

# CHILTONIAN

Volume 22, Number 1

January 2002

## QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 13 January, at the Old Congregational Church (known as Helen Jenkins's Chapel and located across from the High School) in Thorsby. Mr. Billy Gene Davenport and Mrs. H. E. (Lucille) McFarland will speak on the history of Thorsby Institute and the Town of Thorsby.

All members and other Chilton citizens who are interested in our County's history and its preservation are encouraged to attend.

## CREDITS:

*Chiltonian* is a quarterly publication of the Chilton County Historical Society & Archives, Inc.  
P. O. Box 644, Clanton, Alabama 35046-0644.  
(A Non-Profit Organization)

## OFFICERS:

President	-	John Glasscock (acting)
Vice Pres.	-	John Glasscock
Secretary	-	VACANT
Treasurer	-	Colyn Moatts
Historian	-	Wayne Sewell (acting)
Reporter	-	Colyn Moatts (acting)
Programs	-	Morris Moatts

## MEMBERSHIP RATES:

Annual: Individual \$9, Couple \$12, Student \$5  
(Dues payable in January)  
Lifetime: \$100

## Query

James Harvey Wilson Gordon (1905-1996) was the son of James "Jim" Anthony Gordon (1862-1957) and Susie Anna Hall. Susie was born in 1866, the daughter of Joshua and Isabella Harris Hall. Susie's parents are buried at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Pickens County, and her husband is buried at Chestnut Creek near Cooper. I am looking for Susie's death date and burial location. Could she be buried with her husband and children at Chestnut Creek? Anyone with information that might help me find an obituary or burial record for Susie Anna Hall is requested to contact:

Myran Morgan  
207 Cades Court, Crosscreek  
Columbia, SC 29212-1423

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## Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are still needed for a year-long project to preserve old documents in the Chilton County Probate Judge's Office. All necessary training is being provided by the State Department of Archives and History in conjunction with the Genealogical Society of Utah.

The County records go back as far as 1868, and this project will focus on records through 1919. While some original documents were destroyed in the 1870 courthouse fire, many were spared. The goal is to get all the old paper documents microfilmed before they deteriorate further and, ultimately, become unreadable.

This preservation project has the full support of Judge Bobby Martin, and anyone interested in volunteering can contact his office at 755-1555. Volunteers may also contact Mrs. Betty Collins of Collins Chapel at 646-1958.

it back. Things have not always been easy. There have been dark days when diseases hit fruit crops, when prices have been low and the small farmer had to abandon the farm and go to the city to work in order to support his family.

It was interesting to talk to older Thorsby residents like Mr. Grover Bice, now deceased, who saw Thorsby grow up through the years. He recalled the first acetylene lights of 1910 and the first water works of 1912.

In the early 1920's Thorsby residents enjoyed electricity for the first time, but only from sunset until ten o'clock at night. This electricity was generated by harnessing the motor of an old Fordson tractor to a generator. Later Mr. Alt came down from Birmingham and devised a better way to generate electricity and serve more customers and for a longer period of time. This was by using steam from the boiler at the cotton gin. This the present location of Collum's used car lot. Mr. Bice also recalls the making of bricks at the Forsman brick yard west of town and the hauling of the bricks in an ox wagon. These bricks were used in many homes as foundations and chimneys, as well as, in business houses, such as the building formerly used as the Town Hall built in 1918 and now the location of an insurance agency. He recalls seeing the growing of carnations in the field prior to the building of the first greenhouse by the Howard Brothers in 1908. This was one of the first flower growing enterprises in the state and during the years following, many carnations were shipped to various places to be used in floral designing. Later the Howard Brothers added other flowers and potted plants in addition to carnations and went into the floral designing business which continued until 1950 when Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Howard retired and, under new management, the business later became Thorsby Florist.

Education was close to the hearts of the early pioneers. They were anxious that their children should have good instruction [and] from the beginning they were staunch supporters of the public schools. Much progress was being made in the development of the town and establishing of churches and education became an important factor in the community. The people of Thorsby were determined to educate their children. A grammar school and a normal school were established.

