

WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Newsletter



April - May 2016

201 Locust Street

McMinnville, Tennessee



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WCGA Members Tour the Helton Home

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

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



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



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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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

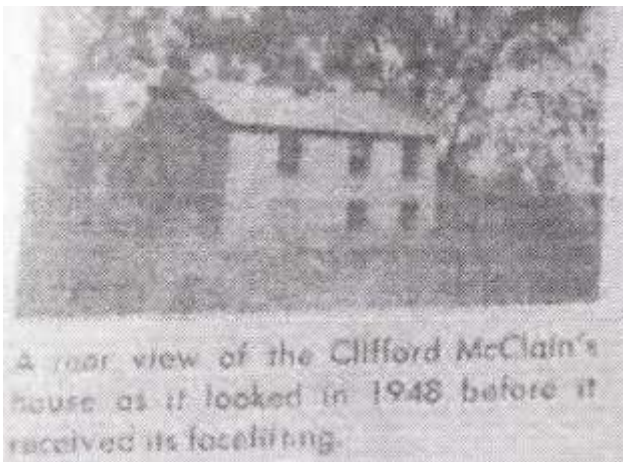


Figure 3. This photograph shows what the rear of the home looked like prior to its 1948 renovation. Image provided by Kara Helton.

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



Figure 4. Front elevation of house.



Figure 5. Rear elevation of house showing enclosed porch.



Figure 6. Well located behind the house.

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

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



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



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

HISTORY

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



Ransom Gwynn 1790-1872

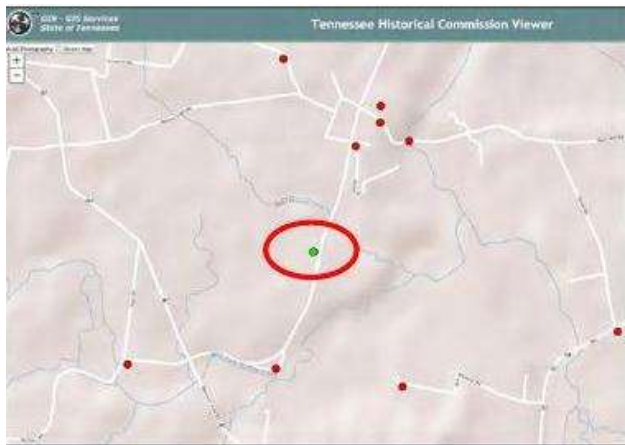


Margaret (McConnell) Davidson
Gwynn Oct 18, 1801 April 21 1868

Photos provided by Bob & Betty Sherwood

Gwynn/Guinn family

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



Site Detail	
Clear Selection	
County:	Warren
Survey ID:	WR00159
Historical Name:	OLD RUMES GUINN PLACE
Common Name:	McCLAIN-DENTON HOUSE
Address:	
City:	
Owner:	CLIFFORD McCLAIN/DENTON
Date Constructed:	c1860
Notes:	ALTHOUGH CONSIDERABLY ALTERED DURING RESTORATION WORK IN THE MID-1990S, THE OLD GUINN HOUSE STILL RETAINS SOME OF ITS 1860 CHARACTERISTICS. THE INTERIOR, WHICH FEATURES A CIRCULAR STAIRCASE, WAS NOT EXTENSIVELY CHANGED.
Primary Style:	GREEK-REVIVAL
Original Use:	Single Family Dwelling
Plan:	Rectangular
Architecture Comments:	2 STORY FRAME, CIRCULAR STAIR. POPULAR LUMBER RESTORED MID-90S - PORCH DATED TO THAT DATE - INTERIOR RESTORED BUT NOT EXTENSIVELY ALTERED.

Figure 11. Tennessee Historic Commission Viewer map of the Helton property. The property is circled in red. Also shown above is property information from the Tennessee Historic Commission Viewer.

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

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

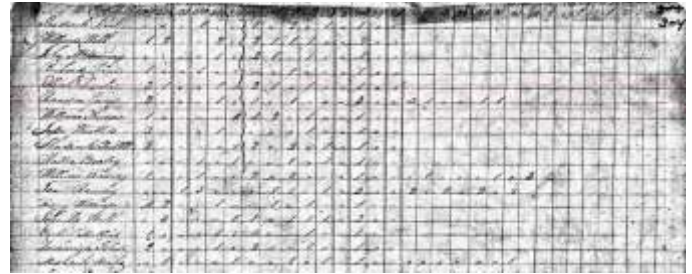


Figure 12. 1820 Census. Ransom Guin’s household is circled in red. In that year, nineteen people lived in the household. The Guin household consisted of 2 white males under the age of 10, 1 white male between the ages of 26 and 44, 1 white female under the age of 10, 1 white female between the ages of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

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

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

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

T.W. Wilson and Edward Wilson

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

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

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

Mary Peay and Romulus Gwynn (1899-1948)

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

Sources

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

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

14 "Gwyn Family Graveyard," <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gsr&GScid=2264017>, accessed January 26, 2016.

