

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BETWEEN 1800-1820**

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

BETWEEN 1800-1820

An Abstract

Presented to

The Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

Ann Evans Alley

May, 1986

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the factors promoting the economic development of Montgomery County between 1800-1820. This was a period of rapid development in which the county evolved into a significant agricultural and marketing economy in which slave holding played a significant role. The thesis will contend that development was encouraged by the county's location at the confluence of the Red and Cumberland Rivers which provided an outlet for the products of the county as well as those of neighboring counties. The county's situation downstream from Nashville allowed it to benefit from the economic and political influences radiating from the capital. The nature of the major agricultural crops, tobacco and cotton, required a large labor supply. This labor requirement contributed to the development of the slave holding economy. The economic impact of Jefferson's Embargo of 1808 and the subsequent War of 1812 will also be considered.

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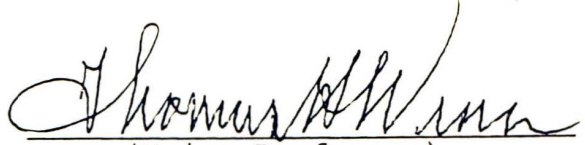
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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Ann Alley entitled "Economic Development of Montgomery County Between 1800-1820." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.


(Major Professor)

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:


Second Committee Member


Third Committee Member

Accepted for the
Graduate Council:


Dean of the Graduate School

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CHAPTER I

FROM SUBSISTENCE TO COMMERCE

By the dawn of the nineteenth century, Montgomery County, Tennessee, was just emerging into the commercial-agricultural economy of the riverine southwest. No longer restricted by Indian depredations and the absence of a dependable outlet to market, the county's produce began to flow freely down the Cumberland and Mississippi Rivers to the markets at Natchez and New Orleans, while imported goods arrived from the east with some regularity. The subsistence frontier had moved further south and west.

The county's emergence in the commercial economy, however, was rather narrowly based on a few staples (cotton, corn, and tobacco) and largely dependent on capital funneled into the area through Nashville, already by 1800 the dominant town on the Cumberland. The concentration of commercial-agriculture, land speculation, and related economic matters encouraged a neglect of such social activities as the formation of schools and churches. Politics was seen largely as a matter of stimulating rather than regulating

economic activity. Unlike some of the older American settlements, laissez-faire economic expansion in Montgomery County did not occur within an already established communal order; rather, such expansion created the society and its character. The results were an early and thorough commitment to slavery and staple agriculture, a highly developed land market and credit system, a tendency to neglect such social institutions as churches and schools, and a contentious politics based largely on personalities and conflicting economic interests rather than any over-arching traditional ideological commitment.

In 1800 Montgomery County lay at the western edge of a rapidly advancing frontier. Tennessee was still a frontier state and the people were frontier people. Since 1796 the county had enjoyed the privileges of statehood, yet only twenty years had passed since Moses and Joseph Renfroe had come with their families to that first ill-fated settlement on Red River, and only five years since the last Indian incursion into the area.

The approximately 105,600 inhabitants of the State of Tennessee were centered in two principal areas of settlement covering only about one third of the present limits of the state. East Tennessee,

the center of the state's political activity, extended only to the Little Tennessee River south of the Holston. Settlements north of the river went just west of Knoxville, the capital of the newly formed state. The settlements on the Cumberland in Middle Tennessee were spread out along a narrow sparsely settled area extending along the Cumberland River from about present day Carthage to Clarksville. Even within these areas there were wide uninhabited areas. The East Tennessee and the Cumberland settlements were separated from each other by more than seventy miles of wilderness which still belonged to the Indians. The land west of the Tennessee River was also controlled by the Indians. The White settlement in that area was a trading post at Chickasaw Bluffs, the present site of Memphis. These two large areas of Indian occupation were connected across the southern half of the state, leaving the county of Montgomery adjacent to Indian territory on the south and the west.¹

¹U.S. Department of State, Statistical View of the Population of the United States from 1790 to 1830 (Washington: Duff Green, 1835), p. 81; Samuel Cole Williams, ed., Early Travels in Tennessee Country, 1540-1800 (Johnson City: The Watauga Press, 1928; reprint ed., Nashville: Franklin Book Reprints, 1970), pp. 311, 502; Jedidiah Morse, The American Universal Geography (Boston: Thomas and Andrews, 1805), p. 680; Phillip M. Hamer, ed. Tennessee: A History, 1673-1932, 4 vols. (New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1933), 1:183; Frederick L. Paxson, History of the American Frontier, 1763-1893 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924), p. 93; James Phelan, History of Tennessee: The Making of a State (New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1888), p. 171.

The population of Montgomery County was increasing almost daily with the arrival of new immigrants from the east. The Federal Census of 1800, the first taken since Tennessee had become a state, showed the population of the county at 2,899, an increase of approximately 300 percent since 1791, taking into consideration the fact that about one-half of the territory and probably more than one-half of the population was cut off in 1796 to form Robertson County. While the major portion of the inhabitants was confined to an area along the Cumberland and Red Rivers within the bounds of the present day county, a great number of settlers was pushing further to the west. Within three years the western portion of the county would be sufficiently populated to justify the creation of two new counties--Stewart and Dickson.²

Over 28 percent of these frontiersmen were slaves, a noticeably higher ratio than the national average of 17 percent and the state average of 13 percent. Even within the Mero District where slavery flourished, Montgomery County showed a larger number

²Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., The Territorial Papers of the United States, vol. 4: The Territory South of the River Ohio, 1790-1796 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936), p. 81; Robert Hays, "Schedule of the Whole Number of Persons in the District of Tennessee, 1800," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publication, 26 (1954):106; Williams, Travels, p. 506.

of slaves than any of her sister counties, with the exception of Davidson County. In 1791 the area had a population of 1,387 people, including 154 slaves and forty-two "other free persons." Slaves amounted to only about 11 percent of the total population. During the next four years the population as a whole increased only 28 percent, while the slave population showed an increase of 158 percent, representing 20.5 percent of the total population. The opening of navigation of the Mississippi River by Pinckney's Treaty with Spain in 1795 and statehood in 1796 gave an additional thrust to the development of an economy which profited from slave labor. As a result, unable to compete in a slave market, free blacks moved to other areas where the presence of slave labor did not diminish the need for their labor, or where their presence gave rise to little or no fear of insurrection from the slave community. By 1800 no free blacks remained in the county.³

It was a youthful community. Well over one-half (55.5 percent) of the inhabitants were under the age of ten. There were only 536 men over the age of sixteen available to assume the civic

³Carter, Territorial Papers, p. 81; Hays, "Schedule, 1800," p. 106.

responsibilities of the county, and only eighty of these men were over the age of forty-five.⁴

Only a small percentage of these inhabitants had lived in the county during the days of early settlement. Most had come into the area since 1795 after the problems with the Indians had ceased and the Mississippi River had been opened for trade. A few men like Haydon Wells and George Neville had come with their families before 1790 and had survived the hardships of the frontier. Wells had come south from Kaskaskia in 1779 and had joined James Robertson and his party along their overland journey to the Cumberland. Neville and his family had come from South Carolina in 1784 and settled along Red River. Other early settlers like John Montgomery, for whom the county was named, had been killed by the Indians. The Seviars had come into the area early, but unable to cope with frontier life, took refuge in Nashville and returned after peace was assured. Other hardy souls, seeing the encroachment of

⁴Hays, "Schedule, 1800," p. 106. Based on White statistics; the 1800 Census does not give ages for slaves.

civilization, had moved further west in search of a new frontier.⁵

Travel was only slightly better than when the first settlers came into the area. The river continued to be a major route from the east and the outlet for the county's growing surplus. Supplies and settlers from the Philadelphia and Baltimore areas floated down the Ohio to the mouth of the Cumberland. Traffic from the Holston area came down the Tennessee River and up the Ohio River about twelve miles to the Cumberland. From there, now the site of Smithland, Kentucky, the travelers poled their way up the river to Palmyra, Clarksville, and Nashville.⁶

Three main roads brought traffic from the eastern settlements into the Cumberland region but these had been heavily traveled without improvement.

⁵Harriette Simpson Arnow, Flowering of the Cumberland (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 87; Ursula Smith Beach, Along the Warioto or a History of Montgomery County, Tennessee (Nashville: McQuiddy Press, 1964), p. 83; Will T. Hale and Dixon L. Merritt, History of Tennessee and Tennesseans, 8 Vols. (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1913), 1:207; Valentine Sevier to his brother, General John Sevier, Nashville, March 13, 1795, Draper Mss. 11 DD 120, 122 (microfilm ed, 1949), Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; Irene M. Griffey, "Descendants of George Neville," p. 1, Clarksville, Tennessee.

⁶Hamer, Tennessee, 1:388; Thomas Perkins Abernethy, From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1932), p. 200.

The northern route, opened by Daniel Boone in 1775, led from North Carolina, passing near the present site of Kingsport, Tennessee, veering northwestward through the Cumberland Gap into present day Kentucky. Near Danville a branch turned southward connecting the Kentucky transylvania settlements with the Cumberland. It was along this road that James Robertson in 1779 brought the first settlers from the Watauga region to the settlements along the Cumberland. A second branch of this road veered southwest through Logan Courthouse (now Russellville) until it reached the state line. There it turned west, following a line near the Kentucky-Tennessee border across Whippoorwill Creek and the Elk Fork of Red River. After crossing the West Fork of Red River, the road turned south to Clarksville.⁷

The need for a more direct route caused the State of North Carolina to order the construction of a new road into the interior in 1785. The road ran from the lower end of the Clinch Mountains in present day Hawkins County to the settlements on the

⁷Thomas Speed, The Wilderness Road (Louisville: John P. Morton and Co., 1886), p. 63; Abernethy, Frontier, p. 155; Paxon, American Frontier, p. 114; J. Russell, Map of the State of Kentucky with Adjoining Territories (London: H. D. Symons, 1794).

Cumberland. The ten foot wide path ran through the present day counties of Jackson, Smith, Trousdale, and Sumner by Bledsoe's Lick into Nashville. Known as Avery's Trace for Peter Avery who laid out the route, the road opened in September or October of 1788. A guard of soldiers was furnished to escort families across the still hostile Indian territory.⁸

As immigration increased, it became evident that this road was not sufficient to carry the multitude of wagons and other traffic coming in from the east. In 1794 the Territorial Legislature meeting in Knoxville authorized a road cut from Southwest Point of Tellico Block House near Kingston to Nashville. An attempt was made to finance construction by a lottery, but this proved unsuccessful. Travelers began at once to take the new route, but the opening of the road was delayed until the following year. Evidence of this route, known as Walton's Road

⁸W. E. M'Elwee, "The Old Road," The American Historical Magazine, 8 (October 1903):347-48; Walter Clark, ed., The State Records of North Carolina, 26 vols. (Goldsboro: Nash Brothers, 1905), 24:913; Stanley J. Folmsbee, Robert E. Corlew, Enoch L. Mitchell, Tennessee: A Short History (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1969), p. 242; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:385; John Haywood, Notes, Tennessee Historical Society Collection, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; Albert C. Holt, "The Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee," Tennessee Historical Magazine, 7 (January 1922):282.

for William Walton, one of the Commissioners responsible for its construction, can be seen today.⁹

Numerous paths, dating from the days of the buffalo and the Indians still criss-crossed the area. One branch of the old Saline Trace left the Cumberland salt springs near Nashville and veered westward, entering Kentucky. A second branch proceeded north from Clarksville and entered Kentucky near Oak Grove. The two trails converged near present day Hopkinsville. Another trail beginning near Palmyra followed the ridge between the Cumberland River and the Little River through Cadiz, Kentucky, passing near the present site of Princeton, Kentucky. The road from Nashville to Clarksville that passed through the upper settlements along White's Creek probably followed another Indian trail.¹⁰

Agriculture dominated the economy of the developing county. Land was still plentiful and cheap. While about 50 percent or more of the land was still in the hands of speculators, good land could still

⁹Hamer, Tennessee, 1:385-86; Gilbert Imlay, A Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America, 3rd ed. (London: J. Debrett, 1797), p. 516; M'Elwee, "Old Road," pp. 351-52.

¹⁰Willard Rouse Jillson, Pioneer Kentucky (Frankfort: The State Journal Company, 1934), p. 59.

be purchased for \$1.50 to \$5.00 per acre, depending on the quality of the land, the number of improvements, and distances from town. The most desirable land lay along the creeks and rivers where timber and water were plentiful. Settlers, who could not afford to purchase the better land, moved out into the back country. Others rented land on a seven or eight year lease at eight to fifteen bushels of corn or Indian wheat per acre.

It was easy to find land to lease. Speculators, some holding several thousand acres, were eager to attract tenants, as their presence induced others to settle on nearby land. The renter would clear and enclose about eight or nine acres, build a cabin, and provide his family with an adequate frontier lifestyle. In some cases this lease would increase the value of the land owner's property some 30 percent after the second year. This property would later be purchased by a new immigrant willing to pay the price for the convenience of having his land already cleared and a cabin built. Some large land owners allowed newcomers to settle rent free in return for clearing and improving the land. Many who began by renting land were able in time to purchase land of their own. Yet there was a large group of landless

yeomen in the county. About 37 percent of the men between the ages of twenty-one and fifty owned no land at all.¹¹

Crops were limited mainly to the production of corn, tobacco, cotton, and a little wheat. The livestock was unimproved and ill cared for. The lush canebreaks, which in the early days provided cattle with both food and shelter from the harsh winters, were by now disappearing. Hogs and cattle ran loose on the open range foraging what pasture they could find. Registered marks of assorted crops, bits, forks, squares, and holes proved ownership.¹²

During the early years of the settlement production was sufficient to meet only the needs of the local community. By 1800 more land had been cleared and production had increased. Now enough was raised to supply the local market, as well as create a surplus.

¹¹Ursula S. Beach and Ann E. Alley, eds., 1798 Property Tax List and 1820 Census of Montgomery County, Tennessee (Clarksville: 1969), passim; Hamer, Tennessee 1:183-14; Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., Travels West of the Alleghanies (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1904), p. 279.

¹²Arnow, Flowering, pp. 214, 226; Henry Adams, The United States in 1800 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955), pp. 12-13; Montgomery County, Tennessee, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Minutes 1:32, 33, 38, 40, 48, 54, 67, 70, 75; Williams, Travels, p. 516; Abernethy, Frontier, p. 150.

