

the Moreland family of Dallas, and they successfully purchased much of her father James Wylie Moreland's land out of probate.



William and Louisa Jane Mackey **Russell**, buried along with 2 infant daughters, were the parents of **Mississippi Governor Lee Russell**, a well-known and deeply documented Mississippi attorney and politician. The Russell family “farm” was called Mucaloon, after the creek, and they were considered of a status above that of poor whites. So says Don Doyle in his book “Faulkner’s County.” Doyle

presents the ugly side of Dallas, the post-Reconstruction violence and the farm families scraping by on poor soil. Lee Russell attended the local public school and a nearby high school. He attended the University of Mississippi, walking from Dallas to Oxford (Doyle says) and waiting on tables for income. He graduated in 1901, by which time a widowed Louisa brought the rest of her family to town to be educated. They did not look back. Lee was asked to join the law firm of **John W. T. Falkner**, grandfather of author **William Faulkner**. Thus Falkner, Russell, and Falkner became a leading firm, and Lee had the backing of big names to pursue his career and political aspirations. (J. W. T. Falkner’s name is found on multiple court records representing the people of Dallas.)

The families of Old Dallas are so intertwined – which is not only frustrating when untangling the knots and connecting the dots, but also gratifying when the research reveals the many ways that they supported each other. They served as guardians for other families’ minor orphans; they took responsibility for the intricacies of probate, bonding, inventory & appraisal of worldly goods, sale of same, payment of creditors, and issuance of inheritance; they married and buried each other; they served as postmasters and church leaders.

Life in Dallas was normal and productive for what turned out to be a brief period. The Civil War and Reconstruction brought fragmentation to the community and ultimately a lawlessness that gutted civilized life there. But to paint Dallas, Mississippi, with one brush is to dishonor the many fine families who once proudly made it home.

[Part Two Preview: There are more families of note – the **Fortners**, the **Watts**, the **Powells**, the **Harrisons**, the **Hartsfields**, the **Morelands** – and all deserve mention in a future installment of “The Families of Old Dallas.”]