

HISTORY OF LONG BRANCH, TENNESSEE

By Sam Denny, 1975

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: pg. ii

Mr. Joe Kenneth Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Braswell
Mr. Will T. Braswell
Mr. Ray Burton
Mr. & Mrs. Grady Denny
Mr. & Mrs. Lawson Denny
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Fish
Mrs. John Fish
Mrs. C. L. Fisher
Mr. R. D. Hayes

Mr. & Mrs. Luther Martin
Mr. & Mrs. Garland Massey
Mrs. Arthur Maynard
Mr. A. W. Maynard
Mr. W. H. Nixon
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Mr. & Mrs. W. E. Trapp

I am also indebted to the Tennessee State Library and Archives and the Registrar's office for their assistance concerning the land grant and deeds of this area.

And to the following published authorities which furnished valuable information:

Following the Braswells in America 1600-1973, Dr. R. B. Braswell

History of DeKalb County, Goodspeed, 1887

History of DeKalb County, W. T. Hale

History of Tennessee, W. T. Hale

Soil Survey of DeKalb County, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, June 1972

1832 Map of Tennessee, State Survey Team

DEDICATION: iii

I dedicate this book to the first settlers, that courageous breed of men and women that endured the hardships and disappointments confronted in establishing a new community. And to those that followed, maintaining the customs of friendliness, honesty, and equality. And to my wife, who endured my periods of frustration while preparing this book.

IN REMEMBRANCE: pg. iv

In memory of my grandmother, the late Mrs. Amanda Denny; she lived most of her adult life in the Long Branch Community extending warmth and compassion to all that came her way. Her passing was grieved by all that knew her. May God bless us by giving us more of her kind.

INTRODUCTION: pg. v

The purpose of this book is to record the important, events and acts of the people that established and maintained the Long Branch community. After reading this book you may recall some families or items that are not mentioned. Such omissions are not intentional, it is just that my research did not reveal all the

necessary information. Much of my information is from residents or former residents, given from memory. So the events may not be exactly as you recall. In all cases where possible, records have been referred to. In cases where an approximate date is given, the memory of at least two people was relied on in making the approximations.

Women readers may notice the first name or maiden name of some of the wives is not given. This is simply because the wife was only known as Mrs. Doe or Mr. Doe's wife. Don't take offense of this as it was the custom years ago for the women to play a secondary role. For example, you know Lewis and Clark, who and what they did, but can you recall the name of the Indian woman that made the trip with them? - - yet Sacagawea not only served as a guide and interpreter as they encountered the different Indian tribes, she actually saved the group from being massacred.

If after reading this you recall an important event you feel should be mentioned, please let it be known so it may be recorded. No doubt grammatical critics will have a field day with this writing and indeed rightfully so. I had the best elementary and high school English teachers in the world; but where grammar was concerned, I was a hopeless student.

THE COMMUNITY'S BEGINNING: pg. 1

In the winter of 1800 the battle of the Calfkiller took place in what is now White County. The defeat of Chief Calfkiller's tribe ended the last organized Indian resistances in Middle Tennessee. The Indians seceded the area to the state and moved to Mississippi. This secession opened thousands of acres of new land, including Long Branch, to settlers. The nearest white settlement at this time was Alexandria, which was settled in 1796 by a group of about fifty people led by Adam Dale. The nearest road was about five miles to the north and was along Chestnut Mound Ridge. It was known as Emery Road. It was a stagecoach route running from Knoxville to Nashville. With this remoteness, an inaccessibility, it is unlikely that the settlers showed any interest in the Long Branch area before the Indians gave up their claim.

After the War of 1812, the state began selling large sections of land to the public. These sales were allowed under the Land Ordinance Act of 1785. For the first time settlers were given clear title to land formerly held by Indians. This land sold for approximately one dollar an acre but in some cases it went as an outright give (land grant). These land grants were often made as payments for being in the army or another government service. The land along Long Branch first went to private ownership during the period of 1815 to 1825.

Some of the first owners never lived on Long Branch. They rented or leased their holdings and later sold it to someone else. These early rental and lease agreements took into consideration that the land had to be cleared, so the tenant paid very little for its use. The standard lease agreement was usually for three years. During the three years the tenant got to keep everything he grew on the land he cleared. At

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the end of the period, the tenant would either start paying rent, move someplace else, or in some cases, buy the land.

There are very few records of these early rental agreements; therefore the names of some of the first people to live on Long Branch are unknown. Before the white man came to Long Branch the area was used as a common hunting ground by the Cherokee, Creek, and Shawnee Indians. There is no sign that any of these tribes lived in the area. The large number of artifacts found along the south ridge (Hayes Ridge) indicate a much earlier tribe; probably the Woodland had a village there. But the absence of burial grounds and ceremonial mounds indicate it was not a permanent village. The fact that the area had never been used as a permanent home by the Indians would mean all the land was covered with trees and the only roads were foot and horse trails. This must have presented a discouraging picture to the first arrivals but they proceeded with dogged determination building cabins and clearing the land.

The First People to Own Land on Long Branch

Thomas Fisher, Land Grant No. 4699, 1826, for fifty acres; Grant No. 12019, 1834, for one hundred and fifty acres; Grant no. 4609, 1836, for seventy acres. The seventy-acre grant is the land near the Long Branch Church. It was sold to H. C. Terry in 1875. Mr. Terry built a fine home on the land, which is still in sound condition. Mrs. John Fish now owns the property and lives in the house. It is one of the oldest homes in the community. The other two grants are believed to have covered the entire Denny Hollow, now owned by Grady Denny and Jimmy Whitmore. These grants first passed from Thomas Fisher to J. D. Fisher, then J. D. sold the land to Wilson Denny and Jeff Braswell in the 1870's. It is not believed that either of the Fishers ever lived in the community

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They are related to the many Fishers that lived on Smith Fork Creek and around Lancaster.

David Taylor, Land Grant No. 2005; 1825, for two-hundred acres. This grant was on the upper end of the community, (Hayes Ridge), and was sold to Issac Hayes in 1847. Mr. Taylor had come from North Carolina in the early 1800's; first living in the Adam Dale settlement, (Liberty – Alexandria), then on Indian Creek (1820). He was the ancestor of the many Taylor families that lived on Indian Creek.

J. W. Gray owned part of the mid-section of this area. There is no other information on Mr. Gray other than that he sold his holdings to Fredrick Starnes in 1874.

Andrew Starnes, exact date of his arrival is not known, but thought around 1830 or 1840. He owned land on the west side of Long Branch near the river. His home was on a rise about two hundred yards from the river in front of the present home of Arvie Maynard. The land now belongs to Mr. Maynard. Mr. Starnes is the ancestor of the other Starnes families that lived in the community for many years.

Bennet Braswell owned land on the east side of the branch along the Caney Fork River. He came from Nashville, North Carolina, in 1823. It is believed that Mr. Braswell was the first land owner that built his home and lived out his life in the community.

At the time the first settlers arrived, Long Branch was part of Wilson County. As this part of the state became more populated, new counties were established and for a few years Long Branch was a part of Smith County. Then in 1838, DeKalb was established and Long Branch was part of it.

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Exactly how and when the community got its name is not known. Was it named for a person or because of its length? The first reference I find using the name Long Branch is on deeds written in 1838. A map of this part of the state made in 1832 shows near-by communities such as Wolf Creek, Indian Creek, and Lancaster, but shows an unnamed stream where Long Branch is. So it appears the community was named some time between 1832 and 1838.

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THE EARLY SETTLERS

With our present day conveniences it is hard to visualize what the first settlers faced when they arrived to this new community. Try to imagine several days travel in a covered wagon drawn by oxen. All of your possessions are on the wagon. There may be a cow hitched to the rear of the wagon and a coop of chickens strapped to the side. A dog follows nearby and one of your children is riding a horse. At last you reach your farm. This will be the first time for the wife and younger children to see the place. There is no house;

all you see is lots of trees. Away off, across the hills, you see smoke rising. This would be your closest neighbor. If you are lucky the neighbor will be less than a mile away.

The first thing you do is select a site and start building a cabin. Of all the places you would like to build, the one thing that will rule is the nearness of a spring. You try to make the log cutting serve two purposes; getting the logs and clearing some land for that first important crop. The neighbors from four or five miles away will help you with the cabin. If one of them is a stone cutter your chimney will be made of hand hewed, closely fitted limestone; if not, our chimney will be built of flat field stone clinked with clay mud.

After the four walls of the cabin are raised and roofed with hand-made shingles, you move in. The cabin will have a loft (attic) and this is where the children will sleep. At first all your cooking will be done on the open fire of the fireplace. It will be months before the cabin will have a wood floor and a room added on for a kitchen.

Most of your clothes will be made at home. The children will help with "carding wool," (everyone kept a few sheep). The wife will spin

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the wool "bats" into thread. She will then weave the thread into cloth that will be used to make sweaters, socks, pull-over caps, and shawls. A local cobbler will made the shoes from your own home-cured leather. The soles and heels will be attached with wood pegs. Dresses, shirts, and under-clothing will be made by the wife from cotton cloth bought on those few trips you made to some distant store. Your bedding will all be made at home, including the blankets. The mattress will be a large cotton cloth bag (tick), filled with straw or dry grass. Later as your flock of geese gets larger, you will have enough feathers to fill the ticks; then you will have a bed for some real cozy sleeping.

All members of the family work from daylight until dark. You are clearing land; building a barn; splitting rails; building fences, a chicken house and hog lot. Of all the farm animals, hogs are the best for adapting to this rough life. They will provide the family with year-round meat. They will also be your first salable product.

There is no church or school in the community. Bible reading, prayer meetings, and singing in the homes will be your only religious services. If there is a school in the community no more than five miles away, your oldest children will walk or ride a horse to attend. The school will be open during the three winter months. This is so the schooling will not keep the children away from work on the farm. Your children will go no further than the third grade. They should know their 3 R's by now; work is more important. Some of your children will not go to school at all. They will learn from you or the older children. Some will never learn to read or even write their names.

The nearest doctor is ten to fifteen miles away by horse trail. If you become bad sick someone will make the long ride after the doctor. If you are able to go see him, you don't need him. Meanwhile, you will

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receive a lot of home remedies. Luckily many of the home remedies will pull you through.

Your first year will be a rough one. There is very little money for buying the necessities. Much of your food will be wild berries, fruit, and nuts. Your meat will be what game you kill or what fish you catch. The neighbors will share some of their garden crops with you. Then at last, your own garden crops are ready for harvest. It has been a good year. You have enough food stored for your family and farm animals. You are well along with your buildings and fences. You are pleased with it all, but there is always that dreadful thought that a fire or sudden serious illness could wipe it all out. There is no insurance, Social Security, welfare, or any other aid programs. You are your own keeper. You may never consider what led you here in the first place; the fact is, you are of the pioneer spirit. You seek to be independent through your efforts. You are taking part in building the greatest country ever known.

The earliest known date of a settler to come to Long Branch is 1822 – 1823. This is when Mr. Bennet Braswell and his brother came to the area where the branch joins the Caney Fork River. They had come from Nashville, North Carolina. The brother (name unknown) was killed on a return trip to North Carolina. It is known a few others lived on Long Branch at that time but their names are not known. Bennet built a house near the river. The house was later moved to higher ground to avoid being flooded. Thirty yokes of oxen were used to pull the house. Logs were used as rollers to aid the moving. No doubt this was the first “house moving” on Long Branch. Bennet married Elizabeth Starnes, the daughter of Andrew Starnes.

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Bennet and his wife had one child, William Andrew, William lived all his life on Long Branch. He died in 1885 and is buried in the Braswell Cemetery. William was most likely the first buried there. Near this cemetery is where their home stood and where part of their property laid. William married Amanda Allen and they had eleven children.

The youngest of William’s children, Latta Lamon (Mr. Lat), retained part of the Braswell property and continued to live there until the 1930’s. The other children moved to other parts of Tennessee and a number of other states including Texas, Arkansas, and California. Mr. Lat married Mary Durham and they had four children. Mrs. Mary and two of their children, Mabel and Clarence, died in 1927-28. The other two, Ola May and Jolly, moved to Detroit.

When Mr. Lat sold his property in the 1930’s, he moved to Bowling Branch. He was the last of the Bennet Braswell descendants to own land on Long Branch. Mr. and Mrs. T. O. Braswell and two of their children remained in the community, but they are a different branch of the Brawell tree (more about the T. O. Braswell family later). William Braswell was known for his church work. He took part in the building of the first church (known as Hopewell Methodist Church) in the community. He enjoyed having people in for Sunday dinner. He would invite the whole congregation home for dinner week after week. This put a lot of work on his wife. After so long a time, she put a stop to it by insisting he would have to fix the Sunday dinner.

Mr. Issac Hayes (Ike Hayes) moved to the community in 1847. He purchased part of the David Taylor’s holdings on what is now known as Hayes Ridge, and this is still owned by the Hayes family. Mr. Issac married Elizabeth McGinnis and later Eliza Robinson. There were

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fifteen children in the Hayes family. Seven of them did quite young. His first wife died in 1852.

He lived on Indian Creek before moving to Hayes Ridge. The family had come from Alabama when Mr. Issac was a baby in the year 1810. At least one of Mr. Issac’s sons, named Richard, remained in the community on the Hayes’ property. One of his children, Leslie, married Nettie Anderson who lived in the valley below Hayes Ridge on what is now Carlas Trapp’s farm. Leslie and wife continued to live on Hayes Ridge, thus keeping the property in the Hayes family for over 125 years. This is the longest continued family ownership in the community. At one time, Mr. Issac owned as much as five hundred acres on the ridge but lost some of this at the end of the Civil War.

During the Civil War, a patrol of Confederate soldiers visited the Hayes’ farm. They came to Mr. Issac’s house and asked for food. While the officer were receiving the food, some of the troop raided the hen house. The officer gave the men a good tongue-lashing for this act. One of the men in this group was Jeff Braswell. This was his first visit to Long Branch; a few years later he would return here to live (more on Mr. Jeff later).

R. D. Hayes, one of Mr. Leslie’s children, now lives in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He visits Long Branch often and still owns part of the Hayes property. Mr. Leslie’s wife, Mrs. Nettie, still lives at the old home place.

Mr. Larkines Maynard was one of the early settlers (actual date of his arrival is not known). He had nine children. Three of these, Marshall, Bill, and Solomon, lived all their life in the community. Marshall and Solomon owned farms which still belong to some of their

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descendants. Another son, Noah, lived most of his life in the community. Actually he lived some of the time outside of the community, but was considered a Long Brancher.

Mr. Marshall and his wife Ida (Smith) had thirteen children and of these only Arvie W. (Hop) still lives in the community. He has been quite successful as a farmer and at one time was the largest land owner in the community. During the past few years as retirement age approached, he has sold much of his land but still owns the area where Long Branch joins the river.

Some of the other children of Mr. Marshall continued to live in the community after they were grown and married, but by 1945 they had moved away. The old Marshall place now belongs to one of his grandchildren. His children that lived in the community were Connie, Columbus, Clarence, Arlee, Ida, Pearl, Macey, Green, Sally and Becky.

Mr. Solomon and wife Martha (Reed) had six children; Charley, Emmer, Shield, Everett, Arthur, and Wylie. Everett, Arthur, and Wylie lived all their lives in the community. Mr. Arthur was a school teacher and Mr. Everett and Wylie were farmers and devoted fox hunters. I have listened to them for hours telling about a good fox chase. The way they would tell it you almost felt you were on the hunt with them. Mr. Everett owned a molasses mill and made many barrels of fine molasses. During molasses making time, he and his brother, Shield, did all the "cooking-off" of the molasses. They would go as much as two weeks without going to bed. They would just catch a cat nap on the "pummie pile," get up and go back to the cooking pan.

Charley and Shield lived in the community for several years. Shield moved to Bowling Branch around 1950.

Mr. Noah and his wife, Mary (Reed), had six children; none of them made their home in the community.

Mr. Bill and his wife, Sarah, (we could not get any information on their children); Mrs. Sarah was known for her work as a "grannie" in the community.

Mr. Larkines' descendants by far number the most for any family to live in the community. His children had the strong, sturdy type of characteristics necessary to survive in the rough early years. An example of this: one fall a big snow fell before the children had gotten their shoes for the winter. (all children went barefoot from early spring until late fall). One of the boys, Marshall, was chasing a cow through the snow when he stepped on a sharp stick hidden by the snow. The stick went clean through his foot. Most likely he didn't even go to a doctor. Such was the life during the early years.

The following is a list of Mr. Larkines' descendants and their families that lived here:

Note: In listing Mr. Larkines' descendants, I have mentioned only those families that made their home in the community at one time or another. I have had to do the same with all the different families discussed in this book. As much as I would liked to have listed everyone that ever lived in the community, I found it impossible to obtain accurate and complete information on those that moved away as young people.

Mr. and Mrs. Marshall's children:

Arvie W. "Hop" married Willie Braswell and they had nine children; Naomi, Keeble, Sally, Shirley, Marshall, Clifton, Gerald, Sybel & Barbara.

