

# YORE LORE

Baldwin County Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 108, Foley, Alabama 36536

Volume 28 No 11

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## Baldwin County Genealogical Society

**Meetings November 14 have been cancelled ...** due to the continued effect of Covid 19 pandemic.

**The next meeting will be December 12<sup>th</sup>. If the Meeting Room is still limited to 20 people, registration will be necessary.** Information will be forthcoming as soon as we know. It has been a tough year but hopefully we will end the year with a Merry Christmas. Stay well, wash hands often and wear a mask!

Please stay posted to BCGS and Foley Library's webpage.

We wish all to be careful and take care.

*Tina Graham, President*

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**BCGS Board Meetings will continue to meet at 10 a.m. Board Room**

**Obit Committee is meeting with respect to social distancing.** 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs of each month in AL, Local History & Genealogy Room

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### **Member of BCGS Margaret Kirk has new address...**

Due to hurricanes making all to frequent and unwelcome visits to Louisiana, Mandville resident and longtime BCGS member, **Margarett Kirk** recently moved near her son, Kenneth, to Friendswood, southeast Texas. Friendswood is about 50 miles inland from the Gulf Coast and is celebrating the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its' founding in 1895. The city lies in Galveston and Harris Counties, Texas. In 2010, the population of the city was nearly 31,000 residents.

Her new residence is one of eight in a smaller neighborhood subdivision and with her love of history, Margarett would fit right in with local color. We miss her and certainly wish her well with best regards. Her new address is **Margarett Kirk, 505 N Clear Creek Dr., Friendswood, Texas 77546.**

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## BALDWIN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MINUTES:

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### **ADDITIONS TO THE ALABAMA, LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY COLLECTIONS**

**In Honor of Lois Marie O'Konek, Genealogist,** from Dr. Daniel Dolgin:

*Formerly Montpelier, a Plantation* by Carolyn E. Hood-Kourdache

*Alabama's Own in France* by William Henry Amerine

**Donated by: Lou Vickery:** *Alabama Creek Indians* by Lou Vickery

**Tina Graham:** *Great Was Their Valor, Profiles of Sacrifice, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War,* researched, written by Dillard D. Ensley

*Black Jack, American's Famous Riderless Horse* by Robert Knuckle

**Carolyn B Messmer:** *Down the Cobb Trail accompanied by our Grandmothers Cobb, Ard, McCurdy, Resmondo, Shelby, Hall & Greenwood,* researched and compiled by Carolyn Brown Broome-Messmer and Glenda Brown Pace

#### **Donations:**

*Gordo Area History and Chronicles Centennial 1901-2001* Pickens County

*Grace was in their steps* by Marcia Webb Pepperman ( Webb family history)

*Alabama Creek Indians* by Lou Vickery

*Joseph Mims-James Walker Fannin-James Calvin McNeil Plantation* by Brazosport Archaeological Society

*Apalachee agency on the Gulf Coast frontier* by Patrick Lee Johnson

Rodziny, journals of the Polish Genealogical Society of America  
The Letters edited by Gordon W. Holmes, Jr  
Philips' 19<sup>th</sup> century county atlas of Ireland by John Bartholomew, 1831-1893  
Down the Cobb Trail by Caroline Brown Broome-Messmer  
Grace was in their steps, the Webb Family by Marcia Webb Pepperman  
Valley Leaves (North Alabama) vols. 24 -42 Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society  
Mississippi Coast Historical & Genealogical Society quarterlies vols. 24 – 33 (southern most counties of Ms)  
The summer cottages of Islesboro 1890-1930 by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.  
Itawamba Settlers quarterlies, vols 17-26, Itawamba (county) Historical Society, Mantachie, MS (Marie McQueen Estate)  
Ancestor Hunt quarterlies, Ashtabula County, Ohio vols 2017-2020  
**Donation from Carol Warren, Plano, Texas:**  
1810-1840 US Census Rockcastle County, Kentucky  
1850 US Census Rockcastle County, Kentucky  
1795 Census of Kentucky  
The News Caster quarterlies 2012 – 2016  
Pulaski Past, Pulaski County Historical Society, Somerset, Kentucky  
Central Illinois Genealogical Quarterly 2017-2020  
Moultrie County, Illinois Heritage Journal, Moultrie County Historical & Genealogical Society, 2012-2018  
White House History Quarterly numbers 49, 50, 51, 52

