The Lives and Times of Some Descendants of John and Rebeccah McKissack 1740 - 1940

Part I – The Narrative

Psalm 16:6: "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

THE LIVES AND TIMES OF SOME DESCENDANTS OF

JOHN & REBECCAH MCKISSACK

Dedicated to the next generation, especially
Kathleen, John, Christine, Andrew, Morgan, & Lillian

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INTRODUCTION

The first thing I must say to a McKissack "cousin" reading this book is that it is by no means the definitive work on the descendants of John and Rebeccah McKissack. For the most part, this is a narrative on only one particular line -- mine -- and there are many other lines to be researched. I don't presume to think I've found all there is to find on my ancestors. There are old stories to be uncovered, and facts to be unearthed. Anyone who has performed genealogical research knows that there is always more to be learned about the descendants of a particular family. A trunk in an attic or a box in a flea market booth may contain a letter, diary or old family Bible that will provide wonderful new information. Hopefully, anyone reading this book will not stop their research here, but simply use this as a starting point for their own genealogical sleuthing.

Unfortunately, there have been precious few of those letters or family Bibles or other primary sources to consult in piecing together the history of the McKissacks discussed in this book. The McKissacks in this line left no diaries or letters that I have been able to find. The written sources of information concerning them take the form of impersonal public documents such as census records, deeds, lawsuits, tax lists and other local records. And there are no pictures of my ancestors beyond my own great grandfather and grandmother.

Consequently, in writing this history, I have been forced to make educated guesses about my ancestors' everyday lives. Some readers will undoubtedly quarrel with this method as "too creative." I've tried, however, to merely give context to these people's lives by recounting the events that shaped their everyday world. I hope I've avoided the mistake of projecting our my values or desires upon them. Likewise, I've also tried to avoid the mistake of trying to make my ancestors better people than they really were.

In addition, I have attempted to avoid judging my ancestors with the standards of our time. Where the McKissacks' actions conformed with the mores and standards of their communities, I've attempted to describe their activities in non-judgmental ways. Where their actions might have earned them their communities' disapproval, I've tried to indicate this, also. No family "skeletons," however, appear in this book if descendants of certain people have requested that the "skeletons" be left out. One person requested, for instance, that a divorce be kept "secret," because it was something their 19th century ancestor had found shameful and tried to hide. It is not included in this book; my goal has been to try to see and understand the world through the McKissacks' eyes, not embarrass anyone or second-guess their actions.

Indeed, since they left no extensive personal writings, it is difficult to do anything other than generalize about the lives, behavior, motives, and attitudes of most of the people mentioned in this book. And as we in the 20th century know, what is true of one generation may not hold for the next. Our assumptions may not fit other people's lives. Consequently, we can draw only the broadest of conclusions.

For instance, one broad conclusion we can draw about the McKissacks is that they have been very mobile. Not a single one of our ancestors died in the same state he or she was born in. Some moved several times in their lifetimes. As the reader will see, this was not uncommon as

early Americans restlessly moved on into new lands.

As a result of their constant moving, the McKissack family was always on the frontier. They were farmers by "trade" and always seeking fresh lands for agriculture. From the early 1700's until 1820, family members were buying and moving onto lands that had not previously been used for large-scale agriculture. This frequently put them into conflict with the Indians, and several lost their lives because of this.

Moving onto these frontier lands with the McKissacks were their slaves. From the time the earliest known ancestor -- John McKissack -- bought his first slave in the 1750's, to the end of the Civil War, most McKissacks were slaveowners. This fact would determine where they lived and how they lived. There are thousands of black Americans today, the descendants of slaves, now bearing the name of McKissack.

Another characteristic of the McKissacks was their relatively low public profile. Few McKissacks ran for or held public office. With certain notable exceptions, few ran afoul of the law. By and large, the McKissacks planted their crops, raised their children, paid their taxes, and served their country in times of war. In this way, they were quite ordinary. But in another way they were quite extraordinary. In spite of tremendous uncertainty and danger, they were always willing to pull up roots, journey into untamed and hostile country, and endure the hardships necessary to survive and prosper. This demonstrated an adventurous and optimistic spirit. In this way, the McKissacks were examples of what one early observer called "the new man" that was an American. I hope this text will give other generations some idea of where they came from, and an appreciation of the struggles of those who made our comfortable modern life possible. This particular branch of the McKissack clan has been fed by interesting roots in America. And those roots go very deep.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe a debt of gratitude to many people for assisting with this book. Perhaps the first person I should thank is "cousin" David Schultz. In 1991 David was researching the McKissack family and contacted my Aunt Sue McKissack, who in turn referred him to me. At that time, I knew very little about my ancestors. I had heard vague stories that my great-grandfather had been born somewhere in Alabama, but that was the extent of my knowledge. David Schultz had done a great deal of research on the family in Mississippi and Alabama, and he thought the family may have come from North Carolina in the 1700s. He asked if I had information confirming this. One thing led to another, and the result nine years later is this book.

I have also been enormously fortunate to have a "merry band" of other kinfolk who have generously contributed information. A special thanks must go to "cousin" Nelda Tarrer, whose research almost makes her a coauthor of this book. Nelda doggedly researched lines, pursued leads, and closely examined and compared information not just on her own line, but on many others as well. By doing this she solved puzzles, untangled messes and found explanations. Anyone who has done genealogy research knows that this is where the real labor is done.

The reader will note that the great majority of Part II of this study (to be published in a separate volume) consists of lines other than the author's. Almost all of that information was provided by relatives descended from those lines. In addition to David Schultz, I am especially grateful to Nancy Cantwell, Bobby Godfrey, Doris Newsom, Juanita Jones, Thelma Freeman, and Joe and Edna Bird for freely sharing their files and information with me. There have also been numerous other "cousins," too numerous to mention, who have provided a few tidbits of information here and there, including old pictures.

A big "thank you" also goes to my brother Ken McKissack for the maps in this book. I was in a real quandry about how to illustrate the migrations and neighborhoods of our ancestors until Ken offered to use his talents to create the maps. Likewise, my sister Jennifer Suffredini did a tremendous amount of research on the McKissacks in Alabama. A very pleasant memory for me is the week she and I spent traveling together doing research in courthouses and libraries in Southeast Alabama.

And finally, I am grateful to my wife Gail Gulbenkian, who read and edited the manuscript for mistakes. (Thanks sweetie – your Stanford University Masters in English came in handy!).

Of course, in spite of the best efforts of all these people to help me, I know that in some places I've misunderstood what they tried to tell me, entered the wrong information and overlooked their corrections. Consequently, I claim any errors in this book to be my own.

CHAPTER I -- BEGINNINGS

The earliest known ancestors of many of the thousands of McKissacks scattered throughout the United States were John and Rebeccah McKissack who purchased 300 acres in Edgecombe County, North Carolina in 1744[1]. John and Rebeccah were the parents of three sons -- John Jr, William and Thomas. These men established large and prolific families. The descendants of their sons and daughters moved into Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas. Later generations would move north and west.

It is impossible to write a single, coherent narrative covering all branches of the family of John and Rebeccah McKissack. The story would involve hundreds of people and be far too confusing. Consequently, this narrative will attempt to trace the lives and times of one particular line of the family which traveled from North Carolina, to Tennessee, to Georgia, to Alabama and finally to Poplarville, Mississippi. A reader interested in other branches of the McKissack family might find useful information in the genealogical listings which follow in Part II of this book.

EARLIEST APPEARANCE

The land onto which John and Rebeccah moved in the early 1740's appears to have been located just south of Halifax, North Carolina on one of the branches of Conneconary Creek. Little is known about John and Rebeccah's lives when they lived in Edgecombe County; records are sparse for that time period.[2] Its also unclear where they lived before their appearance in North Carolina. The act of sale for their land states that John paid "12 pounds 10 shillings current money of Virginia" for the land, so it is possible that John and Rebeccah moved south from Virginia to North Carolina. Many, many Virginians were doing just that.

The fact that John was using Virginia money, however, doesn't necessarily mean he was from that state. Virginia money may have been the only coin available in the area. At this time in American history, coin money was scarce in the backcountry. Independent and self-sufficient pioneers could build, grow, or shoot most of what they needed to survive; hard money was for special purchases. This was especially true of the backwoods where John and Rebeccah settled, because North Carolina was slower than its northern neighbor Virginia to develop some type of coin as a medium of economic exchange. Since pioneers crossed the North Carolina-Virginia border frequently, they used whatever coin was available to buy land. A glance at land transactions during the period shows purchases not only for current money of Virginia, but also for "sterling money of Great Britain," "silver money," "proclamation money," "current money of South Carolina," "gold and silver bullion," and "one ear of Indian corn on the feast of St. Michael the Archangel."

As mentioned, numerous settlers from Virginia, finding the land cheaper in North Carolina, moved across the border. Two families with whom the McKissacks would later intermarry, the Allens and Hudsons, immigrated from Virginia. No records examined so far, however, show a McKissack in Virginia in the early 1700's. Nevertheless, a passage in "History of Pittsylvania County [Virginia]," Clement, 1981, states, "It was probably owing to this exodus [from Virginia in 1756] that we find many of the Scotch names listed in the tithables of western

Lunenburg [Virginia] missing from the records a few years later; such as McDead, McCusick, McCanes, and McDavid and so on."

POSSIBLE ETHNIC ORIGINS

We know for certain that McKissack is a Scottish name. Consequently, John could have emigrated voluntarily from Scotland in hopes of a better life in America. A group of McKissacks were indeed prominent in the predominantly Scottish community along the Cape Fear River in southeastern North Carolina. One of them was named Archibald McKissack; many of the descendants of John and Rebeccah McKissack would be named "Archibald." In addition, a John McKisage received a land grant in this area in 1764. It does not appear, however, that this was the John McKissack of Edgecombe and later Granville County, North Carolina. Perhaps future research can tie John to the group in Southeastern North Carolina, but we have been unsuccessful to date.

It is also possible that John was born a Scotsman and was deported to North Carolina in the early 1700s. In the late 1600s and early 1700s Scotland was in a constant state of turmoil. Wars occurred between clans, between religions, and between Scots and Englishmen. To suppress these conflicts, the English deported groups of Scots to North Carolina.

THE SCOTCH-IRISH

Given the fact that John first appears in lands close to the Virginia border, however, far from the North Carolina Scottish enclaves, it seems most likely that he was what was known as "Scotch-Irish." The Scotch-Irish were descendants of Scots who had lived in Northern Ireland prior to coming to America. Those Scots moved to Ireland in the 1600s. At that time the English, seeking to tame their rebellious Irish subjects, decided to give Irish land to the tough and warlike Scots and let them fight and then "civilize" the Irish.

These Scots were quite successful in Northern Ireland, though it wasn't an easy success. Irish resentment smoldered as they were forced off the best land and reduced to living in the woods or working as day laborers. In addition, the Scots were Presbyterians and the Irish were Catholics, and this was the period of great religious conflicts and wars.

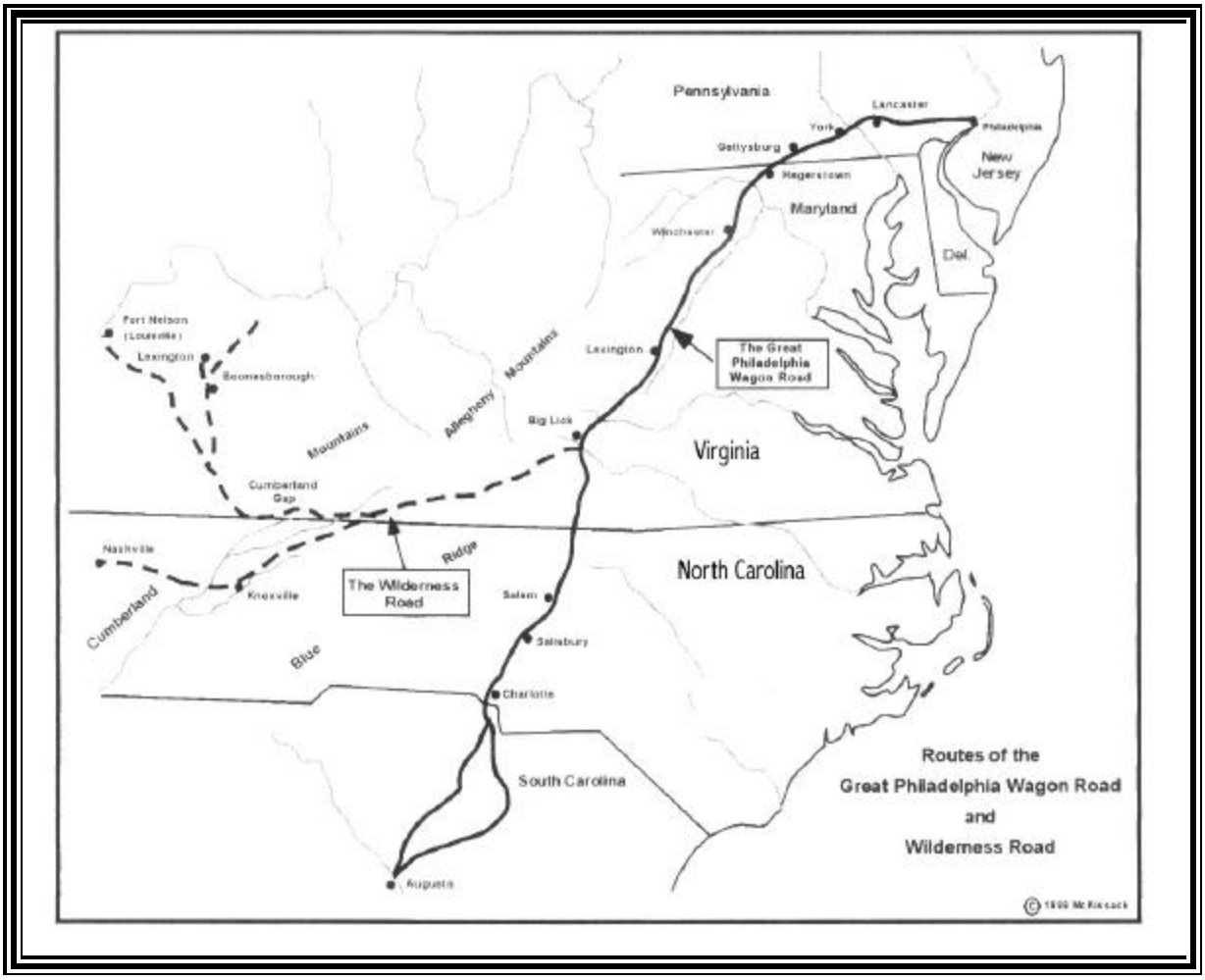
These factors meant that the Scots lived under constant threat of attack by the Irish. The Scots in the countryside lived in small forts into which they drove all their animals at night to protect them from raids by the dispossessed Irish. Open war broke out in 1641 and 1688, and hundreds of thousands of Irish, Scots and English died from sword, famine and plague.

In spite of these problems the Scots prospered. Some of them farmed -- drained swamps, cleared fields, raised cattle and sheep and grew flax. Others developed a thriving linen and woolen industry. Thus, by 1700, the Scots had successfully "civilized" northern Ireland. Ironically, it was their success that led to events that forced many of them to immigrate to America. When their cloth industry began to compete with English cloth mills, English merchants demanded protection, and the English passed laws that devastated the Scots' industry in Northern Ireland. In addition, the Scots had improved the lands so much that many English landlords saw an opportunity to make a profit and raised the rents. Many of the tenant Scots could not pay and were forced off the land. Then a drought occurred which lasted six years,

ruining crops and creating famine. On top of this, the English tried to force the Presbyterian Scots (and Catholic Irish) to vow allegiance to the Anglican Church. Many Scots decided it was time to leave for the rich lands they had heard about over the waters in America.

With its reputation as a colony of good land and religious toleration, Pennsylvania was a favorite destination of many early immigrants of all nationalities, including the Scotch-Irish. By the early 1700s, however, the best land in Pennsylvania had already been purchased. To push further west was to be certain of coming into conflict with the Indians (who would kill thousands in the 1750s). Since many of the Scotch-Irish were accustomed to this kind of violent life from Northern Ireland, some moved to western Pennsylvania and fought for the land.

Others left Pennsylvania and journeyed down the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Continuing south until they arrived in North Carolina, they found large tracts of land for free or for very little. We know the names of some who made this journey -- the Boone family, including a young man named Daniel, and also the Johnston family, which later produced three generations of men named William Wirt, all buried in Bolton, Mississippi, and ancestors of the author through his mother.



Great Wagon Road – Pennsylvania to North Carolina.

Thousands of new immigrants were pouring into Pennsylvania at this time, and records show many McKissacks in Pennsylvania in the early 1700s. John and Rebeccah could have been descendants of some of these settled families and moved to North Carolina when they heard of the cheap and plentiful land. Perhaps they gathered what little they owned, and walked hundreds of miles down dirt roads, slept in the woods, and for safety traveled in a group with some other folk, hoping for some land of their own and the freedom to take advantage of their opportunities. In fact, it is oral history in some branches of John and Rebeccah's descendants that John was from Pennsylvania.[3]

It is also possible that instead of moving directly from Pennsylvania to North Carolina, the McKissacks were some of the many Scotch-Irish who stopped first in Virginia. Several books, including "Emigration to Other States From Southside Virginia,"[4] mention Scotch-Irish settlements in Virginia on the Buffalo River in Prince Edward County, Cub Creek in Charlotte County, and Hat Creek in Bedford (now Campbell) County. These Scotch-Irish came to Virginia

from Pennsylvania. Perhaps the McCusicks mentioned earlier were related to John McKissack and his family.

Whatever John and Rebeccah's origins, it appears they shed old allegiances quickly. They struck out on their own and seem to have been genuine members of the "melting pot" on boil in the backwoods. It appears they were alone, without the aid and support of a network of family and friends. When the American Revolution erupted, many of the North Carolina Scots who had been in America only a few years stuck together and felt obligated to serve the British crown. Likewise, numerous other Americans remained loyal to the King (and thus became known as "Loyalists"). Contrary to this, every McKissack in North Carolina appears to have fought against the English.

We hope that future research will clarify John and Rebeccah's origins. No matter where they came from, however, we can be certain that they, like so many other early Americans, were tough and resourceful. While people tried to help each other when possible, there was no welfare or unemployment compensation and no Medicaid. When John and Rebeccah McKissack moved onto their lands in North Carolina, it was "root hog or die," just as it was for all pioneers.

CHAPTER II --
BUILDING A LIFE IN THE CAROLINA WILDERNESS

John and Rebeccah McKissack lived in the eastern North Carolina county of Edgecombe from about 1744 to 1749. They were probably both around 20 years old at that time.[5] They remained in the region for about five years. John helped survey land in the area in 1748.[6] John and Rebeccah's first son, John Jr., was probably born in Edgecombe County.

Perhaps it was the growth of their family that made John and Rebeccah think of improving their prospects by moving elsewhere. They had undoubtedly heard of the new lands available for settlement to the west. Its likely John visited the area before moving there, as this was a common thing for pioneers to do. John sold the Edgecombe county lands in 1749, and the small family moved west to Granville County.[7]

It appears that the McKissacks moved to Granville County without the support of an extended family group or friends. A 1750 tax list shows that at first they lived with an early settler named Michael Goin (sometimes spelled Going or Gowen), perhaps sharing a crude cabin.[8] Goin and other members of his family remained neighbors of the McKissacks for the next 30 years. Like many of the people moving into Granville County at that time, the Goins were probably from Virginia, where word had spread of the cheap and fertile lands available across the state line.

The Granville County that the McKissacks moved to in 1750 was still a wilderness. Up until 1746 it had been part of western Edgecombe County. Settlers complained about the long journey to the courthouse in the east, however, so the western lands were split off to form a new county -- Granville. This process of forming new counties would continue into the 1800's.[9]

The frontier nature of Granville County is illustrated by the manner in which government business was conducted. Though in June of 1746 a group of settlers petitioned the government for permission to build a courthouse on Tabb's Creek, a few miles from where the McKissacks would settle, no courthouse was ever built.[10] Instead, most government business in the area was conducted at the home of a rich planter named William Eaton, who lived six or seven miles north of where the McKissacks' eventually established their farm. (Eaton lived in Kittrell township of present day Vance County).[11] In our modern world, its almost comical to think of a local government being conducted out of a log cabin with a dirt floor, but this was common in the American backcountry during colonial times. The rural nature of the area would change very little during the time the McKissacks lived there. As late as the Revolutionary War, there were still no towns or churches. Even in 1764, only 40 people inhabited Hillsboro, one of the largest towns in the McKissacks' area (but still about 40 miles away -- a vigorous day-long horseback ride).[12]

A SELF-RELIANT LIFESTYLE

The lack of towns was encouraged by the fact that the early settlers were self-sufficient

and could make, grow, or shoot most of what they needed. What they couldn't make themselves, the pioneers purchased from itinerant merchants who traveled the old Indian Trading Path running down from Virginia. In addition, some of the richer citizens sold dry goods from stores in their homes.

Indeed, North Carolina was a good place for industrious people to build a life. As one book relates:

> "It remained a small-white-farmer's paradise, where the industrious yeoman, the man with fifty acres of land or more, could have some voice in his destiny; ... With a little labor, a plucky, hard-working individual could become a prosperous farmer and a respected member of the community. In such a place, what difference did his origins count or how he began in life? A French traveler in 1765 found the colony 'a fine Country for poor people, but not for the rich.' In fact, the Frenchman met very few rich people and noted that the fortunes of those that he did encounter consisted 'generally in lands, which are for the most part uncultivated, and consequently of no advantage or value for the present.' He believed that many of the new inhabitants were 'convicts' (he probably meant indentured servants) who had served their time in Virginia and then had come south 'where they are not known.' Many North Carolinians, indeed, did manage to keep their origins a well-kept secret -- even to the present day."

DEVELOPING THE HOMESTEAD

Upon arriving in Granville county, perhaps even before moving there, John McKissack located a tract of unoccupied land. To encourage settlement, lands were granted free to new settlers who made improvements and paid rents. On May 2, 1752 John McKissack received a patent for 600 acres in Granville County on both sides of Taylor's Creek, near present day Franklinton.[13] The next day he sold 225 acres of this tract to Michael Goin, and by the end of the month he had sold another 150 acres to Thomas Goin.[14] Compared with other sales in the area at the same time, the price paid by both the Goins appears to have been low. Perhaps Michael Goin had helped the McKissacks settle into the area and John was repaying obligations to him. Whatever the reason for the sales, they provided the McKissacks with extra capital and a remaining tract of 225 acres.

Thus, the McKissacks owned their first land in Granville County. They would live in this area for the next 30 years. And though they would eventually buy and sell several thousand acres of land in the area, they would not sell what remained of the original 1752 grant until they moved west in the 1780s. It seems likely that this first piece of land was where the family homestead was built.

Moving onto their raw land, they began building a life for themselves. In spite of all the movies and books about early America, it is not easy for us to appreciate the rugged and tough lives lived by pioneers such as John and Rebeccah McKissack and later, their descendants. The following extended excerpt, from *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*, by James Leyburn (1962), illustrates how John and Rebeccah probably lived when they first moved onto their lands on Taylor's creek.

Their immediate task was, of course, to build a home and plant a crop as soon as possible. In these first days, every family in the community lived under conditions roughly similar to those of their neighbors. The life of the newly arrived frontiersmen was the same practically everywhere, north or south, and whether the people had come straight from Europe or had moved from a community along the American seaboard. Crude and makeshift arrangements did not first begin on the western side of the Alleghenies. The important question seems to be how long these arrangements were tolerated -- how strong the impulse was to change them into something resembling settled life. In the following account, which happens to be a description of pioneering in New Hampshire, one has the details of the early days of people on a frontier; it might have been an account of pioneers in Virginia or Pennsylvania, in Scotch-Irish settlements or English ones, in early colonial regions or in the much later settlements around the Ohio country.

They frequently lie out in the woods several days or weeks together in all seasons of the year. A hut composed of poles and bark, suffice them for shelter; and on the open side of it, a large fire secures them from the severity of the weather. Wrapt in a blanket with their feet near the fire, they pass the longest and coldest nights, and awake vigorous for labour the succeeding day. Their food is salted pork or beef, with potatoes and bread of Indian corn; and their drink is water mixed with ginger; though many of then are fond of distilled spirits.
Those who begin a settlement, live at first in a style not less simple. They erect a square building of poles [a log cabin], notched at the ends to keep them fast together. The crevices are plaistered with clay or the stiffest earth which can be had, mixed with moss or straw. The roof is either bark or split boards. The chimney a pile of stones; within which a fire is made on the ground, and a hole is left in the roof for the smoke to pass out. Another hole is made in the side of the house for a window, is occasionally closed with a wooden shutter. In winter, a constant fire is kept, by night as well as by day; and in summer it is necessary to have a continual smoke on account of the musquetos and other insects with which the woods abound. The same defence is used for the cattle; smokes of leaves and brush are made in the pastures where they feed by day, and in the pens where they are folded by night.

Ovens are built at a small distance from the houses, of the best stones which can be found, cemented and plaistered with clay or stiff earth. Many of these first essays in housekeeping, are to be met with in the new plantations, which serve to lodge whole families, till their industry can furnish them with materials, for a more regular and comfortable house; and till their land is so well cleared as that a proper situation for it can be chosen. By these methods of living, the people are familiarized to hardships; their children are early used to coarse food and hard lodgings; and to be without shoes in all seasons of the year is scarcely accounted a want. By such hard fare, and the labour which accompanies it, many young men have raised up families, and in a few years have acquired property sufficient to render themselves independent freeholders; and they feel

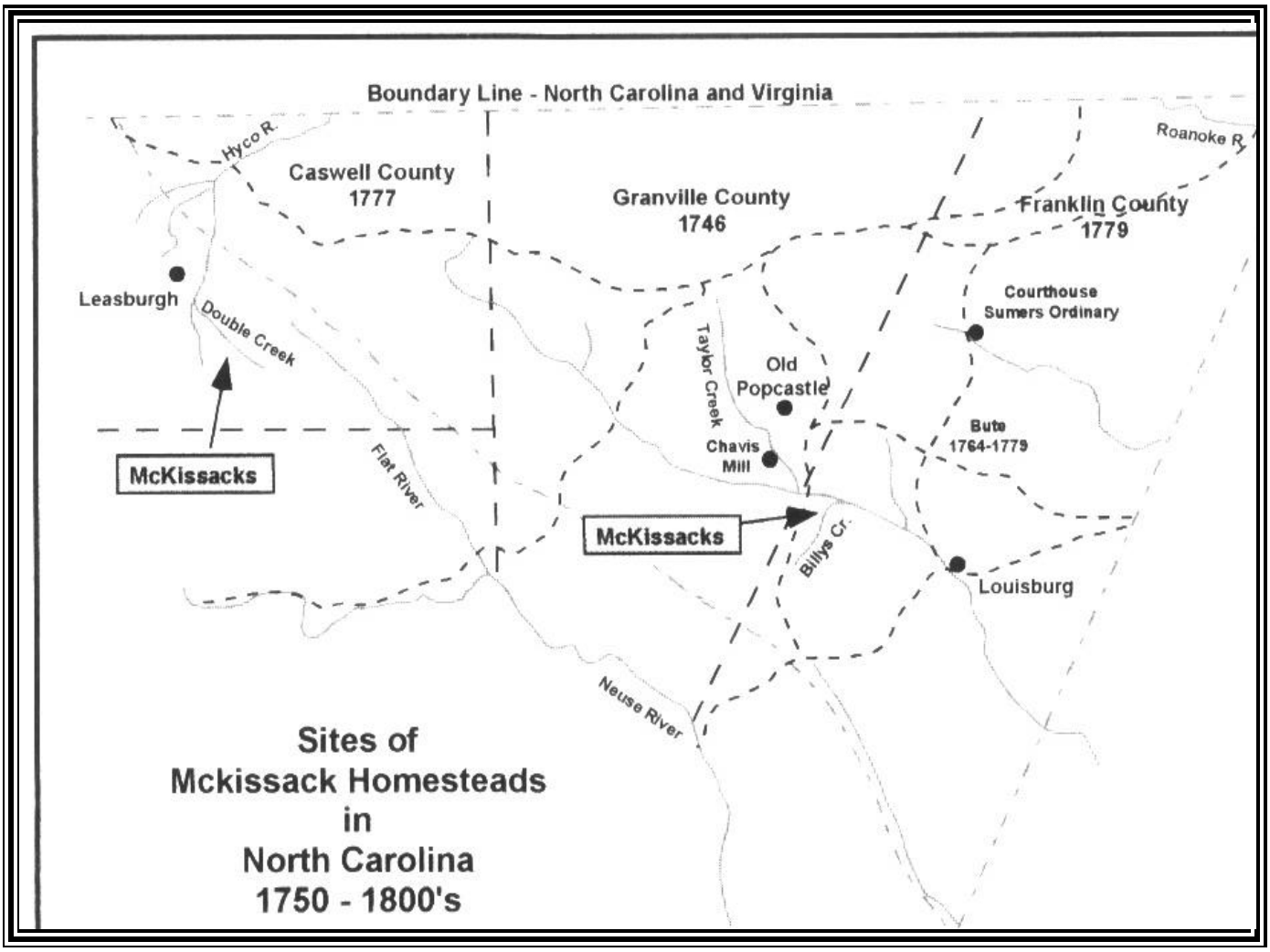
all the pride and importance which arise from a consciousness of having well earned their estates.

Characteristic (and practical) frontier actions occurred among the Scotch-Irish as elsewhere; neighborly help was expected and given in log-rolling, house-raising, tree-felling. No doubt one cabin so much resembled every other that a visitor would have supposed that no social distinctions could exist. Coming with few household goods or implements, each family must camp out until the cabin could be built. With the preliminary preparations made, erection of a house usually required but a day with a rough division of labor among the helpers. With the walls up, the family could at their own leisure construct their furniture, shape their wooden dishes and buckets, build a stone chimney, and make a floor to cover the bare earth. The indispensable equipment of every pioneer consisted of rifle, pouches, powder horn, axe, and hoe; beyond these a man's acquisitions marked his economic progress. Social status in a [pioneer] community was revealed by objective criteria, such as the size and condition of the dwelling, care of the farm, work done by women in the family, personal character and morality, or even diversions engaged in.

A glance around a farm after two or three years would reveal the man's social standing. Good, respectable families had their fields unencumbered with stumps, more land cleared each year, clean crops and careful farming. The cow was the most valuable domestic animal, and the observer could see whether enough cattle were being raised to send east to market for cash or goods. Other animals in variety were further clues to the standard of living in the family. Pigs were certain to be found on every farm. Sheep were not on frontier farms, for they required either shepherds or fences, and labor was not available for either; but the presence of even a few sheep bespoke the quality of clothes the family would wear. As for food, no pioneer need ever want, even before his first crop was harvested. Forests teemed with game, wild fruits, nuts, and berries and the streams with fish. It marked the quality of the family, however, if it long depended chiefly on what nature offered, instead of cultivating a garden that contained not only the staples of the Old World, but the attractive vegetables of the New -- corn, sweet potatoes, new varieties of bean, squash, and pumpkins.

EARLY FARMING

As the passage above mentions, the McKissacks' would have planted a crop on their new lands as soon as possible. To do this, they first girdled an acre or two of large trees, cutting a ring of bark from around the trunk. Then they cleared the underbrush, sometimes by lighting fires that burned the vegetation and scorched the still-standing trees. The following spring the girdled trees didn't leaf out, and this permitted sunlight to reach the ground. Crops were then planted between the huge, dead trunks. The following fall, after the crops were in, the dead trees were felled and used for firewood, building material, or fences.



Sites of McKissack homesteads in North Carolina

Because tree roots still clogged the ground, hoes -- not plows -- were the pioneers' main agricultural tool. If John McKissack was an especially industrious farmer, he removed the stumps from his fields, but to do this he needed a team of oxen; only their brute strength could yank the stumps from the ground. Anyone who has removed a stump knows this is hard, dirty work, and to do it day after day on many acres of ground would have been especially demanding. With so much else to do on the farm, many farmers simply let the stumps rot in the fields.

Slowly, laboriously, the McKissacks and other settlers cleared the land. Working in this fashion a farmer could clear only a few acres a year. Without sons, servants or slaves, he could clear only about a hundred acres in a lifetime. Some historians have speculated that it was the demands of clearing the land that created the "Protestant work ethic." The 14-hour day was the norm for an industrious pioneer family.[15]

Like most pioneers in their area, the McKissacks' first crop was probably corn. It was easy to raise, easy to harvest and incredibly useful. The ears could be roasted and the kernels eaten right off the ear. The stalks were used for livestock fodder, the husks to stuff mattresses, the cobs as jug stoppers and "toilet paper." The kernels could also be ground and used as meal.

Several gristmills were located on creeks near the McKissacks' home; old maps call nearby Billy's Creek "Mill Creek."[16] That the stream offered running water is indicated by the sale of lands near the McKissacks; those deeds refer to "the Falls."[17] Maps also show a Cheaves Mill along nearby Tabb's Creek.[18]

The everyday lives of the McKissacks and their neighbors were for the most part slow and steady. Their main concerns were things like the weather--either drought or violent storm could destroy a crop -- and destructive pests. Frequently mentioned in records of the time is the damage done to crops by various birds, and to livestock by eagles, foxes, raccoons and bears. Like most farmers in their area, the McKissacks raised a kitchen garden; this was mostly Rebeccah's responsibility. In it she grew beans, squash, potatoes, onions, rhubarb, lettuce, greens and herbs. The McKissacks probably also grew wheat and oats, and raised hogs, cattle and poultry.

Raising livestock was a completely different process than what it is today. The McKissacks and their neighbors branded their horses, cattle and hogs and then simply turned them loose to make their own way. Fences were not built to enclose animals; instead the law required farmers to have fences around their crops to protect them from free-ranging livestock. If a farmer's crops were eaten by livestock and he couldn't prove he'd built a good fence, then the farmer could not successfully sue the offending stocks' owner. About 55 percent of the cases brought in colonial Granville county court were for trespass of livestock. If the McKissacks were typical, they probably owned close to 20 cows and 40 or 50 hogs.[19]

PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY

It appears from the available public documents that over the next 30 years the McKissacks grew into solid and respected members of the community. John must been the kind of man who earned the respect of his neighbors because the State Records of North Carolina show him serving as ensign of a company of state militia in 1754.[20] By 1758 he'd been promoted and took the oath as a lieutenant.[21] This is significant because militia officers were chosen by their fellow citizens and were usually some of the wealthiest men in the community. But in 1754 John owned only a few hundred acres. For the other men in his community to desire that he serve as an officer indicates John either had military experience or was a man of reliable character.

Contemporary accounts of North Carolina pioneers paint many of them as indolent; once they had acquired enough land to subsist on, some became satisfied and unmotivated. Considering how strenuous it was to clear the land versus simply living off of it, this isn't surprising. John McKissack, however, was not the indolent type. During the 1750s, as he and Rebeccah developed their farm along Taylor's creek, John acted to acquire additional acreage. In 1756 and 1757 he entered and had surveyed several thousand acres north and south of the Tarr River. The land south of the Tarr fell along Taylor's and Billy's creeks, near the McKissacks' first lands; they kept most of this acreage. They sold the land north of the Tarr River. [22]

John and Rebecca's family was also growing during this period. As mentioned, John Jr. was born around the time of the move to Granville County. William and Robert came shortly after the move, and Thomas arrived in 1755.[23] John and Rebecca may have had other children,

perhaps daughters as well, who died in infancy or without issue. One historian estimates that the infant mortality rate in colonial North Carolina was 40 percent.[24]

RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

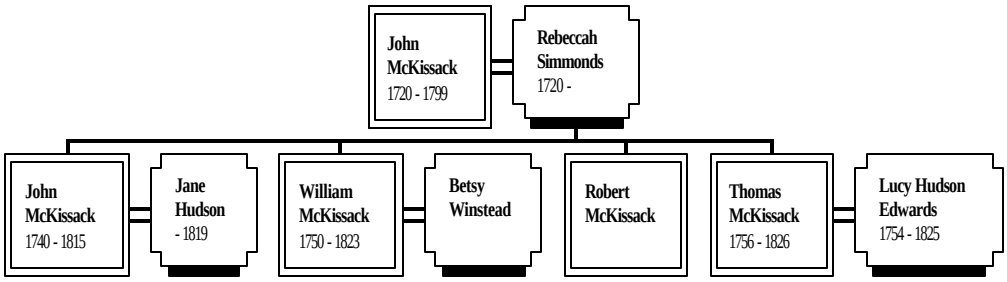
It was also during this period that families arrived in the area with whom the McKissacks would become in-laws. One of these families was that of Robert and Elizabeth Allen Jr., Virginians who settled along Taylor's and Billy's creeks in 1757, adjacent to the McKissacks. Robert and John served in the militia together, being listed in the same company in 1754 and 1758.[25] Years later, Thomas McKissack, John and Rebeccah's son, married the Allen's granddaughter Lucy Hudson. Likewise, one of John and Rebeccah's granddaughters, Nancy, married the Allen's grandson Clement Allen. [26] When the McKissacks moved to Caswell County in the early 1780s, Robert Allen and his son Drury moved there, also.[27]

Following the Allens down from Virginia were several families of Hudsons. One family was that of William and Susannah Hudson. Susannah was the daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Allen, Jr. The Hudsons were in Granville County by 1762, and they purchased lands adjacent to the McKissacks and Allens by 1768.[28] As mentioned, their daughter Lucy later married John and Rebeccah's son, Thomas.

Another Hudson family was that of John and Elizabeth. Elizabeth was also the daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Allen, Jr. To cement family ties even more, Elizabeth's husband John was the brother of William Hudson. So two brothers had married two sisters. One of John and Elizabeth Hudson's sons, Isaac Hudson Jr, would serve with Thomas McKissack in the Revolutionary War. The maternal uncle of Isaac Jr. and Lucy Hudson, Drury Allen, was the son of Robert and Elizabeth Allen, Jr., and would likewise serve in the Revolution with Thomas McKissack and Isaac Hudson, Jr.[29] Drury's son Clement would later marry one of John and Rebeccah's grandaughters — Nancy McKissack — in Georgia.

Another early neighbor, John Simmons, is listed as owning land adjacent to the McKissacks as early as 1758.[30] The Simmons would live near the McKissacks for the next 25 years. Lucy (Hudson) McKissack's sister, Elizabeth, would marry a James Simmons.[31] And a Rebecca Simmonds would witness John Sr.'s will, which was written in Person County in 1799.

John and Rebeccah McKissack's Children & Their Spouses



Perhaps one of the most interesting set of neighbors, to the contemporary mind, were the Goins. It was with Michael Goins that the McKissacks lived when they first moved to Granville County. John McKissack later sold some of his granted land to Thomas and Michael Goins, and they remained neighbors for almost 30 years. What is interesting about this is that the Goins were listed in John's militia regiment as "mulattoes" in 1754.

Early records indicate that relationships between people of different races may have been more relaxed than today. This comes as a surprise to most people who study the period. But there are indications that class, not race, was the important factor in social relationships in colonial America. Whatever the case, the McKissacks were obviously on good terms with the Goins, and possibly related to them, to share a home with them during their initial residence in Granville County.

TOBACCO FARMING

At some point, tobacco probably became the McKissacks' main cash crop. Most of the land being cleared in their area was for growing tobacco. Tobacco became increasingly important as demand grew from England. From 1753 to 1772 tobacco exports from North Carolina (not including what was shipped across the Virginia border) climbed from 100,000 to over 1,500,000 pounds. The northern tier of North Carolina counties which bordered Virginia, and which was where the McKissacks lived, became well-known for tobacco production.

If they did grow tobacco, we have a pretty good idea of the McKissacks' daily and seasonal routine. Tobacco was the most demanding crop grown in colonial America; it was highly labor intensive. John, Rebeccah, and their children would have first planted the small tobacco seeds (a thousand seeds will not fill a teaspoon) in seed-beds. This was done in late February or early March. Once the small plants began to grow they were transplanted to the field. Then, as the plants grew, the McKissacks would have wormed, primed, suckered, and otherwise cared for the plants. The McKissack children would have gone through the fields picking off the tobacco worms and squishing them between their fingers. Cultivation was performed with a hoe instead of a plow, and this again required much labor.

Once they were up and growing, the young plants were topped to prevent useless leaves from growing high on the stalk and ensure that the remaining lower leaves grew big and rich. Topping was done in the hottest part of the summer, and required the grower to move among his plants nipping off the top between his thumbnail and forefinger; whichever hand a man favored for this operation would eventually grow bigger and more muscular than his other hand. The plants were cut in August and hung in sheds where they were "cured." After about five to six weeks, usually in late October, the leaves were removed and packed in hogsheads which were rolled to the most convenient landing. [32]

North Carolinians hauled their surplus crops, including tobacco, to either eastern North Carolina or Virginia. It is possible that the McKissacks sold their crops to the Hamiltons -- Scottish merchants who set up a store about six or eight miles west of Halifax. The store was located at the meeting place of two main roads from western North Carolina, and by the time of the Revolution ,was one of the most prosperous in the state. The Hamiltons promoted and financed the cultivation of tobacco. They loaned planters money to buy more land and slaves

and the loan was repaid in tobacco at the end of the season. The Hamiltons then shipped the tobacco to the coast in their own wagons and carts. In addition, they kept farmers supplied with goods available only through import. A cluster of buildings (including a tavern, warehouses, and an elegant dwelling house) eventually grew around their general store,.[33]

A MEASURELESS FOREST

Whether the McKissacks shipped their crops to Virginia or North Carolina merchants such as the Hamiltons, transporting their crops to a selling point wasn't a simple chore. The nearest river, the Tar, was not always navigable, so hogsheads were probably transported overland to a collection point. Overland travel wasn't easy because the roads were generally poor. Heavy rains eroded soil and cut gulleys into the roadbeds; trees fell across paths. Consequently, travel using any kind of wheeled vehicle could be slower than on foot. This was true in spite of the fact that just about every legislative meeting after 1730 passed laws related to improving the roads.

The roads were usually laid out by overseers appointed by county courts. Since there was no highway department similar to what we have today, all male taxables, 16 to 60, were required to help maintain the roads for a certain number of days each year. John McKissack, as well as Michael and Thomas Goin, Robert Allen, John Simmons, and numerous other men were ordered by the court on December 22, 1758, to help maintain a road laid out in their area.[34]

For local errands, people often traveled on community footpaths. A footpath might lead to a general store, a gristmill or a church. The McKissacks undoubtedly used this avenue of travel, since one deed dated 1766 refers to land as bordering on "McKissack's footpath."[35]

The rural nature of the McKissack's and their neighbors lifestyles cannot be overemphasized to the modern reader. A traveler in some parts of North Carolina could journey a long distance without seeing more than one or two plantations. One traveler in the late 18th century wrote that he journeyed through "a continuous, measureless forest, an ocean of trees."[36] The "roads" that John McKissack and his sons and neighbors cut were probably only dirt paths through the woods. The reader must remember that the farmers had their own farms to work, also. Consider how much time and energy it took to cut down trees, dig up the stumps and fill in gullies caused by rains -- all with hand labor -- and you get an idea of the condition of the roads through the "measureless forest."

Consequently, a traveler could have a rough time of it. If he miscalculated and wound up on the road after dark, he risked losing his way entirely. (Walk on a path in the woods at night with no light and you get a feel for this.) If he was "lucky," he ran across a tavern (called an"ordinary") or a country store at a busy crossroads. These taverns, however, were not earlier versions of a comfortable Holiday Inn. Many were nothing more than the log-cabin home of a settler who took in travelers to earn extra money. The floor might be dirt. Beds were few; you might wake up to find another traveler sleeping with you who wasn't there when you closed your eyes. Pork, bacon, cornbread, and greens were the usual food. An English traveler gave the following description of these "ordinaries:"

They were mostly long-huts, or a frame weatherboarded; the better sort consisting

> of one story and two rooms; ... One corner of the room would be occupied by a 'bunk' containing the family bed; another by a pine-wood chest, the family clothes press and larder; a third would be railed off for a bar, containing a rum-keg and a tumbler. The rest of the furniture consisted of two chairs and a table, all in the last stage of palsy ... If hunger and fatigue compelled you to remain, a little Indian corn for your horse, and a blanket on the hearth, with your saddle for a pillow, to represent a bed, were the most you could obtain ... As to edibles, whether you called for breakfast, dinner, or supper, the reply was one --- eggs and bacon ... Ten to one you had to cook the meal yourself ... No sooner were you seated than the house-dog (of the large wolf breed) would arrange himself beside you and lift his lank, hungry jaws expressively to your face. The young children, never less than a dozen (the women seeming to bear them in a litter in those regions), at the smell and sight of the victuals would let up a yell enough to frighten the wolves.[37]

If a traveler was lucky, he ran across a more genteel farmer's home. The custom in the backcountry was to welcome travelers and give them a place for the night. In fact, given the isolation of most farms, visitors were welcome company. A visitor might bring news from the outside world, tell a good story, or share new jokes. As one writer noted,

> "[North Carolinians] loved company and opened their doors to strangers... Merchants and lawyers were often on the road and sometimes their wives accompanied them for a holiday... On one occasion Johnston and Iredell, while riding circuit, stopped to have breakfast with the newlywed Richard Bennehans, who operated the Snow Camp store in Orange County. The two lawyers had intended to stay only a short time, but at Bennehan's insistence, they stayed the whole day... Bennehan's partner was sent for [and Iredell later wrote] 'we had a happy day in company with them and Mrs. Bennyam, whose amiableness of temper is extremely engaging,' but Iredell believed that her life must be very dull. 'She has not a single woman she can associate with nearer than Hillsboro, which is at a distance of 18 miles.' When Johnston 'told her he would endeavor to bring Mrs. Johnston to see her, she could scarcely speak; tears flowed into her eyes."[38]

The McKissacks probably did not feel as isolated as the Bennehams. They had neighbors living up and down Billy's and Taylor's creeks, and they also lived in an area of the state which was rapidly increasing in population. Their farms were located a few miles away from the main road between Hillsboro and Halifax. Travelers along the road would have lessened the sense of isolation felt by settlers in the McKissacks' area.

Likewise, both Halifax and Hillsboro were only a good day's ride away. Halifax, to the east, was a small though busy trade town that even had a playhouse by 1769.[39] In 1764, Hillsboro was described as a "small village, which contained 30 or 40 inhabitants, with two or three small stores and two or three ordinary taverns, but it was an improving village... A church, a courthouse and jail were built..."[40] By the 1760's a trading center of several stores had grown up along the main road leading to Virginia, near present-day Oxford, about 20 miles northwest of

the McKissacks' farms.[41]

FARM AND SOCIAL LIFE

Nevertheless, as John and Rebeccah labored to develop their farm along Billy's and Taylor's Creeks, they experienced long, monotonous, lonely days and nights. This would have been especially true for Rebeccah, since she would have been tied to the house and farm. For her there were the constant and everyday chores of cooking meals, washing clothes, household organization and childcare. John's duties were more likely to take him away from the farm on occasion to court, a gristmill, militia duty or to a general store. Likewise, his farm duties varied with the seasons. As their children matured, and John Jr and William created their own families, some of the loneliness, and perhaps the burden of some of the work, was alleviated. It appears that John Jr. and William eventually set up their own households on farms next to their parents.[42]

One advantage of the rural isolation was that it created close-knit families. There was simply nowhere else to turn for friendship, entertainment and comfort.

> "The family, which eighteenth century clergymen referred to as the very basis of society, indeed, became the only community that many children knew in their early years; especially in the backcountry. One of the first reasons why James Iredell liked the Johnston family so much was the genuine affection that held the family together -- both adults and children, siblings and cousins. Samuel Johnston clearly believed that as head of his family which included sisters, nephews, nieces, and cousins, he had certain specific responsibilities. But Johnston was certainly no exception. Other families apparently enjoyed the same warm relationship with each other. Given the sparse population and small houses, families undoubtedly became well-acquainted. Sons, when they grew old enough, worked alongside their fathers, while daughters learned housewifely tasks from their mothers."[43]

EDUCATION

While mothers and fathers often taught their children how to read and write, the McKissack family probably was lucky enough to have access to a school. A deed dated July 28, 1766, records the sale of land "adjoining McKissock's path" to "Thomas Springfield, Schoolmaster."[44] Other deeds indicate Springfield had been in the area since at least 1760. (Springfield was a witness to a grant to William McKee [McBee] for 640 acres in Granville County on March 13, 1760.[45] He is also listed in tax records as residing in the same district as the McKissacks in 1762). His school, like most schools of that time, was probably no more than a log cabin in which a group of children of all ages -- perhaps McKissacks, Allens, Hudsons, Goins, Simmons and other neighbors -- obtained a basic education.

RECREATION

The McKissacks probably participated in some of the diversions popular among pioneers at that time. It should be noted that drinking alcohol today might be considered a "diversion," but it could have been a normal everyday activity for the McKissacks and their neighbors. "Beverages were always available in quantity, and the amount of rum sold by country stores and taverns still excites the imaginations of historians. William Attmore noted with some surprise that 'it is very much the custom in North Carolina to drink Drams of some kind or other before Breakfast; sometimes Gin, Cherry-bounce, Egg Nog.' On Christmas day, he emphasized that he had had egg nog -- and with rum -- for breakfast."[46] It seems likely that, except for people suffering from alcoholism, the amount of intake was regulated by the activities expected for the day. The sale of several Mckissack lands mentions their "orchards"; apples, pears and peaches were often grown in home orchards to make brandies.

The McKissacks may have also participated in "diversions" at the legendary Popcastle Inn. This was a tavern supposed to have been located a mile west of present day Kittrell, six or seven miles from the McKissack's farm on Billy's and Taylor's creeks. Local legend holds that a mysterious Captain Popcastle lived there in an imposing house of huge hewn logs. He built a race track and cockpit and erected a sign reading, "Popcastle Inn -- Entertainment for Man and Beast." At some point, a body of the King's officials arrived and arrested Popcastle, charging that he was actually a pirate from the North Carolina coast.[47]

Though Captain Popcastle was gone, new proprietors took over and festivities continued at the inn until around the Revolutionary War. Many were the diversions offered there. Horse racing had a strong appeal among North Carolinians, and one writer reported that "they have what is called race-paths, which seldom exceed a quarter of a mile in length, and only two horses start at a time." Sales of lands in the McKissacks' area refer to "race-paths." Cockfighting was also popular, with observers betting on the likely winner. The sport was so important that fighting cocks were imported from Virginia, England and Ireland.[48]

Other occasions for socializing came at the periodic militia musters John attended, as well as quarterly court sessions and church meetings. Entire families often attended militia drills since they frequently turned into a day of footracing, contests of strength and general socializing. Court sessions were held quarterly and the community likewise gathered at that time. Unfortunately, we know nothing about the McKissacks' religious affiliations, but there were numerous traveling ministers throughout Granville County in colonial North Carolina.

When John and Rebeccah's son, John Jr., married Jane McKissack sometime in the early 1760's, there may have been "diversions" at the wedding. Later frontier weddings could be wild, rollicking affairs with plenty of alcohol, dancing and firearms use, but historians are divided on whether weddings of colonial North Carolina were social events. Some think weddings were staid affairs with the emphasis on confirming a legal and religious union.[49] Others report that "A southern wedding was usually held in the home and was an occasion for the gathering of the neighborhood and the clan. After the minister completed the ceremony, the festivities began -- card playing and dancing, followed by 'an elegant supper, a cheerful glass, and the convivial song to close the entertainment.'"[50] We will probably never know the details of John Jr and Jane's wedding. One thing is clear, however. Whatever ceremony John Jr. and Jane chose was effective; they would be married over 30 years and raise 11 children to maturity.[51]

On the other hand, when Robert McKissack died sometime after 1771, his funeral was

probably a public and social occasion. The law prohibited private burials and required that the body be viewed by three or four neighbors to insure that no foul play had occurred. Since the law also required planters to set aside a fenced burial place on their property for all Christian persons, bond or free, who died on their property, Robert's funeral probably took place at the McKissack homestead. One historian described the typical funeral: "Sometimes an invitation to a wake or a funeral would be sent, and friends and acquaintances would come from a distance.... Food and lodging had to be provided, and it was the custom that no one be turned away. Frequently, the rabble of a community would arrive simply to enjoy the food and drink provided for the 'guests.' Wine and whiskey were usually available at these gatherings -- at a funeral in Mecklenburg County in 1767, seven gallons of whiskey were consumed and charged to the estate of the deceased."[52]

SOCIAL STATUS

Given the scanty records, it's difficult to know what the social position of John and Rebeccah was in their community. We can make some guesses based on what we do know, however. As mentioned, John had bought and sold about two thousand acres in Granville County from 1752 to 1762. Production from this land, along with the sale of some of the acreage to the steady stream of newcomers, could have provided money for at least a middle-class lifestyle.

As mentioned previously, John's service as ensign and lieutenant in the militia indicates he must been the kind of man who earned the respect of his neighbors. Court records contain no instance of any of the McKissacks in conflict with the law or their neighbors. Even the mention of orchards in later sales of the McKissacks' lands speaks well of their characters; William Byrd, an early explorer and Governor of Virginia, wrote: "It is an observation which rarely fails of being true, both in Virginia and Carolina, that those who take care to plant good orchards are in their general characters industrious people."[53]

Using this information may help us make guesses about Rebeccah's life, also. Again turning to the Leyburn book (p.263), we find:

> An almost absolute clue to status was afforded by the women in a family. Were the wife and grown daughters permitted to work in the fields? If so, that family belonged to the lowest class. All women worked, and worked hard; but the proper place for a woman of good family or of respectability was in the home. Marriage was early, for a bachelor could hardly survive in a frontier community without a wife, unless he left home to become a perpetual explorer, hunter, trapper, or Indian trader. Domestic economy depended upon the women; cooking, baking, the making of clothes, washing, milking cows, making butter, spinning, weaving, pickling, all the manifold duties of a housewife, in addition to being mother to eight or ten children, nursing them, caring for them through illness without a doctor, and teaching them if a school were not available. How efficiently and successfully a wife and mother accomplished her endless tasks was, justly or unjustly, considered a mark of status. Not even in the most trying days of early settlement, however, would a man who valued his social position permit field labor for his wife and daughters.

The above passage shouldn't be taken to mean, however, that women didn't *usually* work in the fields. Among the middle and lower classes it was most common, and when John and Rebeccah first moved to Billy's Creek it was probably necessary for them to work in the fields together. Rebeccah would have had other demanding chores as well. "Women not only tended the livestock but also did the slaughtering of even the largest animals. Travelers were startled to see delicate females knock down beef cattle with a felling axe, and then roll down their sleeves, remove their bloody aprons, tidy their hair, and invite their visitors to tea. Females also helped with the heavy labor of forest-clearing and ground-breaking. [One observer] noted that women in the back settlements were not merely 'up to their elbows in housewifery,' but also busy with what other English cultures took to be man's work."[54] The point is that if a man was able to get along without his wife in the fields, he preferred doing so because it was a sign of his own elevated social status. And if a man could afford not to have his wife in the fields, she probably didn't mind at all.

Another factor that may have eased Rebeccah's workload was that in 1757 the family purchased a slave. Her name was Nan and it appears she was owned by the McKissacks for her entire life. Unfortunately, we know very little about Nan. She appears with John in the tax rolls from 1757 to 1762. The next available tax records occur in 1771, and show John as owning one slave, but by that time, tax collectors had stopped recording the names of individual slaves. When John died in 1799, however, he left a slave named Nan to Rebeccah. If this was the same Nan purchased around 1757, she was a member of the household for over 40 years. While records show that in the 1780's the McKissacks would purchase more slaves, making the fateful decision to join the slaveowning planter class, it appears Nan was their only servant until that time. Given that servants, black and white, lived in the same cabin, ate the same food and suffered the same hardships as their masters, Nan was probably a vital and important member of the family.

John and Rebeccah's steadily improving economic status also allows us to make some guesses about their characters. Again, we might gain some clues from a few excerpts from *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*:

> People always make social distinctions. They are always conscious of prestige, even though the attainments that bring prestige change over the years and radically. What disappeared among the Scotch-Irish and among most Americans was the idea of *permanence* of social distinctions, the belief that families must be given deference simply because they have always had it. What was retained among Americans was acceptance of social distinction, even social class, based upon whether an individual family, in this generation and for this generation alone, achieved the qualities that were admired, respected, and honored at the time and place.
>
> A shift had been subtly and imperceptibly made from the criterion of family heritage to that of individual achievement. One's own strength of will, self-control, inward determination, were now the primary factors determining status in a community.

> It could well be reasoned that the informal, but very real, social class system of the Scotch-Irish was based upon character. One of the strongest checks on laxity of behavior had been removed upon the American scene: the farm village. Almost everywhere in the British Isles, tenants on an estate lived in houses close by each other along a village street, each tenant going thence every day to work on his own plot of land. This close proximity had the inevitable result of making every man aware of his neighbors and their opinion, for each person was in truth his brother's keeper. In the New World, however, the farm village was characteristic only of New England. On most of the American frontier, however, it seemed more practical for each farmer to live near the center of his own land. Until the prairies were reached, a man's land had to be cleared out of the forest, and with his hunting grounds might include three hundred acres or more. A village could come into being only when specialists -- a storekeeper, lawyers, a smith, a tavern keeper, the minister -- were present, or when a courthouse marked the final arrival of civilization. For families living alone on an isolated farm, it would be easy to fall into compromises, to let standards deteriorate, in short, to become shiftless in the absence of daily surveillance by close neighbors. Families who, removed from watchful eyes, still upheld the best standards they knew, had proved their worth.

As mentioned, it is likely that the McKissacks were Scotch-Irish. Of all the peoples who shaped early America, the Scotch-Irish perhaps lost their separate ethnic identity faster than any others. Nevertheless, they were known for certain characteristics and some of these might have applied to John and Rebeccah. Modern-day McKissacks will undoubtedly recognize some of themselves in the following sometimes amusing description from *North Carolina, The History of a Southern State* (Lefler, 1973):

> The Scotch-Irishman was described by some writers as 'clannish, contentious, and hard to get along with.' He was usually well 'set in his ways,' as illustrated by the prayer attributed to him, 'Lord, grant that I may always be right, for Thou knowest that I am hard to turn.' His thrift was proverbial, and it was said of him, 'The Scotch-Irishman is one who keeps the commandments of God, and every other good thing that he can get his hands on.' In spite of these ascribed qualities -- or perhaps because of them -- the Scotch-Irish made a great contribution to the growth, expansion, and development of North Carolina. They established Presbyterian churches throughout the area. Within a short time they established schools. They had a flair for politics, and in this, as in religion, they were not given to compromise. They developed agriculture and a variety of local industries, having among their numbers capable weavers, coopers, joiners, wheelwrights, wagon-makers, tailors, blacksmiths, hatters, rope-makers, fullers, and other skilled workers. They had fighting qualities acquired in their rough, hardy, outdoor life, which stood them in good stead on the frontier. All in all they exerted a tremendous influence in shaping the history of the colony and of the state.

CHAPTER III
TROUBLED TIMES

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

As one of Granville County's earliest settlers, a landowner and officer in the militia, John McKissack held opinions and attitudes probably influenced as well as reflected those of most people in his community. Nevertheless, no records indicate how he felt about some of the tumultuous events which occurred in early North Carolina. And at several points during that time period, the shadow of conflict hovered over John and Rebeccah's lives.

During the time John served as an officer in the militia, the French and Indian War between Britain and France was ongoing. The war started in 1754 and lasted until 1763. It appears that John, Jr would have been of age to serve in the militia by 1761, also.[55] During the time of the war, fighting and massacres occurred along the western North Carolina frontier. Cherokee attacks on Rowan County, the westernmost part of the colony, were so ferocious that half of its residents fled east. "In early 1760 Fort Dobbs [in western North Carolina] was attacked ... and by June, the Cherokees ambushed and inflicted heavy casualties on a British Army force of some 1,600 in what is now the southwestern part of North Carolina. These events were not heartening signs to settlers on the frontier, and ... some moved eastward into then Orange and Granville counties. Although Granville was some 100 miles east of the nearest hostile Indians, it served as a refuge for some of the fleeing settlers."[56]

The numerous pioneers fleeing the fighting and heading east into Granville would have no doubt brought a certain amount of fear with them. Some militia units were sent west on forays into Indian territory. These events would have obviously been discussed at great length in the McKissacks' community, and John and Rebeccah's interest would have been heightened by the possibility of the Granville County militia being sent west to fight.

Finally, in 1761, the North Carolina militia, aided by troops from other colonies, dealt the Cherokees several defeats. A strong force entered the Cherokees' mountain strongholds and withstood a vigorous Indian attack. Afterwards, 15 Indian towns were destroyed along with nearly 1400 acres of growing corn. By the end of the year, the Cherokees signed a peace treaty, and the French and Indian War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763.

THE REGULATORS

The McKissacks would have also been very interested in the events which led up to what were called the "Granville Land Riots," and later the Battle of Alamance between the state militia and rebellious citizens. These events were the result of long pent-up resentment of the citizenry at government corruption.

These feelings arose partly because of the way government was organized in colonial North Carolina. Local affairs were usually controlled by a small group of men -- the justices of the peace -- who were appointed by the governor. These justices of the peace oversaw virtually

all public business such as levying taxes, hearing court cases, licensing inns and taverns, and building roads. They also appointed virtually all of the county government's officers: sheriffs, court clerks, and even the vestry, a committee which administered the affairs of the local Anglican church.

While this system seems to have been relatively honest in eastern North Carolina, officials in the western counties attempted to use their power for personal gain. They, the sheriffs and court clerks they appointed, and often merchants and planters who were the wealthiest men in the county, worked to use government to make more money for themselves. They became known as the "courthouse ring."

One way the courthouse ring made money was to charge excessive taxes and set up extortionate fees for performing necessary duties. Adding to the aggravation of these dishonest fees was the fact that cash money was still scarce in the western counties (remember that John McKissack had purchased his first land with Virginia money). Sometimes pioneers didn't keep cash around the house, and if they needed money, they might take a pig or cow or other item to a neighbor and exchange it for coin. The sheriffs, however, began showing up at homes to collect taxes and refusing to wait for the taxpayer to find money. Sometimes the sheriff would charge an extra fee for the delay; other times he'd just seize the taxpayer's property. Even worse, some sheriffs turned around and sold the confiscated property to their friends at a low price. By 1767, even the governor estimated that the sheriffs had embezzled more than half the public money they collected!

The justices of the peace conspired with the sheriffs to charge exorbitant fees and otherwise control the county government to their own benefit. On top of all this, some of the officials responsible for selling land from the government to pioneers engaged in corrupt practices. They also charged excessive fees, and some even sold the same land twice!

Though the citizens complained to the Governor, there was little he could do since he was in the eastern part of the state, far removed by those "measureless forests" from the western frontier. Finally, citizens began taking matters into their own hands. During the "Granville Land Riots" of 1759, frustrated pioneers kidnaped a land agent and held him for several days until he gave bond to produce his books and return illegal fees. Another land agent died before the settlers could kidnap him, but the suspicious settlers dug up his coffin to make sure it contained his corpse!

