

February 5th, 2018

Officers

Chairman: Jerry White
Vice Chairman-Wesley Lee
Treasurer: Wilma Justice
Secretary: Phyllis White

Board Members

Charles Tichy
Robbie Underwood
Carolyn Kelly
Ed Tuell
Buster Harvey
Wesley Lee
Ed Coker



Epitaph.... How will yours read?

One of the main things that I experience over and over in my duties as Archivist and Historian for the Oliver Springs Historical Society is noting the legacy that people leave behind. Rare is the person who fails to leave a mark on those who interacted with him or her. Hopefully the memories are good. At times the remembrances are bittersweet, or even painful on occasion. In a rare instance they will be remarkable. That is the word I think of when calling to mind my friend Marinelle Smith Martin... remarkable.



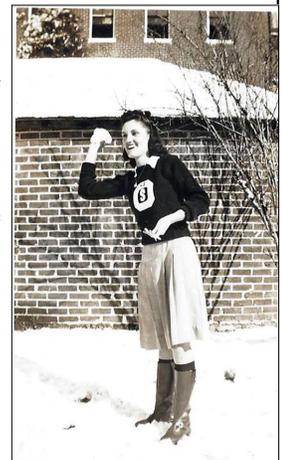
Robbie Underwood

I first met Marinelle when I joined the Historical Society back in 2001, well before many of our members even **knew** there was an Oliver Springs Historical Society. Marinelle was very active and had been for a long time. She could often be seen working around the Historic Southern Depot, planting or cultivating flowers or cleaning the displays in the upper rooms where we had a variety of artifacts and displays. Marinelle was not one for a lot of hoopla, but chose to go about her service with little fanfare. I found her to be often delightfully eccentric, often opinionated, but always kind. We became fast friends.

Marinelle had without a doubt the absolute best chocolate brownies I have ever eaten. None others have even come close. I will say that probably the surest reminder that she and I were friends would be when she would bring her brownies to an event. She would sneak me a baggie full of them, never to be seen, and out of sight of onlookers. She didn't want to make a big deal, but she made me feel like a big deal. She knew I dearly loved her brownies, and she would often smile and remind me to see that one of them made its way home for Janice to eat. Marinelle was unfailingly kind to my daughter Jessi, and would often visit her store and purchase hand-crafted jewelry from her. Marinelle was generous both with her money and her encouragement, and it made a huge impression on my daughter.

I am reminded of the beautiful story in Mark 14, of the woman who broke open the alabaster box of ointment to anoint Jesus. Jesus said that wherever the Gospel is preached, this story would be told as a testimonial to her. That is similar to what I am doing here.... In my own inadequate way, I am telling Marinelle's story as a testimonial to her kindness. Service, encouragement, love and kindness.... This is the legacy of Marinelle Smith Martin. This is what should be told for generations to come.

We love you, Marinelle....



Continued on pg. 2

Robbie Underwood, Editor and Publisher

Inside This Issue:

- Pg. 1-6 Marinelle Smith Martin
- Pg 7- Membership Form
- Pg 8- Edith Ross Burum Update
- Pg 9- Building the "New" Oliver Springs School
- Page 10- Carolyn Kelly
- Pg 11- The Curious Case of Dr. Joe Sienknecht
- Pg 12-14- Wesley Lee- Horror In Jonesville
- Pg 15- Mimi Brock- The Ballad of Pony Cash
- Pg 16- Reed School Dedication

Legacy is published by and for the Oliver Springs Historical Society. We welcome submissions, both in text articles and pictures, current and upcoming events, "in memoriam", reminiscences, etc..

The editor and staff of Legacy reserve the right to edit submissions for length and content, as well as to determine general interest and suitability of content for print.

For questions regarding "Legacy", or to submit material, email:

robbieu41@gmail.com

Marinelle Smith Martin

Continued from page 1



Marinelle Smith, Roger Stubbs, and Marion Parton



Marinelle Smith with a very young Brenda Grayson-Bodie. Marinelle and Brenda were lifelong friends.

In the background is a hugely significant site. Known as the Wright homeplace, this site was reputed to be the site where Major Moses Winters first built his home after arriving in the area around 1800. The gristmill and dam would have been down at creek level to the left and just out of the frame.



Marinelle Smith Martin



Marinelle Smith (Martin), Helen Wright (Nation), and Edna Wright (Justice). These three were reputed to be terrors on the basketball court.



Ruby Massengill (Hunt)

Marion Parten (Stubbs), Ruby Massengill (Hunt), and Marinelle Smith (Martin) in front of the schoolhouse that burned in 1949



Robena Hoskins (Mead)



Neva King



I believe this to be Rudolph Patterson, but I am not positive. There are so few photographs of him available to me for comparison.

