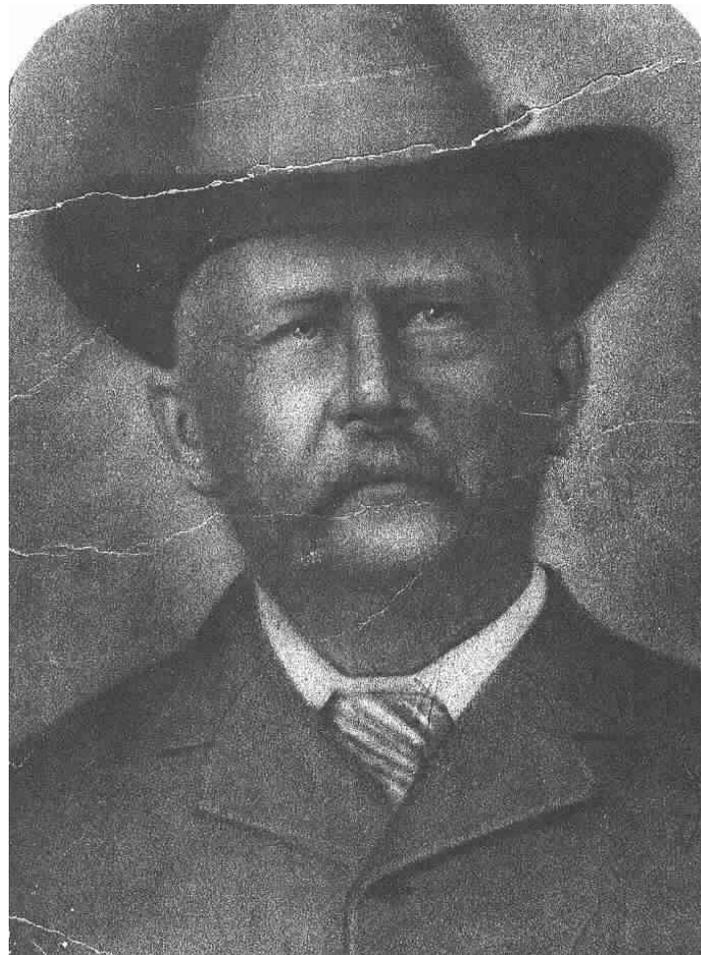


# **The Biography of Samuel Washington Jenkins**

*By Arlene Penney Chissom*



*Samuel Washington Jenkins  
1848-1933*

## **Biography of Samuel Washington Jenkins**

*By Arlene Penney Chissom*

Families in Western North Carolina had a long hard trip before settling in the rugged areas of the Smoky Mountains. Many were believed to be of Welsh descent – Scott and Irish. The Jenkins families probably came into England during the Norman Conquest of 1066, the surname meaning the “Sons of John.” Our Jenkins ancestors would have arrived through the Chesapeake Bay and migrated westward along the Rappahannock River through the Blue Ridge and Shenandoah Valley, then turning south into Western North Carolina.

This account is centered on the life of Samuel Washington Jenkins. Samuel’s great-great-great-grandfather was Jonas Jenkins who was living in 1733, east of the Great Mountain in the Rapidan Valley where a road was being built to move settlers south. Samuel’s great-great grandfather was Samuel Jenkins (1735-1796), the son of Jonas who was born about 1735 in Orange County, Virginia. He married Jane (1742-1802) (last name unknown) in 1756, in Shenandoah County, Virginia. Our first generation in America must have immigrated to the colony of Virginia during the large scale Scotch-Irish emigration of the 1600’s. Records show that Samuel was in the infantry in the Virginia Continental Army in the Revolutionary War, and his oldest son, Josiah, also served with his father in the war.

Jonas Tolivar Jenkins, Sr. (1772-1856) was the fifth child of Samual and Jane and the great-grandfather of our Samuel W. Jenkins. It is this generation that moved into the Swain County, North Carolina area. Jonas married Ann Polly (Nancy) Williams (1774- after 1850) of Woodstock, Virginia and he ran a legal whiskey and brandy distillery. Jonas fathered children by two women who worked in the distillery, a mother and her daughter. Jonas, Sr. served in the War of 1812 in the East Tennessee Militia, later returning to the Shenandoah Valley, then back to the east side of the Smoky Mountains in the Bryson City area. He settled along the Soco Creek and his sons bought adjoining tracks of land for farms exceeding 1,000 acres. Later, much of this was sold to the government for the Cherokee Indian Reservation.

The fourth child of Jonas and Ann Polly was John S. Jenkins (1805-1874) who was our Samuel's father. He was born in 1805 in Tennessee and died in Jackson County, North Carolina. He and his family lived in the Tuskegee River near Jenkins Branch. He married Mary Crisp (1807-1874) in March of 1825 in Haywood County, North Carolina. She was from South Carolina. They farmed the Jenkins land and raised eleven children.

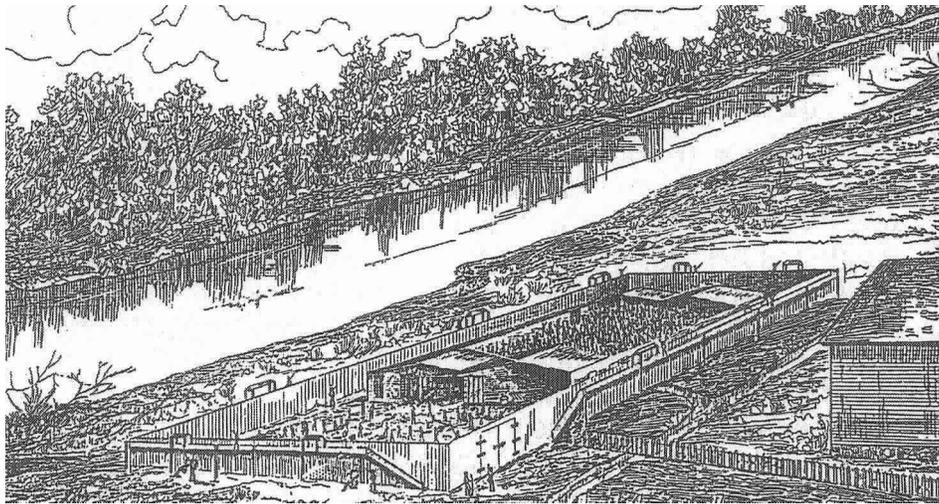
Samuel Washington Jenkins, the youngest child of John and Mary was born in Bryson City, North Carolina on March 19, 1848. When the Civil War began, five sons fought for the Confederacy. Samuel's brother, Jim (1), died in Strawberry Plains, Tennessee during the Civil War. Mitchell (2) died in Cumberland Gap, Tennessee in the Civil War of typhoid. His brother John (3), served in the Confederate Army in Lewis' Artillery Battery, part of Thomas' Legion. Jeremiah

