

BIOGRAPHY

JUDGE JAMES B. PARK

Judge James B. Park of Greensboro, lived through the days of Reconstruction and he made this statement which I quote from the Herald-Journal written on July 29, 1941; "When Sherman's army left Atlanta, GA they came down the GA railroad through Madison, GA and burned the railroad bridge across the Oconee river and then came on down the west side of the river to where we lived, three miles south of the bridge. When the Yankees appeared my mother sent for an officer and told him that she was alone with several small children, that her husband was away and that he was a Mason, and that she would appreciate his kindness if he would see that she and the children were protected from the Federal soldiers. The officer stationed a guard at the front back doors for three days as the soldiers were passing by and the family was not molested. The Federals did burn the three story mill on the river, stole all of the mules, horses, hogs, cows and provisions,. For years afterwards we had little to eat except cornbread, fish and the few vegetables which we grew, sometimes a meat from a more fortunate neighbor and syrup. The only salt we had was filtered out of the dirt on the smokehouse floor.

I have never wanted any cornbread since that time, as that was the main dish. When the mill burned the house also caught fire, but my mother got wet blankets and got them to the roof where a slave, old Cyrus smothered out every spark that caught.

After the close of the war my father told Cyrus that he would give him a home on his place as long as he lived and that he would never suffer for anything. Once while my father was away Cyrus was arrested for vagrancy and locked up in Madison. My rather reached hom and heard about Cyrus being in jail he rode 14 miles on horseback and went on Cyrus's bond, and when the trial came up he made such a plea that the jury found him not guilty. I took care of Cyrus after my father's death, and as long as he lived which was until 1907. Only two out of 100 slaves left our plantation at freedom on Nov. 1864. I know that my father always treated his slaves with kindness and would never let overseer mistreat them.

History of Greene-County, GA by Dr. Thaddeus Brockett Rice

Transcribed - (jtblbit@mindspring.com) 2/17/04

Note: Judge James B. Park is the person that encouraged Thaddeus Brockett Rice to undertake the task of writing the history of the only county created in the year 1786, and named for General Nathaniel Greene ere he died.