

WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Newsletter



November 2016

201 Locust Street

McMinnville, Tennessee



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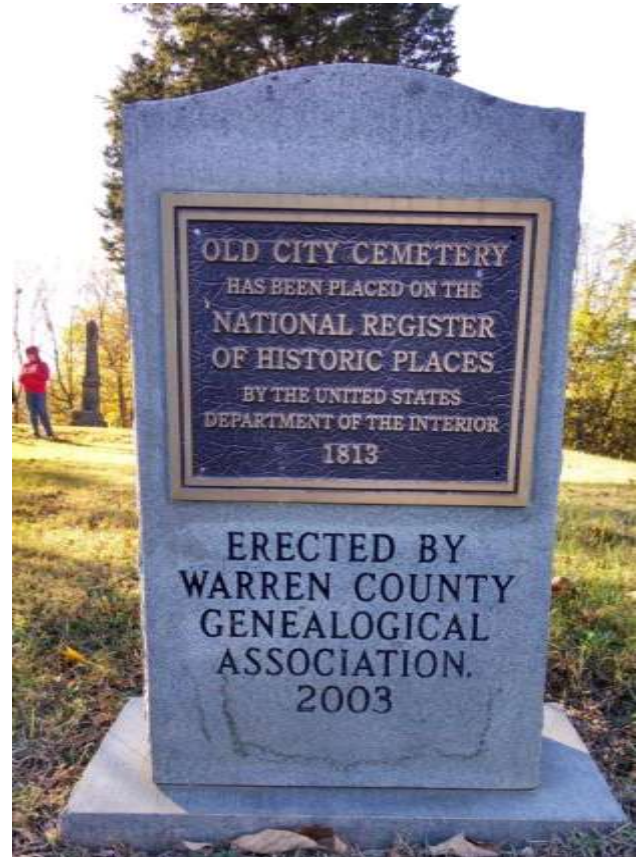
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McMinnville and Its Old Graveyards

By Mrs. Blanche Bentley,
Tennessee Tombstone Inscription and Manuscripts
Originally Published, 1933

That it may be known what manner of men and women are buried in the old cemetery adjoining McMinnville—who they were, from whence they came, what is remembered of their lives in the town, and all the other questions we ask ourselves when wandering through old burial places, a brief sketch of the town will follow. For all that was worthy and

honored in citizenship in that early settlement, gracious and lovely in womanhood or kind, gentle and true in friendship and neighborliness were all with few exceptions buried in the old graveyard. So completely is this true that if a list of all who rest there could be given it would be a census of the residents of the first half century of the town. McMinnville, founded in 1810, and then one of the frontier towns of Tennessee is situated high up the foothills among the Cumberland Mountains. Soon after its settlement families began to arrive in the town who became permanent residents and in many cases still have descendants there. The men and women who came in this migration were typical of and similar to the early settlers in other sections of Tennessee and adjoining states who came principally from the Scotch Settlements in the Virginia Valley and North Carolina as from the older and longer settled sections of those two states. Also listed among early residents were a few prominent families from New England.

According to this theory McMinnville started well on its career of citizenship. Of the seven or eight lawyers noted in Tennessee Gazette of 1834, four of those lawyers are shown family knowledge to have been educated in universities. Princeton, Hampden Sidney, Chapel Hill, and Yale, and two of them during long lives in the town accumulated valuable libraries. Of the two academies listed in same Gazette, one had as principal a graduate of Princeton Theological and the other was taught by a pupil from Nashville Female Academy. How far-reaching these influences were it is impossible to say. They doubtless gave to McMinnville its antebellum reputation for fine schools and an educated community.

Many of the early homes of the town—after the passing of the first log houses—were of brick, comfortable, commodious, and of dignified aspect, standing along the quiet shady streets, built either against the curb or back in yards filled with locust trees, and very like in appearance other houses of the period with stood—and in many instances still stand—in Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

No matter what the house was in its fashion or material, the trees shading, beautifying, and guarding it were in nearly all instances locusts. Tree of the pioneer the locust was called, because when tired of the wilderness and its endless succession of forest trees the pioneer when reaching his place of settlement denuded it of growth and planted about his home the tree of his own choosing, the quickly growing shading, lovely fragrant locust tree.

Many of the men and women of early McMinnville had, in addition to education, advantages of birth and breeding enabling them to bring to the town the influence of the older civilization from which they came, its customs, speech, dress, manners, and best of all, thoughts, beliefs, and restraints.

