



Symbol of the Poarch
Creek Indians

Volume 40, Number 1

January 2013

The January Meeting Tuesday, January 22, 2013, 3:00 p. m.

At

The Poarch Creek Indian Cultural Museum in Atmore



**The Poarch Creek Indian Cultural
Museum and Welcome Center**

The Program: A guided tour of the Poarch Creek Indian Cultural Museum and Welcome Center by Museum Archivist Dr. Deidre Dees and Tribal Historical Preservation Officer Robert Thrower

Car Pool from Brewton: Meet at the Thomas E. McMillan Museum at 2:00 p.m.

Traveling on Your Own: The Museum is located on County Road 1 (Jack Springs Road) in Atmore. When coming from north to south on Interstate 65, exit on County Road 1 (Exit 54) and turn right. When coming from south to north on the Interstate, exit on County Road 1 (Exit 54) and turn left.

Dinner after the Meeting: For those interested, Dr. Dees has arranged for a private room at the Wind Creek Casino for dinner. The dinner will be a buffet and will be "Dutch Treat." The Buffet is \$15.95 per person, plus the cost of drinks.

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The February ECHS Meeting

February 26, 2013

3:00 p. m.

The Thomas E McMillan Museum

The Program:

Mr. John Shiver of Atmore, a WWII vet who has just published the memoir of his experiences as a flight engineer/gunner, will be our speaker.

A Reminder:

January is the time to pay dues.

Poarch Band of Creek Indians Open Cultural Center

From the Atmore News for
November 8, 2012
<Atmore News.com>

“This was something my mother dreamed of,” said Poarch Creek Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Robert Thrower of the new museum, or “Building of Learning,” that opened Saturday, October 27.

The building, dedicated to preserving and sharing the culture and history of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony and tours to commemorate the completion of the facility. Split Rock Studios of St. Paul, Minnesota designed the displays.

“We interviewed historical commission members, seniors, youth, PCI staff and council members before beginning the design,” said Sarah Bartlett, exhi-



Cutting the Ribbon

From left, front, Kennedy McGhee, Mallory Gibson, Megan Young, Breiah Adams, Amber Alvarez, Dr. Suwanee (Deidre) Dees, Speaker for the ECHS Tour of the Museum for the January Meeting; back, Eddie Tullis, Garvis Sells, Catherine Sells, Kaci Martin, Gwen Manning, Robbie McGhee, Raymond Rolin and David Gehman.

bition developer. “We then took the results of our interviews and Charles Lee, the design manager, headed a team that put everything together.” Robbie McGhee, head of Poarch Creek Enterprises and PCI government relations advisor, spoke to the assembled crowd.

“We once were sharecroppers and laborers. It seems appropriate that this museum sits on what once was a sharecropper’s field. We’ve worked hard to become good neighbors and good friends.” Thrower summed up the emotions of the day. “I never knew I would see this. It is a good thing to see a dream become a reality.”

Poarch Museum Exhibits From Split Rock Studios



Village Life

Poarch Museum Exhibits From Split Rock Studios *(continued)*



The Muskogee World Video



Miniature Model



The Road to Removal



Restoration

The Exhibits Tell a Story

From Split Rock Studios, Designers of the Exhibits

Through centuries of change and adaptation, community strength remains the thread weaving the Poarch Band of Creek Indians together. This exhibition tells the story of an active and living culture and people—the only federally-recognized tribe in Alabama.

