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Thomas Morrison Killed By Jayhawkers

2 January 1864, Stone County, Arkansas, two miles southwest of Alco

By 1857, Thomas Morrison had accumulated some wealth for his day and time. He owned a farm and operated a small general store near Timbo. The location of the store is not known but may have be located on his farm. There were rumors in the community that Thomas had hidden gold on his place, and this, alas, would lead to his death.

When war broke out in 1861, many men in Searcy County, Arkansas, were forced to join the Confederate army whether they wanted to or not. Because of his age, Thomas escaped this obligation but his sons did not. Thomas, David, and Lewis were made to join the rebel army. James Sabert, the family called him Sabe, eventually enlisted in the 3rd Arkansas Cavalry in 1864. Later, David and Lewis deserted the Confederate Army and joined the Union Army, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry.

It should be noted that before moving to Arkansas, Thomas Morrison and his family lived in Johnson County, Illinois. Not only was the Morrison family opposed to slavery but Thomas had even joined the nothern Whig Party, Lincoln's Party, whose platform was against the expansion of slavery into the territories and promoted the gradual end to slavery where it already existed.

That bandits and thieves plagued Searcy and surrounding counties was well known. These outlaws were collectively referred to as Jayhawkers. They operated in small bands and few had any official ties with either the Confederate or Union armies. Most of the able-bodied young men of Searcy County were off to war, "To see the elephant," and this left only the women, children, and a few older men to protect property and loved ones. Civil law was almost nonexistent and neither army held a dominate position in the area until the latter part of 1864 when the Union Army made some attempt to protect the civilian population.

Jayhawkers killed Thomas Morrison 2 January 1864. There have been several stories passed down through the generations on how this event occurred but to my knowledge no official account was ever recorded because of the almost complete breakdown of law and order in the region. This is the story as told to me by members of my family:

Thomas Morrison was living on his farm near Timbo, Arkansas (then located in Searcy County). with his wife, Mary Ann Cornett Bolinger Morrison, and youngest daughter, Sarah Morrison. A small band of men rode up on horses and demanded to know where Thomas hid his gold. He refused their demands, was tortured and killed. One story has it that the Jayhawkers tortured Thomas by having him walk around and around in one spot with no water or food until he talked. He dropped over from exhaustion and died. His widow, Mary, and daughter, Sarah, buried Thomas in a grave near the front yard. When the five sons learned of their father's murder on their return home from the war, they vowed revenge and justice. The five Morrison brothers hunted down the Jayhawkers who were responsible for their father's death and killed each one of them. The last one gunned down was a 19-year-old caught near Springfield, Missouri.

Kenneth Rorie, gg-grandson of Thomas Morrison, 19 June 2007, Van Buren, Crawford County, Arkansas, USA.

Much of this information comes from a conversation with Onis Morrison, g-grandson of Thomas Morrison, at his home in Mt. View, Stone County, Arkansas, 25 May 1983, and from correspondence with Errol Lewis, another gg-grandson of Thomas Morrison. Errol is a leading authority on the Morrison family of Searcy and Stone counties in Arkansas. He has recently published books on the related Sutterfield Family. Today there is a Thomas C Morrison road off HWY 66 west of Timbo, not far from where the murder took place.

IRONPONEY50 added this on 18 Feb 2010

littlebritches102 originally submitted this to Rorie Family Tree on 19 Jun 2007

Thomas Morrison tortured to death by Jayhawkers trying to get the gold he supposedly had hidden on his farm near Timbo, Arkansas (then Searcy County).

Media Objects for Thomas Calvin MORRISON

Story

MORRISON'S MURDER AND

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Thomas Calvin MORRISON
1800 - 1864

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Jayhawkers and Bushwhackers

1863, Searcy County, Arkansas, CSA

IRONPONEY50 added this on 20 Feb 2010

Category Type: Portrait / Family Photo

littlebritches102 originally submitted this to Rorie Family Tree on 17 Jun 2009

One bushwhacker, Captain Brand of Missouri, entered the home of C. M. Mills, a farmer, and tortured him and shot his daughter. He then went to Mills neighbor, Thomas Morrison, and tortured him by screwing his hands and feet into a vise. Finally, Brand shot him two times in the back before burning his house to the ground - Courtesy of "Calm, Crisis, and Change: Arkansas Communities and Civil War Appendix 2-1 - The Civil War in Arkansas: Curriculum Guide"

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1800 - 1864

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MORRISON'S MURDER AND REVENGE: The Stories

Please note that this is subtitled "The Stories". Glenn Morrison says that he has collected at least six versions of the Thomas Morrison murder story. I will deal only with two versions: one placing his death in February 1864, and the other in the summer of 1864.

My first attempts at serious oral history interviews were in the summer of 1961 when I interviewed two grandchildren of Thomas Morrison, 1800-1864. My first interview was with Nettie Horton Jennings, age 69, born September 1892, the daughter of Sarah Jane Morrison Horton, and I only took sparse notes of this interview. The second was one I taped in August 1961 with Apsie Sheridan Morrison, age 85, born November 12, 1876, a twin son of Lewis Calvin Morrison, at his home in Campbell, Searcy County. I was looking for Civil War stories and we focused on the murder of their grandfather Thomas Calvin Morrison. With some editing, my interview notes with Nettie Jennings:

"Peter Henson Thomas [PHT] Horton-son of Henderson Horton who came to Searcy county in 1850, settled upon the hill above Davis Creek. Twelve boys, one girl in the family. PHT Horton in Union Army in same company as Ananias Horton [Not so. PHT Horton in Co. K, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry; Ananias Horton in Co. M, 2nd Ark Cav]. PHT Horton married Sarah Jane Morrison (maybe daughter of Lewis Morrison [not-was daughter of Thomas, Lewis was her brother]), originally from Tennessee (?). Settled on Sylamore. [They settled on Timbo Creek which is Upper Sylamore Creek].

