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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SMITHSONIAN COMING TO COWAN March 10 through April 21, 2012

Museums On Main Street (MOMS) chose the Cowan Railroad Museum to host the Smithsonian exhibit. The Cowan Center for the Arts is where you will go to see the exhibit.

“The Way We Worked” is an exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution and Humanities Tennessee council, based on photographs from the National Archives.

The Franklin County History bullets were gathered by Sally Hubbard from issues of the *Franklin County Historical Review* (FCHR) unless otherwise noted.

The Tennessee Historical Society in Nashville possesses a letter written by the state’s Civil War **Governor Isham G. Harris**: from the “Executive Department, Nashville Tennessee, April 1 of 1861 ... Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, Washington D.C. ... Sir ... Your dispatch of 15th Inst. informing me that Tennessee is called upon for two Regiments of Militia for immediate services is received. Tennessee will not furnish a single man for purposes of coercion but 50,000 if necessary for the defense of our rights and those of our Southern brothers ... Isham G. Harris, Governor of Tennessee.” The legislature did in fact pass an act to raise an army of 55,000 volunteers. The public approved secession from the Union on June 8; on July 22 Tennessee was the last of eleven states to join the Confederate States of America. Harris fled to Mexico and Liverpool to avoid assassination by the Union supporter who became Governor of Tennessee after the War. (FCHR, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1985)

In 1905, the Order of the Holy Cross (New York) opened the **Saint Andrew’s Industrial School for Mountain Boys** between Sewanee and Monteagle. The school was not intended for students who could afford to pay, but rather for the poor and isolated, maimed, orphaned, or those from broken homes. Within five years the student body

numbered 40 and the school could no longer afford to provide clothing and shoes. But Christmas stockings for all were still stuffed—with tooth powder, harmonicas, and horns. (FCHR, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1985)

The famous schools in Winchester were not known to accept **black students**. By 1925 the Franklin County School Annual Report listed 14 schools for black children. A junior high and high school for black students did not open until 1927; the first black citizen graduated in 1934. (FCHR Vol. 14, No. 2, 1983) The following black schools operating in Franklin County in the early 1920's are as follows:

- Townsend (near downtown Winchester)
- Mingo (Broadview area)
- Bean's Creek (near Huntland)
- Center Point (Belvidere)
- Mt. Zion (Belvidere)
- Asia (north of Decherd)
- Thorogood (west side of Cowan)
- Estill Springs
- Sewanee
- Prairie Chapel (Alto/Oak Grove area)
- Decherd

Agnes W. Pearson, school teacher of **Cold Springs School** – In the 1920s two boxcars fastened together in a T shape and painted red provided school space for the logging community in the mountains between Cowan and the Alabama line. Seasonal school programs were highlights of each year's social life. Windows without glass had been cut into the walls; when these were shuttered for bad weather, the classroom was dark and the teacher had to draw on her supply of stories. Furniture was handmade or handed-down but included a pump organ. Ms. Pearson lived in the logging hotel during the week, and passed many evenings singing along with a piano, fiddle, and guitar. (FCHR Vol. 15, No. 2, 1984)

For more information call Pat Underwood at 931-962-2356 or check the website at www.Smithsonian.CowanRailroadMuseum.org