



ETOWAH VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Promoting and enhancing the awareness and preservation of
the heritage and traditions of Bartow County*



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Above: Linda Cochran (left forefront) had her hands full when an overflowing crowd of budding genealogists showed up for the Basic Genealogy Workshop held in April. No less a success was the African-American Genealogy Workshop (below) held in February.

Family Tree Climbers Branching Out Genealogy Workshops Meeting Community Needs

Family Tree Climbers chairperson Linda Gossett Cochran has become a bit of a celebrity of late. "Every time I come home, my machine is full of messages from people wanting to sign up for a workshop," the genealogist said. So, is that a good thing, you might ask. "Oh, yes!" she exclaims.

Linda has become *the* genealogist to consult in Bartow County when it comes to learning techniques of, and answering the tough questions encountered in, ancestral research. Her weekly column in the *Bartow Trader* and guest appearances on Sam Irwin's Morning Show on WBHF Radio have propelled her to local celebrity status and made her name virtually a household word.

Much of her success is due to her enthusiasm and self-confidence, which can't help but rub off on her students. People who thought they could never learn how to do genealogy walk away saying, "I can do this!"

A two-day African-American workshop in February attracted a small class of eight people, including a young Girl Scout hoping to earn her Hometown History badge. The workshop taught basic genealogy techniques and those specific to African-American research, and was hailed a success by the newly-enthused students.

Even before that first workshop could meet, more than

*See **Family Tree Climbers**, continued on page 8*



The History of WBHF Radio

Thursday, June 19, 2003
7:00 p.m. in the Encore Room
Wall Street, in downtown Cartersville

Join us for what promises to be
an entertaining evening of song & dance
as local radio personality
Hershel Wisebram
sings the praises of local radio and
dances his way through the history
of WBHF, followed by a tour
of the station's downtown studio.



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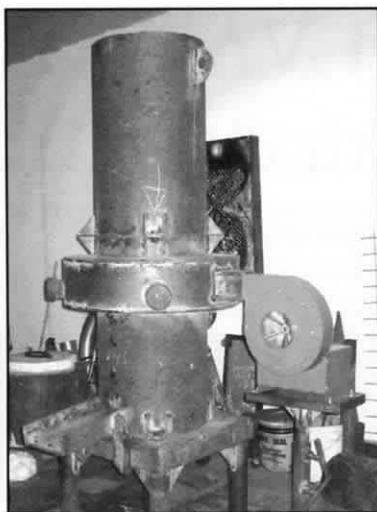
Wilma Cantrell

Website

Michael Garland

The EVHS office and research facilities
are located in the 1903 courthouse at
115 West Cherokee Avenue in downtown
Cartersville. Visit EVHS online at
www.evhsonline.org
Email evhs@evhsonline.org

3rd Annual Hills of Iron May 26 & 27, 2003



Above: She may look like just a hunk of metal, but the new furnace at Red Top Mountain State Park, dubbed "Mary Ann," is "a hunk, a hunk of burning love" and the pride and joy of the park. Mary Ann found her new home thanks to the Friends of Red Top, who paid for her construction and delivery to the park. Top Right: A beaming park superintendent James Hamilton (far right) poses with his furnace crew: from left to right: Truett Stubbs, Roy Queen, Janice Granai, Dan Timms, Rick Batten, Howell Swain, and Kelvin Richey. The crew was specially trained in furnace operation and did an awesome job on their maiden firing.



Above: Visitors to Hills of Iron enjoyed making "scratch boxes," graphite boxes in which designs are scratched using nails and other instruments.

Above right: EVHS member Beth Swanson and son Max had a great time making scratch boxes for their entire family.

Below: Some of the scratch box designs made by visitors included rocket ships, dragonflies, handprints and fish. Many people designed their boxes on the spot; others came prepared with printed designs they then traced into the graphite.



Above: Once prepared, the scratch boxes are filled with molten iron to produce one-of-a-kind "cast" iron mementos that can be taken home, in some cases, while they're still warm.

Humor From the Hills: Folklore & Mountain Culture

Membership Meeting

March 20, 2003

It was standing room only at the Bartow County Library during the March membership meeting featuring author Joe Dabney. A talented story-teller, Dabney regaled the audience with down-home humor gathered during a decade of research for his books *Mountain Spirits* and *More Mountain Spirits*, about the Appalachian moonshine culture. Both books, as well as his latest, *Smokehouse Ham, Spoon Bread, and Scuppernong Wine* (more than just a cookbook!), were available for purchase and autographing at the meeting.

