

St. Clair County, Alabama, Newspaper History Articles

Collected and Transcribed
By Joe Whitten
Odenville, Alabama

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THE HISTORY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY (1874)

By Jesse A. Collins

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, May 6, 1874

The same facts doubtless contributed much to shape the history of the inhabitants. The valleys being narrow, divided as they are by wide ledges of mountains, necessarily circumscribed the size of the settlements; hence stores and schools and churches were of slow growth. We had but few centers of influence--most of the trade was done at Ashville, some at Springville, one of the best villages in the country. Not till within the last twenty years, was there a respectable store in Coosa Valley, the most productive one in the county. About 1851, Col. John W. Jones, who died last winter, an excellent merchant, opened one at Cropwell, and done a prosperous business till his death. Col. Jones was a good citizen, a persevering Sabbath School man, a devoted Christian. He done more to improve the conditions of his neighborhood than any man in it, and died deeply regretted by circle of friends, leaving an amiable family in easy circumstances.

It was very common in the early settlement of the county, for persons to come from all parts of the county to lay in supplies at Ashville. Their wants were few and simple. Here they found the Messrs. John M. Byers, and Alameth and Amzl Byers, a family of merchants, and Major Moses Dean and Tilman Dean ready to supply their customers with substantial goods at reasonable profits, on twelve months time, and I doubt if ever the honesty and fair dealing of either of these men were questioned, and the people of the county had the reputation of being the best debt-paying people in this section of country. We had no steamboats, no railroads nor telegraphs. A few weekly mails and journeys on horseback were the only means we had for communication with the outside world, and but few took newspapers. The Huntsville *Democrat*, a most sterling paper, was

mostly in circulation some thirty years ago. The *Tuskaloosa Monitor*, a Whig paper, the first of the kind perhaps ever circulated in this section, was established by Mr. Slade, a most amiable christian gentleman, about the year 1835. The *Talladega Reporter*, by Rev. Sam'l Henderson, now of Alpine, Talladega, was editor and proprietor. This was also a Whig paper. It has passed through so many phases since then, I cannot determine its politics. Its press is said to be the oldest one in the State. The *Watchtower* was gotten up with Sam'l F. Rice as editor and Harvey Joiner was the publisher. Mr. Joiner was raised two miles and a half from Ashville. These two papers have recently been consolidated. About the year 1836 the *Jacksonville Republican*, edited and conducted by J. F. Grant, a man always true to his country, true to his race, true to his principles, true to this friends, and true to his God. These were for many years, mostly read by the citizens of the county. Several efforts were made to get up a paper, but failed. The products of the country were carried in wagons to Tuskaloosa and Wetumpka, or on flat boats down the Coosa River. Yet, in these good times men had corn in their cribs, meat in their smoke houses, money in their pockets and comforts in their families. I doubt if we see a better race or better times for a long time to come. The old slow modes of life are rapidly giving way to schemes of unparalleled activity. The plow and loom give way to machineries propelled by steam. Commerce travels with the rapidity of the railroad. The old field school stands in the shade of the Academy and College. The old American ideas of a government by the people rules, as to bayonets in the hands of a mob, while the agencies of heaven and earth are being marshaled for the conquest of the world to Christ-- How shall we prepare ourselves to meet these complicated responsibilities of life?

If we could combine the industry, economy and integrity of the past with the agencies and activities of the present, we might then hope for success.

I love Alabama, her soil, her mountains, her rivers, her hills, her dales. I am proud of her brave men, I admire her noble women, her

beautiful children; I claim an inheritance in her records. I love old St. Clair; her political, her war record is good, any slurs by outsiders to the contrary, notwithstanding. I know her history, I know her people, I have lived in her valleys, traversed her hills, and breathed her air for more than a half century.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end.

I have received a thousand expressions of confidence, and then thousand acts of kindness from her plain, honest people, and if I can do anything to stimulate and elevate her sons and daughters to higher aims and ends, it would soothe my descent to the grave I selected in 1936, which waits so patiently to receive me.

Jesse A. Collins.

THE PEOPLE OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY (1874)

By Jesse A. Collins

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, May 20, 1874

The first settlers of this county were not hog and horse thieves, not ignorant, lazy men, who fled from justice, or came here to avoid the light of advancing intelligence and civilization as some foul mouthed persons have modestly intimated. It is a slander. They were generally sagacious men, who could see the advantages to themselves and families of leaving an old worn out plantation, grown up in sedge grass and scrub pines and removing to the Ala. Territory, as it was then called, a Territory unsurpassed for fertility of soil, an abundance of water and timber--of pure air and game, and range and outlet; in fact, a new world,

excelling the land that flowed with milk and honey in all the essentials that constitute a good country--men who had courage to leave home and kindred like old Abraham, and brave the fatigues of a long journey and the dangers of the inuns (Indians) while passing through the Cherokee and Creek Nations, then supposed to be more or less hostile to the white face men who had so persistently crowded them from their original vast domain to their then circumscribed limits. I remember in 1817, when only four or five years old, listening to Uncle Reuben Arnold, who had returned to South Carolina, who lived in Coosa Valley and died there, while he described the Coosa River bottoms and Coosa Valley uplands--the fish, the fowl, the deer, the turkey, the game of all kinds, the cane brakes, the mountain grass, the fat hogs and cattle in the woods, the creeks and springs, mountains and valleys of St. Clair. These descriptions stirred my father and many other of the best doing men of Lawrence District, South Carolina, to sell out their good old worn out lands and come to the land of promise. I remember crossing Chattahooche River at the lower shallow ford, coming to Wills Creek and Canoe Creek at Aubery's bridge and how much freer we breathed after escaping the horrors of the scalping knife, as we then thought, and finding St. Clair all we had anticipated--we said here we rest. Here is Alabama.

I now Aver from a personal knowledge of these first settlers fro over a half a century, that they will compare favorable with the original stock of any community, and this averment I will make good when I reach their history in the next No. [Number]. With men of intelligence, industry, integrity and perseverance, we might expect plenty, order, prosperity and happiness. We had no paupers, no poor houses, no loafers, but little use for jails, State dockets, grand juries, solicitors; litigations were seldom; disorders were limited to a fair fight with fist and teeth now and then at public gatherings. Licentiousness was more bashful then than now, and if discovered blushed and hid its face; men were held to a high rule for fair dealing; boys obeyed their fathers until of age; girls did not marry without mamma's consent; courtships were

conducted modestly; the men women and children all worked; confidence existed among neighbors. A plain hospitality was almost universal; the sick were visited; people dressed plain but comfortably, and their clothes were paid for.

To conclude, while the county did not possess the advantages of high schools, newspapers, books and communication with other communities, as is the case now, while the people did not have great wealth and other facilities for culture and progress, yet, they enjoyed the substantial comforts of life and transmitted examples of probity and virtue which their descendants will do well to imitate.

THE PEOPLE OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY (1874)

By Jesse A. Collins

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, June 3, 1874

It has been said in previous No's, taking the fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, the abundant water power, the inexhaustible mineral resources, the endless variety of timber, the unsurpassed marble, the unfathomed beds of iron ore, the unexplored fields of coal, and the endless variety of resources and productions, that Ala. is one of the best of the Southern States, and that the South is one of the best sections of the world, and that St. Clair claims a share in these sources of wealth and strength, all things considered.

The infinite Creator held back the discovery and development of these inexhaustible resources and productions till the advanced intelligence and civilization should need them, and wisely combined and skilfully utilized them just as a thoughtful parent witholds a part of his estate till his children needs and can safely use it.

The original design in the creation of the world, was for the abode and happiness of man and beast. In its wonderful adaptations and mysterious multiformity there is not a wish or want to which man or beast or fish or fowl is subject, but what can, by forethought and industry and care and toil, be amply met. Not one.

A particular section can comparatively be said to be good or bad, as it combines the essential elements to meet these wants. Some sections possess some of these elements and are deficient in others. This section unites almost all these qualities. Wool, silk, flax, furs and cotton for clothing. Corn, wheat, rye, barley, rice and fruits of every variety; apples, peaches, pears, plums, oranges and sugar, and even tea; potatoes of every kind, garden vegetables of endless variety, with grapes and berries, wild and tame, grow to perfection, to meet and gratify the diversified cravings and tastes of man; while clovers and grasses of every name and description, grow in field and wood to meet the necessities of beast and fowl. In fact our sunny South equals if it does not excel, the garden of Eden, or the land that flowed with milk and honey, and here, too, flowers as sweet and beautiful as ever kissed a maiden's cheek, bloom and glow to please the sight and perfume the air.

I look out now, while I write from Judge Inzer's hospitable mansion, on the very spot where near forty years ago I lay with burning, fiery fever--my face was fanned (I had no wife then) by the hands of maidens and matrons as pure as Eve's--and I see George's clover patch, and Judge Inzer's field, and Mrs. Inzer's flower garden. Just down the street Dr. Cason is constructing houses for a colony of bees just immigrated all the way from Italy, and at the same moment Col. Inzer passes over to the doctor some buck wheat seed to feed his Roman bees that his bees may furnish him with honey sweet enough for the gods to live on, and I now vouch if the Dr. will do his duty, these Italians will theirs.

Jesse A. Collins.

THE PEOPLE OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY (1874)

By Jesse A. Collins

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, June 10, 1874

When the former views were penned, I had not seen Brewer's *Alabama--Her History and Resources*. since then, I have read this valuable contribution to the literature of the State. Mr. Brewer more than confirms all I have said about the almost inexhaustible resources and infinite variety of productions of this commonwealth. He says on page 79, "The soil of Alabama and climate and productions are varied and attractive--perhaps no region on the globe of like dimensions can boast of superiority to her in these important respects." On page 80 he says, "The mineral resources of Ala. are prodigious and of incalculable value; the beds of iron and fields of coal are literally inexhaustible." Again on page 82, he remarks, "The bottom lands of the rivers and creeks in all portions of the State yield bounteously." "A hardy and superior race penetrated the wilderness," p.44.

Now in confirmation of these truthful remarks I have only to open my windows and soft winds as pure as balmy, and bracing as ever inspired the nerves of man, woman or child come floating from the snow-capped mountains of the north, now and then shifting sails as they come wafting gently from the sunny regions of the South, cheering every flower in their pathway and kissing every maiden's cheek in their mission of mercy to the human race.

I look back south, I see the Backbone Mountain, ribs and all, rising in beautiful grandeur as if to variegate the landscape below. Why, I have a natural Sinai on the summit of this rugged region where I have built a tabernacle. Going still southward, my mind rests on Boone's Bend, on the placid Coosa River, my own humble home, and there is a body of red, alluvial land--red mulatto land, as rich, as high and dry, as

can be found in any region of the earth.

I look out east, there the heroic Coosa makes a bold charge on the body of Backbone Mountain, and slashing and dashing through spine and ribs, presents the beautiful Ten Island. Why, the good people of Gadsden have almost gone crazy about Black Creek Falls. Well, this is excusable in a people in a territorial condition--a little creek plunging over a rock may amuse them for a while; but if they want to see sights, let them stand on the Backbone Mountain and gaze on the Ten Islands as the Coosa shouts, and glides, and smiles along its pathway to the Gulf, and if Col. Kyle and Dr. Nowlin will adventure themselves among the rude robbers of St. Clair, I will guarantee a safe passport to and from this grand, natural scenery.

I turn my eyes to the north windows, and here towers the lofty and expanded Sand Mountain extending to the Tennessee River, unexplored by all except the wild deer and howling wolf. Who has examined these regions? Who knows what mines of wealth lie buried in these store houses of nature--locked up for the use of His children who may have the industry to exhume and utilize these vast resources of wealth and happiness?

Well, Bro. Cather, I sat down to give a sketch of the people--the old original stock of St. Clair Co.--but taking a little ramble into her mountains and mines, I got lost; then I took a baloon flight high up in the regions of air and became dizzy, then I went into the cornfields; divided the clover and grass patches and fields of the boys around town, and surveyed the flower gardens to catch the beauties of the flowers; so I lost my aims and ends of this number. Will you excuse the aberation--the bewilderment--I will get sane again I hope, by next week. Be patient, you shall hear from the old foks yet, I owe them a debt which I hope to live to pay. In the meantime, let the married people quit sighing for a better county, and beautify the one they have; let the unmarried men (poor foolish creatures, I pity them) marry, and the single women (I don't mean girls) I am sorry for them; marry wisely, marry from judgement, purchase fields and gardens and work and adorn them and

love them; quit loafing and flirting about; make a business of courtships instead of spending their time in tom-fooleries; beautify their homes, build up the county, make St. Clair County what it ought to be, the home of a prosperous and happy people.

Jesse A. Collins

INCIDENTS OF THE HISTORY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALABAMA [1885-86]

By Wm. H. Cather

Southern Aegis, December 30, 1885

The Indians, in 1812, perceiving that the whites were settling up their lands and that in a few years, if this continued, they would be driven from the country, perhaps, or that the game would be scattered away, protested against further encroachments.

It was about this time that Tecumseh, a most powerful Shawnee chief, came as an agent of the English, who were then on the verge of a war with America, to incite the Creeks to rise against the Federal government and take side with England. The effects of his visit were, as was anticipated, the beginning of hostilities against the white American settlers. The Battle of Burnt Corn, Conecuh County, in July, 1813, followed by the massacre of Ft. Mimms, Baldwin County, caused Gen. Jackson to set out from Nashville, with a large force--nearly 2,000--of Tennesseans. After much difficulty, Jackson cut his way to Will's creek, now in Etowah County, but which was included in the original boundaries of St. Clair County, where he encamped on October 28, 1813, destitute of bread and provisions for his army, to allow his foraging parties to secure a supply of rations. As the contractors had totally failed to fulfill their engagements with him, his army was almost in a starving condition.

While encamped at this point, Gen. Jackson dispatched Col. Dyer with a small force of two hundred cavalry, to attack the Indian town of

Littefuchee, twenty miles distance, situated on Canoe creek. Arriving at Littefuchee at four o'clock on the morning of October 29, they burned down the town and captured twenty-nine prisoners, consisting of men, women and children. Returning to camp, they met another detachment which had been sent out to secure a supply of beeves, corn, etc. This detachment had captured four Indians of the war party and two negroes, probably refugee slaves who had taken up their abode with the redskins. Two other Creeks of the hostile party were brought in by Old Chinobe--an aged Hillabee chief--and his son. These prisoners were all sent together to Huntsville.

In the meantime, while Gen. Jackson was still encamped on Will's creek--in St. Clair county afterwards--waiting for his foraging parties to secure enough provisions from the fertile and beautiful valley of the Coosa to proceed southward, the Creeks had assembled in large numbers at their town of Tallaschatchee--afterwards in Calhoun county--thirteen miles distant from his camp.

Coffee, who had been promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, was dispatched by Jackson, at the head of one thousand men, with one-half of whom he was directed to attack the enemy. The other half was directed to scour the country near the Ten Islands for the purpose of covering his operations.

Col. Richard Brown, with a company of friendly Creeks and Cherokees, accompanied the expedition and rendered faithful and valuable service. In order to distinguish them from the hostile Indians, badges of white feathers and deer's tails were worn on their heads.

