
CHILTONIAN

Volume 36, Number 1

January 2016

QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, January 10th, at the Chilton/Clanton Public Library.

All 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	-	Derric Scott
Vice President	-	Colyn Moatts (acting)
Secretary	-	Scarlett Teel
Treasurer	-	Colyn Moatts
Reporter	-	Janette Bailey

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

Lifetime: \$100

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Gragg Field Update

In regard to the July 20, 2015, Historical Society letter to Mr. Craig Cleckler, Chairman of the Chilton County Airport Authority, concerning our request for copies of federally required environmental-clearance documents on the removal (and apparent demolition) of two of the four contributing resources of the Gragg Field Historic District, there has been no response. Nor has there been any response from those receiving courtesy copies of the letter, to include the Chilton County Commission Chairman Allen Caton and City of Clanton Mayor Billy Joe Driver. (To read the entire letter, see the October 2015 issue of the *Chiltonian*.)

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following article is reprinted from the 1950 Chilton County News "Opportunity Edition".*

Alabama Industries Giving Youth Chance To Remain In Alabama

The Problems and Rewards Of Industrial Development

(By THOMAS W. MARTIN, Chairman of the
Board, Alabama Power Company)

As more industries are established and more opportunities created in Alabama there will be more and more incentive and opportunities for

our young people to stay at home and gain worthwhile employment.

We often hear the remark that we should strive to attain a better balance between industry and agriculture and no thinking man will take issue with that basic need, but we who are privileged to work toward that goal must ever be reminded that our religious, cultural and educational lives need balance and development and these considerations should be a part of our overall plan for industrial development.

In the broad sense, industrialization does not mean the location of a few vast enterprises or even a relatively large number of industries employing people numbered in the thousands. Actually, when Alabama attains a proper degree of industrialization, a great majority of the industries will be so-called small industries employing 100 or less people in each plant, and there will be a diversity of products that presently is undreamed of—only in that diversity of plant sizes and products can we hope to have the stabilized economy that our State deserves. In working toward that goal, all of us should bear in mind that it is of the utmost importance that our industries produce end-goods—the consumer goods that supply the day-to-day needs of our people.

The creation of new wealth and wholly new standards of living will be attained when our factories, utilizing the resources and agricultural products available in Alabama, produce a great number of the consumer goods necessary to our mode of living. This means processing pine trees not only to paper, but to finished clothing and to the many other products that can be made from this lowly source. It means transforming our iron ore through the many stages to tractors or refrigerators or alarm clocks; bauxite to window frames or cooking utensils; coal to cosmetics and medicines; petroleum to automobile tires and plastics; corn cobs to fishing lines; sand to fruit jars; and peanuts to men's hats.

When these things have been achieved Alabama will rank high in average income per person.

In thinking of industrialization Alabamians should always remind themselves that a first obligation is to those industries already established here and already contributing to the State's welfare. There is obligation to develop an appreciation of these industries and to give them every cooperation and protection. The obligation is sometimes easy to forget, but it is just as real as the obligation of the employee himself in a plant, because without that plant's contribution to our economy a deterioration begins that can easily halt the splendid development that is taking place and that is in view.

Alabama now enjoys a very enviable reputation throughout the country as a good place to work and to live, a place where industry has a good chance to succeed, but that can be changed almost overnight by the failure of a few industries, due to a lack of the fullest local cooperation.

We are surely on the threshold of an era of development far greater than we have ever known. Whether or not this development takes place will depend almost entirely on the people of Alabama, and it is as much the responsibility of the working man as it is the merchant or the farmer and the banker. All of us are obligated to keep our heads together and feet on the ground, to maintain a situation here that will be attractive to investment capital.

All along the industrial development road we see abandoned wrecks of once good plans and intentions, born of enthusiasm and died in neglect. It is quite popular now-a-days to want an industry and in the first burst of enthusiasm it is pleasant to contemplate the fruits of your labor, but it may not be so pleasant to study and work and stay at the job for months and years, and then to have your prospect choose some other location and find that you must start from scratch on a new prospect.