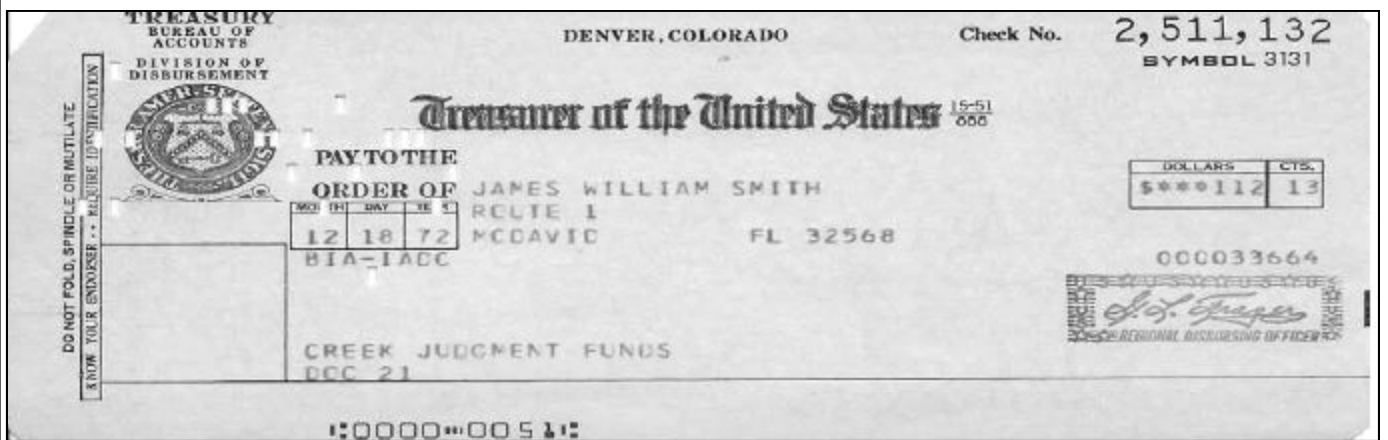
In close collaboration with tribal members, Split Rock Studios designed and built an exhibition that speaks to both local families and outside visitors. The displays invite everyone to share the history and ongoing culture and traditions of the Poarch Creek. In audiovisual programs, oral histories, and hands-on interactives, the spirit and voices of the tribe shine

<<http://www.splitrockstudios.com/226/>>.



Detail from the Poarch Museum's Village Life Scene shown on the previous page..

Historic Check Donated to the Poarch Creek Indian Museum



The Check, one of the many sent to Creek Indians in 1972.

**Article and photos by:
Deidra Suwanne Dees, Ed. D.**

Originally published in the Poarch Creek News for November 2009 <http://pci-nsn.gov/wmlib/pdf/newsletters/2009_12_december.pdf>.

That “Indian money” that had been long sought after and fought for by our leaders such as Chief Calvin McGhee and Ms. Roberta McGhee-Sells ultimately came to pass. In 1972, Creek Indians East of the Mississippi were finally paid for land that had been illegally taken by the United States government under the Treaty of Fort Jackson of 1814 one-hundred and fifty years earlier.

As a Tribe, we now hold in our hands one of those checks, a check that has never been cashed! James William (Billy) Smith donated his personal check to the new Poarch Creek Indians museum for all the world to see.

On October 9, 2009, Smith gave the check to Planning Department Director Mr. Kenny Shivers who is administering a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services which was written by grant writer Denise McGhee Young. The grant supports the museum’s archival collections for the new museum. “The amount of the check is not much monetarily,” Shivers said. “But what it represents is huge! It helped lead to our federal recognition.”

This check is part of Chief Calvin McGhee’s legacy and it embodies all that work he did,” Shivers said. “It is especially meaningful because Chief Calvin passed away before the checks were

awarded. So it is only fitting that an original check which was never cashed has been preserved and will be a part of the archives of the museum in his honor.”

The day that Smith received this check, he wrote a note on the back of the envelope in which the check was mailed. “Received December 20, 1972, after 22 years of trying to get the government to settle a claim that was valid.” Now many people that truly deserved the money are dead and gone such as my mother Nunnie McGhee who could neither read or write, though of her offspring there were 28 children and grandchildren who received the payment of \$112.13.”

Smith reflected on the event saying some people had been led to believe the checks would be enormous. There were rumors flying around that Creeks would receive checks for thousands and thousands of dollars. But in reality, the per capita check was not large. “The value of the check was minute,” Smith said. “But because of segregation, it was a dream come true that the government recognized us as Indians.”

He went on to say that, “We have been Indians since the beginning of time.” But the value to him personally was the actual acknowledgement of our community’s Creek identity by the government that repeatedly failed to honor its treaties with our nation.

Smith said he wanted to donate this check to the

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Historic Check Donated to the Poarch Creek Indian Museum *(continued)*

(Continued from page 4)

museum because he knows the check is a one-of-a-kind. He wants the younger children in our community to see the check and understand what the “Indian money” was all about. “Showing it in a public place will benefit more people than it will sitting in my house,” he said.

Smith and his wife Faye Ledkins-Smith have been active in tribal affairs for more than forty years. In 1978, he said, they drove a group of young dancers to pow wows in Oklahoma and visited a stomp dance on ceremonial grounds where he first met Muscogee leader Sam Proctor. He invited Proctor and the stomp dancers to visit our community and they have been attending our annual pow wows ever since. Smith served on the first Tribal Council and today he serves on the Poarch Creek Indians Gaming Authority.

