

# A FAMILY PAPER BY GEORGE FESTUS PETTIT (1870-1940) TITLED "FOOTHILLS OF THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS"

A STORY ABOUT GILMER COUNTY, GA PETTIT PIONEERS INCLUDING THE  
GRIFFITH, ELLINGTON, KING AND OTHER ALLIED FAMILIES WRITTEN BY  
GEORGE FESTUS PETTIT (1870-1940).

PREFACE AND ANALYSIS  
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## PREFATORY NOTE

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In the spring of 2025 this researcher met with Rose Archer and her daughter Margaret Peters in Grayson, GA. Mrs. Archer is the granddaughter of George Festus Pettit. George was born in 1870 near Ellijay, GA to John Fulton Pettit and Rebecca his wife. John Fulton Pettit was the son of Henry Pettit Jr and Ann (Mooney) Pettit. These Pettits are descendants of Joshua and Rachel Pettit of Spartanburg County, SC through Henry Pettit Sr (b.1763).

Mrs. Archer and Mrs. Peters have several Pettit heirlooms and papers which have been passed down to them. Mrs. Peters has put together an impressive binder with several original documents including George F. Pettit's college degree, teaching certificate, and an old typewritten story prepared by him which describes the Pettit family's move from North Carolina into Georgia and their early years in Gilmer County. The version of this story in Mrs. Peter's possession appears to be an original document and not a photocopy.

The paper was titled "Foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains". The date it was written is not given though it would have certainly been within the author's lifetime of 1870-1940. The story opens with an account of the movement from North Carolina to Gilmer County, GA of Henry Pettit Jr (b.1790), his brother John Pettit, and son Elijah Pool Pettit and their families. The story covers several allied families as well, most notably the Griffiths, Ellingtons, and Kings. George Pettit gives quite a bit of information about local history and the origin of place names such as Owl Town and Turniptown. He also discusses the early rivalry between north Georgia Baptists and Methodists and the Republican sentiments of several Gilmer County residents before secession in 1861.

The author, George F. Pettit, was a well-educated and highly intelligent individual. We should be very grateful that he took the time to memorialize his reminiscing and retelling of family lore. **However, researchers should use caution when considering this paper as a source because not everything recounted from memory will be perfectly accurate.** Nevertheless, when the context and purpose of George's narrative are taken into consideration, the true value of this source shines through. It is obvious the author intended to convey his deep knowledge of the Pettit family in a way that was fun and interesting while maintaining reasonable accuracy. The dialog he included was most likely meant to garnish the factual statements as it seems unlikely he would have known the intimate details of some of these conversations. For the most part, names, places, and dates do line up nicely with historical records. Were it not for this paper we no doubt would have lost some of this rich family history to the ages.

The story ends somewhat abruptly with the last section taking up only half of page 29. There is a blank space on the next to last sentence where it seems the author intended to come back and type in the death date of Henry Pettit Jr. For reasons unknown this was never done and the rest of the story appears to have not been completed.

Below you will find an easy-to-read version which includes minor punctuation corrections but otherwise follows the original. A handful of footnotes were included by The Pettit Research project to aid the reader by adding some context. Lastly, a photocopy of the original typewritten paper is included in at the end.

Many thanks to Margaret Peters for sharing this valuable record for all to enjoy.

# "Foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains"

by George Festus Pettit

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The setting of this story clings around the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the point where the mountains abruptly break away into cliffs, ridges, coves and sloping hillsides with here and there a river or creek winding, turning and twisting its way, singing the song of the brook as it goes on its way to the never ending ocean, through the rocks, boulders and pebbles that roll along their bed cutting deeper and deeper the bed of the run way.

The peoples of this section came from that hardy, independent New England type that drifted along the line of civilization down through the Virginias, Carolinas and stopped with the mountains to be counted among the original pioneers of this section.

These peoples were French, Dutch and Scotch-Irish descent with some Holland or Dutch mixed with them and we mean the "scratchy" Dutch at that.

The ancestral of this picture served among the finest soldiers of the war of independence and many are the early stories of how the hardy old grandfather endured hardships of cold and hunger and how they traveled through cold and ice to attain that which the pioneers of this country greatly earned for Liberty.

For their services of valor the ancestors of our story received large grants from our early government in the western part of North Carolina where gold was found and they cashed their holdings and pushed onward where they might have more Liberty. These early pioneers found such peace at the hands of the red man and bought from them holdings along the streams and adjoining hillside, where the Indians had cleared here and there small patches.

It was in the late thirties and early fourties of last century that a colony came to what is now known as Fannin, Dawson and Gilmer Counties and established this abode. Most all these pioneers were of that independent judicial stock that thought what they thought was right and this independence was ground into them so much so that was one of their leading characteristics and they strove to carry it out in politics and religion as well.

They were mostly of the old school of Baptist, that dominated them through and through and made them great believers of things now and to come as one of them once remarked "once saved always saved"

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One peculiar trait of these pioneers was they, in most part, did not believe in slavery, nor did they have slaves to any great extent. Some freed the slaves they did have. They believed in

personal freedom and self independence. If they cared to take a dram, that was their own business and they did not believe in other people dictating to them.

Picture for a moment Henry Pettit and John, his brother, and Henry's married son Elijah leaving western North Carolina in the year 1842 for an unknown country to live among a people from their own country. They traveled many days in covered wagons loaded with all their worldly possessions and the women and children stuffed in on top.

They made slow progress for their mules and oxen had to be grazed along the way. When they found good pasturage they would stop, make camp and feed their stock, milk their cows which trudged along behind. The feed was nature's growth along the wayside for that was in abundance for there was not much but wild game to devour the grasses growing abundantly.

They carried an abundant supply of powder from which they made their own bullets. Most of them had the old flint lock. We mean the guns were loaded at the muzzle - first pour a charge of powder in, then pack some bits of rags on that, then wrap the bullet with a scrap of cloth and ram it down upon the powder. This being done they put a bit of powder in a little cup at the breach of the gun where there was a small flint rock so when they pulled the trigger the hammer came down on the flint rock striking a spark of fire from the rock which would ignite with the powder in the cup and from there into the gun which would explode the charge in the gun which would drive out the bullet and almost every time one of these shots were fired the wild game was ready for consumption.

Henry and John were more lucky than most of the others for they had guns which had caps for the hammer to explode and they did not have the suspense of the spark being knocked from the flint rock.

As they wended westward across the hills and mountains John and Henry kept their families in meat. While the children grazed the stock John and Henry would wander off into the wayside and bag a wild turkey, a deer or faun and then some quail or a wild shoat<sup>1</sup> and not often would they return without plenty for their families meals.

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They would travel into a settlement now and then which would welcome them and ask many questions about the folks back where they came from and where they were headed and always give good reports of what was ahead and told them they were headed for a prosperous country.

Little John, the third son of Henry was now four or five years old and he became very sick. They thought there was no chance for his recovery so they drove into a prosperous community and pulled camp. The neighbors were kind and accommodating and helped the wanderers out as best they could.

Henry said to Ann, his wife: "Ann, it seems we are going to lose little John, there seems no way out of it" and by reply Ann said, "Yes, Henry, I have taken care of him about as best I can and I am afraid it is God's punishment on us for leaving where we were doing well and come away over here from friends and neighbors to live among Indians". "Now Ann, don't feel that way for you know the people were settling up Buncomb County<sup>2</sup>, North Carolina so that there was not going to be room enough for all of us and you know, Ann, the last few months I had a hard time killing enough game for our meat and they tell me that over on the Cartecay River and back into those mountains game is so plentiful that there is plenty for everybody and the price we got for our mining property will buy us hundreds of acres over there". Ann replied "But you see Henry, all of these hardships we have to go through and now we are here and it looks as though we will lose one of our boys before we go any farther and have to bury him along the wayside." With tears in his eyes, which Ann had only seen a few times in their years of married life, replied, "Now Ann, dear, you know it is hard to make a living in a crowded country. We are going to where we will be in 8 or 10 miles of a good trading post. The Indians have already agreed to sell me and Elijah the plantation along the bend of the river<sup>3</sup> where there is endless game and land as rich as can be made. Just a few acres there will produce more than our whole farm we sold and God will give us good neighbors where we are going".

At this juncture of the conversation, Margaret, the good wife of Elijah<sup>4</sup>, came running calling Elijah's mother to come quick as John was worse. All hands were there around the wagon being used as a sick bed for little John. Granny Charles

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was called. Granny Charles was the neighborhood doctor's helper. It was miles to a doctor, it would have taken two days to get one there. All assistance was given to Granny Charles and by the shank of the evening little John had rallied.

"Ann" spoke Henry, "they tell me the next settlement is many miles from here and as there is a grave yard here and a preacher, and a good Baptist preacher at that, I believe we had better camp here for there seems no hopes that John will ever recover and the neighbors are so good too, so that if John dies we will have a place to bury him so that he won't be alone here in the ground". "You are right, Henry, for I can hardly bear the grief of it all anyway". "If only my father and mother were here" said Ann, "You see Ann, Mr. Mooney, your father promised me that as soon as we were over here and liked it they would sell and come on over if they could".

Ann, a sweet little woman, burdened with every thing about the place seemed more content from day to day as John improved and in about 10 days they were able to proceed along the Indian trails to the big Cartecay River in Gilmer County.

Elijah, Henry and John had previously spied out this land and had tentatively bargained with the indians of the north side of the river for about 600 acres where Henry and his married son Elijah were going to locate but Henry's brother John had bargained for another tract several miles farther east, so they pushed into this section where there were two or three Indian huts already

and early in the fall they landed in this new home site where fish abounded and game stared them in the face.

Across the river there was another settlement where the Indians had vacated and about 3 miles west towards the trading post was another settlement where Stephen Griffith and Coke Ellington had settled, This was near an older settled place where the mother of Mrs. Stephen Griffith lived. Mrs. Griffith's maiden name was Walker and after her father Ben Walker had died she married Dan King and she was known far and wide as Granny King<sup>5</sup> for she was most in demand of anyone in that country for every one who had the toe ache to a confinement case.

The King - Ellington -Griffith settlement was located along the beautiful little valley of the big "Owl Town". Indians were still quartered at the head of this valley where there was a big cane brake, better known as a bamboo brake. The Indian lore had it that the owls were so thick along this stream in early days

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they had in a few cases they had carried off some papooses (Indian babies). While the white man had doubted the truth of the Indian lore, yet you could hear upon a still night the reverbration of the Ho-ho-hoho and the echo would mount the ridges "Ho-wo-who-are-you.

The Indians used their cane to make baskets and other Indian trinkets and would peddle them together with their Indian medicines which were used by many and praised by all.

Grandfather Walker told the following incident: A white man came to Mrs. Walker's with sores all over his back and legs and was told that the Indians could heal them. Mr. Walker and the white man ( Mr. Neese) went to see the big Indian medicine man who had Mr. Neese. remove his clothing and then the Indian says "pale face, he in bad fix. He need medicine red man he cure pale face but it make him, pale face, mad. He, pale face, want to fight red man - red man, he no wants trouble. Mr. Walker; he red man's friend, he knows red man likes pale face Mr. Walker".

"Yes, Red Medicine Man, Walker knows red man likes him, will not let Mr. Neese hurt red man. Mr. Neese is in bad shape and if you can cure him Mr. Walker will pay you for Mr. Neese."

"It hurtee Mr. Pale Face, it hurtee bad too. I no tellee a lie". Mr. Neese replied, "Let it hurt if you can cure me, I don't care how much it hurts Mr. Indian". Mr. Indian kindled a fire, with the assistance of Mr. Walker, out of brush and small limbs and the Indian doctor kept mumbling to himself, all the time making motions with his hands while the smoke rolled away, to the amusement of Mr. Walker and Mr. Neese.

Mr. Indian made a bed of leaves between two small saplings, just far enough apart for Mr. Neese's arms to reach them, also one where his feet could rest on each side.

After the Indian doctor had warmed his medicine thoroughly over the fire he told Mr. Neese "Remove all your clothes but keepee on your shoes. Lie down on your face". Mr. Neese obeyed the Indian doctor and he took two strong cords and tied Mr. Neese's arms drawn taut to the small bushes and stretching out his feet astride the other bush to which he tied them.

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The Indian doctor danced around the fire and chanted his hymn of praise, song or whatever you might call it and with his medicine he proceeded to dab a bit on this sore and some on that one till all were covered. They shothead Mr. Neese so much he nearly went to sleep. "Stopee, no sleepee, it no hurtee yet, wait a little while". When the liniment had dried in the doctor picked up one of the fire brands and waved it through the air and made a big war "Whoo-pee, whoo-pee" and down he came with the red hot coal aglow onto one of the sores. With this Mr. Neese raised his whole body into the air and down came the red hot embers onto another sore. "My G-- quit, you are killing me, you are burning me alive". "Holdee still it no hurtee much it heal white man. Pale face looker red likee e red man when hurtee stops".

The cursing, crying and yelling went on and on but the great old red man doctor kept applying his cure until Mr. Neese was almost beyond exhaustion - "I will kill me an indian when I do get up from here". "No you won't" said Mr. Walker. "You agreed to the cure and you are getting it and neither white man nor Indian will get hurt by you so quiet down", said Mr. Walker and he meant it too for Mr. Walker was much of a man as the Indian knew for he had seen Mr. Walker in many a tussell.

The burning process now over the Indian doctor took some of his healing ointment and oiled each burning spot where there was once a sore and the burning was soon over.

