

Southwest Mississippi Genealogical Society

P. O. Box 175
McComb, MS 39649



May 2017

Vol. 17, No. 3

www.swmgs.com

Pike County's new claim to fame

If you watched the Who Do You Think You Are episode on actor, Noah Wylie, you know that his great-great-great grandfather, John H. Mills, is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Summit. Mills was born in Norwich, Chenango County, New York on March 21, 1843. He's listed with his parents, George and Caroline Mills, in the 1850 census of Huntsville, Alabama along with his siblings Mary A. Mills age 11, Caroline E. Mills age 7, and George W. Mills age 4. Both of his parents and his sisters Mary and Caroline were born in England, but his brother George was also born in New York. His father's occupation is shown as piano forte seller.

In 1860 John H. Mills, age 18, is living alone in Baton Rouge and his occupation is clerk. If the WDYTYA researchers found out who he worked for, they didn't disclose it. They did find out he served as a Private in Company L, Crescent Regiment, Louisiana Infantry from March 6, 1862 until June 5, 1862 and fought in the Battle of Shiloh, Tennessee, on April 6-7, 1862.

Sometime between 1860 and 1865 he met and married Mary Emily Brown of Summit and moved to Summit where he lived for the rest of his life. His obituary from the Summit Sun was read on air, and it said he was the town treasurer of Summit for 24 years. He was a well-known and respected citizen, and was the owner and founder of the Mills Addition in McComb. Unfortunately he had financial reverses and went to Jackson on June 18, 1904 where he committed suicide in Room 37 at the Lawrence House. He left a two-page letter explaining his financial problems and that by committing suicide, he was protecting his family and friends. He also left a letter to the Lawrence House owners asking for forgiveness for committing suicide in their hotel.

Workers and hotel residents near Room 37 heard the noise of a muffled shot around 12:30, but thought it was someone 'shooting at a dog in the streets or of midnight revelers shooting in the air.' The hotel porter found his body the next morning when Mills didn't respond to his knock.

In the 1870 census, he is listed as a grocery merchant, and there is a George W. Mills age 26 who was born in New

York listed in the census next to John Mills and family who could be his younger brother.

Of their nine children, only five lived to adulthood:

John B. Mills is listed in the 1870 census age 5 but no further information is found on him.

George William Mills, 1866-1951, is Noah Wylie's ancestor. He wound up in Lexington, Kentucky where he was a road contractor. He attended the Summit schools and then Mississippi A&M at Starkville. He married Marie Pemberton and they had five children.

Eugene Hunter Mills, 1869-1961, was a professional piano tuner associated with several piano companies in Shreveport where he was living at his death. He married Margaret West and they had four children.

Carrie E. Mills, 1871-1958, never married and was a music teacher. After her father's death she lived at home with her mother until they moved to Gulfport. After her mother's death, she moved to San Antonio, Texas and died there.

Henry Clay 'Harry' Mills, 1873-1932, was a realtor in Brookhaven. 'Mr. Mills was considered an authority on property values and spent a great deal of his time in the development of farm lands in the

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Annual Dues are due June 1

Individual: \$15.00 or Family: \$25.00

May Meeting

May 30, 2017 at 6:00 PM

at J. J. White Church
(Use last door on Third Street side)

Plans are to have a speaker but it hasn't been finalized as of today.

President's Corner

..... Rick Penick

Our March round-table discussion was very successful. At least half a dozen of our members reported they went on the Amite County H&G Society's March 18 NOLA trip and had a great time. Sonya Johnson shared her pictures from the annual Ford Encampment held in February. Those who didn't go really missed an interesting and educational event.

Other members shared information on their families and genealogy research. Everyone enjoyed the discussions so much it was hard to stop talking and the meeting ran longer than usual--a good sign!

Janice Brock has agreed to let us meet at her camp on the Bogue Chitto for the July meeting. It will be Saturday, July 29. See you on May 30!

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surrounding territory' according to his obituary in the Semi-Weekly Journal, McComb, MS. He married Fannie Moreton, daughter of Captain A. E. Moreton of Brookhaven and they had two children.

Hollis A. Mills, 1875-1910, was a prominent citizen of Gulfport, and Mills Avenue in the western part of the city was named for him. He died from injuries sustained when he was thrown from a buggy near Nicholson, MS. He was in the area selling life insurance. He and his family had recently moved to Jackson, and his wife died soon after the move leaving him with four small children.

In the 1920 census, his mother Mary Emily and his sister Carrie have three of his four children in their household: Samuel, 18, Mary Leatha 12, and Charles 9.

The Mills' last 3 children died young and have tombstones in Woodlawn:

Stella May Mills, 1878-1879
Walton Dudley Mills, 1880-1881
Molly Key Mills, 1881-1887

Mary Emily Brown Mills died September 28, 1928 at the Confederate Veteran's home at Beauvoir and is also buried in Woodlawn.

The Mills plot is on the Grant Street side of Woodlawn Cemetery on the left side of the first of three flag poles located on that side. A video of the Noah Wylie episode is available on YouTube.

DNA Testing

Ancestry.com recently announced that they have over four million samples in their DNA database. They were barely up to a million in July 2015, eleven months later they had increased it to two million, and seven months after that they were up to three million. Now, four months later in April 2017, it's increased to four million!

That's good news for those of us who have already taken the DNA test. More cousin matches to research and hopefully provide some information not already in our databases and maybe even help break through some brick walls.

The other popular DNA testing companies are FamilyTreeDNA, 23andMe and recently MyHeritage has added DNA testing. (I admit to a preference for Ancestry because there are a lot more family trees online with them than the other companies. Just having a match doesn't help much without the family information. vz)

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