

About the Author

Lindsey Vance Maness, Jr., a consulting geologist with extensive international experience, is proud of his profession and of the contributions of the mining and petroleum industries to humanity.

This author (LVM) is (at least) a fifth generation miner, through his paternal grandmother (see comments about Moody & George Moody gold mines herein). While it cannot be demonstrated at present, the author suspects that his maternal family tree [the Griffins] can also trace early involvement in southeastern gold mining. The Griffins, according to his maternal grandmother <a Mercer> had somewhat mysterious origins from "somewhere in Georgia." The author, of course, suspects Dahlonega; however, it was other comments she made about their showing up in Eastern North Carolina and buying their farm with gold, that lends credence to his surmises. She stated that it was a deep family secret, but since they had never explained where they got their gold, that people had always suspected they got it by stealing it or in some other illegal manner, but in spite of all the curiosity, they never told anyone where they got their gold, not even their children. The deep secrecy (see Griffin gold mines) that was common to miners in those days [and which continues to this date] is entirely consistent with their having acquired their gold honestly, by the sweat of their own brows. Speaking as a professional, this author is quite proud to finally lay these surreptitious whispers to rest (hopefully) after over one-and-a-half centuries of idle speculation. Considering the fact that mining was the second largest industry in the Southeastern USA from about 1805 until the 1930s, such ancestral involvement in the mining industry should not be surprising.

This author, while he grew up very poor in a farming community and was no stranger to hard, dirty farm labor, has wandered far from his roots (gratefully!). If the author never sees another tobacco plant, he will consider this lack among his greatest blessings. The author served on active duty in the US Air Force for five years (mostly in intelligence) and is proud of his two honorable discharges. His first year of advanced education was at Methodist College in Fayetteville, NC, followed by a BS degree in Geology from NCSU and an MA in Geology from Indiana State University. Professors and staff from all three academic institutions enabled him to complete his education: his family was unable to assist. He also attended the University of Maryland and has other academic honors. After receiving his master's degree, the author worked as a contractor on the earth-imaging satellite program (Landsat, etc.) for over three years at two NASA Centers, Goddard Space Flight Center and Ames Research Center. The author then entered the private sector as a geologist, where he has been blessed to learn much from his many friends in many countries.

This organic document was written by a geologist for both professionals and for amateurs interested in the history of mining in the Southeastern USA. For this reason, many terms and situations, etc., are explained.