

# History of Higdon Arkansas

This is about the family that the town of Higden is named after.



H.N. Higdon Family

Thomas Geoffrey Higdon, after whom the town of Higden was named, was born about 1815 in North Carolina: his parents were Simeon and Margaret Higdon. It is believed Thomas G. Higdon served in the Civil War and was seriously wounded. He died about 1900 and is buried at Colony Cemetery near Morganton, Van Buren County, Arkansas. The town of Higden sponsored a fund drive to place a marker on his grave and held a memorial service on April 19, 1986, for their part in observing Arkansas' Sesquicentennial.

Thomas Geoffrey Higdon was married to Dolly Thompson March 14, 1839. She was born 1821 in Tennessee, the daughter of William Thompson and Penelope Holland; Dolly Thompson Higdon died in Tennessee. Thomas and Dolly Higdon had ten children.

- 1. William T. Higdon, born 1840, died October 22, 1887; married (1) Mary E. Whitehead (2) F. Kilbreath and (3) Sarah Rowe.*
- 2. Mary Caroline Higdon, born May 1842, died 1928; married James Robert Cody on September 22, 1870.*
- 3. Martha E. Higdon, born May 184, married John L. Short April 5, 1877.*
- 4. Thomas Jefferson Higdon, born July 15, 1846, died August 27, 1927; married Sarah Caroline Richardson in 1877.*
- 5. Simeio Higdon, born 1848, died 1870.*

6. *Rebecca J. Higdon born 1851/52, married Jefferson Rollins 1883.*
7. *Sidney Etta Higdon, born 1854, married James Wood January 10, 1885.*
8. *Susan B. Higdon, born 1856, married (1) L.G. Ramer, (2) Thomas Parrish.*
9. *David Newton Higdon, born September 15, 1862, married Selena Frances Wood June 30, 1887. He died November 28, 1928. (dau. Annie Prisley)*
10. *Jasper Higdon, born October 1863.*

After the death of Dolly Thompson, Thomas Geoffrey Higdon married Ann Jane Mullins (Malone), by whom he had three children.

1. *John Higdon, born 1867, died 1884.*
2. *Sarah Matilda Higdon, born October 15, 1868, married Henry Abraham Turney July 4, 1889. She died August 4, 1929. (daughter Ida (Turney) Nelson )*
3. *Ida Lee Higdon, married — Thomason.*

All of Thomas Higdon's children were born in Benton County, Tennessee, near Camden, Tennessee. Most of them died in Arkansas. His daughter, Sarah Matilda, came to Higden at the age of six. The wagon train bringing the Higdon family came to the area about 1874.

*Above from the Cleburne County Historical Journal Spring 1987*

*Added by Mary Turney Miller*

I recently discovered the following. Using census records and family history, we had figured out that the above mentioned Anna Jane Mullins (Malone) was the mother of James Buel Mullins – our great-grandfather. We could not find the father of James Buel Mullins. James was born 1863 in Tn – during the Civil War. There are three individuals searching for this

information. So far we have the following, any additional information will be appreciate.

From the Carroll Co Tn Historical Society, Gordon Browning Museum and Genealogical Library

1. Thomas Higdon m. Dolly Thompson 14 Mar 1839 Benton Co., TN
2. James Mullins m. Jane Malone 7 July 1861 Carroll Co., TN
3. Thomas Higdon m. Jane Mullins 7 Nov 1866 Carroll Co., TN

I am from the James Buel Mullins line and have the rest of that families history – it connects to Hopson and Barnum. Contact [Mary Turney Miller](#)

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## Early Settlers Arrive

We have recorded for us the arrival of another wagon train bringing settlers to Arkansas from Tennessee. This article was written by Robert E. Lee Flowers who married Lucy Turney, the daughter of Willaim Allen Turney, the son of Henry Turney. For the enrichment of the reader we have left the text intact.

