

Tate's Bluff, Arkansas

By Bill Bacon as presented to the Ouachita/Calhoun Genealogical Society at a meeting, 16 March 2002

Ancestors of the Tate's, McGill's and Bacon's of Tate's Bluff

John Tate and wife Mary came from near London England in 1720. They had five sons, each one named for an Old Testament Prophet, and all beginning with the letter "Z". Zacharias, Zaccheus, Zenas, Zephaniah and Zedekiah. John was a carpenter by trade and had many slaves.

Tate's Bluff is approximately 24 miles northeast of Camden. John Henderson Tate, great grandfather married Hannah Ann Bryant in 1807. On April 5, 1928, eighty-nine people landed at Tate's Bluff. The home of John Henderson and Ann Bryant Tate was built on the bluff at Tate's bluff in 1829. The house is believed to be the first permanent home built in Ouachita County. It is a two story log house with one room downstairs and one room upstairs. Part of it is still standing on Bacon's place. It has been moved three times. The one large room upstairs was where the children slept. The kitchen was not a part of the main house. William Harper Tate's widow, Telitha Owens Tate married Edmond C. Bacon. William Harper Tate laid the foundation for the McGill home after buying 1500 acres of land. He had three daughters so he decided to return to Tennessee to educate his daughters and sold to Albert Gallatin Tate. On December 5, 1878 they moved into the Tate home and were parents of 16 children, 12 lived to be grown. Eleven were college graduates, nine from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

The spring home, a log and lumber structure was built when the McGill house was built. The Tate's cemetery on the Boiling Pot Road is one of the oldest cemeteries in this part of the county. The first grave is dated 1837. There are six graves, including those of two Revolutionary soldiers, George and Anderson Tate. The slaves were buried at the foot of their masters.

The fortifications at Tate's Bluff overlook the Ouachita River at the point where the Little Missouri River enters the Ouachita. Tate's Bluff was the site of a Civil War fort.