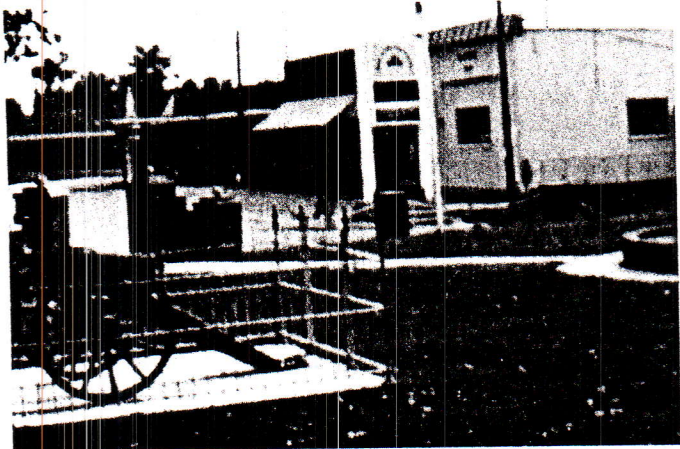


MCKENZIE



McLemoresville City Park.

Early doctors were: W.R. Newsome, S.Y. Bigham, Green, David Boyd, Brannock, Grasty, Ellis, Lewis Bigham, Lone, Bryant, Lancaster and Chris.

Jim Bigham was a druggist and Dr. Hardy Phelps a dentist; Zeb Anderson, Dentist; Mr. Sam Bingham was the last druggist. He owned and operated a drug store until 1941.

Early Musicians were Dr. Brannock, Rev. Felix Johnson, Sr. Lewis Bigham, Will Cooper taught band. The town became famous for its brass bands until about 1914. Mr. Connie Blow and Mr. George Adams Sr. were members of this band. Directors were Will Davis and Mr. Doran.

On September 1, 1907, the Bank of McLemoresville was opened for business with J.H. Bramley, President; John Holmes, vice president; J.C. McKinney, cashier. Miss Zettie Gardner served as assistant cashier. Others who served as president of the bank were: J.A. Bramley, J.C. McKinney, J.E. O'Neill and J.I. McKinney. The current president is Billy Cary. Branch banks are located in Huntingdon and McKenzie.

Businesses in operation in 1986 are: D&D Restaurant, Younger's Grocery, Libby's Quick Stop; Vinson's Garage, Blow's Gun Shop, Flippin's Fixit Shop, Espey Gin Co., McLemoresville Animal Clinic, Day Care Center and Three beauty shops. The postmaster is Robert Childress. A new post office was built in 1980.

The town was re-incorporated in 1949, Julian Devault as Mayor. Others who have served in this office are: William Giles, J.I. McKinney, Billy Blow, Billy Robinson, Harold Blow, Ezra Martin and the present mayor Phil Williams who has served the last ten years.

Billy O. Williams, who passed away in 1985, was appointed Associate Poet Laureate of Tennessee on July 21, 1981 by the Tennessee State Legislature. He published several books of poetry and was in great demand as a speaker.

McLemoresville is the home town of Television star Dixie Carter. She has been in numerous T.V. Shows and is currently starring in "Designing Women". On May 30, 1985 she chose her hometown church as the scene of her marriage to Hal Holbrook.

All citizens of McLemoresville have had the advantage of a good education, a peaceful place to call home and the influence of Christian homes and Churches. The town has five churches, Cumberland Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Reedy Creek Baptist and Bethel Cumberland Presbyterian.