"Now Mr. Walker, Red man's friend, you can turn Mr. Paleface loose if he will not hurtee Pale Face. Red man does not fear Mr. Pale Face". So Mr. Walker untied Mr. Neese and he arose flaming with rage at such treatment but a laughing and jostling brought Mr. Neese to his senses and he had to laugh too. "Mr. Pale face laughee too, he much a better, he no have amy sores any more" and he danced around in gleeful delight.

Mr. Coke Ellington or Uncle Coke as he was called, was brother-in-law to Stephen Griffith and had settled where the big Owltown creek flowed into the river taking all of these bottoms of the river and creek down to where the little Owltown creek flowed into the river.

The little Owltown was a small creek that came in beyond the ridges north of bit Owltown, these ridges being parts of the Walker, Griffith & Ellington places.

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Ellijay, the trading center of this mountainous valley country was the trading center for many miles back into the mountains and lies at the junction of the Cartecay and Ellijay rivers and stretches out into a beautiful valley which was the pride of this country, It was there that courts were held and the land office, the place where the men all met to discuss questions of the day for they had at least one mail a week in the early days and later on a daily mail service was established.

During the early days of the forties Mr. Walker died which was a great shock and the community far and wide mourned his passing. Time wore off the rough edges and in time Mrs. Walker married Dan King and she was known from then on as "Granny King".

The Pettits on Cartecay had entered their new homestead with new interest and Mr. Pettit and his boys old enough to work and one negro he brought with him from N.C.<sup>6</sup> set to work and had hewed the logs and was ready to raise their house.

This event was a great one for the neighborhood for all for miles around were invited, men, women and children too and while the men raised the log house the women quilted quilts under the shade of the spreading oak trees. It was a two day job and the day was long to be remembered.

The Pettits were now able to have one of the best houses on this side of the county. They had constructed temporary furniture and were very comfortable for their first winter in their new home.

Henry and his boys now went to work to clear some more land, so did Stephen Griffith, Coke Ellington and others in their land of promise and by early spring after many hardships, as Anna had often told her husband, they came through in fairly good shape.

By this time another baby came to the fireside for this was a thing not to be overlooked. Children had to be raised and it was up to some one to do the job. These early pioneers, I am sorry to say, believed that women were brought into this world for the sole purpose of satisfying the men, raising babies and making the clothes for the whole family and many the night did Anna sit up till her whole household was in bed slumbering, knitting by the light of a pine knot now and then thrown into the fire or by the light of a tallow candle filling the house and the air full of foul smoke to be breathed and had it not been for a crack here and there for the smoke to

go out they might all have died of suffocation.

While Anna was laboring in child birth trudging along as Henry saw other women of this country doing the same and to find a small family was spoken of as being something wrong as they were not complying with God's command of "Multiply and replenish the earth" and if the women thought differently they had not the courage to speak of it except in a whisper to each other.

Henry and Anna now had several large girls who could sook, spin, weave and help Anna generally.

Their boys also were growing too so that the question of "learning" was the subject discussed around the fireside and Henry discussed it with the neighbors and they hired a teacher to teach the 3 R's "reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic for these were all that was needed.

"They needed enough edification to read the bible". They needed to know how to write and spell and surely they needed to know how to cipher, so they started them to school during the 6 weeks of the summer. Webster's Blueback Speller was enough to learn how to read and spell from. These books were had and the children made wonderful progress the first year, "some got over as far as "Baker". Henry learned from their teacher and could count and add some little numbers.

"You see Ann, how much better off we are over here than where we came from" remarked Henry one day and now that your folks have moved over within 5 or 6 miles of us you can go to see Mr. and Mrs. Mooney once a year anyway and they can come down to see us".

The Mooneys were a very progressive people and were an addition to their community. They lived in the edge of Dawson County which became a part of Gilmer County later.

Ann was greatly delighted when her mother came to see her, for she remarked she had borne 7 children for Henry and was pregnant again which was a great source of pleasure to Henry.

Stephen Griffith's family was still growing and he had now passed the dozen mark. He assured Henry that one of the men remarked "if one woman can't satisfy a man and raise as many children as he wants and dies he can get another. It seemed Stephen

thought the same for he had taken his second wife and started over again in the baby business.

There were a few places of worship and they had met here and there. The Methodists had invaded this country and many had turned after the Wesleys. Lorenza Dow and other great Methodists had spread the gospel here and there. "You can ge[t] saved and go to Heaven by just having a little water sprinkled over your head" remarked one good Baptist to another. "We must build us a church so we can keep such heriticial religion from our children". "And they even let the women have something to say in their meetings and Paul said for them to keep quiet". "I don't know what our country is coming to". "I guess it is going to the devil as fast as it can". The sentiment spread and the Pettit's, Griffith's, Holdens, Holts and others met and builded a church which will play an important part of this story in the future for from this was the scene of many big meeting and many preachers were ordained and sent out into the world. Many a boy's heart was smitten here for his beloved girl. Many a foot was washed and many testimonies were given when they applied for membership.

They met to dedicate the church and name it. There were men from miles around, some from 30 or 40 miles came. They took their dinners and had all day services. In conference some wanted to name it one thing and some an other but the name decided upon was Mt. Zion but many preferred one name or another but the church was organized and a preacher was called to fill the pulpit for the year. This is a step forward Granny King told her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews and friends.

Regular worship was held here during the whole year on the second Sunday of each month for the Methodist hold theirs on that day and this will keep our children from learning this heretical doctrine one close communion brother remarked as was handed down as a whispered remark but no one could vouch for it for sure only "Guess they said it for I am sure they thought it".

The big meetings were a source of great pleasure for the boys and girls for they would gather in little groups here and there and have a great time. The spring was quite a way from the church and many the lad who waited at the spring for his "Sweetheart" to come after a drink. He would tip his hat and dip her a gourd of water.

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They had gourds cleaned for drinking cups and then he would ask her to see her to the house and of course there would be boys who were pals and their girls were pals too so when one "caught his girl" the other one did the same and oh what a thrill they would have when the boy would take his girl by the arm to assist her into the house when services were started. No one knows that thrill who has not been along the path. The men and the women had separate sides of the house in which to sit.

Many a Sunday did the yong "bucks" sit in church with his eyes "glued" upon the girl of his fancy for each knew by intuition just where to sit so they could see the other. Wonderful days were the times when big meetings were held for it was there they got to see more and more of the one they loved or at least thought they did and it answered the same purpose.

There were now a number of Baptist churches over the county, one at Clear Creek about 3 miles from the Pettit colony where Brother John and his family aligned themselves. There was one at Mountain Town where the Osborns made their power felt and one at Mt. Vernon where the Wrights and Bradleys came into strong power.

It was thought along in the fifties that an association of the churches was needed and the clerks of Mt. Zion took the matter up with the other churches and they agreed to come together and form a church aliance so they could better fight the devil and mainly the encroaching Weslyn doctrines which was now making headway.

The churches all sent delegations to attend the churches over in Fannin and Dawson counties and delegations also. They had great preaching and made a three days session of it, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The delegates were royaly treated and they all agreed that the old time Baptist faith

was strengthened much in this mountain section. Many souls testified that God for Christ sake had pardoned their sins and they desired to join the church, Many Methodist took the back seats and listened to the tongue lashing the heretical churches got, "Those people who were afraid of water" as one good old brother preacher termed it "as for me I want water enough to quench hell fire when I get there. The good brother Methodist who attended had the grace of God enough in their hearts to listen and have little to say. Among the leading member Methodists were the Ellingtons, the Harrises, the Simmons and the Johnsons. Most of them had

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family alters and prayed for the Baptist brethren and hoped they would see and know the way of life and brotherly love.

John (little) was now up in his teens and made a trip to the railroad at Adairsville<sup>7</sup> where they had to go to get warp for their cloth. All their clothes had to be home made and then had to have the thread to put in the loom so they could weave their cloth for their clothing as Henry's boys and girls were "stepping out" so were the Walkers, Griffiths, Millers and in fact there were a great throng of young folks in the Mt. Zion neighborhood, all budding to manhood and womanhood, In fact there had been several marriages in the county the last few years. John was coming 16 and they had such a load to market for all the neighbors sent for goods, thread etc. that John had to walk most of the distance.<sup>8</sup> It took most of a week to make the trip in a covered wagon. John was weighed and he could tip the scales at barely 75#. A fine specimen of humanity his father remarked for if he had been much finer there would not have been anything of him at all.

Henry bought Ann and his grown girls some cloth from the mills for some store bought frocks for he wanted his girls to look as good as any. As Henry told Ann "Stephen has bought his women folks some goods for clothes and I guess I am as well off as Stephen". There was rejoicing when the wagon came home and style was booming now the neighbors said.

The boys had to still wear their home spun shirts and pants and coats too for that matter. All their shoes, everyday brogans and Sunday shoes too were home tanned and made in the home shoe shop. The boys from 16 years and down never wore Sunday shoes and some had not much of shoes in winter time, only the men who had to get wood and clear the land had winter shoes of the ordinary folks.

Henry had his own tan vats where the heavy hides were turned into sole leather and the thinner ones into uppers and Henry's vats always contained calf hides to make the "gals" some Sunday shoes and if there came a rain while the girls were off to meeting the gals would pull off their shoes and come home barefoot for they must save their Sunday shoes.

The women folks would dye the wool, card it, spin it and knit some fancy stockings but what was the use for the boys as John remarked to another boy "I don't see any use

of the gals having such purty stockings for we never get to see them except hung on the line". "Yes we do sometimes when they step up to get in the wagon I saw clear up to her thighs and, oh, John, what legs that gal did have and she blushed". "You should not be seeing like that" says John. "Aha"; "Who wouldn't look at a girls pretty legs if he got a chance to do it". "I'll bet you'd do it John if you had a chance". "My mother", said John, tells me it is not nice to try to see girls ankles and peek down their necks" and at times would let her girls pin up their skirts to their ankles when the men were all off to the fields so they could move swifter on the time to the spinning wheel but the caution was always "don't lose those pins for pins are scarce and hard to get" and her girls were very careful to put the pins back in the pin cushion on the mantle. Many of the poorer folks who could not afford to buy pins gathered thorns from the locust trees and dried them which made a very good substitute except for the fact they left too big of a hole.

Granny King was in great demand these months as there had been so many marriages the past few years that "the baby business is picking up" said Granny when she was to her last call. She was a great old soul and she made no charges for her services. They treated her as one of the family and gave her "whatever you sees you can afford to give her.

The Pettit's, Griffith's, Ellington's, Harrises and Walkers had about completed their family raising and had turned the job over to the younger generation except Stephen Griffith who had taken himself another wife a few years ago and had started all over again and about every two years he had to still call on Granny King, his mother-in-law by his first wife for her assistance and Granny called his hand one day "Stephen", she said "I would think now that you are as old as you are you would quit this baby raising". "Now Granny, you have been married twice and you know there is just as much fun in this baby business as there ever was" and with a big laugh he passed it off that way.

The big meetings at night the past few years gave the young people a chance to do their "sparking" under cover and "what was going on in the dark you can't tell" and many seven month babies came after marriages that took place when no one was expecting and as Granny told some of the women "Boys will be boys and girls will be

overcome and try to be women before they were married and so long as they got married what is the harm done for that is what they were made for and how can they help it", so the babies when they came were branded 7 month babies.

The great annual day set aside for "foot washing" was drawing nigh and all the members had to have new socks and new stockings and some of the poorer members who could not afford to buy

or make new ones were helped by the more lucky ones. This was a great religious feast and the Bible plainly speaks that "you must wash one another's feet".

Early in the week hunting for deer was started and Henry with his "Long Tom" as they called his gun, was all cleaned up, Elijah's gun also, and the others proceeded to the mountains and cover to prepare for the great feast which was to take place on Saturday and Sunday. They bagged a couple of fine fellows "As fine as ever growed in the mountains of N. C.", said Henry to Ann when they came in, "And you, my dear, shall have a pair of Sunday shoes from his hide".

The venison was divided and prepared by adept hands. Pies were made and knee high cakes made galore and everything heart could wish for, of course fried chicken was no treat but it was there too. Nobody went hungry on Sunday for they had 2 long sermons Saturday, beginning about 10 A.M. and ending about 1 P.M. Then dinner spread and the young lads and lassies made their way to the spring and back again, No greater joy had any peoples than now was being enjoyed by these mountaineers.

"We must all hurry into the church and get our vantage places for the women and men are all going to wash each others feet" was the cry among the big boys who did not yet belong to the church.

Brother McDaniel made a long talk about washing each others feet and said "All you members of this church or any other church who have enmity in their hearts to any other member could not partake of this rite according to our Savior".

From the male side of the house could be heard "My brother if your heart is right with the church, may I wash your feet" and the reply, "Yes, my brother, if your heart is right with the church, you may". On and on till everybody had paired off.

Likewise from the female side of the house would come like detonations but in a milder, meeker and more subdued tone.

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They had long home spun and woven towels that they girded themselves with and knelt before their "victims" and proceeded to unlace and take off one shoe and sock and wash that foot and likewise the other, always beginning at the right foot. They had brought their wash basins with them and when the feet were washed they took the towel from around themselves and dried the feet, preceeding to clothe the feet as they were unclothed. They that had been washed proceeded to wash the feet of the one who had washed their feet.

Foot washing being over and a recess of a few minutes being given for recreation another two hours of preaching was had and by the time it was all over and the families of men, women and little children loaded in the wagon and they got home it was milking time. The large boys and girls, of course, had to walk and this afforded the young men to escort the girl of his choice home

but there must be some one else along or else the old women of the community would talk about them.

