

Search billions of records on Ancestry.com

First Name

Last Name

Search

MILLER BLOCKHOUSE (RACCOON VALLEY STATION)

Marshall A. Wilson was hired by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to help find trade and labor employees to work on the Norris Dam Project. He spent eighteen years in ten different job classifications. During his tenure with TVA he traveled throughout the Norris area visiting hundreds of families. With his mobility and experience, Marshall became a free lance genealogist, historian, and photographer. In 1982, he published many of the photographs taken in the 1930's that were placed in the TVA library in December, 1967, under the title "Photographs Taken in Norris Reservoir Area 1934-1935." In his historical collection he mentioned visiting with a descendant of John (Raccoon) Miller ([See John Miller's Will](#)) and Rosco Heiskell, who is the present owner (1988) of the property on which both men agreed the Miller Station (sometimes referred to as the Raccoon Valley Blockhouse) stood. The men indicated to Wilson that the Raccoon Station and Bull Run Station were one and the same. Wilson noted the results of this visit in his compilation, but having failed to gather additional information, he finished his declaration with a question. "Where was the military post at Bull Run Creek at the saltlick which in 1794, was 'already erected'?" Many people, he said, "believed a salt lick was on Bull Run, in Raccoon Valley, but the only one I could find was five miles west-southwest from the Raccoon Valley Station at the head spring of Hind's Creek."

Wilson was not familiar with Suck Stone Creek that has its beginning in the hills behind the Holmack's Station site that empties into Bull Run Creek. At the head of Suck Stone Creek was a saltlick (suckstone) giving the creek its name. Indian hunters learned of the halite bearing stone and probably crushed it for seasonings and preservatives. Robert Needham unearthed a limestone pestle thirteen inches long in the field near the saltlick many years ago.

To answer Wilson's question, this writer believes that Holmack's Station was the established military post "already erected" on Bull Run Creek. It was built in the early 1790's to facilitate the garrison at Knoxville for protection of the early settlers.

The Raccoon Miller Blockhouse was probably established later as the settlements around Knoxville expanded. The Miller Blockhouse was located about seven miles east of Holmack's Station and consisted of a log structure that served as a fort, located on the north branch of Bull Run Creek. This writer believes the sloping field on the left of Ailor Gap at the Beard Valley junction, was the site of the fort, since it was on a rise and near Bull Run Creek where there was a water supply. Also, the area identified by Wilson on Highway 33 and Ailor Gap Road later was an extension of the fort and served as a "station" where travelers could rest, have their coaches and wagons repaired, their teams fed and watered, and sometimes exchanged.

The station site slopes southward toward Bull Run but in the other directions the topography is level and much exposed. It is suggested that Miller's Blockhouse or fort was constructed at the Beard Valley and Ailor Gap Road junction very early in the settlement of the area. Years later Capt. Miller and his large family constructed Raccoon Valley Station nearby. Travelers from Knoxville to and from Jacksboro ([See Jacksboro Road](#)) over the turnpike were provided meals and lodging.

Capt. John Miller, son of John Miller who came from Britain to Newberry County, South Carolina and was killed in the Mecklenburg uprising, is believed to have been born in Newberry County, South Carolina in 1747. Summer's Southwest Virginia lists John Miller as a veteran of the Revolutionary War from Washington County, Virginia from 1776 to 1783 as a captain in Colonel Joseph Martin's Virginia Regiment. The date and place of his marriage to Eva, daughter of Ludwig Weidner (Lewis Whitener), is unknown. In his westward migration Miller settled for a time in Hawkins County, the sixth county in the order of creation of Tennessee. He and his father-in-law, Ludwig Weidner (Lewis Whitener), were members of the commission chosen to determine a location for a courthouse and jail. They recommended that the courthouse, prison, and stocks be built at Joseph Roger's on Crockett Creek. This became the

town of Rogersville, incorporated by the North Carolina general assembly on December 22, 1789.

Later, Miller purchased 1000 acres in Raccoon Valley from Stockley Donaldson on February 17, 1794 and bought an additional 600 acres on May 22, 1797. John Miller was commissioned a captain in the Knox County militia by Governor John Sevier on October 10, 1796. It was probably around that time that Miller's blockhouse was established. Capt. Miller tried his hand at raising silk worms. This may have earned him the name "Coon" Miller which was later changed to "Racoon". Capt. John Miller died on August 25, 1832 and was buried in the Ousley Cemetery south of Maynardville on property that probably belonged to him. In 1851, Eva Miller, according to the 1850 Knox County, Tennessee census, was born in 1753 and died on Aug 2, 1853. Jacob Cox, progenitor of the Knox-Union County line Coxes and son-in-law of Capt. Miller, settled about six miles below John Miller's at Holmack's Station, "the fort being near the plantation of the late Haywood Stanley." A list of Capt. John Miller's children is taken from his will probated during the October, 1832 session of the Knox County court.

For more information on this article or any article or publication of the Union County Historical Society please write them at:

**Union County Historical Society
P.O. Box 95
Maynardville, TN 37807**

Or

[E-mail](#) the Union County Historical Society.

This page created and maintained by [Chip Brown](#) and [Maynardville.Com](#)

This page is ©1999 Chip Brown. All Graphics used on this page were created by Chip Brown and may not be duplicated or reproduced in any way without his consent. Questions or comments about this page may be e-mailed to morom01@aol.com. Submissions to these pages may not be sold or transferred at any time. By submitting, you grant Chip Brown permanent use of your work on these pages and for no other purpose than to appear on his webspace. They do not in any way become the property of the UsGenWeb \ TnGenWeb \ TnGenNet.

ERROR: syntaxerror
OFFENDING COMMAND: --nostringval--

STACK:

/Title
()
/Subject
(D:20081114114305-08'00')
/ModDate
()
/Keywords
(PDFCreator Version 0.9.5)
/Creator
(D:20081114114305-08'00')
/CreationDate
(Don)
/Author
-mark-