

Title of unit: LOCAL STORIES TELL THE REAL STORY

Vital theme of the unit: East Tennessee's division of loyalty was great and caused many families to suffer under the hands of their own community members known as "bushwhackers." Students will examine their own families' stories. These primary sources will shed light on what happened to family members during the Civil War, while others will help students understand history, especially their families'. Stories will help students make connections and gain appreciation to their pasts.

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Grade level: 8th & 11th

Number of lessons in the unit: Two

Time needed to complete unit: Varies depending on grade level

Curriculum standards addressed—list:

Social Studies: 8.0 and 4.1 for 11th grade

English standards: 2.0, 3.0

Technology used: Internet and multi-media presentation programs

Unit introduction and overview of instructional plan:

As students study the effects of the Civil War on society and the soldiers themselves, they will research their own communities for stories. Using the stories they gather from family members, some will return with a better understanding of what life was like in the community, as well as what life was like for a soldier. After doing an extensive amount of interviewing with different family members and collecting genealogical information, students are to present their information to the class. This is when the stories need to be shared during several classroom sessions via multi-media presentation programs and/or Internet presentation sources, such as Photo Story 3 by Microsoft. Language Arts skills, such as writing, research, speaking and interviewing are reinforced in this unit.

As one who was never interested in history as a young student, I was always intrigued by my grandfather's stories of his World War II travels as a young aspiring colonel. Pampaw's stories were much more interesting to me than those found in my history books. During my college sophomore year, thanks to a History professor who told stories that made the subject come alive, I changed my major from Accounting to History. I took a whole year of Civil War studies (pre-, during, and post-). These stories helped me to feel a part of history instead of apart from history.

In 2001, I had my History students in the sixth through eighth grades research our community's Civil War past. Actually, they researched their own Civil War ancestors, and it so happened that we ALL learned about how our small rural community was just a microcosm of the nation's dilemma at that time. There was a great division of loyalty in East Tennessee, which included Monroe County where I live. My students were shocked to discover that the rebel flag many of them so proudly donned was not the flag of choice to be flown on many of the courthouses across this part of the state. One of the best stories learned that year was about bushwhacking and guerilla warfare and related violence in the hills and hollers of Monroe County. One family had opposing bushwhackers on both sides, which supports what History books and others have been saying all along about families being divided.

What was it in East Tennessee that set it apart from the rest of the state resulting in the divisions of loyalty among families and/or community members? In *"What They Fought For"*, James McPherson contributes an "ideological commitment" from slaveholding families, which this area did not have a lot of. In the lower-South cotton states where slave labor existed, one could find this commitment. Patriotism meant what it meant during the Revolution when people

fought for independence and their own ways of life not being told what to do and how to live by someone who thought of themselves as superior. As time went on, this patriotic fervor evolved into one of hatred and revenge among Southerners who were willing to fight to the very end against the invading Northern aggressors (page 13).

It is not surprising of whom McPherson says were the stakeholders in the Southern cause in what many of them called “The War of Northern Aggression.” Twice as many slaveholders were officers than enlisted men. These are the ones he refers to as being the biggest “stakeholders” in the Confederacy. They were the ones who would suffer the most, especially economically because of the North’s presence in the South. For many Southerners, the fight was not just about economics. Fighting to defend home and family was just as important. Again, those in the lower South related this to a way of life. McPherson’s view is that Yankees did not share this, but this might be because the fighting took place more in the South than in the North, and Tennessee sure had its share from the east to the west (pages. 16-17).

Tennesseans were/are patriotic people, too, but loyalty was the issue in the 1860’s, and the state was divided as was the nation. It was the last to secede and the first to rejoin the Union in the end. The bitter struggle of which side to take was widespread in East Tennessee. There were many Union soldiers there as well as in the bordering states. Guerilla warfare and bushwhacking practices permeated throughout the hills and hollers of the Unaka Mountains. This was true of western North Carolina, too, for they share the same type of geography; hence, their history is similar in many ways. McPherson states that many Unionists also went north to Kentucky and joined Union regiments only to vow to take revenge of the Rebels in the end (page 38).