15 Census information for John D. Dale, 1900 United States Census, Census Place: Branford, Suwannee, Florida; Roll: 177; Page: 8A; Enumeration District: 0113; FHL microfilm: 1240177. Sheet 8.

16 Email from Kara Helton, October 19, 2015.

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

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

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

Clifford and Mildred McClain

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



Figure 13. Cabinet built by Clifford McClain.



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

Appendix B: DEEDS

1824 Ransom Guin Deed

Record of the State of Tennessee
1824
 The State of Tennessee,
 To all to whom these Presents shall come—
 KNOW YE, That RANSOM GUIN, of the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, do hereby certify that he has sold to the said RANSOM GUIN, of the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, a certain parcel of land, containing one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, situate in the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, and bounded as follows, to wit: Beginning at a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GUIN, and running thence north with the line of the said RANSOM GUIN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GUIN, and running thence east with the line of the said RANSOM GUIN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GUIN, and running thence south with the line of the said RANSOM GUIN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GUIN, and running thence west with the line of the said RANSOM GUIN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to the beginning.

Witness Whereof, William Carroll, Governor of the State of Tennessee, has hereunto set his hand and the Great Seal of the State, at Nashville, on the 28 day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-four, and of the Independence of the United States the 49.

BY THE GOVERNOR,
 William Carroll
 Secretary,
 Daniel Gooden

1856 Ransom Gwyn Deed

Record of the State of Tennessee
 The State of Tennessee,
 To all to whom these Presents shall come—
 KNOW YE, That RANSOM GWYN, of the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, do hereby certify that he has sold to the said RANSOM GWYN, of the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, a certain parcel of land, containing one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, situate in the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, and bounded as follows, to wit: Beginning at a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GWYN, and running thence north with the line of the said RANSOM GWYN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GWYN, and running thence east with the line of the said RANSOM GWYN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GWYN, and running thence south with the line of the said RANSOM GWYN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to a certain point of land, known as the corner of the land of the said RANSOM GWYN, and running thence west with the line of the said RANSOM GWYN, for one hundred and twenty acres, more or less, to the beginning.

Appendix C Census Records for Gwyn Family
1850 Census for Ransom Gwyn

Record of the State of Tennessee
 Schedule L—Free Inhabitants in the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, enumerated by me, on the 31st day of August, 1850.

NAME	SEX	AGE	COLORED	VALUATION	PROPERTY	FREE	SLAVE	WORTH	PROPERTY	FREE	SLAVE	WORTH
Ransom Gwyn	M	35										
Mary Gwyn	F	30										
John Gwyn	M	15										
William Gwyn	M	12										
Mary Gwyn	F	10										
John Gwyn	M	8										
Mary Gwyn	F	6										
John Gwyn	M	4										
Mary Gwyn	F	2										

1860 Slave Schedule for Ransom Gwyn

Record of the State of Tennessee
 Schedule L—Slave Inhabitants in the County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, enumerated by me, on the 1st day of August, 1860.

NAME	SEX	AGE	VALUATION
Ransom Gwyn	M	45	1000
Mary Gwyn	F	40	800
John Gwyn	M	18	400
William Gwyn	M	15	300
Mary Gwyn	F	12	200
John Gwyn	M	10	150
Mary Gwyn	F	8	100
John Gwyn	M	6	80
Mary Gwyn	F	4	60
John Gwyn	M	2	40
Mary Gwyn	F	1	30

1860 Agriculture Schedule for Ranso Gwyn

A detailed agricultural schedule from 1860 for Ranso Gwyn. The document is a large, multi-column table with handwritten entries. It lists various agricultural products, their quantities, and values. The columns include categories like 'Wheat', 'Corn', 'Cotton', 'Lard', 'Honey', 'Butter', 'Eggs', 'Poultry', 'Horses', 'Cattle', 'Swine', and 'Other'. The entries are organized in a grid format, with rows representing different items and columns representing different metrics.

1910 Census for Mary Peay and Romulus Gwyn
Appendix D

A page from the 1910 U.S. Census, Appendix D, showing the household schedule for Mary Peay and Romulus Gwyn. The table lists family members, their ages, sexes, and marital statuses. The columns include 'Name', 'Age', 'Sex', 'Marital Status', 'Occupation', 'Industry', 'Profession', 'Service', 'Religion', 'Color', 'Race', and 'Place of Birth'. The entries are handwritten and organized in a grid format.

1870 Census for Hugh Gwyn

A page from the 1870 U.S. Census for Hugh Gwyn. The document is a large, multi-column table with handwritten entries. It lists various agricultural products, their quantities, and values. The columns include categories like 'Wheat', 'Corn', 'Cotton', 'Lard', 'Honey', 'Butter', 'Eggs', 'Poultry', 'Horses', 'Cattle', 'Swine', and 'Other'. The entries are organized in a grid format, with rows representing different items and columns representing different metrics.

Will of Mary Peay

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Last Will of Mary Peay

I, Mary Peay of Harrison County Tennessee, do hereby make and publish this my last will and testament hereby revoking and making void all other wills heretofore made by me

First

I desire and direct that all my just debts and funeral expenses be paid by my executor hereinafter named as soon as practicable out of any money that I may owned and possessed of.

