

MEMORIES OF MIRIAM (SHANKS) GWALTNEY

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FAMILY:

I was the oldest of three children born to Luther "Luke" Alexander Shanks and Dona (Boyd) Shanks.



My name is Ann Miriam Shanks. I was born June 16, 1927 in Putnam County, TN the 11th District near Buffalo Valley, TN.

(Pictured: William Ivy "Bill" Gwaltney Sr. & his wife Ann Miriam Shanks)

George Shanks, born November 5, 1926, is my brother.

Naomi Carolyn Shanks, born March 28, 1932, is my sister.

George and I were born at home in the white frame house where Dad grew up.

We moved to our "Civil War" house where Carolyn was born. Dr. Sam Denton delivered Carolyn. Mrs. Audra Camilla Denny, our neighbor, came to dress her while other neighbors, the Carr family, took care of George and

me...also Aunt Gertrude was there.

Grandmother Boyd had died in 1926 leaving one daughter, Aunt Gertie Boyd, alone in the "Civil War" house. That's why we moved there. Then we rented out the house where I was born.

Dad and his brother, Uncle Walter Shanks ran a grocery store in Buffalo Valley before Dad married. Later, they owned and operated together the grocery on Indian Creek. It was about 2 miles from our house. Dad walked to it everyday.

We always ran to meet him when he came home and hoped he'd bring us a piece of bubble gum or candy.

One time we took a bucket of eggs to the store to trade for groceries, but George stumped his toe on the bridge and some were broken. We could have a nickel for going to the store for Mother. We always bought a candy bar. One day, cousin Dorothy Ann (who lived across from the store) saw us coming and joined us as we got our candy bar saying "I wish I had some," and Dad made me share with her ½ of my candy bar! Needless to say I was very unhappy.

I still have the metal egg bucket, and Dorothy Ann is one of my favorite cousins. She lives in Madison today, teaches a Baptist Sunday School Class and has a lovely family.

I never knew Mother's parents. Grandpa Boyd died in 1924 and grandmother in 1926.

Grandmother Shanks died of flu in 1919. I do remember seeing Grandpa Shanks. He died in 1935.

NEIGHBORS: DENNY-CARR-SUTTON

Our closest neighbors were Mr. Virgil Timothy (1884-1949) and Mrs. Audra Camilla (Anderson) Denny (1899-1990) and their son, Tim (1923-2001) who was older than I. He married Geraldine Loftis (1930-2002) and they had four children, Ronald Timothy, Richard Lewis, Audrey June and Joe Nelson Denny.

Mr. Virgil was Superintendent of our Sunday School and gave the land where our church stood so it was called Denny's Memorial Methodist Church. It was built about the time I was born. Printed in the concrete on the front steps was the date – that's how I remember.

Mother took us to visit Mrs. Audra sometimes. She always gave us a shiny red apple or a piece of her homemade fudge maybe. We liked to visit her. Her house was spotless. She never did any yard nor garden work much – just concentrated on her housekeeping, it seemed to me. And, the Wesley Carr family always helped her.

After Mr. Virgil died, Joe Carr brought in the coal for the stove until she got gas heat in later years.

Joe always washed off the chunks of coal at the creek so it'd be cleaner in the house.

Arah, Minnie and Ora Carr would clean house for Mrs. Audra and help with washing clothes, gardening etc.

Joe and his father, Wes Carr grew corn and tobacco on the Denny farm. They also helped take care of their cattle.

Ina Belle was Wes' wife. Today (1992) only Joe and Arah live there. Ora married Floyd Adams and moved not far away. Their sister, Minnie died in 1991.

Other neighbors were Lester and Mary (Carr) Sutton and their three sons, Calvert, Walter and Lennell. They lived just across the creek in the house where Enon Maddux, his brother, Alden , and parents Lem and Mrs. Lassie once lived before their move to California.

We went to elementary school with the Sutton boys. Today (1992) only Lennell is living. Calvert and Walt married sisters, Lillian and Keeble Dunavin of Baxter and Cookeville later. Lennell lives in Georgia.

MADDUX-NICHOLS

Haywood and Elmo (Nichols) Maddux lived across the creek for a while in the Lem Maddux house. Their son was Nelson Maddux, older than I. He later taught agriculture at Baxter Seminary.

He married Geraldine Pharris of Granville and today (1992) he lives in Athens, GA. He retired from teaching at the University there.