To support what McPherson writes, I found an article entitled, “Confederate Dissension in the Unakas,” The author, Sandra Ratledge, discussed the “mountain folks” of North Carolina and Tennessee. Many of them were Scotch-Irish descendants who came to this area because of land grants after their ancestors fought for their country’s independence in two great wars. They lived in a haven of being “religious non-conformists” and “dwelt in peace with one another” (page 1). They were to uphold the United States government and individual rights. She contributes a long period of lack of education which caused these folks to be isolated over generations. Family member after family member had become illiterate; furthermore, quality teachers were not able to easily access the mountain areas. Mountain folk were also very poor and could not afford teachers. If an educator could not be afforded, then owning slaves was also out of the question. Many of these mountain folks questioned this new fight for state’s rights because they did not understand it and wanted to remain neutral.

Why start a new country when they were proud of the present one? This begins to answer my question: “Why was East Tennessee different than the rest of the state?” It also sheds light on so many of the stories about bushwhacking that I learned during my students’ genealogical research. There was other evidence to support this difference that was found in reading Stephen Ash’s book, *A Year in the South 1865*.

Ash states that politics in both sides of the state were different. Opposing secession in East Tennessee were the Whigs who wanted to stay loyal to the Union. In West Tennessee, the Democrats were trying to hold onto an economic way of life of slavery and a fight to strongly oppose Northern aggression. The state did finally secede, and the new Confederate government began to tighten its hold on those who were actively resisting in East Tennessee. Mass rebellion

broke out in 1862, and those who were considered Rebels were feeling “uncomfortable.” Hence, guerilla warfare began by the loyal Union community members (page 10).

The stories that Stephen Ash tells in this book bring to life how life was like for everyday people. The Robertson family of East Tennessee had a story to pass down through the generations as they saw the results of guerilla warfare. The Robertsons were politically the minority for they were Democrats in a predominantly Whig area. Therefore, their allegiance was to states’ rights and the Confederacy. Their son, John, joined the Confederate’s Home Guard. Eventually, the Yankees took over the region and Unionists guerillas continuously raided John’s family farm. He was sent off to Knoxville to stay in a military prison manned by the Yanks and swore an oath of allegiance to the Union. This failed to be of any significance as time went on. Determined to go home, John risked a trip knowing the area was swarming with guerillas. He found the physical ruins of Unionists’ savagery, and he also discovered his own family had suffered at the hands of Unionists. Eventually, he began teaching and continued to be harassed because of his history of Confederate participation. This harassment went as far as forcing him from his teaching position or suffer violence. He became a preacher and Ash explains that in 1865, John wanted to serve the Lord; however, living in East Tennessee with the feelings of revenge between both sides, the Lord’s work was a difficult and dangerous task. He couldn’t escape from the war, and the Bible and pistol were his weapons for fighting the enemy (pages 11-12). This story is very familiar to what I have read and heard locally. The war was in the front and back yards of many; one did not have to muster in and leave the community to fight. The enemy was not from a far away place but right there in one’s own neighborhood and/or community.

Who caused this division in the Unaka Mountains? As mentioned above, mountain folk existed here. Mountain men found refuge by hiding in the forests so they would not have to be conscripted, or if they were, they classified as deserters. As time slowly went by, and it seemed that the war was not going anywhere, men's loyalties swayed back and forth. Author Sandra Ratledge states it was these types of men that became the "notorious and dreaded bushwhackers." The term refers to a backwoodsman, according to *The American Heritage Dictionary*. The movie *Cold Mountain* helps to give one a clearer picture of the goings on of bushwhackers who made what was already a terrible situation worse (Dissension, page 4).

