

The Jackson County Chronicles

Volume 37, Number 1

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January Meeting: Have you seen the renovated and redesigned Scottsboro Boys Museum? This is your chance to see the museum free of charge. The January 2025 meeting of the Jackson County Historical Association will be held at the Scottsboro Boys Museum at 428 West Willow on Sunday, January 26 at 1:00 p.m. Dr. Tom Reidy or one of the docents at the museum will talk about the renovation and future plans for the museum. Ample time will be provided to tour the museum and observe the new exhibits.



Repair Work on the Depot: We are completing work to bring the Scottsboro Freight Depot back to post-renovation standards. The skirt along the track has been replaced and improved with a “board and batten” design and addition of an access door. The roof of the storage shed has been repaired. Rotting wood and ornamentation along the roofline has been replaced. Rotted wood in the platform that represented a hazard to train watchers has been replaced. A chimney cap and new woodwork will keep birds from nesting in the depot structure. The wooden bay window has been sealed and painted. All plexiglass storm windows have been replaced. Interior repairs have been made. A new dehumidifier has been purchased. The security program has been updated and access updated from 3GL to 5GL. Thank you, Bynum Foundation and Jackson County Legislative Delegation, for your assistance. Thank you, contractor Thomas Kittrell for the care and expertise you brought to the task of renovating the depot.

JCHA Website Moved to a Better Server: Those accessing the JCHA website (jchaweb.org) will notice a new server name appearing in the display area: sjhc.us/jchaweb. That change is the result of our consolidating web resources with the Scottsboro Jackson Heritage Center. The content and navigation on the new server are the same. All previously established bookmarks will still work. The only differences are that the site is now running under a security certificate (allowing us greater visibility on the various search engines) and performance is greatly improved.

Guest Authors: Dr. James Reed hardly qualifies as a guest any more. He has become our resident Civil War history contributor. Martha Peet Holman wrote the essay about her mother, Dr. Ruth Harris Peet, the kind of personal portrait only a daughter could have written. We are grateful to Jim and Martha.

New Bridgeport Newspaper Records Added to Findagrave

Walking through the Bridgeport newspapers as we scanned them, we discovered a number of unmarked, undocumented deaths, people with no headstone. There are many reasons why a grave is unmarked. Very old people often have no one left to buy them a headstone. Infants and young children with no descendants often have no headstone. A young wife with no children often does not have a headstone. The second half of a couple that dies. People whose families lives elsewhere but arrived in the county by train for burial. Or sometimes, the reason is as simple as a headstone costs more than the family can afford. But when we find these missing residents and can document their burial locations, we add them to findagrave. In the April *Chronicles*, we will list people with obituaries who cannot be identified.

Mabel Emery Whitcher Adair (1884-1962), Milton, Massachusetts
 Thomas Donald Adair (1882-1968), Unknown
 Margaret Allison (1852-1915), Mount Carmel
 Mary Ellen Hammon Barnett (1863-1934), Bonaventure
 Margie Biddle (1925-1937), New Home Baptist
 Beulah Boswell Joyner (1890-1931), Cargile
 Mode Carver (1861-1915), Rocky Springs
 Harold Cox (1937-1937), Mount Carmel
 Emma R. Curtis Fitch (1853-1915), Bonaventure
 Stephen C. Fitch (1843-1914), Bonaventure
 James Henry Free (d. 1929), Bolivar
 Zella Geer (1927-1929), Mount Carmel
 Nancy Ann Ehrenhart Gilley (1883-1937), Bonaventure
 Richard M. Glover (1908-1931), unknown
 Dimple "Dolly" Guess (1914-1914), Mount Carmel
 Maria Abigail Hawk (1867-1936) Mount Carmel
 Billie Robert Hill (1904-1936), Loyd
 Sarah Alice "Sallie" Davis Inglis (1895-1937), Wimberley
 Caroline Maxine Jackson (1936-1937), Mount Carmel
 Joe Johnson (1936-1936), Bolivar
 Nathaniel Johnson (1825-1909), Bolivar
 Jasper Jones (d. 1919), Bonaventure
 Annie Mae Joyner (1918-1919), Mount Carmel
 Walter Joyner (1887-1915), Cargile
 Ida Keys (1895-1915), Smith
 Julian Ladd (1929-1929), Mount Carmel
 Estelle Wilson Lawson (1907-1936), Bonaventure
 Infant Lawson (1934-1934), Bolivar
 J. W. Lawson (1926-1934), Bonaventure
 Emma Dora Maddox *1913-1921) Rose City, Portland, OR
 John D. Mason (1839-1917), Bonaventure

Margaret Elizabeth "Maggie" Smith Mason (1851-1914), Bonaventure
 Lillian Price McAvoy (1906-1930), Bolivar
 Albert M. McCullough (1852-1887), Unknown
 R. A. McFarlane (1855-1934), Rocky Spring
 Marion Metcalf (1849-1936), New Hope Baptist
 Bula Miller (1915-1935), Pleasant Grove, Jasper, TN
 Thomas M. Morris (1863-1936), Blue Spring
 Belle Harrison Nevilles (d. 1936), Cawfield
 D. Page (1857-1936), Woodlawn, Nashville, TN
 Clarence Payne (1908-1937), Dorans Cove
 Helen Stubblefield Payne (1910-1934), Dorans Cove
 Kate Warren Quarrels (d. 1919), Pleasant Grove, Jasper, TN
 Rose Short Reeves (1885-1940), Mount Carmel
 Lula Hammonds Roberts (1872-1931), Bonaventure
 Ada May Gill Rogers (1880-1930), Pleasant Grove, Jasper, TN
 Jimmy Claude Rogers (1956-1957), Old Baptist
 Mrs. N. C. Rogers (1849-1919), Pleasant Grove, Jasper, TN
 Amanda M. Cummins Runyon (1866-1919), Bonaventure
 Walker N. Sexton (1886-1940), Long Acre
 Mrs. F. W. Sherrill (1890-1919), Cargile
 David Wyley Short (1827-1915), Rocky Springs
 Travis Short (1914-1915), Mount Carmel
 Billie Smith (1915-1934), Cargile
 Susan A. Smith (1856-1929), Rocky Springs
 W. B. Smith (1894-1934), Ebenezer
 Infant Troutman (1920-1920), Mount Carmel
 Maggie Roberts Troutman (d. 1920), Mount Carmel
 George R. Van Arsdall (1875-1953), Chattanooga Memorial Park
 Estelle Price Van Arsdall (1875-1962), Chattanooga Memorial Park
 Shirley Ann Westmoreland (1936-1941), Bonaventure

Pikeville and the Building of Tupelo Pike

The road that passes through Pikeville is one of our county's earliest routes.

"Between 1856 and 1886," Ann Chambless wrote in the *Chronicles*, "the three roads entering and exiting Scottsboro included Tupelo Pike and its extension of what is now Maple Avenue; the road leading from Larkinsville to present day Houston Street, thus the route to the Scottsboro Depot; and the Roseberry Creek Road, otherwise known as the Guntersville Road. In the early days there was no Willow Street or Garland Ferry Road. The route from Bellefonte was via Hollywood to present-day Pikeville Store and then down Tupelo Pike to the railroad track where the street followed the track to the depot."

The 1837 Latourette map of Alabama and Jackson County shows much the same roads, along with the towns of Bellefonte, Larkin's Landing, Coffee Settlement, Bolivar, Dodsonville, and Woodville.

Pikeville as a community name did not appear on maps until the improvement of Tupelo Pike in 1902, the upgrade that transformed the thoroughfare from a dirt road

to a pike road. Before this time, the area was known as Berry's Store. It was the Precinct 13 voting place in our earliest newspapers. The location can be found in the 1892 US Geological Service map, shown here.

Improvements to the road that came to be known as Tupelo Pike enabled this community to grow and, for a time, flourish. Trucks carrying cedar logs could get to the cedar pencil mill, located by the Pikeville Store. The last remaining footing for the pencil mill can be seen behind the double-wide trailer next to Pikeville Store.

Often, when a pike road was developed and maintained by an individual, the road owner was allowed to charge a fee for using the road until it was paid for. But Tupelo Pike appears to have been "paved" (graveled) with public funds. The 1901 *Progressive Age* noted, "The county has purchased a new rock crushers similar to the one used on the Hollywood pike, which will be put to work in a few days crushing rock for the Tupelo Pike." (*PA*, Jan 10, 1901)

The Hollywood pike, built along what had been termed the "Scraper road," was started in 1900. Contractor G. P. Bouldin was clearing the right-of-way for the Hollywood pike in 1912. The route was described thus: "the new road leaves the Tupelo pike at the eastern boundary of Scottsboro just south of the Southern railroad and follows the line of the old Hollywood road more or less to the bridge at Dry Creek." (*PA*, Aug 15, 1912) In 1912, a third road joined the Hollywood Pike with Scottsboro and was known as the "Scottsboro-Hollywood pike." It was built by



Details from the 1837 Latourette Map of Alabama



1892 USGS Quad Map

subscription of private citizens, not with public funds. (*PA*, Oct 31, 1912)

The quality of Tupelo Pike was praised in the June 1902 *Scottsboro Citizen*: “The Tupelo Pike built by Dalton & McClendon is one of the finest in the state, and speaks well for the contractors. With such pike roads as this, Jackson County will be second to none.” (*SC*, June 26, 1902)

Once the road provided such excellent access, Pikeville as a named location begins showing up in the Tupelo column of the *Progressive Age* about 1905. Election monitors are defined for this location on June 23, 1904 (*PA*), and these men are also designated as school trustees. Farmers’ Alliance organizers recruited there. A post office was established. The schoolhouse was built. The new pike and these businesses literally put Pikeville on the map.

Three structures defined early Pikeville: the Pikeville Store, the Pikeville Pencil Mill, and the opening of the Pikeville School. Let’s look at each of the structures.

Pikeville Store

The original Pikeville store was built in 1903 by Andrew Jackson “Jack” Bellamy. The building was two-story, a country general store that sold everything local people needed—hardware, seed, clothing, and piece goods. There was even a grist mill in the back right after World War I.

This photo, which hangs in the current deli building, shows the original store with members of Jack Bellamy’s family standing out front. The short announcement from the *Progressive Age* is from 1917 and states that Isaac Bellamy is moving his merchandise to Pikeville to his father’s store.

The best written history is in the 1990 article in the *Daily Sentinel*, written by Donna Haislip [Fredricks]. For her story, she interviewed Alex Bradford, a community resident and domino player who frequented the store. The Pikeville School sat on the little rise behind the store, and the community’s signature business, the Pikeville Pencil Mill, sat on the left side of the store.

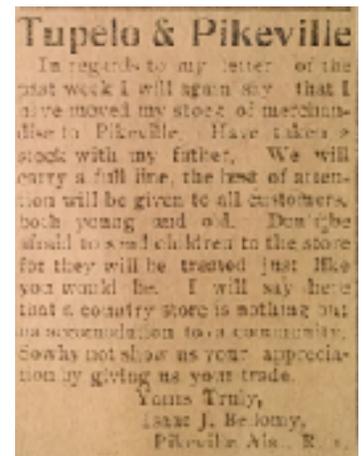
Bradford recalls a time when a trip to town was not a trivial thing. In the early 50s, every one out this way farmed or ‘plowed with mules,’” Bradford said. Everybody shopped at Pikeville Store instead of going to town (Scottsboro). “They didn’t have any way to go to town except for in the wagon,” Bradford explained, “and that took all day nearly to drive down there and back. We’d go to Scottsboro maybe once a week or so.”

The store must have figured large in the lives of school children, who flocked there for penny candy. Voters in Precinct 13 went to Winger’s store to cast their ballots between 1950s through 1990. People brought their dogs to the store for visiting vets to vaccinate them against rabies.

Haislip made the point that though the business had changed hands several times (as any business that lasts more than a generation will do), the property has stayed in the same family. Jack Bellamy built the original stores and members of his family, specifically his brother Isaac and his son Wilson Bellamy, ran the store during its early years. McKinley Brandon had the store in the early 1940s. After Brandon, Jim C. “Preacher” Anderson and his wife Maude operated it for about 20 years. In the early 60s, it was owned by McKinley Brandon’s daughter, Ruby Nell Wilkerson. The original two-story building was torn down and rebuilt.



A.J. Bellamy's store, around 1910. From the Pikeville store.



Progressive Age, 1917

In the 1980s, the Pikeville Store was operated by Ruby Nell's niece, Rebecca Phillips. Ownership passed to Connie and Dwayne Wilkerson who, along with their son Jason, operated the store beginning in 1989, and changed the emphasis from a grocery store to a sandwich shop.

In 1999, Dwayne and Connie renovated the store to accommodate more customers and added a back porch complete with humming bird feeders that were a joy to watch. They also expanded the menu to include a sit-down breakfast and more lunch items. The Wilkinsons leased the business in 2007 to Jeff and Joanne Tolleson, who added some of their family favorites to the menu. They later sold the business to lawyer Scott Berry and his wife Lisa. The Berrys sold the business to a couple from Florida, Brad Patterson and his wife. After some hiccups getting started, the store is flourishing, and the cheeseburgers are as spectacular as ever.



Pikeville Store around 1950

Pikeville School

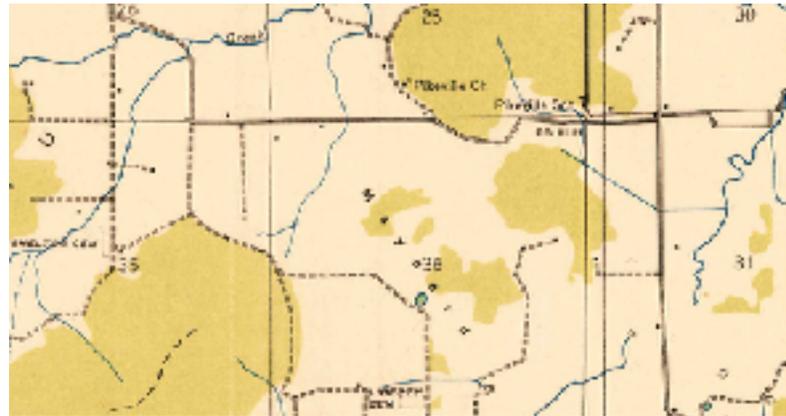
Like many county schools, Pikeville School started as a church building.

In 1950, the school was described as two rooms and was "the property of McKinley Brandon. It was originally built as a church but has served as a school for a number of years." (*PA*, Mar 26, 1950) Mike Bradford, whose father attended Pikeville School, described it as "a one room school house at one time about 100 yards up the road from the Pikeville Store as you travel towards Tupelo."

The earliest newspaper reference to the Pikeville school is found in the August 1905 *Progressive Age*.

"There will be a picnic given by Tupelo and Pikeville schools at Tupelo on Thursday, Aug 17th," so Pikeville School existed in 1905. In February 1906, the teacher was Walter Harper (*PA*, Feb 8, 1906). In August of 1906, the *Age* noted, "The young folks are expecting a swell time Saturday evening as the W. O. W. are going to have an ice cream supper at Pikeville school house. The pretty feature is it will be in the evening, beginning at 1 p.m. There has never been such preparations and we are sure everyone will have a nice time." (*PA*, Aug 2, 1906)

Information accompanying the early photo of Pikeville School shown at the right says the photo was taken in 1909. Trustees were elected for this school in 1904. They were Ben Riddle, Will Evans, James St Clair, and Jack Bellomy. It was initially a one-teacher school. By 1923, two teachers were found (Mrs. Vivian Rainey and Fannie Brewer) and trustees were Elias Shelton, J. D. Precise, and Ike Bellomy, In 1939, Mrs. Rebecca Harrington and J. H. Jarnigan were the teachers. The school remained quite active through the 1930s and 1940s with frequent fund-raising activities held to benefit the school.



Pikeville School location, 1936 USGS Map



1909 photo of Pikeville School , from the Pikeville Store.

The school was still operating in 1950 when the *Progressive Age* “Know Your Schools” series featured this school. In 1950, the school covered six grades. The trustees were Sam Bellamy and T. I. Mitchell. The vacancy of the late T. H. Lusk had not been filled yet. Miss Cora B. Provence is the principal and Mrs. Hassie Evans is the primary teacher. There are ten pupils in the first grade, ten pupils in the second grade, ten pupils in the third grade, six pupils in the fourth grade, five pupils in the fifth grade, and nine pupils in the sixth grade [total of 50]. The average daily attendance last month was 44. After completing the sixth grade the pupils are transferred to the Jackson County High School.

This is the only known photo of the Pikeville School pupils and no identification of students has been found. It is from the Pikeville Store and is believed to have been from 1909, the same timeframe as the school photo.

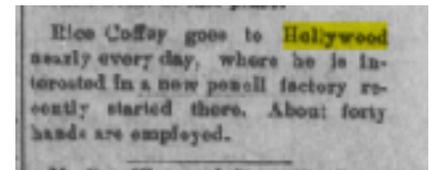


1909 photo of Pikeville School students, from the Pikeville Store.

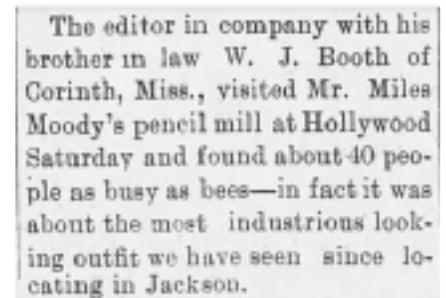
Pikeville Cedar Pencil Mill

The Pikeville pencil mill was a thriving business between 1910 and 1912. The first mention of a local pencil mill was in the October 31, 1901 *Scottsboro Citizen* that treated the yet-unnamed community as a part of Hollywood. The paper reported that banker Rice Coffey is following the progression of “his pencil mill” closely and notes that about 40 people are employed at the site. The Hollywood column of the June 19, 1902 *Progressive Age* stated that “our pencil mill is running in full blast, as in the band sawmill” as part of a short, optimistic article about progress in Hollywood. Pictures and earlier stories of the site put the operating years at 1910-1912, though it seems to have been up and running earlier.

I have been told, but cannot confirm, that the cedar mill did not create finished pencils, but instead milled local cedar into pencils into which “lead” (graphite) was later inserted to create writing implements. There was a slightly earlier pencil mill in Paint Rock. The photo is the lower left with IDs appeared in the *Daily Sentinel* in June, 1991. It is not known when the mill closed. Dwayne Wilkerson remembers that a pile of sawdust remained on the site into the early 1950s.



The Progressive Age
Thu, Sep 15, 1910-Page 3



Annette Bradford



Pikeville Pencil Cedar Mill. This is a photograph of the workers at Pikeville Cedar Pencil Mill circa 1910-12. The mill was located six miles north of Scottsboro. IDs are for the leftmost photo. Pictured are, front row seated from left, Jim Gentry, Clines Boys, John Matthews, T. J. Davidson, Sam Harding, Arthur Harding, Dave Seablot, John Tubbs, Fred Womack. Standing from left, Marion Carter, Bill Woods, Tom Hickman, Faye Sinclair, Virgie Sinclair, Jose Rodgers, Lee Womack, Burma Sinclair, Meg Tubbs, Clara Rodgers, Mae Woolsley, Oscar Sinclair, Tom Carter, McKinley Brandon, Will Reed, George O. Grady, Mr. Clines, Dump Harrison, Jesse Tubbs, Tom Chandler and W. R. Womack.

New Jackson County Papers on [newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com)

Since October, the JCHA has had an ancestry.com camera station set up in the Scottsboro Jackson Heritage Center. We appreciate this location because it keeps us from having to haul bound volumes, so very heavy and some quite fragile, up and down stairs to other locations. It is a messy operation. Old newspapers shed crumbs because the old newsprint is so vulnerable to “breaking,” that is, not tearing but being so brittle that the newsprint breaks.

David Bradford has solved many technical issues associated with the set up and transfer of images. The Ancestry tools are home-grown and poorly documented, so every transmission failure is a guessing game. David, Beth Presley, Marilyn Goolseby, and Toni McGriff have all helped scan pages. When we are done, all the surviving Jackson County newspapers should be digitized and accessible to researchers.

We are scanning four newspapers: the *Jackson County Farmer* (1957-1959), the *Jackson County Advertiser* (1967-1981) the *Bridgeport News* and *Bridgeport News Herald* (intermittently from 1890 to 1941), and the remaining 24 years of the *North Jackson Progress*. We are also plugging holes, locating missing single papers and scanning volumes missed by previous efforts.

Stop for a moment to appreciate all the functions that newspapers fulfilled before the days of radio and television. The newspaper was your nightly news, the source of words and images from around the world. As the media does today, early newspapers shaped opinion. Editorials appeared beneath the masthead and were the work of the editor or a guest contributor. In the mid 1930s, political cartoons began to appear. An early newspaper was your bookstore or library; the newspaper often included a novel published in serial. It was your social media. Correspondents from around the county sent news to the publishers that included local events like school activities and people news—who had moved in, who was visiting, who had gone out of town, etc. The first comics in county papers appeared in the *Bridgeport News* in 1931. Newspapers also provided a local perspective on news that turned out to be highly significant. The *Bridgeport News*, for example, had a much greater appreciation of the role that TVA would play in the life of the valley. And finally, ads and professional “cards” told you who was operating a hotel, who the doctors and lawyers were, and how public institutions were monitored and held accountable. Election returns and officials. Candidates. School districts and trustees. The newspaper came in the mail and connected you to the world.

The Bridgeport papers addressed people and activities in Bridgeport but also in Stevenson, South Pittsburg, Jasper, and other areas of Marion County. It includes obituaries not found in Scottsboro papers.

Bridgeport News

It is not known why the small archive from the *Bridgeport News* has never been scanned. Perhaps it is because of the fragility of these old papers. The *Bridgeport News* was established in 1890 by W. W. Douglas and E. L. C. Ward. The first paper was published September 18, 1890. The earliest years of the Bridgeport News had been microfilmed and were digitized as part of this project earlier this year. Our digitized papers pick up with V1N17, published January 8, 1891 with Crawford Douglas as the editor and proprietor.

There are unexplained gaps, missing papers. In the first months, for example, March 6 (V1N28) is missing. It was never part of the bound volume. Because the first paper was published September 18, the Volume designation did not change with the calendar year, but instead at the date closest to September 18, so V2N1 was the September 18, 1891 paper, which is missing.

The first paper of August 1891 showed a new editor’s name in the masthead: E. L. C. Ward. V4N1 was he December 16, 1893 paper. The 1894 paper is missing altogether; the next paper we have is January 12, 1895, which is V5N4 and missing a number of papers (three from January). On April 12, 1895, B. M. Drake was

listed as editor with The Bridgeport Publishing Company as the owner. A note in the paper stated, "B. M. Drake, of Nashville, has purchased the *Bridgeport News* plant from Brother Ward, and the paper will appear next week. We wish our new brother every success." Ward elaborated on the change of hands in the same paper.

With the coming of Drake, the focus of the paper changed and a great deal of "canned" women's news began to appear. Drake did not personally edit the paper for long. The first paper on March 28 was designated the "women's edition" and J. S. Johnson was listed as editor. That changed quickly, and by April 3, Charles Forest Scofield was listed as editor and F. F. Conway as business manager. The new editors wrote this in their greetings to subscribers: "We take the management of the paper at a time when there is more independence of thought and action in political affairs than ever before. The old party lines are badly broken and men can no longer be influenced to vote a straight party ticket by working on their prejudices."

It is the middle of an election season and the new owner planned to take the paper in new directions. Scofield quickly disappeared because of consolidation with the *Scottsboro Banner*, a short-lived paper, and by August 1, only Conway's name remains in the masthead. Scofield states that "I find the editorial work demands more time than I can spare from my business and official duties and I have therefore sold my interest in the paper to Mrs. Drury C. Ludlow, whose purpose, I understand, is to further improve the *News* under the Management of Mr. F. F. Conway." (Aug 7, p.2) The advocacy for presidential candidate William McKinley leads one to believe that the paper is Republican leaning and liberal. The December 11 paper, for example, rails against Virgil Bouldin: "Alas! Alas! Mr. Bouldin went to this session of the legislature as a stranger but in a short time became one of its more prominent members....At an evil moment he introduced a bill into the House that would prohibit card playing at the fireside." The column went on to call Bouldin a crank. By 1898, the paper's slogan is, "The only paper in the district carrying the Union label."

In 1896, the *Bridgeport News* was consolidated with a second paper edited by F. F. Conway, the *Scottsboro Banner*. We have three months of the *Banner*, with our first paper being V1N13, indicating that V1N1 must have been on October 11, 1895, with the last paper, March 26, 1896, explaining the consolidation: "With this issue *The Banner* will be transferred from Scottsboro to Bridgeport and consolidated with the *Bridgeport News*....Our reasons for this change are many, but chief among them is to give the opposing elements to organized democracy the best paper published in Jackson County, and one that will be on such a firm foundation that there is no danger of it suspending." This paper lasted with Conway as the editor at least until December 23, 1898, which is the last issue we have in a bound volume. It might well have continued for a time but no bound volume survives. By the end of 1898, R. H. Rushbrook is listed as business manager.

Based on the paper's own history, the *Bridgeport News* published, with short breaks, continuously from 1890 to 1941, but we have two blocks of newspapers: 1914 to 1920 (minus 1916) and 1929-1941 (minus 1932).

This set represents more papers that are found in the Alabama Archives and History collection and more information about this paper than is in the Library of Congress database.

Bridgeport News-Herald

The paper picks up again from a survival perspective as the *Bridgeport News-Herald* in 1914, which is designated V23N1. The masthead bills the paper as "a democratic weekly newspaper, office of publication



Bridgeport News Printing Office on Keene Street Across from the Sweeney-Greenough block, 1892. Photo from Ken Gunter. Reprinted in *Bridgeport, Alabama*.



The Peyton Building, built in 1893. From *Bridgeport Then and Now*.

in the Peyton building on Hudson Avenue” on Thursdays. This tagline changed every time the paper changed editors. The editor and publisher is George R. VanArsdall. He was still editor in 1915 when coverage of World War I picks up in earnest.

On April 1, 1915, the editor became C. D. Cargile, who had once owned the *Stevenson Chronicle*. In VanArsdall’s parting message, he stated that he had contemplated moving his printing operation elsewhere with many “good offers” tempting him, but “Bridgeport needs a newspaper and

Mr. Cargile has made a patriotic move in buying the plant.” The 1916 paper is missing, but by the first of 1917, Mr. Cargile is still editor and F. W. Barber is listed as Associate Editor. J. Festus Cargile was the manager, and the News Publishing Company published the paper by February 1, 1917.

C. D. Cargile reported that he had sold his interest in the paper to J. Luther Troxell and that J. Festus Cargile had several years of experience in the business and planned needed improvements in the papers. However, his tenure was short. Troxell, who was the owner, stated that “Mr. Cargile has demonstrated that he is equal to the task,” having come to Bridgeport from Stevenson and 1915. Parker Campbell, Troxell wrote, had seven years experience in the the newspaper and job work business and planned to move his wife and two children to Bridgeport. Parker Campbell was later the founder of the *Jackson County Sentinel*.

By the beginning of 1918 Parker Campbell is listed in the masthead as owner and publisher. Campbell was only 25 years old when he took over this paper. In April, he sold half interest in the paper to S. F. White of Bradenton, Florida so that “improvement plans may be carried out immediately.” (*Bridgeport News*, Apr 19, 1918) He continued in this role until the end of 1918. The December 1918 paper is missing. The first paper of 1919 lists J. Luther Troxell as the editor and P. W. Hurt as the manager. The paper seems to be unable to function without a Cargile. After C.D. and Festus, the new editor, A. B. Cargile, took over June 27, 1919 without a word of explanation. J. F. Cargile returns on September 23. The last paper is V29N53.

We do not have more of this newspaper until 1929 when the paper returns as the *Bridgeport News-Herald* V34N37. It is a minimal paper, hardly ever more than four pages. It seems to have changed locations. The owner and publisher was F. W. Carr, and J. P. Brown was the editor and manager. The 1930 paper is missing and would have been V35. In 1931, J. A. Jones replaces Brown as the editor, but Carr remains the owner. This paper is in bad shape but features, for the first time, a comic strip called “Such is Life” and many more syndicated pictures. The *News-Herald* published the high school newspaper, “The Blue and Gold,” as a page in the regular paper beginning in 1931. This probably sold a lot of papers. The 1932 paper is missing. The first 1933 paper is V42N43. Carr is still the owner but R.C. Hornbeck is the editor and manager.

In June 1935, the paper has been bought by Miss Eleanor Frances Witcher who was listed as publisher, though R. C. Hornbeck remained as editor. The pair remained at the paper in 1936 and into 1937, but by May 1937, Hornbeck has gone and Witcher is listed and both editor and publisher. She continued until the paper stopped publication in 1941. The last paper we have is June 26, 1941 and it is referred to as V50.

Some Information About the Bridgeport Editors

Who were these people who kept the Bridgeport papers alive?

George Van Arsdale was born in Kentucky in 1875. In the 1920 census, he is living in Chattanooga and his occupation is printer. He and his wife Estelle Price had five children. He died in 1953 and is buried in Chattanooga Memorial Park.

Frank Walton Carr lived most of his life in Bridgeport. He was born in 1887 and died in 1961 and is buried in Woodlawn in Nashville. He married Ella Daniel and they had a son Frank Jr. In 1920, he is a boarder with later-editor postmaster Eleanor Witcher and her widowed half-aunt; perhaps he infected Eleanor with the newspaper bug because ultimately, she edited the Bridgeport papers longer than anyone. Carr was a banker and newspaper man and the first president of the North Alabama Electric Cooperative.

James Luther Troxell is from Stevenson. He was born in 1881 and married to Carrie Cargile. He was elected mayor in 1912 and after working as a shipping clerk at the freight depot in the 1910 census, his occupation in 1920 was specified as real estate. He and Carrie raised four daughters. He died in 1946 and is buried in the Cargile Cemetery. The other three Cargiles who edited the *Bridgeport News* were Troxell's brothers in law. Carrie, C. D. (Charlie), and A. B. (Albert), who were siblings, the sons of Elder John A. Cargile and Nancy Christian. J. (James) Festus was a son of Charlie.

Parker Campbell is the well-known originator, editor, and publisher of the *Jackson County Sentinel*. He was only 19 when he was working for Mark Tucker at the *Progressive Age*. In 1915, T. D. Carter of Birmingham bought the *Scottsboro Citizen*, and "the entire business was leased to Mr. P. W. Campbell, a young man of quite a lot of experience in all lines of newspaper work and who has a bright future in the journalistic field. (*Bridgeport News*, Sep 30 1915). In October 1917, he became the owner and publisher of the *Bridgeport News*. He worked a time for his father before returning to the *Progressive Age*, which by this time was published by James Benson.



Parker Campbell, left, working on layout for the *Sentinel*. From the 1941 Word movie.

Campbell's first foray into newspaper ownership was his purchase of the *Bridgeport News-Herald*, which he owned most of 1918. In April of that year, he took on a partner who lived in Florida, probably to provide much-needed cash. He left the paper at the end of the year. Campbell worked with his father for a time whose business took him to Nashville frequently. He was back working with the *Progressive Age* by 1922. But by 1929, the philosophical differences between Campbell and editor James Benson pushed Campbell to buy the fledgling *Jackson County Sentinel*. "Politically this paper will inaugurate and maintain a continuous policy of trying to promote harmony among Democrats and refuse to indulge in any controversies of a personal or venomous nature." (*JCS*, Mar 27, 1930)

But the most pedigreed of Bridgeport editors was Eleanor Witcher. Eleanor was born in Bridgeport, though her family came from Norfolk County, MA, and she and her family are all buried in the Milton Cemetery. Her mother's obituary states that her family "came to Bridgeport in the early boom in that city in 1900, bringing a fortune in cash which they invested in the wonder city of the new South." In 1920, Eleanor had completed a year of college. She is 21, her occupation in the census was accountant at the post office. In February 1922, she was appointed postmaster of Bridgeport. In 1930, she is still listed as postmaster in the census, and she is looking after her widowed aunt Alice Piper French. Newspaper editor Frank W. Carr is a boarder with these two ladies. In the 1940 census, Eleanor is 42 and living alone and listed as editor and publisher of a newspaper, a position she had assumed in June 1935. The paper stopped publication in July 1941, and Eleanor began teaching business courses. Her half sister Mabel died in 1953, and in 1955 she married her brother-in-law Donald Adair in Massachusetts. They lived near Milton until Donald's death in 1968. Eleanor died in 1980.

Annette Bradford

I am indebted to these previous county history texts for pictures and information. In and Around Bridgeport by Flossie Carmichael and Ronald Lee (College Press, 1969) and Bridgeport, Alabama: Gateway to the Sequatchie Valley by Ron Lee and James Dennis Lambert, Jr.

1936 Convict Fire on Old Larkinsville Road

In an article entitled "Scottsboro has its wildest week of weather in history" in the Thursday, February 6, 1936 *Jackson County Sentinel*, the editor detailed the conditions that contributed to one of the most tragic incidents in county history.

By his account, eight inches of snow fell on Jackson County Thursday morning, January 30. That evening, temperatures dropped to four degrees. The following morning, Friday the 31st, with the temperatures hovering just above zero, a work detail of 22 convicts was dispatched from Camp C (also called the Swearingin Camp). Despite the bitter cold, the 22 men were housed in what was termed a "dog wagon," an open steel mesh cage with two wooden benches facing one another. In the middle aisle between the two rows of convicts were two containers of gasoline: a 50-gallon drum filled about half full near the rear of the cage and an unsealed five gallon can nearer to the cab.

In the frigid temperatures (six degrees, according to the *Birmingham News*), one of the inmates lit a scrap of paper hoping to start a small fire to warm his hands, unaware that gasoline had leaked from the unsealed five-gallon can. In the ensuing explosion and fire, most of the convicts ran from the larger gasoline drum situated near the rear of the cage and toward the front of the truck where there was no exit. There, 20 of them were burned to death. Only two convicts--Paul Dawson and John Stokes, both seated near the door at the rear of the truck--were saved by guards who rolled them in the snow to extinguish the flames.

One of the guards speculated during a subsequent investigation that the leakage was "due to the snow and ice on the highway.... The truck was slipping and sliding and apparently sloshed gas onto the floor of the truck."

The two survivors were taken to Hodges Hospital, and although their injuries were described as "serious," both were returned to the convict camp the next day. The two guards who rescued Dawson and Stokes--H.M. Middlebrook and C.R. Watson--were treated for burns to their hands and faces after the rescue.

The incident occurred on what is now called the Old Larkinsville Highway, about one mile from its intersection with West Willow Street. The convicts were being dispatched to clear the roads of ice and snow.

The dog wagon was usually reserved for convicts who were classified as "bad" and therefore required to be restrained. The locked dog wagon was considered secure enough that the individual prisoners were not required to be shackled. On this occasion, however, the dog wagon was being used for prisoners who were considered trusted inmates and not likely to be flight risks. The dog wagon was chosen because it was considered "more humane" than the usual open trucks typically used to transport convicts since it could be covered with a tarp.

As one of the convicts who survived the incident told the *Sentinel*, "We were riding along very quiet and trying to keep warm in coats when I noticed one of the [boys] up front take some paper out his pocket, wad it up and light it drop it on the floor and rub his together over it to warm [them up]; then I saw blue



blazes run around over the floor among boys' feet and they were lifting feet and hollering 'look out'. It seemed the whole truck was fire at once and me and Stokes [jumped] against the back door and tried to cover our heads while twenty others tried to crowd up front to get away from the gas." (x) Ironically, the inmate who gave the interview was serving his last day of incarceration.

The story of the incident published in the *Progressive Age* on the same day (February 6, 1936) gives a slightly different account, quoting the guard H.M. Middlebrook as saying the convicts were considered "bad" and were being taken to their jobs at a rock crusher. Although the discrepancies are not resolved in subsequent coverage, the *Sentinel* article seems more creditable in its assessment of the convicts' status since the inmates whose crimes were listed in the rolls of the dead had not committed violent crimes.

The *Sentinel* reported "Hundreds of people quickly gathered at the scene and the road on each side of the burning truck was blocked for a great distance. The gruesome sight and stench of the burning flesh caused many to quickly turn away and leave the scene."

The account continues with a lurid description of the scene: "The bodies were all burned beyond any possible recognition, in fact they were literally burned to charred chunks about one fourth the size of the original humans . . . some of the bodies were sitting up with hands over their face[s], others were standing or leaning against the sides of the wire mesh . . . The bodies were picked up with shovels, the only way to handle them, and put in sheets and placed on two [flat]bed trucks and carried to Camp C to be prepared for burial." At Camp C, the 20 were placed into coffins that had been dispatched from Kilby Prison.

Restraining convicts not classified as "bad" in the dog wagon and transporting gasoline in the same space with the inmates were both against highway department policy, but the highway department responded that it was reacting to "emergency conditions" because of the severe weather.

The two guards were temporarily suspended while an investigation, ordered by Governor Bibb Graves, reviewed evidence against the two men and the state's highway department. Ultimately the Secretary of State, Howell Turner, who also headed the state's board of adjustments, awarded the families of the convicts \$1,000 each except in the case of two convicts with minor heirs. Their awards were increased to \$1,500. The Alabama Board of Adjustment stated that the awards were the maximum "allowed by law." The guards, who were temporarily suspended during the investigation, apparently did not face further punishment, and were heralded for heroic actions in saving the two survivors.

The archives of the US Convict Records indicate that the 20 men were laid to rest in unmarked graves in the Boshart/Old Prospect Cemetery on Highway 72 on the Marshall side of the Jackson/Marshall County line. That assumption is borne out by Toni Stubblefield, the third generation of her family to serve as caretaker of the cemetery. Stubblefield says that her mother, who had tended the cemetery before her, remembered the incident and actually recalled the burials.

However, the two women differ in their opinions of where in the cemetery the men were buried. The elder Stubblefield believes it is unlikely that the burials took place in the maintained portion of the cemetery (defined today by a circular drive) and instead were buried in an outparcel that has not been tended. The younger Stubblefield believes that the graves are at the south end of the maintained cemetery. She worries that the plot where she believes the convicts to be buried is in danger of encroachment by new graves and feels some urgency for the graves to be located and protected.



The JCHA's initial efforts to probe the cemetery with ground penetrating radar have not been successful, but the JCHA feels strongly that efforts to preserve the plot are urgently needed.

Note: The *Daily Sentinel*, 2/06/1936. The brackets contain words that are lost in the margins of the bound volumes.

David Bradford

Hard War: "No More Mr. Nice Guy"

As one delves deeply into North Alabama Civil War history, the actions of General Ormsby Mitchel and Col. John Turchin clearly stand out. More specifically, it's when they turned away from Buell's policy of conciliation in what's been called the "Sack of Athens." As we shall see, those 1862 landmark actions had far-reaching implications. Indeed they significantly influenced Union civilian policy, that broadly spanned both geographics and time throughout the war.

The initial Union policy of conciliation toward civilians as championed by General Don Carlos Buell had good intentions, and in a perfect world would be the noble thing to do. While admiring this, we might also say its inspiration required some naiveté about human nature. It's hard to imagine how the invading Union Army could expect a "sweetness and light" reception from the resident civilian population. The Federals overestimated the Northeast Alabama Unionist sympathy presence, and they underestimated the fact that the predominant population and sympathy was in fact Confederate. Those of the latter orientation did not take invasion of their homeland kindly (Danielson, p. 25). Any generously granted chivalrous treatment was not returned in kind. The ladies were especially assertive in their own way through discourtesy, verbal derision, and by sometimes even spitting on the Yankee invaders (Danielson, pp. 41-43). The insult had to be compounded by the fact most women of the time dipped snuff. That was provocation enough, but, of course, even more inciteful was activity by the male population (often guerrillas) that resulted in Federal deaths or injury.

Not surprisingly, this lack of southern hospitality soon set the Union command, along with the rank and file, to thinking. Maybe this nice guy idea wasn't so good after all. As mentioned above, one of the most prominent results was what's been called the "Sack of Athens" when Ormsby Mitchel turned John Turchin loose on that Alabama town to wreak European-style revenge on the civilians. General Buell's negative response to that action resulted in the court martial of John Turchin that drew public attention all over the North. Of course, Col. Turchin was exonerated and even granted promotion to brigadier general. He received approbation for his actions, being praised widely throughout the North. So here we have a locally isolated seminal act that greatly influenced Northern war policy and went on to extend well outside its local inception in Northeast Alabama (Danielson, p. 88).

Yet it's not as if this dramatic policy change idea arose exclusively in Northeast Alabama. There soon grew widespread support for a harsh doctrine that civilians in the South---as much as formal combatants---should have to pay for their rebelliousness. They reasoned: considering the extremely assertive Confederate mindset, there was only one way the War could ever be won. Life for all Confederates---including and especially civilians---had to be made so miserable as to take away their intense motivation to fight. The name this punitive policy assumed was that of "hard war." Support for this policy flourished in Washington largely by the actions of General John Pope, commander of the Army of Virginia. Pope issued General Orders 7 in the summer of 1862 that essentially dictated that any house harboring a Confederate sniper would be immediately razed, and the guilty gunman would be shot without civil process.

That same summer of 1862 the U.S. Congress endorsed a hard war policy with the



Union Commanders, top to bottom: Gen. Ormsby Mitchel (findagrave), Col. John Turchin (wikipedia), Gen. Don Carlos Buell (wikipedia), and Gen. John Pope (wikipedia).

passage of the Second Confiscation Act which supported a punitive attitude toward Confederate civilians (Danielson, p. 89). In April, 1863 the change from conciliation to hard war received further formal legitimacy. Lieber's Code (General Orders 100) provided such sanction. A central tenet was to legitimize making the Confederate home front suffer (Danielson 119). This was also the instrument that provided for summary execution of captured guerrillas ... not to say such formal vindication was anything the executioners required or even wanted.

It would be a serious omission about this subject to neglect the Union general whose name was practically synonymous with hard war. I'm referring, of course, to General William Tecumseh ("War is Hell") Sherman. As it turns out, "Uncle Billy" had quite an influential presence all across North Alabama, where he had ample opportunity to hone his hard war skills. The chimneys that looked like tombstones became known as "Sherman's Sentinels"(Ashdown, p. 15). Yet it's interesting that his first experience with prewar Jackson County was apparently quite pleasant for all concerned. It produced a curiously enduring friendship ... especially considering what ensued in later years.

It's here we pick up on a young lieutenant William T. Sherman in the spring of 1844. He took lodging at Bellefonte, Alabama as hosted by Daniel M. Martin. Apparently it represented Sherman's intermediate destination on the Tennessee River for a trip that combined river, rail, and horseback conveyance. Sherman was traveling to and from, of all places, Marietta, Georgia, where he'd been deployed to address some official government legal business (Sherman 31; Nance 13, 14). He enjoyed his Bellefonte stay so much that he cultivated an enduring friendship with Daniel Martin. They corresponded amiably despite the War and Sherman's role in it. Here is a sample of an 1864 letter, from whom by this time was General Sherman during the Atlanta Campaign, as addressed to Mr. Martin:

*HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION MISSISSIPPI, IN THE FIELD, NEAR ATLANTA, GA
August, 10, 1864.*

Daniel M. Martin, Sand Mountain:

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND: When in Larkinsville last Winter, I inquired after you, and could get no positive answer. I wish you had sent me your letter of Jan. 22—which I have just received—for I could have made you feel at ease at once. Indeed, do I well remember our old times about Bellefonte, and the ride we took to the corn mill, and the little farm where I admired the handsome colt and tried to buy it. Time has worn on, and you are now an old man, in want and suffering, and I also no longer young, but leading an hostile army on the very road I came when I left Bellefonte, and at this moment pouring into Atlanta the dread missiles of war—seeking the lives of its people. And yet I am the same WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN you knew in 1844, with as warm a heart as ever, and anxious that peace and plenty shall prevail in this land, and to prove it, I defy JEFF DAVIS, Gen. LEE or Gen. HOOD to make the sacrifice for peace that I will make, personally or officially....



Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman (wikipedia).

Sherman must have had a rare talent for compartmentalizing his feelings as evidenced by the above. It appears that the structure attributed to Daniel Martin at Bellefonte uncharacteristically survived the War, and perhaps collapsed or was finally torn down as late as the early 1970's. This structure has been debated to be Martin's Inn vs his private dwelling. Maybe it was simply both. Whichever it was, Sherman's forces left it alone when they occupied the vicinity of Bellefonte, but we can't entirely exclude that it was rebuilt after they initially burned it (see below). I can't count the number of times I drove by the old structure in the 1960's, regarding it simply as an old shack. I was drawn to the area because my cousin had a cabin nearby, and I hunted ducks in the area's abundant Tennessee River backwater every winter.

A picture of the Bellefonte Martin Structure is presented. There are also included

several other photographs of its chimney that remained after the structure collapsed.



The Daniel Martin home in Bellefonte in the 1970s. Photo by Bill Bradford.

It's important to recognize that this barren chimney can in no way be characterized as a "Sherman Sentinel." However, there was charred evidence in the building's undersoil that might indicate it was initially burned down during the War and subsequently rebuilt (Chambless, Eight 11).

So we can definitely say that General Sherman was no stranger to North Alabama or indeed its Northeastern part. After the above more amicable sojourn, Sherman returned several times to the area on a much less friendly basis. This is best characterized by Sherman's revealing quote about how he really felt about North Alabama. "The government of the United States has in north Alabama any and all rights which they choose to enforce in war, to take their lives, their horses, their lands, their everything" (Sledge, p. 53; Danielson, p. 133). It does indeed seem that General Sherman had a rare talent for compartmentalizing his feelings.

A protracted excursion through Sherman's desultory memoirs reveals he had several other visits to North Alabama during the War. The following is a chronology of the times he graced North Alabama with his presence after the 1844 Bellefonte visit:

November 1, 1863: Present in Florence, Alabama subsequent to the Vicksburg Campaign in compliance with a General Grant October 27 order. The ultimate destination, by way of Bridgeport, was to be Chattanooga, Tennessee. Sherman, while at Florence occupied Wesleyan Hall, on what was to later be the Florence State College campus (Sherman, p. 372; McDonald, p. 81). The impressive old building with its octagonal towers and battlements is still maintained by what is now the University of North Alabama. I had ROTC classes in the building and drilled in its courtyard, as a freshman at Florence State.

November 13, 1863: Reached Bridgeport on the way to Chattanooga. He then had a short return from Chattanooga to Bridgeport on November 16 only to return again to Chattanooga on the 20th for his role in the Missionary Ridge Battle (372-374).

December 19, 1863: Passed back through Bridgeport, Stevenson, Bellefonte, and Decatur on the way to Nashville for the ultimate destination of the Meridian Campaign (Sherman, p. 389).