Employed under the grant as the archivist, I (Deidra Suwanne Dees) was responsible for archiving Billy Smith’s check and the other items he donated and loaned to the museum by cataloguing them and preserving in protective sleeves. As I held the check in my hands, it brought up so many emotions.

Tears came to my eyes as I held this piece of history that was so long in the making. It brought back memories when my father, the late Otis Dees, handed me my own check (from the same docket as Smith’s check) when I was a teenager. In my house, it was a joyous event for our six-member



Kenny Shivers presents the check to Tribal Historical Preservation Officer Robert Thrower for it to be placed in the Museum.

Robert Thrower has presented programs to ECHS in the past and was the host for a tour of the developing Cultural Museum for ECHS members on a field trip a few years ago. We were given a great tour of the entire Poarch Indian Reservation and its facilities. He, along with Dr. Dees, will be part of the tour at our upcoming meeting.

family to each receive a check, but it was also a somber event. Not daddy, not me—no one in my family thought about preserving the check as Smith has done.

We thought only about cashing the check and the grave circumstances it represented—repayment for stolen land, stolen language, stolen culture. My family, struggling to have enough food to eat, knew that the \$112.13-check could not replace all that was stolen, but cashing it would help our family to have a little more than what we had. I remember thinking, “This can’t make everything right, but I never thought I would see the U. S. government acknowledge their wrong with money.”

Shivers gave the check to Cultural Director Mr. Robert Thrower. Thrower appeared mesmerized as he stared at the thirty-seven year old check. “This is the first time in my life that I have ever seen one

of these!” he exclaimed in amazement. “This is a part of our history. It’s one thing to talk about it, but it’s another thing to actually see it.”

Thrower said that although the museum will not open until next year, he envisions a research area where visitors can access important photographs and historical documents such as Billy Smith’s check. Under the museum grant, the museum acquired a software program called PastPerfect which will provide visitors’ access to historical photographs, documents and even video recordings of our tribal elders, many of whom, like Smith’s mother, have passed on.

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Historic Check Donated to the Poarch Creek Indian Museum *(continued)*

(Continued from page 5)

However, we are fortunate to have documents, photographs and audio recordings of our elders whose legacy will live on through our museum. The museum will bring the voices of our elders out of the dusty boxes of storage closets and into the sunlight of the new museum for all to see and experience from the rich history they left behind. Visitors will be able to read rare documents and hear the voices of the elders who possess invaluable knowledge that can be learned from no other source

Thrower said he envisions an on-line museum in the future so that others can learn about our unique history of how we came from so little to what we have today. When he looks at our prosperity today, he said it reminds him of what his grandmother

Ms. Charlene Joiner (Ms. Gail Thrower's mother) taught him, "Remember where you came from." In the same spirit of his grandmother, the museum will reflect where we all came from. There will be no other place on earth that one can learn so much about Poarch Creek history except at our museum.

When the on-line museum is established, our rare documents such as Smith's check will be part of a remarkable and triumphant history of the Poarch Creeks, and our elders' voices will tell everyone about where we came from. Their voices will be free to dance in the glow of a new generation of Internet users to bear witness of the triumphant history of the Poarch Creek Indians. €

ECHS Loses Member Gilbert Earl McGlothren

ECHS Gilbert Earl McGlothren, husband of Sammie Hoomes McGlothren (also an ECHS member), passed away December 6, 1212. He was 90. He was born in Chumuckla, Florida, but lived in Atmore and Nokimis most of his life.

At seventeen, he served in the CCC's and sent his pay home to his parents. He enlisted in the army at age eighteen and was a veteran of World War II and Korea. He became a medic when soldiers in line were asked to step forward if they could sew

After his discharge from the army, Gilbert worked as a medic at D.W. McMillan Hospital in Brewton and then in Holman and Fountain Prisons in Atmore. After retiring to the state of Alabama, he farmed in

Nokomis until his marriage to Sammie in 1993.

Sammie retired and they moved to Florida to have fun. Gilbert loved to fish.

Gilbert suffered from PTSD (Post Traumatic Syndrome Disorder) and never talked about his war experiences. Taking care of his wounded and dead buddies and guilt over not being on the front lines fighting, haunted him.

In 2003, Gilbert and Sammie were hit head-on by a drunk driver while returning from a cook-out at their camp

to their home. Their disabilities led them to move back to Brewton in 2005 to be near family and friends.

Thanks to Sammie McGlothren who prepared this tribute to Gilbert. €



Sammie and Gilbert at his 89th birthday celebration.

