

Tennessee Cousins
A History of Tennessee People
By Worth S. Ray – 1950
Author of “The Lost Tribes of North Carolina”

Jefferson County, Tennessee
Where the First Settlers in Jefferson County Lived – pg. 99.

Goodspeed’s History gives us a fair idea of who the first settlers of Jefferson County were, and where in the County and surrounding country, they lived.

JEFFERSON COUNTY received its first contingent of pioneer families as early as 1783. At that time the territory included all of the present Hamblen, Cocke and Sevier counties.

Among the first were:

Robert McFarland
Alexander Outlaw
Thomas Jarnigan
James Hill
Wesley White
James Randolph
Joseph Copeland
Robert Gentry
James Hubbard

McFarland and Outlaw settled in what is now Hamblen County; Gentry and Hubbard in what afterwards became Sevier County.

CAPT. THOMAS JARNIGAN settled on the North side of “Chucky” River about 4 miles above its mouth. About 1784 he built the first mill in Jefferson Co. on Long Creek.

JAMES HILL lived about a mile below Captain Jarnigan.

WESLEY WHITE lived immediately opposite Taylor’s Bend.

ROBERT GENTRY’S home was four miles above the present DANDRIDGE.

JOSEPH COPELAND located seven miles above Dandridge on the South side of the French Broad.

As the settlements augmented and increased the following persons located their homes on the waters of Long Creek: NINIAN CHAMBERLAIN, THOMAS SNODDY and MATTHEW WALLACE.

RICHARD RANKIN, FREDERICK FULKERSON & others settled along Dumplin Creek.

BENJAMIN McFARLAND, HUGH KELSO, REV. ROBERT HENDERSON, PARMENEAS, TAYLOR, WILLIAM MOORE, GEORGE WILCOXON and WILLIAM GOFORTH located their homes on the North bank of the French Broad above Dandridge.

ADAM PECK came down from Virginia and made the first settlement on Mosby Creek (Jefferson City). His home stood just below where the town now is located.

ADAM MEEK (according to this account) settled on Beaver Creek in Quaker Valley in 1786. He then had no neighbor west of him, and he obtained his supplies from Greenville, many miles east. After that a man named Hazelitt built a mill on Beaver Creek. Later JAMES WALKER erected a mill there.

ALEXANDER McMILLAN settled in what is now Strawberry Plains in 1787, but later moved across the river into Knox County.

WILLIAM and SAMUEL COX lived in between Strawberry Plains and the present New Market.

COL. GEORGE DOHERTY in 1785 located west of the present Dandridge, at Shady Grove. He was Colonel of the militia in the days of the State of Franklin and took part in many of the military expeditions and wars that followed.

After the passing of the Franklin Government Jefferson County was established by an order of Governor William Blount, June 11, 1792, contemporaneously with Knox County. Both counties were cut off from Hawkins and Greene Counties.

Jefferson County, Tennessee
<http://web.utk.edu/%7Ekizzer/jefferson/history.htm#form>
by Billie R. McNamara

Jefferson County, formed in 1792 from Hawkins and Greene Counties, is located in East Tennessee, one of the state's three "grand divisions." It is bordered by "sister" counties Knox and Grainger, and its "children," Cocke, Sevier, and Hamblen Counties.



Jefferson County, named for President and statesman Thomas Jefferson, was erected June 11, 1792, while present-day East Tennessee was still part of the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio (also called the "Southwest Territory"). Portions of Greene and Hawkins Counties were taken to form Jefferson County. Sevier (1794),

Cocke (1797), and Hamblen (1870) Counties were later formed by dividing part of Jefferson County. A small portion of Blount County, near Walland, was contained in the original boundaries of Jefferson County. For a short time during Tennessee's early history, the area of Jefferson County was included in Caswell County, of the short-lived State of Franklin (or Frankland, as sometimes written by historians and contemporary writers). In the early history of the County, residents occasionally petitioned the Tennessee Legislature for relief in the form of minor boundary changes. One often-affected area was along the modern junction of Jefferson, Sevier, and Knox Counties.