Connie married Melanie Apple; they had two children: Vernice and Margaret. Mr. Connie lived all his life in the community and owned

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a farm. Mr. Connie died at a fairly young age; his widow remarried and still lives in the community.

Clarence married Valma Coleman; they had two children: Loett and Billie Joe.

Columbus married Lorene Winfery and they had one girl. They moved to Davidson County several years ago.

Arlee married Helen Fisher and they had three children. They moved from the community in the late '30's.

Ida Pearl married Houston Hayes and they had no children. They moved from the community in the late '30's.

Macey Green married Harvey Clemons and they had two children. They moved from the community in the late '30's.

Sally married Walter Hughes and they had no children. They moved from the community in the early '30's.

Becky married Floyd Patterson and they had one child.

Mr. and Mrs. Solomon's children:

Everett married Molly Denny and they had seven children: Robert, John, Eddie Lee, Elmer, Alene (still lives in the community), Nadine, and Mildred.

Shield married Pearl Grissom and they had four children: Sanford, Reba, Virginia, and Eunice.

Arthur married Melanie Apple Maynard and they had two children: Jo Ann and Edward. Mr. Arthur served as a school teacher at a number of DeKalb County schools including Long Branch. He received his teacher's training at Lancaster High School and Tennessee Polytechnic Institute at Cookeville. During World War I, he saw combat in France

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and was in the thick of the fighting when peace was signed.

Wylie married Rhoda Crawford. She died in 1923; he later married Loreal Boyd and they had two children: Charline and Inez.

Emmer married Robert Moss; they never lived in the community.

Mr. Andrew Starnes:

We were unable to establish the exact year Mr. Andrew came to the community. We did find reference to him as early as 1830. He was the ancestor of the many Starnes families that lived in the community. One of Mr. Andrew's descendants, Charles, received a land grant for a section of land where the Center Hill Dam now stands. Charles operated a ferry boat (mule-powered) at the river near his farm. This ferry connected the communities of Long Branch and Wolf Creek (more about Mr. Charles' family later).

We don't have a complete record of Mr. Andrew's and wife, Sarah's descendants; but we do know that some of them remained in the community as late as 1968. We know they owned several pieces of property along Long Branch.

One of Mr. Andrew's daughters, Elizabeth, married Bennett Braswell, the first-known settler of the community. One of his sons, Fredrick, bought land in 1874 from J. W. Gray, one of the first land owners in the community. Mr. Andrew's wife sold a small farm to James Aldridge in 1884. Two years later, Mr. Aldridge sold this farm to Mr. Tom McClellan. The farm now belongs to Jimmy Whitmore.

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One of Mr. Fredrick's children, Jodie, was a life-long resident of the community. He was the father of J. T. (Tonie) who operated the Starnes store for many years. At one time, Mr. Fredrick lived in the cabin that stands near the old schoolhouse. One of his children, "Babe", was born in this cabin in 1854. This cabin, now over one hundred and twenty years old, is the oldest building in the community. It is being restored by my family and me. We have named the cabin, "The Survivor," and with luck it will be around for a few more years.

Mr. Andrew and his descendants were successful farmers and well-respected members of the community. The last of his descendants, J. T. (Tonie), moved out of the community in 1968.

Reubin Ballanger:

Mr. Ballanger owned a two-hundred acre farm near the Caney Fork River. He sold this farm to Mr. John Dunham in 1888. Mr. Ballanger was in the community for only a few years and we do not have any information on his family. He bought the farm in the early 1870's from T. W. "Tan" Fitts. Mr. Fitts was the big land owner and race horse man from Cove Hollow. At one time, he owned 1,200 acres along the Caney Fork and several famous race horses. He also owned a tan yard, therefore the nickname, "Tan". He obtained most of his land by grants. Due to heavy losses during the Civil War, bad management and as my grandfather would add "fooling with whiskey," Mr. Fitts was almost broke at the time of his death. When Mr. Ballanger sold his farm, he moved from the community. We have no other information on him after that date.

THE SURVIVOR – BUILT PRIOR TO 1850

THE GROWING YEARS

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Up to this point we have discussed only the very first settlers and their direct descendants. No doubt there were others that lived in the community before the Civil War but our research did not reveal any information on them.

The period from the end of the Civil War to 1910 seems to be the time of the greatest inflow of permanent residents. No doubt the general disruption of the war and the relatively low cost of land in the area influenced these new settlers to move in. By no means did they find a Garden of Eden. The community was still young; much of the land was still forest. Most of the homes were still being built of logs,

limestone and hand-made shingles. Rails were still the chief means of fencing and at least 90 per cent of food and fiber was produced on the farm. But they did find things somewhat easier than the first settlers.

By now the towns of Lancaster and Temperance Hall were well established. Cove Hollow, Indian Creek and Wolf Creek were growing communities. There was a wagon road connecting the community to the two towns. A steamboat made regular runs on the Caney Fork River, making a stop not far upstream from the mouth of Long Branch. A church had been built and school was held three months a year in the church house. These improvements and conveniences prevent the later settlers from being considered pioneers but they certainly rate the title of hardy frontiersmen.

The following are some of the families that lived in the community during the growing years. Some are descendants of the early settlers others moved here from different places.

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Henry Anderson:

Mr. Henry and his wife, Josephine (Exum), came to the community in 1888. they owned a farm a the head of Long Branch (now owned by C. Trapp). They had eight children: Roy, Lonetta, Milbra, Leonard, Allene, Troy, Homer and Margie. Roy married Ola Betty and they lived in the Lancaster area for many years. Lonetta (Nettie) married Leslie Hayes (see Hayes family). Milbra married Maisie Bellar and they had two children, Bill and Joe Kenneth. Leonard owned a general store in Lancaster for many years. Allene married Lennox Moss and they had four children. The other three children, Troy, Homer and Margie, died quite young. They are buried at the Braswell Cemetery.

Four of Mr. Henry's brothers followed him to the community; they were Jim, John, Nig and Will.

Jim and his wife, Amanda (Martin), moved here about 1900 and they had two children. He built the fine house that Tonie and Mattie Starnes lived in for many years.

John married Missouri Potter and they had one girl. He is best remembered for the incident involving a coffee can of gold that was stolen from his home during the early 30's.

Nig operated a store in Cove Hollow for many years. He is buried at the Braswell Cemetery.

Will lived in the community for a few years. One of his children, John and his wife, Lulla, owned a farm in the low gap at the head of Jackson Hollow. Their son, Raymond, was a school teacher at Long Branch in 1924. Raymond and his wife, Emmie, had three boys: Aaron, John and Grady. They owned the old Tom McClellan farm for several years. Aaron married Margaret Maynard and they presently reside in Nashville, where he is a supervisor for a State woodworking shop.

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Mr. Jeff Braswell:

Mr. Jeff moved to the community some time before 1870. He first lived in a log house that still stands on the old Denny farm. At first he rented or leased from the Fishers, then later bought the upper end of the hollow where he lived the rest of his life. He and his wife had three sons: T. O. (Oscar), Henry and Martin. Oscar and Martin made their homes on the old Braswell farm. Oscar lived there all his life and Martin for many years.

Although the evidence is somewhat questionable, it appears Mr. Jeff is a descendant of Sampson Braswell, who came to the Dry Creek area of DeKalb County in 1834. This belief is supported by the fact that Mr. Jeff was a member of the Civil War company formed in the Alexandria - - Woodberry area. Also, an 1850 county record shows a J. Braswell in this area. If in fact Mr. Jeff was a descendant of Sampson, then he

was of distant kin to Bennett Braswell (first known settler on Long Branch) although at the time they lived in the community they didn't believe they were related.

Mr. Jeff and family were the sturdy, hard-working type. They used good farming practices for that time, producing good yields in spite of numerous hardships. During the wet spring-dry summer of 1880, Mr. Jeff was one of the two farmers in the community to grow enough corn for seed the next year. He accomplished this feat by planting and working a field by hand between showers during the wet spring. This gave the corn a good growing start and the field produced about half the normal yield even though there was no rain from the end of May until September. The other farmers in the community had waited out the rainy season to plant their crops. With the exception of Mr. Everett Trapp, whose crops was planted along the branch, the other

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farmers didn't even make their seed back. You can bet these two men could have sold their corn for a high price but the report is they shared with their neighbors on a "pay it back when you can" basis.

Mr. Jeff's son, Oscar, married Etta Holly, daughter of John Holly, who lived on the ridge above the Braswell farm. Mr. Oscar and wife had five children: Mattie, Atta, Willie, Tonie, and Joe.

Mattie married Dillard Fisher and they had a four children: John, Bob, Virginia and Faye.

Atta married Sheal Hinsley and moved to Cartage, Tennessee. They had two children: Ruth and Howard.

Tonie died in 1931. He had lived all his life in the community.

Willie married Arvie Maynard (refer to Maynard family): she lived in the community for many years.

Joe married June Denny and they had two boys: Jimmy and Kenneth. They live on their farm near Lancaster, Tennessee. They are still considered Long Branchers.

As mentioned before Mr. Jeff was a Civil War soldier and made his first visit to Long Branch while on patrol with his company. He never talked much about his war experiences, indicating that it was probably a distasteful subject that he wished to forget.

Mr. Harrison Denny:

Mr. Harrison and wife, Betty, owned a farm near where the Starnes store stood (now belongs to K. R. Kruse). We could not determine the year Mr. Harrison came to the community but indications are that it was in the 1890's. Mr. Harrison was a first cousin of Mr. Wilson Denny, although they spelled their last names differently.

Mr. and Mrs. Harrison had four children to die at a young age (one to five years old). We don't know the cause of these early deaths. They are buried at the Braswell Cemetery, all listed on one tombstone.

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One of their children, Molly, married Everett Maynard. She lived most of her life in the community. Another of the children, Bob, retained possession of the farm and lived in the community until the late 1930's. He sold the farm to Spencer Trapp and moved to Wilson County.

Mr. Wilson Denny:

Mr. Wilson and wife, Elizabeth (Fisher), moved to the community in 1887. They bought a farm from J. D. Fisher in what is now known as Denny Hollow. They had three children: Herman, Ethel and the other child died as an infant.

Herman married Bessie Watts and they had five girls: Johnnie, Robbie, Millie, Joyce, and Wilberta. They lived in Buffalo Valley for many years. Herman died in 1971 at the age of 87.

Ethel married Ed holly (now deceased) and they owned a farm near Buffalo Valley. They had two girls, Ruby and Star. Ethel now lives in Love Valley.

Mr. Wilson's wife, Elizabeth, died shortly after they moved to Long Branch. Elizabeth's parents, the Fishers, took care of the two children until Mr. Wilson remarried a few years later. His second marriage was to Amanda Denny, (of Chestnut Mound Denny's). They had six children: Millie, Lawson, Doshie, Minnie, Dovie, and Grady. Millie died as a teen-age girl.

Lawson married Willie Lee Starnes. They lived in the community many years. They had three children: June, Donald and John. They now live in Lebanon, Tennessee.

Doshie married U. B. Adamson (now deceased), and now lies in Alexandria, Tennessee.

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Minnie married Troy Self (now deceased); they lived in the community for a few years. Minnie now lives in McMinnville, Tennessee. She has six children: Sam, Roy, Irene, Tommy, Jimmy, and Larry.

Dovie married Joncie Kelley. They have lived all their lives on Long Branch. They own two farms, the old Denny farm and the Billy Dunham farm. They have one girl, Betty Jean.

During the period between Mr. Wilson's first and second wife, he lived by himself on the farm. He wasn't much of a cook and felt he lived by himself on the farm. He wasn't much of a cook and felt he didn't have time to can and preserve vegetables and fruit for the winter. So he relied on vegetables that could be stored without much trouble. In his case, this was potatoes and cabbage. He used to tell the story of how he went through an entire winter and spring on potatoes, cabbage, and side meat.

Mr. Wilson was born on Bowling Branch, where he lived until about the age of twenty. He owned a small farm there which he sold in order to buy on Long Branch. It is not known where his parents were from. His first wife was born on Smith Fork Creek where her parents owned a farm. She was related to the many Fishers that lived in the area, some of which received land grants. This indicates they were ex-soldiers or associated with the state government in some way. His second wife was born in the Chestnut Mound area. I have heard her mention her parents came from Pennsylvania many years ago but no other information is known.

Mr. Wilson was a hard-working successful farmer. His most enjoyable pastime was discussing the Bible and current new items, especially national and state office holders. Although he could not read,

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he kept well informed on these subjects by having others read to him.

His day-to-day life was guided by the Bible and even though he was a victim of a number of dishonest acts his favorite saying was "honesty is the best policy." He dreaded the thought of becoming too old to work. After he reached the age of seventy-five, on each birthday he would go to the field and "chop out" a fence row just to show he was able to.

Mr. Wilson believed that whiskey was the root of all evil. He didn't hesitate to let his feelings be known about this. As a joke some of the men in the community would from time to time tell him they had spotted a still on the back part of his farm. I think he knew this was a joke but to satisfy himself he would walk over the entire wooded area of his farm to be sure there was no still.

Mr. W. A. (Billy) Dunham:

Mr. Bill came to the community 1887. His farm was along the branch near the present Methodist Church. He bought his farm from W. S. Braswell (Bennett Braswell descendant). He married Sally Hayes and they had one child, Mary. Mr. Billy lived out his life in the community and Mrs. Sally lived there until her last few months. They were both well liked, respected and devoted church members. Mr. Billy took a big part in the rebuilding of the church in 1904.

He was a well-informed farmer, making the best use of the materials at hand to conserve and improve his land. Some of these items, such as retaining walls, fences, and well-built log buildings are still evident.

Mr. Billy was another of the old timers whose life was guided by the Bible. He is well remembered for his continuous whistling of

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“Amazing Grace” while working in the field. I never knew him myself, but every time I hear “Amazing Grace” I picture him walking across a field whistling his favorite song.

Mr. Billy died in 1924 and Mrs. Sally in 1939. After her death, Grady Denny bought the farm. The old home was heavily damaged by tornado in 1956; Grady enlarged and rebuilt the old home and still lives there.

Mr. A. N. (John) Durham:

Mr. John was a brother of Mr. Billy. He came to the community in 1888 and bought a two hundred and five acre farm from Reuben Ballanger. He later added to this farm with land he bought from J. Pritchard. His first wife was Martha Jane and they had seven children: Alex, Mose, Fannie, Bertha, Albert, Hettie, and Cordie.

Alex married Maidie McBride and they had seven children: Johnny, Willadean, J. D., James Edward, Billy, Carlene, and Junior. They made their home in the community for many years. Mr. Alex lived here until his death in 1933.

Mr. Mose moved out of the community as a young man; later two of his sons, Othel and Ray, lived here for a short time.

Mrs. Hettie married Charlie Hale and they lived in the community until 1941. They were moved out by the Center Hill Dam. They had four children: Jay Lloyd, Mary Hester, Charline, and Ruby.

Mr. Albert lived in the community for many years. He married Winnie Jackson and they had six children: Thelma, Lorene, Heddie, Neil, Kenneth, and Geneva.

Mrs. Bertha married Lenny Hale and they made their home in the Wolf Creek area.

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Mrs. Fannie married Floyd Trusty. They never made their home in the community. One of their children, T. J., lived here a few years during the Center Hill Dam construction period.

Mr. John's first wife died in 1928. He later married Miss Cora McClellan and they had no children. The marriage of Mr. John and Miss Cora was probably the biggest wedding ever on Long Branch. It was a big church affair with about everyone in the community attending. They talked about this for years.

Mr. John was one of the more prosperous farmers in the community. Much of his land laid along the river. Each winter heavy rainfall would cause the river to rise and cover the low land. Silt, in the muddy river

water, would settle on the land replacing the nutrients consumed by the previous crop. This was important in the days before commercial fertilizer was available. Also crops on the low land were not hurt so badly in case of a dry summer.

These factors allowed Mr. John to grow a large corn crop year after year. Much of this corn was sold to the grainery at Lancaster. It was hauled there by wagons pulled by mules. There would be four or five wagons used during the height of the corn harvest. This was a memorable thing to see – the heavy loaded wagons being pulled by the big mule teams, moving the grain to market.

The coming of the dam builders brought a stop to most of Mr. John's farming activities, as much of his land was being used in one way or another by the construction project. A large part of the work was going on right in his "front door." Although Mr. John didn't openly complain about his way of life being so drastically changed, I feel that secretly he suffered a lot of heart aches. We must consider

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that for over fifty years he had lived in this peaceful river valley, pursuing a way of life that had been good to him. Then, suddenly, he was asked to give it up in the name of progress. I am not saying he was not fairly compensated for his property. What I am suggesting is at this stage of his life no amount of money could compensate for his personal sacrifices.

His favorite by-word was "Si." If he wanted to put extra emphasis on a point he would use the term, "Si-by-gonnies." How he came to use this by-word I don't know. And as yet I have never heard anyone else use it.

