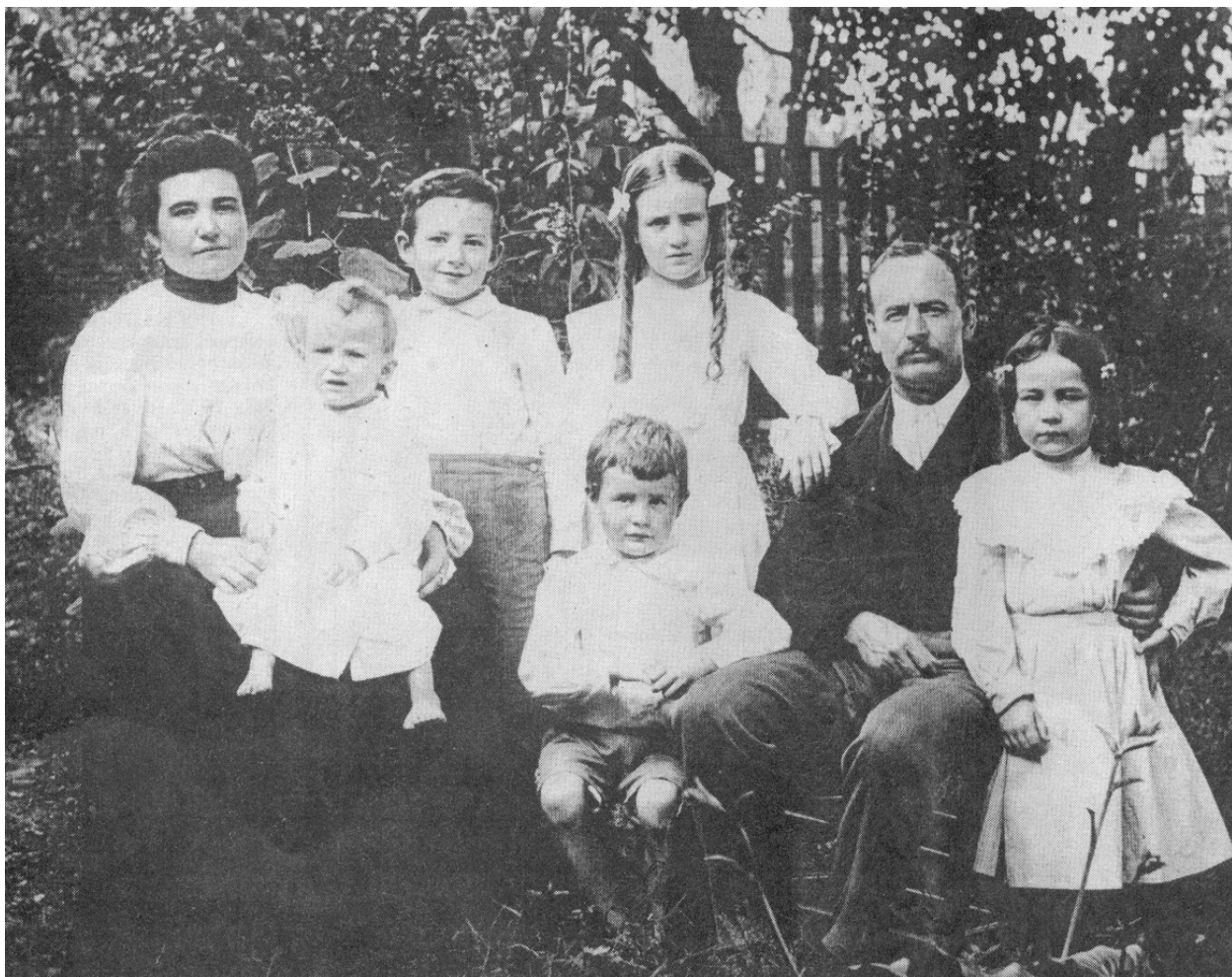


## THE JEFF HALL FAMILY



Front: Ellis, Jeff, and Mamie  
Rear: Mollie, Alvah, Herbert, and Myrtle  
Circa 1903

By

Charles & Carolyn Stubblefield

2003

## PICTURE KEY

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1. The Jefferson Davis Hall family: Ellis, Jeff, Mamie, Mollie, Alvah, Herbert, and Myrtle.
4. Tennessee State Archives.
5. Charles and Carolyn Stubblefield, July 2003.
6. Jeff and Mollie Hall's tombstone, Viola, Tennessee Community Cemetery.
7. Jeff and Mollie Hall.
8. 1808 Warren County surveyor's plat map.
11. "Donnie's Baby" was written on the back of the picture. Donnie was Mollie Elkins Hall's sister.
12. Mollie and Jeff's first house in Viola.
13. Photo taken in 1897 or 1898 of Jeff, Herbert, Mollie, Myrtle, and Mamie.
14. Decorative work on the Winton house (upper). Example of the Victorian ornamentation Jeff made for his homes.  
Herbert, unidentified worker, and Jeff Hall in workshop (lower).
15. Cardwell house (upper).  
Winton house (lower).
16. Bonner house (upper).  
Etter house (middle).  
Ramsey house (lower).
17. West house (upper).  
Cain house (lower).
18. Myers house.
19. Stone house (upper).  
Ramsey house (lower). Mollie bought the house in 1916 from Sam Ramsey. It was owned by Mollie and Jeff's children in the 1920's and 1930's; it was later sold to Bob Ramsey, Sam Ramsey's son, in 1938.
20. Mollie Elkins Hall.
21. Miss Bertha Ramsey (Bonner) picnic. 1<sup>st</sup> row: Mack Bonner & Harry West; 2<sup>nd</sup> row: Herbert Hall, Marjory Mason, Nellis Cardwell, Myrtle Hall, Mamie Hall, Charlie Lee Brewer, Ruby Ramsey, Unidentified, Velma Hughes, and Lloyd Eaton; 3<sup>rd</sup> row: Eiose West, Elizabeth Turner, Ruby Mansfield, Lota Stubblefield, Miss Bertha, Audry West, Ellis Hall; 4<sup>th</sup> row: Clyde Eaton, Harold Ramsey, and Paul Moore.

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22. Hall brothers “threshing machine” (upper). Picture probably includes Herbert, Ellis, Alvah, and other friends.  
Myrtle Hall Cain Martin (lower).
23. Myrtle Hall Cain Martin (upper).  
Front: Bonita Curtiss, Myrtle Cain Martin, Barbara Fraley; back: Gloria DaCosta, Melba Fraley (lower).
24. Herbert and Lura Hall.
25. One of Herbert’s fishing trips. L to R: Unidentified, Unidentified, John, Herbert, and Toadie Hall (upper).  
Herbert Hall, Jr. (lower). Toadie’s baby picture made in Florida.
26. Mamie Hall and Herman Powell Stubblefield (upper).  
J.R. Stubblefield house (lower). Mollie’s neighbor after 1916.
27. Mamie Hall Stubblefield (upper).  
Mamie’s children, late 1930’s. L to R: James, Charles, Sarah, Edwin, Robert and Herman (lower).
28. Mamie’s children, 1990. L to R, front: Charles and Edwin; rear: James, Sarah, Herman and Robert (upper).  
Ellis Hall; (lower).
29. Ellis and Velma Hall.
30. Vallye Hall and children Marcella and Bryan, about 1936.
31. Alvah Hall (upper).  
Myrtle Hall, Alvah Hall, and Ellis Hall (lower).
32. Katherine and Alvah Hall.