March 25, 1864: Per General Grant's orders, took a train back through Stevenson and Bridgeport back to Chattanooga to be on the doorsteps of the hundred days Atlanta Campaign. As we will see in a later

chapter, he was identified that month in Larkinsville through a letter by an occupying Union soldier, William Craig. By May of 1864 Sherman was in the Dalton/Resaca area (Sherman, p. 409).

October 9, 1864: Sherman made his famous suggestion to Grant that he be allowed to pursue a destructive campaign across Georgia “and make Georgia howl” (Sherman, p. 531).

October 19, 1864: Still under Grant’s orders to pursue Hood into Alabama, Sherman once again penetrated into North Alabama as far as Gaylesville. However, Grant finally acquiesced to Sherman’s “March to the Sea” proposal on November 2nd, and Sherman was free to turn his back on Hood and his army, leaving them to pursue their ill fate in Franklin and Nashville (Sherman, p. 539).

It’s been said that Sherman’s Meridian Campaign was a training ground for Sherman’s hard war policy that reached its ultimate expression in the “March to the Sea” (Dougherty 1). There has to be some truth to that. However, the Meridian Campaign cannot be considered the only preparatory course for the goal-oriented civilian punitive policy the Federals pursued. Certainly, North Alabama and particularly its Northeast area struggled woefully under that non-forgiving tactic. After 160 years across three generations, it still leaves its bitter taste among the natives of the area. It’s fair to say that such tactics drew heavily on the baser of human tendencies. The term sadism seems to fit here. Yet there are those who rationalize and condone such a pain-producing policy with the unsettling argument that when looked upon as to net final balance---it ultimately accomplishes more good than bad. They would argue that without civilian suffering, a war might go on interminably. For a war to end, morale must be broken, and there’s no better means to do it than to make the home front miserable. We can easily bring up later examples of this from our own country’s war waging history. No doubt about it, the U.S. has meted-out hard war, as much as any country, especially since the Civil War. Indeed the Civil War has been implicated as the origin of the U.S. hard war policy.

We’ve only to consider such examples as the saturation bombing in Europe and Japan in World War II, not the least of which was use of the A-bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No doubt, the B-52 bombings of Hanoi should be added to the list. Certainly resort to those tactics came only after stiff provocation from our enemies, but the amount of human suffering produced had to be immense. Admittedly, an argument can be made that ultimately fewer died and suffered in the long run, than had opposing warfare been left unchecked through a conciliatory civilian approach. Perhaps it gets back to the old saw that “to make an omelet you have to crack some eggs.” It’s always sounded kind of sick to me, but maybe like most old proverbs, there’s an element of truth in it. I guess the real trick in this world is to escape ever becoming one of those eggs.

Dr. James Reed

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My Mother, Dr. Ruth Harris Peet

My mother, Dr. Ruth Peet had many accomplishments, both professionally and personally. She was one of the few women doctors at that time, she was a charter member of the American Academy of Family Practice, she was a wonderful mother and wife, she was civically engaged, and she had thousands of friends. Her accomplishments as a doctor were many, but I think that most people who knew her remember her for her love of people. She never met a stranger and was friends with everyone she met.

Mother's father was a Baptist minister and her mother was a housewife. Ruth lived in Prattville, Alabama until she was in the fourth grade. Her family then moved to Guntersville, Alabama where she finished high school. She went to Judson College where she majored in music, but stayed only one year. She transferred to Howard College, which is now Samford University. After graduating in 1942, she went to Wake Forest University and graduated from Bowman Gray School of Medicine in 1945. She was 24 years old when she graduated from Medical School. Bowman Gray was on an accelerated program due to the need for doctors during WWII. Her youngest brother told me that she was the youngest graduate from Bowman Gray and also the top student in her class. I do not know if this is true or not but I do know that she was the only woman in her class. Throughout her life she never spoke of her accomplishments but spoke often of the great things that others had done.



Ruth Harris' graduation photo, from
Martha Peet Holman.



Midlife photo of Dr. Peet by Louis Arnold.

After med school she interned at Watts Hospital in North Carolina. She started in Radiology and then changed to general medicine because she wanted more patient contact. After her internship she traveled to Lima, Peru to visit her mother's youngest sister. This was a pivotal point in her life.

In Peru, she was exposed to people of many different backgrounds. The American community was close knit, so she got to know many Americans who were living in Peru. She also became friends with many Peruvians. She kept up with many of these people all her life. She actually dated the American Ambassador to Peru. She attended many parties and social functions in Peru, which was a totally different society from what she had grown up in. This was the first time in her life that she had been on her own, independent of the influences of her parents, family, church, and Southern culture. She adopted many of the different ideas but retained many of the ideas and norms she had grown up with.

It was also on this trip that she met my father, Ben Peet. She went with her aunt and uncle to a mining town high in the Andes for Christmas. My Dad was superintendent of the mine there. He invited her and several others for dinner. They talked and really "hit it off." She was there a few days and he invited her to go with him to other functions. By the time it was time to go back to Lima, they were in love. She had planned to return to the U.S. on January 15. He talked her into waiting until after April when he had a month of vacation. She waited. He came to Lima for the month of April. The wedding was set for June. I read the letters that she saved from her mother after she announced the engagement. There was big concern about my father's age. He was 19 years older than she. But the biggest concern was her wedding trousseau. What would she wear on her honeymoon and wedding and could she get all these things in Peru?

After her marriage she stayed in Peru with my father. My siblings and I were all born there. They lived in Arroya where the Cerro de Pasco mine was located. They moved back to the US because my sister was unable to live in the high altitude. Her parents had inherited land on Sand Mountain in Jackson County. She had visited the location on Newby Cove as a child. She said it was the most beautiful place she had ever seen. She dreamed of living here when she grew up. This is where they settled.

I don't know which of my early memories of my mother, Ruth Peet, are real or which are stories I heard as a young child. I know that she was always a central figure in my life. The first real memory I have of her was her reading to me when I was very young. She read to my brother, sister, and I every night. She read Bible stories, poems, fairy tales, and other children's books. The gift of reading is one of the best gifts she gave to me and my siblings. We all became avid readers. She also sang to us every night. She loved to sing. She knew the words to thousands of songs. We spent many hours in the car driving to Scottsboro and to Chattanooga from our farm on Sand Mountain. I remember her getting stopped for speeding many times. She would lean out the window and say "what did I do?". The highway patrolman would tell her how fast over the speed limit she was going. Her excuse was always that she was singing with her children and lost track of how fast she was going. She never got a ticket except once in some town in Mississippi. The highway patrolman in Mississippi would not listen to her excuse.

The next early memory was at her clinic. That clinic was like a second home to us kids. The clinic was about an eighth of a mile from our house. My Dad designed and built the clinic and our house. My parents decided to open a medical clinic there and my dad would farm. He also did all the bookwork for the clinic. He did not know much about farming but was willing to learn. He was a mining engineer and used his skills to build a prosperous farm. The road is still called Peet Clinic Road by the locals

The clinic had two patient rooms with two beds in each, a room for mothers who had just given birth, a delivery room, two examining rooms, an x-ray room, a little lab, and a dark room to develop x-rays. There was a second floor that had storage, a kitchen, and a one room apartment. Over the years the upstairs had various functions. The upstairs was used as an apartment for various employees. For some time, the upstairs was used to house unwed mothers who wanted a place to stay during their pregnancies with the plan of giving their babies up for adoptions. I remember six of these women. I became friends with them. My siblings and I would walk over in the evenings and play cards or just chat. Some of them were barely older than I was.

Mother's practice was always busy. She took 10-15 pregnancies a year in the early years but fewer after a few years. She delivered several hundred babies before deciding it was too confining. She had no one to cover for her if she was away and a patient went into labor. Her waiting room always seemed to be packed. As far as I know she was the only doctor in that area of Sand Mountain from Bryant to Section. She did all kinds of general practice besides labor and delivery. She set bones, sewed up lacerations, took care of patients with chronic illnesses, and the general day-to-day illnesses such as colds, flu, and other infections. She loved minor surgery. She found a RN nurse, Ella Ruth Long, who had quit nursing as a surgical nurse because she was becoming deaf. She talked Ella Ruth into coming to work for her. Ella Ruth was her right hand as long as she was in Alabama. She always said that Ella Ruth was the smartest person she knew and that Ella Ruth knew what to do before she did.



Photo of the 1995 fire that destroyed the Peet clinic. From Martha Peet Holman.



Photo of the Peet family at home in Flat Rock, from the Sept 26, 1954 Chattanooga Times.

Dr. Kelly, the doctor she had worked with in Peru, joined her practice after a few years. He worked in the afternoons and at night. He had his regular patients in addition to emergencies. His wife, Graciella, was a RN and assisted him along with caring for patients who were staying overnight. I think a night nurses aid came in after 10 pm.

My mother was very gregarious and had many friends on Sand Mountain both patients and just friends. Her patients were like family. I haven't lived on Sand Mountain in more than 50 years but when I am there visiting somehow people recognize me and ask if I'm "Dr. Peet's daughter." They always have a story to tell about her.

She loved to go on house calls. I learned to drive when I was 12 by going with her on these calls. When we got to a dirt road, I would sit in her lap and drive. When I could see over the dash board I took over driving as long as it was a dirt road. Typical directions would be "turn right at the second road past the big hill. Then it's the third house on the right after the big oak tree". She often went on house calls to very old people or very sick people. I would get to go inside sometimes if she knew the family really well. I got to quilt at one place on a quilt which was hanging from the ceiling on a frame. Many would feed me wonderful food such as french-fries or biscuits with sorghum and butter which I did not get at home. Patients would give her commodity peanut butter and cheese. These were among her favorite things to receive. She also loved gardening. She would give them a compliment on their flowers and they would give her bulbs, and roots cuttings to plant. We got several puppies and a kitten from various house calls. This made her sorry she had included me on the house call! These exchanges were occasionally for her services but most often because they were nice, generous people. I often went with her to a house where a little girl had been severely burned when her dress caught on fire while burning leaves. She would go over to clean and change the dressings. I think she took me as a warning to be careful around a fire. She also had a patient with severe rheumatoid arthritis who she would go to. They had an outhouse which I really enjoyed using.



GRACIELLA IN HER FAVORITE PRACTICE
 Dr. Peet examines 12-year-old Floyd Davidson
 Newspaper photo from Martha
 Peet Holman.

She loved geriatrics. She bought a 25-bed nursing home just over the line in Georgia. She was the medical director and owner and would stop and check on patients or sign charts at least once a week. She later enlarged it to 50 beds. My Dad drew the plans for the 25-bed addition. She sold this when she moved to Scottsboro in the early 70's. It is still a nursing and rehabilitation center.

Each year she did physicals for children of migrant workers who were enrolled in a summer school program on the mountain. She also did physicals for HeadStart. I enjoyed this because I got to "work." My sister, the daughters of two of her nurses, and I would get to take turns and help with this. We would do vision screening on an eye chart she had at the end of the hall. We would get to bring the kids from the waiting room to be examined and other simple tasks. She actually paid us 25 cents an hour. I would have done it for free.

Besides her medical practice she was active in many other activities. She went to Pisgah High School each year and talked to the girls about sex and puberty. She was a member of the garden club at Ider. She was an active member of First Baptist Church in Chattanooga. She attended various clubs or organizations in Scottsboro. All these things required big picnics. She thought nothing of having 50-100 people over for a picnic. She would often hire the neighbor to take people on hayrides. We had horses which were always a big hit for "city folk." She and Ella Ruth, her nurse, had a birthday party for me and Ella Ruth's daughter and invited our class. Our birthdays were near Halloween. They had the party in the in a cave near our house. They dressed as witches and had a cauldron of "witches' brew". It was so much fun. She invited the sixth-grade class from Ider High School every year to a picnic. Kids ran wild and had a great time. My parents had a barn dance one year in our barn. They hired a local old-time band and invited everyone they knew. It was a few days after George Wallace stood on the steps

of the University of Alabama protesting the admission of a Black student. She told Wallace how disappointed she was in his behavior. In the same letter she invited him to the barn dance. He didn't come. I guess he was afraid of being chastised again.

We went to Ider to school because when we started school Jackson County rural schools were still having a split session for cotton picking. School started in July then had a month or so off in September for cotton picking. We had to pick cotton but thank goodness it was for only a little while in the afternoon after school. She did not want us kids to think we were too good to work. This is a lesson I appreciate being taught.

In 1967 my family rented an apartment in Scottsboro so that my sister and I could attend school there. There were more activities for teenagers. She commuted to Flat Rock daily until my father's death in 1968. She then opened a practice in Scottsboro. Many of her patients from Sand Mountain followed her to Scottsboro for medical care. She and my sister, Judy, moved into my grandmother's house, now called Fernwood, after I left for college. She lived there and took care of her mother and aunt until their deaths. Then it was on to more adventure!

After scouring the West for new places to live she settled on Albuquerque, New Mexico. All her children followed her to New Mexico. She said New Mexico reminded her of Peru, where she had many happy memories. She also really liked a doctor here who ran two clinics. One was in a small town 20 miles outside of Albuquerque. She said the patients reminded her of her patients in Alabama. She worked there for about 5 years until the clinic was bought by a big healthcare system. She then worked in Albuquerque for the biggest healthcare system in New Mexico, Presbyterian Healthcare. She worked for them until she retired in 1995. She had trouble retiring and after a short time returned to work covering for doctors on vacation.

When my daughter was born in San Francisco she moved there to take care of the baby so I could return to work. She came for a few weeks but stayed almost two years. She and my daughter Amy would get on the bus and go all over the bay area. In her spare time, she did physicals for the Navy on Treasure Island, was active in her church, played bridge and made many new friends.

She moved back to Albuquerque where she resumed her part time work with Presbyterian. When she was 75, she developed Macular Degeneration and could not see to work or drive. This did not stop her from being active. She was active in her church, she taught computer classes at the senior center, she played lots of bridge, and was a wonderful grandmother to her grandchildren. She lived about two blocks from the school they attended. She volunteered at the school to help children learn to read.

When my brother moved back to Alabama, she moved with him and his wife. She wanted to go "home". She traveled all over Scottsboro on a bus provided by the city for "old people." They took her where ever she wanted to go. Sometimes I think she was their only customer. She lived with my brother until the last 2-3 months of her life. She loved to travel and was always ready for an adventure. She loved people and made a positive impact on everyone she met. I know that she had hundreds of friends because she made friends wherever she went. Mother died in 2015.



Late photo of Dr. Peet, from Martha Peet Holman.

Martha Peet Holmen

Martha Peet Holmen graduated from Scottsboro High School in 1969. She earned various degrees from University of Alabama, UAB, University of New Mexico, and New Mexico Tech. She moved to New Mexico where she met Dale Holmen. They married and had two children who are grown. She taught high school math and science for twenty-five years. She now lives with Dale, and their dog Lara.

Early Drug Stores in Downtown Stevenson

Druggists have been part of the commercial landscape in Jackson County since our earliest records. In discussing the beginnings of American pharmacy practice, historical pharmacist Gregory J. Higby noted that “Although the pharmacy had origins going back to medieval Europe, what became the American drugstore arose in the early 19th century from four roots: the traditional apothecary’s shop; doctor’s shops—where physicians prescribed and dispensed; the general store; and the wholesale druggist.” Dr. Payne, for example, in Scottsboro, saw patients upstairs in his drug store and dispensed drugs downstairs, as did several of the Stevenson druggists. Drug stores were also the location of optometrists and dentists.



Old Stevenson Drug Company building, corner of West and Main.

Toward the end of the 1800s, the growth in patent medicines made it possible to open drug stores whose main function was not compounding remedies but selling prepared drugs. Wholesale drug manufacturers filled the remedy niche, and druggists doing less of their own compounding could hone their retail and soda fountain skills.

“With the interest in laboratory work declining,” Higby explained, the American Pharmaceutical Association, the governing body of U.S. pharmacy practice, “brought forward issues concerning the suppression of quackery and commercial problems. Questions concerning preparations dropped off as large-scale manufacturers took over the making of not only ingredients and preparations but entered the field of end dosage forms. The corner pharmacist could not match the elegance of the modern sugar-coated pills or the low price of the machine-made tablets that appeared at the century’s end. By 1900, one young woman in a factory could operate a pair of machines punching out 100,000 headache tablets. Compounding, the crux of professional practice in the late nineteenth century, started its great decline.”
(1)

Between 1990 and 1920, ads for patent medicines were the mainstay of advertising in the local newspapers. Some remedies were local but most had a national following. *The Stevenson Chronicle* is full of ads for patent medicines.

The location most closely associated with drug stores in Stevenson is the Stevenson Drug Store building, located on the corner of Main Street and West Street, a two-story brick structure built in the early 20th century, probably after the 1911 fire. Here is a brief overview of the drug stores that have been part of early downtown Stevenson, tracked through the *Stevenson Chronicle* and *Alabama Herald*. If you take anything away from this article, it will be how fluid business ownership was in early Stevenson and how quickly partnerships changed.

1866: Bunn and Harding Drug Store

In *The Stevenson Story* (2), the first mention of a drug store in Stevenson is found in 1860. It is not known if the drug store was on the same location as the current building, but I have found that in other locations, buildings often came and went on the same site while the business associated with the site remained the same. This was true in Scottsboro, where the address 141 East Laurel Street was home to Hackworth Drugs (1904-1906); John B. Tally Drugs, K. T. Daniel, and City Drugs (1909-1923); Presley Drugs (1923-1937); and Hodges Drugs (1937-1970).

The Stevenson Story cites two sources that mention drug business: the Railway Business Directory for 1866-67 and in the 1860 census. From these sources, we know that the drug store was named Bunn & Harding, and Jacob Walker identified himself as the "clerk in a drug store." The Directory states that the store is located on the West side of the railroad.

The only Bunn living in Stevenson in 1860 was William Henry Bunn, Jr.. According to a direct descendant who wrote about her great great great grandparents for findagrave, this is the story of William Henry Bunn:

William Henry Bunn Jr. and his wife, Cincinnati Huffman "Nattie" Yant Bunn were originally from Fayetteville, TN, where they were married in 1858. After Henry's service in the Confederate army, the couple moved to Stevenson Alabama in 1865 where Henry opened a mercantile shop on Lot 9 of Stevenson's main street across the street from the train station. They built a house on Lot 44, behind the First National Bank. Henry branched out into other businesses. The writer found him listed in a railroad business directory as a partner in a drug store and a ten pin alley. The Stevenson Story states that Henry was granted a business license for this adventure on 12 Nov 1867 with a partner Heyman Dryer.

In April 1878 a drunk blacksmith named W.H. Weedman shot Henry to death then fled into the night. Nattie, who was pregnant with their youngest child, put up a reward of \$500, a huge sum in those days. Other townspeople added \$300. This caused Mr Weedman to turn himself in and ask for a portion of the reward. Of course this request was denied, and Mr Weedman remained in jail, despite a failed escape attempt. The Alabama Herald reported on May 2, 1878 that when Henry Moses Bunn, Henry's son, discovered that Mr. Weedman was in the jail, he made several attempts to shoot the criminal. The trial was moved to Scottsboro and the attorney, J.M. Hoge was retained.

The paper said that Mr. Hoge argued that the incident had extenuating circumstances. Hoge was quoted as saying that Weedman was in the store, in an argument with the proprietor. Henry Moses was shooting a gun, at the same time that Henry Sr. took a swing at Weedman. Weedman claimed that the son shot the father accidentally. Hoge claimed that this was a clear case of self defense.

The outcome of the trial cannot be determined. However, in October 1878, Sam Goole, a young colored man living with the Bunn family, died of yellow fever. He was an important witness against Weedman in the incident. With only a last name to go on, I cannot identify Mr. Harding, and Eliza Woodall could not either. It is assumed that he moved on.

1872 Samuel Fountain Barksdale Stockard

Samuel Stockard was also the proprietor of an early Stevenson drug store. Eliza Woodall stated in the *Stevenson Story* that a Samuel B. Stockard obtained his druggist license on February 21, 1872 and opened his drug store in Stevenson. This ad is found in the 1874 *Alabama Herald*. He seems to have owned a drug store in Stevenson from 1872 to 1878.

On February 14, 1878, the *Alabama Herald* announced that Stockard had taken on a partner. "S. B. Stockard and Dr. Will Spiller are partners in the drug business in Stevenson," the *Herald* wrote. "They are well and favorably known gentlemen and will be reliable and popular druggists." Dr. William K. Spiller practiced most of his life in Bridgeport and died there in 1905 and is buried in Bonaventure. Stockard moved around in Tennessee and and finally died in 1919 at age 82 at his son's house in Caddo, Louisiana. He was buried with his wife Lucy in the town where he lived the last years of his life, Pensacola, FL.

1876: Dr. T. T. Cotnam Drug Store

Dr. Thomas T. Cotnam (1822-1885) was a prominent and politically active Stevenson



The Alabama Herald
Thu, Sep 03, 1874 -Page 4

S. B. STOCKARD
STEVENSON, ALABAMA

Under the direction of physicians to select
large and complete stock of

DRUGS,

Medicines, Oils, Oils, Varieties, Wine,
and Glass, Dry Staffs, Pottery,
Brushes, Soap, Sponges,
Lenses and

Wine and Liquor,
FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

A FULL LINE OF
PURINA, CIGARS, SNUFFS,
AND ACET.

ALSO A COMPLETE LOT OF
CONFECTIONERIES,
Wholesale and Retail, Dry, Soda, Salt,
Pepper, etc. All of which
will be sold

**Cheap
for
Cash!**

All articles of the Drug line furnished
on Credit - Merchants at Wholesale
Prices - Cash prices
Bred's et

citizen. Eliza Woodall noted that Dr. Cotnam and his family had been living in Stevenson by the 1850s. Woodall writes:

Dr. T. T. Cotnam was one of the first doctors in the town of Stevenson in the 1850s. He married Elizabeth L. Doran, the daughter of James and Orpha Doran of Doran's Cove. He studied medicine under Dr. William Mason and Dr. A. A. Russell. Dr. and Mrs. Cotnam were the parents of Tennessee W., James Mason [who is listed as a pharmacist in Stevenson in the 1870 census], Gilbert C., William, Andrew Bass (also became a doctor), Ida, and Thomas T. Jr. After Dr. Cotnam's death, Mrs. Cotnam made her home with her son-in-law, W. E. Carter of South Pittsburg, where she died in 1896. Both Dr. and Mrs. Cotnam are buried in Stevenson City Cemetery.

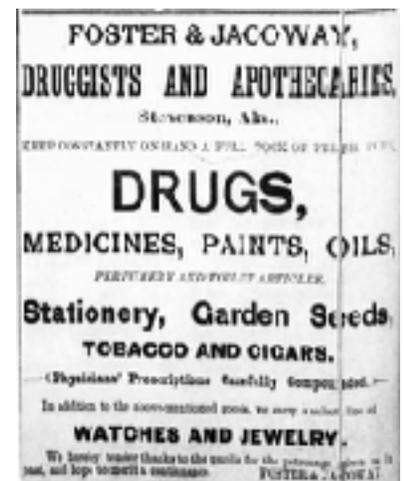
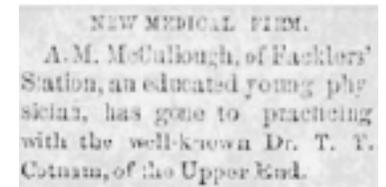
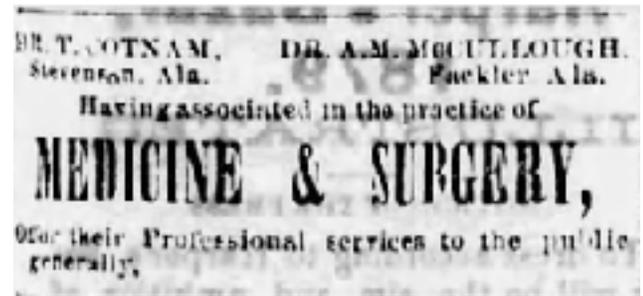
In the 1850 census, Dr. Thomas Cotnam is already in Stevenson, married with three children, and is a school teacher. By 1860, Dr. Cotnam has completed his medical training and is listed as a physician, living in Stevenson with his wife and seven children on a productive family farm of thirty acres. He graduated from the University of Nashville in 1855 and also studied medicine with Dr. William Mason and Dr. A. A. Russell. (Woodall, p. 320) In 1866, his family was censused in DeKalb County, where his son Andrew married Nannie Matheny. He was candidate for the state legislature in 1861 and 1874, and president of the Railroad Board in 1870. He had a drug store as early as 1876 in a frame house in Stevenson; the Alabama Herald noted on January 26 that his drug store burned. He spent time in Nashville in 1879, having been awarded a Peabody Scholarship.

His partner in Fackler, Albert M. McCullough (1852-1887), was also a physician. He married Margaret Lovelady in 1880 and had two children. He died a very young man in 1887, murdered by boarder W. C. Hicks in an argument over a razor. He was living in Bellefonte at the time of his death.

1886: Foster & Jacoway Drugs

When Foster and Jacoway established their drug business, they were, as their ad shows, druggist and apothecaries with a range of products and services that were typically we found in drug stores at the time, including selling paints, garden seeds, and watches and jewelry. Just as with Payne's in Scottsboro, one of the establishment's major attractions was its soda fountain, which the *Scottsboro Citizen* noted was "in operation" in May 1886. There is no doubt but that medical services were available at this drug store; G. W. Foster (1856-1918) advertised being a physician and a surgeon with an office at Foster & Jacoway. The soda fountain was a big attraction, and the pair replaced theirs with a "new and handsome soda fountain" that the *Stevenson Chronicle* described as "a dandy."

Foster & Jacoway was out of business by 1888; "The *Chronicle* has been removed to the building recently occupied by Foster & Jacoway," the January 3, 1888 paper stated. Their successor was Foster & Horton. In July, the *Chronicle* carried a notice that those who had failed to settle their Foster & Jacoway debts would be "put in the hands of Joseph Williams for collection." It seems that A. B. Jacoway left business ownership, not the practice of pharmacy. By 1894, he is part of another drug store, Jacoway and Alston. His obituary in 1947 stated "Mr. Jacoway was a retired druggist having been in business here for many years," the last member of a prominent old family. (PA, Jan 16, 1947)



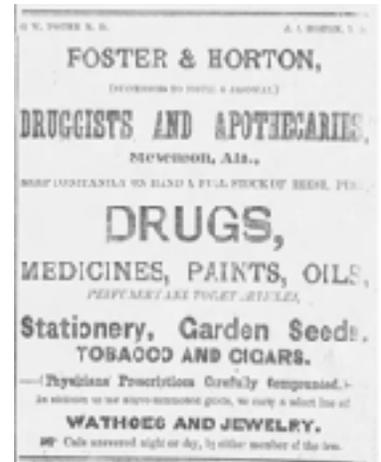
Dr. G. W. Foster, from Findagrave.

1889: Foster & Horton Drug Store

In February 1888, we begin finding ads for a drug store operated by Dr. G. W. Foster and Surgeon J. J. Horton. The ad in the *Stevenson Chronicle* states that the office is in the rear of the drug store. In March, the paper refers to Foster & Horton Drug Store. They sold Bucklen's Arnica Salve for cuts, sores, and ulcers. They sold Electric Bitters to cure kidney complaints and lameness—all the modern patent remedies. Both physicians practiced out of the drug store.

As time passed, they took on additional partners with expertise in other related fields. In 1889, the two men "have ordered new machinery for boring wells," though it took longer than anticipated to get the new machinery working. In June 1889, they allowed S. M. Taylor, a watchmaker and jeweler, to be part of the drug store. Remember that jewelers also made glasses, so this is the equivalent of adding an optometrist.

Some time between November 1890 and January 1892, Foster & Horton moved from the rear of the drug store to the office over W. J. McMahan's store. In this apparently larger space, they also added Dentist C. F. Templeton. The 1892 mention is the last for this drug store. James J. Horton (1851-1929) lived in Bass and later Stevenson. He was a member of the Jackson County Medical Society. By 1893, he was living in Winchester, TN. He died in 1929 and is buried in Winchester City Cemetery.



1894: Jacoway and Alston Drug Store

Armistead Beauregard Jacoway and Lorenzo Russell Alston were druggist and partners in Stevenson that we can document in newspapers between 1894 and 1898. Alston, who would go on to partner in a number of drug businesses over the next years, was only 25 when this business was started. Bo Jacoway's family came to Stevenson from Kentucky. Both men were druggists in Stevenson their entire lives, and are still found in the 1920s when the *Stevenson Story* says the following about them:

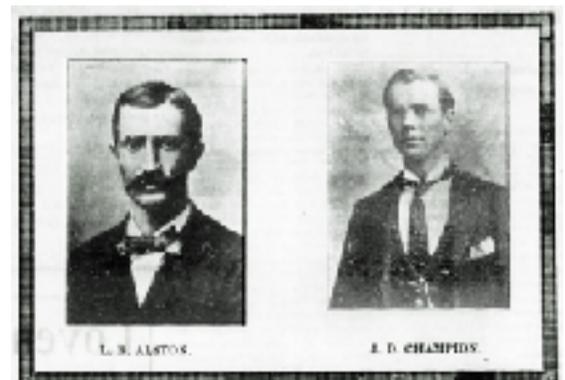
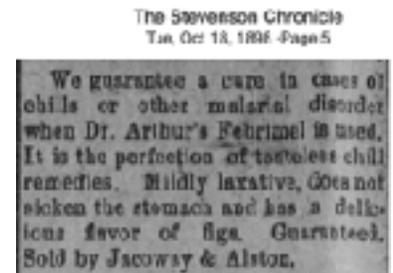
"Uncle Bo" Jacoway and L. R. Alston had a drug store in the building now (1982) occupied by salvage on Main Street. The soda fountain in that store was the gathering place for many on a hot summer afternoon, especially Saturdays when all the farmers and their families came to buy their week's "rations....Uncle Bo" (Armistead Beauregard) had a friendly word to one and all.

On October 1896 *Stevenson Chronicles*, a traveling optician set up temporarily in the Jacoway and Alston Drug Store. Eliza Woodall writes that this drug store was still in business in 1925.

1900: Alston and Champion

In October 1900, the *Progressive Age* included a business supplement that provided an overview of the area's businesses. One of the businesses profiled was Alston and Champion Drugs. Here is the article and photographs of the two men involved in the business enterprise, Lorenzo Russell Alston (1860-1950) who is now 31 and James D. Champion (1869-1927). They are pictured here and the *Progressive Age* description of these two men follows.

The proprietors are both very capable, registered pharmacists who have made of study of satisfying the public wants. They were early to realize that the prescription department, the most vital part of the drug business, must be conducted with the utmost care, and they have made special effort to supply



their patrons with exceptionally good service.

They are a full line druggists's supplies, consisting of patent medicines, toilet articles, cigars and tobacco. One of their special lines is stationary, of which they carry a very elaborate stock sufficient for the needs of a community many times Stevenson's pretensions.

Their soda fountain, which by the way, is the only one in town, is the only place to really satisfy the thirst. All the noted temperance drinks are for sale and the soda mixers here is of high quality. In connection with this establishment the firm handles all the ice which comes to town, buying it by the carload. They also deal in photo and picture frames.

The store is situated on the main street of town and consists of two stories, one for the storage of goods, Mr. Champion is a native of Tennessee, coming to this town from Decherd, where he spent his early life and learned the druggist's trade. The firm is at present manufacturing a line of family medicines that will answer every purpose as simple family remedies. The reputation of the firm is such as to warrant these medicines and people are assured that as cures they are certain and reliable. Prominent among those might be named: Palmer's Child Tonic, Palmer's Sarsaparilla, Palmer's Liniment. These medicines have been used extensive throughout the surrounding community and have received a hearty endorsement.

Eliza Woodall also mentioned that in 1901, the Bank of Stevenson operated out of the back of this drug store until suitable quarters were found. Alston remained in Stevenson and operated drug stores with other druggists including his brother Nathaniel Charles. He must have heeded his own medical advice; he lived to be 81 and died in 1950 and is buried in Stevenson City Cemetery. Champion moved to Huntsville and died in Nashville in 1927 of a failed gall stone operation. He is referred to in his obituary as Dr. J. D. Champion.

1905: Alston Brothers

When Alston left Champion, he opened a drug store with his brother. Eliza Woodall lists these brothers in her list of drug stores: Nathaniel Charles and Lorenzo Russell Alston. They operated drug stores in Stevenson and Fackler between 1905 and 1909. They sponsored ads for patent medicines in the *Stevenson Chronicle*. Like other druggists, they hosted visiting optometrists.

1907: Jacoway and Prince and Prince Brothers

The drug store named "Jacoway and Prince" was a short-lived business concern. The livery stable shown in this picture was at the present site of the Stevenson Drug Company building was made about 1910. The two young men in the picture are (L to R) Dr. J. L. Prince and his younger brother Albert, who is a pharmacist. (4) The drug business first appeared in the *Stevenson Chronicles* in March 1907; the dissolution of the business was announced October 1, 1908. The dissolution statement said that both Prince brothers had sold their part of the concern to Dr. Walker Blakemore.

In 1912, one of the Prince brothers was back in the drug store business with Sam McCrary (1876-1962). The drug stores was in practice with S. A. Todd, a veterinary surgeon. (*StC*, Apr 18, 1912) Jeweler G. F. Greer operated in the back of their drugstore. (*StC*, May 9, 1912) In 1914, this strange exchange occurred: "On Friday, Oct. 4th Sam McCrary bought out Albert Prince's interest in the drug firm of Prince and McCrary and one week later, Dr. J. L. Prince and Albert Prince bought the business back and the Style of the firm is now Prince Brothers. (*StC*, Oct 10, 1912) In 1914, they were reimbursed by the Jackson County Live Stock Association for "dipping supplies." They are no longer mentioned after 1914,

The Stevenson Chronicle
Wed, Mar 14, 1906 Page 7

Indigestion is much of a habit. Don't get the habit. Take a little Kodol Dyspepsic Cure after eating and you will quit belching, puffing, palpitating and frowning. Kodol Digests what you eat and makes the stomach sweet. Sold by Alston Brothers Stevenson and Fackler.



L to R, Dr. J. L. Prince and Albert Prince. From Allen Knox.

1909: Jacoway and Blakemore

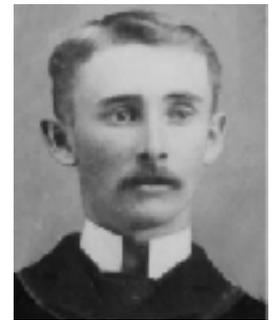
On October 8, 1908, the *Scottsboro Citizen* announced that the firm of Jacoway and Prince had been dissolved, and that Dr. Walker Blakemore (1884-1954) had bought the Prince interest, so that the firm was now known as Jacoway and Blakemore.

When the first ads began to appear in March 1909 for the Jacoway and Blakemore pharmacy, the announcement stated that “no line of mercantile enterprise required so much training and efficiency for the proper...management of a modern and up-to-date drug store.” The announcement of the new business emphasized that both men were registered pharmacists. Their drug store was repainted and papered in June 1909 (SC, June 17, 1909).

In March 1911, the *Progressive Age* announced that Dr. Blakemore had sold his interest in this business to Edward O. Mann and moved to Corpus Christi, TX. The resulting store was known as Jacoway and Co. It burned in the 1911 fire: “Jacoway & Co., drugs, lost \$4000 on stock insured for \$2,500. This building was owned by Jacoway and Prince. Their loss is \$1,000, insurance \$600. Dr. J. L. Prince had his office upstairs and lost all his books, instruments, etc.” (PA, May 18, 1911)

1909: Ingle and Bible

John James Ingle (1866-1919) and Dr. George Roulston Bible (1887-1971) were an operating drug store in Bridgeport in 1903 in the Aldhouse block. (PA, Oct 1, 1903) In 1909, they opened a store in Stevenson and advertised regularly in the *Stevenson Chronicle*. After the 1911 fire, the *Progressive Age* announced on June 15 that “A. B. Jacoway, whose drug store was burned, has bought out the Ingle interest in the drug firm of Ingle & Bible.” Ingles in Bridgeport continued to exist at least until 1918,



John James Ingle, from Findagrave.

1912: Bible and Jacoway

George Bible was born in Texas in 1887. He was 24 years old and practicing medicine and pharmacy in Stevenson in 1911 when he married Ruby Jacoway, A. B. Jacoway’s niece, and the two of them opened a drug store together. When his wife’s uncle retired, Bible christened the drug store Reliable Drugs.

1925-1966: Reliable Drugs under Dr. George Bible

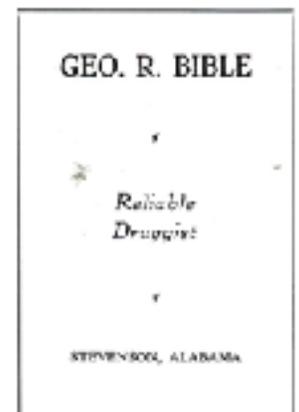
In 1925, Eliza Woodall states, there were two drug stores in Stevenson. A May 28, 1925 health inspection report in the *Progressive Age* notes that “One negro cafe and ice cream parlor were closed because of unsanitary conditions, while the two Stevenson drug stores were the only two businesses inspected that received 100 per cent cards.” *The Stevenson Story* mentions two drug stores in this timeframe: Jacoway and Alston and Stevenson Drug Company.



From the 1955 phone book.

Going into the 1930s, then, Jacoway and Alston were still in business, though I cannot find reference to this business outside of the *Stevenson Story*. George Bible’s obituary states that he operated a drug store in Stevenson for more than 40 years before he retired and moved to Miami. Since he came to Stevenson in 1912, he was in business until at least 1952. A close examination of the Stevenson yearbooks shows that George Bible by this name took out ads in the yearbooks up to 1950 when the ad changed to Stevenson Drug Company, so this perhaps is when he sold his business.

The photograph that follows was taken during World War II



From the 1930 SHS yearbook.



L to R, Dr. George Austin (dentist), George Wimberley, Robert J. Graham (banker) John W. Wimberley, George R. Bible (druggist) and John H. Graham. Men on the right unknown, as is the dog whose tail is in the foreground. Photo from John Graham.

and shows the drug store in its current location at the corner of West and Main with druggist George Bible in the middle in a white coat.

Since the *Stevenson Chronicle* was no longer published, I had to rely on Eliza Woodall for these details:

John Wayne Thompson became the pharmacist at this location and is assisted by John "Peanut" Wilkerson, a local young man who was educated in the Stevenson schools and at Auburn University. John "Peanut" Wilkerson was born February 1935 in Doran's Cove, the son of William Herman and Myrtle Bell (Matthews) Wilkerson. Herman was a descendant of pioneer families who first settled Crow Creek. "Peanut" graduated from Auburn in 1959 with a B. S. in Pharmacy after having served three years in the U. S. Marines where he attained the rank of Sergeant. He has a brother, Wayne, who is also a pharmacist, practicing in Scottsboro. He was first associated with McCamy Drug Store in

Scottsboro before coming to Stevenson Drug Company in 1968.

Many people in Stevenson remember Stevenson Drug Company fondly. Gail Dunn said that the store had, "a soda fountain like Payne's. We loved the place." James Sentell remembers that the store behind it on West Street was a TV and radio repair business run by Paul Keller. Another TV repair shop, McAllisters, was located further west on Main Street; its sign is still there. Dusty Matthews recalls that Claudia Timberlake's Beauty Shop was in the location before the TV repair business. These two photos from Stevenson Drug Company were found in yearbooks.

It is sad to see the building sitting empty with all the activity that must at one time have passed through its doors. But the building appears to be in good shape and might again be a meeting place to be enjoyed.

Annette Bradford

Footnotes

- (1) H. B. Higby, "Chemistry and the 19th Century American Pharmacist," *Bulletin of Historical Chemistry*, V28 No 1 (2003), pp. 15-16.
- (2) Eliza Woodall, *The Stevenson Story* (College Press, 1987). All further references as made inline.
- (3) *Transactions of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama*, 1884
- (4) Allen L. Knox, Jr, *Rivers and Rails, Truth and Tales of Stevenson, Alabama* (August, 1968), p. 10



Membership Roll

An asterisk () indicates your membership has expired. Please renew for 2025.*

Carol Abernathy	Andrea Talley Brennan	Sandra Darwin *
Barbara Akin	John Brewer	Cheryl Davis
Tom Allen	Clyde Broadway *	Janice Davis *
Allen Co. Indiana Public Library	Harold and Elaine Brookshire	Judy Dawson
Robert Alley	Brenda Brown	Robert Dean
Patricia Y. Alsup	Kenneth Brown	RobertDeWitt
Cathy Anand	Charles E. "Chuck" Bryant	Brenda M Dickerson *
Bill Anderson	Cathy Bullock	Martha Dobbins
James C. Anderson *	Sandra Burney	Roger Dukes
Mike Anderson	JessicaButler	Randy Dunn *
AHA Archives	Brian Bynum	Steven D. Durham
Jean Arndt	Wayne Bynum	PhilipDutton
Judy Hubbard Arnold	Chris and Amy Cameron	Ronald H. Dykes
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The Jackson County Chronicles

Volume 37, Number 2

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- Annie Coleman Proctor:** The woman whose work in the 1930s-1960s provided a foundation for future genealogy work in our county.
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Editor: Annette Norris Bradford

Associate Editor: David Bradford

April Meeting: The Jackson County Historical Association will meet at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 27 at Fernwood, the Claude and Veda Spivey home at 517 Scott Street. John and Donna Cleveland have lovingly cared for this beautiful Scottsboro landmark for thirteen years, supporting its upkeep by opening it as an event center. The JCHA met there a while back. This visit is more informal and is a chance to tour the home and enjoy its hospitality before it changes hands. John and Donna are selling Fernwood and moving to Huntsville. Thank you, John and Donna.



Guest Authors: With the two primary *Chronicles* contributors (Annette and David Bradford) tied up scanning the last four months, we are fortunate to have excellent articles from guest contributors. Dr. James Reed is hardly a guest any more, having been our best Civil War contributor the last two years. Ed Carter, who wrote about the Louvin Brothers, is a former JCHA officer and long-time contributor about schools and locations in Bryant and Higdon. Stephen Smith, a former reporter for Rainsville's *Weekly Post*, wrote a story about livestock mutilations in the 1990s. Those stories were widely syndicated and drew speculation that the practice was linked to the UFO sightings in the late 1980s. He looks back on the furor he launched. Finally, Judith Rives asked why has no one ever written a story about Annie Coleman Proctor. She helped me address this omission.

Newspaper Scanning Complete: We have digitized every surviving hardcopy newspaper in Jackson County. About a quarter million pages were added last summer from microfilm. David and I, with help from Beth Presley, Toni McGriff, and Marilyn Goolesby, scanned about 40,000 pages and have the entire *Jackson County Advertiser*, *Jackson County Farmer*, and *North Jackson Progress* online under newspapers.com. We also plugged many holes. Mark Wilson said on the Alabama Historical Association Facebook page: "Congratulations to Annette and David Bradford of the Jackson County Historical Society for completing an eighteen-month process and adding close to 40,000 pages to Jackson County's online newspaper collection on www.newspapers.com! Using equipment on loan from Ancestry.com/newspapers.com, they digitized papers that had not been digitized, and they've documented the process so that other interested counties will have a reference to do the same."

Finding Private Wheeler Lee Saint's Family

In January of this year, I received this message through the findagrave messaging service:

Bonjour madame,
Je me présente Mr Bardeau Alexis, membre de 'association ' les fleurs de la mémoire ''
Je parraine le PFC SAINT WHEELER LEE, 119th infantry 30th division, matricule 34399952, mort en Normandie le 25 juillet 1944.
Pouvez vous m'aider pour avoir une photo ou un contact avec des membres de sa famille ?
Cordialement mr Bardeau

About the time I was dusting off my rusty French, Alexis sent me the same message in English, explaining that he, Alexis Bardeau, was a member of the organization "Flowers of Memory," a French organization that places flowers on the graves of American Soldiers buried at Normandy American Cemetery. Alexis was looking for a family contact for Wheeler Lee Saint and a picture of this 22-year-old man who died from his wounds in Normandy. Wheeler is buried in the American cemetery of Colleville-sur-Mer in Calvados in Normandy

I did not know if Alexis had Facebook access, so I put his query on our Jackson County Historical Association Facebook page. Alexis saw this posting and joined our page. It turns out the Saint family was a large one, with thirteen children, most of whom are linked to the parents Elijah and Ida on findagrave. Descendants of two of the siblings responded immediately. One did not know the circumstances of Wheeler's death and the other was home when the Army representatives called on his mother with the sad news.

I did not know that Blake Wilhelm's grandmother, Hazel Marie Saint Chambless, was Wheeler's sister; Blake's mother reached out to a cousin and located a copy of Wheeler's picture.



Private Wheeler Lee Saint, from the Saint family.

Wheeler was born in Grant in Marshall County, Alabama and moved to Limrock in Jackson County, Alabama when he was a small child. Blake passed this message to Alexis: "Tell him our family is very happy to have him taking care of Wheeler's grave. Such a beautiful thing to do for someone whose family is so far away. My grandmother, who I was very close to, was home when the men arrived to tell her mother he had died."

Other JCHA Facebook page members commented that they were in touch with the people in Normandy who maintained the graves of their fallen World War II family. It is a nice story well worth sharing.

Annette Bradford



Private Saint's Grave in Normandy, France.

Photo by Alexis Bardeau.

Stevenson and Bridgeport: Their Influential Civil War Role

It's been easy for me to gaze right past the enormous influence that Stevenson and Bridgeport had on the course and outcome of the American Civil War. Maybe that's because the area offered so much else to capture my focus and admiration. For me that included such things as: good times with local friends, pleasant memories of football games I played at both towns, and many winters I spent water-fowling in the area's abundant wetlands. But I find I feel now--through more befitting reflection--that the area's Civil War role can't be emphasized enough.

During my considerable time spent in the area, my only nudge toward its rich Civil War history came from a rumor about some guys going to jail for digging up Civil War artifacts on nearby public land. But yes, with the passage of time and a little effort, I awoke to the impressive history of Stevenson and Bridgeport, and with that came realization that the area possessed a crucial role in shaping the course of the War. That's a fact, of course, some serious devotees, far more astute than I, already knew. A noteworthy example would be the reenactors of the April 1862 Battle of Bridgeport. The reenactment of this Ormsby Mitchel siege is performed each spring and is recognized as the largest of its kind in Alabama. Now I too, belated as it may be, find that the area's Civil War history frequently captures my thoughts, inviting me to try to learn more about it, and to try to discern why more hasn't been made of its powerful reach and influence.



Re-enactors at the Battle of Bridgeport. *North Jackson Progress*, March 29, 2012 by Dale Crawford.

