

Robert Simpson Alcorn Sr.
3 July 1902, Cookeville Press Newspaper

R.S. Alcorn
b. 14 November 1824, TN
d. 29 June 1902, TN
s/o James Lee Alcorn & Elizabeth Blackburn Johnson
Wives: md 1st to Martha Alexander
b. 9 January 1831, TN – d. ca. 1857, TN
d/o Reuben B. Alexander & Elizabeth Stockard Johnson
md 2nd Martha J. Exum McGinnis

Drowned While Crossing Caney Fork River

On last Sunday afternoon as he was returning from Church, Hon. Robt. S. Alcorn of Buffalo Valley, was drowned in the Caney Fork at the mouth of Long Branch, in DeKalb county. At that point in the river Wolf Creek on the north and Long Branch on the south side empties into it, thus forming a bar or shoal which has been used as a “ford” for nearly a century. Mr. Alcorn drove into the river from the south side where the public road entered, in the presence of several persons who were on the bank.

The water was very muddy and both creeks and river swollen by recent heavy rains, and was running very swift over the shoal. Just below the “ford” is an abrupt termination of the shallow water. When Mr. Alcorn got about thirty or forty yards from the south bank, or where he entered the river, it was discovered that he was bearing down the river or nearing the “jump off.” A gentlemen who had just crossed in front of him on horseback warned him of his danger, and it seems that he attempted to turn his horse up the river and to his right so as to get back on the south side, when his buggy was turned over by the swift current, and Mr. Alcorn thrown out. He landed on his feet, and the water was only about waist deep, but it was so swift and Mr. Alcorn was so old and feeble that he could not resist it, and was gradually driven by force of the water over the precipice below the ford, where he sank to rise no more.

The men on the bank, who witnessed the terrible tragedy, were powerless to assist him. One young man jumped into a canoe near by and pulled with all his power to reach and rescue him, but the craft was half full of water, and he had only a rough board for a paddle, and on that account could not get to him in time. Rescue parties were immediately formed and the river was full of searchers until he was found about 5 o'clock Tuesday afternoon.

Two of his sons and others were stretching a wire across the river about a mile below where he was drowned, when suddenly he was seen to float to the surface not more than ten feet from where they were. He was immediately taken out of the water and carried home, to the old farm where he has lived for the last fifty years.

Mr. Alcorn was about seventy-seven years old at the time of his death, having had been thrice married and was a widower at this time.

Decreased was a noted man in many respects, and was widely known and respected by everyone who knew him. He had been an active, industrious man and accumulated considerable property during his long industrious life. He had one of the best farms in that famous section of rich land and good farmers, and always lived at home, and was at home to his friends at all times, for his hospitality was unbounded, his house always wide open to the stranger as well as to the friend and neighbor.

When he was but a boy he enlisted as a soldier in Company I, 8th Regiment Tennessee Volunteers, and went with that famous Regiment into the war with Mexico during which he was severely wounded in the knee, on account of which he was a pensioner of that war when he died. Gen. William B. Bate was 1st Lieutenant of his company and the relations then formed by these young men ripened into everlasting friendship and esteem, and none will learn with keener regret than his old comrade of the long ago has been so ruthlessly gathered to his fathers.

In civil life he served the public in several minor positions, such as Justice of the Peace, Chairman of the County Court, Deputy Sheriff, Constable, Tax Collector, etc. In 1886 he was, without his knowledge or consent, nominated as the Democratic Candidate for Senator of this Dist., and was triumphantly elected at the approaching election, and served the people with signal ability and unswerving fidelity. He was a moral, conscientious gentlemen at all times and places and never happier than in the company of his friends, peculiarly sociable and agreeable wherever met.

He raised a large family of children, several of whom survive him, Ex-Sheriff General Alcorn of this place being his eldest son. Albert Sidney Alcorn, Dept. Sheriff of White county, R.L. Alcorn and A.V. Alcorn, prominent and successful farmers of Buffalo Valley. On yesterday he was interred in the family graveyard on the old farm in the presence of a large and sorrowing concourse of the good people of that neighborhood and surrounding sections. And thus ends the life of one who has been a helper and a benefactor to his fellowman in his day and generation.