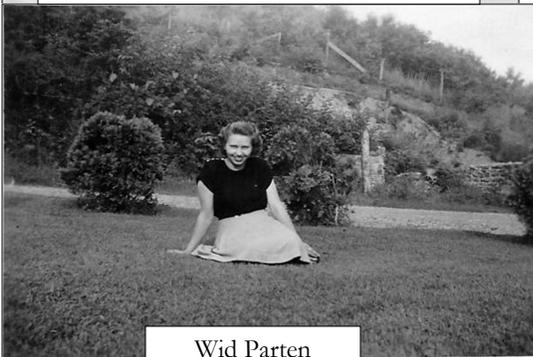
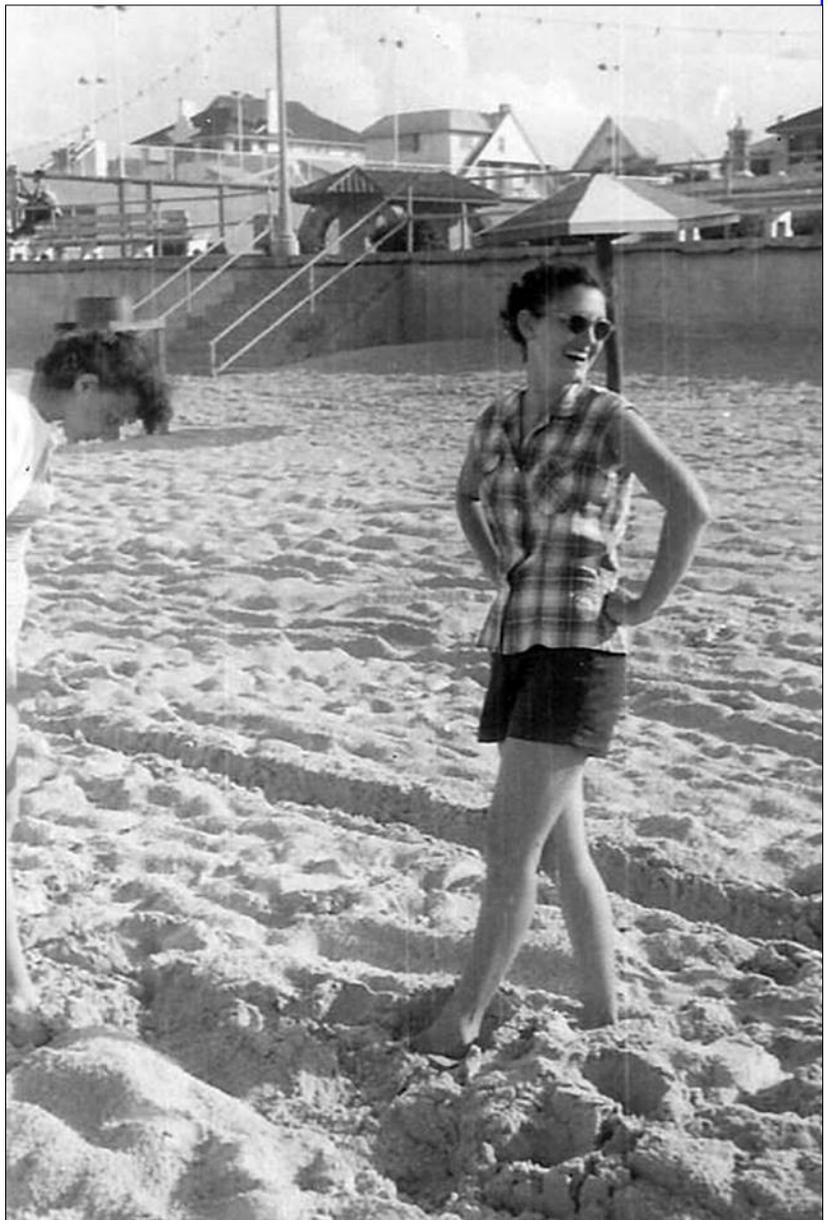


Opal Jackson (Whaley)

Marinelle Smith Martin Photographs



Educator and Historian Snyder Roberts



Wid Parten



The lovely Marinelle Smith at left. I am not sure of the identity of the other two.



Roger Stubbs and Everett Crass



Unknown lady in front of Sharp Funeral Home. The funeral home was formerly the J.K. Butler residence . Bill Sharp extensively remodeled the exterior, eventually adding a large chapel on the west side.



Jean Mays?



Josephine Whalen



Jenny Vann



A young Eugene Justice, who would go on to serve in Oliver Springs City government for many years. He was city Judge, and married Edna Wright. Their sons Stanley, Jon, and Eddie were terrors on the football field, and grew up to become fine men.



The above photograph shows not only the two lovely Oliver Springs debutantes Betty Crass (Johnson) and Marinelle Smith (Martin), but the view in the background may not be repeated in any other photograph extant. The L&N Cow Creek Trestle can be seen as it nestles in against the base of the ridge at Winters Gap, with the road leading to Tuppertown, Piedmont, Khotan, and Windrock passing through that gap. The location of this setting would have been up on Back Street, or West Main Street as it was earlier known. Marinelle was particular about that, and I quickly learned not to call it "Back Street" in her presence. She was proud of where she was from. I miss her so....

Thanks to Brenda Grayson-Bodie for sharing Marinelle's fabulous photo collection!

Marinelle Smith Martin Photographs



Above is Betty Crass Johnson in front of Sharp Funeral Home. The Sharp hearse is in background.



Ruby Massengill (Hunt)



Geneva Davis (Ollis)



A very lovely Marion Parten.



