

White Mineral Springs and Hotel

By Jackie Layne Partin

(2005) – revised (2014)

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Years ago I saw an old map with the words “White Springs” written beside a tiny black dot. By studying the whole map, I got the general idea of where the dot was stationed, but I didn’t know the exact spot, nor did I know the significance of the name “White.” Was it the name of a tiny community, or the name of actual springs, as in water from the earth? When I became seriously interested in Grundy County’s history, I began to pay a lot more attention to tiny black dots on old, yellowed maps.

About a mile from our house off Partins’ Farm Road, or Pigeon Springs Rd., as it is now (2014) known, lie the remains of members of the White family, buried for the ages. The family cemetery is surrounded with a poured concrete fence about four feet high. Inside the fence are the graves of eight people from one family, the William and Katherine (Smith) White family. For approximately one hundred fifty years, travelers have walked, ridden horses or wagons, or driven vehicles passed this cemetery, not knowing who was interred therein or from whence they came. I reckon it is an inherent trait to want to know things, ask questions, but the desire to know everything, everyone, is mind-boggling—I know the desire.

So years ago, I climbed over the concrete stile and stepped into the world of the Whites. As though they would audibly answer me, I asked, “Who are you? Where did you come from?” And they did answer, giving up their lives as though they had kept diaries. They spoke to me in ways that spirits are assigned to speak to the world left behind—etchings on stones, documents—deeds, marriage licenses, birth and death certificates, newspaper articles, acquaintances, photos, and natural materials left behind—thriving lilies, vinca vines with their tiny little blue flowers, gnarled apple trees, and the occasional daffodil or yucca plant. Then there are the unnatural remains—cast iron pieces, cornerstones of old houses, cisterns, locust logs that refuse to give up the ghost—strewn throughout the land. All are gifts from the past tied up with wild grapevines and decorated with passion fruit blossoms. The gravestones placed at the head and feet of each individual drove me to find answers. The first name of each is engraved on the headstone and footer. The only dates on the stones are on the one marked “Mother”, the taller one in the center for the father, and one of the daughters’ stones.



White Cemetery on Pigeon Springs Road in Grundy Co., TN

Following is a list of the stones and other available markings not in italics:

- 1) Ellen White – (#'s 1, 2, 3, and 4 – *died between 1860-1870*)
- 2) Charlie White
- 3) Alice White
- 4) Annie White
- 5) Katherine White – Mother – (1824 – 1908)
- 6) William White – (Jan. 8, 1817 – Feb. 18, 1867)
- 7) Armenia White – (*died between 1870-1880*)
- 8) Fannie White – (1861 – 1911)



**White Family
Cemetery
after a cleaning
by the
Lanny Bell Family**

My research took me first to the Dec. 6, **1850** Census records. In Russell County, Virginia, in the town of Lebanon lived William White (33), born in Ohio, with his wife Katherine (26), born in Pennsylvania, and their three children Armenia (6), born ca. **1844** in Ohio; Franklin M. (2), born **1848** in Washington County, Virginia; and Lydia (possibly Lybia) "Libby" (1), born **1850** in Washington County, Virginia. While still in Virginia, a son Charles was born ca. **1852**, and a daughter Ellen was born ca. **1855**. William cared for his family working as a carpenter.

Around **1856** the family moved to Hawkins County, Tennessee. They received their mail through the Rogersville Post Office. Another daughter Alice G. was born around **1858**. Then in **1860** their son William Smith White was born. Another daughter Fannie was born a year later in **1861**. Sometime after her birth in Hawkins County and before the death of the patriarch of the family on Feb. 18, **1867**, the family moved to Grundy Co., TN. and possibly leased land that was later bought for a homestead. Since it was Katherine who actually made the deal to buy 300 acres of land in June **1868** from Burrell and Barbary Watley, one begins to realize that William, the elder, did not live long after his arrival, maybe four or five years, and was buried on land that his family did not own at the time. Such was also true of the burials of some of his children. The Civil War was going on during some of these years, so it is possible that the White family had decided to buy the acreage, but the deed was not drawn up until after the war causing it to also be after the deaths of several members of the family. The acreage lay near the Wooten and Summers' land. According to an old deed, one acre was reserved from any sale for the family cemetery that already was established, and its position was near the center of the 300 acres on the side of the Tracy City and Battle Creek public road now known as Pigeon Springs Rd.

Young Ellen, Charlie and Alice also died in the 1860's, so we cannot determine who was the first family member buried in the plot. They all possibly died before Katherine could collect herself enough to get a deed from the Watleys for the land. Ellen, then Charlie, then Alice are the way the stones are placed, so we might assume that the children died in that order. Their deaths could have been before their father's in 1867 or between 1867 and the July 30, **1870**, Census where they are no longer alive. The stone for "Annie" does not fit our list of children from Census records, so it is quite probable that Katherine had a child after she got to Grundy County. Since Fannie was born in 1861, one might wonder if little Annie was born a year or two later. Katherine still would have been of child-bearing age, early forties, at the time of her husband's death. She had given birth to ten children in all, so we may assume that one other child was buried somewhere along the journey to Grundy Co., TN.

During the **1870** Census survey, Katherine, as she was called, stilled mourned the loss of her husband and children. She found herself in a strange land, wilderness all around, but thankfully, she had a few scattered neighbors of good reputation. The Thomas Benton Wooten family, the Ephraim Madison Haynes family, and the William and Ephraim Summers families all lived within a good walk from her home. Dear Reader, a good walk may have been two or five miles, but that was just a little distance to people in olden days. Katherine's neighbors were all linked together one way or another. Thomas B. Wooten's father, Benjamin, sold the land that is now known as Tracy City, TN to the Sewanee Coal Company. Ephraim M. Haynes married Thomas' sister Clarissa Eveline "Clercy" Wooten, and one of Ephraim M. Summers' daughters, Martha Naomi, married Thomas' only son Benjamin Anderson "Bennie" Wooten. And to make these relationships more interesting, years later, one of Bennie's sons, Nelson, married Mamie Barlew, a granddaughter of Katherine White. We will read more about Katherine later.

Let's get to know **Libby White** and her family now. On August 8, **1870** in Grundy County, TN, Libby White and William "Billy" Barlew, applied for a marriage license. William Barlew probably was the son of William and Phoebe Barlew. If so, one of his older brothers was Zebedee Barlew. (*This seems to be so because of photos of Zebedee's family that are in the hands of William Barlew's descendants.*) Soon after marriage little Barlew babies were added to their lives over the years. Their children were Caroline "Kate" (Henry Franklin Parmley), Charles "Charlie Bill" (Nancy Elizabeth White), Henry F., Samuel Jones, Elmer Key (Ethel Nunley), Fannie C. "Ann" (John McDonald), William H. and Mamie (Nelson Wooten).