Mr. John died in 1952 and was buried at the Braswell Cemetery. Shortly after his death all of his property, except his home and seventy-eight acres, were sold. The buyers were A. W. Maynard and Odell Starnes. Both men built homes on the land and now live there. The home place was retained by his wife, Mrs. Cora, until her death in 1973. This property was sold to one of Mr. John's grandchildren, Mr. Kenneth Hale.

Mr. John Holly:

Mr. John Holly lived on the west ridge above the Jeff Braswell place on what was later known as the "Connie Maynard place" (now owned by J. Whitmore). Much of the information on Mr. Holly is unknown. Indications are that he came to the community in the 1870 –

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1880 period.

One of his sons, William, by his first marriage (wife's name unknown) has the unique distinction of being the last Long Brancher to be involved with the Indians. William was captured and held by the Indians for seven years. During this period he gained the confidence of his captors to where they would let him move about their camp without a guard. With this freedom of movement, he began to lay plans for an escape. He hid bits of food and clothing along the boundary of the camp. At last he was ready to make a run for freedom. His escape was discovered by the Indians minutes after he started and the chase was on. His pursuers got close enough to shoot holes through his hat brim as he crossed a river into "white country" and safety. His return home was quite a surprise as he had been given up for dead long before.

Mr. John's daughter, Etta (by his second wife, name unknown), married T. O. Braswell. She lived out her life in the community.

Mr. John was a shoe cobbler. He practiced this trade before metal tacks and thread were used for shoe making. He used wood pegs, which were whittled out by hand, to connect the soles and heels to the uppers.

Mr. John apparently had a touch of wanderlust, as he and his wife would bundle up a few things, close up the house and be gone for several weeks. Where they went and with whom they stayed is unknown. They probably spent their nights at whatever home they happen to be at when night came. Most likely he repaired the shoes of the family in return for a night's lodging. Maybe this wasn't a bad way to see the country in those days of limited travel.

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Mr. William Joe Holly:

Mr. Joe came to the community in 1875. At that time he bought a farm from J. A. Starnes. This farm lay southeast of the old school house. A few years later he bought property of H. C. Terry that lies on the west side of Long Branch next to the present church property. Actually the present church property was part of the old Terry farm. When the church was being rebuilt in 1902, Mr. Joe traded this piece of land for the land the church was formerly on (from church deed, 1902). This trade was very beneficial to the church as its former location (the level ground along the branch in front of the present church) was subject to flooding.

Mr. Joe moved into the large, new house built by Mr. Terry. This is where he lived the many years he remained in the community. Mr. Joe and wife, Parrot Dunham, had one child, Ernest. Ernest married Johnnie Jackson and they had four children, Ernestine, Joe, Wilma, and Ruth.

Mr. Joe and Mrs. Parrot were highly respected Christian people. In fact Mr. Joe was a minister and was known to many people as Reverend Holly. He was never the regular pastor of Long Branch Church but was one of its strongest supporters and served as one of the trustee during the rebuilding period. He donated heavily to the construction fund of Baxter Seminary, which at that time was training many of the Methodist preachers for this area.

Mr. Joe was a successful farmer and later owned a store at Temperance Hall and one at Watertown. He was the victim of a dishonest land deal that would have left him broke if justice had not been achieved. This involved buying a farm covered with Johnson grass. In the days before modern herbicides a farm heavily infested with Johnson

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Clarence lived in Akron for many years; after retirement he returned to the old Jackson place where he and his wife, Mary, live.

Elmer lived in Detroit and Nashville until his retirement. He then built a fine home on Hayes Ridge where he and his wife, Marie, live.

The Jackson family was highly respected, helpful, and very successful. Mr. and Mrs. Jackson were active church members and a moving force in the growth of the church. Mr. Wilson did in 1932, and Mrs. Susie in 1960. Both are buried at the Braswell Cemetery.

Mr. Lee Jones:

Mr. Lee and wife (name unknown) came to the community in 1880. They came here from Illinois in a covered wagon. What prompted them to move here from such a great distance is unknown. They located on a farm which is the present location of Center Hill Dam.

They had one child, Mary, and she married Tim Malone. Tim and Mary had one child, Bonnie. She married John Fish and they made their home in the community. Mrs. Fish owns the old Holly place where she still resides.

Mr. Lee was a successful farmer and remained in the community for many years. He apparently loved to travel as he made a return trip to Illinois and back by covered wagon.

Mr. Lee's brother, Sonny Jones, came to the community shortly after Mr. Lee Arrived. He bought the farm that now belongs to Mrs. Wilson Trapp. Before Mr. Trapp bought this farm, it belonged to ne of Mr. Sonny's children, Bill Jones.

Mr. Tom McClellan:

We found no information on where Mr. Tom lived before he came to Long Branch. There are McClellans listed among the early settlers of Monticello (now Cookeville). Perhaps this is where he came from. The exact year of his arrival is not known but we have reference of his being here in the 1880's. His farm was located in the lower part of the community. It was bounded by the W. Braswell and J. Fisher farms. He and his wife, Tinnie (Bates), had seven children: Henson, Haskel, Shelton, Roy, Pearlie, Cora, and Lora.

Henson, Shelton, and Haskel moved from the area as young men. Haskel returned for a short time during the construction of Center Hill Dam. He and his family lived in the old Lat Braswell home. They operated a small store while living there.

Roy lived in the community until 1945 at which time he moved to a farm at the head of Cove Hollow. He had bought the old McClellan farm after his father's death in 1943. He married Novella Fitts and they had one son, Howard. During World War I, Roy saw combat in France and was on the front when peace was made.

Miss Pearlie moved to Cookeville after her marriage to Fount Smith. They had four children.

Miss Cora lived in the community until her last few years. She married John Dunham (see section on Mr. Dunham) and they had no children.

Lora married Mont Winnard and they had one son, Aubery. Lora and her husband never lived in the community. Aubery returned to the community as a young man and married Nadean Maynard. Aubery was an active church member and worked on the Center Hill Dam project. Later he moved to Nashville.

Mr. Tom was a jolly, easy-going type of man. He was an excellent gardener and always had the earliest and largest vegetables in the community. He enjoyed visiting his neighbors and was said to time his

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visits to be there at meal time. Everyone enjoyed his visits as he usually had the latest news.

His favorite pastime was talking polities. Without a doubt, he was the community's most enthusiastic political follower. He kept well informed on the current office holders and candidates. He was a strong Democrat. His sons were Republicans, so you can imagine the lively discussions that took place inthis family.

Mr. Bill Malone:

Mr. Bill and wife owned a farm in the Tim Starnes Hollow. They had two boys: Ben Hooper and Frank and one girl, Jessie Mae. Ben died as a young man. Frank lived in the community for many years and still owns the Malone farm. He moved to Detroit in the early '50's and later moved to Indiana where she now resides.

Frank has always been an enthusiastic hunter and usually has some hunting dogs. He visits the community often. I would guess he is keeping the farm as a place for retirement.

Jessie Mae married Raymond Crawford, (see Crawford family). Hill Dam project during the first years. His favorite pastime was to visit the Starnes store and discuss the current news. Mr. and Mrs. Malone were liked and always extended a friendly welcome when you paid them a visit.

Mr. "Scott" Malone:

Mr. "Scott" and his wife lived on the east ridge where the road turnoff for Cove Hollow. In fact most of their property laid on the Cove Hollow side of the ridge. Mr. Malone, though a farmer, was

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better known for his ability to catch fish. People that didn't have time or couldn't catch fish could rely on "Scoot" to supply them. One of the children, James, was a school teacher at Long Branch in 1946. After the building of the Center Hill Dam they sold their property. It is now the site of a number of resort homes.

Mr. Billy Nixon:

For a few years, during the late 1800's, Mr. Nixon lived in the cabin that now stands near the old school house. Although he never owned any land in the community, he did own a number of fine farms along the Caney Fork river before the building of the Center Hill Dam. He moved to Cove Hollow about 1895.

Mr. P. D. Phillips:

Mr. Phillips came to the community in the early 1900's. He bought a farm in what is now known as the Phillips Hollow (now belongs to Gordon Fish). He build a fine home on this farm and for a while appeared to be well satisfied. But after a few years he returned to his former business as a furniture dealer in Nashville. He kept the farm for a few more years, renting it to different people. In 1941 he sold the farm to Joe Braswell.

Mr. Joe Presley:

Mr. Presley and wife lived for many years in a small house located on the east ridge near the head of Long Branch. They had three children: Mary, Henry, and Hessie. None of the children made their home in the community.

Mr. Presley was a very accommodating and helpful man. He was quite

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skilled as a carpenter and brick layer. He worked on many of the homes in the community.

No one remembers exactly when Mr. Joe came to Long Branch but everyone agrees it was many years ago. He never accumulated very much personal property but he had an abundance of friends. Mr. Joe moved to Temperance Hall in the early 1930's. After the death of his first wife, Ida, he married Miss Shellie Bates.

Mr. John Reed:

Mr. Reed and his wife, Sally, moved to the community in the late 1800's. Mr. John was a cobbler and was affectionately known as "Shoemaker Reed." They had four children: Martha, Mary, George, and Fredick "Fed." All of the children, except George, remained in the community. The two girls married borthers, Solomon and Noah Maynard, (see section on Maynard).

Mr. John Reed:

Mr. Reed and his wife, Sally, moved to the community in the late 1800's. Mr. John was a cobbler and was affectionately known as "Shoemaker Reed." They had four children: Martha, Mary, George, and Fredrick

"Fed." All of the children, except George, remained in the community. The two girls married brothers, Solomon and Noah Maynard, (see section on Maynard).

Fed remained a bachelor and lived an unique and independent life. His home was located near the branch at about the mid-point of the community. He never had a telephone, electricity or a car. Until he was about sixty years old he had never been more than twenty-five miles from Long Branch. He had the opportunity many times to make a trip with Tonie Starnes but would pass them up. Finally he made one trip with Tonie Starnes but would pass them up. Finally he made one trip with Tonie to Nashville. This earned him an interview by the Smithville Review newspaper. He was quite pleased with the article written about him, although I don't think he was enthused with the trip as he never had a desire to go back again.

Fed was skilled as a carpenter and brick layer. He also repaired shoes and fixed clocks and watches. He would lend a helping hand to anyone that needed it and many people did call on him.

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He lived by himself until he was about eighty, then he became quite feeble and arrangements were made at the county nursing home for his care. He stayed at the home a few weeks then took a taxi back to Long Branch. When he got back home he vowed he would stay back to Long Branch. When he got back home he vowed he would stay there for the rest of his life, and he did just that. As he became there for the rest of his life, and he did just that. As he became too feeble to care for himself the people of the community took turns checking on him and helping out. No attempt was made to get Fed to leave his home again and this is where he remained until his death in 1951.

George and his wife, Flora, never made their home in the community. We don't have much information on them other than both of them and one of their children are buried at the Braswell Cemetery.

Mr. John Fish:

Mr. John came to the community from Hanners Branch as a young man in the early 1900's. He married Bonnie Malone and they had four children: Gordon, Juanita, Joyce, and Jimneva.

Gordon married Allene Maynard. They presently reside at their home near the Long Branch Church and are very active in the affairs of the church. They had one child, a girl, Ruthene.

Juanita married Jamie Winfrey and they now live in Wilson County.

Joyce married Ewin Trusty. They lived in the community for several years. They owned the old Tom McClellan farm and had three children: Faye, Larry, and Sue. They were very active in the church while living here.

Jimneva married Bill Self and they have two children. They lived in the community only a short time after their marriage and now reside in Lancaster, Tennessee.

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Mr. Fish was a farmer and construction worker. He was a well respected Christian man. After his death, Mrs. Fish continued to live at their home near the Long Branch Church (the old Holly place). Mrs. Fish is the community reporter for the Smithville Review.

Mr. J. B. Scripps:

We have no information on Mr. Scripps' family. The only thing we could learn about him was that he lived in the community in the late 1800's. He was also a trustee of the Methodist Church in 1902.

Mr. Charles Starnes:

As mentioned before, Charles was a descendant of Andrew Starnes. Charles and his wife, Nancy, had five children; J. M. (Jerry), B. J., U. J., T. W., and Amanda.

J. M. was a trustee of the Methodist Church during the rebuilding years of 1902-04.

Amanda married W. J. Isbell; we could not find any more information on them.

Mr. Charles' farm was located where the Center Hill Dam is presently located. He donated the land for the Starnes Cemetery in 1890. The deed for the cemetery contains some interesting stipulations. It states that anyone may be buried in the cemetery except members of the Latter day Saint faith; and if need arises, a schoolhouse may be erected on the property for the educating of white children only. Between the time Mr. Charles prepared this deed and before the official transfer could be made, he died. This caused a need for the deed to be probated and therefore all of Mr. Charles' heirs had to sign it. Most

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likely Mr. Charles was the first to be buried at this cemetery. It remained open to the public until 1941 when all the graves were moved to make way for the dam building. The graves were moved to Mount Holly Cemetery near Smithville.

The farm of Mr. Charles was retained by the Starnes family (Tim and Oscar) until 1941 when the property was taken for the dam construction.

Much of the farm Mr. Tim owned consisted of fine river bottoms, well adapted for growing abundant corn crops. One of his girls, Eula, married Spencer Trapp and they lived in the community for many years. Mr. Tim's son, Curtis, died about 1950 while living in Detroit.

The farm Mr. Oscar owned was the huge cove just west of the Center Hill Dam known as Starnes Hollow. He build a fine home on the bluff near the road. This bluff was later the site of stone quarry, thus destroying this fine old home.

Mr. Oscar's son, J. B., married Cathleen Trapp and they lived in the community for some time then moved to Lebanon where they now reside. Mr. Oscar was an active businessman and lawyer. He used advanced farming techniques and was successful with his farming activities.

We were unable to find any information on the other descendants of Charles Starnes.

With reference to Mr. Andrew Starnes' descendants we have more information on Mr. Jodie than any of the others. We know that Frederick, J. A., Frank, J. D., Luther, Doss and Robert were descendants of his and owned land or lived in the community at one time or another. Other than Mr. Jodie and Robert, we know very little about them. We do know that Mr. Doss lived in the community at one time and his

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daughter, Willie Lee, married Lawson Denny.

Mr. Doss had the distinction of being the only Long Brancher to move his household possessions by boat. This took place during the spring of 1929. At that time Mr. Doss was living in a house near the spring of 1929. At that time Mr. Doss was living in a house near the Braswell Cemetery. He had already made plans to move to a farm on the other side of the river, but on March 9th the river reached a record flood stage. Mr. Doss could see the flood waters were almost to the house he planned to move to; likewise, the water was near the house we lived in. There was a ferry boat that had been moved inland as the water rose and was tied up near his home. He obtained permission to use the boat, put all his furniture, tools, a cow and some chickens aboard, then steered the boat across the river to the house he was moving into.

Mr. Jodie and wife lived all their lives in the community. Their home was near the Starnes store (now belongs to the Weavers). They had six children: J. T. (Tonie), Pearl, Elsie, Buster, Alvin, and Berthie.

J. T. married Mattie Trapp and they lived in the community for many years. They owned and operated the Starnes' store (see chapter on stores in community). In addition to the store, they owned three farms. J. T. was the Justice of the Peace for many years. They didn't have any children but every child in the community considered them their best friend.

Pearl married Simon Rush and they had two children: Clara Mae and Robert. Clara Mae never lived in the community after her marriage. Robert (Bob) is probably as well known far and wide as anyone from the community. He has traveled quite a bit and makes lots of friends where ever he goes. In his younger days he was somewhat of a 'Steve

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McQueen'- type man. He liked motorcycles, fast cars, and didn't take life very serious. He always has been a lover of horses, likes to horse trade, and is good at training them. He came home from World War II as the community's most decorated soldier, having made a number of trips from battlefield to hospital and back. Bad health has restricted Bob's activities considerably. He now lives in Detroit where he owns and looks after a number of rental properties.

Elsie, Buster, Alvin and Berthie never lived in the community after marriage. As young people they were well liked and very much a part of the social activities at that time.

Mr. Jodie and wife were well liked and respected. I don't believe they ever said an unkind word about anyone. Mr. Jodie was best known for his many years as a clerk in the Starnes' store. He had a friendly greeting for everyone; you could tell he enjoyed his work. In fact, I doubt if he ever thought of his job as work but more of a means of keeping in touch with the people of the community.

When Tonie and Mattie sold their property in 1968, they were the last of the Andrew Starnes' descendants that were residents of the community; thus ending a family line that went back more than 125 years.

Mr. H. C. Terry: ***(Harriet Caroline Turner Terry widow of William Franklin Terry).**

Mr. Terry married Tinnie Braswell (daughter of William A. Braswell) and they had one child, a girl, and she married C. L. Fisher. She is now living at Green Brier, Tennessee. Mr. Terry bought a farm from Thomas Fisher, (Thomas Fisher, land grant No. 4609 – 1836) in 1875. This is the farm presently owned by Mrs. John Fish.

