

**Merchant E. M. Pinckard**  
**By Derric Scott**  
**2020**

From newspaper research and information from the Facebook group "U know u lived in CLANTON as a kid," and other sources.

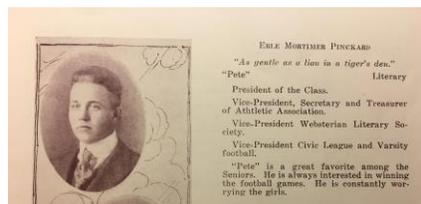
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## E. M. Pinckard Early Merchant of Clanton

Evans Moore “E. M.” Pinckard was one of the merchants of Clanton at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. He was born on August 29, 1873 in Tuskegee, Macon County, Alabama. He married Phala Belle DeBardeleben, also of Tuskegee, on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1895 and they took the train back to Clanton. She was born in October 1876.

When E. M. brought his new bride back to Clanton he was already “one of Clanton’s foremost young business men” with a “bright future before him.” He was associated with his brother-in-law, Clanton businessman W. Lee Sampey (1856-1918) who had married E. M.’s older sister Leila M. Pinckard (1866-1918) after graduating from the college at Marion in 1885. The couple immediately moved to Clanton to start the business.

E. M. and Phala soon began a family, with children Evelyn (1897-1905, buried in Clanton Cemetery) and Erle Mortimer (1900-1969, buried in Forest Park Westheimer Cemetery, Houston), Margonil (Marjorie) Pinckard Scoggins (b. 1904) and Minnie Merle Pinckard Webb (Jul 15 1906 – Mar 27 1968, buried Ore City Cemetery, Texas) and son William E. (b. 1909). Tragically, Evelyn died at the very young age of 7.



**Photo of senior Erle Pinckard from the 1918 Chilton County HS yearbook, the Cantrolla.**

Before the turn of the Twentieth Century, E. M. Pinckard was active in the local municipality and become a city councilman. He had created and was expanding his business, named **E. M. Pinckard Co.**, by buying brother-in-law W. L. Sampey’s business and that of fellow merchant W. T. Callen. He also moved into the former home of W. L. Sampey when they moved to Birmingham. In May 1901 he enlarged his store and partnered with some fellow citizens and established a stock company to start a bank in Clanton. He and partners W. I. Mullins, Judge Adams, W. T. Callen, C. J. Stuart, and E. H. Adams opened the **Peoples Savings Bank**, Clanton’s first bank, later that year.

Being a well-rounded person, he also played and umpired baseball! In 1904 he was first baseman on the **“R. A. R. Nine”** along with Clem Giles (CF), George Kilgore (catcher), A. Johnson (pitcher), Watts Moore (third base), John Robinson (shortstop), and J. E. Robinson (LF), and Audley Johnson (RF).

The **E. M. Pinckard Co.** was located in the two story brick building on the Southwest corner of the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Pinckard ran his store out of that building until he left Clanton after 1916. Apparently an innovator, it is said he instituted a “tin can on cables” system so that change could be made on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and sent to the correct counter on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

A little more research on the building indicates that prior to E. M. Pinckard’s use, it was originally built by W. Lee Sampey in 1897 and he ran his general store there for several years. Prior to W. L. Sampey building the brick building there was a wooden frame building on the site that he used for his store. Even before W. L. Sampey it is possible that the Wright family first used this building for their store, as the Wright’s home was nearby. When E. M. Pinckard bought out W. L. Sampey he began using the store for his own... in the photo below you can see the fragment of his sign painted on the side – the last

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characters “KARD CO” of the “**E. M. PINCKARD CO.**” After E. M. Pinckard the building was used by the **Farmer’s Hardware Store** and then the **Big Four Hardware Co.** In the 1970s it was **Lorch’s Jewelry** store and is presently **Southern Valley Pawn.** In September 1898 Tipton Mullins built an office for his law practice next door and moved out of W. I. Mullins’ building. In the first half of 1902 Mullins built the two story brick building next door that still stands.

