

# *Chiltonian*

Vol. 7 No. 1

March 1987

## **QUARTERLY MEETING**

The second 1987 quarterly meeting of the Chilton County Historical Society will be held on the 12th of April at 2:00 P.M. in the Chilton/Clanton Public Library Conference Room. Subject of the meeting will be the "U.S. Constitution" and the name of the guest speaker will be announced at a later date. A good turn out of the membership is encouraged and the public is cordially invited.

## **QUERIES**

Anyone researching the following families will be well advised to arrange an exchange of information with Mr. Joseph E. Bills, 301 Woodrow Ave., Selma, Al., 36701. The families of interest to him are: Kemp, White, Popwell, Roebuck, Mills and Green.

Mr. Jim Thomas is in need of assistance as to the parents of William Henry Thomas, B. March 6, 1857, August 24, 1902 at Coalburg, Al. and buried at Chestnut Creek Baptist in Coopers. He was the husband of Nancy Ellyfair Yates who remarried G.F. Harris and is also buried at Chestnut Creek. If you have information that might be helpful please contact him at 85 Gardenia Court; Upland, California 91786.

## **MICROFILM STATUS**

The Chilton County Historical Society is happy to announce that the microfilming of early County newspapers is now complete. Future microfilm of this county's newspapers will be obtained by purchase from the State Archives as the microfilm becomes available. Existing microfilm and the newspapers themselves are on file at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library and offer thereby greater access for historical and genealogical research.

## **OLD LANDMARK**

Union-Banner 2 Jan 1930. The town has removed one of the ancient landmarks of Clanton--the old elm tree in the street in front of Dr. J.P. Crumpton's (later Mr. Grady Reynold's residence) residence. While its removal is a benefit to the public, yet it carries with it a certain attachment that can never be replaced.

Many years ago that part of Clanton's residence section, known as the P.D. Wilson addition, was a big cotton farm. The old elm tree stood beside the one which afforded entrance to the farm. When the farm was cut up into lots and added to the city, the old tree was left standing in the side of Eighth Street.

As traffic increased with the coming of more and more automobiles, it became apparent that the old tree was a danger to the public. Now it is gone, and the place round about looks strangely odd.

## **FAMILY RESEARCH**

We are indebted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for their permission to reprint an "Outline to Genealogical Research" which you will find in this issue. We are making an insert of it so that it may be readily removed and thereby more easily used as each member sees fit. It is generally a good idea to look at every possible means of locating family information. At some point in the future we hope to point out a few other local record sources not mentioned in this very comprehensive guide. Anyone who follows this procedure will certainly be greatly aided in their search.

## **CHURCH HISTORIES**

We are reprinting in this issue two church histories as closely as possible to the way they appeared in the Union-Banner. The Chestnut Creek Baptist was reprinted in a local newspaper but we thought it might not have reached some of our members so we are including it herewith. Caution is advised in that it is possible that Chilton County's earliest church was overlooked in the claim of which churches were first established. We hope you find the history within interesting and informative as we did. All three articles were written by the editor of the Union-Banner, Thomas Eugene Wyatt.

## **WALNUT CREEK METHODIST**

[From the Union-Banner, 28 Dec 1944]

"Like Mulberry and Mt. Zion, Walnut Creek church was established in 1820, there being only two churches in the county that are older--Ebenezer at Stanton and Chestnut Creek at Coopers. While Chilton county was in its infancy as a unit of government and was known as Baker county, Walnut Creek community was the center of official activity of the county. In the spring of 1869, when Baker county was only a few months old, the first court of the county was held in the old log building of Walnut Creek church, the presiding judge being J.Q. Smith from Montgomery. The first courthouse, also made of logs, was located about one mile northwest of the church building. The county seat was name Grantville, and after the log courthouse was burned in the summer of 1870, for several months the office of the Probate Judge, Mordecai Robinson, as well as all other official activities of the county, was maintained in a room at the home of Bud Maddox at Dake's Old Mill, between Grantville and Walnut Creek church.

Interested in the founding of Walnut Creek church, Methodist Protestant in creed, were: Arthur (Arter) Love, who was one of the charter members and the church's first pastor. Tom Postell, sometimes called Perstell, was also one of the

[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]



founders and pastored the church during its early years. Other charter members were: Abram Mims, Sr., his brother, Elijah Mims, and their aged mother, Lettie (Grannie) Mims, a most likable, highly respected and widely known old lady. Doctor Logan, Steven Baker, Charlie and Wesley Headley, and James Monroe Parrish, all immigrants from South Carolina, were among the first members of the church, and responsible for making its establishment permanent. All took great interest in the work of the infant church. The church remained Methodist Protestant until some five years ago when the Northern and Southern Methodists united, forming one great body, the Methodist church. It now has an approximate membership of 270, and has an evergreen Sunday school.

Following Rev. Love and Rev. Postell, pastoring the church were: A. C. Pattillo, John L. Murphy, Lat Pattillo, Nathaniel Dobbs, Jim Stanfield, F.A. Gibson and Jeff Ledbetter. In those days preachers from other communities visited their other brother pastors and assisted in services. Filling the pulpit as visiting ministers during the early years of the church were: Jack Wells and his son, Dock Wells, R.M. Honeycutt, Rev. Sampey, Artie Mullins, Rev. Bailey, Henry Johnson and L.P. Adams. Later visiting preachers were: Marion Vines, W.P. Lowery, M.J. Parrish and W.J. Armstrong. Many of the visiting preachers were Baptists.

During the time of the Civil War and for the decade following the mainstays of the church included: Jesse A. Culp, Jim Popwell, Sylvester Headley, James and Abram (Bud) Mims, Alford and Anderson Baker and their wives Rebecca and Lizzie Baker, and old Aunt Feriby (Seb) Baker, Elijah H. Parrish, John Baker, Sr., Lindsey Henley, Jim Thompson, Arthur T. Mims, Richard Mims, Tom and Rebecca Moatts, Wm. C. Headley, William and Louisa Mims, Tom Powell, Tobe and Mary Edwards. Riley Robinson visited the church while he was a young man, but was never a member.

The first building was of logs, was small, and had a large rock fireplace covering nearly one end of the building. Some years later a log school house was built a few yards from the church house. It was in front of this little log schoolhouse shortly after the close of the Civil War that a bunch of deserters caught and skinned two of the dogs belonging to the cavalry who were rounding up the deserters, and nailed them up on a tree. One was a black dog and the other yellow, and old Uncle Art Mims tacked a paper on the tree just underneath the dog hides reading: "Now while you all ride around so grand, and we have to split the mud and sift the sand, we'll wear the black and yellow tan."

Some ten years after the close of the war a frame building was erected on the same plat of ground; this building was used until 1935, when the present brick building was constructed.