The grave yards were sources of great worry to many of the young men who would walk home with his girl, sit on the farther end of the veranda from the old folks and chat for a while, then dark would over take them before they would pass the grave yard and to just tell the truth "There are 'hants' there most every night for we have seen them and heard them moaning and men have been seen walking there without any heads" was going the rounds.

It was upon one of the occasions in the summer of 1856 that John Pettit attended one of these great Foot Washings and had gone to the spring with one of his pals and Rebecca Griffith and one of her pals were there and after giving them the gourd of water with trembling hands of excitement, John asked Rebecca ahem - "Rebecca may I see you to the house". His throat was so dry he could hardly speak the words, and Rebecca made a curtesy and bow and said "with pleasure, John". There was of course nothing left but for the other couple to proceed along the way behind John and Rebecca. They did not go directly to the house but made the pleasantest way the longest way around. As they came meandering up the road some old women were out gossiping and among them was Granny King who said "Well I just declare, look yonder what has already happened with one of Stephen's girls". "What", was the answer. "Look, she has caught John Pettit, who it seemed was too bashful to catch any

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of the girls", "Right there is a match" said another and she is one of the best girls Stephen has". "She can spin and weave and no telling what that gal can do". "You know I have heard it rumored that John is going to make a preacher, for he is one of the best 'edicated' young men in this 'ere country and they say he is a Baptist, died in the wool" came the retorting reply. "I shouldn't wonder, for they say he is caught reading his bible a heap now of days and I am just wondering, myself, if he won't make a big preacher some day and there is no better girl in this whole country to be a preachers wife than pious little Rebecca" was voiced by others.

By the time to go home John and his boy friend were seen standing close over to the women's steps, for they always came out of the church on their own side. As Rebecca came out John approached her and said "It is alright". He meant by that remark that she was to ask her mother, since the spring episode, if John might accompany her home. "Mother said it is alright but we must go along with the crowd". John took her by the arm and they stepped aside for the crowd to get ready to go.

What was said could never be recalled by either on that eventful afternoon for their hearts beat as one and they only touched the high places. John now had grown into an august man and not the 75 lb. boy of 16 yrs.

They came to the little brook on their way to her home and some one had broken the foot log ahead of them and Rebecca had on a brand new pair of shoes for it was her first time to take

the foot washing, also it was John's first time. So when they came to the little branch "It will not do, Rebecca, to get your shoes wet" so he picked her up under her arms and set her down dry upon the other side which caused a great laughter and shout "Hurrah; for John". Then John had to help two or three smaller ones over too. It did not faise John's big manly shoes for he could stand upon the rocks and lift them over. Rebecca blushed and so did John. Rebecca's father, Stephen, and her mother drove up just in time to see it well done and Stechen remarked "Well done, John", which greatly relieved John's excitement. They proceeded along with no further incidents and reached home in due time, and took their seats upon the farther end of the porch to discuss the happenings of the day and about dusk they saw Granny coming up the road so John said "I must go Rebecca and may I have the pleasure of seeing you again some time"?" "You may at your pleasure John".

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So John bade her good night and proceeded on his way just in time to meet Granny out of hearing of the others. Well, John, I see you have made two good steps today". "What is that Granny". "You had your feet washed and you have taken to yourself a girl". "What did she say, John". "Does she like you very much", "Oh, I dunno" was his reply. "You like her, don't you John"? "I have been watching you for some time and I knew it was going to happen some of these days and I told Rebecca it was too". "What did she say Granny" was John's reply. "Oh, she has her eyes on you and her heart is beating for you too, John, and I hope you will 'spark' her alright too, John". "I'll help you too, John, for I would love to have you for a grandson". "I sure would John". "I would like to see Stephen's and Henry's families tied up together with a chord of matrimony for they are both well bred families and I can almost hear your babies crying now John He; He, ee". John whirled and away he went with Granny laughing with all her might.

When Granny reached Stephen's house Rebecca was standing on the porch waiting to see what Granny had to say about John. She came laughing and Rebecca asked "What is the matter Granny". "Oh, I just had a little round up with John for bothering me granddaughter" with a little twinkle in the eye. "What did John have to say" was Rebecca's inquiry. "He wouldn't say much but look here chile, I am a tellin of you, before the Indian chief makes his Wau-hoo, John will be wanting you to dance the broom with him". "Now Gran ny that wasn't what you were laughing at him about" came back from Rebecca. "Ha-ha, hee-hee;" was all Granny could say. Rebecca, of course, was more anxious than ever. "Oh, Granny, do tell me", don't keep suspense like this". "Well, ha,ha,he,he, I told John I could nearly hear yours and his children crying now, ha, ha;" "Oh, Granny you old tease" and away Rebecca went.

All of today was too much for John. Just then there came a big clap of thunder and John jumped high and came down again on earth. He looked around and a big black cloud was rising and by the time he reached the top of the Johnson hill it was dark as a "stack of black cats" and John's mind wandered away into other worlds again. A big hoot owl flapped his wings and crossed the road ahead of him and it almost seemed like angels wings but he was not to think so for long for it lit in a tree top and said "Who, who, o' you". "Oh, a big hoot owl". This brought John back again.



Up the road a little piece and there stood the church. Through the blackness it could just dimly be seen and on out the road a piece was the old haunted grave yard. Not so many graves there but passers by had died and were buried there and it was reported that the Indians had massacred some rowdy white men in earlier days and had piled rocks upon them and it was their ghosts that had surmounted the hill top to cry aloud and they had been seen walking there as they were scalped by Mr. Red Man. There was another report that a young man and girl had been too intimate in their sparking days and she had given birth to an illegitimate child and they had killed it and buried it there and there was the small grave that no one knew about. It was reported here of late that the baby had been heard to cry in the grave yard and that it had been heard as far down as the branch about a couple of hundred yards or more from the graveyard and they knew it was a baby and Granny said "I'm not surprised at all if wern's so".

By this time John had topped the graveyard hill and his mind was not upon graveyard haunts not nothing but one thing and that was what Granny had said; "I can almost hear your child crying". He was so engrossed with his thoughts that he was not minding much where he was going and it was so dark he could scarcely see anyway and he ran right into the bank of the road below the graveyard. He had not more than recovered himself from his near approach to a fall that a startled cry came from apparently a weakened baby. John jumped about three feet and exclaimed "My baby" and then he came to himself with his hair standing straight and his eyes glued to the road, almost paralyzed. John was not a coward but it all was too much once more he heard it and he made to run but his long coat tail hit on the heels and he stopped and listened and he could hear in the leaves a little rustle of a sound "There it is coming", John tiptoed a few steps and again the cry. "I'll just have to run for if I don't I believe my stomache is going to have some action. He didn't though, he stood there what seemed to him 5 minutes but guess it might have been 5 seconds and started off again. Again the cry came forth and a bit louder. If John could have found wings he would have flown away from a crying baby. John sat down for by now he could not stand, but no baby. "I just wonder if the tales Granny was telling me did not go to my head and I just imagined I heard a baby.

"Why of course that was it for I was just thinking about those babies Granny was telling about when I thought I heard one crying". "I wonder what Rebecca is doing and wonder if she would care much if she knew about me getting 'a little bit excited' if she knew it". So by the time all of this came back to him he was up getting ready to go on home for it was thundering more and more. John had only gone a few steps when a more shrill cry came and more like a baby than he had heard before, His hair almost pushed his hat off his head. Now reader, if you never was really scared you can't imagine that feeling of your hair stiffning.

John could not bear it any longer, he gripped his hat in one hand, his coat-tail in the other and he made the road look like a bright streak down the dark road. He never knew when he hit the branch for he went clean over it.

Newt Walker had been home with John's sister, Elenor, and was coming down the hill when he heard John coming down the hill in full run, puffing and blowing. "Hold up" says Newt. John stopped and between puffs and blows told Newt all about it.

"Do you suppose it was a baby's ghost" says Newt. "It sounded exactly like one" was John's reply. "What am I going to do for I will have to go away around through the woods or go right by there" Newt said. "Well, Newt, I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll go back over there and stay all night with you as bad frightened as I am or until we find out what it was if it is still there for if it was the baby's ghost it must still be there".

Newt and John agreed so they went down the road to the branch and up the hill towards the grave yard and when they were nearly to where John made his leap to run they heard it again. "It sure is a baby John". They stopped but there was not a sound. They started on again "There it is Newt, right where I left it, exactly where that little baby's grave is!!

"Let us go out to the grave and see" says Newt. John agreed provided Newt wouldn't run off and leave him. "You already had your run" said Newt "but I promise I'll die there in the grave yard before I'll leave you." They climbed the bank and started on and sure enough there was the baby crying from the yard.

They stopped and not a sound was heard. The thunder had passed around and the sky was lighting a little so they could distinguish some shadows now and then. All

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of them looked like the man without any head but now there were two young men who were sure enough brave, both of them ready to run, faint or something else. "It must have gone into oblivion" says John. "I don't know where that place are but guess 'that has gone there alright enough" says Newt. John ventured that they had better go as it was getting late for him to be out, the main reason being he was getting faint like as he afterwards explained to Newt. "I suppose so" said Newt and they started and again the baby cried out near to them. They both jumped and stopped still but not another sound.

"I'll tell you, Newt, what I'll do. I'll stay right here till the break of day or till we find the ghost". "Well, John, I don't know so much about that but I don't want to act like a coward so I'll stick it out".

They moved a little - it would cry stop it would hush and they stopped and stayed still until they heard it. For many minutes they heard nothing but a rustle in the leaves. "Oh, it is the wind" says John. "Wow-oh" cried Newt and jumped and made a leap but John caught him just as the cry

came from right under Newt's feet. His feet came down with a thud and struck something on the ground and it squalled and there it lay, a little pig with just enough life to cry like a baby and not enough life to let them know it was a pig. Such a relief has never been known before nor since from two young men. They agreed not to tell of the run John had made and of Newt trying to run but they were only going to tell the brave parts of the story and each used it to keep the other down. Each had a story to tell that night when they got home.

If John would get on his "high horse" telling anything, Newt would say "Now John tell it all", so would John say to Newt when we was over boisterous.

It was now drawing nigh to another presidential election, politics were running high. They got the news now and then from the papers The Toledo Blade, printed at Toledo, Ohio was an official organ for the north and it was blazing away for the new Republican Party and the various other papers were not for State Rights. As one of the "hot heads" of the south put it, "We have been ruled by these Northern Yankees about long enough "It is time for us to come out from under the yoke of bondage and form a confederation of ourselves".

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"You see how the supreme court has decided against letting our negroes cross over the Mason-Dixon Line and ge free" The wrangle went on and on till night, getting nowhere, slavery, secession, state rights and all.

Among those who were fighting secession were the Pettit's, Griffith's, Ellington's, Holt's, Charles West of Ellijay, Weaver's and some of those for holding on to the negro were Simmon's, Smith's, Tabor's, Slag's, etc. pros and cons were about equally divided but when the votes were counted in the election of 1856 Gilmer, Fannin, Dawson and Pickens Counties were listed on the Republican side of the fight. They were for holding the union together.

Uncle Ted Ward who lived in Scrougetown remarked to Stephen as they came home the day of the election "It looks like the whole damn country is going to be tied up before long in a great scramble and the devil only knows where the whole damn thing will end". "Which side are you on Uncle Fed" said Henry. "I'll just be damned if I know. I guess I will be on the side that loses for I have always been on that side".

Uncle Fed lived in what was called Scrougetown. It was no town but their section took in one of the richest corn and some of the finest springs in all of North Georgia. The land is so rich Uncle Fed told Grandfather Cantrell, that the land was so rich that her pastures fairly scrouged themselves out of the ground. It became a bye word Uncle Fed's Scrouge Town as it is known until this day.

The Osborn's from Mountain Town took a great hand in the political jamboree of the day. They lived in Mountain Town, another fictious town in name only. Not so much so as some of the others for there were enough hill peaks in this section to be a town of hills but between the hills

there were fertile valleys, one among them was the Mountain Town Creek Valley where the Osborns had settled.

The Holts of Turnip Town had taken a broad stand for the Union side. They had settled that fertile creek valley. It was the outlet of the springs from the opposite side of the mountain from where the Pettit's, Ellington's, Weavers and Oriffith's lived and one dear old soul who lived away at the head of this valley was Granny Elliot and the gap of the mountain you cross to go over to Turnip Town was called "Elliot's Gap."

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One day when Granny Elliot was on a baby case at Mr. Holt's she was asked "Why do they call the valley and creek where you live, Turnip Town"? Granny was in one of her funny moods, as was the rule in those days when she was on a baby case. "Well, you see, when this here country was young and rich and just my folks and a few more was living here we raised such big turnips that we had to have a log rollin' in the fall to gather them in". "Lots of them would fill a wagon bed". "Now Granny what a big one" they said. "It is so and if you will come to my house this fall. I'll show ye that it does take lots of them, even now, to fill the wagon body". They all had a big laugh except the one who was in much pain. "Now Granny, without joking, just why did they name it that"? "This valley which lies between these mountains is just right for this crop and people come here from miles around after turnips, so it took the name "Turnip Town".

The fourth of March 1857 [1857] came and James Polk took his seat as President and the country was doomed to much disappointment for he was a happy-go-lucky man and was the same in office and it was time now for a great growth in the Republic Party.

Now North Georgia crept along in the summer time by "big meetings" and making whiskey in the winter. There was great jollifications in the log rolling which were plentiful. The men cleared more land and in the early spring they invited their neighbors in to help pile up the logs and burn them. It was understood that there must be plenty of good old corn whiskey at these gatherings and before it was all over some of the lot would be ready to turn their toes up to the burning log heap and sleep the corn off. It very often happened that politics would be the topic and some would have enough corn to make them want to fight.

