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# The John Bell family

By SYBIL McRAY  
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Occasionally, a headstone in a cemetery will record such interesting information, it is a challenge to combine data and try to compile a partial history of this particular family. This was the case of two such graves situated in the Celmons Methodist Chapel Cemetery, located on State Highway 52, Hall County. The entire cemetery was recorded April 7, 1967, by Hoard and Edna Fuller and myself.

In the midst of many graves was a wooden picket fence which enclosed two headstones of rather recent origin, although the deaths had occurred more than a century ago. These markers had been placed here not too many years past by descendants of the two so interred.

But who?

**MAJOR JOHN BELL** — born Dec. 1, 1792 in Virginia, died Mar. 2, 1850 Hall County, Ga.

His wife, **NARCISSA LOCKERT BELL** — born April 28, 1801 Chester S.C., died May 4, 1861 Hall County, Ga.

It is not known when John Bell came to Hall County. He is not listed in the 1820 census. Nor is it known if he was a major in the military, or if that is only a name. The wife, Narcissa, has a will recorded in book "A" Wills, Hall County. This document is interesting in that the estate was quite sizable and the children had to return from as far away as Texas for the settlement of the legacy.

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"3rd. June 1861. . . came before me, Ralph S. Law, one William R. Bell executor of Will of Narcissa Bell deceased and produced last Will and Testament of said Narcissa Bell . . ."

"7th November 1860. . . Will of Narcissa Bell, wife of John Bell

deceased of state of Georgia and Hall County . . .

To son: John Bell, \$500, 1 bed and its covers.

To daughter: Mary Permella Bell, wife of Young Riley, \$500.

To Anderson Bell, \$500, 1 bed and its usual furniture.

To son: William Richard Bell, my Negro man William, 1 bed its common furniture or cover.

To daughter: Narcissa Bell, wife of Andrew Thompson, a Negro woman named Hannah.

To son: Madison Bell, Negro girl, Mary, and bed with its usual furniture.

To son: Allen Bell, Negro boy, Lige, 1 bed with its usual furniture.

To son: Aaron Bell, Negro man, Peter, and 2 beds with its usual furniture together with cows and cattle, hogs, mules, kitchen furniture.

To granddaughter, child of my son James Bell, deceased, \$50.

To granddaughter, child of my daughter Harriet Bell Riley, \$60.

My aged Negro woman, Fanny, has the right of choice to live with any of my children.

Executors: Sons William R.

Bell and Aaron Bell.

Witnesses: William Armor, J.C. Highsmith, Peter Falkner. Signed: Narcissa Bell (a notation had been added, "departed this life 5 May 1861").

In order to probate the will:

"3 June 1861. . . admitted to record 7 October 1861. . . request to appear in court first Monday in October to show cause why Will should not be proven. The petition of William R. Bell that Narcissa Bell departed this life

possessed of an estate of considerable value and that she left as her heirs at law: John L. Bell, Anderson W. Bell, and Permella Rylee, wife of Young Rylee, who are now residents of state of Texas, W.R. Bell

and Madison Bell of Banks County, Ga., Harriett Evans, wife of John F. Evans (evidently second husband), of Jackson

County, Ga., and Narcissa Cantrell, wife of Sterling Cantrell, Lumpkin County, Ga., Aaron Bell, Narcissa Thompson, wife of A.J. Thompson, Isaac Rylee, guardian of Mary A., Julia, and

James A. Rylee, children of Harriett Rylee, deceased, and Allen J. Bell, Hall County, Ga."