Fording the Coosa at the Fish Dam, four miles above the Islands, Coffee advanced to Tallasehatchee, surrounded the town at the rising of the sun on November 3rd, 1813, and was met by the savages and their prophets with whoops and the sounding of drums--the prophets being in advance.

Attacking the decoy companies stationed by Coffee, they were soon surrounded by troops who charged them with great slaughter. After a short, but terrible action, eighty-four women and children were

taken prisoners, while the slain bodies of one hundred and eighty-six warriors were counted upon the battlefield, where, unavoidably, some women also perished. Many other bodies, uncounted, lay concealed in the weeds. Five Americans were killed and eighteen wounded.

Late in the evening of the same day, Gen. Coffee re-crossed the Coosa and marched his little army to Gen. Jackson's headquarters. Not a solitary warrior begged for his life and, it is believed, not an Indian escaped to the woods, to tell in after years the results of this battle. All the prisoners captured were sent to Huntsville.

Gen. Jackson, now forcing his way over the Coosa mountain, arrived at Ten Islands, where he began to erect a second depot for supplies, (having already erected one--Fort Deposit--on Thompson's creek, in the present county of Calhoun) which was protected by strong picketing and block-houses and to which he gave the name of FORT STROTHER.

There was considerable fortification there, and older citizens may recollect having seen the gate-posts till a late day, with an appearance of earthworks thrown up around in places. There were the ruins of the historical old fort and which is now embraced within the boundaries of St. Clair county.

This was Gen. Jackson's place of rendezvous during the Creek Indian war in St. Clair and surrounding counties. It was situated near the foot of the mountains on the west side of the Coosa river and on the public road as it was afterwards laid out from Ashville to Talladega. It was near the ferry crossing known in early times as Durinn's and afterwards as Driver's ferry, near which was the residence of a Mr. Woods, son-in-law of Jacob Green.

While encamped at the fort, having done much to subdue the hostile Creek nation of Indians, his little army was reduced almost to the point of starvation and consequent mutiny on account of the delay in the arrival of their provisions, which had to be forwarded to them from east Tennessee, and which were daily expected.

A good portion of the troops had been mustered into service in

Tennessee, and having been allowed to return to their homes, the space of several weeks had elapsed before they were again called to take up their line of march and come into Alabama. Previous to their encampment at Fort Strother, they had been in Alabama some time and it was now that they began to complain.

The soldiers contended that their term of service had expired--counting from the date of being mustered in. Gen. Jackson maintained that it had not expired--counting from the time of their being called in to take up the line of march to Fort Strother.

The men and officers had had scarcely anything to eat for several days and became reduced to such a state that they actually collected acorns and whatever else they could find for food in the woods and ate them. The army was in imminent danger of abandoning the fort in mutiny, which would have endangered greatly the success of the Indian war. The General was daily expecting the arrival of fresh troops to relieve those in camp and, also, the arrival of provisions from the army.

Finally, in this distressing condition of affairs, a compromise was agreed upon. This was to the effect that the troops under their respective officers, including the General, would take up the line of march towards Tennessee, along the Jackson Trace, as it was called. This trace passed near what was afterwards known as Green's ferry, thence to a shoal in Canoe creek, (near which Jacob Green and Mr. Aubury lived in early times) thence through the piney woods to the foot of Sand mountain, (where, in old times, William Brown, and later, Joel Chandler lived) thence northwardly toward Tennessee.

Pursuant to this agreement, the army with its baggage started, along the route indicated, and at about noon of the first or second day's march, met the long looked-for wagons loaded with provisions. At this joyful sight, camp was at once pitched and all hands set eagerly to work cooking and eating and enjoying themselves hugely, then lay down to rest and have a good sleep.

Late in the night Gen. Jackson was informed that a conspiracy had been formed against him, and that the troops had determined to go back

to their homes in Tennessee and not to return to Fort Strother, as they had agreed to do.

The General's quarters being in front immediately in the route they would have to go, he, before daylight, had collected about sixty or eighty men and officers--including his artillerymen, with their cannons charged and ready to be fired. Before sunrise, he placed them in battle array across the road, with himself on horseback in the middle of the line. His arm being in a sling, he held in his hand a musket, the muzzle of which was resting between his horse's ears.

Very soon the rebellious troops formed in columns and companies in the open woods, and with fife and drum sounding to their quick marching, came rapidly forward.

Gen. Jackson had given to those aligned with him the command: *"Don't fire a gun until I fire. Then sell your lives as dearly as you can."*

Imagine, reader, if you can, what must have been the feelings of these soldiers, arrayed, as they were, friend against friend, kinsman against kinsman, father against son and brother against brother, on the verge of a tragic and deadly combat. These men had sworn to obey their general, but driven by starvation almost to desperation, they revolted and bore upon their countenances, a look of determination which no one, save those who have seen it, can describe.

With beating heart the General waited until the front ranks of the advancing column approached within a short distance--less, perhaps, than fifty yards--while it was not yet quite light, so they could see him plainly and his array to resist them, when, raising himself in his stirrups, in a loud, terrible voice, he commanded:

"HALT!"

The mutinous troops wavered an instant, then stopped as if struck by an electric shock. Again came the command:

"Right about face!"

With one accord they turned about as machines.

"Forward march, every damned rascal of you!"

They stepped off quickly and the General put himself at the head

of the column and marched the army back to Fort Strother. This was the end of this mutinous affair. In a short time relief troops came and the veteran soldiers were marched home to Tennessee and discharged.

The above scene is supposed to have occurred in the flat piney woods between Canoe creek and the foot of the mountain.

There was a boy soldier, by the name of Burk, about 16 years old, sick and reclining at the root of a tree, within thirty feet of Gen. Jackson when this thrillingly real dramatic affair occurred. He was so situated that he could see Gen. Jackson's face when the General was giving his commands, and after this boy became an old man, he said he could shut his eyes and see that face again, with a look of determined resistance upon it, appearing as the countenance of some destructive demon from the lower regions.

That boy soldier, when a man, became a large merchant in Nashville, Savannah, New York and in Texas, where he died, respected and honored. Having become well acquainted with Gen. Jackson, he visited him at the Hermitage, after the latter had become President and during their conversation told him about having been a witness to the scene just described, and said that he had always desired to ask what were then his feelings while giving those commands, that made his face present such a commanding and terrible aspect.

Gen. Jackson replied that he knew the Tennesseans well, and had very little hope of turning them back. He said that was one time in his life he expected to die and had deliberately made up his mind that if those troops did go to Tennessee, they would have to march over his dead body.

INCIDENTS OF THE HISTORY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALABAMA [1886]

By Wm. H. Cather

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, January 13, 1886

From the year 1764 and for several years after, the beautiful section of country now embraced within the limits of St. Clair County, in connection with all that part of the state of Alabama above the line of 32 degrees and 28 minutes, was contained in the British province of Illinois, under British government. At this time this--the Illinois--part of Alabama was uninhabited by Europeans, except a few traders who resided in the nations of the Upper Creek Indians--those inhabiting St. Clair County--and the Cherokees and Chickasaws.

Although the country was claimed by the English by virtue of treaty with France and Spain which governments laid claim to it by right of discovery, St. Clair and surrounding country was in complete possession of the Indians. These were mostly of the Muscogee or Creek Nation, although there was quite a number of Cherokees.

In 1794-5 the county of St. Clair, in connection with the counties of Clarke, Marengo, Greene, Perry, Autauga, Bibb, Shelby, Tuscaloosa, Pickens, Fayette, Jefferson and also portions of Blount, Walker, Marion, Wilcox, Monroe, Dallas, Sumpter and Baldwin, with a large part of Mississippi, were sold to the "Georgia Company" of the Great Yazoo Land Sales by the Georgia legislature, for the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Though these sales were afterwards declared null and void and repealed by the Georgia legislature, their tendency was to cause and influx of settlers into these wild, barbarous regions. They came to occupy the lands granted them by the "Georgia Company" and remained after the repealing of the sales.

On April 24, 1802, the state of Georgia, to which the territory than belonged, ceded to the Federal Government of the United States, all the country now embraced in the states of Alabama and Mississippi for a considerable sum. Immigrants then began to find their way towards the new country: a land office was established, and numbers of settlers entered land under the pre-emption laws of the United States. Yet the title of the Indians, the rightful owners of the territory, still remained to

be purchased.

De Soto, the first pale-faced explorer of Alabama, in his march from Georgia down the noble Coosa, in the year 1540, did not enter the present counties of Etowah and St. Clair. He proceeded down the western bank of the Coosa, until he reached the Indian town of Costa, in Cherokee County. Crossing to the eastern bank of the Coosa at this point, he passed through the county of Calhoun on the east side of the river, opposite St. Clair County. It is not unlikely that some of his followers crossed over into the fertile and beautiful valleys of St. Clair, and were probably the first white men that ever entered her borders and penetrated her stately forests.

The presence of the Creek Indians in Alabama, at the time of De Soto's visit is disputed by some writers, who think they were driven from Mexico to Ohio, and while in that state, hearing of the boundless forests filled with an abundant supply of every variety of game, extending over this part of Alabama, they began to move southward, reaching the hunting grounds of St. Clair about the middle of the sixteenth century, after De Soto's visit.

Previous to the visit of the adventurous De Soto, little or nothing was known of these dusky inhabitants. They were described as being a very warlike, independent and adventurous people, and the broad forests were their play-grounds and their work-shops. Here they lived happily and contented in these then solitary regions--far beyond the borders of civilization; but a new era in their career was dawning, which would eventually result in their removal, and consequently, their deterioration from their aboriginal state.

We speak of it in this sense, because, in the history of the world we have but few instances of any improvement of a people by any local change, as such changes have not always affected them in a way to improve their social life for successive generations, unless, by intercourse and conquest, they succeed in establishing a more perfect civilization than they previously enjoyed.

In the study of the primitive conditions of mankind, we find that

changes from their normal state, either in local removal or habits of living, as often affected their progress adversely as beneficially. There are quite as many instances where social evolution has been downward as tending upward. But even where this has not been the case, it has often been that for generations no perceptible progress has been attained, and, indeed, it has been just as frequent after population increased by intercourse and conquest, that subsequent generations of the same people have attained all their advancement.

It is one of the important problems of the present time as to whether the Indians will ever make any great degree of advancement in civilization.

Until several years of the nineteenth century had passed, the Indian chiefs and warriors might step to the tops of the highest mountains and say, with truthfulness, in the language of William Cowper in his "Alexander Selkirk:"

"I am monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute."

This, their own, their native land was to the red men a

"Throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind
Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold." (*Paradise*

Lost)

Whatever may be said of these ignorant residents of the forests, they had their virtues as well as their vices.

The Muscogee, or Creek nation, occupied the territory east of the Warrior and Alabama Rivers. The Upper Creeks--those inhabiting St. Clair--being called Muscogeas, as the Lower Creeks, who lived southward, were called Seminoles.

The Creek warriors were erect in carriage; in movement, graceful; in disposition, proud, haughty and arrogant.

In stature, the women of the Creek tribe were short and well formed. Generally, their features were regular and handsome. In

facial appearance, their cheeks were rather high, brow high and arched, eyes large, languishing and expressive of diffidence and modesty. Their feet and hands were small and exquisitely shaped.

Of their history and customs previous to the immigration of the primitive white settlers to this country, little is known except from the narratives of historians, traders and adventurers. (For an account of the Creek Indians, see appendix.)

The first settlers who immigrated to this country and penetrated the hunting grounds of the Indians, found the climate mild and delightful. The spring season was wet and early, the summers mild and generally dry, falls late and the winters pure and bracing.

The soil was fertile, deep and productive; the air pure and invigorating, and the numerous springs of various kinds of clear, cool and health-giving water--lime-stone, freestone, chalybeate, sulphur. The land was exceedingly well-watered by numbers of beautiful rivulets and creeks of clear, running water. The name of "creeks" was given to the Muscogee Indians by the white traders and European merchants, on account of the great number of creeks flowing through their territory. In fact, these first settlers had found a Paradise, and they were not slow to take advantage of it and invite their friends to overcome many difficulties that were encountered in a journey to these regions, and share it with them.

INCIDENTS OF THE HISTORY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALABAMA [1886]

By Wm. H. Cather

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, January 20, 1886

The vast mineral wealth was everywhere visible, but was not of any great consideration in the minds of these pioneers because they could not utilize it.

The giant forests of stately trees were very extensive. Ash, oak,

pine, hickory, iron-wood, cornell, poplar, elm, beech, chestnut, [and] buttonwood were the timbers most numerous and useful. Wild fruit was plentiful; vines of luscious grapes and muscadines hung from the limbs of the trees in the forest, while blackberries and other fruit flourished in the open lands and mountains. These forests were nature's shield, preventing the summers from being as hot and oppressive as now and serving as a windbreak in winter, so that the temperature and seasons differed considerably from what is experienced at the present time.

Owing to the above facts, houses were unnecessary, though these hardy children of nature had a few wigwams, built of small logs or poles chinked and daubed with mud from bottom to top. These were all the protection they had and as they had no chimneys, a fire was kindled in the center of the wigwam by which their cooking was done.

It is a noticeable fact that the Indians kept the underbrush which accumulated in their forests, burned off regularly every year. This not only prevented the increase of mosquitoes, ticks and other noxious insects, thereby serving as a preventive of malarial disease; but it enabled the hunter to see and approach game much more readily. It also improved the appearance of the forest.

The forests abounded with game of all kinds and the streams were filled with fish. The Indians, depending solely upon their forests as the only resource of food with the exception of a small patch of corn, were very careful in preserving the supply of game. No more than actually necessary was killed at one time; none was wantonly slain nor wasted. In this manner the supply was not exhausted, but the production was increased.

Their modes of killing game were exceedingly primitive, but were always made profitable and efficient by them. Their most common weapons were the long bow and arrow, blow gun and spears. The bows were generally made of cedar, sassafras, elm or ash, from 3 to 6 feet in length, strung with buckskin; arrows were made of reeds, winged with eagle feathers and tipped with flint arrow heads. Knives, hatchets, etc.,

such as the metallic implements we have at the present time were not in use by them, but they had hewed rude tools from stone, and with these made their weapons and prepared their game.

The blow gun was a most effective weapon in their hands, and their aim unerring. This weapon was made with a cane about six feet long with the joints burned out and smoothed on the inside; a sight was placed on one end. In this was placed a tiny arrow made of reeds, sourwood, or some light wood with thistle down and feathers on the small, so made as to fit the hollow cane airtight. The other end was so sharpened and sometimes tipped with a poison that produced speedy death, but did not render the game unfit for use.

INCIDENTS OF THE HISTORY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALABAMA [1886]

By Wm. H. Cather

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, January 27, 1886

When in use, the hunter simply puts an arrow in place, raises the gun to his mouth and blows away, rarely missing his game, even at long distances.

A few small patches of corn was the extent of their agricultural knowledge. These their squaws were compelled to cultivate while their lord and master smoked his pipe or hunted for game.