William had served in the 4th McClemore Calvary in the Confederate Army, and later Libby applied for a military pension. He also worked as a boss at the coke ovens in Tracy City and later as a pump man at the coal mines. Between 1918, when he was listed as the next of kin for his two sons Elmer and Sam on their WWI draft registration cards, and the 1920 Census record, William Barlew died and was buried in the Barlew plot in the Tracy City Cemetery. I want to say here that being a coke oven boss was a dirty, hardening-of-the-heart kind of job. If William was a kind, gentle man when he took the job, without doubt, he did not come out of the job wearing wings. Of course, he had time to grow them back before his death.



Libby (White) Barlew and her daughters, Caroline "Kate" and Mamie; photo made in Tracy City probably at the Jones Studio



Maggie and Zebedee Barlew, children of Zebedee and Ella Barlew; a niece and nephew of William "Billy" Barlew

On July 16, 1925 Libby (White) Barlew died being a widow; she died of "bowel consumption" with which she had suffered eleven months, and was buried beside her husband. Also buried in that plot with markers are Elmer (1882-1952), Henry (1877-

1906—*Ike Woodward's papers give Henry Barlew's death on Sept. 1903.*), Mamie (1892-1994), Sam (1880-1948) and Bill (1889-aft. 1920). This leaves Caroline A. "Kate," Charlie Bill and Fannie C. "Ann" Barlew unaccounted for at the plot. According to research done by Lillian Strode, each married, lived and died outside of Tennessee.



Libby (White) Barlew (1850-1925)

Mrs. Wm. Barlew
 Mrs. Libbie White Barlew died at her home near Tracy City July 16th, after an illness of several weeks. The deceased was a life time resident of Tracy City and was held in high esteem by all who knew her. She was 75 years of age at the time of her death. She is survived by the following children:— Elmer, Sam, Charlie Bill, and Mrs. Nelse Wooten.

Libby (White) Barlew's Obituary



Brothers: Samuel Jones and Charlie Bill Barlew in their older years



Caroline "Kate" (Barlew) Parmley when she was a child with her doll



Left & Rt: John & Fannie "Ann" (Barlew) McDonald

As late as 1930 some of the Barlew children and grandchildren were still in Tracy City. While looking through some old jail arrest records, it was obvious that a couple of the Barlew boys, and I might add some of my own close relatives, were warming the jailhouse cots from time to time. Most arrests in those days were for public drunkenness or possession of whiskey. The "Blue" brothers, as Elmer, Sam and Will Barlew were called locally, were notorious operators at the dangerous section of Tracy City known as "Smokey Row." That area of town lay across the railroad tracks in front of Henry Flury's store. The property was later owned by a local pharmacist, Don Moore, who is now deceased (2014).

On February 19, 1910, one newspaper printed this article: *"Old man Jack Thompson was killed last night, Feb. 18th, by Will Barlew, the son of old man Billy Barlew. He also shot and wounded John Smith. This took place on Smokey Row and in Barlew's place of business. Mean whiskey, we suppose, was the cause of the tragedy. As long as the people of Tracy City allow the law set at defiance and such places operated, killings will occur. I hope our officers and people will get busy and the company should fire every man fooling with intoxicating liquors and visiting such resorts. The company can do more to suppress such*

lawlessness than the courts can, and for the sake of good morals set out to discharge every man violating the law."

The next day another account added: *"Smoky Row has added another murder to its long list of tragedies. This time old man Jack Thompson was the victim, being shot three times, once in the bowel and twice in the mouth. The shooting was done by Will Barlew, a boy operating a pool room...."* Young Will Barlew would have been around twenty-one years of age when he did the murder. Again in another article in March 1911, one may read some good news, *"Smoky Row has been abandoned at last. We have no beerette saloons now that I know of and I hope we never will have again. Intoxicating liquors have cost Tracy City several lives."* And from another article printed in 1911, one can imagine that the Barlew boys were apparently, as Hank Williams, Jr. sang, *"Whiskey Bent and Hell Bound."* *"The people of Shadrick Hill have been very much chagrined over an attempt to erect and put up a beerette stand on the Marion County side of the line. The evening before the stuff was brought, the house was burned to ashes by someone, but this did not seem to deter the Barlew boys from carrying out their purpose, so Saturday they appeared on the Hill with two barrels of the stuff and proceeded to do business, and sold the two barrels on the Marion County side...."* The Marion County line at Shadrick Hill was just above the Grundy County Lakes, just a good climb from the town of Tracy City. The article declared that the good people of Shadrick Hill did not buy the liquor, but the Tracy City gang came in numbers to partake.



Elmer Key Barlew (1882-1952) – son of Libby and William Barlew



Charlie Bill Barlew (1874-1946) – son of Libby and William Barlew

William and Libby's daughter Mamie married one of Benjamin Anderson and Martha (Summers) Wooten's sons, Nelson M. They had two children together, Libby and Nelson, Jr. They lived in Chattanooga. However, Cindy Nunley, a Barlew descendant, told me that she remembered her gg-aunt Mamie living next door to her and her grandmother Myrtle (Barlew) Joyce behind Malcolm Baker's Store in Tracy City. She doesn't remember a man in the house with Mamie, but in 1910 Nelson, Mamie and their three-year-old daughter Libby were living in Tracy City on 2nd Street. In **1920**, Nelson, Mamie, Libby and Nelson, Jr. (Bud) were living in Chattanooga. Libby Wooten went on to become a nurse, and Bud died without ever marrying. In **1980**, Nelson M. died and was buried near two of his brothers, Joseph Benjamin and James Francis Wooten, in Monteagle Cemetery in Marion County. Many of his immediate Wooten family members are also buried at the Monteagle Cemetery. Mamie died in **1994** and was buried in the Barlew family plot in Tracy City. This will account for Cindy Nunley not seeing a man in the house with Mamie since Nelson died fourteen years before his wife.