(4) was in Company A, 16<sup>th</sup> Regiment, North Carolina, and later transferred to the infantry of Thomas' Legion. Thomas' Legion was made up of Cherokee Indians and white mountaineers from North Carolina and Tennessee. It was the last unit to surrender at the end of the Civil War on May 8, 1865. Francis Marion Jenkins (5), who was three years older than Samuel, enlisted in Company F, 29<sup>th</sup> Regiment, North Carolina, Confederate Army in 1861. He served as a private, deserted a year later, and then returned to Thomas' Legion. Later in his life, he was murdered by a Knoxville Sheriff after the murder of a man named Crisp. Francis was shot while trying to escape.

Samuel was only 13 when the war began, but since he was large for his age he was questioned by many of the locals as to why he was not fighting. At 16 he went to try and enlist, but was rejected by the Confederacy. He traveled around the mountain to East Tennessee to Maryville and signed up with the Union Army, stating that he was 18. He was a private in the Third Regiment, Company L of the Tennessee Calvary Volunteers and was mustered in on June 17, 1864. Since he lied about his age, this created many problems years later in applying for a pension. In June 1864, Samuel was promoted to Corporal. He was in a group carrying supplies to General Sherman in his infamous "March through Georgia" from Atlanta to Savannah. The Third Regiment was called on for some severe assignments. They helped to build a bridge over the Tennessee River and suffered a defeat in its first major action in Okolona, Mississippi. The following day they had a victory at Ivy Farm against Nathan Bedford Forrest. Forrest lost his brother in this fierce battle.

After a period of inactivity for four months, Forrest returned to Tennessee and the Third Regiment of Tennessee was right in his path. Major S. W. Pickens surrendered half of the Regiment at Athens, Alabama without a fight. This decision to surrender was not understood by his men. Sam and the rest of the Regiment were stationed at two blockhouses guarding the Nashville and Decatur Railroad. This determined group was a harder nut to crack. On September 24, 1864, these Unionists fought hard all day to hold back the South's best cavalry, but finally were forced to surrender. Sam and 300 members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> were marched to Cahaba, Alabama (near Selma) and into the Confederate Prison, Castle Morgan. Cahaba Federal Prison was located on the banks of the Alabama and Cahaba Rivers near Selma, Alabama.

The prison was 16,000 square feet, surrounded by a tall brick wall. Cooking was done in the open area in the center of the prison yard. Rough bunks without straw or bedding of any kind with a leaky roof extended out from the brick wall.



*The Cahaba Prison. (Jesse Hawes, Cahaba: A Story of Boys in Blue)*

The bunks accommodated only 432 men. This was an old cotton warehouse and held 5,000 Union soldiers from 1863-1865. Food was very scarce. Samuel said the best food he had was a piece of bread where a horse had stepped on it. There was a single fireplace in the building and fires were sometimes built on the earthen floor to survive the cold damp Alabama temperatures. The firewood was either green sap pine or decayed oak from old fields. The water supply came from an artesian well by moved along an open sewer. Many died from disease, but the death rate was lower that the notorious Andersonville Prison. Five men shared two blankets. A prison meant to hold 600, now held more than 3,000. The average ration at Cahaba was a pint of peas and a pint of cornmeal. Decayed beef infested with bugs was also common, according to accounts from Samuel. The commander of the camp was Captain H. A. M. Henderson. He was a Methodist minister and very humane and fair. Captain Henderson later presided at the funeral of President Grant's mother.



*Cahaba's Commander  
H. A. M. Henderson*

In 1819, the state of Alabama was formed out of the wilderness. From 1820-1826, Cahaba was the state capital. Cahaba's low elevation next to the river made it prone to flooding and not too healthy. In 1826, the capital was moved to Tuscaloosa. Next, Cahaba became the major distribution point for cotton shipped down the Alabama River from the black belt region to the port of Mobile. Due to the flooding problems, prisoners were forced to stand in the water, the effects of which were especially brutal during the winter months that Samuel's group had to endure. Dead bodies had to be weighted down to prevent them from floating out of the ground. Many died from these harsh conditions. During one of the floods, orders came that Union prisoners were to be exchanged at Vicksburg, Mississippi. A train took Samuel's group in March of 1865, to join many prisoners from Andersonville Prison. The trip to Vicksburg was almost as harsh as the prison had been. One train derailed three times, resulting in more injury and death. Many died on the trip and bodies were left at almost every stop to be buried by strangers. A report from the U. S. Sanitary Agent in Vicksburg on April 4, 1865 filed the following report to his superior regarding the surviving prisoners:

“There are now in camp four miles from here about 4,000 prisoners and more are coming in every day. Those who came in first were from Cahaba, and were in much better condition than those now coming in from Andersonville. The latter are in very weak and distressing condition; every train containing more or less who have died upon the road. Yesterday an ambulance came in which started from Jackson with four sick men, and when it arrived they were all dead. Large trains of ambulances are running between Black River and Jackson, bringing more, who are too feeble to walk. The city hospitals are being emptied to make room for them and everything is being done that can be done, but still many will die for the succor has come too late.”

Many emaciated prisoners had to walk the last 30 miles from Jackson, Mississippi to Vicksburg taking about 1 ½ day to reach the Union lines at Big Black River, four miles east of Vicksburg.

