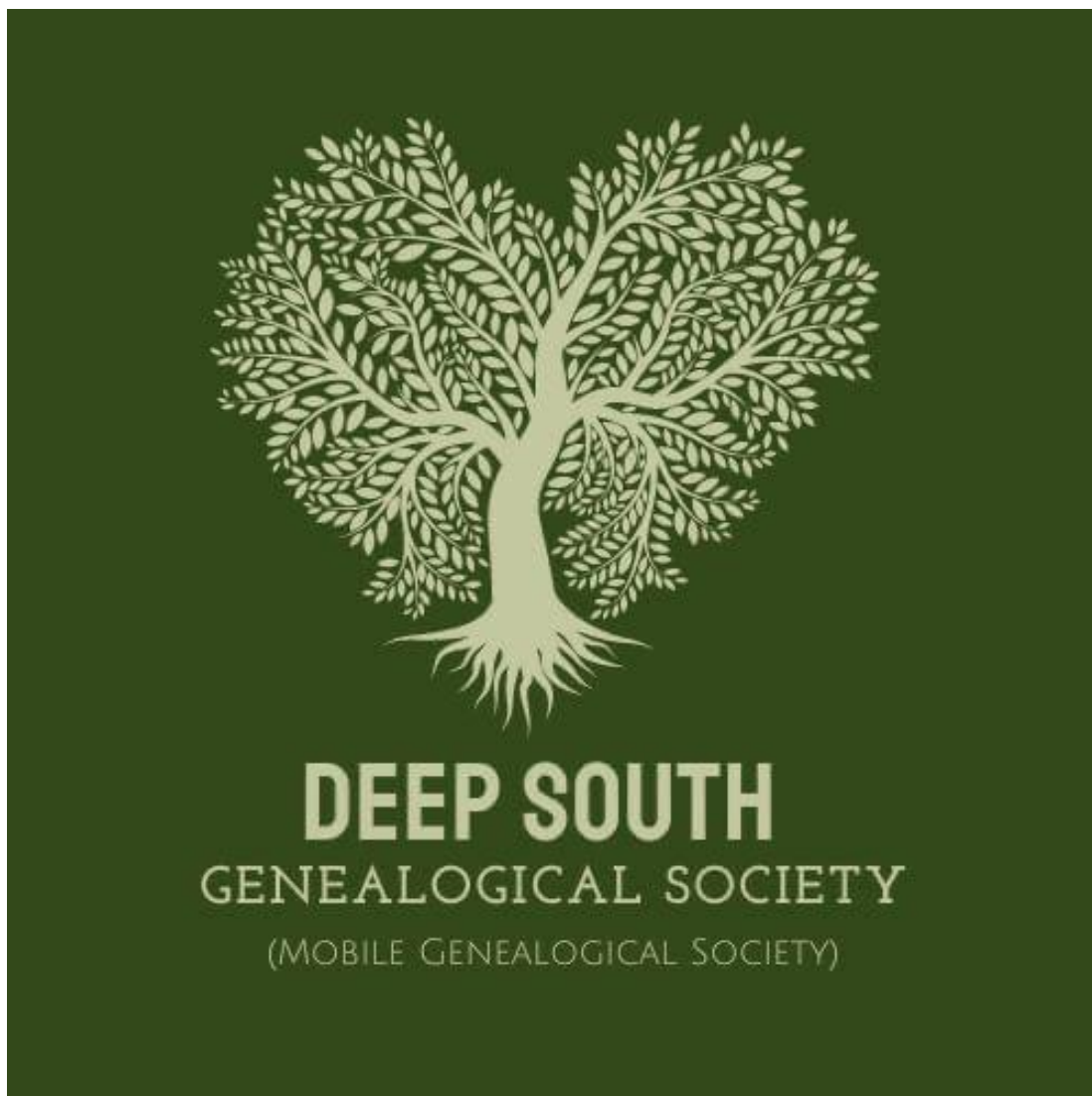


Deep South Genealogical Journal

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Letter from the President

Greetings,

Welcome to the third edition of *Deep South Genealogical Journal*. We are hoping you are enjoying reading what we hope are interesting articles. If you have any ideas for articles in upcoming issues, please feel free to share with us, we are always looking for those stories that are different, but informative.

On a business note, Mobile Genealogical Society (our corporate name) has completed the reinstatement of our 501(c)3 non-profit organization certification. In addition, all tax information through tax year 2022 has been updated and is in good standing. Thanks to our Treasurer, Greg Leatherbury, and especially our Auditor, A.C. Leggett, for their hard work in getting this completed.

In an effort to close our storage unit we will be offering backstock of printed copies of publications for sale. We have been working to have these publications digitized and this project is nearing completion. So, stay tuned for further information. If you own or have access to a microfilm machine, we also have microfilm that will be for sale, and we will be providing a list of the available titles soon. So, stay tuned for further information.

So, do you have some free time and like to visit the Mobile Local History & Genealogy Library? Well, we might be able to use you for a project. One we are working on is going through microfilm Death Notices (Physician Certificate of Death and the Return of Death) from the late 1800's and early 1900's to build a database of information from these notices. This is primarily to help get a listing of possible burials in the recently rediscovered Mobile Public Ground near Magnolia Cemetery but the information from any cemeteries noted will be recorded. This is an ongoing project with no known completion date. Let us know if this interests you. If you have recently responded to this, we will be contacting you soon with more information.

We have finally found an open date for a meeting. We will be having a meeting on August 12, 2023 at the West Regional Library in Mobile. AL at 9am-12pm. We will have two speakers - Michael Bunn, author of the book *The 14th Colony*, and Brendan Kirby, author of the book, *Wicked Mobile*. Both presentations should be interesting. Please plan to attend.

As always, I am here working for you to continue growing this organization - like anything it has to be watered and given time to grow. I am available by phone or email and can be reached at 251-404-8761 or dnicoll@bellsouth.net.

Deep South Genealogical Society
Mobile, AL
Originally Organized as Mobile Genealogical Society, Inc.
February 1962

Officers 2023

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Vice President/DSGJ Editor	Petty Shackleford
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The Deep South Genealogical Society, a non-profit organization, was founded in 1962 as Mobile Genealogical Society, in Mobile, Alabama, it has been reborn as DSGS in 2022. The Society has been granted a tax-exempt status by the U. S. Treasury Department.

Membership in the Society is \$15.00 per year, which includes a subscription to the *Deep South Genealogical Journal*, published in January, April, July, and October. Back issues of the Quarterly can be purchased for \$5.00 plus shipping for hard copy or \$2.50 if sent electronically. A list of all other publications and their prices will be published later.

Neither the Editor nor the Society can accept responsibility for the correctness of material supplied by our contributors. The Editor reserves the right to edit any material submitted, and no material of a controversial nature will be printed. The Society cannot authorize its members to represent themselves as agents of the Society when doing research.

All correspondence relating to membership, subscriptions, orders for back issues or other publications should be mailed to Deep South Genealogical Society 6300 Weddington Court, Mobile, AL 36693. Submissions for the journal and queries can be sent to the same address.

From the Editor

We hope you enjoy this journal. There is an article on Mike Bunn's book *Fourteenth Colony*. Mr. Bunn will be one of the speakers at the member meeting on August 12, 2023. The book focuses on how the Gulf Coast was governed during the period of the American Revolution.

This edition of the journal starts a shift in focus from the history of the Gulf Coast area to more family-oriented history as seen in the article on Adam McCreary. We ask any member who would like to submit their family tree for publication to provide it in a Word document and send it to me at petty_shack@aol.com.

As always, feedback and journal story ideas are welcome. If you would like to write an article (other than a family history), please email me at petty_shack@aol.com and let me know your topic. We try to publish the journal by the first week of the quarter so articles would be due by the middle of the preceding month (i.e., second week of March for publication in the second quarter journal published the first week of April) so we have time to get them placed in the journal.

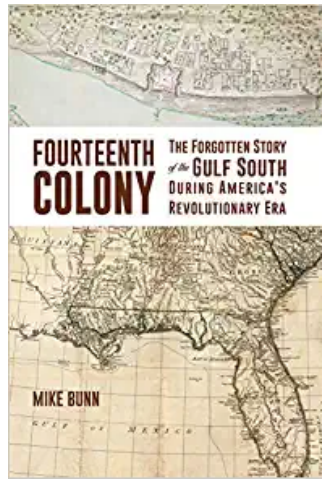
Happy Fourth of July and Labor Day to you all.

Petty Shackleford

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Fourteenth Colony



Editor's Note: The below except is the Preface from the book *Fourteenth Colony*, written by Mike Bunn and published by New South Books in 2020. The book is available at local and online bookstores. Mr. Bunn will be speaking on his book at the DSGS meeting on August 12, 2023, at West Regional Library.

The Revolutionary Era is one of the most storied and studied time periods in America's compelling national saga. Conjuring visions of righteous colonial protests in Boston Harbor, sober state-making in the chambers of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and martial determination on the frigid meadows at Valley Forge, the 1760s and 1770s are venerated by Americans for having witnessed the formation of the United States from the cooperative efforts of thirteen former British colonies. It is an era studded with iconic moments and rich with legendary figures that are a part of our shared national canon. It is sadly ironic that this grand pageant is a heritage from which Gulf Coast residents have long felt detached owing in large part to geography, for an important but little known chapter in America's colonial and Revolutionary drama played out along their sunny shores.