Haywood bought and sold farms often, so they lived in many communities. One time, at the Lige & Vida DuBois farm, another in Congo Bottom of Smith County from here, Mrs. Elmo worked in the school cafeteria in Carthage. They finally bought in Cookeville where he died. Mrs. Elmo sold this farm and lived in an apartment near Tech.

NICHOLS

Lecil and Kathleen (Ford) Nichols lived on his family's land grant farm. This was on the left branch of Indian Creek going towards Buckner community.

Harriet, Tom, and Joe were the three children. Harriet and Tom went to elementary and high school with us, and Harriet went to Tech. with me, but Tom joined the Navy in WWII, then married Mary Frances Buckner and lived in Michigan – still does in 1992. Their dentist son now owns the homeplace, but no one lives there and its such a pretty location.

Harriet married Gordon Elrod and also lives in Michigan as does her mother in 1992. She (Kathleen) died in 1992.

Joe was not in school with us, but he graduated from Tech and lives in Pikeville, I think (1992).

As children, we went to visit at the Nichol's house for little parties. Mr. Lecil would make a freezer of ice cream sometimes. He was always joking. At one party we played Spin the Bottle.

Tom Nichols died in 1999 and was buried on the family farm.

STEELE

Across from the Nichols' farm was the Steele farm which once was called the Jared farm.

My great grandparents, John and Ann (Carr) Jared lived on this farm during the Civil War. When great grandfather Bransford Boyd died in the Civil War, his wife, Eliza Jane (Jared) Boyd and four small children, went to live with Eliza Jane's parents, John and Ann, on this farm.

There's a cemetery on the farm and John, Ann, and Eliza Jane are buried there, (also mother's only two brothers), Fred "Freddie" Denton (1883-1883) and Norman Boyd (1889-1889).

Miles Allen "Bud" Steele (1876-1964) and Nora (Jones) Steele (1880-1975) built a house on this farm. Nora's parents lived in Buffalo Valley, Wade and Rebecca (Bartlett) Jones. Wade was a brother of Capt. Purt Jones. Both were in the Civil War and both attended Cumberland Institute in White County (*See Fiddles in the Cumberland by Amanda McDowell & Lela McDowell Blankenship).

Nora's grandmother was Anna (Anderson) Bartlett, a sister of my great grandfather, Thomas Anderson Jr.

Nora did a lot to preserve family history, but much was lost when their house burned.

Miles and Nora's daughter Effie Norine (Steele) Dunn and her four children lived with them about two years. David, Margaret, Miles and Ann went to school with us at Denny's Seminary Elementary School. Margaret was my age, Miles was George's age, and Ann was Carolyn's age.

Once we went to their house for a birthday party (which one, I don't remember).

This family attended the Church of Christ in Buffalo Valley.

When the Steele house burned, they moved away. Later the farm sold. Today it's once more owned by a Ralph Jared (1992).

Miles and Nora are buried in Woodlawn Memorial Park Cemetery, Nashville, TN, also Effie Norine and Ethan Dunn. My husband, Bill, and I went to Ethan's funeral March 22, 1993, and once again visited with Ann Kathleen, Miles Steele, Margaret Denton, and David Ethan Dunn

Ann Kathleen Dunn married Robert Forrest Wilson, our pharmacist, and lives in Ohio.

Margaret Denton Dunn married Dieter Goebel and lived a long in Wisconsin, but today in Abilene, Texas. Miles Steele Dunn has never married, and lives in Detroit. He's retired from doing art work for a newspaper.

David Ethan Dunn and Barbara Faye (Hearn) Dunn once lived in Livonia, MI where Ethan and Effie Norine Dunn lived and where Effie Norine (Steele) Dunn died. Today David and Barbara live in Logan, OH (1993).

Margaret Denton and Ann Kathleen Dunn graduated from David Lipscomb. Ann teaches at Goodpasture Christian School. Ann has three sons, Steven Douglas, a doctor, and Jeffrey Forrest and Patrick Allen Wilson who are lawyers.

YOUNG-REEDER

The next farm belonged to Hance and Melanie (Young) Reeder. John Young, Melanie's brother, lived with them. Then had no children, but John had a son, Phillip, who was a postman in Baxter. Today (1992) Phillip's only son, Paul, owns the farm. Paul has no children. He married Oda Roberts who died while they lived in Florida. I think. Paul went to Tech with me, and became a Pan-Am pilot later. Oda went to Baxter Seminary with me.