Vaughtie Smith and Betty Crass Johnson. Vaughtie was mother to Marinelle. This photo was taken up on Back Street where Marinelle was raised up.



Cleveland Thompson Johnson and Betty Crass Johnson leaning against hearse with Sharp Funeral Home in background. This is likely one of the hearses that carried sisters Ann and Margaret Richards to their rest after their horrific murders in February 1940.



Wid Parten, sister to Marion. The Partens lived down Old Harriman Highway just past the legenday landmark "Parten's Barn" that proudly stood for nearly three quarters of a century before being torn down in recent years.

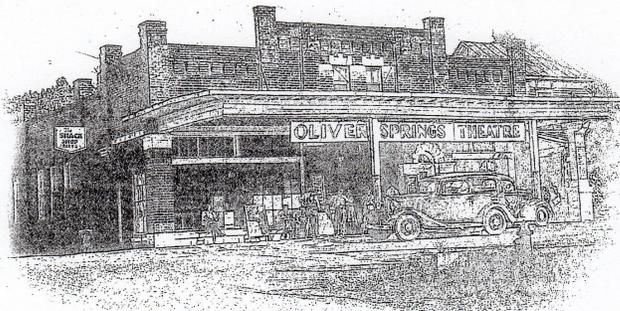
It's Annual Dues Time Again, Pilgrims....

It's that time again, friends... Time to show your support in what you and I are working to do in the Oliver Springs Historical Society. Your annual dues play a large part in what we are able to accomplish toward preserving our legacy. Our Archives is now open, and the theatre is almost finished! \$25.00 multiplied by our total membership adds up to a goodly sum to help keep the lights and heat on in the museum. I won't try to convince you much to continue your support, for if you've been paying attention, you already know that membership is worth far more than the dues. It has to be said, however, that the only way we can continue our work, bringing you these newsletters, trying to further our efforts to preserve written and verbal accounts, photographs, databases, etc., is by your generous consideration. Remember also that the Oliver Springs Historical Society is a recognized and certified nonprofit group, so all gifts are tax deductible. Thank you, and may God bless you in this new year!

Robbie Underwood



The Oliver Springs Historical Society
Invites You to Help Preserve the History of Our Town
by Becoming a Member



Whether you are joining for the first time or renewing your membership, you will be contributing to the restoration of our new museum and archives.

The Oliver Springs Historical Society is a nonprofit Organization. We meet at 6:00 p.m. on the first Monday of every month at the Historic Abston Building, which has been painstakingly restored, and is now the home of the Oliver Springs Historical Society.

Your support is vital to the Oliver Springs Historical Society, and we appreciate your generosity and confidence.

Please visit our website at www.oshistorical.com.



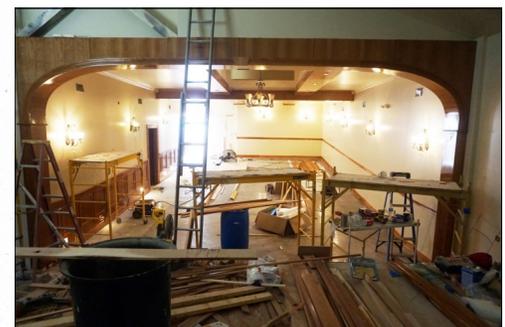
Membership Application _____ Email _____
Oliver Springs Historical Society _____ Phone _____

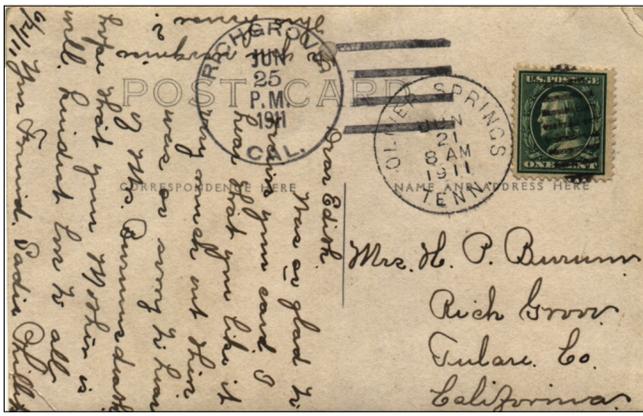
Select Membership Category _____ Individual (\$25) _____ Business (\$100) _____ Gift (\$25)

This gift membership is for:
Name(s) for membership card(s) _____

Address _____

Make check payable to: Oliver Springs Historical Society
Mail to: P.O. Box 409
Oliver Springs, Tennessee 37840

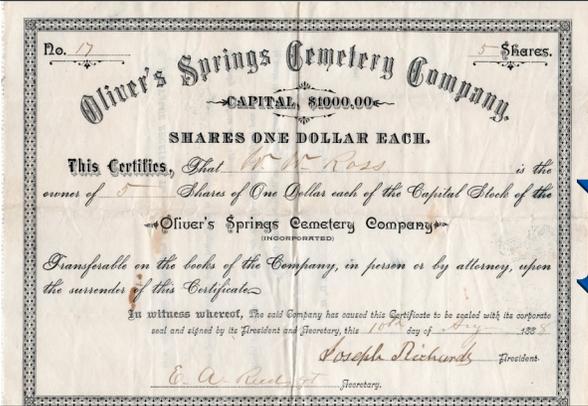




Above is a card from Mrs. Evan (Sadie Richards) Phillips to the newly wedded and relocated Edith Ross Burum.