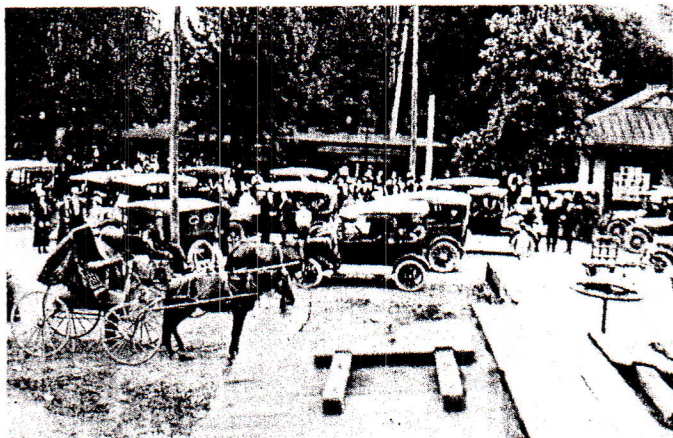
When the first white settlers set foot on the ground that is now McKenzie, they found a virgin land unspoiled by the Nation of Chickasaw Indians who called this part of Tennessee their home. Trees grew on the banks of the rivers and streams, but a large portion of the land was known as "The Barrens". This land was covered with a barren grass which grew so high that riders on horseback could be seen only from the shoulders up.

The Indian hunter had so long and so recently occupied the country, that wild animals were reduced to a minimum. The wolves were so numerous that they destroyed the hogs, cattle and sheep that the settlers brought with them. Wild turkey and deer were plentiful at that time. Bear hunting was considered the finest and most exciting sport, as well as the most profitable.

The portion of land lying west of the Tennessee River was not settled until long after Tennessee became a flourishing and wealthy state. The land in this section was owned and occupied by the Chickasaw Indians. Various treaties were made with this tribe, with a view of obtaining the territory for settlement, among which were those of 1806-1807 and 1816. The final treaty in which they relinquished all West Tennessee was signed by Isaac Shelby and Andrew Jackson. A few roads and traces led through the territory on which a few squatters and surveyors lived. One of these traces, called Natchez Trail, ran through what is now McKenzie. The older people say that the trail was just wide enough for men and beasts to travel single file and that it was two feet below the surface of the ground, having followed an old trail of the buffaloes that once roamed over the country and made their paths along the nearest route between water holes.

The westward march began in earnest after 1817. The people of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Middle and East Tennessee seemed to have been drawn as if by a magnet to the New West, a part of which was the Western District of Tennessee.

A Knoxville paper in 1825 mentioned the fact that four or five thousand carts, wagons, and carriages were passing annually to the west. Soon after the land titles were cleared from the Chickasaws, many speculators and frontiersmen obtained land grants given by the government of North Carolina in exchange for services in the Revolutionary War. The warrants were bought up by speculators



Waiting for the train - downtown McKenzie.

who obtained large tracts of the best land in the country and later sold it to the settlers.

Many of the pioneers made their way on flatboats as these were the cheapest and best means of travel to the New West. They came down the Cumberland River to the Ohio River, down the Ohio River to the Mississippi River, down the Mississippi River to the Forked Deer River, then they poled up the slow-running, muddy Forked Deer, Hatchie and Wolf Rivers to their destination. Many others traveled to the district by horseback.

When the pioneers reached the place where they wished to establish their homes, they erected log cabins near a stream where timber was plentiful. The men and boys cut the trees and built the houses. They split the boards with a froe and made a roof, and finished the house by filling the space between the logs with clay mortar to keep out the cold wind. The cabin was rough, not very handsome, but strong and warm. The early pioneer also made the furnishings for his new home. Spinning wheels were provided for the women to use in spinning thread and looms were provided for weaving the cloth.

David Crockett was quite well known around this district. He visited Caledonia and was known to have attended church at Shiloh near McKenzie. It is recorded that Colonel Crockett killed 105 bears in one season.

The "Barrens" have undergone a great change. The treeless piece of ground, once the hunting ground of Indians, is to-day's McKenzie. Streets now run where trails ran in 1818. The barren grass which grew higher than a man's head is gone and in its place are the homes, churches, schools and the businesses that make up the town.