## PREFACE

Some of those attending the 2002 Stubblefield Reunion suggested that featuring ancestors at future reunions would be a good thing. Herman Hall Stubblefield and his son, Locksley, recommended the selection of Jeff Hall, Herman's maternal grandfather for presentation in 2003. We knew that Jeff had made quite a name for himself by building several homes around Viola, but stories about the Hall family were not widely known and we knew nothing about his young life in Cannon County, Tennessee. Still, we decided we would go ahead and see what we could find.

Gathering data beyond the life of Jeff's father was painstaking. One of the first places we looked was in Magness Memorial Library in McMinnville, TN. After hours of searching for information about Jeff's grandfather, Carolyn declared, "I give up, we have enough information for a report." That was



not what the staff genealogist Bradley Walker wanted to hear. Within minutes a patron/genealogist and Mr. Walker found a record in the 1850 census listing Jeff's father living with the Lemay family and a microfilm that helped us establish more clearly the John Hall orphan link. We then conducted an extensive search in the Woodbury, TN library where we found considerable information, especially about Mollie's ancestors. Later we spent three separate days in the Tennessee Archives in Nashville where we found records that helped us identify ancestors, property, and other data relevant to our investigation. We thank each of these places for the generous help they gave.

Fortunately Locksley Stubblefield was forward-thinking back in 1981 and wisely asked his grandmother, Mamie, questions about the Hall family --- his records helped immensely. And Herman, Locksley's dad, recalled very interesting information concerning Alvah Hall and his wife Katherine. Melba Fraley gave us valuable information about the Hall family and directed us to Gloria Da Costa who provided

extensive detail and photos regarding our relatives that we otherwise could not have found. Marcella Hall Garlin provided significant input about her father, Ellis Hall, and members of his family. Also, Velma Richker, Ellis' wife and Marcella's stepmother, gave us more particulars about Ellis. Hugh Curtiss also graciously showed us the Cain house and shared some of its history. Lee and Molly Hall Webster related stories to us about her father Herbert and her brother, Herbert Jr. (Toadie). We luckily found John Hall, Herbert's grandson, on the Hall Genealogy Forum on the Internet, and our e-mail correspondence with him has helped us learn much more about Herbert and his family. Our appreciation goes out to all who contributed to our effort by searching their records and providing the facts we requested.

The people of Viola were also very helpful, providing a lot of relevant information in the Viola Valley Homecoming publications. Mary Katherine Gaffin, Sara Hoover, Ida Ramsey, Sara Jean Smartt, Woodson King, Charles Brown, Linda Prater, and Imogene Bolen Wright patiently answered our questions. Finally, our thanks are extended to our daughter Jane Kaylor for the thorough editing she gave to our final product. We have enjoyed doing a project that brought us close to people we had not contacted in a long time. Our heart-felt thanks are extended to all who had input in this work.

Charles & Carolyn

August 2, 2003



## PROLOGUE

*There is no time in our lives when we feel our weakness more than when we see those we love suffering death and we are powerless to help them. We can only resign them into the hand of our Heavenly Father. So it was with Mrs. J.D. Hall and family as they gathered around the bedside of their dying father and husband. Their hearts were grieved as they saw that dear one, who had been so kind, so devoted, and so true, passing away from them forever. But could they have seen the great Pearly Gates opening to receive him, and could they have beheld his joyful entrance into the beautiful City, how quickly would their grief have turned to joy. He was honest and just in his dealings with his fellowman; one of the most industrious men I ever met. If we will consider death in the light of God's word, its horror and gloom are dispelled. May the Father of mercy throw his protection around his sorrowing family.*

(Warren County Times – February 16, 1912)

Jeff Hall was born in Cannon County Tennessee on June 5, 1862 in the midst of the Civil War. He died February 7, 1912. He was the son of Reuben M. Hall and Elizabeth Wilson Hall. Jeff's legacy is in the beautiful homes he built, the furniture and musical instruments he made, and the values he and Mollie instilled in the hearts of their children.

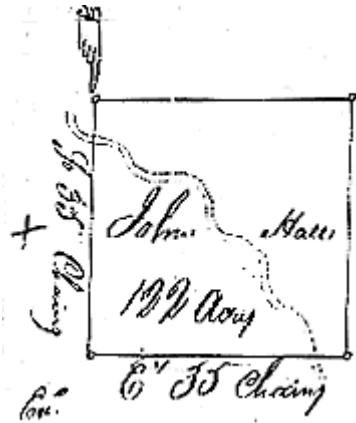


Jeff had a saying : “About the time we get ready to live, we have to die.” These words reveal the emptiness Jeff must have felt when he remembered the fate of his own ancestors in times past.



Mollie & Jeff

## LIFE IN CANNON COUNTY



The history of the Hall family in Cannon County, Tennessee is both interesting and tragic. It began in 1808, when John Hall, believed to be Jeff Hall's grandfather, requested a survey be done on 120 acres of land on Duck River in what was then part of Warren County. He apparently bought land and settled down to raise a family in a new place in what is now Cannon County. His wife, whose name is not known, was about 20 years younger than John. In 1830 they had four children under the age of ten. By 1833 two more children were born and before 1838 John and his wife died. At his death, John probably would have been somewhere around 50 years old.

Because John Hall's children were minors and orphans, his estate was left in the hands of the Cannon County Courts. On October 1, 1838 the oldest male orphans, William J. Hall and John W. Hall, were bound to Thomas R. Young until they were age 21. They were to learn the "art and mystery of the tanning and currying business." Later, on March 5, 1849, William Young was appointed guardian to the orphans Patsey, William J., Reuben, John, James and Margaret Hall. Nathan Finley was their security. According to the 1850 census, Reuben, James, and Margaret were living with Richard Lemay, a Methodist preacher born in Virginia, and his wife Lucy. Finally, William Young made a settlement on October 7, 1851 as guardian of the heirs of the deceased John Hall. Reuben and his brothers purchased and sold land after William Young's 1851 court settlement with the orphans, suggesting that John Hall owned real estate before he died and that the court protected his holdings until the youngest son James reached the age of 21. Reuben Hall, born in 1826 and the orphan child described here, was Jeff Hall's father.

Reuben Hall and Elizabeth Wilson were married on December 4, 1853. At that time he was 27 years old and she was only 18. Elizabeth was one of 10 children of Hiram Wilson and Polly Morgan Wilson. Hiram was born in Montgomery County Virginia and Polly



was born in Berkeley County, Virginia. Hiram died in 1857, leaving property to Reuben and Elizabeth and his other children.