Dabney's lecture traced the moonshine culture from its early days in Pennsylvania, following the American Revolution, down the Pennsylvania Wagon Road, through the Shenandoah Valley, to 20th century Georgia, where the history still lingers fresh in the minds of long-timers. The culturally rich mix of moonshiners included the Scotch-Irish, Germans, Black Dutch, English, Welsh, and Cherokee and other Native Americans.

The author's interest in moonshining was sparked by a visit to "The World's Only Moonshine Museum," located in Dawsonville, Georgia. (A prior interest some years ear-



Author Joe Dabney greets guests to the March membership meeting.

lier had been doused when he was mistaken for a revenuer and beaten up by a moonshiner.) Long hours of research in the Atlanta Library followed, and then an article written by *AJC* columnist Celestine Sibley attracted the attention of former revenuers, moonshiners, and still hands who were more than happy to share their stories with Dabney.

Dabney, a native of Lancaster Co., South Carolina and a former *Daily Tribune* reporter, now resides in Euharlee, and is an EVHS member. He is currently working on a history of the Cherokee Indian Removal. ∞

Confederate Memorial Day

Ceremonies Honor Veterans, Celebrate Service



Tracy Bean and Ashley Haney, with the P.M.B. Young chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, place silk roses into a vase, one for each name read during the roll call of Confederate soldiers from whom the ladies of the chapter descend. The chapter held its annual Confederate Memorial Day Ceremony at Stiles Auditorium in Cartersville on Saturday, April 26. Guest speaker for the occasion was Larry Stephens, author of *Hold the Fort...I am Coming*, a history of the Battle of Allatoona Pass.

In addition to honoring Confederate Veterans, the Memorial Day ceremonies honored the military service of Fain Cochran, who received the UDC National Defense Medal for his service as an Army Specialist 5 during the Vietnam War. Fain is the descendant of William Cochran of Co. D, 8th Georgia Battalion Volunteers. He is also an EVHS member, and the husband of genealogist Linda Gossett Cochran.

EVHS president David Parker was also honored in a surprise ceremony in which he was awarded the Jefferson Davis Medal for historic preservation, essay writing, and research on Confederate topics, including David Bailey Freeman (the youngest confederate soldier) and Charles Henry Smith (Bill Arp). ∞



Top: Vietnam veteran Fain Cochran received the UDC National Defense Medal for his military service during the war. Presenting the award are UDC chapter president Deborah

Hendrix and Bobby Edge.

Bottom: Hendrix and Lisa Ellis (not shown) awarded EVHS president David Parker the Jefferson Davis medal for his preservation of Confederate history.

A Man of Honor and Distinction

Maj. Mark Anthony Cooper's Legacy to Bartow County

By David Archer and Chantal Parker

The following article was written for Cartersville's sesquicentennial celebration in May 2000. It was published in the Daily Tribune News, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

At the Allatoona Lake Overlook, near the Corp of Engineer's Reservoir Manager's office, silently stands an imposing granite shaft built by Mark Anthony Cooper in 1860, called "Cooper's Friendship Monument." It is said to be the only one of its kind in the world—a monument by a debtor to honor his creditors. On three sides of the monument the names of thirty-eight loyal friends are inscribed. On the fourth side, Cooper records, "This monument is erected by Mark A Cooper Proprietor at Etowah as a grateful tribute to the friendship and liberality of those whose names are hereon inscribed, which prompted them to aid him in the prosecution and developments of the interests at Etowah."

By the time Cooper moved to Cass County, he already had a successful and distinguished military, legal, political, and business career. Graduating from the University of South Carolina in 1819, he returned home to Eatonton, Georgia, where he read law and was admitted to the bar in 1821.

In 1826 Cooper served under the command of General Winfield Scott as the battalion commander of a troop of Georgia volunteers who fought in the Seminole Indian War in Florida. Here, he invited the wrath of the General and earned a degree of notoriety when Scott tried to "appropriate" a supply of bacon Governor William Schley had sent to the Georgia volunteers. Confident, and with the power of his convictions, Cooper twice refused to surrender the meat, directly challenging Scott's authority and inviting a court-martial. Mediation was called for, and a compromise eventually reached, when an equitable distribution of the bacon was agreed upon. Cooper was twenty-six at the time.