News and Announcements

Computer Donated to Alabama Room

Ann Biggs-Williams has donated a Dell computer system to ECHS for use at the Ancestry.com table. The college has allowed us to use one of their older systems, but it became obsolete, and the addition of Ann's donation makes research access quite a bit faster.

This makes three computers which have been donated over the last three or four years: Darryl Searcy and Tom McMillan have also made gracious donations as well.

The society for several years has provided free access to Ancestry.com for members and the public to do their own research in the Alabama Room.

A yearly subscription to Ancestry costs over \$150.00, so this is quite a benefit from the Society researchers.

Genealogy Workshop Planned for February 2

Monroe County Heritage Museum will host its 12th annual Genealogy Workshop at the Old Courthouse Museum on Saturday, February 2, 2013. Coffee, sign-in & introductions at 8:30 am, program ends at 3:00 pm.

Elizabeth D. Wells, Special Collections Librarian at Samford University, and Margo Stringfield, Research Associate with the Archaeology Institute at the University of West Florida, will speak at the Museum.

A box lunch will be served at the Old Masonic Lodge in Perdue Hill. The \$30.00 fee includes box lunch. Weather permitting, the day will end with a visit to a nearby archaeological dig led by Dr. Gregory A. Waselkov, Director of the Center for Archaeological Studies at the University of South Alabama.

Pre-registration deadline is 4:00 pm on January 30th. Contact Monroe County Heritage Museum at mchm@frontiernet.net or 251-575-7433. €

Digging for History: East Brewton Site Excavation Begins

By [Lisa Tindell](#) From the [Brewton Standard](#) for January 12, 2013

<http://www.brewtonstandard.com/2013/01/12/digging-for-history-eb-site-excavation-begins/>>
Text, Caption, and photograph courtesy of the [Brewton Standard](#).

A field along Shoffner Street in East Brewton can typically be seen filled with young boys and girls practicing for football – but a new season of activity is underway at the site.

A team of diggers with the South Alabama Center for Archeology has converged on the location armed with tools to determine if the exact location of Fort Crawford can be found on the site.

The team has arrived in East Brewton after being

invited by members of The Escambia County Historical Society and a group of private citizens interested in learning more about the historical area.

Bonnie Gums is in charge of the local digging crew and is leading the search for Fort Crawford.

“We first came in and did a shovel survey and

plotted sections about 10 yards apart over each section,” Gums said. “Then we are digging a shovel sized hole reaching down through the top soil.

“Each shovel full is put into a sifter and gone through thoroughly looking for artifacts that would lead us to believe there might be more down there. If we find concentrations of nails and

artifacts, we know that we need to do more work in that area. We will be out here for a few more days



Pieces of artifacts already turning up at East Brewton site of excavation project.

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Digging for History: East Brewton Site Excavation Begins *(continued)*

(Continued from page 7)

and hope to get a look at the bluffs that run behind the field and the church. The land owners have been very supportive and allowed us to look around. You never know what you might find, especially on this initial check. These digs are very expensive and we won't have much time to do our looking."

Archeologists, Raven Christopher and Tara Potts, are assisting Gums.

"We have to dig a deep hole," Potts said. "It has to be deep enough to get through the sub soil and reach the red clay underneath. This field has been plowed many times and any artifacts here would have also been moved around."

Karen Ellis Castleberry is the liaison between the archeologists and the Escambia County Historical Society. She works with the NRCS and knows the topographical area.

"I have lived on Ridge Road all my life," Castleberry said. "There is a deep ridge that runs all the way behind Snowden Street and Ballard Street, and continues out Ridge Road. There are lots of probable artifacts at the bottom of the bluff, but there is

also a lot of plain garbage. I have actually dug into the dirt out here. If we had found anything, it would have been so exciting.

"They have dug up lots of small pieces of glass, nails, wire and pottery. They are small and there have been no big concentrations yet, but hopefully there will be. It is very expensive to use, but we hope that sometime in the near future, a space satellite can be used to get a good look at the whole area and give us more information."

Gums said the idea is that wherever the fort was located, it would have had garbage dumped close by, and the bluffs would have been great dumping grounds.

While that is probably true, Gums also said other forms of garbage has also been dumped there over the years long after the fort had gone. It, she said, will take a lot of sorting to see in what time period it all belongs.