One among the number of singular customs observed by these hardy and ignorant redmen was that of burying with their dead whatever implements or trinkets belonged to them. Tin cups, pewter plates, bows and arrows, large strands of beads, blow guns and other weapons and articles of ornament, etc., [were] interred with their deceased owner. In exhuming the graves, quite a number of these antiquarian relics have been found and are today among the valued collections of curiosities on exhibition in museums and expositions.

Throughout the county are to be found, to this day, huge rock piles,

reared by human hands, and for what purpose or by whom constructed is a mystery yet to be solved. The writer has dug into several, but without approaching any nearer a solution to their object and purpose than before. Many persons have unearthed them, some discovering bones, but as a general rule there seems to be quite a different purpose than that of a sepulchre for their dead.

Among the most wonderful and interesting antiquarian works or relics found by the early settlers of the county were the numerous mounds or ridges--some of which are still to be seen and will be incidentally alluded to further on--supposed to have been built by the Indians or a pre-historic nation, called Mound-builders. If they were constructed by the Indians, these people, probably, derived their ideas from the mounds built by the Mound-builders. But those still extant do not seem to belong to the class built by the latter race, being distinctly different--smaller in appearance and varying in their contents. Some, however are of the opinion that these constructive ideas of the Indians originated with themselves, but as we are not writing a work on Paleontology, facts only will be given from which the reader may draw his own conclusions.

But it is truly astonishing what skill and time must have been employed in these works of the Indians. When we contemplate the numerous mounds and rock-piles they built and the exceedingly rude and primitive implements they manufactured and used in their every-day life, and, also their manners and customs, we may well be astonished.

INCIDENTS OF THE HISTORY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALABAMA [1886]

By Wm. H. Cather

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, February 3, 1886

On November 20th, at the second session of the Territory of Alabama which convened at St. Stephens in the fall of 1818, an act was

passed creating the county of ST. CLAIR. John W. Walker was, at that time, Speaker of the House, and James Titus, President of the Legislative Council.

The name, "St. Clair," was given the new county in honor to the memory of Gen. Arthur St. Clair, who died but a few months before, and of whose life we give a short sketch, taken from the appendix.

Arthur St. Clair was born at Thurso, Caithness-shire, Scotland, in 1734, and was educated at the University of Edinburgh. He joined the British army as an ensign and came to America in 1758 with Admiral Boscawen. He served with distinction under Amherst at Louisburg, and under Gen. Wolf at Quebec. After resigning his commission in 1762, he held various civil offices until the commencement of the American revolution, when he joined the Colonial Army with the rank of colonel. In consideration of his valuable services at the battles of Three rivers, Princeton and Trenton, he was rapidly promoted until he became a major-general and was placed in command at Ticonderoga in 1777. However, he was forced to surrender this point to Burgoyne and although acquitted of all blame by court martial, his consequent unpopularity lost him his command. Remaining in the army as a volunteer, he again rose to important positions, distinguishing himself under Gen. Washington in the campaign which ended with the surrender of Cornwallis, and afterwards under Gen. Greene. He was a member of the Continental Congress of 1785-7, becoming its president in the latter year. In 1788 he was made the first governor of the Northwest Territory, which position he held until 1802. Meanwhile, becoming, in 1791, commander-in-chief of the United States Army, he was sent on an expedition against the Miami Indians, which ended in the disastrous rout of his forces. A committee of investigation appointed by congress exonerated him, but he resigned his commission in May, 1792, and died in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, on August 31st, 1818. His last years were spent in poverty and obscurity.

Thus it will be seen that the county of St. Clair derived its name from a very noted general--one whose brave and valuable services

contributed much to the success of the American Army in the great War of the Revolution, and whose memory should be sacred to every true citizen of St. Clair.

THE PROSPERITY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALABAMA [1885]

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, August 19, 1885

Ashville, St. Clair Co., Ala., July 29, 1885

From the *Manufacturer's Record*:

Hundreds of minor improvements which swell the wonderful progress of the South are overlooked in the usual estimates of such progress, because lying remote from the great marts of activity or the great thoroughfares of travel. Inference here plays its part in the method of arriving at truth when it is based upon known facts of surroundings and necessary conditions which invariably attend the influence of the former upon communities or the country. the rapid building of Birmingham, Anniston and Gadsden, at so short a distance from each other; the connecting of these places by railroad and telegraph, or their proposed connection in this way, with the consistent improvements constantly reported added to the industries of these towns, indicate an area of country lying between or adjacent to these points which must, in the natural course of things, feel the impulse of such progress, if it does not really contribute largely to its life.

St. Clair is one of the original counties of the State, and as it now seems destined to become very conspicuous on account of its vast mineral resources, its new industrial enterprises, and the advantages it possesses in other respects over many other sections of the South, it will,

perhaps not be uninteresting to speak briefly of its situation, government and people.

This county contains about 600 square miles. Much of this area consists of good tillable land lying in fertile and picturesque valleys, well watered and timbered, susceptible of a high state of improvement, and flanked on either side by hills, in some places rising to the altitude of mountains, on the tops of which are good farms, grazing and an abundance of timber. It is now known that these hills are, for the most part, beds of the richest mineral and most valuable stone, although but a few years ago they were not regarded of very great value, as compared to the more accessible and richer valley soil between them; and it is this knowledge just at this time which is giving such prominent interest to the local features of this section of the State.

Ashville, the county seat, is situated between Chattanooga and Birmingham--about 104 miles from the former and about 42 miles from the latter--and of this town and its surroundings I may speak in a more special manner in the future.

The population of the county is about 15,000, of whom about 3,000 are blacks. The tax rate for county purposes after the war was at first 90 cents on the \$100 valuation of property; then it fell to 40 cents and now is only 20 cents, the lowest in the state. A heavy debt has been lifted from the shoulders of the taxpayers. New bridges have been created at considerable cost at all the creek crossings, and \$2,700 improvements have recently been added to the court-house. The board of commissioners has had under consideration the project of a new jail to cost several thousand dollars, and has advertised for proposals to erect the same.

I do not think any county in the State presents such a financial record in favor of the management of its local affairs and no facts can speak plainer of the healthful and permanent progress of this section of country than these, inasmuch as they show that such improvements are going on here, not upon a credit increasing indebtedness, and as a consequence taxation; on the contrary, the county is out of debt, and

every improvement of which I have spoken has been made while an old and oppressive indebtedness existed and was in progress of being paid off--the crowning results being a reduction of the tax rate, so low that few believe it possible.

We have a county court of criminal jurisdiction which holds its terms monthly, and it is a fact, however unreasonable it may appear, that there is not an average of one case brought into it in two months. Our Circuit Court holds two terms a year, and one week is given, though never consumed, to the criminal docket. Seven-tenths of the cases tried are misdemeanors in violation of the statutes--mostly offenses of a trivial nature, and frequently committed in ignorance of the law. There hasn't been a larceny case tried in the courts for a number of terms. Person and life are absolutely secure here and stealing may almost be regarded as an obsolete crime. Of late the highest crimes of murder, arson, &c, are unheard of as occurring in this county.

I must except from this unqualified statement of the condition of order in St. Clair for several years past, a few sporadic cases of crime of recent date at the mines and public works, perpetuated by parties who are no part of our permanent population. As an illustration of the good order in this section, I will say that no breach of the law in this town has occurred, within my knowledge, for a number of

iel or misunderstanding among our citizens,--and the same condition of order and good feeling exists everywhere in the county, except in the mining towns and government works. I can say with emphasis that there exists nowhere on earth a more law-abiding people than the ---- element of this section of country, and they will see that the laws are faithfully enforced against the disturbers of peace from whatever quarter they may come, if the latter remain here long enough for the authorities to get a grip upon them. No people anywhere have a higher appreciation of the obligations of a contract,--none labor harder to pay their debts. Everything lending to progressive education, morals and religion receives the most earnest attention, and is aided by the most

zealous effort.

Whatever goes abroad calculated to defame society here is mainly the work of new comers engaged at the mining towns, incident to the new conditions springing up.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY (1887)

From the Montgomery *Daily Dispatch*--Cleveland Edition

Prepared by Geo. R. Cather, Esq.

November 23, 1887

The area of this county is 360 square miles; embracing thousands of acres untilled, mountainous and timbered, suitable for grazing, fruit raising and other purposes. A great deal of uncultivated area is mineral land awaiting the investment of capital to bring to light its value in that respect. A large portion is railroad soil subject to sale at a minimum price, while there is yet a considerable number of acres belonging to the United States government subject to entry for homesteads.

Perhaps no county in the state is as rich, in its varied resources, as St. Clair; perhaps none possesses superior facilities and conveniences for living and enjoyment.

That the soil of St. Clair, in varied production, is not excelled anywhere in the state will not be disputed in the light of recent facts--that sunshine and cloud have been as favorable to it as to any other part of Alabama has been demonstrated time and again; besides it is well watered by never failing springs and never drying streams. These features are indeed remarkable.

Ashville, the county seat, is surrounded by nature's reservoirs--three large springs encompass the town. Springville is built around a

dozen springs furnishing enough water for a large lake, and within four miles of the latter town on the Ashville road are St. Clair Sulphur waters at Cornelia. Cook Springs, on the Georgia Pacific railroad, were once among the noted summer resorts of north Alabama--they, with the Cornelia system, are still places of health resort, destined in the near future again to be more famous as such than in the past, owing to their situation, more extended notoriety and increased facilities of travel to them. It would be a marvel to those acquainted with the territory of St. Clair to go any great distance, in any direction, without coming upon a spring of fresh clear, cool water. Why, while I am writing, I call to mind names of places or localities--as Gum Springs, Cool Springs, Goode's sulphur springs, Cliff chalybeate springs, which, under a higher social and natural development of the county to bring them into notice, would give character to its advantages in this particular. If I were to stop to think how many more localities I could call up thus designated, I do not know; but those I have mentioned are within a short distance of the county seat.

Creeks--bold streams--are numerous, and refresh the country in every direction, pouring their volumes of water into the Coosa river, which forms the eastern boundary of its territory. I think that I can safely say the facilities of a water supply to man and beast here are unsurpassed, and in the distribution of the natural flow and courses, are unequalled in the advantages afforded to every position of the county, in any area of the same compass in this state, and, perhaps in the south. It would surprise many unacquainted with this feature of our topographical resources, if I were to begin at any boundary point of the county, proceeding to its opposite, and describe the character, situation and direction of this system of natural water courses, so adapted in its arrangement to the convenience of every part of the county, although I could not near mention all the never-failing estuaries of the larger streams.

The natural scenery of the county is unsurpassed anywhere within the state. Our valley regions are famous. There are probably few

situations affording a greater variety of perspective views. At Cliff Springs, just name miles from Ashville, there are grand picturesque outlooks to the north and east. On Chandler's mountain, just north of the latter point, there must be something similar. The hill country along the valley of the Coosa would be appreciated by the artistic tourist. The ranges south of Ashville are magnificent rolling heights. Coosa valley is one of the garden spots of the world. Beaver valley is flanked by its tall hills on either side. The rich bottoms of Canoe creek spread between the mountains on the west, and the undulating steeps on the east, which once formed the natural embankment of the Coosa river. The truth is that so grandly picturesque and varied is the work of nature in this section that no inspiration of mind is equal to the task of its description even in its faintest outlines. There is such a unity of contrast, so harmoniously blended, in the close grouping of hill and vale, that one cannot separate, in detail, the parts without doing injustice to the whole picture.

St. Clair county was founded in 1818. Quite a number of aborigines roamed over its soil--or still occupied its territory then--and among the old records are found deeds of land from the Indians to the white settlers. While the country's resources are just coming into notice, its historical character, coincident with that of the state of whose territory it forms a part, has been known ever since its creation. It is the only county in the state, I believe, mentioned by name in Chambers' Universal Knowledge--it is, so far as I know, the only one that has furnished more than one governor for its own or other states. Its soil is memorable as a part of Jackson's campaign in the war of 1812 against the Muscogees, of which aboriginal commune were the natives of this county at the time. There are still traces of the encampments and defenses of the military as well as many evidences of Indian settlements in various parts of the county. Besides the Indian town, Litafutchee, once situated not far from where the county seat is now located, is a relic of the ancient empire of the red man's dominion here, preserved on the pages of our state history.

The northwestern boundary of the county is Blount mountain, a spur of the great Sand ridge. In the same corner is Chandler's mountain. The table lands of these elevations are noted for fruit culture, and no better situations exist for sheep raising. Besides, the level plateaus are submissive to agricultural life, and in this particular, owing to the fertility of the soil are very productive, and can be made very profitable. For health and enjoyment, no more desirable locations can be found in the south. The mineral character of those mountains is well known--coal, lime and iron, are found in places, with excellent rock, while timber is abundant.

But the principle coal beds of the county lie south in the neighborhoods of Broken Arrow and along the East and West railroad. Here, owing to the peculiar formation of hills and valleys between the ridges, the soil is even more diversified than in the northern part of the county--the country around is broken, undulating, and the ridges narrower and less steep than further north. The surface features are just such as one would naturally expect in a section of mineral characteristic varied by agricultural pursuits.

While the recent industrial progress has not concentrated at one point or center, in the county, so to speak, the effect of general material development all over its territory has been very marked in the improved condition of society, and is visible in the numerous thriving and enterprising communities springing up in all directions. New Broken Arrow, Fairview, Ragland, River Side, Sedden, Pell City, etc., are familiar names in the newspaper. The lumber business along the railroad, rivers and large creeks has increased to immense proportions in the last few months. Six years ago, one railroad only passed through the county near its Western boundary. Now, besides the Alabama Great Southern--a link of the great trunk line of the Cincinnati Southern--the Georgia Pacific traverses our territory south, and the Eat and West pierces the very heart of the coal and iron region, giving life and vigor to hundreds of before latent industrial operations. Other railroads are projecting into the county, and still others are in view. St. Clair lies

directly on the line of the great railroad belt through the mineral and timber region of the south to the gulf, and on the east and west line from the Atlantic coast to the populous Mississippi regions of teeming wealth and progress. It seems to me both Anniston and Birmingham will be compelled to draw from the natural resources of this county.

Unfortunately for the latter city, neither of the great lines of railroad mentioned pass through the sections of our territory that would give it the greatest advantages by opening up roads to the great wealth stored away in our hills and forests. But it will be seen that the advantages to travel and shipping afforded by transportation lines in this county are almost equal, if not entirely so, to the best in the state, and they are sure in a short time to be unsurpassed in the south.

Quite recently several mining and improvement companies have been incorporated to operate in this county. These have invested largely in mineral lands and sooner or later a greater industrial era will begin here. Active operations in this respect, are secured by the amount of capital already scattered among the land owners of the county.

The agricultural prospects of the county are in a flattering condition, and our farmers have not been so generally in a better financial condition since the war. The products of the soil are cotton, Irish and sweet potatoes, with all the cereals of a temperate climate. Potatoes of both kinds grow abundantly. The sorghum crop seldom fails and the syrup manufactured from this cane is much superior, usually, to the grades of syrup shipped to our local markets. This county will produce a finer texture of cotton and more to the acre on an average, with care and attention in cultivation, than can be produced elsewhere in the state. Corn can be raised in greater abundance than in the corn growing states, with proper cultivation--the soil seems adapted naturally to this cereal growth, if planted early, but the crop is too generally neglected and left to care for itself when it needs most attention.

