

CHILTONIAN

Volume 23, Number 1

January 2003

QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 12 January, at the Clanton/Chilton Public Library.

Mr. Jimmy White, nephew of former Chilton County Probate Judge J. C. White, will speak to the Society on "Growing Up In Chilton County."

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)

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Jemison And Her People

By
Melba Patton Peterson

(With John David Glasscock & Robert Peterson)

Part II
(Conclusion)

Around 1895, W. A. Reynolds was asked by a group of farmers at Collins Chapel to start a store in Jemison. I believe it to be located at the junction of Main and Church Streets, as Mr. Will and Miss Sudie lived across from the Pattons.

In the 1890's, baseball was a favorite sport. J. W. Patton and J. M. Langston played on the town team. The baseball fever came to town as to the rest of the country. In a small notebook of my father's, scores of games played for the years 1893, 1894, and 1895 are given. Clanton won two of the games: 13-10 and 20-18. Jemison won the other two that are recorded: 39-10 and 21-8. Under "Batteries" for these games are the names Middleton, Stanfield, McMorris, and Pinkard for Clanton, and the following list of Jemison players is in the notebook as follows:

R. B. McNeill, Pitcher
Jim Langston, Catcher
Dave Allen, First Base
Jim Patton, Catcher and Second Base
R. D. Durham, Third Base
G. C. Shaw, Shortstop
R. R. Barnes, Pitcher and Left Field
S. O. Bristow, Center Field
H. A. Bandy, Right Field
Jene Bean, First Base

(Continued from Page 1)

Less Williamson, Shortstop

C. N. Shaw, Third Base

S. P. Shaw, Center Field

E. B. Langston, Pitcher

A. A. Langston

Bob Sessions, Pitcher

Wills, Pitcher

Ed McBride, Pitcher

W. L. Hand, Pitcher

In December 1898, the County Commission met in Jemison to make arrangements for taking care of the county paupers in 1899. It was agreed that the present location of the pauper farm was somewhat out of the way, and it was decided to sell the land and secure another site nearer the center of the county and closer to the courthouse. The land was sold to Mr. I. N. Langston for \$800.00 and a contract entered into with him to take care of the paupers in 1899. Dr. Lane was appointed physician to attend the paupers at a salary of \$70.00 per year. I do not know where the land was located but Dr. Lane is buried at Pine Hill Cemetery. However, in 1901, Judge Adams bought 80 acres of land five miles from Clanton on Yellowleaf Creek with a good house for \$460.00 to build a "Poor House."

A Professor J. M. Cordrey taught an arithmetic school in the early years. The Jemison Academy opened by October 20, 1887, with forty pupils and increased to about seventy or seventy-five with Professor C. L. Speer as principal and Miss Kate Sherrill as assistant.

On October 15, 1888, the school was open with J. L. Ruffin in charge. In the advertisement, he says that maps, globes, charts, etc., are of the latest style, and board and tuition will be \$10.00 per month.

Isaac Newton Langston and J. H. Patton had stores on what is now Main Street in early days. Dr. J. A. McNeill and his stepson, James R. Johnson, owned and operated a grist mill and gin. He and Robert Burns McNeill (son of J. A. McNeill) formed a partnership and operated a general store for some 35 years. The names Allen Atkinson, Charles Reynolds, Claud Mooney, Thomas Harrison, John Brantley, and the Coopers have also been mentioned as businessmen of the town. Doctors besides the McNeills were Johnson, Givahn, and Hall.

There were the blacksmiths, Charlie H. Durham and Charlie Ray; the barbers, Allison Sims and George Shaw; and the railroad agents and telegraph operators, Freeman Garner, Elijah Garner, and Hubert Garner. Elijah Garner's father-in-law, David Washington Barnes, was a railroad detective who played a part in the capture of the outlaw, Rube Burrows, in 1888.

Around 1895, L. H. Reynolds established a store known as the Jemison Corporation Company which was later sold to his brother, William A. Reynolds. Mr. L. H. Reynolds was State Representative from Chilton County from 1896-1902. He subsequently became Judge of Probate for the county and held that office for four terms.