"The excavation work will continue over the next few days and findings will be recorded and shared with the Escambia County Historical Society," Gums said. €

Snapshots of the ECHS 2012 Christmas Party



Snapshots of the ECHS 2012 Christmas Party *(continued)*



Snapshots of the ECHS 2012 Christmas Party *(continued)*



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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Story of Sam Thlucco¹ and his Double Barrel Shotgun

By Jacob F.B. Lowrey III
Burnt Corn, Alabama

Readers of *Echoes* will be reminded of events some 200 years ago throughout 2013 - 2014. These events will be well known to most ECHS members. Will we hurriedly skim thru such retellings of those early events, or will we read each in search of new scholarship? I predict even for the history buffs amongst us, we will enjoy the pleasure of new facts about old events.

So I submit the story of Captain Sam Dale, who the Indians called Sam Thlucco¹ or Big Sam and his double-barrel shotgun. Basically this is a story of possession, lost and found, set in the Creek War and the Burnt Corn expedition. But possibly the most important part of the story is about a young man who remembered the events of Dale's double-barrel shotgun and had the good fortune to tell them to one of the authors who chronicled in detail the events of the Creek War. And no other sources who wrote about Sam Dale seem to have known of these events. Much of this essay is background – which seems necessary – and the young man is introduced at the end as an explanation point to this story.

“Samuel Dale (1772-1841) was a scout, frontiersmen, soldier, and public servant who played an important role in carving the state of Alabama out of the Mississippi Territory. His frontier exploits, particularly those involving his participation in the



General Sam Dale Monument
A marble statue of Samuel Dale, pioneer and military hero of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, stands as a monument over his grave in Daleville, Mississippi.

The figure was sculpted by Harry Reeks and dedicated in 1968. Dale County in southeast Alabama is named in his honor.

Photograph and text courtesy of
Encyclopedia of Alabama
<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-2460>

Creek War of 1813-1814, earned him hero status among early Alabamians” (Lewis).

The most famous of Dale's war exploits was the Canoe Fight which took place on November 12, 1813 two miles south from the old James Cornells ferry on the Alabama River in Monroe County. While outnumbered by nine Indians, the sheer strength, bravery and cunningness of Dale, Jeremiah Austill, James Smith and Caesar (a freed slave) prevailed that day (Halbert and Ball, pp.233-234).

When Mississippi Territorial Governor, David Holmes, wrote Secretary of War John Armstrong to inform him about a deadly encounter between settlers and Redsticks on the eastern edge of his governance – the Tensaw, Little River and Tombigbee settlements, he ended his comments by distancing himself from the conflict: “The expedition was irregular and unauthorized by me but I am confident there existed good grounds to believe the Indians meditated an attack upon the settlements,” The governor's report did not mention the date

of the encounter nor a specific location – only a reference to the Wolf path the trading path from Pensacola that met the Federal Road at Burnt Corn Spring.” This encounter became known as the “Burnt Corn” expedition (Holmes, “Letter to John Armstrong,” pp. 395-397).

But there did exist such “good grounds.” A re-

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Story of Sam Thluccho¹ and his Double Barrel Shotgun *(continued)*

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cently published 2009 symposium collection of essays on the War of 1812, Tohopeka² provides considerable new scholarship on the subject matter of the Creek War of 1813-1814 and the War of 1812. Author Robert Collins' "'A Packet from Canada': Telling Conspiracy Stories on the 1813 Creek Frontier," could easily have been titled "Four Days in Pensacola, July 1813."

Mr. Collins reminds us that after the Redsticks burned James Cornells' residence at Burnt Corn Spring and kidnapped his wife, Betsy Coulter, the white settlers in the region sent three spies to Pensacola to gather intelligence – Davy Tate, William Peirce and William Hollinger. Davy Tate's stay was for less than 24-hours, arriving in Pensacola on the evening of July 20th and quickly returning to Fort Stoddert, Mount Vernon Cantonment.

On July 23, Federal Judge Harry Toulmin wrote General Ferdinand L. Claiborne informing him of Tate's observations learned from the Spanish Governor González Manrique – "the Creeks were making every exertion to procure powder & lead." From Cornells' wife Betsy Coulter, a captive of the Indians, "he learned their language breathes vengeance on the white people...of a design to attack the Tensa settlements on their return" ("Letter from Fort Stoddert³ to Brig Gen. Ferdinand L. Claiborne, July 23, 1813").