Lands are remarkably cheap, but this will not be long the case. Grasses and clover grow luxuriantly, though little or no cultivation is

given to such crops, the soil naturally producing enough for home purposes without culture. The dew, black, and huckle-berries grow abundantly, while the raspberries and strawberries can be cultivated to great advantage.

The local educational advantages can hardly be excelled anywhere, as the people are paying great attention at this time to literary and business culture. Every community has its local school, and new school buildings are going up where they are needed. The same progress is making in religious and moral culture. In this respect, St. Clair's history of late has been remarkable, from the new places where public works have been going on. The county is almost free from criminals or law violators. Even the new-comers, if wild and reckless when they come here, soon adapt themselves to the quiet and peaceful habits of the old element of our society.

While the county is not in a complete sense a prohibition one, the sale of liquor has gradually been banished from so many localities as to secure the same effect as a general prohibition. The result has been marvelous on the tone of our society, and in the good order of the people, and in the decrease of crime. Its effect has been wonderful in the progress of the moral and religious culture of the young people--wonderful as adding to the prosperity and happiness of society generally.

St. Clair County is now in a remarkably prosperous financial condition. Recently it expended a considerable sum of money on its court house, making convenient additions thereto, and then built a jail, using in its construction the building rock of our native hills. Perhaps no county in the state has a finer or stronger prison. It is two stories high, both floors built of solid slab rock, the lower story built entirely of large hewn stone, placed in position by the derrick. The upper story constructed of substantial brick work. There is no wood work about it except the roof.

The numerous crossings of the large creeks on every public road are well bridged. All this improvement has been made within a few years, while the county was paying off an old indebtedness of several

thousand dollars. In the meantime, taxes were reduced, and today the county owes nothing. Next year there will be a surplus in the treasury, and a further reduction of taxation for county purposes unless some new improvement is invoked by the people.

The *Southern Aegis*, edited, managed and controlled by Wm. H. Cather, Esq., is published at Ashville, the county seat, and was established in 1873 (January) by the writer of this article. Under the present management the paper is becoming quite a faction in the material, educational and general progress of the county.

In regard to the people of this county, I will only add that I doubt if anywhere there can be found a more liberal, social, hospitable, industrious, thrifty, law-abiding, debt-paying, God-fearing and serving population than in St. Clair. I might say a great deal in detail of the people, but I could not say less to speak the truth.

The valuation of taxable property in St. Clair County for the year 1887 is \$2,493,239 as shown by the abstract of assessment filed with the auditor.

STEAMBOATS IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY [1890]

Southern Aegis, February 20, 1890

Steam boats can now pass lock 1 to lock 2 in this county. The Clifford B. Seay, of the White Star Line, Rome, Ga., in charge of Capt. J. J. Seay, with an excursion party on board went through the lock to Ten Island. Capt. John F. Green of Greensport, was in charge of the gates when the steamer arrived last Saturday, the 8th inst., at 1 o'clock p.m., and opened them promptly, for the passage of the steamer to Lock 2, about three and a half miles below. Major Andrews is engineering the completion of Lock 2, and says the work will be finished at an early day.

COOSA RIVER [1902]

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, February 5, 1902

Among the important waterways of our state may be mentioned the Coosa River. While it is not entirely open to navigation, it is safe to say that within 12 months the boats from Rome and Gadsden will be at Riverside. Already the work is going on rapidly at Lock 4, about five miles above Seddon, which point the steamboats can now reach. The fall from Greensport to Wetumpka, that portion of the river in which the rapids occur, a distance of 142 miles, is 367 feet. The total number of horsepowers that can be developed from the fall and water discharge on this part of the river is 382,882 horsepower. By the opening of the river to thorough navigation would give river transportation from these great water powers to all parts of the world, and would stimulate the development of these powers and their utilization for operating factories of all kinds until the Coosa River would soon be almost lined with factories, from its source to its mouth.

Doubtless on account of the lack of interest shown by those interested in the opening of the Coosa River, congress has not been very liberal in appropriation, money for that purpose. But in recent years more interest has been shown in this direction. A committee of which our esteemed fellow-citizen, Hon. F. H. Lathrop, of Riverside is a member, has been to Washington to bring to the attention of the rivers and harbors committee, the necessity of opening the Coosa. The work of this committee and others has accomplished much. A special to the *Age-Herald*, dated December 2nd, from Washington, stated that the Secretary of the Treasury, in his annual report, requests the appropriation by congress of \$265,000 for the Coosa River, all of which, except \$15,000 to be spent between Rome, Ga., and the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia railroad bridge. Thus, we are that the friends of this movement are not idle, and we think congress will not be slow to recognize the importance of connecting by water the interior of a great

state with the markets of the world.

REMINISCENCES OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY (1895)

Southern Alliance, Ashville, Alabama

Thursday, October 17, 1895

Recognizing the value of history, your representative of the Woman's edition of the *Southern Alliance* called upon Hubard H. Strange for data. We found him, a man 82 years of age, gathering the fleecy staple [cotton]. On mentioning our business, he very readily consented to aid us all in his power, only making the excuse that he would have to give his data on the spur of the moment.

Your representative deems it but right that Mr. Strange should have the place of honor, and we therefore call your attention to a history of

HUBBARD H. STRANGE

H. H. Strange was born in Chester Dist. S. C., Oct. 20th, 1803 [1813], and is now about 82 years of age. He came to this county March the 1st, 1828, and has since resided continuously in this county. The Creator endowed him with a most wonderful memory, as you will know when we state that the data of this article was given from the memory, on the spur of the moment, without every having noted down a single item.

Notwithstanding he was brought up under adverse educational environments, he succeeded in preparing himself for a number of public offices, which will be hereafter mentioned. His moral and religious training was under the old Methodist regime, hence he has always had a high regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath, and is the highest embodiment of honesty and integrity in private as well as in public life. The life and character of such a man, extending over so long a period, in

almost the same community, can but tell upon the character of his neighbors. All questions of history are presented to him for settlement, and his decisions are always satisfactory and final, he being a kind of Supreme court on matters of history relating to the history of this county, as well as the general history of this whole country.

FIRST SETTLEMENT

This county was settled by a few in 1806, a goodly number coming in 1817, among them the Ash family and the Newtons. The Hardins and the Vandegrifts came in 1822 [late December 1821].

Mr. Strange stated at this point that John Ash was state Senator from this county to the state legislature for many years, during the early settlement of this county. Mr. Strange remarked at this point on the social and religious distinctions as contradistinguished from the present state of society and religion.

He does not believe that the present is an improvement over the early times in this county; he doesn't believe that there is that regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath, the church, the ministry, and religious assemblies in general as existed in the early times. He mentioned the fact that religious services were not so often disturbed by drunken rowdies as now, and that the people do not now show the same respect for the Sabbath, as also the same respect for the ministry. He grants that educational facilities are better, and that the masses of the people have more educational polish, but doubts whether morals have been improved thereby.

He doubts whether we have reached a higher degree of civilization than then. But we suppose that he will grant that education is not responsible per-se for these conditions.

The present generation will be surprised to learn the fads of fashion in the early settlement of this county. The modes of dress were plain and simple, most of which was manufactured at home by female hands. They will be surprised to learn that the belles of the day walked several miles to church, going barefoot until near the church, in order to save their Sunday shoes, and that young men accompanied them, the

girls stepping aside to adjust their shoes and stockings. What would young people of the present day think of such proceedings?

Another fact worthy of note is that the young men were strangers to cigars and cigarettes, and hence did not debase their mental powers by this baleful and pernicious habit, which is now unfitting our boys for public trusts requiring strong intellects.

Mr. Strange next referred to the county officers, many of whose names he gave from memory.

COUNTY COURT

The county originally had a county court, the clerk of this court having charge of the Probate business. If his memory serves him right, Polladore Nailor [Polydon Naylor] was first Judge of county court, and Joshua Hooper was first clerk of this court, and was superseded in this office by Ross Phillips.

Following Nailor as Judges of county and Probate court were Judge Boyd, James Rogan, John I. Thomason being first Judge of Probate court, being appointed to this office by the State legislature.

Herby Woolley was first Probate Judge elected by the people, being elected 1st day of May 1850, served 12 months and died, Ross Philips was appointed by the governor to fill out his unexpired term.

Ross Philips was then elected by the people, and served a full term of six years. Alford Turner was next, following him was Thomas A. Ramsey, a Methodist minister, who was succeeded by Thomas W. Montgomery.

Dewberry was next Probate Judge, who, resigning his place was succeeded, by appointment of the governor, by E. J. Robinson, who was elected two successive terms by the people.

Judge Robinson was succeeded by A. W. Lacy, who served a little over one year and died, being succeeded by the appointment of Jas. T. Greene, who was succeeded by the present incumbent, A. G. Watson. Mr. Strange next referred to the members of the

COMMISSIONERS COURT,

beginning with 1848, whose names he gave from memory as follows:--

Henry Looney, Westley Collins, H. H. and A. J. Lawson. These names are given in the order of the votes received, beginning with the candidate receiving the highest vote, as also some of the following. The next county commissioners were:--

William Lee, Henry Looney, Jas. H. Beavers and H. H. Strange.

The next were: H. H. Strange, Fletcher Stone, who was a minister of the gospel, F. B. Walker and James Vandergrift.

The next commissioners, John W. Jones, and others whose names are not remembered.

This brings us to the breaking out of the civil war. Of these Mr. Strange gave no names, remarking that their conduct was so bad that they were unworthy of mention in public print, so he buries them and their ignominious deeds out of sight, in the great vault of forgetfulness.

From 1871 to 1874 the commissioners were as follows:--

H. H. Strange, Hillary M. Zellner, Allen Bevis, and Perry E. Wyatt.

Mr. Strange here stated that the war commissioners left the county \$11,000 in debt, which debt the above commissioners reduced \$5,000, during their term of three years, soon after reducing the indebtedness to about \$1,000.

The commissioners from 1874 to 1877 were as follows: Rowland Hood, the father of Rev. N. A. Hood who is now clerk of the Circuit court, James Montgomery, and Thomas Beavers.

From 1880 to 1884: James Newton, William Murkerson, Harris Trammell, the name of the other member not remembered.

From 1884 to 1888: John Yarbrough, D. W. Waite, H. H. Strange and John A. Warren.

The present incumbents are: B. M. Hill, H. D. Bridges, T. M. Jones, and S. J. Hare.

Next Mr. Strange gave us the names of tax assessors and collectors promiscuously, just as he could call them to mind, hence these may not be in the order of their election, and also some names may have been left out.

The names he gave are as follows, beginning in 1829 or 1830: Champ Langford, William Kerr, Benjamin Strange, who was an uncle of H. H. Strange, John A. Hardin, John Watson, N. W. Box, Peyton Montgomery, Frank Robinson, James T. Johnson, A. G. Watson, John McClendon, and James Cosper and James A. Box, the present incumbents.

Mr. Strange next gave us the names of some of the sheriffs as he remembers them, beginning in the 20's:-- John Shenault, John S. Edwards, Burrell T. Greene.

Mr. Strange remarked that in 1831 there were nine candidates for sheriff, and then continued their names as follows: Lewis Cunningham, Thos Alford, Jas. Clements, Larry Gibson, John Collins, Thos. Shenault, Colquit Mooney, Sheriff Brewster, A. B. Crow, D. A. Treece, who served at two different times, T. L. Nunnely and Rufus Neely the present incumbent.

Next came the representatives of the county to the State legislature, as follows: Jas. Hardwick, Thos. M. Barker, G. T. McAfee, John Massey, John W. Cobb and Jas. Ragan, here comes an interval that he did not remember. Giving others as follows: Richmond Hammonds, O. M. Roberts, Albert Bennett, Graham Beavers, Jas. Forman, Geo. W. Ash, Frank Dillands, John S. Maddox, D. A. Aderholt, J. T. Greene and W. S. Forman, the present member.

Mr. Strange has filled the following offices: Commissioner, Supt. of education, county surveyor, postmaster, Justice of the Peace, Notary Public, holding the three last named at one and the same time. He also took the U. S. census in 1860 and 1880. Your representative neglected to enquire of Mr. Strange the names of the County superintendents of education and therefore can give only the two last, John O. Turner and N. B. Spradley.

Our readers must bear in mind that Mr. Strange was approached unawares, without a moments notice, yet he has given us much useful data, covering half a century.

J. T. Millican

ST. CLAIR COUNTY [1902]

The Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, January 2, 1902

This county was founded in 1818. It was named for General Arthur St. Clair. Extensive interests have sprung into existence within the last few years. The area of St. Clair is 630 square miles.

Population in 1870, 9,360; in 1880, 14,462; in 1900, nearly 20,000.

Tilled land, 125,000 acres; in corn, 35,760 acres; in oats, 12,400 acres; in wheat, 18,300 acres; in tobacco 53 acres; in sweet potatoes, 226 acres. Cotton production, 13,000 bales.

THE COOSA COAL FIELD

I has been estimated that the Coosa Coal Field will cover an area of 400 square miles, giving the largest margin for deduction. Prof. McCalley reaches the conclusion that with the output of 10,000 tones per day the coal of this region would last 165. Aggregating these enormous sums concerning the available coal in alabama, it is seen that there is at least 42,100,000,000 tones, which will supply a demand of 10,000 tones daily for 11,500 years. These great districts of mineral wealth are penetrated here and there by valleys which afford a vast abundance of limestone. And then, as if to supply the last deficiency, a providential Maker has favored these broad regions of mineral with deep and perpetual river-ways, on the bosoms of which these products of wealth may be borne to the seas and to the distant quarters of the globe.

IRON

Iron is the symbol of civilization. Its value can be measured only by the progress of the present age. It is the most potent of all the metals. Indeed, it is worth more to the world than all other metals comined. Silver and gold are not indispensable. Substitutes could be readily found for them were they exhausted, but iron represents only the honest industry of labor. Its uses are universal, and it is fitted alike to hold the stoutest ship at anchor against the ocean storm, and to

manufacture screws in delicate machinery so minute that they can be seen only through the microscope. The beds of this ore are so numerous throughout this famous mineral region that it is impossible to point out the localities where it prevails. Lying in close proximity to coal, its manufacture is far easier than in the older mineral regions of America, where expensive means have to be employed to bring them together.

Thus far the most valuable outcroppings of red ore are found in the counties of St. Clair, Jefferson and Shelby. The brown iron ore is extensively diffused in the region lying south of the Tennessee River. It is already mined in the counties of Cherokee, Etowah, Calhoun, Talladega and Bibb. The barest mention has been made of these dominating minerals in this great belt. Besides these, there prevail gold, silver, copper, tin, lead, graphite, asbestos, emery, gypsum, mica, ochre, asphalt, marble, kaolin and fire plays. The localities of these minerals will be indicated when our attention shall have been turned to a consideration of the counties. Besides these marvelous deposits of treasure, the Mineral Belt has superb forests of timber, which cover many thousands of square miles. In addition, still, it embraces as splendid farms as can be found in any portion of the South.

