### **UPCHURCH**

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- · Virginia Soldiers of 1776. 3 vols.
- · Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution
- · Records of the Revolutionary War
- · History of Virginia's Navy of the Revolution
- Catalogue of Revolutionary Soldiers and Sailors of the Commonwealth of Virginia
- Muster Rolls and Payrolls of Virginia Militia in the War of 1812. 2 vols.
- Virginia Military Records from The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, The William and Mary College Quarterly, and Tyler's Quarterly

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# YALOBUSHA COUNTY HISTORY

(MISSISSIPPI)

REC'O IN LTR 27 MAR 1991 MARILYN MILLER TO RPU

BY

# THE HERITAGE COMMITTEE

OF.

# THE YALOBUSHA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ISBN 0-88107-004-1

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In this environment of culture, service and friendliness, Hazel was reared and, unerringly, the finer attributes of lovely Christian womanhood found expression in her character.

The thirty-first chapter of Proverbs describes the model woman and, taken verse by verse, each one portrays an outstanding

woman.

While Mr. and Mrs. Tyson had no children of their own, they were foster parents of Mrs. Tyson's nephew and niece, John McDermott III and Mary Claire McDermott, and were loved by the children of our whole community.

characteristic peculiar to this lovely young

Mr. Tyson was the owner and manager of the local theater "The Grand". He was one of the leading business men of the city. He helped decorate the city streets at Christmas time. After the Band Stand was erected on Main Street he took great pride in decorating it so that not only the people of Water Valley enjoyed it but also the people traveling through at this time of the year. Mr. Tyson was also a devoted horticulturist. His yards were a riot of color every spring with azaleas in full bloom. People came from far and near to view his gardens.

Succeeding her mother as the homemaker, in the family household, the McDermott home continued to be the rendezvou of friends who found an unfailing welcome, happiness, good cheer and fellowship.

Mrs. Tyson's kindly generosity knew no bounds of creed or color, but reached into unexpected corners, wherever need existed. The rich, the poor, the humble, the great, black and white held her in affectionate esteem. There was no harshness in her conception of the word duty. Ella Wheeler Wilcox's stanza upon the worth of kindness summarizes Hazel McDermott Tyson's philosophy of living: "So many gods, so many creeds, So many paths that wind and wind, when just the art of being kind is all this sad world needs."

by Alma B. Hart

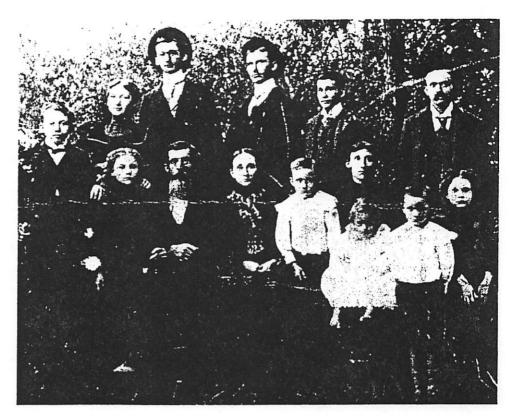
## UPCHURCH, ROBERT BURTON, SR.

F520

Robert Burton Upchurch, Sr. (my grandfather) was born July 4, 1848 in Green County, Alabama near Eutaw. He lived and grew to manhood in this area as a farmer.

He was married to Eliza Elizabeth Pendergrass on February 4, 1871 in Greene County, Alabama. They lived in Greene County for five years. I have heard my grandmother tell how when she was first married, she did not have a cook stove. Her only utensil was a cast iron oven. She cooked vegetables, baked bread with hot coals from the fireplace. She covered her potatoes with hot ashes to bake them. She had to cook one thing at a time in that small oven. She used it for a dishpan when she was through with her meal.

When they had two small children, they decided to look for greener pastures. In 1876, they came by covered wagon along with Mr.



The Robert Burton Upchurch, Sr. Family. Front (L-R): Meaders, Maifred, Robert B., Eliza P., Fred Pittman, Elizabeth U. Pittman, Allie Pittman, Carl Pittman, Minnie Womack. Back (L-R): Leona, John, Joseph, Robert Burton (Burt), William E. Womack.

