

Part Two:

THE ESTATE OF HANNAH WILSON FROST, OF MONTEVALLO, IN 1839

Continued from the January issue of the Chamber Chatter
Compiled by M. R. Cunningham (GoneToAlabama@aol.com) for the Montevallo Historical Society

The report of Hannah's 1839 estate sale begins on page 403 of Will Book 1818-1846. Each buyer is listed, the item purchased, and the amount of the purchase. Much speculation and some clues as to kinship can be derived from estate sale listings.

Henry Bazore buys glasses, pitchers, bowls, tea pots, and a cruet stand: things a wife would admire. Henry was a relative of Mrs. Henry Harless Jr, who was born Margaret Basore, a daughter of the Revolutionary War patriot and Huguenot, Bernard La Bessier, of Berkley County, Virginia. (The spelling of names was of no great concern on those days.)

Mary Wilson, the only woman listed in the sale inventory, buys a counterpane, what we call a bedspread today.

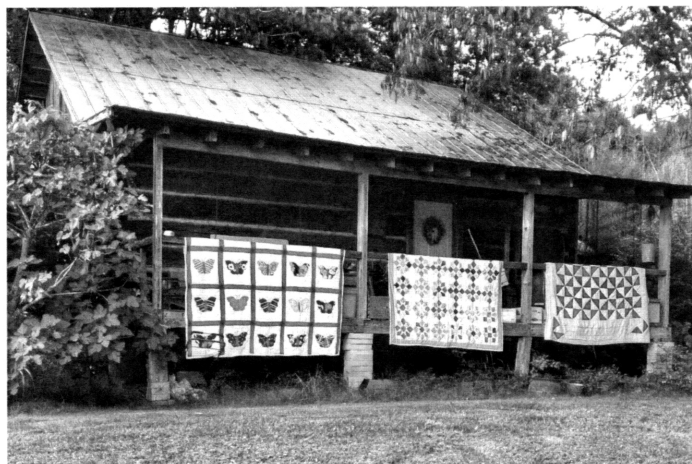
Charles Richardson is at the sale. He was an Englishman, born in 1788, and his son-in-law George Randall was the brother of Benjamin Randall who recorded the Shelby County Census of 1850, and who married Hannah's niece. The Richardson-Randall cemetery is near Highway 25.

Hannah's son-in-law Moses Johnson is at the sale, but only buys a bucket for 62 1/2 cents. Moses descends from Revolutionary War patriot Moses Johnson and wife Elenor Havis, of New York, and later, Virginia. They came to Shelby County before 1820.

Hannah's son Jesse Frost buys many things from his mother's estate. Her son Aaron Frost also is buying, but her son Benjamin Frost buys only a mare and a saddle. He may already be contemplating his move to Mississippi, and will not be transporting many things when he leaves.

At this time, countrymen were in a constant state of selling out, moving, and buying back, another reason why these estate sales were so popular. No one desired to cart wagon loads of farm goods and household goods hundreds of miles as the country moved west.

When Benjamin Frost would get to Mississippi, he would go to the local estate sales and buy back whatever was needed to run his farm. This custom explains why, as families moved west, family heirlooms, especially furniture, did not appear as often in estate sales. Texas families possessed fewer of grandmother's things than their kin back in Alabama, and the Alabama folks would have even less of none of great grandfather's things, unlike their cousins still in Virginia.



Hannah Wilson Frost's brother Ben built his log house about 1817 near Montevallo.

The exception to this would be small portable relics, such as a timepiece, a silhouette, some buttons, a quilt, or an old bible.

The final pages of Hannah's estate deal with the appointments of guardians for the children of her two deceased daughters, Hannah Johnson, and Rachel (Mrs. John Maroney, Polly Maroney's brother). Those grandchildren will inherit in place of their mothers, and someone had to be legally responsible for their inheritance until they became adults. Their fathers were appointed to fulfil this legal requirement.

What became of her sons? Benjamin Frost moved to Mississippi, then to Dallas, Texas, where he had a large family, and died in 1883. Letters from one of his first cousins call him a "scoundrel." When a teenager, he fathered a daughter "on the body of Polly Maroney" (and the county court had him pay \$50 a year to her mother) before he legally married his Lawler cousin from Madison County. His uncle Jesse Wilson, founder of Montevallo, signed to guarantee child support.

John Aaron Frost moved to Mississippi, and had a large family. Hannah's daughters Hannah and Rachel married, had children, and died young.

The names of her other two daughters have not yet been discovered. A Shelby County 1820's -1830's marriage book is lost.

Jesse Frost remained in Shelby County and married Catherine Harless. They had at least 20 children. Many of their descendants are here today.

Jesse died in April of 1880. His friend John Wesley Baine wrote his obituary, proclaiming a "legacy that will tell for good as long as the name of Jesse Frost shall linger." His last words were, "Death is sweet."

Hannah Wilson Frost did remarkably well to have been a widow for over 20 years. She was the mother of seven children, and had over 50 grandchildren.



540 Shelby Street
Montevallo, AL 35115

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