W.W. Ross, father of Edith and Mallie, and husband to Elizabeth Butler Ross. W.W. Ross came from Athens well before the advent of the 20th century. Mallie died in early childhood, and is buried alongside her father and mother in the Oliver Springs Cemetery.

Edith Ross Burum, seen here as she was adapting to her new existence as a genteel wheat farmer's wife in dry-land California.



Above is a share from the "Oliver's" Springs Cemetery Company. Purchased by W.W. Ross on August 10th, 1888, the president was Joseph Richards, and the Secretary was Captain E.A. Reed. Joseph Richards would live less than four months after signing this document, falling suddenly ill after arriving in town on the evening train on December 31, 1888 and passing away late the same day. He is buried in the cemetery he founded only months before.

Edith Ross Burum



This photograph at right is priceless to me, having been fascinated with the Ross family ever since Toni Ray contacted me a dozen or more years ago seeking clarity on the town where her precious grandmother Edith grew up. At right are Edith and her husband Hugh Burum at their home near Delano, California. Next to them can be seen widow Elizabeth Butler Ross, who moved west and made her home with daughter Edith. The small children are the offspring of Edith and Hugh. The lady second from left looks like one of J.K. Butler's girls, possibly Mae, but I am not sure. Located in the San Joaquin Valley, the house and farm are still in the family, much of it leased out to commercial growers. Pistachios, almonds, blueberries, and other various crops are grown on the fertile land that was a wheat farm for much of Edith's married life. It was on this porch that Edith's steamer trunk sat for years after her passing, until her grandchildren, who were busily engaged in professional careers, decided to open Grandma's trunk and see what was in it. Upon finding many pictures and letters with references to Oliver Springs, Tennessee, granddaughter Toni Ray searched the internet for information, ultimately finding the historical society website I was managing at the time. We struck up a friendship, and Toni has been so very generous in forwarding many wonderful photos and documents.

The Ross Family, although refined and prominent in early Oliver Springs society, had all but been lost to the ages. Thanks and blessings to Toni Ray for sharing all the precious relics and keepsakes of her grandmother Edith with us!

Building the "New" Oliver Springs School



The photograph seen above is quite priceless for a number of reasons. Made available by Billie R. McNamara, it shows her great-grandfather, "Uncle" John McNamara in foreground. The building they have just broken ground on is the "new" Oliver Springs School. In the background stands the 'Old' Oliver Springs School built in 1894-95, it stood until the completing of the new school, which was finished in 1922. With the new school's completion, the old frame schoolhouse was no longer needed. Many oldtimers had fond memories of attending school in the spartan accommodations. According to the late historian Snyder Roberts, the shed roof over the front porch was occasionally used by students seeking to escape the wrath of a vengeful instructor, the escape being accomplished by diving through the window and sliding down the tin cover to safety. For several generations, this schoolhouse had been the only venue for learning. The original 1895 structure is in center, with the two story wing at left having been added as the needs of the classes expanded.

Uncle John was a master brick-mason, and was responsible for much of the surviving brick-work in our town. He was the stuff of legend, reputedly having an iron fist that could seriously injure an opponent.



With the completion of the new school, rapid advances were made in curriculum. Spearheaded by James H. Smith, chairman of the Oliver Springs School Board, in 1925 Professor D.J. Brittain was recruited to head up the new school, and rapidly brought advances not only in academics, but also in sports, where he imbued his young charges with a fierce competitive spirit. Oliver Springs teams were rapidly to become feared in regional competitions. The school was soon to offer a complete 12 year program, with the class of 1925-26 becoming the first class to graduate from the school.



John McNamara at left with a young Walter Stripling



Professor D.J. Brittain

Carolyn Kelly

It's February of a new year already!

Thanks to a kind, generous hearted man named Fred Stone, our theatre is becoming a beautiful sight to see. It isn't quite finished yet. Just about!

It's a dream almost completed.