Several literary schools were taught there, some in the old log school house and some in the church building. Serving as schoolmasters were: James Monroe Parrish, Dave Mullins, Vincent Gragg, Mrs. Bowden, Miss Emily Love, Abram Mims, Wm. M. (Bud) Easterling, Arthur (Art) Mims, Ellis Gulleddge, Clay Jones, Turpin Calloway, V.J. Gragg, Bart Jones and Jack Mims. A few singing schools were taught there, among the teachers being: Steeley Jones, Riley Robinson, Henry Robinson, H.M. Eagle

and J.A.W. Mims. An annual all day singing with dinner on the grounds was organized some twenty years ago, and the standing date of the same was set on each Mother's Day, the second Sunday in May. This singing is a kind of home-coming of old friends every year.

The first burying ground in the community was Love Graveyard, a mile south of the church, near the present home of Tommie Mims. Rev. Arthur Love was buried there, as well as some members of the Dunk Moatts family, some Headleys and Moores. Graves are still visible in Mr. Mims' field; there is one slab and some tombs. Among the first to be buried in the church cemetery was Ansel Sawyer, who was born in South Carolina in 1789 and died in 1855. Other families with mounds and markers in Walnut Creek cemetery include: Mims, Baker, Headley, Moatts, Traywick, Powell, Duke, Smith, Thompson, Miller, Maddox and Easterling.

Following F.A. (Gus) Gibson and Jeff Ledbetter, pastoring the church have been: C.D. Messer, J.H. Limbrick, G.B. Golden, J.R. Helms, J.H. Hightower, P.A. Lynch, C.M. Nolen, J.W. Emfinger, Reese Farnell, Mack Gibbs, Haywood Scoot, A.L. Lumpkin, and the present pastor, T.R. Greenwood.

During the past thirty years a number of visiting preachers have taken part in revival services at the church, including: T.C. Cassaday, J.S. Eddins, J.L. Thomas, Revs. Ellis and Fitzwater, C.W. Walton, A.H. and Hershel Lynch, C.C. Willcutt.

There has been an evergreen Sunday school at Walnut Creek as far back as the present generation has any record. Superintending have been: Alfred Baker, Miss Emily Love, Anderson Baker, Sylvester Headley, Mose Mims, Henry Mims, John Baker, Tommie Mims, R.E. Powell, Johnnie Johnson, D. Duke, and the present superintendent, Bill Coggins."

## **CHESTNUT CREEK BAPTIST**

[From the Union-Banner 19 Jul 1945]

"Chestnut Creek Baptist church at Cooper, was established in 1828, the land for the church and grounds having been donated by Rev. Moses Yates, who was also one of the charter members as well as its first pastor. He was the grandfather of Samuel M. Yates, who at present lives a short distance from the church. The church took its name from nearby Chestnut Creek.

The first building was made of logs and stood across the road from the present church house. Up until the slaves were freed at the close of the War Between the States, the blacks were members of the church along with the whites, a section of the church being maintained for the slave members.

Among the early white members and supporters of the church were: Rev. Samuel Ray and wife, Rachel Evans Ray; John Dennis, Cassa Cooper, John Moore, Job Calloway, William Robertson, Jessy Connell, Robert Wilson, Lunsford Moore; William C. (Bucky) Wyatt and wife, Mariam Wright Wyatt; John Robertson, Jim Aldridge, Mary J. Rollins, A. Eilands, William Gray, Singleton Posey, K. E. Allen and wife, William B. Strock and wife, Rev. Allen, William Connell, Allen Ray, Elijah Vinson, Curtis Dupree, Sinclair Jones, Rev. Joe Long, John Barbour, Moses Pinson, Samuel Yates, Sr. These



men, early settlers in the community, 1820 to 1830, together with their wives and families, were members of the church and spent their lives in the community prior to the Civil War.

The church was very strict in discipline often at one monthly conference calling to account half a dozen male members for drunkenness, swearing, "absenting themselves from conference", intoxication, Etc. At a montly meeting on September 6, 1839, listed among the "excommunicated members" was a female "for being a fornicatress".

The first postoffice in the neighborhood was established about the time the log church building was erected; it was located near the present home of D.S. Robinson, was called Barbourville, and was operated in connection with a store and barroom by John Barbour. Mail was delivered once a month by pony express. The village was not named Cooper until after the war when the railroad went through. A store was opened up near the railroad by Andy J. Cooper, and it was from him that the town drew its name.

The first frame church building was put up about 1840; has been torn down and remodeled probably three times. The Sunday school annexes to the building were added some fifteen years ago, making it modern and roomy.

Pastors of the church prior to the Civil War, in about the order in which they came were: Joe Long, Samuel Ray, James Allen, Randolph A. Myers, Alex Blizzard and Gus Raines. Following the War, pastors were: James Artie Mullins, John Huff Ray, Robert Long, John Bone, Joe Long, Jr., R.M. Eycutt, Hardy Jones, J.L. Hand, J.H. Thomas, W.D. Ruddick, T.J. Deason, J.D. Hughes, W.W. Robinson, J. S. Hand, A.L. Nichols, J.W. Jones, M.I. McLeod, G.G. Williams and the present pastor, Rev. Page Kelley.

Some two or three decades before the turn of the century Cooper, or Coopers, sometimes known as Cooper Station, became a prominent sawmill and lumber center. Jake Lovinsky, an emigrant Jew from Holland settled there and operated a store and sawmill. In partnership with Lovinsky in the Dutch company were Pete Youngman and James Helbidge. Some years later they sold out to the Gullahorns--John, Tom, Isaiah, Whit, Berry and Tige. They did a flourishing lumber business there for several years as well as operated a large commissary. They were followed some years later by W.C. Robinson, organizer and owner of the Cooper Lumber Company, which firm was later moved to Clanton.

Beginning with Rev. Moses Yates, one hundred seventeen years ago, members of the Yates family have been active in the operation of Chestnut Creek church for five generations. During the time there have been three Samuel Yateses, the third one now being an active member at the age of seventy years. The fifth generation was represented by the latter's son, J. Lee Yates, who was formerly Clerk of the church and an active member until some ten years ago when he moved his membership to Cane Creek. Members of the Yates family have held at various times every office in which the church has been able to honor its members.

Prominent business and professional men who had their beginning at Coopers include: Dr. John Wise, Dr. Will Wise, Dr. A.J.S. (Jack) Dennis, Dr. Phillip Goggins, Dr. Alpheus Dennis. The latter was a specialist on eyes and throat; he moved to Montgomery in early manhood where he made quite a success of his profession. His father was P.C. Dennis, a merchant at Coopers. Another son of P.C. Dennis was John C. Dennis, lawyer of Clanton. Dr. R.J. Eiland now practicing at Clanton, also had his beginning at Coopers. Another local boy who made good was Peter Pinson, who some decades ago moved to Arizona for his health, started up a chain store business and made an enviable success of same. Mr. Pinson furnished the money necessary to build the Sunday school annexes to Chestnut Creek church some fifteen years ago. J.T. Rockett spent his boyhood days near Coopers, and operated a mercantile business there form many years before becoming Tax Collector of Chilton County.

A church letter found in one of the old church books of Chestnut Creek reads: "The State of Alabama, Autauga county. We, the Baptist Church of Christ at Canaan do hereby certify that our beloved sister Prissiler Dennis, is a member in full fellowship with us, and is dismissed from us when joined to another church of the same faith and order. Done by order of the church in conference October 8, 1854. John Norris, Moderator; Joel Dennis, Clerk." This letter also bears the name of "P.C. Dennis", which name was evidently signed to the letter some years later.