We can't afford to lose interest in a prospect merely because he doesn't give us his

answer after the first visit. The decisions he must make are of such importance that he must weigh each factor that has a bearing on the success of the proposed venture.

Our records show many instances of contacts and negotiations covering ten to 12 years before success and if we lost the plant to some other area we then started working on the next unit of the same company.

There are, of course, many reasons why industries locate where they do and almost none are located on wishes or blue sky conversations. Certain industries locate in proximity to raw materials, certain others choose their location because of a consumer market for their products. One important factor in the location of still others may be labor, transportation, available building, climatic conditions, size of the community, a desire for isolation or for geographical decentralization, taxation, the attitude of the public officials, of regulatory bodies, of the opinion-forming agencies such as the press, the ministry, educational forces, and others, but in all of them economics based on facts are the ruling factors.

Securing new industries is a sales job, sometimes dealing with intangibles but never dealing in loose talk. An industrialist can see through that sort of thing very readily and is never impressed by conversations that do not have the ring of sincerity and which are not backed by facts. Our own experience, and yours, tells us that a man cannot talk convincingly unless he has a thorough knowledge of his subject.

Generalities about a town or surrounding area are not sufficient, one must know the correct answers to any question the prospect may ask and must give an honest appraisal in order to gain and keep his confidence.

A great part of the sales job is already accomplished when you have succeeded in getting your prospect to visit your town, but you have then reached the critical stage in your negotiations, for there is where the prospect will

evaluate the information already given him, and compare what has been said with what he can see and hear. Of course, a clean, attractive town will make a much better impression than one whose citizenry has become lax and careless and obviously not well ordered, but the greatest impression that can be made on the prospect is the opinion he will form of the community based on the people he meets there.

First, a prospect must feel that he is wanted. The members of the reception committee must express the town's welcome with sincerity and conviction and, of course, must refrain from rash statements and promises that cannot be fulfilled; they should know their town thoroughly, the details of population, its churches, its schools, the utility services available, the transportation services available, its water resource and effluent conditions, its tax situation and possible exemptions, any available buildings and plant sites. They should be specific and concise in the event any unusual inducements are offered and should encourage the prospect to spend as much time as he can there in order to know the place and its people better. There are many ways in which a community can make a favorable impression on a prospect, but an alert responsiveness to the wishes of the prospect are usually most impressive.

More than likely the prospect has already visited several towns, and likely will visit more before he arrives at a decision. It is a local responsibility to convince him that in a given community his plant will have the best opportunity to succeed.

Our Industrial Development Division is glad to work with chambers of commerce or other similar groups, one of the goals of which is the industrial development of their community.

In anticipation of further development in Alabama, Alabama Power Company is building major additions to its generating plants and transmission system, and making other improvements at a cost of 63.5 million dollars through 1952.

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By Lorene LeCroy

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Baker/Chilton County Marriages,

1870 - 1893

\$22.50 + \$3 S&H

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The Heritage of Chilton County

[Contact Heritage Publishing Consultants

29 Skidmore Lane

Poca, WV 25159

Tel: (800) 568-1511]

