## DR. SOLOMON FLETCHER ODEN

Dr. Solomon Fletcher Oden was born Nov. 17, 1848 in Brentwood, Williamson County, Tennessee. His parents were Thomas Hardin Oden, Sr. and Rebecca Hardaway Reams, both of whom were originally from the Thompson's Station area. His grandfather was Solomon Oden, who left Maryland where he was born around 1785, and went to Loudoun County, Virginia. He married Mildred Ann Athey on July 5, 1809. They had one son, William, born in Virginia in 1812. Seven more children were born in Williamson County, Tennessee: Solomon, Jr., Albert, Catherine, Sarah, Thomas, Dr. Hezekiah and John E.

They left Loudoun County and went to Nelson County, Virginia which was apparently a stop-over before coming to Williamson County, Tennessee in 1815 when he first appeared in the tax records.

Dr. Solomon Fletcher Oden's uncle was Dr. Hezekiah Oden who married Venturia A. Reams. Their homeplace, Walnut Winds, is located on Lewisburg Pike and is now owned by Bill Stalkup.

Dr. Solomon Fletcher Oden was the eldest of seven children. He grew up in Brentwood on a farm situated on the east side of the Nashville-Franklin Turnpike. He was listed as a student in the Nashville City Directory in 1872 at the age of 24. Upon his graduation from the University of Nashville Medical School he went to Lake Charles, Louisiana but soon returned to his grandfather's home in Thompson's Station.

Dr. Oden soon married Mary Sophronia Oden, his first cousin, who was the daughter of John E. Oden of Thompsons Station, brother to Thomas H. Oden, Sr. They made their home in Brentwood on land given to them by his grandfather, the original Solomon Oden from Maryland.

Dr. Solomon Fletcher Oden practiced medicine in Brentwood for over 55 years. He was a member of the Tennessee Academy of Medicine and was named "Doctor of the Year" at one point in his career. He was "doctor in charge" of the L & N Railroad during the construction of Radnor Yards-Radnor Lake-Lewisburg & Northern Division.

Dr. Solomon and Mary Sophronia Oden lived in a two story frame house built by one of the Reams men, an uncle of Mary Sophronia. It was built of yellow poplar cut on the place. This house was built near the "big Spring" off Smyrna Road. When it burned they rebuilt on the part of the land between the Franklin Pike and the railroad. This rambling, frame home burned in 1927 but was soon replaced directly on Franklin Road where they lived until they died.

One of their children, Marion Francis Oden and his wife, Edith Massenburg Oden made their home with the older couple. The day before the above mentioned fire Edith Massenburg Oden had given birth to their middle son, Robert Harry Oden. At the time of the fire the new mother and her baby were removed from the burning house on a mattress and laid in the yard.

**学。这是发展文学** 

Dr. Solomon Fletcher Oden and Mary Sophronia had eight children: Marion Francis Oden, John Wesley Oden, Lewis Hardeman Oden, Thomas Ellsworth Oden, Robert Edward Lee Oden, Rebecca May Oden, Buist Core Oden, died at the age of 11 years and Solomon, Fletcher, Jr. died at 10 months.

Dr. Oden and his family were life-long members of the Brentwood Methodist Church. His father, Thomas Hardin Oden, donated the land for the Brentwood Methodist Church and was the first Sunday School Superintendent and a Trustee of said church.

Dr. Oden was also a farmer and raised wheat, oats, corn, sheep, hogs and "stiff goats". He bred good mule stock. His favorite buggy and saddle horse was "Old Billy". He owned a Model T Ford but could not drive. He was known by the nickname "Old Scalpeen".

Dr. Oden was a well-read gentleman, reading the Bible through each year. He taught the Men's Bible Class at Brentwood Methodist Church. He had good teeth and eyesight well into old age. He served as company doctor for the railroad during construction of the cut in Brentwood.

Although he retired from active practice around 1920, he kept up with current medical progress and people would still go to him for advice and treatment for many years after that time. During his years of practice he was a busy man, yet not too busy to go where and when he was needed.

His ledger entries in 1887 show day visits \$1.50, night visits \$2.00 and the delivery of a baby \$10.00. Often he was accompanied by gentle, soft-spoken "Miss Mollie", as Mary Sophronia was known as among his patients. In later years he was often aided by his daughter, Rebecca May Oden (Mrs. Charles Andrew Howell, Sr.), also an efficient helper.

Dr. Oden remembered the Civil War and told of General Nathan Bedford Forrest keeping his spare horse in a thicket off Old Smyrna Road near their home during the Battle of Nashville. The Confederate Army retreated south out Old Wilson Turnpike.

Mary Sophronia Oden was the daughter of John E. Oden and Elizabeth Reams who both died while she was very young, leaving she and her two brothers, John W. Oden and Solomon E. Oden orphans. Solomon E. Oden was killed by a pistol shot by

James T. Crockett on Feb. 26, 1882. Mary Sophronia Oden was educated at the Female Academy.

Mary Sophronia Oden's father, John E. Oden, was a confederate soldier and served in Holman's Cavalry. He died of dysentery while home on leave from the war. Her mother, Elizabeth Reams Oden, died of tuburculosis. Mary Sophronia Oden was left land and slaves by her parents but this was wasted away by friendly executors. She always believed that had Lincoln lived the South would have received compensation.

Mary Sophronia Oden was a real country doctor's wife, a Methodist of the John Wesley School. She tithed her butter and egg money. The Missionary Society was a part of her life.

Mary Sophronia and Solomon Fletcher believed in education for their children - no sacrifice was too great. They both lived as people of God with love and respect for the other. Their home was home to many and they were good providers. They always had a well stocked smokehouse. Their hams and other meat was smoked with red cobs, hickory and apple wood.

Dr. Oden died in 1942 and Mary Sophronia in 1934. Their home was first sold to Nelson Elam and later to Sara and Jim Wall who have restored it to its present condition. The house was originally surrounded by acres of level lawn and large oak trees but it has been subdivided in recent years. The Oden-Flippen Cemetery is located on Wilson Pike on land that belonged to this parcel.