Baker / Chilton County Precinct (Beats) History

By Derric Scott

County History

Baker County was formed out of land area from Autauga, Bibb, Perry, and Shelby Counties by the Alabama Legislature in December of 1868.[1] (Just the year before, the section from Perry County apparently became part of Dallas County, so sometimes you will see Dallas listed instead of Perry but it is basically the same area.)

The first mention of the functioning Baker County was in April 1869[2] and only 11 months later the new courthouse burned, on Saturday March 5th, 1870.[3] Exactly what documents were lost was unrecorded. From looking at current records, it appears that the first Baker County Commissioners' Court Minute book may have been among the losses because the first existing book (unnumbered) is for 1870–1878; the first entry in it is from March 21, 1870, just weeks after the fire. Property records don't seem to have been lost as the first existing entry in the Probate Deeds Book #1, page #1 is from Jan 9, 1869 and is Williams selling the land for the Clanton area to Alfred Baker. Perhaps this book was saved or perhaps, since the county was brand new, the land records were still being kept in the parent counties and the book recreated later – we'll likely never know.

Precincts

The first precinct definitions found were in the first existing Commissioners' Court Minutes which described seven precincts on August 8th, 1870. There are numerous errors (some significant) in the descriptions but most can be corrected by comparing them to the next documented list in both the Probate and Commissioners' Court Minutes in 1874.

Thus far the earliest precinct listings have been recorded just after the Alabama Legislature passed laws redefining the county lines. Naturally, the county precincts would have to be redrawn or modified to accommodate these changes, which occurred in 1869, 1873, and 1875:

- 1869 – Lost SW corner to Dallas and gained lower (SE) boundary from Autauga.
- 1873 – Lost NE corner above Wuxahatchee Creek to Shelby.
- 1875 – Regained the SW corner from Dallas.

Brief Beat History

- The likely original 7 beats were
    1. Mims' Cross Roads / Shrader's Mill (later Mineral Springs)
    2. Providence Church (later Jemison)
    3. Benson
    4. Court House (later Clanton)
    5. Cooper's Station
    6. Barbour's Store (Enterprise area, later Kincheon)
    7. Maplesville Depot
- The 8th beat, 1875, Stanton, represented the regained SW corner of the county.

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[1] Alabama Legislative Acts – 1868, #142, page 488.

[2] Shelby Guide, April 28, 1869: "*the new county of Baker, we learn, is fully organized, and the officers gone to work*"

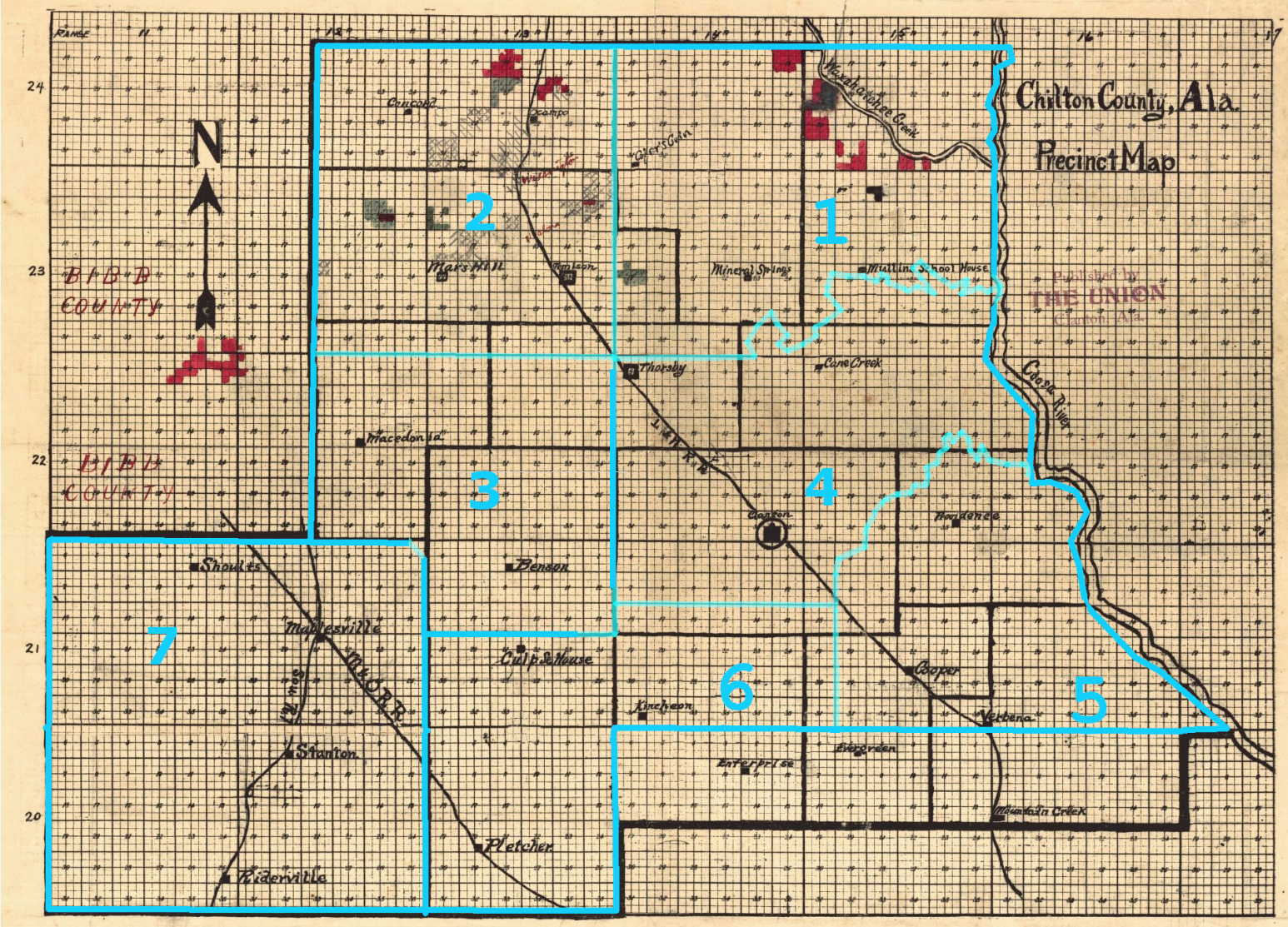
[3] Shelby Guide, March 8, 1870: "*Court House of Baker county together with all the records &c., were burned last Saturday night*"

