



# WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

# Newsletter

**November 2021**

201 Locust Street

McMinnville, Tennessee

## WCGHA OFFICERS



**President:**  
**Cheryl W. Mingle**



**Vice President:**  
**Marion Rhea Speaks**



**Secretary:**  
**Barbara Bates**



**Treasurer:**  
**J.B. Brown**



**Past President:**  
**Ann Brown**

*Our office is located at  
201 Locust Street  
in the lower level of the  
County Administrative Building*

**Come Join Us  
on November 20  
For the next WCGHA Meeting**



**Brad Walker will present a  
program on Family Bibles  
Bring your family Bible for review**

**Election of Officers and Committee Chairs  
will be held**

We will meet in the early voting room located in the rear of the Warren County Administration building. You will be required to sign in and observe social distancing.

(Refreshments will not be served)

*Cheryl Watson Mingle, WCGHA President*



## **Come Visit Us**

**Our hours are**

**Monday  
&  
Friday  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
931-474-4227**

**Email:**  
[wcgaha.tn@gmail.com](mailto:wcgaha.tn@gmail.com)

**On the Web:**  
[www.tngenweb.org/wcgatn](http://www.tngenweb.org/wcgatn)

**On Facebook:**  
Warren County  
Genealogical &  
Historical  
Association

and

WCGHA's Old Warren  
County, TN Family  
History/Photos

Our office is located at  
201 Locust Street  
McMinnville, Tennessee  
in the lower level of the  
County Administration Building

## **Committees**

### **Membership:**

*J. B. Brown*



### **Circulation Manager:**

*Debra Wilcher McBride*



### **Programs:**

*Marion Rhea Speaks*



### **Bulletin Editor and Web page Editor:**

*Ann Brown*



### **Research:**

*Bonita Mangrum*



*Mary Oaks*



### **Newsletter Editor:**

*Doyle Speaks*



[Speaksanddm@aol.com](mailto:Speaksanddm@aol.com)

931-743-7188

### **Publicity:**

*Brad Walker*



### **Refreshments:**

*Christine Bouldin*



### **Office:**

*Evelyn Wade*



*Mary Oaks*



### **Historian:**

*Brad Walker*





## October Meeting Well Attended



A large crowd gathered for the October meeting of the Warren County Genealogical & Historical Association. Our guest speaker was Steve West, former co-owner and employee of High's Funeral Home in McMinnville, now retired. The meeting was held in the early voting room of the County Administrative Building where the larger room allowed for social distancing.

Mr. West presented his program on "The History of Funeral Service of Warren County, TN" and was met with a large volume of questions from the audience after his presentation.

He talked of the first organized funeral establishments in Warren County that came into existence around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to that, the burden of burying the dead was placed upon either family or friends or neighbors. There were no caskets and loved ones were buried in wooden boxes usually built by friends with such talents.

The first two places in McMinnville to sell caskets was McMinnville Hardware, located where the old Fraley's building is and Lively Furniture Company, located next to First National Bank. They also had embalmers. Those embalmers were Neal Hannah, McMinnville Hardware and F. H. Patrick with Lively Furniture Company. A small selection of caskets would be on display on the upper floor of each location. Families would purchase the casket and take it with them or have it delivered. Embalming, if desired, was done at the home of the deceased. The bodies of the dead were displayed at home along with visitation and most funerals were held at the burial site.

In February 1922 Mr. John High came to McMinnville from Smithville where he had worked for a brief time for Conger Brothers Funeral Services. He went to work for Lively Furniture Company.

**Continued on next page**



**John W. High**



**Left photo is the Zeb Martin home where High's Funeral Home is presently located. Photo to the right is what the funeral home looked like after it was remodeled.**

## **FUNERAL SERVICE**

**Continued from page 3**

In 1925 Mr. High opened his own establishment on Court Square where Hoover & Sons insurance office is currently located. In 1927 (or 1929) he moved to the High's present location. This home was originally owned by Zeb Martin.

