



The CCHS Newsletter

Carroll County Historical Society

P.O. Box 1308

Carrollton, GA. 30112

April 2022

The Roop Freshet

As reported in the Carroll County Times Free Press; “April 23, 1883, a flying report came to Roopville at 3 o’clock p.m. that the family of B. Josephus (Ceph) Roop, his brother, Thomas M. Roop were all drowned in what would be the most horrific natural disasters to occur in Heard County.

Merrell’s Mill was a small, rural community in the western part of Heard County next to the Hil-labahatchee Creek. Robert Merrell, Sr. had established a prosperous family business with a large plantation, corn and wheat mills, gin, blacksmith’s shop and store.

Mr. B. Josephus (Ceph) Roop, married Georgia Merrell and lived at Merrell’s Mill with their three young children; Beulah, Homer and Ella. Ceph’s father was Martin Roop, the founder of Roopville Georgia. Ceph and his brother Thomas M. Roop were employed by Mr. Merrell to help manage the Merrell family enterprise at Merrell’s Mill. Thomas M. Roop and his family lived in Roopville, he would stay with his brother during the week and go home on the weekends to be with his family.

Thomas M. normally traveled on Monday morning, but this fateful trip would begin on Sunday afternoon.

Sunday began like any other day, calm and relaxing. Late in the afternoon around the supper table, Mrs. Roop remarked as to how dark it was getting outside. Great clouds were gathering as the family enjoyed social time together, oblivious to the fate that awaited them.

Rain and hail soon began to fall. Lightning was so bright and long lasting that it was possible to read the headlines of the newspaper.

While the family retired for the night, the rain fell furiously outside. The water came rushing down from every hilltop, accumulating in every ravine. “Branches became creeks and creeks became rivers.”

About 3:25 a.m. Pricilla Ridley waked Mr. Ceph Roop with loud knocking at his upstairs bedroom door. “There’s water on my floor, Mr. Roop, there’s water on my floor.” Mr. Roop dismissed it thinking it was connected to an earlier homesickness episode. Pricilla Ridley was a 12 year old black child that was hired to help with the children. When her dad dropped her off in the afternoon she cried saying she wanted to go home. Could it have been a premonition or just homesickness.



In the meantime, the water level was rising very rapidly all over the first floor of the house. Mr. Thomas M. Roop asked his brother what he should do and he said "Save yourself if you can".

Pandemonium ensued in what would only take ten minutes. Mrs. Roop was calling out to her father, Mr. Robert Merrell who lived a little higher up from the mill. He tried to reach her but could not as his canoe and the bridge across the road had been washed away,

Mr. Ceph Roop begged his wife to leave their abode immediately but she refused, expressing her determination to remain with their children. "The house washed from its pillars down-stream and drifted above water for some 500 yards until it hit a cliff and busted asunder".

Mr. Ceph Roop, who had been securing himself in the second floor window of the house, was thrown into the torrent as the house washed from its foundation. He swam after the house and became buried under the timbers when it crashed into the bluff. The screams of the victims could be heard distinctly back at the mill by those safely ashore. Mrs. Roop and the children were drowned in the crash.

Thomas M. Roop made it to the porch of the store only to be washed away later. He would be found a few days later.

Mr. Ceph Roop surfaced miraculously and drifted amidst the broken timbers and logs and swift downstream current. He was finally able to catch hold of a limb of a tree and pull himself into the fork of the upper limbs, three-fourths of a mile away from the mill. He was cold alone, in the dark, shocked emotionally and physically, and worried about his family.

The next day, search parties gathered to look for survivors and victims. Fortunately, all the bodies of the drowned were found and laid to rest.

So violent was the rush of waters, that even fishes, frogs, and turtles were found dead. The Roop's and Merrell's thought they had built their houses above the danger of high water. But the cloud burst that caused the creek to rise 25 feet above the low level mark could not be predicted.

Today, all signs of the mill and home sites are gone. A steep climb of 500 yards or so from the mill site will be the only artifact, the cemetery containing the graves of Mrs. Roop and her three children.

Research for this article includes information from the book, **History of Heard County 1803-1990**, the **Times Free Press** 1883, Mr. Jere Ridley, FindAGrave.com and the **Atlanta Constitution** 1883.

[For a copy of Research Notes email cchsorders@carrollcountyhistory.org](mailto:cchsorders@carrollcountyhistory.org)