Cooper was elected to the state legislature from Putnam County in 1833 as a state-rights advocate, opposing efforts to reduce the House and supporting nullification efforts. He also served as a delegate to the convention to adopt a new Georgia Constitution in 1834. Elected to Congress in 1839, Cooper lost his bid for re-election in 1840, but was chosen to fill the unexpired term of William C. Dawson, who had resigned. Resigning himself six months later to run for governor, Cooper was defeated by his old classmate George W. Crawford. "Crawford beat me on the liquor question," Cooper remarked on the loss, referring to his opposition of prohibition and its attempt to legislate morality.

A staunch supporter of higher education in Georgia, Cooper served as an early trustee of Mercer University, from 1839 to 1842, and for forty-five years as a trustee of

his old alma mater, Franklin College, later the University of Georgia. Closer to home, he served as a trustee on the board of the Cherokee Baptist College at Cassville.

As a plantation owner in Putnam County, in 1846, Cooper helped organize and was seated as the first president in the South Central Agricultural Society, the first such state society formed in the South. With an entrepreneurial spirit, Cooper also built and operated the first cotton mill in Eatonton, and later, after moving to Columbus, engaged in banking, where he bought the charter of the Western Insurance and Trust Company, which he operated for several years.

Perhaps the most important thing Cooper did before coming to Cass County, and which had the most impact on Cass, was his earnest effort to bring railroads to Georgia. In 1831 Cooper and another Eatonton lawyer and friend, Charles P. Gordon, realized the future of railroads in Georgia, and together organized the first convention to publicly consider building a railroad in Georgia. The charter was superseded two years later by another charter, which eventually became the basic charter of the Georgia Railroad and Banking Company, and which, in turn, resulted in the construction of the state-owned Western & Atlantic Railroad from Atlanta to Chattanooga, through Cass County.

Cooper had opened the door to railroads in Georgia, and in so doing, paved the way for Cartersville to be established along the track's line. Cooper remained actively interested in railroad development, and later supervised the construction of several railroads in Cass/Bartow County and northwest Georgia.

Having retired from politics, and coming to Cass County in 1842, Cooper purchased a half interest in an iron production operation operated by Jacob and Moses Stroup. The Etowah Manufacturing and Mining Company was organized three years later, and constructed a rolling mill to process iron; a rail factory; a machine for railroad spikes; a blast furnace, a foundry producing hollow ware and heavy machinery; a flour mill; two corn mills; two saw mills; shops, warehouses, a hotel and a store. Located on both banks of the Etowah River, the town was incorporated as Etowah. Nearby, Cooper erected his home, Glen Holly, some ruins of which survived on a tiny island. Most of the ruins of Etowah, destroyed during the Civil War, were flooded by the waters of Allatoona Lake.



In 1847, the Etowah Railroad Company was incorporated, and tracks were laid from operations at Etowah to the Western & Atlantic Railroad, a distance of about two miles. The company spent about \$50,000 building the railroad to the rolling mill, with Cooper paying to complete the project. Completed in October 1858, the railroad was celebrated with a salute fired from ordnance made and cast at the Etowah foundry.

Developing Etowah, Cooper grew to believe that Georgia's rich mineral resources could be developed to a level equal to or greater than that of cotton production, allowing the state economic independence. In a letter to *The National American* in 1859, Cooper wrote, "...the resources of northern and western Georgia, in iron ore, are superior to any portion of the Union... This county alone, it is believed, has concentrated in its limits as much iron ore as all Pennsylvania together, and is of superior quality." Cooper supported his statements with documentation from the then recently published *The Iron Master's Guide*, which confirmed the richness and profusion of ores in Cass County and the readily available water source for powering "the most extensive works." Cooper's words, however, fell on deaf legislative ears, and full-scale mining of the county's resources would not begin for another half century.

When Moses Stroup could not pay his share of the improvements at Etowah, Cooper bought his interest, and Leroy M. Wiley became his partner. Wiley later sold his interest back to Cooper. Following the panic of 1857, when Wiley demanded payment of \$100,000 owed to him, the property had to be sold at public auction to relieve the debt. No one bought it, and, at Wiley's insistence, Cooper bought it back with a note to Wiley for \$200,000, to be paid in three years. To accomplish the loan from Wiley, Cooper sought endorsers. Thirty-eight of the most influential men in Georgia endorsed the note for Cooper. By 1860, Cooper had made a net profit and paid off the note to Wiley.