James Kelly

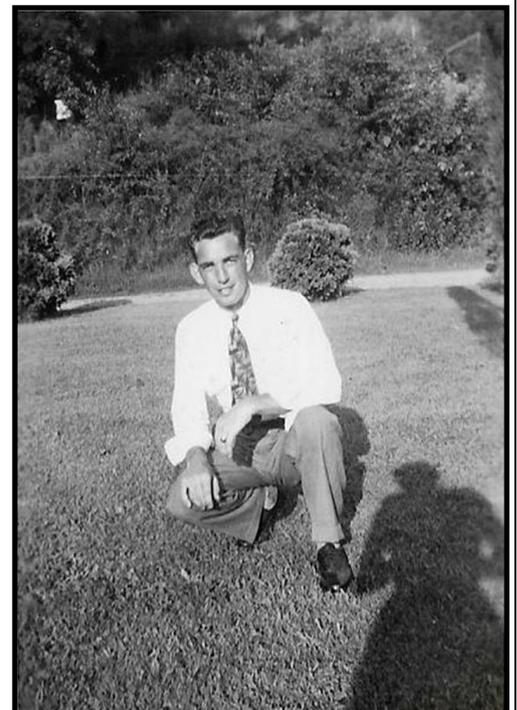
Did you ever have a school pal, not just in school, but forever? I did! I heard the news say it isn't allowed to have a school pay anymore in our schools. What a shame! I thought I would tell you about two school pals. Roger Stubbs and my James started walking home from school one day and a train was going their way so they decided to "hop a ride". They didn't know it but Mrs. Lawrence Brown happened to see them and realizing the danger, what did she do? She called Mr. Dan Kelly at Sienknecht's Store and told him what they had done. When Mr. Kelly came home he asked James if it was true. James replied "yes", which resulted in a good hard whipping. Mr. Kelly then went next door and told Mr. Stubbs. When morning came, James heard Roger getting his. Needless to say, they didn't "hop" a train again. That was when families cared about each other and raising their chil-

dren right. If that happened today, Mrs. Brown would probably be sued, and Mr. Kelly would probably be arrested for child abuse and lose his job. The boys would become liars and do whatever they wanted, but they stayed "pals" forever. Those were the good old days morally speaking.

"A good friend is like an antique— priceless!"

Thanks to Karen Leffew of the Oliver Springs Housing authority for 4 nice filing cabinets (which we needed) and to Buster Harvey for the beautiful sconce lights in the theatre, and to Robbie Underwood for work on the beautiful cherry trim. Our members work so hard and stay so faithful to our dream, everyone needs a pat on the back.

If you are not a member, why not? Join us and help make our dreams come true.



Roger Stubbs

THE CURIOUS CASE OF DR. JOE SIENKNECHT

DOCTOR DEATH NEAR PRISON GATE PROBED

Keys to State Hospital and Drug Store Missing With Other Valuables.

MURDER BELIEVES FAMILY

Club Is Found Near Body But No Blood-Stains Are Discovered on It.

Special To The News-Sentinel

OLIVER SPRINGS, Tenn., Aug. 25.—With keys to the state prison hospital and drug store at Brushy Mountain missing, together with a watch of Dr. Joe A. Sienknecht and probably other valuables, officers today are investigating the possibility that the physician was murdered and robbed.

Dr. Sienknecht was acting physician for the prison during the vacation of the regular official. He had started from Petros to the prison Tuesday night. Wednesday morning his body was found near a bridge and coal chute not far from the prison gate. His skull was fractured. At first, officers thought he might have fallen from the bridge. But investigation has strengthened the theory of foul play, according to L. C. Sienknecht, a brother, of Oliver Springs.

Plank Near Body

Eight feet from where the body was found yesterday was a piece of wooden "two by four," three feet in length. No blood-stains have been found on it, but such a club could have fractured the doctor's skull. Examination of the physician's clothing indicated that he might have been dragged.

A check has been made on prisoners and none are missing from the state prison. Blood hounds would have been used, but too many persons had already gone to the place where Dr. Sienknecht was found dead.

Funeral services for Dr. Sienknecht, who has practiced for 25 years, will be held Friday afternoon.

SEEK MAN SEEN WITH PHYSICIAN

No Doubt Dr. Sienknecht Slain And Robbed Says Brother.

Special To The News-Sentinel

OLIVER SPRINGS, Tenn., Aug. 26.—A young man who was last seen with Dr. Joe A. Sienknecht is being sought by officers for questioning. He was seen with Dr. Sienknecht Tuesday night about 8 o'clock, not far from where the physician's body was found Wednesday morning.

"There is no question but what Dr. Sienknecht was murdered and robbed by some one," said L. S. Sienknecht, his brother, today. "A fall from the bridge could not have killed him, as it is only about eight feet high and there is sand around underneath. His keys, watch and pocketbook were missing." The doctor's skull was fractured.

Dr. Sienknecht was acting physician for the state prison at Brushy Mountain. The body was found a short distance from the prison gate.

The funeral was held this afternoon.



Dr. Joseph and Mamie Richards Sienknecht home, seen c. 1900

1 PLACE OF DEATH County <u>Morgan</u> Civil Dist. <u>9</u> Village <u>Petros</u> City _____		STATE OF TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS CERTIFICATE OF DEATH 20643 Registration District No. <u>44007</u> File No. <u>9</u>	
2 FULL NAME <u>Joseph Augustus Sienknecht</u>		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS		10 DATE OF DEATH <u>August 24 1927</u>	
3 SEX <u>M</u>	4 COLOR OR RACE <u>W</u>	5 MARRIAGE <u>Married</u>	6 DATE OF BIRTH <u>July 11 1876</u>
7 AGE <u>51</u>		8 OCCUPATION <u>Physician</u>	
9 BIRTHPLACE <u>Virginia</u>		10 CAUSE OF DEATH <u>Fracture of skull</u>	
11 BIRTHPLACE <u>Virginia</u>		12 BIRTHPLACE <u>Virginia</u>	
13 BIRTHPLACE <u>Virginia</u>		14 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE	
15 SIGNATURE <u>Dr. Sienknecht</u>		16 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Brushy Mountain</u>	
17 SIGNATURE <u>Dr. Sienknecht</u>		18 SIGNATURE <u>Dr. Sienknecht</u>	

SLAYER GIVES BACK STATE'S HOSPITAL KEY?