One has to wonder about the story of how bushwhackers as a name came to be. Paul J. Long's research showed that a slaveholding plantation owner along the Little Tennessee River wanted to protect his property and "saw the war as a threat." Hence, Confederate outlaws were chosen to do the job. The Union Army found out about this, and as the war ended, it was not just a Confederate tactic anymore. This unconventional method of lying-in-wait and laying siege on the enemy became the norm for not only this outlaw group, both the Union and Confederates. Gangs of ex-soldiers who suffered mentally (and probably physically) evolved. The following is a local account of such by R. Frank McKinney (pg. 5/7):

"No farm in Monroe, McMinn, Blount Counties in Tennessee or farms in Cherokee County, North Carolina were safe from the marauding, killing, raping gang outlaws known as guerilla or bushwhackers. They were believed to be the original Confederate soldiers who had deserted and who had teamed up with a similar band of Union soldiers who were tired of fighting for their country and decided to fight for themselves" (page 5).

This quote tells not only “who” bushwhackers were but also “what” they were capable of doing. The plantation owner ended up having the strategy “backfire” on him for many times these groups were not of either side; they just wanted to cause havoc for the general citizenry (pg. 4/7). Many times they chose a household whereby the man of the house was off fighting. Many times the victims did not survive the vicious attacks and could not give authorities a description. Again, I think of the scenes in the movie *Cold Mountain* where these savages came to the house of the woman whose husband was away and stole, pillaged, and abused. James McPherson’s book could have included them because of “what they fought for” to survive in their own communities.

As the war dragged on, the hills and hollers continued to become infested with bushwhackers. The *Greenville Banner*, February 20, 1863, used the term “infected.” Generational stories of families being attacked show up in not only Civil War research but also that of genealogy. Some notorious names that my students brought to the table were James and John Kirkland, a.k.a. the Bushwhacking Kirklands, their uncle Bas Shaw, and William Reginald Click. These are the ones I further researched, and their stories gave me a clearer understanding of the pain and agony they brought to many in this area.

One of my students had the Kirklands on one side of her family tree and Shaw on the other. The fascinating story is that one member on one side killed his counterpart on the other. No written account of this story has been found by family members; only the oral story that has been handed down generation to generation. My student learned of this during an oral interview with her great aunt, the oldest living family member. When doing my research, I found an account of this story in the Graham County, North Carolina newspaper. John Kirkland killed Bas Shaw, and then he later killed Shaw’s two sons who were members of the Eleventh

Tennessee Calvary, Union Army. This was in revenge for the Union Army burning the family's gristmill, which was located in the Tellico Mountains east of Tellico Plains. It is in this area that many accounts are given as to where the Kirklands roamed and did their guerilla warfare upon those who dared to venture between Robbinsville, North Carolina and Tellico Plains (*Graham Star*, page 2).

"Brother fought against brother" is not a light-hearted statement but one of fact as this story shows. Another incident whereby a Kirkland is thought to have killed a member of the family involves William Harb Linn of Monroe County. His loyalty was to the Union, but he was constantly harassed by the Confederates, enrolled and deserters alike. Linn was married to a Kirkland, but that did not excuse him from their wrath. His story comes from the Southern Claims Commission Reports. He made a claim for personal property being taken by the Union in 1863 when Sherman is said to have come to this area destroying the ironworks on his March to the Sea.

I came upon this while looking for another story involving this gang who killed a member of the same unit as John Kirkland was in before he deserted. Captain Joe Gray of Company H, Third Mounted Infantry, Union Army was killed by the Kirkland brothers before the Uncle Bas Shaw incident occurred. Gray was at first a Confederate soldier, but then resigned and joined the Union. After returning to Sweetwater following fighting at Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Gray was by the Kirkland Bushwhackers. The story does not stop there. Many years later, Gray's wife, Rachel, was called to the bedside of one of the dying Kirklands. Through the years, Captain Gray's murderer seems to have become remorseful and wanted to apologize to the widow. As requested, Rachel arrived at the bedside, listened to his apology, and then got in his face and told him she hoped hell would receive his soul. She went to her grave

never forgiving him (The Olden Days). *The Graham Star* reports the story that the Kirklands had a celebration involving drinking, dancing and women who proceeded to dance around in the dead Captain's boots.