In 1932 Mr. W.J. "Pewter" Bond started McMinnville Funeral Company located where the Chamber of Commerce is located. After a few years in 1937 Mr. Bond sold his funeral home to Mr. Clyde S. Jones and Clarence Warren (Steve's great uncle) and established the Jones and Warren Funeral Home.

During this time frame there was also a funeral home in the Jacksboro Community owned by a Mr. Epsy. In 1941 John High bought Jones and Warren. Mr. Jones started an insurance agency and Clarence Warren went to work for Mr. High until he was called to WWII in 1943. After returning from WWII, Mr. Warren bought Dickey's Flower Shop located in the Walling Arcade on Spring St. Our speaker, Steve West delivered flowers from there in 1966.

In 1967 Mr. High incorporated his funeral home with Clarence Edwin "Tack" Hammer and Tommy Carney who had worked for Mr. High since returning from WWII and the Korean War.

In the early 1950s Mr. James Cantrell and Tommy Love started Love and Cantrell Funeral Home. After several years Tommy Love tragically died. At some point after that A.J. Winton, who had also worked for Mr. High in the 1960s bought and ran Love and Cantrell for a few years. This establishment had several owners over the next

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**EARLY PHOTOS OF HIGH'S FUNERAL HOME -- Top photo shows Billy Williams, Edrie Williams, Neal Sain, Claiborn Zwingle, Robert Hill Foster, Mary Scott, Ed Evans, Willie Bost, "Tack" Hammer, John W. High and Elvin Spangler. Bottom photo is of the staff at Highs, l-r, Willie Bost, Hugh Paris, Francis Cummings, Tommy Carney, Edwin Clyde "Tack" Hammer, A.J. Winton, Jimmy Newby, John W. High, and secretaries Edrie Williams and Mriah Lou Tate.**

# FUNERAL SERVICE

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several years such as Woody Davenport and Aaron Cope.

Steve West attended the John A. Gupten College in Nashville from 1969-1971. He worked for Marshall-Donnelly-Combs Funeral Home in Nashville from 1971 through 1974. They were the largest funeral home in Nashville and afforded many challenges and opportunities for any newly educated funeral director.

He left in 1974 and moved back home to McMinnville where he worked for Kelly's, Sterchi's & Brookside until 1978 when approached by Clarence Hammer to come work for High's.

On that same day in 1978 McMinnville Fural Home was opened by A.J. Winton and a group of 9 other investors. After about 10 years of operation, McMinnville Funeral Home was sold to the Lowen Group out of Canada. This group was later owned by Alderwood, Inc.

While working with the Alderwood group, David Christian, along with his wife Diana Christian, bought McMinnville Funeral Home and have continuously operated there.

In 1984 Clarence Warren decided to retire and offered his stock in High's to Don Paris and Steve West. "Tack" Hammer and Tommy Carney also sold some of their stock to Woody Davenport. In 2002 Dan Paris suddenly died leaving the corporation to absorb those shares. At this time a stock offering was made to Joe Woodside, Rocky Davenport and Brandon Harris.

That's how things stood at High's until Woody and Steve decided to retire in 2019.

With the increase of cremations on the rise, two of the funeral homes in Warren County have built their own crematory facilities. McMinnville Funeral Home was first to build on their site a couple of years ago and High's recently built a facility located at the Mt. View Cemetery which they recently purchased as well.

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## *Donation Made to Our Library*



**Christine Bouldin donated the above war map showing the locations of battles of WWII and the United States map showing interesting places for travelers to visit in the late 1950s.**



**Christine Bouldin**



# **Nominations for Officers and Committee Chairs Have Been Announced**

*For the 2022 term of the  
Warren County Genealogical and Historical Association*

The nominating committee, headed up by J.B. Brown, Brad Walker, Carolyn Lance and Mary Oaks, have announced the following candidates for officers and committee chairpersons for election at the November 20, 2021 meeting:

**OFFICERS:**

President	Ann Brown
Vice President	Douglas Woodlee
Secretary	Barbara Bates
Treasurer	J.B. Brown
Past President	Cheryl Watson Mingle

