

# Ghost of Woolsey past still haunts the woods

By Lorraine N. Hulings

When the mist undulates across the land and the full moon pierces the evening sky, some say they have seen the specter with the light in the woods.

It is believed that this ghost buried his gold and silver in the North Woods of

Woolsey and is still hunting for his buried treasures.

The ghost has been described by some who claim to have seen him as a "thin man with a light."

According to legend, the ghost is Thomas Bolling Gay who was probably the first owner of the land that is now Woolsey.



I.G. Woolsey

Gay was born in 1791 and died in 1864. Natives say Gay buried his gold and silver during the American Civil War when the Union soldiers came down into this area.

There is another story, said Carolyn Lambert, great-granddaughter of Dr. Isaac G. Woolsey, that the treasure was found.

"But that's just a story," said Lambert.

Although Lambert does not live in Woolsey but a few miles north of the town, she fears seeing the ghost.

She says at night she makes sure her curtains are drawn and the doors are shut.

Lambert also said that there have been reports that the old Gay house is haunted.

Various people have seen two ghosts in the house. The male ghost is said to be Thomas B. Gay and people have said that they have also seen a woman.

Legend has it that the woman appears in a white train and moves from room to room.

"There are a lot of unanswered questions in Woolsey," said Lambert.

However, as a child, Lambert had relatives in Woolsey and would often visit them.

"I learned to play 'Doodle Bug' in Woolsey," she recalled.

Because there were no paved roads in Woolsey until 1948, when Governor M.E. Thompson helped Woolsey get Highway 92 paved, Lambert remembers how they would have to wait until there was no rain to travel to Woolsey.

She admits that things have changed. Woolsey has changed.

"It's different from what it used to be," said Lambert, but she added laughing, "I prefer modern convenience."

The current Woolsey Mayor, Gary Laggis, has lived there since 1985.

Laggis and his wife, Pam, moved to Woolsey because of the town's charm and atmosphere.

"They enjoy living in a country atmosphere but still have easy access to city life.

"We're getting the best of both worlds," said Laggis.

Although the town was incorporated in December of 1893, the centennial was held on October 16.

One of the reasons, said Laggis, is because October 14 is Dr. I.G. Woolsey's birthday.

Laggis describes the community as being "friendly and close."

The landscape of the town is another attraction, Laggis loves to watch the sun rise in Woolsey. The town is one of the highest points in the county.

One of Dr. Woolsey's ancestors is Cardinal Thomas Woolsey who dominated the government of England's King Henry VIII.

It is believed that two common nursery rhymes were inspired by Cardinal Woolsey: "Jack and Jill" and "Little Boy Blue."

When the cardinal was a little boy in Ipswich, he used to look after his father's sheep.

It is believed that "Little Boy Blue" was written about the cardinal's fall from power.

This downfall occurred when he was unable to persuade Pope Clement VII to grant an annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon.

The original context of

"Jack and Jill" was two boys; this is shown in a British woodcut of the rhyme and there is no mention of a girl.

The original spelling of Jill was "Gill" and some folklorists believe the two boys represent Cardinal Woolsey and one of his close colleagues, Bishop Tarbes.

One of the cardinal and Tarbes' functions was to travel between the two rival camps (France and the Holy Roman Empire of the Hapsburgs) to negotiate peace.

However their task failed and war erupted. The rhyme of Jack and Jill going up the hill is believed to depict their attempts to negotiate peace.

Dr. Woolsey met his wife, Emeline Clemanza Regan in Fentress County, Tennessee. They were married in 1852.

He studied medicine at the Mount Cumberland Academy under the supervision of a Dr. W.H. Owens.

After the doctor wounded his arm in war in 1863, he fled to Georgia.

In October of 1863, Dr. Woolsey married Arvazenia Frances Marcheson Wood in Cleveland, Tennessee.

When the Confederate Army surrendered, Dr. Woolsey and his family settled in Locust Grove in Henry County.