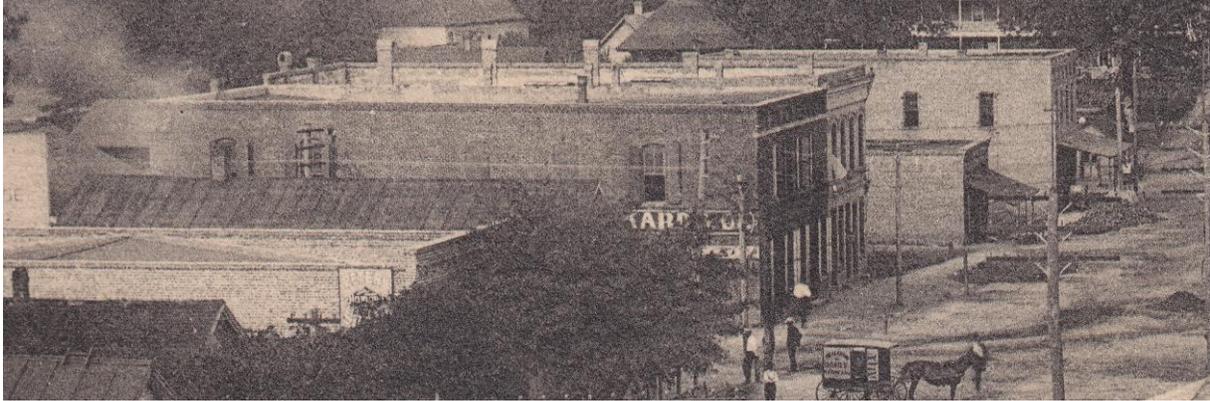


Photo postcard from ca 1900-1905 showing the E. M. Pinckard Co. building and Tipton Mullins’ law building and others.

Tragically, E. M. Pinckard’s house on 7<sup>th</sup> Street totally burned the afternoon of November 30, 1905. Neighbor Dr. N. S. Johnson saw the fire and raised the alarm. Dr. Hayes’ house across the street and a nearby warehouse were saved. It was rebuilt into the house that was later known as “Kate Jackson’s grandmother’s house” and is now the location of Regions Bank.

E. M. made national news in early 1912 when, on a trip to Chicago, he was entrapped in a horse racing “wiretapping” scheme and lost \$5000. The suspects were later arrested, but the outcome of the case is unknown.

He was elected mayor for at least two terms; once on September 21, 1914 and another term on September 21, 1916.

Shortly into his last term as Mayor, his wife died suddenly, on November 21, 1916 at the young age of 40. She was buried in the Clanton Cemetery.



Mrs. Phala Belle DeBardleben Pinckard, May 25, 1913

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After his wife's death, Mr. E. M. Pinckard sold out in Clanton and moved to Texas where he had family. On July 24, 1918 he remarried to Miss Lulu DuPre in Ennis, Texas. Later in 1918 he lists on his WWI draft registration card that he is a travelling salesman with the Hamilton-Brown Shoe Co, St. Louis, Missouri. Hamilton-Brown Shoe Co. was advertised by W. L. Sampey as far back as 1893.

During the 1920s Clanton is visited at different times by E. M.'s children, Minnie Merle and William Pinckard from Texas.

On September 15, 1938 Dr. J. P. Hayes received a telegram from E. M. Pinckard's son Erle that his father has passed away at age 70 in Houston Texas. He died on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1938 and is buried in Forest Park Cemetery in Houston Texas.

## References

**Union Banner**, many small items in many issues. Too many to list.

**Facebook groups** "*U know u lived in CLANTON as a kid,*" "*WE GREW UP IN CLANTON, ALABAMA*" and others.

**Thomas Blalock's** tireless research in old newspapers and Internet archives.