

**ANDREW JACKSON SEATON GRAVEYARD,
CEDAR CREEK ROAD**



**The original grave markers
for Union Civil War
Soldiers, and brothers-in-
law, William Patton Seaton
and John Davis**



New Marker placed by descendants during a Family Reunion

**A CIVIL WAR TRAGEDY AT CEDAR CREEK
BROTHERS-IN-LAW
WILLIAM P. SEATON AND JOHN DAVIS
8th TN Cavalry, Union**

[The complete Civil War Pension files of William P. Seaton and John Davis are archived
at the T. Elmer Cox Historical and Genealogical Library.]

Few families were more closely intermarried than the Seaton, Davis and Holt families. William Patton Seaton married Sarah Elizabeth Davis, John Davis married Nancy Ann Seaton, Margaret Seaton married Jonas Holt, and Elizabeth Seaton married Samuel Holt. Their farms were on Cedar Creek Road near today's Asheville Highway, just a few miles west of South Greene High School. In terms of geography, the state border with North Carolina was closer to their farms than the Town of Greeneville. Several of the farms remain in descendant families.

Brothers-in-law William Patton Seaton, John Davis and Jonas Holt enlisted with the 8th TN Cavalry, Union, on July 23, 1863. William Seaton was age 25, 5'10" tall, dark eyes and dark hair. John Davis was age 30, 5'5" tall, blue eyes and fair hair. No physical description is available for Jonas Holt, who was the only one of the three brothers-in-law who survived the War.

Andrew Jackson Seaton, the father of William, and Joseph Davis, the father of John, both gave pension affidavits on behalf of their widowed daughters. The respective pension affidavits relay identical stories.

**Affidavit by Andrew Jackson Seaton, father of William P.
and Father-in-Law of John Davis
May 13, 1873, Greene County**

This affiant States that he is the father of William Patton Seaton; that in the month of June 1863 as well as he can now remember, his said son escaped from Greene County in East Tennessee, then held by the Rebels, to Camp Nelson State of Kentucky, and enlisted for three years or during the war into Company B 8th Regt, Tennessee Cavalry...that in the Summer of 1863 and about the last of August his son came to East Tennessee with the Army of General Burnside as a Private, and when the troops arrived at Greeneville, seventy-five miles east of Knoxville, his son could go no further by reason of jaundice fever and bleeding of the lungs; that his said son was there with the army of General Burnside and in a very sick and helpless condition, and the next day, he [Jackson Seaton] went to Greeneville from his home, eleven miles distant, and found his said son in camps near Greeneville under the command of Captain John L. Kirk....this affiant made application to said Kirk to let him take his son home with him and accordingly affiant took his son home by permission of Capt. Kirk, who told his son to remain with his father until further order.

William was taken by this affiant on horseback, eleven miles to his home where he remained about one week. Doctor Frank Bell was sent for, and came and administered medicine to him,

and left other medicine for him, and then being afraid of the rebels for what he had done in giving medical aid to a Union Soldier, scouted his way home about ten miles, and soon after this, Bell was compelled to leave his home by reason of his fear of said rebels... that there was another doctor in the neighborhood at Cedar Creek who had been arrested and taken to Knoxville as a rebel...[this doctor was most probably Dr. William Girdner (1803-1889) who is buried in Solomon Lutheran Church.]

By reason of his [William's] disability, he was hauled in a wagon about two and a half miles, to his father-in-laws house [John Davis] where he remained for some time still in a disabled condition; that this was about September 1863. That soon after this, the Command of General Burnside evacuated his position in upper East Tennessee and fell back toward Chattanooga...and that immediately after Burnside's retrograde movement, the country swarmed with rebels, and in detached parties, and the consequence was that his [William's] relatives had to hid him in the woods among the cliffs of rocks in what was called the knobs, about one month; after which he was taken to the residence of his Uncle Mathis Bird, where they concealed him in the loft of the house some two or three weeks; after which he was conveyed by his friends to Paint Mountain where he remained for some time, after which he was taken care of by different neighbors and even by some rebel families, who concealed him in different places to prevent his falling into the hands of rebel guerrillas, who threatened to kill him if they could find him.

Finally he came to his own home, when it seemed there were no rebels about this house being about one hundred and fifty yards from affiants residence; that he stayed at his own house only one night, and the next morning his house was surrounded by rebels... being over one hundred; that they dragged his son out of bed, cussing and abusing him, and denounced him as a Damned Lincolnite, and he was forcibly taken off by them toward Parrottsville in Cocke County. They also arrested this affiant at the same time and threatened to kill him; that finally they left this affiant and took his said son up to the vicinity of Parrottsville, where they shot and killed him..... with bullet holes through his head, shoulder and left breast.

His son was brought home dead, with affiants, son-in-law, John Davis, whom the same rebels had killed at the same time, by Jesse Holt who lived at Parrottsville, near to the place where his son and son-in-law had been murdered. [The preceding sentence was poorly written by the Justice of the Peace who took the affidavit. A reading of the written affidavit by Joseph Davis, the father of John Davis, is more clearly stated. Jesse Holt was not among the killers of the two young men, but a family member who retrieved the bodies of William Seaton and John Davis from Parrottsville in Cocke County and brought them home to Cedar Creek.]

He [William Patton Seaton] left a wife named Sarah [Davis] and two children, Joseph Franklin and Alice Seaton. [Sarah Davis was the sister of John Davis who was murdered and a daughter of Joseph Davis who likewise provided affidavits for pension.]

Postscript

Brothers-in-law, William P. Seaton and John Davis, were buried in a small family cemetery on the Jackson Seaton farm. It is presumed Andrew Jackson Seaton is also buried there. His date of death is not known, but his Estate was probated on June 20, 1874, when he owned over 400 acres of land.

Because the soldiers were only given verbal approval to leave their regiment, they were noted as AWOL in the official records. Sarah Davis Seaton never received a widow pension or pension for her two young children. She fought the decision for many years, and ultimately in her old age was awarded a Union pension "because of need" in 1887. Nancy Seaton Davis never received a widow pension or pension for her children. Nancy remarried after the death of her husband and had several more children. She was later abandoned by her second husband (also a Union Soldier) who later remarried and lived in North Carolina with his "second family".

Old Joseph Davis, the father of John Davis and the father-in-law of William Seaton, lived to be 94 years old and died in 1908. He is buried in Bersheba Cemetery on Houston Valley Road.



Old Joe Davis

Family folklore has passed down that after the War, one day Old Joe Davis spotted James "Devil Jim" Allen crossing the Allen Ford near his home. "Devil Jim" Allen was believed to have been the Confederate sympathizer who alerted local Confederate authorities that Union Soldiers, William Seaton and John Davis, were at home. Today, this location is West Allen's Bridge Road adjacent to the bridge. Legend has it Old Joe shot "Devil Jim" off of his horse. The shot did not kill him, but it surely wounded his pride. James Allen (1824-1885) is buried at Oak Grove Cemetery in Greeneville. Today, the James Allen home still stands and is known as Still Hollow Farm.

Many years ago, the "holler" was not quite so "still", when neighbors turned-on neighbors in South Greene County.