

## The Children of Finley Holmes (b.1802) and Emily Goodwyn Raines Holmes

1) **Georgiana Jane Goodwin Holmes [Wood] Bott** (*George*) was the eldest daughter. She was born in Georgia in 1825 about a year after her parents were married. She moved with her family to Mississippi, and there she met and married Thomas H. Wood in the year of 1846. They had two children, Edward L. Wood, and Emily H. Wood. Thomas died in 1861, and Georgiana remarried in 1865. Her new husband was William Walker Bott, an Englishman and farmer in DeSoto County, Mississippi. They had no children. Georgiana died in 1899, outliving her first husband, but not her second husband. She died in DeSoto County Mississippi, but neither her burial site nor that of her husbands are known.

2) **Robert Raines Holmes** was born in Georgia on the last day of the year 1826. Robert move with the family to Mississippi and in 1844 enrolled in medical school at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1846 with a medical degree. The 1860 census from Drew County, Arkansas shows a "Robert Holmes", age 33 as of July 1860, born in Georgia, with Jane (age 28, born in South Carolina) and three children (all born in Mississippi). Also shown in the 1860 Mississippi census for DeSoto County is "R R Holmes" (age 34), listed as a physician, born in Georgia - no wife or children listed. The census was taken after early September, 1860. Family records do not show him married, and the *Drew County* Jane may be just a coincidence. Robert did father a child in 1860 with Susan Glover Williams, a slave at Valley Grove. Susan was born in Georgia in 1840, died in 1905, and is buried in Memphis. The child was Joseph Robert Holmes, born in 1860 at Valley Grove. He became a teacher and farmer living in the Capleville/Whitehaven area near Memphis. Robert may have been father to another child, Emma Rainey Holmes [Havis] Leach of Desha County, Arkansas. The mother is just identified as a woman of color.

The 1850 census shows "Robert R. Holmes" (age 23) visiting at the household of William B. Holmes in Fairfield County, South Carolina. William B. Holmes is the son of our *cousin William Holmes* who traveled from Ireland with Finley Holmes, the first Finley Holmes in America. Robert lived off and on at Valley Grove, at Desha County, and, perhaps, Drew County in Arkansas. Robert died in 1878 in Jefferson County, Arkansas, and is believed to be buried in Desha County, Arkansas.

3) **Alpheus Cadmus Holmes**, the third child, was born 1828 in Georgia. As a child he moved with the family to Mississippi. At some point in the 1850's his father sent him to Arkansas with 75 slaves to clear the land near Dumas and to manage the farm operations there. A. C. (Cad) married Jane Josephine [Carr] Holmes in 1857, and they had three daughters. During the Civil War, A. C. was serving the Confederacy by building fortifications in Arkansas and Texas. His wife and two children were refuges in Texas during the War. The third daughter was born as her mother was returning to Arkansas. Before and after the War, the family lived on the plantation in Desha County, Arkansas. His wife died in 1866, and their last daughter, Jennie G. Holmes Tillar, was sent to live at Valley Grove at the age of 3 years.

In the censuses for 1870 and 1880, A. C. is found on the Holmes plantation in Jefferson County, Arkansas, without his children. He died in 1881 and is buried with his wife and middle daughter in Walnut Lake Cemetery, Desha County, Arkansas.

**4) Finley Holmes (Jr.)** was born in Georgia in 1832. He was killed by accidental discharge of his own gun at age 17 on Christmas Eve in 1849. He did not marry. His first burial was on the property at Valley Grove, but later the grave was moved to Elmwood Cemetery in 1877 and reburied there. It is the first burial of the family in Elmwood Cemetery (he is first on the list of Holmes in the Registry Book). Finley (b. 1802) probably had bought the grave plots after the death of Bertie Dekalb Treadwell, husband of Finley's youngest daughter, Marcia Elbertina Holmes. B. D. had died in May of 1876 and his Treadwell family plot was adjacent to the plots acquired by Finley (b. 1802). Marcia was buried in the Treadwell plot next to her husband in 1910.

**5) Laurentius Holmes (Renty)**, the forth son, was born in Georgia in 1835 just before the family moved to Mississippi. He graduated from the University of Mississippi (in Oxford, Mississippi) in 1854; and with his brother, Robert, as preceptor, he went to the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania, graduating as an MD in 1857 - the subject of his thesis was *Cholera Infantum*. He married Sarah [Herron] Holmes in the same year and returned to Valley Grove until 1860. He and his wife then moved to Plum Bayou, Jefferson County, Arkansas; and they had nine children. He practiced as a physician and had a farm of about 1000 acres. He died in 1886 of swamp fever and is buried in Bellwood Cemetery, Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

**6) Thomas A. Holmes**, was born in Mississippi in 1837. Thomas snuck away in the middle of the night at age 16 and enlisted in the army of the Confederacy as an 18 year old. In 1862 he died of poison ivy while in the army and is buried in Walnut Lake Cemetery, Desha County, Arkansas. He never married.