J. Madison and Levi Williams and their families. Bob, as my grandfather was known, stopped off in Velma Community. They lived there to rent a farm for two years. Then they moved to the farm that is now owned by Forrest Barber, Cole Williams, Mike Shaw, Doris Murphree and some of the Stanley Farm and a small acreage owned by Henry Gee Estate.

My father, Robert Burton, Jr., was born on 12-7-1884 on this place. According to the Deed Books in the Coffeeville Courthouse, Robert Burton and Eliza Elizabeth Upchurch purchased this land from L. Newburger. The first part he bought in 1881 then in 1886 approximately one section, they purchased for less than fifteen hundred dollars. They moved to the antebllum home on the other hill in 1886. He along with his sons operated a horse drawn gin and farmed the acreage mostly in cotton and corn.

Bob Upchurch was known over a large area for his honesty and deep religious convictions. He joined the Shiloh Primitive Church in 1876. He was a church clerk then was ordained as deacon. His home was a christian home, always open to those less fortunate.

In those days, people had to travel by wagon or buggy. Churches were few and far apart. However, his family was lucky to live in the community where the first church in Yalobusha County was organized in 1835.

When there were annual meetings or associational meetings, people came from miles around. They had to spend nights with people in the community. Once there was an association meeting and about seventy people went home with my grandfather to spend the night with him. The tale was, to out do my grandfather, another member took

seventy-five people home with him. He had to get up and kill a beef before breakfast to feed the crowd. This was around 1900.

Back in those days, they had a big school at Shiloh. It was a two room school house and had two teachers. The school house was on a hill. The water was from a spring at the bottom of the hill. The Baptizing pool for the churches was filled with water from this spring. The Upchurch home was usually the boarding place for the school teachers.

My grandmother made the clothes for the family. They wore brogan shoes, one pair had to last a year.. She spun the thread and knitted socks for the boys and stockings for the girls.

My grandfather had a skin cancer on his face in 1900. He had it removed, but it metastasized to his stomach and he died as a result of cancer on July 29, 1905. Elder Claud Cayce came from Louisville, Kentucky to hold his funeral. He was buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery, Yalobusha County, Mississippi.

My grandmother lived on the farm until the children were all married and away except the grandchild, Mayfred Upchurch Breedlove, whom she had reared from a very young age. Her grandson, Fred Pittman, built her a house in Coffeeville where she lived as long as she could care for herself. Infirmities of age caused her to move to the home of her son, Burt in 1928 where she lived for five years. Then she moved with her daughter, Leona and lived two years. She died of old age on November 24, 1936. She is buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery, Yalobusha County, Mississippi.

Robert Burton, Sr. and Eliza Elizabeth (Ida) raised a family of four boys and five girls. One daughter, Mary Bell, born 1889 died 1890, buried at Shiloh Cemetery, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. All other children grew up, married and had families.

Arminia Elivira, born 6-11-1873 in Greene County, Alabama. She married William Edwin Womack, born 1869. She died on January 19, 1894 leaving one daughter eight days old, Minnie, born 1-11-1894. Minnie married S. Van Perkins and died in 1980 leaving two boys and two girls. One of her sons, Paul was killed in World War II.

Elizabeth Ridgeway, born 5-14-1875 in Greene County, Alabama. She married on 3-1-1898 to Robert Francis Pittman, born 6-14-1871. She died 9-29-1945 and is buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. They had seven boys, Fred, Carl, Allie, Ira, an Infant, John Oscar who was killed in World War II,

John Stephen Upchurch, born 9-17-1877 and married 12-12-1900 to Ada Perkins, born 8-30-1880. She died 3-20-1910 and is buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. They had one infant son, born and died 4-15-1909 and is buried at Shiloh Cemetery. They had one daughter, Ida Maifred, born 2-20-1909. His wife Ada was sick and died one year later. My grandmother, Ida Upchurch reared the child. On 1-17-1915, John married Betty Sue Norfleet, born 3-20-1890 and died 3-3-1946 in a plane crash. She is buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery. Their children are John Norfleet, Robert Leon (dec.), Minnie Delorese, Mary Steven (dead and buried in California). Evelyn and an infant daughter. John Stephen died as a result of an accident in Jackson, Mississippi 5-29-1948. He was a prominent druggist in Coffeeville, Mississippi prior to the "Great

Joseph Oscar Upchurch, born 10-4-1879 in Yalobusha County, Mississippi and married on 12-24-1906 to Effie Terry, born 7-28-1880. They had two daughters who died in infancy and two sons, Robert William, deceased and Earl Curtis, deceased. Joseph Oscar died 4-2-1952 and buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. Effic Terry died 2-21-1954 and buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery. Robert William is buried in Jackson, Mississippi. Earl Curtis is buried at Oak Hill,

Water Valley, Mississippi.

