

# **History of the SW Corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

## **By Derric Scott**

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

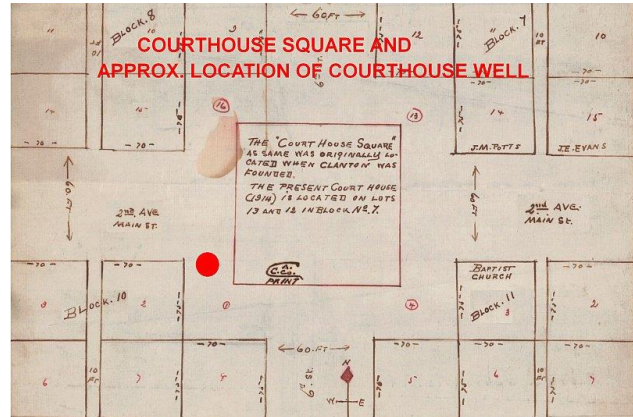
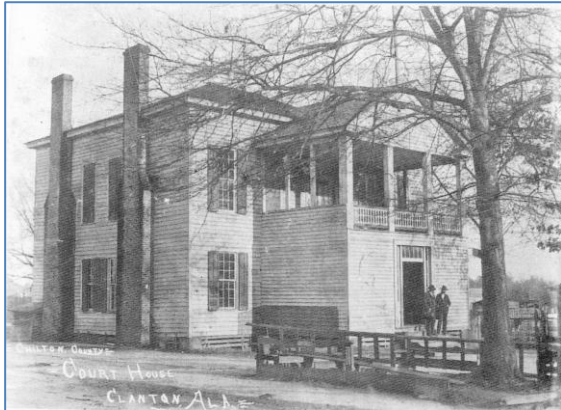
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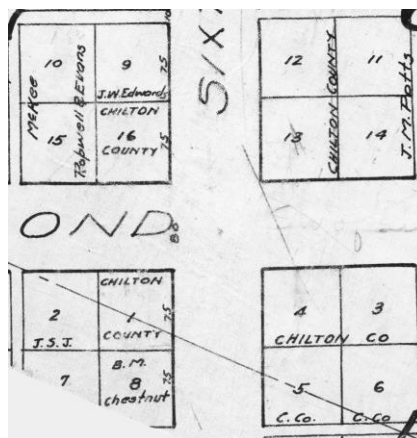
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Second Avenue North in Clanton has traditionally been known as Main Street. The crossing at 6<sup>th</sup> Street has typically been the center of town due to it being the location of the Chilton County courthouse. The courthouse has been in that area since the county-wide election in 1871 (the wood-frame building wasn't finished and in-use until early 1872). This wood-framed, two-story courthouse was used until 1896. Prior to the new courthouse being built in 1896 there was nothing on the corners around that intersection, including the southwest corner. The old 1872 wood-frame courthouse stood in the middle of the intersection with a square of streets around it. That southwest corner was known as Lot #1 in Block #10 of the City of Clanton.



1872 wood-frame courthouse (left), map of its location (right) accurate until 1896, hand-drawn in 1914.

The old courthouse well was located just in front, slightly east, of this lot. The courthouse well was bored in June of 1877<sup>1</sup>. By September of 1877 it was reported that the water tasted “sulfurous”<sup>2</sup>. It was said, with some humor, in January through March of 1887 that there was no bucket on the well<sup>3</sup>! In June of 1887 they built a fence around it<sup>4</sup>. In 1899 the well had gotten into disrepair and needed cleaning badly and the County Commission voted to clean it, add a pump, pump house, and keep it in good condition<sup>5</sup>.



Clanton 1896 map of the city showing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Street intersection, county owned corners.

<sup>1</sup> June 29, 1877 Chilton County Courier.

<sup>2</sup> September 7, 1877 Chilton County Courier.

<sup>3</sup> January 13, February 2, 10, and March 24, 1887 Chilton View.

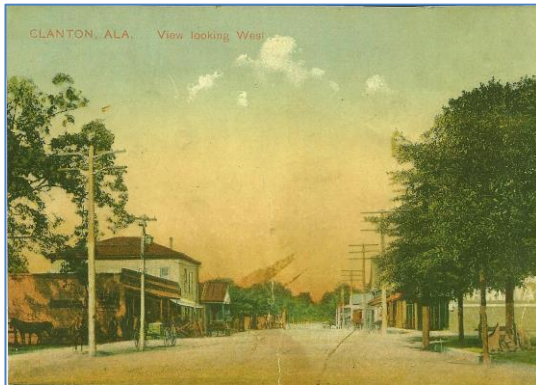
<sup>4</sup> June 23, 1887, Chilton View.

<sup>5</sup> August 17, 1899 Banner.

