The Englishes

A FAMILY PORTRAIT

THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATIONS

UNTIL 1860, THE LIFE OF THE ENGLISH FAMILY in upper Talladega County had been about building—building for the future, confident that their hard labor and sacrifice would be redeemed in the comforts and prosperity their descendants would enjoy. Twenty-three years after the family arrived on the upper-county frontier, in 1859, Talladega was finally linked to the rest of the state by steel rails. Railways were the interstate highways of their day, radically altering the many ways of life across the countryside. (Even so, Talladega County was still without a telegraph wire.) Judge Vandiver remembered the day that the first locomotive arrived:

> *When the Alabama and Tennessee Rivers Railroad completed laying its rails to the tank in the northwest portion of the city in 1859, and the first train steamed up into the grove there, a crowd of 5,000 people was waiting with mouths agape. Some had traveled fifty miles to see the sight, and hundreds had camped all night in the grove waiting for the steam engine's arrival. Out of that crowd, at least 4,800 had never seen a train of cars, and when the engine whistled and came in with clouds of smoke and steam hissing, many broke for the woods and fled for their lives, thinking that the engine had exploded.*
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> *The* Watchtower *of July 4, 1860, published the following: 'We learn that from and after this date the Alabama and Tennessee Rivers Railroad will observe the following schedule: leave Talladega at 7:30 A.M., arrive at Selma 1:30 P.M.; leave Selma at 10:00 A.M., arrive at Talladega at 5:00 P.M.' Until the railroad began operating, Talladega had remained relatively isolated from larger towns and cities. Most of the merchants bought their goods in faraway Charleston, S.C. Selma then became the primary market town for Talladega, and its merchants began advertising in the Talladega newspapers.*

Originating in Selma, the 135-mile route followed MacIntosh Trace across Talladega County. Plans called for it to eventually pass through Rome, Georgia, before terminating in Dalton, a distance of 160 miles. By 1862, the rails reached Blue Mountain (present-day Anniston), where an iron furnace had been built to take advantage of the area's rich mineral deposits. The railroad not only provided passenger service but also unimpeded transportation to the cotton market at Selma, where steamboats plowed the Alabama River to the port at Mobile. North of Talladega, the train stopped at Kelly's Springs, near the Curry family's general store and post office. Five miles further north, a boarding house was built to house the construction workers. It was operated by a Mrs. Munford, and the railroad station established there gave birth to a new town named Munford, only a few miles from the English family farm. Thereafter, their return address would be Munford, Alabama.

When the Englishes arrived in Alabama in 1820, the state's population numbered 127,000. By 1860, it had risen to 964,000,

almost half of whom were the Negro slaves required to fuel the cotton-based economy, which accounted for 60% of U.S. exports. A majority of Alabamans owned small farms, while only ten percent of these farmers owned a slave. In Talladega County in 1860, 39% of the population were enslaved. Describing Talladega in 1860, Vandiver wrote:

> *The town was small—a dinky little hamlet, with the bumptiousness always appertaining to a small, narrow, rural village—the population not exceeding eight hundred. The citizens of the town were mostly farmers who had moved from the country in order to educate their children. The public square was a collection of odd-sized wooden buildings, with one brick building on the north side, two on the east, none on the south and two on the west side. When it rained, there was a pond in the middle of the square, about 75 feet northeast of the courthouse. The courthouse was a three story building, the third story being partly used as a dormitory and storeroom. Two weekly newspapers were published, the* Democratic Watchtower *and the* Alabama Reporter*, both of them seven-column folios.*
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> *A picture of Talladega city and county in 1860 would resemble any other rural, agricultural community in the United States. Slave labor cultivated the fields and daily papers were unknown. There was not a bathtub in the county; parlor matches were just coming into use. Every planter made it an invariable rule to come to town at least once a week and spend the day there talking politics. The politics of that time is but little understood at this day. Whig and Democrat were the names bestowed upon each other by the contending factions, each adherent hating, or pretending to hate, the other emphatically. These two great parties divided then, as now, more on the question of spoils, and the division thereof, than on any real difference. After all, the real issue in the politics of all nations is a fight on the part of the outs to get in, and a struggle on the part of the ins to stay there.*
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> *There was much fear among the white people of a Negro insurrection, so that stringent laws, both state and municipal, were enacted to keep the Negroes in subjection. On December 18, 1860, Mayor M.H. Cruikshank issued this statement: "As a measure of precaution and prudence on the part of our citizens, in view of the excitement and apprehension with regard to our slave population, I would respectfully suggest that each citizen keep a strict patrol over his own premises and servants, and that Negro gatherings be strictly prohibited during the approaching holidays. Patrol companies have been appointed and persons who give their Negroes holidays should provide them with proper passes." Should the Negro he caught out after dark without a pass, it was the custom of the patrol then and there to whip the offender, the number of lashes being limited, either by law or custom, to thirty-nine. The young bloods of the town freely volunteered for this patrol service, as it was great fun for them to spend the hours of the night in hunting Negroes and in fun, dissipation and frolic.*

Census records for 1860 placed the town's population at around 1,500, while the total white population of the county numbered 14,600, with 8,900 slaves. Margaret Rose English's household included herself, age 46, a farmer with real estate valued at $10,000 and personal property at $17,700; her children—Emma Harriet, 17; James Samuel Crawford, a farmer, 16; Sallie Margaret, 14; Laura Jane, 12; Thomas Parker, 10—and E.D.J. Echols, 25, who was identified as a Georgia-born "personal physician." Echols most likely boarded with the Englishes in exchange for his services. Margaret then owned 19 enslaved people: five adult males (ages 26, 27, 30 and 70), four adult females (ages 20, 25, 36 and 36) with eleven children (from 10 months to 14 years of age). They lived in three houses on the farm. A decade after Alex's death, the family was enjoying a comfortable life.

The results of that year's presidential election may have come as a surprise to Alabama voters. The winner, Abraham Lincoln, was not listed on their ballot, his Republican Party having been founded only six years earlier to combat the westward expansion of slavery. Two Democrats, Stephen Douglas and John C. Breckinridge, had vied for the Alabama vote, with Breckinridge winning. As a result, secession from the Union became the unavoidable topic of conversation and a divisive issue throughout the South. According to Judge Vandiver, "Talladega County contained a majority of voters opposed to the dissolution of the Union. Those who opposed secession and favored the abolition of slavery

were known as *cooperationists* because they favored cooperative and continued efforts to preserve the Union."[1] But in January 1861, Southern states began seceding, leaving its cooperationist citizens no choice but to halfheartedly accept the consequences. Although Massachusetts and other New England states had a long record of threatening to secede, no state had actually carried through with it until eleven Southern states formed the Confederate States of America. The outcome was war between the northern and southern states.

THE CIVIL WAR

A letter from a Talladega citizen, dated June 10, 1861, described the local response in the early, optimistic days of the war:

> *It is impossible to do anything at home, and besides when a Southern home is threatened, and the spirit of resistance is irrepressible, next week our County will have four full companies in the field. We have a Ladies Aid Society, supplying the soldiers with comfortable clothing and the necessaries of the occasion. All men, rich and poor, are coming up generously and paying the amount of their taxes extra for the benefit of the soldiery and their families. This, the paying of a double tax, is done voluntarily, and in all cases with the greatest cheerfulness. Once a week, every place of business in our village is closed for one hour, and all people with one accord repair to one of the churches to offer up prayer to the God of Nations and of battles to preserve our country and shield our armies. A God fearing people will never be delivered over to their enemies.*

There is no indication that Talladega's enslaved Black population understood that their freedom was at stake. Judge Vandiver wrote: "Many of the Negroes, especially those who had young masters in the companies, were as anxious to go to the war as were the whites."

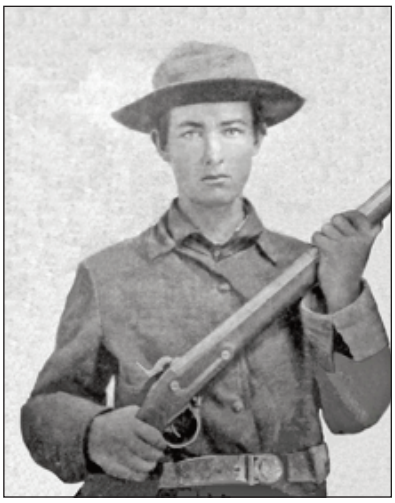
When war came, Margaret English faced her greatest challenge: maintaining the farm without the help of her son. On May 9, 1862, four months shy of his eighteenth birthday, Jim English enlisted in the Alabama 42nd Infantry Regiment, G Company. Two of his older cousins, Thomas Best and Jim Adams, had already joined up and, like everyone else, expected the war to end victoriously within a matter of months. Jim English and Jim Adams were as close as brothers. Sharing a name, they were sons of two widowed sisters. They hoped to serve in the same regiment, but that was not to be. However, their paths as soldiers would cross numerous times, as reported in their letters.