Leona Eleanor Upchurch, born 6-25-1882 and married on 10-27-1914 to John Pittman, born 12-25-1882 and died 5-14-1949. He is buried in the Coffeeville Cemetery. Leona died 2-14-1962 in Grenada County Hospital. She is buried in the Coffeeville Cemetery. They had two boys and two girls; Issac, Ida, Mary Leona and Robert Daniel, all living at present time.

Robert Burton Upchurch, Jr., born 12-7-1884 and married 3-12-1912 to Lizzie Ellen York in Yalobusha County, Mississippi. Burt died of heart condition on 2-5-1966. Lizzie died at age 92 on 8-30-1974 both are buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery. They had seven children, six girls and one boy. One child died at eight months, Lura, born 1-16-1916 and died 8-1916. She is buried at Shiloh Cemetery. The others are: Julia, Mary, Juanita, Dr. William Upchurch (Chemist, University of Missouri), Martha and Burtie.

Egbert Meaders, born 3-7-1887 and married Zenie Palmertree, born 12-29-1892. Meaders died 8-26-1971. Zenie died 5-10-1980 in Panola County, Mississippi. Both are buried at Shiloh Cemetery. They had three boys: James, Egbert (deceased) and Fred. Egbert died 1-10-1981 in Panola County, Mississippi and buried in Yalobusha County, Mississippi.

Mary Belle, born 1889 and died 1890.

Maifred Carrie Upchurch, born 4-20-1891 and married 3-24-1917 to John Bonds Dulaney of Guntown, Mississippi. He was large plantation owner and operator in Earle, Arkansas. He died 3-15-1972 in West Memphis, Arkansas and buried at Crittenden County, Arkansas. Maifred Carrie was a piano teacher for many years. She died 8-12-1980 in West Memphis, Arkansas. She too is buried at Crittenden County, Arkansas. They had five children: Francis, Carolyn, Elizabeth, (one died in infancy), John Bonds and Thomas Mayfred.

Robert Burton Upchurch, Sr. so lived while he journeyed on this earth that his light will ever shine in the minds of all who knew or knew of him. His love and kindness for his

fellow man shall never die.

Robert Burton Upchurch, Sr. was a seventh generation decendent of Michael Upchurch who migrated to Virginia in 1635. He came on The Mayflower from Dedham, England. Deep religious convictions date back to Kent County, England in 1120.

by Julia Upchurch Morgan

### UPCHURCH, JOSEPH OSCAR

F521 &

Joseph Oscar Upchurch was the fourth child of Robert Burton Upchurch and Eliza Elizabeth Pendergrass Upchurch, of Green County, Ala.

Joseph Oscar (1879-1952), married France ス Effie Terry (1880-1954) in Yalobusha County, Mississippi, in 1906. Joseph Oscar was a community leader, prominent farmer, active member of the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church and a good neighbor.

Joseph Oscar and Effie, had four children. Infant daughter born and died in 1908, Infant daughter, born and died 1919. These children are buried in the Shiloh Church Cemetery, beside Joseph Oscar and Frances Effie.

Robert William, 1910-1974, second child of Joseph Oscar and Frances Effie Upchurch, amarried Tommie Elizabeth Williams in 1938. They had two children, Robert Kimmons and Betsy.

Earl Curtis, (1911-1974), third child of Joseph Oscar and Frances Effie Upchurch, married Annie Ruth Cole (1910-1978):

Earl Curtis and Annie Ruth had four children. The first child, Billy Joe Upchurch, born November 12, 1936, married Patsy Peoples, August 15, 1954. Two sons were born to this union, Carl Ray Upchurch, born August 29, 1957. Carl Ray married Elizabeth Ann Bailey, June 6, 1978. Carl Ray and Elizabeth Ann have one daughter, Ruth Marie Upchurch, born January 22, 1982.

