

## **Goodspeed's Tennessee History**

### **McNairy County - Biographical & Historical Memoirs**

**Please note:** we would like to have the historical section of Goodspeed's History of McNairy County, if someone would volunteer to do that.

**Prof. M. R. Abernathy**, principal of the Purdy Male and Female Institute, and superintendent of public instruction of McNairy County, Tenn., was born in Alabama In 1844, and was one of a family of eight children born to Dr. Smith and Elizabeth Abernathy, both natives of North Carolina. The father was born in Franklin County in 1902, was a physician and followed that profession many years. He was a Whig in politics and also a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He died in 1876. The mother was born in Chatham County in 1810 and died in 1867. Her maiden name was Ramsey. Our subject received his education almost entirely through his own efforts. He came to McNairy County in 1866 and soon afterward began teaching, which occupation he has followed the principal part of the time since. In 1869 he married Miss Rachel M. COX, a native of McNairy County, born in 1848, and the daughter of Anderson and Rebecca COX. The result of this marriage was the birth of nine children William K. Terry N, Florence W., Bessie L., Mary, Pearl, George M. (deceased), Orpheus and an infant. In 1868 Prof. Abernathy was elected county superintendent of public instruction and occupied this position until 1871. In 1885 he came to Purdy to take charge of the Male and Female Institute at that place. Previous to this he had taught a few years at Adamsville. January 1885, he was chosen to his present office of county superintendent, and has filled that office to the general satisfaction of the people up to the present. In 1886 he assumed control of the McNairy Independent which under his able management will undoubtedly become one of the leading newspapers of West Tennessee. Prof. Abernathy is an independent Republican in politics, and he and wife are members of the Christian Church.

**Hon. R. D. Anderson**, one of the leading farmers and prominent citizens of the Sixth District, is one of six children born to the union of Thomas and Jane (Gates) Anderson. Two of the sons and two daughters are now living. The father was of Scotch-Irish descent born in Logan County, Ky., in 1805. After having lived in Middle Tennessee and Alabama, went to Hardeman County, Tenn., where he married in 1834; shortly afterward moving to Tippah County, Miss., he remained there Until 1844; when he came to McNairy County, engaging in farming until his death in 1883. By close study he obtained considerable practical knowledge, and held the office of magistrate for a number of years. The mother was born in Bedford County, Tenn., about 1812, is still living in the Sixth District, is an earnest and esteemed member of the church. Our subject was born in Tippah County, Miss., in 1840, was reared under the paternal roof and educated in the common schools. He enlisted in the Confederate service in 1861, being of those eager and anxious to don the gray for his country, was in a company of heavy artillery under command of

Capt. J. C. B. Jones, of Memphis, served in different artilleries in the Army of Tennessee, until the close of hostilities, taking active part in all engagements in which his company participated. After nearly four years of gallantry for his country, he returned home after the surrender and resumed farming. In December, 1865 he married Miss Eliza A., daughter of Thomas and Mary Kerr, who was born in Maury County, Tenn., in 1841, and came to McNairy County when a child. To Mr. and Mrs. Anderson two children have been born: Wm. R. and Mary Jane. Mr. A. has lived at his present home since 1870 owns 180 acres of the most productive and valuable land in the section; it is under a high state of cultivation, well improved; upon it stands a fine commodious dwelling four miles east of Falcon. Mr. Anderson is a man of business capacity and ability, in his early life spent years in giving instruction in penmanship, being quite proficient in that art. In 1882 was brought forth as the choice of the people to represent the county in the Legislature; he was elected by a large majority. He served the term with satisfaction to the people and credit to himself. He is a Democrat, his first presidential vote was for Horace Greeley. He is a warm advocate and supporter for any and all enterprises which may be beneficial to his country. He and his wife are active and esteemed members of the Christian Church.

**Peyton Atkins**, a well known farmer and early settler of McNairy County, and resident of the Ninth District, a son of George and Martha (Martin) Atkins, was born In North Carolina in 1814. His grandfather, Joseph Atkins, was a native of North Carolina and a soldier in the Revolutionary war. The father, George, was of Irish ancestry, born in North Carolina in 1785, and while a resident of his native State married a lady who was born there in 1790. In 1882 they came to McNairy County, where Mr. Atkins engaged in farming until his death in 1849. Mrs. Atkins' death occurred in 1874; she was a consistent member of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The subject of this sketch was raised under his father's roof and received a fair education at the common schools. January, 1841, he married Nancy, daughter of William and Martha Donnell. She was born in North Carolina in 1817, and became the mother of nine children---six sons and three daughters: Artimesia, wife of V. A. Sanders, of Corinth, Miss.; George, of Hardin County; Martha wife of D. W. Babb, of Mississippi; Pinckney C., of Arkansas; James R., of Hardin County; Adolphus S., of Arkansas; John Peyton, of Hardin County; Nancy, wife of Samuel Chambers, and Robert Tolbert. Mr. Atkins has always led an active and industrious life, and by his own efforts has accumulated considerable valuable property, owning the place upon which he resides, a farm of about 400 acres well improved.