This Canaan church referred to in the above letter evidently was the Canaan located at Mt. Creek, which dissolved about 1892. Thomas M. Pyron and family formerly belonged at Canaan, and removed to Chestnut Creek upon the old church's dissolution. The minutes of Chustnut Creek dated September, 1896, read: "Moved and seconded to choose a chorister, and Bro. Thomas Pyron ws unanimously elected, with Bro. R.T. Grant, assistant". J.L. Hand was Moderator at that time and J.W. Dennis, clerk.

In the church minutes dated August 17, 1895, the following is recorded: "Amount due Bro. R.T. Grant for teaching last year's singing school, \$4.35".

Along at this period are mentioned in the church book such names as: George W. Webb, William Moore, W.C. Boyd, J.E. White, Isaac Vinson, John W. Gray, Matilda Farr, F.B. McCary, Samuel Yates, J.L. Farr, H. Furgison, R.T. Grant, William Driver, O.C. Kicker, W.H. Thomas, H.A.J. Harris, J.M. Ward, J.L. Peters, J.M. Cox, L.H. Gentry, Martha Posey, Thad Kicker, William Culp, J.B. Downs, M.E. Howard, Frank and James Dubose, Polly Wyatt, Henry J. Taylor, J.W. Headley, W.A. Curlee.

The rules of decorum prohibited "unnecessary whispering or talking in conference", and reproved members for "drunkenness, dancing, cardplaying, gambling of any description whatsoever, profanity, and such like". Failing to attend three consecutive conferences a member was excluded.

During the year 1894 the pastor, Rev. J.L. Long, was paid the sum of \$17.60, the largest amount credited to any one member being \$3.00 paid by P.C. Dennis. Members often paid the preacher with various material contributions such as hens, fruits and vegetables. In September, 1895 Polly Wyatt is credited with "One bushel corn, 50c".



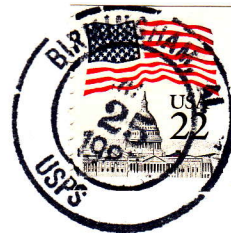
There has been a Sunday school at Chestnut Creek as far back as anyone now living in the community can remember. It was probably organized about 1880 or 1885, as it was during that period that other Baptist churches in the county became interested in this auxiliary to the church. Among the superintendents have been: P.C. (Payton) Dennis, L.A. Calloway, S.M. Yates, H.A. Harris, Charlie D. Hughes, H.J. Taylor, and the present superintendent Johnnie Sorrell. The present enrollment is 125.

(The last three paragraphs of this article will be continued to the next issue.)

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE PAST DUE! MAIL THEM NOW & SAVE

[illegible]

Post Office Box 644  
Clanton, Alabama  
35045





# *Chiltonian*

Volume 7 Number 2

June 1987

## QUARTERLY MEETING

The regular quarterly meeting of the Chilton County Historical Society will be held on 12 July 1987 at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library in the Conference room at 2:00 p.m. The program will be presented by Miss Deborah Pendleton of the Alabama State Archives staff. Miss Pendleton will discuss records preservation pertinent to the records recently retrieved from the Chilton County Rescue Squad building. This will be a great service to the County and we encourage everyone to be present to include all records custodians in the county.

## CENSUS MICROFILM

The Society has recently acquired and placed in the Chilton/Clanton Public Library additional microfilm of the Federal Census. Three rolls of it are the entire 1790 census for the United States. At the end of roll three appears a list of the Revolutionary Pensioners. The remainder of the microfilm obtained covers that part of the State of Alabama from which Chilton's population was made; it covers the years 1830 to 1910 and includes the 1855 census for Alabama (12 counties).

## VERTICAL FILE

At long last a good start on the vertical file has begun thanks to Society member Betty Collins. A substantial filing cabinet has been secured by the Society and it has been placed in the Genealogy area of the Chilton/Clanton

Public Library. We encourage members and the public to take advantage of this new resource. Anyone may contribute to the collection and as many copies as are desired can be made of any material in the files. We only ask that the material not be permanently removed.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Starting with this issue we introduce a new feature, that of publishing biographical sketches of ancestors of any members who wish to contribute them. Naturally, we prefer typed copy but will accept handwritten manuscript.

The subject chosen for this issue has been provided through the courtesy of Mrs. Nell Thomas and was extracted from the Chilton County News of 1934 right after Rev. James Thomas Nelson died.

"I was born the 4th of Jan. 1833 at Indian Springs in Butts County, Ga., son of Meardy and Sarah Nelson (James Meredith Nelson and Sarah Dawson McElroy). Removed from Georgia to Alabama in 1842, at the age of 10 years, and settled in Tallapoosa county. Chance at education very limited, attended rural schools a few months each year between farming and harvesting seasons. Lived at Rome, Tallapoosa county four years. Moved from there to Macon county, remained there three years. Moved back to North Tallapoosa. Remained there until 1859, which covers the time until I became a man of age.

I made profession of religion at Hillaby Camp Ground Monday night

after the second Sunday in September, 1853. Joined Missionary church at Providence 3rd Sunday in November, 1854. Married to Mary L. Burk Feb. 14, 1855. Settled down in Tallapoosa, later selling out and bought land in Coosa, making my first crop in 1860. Drew my church letter from Providence in May, 1860, placed my membership in Weogufka church in May 1860. Picking up my religious life after serving in Confederate Army three years.

Joined Confederate Army (at Rockford May 3 1862), Tom Smith Company, Hilliard's Legion; in '63 joined in 59th and 60th Alabama Regiments, placed under Gen. Longstreet. Fought in battle of Chickamauga Sept. 22, 1863. Went to Richmond, Va., in Spring of '64; in the trenches at Richmond. Petersburg 9 months, relieved 15th day of March, went down below Petersburg. Lost 5 or 6 (members) of my mess 25th of March; fought big fight of Hatcher's-run 31st of March, 1865.

Union Army broke our lines about Richmond and Petersburg 2nd Monday of April. Falling back to Appomattox Court House 9th of April fought last fight in which Bob Lee Army was surrendered. Saw Bob Lee surrender his sword to U.S. Grant under apple tree. Paroled.... Arrived home May 8th 1865. Wounded twice while in Army.

Numerous religious and political offices at Weogufka for many years. Licensed to preach Sept. 1874 and ordained 1875. Served several churches in Coosa, Shelby and Talledega. Preached last sermon at Friendship church in Chilton county. Joined Masons in November 1867.



Had five daughters and one son by my first wife. Two boys and two girls by second wife (Frances Ann Merrell Jones, married Shelby county 17 Dec 1890).

I saw the first railroad that was built in Georgia, when a boy of nine years. I saw the first one built in Alabama in '47-49, from Montgomery to West Point. I saw the first regiment that went through Alabama to the Mexican War. When I came to Alabama the foxes were barking, the wolves were howling, the deer were skipping through the woods. I saw the first train that went through Alabama as it passed through Macon county.