Some of the larger land owners and some of the more adventurous youth floated their produce to the market at New Orleans, but most of the crops were sold or bartered to the local merchants for needed imports or services. Edwin Gibson advertised that he would accept "first proof brandy and whiskey, salt, fur, iron, bacon, young heifers and sheep if delivered at my house within the season" in exchange for his horse service. The merchant shipped the produce to New Orleans where both the cargo and flatboat were sold. The crews returned home overland along the Natchez Trace. The merchant often traveled by ship from New Orleans to Philadelphia or Baltimore where he replenished the stock for his store.¹³

The tools of the Montgomery County farmer were crude and clumsy. Mechanized farming equipment such as the threshing machine and plow of more modern design had been developed, but they were not to be found on the frontier. The sickle and flail had been unchanged since Biblical times. The hoe, a necessary

¹³Abernethy, Frontier, p. 151; Paschall, Old Times (Nashville: For the author, 1869), p. 279; Thomas P. Abernathy, "The Early Development of Commerce and Banking in Tennessee," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 14 (December 1927):311, 316; Tennessee Gazette (Nashville), February 25, 1800; Hugh McClure to his wife, Susan, 10 May 1806, Drane Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

tool for all farmers, was of a simple design which could be made in a local blacksmith's shop. Except among the most progressive farmers, drainage, fertilization, and rotation of crops were not practiced. They had never seemed necessary to the average farmer. The land was rich and plentiful. When the land did wear out, there was always more land on the next frontier.¹⁴

According to one traveler, few varieties of vegetables were found in the area. Some, he commented, had not been introduced, and others did not thrive very well.¹⁵ Peas, beans, pumpkins, cymilins (white scalloped or pattypan squash), and watermelons were often planted in the corn hills for easy cultivation. Cabbage, as well as Irish and sweet potatoes, were grown. Orchards supplied fruit for the table as well as the base for brandy. Joseph McCorkle, who died in 1803, probably had the first nursery in Montgomery County. Listed among his other assets were ninety-five

¹⁴Harriette Simpson Arnow, "The Pioneer Farmer and His Crops in the Cumberland Region," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 19 (December 1960):292; Adams, The United States, p. 12; James Ross, Life and Times of Elder Reuben Ross (1882; reprint ed., Nashville: Alley and Beach, 1977), p. 181.

¹⁵Williams, Travels, p. 516.

apple trees which were purchased in 1806 by Victor Harris for \$15.66.¹⁶

One of the more progressive farmers, Morgan Brown, experimented with methods of planting Irish potatoes. Part of his crop was planted cut and part whole. Some potatoes were placed cut side up, and some cut side down. Even the seed bed was varied. Part was planted in a trench filled with fodder, while the rest was planted with cotton seed as a mulch. The trenches were then covered with an eight inch ridge of dirt. Unfortunately, young William Little Brown failed to record the results of the experiment.¹⁷

Although the bountiful supply of game found by the first settlers had, by 1800, been driven west by the encroaching civilization, the well watered valley of the Cumberland and Red Rivers continued to furnish some food free for the taking. The streams were stocked with fish. Wild turkey, partridges, squirrel, and other small game, although at times more difficult to locate, were still available. Nuts, wild grapes, persimmons, plums, and wild greens

¹⁶Arnow, Flowering, pp. 238, 262; Abernethy, Frontier, p. 151; Ross, Life and Times, p. 178; Montgomery County, Tennessee, Wills and Records, A:301.

¹⁷William Little Brown, Diary, March 18, 1806, Robertson Topp Papers, (microfilm ed.), Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

supplied additional food for the household. Sugar maples furnished one of the few luxuries for the pioneer diet. Its sap, boiled in large kettles, produced sugar for coffee, cakes, and other delicacies. Bees, attracted to hives near the house, produced honey for the table as well as for sweetening. Native herbs provided the medicinal needs of the sick.¹⁸

The climate was well suited for farming, but often the rain did not fall at the right time. One observer commented that the country had too much water in the spring and winter and not enough in the summer and fall. And the fall of 1800 was no exception. The area was extremely dry. By October the county was in dire need of rain. The large creeks were low, causing many of the water mills to cease grinding. The horse mill, a familiar sight in the earlier days, had to be relied upon once again to grind the available corn and wheat. In August of the previous year (1799) a wind and rain storm had caused a great deal of damage to crops around Clarksville. When such adverse conditions caused crop failure, provisions were scarce and prices were higher than usual. Then there was

¹⁸Ibid., January 15, 1805, January 16, 1805, January 24, 1805, February 9, 1805, February 20, 1805; Abernethy, Frontier, pp. 149-50; Morse, Geography, p. 637; Ross, Life and Times, p. 182; Wills and Records, A:183, 188.

always the fear that the spring swell would not come in time, threatening the first leg of the triangular trade route to restock supplies from the east.¹⁹

While some items of clothing were brought in from the east, most of the clothing worn by the inhabitants was still homespun. The earliest settlers had from necessity and convenience adopted the dress of the Indian. Moccasins, leggings, and fringed hunting shirts were made of available skins. Cloth was woven, cut, and sewn at home. Shirts, pants, and even the socks and shoes were homemade.²⁰

However, evidence of grandeur was seen in the county. Joseph Conrad's estate sale listed among assorted items of clothing, a pair of silk stockings which sold for \$3.95 and a silk handkerchief for twenty-five cents. His silver spurs went at auction for \$9.00. John Hill's inventory listed three fine shirts, two pair silk hose, one pair "cassimere" overalls, and one velvet overalls.²¹

¹⁹Williams, Travels, p. 310; Valentine Sevier to General John Sevier, Clarksville, September 12, 1799, Draper Papers 11 DD 144; Andrew Jackson to Col. Francis Freston, April 25, 1804, Sotheby's Auction Catalog (New York: 31 October 1984), Item #119.

²⁰Abernethy, Frontier, p. 148; Ross, Life and Times, pp. 185-86.

²¹Wills and Records A:3, 223.

By 1800 three major towns had developed along the Cumberland and Red Rivers--Clarksville, Port Royal, and Palmyra. Established by the North Carolina Legislature in 1785, Clarksville had by 1796 become a thriving river town of about thirty dwellings, a courthouse, and a jail. The following year the size of the town was enlarged by adding fifty-six new town lots.²² In June 1797 Martin Dickenson, passing through the town on his way to Nashville with a load of iron from Virginia, described the town as

a very trifling place. . . .They dance nightly in this place which is more than might be expected from the scarcity of provisions. . . .where the people give a dollar per bushel for meal and 1/6 per pound for bare (sic) bacon, they ought not to dance at all.²³

Palmyra, the second town in Montgomery County, was established in 1796 on the south bank of the Cumberland River on both sides of Deason's Creek. It was at that time the lowest settlement on the Cumberland River. The town was laid out by Dr. Morgan Brown, who had just come with a group from the Cheraw District of South Carolina. Probably due to the

²²Clark, N. C. State Records, 24:780-81; United States Gazateer (Philadelphia: S. & R. Bailey, 1795), p. 64; Tennessee Acts, 1797, Chapter XXII.

²³Martin Dickenson, Journal, p. 47, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

influence of Dr. Brown, Palmyra was within a year of its establishment designated a Port of Entry, the first one in the west. All vessels, both foreign and domestic, coming up the river from Spanish-held New Orleans and Natchez were required to stop for an inspection. Any cargo not produced in the United States was subject to a duty. Dr. Brown was appointed collector. No doubt due to the small amount of business done by the Cumberland port, and perhaps encouraged by the inability of Dr. Brown to keep his accounts straight, the port was moved to Fort Massac on the Ohio in 1802.²⁴

In 1797 the Tennessee Legislature established the third town, Port Royal, at the confluence of Sulphur Fork Creek and Red River in the northeastern part of the county. The area, situated only a few miles upstream from the abandoned Renfro settlement, had been settled in 1782 by two groups from the Spartanburg area of South Carolina under the leadership of William

²⁴Tennessee Acts, 1796, Chapter XXIV; Edythe Rucker Whitley, "Dr. Morgan Brown," The Montgomery County Genealogical Journal, 8 (December 1978):33; United States Accounting Office, Records Relating to Palmyra, Port of Entry (microfilm ed.), Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; Beach, Warioto, p. 68. Whitley incorrectly places Fort Massac at Cincinnati. According to contemporary maps, the fort was situated across the Ohio and downstream from Smithland, Kentucky. Modern maps designate the area as Fort Massac State Park.

and Robert Prince. As the influx of immigrants increased, others settled in the same area, constituting the earliest growth development in Montgomery County. It was near here that the first court met in 1789 following the creation of Tennessee County.²⁵

While Montgomery County was growing and maturing, the houses of 1800 had not as yet reached the luxurious status of those left behind in the east. The one room and loft construction of the pioneer period was still in use. Measuring about twelve by sixteen feet, the houses were made of logs about one to two feet in diameter dressed down to about six inches, giving both the interior and exterior walls a flat surface. The space between the walls was chinked with clay and wood chips.

The earlier floors of packed dirt had been replaced in some homes by puncheon floors made of split logs. Rock chimneys, usually constructed of the available limestone, replaced the stick and mud chimneys of earlier days. Windows had replaced the loopholes. A simple pitched roof was covered with hand split shingles held in place by weighted poles. As the family grew in number and their financial

²⁵Beach, Warioto, pp. 22-23; Tennessee Acts, 1797, Chapter XX; Albert V. Goodpasture, "The Beginnings of Montgomery County," The American Historical Magazine, 8 (July 1903):201.

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²⁵Beach, Warioto, pp. 22-23; Tennessee Acts, 1797, Chapter XX; Albert V. Goodpasture, "The Beginnings of Montgomery County," The American Historical Magazine, 8 (July 1903):201.

situation improved, a larger home was built some six to twelve feet away from the first. The space between the two cabins was then roofed over and the dogtrot or breezeway construction appeared. In later years a porch was often added, either one or two stories in height. When sawmills came into use, the cabins were clapboarded. Many of these early pioneer homes eventually became the nucleus of more pretentious homes in Montgomery County.²⁶

While life on the frontier had been hard, time was still found for the more cultural pursuits. There were, as yet, no public schools to give the children even the most basic education. Private schools were established as soon as the families were financially able. Several families combined their funds to hire a teacher to educate their children, both boys and girls, in at least the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. William Little Brown and his cousins were more fortunate than the average Montgomery County student. His father secured the services of a Scotchman, Mr. Macklerath, who lived with the family. In a building set aside for a school, the boys and girls alike were taught "ancient language,"

²⁶Abernethy, Frontier, pp. 146-48; Beach, Warioto, pp. 50-51; Phelan, History, pp. 24-25; Montgomery County, Tennessee, Deeds B:178.

history, mathematics, and the sciences.²⁷

For advanced education the student was sent to a school in a more urban area or sent to study under the tutorage of a professional in the student's chosen field. Young William Brown had hoped to study law under Judge John Overton in Nashville. In fact, his father had at one point agreed to permit him to go. However, a few days later the family decided to send young William to study with Major Howell Tatum, a former judge of the Superior Court of Law and Equity. Finally, after discussing the matter with Tatum, they were advised to keep their son at home for two more years. Later, William was sent to Kentucky to study in the home of Joseph H. Hawkins. His tuition was one hundred dollars a year for board and another hundred for "books and attention (to be) paid when studies are completed."²⁸

Even the orphans left to the supervision of the Court were given sufficient education to insure their ability to earn a living. Six-year-old Patrick

²⁷Thwaites, Travels, p. 250; Williams, Travels, p. 517; Brown, Diary, January 22, February 12, February 18, 1805; Elizabeth L. Vance Topp, Reminiscences, vol. 1, p. 123, Robertson Topp Papers. See Ross, Life and Times, pp. 192-96 for description of school life.

²⁸Brown, Diary, January 13, 1805; January 22, 1805; Holt, "Economic Beginnings", 8:67.

Murphy, after the death of his father, was bound to Hugh McClure, a Clarksville merchant, to be taught the "mystery of a merchant." McClure, in return for Patrick's labor, was required to teach Patrick to read and write and instruct him in arithmetic "as far as the rule of practice." McClure would also be required to supply his ward with food, clothing, lodging and "washing." At the age of twenty-one, Patrick would be given new clothes and one hundred dollars in cash or a horse and saddle. He would then be educated sufficiently to make his way in the world.²⁹

Patrick's sister Margaret was bound out to Thomas Keefe to learn the art of being a seamstress. Keefe was to teach her to read and write, and at the age of eighteen her education would be complete. She would be given a new "suit of clothes." While her reward at the end of her term of servitude was not as lucrative as that of her brother, she was as prepared to face life as the average woman in the county during that period.³⁰

While education was available, the number of books in the county was somewhat limited. Most of the books found in the inventories were of a more

²⁹Wills and Records A:30.

³⁰Ibid., A:120.

serious nature, relating primarily to law, religion, or education. Geographies, spelling books, dictionaries, and arithmetic books dominated the libraries. Bibles, testaments, and sermons were also popular. The estate of Robert Edmondson included two Acts of the Assembly and the Constitution. In an attempt to bring more books into the state, legislation was passed in 1809 allowing any person to sell books in Tennessee without taking out a license or paying any taxes.³¹

Perhaps one of the largest libraries in the county belonged to William Little Brown. He was an avid reader. An inventory of his books purchased in Nashville in 1805 included seventeen volumes. His selection of books ranged from educational material to fiction.³²

The 1796 Constitution of Tennessee was reportedly described by Thomas Jefferson as "the least imperfect and most republican of the state constitutions."³³

³¹Ibid., A:26, 189, 198, 205; Tennessee Acts, 1809, Chapter CV.

³²Brown, Diary, January 11, 1805.

³³J. G. M. Ramsey, The Annals of Tennessee (Charleston: Walker and James, 1853), p. 657; Lewis L. Laska, "A Legal and Constitutional History of Tennessee 1772-1972," Memphis State Law Review 6 (1976):582-83; John Trotwood Moore and Austin P. Foster, Tennessee: The Volunteer State, 1769-1923, 4 vols. (Nashville: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1923), 1:156. Although this quotation is often used, no author identifies the original citation.

Under the new constitution, the right to vote was given to all free men twenty-one years of age, including free blacks. With no property or religious qualifications attached to this privilege, and requiring a residency of only six months, it would seem a most democratic situation. Yet, in reality, the yeomen of Montgomery County had little voice in the election of their county officials. Their votes were cast only for the governor, members of the General Assembly, and for U. S. Congressmen.³⁴

Montgomery County government was controlled at the local level by the colonial system of militia companies. The county was divided into eight militia companies composed of all men between the ages of twenty-one and forty-five. While the militiamen elected their captains, subalterns, and noncommissioned officers, that was the limit of their participation in local politics. The General Assembly appointed two Justices of the Peace for each militia company, except the company which included Clarksville. As the county seat, it was allowed three Justices. These Justices served for a term of good behavior.³⁵

³⁴Tennessee Constitution (1796), Article III, Section 1.