Thus has an infinite Creator placed together in lavish profusion, all the elements of wealth and comfort known to our advanced civilization--all the precious and practical ores and minerals, the most splendid timbers, springs, fountains and rivers of the purest water, soils of fertility, and an atmosphere, the brace and healthfulness of which are unexcelled.

CHURCH AND SCHOOL FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY

There are good church and school facilities in St. Clair County. The public school system of the state is being constantly improved and extended, and fully one-third of the gross revenues of the state is appropriated for the maintenance of its public schools. At the recent session of the general assembly of the state, the school fund was again increased by an additional appropriation of one hundred thousand

dollars.

TIMBER AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

The soils of St. Clair County produce for commerce and home consumption, cotton, corn, oats, wheat, rye, rice, potatoes, sorghum and sugar cane. All the garden and orchard products that flourish in southern soil are easily produced. Peaches, apples, plums, pears, grapes figs and pomegranates are ordinary luxuries. Principal among the timbers are white and chestnut oak, shellbark hickory, ash, poplar, sweet gum, beech, maple, cedar, and vast districts of pine. The water supply of the county is abundant, there being many streams, springs and wells in every part of its territory. Grasses of different varieties flourish in every part of the county. Wool growing is fast resolving itself into one of the industries. For many miles along the Coosa River there are the most favorable locations for manufactories and this is true of other streams.

HEALTH AND CLIMATE

To the seeker after health, the mild and equable climate, pure mountain air, and mineral and freestone springs which abound, insure relief from the rigors of the north or enervation of a more southerly region. "Favored in many respects, this portion of Alabama is, perhaps, the most highly favored part in its superb climate. Such is the temperature of this section that the extremes of heat and cold never prevail. The influence of the mountains in the northern part of the county tones into blandness the heat of summer, while for miles inland, the cool breezes from the waters of the gulf fan away the sultry breath of summer tide. Snow but seldom falls, and only thin coatings of ice are seen. The exceptions to this state are exceedingly rare. The Coosa River is never frozen over. Flowers blossom, fruits ripen, and vegetables prevail almost the year round. The mercury rarely ranges above ninety-five degrees even in July, the hottest month in the year."

ST CLAIR COUNTY: ITS MOUNTAINS. Part I (1902)

By the Editor

The Coosa Valleyen, Pell City, Alabama, September 17, 1902

If one takes a journey through St Clair county during the average summer he will be convinced that the beauty and grandeur of the scenery with which he comes in contact is not surpassed for its variableness in any part of the country.

The present summer has been a very dry one in nearly every part of our county, but in years when we are abundantly blessed with rains from Heaven which cause the sweet shrubs and grass to grow luxuriantly around the bases of the massive rocks along the mountain sides, and which keep the brooks and rivulets along the deep hollows running and sparkling, making music to the tramp of the horses feet, and quenching the thirst of the weary care-worn pedestrian, and keeping the grass and lilies fresh and green along the edges, then it is we can see the beauties of Nature at their height and then it is the business-worn person from the city can show an appreciation of the things of God which is hard to find amid the mighty rush and roar and jam of humanity in the world's business centers.

If one, for instance, has the time to spare and cares to take a journey on foot through that mountainous section in the extreme northwestern part of the county and if that one is an observer of the beauties and wonders of Nature; has an interest in the study of the earth's structure; has an inquiring mind as to why certain places present such extraordinary appearances; and cares to know something also of the history of the county; of the great geological change in the path of his journey, his soliloquies will be many and worthy any human being.

He will pass through ravines and gulches near the basis of long slopes which have been cut by the rush of water from above--united little drops of rain coming together in little small streams which streams also come together forming larger streams until the great creeks and rivers of the valleys are reached and caused to swell beyond the capacity

of their banks.

About seven miles north of Ashville can be seen plainly Chandler's Mountain, looming up as a light blue background for the great stretch of flatwoods which border along north of Canoe Creek. The course of this mountain like the valley south of it is northeast and southwest and thought under different names, its chain extends through many counties to the northeast. On its southeast slope it is very rocky and steep with few or no cleared spots and directly northwest of Ashville reaches an elevation of about one thousand feet above sea level. As you near the top of this mountain you begin to encounter rocks of many shapes and enormous sizes; some like mountains themselves in appearance, weighing thousands of tons, resting as it seems, on their little cone-pointed ends, sometimes their heavy ends or what should, from our standpoint, have been their bottom, leaning upward against the side of the mountain as though they had fallen or had been thrown by a violent earthquake or explosion, from the top of the cliff wall above and had rolled down for a distance to lodge in a lime sink hole or on a bench or step of the mountain, some which their bottom ends turned upward.

Truly the close observer could hardly believe otherwise than that many rocks of gigantic dimensions, now occupying, so to speak, minor positions along the side, once towered among the cliffs in the mountain, but by the rains and accidents of time had become loosened and fallen from their places among their former neighbors, the cliffs.

The cliffs spoken of resemble to some extent the stone walls of ancient and dilapidated old castles in that there are, between the magnificent rocks, in many places, passages. Some of these are large enough for a person to enter; through some the top of the mountain can be reached; some will lead you up and down around a monstrous sand rock and out again at the foot of the cliff wall; some will lead you a short distance under the rocks into utter darkness; some will carry you to places where there are crevices or cracks between large rock walls--some of these are from twenty to fifty feet deep, others deeper.

Old pioneer settlers of that part of the county have told many tales

about people hiding out in the rocks during the civil war--deserters--and of other culprits desiring to escape some kind of punishment. One of these tales is to the effect that during the war between the states three brothers had lived on there wearing dresses during the entire time to keep from enlisting, and another is that somewhere in one of the crevices is hidden a great deal of money which was stolen by robbers during the early days when trading posts were run in different parts of the territory--that perhaps some old time wearing apparel taken from the posts by the robbers might be found in one of the caves under this mountain, but from some cause, whether natural or artificial, the entrance to that cave has been filled up and cannot now be located.

Chandler's Mountain is famous among nursery men and fruit growers in many parts of the United States and now ships peaches by the car-load to the east. Messrs Bush & Sloat, who about four years ago, set out about 20,000 peach trees up there are now reaping the fruits of their labor. They went in with the farmers up there, the latter furnishing the land and Bush & Sloat setting out the trees and nursing them up to the present.

Next week the Coosa Valleyan will contain an article on the fertility of our valleys and uplands and the care that should be taken of the land and from time to time historical notes about St Clair. The Editor

ST. CLAIR COUNTY (1902)

By Geo. R. Cather

Published in the

Coosa Valleyan, November 5, 1902

The limitations laid on me in the request for this article leaves only room to state briefly the facts about the county's history, such as will strike the readers attention as pertinent to the object you have in view in the publication of your trade issue.

There are four long line railroads touching, or running through our territory, the A.G.S., in division of the Q. & C. route, traversing the whole western length of the county, the East & West, now a division or what is the same thing, of the Seaboard Air Line, traversing the entire length of the county on its east side, the G. P., a division of the Southern, passing the whole width of the county on its south side, the Georgia Central touching a portion of the county on the south side. The maps will show the extent of these railroads, and their importance as a means of development and transportation to any section of country through which they pass.

Besides these great roads others have been projected into or through the country, which, at no very distant day will be constructed, when St. Clair will possess greater facilities of transportation by rail than perhaps any territory of its size in the world.

There is probably no county in Alabama as well watered with good springs and large creeks--some of the springs are very bold--and containing so many fertile valleys. Beaver valley, a long strip of agricultural land, takes its name from the water course at its head; Shoal creek valley does the same; Cool Springs valley likewise derives its name. Canoe Creek valley is famed for its bold water course, an estuary of Coosa river, which forms the eastern boundary line of the county, and which is navigable from Rome, Ga., almost to the extreme southern limit of St. Clair on that side.

The public roads in any direction from the county seat abound with these springs and water courses.

No county in the state, I think, possesses so many prosperous and well populated towns of thrift and enterprise. On the west side are Steeles, Ashville and Springville. The former is situated on the A. G. S., and is making rapid strides in improvements of late. Ashville is the county seat, and well located for substantial industrial activity, and Springville is a populous place of great advantages. On the east, situated on the East & West, are Ragland, Coal City and Pell City, large towns of industrial activity. Situated on the Southern--southside, are

Eden, Seddon, Riverside--active communities of trade and industries. Besides these are numerous villages, as Easonville, Branchville, Greensport, variously located, and these towns are not dead places, or such as are going to decay. On the contrary, they improve in their life and activity with each succeeding year, and contain all the advantages to be obtained in such communities. Their churches and school houses are in advance of the past few years, and their populations are composed of intelligent, refined and liberal minded people. They are not going to pieces for the lack of energy or the sources of civilhood. By no means, but afford inducements to those seeking locations for health, genuine comfort, pleasant recreation and the small business of life that cannot always be found without great research.

The country surrounding them is occupied by thrifty farmers, many of whom are as well off as need be in this life for a full measure of happiness.

Already the railroads mentioned own large tracts of timber, and the hills abound in mineral wealth. Ragland and Coal City, two thriving mineral towns, are the outcome of the county's mineral resources. Riverside and Eden is its timber wealth, but in fact all or nearly all these towns contain one or more saw or large grist mills in them or near by.

The coal and iron resources of St. Clair are almost inexhaustible; as an evidence of what is doing in this line, I mention the recent purchase by the Georgia Central of a large area of the Cahaba coal field near Branchville in a region which is also well timbered. The coal of that region will shortly be developed into a big industry for that part of the county. Also the surveys into what is known as the St. Clair and Blount mineral field just west of Ashville at Steele's. Development in the latter region will sooner or later come. Along the Coosa and the streams which form its estuaries from St. Clair, large quantities of timber abound. This may be said to be the case also along the shelves of the hills almost the entire length of the valley regions. The timber is of those varieties mostly used in all kinds of manufacture, from a broom handle or axe helve to the ribs or beams of the massive merchantman

which plows the ocean with its burden of American commerce.

Our mountains, as they are called, in fact hills, the highest of which are not over 900 feet, mostly at an altitude greatly less, possess large tracts of table land, or acres of plateau at some points in cultivation are fertile, well watered and timbered. They can all be utilized in the fruit and grazing industry. The fact is these industries are now taking possession of a number of them. Their advantages for fruit raising cannot be excelled anywhere in America, though the fact has not been appreciated until lately.

The soil of the county at every point is adapted to agriculture, and in the acreage usually planted is second to no county in the state in cotton production, though the soil is better suited to grain, grasses, stock-raising, and is especially nutritious to potatoes, both irish and sweet, which yield abundantly here; and the finest melons in the world can be produced on it. This may be said without the evidence of contradiction of all the valley regions of the county. There is every inducement here to the farmer that he can reasonably hope to find elsewhere.

To briefly sum up the advantages of the county, we have

1. An area of about 600 square miles of picturesque country; its hills furnishing beautiful valleys, fertile and inviting.
2. Water courses and springs abounding at convenient points.
3. Large timber area of the varieties in demand.
4. Lime, and building stone in abundance.
5. Mineral deposits in large fields, all in process of successful development.
6. A fine agricultural section, which will produce large yields of cotton, corn, small grain, grass and potatoes, both irish and sweet.
7. A county of prosperous towns and villages, inviting to homes, full of clever, sociable and intelligent people, and what is of the greatest value, who are inspired by a love for order and cultivated social attainments.
8. Large areas of mountain table lands especially adapted to

grazing and fruit culture.

9. Railroad facilities in almost every direction, with steamboat navigation on the Coosa River from a point below Greensport north to Rome, Ga., and with the prospect of a railroad running from Gadsden through the middle of the county to the coal regions of the Cahaba valley, which would complete all the transportation the county needed for trade, and perhaps make it the richest as well as one of the most prosperous in its diversified industries in the state.

I have outlined, in a general way, some of the features of St. Clair inviting to investment and settlement, and do not doubt that special articles on its resources from various points will bear out what I have said, or rather demonstrated, that I could have said more without touching the point of exaggeration, I wish to add in closing this article, that thirty years intimacy with the people of St. Clair, convinces me that few places of the same scope--perhaps none--can be found in America inhabited by a more generous, kind hearted, and hospitable citizenship, of good habits and genial dispositions.

Geo. R. Cather

Editor *So. Aegis*

Ashville, Ala., Sept. 26, 1902

AN OUTLINE OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY AND ITS RESOURCES

By N. B. Spradley

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, February 26, 1902

This sketch of St. Clair County was prepared and read by N. B. Spradley, Supt. of Education of St. Clair County, before the St. Clair Development Association, February 8th, 1902.

This county is in the eastern part of middle north Alabama. It has

a territory of over 600 square miles. The sub-divisions of the county are as follows: There are 29 townships of school districts; 22 beats or voting places. There are over 100 miles of railroads in the county passing through the following subdivisions, viz: A. G. S. railroad runs through township 13 range 4, township 13 range 3, township 14, range 2, and township 15, range 1; The G. P. or Southern through township 16 range 4, township 17 range 4, township 17 range 3, township 19 range 2 and township 17 range 1; East & West, through township 15 range 5, township 15 range 4, township 16 range 3, and township 16 range 4; Birmingham & Atlantic through township 17 range 4 and township 17 range 3; Lathrop-Hatten Ry. through township 17 range 3, township 17 range 2 and township 18 range 3.

The natural divisions of the county are the Backbone Mts. This mountain range runs diagonally through the county from northeast near Greensport on Coosa River and E. & W. railroad to southwest, near Leeds on Southern railroad. That part known as Coosa Valley lies east and south of Backbone Mts. In Coosa Valley there are twelve beats; ten of those have a line of railroad passing through them. Coal is found in the following beats: 9, 10, 15, 16 and 21. Iron ore is found in beats 9, 21, 12, 18, 13 and 14. Lime rock is found in all the beats. Building stone in 20, 9, 16 and 15. In the territory embraced in these twelve beats are nine thriving little towns. Ragland on E. & W. railroad, beat 9, coal mining, saws milling and general merchandise. Coal City, beat 10, on E. & W. railroad, coal mining, general merchandise; Eden, beat 15, saw milling, general merchandise and high school, on Southern railroad; Easonville, beat 12, general merchandise, cotton buying, dairy industry, and ginnery 2 1/2 miles from B. & A.; Cropwell, beat 19, general merchandise, cotton buying and ginnery on B. & A. railroad. Seddon, beat 11, general merchandise, cotton buying, saw milling and ginnery. Riverside, on G. P. railroad and Coosa River.

Pell City, beat 15, railroad center of E. & W., . & A., Lathrop and Hatton railway and on main line of Southern railroad. It is the location made by vote of the people for new couthrouse for territory embraced in

the twelve beats mentioned above.

Coosa River bounds the territory embraced in the three beats on East, and Southeast for a distance of over fifty miles. Locks 2, 3, and 4, on the Coosa River are in this territory. River transportation from Rome, Ga., to Lock 4 near Riverside.