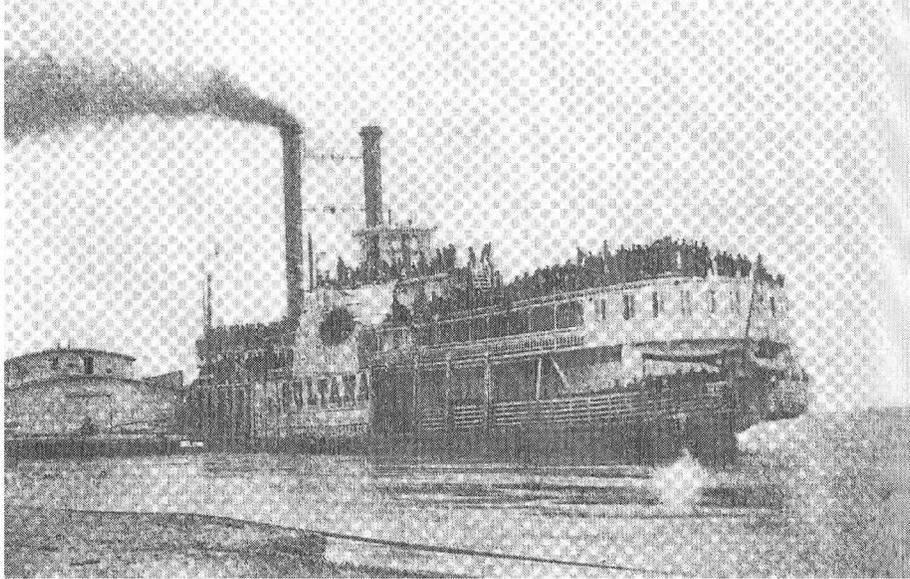
As prisoners arrived at Vicksburg, there was great rejoicing. The men were shouting with joy as they drew near the river, running and throwing hats into the air. On a small hill the American flag was waving and for Samuel and his group of tired, weary soldiers, this was their first glimpse of the Stars and Stripes since their capture at Athens, Alabama on September 24, 1864. The prisoners were housed in a parole camp known as Camp Fisk (or Four Mile Camp) four miles from Vicksburg. During March and April, 5,530 prisoners were received at this camp operated by the Union Army, although the prisoners were still under the control of the Confederate Army, since the exchange of prisoners had not been finalized. At this point, most prisoners were allowed to write their families that they would soon be home. As they waited at Camp Fisk, Grant's army was about to deliver the final blow to the Confederacy in a small town in Virginia named Appomattox. Due to the final surrender, Grant never had to deliver this crushing blow and within hours Lee and Grant drafted documents to end the Civil War. The Union officers at Camp Fisk began to organize the movement of prisoners by steamer and train to Camp Chase, near Columbus, Ohio, where they would be granted their discharge and released to go home. Captain George Augustus Williams was the commissary of musters at Vicksburg in March and April of 1865. General Morgan L. Smith was commander of the Post and District of Vicksburg. Captain Williams proved to be very incompetent in his handling of previous assignments. He was ordered to report to General Grant on April 7,

1865, in Cairo, Illinois for review. At this point Captain Frederick Speed volunteered to carry on his duties in his absence, working with General Dana, Commander of the Department of Mississippi.



*General Morgan L. Smith &  
Captain George A. Williams*

As the Army of Northern Virginia was celebrating at Appomattox, the Sultana was docking in St. Louis for the final time. This steamer had arrived at her homeport with a full load of passengers. Even though the Sultana was to leave the following day at four o'clock, it was delayed one day for a routine inspection in St. Louis. It was found to be structurally sound, including the boilers. The Sultana headed down the Mississippi River on April 12<sup>th</sup> to the next stop which was Cairo, Illinois. The boat was docked there until April 15<sup>th</sup>. While the Sultana was docked in Cairo, tragic history was being made in Washington, D. C. On the evening of April 14<sup>th</sup>, President Abraham Lincoln and his wife were attending a play at the Ford's Theatre. During the performance Lincoln was shot and died early the next day. News reached Cairo that morning and bells on the steamboats and churches were ringing in memory of this great, fallen leader.



*Photograph of the Sultana and her doomed passengers  
Taken on April 26, 1865, at Helena Arkansas*

The Sultana was the first boat to steam southward on the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup>. Since all telegraph communications with the South had been cut off by order of Secretary of War Stanton, the steamer carried the news of President Lincoln's death with her down the Mississippi. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, a stop was made in Memphis, Tennessee and it continued on to New Orleans, Louisiana that same morning.

As the Sultana headed south from Memphis to New Orleans, its captain, Captain J. C. Mason was aware that prisoners were waiting outside of Vicksburg for transportation to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and Camp Chase, Ohio. Captain Mason was eager to have a load of these men since his boat belong to the Merchants and People Line, which had a contract with the government for transporting freight and troops. Other steamers in this loose organization were the Henry Ames and the Lady Gay. More personal reasons to secure a load was that the military was offering \$5 per enlisted man and \$10 dollars per officer for

the transportation of prisoners. Captain Mason was in serious financial trouble since he had been forced to sell the majority of his shares in the Sultana. Everything Captain Mason owned was invested in his small share of the Sultana, on this final trip down the Mississippi. For this reason, Captain Mason hoped to use any influence he had, to insure he gain a large number of prisoners to transport out of Vicksburg on his return trip upstream. Captain Mason made a stop at Vicksburg going down to New Orleans in order to strike a deal with General Morgan Smith, a fellow citizen of St. Louis and former riverboat Captain himself. He also met with Colonel Reuben Hatch and Miles Sells, the Sultana's agent at Vicksburg. Confident of his deal struck with Smith and Hatch, Captain Mason reboarded the Sultana and headed for New Orleans.

The Sultana arrived in New Orleans on April 19<sup>th</sup>. On April 21, 1865, after a day's delay due to an effort to augment the Sultana's load of passengers and freight, the steamer departed from New Orleans.