George Washington "General" Alcorn, born 1861 in Buffalo Valley, he was the son of Robert Simpson Alcorn and Martha McGinnis Alcorn. His wife was Nancy Josephine Garner, the daughter of John H. Garner and Sarah Merritt of the Laurel Hill community west of Silver Point, Tennessee. They are seated in the center. Also shown are their children. Seated on the left is Felix Alcorn and on the right is Robert Alcorn. Standing from the left, Bessie Alcorn, Lela Alcorn who married Charlie Newton Gracey; Mamie Alcorn, Georgia Alcorn, and Will Alcorn who married Fred Luck. "General Alcorn was sheriff of Putnam County from 1896 to 1900. He later became Chief of Police of Cookeville. The Alcorn home was on the corner of Washington and 6th Street in Cookeville. Courtesy Charlene Gracey.

George Washington “General” Alcorn and Black Hawk. He was sheriff of Putnam County from 1896 to 1900, and then reelected in 1903 and held that office again from 1904 to 1908. He rode Black Hawk from one end of the county to the other keeping the peace. Courtesy Charlene Gracey, a granddaughter.



This is a picture of an early Tennessee Technological University play cast taken from the Tennessee Tech archives. In the 1st row from left are: **Robert Lee Alcorn**, Thomas Alva Early Jr., & Victor McClain. In the 2nd row from left are: Robert Elrod, Mildred Fuqua, Cooper Loftis, & Naomi Ensor. In the 3rd row from left are: McGregor Smith, Whitney White, Max Morgan Haile, & Ralph Jared. Identifications made by Rose Dow Dubois. Picture on pg. 75 of the book: Stray Leaves from Putnam Co., TN by Mary Hopson.



Lela Alcorn Gracey, 1886-1985, wife of Charlie Gracey. She was the daughter of General Alcorn and Nancy Garner Alcorn. Lela taught school in Putnam County for a number of years. Courtesy of Charlene Gracey.

Siftings from Putnam County, Tennessee by Mary Hopson: pg. 190



Charlie Gracey, 1881-1959, son of Crockett D. Gracey and Alta Margaret Moore Gracey. He was the husband of Lela Alcorn Gracey, 1886-1985. Charlie worked for the Federal Government in the Revenue Department. Charlie and Lela were the parents of Josephine Gracey who married Howard Hale; Charlene Gracey, and Edward “Pete” Gracey who married Myra Smith. Courtesy of Charlene Gracey.

Siftings from Putnam County, Tennessee by Mary Hopson: pg. 190



Alta Margaret Moore Gracy, 1858-1916, is shown standing in the yard of the Gracy home. East Broad Street near Maple Avenue. Also in the picture is her son Charlie Gracy who at the time was recovering from surgery. Alta was married to Crocket D. Gracy, 1836-1894. She was the daughter of Hamp Moore, a successful businessman. He was the owner of a large amount of property in Cookeville, including the property where the Drama Center and Police Department now sit, also the property that the City hall now occupies, plus property on the east side of the square. Courtesy of Charlene Gracy.

Siftings from Putnam County, Tennessee by Mary Hopson: pg. 190



1912 reunion of Civil War veterans at the Putnam County Jail. This photo was taken August 24, 1912. Members of the 8th Cavalry are front row, from the left: Mansfield Whitson, James Thompson, John Farris, unidentified, Dr. Lemuel Rux McClain, unidentified, and Jim Nickles. Second row: Hicks Buck, Joe Hudgens, Jacob Davis, John Quarles, Mack Wilhite, John Mayberry, Jackson Davis, Robert Alcorn and Joe Dyer. Third row: Bob Stewart, Milton Owen, Braxton Quarles, Newton Rurk, Charlie Bradford, Hugh Terry, Alex Weeks, Amos Williams, unidentified, Lafayette Sliger, Will Cumby, Nelson Hyder, and Dolph Watson.