History of the SW Corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Street

In June of 1901 there was some confusion about ownership of that corner lot. Moses Mims claimed ownership and built a fence around it<sup>6</sup>. The Judge of Probate, S. M. Adams, came back to town and tore the fence down with an axe! July 22, 1901 the county sold the Lot #1 in Block #10 at auction. The new owner was Clanton attorney A. C. Smith, who paid \$700.50 for it. By September of 1901 there was construction of two new brick buildings on this corner, next to **Abe Kanter's old store** (the old two-story wooden courthouse building)<sup>7</sup>. These buildings were for A. C. Smith and Moses Mims and were built "right up to the courthouse well." By the end of September the buildings were nearing completion and A. C. Smith had rented it to **Moses Killgore** "who will run a mercantile business there"<sup>8</sup>. **Moses Mims** would occupy his building next door. For now, it is unclear which building was on the corner (but it was likely Moses Mims' building).

In the postcard view below you can see horses likely gathered near the well. The corner brick buildings had already been built (1901); note that they are single story at this time. The next building westward was the old two-story wood-framed courthouse building that was moved there in 1896 when the new brick courthouse building was built. Next is the original **Banner** newspaper office. A second postcard below shows the fronts of the buildings a little better.



Postcard ca1905. Corner brick building, two story wood-frame courthouse building, Banner office.



Postcard published for Upchurch Drug Co., ca1905.

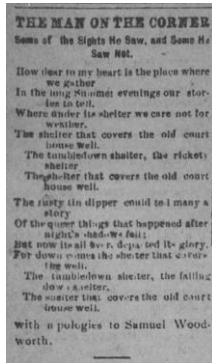
<sup>6</sup> June 20, 1901 Banner.

<sup>7</sup> September 5, 1901 Banner.

<sup>8</sup> September 26, 1901 Banner.

History of the SW Corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Street

In the December 19, 1901 issue, the Banner editor waxed poetic about the old well:

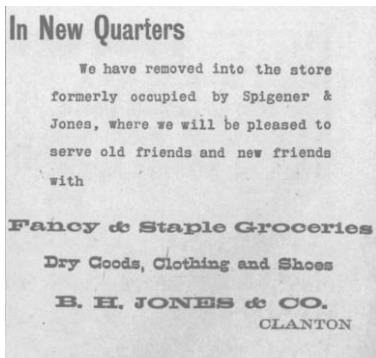


How dear to my heart is the place where  
we gather  
In the long Summer evenings our stories  
to tell.  
Where under its shelter we care not for  
weather.  
The shelter that covers the old court-  
house well.  
The tumbledown shelter, the rickety  
shelter.  
The shelter that covers the old court-  
house well.

The rusty tin dipper could tell many a  
story  
Of the queer things that happened after  
night's shadow fell;  
But now it's all over, departed its glory.  
For down comes the shelter that covers  
the well.  
The tumbledown shelter, the falling  
Down shelter,  
The shelter that covers the old court  
House well.

December 19, 1901 Banner.

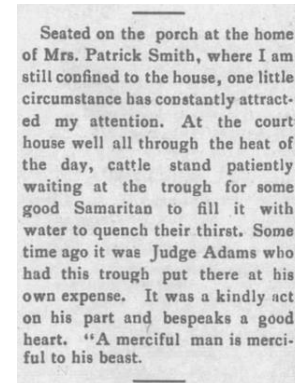
The firm of **Spigener & Jones** opened a Hardware store in the “old **Banner** office” in June of 1902<sup>9</sup>. They moved into the building formerly used by **Mims & Easterling** in August 1902<sup>10</sup> (this was likely the corner building). In March of 1904<sup>11</sup> **Spigener & Jones** moved across the street and **B. H. Jones & Co.** moved into the corner building, selling groceries, dry goods, clothing, shoes, hats, etc.<sup>12</sup> **H. Kanjutzky** opened his “**New Store**” in the building beside **B. H. Jones** in September 1904. In August of that year the **Banner** editor commented on the cattle standing patiently around the well waiting for someone to draw water into the trough for them. Note, at this time there was no “stock law” that required livestock to be fenced in. The “stock law” became a major point of contention in the county and state a few years later.



March 31, 1904 Banner (left),



May 26, 1904 Banner (middle),



August 25, 1904 Banner (right).

The **B. H. Jones & Co.** partnership was dissolved in January 1905 with B. H. Jones retiring and B. E. Jones continuing the business. **B. E. Jones & Bro.** (Crit Jones) ran ads in March 1906 through at least July 1914.