Hance and Melanie kept Rob Carr and Rosa Lee Herd to help them on the farm (1992). Rob and Rosa Lee later married and live in Cookeville.

Today (1992) the Young-Reeder farm house is rented, but Paul comes from Baxter to do some farming or perhaps just "upkeep".

Paul has quite a collection of wild game preserved which fills a house (next door) that once was his aunts' on his mother's side.

MEDLEY – DENNY

The next farm belonged to Lloyd and Verta Mae "Vesta Mai" (Medley) Denny who had no children. Their house was a white frame house that burned. They rebuilt a red brick which they willed to her niece, Peggy Mae (Alcorn) Burton. Peggy lives near Oak Ridge (1992), so rents the house today. In (1997) Peggy sold the farm to Vernon Markel who has previously purchased the Virgil Timothy Denny farm.

The farm house was at the intersection of the Medley road and the Hopewell Road. The next house on the Medley road was "Old Man" William Riley "Bill" Medley's, father of Verta Mai.

I remember his loud voice. He lived there with his 2nd wife, Ada, and Cyril their son. Cyril drove a jeep, never married. Bill's other son, Eugene Eschol "Dock" Medley and family, wife, Buena Vista (Denny) Medley, Bill & Esther, lived in the next house.

Bill and Esther went to school with us. Esther was in Carolyn's grade and her good friend.

Today (1992) she lives in Virginia and works in Washington D. C. She has two children. Bill was older than I. He married Bonnie and went to Tech when we did. Bonnie died (1997) and Bill has remarried and lives in Cookeville.

Dock and Buena and children moved to Old Hickory where they died. Their daughter Vista was born in OH. Vista still lives in OH (1997).

SHANKS HOMEPLACE

The next house and farm on the Hopewell road belonged to us. It was Dad's (Century Farm). His grandparents once lived there. Craven and Nancy (Henley/Hendley) Shanks. They are buried in the cemetery on the hill behind the barn along with several other relatives and friends. Many graves are not marked and cattle have broken and relocated many markers or stones unmarked.

We re-fenced the area, or a part of it since no one knew the exact size of the cemetery, about 3 years ago. (1992)

Craven Shanks' parents are probably buried there. Simon and Margaret (Maddux) Shanks came from Fauquier County, VA with her parents, Craven and Betsy Maddux, and her brothers and sisters also came.

Simon and Margaret married in Virginia in 1823 and came to Putnam County, Tennessee, ca. 1835.

This farm has been in the Shanks family since about that time.

Dad was born in a log house on this farm. Where he was 9, the frame house was built near the road. Later Dad tore down the log house which stood by the garden.

A large hay barn was nearby, and a big spring of water was near. Water came out of the hillside thru' a wooden trough and spilled into a concrete basin overflowing thru' a small springhouse where milk and butter were kept.

There was another trough which caught more water for the cattle.

Our deed says 207 acres in this farm all on the same side of the road today (1997) since George has sold the Century Farm part across the road from the house. This part once had an orchard on it, also two houses and two barns. The houses both burned.

I have sold the timber on the farm, 8 years ago and again this year (1997), to Lanny Kelsey of McMinnville.

A large mudslide occurred on the farm, in the 1980's, which destroyed many trees as well as the big spring. The road had to be rebuilt in front of the slide. It was filled in and made much higher hoping the slide would not cover it. As of 1997, the slide seems to have stopped.

ANDERSON

Adjoining our Shanks farm was the Anderson farm. Forrest Nobel Sr. (1903-1983) and Ruby (Huddleston) Anderson and their children lived there. Forrest Noble "Dean" (1931-1997) and James Derl "Jim" were our ages and went to school with us, but mostly they attended the Hopewell Elementary School.

Ruby had been a nurse before marriage.

One time Mother gave a birthday party for Carolyn, and Noble Dean came to it.

When Forrest's parents died, they moved to their house which was larger. James Wade and Margaret J. (Maddux) Anderson were their names.

James Wade & Margaret Anderson's daughter is Elizabeth "Libby" Jared Anderson who married James Carver Smartt who lives in McKendree Towers today (1992).