In those early times of the town was exercised a very frequent and very friendly hospitality. Very simple at first was this hospitality, but growing more elaborate with the passing of years and many descriptions come back to us of those “parties.” Guests were bidden to them by tiny cards from “Mr. _____ and lady desiring the pleasure of your company at half-past six o’clock” or some other specified hour.

We may be sure at whatever hour bidden that when the guests started to the party the twilight had not yet descended, and as they proceeded along the streets—frequently filled with pools of water—they must have often watched the lovely purple shadows on Ben Lomand turned crimson and gold by the setting sun. Conversation was generally the entertainment at such gatherings, only; tradition tells us when the party occurred at the big brick house of John Cain, his wife, Beersheba, varied the entertainment by singing and playing on her “pianoforte from Philadelphia”—the first one in the town; and we know (in letters from his granddaughter) that Doctor William Pitt Lawrence, a genial, social gentleman, often sang “by ear” in melodious voice the songs of Thomas Moore, and we may feel sure these best loved old songs upon occasion were heard floating out the doors and windows when Doctor Lawrence was at the party.*

(*Surprising tale of the rise of a young Irish emigrant to a position of national influence and importance is found in the history of the family of James Lyon of Lyonville—now Faulkner’s—on Charley’s Creek in Warren County. James Lyon was son of Colonel Matthew Lyon and his first wife, Mary Horsford.

The career of Colonel Lyon is too well known to give details here: his distinguished Revolutionary service under Colonel Ethan Allen, his ownership and editing of a great newspaper of the country, his imprisonment under the Alien and Sedition Act, and his election to Congress while in prison, and his loyal support of Jefferson during his term of office in Washington. During his life he had founded two manufacturing towns and was believed to be a sponsor of a third—an unsuccessful attempt to found the same sort of a town as Lyonville by James Lyon, Pleasant Henderson, and Henry Beidleman).

A host would doubtless hesitate long before resorting to conversation as the sole entertainment of his guest. The host of such social gatherings as those referred to had no misgivings as to the success of his entertainment. He knew the men and women gathered there had interesting things to tell each other, things that would be told in a spirited,

forceful, and often charming manner. These people had come to the little mountain town by long and devious ways, often filled by thrilling and dangerous experiences. In that pristine time of the world simply traveling through the wilderness in a covered wagon was of itself an experience of never-to-be-forgotten sights and sounds.

There were those present who knew fresh details of old historic events learned from immediate forbears who had born a part in those events. Pleasant Henderson, for instance, who, according to Samuel Laughlin, was the "most knowing business man in town," but also of agreeable presence and a fine raconteur could have told of harrowing days during the siege of the old fort at Bonesboro [sic] when his father, just lately died in his home a feeble old man, then a stalwart youth distinguished for his tall, upstanding appearance, had shared with Boone and Calloway all the dangers of death and captivity. And the tale, too, he could tell of the spectacular dash of young Samuel to rescue the girl he was to marry, Elizabeth Calloway, from the Indians.

And Margaret Campbell Rogers, who married in the town in 1811, with her husband, James Rogers, could have told them how every memory of her childhood, traveling back to the green valleys and blue mountains of East Tennessee, was haunted by the dark and skulking shadows of Indians always watching and waiting by each tree or roadside or of the part played by her a father, Judge David Campbell, in the great turbulent drama of Tennessee, the history of the State of Franklin. Sion [sic] of a distinguished family of Scotland and American, Margaret Campbell Rogers long survived her husband before she went to sleep by his side in the old graveyard.

"Matthew Lyon's descendants were distinguished," said Collins in his history of Kentucky. None deserved distinction more than did his granddaughter, Eliza Lyon, who came with her parents, James Lyon and Phila Ann Risley, to Warren County before it was even a county. If a wilderness experience had been desired, she could have told of a long horseback journey she made when a small girl with her father.

They started from Lyonville in Warren County, she on her pony, her carpet bag swinging from the pommel of her saddle, and traveled down a post road that led southeastward, crossed the Cumberland Mountains, forded the lovely Sequatchee River, on over Waldens Ridge into the southern Cherokee country where they stopped in Indian houses for rest and refreshment. Reaching to the great sweeping

Tennessee River, where Chattanooga now stands, but where no Chattanooga stood for many years, this was in the years 1809, they were ferried across by Indians, as Indians were given the right of ferriage along the post roads. Their crossing place was believed to have been the old fording place of the Chickamauga's while they lived in their towns on Chickamauga River. Crossing over, the Lyons passed into the great Federal road which, after traversing Tennessee, penetrated the State of Georgia. Here Eliza Lyon was placed in a noted southern school for girls.

