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Drury Dobbins, Gabriel Washburn - Clevelanders Value Bibles (News Clipping)

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CLEVELANDERS VALUE BIBLES

Dobbins And Washburn Books Used Before County Formed

Two old family Bibles which were in use nearly 40 years before Cleveland County was formed are now treasured keepsakes of the families of Drury Dobbins, pioneer Baptist minister and Gabriel Washburn, layman who assisted Dobbins in organizing churches.

The old Bibles were printed the same year, 1802, and were purchased by Elder Dobbins and Layman Washburn about the same time. Both have been preserved by members of the families, although it was only recently that each family knew of the other Bible.

Printing was believed to have been in England, for the Matthew Carey Company of 118 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pa. A long list of subscribers appears in the front of each book which indicated that orders were taken on the basis of which an English company printed for the American jobber.

The two books include the Apocrypha or the books between the Old and New Testament, and the letter "S" is the old-fashioned type resembling a script "f."

While Drury Dobbins and Gabriel Washburn were not related, their families later became associated through connections with the Harrell families who settled in and around Ellenboro.

Gabriel Washburn was born in 1752 and died in 1825. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and was buried on his plantation near Beaver Dam Creek. He was first a member of Buffalo church, the first Baptist church to be formed in this section in 1771 and later joined Sandy Run, the oldest church in what is now Cleveland county. He assisted in the formation of Concord in Rutherford and of Zion in Cleveland county in 1816 and thus was connected with four of the oldest Baptist churches in Western North Carolina. Sandy Run and Buffalo were organized before the Revolutionary War.

Gabriel was the progenitor of all

the Washburns who now live in Cleveland and Rutherford counties.

Drury Dobbins' Bible is now at the home of the Rev. D. F. Putnam but is the property of Mrs. Cicero Bridges, formerly of Lattimore and now of Shelby. Mr. Putnam and Mrs. Bridges are great-great grandchildren of Elder Dobbins.

In the flyleaf of his well-worn book are these words:

Do not my leaves abuse
As you o'er me peruse,
For I'll get old and dim;
When your loan is out
Quickly turn about
And take me home again.

Born on April 7, 1776, Drury Dobbins was the son of William and Susannah Dobbins of York, S. C. While he was young his parents moved to the State Line community just south of Cleveland county and as a young man the minister moved to the Sandy Run community in Rutherford (now Cleveland) county.

From that point the fiery, eloquent

intellectual giant rode his horse or drove a rig all over the section for miles around. He assisted in the formation of Zion church in 1816 which church became the mother of Shelby First and most of the other Baptist churches near here.

Brilliant Preacher

He is reported to have been able to quote scripture page after page and brilliantly reasoned out his points of view. He was a straight-line Democrat and spoke often for "liberty, especially soul liberty." In 1793 he was married to Hannah Callahan Sams with whom he lived until his death in 1847. They had only one child who lived to be married and she was wedded to Richard Harrill of near Ellenboro. Mrs. T. G. Hamrick of Charlotte, widow of the former Dr. Hamrick who operated the first hospital in Shelby, is a great-granddaughter of Dobbins.

Records of the Warren and Lackey families are also found in the Dobbins Bible, indicating a family connection there.

A history of the Baptists in this section, written by the late John R. Logan describes Dobbins as a strong, powerful man, about five feet ten inches tall, with raven black hair and eyes that were flashing points of jet black. He weighed over 200 pounds and was always clean shaven, contrary to the moustached men of his day. With large head, high forehead and Roman nose he made an imposing appearance and his powerful voice demanded attention.

His favorite text was from Psalms: "Walk about Zion and go round about her, and tell of the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces that ye may tell it to the following generations."

Drury Dobbins' grave is in the little family cemetery near the Dobbins church not far from the Cleveland-Rutherford line. A marble slab there tells the salient facts of his life and death. A second marker is in the churchyard at Sandy Run at Mooresboro, erected in his honor and memory by the Sandy Run association.