Another son was Howard Neal Anderson whose daughters are Mahilda Adell Anderson who married L.D. Sparks and Marguritte "Margaret" May Anderson who married Everette Frank Lee Lankford. They went to high school with me. Mahilda was in my class. She died 20 May 1992.

Forrest and Ruby had died and both their houses have been torn down. However, Jim rebuilt at his grandfather's old house site.

WALTER ROBINSON SHANKS

Joining the Virgil Timothy Denny farm was Uncle Walter Shanks and Aunt Euda (Warren) Shanks' farm. Their children were Walter Warren, Dorothy Ann, Robert Anderson and Reginald "Reggie" Roscoe Shanks, all our ages and we all went to school together, also church.

Walter Warren Shanks became Superintendent of Schools, Dorothy Ann, a math teacher at Baxter Seminary, Robert Anderson, a farmer, and Reggie does police work in Cookeville.

Walter Warren Shanks (1926-1997) married Wanda Stout. They have three sons. Dorothy Ann Shanks married Ralph Herbert Fike. They have three daughters and a son. Robert Anderson married Doris Gillen

who teaches elementary school in Baxter. They have two daughters. Reggie married Andeline Stout. They have three daughters.

Uncle Walter always ran the grocery store. Aunt Euda had a silver Olds which she drove, he never drove.

The store was the center of a group of building belonging to Uncle Walter after Dad no longer was a partner. Dad wanted to “get some fresh air” and just farm all day rather than stay inside a little store, so he sold out.

There was a blacksmith shop which Will Christian ran, a weighing shed for wagon loads of corn, and a grist mill. Everyone took their corn to the mill to be ground into meal for cornbread making.

The store porch always had several men sitting on nail kegs (empty) whittling, and talking in summer time. A bucket of water hung on the porch for the thirsty ones. All drank from the same dipper. Sometimes the water got low and someone with lots of energy would go to the spring and fill it up again.

DUKE

E. Blanchard Duke and Parilla Ruth (Burton) Duke had eleven children. This was the place we liked to visit because so much was going on. Everyone had specific jobs to do, and they all laughed and sang which they did them.

Margaret, my age, was the oldest and in charge of the milking (which they sold), Bill was next, and he helped her. Lou was next. She helped her mother cook. Sue and Ina did the washing using tubs and rub boards. Carl and Reece chopped wood for the cookstove, heat, and washing water. Peggy died when about two years old. Royce was the baby and was carried about by all. After we grew up, Grace and Shirley were born. Blanchard made a garden and supervised. I only remember him listening to baseball games on the radio and swatting flies.

Their farm was on the Sam Bartlett road about 1 ½ miles from us.

We all walked to school together, and swam in the swimming hole near our house in the summer time.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Our elementary school was called Denny’s Seminary because it was on the Timothy Denny farm.

It was just one big room heated with a pot-bellied stove that burned coal.

I started to school at five since Mother had already taught me to read and write. Miss Douglas Nichols was the only teacher for all eight grades. One year Gordon Lamb taught, also Mattie Burton.

I learned multiplication tables from the back of my Blue Horse Table and read every child’s reading book. These were the only books we had access to, since there were no libraries near. I also read all our textbooks, geography, history, arithmetic, spellers, handwriting, health.

One time I represented my school at the county spelling match in Cookeville. I almost won, but goofed on the word, gerund. I said “j”, but changed my mind. Too late. They wouldn’t accept my start over. The winner was Laurel Kuykendall who won the state and went to Washington D. C. to receive an honor.

Another teacher I had was Gordon Lamb in about the 4th grade. Another teacher was Mrs. Mattie Burton of Silver Point.

One time the public health nurse and doctor came. We were very scared at the smell of alcohol and maybe shots. But all I remember is Dr. Fred Terry said I had the most perfect set of teeth he’d seen. That made me feel better, but we all felt better when they had gone. The nurse happened to be his wife.

We carried our lunches to school, mine was always wrapped like a package and in the Nashville Banner. Mother packed whatever we had left from breakfast – a sausage on homemade biscuit or country ham and biscuit, maybe a boiled egg, shell still on, or a fried egg in a biscuit, sometimes jelly and biscuit or just sugar and butter on a biscuit. We often traded for a peanut butter and cracker. We never bought these. We grew everything we ate.

Our drink was from the school water bucket with one dipper. We got our water from a well in the yard next door. Later, we had a well dug in the school yard.