That same year, in gratitude for their friendship and financial support, Cooper erected the Friendship Monument in tribute to the men who helped him in his financial crisis. The monument was originally erected at Etowah, near where Cooper's Iron Furnace still stands, on what is now called River Road. During the Civil War, ordinance was produced there for the Confederacy, and eventually the Confederate government bought and operated the iron

works. In May 1864, Union troops under General William T. Sherman destroyed almost everything at Etowah, except the Friendship Monument, which they left undisturbed. A silent sentinel to the destruction and the Lost Cause, it stood on that spot for sixty-seven years. In 1927, vandalized and deteriorating in its isolated location, the monument was moved with much ceremony, to a park in downtown Cartersville. As part of an Urban Renewal Project, the park was razed for additional parking around 1963. With-

out ceremony, the Friendship Monument was again moved, this time to the Allatoona Lake Overlook.

Cooper was devastated financially by the South's loss of the war. Although he no longer owned the once vast industrial operation at Etowah, he continued to live at Glen Holly, his home on a nearby mountaintop. Described in his later years by a writer from Griffin, Georgia, Cooper was said to have been as full of "energy and fire" as he was in his earlier years. "one of God's grand specimens of genus homo and though the suns of nearly 75 summers have bronzed his noble face and bleached his hair to snowy whiteness, he is still young in vigor, resolutions and enterprise. Glorious old man! Who is able or worthy to walk in his footsteps when his lease of life expires?"

Cooper held his last political office in 1876, elected at the age of 76 to represent Bartow County as a Senator in the state legislature. In 1885, Cooper died at his home and was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Glen Holly, where his two sons, killed in the Civil War, also rested. Prior to the flooding of Allatoona Lake in the late 1940s, the Cooper family cemetery was moved,

and its inhabitants reinterred at Oak Hill Cemetery in Cartersville.

Until his death, Cooper remained actively interested in Georgia's railroad and industrial development, and in the politics of the day. In 1872, as the town of Cartersville prepared to become a city, a bill was entered into legislation to reincorporate Cartersville under the name "Etowah City." Cooper objected forcefully and eloquently, and in so doing, established Etowah's place in Bartow County's history, despite its destruction, forevermore: "In behalf of the town of 'Etowah,' where I now live and have lived for thirty years: During that period, where I am and where a thousand citizens have lived, the town of 'Etowah' has been built up, laid out and named. As such it has been known

Continued on next page



Cooper's Friendship Monument was moved to downtown Cartersville from the Lake Allatoona overlook in 2000, during ceremonies honoring "the Iron Man of Georgia." The downtown plaza, now called Friendship Plaza, was re-named in Cooper's honor.

to you all, and to those who have gone before you. It is known on the Records of the county, of the Government of Georgia, and of the United States. The Government of the United States has here established a post office for twenty years. By this name the proprietors of this town were incorporated by the Legislature of Georgia. By a series of acts and resolutions, that body has recognized the town of 'Etowah.' By this name, 'Etowah,' this town is known, and has been for twenty years... During the war the Federal army destroyed its natural interests, but the *Plan* of this town and the *Name* remains. By the *Plan* conveyances have been made, and by the *Name* it lives, and



Though gone for over a century, Major Mark Anthony Cooper would be pleased to know that his legacy of iron production and the industrial city of Etowah lives on, and that his memory is renewed annually during the Hills of Iron celebration at Red Top Mountain State Park, where he is even given a new voice by means of historical impressionist Phillip Whiteman (above).

will live, whilst its hills endure or its river runs... Much of what Cartersville is, it is indebted to Etowah for. If the war has only left us the *Plan* and the *Name*, we ask you to leave these sacred as the memories of the dead. To deprive us of these would be little better than to open the grave for the treasures buried there. This you would not, could not do.... Respectfully yours, Mark A. Cooper"

That Cooper influenced and impacted Bartow County's growth and development is without question. From his initiative to bring railroads to Georgia and northwest Georgia (which sparked Cartersville's earliest

growth and helped establish it as the county seat following the Civil War), to his exploration and development of local mineral resources (which continues as a major industry today), Cooper contributed to the financial, political, and cultural development of the county. ☺

EVHS Welcomes New Members

Trey & Beth Gaines - Cartersville, GA
Jim & Judy Patterson - Cartersville, GA
Joanne L. Ridgway - Hartwell, GA
Beth & Scott Swanson & Family - Cartersville, GA

A Tribute to Our Confederate Veterans

By Linda Gossett Cochran

The following tribute was written and presented by Linda Cochran at the Confederate Memorial Day Ceremonies hosted by the P.M.B. Young chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. It is reprinted here with the author's permission.