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:**

Membership	J.B. Brown
Circulation Manager	Debra McBride
Programs	Douglas Woodlee
Bulletin Editor	Robert Bates
Newsletter Editor	Kathy Finn
Webpage Editor	Ann Brown
Publicity	Brad Walker
Research	Bonita Mangrum Mary Oaks
Historian	Brad Walker
Office	Evelyn Wade Mary Oaks
Refreshments	Christine Bouldin

***Nominations may also be made from the floor at our November 20, 2021 meeting.***

**All officers and committee chairs will be installed at the January 15, 2022 meeting and will become members of our Board of Directors.**



**WCHGA  
CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION**

December 11, 2021  
11:30 - until

**Bring your favorite finger foods  
(sweet or savory)**  
*Beverages will be furnished.*

**Enjoy  
games and door prizes!**

Location: Christ Family Church  
2285 South Chancery Street

RSVP: Susan Driver, 931-314-6959  
Mary Oaks, 931-314-1743  
Ann Brown, 931-205-0451

# Committee Meetings Held

**The Pioneer Families Committee met November 11 to review 3 applications for Pioneer Family Certificates. Seated, l-r, Bonita Mangrum, Brad Walker and Marion Speaks. Standing are Bettye Pack and Carolyn Lance. Certificate presentation is planned for the January 15 meeting.**



**The very active Cemetery Committee met on Friday, November 12 adding the names of several cemeteries recently found in the county. Those attending were, l-r, Debra McBride, Mary Oaks, J.B, Brown, Carolyn Lance, Evelyn Wade, Bettye Pack, Bonita Mangrum and Ann Brown (inset, who took the photo).**



## *Were We the Corn King?*

# Making Liquor in Warren County

This article is a reprint of the booklet prepared in 1991 by WCGHA member Wanda Muncey Gant.



**PART II**  
This little booklet was composed for educational interest. **YOU WILL FIND THAT THE HISTORY OF TENNESSEE (PUBLISHED BY THE STATE OF TENNESSEE) DOCUMENTS THE FACT THAT MAKING LIQUOR MADE**

**TENNESSEE “THE CORN KING”!** And, today, Jack Daniels Distillery is World Famous.

Drinking use to be a part of common life. It is the number one item preachers **HAVE** to preach about. Fact is, when camp meeting came “the preachers use to stay with my ancestor who provided for the needs”. And he was a whiskey maker!

Newspaper articles regarding some of the troubles indicate that they occurred not because of the drinking, but indirectly because of the prohibition law. Naturally, excessive use of alcohol is unwise. But, excessiveness in anything is harmful in some way.

As you will read, for the largest part of our U.S. history, the government (therefore you) has reaped the rewards of legalized liquor. It still does and you still do. Indirectly, from Federal and State, if not county, **OUR GOVERNMENT**, who we elected, **CONDONES THE USE OF LIQUOR AS LONG AS THE MONEY SPENT FOR IT GOES TO THEM.**

I dedicate this to the “**NURSERY CENTER OF THE SOUTH**” which got its start, no doubt, because of the wonderful orchards here in the county.

Wanda Muncey Gant, August 1991

### **WARREN COUNTY - THE ROUND COUNTY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE**

One-eighth of this fertile county is Cumberland Mountain Natural Forest Land, altitude 2200 feet



**Wanda Muncey Gant**

underlaid with superior coal sufficient to last the county for thousands of years. The remainder of the County forms a part of the “Highland Rim of Middle Tennessee”, with an altitude of about 1000 feet. The county is extremely well watered as there is not a square mile in it unsupplied with a continual stream of water as pure and clear as crystal. Its water power is unsurpassed short of Niagara Falls. All the manufacturing industries in the county are run by water power, and not one-thousandth part utilized. The county is especially adapted to fruit culture with over 30,000 bushels of apples alone being shipped from the county during the fall of 1893, with 42 apple brandy distilleries running in the county at the same time. McMinnville, the county seat, is located in the very center of the county, and has a population of

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## MAKING LIQUOR

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2,000. The following statistical diagrams, showing the relative percent of various interests, will give data concerning its diversified crops and inexhaustible resources.