Hon. J. T. Barnhill, one of the native citizens and prominent farmers of District No. 14, is a son of John N. and Elizabeth (Chambers) Barnhill. He was born In McNairy County in 1848, and is one of ten children, three sons and two daughters now living. The father was born in North Carolina about 1811 and was of Scotch ancestry. His father, William Barnhill, removed to this county from Alabama about 1826 and afterward to Texas, where he died. John N. Barnhill received a good practical education and came to this county about the same time that his father did. He was married when about the age of eighteen or nineteen, and was a lifelong tiller of the soil. He was a man of good business capacity and led a public life for a number of years in various capacities; was also one of the pioneers of this county, having settled here when the country was a dense forest and the settlers were few and far between. He died in 1881. The mother was a native of Alabama, born in 1809, and is still living in this county. Her parents were Samuel and Elizabeth Chambers, also early pioneers of McNairy County. Our subject was reared at home on the farm where he was born and where he now resides. His rudimentary education

was received at the common schools, but he subsequently graduated in the law department of Cumberland University, at Lebanon, Tenn., in January 1881. He has quite an extensive law practice in connection with his farming interest. He owns about 1,500 acres of land in the vicinity of Chewalla. His home farm, one mile north of that village, is under a high state of cultivation and is in a desirable locality. Although Mr. Barnhill is comparatively a young man, he is already one of McNairy County's most efficient and promising farmers, active businessmen and politicians. In 1884 he represented McNairy County in the Lower House of the State Legislature, being elected by a large majority, and served during the term with commendable distinction. He is a Democrat in politics and cast his first presidential vote for H. Greeley. He is an active member of the Masonic fraternity. February 22, 1880, he married Miss Docia Rosson, a native of this county, born in 1859, and a member of the Missionary Baptist Church. She is a refined and much esteemed lady, and is the daughter of Joseph T. and Charlotte Rosson.

**John G. Combs**, a well-known and prosperous farmer of the Seventh District, was born in Virginia in 1827, the only child of Thomas and Catherine (Straton) Ccombs, both natives of Virginia. The father was born about 1796, came to McNairy County in 1831, was a carpenter by trade, also a farmer, a man very highly respected; he died in 1864. The mother was born in 1804 and died in 1871. The subject of this sketch was raised at home, was educated at Savannah and Purdy. About 1847 he married Margaret, daughter of Peter and Celia Shull, both old residents of the county. Mrs. Combs died in 1864 leaving four children: Peter, Henry, John and Willie. In 1865 he made a second marriage to Mrs. Frances Perry, who was born in Giles County, Tenn., in 1889, a daughter of James and Mary Arnis. This union resulted in the birth of Maggie, James, Archibald, Lee and Guy. In 1862 Mr. Combs enlisted in the Confederate Army from Arkansas, joined Company E, McCrary's brigade, and was in active service a short time when he returned home. He is an ardent Democrat, and a Mason. He and his wife are members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Mr. Combs has always been engaged in agricultural pursuits, and with the exception of two years, a resident of the county since childhood; he is an industrious and respected man taking interest in and supporting any enterprise for the improvement of the community.

**N. A. Erwin**, of the firm of Erwin Bros. merchants of Falcon, Tenn., was born October 20, 1848, and is the son of N. A. and M. E. (McKenzie) Erwin. The father was born in Sumner County, Tenn., about 1818 and came to McNairy County with his parents when about eight years old. At this early period there were very few settlers in the county. He cultivated the soil and was one of the leading citizens of the county. His death occurred February 8, 1885. The mother was a native of McNairy County, born about 1828. She died September 1862. Our subject was reared under the parental roof and secured his education principally at Pebble Hill, this county. March 5, 1872, he married Miss Josie Kerr, who was born October 14, 1851, in McNairy County. She is the daughter of Thomas and Mary A. Kerr, and by her marriage became the mother of two children: Mary D. and Pearl. In 1880 Mr. Erwin and his brother engaged in mercantile pursuits at Falcon, where they have since remained engaged successfully in this business. He is a Democrat in politics and a good citizen. Mr. Erwin's grandparents were Nathaniel and Mary Erwin, natives respectively of South Carolina and North Carolina. The grandfather moved to Sumner County where he remained some time. He then came to McNairy County and followed agricultural pursuits. His wife was the only daughter in a family of twelve children, and five of the boys were soldiers in the war of 1812.

**Dixon Etheridge**, a well-known farmer of the Seventeenth District is a son of Kindred and Serena Massengill Etheridge, born in Dixon County, Tenn., about 1838. The father was a native of Edgecombe County, N. C.; immigrated to Dixon County, Tenn., when but a boy, with his father, Willoughby Etheridge; he was raised and married in that section. He moved to McNairy County in 1848. He was an active and industrious man, engaged in farming until time of his death about 1868. Our subject was reared under the paternal roof. His educational advantages were limited. At the age of twenty-five he married Miss Mary Jane, daughter of James and Katie Patterson. To their union eight children were born, seven of whom are living: Nathan Clark, Jackson, Robert D., Mary E., John H., Julia Ann and Winnie. In 1875 Mr. Etheridge settled on Sweet Lips, and moved to where he now resides, two miles south of McNairy, which by his industry, frugality and good management he owns; it consists of about 873 acres. Mr. Etheridge has always been a hardworking, energetic man, is a most worthy citizen and kind neighbor. He is an ardent Democrat, having cast his first presidential vote for John C. Breckenridge. He has been for several years a prominent member of the Masonic fraternity. He and his wife are consistent and faithful members of the Christian Church, and held in respect by all.