Sometimes we made notebook paper drinking cups, and a few students had folding aluminum cups.

The girls “bathroom” was a red toilet behind the school with bushes around it. The boys toilet was farther away.

When you asked the teacher “May I be excused?”, she knew what you meant, and you hurried there and back.

We had recess in the morning and again in the afternoon. Sometimes we’d sneak out something from our lunch at the morning recess since it was kept in or on our desk and smelled delicious.

Lunch time was about an hour long or longer, I guess according to whatever the teacher decided.

We quickly ate to hurry up and play. Drop the Handkerchief, Kick the Can, Red Rover, Marbles, Jacks, or in our playhouses we had made under some thick plum bushes.

There were never any discipline problems. Everyone knew you’d get a licking when you got home. However one year a rough brother and sister came to school and began to fight Miss Douglas. We thought they were horrible. I don’t remember what happened to them, but don’t think they came back. I think they were some Maxwell’s.

Mrs. Vida DuBois told Mother that I gave Jim, her son, the best whipping he ever got. I think he was picking on my brother, and I threw lumps of coal at him, and guess I did fly into him. He was older and always a pest, annoying everyone.

This was at playtime. The teacher stayed inside while we were out playing.

The older boys and girls played basketball and volleyball, I think.

Harriet was the niece of our teacher. We called her “teacher’s pet” because she was always telling on us when things didn’t go to suit her.

We all walked to school. If it were raining, Dock Medley might come to get Bill and Esther. We never got a chance to ride with them in his car or jeep.

PETS

Two of the best pets we had were Jack our German Shepherd, and Spot, a little white dog with black spots. Jack was our snake catcher at the creek. We knew to stand back when Jack was ready to sling his snake into a thousand pieces! (We thought).

When we went blackberry picking, we always went Jack through the bushes first.

When Dad left in his car to go to his boyhood farm to work, he’d tell Jack and Spot to stay at home, but they’d watch him until he was out of sight, then off they’d go to join him. He’d usually let them ride home. They sat up on the back seat smiling and looking like people.

One time George brought home a mother squirrel and her new borns. He put them in a cage but the mother escaped, so we fed the babies with a medicine dropper. They were slick and shiny, no hair, for several days.

The squirrels grew up, were cute and interesting. We'd give them nuts which they tried to hide in our hair. We taught our dogs to not hurt them, but Mother thought they should go to the woods with their kind so we had to return them.

One time we fed and grew a baby sheep whose mother had died. Her name was Nellie. We put her back with the others when she was old enough, and she always came running when we called her name.

Another two pets were goats, Fibber and Molly, but they could jump out of any pen and get into things that Dad didn't want them in, so we gave them away.

Back to Jack: A weasel kept killing our large chickens (not grown) even tho' they were in a pen. Weasels are very fast, but Jack was faster, so we had a funeral with George as the preacher. He said that the weasel had to have food just as we did. We say a church song and buried him in a shoe-box.

CHURCH

We all went to the Methodist church which Dad and Mother helped build. Mother had attended the Presbyterian church as young girl with her family, and Dad had gone to Maddux Chapel.

Revivals were a highlight of the year and were well attended. The big church windows were open, and some non-churchmen stood outside listening. Inside would be full. Mother took small pillows, and we sat on the front row so we could go to sleep if we wanted to.

The preacher would spend several nights at our house sometimes. If not, they always came to eat.

Our church was a one big room with one offset which was a Sunday Schoolroom for teens. One small tots' room was curtained off. In cold weather we gathered as close as possible to the pot-bellied coal stove.

Aunt Euda played the piano at church.

I joined the church when I was ten along with Dorothy Ann and Harriett.

We rode in our buggy with old Snip pulling and Dad hitched her to the fence, I think. Later in 1935, we bought a Chevy to travel in. Mother had a 1925 Model-T Ford convertible that you cranked to start, but she locked it in the garage when I was born and never took time to drive again. It was finally sold many years later.

Dad was Secretary-Treasurer of our Sunday School for years. He ordered our literature. The children had small Sunday School cards with a religious picture and Bible verse on the front and a short story on the back.

I remember Bro Haile, P. M. Dixon, J. D. Harris as a few of our preachers.

We were a very small congregation on Sundays.

Dad liked to sing so did Uncle Walter. One hymn Dad liked was, "When The Roll is Called Up Yonder."