Removed from Coosa to Chilton about 1907 and resided near New Salem church." [Rev. Nelson died 28 Feb. 1934 and is buried at New Salem.]

## CHESTNUT CREEK BAPTIST

(Continued from last issue)

There have been three or four literary school houses in the immediate community, operating at different periods. Among the first schools was that taught in the home of Aunt Sallie Dupree; later there was one in the log home of Hillery Logan and later a schoolhouse was built on the Tom Nix place. Among the first teachers were: Miss Anstis McGee, Janie Oden, A.J.S. Dennis (who later became a doctor), F.M. Connell, J.W. Ray, J.W. Moore, J.A. Raines, and John A. Hunter. The latter two taught in a frame building located nearly in front of the present church building. This building was torn down some thirty years ago.

For several years the public school building was near the Isaac Vinson place and known as Cross Roads. It was later moved nearer the station, and finally in 1932 the present modern stone high school building was erected, the main pushers of the movement being H.A. Harris, who had taught at both the former locations, and Luther E. Little, the then superintendent of education.

When Mitchell Dam was being built in 1921 and 1922, Alabama Power Company built a railroad spur from Coopers to the river. These

operations brought quite an impetus to the business of Coopers, which lasted only during the two years of construction.

The present building at Chestnut Creek is modern in every respect and sufficiently roomy to accommodate the 435 members on the church roll. There is a Womans Missionary Union as well as a Baptist Training Union, which, together with the Sunday school, function full time the year around. The value of the church property is \$6000 and the pastor, who preaches one Sunday a month is paid about \$300 a year.

## PROVIDENCE CHURCH Beat 16

[From the Union-Banner, 12 Oct 1944]

" 'We will meet back here for services by early candle-light' was no vague or traditional saying when Providence church in what is now Beat 16 was young. The old church, or rather the brush arbor, was actually lighted by tallow homemade candles, and some old residents living there now remember how they used to stick the candles to a rock having it high enough to give off light.

Providence church was organized in 1855, it being formed by a few members of Chestnut Creek church who lived quite a distance away and by some others in the immediate community. Two main instigators and charter members were Moses Robinson and Middleton Aldridge, both from Chestnut Creek church. At the time of organization there was only a brush arbor, but within a few months a log church house was built. In 1890 a frame building was erected and the old log building, with a big fire-place at one end, was used for a school house. This frame building was replaced with the present building in 1915.

The first pastor of the church was Baker Hill from Mt. Zion community, followed by Hugh Foshee of old Liberty Hill community. Hill was pastor during the Civil War, and Foshee took charge in 1875 holding for about ten years. A visiting preacher to the church during its early days was Rev. Blizzard. Following Foshee was Frank Marion

Vines, Gantt Riggins, J.F. Bone, R.M. Honeycutt, M.J. Parrish, W.J. Armstrong, W.W. Robinson, J.D. Hughes, E.A. Norris, G.G. Williams, Floyd Smith and the present pastor, Rev. Robert Cost.

Some of the early assistant preachers were: Hardy Jones, Rev. Olive, Gus Raines, John Bone, W.P. Lowery, and Marion W. Mims. Several of those named as pastors dropped back at various times to assist in protracted meetings from time to time.

The Sunday school was organized in 1890, and a peculiarity which is probably unprecedented anywhere existed in regard to Providence Sunday school. It has never had but one superintendent Riley Robinson was elected superintendent when the Sunday school was organized and he still holds that position today at the age of 93. For the first forty years of his superintendency he never missed a Sunday attending Sunday school. He scarcely ever misses now, but sometimes his health or bad weather prevents him from going.

A clerk of the church from 1881 to 1884, during the days of the Gullahorns mill in the community, was Samuel B. McCary, father of Frank McCary of Clanton. The first school teacher of the community was Gabriel Parker in 1882, followed by Mrs. Bowman in the summer of 1883, J.W. Ellis Gullledge in 1884 and for some years following. Others were: W.C. Robinson, Miss Julia Parrish, Elijah (Buddie) Robinson, Joe A. Raines, Toy Williams, Joe Popwell, W.M. Wyatt and others.

Providence has been a burying ground since before there was even a brush arbor. At the time the church was organized there was an old stone covered grave, in which was said to have been buried some years before a Negro-Mulatto woman genius by the name of Bryant. This family of Negroes lived for several years on the present home place of John Bates. This woman was said to have been a genius in needle work, known for miles and miles for her artistry in needlecraft. There is sign of other old graves in the vicinity of this stone-covered one, which is thought to have been burying



places for other members of the Bryant Negroe family.

The first white person buried at Providence was a man named Pattillo, followed by John Robinson. These were buried while the Indians still roamed the hills between Providence and the River [Coosa]. In the Providence cemetery are to be found many markers bearing the names: Jones, Bates, Powell, Mims, Wyatt, Robinson and Calloway.

Providence has always been a community inclined to public gatherings. The old Sunday school march was held there for several years back forty years ago, here having been singings held there from the beginning. Famous teachers of music were: Riley Robinson and Henry Robinson, followed in later years by Columbus H. Robinson who died a few years ago. The annual May singing which was organized at old Salem in 1899 was moved to Providence in 1922 when the building of Mitchell Dam forced Salem to disband. This singing is still an outstanding event at Providence every fourth Sunday in May.

Present membership of Providence church is 185. It has been a member of Unity Association since its organization."

## MT. SPRINGS CHURCH

[From The Union-Banner 19 Oct 1933]

The beginning of Mt. Springs church dates back to one and a half decades after the close of the Civil War. About the year 1880. Rev. William Wells, father of Uncle Dock Wells, who died five or six years ago, began holding services under a bush arbor near the present site of Mt. Springs church. Soon after this a log house was erected, which was used both as a schoolhouse and as a church. Soon crowds attending became too large for the small log house, and another bush arbor was built. It was in the second bush arbor that the church was organized. The present building was erected a few years later, about 1885.

There were five charter members,

namely: Rev. William Wells, Mrs. Jane Rutherford, Mrs. Martha Rutherford Davis, Miss Georgia Rutherford and Mr. George Mims. Of these five, only one is now living—Mrs. Martha Davis. The land for the church and cemetery was donated by Mr. George Mims.

All during his lifetime Uncle Dock Wells was profoundly interested in the church activities of Mt. Springs, and like his father before him, preached and worked there in their meetings, and no doubt accomplished much good in the name of his Master whom he loved and adored above all earthly things.

Teachers who taught in the old log schoolhouse were: Charley Robinson, Mr. Haroldson, Jerry Barnett, and Miss Florence Sillman (was later married to Joe Gore). Prominent in the life of the community and the early church, besides the charter members already named, were Dick Rutherford, Ike Rutherford, and Jap Farley. The latter was the father of J.B. Farley and Mrs. G.O. Foshee.

