

# *Jackson County Historical Society News*

VOLUME NINETEEN, NUMBER THREE

MAY 2012



*Rogers Baptist Church, 1318 Aderhold Rogers Rd, Commerce, GA 30530*

The Jackson County Historical Society will meet at Rogers Church on May 20 at 2:30 p.m. Kenneth Bridges, grandson of Benjamin Rogers, will present a program on the Church and the Rogers Mill. After the tour of the buildings those interested can drive to the Rogers-White Cemetery near the former Mill. All are welcome to attend

*Directions: From Commerce Ga, take highway 98/Ila Rd 4 miles, turn right on Neese Commerce Rd, travel 0.7 mile and make a slight turn left on Rogers Church Road, Travel 1.4 miles to Rogers Church on the right*

*Jackson County Historical Society*

*P.O. Box 1234, Commerce, Georgia 30529*

*(706) 207-6889*

## Newsletter

The Historical Society's collection of books, files and research materials are housed in the Heritage Room of the Commerce Public Library. The Library will begin an expansion and renovation in May 2012 and will move to 2319 N. Elm St (former Video Warehouse) for a period of 6 months. For information call Tina: 706-207-6889

Dues run from July to July and can be mailed to:  
Jackson County Historical Society  
P. O. Box 1234, Commerce, GA 30529:

Individual -\$15, Family -\$25, LIFE members -\$100

## JCHS Officers 2011-2012

President: Shirley Wilson  
Vice-President: Marie Parks  
Recording Secretary: Boniface McDaniel

Treasurer: Tommy Benton  
Directors: James Mathis  
Ann Jarrett  
Jerry Legg  
Past Presidents: the late, Joyce Ethridge  
Ann A. Jarrett  
the late, Richard Chambers  
the late, Jean H. Booth  
Betty Ann Mathis  
James Mathis  
Ralph Freeman  
Carol Tanner  
Marie Parks  
Tina Harris  
Charlotte Mealor  
Caine Campbell  
Mary Lynn Bell



*Rogers Spring Baptism*

Rogers Church was founded in 1913 and built on land donated by Obediah W. T. Rogers, son of Robert Thomas and Mary Jane Smith Rogers. A community Sunday school program has been in existence since 1894 and met at the tenant house of Willie Williams. A short time later a one room school house was built and the Sunday School then met there with Wash Strickland serving as the first superintendent. The original church members consisted of 47 members; 42 moved their membership from Union Baptist, three moved from Black Creek, one from Berea Church and one from Raccoon Church. Rev H. E. Hardman served as the original pastor.



*Robert Thomas and Mary Smith Rogers with daughters*

### **Letters during the War**

Robert Thomas Rogers was born 13 Dec 1844 in Jackson County, Georgia. He was the son of William S. Rogers and Elizabeth Cementha Stapler. Robert served in Company C, 18th Georgia Regiment, CSA, and later in Company B of Dorroughs Battalion. He received a body wound for which he later received a pension. During his service, he wrote to his future wife, Mary Elizabeth Clarissa Smith. She was the daughter of William M. Smith and Martha "Patsy" Bowman of Madison County. Robert and Mary were married in Madison County on 1 Sep 1864.

*Most of the letters below are copies typed from the originals by Robert and Mary's granddaughter, Ruby Rogers Cuff.*

Camp near Richmond May the 21 1862

Dear Miss I seat myself this morning to informe you that I am well and hop that theas few lines will find you enjoyin the same blessing of life you must ecuse my boldness for

I think of you and this is al the way that I can releave hit any atall. If I could see you hit would save me the trubble of writing to you but we are a long ways apart i think of the times and the injoyment we have swen together but that is ast now but I hope we will be togeather an see more pleaser yet an I want you to answer theas few lines if you pleas that is if they ar excepted with you and if not I want ou to drop me a few lines and let me no hit and I shant doo so any are excues my ba writing and spelling for I have a bad chance to write for I haft to write on my knee and the best way I can I will tell you something about my fair I have swen pirty hard times sence I have bin in servis I have march somthing over two hundred miles through the rain and mud and snow part of the time and didnt get half a nuff to eat but I very well satisfad as well as could be expected I am now in a mile of Richmon but I dont now how long we will stay hear we ar looking for a fight every day an have bin some time I have wrote you one leter and hant receive no anser from hit and I dont know what to thin about hit whether you didnt

receive hit or not or whether you didnt think anuff of me to write to me but I thought I would try hit again an give you a fair test. So you must write if you pleas untel death when you write direct your letter to Richmond 18 Ga. Co. C. Gen. Hood Com.

