

Gibbs' Bend

The J. O. Gibbs Story

Jackie Layne Partin (2016)

I tell you folks, at my age there is quite limited, almost nil, short-term memory left in my head, but I keep remembering things from my long-term memory that were stored there certainly not by accident. Does the reader remember the inside vest pocket of Ben Cartwright of the Ponderosa where he easily and conveniently placed rolls of money, deeds, wanted posters, etc.? His vest always looked brand new; even after fourteen years of wear, it never frayed. Well, I have one of those unique pockets, a mental one. Being reared a Monteglean, stories from other parts of Grundy County and those counties adjacent to it must be told to me, or I must read about them somewhere or pull them out of my perpetually new, vest pocket. So it is with the **J. O. Gibbs** story.

As I recollect, the first time I heard of "**J. O.**" was when someone told me that if one goes to the Coalmont Elementary School with his/her back to the school entrance and visually follows the big TVA power line over to the other side of the gulch, then looking on toward the top of the ridge one can find the J. O. Gibbs field. That meant nothing to me until I later heard that the J. O. Gibbs family was **buried** on their own land. At the time "buried" meant a lot to me because volunteers with my scant guidance were looking for all burials in Grundy County in order to publish an all inclusive book of Grundy County cemeteries/burials. During these several years of effort, the name Virginia Vincent Gibbs of **Gibbs' Bend** was sent to the committee so that a search for his grave could be undertaken; the area of Clouse Hill was suggested as the place to look for the **bend**. His grave and those of other Gibbs relatives needed to be recorded in the book.

Gibbs' Bend was not known to anyone on the book committee, but lately (2016) in a conversation with Bailey Campbell who lives in the Bonnie Oak community, **Gibbs' Bend** was mentioned by him. I nearly fell out of my chair, so I stopped him in the middle of his story. He explained that he knows exactly where the bend is/was and described why it was so named. On the road, Wheeler Town Road, leading to **Parson Point**, there was a huge hollow, and in order to get around that hollow, a large bend in the trail or wagon road skirted the end of it. This was an area that formerly belonged to another county but became a portion of Grundy County upon its formation in **1844**. Several acres in that area fell into the Gibbsses' hands upon the emergence of progenitors, James and Hannah Gibbs. Some names on different deeds throughout the buying and selling were Jordan Sanders, G. W. Gibbs, James Gibbs, Virginia Vincent Gibbs, J. O. Gibbs, Jerry Nunley, and others in no particular order.

The senior James Gibbs was born ca. 1797 in North Carolina or possibly the new state of Tennessee since it gained statehood in 1796. Since we do not know his exact birthday, one day he may have been a North Carolina baby and the next day a Tennessee baby without even having his cradle moved. He married a lady named Hannah, born ca. 1803. Before Grundy County came into existence, James and Hannah lived in Warren County, TN in 1830 and 1840; they paid taxes there in 1838.



Above is the best understanding I have of where Gibbs Bend is/was located.

The clearing for the TVA power line is obvious in the map above – running east to west. East comes off the mountain and west goes down into Payne’s Cove. The name, Parson Point, in the Gibbse’s timeframe indicated the owners of the land on the side of the mountain and the point of descension onto Parson land. An old wagon road had been traveled for years by folks who needed to descend into Payne’s Cove from the Coalmont/Freemont area, or ascend to the plateau to teach school at Dick Sanders School or the Bonnie Oak School. Roy Mayes rode his old mare up and down this road/path every school day to teach the children at the Bonnie Oak School. Two other teachers known to walk or ride up the same trail to teach at the Dick Sanders School were Clercy and Mamie Hamby. I am not a map expert and certainly not a degrees °/poles expert as pertaining to deeds, but I think I am in the right area for **Gibbs Bend**.