Among the first settlers to occupy different sections of McKenzie were Stephen Pate who owned several hundred acres of land in west McKenzie. John M. Gilbert settled the northern part, Colonel John D. McKenzie and R.S. Cole the central part, Garland Snead the south, and Harris and Collier the east. The Sneads and Gilberts were rivals and two trading posts were established. Gardner Gilbert, son of John M. Gilbert, was the founder of Marietta, on a site that is now the corner of Stonewall and Magnolia Streets. Garland Snead claimed the honor of locating the town of Dundas which held its name for five years.

In 1853, the Memphis and Ohio Railroad Company was organized and the first train traveled from Memphis to

Paris on May 4, 1860. Meanwhile, the Nashville and Northwestern Railroad Company was building a road to connect West Tennessee with Nashville. Work on this road was suspended on account of the lack of funds. Monroe McKenzie built the McKenzie Hotel, a frame building facing the railroad in 1859. Other buildings were soon erected.

The growth of our town came to a standstill during the Civil War. The people were divided in their feelings. Most of them were for the South and joined or supported the Confederate Armies. The northern sympathizers joined the Union Army or became "bushwackers."

This was a trying time. Great privation prevailed, schools were closed, looting was common, and travel was dangerous. Few men were left to cultivate the soil and what was raised was usually sent to the Confederate Armies or stolen by the Union Army.

Northern raiders stole food, cattle and horses and also burned houses, barns and fences. Some old men were murdered when they refused to give over their gold. When veterans returned to their homes, most of them were tired and worn-many crippled. They had done the best they could and had lost.

Work on the railroad was renewed after the War and the tracks were completed in 1867. Then the town of McKenzie came into existence where the railroads crossed. When the first timetables came out they bore the name of "McKenzie, Tenn." and George McKenzie became the first station agent for the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad.

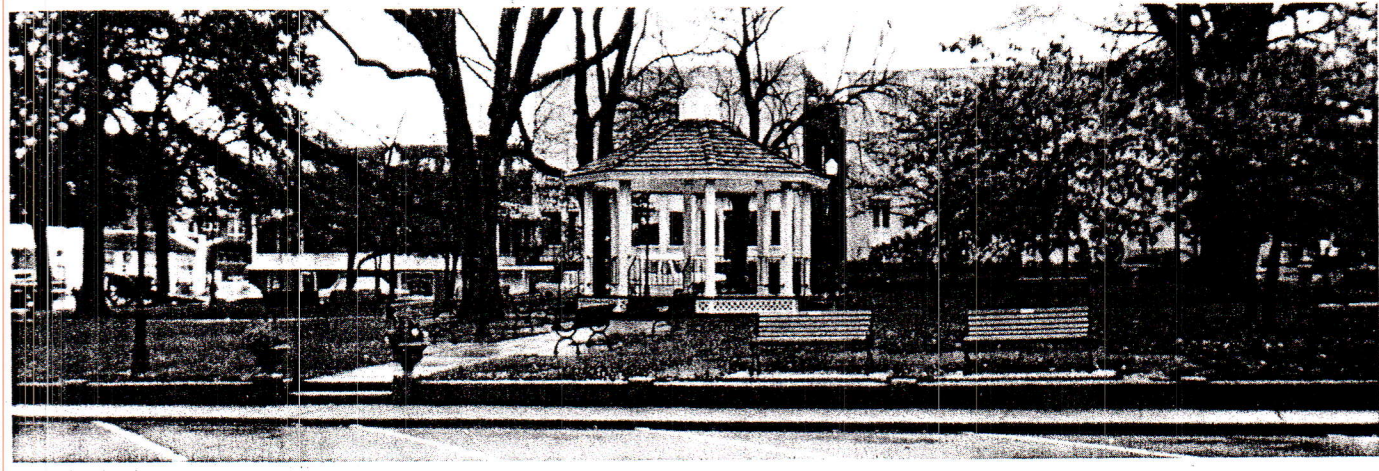
The town of McKenzie began to develop very rapidly after the coming of the railroads. The people of Caledonia, a large and prosperous community three miles north of McKenzie began to move their homes and businesses into McKenzie in order to take advantage of the facilities furnished by the railroads.