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Thorsby: Writings & Memoirs

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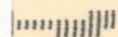
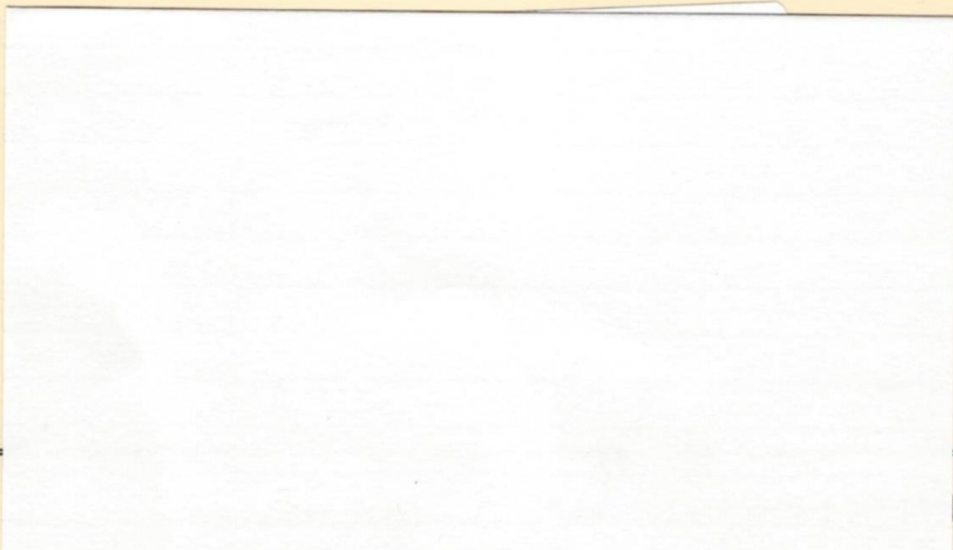


Chilton County Historical Society

P. O. Box 644

Clanton, AL 35046-0644

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



CHILTONIAN

Volume 36, Number 2

April 2016

QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, April 10th, at the Senior Connection (located in the Park Plaza Shopping Center, immediately west of the Clanton City Pool complex). All Chilton citizens who are interested in our county's history and its preservation are encouraged to attend.

Editor's Note: We are pleased to bring you the following historical information on Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, which covers the period of approximately 1890-2005. Although many photos are included in the publication, we do not have access to the original images; therefore, it may be somewhat challenging to reproduce them with clarity. Nonetheless, we will make every reasonable effort to include as many of the photos as possible, space permitting.

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Echoes From The Past *Pleasant Hill Baptist Church* *One Hundred Years*

Edited & Compiled

By

Mr. John Blow & Mrs. Lola Mae Ellison

Blow Graveyard and Pleasant Hill Church History

In approximately 1890 or 1891 my great grandfather, Mr. John Turner Blow, donated the land for the cemetery. This is how the cemetery got the name "Blow Graveyard." His son was the first to be buried in the new cemetery. His son was buried in the front corner near the road and next to where the church is now. At the time the road was widened and paved, this grave was lost and we have been unable to relocate it since. It was marked by a tree and a broken headstone, both of which are now gone.

Mr. John Turner Blow and his wife Sarah Anne Lawson Blow were buried in the cemetery in 1895 and 1896. The tornado of 1932 broke the concrete headstone marking the graves, and later the family replaced the stone with a granite stone. This tornado

broke many of the grave markers in the cemetery, many of which have been replaced.

To properly explain, I need to say something about the family or families involved. Mr. John Turner Blow's parents were Benjamin and Deliah Blow. Benjamin and Deliah had a daughter, Elizabeth Jane Blow whose nickname was "Dude" or as she was later called "Aunt Dude." Dude married Benjamin Lawson Martin.

Benjamin Blow owned lots of land here. In fact, he owned the land from approximately County Road 195 West to where County Road 52 joins County Road 8. During his last several years he lived with Benjamin and Dude (Elizabeth Jane) Martin. In an effort to compensate them for helping care for him for all those years, he gave the land from the West to this point to them and from this point East he gave to John Turner Blow [*sic*].

After John Turner Blow gave the land and the cemetery began being used for burials, it was decided there needed to be a church to go with the cemetery. Mr. Benjamin and Aunt Dude Martin gave the land for the church to be built. This would cause us to think the property line between John Turner Blow and Benjamin Martin ran North and South between the church building and the cemetery.

The church was built in 1902 or 1903 on the property donated by Mr. Benjamin and Dude Martin, from timber donated by them also. The church was recorded in 1905 and was pastored by the Rev. Monroe Hunnicut.