A word that often describes our Confederate Veterans is "Valor." While this is a word that does not have much usage in today's conversations, it behooves us to look at the men the word describes. Our dictionary defines valor as intrepid courage, unshaken by fear, dauntless and bold. It is true that these men possessed all these qualities for without them they would have not been able to persevere for four long arduous years of battles and deprivation.

Our own confederate monument on the courthouse lawn says that these were men power could not corrupt, death could not terrify, defeat could not dishonor. One of the most determined warriors in all History, the confederate soldier, was fast to charge, slow to retreat, following his commanding officer into the jaws of death.

The valor and bravery of the Confederate soldier was something intangible, something that was his, free and clear. He fought for his homeland, his family, and his beliefs, but mostly for the knowledge that he had done his best against impossible odds.

Today, some 138 years later, our valor is being tested in a different way. Let us pray daily that the sacrifice of our Confederate veterans will not be forgotten by those who would revise our history and change our heritage to make room for theirs. Today we pay tribute, with undying remembrance and the courage to stand for that in which we believe. I am proud to be the great grand daughter of a Confederate Veteran. ☺

Coming November 1 & 2

"Come Harvest Our History"
Tour of Historic Homes

**Don't miss this biannual
sampling of Cartersville homes.**

Mark Your Calendar Today!

Warren Akin: Politician, Preacher, Lawyer... Devoted Husband

Membership Meeting

April 17, 2003

On April 17, local attorney Morgan Akin entertained an appreciative audience with stories of the Akin family in Cass/Bartow County history.

The key figure in Morgan's talk was Warren Akin, who moved to Cassville and established a law practice in 1836 that still exists today. Currently known as Akin and Tate, the firm, operating out of the same building on Cartersville's public square since 1886, is one of the oldest continuing law firms in the state of Georgia.

The outline of Warren Akin's life is well-known. He was a politician (speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives, member of the Confederate Congress), a Methodist preacher, and of course a lawyer.

But as Morgan pointed out, the letters that his great-grandfather Warren wrote home to his wife during his time in the Confederate Congress show another side to Warren Akin: devoted husband.

Those letters were published in 1959 as *Letters of Warren Akin, Confederate Congressman*, edited by Bell I. Wiley, the renowned Civil War historian. They offer a fascinating look at a small piece of Confederate history. For example, wartime inflation led Akin to practice a degree of economy surprising for a man of his prominence. He wrote that, in order to save on laundry costs, he wore the same shirt for three or four days, and he changed night shirts and drawers every two weeks. The laundry charged a dollar for washing a handkerchief or a pair of socks, so Akin reported that he wore his socks for a week and kept handkerchiefs "until they are soiled so much that I am ashamed to use them."

The most endearing aspect of the letters, however, was the love he constantly showed his wife.

Akin had married Eliza Hooper in 1845. She died two years later, and in 1848 Akin married Mary Frances Verdery. Warren and Mary Akin had thirteen children, only six of whom lived to maturity. Mary and Warren's marriage lasted nearly thirty years, until his death in 1877. Mary survived another thirty years, until 1907.

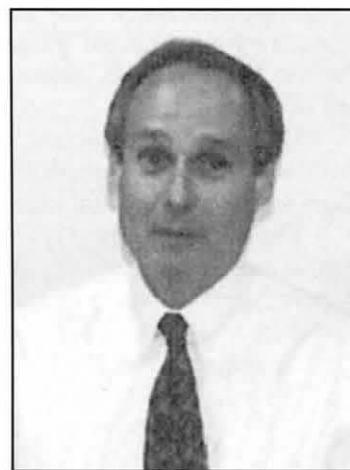
During his months in Richmond, Warren wrote to Mary almost daily—sometimes more than once a day. His letters, which he almost always signed "Your devoted hus-

band," frequently began with the sad note that he had not heard from her for so long. Of course, all he had to do was help govern the Confederate nation, while Mary had to look after a houseful of children and manage the farm!

