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Stories from Family and Friends
Sumner County and Middle Tennessee Region

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Introduction

What you are about to read is a concentration of stories, which have been told to me by means of both family and friends. I have accumulated these in both story telling situations and on a personal basis.

Personal Background

I was born in Gallatin, TN April 5, 1961 to ~~Mr. and Mrs.~~ James and Ruth McDougal. I have lived in Gallatin all of my life. My father, James William McDougal is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall and Jetty McDougal. My Father, Grandmother, and Grandfather were born and raised just about 10 miles north of Gallatin. My mother, Vada Ruth McDougal is the daughter of (Mr. and Mrs.) John and Lena Brown. My Mother, Grandmother, and Grandfather were born and raised in Scottsville, KY and later moved to Gallatin. Both of my mother's parents are deceased. Both my mother and father are from rather large families; my mother is one of seven children. She has 3 sisters and 3 brothers. My father is one of 5 children. He has one brother and 3 sisters.

I, as well as my family, am from Scotch-Irish decent.

Most of my stories that come from my family are of my father's side of the family.

Stories

"The Casket" and "The Green Light"

Once when I was younger, I guess about 14 at the time, I was over visiting my grandmother and grandfather McDougal. It was dark outside and of all things it was storming at the time. Well, the family was together in the living room and some how a story telling session started. Out of all the stories that were told that night two stayed with me. They were told by both my Grandmother Jetty McDougal and my Grandfather Marshall McDougal. As we were listening, my Grandmother was telling a story she had heard. "One day while I was at home with some friends, a lady came to visit my mother. While they were talking I overheard the lady saying that for some reason or another she wished she was dead.

Well, it was only about a few minutes later my mother said there was a funeral car pulling up into the driveway and that there was no driver. Then all the sudden the door flew open and a casket rolled into the room and it opened up. Just as soon as it opened up, it disappeared." ¹ My grandfather which was in the room at the time started in afterwards. "When we were living in the old house, every night after supper I would go down to the barn to feed. Just as soon as I would get down by the fence there would be this green light that would follow me down to the barn and back to the house. It looked like a green ball and it would follow me to the barn and back." When I ask him what happened to the light he replied, "One night when I went to feed it wasn't there and I haven't seen it since." ²

"The Haunted School House"

When I was about ten years old I was over my Grandfather Browns house and he was talking to me on the front porch. He told me a story about one time when he went hunting. "I was out bird hunting one day and I was walking down the old gravel road that led down by an old school house. I had my dogs with me and just as soon as we got down in front of that school house the dogs started barking. As the dogs were barking I heard a scream, sounded like a woman screaming. I turned around to see what was happening and then the doors of the school house flew open and a ball of fire came out of the doors. I was so scared that I beat the dogs home."³

"The Russellville Girl"

I remember one day while at home, I guess I was about 13 years old, it was a saturday and was raining. My mother wouldn't let my sister (Roxanne) go over to a friend's house to play. My sister was upset about the weather and my mother told us a story about an incident which happened in Russellville,

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Kentucky. "One day in Russellville, it was storming and the mother told her daughter that she could not go out on a date and that the daughter was so upset that she cursed God. Afterwards, a bolt of lightning came down from heaven and hit the little girl and killed her leaving the imprint of the girls face on the glass. They tried everything to get the girl's face off the glass but it stayed there." 4

"The Possessed ^{see} Boy"

While at home one day after work my father came home and told me about a story a man had told him at the shop. I guess I was about 20 at the time. Dad said that he knew the man and that the man was in tears after he had talked to him. The man explained, "I had a son who was about six years old and that the boy would start screaming and throwing things and then would just stop and say, "The Devil made me do it daddy," He said one day he went home and the son was playing happily and then all the sudden the boy started throwing a fit and broke a glass. Afterwards, the boy calmed down and looked at his father and mother crying and said, the Devil made me do it," 5

"The Man God Struck Down"

One day after church was over, I went over to my uncle's house to pick up my cousin, Tim Link. While I was there we were talking about church and church business when my uncle (Melvin "Fuzzy" Link) told me about this man that tried to keep his wife from going to revival. "Revival was going on at church and this one man would not let his wife go. He even told the preacher that neither he nor she would be attending. Well, the wife decided that she would go one night. While service was going on, the husband came into church and took the wife out of church and went home. The husband beat the wife. The very next day the husband was working out in the field and a storm came up and

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the man was killed by lightning. Where the man was killed the grass was killed also and from that day, nothing has grown on that spot of ground."⁶

"Phillip's Mountain"

Just this past summer when I was home, I had just gotten back from Airborne school when a couple of friends and I were over Steve Huffman's trailer. The lights were out and it was dark outside. It was about 11:00 p.m. We were sitting around telling stories when Steve Cantrell started to tell a story about the Devil Worshipers at Phillips Mountain. "Remember about a couple of years ago there was an article in the paper about those dogs being stolen or missing. Well, over on Phillip's Mountain a bunch of those dogs were found, mutilated. They say that the devil worshipers would use them as sacrifice. If you go down there, there is a house where a man lives that has seen them and he was on his way to report them. He was caught and his tongue was cut out. And if you were to go by there late at night in a car, it is said that the old man would come out and yell at you and try to tell you not to go up the road which leads to Phillip's Mountain."⁷ One night while me and a friend by the name of Mark Scott was out in the Jeep driving in that area we found two calves laying on the side of the road. We stopped the Jeep and got out to take a look. The horns, eyes and tails were missing. That was enough for us to know to get in the Jeep and get out of Dodge - fast.

"The Bible"

While I was in high school, a junior I believe, I was working at a Department store called Freds. Well, one night while we were closing up the store, the assistant manager Doug Truelove, told me a story about an unusual car accident in Columbia, Tennessee. "One morning on my way to work I read in the paper about a car that was hit by a train and killed 3 people. I went to work and a friend

of mine walked in and asked me if I knew about the accident that happened last night. I told him that I read about it in the paper. He told me that the three boys broke into the church and stole the big Bible that was on the podium and put it in the trunk of their car. The man that lived next door to the church saw them do it. Later after the car was hit by the train and the police were investigating, the man asked the police if they had found a Bible that the three boys stole. They couldn't find it. This morning, the man went into the church and found the Bible back on top of the podium." 8

Conclusion

These are a few stories that I think have affected me the most while I was growing up in Gallatin. I think the reason they stayed with me is because they were told by people I know and trust. Some of the stories are fact and are what I believe to be true. I think that in this day and time we don't hear as much of these types of things happening as we use to. I believe that people think too logical thinking that there's a logical answer to everything that happens. I believe that there is an answer to every strange thing that happens, but, I think we will not always know the reason, because we are not intended to know.

ENDNOTES

1. Mrs. Jetty McDougal, "The Cask~~e~~", Dobbins Pike, Gallatin, TN, 1975.
2. Mr. Marshall McDougal, "The Green Light", Dobbins Pike, Gallatin, TN, 1975.
3. Mr. John Alexander Brown, "The Haunted School House", Gallatin, TN, 1971.
4. Mrs. Ruth McDougal, "The Russellville Girl", 836 Duncan St. Gallatin, TN. 1981.
5. Mr. James McDougal, "The Possed Boy", 836 Duncan St., Gallatin, TN. 1981.
6. Mr. Melvin Link, "The Man God Strunck Down", Dobbins Pike, Gallatin, TN
7. Steve Cantrell, "Phillip's Mountain", Hwy 109 North Gallatin, TN. 1985.
8. Doug Truelove, "The Bible", Columbia, TN. 1978.

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