³⁵Ibid., Article VII, Section 1; Article V, Section 12. See Appendix 4 for list of Justices in 1806.

The seventeen Justices of Montgomery County formed the County Court. They appointed the sheriff, coroner, trustee, and sufficient constables for the county, all of whom held office for two years. The Register and Ranger, also appointed by the Justices, held office during good behavior. The Court issued licenses to keep taverns and to operate ferries, and made other appointments such as Patrollers and Tobacco Inspectors. It was the Court that set the tax rate for the county, within the range allowed by law. Either directly or indirectly the Justices, through the County Court, directed or controlled local government.³⁶

Seeds of the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist denominations were all planted in Montgomery County by 1800. Brought across the mountains by the Scotch Irish settlers from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, the Presbyterian Church was firmly established in Tennessee by the time of statehood. Twenty-seven churches, mostly in the eastern part of the state, stretched from East Tennessee to the settlements along the Cumberland. Thomas Craighead had arrived in Nashville in 1785 and about the same time William McGee began preaching in the Gallatin

³⁶Ibid., Article VI, Section 1; Minutes 1:36, 70, 83, 126, 139.

area.³⁷ While credit for the establishment of some of the earliest schools in the area must be given to the Presbyterians, their educated ministers, according to a contemporary Methodist, lacked the missionary zeal that appealed to the backwoodsmen of the frontier. John Carr of Sumner County described Craighead as ". . . a man of learning. His address was beautiful; but his preaching was lifeless and without power--a dull formal affair." William McGee, Carr continued, ". . . was a good man, but he preached to a cold, dead people with few exceptions."³⁸

The churches along the Cumberland were under the jurisdiction of the Transylvania Presbytery which included a portion of Kentucky. There were evidently no ministers available in the immediate area of Montgomery County, for in October 1801 Mr. James McGready was appointed to supply one sabbath in the neighborhood of Clarksville.³⁹ By 1803 at least

³⁷Herman A. Norton, Religion in Tennessee 1777-1945 (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1981), pp. 8-9.

³⁸John Carr, Early Times in Middle Tennessee (Nashville: E. Stevenson and F. A. Owen, 1857; reprint ed., Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1958), p. 34.

³⁹The Rev. James Smith, History of the Christian Church from its Origin to the Present Time (Nashville: Cumberland Presbyterian Office, 1835), p. 594; William Warren Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier 1783-1840, vol. 2: The Presbyterians (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), pp. 129, 187.

three congregations were established within the county. Colonel Henry Clark represented the united congregations of Spring Creek, McAdow, and Clarksville at the first meeting of the Cumberland Presbytery in April of that year. A petition was presented from the three churches requesting ministers be supplied, and also asking for the administration of the Lord's Supper. By October James Berry certified that these churches were strong enough to support a full time minister.⁴⁰

Historians contend that the failure of the Presbyterian church to develop on the frontier with the same force as her sister denominations was due to the conflicts within the church. Among the issues in dispute were the questions of revivals and ministerial education. The disagreement led eventually to the establishment of an Independent Cumberland Presbyterian Church. In 1806 the strife-torn Cumberland Presbytery was dissolved and the area re-annexed to the Transylvania Presbytery. Insurgent members of the church, opposing an educated ministry and favoring highly emotional revivals, formed themselves into a Council and continued the work. After attempts at reconciliation failed, Samuel McAdow, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King in 1810

⁴⁰Sweet, Presbyterians, pp. 284, 286.

formed the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.⁴¹

The first Baptist church in Middle Tennessee was constituted in 1786 on the Sulphur Fork of Red River by John Grammer, who served as the pastor for only a short time before leaving the area. The congregation was soon dissolved, probably due to Indian hostilities. No record has been found to identify the members of this congregation.⁴²

In the summer of 1791, with the assistance of Elder Ambrose Dudley and John Taylor from Kentucky, a second Baptist church was constituted near the mouth of Sulphur Fork of Red River. Later known as Red River Baptist Church, the new church was "alone in the wilderness." There was no other Baptist Church within one hundred miles until 1794 when a second Baptist church was formed at White's Creek about six miles north of Nashville. The following year, in 1795, Joseph Dorris brought his church from North

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 282-83; B. W. McDonnald, History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Nashville: Board of Publication of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1888), pp. 20-81.

⁴²David Benedict, A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World (Boston: Lincoln and Edmonds for the Author, 1813), pp. 218-19; Norton, Religion, p. 10; J. H. Grime, History of Middle Tennessee Baptist (Nashville: Baptist and Reflector, 1902), p. 6.

Carolina to the head of Sulphur Fork (now in Robertson County).⁴³

At the first meeting the congregation of the Red River Church unanimously chose "our Beloved Brother Richard Thomas" and gave him a written license to "exercise his gift and preach." Little is known about Thomas; however, the typical Baptist minister of the early frontier came from the ranks of his congregation and his community. He was a farmer who worked during the week and preached on Sunday. As he understood the habits and manners of his fellow members, he was an effective preacher. He was usually without much education. However, this did not seem to bother either the man or his audience. His manner of delivery was more extemporaneous than from a written text. Sermon material came more from experience than from formal education. As with many young men from frontier families, he had little opportunity to acquire an education; the Baptists of earlier times had a deep prejudice against educated and salaried preachers. This

⁴³"Minutes of Red River Baptist Church," July 25, 1791, W.P.A. typescript, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; William Warren Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, vol. 1: The Baptist, 1783-1830 (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931), pp. 22, 28; Benedict, History, pp. 219-20; Norton, Religion, p. 10.

suspicious attitude toward educated clergy grew from their association with the Church of England in Virginia where the Baptists were taxed to support what they considered an "irreligious and vicious" clergy.⁴⁴

The preacher was "raised up" in the local church. When the "brother" felt he had been called to preach, he made it known to the church. If, after hearing a trial sermon, the church approved of his "gift," he was licensed to preach in a small territory--usually the local church. After further trial he was approved to preach within the association. However, if on further trial his "gift" did not improve with the additional experience, he was encouraged to end his preaching.⁴⁵

Like Brother Grammer before him, Thomas remained as pastor for only a few months. On November 26, 1791, only four months after the founding of the church, he requested and was issued letters of dismissal from the church. No mention is found of him in the minutes of the church until January 25, 1794, when Brother R. Thomas was chosen moderator of the meeting.⁴⁶

⁴⁴"Red River Minutes," July 27, 1791; Norton, Religions, p. 12; Sweet, The Baptist, p. 36.

⁴⁵Sweet, The Baptist, p. 39.

⁴⁶"Red River Minutes," November 26, 1791; January 25, 1794.

The membership met at the homes of members until 1793 when a church building was built near Prince's Spring near the present site of Port Royal. The church continued to meet at Prince's Meeting House until about 1802 when the congregation moved to Fort's Meeting House at the head of Tollinson's Spring in Robertson County. The church later moved into Adams Station (now Adams) where it remains active almost two hundred years after it was constituted.⁴⁷

Methodist ministry arrived in the Cumberland and Red River settlements about the same time as the Baptist. There were sufficient numbers of Methodist and potential Methodist among the settlers by 1796 for ministers to be assigned to the Kentucky circuit, which included at that time the area now encompassed in northern Middle Tennessee. Rev. James Haw was appointed Elder, while Rev. Benjamin Ogden served as the circuit preacher. The Methodist minister, armed with a Bible, a hymn book, and a copy of John Wesley's sermons, was assigned to a route or circuit along which he preached. This system of circuit riders serving a series of classes or small congregations proved effective for the scattered

⁴⁷Irene Morrison Griffey, "Minutes of Red River Baptist Church," The Montgomery County Genealogical Journal 9 (September 1979):5.

backwoods gathering. In spite of the large territory and small population, the pastors were able to report at the end of the first year ninety white members on their circuit.⁴⁸

With the increasing population the Kentucky circuit was divided in 1787, thus creating the Cumberland Circuit which included the settlements north of the Cumberland River from newly established Clarksville to beyond present day Gallatin, as well as Logan, Warren, and Simpson Counties in Kentucky. Haw and Ogden were retained as elder and pastor. By the end of the second year there were fifty-nine white members and four colored members within the Cumberland area.⁴⁹

By 1791 there were within the bounds of Montgomery County at least four, and perhaps more, Methodist classes or congregations. Rev. Barnabas McHenry, who traveled the Cumberland Circuit, later recalled the congregations in Clarksville, at Prince's Chapel near the mouth of Red River and "one in between."

⁴⁸Cullen T. Carter, History of the Tennessee Conference (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1948), p. 26; John B. McFerrin, History of Methodism in Tennessee, 3 vols. (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church South, 1888) 1:26, 36, 37.

⁴⁹Carter, History, p. 27; McFerrin, Methodism, 1:37.

In addition he remembered "one or two preaching places" up Sulphur Fork Creek.⁵⁰

As the frontier advanced so did Methodism. By 1797 a church was established in the southern part of the county in what is now Stewart County. The McKendree Methodist Church located near present day Cumberland City began as McKendree Camp Ground and retained that identity until about 1812. When a new building was built the name was changed to McKendree Church. Tradition states the circuit riders who served the church were so busy they usually got to McKendree on a weekday.⁵¹

According to Peter Cartwright, a Methodist minister from Logan County, Kentucky,

The Methodist in that day dressed plain; attended their meetings faithfully, especially preaching, and class meetings; they wore no jewelry, no ruffles; they would frequently walk three or four miles to class meetings and home again, on Sunday; they would go thirty or forty miles to their quarterly meetings, and think it a glorious privilege to meet their presiding elder, and the rest of the preachers. . . . Parents did not allow their children to go to balls or plays; they did not send them to dancing-schools; they generally fasted once a

⁵⁰McFerrin, Methodism, pp. 79-80.

⁵¹Cullen T. Carter, ed., History of Methodist Churches and Institutions in Tennessee, 1787-1956 (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1956), p. 20.

week, and almost universally on the Friday before each quarterly meeting.⁵²

In spite of the early efforts of the three denominations, an attitude of indifference dominated the religious life of the population. Many families had brought the Bible with them to their new home but their purpose in coming to the Cumberland region was not religiously motivated. Warfare and the struggle to survive in the wilderness had, from necessity, taken a dominant place in their lives. Even with the easing of the Indian problems, their attitude toward religion did not change. Church membership had not grown proportionally with the great influx of new settlers. In fact, it had shown a downward trend through 1798. The baser element of society, often fugitives from justice seeking anonymity, congregated in the frontier settlements. Their drunken rowdiness and disrespect for religion or cultural pursuits only added to the demoralizing influences.⁵³

⁵²Peter Cartwright, Autobiography (1856; reprint ed., Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 61.

⁵³Rev. Arthur Howard Noll, History of the Church in the Diocese of Tennessee (New York: James Pott and Co., 1900), pp. 23-25; Norton, Religion, pp. 16, 18; Hale and Merritt, A History 1:22; Rev. Robert Davidson, History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky (New York: Robert Carter, 1847), pp. 99-100.

The situation was so bad that Bishop Asbury wrote in 1797,

I am of opinion it is as hard, or harder, for the people of the west to gain religion as any other. When I consider where they came from, where they are, and how they are called to go further, their being unsettled, with so many objects to take their attention, with good health and good air to enjoy, and when I reflect that not one in a hundred came here to get religion, but rather to get plenty of good land, I think it will be well if some or many do not eventually lose their souls.⁵⁴

Lorenzo Dow, a colorful Methodist minister, was not quite as charitable in his statement of the situation. Tennessee was, according to Dow, a "sink of iniquity, a Black Pit of irreligious."⁵⁵

But the situation would not always remain so bleak. The great wave of revivalism was in 1800 beginning to sweep the country. New churches would be formed, membership would increase, and social reforms would be enacted to reflect the religious consciousness of the state.

One popular historian observed that Middle Tennessee in 1800 looked

⁵⁴Williams, Travels, p. 305.

⁵⁵Norton, Religion, p. 18. See Ross, Life and Times, Chapter XXV, "Lorenzo Dow," pp. 248-256.

. . . like a dream of democracy come true--no hatred, religious or otherwise, nobody hungry, nobody wanting a job, cheap land and high wages that made for a fluid society, few symptoms of social decay, or taking Michaux's word, the Cumberlander lived 'happy and in plenty.'⁵⁶

Montgomery County had emerged from the subsistence status of a frontier economy and was entering a phase of basic industrialization.

⁵⁶Arnow, Flowering, p. 110.

CHAPTER II

COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE AND EARLY INDUSTRY

By 1810 Montgomery County had moved from a simple commercial agricultural economy into an economy supported in part by the production of finished goods for market. Fed with capital from New Orleans and Nashville and encouraged by the turbulent political climate in Europe, the industrialization of the county progressed rapidly. Corn, cotton, and to some extent tobacco, had reached a level of production far above that of subsistence. Mills, driven by unlimited water power, produced meal and flour for market, while home industries processed hams, bacon, lard, tallow, and soap, as well as yards of cotton cloth. South of the Cumberland, furnaces and forges turned out bar iron and castings for the New Orleans market. The variety of related businesses which sprang up in support and the influx of new settlers into the area, contributed even further to the increasing wealth of the county.

The prosperity of the county continued at a great pace when the farmers began to produce more

than was needed for local consumption. With the sale of their surplus, the Montgomery County farmers obtained the means of acquiring a higher standard of living. They not only could expand and upgrade their farming operation, but they also could afford to purchase the services of others. As a result, non-agricultural occupations began to flourish within the county. An academy was established and teachers were hired to educate the children beyond a basic education; doctors, lawyers, and printers came to the county to practice their trade. Soon masons and skilled carpenters were in demand as log construction gave way to more pretentious buildings.

The increased need for a means of transportation of produce to market caused the restless young yeoman to give up farming for the adventurous life of a boatman. Increased transportation, in turn, gave rise to the need for inns along the trade routes.¹ As a result of the increased buying power of the community, a variety of businesses were opened offering a wide assortment of goods and services to the local market. Consequently, there began to emerge a merchant class,

¹Fernand Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce: Civilization and Commerce, 15th-18th Century, trans. Sion Reynolds (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 349.

not only financially successful, but carrying a great deal of political clout.

In 1810 Montgomery County had a population of 8,015, an increase of 176.7 percent since 1800. As three new counties--Dickson, Stewart, and Humphreys--were created from the western portion of Montgomery within these ten years, the rate of increase appears more dynamic. Of these inhabitants 32.8 percent were slaves, compared to a ratio of 28.3 percent in 1800. While the white population had increased 176.7 percent during the decade, the slave population increased 220.2 percent.²

The presence of a large slave population within the county was due primarily to the cultivation of two crops--cotton and tobacco--both requiring a great deal of labor. The early settlers had come from Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. They had grown these crops in their former homes and had brought their farming practices with them. At first tobacco was grown in small patches for domestic use. However, as more land was cleared and the Mississippi River opened for trade, the production of tobacco increased.