In this territory is found several grades of land: river and creek bottom, red table land, gray gravel and sandy hills. The variety of soil is a guarantee that the following crops can be successfully grown: corn, cotton, wheat, oats, potatoes, rye, barley, sugar cane and vegetables of all kinds. Here, as elsewhere, the amount per acre depends upon the cultivation; it is very common to grow a bale or more of cotton per acre. Corn was grown near Easonville, in 1900, estimated at 80 bushels per acre. Land can be bought from \$2 to \$30 per acre owing to improvement or locality.

The health of this section is very good; in fact the doctors would say distressingly healthy. From the above, if true, (and we invite investigation) anyone can readily see that few sections of our state, if any, enjoy the advantages we have both natural and artificial. Our citizenship and society will compare favorably with any county in the state.

The most of this territory is well supplied with timber. It is well supplied with water--wells, springs and creeks. The Coosa River has several places suitable for mills and factories--natural formations waiting for the touch of man's skill to utilize this wasted power.

We have the natural resources in coal, iron, lime, timber, water power, productive land, good schools in reach of every child; churches of all denominations, accessible to all who may wish to attend. Our citizenship are equal in obedience to law and order as any other people. While we have all the above, we find we are living in the midst of Nature's great storehouse suffering for their development. This section of our state needs manufactureis to make it one of the best sections of Ala. We have honest and industrious laborers. What we need is skillful labor and capital.

The country can furnish the raw material. From the mines, coal and iron; from the quarries, lime rock and building stone; from the forests, timber of many kinds; from the farm, cotton, cotton seed, broom corn and matting; from the orchard, fruits of several kind.

We need cotton mills, cotton seed mills, broom factories, etc., etc. To develop our natural resources, we must have manufactories. If we can establish manufactories, it will infuse new life in our agricultural population. The farmers could, and would, be stimulated to activities now unknown by finding a ready market for all their produce. We want honest, competent men, with capital men with capital and skill, to locate in this section. To all upright and moral people we extend a hearty welcome, guaranteeing to them every protection we claim for ourselves. To this end we cordially invite those seeking homes in new fields to come and examine our advantages and be convinced that the above is not overdrawn.

NOTES OF GENERAL INTEREST [ABOUT ST. CLAIR COUNTY], 1902

By Bays D. Cather, Ed.

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, October 29, 1902

Twenty-five years ago, our villages--few then compared of the number now scattered over the county--were almost in the backwoods. The log church and school house were in evidence as to our claim to civilization; generally the one building served for both purposes. During that interval our villages have come out of the woods, many of them reaching the proportions of prosperous towns, and the methods of society have changed with other progress.

Ashville, Springville, Easonville, Coal City, and a number of other towns have fine school houses separate from the church houses, governed by a board of trustees. These towns also have large and handsome church edifices, some of them have two or three, to use for

each of the congregations which worship in them. Ashville has three church houses for the whites of different religious societies, and two for the colored people.

The improvement along this line is as well marked in the surrounding country in the large, commodious and comfortable houses of public worship, and in the school buildings erected within the last few years.

By these influences and associations, society has made great strides in social and educational attainment. The young people are growing up under better advantages, and as a result there is a marked degree of refinement and culture among them.

The county now has three newspapers published in it, one at Ashville, one at Springville, and one at Pell City.

The *Southern Aegis*, published at the county seat, was established in 1873. Its first issue was January of that year. It has outlived many of its contemporaries and continues under the same management.

The *Item*, at Springville, is a change in name only of the *News*, which began its existence in the first of 1896 and has been a prominent factor in the improvement and progress of its town ever since its first publication. It is published and edited by B. B. Cather.

The *Coosa Valleyan*, established in January 1902, in the brief interval of its existence bids fair to leave its two county contemporaries somewhat in the rear in the race. It is managed and edited by Bays D. Cather.

Besides the improved church and school buildings in the larger towns, some of the latter have public halls, Masonic and K. of P. Lodge buildings in which to hold the meetings of these fraternities.

In the last 15 years, the town of Ashville has been built over anew, store houses and tenement houses taking the place of the old structures. the same may be said of Springville and other old villages, while in that time Cornelia, Riverside, Seddon, Eden, Ragland and Coal City have come up like magic from the ground.

There are two noted summer resorts in the county--the St. Clair

Springs and Cooke's Springs.

Cooke's Springs was a noted health resort long before the war and has lost none of its reputation since as one of the best anywhere. It is situated on the Southern within easy reach of Pell City and Birmingham, and in a picturesque mountain region.

St. Clair Springs is situated within a few miles of Springville, contiguous to the A. G. S. division of the Q & C route from Cincinnati to New Orleans. It is a famous Southern summer resort, and is now undergoing great improvement to meet the enlarged demands on it in the hot season. It is noted for its varieties of sulphur waters, is beautifully located. Cornelia is its new name and the town is rapidly building up.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY'S MINERALS

The mineral ores in this county are easily mined, reducing expenses. The red iron ore near Ashville is in a vein from 4 to 5 feet in thickness.

Dr. Eugene Smith, State Geologist, and professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy in the University of Alabama, has analyzed some of this ore which shows:

Peroside of iron 68-1 81; only a trace of sulphur and very little phosphorous.

An analysis of the brown ore lying in a parallel ridge iwth the red, and at a distance of only two miles from the latter.

Analyses--Peroside of iron 81.746 Phosphorus and sulphur nearly extinct.

The Coosa coalfields range from 6 to 15 miles from Ashville, the county seat. The veins in some places underlie each other and are from 3 to 5 feet thick.

The Coal City and Ragland mines are the oldest and have been worked several years. The Ragland company has a demand for all its output and employs a large number of men. The coal, much of it at Coal City, is coaked at the mines, and there has been a demand for all the coke. The mine also employs large forces both in lifting coal and

coking the latter. Three other mines have been opened in this field, and two are now operating.

Along the East and West--now the Seaboard Air Line--extension from Ragland to Pell City, the county is rapidly becoming an aviary of industrial movement.

Some of this coal has been analyzed and found to contain: Fixed carbon, 93.02. The percent of other matter, of necessity, is small.

Coke made from this coal is 66.63 per cent, or one ton of the former to one and one-half tons of the coal. An inferior coke is made at Broken Arrow mines, which is used by furnaces in making pig iron with satisfactory results.

The iron ores are of the red fossiliferous and brown hermatite. There are some outcrops of coal showing up in quality much better than those that are now worked.

The Cahaba field near Branchville has not yet been developed, but will be shortly, since the Central of Georgia purchase of a large acreage for no other purpose, assures this.

I might add that the clays in this county are highly valuable, and considered in connection with the other natural resources of timber, limestone, building rock of fine grades, and the mineral deposits, at no distant day will make the county one of the richest in the whole country when all these things are brought into use as they will be. (Geo. R. Cather, Ashville, Ala.)

ASHVILLE—AND ST. CLAIR (1873)

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, February 20, 1873

G. R. Cather, Editor

Having in days back suffered from the results of the war, subsequently been almost burned down by fire, and then torn and outraged by bandits, Ashville has had to encounter as much in the way of progress as any town or village in the state—but it has bravely withstood all these shocks of the past and there is now to be seen marked evidences of improvement in business and population all about us. The wrecks of the past struggles are fast giving way both to new places and a new arrangement in social order.

There are two church buildings here in which worship three large, intelligent congregations—Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist—an Academy, in which we are happy to state, is now held a large school, composed mostly of the youth of our town and county—several stores and business houses, but no doggeries, the sale of intoxicating liquors being expressly forbidden by a special act of the Legislature within two miles of the place; yet we have a hotel, and three Groceries *proper*, and we believe the most quiet and orderly people, as a community, in the state of Alabama. Our town is neither disturbed by noises in the night nor loafers in the day.

Notwithstanding the farmers of this county were flooded out last year, and many of them suffered a loss of nearly all their crops, and some of all, which could not but effect the interests of this market and limit trade this year,, there is a large amount of business done by the firms of Hodges & Co., and Capt. Vandergrift, whose advertisements appear in this paper, and there is hardly a day in the week, that their stores are not crowded with substantial customers and frequently visited by persons from abroad, traveling up and down the A. & C. road in search of country produce for the city markets.

We have three physicians in the town, Dr. Cason & Bass, and Dr. Slack, whose drug-store we noticed last week, situated on Postoffice row and which contains as fine assortment of drugs as can be found in most of country towns.

Our county contains numerous villages, and besides Ashville, the

county seat, Springville, a few miles below us in rapidly approaching significance as a place of considerable population and trade; altogether our community offers inducements to farmers, merchants and mechanics of small capital to invest in lands or business that can scarcely be found any where else in the state. There are no better lands anywhere than the Coosa Valley lands, and those adjacent or lying on the streams that water our county, and the resources of the county are as ample as any around us. We invite specially the stock raising and fruit growing class of cultivators among us. We believe that there are lands here regarded as wasted and sterile upon which tons of hay could be raised that would yield hundreds of dollars to the yearly income of the county. It requires only brain and muscle to test it. But there are other important items connected with our growing community which we will notice hereafter.

ASHVILLE (1887)

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, February 16, 1887

Bending about Ashville is the bottom land of Canoe creek, one of the finest streams of water for mechanical facilities in the state. On our east side are the finest iron ore beds to be found. Just west of us three miles is the great trunk line from Cincinnati to New Orleans, and great lime deposits. East of us are fine rock quarries of flat or block grit—the best building stone in the world.

Ashville sits in one of the bends of the Canoe, a creek that from this point can easily be made navigable in flats to Coosa river. It is right at the source of Beaver Valley, opening into the regions of the great timber belts of the state.

Just south of its location are inexhaustible stores of iron ore. Ragland is only nine miles off—a short-line narrow gauge would bring us

all the coal we need for all purposes.

The railroad from Talladega to Eden must finally be extended northward. It should pass this point and make its terminus at Attalla to be a practicable line of travel.

These are just a few of the advantages of the present outlook.

Ashville is not going to be left behind, but there is every evidence that the town will soon take the lead.

ASHVILLE PROSPECTIVE and RETROSPECTIVE [1892]

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, December 22, 1892

The stranger coming into Ashville on the T. R. A. & C., railroad, springing right out of a muddy desolate flatwoods country, such as lines the A. G. S. railroad on both sides for several miles above and below Whitney (the junction station of the two roads,) is at once impressed with both the beauty of location and the general adaptation by nature to the purposes of improvement and progress of the embryonic city of Ashville.

Situated on the rather elevated undulating tableland, in the Canoe Creek valley, within the broad bends of this historic stream, the city of Ashville overlooks the fertile and valuable agricultural lands of the valley, lying to the west and north and running northeastward. For miles to the northeast this valley is dotted with neat farm houses and barns, improved plantations, and plantations on which a moderate outlay and a little brawn intelligently used would produce wonderful results in production and enhance materially the income of the owner and tenants.

As a background to Ashville, partly embraced in the corporate limits of the city, to the east and south, rise the gently sloping heights, which nature has raised there as if for the especial purpose of providing

the citizens of the would-be city with the most beautiful and picturesque residence sites imaginable. From these heights, which far excel the comparatively insignificant North and South Highland of the great mushroom metropolis of the state in everything except newspaper inflation, the observer can view the valley for miles and keep the little city with its churches and pretty residences still under his eye.

The town has moved along for years since its founding about 1821 in the usual ruts of ante bellum towns, but about 1890 it shook off its lethargy, and as the offshoot of vigorous and repeated attempts of patriotic citizens, began years before in the columns of this paper, to interest capital in the development of her native resources, a land company was formed; the town assumed the political proportions of a city, new life was imbibed and a general revivification and shaking up of the dry bones took place. During this interval three miles of the T. R. A. & C. Railroad were built, a Mining and Manufacturing company established under the most favorable auspices, and an electric light plant at a cost of about \$10,000. Everything seemed in good shape for immediate and active development.

But this was not destined to come just yet, for throughout the length and breadth of the land was sounded the tocsin of approaching stringency in the monetary world, such as had not been known for years past.

The growth of the large towns and cities became retarded, in many the wheels of industry ceased to move, while still others not founded on the rock of natural resources, but relying on a forced growth by speculative methods, absolutely ceased to exist except as a remains of its former self—future prospects having been perhaps forever blighted and destroyed.

Fort Payne, Sheffield, Florence, Middlesborough are sad examples of the young boom towns which fell into the blighting grip of the dread octopus, financial depression, because they were on sandy foundations. Bessemer and the great mushroom city of the air (Birmingham) and a few others, of course, felt the crash, but being founded on the rock of

native iron and mineral wealth and operated by careful and brainy financiers, they remained almost in STATU QUO, feeling but little the depression.

Ashville's foundation was not shaken by the shock. She felt the depression only in the stopping or hinderance of her progress for the present. Her basis is as solid as before.

As the direct result of this move inaugurated by and through the efforts of home men, in January 1891, not two years ago, numerous industries and enterprises were already begun and in contemplation. Some of these, in face of the depression which has sunk other places, have been pushed to completion, while others were only temporarily abandoned.

Within the past two years the progress of the town has been comparatively great. We can from memory enumerate:

The completion of the T. R. A. & C. railroad from Whitney to Ashville about \$75,000;

The extensive mills of Hodges and Hogan about \$15,000;

The stately residences of Judge Box \$3,000; Judge Robinson \$5,000; Dr. Garlington \$3,000; Twenty-five or more other residences, about \$20,000; improvements on residences amounting to a total of about \$8,000; improvements on hotel property about \$3,000; Cox Bros. & Co. store \$2,500; Judge Greene's three iron front stores \$5,000; temporary offices of Ashville Land & Improvement Co. about \$1,500; the Methodist church \$3,000; Masonic hall \$2,500; Spradley & Co. blacksmith and woodworking shops, \$1,500; all newly built, besides considerable improvement on other buildings and residences not included. The above foots up a total of \$148,000—all accomplished in the past thirty months. We have not mentioned street improvement either, which has not been inconsiderable.

On the whole the result of the past two years is a cause for thankfulness on the part of our people. There is no reason for discouragement. In 1893, with the change in our political status will come a change in financial and trade conditions.

In the history of nations, England's is somewhat similar to that of our own. Prior to the establishment of free trade, the protective system was rife and the kingdom had become so confused financially and otherwise that a change of policy could not possibly make matters worse—hence the change was made and England today stands where she does on account of this change from the protective to a free trade theory of government. Can such a change fail to remove the depression now existing? We think not.

With a changed condition in monetary circles and the flowing out of money, Ashville is bound to rise upward. She cannot go backward. Her foundation is too solid for that. She had every reason to rise. In that she will do this the confidence of our people is as strong as ever. Let us prepare for it.

