

LIFE OF  
Jefferson Dillard Goodpasture;

TO WHICH IS APPENDED

A GENEALOGY OF THE FAMILY OF  
JAMES GOODPASTURE.

BY HIS SONS

A. V. AND W. H. GOODPASTURE.  
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## PREFACE.

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This book was not written, primarily, for the benefit of the public, but as a loving tribute to a venerated father, and for the pleasure and encouragement it may be to his family. Many things might otherwise have been omitted and others elaborated, but the authors have kept steadily in view the objects sought to be attained.

It makes no pretensions; if it meets the expectation and approval of those who knew and loved him, it will have achieved their fullest aspirations.

NASHVILLE, October 1, 1897.

## CHAPTER I.

### **The Mountain District.**

The country commonly called the Mountain District of Middle Tennessee may be said, in general terms, to extend northeastwardly, between the Cumberland Mountains and the Cumberland and Cane Fork Rivers, from a line drawn lengthwise through the center of the State, to the Kentucky line, embracing the counties of Overton, White, Jackson, Putnam, Fentress, Clay and Pickett. It is possibly the most imperfectly known and least appreciated portion of the State, owing to its inaccessibility, the rest of the country being many years in advance of it in matter of transportation. The child born there fifty years ago, was taught to expect a railroad through the Mountain District before he reached his majority, and in his turn held out the same delusive hope to his own children. Many of its ambitious young men sought honor and wealth in more inviting fields, and those who remained, finding little opportunity for individual enterprise and development, spent sufficient effort in acquiring a competency, to have made them eminent in a more favored community. Still the country possessess great natural advantages, especially to the manufacturer, on account of its vast mineral deposits, and unsurpassed water power, and will one day reach a degree of prosperity for which life has hitherto been too short to wait.

The Mountain District is distinguished as well for the beauty and variety as for the bold and rugged character of its topographical features. Its towering hills wall in picturesque coves; and its beautiful valleys are furrowed by impetuous streams, often forming magnificent cascades, like those on the Caney Fork, Calfkiller and Roaring Rivers and their tributaries, whose water powers cannot be excelled.

**Roaring River.** In 1802, F. A. Michaux, the great French naturalist, after describing the many falls of Roaring River, following each other in rapid succession, and making the confused noise that suggested its name; the great height of its banks, rising, as he declares, from eighty to a hundred feet; its immense caverns, some of which were celebrated for the dyestone they contained; the large rivulets that terminated their windings at its steep banks, whence they fell murmuring into its bed, forming beautiful cascades, several fathoms wide; the many varieties of trees and shrubs skirting its margin, especially the wild magnolia, so celebrated for the beauty of its flower and foliage, declared that, "All these circumstances give the banks of Roaring River a cool and pleasing aspect, which I have never witnessed before, on the banks of other rivers."

It was on the head waters of this beautiful stream that the "Long Hunters," who spent eight or nine months of the years 1769-1770, in the Cumberland Valley, buried one of their party—the first white man killed in Middle Tennessee. They had proceeded down the Cumberland River from their camp in Wayne County, Kentucky, till they reached Obeds River, which

received its name from Obediah Terrill, a member of their party. They then came to Roaring River, and while hunting on Matthews Creek, one of its tributaries, Robert Crockett was ambushed and killed by a party of seven or eight Indians, who were traveling North on the war trace leading from the Cherokee nation towards the Shawnee tribe.

**Overton County  
Established.**

All the Mountain District was not opened for settlement at the same time. By the treaty of Holston, in 1791, the Indian line was made to begin at a point on Cumberland River, from which a southwest line would strike the ridge that divides the waters of Cumberland from those of Duck River, forty miles above Nashville. This line ran two miles and a half east of Livingston, and divided the Mountain District into two almost equal parts. The west was open to settlement, but the east was reserved to the Cherokee nation, and was commonly called the wilderness.

By an act of the General Assembly, in 1798, the line of the Indian reservation was made the eastern boundary of Sumner County, which, in 1799, was reduced to its constitutional limits, and the new counties of Smith and Wilson established out of its eastern territory. Two years later, Smith County was reduced, and the county of Jackson erected, extending to the wilderness. By the treaty of Tellico, in 1805, the Indian title to the wilderness was extinguished, and from that time the whole of the Mountain District was open to settlement.

The next year Overton County was established. It lay on both sides of the Indian line, and included, besides its present limits, all of the counties of Fentress

and Pickett, and parts of Clay, Putnam, Cumberland, Morgan and Scott. It was named for Judge John Overton (1766-1833), a native of Virginia, who early emigrated to Tennessee, and under appointment of the Legislature, negotiated the compact with North Carolina, by which the State of Tennessee was authorized to perfect titles to lands reserved under the act of cession, which had just been ratified by Congress, and finally settled the hot dispute between North Carolina, Tennessee and the United States, respecting the public lands in this State. At this time he was one of the judges of the Superior Court of Law and Equity, having been appointed in 1804, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Andrew Jackson.