Mr. Terry built a fine home on the property; this home is still in good shape and in use. He lived in the community only a short time and sold his home to Mr. William Holly in 1878. He then moved to Temperance Hall where he owned and operated a store for many years. He was a favorite merchant of the people on Long Branch and was known for his honesty and fair-dealing.

***Letter received from Leota Mac Trapp Bennett on 8 March 2011 to Audrey J. Lambert regarding corrections to the story about Mr. H. C. Terry written by Sam Denny.**

So far there are a few grave errors in regards to my family.

In your story about Long Branch you will find that H.C. Terry bought land and that Mr. H C Terry built a fine house. And then he married Tennessee Braswell.

H. C. Terry is in fact Harriet Caroline Turner Terry widow of William Franklin Terry (who died at Chickamauga September 1863). When her home in Smith County, TN burned, She built a new house for her family on Long Branch.

It was her son Thomas Terry who was married first Tennessee "Bettie" "Tenniel" Braswell and had Winnie Mason, Willie Lee and William Ernest Terry. Willie Lee Terry is the one who married Charles L Fisher. Thomas Terry married second, to Kathleen Washer and had Bonne Mae, Alva, and Allie Jim Terry. Thomas Terry did built a second house in the Long Branch area where he and his family lived and later moved to Temperance Hall.

H. C. Terry's daughter Martha Caroline Terry was Richard McGinnis "Mack" Trapp's second wife and my great-grandmother.

Please make correction notes to your story regarding these people.

Thank you.

Leota Mac Trapp Bennett

Mr. Everett Trapp:

Mr. Everett and wife, Sara Hayes, came to the community from Indian Creek. His parents came to Indian Creek from North Carolina. We do not know the exact year he moved to the community but we do know he was here in 1880. There were eight children in Mr. Everett's family. The children were Ocia, Wilson, Spencer, Eules, Mattie, Carlas, Cathleen, and Bonnie.

Ocia married Lon Watson and they never made their home in the community. Mrs. Ocie is now ninety-plus years old and resides in the McMinnville area.

Wilson lived most of his life in the community and owned the old Sonny Jones' place. He and his wife, Julie, had one child, Athlene. She married J.B. Starnes and live in Lebanon, Tennessee. Wilson believed in retaining the old way of life. He did not have his home connected for electricity or phone service. He never owned a car or worked for a public employer. This way of life must have been good for him as he was very active until his death, doing such things as riding a mule and looking after his cattle. For an eighty-six year old person this was quite a feat. After his death in 1973, Mrs. Julie moved to Lebanon to live with her daughter.

Spencer and wife, Eula (Starnes), lived in the community for many years. They owned a farm not far from the Starnes; store, known as the "Bob Denney place." They had one child, Jerry. Spencer was a farmer and worker for several years on the Center Hill Dam project. He would often help his father with his veterinarian practice and became quite skillful at caring for animals. In 1949 he bought a fine farm near Brush Creek where he still resides.

Eules married Thelma Dunham and they have three children: Harold, Len, and Larry. At first they made their home in the community but have lived in Oak Ridge, Tennessee for many years.

Carlas and wife, Dorthy, still live in the community. Their farm is at the head of Long Branch. This farm was owned by Mr. Everett at the time of his death and was formerly owned by Henry Anderson. After several years on construction work, Carlas is now engaged in farming.

Mattie now lives in Smithville but for many years she and her husband, Tonie Starnes, operated a store in the community (see Starnes family). Mattie is by far the most knowledgeable on the community's history. Her many years at the store brought her in contact with everyone quite often. She can recall something about all the families that lived there. She has been a big help in supplying information.

Cathleen married Buster Starnes and they had four children. They moved to Detroit several years ago where they presently reside.

Bonnie married Lester Wilkerson (deceased) and they had three children. Bonnie now lives in Smithville.

Mr. Everett was a colorful type of man; he always had a cheerful hello and was known far and wide. He is best remembered for his work as a veterinarian. He had a natural gift for treating sick or injured animals. He kept well read on the subject of animal care and his saddle bags contained the latest in medicines for livestock treatment.

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He always kept a couple of fine horses that he used in making his rounds. He was available day or night to those that needed him in all the surrounding communities.

Before he bought his farm, Mr. Everett was said to have lived on about half the farms in the community. He would joke about this, saying that a person should move every two or three years to shake the soot out of the stove and to air the feather beds.

He was one of the two farmers to produce any corn during the wet spring-dry summer of 1880. It is said he furnished the seed corn for the entire community the following spring.

Mr. Everett was the only veterinarian to live in the community. After his death, the people started using the veterinarians from the nearby towns. When called, they would show up in their nice shiny, radio-equipped, pick-ups. They would have a box full of instruments and inoculation equipment (every sick animal needs a shot of some kind). These men are well trained and can tell what the trouble is in a matter of minutes but somehow they don't seem to be as successful in finding a cure as Mr. Everett did when he rode up on his horse with his two sale bags.

Mr. James Williams:

The only information we have on Mr. Williams is that he owned a farm near the lower part of the community in 1889. He later sold this farm to Mr. Marshall Maynard. It appears Mr. Williams' family was the first to live on this farm. Mr. Williams was a trustee of the Methodist Church in 1902. Apparently he was a well-respected man.

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Mr. H. S. (Henry) Winfrey:

Mr. Henry lived in the community during the turn of the century. He was a trustee of the Methodist Church in 1904 indicating he was a well-respected Christian man. Two of his children, Sidney and Robert, owned a farms and remained in the community for many years.

Mr. Sidney and his wife, Eara (Driver), had six children: Dathony, Rosa Nell, Jamie, Blakie, Woodrow and Lucas. This family moved to Smithville in 1928. Mr. Sidney was determined that his children would have better educational opportunities than were available in rural communities at that time. All of his children made use of this opportunity; two of them, Dathony and Lucas, entered the teaching profession and have made a rich contribution to DeKalb County education. The others entered different businesses and have been successful.

Mr. Robert and wife, Minnie (Winnard), had eight children: Athlene, Jamie, Auburn, Nelson, Ruth, Jack, H. L. and Jewel. The Winfrey children were well liked and all good in school sports, especially ball playing. It was a pleasure to visit the Winfrey home. They sure knew how to make you feel welcome. I believe every youngster in the community cried when this family moved to Wilson County in 1941.

Jamie was the only one of the children to make his home here after marriage. He and his wife, Juanita (Fish), lived here a short time before moving to Wilson County where they presently reside.

Mr. Frank Wright:

Mr. Wright owned a farm on the south side of Denny Hollow. He bought this farm from J. D. Fisher in the 1880's (now belongs to J. Whitmore). He lived here for several years but we do not know when he died or where he is buried. One of his children, Elrisne, lived here for many years and is buried at the Braswell Cemetery.

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Thus far we have dealt with the founding families and those families that came during the growing years. This chapter will cover the families that here a few years but were very much a part of the community during their stay.

Mr. Ardell Adams:

Ardell and wife, Dolly (Kelley), lived here for a few years during the '30's. By trade, Ardell was a railroad man but during his stay in the community he was a farmer and timber cutter. They had four children: Joe, Edward, Peggy and Robert Dell. Ardell and Dolly were well liked and accommodating. During the building of the Center Hill Dam project, Ardell worked as a labor foreman. After the Dam project was complete he returned to the Tennessee Central Railroad. There he served as Section Supervisor until his retirement. At the time of his death they were living in Lebanon. Dolly and the children still visit the community quite often.

Mr. Bea Coleman: Mr. Ben and his wife, Ida, lived in the community during the '30's; they had lived in nearby communities for many years so they were well known by Long Branchers before moving here. They had five children: Ava, Arie, Louvada, Velma and J. C.

Ava and Velma now live in the Nashville area. Ava married Hubert Presley and Velma married Clarence Maynard.

Louvada married Arthur Bates and they lived in Old Hickory for many years, then moved to Detroit.

J. C. lived in Old Hickory during the '40's but we have no recent account of where he now lives nor could we get any information on Arie.

Mr. and Mrs. Coleman were the most hospitable and friendly people you could find anywhere. Everyone enjoyed their visits and enjoyed visiting them. Mr. Coleman loved to play checkers; he would stay up half the night playing the game and usually beating all his opponents. Mrs. Coleman was a "grannie" and also was very helpful when there was sickness in a family.

They moved from the community in 1940. It was a sad day for their friends and neighbors. We knew they were gone for good and we had lost a most congenial family.

Mr. Raymond Crawford:

Raymond and wife, Jessie Mae (Malone), lived here during the early '40's. They lived on the old Billy Dunham farm. Raymond was a farmer and construction worker. I believe they moved from the area to another job when the Center Hill project was completed. They had four children: Virginia, Macon, and Don Hooper. The Crawford family was well liked and active in community affairs.

Mr. Robert Starnes:

Mr. Robert is a descendant of Andrew Starnes. He lived most of his life in Lancaster and Baxter areas but for a few years he lived on Long Branch at the old Billy Dunham place.

He and his wife, Dolly, had eight children: R. D., Gereva, Robbie, Mary Sue, Bill, Jack, Jerry, and Doyle. They were probably the most industrious family ever to live in the community. By the term industrious, I mean they seemed to be working toward a well-laid plan

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for a successful future and at the same time were enjoying a full and happy life. Mr. and Mrs. Starnes suffered a number of financial setbacks during their early married life. They seemed to look upon these setbacks as temporary things and maintained an optimistic outlook. They urged their children to obtain a good education and taught them to develop a positive outlook.

R. D. worked as a construction foreman for a few years after high school. He then entered college as a dental student and is now a successful dentist in Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

Bill entered the ministry after high school. At one time he was a pastor of the Long Branch Methodist Church. Later he served as a missionary in Africa. He had held a number of high positions with the United Methodist Church and is now president of Martin College.

Mary Sue was an excellent student in high school and college. She entered the teaching profession after graduation and taught at Gordonsville for while. She and her husband now live at Lebanon.

Jack worked as a machinist for a few years and is now a supervisor of a machine shop in the Detroit area.

We were unable to learn the details of the other children. We feel sure what ever field they chose, they were successful at it.

Mr. Robert was a farmer and an excellent hostess and could brighten anyone's day that paid her a visit. When the children were living at home there seemed to always be some kind of enjoyable activity going on. This family, indeed, left a memorable impression the few years they lived here.

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THE PERIOD OF CHANGE

For the most part the community remained about the same until 1940. But still there had been many improvements since the first settlers arrived. There was a church, a school, a store, and a number of large well-built homes. Large frame barns set within well-fenced farms. Communication and travel had improved. There was a telephone line in the community and at least four people owned cars or pick-ups. So you could at least get to a doctor or he could get to you within a two or three hour period. But basically things were about the same.

There were forty to fifty families living in the community, farming the land as their parents had. The roads were no more than rocky, rutted lanes that became impossible to travel in periods of heavy rain. There was talk of an electric line but this didn't come until ten years later. Every home had a radio that brought in the news and the "Grand Ole Opry." But other than that, people entertained themselves about the same as in the years past. A few men had went to large cities from time to time to work but in the community most "paying" jobs were logging, fencing, helping someone farm, and such. The going rate was one dollar per day and in some cases as high as two dollars.

Then suddenly, change was upon us. For years there had been talk of building the Center Hill Dam on the property of Mr. John Dunham and Mr. Tim Starnes. No one took this seriously until the Corp of Engineers showed up with their core-drilling equipment. They hired local men to help with the core drilling, test pit diggings, and land clearing. The rate of pay was fifty cents per hour; the weekly check after deductions was \$18.75. For the first time men who had been share-croppers or farm hands had extra money to spend. There was a

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sparkle in their eyes and a spring in their walk as they went about buying much needed items for their families.

Still there were those that thought this was a short-time thing, that the tests would prove negative and the dam would never be built. All doubt was removed when the first train load of construction equipment was parked on the rail siding at Lancaster. People came from all the surrounding communities to see the strange machines.

Excitement was running high; the dam was in fact going to be built. The road that ran along the river to the dam site was too narrow for the huge machines, so they had to travel up Smith Fork Creek, over the ridge, and down Long Branch. This had to be the most exciting day ever for the students at Long Branch School. As the convoy of machines approached the school, the teacher dismissed classes so we could stand by the road and watch the action.

The drivers of the machines decided to take a lunch break, so they parked the equipment near the school. This gave the students a chance to walk around the equipment and get a good look. To a lot of us that had never seen a machine larger than a wheat thresher, this was indeed quite a sight. Wheels as high as a man's head; engines that roared like thunder; and an acetylene cutting torch. The truck that was hauling the acetylene rig and some large iron bars aboard. For some reason the driver of the truck decided he needed to cut one of the bars. I am sure that this was for the entertainment of the kids. He selected a bar about the size of a 2 by 4. He lit the torch and in about 10 seconds had sliced the huge bar apart. We had seen it, but couldn't believe it. To us the only way to cut an iron bar was with a hack saw and lots of elbow grease.

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With the equipment, came lots of new people. The community took on a "boom" town atmosphere. Every available house and extra room was rented and many families took in boarders. An entire village including two restaurants, a trailer park, bachelor quarters and about fifty family houses sprang up along the road near Mr. Dunham's. A two lane, hard-surface road (the first in this area) was built from the dam to Lancaster. The Long Branch Road had more traffic each day than it previously would have had in a year. With many of the men of the community working on the dam, a marked change in farming practices took place. Many farms that were normally planted in corn and wheat were turned into pasture land; others reduced their farming activities to growing a tobacco patch and garden. Life style in the community was changing.

The dam was not completed until 1949 due to a delay caused by the second World War. Many men of the community went into military service. Many families moved to be near defense jobs. Lots of men developed construction skills and moved on to other jobs when the dam project was completed. By 1950 only about half the families remained on Long Branch that lived there ten years earlier.

The community soon returned to its familiar, easy-going pace, but some things would never be the same. The community went into military service. Many families moved to near defense jobs. Lots of men developed construction skills and moved on to other jobs when the dam project was completed. By 1950 only about half the families remained on Long Branch that lived there ten years earlier.

The community soon returned to its familiar, easy-going pace, but some things would never be the same. The community now had electricity and almost all families had a car or truck. Improved roads made a trip to town a matter of minutes. After the arrival of electricity the first major appliance for most families to purchase was a refrigerator. The means of preserving food and having a supply of ice seemed to be the greatest desire. Later came electric stoves and the sound of the chopping ax was seldom heard. Soon pumps supplied the homes with running water, thus eliminating the many trips to the spring with a

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water bucket. Of course, running water to the home brought indoor bathrooms and most outhouses became unused buildings. The farmers learned that it was more profitable to turn their hillside land into pasture

than to grow corn and wheat. The sight of field after field of corn is now a thing of the past. There hasn't been a wheat crop in the community in the past twenty years.

From 1950 to 1970 the number of life-long community residents decreased year by year. Some died; others moved away. Their farms were sold, quite often to people from other states. These people were looking for a quiet, unspoiled place to build retirement or vacation homes. I would guess Long Branch meets this requirement or vacation homes. I would guess Long Branch meets this requirement as well as any place to be found. Lately descendants of some of the old families are retaining some of the land. I guess they have come to realize there is no better place to live.

The community no longer has a store and the school has been closed for some years due to the consolidation of all county schools. The church is still going strong. Many of the members no longer live in the community but make the trip back for the services.

In spite of the many changes, the few permanent families still maintain many of the old customs. They still get together for the annual hog killing; they help each other with their farm work; sharing of garden crops is still carried on; and when someone has a problem all join in to help. It appears the change has reached a plateau, so perhaps for many years to come the community will remain a quite peaceful place to live.

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RELIGION AND THE CHURCHES

Over the years Long Branch has been a community of Baptist and Methodist. There have been people of other faiths, but not enough of them to organize a church in the community.

The Baptist church was located on the ridge near the upper end of the community. It was known as Washer's Chapel. We don't know the exact year this church was founded but indications point to the 1895 to 1900 period. John A. Davenport, an elder of Indian Creek Baptist Church, was instrumental in organizing Washer's Chapel.

Mr. John's son James, was a Baptist minister for many years. He was ordained in 1897. No doubt Rev. James preached some at this church his father helped organize. WE were unable to find an official record of this old church; therefore the names of the regular pastors, number of members, and such are unknown. We did talk with people to attended the church some. They report the church had some powerful services, especially during "big meeting" (revival) time. The church burned in 1924. Apparently the members elected to go to other churches and Washer's Chapel was disbanded.

The first church in the community was the Methodist. As with the Baptist Church we were unable to determine the exact year it was founded. Indications of the time was about 1850. William A. Braswell was instrumental in founding this church. He helped build the first church house, a log building that also served as a school for some time. At first the church was named Hopewell Methodist Church, then later was name New Hopewell. In 1902, the church was given it's present name, Long Branch Methodist Church. Throughout the years the church house had been located very near where the present building stands.