- The 9th beat, ~1895, Strasburg, represented the newly founded and growing Thorsby area. By this time the existing beat lines had been redrawn to better follow section lines vs. creeks, etc., and exactly when has yet to be found (perhaps detailed in later Commissioners' Court books).
- The 10th beat, 1902, created from part of Beat 5 (Cooper); but Beat 5 was renamed to Verbena and Beat 10 became the new Cooper.
- The 11th beat, 1902, Flint Hill School House/Cane Creek, carved out of Beat 4 (Clanton).
- Beats 12 – 16, 1907, show up on the 1907 published map, these 16 remain today. These were created from existing beats and the lines and names changed significantly.
    1. Mineral Springs became Mullins' Schoolhouse, a new Mineral Springs (#12) created.
    2. Strasburg became Thorsby.
    3. Ocampo (#13) created from part of Jemison.
    4. Macedonia (#14) carved from Benson.
    5. Pletcher (#15) made from part of Kincheon.
    6. Providence (#16) (Providence Church #2 near the river) created from part of Clanton.

Some notable data points:

- The 1870 list doesn't mention Clanton or Jemison by name, both of which got their names from the respective railroad stations that were defined that same year. Precinct 2's voting place (Jemison) is listed as Providence Church and Precinct 4's (Clanton) is simply "court house."
- Over time many of them had two voting places. Examples:
    - Mims' Cross Roads, Shrader's Mill
    - Flint Hill Schoolhouse, Cane Creek
    - Barbour's Store, Shiloh (Kincheon)
    - Jemison #1, Mars Hill #2 (Providence Church before that).
    - Verbena #1, Mountain Creek #2.
    - Kincheon #1, Enterprise #2
    - Maplesville #1, Shoults #2 (M. F. Fuller's before that)
    - Stanton #1, Riderville #2
    - Cooper #1, Evergreen #2
    - Mineral Springs #1, Cofer's Mill #2
    - Ocampo #1, Concord #2
    - Pletcher #1, Culp's Schoolhouse #2

Chilton County Beats/Precincts - Original Baker County Lines, 1868.
Beats estimated based on 1874 Comm. Ct.