Anger toward these corrupt government officials was especially strong in the western counties, including the area where the McKissacks lived.[57] As recounted in *North Carolina and the Coming of the Revolution, 1763-1776*, (Butler, 1976): "The seething hostility toward public officers surfaced in open defiance on June 6, 1765, when George Simms, a school-master, wrote a protest entitled, 'An Address to the People of Granville County.' The pamphlet castigated the county clerk, Samuel Benton, who was charging exorbitant fees for recording legal transactions. Bitterly characterizing the clerks, lawyers, and sheriff as 'these cursed hungry caterpillars, that are eating and will eat out the bowels of our Commonwealth,' Simms urged legal action and expressed faith that the system could cleanse itself without rebellion. Subsequently Simms was arrested, tried and sentenced to jail for publishing his address." Simms' proclamation became known as the "Nutbush Address" -- named for the Granville locality where Simms lived.

In other western counties people refused to pay taxes and assaulted government land surveyors. One such event, perhaps apocryphal, is supposed to have occurred only a few miles

from the McKissacks' home. A man named Major Lynch was sent by the Governor into Bute County to collect taxes. Where he failed to get money he seized crops and livestock. He eventually commandeered a guard of local men to take charge of his seizures. As he progressed on his journey into Bute, however, the guards began to desert him, and he finally found that they had all slipped away. Then some of the citizens pursued and seized him. The citizens formed a court, tried and judged him. It sentenced him to die, and he was hung at night on a tree near a creek that entered the Tar River. The creek is today known as Lynch's Creek; it was about 10 miles from the McKissacks' farm.[58]

Anger over official corruption simmered until 1768 when the sheriff of Orange County announced that he would receive taxes in only five specified places and that there would be extra charges for failure to pay. To those of us who have access to modern roads and vehicles, this might not seem an enormous burden, though it would be aggravating. But to pay taxes as required by the sheriff of colonial Orange County, some of the pioneers had to spend several days walking or riding down trails, fording streams, being rained on, etc, all to carry scarce and hard-earned hard coin to pay extortionate taxes to corrupt officials. As one of the community leaders wrote, "... [the people] were obliged to bring their Burdens to him [the Sheriff] in order that one of their Deputies might collect the Whole in ten Days sitting on their Breech, at Ease, in five Places only."[59]

By this time, the people were fed up. They organized themselves into a group called "The Regulators" and issued a proclamation saying that they would pay no more taxes until they were satisfied the taxes were only what the state laws required. They asked the sheriff and local officials to meet with them and show a list of taxables and a copy of the laws establishing the fees.

The government officials refused the people's request for an accounting. At the first convenient opportunity, they seized one of the Regulator's horses, saddle and bridle and sold them for taxes. An outraged band of Regulators rode into the county seat of Hillsboro, rescued the horse and fired several shots into a government official's house. The county officials called out the militia, but so many people were in sympathy with the Regulators that few heeded the call.

A meeting was then arranged between the leaders of the Regulators and government officials, but when the Regulators arrived they were arrested and thrown into jail. This so outraged the citizens that a group of over 700 armed Regulators gathered and marched towards Hillsboro to free their leaders. Hearing this, the officials released their prisoners before the Regulators arrived.

When news of this controversy reached the Governor, he promised to issue a proclamation ordering his attorney general to prosecute any government official charging illegal fees. The Governor even went to Hillsboro in an attempt to sort the controversy out himself. He instituted proceedings for extortion against some of the officials, but he also agreed that the leaders of the Regulators should be tried for inciting rebellion. The situation was so tense that the Governor called out the militia to protect the court when it met to try the Regulators. With difficulty, he managed to raise 1,461 men from four counties. The Regulators, however, assembled a force of about 3,700 men, and for several tense days it was unclear whether they would try to interfere with the trial. Finally, they dispersed. Several of their leaders were convicted and sentenced to fines and imprisonment.

The Governor and State Assembly began trying to address some of the problems that had created the Regulators. Their efforts were slow, however, and more people, impatient over what they considered government indifference to their problems, began to take matters into their own hands. Some disrupted courts, rescued friends from jails, and agreed to pay no more taxes. Finally, in September of 1770 a group of Regulators rode into Hillsboro, broke into the courthouse and forced the judge from the bench. Some officials were dragged from the courthouse by their heels and brutally whipped. William Hooper, an assistant attorney general and later a signer of the Declaration of Independence, "was dragged and paraded through the streets, and treated with every mark of contempt and insult."[60] The mob broke into officials' houses, destroyed furnishings, broke windows in private residences, generally rioted in the streets and even burned stables.

Again turning to *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, (Saunders, Vol. VIII, p.551) we find that the McKissacks' neighborhood was probably sympathetic to the Regulators. Charles Cupples, a Reverend in St. John's Parish of Bute County where the McKissacks lived, watched the Regulator's anti-tax activities with concern because ministers in the Anglican Church were paid through taxes. He wrote to his superior that: "I shall not be able to support myself without your kind relief; and the reason is the disturbances of our country has made it impossible for the collectors to get either public, parish, or County taxes.... It begun betwixt two and three years ago, but they have carried it now to such a height that they have obstructed our Courts of Justice, threatened the Capital, destroyed several Gentlemen's buildings, whip every Officer who calls upon them for taxes..."

Reverend Cupples had found that his parishioners didn't take advice from the pulpit well, either. "If in my sermons to them I mention that a true Christian ought to live in a due subordination and in supporting the Government, they will return that they love the Government, will stand up for it with all their lives and properties, but that the Sheriffs, Clerks of Courts and Registers have been Exactors, and unless they make up to them the money which they say they have unjustly taken they will pay no more taxes or anything."

The Governor finally called out the militia to suppress the Regulators in March of 1771. He ordered the commanders of the various local militias to supply 50 volunteers each. Dutifully following orders, the Colonel of the McKissacks' regiment called for the men to assemble at the courthouse. Normally, the county militia regiment met only once a year. A gathering called specifically to raise troops to suppress the Regulators would have been of great interest to everyone in the county.

A militia gathering in colonial times was a big event. It was one of the few times that all the men of the county were required to show up in one place. Consequently, it was usually an excuse for activity other than military training. Entire families would accompany the men, "... and everyone had an opportunity to visit, to politic, to settle debts, to buy and sell, and perhaps to begin a courtship. To survive a hard day of training, liquid refreshment was needed, and by the end of the day, few men felt any pain. Many, in fact had energy left to engage in footraces, target shooting, wrestling matches, or other forms of physical contact. Sometimes serious fighting broke out and no rules of sportsmanship prevailed. On more than one occasion someone left the field with an eye gouged out, a nose slit, a tongue cut, a finger bitten off, or an ear twisted and pulled off."[61]

There are no records showing whether the McKissacks attended the militia muster. It

seems likely that some of them were there, perhaps John and all four of his sons. Likewise, Rebeccah and the wives and children of John, Jr. and William may have traveled to the muster as a social event, also. Since families had to come from all over the county (the McKissacks would have had to travel over 20 miles), it probably took several days for everyone to assemble. In the meantime, there would have been much visiting, "horse-trading" and socializing.

The place where the muster was held was hardly a "town." As mentioned, the self-sufficient, farm-based lifestyle of rural colonial North Carolinians didn't favor the growth of towns. The only significant buildings at the muster point were a few residences, the jail, the courthouse, and perhaps just as important, Jethro Sumner's Ordinary. Sumner had moved to the county from Virginia. Acquiring 7,500 acres, he became a successful planter and built his tavern, which was to become well-known in the county's history.[62]

Sumner's Ordinary was one of the best of those institutions which the area had to offer; a traveler of that time found the food and accommodations excellent. It was a place for planters to transact business, exchange news and discuss important matters. It would have been especially busy when court was in session and when the militia was mustering.

Accounts written in those years indicate Sumner was a vigorous and intelligent man. Sumner was a popular and influential man with his neighbors and also an outspoken sympathizer of the Regulators. Consequently, it is not hard to imagine some of the conversation passing at Sumner's Ordinary while the men were gathering in response to the special muster of the militia to oppose the Regulators.

When the regiment had finally assembled, the colonel called for them to arrange themselves in ranks. He then announced that the governor would be holding a special court session in Hillsboro and required volunteers from the militia to insure the proceedings would not be interfered with by the Regulators.

The colonel later told Reverend Charles Cupples that "the Regiment some 800 or 900 strong, when called on for 50 volunteers, broke ranks without orders and declared themselves for the Regulators." It doesn't take much imagination to see what probably happened after the colonel's call for volunteers; men began walking away, some probably muttering "like hell I will" or "in a pig's eye" until there was a steady stream breaking ranks. At some point, some wag in the crowd may have even yelled, "There are no Tories in Bute!" -- a play on words, since Lord Bute, for whom the County was named at that time, was a hated Tory. A history written in 1850 by John H. Wheeler says, "There were no Tories in Bute is regarded as fixed fact. The whole County as one man was for independence and liberty."

In spite of the unwillingness of some citizens to volunteer for his expedition, the Governor managed to raise about 1000 troops. Most were from the eastern counties or responding to the Governor's offer of a bounty for service. Marching into the Hillsboro area, the Governor's troops met a force of about 2,000 Regulators at Alamance Creek.

While the Regulators outnumbered the Governor's forces, they lacked efficient organization. They were mostly a large group of armed men who had risen up in anger and who hoped that their numbers would awe the Governor into granting their demands. The Governor's forces, on the other hand, were well-organized, had officers and even cannons.

There was some attempt at peacemaking, but the Governor and the Regulators could not come to terms. The Governor gave the Regulators one hour to disperse. During the truce, many of the Regulators approached the militia and dared them to fire. As one of the militia later wrote,

"Never did I see men so daring & desperate as they were, for during the expiration of the hour ... they would even run up to the mouth of our Cannon & make use of the most aggrieving language that could be expressed, to induce the Governor to fire on them..."[63] When the hour was up, the Governor sent an officer for the Regulators' reply. "Fire and be damned!" was their answer. When the Governor ordered his men to fire, they hesitated, and he shouted, "Fire! Fire on them or on me!" The militia and the Regulators began firing at each other.

The battle lasted about two hours, with the disorganized Regulators fighting mostly as individuals, crouching behind trees and rocks while firing at the Governor's troops. Many Regulators fled when the firing began. The Governor's troops, fighting in organized companies led by officers and supported by cannons, eventually drove the Regulators away.

After the battle, the Governor's forces marched further into North Carolina's western counties. By the summer of 1771 the rebellion was over. Rather than submit to what they considered a corrupt government, many of the Regulators moved over the mountains to Tennessee and Kentucky. Those that remained in North Carolina, even many of those who had fought with the Governor, kept with them the idea of armed resistance to corrupt authority. And the American Revolution was only five years away.

Did any of the McKissacks fight on the side of the Regulators? At this point we do not know. That the McKissacks sided with the Americans during the Revolution is not a sure sign that they had earlier served with the Regulators. Many of the leaders of the Revolution were upper-class planters who objected not to the petty taxes of local officials, but to the taxes placed on commerce by the British crown. Other law abiding citizens disliked the Regulators' lawlessness and wanted an end to their high-handed methods. Even though they were outraged by corrupt officials, they did not necessarily approve of the officials being dragged through the streets, whipped and having their houses burned. As relatively successful citizens, the McKissacks probably did not have as much trouble paying the fees and taxes that outraged some of their neighbors. Nor would they have been interested in seeing anarchy take over in their county. Yet, as people who had started with nothing, and as independent farmers, they were probably sympathetic to the stance of the Regulators. The behavior of most people in their area certainly leads one to believe this.

CHAPTER IV
THE COMING OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

PRELUDE

Given their attitudes about authority, one might assume that the Regulators would later fight for the Americans in the Revolution. Allegiances among North Carolinians, however, were much more complicated than that. What skewed political attitudes was the presence of a strong class system. Many of the Regulators were poor backwoodsmen who were especially burdened by the fees, taxes and corrupt practices of local officials such as sheriffs. For the most part, the backwoodsmen lived in the newer, more rugged and developing western part of North Carolina. Most local officials, however, were tied to the wealthier, eastern part of the state where most of the great plantations, landowners and merchants lived.

As mentioned, many of these local officials were part of the "courthouse ring," appointed by the governor and wealthy citizens. When the Regulators rebelled against the abuses of corrupt local officials, the wealthy class, tied into government and the governor, saw this as a revolt against its power. Consequently, many of the upper class of North Carolina supported the governor's suppression of the Regulators. What is interesting is that when the British government enacted taxes which affected the business of the upper class, their outrage eventually led to the American Revolution!

In fact, some of the taxes which upset the upper class were enacted before and simultaneous with the Regulator movement. The 1764 Sugar Act placed duties on numerous goods imported into America such as sugar, molasses, indigo, coffee, wine, silk and other kinds of cloth. Then, in 1765, the Quartering Act required that if no barracks could be found for British troops, then they must be quartered in inns, livery stables, liquor shops and other buildings. In addition, expenses for the troops' upkeep were to be paid with colonial funds.

THE STAMP ACT

Then in 1765 the British government attempted to raise funds by passing the Stamp Act. The Stamp Act required that certain types of documents must be printed only on paper that had an approved government stamp. Individual, gummed stamps had not been invented in 1765 so the stamp was actually printed on the paper, not affixed separately. Printers of government documents were required to put the stamp on a variety of legal papers, bills of lading used by merchants, clearance papers for ships, liquor licenses, bonds, warrants for surveying land, deeds, mortgages, appointments to public offices, leases, contracts, playing cards, pamphlets, newspapers, and other paper products. Any of these documents without the required "stamp" was considered illegal, so citizens were forced to purchase the papers from government printers and pay an extra fee for the "privilege" of doing so.

North Carolinians were affected in different ways by the numerous taxes levied by the British government, but it’s obvious that men of property and business would be affected most

by the Stamp Act since they required more business documents. As a result, people in the eastern part of the state were most vocal in their opposition to the tax, while the westerners were less concerned.

To oppose the Stamp Act, the gentlemen and planters formed an organization called the "Sons of Liberty." They hanged the prime minister in effigy and forced the stamp agent to resign. They also warned the public printer to print the local newspaper on unstamped paper. When a ship carrying stamped paper arrived in Wilmington, North Carolina, armed men from the surrounding countryside hurried to the town to prevent the cargo's landing.

Similar disturbances erupted in other colonies. In far away Boston, Massachusetts, the Stamp Act created such turmoil that the British sent 4,000 troops to help maintain peace. The citizens were forced to house the soldiers. Frictions between citizens and the occupying army eventually ignited into the Boston Massacre where five colonists were shot by British troops.

The various colonies united in their opposition to the tax acts. Men formed Committees of Correspondence and began to consult on the common problem of how to resist British taxes. At this time, most men based their objections on their rights as Englishmen not to be taxed without representation in the English Parliament. Nevertheless, many colonists began thinking of themselves as a separate people from the British.

THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

In 1773 the British Parliament passed what was its last and perhaps most famous "tax" act on the American colonies -- the Tea Act. Interestingly, the act made it possible for Americans to buy tea cheaper than their English cousins, since it eliminated the English middleman. But by this time just the sound of the word "tax" was enough to anger many colonists. Consequently, many refused to buy tea. The colonists in Philadelphia and New York prevented the unloading of tea; the ships returned to England with their cargo. In Charleston, South Carolina, the tea was landed but no one would buy it, and it remained stored in government warehouses. Then, in Boston, on December 16, 1773, 50 or 60 local Sons of Liberty disguised as Indians boarded the tea ships and threw the cargo overboard. Thus occurred the "Boston Tea Party."

The British government was enraged. It passed the Coercive Acts, which among other things closed the port of Boston and made British officials independent of the authority of locally elected government. Seeing these acts as dangerous to their own liberties, other colonies sprang into action. In May of 1774, Virginia's House of Burgesses sent out a call to the other colonies for a meeting, and Massachusetts suggested that a congress convene in Philadelphia in September.

Receiving these messages, a group of leading citizens in North Carolina organized themselves into a Committee of Safety and sent letters to sympathizers in all North Carolina counties asking them to send delegates to a state convention that would choose delegates for the Philadelphia congress. The letter stated that "we consider the cause of the Town of Boston as the common cause of British America and as suffering in defense of the Rights of the Colonies in general...."[64]

GIVE US LIBERTY, OR GIVE US DEATH!

In response to this letter, county and town meetings were held throughout North Carolina in the summer of 1774. Committees of Safety were formed in all counties, including Bute. By late summer, a group of the McKissacks' neighbors had formed themselves into an association to fight what they regarded as British tyranny. Their serious intent is revealed by the articles of association they signed:

> We therefore the Trusty and well beloved Brothers, and friends, to each other, of Bute County North Carolina, being deeply impressed with the sense of our distressed brethren in the Northern provinces, who are now defending the General rights of mankind, against the arbitrary, and dispotick power of a Corrupt Ministry, by enforcing Laws on us, where we are not represented, depriving us of the Constitution, which we were born and bred under, as free Subjects, Privileges highly worthy the spilling the hearts blood of every American, doe most seriously, Religiously, Join our hearts and hands in embodying ourselves against any violence that may be exerted against our persons and properties to stand by and Support to the utmost of our Power the Salvation of America. And do most humbly beseech our Lord Jesus Christ of his glory, and to the good of our distressed Country & with full dependence thereof, we the subscribers do constitute and agree, that this company consist of ninety rank and file, two Drummers, eight serjeants, one Ensign, two Lieutenants, and a Captain to Command with full power, to our glory, and our Country's Good.

In some counties the Committees of Safety seized the functions of local government. They enforced price ceilings on certain goods, regulated public morals, and organized for the defense of the community. Later that summer, when the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia organized a ban of all trade with Britain, the committees punished violators of the boycott by publicly denouncing them. In some counties everyone was asked to sign a pledge to buy no goods imported from Britain. People who refused to sign the non-importation pledges risked not only public denunciation and business boycotts, but also a bath of tar and feathers if they were vocal in their opposition.

In Bute County a merchant named William Duncan was called before the committee because he would not subscribe to the ban. The committee agreed to "indulge" Duncan for a week until he received instructions from the owners of his business, but declared "in the meantime they will have no Dealings with him." The committee instructed Duncan to report to two of its members and if he had failed to subscribe to the ban after a week, those members were "then to give immediate notice to the Chairman."[65]

If we mentally transport ourselves back in time, we can understand the enormity of what the American patriots were attempting. Imagine that a group of armed citizens shouldered aside your local town officials and announced that they were going to run things in your community. Even if you sympathized with their politics, you might feel a little uneasy at such an assault on the established order.

Obviously, not everyone in North Carolina agreed with these actions. In fact, it has been estimated that at the time of the American Revolution only one third of Americans were for rebellion, another third were against, and another third were neutral. The American patriots in

North Carolina and elsewhere, however, were better organized and knew what they wanted.

Likewise, they were firm in their resolve to protect liberty as they understood it. In Cumberland County, North Carolina, for example, a certain Loyalist lawyer named James Hepburn told several people that if he had control of the local militia, he'd use it to stop the patriots. When news of this reached the local Committee of Safety, it published a notice of Hepburn's intentions "...in order that the Friends of American Liberty may avoid all dealings and intercourse with such a wicked and detestable character." After numerous patriots in his community approached him and let him know what they thought of him, Hepburn apologized and begged the committee that he "...be restored again to the favor of the public."[66]

Not all of the North Carolina Loyalists were so easily cowed. In Anson County the local Committee of Safety called upon James Cotton, who was a Lieutenant Colonel of the militia, and asked him to sign the committee's resolves. Cotton refused to sign and told them that they "...would all be deemed Rebels and their Principals would be hanged."[67] Subsequently, Cotton woke up one night to find the patriots, with rifles, standing in his bedroom. He was taken prisoner but managed to escape. He then attempted to rally the local militia, but few men responded. Most were sympathetic to the patriots or afraid to oppose them. Cotton sneaked out of the area; his house and fields were burned.

THE MCKISSACKS' VIEWPOINT

We can only guess at how the McKissacks viewed these developments. The McKissack men did not sign any of the resolves of the Bute County Committee of Safety, but this is no indication of their allegiances; only a handful of residents were actively involved in resisting what were seen as British inequities. As mentioned, the McKissacks' farms were at a considerable distance from the courthouse and they may have just continued working and waiting to see how the situation resolved itself. Due to the lack of towns in their area, they may not have felt the activities of the Committee of Safety as keenly as other North Carolinians. Nevertheless, they undoubtedly kept up with events through conversations with neighbors, visitors, and others.

There must have been some serious conversations around the family fireplace at night. As mentioned, the early opposition to taxes came from the wealthier class in North Carolina -- a class for which the backwoodsmen had little love. Yet, the McKissacks belonged to neither the poorer nor wealthier class. As established landowners they were not poor, but they were also not wealthy. And since their roots were with the common people, they probably shared many of their thoughts and attitudes. Class was probably not an important factor in the McKissacks' view of the Revolution. They were examples of a new type of man -- the American -- who was independent, expected government to treat him fairly, and willing to challenge authority to sustain what he viewed as his natural rights.

Like many other Americans, the McKissacks may have also made a distinction between the King and Parliament. While they saw Parliament as a body of leeches sucking them dry with taxes, people still remained fond of the King as a national symbol. For example, a resolve adopted by the Bute Committee of Safety in January 1775 states: "We his Majestys most loyal Subjects, avowing our Allegiance to his Majesty George the Third, ... find that the Present unhappy Situation of our Affairs is Occasioned by a ruinous system of Colony Administration,

adopted by the British Ministry, evidently calculated on inslaving America, by the oppresive acts of Parliament..." Many colonists expected that the King would eventually step in on their side and persuade Parliament to treat them in what they considered a fair manner. It was only after people realized that the King had called on Parliament for troops to use in America, that he was hiring mercenaries from Germany, and that he proclaimed the colonies to be in rebellion that they turned against him.

It must also be remembered that when the American Revolution occurred, the failed Regulator uprising was only four years past. Some of the Regulators had been hanged; others were forced to flee eastern North Carolina for the mountains. These facts had to weigh heavily on the McKissacks' minds. By this time John Jr. and his wife Jane had a large family of their own, including at least six, and probably more, children.[68] William may have been married and with children, also. There may have been other children we do not know of. The fortunes of wives and children would be affected by any false moves made by the husbands and fathers. Participation in a rebellion could have serious consequences for the family.

WAR ERUPTS

Local and national patriots continued to correspond and work together through the fall and winter of 1774. The British government tried to negotiate with the rebellious colonists, but the colonists were determined to protect their rights. Then, in April of 1775, the British commanders in Boston decided to secretly march into the countryside and seize a store of gunpowder and several patriot leaders. Paul Revere rode to give warning; the Minute Men met the British at Lexington Green; the embattled farmers halted the British at Concord Bridge and fired the "shots heard round the world."

News of the fighting in Massachusetts reached North Carolina in May. West of the McKissacks, in Mecklenburg County, the local militia happened to be meeting when the news arrived. In response, the militia leaders drew up what were later called the Mecklenburg Resolves. The resolves defiantly proclaimed that:

> Whereas by an address presented to his Majesty by both Houses of Parliament in February last, the American colonies are declared to be in a state of actual rebellion, we conceive that all laws and commissions confirmed by or derived from the authority of the King and Parliament are annulled and vacated and the former civil constitution of these colonies for the present wholly suspended.

The citizens of Mecklenburg further stated that all executive and legislative powers were from then on held by local North Carolina committees and the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. They also approved a county representative government and formed a committee to purchase powder, lead, and musket flints for the county militia.

Some historians cite the Mecklenburg Resolves as the first Declaration of Independence. A copy of the resolves was actually sent to Congress in Philadelphia, but it would be almost a year before that body decided that there was no way to settle differences with the British and issued Thomas Jefferson's famous document beginning, "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them

with another..."

In the meantime, the fighting at Lexington and Concord spurred on the local Committees of Safety to prepare for war. In Tryon County, North Carolina, the committee met and signed a set of resolves beginning:

> The unprecedented, barbarous and bloody actions committed by the British Troops on our American Brethren near Boston on the 19th of April & 20th of May last, together with the Hostile operations & Traiterous Designs now Carrying on by the Tools of Miisterial Vengeance & Despotism for the Subjugating all British Americans suggest to us the painful necessity of having recourse to Arms for the preservation of those Rights & Liberties which the principles of our Constitution and the Laws of God, Nature, and Nations have made it our duty to defend.
>
> We therefore, the Subscribers Freeholders & Inhabitants of Tryon County, do hereby faithfully unite ourselves under the most sacred ties of Religion, Honor & Love to Our Country, firmly to Resist force by force in defence of our Natural Freedom & Constitutional Rights against all Invasions, & at the same time do solemnly engage to take up Arms and Risque our lives and fortunes in maintaining the Freedom of our Country...

The committee further stated that it was empowering militia officers to detain and secure all gunpowder and lead in the county. It also resolved that Daniel McKissick (a possible relative of John McKissack -- researchers will find the name spelled McKissick, Mckisick, McKissock, McKizic, Machisick, Mckyzack) apply to the Council of Safety of Charleston, South Carolina, for 500 pounds of gunpowder, 600 pounds of lead, and 600 gun flints which would be distributed as the local committee deemed necessary.[69]

Likewise, the committee in the McKissacks' county recommended "to the good people of this county to meet together at Convenient places, and form themselves into Independent Company's & Chuse their own officers, and that the officers when chosen, shall Diligently Instruct their men in Military Exercise for the Defense of this Country."

Throughout 1775 and into the spring of 1776, the relationship between the North Carolina rebels and the governor continued to worsen. By July 1775, the Bute County Committee of Safety had resolved that "this County do Immediately raise Companies of Foot consisting of 63 men each exclusive of Officers, and each soldier precure himself of a well fixt, Tommehock, hunting Shirt, shot Bag or Cartidge Box picker &c." The committee further asked that the Captains begin drilling their companies and meet at a general muster at the court house the next month. In the meantime, it instructed one of its members to try to procure more gunpowder and lead, and asked that Bute Countians save their gunpowder by using it "as Sparringly as possible."

Eventually, there were several small battles between the rebels (called Whigs) and British supporters (called Loyalists or Tories). The governor was forced to flee to the safety of a British warship at anchor in a North Carolina river. By April 1776, the local North Carolina Congress had met four times, and even before the national Declaration of Independence, it had authorized

the formation of Carolina Continental regiments. It had also written a document called the Halifax Resolves, which called for all the colonies to declare themselves independent of Britain and form their own governments. The document was sent to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia where it was well received. Delegates from other colonies sent copies of the resolves home and urged their constituents to follow suit. On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee moved the Continental Congress to declare "that these United Colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent States." On July 4, the final draft of the Declaration of Independence was approved by the Congress.

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1. Halifax County, North Carolina Public Registry, Deed Book 5, p. 275. Angela Harrell, a Stewart descendant, wrote the author that "My Aunt, Margaret Wilorene Stewart had part of the Stewart Family Bible. John and Rebecca are mentioned. Although Rebecca's name was spelled Symonds..." The old Bible has apparently been lost, but we list Rebeccah as “Simmonds;” that is how she is shown on John’s 1799 will.

2. The Halifax County, North Carolina Courthouse contains a partial document showing a sale of land by John McKissack shortly before he appears in Granville County.

3. Nacogdoches [Texas] County Families, Vol. I, p.337 -- recollections of Adie McKissack Hardaway, born 1910.

4. Elliott, 1966

5. Its doubtful they were much older than this. Otherwise, John would have been truly ancient, considering the average life-span in those days, upon his death in 1799. Supporting this is the fact that census records and last wills and testaments indicate that John and Rebeccah's oldest son, John, Jr., was born in the early 1740's. Furthermore, the gravestone of their youngest son Thomas states that Thomas was born in 1755.

6. Hoffman, The Granville District of North Carolina , 1748 -1763, Vol. 1.

7. An incomplete deed in Edgecombe County, North Carolina Deed Records shows a sale of land by John McKissack in 1749. Unfortunately, the deed does not describe the land or any other particulars.

8. McBride, List of Taxables, 1750, compiled from an original document in N.C. State Archives, Stack File # C.R. 044.701.23.

9. Deeds recording land sales to and from the McKissacks are found in Granville, Bute, Franklin, Warren, Vance counties, North Carolina.

10. Gabriel Johnson Colonial Governor's Papers, 1734 - 1752, Stack File # CGP 2, North

Carolina State Archives.

11. Granville County Historical Society, Heritage and Homesteads, 1988.

12. Merrens, Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century, 1964, p. 162.

13. Hoffman, Patent Book II, Grant 1919, p.441, as seen in The Granville District of North Carolina, 1748 - 1763, Abstracts of Land Grants, Vol. 2. The land had originally been surveyed in 1749 for William Cathcart, a prominent surgeon from Edinburgh, Scotland who moved to North Carolina and established an estate on the Roanoke River. John had surveyed land for Cathcart when both were living in Edgecombe County [Grant dated November 2, 1752, surveyed March 2, 1748]. John may have purchased the Granville County land from Cathcart before the McKissacks moved there.

14. Gwynn, Abstracts of Early Deeds of Granville County, North Carolina, 1746 - 1765, 1974.

15. Hawke, Everyday Life in Early America, 1988, p.32.

16. Pearce, Franklin County, 1779 - 1979, p.5.

17. Sales to William Hudson from Robert Allen and John Hudson, December 9 and 10, 1768. Warren County, North Carolina records Deed Book 3, p.35-36.

18. Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 1974, p.19.

19. Tilley, Industries of Colonial Granville County, North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. XIII, p.279.

20. While John McKissack entered and surveyed the land in the 1750's, grants were not issued until 1760. Land grants were made to John dated December 2, 1760 (no. 1932), November 27, 1760 (no. 1933), March 13, 1760 (no. 1934), and February 6, 1762 (no. 1967). Grants are listed in The Granville District of North Carolina, 1748-1763. See Abstracts of Land Grants, Vol. Two, by Margaret M. Hoffman.

21. Clark, State Records of North Carolina, Vol. 22, p.370. Owen, History and Genealogies of Old Granville County, North Carolina, 1746-1800, 1993.

22. Hoffman, Abstracts in The Granville District of North Carolina, 1748 - 1763, Abstracts of Miscellaneous Land Office Records, Vol. 4. Hoffman, The Granville District of North Carolina, 1748 - 1763, Vol. 2. Gwynn, Abstracts of The Early Deeds of Granville County North Carolina, 1746 - 1765, 1974.

23. Though John's will mentions only three sons -- John, Jr., William and Thomas -- we know

that he and Rebecca had another son named Robert who lived to be at least 16. He is listed as a taxable living in his father's household in 1771. Journal of North Carolina Genealogy, Vol XI., No. 3, 1965, p.1502.

24. Lefler, North Carolina -- The History of a Southern State, 1973.

25. Clark, State Records of North Carolina, Vol. 22, p.370 and Owen, History and Genealogies of Old Granville County, North Carolina, 1746-1800, 1993.

26. Miller, Allens of the Southern States, 1989.

27. Deed from John Palmer to John McKissock, June 6, 1782, Caswell County, NC, Deed Book B:133. Will of Robert Allen, June 6, 1782.

28. Miller, Allens of the Southern States, 1989.

29. Miller, 1989.

30. Hoffman, The Granville District of North Carolina, 1748 - 1763, Abstracts of Miscellaneous Records, Vol. 4.

31. Letter from Norma Miller to David McKissack, February 9, 1996.

32. Hawke, Everyday Life in Early America, 1988, p.44.

33. Merrens, Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century, 1964, p.167.

34. Owen, History and Genealogies of Old Granville County, North Carolina, 1746-1800, 1993.

35. Warren County Deed Book 1, page 112.

36. Johann David Schoepf, Travels in the Confederation, 1783-84, Burt Franklin Reprint 1968.

37. Lefler, Colonial North Carolina -- A History, 1973.

38. Mathews, Society in Revolutionary North Carolina, 1976.

39. Merrens, p. 157.

40. Ibid, p.163.

41. Tilley, Industries of Colonial Granville County, North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. XIII, 1936, p.284.

42. Warren County, North Carolina, Deed Book 1, page 112.

43. Mathews, Society in Revolutionary North Carolina, 1976, p.53.

44. Warren County Deed Book 1, page 112.

45. Hoffman, The Granville District of N.C. 1748-1763, Abstracts of Land Grants, Volume Two.

46. Mathews, Society in Revolutionary North Carolina, 1976, p.49.

47. Peace, Zeb's Black Baby -- Vance County, North Carolina, 1955, p.166.

48. Lefler, p.189.

49. Lefler, p.188.

50. Hawke, p.92.

51. Angela Harrell, a Stewart descendant wrote the authors that "My Aunt, Margaret Wilorene Stewart, had part of the Stewart Family Bible....Jane Hudson is mentioned in the Stewart Bible." This old Bible has apparently been lost, but absent other evidence, we list Jane as “Hudson.” Also, as in the case of John Sr. and Rebeccah, it is possible that John Jr. and Jane were not each other’s first spouses. (None of John’s children named daughters “Jane,” though a few Rebeccah’s appear. For purposes of this narrative, however, I have assumed John and Jane were each other’s life-long spouses.

52. Powell, North Carolina Through Four Centuries, 1989, p. 121.

53. Powell, When the Past Refuse to Die, 1977, p.66.

54. Fisher, Albion's Seed, 1989, p.676.

55. Gwynn, Granville County Deeds, 1746-1765, 1974, p.198.

56. McBride, List of Taxables for 1762 in Granville County, North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal, August 86, p.151.

57. Granville was formed in 1746. In 1764 Bute was cut out of Granville.

58. Pearce, Franklin County, 1779-1979, p.ix.

59. Colonial Records of North Carolina, VII, 771-772.

60. Powell, The War of the Regulation and the Battle of Alamance, May 16, 1771, 1965.

61. Powell, North Carolina Through Four Centuries, 1989.

62. Wellman, The County of Warren North Carolina, 1586-1917, 1959.

63. Saunders, Colonial Records of North Carolina, VIII, 669.

64. Saunders Colonial Records of North Carolina, IX.

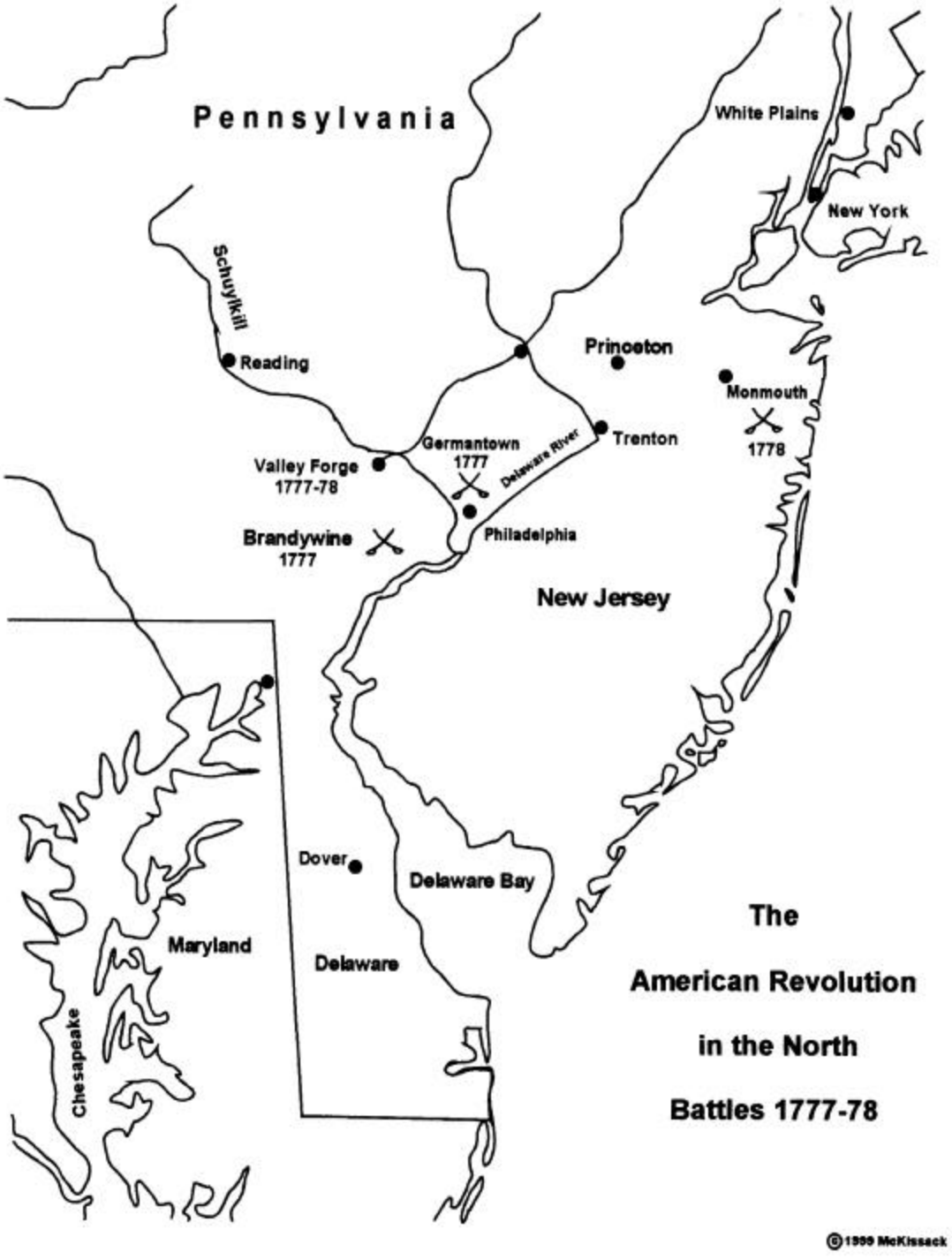
65. Bute County Committee of Safety, Minutes of 1775 - 1776, North Carolina State Library, Raleigh, North Carolina.

66. Colonial Records of North Carolina, X, p.141.

67. Colonial Records of North Carolina , Vol. X, p.119.

68. John Jr's 1799 will lists males in order of birth. Archibald is listed 6th and that the US Census of 1850 shows Archie as born 1774 in North Carolina.

69. Colonial Records of North Carolina, Vol. X, p.162.


Pennsylvania
White Plains
New York
Schuylkill
Reading
Princeton
Monmouth
1778
Trenton
Germantown
1777
Delaware River
Valley Forge
1777-78
Brandywine
1777
Philadelphia
New Jersey
Dover
Delaware Bay
Maryland
Delaware
Chesapeake
The
American Revolution
in the North
Battles 1777-78
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CHAPTER V
THOMAS MCKISSACK'S WAR — SERVICE WITH THE NORTH CAROLINA CONTINENTAL LINE

When the American Revolution did come in 1775, all of the McKissack sons -- John Jr, William, Robert and Thomas would have been old enough to fight. John Jr and William had families of their own by this time and several of John Jr's sons would be old enough to fight by the end of the war, which would last eight years. Thomas, however, is the only one for whom service records have been found. In 1775, he would have been 20 years old. Interestingly, he joined the North Carolina line in April of 1776. This was several months before the Declaration of Independence was issued, so his mind was made up to fight for American rights before the official break came. [69]

An affidavit filed after the war by Isaac Hudson Jr, (who lived on an adjacent farm) said that Isaac and Thomas joined the army together. Other sources indicate that another neighbor, Drury Allen, also joined the North Carolina Line at that time.[69] So its possible that Thomas, Isaac and Drury walked or rode with some other young men the 40 miles to Halifax where the North Carolina Continental regiments were forming.[69]

At 20, Thomas would have been very much a grown man. He probably left home wearing typical pioneer clothes of buckskin or the fringed shirts and pants of coarse cotton or linen woven with wool called "lindsey-woolsey" by pioneers. The men may have carried their own rifles.

Arriving in Halifax, Thomas and the others would have found the activity exhilarating. Though the town was small by modern standards (about 50 houses), it was an active trading center and to them it was the big city. There was a courthouse, a jail, a tobacco store, and even a playhouse.[69]

In addition to the usual merchants and townspeople, the North Carolina Provincial Congress was in town. The most powerful and influential men from all of North Carolina's counties were present, walking about in their finery and traveling the streets in their elegant carriages. They brought with them "an almost rampant spirit of independence... Not only did they instruct their representatives in the Continental Congress [in Philadelphia] to concur in independence should it be proposed, but many, almost before the messenger bearing their resolves had clattered off to Philadelphia, were thinking seriously of drawing up a document under which they could erect an independent government."[69] In other words, Halifax was abuzz with the excitement of possible independence and war.

Thomas and Isaac Hudson Jr, were assigned to Captain Jacob Turner's Company of Jethro Sumner's Third North Carolina Regiment. (Thomas is carried on the rolls as Thomas Metisuck).[69] Turner was the son of a prominent Bute Countian and one of the early members of

its Committee of Safety. And the colonel of Thomas' regiment was Jethro Sumner, the prosperous tavern keeper and Regulator sympathizer. Sumner had represented Bute at the North Carolina provincial congress and been appointed commander of one of the first continental regiments.

There were other young men from neighboring farms in Thomas' and Isaac's regiment. We know from records that John Young, another Bute Countian, served with them. It is not clear whether Drury Allen served in their regiment. Isaac would become the company's sergeant major and John would become a corporal. The men's terms of enlistment were for two and one half years.

FIGHTING IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND GEORGIA

Thomas and his comrades did not stay long in Halifax. By June 1776, it was clear that the British intended to invade Charleston, South Carolina, so the North Carolina Regiments marched for that town. Their presence in Charleston, along with that of South Carolina troops, dissuaded the British from landing.

After spending a little over a month in Charleston, Thomas and his comrades were ordered to march south to Savannah, Georgia. The decision to march the troops to Savannah was made because Loyalists from Florida were raiding and attacking settlements in Georgia. It was felt the presence of regular troops might discourage these raids.

Except for 37 men sent to guard supplies in Salisbury, North Carolina, the soldiers of Thomas' regiment (the Third Regiment) spent the next eight months stationed at various posts in Georgia. They saw little fighting; many spent most of their time on garrison duty or building fortifications.[69] Physical conditions were their most troubling enemy. The weather was terribly hot and their food was bad. When it was first proposed they march from Charleston to Savannah, one of their generals doubted they could do it because of their "wretched condition" due to a lack of clothing. Another general was begging shoes for them. When they reached Georgia, 14 or 15 men died each day as a result of disease. On top of all this, many South Carolinian merchants took advantage of the situation and charged exorbitant prices for goods. Discontent among the troops grew to the point that the officers maintained discipline by sentencing trouble makers to "the Black Hole" on a diet of "Rice and Water." A general later described this period as "a fatiguing, fruitless, expedition in Georgia."

A further blow to morale occurred in September when the commander of the American southern forces decided to allow South Carolina and Georgia to recruit for troops among the North Carolina line. Men serving with the North Carolina regiments were allowed to leave their units and join the lines of the other states. Some of the men would have obviously been ready for a change of any sort, especially if they could collect the extra enlistment bonus being offered by Georgia and South Carolina. Thomas lost numerous comrades in this manner, as many of the men of the Third Regiment chose to leave.

So it was probably with great joy after spending winter in Georgia that the men heard in March that they were heading home. By early April, Thomas and his comrades had reached Wilmington, North Carolina. By mid-April, they were rendezvoused in Halifax, east of Thomas' home. After the misery of the past year it must have been a welcome thing to be back home in

the spring. Given that they were so close to the farms back on Billy's and Taylor's Creeks, perhaps Thomas and Isaac Hudson Jr, obtained furloughs for a visit home.

JOINING GEORGE WASHINGTON

The reason the men were brought back to North Carolina was that they were needed to join George Washington's army in the north. While the North Carolina line had been in the south, things had not gone well for patriots in the north. During the summer of 1776, George Washington's green army of 18,000 patriots had been beaten in a series of battles by the well-trained British troops. Defeated at Long Island in August, Washington was barely able to escape with his army. Throughout the remainder of the summer and fall, the British chased Washington's army across New York and New Jersey toward Philadelphia. Washington's army dwindled to a few thousand men. The patriot cause seemed near collapse, but Washington kept the army alive with his audacious Christmas Eve attack at Trenton, New Jersey. This battle inspired the famous painting of Washington and his men crossing the Delaware.

Halifax was established as the rendezvous for the North Carolina troops heading north. While the troops were happy to be back in North Carolina, the camp at Halifax was not without its problems. Being back on native soil, so close to the comfort of home and family, was too much for some of the men, and an officer reported the North Carolina Line was depleted by those who were "now every night running off." A dispute also arose over rank and was settled when the Captain of Thomas' company, Captain Jacob Turner, was recognized as the first captain of the Third Regiment.

Then in early May smallpox broke out in the vicinity of the camp. It was decided the men may as well begin their march to join Washington. Thomas and his comrades marched to Petersburg, Virginia, and then to Williamsburg and on to Richmond.

In Richmond the North Carolinians had an amusing encounter with a Loyalist. As they marched through the town, a doughty little shoemaker stood in the doorway of his shop and shouted "Hurrah for King George!" The men paid him little mind, regarding him as a harmless nuisance. But that night the shoemaker visited their camp and strutted around yelling "Hurrah for King George!" Still the men ignored him. Pushing his luck, the shoemaker followed the commander of the North Carolinians around the camp, all the while hurrahing for the king. At this, the North Carolinians tied a rope around his middle and dragged him back and forth across a nearby river. The man almost drowned, but when his head rose above water he'd sputter "Hurrah for King George!" Exasperated, the North Carolinian commander had the man dipped head first in a barrel of tar and then sprinkled with feathers taken from the shoemaker's own mattresses. Wearing his feather outfit, the shoemaker continued hurrahing. The general finally had him drummed out of camp and told him he'd be shot if he returned.

Continuing to march north, the North Carolinians stopped in Alexandria, Virginia, (across the river from present-day Washington, DC) to receive smallpox inoculations. In those days this was accomplished by taking pus from the pustules of a smallpox victim and rubbing it into a scratch on the skin. The resulting mild case of the disease incapacitated the patients for three to four weeks. Only one of the North Carolinians died afterwards, but so many men complained that the doctor who administered the inoculation was suspended from duty.

After continuing their march through Maryland, the North Carolinians joined Washington in Pennsylvania. One wonders how they felt about the army they joined in Pennsylvania. Thomas undoubtedly saw some of the more unusual characters around camp who had joined the Americans in their fight. Here was the flamboyant Polish Count -- Casimir Pulaski -- who had been made a General in the American army. Pulaski was born into a wealthy noble Polish family and had achieved military fame in his native country until enemies falsely accused him of plotting to kill his king. Pulaski went into exile and eventually offered his services to the young American revolution.

Then there was General the Baron Johann de Kalb. Over six feet tall, with a high forehead, aquiline nose, hazel eyes and strong chin, de Kalb was a Bavarian who had served in the French army. De Kalb was not actually a baron, nor did his name begin with "de," but he had assumed both the title and prefix because it was difficult for a commoner to achieve high rank in European armies. While he had assumed the name and title of nobility, de Kalb did not soldier in an aristocratic fashion. He marched on foot with his men instead of riding a horse. At night, rather than retire to an officer's tent and cot, de Kalb would wrap himself in his horseman's cloak and fall asleep by the campfire with his soldiers. In 1780, he would lead an army south, passing near the McKissacks' farms in North Carolina. Later that year he fell at the battle of Camden, leading his Maryland and Delaware troops in desperate bayonet charges, fighting even after he was surrounded and the remaining American troops fled in panic.

Occasionally a tall, slim, red-headed Frenchman as fair as a girl rode by. This was Lafayette, barely 19 years old. In France, he had read about the American struggle and became so sympathetic that he left his wife, family and career to offer his services to the new nation. Though he spoke little English at first, he immediately impressed Washington. The two developed a warm relationship -- Washington serving as the father Lafayette never knew, and Lafayette serving as the son Washington never had. Lafayette was given a commission in the army, and the troops probably wondered at the sweet-faced young lad commanding them as a Major General.

And often when Lafayette passed, it was in the company of the man he admired -- George Washington. The North Carolinians had undoubtedly heard of Washington before arriving in Pennsylvania. At this time, however, the six-foot-two Virginian was not the legend he is today. His greatness as "the father of his country" would only be recognized when he'd made the history by which he was judged. In the summer of 1777, though, some of the armchair quarterbacks in Congress, and even a few of his generals, were beginning to have doubts about his military competence. What few appreciated at the time was that his persistence, his sheer willful refusal to surrender to setbacks and adversity, would later be credited with keeping the American Revolution alive during its darkest hours.

Other Americans Thomas may have seen were Henry Knox, Washington's trusted and portly artillery commander; a bookseller before the war, he would weight 300 pounds and father 12 children by its end. In contrast, there was the dashing cavalryman "Lighthorse" Henry Lee, future father of Robert E. Lee. Another who rode by was probably General Nathaniel Greene, a former blacksmith apprentice expelled by the Quakers because he refused to renounce warfare, and who would later be credited with winning the war against the British in North and South Carolina. Also present was Benedict Arnold, whose name would become synonymous with

"traitor" to generations of American schoolchildren.

As for the common soldiers, they were a ragged force, but so were Thomas and the other North Carolinians. What was different was the men themselves. Except for the Virginians, Washington's army were mostly northerners, with different accents and occasionally different customs. But probably what may have divided the men most was that the veteran troops of Washington's army had fought several battles with some of the finest British infantry in the world. Thomas and his comrades must have felt like rookies when they heard the other Continentals talk of their fights at Long Island, Harlem Heights, and White Plains, of what it was like to see, only yards away, the disciplined red lines steadily approaching with sharpened bayonets lowered and ready for work. The North Carolinians were accustomed to the aggravations of army life -- long marches, bad food, illness, sleeping outdoors, but they had not experienced a serious standup fight with British infantry. This was going to change.

During the summer of 1777, the British army was located in New Jersey and New York. Washington's main concern was where the enemy would go from there. He feared their next objective might be Philadelphia, which was then the location of the American government. Then again, Washington felt the British might march north and attack up the Hudson River into New York.

While Washington tried to anticipate the British army's next move, Thomas McKissack and his comrades waited in their camps. Arms were inspected and repaired. Wagons were repaired so that they would be ready to roll on short notice. The men were drilled.

As usual, maintaining health and discipline was a challenging job for the officers. "In general, the average soldier of the American revolutionary army was a rather dirty animal and those of the North Carolina Brigade were no different from Continentals of other states. [Among North Carolinians], the artillery company was the worst offender, 'throwing Bones, and Scraps of Meat and other things about their tents.' Respiratory diseases incapacitated many, and the men were cautioned against bathing too frequently. During the continuing rains, extra whiskey rations were issued in an attempt to keep down illness.

Frequent courts-martial tried soldiers charged with deserting, stealing, sleeping on duty, insulting officers, and disobeying orders." A private in Thomas' regiment, Dennis O'Bryan, was convicted of desertion. The commander of Thomas' company, Captain Jacob Turner, wrote that since the man was considered "a stupid Foolish Person," he wasn't worthy of harsh punishment, so he was merely dismissed from the service and drummed out of camp. Another private named Levi Springer, already a member of the Fourth North Carolina Regiment, had tried to make extra money by also joining the Tenth Regiment and collecting its enlistment bonus. He was sentenced to receive 50 lashes on his bare back.

Finally, in late August, Washington decided that the British were moving to take Philadelphia, and he gave orders that would place the army between that city and the enemy. To encourage the Patriots in the city, as well as awe the Loyalists, Washington marched his army through Philadelphia. A North Carolina member of Congress wrote that the North Carolina brigade "appeared very well."

After months of camping in the countryside, marching through Philadelphia must have been exhilarating for Thomas McKissack and his comrades. Philadelphia was the largest city in America at that time. Its seaport was the busiest in the nation. It was the home of men such as

Benjamin Franklin and the intellectual center of North America. The elegant architecture, cobbled streets, and fine clothing of many of Philadelphia's inhabitants must have been a wonder to some of the men from the American backwoods.

It is also interesting to speculate on whether Thomas had any family connections in Pennsylvania. We've already written how family tradition holds that John McKissack came to North Carolina from Pennsylvania. If this was true, had he told Thomas and his other sons about the kinfolk he left there? Perhaps John Senior told Thomas to look up an aunt or uncle. We may never know.

THE BATTLE OF BRANDYWINE

Washington marched his army to place it between Philadelphia and the British. On the night of September 8, the men saw a magnificent display of the aurora borealis, or northern lights, something Thomas may never have even heard of. The next day Washington decided to make a stand along Brandywine creek. For the next two nights, a hundred North Carolinians, perhaps Thomas himself, as well as other troops, crossed the creek to watch for the British. Sitting up in the dark, Thomas may have wondered how he would fare in the coming battle. Most of the men of the North Carolina Brigade undoubtedly vowed that they would show Washington's veterans that they could fight well. As Hugh Rankin noted in *The North Carolina Continentals*, "The men of the North Carolina Line, on the eve of battle, were no different from other soldiers. Some were nervous, some were scared, while others moved about in that daze that so often overcomes soldiers when combat is near. And all they could do was wait."

Waiting for the British along the Brandywine on September 11, 1777, Washington placed most of his troops on high ground behind Chad's ford, expecting the enemy to attempt a crossing and the battle to begin from there. To slow the British approach, a brigade of infantry was placed across the creek. Among these troops was Captain Jacob Turner, Thomas' company commander, and some of his men, perhaps including Thomas.

At dawn, a fog covered the ground. By eight, however, the sun was beating down hotly and the fog burned away. Four young girls began walking down the road leading to the Brandywine. Suddenly, they saw American cavalry riding through the fields. One of the horsemen shouted, "Girls, you'd better go home!" "Why?" one of the girls asked. "Because the British regiments are coming up the road." Years later one of the girls, Elizabeth Coates, remembered looking down the road and seeing the British coming "in great numbers."[69]

The British began attacking the Americans stationed across the creek. For two hours the Americans engaged the British in hot skirmishing. Several times it appeared the Americans would be flanked, but they adjusted their lines and fought on. The North Carolinians were in the thick of the fighting, and Captain Turner was later cited for gallantry during this stage of the battle. The British eventually put so many troops into the fight that the Americans were forced to withdraw across the creek and rejoin the rest of the army.

By about 11 o'clock a line of British soldiers stood on the bank opposite the Americans. They brought up cannon and it appeared that they would attack. Then a silence fell over the battlefield, interrupted only by an occasional musket shot or cannon boom. Reports trickled in

that the majority of the British army was crossing the Brandywine elsewhere and slipping around the American's flank. But Washington received other information indicating this was incorrect, and he was convinced the main British attack would be at the ford in front of him.

Suddenly a wild farmer riding a sweating, heaving horse burst into camp and demanded to see Washington. The farmer told Washington he'd seen a huge British force flanking the Americans. Despite the farmer's howls of outrage, Washington would not believe this. Then word came that the bulk of the British army had in fact crossed the stream elsewhere and marched around the American flank. Washington hurriedly shifted some of his troops, including most of his Virginians and North Carolinians, to meet the threat.

The men had to hustle over almost four miles of hot, broken countryside to reach the scene of fighting. When they arrived, they encountered a scene later described by a British officer: "There was the most infernal fire of cannon and musquetry. Most incessant shouting, 'Incline to the right! Incline to the left! Halt! Charge! etc.' The balls plowing up the ground. The trees crackling over one's head. The branches riven by the artillery. The leaves falling as in autumn by the grapeshot."

The North Carolina Brigade was placed in reserve as the Virginians held the British back. At one point, it appeared the North Carolinians would have to meet the British with the bayonet, but the enemy retreated. By late afternoon the British flank attack was stifled, and as dark approached, the Americans retreated toward Philadelphia.

While the battle raged on the American right, the men who had started the battle across the river, including Captain Turner's North Carolinians, remained at Chad's ford. At one point, Washington ordered them to attack across the creek, and they drove off the British, killing 30 of a group who were digging a battery for artillery. Though this attack was successful, Washington finally realized his right was in danger, and he recalled the troops across the river.[69]

When the British at the ford heard the fighting on the right, they knew the flank attack was underway, and they began to attack across the river. This was preceded by an immense cannonade. The British stormed across the creek, directing most of their attack at the brigade to which Jacob Turner and the North Carolinians were attached. Slowly, the Americans were forced back. In spite of being reinforced, they were forced to withdraw as dark came on and slipped away in good order.[69]

The battle was a British victory, but it did not depress the Americans. They felt they had fought well. One American captain wrote that as the troops regrouped, "I saw not a despairing look, nor did I hear a despairing [sic] word. We had our own solacing words already for each other -- 'Come boys, we shall do better another time' -- sounded throughout the entire army." The Continental Congress was pleased enough with the troops' behavior to vote them 30 hogsheads of rum, with each soldier to receive a gill (about a quarter pint) a day while it lasted.

BATTLE OF GERMANTOWN

Over the next few weeks the armies skirmished, and Washington could not prevent the British from occupying Philadelphia. When the British finally marched into town, the Congress had left along with most of the city's Patriots. No one viewed Philadelphia's loss as a great concern as long as Washington's army was still in the field to keep the Revolution alive.

Benjamin Franklin remarked that the British had not captured Philadelphia; Philadelphia had captured them.

For the next few weeks, Washington watched for an opening for another attack. Then, in October, intercepted documents revealed that British regiments had been detached from the main force at Germantown, Pennsylvania, reducing the size of the main army. Washington decided to attack.

Washington's plan called for the Americans to march all night and hit the enemy at dawn on October 4. That night was cloudy and the men were allowed no light during the march. Consequently, Thomas and the North Carolinians placed white pieces of paper in their hats so that they could see each other in the dark.[69] The night was damp and chilly. The men marched for six or seven hours in the dark, bumping into each other, starting and stopping as the guides at the head of the column made sure of their directions.

Dawn was breaking as the Americans prepared to strike the British pickets. The sun, however, was covered by clouds. In addition, a heavy ground fog covered the area, so that in some places the men could not see the British until they were a few feet away. These conditions would affect the outcome of the battle.

The American attack began well, and the men drove the British back. As the Americans swept forward through the fog, they ran into a British regiment posted around an enormous stone mansion called the "Chew" house. Part of the American line began exchanging volleys with this regiment, while Americans on either side of the house, unable to see in the fog, charged straight ahead and passed the mansion.

Realizing he had been cut off from his army, the commander of the British regiment ordered about 120 of his men into the Chew house. Once in, the British barricaded the huge wooden doors and closed all the shutters on the first floor. Men were assigned to cover each window and ordered to bayonet anyone trying to climb inside. Other troops dispersed into the basement and second floor where they had a clear field of fire across the elegantly landscaped lawn around the house.

During this initial fighting, the North Carolinians were waiting in reserve with their commander, General Nash, along the road leading to the Chew House. Suddenly, a British cannonball sailed out of the fog, struck a sign post and ricocheted into General Nash's horse. Passing through the horse's neck, the cannonball tore through Nash's left thigh. It then decapitated Major John Witherspoon, son of a signer of the Declaration of Independence. As Nash was carried away, he bravely told his troops not to worry about him, but it was obvious he was mortally wounded. [69]

It must have dented the morale of Thomas and the other troops to have their commander shot down before they had even gone into battle. Nevertheless, they began deploying around the Chew house as Washington and his generals decided what to do about the situation. Some of Washington's aides argued that they should surround the house with one regiment and then push the rest of the army forward to join the units they could hear fighting ahead in the fog. Others argued that leaving a fortified "castle" in their rear would be a mistake.

Washington decided the army should capture the Chew house before moving forward. Thus, 120 British troops were holding up most of the American army. While Thomas and the other infantry fired at the British troops shooting out the second story windows, the Americans

set up artillery and began a thunderous bombardment. The first shot blew the house's huge front doors off their hinges, sending stone chips from the walls flying about in the darkened front hallway, wounding several British soldiers. Other cannonballs blew through the wooden shudders and sunk into the interior plaster walls. Some of the stately lawn ornaments in front of the mansion were blown away; other statues lost arms, legs and heads.

Apart from this damage, however, the cannonballs had little affect on the mansion. Its huge stone walls were too strong for the cannons, and the Americans realized they could fire all day without driving the British out. It was decided the infantry must try to storm the house.

As Thomas and the North Carolinians fired on the house from its north side, they saw troops of the 3rd New Jersey charge the mansion's front door. The British in the house fought as desperate men. They fired on the New Jersey men as fast as possible, killing numbers of them as they ran toward the house. Some of the New Jersey troops and their officers reached the front door and a murderous struggle with bayonets and point-blank musket blasts ensued on the front steps. With the British troops in the front hall lunging at them with bayonets, and the troops in the basement and first and second floors firing at them from the windows, the New Jersey men fell in great numbers. The effort was too much for them, and they retreated from the house, leaving a heap of dead and wounded around the front door.

As the firing and bombardment around the Chew mansion continued, the Americans who had bypassed the house the house in the fog began to wonder why the rest of the army wasn't joining them. Unable to see more than a few yards, some of their generals heard the firing at the Chew house and worried that the British had somehow managed to slip around behind them. Turning their troops around, they marched back through the fog and blundered into other American troops. Unable to distinguish friend from foe at only a few yards away, the men began firing on each other.

In this confusion, the American attack came apart. The men were already tired from being up all night, and some began to run out of ammunition. Unable to see in the fog, feeling as if they were being attacked from all sides, unit commanders began withdrawing their men. In some places, panic set in and the men began running toward the rear. As officers rode among the fleeing men, swatting them with the flats of their swords, cursing and begging them to rally, the North Carolina Brigade began a stubborn and orderly withdrawal.

At some point in the battle Thomas McKissack was wounded. The regimental fifer, John Christian, said he "saw Thomas McKissack a few moments after he received a wound in his right shoulder and saw [him] carried off to the hospital..." Isaac Hudson said that after Thomas was wounded he was carried to the hospital in Redding, Pennsylvania. Another soldier, John Atkinson, said he helped the doctors tend to Thomas in the hospital.[69]

There were other casualties among Thomas' messmates. Jacob Turner, the gallant captain of Thomas' company, was killed. One of the sergeants of Thomas' company, James Richards, was captured. Two of the company's other sergeants, Mathew Goodridge and Bryan Turner, deserted soon after the battle.[69] Lieutenant Kedar Ballard was promoted to Captain of Thomas' company.[69]

VALLEY FORGE -- "PINNACLE OF COURAGE"

For the remainder of October and throughout November and December, Washington and the British watched each other, looking for an opening to attack. There were no large battles, however, though there was much marching and skirmishing. As winter approached, the armies decided to settle in for the winter.

During that time, Thomas was recovering from his wound in the hospital at Redding.[69] It's difficult to know how long it took Thomas to heal. We know, however, that he eventually rejoined the army at a site that would later have special meaning to Americans -- Valley Forge.[69]

As Washington's troops marched in mid-December to their camp at Valley Forge, the air sharpened and snow began to fall. "It was a bare thirteen miles ... but more than a week was spent in covering them. Baggage wagons went astray. Snow thickened, became stinging sleet, softened into pelting rain. The freeze came swiftly and the wretched, boggy roads stiffened into knife-ruts that slashed at rag-bound feet. Washington later said 'you might have tracked the army...to Valley Forge by the blood of their feet.'"[69]

When on December 19 the cold and ragged men of the United States army arrived at the **Error! Main Document Only.**cluster of houses called Valley Forge, what they saw was a bleak and desolate plateau of snow and gray, leafless trees. Most of the men pitched tents on a wooded ridge which rose from the nearby Schulykill river. Many still had enough energy to snort when local residents told them the highest point on the ridge was called "Mount Joy."

