

**Solomon and Jemima Pettit Brashears** arrived in Ralls County by covered wagon in early May of 1831 having departed Spartanburg, South Carolina on November 15, 1830. A heavy snowstorm in December necessitated spending the winter in Edwardsville, Illinois. On the first day of May, the family crossed the Mississippi River at Alton and set foot upon Missouri soil. They departed for Ralls County selecting for their homestead site a tract of dense forestland on Salt River, five miles west of New London. Jemima's parents, Nathan and Levina Pettit, joined them in late 1831 having left Spartanburg in 1829 and spending 2 years in Vermilion County, Illinois. Solomon and Jemima were founding members of the old Bethel Baptist Church located near their homestead. Jemima was buried in the church cemetery circa 1854. Solomon was buried in 1857 at Hazel Green Cemetery located in Clay, Adair County, Missouri.

**Francis Marion Brashears** was the 5<sup>th</sup> son born to Solomon and Jemima and was 3 years old when the family arrived in Ralls County. As a boy, he was sent by his father "to mill" meaning to obtain goods for the household from the nearest mill. Traditionally one boy in every family was chosen for this errand ensuring the miller would always recognize whose son he was. Francis was the Brashears' "Miller Boy" so a great number of his boyhood days were spent traversing the road between his father's farm west of New London and the closest mill in the historical old town of Florida.

He married Sarah Jane McCoy on December 30, 1858, in Adair County and moved back to Ralls County in 1862 locating just east of the original homestead. Sara Jane was the daughter of Peter and Elmiry "Mira" Melton McCoy of Harrison County, Indiana. Francis and Sarah Jane are both buried in Lick Creek Cemetery near Perry. Francis Marion was 100 years old at the time of his death.

**Robert Edward Lee Brashears** was the 6<sup>th</sup> child born to Francis Marion and Sara Jane. He was born on August 15, 1869, on the homestead west of New London. At age 17 he was employed as a painter and carpenter in New London. He painted the old white church east of the courthouse. On June 19, 1907, he married Susan "Susie" Clay Vaughn and farmed the Vaughn homestead 5 miles west of Perry. They are buried at South Fork Cemetery in Monroe County. Robert lived to be 100 years old.

**Robert "Bob" Vaughn Brashears** was the 4<sup>th</sup> child born to Robert and "Susie." He graduated from Perry High School in 1933. He married Gail Curtis Dollins on October 20, 1944, in New Mexico where Bob was stationed during World War II prior to going overseas to Tinian Island in May 1945. In May 1946, Bob and Gail moved into their new house on East Jefferson Street in Perry. Bob then purchased the "Ford" garage on Main Street and opened "Brashears Motor Company" with an Oliver farm implement business and a Dodge automobile dealership. The business was immediately successful and Bob expanded with RCA television, Plymouth and DeSoto automotive dealerships. In 1950, he also began a farming operation that he continued until he was 90 years old in 2005.

Three children were born to this marriage. Melvin Richard in 1945, Donald Robert in 1947 and Patricia Gail in 1950.

*Mel R. Brashears*



The Francis Marion Brashears Family. Photo taken on September 28, 1892, in Mexico, Missouri. Pictured left to right: Seated – Edward Thomas Brashears, Lewis Anderson Brashears, Francis Marion Brashears, Myra Ellen Brashears, Sarah Jane McCoy Brashears, Robert Edward Lee Brashears.

Back Row – Nina Jane Brashears, Alva Hendrix Brashears (Bogg) Brashears, Francis Marion (Pete) Brashears, Fannie Davis Brashears, Benjamin Hixon Brashears.



The Brashears Band at a Santa Fe Picnic in 1889. Pictured left to right: Seated – Chever Day, Saxophone; Bill Sparks, E<sup>b</sup> Cornet; Bogg Brashears, E<sup>b</sup> Cornet; Lewis Brashears, B<sup>b</sup> Cornet; Bob Brashears, B<sup>b</sup> Cornet. Back Row – Mack Brown, Bass Drum; Ben Brashears, Tuba; Ed Dusenchon – Baritone; Jess Myers, Trombone; Pete Brashears, Baritone; Ed Brashears, Baritone; Roy Ward, Clarinet; Unknown Wright, Snare Drum.