**F. M. Freeman**, hotel proprietor and merchant, is a native of Adamsville, born in 1849. His parents were C. J. and Mahala (Williams) Freeman. The father was born in Mississippi in 1823 came to McNairy County, Tenn., in 1846, returned to Mississippi in 1882, where he now resides; he is a blacksmith. The mother was born in 1828 bore five children; her death occurred in 1872. Our subject was raised at home, received a good education in Hardin County. He married Miss Mollie, daughter of J. S. McWhirter, one of the oldest settlers of the county. Mrs. Freeman was born in Adamsville in 1849; is the mother of five children: Minnie, Hattie, James, Napoleon and Josie. Mr. Freeman immediately after his marriage moved to Texas where he remained four years. In 1880 he located at Adamsville and began the drug business. He has always been an enterprising, industrious man and by his own efforts has accumulated considerable property. He is a warm Republican, taking considerable interest in politics; is a genial and worthy man.

**W. A. Gooch**, a farmer and highly respected resident of the Fourth District, is a native of McNairy County, was born in 1840, a son of J. G. and Louvinia (Brumblow) Gooch. The father was born in Alabama in 1809 and came to this county with his parents when a child: they were among the earliest settlers. He was a farmer by occupation and a magistrate in the county over fifty years; a great portion of that time was chairman of the county court, holding that office for perhaps a greater length of time than any man in the State of Tennessee. He was twice married, the father of fifteen children. No man was better known or more esteemed. His death occurred August 6, 1885. The mother was born about 1809, and bore six children. She died about 1845. The subject of this sketch spent his boyhood at home, and received a very good education in the district schools. He served about nine months in the Confederate Army, enlisting in the summer of 1861, in Company C, Twenty-first Tennessee Infantry, under command of Col. Pickett, Dr. Whitmore being the captain. He is an ardent Democrat and is a Mason. December 6, 1866, was married to a native of McNairy County, who was born in 1846-Nancy M., daughter of James and Louisa Warren. Their union resulted in the birth of eight children: S. W., J. R., J. C., W. T., Nancy L., D. C., Martha E. and an infant. The most of Mr. Gooch's time has been given to agricultural pursuits, in which he has been unusually successful; has always taken an active part

in any enterprise which was for the country's good. August 6, 1886, he was elected magistrate of the Fourth District, and continues to fill the position. As a citizen, officer and neighbor no man is more esteemed. He and his wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

**John M. Hamm**, one of the pioneers of the Fourth District, and son of Thomas P. and Tabitha (Huggins) Hamm, was born in Lauderdale County, Ala., in 1822, being the third of thirteen children, two only living. The father, Thomas P., was of Scotch-Dutch ancestry, born in Kentucky in 1778. The grandfather, John Hamm, was a native of South Carolina, born about 1759 and when fourteen or fifteen years of age volunteered his services in the Revolutionary war, served under Gen. Marion; was married in his native State and afterward went to Logan County, Ky., from there to Middle Tennessee, then to Lauderdale County, Ala., finally settling in McNairy County in 1826, where he engaged in farming until his death, October, 1836. He was a magistrate for a number of years. Thomas P. received a common-school education, while residing in Kentucky; married in 1818, and came to McNairy County in 1827, where, with the exception of a few years spent in Hardin County, he remained until his death in 1856. He was a farmer. The mother was born in North Carolina in 1778, and died July, 1886. Our subject, John M., was brought up on his father's place; received such education as the common schools afforded; came to McNairy County with his family, and was married December, 1843, to Elizabeth, daughter of Robert C. and Rebecca Houston. She was born in 1827. Their union was blessed with twelve children, of whom are Archibald B., James R., Rebecca, wife of Wilson A. Smith, of Arkansas; Cynthia Ann, wife of Thomas Ramer; Tabitha, wife of James Prather; Mary E., wife of Dr. J. L. Lawson; Fannie, wife of Jones Reeder; Sallie, wife of Thomas Baker; John H., William and Mac. Mr. Hamm has lived in the vicinity and on his farm since 1865. He at one time owned 800 acres of land, but has divided a portion of it among his children; still has 400 of valuable acres under high cultivation, well improved, three miles east of Ramer. He is a man of great industry, and well informed, possessed of fine business capacity. He takes a deep interest in the advancement of education, has always a helping hand for charitable and religious institutions. At about the time of his majority was elected magistrate, held the office for twenty-five years, was tax collector about twenty-seven years, and in 1880 was census taker. He is a Democrat and has always been. The first presidential vote he cast was for James K. Polk, in 1844. He has been a member of the Masonic fraternity thirty-five years, taking the Royal Arch degree. Both he and his wife are devoted members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