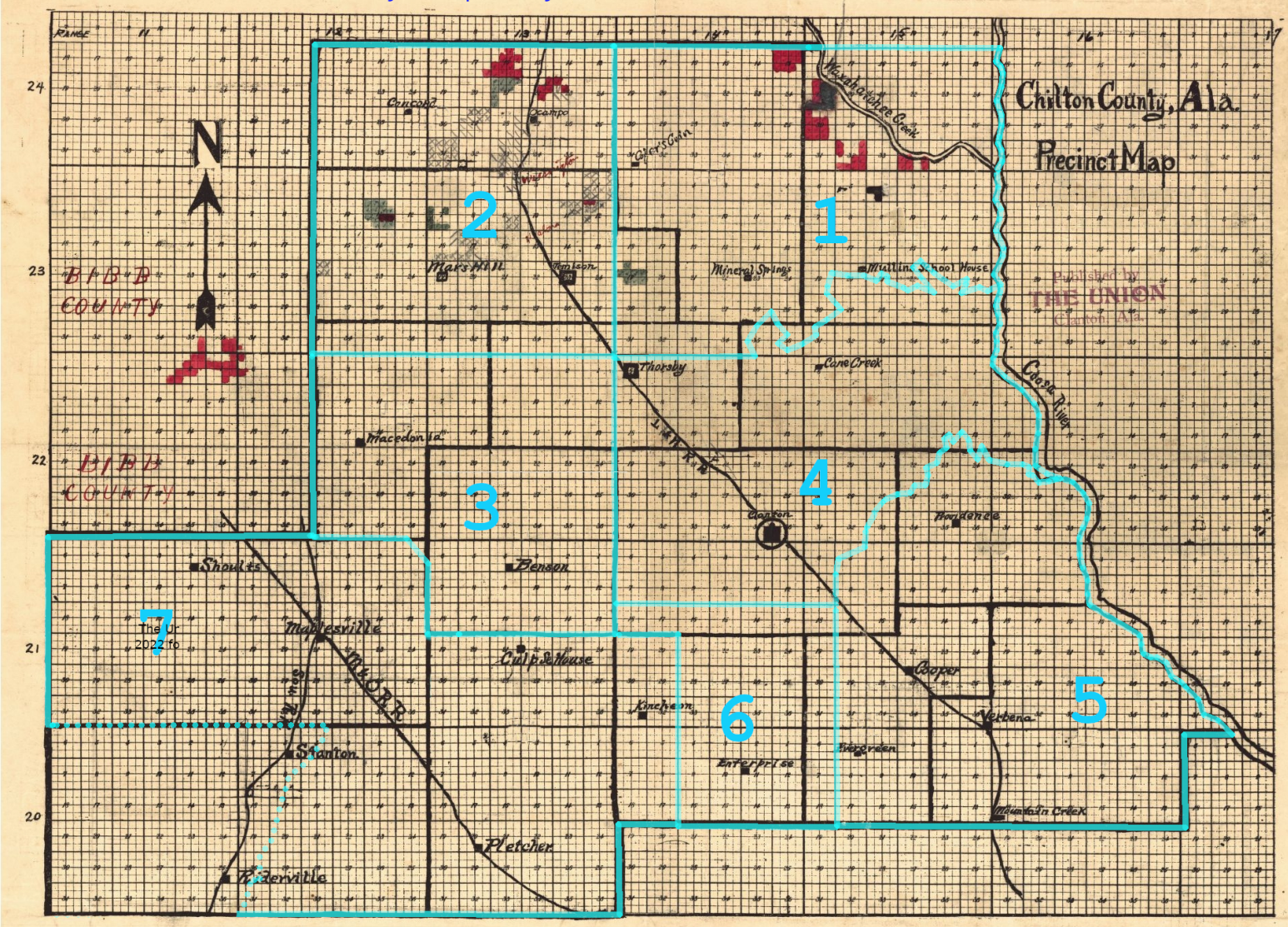
1. Mims Cross Roads
2. Jemison, Providence Church
3. Benson
4. Clanton
5. Coopers Station
6. Barbours Store/Shiloh
7. Maplesville, MF Fullers

*Names as of 1874 listing

RED - Fee Simple
Green - Surface Rights Only
Black - Mineral Rights Only
\ - Timber Rights Uncut
X - Timber Rights Cut

Based on Nov 1907 published in The Union and courthouse map books.
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County Beats/Precincts - Court minutes Aug 8 1870 through ca 1874
(SW corner county lines possibly different).

