



# Rebel Underground

Sons of Confederate Veterans  
Major John C. Hutto Camp # 443  
Jasper, Alabama

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The April meeting of the Major John C. Hutto Camp  
in Jasper, Alabama will be

**Sunday, 16 April 2023 at 2:00PM**

Meeting will be at the  
First United Methodist Church's Adult Center

Speaker - John McGraw

Family, friends & guest are welcome

## **Vice President Aaron Burr hid in Dismals Canyon in Franklin County, Alabama after killing political rival Alexander Hamilton**

by Donna R Causey



**Vice President Aaron Burr**

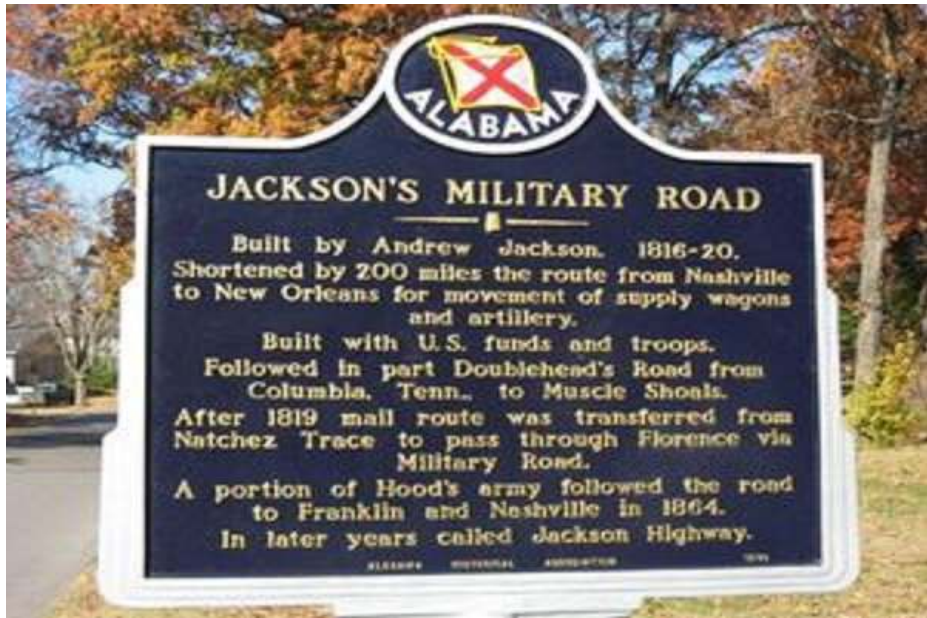
In 1806, former vice president Aaron Burr hid for two weeks in Dismals Canyon after killing political rival Alexander Hamilton in a duel. Some patriots say that Mr. Burr provided a much needed service to the fledgling country. It's just too bad it didn't do it sooner. Though the country under the influence of Jefferson and Madison, we are now reaping the long-term legacy of Hamilton.

Dismals Canyon is located in the town of Phil Campbell in the northwestern part of Franklin County, Alabama. Several outlaws have allegedly hidden in the canyon, including Jesse James and Aaron Burr.

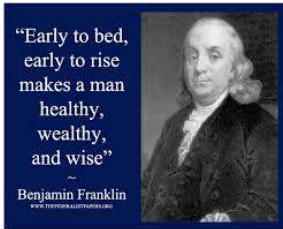
Dismals Canyon is a Registered National Landmark and has been voted one of the country's most secluded and beautiful areas.

### **Jackson's military road**

Jackson's Military Road was built through present-day Franklin County between 1816 and 1820 by Andrew Jackson and his troops to save travel time between Nashville and New Orleans.



Franklin County, Alabama was created by the territorial legislature, February 4, 1818. Its territory was a part of the ancient seats of the Chickasaws, although claimed by Cherokees. With the final Chickasaw cession of October 20, 1832, the county boundaries were extended westward to the Mississippi line. On February 6, 1867, its entire northern portion was formed into a new county, to which the name Colbert was given. It has an area of 647 square miles or 414,080 acres. This split occurred over political issues after the Civil War. It was abolished eight months later by an Alabama constitutional convention and then reestablished on Feb. 24, 1870.



## **Named for Benjamin Franklin**

It bears the name of Benjamin Franklin, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a member of the convention that framed the Constitution of the United States, and one of the most distinguished of Revolutionary patriots.



## **Franklin County, Alabama**

The county seat was originally located at Russellville, named after Major William Russell, an early settler and chief scout for Gen. Andrew Jackson during the Creek Indian War of 1813-14. The state's first rail line, the Tuscumbia Railroad opened in Franklin County in 1832.