The church was served by a board of deacons made up of Mr. Buck Pascal, Mr. George Plier, and Mr. Andrew Lawson (Major) Blow. I believe all of them are buried here. I know my grandfather, Andrew Lawson Blow, and my grandmother, Frances Clementine Maddox Blow, are buried here. Major, as he was known, died in 1938 and Clementine died in 1939.

Some of the families who were a part of the early church were the Stagners, Grooms, Martins, Pliers, Blows, Sammons, and Pascals, each of which made their contributions.

A Sunday school was organized by Mr. Posey Cleckler in the early 1920s (thought to be in 1924 or 1925) and he served as superintendent for several years. Some others who served the church as Secretary, Clerk and song leader, not necessarily in order, are Inez Martin, Clifford Davenport, Elaine Wagnor, Mollie Blow,

Posey Cleckler, J. A. Blow, Lubie Martin and Joyce Martin, and Earl Littleton.

Some of the previous pastors are Rev. Monroe Hunnicut, Rev. Wiley Davis, Rev. Jadie Ellison, Rev. Elba Deason, Rev. J. P. Littleton, Rev. Oscar Deavers, Rev. Jadie Thomas, Rev. Johnny Tillery, Rev. Calvin Ray, Rev. Larry Parrish, Rev. Gray, Rev. Morris Holcombe, Rev. Bruce Varden, Rev. Jim Burnette, Rev. Frank Nelson, and of course the present pastor, Rev. Burnett. I believe Rev. Charles Lowery served briefly as interim or fill-in pastor.

I remember especially Rev. Gray in the mid- to late-1930s. We only had preaching once a month. I have never been sure why. Maybe it was because we were so small or the economy at the time, but Rev. Gray lived South of Clanton and would walk or catch a ride or both to be here for that one Sunday per month. He would go home with us for dinner and afterwards he, Daddy, Mother, my younger brother Julius, and I would load in the old Model T to take him home. It was one of the longest trips we made in the Model T so my brother and I always looked forward to taking Rev. Gray home.

On Easter weekend of 1932 the original church building was blown away by a tornado, which also killed many people. The church was rebuilt in the same location. In 1965 the building was torn down and replaced with another building, using some of the timbers from the previous building. In 1964 [*sic*] the basement and Sunday School rooms were added. Then in 1980 the fellowship and baptistery were added. All that brings us to this beautiful addition, dedicated in the summer of 2004.

I have been unable to find deed records for either the cemetery or the church since the Chilton County Courthouse burned in 1902-1904 and most of the county records were burned in the fire.

I am sure I have left out important events and people. I assure you if so, it is unintentional and regretted. There are so many people to thank for helping me with this information, I will not attempt to name. I would like to thank my father and grandfather, as well as others, for the cemetery information as well as lots of information about the church. Since I last worshiped here in May 1948 I have relied on others for much of the information. My sincere thanks to all of them.

John Blow

Notes of Interest

July 1958 The church voted to give two dollars per quarter to the Cooperative program and two dollars per quarter to the Association Missions. The first quarter of 2005 the church gave one thousand, three hundred eighty-nine dollars & thirty cents to the Cooperative Program and five hundred eighty-nine dollars & twenty-seven cents to Association Missions. In November [2005?] the church gave six hundred ninety-four [sic] dollars & sixty-five cents to the children's home.

Sept 1959 Earl Littleton was ordained as a deacon.

Nov 1963 Committee appointed to figure cost of building new Sunday school rooms.

Aug 1964 The church added four new Sunday school rooms at a cost of one thousand, eight hundred dollars. The church raised the money in four weeks.

1967 Purchased Baldwin piano which is now in the fellowship hall.

1969 Started using individual report envelopes for Sunday school records.

1970 Purchased eighteen ten-foot oak pews, a communion table, and two chairs for two thousand, seventy-five dollars. These pews are being used today in the new sanctuary.