**A. B. Hamm**, a leading merchant and prominent citizen of Ramer, is a son of John M. and Elizabeth (Houston) Hamm; he was born in McNairy County in 1845, is the eldest of a family of twelve children. He was brought up at his father's home; received such education as the common schools afforded. He enlisted in the Confederate Army January, 1863 in Company B, under command of Capt. W. P. Barnhill, Nineteenth Tennessee, under Col. J. Forrests command, taking active part in any engagement in which his company participated; surrendered at Gainesville, Ala., May, 1865. He returned home and resumed the agricultural pursuits. After several months of study at a select school he engaged in teaching several years. In December, 1869 he married Miss Nicy J., daughter of J. R. and Martha Hurley. Mrs. Hamm was born in McNairy County, 1849; became the mother of three children, two of whom are still living: John Robert and Flora Lillian. Mr. Hamm gave up farming in 1873 and entered the mercantile business with T. J. Hurley at Chewalla, the firm being known as Hamm & Hurley until 1874, when he bought out his partner's interest, continuing the business alone until 1876, since which time he has been at

Ramer, where he met with great success, now carrying a stock of general merchandise valued at \$12,000. He is one of the most efficient and flourishing businessmen of the county; by untiring industry, honesty and good management has accumulated considerable means, and owns 151 acres near Ramer, 175 acres in First District, houses and several lots in Ramer. He is a strong Democrat; his first presidential vote was given H. Greeley. Mr. and Mrs. Hamm are conscientious members of Cumberland Presbyterian Church, well known and greatly respected.

**J. M. Hamm, Jr.**, a well-known farmer and saddler of the Fifth District, is a native of McNairy County; was born in August 1848. His parents were Calvin and Emily Ann (Springer) Hamm. The father was born in Lauderdale County, Ala., in 1822, and came to this county with his parents when about eight years of age, making him one of the old settlers. He is a respected farmer of the Fifth District. The mother was born in Giles County, Tenn., in 1826. Of a family of eight children born to her, five are still living. Our subject was raised at home and received the educational advantages of the district schools. In 1867 he married Miss Laura .J. Robertson, who was born in McNairy County in 1847, a daughter of Pleas. and Margaret Robertson, who came to the county at an early day. By their union they have three children living: Minnie, Myrtle and John Calvin. After his marriage Mr. Hamm began farming, which occupation he carried on for some time, when he learned the saddler's trade, in which business he has been engaged since 1873, and has found it very profitable, for by his energy, attention to business and courtesy to patrons, he has succeeded in building up an extensive trade. His work is in great demand. In March, 1886, he was elected magistrate of the district. He is a stanch Democrat. Mr. and Mrs. Hamm are both members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and esteemed by the community in which they live.

**B. S. McIntire**, a well known citizen and merchant of Purdy, Tenn., was born In McNairy County, November 9, 1835; was one of a family of five boys, two of whom are living. His parents were John and Margaret (Day) McIntire. The father was born in Lincoln County, NC, in 1797, and located in McNairy County in 1833. He was a farmer, married twice and raised seven children. His death occurred in 1852. The mother was born in Gibson County, Ind., in 1799, and died in 1844. Our subject was brought up on his father's farm and attended the schools near his home, receiving a fair education. During the war he enlisted in an independent company under command of Capt. Algee, and was with them about four months. In the spring of 1862 he enlisted in the Confederate Army from Carroll County, was in Company K, Tenth Tennessee Cavalry, first under Col. N. N. Cox; afterward William De Moss was colonel and Thomas Hutchison captain. Mr. McIntire took an active part in the battle of Chickamauga, and in several other engagements. January 28, 1864, he was so severely wounded at Dibrell's Hill, Sevier County, that it was necessary to amputate his leg the next day. He returned home in the fall of the year. After the restoration of peace he was salesman for T. K. Hall at Paris, Tenn., in the mercantile business, and later with his brother, R. W., who now resides at Jackson. In 1871 he left Paris and located in Purdy, where he has since carried on an extensive dry goods and grocery business, having by his energy, good management and integrity, built up a large trade. In 1875 he married a native of Purdy, who was born in 1852, Miss Maud, daughter of Dr. W. C. and Martha Kindel. By their union there is one daughter, Ophelia V. Mr. McIntire is a warm Democrat and man whom all respect.

**Josiah Jeans**, one of the best-known men of McNairy County, is one of the six children

born to James and Tabitha (Prather) Jeans. The father was born in Virginia and went to South Carolina when a young man, and there married a native of the State. He came to McNairy County at an early day and engaged in farming until the time of his death. The mother's death occurred at the same place; she was a sincere Christian and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Our subject was born in South Carolina in 1804, was raised on his father's farm, receiving his education in the common country schools. In 1836 he immigrated to McNairy County, located near Falcon on the farm upon which he has since resided. By labor, energy and careful management, he has risen from poverty to one of the most substantial men of the county. He owns 500 acres of land, making him one of the most extensive farmers in the section. In 1828 he married Miss Elizabeth Prather, who became the mother of six children, three of whom are living: James Newton, Josiah T., of Arkansas, and Laura Jane, wife of John Carter, of Falcon. Mrs. Jeans died in the spring of 1880, and in April, 1881, Mr. Jeans married Miss Susan Norman, of Mississippi, who was born in East Tennessee in 1824; she is a consistent and earnest member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Mr. Jeans is an old and stanch Democrat; his first presidential vote was cast for Gen. Jackson in 1828. No man is better known or more generally esteemed.