## **Mysterious courthouse fire**

It is located in the northwestern part of the state. Originally, Franklin County covered over 1200 square miles. Once its boundaries started at Marion County and went all the way to the Tennessee River. In the beginning, there were only two towns, Russellville and Big Springs. Big Springs was later named Tuscumbia.

The county lies south of Colbert, west of Lawrence, and north of Marion and Winston. Its western boundary is the eastern line of Tishomingo and Itawamba Counties in Mississippi.

In 1849, the county seat was transferred to Frankfort, where it remained until

1879 when it was moved to Belgreen. A mysterious courthouse fire in 1890 resulted in the loss of the county's records and probably accounted for the relocation of the county seat to Russellville in 1891. A heated election was called to determine whether the new seat would be in a rival town Isbell or remain in Russellville. Russellville won and a new courthouse was built at its original location. Other towns and communities include Red Bay, Phil Campbell, Vina and Hodges.

Russell Valley comprises the northern half of the county. The town of Russellville was laid out with a public Court house square in the center of town. The old square is now the fourth block on the west side of Jackson Avenue and was 384 feet by 468 feet. Russellville's first Courthouse was built of logs.

In 1849, an election was held to move the courthouse to a more central location in the county and the county seat was moved to Frankfort where it remained until 1879.

### **Lawyers laid their law books on tree stumps**

When Colbert County was created in 1867, it was carved out of the northern portion of Franklin County, but it only existed for 8 months and the land was returned to Franklin County. Then two years later in 1869, Colbert County was again organized.

After the split of the two counties, another election was held to determine Franklin county's seat and Belgreen was selected.

"This time a wood frame courthouse was built by a Mr. Dooley and the jail was built by Mr. William M. Rollins. The streets in Belgreen were just 99 feet wide. The first court was held in the street where the lawyers reportedly laid their law books on tree stumps. The county seat remained in Belgreen until 4 Dec 1890

when the courthouse and all the contents were destroyed by fire. All records were lost, except for one old land record book that was at the home of one of the court clerks the night of the fire.

So once again another election was held to select a new county seat. Two towns were selected, Russellville and Isbell. After a very heated race between the two towns, Russellville won out with 1228 votes, while Isbell received 1147 votes. After some 50 years, the county seat returned to Russellville.”

The new courthouse in Russellville was built by architect and contractor John Barrett. The new three story brick building was built on the corner of Limestone Street on the east side of Jackson Avenue. It had a steeple that housed a bell and a four sided clock The courthouse was completed in 1893 and was the first courthouse in the county to display the American flag on a pole.



Franklin County Courthouse  
ca. 1920 (Alabama Department  
of Archives and History)

Sadly, this beautiful courthouse was again destroyed by fire on January 13, 1953, but the records were saved this time. The new courthouse was built from the remaining basement on the same site from native limestone. The original bell is displayed on the northern side of the building.

### **Streams flow north**

The southern half is a high table land, representing the northern edge of the Warrior coal field. The principal streams rise at the foot of the ridge separating the valley from the table land, and flow northward into the Tennessee River.

Big Bear Creek lies to the south of the ridge, flows to the southwest, thence westward and northwest into the Tennessee. The ridge referred to forms an irregular crescent, overlying the coal measures, and forms a very noticeable feature in the topography of the county.

As indicated the streams to the north flow into the Tennessee, and those to the south into the Tombigbee River. An interesting fact is that the waters of Big Bear Creek on the north are some 50 feet or more higher than those of the streams flowing into the Tombigbee on the south, although not more than a few miles apart. Other streams are Cedar, Hurricane, Tollison, and Little Bear Creek.

### **Franklin County was one of first iron-ore mining centers in the state**

“The county was one of the first iron-ore mining centers in the state. By 1840, the county was one of the leading iron manufacturers in the state. Iron produced at the Cedar Creek Iron Works contributed to both the Mexican and Civil War.” The Cedar Creek Iron Works was destroyed by Union General Lovell H. Rousseau’s raid in July 1864 during the Civil War.

Captain John H. Bankhead, 16<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry, CSA served as US Senator for Franklin County from 1876-1877.

## HUTTO CAMP OFFICERS

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Commander .....	James R. Blackston
1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. Cmd .....	Trent Harris
2nd Lt. Cmd .....	Jeremy Jackson
Adjutant. ....	John McGraw
Chaplain .....	Barry Cook
Judge Advocate .....	Cherokee Brasher
Communications .....	Gene Herren
Facebook .....	Brandon Prescott - Jeremy Jackson
Quartermaster .....	Barry Cook
Newsletter Editor .....	James Blackston

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Website: [www.huttocamp.com](http://www.huttocamp.com)

Facebook - [Hutto Camp](#)

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