

Askew Family: pictured right:

The J.T. Askew family
celebrate the newest

arrival to their family. Representing four
generations are, from left. Jephtha Tubb Askew
III, Jaynie Vize, his daughter; Steve Sargent, his
grandson; and Haley and Rebeka Sargent, his
great-granddaughters.

Herald Citizen Newspaper, Cookeville, TN
12 May 2004

BUFFALO VALLEY
West End of Putnam County
Third Generation From Early Settlers
Tennessee Central Railroad
By Jephtha Tubb Askew III
Pictorial History of Putnam Co., Tennessee

Pg. 75



I lived the first twenty-three years of my life in Buffalo Valley — from 1919 to 1942, at which time I went into World War II. My father, Jephtha Tubb Askew II was Depot Agent from 1899 to 1905. Prohibition had come in about time I was born. This affected the shipment of barrels of whiskey, which came into the Depot of Buffalo Valley. The Depot of Buffalo Valley had a wooden floor about four feet high off the ground. Sometimes someone would crawl under the floor and with a brace and bit, bore a hole through the floor and hit a barrel and steal the whiskey. So they put an armor plate on the floor and that put a stop of having empty barrels.

(Picture left: Buffalo Valley Depot was built about 1897. Sibol Pinkston is standing on the dock. Photo courtesy of J.T. Askew III).

For years before prohibition, Buffalo Valley had an open saloon which was located about where Maxwell's old store house is located today.

Buffalo Valley had a tobacco warehouse, where tons of tobacco was sold, and shipped out by rail. That was the only transportation at that time, except a river boat or wagon.

My father told of driving big flocks of turkeys from Granville and surrounding areas, to be loaded train cars and shipped to New York, Chicago and other large cities. As soon as it began to get dark, the turkeys would fly up into the trees to roost. So the drivers would just have to pitch camp for the night. This meant that enough food had to be taken for the turkeys and their drivers.

Before the railroad — and also competing with the railroads — river boats would bring loads of salt, in, and other products to be sold at Buffalo Valley.

Buffalo Valley was the shipping point for all the surrounding communities, such as Granville, Chestnut Mound, Martins Creek, and some of DeKalb and Smith Counties. Livestock was shipped out of Buffalo Valley by train loads. Two weeks out of the year, Buffalo Valley would beat the Nashville stock yards in shipping livestock. They would bring locomotives and caboose and take out a train from Buffalo Valley.

We children always watched for the trains with several chicken cars, as we would always get a few eggs to sell while the car was on the side track.

Buffalo Valley was a thriving busy community in the roaring twenties. Times were good. Everybody was buying a new car for \$500.00 or less. Some never did even learn to drive it. The Buffalo Valley mail carrier, Claude Garrison, was busy teaching people to drive their new cars. Flat tires were the most common thing. You were lucky to go twenty miles without having a flat. The roads were bad. Horse and buggy was still the best and surest way to get there.

During the time I was growing up, business was at its best with a bank, four stores with full lines of merchandise, one store sold ten suits of clothes on Saturday. They also had hand cranked Victrolas, or record players. There was a drug store, restaurant, car dealership, two saw mills, two grist mills. The business men that I recall were Z.A. Medley, Walter Shanks, Walter Jared, Wirt Sanders, R.L. Maxwell, T.D. Alcorn, Cleve Burch and Pete Gill. Saturday was always a big day. One lady from Chestnut Mound and one from Rock Springs would come to Buffalo Valley to make hats for the ladies.

About three times a year would be Mule Day. People would bring mules and horses to Buffalo Valley to be sold. The buyers would come from all parts to buy: Grisson, Heron, and Taylor were names of some of the buyers. Several car loads would be shipped out that day.



High Waters in Buffalo Valley
Photo courtesy of Ralph H. Wirt
Pg. 132, Putnam County, Tennessee 1850-1970 by
Mary JeanDeLozier

Floods and backwater was an exciting and damaging thing in those days. Water would cover Buffalo up for a few days every so often. Every family had to move out to higher ground. The railroad company would bring in box cars for people to live in until the water went down.