Warren county people who applied for ADULTERATION BONDS in 1879 (Adulteration Bonds Drawer 016 1880-99) farmers and businessmen included:

William White, J. G. Marbury & Barney Caswell Scott; Phillip Hoodenpile & J. M. Drake; L.H. Meadows with security J.M. Drake; W.H. Brooks; Thomas Barnes & W.C. Woodlee; N.B. Stubblefield; Jesse L. Etter with security L. Safely; N.L. Hill, Alex Harison & M. Barnes; W.C. Woodlee & Charles Barnes; John C. Watson with security E.L. & I.T. Hillis;

J.L Curtis with security Aaron Curtis; H.L. Hill & A.J. Woodlee; John W. Jaco & E.T. Drake; J.M. Bowers & G.L. Marshall; David & William Coppinger; A.J. & Thomas Gribble; J.M. Cunningham & M.C. Masengale; Brewer Northcutt & G.W. Summers; Marion Duncan & H.P. Maxwell; A.J. Isreal & W.J. Hill;

J.W. and John Hash; J.W. Powell & Aaron Curtis; R.H. Mason & J.P. Perry; Cooper Scott & F.M. Walker; W. L. Gracy & J.W. Snodgrass; Adam & Wesley Nunley (1878); J.V. Nunley & Robert Miller (1878); H. E. Clement & S.M. Hennessee (1878); A.J. Gribble & R.G. Harry (1878); David Fults & Ruben Hobbs (1878);

Elmore Patterson & E. Montgomery (1878); E.H. Brooks & Thomas Turner (1878); B. Maupin & A.G. Lander (1878); H.C. "Bake" Fults & Ruben Hobbs; T.J. Kline & Dotson Walker; J. M. & Aaron Curtis & Robert McCorkle; J.M. Bost & F.W. Cardwell; T.E. Hash & S.C. Gribble; James W. Ray & Ellenza Bess; H. Fletcher;

N.B. Stubblefield & William Kesey; John M. Drake & Reuben Hobbs; M.C. Masengale & J.G. Northcutt; H.L. Hill & H.H. Faulkner; John W. Powell & T.R. Gribble; E.L. Jaco, M.V. Gribble & J.G. Byars; John Stoner & W.C. Woodlee; S.J. Gibbs & E.C. Pepper; S.V. Green & William Lawson; E.T. & John M. Drake;

R.H. Mason & J.L. Garnett; George L. Marshall & O.P. & C.C. Paris; Archibald C. Clark; David Shoemaker; D. S; & James S. Martin; W.F. & J.C, Jones; M.C. Jones & R.R Womack; D.B. Smith &

Joel Payne; David Coppinger & Isaac Barnes; P.M. Myers & H.H. Faulkner; Cooper Scott & Adam Nunley (in 1890 his grandson William Scott, who wed the daughter of H.C. Fults, with security H.L. Hayes & T.H. Etter had bond;



Photo from [www.perceptivetravel.com](http://www.perceptivetravel.com)

J.M. Cunningham & M.T. Mazy; D.L. Brown & F.L. Man; J.C. Watson & W.H. Meadows; M.J. Jones & A.J. Newby; John Macon & J.B. Argo; R.J. Willis & G.W. Parks; E.D. Hicks & W. W. Fairbanks; W.C. Woodlee, Charles Barnes & John Stoner; Joel & Hardin Patterson; J.R. Groves & J.W. Jaco;

W.H. Fleming & Jono Turner; M.C. Massingale & James G. Northcutt; J.C. Watson & E.T. Drake; Anderson Randolph with security G.T. Tisdale & C.R. Norford; Ed Nunley & W. Houchin; L.H. William H. & L.B. Meadows had an orderly house in 1877; Henry McBroom & W.S. Melton (1876); E. Patterson with security Jones Gribble; E.F. Cantrell & J.M. Argo (1875); R.M. & Leo Safley; John & Washington Green; L.H. & W.H. Meadows (1877); C. & E.G. Bess & Isaac Barnes (1877); and J.M. Argo & Sam Bragg (1878).