FARM LIFE

Dad raised cattle for our milk and to sell. He also raised hogs for food and to sell. We grew tobacco for a cash crop. There were tenants living on the farm who helped with the tobacco.

One of my jobs was to milk. How I hated being swatted in the face by the cow's tail! Sometimes we squirted milk on the cat's face.

Another job was churning to make butter and buttermilk. Mother usually gathered the butter off the top of the milk, rinsed it and shaped it. We rarely ever used our wooden mold which had been Grandmother's. I don't know where it is today?

We also had Grandmother Shanks' and Grandmother Boyd's coffee grinders, but we never used them. Mother was the only one who drank coffee, and she bought it already ground. These grinders have also been lost.

I have one of my Grandmother's wooden dough trays, and her yellow bowl. Carolyn has the other dough tray.

Dad kept mules to plow his corn fields, tobacco, and gardens. Matt and Dinah were two mules I remember.

We also had a few horses. Our favorite was a black, gentle horse named Snip. We'd pull her up to the wooden gate that went to the barn and climb over on her back, then ride up and down our driveway. She was also harnessed (by Dad) to pull our buggy. After getting our car, we parked the buggy, but wore it out later riding fast down a steep meadow. We'd pull it back up to the tope, raise the "shaft" and fly to the bottom again.

We didn't have electricity until TVA, about 1938?, so we waded the creek to a spring and kept our milk in the cold water. Late in the afternoon we three children would go get it for supper. Often "slimly" things swam over our toes so we didn't hesitate to find out what it was.

We lit coal oil (kerosene) lamps at night to see by.

We heated flat irons on our cook stove to iron our clothes with. I wonder whatever happened to those irons.

We did not have a telephone until after 1948. However, Mother's family had a telephone when she was young. Our first phone had a party line. If someone was using their phone (and was in our party), we'd have to wait until they finished before we could call out.

We played records on Grandfather's Victrola which you cranked to wind it up. George has this today, also our upright piano that Mother bought for \$75.00 so we could take piano lessons from our neighbor, Mrs. Elmo (Nichols) Maddux for 50 cents for a lesson a month.

HIGH SCHOOL

I started 9th grade (at age 13) at Baxter Seminary in Baxter. We had to ride a school bus which came early, and we got home about 4:00. L. B. Garrison and Burch Leftwich drove the bus during my four years. The Duke children came to our house each morning and came inside, combed their hair and watched for the bus.

We got up early, took a sponge bath using a wash pan, soap and bath cloth, then ate breakfast, brushed our teeth, and got ready for school. Mother made a lunch for us to take. We ate our lunch outside sitting on the grass in nice weather.

I liked to read in the library, my first time to be around books, but we could only check out one at a time.

As a freshman, I was sick with severe congestion and cough and missed several weeks of school which I had to make up in summer school. This caused me to not understand algebra, but French was very easy, also English. Home Economics was difficult – the sewing especially. I had never done any at home, only

embroidery. Mother made our early clothes, but she didn't need bought patterns. She made most of her everyday dresses and all her aprons. So using a pattern, for me, was hard.

A big mistake was not taking typing, instead I took Biblical literature.

I joined the Glee Club one year – had to have a white jacket to wear, and a long white dress for May Day. I have the picture of me in the outfit hanging in my bedroom at my home. Ball games were after school, also speech. I had to ride the bus home and couldn't do these activities.

Only the dorm students ate at their cafeteria.

One time the backwater from the Caney Fork was up in the creeks and over the roads, so I stayed a few days in Baxter with Joanna Phillips and family and one or two in the dorm, but they had bed bugs in the dorms!

Frances Smellage was a good friend, also Frankie Carter, Sue Rhea Herrin, Sue Sewell, Jean Greene, Frances Farmer, Peggy Lee, we all went on to Tech together.

My first boyfriend was Clyde Webster, he was a friend of cousin Walter W. Shanks. Clyde came in his little car to take me a movie in Cookeville.

Clyde also graduated from Tech with a degree in Agriculture. He married Ogeal Halfacre and lived in Hartsville, but now (1998) in Cookeville.

JOHNSON

Charlie Johnson and his wife, Maud (Judd) Johnson lived just past John Bell Denny's and across the creek from Minnie Myrtle Denny. They attended the Methodist church sometimes.

