



## Battle Ground Academy A Taste of The Past

Battle Ground Academy (BGA) was established in 1889, and was given its name due to its original location on the battle ground of the Civil War Battle of Franklin. The first campus was erected at the corner of Columbia Avenue and Cleburne Street. S. V. Wall and W. D. Mooney were chosen as the first to head the new academy. In 1902, the original school building burned and the school was relocated on a site on Columbia Avenue in Franklin.

Several years ago, to commemorate their 100th year, a cookbook was published. An Eagleville family was honored by Mrs. Barry "Tamara" Scales for her entry. Lytle Elmore, an Eagleville native, was born January 1, 1894 and was the son of Hugh and Flora Lytle Elmore. He attended this prestigious school as did his brother Eris. Hugh and Flora lived near Eagleville, on Elmore Road, with their children, Ethel, Lytle, Eris, Claris, Mary, and Hugh. Lytle served in the 30th Div. Signal Bat, US Army in World War I and received a Purple Heart for wounds received in Belgium. He was married to Sarah Lettie Philpot and had two children; Mary Jane and Lila Jean.



Mrs. Flora Elmore

### A Taste Of The Past – By Tamara Scales

Every fall of the year, \*Old Daddy Peoples would drive to Eagleville in a beautiful single-seated buggy. The buggy had a top and rubber tires. Mary, the little sister, who remembers these visits, says the buggy had rubber tires which she remembers well because most people had steel buggy tires which made lots of noise. She thought Old Daddy looked quite elegant because of this. His buggy was pulled by a beautiful black horse.

He would come to visit and have long conversations about the boys, Lytle and Eris, and was very helpful to Mrs. Elmore with advice about the boys as her husband had passed away.

Mary, who was small, would ask, "Mother, why does Old Daddy always come at dinnertime?", not realizing it took all morning to come from Franklin to Eagleville by horse and buggy.

Old Daddy would blush and say, "Because she has such good food." Before he left he would ask, "Mrs. Elmore, do you have another boy for me this year?"

Certain to be served at these noontime dinners, would be the Old-Fashioned Tea Cakes, a recipe of Lytle, Eris, and Mary's

grandmother, Mrs. James Knox Polk Lytle, wife of a famed confederate soldier.

### Old Fashioned Tea Cakes

2 cups flour, 2 tsp. baking powder, 1 cup sugar, ¾ cup lard, 4 eggs beaten separately, vanilla flavoring or orange juice

Drop on cookie sheet with a teaspoon and bake at 350 degrees until brown.

Lytle Elmore lived his first year (1913) with "Old Daddy" and Mrs. Peoples. He had a room in their house. Mrs. Peoples was very particular. She had Lytle scrubbing and waxing floors. She would say things to him as, "You've got your chair off the rug."

The next year, Lytle's younger brother, William Eris came to BGA as did a friend from Allisona, Earl Smithson. That year Eris and Earl slept in the coalhouse to keep the coal from being stolen at night. This was to earn part of their tuition. The Battle Ground Academy coalhouse was near Old Daddy's house. One very cold night they heard someone in the coalhouse sacking up coal. Eris said to Earl, "Anyone who needs it this cold night can have it – go back to sleep!"

Mary Elmore and her mother would go once a month to BGA from Eagleville in a buggy to take the boys clean clothes. One time it got too late for them to go back in the buggy. So they spent the night in Everbright Mansion. Mary remembers they took in other BGA students at Everbright. The house had twenty-two rooms and was located near the campus. Mary says she could not sleep for thinking about the many rooms of the house. Later on, Lytle got a motorcycle, so they did not have to make the trip in the buggy.

### Miss Ethel Elmore's Pecan Crescents

½ cup butter, ¼ cup powdered sugar, 1 ¼ cups flour, ¼ tsp. almond flavoring, ¼ tsp. vanilla, ¾ tsp. chopped pecans.

Combine butter and sugar. Add flour, mixing well. Add vanilla, almond flavoring and pecans. Roll pieces of mixture (about the size of a hickory nut) between fingers. Place on greased cookie sheet in crescent shape. Bake at 350 degrees. Makes 4 dozen.

Lytle Elmore pitched for the Battle Ground Academy baseball team (1913-1916). Old Daddy Peoples wanted him to become a professional baseball player because Lytle could throw such a curve



The Elmore Family L-R: Hugh, Ethel, Eris ( in the wagon), Flora and Lytle



James Lytle Elmore

ball, as Old Daddy had never seen. Mrs. Elmore did not want her son to become a professional ball player because at that time there was no money in it. She thought the crowd was rough, too.

On September 5, 1916, Lytle wrote his name in a BGA algebra book but in just a few days, he was off to France in World War I. He joined the army motorcycle corps. His job was to carry sealed messages. It was during this time that Earl Smithson (he had also left BGA to go to war), covered with mud and freezing water, recognized Lytle in a trench on a battlefield in France. They embraced each other and cried because they had been through so much. Lytle did not know, until after the war was over, that he had carried the message

that had broken the Hindenberg Line. He was decorated with medals from France, Belgium, England, and the United States for carrying this message.

Miss Mary Elmore remembers that Lytle loved poetry. She asked him why he always wanted to read poetry books and he would reply, "Old Daddy taught me to love it."

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Thank you, Tamara Scales, for your work on this cookbook and especially recording this local history of the Elmore and Smithson families. I also want to thank Ennis Wallace, for his assistance on this and other Step Back In Time Articles.

Eris Elmore, brother to Lytle, who also attended BGA, was born August 13, 1896 and was married first to Jessie Leathers who died in 1932. They had a son William E. Elmore. After the death of her first wife, Eris married Frances Dement, and they were parents to a daughter, Bonnie. Eris died in 1983 and Francis died in 1999.

Url "Earl" Smithson was born at Flat Creek January 6, 1890 on the Smithson home place, approximately 1 mile south of Flat Creek Road on Edwards Grove Road. He was the son of Tom and Mattie Giles Smithson. He and his siblings were given names, spelled with no more than 3 letters; Url, Ary, Lee and Sg.

Url was educated in his early school days at Flat Creek School, later going to BGA. As a boarding student, he rode his horse to Franklin on Sunday evening and back home to Flat Creek on Friday night.

Url married Mary Watson and built their home at the corner of Owen Hill and Horton Highway. He became the rural carrier out of the Allisona Post Office and died January 12, 1945 while on his mail route.

\* Greer (Old Daddy) Peoples mentioned in the above writing was the third Head Master of BGA.