The 1880 Warren County TN census listed in McMinnville Revenue Officers H.J. Faulkner and also Robert Pack of Scotland who lived with Filmore Bell. A.J. Moffitt and Ed Nunley both had a tipping house. The amount of liquor sold could not exceed one quart. M.M. Phelps was a policeman with Robert M. Argo being the jailer and there were 13 lawyers and one law student living in the city area alone. Civil District 1 listed distiller George Frasier living with Thomas Griffith and nearby distiller O.G. Foster.

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## MAKING LIQUOR

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Constable Sam Rankin lived in this district. The sheriff W.L. Steakley lived in Civil District 4. Most of the people applying for adulteration bonds were listed as farmers or had other occupations.

It should be remembered that if they were making liquor, someone had to be drinking it! You will notice that some of these were prominent men.

People under the influence sometimes got into trouble as the local newspapers would print the news. A few will be mentioned here:

In March of 1881 the newspaper reported "Capt. Davis arrested in Grundy County Jesse Nunley, Jesse Fults, Albert Crouch and James McClure for illicit traffic in brandy and whiskey (they had failed to obtain adulteration bonds). Nunly gave bond."

In August 1881 "Dallas Gribble's wagon thrown over a bluff on Collins River turned apples into a River of Brandy".

On 2 October 1881 Jesse Martin, white, called out of his cabin Ish Wood, colored, and asked why he reported him about infraction of the internal revenue law. The negro answered "Jess I'll explain that to you". Martin instantly fired a load of duck shot taking effect in Wood's abdomen. He started to run, Martin firing a second barrel which took effect in the back, hip and right hand. The negro lived 24 hours before dying. I have been killed for nothing - I did not report Jesse at all. A warrant is out for Martin who is still at large. In October of 1883 Jesse Martin of Van Buren County was brought to this place and lodged in jail last Wednesday for the alleged killing of a negro in that county some two years ago.

In December of 1882 Philander Sparkman suicided at the residence of his brother Bryant Sparkman on Charles Creek on Tuesday by shooting himself under the influence of liquor at the time.

Naturally, apples were also shipped to the Atlanta and Nashville markets. In June of 1883 the Southern Standard newspaper stated "Greer Woodlee had 6,000 apple trees; Adam Nunley, an extensive fruit grower of Warren County, said his apple crop in 1882 was large and so in 1883 there were not so many". In November of 1886 Edge Brothers and D.C. Oliver were busy shipping green apples to Nashville.

In September of 1883 "Mr. Ed Passons of Van Buren was tried before commissioner Kenedy this

week for violation of the Internal Revenue Laws and was acquitted".

In March of 1885 J.B. Nunley of Collins River had a very strange kind of spell but we are glad to know he is getting all right again. Mrs. Cinda Nunley was in the "city" today to see the deputy county clerk but I do not know whether she possessed her license or not.



In July of 1885 John R. Motley at Short Mountain was killed at Pea Ridge by H. Johnson, a distiller. And in June of 1886 Carrol Martin of Civil District 5 was tried for selling liquor without a license and bound over to Federal Court.

Southern Standard 5 February 1887 Daylight: D.W. Byars and W.T. Kirby visited Temperance Hall in DeKalb County last week.

On Wednesday, 23 July 1887, Honorable E. Jarvis, Senator from White County, was here attending Whiskey Convention.

On 16 October 1899 Mrs. S. H. Smartt sent a notice to saloon keepers not to sell to her husband or she would prosecute to the full extent of the law. Notices were sent to keepers: Crane & Sons; Mr. Brinkley; Mr. Conger; H.P. Maxwell and W.D.L. Hughes.

In 1879 John C. Watson, with security E.L. and I.T. Hillis, applied for a license to make liquor.

