

James and Rodolphus Yaughn

The 2012 inductees to the Crawford County Potters Hall of Fame are James Yaughn and his son Rodolphus. The Yaughn name has had several spellings from 1850 until the early 1900s, from Yon, Yawn, Youghn, and finally Yaughn. The earliest record of James is the 1850 Crawford county census where he was listed as a three year old, born in South Carolina and the third child of Charles and Harriet Yaughn. His siblings included an older sister, E.A., eighteen years old, and brother, Allen, ten. The 1860 census listed a total of seven Yaughn children, two girls and five boys for Charles and Harriet.

James Yaughn served in Company F, 8th Georgia Militia during the War of Northern Aggression. He married first to Caroline and second to Malicia Harper. During his first marriage, he and Caroline had twelve children, with their first born in 1863. James married Malicia Harper, his second wife, October 20, 1890 and she bore him two more sons. According to his Application for Pension Due a Deceased Pensioner, James died December 10, 1925 at the age of seventy-eight.

Rodolphus Yaughn, born June 1885, was James and Caroline's tenth child. He married Laura Walker and had five children with their first born in 1909 and their last, a daughter, born in 1917. Rodolphus died October 2, 1921 at thirty-six years of age.

There is not much known about the early pottery experience of James or his son Rodolphus. From the 1850 census on the Yaughns were recorded as farmers and farm laborers in the 532nd Militia district. This area was in eastern Crawford county where all the potters were known to be located. Even though the Yaughns were farmers, it was quite common to work as potters during slow times to supplement income. There was a Yaughn kiln and waste dump which still has a few bricks left of the kiln. The Yaughn maker's marks were also found at the Seaborn Becham pottery site.

During an archaeological survey of the Long pottery site several pottery shards with different makers' marks were uncovered. This leads one to believe that there were several different potters working and producing jugs there. In the book, *Brothers in Clay*, the daughter of Rodolphus, Mrs. J. W. Jones, stated that the Long family pottery ran into financial difficulty about 1902 and that James and his son, Rodolphus, took over and continued running

the Long Pottery for an additional five years. At that time, James would have been about fifty-five years old and Rodolphus would have been about seventeen.

The Long Pottery had two kilns; while one was fired, the other was unloaded. With such volume coming out of the pottery, one would assume there were many potters throwing mud for jugs and other wares, especially when one takes into consideration the labor needed to run the pottery and creating enough jugs and wares to require two kilns, running the clay mill and driving wagons throughout central Georgia to deliver the wares. One can only imagine that it took considerable business experience and quality wares for the Yaughns to stay afloat during their five year run of the pottery in such bad economic times.

One can find several pieces of Yaughn pottery at online auctions and in several local collections. James Yaughn marked his pottery with a J and backwards Y whereas Rodolphus used only a single initial, R.