"Horton stayed in County until a band of jayhawkers (from Missouri?) Pretending to be soldiers, stopped at their house, ate all they had, then burned them out. Hortons then went to Pocahontas [Lewisburg] to Army Head Quarters. Grandma Horton died there. Stayed at Pocahontas [Lewisburg] 'til the end of the war. Grandma & Grandpa & some of the kids. Grandpa died at Pocahontas [Lewisburg]. [Nettie said Pocahontas, but it was Lewisburg.]

"Grandpa Morrison married ____, who had first married a Cornett. [She was Mary Ann Cornett who had first married William Bollinger.] One son by first marriage, John Cornett. [It was one son William Bollinger.] Settled on Sylamore [note-same Sylamore, i.e. Timbo Creek-Upper Sylamore]. Morrison boys in army. Some in CSA--Uncle Lewis was youngest boy, Apsie Morrison's father. Grandma Morrison a doctor. Grandpa Morrison, a merchant. Lived on Sylamore 'til Grandpa killed. Had money hid. The murderers tied his feet to chair rounds, then lighted a fire under his feet. He wouldn't tell where his money was hidden. They turned him loose and made him run, then shot him twice in the back. Sarah Jane and Uncle Lewis Morrison's wife dug the grave. They put a rail fence around it to keep the hogs out. The money was in a little tin box; gold and silver. The jayhawkers then piled everything in the middle of the floor (feather beds, etc) and set it afire. Grandmother Morrison's side saddle on top. This happened about 1863. Sarah Jane Morrison was 13 [Sarah Jane born February 1850]. No one ever found the money. Grandma Morrison kept a horse in a cave to go visit sick people. [Morrison researchers say Thomas' house survived the Civil War.]

"After burned out, they went to Pocahontas [Lewisburg]. Here PHT Horton met Sarah Jane Morrison. Mrs Hugh (Nettie) Jennings has Grandpa Morrison's shirt. One hole in back where two shots went in; two holes in front where they came out. It is white homespun cotton, open all the way down the front. [Glen Morrison says his family story is that the jayhawker leader, as he was riding away, saw Morrison leaning against a tree, then turned and shot him in the front. Thus two bullet holes in the front, and only one went all the way through, indicating this was where two shots went in the front, but only one shot came out the back.]"

With some editing, this is the story that 85-year-old Apsie Morrison told me:

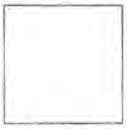
"You want to know the names of them jayhawkers? Put down Bill Dark first. Old Jim Berry killed him on Red River, the first day after the battle between Grandpap's men and his men. (Who was your Grandfather?) Chris Denton, old Captain Chris Denton. (Was he in the Union Army?) Yes, he was a Union man, but he had a Home Guard. His men was all men over age for the Army, old fellows that lived up in this country. Some of them lived on this creek. He had a Home Guard Company. And they appointed him to mix it with these jayhawkers. They was coming in here and killing people, robbing them, taking their money, burning their feet, and making them tell where their money was hid. That happened right here in this country. And I know who lots of them were too, yeah. And they screwed my grandfather's hands in his vise and just busted his hands all to pieces trying to make him tell 'em where his money was. And he had between three and four thousand dollars in money he had buried somewhere about the place. This was Grandfather Morrison. His name was Thomas A. [*sic* C.] Morrison. ... And [Thomas] had five brothers [sons]. The two oldest was in the Southern army and the three youngest ones was in the Union army here.

"[The two boys that were in the southern army were] Well, Thomas A [*sic* W.] and John B., those were the two oldest boys. And they lived and died here, they both died here in this county. But they was in the Rebel Army, that's what they all called it. But the rest of 'em was in the Union army, they belonged to the 3rd Arkansas, and they joined the army took them out of here, you know. They [Thomas W Morrison] went from here to Louisiana and served, and Uncle John, Uncle Tom was captured by the Union Army in Tennessee somewhere, and they sent him to Indianapolis, and he stayed there 21 months, and they paroled him home. When he came back in, he just lay around, they was brothers all in here, and he just lay around, never was bothered. Everybody that was in the war, and they'd round up the jayhawkers, and they'd go, and there wasn't no jail, they just killed them off. They's some killed on this creek that never was buried, and I don't know how many. I heard Dad say they lined up some of them down here, back where Nobe Harness is, and shot them, and they just left them. And they killed one right down here at the lower end of Hubert's [? Not clear] field, and left him. And Captain Brand when they killed him right around yonder under a point, that was the captain of the bunch, they killed him and covered him up in a clay root, where a tree had burned right there.

