



CHRONICLE

The Newsletter of the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society • Fall 2007

The Neglected Statesman

by Gil Campbell¹

There were many able statesmen in the Territory South of the Ohio River. Andrew Jackson, John Sevier, Felix Grundy, Archibald Roane, and George Washington Campbell all seemed to capture the attention of the frontier. But another Tennessean was also very adroit in political affairs, yet he labored in relative obscurity. His legislative and judicial accomplishments were significant, and he was one of the finest orators to serve in Congress. While one historian labeled him “colorless,” his life hardly justifies that opinion and the neglect which has been accorded him. His name is Hugh Lawson White, and his story is well worth telling.

White was the eldest son and second child of General James White (1747-1821), the founder of Knoxville, who figured prominently in the Revolution as a member of the North Carolina militia and later served as a general in the Tennessee militia. The younger White was born on October 30, 1773, in Iredell County, North Carolina. When he was eight years old, his parents emigrated to an area which would, in 1796, become the eastern portion of the nation’s sixteenth state. Young Hugh served as a sentinel at White’s Fort, a village that his father had established in 1781, and which, in 1791, would be renamed “Knoxville” in honor of Henry Knox, President Washington’s first secretary of war.

In 1792, White volunteered for service in a militia led by Sevier that opposed the Creek and Cherokee Indians who had raided the Knoxville area. At the Battle of Etowah, White was credited with mortally wounding The King Fisher, one of the Cherokees’ most distinguished warriors, an act which led directly to the Indians’ defeat and made White a hero. The federal government, however, refused to compensate the militia for its service because the expedition was undertaken without the authority of President Washington and in violation of instructions from the Department of War to the Territorial Governor, William Blount, forbidding offensive operations against the Indians. White refused to let the issue of compensation die and, in 1796, he petitioned Congress for

continued on page 2

TSCHS President Andy Bennett Appointed to Court of Appeals

Just as we go to press, it has been announced that Governor Phil Bredesen has appointed none other than TSCHS President Andy D. Bennett to the Tennessee Court of Appeals. He will fill the vacancy created when Justice William Koch was elevated to the Supreme Court.

In the Governor’s announcement, he stated, “Andy Bennett has developed extensive experience in his career with the Office of Attorney General, bringing both administrative experience coupled with trial and appellate court experience to this appointment. I’m confident he will serve the Tennessee Court of Appeals with both honor and integrity.”

Andy graduated from Vanderbilt Law School and has been with the Attorney General’s Office since 1982. He has been Chief Deputy Attorney General since 1997. In 2004, the National Association of Attorneys General presented him The Marvin Award for Outstanding Leadership, Expertise and Achievement. He was elected to the Tennessee Bar Foundation in 2001. He has been a Board member of the TSCHS since 1999 and is serving his second one-year term as president.

The TSCHS warmly congratulates Andy, his wife, Sidney, and their son, Adam, as well as the other two outstanding finalists for the judgeship, Donald Caparella and Amy Hollars.

Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society Board of Directors

2007 OFFICERS

President

Andy D. Bennett,
Nashville

President Elect

Hon. Frank F. Drowota, III,
Nashville

Secretary

Andrée Blumstein,
Nashville

Treasurer

Jerry Adams, CPA,
Chattanooga

Immediate Past President

Andy D. Bennett,
Nashville

2007 DIRECTORS

Barri Bernstein,
Nashville

Marlene E. Moses,
Nashville

Martha S. L. Black,
Maryville

Randall D. Noel,
Memphis

Gilbert R. Campbell, Jr.,
Nashville

Jack W. Robinson, Sr.,
Nashville

Hon. Ben H. Cantrell,
Nashville

H. Max Speight
Paris

Michael W. Catalano,
Nashville

Libby Sykes,
Nashville

H. Franklin Chancey,
Cleveland

Ruth Anne Thompson,
Nashville

Hon. Frank F. Drowota, III,
Nashville

Guilford F. Thornton, Jr.,
Nashville

Beth DuPree,
Jackson

SENIOR DIRECTORS

Claudia S. Jack,
Columbia

James M. Glasgow, Jr.,
Union City

Charles H. Warfield,
Nashville

Lee M. Greer, III,
Paris

ADMINISTRATORS

Kate Eyler,
Nashville
(2007)