Historian and researcher Robert A. "Bob" Barker compiled information about the Third Tennessee Mounted Infantry Regiment. In it he mentioned categories about enlistees, officers, deaths, etc. Two categories that mentioned the Kirkland Gang were "Officers Killed" and "Bushwhackers." Captain Gray was mentioned as one of three Confederate officers killed in Monroe County; a total of four officers were killed within a short time after the Muster Out in 1864 and early 1865. Then an entire paragraph was given describing the brothers who deserted, became blood-thirsty, and how one was killed by Tim Lyon's Company C of the Third Tennessee Mounted Infantry. Even local newspapers had their writings about the events of bushwhackers in the area. They had a job to keep the regular citizenry well informed, so they wrote articles celebrating when bushwhackers were found and executed. The article that probably best portrays the disgust many had was the *Knoxville Register*, February 20, 1863. (This is when the Union Army invaded East Tennessee hurting the Rebels here.) The author gives no sympathy to the ones who have turned their backs on their country, and who are willing to ambush the ones who were trying to defend the Union. Wishing they were just lost by their captors in the mountains is what the author wanted for it would not stop until they were punished under the "law of retaliation." I take this as meaning "an eye for an eye" type of punishment was thought to be due them.

A story that really tugged at my heart's strings relates not to the time of bushwhacking as it happened in East Tennessee but for a family member that did his own genealogical research and was heartbroken over the actions of one of his Civil War ancestors. He immediately

apologizes to those whose families his ancestor harmed. It just so happens to have taken place in Monroe County and involved William Reginald Click, great-grandfather to the author. He grew up admiring a portrait of William but learned that he became a bushwhacker and once helped murder a man in the presence of his elderly mother. Click joined two family members, Charles and Jackson Denton, noted bushwhackers associated with the Kirkland gang.

For years members of the Click family were clueless of the atrocities their Civil War ancestor caused to innocent families. He wonders if there was ever fear from William of someone later discovering about his horrid past. He did leave Tennessee and became a respectable, honest church-going pillar of a community in the Mid-West. However, the great grandson feels saddened for the orphans and widows that were left behind as his grandfather carried on with this life and never faced the justice that was due him (Civil War Murders in Monroe Co., pages 2-7.)

These stories and many more that I found are what I like to take back to the classroom to keep history alive! My students always ask me what stories I learned after returning from a workshop or summer vacation. Although the stories, such as the one about William Click, are not always what one wants them to be, they do show how life actually was during that time period. It is then when our curiosities start to accelerate when trying to figure out “Why?” This is what makes for meaningful learning; this is what makes history fun, but most of all this is when one feels they become “a part” of history than apart from history. I am sure this is what William Click’s great grandson felt as he learned his family’s past.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Angelo, Bob D., "Southern Claims Commission for William Harb Linn of Monroe County, Tennessee," US GenNet. <http://tngennet.org/monroe/lynn.htm>. June 15, 2006.

A deposition from W. H. Linn regarding the use of his property by Union forces as they made their way south. Linn was a Unionist and was married to a Kirkland whose kinfolk were part of the Bushwhacking Kirklands. It shows the divisions of brother against brother.

Ash, Stephen. *A Year in the South 1865*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

True story of four ordinary people who lived through the most tumultuous twelve months in American History. One story took place in East Tennessee and reasons are given why there was a great division of loyalty and how families were tormented because of the side they chose.

Barker, Robert A. "A History of the Third Tennessee Mounted Infantry Regiment, USA". <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/4the3sratledges/greet.html>
Retrieved on August 5, 2006.

This site is a retreat for avid genealogists, Civil War buffs, and local historians. Here you will find research on the Civil War and how it impacted local history in East Tennessee, Western North Carolina, and North Georgia. Part of the regiments history includes bushwhacking, and information about an officer killed by such.

"Civil War Murders in Monroe County, Tennessee"
<http://members.aol.com/atsissie1/page/index.htm>. Retrieved June 15, 2006.

The great-grandson of a bushwhacker finds out about the evil doings of his grandfather after doing genealogy research. This is an apology and discovery writing attached to the trial's circuit court minutes. This is one of the stories I used to further describe the violence with the mountains of Monroe County.

McClung, Marshall. "The Kirkland Bushwhackers" *The Graham Star*.
<http://www.main.nc.us/graham/mcclung/Kirkland%20Bushwhackers.html>
Retrieved August 26, 2006.

