

This couple had 9 children, the first two (a son, Alexander L. and a daughter, Eulalah B.) dying as infants in Coosa County. They are buried at Mt. Olive Baptist Church Cemetery. Most of the remaining seven children, four daughters and three sons, lived in Birmingham. Walter died July 5, 1925, and is buried with his wife, who died February 8, 1929, and other family members at Forest Hills Cemetery in Birmingham.

John Thomas Vardaman, born September 17, 1857, in Coosa County; married Alice T. Porter, daughter of Captain John Henry and Frances A. (Wood) Porter, October 25, 1883. She was born April 14, 1866, in Coosa County. Captain Porter, well educated and a distinguished Confederate soldier, represented Coosa County as a Representative to the Alabama State Legislature in 1883-84 and again from 1897 to 1902.

John Thomas became a carpenter and later moved to Sylacauga where he became a home builder. They had 9 children, all but one of whom lived to adulthood. Two of their daughters, Frances Marie and Mildred (Millie), had distinguished careers with the U.S. State Department in both Washington, D.C. and overseas. John Thomas died February 24, 1948, and is buried with his wife, who died December 30, 1924, and other family members in Marble City Cemetery in Sylacauga.

Dollar Vardaman, born in February, 1859, at Mt. Olive; married (first) Mary Jane Thompson, daughter of James W. and Mary Elizabeth (Lessley) Thompson of Mt. Olive, January 8, 1880, at Mt. Olive. She was born in September 1866.

Dollar, who lived his entire life in the Mt. Olive area, was a successful farmer and notable citizen. He and Mary Jane had 9 children. Unfortunately, she died in 1907 giving birth to twins who also died. He then married (second), Ruth Epsie (Gunn) Andrews, December 15, 1909, in Tallapoosa County. She was the widow of William Dempsey Andrews and daughter of John W. Gunn and Ruth (nee Mitchell) McLain of Chambers County. Epsie already had 10 children at the time of her marriage to Dollar and she and Dollar would have two more sons. Dollar died February 7, 1921, and is buried with his first wife in the Mt. Olive Baptist Church Cemetery. Epsie died April 28, 1967, and is buried at Evergreen Cemetery in Sylacauga.

A. Rufus Vardaman, born December 22, 1862, at Mt. Olive; married Della Elizabeth Robinson, daughter of Isaac W. and Rebecca (Jones) Robinson of Mt. Olive, December 22, 1887. She was born January 8, 1868, at Mt. Olive. This couple lived in the Vardaman home place at Mt. Olive where Rufus operated a store in a separate building on the property. They had no children. Rufus died October 24, 1946, and is buried with his wife, who died February 24, 1959, in the Mt. Olive Baptist Church Cemetery at Mt. Olive. Submitted by: William V. Arrants, 1901 Battery Park Dr., Port Royal, SC 29935.

Sources: Family, court house and cemetery records, Alabama State Archives and History of Coosa County, Alabama, by George E. Brewer.

Thomas and Annie (Vining) Vardaman

Thomas Vardaman, who came to Coosa County as a pioneer settler in 1836, was the second of three sons of Revolutionary War Patriot James Vardaman of Newberry County, South Carolina. He was born ca 1777 on his father's farm on the Hunting Branch of Indian Creek, a tributary of the Enoree River which joins the Broad River near Lyles Ford.

James Vardaman, born ca 1750, was the fourth and last son of "old" William Vardaman (born ca 1698, possibly in Sweden) by his second or third wife, Bridget Tinkler. "Old" William, the son of John Vardaman who left his will in New Castle County, Delaware, in 1714, had migrated from Bedford County, Virginia, to upcountry South Carolina in 1766, bringing his then wife and youngest son.

The identity of the mother of James Vardaman's three sons is not certain. It is known from her father's will that James was married to Jane/Jean Johnson, daughter of Daniel and Ann (Anderson) Johnson as early as 1783 and that she was the mother of 4 of his children, all girls. However, it is also known that a Williamson Lyles (Liles), who lived near the William Vardaman family in Newberry County, had a daughter, Sabra, who married a Vardaman and that she had died prior to 1794, the date of Williamson Lyles' will. Who her husband might have been has never been determined. The only Vardaman male of marriageable age known to be in that area at that time was James Vardaman.

Since Thomas Vardaman named his first born Edwy Lyles, he could be named after his grandmother's family - if, in fact,

Thomas' mother was Sabra Lyles and not Jane/Jean Johnson. It is very possible that Sabra died giving birth to James' third and last son, Joseph, who was born ca 1782, and that James remarried quickly to provide a mother for the baby and his two older boys.

