WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Newsletter



April - May 2016

201 Locust Street

McMinnville, Tennessee



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WCGA Members Tour the Helton Home

The Helton Home is located in the Vervilla community of Warren County, Tennessee (Figures 1& 2). In November 2015, Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) graduate assistant Taylor Stewart, CHP Director Dr. Carroll Van West, and Interpretive Specialist Leigh Ann Gardner visited the home at the invitation of the property owner. At the time of the visit, the house was undergoing a restoration. What follows is a brief history and architectural description of the house.

Vervilla was described in 1874 as: "another small post town, nine miles from McMinnville, on the west branch of Hickory Greek, not far from the junction of the east and west branches. It has two or three stores, a good school, and two churches." The Helton home is located approximately 0.5 miles from the Philadelphia Church of Christ, built in 1830 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.2



Figure 1. Location of Helton home courtesy of Google Maps.



Figure 2. Plat map of the Helton home. The Helton property is filled in yellow. Map courtesy State of Tennessee.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The two story house likely began as a federalstyle structure, as can be seen in the image of the back of the home included in the information from the homeowner.



Figure 3. This photograph shows what the rear of the home looked like prior to its 1948 renovation. Image provided by Kara Helton.

There have been significant alterations to the interior and exterior of the home, as well as some additions that have altered the exterior of the home. The home was remodeled around the mid twentieth century, and is currently undergoing a renovation. The siding on the home has been added, as well as the bricking on the east-facing front porch area (Figure 4). The back of the home was enclosed to allow for more space (Figure 5), as well as a major addition on the north side of the home. An original well remains behind the house that has been since enclosed and paved around (Figure 6).



Figure 4. Front elevation of house.



Figure 5. Rear elevation of house showing enclosed porch.



Figure 6. Well located behind the house.

The interior features a single winder staircase, with winding handrail and square cut balusters, as seen in Figures 7 and 10. The home has maintained some original historic material, including several doors and much of the wood flooring (Figure 8). The bedrooms on the upper level are undergoing renovation, and the wood floors have been retained (Figure 9).

Figure 7. Curved railing added by Clifford McClain. Figure 10. Staircase to the upper level.





Figure 8. Wood floors and possible original door located on the upper level.

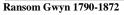


Figure 9. One of the bedrooms on the upper level as it undergoes renovation.

HISTORY

Information from the property owner indicated that past owners of the house included Romulus Gwynn (or Guinn), T.W. Wilson and Edward Wilson, John D. Dale, Mary Peay, and Clifford McClain. The information provided related that T.W. and Edward Wilson sold the property to John D. Dale and Lucy Dale in 1883. In 1899, the property passed to Mary Peay.4 Although a full deed history was not done, what follows is a brief history of the ownership of the house.



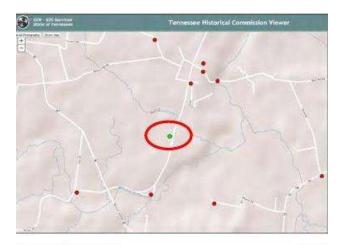




Margaret (McConnell) Davidson Gwyn Oct 18, 1801 April 21 1868

Photos provided by Bob & Betty Sherwood *Gwynn/Guinn family*

The Tennessee State Historical Commission Viewer, which is accessible online, refers to the Helton home as the "Old Rumes Guinn Place". Their survey dated the house to c. 1860 and noted that although the house had been altered in the 1950s, the interior had not been extensively altered.



Clear Selection	
County:	Warren
Survey ID;	WR00159
Historical Name:	OLD RUMES GUINN PLACE
Common Name:	MACLASIA-DENTON HOUSE
Address:	
Citys	
Owner:	CLIFFORD McCLAIN/DENTON
Date Constructed:	C1860
Notes:	ALTHOUGH CONSIDERABLY ALTERED DURING RESTORATION WORK IN THE MID-19505. THE OLD GUINN HOUSE STILL RETAINS SOME OF ITS 1880 CHARACTERISTS. THE INTERIOR, WHICH FEATURES A CIRCULAR STAIRCASE, WAS NOT EXTENSIVELY CHANGED.
Primary Style:	GREEK REVIVAL
Original Use:	Single Family Dwelling
Plant	Rectangular
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Figure 11. Tennessee Historic Commission Viewer map of the Helton property. The property is circled in re. Also shown above is property information from the Tennessee Historic Commission Viewer