SPRINGVILLE (1873)

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

G. R. Cather, Editor

Wednesday, March 13, 1873

We spent an awful night at Ashville Station waiting for the train—all owing to the irregularity of travel on this road. We blame no one, for we honestly believe that every one connected in any way with the road, is irresponsible. We think the road is now run at the expense of the state for the benefit of a few individuals—God only knows who; we confess we know nothing of its affairs, and we don't believe anybody else does—all we claim to know is that the schedule of trains, both passenger and freight, are so irregular that transportation and travel must be a matter of most pressing necessity along the route to those who engage in it. This road has had many difficulties to encounter, and it is a wonder that so far it still lives, but we are inclined to think that since

the U. S. District Court has undertaken to run it, it will soon run down. Nothing could be more fatal to this part of the state. We are a friend of the road, and desire to see it in full and successful operation. It would bring millions into the state, as well as make available millions of wealth treasured upon or in the native hills between which it passes. Not only that, villages have been built along this line, merchants have come in from neighboring states, farmers have staked off lands—towns and cities are springing up about it, which depend upon it as a thoroughfare of inter-communication with the rest of the country—and all those to a greater or less extent, are crippled in their efforts by the irregular and uncertain management of a road that ought to be unembarrassed and full of hope. —But, we got on the train about four o'clock in the morning, after about fourteen hours of patient waiting and watching, and arrived in Springville just before day.

Our Springville friends ought to bridge the little streams between the station and the town—it would be obliging to their friends who are compelled to ravel in the night, we presume, however, that they will do this without any suggestions to that effect from us. What with their new saw-mills, new tan-yards—*off a piece* from town—new churches, new store houses, &c., &c., they have their hands full, so much so, that some of them don't have time to *take*—read, we meant—their county paper.—Pshaw! such stuff—one pleasant looking gentleman who owns a saw-mill down there, talked to us a half an hour about how a paper should be managed, and said his saw-mill took all his spare change at present, and he could not subscribe, but gravely told us that we ought to have opened out in Springville. This thing of *opening out* in Springville, with a paper seemed to be the burden, as though the very life of the place depended on paper. We told them the very life of their town depended on taking their county paper and more especially in letting the outside world know what, where, it is, by advertising largely in a paper that goes to all the hotels in the country, besides is rapidly increasing in circulation at home; and we made an impressive, as our

readers will see shortly by several advertisements that will appear in our paper in a few weeks. The truth is the people of Springville are sensible, they are wide-awake, and are easily convinced of what is best—they can see a point in an argument as plainly as any people. But we didn't intend to write about the people. It is the place we desire to speak of. It is a part of St. Clair, and we feel proud of it.

The town only contains between two and three hundred inhabitants—but most of these are late acquisitions. The population, however, gives but a faint idea of the place; in fact, this of itself is calculated to deceive any one who has not been there, as to its business and prospects. There are several large stores in Springville, and we were surprised at the amount of business that seemed to be doing the day we were there, notwithstanding, it was regarded as one of their dull days. There are two new tanneries in or near the town, besides one that has been in operation for years; two well filled drug-stores—a large, fine, newly finished hotel and a saw-mill, hardly finished, in operation. Two new church buildings to be built this year are in contemplation. The educational advantages are excellent, and for information that score, the reader is referred to advertisement of Mr. Book in this paper.

Springville is a summer resort. Quite a number of families seek its shades and cool waters in the hot months, and considering its advantages in this respect, hundreds of families should be induced to go there during the summer to enjoy these benefits; and at the same time, if they have children, these would not be cut-off from privileges enjoyed elsewhere.

The town is stretching out east and west, as it improves by new residences, or buildings—but no inconsiderable portion of it stands upon a high hill, which slopes down to the business part, or main thoroughfare. In the midst of the town there is a large natural indentation into the hillside, and here arranged almost in a circle, are the noted Springs—nine or eleven in number. We visited these Springs—but did not taste the water—the fact is, we didn't care much about going near

them, for we had suffered so much from rain during our transits up and down the railroad that we were somewhat disgusted with water, and if our stomach didn't turn against it, to use a trite saying, our body did; and we actually forgot to take a few bottles to test on a dry day. We will supply this omission at some future time. *Eureka*, a gentleman who had noticed that we passed these Springs, rather unconscious of their properties, manifesting no interest in the water, afterwards asked us if we ever drank brandy. No doubt he was amazed when we informed him that we did not, unless *especially* needed. He no doubt thought it strange that we did not take a little as a substitute for water. But we must defer further remarks for the present.

THE GREAT STORM (1873)

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

G. R. Cather, Editor

Wednesday, November 10, 1873

A Meteorological Demonstration—Ashville and the surrounding country devastated—Houses blown over—Fences laid flat—Trees twisted up by the roots—The Storm heard in the distance for ten minutes before it struck the Village—A scared Darkey left in the cold—A family goes to prayers—Nobody hurt—A torch light scene.

On last Sunday night about 8 o'clock, one of the most terrific tornadoes passed over this place. The weather during the day had been cloudy and misty, but about sunset it began to break away and had the appearance of becoming clear. It soon, however, grew dark and threatened rain. Heavy clouds loomed upon the horizon in every

direction, and about 7½ o'clock vivid flashes of sheet lightning broke, at short intervals, consecutively upon the still darkness. We had just retired for the night, but distinctly heard a continuous roaring for ten minutes or nearly so, in the distance, which we attributed to electrical transmission and exchange in the clouds—but as this increased as the storm approached, we jumped out of bed, and as we remarked, "it is something more than thunder." We had hardly time to dress hurriedly before the wind lashed the premises with most dreadful fury, threatening to upset everything. We could neither get into our office or out at the front door. In less than three minutes, its force was expended.

THE DIRECTION.

As near as we could judge, the tornado was sweeping in a due easterly course, and was accompanied with a small quantity of rain and some hail—the size of the stones we could not ascertain, as we could find none after the storm was over.

THE TORCH LIGHTS.

After the storm was sufficiently subsided, we went out to take notes—but it was so dark, except when the lightning broke in flashes, that nothing could be seen—presently we heard voices in the west end of town where the storm had struck first, and on looking in that direction saw several torches waving to and fro—parties inspecting their premises—this scene greeted us also from the east end of town. We got a torch and went out to inspect a little, found a tall apple tree and partition fence down in our back yard and several smaller trees broken and bent over; on the front several large trees broken and twisted up by the roots—heard several reports but retired to get a daylight view of the devastation that we knew must have ensued.

NEXT MORNING.

Our village looked like a wreck—town fences were lying prostrate, huge trees had been hurled from their roots or snapped like reeds and were prone upon the ground in every part. One tremendous, tall, heavy tree had fallen on the south west corner of Mr. L. Box's residence, the

branches of which extended far beyond the roof of his house, another had been hurled against the north west corner of Mr. W. T. Hodge's porch, carrying away a part of his chimney doing some damage to the house, and throwing the bricks down the chimney with such force as to scatter the fire in the fireplace out into the room, and it was with much difficulty that a conflagration was prevented. An old stable on the lot recently purchased by Mr. Greene, was removed out of his way, and the out-buildings on the Byers' premises were torn and fairly riddled by the wind, the fencing around these premises suffered severely, also around Mr. Box's and Mr. Hodges' and the palling around the Court House was nearly all destroyed.

THE SCARE AT OLD NAZAR'S.

Old Nazar, a black man living in a little hut in the North west end of the village, had an awful fright and barely escaped with his life. The roof of his house was carried completely off, and the logs rolled over, some falling on him, but finally he was left out in the cold more frightened than hurt. The wreck was complete. Mr. Cobb's tenement house met with serious damage losing a part of its roof and having a large hole bored through it—the family vacated it after the storm had sufficiently subsided. The top of the chimney of the house occupied by Mrs. Capshaw was blown down, and the building otherwise damaged.

Judge Inzer reports considerable injury to his fence and other slight damage. In fact there is hardly a house in the village that did not suffer, more or less, some injury—and quite a number of fruit and ornamental trees were destroyed. From the county we have several reports of houses being unroofed, sheds blown down and other destruction of outhouses and fences. From all we can gather, there has been considerable damage done in the county—but what is remarkable and yet affords us pleasure to note is that no one has been hurt. This storm passed over an area in its sweep of miles—how far it extended we cannot say at this time, but hope to be able to report further accounts next week.

BEAVER VALLEY, ALA., January 30, 1874

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

G. R. Cather, Editor

Wednesday, February 11, 1874

Aegis—I expected to write next from Springville, but deferred my trip in that direction a week later.

It is a fine day, but a light cool breeze is blowing from out the South-east, making an overcoat quite comfortable amid the hills and watered cuts between, until one enters full upon the valley proper. A few miles out from Ashville the country presents a picturesque and very pleasant appearance. There is much, however, of the home like all along the route. There is a considerable amount of timber running in strips parallel to the hills, on the right and left, and I understand coal and iron are found here in plenty.

On leaving Ashville, the country is a continuous wood for some distance with the exception of a clearing, here and there, when it opens into a regular succession of farms lying along the sides of the ridges, or rounded off by the windings of Beaver Creek. I pass thousands of acres, however, not in cultivation, and judging from the surface of the soil where the wheat is growing, one sees that the old system of plowing is stuck to, by some, with a tenacity that bids defiance to more modern ideas in this section. Our younger farmers will discard these old-fogy notions and we may yet expect, at some day, to see a better and more abundant harvest of wheat in this county.

This is the day of sale at the late farm residence of Mr. J. A. Byers, deceased, who lived about eight miles from Ashville, and arriving here, I am, indeed, surprised at the large number of persons already present—some as I learn from a distance of not less than thirty or forty miles. The grove around the premises is almost filled with mules,

horses and wagons, and reminds me very much of a camp ground without the tents or a country picnic where everybody turns out. Sam'l B. McBrayer, the auctioneer, is busy crying off the articles of this days' sale, and it is remarkable with what expertness and agility he passes from one scene to another; first, comes hogs, next cows, next horses, next in succession corn, etc., etc., all of which there seems to be plenty and of a good quality, considering the talk of hard times and poverty we hear so much of now-a-days. The strangest thing of all to many is the exorbitant bids. Everything sells above its value—corn brings \$1.00, hogs from \$6.00 to 12.00, and so on. The speculators and old sharks don't get a bid—they will go home to-day fretful, I am certain, and the good matrons must keep cool. I have great confidence in printers ink, but I never so well understood its virtue as I do to-day. This is what comes out of a good county paper, and the publication law; instead of a loss of a few dollars, as our old sharks would make believe, to the widows and orphans, or heirs and creditors, in printers' fees, these keep the corn, horses, cows, %c., from falling into the hands of that class of persons who are always on hand looking for a good thing at a sale.

Judging from those I see, and it is to be presumed I meet with many of the citizens of this valley, the latter is inhabited by a set of energetic, hospitable farmers, who live well on what they raise, and apparently have an abundant home supply. A stranger would hardly know how rich this country is by passing along the railroad, or lingering in the towns or villages contiguous to the latter; on the contrary, he would rather be impressed by a first acquaintance with these stable old farmers that the country is too poor to live in, but a trip down this valley, which, though it may not be the richest, I am certain it is not the poorest part of the county, will satisfy any one of the liability to err in such matters by hasty inferences. I consider this a healthful, delightful and promising section, full of invitations and inducements to settle down in it, and be happy. I would like very much to remain here a few days, and examine more minutely the country, but must await a more

propitious time in the future, stating, however, that while signs of improvement are plainly indicated in this direction, I am surprised to observe so little attention paid to fruit culture. Our farmers should begin to see that they cannot have a farm without making fruit an object. No farm is complete without this all essential. This is not only the case in Beaver Valley, but all over North Alabama, except in Wills Valley where the people are beginning fully to appreciate this fact, and are now manifesting considerable interest in growing fruit upon their farms.

I will probably write next from Springville.

P.S.—I had almost forgotten to remark that I have the pleasure of meeting several of the distinguished county candidates here.

SPRINGVILLE, Jan. 5th, 1874
Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama
G. R. Cather, Editor
Wednesday, February 18, 1874

Aegis:—I arrived here about 2½ o'clock, A.M., and through the accommodations of B. F. Hill & Co. got two or three hours sleep before sun up, and shortly after daylight was well under way, having first refreshed at the Hotel—which, by the way, is the finest constructed building of that kind I know of in this section of the State—I determined to take a stroll around town to see what was astir. Persons acquainted with Springville will know that to go through the place requires but little time, but to go around it requires both time and patience.

I was as usual unfortunate in hitting upon a day on which little business is done here—the busy days being the first and last days of the week.

The merchants generally complain of the dullness of the season, and I think they have great reason, if this day is to be taken as a

criterion, for all hands appear to be idle, except the workmen in Mr. Hill's and Dr. Wilson's Tan Yards. This seems to be a leading business in Springville, there being two large tanneries in the town and two or three near it, and all appeared to be doing a good business. There are eight stores here—two of which are Apothecaries—and I wish it could be said that others were needed—but it can't. There are already too many for the population and growth of the place—several good shops would answer a better purpose.

What Springville needs is more enterprise. The business portion of the community is not sufficiently wide-awake in small matters. Instead of looking after the trade of the county through the columns of their county journal by advertising and sending up important dots of local news pertaining to the local interest of the place, and giving the people of this and adjacent counties information in regard to business transactions, the facilities and conveniences that surround them, which make the town a desirable location for settlement and population, they seem to be set on having the Courthouse, or nothing, and for this reason there seems to be a manifest disposition to support no public enterprise of the county that does not locate itself at Springville. This is wrong because it militates against the present progress of the place, in keeping hid the moral influence as well as the public spirit of the town. I remarked that there are eight stores in the place; if each of these had two squares, at least, in the county journal, there would be attached a significance to the business enterprise and liberality of the place that would attract the attention and invite the custom of parties at a distance; besides, enhance the value of the local trade of the surrounding communities and tend to concentrate it in Springville. It is a mistake to consider advertising altogether in the light of special advantage—of course, this is the necessary and ultimate result, for whatever induces trade to a point will distribute it among the different branches of business—but the great object among those best posted, in this line, is to locate trade, and this can only be done by systematized permanent

advertising, and inducements to public patronage.

Springville has made some headway since our last visit, several new residences have been erected with yards fenced in. Mr. Herring is gradually improving his Hotel premises, and making things about it present a fine appearance.

Situated on the A. & C. Railroad, forming an intermediate point of trade between Chattanooga and Birmingham, there is no reason why Springville should not be a first-class country town, and it will in time, as it affords all the facilities in this respect. It needs, however, a few more work-shops, and a concentration of patronage in that line, and if the people would take hold of the mechanical industries and push them forward, it would result more to the prosperity and success of the place than anything else.— Let the farmers know that there is a point within reach where they can get work done right, and they will visit it in the busiest seasons of the year. The difficulty in such matters is that mechanics in the South have no encouragement to remain long in a place, too frequently they themselves are to blame for this. They should locate, become permanent themselves and their business would become permanent, as the people of the surrounding country found them out, and began to regard them as a fixture in the settlement.

With its several churches, good schools, Masonic Hall, Good Templars Lodge and the several enterprises spoken of by the citizens, I think the latter may well be encouraged; at least, I believe the people of the county feel proud, as they should be, of this growing place. Certainly it is to the interest of every man in the county to stimulate by word and act according to his means the efforts making in every part of the county looking to the wealth and aggrandizement of the latter, and Springville promises, in the future, to do no little to give us wealth at home and credit and honor abroad.