Following is an important deed wherein the old James Gibbs home place in Grundy County is mentioned, *“to wit: on the head waters of Elk River at the head of Paynes Cove of Cumberland Mountain beginning at a large rock called the unmoveable rock containing 300 acres more or less, and is the same land conveyed by Jacob Sanders To G. W. Gibbs (George W. Gibbs—jackie), deed date _____, and recorded at Altamont, Tenn. In Book _____ Page_____; excepting and reserving from this conveyance one hundred acres of land known as the **James Gibbs old home place** and particularly described in a deed from Jacob Sanders to whom the 300 acre tract above described was granted by grant no. 8807 from the state of Tennessee to James Gibbs and recorded at Altamont, Tenn. And reference is here had to said deed for a complete description of the land reserved. The land hereby conveyed being known as the Whiffin tract of two hundred acres.”*

Another version of the deed pertaining to the same area is shown below. Above we have the land called the James Gibbs old home place and below it is called the G. W. Gibbs old home place. The important words in this version are **Gibbs bend!**

*On the North side of the head waters of Paynes Cove, on top of Cumberland Mountain in the Second Civil District of Grundy County, Tennessee, beginning at a rock called the unmovable rock at the top of the mountain where the old road leading from the G. C. Sanders' place to Jesse Parson's place on the side of the mountain, descends the mountain, and on the north side of said road, running... to the bluff of the mountain; thence with the bluff of the mountain to the point of beginning, containing 300 acres, more or less, and known as the **G. W. Gibbs old home place** in what is known as **Gibbs bend**, upon which tract of land the said G. W. Gibbs and family built and lived for many years.*

Without the book volume or page number, it is difficult to follow the 300 acres. Since I am looking for the proof of the existence of James and Hannah Gibbs house place in that area, I think these two versions are quite adequate for my purposes. A recent trip to Coffee County, TN Archives turned up no relevant deeds that may have preceded the forming of Grundy County in 1844, but it did allow me to be treated with lots of help and kindness while I searched. The important bit of information would be the hint that Gibbs land came down into 20th century Grundy County.

Hannah Gibbs gave birth in Warren County to several boys and girls: George W. Gibbs (ca. 1823), James Gibbs, Jr. (ca. 1825), Virginia Vincent Gibbs (ca. 1828), Louisa Gibbs (ca.1832), John Harrison Gibbs (ca. 1832), William T. Gibbs (ca. 1835), Mary “Polly” Gibbs (ca. 1837), and Nancy Gibbs (ca. 1838). The older Census records of **1830** and **1840** seem to allow for Hannah having at least two more children, a male and a female who may have died young. If one goes by Census records, ages usually change from one

decade to another. Often even dates on tombstones are wrong because someone in the younger generation who loved an ancestor well enough to buy and install a burial stone, did not himself/herself always know the true dates of birth and possibly death. So the information I write in a story may certainly be off a few years or even a few children. Hopefully what I do write will at least give clues to finding one's family heritage. Let's mention a few of these children as we go through this work.

George W. Gibbs stayed in Grundy County for a few years. Around **1845** he married or chose a helpmate. In **1846** she gave birth to Nancy Jane, and in **1849** she had a son, Isaac Coleman. I had no results in my searches for the family in the **1850** Census. It certainly would be helpful in finding out more about George's first marriage. His wife may have died at her son's birth but certainly before **1856** when George was with his second wife, Cynthia (Nunley) Gibbs, another Tennessee lady. Marriage licenses for either marriage evade me. However, there were many common law marriages and unregistered marriage licenses back in those days. After the birth of George and Cynthia's little Susan, they moved to Denton, Texas with the three children. Cynthia's second child was Martha Ann, the couple's first Texas born child. More children came along later and George supported them through farming.

In Denton County, George registered to vote on **August 16, 1867**. In **1870** Denton, TX, George W. and Cynthia were still farming with the house full of children. Even Nancy Jane who had married John Ewing still lived with her parents. In the **1880** Census record, George and Cynthia still lived in Denton and probably died there, but their burial places are not known to me.

While searching for George W.'s burial place, I found that his first child Nancy Jane (Gibbs) Ewing Roark was buried in the Rosemont Cemetery in Wichita Falls, TX. I went straight to her death certificate to see if her mother's name was given; it came as no surprise to me that her father's name was given as George, but the mother was not known.

