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OVER THE MISTY BLUE HILLS

The Story of Cocke County, Tennessee

by *RUTH WEBB O'DELL*

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By: The Rev. Silas Emmett Lucas, Jr.

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SOUTHERN HISTORICAL PRESS
c/o The Rev. S. Emmett Lucas, Jr.
P.O. Box 738
Easley, South Carolina 29640

ISBN: 0-89308-276-7

The Fine family were Holland Dutch. However, the name came from the word "fen," the name for low marshy lands, and is sometimes spelled "Fenn" or "Finn." These Fines were a part of a settlement in 1700 of Johannis Fine, who bought land at Hempstead, Long Island. Before the Revolutionary War, the Fine family was located in Shenandoah County near the Newman, Denton and Thomas families from Long Island, on the waters of the Shenandoah River near New Market. In the First Independent Company of Dunmore County of 1775, the Fine signatures included Thomas Fine, Sr., Peter Fine and Vinott Fine. In the Dunmore County Militia in 1775 under command of Captain Jacob Holeman were Andres Fine, John Fine, Peter Fine, Philip Fine and Winenot Fine. By the census of 1783, Thomas Fine was still residing there with four in family, near his sons, Vinott and John, but soon thereafter, John and Vinott Fine, joined their brother, Peter, who had married Patience McKay and removed to the French Broad River, near Fine's Ferry, which became an early landmark.

The father of these Fine brothers was Philip Peter Fine, Sr., of Maryland, 1764 to 1804, who served in the Virginia Army during the Revolutionary War. There was a daughter, Elizabeth. (Data furnished by Sam E. Leming, Waldron, Arkansas, who has a photo-static copy of land grants to this family in Virginia.)

John Fine also served in the Revolutionary War with Philip. In 1804, the latter moved into Frederick County, Virginia, just across the Potomac River. near the present site of Washington D. C. There he married the widow Catheryne Parrott, who had two sons and two daughters. It is possible that these came with the Fine family to Cocke County.

Major Peter Fine represented the Big Pigeon Baptist Church in 1794, in the Holston Association and was the first, or one of the first, deacons of that Church after its organization in 1787. His daughter, Sally Fine married Abraham Job, born in 1775, the son of David Job. (Same as Jobe.)

John Fine was born January 2, 1782 and died January 26, 1857. His wife, Nancy, was born on November 10, 1782, and died February 18, 1859. He came from Cocke County and helped organize the Baptist Church on Fork Creek, later called the Baptist Church on Sweetwater, the first Sunday in June, 1820. The members of the Church met at his home the first Saturday in August, 1821.

John had a grant, No. 686, from the State, dated, September 7, 1827. The present fair grounds are located on this tract of land. (Sweetwater, Tenn.)

The stage road from Philadelphia to Athens went by the Fine home, which was a "stand" and stopping place. Their children were John, Polly, Abraham, Sarah, Mahala, Minerva, Martha, and Nancy.

(Lenoir's *History of Sweetwater Valley*, page 147, which conflicts some with other records.)

John Fine, son of Major Peter Fine, was in the War of 1812 and married Nancy Lee in 1800. She was the daughter of John and Agnes Jennings Lee. Their children were Peter Lee, Minerva, who married Jobe Taylor, John M., Sarah, and Elizabeth, who married Isaac Hill, all moved to Ashland, Oregon.

In 1833, Abraham Fine was made a Ruling Elder of the Pisgah Presbyterian Church of Newport, of which Mrs. Elizabeth Fine was a charter member in 1823.

The original family that came to Cocke County had also two other members, Wenden and Euphemeas Fine. Wenden died ten years before Cocke County was known as such, and nothing is known of what became of Euphemeas.

The entry of Peter Fine and wife, Patience McKay Fine, was opposite and above the first town of Newport, on the banks of the French Broad River, and included Fine's Ferry and the large island opposite the old homeplace of George I. Thomas, son of George and wife Katy (Lowery) Thomas. Peter Fine died here. He had several children who migrated to various sections of the country. One son, Abraham Fine, remained in Cocke County, where he became Elder in the Presbyterian Church, and also High Sheriff. While Sheriff he raided and broke up an organized band of counterfeiters that operated near Wolf Creek.