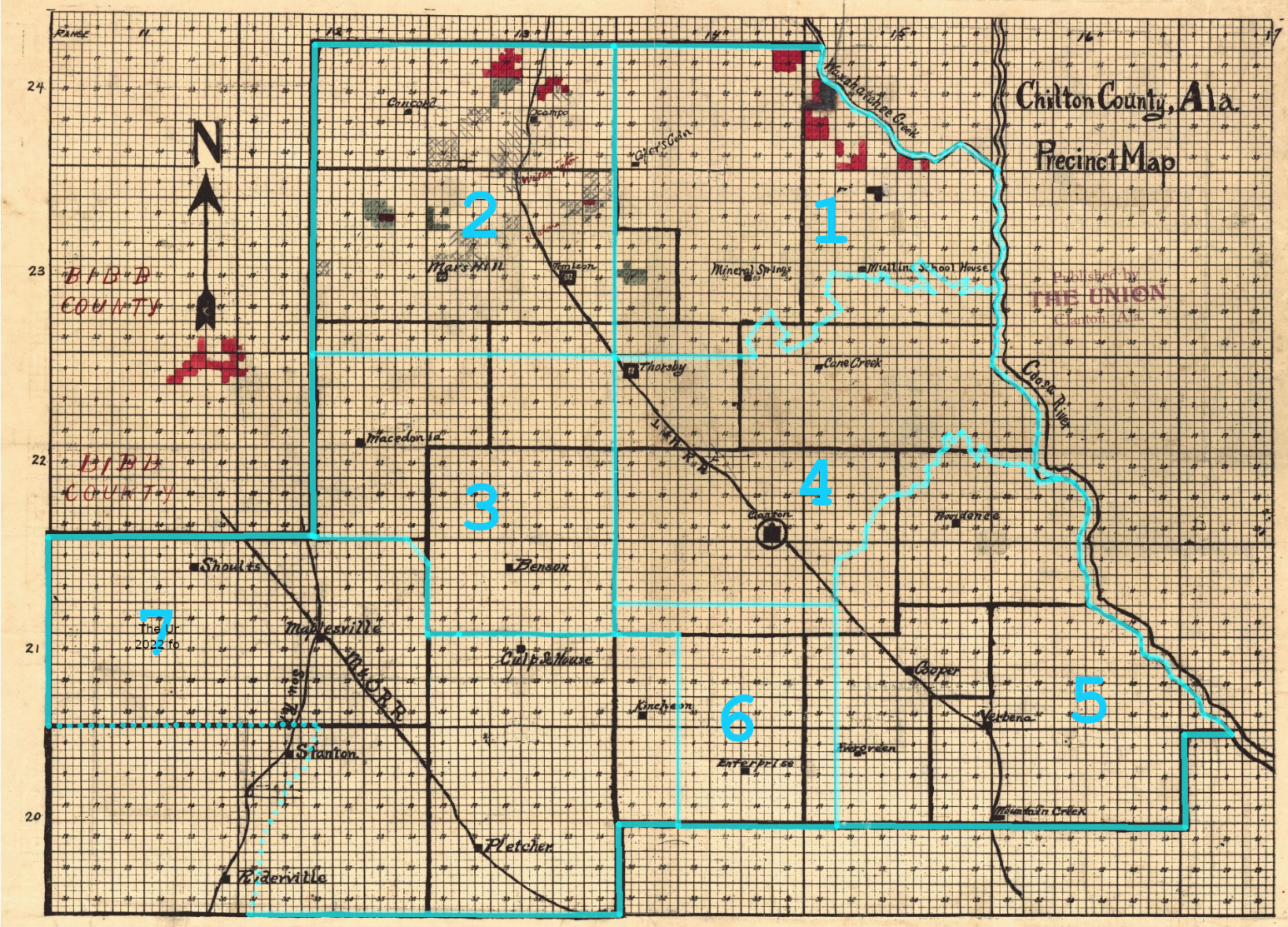


1. Mims Cross Roads/Shraders Mills
2. Providence Church
3. Benson
4. Courthouse (Clanton)
5. Cooper's Station
6. Barbour's Store
7. Maplesville Depot

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County Beats/Precincts - Court minutes Jan 1874 through 1895.
(SW corner county lines possibly different).