Early in 1901 a Thorsby Normal and Collegiate Institute was established by Professor R. A. Rascoe. In the two years it was maintained, the school became widely known and was well attended, but difficulties beyond control of its promoter caused its suspension and for four years the buildings were practically empty. While this school was in progress it contributed greatly to the cultural advancement of the town. In the spring of 1906 a group of men, Mr. S. E. Norton, Reverend G. E. Gates, Pastor of the Congregational Church, and Reverend Almon Clark, State Superintendent of Congregational Home Missions, met and incorporated. The property was bought and a school of academic grade was opened September 17, 1906 known as Thorsby Institute, the first school of high school rank, in Chilton County.

*End of Part I*

(Conclusion of this article will be published in the April 2002 *Chiltonian*.)

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## Value Plus

*Old Schools of Chilton County Alabama*  
By Lorene LeCroy  
\$15.00 + \$3 S&H

~  
*Baker/Chilton County Marriages,*  
*1870 - 1893*  
\$22.50 + \$3 S&H

~  
*The Heritage of Chilton County*  
\$59.40 + \$5 S&H

Mail Check Or Money order  
To  
Chilton County Historical Society  
P. O. Box 644  
Clanton, AL 35046-0644

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# CHILTONIAN

Volume 22, Number 2

April 2002

## QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 14 April, at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library.

Although the program had not been finalized at the time of publication, you can be assured of an interesting and informative session.

All members and other Chilton citizens who are interested in our County's history and its preservation are encouraged to attend.

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## Query

Seeking birth and/or baptismal records on my uncle John Gregor (b. 3 Jul 1902) and on my grandfather Vincent Gregor (b. 9 Jun 1904). The family immigrated to Illinois after May 1901 and was included in the 1910 Illinois census. The census indicated that both boys were born in Illinois; however, later orphanage records indicate that both were born in (West) Blocton, AL (Bibb County). Because of later church affiliations, I assume that both boys were baptized in the Catholic Church; however, contacts with St. Aloysius Church in Bessemer, St. John's in Tuscaloosa, and St. Paul's in Birmingham have been unproductive. Anyone who may be able to help in any way, please contact:

Annette Singer  
08-856 Co. Rd. R  
Pioneer, OH 43554

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## *A Short History Of Thorsby, Alabama*

By  
*Pauline Poole Howard*

(Part II: Conclusion)

The main auditorium [of *Thorsby Institute*] was named Bates Hall. This fine school provided many students with Christian education and instruction. Students came from miles around to attend, many boarding in the boys' and girls' boarding department, and if they could not afford to pay the tuition fee they were permitted to work on the premises

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as much as they needed to enable them to obtain a high school education. Strict rules were laid down as to behavior and habits and if these rules were not observed the offenders were not permitted to remain in school. The standard was that of, "the best of high schools," as recognized by the general Education Board and the Carnegie Foundation. Thorsby Institute was on the accredited list of the University of Alabama, The Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Howard College, Piedmont College and other schools of equal rank. The curriculum and character of work done was to prepare its graduate for admission to any college or university in any state.

Thorsby Institute had an excellent library which not only served the school, but the entire community as well as the surrounding area. When at its prime, many cultural opportunities were brought to the student body and made available to the entire community and county. People came from far and near to attend Lyceum courses and to hear lectures on various subjects as well as to hear excellent musical programs. The music department was above average and always headed by a conservatory graduate.

For a period of time the Congregational Board gave money to help support the school but later it was dependent on contributions from different churches and donations from individuals who became interested in the work the school was doing, aside from the amount received from the small tuition fees.

The school had, besides the main two-story buildings, known as Bates Hall, a girls' dormitory which was originally built as a hotel and housed about twenty young women, and two dwellings, which constituted the boys' dormitory that were located a short distance from the school. One was brought with the school property and the other was built by the Institute, partly by student labor. These buildings accommodated about twenty young men. The furniture was donated by friends. The first Principal of the school was William J. Lampie, succeeded by S. B. Groves, N. W. Henson, S. H. Herbert and the last until 1957 was Miss Helen C. Jenkins.

The school suffered a great loss in 1924 when the main building, Bates Hall, was destroyed by fire. The new building, Helen Jenkins Hall, named for the principal, Helen C. Jenkins, was erected and ready for use in the same year. Another great loss was the large girls' dormitory, which was the original hotel. It

burned in the year 1917. Miss Helen Jenkins gave fifty years of service to Thorsby Institute in helping young people get an education. She served as Principal for forty years and gave freely of her time and money. Her memory will live on in the hearts and minds of many people who have been influenced and benefited by the efforts of this modest lady. Her portrait, along with the portrait of another great educator and friend to this town and community, Mr. H. Rascoe Maddox, hangs in the entrance hall of the school they both loved and served so unselfishly.