Reuben Hall was a leading citizen in the community between about 1852-1862. Cannon County Court Minutes reveal that on November 7, 1859, Reuben, acting in the capacity of Justice of the Peace, was involved in the settlement of the estate of a man named G.J. Brewer. Then on April 2, 1861, Reuben dealt with a case where an account was erroneously entered against William Barton and the action of the court was needed to correct the matter. Again in 1861, Reuben was reappointed as Justice of the Peace and to a civil district committee relating to the Tennessee Volunteers. On January 6, 1862, Reuben was appointed Tax Collector for District 4. An allowance of \$25 was given to each Tax Assessor for the 1862 year. The record shows that all but 3 of the 12 assessors voted in favor of the allowance and that Reuben was one of the ones voting in favor of it. Again in 1862 Reuben Hall was listed as one of the Justices being present when fees were set for various court officers for the year 1863.

Reuben and Elizabeth Hall had five sons between 1855 and 1862. The oldest was Hiram, next was John, then Walter and Reuben, and finally Jefferson (Jeff), born on June 5, 1862. Reuben, the father, is listed as a farmer in the 1850 and 1860 censuses. This must have been a happy time for the Halls, with the raising of five sons, managing their farm, and participating in civic affairs. But all of that soon changed with the coming of the Civil War in 1861. Although no major battles were fought on Cannon County soil, there were military skirmishes and reconnaissance movements between the opposing sides.

There are no Cannon County Court Minutes for the years 1863 and 1864. When the Minutes resumed in 1865 at the end of the Civil War, Reuben Hall's name does not appear again in the records. There are two family accounts of the death of Reuben. Mamie Hall Stubblefield, Jeff Hall's daughter and Reuben's granddaughter, related in 1981 that Reuben refused to serve in the Civil War due to his age and poor health (he would have been 35-36 years old then). She said the Confederates thought he was all right so they put him in prison where he later died. Another granddaughter, Bettie Hall

Rogers, daughter of Jeff Hall's brother Reuben (Ruby), gave a different account in a 1965 letter. She recalled her father saying:

“Granddaddy Hall was captured in the War and died in a prison camp; not that he had done anything wrong, he never was in the War. He had lung trouble and was turned down on that account, but he had carried food to the soldiers and they had gotten in debt to him and after the War was over and he went to collect, and the Yankees caught him and wanted him to be on their side, he told them he would die before he would take their oath. So they put him in a prison camp, thinking he would come on their side to get back home. So he took bloody flux (dysentery) and died. Grandmother Hall lost her mind over all that happened. She was left with five boys to raise, three of them were old enough to make the living.”  
(Hiram, the oldest, however, would have been only ten in 1865.)

History relates that Federal soldiers had raided the town of Woodbury in Cannon County in 1862 and had taken away most of its men to a prison in Murfreesboro on charges of giving aid and comfort to the enemy. Whether Reuben Hall was taken prisoner then or later is not known, but his tragic death was a terrible blow to his family. No official records have been found (they may not exist) that list Reuben as a prisoner of war.

After Reuben died, Elizabeth Hall and the boys had a good deal of support from her family, as indicated by the 1870 census. She was living with her 75-year old mother, Mary Wilson, and living nearby were two of Elizabeth's brothers, Hiram and John. Census records show that Elizabeth and her mother both owned property, suggesting they were not in poverty. Information about Jeff Hall's brothers as they grew to manhood is lacking, and only a few family records shed light on their adult life. It is known that Hiram and John lived in Cannon County. John had four sons --- James, John, and twins Claude and Willie (Willie died as a child). Reuben and Elizabeth's third son, Walter, lived in Texas and was reported to have died while visiting his brother Jeff in Viola, TN. The fourth son, Reuben (Ruby) and wife Lena, moved to Decatur, AL and worked for the railroad. Family records state that Ruby died tragically in a railroad accident and his brother Jeff attended his funeral.

Besides the Halls and Wilsons, another prominent family in Cannon County was the Elkins family. Gabriel Elkins was born in Henry County, Virginia in ca 1765 and moved to Cannon County around 1812. Samuel Lewis had deeded Gabriel Elkins 62 acres on

the East Fork Stone River in July 1810. On a fairly detailed map of Tennessee there is a place near Woodbury named Elkins Community. Along the hills on Highway 70S one can see the Elkins Church of Christ. This building stands near the ancestral Elkins land. The Elkins most closely related to the Hall family are not buried at the church cemetery, but in an un-maintained graveyard not far away. It was Mollie, the great great granddaughter of Gabriel Elkins that married Jeff Hall.



Mollie's father, Robert L. Elkins, was born in Cannon County in 1852 and farmed in the Woodbury, Tennessee community. Mollie's mother, Eliza Tennessee (Tennie) Foster, was born on February 9, 1857 in the Ozark Mountains in Linden, Missouri. Tennie and Robert were married in the year 1873. Mollie, their second child, was born on July 22, 1876. Robert died in March 1891 at the age of 39, leaving Tennie with Mollie and six other young children. At that time Mollie was only 15 years old. Mamie Hall Stubblefield, Mollie's daughter, related a story in 1981 that illustrates how life may have been very

difficult for Tennie during that time. She said that Tennie had a smokehouse with a removable roof, and while she was widowed with small children, someone stole all her hams and other meat. Later Tennie married William Dillard Smith and bore five more children.

Mollie Elkins and Jeff Hall married on November 16, 1893 in Cannon County Tennessee. After Jeff and Mollie had their first child, they must have thought that better opportunities could be found elsewhere. For in September 1895 while expecting their second child, Mollie and Jeff bought a home in Viola, Tennessee where Jeff would later apply his building skills.

## LIFE IN VIOLA

When Mollie and Jeff bought their first house, he was 33 and she only 19. Their first child, Myrtle, had been born a year earlier and Mollie was expecting their second child Herbert. Why they moved to Viola was probably because the town was a bustling village in the late 1800's. The farmers from this fertile valley were prosperous and supported a number of businesses. Jeff must have thought the town would be an ideal spot to live and raise his family.

The house and lot they bought is located at the northwest corner of what are now Mill and Church (Hill) Streets in Viola. When Jeff and Mollie bought the property on September 17, 1895, the owners were W.T. and Mollie Tracy. The total price for the property was \$525, for which they paid \$355.80 cash, and made two notes for \$84.60 at 6% interest, the first note was due after 6 months and the second note due after one year. The deed describes the property location as follows:

“Beginning on a stone in the center of the street, the southwest corner of the lot owned by the late Jesse Sewell (dec'd) thence west with a line of I.C.

Garretson (dec'd) 300 feet to his corner. Thence north 100 feet to M.H. Gwynn's line, thence east with M.H. Gwynn's line 300 feet to his northeast corner in the center of the street, thence south 100 feet to the beginning. It being the house and lot bought of W.M. Thaxton by said Tracy.”



After the Halls, the house was sold to Minnie Bolen (spelled Bollen in deed), wife of Joe Bolen. Felton Bolen, his wife Hazel, and daughter Imogene, lived there for a while. Later owners included John Prater and Drannon Sain. Freddy Hobbs, son of Clifford Hobbs' sister, owns the house now, and living next door is Emmett (Rabbit) Hobbs.