1971 Air conditioning was first installed for a price of two thousand, two hundred fifty dollars.

1975 First inside restroom installed for one thousand, eighteen dollars and eighteen cents. Gave the pastor a raise from fifty-five dollars a week to seventy-five dollars a week.

1977 Bought property on east, north, and west to one hundred and fifty feet west on north side of road for three thousand, six hundred and fifty dollars.

1979 Put top on front porch.

1980 Fellowship hall and baptistery added.

1981 Sold timber on property for three thousand, fifty dollars.

1985 Church pews were padded for one thousand, six hundred and fifty dollars. County water was installed.

1989 Purchased organ for four hundred, ninety-nine dollars. Installed restroom upstairs.

1990 Steeple was added.

1992 Church was bricked for a cost of ten thousand, four hundred fifty-five dollars. Vinyl siding was added for two thousand, three hundred and sixty-four dollars.

2003-2004 Built new sanctuary and remodeled old sanctuary and made it part of the Fellowship hall. Approximate cost was eighty thousand dollars, and [it was] paid in full when finished.

2004 Put asphalt on parking lot. Cost ten thousand dollars.

History of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church was known in the early 1900's as Blow Grave Yard. The first church was built in 1902 or 1903. It was organized and recorded in 1905. Rev. Monroe Hunnicut was called as pastor with Mr. Buck Pascal, Mr. George Plier, and Mr. Major Blow as deacons. Stagners, Grooms, Martins, Pliers, Blows and Pascals were families of the church. Mr. Ben Martin donated land and timber for the first church.

After the storm in 1932, the church was rebuilt in the same location. In 1965, the old building was torn down and another one built. The original floor joists were used from the old church and tongue and groove flooring was installed. The basement and Sunday school rooms of the present church were built in 1964. The fellowship and baptistery were built in 1980.

Notes of interest:

Mr. Posey Cleckler organized a Sunday school in 1921 or 1925 and served as Sunday school superintendent for many years.

Mr. Clifford Davenport served as church clerk for several years. Mr. Earl Littleton served several years, and Mrs. Pattie Ellison is presently our church clerk.

Mrs. Inez Martin (deceased) served the church for many years as secretary. Mrs. Elaine Wagoner has served the church faithfully since.

Mr. Posey Cleckler served as song leader for many years, with Mr. Luby Martin being elected to replace him. Mrs. Joyce Martin served for some time, and Mr. John Thomas Glasscock as present song leader.

To be continued...

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CHILTONIAN

Volume 36, Number 3

July 2016

QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, July 10th, at the Senior Connection (located in the Park Plaza Shopping Center, immediately west of the Clanton City Pool complex). Mr. Bill Tharpe will speak on the history of Alabama Power Company and Lay Dam. All Chilton citizens who are interested in our county's history and its preservation are encouraged to attend.

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Echoes From The Past Pleasant Hill Baptist Church One Hundred Years

Edited & Compiled

By

Mr. John Blow & Mrs. Lola Mae Ellison

History of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

[...continued from April 2016 issue]

Record[s] show our former Pastors were:

Rev. Monroe Hunnicutt, Rev. Wiley Davis, Rev. Jadie Ellison, Rev. Elba Deason, Rev. J. P. Littleton, Rev. Oscar Deavers, Rev. Jadie Thomas, Rev. Johnny Tillery, Rev. Calvin Ray, Rev. Larry Parrish, Rev. Morris Holcombe, Rev. Bruce Varden, Rev. Jim (Pete) Burnette, Rev. Frank Nelson, and Rev. Tony Burnette is our current pastor.

The church deacons are:

Mr. Luby Martin, Mr. Richard Hafer, Mr. Marcell Wagoner, Mr. Ronald Parker, Mr. Donald Ellison, Mr. Merlie Smith, and Mr. Hubert Glasscock.

I am sure I have left out many names and events, but none were intentional. Thank you to everyone who gave me information. It was a labor of love.