Phila Risley and Nancy Pomeroy Risley were the wives respectively of James Lyon and William Pitt Lawrence enlisted as surgeon under Jackson at New Orleans and during his absence his wife remained at Lyonville, Letters yet exist written by Mrs. Lawrence from Lyonville to her mother, Mrs. Eunice Grant Risley mention the fact that she "is living across the street from sister Lyon in one of Mr. Lyon's houses." During the absence of Dr. Lawrence, his son, John Marshall Lawrence, was born who became the husband of Rachel Jackson. Dr. Lawrence later removed into McMinnville and in 1829-30 approximately removed to Nashville. He left one daughter, Mary, in McMinnville. She was the wife of Robert B. Caim; died young and is buried in the old graveyard.

Phila Risley Lyon is said to have been beautiful in her youth and was all her life long the possessor of a magnetic charm that enabled her to enlist the sympathy and help of others in her many fine activities. She and her daughter, Eliza Lyon Mitchell, lived long in the town distinguished as educated, cultured ladies and still remembered and beloved for all their good works.

With her daughter and other members of her family, Phila Risley Lyon sleeps in the old graveyard.

SITUATION OF THE OLD GRAVEYARD AND ITS FIRST USE AS A PLACE OF INTERMENT

In 1812 one hundred and twenty-three years ago, and one year after the first sale of lots in the town, occurred the interment of Samuel Colville in the cemetery adjoining McMinnville and now known for many years as the old graveyard.

Traditionally, Samuel Colville was the first person buried there and as the spot was taken from the land of his father-in-law, Robert Cowan, the tradition is doubtless true.

It was situated about one-quarter of a mile from the main street of the town on the recently open

Winchester road and being almost surrounded by a forest was for that reason regarded as being in the country. Its convenience and perhaps the beauty of its situation being in plain view of the mountains and river influenced others and it soon became what it has remained for about sixty years that one and only burial place of the town.

The original limits remain the same. The western boundary is still a line of picturesque cedars bluffs, rising high above the Barren Fork River flowing at its base; the eastern boundary was and still is the Winchester road, which bounding the entire length of the cemetery descended a hill and crossed the barren fork at the ford of Polly Black, the first woman mentioned in Warren county history.

Traditions from the early days in McMinnville claim that for the first years in its history the dead of the town were not carried to the cemetery in vehicles, but borne on the shoulders of men walking the streets, the families and friends following in procession behind. Whether there is truth in this old echo from the past is not known or whether if true the custom was local or a hand-down from much older and far-a-way countries, but one corroboration comes from an eye witness—a very venerable and responsible woman told the writer of this article many years ago that as a very young girl she saw the coffin containing the body of Capt. William White carried on the shoulders of men walking in the street on their way to the old burial ground. Captain William White died in 1816.

A driveway originally intersected the cemetery and on either side and branching off in a various directions were lots, some of them enclosed in iron railings or picket fences and one other style, stone pillars standing at intervals about the lot connected by heavy swinging chains. Near the central part of the lot, also the first in use, was a row of square, connected brick enclosed, the walls built several feet above the ground. Evidently burial lots, but whose no one seems to know.

As the years passed on the lots were made the objects of tender care and attention by their owners living in the town. Magnolia trees were planted, rare shrubs and evergreens—a flowering, very fragrant box plant among them—and roses and gradually the spot became beautiful with all the planting and tending, and lovely green things grew everywhere, all bathed in the soft tremulous light for quiet serenity that comes to ole loved places tenderly cared for.

This was the appearance of the cemetery remembered by persons now gone, but who in the

days preceding the War Between the States went there often for the soothing quiet and sweetness of the scene.

We know, too, from those same persons, as well as from early newspaper articles that this beautifications of the graveyard by those old residents of the town was the only permanent work ever done there; that they alone, apparently, felt the urge and desire to make it a fit resting place for an honored and respected people.

And so at last with the passing of time they were all brought to the old graveyard to sleep under the trees they had planted and the sweetness they had created. During the war, and the years following, perhaps there was so much sorrow in the land only the living were thought of and the cemetery was brought forcibly to mind when some gallant soldier was brought back from the war. Then came the need for a new cemetery for the town, and after this was established only occasionally interments on family lots were made and none now for many years.