Caledonia College was moved to McKenzie. This name was later changed to McTyeire Institute. The Masons of Caledonia brought their Masonic Lodge and built the Masonic Hall on land given to them by J.M. McKenzie. The lower floor of the building was used for school and church purposes.

McKenzie was incorporated on Jan. 22, 1869. Captain W. H. Hawkins, brother of former Governor Alvin Hawkins, was the first Mayor. When Captain Hawkins

New P.O. built in 1988 - since 1989 this is Gordon Browning Museum & Genealogical Library





McKenzie City Park, Gazebo and Memorial Benches, Homecoming '86 project.

became Mayor of McKenzie, it was a town of less than 500 people. There were few streets, all of them unpaved. Wagons drawn by oxen were known to stall on Stonewall and Magnolia streets because of the deep mud. The only sidewalks were made of plank and when the citizens had business out at night they had to carry lanterns as their source of light. Water was furnished by wells and cisterns. Horses and hogs were allowed to run at large.

McLemoresville was another thriving community which contributed much to the early growth of McKenzie. Bethel College, having been established there in 1842, was moved to McKenzie in 1872. This college has meant much to McKenzie and is still one of the most influential establishments.

McKenzie Hotel was rebuilt after being destroyed by fire in 1872. This hotel was a three-story brick structure located at the junction of the two railroads. It fronted one hundred feet on each of the railroads and contained approximately fifty rooms, each boasting of all the modern conveniences of the day. At this time there were only two hotels in the state larger than the McKenzie Hotel, these were the Peabody Hotel in Memphis and the Maxwell House Hotel in Nashville. This historic landmark was destroyed by first August 5, 1922.

By 1890, McKenzie had seven saloons. Fights occurred frequently and some of them ended in death by a knife or gun. In the period between 1869 and 1896 there were 29 murders, each of which was the result of drinking liquor.

McKenzie had several churches and many Christian people. After much effort on the part of these Christians and the ministers of the town, saloons were voted out and all of them had closed their doors by May 1, 1889. The closing of the saloons introduced a period of great prosperity. At the end of the first ten "dry" years, McKenzie property had increased more than 50 percent. Thirteen new business houses and sixty-nine new residences had been erected or remodeled at a cost of more than one hundred thousand dollars.

Citizens began to take an interest in beautifying their town. One of the first activities in this direction was to fence in an area on the square to be known as the "City Park." Grass and trees were planted in the plot, cinder walks were made and steps were built over the fence on

the west side. Up to this time this area had been used as a hitching ground for horses and mules.

The mayors and aldermen had a difficult time trying to get the horses and hogs off the streets. An ordinance would be passed against the running at large of the animals, and the citizens would immediately circulate a petition demanding its repeal. Finally in April, 1905, cattle were denied the privilege of roaming the streets.

In 1885 or 1886, a band of Indians placed their tents just outside the corporate limits and lived there for several months. That portion of land was then named Nation Hill. In 1890 a petition by the people of that community was presented to the official board of McKenzie asking that the corporate limits be extended to include them. In May, 1890, this petition was granted and Nation Hill became part of the town of McKenzie.

Up to 1899, the only public water works was a pump in the City Park. In the same year, gasoline street lamps were purchased at the total cost of \$50.37. These lamps did not prove to be satisfactory and were replaced by kerosene lamps, purchased from Cannon and Ramsey at a cost of 27 cents each. The first lamplighter was Charlie Manley, who agreed to keep the lamps in repair, light them and put them out between the hours of ten o'clock and twelve o'clock each night. For this service he was paid \$4.00 per month. J.J. Medlin later took the job for \$30.00 per year.

McKenzie had two great fires in the downtown area. The first one destroyed many buildings along the railroad. The McKenzie Hotel was destroyed and a woman and four children burned to death.