That night, "... the exhausted, chilled men lurched to their camp sites and lighted fires. For rations they had only what they might scrape out of their haversacks, and soon even the fires became a menace, for all their cheerful glow. Broken boots dried too quickly and cracked and split. Foot-wrappings charred and fell away from bruised, bleeding soles."[69]

The men of the North Carolina brigade were no better off than the rest of the army. One historian wrote that "they were pathetic in their nakedness."[69] They needed coats, waistcoats, breeches, shoes, shirts, hats and blankets. Indeed, some of the men at Valley Forge had no clothes at all and had to cover themselves with blankets. A roll of the North Carolina brigade taken shortly after they arrived at Valley Forge showed that out of 1,051 men, 327 were on sick rolls, while another 164 were listed as "Unfit for Duty for want of Cloathing."

Seeing there was no time to waste, Washington issued orders the day after the army arrived at Valley Forge for the men to build log cabins. The men were divided into groups of 12 and ordered to build huts 14 feet by 16 feet, and six and one-half feet high. As an incentive, Washington offered a 12 dollar prize to the group in each regiment who produced the best hut in the shortest time.

Short of tools, the men nevertheless began felling trees, shaping logs, and kneading clay for the walls. Short of pack animals, they pulled the huge logs through the snow themselves. The North Carolinians were so short of manpower that even the "walking sick" were forced to help build the shelters.[69] Tom Paine wrote that the men reminded him of beavers, as all across the desolate plain "everyone was busy; some carrying logs, others mud, and the rest fastening them together."[69] A hut city rose, with the men of each regiment grouped together. Finally, Washington moved out of his own leaky tent and into a house, something which he had refused to do until all the men were under cover.

The nights and days grew even colder. On December 23 Washington angrily reported to Congress that many of his soldiers were confined to the hospital because they had no shoes.

Blankets were so scarce that large numbers of the men were forced to sit up by the fires all night to keep from freezing to death. At other times, as many as three men would share a blanket; one soldier wrote that it was "colder than one can think." Some of the sentinels were seen standing in their hats to keep their rag-wrapped feet out of the snow. Washington's sympathy for his troops overrode his usual reserve, and he wrote sarcastically about the members of Congress, "it is a much easier and less disturbing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside than to occupy a cold bleak hillside and sleep under frost and snow without clothes or blankets. However, although they [Congressmen] seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them, and from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent." [69]

As if freezing wasn't enough, food was also scarce. One of the surgeons wrote that during this time the men lived on a steady diet of "firecake and water." Sometimes they were fortunate enough to get "a bowl of beef soup full of dead leaves and dirt." At times, the men could get no meat or bread for two days.

What made matters worse was that the starving soldiers knew that many of the farmers in the area had barns bulging with food. The farmers, however, preferred to sell to the British who paid in hard coin, not the paper money offered by the Americans. Starving and ill-clothed, the men of the American army were not even allowed the luxury of believing their fellow countrymen stood solidly behind them. Before the ordeal of Valley Forge was over, 3000 of the 12000 man army would perish.

The North Carolina men were definitely included in this suffering. According to Washington himself, the North Carolina Brigade was more sickly, for want of provisions and clothing, than any other unit at Valley Forge. During this period, the North Carolina Brigade averaged around 1,000 men, about a third of its official quota. Of these, an average day found 88 sick in camp with another 219 so sick they were in hospitals in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Fifty men died in January and February, many of them from Thomas' company. There was only one doctor for the entire brigade. Nevertheless, the North Carolina Brigade had fewer desertions than any other state.[69]

Why Washington's army survived the winter of 1777-78 is a question which has puzzled historians. The numerous foreign officers serving with the army were astonished that it held together and they stated that no troops they had ever known would have stayed in the field under the conditions at Valley Forge. One historian credits Washington's stubborn refusal to surrender to adversity, as well as the allegiance of the men to Washington and the American cause of liberty.[69] Trying to understand why the men stayed, another historian wrote: "The only explanation ... is that the troops had become conditioned to adversity beyond the recognition of ordinary mortals." Then, two sentences later, still scratching his head, the same historian wrote: "Perhaps the explanation lies in the simple fact that so many of the soldiers were not dressed well enough to attempt desertion, for the records suggest that many had no body clothing other than a blanket in which they wrapped themselves."[69]

Throughout the ordeal at Valley Forge, the North Carolina Brigade was stationed next to the gray field-stone Isaac Potts house which Washington used as his headquarters. Thomas McKissack probably saw the father of our country, as well as numerous other historic figures, ride or walk by frequently. When he was in the hospital, he may also have had a visit from the

general's wife. "The ultramasculine severity of the camps was softened when Martha Washington, always a gallant campaigner, came up from Mount Vernon and threw herself into army life. The dank hospitals knew the memory of her warm smile and her words that somehow touched every man in the stark wards."[69]

It seems unlikely that any of the men at Valley Forge foresaw what their suffering would mean to future Americans. The main thing on their minds was simply surviving. They had no idea the cold and hungry nights were the ingredients of a legendary glory. When we think about what they went through, and how much of our comfort and freedom rests on the backs of their suffering, we must agree with historian Christopher Ward that their story can be told "Not once too often."

SPRINGTIME

From mid-December, through January and February -- for two and one-half months -- the men simply endured. And then their condition began to brighten. In late February a cargo of clothing came into camp. By the end of the month "only" 30 North Carolinians were listed as unfit for duty because of a lack of shoes or clothing. Warm spring breezes began to blow from the west.

And then the food problem was eased by an early and heavy run of shad up the Schuylkill River next to the lines at Valley Forge. Some of the men saw the river churning with the swarming fish, and yelling, they plunged into the cold water and tossed the fish on the bank with whatever tools they could find. One can imagine Thomas and his comrades sitting in their huts near the river, hearing the commotion nearby. Then, realizing what was happening, the men grabbed baskets, shovels, and broken branches and rushed down into the river to heave the squirming fish onto the banks. Seeing the fish might escape, some of the cavalry charged their horses into the river and milled them about so the fish were scared back to the "fishermen." Soon, both banks of the river were covered with slithering, writhing fish. Men dragged down barrels and salt, and spent the day storing tons to be eaten later.

As the weather began to warm, and the food situation to ease, a strange character rode into camp. He called himself Friedrich Wilhelm August Heinrich Ferdinand, Baron von Steuben. He was stout and bald, with a large red nose, and claimed that he had been a general for Frederick the Great of Prussia. Unlike some of the proud foreign officers, however, he requested no fixed command, but merely asked Washington to be allowed to serve as a volunteer.

Though von Steuben carried letters of introduction from Benjamin Franklin, he had in truth never risen above the rank of Captain. In addition, he hadn't been active for fourteen years. But Washington immediately took to von Steuben and asked Congress to appoint him as the army's inspector general. Von Steuben threw himself into training the ragged Americans in the skills they needed to fight the disciplined British regulars.

Prior to von Steuben's arrival, there was no standard drill for the American army. Consequently, the mens' ability to move in formation depended on how well their individual officers or sergeants understood the art of drill. The reader can get some idea of the problem if he imagines himself leading a group of a thousand men down a road; next imagine they are

suddenly fired upon by a thousand of the enemy standing across the road in a double line. How do you get your thousand to move quickly from a long column on the road to a double line that can shoot back? With luck, turning around to the mob of one thousand and yelling, "Everybody line up and shoot" might work, but what happens if another 500 of the enemy appear to your left? How can you get a couple hundred of your mob to calmly break off and face them, all in the midst of shooting and yelling and mayhem?

To teach the American soldiers how to move in formation, Von Steuben started out with 100 picked men. He drilled them from six in the morning until six in the evening. Since his English was poor, he spoke in German and sometimes in bad French. His aides would then translate the commands into English. Sometimes von Steuben, exasperated with his students, would swear in German. Other times he'd swear in French. Then he'd swear in both languages together. And at one point he was so frustrated he shouted for his aides to come and swear for him in English.

The parade ground was in the middle of the Valley Forge camp. Throughout the day Thomas and the other soldiers probably watched von Steuben yelling commands and marching the ragged men around the field. Rather than being offended by von Steuben's cursing them, the men laughed and took a liking to the old soldier. Though he came from an autocratic background, in his own way von Steuben represented the spirit of equality. Sometimes he would seize a musket and demonstrate a command. He demanded that the officers drill their own men and abandon the English practice of leaving drill to sergeants. Officers who balked at performing drill were threatened with arrest. This no doubt pleased the enlisted men.

Von Steuben taught the men how to stand, how to turn, and how to march. After he was satisfied the first 100 men were properly trained, he sent them back to their units to teach their comrades. Then he began teaching another hundred men the same way. After a month, von Steuben was drilling the men by companies, regiments, brigades and divisions, so that the entire army could maneuver together. The next time the British army met the Americans, they would realize this was a new army.

As the weather began to warm, the North Carolina Brigade addressed discipline problems. There were charges against several of the captains in Thomas' regiment. One was convicted of disobedience and being absent without leave. Another was reprimanded for unintentional forgery. One was acquitted of drawing more money and provisions than he had in his company and for giving bonuses to "imagined" recruits. Captain Clement Hall was charged with illegally seizing a barrel of whiskey and three and one-half barrels of cider. But when the case came to court, it was proved that he merely seized the spirits because the owners were selling it without a proper license. The court confiscated the evidence and gave it to the troops. This probably helped keep Thomas and the rest warm.

The ordinary North Carolina soldiers likewise faced discipline. A private named Julian Burton stole a pair of shoes from another soldier and gave them to his girlfriend; he received 50 lashes in front of the entire brigade. A soldier named John O'Neal was convicted of forging and selling discharges and was sentenced to receive 225 lashes, 125 to be applied the first day and 100 more two days later before the welts had time to heal. Other soldiers received from 25 to 50 lashes for offenses such as being absent without leave or drunk on duty.[69]

On May 5, the army received electrifying news. The French had joined the war on the

side of the Americans! The army assembled on the parade ground and performed a *feu de joie* or "fire of joy," where the men used blank cartridges to conduct a rolling fire -- the military equivalent of "the wave" at a modern day sports event. In between firing the men yelled "huzzahs," and on this occasion Thomas and the men saw the usually reserved Washington join in the cheering.

In June, it was decided that the North Carolina regiments were so badly undermanned that they must be consolidated. The nine regiments were combined into three, and the extra officers were sent home to recruit more troops. Thomas was transferred from his old company (Ballard's) in the Third Regiment and placed in Major Hardee Murphree's company of John Patten's Second Regiment.[69] The records indicate none of the other men from his old unit were transferred with him.

THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH

The warm spring breezes made Washington anxious to take the field against the British. Volunteers had begun drifting into camp and Washington's army had grown to over 20,000 men, twice the number of British troops in Philadelphia. While there were reports that the British army was preparing to move, it's destination was unclear.

Then, on June 18, Washington learned that the British had evacuated Philadelphia. It appeared they were marching overland toward New York. Here was an opportunity that every commander relished -- the chance to attack an enemy strung out on a march. The army was set in motion and began to pursue the British, watching for an opportunity to strike. Thomas and the Second North Carolina Regiment were sent with other troops to annoy the enemy's left flank and rear. They felled trees across the roads and destroyed bridges to slow the British and took occasional pot-shots at them.

As Thomas and the other troops pursued the British, the weather became violent. On June 24, there was a total eclipse of the sun. The next day the temperature climbed to 100 degrees and some of the British, in heavy wool uniforms, fell dead of heatstroke. The hot weather continued for the next two days and was accompanied by a heavy rainstorm that soaked the troops at night. But now the army was close to the British camp at Monmouth. The men were issued 40 rounds of ammunition and ordered to check their firearms.

Reconnaissance indicated that the British were in a vulnerable position. Seeing his opportunity, Washington ordered an attack to be made the minute the British renewed their march. He gave command of the advance force, which included the North Carolina brigade, to General Charles Lee.

The selection of Lee showed Washington's extreme patience with some of his officers' foibles. Lee was an arrogant know-it-all who had been held captive by the British early in the war and had been exchanged for another prisoner. Upon his return to the American army, he lectured his fellow officers on the superiority not only of the British army to the American, but also of his own military skill to that of even Washington himself.

When the British began moving out of their camps on June 28, Washington ordered Lee's troops forward. Soon the North Carolina Brigade and other troops were hotly engaged with the British. Suddenly, Thomas and the other North Carolinians saw British cavalry charging wildly

out of the smoke. These were the Queen's Rangers, wearing the distinctive tall, full-dress, fur hats called "busbys." They were followed by the 16th Dragoons. The horsemen charged, pounding down on the Americans, raising their sharp sabers high in the air for action. Earlier in the war, at Chatterton's hill, a few British cavalrymen had routed an entire American brigade. But this time, the British faced men who had learned their lessons well from Baron von Steuben. Thomas and his comrades stood firm, steadily fired their volleys, and then advanced on the cavalry with bayonets. Suddenly, the roles were reversed and a British general later wrote that the cavalry had "to retreat with precipitation upon our infantry."[69]

The British and Americans became heavily engaged, and it appeared there was opportunity for an American victory. General Lee, however, was timid and disorganized. He issued no clear plan of attack and then confused things even further by giving orders without explaining his intentions to his subordinates. Finally, it appeared the North Carolinians and others might be overwhelmed. General Lee ordered the American line to withdraw.

By now the temperature was reaching 100 degrees. Men and officers collapsed. Some units retreated in good order. Others broke into scared, disorganized mobs. The regiment Thomas was in, Patton's Second North Carolina, retreated "in some disorder, the men barely able to walk and greatly distressed by the fatiguing tramp and the excessive heat."[69]

While the advanced guard was fighting the British, Washington had been pushing the rest of the army up the road to join the fight. Suddenly, Thomas' regiment and Lee's other retreating troops met Washington's. Washington, on a huge white horse, his blue and buff uniform stained with sweat, demanded from Lee the reasons for the retreat. Lee had previously said that the British troops were so well disciplined and in such fine condition that the Americans should never try to engage them in a stand-up fight. Now, facing a furious Washington, Lee tried to stammer out an explanation. "Sir, these troops are not able to meet the British Grenadiers." "Sir," cried a seething Washington, "They are able, and by God they shall do it!"

Washington began rallying the troops. Lafayette, who witnessed this episode, later wrote that Washington's "presence stopped the retreat ... his calm courage ... gave him the air best calculated to excite enthusiasm.... [He rode] all along the lines amid the shouts of the soldiers, cheering them by his voice and example and restoring to our standard the fortunes of the fight. I thought then, as now, that never had I beheld so superb a man."

As Thomas and the men of the North Carolina Brigade began to regroup behind the lines, Washington led fresh troops into the fight. Soon regiments from Virginia, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Delaware, New Jersey and New York crashed into the finest troops the British had to offer -- the 42nd Black Watch wearing their distinctive black and green kilts, the 37th Hampshires; the 44th Essex; Light Infantry; Dragoons; Grenadiers; the Guards; and the Hessian mercenaries wearing their tall, brass, miter-like helmets. All afternoon the battle continued with attacks and counterattacks, crashing volleys of musketry and cannons. "Scarlet coats and blue littered the trampled grass, struck down by the heat as often as by American bullets. As the British came on, superbly unflinching, their moral must have suffered at the sight of the American units advancing, shifting ground, sideslipping, falling back with a precision and effectiveness that they could not have shown prior to the advent of von Steuben." In fact, von Stueben, "watching, saw all this reshuffling under deadly pressure and thought that his trainees moved up 'with as much precision as on ordinary parade and with the ... intrepidity of veteran

troops.'"

The heat continued to drain the men. Some of them, including Private Willie Upton of Thomas' regiment, dropped dead of heatstroke. Washington's great white horse died from exhaustion; he continued directing the battle on a chestnut mare, galloping along the lines, encouraging the men as they fired volley after volley and repulsed attack after attack by the British. By late afternoon, both British and Americans were exhausted, and neither side could push to victory. Looking for fresh troops, Washington ordered the North Carolinians and others forward. Though they had been regrouping and resting behind the lines, the North Carolinians, like everyone else, were melted by the heat. They did not come forward quickly, and though they eventually advanced beyond the front line, darkness fell and the tired men on both sides lay down to rest.

That night the British slipped away, marching for their ships on the New Jersey shore. The Americans awoke to find themselves masters of the battlefield. It was the last great battle of the Revolution in the northern United States. After Monmouth, the British in the north would be content to stay safe in the coastal towns where the guns of their fleets could protect them.

THOMAS FINISHES HIS ENLISTMENT

After Monmouth, only four months remained on Thomas' original two and one-half year enlistment. Consequently, if he desired, he could start for home in October of 1778. Likewise, Isaac Hudson Jr's and numerous other men's enlistments would expire in September.

It doesn't take much imagination to see Thomas, Isaac, and the others discussing the pros and cons of reenlisting. There was probably a strong emotional pull to finish the job of winning freedom. Also, substantial financial bounties were offered to troops for reenlisting. Against these things they had to weigh the hardships. What was the likelihood they'd survive to spend the money? What did the future hold? Undoubtedly they wondered if the coming winter of 1778-79 would be as hard as the previous winter at Valley Forge. They decided not to reenlist. Perhaps after two and one-half years of marching over half the eastern seaboard, sweltering in mosquito- and malaria-infested South Carolina, sustaining a serious wound, almost starving and freezing to death at Valley Forge, and standing toe-to-toe with the best troops the British had to offer, Thomas decided he had done his bit for liberty.

There may have been another thing pulling Thomas home. Isaac had a cousin named Lucy Hudson Edwards. Seven years Thomas' senior, Lucy had been married and then widowed prior to the war. Since the family farms were near each other, Thomas probably knew her before the Revolution began. For all we know, she could have been the reason Thomas joined the army, since as some wise person once said, "Most of the blamed foolish things a man does can be traced back to a desire to impress some woman." Maybe when Isaac received a letter from home Thomas would look off in the distance in a distracted fashion and say, "So uh, (cough, cough), how's your cousin?"

Thomas left the army while it was camped in New York. At least 12 other men from Thomas' original company received their discharges at the same time. Numerous men from the other companies and regiments left, also. It seems likely that the men made their way home together. (In 1783, when North Carolina was finalizing its accounts with its soldiers, Isaac

Hudson would go to Warrenton to pick up not only his own back-pay, but also to collect for Thomas and a messmate named John Young.[69]

It was a long walk home from White Plains, New York, to North Carolina, but it must have quickened Thomas' and Isaac's steps to know they could be home by Christmas. The journey probably took six weeks of walking, perhaps less for young men accustomed to marching.

As he headed south, Thomas was walking away from history. For the rest of his life he'd carry the memory of the great events he'd participated in. Perhaps he told the family about some of the things he'd seen -- the battles of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth, of the night he'd seen the beautiful northern lights, and of the dark winter months at Valley Forge. Maybe he related some now-lost anecdote about George Washington or other later-famous Americans at Valley Forge. Perhaps not, since soldiers often choose to leave their war memories behind.

HOMECOMING

So down the eastern seaboard Thomas and his comrades tramped, walking the colonial dirt roads they had previously traveled north. Down through the length of New Jersey, through Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond -- and not a Holiday Inn or McDonald's in sight. Most likely they slept in the woods beside the road -- they were accustomed to it. Perhaps sometimes a sympathetic farmer let them sleep in his barn.

One can only imagine the scene when Thomas strode up to the farm in North Carolina. He'd been away for over two years. Undoubtedly he'd changed. So had everyone else. John Jr's son Archibald, a baby when Thomas left home, was a curious young boy around five years old by this time. And here was his "famous" Uncle Thomas, who had been fighting the redcoats with General Washington!

A WEDDING

It wasn't long before Thomas was visiting Lucy Hudson Edwards. Perhaps she had returned to living with her father upon the death of her husband. Her father had been made her young son's guardian .[69] Thomas probably hung about on the pretense of helping her with some of her chores, maybe trying to make friends with her young son Isham Edward, Jr. Since Christmas was near, maybe Thomas and Lucy enjoyed some of the season's activities together.

Whatever happened, it did not take them long to decide to get married. Thomas could not have been home more than a few months when on February 8th, 1779, they signed a Marriage Bond that was witnessed by her father.[69] This was to be a long and profitable union for both of them. Lucy got the husband that she needed as a widow with a child. Thomas got an older and possibly wiser helpmate. They would raise at least five children to maturity.

CHAPTER VI
THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR IN NORTH CAROLINA

The American Revolution continued for another four years after Thomas returned home at the end of 1778. As mentioned, North Carolina communities were sometimes divided in their allegiances. The Committee of Safety in adjacent Granville County required that an Oath of Allegiance be given to everyone in the area and those who refused to take it were watched closely. The Committee punished or imprisoned those who spoke out against the cause of liberty, refused to use Continental currency, or corresponded with the British. Records show that in 1779 a man named Patrick Duffey was charged with "speaking words inimical [sic] to the American cause & etc, the said Duffey is sent to Hillsboro." Likewise, a commission was established to manage the confiscated estates of Granville County Loyalists.[1]

Though there were a few Loyalists in the area, the McKissacks' region seems to have been safely pro-American. There was apparently even a blacksmith shop located on Billy's Creek which manufactured guns for the Continental army.[2] Toward the end of the war, North Carolina's governor was writing numerous letters from nearby Williamsboro, so that hamlet was probably a military headquarters.[3] Likewise, General Jethro Sumner used the old Bute courthouse as his headquarters in the last days of the Revolution. [4]

The McKissacks and their neighbors were probably most concerned about the foraging activities of armies in the region. The McKissacks lived midway between Hillsboro and Halifax, both of which were used extensively by American armies as staging points. In later campaigns, the British passed through the area, also. The significance of this lies not just in the chance of a battle but also in the fact that the armies fed themselves off the countryside and surrounding farms. Both American and British troops might appear and take hogs, cattle, corn, or whatever they needed. Sometimes they paid; other times they simply showed their guns and took what they wanted. Sometimes homes were burned, women raped, and men killed. By 1781, the area around Hillsboro had little in the way of food for marauding armies.

The first time a large army passed near the McKissacks was when General De Kalb, who had been at Valley Forge, led an army south through the area in the spring of 1780. He and his troops stayed at General Parson's plantation in Granville County. De Kalb had hoped the North Carolina militia would join him, but the governor offered excuses for their not taking the field.[5] Later, during the summer of 1780, after de Kalb and his troops were defeated at Camden, the fleeing American army reassembled at Hillsboro.

After Camden, the British slowly followed the Americans into North Carolina. Each day brought reports to the McKissacks and their neighbors that the British were moving closer. The British sent a force toward the western mountains, intending to scare the pioneers into submission. Instead, a force of men from Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina surrounded the British force at King's Mountain and annihilated it. Records show that a Thomas McKisnick fought in the battle, but its unclear if this was Thomas McKissack of Bute County.[6]

In spite of the King's Mountain victory, the main American army, under General Nathaniel Greene, did not feel strong enough to offer fight. Greene slowly retreated into

Virginia. Reaching the Dan River in Virginia, the British abandoned the pursuit and turned south, passing through Granville County on their way to Hillsboro.

The British made camp at Hillsboro and, raising the royal standard, called for all loyal subjects to rally to the king's support. The Loyalists in the area were emboldened and began to join Cornwallis. General Greene decided he must move south and confront the British. Cornwallis' and Greene's armies met in the battle of Guilford Courthouse. Greene's army contained a large contingent of North Carolina militia. Drury Allen, a neighbor and in-law of the Mckissacks, fought at Guilford Courthouse.[7]

The book "Another Such Victory" by Thomas Baker mentions that two brigades of North Carolina militia, one under Thomas Eaton and another under James Butler, fought at Guilford. These brigades came from the counties around the McKissacks. It's likely that some of the McKissack men and their other neighbors fought, also, considering the battle was fought close enough to their homes for them to feel threatened by the British advance. While the battle was a victory for the British, the Americans killed so many of them that a member of Parliament commented, "Another such victory would ruin the British Army."

All of the McKissack men -- Thomas, John and William -- and any sons or brothers-in-law, could have fought in the battles in North Carolina. As mentioned, the maneuvering and fighting of the armies were certainly close enough to their homes to threaten the families and farms. At the time of the Revolution John Jr may have had as many as six or seven children and this would have placed an extra burden on the family had he served with the regular troops.[8] His oldest son James would have been old enough to soldier later in the war. All of the men could have fought with the militia, who often showed up for a battle and then returned to the farm. No records examined to date, however, show them as having served.

At least one historian makes the case that they probably served at some time. "All able bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 were registered as members of the [Franklin] county militia regiment. Each regiment was divided into companies with each company being broken down into five divisions. The oldest and least able of the men were placed in the last of these divisions, to be used only in times of the direst sort of need. The other four could be called upon at the will of the state authorities, when needed. This resulted in practically every man in the county serving on active duty at some time during the War for Independence, in periods from one month upwards.

An example of this type service is shown in a letter in Vol. 15, page 535, of The State Records of North Carolina, which I quote:

> Copy of orders to Commanding Officers of Franklin and Warren Counties, from the State of North Carolina, July 16, 1781.
> Sir: Some movements of the Enemy in Virginia indicate a rapid movement of Cavalry through this state, therefore I request you to collect the Riflemen from the militia of your county, and order them under expert officers to march towards Burtons Ferry on Roanoke. You may assure the men that the time they serve shall be credited to their next tour of duty, and that they shall be discharged one month at farthest, if they require it. To prevent those wagons from penetrating our Country is of the highest importance and I hope every good friend to his Country will exert himself. Measures shall be taken for supplying arms and ammunition. [9]

This order was signed by Governor Thomas Burke.

Regardless of whether the men saw a battlefield, all of the family was touched by the war in one way or another. The American armies were clothed through the efforts of the people; the government frequently called on the public to produce cloth -- linens and wool -- and these would have been produced by the women working in their homes. The nature of their commitment to independence was so different than ours today. Rather than watch television coverage of a far-away American military action, these women spent their day weaving cloth that they knew could furnish a shirt or pants for a husband, son or neighbor.

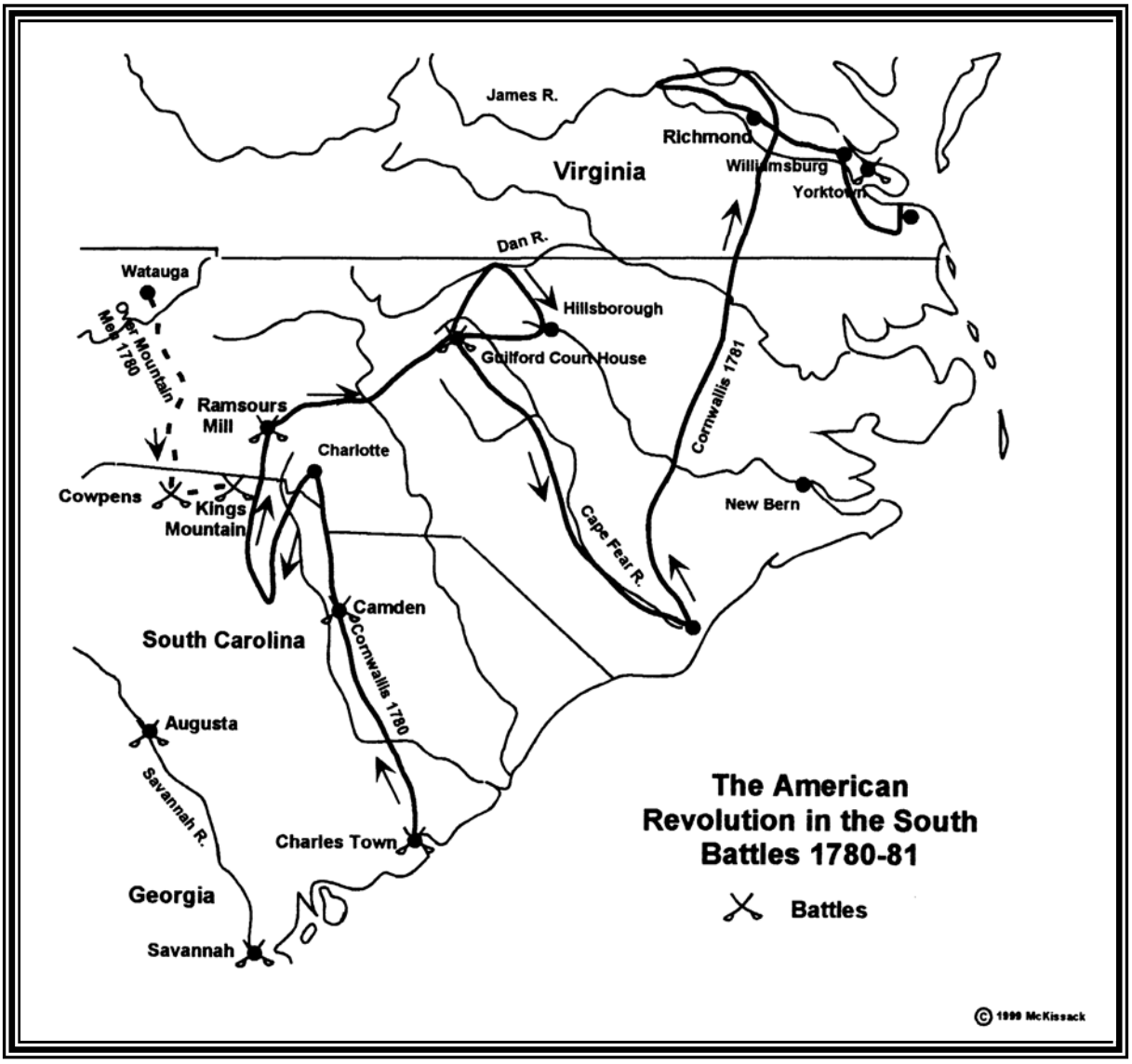
In addition, they were constantly touched by news of relatives and friends serving with the armies; Lucy's McKissack's cousin, -- James Allen -- served with the Patriots.[10] Other possible relatives of Lucy's -- James Hudson and David Allin -- were also killed while serving with the militia.[11] The North Carolina state records contain numerous cases where a wounded and disabled soldier from Franklin County was voted a pension of 20 bushels of corn a year to live on.

Lucy McKissack's maternal Uncle -- Josiah Allen -- was killed in the spring of 1781 when General Greene retreated from besieging the British at Ninety-Six, South Carolina. Especially distressing would have been the fact that Josiah Allen was captured and murdered by Tories after the battle was over. The following describes his capture and death. To appreciate its affect on the family, place yourself at their cabin when news of Josiah's death arrives and this story is told:

> [The Tories] passed the house of Captain Solomon Pope, where they found three of Pope's men, Aaron Weaver, Josiah] Allen and Fred Sisson, whom they made their prisoners. Having no place of confinement .. they took them into the swamp nearby ... and put them to death. Captain Pope immediately called his company together ... They met the [Tories] in the fork of Cloud's Creek and Little Saluda, where a bloody fight ensued, in which [the Tories] were completely exterminated. It is said that about half of them were killed after they surrendered, so great was the exasperation of the Whigs at their conduct in murdering Pope's men ... Only one man was left alive, Henry Etheridge, and he was saved by the interposition of Clark Spraggins, they being closely connected by marriage.[12]

While the McKissacks' area was relatively free of extreme neighbor-versus-neighbor violence, the details surrounding Josiah Allen's death illustrate just how vicious the fighting was elsewhere. As one historian wrote: "The Revolutionary war in the South developed into an increasingly brutal war. The 18th century South was a wild, harsh, and violent land, inhabited by a hard and violent people. The southern Loyalists fought their former friends, cousins, and neighbors who supported the cause of American independence with a cruel and sanguinary ferocity exceeded only by the cruel and sanguinary ferocity with which the American Patriots fought them."[13]

EVENTS AFFECTING OTHER POSSIBLE MCKISSACK RELATIVES



Though John and Rebeccah McKissack's family lived in a relatively safe area, other families of McKissacks in North Carolina experienced some of the war's savagery. It is possible that these other McKissacks were related to John and Rebeccah, though the evidence found by the authors is
circumstantial. Since they may have been relatives and since their experiences further illustrate the nature of the war in North Carolina, however, their suffering is related here.

For example, after the British captured Charleston, South Carolina, in May 1780, they marched north into North Carolina because they had heard that there were numerous Loyalists there who would join their army. One of the Loyalists, a Colonel who had been fighting with the British, returned home to the area around Charlotte and began to organize his friends and comrades into a small army which would join the British when they arrived. Eventually, about 1,300 Loyalists were camped at Ramsour's Mill.

Hearing of this concentration, Patriot leaders, including Captain Daniel McKissick of Lincoln County (the same Daniel McKissick who had been authorized by the Committee of Safety to obtain guns and ammunition from Charleston at the beginning of the war), rounded up about 400 militiamen and, though outnumbered, decided to attack at dawn of June 20, 1780. Since the Loyalists and Patriots were not regular soldiers, both sides were dressed in civilian clothing. As the battle began, the Patriots placed a white piece of paper in their hats to identify themselves while the Loyalists wore a sprig of green. The battle lasted about half an hour, and at one point the combatants fought hand-to-hand, swinging their rifles at each other. "In this strange contest, several [Loyalists] were taken prisoners, and others, divesting themselves of their mark of distinction (a twig of green pine top stuck in their hats), intermixed with the [Patriots], and all being in their common dress, escaped unnoticed."[14]

The Patriots, though greatly outnumbered, were rewarded for their boldness and eventually got the upper hand. After the Loyalists were driven away, the Patriots took possession of the battlefield and walked among the dead and wounded.

> It is believed that seventy were killed, and the loss on each side was equal. About one hundred men on each side were wounded, and fifty [Loyalists] taken prisoners. The men had no uniform, and it could not be told to which party many of the dead belonged. Most of the [Patriots] wore a piece of white paper on their hats in front, and many of the men on each side being excellent riflemen, this paper was a mark at which the Tories often fired, and several of the [Patriots] were shot in the head. The trees behind which both [Patriots] and [Loyalists] occasionally took shelter, were grazed by the balls; and one tree... at the roots of which two brothers lay dead, was grazed by three balls on one side and by two on the other.
>
> In this battle neighbors, near relations, and personal friends fought against each other, and as the smoke would from time to time blow off, they would recognize each other. In the evening and on the next day the relations and friends of the dead and wounded came in, and a scene was witnessed truly afflicting to the feelings of humanity.[15]

One of the "friends and relations" who came in was Jane Wilson McKissick, wife of Captain Daniel McKissick. Years later, Daniel McKissick's daughter Margaret still remembered men coming to their home, about 10 miles from the fighting, and telling her mother that Daniel had been left for dead on the battlefield. Jane hurried to the area and searched among the dead and wounded for her husband. This must have been a ghastly chore. We can only guess at the mixture of relief and anguish that flooded her when she finally found him. She carried him to a nearby farmer's house and nursed him back to health. "The gunshot wound had broken the bone in his left arm, the ball entering at the elbow and lacerating the arm to the shoulder. The severity of the wound caused him to have only partial use of his arm the rest of his life."[16]

In fact, Daniel was lucky he wasn't killed by Loyalists after he was wounded. As related in *The State Records of North Carolina* (Clark, Vol XIX, p.981), "Captain Machisick (sic) was wounded early in the action, shot through the tip of his shoulder, and finding himself disabled &

the result being at the time uncertain, he went from the battle ground about 80 poles to the west; about the time the firing ceased he met 10 of the Tories coming from the neighbouring farm where they had been until the sound of the fire started them, they were confident their side was victorious & several of them knew Capt. Machisick, insulted him, would have used him ill but for Abram Kiener, Senr., one of his neighbors, who protected him & took him a prisoner, and marching on towards the battle ground Kiener kept lamenting that a man so clever & such a good neighbor and of so good sense should ever be a rebel, continued his lecture to Capt. Machisick until they came where the Whigs were formed. Kiener looking round saw so many strange faces said, "Hey poys, I believe you has cot a good many prisoners here," still thinking his party had beat; immediately a number of guns were cocked and Capt. Machisick, tho' much exhausted by loss of blood, had to exert himself to save the lives of Kiener and party."

One historian called the fight at Ramsour's Mill "one of the most significant partisan strikes" of the Revolutionary War. The defeat of the Loyalists discouraged British sympathizers. When the British finally arrived in Charlotte, the Patriots had the upper hand and few sympathizers were willing to welcome or aid the British.

Many of the Loyalists who fought at Ramsour's Mill escaped to South Carolina to join the British at Camden. These Loyalists must have believed one of the old backcountry sayings -- "He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day." And they were right, because two months later, the American army, including some of the Patriots from Ramsour's Mill, suffered a stunning defeat at Camden. Following this victory, the British again decided to invade North Carolina.

News of the British victory at Camden emboldened North Carolina Loyalists. Some contacted friends and comrades who had been in hiding to gather so they could attack Patriots. Numerous atrocities occurred with homes and fields burned, houses pillaged, and men shot down and killed in cold blood.

One area that suffered tremendously from this type of violence was the area along the North and South Carolina borders. This was home to Archibald McKissack, a Justice of the Peace and prominent businessman before the war. After the British won the battle of Camden, violence in the area worsened as Tories were emboldened and Archibald McKissick and his family fled to the northern, safer parts of North Carolina. His son, Archibald McKissack Jr., joined a group of several hundred Patriots fighting the Loyalists. Archibald Jr's group was surprised and he was taken prisoner. What happened next is related in *The Old North State in 1776*, (Caruthers, 1854) "McKizic, still sitting on his horse, and no disposal having yet been made of him, on seeing an opportunity, stuck the spurs into his horse and dashed down the hill at full speed, the balls whizzing about his head all the time, crossed the creek, and when he had ascended to the top of the opposite hill, he stopped a moment, turned round and, waving his hat over his head, gave the whoop of defiance, and then cantered off at his leisure."

While the Patriots, including Archibald McKissick Sr., were gone, Loyalists pillaged and burned their possessions. Archibald Sr. was reported to have lost everything. Nevertheless, he decided to return home once it appeared safe. He returned in the company of a group of other men, some who had been captains in local Patriot partisan bands. Returning to the region of their homes, the group camped for the night at Piney Bottom, a branch of Rockfish Creek. That night, John McNeill, a Loyalist leader and apparently a relative of Archibald's, sent runners to his men to rendezvous for an attack. They approached the camp where Archibald and his

comrades, except for a single sentinel, were sleeping. Carruthers relates what happened next.

> The sentinel hailed them but received no answer. He hailed them again, but received no answer. [A Loyalist] cocked his gun and determined to shoot at the flash of the sentinel's gun. The sentinel fired and [the Loyalist] shot at the flash... Then they rushed upon the sleeping company, just as they were roused by the fire of the sentinel's gun, and shot down five or six of them but the rest escaped, leaving everything behind them. A motherless boy...was asleep in one of the wagons, and being roused by the firing of the guns and before he was fully awake cried out 'Parole me! Parole me!.' Duncan Ferguson, a renegade deserter from the American army, told him to come out and he would parole him. He came out and dropped upon his knees, begging for his life; but on seeing Ferguson approaching him in a threatening manner, he jumped up and ran. Ferguson took after him and Colonel McDougal [ran] after Ferguson, threatening him that if he touched the boy he would cut him down. Ferguson still ran on, however, until he overtook the boy, and then with his broad sword, split his head wide open, so that one half of it fell on one shoulder and the other half on the other shoulder. The waggons were then plundered, the officers taking the money and the men whatever else they could carry away. There were two or three hundred of the [Loyalists].[17]

Archibald Sr. was one of the lucky men who managed to escape into the darkness when the Loyalists attacked. Its not clear what became of him after this. Some of his comrades regrouped the next day and visited some of the Loyalists at their homes and killed them. Archibald apparently survived to the end of the war as there were claims by he and business partners for supplies provided to the Americans.[18]

One of the most vicious partisan leaders of the Revolution was actually the brother-in-law of another Daniel McKissick (not Captain McKissick of Ramsour's Mill). That Daniel was the son of Neil and Catherine McKissick, also of Lincoln County, North Carolina. Daniel married Mary, the sister of William Cunningham, whose exploits in the war earned him the name of "Bloody Bill Cunningham." Like many Loyalists, Cunningham took no prisoners. Several times he surrounded and fought small groups of patriots who surrendered after stout resistance. After they surrendered, Cunningham would have them butchered on the spot. Once, he hung the leader of a group of patriots, and when the rope broke, Cunningham sabered the half-strangled man instead.

CHAPTER VII
AFTER THE REVOLUTION — GO WEST, YOUNG MAN

PEACE

After the battle of Guilford Courthouse in 1781, the British General Cornwallis led his troops north to Yorktown, Virginia. Here they were trapped and forced to surrender by the combined forces of George Washington and the French. Though the American Revolution would continue for another two years, the McKissacks' area would see no more large armies. There were still, however, occasional skirmishes and atrocities between Patriots and Loyalists.

After the war, John McKissack Sr. received payment for goods he had provided the Americans in 1781[19]. For his service with the North Carolina Continental line, Thomas received 640 acres of land .[20] This grant may have been located in Tennessee, where he moved in the early 1800's.

ANOTHER GENERATION MOVES WESTWARD

When Thomas returned home from New York at the end of 1778, he found a family that even then was thinking of moving from the farms along Billy's and Taylor's creeks. In 1778, John McKissack Jr. had been granted 308 acres along Double Creek of Hico Creek in Caswell County, about 40 miles to the west.[21] John Jr. appears in the Franklin (Bute) County tax lists for 1777, but is gone in 1778, so he and Jane and their growing family had probably moved to Caswell County.

Thomas and Lucy (Hudson) McKissack followed them to Caswell County by the fall of 1781, and their first son -- William -- was born there on November 14, 1781.[22] The next year, 1782, John Jr, William, and Thomas appear on the Caswell County tax lists, apparently living together on land purchased by John Jr.[23] Soon afterwards, Thomas acquired 320 acres of his own..[24] John Sr and Rebeccah had probably made the move by this time, also.

As was so often the case, the move to new lands was made by relatives and friends of the family, also. Lucy Hudson's grandfather, Robert Allen, moved to Caswell County in 1781.[25] His brother Drury Allen moved to Caswell in 1777.[26] Members of the Simmons and Goings families also appear to have joined the emigration to Caswell County.

NEW LAND, SIMILAR LIFE

County records indicate that the families settled into the familiar farming life they had known in Franklin County. Within a few years the McKissack men began signing "Planter" after their names, indicating that they considered themselves as part of North Carolina's highest social class.

In the years following the American Revolutionary War, the McKissacks probably became established tobacco farmers. Just as in Franklin County, this crop was the staple commercial crop in Caswell. One piece of evidence which attests to the McKissacks' involvement in tobacco culture lies in the fact that when John McKissack, Sr. died in 1799, his will listed seven slaves. Slaves were used primarily for clearing and cultivating land. A list of taxables in 1771 shows John as owning only one slave -- Nan -- who had been owned by the family since at least 1757. Up until the Revolution, the family probably worked their farms together without additional slaves. They may have had the help of occasional day laborers or indentured servants. Perhaps when they moved west to Caswell County (from which Person County was later formed), they used money from the sale of their old lands to buy more slaves.

We modern folk may find it distasteful, but the fact that John owned seven slaves at his death is also a measure of the McKissacks' growing economic prosperity. This is significant because the early lists of tithables indicate that John owned no slaves when he first arrived in North Carolina. As mentioned, tithable lists show John Sr. as owning only one slave as late as 1771. Slaves represented a significant investment; it was only with the passage of time that John and Rebeccah created the wealth to buy more slaves and join the "planter" class.

Ownership of several slaves placed John and his family in a minority. As late as 1782, only about 40 percent of the families in the area owned slaves. And unlike John, the vast majority of larger slaveholders had brought inherited wealth with them from Virginia.[27]

A GROWING FAMILY

Up until now in our story, it has been relatively easy to keep track of the McKissack family. John Sr., Rebeccah, and their sons lived and worked together from around 1750 to 1780. But by the time the family moved to Caswell County, the sons had begun to establish families of their own. John Jr. and his wife Jane probably had six or seven children by the time of the move (11 children would eventually survive them). Their son James was probably old enough to be a father by 1780. Likewise, John and Rebeccah's son William had also become a father during this period, and, as mentioned earlier, Thomas and Lucy were blessed with their first son, William, in 1781.

THE FRONTIER BECKONS AGAIN

The growth of the family may, as we shall see, have actually motivated John Jr. and Jane to consider moving to lands with more opportunities. For in spite of the prosperity offered by Caswell County, John Jr. and Jane decided in the 1780's to move to the developing state of Tennessee. John Jr. is listed in the Caswell County tax records until 1786; then he disappears. This indicates that John Jr and Jane McKissack's family left Caswell County (later Person County) sometime after 1786. The first national census of 1790 lists both William and Thomas, but no John (not even John Sr.), in this area. The 1794 tax rolls for Person County show Thomas and William as landowners, each with 320 acres and two to three slaves, but again, no John.

1. Owen, History and Genealogies of Old Granville County, North Carolina, 1746 - 1800, 1993, p.198.

2. Pearce, Franklin County, 1779-1979, p.5.

3. Colonial Records of North Carolina, Vol. 15, p.549.

4. Davis, Historical Sketches of Franklin County, 1948, p.6.

5. Lumpkin, From Savannah to Yorktown, 1981, p. 57.

6. Alderman, The Overmountain Men, 1970, p.123.

7. Miller, p.170.

8. Will of John McKissack, Jr., Putnam County, Georgia, Will Book A, Folio 47-48-49, July 4, 1815.

9. Pearce, p.9.

10. Miller, p.75.

11. Clark, State Records of North Carolina, Vol XIX, p.402.

12. Chapman, History of Edgefield County, South Carolina, p.66, 67.

13. Lumpkin, p.52.

14. Account of the Battle of Ramsour's Mill, by General Joseph Graham, published in the Catawba Journal, February 1, 1825, contained in Historical Sketches of North Carolina, Wheeler, 1964, p.227.

15. Account of the Battle of Ramsour's Mill, by General Joseph Graham, published in the Catawba Journal, February 1, 1825, contained in Historical Sketches of North Carolina, Wheeler, 1964, p.227.

16. Wheeler -- Dickson, McEwen and Allied Families, 1975, p.276.

17. Carruthers, The Old North State, p.95.

18. Haun, North Carolina Army Accounts, 1990, Vol. IV & V, Part IV, p.448.

19. Revolutionary Army Accounts, Vol. 9, p.91, Folio 4, North Carolina Department of Cultural

Resources, Division of Archives & History.

20. Roster of Soldiers From North Carolina in the American Revolution, Genealogical Publishing, 1984, p.237.

21. Kendall, Caswell County, North Carolina -- Land Grants, Tax Lists, State Census, Apprentice Bonds, Estate Records -- 1977.

22. Tombstone of William McKissack, Spring Hill Cemetery, Spring Hill, Tennessee.

23. Caswell County Tax List for 1782, North Carolina State Archives, C.R. 020.701.1. A John McKissack in 1784 received another 308 acres along the same creek. A John McKissack also bought 332 acres on Double Creek of Hico Creek in Person County in 1782. We know that these are the same McKissacks because in 1789 John Sr. sold the family homestead that he had acquired in 1752. He was living in Caswell County at the time.

24. Caswell County, NC Tax List 1784, St Luke's district. Also, affidavit in Thomas McKissack's state pension file indicating Thomas had moved to Caswell County in 1780's.

25. Robert Allen sold his property in Franklin County in January 1781 and made out his will in Caswell County in 1782.

26. Caswell County Deed Book, A:48.

27. The Granville County Historical Society, Heritage and Homesteads, 1988.

CHAPTER VIII
TENNESSEE -- DARK AND BLOODY GROUND

The family of John and Jane McKissack left Caswell County, North Carolina hoping for a better and prosperous life in Tennessee. What they found instead was a land embroiled in one of the most confusing and bloody struggles in American history. To understand what they found in East Tennessee in the late 1780s, it's necessary to look at events occurring there during the five years before the McKissacks' arrival.

THE LAND BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS

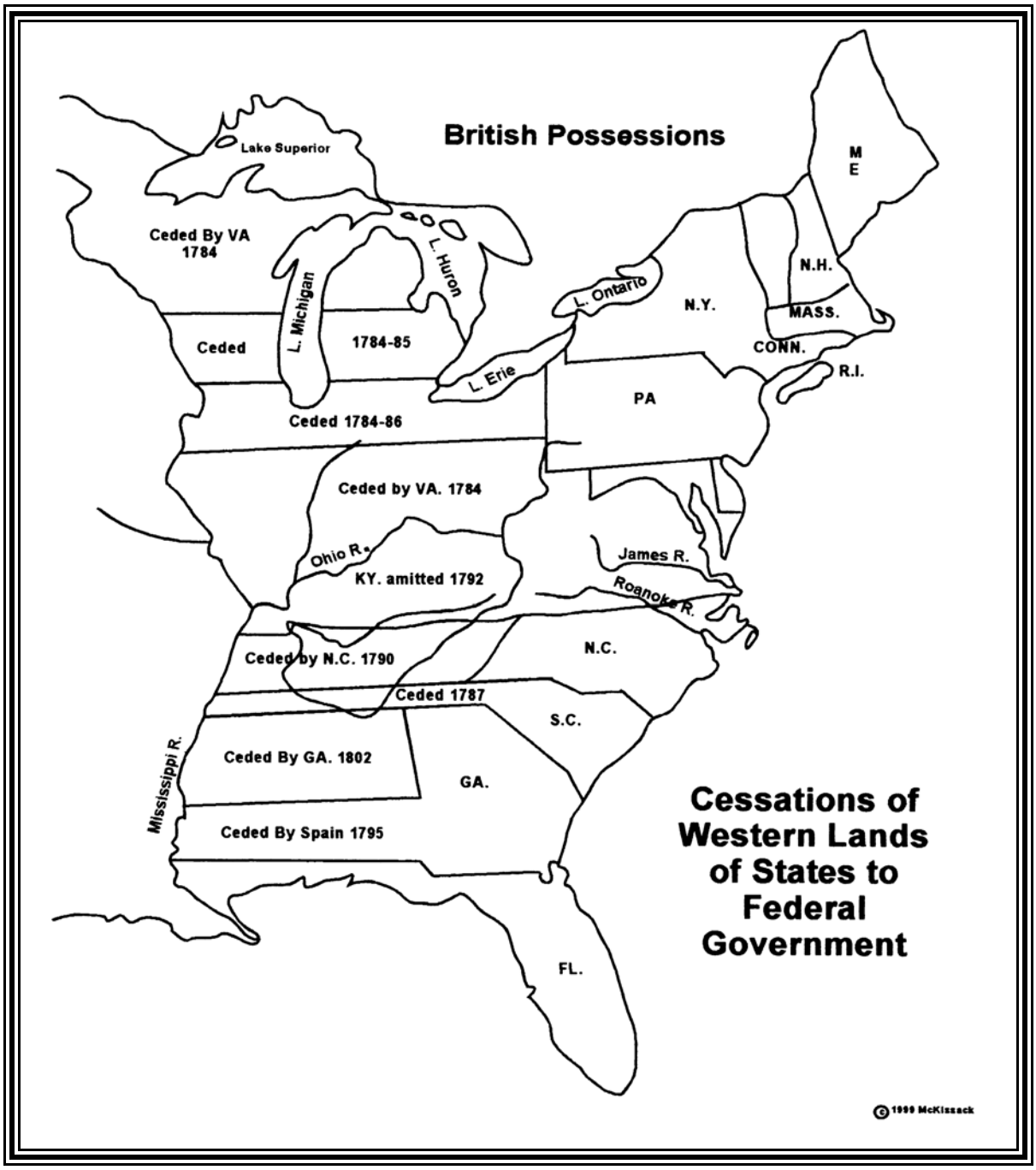
After the American Revolution, the western borders of states such as Virginia and North Carolina were assumed to extend to the Mississippi River. There was still a vast Indian population in this area, but some government officials considered that the Indians had sacrificed their ownership by joining the British in the war. Others did not care one way or the other about treaties or legal niceties. Some settlers saw millions of fertile acres not being farmed and speculators saw millions of acres which could turn a profit for whoever owned them; the only question in their minds was how to acquire that land.

The hunger for new land was sharpened by the fact that the American Revolution had left the people of North Carolina destitute. Property had been destroyed, trade interrupted, and many citizens were deeply in debt. Paper money issued by the state was worthless; the members of the 1782 legislature were paid in corn.

In order to retrieve their fortunes, a clique consisting of political officials and leading citizens decided to perpetrate one of the biggest land grabs in history. In 1783, the legislature passed a land act placing most of North Carolina's western lands beyond the mountains up for sale. Ignoring the fact that the Indians considered the land theirs, the legislature placed the lands on the market to all comers.

Deals, however, were cut between elected officials and speculators so that a select few arrived on the lands first. They then divided their huge land claims and sold them at a profit to others. The land office which handled these claims was opened on October 20, 1783, in Hillsboro, only 20 miles from the McKissacks' homes. Grants for more than four million acres of land were issued in the short seven months that the land office was open. The McKissacks and their neighbors were no doubt aware of the commotion over lands in Tennessee. In fact, a James McKissack obtained one of these grants for 1,000 acres on July 10, 1788, having previously entered the land in May of 1784, marked it off, and had it surveyed.[1] It does not appear, however, that this James was John Jr. and Jane's eldest son. The land was deep in the heart of Indian country and no whites would settle there permanently for years.

One of the reasons the land-grab clique took quick action was that North Carolina was being pressured to cede its western lands to the Federal Government. Congress had gone deeply into debt to finance the American Revolution. If it owned the western lands, Congress could sell them to pay off this debt. The North Carolina clique decided, however, that they had as much right to profit from these lands as did the fledgling national government.



The next year, in April 1784, under national pressure and influenced by Virginia's vote to cede her western lands, the North Carolina legislature voted to cede what remained of its western lands to Congress. Past dispositions of the western lands had treated the rights of the Indians cavalierly. Now, the 1784 cession ran roughshod over the rights of a group of white citizens -- the Overmountain Men.

THE OVERMOUNTAIN MEN

The Overmountain men had been settled in the western mountains of North Carolina (what is now northeastern Tennessee) since before the American Revolution. Most lived on lands purchased from the Indians in the early 1770's. Living beyond the mountains and out of touch with the eastern government of North Carolina, these settlers were an especially independent lot. In 1772, feeling a need for civil and legal organization, they had formed their own government, called the Watauga Association. Then, during the American Revolution, some of the men descended into the lowlands to fight the British. A British officer sent a message to the overmountain settlements telling them to cease aiding the Patriots or he would march over the mountains, hang their leaders, and lay waste their country "with fire and sword."

This threat reached the Overmountain men in the middle of a big festival. A huge crowd was gathered to dance, race horses and eat barbeque. To make a long story short, the men organized, marched down the mountains, surrounded the British command of about one thousand, and annihilated them. (Units of North and South Carolina soldiers joined them in this enterprise, and a Thomas McKissick is listed as one of the Patriots who fought at King's Mountain). Obviously, the Overmountain people were "self-starters."

THE STATE OF FRANKLIN

When the Overmountain men heard that North Carolina had ceded its western lands to the national government, they characteristically took matters into their own hands. They elected representatives who voted to form a new state. They hoped that this state, which they named Franklin, would be admitted into the Union as the 14th state.

But there was a problem. While the Overmountain men were meeting to form a new state in the mountains, the North Carolina legislature was voting hundreds of miles to the east to repeal its cession act. The original cession act was passed April 1784. Before the national Congress could meet to accept the ceded lands, however, the North Carolina legislature met again in October 1784 and took them back! By this time, many of the Overmountain men had devoted time and energy to forming the new state of Franklin.

When news of the repeal arrived in the Overmountain region, it naturally created a great deal of uncertainty. Some Overmountain men wanted to forge ahead with the state of Franklin. Others wanted to rejoin North Carolina. This created bitter divisions within the body politic of Franklin.

THE INDIANS

The confusion over which was the legitimate government in this area -- Franklin, North Carolina or Congress -- made the already hostile relationship between the Overmountain people and the Indians even worse. The Indians would sign a treaty with one group of white men, only to see another group violate it. For instance, before North Carolina ceded its western lands to Congress in
1784, it arranged to meet with the Indians and pay for the lands. Trade goods were purchased for this purpose. Then the land was ceded to Congress. North Carolina's governor wrote Congress that the trade goods would be turned over to that body so that it could proceed with the negotiations.

Then the cession was repealed. The trade goods disappeared and were not replaced. All the Indians knew is that they received nothing, yet whites were moving onto their lands. They vented their anger on the white men and women nearest them. From the perspective of the Overmountain people, both North Carolina and the Congress had made them victims of the Indians' wrath.

FRANKLIN SIGNS A TREATY WITH THE INDIANS

Moving ahead with the business of establishing their new state, the leaders of Franklin signed a peace treaty, called the Dumplin Creek Treaty, with the Indians. The Franklinites were optimistic about the treaty. Some spoke of pursuing an arrangement where the Indians would be given representation in the Franklin state legislature. From Caswell County, the McKissacks' home, an anonymous writer sent a letter to the Maryland Gazette in 1785 stating that "a negotiation is on foot with the Cherokee and the aim will be to incorporate them and make them useful citizens. I dare say the project will startle your rigid secretaries -- but you, we expect, will be more liberal, when it manifestly appears that the interest of humanity and of our new society will be promoted."[2] Clearly, this letter painted a peaceful picture of east Tennessee.

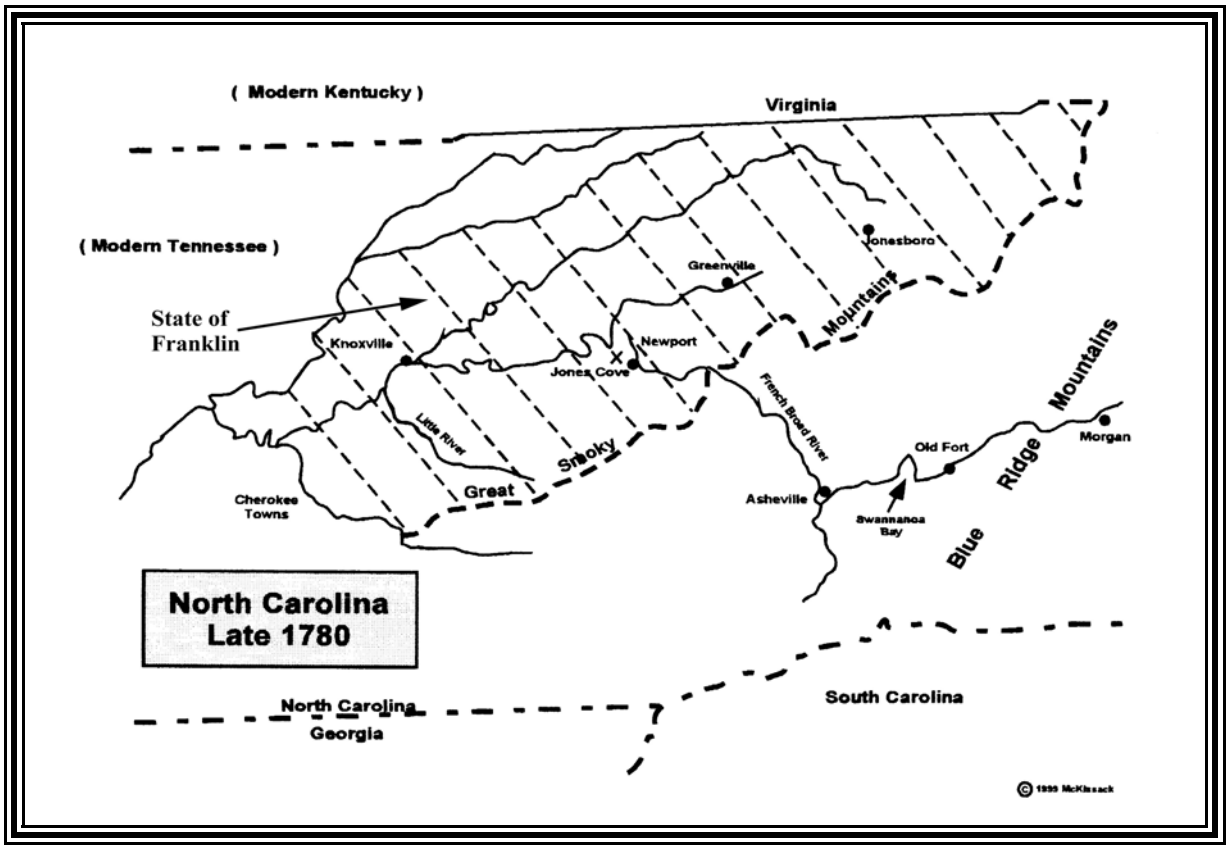
After the Dumplin Creek Treaty, settlers flocked into the area claimed by the new state, especially the area along the French Broad river (see map). Some sources say that entire communities in North Carolina were abandoned when the migration began.[3] No doubt the McKissacks and their neighbors were aware of this westward flow.

While the Franklin leaders may have been sanguine about the future with the Indians, there was also room for doubt. For one thing, not all of the Cherokee Chiefs had attended the Dumplin Creek meeting. Just as the whites had their different factions and leaders, so did the Indians. Also, some of the Chiefs who attended the meeting later claimed they had agreed only to give the white leaders time to consult with their citizens, not to allow whites to live in the French Broad river area.

THE HOPEWELL TREATY

As if these uncertainties weren't enough to rock the boat of peace, Congress stepped in and made things worse. Ironically, the United States Congress was working hard to establish peace with the Indians. From a national perspective, troubles between Indians and frontiersmen throughout the south -- North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia -- were most serious. Without consulting the frontiersmen, specifically the Franklinites, Congress arranged a peace treaty with the Cherokee. This treaty, called the Hopewell Treaty, came only five months after the Franklinites and some of the Cherokee Chiefs had signed the Dumplin Creek Treaty. But the terms of Congress' treaty were entirely different.

Of most concern to the Franklinites was that the new treaty stated that much of their proposed state, including its capital at Greeneville, was in Indian land! Even worse was the last clause of the treaty which stated, "Any settler who fails to remove within six months from the land guaranteed to the Indians shall forfeit the protection of the United States, and the Cherokee may punish him or not as they please." This was an open invitation for the Cherokee, especially the Chiefs who had not signed the Dumplin Creek Treaty, to make war on the settlers. Nobody outside of the federal government liked the Hopewell Treaty. Both North Carolina and the Franklinites repudiated it.



ANOTHER WAR AND ANOTHER TREATY

The Hopewell Treaty did indeed encourage Indian attacks. The Chiefs of the southern Cherokee tribes had long been more hostile to the whites than those of the northern villages. The southern tribes were responsible for most of the earlier attacks and had not attended the Dumplin Creek Treaty meeting. Now a cycle of violence occurred that well-illustrates the tragedy of the wars between the frontiersmen and Indians.