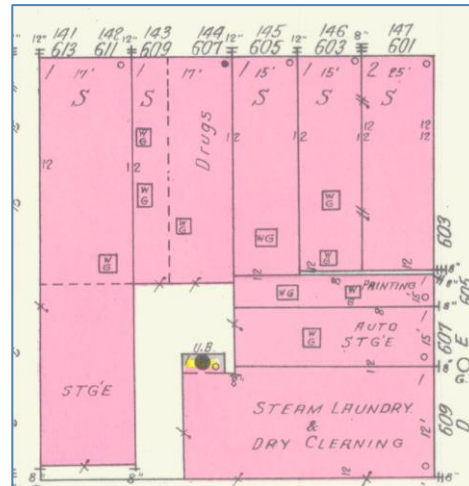
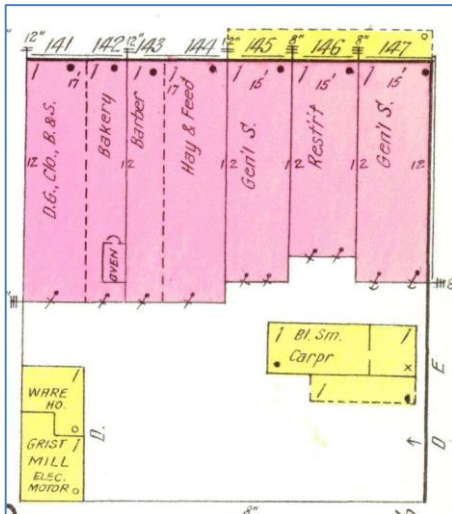
<sup>9</sup> June 5, 1902 Banner.

<sup>10</sup> August 28, 1902 Banner.

<sup>11</sup> March 31, 1904 Banner.

<sup>12</sup> May 26, 1904 Banner.

History of the SW Corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Street



1917 (left) (ONE story) and 1928 (right) (TWO stories) Sanborn Fire Maps, SW Corner of 6<sup>th</sup> St and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N, alley to alley.

In September of 1920, Marion Gore moved his feed store to the corner spot. Previously he was a couple of stores to the west, in the building that Dr. Arthur Johnson would remodel to be his drug store. Within a couple of years Mr. Gore added a cement sidewalk and filled in the old courthouse well with concrete.

Marion Gore has moved his feed store to the building on the corner at the old court house well. Dr. Arthur Johnson is preparing the building which Mr. Gore vacated for his drug store to opened in the near future.

September 16, 1920 Union-Banner (left),

Mr. Marion Gore has made some attractive improvements at his property on the corner of Second Avenue and Sixth Street. He has built a new cement side walk on the Sixth Street side from the new office of Dr. Arthur Johnson up to the corner at the old court house well. The old well, which is one of the most ancient landmarks in Clanton, has been filled and built over with concrete. The corner presents a much neater appearance since this has been done.

August 10, 1922 Union-Banner (right).

The Union-Banner editor describes the filling of the well in the July 23, 1925 issue.

**"THE OLD COURT HOUSE WELL"**

The final chapter of the history of "the old court house well" was written Monday morning when the men who are doing the street paving took off the cement cover which has been over the well for several years and filled it with dirt.

Many people now residents of Clanton do not know that there ever was a well just at the edge of the sidewalk in front of the Marion Gore Building on "Main Street." One man who runs a store close by the place was standing in front of his door Monday morning. As he saw the trucks back up close to the sidewalk and empty their cargo, he was puzzled why they did not soon make a pile of dirt there. Another man passing along was asked: "Say, is that a hole over there where they are dumping that dirt?"

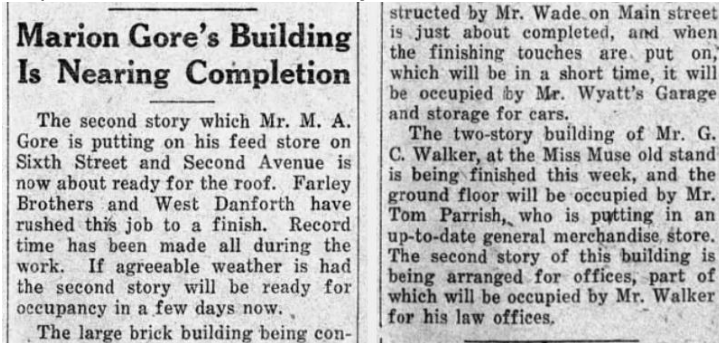
July 23, 1925 Union-Banner.

The man to whom the question was directed was one who is an old resident of Clanton, and you can imagine the brief story of "the old court house well," which he told his inquirer.

For the edification of our citizens who have come to Clanton in recent years, we would say that "the old court house well" is the core of Clanton. It is "hub" from which all the "spokes" have radiated. In years gone by a man could stand at the well and be in sight and talking distance of every business house in Clanton, the court house included. And none of the residences were much over a stone's throw away for there were not many of them.

Many of the old residents stood by and watched the well filled up, recounting bits of interesting history that has transpired about the spot in past years.