James Gibbs, Jr. I assume, stayed in Grundy County through **1850** living at home with his parents and his remaining siblings. The **1860** Census has no mention of James or a wife although during the two decades between **1850** and **1870**, he married around **1854**, fathered daughters: Mary (b. ca. 1855), Sarah (b. ca. 1857), Dorothy Idilla (b. ca. 1859), and Luella (b. ca. 1865). Then his wife died. Before he left Grundy County around **1877**, he had married again to a much younger woman named Elizabeth. Their son Hugh D. Gibbs was born around **1878** in Osage, Carroll County, Arkansas. It was here around **1882** that Elizabeth gave birth to another son, John D. Gibbs. In the **1910** Census record,

when James' age was given as ninety-years-old, he was a widower and living in Dry Fork, Arkansas with his son John D. in Osage. James Gibbs, Jr. died on **March 3, 1916**.

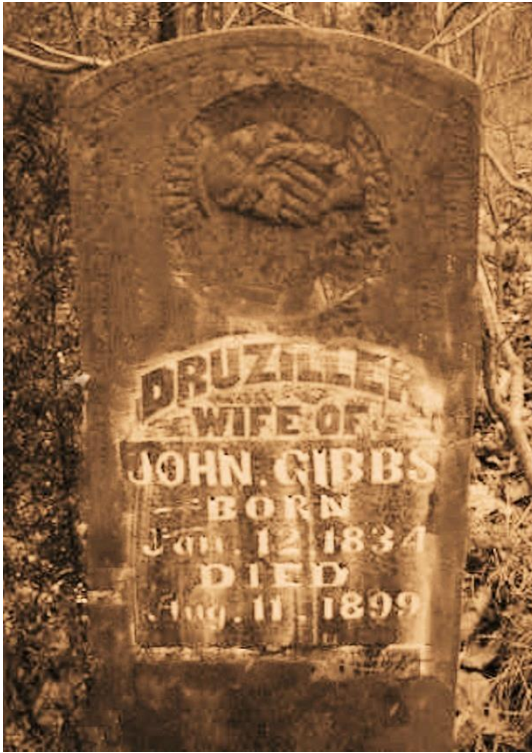
John Harrison Gibbs married Drucilla Armstrong in Warren County on **Nov. 20, 1852**. The couple moved to Osage, Carroll Co., Arkansas right after their son William S. was born around **1859**. Two other children, Martha F. and John H. were born in Tennessee before they moved away. Then the family grew larger until in **1880**, there were eight more children born: William S., Eliza, James, Granville Greeley, Rinda, Isaac Alexander, Mary, and Mellie Isabell. Drucilla died **Aug. 11, 1899**, in Delmar, Carroll Co., Arkansas and was buried in the Gibbs Cemetery. Her husband John H. Gibbs died **Dec. 18, 1905**, and was buried beside his wife. There are seven interments in the small cemetery including their son Granville Greeley Gibbs and his wife Janie. Four graves are Gibbises and three are former Warren County, Tennessee citizens, William Daniel Fultz and two of his brothers, Ephraim and James. They are sons of William F. and Susannah Fults who were living in Osage in **1860**. (Photos below courtesy of *Bobby and Carol Babin Estes via Find A Grave*)

JOHN HARRISON GIBBS

**SERG CO A HARRELL'S BN
AR CONFEDERATE STATES
ARMY**

JUL 27, 1829 – DEC. 18, 1905





DRUZILLER

WIFE OF JOHN GIBBS

BORN

Jan. 12, 1834

DIED

Aug. 11, 1899

Bee Benton Bell

with his wife,

Mellie Isabell (Gibbs) Bell;