Already being on high alert and based on intelligence received from Pensacola, James Caller, a Colonel in the Tombigee militia and senior militia officer on the frontier, quickly assembled the local militia and headed southeast to intercept the Creeks upon their return from Pensacola. It was indeed an assortment of men. Caller was reinforced by Sam Dale's company of volunteers at Fort Glass.⁴

Two early historians of the conflict – Henry Sale Halbert and Timothy H. Ball, whose book on the conflict was published in 1895, reported that "the whole party were well mounted and carried their own rifles and shot guns, of every size and descrip-

tion. Captain Dale carried a double barrel shot gun – an unusual weapon in that day (emphasis added)." A finely dressed group they were, Colonel Caller was said to have been dressed in "a calico hunting shirt, a high bell-crowned hat and top boots and riding a large bay horse" (Halbert and Ball, pp.129-150).

From Ft. Glass,⁴ it was due south to Sizemore Ferry on the Alabama River and crossing into southwest Monroe County, north of Little River (today's Eureka Landing) before stopping at Davy Tate's cowpens (today's Lottie) waiting on reinforcements from Little River and Tensa. Then, the now 180 men strong body of militia changed direction, from southeast to Pensacola to northeast up the Federal Road to Burnt Corn Spring, where the group camped on Monday night.

Dale was placed in charge of the "spies" sent to scout for the Indians' location (Pickett Papers Collection). Heading south on the Wolf Trail (the trading path to Pensacola), the morning of July 27th, 1813, Dale recalled, "I volunteered to go ahead, and ascertain the force of the Indians, and the proper position to fight them. My offer was treated lightly ... After much debate, it was decided that I should go; not, as I wished, with one trusty comrade, but with fifteen others" (Claiborne, p. 73).

The spies advanced to an arch of hills on the east side of Burnt Corn Creek which surrounded a large, open and flat bottom at a ford, where the Wolf Trail crossed to the west side of the creek. While sending several spies to inform Col. Caller's main body to come up quickly, Dale observed the Indians preparing a noon meal. A battle plan to surprise the Indians was quickly agreed upon. The militia hastily dismounted and began to charge down the hill, even before securing their mounts to a rope-line. The Indians, being completely surprised, fled into the surrounding impenetrable cane breaks for their safety.

The militia, mistakenly thinking the Indians had retreated, began plundering the packhorses laden with Spanish supplies. But instead, the Indians

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Story of Sam Thluccho¹ and his Double Barrel Shotgun *(continued)*

(Continued from page 13)

counter-charged in full force with accompanying war-hoops. The fray was “a series of charges and retreats, irregular skirmishes and fre-

quent close and violent encounters of individual and scattered squads,” which evolved until the main body of the militia began a full retreat, followed by the small squads which had stayed until events became hopeless (Halbert and Ball, pp 125-142; battle description, pp. 132-141; quote within a quote, Meek, p. 246).

It was in the later stages of the skirmish that Captain Sam Dale was wounded with a ball to his left side lodging near his back bone, but not before he “threw aside his double barrel into the top of a fallen tree”; yet he continued in the fray, as he was naturally very brave and caught-up in the action of the moment (Halbert and Ball, p. 136).

Word of the battle reached the Creek agency,⁵ which lay roughly 220 miles east of the battle site some twenty days later. The agency, home to Benjamin Hawkins, the agent in charge of southern Indian affairs, was on the Flint River (near today’s Roberta, Georgia, just west of Macon). One particular entry made by Hawkins in his day-journal on August 16th, 1813 mentions Dale’s missing weapon. According to Hawkins, two young Creek warriors from the Creek village of Fishponds⁶ reported to him that they were at the battle.

According to their report, and other intelligence he had received, Hawkins reported that the Indians had two killed and one negro, lost their blankets and some packs, and took ten horses, saddles, saddle bags, and guns, one, a fine double barreled Rifle⁷ [emphasis added]” (Hawkins “Letter to David B. Mitchell”).⁸



Double Barrel Shot Gun
from Vintage Weaponry Antique Shotguns
<<http://www.vintageweaponry.com/shotguns.htm>>

So may we reasonably speculate the “one a fine double barreled rifle...” was Sam Dale’s double-barrel shotgun? It may just have been.

Between the Burnt Corn expe-

dition, the Canoe Fight and the end of the Creek War with the Fort Jackson Treaty signed on August 9th, Dale remained active in the service of local citizens and military activities concentrated in Alabama. As can be seen, Dale’s significant skills and leadership continued to be in demand.

