

TAYLOE FAMILY

James Wynns Tayloe, born March 5, 1832, Stewart County, Tennessee and died 1915 in Missouri, wrote a letter to his only daughter, Nellie Tayloe Ross, when he was passed eighty years old. The letter as follows:

"My grandfather, Richard Tayloe II moved from North Carolina to Tennessee about 1800 and settled in Leather Wood Creek ten miles from Dover Stewart County, Tennessee. It is now known as battle ground of Fort Donaldson on the Cumberland River. My grandfather had many negroes and was regarded as one of the most prominent families in that part of the state. My father was John Tayloe and was born in 1797, Bertie County, North Carolina and died when he was forty years old on his birthday. My mother's name was Charlotte Hogan Tayloe, a stately dignified lady. When I was a child, my mother told me there were three brothers named Tayloe who came from London, England when the first pre-Revolutionary settlers came from England. They settled in Virginia and our branch of the family went to North Carolina. They had families and my mother told me the Tayloe family and mine spring from these three brothers. (See later.)

"My father had an uncle in North Carolina in his will left him several hundred acres of land and a still house (Benjamin Tayloe's will, 1810).

"My father had no opportunity to realize anything from this inheritance. I was born between the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. The country was sparsely settled --every four or five miles there was a creek of fine water running into the river, with ridge of heavy timber between each stream. The original settlers lived on the creeks and great springs flowed from the hills near the farms and from these springs they got their water. At nights the big mosquito was so plentiful we made fires and sat in the smoke to keep out of their way. We had negro cabins near the big lot mansion. There each negro family lived and I must say I never saw negroes so happy as they were in my boyhood days. They were taken the same care of as the whites. Deer, turkey, squirrel and other game were plentiful and side bacon was appreciated for a change. Deer ham being in all smoke houses and was free to white and blacks. Fruit was abundant and there was no one to sell to, there being no cities as now and no railroads. Certain parties every year built flat boats and floated them to New

Orleans with corn, hogs, cattle, chickens and turkeys and buy of their neighbors such things as they wanted to sell to load their boats and pay them on their return with a barrel of yellow sugar and a barrel of genuine molasses, a sack of green coffee. This was to last a year. There was so many maple trees that the amount of maple sugar and syrup was so great we could hardly use it.

"All farmers had their looms and flax wheels and made all clothing for the entire family. My mother made the buttons for all the clothes. Very little money was required during these times. My mother was a devout Christian and belonged to the Methodist Church and reared all her children to observe all the rules of the church. We all attended Sabbath school regularly. In my youth the Methodist preacher was called a Circuit Rider and usually preached once a month and then nearly all day. His salary was fifty dollars a year and if a married man one hundred dollars. My mother and only sister always had a fine dress such as worn in these days and they lasted nearly a life time. (1) They wore bonnets and for shoes the neighbor cobbler made a pair for each of the family once a year and they lasted all the year. The shoes were genuine shoes made from beef hide we killed in the winter and tanned by a neighbor tanner. I had my old black mamma as nearly all children had in my day. Her name was Leddia and I shall never cease to love her memory...I never saw a lock on a door in my childhood as everyone was honest. My country was famous for being a bed of iron ore and there were twenty iron works and rolling mills in the country all run by charcoal. Grand bodies of timber cut and made into charcoal.

"I had only one sister Mary Parsons Manly Tayloe and she married Reverend Allison Akin in 1846. My brothers were John Manly Tayloe and Doctor Thomas Hogan Tayloe a dentist. In 1864 I went to Saint Joseph, Missouri. There was no Kansas City at that day, only a warehouse called Independence Landing. For two years great crowds were going to California. All traveled by oxcart, and, many lost their lives on their trip. The Indians were very hostile to the whites in those days."

The letter concludes with the Civil War events.

Signed March 5, 1912

James Wynns Tayloe

- (1) A sunshine and shadow design quilt made of heavy silks and satins from dresses of Charlotte Tayloe and daughter, Mary P. Tayloe is now framed. Possession Marie Taylor.