Elmer and Ethel Barlew's children are the ones who seemed to have stayed in and around Grundy County. Elmer died at his daughter Mable's home on March 6, **1952**. On May 25, **1938**, Mable Barlew had married Clarence Alfred Dykes, son of Andy and Hallie Dykes, and they had one daughter Helen. Alfred lived a short and troubled life as seen from the following: *"Cumberland Outlook, Oct. 21, 1932 – BOY FIRES FATAL SHOT TO PROTECT HIS MOTHER – Clint Dykes meets death at the hands of his 15 year old nephew – Tracy City, Tenn, Oct. 12 – Clint Dykes, age 30, shot and almost instantly killed last Thursday by his nephew, Alfred Dykes, age 15. He was buried at the Orange Hill cemetery, Friday; the Rev. A. C. Adamz conducted the funeral services. E. C. Norvell Co. were the funeral directors in charge. The killing took place in Marion county about 4 miles from Tracy City, and was said to be the result of much trouble during the past between Clint Dykes and his brother, Andy Dykes and Andy's family. At the time of the shooting Clint and Mrs. Andy Dykes were involved in a dispute, and Alfred Dykes, who is a son of Mrs. Andy Dykes, fired in her defense. Alfred Dykes is a boy only about 15 years old. His preliminary hearing was waived and his bond fixed at \$1,500. In default of his bond he is confined in the Marion county jail, Jasper, at the present time."*

Clarence Alfred Dykes was later murdered, but that is another story for another age. He is buried at the Orange Hill Cemetery in an unmarked grave. After Alfred's death, Mable married Virgil Meeks on Aug. 28, 1941. Mable's sister, Barbara Barlew, married Joe Seagroves. Another sister Myrtle Barlew married Walter "Curly" Joyce who came to this area with the Civil Conservation Corp to work. Yet another sister,

Jessie Barlew married John Throneberry who was some years older than she. John had been married before and had children, thus the age difference. John hauled the garbage for the town of Tracy City and at times dumped it in a hollow that lay near the Mt. Calvary Apostolic Church, Bill Wimpy home place and the Church families' homes. After Mr. Throneberry's death, Jessie married Wes "Ves" Headrick who was accidentally killed while walking on Hwy 56 near Malcolm Baker's Store.

The only son of Elmer and Ethel was Clarence "Little Boy" Barlew. In the Plainview Cemetery in Tracy City there is a lone grave that of Clarence E. Barlew born Mar. 8, 1923, and died Apr. 5, 1972; TN, PFC, US ARMY WWII. I assume this is the grave of "Little Boy" Barlew who is spoken of by Myrtle (Barlew) Joyce in her conversation with Lillian Strode around 1993. According to Lillian's notes given to her by Clarence's sister and notes taken by me from the local older ones, Mable tired of her brother's mistreatment of a grandmother and killed him one night. Her sister Myrtle told that she shot him in the head twice while he was asleep, and in her later years she was sorry that she had done this. Mable died in 1990.

Although Elmer Key Barlew was listed as a widower in the 1930 Census, he and his wife Ethel divorced some time before. She remarried.

Sam Jones Barlew, Elmer's brother, "...never married. In his young years he was a coal miner and ran a beerette in Tracy City. He was employed by the state at the time of his death. The beerette was located on Smokey Row present site (1993) of Don's Drug Store. The beerette was robbed in October 1910 according to the historical newspaper of Grundy Co. Sam also had problems with the law. He cut a man named Jim Levan in March 1909. On July 3, 1947 city marshal Ike Sartain, Jr. arrested Sam for drunkenness. Sam was in the back seat of the police car when he reached in front and cut Sartain's throat. Sartain survived the injury but just six months later on January 15, 1948, Sam was beaten to death by unknown assailants. John Throneberry offered a \$500.00 reward for conviction of his murderer, however, no one was ever charged in the crime. Surviving members of the coroner's jury (1993) are Paul Gibbs, Manchester, David Griswold, Monk, and Dr. P. S. Adams, Chattanooga." (transcribed from the notes of Lillian N. Strode).



Here lie William “Billy” Barlew, his wife Libby (White) Barlew, their sons Elmer, Bill, Sam and Henry and their daughter, Mamie in the Tracy City Cemetery

In 1910, William W. Barlew was living with his brother Charles Barlew in Morris, Jefferson County, Alabama. They were both working in the coalmines. By 1920, William was still unmarried and living with his mother Libby in Tracy City. His father had died maybe a year earlier, so this may have brought him back home to stay. Since there is no date on his little stone, we have only to say that he died after 1920.

One of my favorite people, Mrs. Norma (Sitz) Stoker, shared stories with me. Every minute I spent with her over the few years before she passed away, I asked questions, any questions that might help me know more about Grundy County’s history. For this story concerning the Barlew men, I asked her if she got to know Mr. William Smith White, their uncle, after he moved out her way in the 1920s in the area of Hwy 399. Of course, she knew the Whites and had a story to tell me about the Barlew men. When Mr. William Smith Barlew died in 1942, Sam and Elmer Barlew got an arrangement of flowers somewhere in Tracy City; then they started the long walk to the Fall Creek Cemetery at Gruetli/Laager to attend the burial of their uncle. Everyone was astonished that these two characters had a tender spot in their hearts having put forth the effort to send a loved one on his way with a special gathering of flowers. Norma told this story as though she were looking out into the distance watching the old men slowly make their way to the cemetery. There’s a little good in all of us, but sometimes one really has to look hard for it.

**Elmer Barlew with his brother,
Charlie Bill Barlew**



Let's rejoin Katherine (Smith) White. In 1880 in Tracy City, Katherine White was still living near Thomas Benton Wooten. Noticeably missing was her daughter Armenia who died between 1870 and 1880. She was buried at the family cemetery beside her father but to his right. The other children were buried to his left. Living next door to Katherine was her son, Franklin C. M. White, a carpenter, and his wife Clarissa "Clara" A. (Law) White. In some records Clara is called "Dade". Whether it was a nickname or was actually part of her full name is not known at this time. Clara's brother, John Law, his wife, Annie, and their son Alfred, Jr. were living next door to her. Ten years earlier nineteen-year-old Clara was living in Tracy City with John and Amelia Kelly and children. Amelia had been born in Pennsylvania as was Katherine (Smith) White, so it was likely that the two families knew each other. Some of the Law families lived off the mountain in Marion County. They too may have been instrumental in leading the Whites to Tennessee. And of course, Tracy City has a Law/Griswold Cemetery within its borders.

Between the 1880 and 1900 Grundy County Census records, there is silence on families unless one searches hard enough and finds little tidbits. In 1883 we know that

Franklin M. C. White had already built a home on fifty acres of land in Tracy City, and his mother was involved in the project. In **1887**, Franklin bought land from Ed Von Bergen and sold it to William Graff. It appears that Katherine and sons Franklin and William Smith inserted themselves into the real estate and mercantile businesses, particularly in Tracy City.

