

## **ABRAHAM FORD**

Stonemason, Preacher, Confederate, Captain

Doctor, Pioneer

By Dale Welch

*Siftings from Putnam County Tennessee*

By Mary Hopson

Pgs. 183 & 184

Rev. Abraham Ford, the son of John F. & Nancy Ford, was born in White County, Tennessee, near DeKalb County, on January 3, 1821 – died December 14, 1890. The Ford family was originally from Virginia. They made their way to Tennessee, in about 1801. Some of their relatives settled in the Grassy Cove area of what was then Bledsoe, and now Cumberland County, Tennessee.

By 1840, Abraham Ford married Nancy Womack. They were living by her parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Womack, in the 1840 census of Warren County, Tennessee.

In 1850, Abraham and Nancy were living in the Grassy Cove area, near his father and mother and family. Abe was a stonemason, as was most of his male cousins, living near by. Abe and Nancy had 6 children at the time.

In 1853, Abraham and family had moved back to White Co., now Putnam County, in the Sand Springs area. He had sold his property in Grassy Cove (200 acres), to Thomas Hail. Their residence was on property now owned by Carl Selby. The house was located about where Interstate 40 now runs.

On July 25, 1861, the 40 year-old Preacher enlisted into Confederate service. He was elected as Captain of Company K. of the 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry, made up of men from Putnam and White Counties. Times were hard for these soldiers. They marched and drilled, continuously, at Camp Zollicoffer, and Camp Myers, both in Overton County. In between, Abraham got the opportunity to preach the Gospel to those weary soldiers.

In December of 1861, they were marched to Kentucky. In January of 1862 they took part in their first major battle. All before had been skirmishes in the Upper Cumberland area. In that battle, the Battle of Fishing Creek, Kentucky, the Confederates were defeated badly, by a superior Union force. The 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment lost 55 men. General Zollicoffer was also killed. The men were allowed to go home for a few days to rest up. During the battle of Shiloh, the 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment guarded the railroad. They could hear the cannons in the distance.

On May 10, 1862, Abraham Ford was relieved as Captain of Company K, when the 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment was re-organized, at Corinth Missouri. Also, Abraham's son, Thomas H. Ford, was discharged, by Colonel Stanton, when it was found that he was under age.

Abraham Ford had given land to build a Baptist Church, at Sand Springs. He and his son William J. Ford, were some of the first ministers of the Church. He also gave land, adjacent to the church to be used as a cemetery. In 1875, his granddaughter, Halie Ann Davis (8 years old), was the first person buried in the cemetery. She died after choking on parched corn. At the time, Abraham was crippled, and attended his granddaughter's funeral, setting outside on his horse.

Abraham, who also served as a doctor in the area, was crippled one night when his horse fell with him. He was on his way back from seeing a patient, on a pitch dark night. After becoming lost, he saw a light in the distance, and started toward it, then his horse just stopped. He couldn't get it to go forward so he started backing it, and ran off a bluff.

Abe and Nancy were prominent pioneers of the 5<sup>th</sup> District of Putnam County. They had 10 children: six sons and four daughters, who followed in their footsteps preaching, doctoring and other community service.

Abraham & his wife Nancy (Womack) Ford are buried in the Sand Springs Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN. Also buried in this cemetery: Elizabeth Ford (1844-1911); Lewis M. Ford (1848-1910); Rebecca Ford (1848-1889); George W. Ford (1866-1888); William Ford (1872-1895); Mollie Ford (1877-1886); Harvey L. Ford (1887-1897) & Elizabeth Ford (1889-1889).

Sources: US census records, cemetery records, Mrs. Mildred Wolfe Welch, Deeds, Civil War records of Abraham Ford and Thomas H. Ford. Mrs. Reba Ford. Diary of Thomas Moore. Mrs. Daisy Roberson.