After the Hopewell Treaty, a war party of southern Cherokee bypassed the whites in Tennessee and ranged north into Kentucky. There they raided and killed settlers. In retaliation, the Kentuckians tracked the Indians home to Tennessee. Coming upon a band of Indians, they opened fire and killed seven. They learned too late that these were the wrong Indians; they were from the northern Cherokee towns, and one of the killed was a Chief's brother.

Though the Franklinites sent a messenger explaining they had nothing to do with this incident, the Chief was not satisfied. He led a party of braves into the Dumplin Creek settlements and burned cabins, killed cattle, stole horses, and returned home with the scalps of 15 innocent settlers. The Chief left a note by one of the bodies which read, "I have now taken satisfaction for my brother and friends who were murdered. I did not wish war, but if the white people want war that is what they will get."[4]

Other groups of Indians continued the massacres. Finally, an army of Franklinites marched

against the northern Indian towns and forced them to sign yet another treaty permitting white settlement below the French Broad river. Franklin set up a land office shortly after this treaty and sold land to the steady stream of immigrants still arriving in east Tennessee. But the Indian wars were by no means over.

FRANKLIN -- A HOUSE DIVIDED

As mentioned, North Carolina's decision to take back the lands it had ceded to Congress created factions in Franklin. One group wanted to continue with efforts to form the new state. In their opinion, the Overmountain people had never seen much advantage in being associated with North Carolina and the taxes they paid were never used for their benefit. Other Overmountain people wanted to rejoin North Carolina, thinking that perhaps their land titles would be more secure under the older, more established state.

These two factions contested bitterly for control of local government. Both the state of Franklin and North Carolina appointed court and other public officials. Several times supporters of Franklin disrupted the North Carolina court, destroyed government documents and beat up North Carolina officials. Likewise, the supporters of North Carolina did the same to Franklin officials. Government in the area was in chaos.

TENNESSEE CALLS TO THE MCKISSACKS

One wonders how much the McKissacks and their neighbors in Caswell County, North Carolina, understood of the government chaos and Indian wars across the mountains. As noticed, the chief land office for North Carolina's 1783 western land sales was in Hillsboro. And in 1785 an anonymous writer had sent a letter from Caswell County to Maryland to advertise the hoped-for inclusion of the Cherokee Indians in the Franklin government.

Whatever they knew of this region (now east Tennessee), one thing the McKissacks were certain of was that their family and needs were growing. This was especially true of the family of John Jr and Jane. They may have had eight or nine children by now. Some, such as their eldest son James, were starting families of their own.

Finding room and opportunity for this growing family was undoubtedly a serious concern for John Jr., Jane and their children. What we think of today as "job opportunities" were extremely limited in post-war North Carolina. Basically, only four courses of action were open to any young man. He could enter a profession by becoming an artisan such as a tailor, tanner, shoemaker, silversmith, or jeweler. As mentioned earlier, however, the McKissack's area of North Carolina was extremely rural at this time, with few towns where such occupations could be practiced. Other options open to the sons were to become lawyers or ministers, but these required long periods of study. The sons could also hire themselves out as labor to established farmers. They could head west and become hunters or trappers. Or they could become farmers. There were not many more "job opportunities" other than these. And the prospects of young women, of course, were limited to finding a man who might be a good husband and provider.

As they matured, the sons and daughters of Jane and John Jr. helped their parents with farm work. While the children were growing, Jane and John had a very busy and populous household. In typical southern style, they may have had a special cabin built "out back" that acted as a

bachelor's quarters for their numerous sons. But the children wouldn't live at home forever, and as John and Jane's sons entered young manhood they looked toward the day when they could start their own families. If they were to become farmers like their father, uncles and grandfather, they would need land.

Children of John and Jane McKissack (+ indicates spouses)

James McKissack	1765 - 1830	?
William McKissack	1770 - 1848	+Mary McConnel?
Duncan McKissack	1770 - 1850	?
Jonathon McKissack	- 1813	+Nancy (Gray?)
Thomas McKissack	1773 - 1836	+Mary Browning 1784 - 1836
Archibald W. McKissack	1774 - 1857	+Lucy Ann Ellis 1782 - 1849
John McKissack	1785 - 1840	+Rachael Simmons
Elizabeth McKissack	1776 -....	+George Breeding
Mary "Polley" McKissack	1778 - 1840	+Samuel Pennington
Nancy McKissack	1787 - 1850...	+Clement Allen 1785 - 1823
Lucy McKissack	1784 -	+John Stewart 1784 -

But the Piedmont area of North Carolina where the McKissacks lived no longer offered cheap lands. It had become well-populated and the old days of big land grants were over. The young McKissacks could have hired themselves out at whatever local jobs were available to raise money to buy their own land, but the accumulation of money was a slow process. Cash money was scarce and there were no banks in which to deposit it.

The future of his children would have weighed heavily upon John Jr.s mind. Though he (like his brothers) was a relatively prosperous farmer, his holdings would not continue to support a large and growing family given the type of agriculture prevalent in the North Carolina Piedmont. He undoubtedly wondered what type of inheritance he would be able to leave his children. Unless he was willing to see his family split up or sink to the level of common day-laborers, they were going to need more land.

Whatever their reasons, John Jr. and Jane's decision to move to east Tennessee could not have been a casual one. There was probably much comfort in living near their extended families. As mentioned, the families of Thomas and William had also moved to Caswell County in the early 1780's, as did their parents John Sr and Rebeccah. The McKissacks were living relatively comfortable lives by the standards of their times, owning land and slaves.

A PARTING OF THE WAYS

Consequently, John Jr. and Jane's move to Franklin, or what later became east Tennessee, in the late 1780's was a significant event. It marked a new phase in the history of John and Rebeccah McKissack's family. From this point forward each of the brothers -- John Jr, William and Thomas -- would see their families' destinies down different roads.

Many of the McKissacks remained in Caswell (later to become Person) County for several generations. A William McKissack appears as sheriff of Person County in 1810.[5] A William McKissack appears in numerous Person County records as a prominent merchant in the 1830s. And a Calvin McKissack from Person County fought for the south and was killed during the Civil War.[6] Though there are apparently no white McKissacks remaining in this region of North Carolina, the black American 1960's Civil Rights leader Floyd McKissick was from this area and built his Soul City here.

Thomas McKissack remained in Person County until around 1809, when he and Lucy moved to middle Tennessee.[7] This move may have been to land Thomas was granted for his Revolutionary War service. He and his wife Lucy died in Giles County, Tennessee, he in 1826, she in 1825.[8] Their son William became a prosperous planter and businessman, remaining for many years in Caswell County. Descendants of their slaves would establish "McKissack & McKissack" -- one of the largest and most successful building and architectural firms in Nashville, Tennessee. One of this family and his wife now writes award-winning history books for children. A chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Tennessee is named for Thomas.[9]

In spite of the long distances between them, it appears the families of John, William, and Thomas kept in touch. This was no more unusual in those times than in ours, even though there were no telephones or quick mail system. There were strong extended family ties, however, to encourage communication. One of John Jr's daughters, Nancy, later married Clement Allen, a member of the Allen family that had lived near the McKissacks for 30 years.[10] As mentioned, the available evidence indicates Jane McKissack was a Hudson by birth. Likewise, Thomas' wife Lucy, in addition to being the daughter of a Hudson, was the granddaughter of an Allen. Several of the McKissack's other Caswell County neighbors would later move to Georgia where their children and the McKissack's children would intermarry.[11]

One of John Jr and Jane's sons, Jonathon, eventually returned to Person County and farmed near his uncles Thomas and William.[12] Jonathon died in Person County, North Carolina, in 1812.[13] By that time, his parents were well-established in Putnam County, Georgia. Nevertheless, the distance did not prevent John Jr. from making a bequest in his will to Jonathon's orphans in North Carolina.

DEATH OF JOHN MCKISSACK SR.

After John Jr. and Jane left for Tennessee, life continued on in much the same way for their kin in Caswell (subsequently Person) County. Since we are following one particular line of the family, our narrative must now take leave of the McKissacks in North Carolina. We cannot go, however, without taking note of John McKissack, Sr.'s death. He would live for about 13 years after his eldest son and namesake took his own family into the mountains of east Tennessee. John Sr.'s will is dated February 1799 and on record in Person County, North Carolina.[14]

While John McKissack Sr. must have been a determined and sometimes hard individual to have prospered in the backcountry, his will is a gentle and simple document. It refers to each of his

sons and his wife Rebeccah as "well beloved." In appointing his son Thomas one of his executors, he calls him a "trusty and well-beloved friend."

At the time of John's death, inheritance laws were significantly different than they are today. A man was head of his household and except for his wife's dower he had wide latitude in the disposal of his property. Rebeccah apparently came from a humble background, as no dower is mentioned in John's will.

John divided the bulk of his estate equally among his sons and left the remainder to Rebeccah for life. Thomas received 320 acres and two slaves Dick and Jeffrey. William received 320 acres and two slaves Essex and Willis. John Jr, living in Georgia by 1799, received two slaves Cate and Simon (a slave named Simon was still owned by John Jr. when he died in 1815). Rebeccah received the slave Nan, who had been owned by the family since at least 1757. Rebeccah also received the remainder of John's estate, which would have included all the items they had accumulated in their lives together. John asked that after Rebeccah's death the remainder of the estate be divided equally by his sons, but said that if they could not agree on how to divide the estate, they should sell everything and divide the money. Unfortunately, we do not know when or where Rebeccah died. Most likely, she lived the last years of her life, as John Sr. did, with or near her sons in Person County.

John and Rebeccah should have felt a sense of accomplishment when they reached old age. It appears they had started life as common people in an undeveloped land. By the end of their lives they had acquired land and property and probably run a successful tobacco farm. They had produced at least four children that we know of, and probably suffered the sorrow of losing other children not reflected in public records. At least one of their four sons had fought and bled to create a new nation. Two of their sons had continued to live near them and produced numerous grandchildren, and perhaps even great-grandchildren before John and Rebeccah's deaths. Life had not been a carefree and easy romp, but overall they had done very well.

INTO THE MOUNTAINS

From the relatively flat North Carolina Piedmont, the family of John Jr. and Jane traveled west through what is today Winston-Salem and then through Statesville. Finally, they arrived at Morgantown, at the foot of the Blue Ridge mountains. Camping in Morgantown, the family looked up at the mountains and wondered what lay over those hills.

Leaving Morgantown, they followed the path along the Catawba River to Old Fort. Then the trail wound up through the mountains and crossed a mountain range at Swannanoa Gap. Here they picked up the trail along the Swannanoa River and followed it to the French Broad river where the city of Asheville, North Carolina, stands today. From there they followed the French Broad river to the town of Newport in what is now Cocke County, Tennessee. Then it was a few more miles to their new lands along the south of English Mountain in Jones Cove.[15]

As they ascended into the mountains, progress became slower. Excess baggage was discarded. Roads turned to broad trails and trails to well-worn footpaths. At this time in history, wagons could not travel the road up into the mountains, so whatever the family brought with it was carried on packhorses. Pots, kettles, axes, farming implements, perhaps a spinning wheel -- the horses were needed to carry all these. Unless someone was ill, they probably walked the entire distance to to the new lands in Jones Cove.

At this time John and Jane probably had eight or nine children and one or two slaves. Consequently, every morning and evening it was necessary to prepare a meal for over 11 people. Food was prepared in boiling kettles or on spits over an open fire, in clearings in the woods. Think, dear reader, the effort that goes into preparing a meal for over 11 people today, and you get some small insight into what the McKissack womenfolk and slaves were doing as a day of travel began and ended. Recall the camping trips you've experienced and you'll gain a hint of understanding as to how the family lived on its journey on foot, over 200 miles of dirt trails, in all kinds of weather, into Tennessee.

Though they were undoubtedly hardy like all pioneers, the McKissacks found east Tennessee a totally new experience. Even John Jr. and Jane had grown up in a time and place that was free of "Indian trouble." Their children may have never even seen an Indian. But the land to which they traveled contained plenty of Indian trouble. Before reaching their new home, the family passed forts, stockades, and burned-out cabins. And in the coming years the McKissacks and their neighbors would come to know several of the nearby forts -- Woods' at Newport and Whitson's near Cosby -- all too well.[16]

The following passage from *The French Broad* by Wilma Dykeman (1955) gives us some idea of John and Jane's journey to and settlement in east Tennessee.

> Over the mountains, through the gaps, down the watersheds they came....No wilderness they found was more isolated than the valley of the French Broad and its tributaries. Because of its barriers against the outside world and the "money" poverty of the people, it came to be called "the land of do without." More accurately, it was the land of "make do." To a large extent it remains so today. From the passage of the first thin trickle of settlers, on through the growing stream before the Civil War, to the most recent phases of development, the people of the French Broad have been, for the most part, thrifty, ingenious, skillful, and imaginative in using what lay close at hand to make many of the necessities and some of the pretties of life.
>
> By any standard, most of the early families were poor. Many a man came into the new country on foot, carrying his clothes on his back, hunting knife and ax at his belt, rifle over one arm or shoulder, and powder, flint and bullets and cook pot and hooks, perhaps, on the other. Some came on horseback, but where there was a family, it was rare that all could ride, although a few necessities were added — on the pack horse — to those above: bedding, maybe, blankets and empty ticks which could be filled with leaves or, later, straw and feathers — a froe, an extra skillet of iron, eating utensils, hoes and plow-points and an auger. Those who came next, in wagons, hauling slowly up the steep mountains, creaking down rutted inclines and over rocky creekbeds, could add still more of the necessities, even seeds and plants, sometimes the tools of a trade, and a spinning wheel.
>
> The first cabins were simply logs notched on top of one another, covered by a roof of boards split with the froe and held in place, since there were no nails, by weight poles laid across their length. A door and one or two openings for windows were cut in the logs. The door and the wooden shutters used at the windows in cold or rain were hung on wooden or leather hinges held by pegs. There was a fireplace,

usually stone chinked with clay, and it served as means of heat and light and cooking.

The fireplace was the heart of the family's life, for in its wide opening swung the crane on which pots of venison or wild turkey, squirrel or rabbit or bear stewed to savory tenderness. It was the only sterilizer, by heat or boiling water, which was at hand in times of childbirth or accident. Against its warmth chilled hands and feet thawed in winter; where there was a cow, the crock of cream sat on the hearth turning to clabber for churning; by its light a man or boy could sharpen tools and whittle utensils of a long cold night, while the woman or girls spun on the wheel that stood ready in the chimney corner. And when the mountain winter had closed in, a person could sit before the roaring logs of hickory or oak, watching them crumble into heaps of clear red coals, listening to the dash of the wind or whisper of snow outside, and think long thoughts about this hard compelling abundant region of hills and river that had become home.

In the far corners of the room from the fireplace, beds were built against the logs. A table was made near the center of the room, pegs for hanging clothes or split-oak baskets were scattered around the walls and rafters, and backless stools and benches served for chairs. Uncomfortable they might be, but there wasn't much time for sitting anyway. The floor remained the hard-packed earth, or if there was time, puncheons were laid. These were logs split, smoothed on the flat side and laid face-up to make a tight, if irregular, protection from damp and cold.

When a family settled on the frontier, and much of the French Broad region remained frontier until a late period, they became their own community. They raised their own food or found it in the forest. Salt was the greatest necessity they imported. Its price, because of the mountains over which it must be hauled, put it in the luxury class. Brought ... by pack horse, it cost ten dollars a bushel in the overmountain region. Later, by wagon, it cost around five dollars, still enough to make the salt gourd one of the best-guarded possessions in the kitchen.

Clothes were as crude and utilitarian as the cabins and simple as the food. The wools was raised at home, sheared, cleaned, carded, spun, dyed and finally sewed into hunting shirts, dresses, socks and coats. The deerskin breeches worn for everyday by most of the men gave birth to a song called "Leather Breeches," and it began:

"Hey! my little boy, who made your breeches?
Daddy cut them out and mammy sewed the stitches."

Sunbonnets were the only beauty aids mountain women allowed themselves; to be white as bolted corn meal was considered the ideal complexion. The everyday processes of eating and staying clothed and well were constant and pressing.

As might be imagined, this rugged living affected the mores and habits of the settlers. The McKissack's neighbors were a tough and independent lot, as illustrated by this passage from *Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*:[17]

The colonists who pushed forward under these circumstances were few in number,

and they were not weaklings. Men who tilled their fields with their rifles beside them were not the impoverished drifters of the back country. They were pioneers in every sense of the word....

Among the earliest settlers in the Tennessee country the percentage of literacy was high. Several documents survive from this period which were signed by the people generally, and less than five per cent had to sign by their marks. These first settlers were the Scotch-Irish and Germans who had but recently left civilization for wilderness. Those who were reared on the border showed the effects of the environment. Isolation in the wilderness resulted in many of gentle birth growing to maturity without education and with no training whatever in the social conventions of the seaboard. Andrew Jackson's wife, Rachel, for instance, was the daughter of a man of considerable prestige, one of the richest and most distinguished of the western Virginians, but she went into the forest when a young girl, and the result was that she was barely literate, and she smoked a pipe on occasion. There were few refining influences in the wilderness during the early years of its occupancy.

Since the challenge of the wilderness was so largely to physical prowess, brawn came to be the most respected of all endowments, and education in time came to be looked upon not only as unnecessary, but as something effete, not quite becoming to men of virility. Wilderness-bred men naturally esteemed most highly those of their fellows who possessed the qualifications of greatest immediate use in the wilderness. In the shadow of the forest he was most useful who was quickest in shouldering the flintlock, most dexterous in wielding the axe, mightiest in a physical encounter. When men of culture and education removed to the frontier, if they wished to secure the friendship, the business, the suffrage of their backwoods neighbors, they were likely in time to conceal their vintage-marks and to pare down their cultural standards until they appeared to be on a level with those of the ignorant, uncouth frontiersmen...

A hardy race were these pioneers... They were ready fighters, and an eye was sometimes gouged out or an ear bitten off in the process of fisticuffs. In the latter event, the unfortunate one would find it necessary to have the fact entered on the court records to protect himself from the suspicion that his ears had been cropped for crime. The frontiersmen loved to shoot and gamble, to swear and to drink. They chewed tobacco and the women smoked pipes.

At the same time, western character had its lighter and more agreeable side. The old-time fiddler has not yet disappeared from the rural districts, but he is a mere shadow of his former self. In the early settlements he was an important figure. The jig and square dance were the principal diversions of men and women, young and old, and the fiddler was in constant demand. No picture of the frontier would be complete without him.

These stalwart backwoodsmen were a blend of much that was fine and much that was coarse. They were as a rule hospitable, generous, honest, and reasonably courageous, though they were not always the intrepid Indian fighters that one is accustomed to imagine them. They liked to "frolick" more than they liked to work,

and their tempers were quite undisciplined. They were capable of much cruelty and much kindness, and were inclined to take the cash and let the credit go.

CONFUSION AND BLOODY WAR

When we last looked at the aspiring state of Franklin, it had concluded another treaty (the Coyatee Treaty) with the Chiefs of the Overhill Cherokee in 1786. For a time, this brought peace to east Tennessee. But the peace was only between Indians and whites. Among the whites, there continued a struggle as to whether the state of Franklin would continue to exist. This struggle between Franklinites and those who wanted to return to government by North Carolina continued throughout 1787. "Court raids started again... Unarmed groups from each government seemed to make a game of confiscating the records of the other side. Fist fights, brawls and an air of comedy were part of these escapades. Little malice or hostile feelings were demonstrated as neighbors, separated by their state loyalty, seemed to retain their friendship with each other."[18]

The Franklinite faction was especially strong in the McKissack's area south of the French Broad. The reason for this was that the government of North Carolina appeared to have acquiesced in the Federal Government's treaty of Hopewell, which left all the land south of the French Broad in Indian hands. The state of Franklin, on the other hand, was claiming these lands by virtue of its treaties with the Cherokee. The people south of the French Broad quite naturally favored whatever government supported their right to live on their lands [19]

The leaders of the two factions -- the Franklinites and those who wanted to rejoin North Carolina -- were John Sevier and John Tipton, respectively. The struggle between them and their supporters is well described in John Haywood's *The Political and Civil History of the State of Tennessee* [20]:

> Here was presented the strange spectacle of two empires exercised at one and the same time, over one and the same people. County courts were held in the same counties under both governments; the militia was called out by officers appointed by both; laws were passed by both Assemblies and taxes were laid by the authority of both States. The differences in opinion in the State of Franklin between those who adhered to the government of the North Carolina and those who were friends to the new government became more acrimonious every day. Every fresh provocation on the one side was surpassed in the way of retaliation by still greater provocation on the other. The judges commissioned by the State of Franklin held superior courts twice in each year, in Jonesborough. Colonel Tipton openly refused obedience to the new government. There arose a deadly hatred between him and Sevier, and each endeavored by all means in his power to strengthen his party against the other. Tipton held courts under the authority of North Carolina, ten miles above Jonesborough, which were conducted by her officers and agreeable to her laws. Courts were also held at Jonesborough in the same country under the authority of the State of Franklin.
>
> As the process of these courts frequently required the sheriff to pass within the jurisdiction of each other to execute it, an encounter was sure to take place, hence it became necessary to appoint the stoutest men in the county to the office of

> sheriff... Whilst a county court was sitting at Jonesborough in this year, for the county of Washington, Colonel John Tipton with a party of men entered the court house, took away the papers from the clerk and turned the justices out of doors. Not long after, Sevier's party came to a house where a county court was sitting for the county of Washington, under the authority of North Carolina, and took away the clerk's papers and turned the court out of doors.
>
> The like acts were several times repeated during the existence of the Franklin government ... In these removals, many valuable papers were lost, and at later periods, for want of them, some estates of great value were lost...
>
> The members of the two factions became excessively incensed against each other, and at public meetings made frequent exhibitions of their strength and prowess in boxing matches... Shortly after the election of Sevier as governor of Franklin, under the permanent Constitution, he and Tipton met in Jonesborough, where as usual a violent verbal altercation was maintained between them for some time, when Sevier, no longer able to bear the provocations which were given him, struck Tipton with a cane. Instantly the latter began to annoy him with his hands clenched. Each exchanged blows for some time in the same way with great violence and in a convulsion of rage. Those who happened to be present interfered and parted them before victory had been declared for either.

As this confused state of affairs continued, several incidents occurred which precipitated a general Indian uprising. An Indian named Slim Tom came to the cabin of the John Kirk family and asked for food. As the family knew Slim Tom and had befriended him on many occasions, the food was freely given. Slim Tom, however, was secretly examining the Kirk cabin's defenses. After eating, he departed and met with a band of warriors. They returned to the cabin, killed 11 members of the family, and took their scalps.

Around the same time, Indians boarded a boat on the Tennessee River under a false truce and massacred a group of settlers. Whites retaliated, sometimes attacking the wrong Indians, and a general Indian uprising ensued. Attacks on cabins and settlements were frequent throughout the McKissacks' area. One tough pioneer who had lived through much bloodshed in east Tennessee called 1788 the bloodiest, hottest and hardest of all his years of Indian fighting.[21] John and Jane McKissack had several young children, including babies aged three (John III) and one (Nancy) to worry about at this time. [22]

The fighting and devastation was so severe, in fact, that most pioneers had to abandon their isolated cabins and live in forts. There were 39 of these "forts," mostly stout blockhouses or small encampments surrounded by log palisades, scattered throughout east Tennessee.[23] Many families lived in these forts throughout 1788 and 1789. [24]

The McKissacks lived in either Wood's fort, located at present day Newport or Whitson's fort near Cosby. This must have been a terrible ordeal. The family was large, probably three or four adults and 10 or 11 children by now, including the babies.[25] Feeding, clothing and accommodating everyone would have been a strain. Accounts from this period describe how groups of men would leave the forts to hunt for food, risking Indian attack. They would plow fields with their rifles nearby and loaded. The women would tend gardens outside the fort's walls, alert for Indians and ready to run inside at their arrival. And in winter, of course, there was no garden to tend, only the

dirty and cramped inside of a cold fort.

BITTER YEARS

The state of warfare between Indians and whites continued for many years after 1788. No isolated cabin was safe. Any meeting with Indians was fraught with danger. One historian has estimated that one of every three settlers paid with his life for daring to come to Tennessee.[26]

The Indian wars combined with other difficulties ended the State of Franklin. The people gave up their attempt to form a new state and gradually accepted North Carolinian rule. In 1790, North Carolina once again ceded its western territory to Congress.

Though Congress made several treaties with the Indians along the western American frontier, these did not bring peace. Furthermore, Congress refused to honor the land titles of the settlers below the French Broad where the McKissacks had settled. In response to these settler's pleas for protection, the Federal government merely told them to move.[27] We have no written record of the McKissack's activities at this time.[28] It may well be, however, that the Federal Government's refusal to protect their land titles was the last straw for them. They began to look elsewhere for the "land of opportunity" they were seeking when they left Caswell County, North Carolina.

CHAPTER IX
A MOVE TO WARMER CLIMES — HANCOCK COUNTY, GEORGIA

To the south of Tennessee was a warmer, flatter country -- the developing state of Georgia. At some point, the McKissacks heard about these lands and decided to move there. Once again, they loaded their possessions onto pack animals and made a long trek to new lands. Just as they did a few years before, they now spent weeks walking rough trails, wading streams, enduring the occasional downpour, camping, and slowly making their way through the rough country that was the southern frontier in the late 18th century.

As with their other moves, we can only guess at the reason John Jr, Jane and their family moved to Georgia. The family may have decided to move in 1789 while couped up in a fort because of marauding Indians. They may have waited until the United States government acquired east Tennessee and refused to honor their land titles or protect them from Indian attack. And it's possible that they had not really cared for Tennessee from the beginning. John, Jane, and several of their children had grown up in the rolling Piedmont of North Carolina where the land was level and the winters were mild. The cold, rugged mountains and dark hollows of east Tennessee may not have "suited" them.

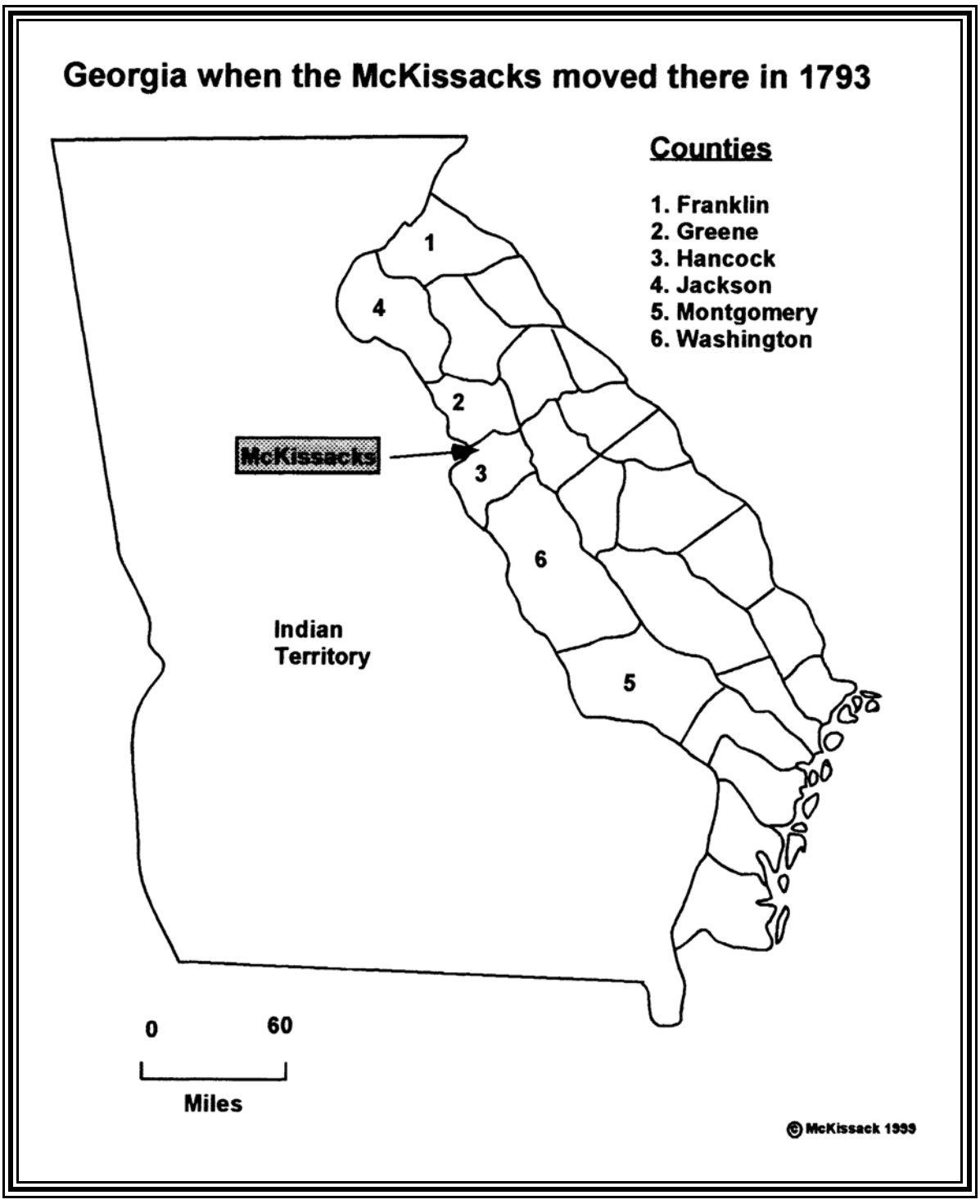
CHEAP AND PLENTIFUL LANDS

It's also possible that they moved to Georgia simply to take advantage of cheap, new and better farming land for their family. There were numerous opportunities. Someone in the family, for instance, may have been granted land by Georgia if they were veterans of the American Revolution. As the book *The Creation of Modern Georgia* (Bartley, 1983) notes: "During the war the [Georgia] government offered a bewildering array of veterans' bonuses. Desperate for recruits -- and growing more desperate as the war progressed -- the revolutionary government offered land bounties to almost anyone who might aid the Georgia cause. Georgia veterans, soldiers from other states who served in Georgia, British soldiers who deserted to the patriots, and others were eligible for bounties."

After the war, the Georgia government granted land to additional veterans. It promised two hundred acres, plus 50 additional acres for each family member, to any American soldier who could produce evidence that he had served not just for Georgia, but for any state. Under these provisions, 3 million acres were given to9,000 veterans. No documents have been located showing any of the McKissacks as recipients of such grants. Some of their future in-laws, however, as well as many of their former neighbors in North Carolina, came to Georgia as veterans of the Revolutionary War. Members of the Allen, Browning, and Hudson families all moved to east Georgia. Perhaps they told the McKissacks of the opportunities in Georgia.

HANCOCK COUNTY, GEORGIA

By 1792, John and his eldest son James appear in the tax rolls of Hancock County, Georgia.[29] John is listed as owning 150 acres on Logdam Creek, while James is shown owning 50 acres on the



same watercourse (see map). It was a year of considerable travel as Archie and John are also mentioned in 1792 Court Minutes in Sumner County, Tennessee.

In addition, Thomas and Jonathan were in Hancock County by 1799,[30] though Jonathon apparently returned to North Carolina briefly before the family moved to Georgia.[31] No land

records, however, exist for Thomas and Jonathan. They, along with Archibald, John III, Polly, Nancy and Lucy were probably living on and helping to farm their parents' land. Duncan apparently remained in Tennessee until at least 1794.[32] James McKissack is listed as a buyer at an estate sale in Hancock County in April of 1801.[33]

Hancock County was described as "... unoccupied and admirably suited for frontier farming. The rolling hills of red aluminuous soil above the fall line, covered with oak and hickory, were especially attractive to the new frontiersmen for crops of corn, wheat and tobacco they were accustomed to grow. The region was well watered and the vast canebrakes of the bottom lands offered unfailing pasturage for livestock."[34]

INDIAN TROUBLES CONTINUE

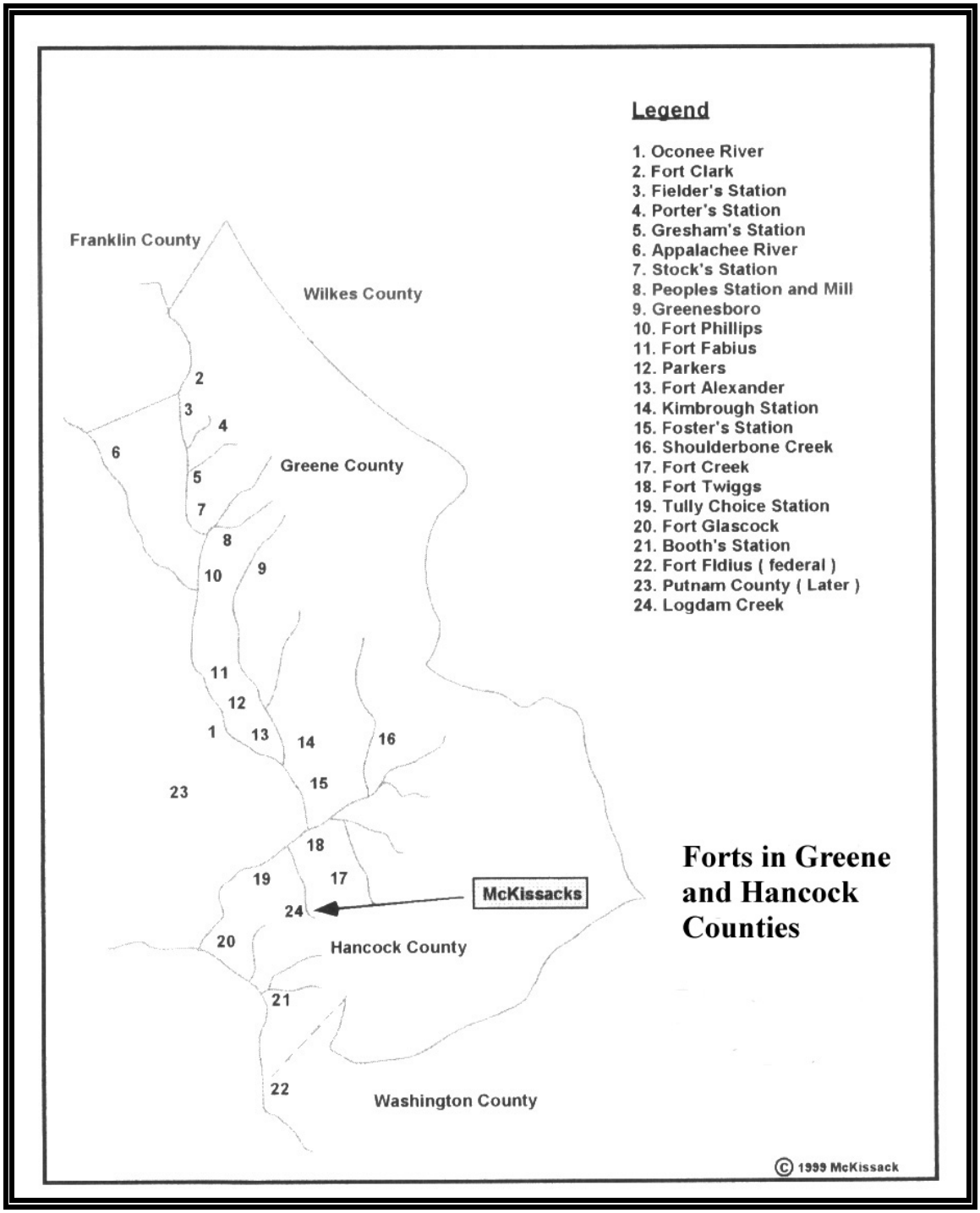
The land may have been productive, but it was nevertheless troubled. Hancock County was one of several that bordered Indian lands. Some Indians would have said Hancock County *was* Indian land. In 1784, whites thought they had negotiated a treaty which allowed whites to settle on these lands. Some Indians felt otherwise. The story was similar to what had happened elsewhere: treaties were signed by some chiefs but not others, undermining their validity. Renegade groups of whites and Indians committed acts which stirred up hatred not just for the perpetrators, but for every member of the other race.

A war had erupted when the government of Georgia opened Hancock County and other lands for settlement by whites. While the McKissacks were living in forts in Tennessee, settlers in east Georgia were undergoing similar trials. A few years before the McKissacks' arrival in Hancock County, the nearby town of Greensboro was burned by Indians and many settlers killed. In 1787 alone, 89 houses were burned; 82 people were killed and 29 wounded; 141 people taken prisoner; and 643 horses, 984 cattle and 387 hogs were stolen or destroyed.

Over the next few years, there were several attempts between the Indians and whites to renegotiate a peace treaty for east Georgia. For numerous reasons, no lasting agreement was reached. A state of near-warfare continued to plague the area where the two peoples bordered. Indian braves frequently raided, crossing the Oconee river to steal horses and property, burn homes, and murder and rape whites. Many white Georgians, knowing the Indian land was good farm land, continuously pressured the Georgia government to force the Indians off. Some whites trespassed and crossed the river and "squatted" on Indian land, attempting to seize by possession what they could not acquire by treaty. It was into this situation that the McKissacks moved in 1792.

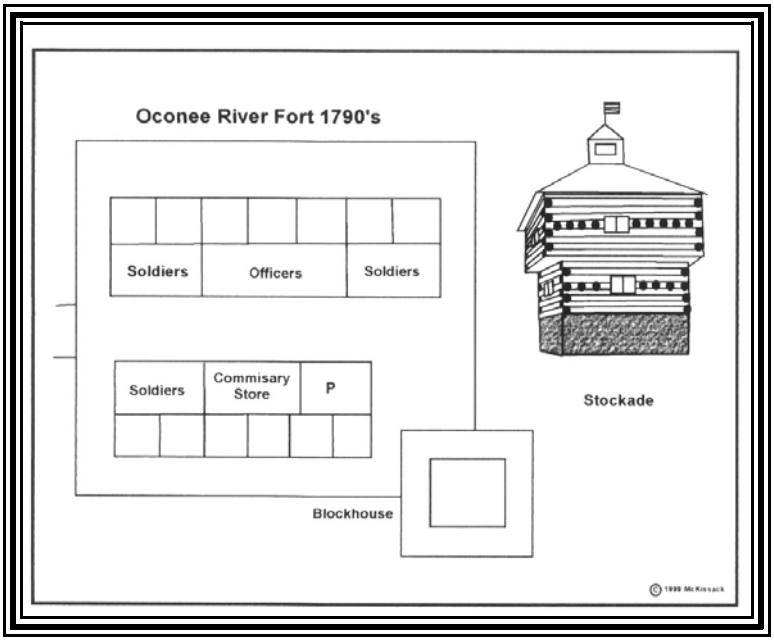
The year 1793 gave promise of continuing troubles. In early March a band of Indians attacked a trader's store, killing the clerk and looting the establishment. A few days later, a war party killed four innocent travelers that they chanced to meet on a trail. Some whites likewise disturbed the peace. A traveler in the area noted later in March that "...white settlers had driven great gangs of cattle to the western side of the Oconee [Indian lands] for a distance of forty miles up the river. He told of parties of white men who hunted by night 'with fire' and by day with rifles, 'and destroyed the game so bad that they (the Indians) can hardly find a turkey or deer to kill.' He also wrote that hunters with great packs of hounds were destroying bears wholesale."[35]

By May, a militia officer reported to his superior that settlers living near the river crossing at Cedar Shoals, just south of the McKissacks' lands, were feeling beleaguered. "Every man considers


Legend
1. Oconee River
2. Fort Clark
3. Fielder's Station
4. Porter's Station
5. Gresham's Station
6. Appalachee River
7. Stock's Station
8. Peoples Station and Mill
9. Greenesboro
10. Fort Phillips
11. Fort Fabius
12. Parkers
13. Fort Alexander
14. Kimbrough Station
15. Foster's Station
16. Shoulderbone Creek
17. Fort Creek
18. Fort Twiggs
19. Tully Choice Station
20. Fort Glascock
21. Booth's Station
22. Fort Fldius (federal)
23. Putnam County (Later)
24. Logdam Creek
Franklin County
Wilkes County
Greene County
Hancock County
Washington County
McKissacks
Forts in Greene and Hancock Counties
© 1999 McKissack

his family in danger...Should the Indians cross the river to do mischief, the officers cannot possibly urge out men to guard the middle grounds... Cedar Shoals is ... a principle crossing place of the Indians. Should you have it in your power to order some men out of the Second Battalion ... it must answer a very valuable purpose ... as without some assistance the whole of them [the settlers] will move away in the course of four or five days..." [36]

The McKissacks were undoubtedly affected by these hostilities. Not only did Hancock county border Indian territory along the Oconee River, but the McKissacks' lands fell in an area located between two of the most used Indian trails in east Georgia.[37] The federal and state governments had found it necessary to build and garrison forts to guard these river crossings. Two settlers near the McKissacks', Tully Choice and John Comer, had also erected personal stockades for protection from Indian attacks.[38] While John and James McKissack are listed in Captain Tulley Choice's tax district in 1792, the tax digests also show that their land adjoined that of John Comer, so it seems likely they sought refuge in Comer's stockade when necessary.



In 1798, when the whites and Indians were negotiating a peace and settling accounts between themselves, John McKissack submitted a claim that Indians had stolen his horse. The horse was valued at forty-two dollars, and was taken in Hancock County, Georgia, in 1793.[39] Another McKissack, whose first name wasn't listed, claimed that in Hancock County in 1794 the Indians stole from him "1 gun, 1 shot pouch, 1 saddle, and 2 bridles," all valued at $166.68. And James McKesick and his neighbor John Comer (owner of the local fort) signed an affidavit in Hancock County dated September 17, 1798, stating that in 1793 they witnessed a theft by Indians of another man's horse.[40]

MILITIA PROTECTION

The McKissack men would have been part of the militia, and undoubtedly involved in defending their own homes. The public records do not indicate that they actively carried the fight to the Indians. Several of their future in-laws, however, were leaders in the militia efforts to combat the Indians. Colonel William Melton and Joshua Browning were two such leaders. Melton, who commanded the militia regiment from Greene County, was married to Lucy Allen, a cousin of Clement Allen, who became Nancy McKissack's husband. Likewise, Clement Allen's brother,

Josiah, became the brother-in-law of Nancy's brother Thomas. Joshua Browning, who served as a "spy," or scout in Melton's miltia regiment, became Thomas McKissack and Josiah Allen's father-in-law.[41] Similarly, Captain Ferdinand Phinzy, commander of a troop of light dragoons from Wilkes County, was related by marriage to John Stewart, who married Lucy McKissack.[42] John Stewart's father, William, served in the militia dragoons under Phinzy.[43] All of these men were also veterans of the American Revolution and active members of the frontier militia in east Georgia. The struggle against the Indians was obviously one of the memories that would bind the extended McKissack family together for many years.

Throughout 1793, the Georgia frontier along the Oconee River was disturbed with further violent encounters between whites and Indians. During this period, Colonel William Melton wrote the following entries in his Muster and Pay Roll book: "May 2 - May; South of the Oconee with a troop of Cavalry in pursuit of Invaders and Indians. May 11 - May 17; On the frontiers viewing the forts. May 21 - May 25; On the Appalatchee with a Detachment of Cavalry. June 1 - June 15; On an expedition with General Twiggs to the Oakmulgee. June 20 - June 24; On the frontier. July 5 - July 9; On the Appalatchee with a Detachment of Dragoons. August 4 - August 7; On the frontier. August 25 to August 30; On a scout over the Oakmulgee on pursuit of Indians having stole horses. September 12 to October 12; On the frontiers and to the Creek Nation."[44]

Colonel Melton's last entry marked the first time the Georgians had carried the fight to the Indian's towns across the Oconee river. It was planned in response to an Indian horse-stealing raid. About 200 mounted men crossed the Oconee River and followed the trail of the Indian raiding party. This led them into west Georgia, deep in the heart of Indian territory. Tracking the Indians to the Indian town of Little Oakfuskee on the Flint River, the whites attacked and stormed the town.

ELIJAH CLARKE'S "TRANS-OCONEE REPUBLIC"

The violence continued throughout 1793 and into the next year. Agents of the federal government continued to negotiate with the Indians, seeking a peace. Many of the local Georgian settlers felt that negotiations were useless. Others cared nothing for a fair treaty with the Indians, but wanted to take their lands in any way possible. Most felt that the federal government was just making things worse. Many Indians continued raids, making a treaty impossible.

It was about this time that there occurred a struggle to win control of the land that was reminiscent of what had happened with the state of Franklin in east Tennessee. This involved a man named Elijah Clarke. Clarke was a Revolutionary War hero who had been in command of the Georgia militia. In 1794, he led a group of about 300 men across the Oconee river and into Indian territory. Claiming land for 120 miles along the Oconee, Clarke and his men set up their own state, which they called the "Trans-Oconee Republic." He and his men constructed forts throughout their "republic" and offered free land to anyone who would join them. Clarke's men were so well-drilled and organized that the Indians left them alone. Likewise, the government officials of Georgia did not interfere, seeing his republic as a buffer with the Indians. Some white settlers moved across the Oconee to join Clarke. Others complained to authorities that Clarke's men whipped and even shot those who refused to support them.[45] It appeared that the Trans-Oconee Republic might become permanent.

One wonders what the McKissacks thought of this enterprise. They obviously knew about it, since they were living directly across the river from Clarke's new state. They probably viewed

Clarke's activities with skepticism because of their memories of the state of Franklin. They had already watched one group of men fail at setting up their own state outside the established political structure.

Regardless of local attitudes, Clarke's action was in violation of federal treaties with the Indians. President George Washington issued orders for Clarke's arrest and trial. Washington's government also forced Georgia's governor to call out the militia to remove Clarke's followers from the land. This was done, and the homes and forts that Clarke and his followers had constructed were burned. Colonel William Melton, mentioned above as one of the McKissack's in-laws, was one of the state officers who ordered Clark to abandon his enterprise and was responsible for burning the forts and homes.[46]

AN UNEASY PEACE

The Clarke story illustrates just how strong the land hunger was among many whites. While the federal government tried to enforce treaties with the Indians, some Georgians wanted more land. In addition, the raids of renegade Indians undermined whatever sympathy existed for them in the white community. This situation was virtually impossible for the authorities to control.

After Clarke's republic was dismantled, the violence between Indians and whites lessened considerably. It did not, however, disappear altogether. Thomas Stocks, later wrote how, as a boy during this time, he had accompanied his mother as she rode on horseback to church in Greene County: "I walked by the side of the horse with my gun on my shoulder, and kept my eyes open for lurking Indians; and the law required every man and boy, who attended church, to carry his gun, and during church services, four to six armed men stood guard around the church."[47]

CHAPTER X
WILLIAM MCKISSACK AND THE PINE BARREN LAND FRAUDS

One of the most interesting stories about some McKissacks in Georgia concerns how one of John and Jane's sons -- William -- may have benefitted from Georgia's version of the type of "land grab" that occurred earlier in east Tennessee. This occurred in Montgomery County, Georgia, which is south of Hancock County and which also borders the Oconee River. As described in *A History of Georgia* (Coleman, 1977, p.106):

> The first spectacular land fraud was the pine barrens scandal during the early 1790s. In newly created Montgomery County there were numerous fictitious "surveys" of land. Pine barrens were described as oak and hickory land with nonexistent streams and other natural boundaries. These descriptions of good agricultural land were made to be sold to out-of-state speculators. Governor George Mathews in 1794-1795 signed grants for several hundred thousand acres per grantee. One person received one and a half million acres out of thirteen million acres so granted. There were similar grants in at least six other counties, so that by 1796 three times as much land had been "granted" as there was in the existing counties. There is no record of how much of this land was later sold, but it was part of the speculative fever then gripping the country.

The land fraud described above was perpetrated at the “grass roots” level by the local officials -- the familiar “courthouse ring” -- of the county. The first sheriff of Montgomery County was named Mack McKissack.[48] It’s not clear where Mack McKissack came from or whether he was related to John McKissack’s family.[49] We do know, however, that while Mack was sheriff, a William McKissack was granted a total of 245,000 acres in Montgomery County, Georgia.[50] The deeds state that he was granted the land "in lieu of an old warrant." William later sold at least 114,000 acres of this land.[51] As in many other cases, the land was probably then sold to a resident of Pennsylvania, who was so far away from Georgia that they had no knowledge of the fraud they were falling prey to. (The man who purchased the land from William -- James Jordan -- later sold land to a resident of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.[52])

Though there is conflicting evidence, this William McKissack could have been John Jr and Jane’s son. Events in the life of John Jr’s son William indicate it was not unusual for him to make long trips or live away from the rest of the family. While the rest of John Jr. and Jane’s family moved to Georgia permanently (except for Jonathon), William lived most of his life and died in Tennessee. According to research done by some of his descendants, he also took at least one long hunting trip from Tennessee to Missouri. So it would not have been out of character for him to be in Montgomery County, Georgia for a few years and then return to Tennessee.[53] It is possible that he was in Georgia with the family and found his opportunities best in Montgomery County. William is mentioned in John Jr's will 20 years later, and he was apparently living in east Tennessee at that time.

On the other hand, the William McKissack who obtained the land grants could have been an entirely different individual than John and Jane's son. For one thing, we know that a William

McKissack who lived in Montgomery County was engaged, and possibly killed, in a fight with a group of Indians in September of 1795. The Augusta Chronicle & Gazette of November 7, 1795 states:

> INDIAN TROUBLES. An account of troubles with the Indians was given in the form of affidavit of Daniel Currie under date of September 14, 1795; he said he was a workman at Captain Benjamin Harrison's boat yard in Montgomery County, and was so engaged when a party of five armed Indians came there and cursed Mr. Vessells, another workman, and beast up the affiant (Currie) who escaped, and while so fleeing met with Captain Harrison, Levi Glass and William McKissack and they with Mr. Vessels returned and killed the five Indians. This was on September 14, 1795. Benjaimin Harrison in his affidavit also published, stated that on the same day as above trouble the Indians had gone in his house and demanded rum which he told them he had none of, and they called him a liar and he ordered them off his property. This was verified by affidavit of James Vessel. In another affidavit made by David Blackshear, Captain Edward Blackshear and Benjamin Harrison dated October 8, 1795, in which they testify that on the preceding Sunday morning when at the house of said Harrison they saw a painted Indian there; and a party then searched for those suspected of being with him and found them a few miles up the river, there being eight Indians there. They attacked the Indians and killed seven of them but lost one of their own number; William McKissack and five others were wounded, one of whom, Josiah Sparks has since died.

This newspaper article does not make it clear that William McKissack was killed in the skirmish with the Indians. Neither do most of the affidavits on which the article is based (the affidavits appear in the same issue of the newspaper). An affidavit signed by the local Justice of the Peace, however, does say "William McKissack killed dead on the ground." This would seem conclusive, but there is other evidence that William McKissack survived the fight and was also the son of John and Jane McKissack. Perhaps this question will be put to rest one day.[54]

The fight with the Indians is also interesting in the way it highlights the struggles between some Indians and whites. While the affidavits of the whites reflect that they acted in self-defense, the men were actually indicted for killing the five Indians with knives and axes. Their leader was Captain Benjamin Harrison, a prominent figure on the frontier and in the militia. In a deposition given shortly after the above-described fight, one settler swore that he had overheard Harrison say "that there Should Never be apeace with the Indians whilst his nam was Ben Harrison for he was able to raise men enough to kill half the Indians that might cum to aney Treaty."[55]

CHAPTER XI
THE PEACEFUL SIDE OF GEORGIA LIFE — RELIGION, FARMING AND MARRIAGES

GREENE COUNTY

Sometime between 1799 and 1805, John and Jane McKissack moved from Hancock County to nearby Greene County (see map). Thomas, Duncan, and Archibald were also residing in Greene County at this time, probably living on and working their parent's land.[56] Like Hancock, Greene County bordered the Oconee River and Indian territory. In 1802, the disputed lands between the Oconee and Appalachee Rivers (called "The Fork") were added to Greene, and this is where the McKissack family settled.[57]

DAILY LIFE

About ten years passed from the time John McKissack purchased land along Logdam Creek in Hancock County to his and Jane's move to land in "The Fork" in Greene County. Some of the above accounts make it seem like the family did nothing but worry about Indians during that entire period. Life went on, however, just as it does in modern times. It might help the reader to ponder some of the violence and crime experienced by Americans living in cities today. Many awful things happen, but "life goes on." People build lives, get married, have children. One original settler and community leader in frontier Georgia summarized the early period this way:

> I venture and take the liberty of endeavoring to throw in, my mite of information with regard to the settlement of some parts of the frontiers of Georgia: from the year 1785, up to 1795...At first designated period, the inhabitants of the frontiers of Georgia were very thinly settled, even the Oak and hickory lands, presented vast tracts, without one spot of cultivated land; such, for instance was the fork, between the Okony and Apalachy rivers. Sometime, the Cherokee, but invariably the Creek Indians, used to make it their sport, every spring and summer to carry off stock and work animals, to burn the housing and fencing of farms, and to massacre some of the inhabitants. Part of these last would then break up, and fold themselves, on the adjacent and more populous parts of the State. The officers, high in command of the militia, would then beat for volunteers, sally forth and scour the wilderness, whilst the frontier people who had stood their ground, and those who then returned, did repair old forts or build new ones, and then tended their respective fields in companies, as should have been done at first, which measures served to protect, at least, the aged and the women and children: But at the dawn of every spring, some specious reasons were always alledged, why the Indians would not be hostile, that year, which reasons always proved fallacious, with regards to some parts of the frontiers, and sometime for its whole extent.[58]

FARMING

Most of the settlers who moved into east Georgia grew tobacco as their cash crop. The McKissacks undoubtedly did the same. The crop became so plentiful, and the maintenance of its quality was so important, that the Georgia Legislature authorized tobacco inspection stations along the Oconee River. Growers took their hogsheads of tobacco to the stations to have them weighed and checked for quality. The law stated that if the owner of an inspection station or any of his employees were caught falsifying the weight or descriptions on a hogshead of tobacco that the penalty was "to be hanged by the neck until dead, and be denied the benefit of clergy."

Most of the settlers along the Oconee River also raised livestock. Just as in North Carolina, the stock grazed in the unfenced fields, canebrakes, meadows and woodlands. Consequently, each settler branded and marked his livestock in order to distinguish them from his neighbors'. These brands and marks, essentially "trademarks," were registered at the county courthouse.

RELIGION

Several Baptist churches were established in Hancock County around the time the McKissacks moved there.[59] Fort Creek Baptist was established near Logdam Creek in 1790. Shoulderbone Baptist was established in 1791 and Island Creek Baptist in 1794. Among the members of Island Creek Baptist was Tully Choice, Captain of the McKissacks' militia district and owner of a local stockade.[60]

The available evidence, however, indicates the McKissacks were probably Methodists. According to some accounts, east Georgia was the cradle of Methodism in that state. Around 1787 in Greene County, a man named John Bush is said to have become a zealous convert to Methodism after he heard sermons by Methodist preachers. He built a large brush arbor near his house and invited his neighbors to come hear the preaching the next summer. They came and listened. This type of gathering became enormously popular and it grew into the annual revival or "camp meeting."

The first organized "camp meeting" was supposedly held in 1802 near Shoulderbone Creek, not far from the McKissack farms on Logdam Creek. Attendance was estimated at between 4,500 and 5,000 people, a huge amount of people for that time and place. One hundred seventy-six tents were pitched and 17 preachers participated.

Camp meetings were held after crops were planted, so work could be halted. People came from miles away and spent an entire week of worship, singing, socializing and fellowship. Emotional excess was common at these meetings. When a person was converted, they sometimes shouted or wept for joy. One historian wrote of camp meetings in Georgia:

> In October [1802] seven thousand people attended a meeting at Rehoboth Chapel in Warren County. Twenty-six preachers, eighteen of them Methodist, harangued the crowd. In November, at a Green County camp meeting, a large crowd stood through a rainstorm to hear evangelical harangues. Several large meetings were held in 1802 and 1803. 'Old stubborn sinners,' said Reverend Moses Black, 'are turning to the Lord.' In early 1803 Thomas Grant's family camped five days at a nearby gathering, but unsated, they looked forward to attending another meeting that would be 'the greatest one ever in the State.'

> The camp meeting message was simple -- Christ died for all people, and everyone who repented and believed would be saved. Preachers depicted the heavenly serenity awaiting believers and the eternal torments and nonbelievers would suffer. During sermons, additional preachers waded into the crowds and urged listeners to avow Christ. Those hearers most affected by the proceedings made their way to an area in front of the preaching stand called the 'mourners' bench.' Mourners had been convicted (convinced they were dreadful sinners) but had yet to sense forgiveness. Preachers paid particular attention to mourners, urging them to push on toward conversion. Some responded, shouting in delight when they felt the weight of sin lifted from their shoulders.
>
> Early Georgia camp meetings were normally held during quarterly conferences. Campers typically gathered on a Thursday night with opening services held by torchlight. For the next three days, campers awoke at the sound of a horn 6 a.m. After breakfast a succession of services began. Preaching was held at 8 a.m., 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 8 p.m., or nightfall. the best and most experienced ministers preached at late morning and evening services when the largest crowds attended. The biggest crowd came at 11 Sunday morning when noncampers from the neighborhood attended Sabbath-day services.[61]

It is not known whether the McKissacks attended any of these camp meetings or were otherwise religiously active. (The authors of this narrative have not examined church records for the relevant times or institutions). We do know, however, that several of John and Jane's sons gave their own sons the name of John Wesley McKissack (see Part II of this book). This is significant because John Wesley was the founder of Methodism. And perhaps its important to note that when John Sr. died in 1815, his estate contained a hymn book.

Likewise, John and Jane's son Archibald would marry a woman -- Lucy Ellis -- who was devoted to the Methodist faith. Archie and Lucy would name a son John Wesley McKissack, and he in turn would marry a woman -- Eliza Jane Shanks -- whose father and brothers were Methodist ministers. Another of Archie and Lucy's sons, Radford Ellis, would contribute to the building of the first Methodist meeting house in Columbia, Henry County, Alabama, and name a son after Methodist Bishop Andrew. Several other McKissack men and relations were also founders of the Columbia, Alabama, church. And one of Archie and Lucy's daughters married a Methodist minister.

If they were active in the Methodist religion in Georgia, this might have reflected the McKissacks' background as plain country folk. One writer concluded:

> Methodism... was weak at the top of Georgia's class system. Many educated southerners remained amused or appalled by Methodists and camp meetings. Planters and city-dwellers often ridiculed Methodist emotionalism as designed for the weak-minded.
>
> Early Georgia Methodism thrived among unlettered up-country planters and frontiersmen, not among a well-established planter gentry. Cotton production had begun to dominate Georgia, especially in older eastern countries, and planters, though often plain and unlearned, were becoming increasingly wealthy. Still, early nineteenth-century Georgia, especially in the up-country, lacked a well-established,

educated elite. Some Methodists, such as Thomas Grant and Josiah Flournoy, had become wealthy, but before the 1820s few Methodists, lay or clerical, were well-educated. Only in 1820 did the first Methodists academy open Georgia, and even Sabbath schools were rare. Georgia's few towns, such as Washington, Eatonton, and Greensboro, where educated professionals often lacked any churches until the 1820s. Lovick Pierce preached in the courthouse because Greensboro had no church. As historian Lacy K. Ford argues, growing evangelical strength helped turn up-country south Carolina from peripheral backwater to a settled civilization in the first decades of the new century. In contrast, much of Georgia was still frontier in 1820. Most settlers, even planters, subsisted on plain fare, lived in log cabins, and set small store by high cultures.

While Georgia Methodism was deeply affected by its plain-folk setting, its evangelical ethos had a limited impact even in the up-country. Georgia was rife with practices that evangelicals deplored. Convivial drinking was almost universal, while gambling, dancing, and dueling were common. Cocksure duelists demanded satisfaction for fancied slights, while plainer men engaged in eye-gouging fights and blood sports. Evangelicalism provided a distinct contrast to this violent honor ethic, as camp meeting Christians, to show their piety, publicly humiliated themselves before God and man. Wesleyans disapproved of their society's violence and disorder. But in the 1820s, still composing under 3 percent of Georgia's population, they lacked the influence to transform their society. [62]

MARRIAGES -- THE GROWING FAMILY

As the family moved from North Carolina to Tennessee and then to Georgia, John and Jane's children found their spouses along the way. James, William, Duncan and Elizabeth were probably married before the family left Tennessee.[63] Nancy married Clement Allen by 1803 (she would have been 16 years old).[64] Archibald married Lucy Ellis in Clarke County, Georgia, in March of 1802.[65] Thomas married Mary Browning sometime before 1807.[66] Polly and Lucy most likely married in east Georgia in the early 1800's, also.[67]

It would be wonderful to find a diary that describes some of these weddings. A wedding was a welcomed way to alleviate the tedious and lonely life of the farm; a wedding was a great opportunity for everyone to "cut loose." There is no way of knowing what the McKissack weddings were like. It is possible they were relatively staid, sober occasions. Given that they were American pioneers, however, there is also a good chance that the McKissack weddings had some similarities with one described by a writer who lived in the Virginia back country at the turn of the 18th century. As noted in *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, (Fischer, 1989, p.671):

> A wedding in the back-settlements was apt to be a wild affair. On the appointed day, the friends of the groom would set out for the wedding in a single party, mounted and heavily armed. They would stop at cabins along the way to fire a volley and pass around the whiskey bottle, then gallop on to the next. Their progress was playfully opposed by the bride's friends, also heavily armed, who felled trees along the road, created entanglements of grape vines and branches to block the passage of the

groomsmen.

Sometimes an ambuscade was formed by the way side, and unexpected discharge of several guns took place, so as to cover the wedding company with smoke. Let the reader imagine the scene which followed this discharge, the sudden spring of the horses, the shriek of the girls, and the chivalric bustle of their partners to save them from falling. Sometimes, in spite of all that could be done to prevent it, some were thrown to the ground; if a wrist, elbow or ankle happened to be sprained, it was tied with a handkerchief, and little more was thought or said about it.

The two parties then came together and staged a contest in which their champions raced for a beribboned bottle of whisky. The results were celebrated with another explosive *feu de joie.*

Two young men would single out to run for the bottle; the worse the path, the more logs, brush and deep hollows, the better, as obstacles afforded an opportunity for the greatest display of intrepidity and horsemanship. The English fox chase, in point of danger to their riders and their horses, was nothing to this race for the bottle. The start was announced by an Indian yell, when logs, brush, mud holes, hill and glen, were speedily passed by the rival ponies. The bottle was always filled for the occasion, so that there was no use for judges; for the first who reached the door was presented with the prize, with which he returned in triumph to the company. On approaching them he announced his victory over his rival by a shrill whoop. At the head of the troop he gave the bottle to the groom and his attendants, and then to each pair in succession, to the rear of the line, giving each a dram, and then putting the bottle in the bosom of his hunting shirt, took his station in the company.

Finally, both parties would assemble with invited guests from the neighborhood. These were "bidden weddings," which could be attended only by invitation. It often happened... that some neighbors or relations, not being asked to the wedding, took offence; and the mode of revenge adopted by them on such occasions, was that of cutting off the manes, foretops and tails of the horses of the wedding company.