"[Tell me something about Captain Brand] Captain Brand, he was a man come in here from Missouri, just a-stealing and a-robbing, and he had a bunch with him. There was a lot of Missouri fellows and some of them lived right here. And some of the bunch who killed grandfather was neighbor boys, and in the bunch that killed him. One of my uncles killed one of them 14 years after the Civil War, between here and Eureka Springs. He met him, and he just took out his pistol and shot him. Left him laying by the side of the road. It'd been 14 years since he, he was one of those that screwed his hands in his vice. See, they knew about it and they ain't saying. Aunt Sarah Horton, Nettie Jennings' mother, she just begged him all the time, tell these boys the money. She thought they was going to kill him. They'd hang him till he was nearly dead. Then they'd let him down, he'd revive up, they'd think he'd tell, he wouldn't do it. And they shot him and killed him, and they buried him right in the corner of his yard, and he's there yet. He's buried there, and my mother and my grandmother buried him. I heard mother say they didn't cover him over two feet deep, they didn't have no way of digging the grave. Yes, I eyed his grave not long ago. Now that's the way they done him. And the same day that they killed my [Grand]father they killed old man Mills, went around on down and killed my [Grand]pa. And old man Mills had a daughter, and they had him tied in a chair, burned his feet, had them some coals, and she picked up a chair and hit one of them, and they shot her down, killed her. Yeah, shot her right through the heart.

"[They killed your] grandfather, Thomas A [*sic* C.] Morrison. Right on down there, they killed old man Mills and killed him. Then they went right on over to Uncle Bill Bollinger's, the same bunch. And he had a boy about 14 year old, well it was a half brother my father had. [William Bollinger was son of Mary Ann Cornett by first husband, William Bollinger.] Andy Bollinger, a boy about 13 or 14, and he wouldn't tell them where his father was and they shot him down, that same bunch. And the next day, they told my mother they was going to go over to get her old dad [Chris Denton], and she said he may get some of you 'ens, the time of it. That was when they killed my grandfather. They went over there the next day