One of their daughters was Ruby Lee Johnson (1912-1991) who married Collie Dewey Anderson (1903-1992) and they had several children. One child was Ray Anderson who lived with his grandparents, Charlie and Maud (Judd) Johnson.

Another daughter Alla Dee Johnson married John Henry Wilhite Sr. and lived in Cookeville.

Robert Anderson Shanks owns their farm today (1997) also the Minnie Denny farm.

Alla D. & John Wilhite had a grocery store in Cookeville.

DENNY

John Bell Denny and wife Eliza Jane (Barnes) Denny, lived on the farm that Robert Anderson Shanks and his wife Doris Lee (Gillem) Shanks own and live today. John Bell Denny was a short, stocky man, with light hair and fair skin, who walked with a cane to Uncle Walter's grocery store. As small children we sometimes met him coming home from school.

Mrs. Eliza Denny made delicious chocolate pies and brought them to the church on special occasions. John and Eliza never had any children but reared a nephew of John Bell Denny's named Ethel L. Jared. John and Eliza also reared Charlie Johnson who later lived near them.

LEFTWICH

Avo Leftwich, a widow, and son Luke, my age, lived past the L. Nichols farm on the left side of the creek. Burch Leftwich, an older son, also lived her with his wife, cousin Marine Bartlett, later.

Burch and Maurine's children were Anna Frances and Lois. Burch was a good carpenter, so they moved several times to be near his work.

Burch died from cancer while living at his homeplace. Later Maurine moved to Baxter to be near Lois and Jim Sherrill. The old pretty old house with the long front porch burned, but the barn still stands (1997).

Luke married and moved to Michigan. His wife died leaving him with two sons. Later he married again to Katy Helms and has more children. Today they live in back of this farm and on a road nearer Gentry. One of his sons is a preacher.

Luke liked to play guitar and fish.

EVANS

John Evans and Edna (Holland) Evans lived on the right at the Gentry road and just before the Steele house.

They had two daughters, Charline and Sally. Charline went to school with us, but Sally died of bronchi pneumonia at six years old (1930-1936), buried in the Carlen Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN located on Clemmons Road on Doss Medley Ridge, Silver Point.

Today (1997) Charline and husband MCoy, live at Shop Springs near Lebanon, and got to church with my husband Bill's cousins, the Young's.

John and family moved to Michigan for several years, then moved to Baxter, then to Wilson Co. where he died.

Charline came to Baxter Seminary while her parents were still in MI. She stayed in the dorm until her parents returned. Charline's daughter was a student teacher at Hickman School while I was there. Today (1997), she lives in Louisville and is Admission Director at a school for the blind and has three children, one who is getting her law degree.

Mrs. Edna lives next door to Charline today (Feb. 1997). Charline graduated from Baxter Seminary in 1946.

WESTER - BARTLETT

Hardee Webster and family lived across from Miss Douglas Nichols and her widowed sister Vivian Cunningham's house (on the Gentry road near the DuBois house).

Hardee was a black man who drove Lige DuBois' car for him. Lige walked with a cane, but I don't remember why he didn't drive.

One day I visited Harriet at Miss Douglas' and we played with Hardee's children. Hester, his wife, gave us a biscuit with sugar and butter to eat. I remember one child was tied in her chair – couldn't walk, I think. She had Muscular Dystrophy and died about 16 years of age, Charline Evans said.

Another black family that lived across the road from the Leftwich house, was Joe Bartlett and wife.

Joe had a deep, loud voice. I remember him calling to Dad from the road in front of our house for Dad to come out.

DUBOIS

Elijah Mannon "Lige" DuBois (1878-1948) and family lived on the Gentry road past the Nichols-Cunningham house. Mrs. Vida DuBois was a Jared (1885-1981). I never knew their older sons, Frank

Morrison and Ivan DuBois, but the youngest, Jim, went to elementary school and high school with me. He was the age of Tim Denny son of Virgil Timothy and Audra Camilla (Anderson) Denny.

After high school, the family moved to Cookeville. Lige died, and Mrs. Vida moved near us to McKendree manor, a retirement home. She stayed active into her 90's always busy doing things for others – said she didn't have time to play cards, etc., that was a waste of time.

Her birthday was December 29th same as my husband Bill's. We visited her a few times and looked at her old photographs.

I wonder who inherited the photos since all three of her sons died before she did. Her photos were of her Jared ancestors.