William L. Harbison,
Nashville

Linda W. Knight,
Nashville

Jeffrey L. Lay,
Dyersburg

Joy Day,
Nashville
(2008)

Marcia M. McMurray,
Cleveland

The Chronicle is published quarterly
by the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society,
P.O. Box 41008, Nashville, TN 37204
Linda W. Knight, editor

Statesman continued from page 1

remuneration, in the hope of establishing a precedent that might apply to his fellow soldiers. In 1797, Andrew Jackson, then a member of the House of Representatives, reported that the committee to which the petition was referred had favorably accepted it and the troops were ultimately paid.

In 1793, White was appointed secretary to Governor Blount, who was impressed with his "strong and elastic intellect and his habit of laborious application to whatever task he undertook,"² thereby earning Blount's life-long confidence and respect. In 1794, White left the territory to study mathematics in Philadelphia and to read law with the noted attorney, James Hopkins, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He returned to Tennessee in 1796 to enter the practice of law, and, by 1801, was considered one of the most successful attorneys in the state. In that same year, his legal acumen earned him election by the legislature to succeed Roane on the Superior Court of Law and Equity, the state's highest tribunal and a forerunner of the Tennessee Supreme Court. White was only twenty-eight years old when he took his seat on the court, and for the remainder of his life he would be known simply as "Judge White." Even his colleagues in the United States Senate would address him as "Judge" rather than as "Senator."

Judge White served on the Superior Court with Jackson, John Overton and David Campbell. He firmly believed that possession is, indeed, one of the strongest points of the law. This fact was especially significant in a new nation where land became the basis for the majority of litigation and where "squatters" were abundant. He was noted for his "nearly-eccentric punctuality"³ in attending sessions and for continuously urging reasonable speed in a trial's conduct.

In 1807, Judge White resigned from the bench to represent Knox County in the state Senate. In March 1808, he accepted an appointment by President Jefferson as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee but resigned within a year because he felt the office precluded him from serving in the state legislature, to which he had been duly elected. During the remainder of his state Senate term, White took the lead in revising the state's land laws and in reorganizing the system by which such laws were reviewed. At that

continued on page 4

A Message from the President

Join the TSCHS



Andy D. Bennett

I have occasionally been asked why a person would want to join the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society. There are many reasons to do so, and want to share some of them here.

1. The Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society promotes the study of our history. The history of the Tennessee Supreme Court is the history of our judicial system. Understanding that history allows us to make sense of the present. Everything that the Court has done over the past 210 years has led to the state of Tennessee law at this moment in time.

Everything has a history, and that history can be researched. If you want to understand why we have certain rules of evidence or why present case law on a matter holds a certain way, the answer is in our judicial history. The case law we uncover as we research an issue is really the history of that issue up to the present. The Supreme Court opinions also speak to present-day issues and are harbingers of the future. From the first Supreme Court opinion written to the one most recently issued, the Court's opinions are relevant to our daily lives and the legal profession. They help form and inform the rule of law, which allows us to live in a just and stable society.

History is more than a collection of dates and facts. History also asks and answers the question, "Why?" The history of the Tennessee Supreme Court and our judicial system is inextricably bound with the history of our state. Hence, the Court itself has referred to history many times to explain a particular practice or a constitutional provision.