Media Objects for Thomas Calvin MORRISON


Jayhawkers and Bushwhackers

Thomas Morrison Killed

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1800 - 1864

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and had a battle on Meadow Creek ....
"Grandfather Denton, they tackled him like they was going to wind his men up, and they got wound up. I'll tell you now what wound up Bill Dark. The next day one of Grandpap's men went and waylaid Bill Dark, flipped up and shot him right in the forehead with a rifle gun, killed him. And the rest of them, Grandpap got after them, you, know, and run them down river, down to the Middle Settlement, that's called Shirley now. The 3rd Arkansas Company there had them caught, and had them surrounded and captured every one of them. And I can tell you another thing, I heard my Dad say. Old John Fendley was in it, John Wilson Gray, and old Jim Bratton and old John [Bratton], that was the advance guard. The first captured seven of 'em, and taken them off up the holler. Old Ben Taylor says take 'em off and do whatever you please with them. And that meant kill them, that's all it meant. They taken them off up the holler, and there's a big log crossing the holler, and they hung them from that log and just went off and left them kicking.
"Yeah, that was where they caught them and that wound up Dark's men. There was one that got away from them. Right out here they brought a lot of them right at this creek. Brand and them, I'll tell that, there was one of them that got away from them. Right out here on the mountain, on the side of the highway [Ark 66], there's a lot of them buried there, and they got 11 of them down in the holler there. I've been down where it was, they just lined them up on the bluff above and they fell off, and they just lay there. And there was one of them bunch, a young fellow that run away from them, and I heard Dad say, now get this: 500 shots fired at him running down that holler and they never did get him. Yeah, they was shooting downhill at him, you know, and they'd get behind trees and he'd run, and sure enough they can't get it on there. That was the jayhawkers they wound up. And that wound up Brand's men up, all but one.
"Captain Brand. And Pa said they lined up him to shoot him right up here in [undecipherable name] field is where they killed him. Said if they'd turn him loose, and give him his guns to go back to Missouri, he'd take them to 150 thousand dollars in gold in an hour and a half and give it to them. They wouldn't do it. They told him they wasn't after his gold, they was after him. They shot him, and he was buried there.
"[Was Captain Brand a Confederate?] No, he was a jayhawker! He didn't belong to neither one. No, they was jayhawkers, they just scouted and killing and robbing. And I'll tell you another story. Before that, two of his men, they just camped here and yonder, [stealing] whatever they could find off of Cellar Creek, and was roaming down at the mouth of the creek, right plumb where that there church house, school house stands down there, they had a little pasture and they loved it there. And old man Reece–one of Dad's [brothers], Uncle Dave, he'd married old man Reece's daughter [Isabella]. They slipped down there and hid right down in a cedar glade right close to where they was turning the cattle out. One of them was down there and they laid the fence down, the others was running them out. My uncle shot him right across the gap there and he fell across the gap. And just guessed he killed him. And all those cattle come out, jumped out, come back up the creek, and all come home. I heard Grandma Mabrey say lots of times, she had a good cow, had a right young calf about a week old, and they took the cow and left the calf. She wondered how she'd ever raise it, nothing to raise it on. And then the next morning about ten o'clock the cow come back home bawling for her calf. Yep. There was a lot of these battles up in these hills, that's nothing new, history tells that. .....
"Captain Brand, that's what Dad called him. Pa said he was as fine a looking man as he ever looked at. And nervy with it. He wouldn't let them shoot him in the back, he turned his face. Yeah. And one of my Dad's, one of my grandfather's nephews is one of the two that donated to shoot him. See, if two shoot him they get one of them a loaded cartridge and one a blank [so each one] didn't want to think [that he'd killed him]. I heard him say this. We always called him Uncle Sam, but he's just a cousin to Dad. His Dad, ... was as a brother to my great-grandfather. ... My grandfather settled right down here at the mouth of this creek, right where Willie Martin lives. He built a huge log house out of cedar. And he come here and he put in the water mill down on Big Creek, and it ground for Searcy County."
Another version of the story which I think relates to Thomas Morrison's death is the bit in Martha Mills Brown's memoirs published in this issue. It said:
"Well, I remember one instance of a neighbor of ours whose hair was white as cotton. He had several sons in the Federal army but one was in the rebel army. The old man and his wife, two daughters and one daughter-in-law lived together. A gang of soldiers or men came through the country, Colonel [Sidney Drake] Jackman's men, Captain Ciscle [Cecil] Co., they caught up the old man and asked him where his sons were. He told them he did not know, they told him he was lying, that his sons were in hiding and he knew where they were. The old man did not know that his sons were in the army. They pulled his fingernails out by the roots, stripped off his clothing, tied two ropes around his neck and then tied them to two of their saddles and ran up a gravelly hill dragging the old man. When they reached the top, they raised him to his feet and repeated their question. He told them he did not know and they told him they would hang him until he was dead if he did not tell where his boys were. He was permitted to put on his clothes, they swung him up by the neck to a limb, the limb broke and he fell to the ground. Then they ordered him to show them to his home which was about one mile away, he was driven home like a brute into the presence of his old wife and daughters, there they repeated the question. The old man answered, "I have told you the truth." After abusing the family they took the man about a quarter of a mile from the house and shot him several times and left him. The family heard the shots of the gun and went. They found the old man dead. They carried him home and dug a shallow grave in the edge of the yard and buried him. The neighbor women were afraid to help them. This was in the summer of '64."
We have two major versions of the story: one that he was killed by Captain Horace H Brand's men in February 1864, the other that he was killed by Captain John Cecil's men in the summer-June or later-1864. I will note that there are various sub versions of these stories in which the details vary, i.e. was he shot in the back or in the front, how many and who helped bury him, etc. I will try to walk through the two major versions and will appreciate any more information whether it agrees with anything I have said or not.
According to Morrison researchers, Thomas (Calvin is general accepted as a middle name, but I have not found it in any records I have seen) Morrison was born June 2, 1800 in Tennessee. Census records for 1850 and 1860 indicate he was born about 1800 Tennessee. He married Mary Ann Cornett Bollinger, a widow with two children, about 1830 in either Jackson County, Alabama or Hamilton County, Tennessee. After the 1830 census (I find a Thomas Morrison, age 30-40, with female 20-30, and two females 15-20 in 1830 Hawkins County, Tennessee census.) They moved to Johnson County, Illinois where the first four boys were born. In 1842 Thomas Morrison moved to Searcy County. He is not in the 1842 Tax List completed August 3, 1842, but son Lewis Calvin Morrison claimed birth October 10, 1842 in Searcy County. Thomas is on the 1843 tax list.
In 1850 Searcy County census, Thomas Morrison, age 50, born Tennessee is shown with wife Mary, age 43, born Virginia and children: Thomas W age 17 born Illinois, John B age 15 born Illinois, James C [*sic* S] age11 born Illinois, David A age 10, born Illinois, Lewis C age 7 born Arkansas, Mary Ann age 5 born Arkansas, Sarah J age 3 months born Arkansas and mother-in-law Elizabeth Cornett age 64 born Virginia and (niece ?) Jennet Cornett, age 11, born Tennessee.
In 1854, for the first time, Thomas Morrison is taxed for 40 acres. (Desmond Walls Allen's *Index to the Tract Books for Izard and Stone Counties in Arkansas* has Thomas Morrison obtaining land in 1853 and 1854 located in Section 3, 14 N, 13 W, but the BLM web site does not show this nor does Desmond's *Arkansas Land Patents: Stone County*. When a land transfer shows up in the Tract Books but not on the BLM website, this usually means the land was obtained with a land warrant based on someone's, not necessarily the purchaser's, military service. I have a copy of the Tract Books for Searcy County as it exists now, but do not have for 14 N 13W or 15 N 13 W which used to be in Searcy County, but were taken in 1873 to create Stone County.) On June 16, 1856, he bought from the US government 40 acres located at SENE Sec 3, 14 N 13 W and on July 1, 1859 he bought another 40 acres-the NWSW Sec 2, 14 N 13W, which adjoined his 1856 acreage. On May 1, 1860 he bought two more 40-acre parcels, SENW Sec 3, 14 N 13 W and SWSW Sec 35, 15 N 13 W. (This land is located on the old Lebanon to Batesville road, now Ark Hwy 66, about half a mile east of Timbo.) In 1855 and 1856 Thomas Morrison was taxed for 212 acres, but the holdings are not identified. In 1858 he is taxed for 212 acres in Sec 3, 14 N 13 W plus 40 acres in Sec 16, 15 N 14 W (although all the 13 W property is in Stone County, this 14 W property is in present day Searcy County on Ark Hwy 74 about two miles west of Landis). In 1862 he is only taxed for land in Sec 35, 15 N 13 W. In 1865, Thomas Morrison Jr is taxed as administrator for his father's land in Sec 3, 14 N 13 W. In 1866, T W Morrison, as administrator, is taxed for 80 acres in Sec 3, 14 N 13 W and 252 acres in Sec 2, 14 N 13 W and 40 acres in Sec 16, 15 N 14 W.
Family tradition reports that he had a mill and/or a store and that he had cash money stashed away, and this was the reason he was tortured and murdered.