An online newspaper article that I used to support primary sources of stories about the Bushwhacking Kirklands. This article further explained the activities of this gang of dissenters.

McPherson, James M. *What They Fought For 1861-1865*. Anchor Books: New York, 1995.

The author uses hundreds of letters and diary entries to go into the minds of Union and Confederate soldiers and why they fought. This helped me in answering the question, “Why was East Tennessee divided from the rest of the state when it came to choosing whether to secede or not?”

“Monroe County, Tennessee Photos – The Olden Days”

<http://tngennet.org/monroe/photos/military/CivilWar0003.htm>

Retrieved August 26, 2006.

Photo and story submitted by a great-grand nephew of Captain Joseph C. Gray. I used this story because it involved a murder by a bushwhacker who asked for forgiveness from the widow. This story was also mentioned in research of the Third Mounted Infantry Regiment.

“News Articles Regarding Bushwhackers in 1863”.

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/4the3ratledges/newspaper.html>.

Retrieved August 15, 2006.

Three brief articles from two newspapers during the year 1863 are given. Each mentions the bushwhackers, and one of them has a tone I found relevant to describe how people dealt with the violence.

Ratledge, Sandra. “Confederate Dissension in the Unakas.”

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/4the3ratledges/dissension.html>.

Retrieved August 15, 2006.

Ratledge’s work helped support other authors I used in my research for it went into more detail relating to the division of loyalty in East Tennessee.

Unit: STORIES TELL THE REAL STORY OF EAST TN DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Lesson Title: A Comparison of My Life and Yours

Grade Level: All grades (modify as necessary)

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: How are our lives similar and different regarding same issues and situations? What has caused these changes down through history?

Lesson Time: Depending on age of students, different lengths are needed. For middle school students, I would allow two weeks. The majority of the work is to be done at home.

Curriculum Standards – List: 8.2.02, 8.2.03, 8.2.04, 8.2.05, 8.2.07, 8.3.01, 8.3.02, 8.3.03, 8.3.04, 8.1.01, 5.20

Technology Used and How: Students might want to use either a tape or video recorder when interviewing the eldest member in the family. These can be used along with photos when putting together a multi-media presentation using PowerPoint or Photo Story 3, if one wants to.

Materials: Construction paper, purchased or handmade binder, copies of titled worksheets or student made worksheets

Activity description(s) and overview of instructional strategies: Students will make personal interview booklets that can be handed down generation to generation. This interview will be with the eldest member of the family. This member will tell the student about an aspect on each of the pages of how life was like for them. In the classroom, the student will write on the bottom half of the page how life is like for him/her regarding the same issue, where applicable. NOTE: For older students, the question “What has caused these changes down through history?” should be written and answered by the student.

- Have students make their own covers and title pages for their books entitled “A Comparison of My Life and Yours”. (This could also be designed and run off by the teacher.)
- Insert twenty-five pages (notebook or copier) into binder, and put covers on front and back. Bind these in a creative way or put into a three-ring binder.
- Assign all the situations below, allow students to choose so many, or pick the ones you want them to address. Title each page, front and back.

1. Mother & Father
2. Brothers & Sisters
3. Grandparents, Aunts, & Uncles (p.1)
4. Grandparents, Aunts, & Uncles (p.2)
5. Sibling Rivalry
6. Nicknames and How I Got Them
7. How Birthdays Were Celebrated
26. Old Sayings I’ve Heard
27. The Family Bible
28. Quilting/Handwork
29. A Favorite Outfit
30. Hats, Shoes, Gloves, Pocketbooks
31. Trips to Town