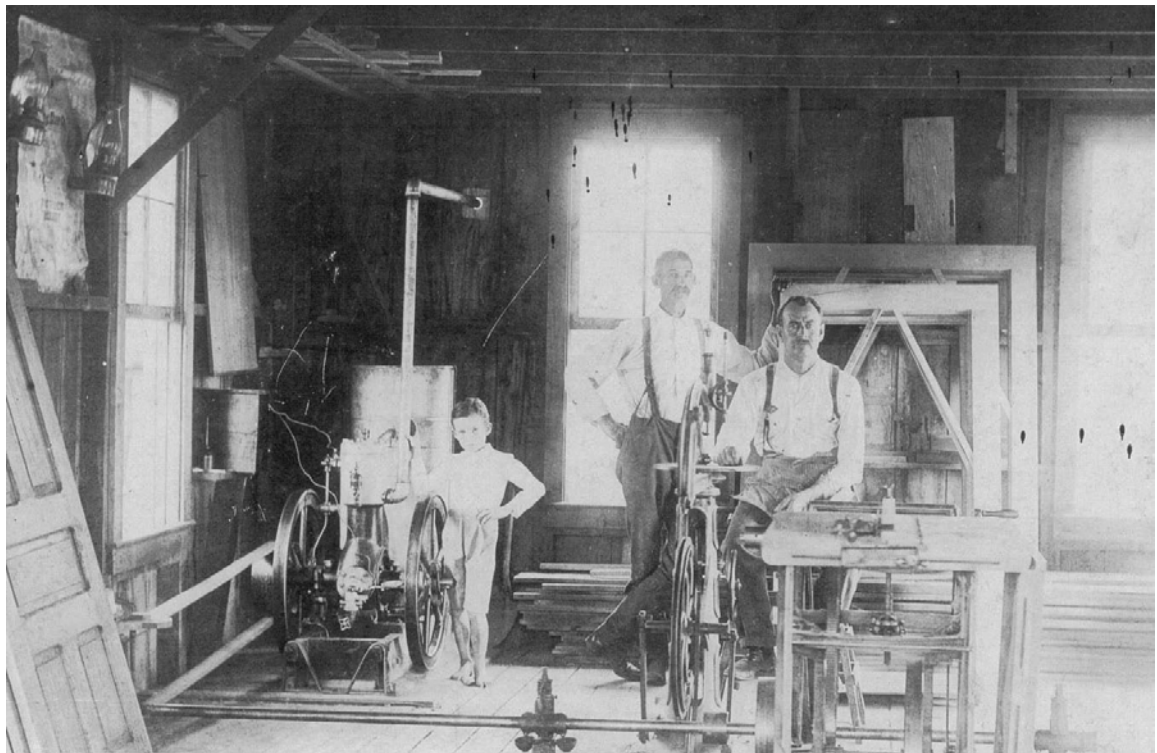


After moving to their new home, Jeff and Mollie became good citizens of the Viola Community. They placed membership in the Church of Christ in November 1898 and participated in the social activities of the town. Where Jeff Hall learned the building trade is not known. But by the time he moved to Viola he was skilled enough to start a business. He was a master carpenter and builder, and a manufacturer of sash, door, and turned work. Herman Stubblefield, Jeff's son-in-law, said in a 1980 newspaper article that Jeff constructed several of the fine homes

in Viola, made his own doors and windows, and described him as a master carver of woodwork and balustrades. Charles Brown, a local resident in the Viola community now over 100 years old, recalled in a 1990 Viola Homecoming Book that "Hall's carpenter shop was a big outfit. Mamie Hall's father made screen doors that are still in the Charles Brown home; they made everything: chairs, wagon tongues and curved stairways. They had gasoline engines, motorized doors and everything." Jeff's brother Ruby was quoted as having said that "Jeff could do anything with wood," and the people of Viola agreed. It wasn't long before he set about building exquisite homes that to this day still display his craftsmanship.

Many new homes were built in Viola during the late 1890's and early 1900's. While Jeff built some of the finest ones, another builder living in Viola then was John R. West. Mr. West owned a lumber and planing mill and it was said that he built some of the churches, schools, and residences in the area. It is very likely that Jeff collaborated with him and other builders and furnished much of the decorative and special construction

material for even the houses where Jeff was not the prime contractor. Most of the homes that Jeff built were of the Victorian style. The Victorian architecture is known for having a significant amount of ornamentation, sometimes called “gingerbread.” These homes are characterized by having an extensive amount of detail on both the exterior and interior, featuring many turned spindles and balusters for decoration. Examples of the houses Jeff built are the homes for the Cardwell, Winton, Bonner, Cain, Myers, and Stone families. Others houses that were either built by Jeff Hall or that he was directly involved in their construction, include the Etter, Ramsey, and West homes. Some other houses in the area have the characteristic style that Jeff used in many of the homes he built, but the actual builder is either uncertain or unknown.



### Cardwell House

One of the first homes Jeff Hall built in the Viola area was for Calhoun Smartt Cardwell



and his wife Sally Duncan. It is located three miles north of Viola on the McMinnville Highway (Hwy. 108) just beyond Hickory Creek. The home was built in 1896 and has a lot of intricate designs around the porch, windows, and eaves. It appears to be smaller than some of the other homes Jeff built.

Many years later as his daughter Mamie passed by, she would often say, “my dad built that house.” The house appears to be unoccupied at the present time.

### Winton House

Jeff Hall built one of the most attractive Victorian farm homes in all of Warren County for P.H.

(Hense) Winton and his second wife Jessie Price.

The house is located about one mile north of Viola on top of a hill overlooking where once stood Todd school (now the Viola Community Center) to the south.

A 700-acre farm is west of the house, and the beautiful Cumberland Mountains are in the east. The intricate and extensive decorative woodwork around the porches, windows, and throughout the house illustrate the excellent construction skills that Jeff used. Around 1930 the ownership changed several times, with Jim McDonough eventually buying the property. Willard Hillis and his wife Pauline managed the farm for Jim’s son, Benton, from 1951 until Willard died in 1990. A caretaker is now repairing and living in the house.



### Bonner House

In the late 1890’s Jeff Hall built a home for Emmett and Mattie Smartt Bonner. As the story is told, he used plans drawn up by Mattie because she had such good ideas about building a house. Euclid Smartt bought the home and 1.2-acre lot in 1973 for \$7000 and the house was renovated the next year. His wife, Sara Jean Stubblefield Smartt, now



owns the property. It is located within the city of Viola near the top of a hill at the intersection of High Street and Bouldin (Pleasant Knoll) Road. The house was built in the style characteristic of many of the homes Jeff built. All the downstairs rooms have fireplaces and 12-1/2 feet ceilings. The front door is beautifully carved and the original door bell still

works. The house has big closets and storage spaces, which is quite rare in houses built during the Victorian Period.