²J. B. Killebrew, Introduction to the Resources of Tennessee (Nashville: Tavel, Eastman and Howell, 1874), p. 406; Hays, "Schedule," p. 106. See Appendix 1 for population schedules.

North Carolina had seen early the possibilities for the crop in this area. In 1789 the Legislature of that state established Clarksville as an inspection point for tobacco. The first inspection point in the Cumberland Settlements had been established four years earlier at Nashville. Designed to "encourage commerce, promote industry and be advantageous to tobacco planters and others in the county," the act provided that warehouses be built for the reception and storage of tobacco. All tobacco brought to the warehouse for export was examined to determine that it was "sound, well conditioned, merchantable, and free of trash" and that it was properly packed in casks or hogsheads within the sizes prescribed by law. The tobacco was also stored in the warehouse for "safekeeping" until it could be shipped to New Orleans. Two inspectors were appointed to oversee the process. By 1799 a second inspection point had been established at Port Royal and by 1806 a third point was established in Palmyra. Montgomery County was on the way to becoming the home of the internationally famous Clarksville Tobacco.³

³Lewis Cecil Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860, 2 vols. (Washington: The Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1933), 2:754-55; Beach, Warioto, p. 117; Goodpasture, "Beginnings," p. 198; Clark, N. C. State Records, 24:770-77; Ibid. 25:44-45; Tennessee Acts, 1799, Chapter LXV; Minutes 1:126.

The production of cotton, like tobacco, began with the first settlers and was raised in small patches for domestic use. With the invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney in 1793, the production of cotton on a commercial basis became feasible. Deseeding the upland cotton grown in Middle Tennessee had previously required one day of laborious hand work to clean about a pound of cotton. Years later, James Ross told his children how,

At night, during the winter months, after a large fire had been made and the hearth swept, your grandmother would put a little parcel of this cotton down before it for each one of us to pick before going to bed. In each one of these was enough to keep us busy an hour or so. It was placed thus before the fire, because when heated, the seeds could be taken out much more easily. After grumbling a good deal about the size of our respective piles, and getting her to take some from one and put it on another to equalize them, we went to work, plying our fingers nimbly till our tasks were done.⁴

By 1802 cotton had become one of the main crops along the Cumberland. F. A. Michaux observed that the inhabitants devoted most of their efforts to the crop, raising only a little more corn and tobacco than they needed for their own use. He optimistically reported that a man raising cotton alone could cultivate eight or nine acres, but would need assistance

⁴Ross, Life and Times, p. 183.

at harvest time. A family of four or five, he estimated, could cultivate four acres easily, in addition to the grain needed for their substance. With the projection of a moderate cotton harvest of three hundred and fifty pounds per acre, a total harvest of fourteen hundred pounds could be expected. According to his calculations, at a conservative price of 18¢ per pound, the crop would yield a lucrative profit of \$212 after deducting \$40 expenses. The same number of acres planted in Indian wheat or corn would yield, he contended, less than one-fourth that amount.⁵

With the financial success of the cotton market came an expansion of services and related industries. The need for equipment, the development of a competitive market, and a convenient transportation system brought about a new class of men who no longer depended entirely on an agricultural economy for their livelihood.

In 1803 the Tennessee Legislature purchased the patent for the cotton gin from Eli Whitney and Phineas Miller and agreed to collect a tax of 37 1/2¢ for each saw for four years. Payment was to be made annually to the two men. Following the purchase of the patent, gins began to spring up in the county.

⁵Thwaite, Travels, pp. 277-78.

The County Court was authorized to issue licenses for the erection of the gins and presses with a bond of \$5,000 required by the owner to guarantee that only first quality cotton was packed. Previously, the Legislature had required a bond of only \$1,000. In October 1802, Henry Rugland and Benjamin Weakley posted bonds for the erection of the first gins in Montgomery County. By 1804 five gins were in operation. In the spring of 1805 about two hundred bales of cotton, along with fifty yards of manufactured cotton, were shipped from Montgomery County to New Orleans.⁶

The cotton industry continued to expand. Taking advantage of the need for a local source of cotton machinery, Robert Atkins advertised in April 1806, that he

. . . has erected a shop for cotton machinery in the county of Montgomery near Clarksville--He wishes to inform his customers that he expects to do business preferable to any that has been heretofore; his customers may

⁶Tennessee Acts, 1803, Chapter XXIII; Wills and Records, A:163; Tennessee, Secretary of State, "List of Cotton Gins for the Years 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807," Record Group 30, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; United States Records of the Bureau of Customs, Port of New Orleans, Cargo Manifests for Flatboats and Barges, 1805-1807 (private microfilm, ed.) Leland R. Johnson, Nashville, Tennessee; "Flatboats in the Mississippi" (typescript, 1940), Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, passim. See Appendix 3 for list of cotton gin owners; Appendix 5 for summary of shipments from Montgomery County for 1805-1807.

be supplied by giving short notice, at three dollars per saw, all in complete order for picking, as he intends carrying on the business very extensively.⁷

By 1807 the number of gins in the county had increased to fourteen and 819 bales of cotton were exported from the wharves of Montgomery County. Cotton was by this time an important export of the county.⁸

Very few producers of cotton shipped their own crop to market; only a wealthy planter could afford to wait several months for his money. Most cotton was sold to a local merchant who was often the gin operator, warehouse owner, shopkeeper, or even the commercial boatman. The planter received his cash immediately or more often took payment in needed supplies. Sometimes the crop was consigned to a commission merchant who paid the planter about one-half of the expected selling price at New Orleans. When sold, the commission merchant would deduct all charges and return the proceeds to the planter.⁹

By 1805 and no doubt earlier, McClure and

⁷Impartial Review and Cumberland Repository (Nashville), Saturday, April 19, 1806.

⁸Tennessee, Secretary of State, "List of Cotton Gins"; Cargo Manifests, 1805-1807, passim; "Flatboats," passim.

⁹Abernethy, "Commerce and Banking," pp. 316-17; Thwaites, Travels, p. 252.

Elder, local merchants, were shipping cotton and candles to Fenner and Henderson in New Orleans. In February 1806, McClure left Clarksville with a shipment containing seventy-seven bales of cotton and one hogshead of tobacco destined for New Orleans. Three men accompanied him on the trip: Thomas H. Oneal, Master of the flatboat Polly Price, and John Keatler and Thomas McCarrell, hands. They arrived in Natchez on March 26 and were given permission to proceed to New Orleans. They reached their destination on April 5, after a two month journey.¹⁰

When his business was settled McClure left New Orleans aboard a ship bound for Philadelphia with \$800 in specie and the anticipation of securing a premium of 2 1/2 percent. After a twenty-one day trip, he wrote his wife on May 20 that he was beginning to "lay off our goods." He planned to leave the next week for home in the company of Mr. Eastin and Mr. Anderson from Nashville and Mr. A. W. Trig from Gallatin, who were also in Philadelphia on business. The trip across the mountains to Pittsburgh, down the Ohio and up the Cumberland would be a long hard one. He did not anticipate arriving home until sometime in July.¹¹

¹⁰Cargo Manifests, 1805-07.

¹¹Hugh McClure to Susan, his wife, May 10, 1806, Philadelphia. Drane Papers.

Efforts were made to offer the farmers of the area alternatives to the New Orleans market. Some cotton was sent overland to Kentucky to supply the families there the material needed to manufacture items for their domestic needs.¹² Some shipments were poled up the Ohio to Pittsburgh where the cotton was sent to the back country of Pennsylvania. Isaac Moore advertised in March 1811 that he "will freight cotton &c to Pittsburgh from this place [Nashville] at \$4 per hundred and give a credit of six months after articles are delivered at Pittsburgh. . ."¹³

Peter Hubbard, a resident of Montgomery County and agent for General James Winchester, wrote the general in October of 1806,

Please write to me by the first mail what you will give for cotton that I may know what to allow for that I purchase. I am well informed that McClure & Elder in Clarksville are giving \$18 only for bailed cotton, but if you can give more I will allow more for what is due me.¹⁴

Winchester replied he would pay the cash price in Nashville. A competitive local market had developed.

¹²Thwaites, Travels, p. 252.

¹³Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette, (Nashville), March 1, 1811.

¹⁴Peter Hubbard to James Winchester, Montgomery County, October 19, 1806, James Winchester Papers, Tennessee Historical Society Collection, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Corn, the staple crop of the frontier settlements, was in short supply for the first few years. Barely enough was raised to meet the needs of the local market. However, as settlements developed and more land was cleared, enough corn was raised to supply not only the needs of the local population, but the needs of the large number of new settlers moving daily into the area. Each family had a patch of corn which provided food for both the family and the livestock. Before mills were established the dried corn was ground by hand or by a horse driven mill. The crushed grain was used to make mush or bread. The green ears were boiled or roasted. The fodder or leaves were stripped from the stalk, dried, and tied in bundles as roughage for cattle. Dried corn was sold in small amounts to travelers for horse food. Money was in short supply and often corn served as a medium of exchange. On one occasion a bushel of corn was paid to a shoemaker for sewing a pair of shoes.¹⁵ Later on wheat and other grains, scarce in the early settlements, began to be produced in significant amounts.

¹⁵Holt, "Economic Beginnings," 8 (April 1824): 24-25; Brown, Diary, February 6, 1805; Abernethy, Frontier, pp. 150-151.

Soon mills began to spring up along the creeks and rivers where the power was sufficient to turn the mill. Strategically spaced about the county, these mills offered an opportunity for the owners to extend their financial opportunities, as well as contributing to the self-efficiency of the rapidly increasing population. The county's as yet unexploited resource of water power was more than sufficient to replace the mortar and horsemill of the earlier days. Water mills would not only offer the local market the convenience of easily ground corn and wheat, but the excess production of grain ground into meal and flour would provide a marketable product. In April 1805 Putoff and Barthomeu shipped 300 bushels of corn and 100 barrels of corn meal, as well as a large amount of bacon, pork, and lard from Clarksville to New Orleans. The following year flour was added to the cargo.¹⁶

Permission to erect the mills was issued by the county court, attesting, perhaps, to the political clout of the mill owners. In 1806 four of the identified owners were Justices of the Court, constituting what in modern times would be considered conflict of interests. In 1796, the same year he was appointed

¹⁶Cargo Manifests, 1805-07.

Justice by the Legislature, Morgan Brown was authorized to establish a floating mill on either side of the Cumberland River at Palmyra. An acre on each side of the river was condemned for the mill. By June 1797 the mill was in operation. Although there were other mills of this type in operation along the river, one traveler considered it a "very great curiossity (sic)." The mill was

. . . built on two flat bottom boats & was movable on the water and the space between the 2 boats there was a large wheel like the flutter wheel of a saw mill which the current of the water it floated upon turned and from that they made the work which they say will grind 100 bushels in 24 hours when the river is in good order.¹⁷

Also appointed to the court in 1796, Hayden Wells established a mill on McAdoo Creek, Joseph Woolfolk had a mill on Sulphur Fork of Red River at Port Royal, and Charles Stewart established a mill on West Fork Creek in the northern part of the county. Appointed Justice in 1799 Stewart had also represented Montgomery County in the House in the 1801-1803 session of the General Assembly. During the same term, his half brother, Duncan Stewart, represented the county in the Senate. Charles McGehee operated a mill in

¹⁷A. W. Putnam, History of Middle Tennessee (1856; reprint ed. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1971), p. 304; Dickenson, Journal, p. 46.

the western portion of the county on the road from Palmyra to Christian (County) Courthouse, while John Powell Vaughan's mill was south of the Cumberland River on Budd's Creek.¹⁸

With the erection of mills and dams along the streams of the county, there began to arise a conflict between those who wanted the rivers and creeks dammed and those who wanted the routes left open to navigation. The manufacturing interests were in direct opposition to those who profited from the transportation of produce down river to market.

Each side petitioned the Legislature for the right to have the river clear or the right to erect dams along the river. In 1796 a law was passed by the General Assembly keeping open the navigation of the West Fork of Red River within Montgomery County. In October 1803 a petition was sent to the General Assembly requesting the law be repealed as the stream, they contended, was not navigable except in flood stage. The petitioners suggested several "merchant mills" built on the stream would be of more value to the public. The first signature, in John Hancock

¹⁸General John Sevier, Commission Book, 1796-1801 (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Commission, 1957), pp. 33, 34; Minutes 1:14, 41, 58, 77; Robert M. McBride and Dan M. Robison, Biographical Directory of the Tennessee General Assembly, 2 vols. (Nashville: Tennessee State Library and Archives and the Tennessee Historical Commission, 1975-1979), 1:698.

style, was that of Charles Stewart, who a few years later established a mill on that stream. The mill later was the site of Peacher's Mill. Again in 1812, with flour much in demand because of the war with England, the General Assembly was petitioned regarding building of mills on Sulphur Fork of Red River. Mills, they contended, could supply manufactured goods, especially flour, thus preventing wheat from being injured by insects, and at the same time avoiding the necessity of having to purchase flour from Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Virginia. J. Woolfolk, who had the mill at Port Royal, signed first with a large, bold signature. By 1821 the issue was again brought to the attention of the legislature by a group who wanted the streams opened for navigation. However, the legislature declared their petition for the removal of the dams was "unreasonable."¹⁹

With the increased production of corn, there also came an increase in the production of hogs and whiskey. Both had been present in the county since the time of the early settlement. With a sufficient supply of corn and cheaper salt, pork became more plentiful. The improved corn-fed product brought

¹⁹Tennessee Acts, Chapter XXIII, 1796; Tennessee Legislative Petitions, 22-1-1803; 3-1-1812; 41-1819; 204-1821.

a higher price at market. The hogs raised in the frontier settlement had been left to feed on cane shoots which grew on the open range. While this provided a sufficient diet to sustain life, the hogs did not fatten. While some live hogs were shipped south to market, most were sold as bacon, hams, or preserved in barrels as salted or pickled pork. Lard also appeared on the cargo. Locally, hogs often became a substitute for a still scarce currency. Theoderick F. Bradford of Clarksville advised the readers of the United States Herald that "bacon at the market price will be received in payment for this paper if delivered immediately."²⁰

The manufacture of whiskey appeared early in the county's history. The abundance of firewood and white oak for barrels had encouraged its production. Farmers unable to buy hogs or cattle could turn their corn into whiskey, which usually provided a higher margin of profit on the crop. As early as 1791 the court records of Tennessee County made reference to Patton's Stillhouse located northeast of Clarksville on a small tributary of Red River. It was an extremely popular place. Court orders instructed the road crews to "view," "lay off" and "clear out"

²⁰Arnow, Flowering, p. 221; United States Herald (Clarksville), August 11, 1810.

roads "to" it, "by" it and "from" it. The two stills were owned by Joseph and James Patton, and had a capacity of 207 gallons and eighty gallons respectively. Tradition has it that the women of the community became upset, as their husbands spent their days, as well as their nights there "for the purpose of carousal and debauch." The women "in their righteous indignation" threatened to lynch Patton if he did not "cease to entice their husbands from home and to their ruin." Patton may have given in to the women, as he is not listed among the sixteen distilleries supplying the county's 450 free males with libation in 1801. The amount produced was probably for local consumption, as none of the available manifests listed whiskey or brandy among the cargo.²¹

This was a drinking age. In those days before the advent of the soda pop, this perhaps was the only liquid refreshment available to quench thirst on a hot summer's day or to warm the bones in the

²¹Arnow, Flowering, p. 272; History of Tennessee (Nashville: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1886), p. 760; Distillery Tax Book, John Overton Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; Cargo Manifests, 1805-1807, passim; "Flatboats," passim. See Appendix 2 for list of distilleries.

midst of winter. William Little Brown, son of Dr. Morgan Brown of Palmyra, recorded in his diary, "Papa had got midling groggy this day with some brandy he bought from Palmyra." A few days later he noted his father was again "very groggy & Deason & Squire Wells with him & also Mama."²²

Other responsible citizens found the alcoholic product to their liking. Many otherwise respectable citizens were called before the church to answer for excessive drinking. Brother Cordery was accused by the Red River Church of being drunk and "danced for a half pint of whiskey." He was, however, exonerated and received back into the fellowship of the church.²³

According to one source, a man would on his arrival in Clarksville, purchase a bottle of whiskey or brandy in a desired size ranging from one half pint to a quart. After taking a drink, he would place his bottle on a shelf provided for that purpose. During the day, as he became thirsty, he would return, sometimes with a friend, and help himself to a drink. If the supply ran out, the bottle would be refilled.²⁴

²²Brown, Diary, January 18, 1805; January 24, 1805.

