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Col. John Williams, East Tennessean in the War of 1812

By Alex Brandau

Alex Brandau is writing a biography of Colonel John Williams (copyright in progress), who commanded a company of the East Tennessee Volunteers. The below article is an excerpt from his book, titled The Horseshoe Colonel. Mr. Brandau is a descendant of Colonel John Williams and his wife, Malinda White.

Excerpt from Chapter 3 of The Horseshoe Colonel:

In Congress, the House of Representatives on June 19th, (the day war was declared) voted 71 to 44 to authorize the President to take possession of the two Floridas. It was, however, not successful in the Senate. The fear was that Great Britain would by some amicable agreement with Spain take over Florida, forestalling this country.”¹ The War of 1812 officially began.

At that time there were two forms of troops: Regular U.S. Army soldiers that were professionally trained, uniformed, and painfully aware of the chain of command and of their lawful duty to obey commands and state militias. In Tennessee those militia were under the command of the Governor; the Regular Army units were commanded by the President, then the Secretary of War, followed by the Generals commanding the seven Military Districts. There was much ambiguity in the ranks about whom out ranked whom between the two.

Knoxville attorney and regular army veteran, John Williams, published an “Address to the People of East Tennessee” in both Knoxville and Nashville newspapers on November 10, 1812.

The latest newspaper accounts show a want of troops in East Florida to check the hostile Indians. 'tis shameful that Georgia alone should bear this burden. All those who have enrolled themselves with me, are directed to parade, at Knoxville, on Tuesday the first day of December next, prepared with a supply of provisions to take them to the point of destination

The patriotic freemen of Tennessee, who have not enrolled themselves, are requested on that day, to come well mounted, and prepare to march to Saint Johns, where the troops of the United States are stationed, and where the Indians are said to be assembled in such numbers as to threaten the destruction of our troops....War now rages in our land – A deranged Monarch, venal Prince, and a corrupt Ministry, have driven us to assert our rights, at the point of the bayonet. They have enlisted under their banners the savages, those hell hounds fitted only for deeds of ferocity, who seek victory by the indiscriminate slaughter of all ages and sexes.

Our females and property are in a place of security – our brethren in a sister state need our aid, will it be withheld!...Let us march to their relief–let us give decided evidence that while others talk we are prepared to act–Let us go to the scene of action, and there present ourselves ready to share with our brethren the dangers and glories of the field–Let us not wait the slow formality of being dragged from home by compulsory orders–Freemen ought to risk something–Let us go on our own expenses in the first instance–If we can thus be useful to our country, we will be more than compensated.²

In it he called for every man to assemble at his home “*mounted on a strong horse, armed with a musket or rifle, with a brace of pistols, a tomahawk and a butcher’s knife – dressed in black hat, black hunting shirt or*

1 Williams, “A Forgotten Campaign,” *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Vol. VIII, January, 1925, No 4, p. 268

2 *Clarion*, November 23, 1812

roundabout and pantaloons" for an expedition into the wilds of the southern frontier controlled by the Creeks and Seminoles.

To understand the purpose of Col. Williams in projecting this expedition it is necessary to look at recent and current happenings on the southern frontiers of Georgia and East Florida along the St. Marys River which was the boundary between the American state and the Spanish province.

The Seminole Indians, who derived from the lower Creek Indians and who on separating from the Creeks had moved down into Florida, were under Spanish influence and were at this period giving much trouble to the inhabitants of South Georgia. Georgians in considerable numbers had settled across the St. Mary's river. When war was imminent, these Georgians in Florida intended immediately to make 'a vigorous effort to possess themselves of the Province and to deliver it to the United States.'³

General Jackson asked his men to assemble to meet at Nashville, November, 27th.⁴ He had promised 2,500 men to President Madison, but they were not called to service earlier because Madison did not need them – his attention was elsewhere. "Madison wanted men of proved ability, men who had attained military stature in the Revolutionary War. Secretary of War Eustis, and old soldier of Seventy-Six himself, concurred in this policy. Furthermore, Eustis could not see the temperamental Jackson, who had called the secretary "an old granny," as the man for an important command."⁵

In October, Madison wrote Tennessee Governor Willie Blount in Nashville that he wanted 1500 Tennesseans to go to New Orleans to reinforce Gen. Wilkinson. Jackson's lack of mention was conspicuous by its absence. However, Gov. Blount gave him the order and General Jackson issued the order to assemble in Nashville on December 10; the men were to wear dark blue or brown uniforms – only officers were to be uniformed in U.S. Army ones. 1800 men showed up that bitterly cold day; they camped on the hills just outside Nashville and slept 25-30 in a tent with little but body warmth to sustain them. The final count was 2070 when the militia loaded up on boats to much hurrahs by the Nashville citizens to descend the Cumberland River, the Ohio River, and the Mississippi River to reach New Orleans 1300 miles away.

