

Jesse, with his father and brother, operated an auto repair business. This endeavor didn't last and, in 1921, the family returned to Ohio to live in Cleveland until 1926. During this period three children were born: Daughter, Margaret Jean, born in Millersburg, April 11, 1921, who lived less than a week, dying on April 16, 1921; son, Jesse Harris, Jr., always called "Jack", born November 4, 1924, in Millersburg, and another daughter, Edith, born June 16, 1926, in Cleveland.

After Edith's birth, Jesse moved back to Alabama, settling in Birmingham, in 1929, where he was employed by the Drennan Motor Car Co. In 1932 Elsie temporarily returned to her parents in Ohio to have their fourth and last child, a son, Owen Carlisle Vardaman, born April 20, 1932. Upon her return, the family moved to Bessemer where seven year old Edith tragically and unexpectedly died, on October 25, 1933, from diphtheria.

In 1934, when Bessemer High School established its Vocational Education Department, Jesse became the first Automotive Mechanics Instructor. He taught there until 1942 when, during World War II, he transferred to the Alabama State Board of Education. In 1944, with son Jack serving in the Pacific with the U. S. Navy, Jesse moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to work at the Bell Aircraft Company. In 1945 he became a civilian Automotive Instructor for the U. S. Army at Ft. Gillem (then known as the Atlanta Army Ordnance Depot) near Atlanta.

When the War ended in 1946, Jesse joined the Georgia Department of Vocational Education and became one of the first Automotive Technology Instructors at the North Georgia Trade and Vocational School (now North Georgia Technical Institute) at Clarkesville in Habersham County in the mountains of northeast Georgia, where he remained until his retirement in 1963. His service to that school was recognized and honored in 1970 when the Automotive Technology Lab was officially named the Deaton-Vardaman Building and a commemorative plaque honoring this recognition installed in the building. During Professor Vardaman's career as a teacher he was fondly known to all of his students everywhere as "Mr. V".

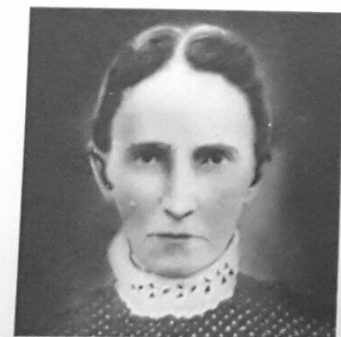
In June 1968, after the death of his wife, Elsie, April 2, 1966, Jesse married a widow, Mrs. Marian K. Stewart. After a lifetime of working with young people as educator, Scout leader, Sunday School teacher and counselor, Jesse died in Atlanta on August 19, 1968. He is buried with his wife Elsie, and daughter Edith, in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Bessemer, Alabama.

Submitted by: J. H. Vardaman, Jr., 361 Wrights Mill Ct., Alpharetta, GA, 30004-7057. Sources: Family History.

Varnon - Shoemaker - McGiboney

The first of the Varnons known to have come to Jefferson County, Alabama was Isaac Newton Varnon, the son of John Varnon. Isaac was born 8 November 1807 in Georgia, and died 6 March 1895 in Jefferson County, Alabama. He married Mary "Polly" Kelly on 14 August 1828, in Jefferson County. Mary was born 3 October 1810 in Tennessee and died 1 April 1900 in Jefferson County. She was part Indian from the Cherokee Tribe.

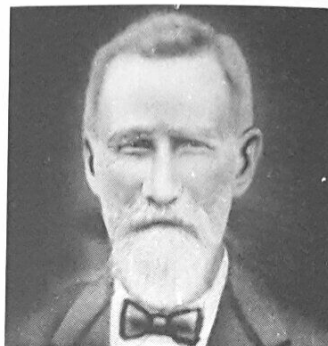
There were eight known children (all born in Jefferson County, AL) of Isaac and Mary (Kelly) Varnon: 1. Buddy Varnon; 2. Gorenzlo D. "Bay" Varnon (d. 24 December 1892); 3. Rachel Lovenar Tabitha Jane "Sis" Varnon (b. ca 1834) m. Early McCarty, 24 December 1851, Jefferson Co., AL; 4. Martha C. "Dovie" Varnon (b. 1837) m. 6 January 1859 John W. Early (b. ca 1834); 5. Jasper Varnon (b. 1838, d.



