

EARLY BIBLE GROVE AND ITS PEOPLE

by Rena Lents Thomas

Editor's note: Most of this information was given me by Merle Lacoax Webster, who has compiled quite an amount of history on the township.)

Thanks Merle!

Clay County is divided into twelve townships and Bible Grove township lies in the Northeast corner of the county. Much has been written about this old settlement, including, how it got its name. Three theories exist as to the name and where it derived from. First, some say it was so named because the early settlers were strongly embedded in religion. Secondly, is the simple story that it was named for the families by the name of Bible who lived in the area. To me the second reason does not hold much water, as there actually were not very many by that name among the early settlers.

The third, and perhaps the most accepted version, is the story about a Bible being found by hunters in a grove of trees near where the town of Bible Grove now stands, thus the name, Bible Grove Township being born.

Although most of us associate the township of Bible Grove with the name George **Monical**, and rightly so, he was not the first known settler to that area. As far as can be ascertained, the first settlement was made in 1835 by Cyrus **Mason** in Sec. 31. He was said to have been highly thought of but left the county after only a few years, going to southern Illinois near McLeansboro.



George W. **Monical** (1860), The Man who Laid Out The Town of Bible Grove.