James died in Newberry County, SC, in 1797 and Thomas, together with his two brothers, William and Joseph, migrated to Jefferson County, GA, where the three brothers married three Vining sisters, the daughters of Shadrack and Pherebe (Ratchliffe) Vining. William married Ruth Vining ca 1801 while Thomas and Joseph married twins, Annie and Rachel Vining, in a double ceremony ca 1803.

Thomas won a prize in the 1805 Georgia Land Lottery and, with his brother Joseph, moved to newly formed Morgan County ca 1807 to claim his land. However, he very quickly moved again to Putnam County, GA, (next to Morgan County and formed at the same time) where he settled on Crooked Creek. He was in Putnam County by 1810 and remained there until 1827/28 when he moved further west to Meriwether County, GA.

By 1836 Thomas' oldest son, Edwy, and his three oldest daughters had married and left home. At this time Thomas together with his wife, two youngest sons and three daughters again moved westward to Coosa County, Alabama, settling in the Mt. Olive area. Thomas died in 1857 and is buried in the Mt. Olive Baptist Church Cemetery, together with his wife, Annie, who had preceded him in death in 1850. There are no markers for their graves.

Thomas and Annie's children were:

Edwy Lyles, born February 2, 1804, in Jefferson Co., GA; married (1st) Lucinda K. Mauk, daughter of Mathias, Jr., and Frances (Lea) Mauk, January 6, 1825, in Putnam County, GA, and (2nd) Martha Conway, daughter of Henry and Adeline (Jordan) Conway, July 4, 1864, in Tallapoosa County, AL. Edwy and Lucinda had 13 children. There was no issue from the second marriage. E.L. died July 25, 1879, at his home near the Elias Community in southern Clay County and is buried with his first wife, Lucinda, who died April 17, 1862, at Smyrna Cemetery in Coosa County, without markers. See *Heritage of Clay County, Alabama*, for more information on this family. Edwy L. and Lucinda (Mauk) Vardaman were the parents of John Forsythe Vardaman whose life is presented elsewhere in this book.

Hilda, born May 29, 1808, in Morgan County, GA; married her first cousin, Joel Clifton Tomme, a Baptist preacher and son of Joseph and Zilpha (Vining) Tomme, September 1, 1831, in Meriwether County, GA. This family lived in Arkansas and raised a large family. Zilpha Vining was a sister of Annie Vining.

Edilda, born ca 1809, in Morgan County, GA; married John H. Smith, December 14, 1826, in Putnam County, GA. Edilda is believed to have died while fairly young but nothing further is known of this family.

Rachel, born ca 1812/1813 in Putnam County, GA; married Levi Johnson, son of Allen and Mary Ann (Pace) Johnson, January 7, 1827, in Putnam County, GA. This family had several children and later lived in the Reeltown area of southern Tallapoosa County, AL.

Elizabeth L. ("Betsy"), born ca 1816/17 in Putnam County, GA; married Henry Harwell, son of Absalom and Sarah Harwell, May 14, 1839, in Coosa County. This family lived in Lafayette County, Mississippi, where they raised a large family. Betsy died after 1880 and is believed to be buried with her husband who had preceded her in death ca 1870-80 in the Dallas Cemetery, Dallas Community, Lafayette County, MS, without markers.

Jane Frances, born March 22, 1821, in Putnam County, GA; married John D. Howell, March 8, 1838, in Chambers County, AL. John and Jane Howell had no children and lived in the Mt. Olive area of Coosa County. Jane died August 29, 1903, and is buried with her husband who died only two weeks later on September 11, 1903, in the Mt. Olive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Thomas Jefferson, born April 4, 1823, in Putnam County, GA; married Nancy Ann Benton Newman, daughter of Wombsley (Wormsley) and Mittie (Benton) Newman, November 22, 1853, in Coosa County, AL. See separate article on the Thomas Jefferson Vardaman family elsewhere in this book.

Ruth Ann, born ca 1827/28, in Putnam County, GA; married William P. Styres, October 22, 1846, in Coosa County, AL. This family moved to Lafayette County, MS, together with the Henry Harwell family (see above) but apparently did not stay there. Nothing further is known of them.

Peter Lafayette, born February 11, 1830, in Meriwether County, GA; married Susan Matilda Durham, daughter of Silas M. and