First Settlers

The first recorded settlers arrived in present-day Jefferson County in 1783. Those who established homesteads were men renowned in the early history of Tennessee. Early pioneers include:

William Bradshaw
Ninian Chamberlain
Joseph Copeland
William Cox
Samuel Cox
George Doherty
Frederick Fulkerson
Robert Gentry
William Goforth
Rev. Robert Henderson
James Hill
James Hubbard
Thomas Jarnagin
Hugh Kelso
Robert McFarland
Alexander McMillin
Adam Meek
John Mills
William Moore
Alexander Outlaw
Adam Peck
James Randolph
Richard Rankin
James Roddy(e)
Thomas Snoddy
Thomas Stockton
Parmenas Taylor
Matthew Wallace
Wesley White
George Willcoxon

It is likely that some early families, including the Burchfiels and Russells, were living in the Cherokee territory south of the French Broad River at the time the first settlers arrived in present-day Jefferson County. No records have been found to substantiate their arrival in the county.

Communities

Dandridge, the county seat, was organized in 1793. It has long been promoted as the second-oldest city in Tennessee. Morris' Tennessee Gazetteer(1) lists four post offices in Jefferson County in 1834: Dandridge, Mossy Creek (now Jefferson City), New Market, and Oak Grove. The county's newest incorporated city is Baneberry. New Market, White Pine, and Jefferson City are also incorporated cities. Major unincorporated communities are Strawberry Plains, Talbott, and Chestnut Hill. The city of Morristown, which was included in Jefferson County until Hamblen County was formed in 1870, has begun annexation proceedings across the Jefferson County boundary near the Talbott community.

Other towns and settlements in the county are shown in Table 1. Please note that some of those listed in Table 1 became part of Hamblen County when it formed in 1870. Small communities in the county were usually named by their residents for nearby geographic features, first settlers, or large farms. A star in the following list indicates the community had a post office.

Jefferson County, Tennessee - Topography & Migration

Topography

English Mountain and Bays Mountain are significant land formations in Jefferson County. Both the Holston and French Broad Rivers, major navigation routes for early Tennessee settlers, flow through the county to their junction north of Knoxville, where they form the Tennessee River. Knoxville has always been the major regional market town for Jefferson Countians.

Jefferson County Regional Setting

The Tennessee Valley Authority built two dams that affect Jefferson County: Cherokee (closed 1941), on the Holston River north of Jefferson City; and Douglas (closed 1943), on the French Broad. Although Douglas Dam is just over the border in Sevier County, most of the flooded land is in Jefferson County. When the dams were closed, numerous creeks, roadways, settlements, graveyards, and homes were lost. TVA maintains records of the structures and burials that were removed.

In 1834, Jefferson County was served by three stage coach routes. Later in the 19th Century, railroads and riverboats also provided transportation of goods and people. Prior to public transportation, pioneers on foot and horseback followed established paths into East Tennessee. Thomas Preston wrote of one path in 1926:

"From 1740 until the Revolutionary War this migration continued [from near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to the Shenandoah Valley near Winchester, Virginia], many of the hardy frontiersmen pushing on down the Holston Valley into the Cumberland settlements of Tennessee and through Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. A well-defined buffalo trail extended from Harper's Ferry down the Shenandoah Valley to Big Lick [Roanoke], Va., thence westward to the headwaters of the Holston River, thence following the Holston Valley to Long Island [Kingsport].

As early as 1760, Col. William Byrd cut out a road following the old buffalo trail from Big Lick, Va., to Long Island. ... Practically all of the early settlers of southwestern Virginia, eastern Tennessee and Kentucky passed over this route in search of their new homes. The Lee Highway [U.S. Highway 11] ... follows this old route for more than two hundred miles."(1)

Historian J. G. M. Ramsey described in detail how the Great Warrior Trail, used by many white settlers to reach Jefferson County, transected East Tennessee:

"Besides its central position and its direct bearing, the great Apalachian [sic] chain could no where else be so easily ascended and crossed. ... One branch of it was nearly the same as the present stage route passing the Big Lick, in Bottetourt [sic] county, Virginia; crossing New River at old Fort Chissel, near Inglis' Ferry, Holston at the Seven Mile Ford, thence to the left of the present stage road and near to the river, to the North Fork [of the Holston River], crossing as at present; thence to Big Creek [Hawkins County] and crossing the Holston at Dodson's Ford, to the Grassy Springs, near the residence of the late Micajah Lea; thence down the waters of Nollichucky to Long Creek, ascending that stream to its source, and descending Dumplin Creek to a point a few miles from its mouth, where the path deflected to the left and crossed French Broad near Buckingham's Island. Near this, the path divided."(2)