British West Florida, stretching from the mighty Mississippi to the shallow bends of the Apalachicola and incorporating large portions of what now the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, is the forgotten fourteenth colony in America's founding era. The colony and its sister province, East Florida, were erected by the British at the conclusion of the Seven Years' War in 1763 on the ruins of the vast but rather vaguely defined territory formerly claimed by French and Spanish colonials. Headquartered in Pensacola originally, with scarcely a European settlement west of Mobile Bay, the province grew exceedingly slowly and only began to come of age as the Revolutionary War flared up along the Atlantic seaboard. Eventually the colony featured clusters of European settlements at such places as Pensacola, Campbelltown, Mobile, Baton Rouge, Manchac, and Natchez, and it assumed a position as a dynamic and promising part of Britain's North American's holdings. But despite the grand visions of its leaders and the best efforts of its residents, the colony struggled economically, and its representative government never quite became the force in the provincial life that similar institutions in the east coast colonies did. In fact, West Florida is so obscure to us today at least in part owing to its relatively small population and its pressing daily concerns; the latter occupied residents and precluded their becoming a vital part of intercolonial discussions during a period of political unrest. As it remained officially loyal to

the crown throughout the Revolution, West Florida is usually regarded as an afterthought where little of consequence occurred.

Yet the Revolution did find the colony, and the story of the ways it did so colorfully and substantively shapes the history of the region. First came politely declined invitations by the Continental Congress to join its sister province in the east in working towards the establishment of a new, independent American nation. Next came a wave of immigration after being declared a safe asylum for besieged loyalists everywhere. In 1778 came a daring raid by a ragtag American force along the Mississippi which exposed the province's inadequate defense and caused a great deal of unrest even if never seriously threatening its takeover by a Continental Army. Finally came an audacious, prolonged offensive spearheaded by the ambitious and capable governor of the neighboring Spanish Louisiana, Bernardo de Galvez, which would ultimately bring about the end of West Florida's days as a part of the British Empire. Spain never formally allied itself with the nascent United States in its war for independence, but it recognized an opportunity to take advantage of a distracted colonial rival. Spain's stunning campaign to wrest control of West Florida from the British featured intense and spirited fighting from the fall of 1779 to the spring of 1781. This war within a war helped divert vital resources from other Revolutionary War campaigns by the British and culminated in the martial conquest of the colony by the Spaniards.

But despite all this, somewhat few people know the colony existed at all. A forgotten Gulf Coast entity which graced regional maps for less than two decades, the province goes virtually unmentioned in most histories of the American Revolutionary Era and is all but unknown to the great majority of those living within its former borders today. The situation is understandable to some degree, as precious few historical sites commemorate the people, places, and events of the region's years as part of the British Empire, and almost no extant structures date to its mid-eighteenth century heyday. Its name alone can confuse some, to boot, as "West Florida" naturally connotes to the modern ear a certain geographical specificity that takes some explaining to communicate the true physical footprint of the colony. Save for the findings of some archaeological investigations and a few scattered historic markers (and one magnificent memorial statue in Pensacola), the British period in Gulf Coast history can only be imagined through the pages of the limited historiography on the subject. While that historical literature is solid and features the work of some eminent colonial historians, candidly it is not exactly brimming with best-sellers likely to be familiar to the casual historian. But the fact that the seminal events in America's founding drama – the political unrest and legendary war between the immortal thirteen rebellious colonies and Great Britain which witnessed the birth of the United States as an independent nation – occurred far away from the Gulf has probably been most responsible for rendering West Florida's story so overlooked, understudied, and poorly understood. Scores of textbooks and narrative histories chronicling the era do not so much as mention British West Florida, much less discuss its place in the Empire. It is not uncommon to find within these books maps depicting Britain's North American colonies during the Revolution as existing only along the eastern seaboard, with the amorphous southwestern frontier behind them labeled as simply "Indian land" or "Spanish territory." In short, Americans, both scholars and lay historians, often so associate our nation's founding era with the thirteen rebellious colonies that we have collectively forgotten that there even was an America further west than the Atlantic coast in 1776.

ADAM MCCREARY 1772-1844 FAMILY HISTORY

Editor's note: the following article was submitted by Sherry Johnson, former Genealogy Librarian at Evergreen Public Library. This is a history of Adam McCreary that she pulled from genealogy records in the library.

JOHN ADAM MCCREARY was the first of a large line of McCreary's to settle in Alabama. His descendants have scattered and live throughout the United States. It is now known for sure where he was born, but it is thought, and from all indications, it must have been in the Ninety-Sixth District in South Carolina. He moved from Barnwell District, SC to Alabama in 1818. Barnwell District became part of what was the Ninety-Sixth District when it was divided. He, along with many others of his time, left his native state because the lands of that state were rapidly becoming non-productive, this was due to over-farming and there was no way to rebuild them again with fertilizer. Little was known about crop rotation. This period was known as "The Scottish Invasion of South Alabama", because so many families with Scottish names moved into and settled the southern part of the state.

Mr. McCreary was one of the first settlers of Conecuh County, building his first house on Old Town Creek. The site on which this house was built was an old Indian village. It was a point prominent on the old Chattahoochee-Pensacola Trail. Later, he moved and built a more substantial home at a site now known as the W.K. Horton place, where he spent the rest of his life. Improvements were promptly begun and a grist mill and a saw mill were soon erected, and in operation, using water as power. He then opened a small store with a small stock of commodities. One of the most popular items was a cheap whiskey of poor quality. Shortly after moving to Conecuh County, he was considered elite because he owned an ordinary Jersey wagon.

Mr. McCreary was a devout church member and his religious feelings were very sincere. Such was his veneration for the Scripture that he drew there from the names of all his children. He was very instrumental in having a "Meeting House" erected, this being the first place of public worship in this section. People would walk seven or eight miles on Sunday to hear a preacher. He was a Missionary Baptist, but he and his fellow churchmen could not see eye to eye in many ways about running the church, so he and his brethren fell out and he built his own church and got a Primitive Baptist preacher one Sunday in each month. After church, the entire congregation was invited to his house for dinner and all their horses, mules and oxen were fed from his barn. The church building still stands and is used as a barn for storage of corn. The window through which the corn is thrown was behind the pulpit. He didn't use mules or oxen on his farm for work, worked only horses.

According to the census records, he owned two slaves in 1800 while living in Barnwell District, SC and fifteen slaves in 1830, but only eleven in 1840, four years before he died. He possessed many splendid characteristics and some peculiarities. One day, while watching the operations of his saw mill, he saw an especially nice piece of timber sawed; he had it tossed up into the loft and when it was dry, had his coffin made out of it. He supervised its construction; lay down in it to see if it would fit, kept it under his bed for a short time, and then stored it upstairs in what was the upper part of a story and a half of his home. It is said that he would go upstairs and take a nap in it from time to time.

The struggles and perils of his early life paid off because he became a man of great influence among the fellowmen of his new location, which at this time was nothing more than a wilderness. This had its advantages as there was always plenty of wild game, such as deer, turkey, and smaller animals and there was no need of anybody being hungry. In disposition, he was quiet and passive. He was a very successful business man, acquiring considerable land, amassing quite a fortune and leaving a large estate to his children.

"The History of Conecuh County", by Reverend B.F. Riley, had this to say about Mr. McCreary. "While he was quite a boy, he endured some of the horrors of the Revolution. His father's home was located in that region which was so sorely infested by Tories. Fearful lest his son might have to pay the penalty of his father's patriotism, for he was in the ranks of the regular Army, the anxious mother would send her son, in company with a Negro, to sleep at night in the woods. His views were exceedingly hyper-Calvinistic, and quite frequently in the midst of calamity, he would seek relief in the assurance, "That it was for-ordained and therefore right". On one occasion, a Negro boy, belonging to him, took an inroad upon his smoke house and when arraigned for the deed, took refuge in the favorite doctrine of his owner, saying, "Well Massa, you see 'dis was 'ranged forehand, it was all fore'dained dat I should take dat meat". Stung by the evident sarcasm and exasperated by the complacent impudence of the thief, the master bound toward him and caught him in the collar, saying, "And it is for-ordained that I give you a thorough thrashing and I'll do it". After a long and useful life, spent in Conecuh County he died at his home in 1844, in the seventy-second year of his life.

It is not known for sure where either he or his wife were buried but it is thought by some of the older generation that they were buried near his old home on the Brooklyn-Evergreen highway in a family cemetery. If their graves were ever marked, the markers have been destroyed. His wife was Mary Odom. It could be that she was born in Barnwell District SC, as there were some Odoms listed in this district in the census records of 1790 and 1800.

Their children are: **1. Mary Ann 2. John Adam 3. Joseph Hartwell 4. Samuel 5. Elijah**

1. **Mary Ann**, the oldest child and only daughter of **Mary Odom and Adam McCreary**, was born in Barnwell District, S.C., shortly before 1800, as she was listed in the 1800 Census of SC. Married **Captain Wilson Ashley** in Barnwell District about 1818. Captain Ashley visited Alabama, liked it so well that he went back to SC, married and returned, settling on Old Town Creek, ten miles from the present town of Evergreen. It is thought that it was on his recommendation that Adam McCreary, his father-in-law, moved to Alabama from the same district in SC. Mary Ann died in 1861 and is buried with her husband in the Old Beulah Cemetery in Conecuh County near Evergreen. This cemetery has long since been abandoned but members of the first settlers families are buried there. Their children are: 1. **Wilson, Jr.** died a year and a half old 2. **William**, b 1822, d 12 Feb 1870, married **Amanda Thomas**. 3. **James Wilson**, b 14 Nov 1827, d 17 Dec 1858. 4. **Caroline Elizabeth**, b 28 Mar 1835, d 8 Dec 1898, married **Rev. Alexander Jay**. 5. **Susan J.**, married **Sanford Jones**. 6. **Nathaniel**, married **Polly Stallworth**. 7. **Mary Ann**, married **Dr. Charles Taliaferro**.
2. **John Adam, Jr.**, oldest son of **Mary Odom and Adam McCreary** was born in Barnwell District, SC in 1802; married **Narcissus Autrey**. Their children were: 1. **William A.**, went to California 1845. 2 **Lorenzo I.**, went to California, 1866. 3. **John Absalom**, b 11 Nov 1832, married 1st to **Marcella**

Hunter Johnston, 2nd to **Sarah Elizabeth Etheridge**. 4. **Patheria**, married a **Mr. Mims**. 5. **Mary Ann**, b 3 Jul 1843, d 1 May 1850, married **James Monroe Travis**.