### **DON'T OVERLOOK QUARTERLIES... THEY COVER MORE THAN A FIRST GLANCE....**

Many researchers in the **Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections** of the Foley Public Library tend to overlook quarterlies judging limitations by title or publishers as covering just that location. They are missing treasures of research resources. Such as:

**The Genie** quarterly is published by **ARK-LA-TEX Genealogical Association, Shreveport, Louisiana**. The contents page of one issue shows Heflin, Natchitoches Parish, Shreveport, Vernon Parish, Union Parish, Jackson Parish in Louisiana. For Arkansas, there is Union County, Washington County, Hempstead County. For Texas, there are records for Anderson County, Sabine County, San Augustine County. That does include the many cemeteries, Bible records thrown in the mix.

**Magazine by Huxford Genealogical Society, Inc**, Homerville, GA., is dedicated to memory of Judge Folks Husvor, F.A.S.G. 1893-1981. Our issues have been and continue to be donated by Dorothy Skipper Brown, one of the founders and life time member of the **Baldwin County Genealogical Society**. Issue in hand covers Florida counties Alachua, Columbia, Sumter while Georgia covers Berrien, Clinch, Lownses and Ware counties. The highlight of these quarterlies are the Sketches of Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, in this issue there are thirty-two given dates, marriages, children and extra information such as "Thomas Alderman was " a weaver by trade and a Presbyterian by faith."

**Valley Leaves** published by **Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society, Huntsville, Alabama** is generally accepted term for **North Alabama**, anchored by the city of Huntsville. An issue in hand covers the counties of Colbert, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, Morgan counties with resources from cemeteries, marriages, wills, deeds, news clippings, church records, voter registrations to name few.

**Southern Roots & Shoots** published by **Delta Genealogical Society** covers Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia resources. One issue's contents: **Georgia**- Dade County; Byrd's Chapel Cemetery. **Alabama**- DeKalb County; Commissioners Court 1861; Probate Record 1852-1868. **Tennessee**- Excerpt from "Some Tennessee Heroes of the Revolution"; Shelton-Wooten Conclusion. Also Pedigree charts for Alice Catherine Robicheaux Whitehead, James David Holland.

**Piedmont Lineages** quarterly publication of **VA-NC Piedmont Genealogical Society**. Its purpose is to preserve and to share local records with interest in **Virginia** counties of Franklin, Henry, Pittsylvania and Halifax; and the **North Carolina** counties of Rochingham, Caswell and Person; and other such Virginia and North Carolina information pertinent to these counties and their inhabitants.

**The Ridge Runners** compiled and published by **William A. Yates, Ozark, Missouri** is designed for the genealogist who researches in the Upper South: Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee. One of the major features of these quarterlies are the Queries section that must show connection and details of one family within the area of coverage.

**Tracks**, a genealogical bi-monthly compiled by **Dorothy J. Moffett, Mobile Alabama**, is a small but filled treasure of research sources. One issue covers: Items from Old Newspapers the Choctaw Herald, **Butler, Alabama**; **Mobile County, AL** records Minutes of Orphans Court 1849-1850; Pendleton District, **South Carolina** Deed Book G; Cemetery, U.S. Naval Base, **Pensacola, Florida**, plot 2; **Habersham County (Georgia)** which became White County 1850 census; **Rowan County, NC** Wills; Heads of households **Winston Co, Miss.** and Beneath Southern Sod, revised. All within one issue!