Courtesy Jim Heard Photography.

Pg. 233 Stray Leaves from Putnam County History
By Mary Hopson

Wallace Family
Stray Leaves from Putnam County History
By Mary Hopson - Pgs. 223 & 224

The Wallaces were landowners in an area that stretched from Buffalo Valley to the waters of Indian Creek to land that later became the 13th Civil District of Putnam County. State records show that Hugh Wallace “in consideration of the sum of one cent per acre...on the 2nd day of January 1826 pursuant to the provisions of an act of the General assembly” was granted 50 acres of land. The grant was signed by Sam Houston. Four years later “by virtue of Entry No. 2172” Hugh Wallace was granted 400 acres of land “on the waters of the Buffalo Valley and waters of Indian Creek” area. This grant was signed by the Governor of Tennessee N. Cannon. Bordering this land was property owned by **Robert Alcorn**, Prettyman Jones, John Jones, and Robert Wallis (Wallace). Another tract of land that contained 100 acres “on the waters of Indian Creek of Caney Fork,” and still another grant of 75 acres “on the Ridge between the head of Buffalo Valley and Wolf Creek waters of Caney Fork” was made to Hugh Wallace. The surveys for the land tracts were done by Richard F. Cooke. The Insurrection Tax list of 1862 shows Hugh Wallace owned 790 acres of land.

Pg. 233:

Robert S. Alcorn

8th TN Cavalry

B. 14 November 1824

D. 29 June 1929

s/o James and Elizabeth Blackburn Alcorn

Married: Martha J. Alexander

Married 2nd: Martha J. Exum McGinnis

Pg. 233: Picture of Civil War Veterans

1912 reunion of Civil War veterans. Members of the 8th Cavalry are front row, from the left: Mansfield Whitson, James Thompson, John Farris, unidentified, Dr. Lemuel Rux McClain, unidentified, and Jim Nickles. Second row: Hicks Buck, Joe Hudgens, Jacob Davis, John Quarles, Mack Wilhite, John Mayberry, Jackson Davis, Robert Alcorn and Joe Dyer. Third row: Bob Stewart, Milton Owen, Braxton Quarles, Newton Rurk, Charlie Bradford, Hugh Terry, Alex Weeks, Amos Williams, unidentified, Lafayette Sliger, Will Cumby, Nelson Hyder, and Dolph Watson. Courtesy Jim Heard Photography.

Siftings from Putnam County, Tennessee by Mary Hopson: pg. 208

Home of Captain Prettyman Jones. 1841-1917. Prettyman Jones, seated in chair, was the son of Byrd S. Jones, 1804-1864 and Hannah Johnson Jones. He was first married to Angeline Anderson, 1843-1888, second to Matilda Smith Garner and third, Martha Ann “Dollie” Denny. He was the father of Byrd Thomas Jones 1864, Walter Jones, 1867-1928, married Dillion Julian; Prettyman Jones, 1869-1927, married Cornilia G. Burton;

Josephine Jones, 1871-1934, married Robert Alcorn; Nevada "Vada" Jones, 1874-1956, married Henry Jones. Picture courtesy, J. Ann Calvetti.

Siftings from Putnam County, Tennessee by Mary Hopson: pg. 190

Lela Alcorn Gracey, 1886-1985, wife of Charlie Gracey. She was the daughter of General Alcorn and Nancy Garner Alcorn. Lela taught school in Putnam County for a number of years. Courtesy Charlene Gracey.

Charlie Gracey, 1881-1959, son of Crockett D. Gracey and Alta Margaret Moore Gracey. He was the husband of Lela Alcorn Gracey, 1886-1985. Charlie worked for the Federal Government in the Revenue Department. Charlie and Lela were the parents of Josephine Gracey who married Howard Hale; Charlene Gracey, and Edward "Pete" Gracey who married Myra Smith. Courtesy of Charlene Gracey.