2. The Society does good works, which deserve support. For example, the Society promoted the publication of *The History of the Tennessee Supreme Court*, which was named the

2002 history book of the year by the Tennessee Library Association. Also, the Society has placed plaques honoring all the appellate judges in Tennessee in the Supreme Court buildings in Jackson, Nashville and Knoxville. We recently held a very enjoyable and well attended dinner where all gathered to honor the members of the Supreme Court. These activities cost money and require the time and talents of many people. In turn, we hope to raise money and undertake new and expanded projects, such as preserving and cataloging the boxes of appellate court records, about which Supreme Court Clerk Mike Catalano wrote in our last Newsletter.

3. Participating will be fun. Learning about the past can be exciting. Historical figures become more real to us, and thus much more interesting. A common love of history gives lawyers yet another form of fellowship that we can enjoy. Supporting and participating in an organization that promotes history can be a fantastic experience.

So, join the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society today and learn more about the Justices of the Court and what they have contributed to our lives. You will not regret it. ❖

Andy D. Bennett

Editor's Note: President Andy Bennett authored a truly wonderful article about his parents, complete with incredible pictures, which was the cover story in a recent issue of the Tennessee Historical Quarterly, published by the Tennessee Historical Society. I hope that all of you will obtain a copy of this article and enjoy it as much as I did.

Linda W. Knight

point in his life, he still had little interest in politics, and when his term ended in 1809, he accepted an appointment to the newly-organized Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals. But White had a continuous problem with tuberculosis and, in 1815, resigned from the bench because he believed that his health would not allow him to perform the duties required of him.

In 1819, Spain ceded Florida to the United States, which then agreed to exonerate Spain from any future claims resulting from acts of piracy imputed to the Spanish government during the War of 1812. The federal government would indemnify any U. S. citizen who had a valid claim for loss or injury inflicted by Spanish interests. In 1821, President Monroe appointed White to a commission whose duty was to ascertain the amount of valid claims under the treaty of transfer. The task proved to be an arduous one. This exacerbated White's poor health, but the work of the commission would operate as an avenue of transition for him from state to national affairs. In 1825, Andrew Jackson resigned his seat in the United States Senate, and Judge White was unanimously elected by the state legislature to fill the vacancy. He was then fifty-two years old. His Senate career would last until 1840 and would be marked by the same punctuality and earnestness which were evident in his earlier public life.

As the first session of the Nineteenth Congress began, White immediately pleased the Jacksonians by strongly supporting Old Hickory's candidacy for President in the next election and by displaying a bitter dislike of the administration of John Quincy Adams. As a member of the Senate committee on foreign relations, White attacked an unpopular move by Adams to send delegates to the Pan-American Congress in Panama and took a leading role in the reform of the federal judiciary. The latter subject was of particular interest to him since he had extensive experience in the frontier courts where reform was always an issue. The Jackson faction basically opposed the reform measure, but its opposition was unsettled and White's support of it did not affect his standing with the Jacksonians. But when the Compromise Tariff Act supported by Henry Clay and opposed by Jackson came before the Senate, White had an ill-natured quarrel with Jackson and wound up supporting Clay — which proved to be the beginning of a wedge in the relationship between the long-time friends.

White's main interest lay in Indian affairs. He had "known the Indians, first-hand, and he understood their problems, and them as a problem, perhaps as well as any other man in the Senate during the critical removal period."⁴ In 1826, while he was a member of the United States Senate, the Tennessee General Assembly appointed White to represent the state as counsel in all pending and future actions by Cherokees holding reserves under the treaties against any purchasers of land from Tennessee which lay within the Hiwassee District where the Cherokees resided. In 1829, White became Chair of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and on February 22, 1830, he delivered the committee report which urged the removal of the Cherokees from Tennessee to the Oklahoma Territory — the now-infamous "Trail of Tears." Unlike Jackson, White truly cared for the welfare of the Cherokees, and firmly believed that removal would be in their best interest. It is said that he favored removal only if the Cherokees consented to it.