After more than fifty years of service to the youth of our town and other places, and as education had progressed rapidly and public schools enlarged their athletic programs, fewer students chose to attend Thorsby institute. By this time also it became harder to raise funds to operate the school and, as adequate teachers willing to work for low salaries became fewer, it was necessary to make a change. The Board of Trustees, realizing that (as stated in the T. I. Bulletin, October 1957) "this is a fast changing world and to keep abreast of the times we must yield to progress and march forward with time." The Board decided to offer the main building and dining hall plus the tract of land on which they are located to the Chilton County Board of Education with the understanding that it be used for a public high school. It was stipulated at that time that in the event it did not continue to operate as high school after a two year period the property would revert back to the control of the Thorsby Institute Trustees. Thorsby High School opened in 1957 with two T. I. Graduates on the faculty and has remained as such with the addition of a large gymnasium, Vocational Agriculture building, modern football field and an active athletic program.

The Thorsby Elementary and Jr. High School was built in the early twenties. Grades 7 through 9 were transferred to the high school in 1957. Grades 1 through 6 are now taught in this building.

Churches have always been important in the lives of Thorsby residents from the beginning. In the latter part of 1896 the Norwegian Lutherans organized and held their first service in an old store building with Reverend Engh, their first minister, holding services in their native language. In 1902 plans were made to build a Norwegian Lutheran church. Mr. Ole Lefstead, an early settler, drew up the plans and a beautiful church was built and impressive services were held in Norwegian language. A few years later as many

*(Continued on Page 3)*

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moved away and the membership became too small to afford a minister, the Norwegian Lutherans united with the Swedish Lutherans. The church was sold to the Congregational church which was active until 1957 when it became impossible to operate because of small membership. The building was later sold to the Thorsby Masonic Lodge and is used for their meetings and the Eastern Star meetings.

The Swedish Lutherans, who had been meeting in the public school building and in the Baptist church, built their church in 1902. They also held their services in their native language. Their minister was Reverend Hedburg from Minnesota.

The women of these churches were active in mission work. The Lutheran Ladies' Aid and Congregational Ladies' Aid, as well as the Ladies' Guild (which supported Thorsby Institute), played an important part in the life of the community.

With the passing of many of the members of the Lutheran Church the membership became too small to continue to operate and the building was sold a few years ago and torn down to make way for progress for the Alabama Telephone Company.

The Thorsby Baptist Church, organized in 1901, is the first Baptist Church in the Thorsby area. This church is now in its third building since that time, the first being the two story wooden structure that was later sold to the town for a public school. The second church building was also a wooden structure, located in the area of the Earl Marcus home. The third is the white masonry structure presently used. This building has recently been bricked over the white masonry.

In the year 1955 the few Methodists in Thorsby met for services in the Lutheran Church until 1956 when they built a small modern brick church. Services are now held twice monthly and Sunday School each Sunday.

About the mid 1930's Thorsby saw the modern public water supply and sewage system installed. Natural gas was installed in 1953. During the last few years a large more modern and adequate sewage plant has been installed. A great improvement to Thorsby was the paving of the streets in the town and during the last few years modern street markers have been placed.

Many new modern homes have been built during the past several years and continuing growth is indicated.

To update this history of Thorsby these are now the present businesses:

A modern fruit and vegetable market and garden center, a foundry, a shrubbery grower and landscape service, a real estate business, two insurance offices, a mower sales and service business, a welding business, an upholstery shop, a florist shop, two garages and a service station, a restaurant, a bank, a convenience store, a video store, an auction house, recreation hall, washateria, auto parts store, furniture store, a mobile home and used car sales yard and a large veneer plant. A plant manufacturing ladies clothes was established in 1958.

The modern municipal building was completed in 1968 with facilities for a mayor's office, council room, auditorium for public meetings and a public library. The library, under the supervision of the Cahaba Regional Library Service, was established in 1963 in the old town hall with the town clerk serving for librarian. Books were donated by the Homewood Library, as well as individuals. The board members met and cataloged these books. The attractive new library has proved an asset to the town and surrounding communities.