Indeed, even though the area gets the Civil War recognition it deserves from reenactment enthusiasts and dedicated locals, others viewing from a distance through nearsighted eyes like mine may not fully subscribe to its primary importance. If we study Rosecrans' pursuit of Bragg from Tullahoma to Chickamauga and Chattanooga, it's easy to regard Stevenson and Bridgeport as only spots on the map where opposing armies randomly chose to cross the Tennessee River. On the other hand--hastening to properly qualify that assertion--one should never overlook the exquisite scholarly attention to detail afforded the Tullahoma to Chattanooga retreat and its enormous complexity (Horn 239-274; Connelly, Autumn 137-165). No, the term, "Best kept secret" doesn't apply here. But shouldn't Stevenson and Bridgeport receive a bit more spotlight about how and why the crossings occurred where they did? Safe to say, no other locations could have provided their unique advantage, the results of which proved hugely important to the outcome of the War. Control of Chattanooga had been a major strategic goal for either side, almost as early as the outbreak of the War. It might be said that Stevenson and Bridgeport, considered as a unit, served as the very portal to that critical Civil War objective. Having thus served, the towns shaped how events at Chattanooga and Chickamauga eventually played out ... thereby making Stevenson and Bridgeport key participants in the outcome of the American Civil War.

It's not surprising that the area came to earn this critical gateway distinction. Several main transport arteries propitiously converged there, establishing it as an important transportation hub. In that little area with the two towns spaced only eight miles apart, a mighty river, several wagon roads, and some key



Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans, from the Brady International Photo Gallery via Wikipedia.



Stevenson location where General William S. Rosecrans located his command, known as "The Little Brick."

railroads all came together ... sort of like, "all roads lead to Bridgeport." Admittedly, the river itself could represent a mixed blessing by being the major obstacle it had always been. But by the time the war came, impressive ingenuity had tackled and largely alleviated that problem. Bridgeport was the chosen bridge site for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad to cross the Tennessee River. This impressive bridge spanned the main river over to Long Island. Then another section, cleverly designed to permit riverboat traffic, completed the bridge on the southeastern side of the Island. Why of all places, not counting the advantage of a supporting island, was this site chosen for construction of such a well-engineered bridge? To answer this requires exploration of several complicated factors.

Of course, even before the War, it was important to connect travel and commerce between Nashville and Chattanooga. The Tennessee River didn't make that goal any easier. In the days before the TVA dams, the river in the area we're considering was not always a gentle stream. Southwest of Chattanooga, especially downstream as far as Kelly's Ferry, the river was a spate of destructive rapids, rocks, and whirlpools.

There was a remarkable area called, "The Sucks," that would capture and hold a riverboat, spinning it around and around. Not surprisingly, fame soon grew up around its picturesque name. Johnny Cash later made a song about it called, "The Whirl and the Suck" (Hall 1).

Apparently, predatory Chickamauga Indians made use of these hazards for the vulnerability they imposed on venturesome river travelers. So obviously, this stretch of river, despite proximity to Chattanooga, was not conducive to bridge construction or even amenable to safe navigation. It follows then that a tranquil and civilized stretch further downstream, yet still close enough for access to Chattanooga, could offer everything needed as a bridge-site location. Bridgeport, as it turns out, perfectly fulfilled those requirements. But it was only living up to its name, which also included, "The Great Crossing," awarded by colonial Indians many years before. The presence of several ferries in the area further reinforced the area's favorability. One of the most notable of these was Caperton's Ferry at Stevenson.

So the Bridgeport and Stevenson area became widely known as a location---perhaps the location---for crossing the formidable Tennessee River. The value this afforded the Nashville to Chattanooga Railroad is easy to rationalize, and the site had even more to recommend it. One could gain alternate access to Chattanooga from there by a road extending northeastward into the Wauhatchie area. That's all well and good for that site, but it's hard to imagine why a human being would want to travel past the river at any point downstream of this railroad crossing. After all, once we get across the Tennessee River at say: Caperton's Ferry---Sand Mountain and Raccoon Mountain are staring us straight in the face. Past that,



Supply train crossing the truss bridge at Bridgeport, 1864. From the Bridgeport Museum.

we encounter corrugated terrain that includes no less formidable obstacle than the rock cliffs of Lookout Mountain. Yes, it's hard to envision any civilian motivation---other than perhaps explorer's curiosity---for crossing the Tennessee River below the bridge into that wilderness in antebellum times. But then came the War, making the Tennessee River a primary military obstacle with immanent motivation to traverse it. All this tended to work in the Confederates' favor. Indeed, for their mission purposes, they could take advantage of the more easily accessible routes past the Bridgeport Railroad Bridge. But the Union mission was considerably more complicated, and instead required them to brave the miserable conditions that awaited across the river downstream of the bridge, as presented at Caperton's.



General Braxton Bragg, from
Encyclopedia Britannica.

First let's take a closer look at General Braxton Bragg's motivation for crossing the river where he did. As we've noted, he was trying to take the best possible route to get to Chattanooga in his retreat from Tullahoma with Rosecrans hot on his heels. The time was around July 4th & 5th, 1863. We already know that the river proximal to Chattanooga upstream of Bridgeport was no place anybody would want to cross. However, at Bridgeport there was this impressive, made-to-order bridge carrying the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad into the terrain between Bridgeport and Chattanooga, which allowed the railroad to penetrate the wilderness southeast of the river. What's more, as we've already visited, there was a passable road running along the river south of Kelly's Ferry into the Wauhatchie area contiguous with Chattanooga (Connelly, Autumn 143). Those combined factors offered a line of least resistance through to Chattanooga ... arguably about the best route to Chattanooga. He had no reason to take any route other than the one most welcoming. Furthermore, Bragg could burn the bridge after he crossed it and thereby slow Rosecrans' pursuit. That's exactly what he did (Horn 242). We're further reminded of the bridge's tactical importance by the fact it was a primary target of the East Tennessee Lincolnites during their bridge burning rampage earlier in November 1861. Their Bridgeport

destructive effort was unsuccessful (Tatum 113). It's ironic that the incineration the Unionists couldn't accomplish, the Confederates later did.

Now let's turn our attention to General William Rosecrans and examine his motivation for crossing the river at Stevenson. He chose to place a pontoon bridge at Caperton's Ferry near Stevenson to get across the Tennessee River. That immediately begs the question: Why would he possibly want to face the wilderness there instead of the lessor line of resistance past the Bridgeport Bridge into the Wauhatchie area where Bragg crossed? Well, fact is, he did build another pontoon bridge beside the burned-out railroad bridge at Bridgeport (Horn 246). Thus providing his forces---already split between George Thomas and Alexander McCook---two pontoon bridges to choose from. But he denied them the easier Chattanooga route and held to a plan that focused and directed his forces, once successfully across the river, eastward out from Caperton's through the wilderness encompassing Raccoon Mountain, Sand Mountain, and Lookout Mountain. His troops faced overgrown ridges that rose above undeveloped valleys packed with entangled underbrush, poison oak, briars, and snakes. Not forgetting, this was the Deep South in sweltering late summer around August 29th & September 4th, 1863. What possible method could there have been for such madness?

First, let's consider how the Union mission unfolded. The terrain did impose some splaying of the routes. For instance: McCook entered the Valley Head area of Georgia (not to be confused with Valley Head Alabama) toward Alpine Georgia, and Thomas took a separate route by way of Trenton, Georgia, to reach Lafayette, Georgia. From those destinations they each flailed their way into McLemore's Cove, which funneled the trek northward toward Chickamauga and Chattanooga. The logic proposed for taking these tortured routes was to cut Bragg off from any supplies or reinforcement he might receive from Atlanta (Horn 243; Connelly, Autumn 145). In so doing, Rosecrans extended his troops over ninety miles across four mountain ranges before striking Bragg's supply line from Atlanta (Connelly, Autumn 145).

Interestingly, toward the end, these efforts didn't go unopposed by Bragg. In fact, he maneuvered to take advantage of the split-in-two nature of Rosecrans' forces. He set up a troop concentration against Thomas on the east side of Pigeon Mountain, but it was poorly coordinated and allowed Thomas to evade the trap (Connelly, Civil 71). However, no matter what else, it did amount to yet another taxing strain imposed by the long, obstacle-ridden Federal march. Through it all, Rosecrans and his operatives, George Thomas and Alexander McCook, paid a heavy price for the exhausting foray. The eventual denouement was a crushing defeat at Chickamauga, after which Rosecrans displayed incapacitating mental exhaustion (Horn 277-278; Connelly, Autumn 261). This led Grant to replace him with General George Thomas, who by then had earned the moniker, "Rock of Chickamauga" for his stand that kept the Union forces from total annihilation in the conflict.

Another valid question arises at this point: Why did so much effort, by both armies, go into approaching Chattanooga from Tullahoma using the Alabama and Georgia approach, instead of a more direct Tennessee--north of Chattanooga--Sequatchie Valley passage? The answer given has been that Walden's Ridge in the area was even more impenetrable than the complicated terrain east of Stevenson and Bridgeport. (The Federals used the more northern route only as a feint). The message that comes through here is that Chattanooga was practically socked-in by formidable terrain. It's easy to see why the Confederates felt, if they could only get there, Chattanooga would afford them an almost impenetrable fortress (Connelly, Autumn 139). Perhaps the key word here is, "almost."

In addition to distinctions earlier described, the Stevenson and Bridgeport area has even further basis for Civil War notoriety. Not the least of which was how it served to supply the besieged and starving Union troops after they occupied Chattanooga. Initially, potential supply routes from Bridgeport to Chattanooga failed to provide sustenance, as hampered by the rugged terrain and constant harassment by Rebel sharp shooters stationed in the surrounding heights. It remained for U.S. Grant to arrive at Bridgeport before there could be a solution to the problem.

His solution has been dubbed the "Cracker Line," named for the hard-tack staple ration used by both sides in the War. Grant didn't accept that "you can't get there from here" and devised an ingenious, serviceable route to supply Chattanooga from Bridgeport. He realized that the treacherous part of the Tennessee River, that included the Suck, the Pan, the Skillet, the Pot, Holston Rock, and Tumbling Shoals extended down only to Kelly's Ferry several miles upstream of Bridgeport. That meant a significant



Cracker Line Steamboat Operation in Bridgeport. From <https://acwscots.co.uk/Shotguns/crackerline.htm>

upstream stretch of river, though not perfect, from Bridgeport to Kelly's Ferry could be incorporated into a supply line. The next stretch would be the eight-mile land distance from Kelly's Ferry to Brown's Ferry that avoided the hazardous loop of river containing, among others, the Suck. The remaining phase would be the even shorter skip across Moccasin Point to reach Chattanooga (Foote 2: 811). The thus supplied and restrengthened Union troops escaped their siege and went on to capture Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain. So, Bridgeport played a key, multi-faceted role in how the Battle of Chattanooga played out ... ironic, as it may seem, that it was usually in the Union's favor.

Yes, not only Bridgeport but also Stevenson--inconsistent with the prevailing native sentiment of the time--each ultimately served more Union cause than Confederate. Stevenson also undoubtedly provided its share of materiel to the Cracker Line, and there's still more to consider. Stevenson held a substantial outpost called Fort Harker, with a significant contingent of Union troops stationed there. We've previously entertained that it had a refugee camp and a hospital located nearby. Stevenson was and still is the actual junction site of the Nashville & Chattanooga and the Memphis & Charleston Railroads, so essential at the time to the Union strategy in the War. Moreover, Stevenson held important Union headquarter buildings, where the generals planned tactics and strategies for the War's extension toward Chattanooga and beyond. One such structure was the "Little Brick" in Stevenson. It was the site of General Rosecrans' headquarters in the area, and housed meetings with such notables as Garfield, Grant, and probably Sherman. It is now only a stack of bricks but is fenced-off and identified by an Alabama Historical Commission Marker.

So I think we can safely say that Bridgeport and Stevenson had a huge extended influence on how the war in the Western Theater, and indeed the Civil War in its entirety, played out. Also, I can't allow myself to leave the subject without remembering that Company A of the First Tennessee and Alabama Independent Vidette Cavalry, U.S.A. was reportedly first organized at Stevenson and Bridgeport. It's not clear why this should be the case, since archival documents clearly designate Larkinsville to be where the Skeltons and Lathams enlisted into the unit. It's also interesting that their enlistment dates preceded the formal unit organization date by thirteen days. Perhaps it's just one more riddle about the Vidette Cavalry that makes it so interesting. Seems there's always more to know, not only about that unit, but also about the fascinating and complex Stevenson and Bridgeport role in the American Civil War.

Dr. James Reed

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Opening Jackson County to Land Purchases in 1829

Recently while organizing materials at the Scottsboro Jackson Heritage Center, Patricia Smith and Susan Fisher happened on a rare item: an 1829 copy of the *Alabama State Intelligencer*, published in Tuscaloosa. We scanned the newspaper and sent it to newspapers.com. newspapers.com had copies of the Alabama State Intelligencer from 1831 and 1835, but our paper was the only 1829 entry.

I read the first page in detail. Pages two and three were a blow-by-blow account of the legislative session immediately prior to the paper's publication date. Much of the back page was legal announcements and advertisements. I copied the four-page paper and put it on the JCHA Facebook page for readers to enjoy.

Sharp-eyed Jimmy Sentell spied why the county owned the single issue of this early paper. It included the announcement that President Andrew Jackson was opening ten-year-old Jackson County to land sales. Jackson announced that he had signed documents authorizing the sale of land in Jackson County beginning in February of 1830. That land was to be sold in "eighth of section or "80 acre" tracts. The patents were issued the next year in the early part of 1831. Land patents, common in the 19th century, were direct conveyances of property from the federal government to settlers during westward expansion.

For those of you who, like me, had a coach for Alabama History in the 9th grade, here is a summary of the events that led up this announcement and of the events immediately after it. This analysis is based primarily on J.R.R. Kenamer, the Alabama Department of Archives and History timeline. (legacy.archives.alabama.gov), and Wendell Page's Decatur County 1821-1825 document. Full attributions are at the end of this article.

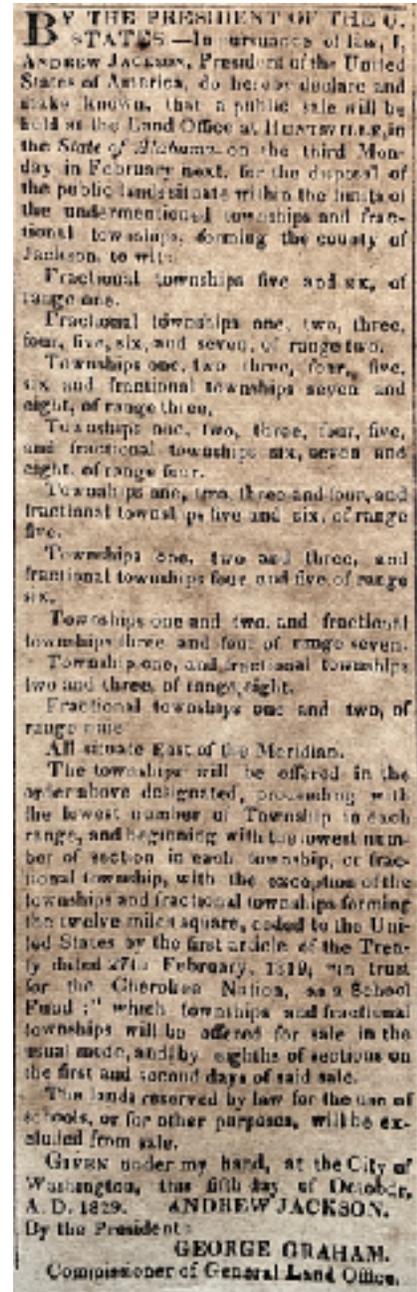
Before 1800: As early as 1783, Georgia claimed all land south of the 35 degree latitude (southern border of Tennessee). A group of North Carolina Blount brothers formed a land company to acquire land in what is now Alabama. This land, though claimed by Georgia, still belonged to the Cherokees. The land company failed. Another commission led by Sevier, Downes, Carr, and Donelson floated down the Tennessee to Long Island Town near Bridgeport and opened a land office and called the area Houston County. This lasted two weeks; the Cherokees invited them to leave also. A third land company tried the same action, paying Georgia two cents an acre for 3.5 million acres. Likewise, the Cherokees invited this land company to withdraw.

1800: White population of Alabama in the 1800 census was 733; the Black population was 571 (494 enslaved and 23 free).

1802: Georgia formally ceded claims for its southern border at the 31 parallel:

1803: Louisiana Purchase from France gave the U.S. immense new territory and the port of New Orleans.

1805-1806: Indian cessions opened large part of western (Choctaw) and



Alabama State Intelligencer, December 4, 1829.



Map of the 1803 Georgia cession by Nathan Glick. From the Alabama Dept. of Archives and History.

northern (Chickasaw and Cherokee) Alabama territory to White settlement.

1806: Treaty of Washington was signed between the Secretary of War Henry Dearborn and seventeen Cherokee chiefs and warriors. The treaty ceded all Cherokee lands north of the Tennessee River and west of a line extending from the Chickasaw Old Fields to the headwaters of Duck River. In exchange for the land cession, the United States agreed to pay the Cherokee Nation \$10,000 in installments (\$2,000 initially and \$2,000 annually for four years); build a grist mill in the Cherokee country; provide the Cherokees with a machine for cleaning cotton; and pay the old Cherokee chief, Black Fox, \$100 annually for life.

1808: Madison County was created. Two years later the county commissioners voted to make Huntsville the seat of justice.

1809-1817: Demand for new land in Madison County exceeded the supply. Many settlers illegally occupied the land along the Paint Rock River watershed, calling the area New Madison. Other settlers occupied land around Mud, Crow, and Coon Creek. (Kenamer, p.8)

1810: West Florida annexed from Spain. Alabama population in the 1810 census was 9,046 White and 2,624 Black (2,565 slave and 59 free).

1812-1815: War of 1812 enabled Alabama to annex west Florida when the Spanish surrendered April 15, 1813. A wagon road opened from Huntsville to the salt peter mines in Santa Cave. War with Britain had curtailed the importing of European gunpowder. Salt peter was mined in Jackson County. The wagon road made it easier for settlers to move illegally into Cherokee territory.

1813-1814: In the Creek Indian War, Andrew Jackson led U.S. forces against the "Red Stick" Creek. The war ended with the Treaty of Fort Jackson that ceded 23 million acres of Creek territory to the U.S. and opened up half of the present state of Alabama to White Settlement.

1817: On March 3, the Alabama Territory was created when Congress passed an enabling act allowing the division of Mississippi Territory and admitting Mississippi into the union as a state.

1818: First Alabama legislature of the Alabama Territory convened in the Douglas Hotel in the territorial capitol of St. Stephens. On November 21, Cahaba was designated the state capital, with Huntsville as the temporary capital.

1819: On February 27, 1819, the Cherokee nation ceded its remaining land north of the Tennessee River to the U.S. According to the terms of the treaty, Cherokee families who had acquired title to 640 acres of land were allowed to retain title to these reservations. On March 2, the Alabama territory organized when President Monroe signed the Alabama enabling act. A constitutional convention met in Huntsville July 5-August 2 and drafted and adopted the state constitution.

1819: Jackson County was created as a county when Alabama was admitted to the union as the 22nd state on December 14, 1819. Indian trails were improved to accommodate wagons but many settlers from East Tennessee came by river, making Bellefonte a busy river port.

1820: U.S. census finds the state population to be 85,451 White and 42,451 Black (41,879 slave and 571 free). The first mail route to serve Jackson County was established May 13, 1920 between Huntsville and Chattanooga past the Jackson County courthouse at Santa.



1818 Alabama Survey map showing Township 1 Range 8 and the John Woods Reservation. From AL Dept of Archives and History.

1820: The Land Act of April 24, 1820 abolished the credit system that enabled settlers to make deferred payment on their land and reduced the per acre purchase price from \$2 to \$1.25 with the entire amount to be paid at the time of purchase. The smallest purchasable unit of land was fixed at 80 acres, though it was later reduced to 40.

Issues of granting land would eventually haunt Jackson, because the excessive speculation and abuses associated with it during his two terms, resulted in Jackson's Specie Circular in 1837. The circular required government agencies to accept only gold and silver for payment for public lands. The order shocked the Western states because speculators there had been buying land with "cheap" paper money. The circular ended land speculation, but inflationary conditions at the end of Jackson's presidency brought on the economic panic that struck shortly before his term ended. (<https://www.historyforsale.com/president-andrew-jackson-land-grant-signed-06-01-1831-co-signed-by-elijah-hayward/dc5670>)

1821: On December 7, 1921, the General Assembly of the State of Alabama created Decatur County from parts of Jackson and Madison. Woodville was designated the county seat on December 17, 1823.

1822: In August, the U.S. postmaster general established a mail route that went to the new county seat, Bellefonte.

1825: On December 18, the Legislative act creating Decatur County was repealed. The land area defined for Decatur County was divided between Madison and Jackson counties.

1826: The state capital was moved to Tuscaloosa.

1829: On October 5, President Jackson published the notice that is the subject of this article, opening the land in Jackson County to purchase. Land sales were set to start on February 5, 1830 in Huntsville.

1830: All of Jackson County south and east of the Tennessee River continued to be occupied by the Cherokees. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was approved by Congress. Its purpose was to forcibly relocate Indian tribes from their ancestral lands east of the Mississippi River to designated territories west of the river to facilitate westward expansion and White settlement. Land cession treaties followed between the U.S. and all Indian tribes with a presence in Alabama. On September 27, 1830, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was signed with the Choctaw people. On March 24, 1832, the Treaty of Cusseta was signed with the Creek people. On October 20, 1832, the Treaty of Pontotoc was signed with the Chickasaw people. And most important for Jackson County, on December 29, 1835, the Treaty of Echota was signed with the Cherokee people.

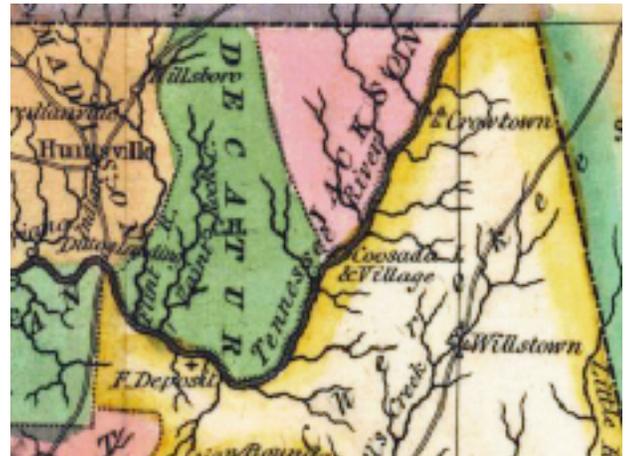
1836: Legislative acts were passed establishing the current boundaries of Madison, Jackson, Marshall, and other north Alabama Counties.

1836-37: Second Creek War, also known as the Seminole War, was fought. The last Indian battle in Alabama was fought in 1837. Many Jackson County men fought in the Seminole War. The gold with which these men were paid enabled many to buy land.

1837-38: Indians were forcibly removed from their homes to destinations west of the Mississippi River in an action known as the Trail of Tears.

1840: The federal census listed the population of Alabama as 335,185 White, 255,571 Black (253,532 slave and 2,039 free).

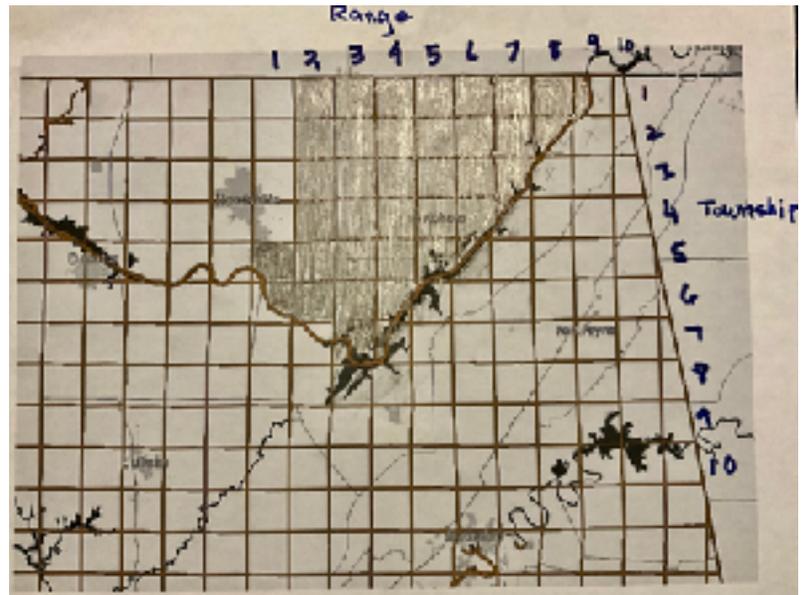
Understanding what went before and after this 1829 list of properties in Jackson County that can be purchased, how does this description of townships and ranges translate into land sales? For this, you have



1822 Lucas Fielding Map showing Decatur County. University of Alabama Geography Dept. Map Site: alabamamaps.ua.edu.

to forgive the primitive way that I identified these areas for sale. They are defined in the 1829 newspaper article. The newspaper description of these townships moved west to east. Nothing that will be part of the Treaty of Echota in 1835 is part of this sale.

- ◆ Fractional townships five and six, of range one. These seem to be part of Marshall County. Notice that Huntsville is directly north.
- ◆ Fractional townships one, two, three, four five, six and seven, of range two.
- ◆ Townships one, two, three, four, five, six and fractional townships seven and eight, of range three.
- ◆ Townships one, two, three, four, five, and fractional townships six, seven and eight, of range four.
- ◆ Townships one, two, three and four and fractional townships five and six, of range five.
- ◆ Townships one, two and three, and fractional townships four and five, of range six.
- ◆ Townships one and two, and fractional townships three and four, of range seven.
- ◆ Townships one, and fractional townships two and three, of range eight.
- ◆ Fractional townships one and two, of range nine.



The statement “The lands reserved by law for the use of schools, or for other purposes, will be excluded from sale” refers to what is commonly called “the sixteenth section laws.” In 1785, the U.S. Congress committed the 16th section of every 36-section township for the maintenance and promotion of public schools. This commitment continued as a stipulation when Alabama was admitted to statehood in 1819. This meant that no sixteenth section land was eligible to be purchased.

Annette Bradford

These sources were consulted to create this timeline:

- December 4, 1829 Alabama News Intelligencer (*available on newspapers.com*)
- Alabama, the Making of an American State by Edwin C. Bridges (University of Alabama Press, 2016);
- History of Jackson County, Alabama by John Robert Kennamer Sr. (Jackson County Historical Association, 1993, reprinted from 1935);
- Decatur County, Alabama 1821-1825 by Wendell page, presented July 15, 1990 at the Robert E. Jones Community Center.
- The vast online resources of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, especially legacy.archives.alabama.gov.
- Old Land Records of Jackson County, Alabama by Margaret Matthews Coward (Huntsville Historical Association, 2013, reprinted from 1980)
- U.S. Department of the the Interior Bureau of Land Management database for General Land Office Records (<https://glorerecords.blm.gov/default.aspx>).
- The Encyclopedia of Alabama (<https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/>)

Annie Coleman Proctor

Annie Coleman Proctor, a name that county genealogists a generation earlier always spoke with reverence, is little known today, but the time and attention that she put into capturing and preserving family history in our county almost defies description.

Imagine that you are canning in your kitchen in the Paint Rock Valley in 1950 when the woman at the left in this photo knocks on your door and asks if your family has Bible records that she could copy. And she pulls out notebook paper and a pencil and copies the information about your family. Because this woman performed the arduous, selfless act, and many times over the next years, hundreds of family histories that might have been lost have instead made their way into the Church of Latter Day Saints genealogy collections. Her collection was microfilmed in 1978 by The Genealogical Society of Salt Lake Utah.

Annie Elizabeth (called Annie Lizzie) Coleman was born October 14, 1884 in Walterhill, Rutherford County, Tennessee to a farmer named Nathaniel Miller Coleman and his wife Florence Clarabell Miller. She was the middle child of three children, with an older brother and younger sister. She grew up in Rutherford County, and worked in the post office. She was a 35-year-old spinster working as a clerk in the post office in the 1920 census, living with her parents.

While working in the post office, she met a young widower named Jesse Proctor who came into the post office on business. "He met Annie on a business trip to Tennessee," Judith Rives, her great granddaughter, explained. "Annie worked at the local post office, and Jesse bought livestock by the boxcar load and had them shipped by train to Scottsboro." Jesse had lost his young wife to tuberculosis six years earlier in 1921, leaving him with three sons: John born in 1906, Thomas Worth born in 1907, and Finis Dozier born in 1910.

As fate would have it, father and son married on the same day. Judith tells the story of these two weddings: "Son John Will married Caroline Carpenter at her parents home in Scottsboro at 9:00 on Thursday morning, and left immediately after the ceremony with John Will's father, Jesse, for Murfreesboro where his bride, Annie Coleman, was waiting." Caroline was still wearing the 'navy blue georgette dress with gold trimmings' that she had bought in Chattanooga for her wedding. When they met up with Annie for the second wedding of the day, much to everyone's surprise, Annie was wearing an identical dress. Annie's dress had been purchased in Nashville, so it was a coincidence, but showed they had similar tastes. After the Murfreesboro cemetery, the two couples went on their honeymoon together in Nashville and the women became fast friends."



Annie Coleman Proctor with husband Jesse and Jesse's mother Sarah Rhonda Jane Sanders Proctor in 1934. Photo from Judith Rives.



Annie as a young woman with her aunt, uncle, and cousin.

When Jess and Annie married on July 27, 1927 in Murfreesboro , Annie was 42. The *Progressive Age* write-up described her as “a most charming and accomplished young woman” who received a hearty welcome in Scottsboro. (*PA*, Jul 7, 1927) Judith remembers Annie, whom she called “Nanny,” from her childhood. Annie and Jesse built a house on Highway 35 between Section and Scottsboro, which is gone now.

As the children grew up and left home, Annie began the work for which all of us in Jackson County remember her. “Annie became very active in genealogical research in the days before computers and digital records were available,” Judith explains. “Research then included personal letters and interviews, and courthouse and cemetery searches. The Annie Coleman Proctor Collection at the Scottsboro Public Library includes the information she gathered in her research.”

One of the people who has made the greatest use of Annie’s research is Christine Paradise Sumner. Christine was one of the people who indexed Annie’s collection of notebooks prior to its being copied and made available in the Scottsboro Public Library. Christine often cited in Annie’s records in her newspaper column, “They Passed This Way.” While indexing the collection, Christine wrote, “We hope that each person who uses Mrs. Proctor’s papers will fully appreciate all the years and years she put into collecting these old records. She worked tirelessly for over thirty years collecting and arranging these records, beginning in the 1930s. Many, many of her records were typed and in alphabetical order. Many others were handwritten notes....Mrs. Proctor was the step-mother of Worth and Dozier Proctor in Scottsboro. The family was very cooperative in letting us copy her papers.” (*Daily Sentinel*, Jan 5, 1972). I understand, though cannot confirm, that the originals of her records were given to the LDS. Bound photocopies are found in the Scottsboro Public Library, though they are rapidly fading. There is also a set of photocopies at the Scottsboro-Jackson Heritage Center. I will try to digitize them over the next year and put them on the JCHA website.

Annie died July 6, 1965. At her death, Bertha Kirby and Elma Benson penned a resolution of respect for Annie regarding her role in the Daughters of 1812, where Annie was a charter member and chaplain. Among her many accomplishments, Annie located 25 graves in the county of U. S. War of 1812 veterans. The chapter placed a book in the library in Annie’s honor. (*Sentinel-Age*, Sep 16, 1965)

Ann Chambless, cofounder of the Jackson County Historical Association and 42-year newsletter editor, paid tribute to Annie in the *Chronicles*: “Mrs. Jess (Annie Coleman) Proctor made many significant contributions to the preservation of Jackson County history, and her cemetery records are probably the most valued single collection in the Scottsboro Public Library. She spent twenty or more years locating and recording grave markers in every burial plot she could get to in this area. Now her records are absolutely invaluable.”

Annette Bradford and Judith Rives



Annie in her Garden. Photo from Judith Rives.



Caroline Carpenter Proctor holding her son John Will Jr. and Annie Coleman Proctor holding her step-granddaughter Carol Ann, about 1933. Photo from Judith Rives.

Jackson County's Claim to the Louvin Brothers

I grew up on my parents' farm located alongside Alabama Highway 35 about three miles east of Section, Alabama. In the 1950s and early 60s, I sometimes heard conversations about a country music duo called the Louvin Brothers. Occasionally on Saturday nights, our family tuned in to the Grand Ole Opry on the 50,000-watt, clear channel radio station WSM in Nashville. Once in a while, the Louvin Brothers performed on a segment of the Opry.

I was never particularly interested in the Louvin Brothers until one day my father told me that the two guys had grown up on Sand Mountain about 20 miles from our house. He said their parents still lived on a farm near Henagar, Alabama. Dad said he had met their father. His first name was Colonel. However, his last name was not Louvin. Instead, he was Colonel Loudermilk. The singers at some point in their careers changed their professional name. I had never heard of anyone changing a birth name before, but I understood why they did for the sake of their careers. The Louvin Brothers sounded so much better than the Loudermilk Brothers!

Over the next several decades, as I learned more about the duo, I came to appreciate the fact that at the peak of their careers, Ira and Charlie Louvin were very talented musicians, singers and songwriters. They perfected a very distinctive style of high, full-throat harmony, which made them "stars" and later defined their legacy. The brothers joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1955 and had many hits on the Billboard country charts. They also wrote scores of songs, sold thousands of singles and albums, won numerous music industry awards, and eventually saw many of their songs become popular hits for other performers. I thought their musical accomplishments were quite noteworthy for two boys raised in the country on Sand Mountain.

On a personal note, eventually I had the opportunity to see Charlie Louvin on two different occasions. During one of several trips my wife and I made in the 1990s to the Opry, Charlie Louvin sang a ballad. He did an excellent job, but the audience response was disappointing to him. Seemingly, the younger people in the Opry House that night did not realize that he and his brother had once been on top of the music world in Nashville.

A couple of years later, during a Saturday trip to the "RC Cola and Moon Pie Festival" in Bell Buckle, Tennessee, my wife and I noticed a new structure had been erected near the many antique stores in the small town. A sign identified it as the Louvin Brothers' Museum. I entered the museum and was surprised to find Charlie there. We had a chat; he was very friendly and open to questions. I asked Charlie where on Sand Mountain his family had lived when he and Ira were born. He said near Section. He went into more detail by saying that "when you are driving from Rainsville toward Section on Highway 35 you cross a very long narrow bridge" and further said they were born off to the left shortly after one crossed the bridge. I



Charlie and Ira Loudermilk, the Louvin Brothers.
From the Encyclopedia of Alabama.

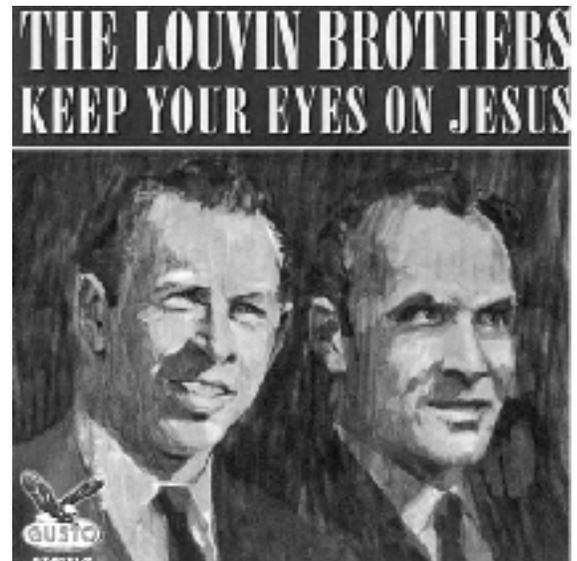


Louvin Brothers Museum in Monteagle, TN. The Smokehouse burned in April 2021. Photo from tnvacation.com.

immediately knew the exact location. The long narrow bridge he spoke about was the one over Kirby Creek. Locals in the area commonly referred to this bridge in days gone by as the Arch Bridge. A tall concrete arch underneath the roadway supported the structure. I was very familiar with the area he described. It was about two miles east of Section High School. I, too, was born in the same vicinity — at my parents' farm house only a mile further east of the Kirby Creek bridge site. Charlie and Ira were both born in the mid-1920s; I was born in the late 1940s.

My father apparently had no knowledge about where the Loudermilk family lived before they settled in a rural area northeast of Henagar. I don't recall him ever saying anything about the Loudermilk family living in the vicinity of Section. It was probably because they moved away to Henagar before my parents moved to that same area in 1941.

A few times in recent years, individuals have voiced their opinions in my presence that there was no way to prove that the Louvin Brothers had any connection to Jackson County since birth certificates were rare in rural areas in the 1920s. They believed the men were born in DeKalb County. Based on what Charlie had told me, I knew that was not true. I later began some research to set the record straight—once and for all. Some biographies I found on line clearly stated their place of birth was near Section. Others said the brothers were from Henagar, and one source generalized the location as northeast Alabama. When I expanded my research to their parental roots and their property ownership, I found decisive evidence which proves beyond a doubt they were actually born in Jackson County. That is reason enough for Jackson County to claim them and celebrate them as native sons. This statement doesn't discount that DeKalb County also has sufficient reason to claim them in a different way.



Album cover photo from amazon.com.

Loudermilk Family Genealogy

The following information from various public records validates where the Loudermilk/Louvin Brothers were born and how long they lived in Jackson County.

Ira Lonnie Loudermilk was born on April 21, 1924, near Section, Alabama. He died on June 20, 1965, near Williamsburg, Missouri. He was buried in Harpeth Hill Memory Garden near Nashville, Tennessee.

Charlie Elzer Loudermilk was born July 7, 1927, near Section, Alabama. He died on January 26, 2011, at Wartrace, Tennessee, and was buried in Harpeth Hill Memory Garden near Nashville, Tennessee.

Colonel Marcus Allen Loudermilk, the father of the Louvin Brothers, was born July 13, 1899, in Murphy, North Carolina, and died April 13, 1983 in DeKalb County. He was buried in New Canaan Baptist Church Cemetery. The New Canaan Cemetery is located in Jackson County alongside County Road 47 about one mile north of the theater building at Northeast Alabama Community College. The brothers' Loudermilk grandparents were Colonel Marcuis [sic] Loudermilk (1857-1933) and Ellen (Ella) Symanthia McAllister Loudermilk (1880-1958). They are buried in Floyd County, Georgia.

Georgiann Elizabeth Wooten Loudermilk, the mother of the Louvin Brothers, was born April 4, 1902 and died August 12, 1997. She too is buried at New Canaan Cemetery. Her name on the grave stone is spelled Georgiann, but other sources spell it out as Georgia Ann. Her parents were Charles Postell (C.P.) Wooten (1879-1959) and Rhoda Jane Haynes Wooten (1877-1947). The Louvin Brothers' Wooten grandparents were married in Jackson County on October 3, 1900, and Georgiann was born two years later. Census records

indicate that both the Wooten and Haynes families had lived in the Kirby Creek area for at least 20 years before Georgiann Wooten married Colonel Loudermilk. Many of the Louvin Brothers' other relatives are buried in cemeteries in Jackson County. The Wooten and Haynes families were both known to enjoy music.

Jackson County Marriage Record: According to their marriage record in the Jackson County Courthouse, Colonel Allen Loudermilk and Georgia Ann Elizabeth Wooten married on September 11, 1919, in Section, Alabama. The certificate states he was 21 years of age, and she was 18. They were married by M. J. Wooten, a Minister of the Gospel.

Land ownership in Jackson County: On July 10, 1920, Georgia E. Loudermilk and her husband C.M. Loudermilk purchased 40 acres, more or less, from C. P. Wooten and his wife R. J. Wooten for \$700. The land deed was recorded in Jackson County's Deed Book 71 on Page 192. The description of the land purchase is as follows: "The South east fourth of the North West Quarter of Section thirty-one (31) of Township five (5) South Range Seven (7) east situated in Jackson County and State of Alabama, containing 40 acres, more of less"

Physical location of the Loudermilk farm: The above sited 40-acre Loudermilk farm was located in Section 31 of Township 5S, Range 7E. Section 31 is on both sides of Alabama Highway 35 about 2 miles east of the intersection of Alabama Highway 35 and Alabama Highway 71 near Section High School. Most of the Loudermilk land was located on the south side of Alabama Highway 35 between Jackson County Road 624 and Kirby Creek. All the roads on Sand Mountain were unpaved in the 1920s. The first "modern" paved road across that portion of Sand Mountain was Alabama Highway 35. To the best of my knowledge, it was built in the 1930s after the B. B. Comer Bridge was constructed over the Tennessee River in 1929 and 1930. The paved road was not there in the 1920s.

When I was a young man, the "Loudermilk 40-acres" sited above was owned by Henry J. Smith and his wife Velma. A portion of the land was also owned by their son, Jimmy Hugh Smith, and his wife Willodean. Today, this property is owned by the Waterworks Board of Section, Jon Cordell, and perhaps by others on the southern end of the large tract. When Highway 35 was made a four-lane highway in the 1990s and early 2000s, the long, narrow Arch Bridge which Charlie Louvin talked to me about was demolished, and a much wider and much taller two-lane bridge replaced it at the same site.

Sale of Jackson County Loudermilk farm: On November 9, 1930, Georgia E. Loudermilk and C. M. Loudermilk sold 40 acres, more or less, to J. N. Kilgo for \$1000. The land deed was recorded in Jackson County's Deed Book 82 on Page 385. The description of the land purchase is as follows: "The South-East fourth ¼ of the North-West Quarter ¼ of Section Thirty-one (31), in Township Five (5) South of Range Seven (7) East containing 40 acres more of less situated in Jackson County State of Alabama. This deed of land conveyed is mortgaged to the Federal Land Bank."

Purchase of DeKalb County Loudermilk farm: On August 15, 1929, C. M. Loudermilk purchased 40 acres of land for \$800 from G. F. Marona. The description of the 40 acres was "The Southwest quarter of the Southeast quarter (the SW ¼ of the SE ¼), Section twenty (20) Township four (4) of Range Nine (9), containing forty acres more or less situated in DeKalb County, Alabama." This land conveyance was filed for registration in the office of the DeKalb County Probate Judge on December 26, 1929 and was recorded in Volume 68 Record of Deeds, page 291.



Ira (top) and Charlie (bottom) Louvin, from their findagrave records.

Physical location of DeKalb County farm: From a 2025 perspective, the 40-acre farm C. M. Loudermilk purchased in DeKalb County in 1929 is about 5 miles north of the commercialized portion of current-day Henagar, which lies adjacent to long stretches of both Alabama Highway 40 and Alabama Highway 75. In 1929, the land Mr. Loudermilk purchased was located in a rural area alongside a road which ran from Rosalie, Alabama, to Valley Head, Alabama. The area was apparently serviced by a rural mail carrier from the post office in Henagar.

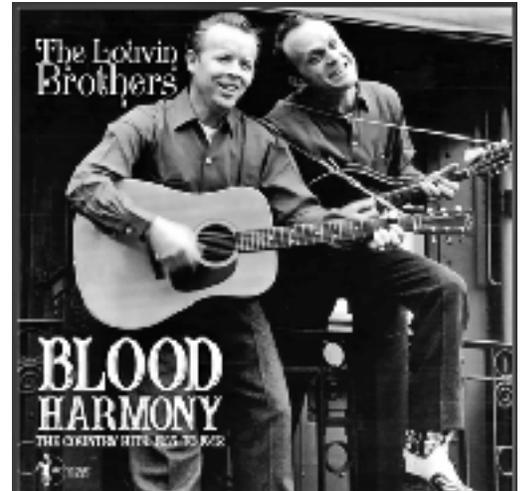
Today, a map of Henagar's city limit boundary lines shows the Loudermilk place to be located in the extreme northeast portion of the map. A portion of the old Rosalie to Valley Head route from DeKalb County Road 134 to Alabama Highway 75 is now labeled as Loudermilk Drive. The family home still stands at the western end of the drive, close to its junction with DeKalb County Road 134.

The only landmark in that locality in 1929 was Spring Hill School. It located about a mile and a quarter west of the Loudermilk home place. The two-room school house was located on the western side of the present-day Bellview Road, about a quarter mile from the intersection of Bellview Road and DeKalb County Road 134. Spring Hill Missionary Baptist Church, organized in 1926, also held services in the school building during the time when the Louvin Brothers were growing up in Henagar. Several years later, Spring Hill Church relocated to a new building alongside DeKalb County Road 134 a quarter mile west of Bellview Road.

The county line marking the boundary between DeKalb County and Jackson County is about a half mile further west on DeKalb County Road 134 from the church site. At the county line, Jackson County Road 260 begins and continues for about two and a half miles to its end at its junction with Alabama Highway 71, across the road from Rosalie Baptist Church.

Louvin Brothers Musical Career

Ira and Charlie Loudermilk grew up singing at Spring Hill Church, as well as at family gatherings and community events. The first time they were paid to perform was a few miles up the road from their Henagar home at an event in Flat Rock, Alabama. Charlie stated in an interview with Charles Wolfe, the author of *In Close Harmony: The Story of the Louvin Brothers*, that they sang on July 4, 1940, for several hours in the center of a "flying Jenny" (homemade merry-go-round) that was pulled by mules. Ira was sixteen years old and Charlie was almost thirteen. Even though the weather was blistering hot that day, they enjoyed making music. The three-dollar payment they each received when they finished was more money than the boys had ever had before. Some time later, a visit by Roy Acuff and the Smoky Mountain Boys to Spring Hill School for a night-time show inspired the boys. It helped them decide to pursue a musical career. Howard E. Miller's 1986 booklet, *The Louvin Brothers From Beginning to End*, chronicles their slow rise to success and stardom by singing on various radio stations in Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Memphis and eventually in 1955 as members of the Grand Ole Opry. The booklet is based on interviews with Charlie Louvin and many of the country music performers who knew the Louvin men well.



Louvin Brothers album cover from amazon.com.

A few months after they were asked to join the Grand Ole Opry, the brothers began touring with other popular opry stars. On one of those extended tours a young man from Tupelo, Mississippi, named Elvis traveled with them. Elvis opened most of the shows in the cities booked for the tours, except on weekends when he traveled to appear on various national television programs. Soon, Elvis's new genre of music caught fire with some music fans and things quickly changed. In a switch, the Louvin Brothers

found themselves opening for him. The upsurge in the popularity of Rock and Roll smashed the country music industry pretty hard, but the brothers pressed forward as country stars with their songwriting, recording sessions, and live appearances.