²³"Red River Minutes," May 17, 1800.

²⁴Ross, Life and Times, p. 262.

Tavern licenses were issued by the County Court for individuals to sell liquor and keep "houses of entertainment" or "ordinaries" in their homes. These were the motels of the period, providing food, drink, and shelter for both man and beast and eventually becoming the hub of commercial activity. In 1790 Samuel Stout was issued a license to keep an ordinary at his dwelling house in Clarksville. He gave bond for five hundred pounds and swore that he "shall not suffer or permit any unlawful gaming . . . nor on sabbeth suffer any person to tittle or drink more than is necessary."²⁵

Prior to 1795 and the treaty with Spain, overland freight routes were the only sure way of getting produce out of the Cumberland area. Spain controlled the navigation of the Mississippi and refused at times to allow shipping to New Orleans. Freight rates were high, costing about \$10 per hundred pounds for a shipment east by wagon. However, following Pinckney's treaty, the Mississippi was opened to trade and regular commerce soon developed. The producers in Montgomery County began shipping their surplus goods down river to New Orleans and began to receive supplies from Philadelphia. The first boats were loaded with lime, bacon, bar

²⁵Goodspeed, History, p. 760.

and cast iron, and whiskey. Butter, eggs, dried fruits, chicken, ducks, guineas, and turkeys were also shipped south to New Orleans to feed that city's growing population. After 1800 cotton and tobacco were added to the cargo.²⁶

The steamboat did not come to the Cumberland until 1819. Before then river traffic both up and down the rivers was carried on flatboats, barges, or keel boats. Goods from the east came from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh by wagon. From Pittsburgh they were floated down the Ohio River and up the Cumberland to Palmyra and Clarksville. Produce and passengers going south came down the Red River from as far north as Logan County, Kentucky, down the Cumberland to the Ohio and down the Mississippi to Natchez and New Orleans. Barges and keel boats brought goods up the river to the Cumberland area.

The barge Clem Hall with Samuel Beaty, Master, arrived in Natchez on March 5, 1806, loaded with seventeen bales of cotton, two hogsheads of tobacco, lard, fifty-three barrels of pork, seven barrels of beef, 2600 pounds of deerskin, one barrel of tallow, seven boxes of candles, three barrels of flour, and

²⁶Abernethy, Frontier, p. 200; Harriet Parks Miller, The Bell Witch of Middle Tennessee (Clarksville: 1930, reprint ed. Nashville: Charles Elder, 1972), p. 29.

three packages peltry being shipped by John Baker, Jr. from Port Royal to New Orleans. Henry Baker accompanied Beaty as a hand. On April 22, the barge left New Orleans loaded with logwood, rum, wines, sugar, and other imports for Baker at Port Royal. A small order was consigned to King, Carson, and King in Nashville.²⁷

The flatboats were built during the summer and fall and moored along the river bank waiting the winter and spring rises in the river. The boats, as the name implies, had a flat bottom and were rectangle in shape, much like a raft. Any person with the available lumber and a reasonable knowledge of carpentry could manufacture a flatboat. The hulls were constructed along the river banks, hull side up. After the planks were joined together, caulking was forced into the seams between the planks to prevent leaking. A tool, similar to a chisel, with a groove instead of an edge, was used to force the caulking into the seams. Once the caulking was completed, the boat was ready for turning right side up.²⁸

Because of the weight several men were needed to invert the hull. The men would line up on one

²⁷Cargo Manifests, 1805-07.

²⁸Leland R. Johnson to Harold Moser, Nashville, November 11, 1983. Copy in personal files of Ann Alley.

side, grasp the upper edge, and lift it as high above their heads as possible, and throw that side away from them, in hopes the boat would land hull side down in the water. If the boat landed hull side up, the men would have to wade or swim in and try to flip the boat with their weight. If this was unsuccessful, the water would then be bailed out, sometimes a long and tedious job. Once the hull was successfully launched, sides were constructed and the area roofed to give protection for travelers and goods during the journey.

When the rise in the river came, the boats were loaded with the produce. When the tide and current were sufficient to float the craft, they were cut loose to begin the long journey south. As the flatboats were not designed to travel up river against the current, they were broken up at their destination and sold for about \$5 for the lumber. The men sold their produce and headed home overland through Indian country along the Natchez Trace.²⁹

A keel boat had a sharp hull both before and aft, and was designed to be poled upstream against the current. They usually were about fifty feet in

²⁹Abernethy, Frontier, p. 200; Paschall, Old Times, p. 280; Miller, Bell Witch, p. 29; R. S. Cotterill, "The Natchez Trace," Tennessee Historical Magazine, 7(April 1921):28.

length with a narrow deck extending on every side. A cabin was built inside the deck. If the cabin ran the full length of the boat, the boat was referred to as a barge.³⁰ An ad in The Democratic Clarion and Nashville Gazette, December 21, 1810, stated that the barge Lark was "in complete order, having elegant accomodations for passengers." Interested parties were belatedly assured the craft would "positively sail between the 15th and 20th of December."

The period from 1803 to 1812 was a period of general European conflict. The need for American produce to fill the void left by the absence of European goods created a dramatic rise in the American market. The American shippers began to service markets that had previously been closed to them. During the years before 1808 when Jefferson imposed his controversial embargo, the United States became the most important neutral carrier, especially of foodstuffs. Responding to the situation, the economy of Montgomery County rose to new heights. Between 1805 and 1807 McClure and Elder, Reynolds and McFarland, King and Poston, and Putoff and Bartholomue, merchants, as well as an assorted number of citizens, were shipping cotton, tobacco, castings, beef, candles, potatoes, soap,

³⁰Abernethy, Frontier, p. 199.

corn meal, lard, bacon, deerskins, venison, hams, staves, corn, horses, pork, chickens, butter, and peltry from the Clarksville landings. At Palmyra in 1807 Peter Hubbard was shipping a large number of staves. The same year, Bradley, King and Bradley shipped peltry, cotton, pork, and lard from that port. John Baker was shipping yearly from Port Royal, while James Carr of that same community was taking flour from Pittsburgh to New Orleans.³¹

During the period of early development in Montgomery County banks were non-existent. Trade was comparatively small and money was scarce. Merchants would buy on credit from Eastern suppliers, sell on credit to local customers, and settle the accounts when the local crops matured. Payment was often made in cotton or tobacco. On September 26, 1806, Isaac Martin gave the following note for a debt:

fifteen months After date I Isack
Ma(r)ten of the county of
Montgomery promas to pea unto Josheay
Wekle of the said county the just
an fool som of one hundred and teen
dollars to be paid in cotton at cash
price for value received...(signed)
Isack Marten.³²

Most business was conducted by trade and barter.

³¹Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People, 10th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 116-17; Cargo Manifests, 1805-1807, passim; "Flatboats," passim.

³²Drane Papers.

John Stewart offering for sale 400 acres on the West Fork of Red River, advertised he would accept not only cash, but slaves, horses, hogs, beef cattle, tobacco, and cotton in payment. James Williams, a tanner, in Clarksville, urged his customers to pay their accounts as his creditors were pushing him for his debts. Williams offered to accept "hides of any description" as payment with the following amounts being allowed on credit:

Large Byden -- dry per pound 10¢, green 5¢
 Kip Skin -- dry 12¢, green 6¢
 Calf Skin -- dry 12 1/2¢, green 6 1/4¢
 Hog and dog skin from 25¢ to 75¢
 Deer and sheep skins from 25¢ to 50¢³³

Immigrants coming into the area found it necessary to purchase corn and meat. Unable to pay in cash, they traded their labor for the needed supplies.

As the population increased and new land opened, the production of surplus produce rose. These conditions, coupled with the expansion of trade during the first decade of the nineteenth century, brought about the need for banking facilities. Drafts and Bills of Exchange were being used to transfer credits from one section of the country to another. In 1807 the Tennessee Legislature chartered the State's first bank, the Nashville Bank. The Legislature believed

³³United States Herald (Clarksville),
 August 11, 1810.

the bank would encourage improvements in agriculture and manufacturing and aid the State government by enabling it to borrow against the funds due it. The State took no stock in the bank. The capital was set at \$200,000, which was divided into shares of \$50 each.³⁴ It would, however, be the next decade before a bank would open in Montgomery County. Until that time local business was dependent on the Nashville institution for banking services.

Montgomery County is divided into two parts by the Cumberland River. The land on the south side of the Cumberland is good timber land with deposits of iron ore. Because of these natural resources this section developed the earliest forges and furnaces. While there was some iron production in the western portion of the county just north of the river, the northern side of the river was predominately agricultural land.³⁵

³⁴Hamer, Tennessee 1:230; H. W. Crew, History of Nashville, Tenn. (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1890), pp. 260-61; Hale and Merritt, A History, 2:349-50. Hale and Merritt incorrectly set the amount of stock at \$400,000.

³⁵J. B. Killebrew, Montgomery County: Its Agriculture and Mineral; Its Topography and Geology; Its Healthfulness and Desirableness (Clarksville: Ingram and Doak, 1870), pp. 5, 7; Goodspeed, History, p. 750; Beach, Warioto, pp. 122-23; Goodpasture, "Beginnings," p. 193.

When Abraham Steiner and Frederick C. De Schweinitz, Moravian missionaries, made their report following their 1799 trip through the Cumberland area, they mentioned that "a great furnace" was being built at Palmyra and was almost complete. This was no doubt Morgan Brown's first furnace. In January 1804, an agreement was drawn up between Morgan Brown and Clement McDaniel to build a second furnace near Morgan's mill on Yellow Creek. The Furnace was to operate under the firm name of Brown and McDaniel. The agreement was for seven years. However, the two men ended the relationship with a court suit. The furnace was evidently completed as the 1810 manufacturers' report lists two iron furnaces in production.³⁶

By 1810 the women of Montgomery County were producing 125,540 yards of cotton cloth and 20,000 yards of blends on their 567 household looms. Anthony Vanleer's forge was producing one hundred tons of iron products, four tanneries processed five hundred

³⁶Williams, Travels, p. 517; McDaniel vs Brown, Final Record Book of the United States Circuit Court for West Tennessee, 1808-1839, pp. 162-167, Records of United States District Courts (microfilm ed.), Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; Walter Lowrie and Matthew St. Clair Clark, eds., American State Papers, Class III, Finance, 5 vols. (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1832), 2:800-01.

hides, and seventeen distilleries produced 34,020 gallons of liquor. Clarksville, the county seat, could boast of an academy; at least two medical doctors, Dr. Maxwell Sharp and Dr. R. F. Slaughter; a tanyard; a newspaper office whose office also served as a book and stationary shop; several taverns; and at least three general stores. Advertisements in the local paper indicated a stock of dry goods, hardware, groceries, wines, bar iron, shot, gun powder, whiskey, and new cotton gins. The town was growing. Owen Reilly announced that he had opened a new store on Water Street with a shipment "just received from Philadelphia." He had in stock Dry and Fancy Goods, Hard & Queenswear, Iron and Tinwear, a choice assortment of groceries and a well chosen collection of books.³⁷

The development of Montgomery County toward a more settled community occurred while the American shipping industry experienced problems with England. England was at war with France and was determined to stop the reshipment of French goods from the United States. Furthermore, American ships were boarded and her seamen pressed into British service. The

³⁷American State Papers, Finance, 2:800-01;
United States Herald (Clarksville), August 11, 1810.
See Appendix 6.

citizens of Tennessee were filled with indignation against the British and their violation of American rights on the seas. The newspapers of Nashville record the details of a public meeting held in that city resulting from the "Chesapeake" incident.³⁸

President Thomas Jefferson, in an attempt to avoid war and yet gain respect for American shipping, imposed an economic embargo prohibiting commerce between American and foreign nations. The embargo had a dual effect on the economy of Montgomery County. The ban on exports affected the producer who could no longer sell his surplus commodities. The merchants were also affected. Few ships were bringing in imports without being guaranteed a load for the return trip. Money became exceedingly scarce, and soon debtors were being pressed with no funds with which to pay. Consequently, farm prices fell. Cotton which had sold for twenty-six to forty-four cents in the 1790s sold for fifteen to nineteen cents.³⁹

On July 5, 1808, seventy-eight men from the area around Port Royal petitioned Governor John Sevier for relief. They sought a stay law against the sale

³⁸Hamer, Tennessee, 1:217-19; John A. Garraty, The American Nation: A History of the United States, 4th ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), pp. 160-61.

³⁹Hamer, Tennessee, 1:218.

of their property during the embargo. The states of Virginia, Maryland, and Georgia, they said, had already passed such a law.