A great booster of Thorsby was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Johnson who were one of the families of Scandinavian settlers. The Johnson family was Swedish. Their daughter, Esther, before her death in 1986, was interested in getting together a history of Thorsby's homes that were built by the early settlers. She obtained pictures and newspaper articles, etc., and compiled them in a large album and requested that it be kept in the town hall for all who were interested to view its contents and that it be seen in the town hall and not taken out of the building. Mr. Sam Bentley, the mayor, has honored her request and invites anyone interested to ask the clerk to place it in the library for viewing.

Reita Price is to be commended for starting a revival in the interest of the town's history when the Swedish Heritage Fest was held in 1988. It was a big success and drew a large crowd and now we are looking forward to the second annual affair on September 9, 1989.

*The End*

# Value Plus

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By Lorene LeCroy  
\$15.00 + \$3 S&H

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1870 - 1893  
\$22.50 + \$3 S&H

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\$59.40 + \$5 S&H

*Thorsby: Writings & Memoirs  
Of Mrs. Grover Bice*

\$20.00 + \$3 S&H

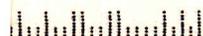
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

CHILTONLAN 4



THE APRIL 14th QUARTERLY MEETING WILL BE HELD IN JEMISON AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY AT 2:00 PM.

ELIZABETH PETERSON OF JEMISON WILL GIVE THE PROGRAM ON THE HISTORY OF JEMISON. ROB PERSON WILL BE ASSIST. ROB HAS WRITTEN NUMEROUS NEWS ARTICLES ABOUT THE TOWN OF JEMISON. THIS WILL BE A MOST INTERESTING PROGRAM WITH PICTURES AND EXHIBITS

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO INVITE YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

& & & & & & & &

THE PEACH PARK HAS ALREADY OPENED FOR THE SEASON. THE GARDENS ARE BEAUTIFUL. MR GENE GRAY AND SONS HAVE ADDED A BEAUTIFUL ROCK WATER FALL AT THE REAR OF THE SEATING AREA WITH A WONDERFUL VIEW.

~~The museum~~  
THE MUSEUM WILL OPEN ON MONDAY APRIL 29 AND REMAIN OPEN THRU SEPTEMBER FROM 10:00 AM TIL 4:00PM. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO GREET VISITORS AND TELL THEM ABOUT CHILTON COUNTY, PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU COULD HELP. IF YOU ARE A FRIEND WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST WITH THE GARDEN, VOLUNTEERS WILL WORK ON THURSDAYS.

I HOPE TO HAVE SEVERAL ART EXHIBITS DURING THE SUMMER AS WELL AS MR KENDRICK'S WOOD CARVING ON EXHIBIT. SHOULD BE A FUN SUMMER.

WILL HAVE COUNTY HISTORY BOOKS FOR PEOPLE TO CHECK ON FAMILY HISTORY.

WAYNE SEWELL ANTICIPATES HELPING ONE DAY A WEEK WITH GENEALOGY.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON THE 04TH.



MORRIS MOATTS  
Program & membership

# CHILTONIAN

Volume 22, Number 3

July 2002

## QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 14 July, at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library.

An overview of historic structures in Chilton County will be presented by Sally Moore and Linda Klinner. Please join us for this informative lecture and slide presentation.

All members and other Chilton citizens who are interested in our County's history and its preservation are encouraged to attend.

## CREDITS:

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## Query

I am researching the Gullahorn surname and am seeking any information that might tie the Jack Taylor Gullahorn line to the Elisha Thomas Gullahorn line. Elisha Thomas was possibly from North Carolina, and he died near Clanton (b. 1818, d. 1881). Jack Taylor married Mrs. M. A. Dennis on 8 Apr 1882 in Chilton County. If you can help or would like to share information on the Gullahorns, please contact me at the following address:

Lowell M. Duffey  
802 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, NE  
Jacksonville, AL 36265

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## *The History Of Race In America*

*(Reprinted Courtesy Of  
The Alabama State Data Center,  
University Of Alabama)*

Our country's first Federal racial classification system has been devised by the history of legal thinking, social science, the Federal bureaucracy, and American pop culture. It has nothing to do with biology. The new racial classifications we have seen in Census 2000 are only the most recent in the long history of the Federal racial classification system.

