

### LONNIE DOWELL “LON” PRENTICE (#832)

**Source:** Heritage of Putnam County Tennessee – 2008 by Putnam County Heritage Book Committee and County Heritage Inc.



Pgs. 301 & 302 – Lon was born in September of 1891 or 1894 in district 13 of Putnam Co., TN. His parents were James “Jim” and Martha Wallace Prentice. The 1900 Census revealed his birth date as Sept. 1891 and that he was nine years old. The 1910 Census revealed his birth date as Sept. 1891 and that he was nine years old. The 1910 Census said he was only sixteen, but he was a farm laborer on his dad’s farm. Three years later on 4-12-1913 he wed Daisy D. Webb in Putnam County. She was the daughter of John D. and Mary Medley Webb, also of district 13. She was born September 1895. Their first child Vergil was delivered 12-3-1915, and he died 1-14-1916. He was buried at the Webb Cemetery with no marker. Their third child Effie came later.

**(Pictured:** L to R: Back: Lonnie, unknown child, Susie, Bettie, Martha – Front: Monroe and Army Prentice).

Lon served in WWI. The family remembered it was a long time before he returned home following the war. His family thought he must have died in action. Lon suffered “shell shock”. The family never knew if he had been in a hospital, a war prison camp, or what delayed his return, but his son said he was exposed to poisonous gas during the war. The 1920 Census revealed that he could not read nor write, he was widowed (actually divorced), he was twenty-six years old, his six-year-old son Clarence lived with him, and he resided in district 8 in the home of his widowed father Jim. A widowed sister Bettie, with her two youngest children, was also there. Clarence stated, “I lived with my father until age nine or ten and then with Mother.”

Lon married Martha unknown after this time. They moved to the Antioch area in Davidson County. He never worked at a regular job, after the war, but as a carpenter now and then. Beverly Prentice told that Lon and Martha lived near them in Nashville at one time. They lived in a log house in a clearing in a wooded area. Lon had built this small two-story log cabin himself from the trees he had cleared from the same space. The logs were roughly hewn and daubed with mud instead of concrete. Their furniture was homemaker. Everything was kept neat and clean. They had no children. They lived mostly off the land and seemed to really enjoy life. They had a bunch of hound dogs, which Martha treated like children.

Don Carlos Ashburn, Jr. remembered going with his father to visit Lon. This was during the mid 1930s when Don’s family lived in Nashville. He recalled the log home and the dogs. He thought Lon acted a little odd. Lon died in 1971 of complications that developed from the gas exposure. He was brought home to Putnam County and was buried in the family cemetery.

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