Mt. Springs church was first organized as a Congregational-Methodist church and remained so until about 1890. It was then changed into a Congregational church. Twenty-six years ago Mt. Springs church was the largest Congregational church in Alabama, it having about 130 members. The present deacons are Leander Giles, Ervin Williamson and H.H. Killgore. The trustees are Marvin Rutherford, Paul Williamson and Lewis Carroll. Rev. A.C. Nelson is pastor, and he has held that position for the past five or six years. The present membership is 58.

## TEMPLE ASSEMBLY OF GOD

[History of Temple Assembly of God by Jesse Baker, Teacher Men's Bible Class. Feb 1944]

The Temple church was organized about the year 1906, being affiliated with The Church of God in Christ. The founder of the church was L.P. Adams, a well known holiness preacher of Memphis, Tennessee.

The charter members, previous to this time were mostly Methodist Protestants, being members of Walnut Creek church, a place still dear to all the older members of Temple church.

The first church building was 40 x 60 feet, and was erected at a time when people had but little money and sawmills were few and far away. There were no good roads in those days as they had to be kept up with picks and shovels. The lumber had to be hauled for a long distance over muddy roads and it required a good deal of sacrifice to erect this building, but it was done gladly and joyfully and some of the most wonderful meetings were held in those days that have ever been witnessed in this country.

It can truthfully be stated that through this church people have been greatly enlightened on the Word of God. People were more careful to attend church in those days although it was mostly in one-horse wagons. They went to church rain or shine, hot or cold.

There was a great change in the community at this time, and many people, and especially the women whose lives were a burden, were changed into lives of joy and happiness. It was years before any members of the church were taken by death, but at this time many have passed to their reward.

Although the church is about 38 years old, it has had but few pastors. L.P. Adams, being the founder and a great Bible teacher, was pastor for about 20 years.

Our next pastor was Arthur Bell, and at this time we came into the Assemblies of God. Following Bro. Bell were: W.P. Mims, A.T. Hickman, Troy B. Helms, Grover M. Langston, C.F. Norton, and our present pastor, who is J.D. Stevens. As stated by a very prominent visiting minister, all of our pastors have been the best. They are all still living at present, and we are always glad to see any of them and hear them preach.

We erected the present church building in 1925 or 1926. We are moving along nicely and having good services. Our Sunday school, which branched out from Walnut Creek Sunday school



was organized about 1896 and has never had to be reorganized since, but has been evergreen from that date. We have one of the best systems to be found in any country church and invite any and all not attending elsewhere to come and be with us. We have had a full time pastor for several years and although we have several churches nearby, yet we find it is no burden to support our pastor. We believe we have one of the best pastors to be found anywhere and one of the best Sunday schools in the country. We invite all to come and be with us and we will convince you that these statements are all true. [Land donated to Temple Assembly God by Joseph Andrew Washington Mims.]

[From the Union-Banner 29 May 1930.]

**The Man on the Corner.** Mr. W.H. Sartor gives us a bit of interesting history about the first newspaper published in Chilton County. It was called the Chilton County Courier (Published 1875-1877). W.A. Collier was proprietor, Robert A. Wright, brother of our Uncle Billy

Wright, was editor. W.H. Sartor was devil. The printing office from which The Courier was issued was in the northeast corner room of the courthouse which stood in the spot where Second Avenue now crosses Sixth Street. Our baseball ground then was right where the present courthouse stands, said Mr. Sartor. When the boys began to gather for a game, the printing office closed and the force went out to take part in the sport. When we got the paper printed I would take some copies and go to the trains as they passed and cry Chilton County Courier. My recollection is that I sold two or three copies in all my experience. That was an accident I guess.

### Family Group Record

available from  
**Mail Specialist**  
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Clanton, Alabama 35045

**Pad of 50 - \$1.00**

755-5892

Chiltonian is a quarterly publication of the Chilton County Historical Society and Archives, Incorporated, Post Office Box 644, Clanton, Alabama. [A non-profit organization].

Editor Ben Roberts

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### 1987 OFFICERS

President - Linda Kliner

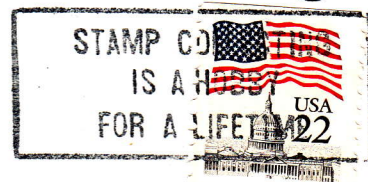
Vice-Pres. - Helen Parrish

Sec/Treas. - Mary Richardson

Reporter - Betty Collins

Historian - Nell Thomas

Post Office Box 644  
Clanton, Alabama  
35045





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# *Chiltonian*

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Volume 7 Number 3

SEPTEMBER 1987

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## **QUARTERLY MEETING**

The third quarterly meeting of the Chilton County Historical Society and Archives will be held on Sunday, the 11th of October 1987 at 2:00 p.m. The meeting will be at the regular place, the Conference Room of the Chilton/Clanton Public Library. Mr. Paul Martin, of the Auburn University Archives, will be the guest speaker. Mr. Martin's duties include being the Project Coordinator for the Preservation of Alabama Newspapers and his program for the meeting will cover the status of the project and the many interesting highlights of this endeavor.

## **RECORDS PRESERVATION**

Visitors to the basement of the Chilton County Probate vault will be greeted with what we consider a very pleasant surprise. By rearranging books, shelves, file cabinets and the like, a noteworthy transformation has resulted. This all leads to a project for preservation of all records currently maintained in the old

Woodruff files. Preservation materials and equipment are on hand to aid in the proper and archival storage of early estate records, commission papers, pension lists and applications, wedding licenses and so forth. We will need help from as many members as possible in achieving this essential result.

## **BEFORE CLANTON**

It has been written that Grantville was the name of the community that was changed to honor Gen. James Holt Clanton, CSA, in the latter part of 1870. Research indicates that to be a correct statement of fact. The name of the community prior to the time it was named Grantville, however, may have been mistakenly taken as Goose Pond.

The authoritative map of Alabama for the year 1867 (Alabama State Archives) shows something quite different. In fact, from census records and old newspapers we know that Goose Pond was a voting precinct or district within Autauga county and the area covered was rather too large to designate a small village. What the map shows is that there was a community or

village located at about the geographical location where "Tink's" Restaurant stands today.

Incidentally, that map also shows that there was a community about where Jemison is today that was then named Campbell's Hill. Another village, known as Chestnut Creek, is depicted at the site currently called Coopers; the map appears to show the locations of known Post Offices. As far as we know, there was never a Post Office named Grantville, Goose Pond or Pond.

The name of the village or community referred to was, as shown on the map, "Ranch", Alabama. We are fortunate to have been provided the original Postmaster's Commission of Dr. John Prudence Robinson which is dated May 5, 1860 and is signed by U.S. Postmaster General Joseph Holt. When the Civil War came along Dr. Robinson's appointment as Acting Postmaster was conferred by the Legislature of the State of Alabama on January 19th, 1861. Permanent appointment as Postmaster at Ranch, Alabama for Dr. J.P. Robinson came on May 16th, 1863 from Confederate Postmaster General John H. Reagan.



The name of the Postmaster and the location and name of the Post Office for the intervening years after the close of the Civil War are not currently known; however Mr. Alfred Baker became Postmaster of Clanton in 1871.

