

CHANCERY COURT RECORDS
by Jane C. Turner
Smith County Historical and Genealogical Society
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*The Chancery Court cases are filed by box and case number
and are available in their entirety on microfilm at both the Smith Co.,
and Tennessee State Archives.*

1827. Box 49, No. 2491. JAMES ROLLINGS VS LARKIN CORLEY, James Rollings says he moved to the State of Tennessee in 1815 and rented a farm from Corley. Corley proposed to sell 255 acres on Mulherrins Creek to Rollings in exchange for a Negro woman named Mary. After the trade was made, Corley claimed to have been drunk and defaulted on the deal. Corley says he came to Tennessee in 1804 with his family after having served as a common soldier under Harmer, Sinclair and Wayne for four years fighting the northern Indians. The deposition of David McClanahan, age 76, states that Corley says to him "Granddaddy, I have sold my possession..." (Not clear if McClanahan is Corley's grandfather or if this is only a form of addressing an older man). Samuel Reed states that "old" William Bailey had offered Allaway a cow and calf if he would get Corley's land and get him out of the neighborhood, and Capt. Massie offered Rollins 20 gallons of whiskey to get Corley out as he was an old rascal. On oath J. B. Forester says he received Reed's deposition from William B. Moores, son of William Moores, dec'd., 21 July 1828.

**Evaline Rollins who md Benjamin Denney & Dawson B. Harris; parents were:
James Rollins & Mary Enoch.*

**See Chapter 4, Benjamin Denney who md Evaline (Rollins) Denney who later
md Dawson B. Harris.*

1874. Box 9, No. 452. WILLIAM ROLLINS VS WYATT B. DENNEY
A life interest in a 111 acre farm was granted Barbara Allison upon her divorce from Lewis Allison. At her death the land goes back to the Allison heirs. Wyatt B. Denney is living on the land and the Allison heirs (William Rollins married Rebecca, d/o Lewis Allison) complain that Denney is cutting timber and destroying the farm. Lewis Allison testifies that he lived on the place over 20 years and gives a good description of the property as it was then. Court rules in favor of defendant.

1837, Box 26, No. 1310. MARY HARRIS VS DAWSON B. HARRIS
Mary "Polly" Dowell, d/o Nehemiah Dowell, is filing for divorce from Dawson B. Harris. She says they were married in 1818 or 1819 (he says 1820) in Virginia. She claims he is cruel to her and slips in the kitchen at night where the slave girl, Rachel, sleeps. She and Dawson B. have six minor children: Bus, 16; William,

12; Frances, 10; Besty Ann, 8; Sarah Jane, 6; Lucindy, 1. Suit was filed 5 June 1837. On 26 December 1838 Mary requests that the suit be dismissed.

1889. Box 26, No. 1315. EVALINE HARRIS VS W.B. DENNEY, JAMES
ALLISON, CLOUD DENNEY, JEFFERSON TAYLOR.

Evaline Harris, a widow about 78 years old, been married twice, her first husband being Benjamin Denney who died in 1844. She then married Dawson B. Harris about 1849. He died about 1880 in the State of Illinois. J.W. Denney, age 51, is oldest son; W. B. Denney is another son. Caroline Denney married an Allison, has son, James, age 32 or 33. Nick Denney, age 23, another grandson, son of Wyatt B. Denney (W.B.). Eliza Hubbard, age 37, half-sister to W.B.denney, married Henry Hubbard. Enoch Rollins, age 55, says Elaline is his mother-in-law. B. F. Atwood, age 67, states that Evaline had 6 children by Denney, 2 boys, 4 girls and 1 daughter by Harris. Evaline inherited tract of land in District 17 from her father, James Rollins. She accuses son, Wyatt B., of taking her interest in the tract. Reference is made to Minute book, pg. 214, May 21, 1897, that, because of the death of Evalin Harris, Lewis Allison, Admr. Continues suit.

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By Sue Maggart-Petty

Smith County Historical and Genealogical Society

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1851. Box 19, No. 1006. DENNEY, CHAS. VS ROLLINS, JAMES, ET AL
Benjamin Denney dies in 1841 leaving a will with Chas. (*Charles W. Denney*) and James Rollins, excs. The estate was left to the widow, Evaline Denney, for her lifetime or remarriage. She was the daughter of James Rollins. In 1849 she married Dawson B. Harris and continued to live on Denney's farm & enjoy the proceeds. Others named in will: James Denney, Caroline Denney, Mary D., Salley, Benjamin W., the last five minors.

The land under protest is on Mulherrins Creek. Chas. Denney, brother to Benjamin, says that Rollins refuses to carry out the will by not having Evaline removed from the land after her remarriage. Franklin Atwood is gdn of minor children. Evaline Denney is his aunt. The children have in time attended Mount Holly school. The land was sold for \$1,580, Evaline Harris being the highest bidder, but she let her bid go to Benjamin Atwood, March 1852.

**Evaline Rollins who md Benjamin Denney & Dawson B. Harris; parents were:
James Rollins & Mary Enoch.*

**See Chapter 4, Benjamin Denney who md Evaline (Rollins) Denney who later md Dawson B. Harris.*

1895. Box 55, No. 2821. EVALINE HARRIS VS JAMES W. DENNEY

Evaline Harris, age 85 last month, born in 1810 in Old Virginia, says that in 1875 she leased to her son, James W. Denney, age 58, all her lands to hold during her natural life. She has 5 other living children – those that are dead left no issue. Evaline wants to revoke the lease because James has failed to farm the land as agreed upon. Names sister to Evaline, Peggy McClanahan; son, Wyatt B. Denney; daughters, Eliza, wife of Henry Hubbard; Pleas G. Harrison, 65; Caroline Allison; Jno. B. “Sonnie” Harrison, grandson. Land is known as old Jimmie Rollins farm; old cabin James W. Denney live in called the Corley house. Court rules that James W. Denney is to vacate land by 25 December 1896.

**See Chapter 4, Benjamin Denney who md Evaline (Rollins) Denney who later md Dawson B. Harris.*

DENNY, FRANCIS VS W. H. CHEEK

1872. Box No. 22, No. 1126.

Land case relating to the estate of David Everett, Charles Denny, exc. of will. Francis Denny married in 1861, daughter of Charles Denny. Chas. was the uncle of Francis. James Nixon, age 44, married another daughter of Charles Denny. Chas. Denny died intestate ca. 1872, W. H. Cheek, Admr.

**See Chapter 4, Charles Denny who md Martha Patricia Everett d/o David Everett.*

*Delilah Francis Denney – b. 15 October 1836, Smith Co., TN
md 9 December 1852 in Smith Co., TN, James Nixon – Farmer
b. 28 September 1829 – d. 12 February 1916, Hickman, TN*

*Sarah “Sallie” Denney – b. ca. 1844, NC –
md 24 December 1860, Francis “Franklin” C. Denney –
b. 13 December 1836, Smith Co., TN, – d. 1 September 1881,
Denney Branch, Smith Co., TN*

*Sarah “Sallie” Denney & Francis “Franklin C. Denney are 1st cousins.
Francis “Franklin” Denny was the s/o Wiley & Clara (Enoch) Denny. Wiley was
the s/o John & Sarah (Winfree) Denny. John was the s/o Benjamin & Barbara
Denney*