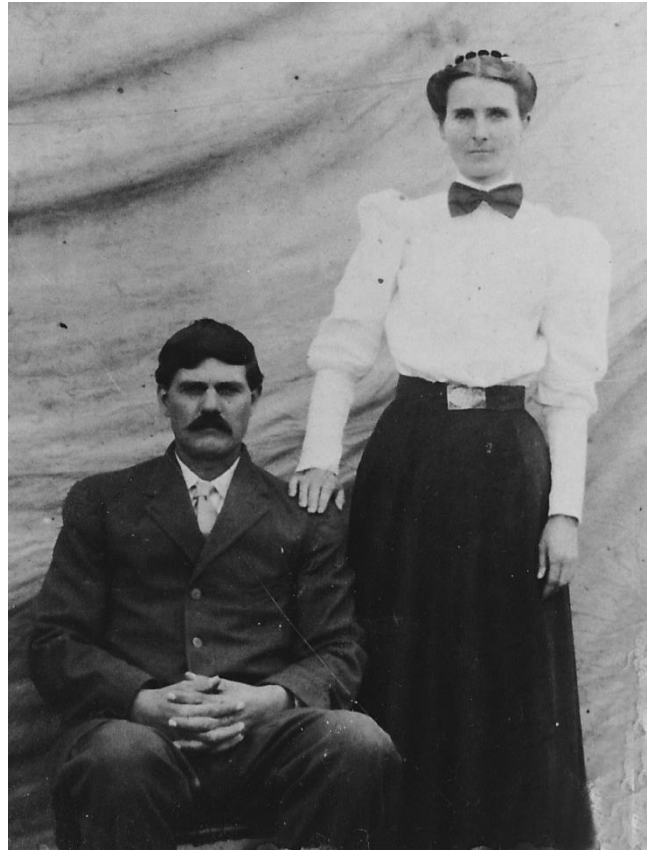
Mellie is one of

many

grandchildren of the elder James

and Hannah Gibbs of

Grundy Co., TN



William T. Gibbs, born ca. 1836, married Mary Ellen Martin on **Aug. 5, 1859**, in Grundy. Her father had already passed away before 1850 leaving her mother nine

children at home to rear. The young couple was still living in Grundy County in **1860**. Admittedly, this couple seemed to have dropped off the face of the earth, but that may be just a weakness on my part in research. So for now, we will leave them in happy marital bliss until we learn differently.

Louisiana "Louisa" (b. ca. 1831), **Mary "Polly"** (ca. 1837) and **Nancy** (1838) stayed in Grundy County. Even in death, they stayed put at Gibbs Bend with their parents. Maybe later in the story I can give a clue as to what happened to them.

On **Sept. 6, 1850**, **Virginia Vincent Gibbs** (25) was living alone in Grundy County working as a laborer. His future bride, eighteen-year-old Mary "Polly" Sanders, daughter of Jacob and Martha (Yates) Sanders, lived near Vincent. This made a link between Vincent and owning "land." He started young in acquiring land from Jacob Sanders who had years earlier received a large land grant. Jacob also sold to Vincent's brother George W. Gibbs. From the ages given of the children in the **1860** Census, it appears the young couple took up married life soon and the babies came rather quickly. In this Census their children were listed as Malinda Gibbs (1850), Carry A. Gibbs (1853), Nancy Gibbs (1857), and **James** Gibbs (1859). The given name "James" was a thought of endearment toward the elder James Gibbs and was used throughout the generations.

Virginia Vincent Gibbs volunteered to fight in the Confederate Army. On **December 9, 1861**, Pvt. Vincent Gibbs was mustered into Co. B, 44th Regiment, Tennessee Infantry, by Lieut. T. W. Hunt, at Camp Trousdale. His enlistment time was for twelve months. At the muster roll for the period of **Dec. 9, 1861** through **Jan. 12, 1862**, Vincent was absent without leave. According to the Park Services records, Vincent Gibbs died in the Battle of Shiloh, aka Battle of Pittsburgh Landing, which lasted from **April 6, 1862** through **April 7, 1862**. Company B of the 44th TN Infantry was certainly in that fight with heavy losses. The Confederate and Union dead for the most part were buried in mass graves where they fell in battle. However, a few years later, the Union dead were disinterred and buried in what is now known as the Shiloh National Cemetery. Since the Confederate soldiers were considered enemies of the United States, they were not allowed to be buried in the National Cemetery. With this information, one can assume that Virginia Vincent Gibbs died on **April 6 or 7, 1862** near Shiloh Church in Hardin County and was buried in one of the mass graves on the battlefield.

Ironically, Vincent was assessed forty-four cents on 200 acres of land on **June 7, 1862**, in the U. S. IRS Tax Assessment. This could have been done before the assessor got word that Vincent had been killed two months earlier in battle. Of course, his family would have still owed the money.