DIRECT DESCENDANTS OF ROBERT SIMPSON ALCORN:

Robert Simpson Alcorn Sr.- b. 14 November 1824, TN
d. 29 June 1902, TN, drowned in the Caney Fork River, Putnam County, TN
s/o James Lee Alcorn & Elizabeth Blackburn Johnson
Wives: md 24 October 1851, 1st to Martha Alexander
b. 9 January 1831, TN – d. ca. 1857, TN
d/o Reuben B. Alexander & Elizabeth Stockard Johnson
md 2nd Martha J. Exum McGinnis, b. 9 January 1831 – d. 23 December 1900

Children of Robert Simpson Alcorn Sr. & Martha J. Alexander were:

...Felix Patterson McGinnis – b. 5 July 1849, TN – d. 28 February 1935

md Victoria Jared – b. 30 November 1956 – d. 15 May 1953

Both buried: Ridgewood Cemetery, Carthage, TN (*Felix P. McGinnis, s/o Martha J. Exum McGinnis*)

**See Alcorn Family Bible – Related Families. Robert Simpson Alcorn Sr. – Civil War Veteran, 8th TN Calvary - Robert later married on 28 January 1858, Martha J. Exum McGinnis, b. 9 Jan. 1831 – d. 23 Dec. 1900. Victoria Jared, d/o Josiah Jared & Frances Woodbury Bennett.*

Robert Simpson Alcorn Sr. drowned while crossing the Caney Fork River in his buggy, in TN: See Story of R. S. Alcorn in the Anderson family stories. 1860 – 1870 - 1880 census

...William C. Alcorn – b. 21 June 1852, TN – d. 8 November 1865

...Mary Frances Alcorn – b. 6 August 1854, TN – d. 7 August 1889

md 28 July 1870, Daniel Morgan Bartlett – b. 16 November 1849, TN

d. 8 April 1904, Putnam Co., TN - **See Related families: Robert Simpson Alcorn.*

Children of Robert Simpson Alcorn Sr. & Martha J. Exum McGinnis were:

...Nancy Elizabeth Alcorn – b. 2 Sept. 1859, TN – d. Sept. 1861

...Robert Lee Alcorn Jr. – b. 20 August 1866, Putnam Co., TN

d. 30 March 1946 - md Josephine "Josie" Jones –

b. 15 March 1871, TN – d. 11 March 1954

d/o Capt. Prettyman "Purt" Jones & Angeline Anderson.

Both Buried: Alcorn Family Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN

Children of Robert Lee Alcorn Jr. & Josephine "Josie" Jones were:

...Hattie A. Alcorn – b. 27 June 1889, TN – d. 11 April 1990

md Tinsley Garner – Hattie, Buried: +Cookeville City Cemetery, TN

...Walter Herman Garner – b. 23 February 1929 –

d. 22 October 1932 - Buried: Alcorn Family Cemetery Putnam Co., TN



Hattie (Alcorn) Garner & Audra Camilla (Anderson) Denny in front of Audra's home near Buffalo Valley, Putnam Co., TN.

Picture taken in 1967.