**7) Francis Holmes** was born on June 6, 1839 at Valley Grove, Plum Point, DeSoto County, Mississippi. He was the sixth son of Finley. After graduating from the University of Mississippi in 1858, Francis began the study of medicine, but before his course was completed the War started, and he enlisted as a Private in Company I, 29th Mississippi Regiment, Walthall's Brigade, in March 1862. He commanded a company as a Private during the Battle of Murfreesboro (Tennessee - 1862, 1863) when his commanding officer was killed. Francis was promoted to Second Lieutenant, and later was wounded and captured at Lookout Mountain (Chattanooga, Tennessee - October 24, 1863). He was a prisoner for the remainder of the Civil War (18 months), first at a POW Camp in Tullahoma, Tennessee. Later he was commissioned Captain while a prisoner at Camp Chase, Columbus, Ohio, and then sent to Fort Delaware in Delaware before his release. Captain Holmes returned to Plum Point after the war and married Elizabeth "Lizzie" Kelley Clarke, step-daughter of Judge Joseph W. Vance, of Hernando, Mississippi, on December 15, 1866, in Hernando. Valley Grove was in shambles, but his father had tried to keep it going - without much success. After a few year of difficulty, his father sold it to Francis who renovated it and assumed the management of the plantation.

Francis and Lizzie reared seven children, four sons and three daughters, gave each an education, saw them marry, and prosper. Only the last daughter, Bertha Holmes Beasley, died before him. She was the wife of James N. Beasley, a former mayor of Amarillo, Texas. Of the other children, his eldest son, Finley Vance Holmes, managed the plantation homestead in DeSoto County, Mississippi; and his son, Frank Clark Holmes, was an attorney and judge in Hernando; his son, John Elmore Holmes, was a member of the Memphis Bar, and his son,

Herbert Holmes, was a member of the Senatobia Mississippi Bar. His eldest daughter, Mrs. Lizzie Raines Fant, was the wife of Edward Maynard Fant, who was a planter and merchant of Coahoma County, Mississippi; and his next daughter, Mrs. Agnes Hathaway, was the wife of Dr. A. H. Hathaway, of Mountain View, Oklahoma.

At his father's death in 1884, Francis received the 2000 acres in Arkansas left to him (his share according to the will) by his father. He did not want to live in Arkansas since he had always been at the old homestead, Valley Grove, so he swapped it for land in Mississippi held by William B. Dumas (the city of Dumas, Arkansas, is named for this planter who bought acres of farmland from the Abercrombie Holmes family in 1870).

Francis was called PawPaw by his grandchildren. His grandson, Jimmy, recalled that he was a distinguished figure who, in his later years, had a snowy white beard — often stained yellow with tobacco juice.

In 1916 Francis' death occurred at Valley Grove, near Plum Point, Mississippi, where he had lived all his life except the four years in the army. He was laid to rest in the Bethlehem Cemetery, at Capleville, Tennessee, along with his wife, who died in 1929, his son, Finley Vance Holmes (died 1936), and three of his grandchildren, all sons of Finley Vance Holmes.

From *Men of the South: a work for the newspaper reference library* in a biographic statement in 1922 about Francis Holmes:

"He was chiefly concerned in the promotion of education and was a steadfast believer in religion, being a life-long member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. He was interested in a number of Memphis Financial institutions, and throughout his long and useful life he stood as a bulwark for law and order in North Mississippi. He was a man without show or pretense, but his influence reached far beyond the horizon of his native heath."

**8) Abercrombie Holmes (Crom)**, the seventh son, was born in 1842 at Valley Grove, Plum Point, DeSoto County, Mississippi. He was a student in the University of Mississippi during the early part of the Civil War, where he joined a fighting company made up of his fellow-students called the University Greys. That group became part of the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry. He was in the war for the duration and fought in the battle at Corinth (Mississippi - 1862) and in those battles in and near Atlanta (Georgia - 1864), Fort Pillow (Tennessee - 1864), Peach Tree Creek (Georgia - 1864), and Franklin (Tennessee - 1864). He participated in many of the engagements that were led by General Nathan Bedford Forrest. Near the end of the struggles, Abercrombie was captured by the Union forces while he was taking a break to visit his home, sent to a holding prison in Memphis, then to Vicksburg for a prisoner exchange. Before the exchange could take place, the war ended, and he was paroled. Abercrombie returned to Valley Grove and stayed there until 1867 when he married Lethia Pickett. Soon after the couple moved to Arkansas where he became a leading business man in Walnut Lake, Arkansas, and a successful planter. They had nine children - four girls and five boys, two died at a young age, and the others, as adult over the years, could be found in Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma. His wife died in 1887 and in 1889, he married a second time to Lundie L. Tillar. Later in life,

Abercrombie and his wife move up the road to Dumas, Arkansas, where he spent the last 35 years of his life.

*From Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas. (1890).*

"Abercrombie Holmes was the owner of 640 acres of fine land, and has 320 acres in high state of cultivation, the principal products being corn and cotton. He also raised some fine Jersey and Durham cattle, also some horses of a good grade. On his farm was a cotton gin which had a capacity of 2,000 pounds of lint cotton per day, and this, as well as the products of his farm, brought him in a handsome yearly income. Mr. Holmes was a thorough and practical farmer, and every enterprise to which he had given his attention had been attended with satisfactory results."

*Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas. (1890).*

Biography of Abercrombie Holmes. Nashville: Goodspeed Publishing.  
p. 1023.

Abercrombie died in 1890 of swamp fever at Dumas, Arkansas. He is buried with his first wife, Lethia, and five of his children in Walnut Lake Cemetery, Desha County, Arkansas.

**9) Nathaniel T. Holmes (Nat)** was born at Valley Grove in 1843. At the age of 17 in 1861, he enlisted in Company A, Memphis Light Dragoons, and was in the battles of Belmont (Missouri - 1861), Shiloh (Tennessee - 1862), Holly Springs (Mississippi - 1862), Thompson's Station (Tennessee - 1863), as well as other smaller engagements. He was captured by Union forces near Vicksburg on July 9, 1863. He was incarcerated in St. Louis for about a month, then sent to Camp Morton, Indiana for 18 months. Paroled was issued at Richmond, Virginia, on May 1, 1865.

Nathaniel returned home at the age of 22 years and farmed land provided by his father for himself in Desha County, Arkansas. He married Flora Virginia Tillar in March of 1877 in Drew County, Arkansas. They had six children - three surviving to adulthood, living in Arkansas, Michigan, and New England.

Nathaniel spent his time after the war primarily engaged in planting and raising cattle. He owned 880 acres of land at and near Walnut Lake, Arkansas and at a plantation in Selma in Drew County, Arkansas. He died in 1904 in Pulaski County, Arkansas just north of Jefferson County, Arkansas, and is buried with four of his children in Walnut Lake Cemetery, Desha County, Arkansas.

**10) Marcia Elbertina Holmes [Treadwell] Beardsley** was the second daughter. She was born in 1845 at Valley Grove. At the age of 21 in 1866, she married Bertie Dekalb (B. D.) Treadwell. B. D. had come to Memphis from Mississippi to work in his brother's cotton business. Before meeting Marcia, he had served in the Memphis Light Dragoons - a Confederate cavalry unit that in 1861, with other units, became Company "A" of the 7th Tennessee Cavalry Regiment.

In the next 8 years, Marcia and B. D. had four daughters, Ida Lee Treadwell Caldwell, Allison Treadwell Cowan, Corinne Treadwell [Snowden] Ragsdale, and Marcia Bertie Treadwell Muller.

The daughters were raised in Memphis and had all married before Marcia died. As adults, they could be found in New England, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Florida. In the decade before his death in 1876, B. D. became a very successful cotton broker, leaving his family quite well off; and Marcia had become a prominent Memphis social figure.

Marcia, with four young girls to care for, remarried in 1879 to a constructive engineer, who was especially proficient in railroad construction and traveled widely for his job. He was Moss White Beardsley, from Ohio, and 7 years older than Marcia. Like Marcia, it was his second marriage. Marcia and Moss had two children, a son, Walter Holmes Beardsley, and a daughter, Lydia Maude Beardsley Gaines (name changed from Gans). In the 1880 census, the family was in Memphis. Sometime around 1902, Walter and Maude moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, and Marcia and Moss joined them 4 years later. There Marcia became active in Charlotte's social scene, but after a few years she suffered a stroke and was confined to a wheelchair. Marcia died in August of 1910, and her remains were sent to Memphis for burial in Elmwood Cemetery in the adjacent plot of her first husband. Her plot is adjacent to the burial site for her parents, Finley and Emily G. Holmes, and other members of the Holmes family.

Moss Beardsley lived another 14 years and passed away in Charlotte in 1924. Of Marcia's six children, with Treadwell and with Beardsley, only one daughter, Corinne Treadwell, produced children. Of Corinne's grandchildren, only one survives, Anita Wallace Pawley of Coral Gables, Florida; and she, at the age of 99, has never married. She is the oldest living member of the Holmes family line.

**11) Winfield W. Holmes**, the ninth son and last child, was born in 1847 at Valley Grove, Plum Point, DeSoto County, Mississippi. In 1877 he married Calista Antoinette Tillar Holmes, a cousin of Flora Tillar Holmes, the wife of his brother, Nathaniel Holmes. After their marriage, they lived in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where Winfield was a member of the firm Tiller, Taylor, and Company. Winfield also had a farm in Desha County, Arkansas. The couple had one child, a daughter named Alma Holmes. She was born in 1879 and married William Custis Adamson.

In 1883 Winfield's wife died. His daughter went to live with her grand parents, Major J. T. W. Tillar and his wife, in a near by town and Winfield moved to Selma, Arkansas (just 5 miles or so away from Dumas, Arkansas). He died in 1897 and is buried Walnut Lake Cemetery, Desha County, Arkansas.

Note: Another child, who would have been the fourth child, was daughter, **Emily G. Holmes**, born September 17, 1830 in Georgia. Emily died in infancy, perhaps soon after birth, but surely before the end of the year.

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