My Family Tree
by pjaha on 27 Jan 2011

morgan
by kenberlybaughman on 13 Feb 2010

Horton Janeczek Family Tree
by lojaneczek on 6 Sep 2012

My Family
by DArchambo on 17 Apr 2012

Morrison Family Branches
by twigsandleaves on 17 Apr 2012

...and 3 other users.

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In 1860 census, family 588, Thomas Morrison is age 60, born Tennessee and is farming and trading. He is with wife Mary age 53, born Virginia, son Lewis age 18, born Arkansas and daughter Sarah, age 11 born Arkansas. Next door, family 589, is son John B age 25 born Arkansas (*sic*) with wife Martha (Reece) age 20 born Indiana. Next household 590 is son David A Morrison age 20 born Arkansas (*sic*) with wife Isabel (Reece) age 18 born Indiana. Next in 591 is Thomas W Morrison age 27 born Illinois and wife Martha (Gray) with children James 3, Mary 2 and Hannah six months. In the next house, family 593 is son-in-law James A Horton age 21 born Tennessee and his wife, Morrison's daughter Mary age 16 born Arkansas and James and Mary's son Thomas age 7 months.

On the eve of the Civil War the tax records indicate Thomas Morrison was relatively well to do for 1860 Searcy County. He owned at least 372 acres, and was engaged in trading and probably had a grist mill. His sons were all old enough to start families and begin their own farms, also they were old enough for military service and, with the exception of the youngest, Lewis Calvin, were in the 45th Arkansas Militia which rounded up the Peace Society men. Sons David A and John B were in Company A (Big Flat township) and sons James S and Thomas W were in Company E (Locust Grove) 45th Arkansas Militia when they were called up November 22, 1861, to put down the Peace Society. This service lasted only a month and they were discharged December 20. They all joined the Confederate companies that were organizing in the neighborhood. Lewis C Morrison, the youngest, was the first to go into Confederate service, perhaps because he was not married. He joined Captain John W Lawrence's Company K, 16th Arkansas Infantry, November 5, 1861. This company was made up of men from Locust Grove and Campbell townships, Searcy County. After the Battle of Pea Ridge, his regiment was transferred east of the Mississippi River and he deserted June 2, 1862 at Gun Town, Mississippi during the Confederate's retreat from Corinth, Mississippi, and returned to Searcy County.

On May 21, 1862, shortly after the Confederate Conscription Act was passed April 16, 1862, Waddy T Hunt raised Company F, 27th Arkansas Infantry at Locust Grove. The Morrison boys David A, James S, John B and Thomas W all enlisted, along with their brother-in-law James A Horton and future brother-in-law PHT Horton. David Morrison received a disability discharge and returned to Searcy County, but John B and James S both deserted December 18, 1862. The two Horton brothers, James A and PHT went AWOL February 28, 1863, and never rejoined. Thomas W stayed with the Confederate colors, but with an attempt at desertion November 5, 1862. He went with the 27th Arkansas to Louisiana to oppose Federal General Banks' attempt to capture the Red River. He is listed as a deserter at Delhi, Louisiana July 16, 1863, then was captured by Federal forces at Jackson, Mississippi July 23, 1863 and sent to military prison camp at Camp Morton, Indiana where he was held until the end of the war and released on oath May 22, 1865. He was not always with his unit, however, at some time during the war when "the country had just begun to realize war in its most dreaded form, the guerillas and bushwhackers had come" that Thomas Morrison discovered the sink hole and cave near Landis, later known as Pemberton's Cave. (*The Mountain Wave*, August 25, 1892).

Like many Searcy County men who were in Confederate service at the beginning of the War and either left at the end of their one-year enlistment or deserted, the Morrison boys came home and hid out until they could, or had to, join the Union army. David A Morrison enlisted December 21, 1863 in Wiley's Cove and was mustered in February 1, 1864 as a blacksmith in Company K, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry (Union). On February 1, 1864, James A Horton joined Company K, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry, and Lewis C Morrison joined Company I, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry. (Company I was commanded by Captain Archibald D Napier, the "Captain Napier" whom the murderers of Caleb Mills claimed to be.) James S Morrison had deserted Company F, July 21, 1862, just two months after enlisting, been arrested on July 24th and pardoned and restored to his company July 26th. He had definitely deserted December 18, 1862 with brother John B Morrison, then had apparently taken an oath to the US government (to abstain from taking up arms against the US? to remain away from north Arkansas?) James returned to his home near Big Flat and became a civilian. I do not know anything about John B Morrison's further military activities or where he was. His wife Martha Reece Morrison continued to have children every year or two all during the 1860s, born in Arkansas, indicating John B was probably in Arkansas too. He was taxed in Searcy County in 1862 and in 1865 (as administrator for A. Blassingame). John B Morrison is mentioned in George W Reece's story (as well as by Apsie Morrison) of the Reeces and David and John B catching the jayhawkers near Big Flat in 1864 (see "The Civil War" in this issue).

By January 1864, Thomas Morrison owned about 372 acres, had a grist mill and a store where he traded. His youngest son Lewis Calvin had married in June the previous year and Rebecca Jane, Lewis' wife, was probably living with Thomas and Mary his wife. (Lewis and Rebecca were married June 14, 1863 according to his pension application. Lewis Calvin Morrison had been living with his parents in 1860.) I do not know where the other four sons and James Horton, Thomas' son-in-law were. They had all lived nearby in 1860. At least three of the boys were around, probably hiding out: James S and John B had both deserted December 18, 1862, and I don't know where they were in 1863. Thomas W was a prisoner of war in Indiana and David A had joined the Federal 3rd Arkansas Cavalry.