As the presidential election of 1828 approached, White gave influential aid to the Jackson campaign, perhaps in the hope of receiving a Cabinet appointment if Jackson was elected. In the months preceding Jackson's inauguration, White maintained a close relationship with the President-Elect. But when the Cabinet appointments were announced, John Eaton, another Tennessean, was named Secretary of War. It was the position to which White had aspired. His disappointment caused him to spend the summer of 1829 in Knoxville, but it did not result in his resignation from the Senate as some had predicted. He resumed his Senate duties in the fall with a positive attitude and in April, 1831, upon Eaton's resignation, White was finally offered his position but he declined.

When the issue of the recharter of the Second Bank of the United States came before Congress, White delivered several major speeches opposing recharter. He attacked the institution on constitutional grounds, maintaining that Congress had no power to charter a bank which would operate within the states. On one occasion, he defeated one of the nation's greatest orators, Daniel Webster, in a major debate on the issue.⁵ But when, in September, 1833, President Jackson ordered the immediate removal of the government deposits in the United States Bank — and received a Senate censure for it — White opposed the censure vigorously. He was barely on speaking terms with Jackson, but his support of the administration at this time of crisis was certainly significant.

continued on page 8

Cavort with the Court

The Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society has planned a very special dinner to honor recently-appointed Justice William C. Koch, Jr. and the late Justice Charles O'Brien, as well as the other members of the Tennessee Supreme Court, Chief Justice William M. Barker and Justices Janice M. Holder, Cornelia A. Clark and Gary R. Wade.

Our second annual dinner will take place at the Hilton Nashville Downtown on Tuesday, October 2, 2007, to coincide with the Court's opening session. We are grateful to the Justices for allowing us to plan an evening in their honor. In addition to a delicious meal, we will present an entertaining program.

It is the hope of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society that this event will be as well received as it was in 2006 in its inaugural year. You will not be able to resist the temptation to attend when you read about the 2006 Dinner elsewhere in this issue!

For details, and to make a reservation, see the invitation and reply form included in this newsletter. ❖

The Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society

Cordially Invites You and a Guest to a
DINNER HONORING

Recently-Appointed Justice William C. Koch, Jr.

Chief Justice William M. Barker

*and Justices Janice M. Holder, Cornelia A. Clark
and Gary R. Wade*

*and Newly-Appointed Court of Appeals Judge
Andy D. Bennett*

and the Memory of the Late Justice Charles O'Brien

Tuesday, October 2, 2007
Hilton Nashville Downtown Hotel
121 Fourth Avenue, South
Nashville, TN

6:00 p.m. Cocktails
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Dinner & Program
Business Attire
Complimentary Self-Parking
Valet Parking Available

The favor of a response by September 21st is both requested and appreciated. A reply card is below. Please mail to:
Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society
Attn: Ms. Joy Day
Sutter, O'Connell & Farchione
Suite 430, 341 Cool Springs Blvd.
Franklin, TN 37067

Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society Dinner, October 2, 2007

Name: _____

____ I will attend the Dinner. ____ I am also bringing a Guest(s). Name(s) of Guest(s): _____

____ Enclosed is a check payable to TSCHS in the amount of One Hundred Thirty Dollars times the number of attendees I have indicated above.

____ In addition to attending the Dinner, I would like to support the Society by becoming a member. I enclose a separate check payable to TSCHS in the amount of Fifty Dollars. I understand that this membership will extend through 2008.

____ I cannot attend the Dinner, but wish to support the Society by becoming a member. I enclose a check payable to TSCHS in the amount of Fifty Dollars. I understand that this membership will extend through 2008.

Note: A table of ten may be purchased for Thirteen Hundred Dollars.

____ I agree to purchase a table and enclose a check payable to TSCHS in the amount of Thirteen Hundred Dollars. The names of those who will be seated at the table are listed on the back of this Reply.

Name of Firm or Individual to Show on Table Sign: _____

Please mail this card and your payment to:

Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society
Attn: Ms. Joy Day
Sutter, O'Connell & Farchione
Suite 430, 341 Cool Springs Blvd.
Franklin, TN 37067

If you have questions or wish to reserve by phone or email, please contact Joy Day, Administrator, at jday@sutter-law.com or 615-771-5008.