Dan Miller had married Barbary Pettit, John's sister, and had settled on the headwaters of one of the branches making the Owltown Creek. He had cleared land all winter and early spring they had a big "log rolling". Dan had prepared from the corn plenty of double and twisted corn liker and the log rolling had gone along very well.

The ladies were there to do quilting for Barbary. A great crowd of Dan's special crowd had come and by the time dinner was over several were so full they wanted to fight anybody and everybody who did not believe politically as they did. Henry, Stephen, Coke and a few others got together and agreed that from this time on there

would be no more jugs of whiskey at log rollings, "I take my dram" says Henry, "When I feel I need it". "So do I" said Stephen and Coke, "but I don't believe it should be taken in public places".

This was the first move so far as we know when whiskey was made an issue of public gatherings and was destined to be a great factor in the lives of the families of these great fearless men who had the stamina to denounce whiskey at all.

This was a great corn country and apples were coming to their own so some of these husky mountaineers thought there was no harm in making their corn into liquid and their apples into brandy. The market wagons from the mountains were soon to be known for their stock of good whiskey and brandy. Mind you, however, not all market wagons carried liquid merchandise for the prohibition question already started was beginning to have its effect upon this country.

John was still making his regular visits to Stephen Griffith's. Several of Stephen's children had married off, as had some of the Ellington's and Pettit's, Simmons and Smith's. John, however, did not make it night by the grave yard alone though he firmly believed there were no ghosts. John tried to shun Granny for she was a thorn in the flesh when it came to teasing.

John had come into his own on Feb. 27, 1958 [1858] and had spent the next Sunday with Rebecca and Stephen's folks and they had made it possible, by making an extra fire, for John to have a few hours with Rebecca. "Rebecca, I am 21 years of age". "Yes, John, a man of your own", "And a good man you are too John for father has told us how you are sticking up for the morality of our country". "I hope you will be a great man some day, John".

"You know, Rebecca, that my papa and Mama are getting older and some one has to look after them and I have no one to do that". "Well, John, it seems you might find some one that you could trust" says Rebecca, cutting her eyes at John. "But whether the one that I would like to have to look after them and me would be willing to do it or not, for you know Rebecca it is a hard job sometimes to look after old folks for most old folks get cranky and do many things unexpected."

"Yes, John, that is all true but there are the Ellington girls and the Smith girls and there are some fine girls at the Holts and I hear there is a new family of folks moved in over the river

by the name of Harris and they say they have some mighty fine christian girls", "It does seem that you might find one among this list that would answer the roll call' and say yes when asked", said Rebecca.

"But, Rebecca, they tell me those Harris' are strong Methodists and the Ellingtons too, they say are likely to all join the Methodists for Fletch and Lon have already joined". "You know, Rebecca, that I could never get along with the Methodists at all. They tell me they all believe in 'falling from grace'". "Oh, they do" was her only reply.

John and Rebecca sat there a long time without either speaking a word but their hearts beat as one. John twisted and turned and looked at Rebecca and spoke thusly "Rebecca could you guess who I was wanting to help me out". "Well I have guessed nearly everybody I could think about but it seems they don't suit you" says she.

"Rebecca, I have something to say to you and I have not told any one and I wanted to tell you first". "Well, go ahead John, I will keep your secret" says she. "Well, Rebecca, it is a mighty big undertaking and requires lots of courage but I am thinking about making a preacher". Rebecca arose and walked over to John and laid her tender white hand upon John's shoulder and said "May God's blessings be upon you in your work". This was more than John could withstand and he arose and facing Rebecca said "Rebecca", "Yes John", "Rebecca will you", "Yes, John, go ahead and may God help you." "Rebecca, will you take me just as I am without one plea and try to help me in all my work". "Yes, John, if it is your wish that I may then I will try, God being my helper to make you a good wife and a care taker for your father and mother and a mother" and she stopped and blushed, but John caught the meaning and caught his hand under her chin, reached down and sealed it with a kiss, the first one he had ever had and the first one she had ever had and their souls of passion burned within their very souls.

Their fire had gone nearly out and one of Rebecca's sisters guessing, if she had not listened through the crack in the door, brought in some wood and made up the fire and looked at Rebecca's face so red and at John whose eyes were glistening with love smiled a teasing smile and said "You children must have been warm to sit your fire out but guess now it will burn and she slipped out the door.

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John and Rebecca sat close together leaning their heads on their hands, elbows resting on their knees for a long time, their hearts beating in perfect rhythm. John had found the one to take the greatest task one could take and little did Rebecca know that she had taken a job that would send her prematurely to a mother's grave but little did they care now.

Just then the door opened and Granny stuck her head in at the door "John", she said "Have you heard any more babies crying" meaning the grave yard incident. "Now, Granny, don't talk to John that way", "What is it to you, Rebecca, how I talk to John". "Um-hum, I see well that it is alright. You both will hear the baby crying some of these times" and she stepped out laughing. "Don't pay any attention to her" said Rebecca. "Oh, that is alright". "John," Rebecca said very earnestly, "are you sure you are satisfied with your choice". "Yes, Rebecca, "I want you with all my heart, soul and mind and strength and have for a long time but could not see my way clear to ask you to load yourself with a preacher and two old folks". "Are you sure you want to take me

just as I am"? "Yes, John, you are the only man I ever saw that I truly loved and wanted to marry". "Well, just as soon as we can we will get married".

Granny told the whole family what had happened for she said "I have seen the hand writing on the wall too many times not to know the signs".

It was a day of great rejoicing in the family circle to know that John would some day be a member of the Griffith family.

Rebecca began by Granny's instructions to get her clothes ready. "You must have you some nice clothes" says she. "I believe John is going to be a preacher".

"You must make you some woolsey dresses and some nice pretty coats. Your brother Will can make shoes. We will see that he makes you the nicest pair of shoes that has adorned a foot in this here country round about". "When is it going to happen" asked Granny. "The day has not been set yet for you know there are things John has to see about before this can take place but Granny you must not tell any body about it". "Ah, chile, don't you think Granny got a bit of sense, I know what to tell and what to keep", "Yes, honey chile, I sure keep your secret for you."

The thread was on hand and the spinning wheel ran nearly day and night spinning the wool and the cotton for the garments. One of Rebecca's sisters said

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"I would be hunting me a man too if I knew I was going to have such nice clothes like Rebecca". "If you work like Rebecca, day and night, you might have nice things too", says Granny.

The calf skin hides had just come from the tannery and was now being cured and worked and William was instructed by Granny about them. William was one of the best shoe makers in the country. He got a big price for making ladies fine shoes but as he and John were special friends, William said he would not charge Rebecca anything for making hers and they were perfect when done.

While reviewing these high lights we turn to some other sections. There was a great rush into the Dahlonga, Ga. section. Reports came that they were coining gold there by the hundreds as the mint there was in full blast. Gold was being mined in great quantities for many young men were going over there to engage in the work. Loads were being staked out, ditches were being dug to carry water for sluicing the dirt laden with gold, for miles one ditch they said was about 7 miles long. It passed across the road near the mint. After big rains particles could be seen in the sand where it washed, but this being government property they would not allow any panning over there. The Dotson boys had just come over from there and reported great enthusiasm over there.

While about 5 miles north of Ellijay there had been reported one of the largest nuggets that North Georgia had ever found, everybody was wild over the prospect.

Uncle Fed Ward told some wonderful tales about having seen on the north side of the Stover Mountain some rocks that were loaded down with gold but he could not find the place again.

Uncle Dave Cantrell had moved farther up the Cartecay River and was beyond the flour and corn mill that had been put in, known in later years as the Swan Mill for Mr. Momeduk Swan had kept this mill for years and had put in a saw mill. It was rigged with a saw similar to a cross cut saw but ran perpendicular and was much heavier, It was a slow process as the saw would kick off when a board was sawed and stop till some one would go set for another board and run the log back by hand but we are side tracking from riches to boards or planks as they were called.

The ridges for miles around the White Patch find was dug here and there and

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and all around hunting for riches. In the meantime the Mays, Mr. Hays and three sons had found a "lode" as pockets of gold were called, up the river about 1 miles from Henry Pettit's and were making regular trips to Dahlonega, some said with a pocket full of gold. For fun they would leave the washing of gold and took goose quill feathers and cut the end off, filled the quill and slip the end of another quill over the open end so they might not lose any.

The Mays had made an artificial dam on top of a high hill about the river where this lode was located and had gone a long way up the creek and ditched the water around the hill side and at night the reservoir on the hill would fill up and in the day time they would turn a sluice of water loose on the clay hill side and wash the dust into the river. The way they gathered the gold was - They made long boxes with one side open and nailed pieces across the bottom about every foot and they would wash, running all the water through there boxes until evening they they would clean out the boxes and pan out the gold. It was a facinating business and just the word "gold" in those days meant much to those people who did not see much money.

They would take their gold and exchange it at the mint for money. Who would not be excited to see the shining metal come out of the washings.

John Pettit had been to the May's mine to take some meat, eggs and cabbage to them for John was the market boy. While there the Mays made a run, that is, they cleaned out their sluice boxes and John stood for hours looking on. Also Granddaddy Strickland who was known as "Gramps Strickland" was there and told John, "There has been gold found on your father's place. It is said the Indians found gold there". "Where do you think they found it"? "From out on the spring branch" was Gramps reply.

John went home light footed saying "Out'n the spring branch, out'n the spring branch". "Well if they got gold out'n the spring branch the source must be back in the hills somewhere and I will see about it tomorrow". John had watched the panning at the mine till he thought he understood about it all.



If the reader does not know what "panning" means permit me to explain. They take the settlings or sediment where gold is expected to be in a basin similar to a wash basin. They then keep the pan under water, stirring and stirring till all the mud and sand is washed out and as gold is so much heavier than these substances it will

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cling to the bottom and when everything has been washed out gold remains at the bottom. Then a few drops of quick silver put into the pan will gather the gold together as gold and quick silver has an affinity for each other, that is they stick together.

John was up next morning and had his chores done early and took the wash pan and away he went to the branch. He tried the branch in many places and only got a color until he got to the spring. Henry's spring was a boiling spring and bubbled up from the bottom bringing small particles as it came up.

John sat there and watched for a long time, he reasoned to himself "This sand comes here from some where as the water must gather together so if gold is in this sand there must be gold up under the hill somewhere".

John dipped his wash basin down into the bottom of the boiling sand and began the tedious process of eliminating the sand by washing it over the side of the pan for sand was next to gold in weight.

John had just cleared out the sand and had a few particles in the bottom left. "Hurrah!" he said "I found it". Henry had been sitting a ways off watching John's maneuvers. "Hurray! You have found what", "A good licking, I guess". "No, Papa I have found the source of the gold the Indians said was here". "What Indians"? Who said, How come", "What got that into your head?". "Why, Papa, Grancer said the Indians used to get gold".

"Indians, Grancer Strickland and the whole she-bang be darned". If I ever catch you fooling around my spring any more I'll make you think gold sure enough". "I would not give that spring of mine for the whole Mays gold mine."

Henry picked up the pan and looked and sure enough there were gold particles in the pan. "Huh, about a quarter's worth, I guess.

From that day on Henry's and afterwards John's spring<sup>9</sup> was never tapped for gold and the dream of gold on the Pettit farm died with John's pan of gold that bright sunny day. "Water as pure as that is worth more than gold" and so it is.

The Balews had now become figures of Scrougetown. Uncle Johnny as he was known.

The Hogans also were located up above the home of Uncle Fed Ward as he married one of Fed's daughters.

In the upper settlement towards the Mountains was another settlement, Tichanettly,

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where the Plemmons, The Cannons, Weavers, Woodies, Cochran, Claytons, Akins (one family branch of the Holts) which were all to play a part in the future of this country.

The little private school which was being run during the late 1840's and up through the early 1850's had made the Cartecay District and surrounding it the best educated district in North Georgia.

The Ayers had settled across the river from the May's gold mine and their property extended down the river to the ford.

The Methodist church was established and a house built about 1/2 mile above the ford of the river. The Methodists were making headway in North Georgia. The Methodist doctrine discouraged making, selling or drinking to excess any whiskey and the doctrine was adhered to in the main while many thought there was no harm in taking a social dram. One good Baptist deacon remarked one day in discussing the Methodist "They are dry without, dry within and Hell fire wouldn't have a hard time setting them on fire". Only jesting, of course but really just trying to throw off on the new denomination for trying to teach contrary to their belief for some churches as well as some folks believe every body is wrong but themselves.

Time was rolling on and religious feeling in North Georgia was running high and the national congress was having a great time on the negro question, the north trying to hold down the number of slave states in the south so the north would have a majority in the senate and the south trying to increase the slave holding states, so they had it and sentiments ran high.

The great cry was "Cecede, form a government of our own in the south". "We do not need to be "run" over by those damned Yankees and foreigners who are up in the big cities just to run over things". "We can live without them". "We don't need them".

North Georgia was not an exception to the rule for the North Georgia mountain country believed in a firm steady government and while we are our own let's stay one. "One and inseparatable". There were about as many who believed that way as believed against.

Alexander H. Stephens, one of George's brave sons in congress fought secession to the last. He was a firm believer in "state rights" but believed that state rights

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ceased when it dominated the sister state. "You have no right to burn your own woods if it endangers your neighbor's property" was the principal he fought for.

Things got mighty hot in North Georgia. The Pettit's, Griffith's, Weaver's Akin's, Ellington's, Charles Bramblett, Craizor and too many to name, both Baptist and Methodists were strong for the central government plan, while the Smith's, Tabor's Hudson's, Plemons, Rogers, Cannons, Bishops, Wards and others were 'raring' for secession and slavery.