In the Gay Nineties, Jemison had its amusements and diversions. Traveling shows passed through, medicine vendors came and promoted their cure-alls, the young ladies played parlor organs (harmoniums) and pianos, and the young had a string band led by Henry Grady Jefferies who played the violin. Gypsies occasionally wandered through exciting interest and alarm. There were parties and picnics, too. When the girls were not busy baking cakes or frying chickens to eat at such gatherings, they were sighing and weeping with the heroines of such novelists as Augusta Evans Wilson. They embroidered, tatted, quilted, crocheted, and whipped yards of lace and insertion [sic] on their clothes which were stiffly starched, then ironed, with a heavy little iron, heated on the stove or fireplace and rubbed over a cedar branch to make it slick. The boys read James Fenimore Cooper and Mark Twain. A son of J. H. Patton was named Samuel Clemens Patton for Mark Twain.

In 1888 the post office name had been changed (or corrected) to Jemison. For a while it became Bristol (I read somewhere that Shelby County was first called Bristol) and back to Jemison which it has since remained. Postmasters during the nineties were: Frank I. Cockeron (1889), Mrs. Frances E. Scott (1891), Thomas Harrison (1894), and William A. Reynolds (1898).

Today more than a hundred years after the railroad was completed, the town has expanded miles beyond its original "half mile square." Lumber is not a major industry, and the "Old Reliable" Louisville and Nashville Railroad has merged with the CSX. There are no passenger trains to be met where the depot once stood.

Most of the people who created this town sleep quietly at Pine Hill Cemetery with the Atkinsons and Smiths who gave the land for it.

(The End)

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Bio Brief On Samuel Memory Adams

By

John Glasscock, Principal Contributor

Sam Adams was born at Summerfield in Dallas County on December 10, 1853. He was the son of Alford A. Adams and Elizabeth McGough Adams.

Sam's paternal grandfather was Samuel M. Adams, who, as a young boy, came to Alabama from South Carolina, and his paternal grandmother was Elizabeth Adams.

The maternal grandfather of Sam Adams was James McGough, a man of Irish descent who, after some years in Alabama, removed to Arkansas.

In 1863, Sam's father, Alford, enlisted in Captain M. N. Burks's Company "F" of the Eighth Alabama Cavalry Regiment. In 1864, Alford was killed in Confederate service.

After his father's death, Sam reportedly plowed a steer to cultivate the small family farm and provide subsistence for his mother and younger brothers. Even so, supper was often reduced to no more than a small piece of bread and some spring water.

With limited educational opportunities, Sam attended country schools and—very briefly—Howard College (now Samford University).

Feeling the call to preach, he was ordained by the Missionary Baptist Church in March 1881. From that point forward, Sam preached and served at several churches in Autauga, Bibb, Chilton, Dallas, Perry, and Shelby Counties.

On December 24, 1873, Sam married Martha J. Whatley in Montevallo. She was the daughter of Elisha and Epsa M. Whatley, and the granddaughter of Reverend Enoch Hays. Sam and Martha had two sons and two daughters.

After developing his oratorical skills and becoming more widely known, he was elected (as a Democrat) to represent Bibb County in the State Legislature of 1888-1889. It was during this period that he became involved with the Populist Party, serving as President of the Alabama State Alliance for the period 1887-1893.

Near the end of Sam's legislative term, he removed his family to Chilton County and was elected to serve as the County's fourth Probate Judge (1900-1904).

A Mason and resident of Clanton, Sam Adams died on March 30, 1932, and he is buried in the Clanton Cemetery.

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Probate Judges Of Baker/Chilton County

Mordecai Robinson	1869-1875
Hugh Jack Callen	1878-1896
Riley M. Honeycutt	1896-1900
Samuel M. Adams	1900-1904
Elijah B. Deason	1904-1905
Lewis H. Reynolds	1905-1911
Elijah B. Deason	1911-1917
Lewis H. Reynolds	1917-1935
J. Lee Smith	1935-1947
W. L. Parrish	1947-1953
M. Dave Tingle	1953-1959
J. C. White	1959-1965
Thomas A. Hayes	1965-1971
George Smith	1971-1977
Thomas A. Hayes	1977-1983
Mack Yeargen	1983-1989
Bobby Martin	1989-present

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Although the guest speaker has not yet been confirmed, everyone can be assured of an interesting presentation.

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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Homecoming History At Walnut Creek

By
Colyn C. Moatts

(The following remarks were presented as part of the October 2002 homecoming program at Walnut Creek United Methodist Church in Clanton, AL.)