The last week of September 1863, Confederate Colonel J. O. Shelby began a raid into Missouri from Arkadelphia, Arkansas, to take Federal pressure off the retreating Confederates who had just lost Little Rock to the Federals. Captain Horace H Brand, who was active in the Missouri Confederate forces and had been given a CSA captaincy in March 1863, accompanied Shelby as far as Huntsville, under recruiting orders from Confederate Missouri Governor Reynolds. He was headed to northeast Arkansas where recruits were believed to be in abundance. Shelby gave him a strong escort and orders to gather his men rapidly and threaten Rolla, Missouri. Brand, after leaving Shelby's force at Huntsville in October, proceeded to northeast Arkansas and recruited, according to Edwards' *Shelby and His Men*, 800 soldiers. He did make a diversion into Missouri and returned to northeast Arkansas. He furloughed his men home to obtain fresh horses and clothing, and was left with only a few men-six or eight. Missouri troops without any regular supply system came and went as their leaders permitted and lived off of the Arkansas people. Arkansas Confederate Brigadier General Dandridge H McRea was in command of northeast Arkansas and had had trouble with Brand and his men before, and-probably in early February 1864-sent a company under Captain George W Rutherford to arrest Brand.

Apsie Morrison said that Thomas Morrison was murdered by Captain Brand's men at the same time that they killed Caleb H Mills and Amanda. Apsie also reports the capture and execution of Brand and his men, as do others in the Campbell-Oxley area. Edwards' *Shelby and His Men* reports that Brand was killed by unnamed Confederates sent out by McRea. I am convinced that Brand and his six or eight men, including the displaced Missourians who were living in the area-Ellor Hancock, E. Abernathy and J Johnson as well as Searcy County Robert Cypert, were the culprits on the night of February 15, 1864, and that they were looking to torture and kill Unionists. Although not mentioned, they could have been drunk. Cypert in later years was an alcoholic, and Shelby reports when he gets to Batesville, that the Confederate soldiers are "steeped in the fumes of Memphis whisky." Apsie Morrison is my source for Captain Brand killing Mills and Thomas Morrison. There is oral tradition from others about Captain Brand getting captured and executed in the Campbell area, but no other independent source–that didn't start with Apsie Morrison–of Thomas being killed by the same people that killed Mills.

Mills' murderers first said they were Captain Napier's men. Archibald D. Napier, born about 1823 in Tennessee, was living in Pope County in 1860. He joined the 3rd Arkansas Cavalry (Union) in Pope County as a 1st Lieutenant and was sent out on recruiting duty to Searcy County and surrounding area. In December 1863 he raided the Confederate Nitre Mine north of Big Flat and several Confederate nitre miners went with him to join the Union army. Napier did raise Company I, and was mustered in as its captain February 14, 1864. Napier did not have a reputation for kindness toward non-Unionists. So Captain Napier was active in the Big Flat area and Locust Grove area and would have been a Union officer's name the locals would have known. James S Morrison later joined Company I when he entered Federal service.

That Wade Campbell tried to warn Mills and get him to hide in the woods the night he was killed, indicates that the jayhawkers were doing things that were making themselves known. Their activities were not secret and those who felt threatened fled to the woods. That the Campbells were Confederate sympathizers and Mills a "Union man" made no difference.

Martha Mills Brown says that they were robbed several times after her father was killed in February and before they left in August. Undoubtedly, the Morrisons were too. Everyone was. Bill Dark (mentioned by Apsie Morrison), a notorious jayhawker and Confederate guerrilla leader was active in western Stone County, may have been killed by February, 1864. See Michael A Davis, "The Legend of Bill Dark: Guerrilla Warfare, Oral History, and the Unmaking of an Arkansas Bushwhacker," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Winter, 1999, for a review of the Bill Dark material.

So, in the spring of 1864 Thomas W Morrison is a Confederate soldier POW in Indiana, John B is at home in Searcy County, as is James S. David A. and Lewis Calvin are in the Union Army, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry, as is son-in-law James A

Horton. Lewis Calvin Morrison was married June 24, 1863 (according to his Federal pension application) and his wife Rebecca Jane Denton Morrison is probably living with her Morrison in-laws. Her husband Lewis Calvin was living with his parents in 1860, and I assume that she moved in with them, rather than set up a separate house. Two independent sources (Nettie Horton Jennings and Apsie Morrison) both report that she helped bury Thomas Morrison–in either February 1864 or summer 1864, whenever he was killed.

Lewis Calvin Morrison, private, Company I, 3rd Arkansas, goes AWOL (listed as deserted) May 20, 1864. On July 11, 1864 he returned to duty. He lost pay from May 25 to July 11, 1864.

Looking at Martha Mills Brown's story of the cotton-haired old man who was tortured and killed in the summer of 1864, she says that " Colonel [Sidney Drake] Jackman's men, Captain Ciscle [Cecil] Co." killed him.