Another thing that we children looked forward to was train wrecks and derails. We were hoping the train would wreck so we could go see the work crew take up the wreck. Several crew other

stations would come to help. It was something to see the big steam wrecker (as it was call and lift the cars back on the rail. The work crews would bring their own camp cars to eat and sleep and bring their cook to fix the meals. I talked to two ladies just recently who cooked for the railroad work crews.

During World War II, I rode the Tennessee Central to Harriman and transferred to the Southern to get to Knoxville in order to get to the coast, as I was in the Navy.

My father worked on the railroad while they were building the line through Buffalo Valley. He a water boy, as he was very young — born in 1878. He told of a steel crow bar being dropped off river bridge at Caney Fork. It went through a worker from the shoulder all the way through his He would talk to the other men as though he was O.K., until they pulled it out. Then he died perhaps from shock.

My grandfather gave the land to make the right of way for the railroad, so they offered him a pass to ride the train for life, or an underpass. He took the underpass.

The passenger train going East about noon would stop at Buffalo Valley and all passengers and would eat at the Bob Kerr's, near the depot.

Before I was a teenager, there were six passenger trains; three east and three west. They commonly known as “(the Westbound) Early”; “Shopper”; and “Evening”; “(the Eastbound) Noon “Shopper”; and “Midnight.” After 1930 only four continued.

Buffalo Valley had its heyday some called it Little Egypt. People came to get food and supplies, their barter, or even to borrow money from the bank.

There was a common saying in those days “no land for sale in Buffalo Valley.”



Jeptha Tubb Askew I (1840 – 1927). Son of Tom Askew and Malinda Tubb Askew.
Grandfather of Jeptha Tubb Askew, III of Silver Point, Putnam Co., TN.

Picture courtesy of

Jeptha Tubb Askew III.

Picture found in the book, Pictorial History of Putnam County, Tennessee on pg. 107.



Jeptha Tubb Askew, II home was the first or second house built in Buffalo Valley. The house stood across the road to the west of the old bank building which used to house the Post Office. Seated on the steps is Jeptha Tubb Askew II and his wife. The other people are unidentified. *Comparing pictures I would say the man sitting on the porch is Jeptha Tubb Askew I.*

Picture found in the book, Pictorial History of Putnam County, Tennessee on pg. 201.



Buffalo Valley in 1921. Cleve Burch and daughter Kathleen. Note the livery buggy with metal wheels. The house to the right of the store was the old Smith home. Mr. Burch was the store operator.
Picture courtesy of Erlene Mikitka.

(Herald Citizen Newspaper: March 27, 1930) A Lebanon attorney, Walter Faulkner, filed suit this week on behalf of 22 Buffalo Valley property owners who say the Tennessee Electric Power Co. owes them for damages to their homes and businesses in the flood of 1929, which about washed away Buffalo Valley.

They contend that the flooding resulted from the erection of a dam at Rock Island by the company. They are asking for damages ranging from \$100 to \$3,500.

1900 Census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN

Dwl: 173 Family: 173

Askew, Johnson Head M W July 1841 58 Married (30 yrs. married) Farmer TN TN TN

Askew, Nancy E. Wife F W September 1844 55 Married (30 yrs. married) (8 children born, 8 children living) TN TN TN

Askew, Win S. Son M W January 1871 29 Single TN TN TN

Askew, Jep T. Son M W February 1878 22 Single TN TN TN

(Jeptha "Jeff" Tubb Askew md Etta Terry)

Askew, Berthie Dau F W February 1883 17 Single TN TN TN

(Bertha Askew md Robert Lonzo "Doll" Maxwell)

Askew, Audrey Dau F W October 1888 11 Single TN TN TN

Pullum, Mollie Dau F W February 1873 27 Married (11 yrs. married) (6 children born, 2 children living) TN TN TN

