

## WHERE DID MT. JULIET GET THE NAME?

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That was the question posed to the Mt. Juliet men's club in the 1940s. It had always been the name, but no one knew the origin. Anyone old enough to know the story had long since died and their descendants removed from Wilson County, Tennessee. They needed to answer the question sent by an author writing a book about unusual names of Tennessee small towns. Where was the mountain and who was Juliet?

The story of that meeting was related by one of the members present, N. C. Hibbett, Senior (better known as Dude) to his son N. C. Hibbett, Junior, and was repeated to the writer years later. It seems that everyone agreed the village had its beginning on the Old Lebanon Dirt Road, west of Eagle Tavern. After much discussion, it was suggested the name came from the Mint Julip served at the Eagle Tavern, the local stage coach inn. This was not agreeable to Preacher R. V. Cawthon who refused to have his hometown named after an alcoholic beverage. More discussion followed, then someone thought of a name similar to Juliet: Mrs. Julia Jennings Baird Gleaves, she was a good Christian woman and considered a guardian angel during the Civil War (1861-1865), so the legend began. The community was already established before Mrs. Julia moved to the area. Julia Jennings was born 24 July 1817, near Cedar Lick Creek and the Cumberland River. She married James H. Baird in 1837. The widow Julia Jennings Baird married Guy T. Gleaves, 29 Sept 1851 and removed to his home on the Old Lebanon Dirt Road. Only then did Mrs. Julia Gleaves live in the Mt. Juliet community.

The oldest date found with the name Mt. Juliet is from the booklet, An Historical Sketch of Wilson County, Tennessee by James V. Drake, published in 1879. "Old Mt. Juliet was located in 1835, on the old Lebanon and Nashville Road, on the land of John Crudup about a half mile west of old Eagle Tavern, which was well known to the traveling public in days gone by." (John Crudup did not own the land until 1846).

In the Spring of 1851 members of the local community removed to Texas. Among those were the Wright, Hewgley and Hamilton families who named their new community "Mount Juliet" after their home town. The town of Mount Juliet, Texas had a post office from 1873 to 1877, James A. Wright was the postmaster. When the railroad was built in 1876, it missed the little town of Mount Juliet, Texas by two miles. The post office was then moved to Duval, Texas on the railroad and Mount Juliet was gradually abandoned. It was a member of the Hewgley family the writer suggested in 1998 the name of Edward Bodely, a stonemason born in Ireland, who could have seen both Mount Juliets. He was disproved when his naturalizations papers were found in Davidson County, Bodely was not living in the area until 1843. New Texas Handbook, copy sent by George Castleman, article sent by Betty R. Martin, In 1851 Dr. Joseph Wright decided to build his dream in a boom town called Austin]

Charles Sherrill, TN State Library & Archives, found a date with the name Mount Juliet in

the book, Correspondence of James K. Polk, Volume V, 1839-1840. The letter was dated 19 May 1839, telling Polk, "to schedule a meeting at Mount Juliet in the lower end of the County." The letter was from a lawyer in Lebanon. Mt. Juliet was an established community, why did so few people know its origin? Who was the lawyer who wrote the letter, what connection did he have? Sherrill also stated, "you will find that most things in that area, lead to Andrew Jackson."

Two known dates, 1835 and 1839, could Mt. Juliet have an earlier date?

In 1987, a local minister knocked on the door of N. C. Hibbett, the city historian and a member of the historical society. He had a magazine with an ad for the sale of Mount Juliet Estate in Ireland and the picture of a house. Mount Juliet was the name of a house, not a town or village. Hibbett and Madelon Smith of the historical society communicated with Sotheby's International Realty inquiring about the estate and asking for information and history. "Mount Juliet Estate was the seat of the Earls of Carrick for 250 years, it is situated in the quiet pastoral countryside of County Kilkenny, about 85 miles from Dublin." The Chronicle, Book II, page 1, published by the historical society, 1990.

