

MONTGOMERY MONUMENT DEDICATED TO EARLY SETTLERS

Prepared by Becky Blankenship Darrell

On the afternoon of June 10, 2012 descendants of the Montgomery pioneers, who settled in the Baker's Creek area of Blount County in 1788, gathered at Baker's Creek Presbyterian Church to dedicate a monument to their courageous ancestors. This monument was purchased by the local Montgomery Clan Society of Tennessee and is the culmination of efforts long encouraged by several descendants. After a brief introduction by President Susan Montgomery Shearin, Pastor Roy Scarborough, who grew up in the Baker's Creek Church, gave the prayer. Becky Blankenship Darrell, who spearheaded the purchase, engraving, and setting of the monument, briefly spoke about these brave and hardy Scots-Irish pioneer ancestors. She commended Miss Esther Montgomery, who is a noted Montgomery genealogist and the last surviving author of the book *John and Esther Houston Montgomery 1719-1973*, as the driving force behind honoring our ancestors with this monument.

The monument was beautifully inscribed on both sides by Maryville Monument Company. Attendees are shown around the monument on the accompanying photograph. The inscription reads as follows:

"The Montgomerys who first settled in what is now Blount County originated in Scotland and later Northern Ireland and came to America in the early 1700s. The family migrated from PA to Augusta VA. James Montgomery, son of John and Esther Houston Montgomery was born in Lancaster PA and married Margaret Weir of Rockbridge VA. They and their older children moved to what is now Blount Co. in 1788, and settled on land bordering Baker's Creek. James' brother Alexander (Sarah Alexander) also came here at about the same time. Other settlers in the area included Cowans, Henrys, and Craigs. The hard work, perseverance, and strong Scots-Irish beliefs in God and education characterized these early settlers and their descendants. James and Margaret had eight children: John (Mary Love), Hugh (1 ?, 2 Jane ?), James Jr (Charity Garretson), Jane (William Moore), Margaret (William M. Henry), Mary (Capt James Cowan), Samuel (Elizabeth Gillespie), and Esther (William Craig). All of James and Margaret's sons served in the War of 1812. Hugh, James Jr, Jane, Mary, Esther, Alexander and their families removed to Middle TN. Some later went to AL, MS, KY, and other states. John, Margaret, and Samuel remained in Blount and Loudon Counties. They and their descendants who remained in this area have been prominent in education, agriculture, and business. They gave land for Pine Grove Presbyterian Church and cemetery, and have also been active in Baker's Creek Presbyterian Church."

Ms. Darrell introduced Mrs. Shirley Hall, President of the General Henry Knox Chapter, Daughters of 1812. Mrs. Hall and other chapter members placed a wreath honoring the Baker's Creek Montgomerys who had served in the war.

Prior to this dedication, descendants had gathered at the Greenback Community Center for their annual potluck lunch and business meeting. John Maynor Williams of Tampa was recognized as the attendee traveling the longest distance to the reunion. The following officers for the next year were elected: President Becky Blankenship Darrell, Vice President Marilyn Kyker Cate, Secretary Alice Montgomery, Treasurer Wanda Montgomery Britton, Newsletter Editor Dale Montgomery, and Hostess Susan Montgomery Shearin.