Ransom Gwynn (Source 6) was born in 1790 in North Carolina. While it is not clear when he came to Tennessee, there is a Ransom Guin living in Warren County in the 1820 Census (Figure 12). In 1824, Ransom purchased fifty acres of land in Warren County, "at the head waters of Hickory Creek." In 1856, Guinn purchased about 670 acres of property described as "on the waters of Hickory Creek," which is across Vervilla Road from the Helton home. Although the property descriptions in the deed appear to correlate with the current location of the Helton home, this cannot be completely confirmed through these land grants alone. The naming of the property as the "Old Rumes Guin Place" by the Tennessee Historical Commission appears to confirm that the Guin family built the home and/or inhabiting it for some length of time.

Ransom married three times and died in 1872, which fits into the timeline of the home being contested in court by the Wilsons before 1883. After the Wilson's dispute was solved, the home was sold to John Dale in 1883.

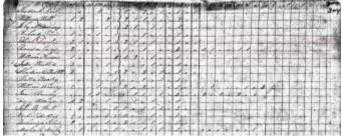


Figure 12. 1820 Census. Ransom Guin's household is circled in red. In that year, nineteen people lived in the household. The Guin household consisted of 2 white males under the age of 10, 1 white male between the ages of 26 and 44, 1 white female under the age of 10, 1 white female between the ages of 16 and 25, 3 male slaves under the age of 14, 1 male slave between the ages of 14 and 25, female slave under the age of 14, and 1 female slave between the ages of 14 and 25.

Ransom Gwyn appears to have been a fairly prosperous farmer during his time in Warren County. The 1850 census records show that his real estate holdings were valued at \$4,000. The 1860 Agriculture Census indicates the value of his farm to be \$12,000. He primarily produced wheat, corn, potatoes and sweet potatoes (Appendix C). 11 Ransom Gwyn was also a slave owner, owning 34 slaves in 1860 and having four slave houses on his property (Appendix C). Ransom died in February 1872 and is buried at the Gwyn Family Graveyard in Viola, Tennessee.12

Ransom's son, Hugh, was born in 1818. He married Mary Evans (1828-1913), and they were the parents of two sons, Romulus Gwynn and Remus Gwynn. While Romulus lived in Warren County, Remus lived in Texas. Like his father, Hugh was a farmer, and his real estate was valued at \$3,650 in 1870. Living in the household with him was an African American farm laborer and a female house servant (Appendix C).13 Hugh died in 1873 and is buried at the Gwyn Family Cemetery in Viola, Tennessee.14

For more information on the children of Ransom Gwyn, see Appendix A.

T.W. Wilson and Edward Wilson

Little is known of the time period of ownership for T.W. Wilson and his brother, Edward Wilson.

John D. Dale and Lucy Dale (1883-1899)

Without seeing the deeds, it is difficult to prove that the Dale family lived in the house during this period. The 1890 census is missing, and by 1900, Mr. and Mrs. Dale lived in Suwannee, Branford County, Florida. (Source 15)

Mary Peay and Romulus Gwynn (1899-1948)

Mary Peay purchased the house in 1899, the current homeowner's great aunt and uncle purchased the home during the estate sale of Mary Peay in 1948. (Source 16) Her first husband, Hugh Gwynn, died in 1873, and she later married Thomas Peay. Mary Peay was the mother of Romulus Gwynn, and they were living in the same household by 1910 (Appendix C).17 At her death in 1913, she willed her property to Romulus Gwynn and his wife, Hattie (Appendix D). (Source 18) Romulus and Hattie Gwynn continued living at the house until the death of Romulus in October 1947. (Source 19)