A few years thereafter, things happened in the personal lives of the brothers which made them, in effect, shooting stars. Many months of heated disagreements and squabbles caused the Louvin duo to split up in 1963, and both started solo careers. Then, the 1965 tragic death of Ira in an automobile accident in Missouri forever ended the brothers' partnership. One of the best duet teams ever to perform on the Grand Ole Opry stage began to fade into country music history. Charlie later estimated in an interview with author Charles Wolfe that during the duo's thirteen-year recording career he and Ira wrote about 400 songs, had 219 songs commercially recorded, had eighteen LP albums and won eighteen songwriting awards.

After Ira's passing, Charlie continued performing on the Opry stage and recorded about thirty additional songs that became hits for him on the Billboard country charts. He also partnered with other singers from time to time on records and enjoyed considerable success. However, he never reached the top tier again as he had with Ira. He worked tirelessly for many years to keep the memory of the Louvin Brothers talent and the originality of their high harmony alive. Happily, for Charlie, the quality of their music during their heyday earned them induction into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1979, the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in Tuscumbia in 1991, and the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2001.

I do not know what will come about as a result of this research on the Louvin Brothers. I hope many in Jackson County will be enlightened about the depth of their musical and songwriting talents and the impact they had on several different kinds of the music, as well as the great inspiration they were to other musical artist who became brighter "stars" than they were. One example is another Alabama-born singer, Emmylou Harris. The fact that they were honored by three different halls of fame speaks volumes about their success in the world of music. It is hoped that many who read this will agree that the Louvin Brothers deserve being remembered in some meaningful way in Jackson County. The centennial of Ira's birth in 1924 has just passed and Charlie's birth in 1927 is close at hand.

Perhaps the campus of Northeast Alabama Community College would be an appropriate place for a Jackson County Historical Association marker honoring the brothers' prolific musical legacy. Such a marker on the campus would be about 2.3 miles from their birthplace, visible to the public, about a mile from their parents' graves at New Canaan Cemetery, atop their native Sand Mountain, in close proximity to the Jackson/DeKalb county line, and could be near a performance theater. Conceivably, citizens in both counties could share in a celebratory unveiling of a memorial marker.

Edward H. (Ed) Carter



Louvin Brothers buried under their stage names in Harpeth Hills Memory Garden in Nashville, along with Chet Akins, Donna Summer, and other Nashville stars.

The Nine Years When Scottsboro Had a Cheese Plant

When we were walking through Cedar Hill recently, I was surprised to see that one of the recent storms had taken part of the roof off of the cheese plant, which you might think of as the place that made bungee cords, on the corner of Vann Street and West Laurel. The building is painted white bricks over block construction and features several loading docks.

When the South was struggling over what to do with the low price of cotton, local officials were grasping at alternatives for the county's farmer. In April 1948, Huntsville was touting its new industries: a cotton goods finishing plant, a cheese factory, and a milk condensary. In June, enterprising Probate Judge A. D. Kirby saw this as a possibility for Jackson County. He asked in the June *Progressive Age*, do farmers want to make some easy money? He suggested "Let's think about a creamery for Scottsboro" because "a creamery and cheese factory will make your heifer calves worth \$25 as soon as they are born." (*PA*, Jun 7, 1928) But Roland Turner, general agricultural agent for the Southern Railway Development Service, was quick to point out that becoming a dairy producer was not as easy as Kirby was leading citizens to believe. "Every farmer...ought to have, in addition to his present crops and live stock, a herd of four or five or ten good dairy cows" to produce cream for a dairy. While this system of farming had real advantages for parts of the county that were too dependent on cotton or tobacco (year-round income, for example), Turner believed it was premature to build a cheese plant or creamery before the agricultural base was in place to provide milk for this effort. He suggested a meeting to start the ball rolling.

It rolled slowly. Jackson County already had a dairy infrastructure in the early 1930s when health inspectors reported that they had inspected the milk supply available through the county's five dairies, collecting and testing 10 samples and finding the milk 100%.

How early did Scottsboro have good dairies operating? Loyd's Dairy was advertising in the 1931 Stevenson High School yearbook, and Riverview Farm Dairy in the 1932 *Progressive Age*. A photo on the JCHA Facebook page a Riverview Farms Dairy milk bottle that Patrick Dicus found on a construction site prompted Raymond Brandon to talk about the dairy operated by his grandfather's, Almon Berry or A.B. as he was widely known:

He owned Riverview Farm Dairy on the hill across from Calvary Church! My Grandfather had a blacksmith shop in the corner where the road goes up behind Calvary and the tractor shed was where their front parking lot is! The dairy building is still there and is a concrete block structure! The hay barn has fallen! Me Grandfather bought the land from Broad Street to County Park excluding some that had already been sold on the right for County Park Road.

In 1930, Ben Hunt identified himself in the census as the manager of a dairy, and three other men identified themselves as dairy workers. In 1934, the county inspected five dairies in the county, and graded them all at "A, 100%." On June 1, 1939, a dairy owner sold his farm in the Bridgeport and described it in the *Bridgeport New-Herald* thus: "A Dairy, 40 cows and dairy equipment, with established milk route, grossing \$900 and netting approximately \$300 a month; on Lee Highway only 2 miles from two good towns....Has electricity and city water." That \$300 has the purchasing power of \$6700 in today's dollars, which translates into an annual income in 2025 dollars of \$80,000. Not bad for a herd of 40 dairy cows.



Patrick Dicus holding a recently unearthed milk bottle.



Ben Hunt's Dairy Barn, located where Unclaimed Baggage is today, From the 1939 TVA Survey.

Seven years later, in 1941, another call for a local cheese plant produced results; the process was more organized and already had financial backing. They had conducted a survey of interested businessmen and had plans to encourage local farmers to supply milk. The call came from the Cheese Factory Committee. The headline in the April 24 Bridgeport paper said it all in the headline: "Farmer's Cooperation Needed to Bring Cheese Factory to Jackson County." (*BNH*, Apr 24, 1941)

On May 13, the *Jackson County Sentinel*, ran a story with the headline "Cheese Plant at Scottsboro Now Assured" and all the specifics about the new business were spelled out. The stock was subscribed and sold and plans were laid. These were the officers: John Will Gay, president; H. O. Bynum, vice president; Ben Hunt, secretary-treasurer and plant manager. In addition to the three officers, these men were selected to be directors: H. G. Jacobs, John Benson, Robert Word, A. L. Couch, J. W. Woodall, and R. C. Maples. The business name for the cheese plant was Jackson County Dairy Products.

The organization set about to select a site to rent or build the new business. They estimated that the plant would cost \$12,500 to complete. Stock in the amount of \$15,000 was being sold to provide surplus working capital while the new business was working its way toward profitability.

The business needed 5,000 pounds of milk daily to meet its needs, and that amount had already been pledged. The plan was projected to grow to 9,000 pounds by January 1942 so that both the farmer and the factory would see a profit. Farmers contracted to provide milk would be given notice of the starting date and a list of the truck schedule for daily milk pickup.

"The factory will be operated by Ben Hunt, who has had years of dairy and milk experience, and in whom both the confidence of every stockholder and every farmer will be well founded." Everyone felt that Hunt was the man to manage this new business. "This new enterprise was not started with the view of profit for the stockholder, but rather as a community-wide endeavor to get something started which would pay farmers cash the year around and greatly assist the weak price of cotton and farm products in bettering the condition of our rural people"

This "help to the rural people" idea was echoed in the June 4, 1941 short in the *Progressive Age* about the "new tenant system" in Hale County, where "the old cotton tenant system is being replaced by the dairy tenant system." Hale County had 18 milk routes and an annual dairy income of \$50,000 annually.

Both Hunt's and Brandon's Dairies in Scottsboro and Loyd's Dairy in Stevenson offered to give their surplus heifer calves to F-H boys and girls to raise as 4-H Club projects and use for milk production. Demand for these calves was so high that an essay contest was instituted to pick the children [13 and over] who would raise the heifer calves. Their progress would be monitored by the county agent. The first

The papers contained to emphasize the importance of dairy products to the war effort. The *Sentinel* emphasized the “urgent need for additional milk” on May 23, 1944. “The Government is taking 50 percent of all of the commercial cheese and 30 percent of all creamery butter made in the U. S. this year,” the *Progressive Age* said on June 3, 1943.

The plant struggled without Hunt. The October 5, 1944 *Progressive Age* announced that the cheese plant was changing ownership. “John W. Gay, president of the Jackson County Dairy Products, has announced that the local cheese plant has been purchased by H. E. Henegar of Pulaski, Tenn., Ernest Henegar of Lewisburg, Tenn., and Casto Jarvis of Decatur. The new owners take charge October 1st, 1944, and will continue to operate and expand the scope of the company,” the paper said, and the business retaining the familiar name. The new owners were experienced cheese plant operators who owned other plants. As the plant sold, Gay said that “Jackson County and neighboring counties have been paid almost \$200,000 by the local plant.” The new plant manager was H. E. Minatra.

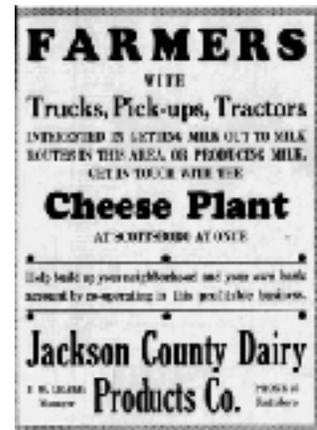
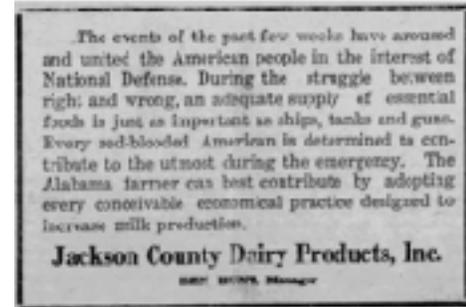
As the war was winding down, the new owners seems determined to keep the Scottsboro cheese plant profitable. They published an 8-point dairy plan. The county set ambitious milk production goals. But shortly after the war ended, their group sold the cheese plant January 2, 1946 to a group of Chattanooga dairymen led by J. W. Leake, Jr. (who managed the plant), Sanford Leake, and David Turner of Chattanooga and Ilan Durant of Iowa. The *Sentinel* believed that these new men could pay farmers better prices for the product. The new owners planned to increased milk and cheese production and begin making ice cream. (*JCS*, Jan 22, 1946) The ad addressed to farmers appeared February 5, 1946 and reflected the attempt to increase access to milk. These men were part of the Happy Valley Farms syndicate in Chattanooga.

Happy Valley was a large dairy organization that began being mentioned in Jackson County in 1938, when it is logical that they established the Happy Valley Dairy, located where Publix is today on Highway 35. The 1960 photo below was taken by Bill Bradford and shows both the Proctor Barn and the Happy Valley Dairy building.

The new owners promoted the cheese plant tirelessly until the August 29, 1950 *Sentinel* announced that the cheese plant would close on October 1, due to lack of business. “The present owners state that the support given the plant was not sufficient to justify the expense and that milk production for it or sale to it had decreased rather than increased during the five years past.”

So the modern plant closed only nine years after its popular opening. The building housed several other businesses over the years, most recently a bungee cord manufacturing facility. Charles Heath tells me that the Maples Company bought the building in the early 50s to use in their latex backing operation. A fire in November 1952 caused considerable damage.

Minnesota was never in any danger of being overtaken by Jackson County cheese production, but it is interesting to remember that the county produced cheese of a quality bought by Kraft products for those nine years.



Happy Valley Dairy and the Proctor Barn on Highway 35 about 1960. Photo by Bill Bradford

Annette Bradford

The 1989 Fyffe UFO Sightings

On Friday evening, February 10, 1989, Fyffe Police Chief Junior Garmony accompanied his Assistant Chief Fred Works to answer what might well have been a prank call. Donna Saylor of Oak Grove told Deputy Works that a well lighted object bigger than an airliner was hovering noiselessly in sight of her home.

Skeptical, the two were astonished when they arrived at Saylor's house to find the object still in place. They turned off the engine of their car and found that the object indeed emitted no noise. Shortly, it began a slow movement that allowed the officers to follow it for twelve miles. Suddenly, the object reversed direction. The object, described as bigger than a jumbo jet, flew overhead at a speed Garmony estimated at "three or four hundred miles an hour" at approximately 1,500 feet. He said it "had a shape difficult to describe" with green, white, and red lights arrayed similarly to navigation lights on an airplane.

Nearby agencies reported 11 such calls that night, all reporting the strange apparition.

The trite explanation that the object was a weather balloon was dispelled when a National Weather Service representative stated that weather balloons, sent up daily at 5:00 pm would have burst by 7:00 pm.

The initial reports described the object as "shaped like a banana . . . with a red light on each end and a white light in a line between them. The curve was outlined in green light." The reports were validated by other officers and state troopers on duty that night.

One Lickskillet resident reported that he'd fired a shotgun at the object as it passed at treetop level. Another Lickskillet resident told police "You better get a deputy over here quick. I don't know what it is, but it's scaring the hell out of my birddogs." (1)

The sightings of course met with skepticism, but were given credence in the following days by numerous visual encounters. Daily Sentinel correspondent Byron Wade wrote one of the most convincing accounts, saying

. . . last Sunday night, February 12, as I drove along Sand Mountain's County Road 33, [I saw a] huge banana-shaped arc of pale blue light. . . I thought I was hallucinating. It was almost like being in a state of shock. The arc of light, which appeared to be 20 yards wide, hovered in one place as I stood there staring up. The pale blue light was so intense that I could see what looked like [a] series of dark windows running parallel above the glowing arc. Finally, it began to move. I couldn't tell for certain the distances and true directions, but it looked like in a matter of seconds the thing evaporated in a northerly direction. (2)

By the first of March, there had been over 100 reports of sightings of a similar object. Fyffe Fire Chief Ricky Dobbins said roads were congested with people hoping for a glance, drawing parallels with the movie "Close Encounter of the Third Kind." DeKalb county deputy Dale Orr watched an object hovering over Geraldine city hall. Seven officers who were gathered in a cemetery on Alabama 227 witnessed the phenomenon.



"Assistant Police Chief Fred Works shows off gifts he has received as pranks since his UFO encounter. Photo from *Birmingham Post*, Feb 17, 1989

Although the sightings brought the community national interest, there were also mean-spirited and derisive accounts of the locals and their unique experience. One of the most widely-circulated and hurtful of those examinations was a March, 1989 piece produced by the television show *Inside Edition*.

The *Inside Edition* narrator introduced the piece by saying "We sent Jeff Cole down there to see if ET has a Southern accent." The introduction is followed by footage of the Fyffe officers moving in fast motion in a manner reminiscent of silent movie comedies. "There is a legitimate investigation going on down there, if you can believe it," the narrative scoffed, and closed by saying "If any of you Martians are watching this broadcast, please drop by to see us and bring Elvis with you. Straight ahead, we'll get back to reality."

The lampoon struck deep at civic pride. "People up here didn't like it at all," said Carey Baker, owner and publisher of *The Weekly Post* in Rainsville. "[We] thought they were here in good faith, so [we] showed them Southern hospitality. So when the program came out, [we] were incensed. Not just the people in the path, but the people in the whole area were very, very angry at what *Inside Edition* did. It was ridiculous. When *Inside Edition* to do their piece, everybody was welcoming. We tried to make them feel at home and be a part of the community. But after the *Inside Edition* piece ran on TV, the outlook toward the media was completely different. Help [for the media] was slow in coming. [The media] had to show good faith that what they were doing wasn't like what *Inside Edition* did." (3)

Writing for Scottsboro's *Daily Sentinel*, columnist Bill Cornwell Jr. said "It is hard to tell which is more frightening, the presence of a UFO or the many star-gazing drivers weaving about the road. While physical descriptions of the UFO by eye witnesses have been uniquely similar, one major point of validation is still missing from these reports. So far, no one has come forward with a photograph or video for public record. So on behalf of our faithful *Daily Sentinel* readers and by the slim chance that the Fyffe-alien beam up a copy of Jackson County's finest newspaper, I extend to our galactic guests, a free photo session. If you have a saucer phone, you can call our office. We look forward to our encounter and until then keep the skies clear and watch out for those star-gazing drivers." (4)

Perhaps the most caustic attack was an editorial published in the Jacksonville State University newspaper, *The Chanticleer*, on March 23, 1989 where the columnist commented "If you are thinking about visiting there yourself, forget it. The only unidentified thing around there is a brain," and suggested that the second unidentified object in Fyffe was a bar of soap. State senator Lowell Barron demanded an apology from the editor, who offered in the April 6 edition. "The mail has gone from anger to revenge to threats against [the author's] life. I have just been waiting for the whole thing to blow over." (5)

There are two interesting sidebars to the UFO story: A woman who claimed that an alien spacecraft had hovered over the car in which she, a friend, and the friend's grandson were riding and had emitted flames that heated the car to an "unbearable temperature," resulting in third-degree burns to all the car's occupants. She said that the burns were from flames shot from funnel beneath a "diamond-shaped craft the size of a water tower" that was blocking the road ahead of them. "The flames would shoot out the bottom with a swooshing sound and then it would rise. And then when the flames died down it would lower almost to the ground."

The woman, Betty Cash, phoned Police Chief Garmony to get the phone number for Donna Saylor (the first to report the Fyffe UFO) and the two agreed that the descriptions of the objects in each of the instances were identical. Mrs. Cash encouraged Mrs. Saylor to remain steadfast in the face of the scrutiny and ridicule. Mrs. Cash also claimed that Alabama



"Ken Williams helping his son Kenneth, 9, and daughter Katie, 11, look skyward for UFS Friday nigh near Fyffe, Ala." Associated Press Photo in the Ledger-Enquirer, Mr 5, 1989.

Senator Howell Heflin had agreed to launch an investigation into the matter. (6)

A second instance of the Fyffe sightings drawing national interest was the case of San Francisco resident Ted Oliphant who moved from California to Alabama expressly to study the phenomenon. So intense was Oliphant's commitment that he enrolled in Jacksonville State University's police academy and was appointed a Fyffe police officer upon graduation. "I thought the best way to find out what was going on was to become a cop," he told the Birmingham Post Herald.

Oliphant's main investigative focus was to link the UFO sightings with cattle mutilations that began some months later. The author of the accompanying article on the subject of cattle mutilations, Stephen V. Smith, says he has no idea whether the two stories are related. He is certain, however, that something happened to those cattle that could not be explained by experienced farmers and several scientists who studied the cases.

There have not been notable sighting or mutilations in the last two or three decades.

In 2005, Fyffe instituted "Fyffe UFO Days." This year, on August 23, 2025, the town will host the twentieth anniversary of the celebration with music, vendors, and unique souvenirs.

David Bradford

Notes

- 1) *All previous quotes from an Associated Press release, cited here in the February 15, 1989 Birmingham News.*
- 2) *The Daily Sentinel, February 19, 1989.*
- 3) *Youtube video, "Eyewitness Accounts and Media Coverage of the 1989 UFO sightings in Fyffe, Alabama."*
- 4) *The Daily Sentinel, February 19, 1989.*
- 5) *The Montgomery Advertiser, April 13, 1989.*
- 6) *The Columbus Ledger Inquirer, Feb 18, 1989.*

Cutting-Edge Mystery: Reflecting on the 1993 Cattle Mutilations in Northeast Alabama

It was spitting snow the night we dug up the dead cow. You could see the white specks in the headlamps of the pickup truck that carried us across the field and into the back pasture of this Sand Mountain farm. The anticipation of what we might uncover made me forget that the jacket I was wearing wasn't quite heavy enough to fight off the chill.

My fellow passengers were Carey and Teri Baker, the husband-and-wife owners of the community newspaper where I worked as a reporter. We had been transformed into an impromptu documentary film crew by the leader of the night's mission, Philadelphia film producer and author Linda Moulton Howe.

The truck followed closely behind the farmer, lighting the field ahead as he maneuvered his tractor to the spot where, a few hours earlier, he had buried a cow found dead with its udder cleanly removed.

It was Thursday evening, February 25, 1993. And we were about to examine a potential cattle mutilation case.

Overview of a Phenomenon

While new to Northeast Alabama, as far as this reporter understood, the cattle mutilation phenomenon had been ongoing for many years. Cases had been reported in other parts of the country dating back to the 1960s. While there were sometimes wide variations among cases, most shared common characteristics:

- ◆ The victims were mostly cattle, sometimes horses or goats.
- ◆ Their carcasses were discovered in the daylight, the deaths having occurred in the darkness of night.
- ◆ Body parts were missing, such as jawbones, udders, and tongues.
- ◆ Sections of skin were sometimes removed.
- ◆ Organs — particularly rectums and sex organs — were missing.
- ◆ The scenes were often bloodless, despite the damage to the body.

The most mysterious part revolved around the method of the excisions. In case after case, the work appeared to have been done with a sharp instrument. To add to the mystery, some of these smooth edges showed evidence of high heat, as if the incisions had been cauterized during the strange surgeries occurring in pastures under the cover of darkness.

It was those smooth cuts and precise approach to tissue removal that lay at the core of the controversy surrounding cattle mutilations.



A Sand Mountain farmer explains to author and documentary filmmaker Linda Moulton Howe, right, that it was obvious predators were not to blame for the sharp incisions that removed the udder of his cow. *Photo by Stephen V. Smith for The Weekly Post, 1993.*

The Mystery Becomes Local

The story that landed me in a cold pasture on a winter night moved into the coverage area of *The Weekly Post* a few days earlier. As the newspaper's sole full-time reporter, I had been following the news of strange cattle deaths in a neighboring county, but this was in my periphery as I focused on city and county government meetings, business news, community happenings, and human interest features.

Then came the Dawson discovery. A farmer in this community near Collinsville found one of his Black Angus cows dead. Its right jaw has been stripped of its flesh. Its tongue had been removed, though its teeth were intact. Its rectum and sex organs were gone.

The cases continued to move north, into communities where I knew some of the farmers. As their frustration grew, along with public interest, so grew my responsibility to inform the public and give voice to the farmers who were losing valuable livestock to something that could not readily be explained.

I worked hard to earn a reputation as a fair reporter who attempted to present all sides of an issue. There is no such thing, however, as an unbiased journalist, because the best that a writer can do is present the facts as they perceive them. Looking back on the events of 1993, I'm proud that I gave investigators their share of ink — but my focus was clearly on the plight of the farmer.

I had a fairly rural upbringing. I've watched a hog being slaughtered for meat. I've fed goats. I've been chased by a headless chicken that got away from my uncle, its executioner, in those moments between its final cluck and the dinner table. I was not, however, exposed to farming as a full-time, large-scale occupation until I started my newspaper career.

It did not take me long to realize how precarious that life was. The hard work that went into raising poultry or cattle or row crops was often met with great challenges that were out of the farmer's control. Weather. Disease. Market conditions. Grower agreements. Producing that which feeds and clothes America is a difficult life that comes with little thanks compared to how vital the occupation is to our very existence.

This realization led me to do a fair amount of "ag journalism." Beyond the pages of *The Weekly Post*, I wrote freelance articles for publications such as *Neighbors Magazine*, *Alabama Farmer*, and *Georgia Farmer*. I helped a trade association with press releases to earn coverage of ag-related issues. I respected these people for their work, and loved them for their warmth, genuineness, and kindness.

While I didn't bring a bias into my coverage of the cattle mutilations, I did bring an understanding of the farmers' perspective that was perhaps deeper than others covering the cases.

And that shaped the focus of my stories.

They Knew Better

Cases of cattle mutilations are often lumped into the same category as UFO sightings, and thus can carry some of the same stigma. This is not an unfounded connection, as cattle mutilations are sometimes accompanied by reports of government helicopters and unidentified lights in the vicinity.

Locally, this perception problem was compounded by the fact that Sand Mountain was only four years removed from the national attention it received when numerous reports of strange objects in the air

brought countless visitors — and unwanted media attention — to the town of Fyffe and surrounding communities. Most of the coverage seemed content to fall back on tired tropes of Appalachian stereotypes instead of real journalism.

At one point, I was told that some farmers who lost cattle to the strange mutilations simply buried the animals and kept quiet, wary of any negative attention reporting the cases might bring them and their families.

It was against this backdrop that I began my coverage of cattle mutilations in this corner of Northeast Alabama. This was my beat. These were my people. I wanted to be fair, and careful, in my reporting.

Frustration became the overriding theme. These farmers were losing animals worth hundreds, sometimes thousands, of dollars. In their eyes, these cases were no different than someone breaking into a factory and dismantling manufacturing equipment or burning inventory. Though living creatures, these animals were nonetheless business assets, and they were being destroyed.

The frustration went beyond the mystery of what was happening, though. The typical scenario went something like this:

- ◆ Farmer finds dead animal.
- ◆ Farmer examines carcass and suspects foul play.
- ◆ Farmer calls local authorities to report apparent crime.
- ◆ Local authorities visit, sometimes with a local veterinarian, for a quick examination.
- ◆ Investigators tell farmer the animal died of natural causes and the mutilations are the work of natural predators.

The problem with this finding is that the investigators were dealing with experienced farmers. This was their livelihood. They had years, often entire lifetimes, of experience with animals. They had seen dead animals, and they knew what predation from coyotes and other carnivorous animals looked like.

And this was not that.

“I see dead animals all the time, and this is not predators doing this,” one lifelong farmer told me.

My favorite piece in the series of stories I produced on the topic came in late spring of 1993. A farmer in the New Harmony community had discovered one of his cows with the telltale signs: hide stripped from its jaw, four teats removed, and rectal tissue cut out.

Word of the discovery spread throughout the community, and 10 other farmers came to take a look at the animal for themselves. I interviewed many of them. The overwhelming takeaway was that a combined 300 years of experience with cattle was telling me predators were not responsible for the wounds they saw.

True to form, the investigator told the farmer the cow had died of natural causes. Grass in its mouth led him to believe it had died of bloat, with predators causing the damage.

The farmer disagreed. He saw smooth edges instead of teeth marks. He told another journalist, “I think she was hit by something when she was chewing her cud. She was not bloated when I found her and there was nothing wrong with her the night before. The blood around her jaw was still fresh. If a predator had done it, then there should have been fresh tracks around the cow, and there weren’t any.”

I gave an investigator with the county sheriff's office ample opportunity to respond. "This thing has really gotten blown out of proportion," he said. "It's just not happening in this county ... Our department has had no confirmed cases of a cattle mutilation."

His frustration was also evident. "I've heard government cover-up, I've heard UFOs ... It amounts to a great deal of publicity about something that's not happening," he said. "We're one step from someone getting hurt. I've got people trying to buy high-powered guns, saying they're gonna shoot helicopters out of the air. I've got a friend in real estate who owns a helicopter, and he won't fly over this area."

Exhuming a Cow

Interviewing and writing about people for almost 34 years, I've called on countless strangers to collect comments and photos about events in their lives. Only once, however, have I asked someone to tell me about the dead cow he just dug up while I photographed it.

This Sylvania farmer discovered one of his cows dead on Wednesday, February 24, 1993. The udder had been cleanly cut away. He called to report what appeared to be an obvious crime, and was told it was the work of predators. Frustrated, he buried the cow and considered it a closed case.

Enter Linda Moulton Howe. The author and documentary filmmaker had spent a few days in our area interviewing people about cattle mutilations and related phenomena. She had contracted with a film crew, but released them to return to Chattanooga Thursday afternoon with inclement winter weather approaching and no new mutilation cases to document.

Later that day, I heard about this farmer's case and contacted Howe. She immediately called the farmer, somehow talked him into digging up the cow so she could get tissue samples, and called me back with a barrage of instructions — where to meet her, what time, and what to bring.

Among the "what to bring" was a video camera. Keep in mind, this was 1993. We were 14 years away from the first iPhone with video capabilities. None of my friends owned a camcorder; they weren't yet common in our area.

And yet I agreed to Howe's requests, hung up the phone, and thought to myself, "Now how am I going to pull this off?"

Fortunately, the Bakers knew someone with a camcorder, and they became part of this adventure. We met Howe at the farmer's home. He drove his backhoe into his pasture, while his son followed in his pickup truck, transporting our investigative crew through the sleet and cold.

It was dark by the time we got to the burial site. With the headlamps of the truck as our only light, Carey Baker shot video and I shot still photos while the farmer began to dig. He reached the carcass, wrapped one end of a chain around its leg, the other end around the tractor's bucket, and lifted her from the ground.

And there it was. A dead cow missing its udder, which appeared to have been removed with clean cuts. Howe had prepared a preservative fluid using rubbing alcohol and distilled water. Using a knife, she cut away triangle-shaped samples and dropped them into the solution.

In the March 11, 1993, edition of *The Weekly Post*, I wrote the following:

These samples were sent for analysis to Dr. John Altsbuler, a pathologist and hematologist in Denver, Colorado.

Dr. Altsbuler's report stated that examination revealed that the cuts made to remove the tissue samples were the same type of cuts which took away the animal's milk sac.

"The knife cuts could not be distinguished from each other," the report reads.

In conclusion, the report stated that "the tissues submitted show borders that are consistent with sharp dissection," and "there is no evidence of predator-type tearing of the tissues submitted."

This scientific proof that the Sylvania animal was not the victim of a predator is backed up by statements from Auburn University's Department of Zoology and Wildlife Sciences.

"It would be obvious if a coyote had been tearing through," said Dr. Jim Armstrong, assistant professor and extension wildlife specialist.

"The wounds would not be similar to a smooth cut," Dr. Armstrong continued. "Coyotes bite through and pull to tear away the flesh. It would have a chewed-on look."

Reflections Across the Decades

Little did we know, standing in that pasture on a cold, wet night, that we were two weeks away from a historic blizzard that would shut down much of the eastern United States. Coverage of this event and its repercussions would overshadow other new stories for weeks. Mutilation reports grew quiet for a time. The stories did return, however — along with reports of military helicopters, strange lights, and even unusual chemical combinations and evidence of high heat at incision sites.

It was a mystery not to be solved, certainly not by a reporter at a small community newspaper in the foothills of the Appalachians. The reports eventually stopped, and I can only hope that was because the cases themselves went away and not that farmers grew weary of reporting them to authorities who shrugged off years of animal experience and dismissed their concerns.

In the 32 years that have passed since these cases caught a young reporter's attention, I've thought many times about the strange events. I've been asked my opinion through the years, and my answer has become much easier to admit the older I get: I do not know.

Was it our government doing secret medical experiments? Were the mutilations the work of advanced weapons testing? What about aliens? Cults? A secret society with sharp knives and mobile laser machines?

I don't know what it was, but I have complete confidence in what it was not. A reporter looks for subject matter experts, and I found that in scientists — but most of all, I found that in the farmers who had years of experience raising animals and protecting their investments. They reported cases when they were certain that what they were looking at was not the work of predators. I will always trust their judgment on the matter.

Likewise, I will always wonder about the true story behind the mutilations that puzzled and angered so many of the good people of Sand Mountain.

Stephen V. Smith

Stephen V. Smith is a writer and business owner with a passion for family, nature, stories, tourism, and community development. He can be reached at www.thelookoutmedia.com.

The Jackson County Chronicles

Volume 37, Number 3

In this issue:

- **Harris-Moody House:** Ann Chambless and Paralee Moody's 1995 article about the house, written for a JCHA meeting at the Moody Brick 30 years ago.
- **A Look at the Stage Road:** Surveyor and engineer James T. Sentell has used old maps and documents to plot the route of the old stage road 1820-1850.
- **A Story of Bitter Irony: William C. Skelton's Likely Sad Fate:** James Reed talks about misinformation and misdirection in locating his ancestor William C. Skelton.
- **Bradford-Bynum-Gentle House:** The beautiful Queen Anne house on Scott Street built by C. K. Bradford and home to the Bynum and Gentle families.
- **Legacy of the Bynum Foundation:** How Jackson County has benefitted from the \$3 million legacy of the Bynum trust.
- **Cumberland Presbyterian Bell Comes Home:** Seventy years after the Presbyterian Church on Willow Street was torn down, its bell will now be part a church garden.

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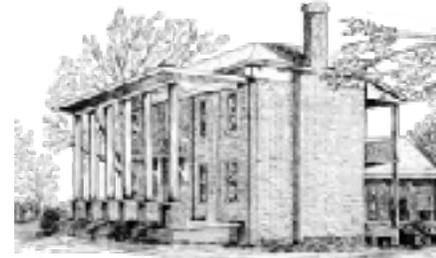
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July Meeting: The July meeting of the Jackson County Historical Association is actually the first week in August this year and you are in for a treat. Rob and Donna-Marie Chiroux, the owners of the Harris-Moody (Moody Brick) house in Carns, are hosting us for a tour of the house and cemetery and a presentation about its history. The meeting will be held on **Sunday, August 3 at 2 pm at the Harris-Moody house**, located at 383 County Road 64, Hollywood.



Art by David Kilgore.

The Chiroux family bought the house from Ron Lee in 2021 and has spent the last four years doing renovations that both respect the history and make the home their own. Rob will talk about this history of the house and let members tour the house and grounds.

Wear casual, summer clothing and bring your own lawn chair, as no seating will be provided by the hosts or the Association. Our generous hosts will provide refreshments.

To reach the Moody Brick from Highway 72, turn west at Hollywood on Jackson County Road 33 and travel west to Harmony Baptist Church. Turn right on County Road 32 beside the church and travel about .5 mile. Turn left on County Road 64 and the Moody Brick is only a short distance on the left or south side of County Road 64.

Thank You, Guest Contributors: Once again, the *Chronicles* would not have made it out the door without the contributions of guest authors. First, Ann Chambless and Paralee Moody wrote about the history of the Harris-Moody house with more focus that I could muster since Paralee's family owned the house, so here is a reprint of their history from 30 years ago when the JCHA last visited. Second, surveyor and highway engineer—and extraordinary contributor of history to the JCHA Facebook page—James T. Sentell has plotted the route of the stage road through Jackson County. The short version of his analysis is in the *Chronicles*; the longer version with many color maps is on the JCHA website. Next, Dr. James Reed writes about searching for a Civil War ancestor based on a careless findagrave entry. And much of the description of the Gentle family's updates to the Bradford-Bynum-Gentle house come from Donna Gardner's 1987 article for *Jackson County Life*. Finally, the history of the Cumberland Presbyterian bell could not have been written without Bill Tally's help. Thank you, everyone.

The Harris-Moody House

Much has been written about the Harris-Moody house. My predecessor, Ann Chambless, did a wonderful story about the history of the house, written with the help of someone who grew up there: Paralee Moody, one of the children of Judge Albert Henry Moody and Ursula Jane "Jennie" Campbell. The JCHA last met at the Harris-Moody house thirty years ago for their July 1995 meeting, while Ron and Diane Lee were in the midst of their renovation on the house, with the able guidance of Huntsville historical architect Harvie Jones.

The Chiroux family purchased the home in 2021 and began their own renovations. The family maintains an excellent website that goes well beyond what I can tell you in the *Chronicles*. I will recount Ann's history of the house that was found in the July 1995 *Chronicles*. There is also a very good Moody family genealogy that Ann and Paralee built in the July 1995 *Chronicles*. For more information about the house, including an aerial tour of the grounds, see <http://harrismoodymoddybrick.com/>. For Paralee Moody's family tree information, see the July 1995 *Chronicles*: <https://www.jchaweb.org/chronicles/1995ChroniclesV7N1-4.pdf>.

Ann's History of the Moody-Harris Brick in 1995

History does repeat itself! When Ron and Diane Lee purchased the Moody Brick in December 1990, not one window remained in the house. For many years the local teenagers taunted their peers with stories of ghosts which roamed the house and cemetery. Identical conditions existed 120 years ago when the Moody brothers purchased the property at an estate auction in 1873 for \$11,700. (Jackson County Deed Book 7, pages 477-478)

In the June 14, 1879, edition of the *Scottsboro Citizen*, the Fackler correspondent wrote to the editor:

As I have just returned from a general ride over the "Moody Farm," I hope you will allow me space in your valuable paper to speak of what I saw and what I know about it, hoping that other large landowners may be stimulated to follow their example. And let me assure you here that this is not intended for a "puff" but a mere tribute to industry and fair dealing; and I hope Messrs. Moody will pardon the liberty I here assume. The farm contains about 2500 acres. more than 1000 of which are cleared and in a high state of cultivation. Originally it was an excellent body of land, and its owners prized it only for the number of bales of cotton it produced and cultivated it exclusively for that View. It is but reasonable to suppose the soil had become tired and worn. When purchased by Messrs. Moody five or six years ago. it was in woefully dilapidated condition—the fences all down—the land grown up in sedge grass and bushes—the hillsides a washed off—and the fine brick building so much abused and neglected as to present an inviting retreat for ghosts and hobgoblins generally. But money and industry can work wonders in the way of improvements.

The fences have been repaired and a great deal of substantial new plank fencing added: the sedge grass and bushes have all disappeared, the red hills have doffed their scarlet robes and donned a coat of living green while the dwelling has been so thoroughly renovated and beautified the most fastidious would be glad to occupy it. These improvements, however. develop themselves most clearly and satisfactorily in the present growing crops.

A large amount of wheat was sown last year, most of which has already been harvested. The stand was not first-rate, but the grain is large and full and of an excellent quality. The oat crop, at once thought to be worthless. will make a fair yield, and is entirely free from rust. The corn crop is rather late but looks remarkably well: it is now growing rapidly and will make an abundant yield if no calamity befalls it. Cotton promises all the reasonable tenant could desire. In one large clover field I counted more than 20 head of colts and horses and saw quite a number of hogs and cattle, all in fine condition. One improvement I noticed which is more than worthy of mentioning here is the pains they have taken and the expense the owners have been at in providing for the comfort and the convenience of their numerous tenants.

Nearly all of them are provided with neat cottages with two rooms, brick or stone chimneys, corn cribs, stables, and neatly paired gardens. All seem to be well satisfied and working like Turks. The object of my visit made it necessary for me to see and converse with all of them, and I can truly say I have never seen a more cheerful and happy class of laborers anywhere. They all seem warmly attached to the Moodys, and how could it be otherwise? And the Moodys have shown their attachment for the by the care and pains they have taken for their comfort and convenience. It is an unusual thing to see tenants running walking cultivators, improved double shovels (plows), all provided by the landlord. yet you may see all this and more too on the Moody farm. If the one horse politicians who so recently tried to stir up strife between the land owners and renters will visit this farm, I am inclined to think they would sneak away and never again renew the effort. But their efforts to improve and build up have not been confined to the farm alone; at a heavy expense they have established on the farm a fine merchant MILL which, unfortunately was consumed by fire a few weeks ago. Although their losses were heavy, they seem to bear it with more fortitude and feel it less than the community around its location. It is a loss to them, but a calamity to the people who were, in a measure, dependent on it for bread. But they are game to the last, for they have built a new furnace and erected a new shed over the ruins of the old site and again we hear the shrill whistle of the engine, and all who wish may get bread or lumber on short notice. I learn they propose building a finer and better mill than the other same time this fall. I also learned they propose building a good church and school house on the place, in order to secure church and school facilities to their tenants. So mote it be. PUBLIUS.

Another newspaper article dated April 25, 1879, told of fire:

The steam, flouring grist and saw mill of M. & J.W. Moody, on Mud Creek, was entirely destroyed by fire, including a large amount of lumber and grain one night last week. The loss is estimated at four or five thousand dollars. The Moody brothers are live business men, and we sympathize with them in their loss.

The Moody brothers were: Miles Norton Moody (1835-1912), James Warren Moody (1839-1912), and John J. Moody who were born in South Carolina but had moved to Langston area where they were enumerated on 1860 census of Jackson County. When the 1870 census was taken, John J. Moody was still in Langston, but Miles N. and James W. Moody had moved to Scottsboro, where they built and operated a store at the corner of present day Mary Hunter Avenue and Houston Street (southeast corner).

When Miles N. and James W. Moody bought the Harris farm circa 1872-73, John J. and his wife, Sally Mullins Moody, moved to this farm and probably lived in the "Brick" itself in the early years. John J. and Sally Moody were the parents of Josephine Moody who married Pleasant Wyatt Sanders. The Sanders and their son, Charles Brantley Sanders, are all buried on the farm.

Today the Moody Brick represents a mixture of architectural styles. The Greek Revival portico (porch with roof supported by six large columns) was added in 1916. The portico protects a second story balcony added to accommodate the second floor front door located immediately above the Victorian door of the first floor. The house was built with a center hall plan. Both floors have two symmetrical windows on either side of their doors. Old pictures of the house show two-over-two window sashes typical of the Victorian period, with shutters to cover the panes.

The L-shaped house is built of solid brick walls, both exterior and interior. Oral history passed from generation to generation relates the brick were made on site, possibly by slaves, from the red clay on the farm. The house framing (floor joists and ceiling joists) are from sawmill cut lumber, not pit sawed. which was typical in this area for houses built in its time period.

The interior is dominated by Victorian accents detailed down to the baseboards, door trim, and window trim. The mantles include two Federal period, two Italianate, and two Victorian. The two Federal period could be those of the original house.

A fire destroyed the original house in April 1888. The *Scottsboro Citizen* dated April 26, 1888, reported: "The handsome country residence of Mr. Miles Moody was recently destroyed by fire near Mud Creek. Mr. Moody's loss is more than \$2000." On April 13, 1888, the *Alabama Herald* had reported:

On last Sunday the residence of Mr. Miles Moody on Mud Creek in this county was destroyed by fire. The house was a large two-story brick. The fire caught in the roof from a spark from the chimney and had got such headway when discovered it was impossible to check the flames. Mr. Moody succeeded, however, in getting out all the house furniture. Nothing lost but the house. The total loss is estimated at \$2000.

The house was rebuilt using the existing brick walls: only the floors, ceilings, and the roof were needed. Today, the windows date to when the house was rebuilt in 1888. Pictures made not long after the house was rebuilt show the Victorian/Carpenter Gothic porch built in 1888. A smokehouse and ground level kitchen were added to the back of the house in 1902, according to Paralee Moody. The original kitchen was in the cellar.

A. H. Moody moved his family to the Moody Brick two weeks before Paralee Moody was born on February 28, 1902. Shortly after Paralee learned to walk (near the latter part of 1903), an Italian artist, Alfonzo LaMonte, hand-painted lovely designs of angels, ribbons, and flowers in pastels on ceilings and walls. Paralee could not remember the actual event but had been told many times by her parents that they were concerned she would venture into the artist's paints with her newly acquired ability to walk and explore all by herself. LaMonte (or Ladante) also decorated the first Scottsboro Presbyterian Church building which was located on Willow Street (between present day Jack's Hamburgers and Word Lumber Company.) Oral tradition says this same artist had previously done work in the White House or Capitol in Washington, D.C. before finding his way to Jackson County.

Ron Lee recently shared the following restoration update: All seven fireplaces and the three chimneys have been completely redone; one chimney had to be taken down and rebuilt to ensure the fireplaces it serves could be used. The brick on the entire house front had to be redone which involved removing all brick below each of the windows and relaying it to remove the hairline cracks, broken brick, and loose mortar. The brick on all sides had to be repainted. The bottom floors had to be replaced due to fire and insect damage. The windows dated to 1888, and all had to be replaced. Our architect, Harvie Jones, referred us to a millwork in Florence, Alabama, and they totally rebuilt our windows.

We removed the 90-year-old kitchen and smokehouse and replaced it with a kitchen, den, and basement. The entire back and side porches were removed to accommodate bathrooms and closet space to preclude altering the main floor plan.

Our architect, Mr. Harvie Jones of Huntsville, has been invaluable to the project. Harvie Jones is a purist in restoring. He proposes restoring versus remodeling which he states very emphatically. His first advice was to stabilize the house—stop the deterioration. We replaced the roof and windows. We made several mistakes before we engaged Mr. Jones, and he was quick to insist that changes be made. Most of the changes we followed.

Mr. Jones wanted us to stop work on the house once we had it stabilized. since he understood we did not know enough about the period of the house to know what steps were required. He was correct, but we continued our work for some time after that.

The approach to our restoration has been to preserve the house as it was remodeled in the early part of this century, not to return it to its original state which meant changing the windows from Victorian to Federal, renovating the front porch and columns. We did not understand the importance of that decision in terms of work and finances involved: however, four years later and after much reading, I now understand what Harvie Jones meant. Our restoration is far from complete, but a mid-1995 tour will present an opportunity to view the project during a major stage of its restoration.

Who designed, and built the original house? None living can say. The home site was first owned by Caleb B. Hudson, born November 22, 1794, in North Carolina. On September 21, 1814, he married Martha C. Ligon in Prince Edward County, Virginia. They were the parents of five children who included Mary Ann Hudson, born in 1817, who married Carter Overton Harris in 1835. Mary Ann Hudson Harris and Carter

O. Harris either inherited the land or she and her husband purchased her father's acreage which later became the core of the Moody brothers' purchase.

When the 1850 Jackson County census was taken, Carter and Mary Ann Harris were enumerated among neighbors known to own land adjoining the house now known as the Moody Brick. In 1850, the value of their real estate was \$6000 which was a great deal larger than the average real estate assessment in Jackson County in 1850. Most likely, they had already built their large two-story brick by 1850 and it and their slaves were included in the \$6000 assessment.

Oral history relates that the same builder also constructed the original John R. Coffey house near Wannville, the Roach house at Carns, and the William Longacre and the William A. Austin houses at Rash. The legend also exists that the builder and his wife are buried within the stone walls in the cemetery next to the Harris family burial plot.



Albert Henry Moody family at the Moody Brick, circa 1905, Left to right: John Jones, Jephtha on mule, John White, Big Jim, Albert Henry Moody, Paralee, Jennie Moody holding Alex, her Uncle San Campbell, Bess on horse. The cook, Sally Ann, is standing on the upper balcony by the bannisters.

Caleb Baker Hudson, the son of John and Lucy (Baker) Hudson, Sr. moved from Virginia to Jackson County, Alabama, with his father and brother, John Hudson, Jr. in 1828 or 1829. Caleb Baker Hudson purchased 360 acres in 1830, and his family was enumerated in the 1830 Jackson County census. His son, John William Hudson born 1818, attended the University of Alabama in 1833, according to University records. The date of Caleb B. Hudson's death is not known, but he does not appear in the 1840 Jackson County census. If he died prior to 1840, he could be buried in an unmarked grave in the cemetery adjacent to the Moody Brick. Paralee Moody remembers playing on a single grave covered with a large horizontal stone when she was a child. There was no inscription on this large flat stone and she agrees this could be

the burial site of Caleb B. Hudson. His wife died in 1822 in Virginia, and it is logical to assume Caleb's grave would be a solo.