Among the passenger list was the Samuel Spikes family of twelve from Assumption Parish, Louisiana to establish a new home in the North. There were about 250 passengers and crew. One crewman, who disembarked two hours before, reported that the Sultana's boilers had been patched or repaired at Natchez and Vicksburg on the two previous trips. When the Sultana was ten hours south of Vicksburg, this final trip, Nathan Wintringer, the Chief Engineer discovered steam escaping from a small crack in the middle larboard boiler. The leak was serious enough to cause Wintringer to refuse to go any further than Vicksburg, unless necessary repairs were made. At greatly reduced speed, the Sultana continued toward Vicksburg, up the great Mississippi. In the meantime

at Vicksburg, General Dana ordered Captain Speed to prepare the rolls for the men to send them north, since the Confederates had agreed to parole the prisoners at Camp Fisk. Dana instructed Speed to place 1,000 soldiers on each of the steamers docking at Vicksburg.



*Captain Frederic Speed  
The only person brought to trial following  
The Sultana disaster*

In April of 1865, the Merchants' and People's Line and the Atlantic and Mississippi Steamboat Line were competing for the transport of these Federal prisoners from Vicksburg. The Henry Ames was the first steamer to be given a portion of these men and it was a boat belonging to the Merchants' and People's Line. It was given 800 men, but that soon rose to 1,300. One of these men, Epenetus McIntosh, with the 14<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry, weighed 175 lbs. when he was captured in Ackworth, Georgia. Now, a year later, after his stay at Andersonville, he weighed 80 lbs.



*Pvt. Epenetus W. McIntosh after his release from prison  
And as he appeared in 1890*

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, another steamer, the Olive Branch, docked and loaded 700 soldiers. It was a member of the Atlantic and Mississippi Line. After it left Vicksburg, charges of bribery began to surface over the transportation of prisoners. Charges against Captain Kerns, the Quartermaster in charge of the river transportation were made, but so many were guilty, no charges were made and later it was stated that Hatch, not Kerns, had made some deals.

The Sultana docked at Vicksburg at 8:45 p.m. on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Shortly after docking, Nathan Wintringer, the engineer, sought out R. G. Taylor a local boiler maker. After an inspection, Taylor discovered a bulge on the middle larboard boiler. He was amazed it had made the trip from New Orleans. Captain Mason felt the suggested repairs of replacing two sheets on the boiler would take too much time, and this might result in losing his valuable cargo, the prisoners.

All that Taylor could do in the time allowed was to patch the boiler and force back the bulge. It did take over 24 hours to do this repair. Taylor, an expert with 28 years experience, felt it was a dangerous gamble to proceed upriver and was

on record as saying all the boilers on the Sultana appeared to him to have been burned by the time it reached Vicksburg, due to a low water supply.



*Maj. Gen. Napoleon Jackson Tecumseh Dana*

After a day of corrupt negotiations to board as many prisoners as possible on the Sultana, despite its need for much more repair to the boilers, 1,300 – 1,400 prisoners were to be put on the Sultana. The men in charge believed this would take all the remaining soldiers. Since they neglected to get complete rolls, this miscalculation placed the number closer to 2,400 aboard the Sultana. They stated rolls would be taken after boarding. Twenty-three prisoners taken aboard the Sultana were confined to cots. Dr. George Kemble, Medical Director for the Department of Mississippi went aboard and, after observing the crowded conditions, requested permission to remove those individuals on cots. Even though the Captain refused their removal, Dr. Kemble removed them anyway, saving their lives. Families were mixed among the prisoners. The decks were sagging with excess weight. Samuel Jenkins was on the upper deck near the boilers. One passenger was William D. Snow, a U. S. Senator-elect from Arkansas. Snow discussed his concern for safety for such an excessive load. The

clerk stated that the Sultana was transporting the largest number of passengers ever carried upriver on a single vessel (2,400 soldiers, 100 citizens and a crew of 80). That was a total of 2,580 people and the boat's capacity was 376. The actual number aboard the Sultana will never be known. The 522 Tennessee soldiers who began with Samuel were the survivors about to see home.

The Sultana also carried a large store of freight such as: 1,200 lbs. of sugar, 97 cases of wine, 70-100 mules and horses, and 100 hogs. An unusual cargo was the crew's pet, a large alligator in a wooden crate.

At 9 o'clock on the evening of April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Sultana slowly backed away from the wharf at Vicksburg, full of weary passengers, relieved to be moving northward. Behind these men were the horrors of war and prison camps, now they could dream of home and families and peace at last.

Despite rampant diarrhea, malnutrition and many diseases, there was not one doctor aboard. Blankets were needed on the cold decks at night. Prisoners ate hard bread and raw salt pork or bacon. Passengers were told not to move or shift aboard the steamer or it might capsize or explode. After a stop in Helena, Arkansas, the Sultana moved up toward Memphis. Wintringer was pacing about the boilers checking them and the patch placed on them. The boiler was a potential bomb and the small patch a lit fuse.

In Memphis, sugar and wine were loaded and many prisoners went to the bars to celebrate their new freedom. After some time the drunken soldiers were rounded up by the Army guards. One seven-foot Tennessean was seen shouting and cursing at a bayonet point as he was escorted to the hurricane deck where he continued to disturb. This large soldier was Private Richard Pierce of Company D

– 3<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee Cavalry. There were also some officers from the gunboat Tyler who walked aboard the Sultana while she was docked. One of these officers, William Michael, later wrote of his visit that night:

“I ...mingled with living skeletons who had been rotting in southern prison pens for months, but who were now happy at the prospect of soon meeting the dear ones at home. We cheered them with kindly words and rejoiced with them at the bright prospects before them. Some of the men were too weak to walk without being supported by more fortunate comrades. Others were compelled by sheer weakness to lie on cots or blankets spread upon the decks, while their wants were cheerfully provided for by devoted companions, who loved them because of the sufferings they had passed through”.