The 42nd Alabama was organized at Columbus, Mississippi, and there Jim English chanced upon Mary L. English Johnson, a daughter of his uncle John. She had been sixteen years old when her father uprooted his family and moved from Talladega to Mississipi, before Jim was born. Their strong sense of blood kinship made a cordial relationship instantaneous, and when he contracted measles three days later, she nursed him through it in her home. (The measles virus would take the lives of thousands of Civil War soldiers.) From Mary, he learned that her six brothers had enlisted in the Mississippi 43rd Infantry Regiment. During the course of the war, he would become acquainted with several of them, referring to his newfound cousins as "the English boys."

Until then, Jim had never traveled far from home nor had any reason to write a letter, but he promised to write faithfully and counted on receiving letters from home.[2] After he'd been away only a few months, Margaret wrote and

1. Without an adult male in their household, the Englishes were not represented in the election vote.
2. The Confederacy had immediately organized a postal system and begun printing its own stamps. As long as railway transit was unimpeded, mail flowed to and from the camps and battlefields with surprising efficiency.

begged him to return home; then Emma appealed to him to return "to attend Ma's business." Their pleas would continue throughout the war. Although he longed for home and often disparaged the soldier's life, he understood the consequences of desertion: "I reckon there is no chance… If I knew that I could get off, I would try it—but I would not know how to fix it up to get to come home. I don't know whether the law would let me come or would exempt me from the service. I would like to come very bad if I could. A good bed and good meals would do me good. I never wanted the war to end so bad before." Through his letters, the family followed the 42nd Alabama from Columbus to the Battle of Corinth (Oct. 1862), to the siege at Vicksburg (July 1863), through his term as a prisoner of war at Demopolis, to the Battles of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge (Nov. 1863), to Dalton, Georgia (until May 1864) and to the defense of Atlanta, where he was wounded (Aug. 7, 1864). After recovering from his injury, Jim rejoined the regiment at Spanish Fort on Mobile Bay (until January 1865) before surrendering at Bentonville, North Carolina (April 26, 1865). Two furloughs allowed him to return home for visits with his family.



Pvt. James S.C. English, 1861

In her memoirs, one Talladega woman recalled the county's descent from Antebellum romance to wartime's terrible truth:

> *Most of the volunteers looked upon soldiering as a protracted picnic, but within less than a year the stern reality of horrid war began to be felt … Letters began to be received from the front, telling of bloody fields, the death grip of actual war, the shrieks of the wounded, the news of dead loved ones. Men were scarce; women tilled the fields or waited at home in anxious suspense. Home guards were called for, resulting in the enlisting of old men in their dotage and aging grandfathers who should have been slumbering by their fireside.*

Union blockades of the South's ports had quickly resulted in shortages of the commodities that weren't manufactured or grown in the Southern states, including medicines, salt and woolen clothing, as well as coffee and tea. In Talladega, substitutes for coffee were attempted, using parched potatoes, chiccory and peanuts, while a tea was concocted from raspberry leaves. In the first two years of the war, planting cotton largely ceased, while the demand for it in Europe and the Union states surged.[3] When production resumed in 1863, what had sold for ten cents a pound before the war returned twice that. Margaret's slaves produced sixteen bales (almost four tons) that year.

The distant war took its toll on Talladega's children, most of whose fathers were away soldiering. The town's private schools remained open, and the English children's education continued at least until April 1863 when the family's expenses included $28.00 for tuition. In Sept. 1863, T.J. Gooch, a Methodist minister, announced the opening of the Midway High School—"an English and Classical School"—in Munford. Tuition for the five-month term ranged from fifteen to thirty dollars, with additional fees for music, Latin and Greek studies as well as the use of a piano. In his advertisement, Gooch wrote: "This being one of the most healthy localities in Ala, offers superior advantages to parents Guardians. The services of a competent Music Teacher has been obtained. Good boarding can be obtained

3. Not planting cotton in 1862 was a political move. Southern-grown cotton accounted for 60% of the nation's exports and 75% of the world's supply, and the Confederacy reckoned that depriving foreign markets of its cotton would hasten the Union's acceding to its independence. That was not the case. England and the European countries then began importing cotton from Egypt and Turkey. As the Union took control of rural areas in the South, cotton production resumed there, with the harvest commandeered to northern mills. The Southern "King Cotton" economy would never fully recover.

in the neighborhood much cheaper than in the towns and cities." As the war stretched on beyond anyone's expectation, children were enlisted in the war effort: companies of boys from 12 to 16 years of age were organized for local guard duty while girls knitted socks for soldiers.Margaret and her three daughters kept busy sewing and knitting for Jim and his soldier cousins, anxiously awaiting news of them. One of their neighbors, William M. Richey, regularly traveled to wherever the 42nd Alabama was camped. His four sons were also members of G Company, and he arrived with letters, bundles of clothing and boxes of food for the company, then returned with letters for their families and the most immediate news available. News from the battle fronts was limited. Talladega's newspapers, the *Democratic Watchtower* and *Alabama Reporter*, continued to publish a two-page issue each week, reprinting the telegraph news from the Selma papers, Selma being the only town with a daily paper that was connected to Talladega by railway. They sometimes reprinted reports from newspapers as faraway as the *New York Times, Richmond Examiner* and *New York Daily News*, as well as dispatches from the federal government in Washington. Readers knew the names of politicians and generals, but the technology for illustrating newspapers with photographs was decades away, and they could only imagine the looks of Lincoln, Lee and Grant.

Emma English took the family prize for letter writing, not only to her brother but also to her cousins. Their replies to her letters reveal how dependent the soldiers were on news and provisions from home. Her 21-year-old cousin James A. (Jim) Adams had enlisted in the 30th Alabama Infantry, H Co., in 1862 with the expectation that Jim English would be assigned to the same regiment. He was the son of Margaret's sister, and the two Cousin Jims were as close as brothers. But Jim English ended up in the 42nd Alabama. In a letter to Emma from Cumberland Gap in east Tennessee that May, Jim Adams wrote "I have not gotten my daguerreotype taken. Some of our boys believed that it was bad luck to have it taken. You may notice that all of the boys that leave their likeness most surely get shot or die for it. Does not look like any human being after they are dead." Months later, the 30th Alabama traversed the state to Vicksburg, where the two Jims were reunited. In March 1863, Jim Adams developed smallpox. From the city hospital, he wrote to Emma: "I happened to go and see Jim [English] when he received his box of provisions about three or four weeks ago. I received a letter from you the day the box came. … I want you to tell Mary Hannah to make me a hat like she made for Tom Eliott and about the same size, if she pleases, and to send it the first good chance to me." A month later, Jim English visited him, writing: "I went down to see Jim Adams yesterday and stayed all night with him. He is in very bad health. He also looks bad. He has been to the hospital but returned to camps again. He will try to get home, which I think he will. I don't think he will be able to do any duty until he does go home. He will have to go before the board to be examined. I know they will not refuse any person that is in as bad health as he is." Jim Adams was transferred to the Confederate hospital near Talladega, where he died July 2, 1863—the family's first-known loss from the war.

Jim English mentioned 20-year-old William Benedict Best, another of his cousins, in one of his letters: "Cousin Will I suppose is still at home yet. Tell him I say to live while he is there for when he gets in the army it will not be home. I don't wish no man in the army, for I know how it is. But I hope we will all get to go home before long so that we can enjoy it as we did before." Will (sometimes called Ben) had by then already enlisted, and they would learn that he, too, had died.

In December 1863, Mary English Johnson in Columbus, Mississippi, wrote to Emma:

> *Dear Cousin Emma,*
> *Your kind and interesting letter came to hand a few days ago, found all well. I can assure you yours was a welcome visitor. I was very glad to hear from you all & to hear that you are all well. I was very sorry to hear of Cousin Ben Best's death. Poor fellow I hope he is at rest. You requested me to tell you where Mr. Johnson and my brothers were. Mr. Johnson is in the Arsenal at Selma Ala. He was well the last I heard from him. There is two*

of my brothers here in camp, the other two are at home. Brother Robert was left at Vicksburg sick, but the Yankees give him a parole and sent him on home. He arrived at this place about 15 days after the rest of the boys did. Brother Jim died at the hospital about a month before the siege of Vicksburg. He left a wife and three little children. They live about 15 miles from here with my brother Alexander. He is not able to stand camp life and is overseeing for a lady. He has tried the camps several times and they give him a discharge and send him home every time. Brother John was killed about a year ago, the 4th day of Oct. at Corinth. Poor little fellow was buried on the battlefield by Brother Robert and a cousin of mine. If it had not been for them, he would have been left for the Yankees to bury, but they could not stand it, to come off and leave him lying there. Brothers Robert and Lewis are here in camp. Brother Frank has gone up home to see his family. He has a wife and two little children in Monroe County, Miss. Sister Sallie is married and has two little boys, she lives in Monroe Co. The man she married is named Flynt. Mother is living with me while Mr. Johnson is absent. I will not say anything about my children, for I suppose Jim has told you all about them. I received several letters from Jim while he was at Demopolis. I started a letter to him about two weeks ago. I did not know that he had left there until I received your letter.