TN Roads pre-1800

TN Roads Before 1800

Created by Billie R. McNamara from various sources

Inside Jefferson County, most of the major roads shown on modern maps existed by the time of the Civil War. An 1869 map of Tennessee(3) shows the following major routes in Jefferson County:

- * Dandridge to Mecklenburg (in East Knox County) via Wilson's Gap
- * Dandridge to Henry's Crossroads, with a fork to Sevierville
- * Dandridge to Mossy Creek (with fork to New Market)

- * Dandridge to Whitesburg via Springvale
- * Dandridge to Greeneville
- * Dandridge to "South of the French Broad River" -- 3 different roads
- * New Market to Mossy Creek
- * Mossy Creek to Whitesburg
- * Mossy Creek to Blaine via Nance's Ferry
- * Mossy Creek to Newport via Leadvale
- * Talbott to Horshoe Bend (where Panther Creek meets the Holston River)
- * The road from Sevierville to Newport passed through, north of English Mountain

Secondary roads went from New Market and Mossy Creek to Oar's Ferry, which provided access to Grainger County.

Railroads

The East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad provided the primary service to Jefferson County. The track traversed the County from Strawberry Plains to Russellville. This track is still in use.

Ferries

Owners of ferries were required to petition the County Court for permission to establish a ferry, whether it was for public or private use. McBee's Ferry, located near Strawberry Plains, was extremely important to the development of Jefferson County. This ferry, built just after the Revolutionary War, was -- for many years - the only way to cross the Holston River between modern-day Kingsport and Knoxville.

Early Ferries

James Campbell Cowan Elliott
 Emert Peter Fine Thomas Flippen
 Harrison Lowrie Marshall
 McBee (predates Jeff. County) Moore Nance
 Neilly Nichols Oar [Ore]
 Pope Mathew Roulstone Russell
 John Seahorn (predates Jeff. County) John Turner

1. Thomas Preston, "Sketch Sixteen - Frontier Roads," Historical Sketches of the Holston Valley (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, 1926), pp. 181-182.

2. J. G. M. Ramsey, The Annals of Tennessee to the End of the Eighteenth Century... (Charleston, SC: Walker & Jones, 1853; reprint ed., Knoxville, TN: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1967), pp. 87-88.

3. Colton's Map of the State of Tennessee (New York: G. W. & C. B. Colton, 1869).

Jefferson County, Tennessee
Historic Businesses

Business & Industry

The Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce (532 Patriot Drive, Dandridge, TN 37725) can provide information on local businesses. It would be impossible to compile a complete history of businesses in Jefferson County.

The Jefferson County Museum & Archives (located in the Courthouse) has several business account books and day books (ledgers) that cover the approximate period 1802-1930. There are no indications on most of these books as to which merchant kept them. Because of their fragile condition, they are not open for public inspection. A list of those records can be found in Guide to Genealogical and Historical Research in Jefferson County, Tennessee, by Billie R. McNamara.

The County Clerk's office has records of Merchants' Licenses that were granted by the County as early as 1835. Two large, early general merchants that survived into the 20th Century were Minnis (New Market) and Gass (Dandridge).

Possibly the earliest businessman in Jefferson County was Jesse Cheek, who established a trading post that became known as Cheek's Crossroads (now Russellville).

Dandridge quickly became the center of commerce for Jefferson County. John Fain was probably the county's earliest merchant, opening his store in Dandridge in 1810. Mossy Creek was served by Thomas Humes before 1795. The earliest Strawberry Plains merchant was a Mr. Williams (1810).

Some of the earliest businesses were ordinaries (inns and taverns), whose existence and rates charged for rooms, meals and beverages, and personal services were legislated by the Jefferson County Court. The earliest were run by Edward George (1795), John Coulter, Alexander Outlaw, William Robinson, Jeremiah Shelley, James Roddy(e), James Doherty, Thomas Jarnigan (1793), and James Jack.

Tradespeople were well-established by the time Jefferson County formed. They were concentrated around Dandridge. Some of the trades represented were blacksmith, saddler, tailor, tanner, cabinet-maker, and cobbler.

Grist mills important to residents of the growing County. Owners of mills were required to petition the County Court for permission to establish a mill, whether it was for public or private use. Often, owners of grist mills also had distilleries on-site. The Dumplin Mill may have been in operation before Jefferson County was established.

