

Newton Jasper Collins

Newton Jasper Collins, was born April 29, 1833 in Collins Hill, Gwinnett County, Georgia. He served in the 35th Tennessee Infantry, formerly the 5th Tennessee Regiment Provisional Army, also called 1st Mountain Rifle Regiment, which was organized during September, 1861, at Camp Smartt, near McMinnville, Tennessee. He was in Pat Cleburne's brigade through most of the war. The 35th fought at Shiloh, Richmond (Kentucky), Perryville, and from Stones River to Atlanta with the Army of Tennessee. It returned to TN with Hood, and saw action in North Carolina.

Collins was captured in Macon, GA, early in 1865 and was paroled in April of '65. Later in life, he was presented a "Meritorious Service Award" from the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the street east of the Jewish and Confederate Cemetery was named Collins Street in his honor. After the War, Newton was a Baptist minister who made rounds to various isolated churches while working as a tanner or building cabins and barns to support his family since ministers were not paid in the early days. Areas he served were the Mount Lookout Baptist Church (an outreach church of the Collinsville, Alabama, Baptist Church) serving Lookout Mountain families in Walker and Dade County, Georgia, and DeKalb County, Alabama, as well as churches in Sugar Valley, Georgia, and Walden's Ridge, Tennessee. While preaching in the churches in the Mentone area, he rode horseback from St. Elmo where he lived at the time. After Sunday services and often dinner on the ground, he rode horseback back home.

Fleeing the small-pox epidemic in the Chattanooga Valley in 1882, his family lived in a cave on Walden's Ridge in the Summertown Community while he built a large two story log house in which they lived in as he preached at Baptist Churches on the mountain and in the Sequatchie Valley. The original house burned to the ground in the 1960s and Creed Bates rebuilt it exactly as it had originally been built.

Newton Jasper died July 1, 1909, at his residence, 719 Main St. in St. Elmo. Both he and his second wife, Mollie Dayton, are buried here in the Confederate Cemetery. His wife is buried in the NW corner where iron markers were removed during WWI for making ammunition.