After the ceremony, there were more volleys, much whooping, and an abundance of kissing, drinking and high hilarity. Then a dinner and dance would take place, with everyone joining in wild reels, sets and jigs while a fiddler scraped frantically in the corner. Before the wedding dinner, another mock-abduction was staged indoors; the bride was stolen by one party and "recovered" by the other. During the dinner itself the party played still another abduction-game called stealing the shoe. While dinner went on, the young people crawled about beneath the table and some of the groomsmen tried to steal the bride's shoe while others sought to stop them. Four of the most beautiful girls and the most handsome men were appointed "waiters" and had the honor of protecting her while at the same time they served dinner. Their badge of office was an exquisitely embroidered white apron, on which the bride and her family had labored for many weeks before the wedding. If the bride lost her shoe, she could not dance until it was recovered by her champions in mock combat.

As the sun set upon this turbulent scene, the couple retired to their chamber, while hordes of well-wishers crowded round the bed and offered ribald advice. Yet another contest was staged at the foot of the marriage bed. After the couple was placed beneath the covers, the bridesmaids took turns throwing a rolled stocking over their shoulders at the bride. Then the groomsman did the same, aiming at the groom. The first to hit the mark was thought to be the next to marry. These games continued well into the night. When the wedding party finally left the chamber, a "calithumpian serenade" took place outside -- the bells and whistles punctuated by uninhibited gunplay that sometimes caused a backcountry wedding to be followed by a funeral. As morning approached, a bottle of Black Betty [whiskey] was sent to revive the bride and groom and the merriment continued, sometimes for several days.

CLAN AND KIN

Marriages in early American created families and ties that are hard for 20th century Americans to understand. These days individuals do not make nearly as many compromises in the name of family harmony since modern technology and culture allow them more resources to live independent lives. But to early Americans like the McKissacks, family was vitally important. As one historian wrote, "The conquest of the [American frontier] was achieved by families...The fundamental social unit, the family, was preserved intact...in a transplanting and reshuffling of European folkways." [68]

When we refer to a family today, we are usually referring to the "nuclear family," which means parents and their children. The definition of family in early America, however, was much more extensive than it is now. This was especially true of people who descended from the Scotch or Scotch-Irish culture as the McKissacks did. As another historian wrote:

From the perspective of an individual within this culture, the structure of the family tended to be a set of concentric rings, in which the outermost circles were thicker and stronger than among other English-speaking people. Beyond the nuclear core, beyond even the extended circle, there were two rings which were unique to this culture. One was called the derbfine. It encompassed all the kin within the span of four generations. For many centuries, the laws of North Britain and Ireland had recognized the derbfine as a unit which defined the descent of property and power. It not only connected one nuclear family to another, but also joined one generation to the next.

Beyond the derbfine lay a larger ring of kinship which was called the clan in North Britain. We think of clans today mainly in connection with the Scottish Highlands. But they also existed in the lowlands, northern Ireland and England's border counties where they were a highly effective adaptation to a world of violence and chronic insecurity. [These clans] were not precisely the same as those of the Scottish Highlands...but they were clannish in the most fundamental sense: a group of related families who lived near to one another, were conscious of a common identity, carried the same surname, claimed descent from common ancestors and banded

together when danger threatened.[69]

As mentioned previously, many of the McKissacks' in-laws and neighbors in Georgia came from families they had known in North Carolina. Members of the Allen, Hudson, and Browning families appear in early Granville County, North Carolina, as well as later in east Georgia. Members of the Melton, Parker, Pyron, and Simmons families also appear in both places and were tied to the McKissacks by marriage or community. These connections may explain much about the McKissacks' lives, including their moves. Early settlers sometimes moved in what were called "migration streams," and the McKissacks and their relations were probably no different. This practice dated back to when the first Scots and Scotch-Irish immigrated to America. Again, turning to *Albion's Seed* (Fischer, 1989):[70]

> The migration from North Britain to the backcountry tended to become a movement of clans. A case in point was the family of Robert Witherspoon, a South Carolinia of Border-Scots descent. Witherspoon recalled:
>
> "My grandfather and grandmother were born in Scotland about 1670. They were cousins and both of one name. His name was Joun and hers was Janet. They lived in their younger years in or near Glasgow and in 1695 they left Scotland and settled in the county of Down [Ireland]...where he lived in good circumstances and in good credit until the year 1734, [when] he removed with his family to South Carolina."
>
> When Witherspoon used the word 'family' he meant not merely a nuclear or extended family but an entire clan. His grandparents, their seven children, at least seventeen grandchildren and many uncles and cousins all sailed from Belfast Lough to America and settled together in the same part of the southern backcountry. Witherspoon described their exodus in detail:
>
> "We did not all come in one ship nor at one time. My uncles William James and David Wilson, and their families with Uncle Gavin left Belfast in the beginning of the year 1732 and Uncle Robert followed us in 1736."
>
> Here is a classic example of serial migration or stream migration which was common in peopling the backcountry. A few clan members opened a path for others, and were followed by a steady stream of kin."

In the tough, uncertain and sometimes violent world inhabited by frontier families like the McKissacks, it only made sense to stay close to relations. More often than not, a person's best friends were cousins or other relations. Consequently, on the frontier, there was no slow emergence of the solitary nuclear family as there may have been in cities. Instead, the nuclear family was connected to many other families and drew support from them.

> As time passed, clans became stronger rather than weaker in the southern [American] highlands...Within these family networks, nuclear households were highly cohesive,

drawing strength from the support of other kin groups around them... 'The patterned dispersal of the Scots, rather than isolating individual settlers from their homes and families, served instead to bind together the scattered settlements through a system of interlocking family networks. Rather than a deterrent, mobility was an essential component of community life.' The effect was reinforced by exchanges of land, by rotations of children, and by chain migrations. The clan was not an alternative to the nuclear family, but its nursery and strong support. The pattern...provided an external source of cohesion — supporting each nuclear family from the outside like a system of external buttresses.[71]

CHAPTER XII
A NEW COUNTY AND A NEW CROP — PUTNAM COUNTY, GEORGIA AND KING COTTON

PUTNAM COUNTY

In 1802, the Creek Indians ceded new land across the Oconee River, making it legally available for settlement by whites. Several new counties, including Putnam, were created from these lands. Wary of the land frauds that had plagued the settlement of its earlier frontier, the state of Georgia decided to award the new lands using a lottery system (see map).

The state first sent surveyors into the new lands to divide them into lots. Then it organized a drawing to determine who would get the land. To be eligible to draw, a person was required to be 21 years old and have been a resident of Georgia for at least three years. For each lot of land, a slip of paper with a "P" written on it was placed in a box. Then slips of paper with "B's" written on them (for "blank") were also placed in the box. Those fortunate enough to draw a winning slip of paper paid 16 dollars to register their land.

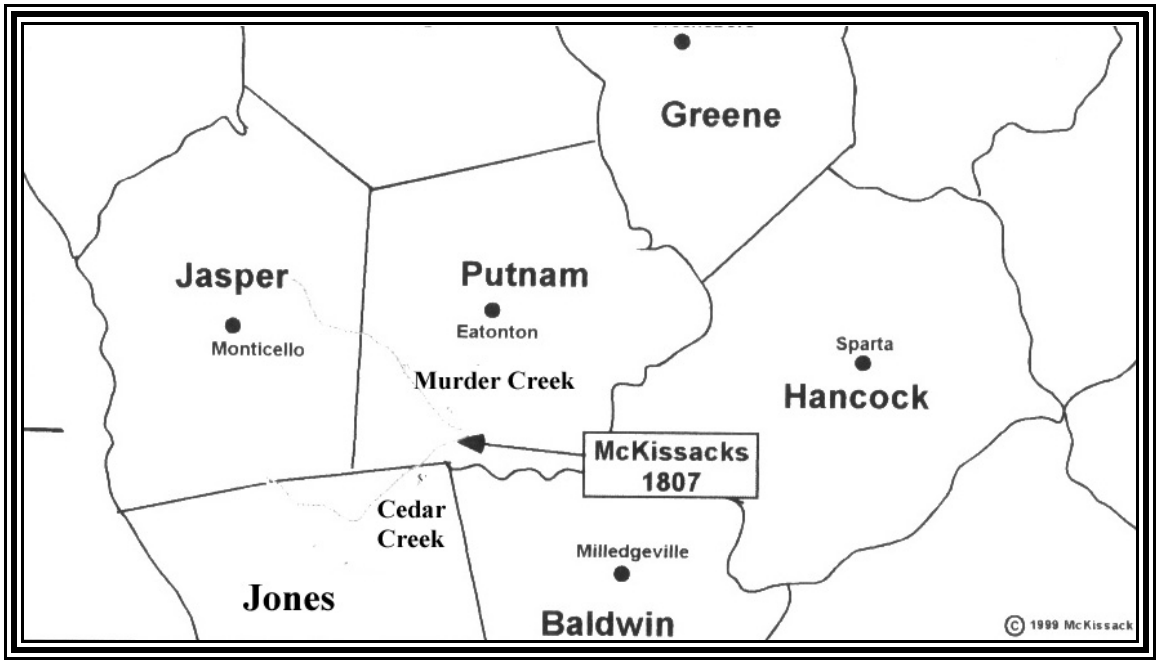
Surveying was completed and the drawing was held in 1805. Records show that John, Thomas, Duncan, and Archibald were living in Greene County at that time, and all drew in the 1805 lottery.[72] Unfortunately, none of them were winners. James McKissack also failed to draw successfully; he was living in Hancock County.[73]

In spite of their failure to win free land, some of the McKissacks decided to move into the new territory anyway. They purchased lands from some of the lucky winners who apparently had better use for the cash instead of the property. John Sr.,[74] Archibald[75] and Thomas[76] all bought land in the new county by 1806. These lands were along Murder and Cedar Creeks in the southwestern portion of Putnam County, near the border with Jones and Jasper Counties.

Once again, the McKissacks were on the frontier. Putnam County was one of the most western counties of Georgia. Even at this date the majority of the state still belonged to Indians -- primarily Creeks, Cherokee, and Seminoles. The same tensions which existed between Indians and whites in Hancock and Greene Counties continued in Putnam, but on a reduced level. The character and attitudes of all the frontier people, including the McKissacks, must have been strongly influenced by living in such an atmosphere.

In a business sense, Putnam County was a good place to start anew since it was in the heart of prime, virgin cotton land. In addition, Putnam county was bordered by the Oconee River, so there was some transport for the McKissacks' crops, though they had to haul the crops 20 miles overland first. In the early 1800s, they would have transported their crops down the Oconee to the Georgia coast by means of pole barges, perhaps making the long trip themselves. Then came an occasional steamboat. Then by 1819, a steamboat commenced regular runs between Milledgeville and the coast. Nevertheless, the Oconee was not navigable year-round, and this limited growth in the area.

Another positive aspect of the move was that the new lands of John, Archibald and Thomas



McKissack's homesteads in Central Georgia.

were less than 20 miles from Milledgeville, now the state capital of Georgia. As stated in *The People of Georgia* (Lane, 1975): "Milledgeville, a raw town at the headwaters of the Oconee... was designated the state capital in 1804, only a year after its founding and before even a dozen houses had been built there. In October, 1807, fifteen wagons carried the state's public records from Louisville, the old capital, to Milledgeville. This was a quiet but significant event, which symbolized the shifting of Georgia's population, wealth and power from the coast to the cotton belt. By 1830, two-thirds of the population of Georgia lived within ninety miles of Milledgeville." Living near the capital could only add value to the McKissack's farming operations.

If Milledgeville was a raw town, the neighboring county of Putnam was even less developed. The only town was Hillsborough, which consisted of four houses, a jail, a courthouse and a saloon -- all built of logs. By 1809, Hillsborough fell into decay and Eatonton, northeast of the McKissacks' farms, replaced it as the county seat of Putnam. While occasional trips to Eatonton were no doubt required because of its status as county seat, the bigger town on Milledgeville was not too much further from the McKissacks' farms along Murder and Cedar Creeks.

"KING COTTON"

As mentioned previously, it appears that John Sr. (we will now refer to John McKissack, husband of Jane, as "John Sr" and their son as "John Jr.") and his sons were farmers, which would be natural considering they probably grew up on a tobacco farm. John Sr's will of 1815 lists 11 slaves-- Lucinda, Sebrinah, Minty, Mary and her daughter Ceila, Tom, Willis, Peter, Minah, Simon and Ellick.[77] This number of slaves indicates a relatively successful farmer. Only about 25 percent of Georgians owned slaves at this time, and even then most owned only about four or five.

Records show, however, that John Sr., like his father, owned only one or two slaves for most

of his life. As late as 1794, ten years before his death, he owned only two slaves. From 1787, when the family left Caswell County, North Carolina, until 1812, John and Jane probably never owned more than one or two slaves. But things changed about the time they moved to Putnam County. John apparently made an attempt to become a large scale planter at that time. One of the reasons may have been opportunities he saw in the production of the crop that would become known as "King Cotton."

While a large number of tobacco-growing settlers from Virginia and North Carolina poured into Georgia in the 1790's, tobacco was soon overwhelmed by cotton. In 1791, Georgia produced only one thousand bales of cotton, but in 1793 Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin, which made the processing of cotton much easier. In 1801, Georgia marketed 20,000 bales. By 1820, cotton growers produced 90,000 bales, and by 1840 408,000 bales. Its an interesting coincidence that the first documented appearance of the McKissacks in Georgia occurs in 1792, a year before Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin. When John Sr. died in 1815, his estate included almost 2500 pounds of seed cotton.

Some idea of the opportunities that John Sr. and his sons saw in the cotton boom is given in the book *The People of Georgia* (Lane, 1975):

> Travelers were struck by the passionate preoccupation of the Georgia people with cotton. John Davis dined at Dillon's boarding house, Savannah, about 1800: 'There was a large party at supper, composed principally of cotton manufacturers from Manchester [England], whose conversation operated on me like a dose of opium. Cotton! Cotton! Cotton! Cotton! was their never-ceasing topic.' Ebenezer Kellogg sighed at Savanna in 1818: 'I hear nothing but talk of the price of cotton. The Georgians are madly devoted to cotton.' Adam Hodgson came to Georgia in 1827: ' I arrived in Augusta and when I saw cotton waggons [sic] in Broad Street, I whistled! but said nothing. There was more than a dozen tow boats in the river, with more than a thousand bales of cotton on each; and several steam boats with still more. And you must know, that they have cotton warehouses covering whole squares, all full of cotton; and some of the knowing ones told me, that there were then in the place from 40,000 to 50,000 bales. It puzzled me to tell which was the largest, the piles of cotton or the houses.'

SPECULATION

As mentioned, growing cotton in Georgia became a game of speculation. The "fever" created by the opportunities in cotton have already been described. And as the book *The Savannah* says: "The price of cotton would go up. Enthusiastically the planter would buy more land and more slaves. This created a vicious cycle where the rise in price would turn the thoughts of men again to staple expansion -- buy more slaves to make more cotton for the continued purpose of buying more slaves to make more cotton."

This speculation eventually landed many planters in financial difficulty. While it does not appear that John Sr. fell into bankruptcy like many planters, it does appear his fortunes flattened out after 1810. By 1810, John McKissack was one of the largest slaveowners in Putnam County, with eleven slaves.[78] Between 1810 and his death in 1815, however, John acquired no new slaves. In fact, in 1813 John Sr and John Jr are listed as delinquent taxpayers in Putnam County. This may indicate financial problems caused by the War of 1812.

CHAPTER XIII

ON THE PLANTATION — THE PEOPLE, THE WORK, THE HOME

As slaveholding southern farmers, the McKissacks were members of a unique economic and social institution. To think about the lives they led is to think about a very broad network of relationships and activities. A southern plantation was a community in and of itself, able to produce almost all of the food, material goods and even entertainment it needed to sustain itself. Consider for a moment if you were a member of such a community. To think about living in the 1800's at the edge of the American wilderness on a plantation, with all its chores, people, and other facets, is to enter into another world that is as different from modern life as apples are from oranges.

THE PEOPLE

John and Jane's family of 11 children was quite a crowd by our modern standards. For most of the time the McKissacks lived in Hancock and Greene counties, it appears that Thomas, Duncan, Archibald, John Jr, Lucy, Nancy and Polly, may have all lived with or near their parents. Some of them married during this period, however, and started families and farms of their own. Even so, it appears that Archibald, Thomas, Duncan, and John Jr. lived near their parents until John and Jane died in Putnam County. They, their spouses, and children would have been frequent visitors and helpers at John and Jane's farm along Murder Creek.

In addition, there were slaves. Though he had owned only one or two slaves for most of his life, in his last few years John McKissack Sr. had increased this number to 11. Add 11 slaves to the other members of the family farm and you have a small village. If you have ever thought it was difficult to organize your family in modern times, think of the number of personalities the McKissacks of 1810 Putnam County, Georgia had to consider.

MULTIPLE GENERATIONS, MULTIPLE FAMILIES, SIMILAR NAMES

We've already seen how the family was organized on the "clan" system in the early American south. This interweaving of the families of John Sr., James, Duncan, Thomas, Archibald, John McKissack, Jr. and their numerous other relatives in Putnam County would have provided an interesting tapestry for anyone growing up in it. One classic history of families in upper Georgia relates how the extended kin "called each other cousin, and the old people uncle and aunt. They lived in the most intimate social way — meeting together very often."[79]

Given the proximity in which the family lived, it was probably not unusual for John and Jane to see their numerous grandchildren frequently. And those grandchildren probably had distinct memories of their grandparents. For example, one early Georgia pioneer wrote "It was a favorite pastime with my grandmother, when the morning's work was done, to uncover her flax-wheel, seat herself, and call me to sit by her, and in my childish manner, read to her from the 'Life of General Francis Marion.' There was not a story in the book that she did not know, almost as a party concerned, and she would ply her work of flax-spinning while she gave me close and intense attention."[80] Similarly, as we will see, Jane and her daughters probably spent much time sewing or quilting together. The men undoubtedly hunted and worked together, also.

Its also amusing to ponder the confusion that could have arisen from how often the McKissacks used the names William, Archibald, John, James and Thomas in naming their children;

a casual count shows there could have been 5 Archibalds, 4 Williams, 4 Johns, 3 Thomases and several Jameses in the area at any given time. Early Americans, however, avoided the confusion that might arise from this situation by attaching a trade or characteristic to an individual's name that might distinguish him from another with the same name. One woman wrote the following concerning the names Mary and Jim. The passage also gives the reader a sense of the security provided by an extended clan.

> All the children in the district are related by blood in one degree or another. Our roll-call includes Sally Mary and Cripple John's Mary and Tan's Mary and Mary-Jo, living yon side the creek. There are different branches of the Rogers family — Red Jim and Lyin' Jim and Singin' Jim and Black Jim Rogers — in this district, their kin intermarried until no man could write their pedigree or ascertain the exact relation of their offspring to each other. This question, however, does not disturb the children in the least. They are content to know that uncle Tan's smokehouse is the resource of all in time of famine; that Aunt Martha's kind and strong hands are always to be depended on when one is really ill; that Uncle Filmore plays the fiddle at all the dances, and Uncle Dave shoes all the mules owned by the tribe.[81]

Considering the above passage, it's easy to imagine John and Jane McKissack referring to their grandchildren as "Thomas' James" or Archibald's John" or "James' William."

THE HOUSE

Though the records show that toward the end of his life John McKissack, Sr. was one of the largest slaveholders in Putnam County, the McKissacks' lives, like most slaveholders in Georgia during the early 1800's, did not fit the "Gone With The Wind" model. The home the McKissacks lived in, for instance, was probably a simple affair. The huge, columned mansions would exist only in the future, and even then for a very few plantation owners. "Prior to 1820, the average home consisted of a two-room log house with wide, open veranda between. There may have been one or more 'lean-tos' at the back of the house, and maybe a log kitchen and dining room in the backyard. If there were several half-grown boys in the family, there was probably a large log, single room house just back of the kitchen and known as 'the boy's room.'"[82]

A man named Basil Hall, in 1828, described a plantation house where he grew up:

> Almost all these forest houses in the interior of the State of Georgia consist of two divisions, separated by a wide, open passage, which extends from the front to the back of the building. They are generally made of logs, covered with a very steep roof. The apartments, at the end of these dwellings, are entered from the open passage which divides the house in two, the floor of which is raised generally two or three feet from the ground. This opening being generally ten or twelve feet wide, answers in that mild climate the purpose of a veranda, or sitting-room during the day.

Another man described a similar house in 1830:

> The common form of the planters' houses, indeed of all houses that you meet with on

> the roadsides in this country, is two square pens, with an open space between them, connected by a roof above and a floor below, so as to form a parallelogram of nearly triple the length of its depth. In the open space the family take their meals during the fine weather. The kitchen and the places for slaves are all separate buildings, as are the stable, corn-houses, etc. About ten buildings of this description make up the establishment of an ordinary planter with a half dozen slaves.[83]

THE SLOW LIFE OF FARMING

Part of the reason for these simple homes was that farming, like any business, did not guarantee wealth. The moonlight and magnolia lifestyle of hooped skirts, mint juleps and fancy balls existed for very few slaveholders, and certainly not for the McKissacks. The steady and busy life of the plantation was, for the most part, their lot.

> The portrait of an average Georgia 'planter' ... is a small proprietor, who works alongside his dozen slaves on his hundred acres of land and shares with them a simple, strong and rather difficult life. Blacks and whites lived in the same backwoods, depended on the same weather and harvest, ate the same cornbread, bacon and molasses, attended the same camp meetings, received the same burials. Letters from planters were preoccupied with three things; the weather, the crops and the health of the slaves. Daily journals of planters record a life of monotonous, unending chores; splitting rails, sowing oats, planting potatoes, cutting sugar cane, spreading manure, chopping the cotton. The vast majority of Georgia planters lived in modest comfort but without much display or leisure time.[84]

A MOBILE LIFESTYLE

Another important reason for the simplicity of planter homes was the frequency with which they moved. John McKissack, Sr. moved four times that we know of. It was common practice in the 1800s for farmers to use up the high fertility of virgin land and then move on once yields, and profits, began to decrease. As one visitor to a southern plantation wrote, "They have but little property that is not moveable. Their possessions generally consist in slaves, herds of swine and cattle, horses, mules, flocks of goats, and numerous fowls of all kinds, fine carriages, furniture, plate, etc., which can be transported when occasion demands a removal from one old worn out plantation to another of newer and more fruitful soil."[85]

"WOMAN'S WORK"

Though very mobile, the McKissack farm, like other southern plantations, would have been a small community and business. As previously mentioned, whether that community and business was profitable depended on the fertility of the soil. Another factor was how effective the mistress of the household, Jane McKissack, performed her duties. And the average farm woman like Jane McKissack, and perhaps later her daughters, had plenty of duties.

When Jane McKissack and her daughters were young pioneer women, they performed the hard work associated with “women’s work” in those days. Once the family acquired slaves, however, the women would have had help performing much of the physical labor around the farm. At times,

if a woman like Jane McKissack said that she had milked the cows, made butter, butchered hogs, and weeded the garden, it might mean that she had supervised the physical labor. But until late in Jane's life, the McKissacks did not own more than one or two slaves. Undoubtedly, Jane's daughters and children helped with many household chores. Nevertheless, physical duties were not the limit of Jane's work. The roles of women like her could be extremely demanding and were determined by the expression "my family, black and white," with the word "my" meaning responsibilities as well as privilege.

FOOD

One thing Jane McKissack would have been responsible for was making sure the supply of food on the farm was steady and ample. Almost all vegetables and fruit, of course, were grown right on the farm. Jane may have spent a great deal of time in the garden located behind the house, since kitchen gardens provided the food for the household, and gardening was a specialty task in which some white women took pride and enjoyment in. She also probably spent a great deal of time putting up preserves or pickles. Preparing regular meals was usually left to a well-trained household slave who was valued for her cooking skills. Jane's cooking may have been limited to making "specialty items" -- pies and cakes, jams and jellies, perhaps wines -- on which she could exercise her creativity. Its easy to see how this system could have produced the tradition of Southern women passing down special desert recipes from generation to generation.

There was also plenty of work for Jane McKissack besides just growing and preserving and cooking food. As the historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese wrote in *Within the Plantation Household*, (1988):

> References to supplies serve as constant reminders of the basic character of plantation households. Supplies were purchased or produced in bulk both because of the difficulty in obtaining them on a daily basis and the numbers of people to be served. Flour and whiskey were purchased by the barrel, sugar by the barrel or the hogshead, fancy sugar by the loaf, and coffee by the sack; chickens, when raised in insufficient numbers to serve the needs of the household, were purchased and slaughtered by the dozens; hundreds of pounds of pork and hams were smoked and dispensed. Sarah Adams helped Eliza, a slave, make sausages from the hogs her mother had cut up and salted -- twelve one day, twenty-two a month and a half later. Mary Hamilton Campbell complained to her husband of having to undertake 'the unpleasant task of superintending the cutting and salting of our meat.' Martha Ogle Fiorman's journal offers an endless list of beef, hams, and pork processed and stored. One day she had seventeen hogs, weighing a total of 2,077 pounds, killed and had the tallow rendered and the sausage made.

Part of Jane's supervisory job would have been planning how much food should be stored for the lean months, making sure it lasted until the next season and organizing its storage. If the family ran out of something in mid-winter, there was no quick trip to the supermarket to replace it. So the preserves, butter, sugar, coffee, flour, whiskey, hams, and sausage were probably all kept under lock and key. As mistress of the house, Lucy carried those keys with her at all times and controlled access to the supplies. Some of Jane's children may have had the unhappy experience of Kate Carney, who wrote in her diary that when she came late to breakfast her mother "would not let me have the keys

to get any sugar or butter, which vexed me not a little."[86]

CLOTHES

On top of food production and management, Jane had other duties as "mistress of the house." A big activity was making clothes. The cloth, whether cotton or wool, was often spun and woven by slave women. The cotton or wool was produced on the farm. Turning the cloth into clothes was often a white woman's job, however. In *Within the Plantation Household*, Fox-Genovese writes:

> Slaveholding women's writings abounded with accounts of their own sewing. Of the mending of their own clothes and those of their white family there was no end. Socks had to be darned, gloves mended, collars turned, dresses refurbished, children's clothes sewed and repaired. Sometimes, a husband's shirt or pair of pants had to be made. Southern women tatted, embroidered, and knitted. They did not write much of quilting or of sewing other linens, although -- especially in the early decades of the century -- they occasionally wrote of making carpets. They wrote endlessly of cutting and sewing the clothes for the slaves. In all of these instances, their relation to cloth articulated dimensions of their lives and their relations with others -- dimensions of their identities...
>
> These women viewed their work on their own clothes as proof of their industry, but they also enjoyed doing it. Not least, they shared sewing with other women of their households, with kin, and with acquaintances. They took a less happy view of their work on their slaves clothes. Each year, the slaves had to be provided with two sets of clothes. Normally, the cloth arrived in huge bolts and had to be cut and sewn with any assistance that could be marshaled. One woman after another, frequently with impatience, noted the time expended in this labor... Withal, the burden of providing clothing for the slave force did not prevent individual women from taking pleasure in sewing something special for a particular slave. Kate Carney reported making clothes for a favorite slave's twin infants and "sewing on a calico, I gave the little darkie, Fannie."

NURSING THE SICK

Another role filled by Lucy, like all mothers, was that of nurse. A plantation on the American frontier wasn't always readily accessible to doctors, and given the primitive state of medicine in those days this was probably sometimes a blessing. Having borne eleven children, Jane's burdens in this sphere would have been long and considerable. No doubt, she would have had the help of slaves and older children, but the ultimate responsibility was hers.

Much of Jane's nursing knowledge would have been learned through trial and error. Given the roughness of life at that time and the numerous diseases for which there was no treatment (malaria, yellow fever, cholera, tuberculosis, pneumonia,, typhoid, tetanus, dysentery, influenza, whooping cough, measles, mumps, smallpox, diphtheria, and typhus) we can be relatively certain that she and John lost some children to miscarriage and early death. The eleven children listed in John's last will and testament were only the ones who lived to maturity. In addition, along with her own miscarriages and lost babies, Jane would have nursed her slaves through their pregnancies and watched some of them lose their own children, also.

Jane undoubtedly knew a variety of "home remedies" including herbal cures and common sense practices to prevent or ameliorate sickness. Kitchen gardens in those days contained numerous herbs for curing sickness, and the McKissack household was probably supplied with these. It is possible, however, that the McKissacks used medical textbooks to treat illnesses, though none are listed in John's estate. "The doctor books, of which there were several, were written by physicians in nontechnical terms to enable the planter to diagnose and treat the ordinary run of cases. The most popular of these was Dr. James Ewell of Savannah and was called *The Planter's and Mariner's Medical Companion*. First issued in 1807 at Philadelphia, it proved immensely popular and went through several editions. It was sold in connection with a medicine chest containing the medicines prescribed. The chests, depending upon the make of wood, sold for $50, $75, and $100."[87]

On top of her own knowledge, Jane may have had the assistance of a female house servant who had become specialized in nursing. As Fox-Genovese notes:

> Female house servants, notably cooks, were likely to know a great deal more about their craft than most mistresses -- frequently more about children, medicine, and life as well. Mary Bateman reported that one of the young ladies of the household refused to take the medicine the doctor had prescribed for her but instead sent out for Big Lize to make her a prescription, which she took on the sly. Nurses, who commonly began their careers young, often received minimal training before embarking upon their responsibilities, although firsthand experience and the knowledge gleaned from other slave women eventually led them to equal or surpass the mistress in expertise.

As with many of her other duties, Jane's nursing responsibilities extended to white and black members of the family. A bill submitted to John McKissack's 1815 estate lists a charge for treating slaves illnesses. [88] Fox-Genovese notes that:

> Slaves' illnesses plagued the mistresses with nuisance, worry, and grief. The nuisance of having a slave absent from everyday tasks was hard to bear. Sarah Gayle waxed impatient. Anna Matilda Page King plaintively cried out to her husband of the consequences for her of an outbreak of dysentery among the servants. Sixteen years later, beset with worries about their debts, she wrote him that it was worth paying top prices for good bacon 'in order to let the Negroes keep well.' Eliza Carmichael worried about the illness of one of her servants, whose services would be difficult to replace if the sickness persisted, and a week later noted that she had spent a busy day 'sick servants and their crying babies 3 in number.' Jeremiah C. Harris, a teacher and small farmer who was determined to spare his wife as many household chores as possible, wrote of his slave cook in 1855, 'Maria is laid up this morning with a bad cold, she is mightily missed in the house, no one can supply her place.' Mahala Roach complained that she was obliged to stand in for sick servants herself: 'Our little nurse still so sick that I am nurse'; and again, 'Margery was taken sick in the night and has been quite sick all day -- so I have had to work hard.' Mistresses frequently railed at the inconvenience of replacing a valued house servant, even for a brief period, just as they frequently railed at the demands that nursing sick servants placed upon them. The nursing ranked as a double worry by reminding the mistress of her particular responsibilities to the prosperity of the plantation. The loss of a slave was a capital loss, as well as a human loss.

RECREATION

Given the hard work and monotony of farm life, pioneers enjoyed the occasional gathering with their neighbors. The main excuses for a big social gathering were militia musters, court sessions, camp meetings, weddings and church. As shown above, weddings could indeed be boisterous occasions. Likewise, militia musters could be very informal and even dangerous. Church going was another social event. Belonging to a church in the early 1800's, however, was more demanding than today. Communities, especially the small, intimate, community of a church's membership, were smaller and more aware of the virtues and vices of their members. As "The History of Greene County" relates, "Churches were very strict in the early days...and records show where men were tried and excluded from membership, which at that time carried the same social standing as an ex-convict. Some of the records show that charges were brought for chicken fighting on Sunday, betting on horse races, false measures in grain and cider, taking roasting ears from a neighbor's field, profane language before ladies, retaining a plow that a neighbor loaned by a neighbor, putting dirty cotton in the center of the bale with good cotton on the outside, and for immorality. Often these 'brothers' would come to a conference and confess their sins and ask forgiveness and would be restored to the privileges of membership."

In spite of the efforts of churches, however, this was still the frontier, and just as in North Carolina, there was much frontier rowdiness and violence. Nevertheless, some of the activities condemned by law seem odd to us today. In Greene county, "Court records show that grand juries condemned profane swearing, drinking, fiddling, gambling and card playing. Parading stud horses on Main Street and riding them to church was forbidden. Little attention was paid to most of these recommendations by the grand jury."[89] In 1813, the last legal dunking was ordered by a judge who found a woman to be a gossip and a scold. The woman was tied to the rear of an old carriage which was repeatedly pushed into Oconee River and then withdrawn. A large group of people reportedly watched from the riverbank.[90]

Many of the things we think of as stereotypical of the frontier were indeed common. Political quarrels often escalated to violence. Four of Georgia's early governors and numerous other elected officials fought duels with political adversaries.

While violence was common, punishment was severe, swift and often public. "Convicted persons were subject to public hanging, branding, ear-cropping, whipping, or confinement in the stocks, the pillory, or the dungeon of the county jail. Highway robbery, second-time horse stealing, counterfeiting, and murder all drew the death penalty. Since such executions were public throughout most of the nineteenth century, they drew large crowds, and newspapers reported every gruesome detail of the proceedings. Punishment was unusually swift. In 1815, a man was convicted of passing a five-dollar counterfeit note in Milledgeville and was hanged five days later."[91]

The capital of Milledgeville was a good day's journey from the McKissack farms. By 1807, the first year John McKissack, Sr. appears in Putnam County, the Georgia legislature was already meeting in the partly finished Statehouse in Milledgeville. Though the title of state capital makes us think of grand buildings with Greek columns, this is not what the McKissacks saw if they visited early Milledgeville. If they came through town in 1810, they would have seen a Statehouse still a year away from completion. There were a few private homes, some churches and lawyer's offices, saloons, and public toilets. A sketch made of the town in 1809 shows a dwelling, only four blocks from the Statehouse, which is labeled "A Whorehouse." The map maker wrote, "These are plenty and make money out of the venturous old bachelors of the town."

If any of the McKissacks visited Milledgeville, they would have seen a side of life very

different from life on the farm, especially if they visited after the harvest was complete. "Throughout the antebellum period legislative sessions were held in the late fall and early winter after most farmers had completed harvesting. At this season Milledgeville was filled not only with important visitors attending legislative matters but also with farmers from outlying areas. On these occasions normal legal restraints which the town imposed on its citizens were not always enforced. Gamblers and sportsmen held high carnival on the streets. Games of chance were openly conducted and prostitution flourished.

Since alcohol was thought by many to possess a certain medicinal value, there were no restraints on its sale and consumption. While drinking to such excess was thought to be no more than a harmless expression of one's own fancy, any kind of indulgence in gambling usually was regarded as highly reprehensible. Gambling was the town's earliest vice and the first to come under local regulation. A legislative resolution in 1811 requested the town commissioners to pursue a more vigorous policy against gambling and arrest all operators of faro banks and to 'put the vagrant law into full force.' Professional gamblers, referred to as 'the Black-legged Fraternity,' were the subject of numerous grand jury presentments."

Other entertainment was also available. What might seem commonplace today may have been fascinating and exotic to frontier people. Records indicate a puppet show came through Milledgeville in the early 1800's. At another time, a showman exhibited wax figures, while another charged admission to see a female baboon.

CHAPTER XIV
THE WAR OF 1812

The reader may remember that we noted in Chapter Ten that John McKissack Sr's financial situation appears to have flattened out around 1812, and that this may have been due to the war between the U.S. and Britain which began that year. The War of 1812 was the culmination of a long line of incidents between the two countries. Throughout the early 1800's Britain and Napoleon's France were engaged in war. By 1807 both countries were harassing American commerce ships, and the British were even seizing vessels and forcing the sailors to join the British navy and fight with it. At President Thomas Jefferson's suggestion, the U.S. Congress voted in 1807 to place an embargo on all commerce with the outside world. Believing that the warring nations of Europe would quit harassing American vessels rather than suffer the loss of American trade, Congress confined all American ships to American ports and forbade foreign ships from taking away American goods.

Unfortunately, the embargo produced economic stagnation in Georgia. The problem is well-stated in *Georgians and the War of 1812* (Akins, 1968):

> Since 1800, large quantities of cotton from Georgia had been exported to Europe and from this trade her wealth was largely derived. However, the embargo bore down severely on the commercial activity of the state. With all shipping and exports prohibited, farmers and planters faced rapidly falling prices in a domestic market flooded with commodities. Cotton, which earlier had sold for as much as twenty-five to twenty-eight cents a pound, brought only ten to thirteen cents in 1809. The price continued its downward trend, until it reached a low of six cents a pound in the summer of 1812. Individuals who had contracted large debts during a period of prosperity prior to the embargo suddenly found that they could not liquidate them. Universal bankruptcy hung over the state. The plight of the debtor could easily be followed by the large number of sheriff's sales which were advertised daily in the several newspapers over the state.

While the interests of the Georgia planters would have best been served by a resumption of trade with Britain, other grievances and goals pushed Congress into declaring war. When war finally erupted between the U.S. and Britain, the British fleet blockaded American shores and interrupted the export of cotton and forced even more planters into bankruptcy. Perhaps John had gone into debt to expand his cotton production operations just before the war broke out and meeting his bills became difficult when war shrunk the market for cotton. In spite this, John left a good-sized estate, so it appears he wasn't bankrupted, but merely slowed by the economic problems facing planters in the early 1800's.

The war went on for two years before there was a threat of British invasion of Georgia. This spurred Georgian to activate its militia, including John Sr's sons Archibald and John. Records in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. show an Archibald McKissac served from Nov 1814 to March 8, 1815 as a private in Captain Cyrus White's militia Company of the 3rd Regiment

commanded by Colonel Ezekiel Wimberly. Archibald appears on rolls taken at Camp Hope and Camp Darien. Other records show a John McKissack who served as a private in Captain William J. Minton's company of the 2nd Regiment of Georgia Militia commanded by a Colonel Thomas. John's service was from October 1814 to February 1815. Records indicate he was on the rolls at Camp Jackson.[92]

Its not clear which Archibald and which John McKissack served in the militia during this period. During this same period, for example, an "A. McKissack" in Putnam County sued a man named John H. Hendrick for payment of a debt. Likewise, there were several Archibald and John McKissack living in central Georgia at this time. More research will be required to determine what part Archibald and John played in the War of 1812. It is possible they saw service in Alabama, but this is unclear. The militia were not professional soldiers, but the law at that time required that all able-bodied men participate in military training.

In spite of a lack of professionalism, there was no lack of fight in some of the militia. Many were present when Andrew Jackson met the British at the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815. This battle was the last of the war and accounts for the fact that Archibald and John both mustered out of service shortly thereafter.[93]

CHAPTER XV
DEATH OF JOHN MCKISSACK, SR.

John Sr. passed away shortly after the War of 1812 ended in 1815. Hopefully, John Jr and Archibald were home by then. We know that Jane was still alive because she is the first person mentioned in John's will. We also know that John had been sick for some time before his death. His estate papers include a bill for his coffin; the bill is dated February, months before his death near the end of June. [94]

It also appears that John was in pain for several months before his death. The bill which his physician, Dr. Lockhart, submitted to the estate lists several charges for "paregoric." This was an opium-based antidysentery drug, so John apparently was experiencing intestinal discomfort. The doctor began prescribing this drug seven months before John's death. Interestingly, the estate records show that Dr. Lockhart consulted with a Dr. Eli Shorter from Monticello. Both men billed the estate for their travel expenses, including food for their horses.

John McKissack's will states, "I give and bequeath to my loving wife Jane McKisic my bay mare once owned by Irkurth with all the effects in my possession which came by her and half dozen pewter plates all of which to forever to remain her own also she must have fifty acres tenable land, ten acres cleared with a cabin thereon well fixed to live in and Lucinda to wait on her, both of which (the land and negro) to remain in her possession during her life or widowhood, then to be sold and equally divided between all my children; she also must have a sow and pigs and provisions, corn and pork sufficient enough to last her the first year."

John's 1815 will lists 11 children. The four girls are referred to by their married names -- Nancy Allen, Polly Pennington, Elizabeth Breeding, and Lucy Stewart. It appears that the seven sons -- James, William, Duncan, Jonathan, Thomas, Archibald, and John -- were also of legal age. John Sr's will refers to Jonathan's orphans; we know that Jonathan was deceased from North Carolina records. (Records for the May court session of 1813 in Person County, North Carolina, however, contain an inventory of the estate of Jonathan McKissack, so he had returned to North Carolina.)

John had amassed a respectable estate in his lifetime. In terms of livestock, the appraisement listed 15 cows, two bulls, 35 hogs, and four horses. It also included 85 barrels of corn, about 1500 pounds of tobacco, and notably, almost 2500 pounds of seed cotton. As would be expected from a working farm, there were numerous agricultural items listed -- weeding hoes, grubbing hoes, plows, traces, wedges, broad axes, and other tools. Interestingly, the estate lists a woman's saddle. Perhaps Jane or one of the daughters enjoyed riding.

The McKissack house, though probably simple in architecture of the time, seemed to have been furnished well-enough for a frontier home. John's estate lists three tables (one a kitchen table), chairs, a writing desk, a side board, a chest and a trunk, bookcase and books, three bedsteads and bedroom furniture, lots of pewter and crockery ware, knives, forks, tea spoons, and an umbrella.

Other things that are of interest in the estate are a bill for work done on John's carriage in 1813. This carriage was listed in the Putnam County tax rolls of 1813. Another bill submitted was for whiskey and wine, so we know John was not a teetotaler. Finally, a bill was submitted for work done on John's guns.

John had lived in an interesting time. He'd seen the colonies fight an eight-year war for their

independence in which his own brother was wounded. Perhaps he'd fought in the war himself. He and Jane had produced a large family. Then he'd moved to yet other frontiers and seen the ferocity of warfare with the Indians. Later he joined in creating the cotton industry, unaware that in the seeds of the cotton and the slave-owning culture it reinforced lay the seeds of the most tragic and devastating war ever fought by Americans and a problem that white and black Americans are still dealing with today.

SLAVES

The approaching death of a slave owner was sometimes watched more closely by his slaves than by anyone else. Because the death of the slave owner could mean changes for slaves far greater than anyone else. Slave families might be broken up, slaves might be bequeathed to family members they did not get along with, or perhaps worst of all, a slave might be put up for auction and purchased by an owner who lived far from the slave's family and friends.

There is no evidence that the McKissacks were cruel or harsh slave owners. And as stated before, the descendants of John McKissack can rest assured that this narrative does not presume to use today's standards to judge ancestors who lived with a different set of attitudes and options. But John Sr's will bears stark witness to the worst aspect of slavery -- a slave's lack of choice in how or where he will live his life. To his second oldest son William, John wills "a negro woman named Sebrina." At this time, William is living in Tennessee, so Sebrina will make a long journey to her new home. Perhaps she will be forced to leave her birth-family and go among strangers. One hopes that she was familiar with the members of William's family. Duncan receives "the negro girl Minty." Thomas is willed "Mary and her child Ceila." John Jr received "the negro boy Willis." Daughters Nancy Allen and Lucy Stewart receive slaves Peter and Minah, respectively. Though the slave Lucinda was bequeathed to Jane for her life, John's will also states that after Jane's death Lucy is to be sold and the proceeds divided among his heirs. John's estate papers indicate that Lucy was sold four years later in 1819 for $500.00, possibly indicating Jane had died.

The will also states that "Simon and Ellick be sold with all my perishable property to make those of my children who are in arrears in this their Legacy whole, to pay my debts and balance, if any equally divided." And on November 15, 1815 the following add ran in the Georgia Journal: "On Friday, 22nd of December, will be sold ... at the late residence of John McKissack on Cedar Creek in Putnam County, two negro men, a quantity of corn and some tobacco; being a part of the personal estate of said deceased. Signed -- Thomas McKissack, Thomas Stephens, Executors." Documents from the estate sale indicate Simon and Ellick were purchased by Duncan and James McKissack. Simon may have been the slave of that name who was bequeathed to John by his father.

Finally, John Sr's will states "I gave to my son Archibald McKisick, the Negro man Tom and said Archibald to pay his brother William one hundred and fifty dollars in good trade." Tom, however, was dissatisfied enough with this change in status to risk running away. On January 7, 1816 the following advertisement ran in the Georgia Journal: "Thirty dollars reward. Runaway on the 23rd of December last, a Negro fellow by the name of Tom, about 38 years of age, five feet 10 or 11 inches high, of a yellowish complexion, a large scar on the back of his neck ... He is a cunning artful fellow, speaks plain & can read & write; I suppose he has forged himself a pass ... has made ... for Augusta or Savannah, to get on board some ship in order to make a final escape from me. Signed -- Archibald McKisic. Cedar Creek, Putnam County, GA."

It is noteworthy that the slave Tom is said to have run away the very next day after the sale of the other two male slaves -- Simon and Ellick -- mentioned above. Tom may have been present to watch that sale. The estate records show that Simon and Ellick were purchased by Duncan and James McKissack, so they remained "in the family." Nevertheless, Tom decided that very night that he would make a gamble to gain his freedom. Unfortunately, we have no information on Tom's future.

131. North Carolina Grant No. 114, Entry No. 2587, Book No.67, p.465. It seems likely that this James McKissack was related to the Captain Daniel McKissick who lived in Western North Carolina and fought at the battle of Ramsour's Mill. Daniel McKissack settled in middle Tennessee after the American Revolution. The author, however, has made no attempt to investigate this connection.

2. The Overmountain Men, Alderman, 1970, p.206.

3. Alderman, p.205.

4. Alderman, p.206.

5. Person County Court Record Books, August Court of 1810, p. 218.

6. North Carolina Troops, 1861 - 1865, A Roster, 32nd-35th & 37th Regiments, Publication of the North Carolina Division of Archives & History.

7. A Person County deed shows Thomas McKissack selling 400 acres along Double Creek to William McKissack Junior in 1808. Thomas appears in the Person County tax rolls in Captain Paines district in 1808. After that year, he disappears from the lists.

8. Tombstones, Spring Hill Cemetery, Giles County, Tennessee.

9. One interesting fact is that when Thomas and Lucy moved to Tennessee in the early 1800s, they moved into the same region as a group of McKissacks who had previously lived in western North Carolina. These McKissacks were descended from Captain Daniel McKissack, who had also fought for the Americans and been wounded in the Revolution. There is some evidence that these groups were related. Whatever their relationship, they must have been intrigued if they met in Tennessee. Some McKissack descendants still live there today and hold a family reunion the third weekend of September.

140. Miller, 1989.

11. Miller, 1989.

12. U.S. Census of 1810, Person County.

13. Person County Court Records, May Court 1813.

14. Person County, North Carolina, December Court 1800.

15. It is difficult to find documents placing the family of John Jr and Jane in Tennessee. The vandalism and confusion of the State of Franklin years may be one reason. Also, east Tennessee at this time was mostly wilderness, and public records kept in log cabin courthouses with dirt floors didn't have much chance of survival. The census schedules for the 1790 eastern Territory were accidentally burned, as were the 1800 and 1810 records for all counties except Rutherford.

We do know that the family lived in Tennessee for only a few years. One of John Jr's daughters, Nancy McKissack Allen, told the 1850 U.S. Census in Meriwether County, Georgia that she had been born in Tennessee in 1787. A son, John, likewise told the 1850 U.S. Census in Tallapoosa County, Alabama that he was born in Tennessee in 1785.

One of John Jr.'s sons, William, settled in eastern Tennessee in Sevier County next to English Mountain in Jones Cove. Another son, Archibald, moved to Putnam County, Georgia in 1806 and bought land from his brother-in-law, George Breeding, who had married Archibald's sister Elizabeth. The deed, dated February 12, 1806, in Deed Book B, p.311 - 312, says that George Breeding is a resident of Sevier County, Tennessee. An Elizabeth Breeding is on record as attending the Big Pigeon Baptist Church near the county line between Cocke and Sevier Counties. (AnSearchin' News, Vol.17, 1970. p.66, Abstracts of the minutes of the Big Pidgeon Baptist Church, Cocke Co., Tn 1787-1874). Elizabeth Breeding and her husband George later lived near her brother William in several locations in Tennessee.

Consequently, the evidence is circumstantial that the McKissacks moved straight from North Carolina to Jones' Cove, Tennessee. Given the evidence available to us, however, I have chosen to make this assumption for purposes of our story.

16. Alderman, p.242.

17. Abernethy, p.158-163.

18. Alderman, p.223.

19. Abernethy, p.82.

20. Haywood, *The Political and Civil History of the State of Tennessee,* p.173

21. Alderman, p.229.

22. In the U.S. Census of 1850, John III was living in Tallapoosa County, Alabama and gave his age as 65. Nancy was living in Meriwether County, Georgia and was then Nancy Allen. She gave her age as 63. Both said they had been born in Tennessee. John's information places the family in Tennessee as early as 1785. This conflicts with the Caswell County, North Carolina tax records listing John McKissack as late as 1786. I have chosen the date 1787 as the date when the family left North Carolina for Tennessee.

23. Alderman, p.242.

24. O'Dell, Over The Misty Blue Hills: The Story of Cocke County, Tennessee.

25. U.S. Census for Georgia, 1850.

26. Abernethy, p.159.

27. Alderman, p.256.

28. An Archibald and John McKissack are mentioned in Court Minutes in Sumner County, Tennessee in 1792.

29. Hancock County Tax Digest 1792, Captain Tulley Choice's District, p.122 and p.124.

30. Book accounts of the estate of George Vest. Some Georgia County Records, Vol. 4, Lucas, 1991.

31. Abstracts of The Wills and Estate Records of Granville County, North Carolina 1746 - 1808, Gwynn, 1973, p.136. Jonathon Martiszick witnesses sale of a negro by William Chavis to Hugh Snelling. March 30, 1789.

32. One of Duncan's sons — John -- told the U.S. 1850 census he was born in Tennessee.

33. Lucas, Some Georgia County Records, Vol. 4, 1991.

34. Shivers, The Land Between, A History of Hancock County, Georgia to 1940, 1990.

35. Shivers.

36. Shivers, p.30.

37. Shivers, p.2.

38. Walters, Oconee River Tales to Tell, 1995.

39. Thaxton, Georgia Indian Depradation Claims, 1988.

40. Thaxton.

41. Miller, 1989. It should also be noted that there is an act of sale filed in Person County, North Carolina and dated November 12, 1798, which is between Josiah Allen, who is mentioned as a resident of Green County, Georgia and William McKissack of Person County, North Carolina.

42. Stewart, Gone to Georgia, 1965.

43. Clark, American Militia in the Frontier Wars, 1790 - 1796, 1990.

44. Clark.

45. Rice, History of Greene County, 1961.

46. Clark, 1990.

47. Rice, 1961.

48. Dorsey, Montgomery County Georgia: A Sourcebook of Genealogy and History, 1983, p.205.

179. A Mack McKissack of Washington County, Georgia is referred to in Court Documents in Marion County, South Carolina in the 1800's. The possibility that this Mack McKissack was related to our McKissacks is intriguing, especially given earlier indications of a connection between North and South Carolina McKissacks.

50. Index to Headright and Bounty Grants of Georgia, 1756-1909, p.438.

51. Georgia Genealogical Magazine, No. 34, Oct. 1969, p.2361 -- Deed dated April 15, 1795 from William McKissack of Montgomery County to James Jordan of Washington County.

52. Montgomery County Georgia: A Source Book of Genealogy and History, Dorsey, 1983, p.67.

53. In a personal letter to the authors one of William's descendants --Bobby Godfrey -- mentions that William, two of his sons and son-in-laws, left Tennessee at one point to hunt buffalo in Missouri. A won named William Jr. and several of the Guinn son in laws moved to Missouri, but later returned to Tennessee.

54. Two prominent figures in Montgomery County, Georgia during the time William McKissack was there were Benjamin Harrison and Willis (William) Wood. Harrison served as Captain of a Detachment of Militia during the worst Indian raids. American Militia in the Frontier Wars, 1790-1796, Clark, 1990. p.278. Willis (William) Wood served as Surveyor for the infamous Pine Barren Lands. William McKissack, the son of John and Jane, later had three grandsons with "Harrison" in their names -- John Harrison McKissack, Abraham Harrison McKissack, and William Harrison McKissack. Likewise, he had a grandson named William Wood McKissack. And yet another "Wood" played a part in William's life, since in 1815 a James Wood signed for William McKissack's part of his father's estate in Putnam County, Georgia. A James Wood also served in Benjamin Harrison's detachment of militia mentioned above.

55. Davis, History of Montgomery County, Georgia to 1918, 1992, p.15.

56. John, Thomas, Jonathon, appear in the book accounts of the estate of George Vest in Hancock County on June 15, 1799. John, Thomas, Duncan and Archibald drew in the 1805 land lottery and were listed as residents of Greene County. 1805 Georgia Land Lottery, Wood, 1964.

57. No deed of purchase has been found for this land but in 1806, when John and Jane were preparing to move to Putnam County, John McKissack sold to Charles Davison “that tract of land said McKissick now lives on one hundred and sixty-five acres being part of a tract of land

granted to Archibald Gresham in the reserved fork lying on little Greenbrier." Greene County Deed Book 4, p.369, Jan. 18, 1806.

58. Shivers, p. 43.

59. Fischer, Albion's Seed, 1989.

60. Walters, Oconee River Tales to Tell, 1995, p.71.

61. Owen, The Sacred Flame of Love: Methodism and Society in Nineteenth-Century Georgia, (The University of Georgia Press, 1998)p.14.

62. Owen, p.25-26.

63. See their entries in genealogy chart.

64. When Clement Allen died in 1823, his son Young S. Allen was appointed adminstrator of his estate. Georgia Journal newspaper. September 28, 1824. Since Young S. Allen would have to be 21 years or older to qualify for this position, Nancy and Clement would have been married sometime before 1803.

65. Archibald and Lucy's marriage date is listed in a lawsuit Archie later filed in Jasper County, Georgia against some of his in-laws on January 3, 1815.

66. The will of Mary Browning McKissack's father, Joshua, refers to her as Mary McKissack. The will was recorded January 10, 1807 in Clarke County, Georgia.

67. Definite proof of these women's husbands does not exist at this time, but a Samuel Pennington and John Stewart signed for the interest of Polly and Lucy, respectively, in the estate of their father in 1815. Available documentation indicates the families of these men were in east Georgia in the early 1800's and that Polly and Lucy were "marrying age" about this time.

68. Bridenbaugh, Myths and Realities, Societies of the Colonial South, 1952. p.135.

69. Fischer.

70. Fischer, p.663.

71. Fischer, p.666.

72. Wood, 1805 Georgia Land Lottery, 1964.

73. Wood.

74. Putnam County Deed Book D, p.130, December 29, 1807. John McKissack to Henry Cooper. Fifty acres out of lot 178. The deed says this is land on which John McKissack now

lives, being part of lot 178 in 2nd district of Putnam. Jane McKissack also makes her mark and Thomas signs as a witness.

75. Putnam County Deed Book B, p.311 - 312, February 12, 1806. George Bearding, a resident of Sevier County, Tennessee, to Archibald McKissack. 202½ acres.

76. Putnam County Deed Book F, p. 317, April 15, 1807. Solomon Thornton to Thomas McKissick. Sixty-two acres of lot 98, on the waters of Cedar Creek.

77. Will of John McKissick, June 1815, Putnam County, Georgia.

78. Wynd, Putnam County Georgia Records.

79. Gilmer, First Settlers in Upper Georgia, 1965, p.168.

80. Rice.

81. Miles, The Spirit of the Mountains, p.13-14.

82. Rice.

83. Lane.

84. Lane.

85. Fox-Genovese, Within the Plantation Household, 1988.

86. Fox-Genovese.

87. Postell, The Health of Slaves on Southern Plantations, 1970.

88. Loose Papers, Estate of John McKissack, 1815, Putnam County, Georgia.

89. Rice.

90. Bonner, Milledgeville, 1978.

221. Bonner, Ibid.

92. National Archives, Washington, D.C., Georgia State Archives, Atlanta, GA.

93. National Archives.

94. 1815 Estate of John McKissack, Loose Estate Papers, Putnam County, GA.

CHAPTER XVI
ANOTHER GENERATION MOVES ON

Life for the families of John and Jane's children continued in much the same fashion after John's death. Their wives, husbands and children lived much the same slow farming life of their ancestors. Public records show them involved in the usual pursuits of farmers of their time, including buying and selling land, suing, writing letters, serving in the militia, being sued. [1]

Jonathon, of course, had already died in Person County, North Carolina in 1813, and William and Elizabeth lived in east Tennessee. John and Jane's daughters — Mary ("Polly"), Nancy, and Lucy -- as was the custom of the time, followed their husbands, but still lived in central Georgia for the most part. Records show James, Thomas, Duncan, Archibald, and John, as remaining in central Georgia for the time being also. They owned land in Putnam, Jones, and Jasper counties.

James, the oldest son, apparently continued farming near his father's original farms. John Sr.'s will had given him "the land whereon he now lives." Likewise, John Jr., the youngest son, probably lived near James, as in John Sr's will he had given him "the land where I now live." Their mother Jane lived nearby also since John had provided for her with 50 acres until she died.

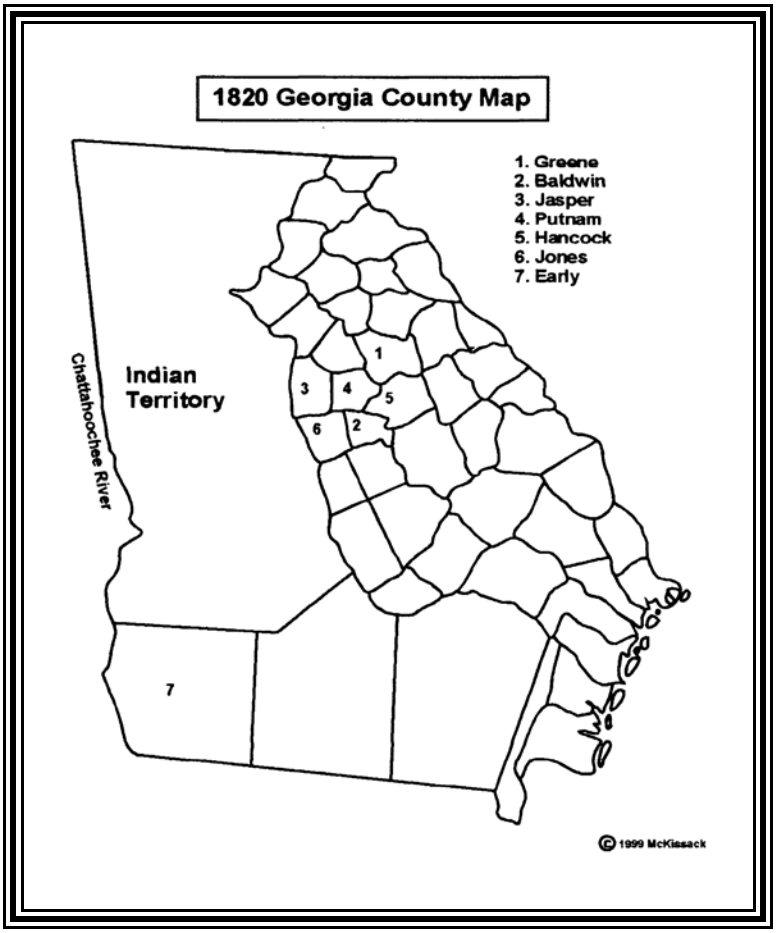
Archibald is listed in Putnam County during this time, probably living along Murder or Cedar Creeks. Duncan is in Putnam County at this time, also.

Thomas McKissack had moved to neighboring Jones County in 1812. Interestingly, the lands that Thomas McKissack owned later became part of a famous plantation, the Jarrell Plantation, which is today a state park and museum near Macon, Georgia. These lands were located not too far from the other McKissacks' lands in Jasper and Putnam Counties. Tax Digests and land records indicate Thomas purchased a portion of the Jarrell Plantation lands in 1813.[2]

ANOTHER MIGRATION-- SOUTHWEST GEORGIA

But eventually John and Jane's children and their families began drifting to the western part of the state. Letters were arriving in Eatonton for Duncan as late as 1825, but he died in Jasper County in 1850.[3] John Jr. apparently lived in Putnam County until at least 1849, then moved to Tallapoosa County, Alabama.[4] Nancy's husband Clement Allen died in 1823, and she appears living near her children and other relatives in Meriwether County, Georgia in the 1850 U.S. Census. It appears that Lucy McKissack Stewart and her husband John died and were buried in Schley County, Georgia. Of Mary "Polly" Pennington we know little; a Mary Pennington, aged 60 to 70 years old, appears in Troup County, Georgia in 1840 and another, 30 to 40 years old, appears in Jasper County, Georgia in 1830.

Other members of the family -- Archibald, Thomas, and James -- would leave central Georgia with their families by 1820. The reason for this was the 1820 lottery for lands in Southwestern Georgia. These land had been recently ceded to the whites by the Indians. And just as in previous years, the state of Georgia decided to allot these lands by a lottery system. Records indicate that Archibald, Thomas and James' son William were successful entrants into



Note lottery lands in Early County.

the 1820 lottery for these lands. All of these men won land in Early County, which borders the Chattahoochee River in the southwestern corner of modern-day Georgia.

It is fascinating to speculate on what made each generation of McKissacks pick up and move. They did it so often. The lure of their fresh, new and free lands in Early County, Georgia was probably what pulled Archie, Thomas, and William away from Jasper County. If they had wanted, however, they could have simply sold the lands they won, pocketed the money and "stayed put." Many Georgians did just that.

A passage from *The Savannah* (Stokes, 1979) explains that in addition to the "pull" of new, cheap land, there may have also been reasons "pushing" the McKissacks to new land:

"Already in the thirties some plantation owners had begun to move away. They went, like some of the smaller farmers who had preceded them, into Alabama and Mississippi. Others emigrated to southwest Georgia, where new lands were then being opened up. But they all left an ominous portent behind them, could it have been read. It was to be found in the ruts and gullies that were beginning to scar the fields. The land was wearing out from over-cultivation and careless exploitation; erosion was eating it away. In the earlier days when a piece of land wore out, the plantation owner would merely take up new land in the same general locality. That dodge was no longer possible."

Whatever the reason for the McKissacks' move, the journey to southwest Georgia could not have been an easy one. In Archibald and Lucy's case, they had three children --James, Mary, and Radford -- at the time of the move. Lucy could have been pregnant with a fourth, Archibald W., on the way to Early County, Georgia. They may have had a large amount of household goods to move, and were possibly accompanied by several slaves. The book *The People of Georgia* (Lane, 1975) contains the following passage which may well describe Archie and Lucy's family on the move:

In 1834 Tyrone Power described other caravans moving towards Georgia's

> western border, 'each laden, first with the needful provisions and such household gear as may be considered indispensable; next, over this portion of the freight is stowed the family of the emigrant planter, his wife, but commonly a round squad of white-haired children, with their attendants; on the march these vehicles are surrounded by slaves, varying in numbers from half a dozen to fifty or sixty, according to the wealth of the proprietor; a couple of mounted travelers commonly complete the cavalcade, which moves over these roads at the rate of twelve or fifteen miles a day.' Power said the numbers of immigrants leaving Georgia for the Southwest were incredible.