**Nase rodina "Our Family" quarterly of the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International published St. Paul, Minnesota**

generally covers a 'theme' in their issues backed with facts, documents and named photos which are treasures in themselves. Example theme for issue: "Divine Intervention: **A tale of three ethnic churches and a flock of ancestors**"; also "A **Cleveland** Legacy-Immigration history at the Western Reserve Historical Society (**Northeastern Ohio**). Another issue's theme : The Voda Road People: The **Trego County Kansas** Czechs 1878-1930." Our own **Baldwin County, Alabama** was featured in December 2014 by Melda H and Gary M Boyd titled "The Czechs of **Gulf Coast, Alabama**" and "Keeping Czech culture Alive: the **Baldwin County** Polka Band."

*National Genealogical Society Quarterly* published **Arlington, Virginia**, editorial office **University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL** is a journal for today's family historian stating "reliable publications have tough criteria for the selection and development of manuscripts." An example of contents: Feature articles: The **John Skelton-Catharine Hepler** Family: from the **Shenandoah** to the Midwest; **Agustina** and the **Kelkers**: a **Spanish West Florida** line; Illuminating manuscripts: the interrelationship of maps and text in genealogical research; Notes and Documents: Genealogical Gleanings in **England**.

The **New England Historical and Genealogical Register** published **American Ancestors, Boston, Massachusetts** goal is "to advance the study of family history in America and beyond." Contents of one issue example: Early **Austins** of **Greenwich** and **Stamford, Connecticut**; De Boys or Boy alias **Archer** Line: Medieval ancestry of the New England Families of **Fitch, Archer** and probably **Clarke**; **Scottish** Origins of **James Murray** of East **Greenwich, Rhode Island**, Father of **William Henry Murray** of **Berlin, Rensselaer County, New York**; **William Sewall** of **Bridgewater, Massachusetts** and some of his descendants: a reconstruction of a New England mixed-race family; Early **Coy** and **Harris** families of Eastern **Connecticut**, further analysis of 1798 estate of **Martha Harris**.

*Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections, FPL, has these quarterlies, our copies of NEHGR cover from 1847-. jbornholt, librarian, FPL*

## What do you know about Baldwin County?

Baldwin County, in South Alabama, with eleven bays, thirteen rivers and a Gulf of Mexico shoreline, has more miles of tide-water frontage (546 miles) than any other county in the U.S..

The infamous Pilot Town, village on shores of Navy Cove on St. Andrew's Bay was locate near the end of Fort Morgan Peninsular and inhabited by Bar Pilots. They assisted vessels loaded with cargo across Mobile Sand Bar in Mobile Bay to Mobile docks. The hurricane of 1906 caught Pilot Town completely by surprise killing six bar pilots along with more than 350 other residents of the town. Pilot Town consisted of about 30 homes before the storm of 1906, only one house survived, ruined, titling precariously until it was taken down. It was never rebuilt.

Fort Morgan, built in 1819, is famous for Civil War activities and Farragut's "damn the torpedoes". But not only was the Fort in use during the early years prior to Civil War, also Spanish American War, over 3000 Native Americans mainly Creek were "housed" prior to the Indian Removal; also both World War I and World War II saw soldiers camped on the grounds of the Fort.

A mulberry tree known to be more than 128 years old is still alive and still bears a crop of berries annually at Bon Secour in South Alabama. A storm in 1812, it was brought to Bon Secour at that time as a young tree and replanted in its present location. *as of The Onlooker, Jan 25, 1940*

Legend says that late at night on moonlit nights listeners on Fairhope Pier can hear distinctly the soft, sweet singing of the Mermaids. Of course, no one believes the old legend ..... BUT ..... *But everyone who listens hears the haunting, plaintive melody!*

Frank Earle's residence in Montpelier, later called Blacksher, in north part of the Baldwin County was previously the site of the home of David Tate, a nephew of Alexander McGillivray, the half brother of William Weatherford, and one who had a long and intimate association with the aboriginal (*Indigenous or Native peoples,*) period of the State's history.

