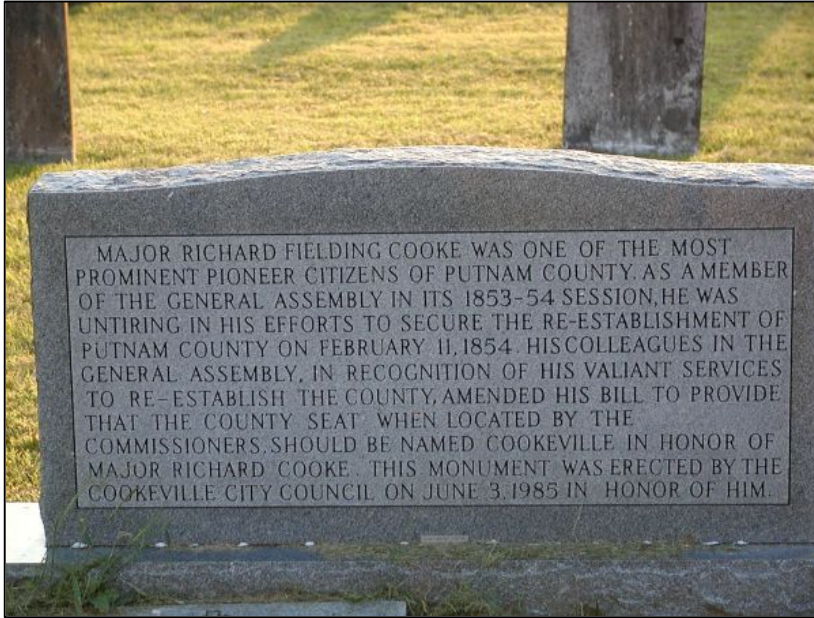


MAJOR RICHARD FIELDING COOKE

b. 8 July 1787, Culpepper Co., VA
d. 15 October 1870, Putnam Co., TN
md on the 31st of March 1813, SC
Wife: Margaret Cox
Father: Robert Cooke
Mother: Susannah Watson



Major Richard Fielding Cooke was one of the most prominent pioneer citizens of Putnam County. As a member of the General Assembly in its 1853-54 session, he was untiring in his efforts to secure the re-establishment of Putnam County on February 11, 1854. His colleagues in the General Assembly, in recognition of his valiant services to re-establish the county, amended his bill to provide that the county seat when located by the commissioners, should be named Cookeville in honor of Major Richard Cooke.

This monument was erected by the Cookeville City Council on June 3, 1985 in honor of him.

Source: "Siftings from Putnam County, Tennessee - Towns, Communities, People" by Mary Hopson, published by Diversified Graphics, 1991, pp 19, 42.

Major Richard Fielding Cooke

by Robert Cooke Sorrell

Cookeville, Tennessee, was named in honor of Major Richard Fielding Cooke. Major Cooke and his wife, the former Margaret Cox, and their two young daughters, Attaline Layne born January 5, 1814 and Minerva Payne born January 11, 1816, moved to Tennessee from South Carolina early in the nineteenth century. They settled near Double Springs, then a part of Jackson County.



Richard Cooke's roots in America go back to Robert Cooke who was born in Scotland about 1700. Robert came to Maryland in 1720 and lived at Choptico with a farmer and planter whose name was Boyd. Also living at the Boyd plantation was a young lady from Devonshire, England, Sarah Fielding. Eventually young love led to the marriage of Robert Cooke and Sarah Fielding. To this union, two sons were born, one of whom was Richard's grandfather John.

John Cooke married Elizabeth Burch, also of Maryland. Robert, their oldest son was a private in the Virginia infantry during the American Revolution.

Robert Cooke married Susannah Watson in St. Mary's County, Maryland. They moved in 1787 to Culpepper County, Virginia, where Richard Fielding Cooke was born July 8, 1787. The family moved again in 1791 to the north fork of the Saluda River, near Greenville, South Carolina. South Carolina was home base for the next twenty five years.