Dr. John P. Robinson continued to live in Clanton and became the town's first doctor. We have also been provided his license to practice medicine granted for the year 1872 and signed by Probate Judge Mordecai Roberson. Dr. Robinson continued to practice medicine in Clanton until about 1893 when he moved to Birmingham where he and his family resided until their deaths. He and most of the members of his family are buried in the Clanton City Cemetery.

Records indicate that when Dr. Robinson arrived at Ranch, Alabama there were a number of families already established there. These families included Thomas, Aldridge, Wright, Robinson, Scarborough, Powell, Popwell, Mims, Clackler, Maddox, Alexander and Pinson. The exact time of his arrival is not certain but deed records indicate that he bought property from Middleton Aldridge on the 15th of October, 1860 and from W.F. Robinson on the 19th of October that same year.

We are under obligation to Mr. Harry Reynolds, of Birmingham, a descendant of Dr. Robinson, for allowing us to borrow the Postal Commissions and the Medical License. Posthumous gratitude is also in order for Harry's aunt, Mrs. Nora Tarpley

who so faithfully held on to those valuable documents.

### **COUNTY MICROFILM RECORDS (CHILTON AND AUTAUGA)**

Microfilm records of the early marriages (and some deed indexes) for both Chilton and Autauga counties have been received and are available for research at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library. For Chilton County the marriages cover the period from 1870 through 1935; for Autauga the period covered starts with 1840. The wedding records include the indexes as well as the actual pages.

### **WISE DRUG COMPANY**

Our photograph for this issue is, we believe, of the drugstore probably operated by Drs. John and William Tell Wise. If this is actually a correct assumption, it follows that the location of the drugstore was in Coopers and more than likely dates back to the 1890's or early 1900's. We can only surmise that these two were the sons of Dr. George Wise.

The information we have indicates that the gentleman in the middle could be a Downs. (Anyone who can identify the gentlemen in the photo, please be kind enough to share the information with us.) Our thanks to Tommy and Sylvia Patterson for retrieving this part of our county's heritage.

## **CEMETERY CENSUS**

Of the 144 cemeteries that required surveys, about 134 have been completed. That leaves only about ten or more, unless more are found, to finish the project. Most of those remaining to be surveyed are relatively small but primarily of difficult access. Still, the surveys should be accomplished by the end of the year.

Once all cemeteries are in and necessary locations are plotted on the county map, only the task of organizing the text will remain. That means there is a great possibility that the new census will be printed and available some time next spring. We know there are a large number of people anxiously awaiting the publication of this volume; none of them, though, will be as glad to have it accomplished as this writer.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

Starting in September 1927 and continuing through the April 19, 1928 issues of The Union-Banner Mr. Mack Wyatt, editor of the paper, wrote a number of highly interesting and informative articles about people from Chilton County who had made successes abroad or locally. We will include one of those articles in this issue and will periodically carry them in subsequent issues. There are about 38 articles which should prove of value to many of our genealogists.





"One of the early settlers of Clanton of whom we are justly proud, is Mr. George O'Gilvie Foshee, who is one of Clanton's most public spirited men.

Mr. Foshee, the son of Mr. Joseph W. Foshee and Julissa Foshee, was born in 1867, four miles west of Clanton, at what is now known as Baker School. When he was 5 years of age his parents moved to Lomax. His early schooling was received at Cross Roads School, where Mr. H.L. Estes was principal. During his early school days Mr. Foshee assisted his father on the farm, plowing oxen part of the time. In 1885 he went into the coaling business at Stanton, Ala. The following year he heeded the call of the wanderlust and went to Texas, where he remained for one year. He returned to Ala-

bama in 1887 and went into the charcoal business at Lomax.

On December 18, 1890 Mr. Foshee married his splendid wife, who was Miss Alice Farley, daughter of Mr. J.F. Farley and Jemima Farley, who lived near Clanton. Mr. Foshee later took a contract stacking and loading lumber for C.J. Shaw and Narette, at Lomax. Later he went into the mercantile business at Pletcher, returning in 1900 to Lomax, where he set up a mercantile business and did extensive farming, cultivating at that time 500 acres of land. In 1904 Mr. and Mrs. Foshee moved to Dothan, where he ran levels for the railroad from Dothan to St. Andrews Bay. A year later his love for Chilton County brought him back, and he moved to a farm near Clanton. At

the expiration of three years he moved to Clanton, where he has remained ever since.

Upon coming to Clanton Mr. Foshee did carpenter work for two years and in 1910 accepted a position as clerk for Mr. Joe Sheppard, working there only two years, at the end of which time he went into the business of buying script and bonds. Mr. Foshee will be remembered by Clanton citizens as serving faithfully as marshal for the Town of Clanton. He has also served as coroner of Chilton County, winning in the election by a popular vote. Mr. Foshee was one of the jurors who assessed the damages done farmers in that vicinity when the back-waters of Lock 12 reached their farms in 1916.

Not only in public office has Mr. Foshee served well, but



since moving to Clanton 25 years ago he, as well as his wife, have been splendid citizens. He has helped in every way to build up his town, taking a prominent part in every phase of its progress notably in the bringing of new enterprise to Clanton.

As real estate owners Mr. and Mrs. Foshee have taken exceptional pride in beautifying their property regardless of whether or not it was occupied. Such interest bespeaks the highest type of civic pride and to say that Clanton is fortunate in having Mr. and Mrs. Foshee as citizens is to express it mildly.

They are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church where they take an active part in the activities of the church.

Mrs. Arthur Willis who also

gives unselfishly of her time to the church and club work of Clanton is the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Foshee and William Arthur Willis is the only grandson. He is also a credit to his family and his community.

Mr. Foshee did not hesitate to voice his enthusiasm over Clanton's progress and his following statement gives him a place with Clanton's boosters. 'I have been in Texas, Oklahoma, Florida and other states but Clanton is the garden spot of the earth.' He also expressed the belief that Clanton will double its population in two years."

Reprints available  
1931 Booster Edition  
Chilton County News  
\$10.00 each  
contact any officer  
Chilton Co. Historical Society

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#### 1987 OFFICERS

President Mrs. Linda C. Klinner

Vice President Ms. Helen Parrish

Sec./Treas. Ms. Mary Richardson

Historian Mrs. Loris G. Thomas

Reporter Mrs. Elizabeth J. Collins

Post Office Box 644  
Clanton, Alabama  
35045



Lined area for address or postage information.



The following researchers visited the Chilton County Courthouse and the Chilton/Clanton Public Library during the past six months and were pursuing the names indicated.

Ann F. Rivers, 420 Love Ave.,  
8-Mile, Al. 36613 --Smither-  
man, Foshee, Hayes, Martin.

Simpson, Fred B., 724 Mira  
Vista Drive, Huntsville, Al.  
35802--Marlow, Marlar, Lowe.

Frances Bowen, P.O. Box 3135,  
Cantonment, Fla. 32533 --Best,  
Moore, Martin, Bennett.

Ella M. Hellwig, Rt. 2 Box 117,  
Centerville, Al. --Hayes, Laham,  
Griffin, Lolly, Lawley.