3. **Joseph Hartwell McCreary**, second son of **Mary Odom and Adam McCreary** was born in Barnwell District SC 25 Jul 1803 and came to Alabama with his father and mother when he was fifteen years old. On 8 Jan 1829, he married **Mrs. Almirah N. (Strange) Autry**, a widow with a small daughter named **Mary**, who later married his brother, **Elijah**. She lived in Brooklyn. They lived for a number of years at McGowin Bridge on what is now known as the Jack McGowin place. He built a beautiful home there. It was built as all houses were during that period, by having a house-raising. He invited all his neighbors to help, as the men worked on the house and the women cooked and quilted. This took several days and what was not finished was completed by carpenters. This area was then part of Conecuh County and he was one of the largest land owners in the county, owning land down to and including what is now known as the Coon/Koon Plantation. He sold this plantation to **Samuel McGowin** and moved north of Evergreen. While living at McGowin, he and his wife were going to Brooklyn one Sunday to church and the horses they were driving ran away, threw her out of the wagon and broke her leg. It never healed enough that she could get around without the aid of a crutch. When the house burned in 1939, the crutch marks could still be seen on the floor. After the Civil War, he gave each of his children \$5,000.00 in gold that he buried during the war. He also had two trunks full of worthless Confederate money when the war ended. He died 13 October 1864. He and his wife are buried in the Belleville, Alabama, Cemetery. Their children are: 1. **Adam R.**, b 29 Jan 1830, d 3 Jul 1858, married **Charlotte Turk**. 2. **Julian A.**, b Nov 1831, d in infancy. 3. **Joseph Hartwell, Jr.**, b 3 Feb 1835 d 1 Jun 1862, married **Jane Crosby**. 4. **John Calhoun**, b 8 Apr 1837, d 12 Feb 1861. 5. **Susan Jane**, b 1839. 6. **Almirah Strange**, b 15 Jan 1841, d Jul 1857. 7. **Martha Frances**, b 26 Aug 1843, d 14 Jun 1896, married **Dr. Robert Augustus Lee**. 8. **Robert James**, b 24 Apr 1846, d 31 Jul 1907, married 1st **Emily Elizabeth Standley**; 2nd **Mary Henrietta Stanley**. 9. **Reuben Strange**, b 12 Sep 1848, married 1st **Miss Baggett**, married 2nd **Nannie Tomlinson**. 10. **William J.**, b 12 Jun 1851, d 22 Feb 1907, married **Mary Forrest Melvin**. 11. **Samuel Elijah**, b 11 May 1853, d 24 Feb 1915, married **Elizabeth (Wereth) Billings**.
4. **Samuel McCreary**, third son of **Mary Odom and Adam McCreary**, was born in Barnwell District, SC. He married **Mary Hunter**. Their Children were: 1. **Preston**. 2. **James**. 3. **Susan**; married **Doctor Hawthorne**. 4. **Mary**, married **Mr. McClellan**. 5. **Mattie**, married **J.E. Massie**.
5. **Elijah McCreary**, fourth son of **Mary Odom and Adam McCreary**, was born in Barnwell District, SC 15 Jan 1818, and was less than a year old when his family moved to Conecuh County. He was the first McCreary to settle at what is now known as McCreary, five miles north of Brooklyn. He bought land from two **Brantley** brothers who lived at Brantley Springs on Bottle Creek, and moved their two houses to where he wanted to build his house. He used them as the two main rooms, making a double pen house. They were log buildings; he later ceiled the house on the inside and added boards on the outside, put a shed room on each side and added other rooms as his family grew. Mr. McCreary wanted a railroad to come through Evergreen, as he had to haul his cotton to Old Clabourn (Claiborne) on the Alabama River, so he bought \$12,000.00 worth of L & N Railroad Stock. He helped get the railroad through Evergreen but lost his \$12,000.00. He traveled a lot, once he went to New Orleans, took a trip up the Mississippi River, saw a

plantation he liked and bought it. Later, he gave it to one of his sons who went to Texas shortly after the Civil War. According to census records, he had a real estate value of \$1,200.00 in 1850 that grew to \$4,000.00 in 1860, with a personal estate of \$48,000.00. William Coleman was his farm overseer in 1860. He built a dam on Bottle Creek and used the back-water as power to run a rice mill, a saw mill and a sugar cane mill, along with a grist mill. In the fall, when he sold his cotton, he would buy barrels of sugar, sacks of coffee and a barrel of whiskey, enough to last a year. The sheep were sheared and the wool used to make clothing, both for the slaves and his family. When the crops were gathered in the fall, the Negro men were put to work clearing new ground and the Negro women began making clothes from the cloth made from the wool and it had been spun. There was a separate room in the house called the spinning room where the spinning wheels were kept. When the spinning wheels were running you could hear the hum of the spinning wheels long before you reached the house with the clang of the battons and all the Negro women keeping time with the tramp, tramp, tramp of the looms. During the Civil War, as each one of his sons would leave for service, he would give the departing son the pick of his horse to take with him. When Mr. McCreary heard that the Yankees were coming, he sent two wagon loads of cured meat to Mr. G.D. Robinson's at Paul for him to hide as Paul was in a more out of the way area than McCreary was. He took all of his horses and mules to the mouth of a little creek on Bottle Creek which was an area well covered with underbrush and left **John Bry**, (a slave he paid \$1,500.00 for as a young Negro boy) to take care of them. He also, had forty bales of cotton hid in a house near Turks Spring and a slave by the name of **Rife** slipped out of the Negro quarters and told the Yankee Raiders that he would tell them where the cotton was if they would take him with them, but after they got the cotton, they told him to stay where he was. Mr. McCreary heard that he had slipped back into the quarters and went to investigate, saw the Negro running, shot at him as he was climbing through a rail fence, hit the rail just under him but he escaped. He was later killed in Brewton by a Mr. Brewton. Cotton was worth forty cents a pound at that time. He owned forty slaves. The Slave Quarters and the Slave Graveyard were located at the back of his house; the exact location is still noticeable today. He was well known all over the country for the fine horses and mules he raised. He married, 1st, **Mary Autry** of Brooklyn, she died in 1851 and is buried at the Old McCreary Place at Horton. Their children are: **Mary Elmira**. 2. **Wilson A**. 3. **Joseph**. 4. **Lorenzo**. 5 **Elijah**. After his first wife died, he married **Mary S. Coleman**, b 1833, d 7 Nov 1906. Her mother was a **Horton**, both her parents died when she was a baby and she went to live with an uncle in Lowndes County; later, she returned to Conecuh County, and stayed with another uncle, **Lab Horton**. She rode a horse from Lowndes County, was very timid at first, hid under a bed and would curse anybody that tried to get her out, saying, "I am not afred of anybody". When she was about eighteen years old, she was visiting in the home of **Elijah and Mary (Autry) McCreary** when Mrs. McCreary was sick. One day as everybody was leaving the room for dinner, Mrs. Mc Creary called her over to her bed and said, "Mary, I'm sick and I'm going to die, I want you to be Elijah's second wife as I know you will be good to my children." She is buried by the side of her husband Elijah in the cemetery at the Baptist Church in Brooklyn. Their Children are: 1. **Callie**. 2. **Anna**. 3. **William Herbert**. 4. **Andrew Jay**.

