

**SIMOND SHANKS WHO LEFT PUTNAM  
50 YEARS AGO, RETURNS FOR VISIT**  
*The Nashville Tennessean Newspaper, 1932*

**ROBERT SIMEON SHANKS**

**BAXTER** – Tenn., Nov. 3 – (Spl)

Two hundred relatives met at Arnolds Chapel Church recently in a homecoming service in honor of Simond Shanks, who left Putnam county fifty-two years ago and who was visiting his many hundred kinsmen in the county after an absence of twenty-two years.



In the morning after singing several hymns, which were sung many years ago when Mr. Shanks and others present were quite young, the Rev. J. R. Clayton delivered a message on "Faith." Songs were again the order of the afternoon, following a bounteous dinner brought by the large throng of people. After several favorite hymns had been rendered, the Rev. Dow Ensor, another relative, delivered an address on "memory."

Mr. Shanks, who will reach the seventy-fifth mile post on December 12, left Putnam county, December 15, 1882, traveling with his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Furgis Shanks, and daughter, Martha to Nashville, in a covered wagon. They went from there to Harrison county, Mo., on the train. After they moved on to Stafford county, homesteaded on 160 acres of

land.

He paid \$14.50 to the government for the homestead. After living on the farm for five years, the homestead became his property. He has added to his acreage until he now owns 1,200 acres of the fertile land.

In speaking of this removal to the west he related, "When I reached Kansas I had seventy-five cents in money. Well, the depression has hurt us, but I have 500 acres in wheat." The drought of the present year has worked a hardship on him, he said. "It has been two years since we have had any roasting ears. When the corn comes up and begins to grow, the drought comes, and the shoot dies.

Mr. Shanks relatives in Putnam county number hundreds of persons, he declares. They can be found in every community in the county. They are, the Gentrys, Maxwells, Shanks, Howards, McCalebs, Ensors, Vaughns, Pucketts and many other names. He declared, "I believe that I am akin to one-half the population of Putnam county." He is a native of the Boma community west of here. He was born about three miles west of Boma. He was the son of the late William H. and Mrs. Nancy Jane Howard Shanks. His wife has been dead four years. He has five daughters and two sons, who live in Kansas.

In talking of his native county, he remarked, "Putnam county has made many changes for the past fifty years. And all of them have been for the better. When I left here fifty years ago, people were worshipping in log churches, and children were attending school in log buildings, but now I see brick churches and brick school buildings. The road used to be mud and now they are hard-surfaces highways. There are many many marks of progress."

He declares that the New Deal has been a blessing to the wheat growers of Kansas. "I do not know what many would have done had it not been for the government helping out," Mr. Shanks declared.

Mr. Shanks and his son, Floyd Shanks, are visiting hundreds of relatives over Putnam country for the next few weeks.



William Henry Shank family. This photo, taken prior to 1904, shows William Henry Shank, son of pioneer Putnam County settler Simeon Shank, and his wife Nancy Jane Howard Shank seated. Back row, from the left Nancy Jane Shank Julian, Robert Simeon Shank, Craven Lincoln Shank and Elizabeth Shank Bryant. Courtesy of Carolyn Huddleston.

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THE NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

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Mr. Shanks, who will reach the seventy-fifth mile post on December 15, 1882, traveling with his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Furgis Shanks, and daughter, Martha, of Nashville, in a covered wagon. They went from there to Harrison County, Mo., on the train. After a ten months' stay in Missouri, they moved on to Stafford county in Central Kansas, where they homesteaded on 160 acres of land.

He paid \$14.00 to the government for the homestead. After living on the farm for five years, the homestead became his property. He has added to his acreage until he now owns 1,100 acres of the fertile land.

In speaking of his removal to the west, he related, "When I reached Kansas I had seventy cents in money. Well, the depression has hurt us, but I have 600 acres in wheat. The drought of the present year has worked a hardship on him, he said. "It has been two years since we have had any roasting ears. When the corn comes up and begins to grow, the drought comes, and the shoot dies."

Mr. Shanks' relatives in Putnam county number hundreds of persons, he declares. They can be found in every community in the county. They are the Gentrys, Marywells, Shanks, Howards, McCalibbs, Ennos, Vaughans, Puckett's and many other names. He declared, "I believe that I am akin to one-half the population of Putnam county. He is a relative of the Boma community west of here. He was born about three miles west of Boma. He was the son of the late William H. and Mrs. Nancy Jane Howard Shanks. His wife has been dead four years. He has five daughters and two sons who live in Kansas. In talking of his native county, he remarked, "Putnam county has made many changes for the past fifty years. And all of them have been for the better. When I left here fifty years ago, people were worshipping in log churches, and children were attending school in log buildings, but now I see brick churches and brick school buildings. The road used to be mud, and now they are hard-packed highways. There are many, many marks of progress."

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