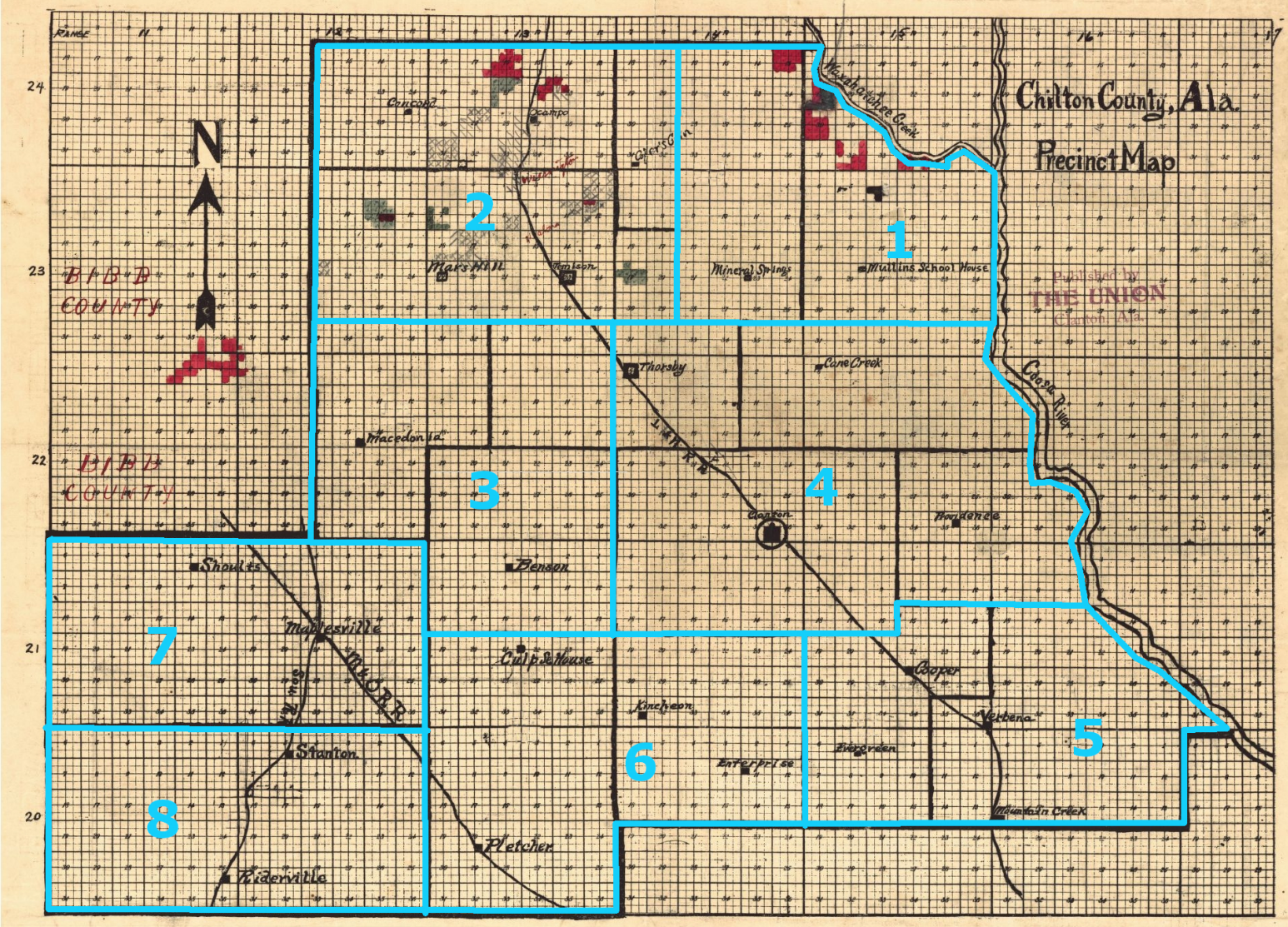


1. Mims Cross Roads
2. Jemison, Province Ch
3. Benson
4. Clanton
5. Coopers Station
6. Barbours Store/Shiloh
7. Maplesville, MF Fullers

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Chilton County Beats/Precincts - Change sometime between 1874 and 1895. (some lines estimated)



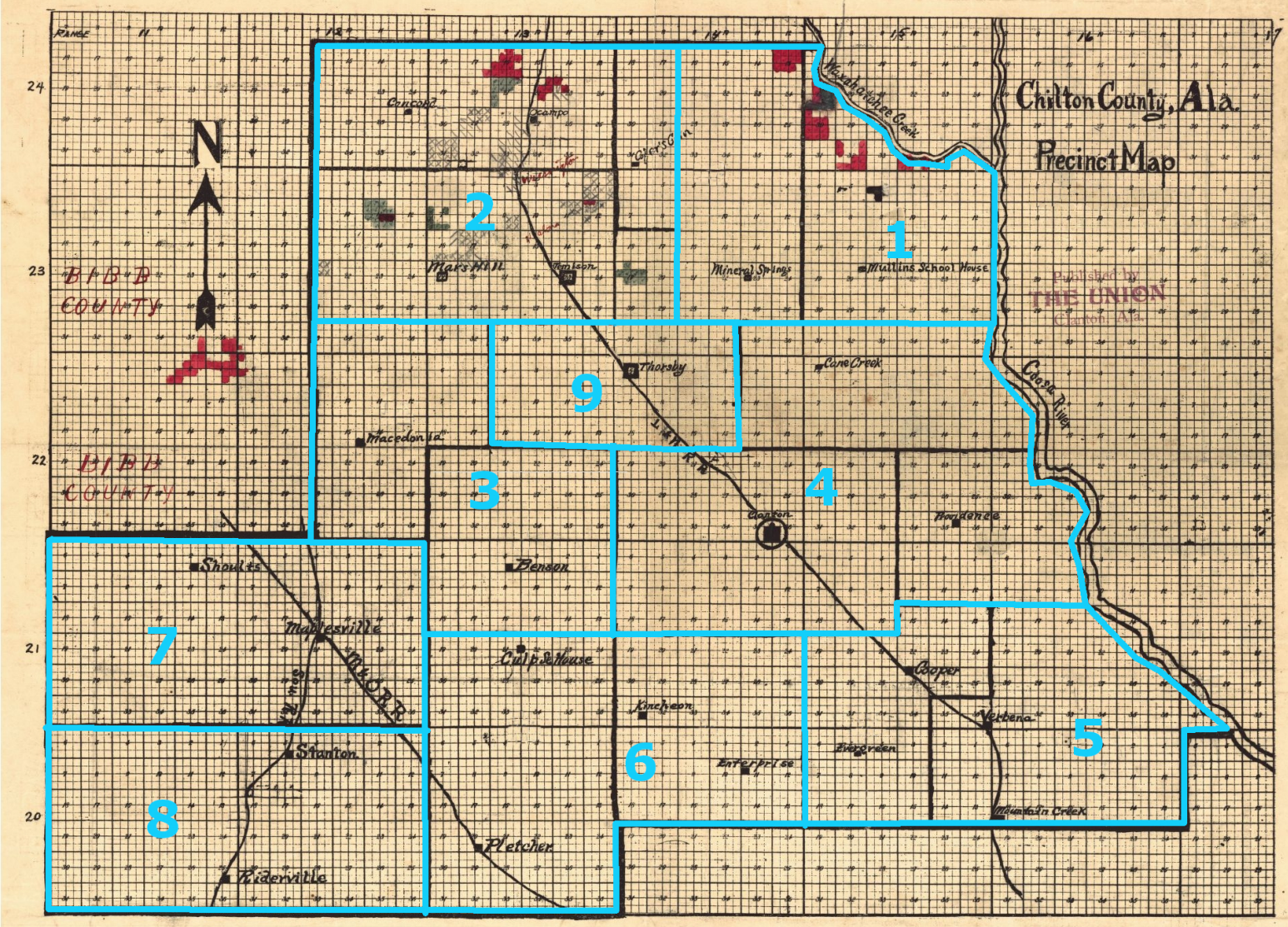
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1. Mineral Springs
2. Jemison
3. Benson
4. Clanton
5. Cooper
6. Kincheon
7. Maplesville
8. Stanton