Mount Juliet Estate in Ireland was built by the first Earl of Carrick, Somerset Hamilton Butler about 1765 for his wife Juliet Boyle. In Ireland, there is no town, land or village named Mount Juliet, and the name was purely connected with the house.

Patricia Bates, a local freelance writer had the opportunity in Dec 2003 to visit Mount Juliet Estates (now a hotel) in Thomastown, Ireland. Bates offered help and suggestions. On her return, she spoke to the historical society relating her experiences in Ireland. There is a display cabinet in the Genealogy Department at the Mt. Juliet library with articles she collected in Thomastown and Mount Juliet Estate.

After the research of Hibbett and Smith discovering that Mount Juliet was the name of a house, the writer began searching in 1996 for a person who could have seen or knew about Mount Juliet Estate in Ireland. After disproving several names and knowing the surname of the Earl of Carrick was Butler, the writer contacted the Kilkenny Archaeological Society and sent a query concerning the Butler family of Ireland. The answer came from John Kirwan a member of the Butler Society and author of the book, Mount Juliet Estate, Thomastown, County Kilkenny, Ireland. Kirwan stated the Carrick Butler and the Ormonde Butlers were distant kinsmen, but he did not know of any link in the 18th and 20th century. He did state, that many members of the family immigrated to America before and during the Revolutionary War. He also mentioned there was a Mount Juliet, in Ontario Province. [Butler, origin df]

The writer began searching for Butlers, why would they be in Tennessee, why Wilson County? At that time in history only the eldest son inherited the title and properties, one of the younger sons to immigrate was Thomas Butler who removed from Ireland with his five sons, two daughters and settled in Pennsylvania. The Butlers did bring with them one very important thing, their name and their blood line. This placed them in the upper class of society, the elite of that era. Only one Butler was found in west Wilson County,

was it possible he was related to the above? Robert Butler of Davidson County, Tennessee purchased 640 acres (square mile) in April 1820. In 1825 he sold the last of his land in west Wilson, 325 acres on Stoner's Creek to Hugh Hays. Robert Butler did not build Mount Juliet House, but who did he know living on the old Lebanon Dirt Road that did build the house?

The Drake booklet, said that Mt. Juliet was located on the Old Lebanon and Nashville Road, 1/2 west of Eagle Tavern. To prove or disprove, you must read the original documents. Who purchased the land, where the land is located and who borders the land, then see if the name matches the census records. (All deeds listed can be found at the Wilson County Archives).

The first deed that was issued on the land described above, was a land grant to Aquilla Sugg for his service in the Revolutionary War. In 1798, Aquilla Sugg sold a tract of land to Blake Rutland and Andrew Donelson (Rachel Donelson Jackson's uncle). In 1800 Rutland and Donelson sold to JOHN DAVIS and his brother Isham Fielding Davis 234 acres, a part of the original grant of Aquilla Sugg. In June 1802, Blake Rutland sold 200 acres to Isham Fielding Davis on Stoner's Creek, bounded by John Davis and Fielding Davis (father). In 1802, John Donelson (Rachel's brother) sold to John and Isham F. Davis 123 acres on Stoner's Creek. Isham Fielding Davis built his home (Eagle Tavern) on the old wagon road, later Lebanon and Nashville Road between 1800-1816. In 1816 Isham F. Davis applies and receives a license to operate an "ordinary" in his home (inn/hotel). His brother John Davis lives 1/2 mile west of Eagle Tavern. John Davis built his home Mount Juliet House/Plantation, probably in the same time period. Isham Fielding Davis was born about 1775 in Virginia. He married in Wilson County, Tennessee, Oct 1809 Rachel Hays, daughter of John and Rebecca Hays. In 1823, Isham Fielding Davis sold his home and the family removed to Gibson County, Tennessee. There was one older brother to John and Isham Fielding named Nathaniel Davis who married Susannah Goolsby in 1798 in Albemarle County, Virginia and removed to Kentucky. In 1804 Nathaniel followed his brothers to Wilson County, he bought 171 acres on Cedar Lick Creek from William Donelson (Rachel's brother). Nathaniel Davis married second Elizabeth McFarland, April 1810 in Wilson County. She was the daughter of John McFarland and Nancy Menees. Nathaniel and Elizabeth M. Davis remained in Wilson County.

