

Dr. John William Evans, 1874 - 1946
Dorothy Granberry, Geneva Miller Historical Society

From sometime in the 1890s, when he graduated from Meharry Medical College until his death in May 1946, Haywood County, TN had access to the medical services of Dr. John William Evans. As was the custom in those bygone days, Dr. Evans saw patients at his home at 202 Bradford Street as well as at his infirmary likely located on East Main St. Dr. Evans probably also made house calls.

Dr. John William Evans was one of three sons of Frank and Fannie Marr Evans. The Evans family lived in old Haywood County District 11 on a 171 acre farm. A reader with access to Haywood County deeds needs to research when the Evans farm was purchased and from whom, along with the terms of the purchase. GMHS would be very grateful to receive a copy of this information.

Pictured here is the Frank and Fannie Marr Evans Family. Seated from left to right are: Dr. John William Evans, Frank Evans, Fannie Marr Evans, and Susanna Claracy Evans Roberts. Standing from left to right are: David Nunn Evans, Mary Emma Evans Flagg Davis, Rev. James R. Evans, and Harriet Evans Mann.

It is presently unclear how the Evans Family came to be in Haywood County. While they appear in the 1880 Census, they have not been found in the 1870 Census. This opens the possibility that although born in TN, they came into Haywood County after formal emancipation in 1865.

The fact that the Evans have a son with the name of David Nunn, the name of a prominent local politician during the last half of the 1800s, suggests that Frank Evans, like many African Americans in Haywood County, may have himself been politically active during the 35 year period from formal emancipation in 1865 to the beginning of the 20th century in 1900.

Little is known about when the Evans Medical Practice began providing clinic stays for patients. Readers should keep in mind that this was likely necessitated by the fact that African American doctors in Haywood County did not have access to the Haywood Memorial Hospital that was instituted during the first half of the 1900s. While African American patients were admitted to a basement ward in the hospital, they had to be the patient of a white doctor who had hospital admitting privileges.

Death certificates from the 1940s indicate that Dr. Evans' hospital or clinic was the place of death for some people treated long-term, for example, Mr. Ed White from the Douglass Community in Stanton in 1946; Ms. Columbia Maclin in January 1947; and Mr. John Irving Cunningham also in January 1947. All of the above cited examples were after the death of Dr. John William Evans, so it is possible that the clinic was instituted by his son, Dr. John Frank Evans who continued the practice until 1950 when he relocated to California.