While slavery was the main issue, cecession was the issue in congress and state legislature. The new Republican party was cutting inroads through the union. Almost all of North Georgia, East Tennessee and Western North Carolina was about equally divided, if any odds, the Republican party had it. The "hot heads" Southern Democrats would throw up "Yanks" to the Union while in turn the Union would stamp the "Sessioners" as Rebels, so there they had it up and down.

Henry Pettit died \_\_\_\_\_ and left John the home place to take care of his wife Anna.<sup>10</sup> Ann was feeble and John saw the task was great.

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<sup>1</sup> A young wild pig.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Pettit's family was residing in Rutherford County, NC prior to their move to Georgia. Buncombe County was a neighboring county and site of Ashville.

<sup>3</sup> Henry Pettit purchased his first tract of land from Larkin Holt, a white man. Some of these original deeds are in the possession of his descendant, Bobby Pettit, who lives on the land to this day.

<sup>4</sup> Margaret E. Osborn married Elijah Pool Pettit in Gilmer County, GA on January 25, 1839, which was also the birthday of Henry Pettit Sr born in New Jersey in 1763.

<sup>5</sup> The name "Granny King" was penciled in, perhaps by George F. Pettit, on the old genealogy family record sheet that is thought to have belonged to John F. Pettit.

<sup>6</sup> In his Rutherford County, North Carolina will dated August 3, 1838, Henry Pettit Sr left his son Henry Pettit Jr his "negro boy... commonly called Pompey" and his son John "one negro boy called Green." The first slave schedule in Gilmer County was taken by the 1850 US Census. Familiar names include the Griffiths, Osbornes, and Ellington families but the Pettit family appears to have gotten out of the slave business by this time.

<sup>7</sup> The Western and Atlantic Railroad was owned and operated by the state of Georgia which began construction in 1838. Adairsville was the site of "The Great Locomotive Chase" in the War of Northern Aggression in 1862.

<sup>8</sup> The distance from the Pettit lands near Ellijay to Adairsville was well over 35 miles.

<sup>9</sup> It is worth noting that according to this account John Fulton Pettit inherited the part of the Henry Pettit Jr land that included the spring.

<sup>10</sup> The will of Henry Pettit Jr was written on February 19, 1858, and recorded in Gilmer Co., GA. The 8<sup>th</sup> Item of the will states, "I will and bequeath to my son John F Pettit all potion of land marked No 4 which is in two separate pieces as shown by said pat and also one cow and calf and one shot gunn my Black mule or a choice Horse beast as he may choice and one yoke of Oxen and both my wagons and all my Farming tools all of which I will to my son John F Pettit as above stated on the condition that he comfortably support my beloved wife Anne during her Widowhood And should he fail or refuse to do so as directed in this my last will and testament my Executors are

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hereby authorized to have all the above property (except the land and cow) and applied to the use and benefit of my beloved wife Anne Pettit”

The setting of this story clings around the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the point where the mountains abruptly break away into cliffs, ridges, coves and sloping hillsides with here and there a river or creek winding, turning and twisting its way, singing the song of the brook as it goes on its way to the never ending ocean, through the rocks, boulders and pebbles that roll along their bed cutting deeper and deeper the bed of the run way.

The peoples of this section came from that hardy, independent New England type that drifted along the line of civilization down through the Virginias, Carolinas and stopped with the mountains to be counted among the original pioneers of this section.

These peoples were French, Dutch and Scotch-Irish descent with some Holland or Dutch mixed with them and we mean the "scratchy" Dutch at that.

The ancestral of this picture served among the finest soldiers of the war of independence and many are the early stories of how the hardy old grandfather endured hardships of cold and hunger and how they traveled through cold and ice to attain that which the pioneers of this country greatly earned for Liberty.

For their services of valor the ancestors of our story received large grants from our early government in the western part of North Carolina where gold was found and they cashed their holdings and pushed onward where they might have more Liberty.

These early pioneers found such peace at the hands of the red man and bought from them holdings along the streams and adjoining hillside, where the Indians had cleared here and there small patches.

It was in the late thirties and early forties of last century that a colony came to what is now known as Fannin, Dawson and Gilmer Counties and established this abode.

Most all these pioneers were of that independent judicial stock that thought what they thought was right and this independence was ground into them so much so that was one of their leading characteristics and they strove to carry it out in politics and religion as well.

They were mostly of the old school of Baptist, that dominated them through and through and made them great believers of things now and to come as one of them once remarked "once saved always saved"



One peculiar trait of these pioneers was they, in most part, did not believe in slavery, nor did they have slaves to any great extent. Some freed the slaves they did have. They believed in personal freedom and self independence. If they cared to take a dram, that was their own business and they did not believe in other people dictating to them.

Picture for a moment Henry Pettit and John, his brother, and Henry's married son Elijah leaving western North Carolina in the year 1842 for an unknown country to live among a people from their own country. They traveled many days in covered wagons loaded with all their worldly possessions and the women and children stuffed in on top.

They made slow progress for their mules and oxen had to be grazed along the way. When they found good pasturage they would stop, make camp and feed their stock, milk their cows which trudged along behind. The feed was nature's growth along the wayside for that was in abundance for there was not much but wild game to devour the grasses growing abundantly.

They carried an abundant supply of powder from which they made their own bullets. Most of them had the old flint lock. We mean the guns were loaded at the muzzle - first pour a charge of powder in, then pack some bits of rags on that, then wrap the bullet with a scrap of cloth and ram it down upon the powder. This being done they put a bit of powder in a little cup at the breach of the gun where there was a small flint rock so when they pulled the trigger the hammer came down on the flint rock striking a spark of fire from the rock which would ignite with the powder in the cup and from there into the gun which would explode the charge in the gun which would drive out the bullet and almost every time one of these shots were fired the wild game was ready for consumption.

Henry and John were more lucky than most of the others for they had guns which had caps for the hammer to explode and they did not have the suspense of the spark being knocked from the flint rock.

As they wended westward across the hills and mountains John and Henry kept their families in meat. While the children grazed the stock John and Henry would wander off into the wayside and bag a wild turkey, a deer or fawn and then some quail or a wild shoat and not often would they return without plenty for their families meals.



They would travel into a settlement now and then which would welcome them and ask many questions about the folks back where they came from and where they were headed and always give good reports of what was ahead and told them they were headed for a prosperous country .

Little John, the third son of Henry was now four or five years old and he became very sick. They thought there was no chance for his recovery so they drove into a prosperous community and pulled camp. The neighbors were kind and accommodating and helped the wanderers out as best they could.

Henry said to Ann, his wife: "Ann, it seems we are going to lose little John, there seems no way out of it" and by reply Ann said, "Yes, Henry, I have taken care of him about as best I can and I am afraid it is God's punishment on us for leaving where we were doing well and come away over here from friends and neighbors to live among Indians". "Now Ann, don't feel that way for you know the people were settling up Buncomb County, North Carolina so that there was not going to be room enough for all of us and you know, Ann, the last few months I had a hard time killing enough game for our meat and they tell me that over on the Cartecay River and back into those mountains game is so plentiful that there is plenty for everybody and the price we got for our mining property will buy us hundreds of acres over there". Ann replied - "But you see Henry, all of these hardships we have to go through and now we are here and it looks as though we will lose one of our boys before we go any farther and have to bury him along the wayside." With tears in his eyes, which Ann had only seen a few times in their years of married life, replied, "Now Ann, dear, you know it is hard to make a living in a crowded country. We are going to where we will be in 8 or 10 miles of a good trading post. The Indians have already agreed to sell me and Elijah the plantation along the bend of the river where there is endless game and land as rich as can be made. Just a few acres there will produce more than our whole farm we sold and God will give us good neighbors where we are going".

At this juncture of the conversation, Margaret, the good wife of Elijah, came running calling Elijah's mother to come quick as John was worse. All hands were there around the wagon being used as a sick bed for little John. Granny Charles



was called. Granny Charles was the neighborhood doctor's helper. It was miles to a doctor, it would have taken two days to get one there. All assistance was given to Granny Charles and by the shank of the evening little John had rallied.

"Ann" spoke Henry, "they tell me the next settlement is many miles from here and as there is a grave yard here and a preacher, and a good Baptist preacher at that, I believe we had better camp here for there seems no hopes that John will ever recover and the neighbors are so good too, so that if John dies we will have a place to bury him so that he won't be alone here in the ground". "You are right, Henry, for I can hardly bear the grief of it all anyway". "If only my father and mother were here" said Ann, "You see Ann, Mr. Mooney, your father promised me that as soon as we were over here and liked it they would sell and come on over if they could".

Ann, a sweet little woman, burdened with every thing about the place seemed more content from day to day as John improved and in about 10 days they were able to proceed along the Indian trails to the big Cartecay River in Gilmer County.

Elijah, Henry and John had previously spied out this land and had tentatively bargained with the indians of the north side of the river for about 600 acres where Henry and his married son Elijah were going to locate but Henry's brother John had bargained for another tract several miles farther east, so they pushed into this section where there were two or three Indian huts already and early in the fall they landed in this new home site where fish abounded and game stared them in the face.

Across the river there was another settlement where the Indians had vacated and about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles west towards the trading post was another settlement where Stephen Griffith and Coke Ellington had settled, This was near an older settled place where the mother of Mrs. Stephen Griffith lived. Mrs. Griffith's maiden name was Walker and after her father Ben Walker had died she married Dan King and she was known far and wide as Granny King for she was most in demand of anyone in that country for every one who had the toe ache to a confinement case.

The King - Ellington - Griffith settlement was located along the beautiful little valley of the big "Owl Town". Indians were still quartered at the head of this valley where there was a big cane brake, better known as a bamboo brake. The Indian lore had it that the owls were so thick along this stream in early days



they had in a few cases they had carried off some papooses (Indian babies). While the white man had doubted the truth of the Indian lore, yet you could hear upon a still night the reverbration of the Ho-ho-hoho and the echo would mount the ridges "Ho-wo-who-are-you.

The Indians used their cane to make baskets and other Indian trinkets and would peddle them together with their Indian medicines which were used by many and praised by all.

Grandfather Walker told the following incident: A white man came to Mrs. Walker's with sores all over his back and legs and was told that the Indians could heal them. Mr. Walker and the white man ( Mr. Neese) went to see the big Indian medicine man who had Mr. Neese. remove his clothing and then the Indian says "pale face, he in bad fix. He need medicine - red man he cure pale face but it make him, pale face, mad. He, pale face, want to fight red man - red man, he no wants trouble. Mr. Walker, the red man's friend, he knows red man likes pale face Mr. Walker".

"Yes, Red Medicine Man, Walker knows red man likes him, will not let Mr. Neese hurt red man. Mr. Neese is in bad shape and if you can cure him Mr. Walker will pay you for Mr. Neese."

"It hurtee Mr. Pale Face, it hurtee bad too. I no tellee a lie". Mr. Neese replied, "Let it hurt if you can cure me, I don't care how much it hurts Mr. Indian". Mr. Indian kindled a fire, with the assistance of Mr. Walker, out of brush and small limbs and the Indian doctor kept mumbling to himself, all the time making motions with his hands while the smoke rolled away, to the amusement of Mr. Walker and Mr. neese. Mr. Indian made a bed of leaves between two small saplings, just far enough apart for Mr. Neese's arms to reach them, also one where his feet could rest on each side.

After the Indian doctor had warmed his medicine thoroughly over the fire he told Mr. Neese "Remove all your clothes but keepee on your shoes. Lie down on your face". Mr. Neese obeyed the Indian doctor and he took two strong cords and tied Mr. Neese's arms drawn taut to the small bushes and stretching out his feet astride the other bush to which he tied them.



The Indian doctor danced around the fire and chanted his hymn of praise, song or whatever you might call it and with his medicine he proceeded to dab a bit on this sore and some on that one till all were covered. They smothered Mr. Neese so much he nearly went to sleep. "Stopee, no sleepee, it no hurtee yet, wait a little while". When the liniment had dried in the doctor picked up one of the fire brands and waved it through the air and made a big war "Whoo-pee, whoo-pee" and down he came with the red hot coal aglow onto one of the sores. With this Mr. Neese raised his whole body into the air and down came the red hot embers onto another sore. "My G-- quit, you are killing me, you are burning me alive". "Holdee still it no hurtee much - it heal white man. Pale face lookee red likee e red man when hurtee stops".

The cursing, crying and yelling went on and on but the great old red man doctor kept applying his cure until Mr. Neese was almost beyond exhaustion - "I will kill me an indian when I do get up from here". "No you won't " said Mr. Walker. "You agreed to the cure and you are getting it and neither white man nor Indian will get hurt by you so quiet down", said Mr. Walker and he meant it too for Mr. Walker was much of a man as the Indian knew for he had seen Mr. Walker in many a tussell.

The burning process now over the Indian doctor took some of his healing ointment and oiled each burning spot where there was once a sore and the burning was soon over.

"Now Mr. Walker, Red man's friend, you can turn Mr. Paleface loose if he will not hurtee Pale Face. Red man does not fear Mr. Pale Face". So Mr. Walker untied Mr. Neese and he arose flaming with rage at such treatment but a laughing and jostling brought Mr. Neese to his senses and he had to laugh too. "Mr. Pale face laughee too, he much a better, he no have any sores any more" and he danced around in gleeful delight.

Mr. Coke Ellington or Uncle Coke as he was called, was brother-in-law to Stephen Griffith and had settled where the big Owltown creek flowed into the river taking all of these bottoms of the river and creek down to where the little Owltown creek flowed into the river.