**Robert E. McKinney**, clerk and master of the chancery court, of McNairy County, Tenn., was born June 18, 1857, and received his early education at Purdy, but subsequently attended the Mars Hill Academy, in Alabama. At the age of fifteen he was appointed deputy circuit clerk, and afterward held the position as deputy in the register's office for some time. In the winter of 1878-79 he took a course of lectures at the Louisville University, having previously studied medicine at Purdy. In the spring of 1879 he began the practice of his chosen profession, and in April of the same year he received the appointment of the office of clerk and master of the chancery court, was reappointed and continued to hold that position. January, 1881, he married Miss Mollie Stubbs, a native of Baldwin, Miss., born August, 1860, and a daughter of Thomas B. and Virginia Stubbs. August, 1884, our subject was elected chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee of the county and was also congressional committeeman for the county for the same term. He has been a public officer of the county most of the time since he was fifteen years of age; he is a man well known and much esteemed by all his acquaintances as an excellent officer and an obliging neighbor. He is an ardent Democrat in politics. He is one of a family of seven children born to Judge J. F. and Julia A. (Adams) McKinney. The father was born at Fayetteville, Tenn., in 1823. He read law at his native town and was admitted to the bar at that place, after which he came to McNairy County and located at Purdy and began the practice of his chosen profession. He was twenty-four years of age at that time, and practiced in this and adjoining counties for many years. He held the honorable position of both circuit and chancellor judge by commission from the governor, and was one of the leading lawyers of West Tennessee. He died May, 1880. The mother of our subject was born at Purdy, November, 1833, and is the daughter of B. B. and Amanda F. Adams, native Virginians, who came to this place at a very early day.

**Gen. John H. Meeks**, one of the most influential citizens and leading farmers of McNairy County, was born in Lincoln County, Tenn., in 1814, was the youngest of three sons and the only one now living. His parents were John and Elizabeth (Henderson) Meeks, both natives of Pendleton District, S. C. The father was born in 1783, was well educated, married the first time in 1810 to the mother of John H., and after her death made a second marriage in 1819 with Elizabeth Lane, by whom he had six children. In 1811 he moved to Lincoln County, and engaged

in farming until 1844, when he located in McNairy Co., and there resided up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1877. The mother was a daughter of Capt. John Henderson, a gallant and noted man of Revolutionary fame. Mrs. Meeks died in October, 1814, when the subject of this sketch was but an infant; he was taken by his grandfather, Capt. Henderson, with whom he remained until manhood. He received liberal literary and business education, and spent the time 1835 to 1838 as a teacher, in which capacity he proved most efficient. Since the latter date he has been tilling the soil, either carrying it on himself or having it done by others. In 1830 he was sent by Capt. Henderson to McNairy County, to take charge of a number of men and raise a crop, after which he returned to Alabama, his grandparents having moved there in his childhood. In 1832 they settled in McNairy County. January, 1841, John H. was married to Ellen, daughter of George and Martha Atkins; she was born in Rockingham County, N. C., and came to McNairy County with her parents in 1832. To them were born eight children, only two sons and two daughters are living: Martha E., wife of F. A. Johnson, of Dyer County; Elder Rufus P., an earnest and influential minister of the Christian Church, residing at Jackson, Tenn.; Marcus Henry, a leading attorney at law of Jackson, Tenn., and Zilpah, wife of W. D. Erwin, a prominent merchant of Falcon. Gen. Meeks has been living on his present farm since 1851; it is twelve miles east from Falcon, extends over 600 acres of the county's most productive soil, which is highly cultivated and improved; the dwelling-house is one of the most elegant and well arranged in the country. He also owns about 800 acres of Tennessee River bottomland in Hardin County, which is very valuable. The General is a half-brother to Orvil L. Meeks, of same county. He is a man of unusual strength of mind, a keen financier, and of indisputable integrity; is an ardent advocate of universal education, and gives liberally to all charitable and religious institutions. He has always been a staunch Democrat-the recognized leader of that party in McNairy County, having held various responsible and prominent positions. His public career began in 1849, when he represented his county in the Lower House of the State Legislature, being the first Democrat representative from McNairy County; he was re-elected in 1851; was nominated several times afterward, but declined further election. In 1855 he was offered the nomination for congressman in his congressional district, but positively declined. He was a member of the constitutional convention of 1870. His first presidential vote was cast for Hugh L. White in 1836. He has been a Mason of good standing and prominence since 1848. The entire family are members of the Christian Church. He received the title of general from the militia votes of both Hardeman and McNairy Counties; was not a soldier in the late war, but had two sons who fought bravely in defense of the lost cause. The elder of these, under the command of Gen. Forrest, fell, mortally wounded, in 1864. Gen. Meeks earnestly opposed the first action of the South in bringing about secession, but, finally, when the war was forced on the Southern people, he was afterward an ardent supporter of the lost cause.