Pullum, Charlie Grandson M W February 1894 6 Single TN TN TN

Pullum, John Grandson M W April 1896 4 Single TN TN TN

Ford, Daisy Granddaughter F W June 1897 2 Single TN TN TN

Ford, Flora Granddaughter F W October 1898 1 Single TN TN TN

1910 Census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN

Dwl: 13 Family: 14

Askew, John T. Head 69 M W (48 yrs. married) Farmer TN TN TN

Askew, Nancy E. Wife 65 F W (48 yrs. married) (11 children born, 6 children living) TN TN TN

Dwl: 13 Family: 15

Maxwell, R. L. Son-in-Law 28 M W Married2 (2 yrs. married) Farm Laborer TN TN TN

(Robert Lonzo "Doll" Maxwell)

Maxwell, Bertha Dau 17 F W Married1 (2 yrs. married) (2 children born, 1 child living) TN TN TN

Maxwell, Ernest Grandson 2 M W Single TN TN TN

(Ernest O'Neal Maxwell md Viva Younger)

1910 Census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN

Dwl: 59 Family: 61

Askew, Jep. T. Head 32 M W Married1 (9 yrs. married) Farmer TN TN TN

Askew, Etter Wife 32 F W Married1 (9 yrs. married) (4 children born, 4 children living) TN TN TN

Askew, John Son 8 M W Single TN TN TN

Askew, Thomas Son 6 M W Single TN TN TN

Askew, Luceal Dau 4 F W Single TN TN TN

Askew, Buford Son 18/12 M W Single TN TN TN

Williams, Jackie Brother-in-Law 16 Single TN TN TN

1920 Census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN

Dwl: 24 Family: 26

Askew, John T. Head 79 M W Widow TN TN TN

Askew, Jep T. son 42 M W Married Farmer TN TN TN

Askew, Etta, daughter-in-law F W 42 Married TN TN TN

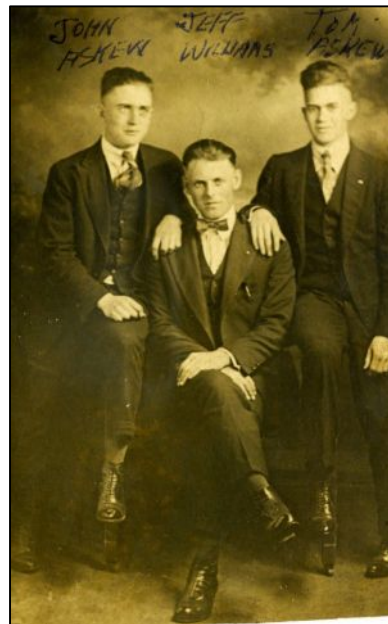
Askew, John grandson M W 18 Single TN TN TN

Askew, Thomas grandson M W 16 Single TN TN TN

Askew, Luceal granddaughter F W 14 Single TN TN TN

Askew, Sam grandson 10 M W Single TN TN TN

Askew, Robert grandson 4 4/12 M W Single TN TN TN



L to R: John Askew, Jeff Williams & Tom Askew.

John & Tom Askew, sons of Jeptha "Jeff" Tubb II & Etta Terry.

Askew, Jeph J. Askew grandson 8/12 M W Single TN TN TN
Elrod, Audra daughter F W 32 widow TN TN TN
Elrod, Wilburn grandson 10 single TN TN TN
Elrod, John grandson 8 single TN TN TN

1930 Census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN

Dwl: 23 Family: 24 Line: 94

Askew, J. T. Head 52 M W Married (22 yrs. old 1st marriage) Farmer TN TN TN
Askew, Etta Wife 52 F W Married (22 yrs. old 1st marriage) TN TN TN
Askew, Thomas Son 26 M W Single TN TN TN
Askew, *can't make out the name* Son 18 M W Single TN TN TN
Askew, Bob Son 14 M W Single TN TN TN
Askew, Jep Son 11 M W Single TN TN TN