Robert Earl Upchurch, second son of Billy Joe and Patsy Upchurch was born January 25, 1960.



Joseph Oscar Upchurch.

Betty Ann Upchurch, the second child of Earl Curtis and Annie Ruth Upchurch, born September 12, 1938, married Dayton Louie Prestage. Betty and Dayton have three daughters. Terry Diane, born September 6, 1959, Sherry Lynn, born September 24, 1960, Myra Ann, born September 30, 1965. Sherry Lyyn has one daughter, Amy Marie, born February 12, 1980.

Frances Kathleen Upchurch, the third child of Earl Curtis and Annie Ruth Upchurch, born November 28, 1942, married Edward Lee Rowsey. Kathleen and Lee have two children, Edward Lee Rowsey, III, born May 1, 1969 and Melissa Rowsey, born May 21, 1973.

Patsy Ruth Upchurch, the fourth child of Earl Curtis and Annie Ruth Upchurch, born July 22, 1944, married Jimmy Bruce Hall. They have one daughter, Kathy Lynn Hall born September 24, 1967.

by Patsy Upchurch

### UPCHURCH, ROBERT BURTON, JR.

F522

My father Robert Burton Upchurch, Jr. was born December 7, 1884. The sixth child of Robert Burton, Sr. and Eliza Elizabeth (Ida) Upchurch. He was born, reared and died in the same community in Yalobusha County. He always had love and respect for his fellow man.

A strict business man, he was a very successful farmer and livestock man. Some of the best Jersey cows grown in Yalobusha County were grown by his family and him. For many years they milked by hand many cows. The milk was separated from the cream with a hand turned separator. All that skim



The Robert Burton (Burt) Upchurch Family. Seated, Robert Burton (Burt) Upchurch and wife, Lizzie York Upchurch—1962, on their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Standing (L-R): Julia, Juanita, William, Martha, Burtie, Mary.

milk along with fine home grown corn, grew some fine hogs.

He was a man of his word and that was an honest word. Many times people have said, "What Burt Upchurch tells, you can rely upon it." "He will not lie to you under any circumstances."

He lived at home with his mother for twenty eight years. A young lady boarded with them in 1911 and taught at the Shiloh school. She was Miss Lizzie Ellen York. They were married March 14, 1912 in the York home. Elder A. B. Morris went from his home in Shiloh community in a down pour of rain to the Skuna Valley Community to perform the ceremony.

Daddy had bought a farm from Mr. Ginner Brown. They had it all furnished and ready to live in when they were married. The house was a two room log house with a dog trot, a dining room and kitchen with shedded rooms. There were two rooms upstairs. The stairs didn't have a rail. Once I fell all the way down.

In February, 1919, Daddy had appendicitis, acute. Uncle Joe Upchurch and Dr. Hilliard Griffin went with him by train from Coffeeville to Memphis, Tennessee for the operation. His pain had subsided late the night before. The Memphis doctor wanted to wait until next day for surgery since it was eight o'clock p.m. when he got to the hospital. Daddy told him, "I came to get this operation over and now is the time." God surely had a hand in this deal. The appendix had been

ruptured several hours. That was before penicillin.

That farming season he could get no help. Mother made a regular field hand. I cooked and helped my sister see after the two younger ones. To look back now, I wonder how they fared on what a seven year old would cook. We all stayed alive and healthy.

My father had deep religious convictions. He was a devoted member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church where he served as church clerk for thirty years. If anything needed to be done at the church or cemetery, he felt it was his duty to do it. Back years ago, no back hoe came to the cemetery to dig graves. People in the neighborhood gathered in and dug it with a shovel. I feel that I could safely say that my dad was present every time, unless providentiality hendered; and that was seldom.

He had one tenant to live on his place for twenty five years. He said when he was no longer able to farm, "I don't know why I didn't find Mr. Burt sooner." Any person who ever worked for him would vouch to the fact that he never cheated them out of one cent. He would go the long mile to help them when they needed help.