It fits the Confederate troop movements for Captain John Cecil's Company F, Jackman's Regiment, to be traveling past Thomas Morrison's house in June 1864 on the Lebanon to Batesville road. John Cecil born about 1828 in Tennessee was a Newton County resident in 1860. He had been sheriff in 1846-50 and 1856-58. He had served with Major W. H. Brooks' Battalion from June 22, 1861, and was left behind on detached service, and served again in Co. D, Harrell's Arkansas Cavalry from March 10, 1863. He later became leader of a Confederate Independent Company (guerrilla) operating in Newton County. He is called "Sissel", indicating that was the way they pronounced "Cecil", in the *Official Records* during 1864.

Sometime during the first two weeks of April 1864, General Sterling Price ordered Colonel Sidney Drake Jackman to northwest Arkansas and southeast Missouri to recruit a brigade for Jackman. Jackman went straight to Newton County where he began collecting independent companies. Captain John Cecil's company became Company F, Captain James H Love's became Company G. (This deduction is from studying Arkansas Confederate pension applications linking a company letter designation with either Nichols or Jackman's regiment. Jackman was promoted and his regiment was given to Nichols.) Jackman's movements in April-August 1864 are partially documented in George W Maddox's *Hard Trials and Tribulations of an Old Confederate Soldier*. He wrote that he was with Jackman in Newton County when on May 3, 1864, they raided a Union wagon train on Richland Creek, Searcy County. The *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* cited as *Official Records* confirm their attack. John Cecil, called Sissel in the *Official Records*, was reported in the Newton-Searcy county area from April 1 to 23. Jackman received several instructions from General J. O. Shelby in May and June: 1) May 19, 1864, to "collect together all squads of men who may be operating in the section of country in which you may be operating, and cause them to enter the regular service" and "You will send details under good officers to arrest all bands of jayhawkers, whether Southern or Union, who may be committing outrages upon the citizens." 2) May 21, 1864, "You will remain in the section of country you now hold as long as you may deem necessary to enlist and conscript every man between the ages of sixteen and fifty years." 3) June 11, 1864, Augusta, Ark. "Immediately upon receipt of this you will move with your command in this direction and report to these headquarters as soon as possible." 4) June 22, 1864, "The brigadier-general commanding has heard many complaints of the conduct of your men. He directs me to say to you that your orders on the subject of jayhawking, rigid as they are, must be enforced. ... It is well known that your position at present is a difficult one, but you must do the best you can until you can get your regiment with the brigade when you can properly control them." *Official Records*, Vol XXXIV, Parts III & IV.

We have substantiated, I believe, with the information above, the plausibility that Captain John Cecil's Company F, Jackman's Regiment, could easily have been traveling the Lebanon to Batesville road in June 1864, and were so undisciplined as to commit the murder of the old man described by Martha Mills Brown. That she says that Cecil's men were trying to locate the old man's sons, fits in with Jackman's orders to conscript every man between 16 and 50.

Connie Ivy wrote Errol Lewis in 1993: "Grandpa [a grandson of James S Morrison] can tell a lot of interesting stories. He told me (in 1974) that Thomas Calvin was on his way to see Bill Bolinger when the jayhawkers found him. After Thomas Calvin was killed, Grandpa Sabe [James Sabert Morrison 1837-1901] decided to join the war. He walked to Leslie and joined. His records show he joined the union army in 1864 so this also shows when Thomas was killed. Anyway, after Thomas was killed, he went to the smokehouse and whittled. Sarah, his sister, put a piece of cornbread under her apron and took it to him. He told her what he was planning to do and she asked him if he wanted to see his dad first. He was afraid the jayhawkers would see him so he didn't." James Morrison, a civilian using Big Flat post office, was captured July 4, 1864 in Searcy County by Captain David Hamilton's Company K, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry, who had been sent to Searcy County to break up a company organizing to join Shelby. He captured one captain (David C Meadows), two lieutenants and 53 men of Company F, Fristoe's Missouri Cavalry. James Morrison, listed as a civilian may have been one of those 53 men. Only 25 of the 53 are readily identified with Meadow's company. Morrison, with the others captured, was incarcerated July 8, 1864, charged with violation of oath. He was released October 15 [?], 1864 by order of Major General Steele. He enlisted August 25, 1864 in Company I, 3rd Arkansas Cavalry. (Company I was the company that his brother Lewis Calvin belonged to. Lewis Calvin had been AWOL from May 20/25 to July 11, 1864. Brother David A belonged to the Company K which arrested James Sabert.) Allowing for a bit of creative memory, if James S Morrison left to join the Union Army the day after his father Thomas Calvin was killed–and if Jackman's pressure to recruit for the Confederates was so strong, one could well be forced to make a decision and set off the join the Union army–this would make Thomas' death about July 1st, give or take a few days. Also, did Lewis Calvin's presence at home (presumably that is where he went when AWOL) when James S decided to join, play a part in his decision?