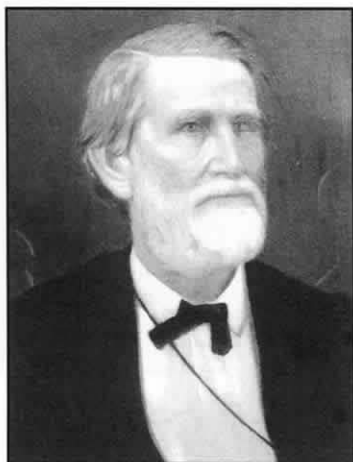
He said how much he missed her, how much he wished they could again be together. In a letter dated January 14, 1865, he went on at even greater length than usual about "my dear, sweet, darling wife": "She who has been so good to me, nursed me so tenderly, and watched me so fondly, and waited on me so unwaiveringly, with unremitting devotion day and night, without complaint, when pain of body, sorrow of heart, anguish of mind and trouble of spirit were felt so keenly by me. She, who for more than sixteen years has tried so hard to anticipate all my wants.... She, who, when young and beautiful yielded me her hand and her heart, became my wife, the mother of my children, the idol of my heart, the sharer of my joys and the reliever of my sorrows." And he went on in this vein for another four hundred words or so before concluding with a poem that shows, as much as anything else he wrote, the love he had for Mary:

When the lovely morn is breaking
Gently o'er the sleeping sea;
When from sweetest slumber waking,
Mary, then, I'll think of thee.
When the evening shade is shedding
Balmy freshness o'er the lea;
When night's curtain round is spreading,
Mary, then, I'll think of thee.
When the Autumn leaf is falling,
Teaching man his destiny;
When the monster, Death, is calling,
Mary, then, I'll think of thee.
When this body cold is growing,
Verging on eternity;
When the web of life's undoing,
Mary, then, I'll think of thee.
And, when in yon heaven above,
When the Savior I shall see;
And feast on smiles and purest love,
Still, methinks, I'll think of thee.

There was hardly a dry eye in the room when Morgan finished reading this poem. ☹



Morgan Akin was the guest speaker at the April EVHS membership meeting.



Warren Akin

Family Tree Climbers, continued from page 1

a dozen people signed up for the second workshop, a Beginning Genealogy class scheduled for April 5. Over 20 people showed up for the one-day "how-to"! Undaunted by the large crowd, Linda made beginning genealogists of all of them.

Due to its great success, another Beginning Genealogy workshop is being scheduled for July. We'll let our members know when it will take place.

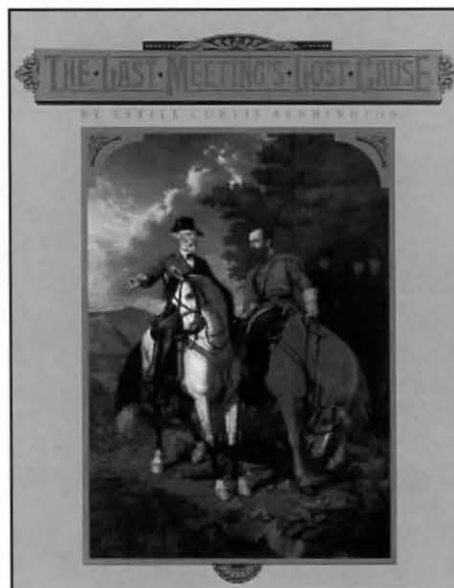
The next workshop is scheduled for June 7 & 14 (consecutive Saturdays), and will teach techniques for researching Native American ancestry. The workshop will meet from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the EVHS office. Linda anticipates another large class size, due to the popularity of Native American research, and suggests signing up early so as not to be closed out of the limited enrollment.

The final class of the year will meet on Saturday, September 27 (Linda's birthday!), and will be a workshop for Advanced Genealogy techniques. The workshop will meet from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the EVHS office. Linda hopes to see a lot of familiar faces from previous classes, students who have come far enough in their research to want to learn more.

The workshops are free and open to the public, and all materials are provided at no charge. For more information, email Linda at lindagenealogy@yahoo.com, or call the EVHS office at 770-606-8862. ☎

New at the EVHS Bookstore

The Last Meeting's Lost Cause By Estill Curtis Pennington



Pick up your copy at the EVHS office,
or grab it online at www.evhsonline.org.

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Introduced at this year's Hills of Iron was the Red Top ingot, the new signature piece of the program produced by the new furnace recently acquired by the park. See photos on page 2.