Southwest Georgia was still rugged frontier country in the early 1800's. Hostile Indians still lived in the area, and there was always the possibility of an uprising. In addition, many of the whites in the border regions were crude or even murderous individuals called "Crackers." The families of Archibald, Thomas, and James may have traveled together and there would have been some safety in their numbers. Nevertheless, the McKissack men undoubtedly have kept their weapons handy on the trip through the unpopulated woods on the way to Early County, Georgia. Some idea of the kind of scenes witnessed on their journey can be gathered by another extended excerpt from *The People of Georgia*:

> Georgia was a tough territory, swarming with drunken, brawling men, who were scrambling and struggling for land. Florida was a refuge for freebooters, outlaws, adventurers, runaway slaves, for it remained Spanish territory until 1819. Alabama was a place where the marauding Indians came from and where the latest line of settlers disappeared to. In 1787 the young wife of a frontier tavern keeper wrote to her father in Massachusetts: 'All of the state of Georgia would be no inducement to me to bring my dear little Lambs in this flock of Wolves, as I may properly call many of the inhabitants of this State. The people are the most profane, blasphemous set of people I ever heard of. Sometimes they look like a flock of blackbirds, and perhaps not one in fifty but what we call fighting drunk. It is impossible for you to conceive what language is used.' Peter Remsen, a New York trader passing through Milledgeville [near the McKissack's home] in 1818, viewed the state legislators at the capital city of Georgia; ' Their conduct was beneath that of any crew of sailors that was ever seen. Cursing, quarreling, hollowing, drinking, getting drunk. Disputing landlords' bills. Drunken men hugging sober ones. Illiterate, mean appearances, readiness for rasseling, etc.' Columbus, at the extreme western frontier of Georgia, was especially notorious for its drunken Indians and young prostitutes. It was a world of hunting, drinking, gambling, and fighting.
> Fierce fighting was a conspicuous element of frontier life, invariably noted by Georgia travelers as a reflection of the state's primitive society. The state legislature in 1787 complained against Georgians who would "willfully or maliciously cut out or disable the tongue, put out an eye, slit the nose, bite or cut off the ear, nose or lip, or cut off or disable any limb or member of any person.' Charles Wilson Janson came to Georgia about 1807 and observed a gouging match: 'We found the combatants fast clenched by the hair, and their thumbs endeavoring to force a passage into each other's eyes, which several of the bystanders were betting upon the first eye to be turned out of its socket. At

length they fell to the ground, and in an instant the uppermost sprung up with his antagonist's eye in his hand!!! The savage crowd applauded, while, sick with horror, we galloped away from the infernal scene.'

Anthony Stokes, Georgia's colonial chief justice, marveled how a small weakling could disable a lusty, muscular fellow by grabbing his opponent's head, putting a thumb into his eye, strangling his throat and biting his left cheek, all in one swift, dexterous operation. William Butterworth, a young sailor at the Georgia coast before 1830, expecting frontier settlers to fight a classic English boxing match, was horrified at the appearance of the victim of a typical brawl: 'A shocking spectacle, a part of the skin of his forehead, with his eyebrow, hanging upon his face, and the blood streaming down his cheeks. His antagonist informed me it was bit, assuring me that a quantity of hairs were then sticking in his teeth.' Isaac Weld, who came to Georgia in 1798, reported: ' Whenever these people come to blows, they fight just like wild beasts, biting, kicking and endeavoring to tear each other's eyes out with their nails. To perform the horrid operation, the combatant twists his fore-fingers in the side locks of his adversary's hair, and then applies his thumb to the bottom of the eye, to force it out of the socket.' In some parts of the state, he said, every third or fourth man appeared with just one eye. At Jacksonborough it was said that in the mornings after drunken frolics and fights you could see children picking up *eyeballs* in tea saucers. In the gold-mining district of north Georgia, when Cynthia Hyde was brought to trial for assaulting Polly Heflin, the lady declared with passion that she was "as supple as a lumber-jack, strong as a jack-screw, and savage as a wildcat.

Other problems which the McKissacks and their children faced were bad roads and no hotels. Again, *The People of Georgia* gives us some idea of the difficulties:

In 1803 a road was laid out across the Cherokee Indian territory from Greensborough to the Mississippi, called the Three-Chop Road, because the trail was blazed with three chops on the trunks of trees along the route. In 1820 traveler Adam Hodgson reported: 'Three rough backwoodsmen arrived from the Mississippi, with a wretched account of the roads; the bridges over the creeks having been almost all washed away, and the swamps being nearly impassable. Their horses were quite exhausted; and they strongly urged me not to attempt the expedition.'

The slow and laborious routes were also dangerous ones. C.D. Arfwedson, a Swedish scholar who came to Georgia in 1833, state the situation bluntly: 'A traveler intending to proceed by land from Augusta [Georgia] to New Orleans is earnestly recommended to bid adieu to all comforts and make the necessary preparations for a hard and rough campaign. If he has a wife and children unprovided for, and to whom he has not the means of leaving a suitable legacy, let him by all means be careful to insure his life to the highest amount; for the chances of perishing on the road are at the rate of ten to one, by horses running away, drowning, by murder, by explosion.' When Charles Lyell had to resort to

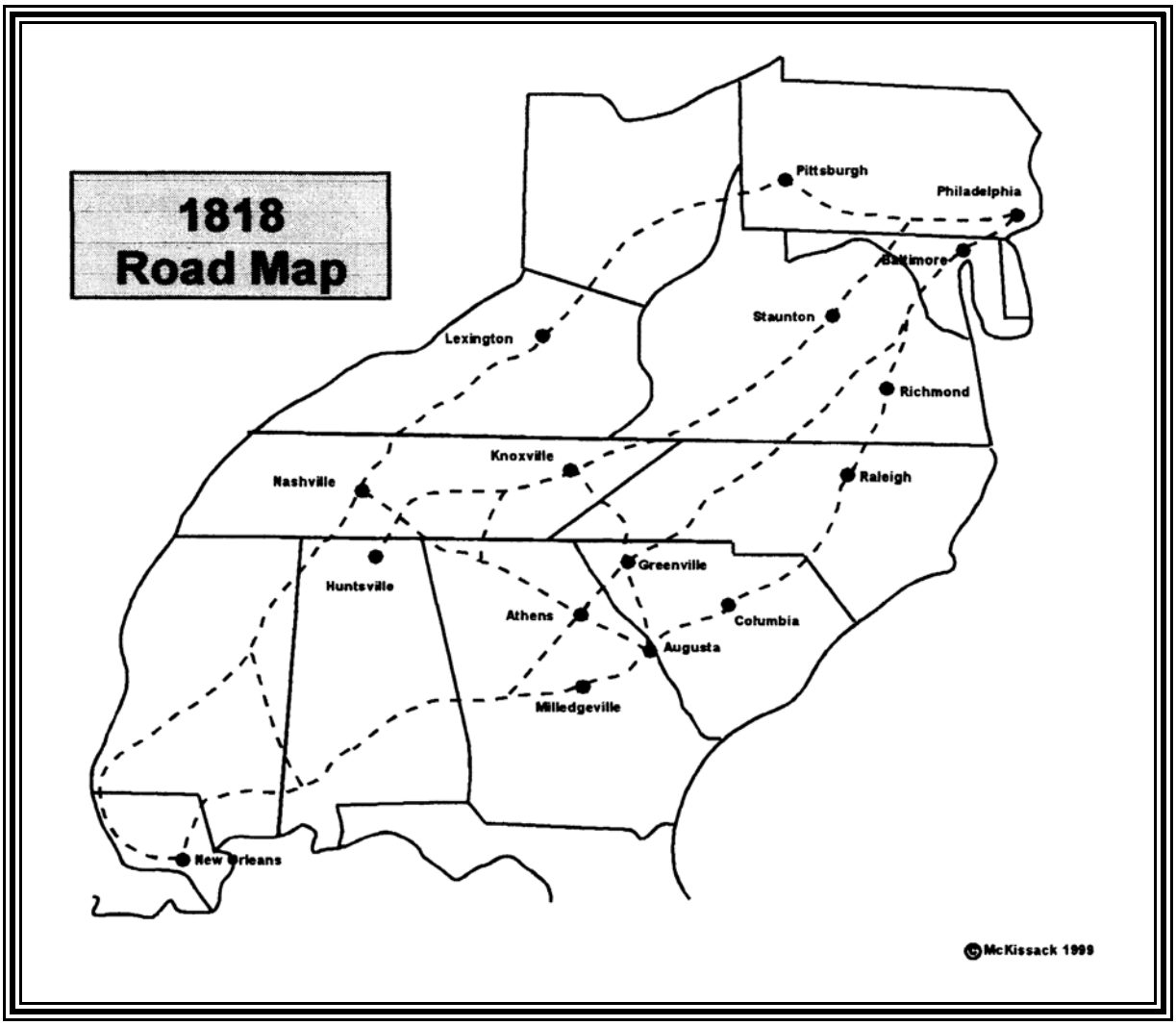
riding a stage instead of a railroad or steamship in 1846, he noticed that for the first time his friends wished him, on parting a *safe* journey, not just a pleasant one. His overland trip across Georgia proved their concern: 'We were often called upon, on a sudden, to throw our weight first to the right, and then to the left side, to balance the vehicle and prevent an upset, when one wheel was sinking into a deep rut. Sometimes all the gentlemen were ordered to get out in the dark, and walk in the wet and muddy road. The coachman would then whip on his steeds over a fallen tree or deep pool, causing tremendous jolts, so that my wife was thrown first against the roof and then against the sides, having almost reason to envy those who were merely splashing through the mud.'

Places to eat and rest were hard to find and then were generally unsatisfactory. In 1783 Joshua Clifford instructed his daughter in the fine arts of inn-keeping, Georgia-style: 'Keep a spit box in each room: this will teach vulgar people that the floors were not made to spit on. Don't allow your children to examine the baggage of your guests; not to belch upwind at the table.' There were few single beds or private rooms. George Featherstonhaugh wrote with philosophical calm from the Georgia-Tennessee border in 1835: 'We stopped for the night at another dreadful dirt hole. The fatigue of the day made me sleep well, although on the floor.' Sheets were changed only when they began to smell. Always, Margaret Hall lamented in 1828, there was the usual complement of fleas and bugs; 'But we have ceased to expect anything else. Every night I am awakened by Mrs. Cownie striking a light to commence her search for her tormentors. When I undress, I find them crawling on my skin, nasty wretches.'

Perhaps the McKissacks trip was not as bad as the above examples. We can guess that it was not so bad for their children, since children are more prone to see the fun in adventure than the danger and responsibility. James and Radford were probably young boys, from 9-13 years old, and may have enjoyed the trip hugely. When the family of Gideon Linceum moved from Georgia to Alabama in 1818 he wrote: 'The journey, the way we traveled, was about five hundred miles, all wilderness; full of deer and turkeys, and the streams full of fish. We were six weeks on the road; and altogether it was, as I thought and felt, the most delightful time I had ever spent in my life. My brother Garland and I
'flanked it' as the wagons rolled along and killed deer, turkeys, wild pigeons; and at nights, with pine torches, we fished and killed a great many with my bow and arrows.'"

Likewise, the young girls probably enjoyed the journey just as much. In *Within the Plantation Household*, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese recounts the story of Sarah Gayle, whose family moved to Alabama even earlier than the McKissacks.

The Gayles cast their lot with Alabama when it was still a territory. Sarah Gayle



was never among those who bemoaned the material aspects of westward migration and 'frontier' life. Indeed, her cherished recollections included the westward journey in 1810 and a stay at Fort Stoddert, Alabama, where she lived with her parents. She could recall with delight the pleasures of riding astride, camping out along the way, and being pampered by soldiers; she could even recall without undue alarm the shadowy presence of Indians, although she knew that her father 'slept with arms under his head, and any stir amongst the horses at night roused all and put them on their guard.' She recollected herself as having, by turn, run 'with the negroes' and perched herself on a packhorse, as having felt her greatest glee 'when mounted on one to myself, allowed to follow my humor in keeping to the path (road there was none in many places) or wandering off, at short distances, amongst the undisturbed shades of trees that encroached on the trace we traveled.' The soldiers, who entertained her by placing her on the wheel of a cannon and encouraging her to 'stand the report without shrinking,' delighted her no less. She was, she recalls, 'frankly lively -- fearless they endeavored to make me, and partly succeeded for the time.' Nor did she especially protest against living conditions on the frontier... The young Sarah Gayle found coffee in a tin cup and food cooked over an open fire delicious...

Whatever the conditions of their travel, the McKissacks must have felt part of a great wave of immigration into Southwestern Georgia and Alabama. "In August 1800, the white and black population of the portion of the Old Southwest that became the state of Alabama was 1,250; in June 1830 the state census revealed 309,527 residents; and ten years later the number had leapt to 590,756... By 1817 the movement was described by James Graham, with an italicized misspelling that further emphasizes how the phenomenon in North Carolina resembled a plague. 'The *Alabama Feaver* rages here with great violence and has *carried off* numbers of our citizens... There is no question that this *feaver* is contagious.... for as soon as one neighbor visits another who has just returned from Alabama he immediately discovers the same symptoms which are exhibited by the one who has seen alluring Alabama.'

A SHORT STAY

It could not have been long after they arrived on their lands in Early County, Georgia that the McKissacks got a look at some of those lands across the river in “alluring Alabama.” Shortly thereafter, they too caught the Alabama “feaver” and decided to move. Archibald moved across the Chattahoochee River to Henry County, Alabama by 1823 because records show his daughter Mary marrying Matthew Perryman in Henry County that year. Likewise, Archie helped appraise an estate in Henry County in 1822. Though Early County records show William sold his “lottery land” in 1832, no similar sales are of record out of Archibald and Thomas. By the early 1830's, all of the family was across the Chattahoochee River in newly formed Henry County, Alabama and listed in the U.S. Census of that year.

CHAPTER XVII
HENRY COUNTY, ALABAMA

The settlement of Henry County, Alabama, actually dated back to 1814 when the lands were ceded to the whites by the Creek Indians. During the War of 1812, the Creeks attacked white settlements and successfully destroyed a fort in central Alabama, killing the hundreds of white settlers who had taken refuge there. After this, Andrew Jackson, a major-general in the Tennessee militia, collected a force and marched into Alabama to fight the Creeks, finally defeating them decisively at the battle of Horseshoe Bend on the Tallapoosa River. After their defeat, the Creek chiefs met Jackson in 1814 and relinquished most of their lands in Alabama.

This was an enormous tract of land in central and southern Alabama (see map). The new lands drew settlers by the thousands. In the book *Henry -- The Mother County*, Dr. Hoyt Warren wrote:

> In 1818 and the early part of 1819, settlers began to increase their rate of flow into the territory soon to become Henry County... Most of these early pioneers settled on old abandoned Indian fields on or near the Chattahoochee River, gradually extending the settlements into the interior. All of the branches and creeks were lined by canebreaks of the densest kind and game of various kinds abounded all over the country. The chief hunting grounds of the Indians had been and were on the Yattawabbe and Mersee Creeks, and Indian trails between these points served as the first roads. Along these crude trails came many of the settlers who were later to become prominent in county affairs... On and on they came to this new land. The call to new, unsettled lands brought [among others]...Archie and John Mckissack.

We know, of course, that Archie McKissack did not arrive in Henry County until after 1819. The McKissacks would have been very much aware, however, of the sale of the Creek lands even when they lived in central Georgia. The first lands went on sale in the state capital, Milledgeville, near the McKissack's home in 1817. Tracts were sold to the highest bidder, with unsold tracts going for $2.00 an acre. Companies were formed by feverish speculators to buy up the best land and sell it for a higher price later. There was much fraud and shady dealing. By 1819, the lands in Henry County, where Archie and Lucy McKissack and James, Thomas and William later moved, went on sale. [5]

EARLY DAYS IN HENRY COUNTY

During the 1812 war with the Creek Indians, another fort had been built in Georgia across the Chattahoochee River from Henry County, Alabama. When Indian attacks grew severe, settlers took refuge there. This fort was called Fort Gaines, and during the early 1800s it became an important waystation for settlers flooding into Southeast Alabama. The fort and its surrounding town stood on a high bluff overlooking the Chattahoochee river (See map).

Directly across the river from Fort Gaines was the trading settlement of Franklin,

Alabama. Franklin had been established as a trading post in 1817. It soon began to compete with Fort Gaines for the trade of local settlers.

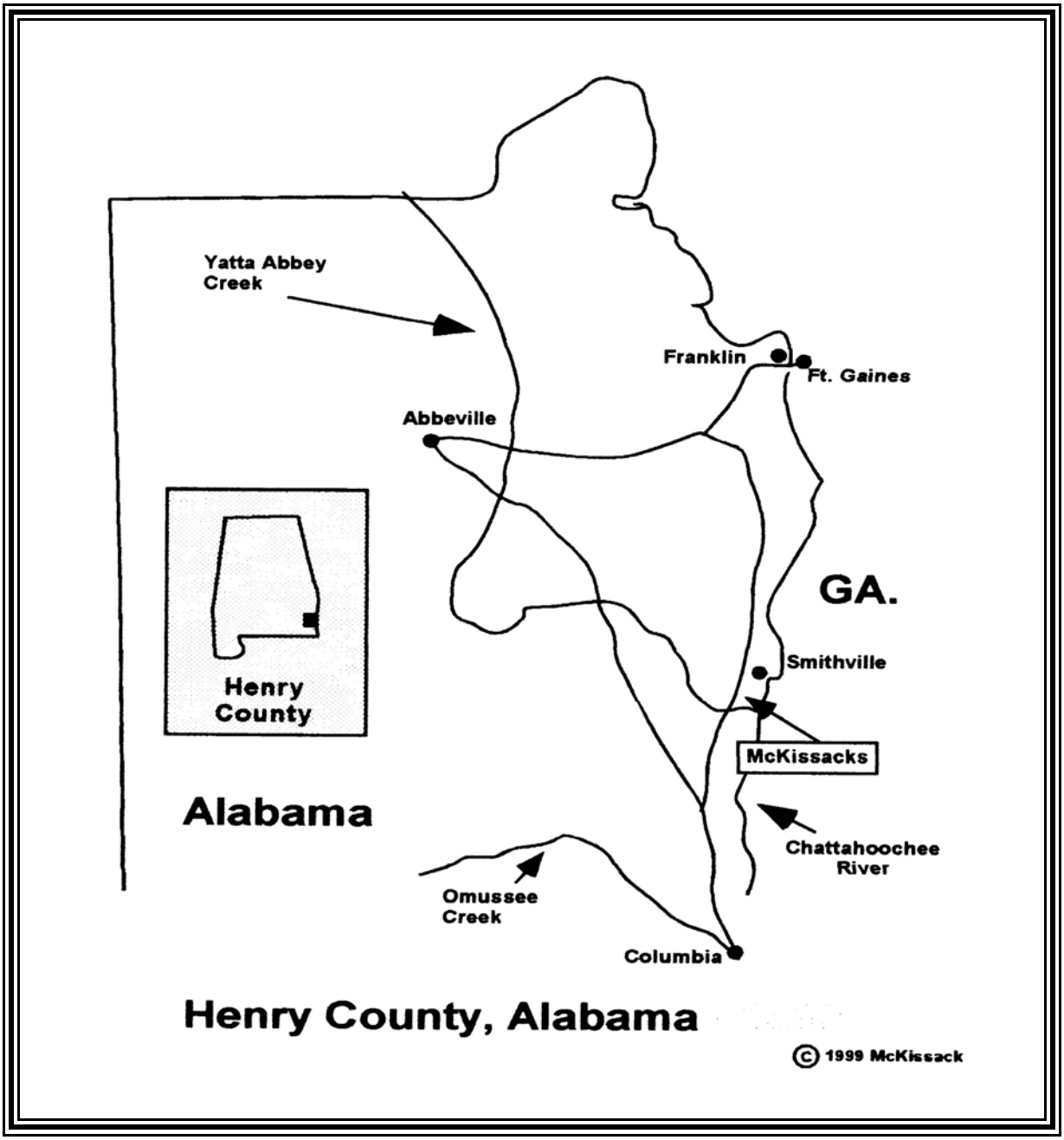
When the McKissacks first traveled to the lands they had won by lottery in Early County, Georgia, it is likely they passed through Fort Gaines. Likewise, when they decided to move to Henry County, they may have crossed the Chattahoochee River at that town. An early traveler to the area described the Chattahoochee as "a rapid stream about sixty yards wide." He noted that he crossed the river in "a small tottering canoe...without any accident but with considerable difficulty." Nevertheless, by the time the McKissacks arrived, another settler had built a ferry of logs and began charging to move passengers and their possessions across the river between Fort Gaines and the small trading community of Franklin, Alabama. The going rates were one dollar for a wagon and four horses, and twelve and a half cents for a man and horse.[6]

Once in Henry County, travel was difficult. The only available roads were Indian trails and these had to be cleared and widened if carts and wagons were to pass. Nevertheless, people continued to immigrate to the area. Most of the early settlements were established on farms adjoining the river, some on fields that had once been tilled by the Indians. With time, these farms extended further and further away from the river and west into Alabama.

Numerous travelers noted the beauty of eastern Alabama. In 1838, Caroline Gilman visited Columbus, Georgia, and saw something other than the wild and licentious behavior described by others. Staring across the river into east Alabama she saw "one of the most magnificent displays of scenery which Nature or Art had ever presented...All that the mind can conceive of beauty is here depicted in the sight of the setting sun, or on a calm lovely evening in summer."[7]

While these descriptions no doubt brought many settlers to Alabama, it was the lure of free and fertile lands that caused the rush. The lands in Henry County, however, were also partly covered with a tough grass called "wiregrass." These lands were mostly in the Southern Red Hills region, many miles south of Columbus. Though the area had its share of beauty, the lands were of only average fertility, with nothing approaching the growing potential of some of Alabama's other farming regions. Nevertheless, the McKissacks situation was improved by the fact that they owned lands bordering on the Chattachoochee River and also on what the Indians had called Yatta Abbey Creek. (meaning "long trail"); these lands were more fertile than those further south.[8] In fact, Yatta Abbey Creek, later called simply Abbie Creek, passed directly through the middle of the McKissacks' lands. (Today part of the McKissacks' lands along Abbie Creek enclose a public park and boat landing for boats to access the Chattahoochee River -- see map.)

Today the Abbie is a winding, sandy-bottomed creek with high, steep banks. Trees bearing long gray beards of Spanish moss form a canopy in places over the stream. On the average weekday a visitor will find the area quiet and restful. It must have been even more so when the McKissacks first walked along its banks, passing through the canebrakes and swamps. The McKissacks and other white settlers and their slaves began clearing these and cultivating the fertile soils along the Abbie's banks. Land and census records show that by the early 1800's Archie, Thomas, and James were living on adjoining farms along the Abbie[9] (see map).



PIONEERS -- AGAIN

There can be no doubt that the small McKissack clan in Henry County -- the families of Archie, James, and Thomas -- began their lives in Alabama in much the same way their ancestors had in each of their previous moves across America. Their first task would have been to build lean-tos or log cabins in which to protect themselves against the elements. The next task would have been to clear enough ground to plant food crops and cotton. The men and slaves would have cleared land and hunted for food. The women would have performed the same

domestic chores their mothers before them had performed to contribute to the families' survival. The situation in the first months or even year would have been crude, but perhaps comfortable by the standards of the time. It could not have helped their attempts to establish themselves that the year of 1823 saw an unusual and terrible freeze in Henry County. Rivers froze, which was unheard of that far south. Wild turkeys were found frozen in the forest.[10]

Unfortunately, like their ancestors in Georgia and North Carolina, the McKissacks in Henry County, Alabama, left no written description of their lives. Not far from the McKissacks' farms, however, a family named the Fordhams also lived on Yatta Abbey creek. One of the Fordhams later related to her granddaughter memories of the Fordham's early days in that area.[11] No doubt, the McKissacks' lives were very similar.

The Fordhams lived in a "two story double pen log house, sealed...with planks that were hand cut and smoothed with a tool called an adz." Even the staircase was held together with "large wooden pegs fitted into the timber." The great-granddaughter of John Fordham would remember playing in this original cabin until it burned around 1915.[12] The Fordhams produced all their "chickens, eggs, milk, butter and cheese, and all kinds of meats, as well as something growing in the garden most of the year. They also had molasses, and honey from their hives." Items such as "salt and other necessities that they could not grow, or make for themselves" were purchased.

As more and more settlers took up lands in Henry County, they began to build a familiar civilization around them. A grist mill for grinding corn into meal was built on Yatta Abbey Creek west of the McKissacks' farms. The county's first sawmill was constructed on Omersee Creek just west of Columbia, a growing river town nine miles to the south of the McKissacks farms where some of the McKissacks would later move in the 1830s and attend church.[13] Small trading settlements grew up in the county, including Shorterville a few miles to the north and Abbeville to the northwest, though most of the McKissacks' activities would have been focused on the river towns of Columbia and Franklin.

As mentioned, in their first years on the new lands the McKissacks cut down the trees and drained the swamps along the creek and began planting cotton. Irish overseers familiar with draining flooded lands helped establish the ditches and drainage systems used by the early settlers. When a particularly big task was at hand, settlers would help each other. They called this "swapping work."[14] If they owned slaves, they would swap work with each other's slaves, also.

One particularly big job was "log rolling," or removing felled trees from land. A farmer would first fell the trees and cut them into manageable lengths. Then he would send out a call to his neighbors for help. On the appointed day neighbors, often entire families, would travel to the farm where the "rolling" was to occur. The men and slaves worked in two-man teams to roll the logs to burning piles. The women would prepare a noon-day meal. After the meal, work would continue until the sun went down. Then another big meal was served and fiddles and banjos were brought out for entertainment. In the slow and relatively uneventful existence of the frontier planter, a log rolling could be an exciting gathering.[15]

Other big jobs and social events were house raisings, corn shuckings, and grain threshings. Houses could be raised in a single day by an organized group of men. In the case of corn and grain, it was important to get them harvested and placed in storage as soon as possible to prevent spoilage. Obviously, this would go faster with many hands.

One of the most important aspects of these types of gatherings was the sense of community they engendered. People at such events worked together in the most intimate way. Men matched in a team at a log rolling, for example, needed to coordinate their efforts. Sometimes the young men matched their strength against each other, testing their partner's ability to keep up. Women worked together, also. When quilting each woman was aware of how fine and fast the others were sewing. In cooking they coordinated efforts around a big fire and table to create the huge meals. Young boys and girls looked forward to the day they would be included in these events as adults. Friends and enemies were made, and no doubt spouses were found at these work and social gatherings.

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

Indeed, perhaps it was at one of these big work and social gatherings that the eldest daughter of Archibald and Lucy, Mary McKissack, met her husband Matthew Perryman. Whatever the circumstances of their meeting, they were married on what must have been a hot Alabama day on August 8, 1823.[16] Mary was only 15 years old at the time. Perryman was 23. Perryman had moved to the area from Twiggs County, Georgia. He owned a plantation near the McKissacks, as well as land across the river in Early County, Georgia. He would eventually become one of the largest and most successful planters in the area, representing Henry County in the state legislature and at one point running for Governor.

Children of James and ? McKissack (+ indicates spouses)

....	John Wesley McKissack 1796 - 1869	+Mary Wheeler 1816 -
....	Susannah McKissack 1806 -	+William Barnett
....	Sarah McKissack 1808 -	+William Ayers
....	Elizabeth McKissack 1811 -	+James Taylor
....	Martha McKissack	+Parker Butts
....	Archibald D. McKissack 1816 - 1838	+Elizabeth Foster 1820 -

The year after Mary's marriage to Matthew Perryman, her mother Lucy McKissack gave birth to another daughter, Elizabeth. At this point, Archie and Lucy already had three sons -- William, 14- year-old Radford Ellis, and four-year-old Archibald W. Three years later, Lucy and Archibald were blessed with a final child, John Wesley.

Other McKissack women marrying in Henry County in the early days were Susannah McKissack (married William Barnett, January 21, 1826), Sarah McKissack (married William Ayers, March 22, 1830) and Elizabeth McKissack (married James Taylor, February 1, 1831). Unfortunately, we have not at this time identified these women's parents. Most likely they were daughters of James or Thomas.

And McKissack men likewise began marrying in the early days of Henry County. James' son John Wesley McKissack married Mary Wheeler, December 8, 1830 and another son -- Archibald D. McKissack -- married Elizabeth Foster on September 11, 1836, though Archibald

D. would die a short time later in 1838. William McKissack, Archibald and Lucy's eldest son, married Mariah Ward sometime during the 1830's, and they soon had at least two sons.[17] The Wards would become one of Henry County's richest and most prominent families. By the end of the 1830s, the McKissacks had been in Henry County for 17 years and had married into and become woven into the fabric of Henry County.

In addition to marrying into some of the first families of the county, at least one McKissack was also involved in its military and political life. Political returns for the year 1832 list a "Captain McKissack's beat." This was a reference to a militia district (which apparently included the McKissacks' area as well as the town of Columbia) organized for military purposes as well as for taxing, voting and other political activities. Captain McKissack would have been in charge of organizing these activities, and commanding the militia company from that area in time of emergency. It's not clear which of the McKissacks was "Captain McKissack." Chances are that it was either James or Archibald's son William, since the returns also show that a William McKissack ran for county sheriff in 1838, placing third in a three-way race. Captain McKissack remained in office until 1839, after which there is no mention of him.[18]

COTTON

Descendants of Archibald and Lucy McKissack (+ indicates spouses)

....	William McKissack 1804 - 1850	+Mariah Ward
....	Mary McKissack 1807 - 1845	+Matthew T. Perryman 1800 - 1853
....	Radford Ellis McKissack 1810 - 1882	+Mary Martha Jones 1831 - 1879
....	Archibald W. McKissack 1820 - 1883	+Mary Fidelia Risen 1829 - 1904
....	Elizabeth McKissack 1823 -	+Pierce Harris - 1850
	*2nd Husband of Elizabeth McKissack:	+James Connelly
....	John Wesley McKissack 1827 - 1906	Eliza Jane Shanks 1831 - 1884

Just as in Georgia, the crop of cotton drove much of the settlement in Alabama. As we have seen, many of the new settlers flooding into Alabama were seeking fresh, fertile lands for growing this crop. In 1828, a traveler in Alabama reported that his boat stopped at about twenty landings and took on cotton, and that at each landing people came on board to talk about the prospect of cotton.

> Every flaw of wind from the shore wafted off the smell of that useful plant; at every dock or wharf we encountered it in huge piles or pyramids of bales and our decks were soon choked up with it. All day, and almost all night long, the captain, pilot, crew and passengers were talking of nothing else; and sometimes our ears were so wearied with the sound of cotton! cotton! cotton! that we gladly hailed a fresh inundation of company in the hopes of some change -- but alas! Wiggin's Landing, or Choctaw Creek, or the towns of Gains or Cahawba or Canton, produced us nothing but fresh importations of the raw material. 'What's

> cotton at?' was the first eager inquiry. 'Ten cents! Oh that will never do!' From the cotton in the market they went to crops in the fields -- the frost which had nipped their shoots -- the bad times -- the overtrading -- and so round to prices and prospects again and again, till I wished all the cotton in country was at the bottom of the Alabama![19]

Its not clear just how involved the McKissacks were in this absorption with cotton growing and selling. As mentioned, the southeastern region of Alabama was mostly covered with wiregrass and its fertility for growing cotton was not as great as other parts of the state, such as the famous "Black Belt" (so-called for its rich black soil). In fact, many farmers in southeastern Alabama concentrated on raising cattle as a livelihood. Some newspapers called the counties in this area "cow counties."[20] Nevertheless, the McKissacks owned some of the more fertile lands along the Yatta Abbey Creek and Chattahoochee River, with the river providing easy transport for crops. The land here would have been better than most in the county for cotton farming.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

There is much evidence that some of the McKissacks were active in religious activities. In the early days of Henry County, however, religious services, like everything else, was conducted in crude structures. A mile or two west of the McKissack lands along the Yatta Abbey there was an early church known as Hickory Grove. It is recorded that several of the McKissack's neighbors belonged to this church. Many years later, Radford Ellis McKissack's wife Martha was buried there in August of 1879. It's likely that Archibald and Lucy McKissack were buried in this cemetery, also, but many of the graves are now unmarked or lost.[21]

The existence of many John Wesleys in the McKissack family (at one time there were three of this name in Henry County alone) indicates a connection with Methodism, one of whose principle founders was John Wesley. Methodism won many converts during the 1790s in the Georgia counties where the McKissacks' lived. And as we shall see, the McKissacks adhered to this faith in Alabama.

Regardless of religious affiliation, it appears that the Christians of early Henry county were broad-minded. By 1834, for instance, Radford Ellis McKissack, J.T. McKissack, Archibald D. McKissack and Matthew Perryman joined several other men in providing money to build a "public meeting house" in the booming steamboat town of Columbia, a few miles south of the Yatta Abbey. (Interestingly, the subscription document notes that two of the men who agreed to underwrite the meeting house were to pay their share in lumber, not money.) The subscription document states that the meeting house was to be "under the control of the Baptist denomination" but that "the Baptists should have and make known the --- meetings or times of worship monthly and at no other time to have preference over any denomination of Christians."[22] So it seems likely that the Methodists shared the building with the Baptists, some of whom were their kin. For instance, when Mary McKissack's husband Matthew Perryman died, his tombstone read, in part: "By a Christian life the communion of the Baptist Church, he endeared himself to all who knew him."

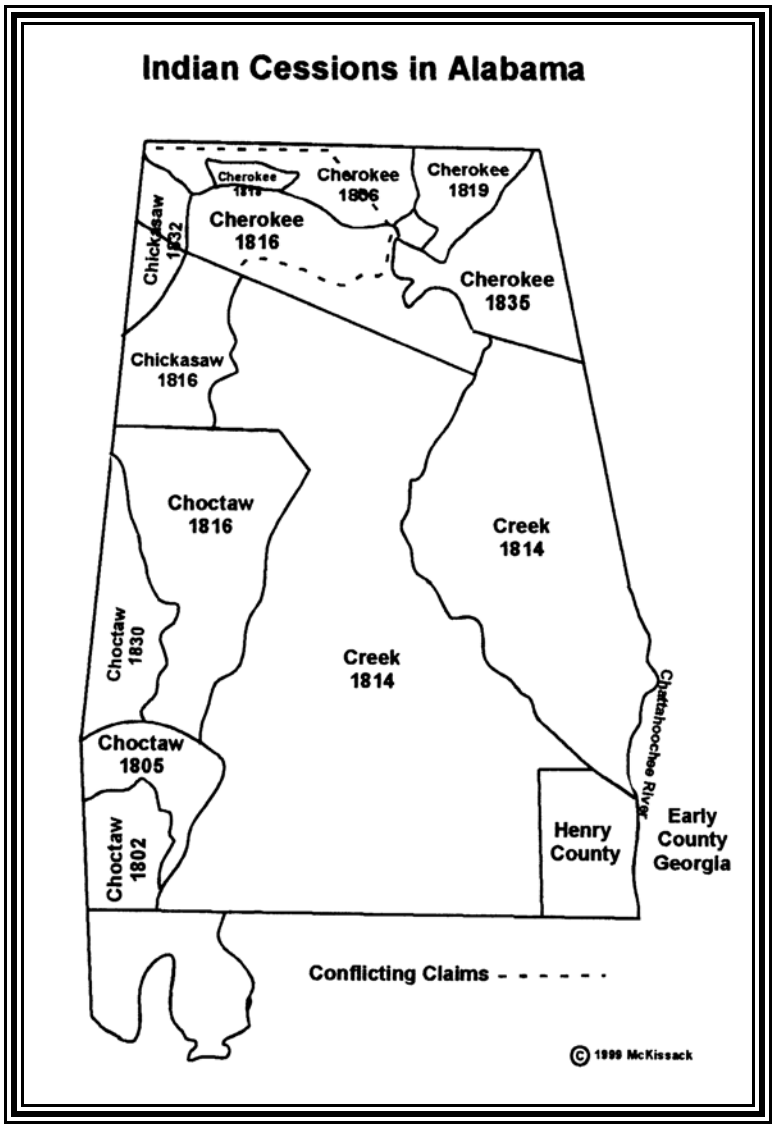
It appears that most of the McKissacks continued to worship as Methodists. In 1854, for

example, Radford Ellis and Mary McKissack named a son Bishop Andrew Radford Ellis McKissack. Bishop Andrew was a senior bishop of the Methodist-Episcopal Church. The Methodist Church held its annual conference in Talladega, Alabama, in 1854, and Bishop Andrew attended and preached.[23] Another subscriber and commissioner for the fund for building the public meeting house in Columbia was Howell Hodges, clerk of court for Henry county who married Nancy McKissack, one of the daughters of Thomas and Mary Browning McKissack.

Also worth noting is that in 1849 Archibald and Lucy's son John Wesley married Eliza Jane Shanks, whose father and brothers were noted traveling Methodist ministers. When Lucy died in 1849, her obituary stated that she had "attached herself to the Methodist-Episcopal Church at about fourteen years of age, and lived a faithful member of the same to the end of life."[24]

CHAPTER XVIII
THE INDIAN UPRISING OF 1836

When whites first began to infiltrate the lands that would one day become Alabama, those lands were occupied by four Indian tribes. The Cherokee and Chickasaw occupied the northern and northwestern parts of the state, respectively. Choctaws lived, for the most part, in its western and southwestern portions. Generally speaking, these tribes followed a policy of remaining friendly with the white settlers while adopting some of the whites' agricultural and cultural characteristics. Many of the Cherokee, for instance, began farming in the style of whites, keeping large numbers of domestic animals, learning to spin and weave cloth, and erecting saw mills and cotton gins.



The Creek Indians, however, adopted a belligerent attitude toward white encroachment on their lands. It was this tribe that the McKissacks and their neighbors would come to know best. This tribe occupied the greatest amount of territory in Alabama, with its lands covering the center, south, and southeast portions of the state, including Henry County.

As has been discussed, the Creeks rose against the settlers when the War of 1812 erupted. Although they initially met with success, killing hundreds of men, women and children at Fort Mims, Andrew Jackson marched an army down from Tennessee and defeated the main body of Creeks at their principal stronghold at Horseshoe Bend. This battle broke the power of the hostile Creeks. Many fled into Florida, which was owned by Spain. Those that remained were forced to cede an enormous tract of land. It was this territory into which the first settlers,

including the McKissacks, moved in the early 1800s (see map).

Some Indians continued to live in the ceded areas. Until whites moved onto and claimed the land, there seemed no reason for them to move. The relationship between the cultures could be suspicious, friendly, or both, depending on the individuals involved. In 1822, for example, the year the McKissacks first appear in Henry County, Indians kidnaped two small white children from the nearby town of Franklin on the Chattahoochee. The two children had wandered away from Franklin to play, and the Indians abducted them and took them south to their town in Florida. The boys remained with the Indians for six years until a white man saw them. The white man paid 50 dollars a piece for them and brought them back to Franklin. These kinds of stories no doubt preyed on the minds of the older McKissacks when their children seemed too long playing in the woods.[25]

Even in the 1830s Indians still lived in the area and were neighbors to the Fordham and McKissacks. Another small tribe lived south of them on Omusee Creek, near Columbia. The Fordham family, "had no more than an occasional sight of them or a chance encounter, and when they did, they were certain to give the Indian a friendly gesture or smile every time they were near." Once, when the Indians needed coal, one woman and two men approached John Fordham at his home and "pantomimed filling their pipes to light them." After Fordham determined what they wanted, he filled their container with coal. The Indians "smiled, bowed, and went on their way." At a later visit, Fordham presented the Indians with tinder boxes, which the settlers used to make fire. After the Indians received these gifts, they began to visit the Fordhams more often. They "would suddenly appear with a large string of fish, or a haunch of venison or buffalo, or even an earthen container of cooked food consisting of corn, meat, herbs, or roots." Fordham's daughter visited the Indians' village and was impressed with the cleanliness of their teepees.[26] This friendly relationship with local Indians would continue even through the 1836 war between whites and Indians, a war that, as we will see, took the lives of numerous settlers, including several of the McKissacks.

North of Henry County the Creeks remained in ownership of their lands. Conflict between Indians and whites continued in this area. In January of 1828 an Archibald McKissack signed a petition with other settlers in Lee County, Georgia (later Stewart), which complained of Indians crossing the Chattahoochee into Georgia and stealing farmer's "stock" (we have copied the spelling verbatim from the petition):

> To Governor John Forsyth, Milledgeville, Baldwin County, GA. Executive Office. Sir: Pleasing your Excelience we are Copeld to in form you that the Indens are stealing and keilling ower Stock of everry kind and on the 15th this instat we found an Indin Camp Composed of Seven Indins and after a few words requesting them to go away the Indins made Battle and fierd on us and killed Willaim Grantham and Shot a ball through the Close of Eprim Loovet. These people are Campt in every direction throughout the County and are verry Sawsey and manifest a hostile Dispersition in the general in conciquence of which some of ower Sittizens are leave the Country and unless some relief and that speedily we shaall all be compeld to leave ouer Cuntry.[27]

Archibald McKissack also signed a statement saying "I was at Wm. Granthams house and saw him a Corps and saw the wond and hope burry him and a very Distrest family. Archibald McKisic."

ACQUISITION OF INDIAN LAND AND "REMOVAL"

As the 1820s wore on, the United States government adopted a policy of acquiring the remaining Indian lands in Alabama for white settlement. The plan was for an orderly acquisition of the lands with compensation to the Indians, their "removal" to other land, a survey of the Alabama lands, and then the sale of the new lands to whites. Subsequent events ruined this plan.

Through various treaties, the United States acquired the lands of the Choctaws, Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Creeks. In return for their lands, each Indian head of family and each orphan child was to receive 320 acres of land in another territory of the United States. Each chief was given 640 acres, and each tribe 16,000 for common use.

The Indians were given individual certificates of ownership for their lands. The federal government sent "locating agents" into the Creek territory to help the Indians find the tract of land they were to move to. The Indians, however, had little concept of the value of their certificates. Locating agents found that many of the Indians -- one writer estimated as many as half -- lost or sold their certificates shortly after receiving them, sometimes to land speculators. In addition, many unprincipled whites and Indians bribed the government agents to approve fraudulent land sales.

Under the government treaties, however, no whites were to move into the Creek lands until they had been surveyed and the Indians removed and settled on their new lands. Undoubtedly, as some settlers and land speculators "jumped the gun" and began purchasing lands and land certificates in the Creek territory, other settlers saw they would be left out if they waited. Many settlers adopted the attitude that they might not have title to the land until it was surveyed, but in the meantime they had a legal right to remain upon it and then bid on it at the proper time. The rush was on for the new lands.

What made matters worse was that the government of Alabama claimed the right to organize the new territory into new counties. Before the land was fully acquired from the Indians and before it was surveyed by the United States government, Alabama created the new counties of Benton, Talladega, Randolph, Coosa, Tallapoosa, Chambers, Russell, Macon and Barbour. This further encouraged new settlers to move into the territory. Seeing this, Andrew Jackson moved to enforce provisions of the treaties with the Indians that required all white settlers to be removed until final disposition of the lands. United States troops were sent to the area, and one settler was even killed during an attempt to remove him from the Indian territory.

This situation created an impasse between the federal and state governments. Local and even national newspapers questioned the authority of the federal government to act. Condemning the actions of the federal government, a Philadelphia newspaper said that if the treaties were "designed to give the General Government unlimited power within the boundary lines of lands owned by it in the States, we cannot conceive what rights are left to the States."[28]

So the situation remained unresolved. In the meantime, thousands of Creeks remained on their old lands, unable to produce certificates for new lands, or simply unwilling to leave their ancestral homes. As whites flooded into the newly ceded lands, tensions between the races rose.

Members of the McKissack clan were among the settlers moving into the new lands. In 1835, Jeremiah McKissack, one of Thomas and Mary's sons, purchased lands from two white

men who had previously purchased the lands from an Indian named Nar-par-har-kee in what then was Russell (today is Lee County), Alabama.[29] It appears that in 1834 Thomas and Mary sold their lands in Henry County and moved into the newly ceded lands near Columbus, Georgia, possibly onto or near the lands purchased by Jeremiah.[30]

Children of Thomas and Mary McKissack (+ indicates spouses)

....	Thomas B. McKissack 1810 - 1878	+Kasiah
	*2nd Wife of Thomas B. McKissack:	+Rebecca Leander Jones Stoker 1809 - 1888
....	James McKissack 1816 -	
....	Jeremiah McKissack 1803 - 1882...	+Ann Stephens 1802 - 1850
....	Rebecca McKissack 1818 -	+Hastings Madden
	*2nd Husband of Rebecca McKissack:	+William B. Barrett
....	Nancy McKissack 1808 - 1880	+Howell Hodges 1800 -
....	John Wesley McKissack 1814 -	+Elizabeth
....	William McKissack 1799 - 1847	+Mary Burroughs 1797 - 1880
....	Archibald L. McKissack	
....	Robert B. McKissack 1812 - 1850.	+Mary Betsy Coppege 1812 -
....	Joseph T. McKissack 1809 - 1860	

THE CREEK INDIANS

It is difficult to form a coherent picture of the Creek Indians. Some travelers depicted them as noble savages, while other observers would have dispensed with the word "noble."

The existing observations often say as much about the attitudes of the person writing them as they do about the Indians. Nevertheless, they are all we have to learn about the nature and culture of this tribe.

In 1828, Captain Basil Hall witnessed a Creek ballgame. He was confounded by the "ceremonial preparations of the team members, which included making hundreds of cuts on their bodies by means of gar teeth set in corn cobs. 'I scarcely knew how to feel when I found myself amongst some dozen naked savages, streaming blood from top to toe, skipping and yelling round a fire, or talking at the top of their voices in a language of which I knew nothing, or laughing as merrily as if it were the best fun in the world to be cut to pieces.'" But Hall also thought that the braves provided "some of the finest specimens of the human form I have ever beheld... Some of them unconsciously fell into attitudes of such perfect ease and gracefulness, as would have enchanted the heart of a painter."[31]

Another traveler, Thomas Hamilton, left yet another account of a ballgame in 1831:

> The players on each side soon appeared, and retired to the neighboring thickets to adjust their toilet for the game. While thus engaged, either party endeavoured to daunt their opponents by loud and discordant cries. At length they emerged with their bodies entirely naked except the waist, which was encircled by a

> girdle. Their skin was besmeared with oil, and painted fantastically with different colors. Some wore tails, others necklaces made of the teeth of animals, and the object evidently was to look as ferocious as possible. After a good deal of preliminary ceremony, the game began....
> I certainly never saw a finer display of agile movement. In figure the Creek Indians are tall and graceful. There is less volume of muscle than in Englishmen, but more activity and freedom of motion. Many of the players were handsome men, and one in particular might have stood as a model of an Apollo. His form and motions displayed more of the ideal than I had ever seen actually realized in a human figure....
> At length the Creeks were victorious, and the air rang with savage shouts of triumph....The victors danced about in all madness of inordinate elation, and the evening terminated in a profuse jollification, to which I had the honor of contributing."[32]

On the other hand, some travelers depicted the Creeks as dissolute and pathetic, a condition often brought on by the Indians' frequent and immoderate use of alcohol. A traveler in 1835 wrote:

> Everything as we advanced into the Creek country announced the total dissolution of order. Indians of all ages were wandering about listlessly, the poorest of them having taken to begging, and when we came in sight would come and importune us for money. Some of them ... were doing their best to prey upon each other, for we frequently saw squaws belonging to some of the chiefs seated by the roadside at a log or rude table with a bottle of whiskey, and a glass to supply their unfortunate countrymen who had anything to give in return, even if it were only the skin of an animal...In other places we met young men in the flower of their age...staggering along, and often falling to the ground, with empty bottles in their hands: in this wretched state of things, with the game almost entirely destroyed, it is evident that nothing will soon be left to those who have beggared themselves but to die of want, or to emigrate, a step they are so very averse to take that in their desperation they have already committed some murders...No language can describe the filth inside of [the Indian cabins]...and the disgusting appearance of their tenants, especially the old crones..[One] was an old creature turned sixty, the most thoroughly hideous, wrinkled, dark, and dirty hag I have even seen amongst them...[She] was completely stark naked.[33]

THE UPRISING

As alluded to in the previous passage, the slow loss of their lands and traditional culture

left many of the Creek Indians bereft and hostile. Many remained on good terms with the whites, but tensions began building between the races, despite the best of intentions among certain individuals. Dishonest whites and Indians cheated and murdered each other, and these sins were blamed on every member of the other race. Calls for vengeance became frequent and loud.

In February 1836 large scale hostilities finally erupted. *The Macon Messenger* of February 4 noted:

> There has been considerable excitement for a week or two past at Columbus, and in the vicinity, from apprehension of hostile intentions on the part of the Indians of that neighborhood, and rumor has thrown in its usual contribution in making up all that was lacking in fact. On Thursday of last week it was understood that 500 Indians had crossed the Chattahoochee...fifteen miles below Columbus.

The newspaper goes on to describe a skirmish between a detachment of militia and the Indians and then states:

> From all that we can learn from people well acquainted with the Indians, we should not judge that there was a hostile disposition on the part of those Indians generally, but that there are outlaws and marauders who are ready to rob and plunder principally for provisions, and to fight whenever it becomes necessary.

Two months later, in April, the newspaper recorded that "the Creek Indians, below Columbus, are said to be almost without provisions, and in a sullen discontented mood. They are very much dissatisfied at not being permitted to hunt in Georgia (where game is much plentier than in Alabama) and declare their intention to do so at any risk as soon as the leaves put out."

Then on May 12 the same newspaper reported:

> Our accounts from Columbus are of a most alarming character. A war has already been commenced, and a number of citizens killed. The Creek Indians, below the Federal Road, are all in arms and killing every white person they have fallen in with....They commenced their general work of slaughter on Monday, the 10th inst. Previous to this, on the 5th of May, Major Wm. B. Flournoy, late of Putnam county of this State, was killed and scalped a few miles below Fort Mitchell. A letter from Col. Crowell, the Agent at Fort Mitchell, dated the 9th, says that 'four persons have been killed and many negroes taken off within a few days;' that he had sent a messenger to some of the principle chiefs, who had returned him word that their young men were bent on war, and have assembled in the swamp near the Federal Road to attack any troops that might march into the Nation.
>
> Great numbers of people, supposed to be about 2,000, who reside west of the Chattahoochee, have come to Columbus for protection.

As mentioned in the newspaper, most white settlers reacted to the Indian uprising by fleeing to the nearest fort or large settlement. In Russell County, Thomas and Mary McKissack and members of their family led a caravan of wagons trying to reach Columbus. One book carries this account of that flight:

> Referred to as 'the flight,' that wagon trail, with a lead wagon, filled with fleeing settlers from as far away county as Pike, pushed its way over the hill from the Long plantation. In the second wagon were Malachi Lundsford Long and neighborhood boys. 'After some miles of travel,' says a vivid account in the family, 'screams were heard, and on reaching the top of the hill the boys in the second wagon saw the Indians killing six people (the McKissicks) in the lead wagon. Cutting the mules from the wagons, they rode horseback through the forest to the stagecoach, leading into Columbus. This exodus was made in the early spring, and in the late fall, after the removal of the Indians, Nimrod Long returned to the plantation. He found one corncrib standing, and feathers from the feather beds blowing about the woods.[34]

It is not clear where the author of the above book got the information that six McKissicks were killed by the Indians. It is an oral tradition in Thomas and Mary's family that only Thomas, Mary and one of their daughters were killed. The other members of the family were ahead of them in the wagon train and managed to escape. The bodies of Thomas, Mary and their daughter were later retrieved and buried at Fort Mitchel.[35]

On May 13 the Columbus, Georgia *Enquirer* carried the following account which also mentioned the McKissacks:

> A large body of Indians, variously estimated at from 500 to 1,500 warriors, have congregated about twenty-five miles southeast from this city, and are scouring the country in all directions from their hiding place, or headquarters, indiscriminately butchering our neighbors, men, women and children, plundering their houses, destroying their stock, and laying waste their farms. On Monday last this city presented a scene of confusion and distress, such as we never before witnessed. Our streets were crowded with wagons, carts, horses and footmen, flying for safety from the rifle and tomahawk of the Indians--many of them having left behind their all of earthly possessions, and some of their protectors and friends, husbands, wives and children, who had fallen before the murderous savage. We have been unable to ascertain with any certainty the number of those who have been murdered by these lawless savages. Wm. Flournoy, Hammond, McKissack, wife and overseer, Davis, Hobbs, several negroes, and in all probably many others...have been killed, and the Indians are yet pursuing their

bloody works.[36]

What follows is yet another account that mentions the McKissack's deaths. It gives the reader an idea of the kindness, fear and panic accompanying the uprising:

> When the war broke out in earnest, Uncle Blake Thomas and his servants were in the field plowing. This was on the 9th of May, 1836. He had made one crop on his new place in the Indian country, and had made friends among the Indians, and, as far as he knew, no enemies; though there were one or two of his immediate neighbors whose conduct incited diligent watchfulness. He knew nothing definite of the Indian hostile movement.
> Early that morning, he discovered Tuskoo-na Fix-a-ko and his son driving their cattle out of the swamp, towards the council house, or his wigwam. This was something unusual, but he had plowed on until the noon hour. While at dinner, he related the circumstance to his wife, whereupon she informed him that old Katy Marthley had been there that morning and told her to go back to her father's house in Georgia, that her people were going to fight the whites and kill all who would not go away.
> Now, it appears that Mrs. Thomas had been kind to this Indian woman, and... this untutored squaw could not stand listlessly by and see her destroyed without giving her timely warning and a chance to escape... Old Katy Marthley called Mrs. Thomas "ink-lis" -- a good squaw -- and she did not want to see her killed.
> Mr. Joseph Thomas, Uncle Blake's brother, was out on the Crawford road that day and found the people leaving, or preparing to leave...Joseph learned that the Indians had burned the bridge across the Big Uchee creek...killed Mr. McKizzie and his wife and fired into Mr. Hartwell D. Green's wagons, killing the mules, destroying the wagons and plunder, except what they appropriated to their own use. Mr. Greene and his servants managed to make their escape. His family, who were in the carriage, about a quarter mile to the rear, hearing the guns firing and the Indians yelling, turned about, and by another route crossed the creek and made their escape.

The marauding Creeks crossed the Chatahoochee and carried their war into Georgia. Striking the small community of Roanoke in Stewart County, they virtually annihilated the town. A militia officer who later arrived on the scene wrote:

> The particulars of its distruction by fire and burning of men alive together with a number killed both whites and blacks. Some of the dead bodies of the Negroes was in their houses: lying on their backs. Their throats cut from ear to ear and stinking so very badly

> that we had to set the house on fire and burn up the carcasses, that we might eat our bread and meat, with comfort. Such a state of consternation ruin ... I have never seen. (For the first 3 or 4 days after the first panick) I presume the like of movins was scarcely known before, from this River to Flint.[37]

Part of the "movins" reported by the militia officers was of terrified settlers into Fort Gaines, across the river from Henry County. The old fort had been allowed to deteriorate and a new structure was hastily thrown together. The officer in charge wrote to the Governor:

> We have built us a temporary Fort here, in doing of which, we had to press all the Scantling and plank, Sills, and house framings, for it was built in a hurry, hearing the Indians was on the way down from Roanoke, about 1/4 of this Lumber is spoilt in Sawing, Short, and cutting port holes.[38]

Further south, where the McKissacks lived in Henry County, both whites and Indians felt caught in the middle of the violence. The McKissacks' and their neighbors on Abbie Creek, the Fordhams, began to hear "stories of massacres, burning of homes and other very horrible things." Fordham's daughter wrote that it all "seemed very far away." The Fordhams had become close with Chief Conchatee, who was head of a nearby tribe. Chief Conchatee was told by marauding Indians to arrange an ambush for the Fordhams and another nearby family, the Millers. Conchatee warned his friend John Fordham of the ambush.

Likewise, Fordham was instructed by white military leaders "to come and aid in the round up of Indians that must leave the area." It seems likely that "Captain McKissack," head of the local militia beat, was one of the military leaders responsible for rounding up local Indians. He would have likewise been trying to prepare for military action if necessary. The Fordhams and Millers had no desire to participate in such action, but nevertheless obeyed the orders. On the night the military moved to order Indians out of the area, the men moved their families to camp in the swamps near an old family cemetery. Fordham wrote that "The swamp lands had not been drained at this time [so they] chose a spot that was almost surrounded by water. " She remembered that a slave kept "the fires going all night...The children huddled on comforts or quilts while the mothers fanned the mosquitoes with leaf-covered branches.... The eyes of wild animals glittered many times in the firelight as the night wore on, but because of the fire they came no closer."

The McKissacks along Abbie Creek may have done as the Fordham's did and hid in the swamps. They may also have tried to cross the river to Fort Gaines, Georgia. Or they may have been active with Captain McKissack in preparing for an Indian attack. The Seminoles to the south were rising at the same time as the Creeks. A William B. McKissack of Henry County, possibly the son or grandson of James, served as a militia sergeant in one of the units fighting the Seminoles. [39] Given the uprisings of both the Creeks and Seminoles, it probably seemed to the McKissacks and their fellow settlers that there was no place safe in all of southeast Alabama.

Here was a familiar story to the McKissacks -- an Indian uprising which required them to flee to safety. In Archie and Lucy's family, Mary, William, and Radford Ellis were grown and apparently living away from the Yatta Abbey farms, but Archibald Jr., Elizabeth, and John

Wesley were still children living at home. Whether they were terrified or excited by the uprising we may never know.

In the following months, there were several battles and skirmishes between the opposing forces. A company of infantry and cavalry was raised in Henry County and sent to Columbus. As noted, William B. McKissack served as a sergeant in one of the units sent to fight the Seminoles in Florida. Interestingly, several thousand Indians joined the white forces and fought against the hostile Indians. While some settlers demanded an immediate and overwhelming invasion of the remaining Indian lands, the Governors of Georgia and Alabama urged restraint and that military action be directed only at hostile Indians.[40]

Hostilities were over by the end of July. *The Macon Messenger* of July 16 reported that most of the hostile Indians had separated into small parties and fled to Florida:

> As the conflict subsided, thousands of Indians -- men, women and children -- surrendered or "came in" to Fort Mitchell. Others were rounded up by the military. At this point, "removal" became a forced operation with no waiting for tribal agreements, crop harvesting or government negotiations. The military began organizing various columns of Indians and escorting these to a reservation in Oklahoma, hundreds of miles away. Some traveled part of the way by boat, passing down to Mobile, then to New Orleans, up the Mississippi to Arkansas and then overland to Oklahoma. Other groups walked almost the entire way.

While the journey of the Creeks to their new homes is not as well known as the "Trail of Tears" endured by the Cherokee, it was nevertheless just as wrenching. Thousands of Creeks died on the journey. And the anguish of those who lived, severed from their ancestral homes, is unimaginable.

CHAPTER XIX
HENRY COUNTY AND THE CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER VALLEY GROW AND PROSPER

After the Creek uprising of 1836, the population of Henry County grew quickly. As mentioned, the white and black population of the southwest portion of Alabama in 1800 was 1,250; in June 1830 the state census counted 309,527 residents; and ten years later the number had exploded to 590,756. Throughout the entire Chattahoochee River Valley land was being cleared and cultivated in cotton. From Columbus, Georgia, in the north to Apalachicola, Florida, on the Gulf of Mexico, commerce was growing at river towns. Even at the end of 1834 a Columbus, Georgia, newspaper had crowed:

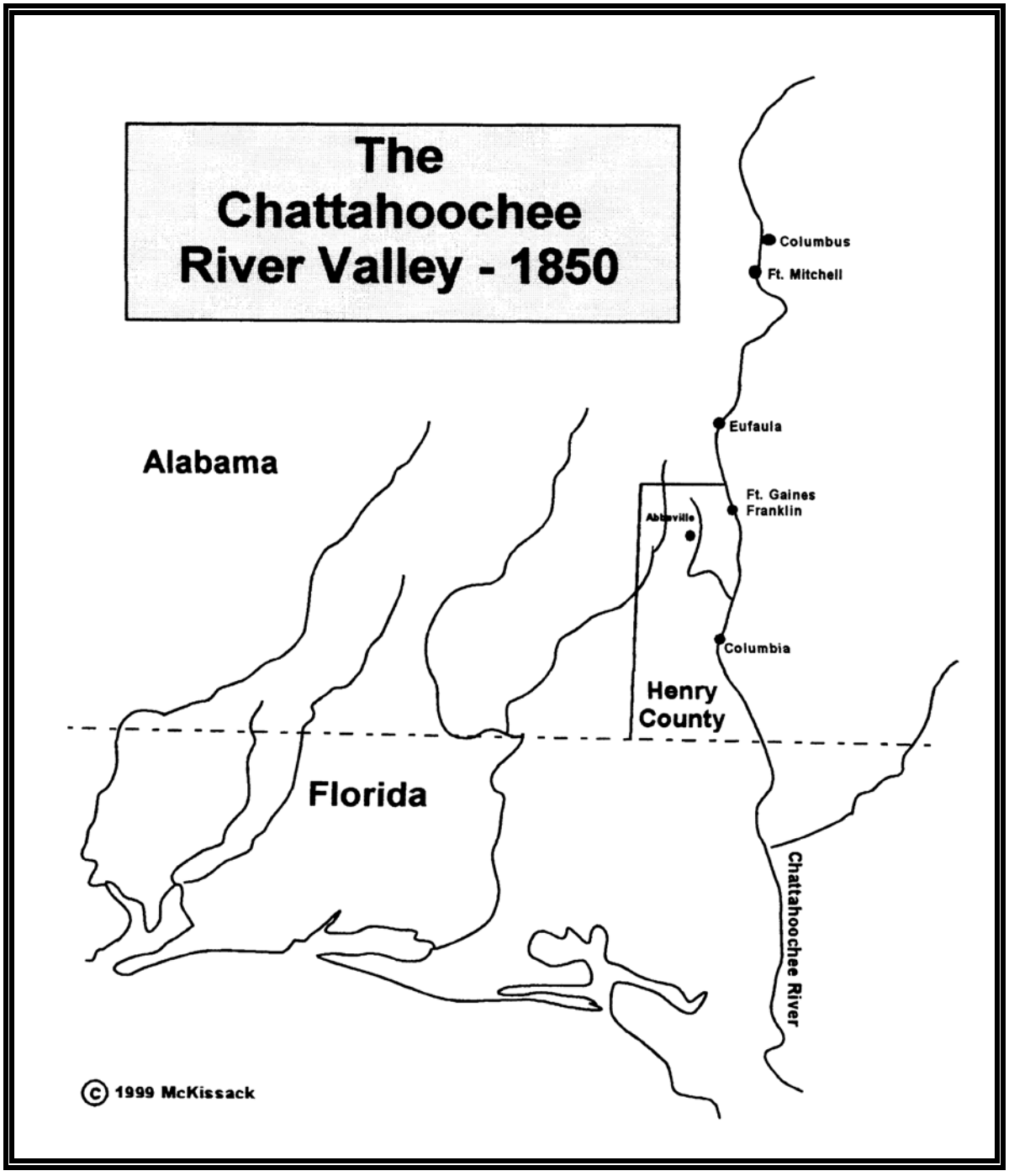
> Our town...has presented quite a businesslike appearance. Bales of cotton have rolled down one street, whilst up another, sacks of Salt and Coffee, hogsheads of Sugar, barrels of strong drink, and boxes of all manner of merchandise have moved to their place of deposit on every known and conceivable vehicle, from the strongest road wagon burdened with its thousands to the humble wheelbarrow, rattling under the weight of a solitary flour barrel. Every body and every thing seemed at times to be moving to and from the boat landing." [41]

One of the things driving this growth was cotton farming. The success of cotton meant that the number slaves in Alabama also increased dramatically. In 1830, a majority of the white settlers did not own slaves. But by 1840, most families owned at least one slave, and many owned over 10. The United States census of 1830 shows Thomas as owning nine slaves and Archibald seven. (James, as usual, is shown as owning none). Their in-law Matthew Perryman had owned only six slaves in 1830; by 1840, he owned 30.