In **1887** Katherine bought her own piece of land from the Tennessee Coal, Iron and RR Co. in Tracy City. The land cornered at Oak St. and Railroad Ave. So she was right in the middle of society when she moved to that area. Her deed called for all of Lot 500 which ran parallel to Oak St. between Colyar and Railroad Ave. In **1898**, she sold a small section off the back to J. P. Gilliam, a onetime manager of the coal company store. Other owners of the section of Lot 500 that Katherine did not sell off were Fannie White, William S. White, A. M. Shook, E. L. Hampton, John and Louise Baggenstoss, Fred Baggenstoss and Gary Day.

Katherine fell ill around **1891** and her daughter Fannie, who never married, was her constant companion and caregiver. On July 24, **1899**, Katherine sold her home in Tracy City to her daughter Fannie for five dollars: *“For and in consideration of sum of five dollars paid and to be paid by Fanny White as follows \$5.00 in cash the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged and for services rendered as nurse and care taking of me during my ill health for the last eight years: service that cannot be estimated in dollars and cents...”*

Maybe because of age or possibly opportunities, Thomas Benton Wooten sold twenty-five acres of his approximately two hundred acres of land out Pigeon Springs Rd. to his son Benjamin Anderson “Bennie” Wooten in **1888** and moved his wife Susannah “Susan Ann” to town on 7th St., two doors east of the Tracy City Methodist Episcopal Church-South and just a neighborly walk to visit their old friend Katherine White. Later in **1908**, after the death of Thomas Benton Wooten, his wife, Susan, and daughters, Sallie, Nora and Anna sold the rest of the 200 acres to I. N. Burnett.

In the **1900** Census record Katherine declared that her parents were born in Germany. Here we also have a record of ten children being born to Katherine, but only four were still alive in this Census year. William Smith was still unmarried and living at home with her; her daughter Fannie also was single and living at home. Their neighbors were Joseph and Maggie (Reid) Shook and Dr. George Douglas and Stella Hayes. Over in another section of town on 10th St. her son, Franklin M. C. White still lived in his brick home. Her daughter, Libby (White) Barlew was living further out the road near Ravens Point.

Katherine had her children all around her in Tracy City, so she saw no need to remain tied to the 300 acres at White Springs with exception to an occasional visit to the little cemetery. A transcription of a **1903** deed where Katherine sold the old farm at White Springs to her son, William Smith White, follows and is inserted here to support statements written by me.

Catherine White to W. S. White – Warranty Deed

For and in consideration of the sum of \$300.00, three hundred dollars, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged by Catherine White, have bargained and sold by these presents do transfer and convey unto the said W. S. White and his heirs and assigns a certain tract or parcel of land in Grundy County, State of Tennessee as follows district 12 containing by estimation three hundred acres be the same more or less and bounded as follows:

Beginning on a stake and pointers fifteen poles North Eastward of a Chalybeate Spring not far from the top of a bluff or hollow, westward of Little Fiery Gizzard being on a direction between Asborn and Moses Thompsons and beginning west 300 poles to a chestnut. Thence South 160 poles to a chestnut thence east 300 poles to a black oak. Thence North 160 poles to the place of the beginning including said Spring. This is the parcel of land deeded to me by Burrell Watley and his wife Barabry Watley in June 1868.

To have and to hold the said tract or parcel of land with the appurtenances estate title or interest thereto belonging to the said W. S. White, his heirs and assigns forever. And I Catherine White do further covenant and bind myself and my heirs and representatives to warrant and forever defend the title to said land to the said W. S. White, his heirs and assigns against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever.

Witness my hand this sixth day of November 1903. Catherine (X – her mark) White”

For nine more years, Fannie continued caring for her mother until one day in **1908** in Tracy City, Katherine took her last breath. She was transported to the family cemetery and placed beside her husband and children. The matriarch had made her last journey to the place where her life began as a citizen of Grundy Co., TN. I don't know if anyone views life and death as I do, but a reflective moment is warranted when a body is carried back, way back to where “**home**” was. The journey of a lifeless body in the back of a wagon, or on a slow train, or on a fast plane, or in the back of a black or a white hearse to a final resting place deserves a moment of meditation. Many young folks could not wait until they grew up to leave their parents' homes, their homes. Later they matured enough to announce that one can never really “go back home”

because home as they knew it had changed. However, upon their deaths, they want to go “**home**”, travel those old roads one more time. Katherine went “**home**” just a little too early, for she missed all the excitement that was to come right up to her grave in just two or three years.



Burial plot in Tracy City Cemetery for Franklin M. C. White, his wife Clara and his daughter Katharine Viola White. The beautiful wrought iron fence has long been gone, taken by thieves, but the posts still stand.

On Mar. 2, 1910, her son, Franklin M. C. White died of pleuralgia, and the family’s good friend, Dr. George Douglas Hayes was his physician. He had been working as an insurance agent when he succumbed to his illness. He and his brother William Smith had worked together on business ventures from time to time. They jointly operated the *F. M. C. and Bro. General Merchandise and Furniture Store* in town. Franklin’s family had acquired a family plot in the Tracy City Cemetery, so he was not buried at the White family cemetery. Known to be buried with him in the plot are his

wife, Clara A. White, and his twenty-one-year old daughter, Katharine Viola White (1881-1902).

On **April 22, 1910** in the Census record, Mrs. Franklin (Clara) White was a widow with her remaining three children, Jeanette, Mary and Alfred J. L. White, still at home. Herbert B. Hutchinson was a boarder in the house. Since Mary later married a Hutchinson, we might assume that Herbert was the lucky fellow. From old deeds, we can determine that the large red brick house on Lankford Town Rd., or 10th St., known as the Arbuckle house, was built by Franklin for his family. His neighbor was Martin Marugg on the north and east side and on the south side was an alley way. On **July 17, 1910** in San Francisco, California, stationed aboard the "USS South Dakota" was a single, young man named Alfred J. L. White (18), an "ordinary seaman" (sailor), born in Tennessee whose father was born in Virginia. It is possible that Alfred J. L. got counted twice that year if both records are his. The timeline would allow for him to be at both places, Tracy City in the month of **April** and San Francisco in **July** 1910.