If you travel east of Elberta on hiwy 98 turning south on co rd 95, at the end of the road is Pirates

Cove. Overlooking beautiful Arnica Bay and originally inhabited by Creeks, Alibamas, Seminole Indians., the Cove is the entrance to Roberts Bayou frequented by pirates seeking refuge after preying on Spanish galleons. Legend lingers today of buried treasures still undiscovered. Legendary Admiral Raphael Semmes spent time in his home on Roberts Bayou.

Sources: *Baldwin County History Files*, Foley Public Library; *The Onlooker* newspaper, 1940; *The Goldenrod Studio*, Walter Overton, Magnolia Springs; *Arrow Points*, v 12 no 3. Compiled by Jeanette Bornholt, Librarian, Foley Public Library

## Blacksher, Baldwin County, Alabama ... an out-of-the-way place to live



Luther Smith ~Tate Creek Baptist Church, Blacksher, Alabama, February 16, 1999, 1999

**Blacksher**, Alabama, described in 1987 by resident **Isabella Julye** as “a quiet, little place to live.” Living in Blacksher, **Tom Bradley** drove half-hour to work in nearby Bay Minette using his drive to collect his thoughts and plan his day; a true out-of-the-way place to live. It has beautiful pine timber forests, and much history, in fact, the timber industry was main reason for the settlement.

Once known as **Montpelier**, located about 5 miles northeast of **Tensaw**, the Blacksher community is made up of about six square miles of land that runs from about the middle of upper Baldwin County on Highway 59 west to the **Alabama River**. **Tom Bradley** and **Francis Earle** came to Blacksher around 1819 as **Tom Bradley** received land grants from the government in 1819 and 1820.

The two cemeteries listed for Blacksher are the **Davis Cemetery** and **Tate Tunstall Family Cemetery**. The **Tate Tunstall Family Cemetery** dates to early 1800s where rest the gravesites of **David Tate** 1779-1829; **Margaret Dyer Tate** 1793-1851; **Thomas Tate Tunstall**, 1823-1918. The **Davis cemetery** is the resting place for **Clander Reese**, 1924-2010; **Alex B Robbins**, 1917-2009; **Jessie Lee Robbins**, unknown-2007; **Mennie Glen Robbins “Dear” White**, 1922-2010.

Local legend says **Jeptha** and **Uriah Blacksher** gave the community its name in late 1800s when they set up logging operations in Blacksher. The community was listed in 1890 census, and by 1899, an established a post office given name Blacksher. **Willam Bryant** later became a postmaster. In 1987, the post office still stood and was in use by **Thomas Earle** and the **North Baldwin Timber Co**.

**John Travis Wilson** family and the **Goghlin**s were also early settlers. **John Wilson** bought the **T. S. Moore** home it was noted in 1905. Land was cheap back then being sold for only twenty-five cents an acre which Wilson bought one-hundred sixty acres. He and his brother **Robert Brewster Wilson**, formed a partnership in the **Wilson Naval Store** in nearby **Tensaw**, eventually building two turpentine stills, a saw mill, and employed over two hundred workers. He and his wife **Annie** built a school building for the Blacksher community and provided room and board for the school teacher. **Wilson** also built the **Church of Christ** church building on his property for Blacksher, housing the visiting preacher.

It was newsworthy to note at the time that “**Messrs. Earle and Bradley**, two of the genial citizens, have a fine pack of hounds with which they enjoy a race up **Turkey Creek** after a huge wild cat or a fox occasionally.” **Henry Holmes** returned from Montgomery where he attended a business college receiving his diploma for bookkeeping in 1905.

It was noted in Blacksher news in May, 1909, **O. A. Wilson** was in possession of 213 bottles of whiskey which were taken from **Tom Watts** by the Monroe County sheriff. In September, a quiet wedding occurred when **D. B. Kearley** of **Peterman**, and **Sadie McCall** were married at the home of the bride’s father. **C. E. McCall** with Rev. **W.E. McConnell** officiating.