- A. **Mary Elmira McCreary**, oldest child and only daughter of **Mary Autry and Elijah McCreary** was b in 1843. She married **William Allen Turk**, son of **Rebecca Allen and George W. Turk**. William A. Turk and his wife died a week apart in 1888 and are buried at the Turk Cemetery near the Turk (Sanders) Cave at Brooklyn. After they died, their children went to live with different relatives. **Tennie** with the **Elijah McCrearys**, **Ida** went to Louisiana with an uncle, **Nick Harwell**; and **Alabama** went to Troy, Alabama to live with the **Darbys and Skinners**. Their Children are: (a) **William Allen, Jr.**, b 5 Dec 1863, d 13 Sep 1923, in Pensacola FL, married **Julia Hadley**. (b) **Rebeicia (Molly)** married **William Johnson**. (c) **Ida (Sissie)**. (d) **Alabama (Dumpie)**, died as a young girl in Troy, Alabama. (e) **George**, b 28 Sep 1870. (f) **Jimmie**, d when 13 years old, buried at Turk Cemetery. (g) **Anna**, married **George Robinson** of Paul, AL. (h) **Tennie**, married **Frank Turner**. (i) **Elijah**, died when a young boy, buried at Turk Cemetery. (j) **Myra**, married **W.S. Rogers**, moved to Texas, died in Waco, is buried there. During the Civil War, **William Allen Turk** served in the C.S.A., and was in Company H, Second Alabama Cavalry.
- B. **Wilson Adam McCreary**, first son of **Mary Autry and Elijah McCreary**, was b at McCreary, 19 May 1844. He d 10 Mar 1881. He married 1st, **Addie Robinson**, born near **Brooklyn**, 11 May 1848 and d 15 Sep 1877. Both are buried at the DuBose Cemetery near Brooklyn. Their Children are: (a) **Franklin Robinson** (b) **Elijah Robinson**. After his 1st wife died, **Wilson A. McCreary** married **Callie Coleman**, b 11 Nov 1853 and d 12 Jul 1923. She is buried at the Baptist Church Cemetery, at Brooklyn. Their Children are: (1) **Dudley Herbert** (2) **Wilson Adam, Jr. Wilson Adam McCreary** moved to Evergreen, used \$1,000.00 his father gave him and started a county paper (The Conecuh Banner). He later gave this up and moved back to McCreary and settled at the place now known as the Wilson McCreary Plantation. When he died, he left his wife with two small boys. His first wife's family of **Robinsons** took the oldest two: **Frank and Elijah** to raise.
- C. **Joseph, Elijah, and Lorenzo**, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th sons of **Mary Autry and Elijah McCreary**, rode horse back to Lot, Texas, shortly after the Civil War. Each married and raised a family in Texas. When they left for Texas, their mother gave them a money belt that she had made from some heavy cloth to wear under their clothes, to keep their valuables in. They all fought in the Civil War, as each one would leave for service their father would give them the pick of his horses, to take with them. They were in the artillery. They said that many times they would have to dash in during the height of a battle, hitch onto their artillery pieces and move to another location or retreat.
- D. **Cally (Caroline) McCreary**, first daughter of **Mary Autry and Elijah McCreary**, was b in 1852, she married **Robert Hodges** of Brooklyn. He went to Texas, near Lot, to live, came back to Alabama and wanted Cally to marry him but her Mother said that she was too young, so he went back to Texas, didn't write for a year, came back and she married him. They went to Texas, but she lived less than a year. She is buried near Lot.
- E. **Anna McCreary**, second daughter of **Mary Coleman and Elijah McCreary**, b 1855, married **William Kennedy** of Brooklyn. He was a horse trader and ran a bar in Brooklyn. The bar was in a wooden building on the corner where the old bank building now stands. It had a pair of wooden hewed timbers on each side of the bar where men could sit. A Baptist preacher, by

the name of **White**, was called to the Baptist Church, in Brooklyn, and he lined up with the dries in Conecuh County and the county voted "dry" and has been dry ever since. Both are buried in Brooklyn. Their Children are: (a) **Mamie**, b 13 Feb 1879, d 21 Jun 1913 (b) **Ralph Leslie**.

- F. **William Herbert McCreary**, oldest son of **Mary Coleman and Elijah McCreary**, was b 8 Jun 1858 and d 4 May 1939. He married **Elmira Alabama Johnston** 23 Dec 1885. She was b 8 May 1861 and d 27 Nov 1911. They lived at McCreary. Her parents were **Susan Catherine Henderson and Asa Johnston**. Both are buried at the Brooklyn Baptist Church Cemetery. Their Children are: (1) **Katherine Lee**, b 19 Oct 1886. (2) **William Leslie**, b 29 Apr 1888. (3) **Daisy Caroline**, b 30 May 1893, d 31 Jan 1905. (4) **Mary Louise**, b 23 Jan 1896. **Leslie McCreary** served in the Army during the first World War, and was in the 54th Machine Gun Battalion, Company B.

- (1) **Katherine McCreary**, oldest daughter of **Alabama Johnston and Asa Johnston**, married **Herbert Snowden**, 3 Jan 1904. They were married by **Reverend Howell**. His parents were **Martha Turk and William Herbert Snowden**.

- G. **Andrew Jay McCreary**, youngest son of **Mary Coleman and Elijah McCreary** was b 9 Apr 1860 at the old McCreary Place at McCreary, d 8 Mar 1910. He was very musical, played the fiddle and believed in a lot of frolicking. He enjoyed going to dances and was always playing jokes on someone. He was a great advocator of the pound square dances that were held for several nights, during the Christmas Holidays. Everybody would take a pound of fruitcake, a pound of meat or a pound of something to different homes each night during the holidays and dance to fiddling music most of the night. Quite often some of the men would dance the soles out of a new pair of shoes in one night. He tried the timber business for a while but was not successful, so he settled down to farming. He married **Ida Findley**, daughter of **Martha Allen (Rabun) and John (Jack) Findley** of Loango, Alabama. She was b 9 Jan 1860, and d 21 Dec 1928. They lived at McCreary. Both are buried at the Baptist Church Cemetery in Brooklyn. Their Children are: (1) **Arthur Allen**. (2) **John Findley**. (3) **Anna Elizabeth**. (4) **Fred Otto**. (5) **Ida Lillian**.

1. **Franklin Robinson McCreary**, first son of **Margaret Addie Robinson and Wilson A. McCreary**, was b at McCreary, 22 Mar 1874 and d 5 Aug 1921. He married **Anna Elizabeth McCreary**, daughter of **Ida Findley and Andrew J. McCreary**. He volunteered for Army duty during the Spanish-American War in 1898, along with his brother **Elijah**. Both were stationed in Miami for some time. Shortly after they returned home from their Army service, they went to Louisiana and went into the timber business. Frank later came back home, married and lived above Johnstonville, on the Brooklyn-Evergreen Road. He is buried at Brooklyn.
2. **Elijah Robinson McCreary**, second son of **Margaret Addie Robinson and Wilson A. McCreary**, was b 22 Jul 1875, at McCreary, married **Florence Dickey** of Louisiana. They now live in Raymond, MS. Their Children are: (1) **Elijah Robinson, Jr.** (2) **Evelyn**. (3) **Wilson**.
3. **Dudley Herbert McCreary**, first son of **Callie (Caroline) Coleman and Wilson A. McCreary**, was b 4 Dec 1878, at McCreary. He married **Janie Riley** of Evergreen and lived

in Evergreen for years. Their Children are: (1) **Verna**. (2) **Edith**, married **Albert Gaston**. (3) **Irvin**, married **James Cathcart**. (4) **Louise**. When **Dudley McCreary** was a young man, he ran away from home with his cousin, **Arthur A. McCreary**. They went to Mississippi to get rich in the timber business, and while they were there, they got caught in small-pox quarantine and had difficulties getting back home. They had to walk, while slipping back through Alabama they came to a toll bridge with a wire gate on it which they had to climb and before they got over it, a large dog got after them, but they managed to get through a hole in the gate and over the bridge and into Mobile without getting caught. They had just enough money to buy train tickets to Evergreen.

4. **Wilson Adam McCreary, Jr.**, second son of **Callie Coleman and Wilson A. McCreary**, was b 31 May 1880 at McCreary. He married **Ethel Williams**, b Feb 1888, daughter of **Estelle Robinson and John Williams**, from across the river from Brooklyn. **Estelle** (b Oct 1868) **John Williams** (b May 1863). Their Children are: (a) **Carolyn Estelle**, married **Leonard Pritchett**. Their Children are: **Linda Carol and George Wilson**. (b) **Wilsie**, married **Charles Gillespie**, of Prattville, AL. Their Children are: **Charles Wilson and Samuel Eugene**. (c) **Wilson Ashley**, married **Wynell Peavy**, dau of **Leonard and Maggie Peavy** of Vienna, GA. Their Children are: **Mary Elizabeth and Lynn Ashley**.
5. **Arthur Allen McCreary**, oldest son of **Ida Findley and Andrew J. McCreary**, was b 4 Nov 1882 at McCreary. He died 9 Jan 1929. He married **Ursie Hart**, daughter of **Sarah Jane McGowin and Reuben Hart**, during the first week of February 1907. She was b 16 Sep 1884 at Teddy. She died 27 Apr 1934 at Auburn, Alabama where she was living at the time, so her children could go to college. The name Ursie is derived from the name Ursula, the first name of a teacher, Ursula Kirpatrick, at Highland Home, a girls school that her sister, **Ruby**, was attending when she, Ursie, was born. They are both buried at the Baptist Church Cemetery in Brooklyn. Their Children are: (a) **Virgil Dudley**. (b) **Andrew Jay**. (c) **Ruby Eulalie**. (d) **Sarah Elizabeth**. The **A.A. McCrearys** lived at McCreary for about two years after they married and then moved to the **Reuben Hart Place**, five miles south of Brooklyn. Part of this plantation, which belonged to his father-in-law, **Reuben Hart**, was under an \$8,000.00 mortgage. He paid this off before the mortgage became due, carried the gold coins, which the mortgage called for, in his hands from one bank to another in Evergreen. He did extensive farming, raised cotton, at one time owned part interest in a cotton gin at Brooklyn. Mules were used to plow, he had about twelve head for years, kept a few horses but they were used mostly for riding. He used one to ride to keep up with that was going on at different places on the farm. He went hunting one day on a horse, dismounted and tied him, got interested in a bunch of turkeys, killed one, forgot about his horse and walked home. Sent someone back for the horse. He was quite a practical joker. **H.H. Snowden**, who owned the plantation across the Sepulga River from his farm, needed a bull, as Mr. McCreary had an extra one, it was decided the best way to get him across the river was to swim him over. Mr. Snowden came across the river in a small boat to get the bull. Mr. McCreary was there with the animal tied to a long rope and several Negro men to help push the animal in the water. When the bull was in the water, Mr. McCreary gave the rope to Mr. Snowden who was in

the boat and Mr. McCreary took the oars out of the boat and pushed it away from the bank. The bull, which Mr. Snowden didn't know was very gentle, he swam down the river about 300 yards, then went out on the other side, pulling the boat with Mr. Snowden in it with him. When he was a young man, his brother, John, slipped out of the house one night and went to a dance that his parents had forbade him to go to. Mr. McCreary stood a bench up on its end next to the door that his brother had to enter on returning from the dance, placed a washtub and a chair on top of it. When his brother came in, he gave a slight push on the door and down came the tub, chair and bench. The racket roused everybody in the house, and they came to see what all the racket was about and there stood his brother fully dressed.

