

**FLATT FAMILY HAS CONNECTIONS TO
BLOOMINGTON SPRINGS**

By Bill Flatt

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'Writer's Corner'

My wife, Louise, and I really enjoyed the Nov. 18 story in the *Herald-Citizen* about Bloomington Springs. It brought back many memories for both of us.

Louise grew up in the Bloomington Springs Community. She moved there with her parents, Paskell and Flora Dyer, along with her brothers, Harold and Ernest, her twin, in 1945. Ernest and his wife Mary still live on that place, which was purchased from Pierce Loftis at an auction. Their son, Keith, and his daughter, Karissa, Kenzie, and Lexie, live in the house built by Paskell and Flora.



(Pictured: Bill and Louise Flatt).

Louise and I moved to that place in March of 1957 and lived there until her parents returned from Detroit to settle down for the rest of their lives at that spot. They were members of the Bloomington Springs Church of Christ, where Pass served as an elder and song leader, and Flora as a Sunday school teacher. She also helped the other ladies make beautiful quilts and helped out in many other ways as well.

Louise remembers many of their neighbors: my Uncle Robert and Aunt Lillie Brown and their daughter, Patsy, who still lives there; Hulon and Opal Ferrell; Summine Brown; Ma Maggie Nola Dyer Brown; Walter and Corinne, Mary Frank, Polly, and Ray Ferrell; Comer, Lucy, and Everette Brown; the Gilliam family; Marian and Mable, Arlene, and Jodie Thomas; Andy and Beulah Flatt; Charlie, Milbra, Marie, Kenneth, Earl, Lewis, and Glen Norton; Charlie, Willie, Charles, Jr., Millis, Juanita, and Annetta Brown; Matthew and Alsa Tayes; Whit and Mag Patton; Dewey, May, Pinkie, and Apple Jack Patton; Frazier, Mallie, Linda, Evelyn, Helen, Richard, Shirley, Jo Nelda, and Grant Vaughn; the I. E. Warren family; Van and Ruth Way; Andrew and Lulu Way; Grace Thomas (Presley), her father, Simon, and family; as well as John, Hugh, Joe, and Ben Skimmiehorn. John survived the death march in Japan during WWII. Others include the Mart Hensley family; Bobby and Hulon Hensley; Daniel and Dorothy Pippin; Jess and Bonnie Bowman; Betty and Jimmy Hunter, their mother, Aunt Ila Dyer Hunter, and her mother, Ma Maggie Nola Dyer Brown.

I remember getting my hair cut by Summie Brown during my high school days at Baxter Seminary - \$.25 a clip. Robert Pippin and Layton and Litton Way were often with me. So, Mr. Summie got a whole dollar from all of us.

I remember that the Bloomington Springs Church of Christ began having Sunday School before we did at Union Hill. Some of my friends though it was unscriptural and criticized my Pa Way for preaching there. Louise remembers some of their discussions



about using Sunday School literature in their classes, some believing that it was wrong. My brother, Leamon, and I rode with Pa and Ma Way, Helen and Emogene, one Sunday afternoon when Pa preached at the old School House. I remember that they had a volleyball court in the back yard of the school Pa's brothers, Van and Andrew Way and their families, were members of

the church at Bloomington Springs.

(Pictured are the 8th grade graduates of Bloomington Springs Elementary School: Pinkie Patton, Louise Dyer, Lora Huddleston Ernest Dyer and Jessie Mae Goolsby).

Pa was driving his 1929 A-Model Ford convertible and trying his best to keep it in the ruts and stay under the speed limit which was 35 miles per hour at that time during WWII. Ma Way's job was to watch the speedometer and tell Pa when he was speeding. That rate of speed seemed sort of fast on some of those gravel roads.

I grew up on Shephardsville Road in the Union Hill Community of Jackson County. Everette Presley was our mail carrier. I remember when he bought a new 1941 Chevy. It was the talk of the community – beautiful, and the gear shift was up by the steering wheel. My aunt, Ruth Way, took his job at the Post Office when he retired. Louise and her twin brother, Ernest graduated from the Bloomington Springs School in 1948. Their two classmates were Pinkie Patton and Jessie May Goolsby. Their teacher was Miss Lora Huddleston, who taught at the school for 44 years, retired, and then came back and taught some more. Pinkie married my cousin, Leamon Fowler Flatt. Their son, Steve Flatt, served as president of Lipscomb University and its presently president of NHC. Louise and Ernest's brother, Harold Dyer, graduated from Bloomington Springs in 1947 and now lives with his wife, Margie, near Cookeville on Pippin Road.

My brother, Leamon, and I both held gospel meetings at the Bloomington Springs Church of Christ. He always remembered that his good friend, Charles Huddleston, became a Christian during his meeting. I did supply preaching there recently.

Louise and I used to shop at aunt Mary Ike's Store in Bloomington Springs. She often offered us a cold Nehi drink. She was married to Willie McBroom. The story she told us

about this marriage was somewhat amusing. They had been seeing each other and had talked about getting married sometime. One afternoon Willie came into the store and observed that no customers were present. He then said to Aunt Mary: "Since business has slacked down, why don't we just go up to the County Court Clerk's Office and get married?" She said yes, and they did.

Louise and I are glad to hear of the signs that are being installed at Bloomington Springs and at other communities as well. The stories that come out of all of this help reserved some historical details that would otherwise be lost.

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