A few old trees still stand guard over forgotten spots and lonely groups of box mark places where some beloved ones are buried. Not so long ago two huge bushes of the very old rose of former times, the Microphylla, still outlined the former driveway. The list that follows is only a partial one of the persons buried in the old graveyard—perhaps not more than a third, but all that could be gotten from family records, from facts, and the few stones left undisturbed there:



Rachel Scott Hillis explains the history to WCGA members during our tour of the Old City Cemetery.

Isham Randolph of Goochland County, Va., married Sally Payne; removed to Warren County, Tenn., in its early organization. Died in Warren County in town of McMinnville. Sally Payne, born in Virginia, descended in two lines from distinguished Payne family, wife of Isham Randolph.



George R. Smartt, born in Tennessee, son of Francis Smartt and wife, Martha Cheek, both of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, removed early to Warren County, Tenn.;



married Athelia Randolph; died at his home, "Woodlawn," in 1855. Athelia, daughter of Isham Randolph and wife, Sally Payne, born in Hawkins County, Tenn., in 1791; married George R. Smartt in McMinnville, Tenn.; died in McMinnville.



One of the last burials in the old graveyard was that of Mrs. Mary V. Hill, daughter of George R. Smartt and wife, Athelia Randolph, and wife of General Benjamin J. Hill.





Benjamin J. Hill, born in Warren County, Tenn., son of Benjamin Hill and wife—Pickett; died in McMinnville, Tenn. Brigadier-General in service of C. S. A.

Of the two or three generations of the Payne connection in the old graveyard were two daughters of Rodham Renner and wife, Malinda Payne, of Hawkins County, Tenn., originally from Virginia. Matilda and Elizabeth married respectively to Alexander Shields and George Savage and own cousins to Sally Payne, wife of Isham Randolph. The Savage family was later removed to the new cemetery.

Myra, daughter of Isham Randolph and wife, Sally Payne, married her cousin, Alfred Payne, of a different but connected line, son of Captain William Payne and wife, Orpha. His sister, Pauline Payne, married John Davidson Lusk of Warren County, Tenn., but who died from home and is not buried with the others of Payne connections in old graveyard. One of the last of the family buried there was “Orville Sydenham Payne,” inscribed on a tiny stone, the only

clue left of the connection between the Paynes and Sydenham families of Goochland County, VA. Mary Ann Smith, born near South West Point, Tenn., daughter of Colonel Merriwether Smith, once Commandant of South West Point, was descended through her mother from Payne-Clark families of Virginia, believed to be connected with the family already noted. Colonel Alexander Black died from home.

Stokely Donelson Rowan was born in Overton County, Tenn., son of Major Henry Rowan and wife, Elizabeth Latham; married first to Lucretia Hord of Hawkins County, Tenn., and second to Jane, wife of James (or John) Grundy, son of Felix Grundy; maiden name McCullough and granddaughter of Governor Caswell of North Carolina, a bridesmaid of Mrs. J. K. Polk. Mary Grundy, daughter of James (or John) Grundy and wife, Jane McCullough, married first to Walter Scott; second, to Colonel Phillip Marbury of McMinnville.

Ann Hord was born in Hawkins County, Tenn., in 1821; married Lorenzo Dow Mercer of McMinnville, Tenn., in 1840; died in 1851. Lorenzo Dow Mercer was born in Wayne County, Ky., Nov. 23, 1810, son of Richard and Mary Mercer. Mercer removed to Warren County, Tenn., in 1831; married Ann Hord; died in McMinnville. Lieut. Elza Mercer, son of Richard and Mary Mercer, member of Company of Mountain Blues, Capt. Adrian Northcutt, 1st Tennessee Regiment; died in McMinnville, Tenn.

Howard Mercer, wife, Priscilla. Rebecca, daughter of Howard Mercer and wife, Priscilla, first wife of Philip Marbury of Warren County, Tenn.

Robert Alexander Campbell was born in Richmond, Va., in 1812, son of James Austin Campbell and wife, Mary Massie Vaughn, of Nelson County, Va., graduate of Yale University; married Sarah Ann Harrison, daughter of Joshua Stone Harrison and wife, Judith Turner Harrison. Lawyer and teacher of McMinnville; died 1854.