On December 1, 1812, in Knoxville, 164 men assembled on what became the campus of the University of Tennessee. The men could have stayed in better accommodations, but were said to have preferred the camp-like conditions that they knew awaited them. On December 3rd, Col. Williams wrote President Madison informing him of the volunteers' intent to reinforce the Georgians against the Creeks and Seminoles. By the next day when they left, Knoxville citizens had contributed over \$300 dollars toward their campaign. The volunteers rode to Asheville, N.C. for there was no road going south in those days. "There a Mrs. Erwin had beeves butchered and barbequed for the hungry men. She and another patriotic woman of North Carolina collected and presented the volunteers with \$100 for their expenses."⁶

By the 11th, Williams' force had grown to 200 men and he wrote Georgia Governor Mitchell of his intentions; it was said that Asheville at that time was very cold. On the 15th, the *Nashville Clarion* reported on the expedition and stated that they were the "finest looking body of men ever assembled in this sector." General Cocke, general of the East Tennessee Militia, himself enrolled in this group as a private and followed Colonel Williams.

By the 19th of December, 240 men reached Washington, Georgia. While providing needed relief, their appearance put the Governor into an embarrassing predicament. "He could not welcome the Tennesseans whole-heartedly, for their expedition implied the failure of Georgians as Indian fighters and an official could not admit such a damaging fact. On the other hand Mitchell could not ask the Tennesseans to return home

3 Williams, p. 268

4 *Tennessee Gazette*, November 12, 1812

5 Patrick, p. 238

6 *Clarion*, January 5, 1813.

and let his people subdue the Indians - that would be inhospitable - moreover the futile efforts of the past months contradicted any claim of military prowess which Georgians might advance.

General Pinckney commanded the Sixth Military district from Milledgeville and General Flournoy at St. Mary's sent the volunteers to Camp Pinckney. Flournoy would later command the 7th Military District at New Orleans.

By the time their letters would have been received in Washington, the volunteers had progressed into the southern part of Georgia near St. Mary's.

Williams had alerted the Secretary of War, of his actions. Because everything was horseback-delivered, the Secretary was merely advised of their actions and had no opportunity to direct them. Though at one point, Governor Mitchell of Georgia wrote: "What am I to do with the Tennessee Volunteers?"⁷ *It was the first time the two words were ever used together and capitalized.* The nickname stuck and the unit became known as such.

"The Governor of Georgia was having trouble with the militia of his chief city of his State, Savannah, where some of the leading officers had declined to obey orders that would cause them to march beyond the borders of Georgia; and the Governor had threatened to reduce them to the ranks. The contrast of this action with that of the Tennessee volunteers was too marked for complacency on the part of Georgia's governor.

That Georgians generally welcomed the relief, coming without money and without price, is perhaps shown by the action of her General Assembly, which on December 28th sent to Georgia's Senators in Congress a resolution requesting that a road be opened between East Tennessee and Georgia through the country of the Upper Cherokees. Aid had so often in the past been proffered or given Georgians by the people of the East Tennessee Valley - in the years of the existence of Franklin state⁸ and of the Southwest Territory - that Georgia's legislature thought it wise to have a more direct connection with such a source of succor in case of need."⁹

When the new year began in 1813 the Augusta Chronicle published that General Flournoy was going to use the Volunteers against the Seminoles. General Pinckney a few days later once again asked President Madison for guidance only to be ignored. Pinckney then asked the Secretary of War, for military advice. Neither official replied. Quietly near the end of January while the Volunteers waited anxiously for action, the Congress authorized the formation of a new Regiment of U.S. Infantry to be formed, the 39th.

On February 7th, the returning Creek warriors being misinformed that the Creeks had gone to war, attacked and killed several Tennessee border families. Only a Mrs. Crawley was spared; she was to be rescued and gave an horrendous account of her experience. On the 10th, General Pinckney advised Secretary Armstrong that the Tennessee Volunteers had now 250 men.

