

AUGUSTUS GROGAN BRYAN 1849-1926

Augustus Grogan Bryan, born 15 December 1849, was the 2nd child of Thomas Bryan Jr. and Thomasin Grogan Bryan of Cane Creek District, Walker County, Georgia. His father (born 1793 in Elbert County, Georgia) a veteran of the War of 1812 and the Creek War of 1836, was the son of Thomas Bryan Sr., who had served in the Revolutionary War. His mother, Thomasin Grogan, of the Spartanburg District of South Carolina, was Thomas Bryan's second wife, married 1847. (See family history of Thomas Bryan for children of both marriages).

The Bryan family lived comfortably, though not lavishly, on their farm until it was ransacked by Union raiders. Young Gus's garden, planted with the aid of the remaining crippled ox, and a few geese which had managed to escape, sustained the family of seven.

Another indignity, according to Gus Bryan, marked the day "Mama became an old woman". Thomasin Bryan was in LaFayette when the Union Troops surrounded the town and refused to allow her to return to her family and farm until she swore allegiance to the Federal Union and promised not to aid the Confederate cause.

After the war Augustus Bryan moved to Trion, Georgia, where he worked in the dispensary of the Allgood Cotton Mills. On 11 December 1870, he married Hettie Ann Williams, daughter of

Jeremiah Williams and Phoebe Lowery. They had two children: Mary Lula born 29 February 1872 (married George Murray Combs) and Walter Thomas, born 23 January 1874 (married Pearl Murdock). Late in 1874 Hettie Ann Bryan died and in early 1875, the Allgood Mills burned. Gus Bryan then returned to Walker County.

AUGUSTUS GROGAN BRYAN (continued).

His second marriage, in 1881, was to Margaret Ella Talley whose father, Henry, was a shoemaker and pioneer settler of LaFayette. (Her mother was Elizabeth Jane Meredith.) Augustus Bryan went back to Trion, Georgia as a cotton buyer for the Allgood Mills, which had been rebuilt. While there, two children were born: Pearl Lucille on 25th March 1884, who died at the age of two; and Clarence Ray, on 21 November 1887 (married Lucy Vida Lanham). Several years later, Augustus Bryan moved his family to Oxford, Florida where he was interested in truck farming. A third child, Mildred Ella, was born here on 16 June 1894 (she later married S. Walter Edgmon). Apparently dissatisfied with farming, Augustus Bryan moved to Harriman (Roane County) Tennessee, where he ran a lumber mill and later became an area factory representative for International Harvester. He eventually became co-founder of the Hamilton County Buggy and Implement Company of Chattanooga. A man of varied interests and abilities, Augustus Bryan was active in Church work, the Masonic Order, the Democratic Party and numerous civic affairs. After a mild stroke, however, he was forced to curtail his activities and sold his partnership in the farm implement business. Subsequently, he purchased an interest in the Hamilton County Herald and served as its editor. This gave him a political outlet and furnished him the means for expressing his Irish wit. He retired after a second stroke and died on 21 July 1926, ten days after his wife's death. They are buried in the Greenwood Cemetery, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

References: Sartain, James Alfred, History of Walker County Georgia, Vol. 1, Thomasson Printing and Office Eqpt. Co. Inc. Carrollton, Ga. ; Bible and family records of C.R. Bryan, Jr., Dayton, Ohio; Family and Bible records of Allie Bryan Combs in possession of Edwin L. Combs Hampstead, N.C.

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