Mrs. Lola Mae Ellison

[SELECTED PHOTOS]

Pastors

- 1947 – 1948 Ernest Jones
- Missing Records*
- 1951 – 1956 Jadie Ellison
- 1956 –
(died 1956 while serving as pastor) Jadie Thomas
- 1956 – 1958 Johnny Tillery
- 1958 – 1960 E. E. Deason
- 1960 – 1961 Jadie Ellison
- 1961 – 1966 Oscar Deavers
(died while serving as pastor)
- 1966 – 1970 Calvin Ray
- 1970 – 1971 Larry Parrish
- 1971 – 1973 Morris Holcombe
- 1973 – 1974 Tommy Karn
(others filled in)
- 1974 – 1986 Morris Holcombe
- 1987 – 1992 Bruce Varden
- 1993 – 1994 Jim Burnett
- 1995 – 2001 Frank Nelson
- 2001 – Tony Burnett

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Mr. and Mrs. Posey Cleckler
Organized first Sunday School in early 1920's



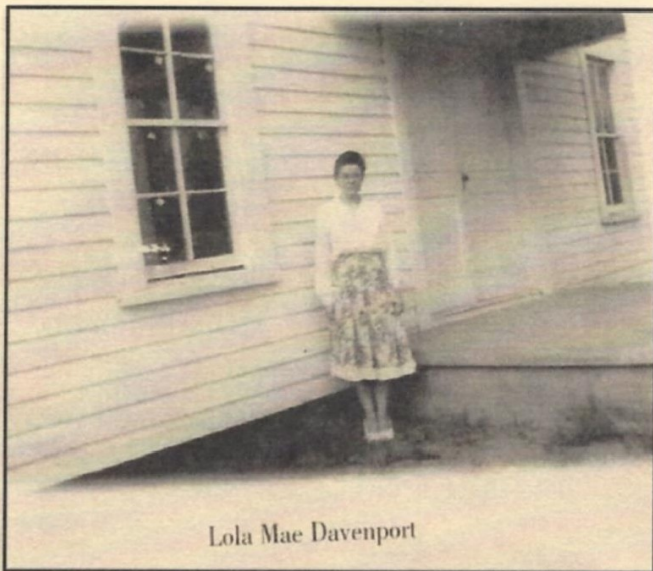
Church Congregation 1946-1947



John Barnett



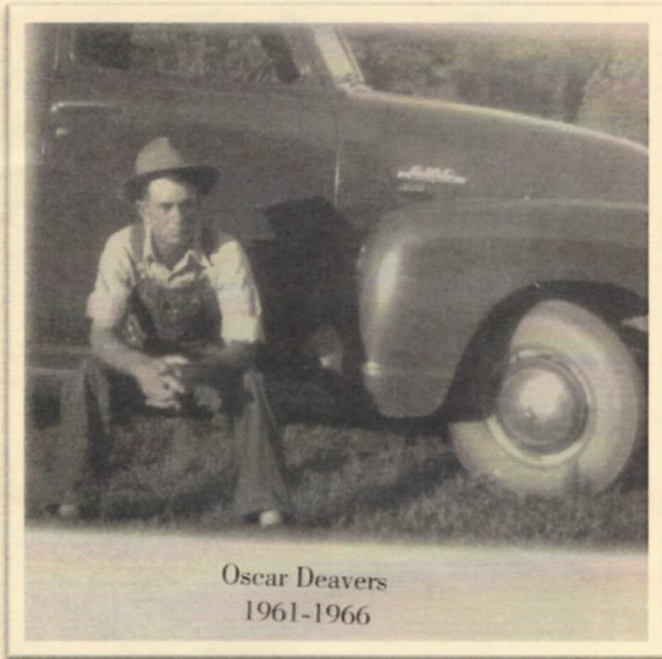
Jadie Ellison
1951-1956 / 1960-1961



Lola Mae Davenport



Mr. and Mrs. Jadie Thomas
1956



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[SOLD OUT]
 By Lorene LeCroy
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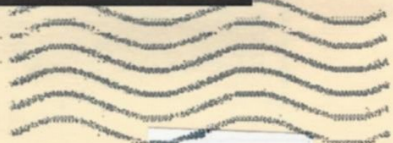
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CHILTONIAN