Sarah Elizabeth Varnon McGiboney (1845-1929)

Civil War); 6. Mary A. "Pet" Varnon (b. 12 August 1840 - d. 21 October 1913, Jefferson Co., AL) married on 21 March 1869 J. L. Early (b. 17 February 1837 - d. 24 September 1905); 7. Alonzo Washington Varnon (b. 2 November 1842 - d. 16 November 1919) m. first, 10 July 1864 in Jefferson Co., AL, Rachel Caroline Miller (b. 1841 - d. October 1886), and m. second, about 1888, Annie Laurie Johnston (b. 1859, VA - d. 1933, Jefferson Co., AL); and 8. Lorenzo

Varnon (b. 2 December 1849 - d. 9 October 1864, Jefferson Co., AL), researcher. Alonzo fathered sixteen children (all born and died in Jefferson County, Alabama) by two wives. Children of Alonzo Varnon and his first wife, Caroline Miller, are: 1. Rachel Myrtilla Courtly "Murtie" Varnon (5 October 1867 - 30 March 1922); 2. Isaac "Ike" Newton Varnon (8 September 1868 - 6 December 1960); 3. William Jasper "Jap" (8 January 1869 - 2 July 1939); 4. Naney Maryetta Caroline "Met tie" (12 February 1871 - 1958); 5. Alonzo "Lon" Marion Varnon (27 January 1873 - 24 May 1971); 6. Rhoda Alice Varnon (17 September 1874 - 11 February 1958); 7. Fannie Jane Adeline Varnon (b. 7 February 1876); 8. Martha Francis "Fannie" Varnon (30 December 1877 - 30 December 1950); 9. James Lee Marvin Varnon (19 February 1879 - 1903); 10. Jesse Luther "Luke" Varnon (18 February 1881 - 1976); and Burlie Virginia Varnon (23 December 1881 - 15 October 1968). Alonzo's first wife, Caroline, was stricken with typhoid fever and



John Alexander McGiboney (1845-1927)

passed away in 1886.

Alonzo married a widow, Mrs. Annie Laurie Johnston, who had two children, Hood and Gertie Johnston, by her first marriage. Alonzo and Annie had five children: 1. Berthel T. Varnon (20 March 1891 - 24 July 1920); 2. Minnie Estelle Varnon (d. 1966); 3. Jewell Varnon (1896 - 1993); 4. Revice W. Varnon (1900 - 8 December 1921); 5. Daisy Varnon (29 January 1889 - 21 April 1913); and 6. Infant Son (b. March 1900).

Two of the Varnon sisters (from Alonzo's marriage to first wife, Rachel Miller), Rachel Myrtilla Courtly "Murtie" and Naney Marietta Caroline "Mettie", married two Shoemaker brothers, Jesse Wilson Shoemaker and James Russell "Jim" Shoemaker, sons of Russum and Elizabeth "Betsy" (Regan) Shoemaker. [See also Alonzo Melvin Shoemaker Family article].

Jesse Wilson Shoemaker (my grandfather) was known simply as "Wilson". He and my grandmother, Murtie, had three children (all sons, born and died in Jefferson Co., AL): 1. Maude W. Shoemaker (15 January 1888 - 4 May 1928); 2. James Grady Shoemaker (24 December 1891 - 31 August 1956); and my father, Alonzo Melvin Shoemaker 27 July 1893 - 3 February 1961).

While my grandfather, Jesse Wilson Shoemaker, was alive I was not aware that he was a dentist. He died in 1940 at the age of 78. I was 15. It was the only time I remember my father crying. I still have a few of the dental tools my grandfather used. My earliest memories of Grandfather Shoemaker are of when he lived with Uncle Grady Shoemaker in Crumby Chapel in the 1930s. He helped me learn my multiplication tables. He was a distinguished looking gentleman with a blonde, full-lip mustache. As I reflect on it, he looked like a doctor should look. He had a black Model A ford with a "rumble seat". He also had a small coin that I learned was a \$20 gold piece. I remember Grandfather had one or two stores near Calera, in Shelby County, AL. I seem to remember the first was a drug store on the left just past the place where the railroad tracks cross U.S. Highway 31. I believe the second one was a cafe because I have some old pictures of it and there is a hand-painted sign on the window saying "Barbecue". One night, in the early 1930s, my father received word that Grandfather had been knocked in the head at his store in Shelby County. I remember us getting into our old car and driving like crazy to get there. Fortunately he was alive, and as I recall, it was a case of attempted robbery. I don't recall the details but do know that, for the rest of his life, Grandfather had a sunken place at his temple about the size of a silver dollar.

It was these and other recollections that led to my searching for additional Shoemaker and Varnon roots in Shelby County. That led to my being contacted by another Varnon researcher, Patricia Crim Dietlein. As this book goes to press, we are still trying to make a direct connection. Her ancestor is Sarah Elizabeth Varnon (23 November 1845, GA - 8 February 1929, AL) who married, 12 June 1872, in Shelby County, AL, John Alexander McGiboney (10 June