### Etter House

This house is located about 2 miles east of Viola on the south side of the Fults' Cove road. Construction began in 1910 with Jeff Hall providing the required finished timber, the doors, window sash, and window frames. Carpenters included Felix Malone, described as a very careful workman, and Charley Newman, said to be fast. The house was built for Stoke and Sallie Etter, who subsequently had two sons, Stokely and Dan, who never married. Following the death of Dan in 2001, the house was auctioned to Michael Rhody who has made major repairs. The renovation included installation of air conditioning, an outside Jacuzzi, new wood and posts on the porches, and replacing the roof. It is interesting to note the roofer stated that "the guy that built the house was very good and everything in the house was solid and well constructed." He also said, "You couldn't afford to build a house like that today."



### Ramsey House

This house was said to have been built for David Lytle Ramsey in 1907 by Jeff Hall and E.T. Gannaway (described as a carpenter, painter, and dealer in wall paper and paint). It is located at 235 High Street in Viola. The house was purchased by





Fred and Ruby Hoover in 1921 and renovated extensively in 1937. Later, the Hoovers added four rooms, a hall and a bath, and used one room as an office for his insurance company.

### West House

Some local residents say that Jeff Hall also built the West house, located at 109 Lynn Street in Viola. The original owner, John R. West, however, was a builder too and may



have constructed the home himself or in conjunction with other workers. The house, built in 1907, contains a beautiful porch and balcony, a lovely stairway, and extensive oak paneling characteristic of the homes that Jeff built.

Subsequent owners include Dr. W.R. Price and Raymond and Evelyn Stubblefield. The present owner is Linda Prater, who recently did an extensive renovation of the home and complemented it with numerous pieces of antique furniture.

### Cain House

Jeff Hall built this house, now known as “Cain Acres”, for William S. and Athelia Hill Cain in 1910. It is located not far from Collins River on a 1,000-acre farm in the edge of Grundy County on Highway 56, several miles from McMinnville and south of Irving College. The Cain property originated through Athelia Hill Cain whose father



served in the war of 1812 under Andrew Jackson and was able to get 25,000 acres as a land grant because of his service. When Mr. Hill got very old he divided his property between his children by writing the location of each land division on pieces of paper and putting them in a hat so the children could draw their inheritance. He said that if they didn't like what they got they could exchange with one another if they could agree to do so. Hugh Curtiss, William Cain's great-grandson, who lives there with his father, Waymon Curtiss, now owns the home.

Lumber for the house came from trees on the property. After milling, Jeff took some of the lumber to Viola and there made the doors, windows, columns, and the trim work. It was said that he stayed so long in Viola that Mr. Cain was beginning to wonder if Jeff had stolen the lumber and was not coming back. But one day while working in the fields the Cains looked up and saw what appeared to be a wagon train loaded with the material Jeff had made. At this time a road existed from the Mt. Zion community through a gap in the mountain to Irving College, about a six mile trip, only a two to three hour horse ride from Viola. While building the house Jeff moved his family to the area, probably living in what was called the “white house”, located just a few hundred yards from the main house and called this because it was white washed rather than painted. The children attended the Philadelphia school nearby. An interesting feature of the Cain house is its large vestibule, with a parlor, three bedrooms, a dining room, and the back porch leading off from it. The kitchen is at the back of the dining room. A stairway from the vestibule leads to one large room upstairs, with ample bedroom, attic, and closet storage space. Throughout the house the floors and woodwork are made of beautiful material and show the quality of excellent craftsmanship. The front porch columns were said to be made originally by gluing together boards and then turning them down by hand in large lathe-like equipment.

### Myers House

The Andrew Myers house is also located off of Highway 56 near Irving College. It can be reached from Turner Road, going about four miles east of the Smyrna Church of Christ and crossing Collins River into the Myers Cove area. Mrs. Myers was Athelia Hill Cain’s sister. She had inherited 5,000 acres from her father, but later had to sell off much



of the land during the Depression to pay taxes. It is said that the sisters wanted to outdo one another with the best and biggest house and both the Cain and Myers houses were built around the same time. Andy Myers, grandson of the original owner, lives in the house and is the current owner. He said the house was built in 1910, that the timber for the

house was cut on the property, and that the house had been added on to after it was originally built. The outside now looks more massive and larger than other houses Jeff

Hall built, although it has a lot of similarities to the Cain and Stoke Etter houses, particularly in the windows and the columns.

### Stone House

Jeff Hall, with the help of his sons, began the construction of a house for Robert L. Stone and his wife Ida Bonner shortly before he died. It is located in Viola at the intersection of



the Viola and Hillsboro Roads. Ida also died before the house was finished. In 1913 Mr. Stone married Beulah Beachboard and shortly thereafter, Elmer Mansfield completed the house. The house had eight rooms, two large halls, upstairs bath, front porch, back porch, and a large cellar. All the floors and

woodwork are of oak, the walls are finished with wallpaper, and every door in the downstairs part of the house has a transom over it. Water for the bath was piped from the Viola Flour Mill across the road. The only problem noted about the house was that the roof had always leaked and people attributed it to the fact that the Hall boys, as they were finishing their Dad's work, slid down the roof too much. The house was wired for electricity in 1926 when Southern City Power Company made services available for Viola. Mary Katherine, daughter of Robert Stone, and her husband, W.C. "Red" Gaffin now own and live in the home.

### Mollie's Home

On September 4, 1911 Jeff and Mollie borrowed \$600 from P.H. Winton, mortgaging



their Viola home to secure the loan. Although the interest and principal were due a year later, after only five months Jeff was dead. The reason for obtaining the loan is unknown, but it might have been simply to purchase needed equipment, building material, or meet some other financial obligation. Sadly, after the

loss of a husband and father, Mollie and the children must have struggled to earn a living and probably nothing was left over to pay the loan. Thus, four years after the loan was due and because no payment was made, J.R. Ramsey, the trustee of the loan, proceeded according to the terms of the deed of trust. He advertised the property and sold it on

February 23, 1916 at public sale to Minnie Bolen for \$1400, this said to be the highest and best bid. Seven months after the Viola property was sold, on September 30, 1916, Mollie Hall and her 5 children bought property just north of Viola from Sam Ramsey in the 8<sup>th</sup> Civil District of Warren County. She paid a total of \$1350 for the property, giving \$589 in cash and making notes to J.J. Belevu for \$360 due in 2 years with interest, and then notes for \$100 each year for 4 years. The property is described as follows:

“Beginning on a slanted stone in the center of the Viola and McMinnville road. 4 (poles) and 14 feet north of the Hughes corner. Thence east 30 poles to the center of creek in J.R. Stubblefields line, thence down said creek and J.R. Stubblefield’s line 4 poles and 12 feet to said Stubblefield’s line, thence westwardly with his line 30 poles to center of above-mentioned road. Thence south with center of said road 14 poles and 12 feet to the beginning containing 3 acres be the same more or less.”