*The American Nut Journal’s* **National Nut Growers Convention** in 1916 told of the debate of settling on one name for the same pecan nut. There were two **Williams** pecans; one in Mississippi and one in Alabama; the recommendation of the committee was that the one named after **B. F. Williams**, Blacksher, Alabama, be called the *Williams* and that Mr. **Forkert** of Mississippi be asked to select another name for the other.

**Rev. William** filled his regular appointment Sunday at the **Mt. Triumph Baptist Church** in Blacksher, Sept. 25, 1918, with attendance of the **Sullivan Phillips** family, **Randolph Wilson** and son, **Mr. and Mrs. Billie Wilson** and daughters **Tillie** and **Rela** and grandson **William Bert** with several others whose names the reporter did not learn.

**World War I** was noted when several of the men and boys in Blacksher registered and had already gotten their class cards. It was supposed they would soon leave for the training camps, “*but we want them to hurry and whip the old Kaiser and come back.*”



A wedding of much interest in Blacksher as well as throughout the county in Nov. 1918, was that of **Chas. Earle** of **Blacksher** and **Mae Bryant** of **Stockton** which took place the home of bride's brother, **Dr. D. O. Bryant**. Owing to the epidemic influenza, the ceremony was witnessed only by the immediate families and a few intimate friends. Out of town guest were Mrs. **A. E. Maumauee**, Mrs. **Florrie McDavid** of Mobile, Mrs. **Jno McGowan**, son **Claude**, Dr. and Mrs. **Sibley Holmes** of Foley, **Gladden Earle** of Atmore, Mr and Mrs. **J. T. Booth** of Brewton.

Mrs. **Laura L. Files** death 8<sup>th</sup> of August, 1919, sadden the community. Mrs. **Files** was born at **Tensaw** on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1843 daughter of **Charles Daniels** of Montgomery Hill. She married **Dr. G. W. Files**, well known physician of Gosport, Clarke County, but later years she spent most of her time in Blacksher with her sisters, Mrs. **T.H.Boyles** of Tensaw and Mrs. **Mamie A. Earle**, Blacksher. Also mourning her loss was daughter **Fannie May Files** of Blacksher.

The Probate office printed Jan, 1921, issued marriages licenses to **Burton Kelson** and **Cornelia Wilson**, Blacksher; **Sam Edwards** and **Alice Henry**, Blacksher. There was to be preaching at **The Methodist Church** in January 1923, with everyone invited to come.

During the 'Sale of Improved Livestock in Baldwin' Oct, 1931, both **U. E. Bradley** and **J. W. Earle** of Blacksher purchased purebred Hereford bulls with both also purchasing Augus calves. In continuing to improve farming in Blacksher, in January, 1932, two day terrace schools were held in area with the first scheduled on the farm of Mr. **John Earle** of Blacksher. The purpose was to teach farmers laying successively graduating flat surfaces for purpose preventing erosion on hilly or mountainous ground, terraces.

In August, 1938, the community lost a member of one of the oldest families and one of the finest citizen with **Mrs. Frank F. Earle** whose interment was in the family burial grounds in Blacksher. Her husband was a man of prominence throughout Baldwin County.

It was noted in Feb. 1939, a 23 mile long 'gravelled' road, well served its purpose, serving communities of **Latham, Tensas, Blacksher** and **Little River**. But traffic from **Bay Minette** outward which had formerly travelled this road considerably had been almost completely routed on the paved road north. It was suggested "paving of this (graveled) road would open to tourists a section that is without doubt one of the most historical in the state."

In 1939, U. S. Treasury Dept. Secretary and Public Health Service Surgeon General's government publication of thousands of clinics listed in "Hospitals and Dispensaries for the Treatment of Venereal Diseases" included "**Blacksher: Baldwin Co. Clinic**" which offered *Free; syphilis only* treatment. The majority of other clinics in the country was *pay or part-pay* for treatment.