The Sultana left Memphis at 11 o'clock that night and on to Hopefield, Arkansas where 1,000 bushels of coal were loaded aboard. They departed from Hopefield at 1 a.m., April 27<sup>th</sup>. Due to the flooding and no levees north of Memphis, the river was more than four miles wide. The steamer was steered through a series of islands known as Paddy's Hen and Chicks. Distant lightning was seen and a cold drizzle of rain covered the passengers on the Sultana that April night.

On the main deck, and between the waterwheels, lay a battery of four boilers, each measuring 18 feet in length, and filled with steam and boiling water. On the middle larboard was the small patch Wintringer, the Chief Engineer, had been watching. He had reason to worry. A boiler on the steamboat contained 150 pounds of pressure per square inch, enough energy to hurl the boiler over two miles in the air. Also, a cubic foot of heated water under pressure of 60-70 pounds had the same energy as a pound of gunpowder. On the morning of April 27<sup>th</sup>, these four boilers had approximately 135 pounds per square inch of pressure.

Beneath the boilers was a coal-burning furnace running the breadth of the steamer forward. Hard firing was needed to maintain the pressure of steam in the boilers to make them work. This made the metal work around the furnace, the furnace and the boilers, red hot. The risk of fire and its rapid spread was a constant threat. If this were to occur, the only hope was for steering ashore, since the passengers could not depend on lifesaving equipment. The boat carried only 76 cork-filled life preservers and one metal lifeboat.

At 2 a.m. on April 27<sup>th</sup>, seven miles out of Memphis, all Hell broke loose! Three of the four boilers erupted with volcanic fury that could be heard for miles across the countryside on either side of the Mississippi River. Arthur A. Jones of the 115<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry described the blast in the following manner:

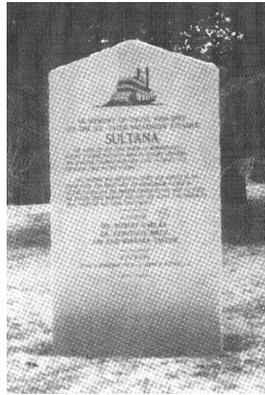
“What a crash! My God! My blood curdles while I write and words are inadequate; no tongue or writer’s pen can describe it. Such hissing of steam, the crash of the different decks as they came together with the tons of living freight, the falling of the massive smoke stacks, the death cry of strong-hearted men caught in every conceivable manner, the red-tongued flames bursting up through the mass of humanity and driving to death’s door those who were fortunate enough to live through worse than a dozen deaths in the damnable death pens at Andersonville. We had faced death day by day while incarcerated there, but this was far more appalling than any scene through which we had passed”.



*Explosion and Sinking of the Sultana (Artist's sketch)*

We wonder what went through Sam's mind during this horrible ordeal which must have made his six months in the Cahaba prison seem not nearly as bad. From the Pension documents reviewed many years later, Samuel was on the Sultana when it blew up on the night of April 26, 1865. The records stated that he fell from the upper to the lower deck, falling over a coil of rope, causing a scrotal rupture. Since he was a good swimmer, he jumped into the water, he said and was picked up by a gunboat. After his injury was discovered he was taken to Adams General Hospital in Memphis on April 27, 1865. He had intermittent fever, according to hospital records, but returned to duty on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Samuel was one of the 755 rescued, and out of this group 300 died in the hospital due to severe burns or injuries. Approximately 2,500 perished in the Sultana disaster. Several husbands lost wives and children, and wives lost husbands among the civilians traveling on the steamer. Many were never recovered from the river, but

some were buried in unmarked graves in the Elmwood Cemetery in Memphis. A granite marker in Elmwood memorializes this disaster.



*Monument, erected in 1989 at the Greenwood Cemetery in Memphis, TN*

Many years later when Samuel was applying for a pension from the Department of the Interior in Washington, he was denied several times. After the family kept pursuing it, he finally was granted the pension during his latter years. Two friends from the Cahaba Prison who had stayed in touch over the years following the war, wrote letters on his behalf to verify a hernia was not present during the prison time since they all bathed together. These men were Oliver McCammon and Isaac Smith. Also a local doctor verified a right scrotal hernia the size of an orange as the result of the Sultana injury. At least he received a small compensation, at age 64 whereas his four brothers who fought for the Confederacy were not entitled to a pension.

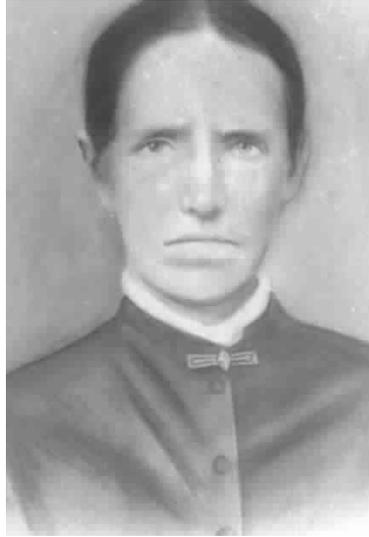
The Sultana became history and political influence saved the guilty from prosecution and no criminal misconduct was ever exposed. Even though Frederic Speed got a court martial, he was probably less guilty than the others. Speed later became a judge, newspaper editor and a powerful voice in Mississippi

politics. It was the same old, sad story. For many years the Sultana survivors held reunions, and Samuel attended several of these. The reunions continue to this day except that they include only the grandchildren and other relatives. In 2003, Glynn Jenkins Green, Samuel's daughter, was one of two children of survivors that attended. He would talk more about his prison experiences with friends and family, but not the fiery night in April, 1865 on the Mississippi River when the "Angel of Death" visited them.

Little mention has been made in historical accounts of the Sultana tragedy since it occurred the week President Lincoln was assassinated. This is a terrible oversight in our accounts of the Civil War since more died on the Sultana than died on the Titanic, and almost as many as in the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on September 11, 2001. Certainly close to the 3,000 that died in all the plane attacks on that day.

On June 10, 1865, Samuel received an honorable discharge at Nashville, Tennessee. Family members remember that Sam walked home from Nashville to Bryson City, North Carolina. He was truly happy to be home, even though disabled to the extent it was difficult to become a farmer as his family had been before the war.