In the summer of 1814 – “Colonel Milton, then commanding at Fort Claiborne, ordered Major Carson and...Sam Dale...to Pensacola, to induce the Creeks, who had gone there for protection, to sue for pardon and return to the nation, where a treaty of peace with the United States had been ratified. They agreed to the proposal, but the same day news came that Arbuthnot and Ambrister (... British agents...) had arrived in Apalachicola Bay with provisions and military stores, and most of the refugee Creeks joined the Seminoles shortly after, and remained hostile” (Claiborne, p. 147).⁹ This passage would place Dale in Pensacola between August 9th and mid-August, 1814.

A Happy Ending

The authors Henry Halbert and Timothy Ball have been the primary source for facts in this Sam Dale story about his double-barrel shotgun. Other sources have been integrated to collaborate the underlying story, to give it more than a one dimensional perspective.

And once again Halbert & Ball provide an amazing detail. They explain that Dale recovered his trusty weapon “after the war from an Indian, at Fort

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Story of Sam Thlucco¹ and his Double Barrel Shotgun (*continued*)

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Barancas [sp. Barrancas]” (p. 136).¹⁰ The timing of the recovery surely must have been when Dale and Major Carson went to Pensacola to treat with the Indians in August 1814.

As amazing as the chance assignment sending Dale to Pensacola, which led him to meeting one of the hundreds of Creek refugees seeking protection in Spanish Florida from the Americans, and there recovering his double-barrel shotgun, is how this interesting ending came to be known.

It seems to be a story of a youth meeting his hero and idolizing all the adventures he must have heard Dale recount at many-of-a-camp-fire over the Creek War years. And the youth was Josiah Allen of Jasper County, Mississippi (Halbert and Ball, p.142).¹¹

He would later become known as Rev. Josiah Allen and was the last known survivor of Dale’s war years’ company. Allen joined the Sam Dale company when he was not yet fourteen in the year 1814. While this means he did not participate in the Burnt Corn expedition or the Canoe Fight, the year of 1814 was certainly one of significant activity for Dale’s company up until the time of January 1815 when Jackson’s army defeated the British at New Orleans. So young Master Allen would have experienced many nights under the night sky around the warmth of a campfire where oral history was freely exchanged as a means of authenticating one’s experiences, manhood and valor and challenging the younger to bravery in events to come.

While one might expect Dale’s biographer, J.F.H. Claiborne, to have written about such a noteworthy event, the reason for the omission will always be a mystery. But does it mean the events did not in fact happen? Rev. Allen’s reminiscences of oral history stories, as explained to him in his youth, made such a lasting impression of a man for whom he must have greatly admired, the “double-barrel shotgun” tale was one such story, still vivid after those many years when he shared his memories of Sam Dale

with Henry Halbert, as if the events were yesterday.

Of course it is plausible that when Dale sat down with Claiborne to tell his life’s story, the significance of the lost and found double-barrel shotgun had faded from his memory. But for Josiah Allen, even as an adult, a man of the cloth, the camp fire tale was bigger than life and at the time he heard the tale, or the tale repeated, the events on Burnt Corn Creek would have conjured up all sorts of excitement in a youth of fourteen – enough to remember for a life time.

In keeping with the late radio commentator Paul Harvey’s signature sign off, “Now, you know the rest of the story.”

Notes

¹ Meek says the Indians called him, Sam Dale, “in their simple tongue – Sam Thlucco, or Big Sam” (p. 306).

John F. H. Claiborne, Sam Dale’s biographer, describes Dale, well – as big: “Six Feet Two inches, erect, square shouldered, raw boned and muscular, noted particularly for great length and strength of arm. He resembled his antagonists of the woods....” i.e. the American Indian – “he had the square forehead, the high cheek-bone, the compressed lips, in fact the physiognomy of the Indians, relieved, however, by a fine benevolent Saxon eye” Claiborne, pp. 231-232).

Note: In Halbert and Ball *The Creek War*, page 235, the description of Sam Dale is essentially a quote from A. J. Pickett’s *History of Alabama*, pp. 568-569.

² The collection of essays is taken from a May 2009 Symposium at Auburn University that brought scholars together to present their individual works on the War of 1812 with an emphasis on the Southern Theatre and the Battle of Horse Shoe Bend.

³ In many places the spelling is “Stoddart.”

⁴ Fort Glass was 5 miles south of Suggsville and ten miles east of Jackson along the 1802 Choctaw Indian Boundary, which at that time was the watershed ridge that served as Clarke County’s eastern

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Story of Sam Thluccho¹ and his Double Barrel Shotgun (*continued*)

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boundary. Today this is County Road 35, which leads to Gainesville and the site of the old Sizemore Ferry, where in late July, 1813, Caller and his men crossed into north Baldwin County on their way to Davy Tate's cowpens.