(1860 census 2<sup>nd</sup> Dist., post office White Plains, Putnam Co., TN: Dwl: 345 – **Abraham Ford** is head of household, 38 yrs. old, TN. Occupation: Farmer, md to **Nancy**, 40 yrs. old, TN. Children: John, 17 yrs. old; Thomas, 16 yrs. old; Lewis, 14 yrs. old; William, 12 yrs. old; Green, 10 yrs. old; Frances, 8 yrs. old; Damy, 6 yrs. old; Julia Ann, 3 yrs. old & Benjamin Ford, 1/12 yrs. old. All born in TN)

(1870 census 5<sup>th</sup> Dist., Putnam Co., TN: Dwl: 13 – **Abraham Ford** is head of household 49 yrs. old, TN. Occupation: Farmer, md to **Nancy**, 51 yrs. old, TN. Children: Green W., 20 yrs. old; Nancy F., 17 yrs. old; Dovey B., 13 yrs. old; Julian, 12 yrs. old; Benjamin A., 10 yrs. old & Abraham Ford, 3 yrs. old. All born in TN).

Census Place: 1880 District 5, Putnam Co., Tennessee

Source: FHL Film 1255275 National Archives Film T9-1275 Page 136A

Dwl: 3

	Relation	Sex	Marr	Race	Age	Birthplace
<b>Thomas FORD</b>	Self	M	M	W	35	TN
	Occ:	Farming	Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
<b>Margret FORD</b>	Wife	F	M	W	35	TN
	Occ:	Keeping House	Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Alex FORD	Son	M	S	W	14	TN
	Occ:	Farming	Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Nancy FORD	Dau	F	S	W	12	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
William FORD	Son	M	S	W	10	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Lewis FORD	Son	M	S	W	8	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Elizabeth FORD	Dau	F	S	W	6	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Didoma FORD	Dau	F	S	W	4	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Henderson FORD	Son	M	S	W	2	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		

Census Place: 1880 District 5, Putnam Co., Tennessee

Source: FHL Film 1255275 National Archives Film T9-1275 Page 136A

Dwl: 4

	Relation	Sex	Marr	Race	Age	Birthplace
<b>Lewis FORD</b>	Self	M	M	W	33	TN
	Occ:	Farming	Fa: NC	Mo: TN		
<b>Beckey FORD</b>	Wife	F	M	W	32	TN
	Occ:	Keeping House	Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Abraham FORD	Son	M	S	W	14	TN
	Occ:	Labor	Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Washington FORD	Son	M	S	W	11	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
Thomas FORD	Son	M	S	W	9	TN
			Fa: TN	Mo: TN		
William FORD	Son	M	S	W	7	TN

Sarah FORD	Dau	Fa: TN F	Mo: TN S	W	6	TN
Green FORD	Son	Fa: TN M	Mo: TN S	W	4	TN
Mary FORD	Dau	Fa: TN F	Mo: TN S	W	2	TN
Tobias FORD	Son	Fa: TN M	Mo: TN S	W	2M	TN

Census Place: 1880 District 5, Putnam Co., Tennessee

Source: FHL Film 1255275 National Archives Film T9-1275 Page 138C

Dwl: 35

	Relation	Sex	Marr	Race	Age	Birthplace
<b>Willie FORD</b>	Self	M	M	W	31	TN
Occ:	Farmer	Fa: TN	Mo: TN			
<b>Feriby FORD</b>	Wife	F	M	W	28	TN
Occ:	Keeping House	Fa: TN	Mo: TN			
John FORD	Son	M	S	W	9	TN
		Fa: TN	Mo: TN			
Nancy FORD	Dau	F	S	W	7	TN
		Fa: TN	Mo: TN			
Louisa FORD	Dau	F	S	W	5	TN
		Fa: TN	Mo: TN			
Samuel FORD	Son	M	S	W	2	TN
		Fa: TN	Mo: TN			

Census Place: 1880 District 5, Putnam Co., Tennessee

Source: FHL Film 1255275 National Archives Film T9-1275 Page 138C

Dwl: 36

	Relation	Sex	Marr	Race	Age	Birthplace
<b>Abraham FORD</b>	Self	M	M	W	58	TN
Occ:	<b>Physician</b>	Fa: VA	Mo: TN			
<b>Nancy FORD</b>	Wife	F	M	W	60	TN
Occ:	Keeping House	Fa: NC	Mo: NC			
<b>Benjerman FORD</b>	Self	M	M	W	21	TN
Occ:	Farming	Fa: TN	Mo: TN			
<b>Mary FORD</b>	Wife	F	M	W	19	TN
		Fa: TN	Mo: TN			
Nancy FORD	Dau	F	S	W	1	TN
		Fa: TN	Mo: TN			