The following year, 1866, he married Elizabeth "Eliza" Jane Rose and by 1886, they had a family of five boys and two girls. They lived on a farm near Webster, North Carolina in Jackson County. In 1880, the family moved to Polk County, Tennessee and lived in Ducktown. Eliza's family lived in that area.



*Elizabeth "Eliza" Jane Rose Jenkins  
1846-1899*

In 1887, at the age of 39, Samuel moved his family to Soddy, Tennessee where he worked in the coal mines and did light farming. On December 6, 1889, Samuel's wife Eliza died and was buried at Hot Water Cemetery on the mountain above Soddy. Twelve years later, on July 25, 1901, he married Sallie Goode (1883-1924) and over the next 23 years they had thirteen other children. A complete list of Dr. Sam's 20 children is at the end of this document. During this time he became a medical doctor and lived and practiced in Bakewell, Tennessee.



*Samuel Washington Jenkins Family, Picture taken about 1878  
William Francis (standing) age 10, baby on father's lap Samuel, Jr. age 2  
Emanuel Alexander age 6, Mary Clementine age 5  
Samuel age 30 and Eliza Jane age 32*



*Sallie Ann Goode  
1883-1924*

Even though his pension was approved in 1912, it was not until 1926 that he began to receive compensation in the form of a Pension check for \$100.00 per month. Samuel's wife Sallie had died in childbirth in 1924 when William was born, and his half brother, Samuel Jenkins, Jr. adopted and raised him. The two families of children stayed fairly close despite the difference in their ages.

Sam was a respected citizen and medical examiner for the Southern Railroad. In 1933 when he died his obituary listed seven sons and nine daughters as surviving. The following is his obituary from the Chattanooga Times:

Obituary for Dr. Samuel Washington Jenkins  
January 20, 1933  
Dr. S. W. Jenkins, 84, Dies At Bakewell  
Union Veteran Fought in Tennessee Regiment - Was Medical Examiner

Dr. Samuel W. Jenkins, 84, died at his home in Bakewell yesterday morning after a long illness. Dr. Jenkins was born March 19, 1848, and was a Union veteran of the War Between the States, being a member of Company L, Third Tennessee regiment. He served for more than three years and was one of the 2,120 soldiers on the boat Sultana when it was destroyed during the war on the Mississippi river.

Dr. Jenkins was captured at Sulphur Trussel, Alabama, and was in prison for six months at Andersonville. He helped to build the pontoon bridge across the Tennessee river here during the war and was also in the Battle of Orchard Knob. He was a practicing physician for more than sixty years and was pension examiner for the Southern railroad under Dr. George Baxter and Dr. W. A. Applegate of Chattanooga.

Dr. Jenkins had lived in the section of Soddy and Bakewell for more than fifty years and was a charter member of the Masonic lodge of Soddy.

Dr. Jenkins is survived by seven sons, E. A., S. W., Jr., and William, all of Soddy; Arthur of Emory Gap, Tennessee, and John, Eddie and Theodore Jenkins of Bakewell; nine daughters, Mrs. T. J. Welch, Red Bank; Mrs. Elizabeth Woods, Toledo, Ohio; Miss Grace Jenkins, Chattanooga; Mrs. Harry Sanders, Chattanooga; Mrs. Walter Constigan, Cincinnati, Ohio; Mrs. Jessie Ledford and Misses Glenna and Sallie Maude Jenkins, all of Bakewell, and Mrs. Crystal Minnis of North Carolina; also a large number of grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held this afternoon at 1:30 o'clock at the Congregational church at Soddy, with the Reverend A. L. DeJarnette in charge, assisted by Reverend W. O. Peeples. Interment will be in Varner cemetery, with Hallett's in charge. The Masonic order will have charge of the services at the grave.

Article from Chattanooga Newspaper  
January 21, 1933  
Dr. Jenkins Death Recalls Sultana  
Survived Ship Tragedy in Mississippi River  
Paroled Union Soldiers Crowded on Board  
Total of 1,338 Lost Lives

The death of Dr. Samuel W. Jenkins, survivor of the sinking of the Sultana, at his home in Bakewell Thursday, recalled to memories of a few old-timers the

story of that ill-fated steamer whose destruction cost 1,338 lives. Dr. Jenkins was 84 and was spared in his youth to tell the tale of the Sultana.

The boat, loaded with 1,990 persons, including about 1,200 paroled Union soldiers, sank in the Mississippi river in April of 1865. Two nations - the United States of America and the Confederate States of America - were shaken by the stark horror of the disaster and yet chronicles of was scarcely mention it - if at all, the Associated Press reported.

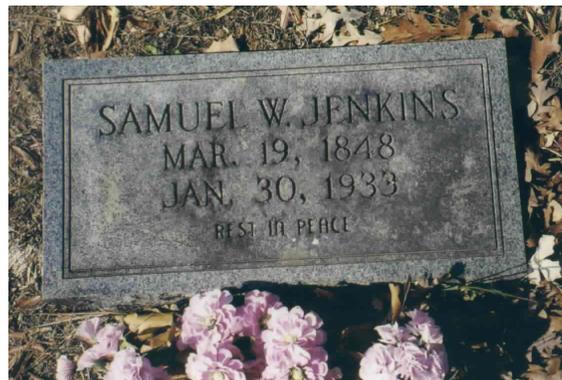
There was nothing glamorous about the disaster - no brave men charging into cannon, no rebel yells and no waving flags. It was just death without the tinsel of romance. The steamer either blew up or turned over from weight of its passengers. Anyway its human cargo was thrown into the mad Mississippi and most of the men and women drowned.

Acts of congress and snatches of history in documents of the "war of rebellion" mention the disaster. The prisoners were paroled by the Confederates in the Vicksburg area and were loaded on boats to go home. The Sultana steamed up the river and 1,900 persons were loaded aboard. Some documents say there were protests against herding so many men on one little ship.