During that month of delay, the rabid Tennesseans were bitterly resentful. Some went into St. Marys and presented their case to General Flournoy; others castigated Benjamin Hawkins for his interference. One volunteer wrote Governor Blount that the volunteers had been stopped by the "Chief of the Creek nation, to wit, Benjamin Hawkins." That Volunteer went on to say that their group "would plant the American eagle on the walls of St. Augustine before we return."¹⁰ Given his writing style and bravado, this sounds like none other than Col. Williams.

Benjamin Hawkins was negotiating with the Seminole Indians and requesting General Pinckney not to punish them. Lacking a response from President Madison and Secretary Armstrong, General Pinckney could do nothing but allow the Volunteers to proceed. "This was the wish of Madison and Monroe, for their

7 Heiskell?

8 Williams, "History of the Lost State of Franklin," passim

9 Williams, "A Forgotten Campaign," p. 272

10 *Clarion*, March 2, 1813

silence had a purpose. By striking the Seminoles, the danger of attack on Pinckney's forces, or Jackson's, when they should enter east Florida, would be eliminated. It is evident, therefore, that the Madison administration purposely refrained from answering Benjamin Hawkins or issuing General Pinckney orders. Long after the volunteers should have proceeded on their mission, the secretary of war informed Pinckney: 'When the mounted volunteers under Col. Williams shall have performed the duty which you have assigned them against the Indians, you will consult your own judgment, and either continue them in service with the Regular Troops assembling at St. Marys, or dismiss them, as the good of the service may require.' The unquenchable thirst of the Madison administration for the Floridas had blinded it to right: Indians suing for peace would be given the sword because their destruction was part of a plan of conquest."¹¹

"A part of the hostility toward the Seminoles was due to the fact that they received and harbored large numbers of runaway slaves. Gen. Flournoy's orders to the troops stated: Every Negro found in arms will be put to death without mercy."¹²

"Earlier, a tribe called the Yemasses had migrated to middle and eastern portions of Florida; they had 'dark skins, thick lips, and flat feet.' A war of extermination was waged by the Creeks against the Yemasses, and finally, at Tallahassee, the last of the warriors were killed – but about a thousand of the young Creek warriors took sweet-hearts among the Yemassee girls, and saved them from death. According to a law among Creeks, these were required to remain out of the nation a year for purification. Before the end of the year, the young warriors concluded to make wives of the Yemasses girls and set up a nation for themselves, which they did. The Creeks called these warriors *Seminoles*— meaning *wild*, wild man, crazy, mad-man, &c, &c. These Seminoles were afterwards joined by the outlaws and runaways from all other nations, and soon became a formidable nation."¹³

Finally on February 3, the Volunteers left camp Pinckney and arrived in Payne's Town (home of King Payne of the Seminoles) six days later. Their first fight with the Seminoles caught the Indians by surprise and they killed fifteen, wounded seven, and burned the town. Advancing before the regular army troops, they reached Bow Leg's Town, home of King Payne's brother, it had been abandoned, so there were no casualties, but it was destroyed and the force returned to Payne's Town the next day and camped.

"Here they were attacked by two hundred Indians, who had collected, purposing a surprise. The action continued for an hour and a half when a charge by the whites dispersed the savages with a very considerable loss. Chief Bow Legs fell wounded before the Tennesseans. In all engagements, thirty-eight Indians were killed, many wounded, seven taken as prisoners; four hundred horses and about the same number of cattle were taken. It was estimated that 386 Indian huts and houses were destroyed.

"The losses of the Tennessee Volunteers were: one killed and seven wounded. The volunteers celebrated their victory. They described how the Indians had taken the bodies of Newnan's unfortunate soldiers, cut off their heads, and nailed them on trees in the Indian villages. An elderly volunteer named Wildear displayed his son's scalp, which he found in an Indian hut."¹⁴

Meanwhile, Jackson's force had survived a torturous winter river trip and arrived at Natchez on February 16th. There Jackson received orders from Gen. Wilkinson at New Orleans telling him to stay at Natchez as New Orleans hadn't the means to support them. They marched through Natchez and set up camp outside the city. There they stayed for over a month wallowing in a quagmire while Jackson awaited orders to invade Florida. Finally, new Secretary of War John Armstrong's orders reached Natchez on March 15th; to their

11 Patrick, *Florida Fiasco*, p. 230

12 Williams, "A Forgotten Campaign", p. 273

13 Woodward, p. 130

14 *Savannah Republican*, March 2 and 4

dismay and utter surprise they were "dismissed from public service."¹⁵ Jackson refused to disband his troops and they set about *walking* back to Nashville; some four hundred plus¹⁶ miles.