Jeanette White operated a private school in the family home in Tracy City. Catherine (Kilgore) Flury's mother, Theona Anastine Haynes born 1901, attended the school for a while because it was so near her home. Theona kept leaving her classroom to go upstairs and look at the bathroom which was an unusual fixture in those days; Theona did not have one of those in her house. When the teacher looked for her, she was always found upstairs staring with amazement at the fixtures. Jeanette probably began operating her school after her father's death in 1910 so that she could help with living expenses. Years later in **1939**, the White heirs, Alfred J. L. and wife, Elizabeth, Jeanette White and Mary (White) Hutcheson sold the house to Jasper William and Ethel Arbuckle for \$1,800.00.

In **1910** William Smith White was listed as being in the "loan, discount, and real estate" business. After the loss of her mother, his sister Fannie kept house for herself and brother until her death in **1911**. Like her mother, her body was carried back to the old homestead and placed at rest to the right of her sister Armenia. By this time William Smith had big dreams of a new adventure that he had hoped to experience with his brother Franklin, but now he was on his own, headed toward accomplishing something greater than he had in his past.

Around **1910** the local talk was that William Smith went to Alaska to mine for gold and struck it rich. Then he came back to White Springs to build his dream. He set about building a summer resort, a hotel with all the amenities of a fine rest and recreational facility. The resort had hot baths and mineral springs, a wooden, dance

pavilion under the bluff area, an outdoor furnace for heating water, and a huge cistern for holding water, stunning natural scenery, and cold water springs along with a deep well for drinking water. Inside the hotel were card games, gossip, great meals, plenty of homemade brew, dance halls, dining halls, and lovely, cozy rooms for recuperating after a day and night of fun. The rushing flow of the Fiery Gizzard could be heard at times, an added incentive to sit back and rest ones weary bones. From a newspaper article dated Apr. 25, **1911**, we read that *"William White has erected a building which has eighty rooms, within three miles of Tracy City, at what is known as White Springs – the water of which is said to be very fine for certain human ailments. He hopes to have it ready to receive health seekers by July."*

In June of **1913**, during the beginning of the new venture, William Smith decided to take the plunge and marry for the first time. He married Annie Elida (Johnson) Owens, daughter of Nathan Lindsey and Nancy (Millican) Johnson. She and her first husband, Charles Montgomery Owens, were the parents of three children, two of whom were R. B. Owens and a daughter, Anna Johnson Owens, who came into the new marriage with her mother. *"R. B. Owens of Hampton, Va., visited his mother and sister at White Springs last week. He returned Saturday by way of Chattanooga and Knoxville."* (Mrs. Grundy – Feb. 16, 1922) The daughter married William Floyd Harris as shown in the following Sept. 20, 1923, Mrs. Grundy article: *"Harris-Owens – Mr. and Mrs. W. S. White make announcement of the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter, Miss Anna Johnson Owens to Mr. William Floyd Harris of Macon, Georgia. The date of the wedding has been set for Sunday the sixteenth of September...The many friends of Miss Owens at this place extend congratulations and wish her happiness."* By the time the local newspaper got the announcement, the marriage had already happened. And again on Aug. 9, **1928**, Mrs. Grundy newspaper printed an article about the death of the little daughter of Anne Owens Harris. She *"...died at a private hospital Wednesday afternoon July 18 at 5:30 o'clock. She was ill only three days, and the many friends of the family deeply sympathize with them in the loss of their only child. She was one year of age and a beautiful little girl...Mrs. Harris was before her marriage Miss Anna Johnson Owens of Tracy City, Tennessee...the grandparents survive: Mr. and Mrs. W. S. White of Palmer, Tenn..."*

After William Smith and Annie married, she and her daughter jumped right in and helped him with his dream. A woman's touch was all that was needed to complete the magnificent hotel and surroundings. They lived at the Hotel giving every day of their lives to make it as great as any hotel in the county. It stood on Pigeon Springs Road, or as known back then, Battle Creek Road, or more precise, White Springs Road. As far as hotels go, the Monteagle Hotel and the Beersheba Springs Hotel were the competition for the White Hotel.

The following article was transcribed from *Mrs. Grundy, July 10, 1913*:

“The Banquet At Mineral Springs Quite an Enjoyable Affair— *Tickets were sold Wednesday of last week for a banquet and evening of good innocent fun and at 6:30 o’clock a party of about sixty drove to Mineral Springs in wagons filled with hay, making the woods ring with laughter and song, while the air was fragrant with pine and mountain flowers.*

The hotel was in gala attire for this festive occasion. No place has ever been so spotlessly clean. Japanese lanterns made the lawn bright, while the climax of a decorator’s skill was reached in the beautifully decorated dining room. An orchestra was stationed at one end, which added greatly to the enjoyable affair. The tables fairly groaned with tempting viands, being so skillfully and temptingly prepared that every person did full justice, and regretted that they were not registered for a prolonged stay.

Too much cannot be said in praise of the splendid hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Will White. The promptness and unequalled service was very noticeable, and proves with the excellent handling of such a large crowd that Mr. White is capable of directing and making a trip to his famous springs a pleasure as well as a beneficial affair.”



The remains of the White Mineral Springs Cistern



A view showing how a hole was knocked in the side of the cistern to allow local women to get water for washing clothes and other chores. This happened after the hotel burned and the place was abandoned

Another newspaper of the day, *The Mountain Herald*, Jul 10, 1913, wrote about the "Grand Opening of White Hotel. The White Springs Hotel had its opening last Thursday evening the occasion being one of the most enjoyable affairs ever attended by Tracy Citizens. White Springs is an ideal summer resort and while this is only its second season, it bids fair to be one of the leading pleasure resorts in the state. Situated two and one half miles from the thriving little city of Tracy, with its fresh air and pure mineral water, its beautiful location, and under the management of the owner, Mr. W. S. White, we would recommend it to the pleasure seeker, to the feeble, to the tired and worn out. At the opening a special prepared supper was served consisting of all the good things to eat that would tempt the palate of a king. In the spacious ball room dancing was indulged in until a late hour. Following are the names of the guests attending this grand opening: Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Werner, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Werner, Mr. and Mrs. L. T. Church, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Schwoon, Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Bowers, Mr. and Mrs. J. Oliver, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Norvell, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Hampton, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hampton, Mrs. G. W. Tidman, Mrs. Frank White, Misses Helen Byers, Lizzie Robbins, Loulla Hampton, Geanett White, Wilsie Cope, Omealee Coe, Irma Hampton, Malinda Hampton, Ophelia Oakley, Mella May Aldrege, Cornelia Goodall, Thelma Hawk. Kenerly

Werner, James Stepp, Carl Werner, Walter Tidman, Everet Roberts, Mike Bradlely, Mr. Mongold, W. F. Bradley, Henry Garner, Mark Lowry, Stanley Hampton, Sam Werner, Jr."