In 1887, another fire demolished a row of frame houses facing east on Broadway and also several facing the Louisville and Nashville railroad. Students from Bethel and McTyeire fought the fire with water drawn from wells. After the great fires, the town began to erect their buildings so they would surround the City Park.

One of the saddest experiences in all West Tennessee history was the Yellow Fever Epidemic. W.W. Austin was mayor. All the surrounding towns were quarantined. Thousands fled from the plague and came to McKenzie where they stayed in the hotels. Some died and are buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Not a single person contracted the disease.



Mayor Joe Morris and councilmen: l to r, Danny Yates, Billy Vawter, Dennis Coleman, Bob Putman, Bob McDonald, and Dan Bradfield.

October 15, 1887 was a red-letter day for McKenzie. The President of the United States, Grover Cleveland, and his wife visited McKenzie. Elaborate preparations were made, and several thousand people came to meet the train. Cleveland and his lady appeared on the balcony of the McKenzie Hotel.

From 1900-1917 our town went through the usual growth. Public schools were built, a water and light plant constructed, and streets were graveled. Broadway was the first street to be graveled. As money became available the entire public square and other streets were graveled. Then came the automobiles and soon after the city set a speed limit of 10 miles per hour and imposed a fine for not abiding by it.

At the coming of World War I, many of our sons went to war. Six never returned. There were many privations due to rationing. The war ended November 11, 1918 and this became a time of celebration.

Following the return of the soldiers the town became very prosperous. Nearly everyone had a job and factories and stores hummed with activity. A new high school was built and occupied in the fall of 1923. Population from 500 in 1869 to 1,630 by 1920, and by 1930 the population was 1858. Then the "Depression" came, by the last of 1929, business and banks were closing. Jobs were disappearing and times were very hard. A soup kitchen was set up in the basement of the high school building to feed the hungry children. The government assisted with a lot of relief for the poor. Camp Gordon Browning was erected east of town as a work camp for young men from needy families and was in operation for several years.

By 1936, conditions were improving. A new post office was constructed. The corner stone was laid June 27, 1936 with the Caledonia Lodge presiding over the dedication ceremonies. A new grammar school was erected to replace the one that had burned earlier.

In 1941 one of the biggest industrial projects in the history of West Tennessee got under way. The Federal Government built a huge munitions plant and arsenal just east of Milan. McKenzie's population increased 86.9 percent including 1,300 persons annexed to the population in 1947. All this preparation was made because of impending war, registration for the draft was held in McKenzie on October 16, 1940 and 592 young men had registered.

Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese on December 7, 1941 and the United States was at war again. Boys began

to leave for camps and rationing of food, gas, shoes and other goods was in force.

Some of the early businesses of McKenzie were: Dr. O. Snead and Grocery Co., Johnson-Porter Clay Co., Hobbs Mine, Southern Star Lumber Co., Roller Mill, Granade Bottling Co., City Meat Market, Corn Mill and Feed Store, Wrinkle Moore and Co., Citizens Bank, Allen Store, J.A. Marshall Store, Bobo's Store, Pierce Hotel, Moore and Burns, Johnson's Grocery, Hotel McKenzie, Garland Hotel, Quinn House, R.D. McFarland Blacksmith Shop, Saeur Studio, Wholesale U-TOTE-EM Grocery Co., McKenzie Milk Products Co., Sassafras Mill, McKenzie Canning Factory, Cannon Drug Co., Chandler's Grocery, Coston, Moore and Granade Brick Manufacturing Co. These and many more businesses helped in the early days in McKenzie.

The Wilker Brothers factory began in 1949, Gaines Manufacturing Co. in 1958, Brown Shoe company in 1963, it has since closed.

Businesses employing a number of people in 1986 are: Wen-Su Manufacturing Co., Road Industries, Universal Plating, Republic Builders Products Co., Tamco Inc., Wilkers Bros., Keco Milling Co., Southern Biological Co., Southern Star Lumber Co.

