

The Knoxville ‘Lottery’

by Paula Gammell

On December 17, 1791, the following notice appeared in the *Knoxville Gazette*, Volume 1, Number 4:

Knoxville, October 3, 1791

Articles of Agreement made and concluded on this third day of October, 1791, by and between James White, esquire, proprietor of the land laid off for the town of Knoxville...and John Adair, Paul Cunningham, and George McNutt, commissioners appointed on behalf of the purchasers of the lots in the town of Knoxville...all of Hawkins county...Witnesseth that the said James White do bargain and sell to the subscribers for lots in the said town, sixty-four lots, each lot containing one half acre square.... The said town to be loted for and drawn in a fair lottery by the said commissioners in behalf of the subscribers, on the third day of October aforesaid....And the said James White doth agree that all the land between the town and river, one pole in breadth along the river bank excepted, and all the land between the town and the creek, as far up as the south-east corner of Broad street, with a street of thirty three feet wide round the remainder of the town, shall be for commons for the said town....

1 James White	27 George Roulstone	53 Daniel Hamblin
2 James W. Lackey	28 Reserved	54 John Hackett
3 His excellency Wm Blount	29 Reserved	55 Jacob Carper
4 James Armstrong	30 Andrew & J. Balfour	56 Robert Legitt
5 William Davidson	31 John Rhea	57 Adam Peck
6 Andrew & J. Balfour	32 Mathew A. Atkinson	58 David Allison
7 John Hays	33 Rev. Mr. Carrick	59 James & W. Lea
8 Thomas Amis	34 John Stone	60 John Troy
9 Jacob Brown	35 Hon. Judge Campbell	61 William Small
10 James Knox	36 Reserved	62 Hugh Fulton
11 James Richardson	37 Reserved	63 James Millar
12 William Boyd	38 Samuel Hannah	64 Thomas Smith
13 Thomas Amis	39 Jacob Carper	
14 Jos. Hodge	40 George Roulstone	
15 Hon. Judge Anderson	41 Andrew Greer	
16 John Gehon	42 John Adair	
17 Ignatus & J. Chisolm	43 William Lowery	
18 John Carter	44 Nathaniel Cowan	
19 James Cozby	45 Samuel McGaughey	
20 Thomas King	46 William Henry	
21 Rev. Mr. Carrick	47 William Cox	
22 Jacob Carper	48 John Chisolm	
23 John Love	49 John King, Sen.	
24 John Owens	50 Lewis Newhouse	
25 James Greenway	51 Peter McNamee	
26 Jacob Carper	52 Nicholas Perkins	

We the commissioners do certify that the above names are set opposite to the numbers, agreeable to the lottery, as they were drawn.

[Signed] John Adair,
Paul Cunningham, George McNutt

N.B. Those persons who subscribed for lots are desired to pay the purchase money immediately, otherwise their subscription will be deemed void, and the lots disposed of for the benefit of the proprietor.

But wait! If you’ve found somebody, don’t get *too* excited just yet. Only a handful of the above-named people actually *purchased* a lot in Knoxville – and only some of those ever lived on it.

Several months elapsed before the first lot was sold; more months elapsed before any significant number changed hands. And, if you’re wondering what the odds are that James White just happened to draw lot number 1, well... you’re on the right track. By the way, did you know that the *Knoxville Gazette* was published in Rogersville?

There’s more to this story – a *lot* more.

The founding of Knoxville – and the events that led up to it – is one of my favorite areas of research.

We’ll talk about the beginnings of Knoxville soon in “East Tennessee Roots.” Don’t miss it!