He moved to Fayette County in 1875. He bought land from the Gay family and in the 1877 Tax Digest, he was listed as one of the largest land owners in the county. He had 500 acres which was valued at \$3,500.

The Woolsey area was called Woolseyville in the early 1890's.

It was Dr. Woolsey who made applications for the post office in Woolsey and he practiced medicine, farmed, operated a mercantile business and corn mill in the area.

When Dr. Woolsey made the application for the post office in 1889, he made his son-in-law, James T. Lewis, the postmaster.

The name of the post office was changed from Woolseyville to Woolsey in 1889.

In 1971, as all other post offices, it became the "U.S. Postal Service."

Even though he had a busy schedule, Dr. Woolsey was a minister at Antioch Baptist Church. However, in 1888, 23 members of the church withdrew because of a difference of opinions and Harmony Grove Baptist Church was formed.

In 1904, this new church became known as Woolsey Baptist Church.

Dr. Woolsey donated the land for the church as well as the land behind it for a cemetery.

Dr. Woolsey also donated the land for the depot, post office and first school.

However, this was contingent on the schoolhouse being used as a meeting place for the Masons and Woodmen.

Dr. Woolsey was the first Worshipful Master of the Davidson Lodge when it was organized in 1891 and he remained there until 1896.

When Dr. Woolsey died of heart failure on September 11, 1902, 2,000 people attended his funeral to pay their respects and honor the man who had done so much for Woolsey.

After Woolsey was incorporated, citizens voted for members of the General Assembly of Georgia and for a mayor and three council members on the first Saturday of September each year.

Many who have lived in

the area all their lives, and stories that have been carried down from generation to generation, make mention of a jail in Woolsey at that time.

The ladies of Woolsey got together in 1934 to clean the town up. They labored hard to clean the streets, the cemetery and sidewalk.

This "petticoat government" was given authority from the railroad department to have a park near the depot.

Telegraphy, telephones and radios were Woolsey citizen's means of communication.

Although there were not many private telephone lines in the community, they did have telephones in 1951.

It was in the late 1940's that television was first introduced to Woolsey.

In the late 1880's, the Atlanta-Hawkinsville R.R. Company built a 125 mile rail line from Atlanta to Hawkinsville. This route went through Fayette County.

Grist mills, cotton gins and "millinery shops" were also part of Woolsey's business district. In 1920, Tom and Andrew Lunceford opened an automobile garage.

There were a number of stores owned by various people in Woolsey. Some had general items for people to use on a day-to-day basis, others had fruit and some

sold meat.

The Woolsey Bank Building was built in 1907 by John Murphy and it closed in 1927.

The school in Woolsey was a two story building. The first floor was used for all grades and had a stage at one end which was used for plays.

In 1929 a brick building was built. It cost \$10,000 and consisted of four class rooms, an auditorium and rooms on either side of the entrance which were later converted into restrooms.

One of the main methods of recreation for the men was hunting and fishing. Although they also did so for

Women used their spare time to make quilts. They enjoyed this on a social basis but they also got some work done.

Card and sewing clubs were popular in the 1920's and 30's and so was square dancing.

American Independence Day was a day the families would gather at the Flint River and celebrate. Fish, which the men caught earlier, were prepared by the women who also made cakes and other desserts and the children would play in the river.

Woolsey will be 100 years old in December this year and yet the town has not lost any of its charm, mystique and friendliness.

Arvazenia Wood Woolsey

Arvazenia Wood Woolsey

## Knights of Columbus earn the Star Council

Knights of Columbus Council 8081 of Peachtree City has earned the distinction of Star Council, the international organization's top award, for the 1992-93 fraternal year.

The announcement was made by the organization's headquarters located in New Haven, Connecticut. The award recognizes overall excellence in the areas of membership recruitment and retention, promotion of the fraternal insurance program and sponsorship of service oriented activities. The award was presented to the membership by District 7 Deputy John Silbernagel at a special ceremony held on October 7, 1993.