November 16, 1886 a wagon train rolled over the hills into Sugar Loaf Springs (now Heber Springs) a temporary destination to a final goal of "Salt Springs Barrens". Among the party was an aged bearded man, Uncle Tim Flowers, his wife Aunt Lou, and son and daughter Bob and Anna. These people in quest of a home sighted Cullums Flatwoods, the finest pinery I ever saw and contacting Uncle Billy Holmes (Uncle Blinker Holmes) bought his squatters cabin. It was a 13' X 16' log shack, ridge pole roof, cobble stone chimney, door hung on wooden pegs on outside (no room inside) and every time it opened said hard times! Beds were bunks pegged to wall in two corners, this

writer whanged up a trundle bed shoved under another bunk.

From this cabin we heard the panthers scream and the wolves howl and at least one bear was killed in passing. Deer by the half dozens loped down the ravine and sighting 20 odd turkeys was common. Contacting neighbors we found the most generous hill people that ever lived, an old Methodist Church, Old Bethel, to which people from a radius of miles would come in ox wagons or even in better vehicles, others on horseback or afoot.

They'd bring their children (to the church) and spread bedding in the corners; there'd be singing and preaching that moved to spiritual uplist and Uncle Abe Turney would talk to God in prayer in a way that could not be denied. Here's where the old sister said "Praise God!...somebody hold my baby while I shout!"

Ater the meeting Charley Turney would say "everybody go home with me!" and sure enough there'd be a big crowd accept. I never knew a more hospitable man than Charley Turney and Aunt Jeannie made the finest coffee and big fat biscuits and there was pork roast, taters, gravy and vegetables galore.

Old Bethel Community must have a new district school! So the Lynns, Turneys, Whitakers, etc., got together and soon by the help of everybody a new Union Church and school house and a new district (#38( was established.

The writer was one of the early teachers, taught twelve terms within walking distance of home. Bethlehem 4, Bethel 6, Cullum 2, three miles to any point. A moving spirit was William Allen Turney (Bill Allen) who lived at least four miles from Old Bethel but who patronized not only his own school but his son John attended Quitman and Heber schools and with the writer four terms.

George Allen Turney, the youngest son, was with this writer 8 terms, one term at Kinderhook, now Edgemont. This writer and George A. Turney ate together, roomed together, studied

together, slept together and bonds of allegiance drew us closer than buddies.

About the year 1894 Charley Turney and T.A. Stuart built a saw and grist mill and a cotton gin. Andrew Lynn, Jr. for several years had a blacksmith shop, as huckster kept dry goods and groceries.

This section for many years had received mail at Shiloh, Eglantine and Kinderhook 5 to 10 miles away and across Little Red River. A branch route from Morganton was extended to Chalk, McLehaney, Scott and Smallwood communities. Later on Higden, named for a family of long residents in Saline township (old Uncle Tommie Higdon) whose only son, Dave, lived near Old Higden, home of the Uncle Davy Nicholson place. The Higdens had connections with the Codys, Crocketts, Woods, Turneys, Thomasons.

John Calvin Turney son of Bill Allen Turney established a general store at Higden in the late 1870's but later moved to Quitman. George A. Turney moved to Higden where he had various enterprises; left three sons and two daughters.

Robert E. Lee Flowers first married Lucy, a daughter of Bill Allen Turney (Wm. A. Turney), she passed away and left also five children. George Allen (Red George) Turney was also married to a Lucy (Allison).

On October 16, 1911 Andrew Lynn was paid \$25.00 for one acre of land that was to become the Higden Cemetery. The Higden, Lower Barnes (Barrens), Turney and Treadway Cemeteries were relocated at the Higden-McLehaney Cemetery July 1960, due to the forming of Greers Ferry Reservoir. Sylvia Ibbotson has compiled a comprehensive list of graves in the old cemeteries, and graves, numbers and names or relocation in the Higden-McLehaney Cemetery.

*This is from the Spring 1987 issue of Cleburne County Historical Journal.*