

John Bates may have helped decide county seat location

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Special to The Times

In the early records of Hall County John Bates is frequently named. He is listed as one of the first settlers of Hall in early histories.

It is believed that he helped decide the location of the county seat and possibly aided in the selection of the name "Gainesville" for this town. But John Bates followed the usual procedure of that day and time, he lived in this vicinity for many years, made a contribution to the growth of this area and then relocated westward.

General John Bates was born Sept. 15, 1776, and died at the age of 75 years on Oct. 20, 1851. His father, also John Bates, was described in a book "History of Georgia," published in the 1850's, as one of the first 10 or 12 settlers to come to the state of Georgia.

General John Bates was active in the military during the War of 1812 and was commissioned major general of the 7th Division of the Georgia Militia Dec. 7, 1832. He resigned this position Dec. 14, 1835.

He was Hall County's first representative in the state legislature in the days when "states rights" actually was practiced. The general represented this

county continuously for the first 15 years of its history. He was then appointed "keeper of the penitentiary" for one year and was returned to the legislature for a one year term making 16 years of service as Hall's representative.

Crossroads

John Bates was one of the

Hall

history

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first five inferior judges and in this capacity helped to make many decisions that formed policies and history of our county. It is said the location of the Hall County seat was selected because of the crossroads that met near the Bay-Way Laundry building on West Broad Street.

John Bates was married to Barbary Granger of South Carolina, and they were parents of 10 children: John C., Julius R., Elias E., Frances, Lau-

raette, Harriet, Sarah, Nancy, Rice Ross and Clayton. Several of the children have marriages recorded in Hall County Courthouse.

The daughter Lauraette became the wife of Burrell Jefferson Hulsey and is the ancestor of many present day Hall Countians. A son Clayton was drowned in the Chattahoochee River when he was 18 years old. He became overly tired after swimming across the river seven times without resting. He is buried on a hill overlooking the Chattahoochee back of the old homeplace supposedly the first home ever built in the county, exact location unknown.

Murray County

In 1836 most of the members of the Bates family removed to Murray County, Chatsworth, Ga. John Bates was then returned to the State Senate in 1839 as Murray's representative. The Bates burial plot is located about two and one-half miles west of Eaton on the old Federal Trail which links Chattanooga, Tenn. with Augusta, Ga.

The following inscription is found on the wife's headstone.

"In memory of Barbary consort of John Bates, who died July 31, 1843, age 68 years, 9 months, 15 days"