



William Grover Anderson, born in Boma, Tennessee, March 24, 1889. Married Miss Lillian Lee, July 21, 1915. Engaged in wholesale and retail hardware. He has built several large business houses at Baxter. Has been mayor of Baxter. He is a member of the County Board of Education, a member of the Baptist Church. Mr. Anderson is one of Baxter's most valuable citizens. *Taken from A History of Putnam County, TN by Walter S. McClain*

William Grover Anderson: by Louis Huston Gill, s/o Preston Gill & Addie Anderson. Addie Anderson was the sister of William Grover Anderson. William Grover Anderson was born 24 March 1889 and married Lillian Lee. Lillian was born 21 November 1889 and died 4 July 1925.

"William was born a farm boy at Boma in the last year of President Grover Cleveland's first administration. Anderson was a Baxter banker and merchant whose interest in public affairs led him to three terms as Putnam County's direct representative in the State Legislature. Anderson was first elected to the legislature in 1927, serving under Austin Peay's term; again in 1929-30 under Governor Henry Horton; and later, in 1949-1950 under Governor Gordon Browning. Says Mr. Anderson, 'When I went for my first term, there wasn't a mile of hard-surface road in Putnam County, Tennessee.' Anderson was a member of the Putnam Board of Education 20 years, and was building committee chairman when the first Baxter Elementary School was built in 1923."

"After Anderson finished high school in Cookeville, he worked for a time at Boma in his Uncle W.T. Anderson's general store. In 1912, he went to Baxter, TN and worked until 1918 as cashier at the Baxter Bank & Trust Company, and that year he and his uncle formed a partnership in a department store in Baxter. It was the largest in the Upper Cumberland, boasting 'anything from the cradle to the grave.' They meant it too, for the partners were the county's first licensed embalmers. Mr. Anderson moved to Cookeville, TN in 1957. After an eight year tenure as general secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, he left his office at the

corner of East Spring Street and South Jefferson Avenue, Cookeville, TN. William Grover Anderson was a 32<sup>nd</sup> degree Mason.”

William Grover Anderson was the brother of my Grandmother Audra Camilla (Anderson) Denny. In 1923 Baxter Seminary, operated by the Methodist Episcopal Church under the Putnam County School Board, provided secondary schooling for hundreds of student in western Putnam County who otherwise would not have had it. William Grover was a supporting businessman that helped the seminary to grow rapidly. He was a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives from 1949 to 1951. William Grover Anderson succeeded Richard Marklham as executive secretary of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce and worked in this post until 1966. Grover helped rally support for Tennessee Tech in 1946 when the college needed housing for the record enrollment after the war. From newspaper articles and pictures I know that Grover was a busy character. He was even an undertaker at one time. A lot of the information is in the book ***Putnam Country Tennessee***, 1850-1970 by Mary Jean Delozier. I remember Grover from when I was a kid visiting Grandmother Audra (Anderson) Denny. Audra Anderson Denny was the sister of William Grover Anderson. *by Audrey June (Denny) Lambert.*

William Grover Anderson, Sr.  
by Joe Lee Anderson, his son

William Grover Anderson, Sr. was born on a farm at Boma, TN in the last year of President Grover Cleveland's first administration. Anderson was a Baxter banker and merchant whose interest in public affairs led him to three terms as Putnam County's direct representative in the state Legislature. Anderson was first elected to the Legislature in 1927. He served during Austin Peay's term, and again in 1929-30 under Governor Henry Horton. Later in 1949-50 he served under Governor Gordon Browning. Mr. Anderson said, "When I went for my first term, there wasn't a mile of hard-surface road in Putnam County, TN."

His proudest accomplishment as a legislator was his now famed "Million Dollar Bill" appropriation request which saved Tennessee Tech. He called for a million dollars to help build the school up, and he almost got it. After Governor Henry Horton vetoed the million dollar bill for Tech., he was still able to get a \$250,000 appropriation and a new lease on life for the college.

Anderson was a member of the Putnam Board of Education for twenty years, and was building committee chairman when the first Baxter Elementary School was built in 1923.

After my father finished high school in Cookeville, he worked for a time at Boma, TN with his Uncle William Tom Anderson's General Store. William Tom Anderson was the brother of Lewis Monroe Anderson.

In 1912 he went to Baxter and worked until 1918 as cashier at the Baxter Bank and Trust Co. That year he and his uncle formed a partnership in a \$90,000 department store at Baxter. It was the largest in the Upper Cumberland, boasting "Anything from the Cradle to the Grave." They meant it, too, for the partners were the County's first licensed embalmers – in a day when people were skeptical, not only of embalming, but of factory-made coffins, too.

Mr. Anderson moved to Cookeville in 1957. After an eight-year tenure as General Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, he left his office at the corner of East Spring St. and South Jefferson Avenue, Cookeville, TN.

William Grover was a 32<sup>nd</sup> degree Mason.