Second

I direct that my executor select a tombstone at my grave not exceeding \$20.00 and pay for same out of any money that may come into his hands.

Third

I do hereby bequeath unto my son, Romulus Gwyn and his wife Hattie Gwyn all of my personal property of every kind and character.

Fourth

I bequeath and devise unto my son Romulus Gwyn and wife Hattie Gwyn my home place that I now live on containing of about 50 acres during their natural life or lives and at the death of both the said Romulus Gwyn and wife Hattie Gwyn, I direct that my said farm of 50 acres be sold and the proceeds thereof be paid to my brother, Couch Evans and my sister Elizabeth Cummings in equal amounts or shares and should either or both of them be dead then I direct that said money be paid to their heirs.

Fifth

I have heretofore made full and complete

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provision for my beloved son Ransom Gwyn and do not want the heirs of my said beloved son Ransom Gwyn have any share or portion of my estate either real or personal, as they have already received more than their share.

I hereby appoint and appoint my friend Joe R. Bostick my Executor and trustee here from making any bond or taking the oath and there be he paid for his services as Executor.

Witness my hand this July 17th 1913.
Mary Gwyn

Signed and acknowledged by the testator, Mary Gwyn in my presence and we at her request and in the presence of each other hereunto named as names as attending witnesses
This July 17th 1913
John T. Hatt
B. M. Ramsey

Protested Sept. term 1913



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

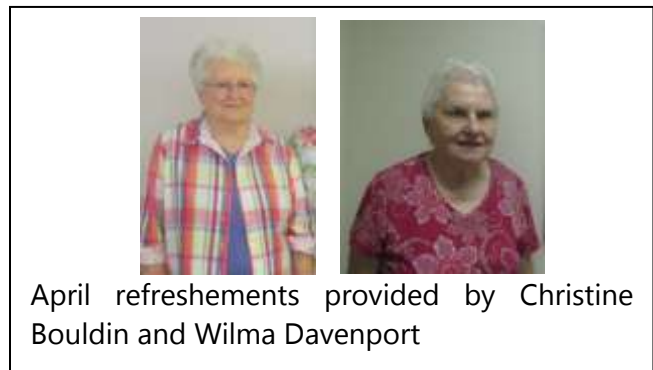


Clifford McClain House prior to remodeling

Appendix E Article about the Helton home published in April 1970



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



April refreshments provided by Christine Bouldin and Wilma Davenport

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

Touring Eureka Cemetery on Hwy 30. Burial place of the man who was Warren Co's oldest Civil War Veteran - Ransom Gwyn Martin.



WCGA On The Radio



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

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

Current Membership

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

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

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

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

WCGA is on Facebook!

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

**Give a piece of
 Warren County History**



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

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

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

Hebe, McMinnville, TN
 (Forth in a series)

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



WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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

Membership Renewal & Information Update Form



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

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

Print Name and Address as desired on Membership Record:

Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Please check one:

Dues for year _____ Individual Member, \$20 year ____

Other Donation \$ _____

Would you like to receive our monthly Newsletter by E-Mail? _____ yes

Our Bulletin is mailed two times each year

FAMILY NAMES I AM RESEARCHING:

We may be able to help you with your genealogy, so come by and visit our office. We are open on Friday from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. and we're located at the rear of the Warren County Administration Building, 201 Locust St. McMinnville, TN.

Thank you!

Civil War Soldiers of Warren County, Tennessee Questionnaire

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

Full name of Soldier: _____

His Company, Regiment, Branch, Rank and Army: _____

Date & Place of Birth: _____

Date & Place of Death and Burial: _____

Occupation before the War: _____

Amount of Schooling completed: _____

Approximate date of family's settlement in Warren County area: _____

Parents' names, with birth, death, marriage dates & places, and occupation, if known:

Father: Born _____ Died _____
Buried _____
Occupation: _____

Mother: Born _____ Died _____
Buried _____
Marriage: _____

Brothers & sisters of Soldier, with birth & death dates:

Name(s) of spouse(s), with birth and death dates and places, and date and place of each marriage:

Children's names, with birth and death dates:

Sources used – (circle appropriate ones): Official government records (from National Archives, Tennessee State Library & Archives, etc.), state pension papers, United Daughters of the Confederacy rolls and proof, Sons of Confederate Veterans records, county court records, regimental history, county history, census records, marriage records, Bible records, cemetery records, family traditions, Warren Co. Genealogical Association Bulletins', other, e.g._____.

Did this Soldier answer the 1914, 1915, or 1922 Tennessee Civil War Veterans Questionnaire? _____
.....

I attest that the foregoing material is accurate to the best of my knowledge, and I give my permission for its use by the Warren County Genealogical Association.

(Signed)_____

Date:_____

Please return this form as soon as possible to Warren County Genealogical Association, P.O. Box 411, McMinnville TN 37111-0411 or email as an attachment to rhillis@blomand.net or ctmingle@blomand.net
Thank you!