Discovery Made In Road Near Where Dr. Sienknecht Was Found Dead.

Special To The News-Sentinel

OLIVER SPRINGS, Tenn., Aug. 27.—Mystery as to the murder of Dr. Joseph A. Sienknecht, 51, has deepened with the discovery of the keys to the Brushy Mountain state prison hospital in the road about 100 yards from where the body of the physician was found Tuesday morning.

The keys were found yesterday. Persons who searched for them and other valuables which Dr. Sienknecht had said that they had looked there after the body was found. A theory now is that the keys were left in the road probably two days after the killing.

The watch and pocketbook of Dr. Sienknecht have not yet been found.

Sheriff Investigates

The Morgan county sheriff was in Petros tonight continuing his investigation.

A man last seen with Dr. Sienknecht has been questioned but gave an explanation of where he was that night.

Members of Dr. Sienknecht's family say there is no doubt that he was slain by someone instead of killed by a fall from the bridge. The doctor had a gash on the back of his head and the way he lay when found indicated a fall could not have caused his death, relatives say.

Dr. Sienknecht was acting physician for the state prison hospital during the vacation of the regular official.

Horror in Jonesville

By Ralph Wesley Lee

There is usually a beginning and end to most stories but occasionally a story is not so clear and one must pick a point for both. This story will begin in the early nineteenth century when many families were leaving Virginia and heading west in search for land and a new life. Thomas Howerton Jett was one of these pioneers who along with his family would find their way to Knox County. Thomas was the oldest child of Stark Jett and Frances Howerton. Thomas parents would later cross the Clinch River into Anderson County and Thomas would marry Rebecca Bell Tillery and continue carving out a new life in Roane County around Wheat, Tn. Thomas was an industrial young man and his hard work would take the family to Morgan County to start a long career as a lumber business and the owner of a saw mill and raise a family of twelve children. The youngest of his children was Erastus (Rassey) H. Jett who worked with his father until he married Rebecca A Love from Roane County in 1893. It's unclear what happens to Rebecca but by 1898 Rassey would marry Louisa E. Baker and take in her son Charlie Baker. Rassey and Louisa would live with his parents Thomas and Rebecca who at this time were near or in their eighties. By 1910 Rassey was still married to Louisa and still in Morgan County but he is boarding alone with a Robins family and working in a saw mill. His time in the saw mill was over by 1920 and Rassey and Louisa move to a farm in "Here Vallie" or what we all know a Hen Valley in Roane County. Rassey never had any children of his own with Louisa and she dies in February 1927 near her homeplace of Jonesville in Roane County and she is buried in the Jonesville church cemetery. Rassey doesn't wait long to remarry and by August of 1927 marries the main subject of this story, a woman at that time by the name of Katherine Sands.

She was previously married to William Sands whose family at one time owned over 1500 acres in Cades Cove. This was the largest tract sold to the government for the park in Cades Cove and some of his family lived there until their death. William Sands married Katherine who we'll call "Katie" in 1909, he was 62 and she was 35. By 1910 she is shown living with William and a son by the name of John, age twelve. This son would later use the name John Byrant Joyner with a birth of Jan 7, 1897 in Morgan County. Katie's husband William Sands dies in July 1926 and Katie as stated above marries Rassey Jett a year later in August 1927. Rassey and Katie live on their farm in Jonesville about seven miles west on the old Harriman highway 61 from Oliver Springs. All is normal until Christmas Eve 1930 when Rassey returns home carrying Christmas gifts for his wife and himself given at a church Christmas tree entertainment at the Jonesville church. Rassey happily opened the door of his home and an instant later he cried out in horror. On the floor of his home lay the body of his wife Katie, her skull crushed and her throat slashed. Two days later Sheriff W.W. Roberts would have

in custody in the Roane County jail charged with murder. They are Abe Lawson, 35 and Jim Dalton 18. Sheriff W.W. Roberts said each man accused the other of the killing. Lawson and Dalton were arrested at a deserted log cabin on Walden's Ridge. "Before I even told them what the charges was, Dalton pointed to Lawson and said, "There's the fellow you ought to arrest —he killed the old woman," said the sheriff. "Lawson accused Dalton. I found some blood on Dalton's shirt and a knife that had been hidden behind a plank which was some blood." Sheriff Roberts believed that revenge was the motive for the killing. Lawson was prosecuted by the Jett's on a charge of stealing a gun and had served a workhouse sentence,



Wesley



Horror in Jonesville

said the sheriff. Savings of the Jett's, \$14 dollars which was supposed to be used to pay the taxes was missing. A hearing on Monday the 29th will be held 10 a.m. in Dyllis. Sheriff Roberts said that Katie Jett had been struck three blows in the head with an ax and her throat cut twice with a knife. A bloody ax was near the body. Rassey Jett said he had worked all day and was supposed to meet his wife at the Christmas tree but when she failed to come he supposed it was because of the cold weather. Dec 30, 1930 Jim Dalton (left) 18 and Abe Lawson 28 are shown with Sheriff W.W. Roberts. Bond was denied at the hearing at the Baptist Church in Dyllis Monday afternoon before Squire E.C. Phillips assisted by Squires J.L. Johnson and M.C. Parker of Harriman. The church was packed long before Sheriff Roberts showed up with his