**The Goodpasture  
Family.**

From the best information now to be had, there appears to have been six brothers and two sisters, namely, James, John, Abraham, Isaac, Cornelius, Solomon, Elizabeth and Martha Goodpasture, who emigrated from the region of Wolf's Hill, in Virginia, sometime in the latter part of the eighteenth century. They seem to have come first to Tennessee, whence most of them moved to Kentucky, and settled near Owingsville, in Bath County. Cornelius died in that county, and Solomon volunteered in the war of 1812, and was probably killed, as he was never heard of afterwards. Of the two sisters, Elizabeth married and moved to Missouri, and Martha raised a family near Owingsville. John did not remain long in Kentucky, but moved to Warren County, Ohio. Isaac married and left children, but their location is not known to the writer. Abraham, who is said to have reached Bath County about the year

1795, made it his permanent home, and became the ancestor of the large and influential family of Goodpastures in and around Owingsville.

**James Goodpasture.** James Goodpasture, with whose family we are more intimately concerned, was well advanced in years when he came to Tennessee. His oldest son, William, had already married, and remained in Virginia, where he has many worthy descendants. He first located in the neighborhood, as neighbors were then counted, of Southwest Point, a Federal fort, at the junction of Clinch and Holston Rivers, on the eastern border of the Indian reservation. The place was then in Knox County, about a mile from Kingston, now the county site of Roane County. One of his last acts while a citizen of Knox County was to sign a petition to the Legislature, praying the erection of a new county. As it is the only paper to which the writer has found his name attached, it is here given in full.

“To the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee:

“We, the subscribers, living in Knox County, below the mouth of Turkey Creek, or north of Clinch, petition that Knox County may be divided, so as to leave the same a constitutional county, and that a new county be formed, so as to contain therein a part of the tract of country lying between the river Holston and Clinch, and above Southwest Point, and a part of that tract of country lying north of Clinch, and we, as in duty bound, will ever pray. July 15, 1799.”

This petition was signed in fair and legible hands, by James Goodpasture and Jno. Goodpaster, and by Jacob

Gardenhire, John Gilliland, John Eldridge, James Cope-land, and many others, who afterwards became leading citizens of Overton and adjoining counties. The curious fact will be noted, that James spelled the final syllable of his name "ture," while his son, John, spelled it "ter." Afterwards, John and all his family adopted his father's orthography, but the descendants of his uncle, Abraham, of Bath County, Kentucky, and perhaps other branches of the family, adhere to the final "ter." Such small difference in orthography is not remarkable, however, in an age and country which took such astonishing liberty with men's names as to call Chapin, Chapel; Barksdale, Basel; Christian, Christy; Chowning, Tunin; and Howard, Hoard.

**The Walton Road.** The General Assembly did not grant the prayer of the petitioners. But, as we have seen, it established the new county of Smith out of the eastern territory of Sumner, extending to the line of the Indian reservation, and the Goodpastures and some of their neighbors determined to move to this new county. It lay directly across the wilderness from their home near Southwest Point. There had long been a trace across the mountain from Southwest Point to the Cumberland settlements. Francis Baily traveled it in 1796, and has left an interesting account of his journey. But at the time the Goodpastures crossed the mountain a wagon road had been recently marked out, under authority of the General Assembly, between Southwest Point and the mouth of Caney Fork River, where Carthage was afterwards established. The work was the enterprise of Capt. William Walton (1760-1816), a native of Birtie County, North Carolina, who had enlisted at

the age of seventeen, as a private in the Revolutionary war, and served till its close in 1783, coming out with the rank of captain. He emigrated to the Cumberland settlement in 1785, and located his military land warrant on the north bank of the Cumberland River, at its confluence with Caney Fork, in 1786. The road, which still bears his name, was about a hundred miles in length, and contained four "stands" for the accommodation of travelers. Coming west, the first of these was at Kimbrough's, on the eastern foot of the mountain; the second, at Crab Orchard, a once famous place on the mountain plateau, in Cumberland County; the third, at White Plains, in Putnam County, on the western foot of the mountain; and the fourth, near Pekin, also in Putnam County. The road was completed in 1801. In the fall of 1802, Michaux writes of this road:

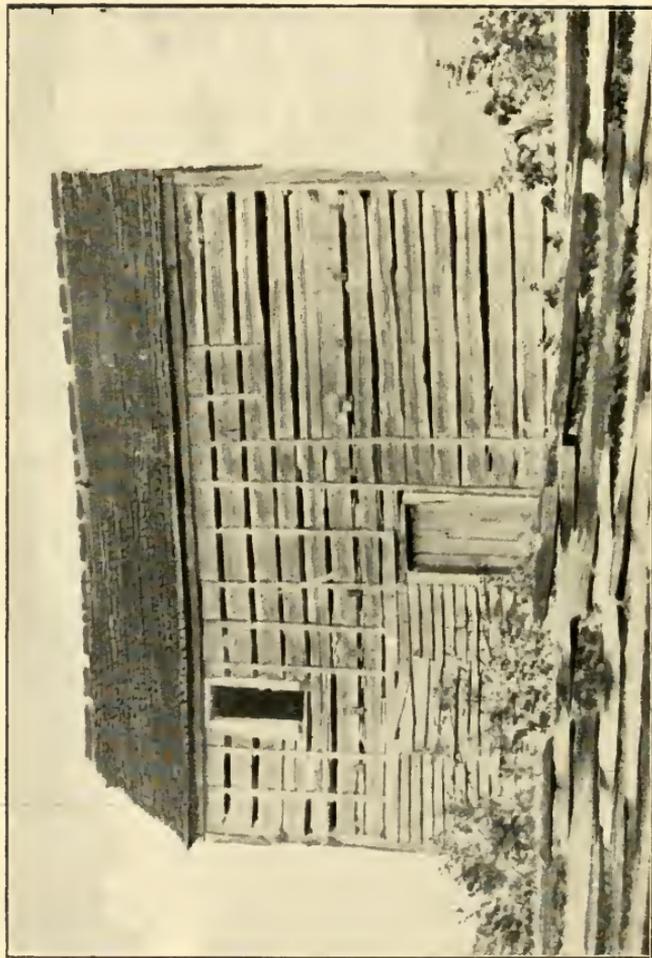
"The road that crosses this part of the Indian territory cuts through the mountains in Cumberland; it is as broad and commodious as those in the environs of Philadelphia, in consequence of the amazing number of emigrants that travel through it, to go and settle in the western country. It is, notwithstanding, in some places very rugged, but nothing near so much as the one that leads from Strasburg to Bedford in Pennsylvania. About forty miles from Nashville we met an emigrant family in a carriage, followed by their negroes on foot, that had performed their journey without accident. Little boards, painted black and nailed upon trees, indicate to travelers the distance they have to go."

In the year 1800, when the Goodpastures crossed the wilderness, the road was neither so good nor so safe as it was when Michaux traveled it, although, even then, it

was not considered prudent to travel it, except in parties, on account of roving bands of Indians, one of which he met before he reached Southwest Point.

**John Goodpasture.** John Goodpasture first intended to settle in Hickory Valley, White County, but the title to his land proving bad he located on Buffalo Creek, near the present village of Hilham, in Overton County. There were then few settlers in this section of country. His nearest neighbor, for a time, was one Anderson, who lived eight miles distant. A wandering Indian was sometimes seen, and a few buffalo were still to be found. The country was wild and beautiful. Its surface was rough and broken, but the valleys were covered with luxuriant cane brakes, and the hills bore so abundantly the wild pea vine, that stock would fatten in the woods. He did not have to feed his stock, winter or summer. Besides, there were the other two important points always considered by the pioneer, namely, wood and water. There was no finer timbered country in the Mountain District than the region around Hilham. Buffalo Creek was a beautiful little stream, fed by many of the never failing springs, so much sought after by the first settlers. It should be remembered that the river bottoms were quite unhealthy when the country was new, and for this reason the pioneers were deterred from occupying them.

Not long after the immigration of the Goodpastures, came also William Bryan, a native of Virginia, who, with his family, settled at the Hiram Allen place, on Flat Creek, in the same neighborhood. Here, in 1803, John Goodpasture was married to his daughter, Margery. They began life poor, but by industry and economy they



RESIDENCE OF JOHN GOODPASTURE (1778-1864), HILHAM, OVERTON COUNTY,  
TENN., AS IT APPEARED AUGUST 23, 1894.

were enabled to make a comfortable living, and to give each of their children a common school education, such as the country afforded. They raised a family of fifteen children, fourteen of their own, and a nephew, Jefferson, the son of James Goodpasture, deceased, all of whom survived them, except Andrew, who died in the State of Illinois after he had reached his majority, and left the parental roof. They had first lived in a log cabin, such as was common among pioneers, but in 1804, Mr. Goodpasture built a two story, weatherboarded, hewn log house, with a kitchen in the rear, connected with the main part of the house by an enclosed hallway, which served them as a dining room. In this house they lived, without intermission, from that time until their deaths, which both occurred in 1864.

Plain and unpretentious as it was this humble dwelling saw more of the bright sunshine of a happy home, and less of the dark shadows of sorrow and distress, than many more imposing structures—even of the present day. Under its roof, seven little boys and seven little girls were born into the world. Never in want and never idle, the years rolled on, and they grew to be seven honest, self-supporting, Christian men, and seven virtuous, domestic, pious women. There was never a death in that old house from the day it was built until the master and mistress, whom it had sheltered for sixty years, in ripe old age—eighty-six and seventy-nine—within two months of each other, were gathered to their fathers, and left it tenantless; for no one of the fifteen children any longer called it home.

John Goodpasture was a man of strong, positive character. Firm and just, he was at the same time so con-

servative and liberal that he never had a lawsuit in his life, and maintained at all times the utmost respect and confidence of his neighbors, among whom he was regarded as a leader. For half a century, he took two newspapers—a political paper supporting the Democratic party, with which he always affiliated, and the organ of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, of which, for fifty-five years, he was a member. Temperate in all things, he never used tobacco in any form, and for the last fifty years of his life totally abstained from intoxicants. Regular and domestic in his habits and taste, he never spent but eight nights from home after his marriage. Faithful to his public duties, he voted at every election held in his district. And with a powerful constitution and an orderly manner of life, he never had a serious spell of sickness, except that of which he died.