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The first building stood on low ground near the branch. It was damaged by flood waters in 1887. The building was later moved to a higher elevation where it remained until 1900 and at that time was destroyed by fire. In 1902 a large, beautiful church building was erected on a site slightly south of where the old building was. This building stood until 1956 when it was destroyed by a tornado. Work was started immediately on the present building and it was ready for services a few months later. There are no records of the church before 1902. The only preacher's name we can find that might have preached here at that time is Rev. Glasgow Harper.

Rev. Harper is reported to have preached some at all the Methodist churches in this area in the 1850 period. After the church burned in 1900, a committee was formed to handle the affairs of the church with the chief mission to erect a new building. The members of this committee (trustees) were W. J. Holly, J. B. Scripps, J. M. Starnes, H. S. Winfrey and J. A. Williams. Mr. Holly was chairman of the group. At this time, Mr. Holly traded the land where the present church stands for the old, less-desirable site. Apparently this group of men were very competent, for within two years the new building was ready for use. It was one of the more attractive, well-designed buildings for a rural community for this time.

The pastors of the church, chronologically from 1902 to the present, were: J. W. St. John, L. P. Reeder, H. P. Keathley, Valentine Massey, Rev. Ramsey, J. B. Dickins, J. H. Hale, B. M. Harness, Rev. Teasley, P. M. Dickins, W. A. Trammel, Earnest Trammel, Vernice Ragsdale, Wesley Holden, Hillard Howard, Billy Starnes, Gus Self, George Cope, B. M. Harness, P. M. Clayton, Othel Dunham, Sammie Cherry, Arnett Creasy and Bennie Davis.

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No doubt the names of these men will remind some of you of very important events in your life, such as when you were converted, or maybe your marriage ceremony was performed by one of them, or one presided at the funeral of a loved one.

The Church is associated with the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church. A number of the pastors were graduates of Baxter Seminary, which at one time was sponsored by the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The church prospered with an active and growing membership (1915, 65 members) until the mid 1930's. At this time interest in the church seemed to drop. Perhaps this was due to the economic depression that affected most of our activities. The building was in a sad state of repair and for a while we didn't have a regular pastor.

In 1940 a renewed interest in the church came into being. This time the women of the community took the lead in church improvements. This movement was basically led by Mrs. John Fish and Mrs. Grady Denny. They enlisted the help of many others in fund-raising and building improvements. One man that took a big part in this program was a temporary resident and a member of another church. This was Mr. Roy Pegram, an employee at the Center Hill Dam project. In a short time the building was in excellent condition; we had a very likable pastor and membership began to grow. One of these new members was one of the most devoted Christians I have ever known. That was Mr. John Fish, who was surely an inspiration to all that knew him.

In addition to the preaching services, the church has had a active Sunday School program. Also the women and children have put on many fine church plays. Some of the women that over the years have conducted these plays are Miss Doshie Denny, Mrs. Mildred Granthum, and Mrs. Joyce Trusty. They would put in many hours rehearsing and making

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preparations for these plays.

During the early 1950's interest in the church dropped off some. At this time, a long-time friend and member of the church provided the inspiration and leadership that recreated an active interest. This was Mr. Dewey Martin. Although Mr. Martin has never lived in the community, he has been active in the church for many years and was the Sunday School superintendent for quite some time. He first attended the church as a small boy when his mother (Mrs. Mandy) would bring him, walking from Cove Hollow, to attend the church services.

One Sunday, during the mid 50's, Mr. Martin told the congregation he had a vision of a new church building being erected. A few weeks later the tornado struck and the need for a new building was at hand.

Mr. Martin, a natural leader, was chosen as chairman of the building committee and treasurer of the building fund. Other members of the committee were Mr. Grady Denny, Mr. Paul Ellis, Mr. Gordon Fish, Mr. Carlas Trapp and Mr. Ewin Trusty.

The above group was very efficient for in a short time a new building was erected and donations had been received to meet the construction costs. For such an ambitious undertaking to go off so well many people took an active part. All the men in the community donated their labor. The women were active in various fund-raising projects. The only paid person on this project was one carpenter, Mr. Virgil Hayes from Smithville.

The first revival held in the new church was conducted by Rev. Sam Fry. It is said that this revival was one of the best the church has had. The church has had many fine singing groups. The individual singers I remember best were Aubery Winnard, Carlas Trapp and Lawson Denny. There were many others but when I think of singing at the church these men come to mind. Presently a number of fine singing

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groups from other communities visit the church. These groups attract large crowds and the service is enjoyed by all. Mr. Gordon Fish deserves much credit for his work in arranging for these groups.

The future of the church looks good. It now has a good size membership, many living in other communities. There seems to be much interest and sincerity among the members.

Other religious services in the community have been prayer meetings and singing at individual homes and "brush arbor" meetings. For those of you that have never been to a brush arbor meeting, I will give a brief description. In some ways the brush arbor meeting was similar to present-day tent meetings (less the tent). The similarity is they were non-denominational, were always held in the summer or early fall, and the assembly was of a temporary nature, which may or may not get together at a later date.

The biggest difference in the brush arbor meetings and the tent meetings is the brush arbor meetings had no expenses. Therefore, there was no collection taken during the service. Some of today's tent meetings, especially those set up near large cities, seem to have a world of expense. Much of their time is devoted to taking up collection with such catchy phrases as "everyone, a dollar for Christ" or "lets wave a sea of green." The brush arbor meeting was strictly for spreading religion. They served a good purpose as they attracted people that normally would not go to a regular church. Also, in the days of limited transportation, they provided a place of worship to communities that had no church of their own.

The brush arbor building was simply a frame work or poles that supported a low, flat roof. The roof was made of leaf-covered tree limbs. There were no sides to the building and the lighting was from lanterns brought by the people attending the service. Seating was on

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rough cut boards or logs split in half. There were some powerful sermons preached at these gatherings. Sometimes two or three preachers would preach at the same service. The service would start about dark and last as long as the spirit moved anyone to speak, which at times was late as one o'clock in the morning.

No discussion of country churches would be complete without mentioning the one time practice of a group of people staying on the outside of the church during services. This outside group was made up of men and boys that came to the church but seldom went inside.

When the service was at night (during the "big meetings"), some of the outside group would create some kind of disturbance or pull some type of prank. A favorite disturbance was to get on their horses and ride around the church house firing their pistols then ride off into the darkness before anyone could identify them. The pranks consisted of doing something to the wagons, buggies or horses of those inside.

The prank most often used was to remove the nuts that held the wheels on the wagons or buggies. When the owners loaded up and started home, the wheels would drop off after the first few feet of movement. This, of course, was a dangerous trick as it could and often did topple people off their seats and to the ground. Another prank (often pulled on the preacher) was to loosen the girth of his saddle. When he started to mount the horse, off came the saddle with him hanging on; all landing under the horse. Another dangerous trick, to say the least.

Ironically, the “Outside Congregation” remained popular for many years and then it disappeared as mysteriously as it had first developed. Perhaps it disappeared when some of us that were youngsters in those days grew up.

(Two pictures)

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THE SCHOOL

The first formal education in the community was by means of the subscription school system. Under this system the community provided a building (usually the church house) with sufficient benches or seats for the students. The teacher was hired by the people whose children were going to attend. The teacher’s salary was \$20 to \$30 dollars per month. Payment of this was shared equally by the parents of the students. Obviously, the more students in a class the less it cost per family. The cost may seem small today but in those rough early years this was sometimes hard to come by.

Classes were held for three months per year (winter months). Many families felt that three years of classes were sufficient for their children; thus many didn’t receive education beyond this. Those that did complete what was considered an eighth grade education were eligible to attend one of the area academies (private high schools). Temperance Hall, Liberty and Alexandria all had academies before the days of the public school system.

The qualifications for being a subscription school teacher were having completed the eighth grade or above and of course, being able to maintain discipline at school. With many of the students being large, rough farm boys who didn’t want to be in school in the first place, discipline could be a problem. One thing the teacher had in his favor was that the parents would back him up. If a student received punishment at school then he would receive equal punishment at home.

We don’t know the exact date of the first subscription school in the community. We have indications this was about 1850. The school

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was held in the first church building of the Methodist Church.

There are no records of these subscription schools, so the names of the teachers, number of students and such are unknown.

In 1867 the free school system was organized; however this system did not reach the rural areas until 1873. At that time the county took over the hiring of teachers and providing the buildings. As with the subscription schools, books had to be bought by the students (the free textbook law didn’t become effective until 1934); you can imagine the number of students that used the same book under this system.

The church house continued to be used for school activities during the first years of the free school system. Then a log building was erected as the school house. This building was located near the site of the present school house. The building was used until about 1900, when it was destroyed by fire. In 1904, a frame building was erected and remained in use until the school closed in 1952.

The free-school system introduced a new type school year. Classes were now held for two-three month periods each year. Three months in the winter and three months in late summer and early fall. The purpose of this broken year was to allow student to be available to help on the farm during the busy periods. This broken year system remained in effect until 1935, at which time the eight-month-per-year program was started.

In 1923 a fire at the DeKalb County courthouse destroyed the school records; therefore, detailed information of the early years, especially the names of the teachers, are not available.

For a few years the school had as many as sixty students; in the year 1912, there were sixty-five, all of these being attended by one teacher. The teacher served as playground supervisor and in some

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years had a baseball team that competed with other schools.

Bees were part of the course of study, with the best spellers competing with other schools.

Some of the games the students played during recess and lunch hour were "fox in the morning and goose in the evening," "Annie-Over," "hide and seek," "farmer in the dell," "sling-a-ling," "hop-scotch," rolling hoop, "Red Rover," "mumble peg," shooting marbles, and horseshoe pitching.

Some methods of punishment for those that had broken a rule The old-fashion whipping with an elm switch or paddle no doubt got the best results. Others were standing at the blackboard holding your nose in a circle, standing in a corner with your face to the wall, sitting on a broom handle suspended between to benches, writing "I will not disobey" a few hundred times, not allowed to play during recess and lunch hour and being kept after school.

In the winter, heat was provided by a large stove. About once each week the wood floor was sprinkled with "coal oil" to keep down the dust. The building was never wired for electricity, so on overcast days the students had to sit near the windows in order to study. The school never had a hot-lunch program, so the students brought their lunch from home. Some would bring a jar of milk which was placed in the cool spring water to prevent spoilage until lunch time.

Some of the teachers that served Long Branch:

Charlie Fouch, Lat Braswell, Shelie Starnes, Jim Amonett, Nora Page, Dewey Martin, Raymond Anderson, Jim Winnard-2 yrs., Ocie Page, Thelma Gann, C. A. Malone-2 yrs., A. O. Maynard-3 yrs., Cardene Johnson-2 yrs., Sidney Jones-2 yrs., Clydie Spencer, Sweetie Starnes, George M. Lamberson-6 yrs., Opal Nixon-5 yrs., James Malone, James Reynolds and Ray Burton.

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As a student you probably had one teacher you thought was the greatest. In this respect I admit I may be biased but I do believe that during the years from 1937 to 1942 the students of Long Branch had the best teacher ever. This was George Martin Lamberson, (Mr. George, as he was called by the students), taught us more than the basic school subjects. He taught us many important facts about life and how to cope with life's problems. He discussed topics of the future that have turned out to be amazingly accurate. As early as 1940, long before the environmentalists became concerned about our environment, he told us that our lakes and rivers could not continue to serve as the cesspools of the nation. He taught of the good things the new-born Social Security System and farm-price support programs could bring but warned us of the pitfalls of too much government control.

He told us one day we would be able to sit in our living rooms and watch pictures of action, thousands of miles away, (we mumbled in disbelief at this). He taught the "waste not-want not" theory and warned us that some of our natural resources could become scarce. He taught us many more important things.

Unfortunately, we didn't remember all of them; but I do think we went out in life better prepared than the average student of that time.

Long Branch School closed in 1952 due to the consolidation of the county schools. At that time this was thought to be an improvement. Lately, many people, including educators, are beginning to realize a one-room school such as Long Branch had a lot to offer.

(picture)

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POLITICS

To be so far removed from the national and state political scene, Long Branchers have always had a high interest in politics. They have kept well informed on the candidates and the issues. Some of the old timers could hold their own with the best of debaters when it came to current political issues. Two such men were Mr. Oscar Braswell and Mr. Tom McClellan. Mr. Oscar was a Republican and Mr. Tom, a Democrat. They were especially fond of discussing politics with each other or anyone else who would lend an ear.

One year after a long and heated campaign the two of them came to the conclusion that they would be killing each other's vote when they went to the polls. They agreed to stay at home and miss the election. Sure enough, when the men of the community gathered at the "store" to make the trip to Temperance Hall to vote, Mr. Oscar and Mr. Tom were not among them. Later Mr. Tom would tell that Mr. Oscar walked through the woods and across the ridge to the polls and voted. Maybe he did at that, but you must admit anyone that would walk four miles to vote was a loyal supporter of his candidate.

Over the years the people have been fairly evenly divided as either Democrats or Republicans. There have been occasions when they "voted for the man," but in most cases there was strong party support. An example of "voting for the man" was when J. T. Starnes ran for Justice of the Peace. I would guess he got every vote in the community. Another occasion was when Roosevelt was running for his second term in 1936. We had a "straw vote" at school. If children reflect the political feelings of their parents (researchers say they do), then there was a lot of switching of parties that year. I believe the straw vote

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was thirty-two for Roosevelt and three for Landon.

One of the best remembered and talked about campaigns was that of the two brothers, Bob and Alfred Taylor, when they ran for governor in 1886. Bob was a Democrat and Alfred a Republican. It seems Bob had the greatest appeal in this hard-fought campaign; he carried the county and the state. Nevertheless, Alfred had some strong supporters. The Oakley family in Temperance Hall were so serious about the election that they named their twin boys Bob and Alfred, to keep peace in the family.

There have been cases when the community gave strong support to the third-party candidate. The best example of this was the support the Prohibition Party received in 1892. My grandfather, normally a Democrat, was a strong supporter of the Prohibition ticket. The Prohibitionists managed to get a lot of Prohibition laws passed, but they never had a major candidate elected.

Politics is still an important subject in the community and most of the people exercise their right to vote and openly support the candidate of their choice.

INTERGRATION

For the most part Long Branch has been an all white-community; however one colored family did make their home here many years ago. The family left the community under tragic conditions. It is not known where they moved to or if any of them are still living. The family's name was Hickman; the husband's first name was Ward. He was the son of Tom Hickman, "Free Tom," the only colored family to live on Indian

Creek in the pre-Civil War days. The nickname, "Free Tom," indicates he had received his freedom and was not subject to the slave trade. Therefore, we know Ward was born free even though the Civil War had not yet been fought.

Their farm was located on the western ridge, at the head of what is now known as "Denny Hollow." Part of the farm laid over the ridge on the Smith Fork Creek side, part of the Ression Page farm. There is no record of when Mr. Ward bought the land and built his cabin, but it is known that he was living there in the early 1880's. The family sold the land in 1890. It is hard to understand what brought this lone, colored family to this remote all-white community during the early post-Civil War years. You must remember in those years many white people looked on all colored people that left the farms and plantations of their former owners lived in compact groups for friendship and protection. Perhaps the people living on Long Branch presented a friendly atmosphere that encouraged this family to locate here.

The spot where the Hickman cabin stood probably offers the best view of any place in the community. From this point looking eastward you can see across the Caney Fork River deep into the Wolf Creek Valley.

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To the west, you view the wide expanse of the Smith Fork Valley. This point is the first to be touched by the rising sun each morning and is the last place in the community for the sun to set on. I wonder if Mr. Ward was influenced by this view when selection for the site of his cabin was made. Or was he guided by the convenient and needed factors such as nearness to the road, (the Lancaster to Smithville road ran along this ridge at that time) and it being a level spot near a spring. At any rate, it was and still is a beautiful place for a home.

About the tragedy that befell this family. During the years following the Civil War there were groups of men known as "Kue Klucks" (a forerunner of the present day KKK). They appointed themselves as judge, jury and executioner in cases they felt required their attention. Their chief mission was to "keep the colored people in line" and "straighten out the 'white trash.'" No doubt they did some good things, like correcting a husband that was drinking and gambling away all the family income. For the most part they harassed colored people just for the sake of harassment. They traveled in small groups, all wearing hoods, on horseback and at night. Such a group came to the Hickman cabin for the purpose of giving Mr. Ward a thrashing for some alleged wrong doing. At this point Mr. Ward took a chopping ax for defense. One of the group took the ax from him and killed him with it. The ax swinger became fearful that someone in the group would expose him, for a killing was more than they had expected that night. To avoid detection the man's father put him in a large tool box on a wagon and hauled him out of the area (to Kentucky). He was brought to justice. As expected, the Hickman family did not remain in the community much longer.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

As mentioned before the horse, ox and mule played an important role in transportation during the early years. The river was another important transportation route during this period. At first the river served as a one-way route. That is, the people would assemble logs into rafts, load corn and livestock on the rafts, and float the loaded raft downstream to Nashville and sell the whole "kit and caboodle." As might be expected this was a buyer's market. The rafter could not bring his load back upstream. It was too far to the next town, so he had to take what was offered. This situation improved some as more buyers got into the act and started competing among themselves for the valuable products these rafts contained.