I think that piece of your dress is very pretty. I wish you would write me a receipt for dying the thread like yours. I would have written to you some time ago but I had forgotten the name of your P.O. I wrote to Jim several times and requested him to write to me and tell me the name, but he always neglected to do it. You must write to me and tell me the names of all Aunt Lizzie's girls. Give them all my love. You must all come to see me. I would be very glad to see you all. I would try to come and see you all if Mr. Johnson was at home. I do not know how soon the Yankees will be in here and run me out by burning my house and everything I have. Mother joins me in sending our love to all our relatives and friends. Write soon.

Your cousin with much love,
M.L. Johnson

Samuel Lewis, Margaret's younger brother, had escaped military service until the Confederacy began conscripting older men in 1863. He enlisted as a private in the 30th Alabama Infantry at Demopolis. Jim English, who was paroled there as a prisoner of war after the Vicksburg surrender, wrote to his mother in late September: "I have seen Uncle Sam nearly every day but today. He is well and doing well. I don't think he likes camp very much. He says if he knew what he sees now, he would not have come down here." The soldier's life would never agree with Sam. He had been forced to leave his wife Eliza with four children—the youngest only a couple of months old—and that year's corn crop to be harvested.

Far removed from the battling, Talladega, the town and county, played no more than a secondary role in the Confederate war effort. One of the state's two "camps of instruction" for gathering recruits had been organized there in April 1862,[4] and a small hospital in the Exchange Hotel cared for whatever wounded soldiers made their way there. Later, the Baptist Male College was used to imprison captured Union soldiers. Twenty miles north of Munford, a furnace for producing pig iron was under construction at Ohatchee. The iron ingots it was to produce were to be shipped by rail to the Selma Ordnance and Naval Foundry for manufacturing cannons, ammunition and steel plate for ironclad ships. Talladega County got its first look at the enemy in July 1864 when Rousseau's Raiders, a Union cavalry unit, swept through East Alabama, destroying the unfinished Ohatchee furnace, leaving only its stone chimney

4. The enrolling officers in each Alabama county collected local recruits and sent them to one of these camps, where they were enrolled and eventually assigned to a front-line unit.

standing, before continuing to Talladega. There, they burned the railroad depot and pulled up its tracks, confiscated horses and looted the homes of townspeople. Jim English was relieved to learn they had bypassed his mother's farm.

It was only in the final weeks of the war, after Lee's surrender at Appomattox and the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, that the county and Munford finally faced the true might and terror of the Union Army. Croxton's Brigade of 1,500 men, after seizing Tuscaloosa and leaving most of the young university there in ruin, made its way to Talladega. They occupied the town, looting homes, burning warehouses and vandalizing public buildings, then marched north to Munford, where on Sunday, April 23, 1865, they were engaged in a brief skirmish with a volunteer company of 150 convalescents, home guards and pardoned deserters. This Battle of Munford is said to have been the last fighting east of the Mississippi River.[5] Each side lost one man, who have been described as the "last to die in open combat by contending military forces."

On Thursday morning, May 11, 1865, the *Alabama Reporter*, with a motto: "Justitia et Veritas," officially informed the citizens of Talladega County that the war had ended:

> *Alabama, with all the territory east of the Mississippi, has been surrendered to the Federal authorities. The war may be regarded as over. The question is frequently asked as to what should now be done. Our advice is that the people should remain quietly at their homes and apply themselves diligently to the culture of crops necessary to the sustenance of man and beast. It will be difficult to raise sufficient grain to supply the county. Confederate money will no longer circulate, and people can barter one commodity for another."*

Jim English and several of his male cousins survived the Civil War, but his uncle and seven other cousins—including Michael Pearson, a cousin by marriage whose claim of kinship was as true as blood—perished. They were:

John C. English II (1834-62)
James M. English (1826-63)
James Alexander Adams (1842-63)
William Benedict Best (1843-63)
William L. Best (1836-64)
Samuel L. Lewis (1825-64)
Michael G. Pearson (1827-64)
Lewis English (1836–64)

Jim English's wartime experience is recounted in detail, mostly his own words, in *Jim English: A Soldier's Story.*

RECONSTRUCTION

After the South's surrender, the Fourth New York Cavalry began its occupation of Talladega County. The commanding general warned the county's large Black population that "they will not be allowed to straggle about the country. They are advised to remain at home and raise corn to feed their wives and children." Remain at home? Suddenly liberated, they were also suddenly homeless and at the mercy of their former owners. Most were illiterate, which made exercising

5. In fact, a minor action occurred at Hendersonville, North Carolina, that same day. Some consider a fight in Chambers County between 104 youths and convalescents and 3,000 Federal troops sent to reinforce Croxton's Raiders to be the final contest of the war—but that was on April 16, one week earlier than the skirmish at Munford.

their new-found freedom anything but easy. Later, in retrospect, some of the older freedmen would say they had been better off enslaved, while many white people would reluctantly appreciate the protection and stability the occupation ensured. Margaret English's family began to restore their lives in light of the new realities, no doubt grateful that Jim had come home when so many other families were left without fathers, sons and brothers. For Alabama farmers, the sense of loss and defeat would only be compounded by the failure of cotton crops in 1865, 1866 and 1867, and the low prices paid for whatever made it to market. Abraham Lincoln had envisioned a quick, forgiving reconciliation with the defeated South, and his successor, Andrew Johnson, was of he same mind. But the U.S. Congress enjoyed the power they wielded without Southerners sitting in the House and Senate, and were determined to punish the Confederates. Their revenge kept the Southern states disenfranchised for four years, with the military and appointed Republicans governing the Southern states and imposing heavy taxes—without representation—upon any Southerners who had come through the war years with anything left to tax. Prior to the war, the annual tax levied on slaveholders (twenty-five cents per child and one dollar per adult) had provided Alabama its greatest source of revenue. With slavery abolished, the occupational government imposed income and excise taxes. In 1866, Tom Best was taxed $108 for the 5,600 pounds of cotton he sold and $18.75 for his income of $375.00; he also paid excise taxes of $1.00 and $4.00 on his purchases of a carriage and a piano. The English family struggled to eke out a living. In 1867, they harvested their first cotton crop in four years: barely two bales and only ten percent of the farm's output from before the war. It brought in $115. That year, Margaret reported "that said estate at this time consists of about 300 acres of land, three mules and one horse, ten head cattle, twenty head of hogs, one wagon."

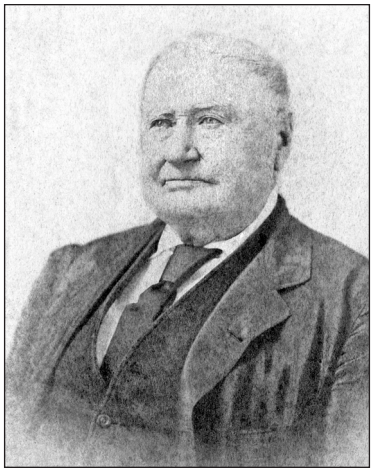
Alex English's estate had yet to be divided among Margaret and the five children. On June 2, 1868, she, Emma, Jim and Sallie signed an agreement that terminated her official role as administratrix, with the understanding that they shared responsibility for protecting the estate until both Laura (then 20) and Thomas (18) had reached the age of majority three years later. In 1871, Thomas turned 21, only to die two weeks later, cause unknown. Without any prospect of a life beyond their mother's farm, the children continued to live and work together as they always had, leaving their father's estate intact.

The era known as Reconstruction was not about rebuilding the physical properties and economy that had been decimated by war, but about restructuring a society and way of life. It began with Federal troops occupying the state and Republican leadership installed in Montgomery. Every citizen who had sided with the Confederacy was required to sign an oath of allegiance to the United States. Alabama would not be re-admitted to the Union until government troops withdrew in 1868, after the groundwork was laid to ensure that the state's freed slaves were granted the liberty and protection guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, namely their right to vote and their entitlement to an education. Choosing a surname was the freedman's first opportunity to exercise his free will, and most chose the name they knew best: the name of their former master.[6]

The war halted Talladega's progress in establishing itself as a center of higher education. To the broken upper-county community, education had become less essential than reuniting family and restoring the farming economy without an enslaved labor force. The Munford Academy, a one-room schoolhouse, opened soon after the war. With textbooks in short supply, teaching was limited to reading and spelling. In 1866, 58-year-old William Linn Lewis (Margaret's cousin) started a neighborhood school at his home three miles north of Talladega's town square.

6. The 1870 census listed two Negro English households in the county: 45-year-old Cyrus English (more than likely Silas), his wife Emmeline and five children, and 47-year-old Frank English, unmarried. Both worked as farm laborers. In Munford, the preponderance of black families named Curry, Bowie, Best, Cunningham, Montgomery, Jemison and Elston reflected those white families that had owned great numbers of slaves.