6. **Virgil Dudley McCreary**, oldest son of **Ursie Hart and Arthur J. McCreary**, was b 18 Nov 1907 at McCreary. He married **Iva Hinote** on 31 Jan 1936 in Evergreen. She was b 23 Nov 1912, in East Brewton, Alabama, daughter of **Rosa Williamson and Walter Hinote**. They have one daughter: **Mary Carole**, b 22 Aug 1942. He moved to Teddy with his family when he was about one year old and was raised on the farm. He went to grammar school at Teddy, finished high school at the old SSAS in Evergreen, and received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Auburn in the Class of 1931. He went into practice in Brewton, Alabama as soon as he was out of college, also, inspected meat for the City of Brewton. He was appointed to the State Board of Veterinary Examiners in 1950.
7. **Andrew Jay McCreary**, second son of **Ursie Hart and A.A. McCreary**, was born on the farm at Teddy. He married **Annie Mae Henderson**, daughter of **Kate Robinson and James D. Henderson**, in the First Baptist Church, Andalusia, AL on 3 Oct 1945. They live in Pensacola, Florida. Their Children are: (a) **Andrew Jay, Jr.**, b 7 Oct 1947. (b) **James Henderson**, b 19 Apr 1949. (c) **Dudley Burney**, b 30 Jul 1952. **Andrew Jay McCreary** finished grammar school at Teddy, high school at the Old SSAS in Evergreen in the Class of 1929, and received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine Degree from A.P.I. in the Class of 1935. Receiving a reserve commission in the Veterinary Corps of the U.S. Army at the same time, he worked a year with the Bureau of Animal Industry of the U.S. Dept of Agriculture in Alabama, Texas and Virginia. He went with the City of Pensacola as milk and meat inspector in March of 1937. He went on Active duty with the Army 15 March 1942, and was stationed at Fort McIntosh, TX with the 56th Cal. Brgd. Until 1 Sep 1943, when he was ordered to Europe, being stationed in England, France and Germany. Arriving back in New York on 3 Sep 1945, where he became stationed until he reverted to inactive duty at Camp Blanding, FL 14 Mar 1946. He then went into private practice in Pensacola.
8. **Ruby Eulalie McCreary**, oldest daughter of **Ursie Hart and A.A. McCreary**, was b 29 Sep 1913 at Teddy. She married **William Thompson Christopher** of Silas, AL in Mobile on 8 Apr 1934. He was the son of **Susie Watkins and Dr. Frank E. Christopher**, b 9 Jun 1912 in Bolinger, AL. Their Children are: (a) **Arthur Frank**, b 24 Dec 1934. (b) **William McCreary**, b 15 Jun 1937. (c) **Martha Sue**, b 10 Sep 1943. They lived in Silas for several years, then

moved to Washington DC and then, back to Silas after living in Washington for several years. He died 17 Sep 1950.

9. **Sarah Elizabeth McCreary**, youngest daughter of **Ursie Hart and A.A. McCreary**, was b 9 Jul 1915, on the family farm at Teddy. She married **James Horace Sellers** of Hope Hull in Chicago, IL 26 Dec 1942. Their Children are: **Vera Pamly. Edward Durden. William Durden.**
10. **John Findley McCreary**, second son of **Ida Findley and Andrew J, McCreary**, was b 9 Jan 1886 at McCreary. He married **Florida Callaway**, daughter of **Georgia Boyett and Edgar Douglas Callaway**, b 25 Feb 1888. They live at McCreary. They were married 17 Feb 1910 by **Rev. B.F. Brooks**, at the Calloway Place, across the river at Brooklyn. Their Children are: (a) **Georgia Vonceil**. (b) **Ida Floride** (c) **John Frederick**. (d) **Edgar Callaway**.
11. **Vonceil McCreary**, oldest daughter of **Floride Callaway and John F. McCreary**, was b 16 Sep 1911. She taught school for a number of years in Alabama and is presently teaching in Pensacola. She attended college at Troy, Alabama; Auburn,;University of Alabama; Colorado and Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.
12. **Ida Floride McCreary**, second daughter of **Floride Callaway and John F. McCreary**, was b 9 Jan 1914. She married **Jack Harper**, son of **Hettie Smith and Ralph Harper** of Herbert, Alabama, in Feb 1936. Their Children are: **Glen Terry and John Ralph**.
13. **John Frederick McCreary**, oldest son of **Floride Callaway and John F. McCreary**, was b Jun 1918 at McCreary, finished high school at Evergreen. He served with the Air Force during WWII and was discharged as a Master Sgt. He married **Betty Jo Stallworth**, daughter of **Joe and Rebecca Stallworth**, in Castleberry, Alabama on 10 Jan 1953, by Rev. Stanley Kelley.
14. **Edgar Callaway McCreary**, second son of **Floride Callaway and John F. McCreary** was b at McCreary 29 Jun 1925. He finished school at Evergreen in the Class of 1943. He served one year in the Merchant Marines during WWII, made one trip to Europe, and married **Anna Ruth Findley**, b 1 Feb 1928, at Loango, Alabama. She is the daughter of **Vergie Elizabeth Fuqua and George Cyrus Findley**. Their Children are: **John Findley. Susan. Anna.**
15. **Anna Elizabeth McCreary**, oldest daughter of **Ida Findley McCreary and Andrew J. McCreary**, was b 21 Sep at McCreary. She married **Frank R. McCreary**, son of **Addie Robinson and Wilson McCreary** at 3 o'clock one Wednesday afternoon, 26 Nov 1913 by Rev. Bob F. Brooks. They drove "Bob", a big frisky bay horse to the preachers who had built a house on the old DuBose Track near Brooklyn and sat in the buggy while the knot was tied, and the horse was still for the first time during the trip. They then drove to Mr. McCreary's Aunt Minnie's home who had a very nice supper for them. Their Children are: **Elijah Wilson. Frank Robinson. Addie.**
16. **Elijah Wilson McCreary**, oldest son of **Anna McCreary and Frank R. McCreary**, was b 29 Aug 1914. He finished high school in Evergreen and College at Auburn. He married **Lois Brock**, of Sand Mountain, AL. Their Children are: **Wilson Elijah. John Brock. and Jane Ann.**

17. **Frank Robinson McCreary**, second son of **Anna McCreary and Frank R. McCreary**, was b 28 May 1917. He finished grammar school at Brooklyn, AL and high school at Evergreen in the Class of 1935. He received his B.S. Degree in Agriculture at Auburn in the Class of 1941, taught Agriculture at Copeland, NC for one year. He served three and one half years in the USAF and was stationed in Europe for some time, was discharged 5 Dec 1945 as a Staff Sgt. He taught school for five and one half years at Geraldine, AL, then, moved to Uriah, AL. He received his Masters Degree in Agriculture from Auburn University during the summer of 1954. He married **Alice Rich**, daughter of **Helen Early Chaffin and Samuel Oscar Rich**, of NC on 4 Jan 1942 in York, SC. She was b 1 Aug 1919 and received her B.S. Degree from East Carolina Teachers College in the Class of 1941. Their Children are: **Helen Elizabeth. Frances Lillian. Frank Robinson, III.**
18. **Fred Otto McCreary**, third son of **Ida Findley and Andrew J. McCreary**, was b 5 Nov 1891 at McCreary. He served in the first World War, enlisting 29 May 1918 at Camp Sevier, SC, was discharged 26 Jun 1919, was attached to Company "B", 321st Infantry, 81st Division, known as the "Wildcat Division". He was overseas 11 months most of the time in France, in action. He married **Ela Mae Callaway**, b 21 Apr 1891 on 3 Nov 1920 near Brooklyn. They were married by Dr. J.G. Dickinson. Their Children are: **Lillian Estelle. Neta Virginia. Arthur Frederick.**
19. **Estelle McCreary**, oldest daughter of **Ela Mae Callaway and Fred O. McCreary**, was b 31 Jul 1921. She married **Thomas Fleetwood Reynolds** of Pensacola, FL 21 Dec 1948. His mother was **Elizabeth Bonner Neville** of Camden, AL and his father was **William W.B. Reynolds** of Pensacola, FL.
20. **Neta McCreary**, second daughter of **Ela Mae Callaway and Fred O. McCreary**, was b 20 Dec 1924 at McCreary. She married **Edward H. Buckner** of Pell City, AL 10 Sep 1949, the son of **Lela Maude Pearson and Hershell Zeb Buckner**. Their Children are: **Hershell Rhett.**
21. **Arthur McCreary, only** son of **Ela Mae Callaway and Fred O. McCreary**, was b 5 Sep 1927 at McCreary. He married **Mary Alice McIntyre**, b 23 Feb 1934, on the 12th of June 1952. Her parents were **Faye Harper and Gary L. McIntyre** of Herbert, AL. Their Children are: **Charlotte. Gary Frederick. Arthur Robert.**
22. **Ida Lillian McCreary**, youngest daughter of **Ida Findley McCreary and Andrew Jay McCreary**, was b 12 Aug 1894 at McCreary. She married **Cary Murphy** who was b 9 Aug 1891 at Herbert, AL. His parents were **Mary Harper and John Murphy**. They were married 11 Dec 1921 at McCreary. Their Children are: **Judson Cary. Lillian Mildred.**
23. **Judson Cary Murphy**, only son of **Lillian McCreary and Cary Murphy** was b 31 Mar 1923 at Montgomery, AL. He finished high school at Evergreen and was in college at Auburn University when he entered the Air Force. The following is a reprint from The Evergreen Courant, Evergreen, AL. "A letter from the War Dept to Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Murphy was recently received notifying them that their son, Lt. Judson C. Murphy was recently officially listed as Killed in Action as of 17 Oct 1945; he having been reported missing in action since 16 Oct 1944. Lt. Murphy was a bombardier on a B-24 attached to the 15th Air Force based in Italy. On the morning of 16 Oct 1944, shortly after leaving on a

mission to Steyr, Germany, his plane was observed by others in the formation to drop behind and eventually disappear entirely while the formation was passing through a cloud bank. Later reports stated a B-24, believed to have been the one Lt. Murphy was on, was seen to go down in the Adriatic Sea near Cherso Island. No parachutes were observed dropping from the plane. All of the crew of the plane has been reported missing in action. Lt. Murphy graduated from the local high school and later attended Auburn. He entered the service in Jan 1943, graduated as bombardier and received his commission as a Second Lt. at Deming Field, New Mexico, in the spring of 1944. He landed overseas in Aug 1944 and was on his 12th Mission when he was reported missing in action. The Air Medal and Purple Heart were awarded to him posthumously. He is survived by his mother, father, and one sister, **Miss Mildred Murphy.**"