Then about one year later we read from Mrs. Grundy June 11, 1914 the following: *"An Outing Party – A party composed of Mrs. Libbie Sherrill, Mrs. C. V. Cunningham, Mrs. Elmer Woodlee and little son, Misses Novella Keathley, Minnie London, Mrs. Maggie Shook and sons, James, Charles and Edwin Price Shook, spent a most delightful day at White's Mineral Springs last Friday. The hotel not being open to the public yet Mr. White allowed the party the use of the dining room and after making coffee a bountiful lunch was enjoyed by all. The party amused themselves playing various games, some chatting and crocheting. White's Springs is the place to enjoy a perfect rest. The water possessing certain medicinal properties which are very beneficial makes this an ideal place to spend your vacation. The party returned at dark loud in their praise of White's Mineral Springs."*

Patrons could arrive from at least two directions. The Battle Creek Road (now known as Pigeon Springs Rd.) came up the mountain from Martin Springs and meandered along until one took a right hand turn onto the White Springs Road, which would have been near the former Lige and Dorothy (Collins) Anderson home place today (2014); the wagons could drive right up to the White Hotel. This was a rough road, but it was traveled in those days. Remember that the Dixie Highway or State Highway 41 had not been built across the mountain yet. The other mode of travel to the hotel was by passenger train. It stopped at the Haynes Station that stood near the railroad on the eastern side of Pigeon Springs Rd. The station was often called Yellow Station because of the yellow paint it displayed on its sides. Then the patrons were taken by hacks to the hotel site. There are a few people still living (2005) who can remember their parents speak of going for R & R, fresh spring water and just a good ole outing in the hotel area. Dorothy (Ingman) Minkler remembered visiting the hotel when she was a small child; some years ago she explained to me that she played in the vast wooded area between her parents' home and the White Hotel. "The steps to the front porch were ever so high going up one at a time," Dorothy exclaimed. Catherine Flury can remember visiting family members, the Haynes of Haynes Station, and then extending the visit by going out to White Springs for some good cold water and lots of fun.



Above: the boiler setup showing how close to the bluff the operation was located.

Below: another view of the boiler



Information furnished by **William Ray Turner** in an article in the *Grundy County Herald* by Donna Dykes was wonderfully descriptive: *“Since the place was big for the times, 60 rooms, lobby, front and back porches, large dining and ball rooms as well as servant*

quarter, barn and cribs and all necessary out buildings...". Anna Johnson Owens Harris in the *Grundy Herald* article recalled the White Hotel as, " a long two-story, building with a reception room built on the front at the end, and steps leading up to the dining room....in the back, but not attached to the building, was a pool room with two pool tables. It could be used for a cool place to relax and look at the mountains across the Gulf (Fiery Gizzard)."

"The mineral springs located at the foot of a hill were chalybeate," according to Mrs. Harris. 'The spring was full of iron. It ran from the hill and dad built a trough on the water so the water could be caught in glasses or pitchers.' Part of the trough remains although it is filled with silt, and the pipe which brings water from the rock enclosed trough continues to pour out its pure liquid. However, Mrs. Harris notes, that it had a tendency to become quite irony after standing a few hours. She also recalls a pavilion with tables and benches for picnics on land between the hotel and the spring."



Just like the Beersheba Springs chalybeate spring, the White Springs chalybeate spring (shown left-- 2014) dissipated probably because of the change in the water table throughout the years. It is easy to see why it was called a "mineral spring."

With the research I have done and the talks I have had with some old timers who told stories handed down to them, I think the pavilion that Mrs. Harris spoke of was the same one used for the dances which were held regularly. It has been explained that the dance pavilion was situated over the edge of a bluff which gave it a good view of the forest on the other side of the Fiery Gizzard Gulf. I have been to this area on several visits between the spring and hotel and the land gradually slopes down at different points at the bluff's edge, I call them landings, until one eventually comes to a deep gorge where the creek travels on down Gizzard Cove on its way to Battle Creek. So unless a patron was drunk or quite careless, there was no danger of someone falling over the bluff.

According to Noah White in the *Grundy County Herald* article, "*Frank and William S. went to California during the gold rush, and built the hotel when they returned.*" The California Goldrush was during the years 1851- 1864. I hardly think the brothers were involved in that goldrush, but beginning in August of **1896** there was a gold rush to the Klondike in the Yukon territories of Canada. Basically, six months later the land or mines were all staked out. Assuming that this is what happened with Franklin and William, this would allow the decade between 1896 and 1910 for them to mine their claim. We do know that in **1900**, William Smith White was living in Tracy City and operating a grocery store; he was still in Tracy City in the **1910** Census.

However, in **1920** his income came from owning a coal mine. Why he didn't mention the hotel is a mystery unless the hotel was closed for the winter when the Census record was taken in January. Stories handed down said that Claude Fults did some coalmining under the bluff where the hotel was located. The coal was brought out by mules. Maybe Mr. Fults was working for William Smith who may have owned a mine there except that the deed to the land does not go under the bluff—only at a point which took in the famous White Spring. Claud's father Dock Fults would have been more the right age for mining at that time. Claud was still young.

Locally, the talk was that William struck gold in Alaska. This version simply seems more reasonable. Franklin White had in many years prior to **1900** been a carpenter, but in 1900 he, too, was a grocery merchant in Tracy City. Whatever the timeline was, on 2 Mar. **1910** Franklin died and as stated in the *Herald* article he, "*...didn't get to enjoy the fruit of his labors.*" Next an advertisement showed up in the Dec. 15, **1910**, *Mrs. Grundy* newspaper as follows: "*For sale – my home place, good house, large lawn, lots of shade, fine shrubbery, and the best cistern on the mountain. Address W. S. White, Tracy City.*" William had made up his mind to go back home, to the place where his family settled in Grundy County in the beginning. He had a dream, and there was plenty of work to be done on his project.

Quoted from Donna Dykes' article in the *Grundy County Herald* in **1984**: "*Frank and William S. White began building the Hotel sometime in 1910. 'It opened with a grand ball the summer of 1913, and everything was lovely,' reports Anna J. Harris, William's step-daughter, who lives in Macon, Ga. 'Until the war, we had families and elderly singles from Georgia, Texas, West Tennessee, and Middle Tennessee,' Mrs. Harris recalls. 'We had elderly couples that would come for a month or six weeks. One came in May and stayed through September, after the war.'* The first World War spanned the period of 1914-1918. A few years later, William sold the hotel and moved to Palmer where he took up farming."