Another means of one-way river traffic was the "keel boat." This was a rough, unpowered barge-type boat that was built for making one trip downstream to Nashville or on to New Orleans. The trip to New Orleans would take as much as five or six months. These keel boats held more cargo and were easier to maneuver than a raft. But unlike the raft, the keel boat was of no value after the trip was completed, as there was no way to power the heavy craft.

The coming of the steamboat brought the first mechanized transportation to the community. As early as 1810 steamboats were operating on the Cumberland River and by 1840 the boats were operating on the Caney Fork, making stops at the mouth of Wolf Creek, Cove Hollow and Indian Creek. At these points were storage houses used for temporary storage of cargo for the boats.

The boats hauled in supplies for the settlers as well as hauling out farm produce. One of the important items brought in by the boats was salt. This was one very essential item the settlers could not

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make nor find a substitute for. In 1850 salt sold for ten dollars a bushel (94 pounds). This is about ten cents a pound or very near the price of salt today. But we should remember in 1850 the rate of fifty cents a days was considered top wages. In fact salt was sometimes used as payment for wages, therefore creating the phrase "not worth his salt."

In the early 1900's, the gasoline-powered boat came into being. Mr. Hurbert Nixon recalls a boat by the name of the "J. J. Gore," it was operated and lived on by Mr. Loranza Plumlee. The boat was 12 feet wide and sixty feet long. It was also double decked. This boat provided much of the marketing service for families within a reasonable distance from the river. Another well-known gasoline-powered boat was operated by Don Johnson and Downey Judkins. They were more like peddlers or a "floating store." This boat was six feet wide and thirty-five feet long. Its main tie-up point was Buffalo Valley. The operators were known for the good prices they paid for farm produce.

The big drawback with powered boat service to the community was the boats could operate only at times of high-river level. This meant that during summer and early fall there was no boat service.

Improved roads that allowed truck delivery to the nearby towns and the railroad through Lancaster and Buffalo Valley put an end to the power boats on the Caney Fork River. Surprisingly, the railroad did not bring an immediate stop to rafting. In fact, the railroad made special provisions for the men that worked the rafts. The passenger trains would have a car called the "logger's special." Luther Lee Martin relates stories told by his dad and uncles about their rafting days and the lively times they had on the "logger's special." Before the railroad was built the loggers had to make the return trip from

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Nashville (sixty-five miles) by foot. Mr. Oscar Braswell would tell the story of him and his partner walking this distance in one day and part of one night, about eighteen hours total.

Before the automobile became popular, the horse and buggy was probably the most-used means of transportation, especially when the trip was of a social nature. Many Long Branch girls have been "wooded" while riding home from church in a nice shiny buggy. The buggy was well adapted for hauling light loads and was very useful for shopping trips to the nearby towns. Trips to Smithville, Alexandria, and Carthage were made regularly in a buggy. Much traveling was done on horseback. Every family had at least one horse or mule that was "saddle broke." There were two types of saddles; the regular saddle, like the cowboys used, and the side saddle. The side saddle was used by the women as it was considered unlady-like for a woman to ride a regular saddle.

The first road in the community ran along the western ridge. It was known as the Lancaster to Smithville road. For the most part, it was just a wide trail through the forest and was maintained by the people that used it. After the Alexandria to Sparta "turnpike" was built in the 1870's, the Lancaster road joined it near Snow Hill. The turnpike, a well-maintained gravel road, was a toll road. There was a toll gate every five miles. The charge was five cents for a single horse and rider, ten cents for a two-horse wagon.

By 1900 a road in the valley that ran along the branch (in some places, it was in the branch) was well established. This road was extended to Lancaster by passing around the base of Thompson Bluff near the river. At this time the ridge road slowly faded out of use.

The valley road was maintained by the men in the community under the "Road Working Law" administered by the county. Under the law any male

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over twenty-one years old was required to work six days a year maintaining the road in his community. If the man furnished a team of mules and a wagon to be used on the road work his requirement was only three days a year. If a man for some reason couldn't work his time he could be excused by paying two dollars for each day missed. With the going wages in the community being one dollar a day, very few people used the two dollar a day pay-off method.

Strange as it seems, the roads were kept passable under this system. This is, passable for a horse or a wagon; for cars, that was another matter. I remember when our mail carrier, Mr. Arthur Sykes, would do his own road work. He would stop at a "gravel bar" along the route and fill some buckets he had in his car with gravel. At the next mud hole in the road he would stop and empty the buckets. By doing this every day he filled a lot of mud holes. When the WPA came in to being in 1936, the "Road Working Law" was discontinued. Since that time the county road department has maintained the roads in the community.

Referring to cars, the first car to travel the Long Branch road was driven by Frank Williams of Temperance Hall. This was in 1920 or '21; the car was a Model T Ford. As you might guess, this created much excitement. Both Lawson Denny and Carlas Trapp recall this event quite clearly. The first person to own a car in the community was Mr. Lat Brawell; the year was 1924. Mr. John Dunham bought one a short time later. Both of these cars were Model T's. They took very good care of these cars and would drive them only on nice days and, of course, only at slow speeds. Ironically, with only two cars in the community, they met on a curve and collided, marking the first car accident on Long Branch.

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Telephone Service

The first telephone was in the Bill Jones, home. This was in 1915. We are not sure to which switchboard this phone was connected - - either Lancaster or Temperance Hall. There was a phone in the old Oscar Starnes' home in 1924. It was connected to the Lancaster switchboard. Mrs. Bonnie Fish remembers the early phone owners would disconnect the wires leading into the house during a lightning storm. Some people would not use a phone for fear of the lightning running in on the wire.

Railroad Service

The coming of the Tennessee Central Railroad promoted much long-range traveling among Long Branchers during the early 1900's. The railroad which at one time operated as many as six passenger trains a day made traveling to distant cities an easy feat. For the first time people in the community could start from home early in the morning, spend the day in Cookeville or Lebanon, and be home for supper. Such a trip was possible by riding the "Shopper's Special"; a train that started the run early and returned late for the benefit of people doing business in the towns.

A trip to Nashville was now a mere three-hour ride. Or course, once you were in Nashville, you could make connections to many other cities. With the popularity of the railroad, the depot in Lancaster became the scene of many sad partings and happy returns for the people of the Long Branch Community.

Mail Service

The first mail service for the community was supplied by central drop and pick-up stations. One of these stations was at the store in

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Cove Hollow. This was in the very early days. Just how the mail was delivered to the station is not fully known. The delivery was probably handled by "mail contractors," similar to present-day "Star Routes." The frequency of the pick-ups and when the service started is not known. The other station was the post office in Lancaster. This station received mail daily after the railroad was built in the late 1800's. Regardless of which station was used, the people had to make the trip to the station if they wished to use the mails.

In 1904 a rural route was established for Long Branch. It was listed as Route #1, Lancaster. At first this route was served from horseback, using saddlebags for the mail. A horse and buggy was used when there was a heavy mail load or during periods of heavy rain or snow. By 1935 the automobile was being used regularly but the horse was needed during periods of bad weather. With improved roads and increased traffic, the use of the horse became less and by 1940 the route was completely motorized.

Mr. Sid Robinson was the first mail carrier on this route. He carried from 1904 to 1917. Mr. Arthur Sykes carried the route from 1917 to 1945. After the death of Mr. Sykes in 1945, the route was carried by the substitute carrier until 1949. At this time Mr. Garland Massey was appointed to the route and he carried it until 1974. A reorganization of the mail service area resulted in the long Branch route being served out of Hickman and is now being carried by Mr. Ken Thomas. Mr. Elmer Maynard served as a substitute carrier for many years.

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THE STORES OF THE COMMUNITY

There have been only three stores in the community. The first was operated by Roscoe Judkins. It stood along the road near where Carlas Trapp now lives. Not much is known about this store other than it opened in the early 1900's, it carried the usual items needed by rural community, and it closed around 1920. Why it closed is not known. Before this store opened, the people did their trading at Temperance Hall, Lancaster, and a store in Cove Hollow.

In 1941, George Lamberson opened a small store near the Center Hill Dam Village. He later sold the store to Haskell McCallen. This store catered mostly to construction workers. When the construction job was finished, the store closed.

One of the best-known places in the community was Tonie Starnes' store. We hadn't visited on Long Branch for two or three months in 1969 and as we rounded the bend of the road everyone in the car said in unison, "look it's gone!" There was a look of sadness on all our faces as we viewed the weed covered place where Tonie's Store once stood. For longer than any of us could remember, the J. R. Starnes store had been a landmark in this North DeKalb County community. Now we fully realized it was gone forever.

Actually this should have been no surprise, as the store had been closed for some time and Mr. and Mrs. Starnes had moved out of the community. Still, the people that had patronized the store for many years were hoping someone would reopen it. With the building gone, we knew this would not happen and another bit of rural America had faded into the past.

"Tonie's Store" was more than a place to buy a needed items; it

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was a place of warmth and friendliness, a place where you were always welcome even though you had just dropped in to warm by the little pot-bellied stove and had not a penny in your pocket to spend.

For years the store had been a place to sell farm produce. Many baskets of eggs and frying chickens have been carried to the store by wives and children. After these were sold part of the cash would be used to buy household necessities. The items were selected with care. "Yard goods" would be measured by stretching it from the tip of the nose to the end of their outstretched hand. Neighborhood boys who had gathered

walnuts during the fall eagerly watched as they were weighted by “Mr. Tonnie” or “Uncle Joe” and immediately calculated what they would bring. This would buy Christmas firecrackers, a gift for a favorite girl, or maybe a new pair of shoes. Skins of animals the men and boys had trapped were sold at the store. Grading of the skins was always done with much deliberation, whether it be a 10 cent “summer possum” or a \$2.50 “black pole cat.”

The store was clearing house for community news – both good and bad. You would learn how much a new baby weighed, about some-one’s barn burning, about a large litter of pigs, how many fish were caught, who was getting married, and the market price of hogs and cattle. For years Mr. Starnes was Justice of the Peace for the district and the “store” was our official contact with the County Seat.

The store had an unique atmosphere; the smell of horse collars, “coal oil,” Mr. Everett’s pipe, Uncle Fed’s chewing tobacco, cedar shavings, apples and oranges, all blended together to produce an odor that gave a feeling of contentment.

When men were leaving the community, such as going into the service or to a job some place, one of the last things they would do was

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visit the store. Upon returning, a trip to the store came right after that first home-cooked meal.

For many years the communities of Jackson Hollow, Cove Hollow, and Long Branch depended on “Tonie’s” for their needs. When things got rough you could get credit until crops came in or you sold some cattle or hogs. Credit was established simply by telling Tonie to “write it on the wall.”

The building of Center Hill Dam displaced many people in the area, but it also brought in new people. Tonie’s soon became the favorite trading place for lots of these new folks as they learned of the pleasant welcome all received. In later years, visitors to resort areas near the dam would visit the store and later bring friends. You could tell they enjoyed the visit.

Bad health and retirement age were the factors that caused Mr. and Mrs. Starnes to close the store. Our guess is they hated to leave as bad as we hated to see them go. Time and progress brings change and no one can deny that a modern shopping center is a very convenient place to buy things, but to the people of the Long Branch Community there will never be a place to supply one’s body and soul needs as “Tonie’s Store” did for a half century.

Peddlers and Rolling Stores

Following close behind the first settlers of any community came the “pack peddler.” These merchants carried their wares on their back in a large frame-supported pack or in two such packs hanging from a special saddle on a horse or mule. For those of you who haven’t seen one of these, don’t underestimate the amount of items that an experienced peddler could carry. He would have such things as needles, thread,

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buttons, lace, ribbon, elastic strips, scissors, combs, pots and pans, dippers, flour sifters, flavoring, cake coloring, patented medicines, shoe-repair materials and a lot of other items needed by the rural household.

One of the pack peddler’s persistent problems was that many of his customers wanted to pay for their goods with farm produce. You can see he would soon exceed his carrying capacity with chickens, eggs, hams, and such. To overcome this, some of the peddlers advanced to a covered wagon-type store. With the wagon, the peddler could expand his line of items to include farm tools and implements, kettles, tubs, and other heavy things as well as taking in farm produce as payment.

The peddlers made their rounds every few weeks. They usually spent the night with the family they were calling on when dark came. My grandfather's house was a favorite place for the peddlers and their visits were enjoyed by all, as they were someone to talk to with news from the outside world. One of these pack peddlers, I. C. King, became the owner of a large variety store in Tullahoma, Tennessee, and was still active in the business a few years ago.

In addition to the roving independent peddlers, some of the merchants in Temperance Hall operated "rolling stores" or peddling wagons as part of their business. These peddling wagons had a regular route that they traveled at least once a week. They carried similar items to those carried by the "home" store, including "coal oil," that was hauled in a barrel lashed to the side of the wagon. These wagons had several chicken coops and egg crates aboard, so they could accept this particular produce from those that wished to pay this way.

The rolling store provided an important service to the community in the early years. They were especially useful to the busy farm families

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that didn't have time to make the long trip to the store for needed items. They were still doing business in the community as late as 1940. At this time merchants as far away as Smithville were sending out truck-mounted rolling stores. The truck-mounted stores never gained the popularity the old peddling wagon had enjoyed. One reason was people were now doing more business with their own community store, and another reason was the rolling store didn't "give credit." So, gradually the rolling store faded out of existence.

(picture)

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ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

For many years the community was very much self-supporting. The economics, in most cases has depended on the farming and timber resources. An estimated ninety percent of the essential items were grown and processed in the community. Granted, many comforts and conveniences that would have to come from outside were done without. Also a number of items as we know them today were substituted in a home-made form. The fact remains, it is a remarkable feat that so many people (54 families, largest count) could produce a living for so many years in an area of less than two square miles. This shows an amazing amount of ingenuity and resourcefulness.

The following is an example of the activities and community industry that the average farm family engaged in to remain self-supporting:

Bread:

Bread from flour or meal was made from grain grown on the farm. Although the grain had to be ground at a community mill, the charge for grinding was paid for with grain "toll." The seed to plant the grain fields was saved from the year before. No fertilizer was used; instead crop rotation and cover crops were used in a manner to maintain the soil.

Meat:

Meat was produced, butchered, and cured on the farm. Most people used salt to cure their meat; the salt was one item that had to be purchased. There was a way of meat curing with home-grown spices and peppers, but this method was not widely used.

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Vegetables:

Before 1930, all vegetable used in the community were grown there. Types of vegetables grown were determined by how well the species could be kept after the growing season. The methods of preserving were; storing in the ground, in a “tater hole” or “root cellar.” Potatoes, turnips, onions, and cabbage were kept this way. Drying peas and beans led the list of dried vegetables. Canning green beans, garden peas, tomatoes, beets, and pickles was second on the list. Pickling in vats or barrels with brine or vinegar was a popular method in the early years.

Milk and Milk Products:

Every family had at least one milk cow. In addition to using milk at each meal and for cooking, much of it was used for making butter. The milk and butter was kept from day to day by placing the containers in the “spring house.”

Sweets:

Most families used some sugar which had to be bought. But the greatest part of sweetening came from honey and molasses. The honey was from wild bees that had been place in home-made hives. The molasses was made from cane grown on the farms and then taken to the local mill.

Soap:

Pork fat and lye were made into two types of soap, a mild liquid form and bar soap. The port fat was rendered from meat scraps. The lye was from home-made ash hopper.

Chickens and Eggs:

Every family had a flock of chickens. This flock usually consisted of about a hundred chickens. The flock not only supplied eggs and meat for the table but were the source of a small cash income.

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If allowed to run free (as most flocks did), the chickens would gather a lot of their own food in the form of seeds, berries, and insects. There was one big drawback with free-roaming chickens; they were victims of a number of furred and feathered attackers. Taken on a year-in-year-out basis the chicken flock probably pulled more families through more rough periods than any other farm enterprise.

Strong Drinks:

Although only a few engaged in the business, there were always sufficient alcoholic spirits produced in the community to go around. With the exception of sugar, all the needed materials were grown on the farm.

Clothing:

For many years all clothing, including shoes, was made in the community. A lot of the materials used to make clothing was purchased from a store but much of it was produced and processed on the farms. Every family had a small cotton patch. Much of the cotton was used as the filler for quilts. A “cotton pickin’” (removing the seed) was one of the many work-social gatherings that took place in the community. At these affairs, the host family would provide some type of enjoyable meal. The visitors would empty the bags of cotton in the living room floor and start removing the seed. This would go on for hours with story telling, singing, and, of course, lots of eating. A similar activity was a “pea shelling” which involved shelling a room full of dried peas.

Tools:

Many of the tools and much of the equipment used in the community were made by the users from materials at hand. Examples of these are the sled, used for hauling things on the farm; the bull-ton-plow, which

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was a one-horse plow made entirely from wood except for the metal point that was made at the local blacksmith's shop. Chairs, tables, bed frames, and a number of similar items were all home made.

