

The Town of Arlington... Our History



The land currently known as Arlington originally belonged to the Chickasaw Indians. In 1818, a Treaty with the Chickasaw ceded this land, along with other land in West Tennessee, to the United States. On November 24, 1819, Shelby County was established and named after Isaac Shelby, who



was one of the commissioners of the Treaty with the Chickasaw, a Revolutionary War Veteran and the first governor of Kentucky. During this time, the community consisted of

fewer than 20 settlers.

By 1856, the community had grown to around 200. Agriculture was predominant in the area, and a method of shipping was essential. As a result, Withe Depot was constructed on land donated by General Samuel J. Hays. Served by the Memphis & Ohio Railroad, the primary shipment was cotton and its purpose was to attract shipping to the Fayette County community of Withe. Because of this generous donation of land by General Hays, the community was named Haysville, which continued its growth until the Civil War, when men answered the call to fight the war. Many never returned.

In 1872, the land surrounding Withe Depot owned by the Estate of General Hays was sold off, and the lots sold at a public sale with an ad stating "its healthy location, finest agricultural region, churches, schools, and railroad

makes it one of the most desirable points for business and residences."

Haysville was incorporated on February 10, 1878. W. B. Nolley served as Mayor, followed by H.Y. Marley, Dr. J.P. Bone, W.I. Hooks, and C.C. Poole. During this time, an outbreak of yellow fever prompted the Town fathers to quarantine Haysville. Outsiders were not allowed to enter in an attempt to mitigate the spread of the deadly fever.

In 1883, Town leaders wanted to establish a post office. However, a "Haysville" post office already existed in Tennessee. Captain Henry Pitman suggested that the town change its name to "Arlington," after Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. The population stood at 500, and the Town proudly boasted its own steam sawmill, grist mill, steam cotton gin, livery stable, stores, and four churches. By the end of the 19th Century, the Town had added a post office, physician, druggist, lumber store, meat market, and an undertaker.

In 1900, with a population of around 600, the Town of Arlington was incorporated. Some of the early citizens to serve as Mayor were Will Taylor, Charles McAuley, C.W. Bond, Sam Tucker Wilson, and Jimmy Henry. The 1950 census shows only 465 residents, and the 1960 census lists 651. In its centennial year (2000), Arlington was home to approximately 2,300 people. The special census of 2018 lists Arlington with a population of just under 14,000 citizens, making our Town one of the fastest growing communities in Tennessee.

Throughout its history, Arlington has



WHO WAS GENERAL SAMUEL J. HAYS?

Samuel Jackson Hays (1804-1866), became the ward of his uncle, Andrew Jackson, upon the death of Samuel's father, Colonel Robert Hays, and President Jackson was a great influence on Samuel's life. Samuel Hays attended West Point Military Academy, at age 23 served as his uncle's secretary in the White House and was a Major General in the 2nd Army of Tennessee in the Mexican War. General Hays purchased a tract of 640 acres from the State of Tennessee in 1837 that eventually became known as Haysville (also referred to as Wythe Depot with the development of the Memphis and Ohio Railroad). By 1845, Hays, who had never lived in Haysville (later Arlington), sold much of his property in the area (Burrow 1962).

met the challenge of blending old and new. Today's leaders are tasked with providing its citizens with the modern conveniences and infrastructure they require, all the while, preserving the influences of the past that make Arlington unique.

In 2014, with wide community support and effort, Arlington Community Schools was created, and ACS is credited as one of Arlington's most desirable assets. Many families move to Arlington to access the schools but find that they also access a rich and deep history in our Town.

When future generations look back at Arlington's history, no doubt they will reminisce about when the Forrest Street Park was built and when Arlington gained a Tennis Center, along with other recent improvements. Hopefully, with good planning, they will see that our Town leaders added great amenities for our citizens while protecting Arlington's rich history.