A system was introduced to classify American immigrants in the decade after 1900. Prior to 1899 immigrants were classified simply in terms of their

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country of origin. The 1899 Report of the United States Commissioner-General of Immigration instituted racial categories for the first time in published reports. The Commissioner-General gave his justifications for the change to reporting not only country of origin but also race. During the 1890s the sources of American immigration had been shifting, with increasing proportions of newcomers arriving from the multi-national empires of central and eastern Europe (Russia, Austro-Hungary, Turkey, Germany). Knowing the immigrant's country of origin did not tell much about the immigrant. Was an immigrant from Russia a Finn or a Pole or a Jew? One thing was almost certain: the immigrant listed as "Russian" by country of birth was not an ethnic Russian. The Commissioner-General argued that these differences were important.

At this point, "race" classifications placed together people who spoke the same language and had the same religious ties. The system remained largely unchanged for the next 50 years, until well after the Second World War. Most immigrants were from Europe, and most of the discussion about classification concerned the European groups.

The passenger lists of ships of 1898-1902 did not call for "race of people" information. How, then, did immigration officials present the data on that subject in the annual Reports covering those years? In most immigration stations, American officials reviewed the passenger lists while facing the immigrants themselves and added a notation about "race of people." But at the crucial New York station it was done differently. There a supplemental form was added to the passenger list, not on the basis of any congressional mandate, but apparently on the initiative of immigration officials themselves. This supplemental form did not include an item on "race of people." Instead it included items on "color," "country and province of birth," "mother tongue," and "religion."

Soon afterward the system of classification had to be defended against vociferous and repeated criticism from articulate ethnic interest groups—more specifically, from a number of Jewish organizations. Government officials, of course, changed over the years. New bureaucratic officials inherited the classification system, often with precious little knowledge of how it had come into being. These new officials were put in a position of defending a status

quo that they had neither created nor given formal approval to.

What began as a fairly off-hand effort was now criticized as unscientific, and in turn defended as either scientific or practical and necessary. Just prior to 1910, immigration experts and some members of the Senate tried to extend into the United States decennial Census of 1910 the usage of the race classification system developed for Europeans. This effort was unsuccessful, but it resurfaced in a new form and resulted in the "mother tongue" question in the 1910 Census.

Our widely used decennial census racial data evolved from these inauspicious beginnings. Our country still doesn't entirely agree about categories, terminology, or classification. But we can know that the century-old national dialogue has resulted in a system that is better than what we started with. As decades pass, governmental classifications of race can be expected to continue to evolve with the nation's attitudes about the subject of race, and data reported from the censuses will continue to reflect those changes.

*The End*

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# CHILTONIAN

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Volume 22, Number 4

October 2002

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## QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 13 October, at the residence of Mr. Richard Jones. We'll assemble at the Peach Park Welcome Center at 1:45 PM, and then "convoy" to the meeting site.

You can be assured of an interesting and informative "hands-on" session.

All members and other Chilton citizens who are interested in our County's history and its preservation are encouraged to attend.

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## *Jemison And Her People*

By  
*Melba Patton Peterson*

(With John David Glasscock & Robert Peterson)

The land where the town of Jemison was first located, in Township 23 North, Range 13 East, and Section 23, was first entered in a land patented by Weston P. Gale on January 14, 1837, warrant #22300. Gale may have been a land speculator.

The Alabama and Tennessee Railroad patented 280 acres. This must have happened at about the same time, as railroading came about 1830 and the steam locomotive in 1834. The railroads consisted of wrought iron, laid along thin strips of wood which rested on cross-ties of heavy wood (as the rails do today). But the rails wore out quickly. When the Louisville and Nashville bought it, the trackage had to be completely rebuilt.

On January 14, 1858, Willis Langston patented 40 acres, warrant #36891 in what was then Shelby County. A year later, in 1859, Reason J. Langston built the first house, so we are told.

Willis Langston was born about 1813 or 1816 in South Carolina. He married Louisa Wooley, the daughter of Zaccheus Wooley and Elizabeth Long. Willis and Louisa were married on October 29, 1837, in Bibb County. They were listed in the 1850 Bibb County census, but were also listed in the 1860 Shelby County census. They had at least 13 children, born from 1840 until 1859.

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In the 1860's came the Civil War (War Between the States). Many men who later lived in Jemison fought in the war, and three daughters of Captain James Cobb and Elizabeth Campbell married and lived in the town. They were Mary Ann, who married Dr. J. A. McNeill; Martha Malone, who married W. E. Lowery; and, Paralee Melissa, who married J. H. Patton. Willis Langston was murdered in 1865 as was Captain Cobb and some others during the war.