*Names as of 1895 listings

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Chilton County Beats/Precincts - Formation of #9 Strasburg, 1895 through 1902. (some lines estimated)



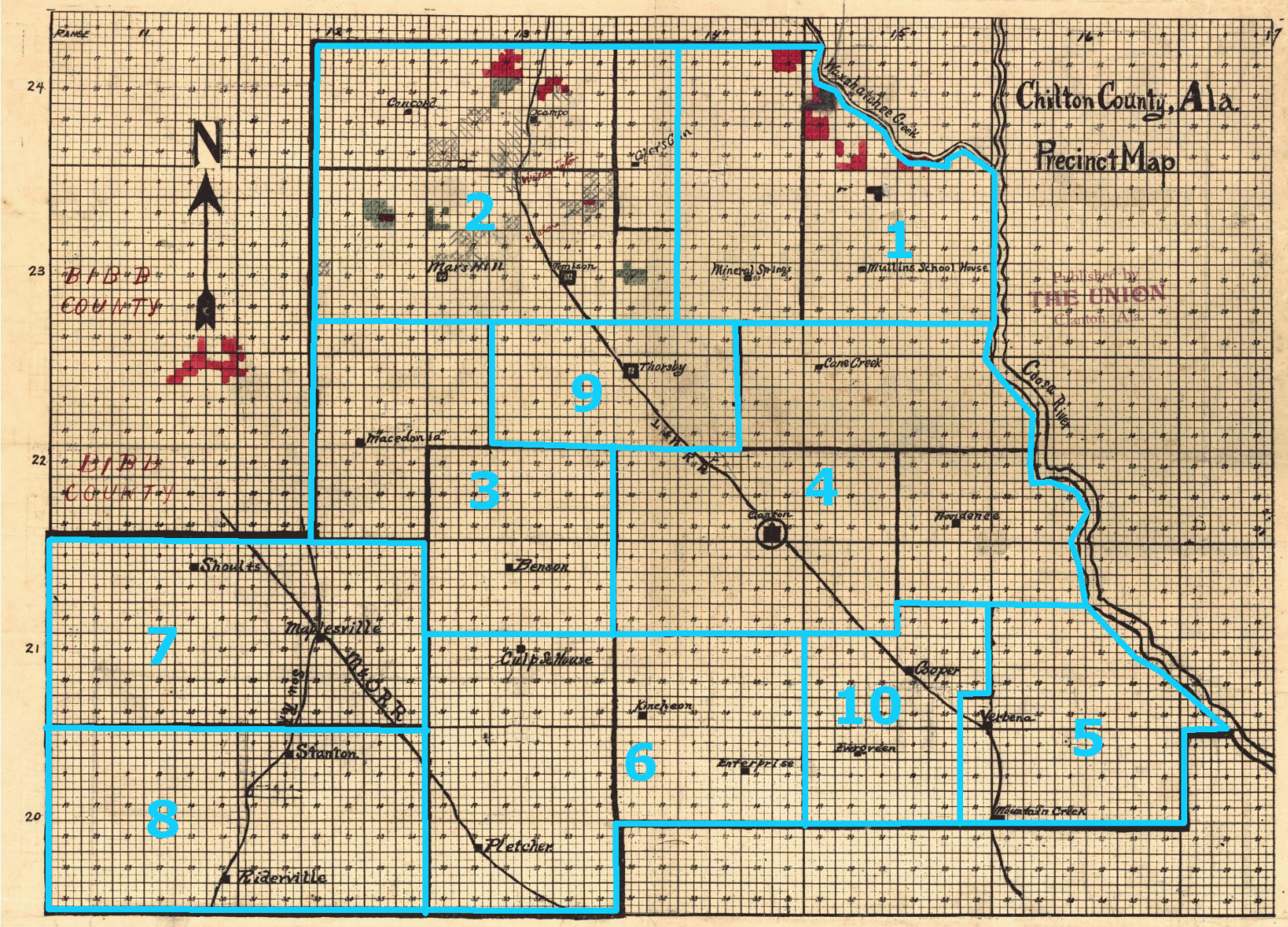
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1. Mineral Springs
2. Jemison
3. Benson
4. Clanton
5. Cooper
6. Kincheon
7. Maplesville
8. Stanton
9. Strasburg