The effects of the embargo are felt perhaps as severely in this state as in any other; and the proportion of severity is increased by the circumstances of the general credits which have been extended to the great mass of community by vendors of imported articles. The stagnation of trade while it pre-?- to the influx of Specie raises its value hence the monied and the creditor class of community have great and undue advantage of the debtor class.⁴⁰

Their relief was granted. Strange as it may seem, it was these very same hardships imposed on the commercial and planting class all over the country that caused the great migration to Montgomery County between 1800 and 1810. Many families lost their land in the east and came west to start over again.⁴¹

The Embargo had slowed the industrial and agricultural development of the county. However, land speculation continued to keep pace with the rapidly increasing population. Not until the United States had been drawn into the war dividing Europe, would the economy of the county again reach a substantial growth pattern.

⁴⁰Governor John Sevier Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

⁴¹Abernethy, Frontier, p. 224.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WAR AND EXPANSION

The second decade of the nineteenth century was a period of war, inflation, and recession. It was also a period of prosperity--a period of economic growth and development not only for Montgomery County but for the entire state. By 1812 the economy of the county was still below the level it had reached in 1807. However, fed by the influx of military funds from the war effort, the county had by the end of the war reached a level of relative prosperity, only to be thrust into a recession before the decade had ended. Yet, in spite of the county's economic difficulties, the population showed a significant increase; tobacco and cotton remained "king" as prices rose sharply; the steamboat came up the Cumberland River; and a resident of Montgomery County became governor for the full three terms allowed by law.

During the early nineteenth century the politics of Montgomery County, as the politics of the state, were based largely on sectionalism and

personalities rather than on national party affiliations. East Tennessee had consistently controlled the governor's seat. However, by 1809 Middle Tennessee had grown sufficiently in population to overcome the eastern block and elect a governor from this section.

In 1809 two candidates were on the ballot as successor to John Sevier--William Cocke of East Tennessee and Willie Blount of Montgomery County. Blount, the half brother of Territorial Governor William Blount, had served from 1791 to 1796 as his brother's private secretary. He had been elected by the Legislature as a Judge of the Superior Court but had resigned the same year. He had served as a trustee of Blount College in Knoxville, Cumberland College in Nashville, and Rural Academy in Clarksville. In 1807 he had been elected to the General Assembly to represent Montgomery and Stewart Counties. Born in Bertie County, North Carolina, in about 1767, he had been educated in King's College, later Columbia University in New York, and the College of New Jersey, later Princeton University. He moved to Tennessee County in about 1790 and settled in the eastern part of what is now Montgomery County to practice law and farm. His election in 1809 and reelection in 1811

and 1813 thrust him into the position of Tennessee's wartime Governor during the second conflict with England and the war against the Creek Indians. No returns are available for the Montgomery County vote of 1811, but in 1809 Blount received over 87 percent of the total vote. In 1813 the county gave him all of their 831 votes.¹

His prime interests for the state were the extinguishing of Indian titles in Tennessee, improvement of communication and transportation for the state, and the development of the state's economy. "Attention . . . to these things," he told the Legislature in 1811, "are (more) important to the future growth of our infant state than time devoted to the idle whimsies of foreign relations. . . ." ²

It was during the second term of Blount's administration that the second war with England

¹Allen Johnson, ed., Dictionary of American Biography, 20 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 2:391; Robert H. White, ed., Messages of the Governors of Tennessee, 1796-1821, 7 vols. (Nashville: The Tennessee Historical Commission, 1952), 1:274; Elizabeth H. Peeler, "The Policies of Willie Blount as Governor of Tennessee, 1809-1815," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 1 (December 1942): 309-10; Anne H. Hopkins and William Lyons, Tennessee Votes, 1799-1976 (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee, 1978), pp. 9-11; Tally, Gubernatorial Election, 1813, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

²White, Messages, 1:347.

became a reality. Both politically and economically it was a popular war with the people of Tennessee and Montgomery County. The treatment of the American seamen, the low prices received for their exports, and the Indian hostilities, all were attributed to the British. The people were expansionist and saw the war as a chance to annex both Canada and Florida. The United States Herald carried an article announcing that West Florida wanted to "shake off their European allegiance and join the United States, or establish a free government." Reflecting the anticipation of the majority of the readers, the editor added, "The event is important to us--a free commerce on the Mobile &c. may be expected. We wish them all the success they can merit."³ A copy of a proposed constitution for West Florida was carried in the same issue.

When word was received that war had been declared, Governor Blount delivered 1,500 troops at the request of the War Department to help fight the British. Under the command of Andrew Jackson, 1,400 infantry and 760 mounted riflemen assembled in

³Reginald Horsman, The Frontier in the Formative Years, 1783-1815 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 160; William A. Walker, Jr., "Martial Sons: Tennessee Enthusiasm for the War of 1812," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 20 (June 1961):20, 26-27; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:217, 219; United States Herald (Clarksville), August 11, 1810.

Nashville. On January 7, 1813, Jackson broke camp sending the infantry in thirteen boats down the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers to Natchez. The cavalry troops, under the leadership of General John Coffee, marched overland. Included in Coffee's brigade was a company of Volunteer Cavalry consisting of thirty-one young men from the Montgomery County area under the command of Captain Michael Molton.⁴

The first boats, with Jackson aboard, arrived in Clarksville on January 13 about six o'clock in the evening. One hundred and sixty barrels of flour were to be purchased for the troops. When the draft was presented at the merchant's house, Jackson was informed that only sixty barrels were available. Hearing that there was flour concealed in the neighborhood and not being able to purchase it, Jackson "sent out the bayonet" to bring it in. The first day's search produced enough to supply the first regiment.⁵

On the morning of Friday, January 15, Jackson left Clarksville, leaving behind Colonel Thomas H.

⁴Hamer, Tennessee, 1:221-22; Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:338; Wills and Records, M:281.

⁵Nashville Clarion and Tennessee Gazette, February 16, 1813; Harold D. Moser, Sharon MacPherson, Charles F. Bryan, Jr., The Papers of Andrew Jackson, 2 vols. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 2:357-58.

Benton to "procure" the rest of the flour needed. Before the rest of the boats arrived, Benton again "sent out the bayonet" procuring an additional seventy barrels of flour. The price for flour sold in the area was five and a half or six dollars per barrel; but to cover the losses of the people in "being unexpectedly deprived of property which they had been out the expense of preparing for a distant market," Hugh McClure and John H. Poston, local merchants, set the price at eight dollars.⁶

The event did not go unnoticed. William B. Lewis, Assistant Deputy Quartermaster, responding to criticism against the quartermasters because of the late arrival of boats at the mouth of the Harpeth, declared that, while in Clarksville, Colonel Benton was

. . . amusing himself by distressing the citizens with unnecessary impressment . . . for no other purpose, it would seem, than to put into operation that very effective & favorite weapon of his, the bayonet, . . . and then, to make ample compensation to the citizens for having wrested from them produce for foreign market, he allows them extravagant prices.⁷

⁶Nashville Clarion and Tennessee Gazette, February 16, 1813; Moser, McPherson, Bryan, Jackson Papers, 2:358.

⁷Nashville Clarion and Tennessee Gazette, February 23, 1813; Nashville Whig, February 24, 1813.

About a month after Jackson and his troops arrived in Natchez, the Secretary of War, John Armstrong, ordered General Jackson to discharge all his men and to deliver the supplies he had in his possession to General Wilkerson, Commander of the Seventh District. If Jackson had complied with this order, many of the 150 sick men under his command would have died. Others, without the funds needed to return home, would have been forced to enlist in the regular army under Wilkerson. Jackson refused to leave a single man. He was determined to hold his men in the volunteer service of Tennessee until they could reach home. He arrived home with his men on April 22 after a 460 mile march in twenty-five days. He immediately reported to President Madison, who approved, reimbursing Jackson for expenses incurred personally in returning the men to their homes. However, the war was not as yet over for the young men of Tennessee and Montgomery County.⁸

Tecumseh, Chief of the Shawnee, visited the Creek Nation in Alabama and incited many of the Indians

⁸Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:338-39; The Weekly Register (Baltimore), June 5, 1813; Moser, MacPherson, and Bryan, Jackson Papers, 2:361.

to war. On August 30, 1813, the Creeks under the leadership of William Weatherford, or Red Eagle as the Indians called him, attacked Fort Mims, a stockade fort in southern Alabama. The fort was taken and about 250 were killed, including men, women, and children gathered there for protection. Estimates of the number of survivors vary from none to about forty. When the news reached Tennessee, the people feared the Indians might begin attacks in this state. Governor Blount was urged to send an army against the Creeks. The Legislature approved the organization of an army of 3,500 men and gave the Governor authorization to borrow \$300,000 to finance the army.⁹

In spite of wounds received only a short time before in a fight with Thomas H. Benton and his brother Jesse, Andrew Jackson assumed command of the army. After a series of victories against the Indians, the chance of an Indian invasion into Tennessee ended. However, Jackson was now faced with a problem caused by confusion as to the end of the enlistment period for some of his men. Jackson needed a new army. True to the name given the state, a new force of

⁹Frank Lawrence Owsley, Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle of New Orleans, 1812-1815 (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1981), pp. 38-39; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:223; Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:340, 343. Hamer erroneously gives the date of the attack on Fort Mims as August 13.

volunteers began to arrive, including a company of Mounted Volunteers under the leadership of Captain George W. L. Marr of Clarksville. Forty men had enlisted under Marr on December 20, 1813, and served until February 8, 1814.¹⁰

Volunteers continued to join Jackson and by March 1814, 5,000 men were ready for action at Horseshoe Bend. Two more companies arrived from Montgomery County under the commands of Captain Abraham Allen and Captain Edward Neblett. The men were mustered in at Fayetteville, Tennessee, on January 18, 1814, and served until May 10. At least two of the 129 men who went to fight with Jackson died in the service of their country--Edmund Rivers, a wagon master, and Jacob Melton. Several of the men were reported sick due to the hardships of the winter march and army life.¹¹

Jackson's victory at Horseshoe Bend ended the war with the Creeks. He returned home and was given a commission as a Major General in the United

¹⁰Hamer, Tennessee, 1:226-27; Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:343-353; War of 1812 Muster Rolls, Colonel N. T. Perkins, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

¹¹Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:353-58; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:226-27; War of 1812 Muster Rolls, Colonel Robert Napier; War of 1812 Muster Rolls, Brigadier General Thomas Johnson.

States Army. However, as the war with England progressed, rumors began to surface concerning a large expedition being sent by the British to take New Orleans. Jackson urged Governor Blount to send him a brigade of volunteers. In answer to Blount's call about 2,000 men assembled at Fayetteville. On October 5, 1814, under the leadership of General John Coffee, these men marched south to aid Jackson. Responding to the call was a company of Mounted Gunmen from Montgomery County under the leadership of Captain Robert Edmondson. Of the seventy men who rode with Edmondson, ten died--Tate Odeneal, Robert Neely, John Tinnen, William Baker, William Cooper, Kinchen Deyel, Zachariah Harvey, James McFadden, David Terry, and Henry White.¹²

In answer to the call for troops, a second group of the Tennessee Militia rendezvoused at Nashville on November 13. Under the leadership of Colonel William Carroll, the group left Nashville on November 18, 21, and 23 and marched to Clarksville, where they boarded flatboats for the long journey to New Orleans.¹³

¹²Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:358-60; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:227-28; War of 1812 Muster Rolls, Colonel Robert H. Dyer; Wills and Records,, B:255, 258.

¹³Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:364; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:228; Chase C. Mooney, ed. "Some Letters from Dover, Tennessee, 1814 to 1855," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 8 (June 1949):159n; William Priestly, Journal, 1814-1815, p. 16, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; E. B. Crisman, Living Old Men of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1877), p. 100.

Men from Montgomery County evidently joined the group as they came through. Many years later James Ross recalled that his father, Reuben Ross, the well-loved Baptist minister, preached to the men preparing to leave

. . . a number of volunteers were encamped on the bleak, snow clad hills around Clarksville, awaiting transportation to New Orleans where it was reported an army of fourteen thousand men were about to be landed by the enemy . . . These soldiers belonged to families in the surrounding counties . . . They embarked on their perilous voyage down the great rivers in the dead of winter, on the crowded and uncomfortable flat boats . . .¹⁴

William Williams of Dover wrote to his brother on November 26, 1814, "The troops from this state has (sic) not sailed down the river yet[.] they are at Nashville[.] they go by water to Orleans." The next day he added a postscript, "NB 75 boats flat bottom laden with soldiers past here this morning 27 November."¹⁵

According to one source, Carroll had only one gun to ten men until he overtook a boatload of muskets. He then drilled his men on the deck of the

¹⁴Ross, Life and Times, pp. 220-21.

¹⁵Mooney, "Letters," pp. 158-59.

boats until they reached their destination.¹⁶

Thus in less than one month from the time of embarkation at Nashville, with a little fleet of near fifty sail, was a voyage of 1339 miles performed by the unequalled ardour of a youthful commander; seconded by those who were fired by his zeal, and was landed without the occurrence of a single unfortunate accident on its passage.¹⁷

Blount's third term as governor expired in 1815. Five men appeared on the ballot to replace him. (1) Jesse Wharton, a Republican from the Nashville District, was serving in the United States Senate as a replacement for George M. Campbell who had resigned to become Secretary of the Treasury in Madison's Cabinet. Wharton resigned his seat shortly before the gubernatorial election. (2) Robert C. Foster was at the time of the 1815 election serving as Speaker of the House of Representatives, representing Davidson County. Foster, in later years became a member of the Whig party. (3) Robert Weakley had been an early pioneer to Davidson County. He served in Congress from 1809-1811 and had served in both the Senate and House of the Tennessee Legislature. (4) Thomas Johnson, a resident of Robertson County and father of Clarksville

¹⁶Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:364.

¹⁷Priestly, Journal, p. 47.

attorney, Cave Johnson, had come early to the Cumberland Settlements. He represented Tennessee County as a member of the First Constitutional Convention. He had represented Robertson County in the General Assembly, and had served as an officer during the Creek War. (5) Joseph McMinn had come to Hawkins County before 1790. In 1807 he had served as Speaker of the Senate. He announced his candidacy only about a month before the election, declaring in true Republican form, that it was then only in response to the "call" of his many fellow citizens, unlike the office hunter "sticking up his own name . . . inconsistent with the genuine principles of republicanism."¹⁸

When the votes were counted, Montgomery County had supported her neighbor from Robertson County, Thomas Johnson, with 422 votes. The county gave Robert Weakley 203 votes; Robert Foster, 108 votes; and Jesse Wharton, 140 votes. Joseph McMinn from East Tennessee won the sought-after seat, but had received only 73 votes from Montgomery County.¹⁹

¹⁸Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:368; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:229; McBride and Robison, eds., Biographical Directory, 1:258-59, 410-11, 485, 768-69; Hale and Merritt, A History, 2:259-60.