Joshua Stone Harrison, son of Answorth Harrison and wife, Dolly Coleman Stone, of Pittsylvania County, Va., died in McMinnville. Judith Turner Harrison was born in Pittsylvania County, Va.,; married Joshua Stone Harrison.



John Cain was born in Kentucky, son of William Cain and wife, Hannah; came to McMinnville about 1815;

married Beersheba Porter Sullivan, merchant and land dealer; died in McMinnville about 1837. Beersheba Porter Sullivan, daughter of one of the earliest settlers of Warren County, and wife of John Cain, died at advanced age at home of her daughter, Mrs. Mary Cain Stubblefield. In 1833 discovered the spring on top of Cumberland Mountain named for her.

Hiram B. Stubblefield, son of George Stubblefield and wife, Mary Jeffries, married Mary, daughter of John and Beersheba Cain. This family claimed descent from Colonel George Stubblefield of Spotsylvania County, VA.



John Josiah Morford was born in 1799 in Princeton, N. J., son of Zebulon Morford and wife, Mary Denton; graduate of Princeton University; came to McMinnville about 1820; lawyer and Chancery Court Clerk for many years; married Jane B. Taylor; died in McMinnville in 1869.





Jane B. Taylor was born in Warren County, Tenn., daughter of Edmund Taylor and wife, Polly Robards; married John Josiah Morford; died at her home in Warren County, Tenn. Through her father, Jane Taylor Morford was a lineal descendant of the Pendleton family of Virginia, of Charles Lewis of the Byrd and the Howell families of Virginia.

Landon A. Kincannon, grandson of Andrew Kincannon and Catherine McDonald, son of James Kincannon and wife, Elizabeth Armstrong, daughter of Hugh Armstrong and wife, Maratha Dismukes. Andrew Kincannon was at King's Mountain. Cyrena Roberson of Rutherford County, Tenn., wife of Landon A. Kincannon and niece of Edward Ward of Davidson County, Tenn.

John Lyle Shaw was born in Augusta County, Va., in 1780, son of Robert Shaw and wife, Ester Blair, both from County Antrim, Ulster Province, Ireland; married Sarah Davidson, daughter of John Davidson, Rockbridge County Va., and wife, Sarah Roates; came to Tennessee in 1800; was in the War of 1812; died in Warren County, 1852. Sarah Allen Shaw was born in 1810, daughter of John Lyle Shaw and wife, Sarah Davidson, and wife of James Clare Spurlock, son of Drury Spurlock and wife, Olive Clare; died at her home in Warren County, Tenn., in 1844. Drury Clare Spurlock was born in 1833, son of James C. and Sarah A. Spurlock. Captain of Company C. Savage's 16th

Tennessee Regiment; killed at battle of Murfreesboro, Tenn.



Chamberlayne Scurlock was born on April 7, 1842, son of James C. and Sarah A. Spurlock; died March 10, 1873.



Pleasant Henderson, son of Colonel Samuel Henderson and wife, Elizabeth, came to Warren County about 1807; married Agnes Robards in North Carolina; nephew of Judge Richard Henderson of Transylvania history; died in 1837. Buried in old graveyard by the side of his wife and his father who died in 1810.



Joshua Coffee was born in Smith County, Tenn.; died at his home in Warren County in 1842; age fifty-five years. Wife of Joshua Coffee, Jane Trousdale, daughter or niece to Governor Trousdale. Her burial in old graveyard uncertain.

Rachel Shelley Thompson was born in Davidson County, Tenn., in 1804, daughter of Thomas Edmondson and wife, Martha Buchanan, and wife of James Powell Thompson; died in McMinnville in 1859.

John Lucas Thompson, son of James Powell Thompson and wife, Rachel Shelley Thompson, born in McMinnville in 1833; educated in Virginia; lawyer. Captain in Company C, Savage's 16th Tennessee C. S. A., after death of Captain Drury Spurlock in 1862. James Powell Thompson was buried in Riverside Cemetery.

Dr. Thomas Boyd died in McMinnville in 1830; wife, Buchanan.

William Edmondson was born in Washington County, Va., son of John Edmondson and wife, Mary Buchanan; removed to McMinnville in its early settlement; married Myra Coffee, daughter of Ambrose Coffee. William Edmondson and wife, Myra, died of fever in 1832; their deaths occurring close together.