Sara Head, P.O. Box 6252,  
Pensacola, Fla. 32503 --Best,  
Moore, Martin, Bennett.

Paula A. Moates, Rt. 1 Box 870,  
Verbena, Al. --Moates, Baker.

Ruby Summers, 35222 --Estes,  
Summers

Peggy Slay, 13 Southern St.,  
Chickasaw, Al. 36611 --Middle-  
brooks, Ferguson, Smith.

Mrs. Granuel L. Pierce, 6026 E.  
University Condo 6, Dallas,  
Tex. 75206 --all names.



# **WORLD WAR 1 ROSTER FOR THE 167TH INFANTRY REGIMENT**

(From "Alabama's Own in France" by W.H. Amerine.)

Following is a list of Chilton County and surrounding community personnel listed on the Official roster for the 167th Regiment:

## **Medical Corps:**

Arant, Winston	Pvt, Mt. Creek, Al.
Ellis, Jesse E.	Pvt, Marbury, Al.
Sims, Edward C.	Pvt, Jemison, Al.

## **Headquarters Company:**

Atchinson, Dan J.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Bruce, Roy	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Gless, Harvey	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Gothard, Bennett	Pvt, Randolph, Al.
McIntyre, Tollie E.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Parnell, Leighton C.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Reynolds, Ruben	Pvt, Birmingham, Al.
Roberts, Guy H.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Shoults, Bush	Pvt, Lawley, Al.
Smith, Avery R.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Smitherman, Thomas J.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Teal, Russell A.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Tucker, Wesley O.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Wallace, Claude J.	Pvt, Randolph, Al.

## **Machine Gun Company:**

Brown, Coley	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Dobbs, Russell	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Vernon, Lewis E.	Corp, Clanton, Al.

## **Supply Company:**

Cruise, Mulkey D.	Wag, Plantersville, Al.
Gary, John	Pvt, Clanton, Al.

## **A Company:**

Armstrong, Cecil	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Bleauvelt, Clifton G.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
DeRamus, Charles M.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Garrett, Will E.	Pvt, Marbury, Al.
Harless, John G.	Pvt, Maplesville, Al.
Headley, Marvin W.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Henderson, Charlie	Pvt, Mt. Creek, Al.
Plier, Porter M.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Prim, James C.	Pvt, Randolph, Al.

## **B. Company:**

Lockhart, Dan	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
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## **C Company:**

Burnett, Caulia	Pvt, Ocampo, Al.
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## **D Company:**

DeVaughan, Sanford	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Forshee, Barney	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Holley, Alfred	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Jackson, Jefferson R.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Jones, Robert	Cook, Jemison, Al.
Lockhart, John T.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Lockhart, Zeb	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Parker, Sloan	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Pounds, Willis E.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Rollan, C.C.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Shirley, Alonzo S.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.

## **E Company:**

Downs, Evans	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
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## **F Company:**

Heath, Robert	Pvt, Marbury, Al.
Holley, Grover	Pvt, Lawley, Al.
Huggins, John H.	Pvt, Mt. Creek, Al.
Mathis, Raymond	Pvt, Marbury, Al.
Sanders, Ellie G.	Pvt, Lawley, Al.

## **G Company:**

Mancil, Jake	Pvt, Dixie, Al.
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## **H Company:**

Milstead, John *	Pvt, Riderville, Al.
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## **I Company:**

Jones, Brady	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Williamson, Erwin	Pvt, Clanton, Al.

## **K Company:**

Allen, Arden	Cook, Cooper, Al.
Clenner, Earley W.	Pvt, Coopers, Al.
Dennis, Richard P.	Pvt, Mt. Creek, Al.
Glass, James B.	Pvt, Jemison, Al.
Hunter, Carl J.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Jones, Lonnie M.	Pvt, Lomax, Al.
Lockhart, Frank	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Robinson, Arguiness	Pvt, Clanton, Al.

## **L Company:**

Boswell, Thomas M.	Pvt, Clanton, Al.
Carroll, William O.	Corp, Plantersville, Al.
Hutto, Sterling	Sgt, Plantersville, Al.
McKee, Emmett	Corp, Clanton, Al.

\* John Milstead was one of the ninety men cited by the regimental commander, Colonel W.P. Screws.

Others from the county who served during World War 1 but were not in this regiment include: Dr. Samuel Earl Johnson, Dr. Arthur Johnson, V.J. Elmore, Mack Wyatt, Gene Wyatt, Jadie Wagoner, Bice brothers (five) and Newt Aldridge.



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# Chiltonian

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Volume 7 Number 4

December 1987

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## QUARTERLY MEETING

The first quarterly meeting of the Chilton County Historical Society and Archives will be held in the Conference Room of the Chilton/Clanton Public Library on the 10th of January 1988 at the regular time, 2:00 p.m. One of the main items of business for this meeting will be the election of officers for the 1988 term. As well, a review of the Society's accomplishments will be conducted toward the aim of establishing future projects. For those interested there will be slides showing certain aspects of the Society's work. Please be sure to plan to attend and bring along a guest. Members are reminded that annual dues are payable at the current time, in case you did not receive a post card reminder.

We are enclosing with each issue of this newsletter an extra copy for all members. The idea is that every member will then be able to pass along a copy to a friend or relative to solicit their participation by becoming a member of the Society. Remember, the larger our membership is, the greater facility we will have in undertakings that will benefit us along with those who follow us in posterity. We are especially desirous of adding more young people to our roster so that they may develop an interest in extending the effort to preserve our county's history.

## OCTOBER MEETING

We were indeed fortunate to have had Mr. Paul Martin, of the Coalition for the Preservation of Alabama Newspapers, to present

an interesting and informative program. The valuable work of this organization cannot be overrated, nor overstated. Mr. Martin indicated that there were approximately 4700 newspaper titles that have been identified, the majority of which have undergone at least some form of preservation. Alabama's newspaper output over the duration of its history appears quite favorable in comparison with other States of the Union. We were naturally elated to learn that Chilton is one of two counties within the State whose early newspapers have been microfilmed, the other being Escambia county.

## CHILTON'S FIRST

At a time when most every county in the State of Alabama, and many other states for that matter, has made great stride in the restoration of older structures, Chilton county has at long last gotten a foothold. There is only, as far as we know, one structure within the county that has been a candidate for nomination to the National Historical Register and that is the Walker-Klinner house, near Maplesville. Many of our members will recall that it was one of the two houses shown during the Society's Heritage Day Open House a few years ago. John and Linda Klinner, and their family, are due commendation on their efforts in restoring the house and getting it eligible for the National Register. They have compiled quite an interesting history of the property and its owners, starting with Mr. William Y. White and coming down through the current time when they became the owners and undertook the restoration of the main residence. The history referred to is extraordinarily interesting and but for its length would be published at this time; we will reserve it for

publication at some future date, however.