*Names as of 1895 listings

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Chilton County Beats/Precincts - Formation of #10 Cooper, early 1902 through Aug 1902. (some lines estimated) (new beat named #5 Verbena, old beat Cooper renumbered #10)



1. Mineral Springs
2. Jemison
3. Benson
4. Clanton
5. Verbena
6. Kincheon
7. Maplesville
8. Stanton

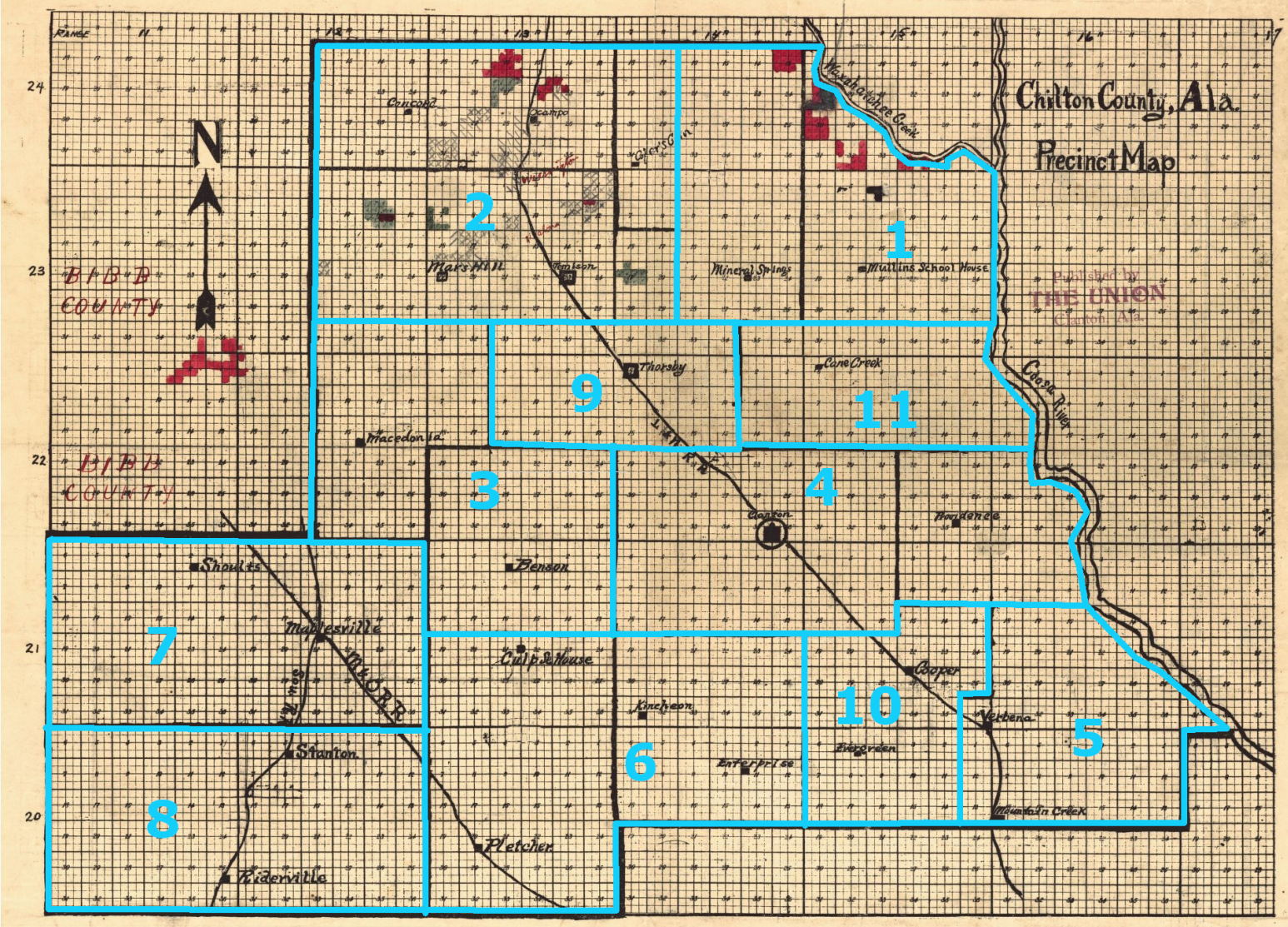
*Names as of 1895 listings

9. Strasburg
10. Cooper

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Chilton County Beats/Precincts - Formation of #11 Flint Hill Schoolhouse, Aug 1902 through Nov 1907. (some lines estimated) (Flint Hill Schoolhouse later Cane Creek)