2006 TSCHS Dinner a Big Success!

by Andy D. Bennett

On October 5, 2006, the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society took a giant leap of faith. We wanted to raise the profile of our organization, so early in 2006 our Board had the inspiration to hold a gala dinner in honor of the three retiring Justices Anderson, Birch and Drowota, and the recently-appointed Justices Clark and Wade. We hoped that the Nashville legal community, and interested firms and lawyers from all over Tennessee, would respond to an opportunity for a good meal in a relaxed atmosphere, where people could mingle with the Justices of the Supreme Court, other members of the Judiciary, and their fellow lawyers and friends.

And respond they did! Over three hundred people attended the first annual Society Dinner at Lowe's Vanderbilt Hotel, and had a spirited time indeed. Not only did we enjoy a great meal and superb companionship, but also we honored our Supreme Court Justices in a very special way. The Justices were presented with memberships in the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society. Sheree C. Wright, President

of the Nashville Bar Association, also made presentations. We were even able to poke fun at the Justices (very gently, of course!) through a video presentation.

I was stopped many times after this event and told what a delightful evening everyone experienced. Events like this do not just happen. They take a great deal of work and worry. The Dinner Committee consisted of the Chair, Marlene Eskind Moses, the Honorable Frank Drowota, III and Guilford F. Thornton, Jr. In addition, Board members Barri Bernstein and Gil Campbell prepared the invitations, brochures, programs and certificates. Also, our indispensable Administrator, Kate Eyler, performed numerous tasks associated with putting on the dinner. To everyone who attended and to everyone who worked so hard to make this dinner a success, thank you. We look forward to seeing everyone again, and an even larger crowd, on October 2, 2007. Please mark your calendars for October 2, and see this issue for further information. ♦





Even though White was becoming increasingly disenchanted with the Jackson administration, extreme enmity did not yet exist between them personally. Any hope of reconciliation was quashed, however, when a movement to nominate White for the Presidency took shape in December 1833. Within a year, the movement had a considerable following in all areas of the nation. Jackson had previously indicated a desire to have Martin Van Buren succeed him, and he deeply resented what he considered White's attempt to interfere.

For a few months in early 1835, it appeared that White might be able to pull enough support from Van Buren to force Jackson to accept him as a candidate at the Democratic convention. But James K. Polk strongly supported Van Buren, and through the summer of 1836, the campaign was centered in Tennessee. While Polk was a very effective campaigner, he was up for reelection to Congress in the fall and was afraid to oppose White in an outspoken matter. Jackson hoped to get Polk reelected to the House where he had considerable support for election as Speaker. Polk was, in fact, reelected and became Speaker. However, Judge White was unanimously elected to the Senate and resolutions were passed in both houses of the Tennessee legislature supporting White for President.

In the presidential election of 1836, Democrats Martin Van Buren and Richard Johnson defeated the Whig ticket of Hugh Lawson White and his fellow Tennessean, John Bell. The outcome was about as favorable as Judge White could have expected. After all, he had been unable to secure the Democratic nomination, and if he had somehow been able to receive a plurality, he would have found the factions which placed him office to be in hopeless disagreement, both with him and among themselves. At least, he carried forty Tennessee counties to Van Buren's nineteen. And, in the Hermitage precinct, White won by a count of 61 to 20 — which, undoubtedly, angered Jackson!

When White returned to the Senate after the election, he found that his influence had notably diminished. His colleagues still respected him, but his prestige with other leaders in the administration had almost vanished. One of his friends noted that "Judge White is much soured and dissatisfied." Tennessee had been largely under Whig domination from 1836 through most of 1839. In December of that year, however, the Democrats regained control of the state, mostly because Polk had been elected governor.