Sources

- 1 J.B. Killebrew, Introduction to the Resources of Tennessee, vol. II (Nashville: Tavel, Eastman & Howell, 1874), 970.
- 2 National Register nomination "Philadelphia Church of Christ," listed November 17, 1988.
- http://focus.nps.gov/nrhp/GetAsset?assetID=1a78eb80-763c-42dc-bd5f-2a22f75d7c07
- 3 "100 Year Old Home More Modern Today," April 1970. Article provided by Kara Helton. A copy of the article can be found at Appendix E.
- 4 Email from Kara Helton, October 19, 2015.
- 5 "TN Historical Commission Viewer," accessed January 22, 2016, http://tnmap.tn.gov/historicalcommission/.
- 6 Ransom and his family's last name is alternately spelled Guinn, Gwynn, Gwyn, and Guin in documents.
- 7 1820 Census, Warren County, Ransom Guin household, Page 304. Ancestry.com.
- 8 "North Carolina and Tennessee, Early Land Records," November 23, 1824, Ancestry.com.
- 9 "North Carolina and Tennessee, Early Land Records," 1856, Ancestry.com.
- 10 Email from Kara Helton, October 19, 2015.
- 11 Selected U.S. Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1860 Agriculture Census, Warren County, Tennessee, Ancestry.com
 12 Gwyn Family Graveyard," http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gsr&GScid=2264017, accessed January 26, 2016.
 13 1870 Census, Warren County, Tennessee, population schedule, Ninth Civil District, Sheet 4, dwelling 25, family 25, Hugh Gwyn household;

digital image, Ancestry.com, accessed January 26, 2016, www.ancestry.com.

14 "Gwyn Family Graveyard," http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gsr&GScid=2264017, accessed January 26, 2016. 15 Census information for John D. Dale, 1900 United States Census, Census Place: Branford, Suwannee, Florida; Roll: 177; Page: 8A; Enumeration District: 0113; FHL microfilm: 1240177. Sheet 8. 16 Email from Kara Helton, October 19, 2015.

17 1900 Census, Warren County, Tennessee, population schedule, Ninth Civil District, Sheet 1A, dwelling10, family 10, Romulus Gwynn household, digital image, Ancestry.com, accessed January 26, 2016,www.ancestry.com.

18 Last Will of Mary Peay, dated July 13, 1913, Warren County Will Book 1, Pages 195-196.

19 Certificate of Death for Romulus Gwyn, October 11, 1947, digital image, Ancestry.com.11

Clifford and Mildred McClain

Clifford and Mildred McClain purchased the property in 1948. It was during this ownership that the house was renovated. Mr. McClain was responsible for the building the built in cabinet (Figure 13) in the house as well as adding the curved railing to the staircase. It is also thanks to the McClain family that the well behind the house was preserved. 20



Figure 13. Cabinet built by Clifford McClain.



Kara Helton and son welcomes the WCGA group and explains the renovations.













Appendix A Ransom Gwyn Family Genealogy

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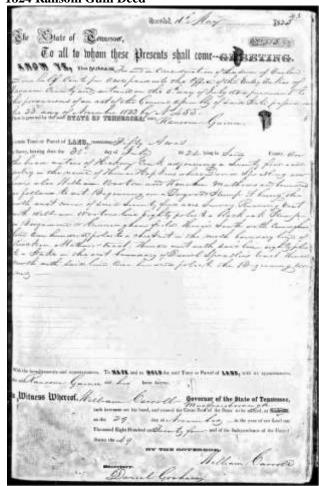
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Taken from Thomas Felix Henderon, Happy Valley: History and Genealogy (Chapel Hill, NC: 1940). P. 179-180. Images from Ancestry.com

Appendix B: DEEDS 1824 Ransom Guin Deed



1856 Ransom Gwyn Deed

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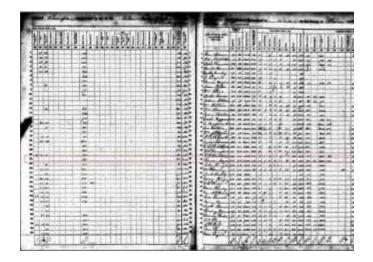
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1860 Agriculture Schedule for Ranso Gwyn



1910 Census for Mary Peay and Romulus Gwyn Appexdix D



1870 Census for Hugh Gwyn

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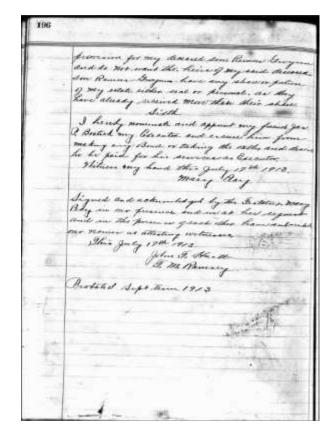
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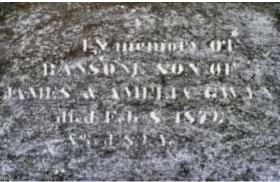
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Appendix E Article about the Helton home published in April 1970





Ransom Gwyn tombstone Photo provided by Find A Grave, Bob Sherwood



Clifford McClain House prior to remodeling



Clifford McClain House after remodeling ca 1970's (Photos provided by Bob & Betty Sherwood.