To put this growth into perspective, one must remember that by 1840 Archibald and Lucy McKissack's family had been living along the Chattahoochee River and Yatta Abbey Creek for almost 20 years. They had had time to drain swamps, clear land, cultivate crops and build a comfortable life by the standards of their times. Archie and Lucy's daughter Mary had married Matthew Perryman and was living a few miles away. By the 1840s Mary had a large family of her own — seven children — and her husband Matthew was one of the most prosperous planters in the county. In addition, Archibald and Lucy's son William had married Mariah Ward and they had two sons. Many of the Ward family lived west of the McKissack farms along the Yatta Abbey and some resided in the town of Abbeville, which had been named the county seat in 1833. Further south in the town of Columbia, Archie and Lucy's son Radford had joined several of his McKissack cousins and in-laws in 1834 in the building of a house of worship. It appears that the children and grandchildren of James McKissack were likewise scattered throughout Henry county.

In spite of the growth of the counties and commerce throughout the Chattahoochee River Valley, life for most settlers, including the McKissacks, continued in the slow and steady rhythms of the farm. In this way, their existence was not so different from those of their fathers

and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers. When we say "slow and steady rhythms of the farm," the reader should remember that in these years the fastest a person could possibly travel on land was at the speed of a horse. There was simply no faster way to get from one town to another by land. People today think nothing of driving 10 miles to a shopping center. But in the 1800s this would have been a physically demanding, all-day journey. And the horse was the easiest way to make the trip. Consequently, many people traveled via horseback, buggies or in wagons if they owned them. The reader might recall the carriage contained in the inventory of Archibald McKissack's father, John.



By the 1840s a stagecoach line traveled through the McKissacks' area, advertising "good horses, good hands, good drivers, and good entertainment."[42] The line passed through Fort Gaines, Georgia and crossed the river there into Alabama. At that point, it ran through Abbeville and then turned south and ran across the Yatta Abbey and down through Columbia. The coming

of the stage could be an exciting event in the small hamlets in southeast Alabama. "The sharp crack of the whip...the long blast of the horn announcing the coming of the stage; the small boys watching as the lumbering vehicle drew to a stop at the station...the quick change of horses...the interchange of mail and passengers; another blast of the horn; another crack of the whip and the excitement was over.[43] But The grandmother of one southeast Alabamian, Lottie Woodham, told her that the stage, as well as the mail, was somewhat erratic. Consequently, many people chose, when possible, to travel by steamboat.

THE STEAMBOAT ERA

One of the major aspects of life on the Chattahoochee river was the steamboat. One 19th century resident of the Chattahoochee wrote: "The steamboat era on the Chattahoochee river from 1828 to 1939 was perhaps the most interesting and romantic era in our history.... The mighty blast of the steamboat whistle usually aroused enough curiosity to cause half the town to run to the docks or the bridge to see the steamboat glide by. [I] fondly recall seeing large steamboats on the Chattahoochee River carrying bales of cotton and other cargo and some passengers and it was my desire as a boy to ride one of the steamboats down the river to Apalachicola."[44]

Some early incidents of steamboating on the Chattahoochee were noted by Lynn Willoughby in Flowing Through Time: A History of the Lower Chattahoochee River:

> The first to attempt to run a steamboat up the Chattahoochee from the bay was John Jenkins. His 89-foot boat, Fanny, began the journey in the spring of 1827. While ascending the Chattahoochee, Jenkins ran up against a massive dam of fallen trees and other debris. He managed to cut a 20-foot swath through it and to proceed as far as Fort Gaines by the end of July. But there the Fanny had to wait for the winter rains before continuing upstream.
>
> Following closely in the wake of the Fanny was the 117-foot Steubenville. It traveled from Mobile to Fort Gaines in only four days in the summer of 1827, and did so, thanks to Jenkins, 'without meeting with any delay of consequence and but few obstructions in the river.' At Fort Gaines the Steubenville turned around, her pilot intending to return when the winter rains made it possible to proceed all the way to the falls at Columbus. She eventually reached the future site of Columbus on February 6, 1828.
>
> To celebrate the Steubenville's arrival... the captain took a group of local boosters down to Woolfolk's Mound (an old Indian mound located on Woolfolk's plantation about five miles downstream) on a pleasure excursion. However, the venture turned out to be a negative advertisement for the efficacy of steam travel. On the return trip the boat could not make headway against the current, and many of the passengers got off and walked home.[45]
>
> River shipping was the primary means for transporting freight throughout the

Chattahoochee River basin. As alluded to in the previous paragraph, the Chattahoochee emptied into the Gulf of Mexico at Apalachicola, Florida. From here, planter's crops, especially cotton, were sent to the world. The most important shipping point for planters on both sides of the river in the McKissack's area was Fort Gaines. Thousands of bales of cotton were stored in huge warehouses along the river. Between Columbus, Georgia, to the north, and Apalachicola, Florida, to the south, there were 118 steamboat landings.[46] This was in a stretch of river 360 miles long. [47] The number of landings shows how important steamboats were to commerce and travel along the river. The landings were located on both the Alabama and Georgia side of the river, and the steamboats would slowly wend their way along the river, stopping at each landing and taking on passengers and goods. Two such landings (North Abbey and South Abbey) were on the McKissacks' farms. Given that Abbie Creek cut through the middle of their lands, it's likely they used both landings.

Along with the towns of Ft. Gaines and Franklin, the town of Columbia, Alabama, was one of the most important river towns in the McKissacks area. As mentioned, several of the McKissacks were in evidence in Columbia by 1834. They no doubt used the steamboats on occasion to travel upriver to visit their relatives on the Yatta Abbey. Each riverboat landing had distinctive features; one of the Columbia landings was identified by a huge brown rock and consequently was known as "the chocolate layer cake."[48]

The McKissack plantations, like all other riverside farms, would have carried on the majority of its trade with the steamboats. The boatowners obtained fresh meats, fruits, and vegetables as well as cord wood for fuel from the planters. There were four landings -- three on the Alabama side and one on the Georgia side -- near the McKissacks' stretch of the river. On the Alabama side there were South Abbey, North Abbey, and T.T. Smith's. Across the river was Howard's Landing.

When the steamboats first began plying the river, they needed all their steam for locomotion. Consequently, there was no steam available for a whistle. Instead, the boats fired heavily charged cannon to announce their approach to a landing. As steam engines improved, some steam was channeled into a whistle, and later, into a steam organ, or calliope, which played a gay song.[49]

At the landings, the steamboat passengers would usually find a cluster of farmers and their families who had driven their wagons to the river to conduct trade. These folks would camp at the landings -- sleeping under their wagons and cooking over open fires. Many years later a woman traveling by steamboat on the Chattahoochee would write, "And all through the night that happened, and I can remember...just sitting on the deck, wrapped in a quilt at past midnight, and ... at every plantation down the river that was the procedure, regardless of the time of the night, the family was there having a picnic,... and it was a family affair."[50]

It is easy to imagine the McKissack children running to the river when they heard the deep blast of the steamboat whistle. Or it may have been a favorite spot to just idle a day away. Describing the arrival of one steamboat traveling the Chattahoochee in 1829, one observed wrote:"With rough clinkings of iron, foaming of water, rolling of black smoke, and the red blaze of the large fire on the fore part...[it] came rushing with an irresistible impetuosity and in a few minutes was still and alongside the bank within a few feet of the shore." [51]

The McKissacks and their neighbors would gather at the landing and load their produce onto the boats, perhaps seeking news of conditions elsewhere along the river from the boat's

occupants. Merely watching the loading of the boat and ogling some of its more exotic passengers was probably an exciting diversion for people whose everyday life followed the slow and steady rhythms of the farm. Also, the Chattahoochee has high banks, and loading the steamboats was an involved procedure. A traveler in 1853 described the excitement surrounding the loading of cotton onto one Alabama steamboat from a high river bluff:

> There was something truly Western in the direct, reckless way in which the boat was loaded. A strong gang plank being placed at right angles to the slideway, a bale of cotton was let slide from the top, and coming down with a fearful velocity, on striking the gang plank it would rebound up and out on the boat against a barricade of bales previously arranged to receive it. The moment it struck this barricade, it would be dashed at by two or three men and jerked out of the way, and others would roll it to its place for the voyage...The mate standing near the bottom of the slide, as soon as the men had removed one bale to what he thought a safe distance, would shout to those aloft and down would come another. Not unfrequently a bale would not strike fairly on its end, and would bound off diagonally overboard; or would be thrown up with such force as to go over the barricade, breaking stanchions and railings, and scattering the passengers on the berth deck. [52]

To increase their profit, the steamboat captains would load as much cotton as possible onto their boats. The bales reached eight feet high. Their weight would push the boat down until its deck was barely above water, and ripples would occasionally wash onto the boat.

In addition to carrying cotton, the steamboats carried passengers. To attract business, many of the boats had luxurious interiors. One traveler wrote that his steamboat had "a handsome saloon, about 200 feet long, the ladies' cabin at one end, opening into it with folding doors. Sofas, rocking chairs, tables and a stove are placed in this room, which is lighted by windows from above. On each side of it is a row of sleeping apartments, each communicating by one door with the saloon, while the other leads out to the guard, as they call it, a long gallery or balcony, covered with a shade or veranda, which passes round the whole boat."[53]

The McKissacks undoubtedly utilized the steamboats for travel. One of the McKissacks' neighbors recalled that she attended school in Pensacola, Florida and came home every few weeks by steamboat.[54] She also remembered traveling on the steamboats to parties at the homes of relatives upriver in Eufaula, where John Wesley McKissack and Eliza Jane Shanks were later married. To folks along the Chattahoochee, travel on steamboats was like riding a bus today. For instance, which option would you choose: a 14-mile physically demanding horseback or carriage ride along bumpy roads to Abbeville, or a walk down to the landing to catch a steamboat, on whose deck you could sit while it took you to the big upriver town of Eufaula?

Steamboat travel, however, could be hazardous. Many of the boats ran into "snags" on the river. Snags were trees that had fallen into the river and whose branches hid just below the surface where they could puncture the hull of a steamboat. Neither were all captains equal in skill or luck. One traveler on an Alabama steamboat wrote about the following incident:

> Just as I put out the candle in the little state-room, I was disturbed by a portentous creaking of the rudder, a frequent ringing of the engineer's bell, mingled with loud cries of 'Stop her!' and 'Back her!' At length came the sound of many hurried feet overhead; and I could hear the sound of a couple of oars tossed into the boat astern, which then lowered down smartly.... I put on my slippers, and opened the door...but just as I did so, there was such a smash, crash, crack, as made our poor vessel tremble from end to end. Away went twigs, branches and finally trunks of trees, all flapping about like so many whips. The fact was, the steamboat, in process of rounding to, for the purpose anchoring, had either gathered stern-way, or been caught by an eddy, which carried her nether end fairly into the forest.[55]

Also, explosions of boilers due to poor construction or handling was not uncommon. The explosions would kill or scald passengers. Fire was also a danger, as might be imagined when tons of wood were powered up a river by an engine depending on fire and steam. In April 1850 the steamboat "H.L. Smith" caught fire and was destroyed while on the Chattahoochee River. One of Henry County's most prominent and respected landowners, General William Irwin, died in that fire because his age and infirmities hindered his escape.[56]

THE MCKISSACKS' SOCIAL STATUS

Since they left so few documents, it is difficult to form a picture of the McKissacks' social position and life in Henry County. Some of their "cousins" in Tennessee left plantation homes and documented legacies of a rich "Gone With the Wind" lifestyle (see notes on descendants of Thomas McKissack who died in Tennessee in 1826). Nevertheless, there is some evidence that the Henry County, Alabama, McKissacks were in the upper strata of society in that county. As mentioned previously, the 1830 census shows Thomas owning nine slaves and Archibald seven. These numbers place them at the bottom of the emerging "planter" class. Furthermore, the McKissacks farmed some of the more fertile lands along both sides of Abbie Creek, which emptied into the Chattahoochee River. These lands may have allowed them to farm more profitably than most of the inhabitants of the "cow counties" of southeastern Alabama.

Another clue to the McKissacks' social standing might be that some of them intermarried with families that were to become some of the richest and most influential in the county. This is especially true of Archibald and Lucy McKissack's family, on whom we have the most information. As mentioned, Archie and Lucy's daughter, Mary, married Matthew Perryman in 1823, shortly after the family moved to Alabama. Perryman owned and farmed lands on both sides of the Chattahoochee River. To travel between these lands, he maintained a private ferry.[57] In 1830 Perryman owned six slaves.[58] By 1840 this number had increased to 30, making him one of the biggest planters in the county.

Matthew and Mary McKissack Perryman are buried in the Perryman Cemetery on the Old River Road north of the Yatta Abbey between Haleburg and Shorterville in Henry County.

Matthew's tombstone notes: "He was one of the first settlers of Henry County, Alabama which he represented in the Legislature, with honor and usefulness. By a Christian life the communion of the Baptist Church, he endeared himself to all who knew him. He needs no monumental verse to represent his name, for his many virtues render him immortal. The righteous hath hope in his death." Perryman was also a Mason in Magnolia Lodge No. 86 in Early County, Georgia.[59]

In addition, the records showing that a Captain McKissack was responsible for a militia beat in Henry County in the 1830s, and a William McKissack ran for sheriff, showing a family involved in the county's power structure. One of James' daughters -- Sara -- married into the well-off Ayers family. One of the men who joined Perryman in building the religious meeting house was Howell Hodges, the Clerk of Court for Henry County. He later married Nancy McKissack, the daughter of Thomas and Mary McKissack.

Another prominent family the McKissacks were connected to was the Wards. William McKissack, the son of Archibald and Lucy, married Maria Ward.[60] Her father, James Ward, was one Henry County's earliest State Senators and a prominent planter.[61] He would later become the guardian of his grandson -- James Oliver McKissack -- who appears to have suffered from some mental condition which left him an invalid. Upon James Ward's death, his son-in-law Ephraim Oates, a member of yet another prominent Henry County family, would become James McKissack's guardian. There is a Ward Creek and an Oates Creek a few miles to the west of the McKissacks' Yatta Abbey farms. Like the McKissacks, these families were early settlers of Henry County.

In addition to marrying into families of economic and political prominence, Archie and Lucy's children also united with religious leaders. Elizabeth McKissack would later marry a minister, Pierce Harris, and when he died she married yet another minister, James Connelly, who was elected the first major of Dothan, Alabama. John Wesley McKissack married Eliza Jane Shanks, whose father was James Shanks and brothers were Methodist ministers. All things considered, as one McKissack family researcher noted, "our people in Henry County were respectable folks."

PLANTATION LIFE

For anyone descended from the McKissacks, it is frustrating to have no first-hand description of them. Absent these, we are left to guess at what they may have been like. Perhaps they were much like their neighbors and fellow farmers. A historian who examined almost 1000 letters written by a 19th-century family that had members in Alabama and Arkansas came to the following conclusions:

> A close reading of the letters reveals several things about the society and the attitudes of that society. The first thing that comes to mind is the dedication to family, especially among the women. These women are strong, courageous human beings; they hold families together in extremely difficult times with a firm belief that God knows what is best, and they will accept and endure. There is a sense of faith, family responsibility, and obligation that our society in the final days of the twentieth century seems to be rapidly losing. Trouble and problems of one family member become the trouble and problems of all the family. There is a

> deep sense of duty to family in these people. To turn one's back on a family member in need was unthinkable. No sacrifice was too great; indeed 'helping out' was not even considered a sacrifice.
>
> Another characteristic of nineteenth-century life that is apparent in these letters is the fragile hold these people had on mortality. Death came very quickly, especially to children, and the value of human life was sacred. Every letter begins with a report on the health of various family members. Fevers, the 'flux,' injuries, and various other illnesses were commonplace.
>
> Still another point of interest is the clustering of families and friends in the same location. A letter from Arkansas to Alabama could refer to people without long explanations of who those people were. The names were as familiar to the recipient in Alabama as they were to the writer in Arkansas. This indicates groups emigrated together, forming close-knit communities carried over from one part of the country to the other.[62]

The above passage mentions the strength and devotion to family of women in 19th century Alabama. Perhaps much of this grew out of their roles, especially their roles as mothers. At the time of John Wesley McKissack's birth, for instance, Archibald was 53 years old and Lucy was 45. The time span between Lucy's first pregnancy and her last was approximately 20-25 years. Lucy's long period of motherhood was typical of women in her time. In the early 1800s America, a high number of pregnancies resulted in miscarriages or stillbirths. On average, women bore seven live children. A large portion of a 19th century woman's adult life revolved around pregnancy, birth, and postpartum recovery. Unfortunately, there was a high risk to a mother during childbirth. Journals and letters of women living during this period are full of apprehension and fear at the prospect of giving birth. Many women worried about the motherless children they would leave behind if they died during childbirth. It was not uncommon for women to deliver their babies with the help of midwives, female relatives, or even a husband. Births were not accomplished amidst the comfort of technology and medicine, but in simple plank houses far out in the countryside.[63]

Perhaps that same countryside provided a certain tranquility for some individuals. A visitor to Abbie Creek today will find -- at least on a weekday -- a quiet and calm that is restful and lazy. Just as for their ancestors before them, the McKissacks everyday lives were slower than what modern McKissacks can imagine. They did not have the constant stimulation of television, radio, quick travel and ready communication by telephone and internet that people have today. Instead, a reader of planters' journals turns page after page of daily descriptions of the weather, condition of crops, and health of slaves and family members. Only rarely is there the mention of a significant political or social event. One of the better known planter journals from this period is the historic journal of John Horry Dent, a planter in Henry County's northern neighbor, Barbour County. Though they never owned enough slaves to be considered in the "planter class," it's probable the McKissacks' lives were similar to those of the men and women whose letters and journals speak to us from the antebellum period.

Likewise, perhaps the McKissack men had a few of the personal characteristics associated with Alabama cotton planters that Frederick Law Olmstead noted as he traveled through the state in the 1850s:

> The cotton planters...were usually well-dressed, but were a rough, coarse style of people, drinking a great deal, and most of the time under a little alcoholic excitement. Not sociable, except when the topics of cotton, land, and negroes were started; interested, however, in talk about theatres and the turf; very profane; often showing the handles of concealed weapons about their persons, but not quarrelsome, avoiding disputes and altercations, and respectful to one another in forms of words; very ill-informed, except on plantation business; their language very ungrammatical, idiomatic, and extravagant. Their grand characteristics — simplicity of motive, vague, shallow, and purely objective habits of thought; spontaneity and truthfulness of utterance, and bold, self-reliant movement...I was perplexed by finding, apparently united in the same individual, the self-possession and confidence of the well equipped gentleman, and coarseness and low tastes of the uncivilized boor — frankness and reserve, recklessness and self restraint, extravagance and penuriousness.[64]

For what its worth, one resident of Early County, Georgia, made a distinction between planters who lived on the Chattahoochee River and those who owned plantations across the river in Early County, Georgia. Writing in his memoirs, W.H. Andrews noted:

> There was a vast difference in the river and Spring Creek plantations; the river planters were self-made. By honest toil and economy they had earned their property, and were hospitable in the true sense of the word; the latch string hung on the outside of the door and everybody was welcome where they lived at home and boarded at the same place. The Spring Creek planters only remained on the plantation a few months in the winter during cotton picking and hog killing time -- then off to North Georgia or the watering places for the remainder of the year. Their idea of hospitality was, you wine and dine me today and I will return the compliment tomorrow, and poor white trash and negroes were considered to be the same level, if anything the negro was in their estimation on top.[65]

A reader influenced by Hollywood might think that slaveowners like the McKissacks and their kin spent their lives sitting on the porch sipping mint juleps and attending horseraces and balls. For a very small minority, this might have been true, but for most planters it was not. Years later a contemporary of Matthew Perryman would note: "He had four sons and three

daughters, William, Matthew, Jeptha and James, Miss Martha, Miss Duck and Miss Lou, a daughter by his last wife, besides two step-sons, Dick and Rom Parramore. His estate was wound up in 1853 and was worth between 80 and 90 thousand dollars. He and his boys, up to the time of his death, worked in the field like his negroes." [66]

The same writer also indicated that some of the women along the Chattahoochee were unique personalities. One was a Mrs. Yeldell.

> She owned two river farms, the other one 12 miles down the river... [She] spun, wove and made her own clothing as long as she lived and when not otherwise engaged worked in the field.
> In 1857 or 1858 I rode horse-back down the river ... The next day on my return it rained most of the evening and night overtook me .... I saw something coming to meet me in the road; it looked white and was stooped over, ambling along with a stick. I thought it was a ghost. My horse jumped out of the road, intent on dashing through the woods, but I held him down until the ghost got in ten feet of me, then I heard a quavering voice say, "Where am I at?" I knew then that it was a woman and told her as near as I could where she was. She said, "Thank God, I am nearly home," and tramped on. I had never seen Mrs. Yeldell, but I heard that she always walked from one farm to the other. Many years before that she had started to Fort Gaines in an oxcart and the oxen ran off the bridge at the Roaring Branch. She said then she would never ride again and she did not until she rode as a corpse to her grave. She was a most remarkable woman, as she was then nearing her one-hundredth mile post on the journey of life, walking 12 miles through the rain and slush.

THE RHYTHMS OF THE FARM -- COTTON

As noted, the lives of the McKissacks in Henry County, like those of their ancestors, were dominated by the seasons and farm work. The land in southeastern Alabama, however, was not nearly as fertile as lands elsewhere in the state. Consequently, when compared with other regions of Alabama, Henry County ranked at the bottom of the state's cotton producing areas. [67] And the McKissacks may have been as much "cattlemen" as "planters." Nevertheless, given that they owned better lands along Abbie Creek and the Chattahoochee River, it seems likely that a part of their farm life also involved growing cotton.

Though cotton could not be planted until March, preparation of the fields began in February. At this time, the fields were plowed deep and left in ridges so the rain could settle the soil. Then the soil was pulverized and the cotton seed planted by hand.

When the cotton plants had grown several inches, it was time to start "chopping cotton," or thinning the plants. This process left two plants in each hill, and then only one plant. The crop was then cultivated until close to harvest time. This required weeds and grass to be removed and the earth around the plant kept loose. Slaves and masters spent long days in the fields, moving down the long rows of cotton as they cultivated the soil with a hoe. It was a boring, tedious task performed day after day, month after month.

Cotton-picking began about the middle of August and kept up until the end of the year;

most people have seen pictures of cotton-picking slaves dragging long bags through rows of cotton. Generally speaking, each picker was given two baskets and a bag. They would pick four rows at a time, placing the baskets in the middle of the rows. The pickers would empty their bags into the baskets as they picked down the rows. The best picking was accomplished in October and November after a frost might open the bolls wide and cause many leaves to drop off the plant.

Since a planter's profit obviously depended on the amount of cotton picked, many planters spent much time determining how to increase production from their slaves. Planters' journals describe different systems for organizing the work most efficiently. Some planters offered prizes such as tobacco, handkerchiefs, calico dresses and sweets as inducements for good work. Others treated their slaves harshly, punishing them, even whipping them, for failure to produce up to expectations.

The cotton-picking season ended when the winter weather made the fields too wet for work. At this point, the farm operations turned to butchering hogs, rendering lard, moving slave houses (usually done every three years), breaking mules, clearing new ground, clearing ditches, building new farm structures, repairing fences, tanning leather, sorting cotton seed, weaving, cutting firewood, and all the tasks associated with farming in the 19th century.

It would have been impossible for the cotton industry to have grown so enormously in the South if not for black slaves. The institution of slavery tightened its grip on the South as cotton became "King." In 1820, a large percentage of the immigrants into Alabama owned no slaves. The high price of cotton, however, encouraged many farmers to buy slaves and join the slave-owning class. Thus, the institution of slavery and its population grew quickly and an entire culture developed around it.

CHAPTER XX
SLAVERY -- THE SOUTH'S "PECULIAR INSTITUTION"

Born into a slaveholding family, most of the McKissacks were involved from birth to death in the "peculiar institution" -- as some people of that time called it --of slavery. From the 1750s when John McKissack bought his first slave in North Carolina to the 1860s when slavery came to an end, the family knew slavery in intimate detail. This involvement stretched over 100 years. Archibald McKissack, for instance, knew the institution of slavery when he was born in 1774 and knew it as a slaveholder when he died around 1857. Just as any of our lives are affected by our occupations and the region we live in, the McKissacks' lives were affected by owning slaves. Slaveholding determined where and how they lived. It occupied a considerable amount of their physical and emotional energy; slaves had to be supervised, fed, housed, nursed and sometimes sold, and these activities not only defined the relationship between master and slave, they affected the daily life of each. As one historian noted:

> The lives of black and white -- slave and master -- were inexorably bound up with one another in that peculiar symbiosis that was the antebellum South. By proximity and necessity they worked together, they sometimes prayed together, they sometimes played together, and they even slept together. Violently, yet even lovingly, their lives intersected in countless complex ways.[68]

Writing about slavery, especially as it involves one's ancestors, is not an easy task. A researcher into slavery quickly learns that many writers on the subject write to support political agendas. After the Civil War much of the southern writing on slavery painted it as a basically benign system run by wise, caring aristocrats which offered Africans an opportunity to learn the ways of a superior European-based culture. Today much of the writing emphasizes the physical and mental cruelties practiced on slaves, as well as the hypocrisy of their masters.

And indeed, one of the difficulties of studying slavery is that one can find support for whatever image one wants of it. (Library books checked out by the author were often filled with underlined passages which uniformly supported one view or another of slavery and ignored other sides presented on the same page!). In reality, there were slaveowners who were benign rulers, looking out for the welfare and health of their slaves, while providing for their comfort to an extent that set them above the level of even most whites. Ex-slave Henry Clay Bruce, who penned memoirs entitled *The New Man, Twenty-Nine Years A Slave. Twenty Nine Years a Free Man*. (York, Pennsylvania, 1895), wrote that his experience with many slaveholders had "taught him that all masters were not cruel.... While some masters cruelly whipped, half-fed and overworked their slaves, there were many others who provided for their slaves with fatherly care, saw that they were well-fed and clothed, would neither whip them themselves, nor permit others to do so.... One of Frederick Douglass's mistresses was so 'kind, gentle and cheerful' that he 'soon learned to regard her as something more akin to a mother, than a slave-holding mistress." [69]

At the other end of the spectrum "...there were many slaveholders who were moral

degenerates and sadists. Quite frequently, even the most cultured of planters were so inured to brutality that they thought little about the punishment meted out to slaves. Flogging of 50 to 75 lashes were not uncommon. On numerous occasions, planters branded, stabbed, tarred and feathered, burned, shackled, tortured, maimed, crippled, mutilated and castrated their slaves. Thousands of slaves were flogged so severely that they were permanently scarred. In Mississippi a fiendish planter once administered 1,000 lashes to a slave." [70]

It may take another hundred years before writers can step back and view American slavery with the same objectivity with which they view it in ancient Roman times. The literature on the subject of slavery is fascinating and vast, ranging from the controversial interviews done with ex-slaves in the 1930s, to modern editions of planters' journals, to modern scholarly studies of the social and economic realities of the slave system. I refer readers to those sources for a more extensive study. This narrative will examine only the bare outlines of the slave system, and where it may have influenced the McKissacks and their slaves' lives.

THE MCKISSACKS AS SLAVEOWNERS

Unfortunately, we are again limited in knowing much about the McKissacks' attitudes and actions since they left us no written documents. We can only look at the public record and the general attitudes of their community. And even after we do this, we are still only guessing. This is extremely frustrating, since so much of the story of the McKissacks and their slaves depends on their individual personalities, personal values, and economic fortunes, and we have little information on these things.

"Farmer Versus Planter"

We do know that the McKissacks in Alabama never owned the large numbers of slaves associated with the popular literature on antebellum plantations. And while they owned enough slaves to place themselves at the bottom of the emerging "planter" class, their homesteads would have technically been classified "farms" rather than plantations. Similarly, the McKissacks may have been as much cattlemen as cotton-growers, so the organization and work tasks of their farms may have differed from the large cotton plantations that usually required large numbers of slaves. One historian assessed the differences in small and large slaveholders as follows:

> Half the slaves in the South lived on farms, not on plantations as defined by contemporaries -- that is, units of twenty slaves or more. Typically, a twenty-slave unit would embrace only four families. If a big plantation is to be defined as a unit of fifty slaves, then only one-quarter of the southern slaves lived on big plantations.
>
> By reputation farmers treated their slaves better than planters did... Good treatment of slaves, as defined by the masters, did not necessarily constitute good treatment from the slaves' point of view. Travelers usually reported that most small farmers showed their slaves greater consideration and worked them more humanely. [Some observers] expressed considerable admiration for the way in

which the farmers and small planters of Kentucky worked with and treated their slaves... An old patriarchal planter in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, considered the small farmers harsher and more cruel to their slaves than big planters like himself, but other planters decried the evils of excessive size and the attendant necessity of using overseers.

No clear verdict emerges from the slaves' reports. Farmers, small planters, and big planters seem to have been more or less alike in this respect. To one ex-slave from Georgia, her alcoholic small-farm master was “the meanest man that ever lived," and the evidence of a number of ex-slaves lent credence to the charge that some small farmers bought slaves before they could profitably use them or decently feed and care for them. Others reported that they received kind treatment and said they felt like part of the family.... One of nine slaves on a farm in Alabama, said of her master, 'I guess he what you calls 'poor folks,' but he mighty good to he black folks.' Such slaves recalled the intimacy and the easy style of life of the farmstead. If white and black accounts are weighed, the pace of work and the material conditions seems to have differed on the small farms, but the range of treatment seems about the same as that prevailing on the big plantations.

Farms of ten slaves or less did not develop an extensive division of labor. The white farmer and his wife divided chores, but the extent of specialization among the slaves rarely went beyond the assignment of one or two women to house work; and even they had to work in the fields when needed. A common effort by master and slave at work together produced an easy familiarity, reinforced by living arrangements. The mistress or perhaps a female slave cooked for all at the same time and in the same way. Only segregation at table drew a cast. the slaved either slept in one small house with the master's family or in a cabin that faced on the same yard. Slave and free, black and white, lived close to one another, and their relationship led to a widespread reputation for 'better treatment.' Thus [one planter] who owned only eight slaves, could boast his people had 'no domestic restraints' and returned his indulgence with faithful service, while [another planter] could rail against the smallholders for extending too many privileges to the slaves and thereby spoiling them. This familiarity did not prevent the subjection of the slaves to the punitive measures of slaveholders whose closeness encouraged the indulgence of daily passions. It did not prevent the breaking up of family units by masters whose precarious financial position often left them without much choice. And among small white farmers of modest means the hiring out of slaves, with its attendant uncertainties, became all the more common.[71]

THE MCKISSACKS' SLAVES

In the McKissack family, slave-owning seems to have peaked with the generation that

was born at the time of the American Revolution. When John McKissack died in Putnam County, Georgia ,in 1815, his will identified 11 slaves. The U.S. Census of 1830 in Henry County, Alabama, shows John's son Thomas as owning nine slaves and Archibald seven. As mentioned, it appears that James McKissack chose not to own slaves. Their brother Jonathon was listed as owning 12 slaves in North Carolina by the U.S. Census of 1810.

Just as in a job, much of the relationship between master and slave depended on their personalities. Obviously, a slave whose master was immature and of low character had a harder life than one whose master was humane and considerate. But the slave's personality had more influence on the master-slave relationship than is commonly understood. This was probably best summarized by Henry Clay Bruce, the former slave, who wrote:

> There were different kinds of slaves, the lazy fellow, who would not work at all unless forced to do so, and required to be watched, the good man, who patiently submitted to everything... and then there was the one who would not yield to punishment of any kind.. Then there was the unruly slave, whom no master particularly wanted for several reasons: first, he would not submit to any kind of corporal punishment; second, it was hard to determine which was the master or which the slave; third, he worked when he pleased to do so.. This class of slaves were usually industrious, but very impudent. There were thousands of that class, who spent their lives in their masters's service doing his work undisturbed, because the master understood the slave..."

SLAVES OF ARCHIBALD MCKISSACK

In their early years in Henry County, the number of slaves on the farms of the McKissack family would have at most equaled the number of white family members. As they approached the 1860s, however, a McKissack family was more likely to own one or two slaves, probably as domestic help. For instance, in Archibald and Lucy McKissack's family, shortly before the Civil War, the 1855 Henry County census shows Archibald Jr. as owning four slaves, Radford owning none, and John Wesley owning one. Archibald and Lucy's daughter Elizabeth owned at least two (a woman named Eliza and "her child") but these were given to her by her father Archibald in 1851. Through her marriage to Matthew Perryman, Mary McKissack belonged to a family that owned about 30 slaves.

The 1830 U.S. Census shows the ages and sex of the McKissacks' slaves, but unfortunately not their names. Archibald owned seven slaves in 1830 and 20 years later the number had not changed, though they are not all the same people. In 1830, three of these were female, with two being under 10 years old and one between 24 and 35. Four of Archie's slaves were male, with one under the age of ten, two between 10 and 24, and one between 24 and 36.[72] Twenty years later, the Slave Census of 1850 again showed Archie as owning seven slaves. Three were females aged 70, 33, and 18. Four slave were males of ages 38, 37, 36, and 8 months. The 1850 census also differentiated between "black" and "mulatto" slaves. The 37 year old male and 33 and 18 year old females were listed as mulattos. [73] Five years later, in the 1855 Henry County Census, Archie is shown as owning four slaves.

It is extremely difficult to "track" slaves because public records often do not list their

names. Nevertheless, Archibald Sr.'s 70-year old female slave mentioned in the 1850 census is an especially interesting individual. There is no female slave in the 1830 census of Archibald's slaves that remotely corresponds in age with this woman. So where did she come from? Given the average life-span in those days, there would be little economic reason for Archie to buy a slave over 50 years old -- she couldn't bear children and her best working days were over. It seems likely that this slave must have been "in the family" for a long time. In the 1855 census a 75-year-old woman named "Lucinda" was living in Archie's household. This woman is a mystery, since Archie's wife Lucy had died in 1849. Some researchers have speculated that this "Lucinda" was the slave "Lucy" left by John McKissack to his wife Jane in his 1815 will, and that Archie somehow acquired her. This is possible, but the records indicate Lucy had been sold in 1819.

Similarly, in 1850 Archibald Jr. owned a male and female slave who were, respectively, 65 and 72 years of age At that time, Archibald Jr. was 32 years old. Even if he had acquired these slaves when he was younger, it doesn't seem likely he would have the money or inclination to have purchased such old slaves. So chances are that they, too, had probably been "in the family"-- whether Archibald Jr.'s or his wife's family -- for some years.

The presence of these old slaves speaks well for both Archies' living up to the notion of many slaveholders that they were humane beings and benevolent masters. As one historian noted:

> With blacks as well as whites considered "old" at fifty, slaves of that age commanded no higher a purchase price than eight-year old children on the open market during the 1850's, and the temptation to cut them loose remained strong among less scrupulous masters... The behavior of the slaveholders toward the superannuated ranged widely from full and kind concern through minimum attention to paternalistic responsibilities to indifference and sheer barbarism... If many slaveholders went to great lengths to take care of the old and infirm, many others brutally abandoned them... [74]

In January 1852, anticipating his death, Archibald Sr. left a slave to each of his seven grandchildren by his daughter Mary McKissack Perryman.[75] Mary had died in 1844. The slaves Archie willed to his grandchildren were named Caroline, Perry, Luke, Richard, Seborn, Samuel, and Elen. The previous year Archibald had given his son a slave named Joe, and as mentioned, he gave his daughter Elizabeth a slave named Eliza and her child.

Many of the documents pertaining to the McKissacks' slaves indicate they kept slaves "in the family" and made some attempt to maintain family units. In the case of the seven slaves given to his Perryman grandchildren, for instance, Archibald stated that all of them were "the children of my negro woman Caroline and she and they are now in the possession of Matthew Perryman." Nevertheless, the ages in census records make it difficult to track all of the McKissacks' slaves as individuals. There may have been sales and deaths that are not reflected in the public record.

And we know that at least one McKissack slave had no desire at all to be "kept within the family." The slave named Tom who ran away from Archibald in Georgia shows that no matter how good their treatment, slaves wanted their freedom. It is shocking to read occasional

testimony of elderly ex-slaves who said they were better off under slavery, but this usually reflected that the person was undergoing great hardships and nostalgically recalling "better" times. The attitude of most slaves, however, was explained by one historian:

> A southern lady... freed her slaves, among whom one went on to considerable economic success. But his son spent him into bankruptcy, and in his old age he had to work hard to pay off the debts. Knowing that he was dying, he went to his old mistress to ask if she would assume the remaining portion of the debt -- a mere fifteen dollars -- so that he might die with a clear conscience. Of course she would. But, she asked, had you been happier under slavery? No, he replied. Freedom had brought much suffering, but he had been free to choose the responsibilities that brought it. A newly emancipated black, who spoke with unabashed affection for his master, said more simply, "Liberty is as good for us as for the birds of the air. Slavery is not so bad, but liberty is so good."
>
> Despite the hesitations, timidity, and caution, the vibrant freedom themes of the spirituals and the sermons of the black plantation preachers echoed throughout the quarters. The slaves wanted a freedom that gave them more, not less, than they had had in slavery. Hence the touch of bitterness as well as of nostalgia among the freedmen in their old age, for it was not slavery but a healthier version of its doctrine of reciprocal obligations that remained attractive to them. On the central question of slavery itself most were clear enough. "In slavery," said Margrett Nullin of Texas, "I owns nothin and never owns nothin. In freedom I's own de home and raise de family. All dat cause me worryment and in slavery I has no worryment. But I takes de freedom." An unidentified slave spoke with James Stirling in the late 1850's. I am told, Stirling said, that the blacks prefer slavery. "His only answer was a short contemptuous laugh."[76]

SLAVES OF THOMAS MCKISSACK

The 1830 U.S. Census shows Thomas McKissack as owning nine slaves. Most of these were females, with three below the age of 10, two between 10 and 24, and one between 24 and 36. The three male slaves were all below the age of 10. This means that six of Thomas nine slaves were below the age of 10, and none of his grown slaves was a male.

The ages of Thomas' slaves -- with six of the nine below the age of 10 -- are interesting. It was standard practice among slave-owners to not send slaves to work in fields until they were at least 12 years old.[77] The fact that six of Thomas' nine slaves were below the age of ten may have affected the "atmosphere" and even the profitability of his farm. A historian wrote the following about slave children :

> The courts and public opinion considered slaves children until about twelve and tender adolescents until their late teens. Boys of twelve might already be plowing, but they remained boys at the beginning of a slow breaking -in process.... Not until the age of ten -- usually twelve -- did humane masters consider selling a child away from the mother, although a great many less humane

masters sold children at any age.... A majority of the slaves went to the the fields at twelve. A noticeable minority began field work before twelve, mostly at ten and sometimes even earlier, but another minority did not begin until thirteen, fourteen, or fifteen.

Before the age of about eight most children did little or no work apart from looking after ("nursing") those younger than themselves, although in every part of the South some masters worked the little ones unmercifully from the time they could toddle. Between eight and twelve the children graduated to such responsibilities as cleaning up the yards, digging up potatoes, many of which they appropriated for their own illicit roasting parties, shelling peas for the kitchen, or more laboriously, totting water to the field hands. Their hardest work came during the cotton-picking season, when they were sometimes called upon to help. In the fields, with little expected of them and with normal childish pride in doing the work of adults, they often enjoyed themselves.... Despite a quota of abuse and danger, the slave children had a childhood, however much misery awaited them.

To appreciate the significance of these protected years, consider the lot of the peasants and workers of other mid-nineteenth-century societies. "I was glad," wrote William Howard Russell, the English correspondent, from Louisiana, "to see the boys and girls of nine, ten, and eleven years of age were at this season, at all events, exempted from the cruel fate which befalls poor children of their age in the mining and manufacturing districts of England."... By 1853, children of eight were still lawfully employed in English and French industry, and children of nine to eleven in much of Germany. Not until 1853 did Prussia take the lead by abolishing child labor under the age of twelve and by restricting the length of the working day to six hours for children under sixteen.

A doctor described the children who worked in the Manchester cotton mills as "almost universally ill-looking, small, sickly, barefoot, and ill-clad. Many appeared to be no older than seven." They had not started out well. As tots, many had had to be shifted into incompetent hands, while their young mothers worked all day.... At work in pits and factories at seven years of age, they worked twelve, sixteen, eighteen hours. Did they fall asleep? Not likely. The whip kept them awake. The rest of the story -- the desperation of their exhausted mothers and fathers, the inattention to their most elementary needs, the utter brutalization of their formative years -- we need only note in passing.

Most abolitionists pretended not to know the relative conditions of English working-class and southern slave children, or worse actually did not know; but the slaveholders knew precisely and commended themselves on their own humanity... The southern slaveholders knew, too, that their slave children fared closer to the style of their own pampered children than to that of the children of nonslaveholders, who had to help their parents by doing rough work at early ages.

> The better impulses of the master class combined with a good deal of solid economic rationality to bring the slave children to maturity slowly and in a manner designed to guarantee their eventual maximum productivity...
>
> The slaveholders in this case and in their more general treatment of slaves looked at the condition of the European working class, at the abolitionists' indifference and even hypocrisy concerning that condition, and at the condition of their own slaves and drew their own conclusion: they saw themselves as misunderstood, misrepresented, wronged. Those leisurely and playful black children were inadvertently strengthening the intransigence of their masters' commitment to slavery. More important for the immediate purposes, the prolonged childhood of the slaves provided a foundation of physical health for their potential development as independent, spirited adults, even if many broke along the way. Once they went to the fields they experienced the full misery of their condition, and the abrupt shift must have been traumatic despite the painstaking efforts of so many masters to break them into hard labor slowly over a period of years. Not that the slaves suffered initially from being sent to the fields. Many youngsters could hardly wait the work assignment itself marked their arrival as young men. Often they were, in the word of an ex-slave, "crazy" to get behind a plow and show their stuff.
>
> The lives of the children changed dramatically at about the age of twelve. The eagerness of many to get behind a plow carried with it other recognitions of manhood... Boys, like girls, wore dresses until the age of about twelve or when they went to the fields. Usually, the boys' dresses could not be distinguished form the girls; by the time the boys reached ten or so and were growing rapidly, the dresses did not always comfortably cover private parts. Under the embarrassment of such exposure, the boys' desire to put on men's clothing requires no explanation.
>
> For some, the shocking awareness of slave conditions came during childhood, and for others later, when they went to the fields and felt the whip. For most, their early and formative years had offered a semblance of childhood, at least relative to the children of other laboring classes. They had time to grow physically and to parry the most brutal features of their bondage through games. Within limits they had been able to feel and enjoy life. Within these limits they absorbed the rules and values of the dominant culture, but their early freedom from mind-and body-breaking toil contributed the strength of the many adult slaves who emerged as high-spirited men and women.[78]

The fact that Thomas owned no male slaves leads to the question of where the fathers of all those children were. It is possible that some of the fathers of Thomas' slaves were owned by Archibald; he owned three male slaves in 1830 whose ages were in the same categories as Thomas' female slaves. And it was not uncommon for slaves to have spouses on neighboring

plantations, so some of the women's husbands may have been owned by other farmers such as the McKissacks' in-law Matthew Perryman. Perhaps more research will one day allow the descendants of the McKissacks' slaves to trace their lineage.

Regardless of who the fathers of the children were, the situation illustrates how the stability of slave families were at the mercy of their owners. We know that in 1836 Thomas and Mary McKissack moved north to east-central Alabama. It would be wonderful to think that arrangements were made to "juggle" slaves so that families were kept intact, but this would probably be unrealistic. More likely, Thomas' slaves and their spouses were separated by the move, perhaps never to see each other again since Thomas, Mary and probably some of their slaves lost their lives in the Indian Uprising of 1836.

Another way slaves may have been separated from their families was by sale. Other than estate sales, we have little information on what slaves the McKissacks may have bought and sold. As we've seen, the McKissacks seemed to try to keep slaves "in the family." But "the bottom line," as we in modern America often say, is that a slaveowner could sell the husband or wife or children of any slave if he wanted to. The law did not recognize slave marriages. And though slaveowners as a class liked to consider themselves as enlightened paternalistic rulers caring for their "families -- black and white," one historian wrote that he thought the great majority of slaveowners "chose business over sentiment and broke up families when under financial pressure."[79]

Nevertheless, a decision to sell a slave, especially if it broke up a family, was a difficult one. Descriptions of slave sales and their affect on families especially touch the heart at its core. Such sales could demoralize the family member left behind, leaving them despondent or even suicidal, and a poor and unprofitable worker. Or it could even turn them into a vengeful "trouble maker" that broke machinery or burned barns. And there is ample evidence that slaveowners felt considerable guilt and shame at breaking up families, and that such action struck at many slaveowners' conception of themselves as benevolent, caring masters.

OVERSEERS

The reader may remember that at least one newspaper account of Thomas and Mary McKissacks' murder by Indians in 1836 mentioned that their "overseer" had been killed with them. Also, the memoirs of Mrs. Fordham, the McKissacks' neighbor, commented on the skills of Irish overseers, who had familiarity with bogs in Ireland, at draining the swamps around the Yatta Abbey. Generally speaking, however, overseers were not needed by slaveholders who owned only 10 slaves. Perhaps Thomas had acquired more slaves by the time he moved away from Henry County, Alabama, in anticipation of clearing and planting more fresh, new lands.

If Thomas did have an overseer, that man would have been directly responsible for managing slave labor. Generally speaking, overseers were disliked by slave and master alike, and rarely lasted for more than two or three seasons with any plantation owner.[80] One reason overseers had short tenure is that, as might be expected, their relationship with slaves was a constant physical and mental struggle for domination. Some overseers tried to dominate through fear. Slave accounts are filled with stories of brutal whippings by overseers. Sometimes this course of action backfired, and slaves attacked and even killed the overseer.

But in the end the overseer could not rely solely on the whip to make slaves work:

> In order for the overseer to retain his job he had to be adept at managing slaves. There were many pitfalls in the endeavor. If on the one hand the overseer became too familiar with the slave or had sexual relations with the black women, the slaves extracted favors from him and did little work. On the other hand, if the overseer was too cruel and hard driving, the slaves did everything they could to discredit him. It was often impossible for the overseer to find a happy medium between these two extremes. Whenever the slaves were dissatisfied with the overseer, they informed the owner of his transgressions, or ran away to escape heavy work or to avoid punishment. Often the slaves refused to return to work until they had spoken to their masters about their treatment. One harried overseer indicated the impact of this tactic when he complained that 'if I don't please every negro on the place they run away right straight.' If the overseer somehow managed to please the master and the slaves, he was guaranteed a long tenure on the plantation. [81]

SLAVES AND JAMES MCKISSACK

As mentioned, James appears not to have owned slaves, with one exception. Early census records list him as a non-slaveowner. When his father died in 1815, James had purchased the slave Ellick from his estate, and by 1820, James owned one slave.

Why James owned only this one slave is an interesting question. There is always the possibility, of course, that he simply could not afford slaves. A slave was a huge investment. There is also the chance that James just didn't want slaves. A slave was a particularly demanding type of property. Not a few planters wrote that they regretted the day they had purchased slaves. Some who felt an obligation to provide a good life for their slaves moaned that their slaves owned them more than they owned the slaves.

But what little evidence we have indicates James was not poor. When the family of John and Jane McKissack moved to Georgia in the 1790's, James was the only son to buy his own land. When his father died in 1815, he had left James, the eldest son, "the land he now lives on" in Putnam County, Georgia. Sale of these assets would have given James money. Yet the 1830 U.S. Census shows James living in his own household in Henry County, Alabama, and owning no slaves, even though his brothers owned several. It is also interesting to note that when John McKissack died in 1815, he gave a slave to each of his other six living sons, and also to his daughters, but not James.

There is the possibility that James, like many Southerners in the early 1800's, felt that slaveowning was wrong. Perhaps this grew from his Methodist faith. As mentioned, there are strong indications that the McKissacks had joined the Methodist church while in Georgia. The first large camp meetings in Georgia were held near their farms. Several of them, including James, named sons John Wesley after the founder of Methodism. And as we have seen, a group of McKissack men were founders of the religious meeting house in Columbia, Henry County.

The anti-slavery movement in 19th century America, like the anti-abortion movement today, grew primarily out of the religious community. As one book noted:

> Belief that all souls were worthwhile and ought to be saved continued to motivate Georgia Methodists to reach across racial lines... During the Great Revival, camp meeting participants sang the following hymn:
>
> > Now God is calling ev'ry nation,
> > The bond and the free, the rich and poor;
> > These are the days of visitation,
> > Sweet gospel grace will soon be o'er.
>
> Yet ownership of one person by another compromised bonds between Methodists. In 1815 [one Methodist bishop] noted that local Alabama preachers, while paying lip service to... antislavery principles, argued that freeing slaves would mean turning 'loose a set of vagabonds to plunder and steal and go to the gallows.' How, asked the bishop, could people 'separated by such sentiments be bound together at the same time by the lovely bands of Christian confidence and fellowship?
>
> Nonetheless, the Methodist antislavery tradition remained stronger than that of any other large southern nomination. Many Methodists, especially clergymen, still harbored antislavery sentiments. [Bishop] William McKendree... agonized over slavery. 'I feel for my brethren. I feel for the poor afflicted slave. I feel for his Master whose situation may be worse at a future day.' But he believed that slavery, however dressed up, was 'a noxious weed' that supports 'ungodly passions...'[82]

The conflict over slavery continued to simmer within the Methodist Church. Seeing, however, that a too-stringent anti-slavery policy would threaten what it saw as its main mission -- spreading scriptural holiness -- the church tolerated slavery where it was already entrenched. One historian of the church noted, "By the 1820's Georgia Methodists (from fear, conviction, and self-interest) steered their concern for slaves into safer channels, promoting spiritual salvation rather than civil freedom."[83] Nevertheless, the official dictates of the church continued to condemn slavery and by 1844 the Methodist church split into factions over the slavery issue. Southerners formed the Methodist Episcopal Church -- South. Yet even with this split it was not until 1857 that southern Methodists would delete from their articles the church's strictures against slavery.

With regards to James McKissack, we may never know why he did not own slaves. Given what little we know about him, however, it appears that he deliberately chose not to associate himself with the "peculiar institution." And religious reasons would have been a likely basis for that decision.

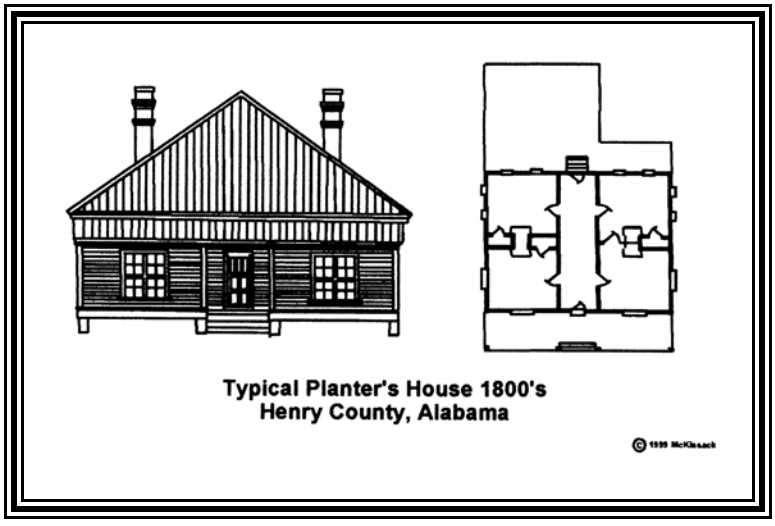
"THE BIG HOUSE" AND THE SLAVE QUARTERS

Anyone who has visited as a tourist at one of the many reconstructed antebellum plantations in the South is familiar with the basic arrangement of such enterprises. There was usually an elaborate and beautiful plantation home for the master and his family. This was surrounded by numerous outbuildings such as stables, springhouse, smokehouse, storehouse, corn house, chicken coup, and kitchen. For the slaves there were small cabins set in a row; these were called the slave "quarters." Some of the McKissacks who moved to Tennessee achieved this grand lifestyle. This is especially true of Archibald, Thomas, and James' cousin William McKissack, whose father Thomas was their uncle -- the brother of their father John. In fact, the slaves of the Tennessee McKissacks became skilled masons, building several elegant plantation homes in the Spring Hill area. After the Civil War, these slaves would continue their trade as free men, eventually founding what today is one of the largest architectural firms in Nashville, Tennessee.

As mentioned, however, none of the McKissacks in Henry County managed to achieve the grand planters' lifestyle. Unfortunately, the houses they lived in have disappeared, and descendants who grew up in the area remember no house associated with the family. Research into the early planters' homes in Southeast Alabama, however, shows that by the 1850s the McKissacks were probably living in a box-shaped, four-room house with a central hallway. These type of houses, examples of which survive in Henry County, were extremely popular and widespread in Southeast Alabama among farmers of upper-class means. [84] The U.S. Census of 1850 shows Archibald as the head of a household, including the families of his children John Wesley and Elizabeth, his grandson James, an elderly woman named Lucinda, and a middle-aged male named Redin. Given this number of people and the rooms required for them, it's possible they lived in a larger house with an addition on back, also.

To someone accustomed to the finer homes of wealthy citizens up the Chattahoochee River in Eufaula or Columbus, the homes of well-to-do Henry County planters might have seemed quite rustic:

> Only the very wealthiest slaveholding households remotely approximated the physical luxury and ease attributed to them in the romantic legend that was strong even then but would grow stronger in the days of "the Lost



Cause." [One observer] counterposed a detailed and sobering description of what she apparently considered a typical plantation to make the point. A paling, she wrote, enclosed all the buildings "belonging to the family and all the house servants." In the middle of this enclosure stood the principal house, which she found less than impressive. In accordance with general custom, it stood atop four posts that permitted circulation both of air and, to her disgust, of animals. Like other southern houses, it was built low to forestall the worst effects of the heavy gales to which the South was prey. Boards, arranged like clapboards, covered the exterior to shield it from rain. They accounted for the "entire thickness of the walls, there being no ceiling, lathing, or plastering within." The floors, which manifested no greater concern with construction, "were all single and laid in so unworkman like manner, I could often see the ground beneath, when the carpets were not on the floor, and they are always taken up in the summer to make the apartments cooler." The roof was so shabbily laid, that "not only the wind, but the light and rain often finds free access into the upper apartments, through ten thousand holes among the shingles." The windows did have the uncommon luxury of panes of glass, but they were rarely used for protection against the elements... Numerous southern women confirmed [this] impression.[85]

Regardless of how such a house would appear to us today, it most likely was impressive to the McKissacks' slaves:

> The overwhelming majority of the big planters, as well as the moderate to small, planters, lived in simple two-story log houses, tolerably spacious and comfortable but hardly the mansions of *Gone with the Wind* and the plantation legend. Yet... for poorer white farmers as well as for slaves... even a modest rustic Big House commanded awe and respect. Will Baily, an ex-slave from Missouri, could recall that his master built the Big House out of the same logs he provided for the quarters...
>
> However the Big House may have looked to a critical and sophisticated eye, it loomed as a "mansion" to the slaves. Isaac Martin of Texas burst out:
>
> > My ol' marster he live in a big house. Oh, it was a palace. It had eight or nine rooms. It was buil' outer logs, and moss and clay was stuff' twixt de logs. Dere was boards on de outside and it was all ceil' nice on de inside. He lived in a mansion.
>
> After a long life in freedom in which to reflect on the reality, James Southall of Tennessee concluded: "It wasn't such a big house as it had only four or five rooms in it. It was a common boxed house, painted white and wid a long gallery across de front. Maybe it was de gallery dat made it so big to us.[86]

We can be sure that while not extremely grand, the Henry County McKissacks farm included some of the typical outbuildings of a plantation, including slave houses. In 1855, when selling some land in his plantation to his son John Wesley, Archibald wrote that he was

"reserving and retaining for myself the dwelling house ... during the term of my natural life and also the lot whereon the negro houses are." [87]

With regard to these "negro houses" mentioned by Archibald, it can be noted that though the "Big House" had its inconveniences, the slave houses could be many times worse:

> The slaves often complained bitterly about what their masters described as "adequate" housing. Most of the autobiographers reported that they lived in crudely built one-room log cabins with dirt floors and too many cracks in them to permit much comfort during the winter months. John Brown complained that in the log cabins: "The wind and rain will come in and the smoke will not go out." [Ex-slave] Austin Steward's cabins were "not as good as many of our stables at the north." Not only were the slave cabins uncomfortable, they were often crowded. Most of the cabins contained at least two families.... Some slaves, of course, lived in more spacious and comfortable cabins.... Few slaves were as fortunate as Sam Aleckson whose master's slave cabins were not only neat and commodious, but also had flower gardens in front of them. Usually the slaves had to make what furniture and utensils they used. [88]

In spite of the crudeness of slave cabins, farmers like Archibald or Thomas McKissack might have thought them quite adequate. After all, they had probably spent the first 30 years of their lives in structures of equal quality as their family moved and built log cabins in Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama. Likewise, the homes of yeoman whites were sometimes worse than those of slaves:

> [Ex-slave] Sarah Debro of North Carolina derided the cabins of the poor whites as "little shacks made of sticks and mud with stick and mud chimneys" and contrasted them sharply with the "planked up and warm" cabins that Marse Cain provided for his slaves. The slaves saw how the marginal white farmers and especially the declasse poor whites lived... "The many descriptions left by the antebellum travelers," writes Avery O. Craven, "indicated that the home of the poor white and the cabin of the Negro slave varied little in size or comfort. Both were apt to be of but a single room whose plain walls of log were broken only buy doorways and open fireplace." Nor did the solid yeomen always do better; many did just as badly. Large families often crowded into one room in a manner that would have made most slaveholders blush were their slaves in such condition. Sidney Andrews described as a typical yeoman cabin in North Carolina in 1865:
>
> > His house has two rooms and a loft, and is meanly furnished, -- one, and possibly two, beds, three or four chairs, half a dozen stools a cheap pine table, an old spinning wheel, a water bucket and drinking gourd, two tin washbasins, half a dozen tin platters, a few cooking utensils, and a dozen old pieces of crockery. Paint and white wash and wallpaper and window-curtains are to him needless luxuries.[89]

Given that Archie never owned enough slaves to account for more than two or three families, there were probably only two or three "negro houses" on his farm. The very fact that he refers to more than one house indicates that his slaves lived relatively well. Some planters forced up to ten or more slaves to live in one cabin, while others required entire families to live in one room in "the big house." As seen, there is evidence that the elderly slave "Lucinda" lived in the same house as Archie's white family.

Though Archie's plantation probably included no more than two or three slave houses, even this small scale "quarters" undoubtedly had a few things in common with the ones on bigger plantations. For one thing, it was primarily where the slaves could escape the master's supervision. No matter how mean the slave houses --

> Within the cabin the power of the master could be shut out temporarily. The fireplace centered the family. "We worked hard in de field all day," said Clara C. Young of Mississippi, "but when dark come we could all go to de quarters and after supper we could set around and sing and talk."... Olmstead reported from a modest plantation in Mississippi:
>
> > During the evening all the cabins were illuminated by great fires, and looking into one of them, I saw a very picturesque family group; a man sat on the ground making a basket, a woman lounged on a chest in the chimney corner smoking a pipe, and a boy and two girls sat in a bed which had been drawn up opposite to her, completing the fireside circle. They were talking and laughing cheerfully.
>
> Many masters took measures to get their slaves to bed early and some even forbade nocturnal singing and audible recreation. When the slaves lacked permission to unwind before their own fires, they often did it anyway at the risk of punishment.[90]

When a master tried to restrict their singing, ex-slaves related that they would sometimes place large washtubs over their heads and sing into them to muffle the noise.[91]

In the area of their "negro houses" the McKissacks' slaves would have had a space in which to build a personal life. Most slaves had personal gardens to supplement food provided by their masters. Slave women contributed much to southern cooking through dishes prepared in their own houses. Slave men built furniture and learned to play musical instruments. Some slaves raised their own farm animals, including hogs, chickens or bees, and others owned pets such as dogs. The dogs were very often used in hunting and some slaves owned guns with their owner's permission. (Indeed, hunting was one of the primary recreations of white and black.) Although no slave was ultimately beyond the will of the master, in the quarters they could nevertheless fashion a limited personal world. They were, after all, human beings with feelings, interests, and within very limited boundaries, hopes. Several of the texts listed in this section include extensive writings and research on the culture, religion, recreation, and music of slaves. The odyssey of African-Americans through slavery is one of the most moving and interesting

subplots of the great American story.

MANAGING AND CONTROLLING SLAVES

Given that human beings naturally rebel against the condition of being held a slave, slaveholding Southerners developed an elaborate system for managing and controlling the slave population. The management and supervision of their slaves would probably have occupied a considerable amount of the McKissacks' time and energy, and at times it would not have been so different than any other supervisor's role. "One slaveholder declared that in managing slaves: 'Love and fear, a regard for public opinion, gratitude, shame, the conjugal, parental, and filial feelings, these all must be appealed to and cultivated.' Reason and persuasion, slaveholders argued, had to be among the primary instruments of slave management."[92]

Another slaveholder wrote that the personality of each slave must be carefully considered:

> In the management of slaves, the temper and disposition of each negro should be particularly consulted. Some require spurring up, some coaxing, some flattering, and others nothing but good words. Study their dispositions well.... Many a noble spirit has been broken down by injudicious management, and many a lazy cunning fellow has escaped, and put his work on the shoulders of the industrious. Give me a high spirited and even a high tempered negro, full of pride, for easy and comfortable management. Your slow sulky negro although he may have an even temper, is the devil to manage.
>
> The negro women are all harder to manage than the men. The only way to get along with them is by kind words and flattery. If you want to cure a sloven, give her something nice occasionally to wear, and praise her up to skies whenever she has on anything tolerably decent.[93]

No matter how adept a slaveowner might be at managing his slaves, however, ultimately the institution of slavery relied on physical coercion. As mentioned, some planters offered positive inducements for good performance by slaves. In a few rare cases, planters even made deals with their slaves to free them after a certain amount of work and good behavior. But the threat of whipping and physical punishment were what kept the huge slave population in control. Some readers may think this statement is too harsh a generalization. But a thorough reading of the primary sources covering the Old South confirms this. As one historian wrote:

> When possible, masters and overseers tried to control their slaves by withdrawing visiting privileges, forbidding a Saturday night dance, scheduling extra work, or putting an offender in the stocks or in solitary confinement. But too many high-spirited slaves scorned such measures. Sooner or later the masters fell back on the whip. If a master lacked the will to use it, he would have to sell his 'incorrigibles,' in which case someone else had to use it. 'Were fidelity the only security we enjoyed,' wrote a planter in the Southern Patriot, 'deplorable indeed

> would be our situation. The fear of punishment is the principle to which we must and do appeal, to keep them in awe and order.' On a well-run plantation the whip did not crack often or excessively; the threat of its use, in combination with other incentives or threats, preserved order.... From colonial times to the end of the regime intelligent masters tried to reduce their dependency on the whip but admitted that they could not do without it.[94]

Furthermore, any Southerner -- white or black -- with rural connections who was born prior to the 1960s probably remembers being "whipped." The ex-slave and abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass once recalled that everyone in the South seemed to want to whip each other. Today "whipping" children might be considered brutal, but it was once quite common; many living Southerners knew relatives and friends who regularly had welts on their legs. If painful physical whipping could be commonly used for control of one's own children in the 20th century, it makes sense that it would be even more common on slaves in a period of history that was far more brutal, dirty and harsh.