Known to all as "Uncle Billy," he had been the county's earliest educator and would be appointed its superintendent of education.[7] At the same time, two freedmen founded a school for the children of the county's emancipated slaves. Classes were held in a former slave's two-room house and taught by a former slave who had somehow acquired a basic education.



William Linn "Uncle Billy" Lewis

Aided by the American Missionary Assoc. and the Freedmen's Bureau, they purchased the abandoned Baptist Academy and an additional twenty acres for $23,000. The school opened in Nov. 1867 with 140 students and a staff of missionary teachers. It was the state's first institution for the education of Negro youth and the training of teachers to educate the next generation. With the issuance of an official charter in 1869, it was named Talladega College. The integration of the freed men and women would continue until 1874 when the state's pre-war Democratic leadership retook the statehouse, effectively halting progressive reconstruction. The terrorism and discrimination that followed would continue, but Talladega College would endure.

In 1870, Margaret described her property as 355 acres: 125 improved, 115 woodland and 115 "other unimproved," valued at $2,000. Hers was the only white family named English in Talladega County. While the white population had dropped over the decade by 42% to 8,500, the Black population had risen by 8% to 9,600. Most of the Black citizens remained illiterate. Many had continued to work for their former master or his neighbors, whoever could afford to employ them and provide housing for their families—an arrangement that would give rise to sharecropping and tenant farming. At the same time, there was a new underclass of landless, impoverished whites who were equally desperate to secure work and shelter.

A voter registration drive in late 1867 had enfranchised thousands of the county's men of both races. Among them was Jim English., After signing a loyalty oath, he was deemed a qualified voter and allowed to register. The election of 1872, the first after statehood and voting rights were restored, saw Alabamians cast a majority of their votes to reelect Ulysses S. Grant. Whether or not Jim English was among them is unknown.

The family finally found cause for celebration in 1873 with Laura's wedding to Thomas Williams. She was the first of Margaret's children to leave the farm and the first of the Englishes to leave the farming life. Marriage took her to a boarding house in faraway Selma. Margaret's parents, Alexander and Amaritta Lewis, had been married for 66 years when Amaritta died in 1875, at age 88. Upon Alexander's death four years later, a local newspaper noted that he was living with his daughter, Mrs. English, and was one month shy of his 99th birthday.

Talladegans had begun putting the Civil War and its aftermath behind them. Talladega county had remained relatively isolated prior to the war, but the construction of railroads crisscrossing the Southern states changed everything, and a new industry was developing in Alabama, one less subject to the whims of weather than crops—lumber, which only had to be harvested and milled. Felling the old-growth forests that covered the deep South fed its newly built sawmills. Not only did the rails transport lumber and nonperishable crops to market and deliver consumer goods from faraway places, but anyone in the rural South could travel almost anywhere in the country by passenger train.

Advertisements in an 1877 issue of *Our Mountain Home*, the weekly Talladega newspaper, reveal the aspirations of small-

7. The older of William Linn Lewis's two sons had died in the Battle of Sharpsburg (Antietam) five years earlier.

town Southerners that could be realized, thanks to the railroad. By mail order, they could purchase a piano from Philadelphia, enamel paint in more than a hundred colors from New York, and seeds and bulbs from a Pennsylvania nursery. Ads placed by the Atlanta Medical College, Virginia Military Institute, Judson Female Institute and Dalton Female College recruited college students. Literacy was on the rise, with annual subscriptions offered by the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Harper's Bazaar* magazines as well as the *New York Sun* newspaper, while a New York bookseller promoted the latest novels by Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens and Jules Verne. But if there was a single item that every home had to have, it was a sewing machine. The "world-renowned" Singer Sewing Machine Co. posted the most prominent of six ads by various manufacturers. Making and maintaining a family's clothing had long been the time-consuming duty of women in the rural South, and for them the invention of the sewing machine had as great an impact as the invention of the cotton gin. Using a treadle-operated machine, they could turn out a shirt or dress in little more than an hour, allowing time for something new: leisure. Seeking pleasure for pleasure's sake was a new notion and another sign of the changing times. Taking advantage of the county's numerous mineral-infused springs, summer resorts had opened at Shocco Springs just outside the town and Talladega Springs in the extreme southern area of the county. The latter advertised the healing benefits of its waters to "invalids and pleasure-seekers." Its hotel charged $35.00 for a month's stay, and railroads conveyed guests from as far away as New Orleans for three cents per mile.

In 1878, 34-year-old Jim English married Maude Hunter Kirksey at her father's home. Only 22 years old and thought to be known as Hunter, she would have had only the barest memory of the days when her grandfather, Alexander Kirksey, had been among the upper county's most prosperous planters.

THE 1880s AND 1890s

For the Englishes, the decade of the eighties began with the marriage of Sallie English to John James Weatherly, a local widower with two sons. The 1880 census listed 66-year-old Margaret "keeping house" with her 37-year-old daughter Emma. Laura often visited from Selma; she and her two young sons (Lee and Walton) were spending that summer on the farm when the census taker made his rounds. Jim had assumed full responsibility for his widowed mother's farm, just as his father had four decades earlier. He and Hunter lived in a nearby house on the property with Margaret Emma (Maggie), their year-old daughter, and Melissa English, an 8-year-old Negro girl described as a domestic servant. Hunter would give birth to their second child, Georgia Etta, in October.[8]

In March 1882, Jim and Hunter celebrated the birth of their son, Albert Clarence English. He was named for Hunter's father, Albert Oscar Kirksey, but would be known among the family as Bud. He would carry forth the English name to the next generation. But as arrivals were celebrated, passings were also mourned. Lizzie English Best and her husband Tom both died early in the decade. She was the last surviving child of Alexander and Mary English.

In the 1880s, the Alabama State Legislature began reversing the imposed laws of the Reconstruction year. It was a futile attempt to restore life to some semblance of what it had been in the state's antebellum days, and the legislators' belligerence would drive an enduring wedge between the white man and the Negro, between the moneyed and the poor, and ultimately between the state and the nation. Talladega County's 1880 census counted 10,856 white citizens, outnumbered by 12,504 Blacks. The county's agricultural economy had slowly made a strong comeback. After 1860, most of the English family's neighbors were Negroes, indicating that Jim English most likely farmed with

8. By then, very few of the neighboring households were white. Their nearest neighbors were Jerry English, a 31-year-old Negro, his wife Margaret and son Walton, his teenage brother John English and cousin Bragg Curry. The three black men probably lived on the English farm and worked with Jim as laborers. Heading nearby black households were Allen English, Cato English, Frank English and Sam English. (Jerry, Allen, Frank and Sam are the names of male slaves the family had formerly owned.)

the help of Black sharecroppers or tenant farmers. In sharecropping, the laborer lived on the property and was paid with a share of the harvest, while tenant farmers rented the land and paid the landowner a portion of their crop as rent. Jim continued to plant cotton, which was still the state's leading crop, but, like other farmers, had learned to diversify and not count on a single harvest. As more and more farmers began raising cattle and hogs on land that was ill suited for growing crops, the acreage devoted to the corn and hay that fed them increased significantly.

The city of Talladega had developed the reputation of a lawless community during the reconstruction era. Outsiders were known to storm the town on horseback with pistols blazing, terrifying the citizenry. Calm was restored in 1885 with the election of a mayor who promised law and order as well as modernization. The town's sidewalks were paved with brick and its rutted dirt streets made level and covered with gravel. Most of the original wooden storefronts around the square began to be replaced by substantial brick buildings. With the newspaper's announcement that "Talladega is on wheels," the "roller skating craze" reached the town. At the city hall, one paid a dime for admission and a quarter to rent a pair of wooden roller skates for the evening. On the corner of Battle and Court streets, the Chambers Opera House was completed in early 1888. Among its presentations were a parade and concerts by Gorton's New Orleans Minstrels and popular operettas by Gilbert & Sullivan. And baseball was becoming the national sport.

Hunter English died sometime in 1886, cause unknown, leaving Jim with three children, ages four, six and eight. They had been married eight years, and she was only thirty years old. She was buried at the Munford Memorial Cemetery. Four years later, on Sept. 25, 1890, Margaret Rose English died at age seventy-seven. For five decades following the death of her husband Alex, she had led the family alone, raising their children while maintaining and expanding the farm through the most challenging of times. Four of her seven children and their nine children survived her. Her place of burial is unknown.

Emma and Jim continued to live on the family farm, with Sallie in nearby Munford and Laura in Selma. As the four surviving children of Alex English, they were then entitled to divide the English property among themselves, but were apparently so closely allied and so respectful of what they called "the home place" that no effort was made.

During what has been called America's Gilded Age of the 1870s and 1880s, the economy had grown and expanded without restraint. Too much of a good thing, it collapsed like a house of cards. The Panic of 1893 was an economic depression that reverberated worldwide. Its cause has been attributed to the overinvestment in and overexpansion of American railroads, which were the nation's largest non-agricultural employer. Over the next four years, banks and businesses failed, construction halted, unemployment rose and families walked away from their mortgaged homes. Prices for farm crops kept falling due to overproduction; unlike the Englishes, farmers with mortgage loans are said to have been the hardest hit.

