

Sarah Elizabeth (Sallie), born October 20, 1899; married James Thomas Thompson, son of James T. and Trecie E. (Caudle) Thompson, July 15, 1920, at Sylacauga. J.T. was a barber in Sylacauga. This couple had three children. One son, James Vardaman Thompson, died during WW II in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium. Sarah died February 24, 1965, and is buried with her husband, who died October 19, 1960, at Marble City Cemetery in Sylacauga.

Earl, born September 1, 1901, at Mt. Olive, lived for a time in Sylacauga where he worked for Lane's Grocery. When his brother, William, became ill, Earl moved to Birmingham to help him operate his service station. He married Annie Broomall, daughter of Caleb Baldwin (Wick) and Annie (Nixon) Broomall, June 7, 1941, in Birmingham. They had one son. Earl died July 22, 1962, and is buried at Elmwood Cemetery in Birmingham. His wife, Annie, still lives in West End in Birmingham. *Submitted by: Elizabeth McClung Reich, 247 So. Hampton Rd., Columbus, OH 43213*
Sources: Family, cemetery and court house records and family lore.

Jesse Harris Vardaman

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather, John F. Vardaman, the first school teacher in Goodwater, Jesse Vardaman began a long and distinguished career as an educator when he became the first Automotive Mechanics Instructor at Bessemer High School in Bessemer, Alabama.

In an effort to better provide for his family, Jesse's father, Marshall E. Vardaman, had moved his family from Goodwater, AL, to east Texas ca 1892-93. There, on the Vardaman farm in Wood County, on Christmas Eve, December 24, 1896, Clara "Odie" (Carlisle) Vardaman gave birth to Jesse Harris Vardaman.

The family remained in Texas for only a few years, returning in 1902 to Coosa County to live near Goodwater in the home of Marshall's father. It was there that Jesse was raised and received his elementary education. The family later lived in Sylacauga from where Jesse departed for the north in 1916 to enter the fledgling automobile industry.

After temporary stops in Detroit, Michigan, and Akron, Ohio, Jesse arrived in the small Amish farming community of Millersburg, Holmes County, Ohio. There he met and married Elsie Lorraine Bell, the daughter of Lewis George and Stella (Calhoun) Bell, on October 1, 1919. The newlywed couple then journeyed south to Ocilla, Georgia, where Jesse joined his father and brother in the operation of an auto repair business. This endeavor didn't last and in 1921 Jesse and Elsie returned to Ohio to live in Cleveland, remaining there until 1926. During this period three children were born. The first, a daughter, Margaret Jean, born in Millersburg, April 11, 1921, lived less than a week, dying on April 16, 1921. Next came a son, Jesse Harris, Jr., who was always called "Jack", born November 4, 1924 in Millersburg, followed by another daughter, Edith, born June 16, 1926, in Cleveland.

After Edith's birth in 1926, Jesse again moved south and after stops in Florida and Georgia, returned to Alabama settling in Birmingham in 1929 where he was employed by the Drennan Motor Car Co. In 1932 after Jesse transferred to Drennan's Bessemer, AL, location, Elsie returned to the home of her parents in Ohio to have their fourth and last child, a son, Owen Carlisle Vardaman, born April 20, 1932, in Millersburg. The family then settled in Bessemer where tragedy struck when seven year old Edith died unexpectedly 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. As part of the National Defense Training Program, he assisted in establishing and supervising the installation of automotive and aviation mechanic classes for the U.S. Army. In 1944, with son Jack serving in the Pacific with the U.S. Navy, Jesse moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to work as a Material Review Engineer for the Bell Aircraft Company. In 1945 he again became part of the U.S. Army Training Program as a civilian Automotive Technology Instructor 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 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, in Atlanta, Jesse married a widow, Mrs. Marian K. Stewart who had been a family friend for many years. 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: Karen A. Vardaman-Moody, 134 Glenmary Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45220.*
Sources: Family history.

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John F. Vardaman

The Vardaman family of E.L. and Lucinda K. (Mauk) is of German descent through three brothers, Peter, James and William, coming to America quite early with Peter settling in Virginia, William in Kentucky and James in South Carolina. The grandfather of John F., Thomas Vardaman, was a son of James and was born in Dutch Fork, South Carolina and finally arrived and settled in Coosa county.

E.L. Vardaman was born in Newberry district, S.C., was married in Putnam county, Ga. to Lucinda K. Mauk coming to Alabama in 1849, the year of the great April frost which destroyed a great deal of vegetation and growing crops. He had been in the legislature in Georgia and when he came to Alabama he located in Tallapoosa, then Coosa and later to Clay. He had thirteen children, namely: Cynthia M. (Hannan), Frances C. (House), Mary B. (Adair), Zilpha T. (McPhail), Adeline E., Annie L. (Luker), Meinda, Minerva, Nancy, William F., James M., Miolda V. (Kilpatrick), and John F. After the death of Lucinda, E.L. was married to Martha A. Conway who has no children.

John F. Vardaman was born in Meriwether Co., Ga., he realized the need for more education after the age of twenty and attended school for a portion of each year for four years. He began teaching until he entered the army, where he saw much service including being in Appomattox at the time of Lee's surrender. On returning home he became engaged in farming and teaching.

John F. was married to Miss Julia Flynn of Coosa county and their children are Marshall E., John W.A., Maggie M. (Mrs. T.J. Webb, Kellyton) and Ada B. He was a magistrate in his beat for nine years, was elected County Superintendent of Education, was a member of the People's Party and sympathized with the Primitive Baptist Church, though not a member. He was a man of influence in the county because of his intelligence and being one of the most substantial and reliable. *Submitted by: Ben R. Carlton*
Source: From The Memorial Record of Alabama

John Forsythe Vardaman

John Forsythe Vardaman, planter, educator, magistrate and prominent citizen of Goodwater, Alabama, was born Tuesday, May 19th, 1835, in Meriwether County, Georgia, 5 miles west of Flat Shoals on the Flint River, the son of Edwy Lyles and Lucinda K. (Mauk) Vardaman and the grandson of Thomas and Annie (Vining) Vardaman. His maternal grandparents were Mathias, Jr., and Frances (Lea) Mauk.

His grandfather, Thomas Vardaman, son of Revolutionary War patriot James Vardaman of Newberry County, South Carolina,



Jesse Harris Vardaman, (1896-1968)