**Marion Gore** added the second story to his **Feed Store** building in early 1923. The first occupants were attorneys **Grady and Omar Reynolds (Reynolds and Reynolds)** who leased almost the entire floor for the next 5 years, and **Drs. V. J. Gragg and T. J. Marcus** occupied the remainder. **Dr. Marcus** moved his offices in January 1930. **Reynolds & Reynolds** was to then have the whole upper floor of the **Gore Building**. However, in February 1930 the **County Child Welfare Office** moved there, staffed by **Mrs. Stapp**. A year later **Mrs. Stapp** moved out and the **Clanton City Clerk / Town Office** moved in. It is possible that the City stayed there until the new **City Hall** was done ca. 1936.



March 15, 1923 Union-Banner, Gore's second story nearly done.

In February of 1933 **Marion Gore** moved his feed and supply store across 6<sup>th</sup> Street and the **Clanton Cash Store** moved into the corner building<sup>13</sup>. O. D. DeLoach was running the **Clanton Cash Store**.

March 1927 Obie D. DeLoach bought out Reeder Taylor's interest in the **Clanton Cash Store**. In 1931, E. I. Moates joined the store and it began selling fresh meats. In 1932 they divided the store with DeLoach taking the grocery side and Baker taking the dry goods side. In mid-1938 the owners of the **Clanton Cash Store** decided to completely remodel their store. Sometime during the remodel it became Clanton's first **Piggly Wiggly**. The **Clanton Cash Store** was on the corner and **Piggly Wiggly** was next door. **Piggly Wiggly** was the first store in Clanton of the new styled "self-service" variety and opened June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1938.



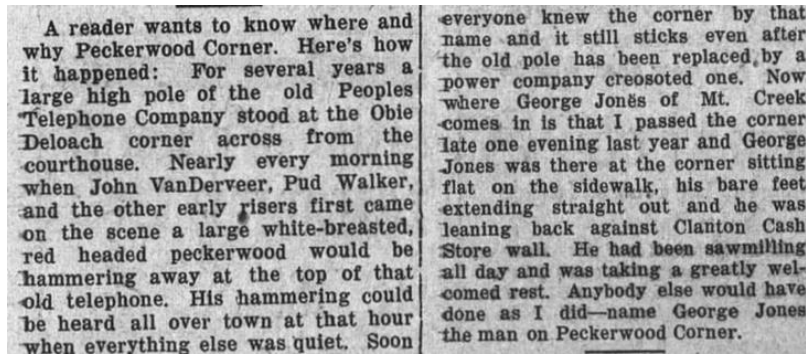
1944 newspaper ad for the Piggly Wiggly on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North.

In February of 1944 the **Clanton Cash Store**, on the corner, was closed for remodeling and all the business was to be handled via the **Piggly Wiggly** Store next door. By the time it was to re-open, on March 30, 1944, they had decided to merge the two stores and use the newly remodeled corner building for the combined store, continuing on as the **Piggly Wiggly**.

<sup>13</sup> February 23, 1933 Chilton County News.

History of the SW Corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Street

In this timeframe, this SW corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Street intersection was called the Obie DeLoach corner or sometimes the “Peckerwood Corner.” This article explains why:



June 10, 1943, Union-Banner – Peckerwood Corner.

The former **Piggly Wiggly** building next door was then occupied by Durwood and Jakie Teel with a “tire and light hardware store” handling tire, tubes, accessories, light hardware, etc. as well as bicycle sales and repair. In 1947 the **Boyette Prescription Shop** and **Marvin Sutley’s jewelry** store moved into that spot. The **Teel Brothers** had moved into the Wade building across from the **Baptist Church** in December 1946.

The **Piggly Wiggly** apparently continued in this building until late 1959 or early 1960 when a new one was built on the old J. P. Hayes home lot on 7<sup>th</sup> Street. One reference is found in October 23, 1958 of a “carpenter’s hall **over** the **Piggly Wiggly**.”

1960 March – new **Piggly Wiggly** store opening 7<sup>th</sup> St.

- No reference for what was after **Piggly Wiggly**.
- No reference for when **Messer’s Jewelry** moved into there.

| FIRST DATE            | OWNERS/OCCUPANTS                        |
|-----------------------|---|
| Beginning             | Alfred Baker???                         |
| Unknown (before 1872) | Chilton County                          |
| July 22, 1901         | A. C. Smith (sell/rent ½ to Moses Mims) |
|                       | Mims & Easterling                       |
| August 1902           | Spigener & Jones Hardware               |
| March 1904            | B. H. Jones & Co.                       |
| 1905                  | B. E. Jones & Bro.                      |
|                       |   |
| September 1920        | Marion Gore (Feed Store)                |
| February 1933         | Clanton Cash Store                      |
| March 1944            | Piggly Wiggly                           |
|                       |   |
| Ca 197x?              | Messer’s Jewelry                        |
| Ca 2020               | Marion Community Bank                   |