The policy of the Madison administration continued to change; in fear of war with Spain, all American settlers in Florida were ordered to submit to Spain. So, by April, the mission of the Volunteers was over. They received a hero's welcome and banquets in Savannah, Lexington, and Augusta. In Lexington one of the toasts was "The Volunteers of Tennessee – an example worthy of imitation to Massachusetts and Connecticut; while others half in their duty, these brave men are foremost in the path of glory." In Augusta the toast was: "Col. Williams and the brave Volunteers of Tennessee – We admire their patriotism and feel gratitude for their services. Music – Volunteers' March!"

It would seem that the very uniqueness of this expedition, reminiscent of the days of knighthood, would have marked it for historical record. It is without barest mention in any history of Tennessee. It was perhaps without parallel in this country's history, in that the men embodied and volunteered service without any call made by Nation, State, or sister-state; and they financed their own equipment and the cost of transportation over many hundred of miles to the scene of the conflict, not to mention the most uncommon elements that went into the composition of the command. As the corps were purely volunteer, no payrolls were made up to show the names of those who went on the expedition.

"The victorious volunteers could return home where families and friends would sing their praise. 'You have rendered an essential service to the public,' Flournoy wrote Col. Williams, 'and merit for yourself and the officers and men under your command, the praise so justly due to brave and patriotic men.'"¹⁶

"The job done by the Tennessee Volunteers was a thorough one. Their destructive expedition left the Indians of central Florida facing starvation, forced them toward the west coast, and eliminated them as an enemy in the planned conquest of the Floridas. The first step in the conquest of the Floridas was an established fact."¹⁷

Jackson's men arrived in Nashville on May 22, 1813 having accomplished nothing except incurring a debt that General Wilkinson wanted Gen. Jackson to pay. That trip inspired the nickname, "Old Hickory", for Jackson. While walking to let a sick soldier ride his horse, it was noticed and complimented among his men that he was "tougher than Old Hickory." That nickname stuck.

In August 1813, Georgia's militia was rendezvousing for an expedition against the Upper Creeks and an express was sent to Governor Willie Blount, of Tennessee, for the aid of 1,500 men. The reply was that "5,000 can be as easily obtained as 1,500."¹⁸ A tradition of service had begun that culminated in the nickname "Volunteers" applying to the entire State of Tennessee and later to its University. That nickname also stuck.

In August 30, 1813, the Creeks attacked and massacred over 400 men women and children at Ft. Mims. The frontier became a wildfire of fear as panic sprang up across Tennessee.

15 Patrick, p, 245

16 Patrick, p. 234

17 Ibid., 236

18 Williams, "A Forgotten Campaign," p. 275

John Williams Muster Rolls

Muster Roll of the Field and Staff Officers of the East Tennessee Volunteers in the service of the United States, commanded by Col. John Williams Dec 1st, 1812 March 25, 1813

1. John Williams Col Dec 1st, 1812
2. John Cocke Major Jan 1st 1813 appointed Major January 16, 1813
3. James King surgeon Dec 1, 1812
4. Richard Meredith 1st Lieutenant

I certify that this muster roll is Just and true and that the remarks set up opposite the names are accurate and just as Mustered by me.

John Williams Colo
E TN Volunteers

Pay Roll of the Field and Staff Officers of East Tennessee Volunteers in the Service of the United States commanded by Col. John Williams from the 1st December 1812 to the 25th March 1813

<u>Name/Rank</u>	<u>Term of Service</u>	Month	Month <u>Pay</u>	Amt of <u>forage</u>	Amt of <u>pay</u>	<u>Total forage</u>
John Williams Colo	Dec1 1812-Mar25th 1813	25.90	9.00	342.58	34.25	376.83
John Cocke Major	Jan1 1813-Mar 25th 1813	6.66	168.82	15.81	84.12	99.83
James King Surg	Jan1 1813-Mar 25th 1813	?	6.66	171.29	15.81	186.60
Richard Meredith 1 st LT	" " " " "	?	?	164.95	11.41	176.36

