

## **JOHN COFFEE'S INSTRUCTIONS TO DEPUTY SURVEYORS FOR THE NORTH PART, M.T. (1817)**

### **Rules and Regulations**

To be observed by Deputy Surveyors in the Northern District the Mississippi Territory, in surveying the lands of the United States, which must not be departed from.

All lines of townships and sections must be surveyed by north and south lines run by the true meridian, and others crossing them at right angles. In surveying townships, the survey must began [sic] at the north east corner, and run south six miles. Then west six miles. Then return to the beginning, and run west six miles, and then south six miles, to intersect the other line at the extreme corner. In closing the survey of a township, if the lines intersect within twelve poles of the proper point, the survey may be considered correct, except the last mile. Which must be re-surveyed, making the proper variation and noting it intersect at the correct point. The lines to be marked plainly by a blaze, with a chop above and below on all fore and aft trees and near sides [sic] lines. Townships to be designated by numbers progressively from north to south, beginning each range with No 1. The ranges to be distinguished by progressive numbers to the west of the basis meridian. On the township lines at each distance of a mile, between the corners, shall be marked corners for sections different from those of the townships. All lines of townships will be continued over all rivers without varying in the course or distance. In the corner of each township a tree must be marked with the number of such township, and over it the number of the range, and under it the number of the section, taking the bearing and distance of each tree from the true corner, and carefully noting the same, with the kind of tree so marked, in the field book.

In surveying sections the same rule will be observed as in surveying townships, by running two lines. And then returning to the beginning and running the other two, so as to intersect at the extreme corner from the beginning, if the lines intersect within two poles it may be considered correct, and make the corner at the intersection, noting the excess or deficiency; But if it should be more than two poles, the line so varying must be incorrect, and run over again; in closing the last section with the line of the township, it must run to the proper station already fixed on that line. In doing which a small variation may become necessary, always noting the same correctly. Section lines will be marked with two chops on fore and aft trees and near side lines. In each corner of all sections a tree must be marked with the number of the section and over it the number of the township.

And the names of such trees so marked, will be carefully noted in the field Book and the distance and bearing of them from the true corner. Fractional sections binding on navigable rivers or Indian boundaries will be surveyed by carefully meandering the bank of the river, or running the Indian boundaries, which cause such fraction. At all section corners a stake must be set up, with a number of notches on each of the four comers directed to the cardinal points corresponding with the number of miles that it stands from the out lines of the township, the side of the stake will be numbered, corresponding with the number of section it faces. Quarter section corners, or half mile stakes, must be set up in the centre of all section lines, at equal distances from the corners as near as may be. All sections, in each township, shall be numbered respectively, beginning with No.1, in the north east section, and proceeding west and east alternately, through the township, with progressive numbers, till the thirty-sixth shall be completed. The southern boundary of the State of Tennessee, and the meridian of Madison

county will be the base and meridian of all surveys made in this district. The lines of townships and sections of Madison county will be extended to the south and west, so as to perfect all fractions occasioned by the diagonal line heretofore existing between that county and the Chickasaw Indians.

All lines must be run horizontally, by leveling the chain and plumbing the pins, where the ground is uneven, and measured with two pole chains subdivided into fifty equal links. Each Deputy Surveyor will adjust his compass and chain, to a standard kept at the Surveyor's Office for that purpose. Every Surveyor shall carefully note in his field book, the true situation of all mines, salt-licks, salt-springs, and mill-seats, which shall come to his knowledge, all water courses, over which the line he runs shall pass, with the bearing of the same, and also the timber and under growth; whether mountainous, hilly, or level; and the quality of the soil, whether of the first, second or third rate The field books shall be returned to the principal surveyor of the district, with such other information, relating to the situation and quality of the lands, as the Deputy may be possessed of. All Deputy Surveyors will make return of their surveys, agreeably to the foregoing interactions, at such times as the principal surveyor of the District may require.

The Deputy Surveyors will administer an oath to their Chainmen and Markers, faithfully to perform their several duties as such, and not to depart their service before the expiration of the term for which they have engaged.

4th May 1817.

*/s/ John Coffee*

Surveyor, North part M.T.

John Hutchings Esquire

Instructions to deputy Surveyors 4th May 1817.

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### **Subsequent Instructions to Deputy Surveyors**

It has been discovered that the survey of Madison County is imperfect, so much so, that by extending the Range lines over the Tennessee river it would render the whole survey of my district incorrect, in consequence of which the surveys on the north side of Ten. river will close to the north bank of the same, and not cross the river as formerly directed, except the Meridian Line which will be continued south to the southern boundary of my district, a Surveyor [Daniel Gilchrist] will run a Base Line on the south side of Tennessee river, Beginning on the meridian, at the first Township corner south of the river, that running west will not touch the river, and run west until the bearing of the river will give distance to run north on a range line the distance of the side of a township, he will then run north, and west with the lines of townships until he reaches the Chickasaw boundary line.

Range lines will be run from this base line north to the Tennessee river, and close the surveys to the South bank of the river, leaving all Islands in the river out of the Survey. The Range lines will also be extended from the Base line south until the eighth township in each range be completed, agreeably to former instructions. The townships that lie on both sides of

Tennessee river although perfect in the out lines, will be cut by the river into two tracts, both of which will bear the same number, but will be distinguished by Fractional Township, North, or South, of Tennessee River as the case may be. Fractional, Sections in those townships will be numbered, and distinguished in like manner.

15th May 1817

*/s/ John Coffee*

Surveyor North part M.T.