8. Dinner on the Ground
9. Games Played as a Child
10. First Day of School
11. How Thanksgiving was Celebrated
12. How Christmas was Celebrated
13. Sunday Afternoons
14. The Best/Worst Teacher
15. Chores At Home
16. Keeping Warm
17. Favorite Dishes and How to Make Them
18. Snow
19. The Home Place
20. The Fair
21. School Friends
22. Hair
23. Keeping Clean
24. The First Time in A Plane
25. Weather
32. Eccentric Neighbors
33. First Job
34. First Day on the Job
35. First Earned Money
36. A Time When Someone Hurt Your Feelings or Your Hurt Someone
37. Most Important Lessons Learned
38. Killing Hogs, Butchering Cattle
39. Politics
40. The Wedding
41. Losing a Parent
42. Funeral Customs
43. Making a Garden
44. Before/After Television
45. Favorite Radio Entertainment
46. A Long Trip By Car
47. What I Want People to Know About Me
48. What I Wish my Mother Had Told Me
49. An Answered Prayer
50. A Serious Illness

Supporting Assignments/Homework: Have the student write a reflection essay afterwards. The student will have a different appreciation of life back then and his/her in modern times. Furthermore, he/she will consider how time has changed society and what types of changes might occur in the next twenty or more years. Also, students need to reflect on the similarities they found with the elder member.

Assessment: Assign a certain amount of these to be turned in; for example, have the student pick their ten best for a grade. (Do not tell them this until after the given amount of time to do the entire list has expired.) Another method is to require so many stories will be turned in every so many days. The only drawback is that the student might not meet with the elderly person that often. To answer all of these in one session will take some time depending on the age. Grade how thorough the interview responses are, writing skills, and neatness. Give extra points for pictures and any type of technology used.

Unit: STORIES TELL THE REAL STORY OF EAST TN DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Lesson Title: Digging Up Our Civil War Past

Grade Level: Intermediate to Upper grades

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: What role did my community play in the Civil War? What are the stories of those community members that participated?

Lesson Time: Time varies depending on how much one allows for classroom time. Much of this has to be done by family members. Many times time needs to be allowed for students to write family members who live somewhere else. A field trip to a genealogical library is very essential to gather information, especially copies of primary sources, if any. Genealogical booklets should be distributed before the holidays in order for students to get information from visiting family members. For this ongoing project, at least a half of a year should be allowed for the entire project.

Curriculum Standards – list: 2.0, 3.0 for 8th grade English; 3.04, 5.18, 5.19, 5.20 for 8th grade Social Studies

Technology Used and How: The Internet is widely used for research of family members; however, one must be very careful in making sure the correct person is identified. Also, family tree charts are available on different software. After the research is finished, students might want to use one of these to display their research.

Materials: Folders, 12-generation pedigree charts ordered online, display boards, basic genealogy worksheets purchased at school supply stores or found online at www.east-tennessee-history.org, Teachers & Students, Community and Family History Classroom, Teacher Downloads. It is here you can get several basic worksheets to begin your project.

Activity description(s) and overview of instructional strategies: Copy genealogy research worksheets for each child. Students will need these before the holidays and will use the information to develop a presentation board. Simultaneously, students will be completing their pedigree charts going back at least nine or ten generations to the Civil War era. Family members need to be notified of this project because without them, the information will not be found. Many are excited to help, especially when the class visits a genealogical library to do further research. After the holidays, students need to begin making connections of whether or not a Civil War ancestor exists or not. A presentation board displaying all the worksheets and information about the soldier(s) needs to be displayed. (NOTE: Students do not need to glue worksheets to board for they need to be able to put them in a notebook after presentation.) Then students need to develop a reflection essay about the project. This is to be displayed on the board, also. Several class periods will be needed for each child to present his/her findings to the rest of the class. In doing so, students need to tell of any story(s) they found interesting while doing their research.

Supporting Assignments/Homework: A Community Genealogy Night will allow family members to view the students' work. Invite school board members and Central Office staff, too. The adults enjoy talking with students about the histories of the different families. Some learn about their own in the process. Other supporting assignments might include a video or picture presentation involving Photo Story 3 or another multi-media presentation program. Also, a mock trial for bushwhacker stories or other atrocities discovered, charting of number of Confederate and Union veterans discovered, Civil War Memorial Wall, culminating information could be put into a book, National History Day project.

Assessment: The following is a rubric to grade the presentation board:

10 pts.—title;

25 pts.—personal and family forms;

25 pts.—five or nine generation chart,

25 pts.—stories,

15 pts.— reflection (Reflection was to discuss student's feelings before, during, and after project.)