Carter Overton Harris' grave marker records his birth and death dates as: born July 16, 1800, died November 22, 1860. His oldest daughter, Martha Catherine (Pattie Kate) was born Jan 3, 1841, and died June 3, 1862. When Mary Ann (Hudson) Harris died on Dec 6, 1897, she was buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Scottsboro in the Coffey plot. The Harrises' second child, Mary Elizabeth Harris (1847-1894) married Weighstill Avery Coffey, and Mrs. Harris lived with the Coffeys after selling the farm to the Moody brothers.

Miles and Rebecca Moody are buried in the Moody family plot at the Moody Brick. The large stone which marks their grave is inscribed:

Miles Moody July 7, 1835 - July 28, 1912 Rebecca Moody Jan 24, 1825 - Aug 5, 1899

Miles and Rebecca Moody's son, Albert Henry Moody, bought the farm from his father and uncle, and Albert Henry and his wife, Ursula Jane (Jennie) Campbell Moody raised their family of eight in the Moody Brick. Their children included:

Jeptha (Jep) Edwards Moody (May 24, 1894 - Apr 18, 1949)

John White Moody (Dec 27, 1891 - Oct 28, 1911)

James (Big Jim) Albert Moody (Jun 24, 1899 - Feb 2, 1977)

Paralee Moody (Feb 28, 1902 - Aug 13, 2003)

Alexander (Alex) Moody (May 22, 1905 - Aug 4, 1906)

Bessie Laura Moody Lipscomb (Sep 9, 1896 - Dec 7, 1962)

Hattie Irene (Brooks) Moody Stone (July 6, 1907 - Jan 29, 1995)

Virginia White (Redwing) Moody (July 24, 1912 - Feb 4, 1945)

Albert Henry and Jennie (Campbell) Moody's first child, William Lit, only lived six months; he was born Aug 3, 1890 and died Jan 29, 1891.

Note from ANB: The current owners used ground penetrating equipment to see if any more burials were close by. They believe around 60 unmarked graves are close by the family cemetery. They are believed to be slave burial sites.

The Moody Brick was owned by Moody descendants for almost 120 years. The house has known both sorrow and joy and countless hours of warm Moody family hospitality. It stands as a monument to a long line of productive, civic minded men and women who can trace their roots to that red clay soil that also produced the Moody Brick.

Ann B. Chambless and Paralee Moody



Harris-Moody House about 1970. Photos by Bill Bradford.

The full stage route is shown on this map below.

County History Timeline

A short review of the time line for the county is appropriate to understand the development of mail and stage coach service in this time frame. This article will document that on a general overview, the route location in the 1820 is basically the same as the current day alignment of US Highway 72. In those early years, the exact location may have changed slightly due to new roads being cut to bypass ruts, new bridges built over creeks, etc, but the road always appears to stay close to the original location.

The beginning of settlement by white European settlers began around 1812-1815 as a few folks moved into the Cherokee territory that would become Jackson County. One group, seeking religious freedom, located to Rocky Springs around 1810, establishing the church which today is said to be the oldest in the state of Alabama. William Price is believed to have built a house at the Rocky Springs in 1811 and established the Church of Christ at Antioch the same year.

The June 20, 1817 treaty with the Cherokee nation ceded the land north of the Tennessee River to the United States, and the territory was opened for settlement on February 17, 1819, leading the formation of Jackson County and the State of Alabama, both in December of 1819. Federal census records of 1820 list 8,129 citizens living in Jackson County.

During 1820, the eleven native American (Cherokee) 640-acre reservations, as granted in the 1817 treaty, were surveyed and ownership was granted to these native Americans. Also a mail route was established from Huntsville. We know that by 1823, post offices were established at Bolivar and Woodville and sometime in the mid-1820s, one is established at Bellefonte. George W Higgins and Stephen Carter had signed a bond for James Riley in October of 1820 where Riley had agreed to sell his reservation to said Higgins and Carter. Bellefonte was being developed as a town in 1821.

The year 1828 marked the beginning of the new stage line that was created by Michael Smith from Knoxville to Huntsville, defining the stage route and times along with mail service delivery times and locations.

The 1830 census for Jackson County indicates the county had grown to 11,418 people, as settlers moved to the new lands defined for Jackson County. President Andrew Jackson published a notice in the October 5, 1829 *Alabama News Intelligencer* stating that land sales for portions of Jackson County north of the Tennessee River would be available for purchase starting February 5, 1830 at the Huntsville land office. In 1836, a general road law was enacted such that each male citizen was required to work for ten days of a calendar year on the maintenance of the public roads. This act has created a wealth of knowledge from these county commission records of the 1840s.

This is a time line of a person or an article of mail as it would have traveled through Jackson County in the year

Dec. 24, '28—6t

NEW LINE OF STAGES.



THE SUBSCRIBER

RESPECTFULLY informs the public, that he now has in operation, a complete **LINE OF MAIL STAGES** from Knoxville to Huntsville. He pledges himself that every attention shall be paid to the comfort of passengers who may favor him with their patronage. The accommodations on the road are generally good, and as cheap as any in the country. His stages are light, tho' substantial are drawn by good horses, carefully managed and strictly attended to. His charges are six and a fourth cents a mile for a passenger. The stage leaves Knoxville every Friday at one o'clock P. M. and passing through Maryville, Tillico, Athens, Washington, Pikeville, Jasper and Bellefont, arrives at Huntsville at 11 o'clock A. M. every Friday; and will leave Huntsville at 1 o'clock, P. M. on the same day, and returning by the same route, arrive at Knoxville every Friday at 11 o'clock, A. M.

MICHAEL SMITH, Contractor.

Nov. 19, '28.—2m Knoxville Register, May 28, 1824.

1829 when the Jackson County visitor learned that soon he would be able to purchase land in the northeast corner of Alabama from the government for \$ 1.25 an acre. If he had boarded the stage in Knoxville, he would have spent the night in Jasper, Tennessee and depart heading west towards Huntsville in the early morning, after having breakfast at the inn and boarding the stage. Based on the advertised timeline from the 1824 ad, we can calculate that the stage moved about 6 hours of travel each day, moving about 30 miles to the next overnight stay and they would have two breaks along the journey as the stage would stop to exchange horses about every 10 miles.

Proposed Stage Route

Using these numbers, we can propose that those using the Knoxville to Huntsville stage and mail service in 1829 would have spent their Tuesday nights at the inn located in Jasper, Tennessee. Leaving for the next night in Bellefonte on Wednesday morning after a breakfast at the inn.

The stage would have entered Jackson County very close to the current day location of US Highway 72 and proceeded southwest very near current day County Road 74, stopping at Rocky Springs for mail delivery to William Price's residence at the springs. The stage would have continued on southwest, along current day county highway via Mount Carmel and current day County Road 75 and arriving at Bolivar for another mail delivery and rest stop. Bolivar was located near the middle of the Bengis Reservation and close to the large spring that served as the community water supply. This road is very visible today where it crosses County Road 75.

Leaving Bolivar, the original road heads southeast, leaving current day US 72 and heads toward the natural ford on Crow Creek, located at what was considered the center of the Cherokee Town of Crow Creek and on the west edge of the Baldrige reservation (this is just south of Ala Hwy 117 and near the Capt. John Snodgrass bridge over the Tennessee river). This route between Bolivar and the Bengis Reservation and the ford at Crow Creek is believed to have been a century's old path south down the Tennessee River valley. Other researchers believe this is the same path as traveled by DeSoto in his exploration of the Southeast. TVA land acquisition map number 81 contains an excellent documentation of the ford location and stage road in this area, showing it headed west from the ford along today's County Road 590 as it comes back to be just west of current day US Highway 72 from near the Concrete Plant and travels south along US 72.

The records for road maintenance refer to W. Y. Taylor at Oak Grove, which is believed to have been a stop on the stage line, possibly a change of horses for the last leg to Bellefonte for the day. The original road can be seen in many places just west of US 72, and leaves current day 72, following County Road 213 as it passes the Price Cemetery and Lakeview Baptist church, which is believed to be the site of the original Mud Creek church as established in 1819.

TVA map numbers 70 and 74 have excellent locations to the old stage road in this area. The stage crossing for Mud Creek was just downstream from the existing bridge on County Road 213 at the Mud Creek BBQ restaurant. The road ran southwest in the bottom of the slough that is adjacent to the restaurant. It appears the road ran west around the area known as the Martintown Hill and then turned south directly towards Bellefonte being near County Road 113 on the south side of US 72, crossing Town Creek at the northwest corner of the town of Bellefonte, near the cemetery.

On Wednesday nights after leaving Jasper the passengers would have arrived in the new county seat of Jackson County—Bellefonte. Most would have eaten their evening meal and spent the night in the newly constructed tavern on the square known as the Manitou Hotel. The Manitou Hotel was owned and operated by the author's third great grandfather, James Turk. After James Turk's first wife had passed away in Maryville, Tennessee, he relocated with his family to the town of Bellefonte in the late 1820s, and constructed the Manitou Hotel, which he operated for several years in the early 1830s. James Turk passed

away in 1835 and the inn was sold to John S. Young who we believe continued to operate the inn. James committed for the sale in August of 1831 to John Young but retained the right to live in the house on the property and to continue to operate the inn. I can only wonder if he was in bad health as he was gone by 1835. Documentation of this sale is found in the deed books for 1831 where three of the leaders of Bellefonte went on record to stand behind the money James Turk had borrowed from John McEfer for the construction of the Manitou Hotel. One note for \$ 276.61 was due for payment on May 1, 1832, and the second note for \$ 276.61 due for payment May 1, 1833. David Caulfied, Henry Norwood and Samuel Gilliam signed this document as co-signers of the money due to John McEfer, probably as a sign that they were providing for the continuous operation of the Manitou Hotel in the new and booming town of Bellefonte. The lot is missing from this document so we do not have a record of exactly where the Manitou Hotel was located around the courthouse square.

Thursday nights, the last night on the seven-day journey, would have been spent from the mid 1830s on at John Redmond's Inn, located at Camden, which later became the town of Paint Rock.

As the stage passed through Woodville on Thursday's trip towards Huntsville, one of the stops for exchange of horses would have been at the home of Henry Derrick, which was located at the bend of County Road 8 adjacent to the Stephens Cemetery. This would have been near the center of the town of Woodville as it was in the 1830s. The stop and horse change at Derrick's place in downtown Woodville would have been the second horse change for the day, taking place in the afternoon and departing towards Camden with the next stop being the short stop at ferry on the Paint Rock River. It is the belief of this author that the morning stop on this Thursday would have been at the home of William Maples, another early citizen of Woodville and an owner of a large tract of line near the Burns Reservation and Aspel. This stop would have been at the Maples home which was located just east of the current site of Aspel.

Conclusion

Today one enters Jackson County on US 72 at mile post 114.2 at the state line at South Pittsburg, Tennessee and drives southwest to mile post 167.2 at the Madison and Jackson County line near Gurley for 53 miles of four lane and 4 red lights. Most of this has a speed limit posted at 65 mph. The average person today passing through Jackson county without stopping would spend about one hour in his travels. In the 1820s, one would have spent two nights on the journey and it would have taken about 48 hours to travel the same route.

The old stage line was located along the same path as US Highway 72 follows today, as the only change is that a few hills have been cut down, a few curves have been smoothed and sometimes a little more direct route was taken, sometime based on creek and river crossing.

These old maps presented here are my best estimate of the location that was traveled in the 1820-- 1860s by the stage coach and mail route and have been presented for those who are interested in the details of the exact location of this old route. Some of these old roadbeds are intact for those who may wander our great county.

James T. Sentell

Note from ANB: James wrote this short version of his longer stage road document for the *Chronicles*. But the full 44-page document with color maps of the 16 segments of the stage road and discussions of the Cherokee reservations and stage stops is found on the the JCHA website at this address:

https://www.jchaweb.org/downloads/StageCoachRoad_FinalReport_JamesSentell.pdf

A Story of Bitter Irony: William C. Skelton's Likely Sad Fate

William C. Skelton was one of the Paint Rock Rifle Confederate soldiers who defected under Ephraim Latham's guidance to join Company A of the First Tennessee & Alabama Independent Vidette Cavalry, U.S.A. in September of 1863. He was my granduncle. He had fought as a Confederate private at Shiloh and Stone's River before he finally deserted at Tullahoma to come back to Larkinsville with some 70 of his comrades. After that, his story of irony promptly begins with his capture within days at Hunt's Mill in Jackson County.

Several family trees are replete with an encouraging but undocumented 1924 death date for my granduncle. There's only one divergent report, which proclaims an 1864 date that is easily dismissed as error, being more properly ascribed to William G. Skelton in the 31st Mississippi Confederate Infantry. No way could that one be our Union Vidette Cavalry member, William C. Skelton. But there's an even more unsettling error left to be considered: The following account graphically demonstrates other pitfalls and the ease of "going down the garden path" that leads to misinterpreted history.

I had been quite willing to accept the 1924 date as authentic by its frequent attribution, and especially since Johnny Potter's excellent compilation on the First Tennessee & Alabama Independent Vidette Cavalry detailed November 22, 1924 as the death date of our William C. Skelton, complete with a specified burial site at Blue Springs Cemetery, Larkinsville, Alabama (Potter, p.14). Furthermore, a FindaGrave entry reported William C. Skelton to be buried in Blue Spring (spring spelled singular) Cemetery at Larkinsville with a death date of 1924. The only problem was, there was no supporting photograph of William's Vidette marker. A tombstone made in 1924 should have remained reasonably sound and legible for a picture, as was Samuel G. Skelton's (my other Unionist relative) in another cemetery. Anyway, I lacked a picture of William's grave marker comparable to Samuel's. Since William was the closer of those two relatives, I became obsessed with traveling to Blue Spring Cemetery to see William's grave and to photograph his marker.

One day in November, I found myself carefully surveying all the markers in Blue Spring Cemetery. There were several Confederate Veteran graves, enough to suggest its identity as exclusively Confederate. Much to my surprise and dismay, I finally had to admit that a William C. Skelton Unionist grave---contrary to all reports---would never be found in Confederate-oriented Blue Spring Cemetery. Moreover, there was not a single Skelton grave in the whole cemetery (conspicuously different from the large Skelton family section at nearby Pace Cemetery, where Samuel is buried). At that point, serious doubt began to creep into my mind about other of William's accepted death records. The more I thought about it, a 1924 death date for William C. Skelton simply didn't fit.

Maybe we should start with what we've come to know for sure. He defected into the Union Vidette Cavalry and within a month was captured by Confederates at Hunt's Mill. There is a report that he wound up in Richmond. Fact is, we have no idea what happened to him after that. Whatever it was, it could not have been good. He was, after all, a captured deserter, and even worse, he was also a defector---more than enough to brand him a wretched traitor. It follows, of course, that treason was punishable by death (Martin, p. 224). It would not be surprising to find out that's how William wound up.

Alternatively, let's consider by some stretch of the imagination, that he escaped the noose or the firing squad. He's not likely to have been "guest-of-honor" at a Confederate prison camp. Inmates, even without his onerous distinction, died like flies in the squalor of those infamous prisons. His traitorous distinction would not have been an asset against those inherently poor survival odds. One can only imagine his horrible treatment by the guards. I'd think those factors alone would nullify any chances of his surviving until 1924 to the ripe old age of 80. Besides, couldn't we expect that if he had survived the war and had

come home at about the age of 21, he'd have married and eventually raised a family? He did not. His family line abruptly ends with the war, leaving no record that he ever had a wife or children. We could easily interpret those facts to say that he died young.

We might get a hint of William's capture-inflicted gauntlet from the course of his Vidette Cavalry comrade, John Latham, who was also captured by the Rebels at Hunt's Mill on the exact same September 26, 1863 date.⁽¹⁾ John is recorded as dying on February 1, 1864 of disease. It doesn't tax the imagination to envision William with a similar, though undocumented, fate.

In addition to John Latham, I count four other Company A Vidette Cavalry members captured at Hunt's Mill who died in prison at Richmond. If we include William C. Skelton, that brings the list to Six. Interestingly, that resurrects memory of John Robert Kennamer's account of the Hunt's Mill Skirmish as recorded in his book, *History of Jackson County*:

Captain Williams of Indiana, with some of Captain Eph Latham's Home Guards and Scouts, was stationed at Hunt's Mill on the railroad about three miles west of Scottsboro. Captain Henry F. Smith came from the south side of the Tennessee River and attacked this garrison and captured six (2) men of Capt. Latham's company and carried them back across the river as prisoners. Smith gave orders to carry there [sic] prisoners to Gen. Bragg near Chattanooga and return at once. That was the last heard of the prisoners. (Kennamer, p. 60)

If all the above evidence seems circumstantial, then let it be said, there's no lack of direct evidence available in the National Archives with considerably more strength. There exists a document from the U.S. War Department Adjuvant General on November 1, 1867 that states, "Investigation fails to elicit any further information relative to this soldier." If that was not enough, a July 3, 1890 U.S. pension document shows his mother, Jane E. Skelton, applying for his pension in lieu of any existent widow. Another copy of the document is stamped DEAD! The take home message here is that William was not there to collect for himself. So it's as if by then, William had fallen off the edge of the earth---note all this is happening well before 1924.

Putting all those factors together, I have no choice but to totally dismiss the popularly disseminated 1924 death date for my granduncle, William C. Skelton. It now simply makes no sense to me. I can't accept that he lived to be an 80-year-old bachelor, and besides, I couldn't, even in person, find his reported grave site. Furthermore, he is conspicuously absent on the AccessGenealogy list of those buried in Blue Spring Cemetery. I think that's because his remains are not there, but in an unmarked burial site somewhere around Richmond.

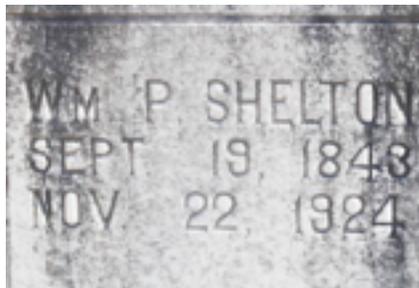
Having read that Richmond was indeed where his captors took him, I reviewed the Record of the Federal Dead Buried From Libby, Belle Isle, Danville and Camp Lawton Prisons (City Point and the field around Richmond and Petersburg were also covered). This was from 1865, done by the U.S. Christian Commission. Most of the names came from very crudely marked graves e.g. wooden markers with pen-knife-carved or painted names. The study admits that often only about 20% of the graves were marked. Undoubtedly there were also mass graves. My granduncle's name was not among the thousands whom the auditors listed. Stated again another way, I think my granduncle's remains are in one of those unmarked burial sites that the auditors mentioned.

So if we accept that the 1924 death date is invalid, how in the first place did it get attributed to William C. Skelton? Its report gave the impression of a high degree of certainty, even detailing a specific day, i.e. November 22, 1924. I think I may have an answer to the question of how the date became erroneously linked to William C. Skelton, and it may even explain how he came to be described as buried in a cemetery where his body couldn't have been practically returned.

I think it comes from the fact that there are two cemeteries in the Larkinsville area with similar names. One is the mentioned Blue Spring (no "s") Cemetery, and the other is Blue

Springs (with an “s”) Cemetery, more often called Hall’s Cemetery. I explored the possibility of William C. Skelton actually being buried in this Hall’s Cemetery. A location error would be easy to make based on the Blue Spring(s) names similarity. Yet it turns out he wasn’t buried in Hall’s Blue Springs Cemetery either. But we can say someone else of some relevance was---i.e., William P. Shelton---relevant by reason of the death date on his marker. It amazingly reads: November 22, 1924! I think William P. Shelton, and William C. Skelton were posthumous victims of crossed identities. This explains the burial report inconsistencies, and the incorrect attribution of a 1924 death date to William C. Skelton.

If I’m right about all this, and I strongly fear that I am, it carries two very strong messages: First off, it is so easy for misinterpretation to creep into historical records, and secondly, it means that my closest Unionist relative---whom I’ve long wanted to know something about---sadly led a very short, unrewarded, and tortured life. How ironic it is that after surviving Shiloh and Stone’s River, he came home ... only to be captured there and sent to his death. I realize what I found and now propose seems to fly in the face of what might qualify as conventional wisdom. Rest assured: It gave me no pleasure to discover what I did. But after struggling with that, I finally had to admit to the obvious---that the 1924 death date crumpled under close scrutiny. I’d be much happier if it hadn’t.



William C. Skelton’s Comrade, William P. Shelton.
Photo by James Reed.

The uncanny exact agreement of William P. Shelton’s death date with that erroneously attributed to William C. Skelton.

I had the honor to visit William P. Shelton’s grave site at Blue Springs-Hall Cemetery in my continued futile search for Willam C. Skelton’s grave.

It’s easy to see how an identity mistake was made.

Dr. James Reed



Findagrave photo by Michelle Urban.

Author’s Note: The previously described experience made me realize how easy it is to “go down the garden path” and draw completely wrong conclusions by acceptance of recorded genealogy data without appropriate scrutiny. It finally dawned on me that if an offered bit of information does not mesh with parallel events and influences, it must be regarded as inaccurate. It’s like a jigsaw puzzle. A piece of information must fit exactly into its slot in time and space and conform to the overall picture. It won’t do to try to force it into place. The fact a 1924 death date simply didn’t fit the influential forces operating in William C. Skelton’s lifetime should have raised a red flag.

Footnotes:

- (1) Significantly, John’s burial site has been erroneously attributed. He has been confused with a Confederate John Latham buried in Lynchburg County, Virginia. Otherwise, we have no information where he rests.
- (2) Some references describe a total number of 18 captured, others 40. Perhaps Kennamer refers here to only those lost.

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The Bradford-Bynum-Gentle House

The lovely residence on Scott Street, usually called the Bynum house because of its most storied occupant, has stood for 113 years. In that time, it has had only three owners:

- Charles Keith and Matilda Bradford: 1912 to 1923
- Hugh Otis Sr. and Lora Allen Bynum and their son Hugh Otis Jr.: 1923-1983
- Foster and Joe Gentle Family 1983 to present

Here is information about these three families and their association with this house.



Bradford-Bynum-Gentle House in 2018

Charles Keith Bradford: 1912-1923

Charles Keith (C.K.) Bradford, half of the couple who built the Bradford-Bynum house, was born in 1862 in Roane County, Tennessee to Alexander Keith (A.K.) Bradford and Margaret Moore. His father was a merchant and his grandfather was sheriff. The Bradfords were Confederates in a Unionist town. Many descendants of Joseph Bennett Bradford and his second wife Margaret Wilson (C.K.'s great grandparents) lived in Dandridge: Bennett's sons James (C.K.'s grandfather), a physician and long-time sheriff who signed Davy Crockett's marriage bond, and Henry, a gunsmith whose instruments survive still in the Museum of East Tennessee History, best known for crafting Old Bess for Davy Crocket. Henry's son William McDermott Bradford was a Civil War colonel and U.S. Senator for Tennessee, living in Chattanooga. Bennett's daughter Sarah married Rice Coffey of Wartrace, TN; four of their children migrated to Jackson County or are buried here, Alexander Hamilton and Benjamin in the Roach Cemetery and Henry Bradford and John Reid in the Cross Cemetery. Bennett's son Benjamin died in Tennessee, but his widow Mary McFarland Bradford is buried in the Roach Cemetery with her daughter Sarah Bradford Roach, the first wife of Charles Lewis Roach (1797-1856). Their son Jacob Tipton Bradford was the first Huntsville land agent who issued land patents to many Jackson County early settlers. C.K. Bradford's family had strong ties to Jackson County.

Margaret Moore was A.K.'s third wife and the only one to give him children who survived their earliest years. A.K. and Margaret moved to Roane County, TN just before the war, where A.K. operated a ferry in Barnardsville. A.K. was too old to fight in the Civil War but rode for a time in Weckler's Battalion, long enough to have his lands seized when the Union Army marched into his area. A.K. and his family fled to Texas, where son A. K. Jr. was born, before newly widowed A.K. Bradford came to Jackson County in 1868. His wife died in Senatobia, MS on the wagon journey from Texas and A.K. arrived in Jackson County with six small children (ranging from age 13 down to 3 days), a free black man who had been with him since he was a child named Peter Big (Charles Raymond Bradford remembered this man as being very old and called Hewlett), and a wet nurse (otherwise three-day-old Maria would not have survived).



Alexander Keith Bradford and Margaret Moore. Family portraits.

Alexander Keith was apparently trying to reach two well-to-do family members who already resided in Jackson County: his first cousin General John Coffey and half-first cousin once removed Henry Clay Bradford. He moved to the Hollywood/Martintown area, close to where his first cousins resided. John Reid Coffey had survived the war with much of his land holdings intact and gave the family a place to live on the Coffey farm near Mud Creek. A.K. farmed and raised his six children. He died 15 years later in 1873, and his brother Theodoric, a justice of the peace who lived in Fabius and was married to Margaret's sister Maria, raised A. K.'s youngest children to adulthood.

One of these younger children was Charles Keith Bradford. His uncle, who had been clerk of the court before moving from Dandridge, TN, made sure that C. K. got an education. C. K. was on the rolls of the first school in Scottsboro, which burned before he could graduate. He went to work as a sewing machine salesman for S. B. Kirby, which took him out of the county frequently and brought him to Morgan County where two of his sisters lived on the Flint River. There he met and married a young widow, Matilda Luter Jennings Hough, from a storied family (the Jennings who were part of the Donalson Flotilla that settled Nashville) in 1883. He was in business with her brother John Jennings in 1891 in Jackson County, cutting wood and shipping it on the river to support the building boom in Decatur. He farmed and set up a gin across Mud Creek from what is today Mud Creek Barbeque.



Charles Keith Bradford and Matilda Jennings.. Family portraits.

The family lived in this area and in Hollywood until their daughters, Ruth born in 1892 and Sabina born in 1895, were old enough to attend school. Son Raymond, born in 1886, had been sent away to Tennessee Military Institute. C. K. and Matilda moved into town in 1904 so the girls could attend school at Southern Baptist Institute (SBI), which became Jackson County High School (JCHS). You find Ruth in Scottsboro schools at SBI in 1905 when she was 13.

By the fall of 1908, Ruth was finishing high school in Nashville before going on to the Church of Christ College in Henderson, TN. Sabina, three years younger, needed better access to Scottsboro schools. The family rented houses in town for a time before buying the Wyeth Rorex house in December 1910. The house was next door to Dr. Hugh Boyd, in a house that I think sat where the Maye Lee Apartments are today. The Boyd house burned to the ground in December 1910, and the Rorex/Bradford House was extensively damaged, though fully insured for \$1000. Dr. Boyd rebuilt on College Street, and C. K. and Matilda razed their house and built the Bradford-Bynum house, started in 1911 and going well into 1912. The *Progressive Age* noted that Sabina gave a Halloween party in 1912 in her "elegant new house;" the family had moved in perhaps midyear 1912. Sabina attended Scottsboro schools. Her name appeared frequently in the social columns of the paper. Bradford remembered that the house was the first in Scottsboro with running water. He said that a cistern in the back caught rainwater and piped it throughout the house using gravity.

As their girls went to Nashville to finish their schooling, the Bradfords allowed girls to board at their house to attend SBI. There is a Margaret listed in the 1920 census who is not family but the census taker called her "Margaret Bradford." In 1923, Sabina married Jack Womack, and C.K. and Matilda had no reason to live in their big house close to the high school, so they sold it and bought the Gregory house on the corner of Kyle and Laurel, the location today of Regions Bank. They lived there until the week before C. K. died in March 1937, when they returned to their small house on Highway 33 in Hollywood near C.K.'s store and Raymond's gin by the railroad



Gregory-Bradford House , JCS Mar 2, 1978. Photo by Carmen Wann.

track. His son, Raymond, and his wife Kate Johnson had recently built next door, and it was easier for Raymond and Kate to look after C. K. and Matilda in Hollywood. Matilda died in 1941. Both are buried in Cedar Hill.

Bynum Family: 1923-1980

The house that C.K. and Matilda Bradford had built and raised their children in on Scott Street passed into the H. O. Bynum Sr. and Lora Allen family in March, 1923 as part of a shift in home ownership that was written up in the *Progressive Age*: the Bradford house passed to H. O. Bynum, the Bynum house passed to J. A. Bird, and the Bradfords bought the Gregory house, shown on page 15.

H. O. Sr. and Lora had three living children, all of a perfect age to live near the school: H. O. Jr. born 1914, a stillborn daughter in 1916, Lucy Scott Bynum in 1917, and Jessie Sue Bynum in 1918. The children grew up in this house. Lucy and Jessie Sue were well known for their connection to local writers. Kathryn Tucker [Windham] of Jeffrey the ghost fame visited in this house, as Harper Lee would visit later in the house the sisters built on Buchanan Street. H.O. Sr. and Lora moved out of the big house in 1949, building a new home with an incredible view on top of Backbone Ridge at the end of



East Ridge Street today. Lora died in 1950, and H. O. Sr. in 1964, and the sisters built a house on Bynum property on Buchanan Street and moved out of the family home. Hugh Otis Jr. stayed behind and lived in the Scott Street house the rest of his life, allowing ivy to grow over the steps and windows and bats to roost in the attic.

The H. O. Sr. and Lora house on Backbone Ridge is still standing at the end of East Ridge Road. This view is looking northwest from downtown Scottsboro. Notice that in 1949 when the house was completed, the entire area to the north was in pasture.

After their father's death in 1965, the Bynum sisters lived together in the elegant house on Buchanan Street, when they were not

traveling the world or in New York seeing plays. They enjoyed their lives together. Lucy died of melanoma in 1983 and Jessie Sue lived another 22 years, dying in 2005. They are the "two sisters" celebrated in the new Two Sisters Park on the south side of their square. Their legacy to Scottsboro is examined in the "Legacy of the Bynum Foundation" article that follows. Neither sister ever married. It was said that their father feared that suitors were after their money. But they were intelligent, educated women who made a lasting impact on Jackson County.



H. O. and Lora Bynum house on Backbone Ridge, 1960. Photo from Andy Skelton.



Bynum-Skelton house on Buchanan Street, built in 1963.

Lucy and Jessie Sue Bynum house on Buchanan Street in Scottsboro.



L to R, Jessie Sue, Lucy, and Hugh Otis Bynum. Lucy and Jessie Sue, from profiles in the Huntingdon Yearbook, appearing in the *JCS*, May 31, 1938. Hugh Otis from 1931 JCHS

The three Bynum children left indelible marks on Scottsboro. Let's look at a brief biography of each of them.

The Bynum Sisters are almost "Irish twins," with Lucy Scott born February 21, 1917 and Jessie Sue, the older, born February 8, 1918. For most of their early lives, they lived a parallel existence. They both studied piano under Mrs. Lyles Hembree and together performed "Sing Robin Sing" in May 1926. (*PA*, May 6, 1926) Their mother sent them through

Jackson County schools as part of the same

class, and their names appeared together numerous times on the honor rolls. Both wrote stories published in the Jackson County School page in 1928 *Sentinel*. Both belonged to the Methodist Junior Epworth Club, where Lucy was president. As tweens, they played a piano duet for the Garden Club in August 1930 when their mother hosted. (*PA*, Aug 7, 1930) and later for the Matrons Class social (*JCS* Jan 15, 1931). They played "Stars and Stripes Forever" for the Twentieth Century Book Club in February, 1931 (*JCS*, Feb 12, 1931) They were always treated as a unit. The 1931 Jackson County High School yearbook where they were in the Junior II class, wrote about them: "B is for Bynum, Lucy and Jessie Sue, Found among the cleverest in Junior II." Lucy represented the Latin club in a declamation contest in 1931, a rare time when she was separated from her sister. In February 1932, they played a duet for the Martha Washington Tea (*PA* Feb 25, 1932) and again in March 1933 when they were juniors in high school. (*JCS*, Mar 23, 1933). Jessie played a solo for the Twentieth Century Book Club in February 1934, while Lucy did a reading. (*JCS*, Feb 8, 1934) Lucy was more active in the Methodist church and in the high school drama club. Both were on the debate team and argued opposite sides of a question against Stevenson school, and won, and went on to compete at the state level.

Both were voted into the National Honor Society when they graduated from JCHS in 1935. (*PA*, Feb 14, 1935) Both attended Huntingdon College in Montgomery, where they were consistently on the Dean's List. Even while at Huntingdon, Lucy was taking classes at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she would later complete her PhD in English (*PA*, Jun 10, 1937). The 1938 Huntingdon profile of Lucy, reprinted in the May 21, 1938 *Sentinel*, noted that she was editor of the *Prelude* college literary magazine and had written and received recognition for an original short story titled "Frustration." She was in Shakespeare plays, a production of *MacBeth* and as Celia in *As You Like It*. In this same profile issue Jessie Sue was recognized as the "Most Intellectual Student" at Huntingdon, having made the honor roll every semester. Her strengths were music and international relations. Jessie was President of the English Club and represented Huntingdon at the Southeast International Relations Club at William and Mary. (*JCS*, Apr 11, 1939) Both were selected for the Tri Sigma honor society. (*PA*, Nov 17, 1938) At this point, their paths diverged.

Immediately after graduation from Huntingdon, Lucy studied for her Master of Arts degree from the University of Texas and graduated in June 1940. She began teaching English in Talladega High School in November 1940 (*PA*, Nov 7, 1940). During the 1942-43 school year, she taught at Kingsport, TN high school. In May 1941, she spoke to the Scottsboro Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy



Two sisters at the Bynum House at Backbone Ridge. Photo from Andy Skelton.

and presented the information that is captured in the booklet that is today on the JCHA website, "Pre-War Jackson County Homes." (*JCS*, May 2, 1941)

In the fall of 1941, Lucy was back teaching at Kingsport, TN high school (*PA*, Sep 25, 1941) Her Scottsboro friend, Elizabeth Jacobs, also taught there. When school was out, she left to take a summer course at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, visiting her sister, who was in school in Chicago, along the way. (*PA*, Jun 25, 1942) By the fall of 1944, she was a member of the faculty at the University of Illinois at Urbana. (*JCS*, Jun 6 1944) In the Fall of 1945, she was on the faculty of Sophie Newcomb College in New Orleans. In the Fall of 1946, she entered the PhD program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (*JCS*, Dec 21, 1946) She was back in town for holidays and in February 1949 when her mother was gravely ill. (*JCS*, Feb 15, 1949) She had returned to Scottsboro by 1954 when she and Jessie Sue participated in the ground breaking for the new hospital. (*JCS*, Aug 26, 1954)

The sisters spent the summer of 1955 touring Europe, and Lucy was teaching at the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) in the fall of 1955. (*JCS*, Oct 8, 1955) She presented a program about the choice of Scottsboro as the county seat to the North Alabama Historical Association. (*PA*, May 7, 1957) and was teaching American Literature at UAH in May 1957. (*JCS* May 28, 1957) She spoke to the Business and Professional Women about her favorite countries, Spain and Portugal, in November 1959, (*JCF*, Nov 5, 1959) and to the American Association of University Women about Africa in January 1961 (*JCS*, Jan 17, 1961) She was a frequent guest speaker both in Jackson County and elsewhere in the state. Lucy donated property that she owned for the construction of the Jackson County hospital nursing home in 1964 (*JCS*, Jan 19, 1964) Their father died in April 1964, and the sisters served as executors of his estate.

Northeast Alabama Junior College (now Northeast Alabama Community College) opened in 1965, and Dr. Lucy Bynum was one of three PhDs that Dr. Knox featured in a discussion of new hires for the 1968 school year. (*JCS*, Aug 15, 1968) The *Jackson County Advertiser's* profile of Lucy in September featured her as the descendant of the founder of Scottsboro (*JCA*, Sep 5, 1968). Her life ended too early. Lucy ignored what turned out to be melanoma until it had metastasized, and she died in Birmingham on April 13, 1983. Jessie Sue was her executor. Lucy is buried with her family in the Cedar Hill Cemetery.

Jessie Sue was a honor graduate at Huntingdon College where she obtained her bachelor's degree. In June 1939, Jessie entered the University of Chicago (*PA*, Jun 22, 1939), graduating with her Master's degree in history in March 1941 and continuing her studies toward a PhD. (*PA* Mar 13, 1941) . During the 1942-43 school year, she began teaching at Wesleyan College in Macon, GA, though she continued to take summer courses at the University of Chicago. (*JCS*, Jun 20, 1944) . She was home with personal illness in the falls of 1942 and 1943, and was teaching at Queen's College in Charlotte, NC by 1948. Both were home the summer before their mother died in October 1950.

Lora Bynum's health had begun its slow decline since at least 1941 when she had a major operation at Highland Baptist Hospital in Birmingham. (*JCS*, Apr 29, 1941) and spent much of the summer recuperating at Hot Springs (*JCS* Aug 6, 1942) She died in October 1950, a former teacher at the Baptist Institute and JCHS, "a woman of high intellect and culture." (*JCS*, Oct 17, 1950)

After her mother's death, Jessie immediately left her teaching post in Charlotte and returned to Scottsboro to care for her widowed father. She was joined a few years later by her sister, Lucy, when Lucy completed her PhD in English at Chapel Hill. Both were very active in the Methodist Church and local book clubs and women's clubs, particularly American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Jessie and Lucy played a significant part in the growth of Scottsboro by creating subdivisions and providing land for industrial growth. Her family made numerous land donations for various county, municipal, and community use. The sisters enjoyed traveling, reading, world



Lucy and Jessie Sue Bynum, later picture from Andy Skelton.

history, working in their flowers, and caring for their dogs. Their friends remember the sisters as very intellectual, quiet, generous, and gracious.

Their brother Hugh Otis Bynum Jr. was the oldest of the three Bynum children. He grew up as the adored only son, a studious child whose name appeared regularly in the school honor and social columns. He is found on the honor roll in Scottsboro in the second grade in 1922. He was rushed to Newell's Infirmary in Chattanooga that year with appendicitis. In 1927 he performed in the Easter presentation at the Methodist church, talking about Christ at 12 years of age. He performed the role of "The Wayfarer" in the 6th grade play at graduation in May opposite Elizabeth Larkin. Hugh Otis and his sister Jessie, with his aunt Lottie Skelton and her son Mark Scott, went on a family visits. In 1929, his sisters played the roles in Texas bluebonnets and Hugh Otis played the role of Texas Cowboy in a performance for the 20th Century Book Club where his mother was an active member.



HUGH OTIS BYNUM

Right Half Back—140 lbs., 5 ft., 8 ins.

On the field this kid is as fast as a rabbit, and when he gets loose, J. C. H. S. rooters know it means a touchdown or a long gain. He will be one of the mainstays of the team next year.

Football team entry from the 1931 JCHS yearbook.

Although he was only 15, he played varsity football in 1929 when the Ardmore teamed visited, and J.C.H.S. played on Hunt Field, "Hugh Otis Bynum, although a beginner and rather light, is almost sure to see some service in the backfield," the paper predicted. (*PA*, Sep 19, 1929) He "starred for the locals" when the team played Pisgah. "His playing was a big factor in the final score." (*PA*, Oct 2, 1929)

He had perfect attendance when he was 16 and was elected class treasurer in the fall of 1930. In his second year of JCHS football, Hugh Otis was a 16-year-old back who weighted 127 pounds. He was part of an academic-athletic honor society. Byron Woodfin in *Lay Down with Dogs* said that as a child, Hugh Otis was allowed to get away with acts of meanness and violence. (p. 20)

By 1931, he was featured as part of the football team in the *Progressive Age*, weighing 140 pounds with a height of 5' 8". He had already lettered in football and received a stripe in May of that year.

Hugh Otis graduated in 1932, when the county was mired in the depths of the Depression. The county school system had closed for a time that year; the city school system was kept open by donations. There was no yearbook from JCHS for this year, but the studious photo of Hugh Otis above was taken from the 1931 yearbook when he was elected treasurer of the first JCHS student government association.

He went off to Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn) with friends in 1933. He is found in the 1934 *Glomerata* majoring in veterinary medicine. According to his army service record, he completed one year of college and returned to Scottsboro to work in the tractor business with his father, which now was called H. O. Bynum and Son. He and Mark Scott Skelton went to a family wedding in South Carolina to see their twin Hamilton cousins married. (*JCS*, Jun 14, 1938) The tractor business was heavily damaged in 1941 by a cloudburst that dumped waste-deep water in the livestock barns on Laurel Street. (*PA*, Jul 24, 1941)

Hugh Otis' name was at the top of the August World War II selective service list in 1942, and he enlisted, but was initially turned down because of poor eyesight. He was later accepted and reported to Fort McClellan on August 17, 1942. His basic training was at Ft. Oglethorpe, GA. When he entered the Army, he reported is occupation as "retail manager." He was 5'10" tall and weighed 182 pounds. He was at his parents' home frequently at holidays, with his sisters, through May 1944 when the *Progressive Age* reported that he was now a sergeant and leaving Georgia and being transferred to the U. S. Engineers. He was home on furlough in August. He served in the South Pacific at the end of the war. According to family members, he "saw some horrible things" in the Pacific war and returned home in 1946. People thought he might have been affected by his war experiences. He came home a different person. He was discharged on



Hugh Otis Bynum in the 1934 API *Glomerata*.

March 23, 1946. The *Progressive Age* said “He has seen several years Army service with many months in the South Pacific. He plans to be in the Allis-Chalmers business again with his father.” (*PA*, Mar 28, 1946)

In 1949, he was briefly married to a widow, with a son, who was working as a hotel desk clerk in Birmingham, Mary Irene Scarborough. The marriage lasted less than a year, and Byron Woodfin reported that the only reference he ever made to his wife was to complain to Judge Robert Gentry that he had no nice old furniture because “that woman got it all.” (Woodfin, p. 18)

In the years after the war, Saltpeter Cave was the locale for rowdy and lawless behavior. Circuit Solicitor John B. Tally and Circuit Judge Jeff Haralson issued a writ of injunction closing the place as a public nuisance. The most notable attack came on January 15, 1949 when Hugh Otis Bynum Jr. stabbed Scottsboro plumber Vaughn Parker, when the two were attending a cockfight at the cave. Parker survived despite numerous stab wounds inflicted by Bynum.

In the summer of 1952, Hugh Otis was stricken with scleroderma, a chronic, debilitating disease that shrinks and hardens the skin. A patient in the Veterans Administration hospital in Nashville for six months, he lost from 200 pounds to 90 as his skin hardened. He survived, but due to a shrunken esophagus, he ate only soft food and spoke in a whisper. (Woodfin, p. 20)

In the years that followed, Bynum was charged with assault with intent to commit murder in each of three consecutive years. He was never convicted. He also escaped prosecution for assaults on attorney Harold Foster, newspaper editor Fred Bucheit, the shooting of white high school student Ray Webb, and a pistol attack on his own father that was thwarted by Mark Scott Skelton. Finally, he was charged and brought to

trial for shooting two black youths, Willie Lee McCamy and Claxton Green, Jr. He was charged with assault in that case and fined \$500. Two of Bynum’s barns and a house belonging to his sisters on Mountain Street were burned, and some of his prize Black Angus cattle went missing. Bynum felt that local law enforcement did not treat his accusations with the seriousness they deserved, and carried a grudge. It was believed that he was acting on these slights when he enabled the December 4, 1972 bombing on Lawyer Loy Campbell’s car. The bombing was investigated, and Bynum was arrested in 1974. He was found guilty and given a 20-year sentence. Bynum did not report to prison until his appeals failed in 1975, during which time he continued to live in the Scott Street house. In the last years before his incarceration, Hugh Otis was reclusive. He lived alone in the old family home, allowing ivy to grow over all the front and side entries. Children were afraid of the house and would cross the street rather than walk close to it.

When he died in prison in 1980, his estate was difficult to settle. He still owned the house on Scott Street. The house sat empty during the years when he was in prison. After his death, the house was tied up in litigation while his sisters and executor Mark Scott Skelton settled the lawsuits associated with the complex estate.

Those who loved the Bradford-Bynum house on Scott Street secretly wondered if it was possible to save it. We were all relieved to see the Gentle family buy the house in 1983 and rescue it from its derelict state. The Joe Gentle family took on the huge task of bringing the home back from the abyss.



Hugh Otis in front of Tom's Restaurant.
March 30, 1975. AP Wire Service Photo
by Haywood Paravacini,



Bynum House in 1975. Photo by Judy Proctor.

The Joe and Foster Family 1983-Present

Joe and Foster Gentle must have had some serious misgivings before taking on a renovation challenge like the Bradford-Bynum house. Some of the permutations this dedicated family went through to renovate this home were detailed in a story in the *Sentinel* supplement *Jackson County Life* in 1987.

Joe Gentle had three little girls when she and Foster decided to buy the old Bynum House. She had no experience renovating old houses—she and Foster lived in a modern house in Lake Shore subdivision. But what she had was a husband who could do anything and fix anything. Together they made a good team.

The Gentle family worked a year and a half before they could move into the house. The kitchen was a disaster when they bought the house; it had neither a floor nor a ceiling. Bats lived in the uninsulated attic. Vines were growing through the windows. But the Gentles were not deterred. They rewired the house first to bring it up to code, and they replaced 27 of the 57 windows. They insulated the attic and replaced the kitchen floor. The fireplaces were all closed sealed, and the mantles had been removed. Luckily they had been stored but not lost. Joe and Foster matched the mantles to their locations, cleaned them, and reinstalled them. A fourth daughter was born while the family was living in the Bynum house. They needed to keep the little girls warm, so they installed central heat. But respecting the old plaster walls, they put vents through the fireplaces rather than disturb the plaster. It was a masterful and skilled restoration.

Here is Donna Gardner's article in *Jackson County Life* from October 22, 1987:

Old Bradford-Bynum Home: A polished Jewel

Joe Gentle said she fell in love with the Bradford-Bynum home, located on Scott Street, when she and her husband, Foster, moved to Scottsboro 20 years ago. "When the house went on the market," Gentle explained, "I knew I wanted it."

The Gentle family bought the historic old home, built in 1913 for Charles K. Bradford, four years ago, and began the monumental task of restoration. Although no structural changes were required in the renovation, there was much time-consuming work to be done. The Gentles, doing all the projects themselves, worked for a year and half before moving into their new home.

There was re-wiring to be done. And 27 of the 57 windows in the house had to be replaced. The attic had to be insulated. Walls on the second floor of the house were scraped of wallpaper. The kitchen floor needed to be replaced. Rather than disturb the original plaster walls, center heat and air was installed through the six fireplaces, Gentle said. Mantles for the fireplaces were taken out of storage, cleaned, and affixed in their specific places. Gentle said each mantle was specifically made for a particular fireplace and would fit only that fireplace.

The approximately six inch wood door frames and baseboards were cleaned and sealer applied. Hardwood flooring was cleaned and restored to the original state. And then, of course, there was painting to be done, both inside and outside the massive structure. The first floor of the house features a five foot wide hallway that runs the length of the house, an entryway parlor, another parlor and living room separated by French doors, a large dining room, kitchen with pantry, breakfast area, guest bedroom, bath and a floor to ceiling linen closet.