Captain John Fine located at what is now known as the Rutherford Farm on Sinking Creek, where he died.

Vinett Fine entered and located on the land known as the Swaggerty Farm and now owned by the Unaka Tannery and James A. T. Wood.

Colonel John Sevier attacked a party of Indians on Indian Creek in the summer of 1781. The place was near the County line, on the farm of William Phillips. Seventeen Indians were killed. Peter, John and Vinett participated in this battle. (This battleground was pointed out to W. R. Fine by his father, Isaac, a son of Vinett.)

In the spring of 1783, Colonel William Lillard and Major Peter Fine raised a company of thirty men and crossed the mountains to the Overhill town of Cowee and burned it because from this town had originated the aggressions upon the Big Pigeon and French Broad Rivers. Captain John and his brother Vinett Fine were members of the company. Such action antagonized the Indians who in the winter of 1783 began to steal horses and cattle from the Big Pigeon settlements.

Major Peter Fine and Captain John McNabb raised a company of men and followed the Indians across our mountains into North Carolina, where they killed one Indian and wounded another, but recovered the stolen horses. The Indians fired upon him, killing Vinett Fine, and wounding Thomas Holland, and a man by the name of gingham.

Because there was not time for grave-digging and apparently no safety in trying to escape with the body, the ice in the creek was broken and the body placed there. Before the men could return for it, the creek became flooded by a sudden change in temperature, the body was washed away and never recovered. To this day, the creek is known as **Fine's Creek**. (The "i" in Vinett pronounced as in "mine.")

Vinett Fine had several sons and daughters; Isaac, the father of W. R., who in 1857 married Nancy Wilson, granddaughter of Major William Wilson for whom Wilsonville was named. A daughter, Emma Fine Gray, became the mother of Jasper Gray. There were four other daughters and five sons. (Data from Jasper Gray.)

In the law office of William M. Crawford, of Newport, a descendant of the Fine Family, is the account book belonging to Major Peter Fine, in which he began keeping records in 1790. These are recorded in English pounds, shillings, pence. The birthdays of his twelve children are recorded as follows: Lidgard, September 2, 1775; Aron, July 5, 1777; Jonathan, May 22, 1779; John, January 2, 1782; David, August 12, 1783; Peter, September 18, 1786; Elizabeth, January 22, 1788; Abraham, March 24, 1789; Aron, June 7, 1792; Mariann, May 5, 1794; Rebecah, August 25, 1796; Pattey Tirevelan, September 10, 1799.

Peter's first wife, Rebecah, died September 7, 1802, aged 46 years. He married Ann Murrel, September 6, 1803. She died September 15, 1815. aged 67 years.

FROM THE APPENDIX (the appendix is not indexed)

On page 316 there is a section titled "REVOLUTIONARY WAR SOLDIERS WHO OBTAINED PENSIONS IN COCKE COUNTY, TENNESSEE" and near the bottom of page 317 "Fine, L., Capt. 8th (Cavalry) Regiment, February 11, 1813." (*probably Ledgerd.*)

On page 319 another section titled "COCKE COUNTY REGIMENTS OF MILITIA COMMISSIONED OFFICERS (1788-1801)" alphabetically arranged ...

Fine, Ledgerd Lieutenant in cavalry regiment, Hamilton District December 22, 1798

Fine, Peter 1st Major in cavalry regiment January 11, 1798

On page 320 a section titled "COCKE COUNTY COMMISSIONS" ...

Fine, L. Captain 8th regiment February 11, 1813

On page 321 a section titled "CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS FROM COCKE COUNTY"

... William Fine

pg322 "COMPILED BY J. W. D. STOKELY"

... Vinson Fine ...

On page 325 "COCKE COUNTY BOYS IN WORLD WAR I" ...

... Fine, Bruce ... Fine, Alton