Early grist mills included the following:

Blackburn
Thomas Busby
William Cate
Spencer Clack (public)
Mary Clendenan
Cook
Cox
Dameron
Derick
George Dorden [Doherty?]
Dumplin (public)
Thomas Flippen
French George Gorden (?)
Harrison
William Hazlett
Hill
Hodges
James Hubbard
Hunnicut
Thomas Jarnigan
Robert King
Lillard
Mill Springs (formerly Cox's)
Miller
Myers
Adam Peck
Alexander Shadden
Thomas Stockdon [Stockton] (public)
John Tillery (public)
Tubb (became Hazlett)
James Walker (formerly Hazlett's)

Jefferson County's first industrial activity has long been thought to have been Haynes Iron Works, established on Mossy Creek before Tennessee statehood. Tradition holds that Christopher Haynes established the business to secure a grant for the adjoining land, but Court records indicate the Iron Works may have been sold to Haynes by Nicholas Perkins. (Perkins Iron Works is noted in the original boundaries of Jefferson County in 1792). Perkins received a grant for land on Mossy Creek in 1792; Christopher Haynes received his grant in 1794, for land on Mossy Creek adjoining Nicholas Perkins. Later known as Mossy Creek Iron Works, it continued operation until after the Civil War. County Court Minutes from 1800 mention "works on Dumplin Creek," but the nature of the activity is not included in the record.

Other important activities include a powder mill in operation by 1810 in Mossy Creek and Samuel McSpadden's powder mill in the Shady Grove community (opened 1812). Several textile mills have operated in the county.

* View a List of Business Record Books at the Jefferson County Museum & Archives

Hospitals & Clinics

The earliest recorded doctor in Jefferson County Court Minutes is a Dr. Irvin in 1796. Since 1960, Jefferson County has been served by only one hospital, Jefferson Memorial. Few medical institutions have existed within the County. Early physicians practiced medicine in their offices, which were usually located in their homes. Hospitals and clinics identified are as follows:

Name

Location

Dates

Sullenberger Clinic Dandridge circa 1947 - circa 1960

Mossy Creek Hospital

(also called "Manley Clinic") Jefferson City 1933 - unknown

Jefferson City Hospital

(also called "McCowan Hospital" and "Justice Clinic") Jefferson City 1930's

Milligan Clinic Jefferson City 1947 - 1969

Jefferson Memorial Hospital Jefferson City 1800 Bishop Avenue, Jefferson City, TN 37760

Unconfirmed hospital in Branner family home Dandridge circa 1900

Newspapers

As far as can be determined, only a few Jefferson County newspapers have been published. Existing issues have been microfilmed. A few original editions are in archive collections. An article in a 1962 edition of the Dandridge Banner stated the county had been "served over 150 years" by newspapers.

The Knoxville Gazette, first published in 1791 by **George Roulstone**, was read in Jefferson County. After moving to Knoxville, **Roulstone** also served as Postmaster. As such, he handled mail for most of East Tennessee. Everyone traveling through the territory was an ad hoc mail carrier. **Roulstone** also opened a private postal service, with the goal of increasing subscriptions to his newspaper. This regular post connected area residents on a weekly basis:

He will set out every other Monday, and go by Maryville to Sevierville; from thence, by Dandridge, to Hugh Neilson's, Esq., on Lick Creek; from thence to Hawkins' Court-House; and from thence, by Haine's Iron Works, crossing at McBee's Ferry, to Knoxville.

The route was expected to be extended as subscribers were added. Other papers, published in Knoxville, Rogersville, Morristown, Newport, and Sevierville, have provided Jefferson County coverage through the years.