On April 25, 1894—thirty years, almost to the day, since the 42nd Alabama's surrender—Jim traveled to Birmingham for the Confederate Veterans Reunion. This was the first such gathering, an event that drew a reported 20,000 visitors to a bustling city founded only 23 years earlier. American and Confederate flags were given equal prominence in decorating the city streets; the cornerstone for the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument was laid in the city park; and a temporary structure constructed at the corner of 1st Ave. N. and 23rd St. could accommodate half the visitors. Evening entertainments there featured the "prettiest young unmarried woman" from each Southern state and tableaux depicting scenes from the war. Southern glory as well as the ties of national unity echoed in the numerous speeches, and the concluding tableau presented the states unified under the banner of the United States. It appeared that the South had rejoined the Union. Jim returned home with a photo of the "Southern Beauties" he'd purchased as a souvenir his young daughters would appreciate.

Birmingham had been founded in 1871, only a few miles from where the Englishes had farmed fifty years earlier. In its first three decades, the vibrant, young city had turned Alabama from the past and toward the future. Named for England's leading industrial center, it had no antebellum history and scarcely a remnant of the Civil War. Jefferson County proved to be rich in iron ore, coal and limestone—a geological phenomenon that supplied the primary ingredients for producing pig iron and later steel. The digging of mines nearby and the erection of blast furnaces and steel mills were accompanied by the laying of railroad lines in every direction. As if by magic, the population of Birmingham grew to 26,000 by 1890 and would top 133,000 in 1910. (The population of Atlanta was 155,000 in 1910.)

A NEW CENTURY

In Talladega County in 1900, Emma, Jim and his three children were the only white residents with the English surname. The family's former slaves and their descendents most likely accounted for the county's 59 Negros who identified as Englishes in that year's census.

The first decade of the new millenium gave the family reason to sorrow and to celebrate, beginning with Emma English's death in September 1901, followed nine weeks later by Maggie's marriage to Clarence Jenkins, a young farmer in nearby Silver Run. Sallie English Weatherly died the following year.

The turn of the century marked the beginning of the state's Progressive Era, which would last for three decades and reshape the City of Talladega. Its population had more than doubled over the previous ten years. Lavish homes in the Victorian style rose east of the town square, lighted, like the city streets, by gas flame and later electricity. The telephone company organized in 1896 to serve the town was soon acquired by the Bell Company, which enabled long-distance calling. A sewer system was installed, and the town's new waterworks, which drew water from the Coosa River, was described as "superior, perhaps, to those of any city of the same size in the South." And the town had finally funded a public school system. In 1905, the first step was taken toward paving the streets. The state's towns and cities were, for the most part, connected by dirt roads and rails, but that would change with the emergence of the automobile. The automobile came to the county in 1910. It allowed people to travel greater distances with greater speed—and unlike the railroad—whenever and wherever they wanted. The increasing ownership of automobiles resulted in the public's demand for reliable roads and bridges. But Talladega remained an island of increasing modernity surrounded by countryside where the roads remained unpaved and change was less notable.

Through most of the 1800s, ninety percent of the U.S. population lived on farms, but in 1900, farmers accounted for only 41 percent of the workforce. Although cotton was still the county's main crop, yielding more than one million dollars in 1909, the new century brought industry to the once strictly agricultural county. Textile mills began springing up near Alabama's rural towns that had railroad access, taking advantage of the state's workforce of poor, unskilled laborers. Manufacturing yarn and fabric within miles of where the cotton was grown would become more profitable than farming the raw cotton. The Munford Cotton Mills in 1907, putting men, women and even young children to work. And there was more to be gained from the county's earth than crops: lumber, minerals and marble. A shelf of marble 400 feet deep and a mile and a half wide extended 32 miles from just below the city of Talladega southwestward to the Coosa River. First quarried in 1838 for making gravestones, the remarkable formation was otherwise hardly known until 1903 when the Commercial Club of Birmingham commissioned a statue of Vulcan, the Roman god of the forge, as a symbol of the city's iron and steel industry. They chose Giuseppe Moretti, an Italian sculptor in New York City, to create the 56-foot cast-iron figure that would represent the state at the World's Fair in St. Louis the following year. While in Birmingham to oversee the casting, Moretti visited the marble quarries in southern Talladega County and was amazed by the purity of the white stone, declaring it superior to Italy's Carrara marble. From the

block of gleaming stone Moretti hauled back to Birmingham, he carved *The Head of Christ*, the first work of fine art fashioned from Alabama marble. He was impressed enough with the stone to close his New York studio and move to Talladega County. Near Sylacauga, he established his own quarry with the intent of developing the commercial uses of the stone and establishing a colony of workers and their families from his native Italy. The quarry was financed with an investment by the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic Railroad, but when the railroad failed in 1909, the quarry closed. Moretti would eventually return to Italy, but would be remembered as a pioneer of the state's marble industry. In 1920, thin slabs of Alabama marble quarried in Talladega County would provide the translucent ceiling of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C.

The first settlers in the county had taken advantage of its many creeks to power the mills that ground wheat and sawed lumber. In the late 1800s, a generator had been developed that could convert the energy of swift flowing streams to electricity. By 1889, there were two hundred hydroelectric power stations in the United States, primarily serving industrial operations . Hydroelectrics in Alabama originated in 1913 with the fledgling Alabama Power Development Co.'s construction of a small dam and generating facility at Jackson Shoals on Choccolocco Creek. A transmission line to Talladega brought electric lighting to the city's streets.

Despite all the progress the state had made over the half century since the Civil War, the lingering vestiges of racism were its stumbling block. The Ku Klux Klan had been loosely organized after the war when Confederate veterans and poor whites employed terrorism to oppose the extension of citizenship and voting rights to former slaves. After only a few years, the Klan disbanded, only to be revived nationally in the early 1920s. At that time, 885 of the farms in Talladega County were white owned, and 514 were black owned. Most Klansmen were white Protestants who believed Blacks, immigrants, labor unions and other groups threatened their presumed position of privilege atop the American social order. During the 1920s, they committed thousands of individual acts of violence and intimidation, but by the start of the Great Depression, the Klan nationwide had virtually ceased to exist, and due to internal conflicts and political opposition, its membership and influence in Alabama sharply declined. But the fact of its existence would stifle racial equality and dishonor the state for decades to come.

The land Alexander English purchased in 1835 would remain in the family for more than a century. Generations were born, grew to maturity and died there, until only the surviving children of Alex and Margaret English remained. Emma, Jim, Sallie and Laura were united in their shared ownership of the farm. After the deaths of Emma in 1901 and Sallie a year later, Laura offered to sell her half of the property to Jim for $1,160. He and Tom Williams negotiated terms of the sale, whereby the property was deeded to Maggie, Etta and Bud, with annual payments (at 8% interest) scheduled over the next five years. He would continue to live and farm there another sixteen years, the last remnant of the English family. In 1920, he left the farm to live out his remaining years with Maggie and her family.

In 1954, Etta sold her share of what remained of the original English family farm to Maggie's husband, Clarence Jenkins, for $950. (What became of the share belonging to their brother is unknown.) Etta died in 1956, Bud in 1960 and Maggie in 1965, and it is assumed that by then the entire property had been sold to someone outside the family. In time, Oak Grove Rd. was paved across the original property, connecting Curry Station Rd. with McIntosh Trace (present-day Hwy. 21). Nothing remains of the English family's home place.

The Third Generation: The Children of Alex and Margaret English

The Civil War was the defining, transforming event in the lives of each of Alex and Margaret English's five children, the third generation. All but one would live into the new century.

Harriet Emmareta (Emma) English (May 23, 1843, to Sept. 29, 1901)


Emma English

Emma was Alex and Margaret's third-born child and the eldest of the surviving children. She was named for her great aunt, Harriet Rainey Bratton, while *Emmareta* is a variation of *Amaritta,* the name of her grandmother Lewis. She was the most thoroughly educated of the five children, having completed her schooling before the Civil War. She is known to have been a prolific letter writer during the war years, although none of her letters survives. Her prospects for marriage were severely reduced by that war having claimed the lives of so many of the county's eligible young men. She never married, but lived her entire life on the farm where she was born and where she helped her widowed brother raise his three children. When she died at age 58, she was, by all accounts, a beloved member of the family and the community.

James Samuel Crawford (Jim) English (Sept. 10, 1844 to Jan. 7, 1931)
Maude Hunter Kirksey (1856 to 1886)

Their Children

Margaret Emma (Maggie) English (1878 to 1965)
Georgia Etta English (1880 to 1956)
Albert Clarence (Bud) English (1882 to 1960)

Jim English got his first name from his father's older brother, James C. English; his second name from his grandfather, Samuel Alexander English; and, for good measure, his third name from his maternal grandmother's family. His father died when he was seven years old. His mother raised him to be a farmer, but saw that he received a rounded education.