For the interest of researchers, I will touch on Vincent and Polly's first child **Malinda**. It is her descendants that I and most people of Grundy County know or remember in the Gibbs families. According to one of Malinda's great-granddaughters, Ruth (Sanders) Stiefel, Malinda had a short relationship, not marriage, with John **Hobbs** that resulted in the birth of her first child, Robert Lee **Gibbs**. Mrs. Stiefel's mother Hester (Gibbs) Sanders handed that story down to her children. Malinda did not give him the surname of his father, but instead, she gave him her maiden name. Robert Lee **Gibbs'** death certificate, wherein John Hobbs is given as his father, supports Mrs. Stiefel's information. Around **1888** Robert Lee married Arcena Meeks, daughter of Crip John and Polly (Cope) Meeks, and sister to my grandfather George Mack Meeks. Together Robert Lee and Arcena had two children, Nora Gibbs and Luke Grady Gibbs. Luke was a small baby when his mother died in **1893**. I don't know where she is buried, but my best guess would be near her parents in Payne's Cove Cemetery.



L to R: Fannie (Parsons) Gibbs; her stepson, Luke Grady Gibbs; husband, Robert Lee Gibbs; son Lois Gibbs; and her stepdaughter, Nora Gibbs

After the death of Robert Lee's first wife, he married Fannie Josephine Parsons, daughter of Thomas and Josie (Nunley) Parsons. Several children were born to Robert

and Fannie starting in the **1900** Census with son Lois Lindsay Gibbs. Fannie had taken on the responsibility of rearing stepdaughter Nora Gibbs and stepson Luke Grady Gibbs. I have heard so much “good” history on Luke Grady Gibbs that Fannie must have done a wonderful job in rearing her him. His descendants speak only of Fannie as their grandmother since Arcena died so young; they never knew her. Fannie and Robert Lee lived in the Sanders Crossing community in the area of the former Desmer Church homestead, currently the Rose family property. Previous owners to Robert Lee Gibbs were not Gibbises, so I looked elsewhere for **Gibbs’ Bend**.

On **April 21, 1924**, J. O. and Lucy Gibbs deeded 200 acres from the 300 acres of land that had stayed so long in the Gibbs family to Jerry Nunley; Hallie Gibbs witnessed the sale for her parents. Unbelievably, J. O. sold 200 acres for \$20. 100 acres of the 300 were kept down through the years because the original old James and Hannah Gibbs home place was on that part of the land. From my years of researching families in our area, one of the last pieces of property to be sold outside of the family usually is the section that holds the old home place and a few family graves. In this case, **Gibbs’ Bend** would have been the last physical evidence that James and Hannah Gibbs ever lived at District 6/7 Grundy County.

Using the Census records from **1850** up to **1940**, the last online published Census, I was able to walk right along with the Gibbs family in Grundy County as it moved toward and into the 20th Century. At times, obstacles and surprises got in my way, but forward I went. None of the cemetery volunteers or my friends admitted that they ever told me the story I am about to write. Dear Reader, I don’t just make up this “*stuff*”, (as one friend called my writings), or “*junk*”, (as one not so friendly called my stories), and absolutely no intervention was made in the dark of the night.

Two Versions of the J. O. Gibbs Mystery

Version One: Years ago, the J. O. Gibbs’ family made lemonade in a metal pan. They drank, and some of the lemonade was left over; it remained overnight in the metal pan. The next morning, they drank what was left. Who all drank and how much each drank is unknown, but the story in my vest pocket tells me that the whole family drank the lemonade then died; when the bodies were found, they were buried at the Gibbs home place. Lemons in the wilderness, enough to make that much lemonade and some left over for the next day-- none of this fits my knowledge of what it was like to be poor and living in the wilderness in the **1870s-1880s** in Grundy County. Even in my youth, **1942-1960**, there was hardly a time when anything palatable was left after a meal, so I have doubts that in that day, in that wilderness, there would have been anything left to

finish off the next day, especially a luxury drink like lemonade. The thing I don't doubt is that something tragic happened to James and Hannah's family.

Version Two: Someone "had it in for" the Gibbs family, and the well that was used for drinking water was poisoned. This sort of vengeance did happen at times; murdered victims were dropped into wells, and sometimes, one would accidentally fall into the well and not be found in time to be saved. Combining the two stories we might come up with a single situation that the water was poisoned, the Gibbises did not know it, and they made their lemonade with bad water, or to make it simpler, they drank poisoned water. Again, unless I could find an unusual disappearance of a Grundy County, TN, Gibbs family, my story would be flimsy.