- ...Robert Fred Alcorn – b. May 1892, TN - md Jessie Bartlett
- ...Clayton E. Alcorn – b. 1 August 1893, TN – d. 17 July 1951
md 1st Katie Medley – 2nd Wilma Medley –
Clayton - Buried: Alcorn Family Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN
- ...Fitzhugh Lee Alcorn – b. September 1895, TN – d. ca. 1962
md Ethel May Huddleston – b. ca. 1895 – d. ca. 1972
Both Buried: +Cookeville City Cemetery, Cookeville, TN
- ...Mary Josephine Alcorn – b. 29 July 1915 – d. 17 September 1969
md Woodrow W. Bartlett – b. 10 November 1911 – d. 18 March 1989
Both Buried: +Crest Lawn Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN
- ...J.R. Alcorn – b. 24 August 1920 – d. 4 September 1962 –
md 23 November 1942, Lola Webb – b. ca. 1920 – d. ca. 1962
Both Buried: +Cookeville City Cemetery, Cookeville, TN
- ...Willie Roberta Alcorn – b. 17 February 1926 – md Carson Tyler Moss
- ...Katie Jean Alcorn – b. 28 July 1931 – d. 18 April 1967
Buried: +Cookeville City Cemetery, Cookeville, TN
- ...Walter James Alcorn – md 1st Jeanette – md 2nd JoAnn
- ...Hubert Lee Alcorn – b. 2 June 1917 – d. 25 May 1959
md Madie Ellen Fielfs – b. 15 April 1922 –
Both Buried: +Cookeville City Cemetery, Cookeville, TN
- ...Ruth Mae Alcorn – b. 20 January 1922 – md 1st Fred Price
md 2nd David Chadwell – md 3rd Fowler Julian
- ...Allen Byron Alcorn – b. ca. 1940 - d. 15 July 1986
md Carol Lowe - Buried: +Crest Lawn Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN
- ...William “Will” Bradley Alcorn – b. 13 October 1898, Buffalo Valley, TN
d. 8 September 1950, Detroit, MI - md 5 September 1920, Cookeville, TN,
Gladys Beatrice Denny - b. 1 September 1900, Buffalo Valley, TN -
d. 1 March 1986, Detroit, MI - d/o John Rankin Denny & Ada Scruggs
**See Chapter 5 - Gladys Beatrice Denny for complete family.*
- ...Walter J. Alcorn – b. 18 December 1900, TN – d. 3 January 1981
md 1st 1 July 1928, Margaret Fitzhugh Lee Alcorn – b. 3 April 1909
Both Buried: +Cookeville City Cemetery, Cookeville, TN
md 2nd Ethel M. Huddleston
- ...Thurman D. Alcorn – b. 26 June 1903, TN – d. 9 October 1964 md
Mabel Medley – b. 10 May 1905, Putnam Co., TN – d. 26 Feb. 2000, Knoxville, TN
Both Buried: +Crest Lawn Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN
- ...Jack Herman Alcorn – b. ca. 1908, TN - md Lois Julia Watkins
Robert Lee Alcorn – listed, 9th Civil Dist., of Putnam Co., TN in 1900 & 1910.
- ...General “Gennings” “George” Washington Alcorn – b. 22 April 1861,
TN – d. 22 June 1935 –md 11 Jan. 1883, Nancy Josephine Garner – b. 3 October 1861, TN
d. 11 March 1954 – d/o John H. & Sarah Garner.
Both Buried: +Cookeville City Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN
- ...Albert Sidney Alcorn – b. 28 March 1863, TN – d. 19 January 1921-
md Alice Burgess – b. 17 Aug. 1867 – d. 18 May 1941 - Both Buried: O’Conner
Cemetery, White Co., TN: Located east side Old Cookeville Hwy. at junction Overpass Rd.
- ...Martha Alcorn – b. 21 September 1891 – d. 21 September 1891
Buried: Upper Cherry Creek Cemetery, White Co., TN
- ...Albert “Able” Van Alcorn – b. 28 June 1871, TN – d. 1940 – *twin.*
- ...Melissa Josephine Alcorn – b. 28 June 1871, TN – d. 6 November 1892–*twin.*

md Lemuel L. Maxwell, s/o Samuel Foster Maxwell & Elizabeth Besty A. Boyd.

...Mary Francis Alcorn – b. 6 August 1854, TN – d. 2 August 1889, Putnam Co., TN –
md 28 July 1870, Daniel Morgan Bartlett – b. 16 November 1849, Jackson Co., TN –
d. 8 April 1904, Putnam Co., TN

...Ocia Etta Bartlett – b. 5 March 1879, Buffalo Valley, Putnam Co., TN –
d. 21 January 1962, Akron, Summit, OH – md 12 October 1905, Francis Columbus
Maxwell – b. 12 October 1879, Smithville, DeKalb Co., TN – d. 15 October 1944,
Dearborn, Wayne Co. MI.