During the War of 1812, Richard served as a First Lieutenant in Wolford's battalion of General Jackson's army. He rose to the rank of Major.

Margaret Cox was born in South Carolina in 1791, the same year that little Richard and his family arrived from Virginia. Richard and Margaret became husband and wife March 31, 1813. Their family grew to include two daughters before they left for Tennessee.

In the spring of 1816, both Cooke families, Robert and Susannah and Richard's family moved to Tennessee. Richard's parents settled at a place to known as "Green Bottom", about eight miles west of Sparta. They are buried there in an enclosed rock tomb.

The Richard Cooke's settled near Double Springs. The place was called "The Big Woods", and in the process of time consisted of several thousand acres. There the Cooke's lived, and after a few lean years they became prosperous.

Seven other children were born to Major and Mrs. Cooke at Double Springs. They were Watson McSwain born September 23, 1817, Louisa born September 28, 1819, Derinda born April 21, 1823, Zenira born April 23, 1821, Calvin Whitley born March 18, 1825, Bolivar Huston born October 7, 1827 and Harriet Newell born January 25, 1830.

Margaret died December 14, 1849. Her burial plot is in sight of her home, about two miles east of Baxter on the Buffalo Valley Road, in the Cooke's Cemetery.

Major Cooke became a prosperous business man and a public spirited citizen. He was one of the leaders in securing the original establishment of Putnam County. By act of the General Assembly, Putnam County was created February 2, 1842. However, this act was annulled in 1844. During the next ten years, Major Cooke was untiring in his efforts to see Putnam County re-established.

At age 64, Richard Fielding was elected State Senator. He served in the twenty-ninth and thirtieth General Assemblies, in his capacity as Senator, he continued to push for the re-establishment of Putnam County. Finally, on February 11, 1854, the Act passed. Cooke's colleagues in the General Assembly amended the bill, so that, when the commissioners should locate the county seat town site, it should be named Cookeville in honor of Major Richard Fielding Cooke.

Major Cooke died October 15, 1870. He is buried beside his wife Margaret, in the Cooke Cemetery.

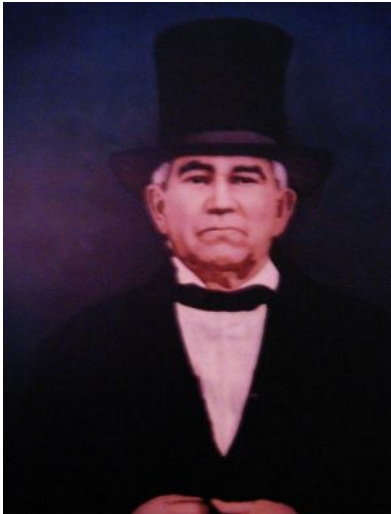
Three of the nine children of Richard and Margaret Cooke have descendents living in Putnam or adjoining counties. They are Attaline, who married Reuben Hickman Dowell; Zenira, who married Rober Logan Lindsey; and Bolivar Houston, who married Galena Alice Kissell.

Two of Major Cooke's descendents own parts of "The Big Woods" out near Double Springs. Lillian Bockman Crawford (Mrs. Ben Hooper Crawford), the great granddaughter of Zenira Lindsey, has some acreage. Also, Harold Speir, grandson of Bird Lindsey and great grandson of Zenira Cooke Lindsey. (Submitted by Robert Cooke Sorrell, grandson of Bolivor Houston Cooke.)

Then in an article by Marion Moore of the Putnam County Herald Citizen published 20 Feb.1985, she quotes Elizabeth Wilson Smith's book, "Back home in Tennessee" published in 1980 as saying, "Major Cooke fought under Gen. Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812 and later received a land grant near Baxter. As a state legislator representing White County, he was regarded as a leader of a move to establish Putnam County, and the county seat was named to honor his 'many important' contributions."