The difference, of course, was that under slavery adults were whipped, and they were whipped not on their legs or behinds with a belt or leather "strop," but sometimes with bullwhips on their backs. Its true that some masters never whipped, and some were reluctant to use this punishment. Others, however, employed the whip freely and others were sadistic. Reliable accounts exist of male and female slaves who were tied down and whipped until they died.

Whippings were most frequently given for some infraction of whatever rules the master had established. Working slow, fighting, stealing, running away, drunkenness -- all of these things could prompt a whipping. But whippings were not always the calculated action of an owner for "misbehavior." Just as a parent can sometimes explode at a child, slaveowners, both men and women, could sometimes take out their frustrations and impatience with slaves by whipping them. Sometimes we speak of children as "testing" a parent's patience, and this same tension existed between master and slave. This was as true inside the plantation home as in the fields. As Elizabeth Fox-Genovese noted:

> Mistresses and slaves lived in tense bonds of conflict-ridden intimacy that frequently exploded into violence on one side or the other. Everyday proximity to mistresses permitted slave women special kinds of psychological resistance, the consequences of which are almost impossible to assess. Impudence and 'uppityness' which derived from intimate knowledge of a mistress's weak points, demonstrated a kind of resistance and frequently provoked retaliation out of all proportion to the acts, if not the spirit. Because the mistress lacked the full authority of the master, her relations with her servants could easily lapse into a personal struggle. When servants compounded sauciness and subtle disrespect with a studied cheerful resistance to accomplishing the task at hand, the mistress could rapidly find herself losing control -- of herself as well as the servant. “Puttin on ole massa” must have been, if anything, more trying when practiced by slave women against the mistress. But slave women who worked in the big house were uniquely positioned to...make the lives of privileged mistresses an unending war of nerves. Withal, it was the mistress, not the servant, who held the whip and

who, much more often than not, initiated the violence.

> Mistresses and servants did not readily agree about the appropriate standards for work, and resentful slave women frequently shirked to make their point.... In innumerable other instances, house maids dusted inattentively, young nurses pulled [white] children's hair, and everyone pretended not to hear or understand instructions. After the war, Frances Butler Leigh noted that to get blacks to do anything, she had to tell them to do it, show them how to do it, and then do it herself.

We have already noted that some masters simply refused to whip their slaves. But it is also interesting to note that there were some slaves who refused to be whipped.

> Many of the strongest, most industrious and intelligent slaves refused to submit passively to floggings. Approaching the master or overseer directly, the slaves informed them that they would do the labor required of them, but that no man would whip them....
>
> In most cases the masters tried to avoid trouble with the intractable slave because of his value as worker. The only way he could be punished was to shoot him. Realizing this, many slaves parlayed it into better treatment: they threatened to run away, to fight, or to stop work if they were flogged. William Green, after fighting his master to a standstill when the latter tried to flog him for disobedience, declared that no man would whip him and if he were flogged, he would cease work. His master relented, Green declared, and 'after this we made up and got along very well for almost a year.' James Mars wrote that he refused to permit his master to flog him when he was sixteen, and from that time until he was twenty-one he had no more trouble with his master: 'I do not remember that he ever gave me an unpleasant word or look.'... [95]

And it wasn't just the male slaves who might refuse to be whipped:

> Ruben Laird recalled an overseer who started to whip a young field woman for not dong her share of the work. She turned on him "and chased him out of the field with her hoe, whereupon the overseer resigned, stating that Dr. Laird's slaves were too 'ambitious' for him to manage." But masters had to reach their own accommodations with slaves or else sell them. Selina Jordan, who had a merited reputation as a fighter, could not stand life with her master, who "'was always whipping and beating his slaves." She figured that she "would be better off dead and out of her misery." So one day when the master claimed to find fault with her work and started to raise his whip, "she fought back." When "the ruckus was over the master was laying still on the ground," as if dead from the whipping. He was not, but she was sold to a new master. On her second day at the plantation, the new master "acted like he was going to whip her for something she'd done or

> hadn't, but [she] knocked him plumb through the open cellar door." Presumably he had only been testing her, for he climbed out unhurt and laughing, saying "he was only fooling to see if she would fight." Although masters could turn to the law and the public authorities for assistance in controlling their slave women, they -- like those women -- knew better than any that, to the fullest extent possible, day-to-day resistance had to be dealt with within the household.[96]

PATROLLERS

To control the slaves it was necessary also to control their movements, especially nighttime movements. This became especially important to slaveowners after the unsuccessful slave insurrection led by Nat Turner in Virginia in 1831. Nat Turner's uprising left 55 whites dead and spread fear throughout the slaveholding community. Likewise, activities of Northern abolitionists in the 1850s caused a tightening of slave laws. And after John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia, in 1859, Southerners feared a general slave uprising.

To guard against the threat of a slave uprising, communities established "patrolers" who policed the roads at night. These men searched for gatherings of slaves who might be plotting rebellion. The patrolers consisted of men from the community who served by rotation. In Alabama, the patroler force was created by a law specifying that "every male owner of slaves, eligible to perform military duty, is eligible to perform patrol duty."[97] Thus, as slaveowners, several of the McKissack men would have been required by law to serve duty as patrolers. Historic accounts, however, indicate that the patrollers were often plantation overseers or young men hired for the job.

Slaves were not allowed off their plantation at night without written passes from their masters. It was the duty of each patrol to visit places suspected of entertaining unlawful assemblies of slaves, including the slave quarters on plantations. Any slave found without a pass from his owner was to be given 15 lashes. After the Civil War, many ex-slaves mentioned the patrollers, and some recounted the whippings slaves received from them. Patrolers sometimes used dogs to track runaway slaves. Ex-slaves frequently mentioned these dogs as terrible. In the most brutal instances, the patrolers would allow the dogs to attack the runaway slaves once they were caught.

In other cases, however, the patrolers and slaves knew each other well, and sometimes slaves got off with no punishment after being caught.[98] Some hint of the human interaction between slaves and patrolers surfaces in the following 1831 newspaper editorial:

> The present patrol laws are very lame. On the first day of our Circuit Court I was surprised to hear the remarks made, I should say threats against the patrollers... If the patrollers are not clothed with powers to correct negroes for insulting them, when in discharge of their duty, they had as well remain at home where they will be out of reach of indictments, and those gentlemen who own large numbers of negroes can enjoy themselves, whilst their negroes are eating the poor man's hogs and chickens.[99]

In spite of the patrollers, slaves found ways to gather and "frolic" whether their masters

wanted them to or not. Some were confident in their ability to elude the patrolers and return home before they were caught. Others with lenient masters knew their punishment would be light even if they were apprehended while off the plantation without a pass. Nevertheless, the patrollers -- often called "pattyrollers" by the slaves -- were mentioned frequently by ex-slaves as one of the evils of the slave system they hated most.

CONCLUSION

Given the scantiness of documents, we can only make educated guesses about how the McKissacks' lives were influenced by slavery, what kind of masters they were, or how their slaves fared. What little information is available, however, indicates the McKissacks were humane masters. They took care of older slaves long after their "prime" working years. Archibald seems to have provided adequate housing for his slaves. At least one slave, Tom, knew how to read and write. And there is evidence that at least one member of the family -- James -- refused to join his brothers and sisters in the "peculiar institution."

Its likely, however, that the McKissacks' slaves, like many others, suffered the hardship of being separated from fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers against their will. Slaves may have been kept "in the family" where possible, but the McKissack family was one whose members often moved apart from each other. And their slaves, as their property, would have gone with them. Likewise, the death of a master could mean the breakup of families whose members were inherited by the descendant's children.

Like all human beings, the McKissacks' slaves were individuals faced with a certain set of skills and options. These determined whether they attempted to run away, like Tom did in Georgia, or remain with the McKissack family all their lives, as "Lucinda" may have done.

Some of the story on the lives of the McKissacks' slaves might one day become more widely known by finding more information. Or perhaps one day someone can trace specific McKissack slaves to some of the numerous black Americans bearing the name of McKissack throughout the south. It would be fascinating if these people had oral or written histories passed down in their families. For now, however, we can only use general knowledge to try to guess at the shapes of their particular lives.

CHAPTER XXI
FAMILY CHANGES IN THE 1840'S AND 1850'S

The 1820s and 1830s were a time of consolidation for the McKissacks. As we've seen, they were some of the earliest settlers of Henry County and participants in building its economy and social life. Archibald and Lucy McKissack's oldest children -- William and Mary -- had both married into prominent families. In addition, several of their McKissack cousins had likewise married. The younger children no doubt worked on the plantation and enjoyed the experiences of young people on the frontier everywhere.

By the 1840s, most of the work of "civilizing" Henry County was accomplished. The white and black populations had grown, the Indians had been removed, and the younger McKissacks began to come of marrying age. We are primarily concerned with our own ancestors in this regard, and anyone interested in other lines might check Part II of this book for information. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it appears while many of Archibald and James McKissack's children remained in Henry County, all of Thomas' family had moved to east-central Alabama or west-central Georgia by the 1840s and 1850s.

DEATH OF MARY MCKISSACK PERRYMAN

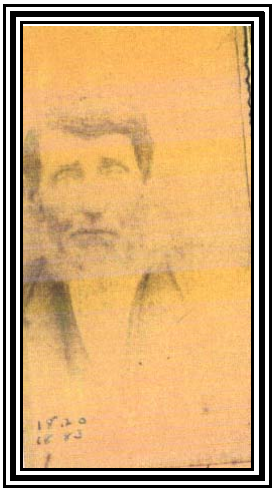
As mentioned, Mary McKissack had married Matthew Perryman in 1823 when her family had first arrived in Henry County. At that time she was only 15 years old. For the next 22 years Mary and Matthew built a relatively successful life together in Henry County, Alabama. They had seven children and apparently lived in the Shorterville area just north of Yatta Abbey Creek. When Mary died in 1845, her husband Matthew was one of the most prominent and influential planters in Henry County. He remarried, but also died in 1853.

MARRIAGE OF ARCHIBALD MCKISSACK JR AND MARY FIDELIA RISEN

Archibald and Lucy's son Archie married Mary Fidelia Risen on May 22, 1844. Mary was born in Mississippi or Tennessee, depending on which census one relies on (1880 U.S. Census). Documents sometimes list her last name as Rising or Rison. Like many other Henry County couples, Archie and Mary crossed the river to Early County, Georgia to be married.[100] They settled into a farming life near Archie's parents. Years later, a 23-year-old woman named Ann Risen would be listed in the 1860 U.S. Census as living within the household of Archie's brother John Wesley, and her occupation would be schoolteacher. Ann may have been a younger sister or cousin of Mary's. She told the census her birthplace was Mississippi.

MARRIAGE OF JOHN WESLEY MCKISSACK AND ELIZA JANE SHANKS

At some point, John Wesley McKissack began visiting Barbour County, Alabama, which bordered the Chattahoochee River north of Henry County. Perhaps it was on trips to Eufaula, where many river folks went for goods and entertainment, that he met Eliza Jane Shanks, whose father was a Methodist minister. Or perhaps John Wesley and Eliza met at one of the religious camp meetings held periodically in the region. Whatever the circumstances, they were married on Christmas day of 1849. John was 22 and Eliza was 18.



Archie McKissack Jr.

John and Eliza's wedding must have surely been a large and festive occasion. By the late 1840s, Christmas Day had become a time when families gathered and socialized together. Likewise, one would imagine that the parishioners of James' Shanks would have been excited about the marriage of their minister's daughter.

The family John Wesley McKissack was marrying into was strongly connected with the Methodist church. The Shanks family is described briefly in The History of Methodism in Alabama:

Fidelia Risen

In the first years of Methodist work on the

Chattahoochee...a group of kindred by the name of Shanks settled in the vicinity of ... Barbour County. That family came from South Carolina. The ancestors of the family, and the older children of the household, were acquainted with Bishop Asbury. One member of the family, born in South Carolina in 1808, bore the name of the Bishop. In the assemblage of Methodist names found at that early day in that section of Alabama none was more illustrious than that of Shanks. Not to mention the sisters, who were women of piety, and gifted in song, three brothers, James, William, and Asbury H., were Methodist preachers....

> James Shanks was a man of extraordinary force, and a man of admirable consistency of character. He was renewed by divine grace October 11, 1829, and was licensed to preach March, 1832. In connection with renewal of heart he received an overwhelming ecstasy which almost without intermission and with but little abatement continued for two years, and at the time of his death he said, in the review of this life, he was, though he was in agonies, the agonies of death, happier than at any former period of his Christian experience.[101]

It might be noted that someone once asked James Shanks if he had shouted in ecstasy when he became a Christian. Shanks replied, "Yes, for two years."

ELIZABETH MCKISSACK HARRIS CONNELLY

Elizabeth had been born in 1823, shortly after her family moved from Georgia to Henry County. By the time she was 19 she had married a minister named Harris, but he apparently died by 1850 as the U.S. Census for that year shows Elizabeth and her seven-year-old daughter Amanda living with her father Archibald. On December 21, 1853, Elizabeth married the Reverend James Z. S. Connelly. The Connellys would live in Henry County for many years. In 1871, James Connelly bought land near the old McKissack farms. By 1885, he was the first mayor of Dothan, Alabama, just to the south of Henry County. Some McKissack researchers say many of the Connellys later moved to Texas.

MARRIAGE OF RADFORD ELLIS MCKISSACK TO MARY MARTHA JONES

Born in 1810, Radford married Mary Martha Jones relatively late in life on March 26, 1853. Throughout the 1850s Radford and Mary Martha farmed land south of the old McKissack farms on the Yatta Abbey. (See Parts II and III of this book for extensive information on Radford and Mary's descendants — supplied by Doris Gilbert Newsom.)

There may have been a calamity in the Jones' family sometime in the 1850s in which Mary Martha's parents died. Several of Mary Martha's siblings were living with McKissacks in 1860. The 1860 U.S. Census shows Mary Martha's brother Aaron living with the family of Archibald and Fidelia McKissack. The census likewise indicates that Mary's sister Rachael was living with her and Radford that year.

CHAPTER XXII
ANOTHER GENERATION PASSES ON

As the 1840s came to a close, so did the lives of the generation that was born at the time of the American Revolution. These people had known the American republic in its infancy, when the notion of a people choosing their own leaders and form of government was still in new. Many of them, such as the McKissacks, had participated in the new nation's expansion into the new lands away from the eastern seaboard where their civilization had for so long been contained.

THOMAS AND JAMES MCKISSACK

As noted, it appears that Thomas and Mary Browning McKissack, as well as one of their daughters, were killed in the Indian Uprising of 1836. For many years their children lived in east-central Alabama and west-central Georgia. Many later moved on to Texas and other points west. (see Part II of this book for more information in genealogy charts).

Likewise, James McKissack, the eldest son of John and Jane McKissack, last appears in the Henry County, Alabama, census of 1830. He may have died shortly after that in Henry County. Many of his descendants probably still live in Alabama, Florida, Georgia and throughout the United States.

DEATHS OF ARCHIBALD AND LUCY ELLIS MCKISSACK

In the mid-1800s, the health of Archibald McKissack's wife, Lucy Ellis McKissack, began to fail. Her obituary in March of 1849 stated that "Her health has not been good for some five years, yet her mind was calm and her faith steadfast in God. After suffering much she was suddenly removed from earth by an attack of paralysis." To modern ears, this sounds like Lucy suffered a stroke of some kind.

Like so many others, Lucy had lived the rugged and demanding life of a pioneer farmer's wife. But this was a life she knew from an early age, since she had been born into the North Carolina pioneer culture. By the time she passed away, she had seen one of her Uncle Spruce McCoy's law proteges -- Andrew Jackson -- become President of the United States. She had borne and raised at least six children, and by the time she died she knew 18 grandchildren. Her obituary remarked that "She was a good wife and tender mother, a faithful friend of the minister of the Gospel, and indulgent mistress, kind and liberal to the fatherless and widow."[102] Unfortunately, we do not know where she is buried, but it is probably somewhere in Henry County not too far from the McKissack farms along Yatta Abbey Creek and the Chattahoochee River. Perhaps in one of the unmarked graves in the old Hickory Grove cemetery near Haleburg.

Archibald McKissack's health likewise seems to have declined shortly after Lucy's death. In the early 1850's he began distributing his estate among his children and grandchildren. In 1851, he signed a document leaving a slave named Joe to his son Archibald, Jr.[103] The following year he gave a slave to each of his seven grandchildren borne to Mary McKissack Perryman. Mary had died in 1845. (These slaves' names appear to have been Caroline, Perry, Luke,

Richard, Seborn, Samuel, and Elen). In 1855, Archibald gave a slave named Eliza and "her child" to his daughter Elizabeth McKissack (Harris) Connelly.

Archibald also sold his land to his sons for such low prices ($50) that he essentially gave it to them. In November 1855 he sold his land to Radford Ellis, Archibald, Jr., and John W. McKissack. He also sold land to his grandson James McKissack. (Though the act of sale does not refer to a guardian, it may have been that Archibald was providing an estate for the care of the young man who may have been already showing signs that he was mentally incompetent.[104]) In one of these sales, Archibald sold the land he was living on, but he retained the use of the home overlooking Abbie Creek until his death. An 1855 census shows Archibald as living alone with four slaves.[105] He probably died shortly thereafter, as there is no further mention of him in public records. In 1855 he would have been 81 years old.

The American Revolution ended when Archie was nine years old. A new nation had won its freedom after an eight-year war. Archie's family moved to the mountains of Tennessee when he was just entering his teens. He had come of age on the hard and dangerous frontier in Tennessee and Georgia, finding a good wife in 1803. In middle age he and his brothers had moved their families to yet another frontier and prospered there, also. When Archie died, there were storm clouds of war already showing on the nation's horizon.

With the passing of Archibald's generation, a chapter would close in American history. During their lifetimes, a new nation had been born and expanded greatly. With the other members of his huge family -- his father and mother, brothers and sisters -- Archie had moved into the American frontier and helped tame it.

During these years, concepts of self-government and democracy were being tested and improved upon. Nowhere on earth had something like the new nation of America been tried. But one of the great truths that the new nation was founded upon was that "all men are created equal." Another truth was that individual states retained certain rights that the federal government was not free to override. These concepts were soon going to collide in the American Civil War.

CHAPTER XXIII
THE CIVIL WAR

History books trace the events leading up to the Civil War from a time as early as the adoption of the American Constitution. The reader may remember that at that time there was a dispute between Northern and Southern states as to whether slaves should be counted in the population in order to determine how much representation a state would have in the national Congress. Southerners, naturally, wanted the slaves counted, while Northerners did not. As a compromise, that document declared that slaves were to be considered as three-fifths of person. Obviously, there would have to be some type of reconciliation with the Declaration of Independence, which declared that "all men are created equal."

On the other hand, some historians have noted that the southern and northern parts of America were at odds as early as the American Revolution. Differences in culture caused the sections to approach political issues differently. In addition, there were sincere differences of opinion with regards to whether a powerful federal government should be able to impose its will on the independent states of the union.

We will not attempt here to recount the story of the great debates that led up to the Civil War. It includes some of the greatest issues and personalities of American history. While this is a fascinating episode, the reader must turn to history books for a discussion of this story. In this book, we will consider only what is necessary to tell the story of the McKissack family in Henry County, Alabama.

ALABAMA'S SECESSION CONVENTION

Many white Southerners, especially those in the planter class, believed the election of Abraham Lincoln at the end of 1860 meant that the North intended to outlaw slavery. Consequently, by the spring of 1861, South Carolina had seceded from the union. Other southern states, including Alabama, began considering whether they should likewise secede.

When Alabama called a convention in Montgomery, Henry County's two representatives voted to secede from the Union. One of Henry County's representatives was Thomas T. Smith, a prominent businessman and neighbor of the McKissacks. In 1857, John Wesley McKissack had sold Smith land adjoining the McKissack farms along the Yatta Abbey. At that time there was a community named Smithville just north of the Yatta Abbey, and a bend in the Chattahoochee is still today called "Smith's Bend."

The decision to secede was not an easy one. When a test vote was called for at the convention, the delegates at first voted against secession 55 to 54. As pressure mounted from the state's planter class, the convention adopted an Ordinance of Secession 61 to 39.

In Henry County, the two major political parties -- Whigs and Democrats -- performed an interesting ceremony to show their support for secession. The parties were staunch foes, and opposed each other politically on many matters. Nevertheless, the party leaders decided that the threat of war required that they, quite literally, "bury the hatchet." Consequently, they bought a hatchet and arranged an elaborate ceremony on the veranda of the county courthouse in Abbeville. A prominent local lawyer gave a suitable oration to the gathered crowd, and the party

leaders buried the hatchet on the courthouse grounds and raised a Liberty pole and flag on the spot.[106]

In spite of such displays, however, Alabama was never unified behind the decision to secede. Many men in the hilly, northern part of the state were yeoman farmers who owned no slaves. One of them from Winston County wrote scornfully of the state's planter elite: "All tha want is to git you... to fight for their infurnal negroes and after you do their fightin' you may kiss their hine parts for o tha care."[107] In fact, many North Alabamians joined the Union army, especially after the Union troops took over their region. There was similar sentiment in southeastern Alabama where the McKissacks lived. Many of the yeoman farmers living there in the Wiregrass owned no slaves and were ambivalent or even hostile toward the Confederacy. It was said by many that the conflict was to be "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight." This would have ominous consequences for Henry and the other counties in southeast Alabama.

WAR ERUPTS

A week after Alabama voted to secede, one Chattahoochee River planter wrote, "The political skies are cloudy and no one can tell what is the future, but I am hopeful that our Southern Confederacy will be established without blood-shed."[108] Shortly thereafter, Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina. Thus began the American Civil War.

HENRY COUNTY REACTS

As the war erupted, many Southerners, including several of the McKissacks, their kin and neighbors, eagerly joined the Confederacy's armed forces. The McKissacks' neighbor Thomas T. Smith took the lead in organizing a company of volunteers from Henry County. This was one of the first units raised in Henry County and Smith was elected its commander.[109] A young man named James Stokes joined Smith's company, which called itself the "Henry Blues." At the time the war broke out, James was listed by the census as living on the farm of John Wesley and Eliza Jane McKissack. James was apparently related to the McKissacks and had come to them when he was orphaned.[110] A few years after the Civil War, James married John Wesley and Eliza Jane's daughter Mary. No doubt their attraction had first started to flower when James came to live on the McKissack farm.

Also joining the Confederate forces was William Jefferson McKissack, grandson of Archibald and Lucy, son of William McKissack and Mariah Ward.[111] William joined another Henry County company called the "Henry Grays." This unit was organized by yet another prominent Henry Countian, Alexander C. Gordon.

The men in these companies -- the Henry Blues and Henry Grays -- were immediately sent to Virginia in the summer of 1861 and assigned to the 6th Alabama Regiment. This regiment would participate in some of the fiercest fighting of the Civil War.[112] The regiment was present at almost 50 engagements, from First Bull Run to Antietam to Gettysburg to Appomattox. It was probably best known for one of its commanders, John B. Gordon, and the fight in "Bloody Lane" at Antietnam. James Stokes later recounted some of his wartime service to his grandchildren and these are related in Part II of this book.

The alacrity with which some Henry County's young men joined the war effort was remarkable. Perhaps one of the most ardent was Robert Reynolds, who joined yet another Henry County unit, the "Henry Pioneers:"

> Only fifteen years old, he ran away from home in the first year of the war to enlist with [the Henry Pioneers]. Rejected because of his age, he was sent home. Again he ran off, this time all the way to Virginia, where he joined a Henry County unit, the Irwin Invincibles. He almost died soon after from an attack of measles and typhoid fever. He returned home in December 1861 "almost a skeleton." The following May, he enlisted in the Twenty-seventh Alabama Infantry and served until wounded during the Atlanta Campaign in July 1864. Young Reynolds returned to his unit after a three-month recuperation, serving until the war's end.[113]

The unit young Reynolds had joined -- the Henry Pioneers -- was formed after the First Battle of Bull Run by Henry Countian William C. Oates. This company of men eventually became part of the famous 15th Alabama Regiment. Captain Oates rose to become Colonel of the 15th Alabama regiment and recounted the regiment's service in his memoirs.[114] Several McKissack men and kin likewise joined this company. Many of their kin and neighbors had already left for Virginia with the Henry Grays and Henry Blues in the early summer of 1861. The Henry Pioneers followed and arrived after the First Battle of Bull Run.[115]

Because of the excitement and naivete, the early volunteers from Henry County got rousing send-offs. The Henry Pioneers, for instance, formed up in Abbeville in front of the town's old academy. Before a gathering of fellow citizens, the ladies of Abbeville presented a Confederate flag to Captain Oates. Several days later, the men marched to Franklin on the Chattahoochee River. County citizens provided wagons and buggies to transport the men's camp equipment to Franklin. A banquet was prepared for the men, and a large crowd gathered to wish them off. After giving a "Rebel Yell," the men embarked on a steamboat up the river to Ft. Mitchell where they joined other companies of the forming 15th Alabama.[116]

One can easily envision the scenes as Henry Countians watched their loved ones depart. Clearly, there was much fanfare. Nevertheless, there was much sadness, also. One soldier remembered the parting of a young Henry Countian still in his teens from his sisters -- "The parting between the Misses Cody and their brother, Barnett, was very sad to me. I could not suppress the tears, seeing the manifestations of love of those beautiful girls toward their brother. On account of his genial, lovable disposition, they could not help but love him, and for those traits of his character, he became the idol of the company."[117]

We will not attempt here to tell the story of the Civil War. Most people know that it was a bloody, four-year national trial that left over 600,000 men dead -- the most Americans who have ever died in a war. Probably no war has been written about so extensively. Most important to us is the fact that numerous men of the McKissack family were serving in the southern armies throughout the Confederacy. Several lost their lives. To mention a few of these men, John Wesley McKissack, probably a grandson of Archibald Sr.'s brother James, served as a private with the 37th Alabama Regiment, Company A. He would fight in most of the major battles of the western theater, and be captured at Vicksburg. William Fletcher McKissack of Dadeville, Alabama, served in the 62nd Alabama from 1862 to 1865.[118] Several of Thomas'

grandsons joined in east-central Alabama. James Wesley and George Artemus McKissack served in the 13th Alabama Regiment, company F. Robert Green and Jeremiah F. McKissack served in the 53rd Alabama Cavalry, Col G. Martin Andrew McKissack served in the 15th Alabama Regiment. Many other cousins and kin of the McKissacks joined various units throughout the south from Texas to Virginia.[119] Several lost their lives. More about individual service records is contained under the appropriate entries in Part II of this book.

One interesting thought relates to the William B. McKissack who moved from Henry County, Alabama, to Illinois, appearing there in 1851. I have not had time to research this, but it is possible his descendants fought with the Union armies. This would have meant they were fighting their cousins from Henry County and elsewhere.

THE REALITY OF WAR

At the beginning of the war, many Southerners saw Northerners as greedy, money-grubbers who, while they loved commerce, would not fight. One member of the "Henry Blues" wrote his wife from Virginia that his regiment was facing several thousand Yankees, "but they won't fight....I believe peace will be made soon, for they see they cannot fight the South." Only a month later, the battle of Manassas, or Bull Run, occurred. Thousands of men were killed and wounded in the bloodiest battle in American history up to that time. A month later Henry County soldiers of the 15th Alabama regiment, including several McKissacks, arrived in Manassas and found hundreds of shallow graves on the battlefield. The rain had washed dirt away to reveal skeletons. This was only the beginning of the horrors men from Henry County would witness.[120]

As the war went on, many Henry County men were killed and wounded. No family went untouched by tragedy. Captain Oates received a wound that required the amputation of his right arm. His brother John was killed at Gettysburg. Likewise, Barnett H. Cody, whose sisters had wished him a tearful goodbye when the Henry Pioneers left for war, was killed at Gettysburg. A comrade wrote: "He became the idol of the company and those of us that were living at the time he was killed ... realized that in the death of Barnett H. Cody, we had lost a friend and the company one of its most useful members. He was in his teens...had been commissioned Second Lieutenant when he was killed."[121]

The McKissacks' neighbor Thomas T. Smith lost both of his sons in the war. One was killed in the Vicksburg Campaign in 1863. The other was captured in that campaign and died in Ft. Delaware prison.

Likewise, Sarah McKissack Ayers' son Oren died in Richmond, Virginia, in early 1864. His body was encased in charcoal and shipped home for burial. Perhaps it was best that Sarah had died in December 18, 1863, so that she was spared this grief, though Oren left a wife and two minor children. [122] John Wesley McKissack, a grandson of James, was captured during the Vicksburg campaign. Several other McKissack kin were captured or wounded. The war affected everyone. A reading of Henry County histories shows numerous men throughout the county as killed, wounded, and captured.

As the war dragged on, the Confederacy was forced to turn to conscription of men from 18 to 35. All of Archie and Lucy's sons were too old to be drafted. Fifty-five-year-old Radford McKissack joined the Henry County Guards, a local militia group. Meanwhile, young men such as Zebedee Jones, the brother of Radford's wife, were joining Confederate regiments though

they were no more than 15 years old.[123]

FEAR ON THE CHATTAHOOCHEE

By 1863, much of the county's male population was away at war. Henry Countians were far removed from the major battles in Virginia and Tennessee, but they nevertheless felt insecure. The threat came from several sources.

Shortly after the attack on Fort Sumter, Abraham Lincoln ordered a blockade of all southern ports. A few months later, federal gunboats had effectively sealed the port of Apalachicola, Florida. The next spring, in April of 1862, northern forces landed in Apalachicola, sending a ripple of fear up the Chattahoochee. An Englishwoman living on the river wrote that the valley's residents "lived in constant apprehension, after the evacuation of Apalachicola, that the Federal gunboats would ascend the Chattahoochie, and thus cut us off entirely from Northern communication...."[124]

Newspapers and Confederate government documents of the time indicate a high level of anxiety about the possibility of a Union thrust up the Chattahoochee River valley. A variety of defensive preparations were made, including creation of an obstacle across the river by placing huge chains across the river. In addition, construction was begun on cannon emplacements at Fort Gaines.

By midsummer, however, the anxieties created by the war prompted the Englishwoman to board a steamer heading upriver, past the McKissacks' farms to the town of Eufaula, where she would catch a train. Boarding her steamboat she noted:

> This river steamer was so crowded that...I thought we should be obliged to sit up all night, every state-room being occupied. There were, among the passengers refugees from Pensacola and Apalachicola, relatives going to Richmond to visit their wounded brothers or husbands, and several country doctors going to offer their services to the army....
>
> At last it was arranged for some of the gentlemen to rest in the saloon, so that the ladies should appropriate the berths.... On the next morning all the female passengers waited most amiably for the only hand-basin on board to be passed from one room to another, before they could make their toilet. I coaxed the stewardess to bring me a good-sized, broad tin bucket full of river water, and I do not believe any one else was so favoured. This was another effect of war and blockade, for I was told by those who knew the boat, that it had always been famous for the convenience and elegance of its fittings. People were getting accustomed to these things, and made no complaints at all. [125]

LIFE ON THE HOMEFRONT

Though Henry County saw no battles, life there was nevertheless affected by the war. Residents of the lower Chattahoochee were plagued by rumors that the Yankees would launch an assault up the valley. As things turned out, Union troops would not enter the Chattahoochee River Valley until the last week of the war.

In the meantime, civilians faced an ever-dwindling supply of material goods and an ever more difficult daily life. Many of these trials and tribulations are described in the book *A Blockaded Family: Life in Southern Alabama During the Civil War*.[126] This was written by a

woman who lived on a plantation in Barbour County, Alabama, neighboring Henry County. Undoubtedly, the McKissacks and kin lived through some of these same difficulties.

BANDITS IN SOUTHEAST ALABAMA

As mentioned, Henry Countians worried about attack even though they were far from the scenes of most major battles. One reason for this was the constant fear that the Union troops would force their way up the Chattahoochee. But another reason came from a surprising source. The people in the far southern part of Henry County had, for the most part opposed secession. During the first years of the war, they were relatively quiet, but this changed. One history recounts the problem this way:

> There were also manifestations of a disloyal spirit in the extreme inaccessible corner of the state next to Florida and Georgia, where the population of the sparsely settled country was almost entirely non-slaveholding.... During the winter of 1862-63, numerous outrages were committed by outlaws who were called, indiscriminately, tories and deserters. Much trouble was given by an organization called the First Florida Union Cavalry, which for two years committed various outrages while on bushwhacking expeditions... .In January 1863, Governor Shorter wrote to President Davis that nearly all the loyal population of southeast Alabama was in the army, and that the country was suffering from the outrages of tories and deserters. About the same time, Colonel Price suppressed unionism and treason in Henry county...."
>
> During the next years matters grew worse in this section... Some of the best soldiers felt compelled to go home, even without permission, to protect or to support their families.... The worst depredations were committed during the winter of 1864-1865, in the counties of Dale, Henry, and Coffee. The loyal people in the thinly settled country were terrorized. The legislature, unable to protect them, authorized them to band themselves together in military form for protection against the outlaws. These bands of self -constituted "Home Guards," composed of boys and old men, captured numbers of the outlaws and straightway hanged them.[127]

Some sources claim that southeast Alabama and southwest Georgia harbored hundreds of deserters. One man across the river from the McKissacks in Early County, Georgia wrote that there were "deserters in every direction." An Alabamian wrote that the Wiregrass region was "one of the Graitest Dens of Tories and deserters from our Army in the World."[128]

In June 1863, Alabama's governor sent the militia after a band of deserters hiding in the southeast Alabama swamps. The militia captured seven men, but the party was attacked near Abbeville and the prisoners escaped. Similarly, in 1863 the local Confederate commander sent a patrol to bring in draft-dodgers in Henry County, but a group of local men ambushed the patrol, killed one of them, and freed the prisoners.[129] Perhaps Radford Ellis McKissack was involved in these encounters as a member of the Henry County Home Guards.

CHAPTER XXIV
THE END OF THE WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

While the physical destruction from the war was minor in Alabama when compared with that in the neighboring states of Georgia or Tennessee, the disruption to everyday life was nevertheless immense. Railroads had been destroyed. Economic stability was disrupted. Many Alabamians had invested their money in Confederate bonds. These were now worthless. In addition, the value of all types of property had fallen. Before the war, the U.S. Census of 1860 showed John Wesley McKissack owning $2000 in real estate and $5845 in personal property. Afterwards, his real estate was valued at only $1000 and his personal property at $200. His brother Archibald Jr. suffered a similar loss of fortune.

Likewise, the war had affected the prosperity of the entire Chattahoochee River Valley. As late as 1879 the region was still showing the effects of the Civil War. A newspaper reporter passing through Abbeville wrote that the town wore a dilapidated look -- The store-houses look as though old man Noah might have been the architect." Reaching nearby Fort Gaines, Georgia the reported commented that though it had once been "one of the most enterprising and thrifty little towns in the state," the war had dealt it "a set back which the citizens are slow to overcome." He noted that the stores were run-down, and the courthouse was "better suited for the home of goats and bats than for the hall of justice."[130]

In addition to the physical destruction was the loss of life. A huge proportion of the South's adult white male population died in the war -- 260,000 men. And for every one killed, there were others who had been wounded and had lost limbs. Almost every family in the South was touched by the death of some of its members and this included McKissack men and relatives. The death or dismemberment of a man affected a large circle of people; the main social welfare program of the time was the family. Relatives were obligated by custom and motivated by sentiment to help one another. The Civil War was not a war that seemed far off, occurring while everyday life continued undisturbed. It was more like a huge ever-present black cloud that covered communities. Its aftermath was the same.

After the surrender, soldiers slowly trickled back to their communities. Several of the McKissack family walked hundreds of miles to get home. The same scene was repeated time and again. One of the McKissacks' neighbors along Yatta Abbey Creek described the return of a relative this way:

> Ben Fordham the middle son, was captured and for two years after the war was over they still didn't know if he was dead or alive. Then one day as they were all gathered at grandmother's house, because her husband was sick, they saw this scarecrow of a man riding up on a boney, decrepit mule that walked as if he was making his last mile. All of them came out to see who on earth it could be, and as he came up to the yard he called, "Pa, Ma, its me -- Ben. I'm home."

> Grandmother said her mother and all of the family started running toward him, but he motioned them back -- violently asking them to stop, and said “Wait! Don't come near me for I am covered with lice.” Grandmother said Ben's mother stopped where she was and told Aunt Hanna, an old negro who helped around the house, to get her son, Josh, to gather some clean clothes for him and a pair of scissors to clip his hair, and meet him at the spring where the laundry pot and tubs were. Aunt Hanna ran to get Josh, who cut the hair to the scalp, and burned it along with all the clothing he wore, and bathed him in strong lye soap. Even his shoes were burned, and the old mule carried away and shot. Then, and not until then, did any member of the family touch Ben, who had wasted away to little more than a skeleton. [131]

EARLY OR "PRESIDENTIAL" RECONSTRUCTION

The loss of so much blood and property separated the North and South in many ways. Robert E. Lee and other wise southern leaders urged Southerners to forget the war and concentrate on becoming good citizens and rebuilding the south. Nevertheless, memories of the war would live on. Archibald McKissack Jr., son of Archibald and Lucy Ellis McKissack, would name sons Jefferson Davis McKissack and Robert E. Lee McKissack.

In spite of their loss and anguish, most Alabamians were looking to the future. As one historian wrote: " In the spring of 1865 Alabama was quiet as the state awaited news of her future.... Alabamians were relieved that the war was finally over and were ready to accept whatever peace was forthcoming from the North... A slight air of impatience lingered, as if Alabama had closed the door on a painful period and now was eager to get on with her future. There was no arrogance or pride in an unpopular and lost cause, and Alabamians expressed a mood of decided cooperation, if they could just be told what they were expected to do to get life functioning around them once again." [132]

The war ended in early April. Several days later, Abraham Lincoln was shot and Andrew Johnson ascended to the presidency. Lincoln had intended to be very lenient in his treatment of the defeated South, and Johnson more or less followed this policy.

In the first year after the war, Reconstruction policy was formulated primarily by the president. At the end of May Johnson appointed a provisional governor for Alabama. He stipulated that this man would serve until the citizens of Alabama could reorganize and elect a government. Under Johnson's plan, once Alabamians elected a new government, voted to repudiated their Confederate debts, nullified their acts of secession, and ratified the Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery, they would be allowed back into the Union.

RECONSTRUCTING AN ELECTORATE

The biggest problem Alabamians faced in reconstructing their government lay in the question of who would be allowed to participate in that process. Many Northerners felt that under no condition should those who had participated in the rebellion be allowed to vote. Others felt that only the Confederacy's top military and political officials should be excluded. President Johnson adopted the latter plan, proclaiming that only those people who could vote under the

state laws of 1860 and were included in his general amnesty would be allowed to vote. This meant that among the white population all but Alabama's leading Confederates could participate. Thus, any of the McKissack men could vote as long as they declared their allegiance to the United States.

But Johnson's proclamation did not answer the question of what were to be the political rights of Alabama's black population, since blacks had not been allowed to vote in 1860 because they were slaves. Again, there was a sharp division of opinion on this. Some Northerners, though not yet a majority, felt that blacks should be given the same rights as whites. Among Alabamians, however, there was almost universal opposition to this, even among the state's "Unionists" who had opposed Secession. As one historian wrote:

> But although slavery was gone, prejudice was not. Unionists and ex-Confederates alike frankly regarded the blacks as 'socially and intellectually inferior,' and some expected the sense of inferiority to embitter the blacks and kindle resentment against the whites. One pessimist predicted that no sort of legislation would make a 'good servant or citizen' out of the freedman because of his weak character and suggested that colonization offered the only solution. Despite this fundamental belief in the inferiority of the black race, white Alabamians generally faced the fact that life ahead was to be full of readjustments in race relations, and they professed willingness to assist the freedmen in fitting themselves 'for their changed relations and responsibilities.' However, reservations were voiced about whether whites were sufficiently flexible to cope immediately with the race question with much success. One Unionist feared that a lifetime of white rule over blacks slaves rendered white Southerners 'incompetent' suddenly to acknowledge the rights of their former slaves. He pleaded for time during which Southerners could accustom themselves to the change and to transfer the rights of the master to the individual black.
>
> The idea of black suffrage at this time was generally abhorrent in the state. The Huntsville Advocate observed that the black was free, and as a freedman the government would protect him in his legal rights. The Advocate urged its readers to accord the black man what the war had secured for him. But 'legal rights and political privileges are essentially different. He has been granted the former -- not the latter.'
>
> One Unionist put the matter more bluntly than did the Advocate: 'This is a white man's government, made by white men, for the benefit of white men, to be administered by white men, and nobody else, forever.' Another Unionists was equally firm: 'I want the negro to have his legal or civil rights and nothing more. He is not now fit for enfranchisement--as a race the Blacks are not capable of appreciating the ballot box or a free government. If they were qualified and could understandably appreciate the right of suffrage, ' he concluded, he would feel differently. Former non-slaveholders were reputed to be more bitterly opposed to black suffrage than even ex-secessionists. This attitude resulted from the fact that the blacks had a 'real contempt which they have not concealed for what they

called poor white people of the South.' However, one Northerner in Alabama speculated that Alabamians might submit even to black suffrage in exchange for a 'return to the prosperity of old.' But even this observer who found no fault with black suffrage drew the line at putting blacks into office, saying that those who advocated such had better join those who favored female suffrage.[133]

ALABAMA'S SHORT-LIVED "JOHNSON" GOVERNMENT

The Alabama state convention opened in September 1865 and followed President Johnson's plan for Reconstruction. The convention set the state's elections in November for governor, members of the legislature and representatives to the United States Congress. Unlike some other states of the former Confederacy, the citizens of Alabama elected a moderate government. Except for one man, all of the representatives –the governor, representatives, and senators -- had opposed secession in 1861. The new government was inaugurated in December 1865 and *The New York Times* commended it as being "greatly national, not sectional" and able to rise above "party spirit and political prejudice."[134]

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION FAILS

Unfortunately, not all southern states followed Alabama's moderate course. Georgia, for instance, elected the former Confederacy's vice-president -- Alexander Stephens -- to the U.S. Senate. Texas sent former leading Confederates leaders to both the U.S. House and Senate. Outraged, the Congress refused to seat these men. The defiance of some southern states overshadowed the more moderate approach of others. In addition, many of the local officials elected in the South during Presidential Reconstruction had also been its prewar leaders, though in Alabama most of these men had opposed secession.

Another disturbing aspect of Presidential Reconstruction to northern Republicans was that blacks were not receiving equal treatment. As mentioned, President Johnson's plan had made no provisions for voting by the newly freed blacks. Though white legislatures such as Alabama's had adopted the U.S. Constitution's Thirteen Amendment eradicating slavery, there were signs that white Southerners intended nevertheless to keep the advantages of slavery under the name of freedom.

As would be expected, there was a great deal of uneasiness in the relationship of blacks and whites immediately after the Civil War. An entire social structure had been destroyed by the war, and no one was quite sure what would take its place; the change was immense. As mentioned above, most whites were not ready to accept blacks as political or social equals. Some of this was bigotry; some was a sincere doubt that people who had been slaves only months before were ready for the responsibilities of citizenship. Some blacks reinforced these doubts by leaving their former plantations and congregating idly in towns. This behavior was encouraged by rumors throughout the fall of 1865 that all the plantations and stock provisions of southern whites would be taken from them and distributed among blacks.

Legislatures in nearly every southern state, including Alabama, responded to these uncertainties by passing what were called "Black Codes." Some of these codes were necessary because of the changed status of blacks from slaves to freemen. Before emancipation, for

instance, slave marriages were not recognized under law. The Black Codes legalized black families that had been formed under slavery. Unfortunately, not all of the Black Codes were so beneficial to blacks. In many cases the codes made them second-class citizens; blacks could not testify in cases involving white men and were forbidden to serve on juries. They were forbidden to use public facilities with whites. Overall, the effect of the Black Codes was to maintain white supremacy.

Furthermore, every southern state refused to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. This amendment was crafted by Congress in 1866 to outlaw discrimination on the basis of race. It also disqualified from holding office any man who had held office before the war and then joined the rebellion. This last provision affected numerous prominent men, called "Unionists," in Alabama who had opposed secession. Many of them had been appointed or elected to an office in the Confederacy after the break occurred. Some had accepted the offices as a way of avoiding military service or influencing public opinion. Under the Fourteenth Amendment, they would be disqualified from holding office.

Watching the election of ex-Confederates, the enactment of the Black Codes, and the refusal to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, northern Republicans decided that under Presidential Reconstruction no changes were occurring in the South. It seemed like the people that started the war were still in power and that the former slaves were little better off. As one historian summed it up:

> There seemed to be something unreal and impermanent about the course of events. The harder you looked at the changes taking place in the South, the less they seemed like changes. Except for the most prominent Confederate leaders, the same people seemed to be running the South as before, and Andrew Johnson was busy every day pardoning more Confederate generals and congressmen. Southerners recognized that they had lost the war, but many of them still insisted that it had been a glorious effort. The Confederate veterans were hailed as heroes of a noble cause that had deserved to win. As soon as the new governments were installed, they began passing laws which locked the Negro into something that looked a great deal like slavery. From the Northern point of view, the real Southern heroes were the black men and those whites who had held the Union flag aloft in wartime and suffered persecution for their loyalty. Yet they were still subjected to constant discrimination and even physical attack while almost no one lifted a hand to protect them. Who won the war after all? Northerners demanded. And what was it all for? With unrepentant rebels still in the saddle, what had four long years of death and sacrifice achieved?
>
> Northerners resented the South's cockiness. Right after the war, Southerners, still dazed from their defeat, seemed ready to accept any peace terms the North might offer. But once Andrew Johnson became lenient, they began sitting up and demanding favorable treatment as their right. Yankees thought they were being lenient enough in not hanging the rebel leaders and seizing their property, but the South demanded the right to go its own way without further conditions than the abandonment of secession and slavery. Perhaps it was the Southerners' refusal to recognize that they had been wrong which annoyed Northerners more than anything else. Both sides' views were natural enough under the circumstances, but they were a cause of continuing hostility between the sections."[135]

CONGRESSIONAL OR "RADICAL" RECONSTRUCTION

As a consequence of their dissatisfaction, northern Republicans decided to take control of Reconstruction from President Johnson. In March 1867, Congress passed a Reconstruction Act that divided the South into five military districts. A military commander was set over each district. The Reconstruction Act required that new constitutional conventions be held in each state and new governments formed.

We will not here attempt to recount the political battles fought in Alabama over the remaining five years that our branch of McKissacks lived there. For one thing, the story is told in detail in the books listed in our endnotes. For the most part, those political battles focused on struggles between Alabama's Union men (Republicans) and ex-Confederates (Democrats) and their attempts to influence the votes of the newly enfranchised blacks. These political battles turned corrupt with fraud at the voting booth and violent as the Ku Klux Klan tried to intimidate blacks with terror.

In addition, we once again have little direct evidence of how these events affected the McKissacks or what role they played in the political process. The fact that Archibald and Fidelia McKissack named sons Jefferson Davis, Robert Lee, and Samuel Stonewall Jackson would seem to indicate that Archibald was unlikely to have been a "Union" man. Likewise, one historian notes that in the counties in southeast Alabama it was "considered a disgrace" to have any connection with Unionists.[136] And the majority of Henry County residents would cast their votes for Democrats in the elections of 1870 and 1872.

1. Early in 1815, Archibald had filed suit against some of his wife Lucy's siblings because he believed Lucy had been fraudulently excluded from her father's will. (Lawsuit filed in Jasper County, Georgia, January 3, 1815). Archie alleged that Lucy's father had been tricked into giving all his property to her brothers James and John while leaving out Lucy and another sister and brother. Archie and Lucy are listed as residents of Jasper County at this time, though they apparently also owned land in Jones and Putnam. Whatever the outcome of this lawsuit, it appears to have created no permanent rift with James Ellis, as only a few years later Archie appointed James as his attorney to handle the inheritance Lucy acquired from her grandfather. (Jasper County, Georgia, December 23, 1819).

2. Gunn, Jarrell Plantation: A History, State of Georgia, Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Section, July 1, 1974.

3. Duncan's estate was probated in Jasper County, GA in 1850.

4. U.S. Census for 1850.

5. Abernethy, The Formative Period in Alabama, 1815-1828, (University of Alabama Press, 1965), 1965.

6. Willoughby, Flowing Through Time: A History of the Lower Chattahoochee River, The University of Alabama Press, 1999, p. 54.

7. Brown, Clearings in the Thicket: An Alabama Humanities Reader, (Mercer Press) p.43.

8. Abernethy, p.32.

9. A listing of early deeds. Additional transactions in the 1850's and afterwards appear later.
   a. March 7, 1834. Deed Book A, p. 118. Thomas McKissack Sr. and wife Mary sell 68.2 acres in Section 7, T-5, R-30 to Harmon H. Hollins. This acreage borders the Chattahoochee.
   b. March 5, 1834. Deed Book A, p.368. William McKissack sells land to Archibald McKissack.
   c. February 17, 1839. Deed Book A, 368. William McKissack sells land to A. McKissack.
   d. August 15, 1836. William McKissack receives 72 acres from the receiver's ofice. Certificate to William and Archibald witnessed by Radford McKissack.
   e. September 17, 1836. Archibald receives 39.87 1/2 acres from receiver at $1.25 acre.
   f. November 8, 1836. William McKissack receives 79.75 acres in Sec. 12 T-5 R-29 from receiver for $1.25 per acre.

10. Scott, History of Henry County, Alabama, p.78.

11. Warren, Henry's Heritage, (Chancey-Herring Publishing, 1978), Vol.1, p.148.

12. Warren, Henry's Heritage, Vol. 1.

13. Warren, Henry--The Mother County, 1816-1903, (Warren Enterprises -- 1981) p.21.

14. Warren, Vol.1.

15. Warren, Henry's Heritage, Log Rollings a Big Affair, Vol.III, p.191.

16. Henry County, Alabama marriage records.

17. Scott, Henry County Cemetery Records, p.105.

18. Henry County Political Returns, 1822-1860, and Church Records. Softcover folder found in Abbeville Library, local history room. This was a xeroxed copy of certain records from the Alabama State Archives. Prepared by William Nordan, President of the Henry County Historical Society, 1970.

19. Hall, Travels in North America, III, p.310-311, cited in Charles Shepard, The Cotton Kingdom in Alabama (Philadelphia, 1974), p.38.

20. Shepard, The Cotton Kingdom in Alabama (Philadelphia, 1974), p.10.

21. Warren, Henry' Heritage Volume III, p.73.

22. Document recorded in Henry County, Alabama, February 15, 1834.

23. McWhiney, Fear God and Walk Humbly: The Agricultural Journal of James Mallory, 1843-1877, University of Alabama Press, 1997, p.557.

24. Southern Christian Advocate, March 27, 1849, p.188, p. 2.

25. This story is contained in several sources; one is Mrs. Marvin Scott's, History of Henry County, Alabama, p.24-25.

26. Warren, Vol.1.

27. Clark, History of Stewart County, Georgia, Vol. II, p.25.

28. The Examiner and Journal of Political Economy, November 18, 1833 -- cited in Lucille Griffith, Alabama: A Documentary History to 1900, The University of Alambama Press, 1968, p.123.

29. Crump, Chambers County, Alabama Tract Book, 1984.

30. Deeds in Henry County Land Records, Book A page 118, dated March 7, 1834, from Thomas and Mary McKissack to Harmon Hollis.

31. Brown, p.49.

32. Brown, p.49-50.

33. Brown, p.51.

34. Walker, Russell County in Retrospect, Dietz Press, Richmond, Virginia, 1950, pp.196-97.

35. Eleanor Warthen, wife of a descendant of Eli and Mary Ann McKissack Warthen, wrote a letter relating the family's oral tradition regarding the deaths of Thomas and Mary McKissack and their daughter. Nelda Tarrer obtained a copy of this letter from Paul McDuffy, and provided the authors with a copy. Mary Ann McKissack Warthen was the daughter of Jeremiah McKissack, son of Thomas and Mary. Mary Ann was also the mother of Eleanor Warthen's husband.

The site of the civilian graveyard at Ft. Mitchel is today marked by a state historic marker, but there are no individual tombstones.

36. Martin, Columbus, Georgia, Thos. Gilbert Book Printer and Binder, 1874, p.63.

37. King, p.38.

38. King, p.38.

39. William B. McKissack, Application for Bounty Land, filed in Williamson County, Illinois, May 30, 1851.

40.. Martin, Columbus, Georgia, Thomas Gilbert book Printer, 1874, p.65-67.

41. Columbus Enquirer, December 13, 1834.

42. Advertisement in the Florida Way, December 29, 1847, mentioned in Edward A. Mueller, Perilous Journeys: A History of Steamboating on the Chattahoochee, Apalachicola, and Flint rivers, 1828-1928, Historic Chattahoochee Commission, 1990, p.91.

43. The History of Clay County, Fort Gaines, GA., 1976, p.7.

44. King, p.89.

45. Willoughby, p. 49-50.

46. King, Jr, p.100.

47. King, p.90.

48. Warren, Henry's Heritage, p. 138.

49. Frazer, Early History of Steamboats in Alabama, Auburn, Alabama, 1907, p.5.

50. Meddye Tipton Willis quoted in Lynn Willoughby, Flowing Through Time: A History of the Lower Chattahoochee River, The University of Alabama Press, 1999, p.111.

51. Willoughby, p.52.

52. Account of Frederick Law Olmstead contained in Early Steamboats in Alabama, p. 26.

53. Account of Sir Charles Lyell in Early Steamboats of Alabama, p. 21.

54. Warren, Henry's Heritage, p.151.

55. Account of Charles Lyell contained in Early Steamboats in Alabama, p. 11.

56. Newspaper article mentioned in Early History of Steamboats, p.9.

57. Perry, Some Pioneer History of Early County, p.30.

58. U.S. Census of 1830.

59. Collections of Early County Historical Society, 1971, Vol. I, p.417.

60. In her book Henry County Cemetery Records, p.105, Mrs. Marvin Scott shows James McKissack as marrying Mariah. The original probate records of Edward J. Ward (August 11, 1862), on which Mrs. Scott made this connection, however, show a line stricken through the name "James" and "William" written above it.

61. Warren, Henry's Heritage, (Abbeville, 1978) p.12.

62. Fountain, Sisters, Seeds and Cedars, UCA Press, 1995, xiv-xv.

63. Leavitt, Brought to Bed: Childbearing in American, 1750-1950. Oxford University Press, 1986.

64. Brown, p.55.

65. Whitehead, Collections of Early County Historical Society, 1979, Vol. 2, Early County Historical Society, 1979, Blakely, Georgia, p.125.

66. Whitehead, p.127.

67. Davis, The Cotton Kingdom in Alabama, (Porcupine Press, 1974).

68. Miller, Dear Master: Letters of a Slave Family, Cornell University Press, 1978, p.23.

69. Blassingame, The Slave Community, (Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 191, 193.

70. Blassingame, p.163-64.

71. Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made, (Vintage Books 1972), pp. 7-9.

72.. On January 29, 1851, Archibald bequeathed, upon his death, "one negro boy named Joe, twenty-two years old," to his son Archibald, Jr. (Source -- Henry County, Alabama Deed Book G, p. 108).
On January 29, 1852, Archibald gave some of his slaves to his grandchildren by his daughter Mary McKissack Perryman. He gave away seven slaves.

73. The female slave of age 70 in the 1850 Census is especially interesting. Five years later, the Census of 1855 would list a 75 year old woman who was named "Lucinda" in Archie's household. She was listed as having been born in North Carolina. But Archie's wife Lucy had died in 1849. While the age of "Lucinda" corresponds with that of the female slave, its difficult to see how she would be counted as part of the white household. The 1850 Census lists her color as "black," not mulatto. Other things in the 1855 Census which includes Archie's family

indicate the census taker made mistakes, but the presence of 75 year old "Lucinda" in the household is intriguing. She was not in the household in 1830, and would have been past her most productive age at that time anyway, since she would have been 50 years old. One intriguing possibility is that this Lucinda was the "Lucy" mentioned in the will of John McKissack who died in Putnam County, Georgia in 1815. That Lucy was left by John to his wife Jane to care for her. One possiblility is that upon his mother's death, Archibald bought Lucy.

74. Genovese, p.520.

75. Henry County, Alabama, January 29, 1852, Deed Record Book E, p. 273.

76. Genovese, p.128.

77. Genovese, p.502.

78. Genovese, pp.502-503

79. Genovese, p.453.

80. Miller, p.140.

81. Blassingame, p.176.

82. Owen, p.23.

83. Owen, p.24.

84. Jeane, The Architectural Legacy of the Lower Chattahoochee Valley in Alabama and Georgia, (University of Alabama Press, 1978). See this books pages on the "Graham House."

85. Fox-Genovese, Within the Plantation Household, (University of North Carolina Press, 1988) p.105-6.

86. Genovese, p.532.

87. Henry County, Alabama Record Books, November 1855.

88. Blassingame, p.159.

89. Genovese, p.533.

90. Genovese, p.534.

91. Brown, Gabr'l Blow Sof': Sumter County, Alabama Slave Narratives, Livingston Press, 1997 and Slave Narratives: Alabama and Indiana, (Scholarly Press, 1976).

92. Blassingame, p.150.

93. Southern Agriculturalist VIII, (July 1834), p. 368.

94. Genovese, p.65.

95. Blassingame, p.212.

96. Fox-Genovese, p.317-318.

97. The Cotton Kingdom in Alabama, p.97.

98. Brown.

99. The Cotton Kingdom in Alabama, p.98.

100. Ingmire, Early County, Georgia Marriage Records 1820-1850.

101. West, Methodist Episcopal Church South, 1893, p. 283.

102. Southern Christian Advocate, March 27, 1849, p.188, col. 2.

103. Henry County Deeds, Book G, p. 108.

104. Henry County Deed Book F, p. 493-496.

105. Cutler, Henry County, Alabama, Records, Vol. 1, p.303.

106. Description of this ceremony is contained in William Augustus McClendon's "Recollections of War Times."

107. Thompson, The Free State of Winston: A History of Winston County, Alabama (Winfield, Ala., 1968), p. 3-4.

108. Smith, editor, The Civil War Letters of Rabon Scarborough, Apalachicola, Florida, 1861-1862 (Crawfordville, Florida: Magnolia Monthly Press, 1973), 1.

109. Warren, Henry's Heritage, (Henry County Historical Society, 1978), p.271.

110. Though there were several Stokes families in Henry County at this time, some living west of the McKissacks near Abbie Creek, we have been unable to tie James to one of them. His granddaugther Erie Barnes related in an interview with David Schultz, however, that James had been orphaned. Why he moved in with the McKissacks instead of one of the Stokes families is unclear. Perhaps he hired on with John Wesley as a farm hand.

111. Jones, Census of Confederate Veterans Residing in Southeast Alabama in 1907, Pioneer Publishing Company, 1998, p. 213. The entry for William Jefferson McKissack shows him as living in Ashford, Alabama and born December 27, 1834 at Abbeville, Henry County, Alabama. The entry notes that he enlisted at Abbeville in 1862 (hough the regiment was officially formed in 1861) as a private in Company H. and continued until the close of the war.

112. Assigned to the 6th Alabama, the unit was designated Company K when it left Henry County. It would later be Company L and finally Company A of the same regiment.

113. Williams, Rich Man's War:: Class, Caste, and Confederate Defeat in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley, University of Georgia Press, 1998, p.55.

114.. Oates, The War Between the Union and the Confederacy and Its Lost Opportunities, with a History of the 15th Alabama Regiment and the Forty-Eight Battles in Which it was Engaged, edited by Robert K. Krick, Dayton, OH, Press of Morningside Bookshop, 1985.

115. Information that Martin Andrew McKissack served in the 15th Alabama was obtained from Nelda Tarrer. A muster roll in William C. Oates' book also shows an "A.J. McKissack" as serving with the 15th Alabama.

116. Contained in Mrs. Marvin Scott, History of Henry County, Alabama, p.359

117. Contained in Mrs. Marvin Scott, History of Henry County, Alabama, p.97.

118. Georgia Genealogical Magazine, Vol 20, p.260.

119. Some McKissacks who served in the Confederate armies--
William Fletcher McKissack of Dadeville, Alabama joined the 62nd Alabama Regiment, Company D, on April 1862 at Montgomery and was captured at Mobile in March 1865. He was born June 5, 1846 in Meriwether County, Georgia. William was most likely a grandson of either Thomas or James McKissack. Archibald McKissack, the son of Archibald McKissack who died in Henry County around 1855, had a son named Fletcher, born in 1858. (Source -- Georgia Genealogical Magazine, Vol. 20, p. 260).

120. Williams, p.59.

121. Contained in Mrs. Marvin Scott, History of Henry County, Alabama, p.97.

122. The estate of Oren J. Ayers is listed in Henry County Orphan's Court Book N, p.582, March 9, 1864.

123. Zebedee served in Co. F, 33rd Alabama Regiment. This is indicated by pension records examined by one of his descendants, Brenda Antal.

124. Hopley, Life in the South, from the Commencement of the War, 2 vols. London: Chapman & Hall, 1863, 1:264:65.

125. Hopley, p.327-28.

126. Hague, A Blockaded Family: Life in Southern Alabama During the Civil War, University of Nebraska Press (1991).

127. Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama, Columbia University Press, 1949, p. 122.

128. Williams, p.142

129. Williams, p.142-143.

130. Willoughby, p.104.

131. Warren, Henry's Heritage, (Henry County Historical Society, 1978), p.151.

132. Wiggins, The Scalawag in Alabama Politics: 1865-1881, University of Alabama Press, 1977, p. 7-8.

133. Wiggins, p. 8-9.

134. November 30, 1866.

135. Trelease, Reconstruction The Great Experiment, (Harper and Row, 1971), p.46-47.

136. Wiggins, p.21.