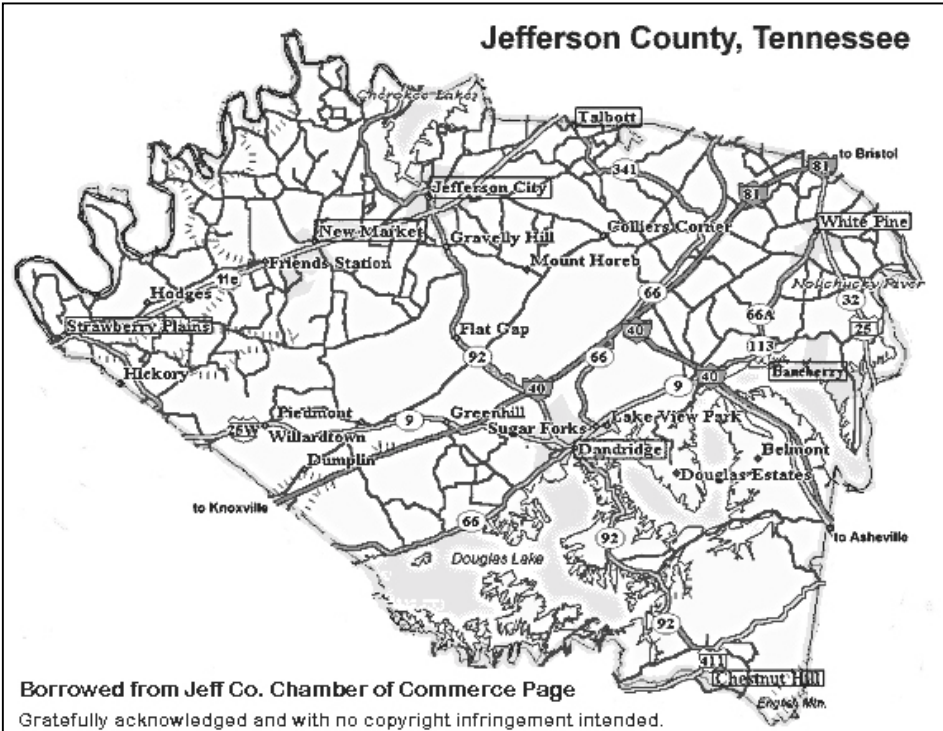
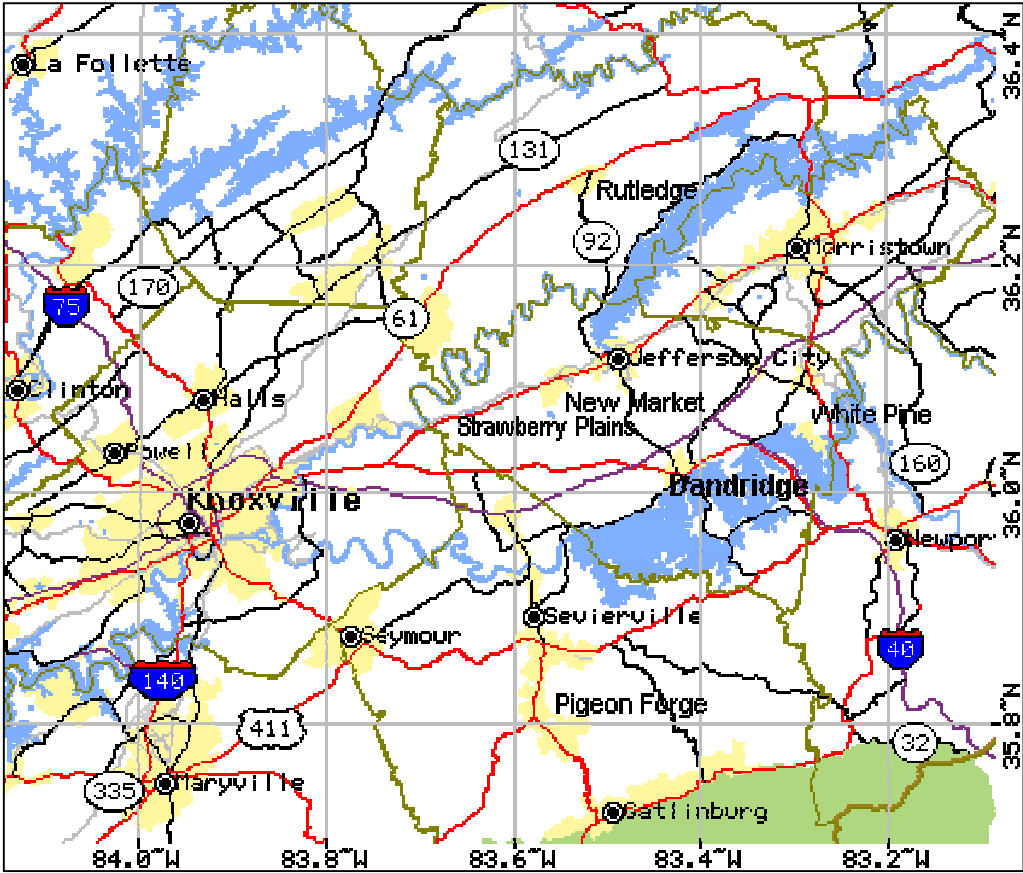
The Standard Publishing Company (P. O. Box 310, Jefferson City, TN 37760) publishes Jefferson County's largest local newspaper bi-weekly. It has original volumes of the Jefferson County Standard-Banner from approximately 1965. Dale Gentry is Editor.