Volume 36, Number 4

October 2016

QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting at 2:00 PM on Sunday, October 16th, at the Senior Connection (located in the Park Plaza Shopping Center, immediately west of the Clanton City Pool complex). The owners of historic Yellow Leaf Mill will update us on the status of their renovation/restoration efforts. All Chilton citizens who are interested in our county's history and its preservation are encouraged to attend.

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Yellow Leaf Grist Mill



Editor's Note: *At this month's meeting, we'll receive an update on the progress at Yellow Leaf Mill.*

According to an article in The Heritage of Chilton County, the mill originally was built by John M. Robinson in the mid-1850s. When he left to manage the sawmill that furnished lumber for the building of Lay Dam, he took the millstone and stored it at a daughter's (Nancy Elizabeth Robinson) house. At some point the millstone was returned, and the mill was operated by Mr. Robinson's son (Coss Robinson). There are an unknown number of subsequent owners.

Almost every Chilton County "old-timer" has some recollection of the mill when it was in commercial operation. For example, I can remember going out to the mill with my dad, when the mill was owned/operated by one of my dad's distant cousins, Mr. Miller (appropriate name, huh?). My dad loved the cornmeal and the grits produced there—"They taste better than store-bought"—but I think he had just as much affection for renewing acquaintance with his cousin. As a child, I was most impressed by the size of the machinery and the deafening noise created when the water wheel was turning, the gears were engaged, and the millstones were grinding.

If you have a memory of the old mill, drop us a line and we'll include it in an upcoming issue of the Chiltonian.

YET ANOTHER CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The *Chiltonian* is in need of fresh submissions from our readers.

The submissions may be on any subject either directly or indirectly related to the history of Chilton County, e.g., family histories, personal school stories, church histories, old homes/businesses, military experiences of Chilton County soldiers, sailors, airmen, or Marines, etc.

Your stories may be submitted in any format, as long as it's readable—we'll do the rest.

In addition, we encourage submission of genealogical queries. Why not give it a shot? One of our readers might have the one missing piece of your family-tree puzzle.

NOTE: *The following articles are reprinted from the 2000 book, The Heritage of Chilton County.*

The Hot Well Hoax

In the early 1880s, Clanton became a popular health resort as a result of the discovery of a "hot well" in South Clanton. Because of the reported curative powers of the "hot mineral water," people came from all over the country to drink the water, as well as take baths in it. According to an article in the "*Mining and Manufacturing Journal*," which was reproduced in the "*Chilton View*" newspaper of November 5, 1885, Mr. S. A. Blasingame (owner of the property where the well was located) claimed

cures of "many bad cases of paralysis, rheumatism, and scrofula."

At the time of the well's advent, Clanton's population was about 600, and many of the local businessmen were seeking ways to attract people to the area. The hot well served that purpose admirably, and, once the word got out, traffic was sufficient to justify construction of a nearby boarding house. The proprietor was R. P. Wooley, probably a partner of Blasingame, and he advertised: "Within a few steps of the hot well.... Good board and comfortable quarters at low rates."

Every opportunity was capitalized on to reinforce the well's reputation. When an earthquake hit the area Tuesday, August 31, 1886, "Mr. Minor Wooley at the Hot Well said the steam from the well Wednesday morning was of unusual density."