24. **Lillian Mildred Murphy**, only daughter of **Lillian McCreary and Cary Murphy**, was b 25 Oct 1926 at Montgomery, AL. She married **Murray Stinson** 2 Nov 1947. Their Children are: **William Judson. George Murray. Lillian Cary. Leigh.**

**Compiled by Andrew Jay McCreary
Thanksgiving
1954**

How Magnolia Cemetery Got Its Name

Editor's note: This article was originally published in the Mobile Daily Tribune on December 22, 1875, page 3. It was transcribed due to the difficulty reading the copy.

How the "new grave yard" happened to be called Magnolia Cemetery is thus explained: When Caleb Price was mayor of the city, a gentleman wrote to that official from New York, making some inquiry about the burial of a New Yorker in Mobile. Mr. Price thought it would indicate an inability to designate the new grave yard by a more fitting name, and, selecting Magnolia Cemetery as euphonious and appropriate, he drew up an ordinance, had it introduced and adopted by the two boards and henceforward that sacred enclosure was officially known as Magnolia Cemetery. He wrote to New York about the burial in Magnolia Cemetery.

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History of Brownville and Owassa

Editor's Note: The below was an article published in the *Evergreen Courant* (Date Unknown) in Evergreen, Conecuh County, AL regarding history in Conecuh County - Provided by Sherry Johnston, resident of Evergreen and former Genealogy Librarian at Evergreen Public Library. It was written by Edwin Brown.

The first settler to this community was Joel Brown of Culpepper County, Virginia via South Carolina in the year 1816. His children were Squire, Sarah, Mary and Joseph born in Virginia and Judah, James, Joel, Sherwood, Thomas and Russell born in South Carolina and Permealy born in Conecuh County. The first four stayed in Virginia and still have descendants in that state. Joel bought and homesteaded most of the land around for ten and fifteen cents per acre. Later, he sold part of the land to the railroad company and to new settlers. Old Town had been settled by two or three families a few years earlier and Brownville was originally part of that community. About 1830, as other people moved in, the name was changed to Brownville.

Owassa was known as Gravella and Wilcox was called Peach Bloom. They were settled about the time the L & N Railroad was built—this was just before the Civil War. Some of the early settlers were the Adams, the Beasleys, Bakers, Butlers, Smiths, Darbys, Johnsons, Diamonds, Jordans, Northcutts, Spences, Houstons and McGraws. They were all farmers but some had other activities as well. Joel Brown built and operated the first cotton gin and sawmill in this part of the state on the Forty Crook Creek at Old Bogalusa. The gin capacity was one bale per day and the mill was one ox cart of lumber. Both mills were run by water power. It was here they discovered that cotton seed made good fertilizer. Genus Haygood built a saw mill and Brach Smith a gristmill near the same site. W.E. Brown had tanning vats and made shoes at Grandma's old spring. Some of the signs can still be seen. Several years later, Bob, Russ and Mal Brown built and operated another gin and saw mill in the community.

Farming and politics were the main interests in those days so they organized and built a Grange Hall for that purpose. It was located at the intersection of the Brownville and Old Greenville road and is still known by that name. W.E. Brown ran for county treasurer in 1888 and lost due to election fraud. He won four years later by a landslide with the help of armed guards at the polling places and the courthouse. The county was quite wealthy back then with \$430 in the bank when he took office. Eight years later, he left \$17,000 in the bank and remodeled the courthouse. At one time, Owassa was a thriving town boasting a cotton gin, sawmill, several general stores, a barber shop, blacksmith and a doctor (Dr. Mason). The L & N Depot shipped produce out and was the supply depot for the town of Andalusia until their railroad was built.

During the Civil War, a group of Yankee raiders came through and tore up the tracks at Owassa to block supplies from Mobile. They also took everything in sight. Some people hid their livestock and food in large gullies on the plantations. This was well represented in that war as well as World War I and II. Civil War Veterans James Butler, Henry Beasley, S.M. Beasley, Julius Beasley, John Griffin, Seymour Griffin, and Wesley Brown all returned. Julius and Robert Brown died in Virginia. There were sixteen or seventeen men to serve in World War II with only one not returning (Jabe Grant). We are almost certain that Joe Brown served in the Revolutionary War under George Washington as he had a personal letter from him and was about the right age.

The first church, Concord, was built near Old Bogalusa and was used for years. Later, another building was erected above the Brown Spring at the home place and was used for preaching services and as a school. It was a log cabin building with dirt floors and was used by the slaves as well as whites. Miss Julia Baker and Andrew Mason were two of the early teachers. Later, a frame building was put up by the community which was used for school and social event until 1946. The County Fair was held there in 1922.

The present Methodist Church was organized and built in 1884 on land donated by the Brown Family. A storm blew it down in 1942 but it was soon rebuilt. Since then, it has been modernized and the grounds landscaped. The church dedication was by Rev. P.L. Howell, with Rev. W.L. Frazier as the first pastor. Since then, there have been 34 pastors. The Pentecostal Holiness Church was founded in the early 1900s by a Mrs. Wilcox and Mrs. Palmire. Some of the original members were Spence, McGraw, Jordan and Braxton. The Cemetery is known as Mount Herman. The first person to be buried at the Old Brown Cemetery was a tombstone salesman from Ohio. He died at the Joel Brown home during the Civil War and one of his own tombstones was used as a marker.

The original Brown homestead is owned by Mrs. W.C. Braxton, a great granddaughter of Joel Brown. The house was built during the 1840s with slave labor and hand tools. The brick came from the Y.M. Rabb brick yard just off Highway 31. His name is on some of the brick. The house was two stories with four large rooms each with a fireplace and wood shutters. A large hallway, side rooms and an ell for a kitchen. It has been remodeled several times and is still in good condition. Some of the hand work such as wooden pegs and square nails can still be seen. The slave quarters were nearby and all shared in what the land produced. After the war, the slaves were freed and each family was given forty acres of land by Joel Brown who lived to be 104 years old. Some of the Henry Rabb family still owns their land. Also, some of the older people stayed on and lived out their lives in the community.

The community has produced 8 preachers, 8 school teachers and 12 shoe cobblers. Mr. Arthur Beasley delivered the mail for 48 years. At one time, there were 14 families of Browns living within sight of each other, all kin. Our first telephone service was an eight party line. Yes, all Browns and kin.

This brief history was taken from old family records and stories handed down by my father, F.Frank Brown and it is to him and his phenomenal memory these few words are dedicated.

Ed Brown

The Tuskegee Airmen

Magnificent Black Men in Their Flying Machines

By Valerie Ellis

Editor's Note: This article was researched and written by Valerie Ellis, librarian at the Mobile Public Library Local History and Genealogy branch. This is the first part of the article. The second part will be in next quarter's journal along with her source material.

Their ranks have dwindled to fewer than 10, but the Tuskegee Airmen leave behind an enduring legacy of service, sacrifice and resilience that goes beyond their wartime valor as they battled the Axis powers abroad and Jim Crow at home. America's first African American military pilots have richly earned their place in our heroic "Greatest Generation" narrative, a narrative that for many years included few black voices.

"African Americans played a critical role in World War II," notes historian and educator John W. McCaskill, who has been telling the story of the famed aviators for decades in re-enactments and lectures, "and just about 2,000 Black Americans were on the shores of Normandy on D-Day. But if you look at the documentaries and newsreels, you don't see them."

In fact, when Smithsonian TV in combination with a German TV production company decided to make a documentary of Vassar Professor Maria Hohn's book, "Breath of Freedom," a two-year search through media and military archives for footage of black GIs during the final push into Germany and the postwar occupation, turned up less than 10 minutes of footage for the filmmakers.

While an Army manual instructed U.S. occupation soldiers that America was the "living denial of Hitler's absurd theories about a superior race" and that it was up to them to teach the Germans "that the whole concept of superiority and intolerance of others is evil," the black soldiers serving in their segregated units knew only too well the size of the gulf between those professed ideals and the reality of racial segregation back home.

It was that experience as well as dealing with institutional racism within the military itself that catalyzed many of them, including members of the Tuskegee Airmen, to continue the struggle for equality and civil rights at home and within the military.

[The sad irony of their situation was captured by Langston Hughes in 1943 in his poem "Beaumont to Detroit: 1943."

You tell me that hitler/Is a mighty bad man./I guess he took lessons/From the ku klux klan, Hughes wrote, which was essentially true, as Nazis had studied Jim Crow laws in the South as a guide to the development of their own race laws.