The little Owltown was a small creek that came in beyond the ridges north of bit Owltown, these ridges being parts of the Walker, Griffith & Ellington places.



Ellijay, the trading center of this mountainous valley country was the trading center for many miles back into the mountains and lies at the junction of the Cartecay and Ellijay rivers and stretches out into a beautiful valley which was the pride of this country, It was there that courts were held and the land office, the place where the men all met to discuss questions of the day for they had at least one mail a week in the early days and later on a daily mail service was established.

During the early days of the forties Mr. Walker died which was a great shock and the community far and wide mourned his passing. Time wore off the rough edges and in time Mrs. Walker married Dan King and she was known from then on as "Granny King".

The Pettits on Cartecay had entered their new homestead with new interest and Mr. Pettit and his boys old enough to work and one negro he brought with him from N.C. set to work and had hewed the logs and was ready to raise their house.

This event was a great one for the neighborhood for all for miles around were invited, men, women and children too and while the men raised the log house the women quilted quilts under the shade of the spreading oak trees. It was a two day job and the day was long to be remembered.

The Pettits were now able to have one of the best houses on this side of the county. They had constructed temporary furniture and were very comfortable for their first winter in their new home.

Henry and his boys now went to work to clear some more land, so did Stephen Griffith, Coke Ellington and others in their land of promise and by early spring after many hardships, as Anna had often told her husband, they came through in fairly good shape.

By this time another baby came to the fireside for this was a thing not to be overlooked, Children had to be raised and it was up to some one to do the job. These early pioneers, I am sorry to say, believed that women were brought into this world for the sole purpose of satisfying the men, raising babies and making the clothes for the whole family and many the night did Anna sit up till her whole household was in bed slumbering, knitting by the light of a pine knot now and then thrown into the fire or by the light of a tallow candle filling the house and the air full of foul smoke to be breathed and had it not been for a crack here and there for the smoke to



go out they might all have died of suffocation.

While Anna was laboring in child birth trudging along as Henry saw other women of this country doing the same and to find a small family was spoken of as being something wrong as they were not complying with God's command of "Multiply and replenish the earth" and if the women thought differently they had not the courage to speak of it except in a whisper to each other.

Henry and Anna now had several large girls who could cook, spin, weave and help Anna generally.

Their boys also were growing too so that the question of "learning" was the subject discussed around the fireside and Henry discussed it with the neighbors and they hired a teacher to teach the 3 R's "reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic for these were all that was needed.

"They needed enough edification to read the bible". They needed to know how to write and spell and surely they needed to know how to cipher, so they started them to school during the 6 weeks of the summer. Webster's Blueback Speller was enough to learn how to read and spell from. These books were had and the children made wonderful progress the first year, "some got over as far as "Baker". Henry learned from their teacher and could count and add some little numbers.

"You see Ann, how much better off we are over here than where we came from" remarked Henry one day and now that your folks have moved over within 5 or 6 miles of us you can go to see Mr. and Mrs. Mooney once a year anyway and they can come down to see us".

The Mooneys were a very progressive people and were an addition to their community. They lived in the edge of Dawson County which became a part of Gilmer County later.

Ann was greatly delighted when her mother came to see her, for she remarked she had borne 7 children for Henry and was pregnant again which was a great source of pleasure to Henry.

Stephen Griffith's family was still growing and he had now passed the dozen mark. He assured Henry that one of the men remarked "if one woman can't satisfy a man and raise as many children as he wants and dies he can get another. It seemed Stephen



thought the same for he had taken his second wife and started over again in the baby business.

There were a few places of worship and they had met here and there. The Methodists had invaded this country and many had turned after the Wesleys. Lorenza Dow and other great Methodists had spread the gospel here and there. "You can be saved and go to Heaven by just having a little water sprinkled over your head" remarked one good Baptist to another. "We must build us a church so we can keep such heretical religion from our children". "And they even let the women have something to say in their meetings and Paul said for them to keep quiet". "I don't know what our country is coming to". "I guess it is going to the devil as fast as it can". The sentiment spread and the Pettit's, Griffith's, Holdens, Holts and others met and builded a church which will play an important part of this story in the future for from this was the scene of many big meeting and many preachers were ordained and sent out into the world. Many a boy's heart was smitten here for his beloved girl. Many a foot was washed and many testimonies were given when they applied for membership.

They met to dedicate the church and name it. There were men from miles around, some from 30 or 40 miles came. They took their dinners and had all day services.

In conference some wanted to name it one thing and some another but the name decided upon was Mt. Zion but many preferred one name or another but the church was organized and a preacher was called to fill the pulpit for the year. This is a step forward Granny King told her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews and friends.

Regular worship was held here during the whole year on the second Sunday of each month for the Methodist hold theirs on that day and this will keep our children from learning this heretical doctrine one close communion brother remarked as was handed down as a whispered remark but no one could vouch for it for sure only "Guess they said it for I am sure they thought it".

The big meetings were a source of great pleasure for the boys and girls for they would gather in little groups here and there and have a great time. The spring was quite a way from the church and many the lad who waited at the spring for his "Sweetheart" to come after a drink. He would tip his hat and dip her a gourd of water.



They had gourds cleaned for drinking cups and then he would ask her to see her to the house and of course there would be boys who were pals and their girls were pals too so when one "caught his girl" the other one did the same and oh what a thrill they would have when the boy would take his girl by the arm to assist her into the house when services were started. No one knows that thrill who has not been along the path. The men and the women had separate sides of the house in which to sit.

Many a Sunday did the yong "bucks" sit in church with his eyes "glued" upon the girl of his fancy for each knew by intuition just where to sit so they could see the other. Wonderful days were the times when big meetings were held for it was there they got to see more and more of the one they loved or at least thought they did and it answered the same purpose.

There were now a number of Baptist churches over the county, one at Clear Creek about 3 miles from the Pettit colony where Brother John and his family aligned themselves. There was one at Mountain Town where the Osborns made their power felt and one at Mt. Vernon where the Wrights and Bradleys came into strong power.

It was thought along in the fifties that an association of the churches was needed and the clerks of Mt. Zion took the matter up with the other churches and they agreed to come together and form a church alliance so they could better fight the devil and mainly the encroaching Weslyn doctrines which was now making headway.

The churches all sent delegations to attend the churches over in Fannin and Dawson counties and delegations also. They had great preaching and made a three days session of it, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The delegates were royally treated and they all agreed that the old time Baptist faith was strengthened much in this mountain section. Many souls testified that God for Christ sake had pardoned their sins and they desired to join the church.

Many Methodist took the back seats and listened to the tongue lashing the heretical churches got, "Those people who were afraid of water" as one good old brother preacher termed it "as for me I want water enough to quench hell fire when I get there. The good brother Methodist who attended had the grace of God enough in their hearts to listen and have little to say. Among the leading member Methodists were the Ellingtons, the Harrises, the Simmons and the Johnsons. Most of them had



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family alters and prayed for the Baptist brethren and hoped they would see and know the way of life and brotherly love.

John (little) was now up in his teens and made a trip to the railroad at Adairsville where they had to go to get warp for their cloth. All their clothes had to be home made and then had to have the thread to put in the loom so they could weave their cloth for their clothing as Henry's boys and girls were "stepping out" so were the Walkers, Griffiths, Millers and in fact there were a great throng of young folks in the Mt. Zion neighborhood, all budding to manhood and womanhood, In fact there had been several marriages in the county the last few years. John was coming 16 and they had such a load to market for all the neighbors sent for goods, thread etc. that John had to walk most of the distance. It took most of a week to make the trip in a covered wagon. John was weighed and he could tip the scales at barely 75#. A fine specimen of humanity his father remarked for if he had been much finer there would not have been anything of him at all.

Henry bought Ann and his grown girls some cloth from the mills for some store bought frocks for he wanted his girls to look as good as any. As Henry told Ann "Stephen has bought his women folks some goods for clothes and I guess I am as well off as Stephen". There was rejoicing when the wagon came home and style was booming now the neighbors said.

The boys had to still wear their home spun shirts and pants and coats too for that matter. All their shoes, everyday brogans and Sunday shoes too were home tanned and made in the home shoe shop. The boys from 15 years and down never wore Sunday shoes and some had not much of shoes in winter time, only the men who had to get wood and clear the land had winter shoes of the ordinary folks.

Henry had his own tan vats where the heavy hides were turned into sole leather and the thinner ones into uppers and Henry's vats always contained calf hides to make the "gals" some Sunday shoes and if there came a rain while the girls were off to meeting the gals would pull off their shoes and come home barefoot for they must save their Sunday shoes.

The women folks would dye the wool, card it, spin it and knit some fancy stockings but what was the use for the boys as John remarked to another boy "I don't see any use



of the gals having such purty stockings for we never get to see them except hung on the line". "Yes we do sometimes when they step up to get in the wagon I saw clear up to her thighs and, oh, John, what legs that gal did have and she blushed".

"Ypu should not be <sup>1</sup>see<sup>1</sup>ing like that" says John. "Aha"; "Who wouldn't look at a girls pretty legs if he got a chance to do it". "I'll bet you'd do it John if you had a chance". "My mother", said John, tells me it is not nice to try to see girls ankles and peek down their necks" and at times would let her girls pin up their skirts to their ankles when the men were all off to the fields so they could move swifter on the time to the spinning wheel but the caution was always "don't lose those pins for pins are scarce and hard to get" and her girls were very careful to put the pins back in the pin cushion on the mantle. Many of the poorer folks who could not afford to buy pins gathered thorns from the locust trees and dried them which made a very good substitute except for the fact they left too big of a hole.

Granny King was in great demand these months as there had been so many marriages the past few years that "the baby business is picking up" said Granny when she was to her last call. She was a great old soul and she made no charges for her services. They treated her as one of the family and gave her "whatever you sees you can afford to give her.

The Pettit's, Griffith's, Ellington's, Harrises and Walkers had about completed their family raising and had turned the job over to the younger generation except Stephen Griffith who had taken himself another wife a few years ago and had started all over again and about every two years he had to still call on Granny King, his mother-in-law by his first wife for her assistance and Granny called his hand one day - "Stephen", she said "I would think now that you are as old as you are you would quit this baby raising". "Now Granny, you have been married twice and you know there is just as much fun in this baby business as there ever was" and with a big laugh he passed it off that way.

The big meetings at night the <sup>1</sup>past few years gave the young people a chance to do their "sparking" under cover and "what was going on in the dark you can't tell" and many seven month babies came after marriages that took place when no one was expecting and as Granny told some of the women "Boys will be boys and girls will be



overcome and try to be women before they were married and so long as they got married what is the harm done for that is what they were made for and how can they help it", so the babies when they came were branded 7 month babies.

The great annual day set aside for "foot washing" was drawing nigh and all the members had to have new socks and new stockings and some of the poorer members who could not afford to buy or make new ones were helped by the more lucky ones. This was a great religious feast and the Bible plainly speaks that "you must wash one another's feet".

Early in the week hunting for deer was started and Henry with his "Long Tom" as they called his gun, was all cleaned up, Elijah's gun also, and the others proceeded to the mountains and cover to prepare for the great feast which was to take place on Saturday and Sunday. They bagged a couple of fine fellows "As fine as ever growed in the mountains of N.C.", said Henry to Ann when they came in, "And you, my dear, shall have a pair of Sunday shoes from his hide".

The venison was divided and prepared by adept hands. Pies were made and knee high cakes made galore and everything heart could wish for, Of course fried chicken was no treat but it was there too. Nobody went hungry on Sunday for they had 2 long sermons Saturday, beginning about 10 A.M. and ending about 1 P.M. Then dinner spread and the young lads and lassies made their way to the spring and back again, No greater joy had any peoples than now was being enjoyed by these mountaineers.

"We must all hurry into the church and get our vantage places for the women and men are all going to wash each others feet" was the cry among the big boys who did not yet belong to the church.

Brother McDaniel made a long talk about washing each others feet and said "All you members of this church or any other church who have enmity in their hearts to any other member could not partake of this rite according to our Savior".

From the male side of the house could be heard "My brother if your heart is right with the church, may I wash your feet" and the reply, "Yes, my brother, if your heart is right with the church, you may". On and on till everybody had paired off. Likewise from the female side of the house would come like detonations but in a milder, meeker and more subdued tone.



They had long home spun and woven towels that they girded themselves with and knelt before their "victims" and proceeded to unlace and take off one shoe and sock and wash that foot and likewise the other, always beginning at the right foot. They had brought their wash basins with them and when the feet were washed they took the towel from around themselves and dried the feet, preceeding to clothe the feet as they were unclothed. They that had been washed proceeded to wash the feet of the one who had washed their feet.

Foot washing being over and a recess of a few minutes being given for recreation another two hours of preaching was had and by the time it was all over and the families of men, women and little children loaded in the wagon and they got home it was milking time. The large boys and girls, of course, had to walk and this afforded the young men to escort the girl of his choice home but theremust be some one else along or else the old women of the community would talk about them.

The grave yards were sources of great worry to many of the young men who would walk home with his girl, sit on the farther end of the veranda from the old folks and chat for a while, then dark would over take them before they would pass the grave yard and to just tell the truth "There are 'hants' there most every night for we have seen them and heard them moaning and men have beenseen walking there without any heads" was going the rounds.