Herald – July 22, 1915

Anderson – Lee

One of the prettiest weddings of the season was that of Miss Lillian Lee and Mr. Grover Anderson which was solemnized at the home of the bride's sister, Mrs. J.E. Oliver, in Baxter Thursday evening, Rev. Alonso Harris performing the ceremony.

Miss Lee was so attractive in a beautiful gown of white satin; she carried bride's roses. The music was rendered by Miss Clara Miller of Nashville. Only the immediate family and a few intimate friends were present. The bride is an accomplished popular young lady and has a large number of friends in Cookeville. The groom is a prominent young businessman, cashier of the Baxter Bank and Trust Company.

They will take a short western trip after which they will be at home after September the 1<sup>st</sup> to their friends in Baxter.

Herald – Citizen

March 30, 1970

Grover Anderson

William Grover Anderson, 81, died Thursday at Master's Nursing Home on the Algood Road, following a long illness.

Funeral services were held Saturday afternoon at 2:00 at the chapel of Hooper – Huddleston Funeral Home with Rev. Andrew Albert officiating. Burial was in the Cookeville City Cemetery.

Mr. Anderson was a native of Putnam County, the son of the late Lewis and Matilda Wallace Anderson and was reared in the Silver Point – Baxter area.

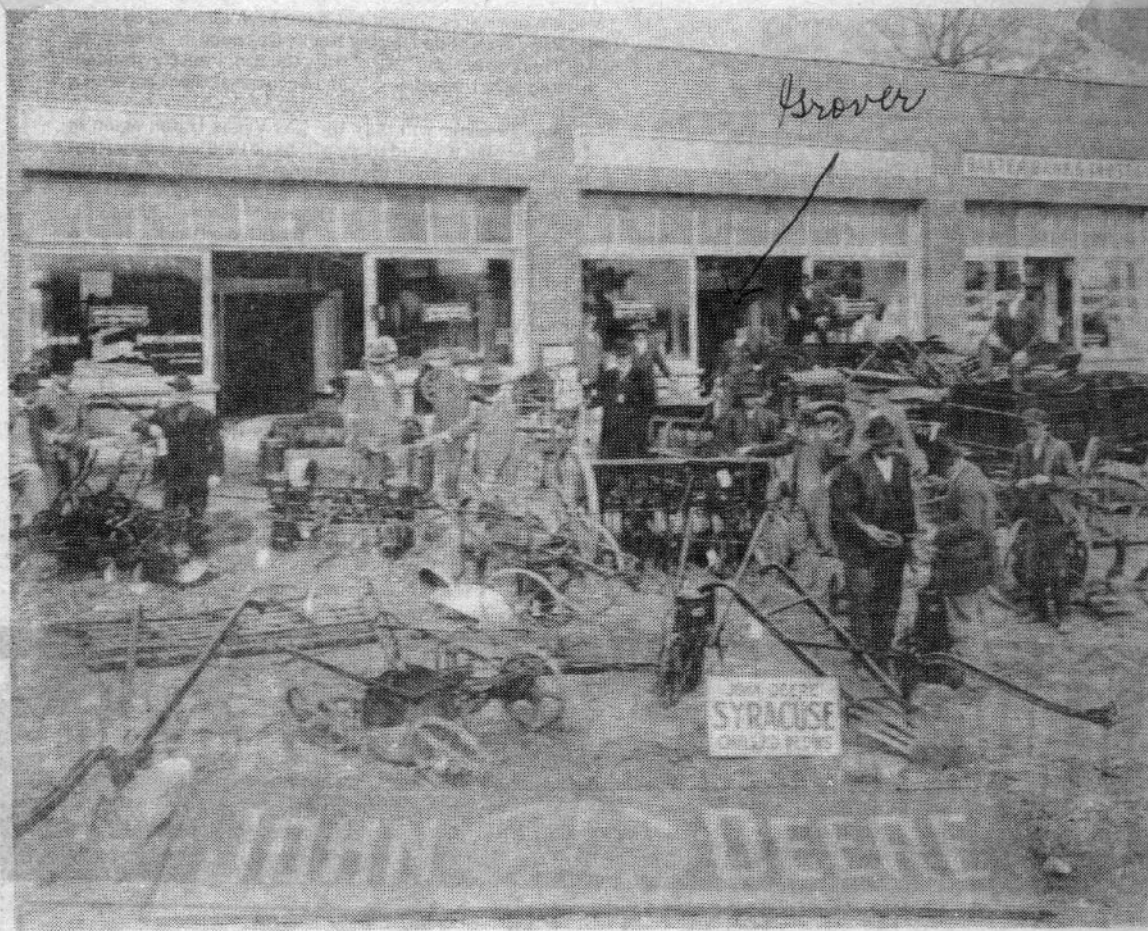
His wife whose death occurred several years ago was the former Lillian Lee also from Putnam County.