The following table contains a list of known Jefferson County newspapers and their dates of publication:

Newspaper Name	Dates of Publication
New Market Telegraph	1831- unknown
Dandridge Herald	1854-unknown
American Statesman	circa 1857-unknown -- moved to Morristown, TN
Mossy Creek Lancet	1873-unknown
Dandridge Weekly Watchman	1877-1883; became Sevierville Republican
Watchman & Reporter	circa 1881-unknown
Republican Banner	circa 1881-circa 1887; merged with Morristown Pilot
The Visitor Mossy Creek	1886-unknown
The Dandridge Weekly News	circa 1892-unknown
Mossy Creek News Bureau	circa 1896-unknown
Weekly Register	1897
Dandridge News-Visitor	circa 1898-unknown
The Watchman	circa 1899-circa 1927 or 1930
The Jefferson County News	circa 1914-1920
(The) Jefferson County Standard	circa 1918 to 1965
Dandridge Star	circa 1923-1926?
Dandridge Banner	circa 1928-1965
Jefferson County Standard-Banner	1965-1980
The Standard-Banner	1980-present

A detailed list of issues that have been microfilmed and that exist in their original format is included in Guide to Genealogical and Historical Research in Jefferson County, Tennessee, by Billie R. McNamara.

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Dandridge Tennessee - American Civil War
January 17, 1864

Union forces under Maj. Gen. John G. Parke advanced on Dandridge, Tennessee, near the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad, on January 14, forcing Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's Confederate troops to fall back. Longstreet, however, moved additional troops into the area on the 15th to meet the enemy and threaten the Union base at New Market. On the 16th, Brig. Gen. Samuel D. Sturgis, commanding the Cavalry Corps, Army of the Ohio, rode forward to occupy Kimbrough's Crossroads. Within three or four miles of his objective, Sturgis's cavalry met Rebel troops, forcing them back towards the crossroads. As the Union cavalry neared the crossroads, they discovered an enemy infantry division with artillery that had arrived the day before. The Union cavalry could not dislodge these Rebels and was compelled to retire to Dandridge. About noon the next day, Sturgis received information that the Confederates were preparing for an attack so he formed his men into line of battle. About 4:00 pm, the Confederates advanced and the fighting quickly became general. The battle continued until after dark with the Federals occupying about the same battle line as when the fighting started. The Union forces fell back to New Market and Strawberry Plains during the night, but the Rebels were unable to pursue because of the lack of cannons, ammunition, and shoes. For the time being, the Union forces left the area. The Confederates had failed to destroy or capture the Federals as they should have.

Result(s): Confederate victory

Location: Jefferson County

Campaign: Operations about Dandridge, Tennessee (1863-64)

Date(s): January 17, 1864

Principal Commanders: Brig. Gen. Samuel D. Sturgis [US]; Lt. Gen. James Longstreet [CS]

Forces Engaged: Cavalry Corps, Army of the Ohio, and Infantry of the IV Army Corps [US]; Department of East Tennessee [CS]

Estimated Casualties: Total unknown (US 150; CS unknown)

Tennessee State Battle Map
State Battle Maps
American Civil War Exhibits
Civil War Timeline
Women in the War

Sources:
U.S. National Park Service
U.S. Library of Congress.

Dandridge, Tennessee, about 30 miles east of Knoxville. Dandridge is the second oldest town in Tennessee and is steeped in tradition. Nestled near the foothills of the Smoky Mountains on Douglas Lake, Dandridge is the only town in the United States to bear the maiden name of our country's first lady, **Martha Dandridge Custis Washington**. Settled in 1783, Dandridge is a town of natural beauty and history. Many of the historic homes are still standing, several of them occupied by businesses in the downtown area. The entire downtown area of Dandridge is listed on the National Historic Register.