Kitchen renovations included the installation of glass door cabinets, made by Foster Gentle. Much of the glass used to make the cabinet doors was taken from the windows that had to be replaced. Bricks from the old kitchen flue were used to make the counter top. Gentle said the small breakfast area just off the kitchen was originally a screened porch. Wood wainscoting, rising approximately half-way up the 12 feet high walls, is a dominant feature of the downstairs bath. Tub and toilet are original fixtures in this area. Gentle said.

Two stairways led to the second floor. The first is an impressive wood-tiled and bannister structure in the entryway of the home. The second staircase is located along the hallway. The second floor consists of the master bedroom and three other bedrooms, two bathrooms, a sewing/ironing room, a sun room, and a wide hallway that runs the length of the house. The master bedroom is equipped with his and her walk-in closets. The guest bedroom downstairs also has a walk-in closet, an unusual luxury for the time, according to Gentle.

She said that most turn-of-the-century houses were not built with closets but large trunk rooms. One upstairs bedroom and the sewing/ironing room were initially built as trunk rooms, Gentle said. Most upstairs rooms are decorated with a raised-pattern wallpaper that is painted. Gentle said the wallpaper was popular during the early 1900s and is not gaining popularity. Both walls and ceiling are painted in an off-white shade.

Other unique features throughout the house include hinged window—or transoms—above all interior doors, beveled glass windows, push button light switches, a wrap-around front porch with three separate entrances, and a second floor porch. Gentle said most people think of the house as being ornate inside, but likely because of the elaborated wood-trimmed screen doors, scrolled columns, and the Queen Anne shingles that decorate the exterior of the home. But is it basically a farm house. It isn't that ornate inside, she said.

An ardent collector of antique furniture, Gentle continues to search for just the right pieces of furniture and accessories. Many of the Victorian pieces found throughout the home, such as settees, Persian rugs, and antique light fixtures, were purchased at one of the many auctions she attends.

“We still have a lot of work to do,” Gentle said. The thought doesn't seem to distress her. It is, after all, the house she had long admired. It is the house she and her family restored.

The Gentle family has lived in this historic house now for 43 years, longer than either of the other families that called the house their home. Their girls—Lesley, Greta, Jennifer, and Jessica—all were married in the house, as was a cousin. Their friends who came to play with them did not generally spend the night because they thought the house was haunted. But Lesley, the oldest daughter, is the best argument for the love of old houses being passed down from parent to child: she moved in the old Jones house next door to her parents 19 years ago.

Joe is having trouble with her eyes, but still climbs the stairs every day to do laundry. Lesley says that the old house is hard to heat and cool, and her parents sleep downstairs in the summers and upstairs in the winter. We are all fortunate that the Gentle family saw beyond the scary facade and fell in love with the old 113-year-old Bradford-Bynum-Gentle house, so that future generations of Scottsboro families can love and appreciate the house and its history.

Annette Bradford

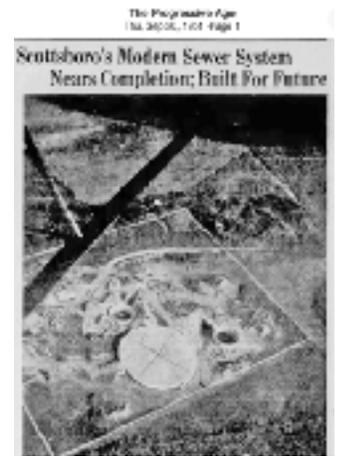


Top L to R Inside the front hall; main staircase; and upstairs hall. Bottom, one of the fireplaces, transom windows for cooling, and Susan Keith Case with her grandmother Ruth's picture and Cynthia Womack with her grandmother Sabina's picture in front of the great grandfather's house.

Legacy of the Bynum Foundation

Many of the county’s cultural and recreation landmarks that we take for granted today were the result of donations of land and money from the Bynum Foundation. Few small towns can boast that they were handed land that has been sold to generate \$3 million for the Bynum Foundation, which in turn donates to worthy causes. The largesse of the Bynum Foundation has been a seemingly endless source of money that organizations for more than 18 years. As the source is about to end with a flourish, we will be left with a final lasting enhancement to the town square, the Two Sisters Park.

Even before 2007 when the Foundation began distributing money generated by the sale of Bynum land, the Bynum family gave the land for the city’s sewage treatment plant. It was built in 1951 on what is today Heroes’ Drive. “The city didn’t even ask,” f\A foundation co-administrator Bill Tally said, “they just built on Bynum land and asked permission later.” Part of the same parcel became the location for the Jackson County Hospital in 1954. Jessie, Lucy, and their father H. O. Sr. were part of the groundbreaking photo, Jessie Sue is shown in the photo below from the August 26, 1954 *Progressive Age*, handing the deed for the property to Dr. Lynch, chairman of the hospital board. She cut the ribbon later when the hospital opened.



1951 aerial view of Scottsboro’s new sewage treatment plant, built on Bynum land.

The Progressive Age
Thu, Aug 26, 1954 Page 1



1954 Lucy, H. O. Sr., Jessie Sue Bynum, and John B. Tally handing the deed to the hospital property.

The Daily Sentinel
Thu, Aug 26, 1955 Page 7



1955 Jessie Sue Bynum cutting the ribbon to open the new hospital.

Charlotte Scott Bynum, as one of the surviving children of Scottsboro founder Robert T. Scott, inherited land that would become the core of the Bynum estate from Scottsboro founder Robert T. Scott. Other land was added to the family holdings by H. O. Bynum Sr. H. O. was a horse and mule trader, working with his father, Robert Bynum, until Robert’s death in 1909.

The Progressive Age
Thu, May 16, 1907 Page 1

FOR SALE—15 head work horses, mares and mules for each of good notes. R. H. & H. O. BYNUM. 11

The business operated as H. O. Bynum and Son from a building at 307 Willow Street. Today it is the site of a restaurant whose name is the building’s address. Bynum’s mule barn can still be seen on the 1957 aerial photo to the right.

When mules were no longer used to plow, the Bynums sold Allis-Chalmers tractors. Mark Scott Skelton joined the business in 1953, and it was thereafter known as Bynum Tractor. All of this time when H.



1957 areas view of Laurel Street at Caldwell, with familiar buildings marked.

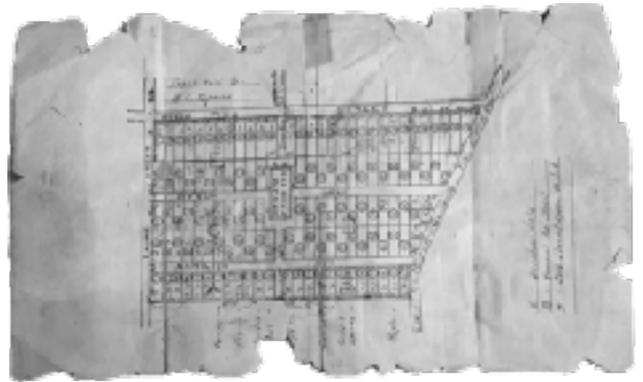
O. Sr. was selling mules and tractors, he was also buying land and developing subdivisions. “I remember Mr. Bynum never seemed to have any pocket money,” recalls Andy Skelton, the other administrator of the Foundation. “It was because every time he got enough money together, he bought land.” And when the city needed land to expand, the Bynum family donated property.

When Lora Allen Bynum died in 1950, her daughters returned to live in Scottsboro to look after their father. They lived with him in the house on Backbone Ridge. In 1963, they built a home on Buchanan Street on old Bynum land. Lucy continued to teach for a time, and the sisters indulged their love of travel and good theater, going frequently to Europe and New York and viewing landmark original productions of Broadway plays. Their lives together came to an end when Lucy developed melanoma and died in 1983, 22 years before her sister. Jessie Sue continued to live in the Buchanan Street house until her death in 2005.

The Bynum Foundation was defined legally in Jessie Sue Bynum’s will in 2005. To ensure that grant requestors met her criteria she chose her nephew Mark Scott Skelton and great nephew Attorney Bill Tally. After Mark Scott’s death in 2015, Mark’s sons Andy and Scott Skelton, along with Andy’s children Graham and Colleen, and Bill Tally, became the administrators of the Foundation. This group has reviewed many grant applications and faithfully adhered to the criteria that Jessie Sue established. For 18 years, the Bynum Foundation has been a funding source for some 39 grant requesters ranging from municipalities to educational foundations, and they have distributed almost \$3 million.

Nothing has been written about the Foundation itself because Jessie Sue Bynum wanted it that way. She was a modest woman who did not want her name associated with the incredible gifts her family bestowed on Jackson County. But now that the Foundation is winding down and the 18-year parade of funded projects is coming to an end, it is time to look back and examine examples of what Jackson County has today because of the Bynum Foundation. The table below was constructed from popular press accounts of specific projects. Newspaper source information is included, though specific attribution to the individual writers is omitted, and an academically sanctioned bibliography is not included.

AB Note: Throughout this account, *JCS* means *Jackson County Sentinel*, though at time the paper was known as the *Daily Sentinel*. *PA* means *Progressive Age*, *JCF* means *Jackson County Farmer*, *JCA* means *Jackson County Advertiser*, and *NJP* means *North Jackson Progress*.



Original plat subdividing the homeplace of R.H. and Bathsbea Bynum.



Development of Bynum Heights in 1938.

Year	Project	Bynum Foundation Contribution
2007	Jackson County Historical Association	Renovation of the bandstand on the north side of the courthouse, \$10,000 of the required \$40,000 for the renovation. (<i>JCS</i> Sep 27, 2007) Additional grants in 2007, 2009. 2010. 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2022.

Year	Project	Bynum Foundation Contribution
2007	City of Scottsboro	Donation of 21 acres of property on Jefferson Street across from Bynum Park and Scottsboro Junior High School, some of which is in wetlands, for recreational purposes, including tennis courts, soccer field, and the Miracle League baseball project. (<i>NJP</i> Sep 25, 2007) Cost of the tennis facility. (<i>JCS</i> , Oct 18, 2007) Planning ongoing. (<i>JCS</i> , Aug 4, 2010) Additional grants in 2009, 2010, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2022.
2008	Scottsboro Downtown Redevelopment	Grant for up to \$25,000 for an architectural landscaping plan for the Jackson County Courthouse Square. (<i>JCS</i> , Apr 16, 2010. Additional grants in 2018, 2020, 2021, and 2022.
2010	CASA (Care Assistance Service for the Aging) .	Food distribution, wheelchair ramps, handicapped stair assistance, handrails, air conditioners, window fans, space heaters, smoke alarms, and household medical equipment. (<i>JCS</i> , Jan 2, 2010) Additional grants in 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2022, and 2023.
2010	Scottsboro Public Library	In 2010, 54,464 items including 415 DVDs, 1598 video tapes, 2223 audio books, eight computers for public use, one computer for genealogical research with an ancestry.com subscription, and two iMacs. (<i>JCS</i> , Jan 23, 2010) Additional grants in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2023.
2010	Youth Leadership Jackson County	Enabling young leaders in our county to tour hospitals, schools, farms, businesses, and historic sites to learn about how they are managed and operated. (<i>NJP</i> , Apr 1, 2010) Additional grants in 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018.
2010	Collins Elementary School	\$15,000 to improve existing scenery areas and reptile habitats around outdoor courtyard and create an outdoor classroom known as the Collins Ecotorium. (<i>JCS</i> , Aug 28, 2010 Ribbon cutting (<i>JCS</i> , Jun 9, 2011) Additional grants in 2011 and 2012.
2010	Scottsboro Boys Museum and Cultural Center	Donated \$4585 to purchase audiovisual aids for the museum. (<i>JCS</i> , Oct 16, 2010)
2011	Scottsboro City Board of Education	Renovations to the Page Administration Building auditorium. \$20,000 to improve the auditorium and install a sound system. (<i>JCS</i> , Nov 5, 2011) Additional grants in 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015.

Year	Project	Bynum Foundation Contribution
2011	CASA (Care Assistance Service for the Aging) .	\$9800 to buy home medical equipment. (<i>JCS</i> , Dec 11, 2011 and <i>JCS</i> Dec 8, 2011)
2013	Jackson County Historical Association	Generous donations to fund renovation of the Scottsboro freight depot and turn it into a museum. (<i>NJP</i> , Mar 11, 2013). Jessie Sue Bynum gave so much money to the depot renovation project that a plaque on the wall dated July 1998 proclaims Jessie a "Trainmaster" for her outstanding service in renovation of the depot.
2013	City of Scottsboro	\$25,000 grant to put new welcome signs on 72 east and west, 79 south, and 35 from Section. (<i>JCS</i> , Jul 19, 2013)
2013	Boys and Girls Club on NE Alabama and of Jackson County.	One of several organizations supporting the building of the Ben Sanford Boys and Girls Club. Additional grants in 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021, 2022, and 2023.
2014	City of Scottsboro	Donation of 13 acres of land located along the railroad tracks. (<i>NJP</i> , Jan 13, 2014)
2014	Impact Learning Center	Addition of a second pre-K classroom at Brownwood Elementary, creating three new jobs. Bynum Foundation was one of several donors. (<i>NJP</i> , Aug 18, 2014 and <i>JCS</i> Sep 24, 2014)
2014	Youth Leadship Jackson County	\$19,000 in scholarships awarded to young people. (<i>NJP</i> , Sep 22, 2014) Awarding of North Sand Mountain scholarships to Shyann Hartline, Morgan Williams, and Courtney Bolton. (<i>NJP</i> , Jun 11, 2015)
2014	Scottsboro Public Library	An up to \$20,000 grant paid for paint and labor to repaint the library and install additional bookshelves. (<i>JCS</i> , Dec 14, 2014)
2017	Veterans Memorial Park	\$10,000 to organize a park on Heroes Drive to honor county veterans. (<i>NJP</i> , Jan 19, 2017). Additional grants in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021.
2017	City of Scottsboro	A grant to construct a playground at the soccer and tennis fields (<i>NJP</i> , Mar 2, 2017)
2017	City of Scottsboro	City acquired property to build a retention pond south of Carver Park valued at \$34,500, which Bynum Foundation agreed to sell for \$24,000. (<i>NJP</i> , Apr 13, 2017 and <i>JCS</i> Mar 30, 2017)

Year	Project	Bynum Foundation Contribution
2017	Impact Learning Center	Recognition of the Bynum Foundation for its role in 10 years of supporting pre-K education in Scottsboro. (<i>JCS</i> , Aug 12, 2017)
2017	Scottsboro City Cemetery	Property donated valued at \$65,000 to enable a Cedar Hill Cemetery property expansion. (<i>JCS</i> , Nov 30, 2017)
2018	City of Scottsboro	Foundation provided land that would help address drainage infrastructure problems. (<i>JCS</i> , Jan 25, 2018)
2019	Cedar Hill Cemetery Stroll	Foundation funded the second and third cemetery strolls in Cedar Hill. (<i>JCS</i> , Feb 8, 2019)
2019	Veterans Memorial park of Jackson County	\$40,000 grant to construct a pavilion at Veterans Park. (<i>JCS</i> , Aug 16, 2019) Dedicated and named Brotherhood Pavilion in honor of the friendship of Mark Scott Skelton and Charles Bradford. (<i>JCS</i> , Aug 19, 2020)
2020	Nourish One Child	\$25,000 grant to provide food to children during the Covid crisis. (<i>JCS</i> , Apr 3, 2020) Ongoing support through the Scottsboro First Methodist Church. Additional direct grants in 2022, 2023, and 2024.
2020	Earnest Pruett Center of Technology	Provided two grants that along with other contributions that enabled the school system to purchase "Nurse Ann Simulators" for teaching healthcare skills. (<i>JCS</i> , Nov 18, 2020)
2022	City of Scottsboro	Upgrade lights at Caldwell Park. (<i>JCS</i> , May 2, 2022)
2023	City of Scottsboro	New sign on Highway 35 at the Scott Cemetery "Scottsboro: Someplace Special." (<i>JCS</i> , Dec 27, 2023)
2024	Jackson County 4-H Junior Leadership Program	Awarding scholarships to students who completed the program. (<i>JCS</i> , May 15, 2024)
2025	City of Scottsboro	Pocket park honoring the contributions of the Lucy and Jessie Bynum, named Two Sisters. (<i>JCS</i> , Mar 5, 2025). Additional grants in 2024.

One of the first commitments that the Bynum Foundation made was to build the vast system of parks that includes baseball and soccer fields, tennis courts, pickle ball courts, playgrounds, and dog parks. "The City of Scottsboro appreciates the kind gesture on behalf of the family of Miss Jessie Bynum," said Mayor Dan Deason. "Their love for Scottsboro has not gone unnoticed. The city has a tremendous debt of gratitude to the Bynum Foundation." The foundation has requested that the city use the land for soccer and ball fields, said Steve Kennamer, who added that Miss Bynum spent her career in education. "She had a deep love for this community and its people," he said. "She wanted to do things for the children of the community. That's what this is for, the children." (*JCS*, Sep 14, 2007)

Children whose homes cannot feed them adequately on weekends benefit from the Nourish One Child program, which the Bynum Foundation has funded through the First Methodist Church. This group provides children who may not eat when school is not in session with a bag filled with eight nutritious foods and snacks. The teachers at each school distribute the bags, putting them in the backpacks of the children who need them. The first Bynum Grant of \$8,000 supported more food distribution last school year by increasing the items per bag from 8 to 10 (25% increase). Subsequent grants have supported this worthy and ever-expanding program. (JCS, Sep 4, 2015)

Children and adults alike know more about their history because the Bynum Foundation funded the second and third cemetery strolls, put on by the Jackson County Historical Association and Northeast Alabama Community College.

The last project of the Bynum Foundation is one of its most ambitious: construction of a pocket park on the south side of the square in Scottsboro. The park is a performance venue with a stage and green room, state-of-the-art sound system, and listener seating. It should be ready for its premiere performance this fall.



Members are organizers of the 2016 and 2017 cemetery strolls. From left to right is Vicki Watts and Richi Reynolds. Seated to the left is Jennifer Whitehead and Bill Tally. Standing to the right are Andy Skelton and Nita Tolliver.

Bynum Foundation grant enabled this group to hold two cemetery strolls.

On Feb. 24, Main Street Scottsboro celebrated one of the final steps on this project, three years in the making, by breaking ground on the pocket park, officially named Two Sisters Square. The design team posed in pink construction hats and broke ground for the park in March. Among those pictured are: Jeremy Robinson, Jennifer Whitehead, Vicki Watts, Richi Reynolds, Bill Tally, Andy Skelton, Nita Tolliver. An administrator for the Bynum Foundation from its inception, Bill Tally spoke on the founding of the Bynum Foundation, stating that the foundation started through a pair of sisters, Jessie Sue and Lucy Bynum. He spoke of the generosity of the sisters and how their land donations in the past helped Scottsboro grow tremendously. He also spoke of how Jessie Sue, the Bynum Foundation’s founder, was passionate about art, history and culture. It is hoped that the park will be the centerpiece of a revitalization of the square where diners sitting on sidewalk tables will enjoy music and dinner just a block from the original Bynum mule barn. It is a fitting ending to 18 years of generosity and support.



Ground Breaking for Two Sisters Park. JCS, Mar 5, 2025. Among those pictured are: Jeremy Robinson, Jennifer Whitehead, Vicki Watts, Richi Reynolds, Bynum Foundation administrators Bill Tally and Andy Skelton, and Nita Tolliver. Photo by Hunter Jones.

So thank you to H.O. Bynum Sr. who worked hard all his life and used his money to buy land that he put into a trust for his children. Thank you, Lucy and Jessie Sue Bynum, for leaving the trust intact and passing it on to your family with strict instructions about how it was to be used. Thank you, Mark Scott and Andy Skelton and Bill Tally for the years of diligent and thoughtful administration of this incredible gift.

Thank you from the Jackson County Historical Association for the foundation's generous help in turning the dilapidated 1861 Scottsboro freight depot into the showplace that it is today.. Thank you for the kids with books to read and food to eat. Thank you from the students at Collins School who every year use and learn from the Ecotorium. Thank you from the kindergarteners who enter public school better prepared for the challenges they meet because they spent time in quality pre-K education. Thank you from the veterans who relive the challenges of their service to their country, and from the people who enjoy lunch beneath the Brotherhood Pavilion. Thank you from the people who play baseball and tennis under the lights of Bynum Park. Thank you from the people who will listen to music in Two Sisters Park long after I have left the earth and wonder about the name. The list goes on and on—and so do the differences that Bynum family has made to the lives of Jackson County people.

Annette Bradford

The Cumberland Presbyterian Bell Comes Home

The bell that hung in the tower of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on Willow Street was born in Hillsboro, OH at the foundry of the C. S. Bell Company. "During its heyday, from 1875 to 1925, the C. S. Bell Company cast and shipped tens of thousands of cast iron church bells, as well as school and farm bells, all over the world," the Highland County Historical Society wrote about its recent restoration on the Bell Company building. (1) Our Presbyterian bell, like all of its brothers and sisters, was cast in wet sand using one of the company's molds, one of its biggest in fact. It is a No. 7 bell that measures more than three feet across at its widest point. Inside the bell, its clapper, an angled piece of iron with a ball at the end, hangs free. The bell is rung by pulling a rope attached to the housing and threaded through a wheel, so that when the rope is pulled, the bell rocks, its clapper striking the side of the bell at its vertical center, emitting a resonant low Bb. If you strike the bell at its crown, the sound is more muted because fewer overtones are produced, and the same is true of striking the bell's skirt. The clapper hits the sweet spot and produces the best overtones.

Overtone is a sonic phenomenon, resonant frequencies that occur above the fundamental frequency of a sound. They are the result of multiple vibrations occurring simultaneously, creating a complex sound. Those of you who played wind instruments might recall that some fingerings just sounded better than others because they produced different overtones. Overtone is easier to visualize with a stringed instrument. A string vibrates in halves, creating a phantom octave tone. The halves vibrate creating a phantom perfect fifth above the octave. The quarters vibrate and create perfect fourths. And so on. When the bell is struck, you hear not just the deep C fundamental tone but all of its complex overtones.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Jackson County had its first congregation in Bellefonte. According to the county historical accounts, this church was established by 1831 and was a frame building. King Caldwell told the story of its destruction during the Civil War, as it was told to him by his father David King Caldwell. The church was burned by Union soldiers during the war and the original church bell was picked from the ashes and stayed at the Caldwell home after the war when it was given to another church being built in the community.

The Cumberland Presbyterian church in Scottsboro was established in 1869 by Rev. R.D. Shook and Rev. E.J. Stockton. For the most part the church's congregation consisted of people who had previously been members of the Bellefonte church and moved to the new county seat. The J. B. Tally family gave the land to build the church, a building that served both the USA traditional Presbyterian church and the Appalachian variation, the Cumberland Presbyterian church. When the church was built, Willow Street was a narrow, unpaved footpath. In the latter part of 1882, a joint Presbyterian building committee awarded a contract to John W. Hill for the erection of a new church building, which was completed in September, 1883. Dr. Constantine B. Sanders, the "sleeping preacher" famous for his prophetic visions, delivered the first sermon in the new structure.(2)

The bell would have been shipped by train from Hillsboro, OH. It must have taken some muscle and ingenuity to hoist the 400 pound bell and its 200-pound wheel and framework to the top of the church, but there is no record of how this was accomplished. Parks Hall, who lived with his parents around the corner, across from the Bailey Hotel, remembers that the church "was never locked and several times during my childhood I went



Photo from the *Jackson County Sentinel*,
Aug 25, 1955.

in the church and climbed the ladder up into the steeple bell tower. I was fascinated by the big bell with a rope dangling down and of course all the pigeon nests and I could look out the louvers of the steeple and look out over the town square.” The bell hung in the tower until 1953 when the new church on Kyle Street was built, and the beautiful old building was torn down in 1955 to create parking space for Word Lumber.

The contents and salvaged building materials from the old church were sold, and Paralee Moody bought the bell. It sat in her yard for several years before she gave it to the new Cumberland Presbyterian church on Kyle Street in the early 1960s. The church put it on the concrete pad behind the church and debated for the next thirty years about what to do with it. The church elders could not agree on a structure to house the bell.

In the early 1990s, Paralee was annoyed that the church had failed to display the bell and took it back, declaring that the church would never have it again. So the bell was returned to Paralee Moody, and it stayed in her yard until she died in 2003.

Next, John Graham, a Stevenson native son who, along with his wife Angela, had bought and renovated the old Cowan house on Main Street, acquired the bell at the Moody estate sale in 2003 and put it in his garden, where it occupied a place of honor for the next 20 years.

Recently, a prominent Cumberland Presbyterian and friend of John Graham, Frances Chambers Dawson, died in January of this year. John decided to donate the bell to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Scottsboro in memory of Frances Dawson and in honor of her husband, lawyer Charles Cook Dawson. A local man picked up the bell from the Graham house in Stevenson and delivered it to the home and workshop of Bill Tally, who is lovingly restoring the bell to its original state.



Reconditioned bell at the Tally house.

Bill has disassembled the bell and sandblasted years old rust and old paint from its surface. As he cleaned off years of old paint, he could see the pattern left by the sand mold in which the bell was created. He brazed portions of the bell housing that needed reinforcement, and carefully smoothed the rough surface of old repairs. He primed the bell with aviation paint and is about to paint it the original gold color that he found traces of on the bell housing. A committee at the church is finalizing plans for a landscaped garden where a bell tower will be constructed to house the reconditioned bell.

So the bell has gone full circle, with some stops in between. We hope Paralee does not haunt John. We look forward to seeing what the Scottsboro church builds to hold such a well-traveled artifact.

Annette Bradford and Bill Tally



Bell in John Graham's garden.

Footnotes

(1) <https://www.timesgazette.com/2021/10/11/historical-society-touting-the-c-s-bell-experience/>

(2) Gist, Jerry W. The Story of Scottsboro, Alabama, (Rich Publishing Co, 1968), pp. 119-122.

The Jackson County Chronicles

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Associate Editor: David Bradford

JCHA Officers

President: Nat Cisco

Vice-President: Bill Tally

Secretary: Shannon Stahl

Treasurer: Tammy Bradford

Board Members: Hon. John Graham, Patrick Stewart, Betty Esslinger

October Meeting: Happy birthday to the JCHA! The organizational meeting for this group was called by Ann Chambless and Christine Sumner. It was held October 27 at 3:00 pm at the Scottsboro City Hall Auditorium. In 50 years, many wonderful speakers have spoken. Lots of history has been written. Lots of places have been visited. Lots of landmarks have been saved.

We will hold a birthday party for ourselves at the Scottsboro Freight Depot on **Sunday, October 26** (a day short of 50 years....) **at the 2:00 p.m.** Bring your appetite. We will have catered snacks and a birthday cake. Before and after the meeting, we will run a slideshow of activities and memories. We will introduce our new officers, hear a brief history of the organization, and present our highest award to some deserving historians. And that is just the beginning.

Many of you have enjoyed reading the Civil War articles in the *Chronicles* written by Dr. James Reed. Born in Scottsboro at Hodges Hospital, Dr. Reed started life as an infant in Woodville. His early years were then spent in Huntsville, returning to Scottsboro for his high school years until his family, much to his chagrin, moved back to Huntsville in the middle of his senior year. He received his pharmacy degree at Samford University and his Ph.D. in pharmacology at the UAB School of Medicine, where he also received his M.D. He completed his residency in internal medicine and went on to further specialize in nephrology, which he practiced in Birmingham for some 45 years. His publications have focused on his professional field and the sport of fly fishing. Dr. Reed will discuss the often-overlooked role of Stevenson and Bridgeport in the months leading up to the siege of Chattanooga and the surprisingly strong Union sentiment in the county.

This meeting is a great opportunity to meet old friends and catch up on the last 50 years. Both members and non-members are invited.

Welcome Guest Authors: I needed help as I tried to document the county's Rosenwald schools. That help came from Andrea Talley-Brennan and her father, James Talley. They wrote a first-person account of attending the Fackler Rosenwald School that includes interviews with his teachers. Thanks, too, to Sharon Allison and Dennis Lambert for their assistance.



New Officers: We are entering our second 50 years with a great set of new officers:



L to R, President Nat Cisco, Vice-President Bill Tally, Secretary Shannon Stahl, Treasurer Tammy Bradford, and Board Members Betty Sisk Esslinger, John H. Graham, and Patrick Stewart.

Nat Cisco is a lifelong resident with deep roots in the county who loves all things about local history and culture. Over the last decade, he has become the expert on downtown Scottsboro history. In 2018, he co-founded Main Street Scottsboro, a nonprofit dedicated to downtown revitalization and served 6 years as either treasurer or president on the board of directors. He also served on the Scottsboro Museum (Heritage Center) Board and has previously served as Treasurer for the Jackson County 21st Century Council, IMPACT Learning Center. He is an auditor by trade, holding degrees in finance from Auburn University and in accounting from Athens State University. He is currently an internal auditor at Huntsville Utilities and also serves as President of the North Alabama Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors. He is the father of twin 13-year-old boys with his wife, Lindsey. The family enjoys spending time together traveling and listening to live music.

Bill Tally has Jackson County roots that run deep. He is the 6th generation of Jackson County Tallys and a direct descendant of Scottsboro founder Robert T. Scott. He attended Scottsboro High School, the University of Alabama, and the Cumberland School of Law. He has been in practice as a lawyer in Jackson County since 1977, engaged in a general civil practice. His office is in what was the old City Cafe on the north side of the square. He still practices part-time there with the firm of Tally and Ashmore. With Andy Skelton, Bill has served as a member of the grant committee for the Bynum Foundation. He is married to Beverly Creel from Dothan, and they have two grown children, a son and a daughter, and one grandson.

Shannon Stahl is serving as our new secretary of the Jackson County Historical Association. History and genealogy have always been a big part of her life, and she has been active with the Scottsboro-Jackson Heritage Center where she helps visitors with research, tours, and community outreach. She assists with events and enjoys helping organize and plan gatherings held at the heritage center. Before stepping into this role, Shannon worked at H&R Block for 16 years preparing taxes and assisting clients and spent 14 years teaching as a fitness instructor in the community. She is currently finishing her degree in office administration. She and her husband raised five children and are enjoying life with their youngest, Kenny, who is still at home. Along with family time, Shannon loves staying active outdoors and caring for their many pets.

Tammy Bradford agreed to stay on as treasurer, taking over membership responsibilities from David Bradford. She is a graduate of Scottsboro High School and graduated from Auburn University with a degree in History and Political Science. She also has an associate's degree in Paralegal Studies from Samford University. She worked in the banking industry for over 40 years with positions in commercial lending and trust. She spent over 20 years as an executive assistant. She is a member of the Tidance Lane Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, where she serves as recording secretary. Her interests include reading, history, genealogy, and travel. She attends Scottsboro Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Betty Esslinger has been beloved of thousands of Scottsboro High School students, where she has taught and is still teaching English for 54 years and counting. After earning a degree in education, she returned to Scottsboro and began her career as a teacher, a mentor and a pioneer in young women's sports by promoting opportunities that were not typically recognized at that time. In October 2024, she received the statewide Alabama Public Television's Excellence in Education Award. And last year, she was recognized with the *Jackson County Sentinel's* People's Choice Award as the city's favorite teacher. She is married to John, who coached the SHS cross-county team to 46 state championships, for 53 years. They have two sons and two grandsons.

Judge John H. Graham lives in his hometown, Stevenson, Alabama, in an 1850 Greek Revival community landmark that he and his wife, Angela, rescued from destruction-by-neglect. They have two adult children. He has a history degree from Berea College in Kentucky and a law degree from the University of Alabama School of Law. He was appointed Circuit Judge for Jackson County in 2006 and has four times been reelected without opposition. He serves on the Board of and is Chair of the Education Committee for the Alabama Circuit Judges Association, is Past President of the Alabama Association of Drug Court Professionals, and serves on the Berea College Alumni Executive Council. He has attended JCHA meetings since he was about 14-years old, and is a life member and former president.

Patrick Stewart is a long time resident of Scottsboro. He is married to Lauren Warr Stewart and they are members of the Scottsboro Cumberland Presbyterian Church. They have five children—Ava, Ethan, Chloe, Mason, and Audrey Claire. Patrick has had a love for history ever since his dad took him looking for Indian artifacts as a young boy. He has since gotten into metal detecting where he had found several rare artifacts, one being a George Washington inaugural button, of which only eight are known to exist. Patrick's full time job is with Cardinal Health as a Pharmacy Business Consultant. He also serves on the Scottsboro City Council where he was appointed last month.

We have had a wonderful set of officers the past eight years who have served way above and beyond the call of duty: President **Lennie Cisco**, Vice President **Blake Wilhelm**, Treasurer **Tammy Bradford** and Secretary **Elizabeth "Bunny" Mountain**. Our depot museum has been manned for the last eight years by Bunny and Marland Mountain, Harold Brookshire, Annette and David Bradford, and for a time, Bill and Beverly Tally.

A New Way to Pay

If you pay your dues annually, you received a sheet prompting you to pay them with this *Chronicles*. There is a new way to pay your JCHA dues that we of the old guard were not willing to implement. Nat and Tammy have enabled Stripe, an SSL-secured system that accepts payments online. The Stripe processing screen is on our website at this address: <https://www.jchaweb.org/join.html>

Starting this signup period, everyone pays the same dues—\$25 for yearly dues, \$150 for a lifetime membership. Plans are being put in place for an option that enables you to receive the *Chronicles* electronically, a PDF sent to your email address. If you want to use electronic delivery of your *Chronicles*, be sure to include your email address on your signup form, or send an email to jcha@scottsboro.org.

Annual dues are changing to \$25. A one-year membership is now \$25, regardless of your age (we previously offered a discount between our over-55 members to offer a small discount).

Life memberships remain unchanged at \$150.

We welcome donations over and above the membership dues, if you see fit to contribute.

As always, we welcome your checks. Click here for a printable PDF form, or, if the form fails to print, send a check directly addressed to JCHA, PO Box 1416, Evelynsboro, AL 36738. Be sure to include your mailing address (if not printed on the check) and, optionally, your telephone number and email address.

Additionally, we now offer online payment:

Click here to sign up for a yearly membership.

Click here to sign up for a lifetime membership.

Thank you for your continued support of the JCHA.

The County's Eight M&C Railroad Stations

When it comes to understanding the early Memphis & Charleston Railroad as it passed through Jackson County, we have some excellent sources of information in the new “Railroads” downloads section of our website:

- *Southern Railway: From Stevenson to Memphis* by Jack Daniel (Grandmother Earth Creations, Germantown, TN: 1996).
- *Eighth Annual Railroad Celebration*, Spring Park, Tuscumbia, Alabama, Wednesday, April 30, 1950 booklet (which Ann Chambless bought from eBay).
- *Inventory Notes on Building Structures of the Southern Railway in Validation Section No. 79*, November 20, 1917, scanned by Andrew Waldo.
- Fifty years of the *Jackson County Chronicles* and help from our JCHA Facebook page

Ann Chambless acquired the little celebration booklet from eBay, hoping that the depot photos were good enough to frame and put on the walls of the Scottsboro Depot Museum. But they were not. We had hoped to mark the rail route through Jackson County with photos of the various depots. But we found no such images, and the walls of the depot were filled with other valuable history.

Recently Andrew Waldo captured images of the 1917 Southern Railway assets report that included high-resolution photos of the county's ten depots (eight passenger and two freight). The JCHA printed these photos and gave framed copies to the associated museums in Woodville, Hollywood, and Stevenson. And R. Daniel Proctor gave us copies of his historic photos of railroading in Jackson County; his collection is scanned high quality and also on our website.

One of my long-term goals during my time as editor of the *Chronicles* was to write essentials about the eight M&C stops in our county. To do this, I relied primarily on the sources shown above. Though of course, no one can talk about Stevenson without mentioning Eliza Woodall's *Stevenson Story*. In the section that follows, I will show you the 1917 inventory photo of the depot, look at what was said about that depot in the *Celebration* booklet (booklet) and the 1917 Southern inventory report (report), with additional information from the *Chronicles* history files and the Jack Daniel book.

The *Celebration* booklet opens with this description:

In 1856, the Memphis and Charleston (M&C) Railroad Company completed their tracks from Memphis, Tennessee to Stevenson, Alabama, a distance of 272 miles. To generate the steam that power their rolling stock, large elevated tanks were constructed to transfer water to the locomotive tender via a large spout. Using an automatic refill mechanism, the tanks were usually refilled from local natural springs, lakes, or rivers.

The distances between the water tanks was normally every eight to ten miles. Within that parameter, the site was chosen based on the availability of a year-round water source. Wood was also a staple at many of the water tank locations. If the tank site did not coincide with a previously established village or town, the water/wood stops were nothing more than a tank and a wood platform.

One of most interesting features of the Daniel book is documentation for the “in between stops” that are no longer visible. These include:

Between Woodville and Limrock: “There was a station called Stephen's Gap. Daniel describes it thus: “Located about two miles west of present Lim Rock, Stephen's Gap was an early water station. The 1861 report states that a wood shed and a water tank ‘are to be built.’ In 1872, a new water tank is needed, but the stop was not mentioned after that time.” I think this is a wide spot across the private airstrip that Ann called “Becky's Switch.”

Between Limrock and Larkinsville: The stop for the Belmont Coal Mines. Daniel writes, “In 1879, C. E. Gordon, brother of John B. Gordon, built a six mile line to the Belmont Coal Mine near the top of the Cumberland Mountains. They furnished coal for the M&C railroad. The mine was abandoned in the 1920s.” The photo at the right shows the railroad connection to the mine through the Paint Rock Valley.



Spur railroad photo from Ed Wad to Cindy Falk Rice at Skyline. Between 1925 and 1935

Between Scottsboro and Hollywood: Morrison’s Mill Branch. This was a spur track that was cited in a July 1, 1870: “A spur track has been placed at Morrison’s Mill, east of Scottsboro.”

Between Fackler and Stevenson: Timberlake’s. “The only time Timberlake’s was mentioned as in 1861 when a new wood and water station was built here. (It could be that this water stop became Facklers at a later date.)” Charles Heath speculates that this might be a stop known as Cedar Switch.

Charles Heath also provided information about these additional stops. “There is also a spur track between Scottsboro and Larkinsville near the base of July Mountain that was used to ferry materials in and out of Revere on Goosepond Island (classified by the railroad as a ‘lead track,’ not a spur) and one between Hollywood and Fackler that was built to serve the Bellefonte Nuclear Plant during its construction.” The track has been taken up in Bellefonte but the railbed is still visible off just past the pond on County Road 113. These would not have been apparent to Mr. Daniel, who was taking his information from the M&C minutes.

“Beyond Stevenson, there was a modern spur that served Widow’s Creek and a spur that passed in front of Russell Cave to service the coal mine at Orm. The station survives at Orme,” Charles Heath notes, “and some of the roadbed can be discerned. There is a branch railroad, the Sequatchie RR at Bridgeport, that goes up into Tennessee parallel to I-24. I don’t know if it is in operation now or not. They used to have a lot equipment next to the Lodge plant but it appears to be gone. The RR also served the quarry/cement plant at Richard City.”



Orme, Tennessee, spur railroad supporting mining operating around in 1902 .Photo Archives-Sequatchie Valley Historical Association-Dunlap Coke Ovens Museum.

Some of the rail hotels were covered extensively in previous *Chronicles*, and the Stevenson hotels are covered in great detail by Eliza Woodall. I have given space here to obscure hotels that have not been researched before. Here are the eight original station stops for the M&C and the rail hotels that supported these stops.



Harpers Illustrated drawing of Union Troops in front of the Stevenson Depot showing the passenger depot with Alabama House in the background. Colorized by the Gunterville Museum on Facebook.

Paint Rock Station

Booklet: “Paint Rock was first named Camden, changed in 1876. The first depot was built there in 1856. This was destroyed by cyclone Jan. 17, 1870. A new depot built and this was destroyed by storm April 25, 1880. Again on March 21, 1932 the store struck and Southern had to build a new depot. Until the advent of good roads Paint Rock was the shipping point for an area of 25 miles north and south and was a very busy point. She has today the only three track telegraph office between



1917 inventory photo.

Huntsville and Stevenson. Railroad men from Paint Rock are as follows: W. H. Bearers, A. O. McAnnally, H. D. Hannamore, Sidney David, Chas. Loveland (col.), Richard McCulley, R. S. Beasley, O. L. Beasley, Robt. Beasley, Tilden Beasley, L. L. Smith, J. C. Gormely, Dennis Kirkpatrick (deceased), Walter Jones, S. H. Kannamore (deceased). Harry Hill (deceased), Lucian Hill, T. L. Hill, E. Smithers, Jake Smithers, Clark Lovelady (deceased).

Report: The photo is from the November 17, 1917 Southern assets inventory. The auditor who took the photo above recorded that the depot included a 24’ x 32’ cotton platform, a stock pen with fence and chute, a privy, a mail box, an oil box, and a passenger platform. The station was a Type V combination station with drop siding and a six-year-old roof. It included a passenger entrance, dormers, and a bay window. The elevated platform was 8’ x 11’ and covered at the edges with a skirt.

Rail Hotel: Passengers and drummers who exited the train in Paint Rock stayed at the Keel Hotel. It was built in the early 1900s by Christopher Columbus Keel and his wife, Mary Frances Kimbrough Mead Keel. The house had two stories, sixteen rooms, two baths, and a wrap-around porch. In the 1920 census, it was referred to as a boarding house. Mary’s first husband was Lemuel Green Mead of Civil War renown. He was shot and killed in Gurley in 1879, and Mary married Christopher Columbus Keel in 1880. They sold the Mead farmland and built the boarding house/hotel. It was a center of social activity before the 1932 tornado destroyed most of the town. Though the hotel suffered some damage, it was home to several families until about 1950s. John S. O’Neal bought the old Keel Hotel in 1941 or 1942 and owned it until it was torn down in 1950.



From the “Paint Rock Used to be Here” Facebook page.

The materials were reused to build a two-bedroom house for Mose O’Neal where he lived until his death in 2006. (Information from Ann Chambless).



L to R, 1900 Coal Chute in Paint Rock from “Paint Rock Used to be Here” FB page, Station Agent W. H. Hill in 1931, 1937 Photos for *Life* Magazine by Alfred Eisenstaedt.

Woodville Station

Booklet: “Woodville is one of the oldest towns in Jackson County and was for a short time the county seat of Decatur County, which was created out of part of Jackson, Madison, and Marshall Counties in 1821. The depot was built in 1857 and as she has been so well covered by Leona Merritt Woodall in our 1949 Annual I shall confine my report on the number of good railroad men she has furnished to Southern Railway Co. James Riley Woodall, Patrick Henry Woodall, Leslie H. Woodall (retired), J. A. Woodall (deceased), C. C. Woodall (retired), Maxie Woodall, J. Tom Woodall, Sam Prince Elbert Chandlers, Geo. Chandler, John Maples (retired), George R. Roberts (deceased) Orië C. Roberts, S. M. McGee, L. Thompson, H. A. Tribble, Willard Butler, Rufus Hodges, Geo. Wann, Frank Wann, R. D. Peters, C. C. Peters, J. A. Peters (retired), Henry Peters, Harvey Peters, W. A. Parker, Jim Bullman, Houston Evans, Sam H. Hodges, Chas. T Hodges, Dallas Wildon, Luther Thompson, Will Spurgeon, Waine Spurgeon. Agents in order: John A. Brown, James R. Woodall, Patrick H. Woodall, Chas. Lowe, Glenn Byran, W. B. Johnson, S. E. Pierce, Lucian R. Hue.”



1917 inventory photo.

Report: The Woodville station complex in 1917 included fenced stock pens with a chute, a Type II combination station built in 1892 with a covered porch, a wooden skirt, and tin roof, a privy, a white-washed fence, a tool box, an oil box, a coal bin, and a mailbox. The depot was surrounded by a 31 x 32 foot cotton platform built in 1915.

Rail Hotels: J. R. R. Kennamer’s *Story of Woodville* discusses a number of local rail hotels. Dr. John W. Boggess “built and ran a hotel where Mrs. Claud Hodges now lives. He was living in the W. O. W. building when he died. Mrs. Boggess ran the hotel and did a fine job...Dr. Esslinger came here after Dr. Boggess and lived in the hotel building. His wife ran the hotel.” (p.60) Elsewhere in the book, he calls this “the Boggess Hotel.” John A. Brown paid \$100 for property on the south side of the railroad that joined the depot lot where the M. A. Hodges dwelling “now” stands. Brown “ran a hotel, fed the train men and passengers” until he sold to James R. Woodall in December 1879.(p. 98) Woodall added a little grocery store and made a dwelling out of it. He ran the hotel, was depot agent, and sold goods” until he health failed. (p.99) George R. Hodges and his wife Lou L. Jones “sold groceries and liquor in the little corner house south of the railroad near the crossing in 1879.” Disgusted with all the drinking and fighting, he sold out, and “his wife ran a hotel for years.” (p.101)



Top: Dr. and Mrs. Boggess. Bottom: Boggess Hotel, later run by Mrs. Esslinger before becoming the Robert L. Jones house. Photos from JRR Kennamer, *The Story of Woodville*.



L to R, Depot in 1914 from *Historic Woodville*, FB Page, Sept. 1897 excursion from Huntsville to Chattanooga, from R. Daniel Proctor, Woodville about 1925 from Timothee Howland.

Limrock Station

Booklet: “Lim Rock, no longer an agency, would not be mentioned here but for the fact that she has furnished so many good railroad men. In the early days it was known as Boyd’s Switch, changed to Lim Rock in 1882.” Jack Daniel says that Lim Rock first appeared in M&C reports of 1880. It is probable that a cotton platform was built there about that time, although none was listed. The 1895 report lists as ‘in good condition.’” The booklet continues, “In 1879, Maj. C. E. Gordon, brother of Gen. Jno. B. Gordon, build a R. R. to Belmont Coal Mine near the top of Cumberland Mountain, six miles in length.

This railroad and the mines were operated for many years but the trackage was abandoned in the late 1920s. R. R. men from Limrock were: Mose Watson, M. M. Watson, Rube Shelton, W. T. Johnson, A. O. Johnson, Louis T. Hardcastle, Rufus H. Hardcastle.” Marlin Tucker, whose three-part history of Limrock is titled *Letters, Laughter, and a Little Bit of Lineage from Lim Rock, Alabama*, remembers that the depot also included a cobbler shop.

Report: In November 1917, the railroad reported that the depot was six years old, meaning the building was constructed in 1911. It was classified as a Type 4 combination station with drop siding and a tin roof. There were two platforms, 10’ x 18’ probably for the coal operation and for the passenger depot. At the time of the inventory, the platforms were 8 years old, built in 1909. The structure included an oil box, a mail box, and a privy.