¹⁹Tally Sheet, Gubernatorial Election, 1815, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Of the four men on the ballot that year for the United States Congress, two were from Montgomery County. James B. Reynolds, an Irishman, had settled in Clarksville about 1804 where he practiced law. He was an incorporator of the Rural Academy in 1806, and a trustee of Mount Pleasant Academy in 1811. A Republican, he served in the Senate of the 9th General Assembly in 1811-1813 representing Montgomery, Dickson, Hickman, Humphreys, Robertson, and Stewart Counties. Although he was elected to Congress in this election, he failed to carry his home county. He received only 341 votes, less than one-third of the votes cast. George W. L. Marr, also of Montgomery County, received an overwhelming majority with 670 votes, almost two-thirds of the total vote. His popularity as an officer in the late conflict against the Creek Indians had thrust him into political office. Token support was given to Peter Booker, who had represented Maury County in the Senate during the 10th General Assembly, 1813-1815, with six votes; and James Holland with nine votes.²⁰

The years that followed the war were boom years for Montgomery County, as well as for the entire

²⁰Tally, 6th District Election, 1815; McBride and Robison, Biographical Directory, 1:60-61, 497, 616.

state. Inflation was rampant. The cost of the war itself had done much to add to the condition. The influx of money paid to the Tennessee volunteers for military services and the money received from the purchase of supplies to support the military operations brought a surge in the economy of the county and state reaching a level not seen since 1807. A Nashville paper noted in December, 1812

. . . the detachment destined for New Orleans . . . will necessarily be encamped for several days previously to their departure. They will need a great many articles for their convenience during the descent of the river and supplies must be laid in before they start. An upward of sixty thousand dollars will be paid in hand to the volunteers, (it will be hard if they go off with their pockets full of money and suffering for the (torn) --les of which our farmers possess (in great redundancy--dried fruits, cabbages, potatoes, chickens, turkies, butter, . . . vinegar, will meet with a ready sale. Farmers to the Market!²¹

Cotton prices were at their highest level due to a shortage of the commodity in England. By 1817 it was selling at an unheard of price of thirty-four cents. Tobacco had reached an all-time high of over eighteen cents per pound. The demand for land increased. Thousands of newcomers flocked to the

²¹Nashville Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette, December 1, 1812.

area in hopes of taking advantage of the high cotton market. With the increased demand for land came increased prices. Land values rose rapidly. Much of the land was purchased on credit with the expectation of the trend continuing. Merchants expanded as trade increased and soon found themselves heavily in debt. The abundance of paper money being issued by state banks only added to the inflation.²²

In 1811 when the charter of the first United States Bank expired, Congress refused to recharter the bank. Many in the state feared the loss of the advantages of a "sound and circulating medium" and hoped to reap the large profits which were supposed to come from a successful banking operation. Accordingly, the bank of the State of Tennessee was chartered by the Legislature. Headquarters of the bank was located in Knoxville with branches authorized in Clarksville, Columbia, and Jonesboro. The capital stock was not to exceed \$400,000 with shares set at \$50 each. The bank was permitted to begin operation when \$25,000 in gold and silver had been paid in by the subscribers. The bank began operation on September 1, 1812 with Hugh L. White as President. Under the

²²Abernethy, Frontier, p. 224; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:231; Gray, History of Agriculture, 2: 697, 765.

conservative leadership of White, this bank was able to continue redeeming its notes in specie at times when other banks had to resort to payment in bills and notes. By 1817 Tennessee had chartered as many as fifteen banks of issue. The total paper issue of these banks amounted to \$10,000,000--over \$3000 for each resident of the State of Tennessee!²³

The Weekly Chronicle of April 8, 1818, gave notice that James Elder, John H. Poston, and William L. Brown had been authorized to sell 2000 shares of capital stock at \$50 per share for the purpose of establishing a branch bank in Clarksville. The books were to be opened at the courthouse on September 17, 1818, for the sale.

No records have been found to indicate the officers or the financial condition of the branch at Clarksville, with the exception of a notice in July 12, 1819, issue of Town Gazette notifying the stockholders of the Branch Bank of the State of Tennessee at Clarksville that an installment of \$5 per share capital stock would be due on August 2. Joel C. Rice signed as cashier.

²³Abernethy, Frontiers, p. 224; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:230, 451; Phalan, History, p. 258; Tennessee Acts, 1811, Chapter 79; Moore and Foster, Volunteer, 1:451-452; Abernethy, "Commerce and Banking," p. 312.

With more money in circulation, came more inflation, and with more inflation, came more speculation. Land was purchased on credit at high prices with the anticipation that the upward spiral would continue. Across the county towns were laid out with the expectation of future growth and development. In 1817 Jonesville was established on Spring Creek on land owned by Joseph Woolfolk "at or near" the Spring Creek Cross Roads. Commissioners were William Trigg, David Williamson, and J. E. Wilcox. A few months later in the same section of the county, William R. Gibson announced the establishment of Gibsonburgh, "Seat of Health," located ten miles east of Clarksville on "the big road" leading to Russellville. Lots were to be auctioned on June 24, 1818, with a credit of twelve to eighteen months given the purchasers.²⁴

In March 1819 an announcement was made concerning the sale of lots in the town of Cumberland located at the mouth of Red River across from Clarksville. Nine men held a share of this new venture: John C. McLeMore, Jesse Blackfan, George Brown, and Frederick W. Huling owned one-eighth each; William L. Brown, Oliver B. Hayes, Patrick H. Darby, and Charles L. Dibrell,

²⁴Tennessee Acts, 1817, Chapter LV; Weekly Chronicle (Clarksville), May 13, 1818.

one-twelfth each. The largest holder was Amos Edwards with one-sixth interest. On April 24, 1819, at least thirty-five lots in the new town were auctioned to twenty purchasers. By July, 1820, the town was incorporated with Amos Edwards, Anthony Butler, George Brown, John C. McLemore, and Frederick W. Huling as Commissioners. McLemore was a land speculator from Davidson County. Huling, an attorney from Montgomery County, had served as solicitor for the county from 1816-1817, and had been appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1817. He was one of the incorporators of the Red River Bridge Company which planned to build a toll bridge near Smith's Ferry across Red River. He later served as one of the first aldermen of Clarksville.²⁵

In June 1819 a fourth town, New York, was located between the confluence of Blooming Grove Creek and Sugar Creek, tributaries of the Cumberland on the north side of the river. Advertised as "affording a delightful view two or three miles up and down the river" the new town was to have lots set aside especially for a church and an academy. Lots were

²⁵Weekly Chronicle (Clarksville), March 22, 1819; Deeds I:984, 1013, 1014, 1016, 1018, 1019, 1020, 1037, 1038, 1042, 1071; Deeds K:32, 33; Tennessee Acts, 1820, Chapter 87; McBride and Robison, Biographical Directory, 1:387.

to be auctioned on August 9 and 10 with the contracts let on the last day of the sale for the construction of the church and the academy--of brick. Commissioners were Henry H. Bryan, Robert Searcy, William Clements, Jesse Fentress, and Louis C. Taylor.²⁶

The towns of Jonesville and Gibsonburgh are only memories. Their failure as commercial ventures was probably due in part to their location on a small waterway, too far upstream from the developing area along the Cumberland and Red Rivers near Clarksville, and the financial difficulties that befell many speculators of that period. While Cumberland prospered and remains today as a part of the City of Clarksville, the New York venture sold only a few lots. The only evidence of this attempted development is a road leading to the area now known as York Road.

In 1819 the boom ended. The price of cotton fell as rapidly as it had risen. Land values declined, and Montgomery County, like other cotton producing sections found itself in a depression. Farmers and merchants alike were rendered insolvent. During 1818 113 cases concerning debts were heard in the county

²⁶Town Gazette and Farmers Register
(Clarksville), July 5, 1819; Tennessee Acts, 1821.

court--an increase of about 50 percent over the preceeding year. This was only a portion of those who shared the same fate. During 1819 there were slightly fewer cases of debt before the court, but there were still over one hundred attempts to collect unpaid debts.²⁷

On May 24, 1819, the Tennessee Weekly Chronicle observed that

The distressing effects of the Banking system has certainly at no period of the American government been so deeply felt as the present. The majority of the people do not understand the principle on which these institutions are conducted either from theory or by practice; but all classes now feel their dread consequence to such a degree as makes them almost the sole topic of converse in every circle of society. They find that all must suffer, if not directly in an indirect way. In Clarksville, the oppression is not so severely felt; the people here have nothing to fear from their own paper, nor do we believe that such wily tricks are practised by the bank in this place as are common in others. The failures of individuals at Nashville are many and caught in the banking snare, no mercy is shown them; their property must become a sacrifice to the interest of the bank perhaps at less than half its value.

However, by July the economic situation caused one observer to comment

The memorable words of the scriptures are applicable to the present times.

²⁷Abernathy, Frontier, p. 225; Hamer, Tennessee, 1:231-32; Minutes, 7, 8, 9, passim.

We have speculated so deep in banking that the country is nearly shaken to its centre. We have sown the wind; and we are now reaping the whirlwind.²⁸

The newspaper observed that "Distresses have risen to so high a pitch as to turn politics of the day almost wholly on that subject . . ." and predicted that at the next session of the Legislature ". . . a suspension of the collection of debts by execution will be the first subject agitated."²⁹

The "endorsement law" passed by the legislature was meant to give relief to the debtor class. However, the law seemed to serve the interest of the merchant against their Eastern creditors. The law provided that the execution of any judgment could not be made until two years after the issuance of a judgment, unless the plaintiff would agree to accept the depreciated notes of the newly created Nashville or State Bank. The debtor class, however, did not even have the notes of the Tennessee banks with which to make payment.³⁰

The situation was, however, temporary. By 1820 the county was leaving frontier status and beginning to

²⁸Town Gazette and Farmers Register (Clarksville), July 5, 1819.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Tennessee Acts, 1819, Chapter 15; Phelan, History, p. 261; Hamer, Tennessee 1:232.

show signs of urbanization. The county had, by then, grown in population to 12,219, including 4,869 slaves--an increase of over 50 percent since the previous count in 1810. Of the 1,217 households enumerated in the census, 641 or about 53 percent held slaves. Of the households holding slaves about 56 percent held five or less slaves; about 19.5 percent held six to ten slaves; 17.5 percent held eleven to twenty slaves; 5 percent held twenty-one to thirty slaves; while only 2 percent of the slave holders held more than thirty slaves. The county was no longer entirely dependent upon an agricultural economy. Three hundred and fourteen citizens of the county were employed in manufacturing, while forty-four were engaged in some form of commerce.³¹

The steamboat, previously confined to the Ohio and Mississippi, now came up the Cumberland to Clarksville and Nashville, shortening the month-long trip from New Orleans. With other improvements, the county became more accessible to outlying areas, favoring both the importation of goods and the exportation of the produce of the area. A new post road was being built connecting Trenton, Kentucky,

³¹Beach and Alley, 1798/1820, passim.

with Clarksville and Port Royal; and a road was being opened through the Chickasaw Nation to the southwest. In anticipation of the increased river traffic, both up and down the river, Nace F. Trice and T. W. Atkinson built a new warehouse one-half mile below the mouth of Red River. Built above the highest water mark, the new facility offered a "safe deposit for any articles descending or ascending the river" plus the convenience of loading the boat "directly from a windlass."³²

Clarksville, responding to the needs of a growing population, opened new stores within her bounds. In October, 1819, twenty-two licenses were granted to firms to "vend goods." Two licenses were issued to John Ware and Oldham and Mullins as "shewman."³³ In addition to the usual taverns and blacksmiths, the town had a bake house owned by Thomas Bray, offering a variety of breads and cakes. Wells Fowler established a watch and silversmithing business on the east side of the public square, Josiah Emmitt was making Windsor chairs, as well as doing house and sign painting and gilding. Wool and Merino, castor and beaver hats, both ladies' and gentlemen's fashions, could be purchased

³²Folmsbee, Corlew, Mitchell, Tennessee, p. 245; Tennessee Weekly Chronicle (Clarksville), January 27, 1819; May 3, 1819.

³³Drane Papers; Shewmen produce shows for entertainment.

at the shop of John R. Collins next to Lockert and Smith's tavern. Richard Bridgewater was also making hats at his shop four and a half miles above Clarksville on Red River.³⁴

Business was good and more help was needed in the shops. Fowler needed one or two journey silversmiths; the Town Gazette and Farmers Register needed two young boys to learn "the art and mechanical operation of printing"; Alex Martin wanted a good blacksmith to take charge of a shop having two fires; John G. Cross and John McGowan advertised for a young man "age 13 to 16 of moral and steady habits" to learn the tailoring business; and John H. Scruggs needed two or three apprentices to learn the brick making and laying business.³⁵

The county was maturing and beginning to find time for cultural activities. Mount Pleasant Academy, which opened in 1811, was still educating the youth of the county. At Sylvan Academy on Spring Creek, the students were providing exhibitions for the entertainment of their friends. John D. Tyler was opening his

³⁴Town Gazette and Farmers Register (Clarksville), July 5, 1819; August 16, 1819; The Tennessee Weekly Chronicle (Clarksville), May 17, 1819.

³⁵Town Gazette and Farmers Register (Clarksville), July 5, 1819; August 2, 1819; October 25, 1819.

school on Spring Creek. He advertised that he could " . . . accomodate 6 or 8 students with board at \$35 per session, each boarder furnishing his own bed, bedding, and candles."³⁶ Oliver Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer" was presented by the Clarksville Thespian Society to raise funds for a circulating library. Port Royal had also organized a Thespian Society.³⁷

The war transformed Nashville. The same effects were also felt in Montgomery County. On October 23, 1819, legislation was passed incorporating the town of Clarksville. The little river town had at last become of age. The frontier was moving west. Ads informed the people of the sale of Indian lands recently opened to the south and to the west, as well as land available in Illinois Territory north of Kaskaskia. The development of the west continued.³⁸

³⁶ Tennessee Weekly Chronicle (Clarksville), February 18, 1818; Clarksville Gazette, January 8, 1820.

³⁷ Town Gazette and Farmers Register (Clarksville), July 5, 1819; August 16, 1819; Clarksville Gazette, November 21, 1819.

³⁸ Town Gazette and Farmers Register (Clarksville), July 18, 1819; Weekly Chronicle March 29, 1819.

Out of the war, the boom, and the panic, there emerged a new order of things. Tennessee had ceased to be a frontier and had come to be an agricultural commonwealth. The old conditions continued to exist in the back country, but trade was occupying the attention of the rising towns, and steamboats and stage coaches were taking the place of keel boats and pack horses. This economic transformation brought political changes in its wake and out of so evil a thing as the panic there flowered a new democracy.³⁹

³⁹Abernethy, Frontier, p. 226.