Hughes concludes:

You jim crowed me

*Before hitler rose to power-
And you're STILL jim crowing me
Right now, this very hour.*

*Yet you say we're fighting
For democracy.
Then why don't democracy
Include me?*

*I ask you this question
Cause I want to know
How long I got to fight
BOTH HITLER – AND JIM CROW.]*

Postwar Germany was no racial utopia by any means, but African Americans in the occupying forces experienced there for the first time a society without the strict color line of Jim Crow. To the Germans, their uniform identified them as Americans, not “negroes.”

At a Veterans Day ceremony in Mobile in 1996 honoring the surviving Tuskegee Airmen as “Patriots of the Year,” retired Lt. Col. Herbert Carter, one of the original 34 Airmen, echoed that desire to prove their mettle not only to silence the naysayers in the white officer corps about the abilities of black soldiers but to be recognized for their patriotism as well. “We wanted to be able to fight and fly and die if necessary for the United States. First, we were Americans.”

“We cannot allow this story to die,” McCaskill insists, “because every Black pilot, male or female, that sits in a military cockpit or commercial cockpit, owes a debt of gratitude to these individuals who proved once and for all that Blacks were smart enough to fly, and that they were patriotic enough to serve the country.”

Prior to World War II, few African Americans had the opportunity to learn to fly. Some were able to break through the barriers of prejudice, though they sometimes had to get their training outside the U.S. [American-born Eugene Bullard, who lived an adventurous life worthy of a Hollywood movie, after a stint in the French Foreign Legion and service in the French infantry, joined the Aeronautique Militaire (the French flying service), becoming the only African American military pilot of World War I, the first to fly in combat and possibly the first to score an aerial combat victory, though not for his native country. He was decorated 15 times over the years by the French government. But his attempts after the war to become an American military pilot were repeatedly rebuffed.

“Brave Bessie” Coleman, the first black woman in America to hold a pilot’s license, also learned to fly in France and barnstormed across the U.S. in popular air shows in the 1920s until her death in a plane crash

in 1926. James Herman Banning and Thomas Allen were the first black Americans to complete a transcontinental flight, in 1932. A year later, Charles Alfred “Chief” Anderson, later to become an important and beloved figure in the history of the Tuskegee Airmen, and Dr. Albert E. Forsythe became the first African Americans to make a round-trip transcontinental flight.].

But all of this was about to change. Amid the ominous signs from Europe, the U.S. War Department began drafting plans for expanding the nation’s air force in 1938. Polls showed public support for such an expansion, especially as an alternative to building up ground forces, and the idea had President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s enthusiastic backing. FDR asked Congress for money for more planes for the expanded force and for pilot training through the Civil Aeronautics Authority (the precursor to today’s Federal Aviation Administration).

Roosevelt signed the Civilian Pilot Training Act in June 1939, building on a trial program of the previous year. Under the act, tens of thousands of college-age youth would receive federally funded pilot training conducted through colleges and universities across the country. Its purpose was to drum up interest in aviation in general and build up a pool of fliers with basic aviation skills who could quickly transition to being military pilots should the need arise. Several European countries, Italy and Germany in particular, had been conducting similar training programs, which were officially civilian in nature but in actuality were secret military flight training academies.

Seeing this program as an opportunity both to provide good civilian jobs in aviation for African Americans and as a foot in the door for expanded participation of blacks in the military -- a particular focus of black advocacy at that time -- the black press and black organizations lobbied heavily to include black schools in the program.

In October, Tuskegee Institute’s application was approved, after the school secured the use of nearby Montgomery Airport until a suitable field could be built on campus. Several other historically black colleges and universities, such as Howard University and Hampton Institute, also secured slots in the program. By February 1940, improvements to Tuskegee’s Kennedy Field negated the need to use the Montgomery airport.

Every student who applied at Tuskegee passed the standard written examination required of all CPT students, beating the passing rate of other schools in the South. In its first year of operation, 91 of 100 Tuskegee students qualified for civil pilot’s licenses.

Public Law 18, enacted in April 1939, called for civilian schools to be contracted to conduct primary flying training for the Army Air Force, and black leaders pressed hard to include the black CPT schools in these new classes. In the end, Congress compromised, earmarking only one of the pilot schools, Tuskegee, as a training site for African Americans. But no explicit promise was made about admitting black civilian pilots to the air corps after their training.

Over the years, African Americans had attempted to join the Army Air Corps but had been rejected on racial grounds, largely because of a biased 1925 War College study. The report can be found at https://www.fdrlibrary.org/documents/356632/390886/tusk_doc_a.pdf/4693156a-8844-4361-ae17-03407e7a3dee and its blatantly racist language is jolting for a 21st century reader, with pseudoscientific claims about brain size and cranial capacity as proof that American descendants of West Coast Africans – “according to the best authorities,” of course – were “very low in the scale of human elevation.”

The report cites as “facts” that Blacks were “mentally inferior to the white man,” and that they themselves believed that to be true and preferred to be led by white officers, that they were easily influenced, superstitious, lazy and cowardly and lacked the “initiative and resourcefulness” of whites. The authors decried the “political pressure” that led to experiments with all-black combat units led by black officers during World War I and pronounced those experiments failures, claiming that only when white officers were substituted did performance improve. Of course, the report also fails to mention that units such as the 92nd Division, made up of draftees and black junior officers but white commanders, were also plagued by equipment shortages, inadequate training, poorly qualified personnel and racism from senior white officers

The report concludes that “the negro has made a fair laborer, but an inferior technician” and lacked leadership qualities and that the “negro officer was a failure as a combat officer” in World War I.

The sentiments among the ranks of the Southern-dominated military brass represented by this report illustrate the difficulties in breaking down the barriers to greater participation of blacks in the military as anything other than laborers and low-level support staff.

The final piece of prewar legislation laying the groundwork for the Tuskegee Airmen was the Selective Service Act of 1940, signed in September, which prohibited discrimination because of race in induction, selection and training. After passage of the act, President Roosevelt, mindful that 1940 was an election year, promised opportunities for blacks in the Army in proportion to their numbers in the population at large, and that pilot, mechanical and technical training for blacks in the air corps would be increased.

However, top military brass managed to insert language into the final bill stating that no man would be allowed into the service unless deemed “acceptable” to the Army, or until the Army had “adequate provision ... for shelter, sanitary facilities, medical care and hospital accommodations” for every man. Particularly in the South, where such facilities were strictly segregated and the “colored” facilities often inadequate, such a loophole allowed recruitment centers to turn away thousands of would-be enlistees.

In December of that year, an Army regulation was issued requiring post commanders to ensure all officers be allowed full membership in officers’ clubs and other social organizations – a rule that was not always followed, which led to a major incident involving members of one of the Tuskegee Airmen units later in the war.

On Jan. 16, 1941, the War Department announced plans to create the all-black 99th Pursuit Squadron and base it at a new military airfield to be constructed near Tuskegee, and the Tuskegee military training program was born. The decision was not universally welcome, as some black leaders preferred an integrated air corps to all-black units in a segregated force, but the decision represented a significant step toward the goal so many had been working toward, expanding the presence of African Americans in the armed forces.

At the end of March, the program received a public relations boost when first lady Eleanor Roosevelt visited Kennedy Field and went up in a Piper J-3 Cub piloted by the Tuskegee program’s chief pilot instructor Charles Anderson. She complimented his skills, saying they put the lie to the contention that “colored men can’t fly.” She boosted the program in a more concrete way in her position as a member of the board of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, by helping to raise money to build a second airstrip at Tuskegee, which became Moton Field, named for Robert Russa Moton, second president of Tuskegee Institute.

Moton Field provided the only primary flight training for black pilot candidates during World War II.

In the summer of 1941, Tuskegee Institute received word from the secretary of war that Congress had appropriated funds to construct an Army air base. Black cadets would now have the opportunity to receive basic, advanced and combat training and to earn flight wings and commissions. Hangars, repair shops, classrooms, laboratories, administrative facilities, an infirmary, dining hall, firehouse and dormitories were to be constructed to provide a self-sustaining and fully functional air base.

Tuskegee Army Air Field became the only Army installation performing three phases of pilot training at a single location. Initial planning called for 500 personnel in residence at a time. By mid-1942, over six times that many were stationed there, even though only two squadrons trained there.

In July 1941, construction began for Tuskegee Army Air Field a few miles from Moton Field. African American contractor McKissack and McKissack Inc. was in charge of the contract. The company's 2,000 workers, the Alabama Works Progress Administration and the U.S. Army built the airfield in only six months. The construction was budgeted at nearly \$1.7 million.

The first class of cadets transferred to Tuskegee Army Air Field in November 1941 just before the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, which brought the United States officially into World War II.

The War Department also grappled with the problem of who would lead the black aviators. They needed not only a regular Army officer who was black but a black officer who could fly planes. Between 1920 and 1940, only one black man had graduated from West Point and had served with distinction: Capt. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., West Point Class of '36 and son of the Army's only black general. He was selected to command the first class of cadets at Tuskegee, which would form the core of the 99th, the air corps' first black squadron. First, he had to learn to fly, which he did, though he was never his squadron's most skilled member. But, most importantly, he was a regular line officer who understood Army procedures and knew how to motivate men.

The cadets spent five challenging weeks in preflight training. From 5 a.m. to lights-out at 10 pm, cadets drilled and studied first aid, radio codes, aircraft identification, military law, courtesy and Army organization. The Army supervised primary flight training, but the actual instruction came from black civilians trained under the Civil Aeronautics Authority. Basic flight training began in November 1941, when Davis took command, and advanced training began in January 1942. Lt. Charles H. DeBow Jr., who was interviewed for *American* magazine in 1942, underwent four days of training with several other pilots at Eglin Field in Florida and described practicing night formation flying "with our wing tips just 6 inches apart."