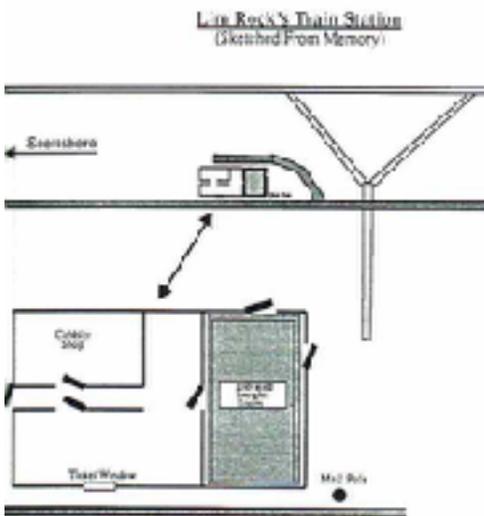
1917 inventory photo.

Rail Hotel: According to Johnny Gentle, whose grandfather Milton Gentle built the Gentle Store in Limrock, there were never other structures associated with the Limrock station. There were houses along the chert road that led away from the depot, and some of these homes accepted boarders.

According to Marlin Tucker’s second Limrock book, “during the heyday of the community in the 1920’s and 1930s, Lim Rock had one general merchandise store and two other gasoline and convenience stores. John Rousseau ran the barbershop located in the Gentle General Merchandise Store. Most of the route mail was delivered from the Woodville Post Office.”

“There was a train depot across the street from the general store. The depot was a very active place. Mail was picked up and sent out from the depot. If there was no passenger to be let off or picked up, huge mail sacks were ever so precisely hung from the post as the train sped along at full speed. Many times the mail pickup became a source of entertainment as the residents stood by to watch as the

depot manager hung the mail and as the train sped by, like a great monster, grabbed the mail bag. It was understood that the mail was sorted while the train was in route. Many times the children who were bold and curious would go and peer through the depot’s windows to watch the depot manager do his chores including operating the code machine to receive and send mail, and preparing passengers to board the train....The observers would also check out how Emmett Pockrus would spin his magic in his shoe repair shop located within the depot. They knew there was something beyond Lim Rock, but they did not know what.” (Martin Tucker, *Lim Rock, Alabama: A Community Remembered 50 Year Later*, October 1992, pp. 3-4)



Larkinsville Station

Booklet: “Larkinsville was settled in the eighteen-twenties and named for David Larkin. The town and the surrounding area was one of the most thickly populated part of North Alabama for many years. During the Civil War it was the largest voting precinct in this County. Mr. Sam H. Hodges, the



1917 inventory photo.

present agent, entered the service of Southern Railway Co. May 1, 1905. Most of these years have been spent at Larkinsville. Looking at the list of men who entered the service of this railroad it is easy to see why the population has fallen off. Wm. (Billie) McMahan (deceased). Bunn McMahan, John McMahan (deceased) Sam H. McMahan, White Hamlett, Buck Hamlett, John Aday, Tom Swaim, R. Driver, E. R. Driver, A. G. Harper, B. M Harper, H. A. Tribble, Geo. Higgins, John Higgins, W. D. Butler, John Sisk, Sam Sloan, A. Pl Grizzle, M. I. Honey, Jonah Honey, John Holderfield, A. L. Skelton, N. C. Hall, David Larkin, Wm. Larkin, Richard Keel, H. B. Wilborne, E. L. Smart, Tom Caldwell, Edw. Boyd, J. J. Canterbury, John Canterbury, Hunter Kennemore, I. H. Petty, J. D. Brannum, Vergin Henshaw, Gordeon Barclay, I. A. Durham, Sam Hamlett, and M. E. Hall.”



Historic photo of the hotel from a TARCOG historical survey.

Report: The Larkinsville railroad installation was large. A tool building built in 1915 was flanked by an earlier building built in 1897. The complex surrounding the worker housing included an out building, a barn, a chicken house, a privy, fences, and a well, as shown in the photo below. A 48’ x 32’ cotton platform and stock pen and chute surrounded a Type III Combined station built in 1892 with a privy, fence, oil box, and mailbox.

Rail Hotel: The hotel is a two-story frame structure with two-story porches on each side. An 1876 ad in the *Alabama Herald* stated that Jefferson Gentle had erected a new hotel and livery stable near the Methodist Church in Larkinsville dated 1876. Ads disappear almost immediately for this establishment. Jefferson’s daughter Ellen married William Franklin Shelton in 1881, and they operated the hotel until Ellen died in 1911 and William moved to Florence. Newspapers reported the names of people staying in the Larkinsville Hotel in 1919. Known today as the Smith House, this building was owned by Talmadge and Carolyn Smith, half brother to Connie and Larry Keel. Until his death in the 1930s, it was owned by Will and Thelma Stewart until the late 1960s. It sold recently, and the current owners are caring for it with the attention that such a lovely relic deserves.



L to R, 1922 Larkinsville Depot, gift to JCHA; Larkinsville worker housing from 1917 inventory report; Larkinsville rail yard from Walt Hammer’s *Pictorial Walk* book.

Scottsboro Station

Booklet: “We picture here only the Passenger Station, which is separate and apart from the Freight House a block further West. The brick freight house was built in 1857. Scottsboro is County seat of Jackson County and a thriving community on the Memphis Division. I do not believe there is a city that can show more progress than Scottsboro. The county seat of High Jackson was Belle Fonte, two miles South of Hollywood from Dec. 15, 1821, to Nov. 13, 1868, when it was moved to Scottsboro. Both Stevenson and Larkinsville had won the county site in two elections but Scottsboro got the Courthouse.”

“Scottsboro furnished its quota of good railroad men, namely: M. A. Payne (deceased), J. W. Payne, Wayne Wallace (deceased), Sam J. Frasier (deceased), Sam J. Frasier, Jr., Clay S. Frasier, Joe G. Matthews, Julian O. Askin (deceased), Garland Woodall, R. R. Kelley, B. E. Kelley, B. F. Kelley, E. T. Hodge, E. C. Snodgrass, Edw. M. Sisk, Sr., Edw. M. Sisk, Jr., E. M. Sisk, Wm (Billie) McMahan (deceased), Bunn McMahan, John McMahan (deceased), White Hamlett, Buck Hamlett, Price Hamlett, Jno. R. Hamlett, Audy Hamlett, Sam Hamlet, John Aday, Tom Swaim, R. Driver, E. R. Driver, A. G. Harper, B. M. Harper, H. A. Tribble Geo. Higgins, Harry Higgins, W. D. Butler, John Sisk, Sam Sloan, A. P. Grizzle, M. I. Honey, Jonah Honey, Joe Holderfield, A. L. Skelton, N. D. Hall, Dave Larkin, Wm. Larkin, Richard Keel, H. B. Wilborne, E. L. Smart, Tom Caldwell, Edward. Boyd, J. J. Canterbury, John Canterbury, Hunter Kennemore, I. H. Petty, J. D. Brannum, Virgil Henshaw, Gordon Barclay, I. A. Durham, Sam Hamlett, and M. E. Hall.”



1917 inventory photos.

Report: From Jack Daniels: Originally called Scott’s Mills, Scottsboro was probably an early water station but no depot was built until 1861, when the brick freight house and combined ticket office was completed. This depot survived the Civil War and was repaired in 1866. In 1871, a new water tank was built. The first separate passenger depot was built in 1891 at a cost of \$1,944. See report for technical details of the structures.

Rail Hotels: Scottsboro was a rail stop for a bit over 100 years, and a number of hotels and rooming houses in walking distance of the depot came and went during that time.

Ellis House: In September 1874, the *Alabama Herald* carried an announcement from John W. Ellis about the opening of Ellis House, a “New Hotel, near the Public Square in Scottsboro, Ala.” that “is now open for the accommodation of the public.” At some point over the next years, Mr. Ellis becomes the manager of the Harris House Hotel; he left this job and later returned to it in 1881. The Ellis House was still in business in 1893 when dentist Dr. C. Q. Beech listed in his business card that his office was in the “Ellis house next door to the Livery Stable.” In 1904, a Mr. Yokley gave up his access to the house and it was rented to W. D. Sisk and was a private residence.



Phillips Hotel: According to Elizabeth Snodgrass, daughter of mayor and publisher Alexander Snodgrass writing in 1900, the Phillips Hotel was on a slight elevation and sat diagonally across from the freight depot, making it the southwest corner of North Houston. The hotel was built and operated by John Phillips, who lived next door with his wife Elizabeth. This hotel is found in Scottsboro’s earliest newspapers; it seems to have opened just after the Civil War. The *Alabama Herald* wrote on November 12, 1868, “Mr. John Phillips, having bought the property of Mr. John Whitfield will, it is said, open a hotel there soon.”



There are tales of drummers selling peach and plum bushes in 1874 and of a sophisticated Christmas ball in 1873. Just before John died in December, 1875, the family converted the hotel to a private boarding house. J.M.M. Drake arrived in October 1876 to manage the hotel for the family. In 1880, it was purchased by Mr. M.M. Grantham for \$2800 and sold shortly thereafter to Hamlin Caldwell, who, for a short time, used it as a private residence. When he sold the house in 1899, it was described thus: "The house contains 18 or 20 rooms and is one of the most substantial houses in the county. Good out houses, larger lot, well water on site." It was torn down when the industrial building on this site was built.

Harris House/Staley Boarding House: This rooming house is associated with two locations in Scottsboro: between Word Lumber and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on Willow Street and the corner of Martin and Andrews. The Willow Street house was torn down when the new Word Lumber was built in the mid 1950s. Its history as a hotel goes back to just after the Civil War when this building was the Harris Hotel. The February 15, 1900 *Scottsboro Citizen* notes, "Mrs. James Staley has rented the Capt. J. R. Harris residence and will keep a select private boarding house." Capt. Harris moved to his Larkinsville home and died in 1916. James Staley died in 1922. Hal Hurt was a resident of the Staley Hotel in the 1920 census. He married and brought his new wife "home" to live in the Staley Hotel. After James Staley died, Mrs. Staley moved to the corner of Martin and Andrews Street and continued to run a boarding house. One of her boarders, dentist Elias Ingram, remained in the house after it ceased to be a boarding house, looking after Mrs. Staley. He died in 1948, and she died in 1951.

Parks Boarding House: Before Dr. William Caswell Maples brought the lovely early Victorian house at the north end of Market Street into the Maples family, it had been a boarding house operated by Mrs. M. J. Parks. The house was built by master builder William Whitworth around 1871. It sold in 1889; Whitworth sold the house to W. F. Kirk, an attorney, for \$3500. The Kirks sold 5/8 of their interest in the house and property to Maggie J. Parks, Mrs. Kirk's mother, who converted it into a boarding house and hotel. Mrs. Parks added the bay window and a good deal of gingerbread trim. The hotel thrived, and she paid off her mortgage in 1901. In 1905, she sold the hotel to Maples.

Bailey Hotel: The Bailey Hotel opened for business October 1, 1905. The new hotel was just across the tracks from the Parks Hotel. "Mrs. Nannie Bailey will be ready to open up her house as a hotel on October 1st, which is the time Mrs. Parks leaves. The Parks House closes the 23rd of September." (SC, Sep 21, 1905) Nancy Bird Thompson "Nannie" Bailey (born in 1865) was 40 years old and had been a widow six years when she opened the Bailey to support herself and her three children. It was torn down in 1964 to add parking for the square.

Jessica Hotel and Apartments: Built by L. E. Brown, the Jessica Hotel included a white-tablecloth restaurant that was the "after church" destination of choice for many years. It opened August 8, 1940 and was managed by Victoria Keeton and others. The apartments on Laurel Street burned January 16, 1958. The hotel was torn down in 1972.

Hotel Scottsboro: Built by James Money, construction of the Hotel Scottsboro on the northwest corner of Willow and Broad began in February 1934. The three-story structure was the tallest building in Jackson County. The hotel cost \$25,000 to build with 18 rooms per floor (33 total guest rooms), and public spaces and retail establishments downstairs. As the county moved away from rails and became a car culture, the hotel benefitted from being on the Dixie Highway. It burned in 1998.



Top: Staley Boarding House from City Hall. Next: Parks Boarding House/Maples house, *Sentinel* photo by Carmen Wann. Bailey Hotel 1917 photo from Ann Chambliss; Jessica Hotel from 1941 Word movie; Hotel Scottsboro from John B. Tally.

Hollywood Station

Booklet: “First named Belle Fonte Station, afterwards changed to Samples and later to Hollywood. The new depot was built in the spring in 1949. With my pictures as a guide I shall have a second place to Hollywood and the credit to Emmy Haines, Supt. B & B Department.



1917 inventory photo.

Mr. Meek, agent tells us that he was checked in here June 4, 1910 by Mr. T. H. Seay (who was then traveling auditor now is now comptroller in Washington). Forty years at one station is a mighty good record. Best authorities have it that Mr. G. W. Chapman was first telegrapher-agent, but prior to him a Mr. Russell was non-telegrapher agent. Following Mr. Chapman was J. A. Wilson, Geo. H. Strickland, J. W. Maples, J. D. Brandon, and A. Hamilton. The Old Depot served from 1890 to 1949. from this station came the following good R. R. men: D. C. Minor, C. Chandler.”

Report: Built in 1892 and photographed on November 6, 1917, the Hollywood station was the Type IV combination station with a passenger entrance, a bay window, and an 8’ 6” by 19’ platform surrounded by a wooden skirt. It was electrified. The area around the depot included a coal house with an 840 cubic foot capacity and chutes, a 31’ x 45’ cotton platform, and a privy.

Rail Hotel: People who stepped off the train in Hollywood walked only a few feet to find a room at the Chapman House Hotel and Boarding House, located (according to Caroline Machen) to the right of Shorty’s Store. “George Chapman emigrated to Hollywood from Carnes and built the Hollywood Hotel,” Elizabeth McAlpine wrote in 1977. “The Hotel contained twelve rooms. Braxton B. Comer, Governor of Alabama, and his party lunched at the hotel in 1908.” George Chapman was the first telegrapher at the depot and was also station agent. The boarding house was built some time around 1890. In the 1900 census, George and his wife Mary Lou are running the boarding house. The 1910 *Progressive Age* October supplement showed the hotel as a single-story building and said, “Mr. Chapman is proprietor of the hotel and a better place or a more cheerful fireside never greeted a tired traveler.” In November 1910, the *Age* reported that a second story was added. George sold the hotel to Elizabeth McAlpine noted that Robert O. Starkey bought the hotel and converted it into apartments. Caroline Machen remembered when it was torn down.



Top: Chapman boarding house, from the October 1910 *Progressive Age* supplement. Bottom: Boarding house after 2nd floor added, 1910 from Hollywood City Hall.



L to R, 1900 Walter Johnson on Tull, at Depot #2, Depot #2 from Dee Meek, Dee Meek in the Hollywood depot, and Meek in front of Depot #3.

Fackler Station

Booklet: “Fackler was a busy little station in the early 1900s, logs, lumber, axe handles, and general store. The same depot has served since 1890.” Jack Daniels has a bit more information: “A Jackson County history states that in 1873 there was only one store in Facklers. The M&C reports Facklers as being a freight stop for the first time in 1887, but there is no mention of a depot being built. Railroaders coming from here: M. A. Roach, J. B. Carleton.”



1917 inventory photo.

Report: The 1917 Southern Railroad inventory states that the depot shown in the report was built in 1907 and calls it a Type V combination station with passenger and freight capacity and a bay window surrounded by wooden skirting. The depot property included a privy with “novelty siding,” an oil box, a six-year-old passenger platform, an eight-year-old cotton platform 20’ 6” x 63’, a mail box, two tools buildings, and a well and fence.

Chronicles: Ann Chambless wrote about the founding of Fackler in the April 2014 *Chronicles* and it is her information that follows. In 1856 Fackler was a water-and-wood site. “The Memphis and Charleston reports show Fackler as being a freight stop for the first time in 1887, so Fackler’s Station probably had only a cotton platform and a water tank for 30 years.” The location was referenced in John A. Logon’s account of movements of the 90th Illinois Infantry in 1863, when his Union soldier camped there.”

So why pick Fackler the location for a water stop and cotton platform, you might ask? The affluent John Jacob Fackler family flourished in Huntsville in the 1850s. Like Robert Scott in Scottsboro and Addison White in Hollywood, John Fackler was a major stockholder in the M&C Railroad, and coincidentally, owned 80 acres of land just south of today’s “downtown” Fackler. John J. Fackler, whose personal estate was valued at \$150,000 in 1860, lived in the Twickenham district house at 518 Adams Street, so had the means to influence the building of the water station and cotton platform. John and his wife Jane Reed spent time in Jackson County between 1854 and 1860 and needed a way to move his lumber and cotton out of Jackson County. So Fackler’s Station, as it was called in the 1870 census, was born.

The Roach family mostly likely opened the first store in Fackler, since Milton Roach is listed as a store clerk in 1870, and Jonas Campbell showed a similar occupation in Fackler in 1880. Fackler was a freight stop in 1887. The first evidence of a depot was 1900 when Sidney Johnson Nethery’s occupation was recorded as a Fackler depot agent.

Rail Hotel: The 1900 census also showed the Fackler Hotel, operated by John R. and Mary J. Field of Kentucky, next door to Ben Waddle. Boarders listed in the census were Joe McCrary, Wallace E. Holder, and Sidney Nethery (the depot agent). The hotel was still thriving in the 1910 census with the same managers and these boarders: Joseph L. McCrary, a retail merchant; George B. McKenzie, a school teacher; Leon Giles; and Dr. J. H. Sentell. By 1930, John Canterbury was the railroad agent.



Fackler Hotel, Photo from Betty Knight.

Stevenson Stations

Booklet and Daniel Book: “The original Stevenson depot was built in 1857 jointly by Memphis & Charleston and Nashville and Chattanooga railroads. Some changes have been made on the interior but the contour of the building is the same. Stevenson is technically the East End of the Memphis Division, and early historians say that the Memphis & Charleston was finished to Stevenson on March 8, 1856. It is my [Jack Daniels’] opinion that tracks were laid and trains run from Stevenson to Decatur and freight ferried across to river at Decatur until the early part of 1857. The Nashville & Chattanooga was completed to Bridgeport in 1853 whereby M&C cars were moved over N & C track between Stevenson and Chattanooga. This contract was to run for 30 years, but was abrogated Oct. 1, 1880 and a new contract entered into by Louisville & Nashville....Mr. W. F. Martin was agent for M&C for many years; following him was R. B. Ellis and Edward M. Sick, who was, I believe the last man to hold this agent for the Southern Ry. Co. Mr. W. M.

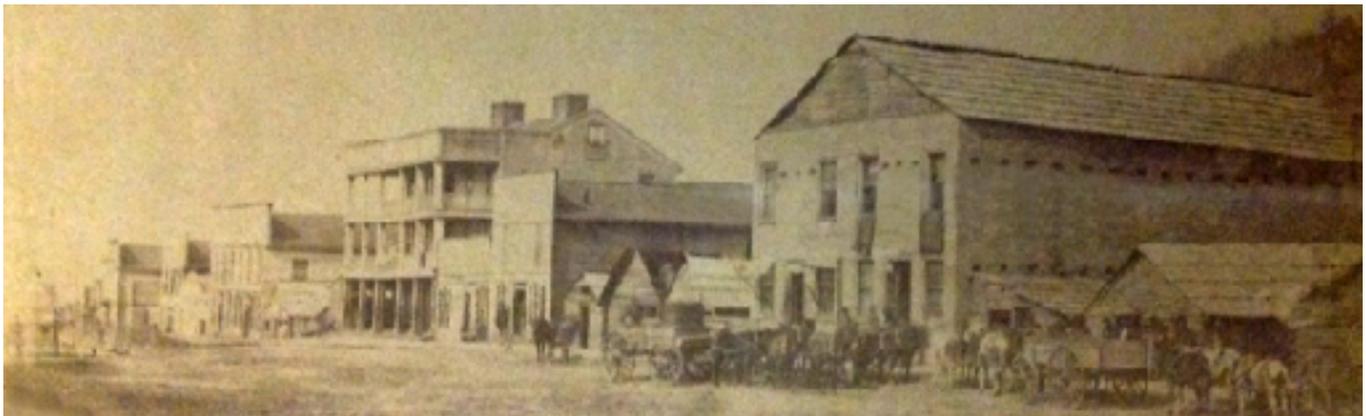
Cowan was the first agent for the Nashville and Chattanooga R.R. that I have any record of.”

A wooden freight house was built there in 1856 and the report for that year states that “It is contemplated to build a passenger house and a covered platform for transshipping freight” to be used by both railroads. This building was constructed and in 1858 a machine shop erected. These buildings survived the Civil War. In 1872, a brick passenger station was built at Stevenson: “A neat and commodious brick depot has been built costing about \$6,000. In 1892 a new freight house was built for \$857 to replace the one which burned.”

“Stevenson has produced her quota of good railroad men: John B. Shirley, Jack A. Shirley, J. Wiley Hill, J. T. Parton, Ben Parton, Geo. Sanders, Geo. Shorts, B. F. Sanders, Luke Sanders, Doug Sanders, Jessie Sanders, Joe Sanders, R. D. Sanders, Jerry Sanders, John M. Talley, Collins Bennett, Jim Graham, John Graham, Hope Graham, Joe Stone, Harry Stone, Stonewall Smith, Alex Caperton, Jack Caperton, Alex Stewart Jr. and Sr., Wallace Stewart, W. A. Stewart, John Martin, Ben Ellis, H.H. Hopkins Jr., Geo. Cloud. A great number of Hackworths and Rudders. Colored: Ben Stevens, Jno. Bowman, Andy Hill, Oscar



Inventory photos of top, passenger depot and hotel and bottom freight depot.



Main Street Stevenson in 1870, from John Graham. Alabama House is at the center.

Jones, Jim Jones, Alex Smith, Henry Smith. Bunk Smith Linas Miller, Dan Austin, Riley Jordan, Edw. Cook, Chas. Miller, Tom Young, John Rice, Dal Rice, Burt Winston, Geo. Washington, Walter Washington.” The list goes on for two pages and is too extensive to reproduce here. The full list is in the Sheffield Celebration booklet: <https://www.jchaweb.org/downloads/TuscumbiaRRCelebration1950.pdf>

Report: The 1917 Southern inventory report noted that the freight depot included the freight house, a privy, a well, a tool house, a coal bin and a 16’ x 36’ cotton platform. The Type VI jointly owned passenger station included a great number of out buildings, several platforms, and shanty houses.

Rail Hotels: Stevenson has a long history of hotels near the tracks that supported rail passengers. The oldest is seen in all the Civil War photos of Stevenson—Alabama House.

Washington House: Matthew Washington had his store in Bellefonte. He died in 1862 and his son William moved the Dry Goods business to Stevenson, where the business was downstairs in the building where Ricky Steele Park is today, and the hotel and boarding house was upstairs. The 1860 census shows the boarders at the hotels at the time the census was taken, which included merchants, store clerks, and a shoemaker. William was ill with Bright’s disease and had moved home in the 1880 census and died in 1883.

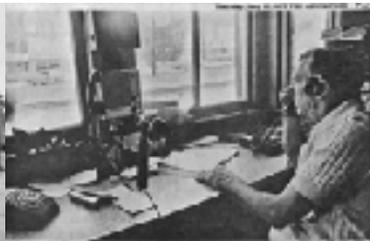
Alabama House/Condit House: At the same time the Washington Hotel was operating, the major hotel in town was the Alabama House. As the photos show, it was a surprisingly large hotel for a new town, three stories and an attic. James Sulzty’s *Hotels of Alabama* notes that the building had 50 guest rooms. “Train passengers took their meals at the Alabama House while the train took on water and wood,” Eliza Woodall wrote in *The Stevenson Story*. Ms Woodall continues: “During the Civil War at the first occupation of Stevenson in 1862, Gen. McCook had his headquarters in the Alabama House, but in 1863 during the second and continuing occupation, the hotel was specifically leased for the sole use of Federal Government railroad employees.” (p.186) Proprietors of the hotel included J. D. Borin and A. B. Condit, who briefly changed the name to Condit House. The hotel burned in the 1911 Stevenson downtown fire.



Top: William Washington family photo. Middle: Alabama House from Eliza Woodall, put on Facebook by daughter Patty. Bottom: Stevenson Hotel from Emily Campbell.

Stevenson Hotel: The Stevenson Hotel opened April 15, 1873 (*AH*, Jan 7, 1873) It is almost attached to the Stevenson Station. It thrived as a hotel under a number of owners until the early 1930s when travel by car took drivers away from the hotel. It is still in use today for meetings. Eliza Woodall’s *Stevenson Story* has excellent information about this hotel, from period newspapers and interviews with Earnestine Mann Russell.

Union Hotel: The Union Hotel opened in 1887, with L. J. Langston as the proprietor. “It was a frame building located on the lot where City Hall is today. According to the *Sentinel*, it was destroyed in 1907 by a wind storm. (*JCS*, April 12, 1992)



L to R, 1917 inventory photo; Mid 1930s Foster Coffman and Charles “Dougar” Coffman at the depot in the 1930s; Barron Purdy, Stevenson station agent (*JCA*, May 22,

New Information about the Moody Brick Cemetery

When Rob and Donna-Marie Chiroux so graciously hosted the JCHA on August 3 of this year, Rob told us about additional information that he had discovered when he brought in ground-penetrating radar to study the family cemetery and the area around it. There are eight marked graves in this cemetery, but the radar operators identified 61 additional burials.

Of these unmarked graves, 34 of them were determined to be graves of enslaved persons. These graves were shallow (18 inches deep) and contained no remaining bones or bits of metal. The researchers concluded that bodies were interred in such graves without coffins, wrapped probably in burlap, and that after this much time has passed, all that identifies these graves is disturbed ground. Rob marked these shallow graves with bricks that were removed from the back of the original house in the early 1900s when the addition was added, some of which are original bricks and some from the time of the addition.



Photo from Findagrave, taken by Don C. Willmon.

The remaining graves were different and dug deeper. One large grave is off by itself and contains the remains of an equine skeleton. This large grave is downhill from the cemetery area at the center of a cluster of trees, one of which is a huckleberry tree (“noted as such in some verbal histories we have heard”, Rob tells us) in the open field. The singular, large grave under the huckleberry tree was suspected by the operator to possibly be a large animal (maybe a horse or mule). Human remains could be below the equine skeleton but this cannot be confirmed.

The remaining 26 graves are on the rise in the cemetery, three mass graves three feet deep containing 12 (6 x 2), 10 (5 x 2) and 4 (4 x 1) likely human remains for which rows of metal buttons can be detected. One of these burials shows indications of a continuous metal object to the side which is likely a sword buried with an officer. Based on the time of the war, when troop movements took place in the area, Rob had hypothesized that these were Union graves and that the graves were created after 1863 because this timeframe reflects the time when the Union occupied North Alabama.

I passed this information on to James Sentell, one of our very able JCHA Civil War experts, and asked if he could speculate what Union regiments might have been in the area and if he knew anything about the equine burial in the yard.

According to James, himself a Barbee descendent, he and Ann Barbee Chambless had documented the incident that very likely created the equine burial in their Barbee genealogy. There were actually two men also buried here, Confederate soldiers, Jeff Barbee and, Issac Teeters, along with their mule. The two men hanged a Union sympathizer. They were caught at the Moody Brick, killed by Union troops, and buried with their mule.

The man that the two Confederates had allegedly killed was Joe Sanders. Joe’s great-great grandnephew Gary Sanders tells the story of his death, a story he got from a letter written by Louie Richard Davis of Texas to his friends in Scottsboro, published in 2000 in a newsletter called *Sanders Siftings*. “One of the Sanders...was caught off guard while plowing in a field by bushwhackers. They took him and his horse to the top of a hill and made Sanders dig a grave. Then the bushwhackers killed both man and horse and buried both in the grave with the legs of the horse sticking out of the grave.” Another variation stated the

“the Rebel neighbors thought he was giving information to the Yankees. There were three of these Rebels, one a neighbor by the name of Barbee. They caught up with them near the foot of the mountain close to the old Moody Brick. The Yankees killed the horse and made the men dig a grave for it. When the grave was dug—they killed the men, put them in the hole and rolled the horse in on top of them.” A Huntsville newspaper reported much the same story. So this is a well-known story from family tales, backed up by a newspaper account, with the Barbee name associated with it. This story is related in Joe Sanders’s findagrave record: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/29127047/joseph-sanders>

“Ann and I have always believed that this killing is what set off Jeff and Isaac,” James Sentell adds, “if they really did kill Joe Sanders.... Joe Sanders owned the Blowing Cave, yet Jeff and Uncle Isaac worked most days in the cave for the Confederates while the Sanders guys were off with the 3rd Ohio Cavalry.” Confederates and Union soldiers never passed up a chance take revenge on each other.

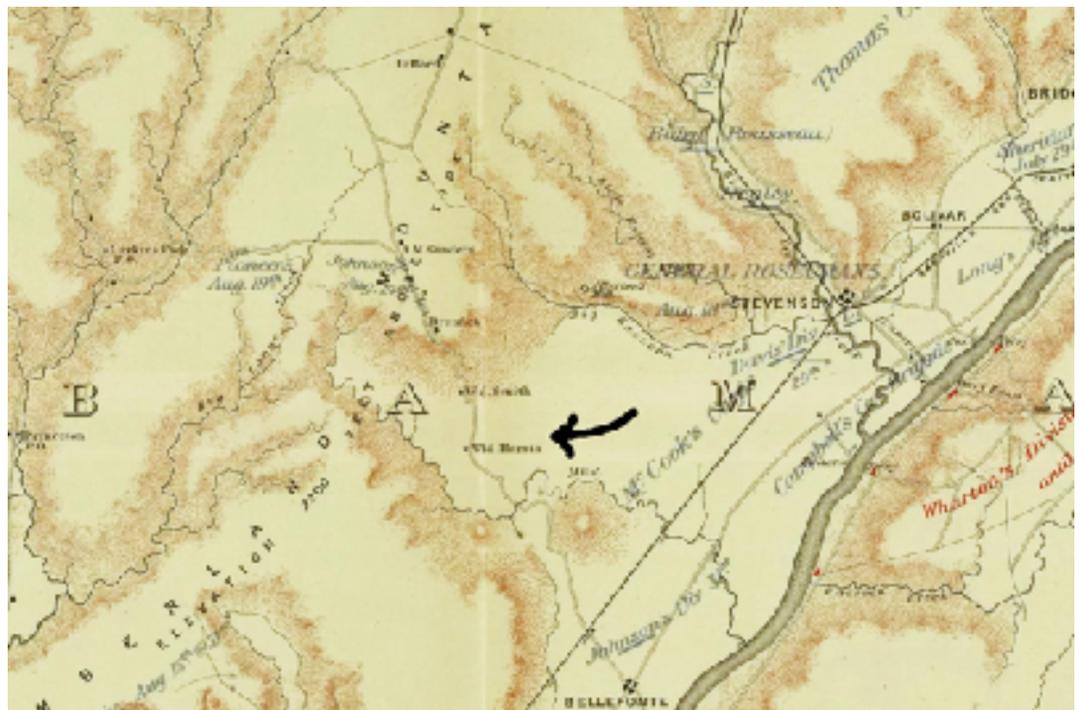
But James has his doubts about the killing of horses and mules. “The crazy hand-me-down tale of the mass graves of my three relatives and their mule could be warped by time and conveyance. Mules and horses were valuable war booty, as the records are full of the Union guys taking mules and horses when they were here in ’62 and ’63. I have always believed Jeff and Issac are in some of those unknown graves at the Moody Brick. Ron Lee [former owner of the Moody Brick] and I talked years ago about all these graves scattered around the property, not near the rock enclosure for the family graveyard.” Still, the reason for the equine grave can be corroborated with a newspaper account and tales from both families.

The other three mass graves contain the bodies of 26 men who appear to be soldiers, identified by the rows of metal button that have survived the corrosive effects of nearly 160 years underground. Rob Chiroux speculates that the numbers were so great because the Moody house had been used as a convalescent facility for wounded Union soldiers who needed time to heal.

I asked James if there were records of Union or Confederate troops being in the area around the Moody Brick. He sent me the official "Chattanooga Campaign in August and September, 1963" map, shown below. The arrow

points to the location of the Widow Harris house, aka the Moody Brick. “It appears from these maps that the main road from Winchester, across the Cumberland Plateau to Bellefonte ran just in front of the Moody Brick,” James explains. “These maps appear to be last revised in 1891 where troop locations at various dates were added. Please note that the Moody Brick appears on these Civil War Maps as the ‘Widow Harris’ home.”

This map is part of a set of six maps that



Captain S. C. Kellogg, 5th Cavalry, "The Chattanooga Campaign of August and September by G. C. Merrill, May No. 4," with positions of troops location in 1891. Enlarged from a map compiled in 1865 by C. S. Margell under the direction of W. E. Merrill, 1st U.S. V. V. Engrs. and Published by The Chief Engineers of the Army in 1874. Drawn by J. Von Glumer.

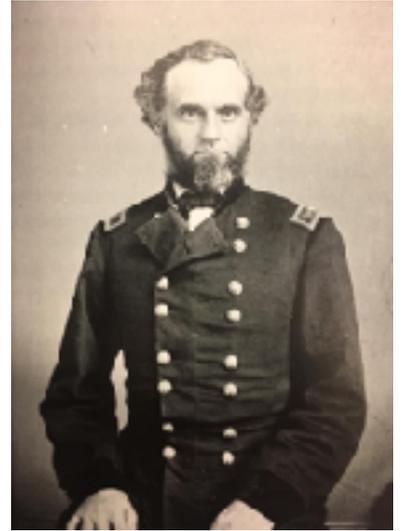
document Union activity during the summer of 1863 action in Alabama and Middle Tennessee, troop movements that ended in Chickamauga in September of 1863. “I believe that Union folks were at the Moody Brick,” that as history books describe, “they threw out the ladies and kids and stayed in the homes. There were a lot of skirmishes in the county and soldiers on both sides were killed and wounded.”

In one of the mass graves, a saber is clearly visible, an officer buried with his ceremonial weapon. “If the guy in the grave with a saber was Union, one would think it would be in the reports and post war, they would have moved him to Chattanooga, but it is not.” James speculates that the officer is a Confederate.

“I used the *Stevenson Story* to look for names in August of 1863 and found information for the movement of Union General Richard W. Johnson’s troops,” James continues. “The map shows him near the Sanders Residence. The *Stevenson Story* includes his note from August 22 when he is camped at Bellefonte.” (p. 122) The August 22 note by Johnson said, ‘Mountain was rough and steep and no water.’— Yes, those 4,000 folks gathered around the Moody Brick for a rest and water on a hot August day after pulling those cannons and caissons up and down the mountains.”

“The map also sketched Union General Alexander McCook’s troops on the map in the vicinity of Fackler. Union General Alexander McCook was in command of the 20th Ohio Corps at this time. Three divisions under him were commanded by General Jefferson C. Davis, Union General Phillip Sheridan, and Brigadier General Richard W. Johnson (1827-1897).” James indicates that the Johnson troops were near Hytop on August 19th, on the march south.

“It is my opinion that over 12,000 troops passed by the Moody (Harris) Brick in the third week of August, 1863 and based on the August 22 note by Johnson (*Stevenson Story*, p. 190), I believe many of these troops spent one night camped around the Brick.”



Union General Richard W. Johnson.
From Wikipedia.



Map identifying plate.

Information found concerning the 20th Corps and McCook's troops at the engagement of Chickamauga in late September of 1863 state that these three divisions consisted of 12,480 men. The loss at Chickamauga for McCook was one third of his troops, listed are 423 killed, 2698 wounded and 1215 missing in action, which would reduce his post battle troops to 8,144.

“These numbers indicate that approximately 4,000 troops are in that group under Johnson marching on the 19th, James said, “and I would think that the other 8,000 were in front by a day or so, having also passed by the Harris/Moody Brick. It sounds like the

move down the mountain along where current day County Road 33 is at the end of Crow Mountain was a tough march as each of these three divisions also had a battery of light artillery along.”

Rob notes that there is also a crypt behind the tombstones. “We have no information on its significance other than local lore,” Rob told us, but the Chiroux family has been told that the crypt contains “the skilled enslaved persons who directed the construction of The Brick” and that “the crypt was built as a memorial to them. This is entirely unconfirmed,” Rob said, “and I have not ventured into the enclosure and the ground within was not surveyed by the ground penetrating radar.” The records of Annie Coleman Proctor indicates that the crypt contains members of the Hudson family.

Annette Bradford, James Sentell, Rob Chiroux, and Gary Sanders

Brief History of 50 Years of the JCHA

In October of 1974, Ann Chambless and Christine Sumner had a formal invitation printed. It read simply, “A Jackson County Historical Society will be organized at the Scottsboro City Hall Auditorium, Sunday afternoon October 27, at 3:00 p.m. Please join us at this organizational meeting and help preserve the history of Jackson County. Please tell your friends and neighbors about the meeting.”

And the Jackson County Historical Association was born. It has remained active all the years since. The first officers were: Ann Chambless, President; Walter Hammer, 1st VP; Hazel Matthews, 2nd VP; Jim Eiford, Treasurer; and Alice Ruth Page, Secretary. The organization had 48 members. Of those original members, five—Jack Livingston, Pat Maples, Christine Sumner, Sandra Burney, and Patty Woodall—are still with us. Dues were \$7.50 a year and the group met in city hall.

Ann and Christine were not the first Jackson County historians. J. R. Kennamer wrote columns for the paper and histories of Jackson County and Woodville in the 1930s. The Matthews sister—Hazel, Leola, Pearl, and Eunice—scoured old newspapers and tromped through overgrown cemeteries recording information before I was even born. Annie Coleman Proctor drove from house to house copying precious family Bible records with a pencil and paper in the 1950s and 1960s. Ralph Mackey combed newspapers and public records to document locations, businesses, obscure graves and homes, and veterans. Pack rats kept family letters tied up in ribbons and stored in precious places. Men recorded their adventures and their farm activities on ledgers meant for commerce. Today we are able rub these family records together with public documents and come up with a pretty fair history of Jackson County. Every document rediscovered, every memory recorded, adds another piece to this puzzle.

This is what Ann Chambless did incrementally over the her 40 years of editing the *Chronicles*, one newsletter at a time. In the preface to the first bound volume of the *Chronicles*, Ann described her job as “filling the void in the story of the people who made local history.” A secondary goal was “to identify, by name, as many Jackson Countians as possible....to make people come alive.” Ann surfaced family names by publishing lists that she searched out and typed, lists that we now find in a flash online. Ann love a good list. When I took over the *Chronicles*, she told me that the only reason anyone reads the *Chronicles* was to look for their family names. I don’t think that is true, but I always remember her words when I choose whether include or omit a list of names.

While I hated to see so much space (sometimes an entire year) devoted to listing names, you have to remember: I write the *Chronicles* using ancestry.com for genealogy and census records, fold3 for military information, FindaGrave for headstones and family links, newspapers.com for dates and fact-checking, yearbooks.com for graduation information, and the previous editions of the *Chronicles* for local perspectives. Our major county history books are scanned and searchable, and every newspaper you can hold in your hand can be viewed online. The Library of Congress, the TVA, the Alabama Archives, state and local museums, Wikipedia—all these information sources are literally at my fingertips. If I can’t get it right with all that help, then I am indeed a sorry researcher. But Ann had to mail off to Washington and wait months for military records. She had to pull hardcopy volumes from the shelves of the Alabama Archives. She had to walk through newspapers one page at a time to track a subject. She had to check dates and facts in a book. I respect how hard her job was before the internet.

When the JCHA was new, there was so much to do, and the fledgling JCHA struggled to get all the undocumented history recognized. In January 1977, the organization had 20 subcommittees pursuing topics such as archaeology, artifacts, curation, fund raising, genealogy, hospitality, and research.

The earliest newsletters were transcriptions of articles from the *Alabama Herald* and the full text of the only surviving 1839 issue of the *Bellefonte Courier*. Newsletter #2 published the 1901 *Dun Alabama Mercantile Reference* listing all the businesses in all the towns recognized in Jackson County. Ann and

Eunice Matthews compiled a list of Revolutionary War veterans buried in Jackson County, and Sandra Burney in Montgomery created the list of county members of the 1820 state militia, the first of many lists that Ann published in the *Chronicles*.

Immediately after its birth, the nascent JCHA's first job was celebrating the nation's bicentennial. Walt Hammer and Carlus Page were our Jackson County and Scottsboro representatives respectively to the state group planning the celebration. The first JCHA bus tour was scheduled. Revere paid the expenses to have poor, long-suffering Joe Chambless ride through the streets of Scottsboro impersonating Paul Revere. The organization raised money for the Andrew Jackson statue in front of the courthouse. Nancy Hammer Bradford tells me that a newspaper writing about the upcoming unveiling the statue stated that Carlus Page and Walt Hammer would have an erection on the square. Nancy said that Carlus remarked to her father, "I don't know about you, Walt, but I'm not sure I'm up to it."

In July 1976, Ann and Pat Maples made a major move to scare up more members. They sent 575 formal invitations to prospective members in the county and held a membership tea at the old Maples home, and not to sound too Baptist, 102 souls were added to the membership roster. Ann and Joan Harbin created a history coloring book in 1981 called *The Colorful History of Jackson County*.

The sixth issue of the *Chronicles* concentrated on the history of Stevenson, and Kathryn Armstrong and Betty Ruth Henninger wrote about Fort Harker and the Rosencranz headquarters. The *Chronicles* reprinted a 1910 *Progressive Age* history of Stevenson, to which Eliza Woodall wrote a scathing retort that became part of her research for *The Stevenson Story*, which was published in 1982. A Woodville history followed in the 8th newsletter, and histories of Langston, Fackler, and other municipalities followed. In the early years, Ann also wrote many church histories.

In 1993, the organization reprinted Kennamer's 1935 *History of Jackson County*. The JCHA and Dr. Ronald Dykes partnered in publishing four of Dr. Dykes' books: *Growing Up Hard in Jackson County*, *Fighting the Just War*, *They Wouldn't Let Us Win*, and *Building Bridges and Roads in the Korean Conflict*. The organization printed Wendell Page's *Belmont Coal Mines of Jackson County* and offered it to JCHA members with a \$30 donation.

The primary job of the organization is historical preservation. The 1970s was a notorious time of "tear that old thing down and let's build something new," and Scottsboro lost a lot of beautiful homes and buildings during this tear-it-down frenzy. But more important is what was saved. Can you imagine Stevenson today without the Cowan house, the depot, and hotel? Scottsboro without the freight depot and the heritage center? The square with the lovely 1930s facades replaced with metal warehouses?

The JCHA was instrumental in recognizing and preserving the historic places in Jackson County and having them added to the National Register of Historic Places. When I coded the *Walk Around the Square* application for the web, I had the beautiful work done by Judy Proctor and Ann to use as a starting point—the deed research, the architectural descriptions, and the pictures. Jackson County has twelve major entries from across the county in the National Register of Historic Places.

The JCHA continues to procure historic markers to identify and recognize Jackson County landmarks and events. There are presently 20 markers put in place by the JCHA. And there are always more in the works. In 2003, the JCHA led the county by "knocking the scab off the wound" that was the Scottsboro Boys incident by erecting a historical marker along the path that the nine boys walked from the old jail to the courthouse. The marker ceremony attracted national attention.

In the first years of the JCHA's existence, members who lived in Stevenson began working to save and refurbish the Stevenson Railroad Depot, and the JCHA furnished manpower and gave the museum board \$15,000.00 for depot improvements. In 1981, the JCHA worked with Brad Bradford and Wendell Page to assemble a broad coalition of committed community members. This group convinced the City of Scottsboro to purchase the Brown-Proctor House (built in 1881) for use as a museum and family history center. The JCHA served as the supporting organization and umbrella for the Paint Rock Valley History

Project coordinated by JCHA member Judy Prince. The organization worked with David Loyd to establish the Bridgeport Area Historical Association. The JCHA provided some financial and research assistance and manpower to Fackler citizens for restoration of the McGuffey's Store as a community center. We are not just the Scottsboro Historical Association.

The JCHA worked with Scottsboro's mayor to save the Scottsboro Freight Depot when the Norfolk-Southern Railway announced its intention to raze the building. After Norfolk-Southern deeded the building to the City of Scottsboro, the building was leased to the JCHA. Dr. David Campbell gave the mayor the ammunition he needed to prove the building's worthiness by researching the building and adding it to the National Register of Historical Places. John Neely served as the first restoration chairman and stabilized the building's deteriorating state; Kelly Goodowens assumed that role in 2007. A plaque on the wall of the depot recognizes Jessie Sue Bynum as a "Trainmaster" for her generous donations to saving the depot. Local citizens helped the JCHA fill the depot museum with artifacts. It is open to the public the first Saturday of every month and by appointment, and is the default location of JCHA meetings.

For 40 years, Ann Chambless crafted historical experiences for the county in the JCHA's quarterly meetings. She invited authors and re-enactors. She surfaced diaries and interviewed elderly folks whose heads held first-person accounts of early Jackson County. She wrote a short play and brought costumed actors and a fog machine to dramatize life at the Standish home in Bryant. She drove most of the historical marker activity. She spoke to civic groups and school children about county history.

Ann organized some wonderful bus tours. With so many years of *Chronicles* research, she amassed a vast knowledge of the county. Her bus tours were things of beauty, something that we have not been able to continue now that she is gone. She knew what was interesting. She had local contacts. She collected money, rented a bus, and arranged for meals and stops. She wrote and conducted the tours.

In 2004, the JCHA received the Alabama Historical Association's Kuykendall Award for the State's outstanding local historical association. In 2014, Scottsboro was chosen to host the Alabama Historical Association Spring Conference. Our web site was selected as best in the state in 2019.

Documenting people who are buried in the county has always made history more tangible. JCHA members Barry Pickett, Ralph Mackey, Beth Presley, Annette and David Bradford, Carol Ballard, Bobby and Judy Liles, Michelle Urban, James Sentell, and others have prepared county-wide cemetery inventories that have been shared with libraries and through the www.findagrave.com web site, enhancing the site by documenting graves without headstones, adding historic photos and gravesite pictures, and working through complex family trees. Our members have reached audiences beyond the *Chronicles* by writing history columns for local newspapers—Christine Sumner, Carlos Page, Edna Gay, and the Bradfords to name a few.

When the group of officers that are now passing the reins of the JCHA came on board in 2018, we struggled to find speakers that groups would enjoy and offer programs that would be attended and appreciated, with varying success. When we had an excellent speaker last spring with 18 people in attendance, I was ready to write off the organization as having outlived its usefulness.

David and I have worked to make the JCHA more accessible to people who do not live in Jackson County. More than half of the *Chronicles* are mailed to people who lived outside of Alabama. Some make a once-in-a-lifetime journey to Jackson County to visit places that have been special to their families in the past. But the amount of traffic to our website says that many people research from home.

