

## HISTORIC BRENTWOOD

### The Frost Family

If we were asked to select the most historic site in Brentwood, we would pick the Frost place on Old Smyrna Road, a.k.a. Cottonport.

First of all, the Frost place was the site on an old Indian town, perhaps Mound Builders or earlier. History books tell us that Mayfield Station was built on the site of an old Indian town. Also, local families tell of having found Indian relics for years and years. One the great Indian trails ran through the town, evidence of which can still be seen, so they say.

Then, the Frost place was the site of Mayfield Station, which was the first fort built in what is now Williamson County. It was built by the Mayfield family to protect themselves and their neighbors from Indian attack. As we have said in a previous article, an Indian raid did occur there in 1788.

And, finally, the Frost family themselves were early settlers in the Brentwood area and have made important contributions to the community. The Frosts first came to Brentwood in 1810 - 1812. They came from Newberry County, South Carolina.

The Frosts originated in Pennsylvania where they emigrated in the 1600's. They came from England and were Quakers. It is to be noted that the Quakers were far more numerous in the 1600's and 1700's than one might imagine. They were the fourth largest groups of emigrants to come to America.

From Pennsylvania, the Frosts and other families with whom they were connected migrated to Winchester, Virginia, for a generation or so, and then they moved on to South Carolina, where they arrived in the mid 1700's. The Quakers did not fair well in the South. They did not believe in slavery, and they did not believe in wars. Their religion was strange to South Carolinians. They said "thee" and "thou". They wore funny clothes. And they wouldn't take their hats off in church.

In the early 1800's a "prophet of doom" went through the South Carolina country side predicting an impending bloody conflict in which brother would fight brother. In hindsight some have said it was the Civil War. In any event the Quakers left South Carolina almost in one body. The main contingency went to Ohio (where Richard Nixon's ancestors came from). The Frosts and those of their connection came to Brentwood.

The first of the Frost family to come to Brentwood was Captain John Frost and his wife Rhoda Miles Frost. John Frost earned his "captain" during the War of 1812, when he commanded a

company under Andrew Jackson's command. His father Jonathan Frost was killed during the Revolutionary War. He was a Loyalist and was defending a fort in South Carolina. As a result of his political alliance, the family property was confiscated by the newly organized South Carolina government. They were reduced to poverty and decided it was time to move on.

The Frost place was also the first commercial area in Brentwood. Captain John Frost operated a mill and general store there. It was also the site of Brentwood's first post office.

Sterling Brown Frost, son of Captain John Frost, inherited the home place and continued to live there. He was a practicing physician in the Brentwood community. He also was instrumental in organizing the Brentwood United Methodist Church.

Another Frost son, Samuel Miles Frost, went to Texas, where he prospered. He was one of the founders of the city of Houston, Texas, and went on to found the Frost National Bank of San Antonio. Rhoda Miles Frost when she was in her 60's "rode horseback" to Texas to see this son and his family. She died and is buried there.

The Frost place continues in the Frost family. It is owned and occupied by Woodward Frost, great grandson of Captain John Frost.

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