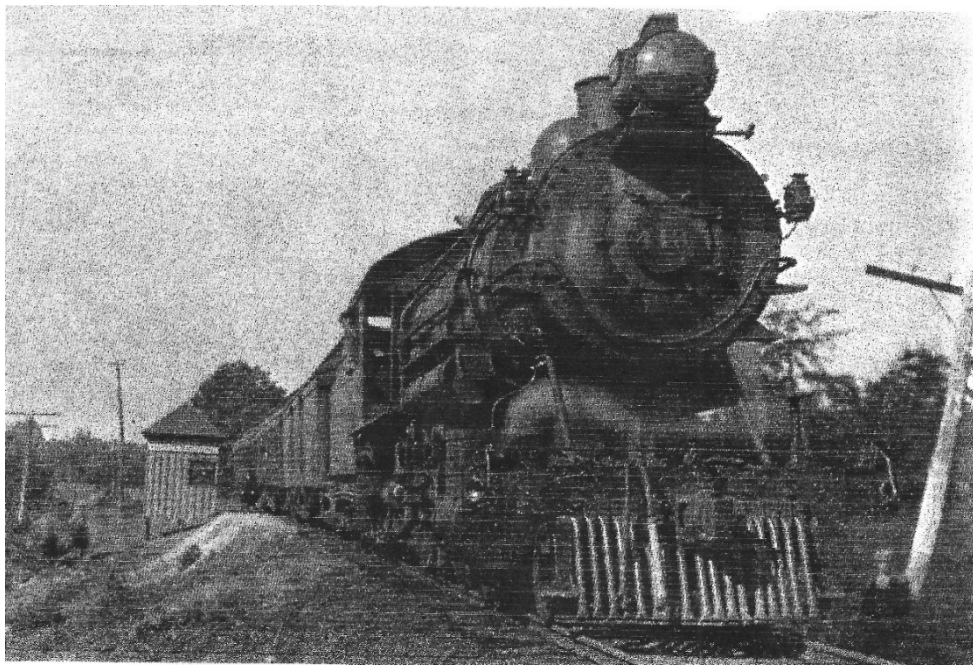
The following quote is from an interview with Homer Kunz by Mary Priestly. *"The train would stop at a little station that was open on three sides at Hanes (Haynes –jackie) Crossing. We called it 'Yellow Crossing' because the station was painted yellow. They had two passenger trains a day then. The hotel would send a buggy up in case there were hotel guests to be picked up -- they had no way of knowing ahead of time.*



Haynes "Yellow Crossing" Station looking toward Tracy City. Coming from Hwy41/56.

The station stood on the left of Pigeon Springs Rd. just across the railroad tracks.

The Ephraim Madison Haynes home was on the next lot below the station.



No. 413 and a three-car passenger train on the Cowan-Tracy City branch, stops at Haynes Crossing

A Mrs. McCord was paid to bring the mail to the hotel once a week. She paid us kids a dime or something to ride in her buggy with her. That lonesome road out to the hotel was like a tunnel through the woods it could be pretty scary on a cloudy, foggy day.

The dance pavilion was down under the bluff, below the spring. The hotel was a long building with rooms back to back and a continuous porch on each side. Old Man White was so particular he practically chased the guests away. [For instance] he accused them of stomping down the grass when they played croquet. Mr. Kunz remembered the cistern and cemetery. He didn't know anything about the outdoor furnace or the rock basin near the spring. I would guess that the wooden structures overshadowed these smaller things that have survived."

Down under the bluff, as Homer Kunz said, was the dance pavilion. The Andy and Hallie (Sanders) Dykes children remember playing on the remains of that old wooden floor a few years after the Whites sold the estate. Nothing remains of the dance floor, but the photo below shows a basin which was near the location of the dance floor.



A basin with a cement bottom—the use may have been for mineral baths. This basin is down under the bluff near the spring. Years of debris may have covered other basins.

In the *Grundy County Times*, July 8, 1915, W. S. White made what seems to be his best plea for all to come to the Mineral Springs for relaxation. The article reads as follows:

“MINERAL SPRINGS, Situated on top of Cumberland Mountain 2200 feet above sea level, one and one half miles from the railroad station at Haynes crossing and five miles from Monteagle, Tennessee. Mineral Springs is a delicious icy cold water, which cures chills, malaria, liver, kidney and uric acid and all kindred troubles. This water is very delicious and refreshing. The more you drink of it the more you want. It is a great appetizer. After you drink it a few days you can hardly wait for meal time because it makes you so hungry. The great beauty about this water is you can drink all you want and never have that full, bloated feeling you are sure to have if you drink a little too much of most any other water.

The scenery around Mineral Springs is grand, with great high bluffs and deep canyons. Mineral Springs is right in the spruce, hemlock and mountain pine woods, besides a great variety of hardwoods. Mineral Springs is right on top of a great high bluff overlooking a deep canyon where the cool breezes blow nearly all the time and it is ten degrees cooler here than it is most any other place. There is no dust in the air at Mineral Springs. When it gets hot and sultry this summer in the city and low lands and you can't sleep for the heat come to Mineral Springs where the cool breezes blow and drink that delicious icy cold, health giving water and sleep soundly under blankets.

Mineral Springs is only two miles from Bridal Veil Falls and only two miles from the justly famous palisades, one of the grandest natural formations of nature's handiwork in all of the grand scenery of the Cumberland Mountains. The palisades bluff forms nearly a true circle of perpendicular walls over two hundred feet high. At the foot of this grand work of nature there is a very fine Mineral Spring of icy cold water. Besides this grand palisade there are dozens of high bluffs and grand views in less than one mile of Mineral Springs Hotel. So you don't have to hire a conveyance to see these grand works of nature as they are only a few minutes' walk from the Hotel.

The Hotel at Mineral Springs is a large, cool, summer Hotel with nearly seven hundred feet of wide piazzas around it. It is always cool and shady. There are hot and cold baths at Mineral Springs. In addition to the Mineral water there is also here the purest Free Stone water. Mineral Springs is easy of access, only about fifteen minutes drive from the station at Haynes crossing. You can get the train men to unlock the telephone box at the station where you can call up Mineral Springs Hotel and a conveyance will meet you in a few minutes and take you to the Hotel for a small charge. Or if you don't stop at the station you can go on to Tracy City and get livery hire to take you to the Hotel for a moderate charge, as it is only three miles from Tracy City to Mineral Springs Hotel.