R. T. Rogers

Miss Mary Smith

Virginia July 15th 1862

Dear Miss I received your kind letter the otter day wichit it was kindly received I was glad to hear you & all the family was well theas few lines leaves me well except a wound I got in the fite on the 7th day of June. A ball struck me in the left side. It struck me between my ribs and hip & went threw me all but the skin. & the doctor cut it out he sed it did just mist my interls he sed if it had fel down in among my interls it would of kild me the ball he lowes will way a pound he told me to keep the ball tel I dide he give a suftifficet to go with the ball to prove it to be the same ball I am doing better than any person could expect 2 more balles struck me on each arm but never quite entered them two balles war spent balles that struck me arms below my elbows the doctor ses they think I will be able to go home in a weak but father ses he don't want to start tel he thinks I can stand the trip I thank God that it was no worse then it was theasr was many a good man kild that was better than I was but my life is stil spard tel now wich I ought to be thankful. I have saw hard times sence I saw you but I don't think hard of it Just so I can live and get to my native land onst more. I cant under take to go into detail to tel you what I have sean I have sean many a thing sence I saw you I want you to read this letter to you father and mother Lawid onst at Yorktown he was well and saw Grifa and Newton & they were well as comin. Excuse my short letter. I must close by saying if you dont wish to read it to you father & mother you are at liberty to yous your own pleasure abotit mark ou thes last lines when you redit with ink

to Miss Mary E. C. Smith

Camp of the 18 Ga Grey Near Fredericksburg 12

This the 12 of May 1863

Dear Miss I take the opportunity to address you a few lines to let you know tat I am well and am out safe. I hope those few lines will come to hand and find you and all the rest well. Dear friend I received your kind letter. youz it was sed that their was no happiness to be seene hear that is so. but their is a hepe of trubble hear we dont now whether we will live a day or not and their is times we dont now whether

we will live to see the next our or the next minit or not you better bleave it is the serious thing that ever I was in I makes me feel bad an lonsom to think of it. I cant inform you how it makes us feal. I was glad to hear that you was well. I have not much to rite to you you have heard of the fight. I received your letter after I come out of the fight I feal happy that I was spaired out to read your kind letter. I have not had time to rite till now. We jus got back to our old camps yestady. two weeks to day since we left our camps. We was in the line of battle 7 or 8 days and knights. I am a fraid thay will not many of us tha will see peace, but I hope we will see our pleasure to gether and peace in this world. Now is the time to go to church. loks like all of the Cons will die and get kild if the war lasts 4 or 5 year I dont know what you girls will do for seete harts. if peace was made in that time. I was sorry to hear Jack Ash was ded. Loid is well, Henry White ses he is he is jus com from their and all the rest of the boys that is left. I wish I cold see you and talk with you it wold be a grate deal of pleasure to me bu lord only knows wether we will ever meete in this world or not, if not I hope we will meete in heavin. did you ever get the yankey love letter I sent to you. A girl sent it to me.

R. T. R. to M. J. C. Smith.

Camp of 18 GA Reg near Culpeper VA

This the 11 day of June 1863

Dear Miss I seat myself this eavning to inform you that I am ingoring very good health and I hope those few lines will com saf to hand and you all ingoring the same blessing. Dear friend I have bot much nuze to rite. We have had to do powferl hard marching since we left Fredericksburg. We started from Fredericksburg about dust and marched near by all knight up to whear we fought and stade till day we marched hard the next day and stopt and campst that knight. It was about 25 or 30 miles back to Fredericksburg you never saw the lik the boys had sore feete it was so hot it coldid our feet and skindd and blisterd our feete som of them had to march bearfooted they colad not wair their soes. next morning we cold hardly walk. we stade their all day and knight then we started the next morning and went about a mile and a half and had to waid the Rapperdan River we com on to Culpeper Sunday and we rested until tuesday and the calvary had a fight not far off and we had to start we went about one mile and fornd the line of battle but we hant not hat to fight yet. I tell you no one noes what a solder has to go threw with we toat a gun Cotterage box with 40 rounds in it and baonet and our close. I receivid