In 1920, Daddy and mother decided to build a new home. Mother wanted to get off the top of a steep hill. So they went over the hill into the valley and with the help of Mr. Water Spiers and Fred Pittman, they built that house. The shingles were cypress dipped in hot creosote right in the back yard. Every plank of the weather boarding was rough sawn and painted before it was nailed up. There is enough cross ventilation in that house one hardly needs air conditioning after the sun goes down on a hot day.

In 1924, Daddy bought his first car, a Ford Touring Car. It's full cost was four hundred dollars.

A bought piece of ham, gallon of milk, pound of corn meal, pound of butter, hen or fryer, or a ready made dress or any type of underwear was unheard of at the Upchurch house. The Upchurch family was a team, a team that worked together. Daddy and Mother were not hard on us. They showered us with all the love anyone could ever need, but we knew what they said was what they meant. No need to plead for more.

My mother was a school teacher. She taught several years after they were married. It is really fun to walk a half mile to school with your own mother. I did not have the opportunity to go to school under her. She taught when I was a baby and next time I was in the fifth grade. So I missed her good school teaching.

Daddy's health began to fail in 1939. He kept on the go and did some farming, but on a lesser scale. My children fondly recall their childhood when they were helping "Ban-daddy" hoe, chop wood, or mend the fence. Their greatest fun was to ride the huge load of hay from the field to the barn to be pulled on a hay carrier by a horse up into the big barn loft.

That big barn loft was a great place for hens to steal a nest. Many a time we searched for huge nests full of eggs. Maybe three or four hens were laying in one nest. Daddy took the eggs and the cream to town about twice a week in the wagon. The cream would be shipped, by train, to Louisville, Kentucky or some other processing place. The eggs bought the sugar and flour, toilet soap, etc. We made the lye soap to wash the clothes with, using cracklings and merry war lye. It got them clean along with some boiling in the pot and scrubbing on the rub board.

In 1964, Daddy had a stroke. He never was well anymore. On February 5, 1966 after a bout with pneumonia and congestive heart failure, he died. Elder W. C. Moak held a very sweet memorial service for him. He was laid to rest in the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery, Yalobusha County.

Though in poor helath, Mother survived him eight years. She got around sometimes, slowly, for four years. Then in the spring of 1970, she had a severe illness which left her incapacitated. Between the children, she was well cared for and lived until August 30, 1974. She is also buried at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Cemetery. My mother and daddy were pillars in Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church. Mother's first membership was at Airmount. After she married Daddy, she moved her membership to Shiloh. May it be known that a meal was prepared for company every single time there was preaching at Shiloh.

There were six girls and one boy in our family.

Julia Elizabeth, born 12-5-1912, married 12-20-30, Yalobusha County to Kermit Demps Morgan, born 4-5-1910 in Calhoun County, Mississippi. They had two sons, Robert Herman Morgan, born 1-19-32, Yalobusha County and William Andrew Morgan, born 4-3-1938, Yalobusha County, Mississippi.

Mary Eleanor, born 9-3-1914, married 5-31-1943, Mayfield, Kentucky to Mark E. Smith, born 7-29-1916, Flora, Mississippi. They have two children Judy Carrol, born 11-12-1954 and Mark Rodney, born 7-28-1947.

Lura Amelia, born 1-16-1916 and died 9-8-1916, acute indigestion.

Juanita Olivia, born 8-18-1917, retired

public health nurse. She never married.
William Joseph, born 9-26-1919, married 6-2-1953 to Miss Ruth Crowley, Cookeville, Tennessee, b. 1-14-1919, Cookeville, Tenn. They now reside in Columbia, Missouri where he is a soil chemist with a doctrate in agronomy. They have one son and one daughter. Robert Burton Upchurch, Captain, USN, born 6-12-1954, Columbia, Mo. Lois Jean Crowley, born 2-22-1956, Columbia, Mo.

Martha Reba, born 12-26-1921, married 8-17-1943 in Pontotoc County, Mississippi to James Madison Rutlege, born 8-8-1919 in Pontotoc County. They have two daughters. Martha Jane, born 11-16-1944 in Yalobusha County and Ann Elizabeth, born 5-11-1956, Cleveland, Mississippi.

Burtie York, born 1-27-1925, married 2-4-1951 in Montgomery County, Mississippi to Curtis Quay Hamilton, born 2-18-1925 in Lafayette County, Mississippi. Two children, C. Q. Hamilton, Jr., b. 1-30-1956, Coahoma, Co., Ms; Laura Ellen b. 9-16-1958, Coahoma, Co., Ms.