Sam M. Ramsey and Myrtle Mabry Ramsey signed the deed. The house is believed to be the one George H. Stubblefield built next door to the J.R. Stubblefield farm as a bachelor. After Mollie died, Myrtle Hall bought the house from the other heirs. Myrtle lived there for a while, rented it out for a period, and in January of 1938 sold the property to Bob Ramsey, the son of Sam Ramsey. Bob’s wife Ida Ramsey now lives in the house.



## AFTER JEFF AND MOLLIE

Jeff Hall died on February 7, 1912. The obituary in the Warren County Times, February 9, 1912 stated: “Jeff D. Hall died in his home in Viola Wednesday night after a brief illness from pneumonia fever. He was a good man and one of the leading citizens in the Viola community.” This was an outstanding compliment, for it was said that obituaries were not regularly written until the 1930’s, and that only prominent people in a community had notices of their death printed in the paper.

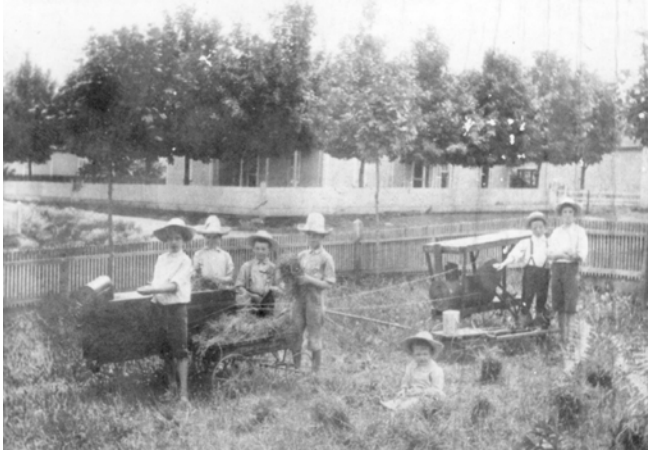
Mollie, at age 35, was left with 4 children at home. Myrtle, the oldest, was already married to Hugh Cain. This left Herbert at age 16, Mamie at age 14, Ellis at age 12, and Alvah, the youngest, at only 9 years old when his father died. How Mollie managed during the period that followed is unclear. Very likely the boys continued in their father’s business for a while, as evidenced by writings found in 1999 in a renovated dormer of the J.R. Stubblefield house, which said, “This was done Jan. 29, 1917 --- Hall Bros. ---.”

Mollie Hall died on December 8, 1921 at the age of 45. All of the children were essentially grown at the time and most were already married. Mollie died of complications from surgery. She had a hysterectomy and was seemingly doing fine, but she was found dead the morning she was to come home from the hospital.



Mollie and Jeff had five wonderful children, each of which grew up, married, and raised wonderful families of their own. All the children were born in Viola with the exception of Myrtle, the oldest, who probably was born in Cannon County before her

parents moved. Growing up, they were healthy, attended church and the local schools, had friends and played like all children do. Being in a farming community, one of the



things the boys enjoyed doing was pretending to harvest seed with a toy thrashing machine that they made themselves. In the following sections are some of the interesting details known about the children as adults.

### Myrtle

When the Hall family moved to build the William and Athelia Cain house, Myrtle met and fell in love with their son Hugh and it wasn't long before they married. It is said that Jeff went somewhere and bought Myrtle new clothes for the wedding, and that one of Myrtle's daughters still has the Panama hat she wore. They were married in the "white house" on the Cain property. Myrtle had two children, Bonita and Melba, before Hugh died on April 21, 1921 of pneumonia at only 31 years of age. She then moved back to Viola and lived with her mother until Mollie died in December of 1921. During this time, she had a general store in Viola that the two younger brothers ran. In 1925, Mollie's children sold their interest in their mother's property, first to Ellis and Alvah, then Alvah bought Ellis out later in the same year, and finally in 1926 Myrtle paid Alvah \$2050 for the property. By then Myrtle had married Elijah (Lige or E.D.) Martin, a Church of Christ preacher. From that union their daughter Gloria was born.





Myrtle was a very attractive woman, as were her three girls. When describing her cooking skills, Gloria recalled that Myrtle made a “very good” chocolate pie from memory and never wrote down how it was made. The recipe was attributed to being one used by Mollie Hall and, so far, Myrtle’s children have not been able to duplicate it.

After Myrtle’s family moved back to the Irving College area, in 1934 the house where they were living burned. Myrtle’s engagement ring from Hugh Cain was in the fire, but it had been placed in the piano in a metal box for safekeeping. Because the piano had

settled quickly to the ground in the fire, the ring was found after carefully searching through the ashes. Some beautiful oak furniture that Jeff had made for Myrtle also burned in the fire. The only pieces that Jeff made that survived were an oak table and washstand, which Bonita had in her apartment at the time of the fire. Unfortunately the violin that Jeff Hall had made for Myrtle was



lost in the fire along with most everything else. It was said that Myrtle cried and cried at the loss because the violin was such a beautiful instrument and that both Myrtle and her father knew how to play. Just how well Jeff played is unclear, however, because when Myrtle’s sister Mamie was asked about her father’s violin playing she said she “didn’t like it.”

Around 1936, a new home for Myrtle’s family was completed. The house is located on Highway 56 in the Irving College area and now belongs to Gloria and her husband Richard Da Costa who spend most of their time in Winter Park, Florida. Melba, Myrtle’s second daughter, who previously lived in McMinnville is now living with her daughter Barbara in Panama City Beach, Florida. Melba’s husband Walling Fraley died in 1994. Bonita died August 2, 2002 and is buried in the Philadelphia Church cemetery near her mother. Bonita’s husband, Waymon Curtiss, at age 90, is living with his son at “Cain Acres.” Myrtle, who passed away June 9, 1965 about 3 hours after experiencing a heart attack at the age of 70, is buried beside her first husband Hugh Cain.

## Herbert

It is said that Ernest Herbert Hall courted Lura Sain by taking her for horse and buggy rides around Viola. They married and the union produced one son, Herbert Jr. (Toadie) and a daughter, Molly. Herbert probably remained in the construction business in Viola



for a while until it became increasingly difficult to support a family there in the building trade. During this period improvements were made in the road to McMinnville so auto travel to McMinnville became easier and less shopping was done in Viola. And by the time the Great Depression set in, Viola was certainly not as bustling as it was at the turn of the century and many businesses closed. Seeing the decline coming, sometime around 1917 when Toadie was still an infant, Herbert and Lura moved to Florida where he had a construction job. After the job was finished in Florida, Herbert and family moved to Shreveport, Louisiana and he worked in the construction business there until some time in the late 1930's or early 1940's when the family

moved to Dallas, Texas where he started a hardwood flooring business. The business grew and became the most highly respected of such businesses in Dallas and beyond. Herbert Jr. joined his father in the business in 1947. As time went on and people began to carpet their homes, the hardwood flooring business waned. Herbert continued to put in gym floors and floors in large homes, but eventually closed his business entirely in the 1960's and retired.