Timber Products:

As mentioned before timber played an important role in the economy. First, the timber served as a means of moving farm produce to market (the raft) as well as being a salable item. Later the timber was hauled to local mills for sale or cut into lumber for home use. Of course, timber supplied all the fuel for heating and cooking for many years. With all this use the forest held its own until the coming of the chain saw, bulldozers, and other power equipment in the 1950's. At this late date there were still many trees over two-hundred years old, four feet in diameter and eighty feet tall, that had been too much for man and beast to handle.

Saw Mills:

There have been two saw mills in the community. One was owned and operated by A. W. Maynard. The other was operated by a man from Smithville. This mill was located near Starnes' store. This mill cut lumber for local use and also trucked some lumber out of the community. It operated during the mid 1930's.

Grist Mills:

There have been two grist mills (grain mills) in the community. The first mill was located near the old John Fish home. It was operated by T. Moss. This mill provided the grinding service for the community for many years. It was still in business in 1928 but closed a short time later. The other mill was owned by T. J. Starnes. It was located near his store and operated for a few years during the late 1930's.

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Crops:

The principal crops grown in the community have been corn, wheat, hay, and tobacco. For years corn was the leading crop. Every farm would have several acres of corn. This was feed to hogs or cattle which were sold to provided the cash income for the farm. Some of the farmers sold their corn directly to the mills but this was not considered a good practice. Wheat and hay were grown for use on the farm and were never considered a money crop. The growing of tobacco as a money crop began in the early '30's and is still in practice. Hay and pasture now cover most of the tenable land in the community and cattle raising represents the largest farm income.

Fruit Trees:

At one time every farm had a small orchard. In fact, fruit trees were usually the first thing planted when a family moved to a new house. The type trees planted were apples, pears, peaches, plums, and cherries. The fruit from these trees was canned, smoked, dried, and made into preserves and jellies. These fruits were an important part of the people's diet during the days of limited transportation. Strangely, some of the old pear trees, now approaching seventy-five years old, still produce an abundant crop of large, mellow fruit.

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SEARS – ROEBUCK CATALOGUE

(The Book for all Ages)

With the exception of the Bible, no other book was read as often and by as many people as the Sears-Roebuck catalogue. There were other mail-order companies serving the community but Sears was the leader by a large margin. Old money-order stubs indicate that some people in the community were doing business with Sears as early as 1892 (Sears first started their mail-order business in 1886). By 1910, Sears was probably getting more of the non-food dollar than all other retailers combined. Two issues per year of the catalogue were published. These were mailed out to all customers who ordered at least five dollars worth of merchandise from them.

The catalogues were received with much enthusiasm; in fact, many a family squabble arose over who would get to look at the catalogue first. The women would study the clothing section to see what the latest styles were. The men went to the sections on tools, guns, and work clothes. The children looked at all the sections but especially the toys and games. Obviously, there was more looking and “wishing” than buying; but the catalogue served as a good place to dream.

The catalogue also served as a reference book. There have been many dresses made and pieces of furniture built by using the pictures in the catalogue as a pattern. Even if a person was planning to buy something locally, he would first look at a similar item in the catalogue to determine what the price should be. He wouldn't hesitate to tell the local merchant what the price should be. He wouldn't hesitate to tell the local merchant what the item sold for in the catalogue.

Sears and the other mail-order houses brought a complete line of the latest merchandise to the living room of the most remote cabin. They

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received a large share of rural America's trade until about 1950. Improved roads and the increased use of the automobile made it much easier for rural people to go to the cities, so the importance of the mail-order business has decreased. There is no longer the excitement connected with looking at the new catalogue; somehow, I think we have lost a bit of down-to-earth enjoyment.

Eventually after the catalogue had served its use for a half year, it could then substitute for a semi-annual supply of toilet paper.

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DOCTORS AND MEDICINES

From the beginning until 1940, practically all the professional medical service in the community was provided by four men. They were Dr. Bill Robinson, Dr. George Martin, Dr. Robert Mason, and Dr. S. C. Robinson. The younger generation should not confuse these men with the present breed of doctors found in the plush clinics, whose main purpose seems to be making money and looking for tax shelters.

These men were sincere, devoted healers of the sick. They served their patients at the patients' homes. They came at all times of night or day, in all types of weather, over roads only a horse could travel. They came because they knew when they were called, they were needed badly. They carried most needed medicines with them and left enough medicine to last the patient until the next visit. The usual fee for one of these visits was two or three dollars, including the medicine. He might have to wait six months or a year to collect but he never sent out a dun.

Very often when the doctor arrived at a home the patient was in serious condition as a number of home remedies and “store medicines” had been tried first. On many occasions the home remedies were all that were needed but in other cases the condition worsened; then a doctor was needed badly.

The two favorite “store medicines” for children were Black Draught and castor oil. There is probably no other concoction more distasteful than Black Draught. I do believe one dose of Black Draught would keep my child healthy for at least a year. Not because of its long range medical effects, but the child knew that any signs of sickness would bring on more Black Draught. Come springtime it didn't matter if you

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were sick or not, every child in the family got a round of Black Draught, just to be on the safe side.

The thoughts of having to go to the hospital was a dreadful thing to any family. First of all it was a long way to the newest hospital and travel was limited. Then the stories of the high cost was something unbelievable. There was talk of being charged eight to ten dollars a day for a room and twenty-five to fifty dollars for operations. This was a lot of money to the small farmer before the days of any hospitalization insurance.

An example of the consideration of such matters is shown by the following account.

Mr. Oscar Braswell's wife became seriously ill and had to be taken to the hospital in Lebanon. After several days the crisis had passed and Mrs. Braswell was recovering. Mr. Oscar approached the doctor, Dr. Gaston, who also owned the hospital, about how much his bill would be. The doctor asked Mr. Oscar how he made his living and what was his financial condition. Mr. Oscar replied that he owned a small farm, had a cow, a few chickens, hogs and a team of mules and that he made his living by working his farm. The doctor told him his total bill would be twenty-five dollars. Now this was surprisingly lower than Mr. Oscar had expected and he told the doctor he had expected the bill to be much higher. The doctor said, “Mr. Oscar, I treat some of these hospital bills similar to cooking ham meat. That is, I let the fat fry the lean.” You can bet Dr. Gaston was a long-time champion among the rural families of Middle Tennessee.

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SOME FAVORITE HOME REMEDIES

A small bag of horrible smelling stuff called “asafetida” tied by a string around the neck would keep away the itch, common cold, body lice, and few other things. It probably did just that; it also kept away friends.

A hot mustard poultice (compress) would relieve the soreness of a sprained joint, pulled muscle, sore back and such. Come to think about it, this worked as good as Gen-Gay or some of the other store-brought medicines.

Burned whiskey was a treatment for a number of things, especially colds and the flu. Families that would not think, of using whiskey in any other form would allow it as a medicine, providing it had been burned first. The burning was to “kill the devil in it.”

“Spice wood tea” was a pleasant tasting tea made from the twigs of a small tree called spice wood. This tea was considered a general spring tonic, preferred especially by the older folks. Sassafras tea was also regarded as a spring tonic but it served as an enjoyable drink more than for medical purposes.

A favorite worm medicine was four or five drops of turpentine in a teaspoon of sugar. You took this each morning for a week.

Turpentine or “coal oil” was used for a number of treatments, such as keeping down infection in case of a cut or nail puncture. Applied directly to the chest or throat, it was a good treatment for congestion and sore throat.

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Rock candy melted in whiskey, taking a few spoonfuls each day, was a treatment for colds and chest congestion. A mixture of honey and vinegar could be substituted for the candy and whiskey. The tea of butterfly root was used to treat pneumonia.

For rheumatism, you could carry a buckeye or an Irish potato in your pocket.

For measles, any root or bark tea would cause them to break out but an extra good one was a tea made from sheep droppings.

There was a number of wart removal treatments; but the one used most often was to rub the warts with a dishrag, bury the rag in the woods, and when the rag rotted, the warts would go away.

If you didn't use the asafetida bag and caught the itch you could rub a mixture of sulfur and lard on the infected area and cure it. Bee stings, chigger bites, and poison ivy were treated by applying tobacco juice or a mixture of soda and water.

To quiet a fretful child, it was allowed to suck on a small bag of boiled catnip leaves. The child might be given a "sugar tit." This was made by placing a bit of sugar on a piece of cheese cloth and then tying it into a lump.

Diarrhea was treated by drinking a tea made from the bark of a red oak tree.

To stop bleeding, a handful of spider web was placed on the wound. Another method was to make a mixture of soot and lard and apply it to a wound. This indeed would stop the bleeding but left some horrible

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scars and the chance of infection was great.

For burns, the inside of a potato was scraped and the scrapings put on the area. Some people just sliced the potato and applied the slices. There were a number of store-brought salves as well as home remedies such as lard and flour, axle grease and sulfur, and goose grease and soda.

Baking soda was used for indigestion, heart burn, and other gaseous problems. Methods of taking: one spoon of soda in a glass of water, drink down fast; or one-half spoon of soda in one-half cup of vinegar. The soda-vinegar mixture caused a bubbling action; you drank the solution while the bubbling was taking place.

For sore throat, soak a red corn cob in a quart of water overnight. Drink a cup of the water every few hours until the soreness is gone.

Another sure-to-work treatment for warts: cause the wart to bleed, put a drop of the blood on a grain of corn, then feed the corn to a black hen.

Without commenting on the success of these remedies, they were relied upon in many cases when nothing else was available. Just because modern facilities were not available didn't lessen the need for them. We should remember that a number of people that used these remedies lived past their ninetieth birthday and never saw a hospital.

In the early days one of the most serious and often-used non-professional services were provided by that of the midwife or "grannie." There were usually one or two women in the community that were called on regularly during the time of child birth. In most cases they did

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a good job. There was an urgent effort to get the doctor; but with communications and travel as fast as a horse could go, the area doctor quite often got there after the child was born. The doctor would check over the mother and child and tell the “grannie” she had done just as good a job as he would have. This would be all the reward she would expect for her effort.

One of the old-time grannies was Mrs. Sarah Maynard, wife of Bill Maynard. Mrs. Sarah would provide follow-up care for the mother and baby. When the baby had the colic (they often did in those days), her treatment would be to rub the baby’s feet with tallow.

The women I best remember that served as “grannies” were Mrs. Ider Maynard and Mrs. Bea Coleman. Before 1940 most cases there were no problems, but if complications developed the mother and child or both were in for a long period of trouble and in some cases death. Therefore, the grannies were taking on a very serious responsibility.

Presently with good roads serving the community and modern hospitals in most of the towns, medical help is a matter of a thirty minute drive.

HARD TIMES AND TRAGIC EVENTS

Without reservation the years of 1880-81 were the most difficult period the community has experienced. In 1880 scarcely any crops were produced due to the wet spring and dry summer. 1881 was the aftermath of this crop failure. The wet spring had prevented the planting of crops and gardens at the proper time. When the rains did stop in late May the crops that were planted didn’t produce anything as it didn’t rain anymore until September. To add to this predicament, the entire central part of the country had been similarly affected and the people had no place to turn for needed food and grain.

The drought was so severe that the wild edibles, such as berries and nuts, failed. This had an adverse effect on the people and domestic animals, as well as wildlife in general. Springs dried up; the branch receded to the river. The river was low and without current. Even the fish that would normally have been a source of food became scarce. By fall of 1880, the community was almost barren of shallow-rooted vegetation; drinking water was a precious commodity. It is a miracle that serious illness did not break out.

Facing a winter without sufficient food and grain, many farmers let their livestock run free to search for what food they could find. It took several years to build back the herds and flocks after this set-back. As an indication of the effect this had on the number of live-stock, we can refer to the tax assessor’s record for the county; in 1879 shows 11,500 head of sheep and 21,000 head of hogs. In 1885, the records show 7,100 head of sheep and 2,800 head of hogs. So it can be clearly seen that the small animals which depended on shallow-rooted plants had been severely reduced in number.

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As mentioned before, only two farmers in the community (Mr. Jeff Braswell and Mr. Everett Trapp) produced enough corn in 1880 to “seed back” the following year. Until the new crop began to yield in the summer of 1881, things were really bad. Farmers gathered leaves from the trees (mulberry) and edible weeds (horse weeds) to feed their working stock in order to plant a new crop. The people relied heavily on greens and other early plants until their gardens began to produce.

When considering the plight of the people during these trying years, we must remember their survival depended on their own resourcefulness. There were no emergency relief programs, no surplus stores of food and grain (except what might be in their own barns) and no disaster loan programs. They simply had to tough it out and make do with what they had.

Following closely in the wake of the 1880 crop failure, the weather played another cruel trick on the community. That was the late snow in 1887. After what appeared to be an early spring, with all crops and gardens planted and growing, a ten to twelve-inch snow fell on May 12. The wet, heavy snow killed everything in its path. Field after field of knee-high corn turned black and fell to the ground. Wheat fields, with the heads already forming, became a tumbled, rotten mess. Well kept gardens turned to rows of wilted plants. Young chickens froze by the hundreds and the tender fruit in the orchards turned black and dropped to the ground.

With the exception of the wheat and the fruit, the people replanted their field and produced about half the normal yield, therefore, they didn't fare nearly as bad as during the dry year. But this one-two punch coming in a seven-year period left its mark for a long time.

Taking in exception the two record-breaking river floods (1903 and

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1929), the community didn't have any more weather disasters until the spring of 1928. This was the year of the "wash-out" that affected every family in the community and left permanent scars on the landscape. This record-breaking rainfall came at the most vulnerable time. Many of the fields were freshly plowed with nothing but young plants to hold the soil. The farmyards were teeming with young chickens, pigs and lambs. Then, on a quiet May night, a cloud burst that has never been equaled opened up on the community. There is no official record of the amount of rain that fell but indications are that about five or six inches fell in a one-hour period. The freshly plowed earth came rolling off the hillsides, as if a hundred bulldozers were pushing it. Everything in the valley below was knocked down or flooded with mud. Houses and barns were heavily damaged as the avalanche of mud poured into them.

My Uncle Grady relates the story of how he was awoken when mud broke open the back door of the house. By the time he lit a lamp to see what was happening, a churn that had been in the kitchen came floating through the living room. Chicken coops, with their many baby chicks, were floated off on the sea of mud into the roaring branch. Young pigs and lambs floated by, squealing and bleating as they went out of sight.

Mr. John Fish's house, which was located at a place on Long Branch where a hollow emptied into the branch, was caught in the cross-stream and almost washed away. The kitchen was flooded so badly that most of their food supplies were damaged. The grist mill that stood near the Fish's house was heavily damaged.

The level land near the branch was over run with mud and debris and like many of the hill farms some would never be the same. The next day the massive job of cleaning up began. Shovels, wheelbarrows, and road

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scrapers were used to move the mud out of the houses and barns. Some people diverted water from wet weather springs into the house creating a flowing stream to flush out the mud. There was nothing much to be done to the heavily damaged fields except start a long-range rebuilding program.

The two river floods mentioned earlier caused damage to the homes that the flood water reached. Fortunately only a few were at low enough elevation to be affected. Other than the inconvenience of having the roads blocked, the school house flooded, and no mail service for a few days, the rest of the community was without damage. The people were accustomed to seeing the river get out of banks each winter, covering the low-lying land and blocking the roads. But during the winter of 1903 and 1929 the river rose to levels never seen before. The "back water" came above the window sills of the school house, opened the door, and guided the boat inside.

During the winter of 1941, the river caused much damage to the construction equipment at the Center Hill Dam site. The people of the community were not too sympathetic with the dam builder's plight, as they

had been warned of what to expect. The warning had fallen on deaf ears; the newcomers just couldn't believe the peaceful Caney Fork River could be such a tiger. This was the last fling for the Caney Fork at massive destruction. The building of the dam tamed the river and removed the threat of the annual floods.

Another disaster that affected the community was not recognized as such at the time; it was taking place because the people thought it was a temporary thing. This was the blight that killed most of the

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chestnut trees in the United States. Prior to the blight in 1927, a large number of huge chestnut trees could be found on all the ridges in the community. Some of these trees were five feet in diameter and over a hundred feet tall. No doubt the chestnut was one of the most useful trees in the community. The long, knot-free trunks were used for lumber of all types. The rot-resistant qualities of the wood made it an excellent material for outdoor building. The wood was easily shaped by splitting and hewing, therefore was a favorite for fence posts and rails and barn frames. The trees had a good market value, as they were used commercially as railroad ties and telephone poles.

The abundant crop of nuts and trees grew each year were the bread basket for many wildlife species. The nuts also provided a reliable food source for the people. No family would dare start out the winter without a few bushels of chestnuts on hand. They used them in many different recipes as well as roasting them in the fireplace for a between-meal snack.

When the blight first hit the trees, the people felt it was just for the season; and the trees would leaf-out again come spring. But this did not happen; all the young trees were dead and the old trees were heavily damaged. Some of the old giants hung on in a half dead state for a few years but the nuts they grew were diseased and would not reproduce.