Good morning! I'm Colyn Moatts and, once again, I've been asked to provide you with a history of the church. For those who have been to a Walnut Creek Homecoming in recent years, you know that I don't like to give the same generic history year after year—the Church was founded in 1820, first building was a log cabin, first pastor was Arthur T. Love, etc, etc, etc. All that basic information is found in the little brochure that's always available on the shelf in the rear of the sanctuary, and I encourage you to pick one up today, if you've not done so already.

What I prefer to do—and nobody's told me yet that I should do something different—what I prefer to do is give you a little more information about specific events that have occurred or some of the people who have attended Walnut Creek during the last 182 years. In addition, I *really* enjoy passing along something that I've only recently discovered about the event or the person. One thing I have to say is that most of the historic info I give you is based on my family genealogical research, and for the Walnut Creek side of my family that includes Moattses, Bakers, Johnsons, Mimses, Popwells, Easterlings, Headleys, and a few others. So, the only way I'll ever be able to do a homecoming history involving one of your ancestors with a different surname than those mentioned, is if you give me some information that I can use. There... is that a big enough hint?

(Continued...)

(Continued from Page 1)

Now today, I want to share with you some old—and some new—information about one of my Great-great Uncles, John Baker. John was born in South Carolina on Christmas Day, 1825, and he came to Alabama with his parents, Stephen Baker and Margaret Charlotte Popwell Baker, in 1828, when he was almost three years old. John, like his brothers and sisters, grew up in Walnut Creek Church. Like his more famous—or infamous—younger brother, Alfred, there's little documentation available on John's early life.

He married Phairriba Mims on February 16, 1843, in Autauga County [*that portion of present-day Chilton that was once Autauga (Baker/Chilton was established from pieces of Shelby, Bibb, Perry & Autauga)*], and they ultimately had 10 children.

John was a very religious man, and, perhaps, this is one of the reasons he refused to fight in the Civil War. Although his brother Alfred was the local Justice of the Peace, there are no indications that John ever requested or used his brother's political influence to avoid military service. As we learned last year, that's something that would not have been outside the range of possibility for Alfred.

After the war, John became a Radical Republican, just like his brother Alfred. In fact, because of his anti-war and political views, John was beaten and his barn burned by the Blackwell Crowd, just after the Civil War. If you know anything about the Blackwell Crowd, you know that John got off easy. For Alfred, becoming a Radical Republican was a matter of political expediency—he renounced the party after he'd gotten everything out of them that he wanted. But John remained a Republican for the rest of his life. After 1874, even as the Democratic "Redeemers" wrested total political control from the Radicals, John was a notorious Republican. He was so well known in that regard that *Ripley's Believe It Or Not* once featured him as often being the only man in Chilton County to cast a Republican vote in various elections. The Ripley's newspaper drawing was fashioned after a photo of John, seated with a Bible in his hand—the same photo that graces Gene Wyatt's 1940 book on the history of Chilton County and Her People.

In addition to attending services at Walnut Creek, John often assembled relatives and friends at his home and had a local or visiting preacher give the sermon. One such event was chronicled in the *Chilton View* newspaper issue of July 11, 1895—the article reported that 113 people were in attendance. Brother

Tony, I wonder whether we have 113 people here today...

Other than the turmoil that affected everyone during Union Reconstruction, it appears that John and Phairriba (or "Feraby") lived a relatively quiet life of farming. John served a stint as the town of Clanton's first marshal, a position probably arranged by his brother Alfred, but I've found no indication of other overt political activity—except for his being an outspoken Republican.

John died on April 28, 1915, and he's buried beside Feraby just outside the north wall of the church. I've been told that he had set aside some money for one of his sons to erect a marker over his grave, but, for some reason, the son never got around to it. As a result, John and Feraby's graves remained unmarked—except for a couple of concrete blocks—until last year, when some of his descendants got together and purchased a nice monument. He's an important individual in our County's history, and it's only fitting that his grave be properly marked.