His grandson, John, described Herbert as a tough, Camels-smoking, joking, wisecracking, and delightful kind of guy. John also described his grandfather as an avid fisherman, especially enjoying a fishing hole at Cross Lake in Shreveport, LA, that became his favorite spot. Even after opening his hardwood flooring business in Dallas, TX, Herbert and his family made frequent weekend trips back to Shreveport so Herbert could angle for catfish in his favorite lake. Herbert's daughter, Molly also remembered Herbert as a



fun-loving guy that everybody liked. She said that when Herbert walked down the street little black kids would come up to him and say “Mr. Hall, how are you doing?” Herbert would then reach into his pocket and give them money for candy, and a friendly rub on the head. About his fishing, she said he frequently had his picture in the paper because of his “big catches.”

Herbert died on Oct. 1, 1966 of lung cancer at the age of 70. His death left a huge



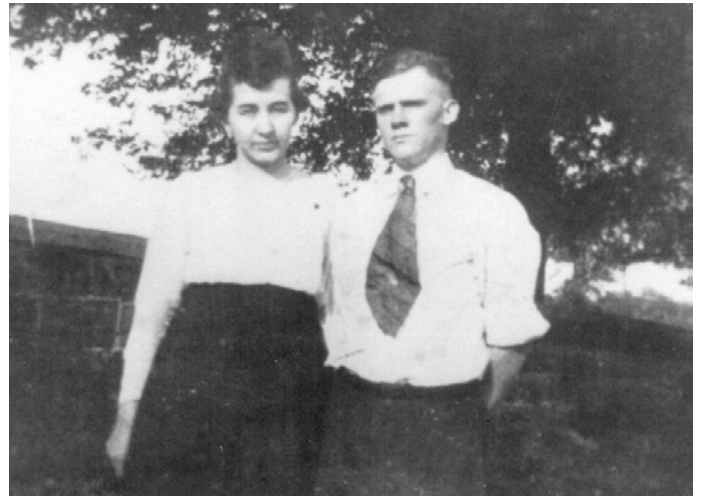
irreplaceable void within the family. After services were held in Dallas, his body was brought back to Viola, TN for burial in the Viola Cemetery. Lura moved to Manchester, TN to live after Herbert died. Lura died on Feb. 8, 1975 and is buried next to her husband.

Toadie, so nicknamed because he hopped around so much as a child, married Mildred Louise Woodson of Shreveport and had two children, John Herbert and Sharon Evans Hall. After Mildred’s death, in the late 1960s Toadie married a beautiful woman named Elaine. Toadie died in 1977. Molly, Toadie’s sister, married Lee Webster and they are currently living in Manchester, TN. Their four children are Pamela, Bryan, Susan, and Patricia.



## Mamie

When Mamie Hall grew to adulthood she continued living with her mother, assisting with family activities, and working some as operator for the Viola telephone system located in the house beside the Jeff Hall home. After Mamie's family moved next door to J.R. Stubblefield, Mamie became a close friend of Herman Powell Stubblefield, one of J.R.'s sons. Both being from



Viola, Mamie had known Herman since childhood. So in 1918 when Herman returned home after serving in the military during World War I, a courtship begun that resulted in their marriage on August 10, 1919. Signing the marriage license were Luther Crouch, a man Herman worked for as a mechanic many years later, and E.A. Elam, the preacher.



Initially Herman and Mamie lived a short time in Nashville while Herman worked in a garage with his brothers. Then they moved back to Viola for a brief time before moving in the Robert Locksley Stubblefield house (commonly called "the old house" by family members) while Herman engaged in farming with his father. Their first child, Herman

Hall, was born during this period. Over the next five or so years the family moved first to a home in Viola where Sarah Elkins was born, then to McMinnville where Robert Davis was born, then to another home in McMinnville, then to Rock Island, then back to McMinnville where Edwin Powell was born, then back to Myrtle's house in Viola, then back to the "old house" where James Gray and Charles Bryan were born. There were other moves that are now uncertain, but their final home was chosen in 1933 when they rented a house owned by Sallie W. Gunn and located about a mile north of Viola on Highway 108 across from Herman's part of the Stubblefield farm. While the rent was only \$7 per month, in 1940 they bought the Gunn property for \$1100 and were credited for the rent already paid. During these and subsequent years Herman supported the family by farming and by working as an automotive and farm machinery mechanic,

having studied at and received a diploma from the Automotive Training School in Kansas City, Missouri in 1914.

Mamie was a wise, wonderful and loving mother to her family. She maintained the



household and liked to stay at home and care for her husband and children. She, along with Herman, saw that the children were disciplined, taught the Bible, attended church and school, and did their chores around the house and farm. And all who have eaten Mamie's meals can attest to the fact that she was an excellent cook. Her children well remember the scrumptious meals they had each day and the special Sunday dinners. She worked hard doing the usual house work, including harvesting vegetables from the



garden and canning food for the winter. Two favorite family recipes she passed down are the ones for her fudge cake and white fruitcake. Flowers were very special to her and she really liked the jonquils, tulips, and cannas that Herman

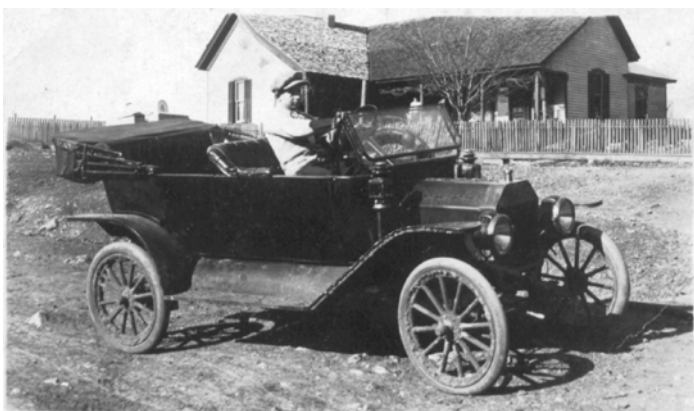
set out for her around the yard. She enjoyed quilting and gave each of her children a beautiful quilt after they married. Mamie also kept in close touch with not only her children when they were away, but with her relatives as well, by writing letters to them regularly. Mamie had a quiet, unassuming personality that made everyone like her.

Mamie died June 21, 1991 at the age of 93. She never expected to live that long, given that her parents and many other relatives died at an early age. She is buried in the Viola Cemetery by the side of her husband who passed away on December 24, 1989 at the age of 95. Mamie and Herman were married for 72 years before his death. Two of their children have since died: Edwin on October 18, 1997 at age 70 and Robert on May 13, 2001 at age 76, both of heart attacks, and they are also buried in the Viola cemetery. Herman Hall and his wife Rebecca now reside in Birmingham, Alabama; Sarah and her husband Loyd Collier, in Elgin, Oklahoma; Robert's wife Maxine, in Manchester, Tennessee; Edwin's wife Millie, in Luxora, Arkansas; James and his wife Milly, in Daytona Beach, Florida; and Charles and his wife Carolyn are living in Gastonia, North Carolina.