I think Jim may have had children, but not sure.

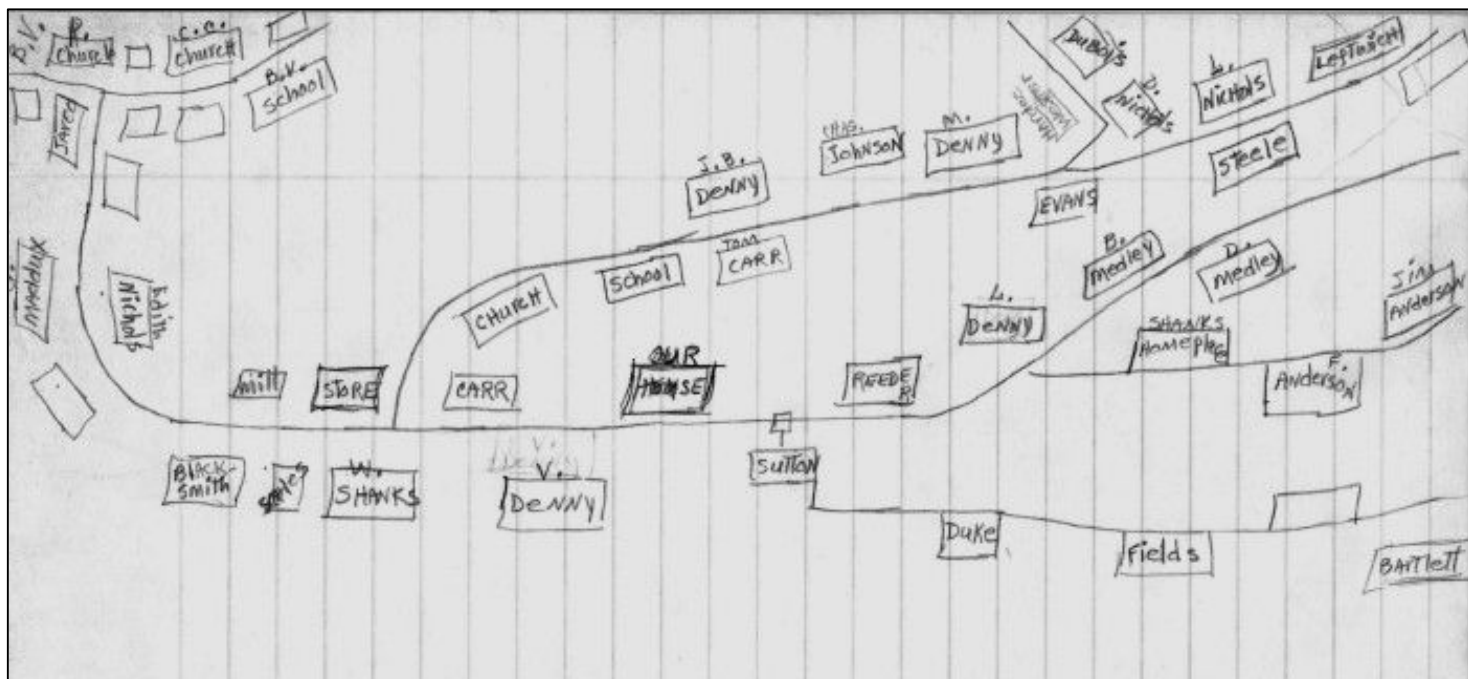
When they moved to Cookeville, the Haywood Maddux family lived here for awhile.

FOND MEMORIES

I only have fond memories of my childhood. Everything was happy – if we were in a depression time, we didn't know it because everyone else was too.

My parents were good, loving, kind, and honest – the pillars of our community. For these traits I am thankful and appreciative.

Miriam Ann (Shanks) Gwaltney (2010).



Map drawn by Miriam Shanks Gwaltney showing the locations of the families talked about in her memories of growing up in the 11th Civil Dist., Putnam Co., TN. The Luther Alexander "Luke" Shanks house was on Hopewell Road across the street from the Virgil Timothy Denny house and farm. The John Bell Denny farm now owned by Robert Shanks is on Indian Creek Road. Across from his house was Denny's Memorial Methodist Church and Denny's Seminary school.

Buffalo Valley can be reached off I-40, Exit 268. The Buffalo Valley School - Community Center: off Exit 268, turn right ½ mile then second right into the center.