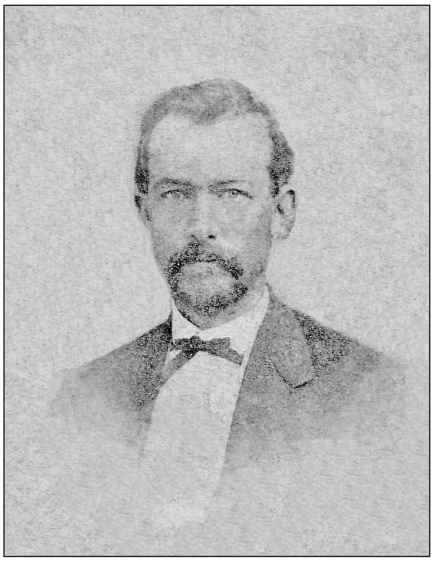
In 1862 at age seventeen, he enlisted as a private in the 42nd Alabama Infantry. Months spent training at Columbus, Mississippi, marked his first experience of being away from home, but he adapted to the military life. In letters to the family, he wrote: "Camp life has brought me out of all my ways in eating. Bacon and beef and cornbread go very well, which I would not eat at home"; "Can eat anything that they put before me. Broil a piece of bacon on coals and a piece of cornbread is good enough"; "When I was at home I never thought anything of [potatoes], but now I cannot get enough of them and old bacon. I would not touch that but eat it now just like any negro."[9]

He went to war a boy and came back a man, returning home at war's end to assume responsibility for the farm as well as the well-being of his mother, sisters and brother. Thirteen years passed before he married Maude Hunter Kirksey, a delicate beauty with dark brown eyes, at her father's home on Jan. 17, 1878. Twelve years younger than Jim and most likely known as Hunter,[10] she was the fifth eldest of Albert Oscar and Margaret Goodwin Kirksey's thirteen children.

9. The Englishes had probably relied on pork to feed the family. Unlike beef, it could be preserved for months, whereas beef had to be consumed immediately.

10. Although the English family Bible lists her as "Maude H.," only "Hunter Kirksey" appears on her gravestone.

James S.C. English and His Family



Above: The hand-colored wedding portrait of Jim and Maude Hunter English, 1878; *Right:* Jim English (undated); *Below:* (l-r) Etta, Maggie, Jim and Bud, about 1898.

Her grandfather, Isaac James Kirksey,[11] had been one of upper Talladega County's leading citizens. Like the Englishes, the Kirksey family had caught the initial "Alabama Fever" and migrated from the South Carolina upcountry about 1817. They settled in Madison County, near Huntsville. Isaac, a blacksmith by trade, married Mary Bradford Connolly four years later. An ambitious man, he acquired a great deal of land in Madison County and later served as Justice of Peace. When the Creek Indian territory in East Alabama opened for settlement, he moved to the Eastaboga area of Talladega County, in township 17, range 6, about eight miles northwest of the English family farm. Having sold his holdings in Madison County, he was able to immediately purchase 480 acres that extended northward into Benton County (present-day Calhoun County). In 1835, Isaac was named a trustee of the Methodist Episcopal Church there. Mary died in 1839, and he soon remarried. In 1850, he owned 650 acres in northernmost Talladega County. He became a trustee of the Eastaboga Academy in 1858. By then, he was one of the more prosperous planters in the county with assets, including 42 slaves, totaling $70,000. He had also acquired thousands of acres in Texas and dispatched five of his children there to settle it.[12] Albert Oscar Kirksey, his eldest son and father of Maude Hunter Kirksey, remained at home and at age 37 in 1860 was farming nearby with 24 slaves of his own. Both Kirksey fortunes were wiped out when the South was defeated and their slaves emancipated. Isaac Kirksey died a broken man in 1865 at age 68.

Jim and Hunter lived in their own house on the English property, where she gave birth to three children—Maggie, Etta and Clarence (nicknamed Bud). She died in 1886 at age thirty, cause unknown, and was buried in the Munford City Cemetery.[13] Jim and the children eventually moved into the home place, where his older sister, Emma, played a maternal role in their upbringing. To Jim's disappointment, Bud would grow up with no interest in farming. Etta's marriage in 1911 left Jim the one remaining white person with the English surname in Talladega County.

Confederate veterans were regarded as heroes, which made it almost mandatory for their home states to support them after the war. In 1867, Alabama began granting pensions to those who had lost both arms or both legs or been blinded. Decades later, the State Legislature passed the Confederate Pension Act, funded by a portion of state property taxes, which expanded the qualifications for relief to needy veterans as well as their widows. In July 1910, 66-year-old James C. English applied, stating that the wound he suffered in the Battle of Atlanta prevented him from earning a living by manual labor, that he owned no property valued above $400, that his annual income was less than $400 and that he had no children he could depend upon for support. The doctor who examined him described his physical appearance as "tolerably fair" and confirmed that he was "troubled with knee joint walking, from wound." He would receive $8.10 per month, but as the pool of recipients was reduced, the surviving veterans' pensions would increase: from $20.00 in 1912 to $74.00 in 1924, and to $150.00 in 1931.

By 1920, Jim had retired from farming and was living with Maggie and Clarence Jenkins in nearby Silver Run. There, he helped his son-in-law with the farming and relished the company of his eight Jenkins grandchildren. In September 1927, he wrote to Etta: "I have no complaint to make. Able to be going, helping to pick some cotton. Better than sitting about doing nothing. … Children all gone to school. All to Munford; Georgia to Jacksonville.[14] Lonesome

11. Isaac Kirksey left an enduring mark on American jurisprudence with *Kirksey v. Kirksey*, a seemingly insignificant family conflict that came before the Alabama Supreme Court in 1845 and resulted in one of the fundamental decisions in American contract law. All accounts of the lawsuit cast Isaac in a less than favorable light.

12. Isaac Kirksey's daughter Eliza married Dr. Daniel Rather. They relocated to Shelbyville, Texas about 1850. Their great grandson is Dan Rather, who made a name for himself as a television news journalist.

13. The oldest grave in this public cemetery dates to 1872. The two young sons of Jim's sister Sallie Weatherly had died in 1884 and were buried there. Until then, members of the family had been buried on land associated with the family.

14. Georgia Jenkins, then 19, had enrolled at Jacksonville State Teachers College in nearby Calhoun County. Her education there would qualify her to teach in the state's public schools, and she enjoyed a long and dedicated teaching career in the local schools.

when all gone." He was then 83 years old. He took pride in his grandchildren and their place in the family's onward progression: "Maggie has eight children, five boys and three girls. Etta, three boys and a girl. Clarence [Bud], four boys, one girl. Two of Maggie's oldest are off at work for themselves; the others going to school. Eleven of the 17 have brown eyes."

In his final years, Jim English occasionally traveled by train to visit Bud and his wife Carrie in Birmingham. He had apparently never warmed to Etta's husband, Hugh Elzer Smith, but kept in close touch with her by letter. When Etta and other members of the extended family expressed an interest in the family's history, he was only too happy to share what he knew of it by letter, effortlessly recalling names, places and relationships. But not everyone was interested: "Maggie," he wrote, "says old ancestors don't do her any good." Responding to one of Etta's queries, he wrote:

> *Grandfather Lewis said Samuel Rainey was the first to invent a cotton gin. A man by the name Whitney stole his patent. His sister was teaching school at York, S.C., wrote her brother about the invention. He came to York, S.C., went back north, made one, had it patented. Uncle Sam made them turn by hand. Grandfather Lewis brought one to Alabama, gave it to my mother. I have turned it to gin the cotton to make quilts. Should have taken care of it.*[15]

One of Maggie's daughters, Margaret, remembered her grandfather spending hours sitting alone on the porch, talking to himself, apparently recounting his soldiering days. As the years passed, he became less and less, as he put it, "able to be going." In the spring of 1929, he suffered a stroke, but was only down, not out. The fluid handwriting cultivated by a young Confederate private may have been reduced to a labored scrawl in pencil, but he continued to write letters. In June, he wrote to Etta: "I am here in bed yet. I improve so slowly. I cannot walk yet. Writing is a task for me. I cannot say how farming is getting [along], for I cannot go out to see the garden. I was expecting to get a wheelchair." From a January 1930, letter to her: "Christmas passed off quietly. Johnnie [Weatherly, his nephew] came to see me, was my only visitor I had. I enjoyed your cake. … I wish you would pick out a monument for your mother's grave, a nice one, not too costly. Send me the price. I will send money and what to be put on it. Something I have neglected too long." On Jan. 2, 1931, he received what would be his final Confederate soldier's pension of $150. Two weeks later, on Jan. 19, he died. He was 87 years old. He was buried beside his wife in the Munford City Cemetery, and a proper marble tombstone marks their graves.