So has the life of R. B. Upchurch, Jr. passed down through the pages of time. He left a light shining that will shine on for many years. The love and devotion for his fellow man, Church, community and State will be remembered for a long time. His honesty and kindness has left foot prints upon the sands of time.

by Julia Upchurch Morgan

### UPCHURCH, ROBERT WILLIAM

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Robert William Upchurch the eldest son of J. O. and Effie Upchurch, born September 10, 1909, in Yalobusha County. He grew up on the family farm four miles north of Coffeeville and attended public schools of Yalobusha County, graduating from Jeff Davis Consolidated School in 1928. In the Fall of 1928 he enrolled at the University of Mississippi and in September of 1933 received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. Before graduating from Law School, he was elected to the Mississippi Legislature and served as a representative of Yalobusha County from 1932 to 1940. While in the Legislature, he served on the Committees for Fees and Salaries, Appropriations, Federal Relations and Judiciary.

After receiving his law degree, he opened his law office in Coffeeville and later formed a partnership with R. F. Kimmons of Water Valley under the name of Kimmons and Upchurch.

On January 30, 1933, he was married to Tommie Williams of Water Valley. The



Robert William Upchurch, 1909-1974.

Coffeville Courier carried the following account of the marriage:

"Representative Bob Upchurch stole a march on his friends Sunday morning when he motored to Jeff Davis and claimed the heart and hand of Miss Tommie Williams, talented daughter of the late Monroe Williams and Mrs. M. E. Williams.

The wedding climaxed a romance that blossomed back in their early school days.

Rev. L. J. Crumby, Baptist minister, performed the ceremony and the happy couple left immediately for Jackson where Mr. Upchurch is engaged in his legislative duties.

The Courier joins with their host of friends in wishing them the best of things of life."

Mr. Upchurch continued in the private law practice until 1943 when he entered the United States Navy. He was on active duty until October of 1946 and separated from the Navy with the rank of Lt. Commander.

After completing his military service, he and his family moved to Oxford, Mississippi, where he was employed by the Veterans Administration as a field examiner. In 1948-49 he was a staff attorney with the Veterans Administration in Dallas, Texas. In 1949 he came to the Veterans Administration Center in Jackson, Mississippi, as Assistant Chief Attorney and in 1963 he was appointed Chief Attorney and served in this capacity until his death in 1974.

He was instrumental in the organization of the Mississippi Chapter of the Federal Bar Association having served as President of the Mississippi Chapter in 1968-69 and served as Vice-President of the National Association in 1970. At his death, the Mississippi Chapter established a scholarship fund in his memory at the University of Mississippi School of Law.

He was an active member of the Parkway Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi, where he served in many capacities, including Chairman of Deacons, Superintendent of Sunday School and Director of the College Sunday School Department.

Robert William and Tommie had two children, a son, Robert Kimmons, born July 19, 1942, who is a lawyer in Tupelo, Mississippi. Robert Kimmons married Joan Baton of Jackson, Mississippi, they have three sons, Robert Kimmons II, born November 21, 1967, David Walker, born May 20, 1970, Richard William, born March 13, 1974.

Elizabeth "Betsy", daughter of Robert William and Tommie, born July 31, 1944, married Douglas McCullough, they have three children, Elizabeth, born July 2, 1977, Amy Ruth, born October 10, 1978 and Johnathan Douglas, born January 10, 1982. They live in Clinton, Mississippi.

by Robert Kimmons Upchurch

### **USRY FAMILY**

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In the late 1700's or early 1800's, a ship loaded with members of the Usry family left Ireland. Some disembarked in England, the remainder continued on to the United States.

The first Usrys migrated into Mississippi from North Carolina. They are said to have been one of four original families to settle what is now southeastern Yalobusha County and parts of Calhoun County around what was once called Burke.

William, John, Jeff and Nath are the earliest Mississippi Usrys that can be recalled by today's living Usrys. All four served in the Civil War. Only one is known to have survived the war. He made his way home as far as Tennessee (possibly Memphis) where he is said to have killed a man and been sentenced to the Tennessee prison. Exactly what