Muster roll of a company of Volunteers from East Tennessee under the command of Colonel John Williams in the Service of the United States commanded by Capt Samuel Bunch for the 1st day of Dec 1812 to 25th Mar 1813 Inclusive

Samuel Bunch Capt

John Reynolds 1st LT

Ira Green 2nd LT

John Stephens Ensign

Jacob Noe Sergeant

John W. Flowers "

Reuben Tipton "

Absalom Hawkins "

Armstrong, William, pvt

Baldrige, Francis, "

Brown, Joseph "

Blackley, Thomas "

Bean, Bacter "

Branner, Michael "

Bowman, Abraham "

Bayles, Reese "

I certify upon honor that the within muster roll exhibits a true statement of the company under my command and the remarks set off side the mens names are accurate and Just to the best of my knowledge

Saml Bunch, Capt
of Rifle Company of E.T.V.
Feby 25th 1813

Bayles, Williams "

Cummins, James "

Conway, William "

Click, George "

Click, Henry "

Cunningham, James "

Crutchfield, William "

Crocket, William "

Derrick, Michael "

Dokes, Robert "

Findley, James "

Freshour, George "

Freshour, Henry "

Fine, David "

Felby, Williams "

Gideon, Edward "

Green, Arnold "

Green, Joseph "

Gann, isaac “	Leath, George “	Nale, Robert “	Wheeler, John “
Galbreath, Abnear “	Long, James “	Noe, Davis “	Williams, James “
Hemp, Jacob “	Long, Joseph “	Rhea, Robert “	Welch, Daniel “
Hale, Joseph “	Leathe, James “	Roberts, William “	White, Benj J “
Hale, Hugh “	Loughmiller, frederick “	Rice, Lewis “	White, Benjamin “
Henry, Spencer “	Mills, Williams “	Smith, Williams W “	Welles, Jacob “
Harbison, James “	McCay, John “	Smith, Charles M “	Worthington, William “
Inglish, John “	McWilliams, James “	Smith, John “	Young, William Sr. “
Inglish, Joshua “	McKinney, James “	Skaggs, James “	Young, Williams, Jr “
King, Williams “	Mills, Henry “	Simpson, John “	Aetley, William “
Kirkpatrick, John “	Mills, John “	Shough, John “	Clyatt, Samuel “
Klepper, Joseph “	Massengill, George “	Trimble, John “	Staffers, James “
Lilliard, James “	Marvin, Robert “	Upton, William “	Wilder, Thomas “
Livingston, Preston “	Martin, Wyly “	Worthington, James	

Pay Roll of Capt Bunch – same

Muster Roll of a company of mounted Volunteers from East Tennessee Under the command of Colonel John Williams in the service of the United States commanded by Captain David C. Vance from the 1st day of Dec 1812 to the 25th of March 1813 inclusive

David C. Vance Capt
 Samuel Wilson 1st LT
 John K. Smith 2nd LT
 James S. Johnson ensign
 Wm K Vance sgt
 Thomas A. Rodgers “
 Michael McCain “
 Nathl Smith “
 Anies, James pvt
 Akin, Benjamin “
 Acard, John “
 Boyd, Michael “
 Bishop, Mason “
 Brabson, Ephriam “
 Cocke, Sterling “
 Coates, Cody “
 Cain, Hardy “
 Derrick, E. William “
 Ford, Peter “
 Gaines, John S. “
 Granturn, Amis “
 Goforth, Zachariah “

I certify upon my honor that the within Muster roll exhibits a true statement of this company under my command and the remarks set off opposite the mens names are accurate and Jut to the best of my knowledge

D. C. Vance

Hamilton, William “	Martin, Isaac “	Trotter, David “
Howel, John “	Mulvaney, Henry “	Tate, David “
Hunter, John “	Messer, John “	Thompson, David “
Hale, Walter “	McCoy, Jacob “	Whitesides, Thompson “
Holly, Frazier “	McClary, Thomas “	Woods, M. Richard “
Jacobs, Joseph “	McClary, Thomas “	Walker, Elias “
Kirkham, William “	McDaniel, Jeremiah “	Young, Ewen “
Kinchloc, Enock “	Nail, Mathew “	Charlton, John KM “
Kean, Enoch “	Parker, James “	Cruthfield, Sam'l “
Lyon, Jacob “	Robertson, David “	Mason, nat'l “
Lockey, Thomas “	Ragan, William “	Mann, Gilbert “
Lea, Thomas “	Simpson, John “	Christopher, John “
Letner, Christian “	Smith, Richard “	Connor, Edward “
McCorkle, Joseph “	Stewart, Robert “	Garner, Jeremiah “
McCunce, James “	Simmons, John “	