Now, most of this you probably already knew, but I've saved the "new stuff" for last. In other articles I've written for various newsletters and such, I've indicated that—except for the single notable exception of Jim Baker, who was owned by Alfred before the war—there was no documented evidence that any of the other Bakers owned slaves. One of the primary reasons for this is the transcribed will of Stephen Baker (the family patriarch), which makes no mention of disposition of *human* property. I've heretofore viewed that as important, since it was the custom of the antebellum South to either pass along slaves as an inheritance or—more frequently than you might imagine—to give them their freedom once the "ole massah" had died.

Ole Stephen's will is dated July 12, 1856, and it was entered into probate on September 1, 1862. Now, this indicates to me that Stephen died shortly before September 1st. The 1856 will left all his property to his wife Charlotte, thence to devolve upon his children; however, Charlotte had died sometime after 1856 and prior to December 18, 1859—the date old Stephen (age 70) married Frances Scott Edwards, a sweet young widow just 25 years old.

John and his brother Alfred were executors of Stephen's estate, and I have a copy of a hand-written petition they submitted to the Court on November 7, 1864, in which they concluded that "the land [that is, Stephen's property] cannot be equally, fairly, and

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

Beneficially divided among the heirs... without a sale thereof." Basically, they asked the court to authorize them to sell the land and divide the proceeds.

Until recently, I had thought that the twice-widowed Frances Scott Edwards Baker might have been the sticking point on dividing the property, but, based on a recently located handwritten document, she was not the problem. I quote the document from Autauga County Deeds, Mortgages, and Reports #D-1, Volume 14, pages 688-689:

"The State of Alabama, Autauga County: Know all men by these presents that I Frances Baker, widow of Stephen Baker deceased of this State and County aforesaid, for and in consideration of the sum of three hundred and fifty dollars to me in hand given by John Baker, the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge, do hereby grant bargain sell and forever quit claim to any and every part of the interest I have in the estate of my deceased husband Stephen Baker, consisting of Negroes, land, Horses and Cattle. To have and to hold the aforementioned interest which I hold in the estate of my said deceased husband Stephen Baker unto him the said John Baker his heirs and assigns to their use and behoof forever, and I do covenant with the said John Baker his heirs and assigns that I am lawfully seized in fee of the aforementioned premises, that they are free from all incumbrances [*sic*], that I have a good right to sell and convey the same unto the said John Baker his heirs and assigns, and that I will warrant and defend the premises to the said John Baker his heirs and assigns forever, against the lawful claims and demands of all persons. I[n] witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this the first day of August A.D. 1862.

Frances Baker {*her mark*}

Test. {*witnesses*}: James Wyatt & William Headley"

So John and Alfred didn't enter the will into probate until after John had bought out Frances's interest in the estate. You might think that \$350 was a lot of money in 1862, but we must remember that Confederate currency was already highly inflated, so, it seems to me, Frances went pretty cheap. Within another year, Frances married James Headley, another older man, so the squabbling over Stephen's estate in 1864 must have been among the children and step-children. That would never happen today, would it?

As far as I'm concerned, this document confirms that Stephen owned slaves and that some of his children owned them after his death. As another

interesting note, the Probate Judge, G. W. Benson, correctly spelled the word "Negroes" and it was capitalized. Now, he also capitalized "Horses" and "Cattle," but, even so, it is unusual to find a Civil War document from the South with the word "Negroes" both correctly spelled and capitalized.

This begs the question, why were there no slaves mentioned in Stephen's will? I now believe they *were* identified in the document, but the transcriber of the will (back in 1983)—for whatever reason—chose not to include that information in the transcription. Perhaps the person was embarrassed by it or maybe just overcome with an attack of political correctness. I don't know.

[HOLD UP BOOK & POINT TO PHOTO]

This photo in the Heritage of Chilton County shows John and his family, and it includes a black lady named, I believe, Sally DuPree [*several comments of agreement from some older members of the congregation*]. Based on the newly available document I shared with you just now, I believe that Sally was probably a former slave who chose to stay with John after the war... much the way Jim Baker stayed with Alfred.

Like John Baker, we, too, are products of our times and subject to the political and economic system in which we live. The thing that never changes is the Word of God and the Lord Himself. Also like John Baker, most of the people here today are members of the Lord's congregation at Walnut Creek. If you're not a member, then probably some of your relatives are—or once were—members.