SEPTEMBER 2004: CANDLELIGHT CEMETERY WALK
Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN

MAJOR RICHARD FIELDING COOKE, born 8 January 1787, Culpepper Co., VA, died 15 October 1870, Putnam Co., TN, buried in the Cooke Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN. He married Margaret Cox, born 28 March 1791, died December 1849, buried in the Cooke Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN.



Soldier, Surveyor, Senator

Born in Culpepper County, VA, in 1787, Richard Fielding Cooke and his family moved to Tennessee in 1810. After marrying the former Margaret Cox, Cooke joined the military and became a major in the War of 1812 under the leadership of General Andrew Jackson.

In 1816, at the age of 29, Cooke and Margaret moved to Putnam County area and with several thousand acres of land, started a farm in what was called "Big Woods," southwest of present-day Cookeville and about three miles south of what is now the Double Springs community.

Major Cooke prospered not only on the farm, but also in the surveying business. After the death of Margaret, the age of 64 or 65, he decided to venture into a new career, that of politics. In 1851, he ran a successful campaign for the Tennessee Senate. An energetic senator, he sponsored and supported many important bills.

Probably the most important was a bill he sponsored in 1854 that re-established Putnam County, which had been established and subsequently dissolved ten years earlier. The bill was passed and on February 11, 1854, the House voted and Putnam County, Tennessee was finally a reality.

To honor Major Cooke, the General Assemble amended the bill so that when the county seat was established, it was to be named Cookeville to honor the sponsoring individual. Cookeville may be the only county seat in Tennessee that was named before it actually came into existence.

Major Cooke died on October 15, 1870, after a long and successful life.

*"Nothing has prepared me for the measure of pride
that I feel for this town of Cookeville...."*

(The story of Major Richard Fielding Cooke was researched by Judy Duke. Script by Cindy Putnam. Actor: Bruce Welker (Major Richard Fielding Cooke) has performed in collegiate, community and professional theatre for nearly four decades. Bruce is a long-time veteran of the airwaves and is the Director of Sales for Clear Channel Radio in Cookeville).

Note: Mrs. Phy Gibson was the subject of the newspaper's weekly birthday interview. She turned 82 on May 4. Her daughter, Mrs. Hugh Caruthers, threw her a surprise birthday party.

Mrs. Gibson is the great granddaughter of Cookeville's namesake, Maj. Richard Fielding Cooke, a Revolutionary War veteran who was an early settler here.

Her home is on Proffitt Street where she's lived for the past 30 years. Her husband died two years ago. He was retired from the Cookeville Police Department, in which he'd served as an officer for 26 years.

Herald-Citizen newspaper, Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN: 7 June 1966.

Note: Richard Fielding Cooke: Cookeville was named in honor of Richard Fielding Cooke, the fifth son born to Robert and Susannah Cooke. His middle name, Fielding, was his great grandmother's maiden name. He was born in the year 1787 in Culpepper County, VA. The usually accepted date and the date on his gravestone is July 8, 1787.

The Cooke family moved to the Greenville District of SC in 1791. It was there that Cooke spent much of his young life. In 1810, Cooke moved to Maury County, TN. On March 31, 1813, Cooke married Margaret Cox of Edgefield District, SC. He was married by the Rev. Zion Blythe.

Over a year later, on September 20, 1814, he enlisted as a soldier in the War of 1812. He became a sergeant in Captain Abraham Dulaney's company, Major Woodfolk's 3rd regiment and was promoted to 3rd Lieutenant on October 1, 1814. Before the war ended, he earned the rank of Major under General Andrew Jackson.