On 26 April 1900 the McMinnville New Era newspaper reported that a triple hanging took place

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## MAKING LIQUOR

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on gallows erected inside a fenced area in Depot Bottom. One of those persons was John C. Watson who had been convicted of the murder of James Hillis, his neighbor in the Irving College community,

John C. Watson was born in Warren County, TN near Irving College about 8 miles south of McMinnville in September 1841. Watson was born of good parentage and in early life had the advantages of a rudimentary education and good association.

In May of 1861, at the first call to arms, he enlisted in Company H of the famous 16th Tennessee (Col. John H. Savage) C.S.A. and served gallantly through the war between the states. After the war Watson was engaged in farming and fruit raising near Irving College. John C. Watson was universally honored and respected in the community where he resided and also it might have even been thus but for that hell-born fury, the well-nigh unconquerable friend - strong drink.

Living in a community where more apple brandy was produced than in any other territory of equal size in the United States, Watson began the manufacture of brandy, and to drink it.

John Watson lost the confidence and finally the respect of the community. In a drunken row in 1893 he shot and seriously injured a colored man, but after an exciting trial and hotly contested legal battle, he was acquitted.

"On the evening of December 21, 1898, between sunset and dark, John C. Watson waylaid and shot Jim Hillis between Watson's and Hillis' homes just across the road from where Hillis lived and not over 15 paces from his front yard. After the killing, Watson went home and went to bed, but a few hours later was arrested". After several continuations the case was finally tried on September 11 and 12 and Watson was sentenced to hang. After an appeal to the Supreme Court, the date of hanging was set as April 25, 1900.

Whiskey is a spirituous liquor distilled chiefly from the fermented mash of cereal grains. There are two main varieties of whiskey, malt whiskey in which malt predominates and grain whiskey in which unmalted grains predominate. The latter was formerly manufactured almost exclusively in the United States, rye and Indian corn being chiefly employed.

In the making of whiskey several processes are necessary to convert the starch of the grain into sugar

and the sugar into alcohol. The grain is ground and is cooked in a steamer for several hours to render it soluble. It is then added to the malt, and the mixture is kept at 450 degrees F for about four hours. This saccharine infusion, called WORT, is then drawn off, yeast is added, and the wort is allowed to stand from 3 to 9 days to ferment. The liquid thus prepared for distillation is technically known as mash. It is placed in a metal container called a still, subjected to high temperatures, and the vapors pass off through a spiral tube known as a worm and are condensed.

### FAMILY WHISKEY RECIPE

A copper barrel was made out of a sheet of copper. It was hard work. The finished product was placed in wooden kegs or barrels.

To make one barrel of whiskey, take 45 gallons of water and cook a bushel of corn until it is mush. Add 50 pounds of sugar, stir good. "Tap it" (or on top) 2 gallons of wheat bran. It will ferment in 4 or 5 days in hot weather. If in the wintertime, bury the barrel in the ground if it is not in a building. When ready, dip out into still and cook until it runs. The first 2 gallons is too strong to drink. Anyway, when it beads (has a large bubble) add spring water until the bead is like a pin head, then it is right. To make real good whiskey add a half bushel of malt "sprouted" corn to the above mush. And to make rye whiskey you just thin it down more with spring water.

Just for the record, my ancestors Cooper Scott, his brother-in-law Ben McCollom, Bake Fults and his grandson William Scott and his cousin John Stoner all made whiskey on Collins River. G.V. Muncey made whiskey on Hickory Creek. They were all born in the 1800s and liquor was not only drunk just for a beverage but also for medicinal purposes. In fact, a small quantity may be recommended for circulation and digestive health.

*Credits to:*

*The Tennessean and His Government 1941*

*Taxes - Benefit and Burden by Kedrick & Seaver 1937*

*Tennessee Its Growth and Progress by White 1936*

*History of TN from 1663-1909 by McGee 1899*

*How We Are Governed in TN and The Nation by McBain & Mynders 1909*

*American History & Government by West 1913*

*The American Educator by Foster & Hughes 1921*

*This article is a reprint of the booklet prepared in 1991 by WCGHA member Wanda Muncey Gant.*