'**Byways of Baldwin**' newspaper columns by **Jimmy Faulkner**, in Dec. 1945, writes of ... "*of Alabama's famous people possibly the colored ones have brought us the most publicity*" naming **Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, Joe Louis, Hazel Scott**. "... and now Baldwin comes forth for her just share of Negro great. Perhaps many of you saw the picture of the 7 year old colored piano playing, **Honey Chile**, in **Life** magazine about three weeks ago. This youngster with MGM movie contract in hand has his heritage in Blacksher. **Honey Chile** is the grandson of old **Frank Bracey**, 85 year old colored school teacher of Blacksher. Uncle Frank's daughter, **Elizabeth**, who is now dead, married **Clarence Robinson** and to them was born the now famous **Honey Chile**."

**Catherine Earle**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. **Thomas Earle**, was elected vice president of the Women's Student Government Association at Alabama Polytechnic Institute, **Auburn**, in Feb. 1957 while **George Blue Lee**, Bay Minette, nephew of Mr. and Mrs. **Frank Earle** of Blacksher, was one of four Distinguished Military Graduates at Auburn University in fall of 1959.

**Ulmer Earle Bradley**, son of Mr. and Mrs. **Ulmer E. Bradley, Sr**, attended University of Alabama in 1941, then joined the Army, training in Army Combat. He was shipped overseas as tailgunner with the British-based **Liberator Bombers of the 448<sup>th</sup>**; his crew name **68<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Bombardment Group**. His plane was recognized as the "Flying Little Joe." In a returning trip from a raid over the enemy territory, he was killed in action over Germany January 5, 1944. **Bay Minette Veteran Lodge Unit VFW Post 3563** has placed a memorial plaque to the building known as the **Bradley & McDowell Post**.

In 1982, from the publication of *Alabama Coastal Region Ecological Characterization*, oil and gas production was well established in Mobile and Baldwin Counties and "will increase in the near future; new fields had been discovered east of the **Chunchula** Field in **Mobile County** and in **Baldwin County** near **Foley, Gulf Shores, and Blacksher**." The geological survey station site 23, name of **Turkey Creek** near **Blacksher**.

**Montpelier Methodist Church**, located among thick pine trees of Blacksher community, was built in late 1800s to replace **Holly Creek Church** formerly located on this location, and is one of Baldwin County's Historic Churches.

It's true, **Blacksher** is an out-of-the-way place to live but it does have beautiful pine forests, clean skies, little traffic, lots of history, wonderful creeks and rivers, and much, much land. What most take for granted with grocery stores, banks, quik-stops, the residents do not mind the lack of near-by conveniences. The residents know their home is well worth the drive.



Wilson Turpentine Still and Naval Store Company in Blacksher, August 7, 1909.  
Photo credit to Carolyn Hastings Dickinson



Blacksher School about 1914. Wilson, Cumbie, and Boone Children  
Photo credit to Carolyn Hastings Dickinson



Tate Tunstall Family Cemetery  
Blacksher

Sources: **Luther Smith** *Tate Creek Baptist Church, Blacksher, Alabama, February 16, 1999*, 1999, Fort Worth Contemporary Arts, **On loan, My Time at TCU: Photographs | Luther Smith** [www.artsy.net](http://www.artsy.net); *Blacksher*, Mary Lee Conwell, reporter, *Mobile Press Register*, Oct 10, 1987, pg12b; *Heritage of Baldwin County, Alabama*, 2002; *Green Gold: Alabama's Forest and Forest Industries*, James E. Fickle pg 70-71; *The Baldwin Times*, *Blacksher* news; *Blacksher* courtesy of Carolyn Hastings Dickinson, edited by Debbie Owen, [www.sites.rootsweb.com](http://www.sites.rootsweb.com); [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com); *Hospitals and Dispensaries for the Treatment of Venereal Diseases*, 1939, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC; *American Nut Journal*, vol V no 6 pg 66, pub. American Fruits Publishing Co. Rochester, NY. *Compiled by Jeanette Bornholt, Librarian, Foley Public Library.*