It was upon one of the occasions in the summer of 1856 that John Pettit attended one of these great Foot Washings and had gone to the spring with one of his pals and Rebecca Griffith and one of her pals were there and after giving them the gourd of water with trembling hands of excitement, John asked Rebecca - ahem - "Rebecca may I see you to the house". His throat was so dry he could hardly speak the words, and Rebecca made a curtesy and bow and said "with pleasure, John". There was of course nothing left but for the other couple to proceed along the way behind John and Rebecca. They did not go directly to the house but made the pleasantest way the longest way around. As they came meandering up the road some old women were out gossiping and among them was Granny King who said "Well I just declare, look yonder what has already happened with one of Stephen's girls". "What", was the answer.

"Look, she has caught John Pettit, who it seemed was too bashful to catch any



of the girls", "Right there is a match" said another and she is one of the best girls Stephen has". "She can spin and weave and no telling what that gal can do". "You know I have heard it rumored that John is going to make a preacher, for he is one of the best 'edificated' young men in this 'ere country and they say he is a Baptist, died in the wool" came the retorting reply. "I shouldn't wonder, for they say he is caught reading his bible a heap now of days and I am just wondering, myself, if he won't make a big preacher some day and there is no better girl in this whole country to be a preachers wife than pious little Rebecca" was voiced by others.

By the time to go home John and his boy friend were seen standing close over to the women's steps, for they always came out of the church on their own side. As Rebecca came out John approached her and said "It is alright". He meant by that remark that she was to ask her mother, since the spring episode, if John might accompany her home. "Mother said it is alright but we must go along with the crowd". John took her by the arm and they stepped aside for the crowd to get ready to go.

What was said could never be recalled by either on that eventful afternoon for their hearts beat as one and they only touched the high places. John now had grown into an august man and not the 75 lb. boy of 16.yrs.

They came to the little brook on their way to her home and some one had broken the foot log ahead of them and Rebecca had on a brand new pair of shoes for it was her first time to take the foot washing, also it was John's first time. So when they came to the little branch "It will not do, Rebecca, to get your shoes wet" so he picked her up under her arms and set her down dry upon the other side which caused a great laughter and shout "Hurrah; for John". Then John had to help two or three smaller ones over too. It did not faise John's big manly shoes for he could stand upon the rocks and lift them over. Rebecca blushed and so did John. Rebecca's father, Stephen, and her mother drove up just in time to see it well done and Steohen remarked "Well done, John", which greatly relieved John's excitement. They proceeded along with no further incidents and reached home in due time and took their seats upon the farther end of the porch to discuss the happenings of the day and about dusk they saw Granny coming up the road so John said "I must go Rebecca and may I have the pleasure of seeing you again some time"? "You may at your pleasure John".



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So John bade her good night and proceeded on his way just in time to meet Granny out of hearing of the others. Well, John, I see you have made two good steps today". "What is that Granny". "You had your feet washed and you have taken to yourself a girl". "What did she say, John". "Does she like you very much", "Oh, I dunno" was his reply. "You like her, don't you John"? "I have been watching you for some time and I knew it was going to happen some of these days and I told Rebecca it was too". "What did she say Granny" was John's reply. "Oh, she has her eyes on you and her heart is beating for you too, John, and I hope you will 'spark' her alright too, John". "I'll help you too, John, for I would love to have you for a grandson". "I sure would John". "I would like to see Stephen's and Henry's families tied up together with a chord of matrimony for they are both well bred families and I can almost hear your babies crying now John He;He,ee". John whirled and away he went with Granny laughing with all her might.

When Granny reached Stephen's house Rebecca was standing on the porch waiting to see what Granny had to say about John. She came laughing and Rebecca asked "What is the matter Granny". "Oh, I just had a little round up with John for bothering me granddaughter" with a little twinkle in the eye. "What did John have to say" was Rebecca's inquiry. "He wouldn't say much but look here chile, I am a tellin of you, before the Indian chief makes his Wau-hoo, John will be wanting you to dance the broom with him". "Now Granny that wasn't what you were laughing at him about" came back from Rebecca. "Ha-ha, hee-hee;" was all Granny could say. Rebecca, of course, was more anxious tjan ever. "Oh, Granny, do tell me", don't keep suspense like this". "Well, ha,ha,he,he, I told John I could nearly hear yours and his children crying now, ha, ha;" "Oh, Granny you old tease" and away Rebecca went.

All of today was too much for John. Just then there came a big clap of thunder and John jumped high and came down again on earth. He looked around and a big black cloud was rising and by the time he reached the top of the Johnson hill it was dark as a "stack of black cats" and John's mind wandered away into other worlds again. A big hoot owl flapped his wings and crossed the road ahead of him and it almost seemed like angels wings but he was not to think so for long for it lit in a tree top and said "Who, who, o' you". "Oh, a big hoot owl". This brought John back again.



Up the road a little piece and there stood the church. Through the blackness it could just dimly be seen and on out the road a piece was the old haunted grave yard. Not so many graves there but passers by had died and were buried there and it was reported that the Indians had massacred some rowdy white men in earlier days and had piled rocks upon them and it was their ghosts that had surmounted the hill top to cry aloud and they had been seen walking there as they were scalped by Mr. Red Man. There was another report that a young man and girl had been too intimate in their sparking days and she had given birth to an illegitimate child and they had killed it and buried it there and there was the small grave that no one knew about. It was reported here of late that the baby had been heard to cry in the grave yard and that it had been heard as far down as the branch about a couple of hundred yards or more from the graveyard and they knew it was a baby and Granny said "I'm not surprised at all if wern's so".

By this time John had topped the graveyard hill and his mind was not upon graveyard haunts not nothing but one thing and that was what Granny had said; "I can almost hear your child crying". He was so engrossed with his thoughts that he was not minding much where he was going and it was so dark he could scarcely see anyway and he ran right into the bank of the road below the graveyard. He had not more than recovered himself from his near approach to a fall that a startled cry came from apparently a weakened baby. John jumped about three feet and exclaimed "My baby" and then he came to himself with his hair standing straight and his eyes glued to the road, almost paralyzed. John was not a coward but it all was too much once more he heard it and he made to run but his long coat tail hit on the heels and he stopped and listened and he could hear in the leaves a little rustle of a sound "There it is coming", John tiptoed a few steps and again the cry. "I'll just have to run for if I don't I believe my stomache is going to have some action. He didn't though, he stood there what seemed to him 5 minutes but guess it might have been 5 seconds and started off again. Again the cry came forth and a bit louder. If John could have found wings he would have flown away from a crying baby. John sat down for by now he could not stand, but no baby. "I just wonder if the tales Granny was telling me did not go to my head and I just imagined I heard a baby.



"Why of course that was it for I was just thinking about those babies Granny was telling about when I thought I heard one crying". "I wonder what Rebecca is doing and wonder if she would care much if she knew about me getting a little bit excited' if she knew it". So by the time all of this came back to him he was up getting ready to go on home for it was thundering more and more. John had only gone a few steps when a more shrill cry came and more like a baby than he had heard before, His hair almost pushed his hat off his head. Now reader, if you never was really scared you can't imagine that feeling of your hair stiffning.

John could not bear it any longer, he gripped his hat it one hand, his coattail in the other and he made the road look like a bright streak down the dark road. He never knew when he hit the branch for he went clean over it.

Newt Walker had been home with John's sister, Elenor, and was coming down the hill when he heard John coming down the hill in full run, puffing and blowing. "Hold up" says Newt. John stopped and between puffs and blows told Newt all about it.

"Do you suppose it was a baby's ghost" says Newt. "It sounded exactly like one" was John's reply. "What am I going to do for I will have to go away around through the woods or go right by there" Newt said. "Well, Newt, I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll go back over there and stay all night with you as bad frightened as I am or until we find out what it was if it is still there for if it was the baby's ghost it must still be there".

Newt and John agreed so they went down the road to the branch and up the hill towards the grave yard and when they were nearly to where John made his leap to run they heard it again. "It sure is a baby John". They stopped but there was not a sound. They started on again "There it is Newt, right where I left it, exactly where that little baby's grave is!"

"Let us go out to the grave and see" says Newt. John agreed provided Newt wouldn't run off and leave him. "You already had your run" said Newt "but I promise I'll die there in the grave yard before I'll leave you." They climbed the bank and started on and sure enough there was the baby crying from the yard.

They stopped and not a sound was heard. The thunder had passed around and the sky was lighting a little so they could distinguish some shadows now and then. All



of them looked like the man without any head but now there were two young men who were sure enough brave, both of them ready to run, faint or something else. "It must have gone into oblivion" says John. "I don't know where that place are but guess 'that' has gone there alright enough" says Newt. John ventured that they had better go as it was getting late for him to be out, the main reason being he was getting faint like as he afterwards explained to Newt. "I suppose so" said Newt and they started and again the baby cried out near to them. They both jumped and stopped still but not another sound.

"I'll tell you, Newt, what I'll do. I'll stay right here till the break of day or till we find the ghost". "Well, John, I don't know so much about that but I don't want to act like a coward so I'll stick it out".

They moved a little - it would cry - stop - it would hush and they stopped and stayed still until they heard it. For many minutes they heard nothing but a rustle in the leaves. "Oh, it is the wind" says John. "Wow-oh" cried Newt and jumped and made a leap but John caught him just as the cry came from right under Newt's feet. His feet came down with a thud and struck something on the ground and it squalled and there it lay, a little pig with just enough life to cry like a baby and not enough life to let them know it was a pig. Such a relief has never been known before nor since from two young men. They agreed not to tell of the run John had made and of Newt trying to run but they were only going to tell the brave parts of the story and each used it to keep the other down. Each had a story to tell that night when they got home.

If John would get on his "high horse" telling anything, Newt would say "Now John tell it all", so would John say to Newt when he was over boisterous.

It was now drawing nigh to another presidential election, politics were running high. They got the news now and then from the papers The Toledo Blade, printed at Toledo, Ohio was an official organ for the north and it was blazing away for the new Republican Party and the various other papers were not for State Rights. As one of the "hot heads" of the south put it, "We have been ruled by these Northern Yankees about long enough "It is time for us to come out from under the yoke of bondage and form a confederation of ourselves".



"You see how the supreme court has decided against letting our negroes cross over the Mason - Dixon Line and be free" The wrangle went on and on till nearly night, getting nowhere, slavery, secession, state rights and all.

Among those who were fighting secession were the Pettit's, Griffith's, Ellington's, Holt's, Charles West of Ellijay, Weaver's and some of those for holding on to the negro were Simmon's, Smith's, Tabor's, Slag's, etc. It seemed the pros and cons were about equally divided but when the votes were counted in the election of 1856 Gilmer, Fannin, Dawson and Pickens Counties were listed on the Republican side of the fight. They were for holding the union together.

Uncle Ted Ward who lived in Scrougetown remarked to Stephen as they came home the day of the election "It looks like the whole damn country is going to be tied up before long in a great scramble and the devil only knows where the whole damn thing will end". "Which side are you on Uncle Fed" said Henry. "I'll just be damned if I know. I guess I will be on the side that loses for I have always been on that side".

Uncle Fed lived in what was called Scrougetown. It was no town but their section took in one of the richest corn and some of the finest springs in all of North Georgia. The land is so rich Uncle Fed told Grandfather Cantrell, that the land was so rich that her pastures fairly scrouged themselves out of the ground. It became a bye word Uncle Fed's Scrouge Town as it is known until this day.

The Osborn's from Mountain Town took a great hand in the political jamboree of the day. They lived in Mountain Town, another fictitious town in name only. Not so much so as some of the others for there were enough hill peaks in this section to be a town of hills but between the hills there were fertile valleys, one among them was the Mountain Town Creek Valley where the Osborns had settled.

The Holts of Turnip Town had taken a broad stand for the Union side. They had settled that fertile creek valley. It was the outlet of the springs from the opposite side of the mountain from where the Pettit's, Ellington's, Weavers and Griffith's lived and one dear old soul who lived away at the head of this valley was Granny Elliot and the gap of the mountain you cross to go over to Turnip Town was called "Elliot's Gap."



One day when Granny Elliot was on a baby case at Mr. Holt's she was asked "Why do they call the valley and creek where you live, Turnip Town"? Granny was in one of her funny moods, as was the rule in those days when she was on a baby case. "Well, you see, when this here country was young and rich and jist my folks and a few more was living here we raised such big turnips that we had to have a log rollin' in the fall to gather them in". "Lots of them would fill a wagon bed". "Now Granny what a big one" they said. "It is so and if you will come to my house this fall I'll show ye that it does take lots of them, even now, to fill the wagon body". They all had a big laugh except the one who was in much pain. "Now Granny, without joking, just why did they name it that"? "This valley which lies between these mountains is just right for this crop and people come here from miles around after turnips, so it took the name "Turnip Town".

The fourth of March 1957 came and James Polk took his seat as President and the country was doomed to much disappointment for he was a happy-go-lucky man and was the same in office and it was time now for a great growth in the Republic Party.

Now North Georgia crept along in the summer time by "big meetings" and making whiskey in the winter. There was great jollifications in the log rolling which were plentiful. The men cleared more land and in the early spring they invited their neighbors in to help pile up the logs and burn them. It was understood that there must be plenty of good old corn whiskey at these gatherings and before it was all over some of the lot would be ready to turn their toes up to the burning log heap and sleep the corn off. It very often happened that politics would be the topic and some would have neough corn to make them want to fight.

Dan Miller had married Barbery Pettit, John's sister, and had settled on the headwaters of one of the branches making the Owltown Creek. He had cleared land all winter and early spring they had a big "log rolling". Dan had prepared from the corn plenty of double and twisted corn liker and the log rolling had gone along very well. The ladies were there to do quilting for Barbery. A great crowd of Dan's special crowd had come and by the time dinner was over several were so full they wanted to fight anybody and everybody who did not believe politically as they did. Henry, Stephen, Coke and a few others got together and agreed that from this time on there



would be no more jugs of whiskey at log rollings. "I take my dram" says Henry, "When I feel I need it". "So do I" said Stephen and Coke, "but I don't believe it should be taken in public places".