For the next thirty years bleached skeletons of the chestnut trees dotted the woodland. Even in this dead, barkless state, the trees were a favorite building material. As the years went by, man, insects, and fire ate away the non-refurbishing tree. Now only the scant remnants of the once-majestic chestnut can be found.

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The economic depression that swept the country in the early 30's was regarded by many people as the most severe of hard times. Actually Long Branchers were affected far less than people in the cities. The reason being they were accustomed to living off the land, so they had plenty to eat and comfortable places to live.

The most undesirable effects were that there was no market for the farm produce. This reduced the cash income needed for items not produced on the farm. The people simply managed to get along without these items. They were glad, of course, when things started to improve in the late thirties and the income of the community increased. The following are some prices received for farm produce during the early 30's: hogs 2 cents per lb., tobacco (best grade) 2 cents per lb., corn 50 cents per bushel, eggs 10 cents per dozen, chickens 5 cents per lb., wool 10 cents per lb., and beef 4 cents per lb. Even at these low prices you were hard put to find a buyer.

One of the grimmest personal tragedies was the event involving Mr. and Mrs. Noah Maynard. This happened in the early 40's. Mr. and Mrs. Maynard were well along in years and quite feeble. They were living in a small house just over the ridge from Carlas Trapp's farm. Mr. Noah was confined to bed and his wife was trying to manage by herself. She was making a trip to the spring when she fell down the steps and broke her hip. Mr. Noah heard her calling for help and made his way to window to see what had happened. He realized he couldn't make it down the steps; therefore, he attempted to throw a quilt to her, hoping to give her some protection from the night air and rain. While leaning out the window to make the throw, his feet slipped and left him dangling across the window sill. He didn't have the strength to raise

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himself up so he died in this position. Although the road was only a short distance away, no one heard Mrs. Maynard's call for help and she lay in the yard from Friday until Monday. Fortunately Mrs. Susie Jackson came to visit them and discovered their predicament. Surprisingly Mrs. Maynard survived this ordeal and lived several years longer.

Another personal tragedy of great magnitude was the 1938 midnight robbing of Mrs. Sallie Dunham. The amount of money taken was insignificant. The act itself and the event that followed are what were so distasteful. At the time this happened Mrs. Dunham was living at her home with another elderly lady, Mrs. Cora Jones. The robbers came in the middle of the night, pounding on the door and shooting pistols. They demanded that Mrs. Dunham give them her money or they would break open the door and beat her up. Mrs. Dunham threw out a purse containing the small amount of money she had in the house. The robbers, realizing they had awakened a nearby neighbor (Mr. A. W. Maynard), grabbed the purse and fled in their car.

As might be expected this incident left Mrs. Dunham and Mrs. Jones in a fearful state. They were afraid to be alone at night. The neighbors took turns staying with them until a permanent arrangement could be made. At last Mrs. Dunham decided to move to the home of some of Mrs. Jones' relatives at Watertown. To Mrs. Dunham, who had lived all her life on Long Branch among old friends and neighbors, this must have been a dreadful move to make. She died a short time later. No doubt the act of the midnight robbers shortened her years.

This incident that drove this beloved elderly lady from her life-long home has to be the most heartless crime ever committed on Long Branch.

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The flu epidemic that swept the county in 1919-20 didn't spare Long Branch. Nearly every family was affected; to some it brought death. This flu is not to be confused with the present-day viruses that do no more than put you in bed a couple of days. This was the killer flu that left death and permanent disability in its wake. To make matters worse, whole families would be sick at one time. This would cause the least sick to try to take care of the others often causing the caretaker to go into a relapse and then a very serious condition. With only one or two doctors serving hundreds of people and without the aid of modern antibiotics, it is a miracle the death rate wasn't much greater.

For some families, death reached unbearable proportions. For example, the family of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. "Dosh" Kelley, (Jonice Denny's parents) had two children to die in a one-week period. With everyone else in the family sick, it took the strongest of people to survive the ordeal.

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PLANTING AND HARVESTING BY THE SIGNS AND MOON PHASES

As in many other communities, the people of Long Branch used the signs and phases of the moon for planting, harvesting, and other farm activities. The following customs do not give the complete set but show the more important ones.

1. Don't plant potatoes when the sign is in the feet. If you do the potatoes will be covered with little nubs. The best time to plant potatoes is in the dark of the moon in March.
2. Harvest potatoes and other root crops when the sign is in the knees or feet.
3. Harvest above ground crops, such as corn and wheat, when the moon is in the last quarter.
4. Never transplant when the sign is in the head or heart, the death signs.
5. Plant above-ground crops in the new of the moon.

6. Set eggs to hatch when the sign is in the breast.
7. Castrate pigs and calves when the sign is in the feet.
8. Can vegetables and make pickles during the last quarter of the moon.

The educated scholars of the subject will tell you there is no scientific evidence that the signs and moon phases have any effect on farm activities. They may be right; however, there is a connection between sign watchers and good yields. If a person is careful enough to

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watch the signs and moon phases, then he probably is careful about all other aspects of farming; so barring extreme weather conditions, he is going to have good luck with his farming activities.

Some other indicators and customs the people use:

1. When the leaf of the poplar tree is the size of a squirrel's ear it is time to plant corn.
2. Plant beans on Good Friday or the 100th day. Don't plant beans in the evening or the bloom will drop off before the bean forms.
3. If you plant anything on Sunday, the crop will be sure to fail.
4. If the frost is heavy enough to write your name in, it is cold enough to kill hogs.
5. If a skim of ice forms on a bucket of water (left outside overnight) it is cold enough to kill hogs. (On the subject of killing hogs, I don't know what my Uncle Grady Denny goes by but in all his years of hog killing, I have never known him to lose a bit of meat to spoilage).
6. If a handful of soil will form into a ball and not break apart when it is dropped, then it is too wet to plow.
7. If you do your churning in the morning you will make more butter.
8. When selecting seed corn use only the grains from the center of the ear. The small grains near the ends will produce small corn.
9. If a cow is facing east when bred the calf will be a heifer.

COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES

Some principles the people of the Long Branch Community observed closely. Although these items are not unique with this community, they were very much a part of their day-to-day life and anyone who violated them was frowned upon.

1. To sell a hog that would catch chickens, without telling the buyer before the sale was made.
2. To buy the last milk cow from a family with children.
3. To work on Sunday, except milking, feeding and watering the stock, and cooking three meals.
4. To sell eggs that a hen had sat on for more than two days.
5. To sell land with Johnson grass on it without telling the new owner.

6. To smoke in a barn.
7. To sleep late on weekdays.
8. To work a mule or horse without feeding it.
9. To show disrespect to an older person, no matter what the circumstances.
10. To loaf on the job.
11. To brag about your possessions, especially money.
12. To not help a neighbor in need.
13. To let your wife do the plowing.
14. For the husband to spend all the chicken and egg money.
15. For the wife to spend anything but the chicken and egg money.
16. To complain about the food you were eating (or lack of food).
17. To take the last piece of food on the serving plate.

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FAVORITE SAYINGS

Below are some of the sayings the people of the Long Branch Community used and still use to emphasize a point or to express their true feelings.

“Deader than a door nail.”

“Slick as a mole.”

“Full as a tick.”

“Crooked as a snake.”

“Mean as a snake.”

“Fine as cat hair.”

“Tight as a banjo string.”

“Slow as molasses.”

“Fat as a town dog.”

“Skinny as a rail.”:

“Quick as lightning.”

“Drunker than an owl.”

“Sweating like a nigger.”

“Tough as whit leather.”

“Soft as mush.”

“Black as a pot.”

“White as cotton.”

“Poor as a church mouse.”

“Rich as manure.”

“Open as a bootjack.”

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RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

Baseball, by far, has been the most popular team-type recreation of the community. In addition to being played regularly at school, the community had a team for many years. Usually the community team made a good showing and held their own with their opponent. Dr. A. H. Lancaster (formally of Lancaster, now of Knoxville) recently remarked of playing ball on Long Branch against some pretty good teams.

Some Long Branch players I remember that made other teams take notice.

1. Ben Hooper Malone, pitcher, had a fast ball that very few batter got a piece of.
2. Othel Dunham was a long ball hitter. If they didn't walk him, he usually put it over the fence.
3. Vernice Maynard, fly catcher at center field; if a man hit high to center he was caught out.
4. Joe Braswell pitched a mean curve ball that slipped by most bats.

Over the years there were many other good players; those mentioned are some I personally remember.

Volleyball was started as a school sport in the last 30's, but the sport caught the interest of the community and for a while some lively Saturday evening games were played by grown-ups as well as the students.

Hunting and fishing have always played an important part in community recreation. Granted, much of the hunting and fishing was to put meat on the table but it was enjoyed by all that participated. From the standpoint of hunting just for the sport of it, the fox hunters (fox chasers) were the leaders. They never intended on catching a fox; in fact they would have felt bad if they had caught one. They followed their sport just to listen to the “music” of the hounds.

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They put a lot of time and money in this sport and seemed to enjoy it tremendously. There were several men in the community that owned fox hounds but Wylie and Everett Maynard usually had the best. These two men were considered the authorities on fox hunting and any time a hunt was being arranged, they would be part of it.

Several men owned “tree” dogs which they used while hunting. These dogs aided the hunter by locating the game and then “treeing” it (by barking to let the hunters know something was up the tree). Some of the men to own good “tree” dogs were Grady Denny, John Fish, Frank Malone, Elmer Maynard and Clarence Jackson. We had some bird dog owners; John Maynard and Clarence Jackson were the most devoted bird hunters. Clarence was probably the best “wing shot” in the community.

Entertainment in homes (before television) consisted of playing the organ and singing, Rook games, checkers, “cross questions and crooked answers,” “sail my ship,” club fist, “Uncle Bob,” “Slap Sally,” ice-cream making, candy making, popcorn-ball making, telling riddles, hully-gully and “tacky” parties. June Denny (Braswell) is well known for giving “tacky” parties.

A lot of the community entertainment was centered around some type of work gathering. This is where a number of people would get together to help a family with large job then some type of entertainment connected with the gathering. In this way the job was finished in a short time and everyone enjoyed themselves at the same time. These jobs included pea shellings, cotton pickings, quilting, and corn shuckings.

One of the things about the corn shuckings was when a boy found a red ear of corn he got to kiss the girl of his choice. Now a red ear of corn doesn’t occur very often; so one young man I knew would bring a few red ears with him, hidden under his coat. Some time

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he would slip out one of the red ears, which of course entitled him to kiss his girl. All of this was taking place under the watchful and frowning eye of her father.

Some of the work gatherings for the men and boys only were barn raisings, wood cuttings, grubblings, wheat thrashings, log rollings and hog killings. These jobs were hard work, make no mistake about that, but everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, especially after a few visits to the special “water” keg one of the men would bring. One thing for sure about the work gatherings, the host family would serve one of the best meals you ever sat down to.

The community used a number of entertainment-type fund-raising projects. The most popular of these were pie suppers and cake walks. For you ‘younguns’ that have never been to a pie supper, here is what takes place. The women and girls make pies which they donate to the program. The pies are sold then to the highest bidder. The buyer not only gets the pie but also has earned the right to sit with the person that baked it. Now this created a lot of competition for the pies baked by the pretty girls. In a case where a boy was real sweet on a girl, without fail, he would have to pay a high price for her pie. What would happen is a group of men and boys would pool their funds and elect one of the group to bid against the love-stuck young man. With love and honor at stake, you can imagine the height of the bidding. I have seen a pie sell for as much as \$30 dollars, and this was when \$30 dollars was about two weeks work. This, of course, was delightful to the fund-raising committee.

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PRESENT RESIDENTS

Presently there are only nine homes occupied by descendants of the old time families; they are Mr. and Mrs. Grady Denny, Mrs. John Fish, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Fish, Mrs. Nettie Hayes, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Jackson, Mrs. Arthur Maynard, Mr. A. W#. Maynard and Mr. and Mrs. Carlas Trapp.

There are a few newcomers that have become very much a part of the community. They are Mr. and Mrs. Kruse, Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Whitmore and Mr. and Mrs. Rodger Weaver. The Kruses and Whitmores are part-time residents; the Weavers live here full time.

Odell Starnes, a former resident of Wolf Creek, has recently built a fine home at the junction of Long Branch and the river. This house is located at approximately the same spot where the original home of Bennett Braswell stood.

J. Harris and Mr. Dimick have recently bought land in the community. They bought the holdings of Harms Stanley (formerly T. Starnes and Robert Winfrey). We don't know if either of these men plan to live here.

There have been a number of new homes built along the east ridge overlooking the Center Hill Lake. This part of the community now tends to be regarded as sites of recreation and summer homes; therefore, we made no attempt to get the names of the property owners.

A pleasant note about the newcomers—they appear to like things as they are. They do not advocate any major changes, so perhaps Long Branch will retain the easy-going, uncomplicated way of life that has been the community's chief asset for so many years.

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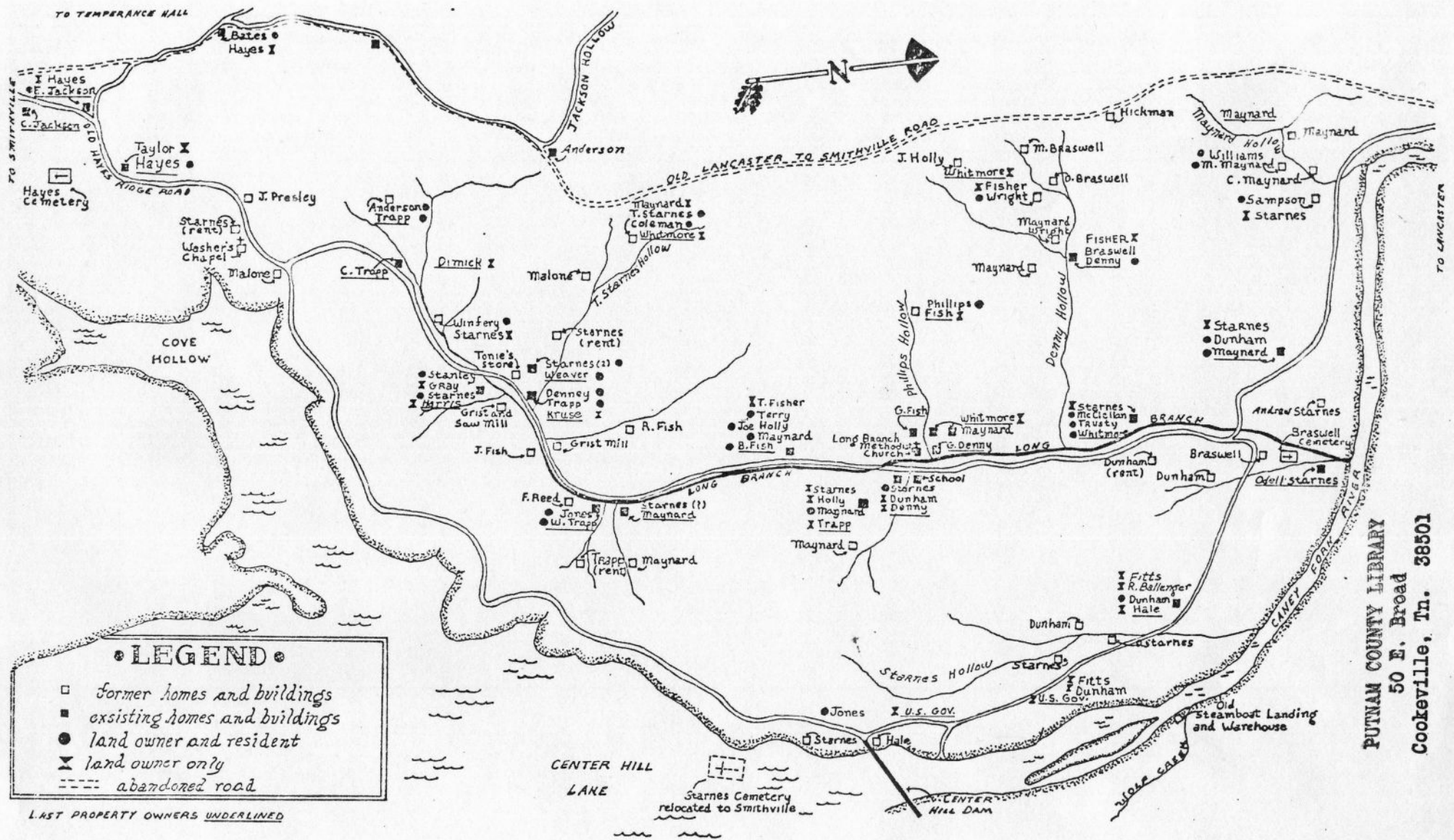
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LEGEND

- former homes and buildings
- existing homes and buildings
- land owner and resident
- ⌘ land owner only
- abandoned road

LAST PROPERTY OWNERS UNDERLINED

PUTNAM COUNTY LIBRARY
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