Present day McKenzie has a population of 5,439. The Mayor is Joe Morris, (serving his third term). Councilmen are: Bob Putman, Vice-Mayor; Dennis Coleman, J.R. McDonald, Dan Bradfield, Danny Yates. Dr. William Grant-Health Officer; Kent Jones-City Attorney; Al Ownby-City Judge; Ed McNeil-Building Inspector; Jane Thompson-City Clerk; Raymond McDade-Chief of Police; Billy Sexton-Fire Chief; Williard Barksdale-Superintendent of Streets; Jerry Curtis-Superintendent of Water; Larry Wilkins-Director, Parks and Recreation.

Industries in 1986: Gaines Manufacturing; General Concrete Products; Keco Milling Co., McKenzie Welding Service; Republic Builders Products; Southern Biological Supply; Southern Star Lumber Co.; Tamco Inc.; Universal Plating Inc.; Wen-Su Manufacturing; Wilker Brothers Co.; Roads Industries.

Homecoming 86 projects were, renovating "The Barn" at McKenzie Recreational Park for entertainment and picnic pavillion, Building a Gazebo in City Park and the addition of Memorial benches.

Our town can boast of a weekly newspaper, two radio stations, a Cablevision Co., an airport in the process of being built, banks, churches, above average educational system, Bethel College and a school with kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Re: Origin of name "McKenzie, TN."
To: Alexander MacKenzie; 7 West St.; Stoneham, Mass. 02186
From: Browning Museum Library - Barbara

In 1853, The Memphis & Ohio R.R. was organized and 1st Train from Memphis to Paris TN 4 May 1860 Nashville & Northwestern was begun to connect West TN with Nashville - completed 1867 after the war which together with lack of funds had stopped construction.

McKenzie grew where the two r.r.'s crossed. It was so named because James Monroe McKenzie gave land on which one of the railroads was built, stipulating that his son George McKenzie, Sr. be the 1st station agent. So done and the stop was called McKenzie's station - eventually just "McKenzie". That road was the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis - better known around here as the N.C. + St. L. Monroe McKenzie was a son of Col. John D. McKenzie (Rev. War) and Patsy Bonner McKenzie. She was a. Londonderry, Ire., arrived in New Orleans La. while Col. McKenzie was there with Gen. Andrew Jackson's Army. They were married there and returned to NC after the war. They came here to visit Col. McKenzie's sister Millie Gilbert who had emigrated to the area with her husband. The McKenzies subsequently settled here and are buried in Mt. Olivet, the cemetery associated with the town. No one with the McKenzie name currently lives here.

Thank you for the SASE and for your inquiry. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know. We charge only for copies (@ 20¢ per page) and actual postage. We exist on an inadequate state grant and donations. There is no charge for this response.



McKenzie Mayor Patty Edwards presents the Key to the City to Martha McKenzie Carpenter.

Marker dedication denotes McKenzie's origin

by Joel Washburn

A new historical marker resides in the downtown McKenzie park. A Saturday afternoon ceremony was abbreviated by heavy storms as Mayor Patty Edwards and Martha McKenzie Carpenter, the great granddaughter of founder James Monroe McKenzie attempted to dedicate the marker.

Mrs. Carpenter said she pursued the idea of erecting the marker at the urging of Dr. Howard Smith and wife, Marion.

Last week, crews from the McKenzie Public Works Department and Carroll County Electric cleared an area for the marker. It is situated just north of the gazebo and west of the veteran's walk.

Because the inclement weather forced the ceremony to be cut short, Mrs. Carpenter was not able to give her prepared speech, but did pass along the contents of that text to The Banner.

"We are here to dedicate this marker to James Monroe McKenzie for his contribution to the development of this little town. Some newcomers may have wondered where the town got its name. James Monroe McKenzie was born February 14, 1818 and probably was named for President James Monroe who came to office about that time. He came to West Tennessee with his father, Cap-

continued on page 12

McKenzie dedication . . . cont. from page 1

tain John, along with some settlers - Sneads, Gilberts, Pates, Ridleys, Bowdens, and others. Little communities sprang up where these families staked their claims.