April refreshements provided by Christine Bouldin and Wilma Davenport

WCGA next meeting Saturday, May 21th, 2 p.m.

Touring Eureka Cemetery on Hwy 30. Burial place of the man who was Warren Co's oldest Civil <u>War Veteran - Ransom G</u>wyn Martin.



WCGA On The Radio



WCGA President Cheryl Watson Mingle & Allen Jaco were the guest speakers for the "Behind The Mike" radio show on April 15, 2016.

Pictured Allen, Kelly Marlowe who is host for the show on 96.0 AM radio in McMinnville and Cheryl.

Current Membership

•	
Complimentary Memberships	
(Receive Bullentins, at no fee)	3
Exchange Memberships	
(Swap of Bullentins, at no fee)	3
Honorary Lie Memberships	
(Receive Bulleitns, aat no fee)	2
Renewed Memberships	
(A member in prior year - Full fee)	70
New Memberships	
(First year as a member - full fee)	7
Total Memberships	85
* Newsletters e-mailed	127

Do You Have
CIVIL WAR SOLIDERS
who lived in
WARREN COUNTY
before, during or after the
war?

Submit your Civil War Solider for entry in our upcoming Warren County Civil War Soliders BOOK'S

You may obtain forms on our Facebook Page or at the Magness Library Genealogy Department or attached.

WCGA is on Facebook!

Come visit us at:
http://www.facebook.com/pages
/Warren-County-GenealogicalAssociation/135126859883450
We're also on the web, visit us at
www.tngenweb.org/wcgatn

Give a piece of Warren County History



The Courthouse, McMinnville, TN (First in a series)

First Methodist Church, McMinnville, TN (Second in a series)

The Birthing Tree, McMinnville, TN (Third in a series)

Hebe, McMinnville, TN (Forth in a series)

All four available for \$18 each at
Southern Museum
201 E. Main Street, McMinnville
Open Wed., Fri., Sat. 10:00 a.m.-4 p.m. and
Warren Co. Genealogical Association
County Administrative Building 201 Locust St.
Open Fridays 1:00-4:00 p.m



WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Meeting held in the rear of the Warren County Administration Building 201 Locust Street, McMinnville TN 37110

Membership Renewal & Information Update Form

Annual membership fees for 2016 were due on January 1, 2016

Please make checks payable to Warren County Genealogical Association (WCGA) and mail to WCGA, P.O. 411, McMinnville, TN 37111

Print Name and Address as desired on Membership Record:
Phone:
E-Mail Address:
Please check one:
Dues for year Individual Member, \$20 year
Other Donation \$
Would you like to receive our monthly Newsletter by E-Mail?yes
Our Bulletin is mailed two times each year
FAMILY NAMES I AM RESEARCHING:
We may be able to help you with your genealogy, so come by and visit our office. We are open on Friday from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. and we're located at the rear of the Warren County Administration Building, 201 Locust St. McMinnville, TN.
Thank you!

11 WCGA April May 2016

Civil War Soldiers of Warren County, Tennessee Questionnaire

Warren County Genealogical Association has been compiling data on our members' Warren County Civil War Veterans for many years and is now ready to publish this material. We want this publication to be as complete as possible, and we invite members of the public to contribute information on your Civil War ancestors if you would like to have them included in this important volume. Civil War participants, either Union or Confederate forces or Home Guard members, are eligible for inclusion. Give as many details as possible, using another sheet of paper if needed. **Please type, print, or write very plainly.** WE WELCOME PHOTOS and will scan and return them to you quickly. (Contact Warren County Genealogical Association at 931-474-4724 or come by our office in the Warren County Administrative Building on Fridays between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m.) Help us make this project a huge success!

Full name of Soldier:		
His Company, Regiment, Branch, R	ank and Army:	
		
Date & Place of Birth:		
Date & Place of Death and Burial:		
Amount of Schooling completed: _		
Approximate date of family's settle	ement in Warren County area:	
Parents' names, with birth, death,	marriage dates & places, and occupation, if known:	
Father: Born	Died	
Occupation:		
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Brothers & sisters of Soldier, with	birth & death dates:	

hildren's na	mes, with birth and death dates:
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