Newspaper Articles Mentioning White

With a majority of both houses in the General Assembly, the Democrats were poised to play for higher stakes at the national level. They wanted to put pressure on White and his Senate colleague, Ephraim Foster. Foster had promised to resign if the Democrats regained control of the legislature and he was true to that promise. On the other hand, White had submitted a letter of resignation in 1838, but it had been rejected by the Governor.

Polk and Jackson then devised a plan to obtain a copy of the letter, get the Governor to accept White's resignation, and have the legislature elect a successor. However, Governor Nelson Cannon would not cooperate in the scheme, and it failed. Polk and Jackson then developed an alternate plan: the Tennessee General Assembly would instruct White to vote for the Independent Treasury Bill and support Van Buren's policies in the next Congress, which it did.

White, of course, refused to comply with either demand and resigned from the Senate. In fact, one of White's final legislative endeavors was an attempt to defeat the Independent Treasury Bill. White considered the measure a scheme concocted by Van Buren and bitterly opposed it. The bill ultimately passed, but White still had enough influence to delay its passage so that the system it outlined would never be tried in practice.

White's friends and sympathizers considered White's resignation political martyrdom. There was a strong reaction to the high-handed and partisan policies of the Democrats, which carried over to the November 1840 election's. The Whigs regained control in Tennessee when Polk lost the Governorship, and in the national election, the Whig candidate, William Henry Harrison, won a sweeping victory in the race for the Presidency.

On April 10, 1840, Hugh Lawson White died in Knoxville at the age of sixty-six. He had spent the majority of January and February on horseback in his return from Washington. His health worsened and the thankless treatment he received at the hands of his opponents contributed to his death. His memory, however, would figure prominently in the November elections. He was given an elaborate funeral at the First Presbyterian Church in Knoxville and was interred beside his father in the churchyard cemetery. Like the vast majority of pioneers, White had known much adversity and tragedy in his life.

His wife and seven of his twelve children predeceased him. He was ill most of his adult life, and yet, he was able to spend his substantial career serving his state and country in several leadership positions,

influencing the outcomes of issues that were important during those frontier times. His oratorical skills earned him the appellation of "The Cato of the Republic." But when his generation passed into eternity, what little renown Hugh Lawson White had acquired nearly perished with it. ❖

SOURCES

The Public Career of Hugh Lawson White (Doctoral Thesis), L. P. Gresham, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, 1945;

A Memoir of Hugh Lawson White, Nancy N. Scott, J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1856;

A History of the Tennessee Supreme Court, James Ely, Jr., University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 2002.

NOTES

¹Gil Campbell is a former Executive Director of the Tennessee Bar Association and the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society. He currently serves on the Society's Board of Directors and is a frequent contributor to *The Chronicle*.

²*A Memoir of Hugh Lawson White*, Nancy N. Scott, J.B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1856.

³*The Public Career of Hugh Lawson White* (Doctoral Thesis), L. P. Gresham, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, 1945.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵Register of Debates, 22 Congress, 1 Session, 1240-1248, Library of Congress, Washington.

The following is a transcript of a letter (original is on next page) from our featured historical figure, Hugh Lawson White, to his wife. Judge White wrote to her from Washington on December 13, 1835. The reader will note that the same period is referred to in our article about Judge White, which puts this letter in context. This letter is lodged in the Special Collections Library of the University of Tennessee, MS-2413, and is published with the Society's thanks.¹

Washington
Sunday Evening Dec. 13th 1835

My best of wives,

This is the only place I ever saw where a man can be always busy and yet do nothing. I have been striving to write you a letter ever since you left me and have never been able to get time to do so. As soon as I sit down to write some one calls and I am interrupted. Do not suppose that I have an increase in company this winter. **The wine?** [?] is the **fast?** past. Forsyth and Dickerson have called, none of the other dignitaries altho' we have Mrs. Woodberry's invitation for the Evening of the 17th.