**Hon. Orvil L. Meeks**, farmer and miller, and one of the leading citizens of District No. 14, is a son of John and Elizabeth (Lane) Meeks. He was born in Lincoln County, Tenn., in 1822, and is the eldest child born to his parents. The father was born in South Carolina in 1783, and was of Welsh-English descent. He was reared in Georgia and received his education in the common schools, was a farmer and mechanic, and was twice married, his first wife being Miss Elizabeth Henderson. His second marriage occurred in 1819 in Franklin County, Tenn. He removed to Lincoln County at a very early day, and from there to McNairy County in 1844. He died about 1877. His father, Littleton Meeks was also a native of South Carolina, but afterward located in Georgia. He was for many years engaged as a missionary among the Indians. The

mother of our subject was born about 1806 and died at the age of seventy. She was a woman of rare intelligence, fine culture and high moral attainments. Both parents were members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and much esteemed by their many friends. Our subject was reared at home and received a common-school education. In 1841 he came to McNairy County, and in December, 1845, he married Miss Cynthia L., daughter of John and Rebecca Chambers. In 1854 Mrs. Meeks died; she was the mother of the following children: John C., a wholesale merchant at St. Louis, Mo.; Marcus W., merchant at Corinth, Miss., and Orvil L. (deceased). October 11, 1859, Mr. Meeks married Miss Martha Michie, a native of McNairy County, born in 1839, the daughter of G. G. Michie, and a member of the Christian Church. This union resulted in the birth of eleven children—three sons and eight daughters: George T., Lovinia, James L., Henry, Zilpha, (Mrs. David Sharp), Ellen, Josie, Kate, Lillie, Flora and Lucretia. Mr. Meeks has been a resident of his present home since 1845, and is the owner of about 1,500 acres of productive land, four miles southeast from Ramer, nearly all of which he acquired by his own industry. He is well known throughout the county as one of its best and most successful citizens. He served for some time as colonel of the militia. In 1855 he was elected by the Democratic party to represent Hardeman McNairy and Hardin Counties in the upper branch of the State Legislature, where he served one term. During the latter part of the late civil war he served for several months in Forrest's cavalry. In politics he is a staunch and active Democrat, and cast his first presidential vote for James K. POLK in 1844. He has been a Master Mason for over thirty years, and is one of the county's most respected citizens.

**S. M. Perkins**, a prominent citizen and merchant of Adamsville, Tenn., is one of twelve children, ten now living, born to S. M. and C. Perkins, both natives of Middle Tennessee. The father was born in 1814, came to McNairy County about 1834, and now resides in the Tenth District. He is a farmer. The mother was born in 1817 and died 1850 her maiden name was Houston. Our subject was born in McNairy County in 1840, and received his education in the schools near home. In 1865 he began merchandising at Stantonville and remained in the business at that place for three years. He then engaged in tilling the soil and continued at this until 1883 when he came to Adamsville and engaged extensively in the sale of dry goods and general merchandise. In 1867 he married Miss Mary A. Howell, who was born in Hardin County in 1847, and who is the daughter of Benjamin and Nancy Howell. By this connection our subject became the father of five children: Josie, Samuel, Ida, Estella and Bennie. Mr. Perkins is thrifty, wide-awake and is one of the town's most substantial businessmen. He is a Democrat in politics and he and wife are worthy members of the Christian Church. In 1861 he enlisted in Company G, Thirteenth Tennessee Infantry (Confederate Army) under Col. Williams, and served with his company two years, after which he joined Forrest's cavalry. He took an active part in the battles of Shiloh, Harrisburg, Ky., and Cross Roads. He was with Hood and was in many minor engagements and cavalry skirmishes. He was slightly wounded four times and was a brave and fearless soldier. He then returned home in the spring of 1865.

**J. P. Prince**, a prominent citizen and merchant of Purdy, Tenn., was born in Pendleton District, South Carolina, June 29, 1817; was one of a family of nine children born to James and Mary Prince. The father was born in 1778, and was a farmer by occupation. In 1825 he moved to Georgia and was for many years justice of the peace; his death occurred there in 1863. The mother was Miss Mears, born in Virginia about 1786, departed this life November 1876. Our subject was raised at home, received his education at Clarksville, Ga., and came to Tennessee in

1843, locating in Hardin County, where he taught school for four years. He was in a warehouse at Camp's Landing for five years, at same time doing a mercantile business for himself, going from there to Adamsville, selling goods until 1863, when he went to Paducah, remaining there until the close of the war. For eight years he was in the commission business in St. Louis, Mo., and in 1873 settled in Purdy, meeting with great success and is considered one of the leading merchants. December of 1859 he was married to Eliza Kerby, who was born in Hardin County in 1832 a daughter of John and Nancy Kerby. Mrs. Prince died in 1858, leaving one son, Dr. J. J. Prince, a physician and merchant at Bethel Springs. Mr. Prince is a Republican, and a member of the Christian Church, a man of good business capacity, a fine manager, who has always been prosperous and respected.