APPENDIX 1

POPULATION SCHEDULES

A. Tennessee County,

The Territory South of the River Ohio

1791¹

<u>Free White Males 21 and up</u>	<u>Free White Males Under 21</u>	<u>Free White Females</u>	<u>All Other Free</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Total</u>
235	380	576	42	154	1,387

B. Tennessee County,

The Territory South of the River Ohio

1795¹

<u>Free White Males 16 and up</u>	<u>Free White Males Under 16</u>	<u>Free White Females</u>	<u>All Other Free</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Total</u>
380	444	700	19	398	1,941

¹Carter, Territorial Papers, pp. 81, 404.

C. Montgomery County, Tennessee

	<u>1800</u> ²	<u>1810</u> ³	<u>1820</u> ⁴
<u>Free White Males</u>			
Under 10 years of age	462		1,365
Of 10 and under 16	160		631
Of 16 and under 26	227		773
Of 26 and under 45	222		670
Of 45 and upward	87		428
<u>Free White Females</u>			
Under 10 years of age	371		1,257
Of 10 and under 16	160		671
Of 16 and under 26	137	5,386	732
Of 26 and under 45	172		608
Of 45 and upward	80		365
<u>All other Free Persons</u>	--		65
<u>Slaves</u>	821	2,629	4,663
Total	2,899	8,021 (sic) [8,015]	12,228

²Hays, "Schedule," p. 106.

³The Weekly Register (Baltimore), January 11, 1812
Putnam, History, p. 654; Killebrew, Resources, p. 406.
All three sources give the total population as 8,021.
Putnam and Killebrew do not give breakdown. The breakdown
given in The Weekly Register totals 8,015 rather than the
8,021 given.

⁴Alley and Beach, 1798/1820, p. 34; Putnam,
History, p. 654; Killebrew, Resources, p. 406.
Killebrew and Putnam give the total as 12,219.

APPENDIX 2

DISTILLERIES TAXED¹

A. Tennessee County

For year beginning July 1, 1795 and ending June 30, 1796.

	<u>No. Stills</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
James Patton	1	207
Benjamin McNeese	1	51
Martin Grooder	1	118
Philip Parchment	1	74
Joseph Crockett	1	78
Samuel McMurtry	1	44
Andrew Irwin	1	90
Thomas Johnson	1	131
Francis Prince	1	90
Francis Prince	1	44
William Fort	1	263
Philip Hornbarger	1	55
Joseph Patton	1	80
William Brown	1	97

¹John Overton, Distillery Book. The spelling of the surnames were left as Overton wrote them. The first names, often abbreviated on the original list, have been spelled out. The figures for 1801-1802 are incomplete as the tax on distilleries had been repealed.

B. Montgomery County, Tennessee

98

For year beginning July 1, 1796 and ending June 30, 1797.

	<u>No. Stills</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
James Patton	1	207
Martin Grider	1	118
Francis Prince	1	90
Francis Prince	1	44
Philip Hornbarger	1	120
Philip Parchment	1	74
Samuel McMurrey	1	44
Joseph Patton	1	80
John Crockett	1	78

C. Montgomery County, Tennessee

For year beginning July 1, 1797 and ending June 30, 1798.

	<u>No. Stills</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
James Patton	1	80
George Bell	1	44
James Patton	0 (sic)	80
Philip Hornbager	1	114
James Patton	1	---

D. Montgomery County, Tennessee

For year beginning July 1, 1798 and ending June 30, 1799.

	<u>No. Stills</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
James Patton	2	---
Nicholas Conrad	1	60

E. Montgomery County, Tennessee

99

For year beginning July 1, 1799 and ending June 30, 1800.

<u>1st half of year</u>	<u>No. Stillls</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
James Patton	2	---
Headon Wells	1	---
Robert Wells	1	82
 <u>2nd half of year</u>		
James Patton	2	---
Headon Wells	1	---
Robert Wells	1	82
Benjamin Thomas	1	114
John Shelby	2	100
Joseph Wray	1	65
Charles Stewart	1	50
Duncan Stewart	1	73

F. Montgomery County, Tennessee

For year beginning July 1, 1800 and ending June 30, 1801.

<u>1st half of year ending December 31</u>	<u>No. Stillls</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
James Patton	2	---
Headon Wells	1	60
Robert Wells	1	---
Frances Prince	2	---
Benjamin Thomas	1	---
John Shelby	2	---
Joseph Wray	1	---
Charles Stewart	1	50
Duncan Stewart	1	---
Game Brison	1	---
David Patterson	1	120

<u>2nd half of year</u>	<u>No. Stills</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
Headon Wells	2	142
John Shelby	2	100
Joseph Wray	1	65
Charles Stewart	1	130
Duncan Stewart	1	73
James Ford	1	90
Benjamin Wooford	1	37
Benjamin Wooford	1	37

G. Montgomery County, Tennessee

For year beginning July 1, 1801 and ending June 30, 1802.

	<u>No. Stills</u>	<u>Capacity (gallons)</u>
David Jones	---	54
James Yates	---	50
Michael Sweetman	2	267
Headon Wells	1	---
Robert Wells	1	---
Francis Prince	2	---
Benjamin Thomas	1	---
John Shelby	2	---
Joseph Wray	1	---
Charles Stewart	1	---
Duncan Stewart	1	---
William Griffin	1	---
James Ford	1	---

APPENDIX 3

COTTON GINS TAXED¹

<u>1804</u>	<u>No. Gins</u>	<u>No. Saws</u>
Amos Bird	1	60
Ebenezer Frost	1	60
Jones Kendrick	1	37
James Moore and Morgan Brown	1	50
Benjamin Weakley and David Weakley	1	50

<u>1805</u>		
Amos Bird	1	60
Ebenezer Frost	1	60
Jones Kendirck	1	40
James Moore and Morgan Brown	1	50
Benjamin Weakley and David Weakley	1	49
Whitfield and Keathley	1	51
Burrell M. Williamson	1	60
John Baker	1	60

<u>1806</u>		
Amos Bird	1	60
Ebenezer Frosts	1	60
William Ross	1	35
Whitfield and Keathley	1	51
John Baker	1	50
Thomas Simmons	1	50
Prince and Shelby	1	50
Josiah G. Duke	1	51
Burrell M. Williamson	1	60
Benjamin and David Weakley	1	49

¹Secretary of State, Record Group 30.

1807

102

	<u>No. Gins</u>	<u>No. Saws</u>
Amos Bird	1	
Ebenezer Frost	1	60
Burrell M. Williamson	1	60
Thomas Simmons	1	60
John McCarrell	1	50
William Mitchell	1	50
Charles Stewart	1	50
Whitfield and Keathley	1	60
Joseph Woolfolk	1	51
John Baker	1	50
Josiah G. Duke	1	50
Benjamin and David Weakley	1	50
William Ross	1	49
John Shelby	1	35
		<hr/> 40
TOTAL		1,918

APPENDIX 4

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Montgomery County, Tennessee

June 1805

Brittain Bayless
John Blair
Willie Blount
Morgan Brown
James Fentress
Samuel Gattis
James Huling
James Lockert
Nathaniel McGraw

Robert Prince
Joseph Robertson
Henry Small
Thomas Smith
James Stewart
Shadrick Tribble
Haydon Wells
Joseph Woolfork

APPENDIX 5

TALLY OF FLATBOAT MANIFESTS, 1805-1807¹

Shipments from Montgomery County to Natchez and New Orleans

<u>Product</u>		<u>1805</u>	<u>1806</u>	<u>1807</u>
Potatoes	Bushels	40		
Tobacco	Bales	1		
	Hogsheads		8	31+ ²
	Kegs		1	
Cotton	Bales	200	145	819++
County Cotton Mfg'ed.	Yards	50		190++
Hogs (live)				
Bacon	Wt.	3000	1500	
Bacon hams		20		
Pork	Barrels	110	57	394+
Lard	Barrels	12	11	
	Kegs	2	41	15
Beef	Barrels	123	13	
Butter	Kegs	1		10
Soal (sic) Leather	Sides			5
Corn	Bushels	300	500	500+++
Corn meal	Barrels	100	3	
Flour	Barrels		3	
Venison Hams		408	60+	
Beaver and Otter		10		
Coon Skins		140		
Bear skins		55		
Deer skins	Bundles	1		
	Wt.	1000	2600	500
	Skins		60	9
	Bales			
	Skins	500		21
Peltry	Packages		4	4360
	Wt.			250
	Skins			
Raccoon, Fox, etc.				

¹Cargo Manifest; "Flatboats".

² + indicates a shipment with no amount designated.

product180518061807

Tallow	Barrels	8	1	
Candles	Boxes	7	7	
Soap	Barrels	5		
planks			13,000	
Staves			41,000	40,600+++
Castings	Pounds		2,500	
Lime	Bushels		150	
Oats	Bushels		250	
Chickens				+
Horses			3	6++++
Gunpowder	Pounds			1,025

APPENDIX 6

WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE-MANUFACTURERS, 1810¹

COUNTIES.	Cotton Cloth, in families, &c.	Cotton Manufacturing Establishments.	Blended and unnamed Cloths & Stuffs.	Woollen Cloths, in families, &c.	Total.	Cotton and Wool Spun in Mills.		Looms.	Fulling Mills.			Spindles.	Furnaces.			Forges.			Naileries.		
	Yards made.		Yards made.	Yards made.	Value in dollars.	Pounds.	Value in dollars.	Number.	Number.	Yards fulled.	Value in dollars.		Number.	Tons.	Value in dollars.	Number.	Tons.	Value in dollars.	Number.	Pounds.	Value in dollars.
Bedford, -	76,580	1	-	-	38,290 00	-	-	451	-	-	-	306	-	-	-	-	-	2	64,480	14,830 40	
Davidson, -	161,488	-	34,683	738	107,309 75	10,000	7,159 75	856	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Dickson, -	70,078	1	-	-	35,039 00	-	-	308	-	-	-	-	2	400	56,000 00	1	50	12,500 00	-	-	
Franklin, -	36,253	-	27,735	764	39,447 37	-	300 00	364	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Giles, -	50,404	-	26,646	-	43,716 50	-	-	240	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Hickman, -	35,170	-	5,820	345	19,912 75	-	-	188	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	14	3,668 20	-	-	
Humphries, -	24,565	-	-	-	12,282 50	-	-	111	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Jackson, -	55,125	-	-	-	17,562 50	-	-	416	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lincoln, -	61,350	-	5,537	460	34,198 00	-	-	314	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Montgomery, -	125,540	-	20,000	-	77,770 00	-	-	567	-	-	-	2	187	22,227 80	1	100	28,000 00	-	-	-	
Maury, -	193,328	-	212	1,303	97,121 50	-	-	648	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Overton, -	59,927	-	-	-	29,963 50	-	-	414	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Robertson, -	63,012	-	7,998	2,640	32,420 75	-	-	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Rutherford, -	247,936	1	-	-	123,968 00	-	160 00	647	-	-	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Sumner, -	40,660	1	4,550	1,700	24,305 00	3,000	1,875 00	870	1	1,800	2,700	44	-	-	-	-	-	1	24,000	6,000 00	
Smith, -	123,981	-	31,489	15,515	24,471 50	-	-	829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Stewart, -	34,726	-	-	-	17,326 00	-	-	432	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Wilson, -	65,084	-	56,948	8,136	61,524 87	-	-	770	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Williamson, -	172,701	-	-	-	86,350 50	-	-	854	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
White, -	30,031	-	6,525	2,470	19,513 00	-	-	199	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	28,000 00	-	-	-	
Warren, -	62,505	-	-	-	31,252 50	-	-	475	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total amounts, -	1,790,514	4	229,193	34,141	1,051,115 49	13,000	9,494 75	10,353	1	1,800	2,700	396	4	537	85,227 80	4	251 1/2	72,168 20	3	88,480	20,830 40

¹ American State Papers, Class III, Finance 2:800.

WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE-MANUFACTURERS, 1810 (Continued)

COUNTIES.	Tanneries.			Distilleries.			Glauber Salts.		Coppers.		Rope Walks.			Gun Powder Mills.			Articles of a doubtful nature, or Agricultural.				
	Number.	Hides.	Value in dollars.	Number.	Gallons.	Value in dollars.	Pounds.	Value in dollars.	Pounds.	Value in dollars.	Number.	Tons.	Value in dollars.	Number.	Pounds.	Value in dollars.	Saltpetre Caves.			Red Ochre.	
																	Number.	Pounds.	Value in dollars.	Pounds.	Value in dollars.
Bedford,	2	200	800	11	4,080	2,040	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	7,500	3,750	-	-	-	-	-
Davidson,	6	1,631	8,635 ^{1/4}	132	84,345	42,172 ^{1/4}	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dickson,	2	1,010	3,030	31	9,644	4,822	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Franklin,	8	124	497	14	2,562	1,281	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Giles,	3	125	500	1	600	300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hickman,	-	-	-	6	1,740	870	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	500	250	-	-	-	-	-
Humphries,	-	-	-	2	50	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jackson,	2	375	1,500	12	8,000	4,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,000	500	3	5,200	864 16	-	-
Lincoln,	4	1,770	3,940	5	1,350	1,012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Montgomery,	4	500	2,500	17	34,020	17,010	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maury,	-	-	-	8	13,510	6,755	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overton,	-	-	-	23	8,505	4,252 ^{1/4}	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	8,200	4,100	-	-	-	-	-
Robertson,	2	440	1,760	60	33,202	16,601	-	-	-	-	1	4	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rutherford,	1	300	1,200	79	40,405	20,202 ^{1/4}	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sumner,	7	1,410	7,050	113	57,150	28,575	-	-	-	-	1	14	375	2	6,000	3,000	-	-	-	-	-
Smith,	3	750	4,500	67	51,220	25,610	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	8,000	4,000	-	10,000	1,250	-	-
Stewart,	2	250	1,000	2	1,004	502	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wilson,	4	930	2,790	47	21,410	10,705	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	3,170	1,585	-	-	-	-	-
Williamson,	8	1,912	7,650	114	79,000	39,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White,	1	197	788	12	12,250	6,125	591	148	600	100	-	-	-	3	10,003	5,001 50	19	29,695	3,712	-	-
Warren,	-	-	-	-	2,000	1,000	-	-	50,000	6,250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100,000	12,500	10,000	2,000
Total amounts,	59	11,924	48,140 ^{1/4}	756	466,047	233,360 ^{1/4}	591	148	50,600	6,350	2	14	435	21	44,373	22,186 50	22	144,895	18,326 16	10,000	2,000

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