Around 1869 [sic], Baker County was created from parts of Shelby, Bibb, Autauga, and Perry Counties. Jemison was located in the Shelby County part.

Some time in the 1850's and 1860's [sic], the South and North Alabama Railroad rebuilt "that portion of it from Calera to Montgomery which wasn't much to start with, and which the war had made even less." (Kincaid A. Herr—Louisville and Nashville Railroad 1850-1963)

On December 12, 1870, "Langston's Station" was established. That same year, James Gibbons was appointed postmaster. I. N., R. J., and G. W. Langston's names appear on deeds to land sold in [the] early years, and the Langstons probably sold wood for cross-ties and fuel to the railroad. These men were possibly sons of Willis and Louisa.

John Owen Smith was appointed the second postmaster in 1872. Mr. Smith was a lumberman and donated land for Pine Hill Cemetery. The first burial, that of Arvazena Atkinson, was made that year.

On September 5, 1873, "Langston's Station" was changed to Jamison, and that name stayed until 1888 when it was changed to Jemison. The town was named Jemison for Robert Jemison, who served in the State Senate and Legislature and in the Confederate Senate. The grandnephew of Robert Jemison said that Mrs. Orr, supposed to be the daughter of Sam Tate who was chosen to rebuild that portion of the South and North Alabama Railroad from Calera to Montgomery, named several stations for his friends—for instance, Robert Jemison and General Clanton. According to a story in the "Alabama Magazine," Senator Robert Jemison was the largest land owner and slave owner in Alabama. He served in the Confederate Senate until the end of the Civil War. He was a lumberman.

The Shaw brothers, who owned a large piece of land near Jemison and were early settlers, told Julius Simmons that travelers by stage coach from Elyton (Birmingham) to Montgomery used to halt their covered wagons and camp at a big spring east of my home. There is a ditch there. When I was a child, it was nearly always flowing with water, and Mrs. Nelia Van Hoose told me that the old post office was located along it. It was called "Jemison's Spring."

The first through operation of trains from Louisville to Montgomery began on September 24, 1872. Possibly due to the upsets during [R]econstruction, the post office was discontinued for a couple of weeks in January of that year and started again with John E. Moore as postmaster. The next year, of course, it became Jamison, which I believe to be Jemison as we have a deed executed in 1874 on which plainly is written, "Jemison."

The population of Jemison was 402.

During the first ten years (1870-1879), there was at least one doctor, J. A. McNeill, who had been issued a county license in 1875 as had businessmen Loss Hand and H. C. Lawhon. Some designating lots in the town are signed by William Houston Shelby, Isaac Lawhon, G. W. Deramus, and Samuel Ariedge as witnesses. William S. Thompson (1873), Henry C. Lawhon (1874), John A. Hornady (1877), and Wilson L. Bandy (1878) were successive postmasters.

My great, great grandfather, William Seymour Patton, moved to town in the LeRoy house sometime in the 1870's. He was a gunsmith. I have a gun which he made for my father, James William Patton. The wood came from the forests north of Jemison. William Seymour Patton also made guns during the Civil War. His son, John Henry Patton, had a sort of commissary near Pine Hill in 1873 where he sold supplies that the lumbermen needed. He moved here and built a house with an adjoining store facing the railroad in 1887. My father, James W. Patton, built a variety store later in old downtown Jemison. Finally, Grandfather built a two-story frame building west of the railroad where the parking lot was paved after his and my father's stores were torn down. He ran a general store, even selling tombstones and coffins, but repairing clocks and watches was his specialty. He had a large wooden clock to hang outside his store to aid the illiterate.

Wilson L. Bandy, postmaster in 1878, was also a merchant who had moved from Columbiana in Shelby County. He and James P. Allen formed a

company called "Allen and Bandy" with many legal transactions in the county courthouse. Mr. Bandy died on August 31, 1882, of consumption. He had been sick two weeks and had gone to Florida in hope of recovering his health. He left a widow, three sons, one brother, and one sister. He was in the process of building a new house at the time of his death.

Mrs. Allen died on September 21, 1882, and Mr. J. P. Allen died on May 27, 1885, at the age of eighty-one. He had been a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for fifty-eight years, fifty-six of which he was ruling elder. He was known as Reverend Allen and is buried at Mount Hope Cemetery.