John R. Reeder, a farmer, miller, ginner, and prominent man of McNairy County, is a son of Jacob and Sarah (Wesson) Reeder, was born in Lawrence District, South Carolina, in 1822. His great grandfather was a native of Germany, immigrated to the United States where he raised a family of sixteen children, the grandfather of Jno. H., being the youngest boy—all of whom lived to marry and rear children. The father, Jacob, was born in South Carolina in 1799, was married when about twenty-one years of age to a lady of his native State who was born about 1800 and died about 1856. In 1825 Jacob moved to Lauderdale County, Ala., where he engaged in agriculture up to the time of his death in 1861. He and his wife were devoted and esteemed members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. John H. was raised and educated in the common schools of his native State. February, 1842, he married Miss Rosana, daughter of Frederick JONES of Lawrence District. She was born in 1820; became the mother of eight children, four sons and two daughters still living: Wm. A.; Sarah, widow of Cicero JEANS; James A.; Lydia, wife of J. S. Ramer John Henry, Jr., and Jones C. In 1843 Mr. Reeder came to this county, but remained only a year, returning to Alabama in 1844; he came back and located near Gravel Hill in 1848, where he now owns 213 acres of good land, fertile and well improved. In 1886 he moved to Ramer, where he is at present engaged in saw-milling and ginning. He is a man of great energy and untiring industry; has accumulated his possessions by hard labor and good management. He was in the mercantile business from 1865 to 1875 and in all his undertakings has met with success. He is a life-long Democrat; gave his first presidential vote to James K. Polk in 1844. He was elected magistrate in 1870, and held the office six years to the satisfaction of the people. He has been a Mason a number of years. He and his wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, both held in highest respect by the community.

**Dr. W. M. Sanders**, physician and surgeon at Adamsville, Tenn., was born In McNairy County, August 9, 1849, and is one of a family of eleven children born to the union of W. C. and Martha Sanders The father was born in East Tennessee in 1819, and came to McNairy County, with his parents when two years of age. He is an extensive farmer and now resides in the Tenth District. The mother was a native of Lincoln County, born about 1830, and her maiden name was Moore. Our subject received his education at the Adamsville Male and Female Institute, and in 1871 began reading medicine with Dr. L. N. Pettigrew, of Adamsville, with whom he remained until September, 1873 when he entered the medical department of the Louisville University and took a course of lectures. The next year he located at Adamsville and began the practice of his chosen profession. In the fall of 1879 he returned to Louisville and took a course of lectures at the Kentucky School of Medicine where he graduated In the spring of 1880. January 27, 1876, he married Miss Jennie Scott, a native of McNairy County, and the daughter of Frank Scott. By this

union they have two children living: Daisy and Alma. Since locating at Adamsville Dr. Sanders has built up an extensive and lucrative practice and has made many warm friends. Since 1879, he and his brother, Dr. J. L., have been in partnership. The brother studied medicine under our subject and then completed his education at the medical department of the University of Louisville. They have the leading practice at Adamsville. The Doctor is an ardent Democrat in politics and he and wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

**J. W. Stumph** chairman of the county court of McNairy County, Tenn., was born in Pennsylvania in 1836, son of W. W. and Nancy (Hyatt) Stump, both natives of Pennsylvania. The father was born in 1816, and was of German lineage. He was a merchant for many years, and then moved to Illinois, where he cultivated the soil. He died in 1879. The mother of our subject was born about the same time as her husband, and is of English descent. She is now living In Illinois. Our subject was one of a family of seven children, five of whom are now living. He was educated at Uniontown College, and in 1858 moved to Savannah, Hardin County, and the next year came to Purdy, where he has since been engaged in the jewelry business. In 1860 he married Miss Margaret Braden, a native of McNairy County, born about 1841, and the daughter of P. H. and Sarah Braden, old and respected citizens of McNairy County. Mrs. Stumph died in 1872 leaving two children: Fred and Sallie. In the fall of 1873 he married Miss L. Huddleston, a native of McNairy County, born about 1846, and the daughter of Calaway Huddleston. The fruits of this union were five children: Lockie, John, Calaway, Wynn and Oliver. In 1870 Mr. Stumph was chosen magistrate of the Seventh District, and has held that position ever since. In 1876 he was made chairman of the county court and from 1870 to the spring of 1886 was postmaster at Purdy. He has always been an active, energetic man, and has accomplished much toward the general improvement of the place. He is a stanch Republican in politics. In 1881 he was appointed United States commissioner of McNairy County by Judge Hammond.

**R. P. Swain** a well known farmer of the Fourth District, son of William and Rebecca (Williamson) Swain, was born In Lincoln County, Tenn., in 1820 The father was of Irish descent, born in South Carolina in 1783; when about thirteen years of age he went to Georgia, where he married at the age of twenty-six. He moved to Lincoln County in 1812, and in 1828 went to Henderson, Chester County and remained until 1840, when he settled In McNairy County, resuming his farming and so continuing up to a year previous to his death which occurred in 1871. The mother was born In Georgia about 1788; died in 1861; she and her husband were both faithful members of the Primitive Baptist Church. Our subject spent his early life at home, receiving his education from the common country schools. April, 1846, he married Miss Melissa Merrell, of McNairy County. They became the parents of six children, all living but one: Aurelius; Martha, wife of John McCoy; William; Mary, wife of Elihu Blasingain, and Elma. Mr. SWAIN first located in McNairy County, in 1848 moved to Mississippi, in 1861 returned to the county and in 1874 settled on the farm which he now occupies and owns, a place of seventy acres, one and a half miles east from Ramer. He is a life-long Democrat, having cast his first presidential vote for Jas. K. POLK. Mr. and Mrs. Swain are interested and active members of the Missionary Baptist Church and are esteemed by the community.