Mr. Anderson was once a merchant of Baxter, was a chairman of the Putnam County School Board and for a number of years served as a trustee of Baxter Seminary.

He served as representative at large in the Tennessee Legislature for some years, and was instrumental in getting various appropriations for Tennessee Tech during its initial year. He also held the position as secretary of the Putnam Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Anderson was a Mason. The Excelsior Lodge of Baxter conducted a service in his memory Friday night at the funeral home.

Survivors are a son Joe Anderson, Washington D.C.; 4 sisters, Mrs. Addie Gill, Cookeville, Mrs. Audra Denny of Silver Point, Mrs. Floyd Shanks of Silver Point, and Mrs. Ollie Julian, Baxter, and a grandson, and 2 grandchildren.

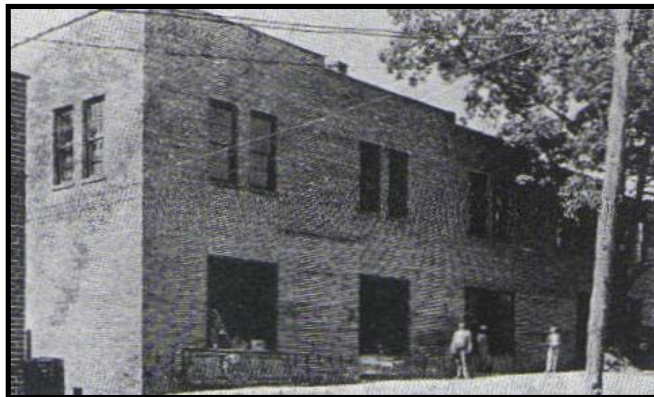


## Baxter about 1918

This picture, made on March 25, 1918, is of W. G. and W. T. Anderson's Store and of Baxter Bank and Trust Co. in Baxter. Anderson's Store was displaying its John Deere farm equipment.

The two buildings occupied by the farm supply store became, on the left, Anderson's Department Store, and, on the right, Three Big Stores in One, in 1919. At the present time,

Baxter Recreational Center, owned by Silas Anderson, occupies the two W.G. and W. T. Anderson buildings; and Nunally's Drugs is located at the Baxter Bank and Trust Building.



William Grover & W. T. Anderson Hardware Company, building about 1920 in Baxter, Tennessee.

## Herald Citizen

Services were held this week for Grover Anderson, 81, a prominent resident who helped save Tennessee Tech in one of its darkest days. A native, Anderson was a merchant in Baxter who served terms on the Putnam School Board and who for 40 years was a trustee at Baxter Seminary. He was serving as Putnam's state representative in 1929 when years of resentment against higher education and the stock market crash that led to the Depression threatened to dry up state dollars for the state college in Cookeville. That year, Anderson campaigned for \$1 million in state funding for Tennessee Tech for its annual budget. He got \$250,000. He attributed much of the shortcoming to competition from other state colleges in Tennessee that are scrambling for state support.

**Source:** Biographical Directory of the Tennessee General Assembly – Vol. III 1901 – 1931 by Ilene J. Cornwell with research by Verla S. Hodges – published by The Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville – 1988.

### **Anderson, William Grover (1889 – 1970)**

HOUSE, 65<sup>th</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 76<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies, 1927 – 1931, 1949 – 1951; representing Putnam County; Democrat. Born March 24, 1889, in Boma, Putnam County; son of Louis and Matilda (Wallace) Anderson; extent of education not known. Married July 21, 1915, to Lillian Lee; names of children, if any, not found. His occupations included farmer, merchant, and businessman in Baxter and Cookeville, both in Putnam County; general secretary, Putnam County Chamber of Commerce. Served as mayor of Baxter; member county board of education; member Baptist Church; Free and Accepted Masons, 32<sup>nd</sup> degree, Scottish Rite, York Rite, Order of the Mystic Shine. Died March 26, 1970 in Cookeville; buried in Cookeville City Cemetery.

Sources: Walter S. McClain, *History of Putnam County*, 140; Tennessee *Public Acts*, 1927, 1929, 1949; Tennessee Vital Records, Death Certificate #8880.



Micheal Martelia, Eldra, Addie & Audra Camilla Anderson  
Sisters of William Grover Anderson.



William Grover Anderson with his sister  
Audra (Anderson) Denny's grandchildren.  
Left to right are Ronald Timothy Denny,  
Richard Lewis Denny &  
Audrey June (Denny) Lambert.

## ANDERSON HARDWARE COMPANY

The Anderson Hardware Co. of Baxter, has been incorporated, with a capital of \$100,000. W. G. Anderson, W. T. Anderson, Lawrence Grace, J. A. Isbell, and J. H. Carpenter are the incorporators. Messrs. Anderson have been engaged in the hardware business for sometime and the new company will take over and continue the business on a larger scale.

Herald Newspaper, Cookeville, TN, front page, Thursday, 9 September 1920.

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