I hope and pray that I'm wrong, but what if Jesus doesn't come back for another hundred or two hundred years? What will your great-great-grandchildren or nieces or nephews know from the family stories or, perhaps, find in the State Archives about you? Will they learn that you were a man or woman of God? That you taught your children and influenced them and your friends and co-workers to come to salvation by the Blood of the Lamb? Or will they learn that you sold out cheap? Whatever land, goods, or other wealth we leave behind is just that: left behind. Our priceless and eternal inheritance comes from the Lord.

Despite the fact that he owned slaves at one time in his life, all indications are that John Baker chose to serve the Lord. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." [Joshua 24:15]

(The End)

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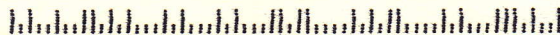
QUERY

Trying to locate information on my Great-great-great Grandfather, **William Archibald Drake Ramsey**. He was born about 1821; first wife was Mary Elizabeth Abercrombie; second wife was Sarah L. Brown; and, he was listed as a farmer in the 1850 and 1860 Dallas County censuses.

One source indicated he was a Superintendent of the Chilton County schools at some point, but have been unable to confirm.

If you have additional information, please contact:

Pat Coyle
321 Reserve Avenue
Steubenville, OH 43952-1626



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The City of Clanton

(The following article is an updated version of the one that originally was written for The Heritage of Chilton County.)

It is difficult to separate the development of the City of Clanton (formerly Goose Pond) from the creation and development of Chilton County (originally established as Baker County). Both came about during the troubled era of Union Reconstruction after the Civil War, and both exist largely through the efforts of Alfred Baker, Sr., the second son of area pioneers Stephen and Charlotte Popwell Baker.

Alfred Baker was elected as the Radical Republican State Legislator from Autauga County in the infamous "Freedmen's Bureau election" of February 1868. It appears from the records of the Secretary of State that Alfred's chief purpose in running for office was to use the political process to create an independent county in north Autauga and south Shelby, which would be run by local people for the benefit of local people. He succeeded, and Baker County was established by an Act of the State Legislature on December 30, 1868.

The new county was formed from relatively large portions of Autauga and Shelby Counties, plus smaller portions of Bibb and Perry. Five "Election Commissioners" were appointed—all relatives or allies of Alfred Baker—to oversee a county-wide vote to select a "county capital" or county seat. It is interesting that the land area "carved out" of the surrounding counties for the purpose of establishing Baker County was overwhelmingly populated by white yeoman farmers who typically had never owned slaves. It is even more interesting that the Radical Republican State Legislature could be convinced to vote approval of such an arrangement, given the prevailing social and political conditions mandated at the time by the Radical Republican U.S. Congress.

(Continued from Page 1)

Much of the acreage that comprised the old Autauga County piece of the new county was owned by Alfred Baker or his relatives, and he took steps to expand his holdings around Goose Pond, where he owned a store that, reportedly, featured whiskey and peppermint candy. Coincidentally, the place known as Goose Pond happened to be adjacent to the proposed line of the South & North Alabama Railroad that had been planned before the Civil War started. Given the surge in railroad building after the War, this line was a likely candidate for completion, and Alfred Baker used his Legislative influence to help "make it happen."



1872 Alabama State Legislature
(Photo Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives & History)

While the new railroad was being completed, the Baker County Election Commissioners established a county capital at "Grantville," which was nothing more than a spot in an open field less than two miles northeast of Goose Pond. Its only advantage seemed to be in its name, which implied honor for the leading Union general of the recent war. One of Baker's allies was awarded a \$5,000 contract to build a new courthouse, and he used the money to build a very nice log cabin—probably at a total cost of less than fifty dollars. In any case, this first county courthouse mysteriously burned in 1870, and the county capital was moved temporarily to nearby Dake's Old Mill on Walnut Creek.

Sometime between 1870 and 1871, as political power began shifting in Montgomery, local leaders apparently felt secure enough to rename their town site Clanton, in honor of Confederate General James Holt "Old Red" Clanton. Alfred Baker had been Goose Pond's first Postmaster since January 31, 1871—the Goose Pond Post Office was officially redesignated the Clanton Post Office on May 4, 1871.

Alfred Baker hired surveyor G. W. Floyd of Montgomery to lay out the streets and alleys of the town, as well as business and residential lots. Baker donated land for the courthouse building, the town cemetery, as well as land for the Baptist and Methodist churches that still today face each other, one east and one west of the railroad line. Most of the land that today comprises Clanton was conveyed to Baker County (for a nominal price of \$5) by Alfred and first wife Rebecca Mims Baker, in a deed dated June 26, 1870.

