

Bone, Joe N. and Dee C. Jackson, eds. Rutherford Revisited. Rutherford, TN: The Rutherford Heritage Committee for the Tennessee Bicentennial, 1996.

This volume resulted from Rutherford's observance of Tennessee's Bicentennial celebration. Actually the impetus for this book arose in connection with Tennessee's Homecoming '86 and the volume published at that time, In and Around Rutherford. Since then, there has been considerable demand for a reprinting or reissuing of In and Around Rutherford. However, a local committee was appointed to gather additional information and material for a considerably different effort. I believe the entire Rutherford community can be justly proud of the result that gives their history, businesses, and past and present families.

Almost all prominent families are mentioned at one time or another and featured in one part or another of the volume. It is amply illustrated with maps and tables and numerous photographs and other graphics in this attractive edition.

This comprehensive account covers the town from its origins to the present day. Understandably the great bulk of the material concerns the twentieth century. Naturally David "Davy" Crockett receives appropriate coverage as perhaps the town's most famous resident. Perhaps the only factual change might be that legend, folklore, or popular history have put Crockett at almost six feet tall instead of his having stood more nearly five feet, seven inches.

Actually the heart of any community is its families, and a special section is devoted to the families of Rutherford while another focuses on memorials and tributes. Because of his

research on Crockett, this reviewer has had occasional contact with Rutherford since 1975 and happily recognizes many of the names included. Those that readily come to mind are Joe Bone, Dan Brooks, Broeck Cummings, Fred Elrod, Thomas Pate, "Uncle Nat" Davis and his family. While circumstances did not allow more attention to be given the role of Nathaniel Davis's oldest son Richard in the Davy Crockett memorials at Trenton or more attention to May Davis, sister of Nathaniel, nonetheless the editors chose to highlight a quotation from her on the title page:

I grew up with the most wonderful group of boys and girls that could be found anywhere, Our parents taught us to respect the rights of others. We were taught that character was of more importance than dollars. Christian ethics and self value were taught us at an early age. We all had a rich inheritance of good training.

After I finished my education, I spent many years as a teacher. The fine men and women that I taught make me believe that teaching is a good profession.

The editors cover well the spirit of the Great Depression of the 1930's and President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Any number of older readers will recall during the 1930's and 1940's "flour sacks and feed sacks were used for towels and were made up into both underwear and outer garments." Likewise, some readers will identify with the recollection that "On Saturdays, in addition to the feature (movie) film, there was a serial. These serials were breathtaking cliffhangers and had ardent fans who could hardly wait from one Saturday to the next."

The evolution of "E911" provides some interesting moments.

Via newspaper clippings, the editors remind us of what a notably wet year 1972 was in Gibson County and throughout West Tennessee. Perhaps some younger readers will be surprised about free school bus transportation that helped to end small schools in circumstances favoring school consolidation and integration. Younger readers may not envy those students who had to leave school to pick cotton in order to pay the costs for tuition and clothing for school. However, such readers may envy the three Major brothers' getting to meet President Harry Truman at Reelfoot Lake in the second half of the 1940's.

Certainly The Rutherford Heritage Committee, the editors, and Rutherford residents can be rightly proud of their history and the work of the Committee in depicting it.

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