Martin Roop 9 Mar 1810 — 25 Jan 1883

Married: Elizabeth King 20 Sep 1820—6 Mar 1899

Children: John King Roop 1839-1904

William Wright Roop 1841-1922

Sarah A. Roop FIELDS 1847-1912

Benjamin Josephus Roop 1849-1935

Thomas M. Roop 1851—1883

Henry Owen Roop 1852—1919

James A. Roop 1856-1937

George W. Roop 1858-1936

Martha J. Savannah Roop ALMON 1860-1930

Robert Edward Merrill 29 Sep 1827—11 Mar 1907

Married : Sarah Jane Mize 4 May 1827—1 Dec 1886

Children: Mariah Abigail Merrill TRAYLOR 1847-1916

James A. Merrill 1848-1902

Sarah Frances Merrill DOBSON 1850-1912

Charlotte Stewart Merrill LIPHAM 1851-1928

Joseph B. Merrill 1854-1899

Georgia Ann Merrill Roop 1856-1883

Robert Merrill 1858-1919

Henry Albert Merrill 1860-1927

William J. Merrill 1867-1913



Photo One



Photo Two

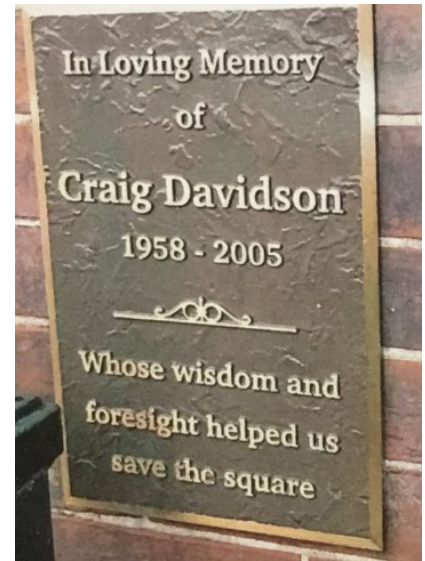


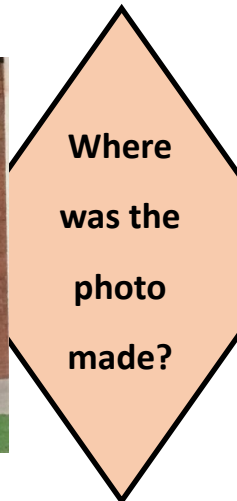
Photo Three



Photo Four



Bonus Photo One



Bonus Photo Two

HINT:
around the Square



- 12th Bowdon Historical Society
- 21st Villa Rica Historical Society
- 28th Carroll County Genealogical Society Meeting
- "Genealogical Wills" ccgsa76@gmail.com

[Georgia Historical Research Sites](#)

Georgia Historical Society (GHS) is the premier independent statewide institution responsible for collecting, examining, and teaching **Georgia** history. GHS houses the oldest and most distinguished collection of materials related exclusively to **Georgia** history in the nation. www.georgiahistory.com

The Newnan-Coweta Historical Society interprets and preserves the historical, cultural, and architectural heritage of Coweta County through its programs, exhibitions, and collections while serving, engaging, and educating the diverse communities of **Coweta County** and the surrounding region. www.newnancowetahistoricalsociety.com



CCHS President Robert Blakemore speaks to the Villa Rica Area Historical Society in March.



SERGEANT DAMON MILLER
Carrollton, Ga.

Sergeant Miller entered service June 10, 1917, as a private. Was attached to Motor Truck Company No. 340, Camp Gordon, Atlanta, Ga., with which unit he served with rank of Sergeant. Was given sick-leave to visit his home at Carrollton, Ga., where he died of tuberculosis, December 24th, 1918.



PVT. JAMES A. ROBINSON
Bowdon, Ga.

Private Robinson entered service April 27th, 1918, at Camp Lee, Va., where he received his preliminary training. Embarked for over-sea service with Company "M," 111th Infantry (division not known). Private Robinson was in the front line trenches at Meuse, France, when he was killed in action, October 3rd, 1918.



PVT. SAMUEL I. ROOKS
Carrollton, Ga.

Private Rooks entered service July 15th, 1918. Was attached to a Machine Gun Company with the 9th Infantry, 1st Battalion. Embarked for over-sea service in August, 1918. Was killed by an enemy bullet while caring for a wounded soldier on the battlefield, November 3rd, 1918.



PRIVATE IRA SMITH
Villa Rica, Ga.

Private Smith was attached to the September Automatic Replacement Draft, Coast Artillery Corps, Ft. Screven, Ga. Embarked for over-sea service in September, 1918. Was drowned in the sinking of the ill-fated transport "Otranto," off the Scottish Coast, October 6th, 1918.



SERGEANT CHARLIE W. PAYNE
Bowdon, Ga.

From all information obtainable, Sergeant Payne entered service in 1912. At the time of his death he was attached to Company "B," 19th Infantry (division not known). Died of tuberculosis February 22nd, 1918, at Ft. Bayard, New Mexico.

From the Book Memorial to WWII Army Veterans

[Books for Sale at Carroll County Historical Society](#)

- At Home in Carrollton 1827-1994
- The Heritage of Carroll County 1826-2001
- Sherman's Horsemen
- Bridging Deep South Rivers
- <https://www.carrollcountyhistory.org/store.html>

[Books for Sale at Carroll County Genealogical Society](#)

- Carroll Cemetery of Carroll County Vol. 1 Western Section
- Georgia's Last Frontier
- Carroll County Souvenir Edition
- The Carroll County Story
- <http://ccgsga.org/ccgs-publications/>

**Carroll County Historical Society
Membership Application 2022**

Individual Membership
Family Membership

\$30 per year
\$50 per year

Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

*** E-mail Address:** _____

*** E-mail addresses are important for receiving bulletins and announcements sent out concerning the Society activities between newsletters.**

Membership \$ _____ **** Donation \$** _____

Reason for Donation _____

Total Paid \$ _____

**** Donations to the Society will be used to fund preservation projects in Carroll County. All donations are Tax Deductible.**

Members receive our CCHS Newsletter.

Renew your membership on line at:
<https://www.carrollcountyhistory.org/cchsmf.html>

Or

Mail this form to:
Carroll County Historical Society
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Carrollton, GA 30112