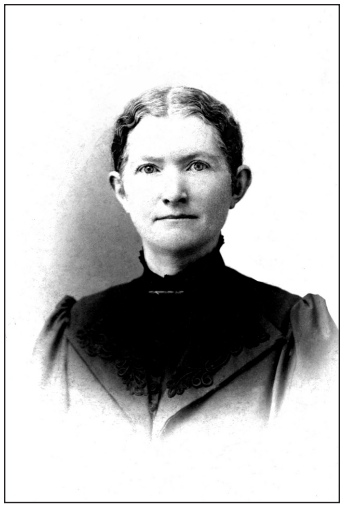
Margaret Sarah (Sallie) English (June 16, 1846, to Nov. 3, 1902)
John James Weatherly I (1833 to 1898)

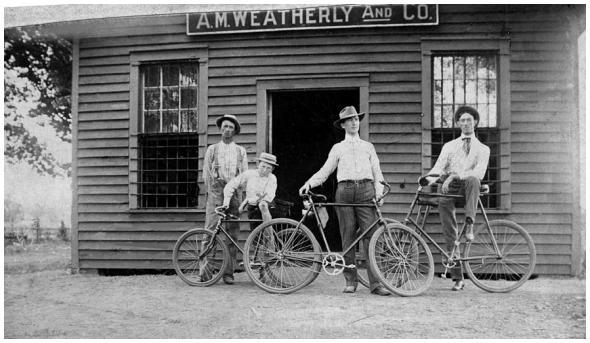
Their Children:

Jessie Emma Weatherly (1881 to 1884)
Clifford Alexander Weatherly (1884 to 1884)
John James (Johnnie) Weatherly II (1887 to 1957)

She was named for her mother, but known as Sallie, the name of one of her father's sisters. When the Civil War ended, she was of marriageable age, but the local population of prospective grooms had been decimated. On April 13, 1880, at age 34, she married John James (J.J.) Weatherly, a widower and dry-goods merchant. His Virginia-born parents, Martin Weatherly and Martha Ball had met and married in Madison County, Alabama, in 1828. They were

15. Samuel Rainey of York County, South Carolina, was the brother of Jim's grandmother, Amaritta Rainey Lewis. The design of the cotton gin did not actually originate with Eli Whitney, a Yale graduate who came south and worked a while on a Georgia plantation. Hearing that substituting wire for the wooden teeth in cotton gins might make them more effective, he patented such a machine in 1794 and manufactured them until his patent expired ten years later.





Left: Sally English Weatherly; *Center:* Young John Weatherly about 1897 with his half-brothers and, on the right, his cousin Leslie Williams; *Right:* Pvt. John Weatherly, 1918

among the first settlers in upper Talladega County, where J.J. was born in 1833. He married Margaret Smythe Howell, a widow from Belfast, Ireland, in 1861 and worked at the Talladega depot as a postal agent during the Civil War. Her death in 1879 left him with two sons: William Henry Weatherly (15) and Alonzo Martin Weatherly (11). By the time he married Sallie, the Munford community had become a town, and J.J. had made a success of his dry goods business. He and Sallie lived in the town, next door to his mother and three unmarried sisters. Sallie and J.J.'s two first-born infant children died in 1884, possibly from the yellow-fever epidemic that swept through the state. Their third child, John James Weatherly II, was born in 1887 and was known as Johnnie. That same year, his half-brothers took charge of the family business, hired a fleet of traveling salesmen and renamed it the Anniston Mercantile Co.. It would later be described as "a vast mercantile concern" doing business in Alabama and Georgia. J.J. died in 1898, leaving Sallie and Johnnie were well provided for. Only four years later, she passed away, one year after the death of her older sister Emma. Sallie and John Sr. were buried in the Munford City Cemetery.

Afterward: Johnnie Weatherly was orphaned at age fifteen and left in the care of his older half-brothers. The generous inheritance afforded him an excellent education; he was the first of the English descendents to graduate from college, receiving a degree in engineering from the Alabama Polytechnic Institute at Auburn in 1908. Two years later, he was employed as a civil engineer in Oklahoma City, a job that led to his working as a "levelman" in the construction of the Panama Canal in 1911–12, two years before its completion. His WWI draft registration from 1917 describes him as a civil engineer employed by the Interstate Commerce Commission, of medium height and build with grey eyes and brown hair. One year later, he was drafted into the army as an infantry private and shipped to France, returning as a corporal ten months later. After the war, he was employed in the advertising department of a Philadelphia paint manufacturer.

He cherished his mother's family and made a point of writing to his Uncle Jim once a year. In 1928, he wrote: "I am not anywhere near marrying myself, and doubt if I shall ever get to making enough to support a wife. Perhaps some day I shall find a girl who is willing to starve with me." He was devoted to documenting his ancestry and in another letter to his uncle wrote: "I remember an old sermon book that you used to have that was brought over from Scotland by one of our forefathers who was a Presbyterian minister, and the book must now be nearly three hundred years old. And I remember the Adams [Jim's aunt's family] had lots of old things including an old wooden grandfather clock that one of our relatives made." By 1930, Johnnie had relocated to Atlanta, "selling lead-in-oil for paint, also metals such as solder, babbitt, lead pipe." According to the 1940 census, he worked as a salesman at a second-hand bookstore there. In the 1950s he made several vacation trips to Bournemouth, England, a coastal resort town, before his death in Atlanta on March 17, 1957. He was buried at Hillside Cemetery in Anniston.

Laura Jane English (May 7, 1848, to Jan. 23,1933)
Thomas Joseph (Tom) Williams (Oct. 20, 1843, to Nov. 29, 1921)

Their Children

Lee English Williams (1875 to unknown)
James Walton Williams (1878 to 1968)
Lewis Crawford Williams (1880 to 1950)
Thomas Leslie Williams (1883 to 1964)
Margaret Mae Woolley (1889 to 1970)
Laura Catherine Apple (1891 to 1955)

When Laura was fourteen, the Civil War halted her formal education. During the war years, she knitted socks for her soldier brother and cousins, and developed her sewing skills. She was the first of Alex and Margaret's children to leave the farm after marrying Tom Williams on Nov. 13, 1873. How Laura and Tom met is a matter of conjecture. He was five years older than she; he had grown up in the lower county, she in the upper county; he was the son of a Baptist minister, she was Presbyterian; and he was living in Selma, 110 miles away, when they became engaged. However, his brother Abner had managed the Curry store in the 1850s and would have been well acquainted with the Englishes then. Also, during the war, Tom and Jim English served with the Army of Tennessee and were engaged in the same battles at the height of the war. Whether or not they knew each other then is unknown. In moving to Selma, Laura became the first in three generations of the Englishes to live in a town.

Laura English

To learn more about Laura English, see The Jordan Williams Family: A Brief History.

Thomas Parker English (April 8, 1850, to April 25, 1871)

Next to nothing is known of Thomas, the youngest child of Alex and Margaret English. Known to the family as Tommy, he was most likely named for his great uncle Thomas English, who had died in the Second Seminole War in 1836. During the Civil War, when Tommy was 13 years old, Jim English mailed spent ammunition and gunpowder he collected on battlefields to him. The census of 1870 lists him as a laborer, working alongside Jim to restore the farm. He died two weeks after his 21st birthday, without having married. Cause of death and place of burial are unknown.

The Fourth Generation: The Children of James and Hunter English

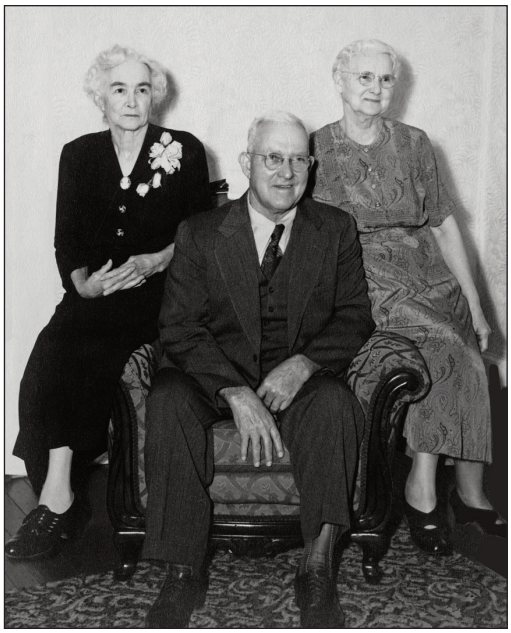
Like most Americans of their generation, Maggie, Etta and Bud (Clarence) English were born on a farm when the nation was still recovering from the Civil War and isolated from world affairs. Their generation would witness the dawn of the Modern Era, and by the end of their lives, everything had changed: Most Americans would then live in towns and cities, thanks in part to railroad travel and transport, while the nation's crucial participation in two world wars would establish it as an international power.