When Andrew Jackson told his wife Rachel he was going to Mount Juliet, she knew he was going to visit the plantation home of John Davis. As the community of Hermitage evolved around the home of Andrew Jackson, so did the home of John Davis evolved into the community of Mount Juliet. The difference was that John Davis did not become famous. The large two-storied house on the mount could be seen from a distance, hence the locals would say they were going to Mt. Juliet. They were going to the old Lebanon Nashville road where the stage coach stops, where the shops were located and the "Tavern." John Davis didn't seem to socialize with the local people, although he served as an officer in the local militia and the militia trained on his property.

John Davis was a member of the old Virginia colonial families of the Lewis, Jefferson,

Washington, Tilghman, Fielding, Meriwethers and other noted families of the area. The Davis family was related by blood or intermarried in these families, often marrying cousins. Andrew Jackson knew members of these families, and who else could have convinced these two young men to leave their comfortable surroundings in Albemarle, Virginia for the wilderness of middle Tennessee? The Davis family of Virginia is not to be confused with the North Carolina Davis, although some may share the same name.

The John Donelson, III [1718-1785] family of Davidson County were wealthy land owners, owning thousands of acres in Davidson, Wilson and other Counties across the state of Tennessee. John Donelson's mother was Catherine Davis, said to be the daughter of Rev. Samuel Davis. Andrew Jackson was the right man at the right time in history and the link between Colonel Butler and John Davis. Jackson had a wide circle of friends, political and social. He and Rachel had three different generations of Butlers living at the Hermitage at one time or another. The five fighting Butlers of Revolutionary fame were sons of Thomas Butler, born April 1720, Kilkenny Parrish, Ireland, he died in Cumberland Co, PA. All of his sons were in the army and were known for their fearless leadership in battle. At a victory dinner for his officers, George Washington raised his glass and toasted, "The Butlers and their five sons." Lafayette's toast to the Butlers is historic: "To the Butlers. When I wanted a thing well done, I always chose a Butler."

Robert Butler, who bought the land in west Wilson County, was the grandson of the first Thomas Butler. Robert's father Colonel Thomas Butler, born May 1748, Dublin, Ireland, died in New Orleans in 1805 of yellow fever at his plantation, "Ormonde." During the Indian Wars, Colonel Robert Butler was assigned to Jackson and lived at the Hermitage. In Aug 1808, Colonel Butler married Rachel Hays, the favorite niece of Rachel Donelson Jackson and daughter of Colonel Robert Hays. The Lebanon lawyer who wrote the letter to James K. Polk, Robert M. Burton, was married to another niece of Rachel Jackson, Burton and Butler's wives were first cousins. Butler was Jackson's Adjutant General at the battle of New Orleans. When Jackson was made the first American governor of Florida in 1821, he sent for Rachel. Jackson had written a letter for her to join him and she was to buy new clothes that would be appropriate for the wife of the Governor. Rachel and her niece Rachel Butler joined their husbands in Florida. Jackson appointed Robert Butler, Surveyor General of Florida. Colonel Robert Butler and Rachel Hays spent their remaining years in Leon, Florida. They had ten children, six of whom reached adulthood.

The writer asked her niece, Diane Weathers, to trace the deeds in Wilson County of Robert Butler. Using the landmarks and local names in the deeds, she found the place, the original 640 acres of Robert Butler. Weathers came by with a map and off we went on a road trip. We traveled west on Central Pike (not here in 1820), turned on Chandler Road (not here in 1820), and went to the crest of a hill (here in 1820). Looking out over the hill, there before us was Mt. Juliet ([not the house, but the sub-division). We tried to imagine what it must have looked like in 1820, when Butler could stand on his property and look out and see Mount Juliet House. Did Butler name the road to his property Noreland [Moreland today]? Did he have plans to build Noreland Estate, like two of the Butler properties side by side in Ireland? Our search continued, Weathers went online to

search for the Butler family, the writer went to the library and archives. We both discovered about the same information, but each of us found additional data that fit together like a puzzle. The Butlers have an extraordinary history, much has been written about this family.