In its May 4, 1893, issue, *The Chilton View* gave credit to Baker for his early environmental awareness: "Clanton is indebted to Mr. Alfred Baker for the preservation of her forest growth of oaks. When the town was first laid out and built, it was he who impressed upon the early inhabitants the importance of leaving these trees standing for the shade and embellishment {sic} they would afford the future city."

Baker helped ensure a concentration of commercial activity by opening another store, a stable, a storehouse, and a hotel of his own. After the South & North Alabama Railroad was completed in October of 1871 and Clanton had been selected by the voters as the new Baker County seat of government, Alfred Baker engaged in a lobbying effort to ensure the S&NA made Clanton a designated stop on their north-south line.

This latter task was made more difficult by the fact that Baker essentially had renounced the Radical Republican Party and abandoned his seat in the Legislature, spending most of his time helping secure the new county seat. In a letter to the editors that appeared in the July 2, 1872, edition of the *Montgomery Advertiser and Daily Mail*, Alfred Baker expressed great frustration with the railroad's failure to establish a stop at Clanton, calling that failure an "evil" and accusing the railroad owners of "gross mismanagement." According to Baker's letter, some of the S&NA management (or their relatives) owned land around Lomax and therefore preferred that site over Clanton as the county capital. "Failing to coerce the selection of Lomax as the county seat of Baker, [the railroad management is trying] to demonstrate to the citizens of Baker [County] the disadvantage of Clanton as the county capital... ."

It is likely that Alfred Baker also was upset by the S&NA's refusal to accept his earlier offer of a train depot for their use. The railroad refused his generosity on the grounds that they feared Baker might end up with too much influence over the road's operations,

(Continued from Page 2)

that he might seek concessions for freight rates, etc. Ultimately, however, the S&NA purchased the depot and opened it in 1874.

Chilton County might yet be known as Baker County had Alfred Baker been able to control his fatal attraction for members of the opposite sex. But his frequent and sometimes scandalous indiscretions caused what has been called "a moderation of public opinion" toward him, and, by State Legislative Act of December 17, 1874, the name of the county was changed to Chilton. (Some speculate that the S&NA Railroad also might have used its powerful political connections to make establishment of the Clanton Depot contingent on Alfred Baker's public demise, but this has not been substantiated by available records.)

The new county name honored Judge William Parrish Chilton, a former Confederate Congressman and Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court. Although Judge Chilton was a "pure and noble man" whose daughter Jenny once taught school in Clanton, he apparently never set foot in the county. In March of 1888, Chilton's widow moved to Clanton and lived here until December of 1890, returning to Montgomery only two months before her death.

Alfred Baker died on February 9, 1896, and he is buried in the Clanton Cemetery, in some of the land he donated to the town.

When Clanton first became the county seat, the town had a population of only about 200, and it was the centerpiece of Alfred Baker's vision for political independence. Today it has a population of approximately 8,000 in a county with a population exceeding 40,000.

Much has changed in "Goose Pond" and "Baker" County since 1868, but current citizens—both native and transplants—need to know where we came from and how we got here. We all owe a great deal to visionary pioneers like Alfred Baker.

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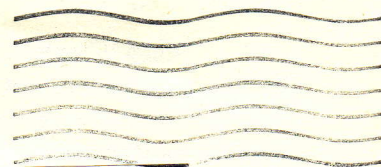
To

Chilton County Historical Society

P. O. Box 644

Clanton, AL 35046-0644

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ADDRESS CORRECTION PROGRAM

CHILTONIAN

Volume 23, Number 4

October 2003

QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 12 October, at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library.

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

1880s/90s Excerpts From *The Chilton View* Newspaper

(Compiled By Betty Collins)

HEARD HER FUNERAL PREACHED

Squire Jesse R. Jones mentions Mrs. Goss, who resides some miles east of Clanton, as being 90 years of age. He and Rev. Mr. Smith, of the Episcopal church, can recall that about fifty years ago she was at the point of death and to gratify her supposed last wish she was taken to church on a cot by her relatives that she might hear her funeral preached before she died. The funeral sermon was preached and the object of it is still living.