### Ellis

Ellis was probably the heartthrob of many young ladies in the Viola area. It is rumored that he courted his neighbor, Lota Stubblefield. He wrote her a poem entitled “A Little



Girl Like You” probably in his late teens or early twenties. But Ellis later courted and won the heart of Vallye Cullum, a Viola schoolteacher. Viola resident Mary Katherine Gaffin recalled recently that as a child she sat by Ellis and his wife at church.

Ellis was the most musically inclined of the Jeff Hall children. He played in the Viola Band in the early 1920s and made music his career for the next 20 years. Ellis attended the Conn National School of Chicago and was a pupil of Frederick Neil Innes, regarded at the time as one of America's greatest bandleaders and conductors. He sold his interest in his mother Mollie's house in 1925 and moved to Amarillo, TX. He conducted the



Amarillo Symphony Orchestra from 1926 to 1934. During this period he started his own Academy of Music and Art, which was comprised of 15 teachers who represented all departments of music, art, dancing, and expression. Ellis taught all the instruments in high school band, but his specialty was the coronet. Vallye also taught music and English in the public schools, played the harp in the Amarillo Symphony, and taught the harp privately.

A description of Ellis' musical career was published in a 1937 article in the "Southern Standard" when he was elected to the American Bandmasters Association. A portion of the article is quoted below.

Bandmasters Elect Hall to Membership  
American Bandmasters Association Honor Former Warren Resident

At a recent meeting of the American Bandmasters Association in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Ellis B. Hall, director of the Academy of Music and Art, was elected to membership. Mr. Hall has taught music in Amarillo for the past eleven years. He conducted the Amarillo Philharmonic Orchestra for eight years. His musical compositions have attracted national recognition, and are frequently heard over national chain programs.

On June 19, 1930 Vallye and Ellis' child Marcella was born in Amarillo and on December 28, 1931 Ellis Bryan, Jr. was born. Unfortunately Vallye and Ellis had marital problems and eventually the marriage ended in divorce in the late 1930s. In the early 1940s Ellis married Velma Granberry (now Velma Richker). According to Marcella, Ellis changed his profession shortly after WWII broke out. He worked at Sears from 1941 to 1944 and moved to Fort Worth, TX. He subsequently worked for Montgomery Ward, and finally as a manufacturer's representative for Peasley-Galbert, selling furniture and home furnishings. Ellis was still in sales when he visited us in Corpus Christi, Texas in October 1961 while he was on a business trip.



Ellis died suddenly of a massive stroke on December 26, 1961 at Market Hall in Dallas, TX where he displayed his lines of lamps, pictures, mirrors and furniture at the annual furniture market for dealers and buyers. He was 62 years of age and the first of Jeff Hall's children to die. When his sister Mamie received a phone call bearing the sad news her reaction was that of disbelief, having always thought that she would be the first of her siblings to die; as it turned out, she was the last to go.

After Ellis' death, Velma married Joe Richker. She now lives in Fort Worth, TX at the age of 92. Ellis' daughter, Marcella (Garlin) retired from the Department of Veterans Affairs and continues to live in Amarillo, TX. She had two children from her first marriage, Leslie Ellen Bueker Albert (1953 - 2002) and Joyce Elaine Bueker (1959 -). Ellis' son, Bryan (Ellis Jr.), is in the real estate business with John Daugherty Realtors in Houston, TX and has no children.

### Alvah

Alvah, the youngest of Jeff Hall's children, married Katherine King, his high school sweetheart. Alvah worked in the Gannaway General Store and in Mrytle's store in Viola

after high school. It is said that when Alvah and Katherine went on their wedding trip to Arizona, they liked Arizona and wanted to live there. With encouragement from Mr. Gannaway, Alvah applied at J.C. Penny's and was hired at their store in Globe, Arizona. Alvah did such a good job, he was promoted to a manager's position and the family moved to Chandler, Arizona. When Alvah retired he and his son Elliott opened a men's clothing store in Chandler.

When Herman Hall Stubblefield, Mamie's oldest son, was in flight training during World War II, he was stationed in Arizona near where Alvah lived. He was able to visit with his uncle's family and get to know them quite well. When Herman was ready to graduate from flight school, he had no girl friend or wife to pin his wings on him during the graduation ceremony, as was the tradition. Instead, Alvah attended his graduation and pinned the wings on him. Years later as a commercial pilot, Herman, accompanied by his wife Becky, flew some people



to an old resort hotel in Chandler, Arizona. When there, they visited his Uncle Alvah and Aunt Katherine whose home was in Chandler. Katherine was a collector of antique jewelry and she showed Herman and Becky many of her fine pieces, even giving Becky one of her beautiful necklaces. The interesting thing remembered about her collection was the way she stored it. Fearing that a thief would break in and steal her prized jewelry, she kept most of it in the cook stove, but not in the oven as might be expected. Instead, when she showed them the jewelry she almost had to disassemble the stove, pulling more pieces than one could imagine out from behind the insulation and other hidden places around the oven.



Alvah died suddenly at home in May of 1980 at the age of 78. Katherine died in November 1991 at the age of 87. Both are buried in Mesa, Arizona. They had three boys, Robert Alvah Jr. (Bob), Larry and Elliott. Bob and Elliott currently have a business in Arizona restoring old historic places. Larry raises exotic birds and fish.





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**PEDIGREE CHART**

<p><b>Children of Jeff &amp; Mollie</b></p>		<p>Reuben M. Hall ----- b. 1826 d. ~ 1865</p>	<p>John Hall b. ~ 1788</p> <p>Unknown</p>	<p>Benjamin Wilson b. ~ 1760/1769</p> <p>Sarah (Sally) Nuton or Newton b. ~ 1770/1772</p> <p>John Morgan B 6/24/1754 d. 1/8/1835</p>		
	<p>Jefferson Davis Hall --- b. 1862 d. 1912</p>	<p>Elizabeth Wilson----- b. 1835 d. after 1880</p>	<p>Hiram Wilson ----- b. ~ 1787</p>	<p>Mary Polly Morgan----- b. 1796</p>	<p>Elizabeth ?</p>	<p>Gabriel Elkins b. ~ 1765/1769</p>
	<p>Myrtle Hall Cain Martin b. 1894 d. 1965</p> <p>Ernest Herbert Hall b. 1895 d. 1966</p> <p>Mamie Hall Stubblefield b. 1897 d. 1991</p> <p>Ellis Bryan Hall b. 1899 d. 1961</p> <p>Robert Alvah Hall b. 1902 d. 1980</p>		<p>Robert L. Elkins ----- b. 1852</p>	<p>Dillard Love Elkins ----- b. 1821</p>	<p>Thomas Elkins ----- b. 1803</p> <p>Mary Melton -----</p>	<p>Stacy Dillard</p> <p>Ancel Melton</p> <p>Unknown</p>
		<p>Mollie Elkins ----- b. 1876 d. 1921</p>	<p>Eliza Tennessee Foster b. 1857</p>	<p>Emilie Walkup b. 1833</p>		



TN Highway Map Showing Where Jeff & Mollie Hall Lived

Included are Cannon and Warren Counties and the Towns of Viola, and Irving College