My first goal was to set out searching until I found *a* **J. O. Gibbs**. This would make me feel better about sharing my story. If I had no main character, then I probably had no story.

1850: The Gibbs children still at home were James (b. 1825); Louisiana, aka Louisa (b. 1831); John (b. 1833); William J. (b. 1836); Polly, aka Mary (b. 1838); and Nancy (b. 1839). Mom and Dad, James (53) and Hannah (48), were still brooding over their growing children. Two sons, George W. and Virginia Vincent, had left home by **1850**.

1860: James (62) and Hannah (57) had their family household number reduced to just daughters in the house. All of their sons had either married and moved on or passed away. But Louisiana (29), Nancy (23), and Mary/Polly (20) just seemed to be content to remain unmarried and live on in the wilderness with their parents. They had some good neighbors in the George Carroll "Uncle Dick" Sanders and the Jesse Parsons family, a very large family. Now I can relate to these two names since Dick Sanders was a gg-grandfather of my husband. And I connect Jesse Parsons to "Parsons Graveyard" and Parsons Point that overlooks Payne's Cove although Jesse is not buried there. Neighbors in those days were sometimes miles away as were most of the families that lived out the Wheeler Town Rd.

1870: Something changed on **September 18, 1867**, when Nancy Gibbs gave birth to a little boy whom she named **James Gibbs**. The family then looked like this: James Gibbs (72), Hannah (67), Louisiana (40), Nancy (33), Polly (30), and of course, let's not forget the small three-year-old boy, James, son of Nancy, although not listed as her son in any Census record. The little fellow kept his mom's maiden name, but Nancy did give him a middle name which I recognized immediately as fittingly being my "**J. O.**" James Odom Gibbs was his full name; he became known as **J. O. Gibbs** all around Wheeler

Town, Bonnie Oak, Coalmont, Tracy City and Palmer. I had found my main character in the right family.

Now I needed to find the family with an unexplained reduction in the number of people in the household.

1880: Grandma Hannah (77) and young James (12—grandson) were all **alone**. Where did everyone go? A reduction of four from the household between 1871 and 1880—wouldn't that support my story? Did James' mom Nancy and her two old maid sisters all find husbands between **August 9, 1870** and **June 7, 1880**? Doubtful!!! What happened to Grandpa James? Was elderly Grandma Hannah the only one who wanted to help the young boy? Let me hasten to say that this is the only Gibbs family that I could find in Grundy County in the right area that fit the need for the loss of several family members in the same period of time. Whether they died by drinking tainted lemonade or poisoned drinking water doesn't matter; their deaths alone lend credence to the whole Gibbs family mystery.

The cemetery book committee did not find the graves, but if we had known where Gibbs' Bend was, we may have found fieldstones for James, his three daughters, and possibly other family members. A friend of my husband remembers the fieldstone markers from his youth, but he doubts that any evidence would be available now because of four-wheeler trails, mining, logging, construction of large TVA power lines, and general, everyday destruction of property.

The story handed down in the Campbell family is that Hannah and her young grandson came to the Bonnie Oak community to visit. The weather was cold, so they stayed overnight. When they returned home, they found their loved ones dead. Understandably, after the tragedy, Grandma Hannah brought her young grandson out of the wilderness to the Bonnie Oak vicinity to be closer to other people. J. O. could attend school at the Bonnie Oak School. According to the locals, the hollow behind the Meeks/Roberts burials on the corner across from the Sweeton Hill Methodist Church is known as the "**J. O. Hollow**". Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Howell, who will be 99 years of age on Oct. 16, 1916, concurs with the locals. (*Note: Sadly Mrs. Howell passed away not long after I spoke with her about J. O. Hollow. She died on May 16, 2016.*) The hollow is where Hannah and J. O. settled leaving behind the tragedy of what happened at the old house place. Living so near the Parsons Graveyard, (the earliest section of what is now known as the Bonnie Oak Cemetery), when Hannah died, it was there that she was probably buried. However, she may have asked to be carried back "home" and placed with her husband and daughters.