30 May 1889

Comments by EJC: This must have been Nancy, and/or Ann, Goss. She was born (1806) in North Carolina, as were both her parents. She married Rev. James Davis Goss, born 31 December 1793 in GA, died in 1866. He is buried in Corinth cemetery, southeast Chilton. She made her home with her son, William David Goss, in 1870 and 1880. He, his wife, and one of their sons, are all buried in Corinth. William David served in the Confederacy. Nancy was not 90 years old in 1889, but appears only to be about 83. She would only have been in her late thirties when she heard her funeral. She died between May 1889 and June 1900. It would be interesting to know more about the Goss family.

OLD CHILTON FOLKS

Mrs. Amelia Sexton, known all over the country as "Grandma Sexton," was born in Camden, S.C., and on the day Mr. Harrison took the presidential chair "Grandma Sexton" reached the age of 84 years.

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)

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(Continued from Page 1)

She enjoys pretty fair health, and attends to all her household affairs. She lives at Clanton, this county.

21 March 1889

Rev. W. A. Wells will be 80 in July. He was born in Georgia in the year 1809, and moved to this state in the year 1819. His wife is 75 years old. They have been married 60 years. Mr. Wells is a Protestant preacher, and has charge of four churches in different parts of the county. He travels to each of his appointments on horseback. He don't [sic] look to be more than 60 years old.

11 April 1889

Uncle Jimmie Griffin is 87, is very healthy, and did field work until this year. His wife, aunt Sophia is 75, and until two years ago when thrown from a horse could do more house keeping than many younger women. They are much given to hospitality. Aunt Sophia takes a chair and case knife and works her garden making many savory dishes of vegetables. By honesty, industry and economy this highly respectable couple have a competency in their old age.

6 June 1889

Since writing about the old people of Clanton and vicinity, have since been informed that Uncle Johnnie Goodgame, who is 92 years old, and his wife, who is 89, have been a prolific pair. They have 259 descendants, including children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. One of their married daughters gave birth to five children in thirteen months.

11 April 1889

"Old Uncle" Charley Ingram is the best preserved man for his age in the county. He is 72 years old, lively, spry and a hard worker. Fifty years ago he removed from Cahaba to Old Maplesville, this county. He has a fine memory and knows a great many remarkable happenings "away back."

William Harper is now in the 70s. Forty years ago he ran a tanyard on Goose Pond creek, this county.

21 March 1889

A Mr. Davis, from Maull's Mill, came down to Clanton Tuesday to have two of his fingers taken off,

and while the doctor was amputating them he treated his observers by singing the familiar song, "A Flower From My Angle [Angel] Mother's Grave."

3 March 1887

Among the old persons of Chilton county deserving of mention is Mrs. Penny Motley, of Jemison. She was born in North Carolina in 1797, and is therefore in her 92nd year. At the age of 8 years she moved to Ga., lived there till grown and married; then moved to Autauga Co., this state where she has raised a large family. She has been living with her daughter Mrs. J. P. Allen at Jemison for the past ten years. She is feeble, but her health is good for one of her age; her appetite is fine; her mind is perfectly clear and her recollection good. Her eye-sight is failing.

18 April 1889

Comments by EJC: Penelope Motley is buried in Pine Hill cemetery in Jemison. Her tombstone relates that she died in her 93rd year.

Mr. Sinclair McCary, who died last year was 88 years old, was remarkably healthy until a few months of his death, and could read without his glasses. His wife is yet living and is now in her 76th year, is in the enjoyment of very good health, keeps house, and is great assistance in house work. She was married when 15 years old in S. Carolina, and came to this country on a bridal tour riding horse back and never returned.

6 June 1889

The numerous long-lived people in Chilton county ought to be a great advertisement for our county. Some of the folks whose names have not been mentioned will be given:

Mr. V. G. Graggs is near 83 years old, and can do pretty good work. Besides having enough money for the rainy days.

Mr. M. Rasberry is 81 years of age and his wife is not far behind him.

Mrs. Kate Morris is between 80 and 90. Her husband served in the War of 1812.

Mrs. L. Andrews will be 79 years old the 10th of next month. She spent a day with me last week and enjoyed reading the VIEW very much.