your kind letter you sent to me which thankfully received I was glad to hear you was well it came to hand when we were at Fredericksburg but I did not get to answer it till now we had to march. Loid is well. I would be glad to see you. there is not hardly a knight but what I dream of you and be with you and be at home and seeing pleasure with you and when I wake I am some 8 hundred miles from you. You do not now how bad it makes me feel it nearly breaks my heart I want you to write off in you need not wait for me to write I have no chance to write and I don't want you to wait for me to write I may not have no chance to write in a month. you must write soon, I am glad to hear from you anytime you need not to be afraid to write to me nor to be a slave to explain your feelings.  
your friend R. T Rogers

Camp near Culpeper

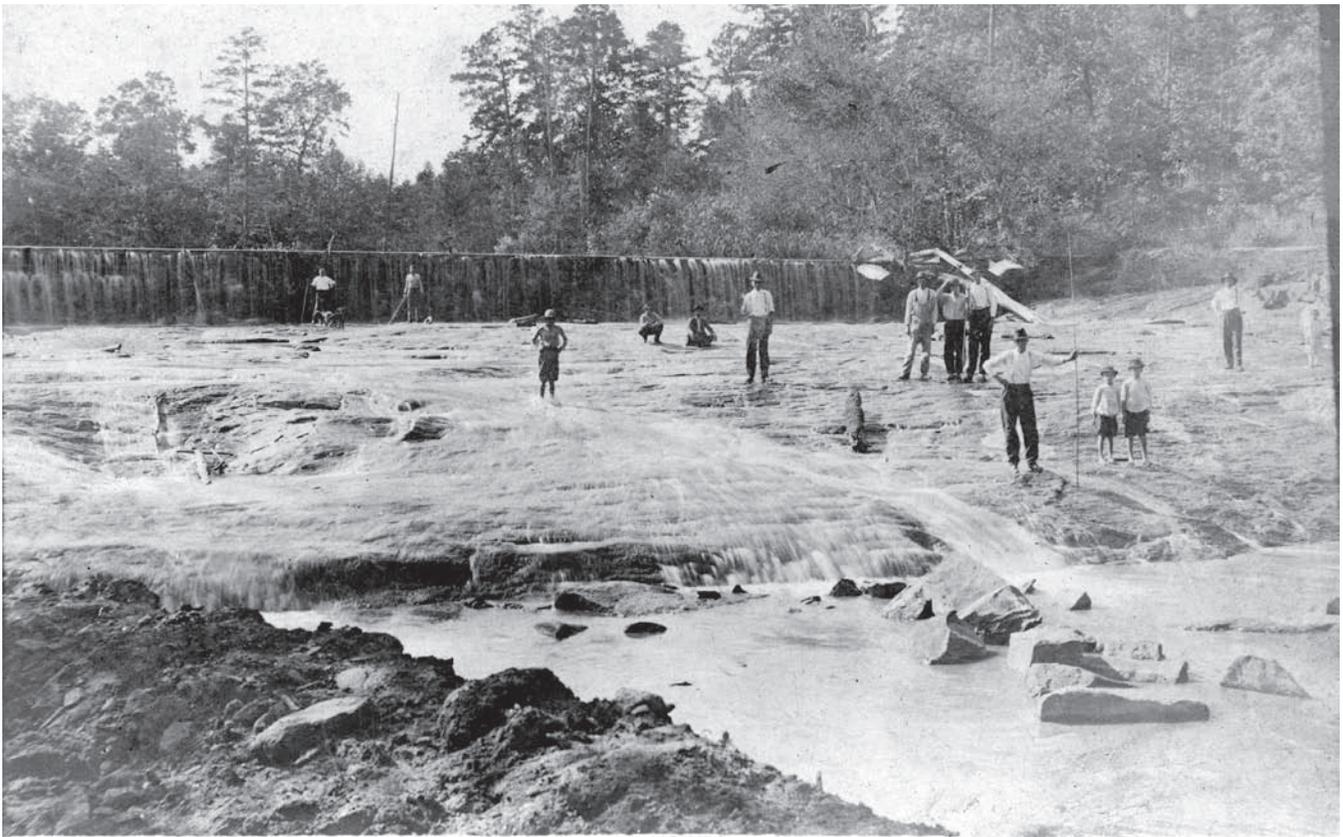
This the 12th of June 1863

Dear Miss I seat myself with pleasure this morning to inform you that I am still enjoying the same blessing of life and I hope when these few lines come to hand they will find you and all the rest well and hearty. Dear friend I have no news to write. I written you a letter yesterday so I have not

much to write I was going to send it by mail in Father's letter but I will send it hand you better believe I was glad to see your Father and to see your kind letter you do not now how it hopes me up to hear from you and to hear you was well I was glad to hear you got that Yankee love letter a girl in Jackson Co sent it me She cut me deeper ever pop. you said you saw my sister at meeting you must get acquainted with her and go and see her and I hope God will spare me out safe and sound I hope we all will see peace together once more which we saw once if all of the fellow soldiers all die and get killed I hope you will get some body that will treat you with pleasure and happiness in this world I was glad to hear the crops look well

#### Nature's Claims

How vain to think a maiden's heart  
Will tamely yield its power  
they might as well say nature's hand  
Shall never raise a flower



*Rogers Mill Falls*



*Benjamin and Bethel Rogers*

Camp Near Macon T. T. Borougs Battalion

This the 12th day April 1865