We grow our own vegetables at Mineral Springs. The vegetables grown on this sandy mountain land are the best flavored, tender, crisp vegetables you ever saw. We prepare these vegetables for the table in the best manner so they are very appetizing. We keep a good table for our guests and our prices are very moderate. Write for prices by the day, week or month.

Right by the Spring there is a large pavilion with lots of seats and long tables where you can sit in the shade and read or play games within thirty feet of this delicious health-giving water. This pavilion is only fifty feet from a two hundred foot high bluff and is in the shade of this high bluff nearly all the day. We have a large dance hall and billiard room, also tennis court and other game grounds at Mineral Springs all free to our guests.

If you are looking for a good cool place to visit or to spend the summer why not come to Mineral Springs where you can find the best water and purest air that is to be found on top of Cumberland Mountain, with all the grand scenery right at the Hotel door. Address, W. S. White, Tracy City, Tenn."



The bluff that shaded the pavilion for most of the day.



The broken casing of the old well surrounded by concrete – the well itself is still present but safely covered.



Location of the White Hotel (2014 Photo)

AT AUCTION!

THE FAMOUS

WHITE MINERAL SPRINGS

Summer Resort

Sub-division of 300 A. Timber Land, On

TUESDAY, JULY 29, 1924

11 O'clock A. M. on Premises, Rain or Shine

We will sell the famous White Mineral Springs without Reserve—Hotel contains 60 Rooms, lobby, front and back porch, large dining and ball rooms, servant quarters, barn and crib, all necessary out buildings, etc.

60 A will be sold with Hotel, all in timber except about 2 acres which are in vineyard and garden.

Adjoining Hotel 8 30 A. timber tracts, practically all level, facing on Tracy City and Battle Creek public Road, one and one-half miles of R. R. All property to be sold is located 2 miles South of Tracy City.

TRACY CITY is located on top of Cumberland Mountain on a branch of the N. C. & St. L. R. R. and has a population of near 3000. It has fine Schools, Churches and good citizens.

If you want to buy some great bargains attend this auction

TERMS: One-Third Cash, balance One and Two Years

Free Dinner on the Grounds

Property will be sold without reserve

To be Shown this property see Sam Charles, Tracy City, Tenn.

E. P. CHARLES, Manchester, Tenn. [Owner]

CLARK & WHEELER REALTY CO.

McMinnville, Tenn.

The above advertisement speaks for itself.

Told by a Wooten descendant that the "*Chattanooga Times*" did an article on the hotel, I inquired with one of their archivists. I was told that there was no digital indexing of stories, so I would probably have some hard work finding the article. This effort was in hopes of finding a photo of the hotel. Finding a photo would be a dream come true.

Following the selling and buying of Katherine's old home place, we have seen it move from Burrell Watley to Katherine White to William Smith White, then to E. P. Charles. He owned the White Mineral Springs Hotel and all the land since he had bought it on May 30, **1924** from William S. White. And two months later, as seen above, he put the whole estate up for auction. It appears that Warren S. and Nell Yell bought the whole estate that day, July 29, **1924**, at the auction, but on Sept. 25, 1924, they mortgaged the estate to The Bedford County Bank at Wartrace. As the United States crept toward Black Tuesday on Oct. 29, **1929**, the Yells may have seen it coming. On February 28, **1928**, the hotel and outer buildings were still standing when they conveyed the estate to The Bedford County Bank at Wartrace, TN which held the Yell notes on the property.

Remembering the stock market crash of **1929** and the terrible calamities that happened afterwards, may help the reader understand why Mr. D. D. Robertson, Superintendent of Banks of the State of Tennessee and receiver of The Bedford County Bank was in the picture on Sept. 19, **1936** when the 300 acres were sold to T. N. Meeks, probably Thomas Newton Meeks, husband of Myrtle (Burrows) Meeks, and son of William Houston and Norna Meeks. Thomas then turned around in the same year and sold the land to Mrs. Myrtle (Lasater) Abernathy, wife of William C. Abernathy. Mr. Meeks had a stipulation put in the transaction that for two years he could cut the big timber off the land. On May 3, **1961**, Katherine White's old homestead which once held only two appurtenances, her little home and the family cemetery, then later the glorious Mineral Springs Hotel and all its appendages, then only the debris from the burned out Hotel and a cemetery, and finally 300 acres of cut timber land, was sold to James Frederick Bell, Sr., excepting 25 acres sold to Arthur Ray Ingman.

The **1930** year found William S. White and his wife Annie living in the Palmer area on part of the old Howell Barker land. Although Bill's sister Libby Barlew had died, some of her children and grandchildren were still living near Lankford Town. Elmer and his wife Ethel had divorced, leaving him with three daughters at home—Jessie, Alma, and Mabel. His neighbors were Roy and Hazel Johnson and George and Martha Harris.

Another story is that William Smith "Bill" White came back to the old home place in the early **1940's**. He was in poor health, so he set up a tent for a period while he bathed in the sulfur springs and worked on the family cemetery plot. Evidence that someone had redone the gravesites is the small mound of footer stones piled against the inside wall of the boundary. Newer ones had been placed at the foot of the graves. While he was there, a storm blew a tree onto his tent. If this was William Smith, he would have been around eighty years of age. He died Aug. 15, 1942 and was buried in the Fall Creek Cemetery in Grundy County. According to his stepdaughter, Mrs. Anna Harris, the hotel burned just a few weeks after his death in 1942. I do not accept that as the year the hotel burned.

There is a big question mark in my head about the timing of the demise of the Mineral Springs Hotel. In **1942** a small house built from hotel debris did burn. Skacie Bill Ellis and his son Doyle Ellis were living in the little house at the time. I think Mrs. Harris may have gotten the story of that fire mixed up with the actual fire that destroyed the hotel. We last hear of the hotel still standing in a 1928 deed. As we watch the estate move along through the sales, we can almost pinpoint the burning of the Hotel between 1928 and 1933. I really believe that it burned soon after the Yell family bought it in 1928. Charles Dykes said his mother and father moved onto the land around 1933/34 when he was just a child, and he stated that the hotel was no longer there. He said that there was rubble from the fire which left some material that could be used to build small shacks for those living in hard times. And those years, around the **1930s**, Great Depression years, were hard times for certain.

Our story started with a little black dot on an old map. There is always more to a story than one can get on a few pieces of paper. Hopefully, this work will help those White descendants who are still wondering about this part of their history in Grundy County, TN.