⁵ Using the H.S. Tanner 1825 Map of Georgia and Alabama, the distance from the ford on Burnt Corn Creek and the Creek Agency as measured along the Old Federal Road was roughly 220 miles. Sam Dale is quoted in Claiborne's book that it is a distance of 150 miles. It is possible that woodsman and scout Sam Dale used a shorter route than the Federal Road.

⁶ Fishponds is not one of the frequently mentioned towns; it was also called Thlothlegugau, and was destroyed in July, 1813 (Waselkov, Conquering Spirit, p.222).

Its location was in the vicinity of today's Alexander City and west of the Creek village of Okfuskee, both being north of Horse Shoe Bend and on the west side of the Tallapoosa River

⁷ According to Mike Williams of Brewton, Alabama, at the time of the Creek War there existed

both double-barrel shotguns and rifles, the former being a smooth bore and the later a grove bore.

⁸ In Benjamin Hawkins' letter to George Mitchell, Hawkins' entries are confusing and contain duplicate descriptions, probably due to the high state of alert and increased activity of people arriving and leaving the Agency and the increased demands on Hawkins.

Also, note, some of the extracts are dated later than the letter to Mitchell, which probably means the letter was delayed in being picked up by a postal rider

⁹ In the passage on page 147, the biographer (Claiborne), references "Arbuthnot and Ambrister...British Agents," but these agents date to the First Seminole War – 1817 – not to 1814. The obvious error cast some doubt on the passage as

printed. A more accurate reference to 1814 British Agents assisting Spanish Governor Gonzáles Manrique would have been to Major Edward Nicolls of the British Royal Marines and Captain George Woodbine.

Important dates in the context of the Claiborne quote would include:

May 10, 1814 - British Captains Hugh Pigot and George Woodbine arrive at Apalachicola, also known as Prospect Hill;

Aug. 9, 1814 – Treaty of Fort Jackson;

Aug. 10, 1814 – British Major Edward Nicholls arrives at Apalachicola;

Aug. 14, 1814 – Nicholls arrives in Pensacola;

Oct. 25, 1814 – General Jackson begins invasion of Florida;

Nov. 7, 1814 – Jackson captures Pensacola;

Nov. 9, 1814 – Jackson evacuates Pensacola and returns to Mobile;

Nov. 22, 1814 – Jackson departs for New Orleans.

¹⁰ The Treaty at Fort Jackson is generally considered to be the end of the Creek War. While other military activities against the Creeks, and also the Seminoles, continued into 1815, this era is not generally considered to be part of the Creek War.

For a brief mention of Major Uriah Blue's expedition into the Escambia valley after General Jackson departed for New Orleans, see Waselkov: "Fort Jackson and the Aftermath," Tohopeka, p.166.

¹¹ Readers of Halbert & Ball are treated to a rarity in books from this era. At the end of Chapter VIII – "The Battle of Burnt Corn" - there appears a "NOTE" penned by Henry Sale Halbert which details the sources used by the authors – mainly Pickett, Meek, Woodward, Judge Toulmin, Colonel Carson and John F.H. Claiborne. A review of these published sources by this writer finds no such mention of Dale's double barrel shotgun:

Other sources include: Thomas McAdory Owen, ed. Transactions of the Alabama Historical Society, 1897-1898; Vol. II; Henry Sale Halbert "Creek War

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The Story of Sam Thlucco¹ and his Double Barrel Shotgun (*continued*)

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Incidents,” footnote 2, page 95..

See also Rev. T.H. Ball, A.M.:Clarke County Alabama and Its Surroundings; a republication of the 1879 printing of A Glance into the Great South-East, Clarke county, Alabama, and its Surroundings, from 1540 to 1877; and T.H. Ball, Grove Hill, Alabama (1879) – “The Drury Allen Family,” pages 317 – 320.

Henry Sale Halbert taught school in Mississippi before coming to Alabama to work with Thomas McAdory Owen when Owen established the Alabama Archives in 1900.

Halbert personally knew Josiah Allen and found him to be a credible source of events from the times of the Creek War. Halbert noted “Mr. Allen ... was intimately associated with many of the participants in the battle [Burnt Corn] from whom he derived a number of incidents and other minor facts, which have been incorporated in this narrative – initialed H.S.H.” (Halbert, page 142).

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ECHOES
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