Our [?] is comprised of Mr. & Mrs. Peyton, Mr. Wine of Va., Mr. Lawler of Alabama, Mr. Maury, Mr. Lea, Mr. Bunch and Mr. Standifer. I understand my old friend **held** [?] forth largely about me to some of his **visitants** [?]. He cannot **well** [?] compare me, in his peaks, to any one, except his old friend Mr. Burr.

These things disturb me not. Several of the Anti Masons from Harrisburg have been corresponding with me about Masonry. I **imagine** [?] ~~give~~ my answer will be unsatisfactory. I tell them I am not and never was a Mason. That I must decline giving an opinion about the principles and obligations of Masons because I have not sufficient information to enable me to form one satisfactory to myself. I am told the Boats to Philadelphia are locked upon the ice. If Col. Bill has gone up and cannot return it will be a misfortune as his friends wish him here. [Karns?] death will produce a stir in Illinois, the legislature is now in session and if it suited him I should like to see Governor Duncan succeed him but of that I suppose there is but little prospect.

I feel satisfied Lynch is the Governor of Miss. and that a large majority of the **Legislature are anti-Van Legislation an anti-can.** My name sake Dunlap whom you saw is **hated?** in [?].

Did any one suppose I was afraid to go and wait on the **President** [?] unless I had a guard, or Did they suppose I came here to quarrel with him personally or politically? My course has been as usual thus far, and I intend it shall be so, unless a departure by others from my principles separates them from me.

I want your society very much, yet think you ought to make a comfortable visit as to duration of [?] My wife and children are my only sources of comfort. Others are all very well in their place; but you know I have no relish for society. How far I ought to confide in strangers or any family connection those only can tell who know how I have been and am treated by those for whom I have done most, but I complain not. While I have the warm and devoted attachment of my wife and children the world may take the rest, if it is profitable to do so.

Bill has been Polked out of the speaker chair because he would not sell out. There may be more sacrificed for the public **weal** [?] before next June. We'll see what the public good requires, and so far as depends on me, it shall be done faithfully and fearfully.

I will send for the card tomorrow. Tell Sam P. he must be a good boy, please his father and mother and by doing what ever they wish and we'll see to the Pony bye and bye.

Make yourself comfortable, and your husband can make out some here; if he freezes you will never be [censored?], except by the President and other friends who may sometimes need the Automaton's Vote.

My love to all and believe me

As usual and ever yours

H. L. ~~Hugh~~ White

Mrs. Hugh Lawson White

Did you ever know me write so long a letter with nothing in it.?

¹[?] designates text that the University of Tennessee considered illegible.

If the [?] or a word/phrase is lined through and there is a word/phrase in bold beside the [?] designation, that indicates that the editor of this newsletter was able to read the word (if there is no additional question mark), or believes that she read the word correctly (if there is an additional question mark).

Washington

Sunday Evening Dec 13th 1825

My dear friend

This is the only plan I can see when a man can be always busy and yet do nothing. I have been trying to send you a letter ever since you left me and have never been able to get time to do so. As soon as I get some leisure I will write you on cash and I am interrupted. Do not suppose that I have no opinion of a company this week. The worse is the fact. Every the and I believe have called them of the other dignitaries at the same time. I have been thinking much lately for the evening of the 17th.

How all this is compared of Mr & Mrs Taylor Mr Wise of Va Mr Lawrence of Alabama, Mr May Mr Lea Mr Branch and Mr Standish.

I understand Mr Hill's friends hold just largely about me to some of his writings. He cannot well compare me in his justice to any one except his old friend Mr Burr.

These things interest me not. Several of the State clerks from Kentucky have been corresponding with me about elections. I am sure my answers will be unsatisfactory. I believe I am out and more was a blow - that I must be alone giving an opinion about the principles and obligations of electioneering. I have not sufficient information to enable me to form one satisfactory to myself.

I am told the Board of Philadelphia are to discuss the case of Mr. Hill. How you are and cannot return it will be a misfortune as his friends wish him here.