Other aspects of life at Tuskegee Army Air Field proved more difficult. The original plan was to run the base exclusively with black personnel, but the command structure for the most part was white, which remained a source of frustration throughout the war. With segregation rules maintained, officers had little contact with the men except during duty hours. The Army was convinced that any effort to buck the system would bring on race riots and hurt the war effort. Tensions on the base, added to tensions with the surrounding segregated community, weakened morale.

Under the more enlightened leadership of Capt. Noel F. Parrish of Kentucky, however, who arrived in May 1941 as base commander, the situation greatly improved. In order to reduce tensions with the

surrounding community, Parrish sought to make the base so self-contained and attractive, personnel would want to stay.

A physical fitness program was instituted along with sports teams that competed with other black teams throughout the country. The base held local talent shows and showed the latest films at the base theater.

Top celebrities entertained at the base, including Ella Fitzgerald, Lena Horne, Louis Armstrong, Joe Louis, Langston Hughes, Eddie “Rochester” Robinson, the Camel Caravan orchestra and singers, and even opera stars Grace Moore and Richard Crooks.

Base personnel formed an orchestra, the Imperial Kings of Rhyme, for on-base dances, and young women from local colleges were invited to attend, with overnight quarters and transportation provided. Musical programs featuring hymns and spirituals by the post chapel choir and marches by the post band livened up Sunday afternoons.

In March 1942, five Tuskegee cadets received the silver wings of Army Air Forces pilots, the first African Americans to qualify as military pilots in any branch of the nation’s armed forces. By the end of World War II, however, almost 1,000 African American pilots had won their wings at Tuskegee Army Air Field. They were keenly aware that their personal success or failure would determine the fate of the “Tuskegee Experiment.” Thankfully, for the future of African American participation in the military, they proved more than up to the task.

The term Tuskegee Airmen was not a formal designation. The airmen were members of their various squadrons and fighter groups that were established as the program expanded and war needs dictated, but the term came to be understood to encompass not just the pilots, navigators and bombardiers. They were the nucleus around which black mechanics, weather forecasters, navigators, flight surgeons, truck drivers and administrative personnel grouped to form an all-black military organization. There were about 14,600 individuals in the various Tuskegee Airmen organizations in World War II, including both pilots and ground personnel.

No matter how attractive base life had become under Captain Parrish’s efforts, the airmen were impatient to participate in the combat operations for which they were training. Because of disagreement in the War Department on a policy governing use of black soldiers abroad, combat assignments were slow in coming. Capt. Parrish repeatedly appealed to the War Department for activation of his fliers.

The 400 men of the 99th initially were assigned to an airfield in French Morocco. In June 1943, they were given their first combat assignment, a strafing mission against the heavily fortified island fortress of Pantelleria in the Mediterranean.

Known as the “Red Tails” for the way they painted their planes, the Tuskegee Airmen boasted an impressive combat record, though some of the actions attributed to them over the years are inaccurate, according to Daniel Haulman of the Air Force Historical Research Agency, who has done extensive research on the Tuskegee Airmen. Among these myths were that in their role as escorts they never lost a bomber, that they flew more missions than any other unit, that they sank a German destroyer, that they won a gunnery competition against other flying units after the war. Haulman details some 45 examples of this mythology in “Misconceptions About the Tuskegee Airmen,” for the Air Force Historical Research Agency.

Haulman asserts that the research that debunked the myths actually left him with a greater appreciation for what they actually accomplished. "If they did not demonstrate that they were far superior to the members of the six non-black fighter escort groups of the Fifteenth Air Force with which they served, they certainly demonstrated that they were not inferior to them, either," he writes. "Moreover, they began at a line farther back, overcoming many more obstacles on the way to combat."

The Tuskegee Airmen flew some 15,000 sorties, including ground attack, coastal patrol and bomber escort, and took out over 250 German aircraft on the ground and 150 in the air, including several jet fighters that appeared near the end of the war. The 99th Fighter Squadron, along with the also Tuskegee-trained 100th, 301st and 302nd squadrons making up the 332nd Fighter Group, helped destroy the Nazi war machine across central and eastern Europe. The airmen flew hundreds of missions over European territory and were part of allied invasion forces in Sicily, southern France and Greece. In the process, 84 lost their lives, including 68 killed in action or in accidents and 12 killed in training or noncombat missions. Thirty-two were taken prisoner.

In March 1945, the 332nd, while flying cover for B-17 bombers, encountered several jet-propelled Messerschmitt 262 fighters. The Tuskegee Airmen claimed three of the eight bombers that were destroyed. The 332nd was awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation, for successfully escorting the B-17s and exhibiting "outstandingly aggressive combat technique." The 99th already had racked up two Presidential Unit Citations (June-July 1943 and May 1944) for outstanding tactical air support and aerial combat in the 12th Air Force in Italy, before joining the 332nd Fighter Group.

Among their decorations were 14 Bronze Stars, nearly 100 Distinguished Flying Crosses and about a thousand Air Medals. In April 2006, President George W. Bush, on behalf of Congress, presented a collective gold medal to the Tuskegee Airmen. The medal is kept at the Smithsonian.

On their last mission April 25, 1945, the Tuskegee Airmen added four more victories over enemy aircraft on a photo reconnaissance mission over Prague.

Operations continued at Tuskegee until June 29, 1946, when the last class graduated and was transferred to other units.

When the war ended, an all-black bomber group, the 477th, was in training with Mitchell B-25s for combat in the Pacific. They didn't see combat in the theater of war, but they gained their own kind of fame for the fight they waged at home confronting the military version of "separate but equal."

The unit was established in June 1943 but not activated until January 1944. Its first commander was Col. Robert Selway. He and his ranking officer, Gen. Frank "Monk" Hunter, both of them ardent segregationists, made it clear to the men that there would be no "mixing of the races" or social equality between black and white, despite regulations against discrimination.

Selway and Hunter were so committed to maintaining segregation in all base facilities, they even drew a line in the base theater and ordered separate seating by races. When the lights would go out, the audience, with the cooperation of both blacks and whites, would move to sit in random patterns as part of what they called "Operation Checkerboard." The lights would come back up, the movie halted and the men ordered to return to segregated seating. This would sometimes happen multiple times in a showing.

The unit was moved from its initial posting at Selfridge Field, Michigan, in May 1944, to Godman Field in Kentucky. Godman had separate facilities for black and white officers clubs in the area. In March 1945, they were relocated to Freeman Field in Indiana, a larger base with room for all four squadrons. But the area had only one officers club. Selway set up separate clubs, but to get around the regulation, he labeled them as “supervisory” and “trainee” clubs, the supervisory personnel being white and the trainees being black. Black officers refused to use the trainee facility they referred to derisively as “Uncle Tom’s Cabin.”

Upset at the situation, the officers got together and planned a nonviolent protest over the separate clubs. In what became known as the Freeman Mutiny, groups of black officers over the course of two days attempted to enter the supervisory facility, and all 61 were arrested and charged with disobeying a superior officer. The charges eventually were dropped against all but three, who were alleged to have shoved a white officer aside.

Selway then issued a base regulation delineating which group could use what facility, with violators subject to charges, and ordered the men to sign it. When 101 of the 400 black officers refused to sign, they were arrested and charged with insubordination. Many had been among the protesters in the previous incidents. A week later, the unit was sent back to Kentucky and the 101 were placed under house arrest.

Only one officer ended up standing trial and was convicted, fined \$150, reduced in rank and dishonorably discharged. His conviction was set aside in 1995, and the officers who were issued reprimands were given the opportunity to have those erased from their records if requested, although some allowed the record to stand in testament to their fight against institutional racism.

On May 18, a War Department committee found that Selway’s regulation concerning the clubs violated the Army’s nondiscrimination regulation. He eventually was relieved of command and replaced with Col. Benjamin Davis, who previously commanded the 332nd Fighter Group. With the addition of fighters to the unit, the 477th was renamed a “Composite Group” and was staffed with only black officers; white officers were reassigned elsewhere. Eventually, the unit was sent to Lockbourne Field near Columbus, Ohio.

When the Air Force was established in 1947 as a separate branch of the armed forces, Lockbourne was the only all-black Air Force base in history, until the integration of the military soon thereafter.

One could argue the insistence on maintaining military segregation actually hurt the war effort. Over a million African Americans were on active duty by the end of the war, but three-fourths of enlistees were limited to headquarters, service or supply units and served in noncombat roles at more than double the percentage of whites, and black soldiers’ 19% combat participation was less than half the rate for whites. This left black troops feeling disrespected and whites overburdened.

As the President’s Committee on Civil Rights, chaired by General Electric President Charles E. Wilson, concluded in a report in October 1947 titled “To Secure These Rights”:

“The injustice of calling men to fight for freedom while subjecting them to humiliating discrimination within the fighting forces is at once apparent. Furthermore, by preventing entire groups from making their maximum contribution to the national defense, we weaken our defense to that extent and impose heavier burdens on the remainder of the population.”

On the heels of the report, amid pressure from civil rights groups, some high-profile incidents of violence against returning black servicemen, a desire to take away talking points from Soviets mocking Americans for claiming to be leaders of the free world while sanctioning Jim Crow, and the stereotype-defying performance of black units such as the Tuskegee Airmen, President Truman signed Executive Order 9981 in July 1948 prohibiting racial and ethnic discrimination in all branches of the U.S. military. Truman's decision in turn paved the way for the 1954 Brown decision on school integration and many such rulings to come.

Returning veterans helped energize the larger struggle, joining the NAACP in record numbers and opening new chapters in the South, despite a wave of violence against them, working as foot soldiers in a war for justice in their workplaces, in civil rights organizations, as lawsuit plaintiffs and within the military itself to reform the institution.