Muster Roll of Capt David C Vance's Company of Tene Volunteers from 1 Dec 1812 to 25 March 1813

Pay Roll of Cpt. Vance's company – same

Muster Roll of a company of mounted Volunteers from East Tennessee Under the command of Colonel John Williams in the service of the United States commanded by Capt William Walker from the 1st Decem 1812 to the 25th March 1813

Williams Walker, capt
Richard Meredith 1st LT
Jack Denton 2nd LT
John Chiles, ensign
Joseph Hart sergeant
John R. Houston "
Thomas H. Miller "
Wm H. Greenway "
Armstrong, Williams pvt
Ayers, Marshal "
Alston, John W. "
Bartlett, Jessie "
Bennett, James D. "
Bacon, Allen S. "
Campbell, Alexander "
Campbell, Alexander "
Cowan, Andrew "
Crawfird, English "
Collins, Francis "
Davis, Thomas "
Dean, Benjamin "
Douglass, Charles "
Dearmond, Richard "
Eddington, Phillip "
Fornewalt, Jacob "
Gordon, A.W. "

Grady, Bevid "
Graves, Daniel, "
Gerring, Joseph "
Hodge, Charles G. "
Handcock, Robert "
Hindman, James H. "
Jioghcs, William "
Jackson, Hazekiah "
Lea, Luke "
Matlock, Henry "
McConnell, James "
Malcolm, William "
Miller, Plesant M. "
Mynatt, William C. "
McEldry, Samuel "
Mackland, Nathaniel "
Morgan, Gideon "
Mayo, Valentine "

Mayo, William "
Murphy, James "
McConnell, Thomas "
McNair, John "
Nolan, Thomas "
Outlaw, Alex S. "
Parsons, Enoch "
Parsons, Peter "
Page, James "
Pangle, Tracie "
Peterson, Joseph "
Purvis, Williams "
Stephens, Henry "
Smithe, George "
Stout, Benjamin "
Sawyers, William "
Skaggs, Stephen "
Turner, James "

Tipton, Jacob "
Tipton, Abraham "
Williams, Thomas L. "
Waterhouse, Rich "
White, Moses "
Wheeler, Benjamin "
Williams, John "
Wells, Thomas F. "
Tunnel, James "
Cox, Coleman "
Cox, Jacob "
Dell, James "
Vince, Williams "
Hampton, Wade "
Mace, Joseph "
Henry, Newman

I certify upon honor that the within Muster Roll exhibits a true statement of the company under my command and the remarks set opposite the mens names are accurate and Just to the best of my knowledge.

Williams Walker Cpt
1st Company E.T.V.

Pay Roll of Capt. Walker - same

Notes from *Echoes*

Transcribed by Harriet Jordan, Co-Editor

Brice's Tavern

Reprinted from Echoes from the East Tennessee Historical Society, Vol. 8, No. 1 (March 1962), p.239.

Standing proudly on the old stage road between Knoxville and Washington, Brice's Tavern served several generations of travelers, including Tennessee's three presidents: Jackson, Polk, and Johnson. The tavern, on Old Rutledge Pike in East Knox County, unfortunately burned in February [1962].

According to tradition, James (Trooper) Armstrong built the house or tavern some time after his service in the Revolutionary War. In 1856, N.B. Brice acquired the inn and the land, and the property still belongs to his descendants.

Adding fuel to the fire was a trunk of papers and letters, some dating back to the Civil War. The value of these will never be known. Let this be a lesson to all of us--the trunks and books we so highly value cannot stand fire, theft, or loss. Are yours protected?

Edward Cox Cabin

Reprinted from Echoes from the East Tennessee Historical Society, Vol. 8, No. 1 (March 1962), p.240.

Recently, Methodism honored the Edward Cox Cabin, Bluff City, during a commemoration of the history of the early Church. Built in 1775, the cabin is honored as being the site of the first prayer meeting west of the Blue Ridge mountains where an early circuit rider was received and the religious meeting held.