The railroad began coming through in the 1850s taking land for the right-of-way as they needed it. The Memphis and Ohio line, later the L&N, was the first line with passenger and freight service from Memphis to Bowling Green, beginning in 1861. The N&W had begun laying track from Nashville to the west but the Civil War interrupted the construction.

After the war, work continued and eventually the two lines crossed at McKenzie. In March 1861, James Monroe had donated 10 acres of land on the north side of the N&W tracks to construct a depot. Subsequently a passenger depot was built right at the crossing and a freight office a little to the west. They called this McKenzie Station. When the town was incorporated in 1869, the name 'stuck' When scheduled train travel was established, the railroads had to publish timetables so they had to name the stops. In 1870, a 112' x 20' freight platform was built on each side of the freight office with rail sidings on each side. Later a concrete platform was laid between the main line and the freight siding."

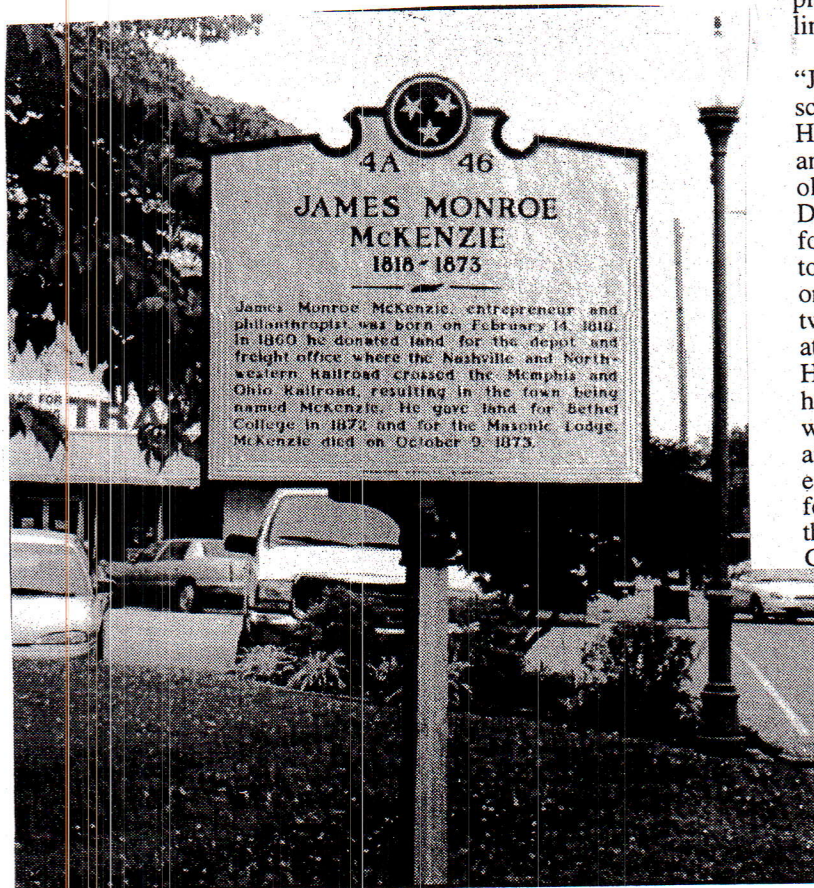
The script continued by reading, "James Monroe worked for good schools, churches and government. He married Martha Louisa Coleman and they had eight children. The two oldest boys, James Albert and John David practiced medicine in Bradford for many years and came back here to retire. They build identical houses on Stonewall, one of which was razed two years ago. Malcolm became an attorney, practicing in McKenzie and Huntingdon before going to Oklahoma, where he practiced law and was an agent for the Pawnee Indians. Today the name Malcolm McKenzie is still known in the legal profession in Oklahoma City and Tulsa through some of Malcolm's children. Clinton Atkin was the youngest son

and he too went west. He was there when the land was opened up for homesteaders so all his life he was involved in real estate and oil. He is the one who gave McKenzie its first swimming pool on Stonewall.