Margaret Emma (Maggie) English (Dec. 22, 1878, to Dec. 2, 1965)
Clarence Luther Jenkins (June 17, 1877, to Nov. 1, 1963)

Their Children

Albert Clyde Jenkins (1903-85)
Sterling Gresham Jenkins (1906-83)
Georgia H. Jenkins (1908-99)
James Lewis Jenkins (1909 to 2004)
Clarence Luther (Tiny) Jenkins II (1911 to 2004)
Margaret E. Jenkins Starr (1914 to 2012)
Harriet Jenkins Conville (1915 to 2010)
Young Sterling Jenkins (1917-77)

Maggie was named in honor of her father's mother, Margaret, and his unmarried older sister, Emma. After Hunter Kirksey's death, Emma would play a vital role in the children's upbringing, ensuring that Maggie and Etta learned to cook and can, quilt and sew. Maggie married Clarence Jenkins on Dec. 3, 1901. The Jenkins were among the earliest settlers of Silver Run, a community eight miles east of Munford. Clarence, one year older than Maggie and a high school graduate, had spent the previous two years at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute in Auburn, studying veterinary medicine. His grandfather had been both a Baptist minister and a well-to-do planter, and Clarence's father had continued the



Maggie, Bud and Etta (left to right), about 1894 and 1952

farming tradition, although on a much smaller scale. Destined to become a farmer, Clarence would eventually inherit what remained of the Jenkins plantation. Maggie's domestic skills and understanding of farm life made her his ideal wife. Their first child was born in 1903, and another seven would follow in stair-step succession over the next fourteen years.

In 1918, Clarence registered for the World War I draft. Then forty-one years old, of medium height and build with brown eyes and black hair, he wasn't called to serve. By 1920, Maggie's 75-year-old father, Jim English, had retired from farming and came to live with her family. The four oldest Jenkins boys, aged eight to eighteen, were described in that year's census as farm laborers. They had been brought up to be farmers, but times had changed and they knew there were other ways to earn a living. Only one of the five boys would carry forth the farming tradition.

Clarence died in 1963 at age 86, and Maggie followed two years later. They were buried in the century-old Jenkins family cemetery across the road from their home.

To learn more about Maggie English, see *The Jenkins Family: A Brief History*.

Etta (left) with her cousin Laura Williams and aunt Laura English Williams, about 1899

Georgia Etta English (Oct. 1, 1880, to Nov. 27, 1956)
Hugh Elzer Smith (March 3, 1870, to Aug. 30, 1952)

Their Children

Hugh English Smith (April 16, 1913, to Nov. 17, 1973)
Herbert Allen Smith (Dec. 24, 1914, to Sept. 18, 2012)
Margaret Helen Roberts (Jan. 26, 1917, to March 10, 1980)
James Dent Smith (Sept. 10, 1920, to June 27, 1976)

Etta was named for Georgia Ella Kirksey Richey, one of her mother's older sisters, who had died shortly before Etta's birth. Etta was six years old when her mother died, leaving her father's unmarried older sister, Emma, to step in and mother the three young children. Etta was reared to one day be a farmer's wife. Although she enjoyed an active social life, the approach of her thirtieth birthday found her yet unwed. Marriage to Elzer Smith, a widowed businessman from Wilsonville, appeared improbable, but the stars somehow aligned in his favor.

To learn more about Etta English, see *The Smith Family: Part Two.*

Albert Clarence (Bud) English (March 5, 1882, to Jan. 2, 1960)
Carrie Lucretia Hall (Oct. 13, 1885, to Oct. 8, 1965)

Their Children

Georgia Eleanor Calvert (1913 to 2002)
Albert Clarence English II (1916-78)
James Hall English (1918-90).
Robert Waldron English (1921-93)
Leslie Brooks English (1924-64)

He was named for his mother's father, Albert Oscar Kirksey, and known as Clarence. But to the family he was Bud. His mother died when he was four years old, and he became especially close to his older sister Etta. His formal education was limited to eight years. This was typical of young farmers of that era. While it would have seemed inevitable for Bud to become a farmer and eventually take over the farm, he was born to be a railroad man, not a farmer. His father was gravely disappointed when Bud moved to Birmingham in the first decade of the 1900s. Birmingham was then a vibrant young industrial city that owed its founding to the two railways that happened to intersect in that mineral-rich area of the state. Bud found work with one of them and lived in a boarding house with other railroad men.

He married Carrie Lucretia Hall in the neighboring town of Avondale on February 23, 1910. She was the daughter of Andrew Jackson Hall II, a cattleman, and his wife Mary Elizabeth Brown of Canoe, a community between Atmore and Brewton in south Alabama. Carrie had a high school education, and it's possible that she came to Birmingham to work and then met Bud through her older brother, Wallace, a railroad conductor. After the wedding, Bud and Carrie visited her family. From there on February 28, he wrote to Etta:

I am enjoying married life now. Sure have a sweet little wife. Married Wednesday at 2 o'clock, left at three twenty-five for Selma. Spent one night and day there. Went around and called on Aunt Laura. Guess we will spend the night there when we go back. Sure would like to come to see you all while I am off, but will have to go back to my work the 5th. Will leave here on the fourth. We will come to see you this summer. I like my new papa, mother, sister fine. Sure are nice to me. I have been trying to get Carrie to write this letter. Said she would write the next one. I told her she would have to do the writing now. Guess I have told you about all I know. Write soon.

Your Bud A.C.E.

Our address is 4109 4th Ave. So.

In the 1910 Census for Birmingham, Clarence and Carrie English were living in a boarding house at 4111 Fourth Ave. South, near Avondale Park. He was employed as a railroad locomotive fireman. On Nov. 6, 1910, he wrote to Etta:

I will now try to write to you. I have something sad to tell you. Our baby was born on Sunday night at 10:10 o'clock and died Monday night at 6:30 p.m. Was buried today at 11 a.m. Carrie is getting along fine. I am well. Everybody is so nice to us. I have a train[ed] nurse to stay with Carrie for a few days. I am well and fat. Will go to work in about three days if Carrie still improves. I can't write much this time. Will write again soon.

Your Bud. C.

He was able to report happy news on April 13, 1913: "Our fine girl came this a.m. at 5:05. Carrie and baby seem to

be doing nicely. Your bud A.C.E." Eleanor would be the oldest and only daughter of their five children. Registering for the WWI draft on Sept. 12, 1918, he gave 1884 as his birth year[16] and listed 1616 30th Ave. North as his home address. The registration form described him as being of medium height and stout build, with grey eyes and grey hair. He was not called to serve.

According to the 1920 Census, Clarence (36) and Carrie (32) still lived in the rented house on 30th Ave. with their daughter Ella (6) and sons Albert C. Jr. (3) and James H. (1). Clarence was then employed as a railroad engineer. In the years that followed, Carrie would give birth to another two sons, Robert and Leslie, the youngest of the Jim English's grandchildren. Jim had come to terms with Bud's disinterest in farming and occasionally took the train to Birmingham to spend a few days with the family. In a letter, he wrote: "I was disappointed in the naming of my youngest grandson [Leslie Brooks English]. I named him Lewis Alexander English. Have twelve grandsons, not a one Alexander; one Lewis." (He neglected to mention that each of his three children had honored him by naming one of their sons James.) About 1925, Bud's sister Etta and her family moved to Birmingham, and the two families kept in close touch.

By 1930, Bud and Carrie had purchased a house at 1501 20th St. North and were living with their five children: Eleanor (17) and Albert Clarence II (13), James (10), Robert (8) and Leslie (5), as well as an 18-year-old boarder, who worked as a grocery store salesman. Bud was still employed as a railroad engineer. Their comfortable two-storied home on a hilltop corner in the Druid Hills neighborhood had a wide front porch that wrapped around its street-facing sides. It was a welcoming home, and they would live the rest of their lives there.

Eleanor married Cecil Calvert in 1933. Jobs were scarce in Birmingham during the Depression years, and they moved to Charleston, S.C., where he found employment as a machinist at the naval yard.

According to the 1940 census, only Robert and Leslie remained at home. Robert had recently completed high school and taken a job as a helper at an awning company; Leslie was a high school student. Albert was also employed in Birmingham. James had followed Eleanor and Cecil to Charleston, where he lived with them and their four-year-old son, and worked as a machinist's helper at the naval yard. Bud earned about $2,000 that year as a locomotive engineer, and the value of their house was estimated at $3,500.

By 1950, all of the children were living on their own, and Bud, then 68 years old, remained employed as a railroad engineer. His and Carrie's happiest times were gatherings that brought together their children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and their children. Carrie had furnished the house's parlors with sofas, so everyone sat closely together, and on warm Sunday afternoons, the porch was often filled with members of the family, chatting and laughing with children underfoot. She adored children and won each one's heart with a quarter-pint serving of ice cream that awaited their visits. After retiring, Bud died at age 78 in 1960, and Carrie eventually moved to Florence, South Carolina, to live with Eleanor and Cecil. She died there in 1965 and was buried beside Bud at Elmwood Cemetery.

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16. In public records from 1910 to 1950, Clarence's age was invariably incorrect.