Wants another vote previous a man in Illinois, the large labor is now in session and if it could be seen I should like to see Governor Duncan see and him, but of that I suppose there is but little prospect.

But I suppose you are the Governor of Miss^{is} and that a case in regard of the regulation on election - they are some who have whom you have called.

Did any one suppose I was afraid to go and wait on the Board? I had a quarrel or had they suppose I came here to quarrel with him personally or politically? My course has been as usual these forty and I think it shall be so, unless a departure by them from my principles expands them from me.

I want you surely very much; yet think you ought to make a comfortable visit as to yourself &c. My wife and children are my only source of comfort. Others are all very well in their places but you know I have no relief for security. How far I ought to suppose in strangers or any family connections there only can tell who know how I have been and am treated by them for whom I have some most but I complain not. While I have the warm and sweet attachment of my wife and

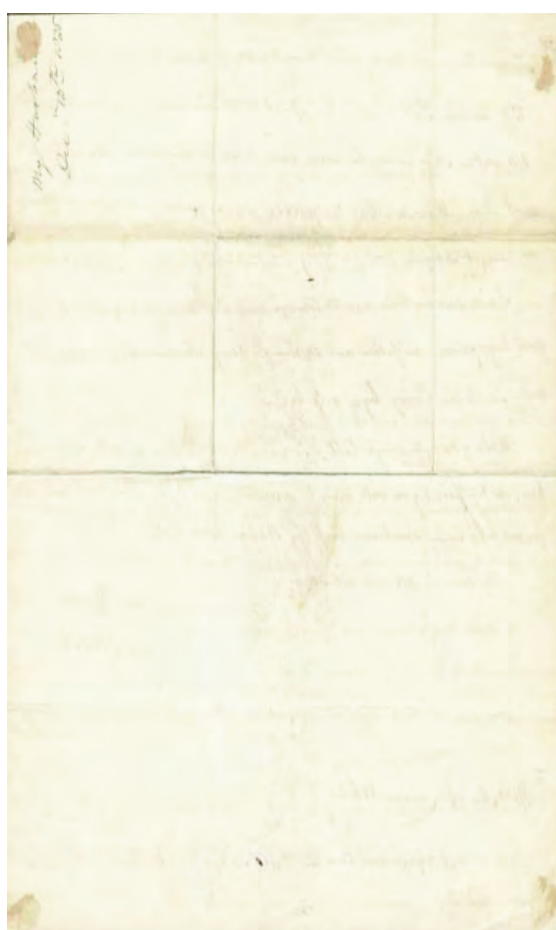
children the world may take the rest if it is profitable to do so. Bill has been pulled out of the speaker's chair because he would not side out - there may be more sacrifices for the public weal before next June. Will see what the public good requires and as far as depends on me, it shall be done faithfully and fearlessly.

I will send you the card tomorrow - the same I think he must be a good boy, please his father and mother by doing whatever they wish and will see to the money by and by.

Make yourself comfortable; and your husband can make out some how; if he freezes you will soon be carried, except by the President and the friends who may sometimes miss the Custom stone Veto.

My love to all and believe me
As always and ever Yours
Alex. White

Mr Hugh Swann White
Do you ever know me with so long a letter with nothing in it.



HELP CATALOG THE ARCHIVES!

In the October 2006 issue of this Newsletter, we published an article by Supreme Court Clerk Michael Catalano, about the urgent need to catalog and preserve the boxed Supreme Court records which are presently in the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Now you can provide hands-on help with this project!

The Tennessee State Library and Archives has an exciting volunteer opportunity available. If you are interested in assisting with the arrangement and description of Tennessee Supreme Court records dating back to 1796, please contact:

Dr. Wayne C. Moore,
Assistant State Archivist,
by e-mail at Wayne.Moore@state.tn.us
or by calling (615) 253-3458.

Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society
P.O. Box 41008
Nashville, TN 37204