My grandfather, George W. was station agent for the railroads in McKenzie and in Dickson for 55 years. James Monroe also had three daughters, Callie, Sally, and Gussie who marked local businessmen and lived near the rest of their family.

James Monroe died in 1873 before Mt. Olivet (cemetery) was established. He could have been buried in the Gilbert Cemetery or on McKenzie land, but it is assumed he was moved to Mount Olivet where his wife and all the children and spouses are buried.

McKenzie has always been a good place to live. Folks were interested in having good schools, good churches and keeping an eye on their children. The town has responded to national emergencies, sending their boys to the service, supporting the Red Cross and War Bond campaigns. There have always been those planting flowers to make the town pretty, book clubs to keep up to date on what was going on, and church circle meetings. Many former McKenzians and their children have excelled in the field of education, military, athletics and religion. I am sure the young people coming up now will accomplish even more with the opportunities open to them today. And when they become famous, I hope they will always mention they got their station in this little town, even if it's through a great grandfather or grandmother. I hope those who choose to leave McKenzie will always have a longing to return someday. I honestly believe the happiest people in the world are those who were born and raised here and never left. I still get home sick sometimes and when I'm on the way up here, along about Jarrell Switch, the air seems to smell better, the trees greener, and I drive a little faster."



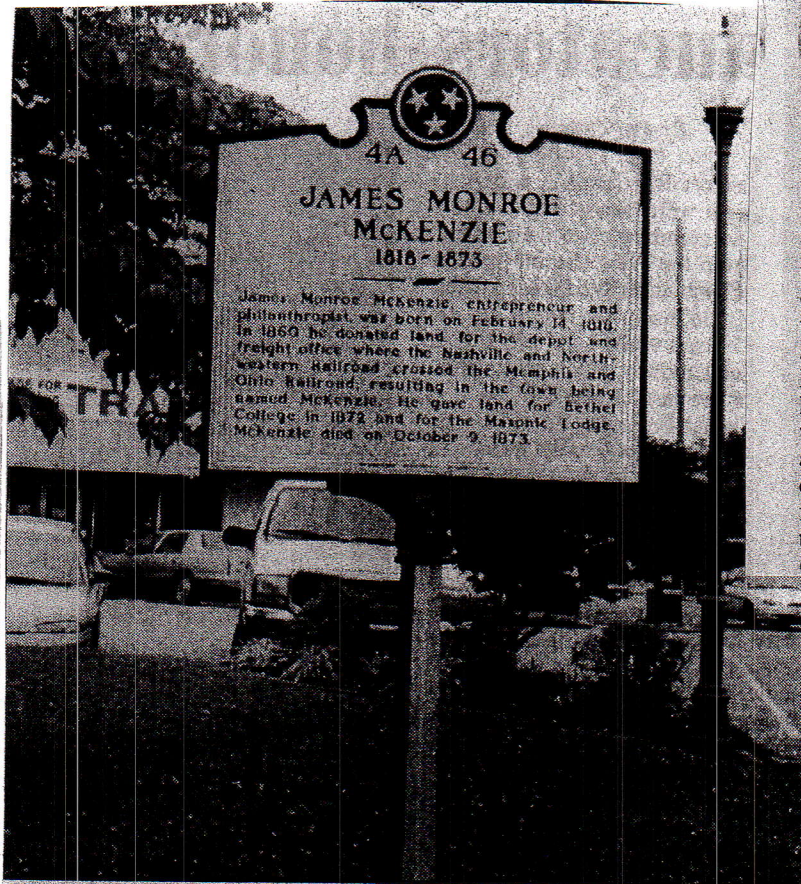
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A new monument in downtown McKenzie denotes the history of McKenzie.