But she started north and up the river she went down. Experts examined pieces of her boiler and testified as to causes of the disaster. The men who would have known what happened were dead - victims of the river. The secretary of war ordered an investigation.

One record says a captain was responsible for the large number of passengers and another document places blame on another Union officer. There were court martials. An ensign from the U.S.S. Ironclad Essex testified Union soldiers at Fort Pickering fired on him and his crew when they sought to save drowning soldiers. Other authorities said the ensign's report was not true. There were charges and counter-charges, but somehow the story of the Sultana died down.

The funeral of Dr. Jenkins was held at the Soddy Congregational church yesterday. Dr. A. L. DeJarnette officiating, assisted by the Reverend W. O. Peebles. Interment was in Varner cemetery.



*Gravestone for Samuel W. Jenkins  
Varner Cemetery, Soddy, Tennessee*



*Civil War Gravestone for Samuel W. Jenkins  
Varner Cemetery, Soddy, Tennessee*



*Dr. Samuel Washington Jenkins  
In Later Life w/His Doctor's Bag*

This excerpt is from a book published in 1989 about Soddy, Tennessee by Elsie M. Janow:

He (Samuel) set up his practice on Wall Street in Soddy, in a building adjacent to a pharmacy. He was the first doctor to practice medicine in Soddy. Later he moved his office to where the old Company Store used to be.

During World War I, the flu epidemic broke out. Dr. Sam's six-year-old son, James died. Snow was on the ground and Dr. Ed Jenkins, carried the little boy in

a pine box across his horse and rode up Soddy Mountain where he was buried in Hot Water Cemetery. (See the following story about the Flu Epidemic.) There were no funeral homes in Soddy during that time.

### **The Influenza Pandemic of 1918**

The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919 killed more people than the Great War, known today as World War I (WWI), at somewhere between 20 and 40 million people. It has been cited as the most devastating epidemic in recorded world history. More people died of influenza in a single year than in four-years of the Black Death Bubonic Plague from 1347-1351. Known as the "Spanish Flu" or "La Grippe" the influenza of 1918-1919 was a global disaster.

In pockets across the globe something erupted that seemed as benign as the common cold. The influenza of that season, however, was far more than a cold. In the two years that this scourge ravaged the earth, a fifth of the world's population was infested. The flu was most deadly for people ages 20 to 40, and it infected 28% of all Americans. An estimated 675,000 Americans died of influenza during the pandemic, ten times as many as in the world war. The effect of the influenza epidemic was so severe that the average life span in the US was depressed by 10 years. Outbreaks swept through North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Brazil and the South Pacific. There were pockets in East Tennessee, and Western North Carolina where the Jenkins family lived and where they were infected. Two Jenkins children died as a result of the flu epidemic, James, age six, and Clarence, age six months. Both Samuel and Sallie were in bed with the flu when Dr. Ed Jenkins carried one boy up the side of Soddy Mountain to bury him in the snow of Hot Water Cemetery.

Dr. Sam Jenkins was known to be a very compassionate man and had many friends. Mr. Marshall Flerl recalls the following story from when he was a very small boy:

"My mother was washing clothes outside in a big, black, iron pot. I was stirring them in the hot water with a stick. The stick slipped and my left arm went down in the hot, sudsy water. My brother got to me and began to rub my arm and the skin was coming off. It scared him so he ran into the barn and jumped into the big bran box we fed the cows from. Dr. Sam came and smoothed a lot of ointment on my arm. After treating me two or three times, my arm healed completely. I will never forget Dr. Sam."

Years later, Dr. Samuel Jenkins retired, but not from the public eye. He was an avid story-teller and the children in the neighborhood would come in the afternoons and sit on his porch to hear him "spin his yarns."

Dr. Ed Jenkins took Dr. Sam's place after his retirement. Dr. Ed Jenkins was the son of Morris Jenkins who immigrated to this country from Wales in 1865. Dr. Ed received his elementary and secondary education, going on to Chattanooga Medical School where he graduated in 1880 as valedictorian of his class.

Dr. Ed delivered me (Arlene Penney), at home in 1940. He slept on our daybed until labor had progressed enough for delivery. He retired from practice

in 1955 and died in 1965 at the age of 78 in St. Petersburg, Florida where I lived with my parents until 1963. My parents, Wilburn and Rachel (Jenkins) Penney, lived in St. Petersburg for 40 years until they moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama in 1996 to be near us.



*Arlene Penney at Six Months*

### **Jenkins Family Reunion**

On July 8, 1989, a reunion of many of Samuel Jenkins family took place at the old former Bakewell Elementary School, now the Bakewell Community Center. None of us who attended this occasion would have been there if Samuel had not survived the Sultana disaster. On the next page are some pictures from the reunion. Also, Rachel Penney (Samuel's granddaughter) wrote a poem for the occasion that was to be sung to the tune of "It's a Grand Old Flag." The whole clan joined in and sang the family song during the meeting.

*“It’s a Grand Old Clan”*

*It’s a grand old clan  
It’s the old Jenkins clan  
Tracing back to the nation of Wales.  
On our family crest,  
The very best,  
With spirit that always prevails.  
Everyone who’s here  
Will be ready to cheer  
For the ties that have bound us today.  
For Uncle Sam  
And DOCTOR SAM  
Here’s a toast to the Jenkins Clan.*

People attended the reunion from all over the country, from California to Tennessee, and as far away as England, and enjoyed the fun and fellowship. There was even a square-dance exhibition presented by a local group from the Bakewell community.

*Pictures from the Jenkins Family Reunion*



*Display table of Dr. Sam's Artifacts*



*Group Meeting of the Jenkins Family*



*Bakewell Community Center*

**Those Attending the July, 1989 Reunion**

**Children of Samuel Washington Jenkins**

Edwin Jenkins (one of Samuel's children by his second wife)

Glynnna Jenkins, (one of Samuel's children by his second wife) and her descendants: Max and Zoe Green, Carolyn Green, Judith Green, and Chris Green

Theodore "Ted" Jenkins, (one of Samuel's children by his second wife) and his descendants: Ted "Teddy" Jenkins and Marion Bashcord

**Descendants of His Children**

Sam and Meda Welch, Evelyn Welch, Elmer Welch, David and Carol Welch Martin, and Ruth Welch – Descendants of Mary Clementine Jenkins (Aunt Tim).