The owner of Mount Juliet House, John Davis was born 1773 in Albermarle County, Virginia. He was the son of Fielding Davis and Elizabeth Lewis. Mount Juliet House was probably built before he married Theodelia Martin in April 1810 in Wilson County, Tennessee. She was also from a prominent family from Albermarle County, Virginia. They had four known children: Lewis Davis, born about 1812, died in the early 1840s, Isham Davis, born about 1814, Caroline M. Davis, born about 1819, and Nathaniel F. Davis, born about 1821. All three of the children married and removed to Texas. Theodelia Martin Davis died before 1840. John Davis, now alone in Mount Juliet House, married his cousin the widow Sarah Price Lewis Tilgham. She is the daughter of Owen Price Lewis and Sarah Perkins, also from Albermarle County, Virginia. Sarah P. L. T. Davis died in January 1844 and is buried on the plantation, and probably John Davis' first wife Theodelia and son Lewis, but Sarah's grave was the only grave marked. Her tombstone is recorded in the book, Annotated Cemetery Records of West Wilson County area of Tennessee, published by the MJWWHS, page 49. Sacred to the memory of Mrs. Sarah Tilgham, Consort of John Davis, b. Nov. 8, 1778 A.D., and departed this life Jan. 1844 A.D., a native of Virginia. Her tombstone is no longer in its historical place, it was probably removed for safety reasons during construction of the sub-division, hopefully the stone will be found and returned to its proper place. John Davis had lived in Mount Juliet House over thirty years. The last deed found for John Davis is recorded Oct 1846, he sells 366 acres, including his home place (Mount Juliet) to John Crudup. John Crudup did not build Mount Juliet House, he did not own the house until 1846. When Drake published the 1835 date in 1879, all of John Davis' family had been gone almost 30 years and John Crudup had lived in Mount Juliet House for 33 years. No one remembered, no one to tell the story of the house that John Davis built. Mt. Juliet, it's always been there.

In genealogy, you have to follow the facts, not the oral history, unless it can be documented. There are times you think you know the people and the kind of life they lived, then you get a surprise that can change that in an instant. It is all about the proof. The writer felt empathy for John Davis, it was the name of his home that evolved into the community of Mt. Juliet. No mention of him was made after 1846, no record of his death, nothing. I could not let John Davis go, just kept searching for him, thinking his family had deserted him in his old age. Then to my surprise, I found John Davis in the 1850 Federal Census in Cass County, Texas. His family did not forget him after all, they came back for him and took him to Texas. His daughter, Caroline had married Bartholomew Figures in June 1834 in Wilson County, Tennessee. Bartholomew Figures was listed on the census as an Inn Keeper, after reading the names of their children and the people in the inn, the very last name on the list is John Davis, age 77, born in Virginia. John Davis' two sons Nathaniel F. and Isham and their families were in Marion County, which borders Cass County, Texas. What a reunion that must have been, the John Davis family back

together again and with 10 grandchildren and more to come. John Davis of Mount Juliet died in Texas after the 1850 census.