...Lansdon Bartlett Maxwell – b. 8 December 1909, Buffalo Valley, Putnam Co.,
TN – d. 20 January 1972, Taylor, Wayne Co., MI – md 28 September 1929,
Methodist Church on Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI, Mildred Boase – b. 12 August
1911, Ahmeek, Keweenaw Co., MI – d. 18 March 1946, Phoenix, Maricopa
Co., AZ.

...Dorothy Mae Maxwell – md Frederick Archie Cornell – b. 14 January 1921,
Minneapolis Hennepin Co., MN – d. 31 December 1998, Carmichael,
Sacramento Co., CA.

...Donna Jeanne Cornell

Fletcher Davis Bly Obt.

b. 21 August 1874, VA – d. 2 March 1962, CA md Georgia Alcorn, b. 20 January 1891, TN – d. 27 October 1977, d/o General “Gennings” “George” Washington Alcorn & Nancy Josephine Garner, both buried in Cookeville City Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN. George W. Alcorn is listed as Sheriff in the 1900 census 1st Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN. He is the son of Robert Simpson Alcorn Sr. & Martha J. Exum McGinnis. Nancy Josephine Garner is the daughter of John H. Garner & Sarah Merritt.

A prayer service for Fletcher Davis Bly, 88, will be held Wednesday at 2:30 p.m. in the Chapel of Whitson Funeral Home. The Rev. Hall Barrett, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church will officiate.

Burial will be in the Cookeville City Cemetery. The body is at the funeral home.

Mr. Bly's death occurred Friday in Pasadena, CA, and funeral services were held there Sunday. He had been ill for several months.

He was reared and educated in his native Weatherford, TX, in later years he owned an operated a sheep ranch in the Grand Canyon area of AZ and resided in Williams, AZ. There in 1918 he married the former Georgie Alcorn of Cookeville. They have been residents of Pasadena for 16 years.

Besides his widow there are no immediate survivors.

The Cookeville Citizen Newspaper, Cookeville, TN: Tuesday, 6 March 1962.

1920 census Williams Precinct, Coconino, AZ: Dwl: 47 – Fletcher D. Bly is head of household, 41 yrs. old, VA (parents both born in VA), occupation: stock raising, sheep - md to Georgia A., 28 yrs. old, TN, (parents both born in TN) occupation: teacher high school. Also living in the household: Mamie Alcorn, sister-in-law, 31 yrs. old, TN, single, occupation: music teacher. Note: Mamie Alcorn is the daughter of George W. Alcorn & Nancy Josephine Garner. She is the sister of Georgia A. (Alcorn) Bly & Felix Alcorn that lived next door to Fletcher D. & Georgia (Alcorn) Bly in the 1930 census.

1930 census Williams Town, Coconino, AZ: Dwl: #201, Sheridan, Family: 247, 271 – Fletcher D. Bly is head of household, 52 yrs. old, VA (parents both born in VA), (41 yrs. old 1st marriage), occupation: stock raising, sheep - md to Georgia A., 38 yrs. old, TN, (parents both born in TN), (27 yrs. old 1st marriage) occupation: none. Also living in the household: Bessie Alcorn, sister-in-law, 42 yrs. old, TN, single, occupation: teacher high school & Ida M. Francisco, lodger, 31 yrs. old, KS (father born in IL, mother born in OH) divorced, occupation: teacher public school & Nellie K. Fritz, lodger, 23 yrs. old, CO, (father born in PA, mother born in IL) single, occupation: teacher public school.

1930 census Williams Town, Coconino, AZ: Dwl: #126, Sheridan, Family: 248, 272 – Felix Alcorn is head of household, 29 yrs. old, TN (father born in VA, mother born in VA), (26 yrs. old 1st marriage) occupation: owns shop, dry cleaning – md to Elizabeth A., 23 yrs. old, New Mexico (father born in Budapest, Hungary, mother born in CO), (19 yrs. old 1st marriage). Note: Felix Alcorn is the son of George W. Alcorn & Nancy Josephine Garner. He is the brother of Georgia A. (Alcorn) Bly that md Flether Davis Bly.

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