Captain William White, Revolutionary soldier, died in McMinnville in 1816. William White was born in 1800, son of Captain William White and wife, Bathia Lyne; removed to McMinnville about 1810; married Patsy Buchanan; died in McMinnville. Patsy Buchanan was born in Davidson County, Tenn., in 1800, daughter of Thomas Edmondson and wife, Martha Buchanan, wife of William White, Jr.

Sion Spencer Read, son of Captain John Nash Read and wife, Julia Elizabeth Spencer, born in Charlotte County, Va., April 22, 1791; married his cousin, Hardenia Jefferson Spencer, in 1819; died in McMinnville in 1845. Was in the War of 1812 in Gen. John Coffee's Regiment of Cavalry and later in

Williamson's Mounted Gunmen of Tennessee. Hardenia Jefferson Spencer was born in Virginia in 1803; married her cousin, Sion Spencer Read, in 1819. Married second, to Doctor Melchizedec Hill in 1849; died Sept. 6, 1889. Sion Spencer Read and his wife, Hardenia, married first, Dillard Thomas Jefferson. Haniel Read, daughter of Sion Spencer Read and wife, Hardenia, married first,



Dillard Stone; second,



Samuel Pennybaker.

Archibald Stone was born July 12, 1805; died 1879; wife, Sarah Wood.

Mary French was born in Nelson County, Va., daughter of Colonel John Hopkins and wife, Mark King, wife of Robert French; removed to McMinnville in 1826; died in about 1846.

John S. Young, Secretary of State of Tennessee; married Mrs. Jane Colville Preston in McMinnville; died in 1857; buried in old graveyard.



Jane Colville Young was born in McMinnville, daughter of Joseph Colville and second wife, Mrs. Martha Cheek Smartt; married first James Preston of Washington County, Va.; second, John S. Young. Thomas North Clark died in 1834, Virginia. Elizabeth Garth Clark died in 1831; buried in old graveyard. Surviving little daughter rode horseback behind the relative who came from Virginia for her. A granddaughter came from Charlottesville, Va., in 1932 searching for graves of her ancestors.



Miss Betsy Langdon died April 7, 1863.

Edward Hoge was born in Virginia; removed early to McMinnville; died in 1844. Said to be descendant of Capt. Peter Hogg of Augusta County, Va. Susan Montgomery Hoge was born in Augusta County, Va.





Joseph Colville





Salmon Mitchell



Robert E. Titus



Ellen E. Edwell wife of Rev. John Powell



Nancy N wife of J. P. Lively



Phiah 2nd wife of A. P. Greer



Richard B. Son of J. & G. Locke



As of October 19, 2016 WCGA's Facebook page had 2000 members. Check us out on the CGA's Facebook page.

WCGA On The Radio



Allen Jaco the guest for the "Behind The Mike" radio show on November 17 pictured with Kelly Marlowe who is host for the show on 96.0 AM radio in McMinnville.

Election of 2017 WCGA Officers Held November 19

Election of officers for the 2017 calendar year were held at the November 19 meeting. Offices same as 2016

Membership Dues For 2016 are due Jan. 1, 2016

Annual dues are \$20 per calendar year for Members within the 50 states.

Foreign Membership is \$28 per year.

Make checks payable to the

Warren County Genealogical Association

Mail to: WCGA, P.O. 411

McMinnville, TN 37111

November 2016 Membership

Complimentary Memberships (Receive Bulletins, at no fee)	3
Exchange Memberships (Swap of Bulletins, at no fee)	3
Honorary Life Memberships (Receive Bulletins, at no fee)	2
Renewed Memberships (A member in prior year - Full fee)	84
New Memberships	24
Total Memberships	116
* Newsletters e-mailed	137

Join us

At the next meeting of the

**Warren County Genealogical Association
Members Meeting**

***Saturday, January 21, 3:00 p.m.
Show & Tell***

Christmas Times A Coming Great Christmas Presents



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
(Fourth 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.*

Share our Newsletter

Do you have a relative or friend you would like to receive the WCGA Newsletter? We would be happy to add them to our list.

Just send their name and email address to:
ctmingle@blomand.net



Merry Christmas



*The annual
WCGA
Christmas outing
will be held on
December 3, 12 NOON
at
Fall Creek Falls Resturant*

If you would like to attend
Contact
Cheryl Watson Mingle ctmingle@blomand.net

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Our office is in the rear of the Warren County
Administration Building,
201 Locust Street, McMinnville
Open Fridays 1 to 4 p.m.