1930 Census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN

Dwl: 23 Family: 25

Askew, John Head 28 M W Married (26 yrs. old 1st marriage) Laborer Farm TN TN TN
Askew, Maude Wife 24 F W Married (22 yrs. old 1st marriage) TN TN TN
Askew, Patsey Dau 7/12 F W Single TN TN TN

ASKEW FAMILY BURIED IN SMELLAGES CEMETERY, Putnam Co., TN

Ford, Malinda – b. 25 February 1873, TN – d. 15 June 1908 - (*w/o L. G. Ford*).
(*d/o Johnson "John" & Nancy Elizabeth Askew*) (* See John "Johnson" Askew).

1880 Census: 11th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN

Dwl: 27 Family: 30

John T. ASKEW Head M W 39 Merchant TN TN TN *Johnson "John" T. Askew*
Elizabeth ASKEW Wife F W 35 Keeps House TN TN TN *Elizabeth Askew, maiden name unknown*
Benjamin ASKEW Son M W 13 TN TN TN
Molley ASKEW Dau F W 11 TN TN TN
Winfield S. ASKEW Son M W 9 TN TN TN *Winfield "Win" Askew*
Malinda ASKEW Dau F W 7 TN TN TN *Malinda "Mollie" Askew md L.G. Ford*
Rilda S. ASKEW Dau F W 5 TN TN TN
Jeptha ASKEW Son M W 2 TN TN TN *Jeptha Tubb Askew*
Fern? REASONOVER B F 18 Servant Single TN TN TN

Ford, Flora – b. 20 June 1898, TN – d. 16 November 190?
(* See John "Johnson" Askew).

*Askew, Johnson "John" T. – b. 9 July 1840, TN – d. 14 February 1927

(1900 census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN: Dwl: 173 – Johnson "John" T. Askew, b. July 1841, TN, is head of household, b. July 1841, TN md 30 yrs. to Nancy Elizabeth, b. September 1844, 8 children born, 8 children living – Children: Winfield "Win" S., b. January 1871, Jeptha Tubb Askew, b. 17 February 1878, Berthie, b. February 1883, Audry, b. October 1888. All born in TN. Living with the family is their daughter, Mollie Askew Pullum, b. February 1873 & her children, Charley Pullum, b. February 1894, & John Pullum, b. April 1896. All born in TN. Also living in the household: Daisy Ford, granddaughter, b. June 1897, TN & Flora Ford, granddaughter, b. October 1898, TN).

(1920 census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN: Dwl: 24 – John T. Askew is head of household, 79 yrs. old, TN widow – Living with him is the family of his son, Jeptha Tubb Askew. Jeptha Tubb Askew is 42 yrs. old, married to Etta, 42 yrs. old, TN – Children: John, 18 yrs. old, Thomas, 16 yrs. old, Luceal, dau., 14 yrs. old, Sam(?) 10 yrs. old, Robert, 4 4/12(?) yrs. old & Jeptha Akew Jr., 8/12 yrs. old. All born in TN. Living also with John Askew is his daughter Audra Elrod/Elnod(?) with her children, Wilburn, 10 yrs. old, TN & John, 8 yrs. old, TN).

*Askew, Nancy Elizabeth – b. 14 September 1844, TN – d. 16 November 1916

(1910 census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN: Dwl:13 – John T. Askew is head of household, b. ca. 1841, TN md 48 yrs. old to Nancy Elizabeth, b. ca. 1845, TN, 11 children born, 6 children living. Living with them is: R.L. Maxwell, son-in-law, 28 yrs. old, (married twice), Bertha, dau., 17 yrs. old, (married once), 2 children born, 1 child living – Child: Ernest Maxwell, 2 yrs. old. All born in TN).

Askew, Thomas B. – b. 17 December 1903, TN – d. 16 July 1977
(s/o Jephtha “Jeff” Tubb Askew II & Etta Terry. *See Jephtha “Jeff” Tubb Askew).