Until the spring of 1887, the money being made was from the room and board at the "Hot Well House." In the March 3rd issue of the "*Chilton View*," Mr. Blasingame published an announcement "to inform the public that the 15th day of March the free use of water from his well will be discontinued." The earnings potential attracted the attention of Dr. A. J. Massey, a traveling dentist from Rockford in Coosa County. He was so convinced of the well's authenticity that he leased two lots from Mr. Blasingame for ten years at \$1,000 per year, then proceeded to construct two boarding residences.

Many local people doubted the well's validity, and Dr. Massey obviously heard the rumblings. In the "*Chilton View*" issue of July 21, 1887, it was reported that Massey had ordered a pump "to pump out the well and allow the general public to investigate should it so desire; we hope he will satisfy the doubters yet."

Then, in the August 25th (1887) issue of the "*View*," Dr. Massey issued a formal invitation: "There will be a basket dinner at the Hot Well on Friday September 2nd, at which time Dr. Massey proposes to demonstrate the genuineness of the

well by withdrawing the water. Everybody from far and near is invited to be present.... Efforts will be made to obtain special rates on the railroad for the day."

A special "Investigating Committee" was formed to certify the outcome of the well de-watering exercise. Committee members were: a Dr. Green of Opelika; Robert Douglas, a "mineralogist"; W. R. Holder and W. W. Wadsworth of Mountain Creek; and, James M. Ponder.

The results of the test were published in the "*Chilton View*" of September 8, 1887: "After three days investigation and deliberation, the committee conducting the hot well test gave it as their opinion that the water was originally cold and had been heated by artificial means." The source of heat, which sometimes got up to 162 degrees and was not "hot enough to cook eggs," was a one-inch metal pipe that connected to the boiler of Mr. Blasingame's nearby steam-powered sawmill.

Dr. Massey lost much of his investment, later selling his interest in the property to local businessman Alex G. Dake. According to Eugene Wyatt's book, "*Chilton County and Her People*," the property eventually fell into the hands of Mr. Terry Frazier, whose family lived on it for many years. Long afterward, the South Clanton area was called "Round O," a reference to the 10-foot diameter, 35-foot deep hole in the ground once known as Clanton's "Famous Hot Well."

The "Turn-Round"

Located in a bend of Chestnut Creek, about three miles southeast of Verbena is a scenic area once known as the "Turn-Round." Its name came from a winding, two-mile bend in the creek, which comes back to within a hundred feet of itself across a low ridge. A person standing at a certain point on the ridge could see different parts of the creek running in all four directions of the compass.

Known as the "natural show place of Chilton County," the park's development began in 1938. Designed by Edmond Taber, the park's amenities included two miles of improved walking trails on a hundred-acre tract of land filled with jagged cliffs and verdant hollows overflowing with natural vegetation such as dogwood, mountain laurel, and wild azalea. Concrete steps were provided for the harder-to-reach viewing spots like Lookout Rock, Picture Frame Rock, and Alum Rock. There were stories that Alum Rock had been used by the Confederates as a source of gunpowder ingredients. There were signs that portions of the rock had been broken off, and there were holes in it, apparently made by crude drills.

The scenic area was located on land belonging to the Flaketown Graphite Company, whose nearby mines were owned and operated by Frank Taber. The Tabers called their place "Totnis," but the name was changed to Turn-Round when the land was purchased by the Alabama Machinery and Supply Company of Montgomery. Colonel W. W. Doe was named manager of the park, and he oversaw the addition of a large automobile parking area and concession stand. The park's in-residence caretakers were Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Pitts, formerly of Montgomery.

The Turn-Round held its formal opening on Sunday, April 18, 1948. Some two hundred guests showed up, paid the small admission fee, and roamed about the new natural wonder. Plans were announced for further development, to include a swinging bridge across Chestnut Creek.

It is not known exactly how long the park stayed in business, but it must have been only a few years. Apparently, it simply did not attract enough paying visitors to support management and upkeep. When I was a young child in the early 1950s, my parents often spoke fondly of the "ole Turn-Around." At least for them, it had been a great place to go for a picnic and a quiet walk in the woods.

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