## LOCAL BIOGRAPHIES

The publication, in our last issue, of the Union-Banner article about Mr. Foshee appears to have stirred considerable interest and impels us to continue the feature. The selection we choose for this issue is Mr. Joseph B. Downs and we trust that most everyone will find it equally informative. There are, as yet, numerous descendants of this family residing in the county, not to mention those who settled elsewhere. Some members of the family are tied to the Kicker family and, therefore, are mentioned in the excellent history of the Kicker family compiled and published by former Society member, Mrs. Ann Bloomquist of Orlando, Florida. Incidentally, Mrs. Bloomquist's book is available at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library and is a model for family researchers who are interested in a similar venture.

Union-Banner 15 March 1928.

## Who's Who in Clanton

"A citizen who is noted for his loyalty to his town, his just dealings with his fellow citizens, and his thrift is Mr. Joseph Benjamin Downs, the son of the late M. William Downs and Rebecca Downs.

Mr. Downs was born near Rockford in Coosa County on May 18, 1864. He obtained his education from the country schools of that county, and assisted his parents on the farm until he was 18 years old, at which time he received a position as teacher of the Coosa River Church School, in Elmore County, where he taught two three



month terms. In '86 Mr. Downs worked several months on a short line railroad at Oxmoor, Ala., and the following year married his 16-year-old bride, who was Miss Leah M. Eiland, who lived 7 miles south of Clanton. His account of marriage is very humorous. Mr. Downs said he borrowed his brother's Prince Albert coat, stole his youthful bride, and set out for Atlanta, where they spent their honeymoon. They returned a few days later to Alabama, and Mr. Downs bought a round axle wagon on credit and set out in earnest to work, hauling lumber for Uncle Berry Wells, who had the lumber unloaded at old Wintersville. During the summer months the price of the lumber went so low that times became very hard for the lumber dealers, so much so that Uncle Berry called his employees together, explained the situation, and said that due to the slump in the business he would not be able to pay any wages for their services, but said that he would divide rations with them. Some of the workers agreed to this arrangement, but Mr. Downs hastily withdrew his services and sought employment elsewhere. He spent a month on the farm and then went to Poplar Springs School, and taught two 10-month terms.

The following year he went to Cooper, Ala., where he went into the mercantile business. He went to Montgomery to buy the opening bill of dry goods from Bolling & Co. The salesman, Mr. Worthington, attended him, and here Mr. Downs had another amusing experience. After he had spent all of his money he told Mr. Worthington that he was under the impression that when a man paid a certain amount of cash money for goods he was entitled to the same amount of credit, and the somewhat puzzled and embarrassed salesman consulted the credit man and came back with the answer—"We know you are as good as gold, but we would rather have the gold." Needless to say, this experience has been the source of a good deal of fun during the past years, and Mr. Downs still laughs over it. He remained in the mercantile business at Cooper 8 years, during which time he also served as postmaster, and in 1898 moved to Clanton. Upon arriving here he bought out Mr. Dick Edwards' stock roughshod, without even an invoice. At that time he occupied what is now known as the Wade Building, and later moved his store across the railroad. It seems that Mr. Downs was in great demand as a postmaster, because here, too, he served several years as postmaster.

In 1915 Mr. Downs bought out the hardware business now owned by Farmers Hardware Co., and established the firm of Downs Hardware Co., his partners being his son, Mr. Hosea Downs, and Mr. J.J. Pickens; 8 years later, in 1923, the Downs Hardware Company was sold to its present owners, and one of the partners, Mr. Pickens, moved his family west.

Mr. Downs recently retired from public business, but says that he will soon be very actively engaged in raising chickens, watermelons, and sugar cane at his new farm two miles south of Clanton on the Montgomery highway.

Mr. and Mrs. Downs are the parents of three children—Mr. Hosea Downs, who is a member of the firm Downs Wholesale Grocery Co.; Mrs. J.J. Pickens (Ruby Downs), who is living in Denver, Colo., where her husband is interested in the real estate business; Joe Ben Downs, who operates an up-to-date barber shop here. Each of Mr. Downs' children are splendid men and women, who mean much to the religious and social life of their communities.

Mr. Downs joined the Masonic order at Cooper in 1893, and the Cooper Baptist Church in 1896. As a boy Mrs. Downs was ambitious to become a lawyer, and though fate did not lead him in that direction, he became a most successful business man, and Clanton is indeed fortunate in having a splendid man of Mr. Downs' type as a citizen.

He is a progressive citizen, and has proved himself sincere and loyal. During his 30 years stay in Clanton he has done much to promote its growth, entering whole-heartedly into every plan for the upbuilding of the town, and standing always for the best. Both Mr. and Mrs. Downs are loved by the Clanton citizens and their influence is far-reaching. Mr. Downs says that when he came to Clanton there was only one brick building, and that the city's growth has been continuous, and he is confident it will never stop growing."

## MEMBERSHIP

The central theme of this issue of the Chiltonian, as is painfully obvious by now, is, in fact, MEMBERSHIP. For that cause we are publishing, herewith, a name and address listing of all current members along with

some whose dues are considerably in arrears; this is in the hope that they will be encouraged to revitalize their membership. To further this aim we offer our efforts toward better and more interesting contents for future issues of the Chiltonian.

For example, we have located several interesting newspaper articles and other references to give us better insight into the life of Gen. James Holt Clanton, for whom the city of Clanton is named. Another gentleman who will be of interest to us all is the Honorable William P. Chilton, for whom the county is named. Also the local biographies, a significant genealogical source, contained in the Union-Banner number about 38 so that we have an ample supply of material from that source.

This will be considerably enhanced with findings in the basement of the Court House as the document preservation and reorganization gets underway. Not the least of our effort will be the future publication of the Cemetery Census, which will be one of the most comprehensive in the State when it is published. We are extremely hopeful that it will be in print and available by June of 1988.

## MEMBERSHIP LISTING

Capt. and Mrs. George Miller  
Rt. 5 Box 405  
Clanton, Al. 35045

Dr. and Mrs. Harry G. Collins  
394 Hamilton Station  
Columbus, Ga. 31909

Dr. and Mrs. William H. Dodson  
4311 Kennesaw Drive  
Birmingham, Al. 35213

Edna H. Clark  
9720 Pineaire Drive  
Sun City, Ariz. 85351

Eugenia Walters Parker  
1601 Oak Forest Court  
Mobile, Al. 36609

Marilyn Beard Giles, D.R.E.  
Rt. 2 Box 73  
Maplesville, Al. 36750

Miss Kim Cleckler  
115 Betty Street  
Clanton, Al. 35045

Miss Lynn Arnold  
137 Mims Circle  
Clanton, Al. 35045



Mr. and Mrs. Billy Gene Davenport  
Rt. 1 Box 17  
Thorsby, Al. 35171

Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Veazey  
Rt. 2 Box 253  
Maplesville, Al. 36750

Mr. and Mrs. C. Richard Moore  
POB 1140  
Clanton, Al. 35045

Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Smith  
Rt. 3 Box 118  
Clanton, Al. 35045

Mr. and Mrs. E.L. Klinner  
1765 Mountain Woods Drive  
Birmingham, Al. 35216

Mr. and Mrs. Ferrel Glass  
518 Dover Road  
Clarksville, Tenn. 37042

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon E. Wood  
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