Another J. P. Allen, I suppose to be a son of the Allen named above, was born on March 14, 1881, died on February 18, 1898, and is buried at Pine Hill Cemetery.

In 1884, J. T. Mullins had removed his stock of goods to Jemison from Verbena, had a "first class store," and was "a first class businessman" according to the *Chilton View* of January 17<sup>th</sup> that year.

J. H. Gibbons had moved to Jemison from Benson (Isabella) where he was engaged in the hotel business called "Gibbons House." On July 3, 1884, the *Chilton View* stated that Jemison had a hotel named "Chilton House."

In the 1880's, land for three churches was acquired in the town proper. On December 18, 1884, land occupied by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was sold by Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Allen "in consideration of the love and affection they have for Christ and His cause and with a view to promote His Kingdom in the World" to trustees J. A. McNeill, J. C. Morris, and J. C. Allen (buried at Pine Hill Cemetery).

I have been told that the Baptist Church was organized in the Mulberry Association in 1856, but I do not know if this is true. There was, according to tradition, an old Baptist Church standing across the railroad from Pine Hill Cemetery in the past century. It was later sold to an African-American congregation. It must have been the place from which the Baptist congregation moved to its location in the town on what is now Highway 191 in 1886. That must have been the old Masonic Hall, a two-story building, which stood in front of what is now the Church of Christ. At any rate, I have been told that the Dave Crosby family donated "one square acre of ground" for a Missionary Baptist Church in 1886. The first pastor was Asa Burns who

later became principal of the school. His son Percy was dean of Howard College for many years. Further research shows that a deed to the Jemison Baptist Church was made by M. E. Ward on May 7, 1886. In 1908, another building was constructed in back of it. At that time, deacons J. A. Skaggs, William Ensley Lowery, and David Lafayette Langston sold it to the Jemison Masonic Lodge which is now located just east of the Church of Christ.

The lot where the once Methodist Church, now the True Life Church, [stands] was purchased on January 18, 1887, from Pendleton C. Bean by trustees G. W. Deramus, J. H. Hughs, and G. L. McCary. In 1887, the building at Pine Hill was in great need of repair so the congregation agreed to start a church in the town.

St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1890 by a group of African-Americans. The name of the first pastor was unavailable at the time I wrote this but John Robinson, Need Bailey, and John Johnson were deacons. This church is located west in Jemison.

The Holly Grove Baptist congregation was formed in 1900 when there was a division of St. Paul's membership. This group of African-Americans met under a brush arbor until a church was built. The Reverend Robert Mixson was the first pastor and Brothers Ed Singleterry, Dan Hicks, Jim Poundell, Sr., Joe Martin, and Jake Kinnebrew were deacons. Members now meet in a brick church located southeast in Jemison.

The old St. Paul's Church stands north of town, and there is a new church built there. Nearly all of the people in the town and surrounding it were members of these six churches.

Sawmilling and lumber was an important first industry of Jemison. By 1884, Hand and Callen had a tram road in operation. A tram was a train that was built to haul logs out of the woods to the sawmills. They were even connected to the railroads. A Reverend J. C. Hand, father of Daisy Hand who married J. M. Langston, was pastor at Mulberry Church in 1855. The Hands were in Jemison by 1888. A large lumbering company early in the century was the Clear Creek Lumber Company at old Wessington. Another lumbering company that has been mentioned is that of Taft and Marbury, who used a pond where the park is now to float logs. This pond froze over in the late nineties and my father said they skated on it.

(Continued from Page 3)

In 1885, the Cumberland Presbyterians organized a school at the church with an enrollment of about forty. The next year there was a study about building a new school. I have report cards for the Jemison High School 1888-1891 when J. D. Ruffin and B. F. Crump were principals, assisted by Miss Mattie Ruffin. Wyatt in his history of the county states that Jemison and Verbena schools were outstanding. Miss Emily Love, who owned property in the north of Jemison, was a prominent teacher, as was Mr. Ruffin. Early teachers were Asa Burns, C. C. Walter, Lillie and Carrie Slaton, Judson Strock, Harvey Hicks, Lindsay Smith, and J. M. Collier. Tuition ranged from \$.70 to \$2.00 monthly. The old school house oak still stands today.

Jemison was incorporated in 1898. It was reincorporated about 1916 or 1919.

(To be continued, next issue...)

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