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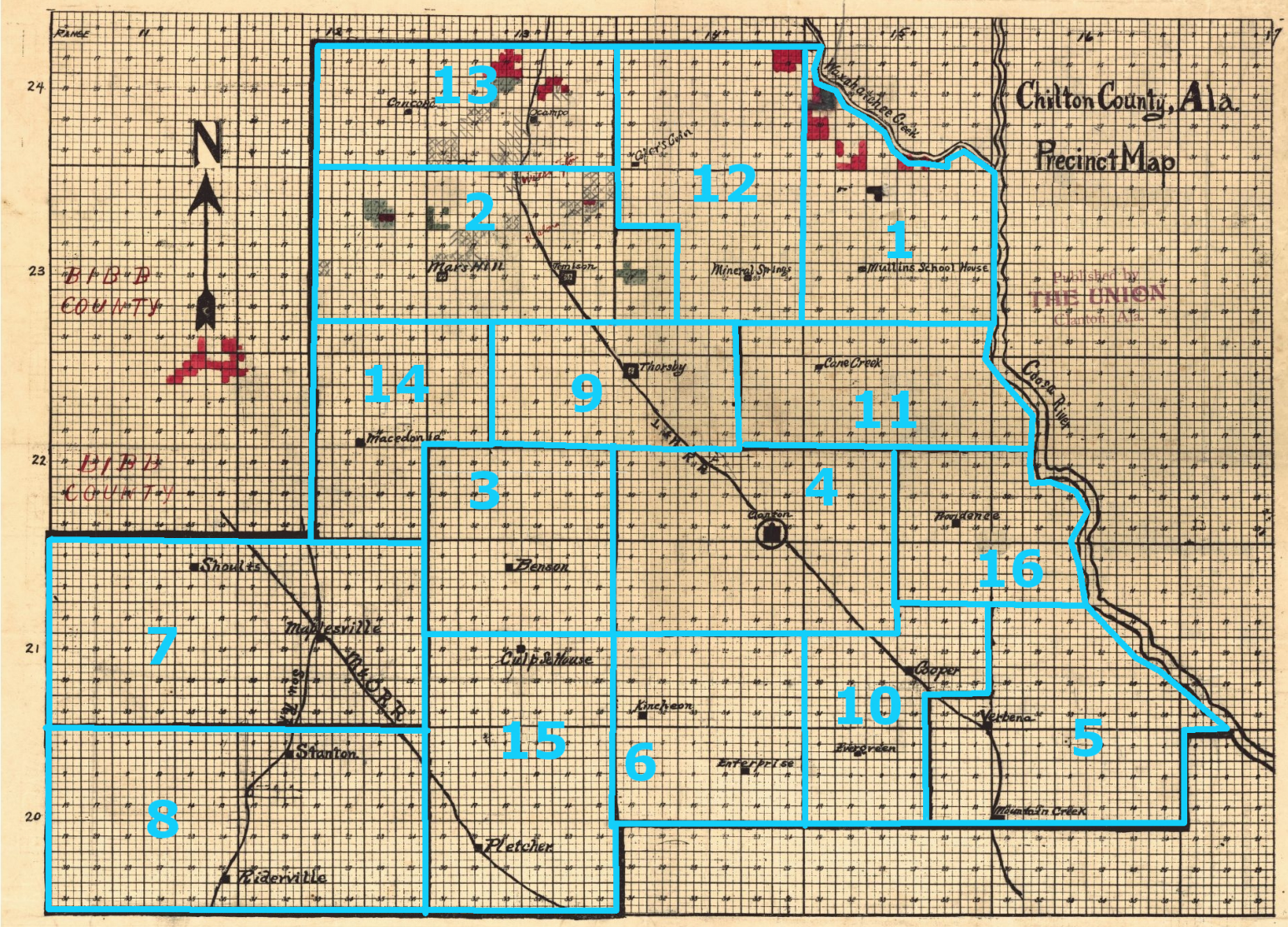
1. Mineral Springs
2. Jemison
3. Benson
4. Clanton
5. Verbena
6. Kincheon
7. Maplesville
8. Stanton

*Names as of 1895 listings

9. Strasburg
10. Cooper
11. Flint Hill Schoolhouse / Cane Creek

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Chilton County Beats/Precincts - Formation of #12 - #16, Nov 1907 through 1940s and beyond. (some lines estimated) (Mineral Springs, Ocampo, Macedonia, Pletcher, Providence)



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*Names as of 1907 listings

1. Mullins Schoolhouse
2. Jemison#1/Mars Hill#2
3. Benson
4. Clanton
5. Verbena#1/Mtn Crk#2
6. Kincheon#1/Enterprise#2
7. Maplesville#1/Shoults#2
8. Stanton#1/Riderville#2
9. Thorsby
10. Cooper#1/Evergreen#2
11. Cane Creek
12. Mineral Sprints#1/Cofer's Mill#2
13. Ocampo#1/Concord#2
14. Macedonia
15. Pletcher#1/Culp Schoolhouse#2
16. Providence

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