If we put Martha Mills Brown's story together with the James Sabert Morrison's story we come up with:

"a neighbor of ours whose hair was white as cotton. He had several sons in the Federal army [David A and Lewis Calvin] but one was in the rebel army [Thomas W]. The old man and his wife, two daughters [Mary Ann Horton, wife of James A. Horton and Sarah] and one daughter-in-law [Rebecca Jane, Lewis Calvin's wife] lived together. A gang of soldiers or men came through the country, Colonel [Sidney Drake] Jackman's men, Captain Ciscle [Cecil] Co., they caught up the old man (Thomas Calvin was on his way to see Bill Bolinger when the jayhawkers found him-James S story) and asked him where his sons were [CSA interested in conscripts]. He told them he did not know, they told him he was lying, that his sons were in hiding and he knew where they were. The old man did not know that his sons were in the army. They pulled his fingernails out by the roots, stripped off his clothing, tied two ropes around his neck and then tied them to two of their saddles and ran up a gravelly hill dragging the old man. When they reached the top, they raised him to his feet and repeated their question. He told them he did not know and they told him they would hang him until he was dead if he did not tell where his boys were. He was permitted to put on his clothes, they swung him up by the neck to a limb, the limb broke and he fell to the ground. Then they ordered him to show them to his home which was about one mile away, [he was not captured at home; he was on his way to Bill Bolinger's] he was driven home like a brute into the presence of his old wife and daughters, there they repeated the question. The old man answered, "I have told you the truth." After abusing the family they took the man about a quarter of a mile from the house and shot him several times and left him. The family heard the shots of the gun and went. They found the old man dead. They carried him home and dug a shallow grave in the edge of the yard and buried him. The neighbor women were afraid to help them. This was in the summer of '64." (James S story-"Anyway, after Thomas was killed, he went to the smokehouse and whittled. Sarah, his sister, put a piece of cornbread under her apron and took it to him. He told her what he was planning to do and she asked him if he wanted to see his dad first. He was afraid the jayhawkers would see him so he didn't." James S may have gone to the smokehouse to hide, at least to reflect as he whittled, but he was afraid to show himself at the house, because Cecil's men may still have been around. Martha Mills Brown reported that the neighbor women were afraid to help them. Sister Sarah Jane took a piece of cornbread hidden under her apron to her brother James, indicating that she was afraid that someone would see her taking food to James in hiding. James was about to leave, but was afraid to go see his dead father, because Cecil's men would catch him.)

Whichever date and selection of murderers one chooses, the Morrison boys decide to get revenge. Apsie Morrison tells of one son killing a man 14 years after the event on the road to Eureka Springs. There is another story of David A and John B going to Missouri and talking with an unidentified man who tells about killing Thomas Morrison, so they kill him. Betty Keeling Harris tells a story in her family that Aaron Keeling, a grandson of Andrew J Osborn was in the barbershop in Marshall when one of Thomas Morrison's grandsons came in for a haircut. In the barbershop conversation Morrison told of his Uncle John Morrison going to Missouri and killing Andrew J Osborn. It is not clear whether he mentioned that he thought Osborn had been in the bunch that killed Thomas Morrison. Aaron Keeling went home and told his family what he had heard and it became part of the family lore. Andrew J Osborn was a Mexican War veteran and was killed October 11, 1864 near Ozark, Missouri. According to Keeling/Osborn family tradition Andrew J Osborn had been shocking wheat

with his sons Dick and Clay, the day he was killed. A. J. told the boys to pay attention and learn how to shock as that day's shocking might be the last he ever did. A bit later, as they were returning home from the field, some men rode toward the three Osborns and one of the boys urged his father to run, but he did not, and the men rode up and killed Andrew J.

Andrew J Osborn born about 1816 in Giles County, Tennessee, came to Searcy County before 1844. He married Julia Frances Gabriela Augusta Tutt, daughter of Benjamin Tutt, on February 5, 1844 at Point Peter, Searcy County. He had gone with James H Love and other Searcy County men to Little Rock then on to Washington, Arkansas, to enlist in the 1st Arkansas Mounted Volunteers for the Mexican War. During the Civil War he had enlisted in Captain Love's Co. K, 14th Arkansas Infantry August 5, 1861 at Yellville. He was discharged August 5, 1862. There are no records to show that he had other Civil War service, but Confederate records are unreliable in that so many were lost or destroyed. If Osborn had been with one of the two possible bands that may have killed Thomas Morrison, it would have been either 1) February 15, 1864 with Brand or 2) June 1864 with Jackman. Both dates and bands are possible, because we do not know everyone that was with either group. However, Brand is unlikely as most of his men were Missourians gathered from eastern Arkansas or maybe eastern Stone County . In 1860 census, Osborn is living in Tomahawk township, and I think it unlikely that he would have been with Brand. On the other hand, based on Osborn's previous association with Captain Harry Love, both during the Mexican War and in company K, 14th Arkansas Infantry, Osborn could have been with a subsequent Love company, and he had several. There are no muster rolls for Jackman/Nichol regiment that I know of, and Love may have been traveling east to Batesville with Jackman and Cecil. We do know that Love with Company G, Jackman's Regiment, did go to the Batesville area and then on CSA General Sterling Prices Fall 1864 raid into Missouri from pension records and Mollie Williams *A Thrilling Romance of the Civil War*. But would, once enlisted in Love's company in June, he be allowed to leave just before a big raid for which the company was organized, and take his family to Missouri, and start a wheat crop which he was gathering in October 11? It doesn't sound likely.

There are lots of questions to be answered with the Thomas Morrison story. I would hope that other researchers who have variations on this story, or any more information to offer, will please write to me. Even if we don't come to any conclusions about when and by whom Thomas Morrison was killed, or what revenge which of his boys took upon whom, more information will add to the collection, and it might give someone a clue to what really happened. So PLEASE WRITE.

[With thanks to my sources: Betty J Harris, Errol Lewis, Glenn Morrison & Ralph Morrison.]

IRONPONEY50 added this on 18 Feb 2010

littlebritches102 originally submitted this to Rorie Family Tree on 5 Nov 2009

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