James Odom Gibbs grew up having only attended part of the first grade. On **September 20, 1889**, he married Lucy Bell Argo, daughter of John and Sarah "Sallie" (Hobbs) Argo. On **June 24, 1890**, they had one child, a baby girl, Hallie Emma Gibbs. J. O. was able to care for his wife and rear their daughter on meager coalminer pay/scrip, every penny of it earned by back-breaking efforts. At some point a coalmining mishap caused J. O. to step on a large nail that caused his foot to become so enlarged that he could never again wear a shoe. He walked on it by keeping it wrapped in layers and layers of cloth. He had to work, so he asked men to help him push his coal car out of the mines. Bailey Campbell's father Celo Campbell worked with J. O. in the mines. Celo commented to his family that J. O. never missed a day of work.

Lucy (Argo) Gibbs died in **1931**. She was buried at the Hobbs Hill Cemetery amongst many of her Argo relatives.

J. O.'s death certificate gives his mother's name as Nancy Gibbs, but it lists no father. This probably means that J. O. was not a Gibbs, and Hallie being his only offspring, for genealogical purposes, it really doesn't matter who his father was. He died a widower in Palmer, TN on **March 23, 1950**, at the age of 82, and daughter Hallie Gibbs, unmarried, was the informant on the death certificate. His body was placed to rest beside his wife; there is one unmarked concrete block to the side of J. O and Lucy. His obituary reads: **James Gibbs, 83, dies at Palmer:** *"James O. Gibbs, 83, died Thursday afternoon, March 23, at his home in Palmer. Mr. Gibbs is survived by one daughter, Miss Hallie Gibbs. Funeral services were held Sunday morning at ten o'clock at the Hobbs Hill Methodist Church with Brother John Scissom officiating."* I find it strange that his parents were not mentioned or more family history given. Maybe Hallie knew nothing of her Gibbs ancestry beyond her father.



**Lucy B. Gibbs
(1867-1931)**

**J. O. Gibbs
(1867-?)**

**The absence of
a death date on
the stone
indicates that
J. O. bought
the stone, and
Hallie never
put his death
date (1950) on
it.**

A fellow researcher, David Patton, was too young to remember J. O., but he does remember *Aunt Hallie Gibbs*. His memories are of her snow-white hair and the fact that she lived in poverty, often moving around Palmer, living in little rooms behind unrelated families' homes. Mrs. Elizabeth Howell remembered seeing Hallie, a heavy woman, walk the roads around Coalmont. She never married, and David believes she lived lastly on the Wideman family homestead in a small house in the back.

Hallie Gibbs loved cats. Twenty or thirty usually pushed their way up to the feeding bowls while Hallie looked on with contentment. One day she rode a bus from Palmer to Altamont to grocery shop. The friend who went with her noticed that she had a habit of testing one grape or one strawberry and on and on. Whether she felt that was a fair way to shop was not known. As for her death and burial, David thinks maybe she died in the **1960s** and was buried in the Palmer Cemetery.

When the last member of a family passes away, there usually is a small treasure box, somewhat like a shoebox, left on a shelf or under the bed. Hallie Gibbs probably had one that may have had old family photos or notes on the tragedy in her paternal great-grandparents' family. Anyone with knowledge of James Odom Gibbs, please share with me. I never like to leave a story without an ending. And, if possible, the graves need to be found and listed for future generations.

Lastly, my mystery story seems to have merit. Something happened to this family between **1870** and **1880**. Because of extensive power line work in that area of Wheeler Town Rd. and Parson Point, it is doubtful that any of the mentioned Gibbsses' graves will still be identifiable with field stone markers and the recognizable rows in which families buried their loved ones. Probable burials on the family compound would have been the elder James Gibbs and his wife, Hannah, and daughters, Louisana, Nancy, Polly, and maybe others relatives.

While researching for this little story, I noticed that there was no actual history about James and Hannah Gibbs toward the end of their lives; there was only silence or perhaps confusion. Even local Gibbs descendants are in the dark about their ancestry. Maybe my little mystery story will help them understand why they could not find some of the answers in order to fill in gaps in their family history.

The Gibbsses were difficult to find from one Census record to another. My answer to these problems usually goes something like this: "They lived so far up a long rocky, muddy path or on the side of a mountain that the Census taker just skipped a few families hoping no one would notice." If guilty, much to their chagrin, I notice, I notice a lot!

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