Dyllis Church, seen here in 1940. This was the venue for the initial inquest and hearing in the immediate aftermath of the murder.

handcuffed prisoners. Lawson waved a hearing but young Dalton entered a plea of not guilty and took the stand in his own defense. Dalton claimed he went to Oliver Springs the morning of Dec. 24 returning about 12:30 that afternoon. He said he met Lawson at Abe's Crossroads, but was not with him until again that night. He said he noticed something was wrong with Lawson and kept after him until Lawson finally told of the killing of Katie Jett at about 3:30 p.m. He said Lawson confessed to using an ax and a knife in the killing of the woman, said Dalton. Lawson claimed he was eating some food in the Jett home when Katie came in with an armful of wood and started shouting at him according to Dalton. Lawson claimed the old woman shot three times with an automatic gun. The Dalton boy said he planned to tell about the crime the next morning as soon as he could get away from Lawson safely.

Jan 17, 1931 Sixteen prisoners, two of them charged with cold blooded murders walked out the door of the Roane County jail at 2 a.m. as the jailer slept. Last night, unobserved they slipped a block against the door of the cell so it wouldn't lock and waited until officers were asleep. Abe Lawson held without bond and Jim Dalton 18 were two of the sixteen who escaped. Sheriff W.W. Roberts was ill with the flu but soon had a search underway.

Jan 18, 1931 Sixteen men who escaped the Roane County jail are now back in their cells. Five were captured late Saturday after they crossed the Clinch River near the Gallatin farm. They were taken with the help of two farmers, Will Roberts and Rollie Green.

Mar 1, 1931 The case of Abe Lawson and Jim Dalton charged with the ax murder of Katie Jett west of Oliver Springs on Christmas Eve is on the docket of Criminal Court which Judge Blair will convene Monday and the state is expected to ask for the death penalty.

Mar 9, 1931 A jury was completed by noon today for the trial of Abe Lawson and Jim Dalton. Mar 10, 1931 Ax murder case is up after Rassey Jett pictures that Christmas Eve scene when he trudged home with gifts under his arms, found the front door locked and the rear door open, called for his wife and got no answer, then lighted a candle and in the flickering shadows looked down on the body of his wife—all the details were pictured by Rassey Jett in court. Katie Jett's head had been crushed with an ax and her throat cut. Sheriff W.W. Roberts testified that the two men in the cabin accused each other.

Mar 12, 1931 Abe Lawson 27 was sentenced to die in the electric chair today for the murder of Katie Jett. Jim Dalton 18 was sentenced to 21 years. They were found guilty by a jury Wednesday in Kingston.

Jul 2, 1931 Man under sentence to die, Abe Lawson escapes Roane County Jail with 10 others, accomplice Jim Dalton also out. They sawed their way out of Roane County jail at 3 a.m. today and Sheriff W.W. Roberts left in hot pursuit. Lawson was under sentence to die but has appealed to the Supreme Court. They sawed out a section of their cell and two

Horror in Jonesville

bars in a window below.

Jul 4, 1931 Jail-Breaker is alluding posse with his life on the line, Abe Lawson is the only one left on the run as the other nine are back in their cells.

Jul 5, 1931 Hunted like an outlaw, Abe Lawson is still on the run.

Aug 4, 1931 Christmas Eve killer caught, Abe Lawson was caught earlier in Corbin, Ky. A reward of \$250 had been offered for his capture. He was apprehended by city jailer Lester Peace of Corbin on the L&N yards and Sheriff W.W. Walker brought him back to Kingston. He maintained he was innocent.

Nov 15, 1931 An incomplete and unsatisfactory record was largely responsible for the reversible of the conviction of Abe Lawson for the murder of Katie Jett, the Supreme Court announced yesterday. There is nothing in the record that shows which committed the deed. Each insisted the other did it, but it is impossible to say which. There is nothing in the record to show they both did it. There is nothing in the record to show why the Sheriff went to the cabin for both these men, why he suspected them.

Aug 24, 1932 A year ago Abe Lawson was under sentence to die but now he is freed of the charge of murdering Katie Jett. Judge Blair gave a directed sentence of not guilty. The case of Jim Dalton indicted with Lawson but sentenced to 21 years at a previous trial, with indications it would also be dismissed. The Supreme Court said there was a lack of proof. Death Certificate of Katherine Jett I assume Katie is buried at the Jonesville Church but I'm not sure if there is a gravestone or any type of marker for her. I would like to thank Judy Spradlin for sharing some information on Katie Sands and especially the