**Hon. James Warren**, a farmer and pioneer of McNairy County, was born to Claiborne County, Tenn., in 1810. He is the only surviving one of a family of eight children born to James and Nancy (Murphy) Warren. The father was a native of Virginia, and moved to Caswell County,

N. C., with his father, James Warren. While a resident of the State, he married, it is thought, about 1798. A few years later he located in Claiborne County and resumed his farming, which occupation he continued until his death about 1813. The mother is supposed to have been a native of North Carolina; after Mr. Warren's death she again married and raised another family of children; moved to Arkansas about 1847, where she died. Our subject, bereft of a father's care at three years of age, served as a bound boy until he attained his majority. His educational advantages were of course very meager, having attended school but a few months, but possessing a bright, quick mind; a close observer and lover of literature, by study and application he obtained fair learning. He came to McNairy County with his master when sixteen years of age. At his majority he began life on his own responsibility as a tiller of the soil. March 30, 1836, he married Miss Louisa, daughter of John and Ann Rains, of this county, but a native of Warren County, born in 1815. To this union nine children were born, of whom five are living: Hugh A.; John T.; Nancy, the wife of Wm. A. Gooch; Lucinda K., wife of Dr. L. H. C. Prather, and Martha E., wife of J. T. Jeans, of Arkansas. The first year of Mr. Warren's married life he was a tenant, but soon accumulated sufficient to purchase a home. He has continued to reside in this county, and has been in the Sixth Precinct since 1860. He has always been an industrious active man, and by his own efforts, became an extensive landholder, owning nearly 1,500 acres. He has risen from poverty and obscurity to be recognized as one of the most prominent and successful men in McNairy County. That he has the confidence and respect of the people, is demonstrated by the fact that he has filled various responsible offices for a number of years. He was first elected constable, then became sheriff of the county in 1838, serving six years; he was a member of the Legislature during 1845 and 1847; was internal revenue assessor a short length of time, and in 1880, was again elected representative. He was formerly a Whig, casting his first vote for Hugh L. White; was a firm Union man during the war; after that event he affiliated with the Republican party until the organization of the Greenback party and the adoption of their platform, which he accepted as the true principles of government. He is deeply interested in the public schools believing in universal education, and a liberal supporter of all laudable public enterprises. He has been a member of the Masonic fraternity since 1845. The entire family are consistent and devoted members of the Missionary Baptist Church.

**Hugh A. Warren**, one of the prominent farmers and residents of the Fourth District is a son of James and Louisa (Rains) Warren; he was born in McNairy County, in 1839, and is one of a family of four sons and five daughters, of whom but five are living. Hugh A. spent his boyhood under the paternal roof, receiving his education in the common schools. He was married February 22, 1861, to Julia, daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Knight, who was born in North Carolina, in 1837, and came with her parents to McNairy County when she was quite young. She became the mother of seven children; two sons and two daughters still survive: Frances, wife of J. W. Gooch; James A., Martha E., and John T. Mr. Warren has occupied the farm upon which he now lives for several years, owning 270 acres of fertile land under fine cultivation, and upon which are the best of buildings; is situated four miles southeast of Falcon. Mr. Warren has always been an energetic, prosperous farmer; is a strong advocate of general education, a generous contributor to charitable and religious institutions. Politically he is strictly independent, adhering rigidly to principle and not to party ties. His first presidential vote was for John Bell in 1860. He is a sincere member of the Missionary Baptist Church.

**John T. Warren**, a merchant of Adamsville, Tenn., was born in McNairy County, April

17, 1841; was one of a family of nine children, five of whom are still living. His father is James Warren, a native of East Tennessee, born in 1810 and came to McNairy County at an early day, being one of the oldest settlers. He is a farmer and lives near Falcon. The mother was Miss Louisa Rains, born in East Tennessee in 1815. Our subject was at home during boyhood, and educated at the schools in the vicinity. After the war he located at Purdy, entering into the mercantile business; from there he went to McNairy Station; afterward was in business at Bethel Springs. In 1877 he came to Adamsville where he has since resided and carried on an extensive and profitable dry goods and grocery trade. He has always been an industrious, upright man, successful in all his undertakings. He is a Mason in good standing, an Independent in politics, voting for principle rather than party. In 1869 he married Miss Jennie, a daughter of Dr. J. S. Rogers, a prominent physician of the county. Mrs. Warren was born in this county in 1848, and is the mother of seven children, two of whom are living: Susan Violer and Virginia D. Mr. and Mrs. Warren are esteemed members of the Missionary Baptist Church.