In announcing the local winner of the Star Council Award, Virgil C. Dechant, president of the international organization, said "Please accept my sincere congratulations upon attaining this

prestigious award. The dedication to the principles and aims of the Order shown by your officers and members is exemplified by the high standard of excellence you have achieved. At the same time, I encourage you to carry forward this enthusiasm to meet the challenges that will face the Knights of Columbus in the years ahead."

"The Star Council Award is quite an honor for us. We're extremely proud of this accomplishment," proclaimed Grand Knight George Cabral, head of the local group.

The Knights of Columbus is a Catholic, family, fraternal, service organization with 1.5 million dues-paying members in more than 10,000 councils worldwide. In 1992, they gave more than 41 million hours of volunteer service and donated over \$92 million to charitable and benevolent causes.

McIntosh H.S. hosts 2nd annual golf tourney

The McIntosh High School golf team will host its second annual golf tournament on Saturday, October 30 at Flat Creek Country Club.

Pre-registration is urged and can be done by making check and application to Steve Ritter, 100 Moravian Hills, Peachtree City, 30269. For more information, call 487-1315 or 487-2870.

McIntosh H.S. hosts 2nd annual golf tourney

The McIntosh High School golf team will host its second annual golf tournament on Saturday, October 30 at Flat Creek Country Club.

Pre-registration is urged and can be done by making check and application to Steve Ritter, 100 Moravian Hills, Peachtree City, 30269. For more information, call 487-1315 or 487-2870.

Isn't it time to take a closer look at Cellular Service?

PACTEL CELLULAR OFFERS:

- Purchase Plan
- Rental Plan
- New affordable Rate Plans

and \$50 OFF your first monthly bill

Call: **Lynne Sawyer 683-5877**

and ask how you can turn \$50 OFF into \$70 OFF!

TINKS \$6.99 EA. 69

Doc-in-Rut Expires 12-31-93

BERRY'S 100 S. 5th Street - Columbus 227-3048

CHILD CARE

PEYSTONE Child Development Center

DAY CARE - Infants to After School Monday - Friday 6:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. 109 Patrol Point - Peachtree City 487-3284

Come See The Difference SMILES Can Make

## Ari-Beth Cohen, M.D.

is pleased to announce the opening of her office specializing in Family Practice

(Office Hours by Appointment)

220 W. College Street • Griffin 228-1711

HUNTERS/DRESSAGE/COMBINED TRAINING BOARDING - LESSONS - TRAINING



Pegasus Place School of Riding & Driving Inc.

Pegasus Tack Shop\*

228-3865

Full-Service Equestrian Facility

392 Philip Weldon Rd. Milner, GA 30057

Warren & Linda Abrams Owners

BACK TO BASICS WITH WAVERLY

FABRICS WALLCOVERINGS HOME FASHIONS

Jennifer Greene Interiors

invite you to join us for a Consumer Seminar

"Back to Basics" Preview

Refreshments

of our

Door Prizes

Waverly In-Stock Products

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28 • 7 - 9 P.M.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29 • 10 A.M. - NOON

RSVP Only 461-8677

Call early to reserve your seat. Limited seating available.

## Kasey Roberts pledges Delta Gamma fraternity

Delta Gamma Fraternity of the University of Georgia has announced that Kasey Roberts of Peachtree City has pledged.

Kasey is the daughter of Gary and Gail Roberts of Peachtree City. She is a 1993 graduate of McIntosh High School.

Delta Gamma is one of the oldest National Greek organizations for women. The Delta Iota Chapter has been on the Univ. of Georgia campus for 25 years and has more than 130 members.

The Delta Iota Chapter has been on the Univ. of Georgia campus for 25 years and has more than 130 members.

The fraternity is widely known for its Philanthropic services in the areas of sight conservation, aid to the blind and collegiate grants and loans.