Death Certificate of Katherine Jett

1 PLACE OF DEATH County <u>Roan</u> Civil Dist. <u>Third</u> Village <u>Jonesville</u> City <u>Jonesville</u>		STATE OF TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH Bureau of Vital Statistics CERTIFICATE OF DEATH 20363	
2 FULL NAME <u>Katherine Jett</u>		Registration District No. <u>142</u> Primary Registration District No. _____ Registered No. _____ File No. _____	
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
3 SEX <u>Female</u>	4 COLOR OR RACE <u>White</u>	10 DATE OF DEATH <u>Dec 24 1930</u>	
5 DATE OF BIRTH <u>Not known</u>	6 AGE <u>61</u>	17 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from _____ 191__ to _____ 191__ that I last saw her alive on _____ 191__ and that death occurred on the date stated above, of _____ M The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows: <u>Murdered with knife and an eye</u>	
8 OCCUPATION <u>House Keeping</u>	9 BIRTHPLACE <u>Anderson Co Tenn</u>	18 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (FOR HOSPITAL INSTITUTIONS TRANSIENTS OR RECENT RESIDENCE) At place _____ yrs. mo. da. State _____ If not at place of death? Place of death _____	
10 NAME OF FATHER <u>Stanley</u>	11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER <u>Not known</u>	19 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Jonesville</u> DATE OF BURIAL <u>12-26-30</u>	
12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>Not known</u>	13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER <u>Not known</u>	20 UNDERTAKER <u>W. S. Beck</u>	
14 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Signature) <u>Katie Jett</u> (Address) _____		15	
Filed <u>1-10-31</u>		REGISTRAR	



Katie Sands, Junior White and Eliza Kesterson
Junior White born 15 Jan. 1926 Died 19 May 1992

only know photo of her which I will share here. Katie lived next door to Eliza Kesterson in Anderson County on the 1910 census and also shared that Katie son, Johnny Joyner was her grandfather's best friend. Her son died in 1973 in Kentucky. Katie was born 1869 but I could not find connections to her before she married William Sands and Judy and I have not found a Joyner connection other than her son knowing he was born in Morgan County. On Katie's death certificate it has Ruth Stanly listed in the father box and place of birth in Anderson County. Another mystery still unsolved Erastus (Rassey) H. Jett married again in 1931 to Mary A Coffey Jones from Morgan County and lived out his life in Morgan County with Mary and her two sons from a previous marriage. He is shown a having died in 1945 but I can find no real listing or his place of burial. I looked some for Jim Dalton and did find one that was buried at Elverton Church cemetery. The age of this Jim would

match and it seemed to have an odd inscription. As for Abe Lawson, he is another mystery that needs more research. I will end this story with the photo of Katie Jett that would really date to about the time that she would die but the birth of the boy in the photo as 1926 seems to raise questions as he would be too big for a four year old. She died a horrible death and it seems that sloppy police work might have led to her killers not paying for the crime. Researching local history can discover many interesting facts and lead you toward some fascinating stories. I encourage everyone to find your own fascinating stories.

THE BALLAD OF PONY CASH

By Mimi S. Brock

Oh, hear the ballad
of our own Henry J.
The marshal that they thought
would be here to stay.
He was tall in stature,
a giant of a man,
And did his job with
an iron-fisted hand.
His story has always
been quite compelling,
So listen to the story
that we are now telling.
He was called "Pony"
instead of Henry J.
The reason for this
we just cannot say.
'Cause nobody knows
'til this very day,
Why it would forever
be that way.

Pony was a veteran
of the Civil War,

This vow to his country
he solemnly swore.

The law was his choice
when he settled here,
His pledge to his work
made this very clear.

He roamed through our land
making friends here and there,

There were enemies too,
he had more than his share.

There was one certain man
who caused him concern.

He encountered this man
at each and every turn.

They feuded and fussed,
had many an altercation.

Pony thought Will's demise
would cause great celebration.

William West was the culprit,
bad when drinkin' likker,

Seemed all that drinkin'
made him lose his temper quicker.



Then tragedy occurred on a day
in late September.

All the witnesses are gone,
there is no one to remember.

We read about the facts
from those who are now gone,
They all have passed away
but the legend lingers on.

Pony and his son walked
down the street that day
Never knowing what would happen
as they headed on their way.

Five shots rang out
from Wicked William's gun,
Pony never had a chance,
he couldn't even run.

Beside the tracks on
the Roane County side
Was the very spot
where Pony Cash died.

But Anderson County was
where Wicked William stood

When he fired those shots
heard throughout the neighborhood.

Now the question soon arose
as to what was William's fate,

For any final plan
the town would have to wait.

Boundaries of the town
made for a strange situation
And the fact of these three boundaries
caused official consternation.

This problem soon was solved,
Will did time in the pen,

Then came back to our town
to live here once again.

But with a final twist of fate
William's heart gave out one day.

He was stricken on the street,
died near where Pony lay.

Now the story that you've heard
no longer is a mystery.

The ballad of Pony Cash
is part of our town's history.



Building of Reed School, c. 1916-17. Harvey H. Hannah is in white suit at left, striking a gallant pose. The Reed School was named for Captain E.A. Reed, who was a champion of the early town, and was actually one of the original planners of the scheme to build an elegant Hotel at the site of the mineral springs.

Oliver Springs Historical Society
P.O. Box 409
Oliver Springs, TN 37840

Postage
Here