This was the first move so far as we know when whiskey was made an issue of public gatherings and was destined to be a great factor in the lives of the families of these great fearless men who had the stamina to denounce whiskey at all.

This was a great corn country and apples were coming to their own so some of these husky mountaineers thought there was no harm in making their corn into liquid and their apples into brandy. The market wagons from the mountains were soon to be known for their stock of good whiskey and brandy. Mind you, however, not all market wagons carried liquid merchandise for the prohibition question already started was beginning to have its effect upon this country.

John was still making his regular visits to Stephen Griffith's. Several of Stephen's children had married off, as had some of the Ellington's and Pettit's, Simmons and Smith's. John, however, did not make it night by the grave yard alone though he firmly believed there were no ghosts. John tried to shun Granny for she was a thorn in the flesh when it came to teasing.

John had come into his own on Feb. 27, 1958 and had spent the next Sunday with Rebecca and Stephen's folks and they had made it possible, by making an extra fire, for John to have a few hours with Rebecca.

"Rebecca, I am 21 years of age". "Yes, John, a man of your own", "And a good man you are too John for father has told us how you are sticking up for the morality of our country". "I hope you will be a great man some day, John".

"You know, Rebecca, that my Papa and Mama are getting older and some one has to look after them and I have no one to do that". "Well, John, it seems you might find some one that you could trust" says Rebecca, cutting her eyes at John. "But whether the one that I would like to have to look after them and me would be willing to do it or not, for you know Rebecca it is a hard job sometimes to look after old folks for most old folks get cranky and do many things unexpected." "Yes, John, that is all true but there are the Ellington girls and the Smith girls and there are some fine girls at the Holts and I hear there is a new family of folks moved in over the river



by the name of Harris and they say they have some mighty fine christian girls". "It does seem that you might find one among this list that would answer 'the roll call' and say yes when asked", said Rebecca.

"But, Rebecca, they tell me those Harris' are strong Methodists and the Ellingtons too, they say are likely to all join the Methodists for Fletch and Lon have already joined". "You know, Rebecca, that I could never get along with the Methodists at all. They tell me they all believe in 'falling from grace'". "Oh, they do" was her only reply.

John and Rebecca sat there a long time without either speaking a word but their hearts beat as one. John twisted and turned and looked at Rebecca and spoke thusly "Rebecca could you guess who I was wanting to help me out". "Well I have guessed nearly everybody I could think about but it seems they don't suit you" says she.

"Rebecca, I have something to say to you and I have not told any one and I wanted to tell you first". "Well, go ahead John, I will keep your secret" says she. "Well, Rebecca, it is a mighty big undertaking and requires lots of courage but I am thinking about making a preacher". Rebecca arose and walked over to John and laid her tender white hand upon John's shoulder and said "May God's blessings be upon you in your work". This was more than John could withstand and he arose and facing Rebecca said "Rebecca", "Yes John" "Rebecca will you", "Yes, John, go ahead and may God help you." "Rebecca, will you take me just as I am without one plea and try to help me in all my work". "Yes, John, if it is your wish that I may then I will try, God being my helper to make you a good wife and a care taker for your father and mother and a mother" and she stopped and blushed, but John caught the meaning and caught his hand under her chin, reached down and sealed it with a kiss, the first one he had ever had and the first one she had ever had and their souls of passion burned within their very souls.

Their fire had gone nearly out and one of Rebecca's sisters guessing, if she had not listened through the crack in the door, brought in some wood and made up the fire and looked at Rebecca's face so red and at John whose eyes were glistening with love smiled a teasing smile and said "You children must have been warm to sit your fire out but guess now it will burn and she slipped out the door.



John and Rebecca sat close together leaning their heads on their hands, elbows resting on their knees for a long time, their hearts beating in perfect rhythm. John had found the one to take the greatest task one could take and little did Rebecca know that she had taken a job that would send her prematurely to a mother's grave but little did they care now.

Just then the door opened and Granny stuck her head in at the door "John", she said "Have you heard any more babies crying" meaning the grave yard incident. "Now, Granny, don't talk to John that way", "What is it to you, Rebecca, how I talk to John". "Um-hum, I see well that it is alright. You both will hear the baby crying some of these times" and she stepped out laughing. "Don't pay any attention to her" said Rebecca. "Oh, that is alright". "John," Rebecca said very earnestly, "are you sure you are satisfied with your choice". "Yes, Rebecca, "I want you with all my heart, soul and mind and strength and have for a long time but could not see my way clear to ask you to load yourself with a preacher and two old folks". "Are you sure you want to take me just as I am"? "Yes, John, you are the only man I ever saw that I truly loved and wanted to marry". "Well, just as soon as we can we will get married".

Granny told the whole family what had happened for she said "I have seen the hand writing on the wall too many times not to know the signs".

It was a day of great rejoicing in the family circle to know that John would some day be a member of the Griffith family.

Rebecca began by Granny's instructions to get her clothes ready. "You must have you some nice clothes" says she. "I believe John is going to be a preacher".

"You must make you some woolsey dresses and some nice pretty coats. Your brother Will can make shoes. We will see that he makes you the nicest pair of shoes that has adorned a foot in this here country round about". "When is it going to happen" asked Granny. "The day has not been set yet for you know there are things John has to see about before this can take place but Granny you must not tell any body about it". "Ah, chile, don't you think Granny got a bit of sense, I know what to tell and what to keep". "Yes, honey chile, I sure keep your secret for you."

The thread was on hand and the spinning wheel ran nearly day and night spinning the wool and the cotton for the garments. One of Rebecca's sisters said



"I would be hunting me a man too if I knew I was going to have such nice clothes like Rebecca". "If you work like Rebecca, day and night, you might have nice things too", says Granny.

The calf skin hides had just come from the tannery and was now being cured and worked and William was instructed by Granny about them. William was one of the best shoe makers in the country. He got a big price for making ladies fine shoes but as he and John were special friends, William said he would not charge Rebecca anything for making hers and they were perfect when done.

While reviewing these high lights we turn to some other sections. There was a great rush into the Dahlonega, Ga. section. Reports came that they were coining gold there by the hundreds as the mint there was in full blast. Gold was being mined in great quantities for many young men were going over there to engage in the work. Loads were being staked out, ditches were being dug to carry water for sluicing the dirt laden with gold, for miles one ditch they said was about 7 miles long. It passed across the road near the mint. After big rains particles could be seen in the sand where it washed, but this being government property they would not allow any panning over there. The Dotson boys had just come over from there and reported great enthusiasm over there.

While about 5 miles north of Ellijay there had been reported one of the largest nuggets that North Georgia had ever found, everybody was wild over the prospect.

Uncle FedWard told some wonderful tales about having seen on the north side of the Stover Mountain some rocks that were loaded down with gold but he could not find the place again.

Uncle Dave Cantrell had moved farther up the Cartecay River and was beyond the flour and corn mill that had been put in, known in later years as the Swan Mill for Mr. Momeduk Swan had kept this mill for years and had put in a saw mill. It was rigged with a saw similar to a cross cut saw but ran perpinducular and was much heavier. It was a slow process as the saw would kick off when a board was sawed and stop till some one would go set for another board and run the log back by hand but we are side tracking from riches to boards or planks as they were called.

The ridges for miles around the White Patch find was dug here and there and



and all around hunting for riches. In the meantime the Mays, Mr. Mays and three sons had found a "lode" as pockets of gold were called, up the river about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Henry Pettit's and were making regular trips to Dahlonega, some said with a pocket full of gold. For fun they would leave the washing of gold and took goose quill feathers and cut tje end off, filled the quill and slip the end of another quill over the open end so they might not lose any.

The Mays had made an artificial dam on top of a high hill about the river where this lode was located and had gone a long way up the creek and ditched the water around the hill side and at night the reservoir on the hill would fill up and in the day time they would turn a sluice of water loose on the clay hill side and wash the dust into the river. The way they gathered the gold was - They made long boxes with one side open and nailed pieces across the bottom about every foot and they would wash, running all the water through there boxes until evening they they would clean out the boxes and pan out the gold. It was a facinating business and just the word "gold" in those days meant much to those people who did not see much money.

They would take their gold and exchange it at the mint for money. Who would not be excited to see the shining metal come out of the washings.

John Pettit had been to the May's mine to take some meat, eggs and cabbage to them for John was the market boy. While there the Mays made a run, that is, they cleaned out their sluice boxes and John stood for hours looking on. Also Granddaddy Strickland who was known as "Gramps Strickland" was there and told John, "There has been gold found on your father's place. It is said the Indians found gold there". "Where do you think they found it"? "From out on the spring branch" was Gramps reply.

John went home light footed saying "Out'n the spring branch, out'n the spring branch". "Well if they got gold out'n the spring branch the source must be back in the hills somewhere and I will see about it tomorrow". John had watched the panning at the mine till he thought he understood about it all.

If the reader does not know what "panning" means permit me to explain. They take the settlings or sediment where gold is expected to be in a basin similar to a wash basin. They then keep the pan under water, stirring and stirring till all the mud and sand is washed out and as gold is so much heavier than these substances it will



cling to the bottom and when everything has been washed out gold remains at the bottom. Then a few drops of quick silver put into the pan will gather the gold together as gold and quick silver has an affinity for each other, that is they stick together.

John was up next morning and had his chores done early and took the wash pan and away he went to the branch. He tried the branch in many places and only got a color until he got to the spring. Henry's spring was a boiling spring and bubbled up from the bottom bringing small particles as it came up.

John sat there and watched for a long time, he reasoned to himself "This sand comes here from some where as the water must gather together so if gold is in this sand there must be gold up under the hill somewhere".

John dipped his wash basin down into the bottom of the boiling sand and began the tedious process of eliminating the sand by washing it over the side of the pan for sand was next to gold in weight.

John had just cleared out the sand and had a few particles in the bottom left. "Hurrah!" he said "I found it". Henry had been sitting a ways off watching John's maneuvers. "Hurray! You have found what", "A good licking, I guess". "No, Papa I have found the source of the gold the Indians said was here". "What Indians"? Who said, How come", "What got that into your head?". "Why, Papa, Grancer said the Indians used to get gold".

"Indians, Grancer Strickland and the whole she-bang be darned". If I ever catch you fooling around my spring any more I'll make you think gold sure enough". "I would not give that spring of mine for the whole Mays gold mine."

Henry picked up the pan and looked and sure enough there were gold particles in the pan. "Huh, about a quarter's worth, I guess."

From that day on Henry's and afterwards John's spring was never tapped for gold and the dream of gold on the Pettit farm died with John's pan of gold that bright sunny day. "Water as pure as that is worth more than gold" and so it is.

The Balews had now become figures of Scrougetown. Uncle Johnny as he was known

The Hogans also were located up above the home of Uncle Fed Ward as he married one of Fed's daughters

In the upper settlement towards the Mountains was another settlement, Tichanettly.



where the Plemmons, The Cannons, Weavers, Woodies, Cochran, Claytons, Akins (one family branch of the Holts) which were all to play a part in the future of this country.

The little private school which was being run during the late 1840's and up through the early 1850's had made the Cartecay District and surrounding it the best educated district in North Georgia.

The Ayers had settled across the river from the May's gold mine and their property extended along down the river to the ford.

The Methodist church was established and a house built about 1/2 mile above the ford of the river. The Methodists were making headway in North Georgia. The Methodist doctrine discouraged making, selling or drinking to excess any whiskey and the doctrine was adhered to in the main while many thought there was no harm in taking a social dram. One good Baptist deacon remarked one day in discussing the Methodist "They are dry without, dry within and Hell fire wouldn't have a hard time setting them on fire". Only jesting, of course but really just trying to throw off on the new denomination for trying to teach contrary to their belief for some churches as well as some folks believe every body is wrong but themselves.

Time was rolling on and religious feeling in North Georgia was running high and the national congress was having a great time on the negro question, the north trying to hold down the number of slave states in the south so the north would have a majority in the senate and the south trying to increase the slave holding states, so they had it and sentiments ran high.

The great cry was "Cecede, form a government of our own in the south". "We do not need to be "run" over by those damned Yankees and foreigners who are up in the big cities just to run over things". "We can live without them". "We don't need them".

North Georgia was not an exception to the rule for the North Georgia mountain country believed in a firm steady government and while we are our own let's stay one. "One and inseparatable". There were about as many who believed that way as believed against.

Alexander M. Stephens, one of George's brave sons in congress fought secession to the last. He was a firm believer in "state rights" but believed that state rights



ceased when it dominated the sister state. "You have no right to burn your own woods if it endangers your neighbor's property" was the principal he fought for.

Things got mighty hot in North Georgia. The Pettit's, Griffith's, Weaver's Akin's, Ellington's, Charles Bramblett, Craizor and too many to name, both Baptist and Methodists were strong for the central government plan, while the Smith's, Tabor's Hudson's, Flemons, Rogers, Cannons, Bishops, Wards and others were 'raring' for secession and slavery.

While slavery was the main issue, secession was the issue in congress and state legislature. The new Republican party was cutting inroads through the union. Almost all of North Georgia, East Tennessee and Western North Carolina was about equally divided, if any odds, the Republican party had it. The "hot heads" Southern Democrats would throw up "Yanks" to the Union while in turn the Union would stamp the "Sessioners" as Rebels, so there they had it up and down.

Henry Pettit died and left John the home place to take care of his wife Anna. Ann was feeble and John saw the task was great.