Dear Wife I seat My Self with pleasure to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am well. I truly hope these few lines will find you Ingoring the same blessing. I hav not any nues to write of importance. Nues came to this place this morning that we had lost Eighteen thousand of our men at Richmond, VA. And tht the yank is Coming down the stat road. They burnt Calhoun in Dalton Co. last weeke. I also hear they are making their way thru Ala. to Ga. I hear these nues I cannotell whether it is so or not. I think it is termanant. I also hear that my Uncle John Rogers is mar-rid to Jane Johns. he is doing well he is got a Lot in Atlanta Ga. he makes from 50 to one hundres dollars a day. besides his wages. He is tending to Ralerod stock and he picks up led, brass and bum shels and sels to the government. He to see her twist befor he married and when he went to

mary he took his wagon and when he left he moved home. We have go orders to leave today we will tomorrow I guess will go to Columbus Ga. I guess but I cannot tell whear we will go but I think I can give a good guess by what I hear. Spun cotton is sellig one hundred dollars pr bunch Cotton cards at one hundred fifty dol. Corn thirty dollas per bush. Flower two dols and a half per pound. Bacon seven dols per pound Lard five dols Butter ten dols Eggs eight dol per doz Chickens for about ten or fifteen Butter Milk two dol. per quart sweete milk five. Surp fifteen dols. William White ses go over and see his wife and children. Pins is one hundred dolars per paper he is well. We drew bacon meal peas sogum. Our horse corn We get ten dobbble hand fol for two days. The last we drew. we ginerly drew 15 hands ful for two days and not a bit of foder have we drew since we com hear. This the 13 day we are fixing up to leave this morning I have not got time to write any more rite soon and do not wait for me to rite. I rote one letter since I com hear.

R. T. Rogers



*Lloyd and Cora Rogers*

*excerpt from Rogers Family outline by Calvin Floyd*

### **Rogers family in Madison/Jackson County**

John Rogers III, 1789-1853 married Nancy Staples

*Children:*

(twins) William S. Rogers and Sarah J. Rogers  
Elizabeth Rogers

John Rogers III married Sarah Staples

*Children:*

John W. Rogers  
James T. Rogers  
Franklin J. Rogers (adopted)

William S. Rogers, 1818-1899 married Elizabeth Staples

*Children:*

Robert Thomas Rogers married Mary Smith  
Nancy A. Rogers married Lampkin/ Webb/Hardman  
Sarah Rogers married Henry Hawks  
James Obediah Rogers

Children of Robert and Mary Rogers:

Obehiah W. T. Rogers married Tallulah Rice  
Mattie Rogers married Willie Williams  
Lucy Rogers never married  
Nanny Rogers married Joe Webb  
Lloyd James Rogers married Cora Lee Murray  
Mitchel Rogers married Minnie L. Tolbert  
Benjamin F. Rogers married Bethel Ree Gordon  
Mary Annie Rogers married George Burroughs  
Stella S. Rogers married Eugene Hardman

*excerpt from A History of Hillhouse Furnace, Hillhouse Fort, White's Mill, Roger's Mill by Calvin G. Floyd*

### **Hillhouse Furnace, Fort and Rogers Mill**

Hillhouse Furnace, Hillhouse Fort, White's Mill, and Rogers Mill have all occupied the same historic site. This site is found in Madison County, Georgia public road number 205, which is named the Old Rogers Mill Road. It is on the west bank of South Fork of Broad River. It is about 4 miles from Danielsville, Ga. and about 3 miles from Ila, Ga.

The site has been in several governmental controls. Cherokee Indian territory in prehistoric days; Georgia Colony in 1733; St. Paul's Parish, as part of the Georgia Colony; the State of Georgia after independence; Wilkes County, Ga, in 1777; Franklin County, Ga in 1784; Jackson County, Ga in 1796; Madison County, Ga in 1811.

The Furnace had its beginning with David Hillhouse. Hillhouse was a large landowner from Connecticut who settled in Washington, GA after the Revolutionary War. He received 5 land grants totaling 12,362 acres. The Land Grant Act of 1780 provided grants for 2,000 acres for the purpose of establishing iron furnaces and forges in frontier Georgia. David Hillhouse used part of his grants to establish two ironworks. One was the Roger's Mill site called Hillhouse Furnace. This was the only blast furnace built in Georgia in the eighteenth century.

An advertisement in the Savannah, Ga, "Georgia Gazette" on April 21, 1796 states that the furnace was a blast furnace and would take orders of articles in the iron foundry line such as iron chests, pots, ovens, skillets, fire dogs, stoves, cambousses, cannon, balls, cranks, gudgeons, anvils, wagon and stage boxes, and also bar iron refined or in blooms, of all sizes, either round, square, or flat. The Ironworks may have closed around 1799, as no taxes are shown paid on it after that time.

Hillhouse Fort was built near the Hillhouse Furnace as early as 1792. The Governor of Georgia thought highly of the Hillhouse Furnace and gave it military protection for several years.

Stephen and Lucy White became owners of the Furnace in the early 1800's. In 1856 they built White's Mill. This grist mill had corn and wheat mill stones housed in a three story wooden building. Thomas Bailey bought the Mill in March of 1886. William S. Rogers and his son Robert Thomas Rogers, bought 1/2 interest in the Mill from Bailey on August 4, 1886. On December 5, 1887 William and Robert Rogers bought the remaining interest in the Mill from Bailey. William willed his interest to Robert Thomas Rogers. Thomas moved his family to a log house know as the Miller's house on the property in 1887. The Rogers made improvements to the Mill and added a new house, cotton gin, saw mill, shingle mill, feed mill, country store, tenant houses, three large barns, and blacksmith shop. The overshot water wheel was replaced with two LeFell turbine water wheels. On August 21, 1900, Robert Thomas and Mary Jane Rogers deeded the Mill and 31 acres of land to sons Lloyd J. and Benjamin F. R. Rogers.

Lloyd Rogers and Benjamin F. Rogers owned Rogers Mill for many years. On March 17, 1913, Lloyd Rogers sold his interest in the Mill to Benjamin Rogers. Benjamin Rogers operated the Mill and farm until his death in 1936. His wife, Bethel Rogers continued for several

## Jackson County Historical Society

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P.O. Box 1234 Commerce, Georgia 30529

years then sold the Mill and land to Mr. Samuel Murray. The Mill Pond filled with sand and the water power decreased. The Old Mill was torn down and replaced with

a metal structure. A small used wheat roller mill was added to the two millstones. The industry was powered with a gasoline motor which proved expensive.



*Obediah Rogers, built the Rogers Spring near the church and a store at Rogers Mill with a barber shop upstairs and a doctors office in an adjoining building, later used for the storekeeper's house. The store is the only building still standing at the Mill site.*