

JACKSON COUNTY TENNESSEE ORIGIN

BY

ENCEL A. CHAFFIN of Dayton, OH

The Chaffin Manuscript,

by Cousins by the Dozens

The “Long Hunters” had reached what is now Jackson County as early as 1769 and one, Robert Crockett met his death at the hands of the Indians on the upper reaches of Roaring River. Jackson County was formed from Smith County in 1801; Smith was formed from Sumner County in 1799 which was formed from Davidson County in 1786. Davidson County was formed from Washington County in 1783 and Washington County was made a county in 1777 covering most of the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. The origin of Jackson County came through as many states, by counties having first been thought to be a part of Virginia, then Sumner County, North Carolina, then the U.S. Territory South of the Ohio, next the State of Franklin and finally the State of Tennessee in 1793.

Pioneers had poled their boats up the Cumberland River. Fort Blount had been established in what is now the lower or western part of Jackson County. Smith County Court had met here and in a private home in the Dixon Springs area, and no doubt from there ordered a road built from Fort Blout to the head of Flynn’s Creek “so as to include the **Chaffin** settlement, in the year of 1801. Not mentioned in the Court Order, this road no doubt not only reached the **CHAFFIN** settlement but also connected with the Walton Road running North and South Walton Road, about the same location as our present state route 70N was a continuation of the old Wilderness Road from Virginia and at (now) Nashville, Tennessee, connected with the Natchez Trace, leading another 500 miles to the Mississippi River at Natchez, MS.

In a cloud of dust, over these trails had come pioneers from Virginia and North Carolina, South Carolina and Pennsylvania; with them the **CHAFFINS**. Fearing the “fever” of the valleys, they settled mostly on the highlands, all being virgin soil. Further south along Walton Road, one of the **Chaffins** is said to have assisted David Crockett who laid out the town of Lawrenceburg, TN, where Abner Chaffin of Jackson County had a “powder store” in 1820.

Shortly after the **Chaffin’s** settled on the head of Flynn’s Creek, som of them moved back north along the Walton Road to the head waters of (now) Blackburns Fork – first known as the West Fork of the Roaring River, a move of some two to four miles. **Abner Chaffin** and his son Joseph were engaged in “powder making” as well as clearing land and farming.

Joseph and Martha “Nancy” Norvell (Fox) Chaffin reared their 11 children in Jackson County, TN near Gainesboro. The first Chaffin settlement was on the head of Flynn’s Creek, but they soon bought land in Talley’s Hollow, Blackburns Fork and on the Roaring River.