*Askew, Jephtha “Jeff” Tubb II – b. 17 February 1878, TN – d. 8 September 1963
Buried: Smellage Cemetery, Boma, Putnam Co., TN
(s/o Johnson “John” T. & Nancy Elizabeth Askew. *See John T. Askew). (1910 census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN: Dwl: 59 – Jep T. Askew, is head of household md 9 yrs. to Etta “Etter” Terry, 4 children born, 4 children living – Children: John , b. ca. 1902, Thomas B., b. ca. 1904, Luceal, dau., b. ca. 1906 & Buford, son, age 18/12. All born in TN. Living with them is Jackie Williams, Brother-in-law, 16 yrs. old, Single, born in TN). (*See Johnson “John” T. Askew).

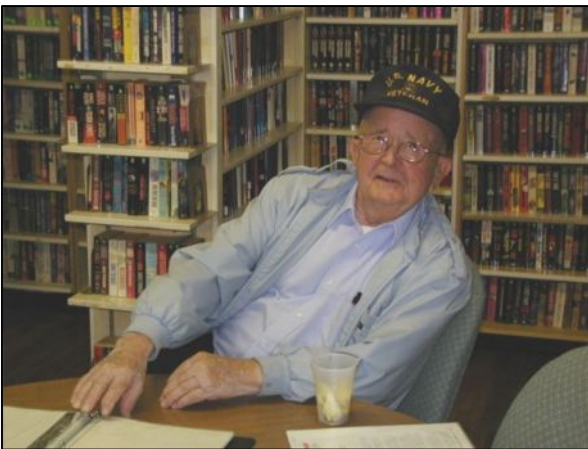
*Askew, Etta Terry – b. 11 April 1878, TN – d. 6 December 1972
Buried: Smellage Cemetery, Boma, Putnam Co., TN
(1930 census 9th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN: Dwl:23 – Jephtha “Jeff” Tubb Askew is head of household, 52 yrs. old, TN, (22 yrs. old 1st marriage) md to Etta Terry, 52 yrs. old, TN, (22 yrs. old 1st marriage) – Children: Thomas, 26 yrs. old, (?), son, 18 yrs. old, Bob, 14 yrs. old, & Jep Askew, 11 yrs. old. All born in TN. Living next door: Dwl: 24 is his brother, John Askew, 28 yrs. old, TN).

Askew, Robert Jetton – b. 16 August 1915, TN – d. 23 December 1932
DC # 27116: 1932 – (s/o Jephtha Tubb “Jass” “Jeff” Askew II & Etta Terry).
(DC states, b. 16 August 1905). (*See Jephtha “Jeff” Tubb Askew).

Askew, Ruby “Ruba” May – b. 27 May 1922, TN – d. 22 September 1923 –
DC: # 371(d/o Jephtha Tubb “Jass” “Jeff” Askew II & Etta Terry) (*See Jephtha “Jeff” Tubb Askew).

Askew, Buford – b. 6 October 1908, TN – d. 16 November 1910
(d/o Jephtha Tubb “Jass” “Jeff” Askew II & Etta Terry. * See Jephtha “Jeff” Tubb Askew).

<http://www.ajlambert.com>



Jephtha Tubb Askew III sitting in the Buffalo Valley Library in one of the rooms of the Buffalo Valley Community Center once the school in Putnam Co., TN

Picture taken in 2006



HONORARY MAYOR

In April, the Buffalo Valley Community Center and Friends of the Library hosted a potluck 88th birthday party for J. T. Askew III. Askew was recognized for his participation at the community center and his involvement in the process of preserving the schoolhouse to its present status as a national historic landmark. County Clerk Wayne Nabors and Sheriff David Andrews presented Askew with a bronze commemorative plaque and the title “Honorary Mayor of Buffalo Valley.” From left are Nabors, Askew and Andrews. Herald Citizen Newspaper, Cookeville, TN: Monday, 21 May 2007, pg. A-8.