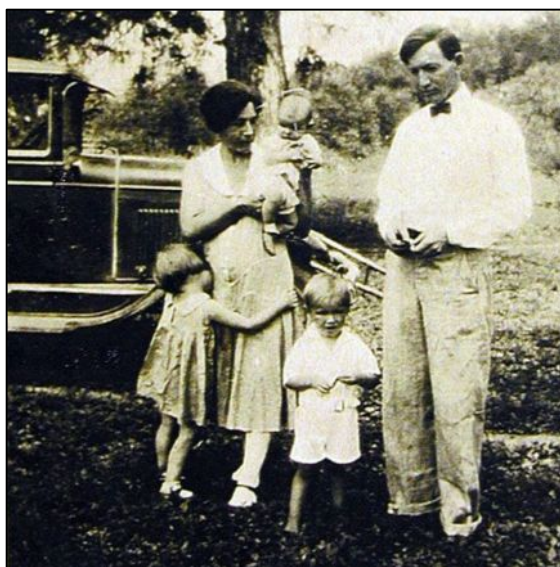


LUTHER “LUKE” ALEXANDER & DONA FLORENCE BOYD SHANKS



Luther “Luke” Alexander Shanks born 1890 in a log cabin in the lower end of Putnam County, TN on what is now a Century Farm was one of 7 children who lived to be adults. He was born to Robert Fain Shanks and Anna Louisa Anderson. The youngest child, Josie, had Down's Syndrome. Her mother, Ann taught her how to dress herself and make up her bed. Luke said his mother always prayed that Josie would die before her because it would be a burden for other members of the family to take care of her. Grandma Ann's prayers were answered in 1919 when the dreaded FLU which started in Europe reached the States. Luke had this Flu and said, “it was the worst thing I ever had—I couldn't get out of bed”. As one person got better they had to wait on the others. Mrs. Molly Sutton, who was a niece of Ann's would ride her horse down from Baxter to help the

family out during this terrible time. Finally Josie came down with the flu and died in Jan 1919. Grandma Ann also succumbed to the disease in March 1919, fulfilling an answer to her prayers.

The grandparents of Luke Shanks were Craven Michael Shanks who served in the Union Army during the Civil War and Nancy Katherine Hendley who died at an early age in 1877. They are buried in the Shanks family cemetery on the Century Farm up the hill behind where the barn stands and the log cabin once stood on what is now known as Hopewell Road. Craven Shanks father, Simon Shanks and his English bride, Margaret Maddux were married in 1823 in VA. They came to TN with Margaret's parents, Craven Maddux and Betsy Davis. None of Simon's siblings came along. The story passed down says they were proud German people who ostracized Simon for marrying outside the German clan. The family spelled the name Shank in VA, however one of the earliest patriarchs who came into Lancaster county PA was Heinrich Schenck, Luke Shanks' gr-gr-gr grandfather who preferred the German spelling, Schenck. Anna Louisa Anderson was a daughter of Thomas Anderson, Jr. and Louisa Alexander, who both died in June 1861 in their early 40's, along with two small children leaving behind 11 children. Ann had a twin sister Jane who married an Simon Obadiah “Bud” Evans.

Dona Florence Boyd was born in 1889. Her parents were George Washington Boyd & Naomi Tennessee Kerr or Carr. George Washington Boyd's parents were Eliza Jane Jared & Bransford B. Boyd a Confederate soldier who died in 1861 during the Civil War where a memorial for him was placed in the Civil War Circle at Mt Olivet cemetery in Nashville. Bransford Boyd was the youngest child of John & Elizabeth Leath Boyd, early settlers of Putnam County. Eliza Jane Jared Boyd remained a widow until her death in 1899. Bransford and Eliza were the parents of 4 children: Lafayette, Irvin, George and Betsy Ann Boyd. Andrew Carr and Carolyn Stillman Jared were the parents of Naomi Tennessee Carr. Carolyn Stillman Jared was a dau of Joseph & Dorcas Byrne Jared.

Luke Shanks was a farmer most of his life. He was also a merchant in Buffalo Valley during its heyday. He later formed a partnership with his bro Walter Shanks, known as Shanks Bros. He began feeling sickly and “went out on the farm full time to be out in the sunshine.” He lived to be 89 yrs old enjoying life to the fullest with very few illnesses or medicines other than aspirin. He had his first coke when he was in his late 60's, the first and last. He never indulged in coffee, tea or tobacco. He had one episode with moonshine which he thought was going to cost him his life and vowed he would never indulge again. These things didn't have any food value so he

surmised it was useless to spend money on such things. He bought his first car, a 1935 Chevrolet ca 1937 and learned to drive it.

Dona Florence Boyd Shanks was a teacher when she and Luke Shanks married. She attended the Normal School (MTSU) in Murfreesboro and Dixie College, formerly TTU in Cookeville. Her last school was in the late 1920's in Buffalo Valley referred to as the school up the hill on the bluff. It was completely demolished when I-40 went thru. This school was called a subscription school. She bought one of the first automobiles in this area. Elise McKinley said when Dona Boyd went past their house going to school, the entire family would race to the window to see the car and the unbelievable woman driver. Dona learned to change tires as the roads were very rocky causing many flats. Before buying a car, her dad, George Boyd had to ride a horse while leading another one on week-ends for her to come home or else get the Buggy out. She would board during the week with someone in the neighborhood where she taught. Later she would accept schools in Huntsville AL and Cairo , GA as her school terms here would be drawing to an end. She would engage someone to finish her school in Putnam county and go further south to take up another school which would ensure her full time employment. In Putnam county and the surrounding counties the school term would only be for 3-4 mos. Children were needed to help on the farm in the summer and since the winter months were extremely cold and the heating poor, the school term would start in March and go thru May or June.

Dona Boyd and Luke Shanks had 3 children: Ann Miriam Gwaltney, George Shanks and Naomi Carolyn Huddleston.



Front row: L to R: Ann Miriam Shanks Gwaltney, Luther "Luke" Alexander & Dona Florence (Boyd) Shanks.

Back row: L to R. Naomi Carolyn Shanks & George Shanks.