By 1846, John Crudup was living in Mount Juliet House where he lived for the next forty years. John Crudup (Jr) was born about 1808 in the Rutland Settlement, his parents were Rebecca Temple and John Crudup (Sr) born in 1770 in North Caroline, and died before Jan 1810 in Wilson County. Blake Rutland and Isham Fielding Davis were the guardians of his three sons: Robert Crudup, Elisha Battle Crudup and John Crudup (Jr). John Crudup (Sr) had purchased 320 acres in 1807, in 1828 the land was divided between the three sons. This was the only Crudup family in the area, Robert and Elisha B. Crudup eventually removed from Wilson County, only John Crudup remained. By the age of 17, John Crudup was keeping lists for estate sales, his guardians did not neglect his education. John Crudup married in 1837, Wilson County, Mary Elizabeth Graves the granddaughter of Blake Rutland, daughter of John G. Graves and Mary Rutland. John and Mary Elizabeth had three children, Dempsy Graves Crudup, Mary Temple Crudup and John R. Crudup. Mary Elizabeth's sister Johanna Graves, widow of Samuel Walker lived at Mount Juliet House with her sister and brother in law, till her death in 1881. Johanna Graves and her husband Samuel Walker are buried in the cemetery located behind the West Wilson Middle School.

John Crudup was a well respected member of the community. He was on the Board of Trustees for the purpose of establishing a high school in Mt. Juliet in 1854. Crudup was appointed as judge by the Wilson County Court in 1861 for District 25 for the election for President and Vice-President of the Confederate States. He was the executor of wills for several well known people in the area and often a witness for wills and deeds. John Crudup and John Davis were neighbors for years and as quiet and uninvolved in the community as Davis was, Crudup was the opposite. John Crudup and Mary Elizabeth were still living in Mount Juliet House in the 1880 federal census. When and where Mary Elizabeth Graves Crudup died and is buried is unknown. In Sept 1884, John Crudup sells to J. H. Osment and his wife Emma, "my homeplace in the 25th District." No records were found on John Crudup after Nov 1886. When and where John Crudup died and is buried is unknown. As long as anyone could remember the house had always been there, just as the Mt. Juliet community had always been there. Mount Juliet House had survived for 150 years or more, when it was destroyed by fire on Feb 7, 1958. Even though Mount Juliet house and the John Davis family are gone from this place, his legacy lives on in the City of Mt. Juliet.

Did Colonel Butler and Andrew Jackson watch the house being built on the mount? Did Colonel Butler help John Davis train the militia? Did Colonel Butler suggest the name Mount Juliet to John Davis? Did Colonel Butler plan to build Noreland Estates on his 640 acres, just west of John Davis? These are questions that can't be answered without proof. Is it possible that John Davis named his own plantation? He was also of Irish descent. Not only did Colonel Butler know his pedigree so did John Davis. In the same book by John Kirwan, "In 1757, Hannah Davis, who was the widow of John Davis, late of Enniscorthy, County Wexford, conveyed her property to trustees, on the occasion of the marriage of her daughter, Mary Davis, to Francis Gervais, a surgeon of the city of Dublin.

Sometime afterwards the property was acquired by Somerset Butler first Earl of Carrick." The Davis family owned the property in Ireland before the Earl built Mount Juliet Estate for his wife Juliet Boyle in 1765. There is no proof, at this time, of a connection between Butler and Davis other than social. The names Mount Juliet, Noreland, Ormonde and Carrick are strictly associated with the Butler family of Ireland.

Where did Mt. Juliet get the name? The origin was the Mount Juliet Estate in Ireland, the preponderance of the evidence certainly suggest a Butler. Colonel Robert Butler was here, he knew John Davis, his father was one of the five fighting Butlers of Revolutionary fame who had named his plantation "Ormande." Colonel Robert Butler was the only Butler who purchased land in the area. Butler had been living at the "Hermitage" with the Jackson's until 1821. It is possible that only Butler called the house Mount Juliet. This could be the reason so few people knew the origin, other than the inner circle. It is only circumstantial evidence that Colonel Butler named Mount Juliet or suggested it to John Davis, more research is needed for proof. We have proved the land, 1/2 mile west of Eagle Tavern. The man John Davis who bought the land in 1800, built the house called Mount Juliet, and lived in the house over thirty years. It was to Mt. Juliet the militia came to drill, on John Davis' property. If John Davis' house was built before he married in 1810, then the name of the community goes back well before 1835. After all, Mt. Juliet has always been there. If only we could find a John Davis descendant with a journal, or more letters of Colonel Butler. Maybe, some day, some one will knock on a door again.

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