It is impossible to underestimate the role that David has played in keeping the JCHA alive. Ann first recruited us to create a website for the Scottsboro Depot Museum, which is still online and part of the JCHA website, in 2012, while we were still working. We retired in 2017 from a technology company where much of our careers had been spent researching and delivering technical information, in books and on the web. David wrote about his family business, the Locker Plant, and I wrote about the men who died in our world wars. David photographed the hand-drawn TVA maps donated to the heritage center, and we

created the indexed *Guntersville Watershed Before the Flood* website so people could determine what family lands were swallowed by Lake Guntersville in 1939. David had been writing about Jackson County since 1968 when he wrote news and a column for the *Jackson County Advertiser*, and after we married in 1976, for the *Sentinel* and the *Huntsville Times*. His articles for the *Chronicles* always draw compliments across the organization. He first made contact with Dr. James Reed and has edited many of Jim's articles for the *Chronicles*.

But David's most enduring accomplishment is the JCHA website. The JCHA scanned all the early years of the *Chronicles* using optical character recognition (OCR) technology so that all of our county's history can be searched with Google, and made them available on the JCHA web site (www.jchaweb.org). This site includes over 100 out-of-print county history books for Download, the *Walk Around the Square*, the TVA Maps, and the Scottsboro Depot Museum site. Most recently, he worked with Steve Turner who owns the heritage center website to port the site to the his server instead of GoDaddy. Together David and Steve met the single-sockets layer (SSL) requirement to keep our content safe from hackers.

We worked with Auburn University in 2017 to host a special World War I exhibit that included local information, and I wrote a series of articles on the impact of the war on Jackson County. Working with the heritage center, we set up well-attended exhibit of women's hats in their formal rooms. We also set up and hosted a Lucille Benson exhibit at the depot, and wrote an article about her for *Alabama Heritage* magazine in 2024. We partnered with the Alabama Cemetery Alliance to present a day-long cemetery workshop. This was the Alliance's annual meeting, and they brought speakers and workshops that we could never have organized or afforded on our own. Parts of Cedar Hill still gleam from the headstone cleaning part of the workshop.

We partnered with Northeast Alabama Junior College to put on three cemetery strolls at Cedar Hill. Held in the fall with great support for the Alabama Humanities Commission and the Bynum Foundation, we had an excellent turnout of people who left knowing more county history than when they arrived.

When David and I took over the *Chronicles* in March 2018, we inherited a membership list scribbled on sheets of paper and cocktail napkins. David made it possible to handle membership and mailing by putting the distribution list into a spreadsheet and tracking dues paid on address labels generated quarterly by sorting the membership database.

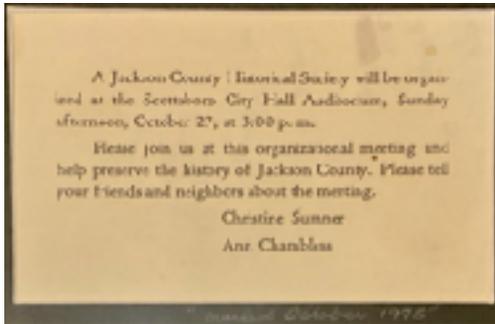
We used our skills to make information searchable and accessible. I scanned 340 high school yearbooks from all over the county, from their earliest years until 1990, when most school libraries have copies. Many of these were ones and twos that I drove sometimes long distances to borrow and return. I scanned records compiled by past historians like Mark Scott Skelton, Annie Coleman Proctor, and Christine Sumner. I ordered and organized Ann's family files and put them in the heritage center.

Over the years, the JCHA officers have largely been retired people, especially retired teachers, who can give the JCHA all the time that it demands. We have had some outstanding people serve as our presidents: Alice Ruth Page, Ann Chambless, Walt Hammer, Bob Hodges, Harry Campbell, Anna Ruth Campbell, David Campbell, Wendell Page, Rubilee Smith, James Davidson, John F. Neely, John Graham, Finis Royal, Drenda King, Donna Haislip Frederick, Jen Stewart, Susan Fisher, Kelly Goodowens, and Lennie Cisco.

The new group of JCHA officers includes younger people and working people. People with little children who have to come first. But these young officers are our "seed corn," the group we have to cultivate if we are to see the JCHA into its next 50 years.

These new officers face an entirely different set of challenges from their predecessors. Keeping the JCHA relevant and informative in an era when AI agents fetch any facts we want from the comfort of our recliners is at the top of the list. All of us are more polarized and more insular than ever, and new technologies have exacerbated the problem. We rattle around inside our like-minded internet groups. Civic clubs struggle to maintain a quorum—the once-active Jaycees and Civitans are gone. No one has

time for a meeting, much less time to volunteer. We worried that this 50th anniversary was the occasion to shut the JCHA down. But we are still here. Please give our new officers and authors your support. We desperately to understand where we have come from as we navigate the challenges ahead.



Top to bottom, left to right. 1976 Invitation to the JCHA organizational meeting; 1978 Ann with Katherine Armstrong and a friend when Stevenson Downtown was added to the historical registry; 1976 Walt Hammer and the erection on the square. Walt and Ann during the courthouse records project. Ann and Joan Harbin at the 1981 coloring book launch party. 1976 Joe Chambless as Paul Revere; 2018 Susan Fisher addressing a group of young lawyers at a depot workshop; General Grant (Dr. E. C. Fields Jr.) with Mrs. Grant, Jen Henninger, and Kelly Goodowens;. 2016 Curly Putman celebrating Curly Putman Day at the depot; 1976 the JCHA Bus Tour group.



Rosenwald Schools in Jackson County

Many of you may not be familiar with Rosenwald Schools since two of ours in Jackson County have been torn down and the third in Bridgeport is so changed as to be unrecognizable. Rosenwald Schools were built between 1917 and 1935 as matching grant schools for African-American children all over the South, funded by Chicago businessman Julius Rosenwald. The 1918 Russell Sage Foundation report on education in Alabama schools stated that the illiteracy rate for white children 10 and over in Alabama was 6.4 percent. It was 31.3 percent for African-American children.(1)

Rosenwald Schools were put in place to address this disparity. Madison County had nine Rosenwald Schools; Jackson had three. The Madison County web site sets the stage for the introduction of Rosenwald Schools:

In Alabama in the early 1900s, nearly half of the population was Black. However, only 20% of Black children were enrolled in school compared to 60% of white children. In addition, schools for Black children did not usually teach higher grades. Black teachers tended to have less education and were paid less than white teachers.

The curriculum for poor white and Black children in the rural South focused on practical lessons: reading, writing, arithmetic, agriculture, sewing, and cooking. This pragmatic approach neither prepared rural children for higher education nor encouraged them to pursue it, preventing them from improving their position in society. (2)

The Deep South was ripe for educational reform in the Black community, and there was a desperate need for qualified teachers. In South Alabama, Booker T. Washington founded Tuskegee Institute in 1881 under a charter from the Alabama legislature for the purpose of training teachers in Alabama. In North Alabama, William H. Councill organized Lincoln Normal School in Huntsville, which became Alabama A&M University in 1875, as a result of an 1873 state bill that established a "State Normal School and University for the Education of the Colored Teachers and Students." But progress was slow and by 1910, Blacks were starting to move north in great numbers, six million between 1910 and 1970. Jackson County had small, fledgling Black schools in some locations before 1920. But if the majority of school-age Black students were going to become literate, the system needed help.

Some of that help came from Julius Rosenwald, the president and later chairman of Sears Roebuck & Co. and creator of the philanthropic Rosenwald Fund, which provided matching funds for the schools. To explain what these schools are and how they came into existence, I can do no better than to repeat parts of the 2009 article on Rosenwald schools written by Abraham Aamidor for the *Encyclopedia of Alabama*.

Rosenwald schools refer to a group of educational institutions established in the South for African Americans in the first half of twentieth century. The schools were named for Julius Rosenwald, president and later chairman of Sears Roebuck & Co. and creator of the philanthropic Rosenwald Fund, which provided matching funds for the schools. Nearly 400 schools and houses were constructed in Alabama and nearly 5,000 new schools were built in 15 southern states between 1917 and 1932 as part of this civic effort to increase educational opportunities in the largely rural and segregated South.

Rosenwald met Tuskegee Institute founder Booker T. Washington in late 1911 when Washington was the keynote speaker at a gathering of civic leaders in Chicago. Rosenwald, who introduced Washington to the crowd, was impressed with Washington's cause and soon signed on as a trustee of the Tuskegee Institute, a position he continued to hold after Washington's death.

In 1914, Rosenwald helped fund the building of six schools in Alabama with a \$25,000 grant to Washington and Tuskegee, which served as the base of operations for the project. The first to open its doors was a frame building in Loachapoka, Lee County. The other five were in Notasulga and Brownsville (Macon County), Chewacla (Lee County), and Big Zion and Madison Park (Montgomery County). The schools typically had a single teacher for all grades, and instruction generally focused on a basic curriculum of reading, writing, and arithmetic augmented by shop and vocational skills, including farming, gardening, dress making, and principals of personal hygiene.

In 1917, Rosenwald established the Rosenwald Fund to oversee the establishment of additional schools. (The schools were almost never officially named after Rosenwald but were known generically as such. In later years, after a school had crumbled or burned down, it sometimes was remembered as a "Rosenwald school" rather than by its actual name.) In 1920, management problems at Tuskegee prompted fund officials to establish an independent office for the school building program in Nashville, Tennessee. By 1928, at the height of the matching-grant program, at least one in every five rural schools for black students in the South was a Rosenwald school. Some 40 percent of black children in the South attended a Rosenwald school at the height of the program's popularity. In addition to the schools, the fund constructed 217 homes for teachers and 163 shop buildings at a total cost of \$28.4 million. In later years, the Rosenwald Fund also provided grants to African American artists and writers, such as author James Baldwin.(3)

The North Carolina State Archives has the plans for a one-room and a two-teacher Rosenwald Schools (4), and the Madison County Rosenwald web site provides further insight into construction of a Rosenwald school: "The Rosenwald Foundation also provided communities with booklets to help design their school, resulting in a uniform look. The designs tended to be simple with traditional details: pitched roofs, steep overhangs, white trim, and white-washed clapboard siding. The large windows on the schools allowed the maximum amount of light, important because many rural buildings did not have electricity. The buildings were east-west facing to avoid heat during the day. To keep it cool in the summer the building was raised off the ground, and the windows had breeze openings. Rosenwald School designs were so efficient that they were also used for schools not funded by the philanthropist."

Jackson County Rosenwald Schools: Jackson County had three bonafide Rosenwald schools: Fackler, Stevenson, and Bridgeport. Fackler and Stevenson have been torn down; the Bridgeport school is still standing but has been so altered by a local church that it is unrecognizable. The best way to appreciate how these schools operated is to visit the Burritt on the Mountain Replica Rosenwald School.

In Jackson County, institutes to coordinate the curricula across the county's black school are found as early as 1903. In December 1927, an institute for colored teachers was held, attended by ten teachers. The *Progressive Age* article notes that in 1927, "Jackson County boasts two Rosenwald Schools. We feel that the prospects for the colored child in this county are better than they have been before. The teachers are all unusually well prepared and are working enthusiastically and earnestly for the success and improvement of their schools."

Attendance at the county Rosenwald schools was consistently high. The May 3, 1928 "School Page" in the *Progressive Age* recognized students with perfect attendance, and the Stevenson Rosenwald School students include a number of future leaders of the Black community, included Thomas Elias Weatherly, who would later be principal at Carver School in Scottsboro. A similar column in January 1931 put attendance for the Fackler Rosenwald School at 92 percent.

The third Rosenwald school was added in 1929. When the county board of education met in January 1929, this notation was made: "The Superintendent was instructed to make two contracts for the Rosenwald School at Bridgeport: one contract for the materials and the other for the labor." The Bridgeport school was popular and well-attended, the attendance percentage in 1935 being 97.2 percent.

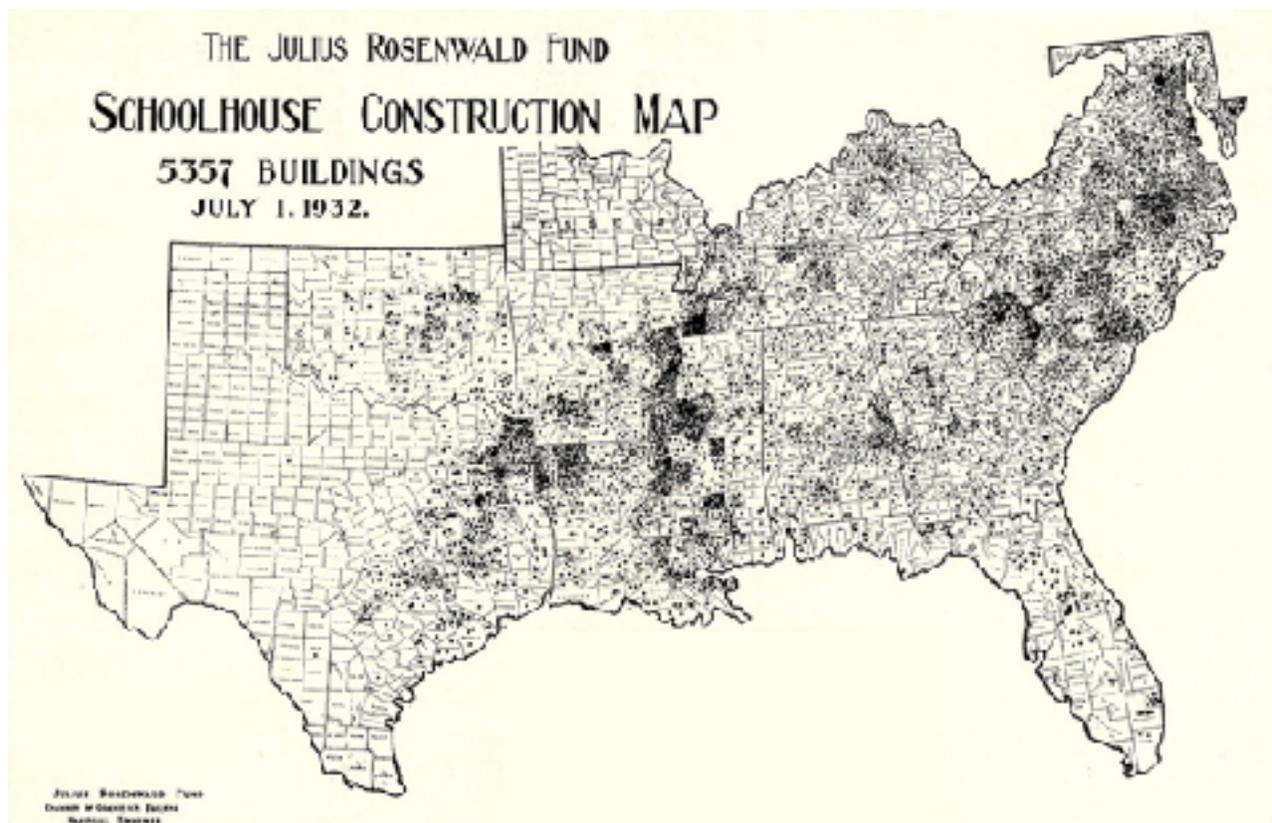
The November 7, 1929 "Financial Report for the Jackson County School System," published in the *Progressive Age*, noted in the list of receipts that \$500 was received from the Rosenwald Fund. A February 6, 1930 of "News for the State's Capitol" showed how much the state had received from the Rosenwald fund. "The contribution of \$26,350 from the Rosenwald Fund, appropriated for the year October 1929-1930 will enable the counties to receive aid in matching the State's appropriation," the column explained.

The Rosenwald schools also served as centers for adult education, and illiterate Black adults were highly motivated to learn. Prior to the 1930 census, the state superintendent of education for Alabama, and therefore the local county superintendents, became increasingly concerned with the adult illiteracy rate in Alabama. Since the 1930 census anticipated recording whether or not respondents could read or write,

Alabama set out to improve their literacy status by offering adult education in existing schools in the county. These were called Opportunity Schools. The May 22, 1930 *Progressive Age* reported that the Rosenwald Fund contributed to the opportunity schools. "Across the state, 8,193, adults registered for the first offered term of which 1,534 were white and 6,662 were colored."

In 1934, candidates running against incumbent governor Bibb Graves criticized him soundly for spending money on "colored schools" and having a building at "Negro normal" named Graves Hall, for the governor. But, Editor Jim Benson pointed out in the *Progressive Age*, "This argument was knocked into cocked hat by Governor Graves when he explained that the State of Alabama had no part in this building from a financial standpoint, but it was erected by contributions from Julius Rosenwald of Chicago. The man has contributed very generously to the erection of negro schools all over the nation and especially in the south. He has helped with a number of schools in this county, Fackler, Stevenson, and other places." (*PA*, March 8, 1934)

This map from the National Park Service Rosenwald School discussion was drafted July 1, 1932, when Julius Rosenwald died and the fund ended. It shows 5357 schools built by the Rosenwald Fund.(5)



As noted earlier, there were three Rosenwald schools in Jackson County. There was also a Rosenwald school near the county line in Gurley which some Jackson County students would have attended, and the Hollywood Colored School which is still standing was built in 1938, too late to have come under the Rosenwald program. The Black school in Scottsboro existed before the Rosenwald Fund was in place; it burned in 1917 and was rebuilt soon thereafter. Mary Hunter wrote a short column for the *Jackson County Sentinel* in April 1939 titled "Doings of Negro Schools" and recognized eight Black schools: Bridgeport, Cedargrove, Fackler, Hollywood, Larkinsville, Langston, Paint Rock, and Scottsboro.

Of the monies expended on the Rosenwald schools over the years, 64 percent came from tax revenues, 17 percent was donated by African Americans, 15 percent was contributed by Rosenwald and the Rosenwald

Fund, and just over 4 percent came from other private white donors. In Alabama, local residents contributed what they could, and some, like Peter Alba, a Civil War hero and philanthropist from Mobile County, donated land. The Grand Bay School, built on Alba's property, consisted of five large rooms, three of which were used for primary through seventh-grade classes. The other two rooms served as living quarters for the teachers.

Julius Rosenwald died at home in suburban Chicago on January 6, 1932. Condolences and eulogies poured in from a variety of national figures, including African American leaders W. E. B. DuBois and Walter White, then secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. President Herbert Hoover delivered a eulogy on March 27, 1932, over the National Broadcasting Corporation radio network from New York City that was broadcast nationally. Of the many obituaries in the public press accompanying the announcement of Rosenwald's death, the most interesting came from W.E.B. DuBois.

He noted that Rosenwald, a Jew, was more than familiar with racial prejudice and that his philanthropy was a shameful indictment of white Christian society. DuBois also said that it was ironic that a Jew was sponsoring educational initiatives for African Americans in the South—work that should have been undertaken by leaders in those states—and that this irony was lost on the white residents of the South.

Some of the Rosenwald schools in Alabama still stand. The Elmore County Training School, built in west Wetumpka in 1924, was made of brick and fared better than most Rosenwald schools. It currently houses the Elmore County Black History Museum. In Notasulga, the Rosenwald school and associated Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church were added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage and have been restored. Some surviving structures, such as the New Hope Rosenwald School in Chambers County, have already been added to the National Register of Historic Places (2001). All that remains of the original Grand Bay school building is a chunk of stone and mortar about 2 by 3 feet in size. Overall, preservation efforts remain haphazard and are usually dependent on committed local citizens, often alumni of the schools. Various efforts exist to document and catalog the Rosenwald schools, including one by the Alabama Historical Commission, several other states, and especially the Rosenwald Schools Initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Sharon Allison sent this information from the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC), State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This organization has very limited information on the schools in Alabama extracted from the files at Fisk University about 10 years ago. This description of local Rosenwald schools is derived from letters, popular press, and personal experience. These were our Rosenwald schools:

Location	Year Completed	Total Cost	Type	Negro Contribution	White Contribution	Public Contribution	Rosenwald Contribution
Fackler	1923	\$1750	1-room	\$800	\$0	\$450	\$500
Stevenson	1922	\$2300	2-room	\$1850	\$150	\$650	\$800
Bridgeport	1929	\$3080	2-room	\$830	\$500	\$2050	\$500

Fackler Rosenwald School: The first mention of Julius Rosenwald and his schools in Jackson County was at the first Colored Fair in the county in October 1916. Booker T. Washington Jr. addressed his audience and talked about the possibilities of this fund for a brighter future of African Americans, encouraging them to stay in Alabama rather than migrating north. (*PA*, Oct 27, 1916) A history of this school, published in the *Jackson County Sentinel* in 1934, says that the school for Black children in Fackler was originally held in Friendship Church. M.F. Timberlake, the “first Colored trustee ever appointed in Jackson County,” wrote Superintendent J. H. Wheeler requesting Rosenwald funds in 1922, and the request was granted on October 23 “providing we raised the sum of \$400.00” The school history details the fund raising effort and locating the deed to the property where the school was to be built. The group

was told that they had to raise additional money, and it was an arduous task. The Women’s Cleaning Club was formed to raise money; the cleaned houses and held dinners. Groups of men volunteered to pick cotton. Finally the group was ready to proceed, and with lumber purchased from W. J. Word and L. W. Scott as their builder, they completed their school in September 1923. G. W. Murphy was the first teacher to teach in the new building, followed by Mrs. M. E. Hunter and Mrs. G. E. Porter. (JCS, June 14, 1934) “Fackler is building a new negro school building,” the *Progressive Age* said proudly on August 23, 1923, “which is pronounced by many as one of the best of its class in North Alabama.”

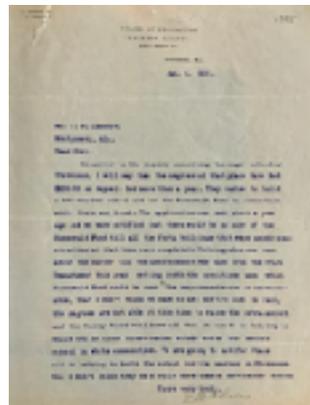
In the 1950 schools profiles printed in both county papers, 17 students attended Fackler Colored School distributed across grades 1-6. The school consisted of two classrooms, a large playground, one cloakroom, and two outdoor toilets. The school reported that it needed building repairs, library books, playground equipment, paint, and a pump for their well. (JCS, May 25, 1950) A change in state law governing school size and teacher-to-student ratios forced the closure of many small school in the state a year later, and the Fackler Rosenwald School closed and the building was sold by bid on August 29, 1952. The property reverted to the original grantor. The best understanding of the Fackler Rosenwald School comes from reading James Talley’s account of the school, which follows.

Stevenson Rosenwald School: The second Rosenwald School built in Jackson County was built in Stevenson. It opened on February 6, 1922. It was located “two miles northeast of Stevenson in a community known as New Town.” (JCS, May 30 1950) We have very good information on this school because of a series of letters between Jesse H. Wheeler, county superintendent of education, and J. S. Lambert, the state rural school agent that I found in the basement of the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Here is a summary of the letters.

January 1920 through December 1921



Jesse H. Wheeler, from his son



Principal Weldon and Rural School Agent Lambert in Coosa County, Digital Public Library of America.

January 8, 1920: Wheeler is informing Lambert that “concerning the negro school at Stevenson, I will say that the negroes of that place have had \$800.00 on deposit for more than an year. They want to build a two-teacher school and use the Rosenwald Fund....The application was about a year ago and we were notified that there would be no more of the Rosenwald Fund till all forty buildings that are under construction at the time were completed.” Wheeler found this unreasonable and the school board was already stretched building school for white communities. “We are going to ask State aid to build the school for the negroes in Stevenson, but I don’t think they can build more than a one-teacher school.”

August 4, 1920: Wheeler writing to Hon John W. Abercrombie. “I am enclosing applications for the Rosenwald Fund for the negroes of Stevenson and Fackler school. These negroes have been working on

this matter for some time and have taken the matter up with the Rosenwald Agents in Tuskegee. I would like to see these projects go through as the negroes have no house in either district that is suitable to have school in.”

August 5, 1920: Lambert repeats his statement to Wheeler that no new Rosenwald projects can be started until the 41 in progress are completed, and apologizes.

December 7, 1920: Wheeler writes Lambert enclosing a letter from the Black community. Lambert asks what kind of school they want to build but say, “Eight hundred dollars will not be sufficient without State aid to build either a one or a two-teacher school.”

January 11, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. Quoting Wheeler’s letter of January 8 back to him and asking did he not understand the circular describing Rosenwald requirements and costs. “If you can construct a two-teacher school for one-half the amount estimated by me, certainly I have no objection to offer,” but Lambert doubted that this was true. “I am anxious to see the negroes at Stevenson have a school building, and should be glad to give them Rosenwald aid towards its construction, if you, as executive officer of your Board, will guarantee the completion of the building....The negroes can get \$800.00 of Rosenwald aid and \$900 of State aid, providing you can allow it, and \$2500 out to complete the building.”

January 22, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert. “We are ready to make application for the Rosenwald fund for the Negroes of Stevenson” and asks for specific instructions.

January 25, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. Outlines the procedure for applying for Rosenwald assistance. “As soon as the Rosenwald check is in your hands, use it, together with the local funds, as the basis for state aid” and asks again what type of building he is proposing so he can forward the plan and specifications.

February 7, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert: Wheeler completed the Rosenwald and State aid applications and estimated that building the school should cost \$2400.

February 8, 1925: Lambert to Wheeler, acknowledging receipt of the February 7. Asking for placement diagram to show lots 117, 118, and 119 covered by Lee and Charlotte Slaughter. Lambert needs a sketch of the lot showing position of the build and deeded lots.

Feb 16, 1921: Lambert’s secretary acknowledging receipt of the deed.

February 17, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. Acknowledges reception of his letter, lot deeds, and drawing. “Your application for Rosenwald aid has been approved for \$800.00. You are therefore now qualified to make application for state aid.” Lambert send application forms. “As soon as application for state aid is approved, blue prints and specifications will be forwarded you at once and you will be ready to begin work.”

March 10, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert: “The negroes in Stevenson have \$800.00 on deposit and have made application to the Rosenwald Fund for \$600.00. The County Board has agreed in meeting to apply for \$600.00 from the State Aid Fund. We want to use the \$800.00 that the local community has raised, together with as much of the Rosenwald Fun as it takes to double the amount of State Aid warrant, as a basis on which State Aid is asked. Please arrange the matter so that the Treasurer of School Fund can certify that amount is in his hand necessary to secure State Aid.”

March 12, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler: The “matter of handling the Rosenwald Fund has been changed under the new plan.” A new step has been added that requires the “county treasurer of school funds to certify that he has in hand to the credit of the Rosenwald school at Stevenson, \$800.00.” Lambert sends a “copy of this certificate and of the agreement the State Board of Education has with the Julius Rosenwald



John W. Abercrombie, President of the University of Alabama, US Representative and Superintendent of Education in 1920. From Wikipedia.

Fund regarding the distribution of aid allowed for this project. I note that your county board of education has allowed you \$650.00 in State aid, instead of \$800.00. Unless building material and labor in your section is cheaper than the other sections in Alabama, I fear that the negroes will not be able to complete the project with \$2,250, however, that is a matter for your own good judgment.” The building was required to be equipped “before the last installment of the Rosenwald aid is paid over.” Lambert suggests that if the money is insufficient, “you will be allowed to use homemade desks construction according to a blue print which will be furnished you from this Department.”

March 16, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. “I have your letter with the attached deed and application for \$650.00 in state aid for the Stevenson Colored School in Jackson County. The deed and application are being delivered to Mr. R. E. Ledbetter with the request he give the matter prompt attention.”

March 28, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. He is sending the blue print for a 1-B schoolhouse plan and home made desks.

April 5, 1921: Wheeler to Abercrombie. “I am enclosing the only blank, or rather certificate, that I have concerning Rosenwald Aid. I notice that there is a slight mistake made in the amount of State Aid. We only ask for \$650.00 of State Aid because that seems to be all we can spare the negroes of this place. I hope this matter can be arranged soon. We have been so long transacting this business that the negroes are getting very impatient.”

April 23, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. Apparently an impatient citizen, C. R. Rutherford, has written the department of education directly about the delays in the Rosenwald project. “It is the established policy of this office to refer all such matters to county superintendents.”

May 4, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert: “We are very anxious to build a Rosenwald school at Stevenson, and we are ready to begin work as soon as we have notice from you that our application has been accepted, and that the warrant for State aid has been issued. Please let us hear from you at once.”

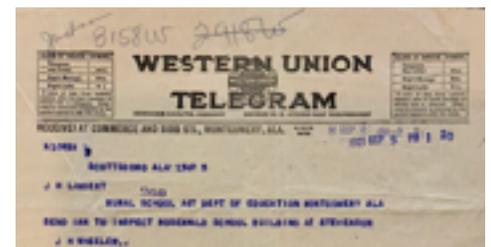
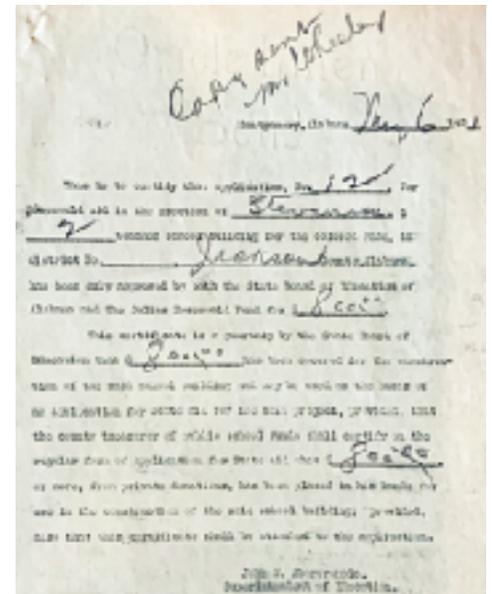
May 5, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. Lambert chastises Wheeler for failing to have Rosenwald aid in place for the Stevenson school, as he had indicated he did on May 12. Lambert sent him duplicate copies of both the certificate and agreement. But by now, construction costs have gone up. “I am frank to say, Mr. Wheeler, that the amount of money the negroes have in sight is not sufficient to complete this project according to requirements. May I not suggest, therefore, that you so inform them and tell them that, unless they can raise an amount sufficient to complete and equip the building, it will not be worthwhile for them to undertake to build. I am sorry your board of education is not in a position to let them have the maximum amount of State aid on this project. With \$2700, it might be possible for them to erect the building....My reason for insisting on raising of more money is to save trouble and annoyance for you in getting the Rosenwald and State aid released.”

May 6, 1921: Certificate at the right sent.

July 22, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert. Because the application took so long to process, Wheeler asks for an extension of the time allotted for using the Rosenwald funds. Lambert agrees to the extension of 8/1/21.

September 5, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert: Telegram. Send a man to inspect our school, shown right.

November 28, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert: “The negro school at Stevenson is complete and we would like for the remaining \$200.00 to be released at the earliest moment. The people have worked hard on the



house and have a very nice one. It measures up to the requirements of the state, being inspected by Mr. Ledbetter. There is a small part of the work that has to be received, and that has been done." Asks for release of the warrant.

November 29, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. Work has been completed. Mr. Ledbetter is satisfied. "We shall send you the Rosenwald check within a few days."

December 14, 1921: Wheeler to Lambert. "We are in great need of the Rosenwald check of \$200.00 due the Rosenwald school, district 89."

December 19, 1921: Lambert to Wheeler. Lambert is sending the check. No idea why it is not received.

***Progressive Age*, February 2, 1922:** "The white people of this town and community have pledged themselves to raise the balance of money to pay off the indebtedness on the colored high school so they may open the school, February. 6th."

Students who entered Stevenson Rosenwald were anxious for success; these students passed their Sixth Grade exam in 1928, the first "graduating class" included: Thomas Elias Weatherly, Dimple Washington, Pearl Beatrice Jacoway, Emma Leggins, Mary Ellen Buckner, Bill James Young, Eva Lee Blevins, and Vella Maud Rutherford. (*PA*, May 3, 1928) The school was recognized in 1931 for their nine students with perfect attendance. (*PA*, July 23, 1931) The school "won the attendance banner for the month of January 1935 with 95 per cent attendance. This is the first month the colored schools have been offered the banner." (*PA*, January 17, 1935)

In 1940, Adele Rivers was keeping a close eye on all the county schools. A column in the January 4, 1940 *Progressive Age* was a summary of activities in "Jackson County Negro Schools" and schools in Bridgeport, Fackler, Hollywood, Langston, Larkinsville, Paint Rock, Scottsboro, Stevenson, and Woodville all reported in this article. Stevenson Rosenwald was awarded a U. S. flag for its high attendance percentage got the 1944-45 school year. (*JCS*, July 3, 1945)

In the school census that was published in both county newspapers in 1950, Stevenson Rosenwald had three teachers: Miss Lillie B. Calhoun, principal, Mrs. Willie B. Winston, and Miss Thelma Stewart. Miss Stewart taught grade 1-3 and had 40 pupils. Miss Winston taught grades 4-6 and had 21 pupils. Mrs. Caolous taught grades 7-9 and had 12 pupils, for a total of 85. The school had three trustees: Dennis McCain, Otis Talley, and L. B. Bynum. The school had two buses to transport students for grades 1-9, and one to take students to Carver High School in Scottsboro, driven by Sam Matthews (who was also janitor) and Floyd Snodgrass. "The school building has three rooms, but one is very small. It has outdoor toilets." The books were few and the desks and tables were old. The school needed a lunchroom, windows repairs, more desks, another room, a stage, and playground equipment. (*JCS*, May 30, 1950) Archie Stewart was principal in 1956 when Mary Elizabeth Winston was crowned queen of the school. (*PA*, April 5, 1956)

The school was expanded in late 1959. The construction contract described addition of five classrooms, a cafetorium, restrooms, a principal's office, and a storage room at at cost of between \$79,700 and \$103,00. Some of this cost was met with federal funds but the remaining three quarters came from the County Board of Education. (*JCS*, December 15, 1959) The school was active in the fight against polio, raising money for the March of Dimes and serving as a vaccination site in 1964. It was phased out in the late 1960s when white and black schools were merged, and the school was listed as an abandoned property owned by the "PTA of Stevenson Rosenwald" in 1977. (*JCS*, Feb 8, 1977)

Bridgeport Rosenwald School: The Bridgeport Rosenwald School is the only one of the county's three schools that is still standing, though it has been altered so much that it is barely recognizable. Much of this information about this school comes from Dennis Lambert from his "Bridgeport Then and Now" FaceBook page. Here is this building in 2004. The original Rosenwald school is in the center.



2004 photo of the Bridgeport Rosenwald School building. Photo by Dennis Lambert.

The Bridgeport Rosenwald School was located on the north side of town. It was a wood frame building with two large rooms and one small one. In one of the classrooms, there was a stage that enabled this room to be used as an auditorium. The school also included two cloakrooms and a playground. Its construction was funded with \$500 from Rosenwald Fund, \$500 from City of Bridgeport, \$1000 from county and state along with \$1000 from private subscriptions or donations from Black and White citizens. The school officially opened October 7, 1929 with Cora Branch as the teacher.

The building as it is shown here had a large cement block addition built to the side when it was being converted to a church about about 25 years ago. Until about 2004, the structure was unchanged from when first built. Another church that used the building removed or covered the original clapboard exterior. The right side wing was removed during same work resulting in the building you see pictured, which included replacing or adding the windows along with new front door.

The school was considered a grammar school supporting grades one through six. To complete high school, older students attended McReynolds High School in South Pittsburg, TN. The school was described in some detail in the 1950 "Know Your Schools" series, which ran in both county papers. In 1950, the trustees of this school were Arthur Walter, O. T. Walker, and Mrs. Jessie Mae Jones. The teacher was Miss Marie Slaughter. There were five children in first grade, six in second, seven in third, five in fourth, five in fifth, and one in sixth, for a total of 25 students. Attendance was typically high, 98%. The school had an active PTA with about ten members.

Dennis notes that the Bridgeport Rosenwald school building was last used for academics when Alabama schools desegregated in 1965. It was sold to the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church in 1966 for \$1500. (*JCS*, Feb 27, 1966)

Annette Bradford

Footnotes: References to period newspapers are made inline.

- (1) Gordon Harvey, "Public Education in the Early Twentieth Century." *Encyclopedia of Alabama*. <https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/public-education-in-the-early-twentieth-century/>.
- (2) Guest Blogger, "Explore the History of Rosenwald Schools in Madison County." <https://www.huntsville.org/blog/list/post/explore-the-history-of-the-rosenwald-schools-of-madison-county-alabama/>
- (3) Abraham Aamidor, "Rosenwald Schools in Alabama." *Encyclopedia of Alabama*. <https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/rosenwald-schools-in-alabama/>
- (4) Original Rosenwald bulletin is found at <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/community-school-plans-bulletin-no.-3-the-julius-rosenwald-fund/974189>
- (5) National Park Service, "Julius Rosenwald," <https://www.nps.gov/liho/learn/historyculture/julius-rosenwald.htm>.

Attending Fackler Rosenwald School

When you drive north on County Road 42, just after you cross the railroad tracks, past the former residence of Ananais and Lizzie Green, you might not notice an abandoned lot lushly overgrown with trees, bushes, and grasses. No sign or other place marker indicates that on this property once was where African-American children gathered to learn. However, many years ago, when County Road 42 was known as Old Fackler Road, you would have seen the Fackler Rosenwald School.

Nothing remains of the physical building, but memories of it remain vivid in the minds of the children who attended school there.

In the morning, the students walked to school while playing and laughing. “We walked to school every day,” recalled Thelma Irene “Sis” Harrison. “I remember that it was a nearly two-mile walk,” said Irene Steward. Steward, Harrison and their classmates, including several cousins who lived on farms on Old Fackler Road, walked together along the side of the road, arriving at the school house after 30 minutes.

The walk was longer if the children were having fun. “Cousin Seth (Calvin Seth Steward, Irene Steward’s brother) and ‘Little Brother’ (James Alfred Talley, Jr., who was another cousin) teased us all the way to school,” said Harrison. Shirley Steward, who grew up in the same house as Talley, laughed in agreement; “they caught snakes and frogs!” Harrison added, “Little Brother took my books and tied them up in a tree.” Talley chuckled at the memory. “I was mischievous and had a lot of energy,” he explained, “but I studied in the classroom.” Meanwhile, Talley’s older brother, Herman Talley, quietly walked alongside his cousins such as David Horton from next door. After crossing the railroad and passing their great-aunt Lizzie Green’s house next door to the school, the children arrived for their day’s lessons.



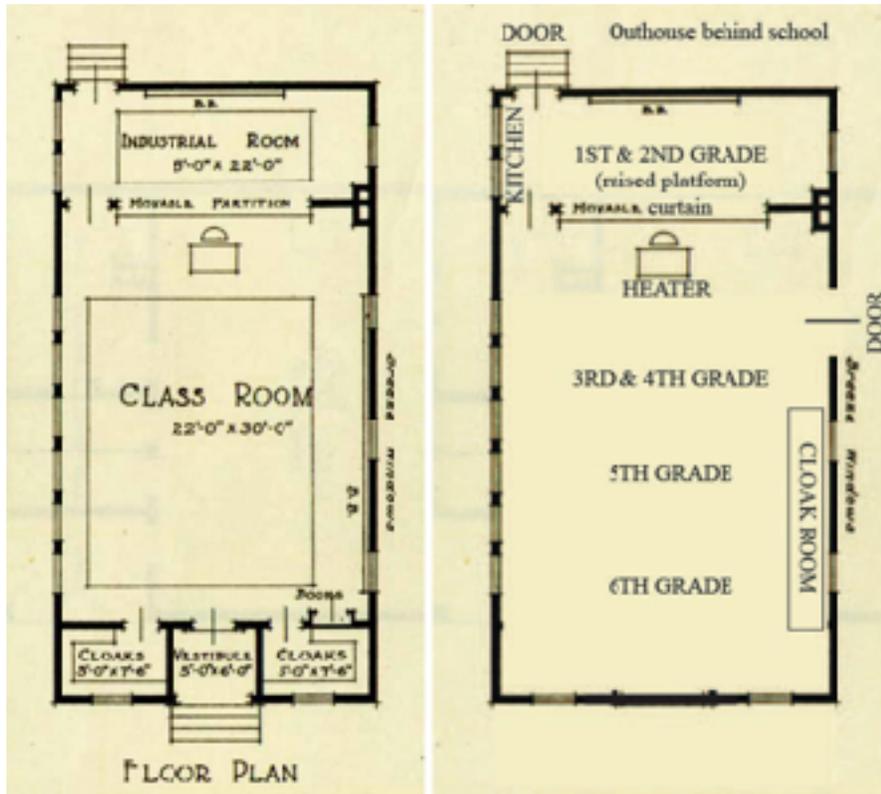
Location of the Fackler Rosenwald School, from the Alabama Historic Commission map.



Shirley Steward, Herman Talley, and James Talley. Photos from Shirley Steward

The student body of the Fackler Rosenwald School was Black and rural, mostly children of farmers and laborers. Racial segregation policies placed Black and White students in separate facilities. The Rosenwald school was a simple one-room wood-frame building with one door at the front, a window facing the road, a door on the side, and another window near the rear of the building, as Talley recalled. The interior had a wooden floor. Several long wooden benches were neatly arranged in rows for the first and second grade pupils; a raised wooden platform in the

front of the room served as the learning space for the older pupils. A curtain separated the two areas. A wood-burning stove heated the room and was also used for cooking the midday meal. An outhouse behind the school served the students' personal needs.



Left, original Rosenwald school plan, from the State Archives of North Carolina, Right, the Fackler Rosenwald school, as remembered by James Talley.

The students brought their own supplies such as pencils and paper, and they used textbooks discarded from the schools they were not allowed to attend. Talley described the elementary school for the white children: a brick building with large windows, a playground filled with equipment, and a bus transporting the children between home and school. "I remember the bus passing me as I walked," he recalled, "and it never picked any of us up, no matter the weather."

The first teacher James Talley remembered was Bessie Walker, who lived across the road, next to a church. He also remembered Miss Smith, who traveled from Tennessee every week to teach at the school. "She (Miss Smith) was a disciplinarian," he said. Teachers earned very little, around ten dollars per month, and sometimes did not stay long at the school.

Irene Steward recalled Mrs. Roach, who lived in nearby Hollywood, as another strict teacher who used a paddle to control her classroom.

In 1946, the children acquired a new teacher named Roberta Little Stewart, a young woman who had previously lived across the road from the school. She taught at the Fackler Rosenwald School for three and one half years. Stewart believed that the function of teachers was to help students learn by imparting knowledge to them and providing an environment where they could learn effectively. Stewart's former pupils remember her as a kind but strict teacher who sometimes assigned



Rosenwald School in Cairo, Tennessee of similar design. From Wikipedia.

older students to help younger primary students learn their lessons. Stewart was herself a Fackler Rosenwald School alumna, having finished her primary education there before completing high school in Scottsboro and then earning her degree in Elementary Education at Daniel Payne College. Stewart was the daughter of the Rev. Dennis Little and Annie Mae Starkey Little, who taught their children at home until the family moved to Fackler and much closer to the school. Mrs. Stewart was married to Charles Elmer Stewart and raised nine children. Stewart left the teaching profession after her first child was born, but returned several years later to teach eighth grade in Hollywood.

Herman Talley was a good student who behaved in the classroom, said Stewart, but “Little Brother” continued his antics, often climbing the tree outside the school and once bringing a snake to class. Mrs. Stewart usually assigned homework, and Shirley Stewart and James Talley remember their grandmother, “Mama Anna,” making sure they had changed out of their school clothes and finished their homework before they could go outside and play or work. Growing up in a farming community, the children balanced their education with helping out in the family gardens and fields. It is not a surprise that Harrison and the Talley brothers kept large flower and vegetable gardens throughout their lives.

Families played an important role in supporting the Fackler Rosenwald school. When the children were in school all day, parents and grandparents packed a lunch, usually a sandwich and a piece of fruit grown in the yard.

Sometimes, Talley recalled, his grandmother gave the children a few coins to purchase a thick slice of bologna from McGuffey’s store on Fackler Road. Harrison still has a fondness for that bologna, requesting a “red stick” from anyone returning from a visit to Jackson County. The wood-burning stove in the school was also put to use during lunch, as parents took turns cooking hot meals for the children every day. For some, this was their only meal of the day. However, “that pot-bellied stove wasn’t efficient enough to keep the room warm,” said Talley, so the children kept their coats on inside the building during the colder months.

After the Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court ruling in 1954, instead of integrating the schools, the school where the white children attended closed, and those children then took a bus to the neighboring towns of Hollywood or Scottsboro. The Rosenwald school also closed, and for most of the Black children in that area, this is when primary education ended in Fackler. The bus to the next nearest school was not made available for Black children; James Talley remembers a much longer walk to junior high and high school for the next few years, and he knew of children who simply stopped their education. The Talley brothers left Fackler in the early 1950s; James Talley finished his secondary education in Chicago, graduating as valedictorian of his class, going on to college, then following his brother Herman into the U.S. Navy, and later completing two graduate degrees.

Teachers at the Fackler Rosenwald School in the 1940s: Miss Roberta Little (later Mrs. Stewart), Mrs. Roach, Miss Bessie Walker, and Miss Smith.



Teacher Roberta Little Stewart. Photo from *A Glimpse at the Life of Charles Elmer and Roberta (Little) Stewart*, by Roberta L. Stewart and Wanda Stewart Wilder, 2025.

Students who attended the Fackler Rosenwald School in the 1940s:

- Dorothy Buchanon
- Ruby Mae Buchanon
- Sonny Carter
- Alice Earls
- Hugh Earls
- Macie Earls
- Patricia Earls
- Mattie Pearl Harris
- Dorothy Mae Harris
- Rayford Harris
- Neyman Harris
- Thelma Irene “Sis” Harrison
- Dutley Harrison
- Willie Rae Harrison
- Ora Lee Harrison
- Edward Horton
- David Horton
- Fay Horton
- Jim Horton
- Samuel Little
- Pirty Samuel Starkey
- Irene Steward
- Kemp Steward
- Seth Steward
- Shirley Steward
- James “Little Brother” Talley
- Herman Talley
- Seymour Talley
- Floyd Wordlaw
- Lloyd Wordlaw
- Percy Wordlaw
- Earl Wright

The cousins keep in touch despite living far from Alabama and each other. When they have been able to visit in person, the memories of their childhood in Fackler and of their Rosenwald schoolhouse experiences come alive.

James Talley and Andrea Talley-Brennan



Cousins and Fackler Resenwald alumni Pictured from left to right: James Talley, Irene Steward Bogan, Shirley Steward, and Irene Harrison