

FROM "HISTORY OF BETHLEHEM CHURCH  
AND EARLY SETTLERS"  
by Orpha Haisell, Livingston, Tenn. 1

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One old deed that I found was where George and John Christian had sold a tract of 200 acres of land to Alvin Cullom in 1842. There may have been farms in the area before then, but I could not find them.

W. J. Cullom, who married the daughter of Moe Young, Elizabeth, raised large family. Aunt "Lizzie", as everyone knew her, came from Lee County, Virginia. She was born in 1837 and died in 1924. Susan Cullom (1830-1865) married A. J. Goodbar. Several of the Culloms are buried here in the cemetery. They have some of the taller monuments that stand out in the cemetery and are very pretty. The Culloms came in and were good business promoters in the general area. They were always very active in politics and served in various offices. One served in the Senate.

"Big" Joe Copeland and Part of the Family Tree

Big Joe Copeland and his father, Steven Calvin Copeland, braved the wilderness, ravines, cliffs, snakes, bears, etc., and came in the spring of 1799 from Jefferson County, North Carolina, to find a spot to make a new home. They settled near what we now know as Windle, in a beautiful cane brake.

The Copeland family became great friends with the Indian Chief, Nettle Carrier and received permission to settle on the reservation. They returned to North Carolina to get the rest of the family. They were the first white settlers in this part of the country. Solomon Copeland was the first white child born in this section. It is believed that this Copeland was originally from Virginia.

Joseph (Big Joe), after reaching adult age, married a full-blooded Cherokee Indian, named Hannah Thatcher Ward. The Copelands then settled in his beautiful valley that we now know as the Copeland Cove. Joe had become a landowner and cattle-trader. He had to drive his cattle to Baltimore, Maryland, which was the nearest market.

Joe Copeland was a man of great stature, seven feet tall, and weighed about 300 pounds. It is said that he cracked black walnuts with his bare teeth and that he once picked up a donkey and set him over the fence. There are many such stories about him. Big Joe served in the community life and was one of the first men to serve as sheriff of Overton County. Back in those days when men had a falling out, they did not settle it with a knife or gun; they fought it out with their fists. Seldom did anyone wish to take on Big Joe.

He lived in the days of log cabins, puncheon floors, hunting shirts, moccasins and buckskin pants; the rifle was the constant companion of the settlers. (Puncheon means a log split and not smoothed very well.) In addition to puncheon floors there were also puncheon tables. Eating utensils were made of wood by Solomon Allred in the nearby section. Those who could afford it ate out of pewter or tin. Pearl or ivory buttons were not known in those days. The women would make them by wrapping some thread around a goose quill, slip it off and then work it into a button. The early settlers seemed to enjoy themselves, though. They had plenty of hog and hominy and helped each other if someone ran short.