Mrs. Elizabeth P. Gaines, of Jemison, will be 79 on the 13th of October next. Very few ladies have

the nerve and strong mental faculties which this lady possesses.

16 May 1889

Mrs. Gross, who is a widow and living five miles from Clanton, is 84 years old.

Elijah Myers, the father of Rev. Mr. Myers, who died three years ago, was 81 years old. He had followed farming all his life, and to this kind of life he felt that he owed his long life.

11 April 1889

Mr. James McDonald is another old citizen of Chilton county who deserves mention. He is 77 years of age, was born in Pickens county, South Carolina, and was married in Georgia. He moved to Eufaula, Ala., in 1837. A tribe of Indians that were much feared by white settlers were carried west by the government the same year. He followed the trade of a carpenter and built the first house in Glenville, Barbour county in 1838.

Ten years later he built the first house in Opelika, Ala., then a new railroad town. Afterwards he moved to Greenville and from that point to Clanton. He now lives in Strasburg. His wife is still living, is 71 years of age, and he says they have lived together 51 years and have never quarreled [*sic*] which probably accounts for their living so long. Mr. McDonald's eye-sight and hearing are failing, but he is still able to get about.

4 April 1889

John Parnell, known as "Honest John," is 71 years of age. He enjoys perfect health and is a successful farmer, moderate swearer and a pretty good old man.

21 March 1889

Comments by EJC: John Parnell, born 9 September 1821 and died 17 December 1893. He served in the Confederate infantry, was captured near Savannah on 8 December 1864. He was 5 feet, 7 and a half inches tall, had brown hair and hazel eyes. He married Eliza Jane Lenoir on 18 January 1849 in Bibb county. She was born 1 September 1828, and died 2 January 1899. They were members of Ebenezer Baptist church. They are buried in the Stanton cemetery. (See Roberts, *Yours, Mine and Theirs*, and *Cemeteries of Chilton*.)

Mrs. Judge Chilton, widow of the distinguished statesman and jurist in honor of whom our county was named, has removed from Montgomery to Clanton, and will occupy the Haden residence. In behalf of the people the VIEW extends her a most cordial welcome.

8 March 1888

LOCAL DOTTINGS

While plowing the other day Moses Kilgore turned up an old coin dated 1781, with the inscription "Hispa," "Dei Gratia Carsoll III."

16 September 1897

Quite an addition was made to our collection of curiosities, or rather to the CHILTON VIEW MUSEUM, by Mr. F. J. Davis, this week, in the way of an ancient powder horn and hymn book. The powder horn was brought over from Ireland about 50 years ago by Mr. Davis' father and he, no doubt, had used it for years, and looked upon it as a relic. With the exception of a few worm holes in it, it is still sound, and the wooden head in it is in a perfect state of preservation. The hymn book is indeed a curiosity. The date of its publication is 1767, and it is the twenty-seventh edition, the date of the first edition is 1720. It was printed in London. By looking over it any one can readily see what great improvements have been made in the art of printing since its publication. The above mentioned curiosities, in addition to quite a number of others, are now on exhibition at this office.

26 February 1885

CALLIERVILLE DOTS

The old State Road runs through Mrs. Crum's little tract of land—the most cultivable portion—many of the citizens petitioned for a new road to be cut through her land, next to the railroad, which would bring the old road directly from Bogles creek into the Clanton road, at the depot; a much shorter route, for those who reside the other side of Mulberry creek, to get to the church; and a great convenience generally, especially to the poor widow, who can now enlarge her little field. The road has been opened out and worked as the State Road.

23 April 1885

(Continued on page 4)

Miss Anna B. Adams, an accomplished young lady, of Tuscaloosa, Ala., has been on a visit to her sister, Mrs. W. E. Stewart, this week. Miss Adams was the second young lady entering the University of Ala., after the provision was granted for the teaching of women in that University.

7 December 1893

BENSON VIEWS

Mr. John Milford, Sr., occupies a house which was built in 1821. Supposed to be the oldest log house in the county. Can anyone tell us of an older one?

21 February 1884

LOCAL DOTTINGS

It now turns out that the returned soldier, James A. Parker, has a wife in North Carolina. This was learned last Monday, when the postmaster received a letter from this wife number two, inquiring about Parker. She said he also had several children there, the oldest being thirteen years of age.

31 January 1884

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