RICHARD FIELDING COOKE

Story written for the 2008 Cookeville City Walk: Major Richard Fielding Cooke was one of the most prominent pioneer citizens of Putnam County. Born in 1789 in Culpepper County, Virginia, he was a veteran of the War of 1812 fighting with President Andrew Jackson. He came to Maury County, Tennessee in 1810 and with his wife Margaret Cox Cooke, finally settled in Jackson County in 1812. In 1816, they moved to a farm about 9 miles southwest of present day Cookeville. As a younger man, Cooke was a farmer and a surveyor. In his later years after Margaret died, Cooke, at age 64, ran for public office and became a member of the General Assembly of Tennessee. As a senator he was untiring in his efforts to secure the re-establishment of Putnam County. The county was first established in 1842 but was dissolved by court suit. His colleagues in the General Assembly, in recognition of his valiant services to re-establish the county (1854), amended his bill to provide that the county seat when decided should be named Cookeville in his honor.

Born in Virginia in 1787, Major Cooke served with Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812. Moving to Tennessee with his family in 1816, Cooke settled nine miles southwest of Cookeville, acquiring 3000 acres. Serving in the Tennessee Senate, 1851-1854, Cooke sponsored the 1854 bill to reestablish Putnam County; the bill named the county seat "Cookeville." Cooke died in 1870.

MUSEUM SPOTLIGHTING WAR OF 1812 WITH EXHIBIT OPENING SATURDAY

By Amy Davis

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: 17 October 2013, pg. front page & pg. 2.

COOKEVILLE – Before Cookeville was named after him, **Major Richard Fielding Cooke** fought for another cause.



An anti-British cause.

It was during the War of 1812 – sometimes referred to as the Second War of Independence- more than 40 years prior to Cooke's efforts to reestablish Putnam County in 1854, which had resulted in the county seat bearing his name.

Now, 200 years after the war, the Cookeville History Museum is celebrating Tennessee's involvement in the 32-month conflict with a

new exhibit – “Becoming the Volunteer State: Tennessee in the War of 1812” – Saturday with a reception from 1-3 p.m.

“People say, ‘What’s Cookeville’s connection to the War of 1812?’” said Judy Duke, administrator of Cookeville museums.

“Obviously, there was no such thing as an established Putnam County or Cookeville in 1812...but the man Cookeville was named after fought in the War of 1812 along with Andrew Jackson in New Orleans.

“So can we say Cooke fought from Putnam County? No. He was still living in Culpeper County, VA.”

The traveling exhibit, funded in part by a Humanities Tennessee grant, comes from the Tennessee State Museum, which had collaborated with the Tennessee War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission.

“It has traveled all over the state, and we’re just fortunate to have it here,” Duke said.

The exhibit features panels, artifacts and artwork, including an 1890 illustration of the Battle of New Orleans; a flintlock dueling pistol used by Samuel G. Smith (who was an aide to Gen. Jackson) at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815; and a sword that was presented to Jackson by the Tennessee legislature in 1819 for his victory over the Creek Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814.

Duke noted the significance of the War of 1812 in Tennessee.

“that’s how we got our nickname, the ‘Tennessee volunteers’” she said. “The government asked for volunteers, and Tennesseans poured out in droves.”

Tennesseans like Cooke, whose family have moved to Maury County in 1810.

“On September 20, 1814, he enlisted in the War of 1812,” Duke said. “The fact that he fought with Andrew Jackson, and they won the Battle of New Orleans – that’s really a connection to Cookeville.”

In 1816, after the war, Cookeville moved to the area that would become Putnam County, becoming one of its most prominent pioneer citizens.

As a member of the General Assembly during the 1853-54 session, he fought to reestablish Putnam as a county in 1854 since its original formation in 1842 had been declared unconstitutional.

Duke also spoke of the War of 1812’s national importance.

“Looking at it from the bigger picture, the British burned Washington, D. C., and that’s when Dolly Madison, who was First Lady at the time, saved a portrait of George Washington that hangs in the White House now,” she said.

The national anthem is also a product of the war.

“A song that most children learn is the Star-Spangled Banner by Francis Scott Key,” Duke said.

The War of 1812 exhibit may be viewed through Dec. 14 at the history museum, located at 40 E. Broad St., Cookeville, TN.

The museum is open Wed. through Sat. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Read more about the Cookeville History Museum and the people of Putnam Co., TN at: <http://www.ajalmbert.com>