Janice Early – Descendant of Willie Jenkins.

Lee Wood and Ralph Wood – Descendants of Eliza Jane Jenkins.

Sara Jo and Hugh Neil, Servais Evrand Neil, Elizabeth Errett Neil, Roselyn Card, Sandy and Kay Alexander, James Carter, and Gwen Marion – Descendants of Samuel Jenkins.

Arlene, Brad, and Russ Chissom, Rachel and Wilburn Penney, Mary Marlow, and Joan Johnson – Descendants of Emanuel Jenkins.

Marilyn Sanderson, Evelyn (Evie) Pastor and two of her daughters – Descendants of Mary Agnes Jenkins.

Edna Gossage Blue and Bill Blue - Descendants of Arthur Jenkins.

**Children of Samuel Washington Jenkins and**  
**Elizabeth “Eliza” Jane Rose**

- 1- William Francis Jenkins – (1868-1886) Died at 18 years of age
- 2- Emanuel Alexander Jenkins – (1872-1938) Lived in Soddy, TN
- 3- Mary Clementine (Aunt Tim) Jenkins – (1873-1959) Lived in Soddy, TN
- 4- Samuel Washington Jenkins, Jr. – (1876-1956) Lived in Soddy, TN
- 5- Elizabeth Jane Jenkins – (1881-1958) Lived in Toledo, OH
- 6- Arthur Jenkins – (1884-1970) Lived in Emory Gap, Roane County, TN
- 7- Charles Jenkins – (1886-1909) Lived in Emory Gap, Roane County, TN

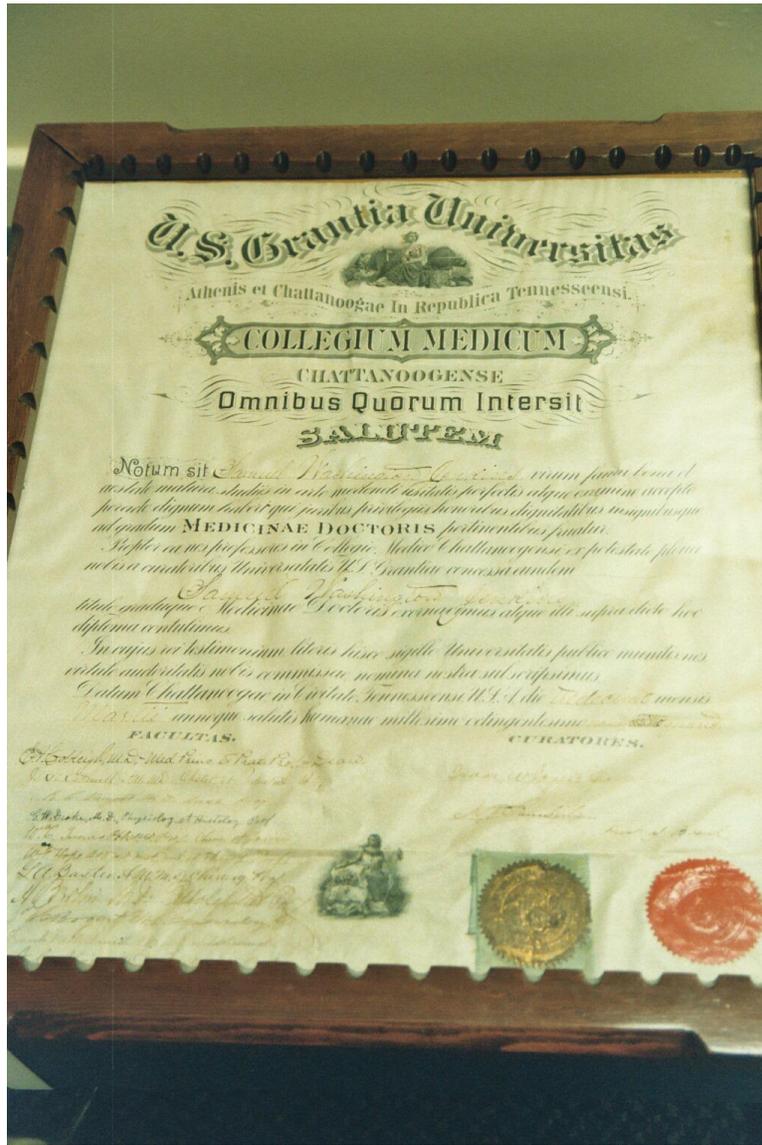
**Children of Samuel Washington Jenkins and**  
**Sallie Ann Goode**

- 1- Grace Jenkins – (1902- ) Lived in Bellflower, CA
- 2- Willie I. Jenkins – (1903- )
- 3- Charlotte Jenkins – (1905-1992) Lived in Los Angeles, CA
- 4- Chrystal M. Jenkins – (1907-1986)
- 5- Mary Agnes Jenkins (1909- ) Lived in Cincinnati, OH
- 6- John Thomas Jenkins - (1911-1988) Lived in Bakewell, TN
- 7- Theodore “Ted” Jenkins – (1913- ) Lived in Soddy, TN
- 8- James Jenkins – (1914- 1920) Died at age six. Probably because of the flu Epidemic of 1918-1919.
- 9- Edwin “Doc” Jenkins – (1916- ) Lived in Fort Walton Beach, FL
- 10- Clarence Jenkins – (1918- 1918) Died at age six months, because of the flu Epidemic of 1918-1919.
- 11- Glynn Roberta Jenkins – (1919- ) Lived in Bakewell, TN. Still living as of

3/2004

12- Sallye Maude Jenkins – (1921-1993) Lived in Soddy, TN

13- William Jenkins – (1924-1975) Lived in Nashville, TN



Medical Diploma of Samuel W. Jenkins

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