My letter has already been "long stretched out," and I must close by remarking that as members of the same body—that is, of the same county—we should not allow our aspirations, whatever they may be, to

conflict with our duty as citizens, and though we don't get all we want, let us put our force and spirit into our public enterprises, wherever located in the county, and thus unselfishly establish ourselves in the confidence of others that there may be no hindering cause to success.
C.

FERRYVILLE, ALA (1876)

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, June 30, 1876

Ferryville, Ala., June 30, 1876.

Dear Aegis – I have just had the opportunity, for the first time, of reading your most interesting and full-of-news paper. Ferryville, as you doubtless know, is a little village situated on the banks of the Coosa River running southward from this place, dividing the rich bottom lands on either side between Talladega and St. Clair counties. I do not know the population of the place, but do not think that it is incorporated. It contains a carriage and wagon shop, a cabinet shop, a blacksmith shop, a post office, receiving four mails a week, a good templar's lodge, a Baptist church and one dry goods house. The people down here are all alive to the centennial. Our land is first quality. Crops of corn and cotton are splendid; owing to the rust wheat crop was not good. Our gallant townsman Maj. J. R. P. Lacy had roasting ears on the 15th ult., and one Irish potato weighing nine ozs. Who can beat that?

HO, FOR BROKEN ARROW! (1883)

Southern Aegis, Wednesday, September 5, 1883

Ashville, Alabama, G. R. Cather, Editor

Our trip to Broken Arrow last week was due to the fact that the first train on the East & West Rail road of Alabama would reach that point on Tuesday 28th ultimo. An excursion had been arranged and quite a number of visitors from Ga. and other points were expected among whom would be quite a number of representatives of the press. Evans, of the Birmingham Chronicle, and Charlie Roberts, of same city, passing through Ashville proceeded us on Tuesday for the mines.

We arrived, about sunset, at the village of Broken Arrow, in company with J. T. Greene, Esq., of the law firm of Inzer & Greene, attorneys for the railroad and coal companies, and large stockholders in the mining companies recently organized at Trout Creek and Broken Arrow, and put up at Mr. D. B. Moor's, one of the leading and most hospitable citizens of this place.

The train arrived shortly after we had domiciled for the night, and the town was crowded with visitors from all parts of the United States, representing the talent, capital, and muscle of their different sections. There were all duly cared for by the hospitable and quiet people of the community. An informal meeting was organized at the school house by the guests of the town, at which resolutions of thanks were offered by the visitors, to the citizens of Broken Arrow, for their kind reception and preparation for their entertainment during the night, and to the railroad managers for their attentions and accommodation in bringing them to this grand scene of industry, skill and natural wealthy, and also to the managers of the mine for their courtesy and cleverness in conducting them about the works and explaining the operations and prospects of the mines.

Speeches were then called for.

Rev. Mr. Harris led off, explaining the completion of the East & West Railroad, and its object.

Col. A. G. West, of Cedartown, Ga., was called for, who responded by saying he knew more about pig iron than making

speeches.

Wallace Woodward, Esq., of Jacksonville, was next called, and entertained the crowd in half an hour's talk. His speech abounded in metaphor and beautiful illustrations and was listened to with great interest. He was followed by Cols. W. Gordon, Kimball, Haas, Smith, and Waddell, all of Georgia, in able pleasant and pertinent remarks. If we have overlooked any of the orators of the occasion, we regret it. We didn't get their names. It was a happy and opportune affair, and quite stimulating to a little country village, heretofore unknown out of this county, to rise so suddenly out of her wooded hills to such significance as to attract the attention of the railroad and mining magnates of the county. August 21st 1883 ought to be, as undoubtedly it will be, a memorable day in the history of Broken Arrow. It witnessed the consummation of the greatest enterprise ever projected in this county; it brought together in public conference such representatives of capital as Haas, Postell, West Gordon, Rowan and others.

The visitors were well cared for during their stay. On the next morning, they visited the mines and works, and at 9 o'clock boarded the train to return to their homes with the best wishes of the people of Broken Arrow for their success and health.

BROKEN ARROW. Its Mines—Its Railroads—Its Future Glowing Prospect and Importance!

Broken Arrow is on a great big boom. There is no use to cavil about it. This is the coming town of St. Clair county. It is build on wealth. Its hills are filled with coal and covered with timber. A mining town is now going up. All is life and energy. Stores and dwellings are in process of erection and everywhere the people of Broken Arrow village are fairly alive with hope and expectation. The hammer and the saw, the chisel and the plane, make music in accord. Great saw mills are in operation, mines are opening, the earth is widening the doors of its store-house of rich resources. While down there the other day we went into Broken Arrow mine, which is in charge and under the management of Major Stone. It is about twenty feet wide

by seven feet high. We were in the heart of what was once a sea of coal of lava hardened or fossilized in time to a solid bed, stretching far away in every direction. In this dark passage, one hundred and seventy feet from the entrance, one could stand and wonder at nature's work in that place a few million or more years ago, when what was at that time the vegetable outgrowth of the earth's surface, was consumed and dissolved during the coming centuries, to be solidified, prepared by inconceivable processes for use at the present time. How strange! that we, of this day, should behold the operations and processes of art bringing out from their hidden recesses these rich treasures of the ages of pre-historic time. This work has begun here in earnest.

Here is the great, mining water pump at the mouth of the dip; here is the engine which is used to draw up and to let down the coal dumps; here were the mine tram ways, all in position, all at work or in use. Coal was coming up, coke was being made. The train is now within half a mile of the mine and only a few days more, and the mineral, lumber and other natural resources of this great section, just putting off its virginal robes and putting on the garb of this utilitarian era, will not only be on exhibition at one of the great cities of the south, but actually a part of its great commercial forces of trade and opulence. Atlanta is growing but the step already made at Broken Arrow will stimulate its progress tenfold in a few short years. Maj. Stone is a gentleman of energy, of skill, and of brains. He has now everything in readiness to load the coal on the cars as soon as the train can reach the mine, which, perhaps, has been accomplished by this time, as the grade was nearly finished on last Wednesday, and the hands were busy pushing the work to completion.

A great day has dawned on our county; for let our citizens know and understand that one of the features, and the real one too, in the projection of the East & West Railroad of Alabama into this county, was not some great point of through travel and transportation, but to reach the mineral regions of Broken Arrow and Trout Creek. These were the objective points, and they have now been reached. The grand scheme

has been perfected, and a section of country heretofore unknown, is about to expose to the wonder, admiration and awe of mankind, wealth far exceeding that of the lordly palaces of the great, or the bejewelled crowns of earth's richest potentates.

BROKEN ARROW One of St. Clair's Live Towns (1887)

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, July 27, 1887

William H. Cather, Editor

Her Mineral and Timber Resources, Marvellous Industrial Development Location etc., etc.

Just across Backbone mountain fourteen miles from Ashville, lies the modest little town of Broken Arrow. It is singularly, yet very favorably situated, and the traveler, approaching this town from the north feels a certain degree of romantic pleasure when he reflects upon the origin of the town and its name.

In the earlier part of the present century, the surrounding country was the home of the red man. A stalwart young brave, as the Indian youths were called, takes his bow and arrow for a hunt along the banks of the beautiful little creek near, which empties into the Coosa river, less than five miles distant. He shoots a deer and the animal in its death struggle breaks the arrow with which it is pierced, and from this incident tradition says that portion of the country was called "*Theitka*," which rendered into English, signifies 'BROKEN ARROW'. The town as now situated is divided into two sections known as Old Broken Arrow and "Inzer" or New Broken Arrow, about one mile distant. It is of the latter we wish to speak.

The location of new Broken Arrow is excellent, almost in the heart

of the mineral district, surrounded by a fertile country, well timbered and an excellent water supply; it deserves special mention. On the north the rugged Backbone mountain, laden with its weight of minerals, towers. In descending the mountain in approaching Broken Arrow, the surface indications of coal are plainly visible and in some places where the side of the road has been cut off, the coal itself out crops, scarcely two feet beneath the surface. The coal is of good quality and covers an extensive area.

The East & West Railroad, a busy little narrow gauge running from Cartersville and Cedartown, Ga., with its eastern terminus now at Broken Arrow, furnishes the transportation facilities for the lumber and mining industries in this section. This road has been built only a few years, and is already extending its line to Pell City about six and one-half miles further westward, with the intention of changing to a broad gauge in a short time to meet the increasing demand for transportation, and will thereby furnish the Birmingham market with St. Clair coal.

The timber around Broken Arrow is plentiful and equal to any. Sawmills are eating their way into the forests, and St. Clair timber is transformed into handsome residences, factories, etc., etc.

Among the singular things at the old Broken Arrow is a mineral well with well defined saline properties containing peculiar medicinal virtues.

The Eureka Mining Co. is rapidly getting its new slope in shape for operation. This slope is sunk several hundred yards east of the old Broken Arrow mines and some coal is already being taken out. The vein is of good thickness, excellent quality of coal and cokes well. The company owns sixty coke ovens, part of which are already in operation, and the others will be fitted as soon as possible. The gentlemen composing this company are fully qualified to carry the work through and have made a good start.

We can give no better idea of Broken Arrow and her prospects as are of the future towns of St. Clair than is embodied in the following from our enterprising corresponded "Enterprise" who says:

Track laying is progressing at the rate of one mile a week on the E. & W. Rr. only four miles to complete, and then we will have connection with Pell City. this connection will doubtless stimulate mining interests at Broken Arrow as we will then have railroad communication with Birmingham, Talladega, and Anniston. With such increased facilities for transportation, we expect the town to build up rapidly. Geologist and mining Engineers have estimated that the coal belt in St. Clair county, beginning at a point near where the E. & W. Rr. crosses Coosa River and running parallel with said road to Broken Arrow, is some 20 miles long, and four miles wide. They further estimate that the average thickness of the coal vein is four feet. Now what does this mean? It means eight miles of coal, 4900 tons to every acre; 3,136,000 tons to every square mile; or 250,880,000 tons which, valued at \$1.50 per ton amounts to the magnificent sum of \$376,320,000. You will observe that we do not undertake to give you any estimate of the coal in this county lying west of Broken Arrow. Now, Mr. Editor, will mining pay in this county? If not why not? There are only two companies now engaged in mining in this vast field, the "Success" company at Broken Arrow and the St. Clair Co. at Ragland. We understand that both are doing a satisfactory business. The time will come ere long perhaps, when coal will be successfully mined on every square mile of this territory.

The extension of the E. & W. Rr. brings into market some 2,500 or 3,000 acres of well timbered pine lands lying 1½ miles south of this place. Messrs. Lewis & Wills, late of Stylesboro, Ga., have a mill in this pine region. They brought with them from Georgia a small colony of good industrious people who are proving to be quite an addition to our section. We welcome such people most heartily. Mr. J. B. Cosper, also has a mill in the same vicinity and is doing well. Next to agriculture, the manufacture of pine lumber is the most extensive business in Coosa Valley. Many of your readers, even in this county, do not know that the amount of capital invested in the lumber business in this section runs up into the hundreds of thousands. We have about a

dozen mills along the line of the Ga. Pac. Rr. and the E. & W. Rr. within seven miles of this place. Their aggregate output exceeds in value \$1000 per day, probably \$1500 per day. Some of the companies have material enough to keep their mills going for many years to come.

THE BROKEN-ARROW MYSTERY (1876)

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

August 16, 1876

[CORRESPONDENCE. Eden, Ala., August 8, 1876.

Editor Aegis— ...We have had some little excitement in this community this week occasioned by the discovery of some portions of three dead human bodies in a thick copse near the Broken-arrow bridge school house, but the excitement has subsided and the conclusion of the matter is that some doctor has been robbing the graveyards for the purpose [of] anatomical investigation. ...]

In regard to the graves found near Broken-arrow bridge, is it not likely that but one body only has been buried there—that, afterwards, was displaced by some means, and in its displacement certain portions of the frame lost, or carried off, or it may be, if not deposited in another place, where found after displacement, finally *requiescat in pace* in the bed of the creek, provided uncompanionated sections of the human skeleton can rest in peace?

All the facts seem to say that a body was interred in the oldest grave, and rose up afterwards as a connecting link in the chain of evidence that, if properly investigated, may lead to the detection of a crime and fasten it upon the guilty culprit, whose conscience stricken fear exhibited itself in the half buried remains of the second interment.

The circumstances which seem to lead to this conclusion, are that

the old grave contained nothing but wool and a deposit of decomposed flesh. It was no work of doctors; for they would not bury flesh from which they had extracted the skeleton; cremation would have been attended with less trouble and expense, and would leave no signs to interfere with the future experiments of the scalpel. It is clear that the body deposited in the old grave was displaced by some cause.

The remains found in the newest or more recent grave were not the work of doctors; for no case of dissection, it seems to us, is likely to arise among our country surgeons, or anatomists, which would require such a scattering selection of sections of the human frame, for skillful investigation. If anatomists had this carcass for a subject, they did not understand their business—that is evident.

The old grave shows some regard to interment, and presents the usual evidences that it was prepared for a full member corpse. It is not a mere hole like the more recent grave, which shows a haste in its preparations, and indicates that the subject it was to receive was not by any means a complete one. The remains themselves are most conclusive that the place where found was not their first resting place. Situated upon an elevation thrown up by the July freshet, it is inconceivable how a carcass could lose such a large portion of its heavy material and small joints within the time given for this grave. We insist that no such thing was ever heard of among the animals which have died in the open fields and woods, and decayed without any protection of their parts whatever. We have no doubt that the two graves were made for the same body.

That there are persons who are posted in regard to the facts about this mystery, and who have made it their business to watch the scene where this discovery was made, there is no question in our mind. That the discovery of the displacement of the body from its first receptacle was made by the parties interested in the secret is equally clear, and was, or what was found disclosed, was then hastily deposited in the new hole nearer the creek. Here we have the evidence that whether one or two bodies have in time been deposited in this place, those who are privy to

he secret are not removed many miles from the scene of the last discovery, and are probably now watching with eager interest the effect of this second disclosure—which, it appears to us, bears the most unmistakable circumstantial proof of an act perpetrated by violence, either under a sentence of that modern *Vehm.* known in America as Lynch's court, or by the hand of the assassin.

The later idea is not so well sustained as the former. The rope and withe found in the bottom of the grave are signs that accord well with Lynch's mode of carrying into effect the judgments of this terrible tribunal of modern civilization; the grave does not imply that the act was done in any other way than with coolness, and with some degree of attention to the order and fitness of things; the charred fragments show that torch-light was not overlooked in the performance of the last ceremonies; and are also suggestive of the means employed to destroy all marks of identity—no, we cannot think the hand of the common assassin was employed. On the contrary we are inclined to the opinion that the victim was fleeing from the hands of justice; and hard by this copse was overtaken by the avenger's arm, and out of a strange mixture of hate and mercy allowed sepulchre after vengeance had glutted herself. Shall we ever know?

THE WONDERFUL DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS IN ALABAMA

[From the *Manufacturers' Record*]

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, July 1, 1885

Ashville, St. Clair Co., Ala.,
June 11, 1885

Editor Manufacturers' Record:

At the time the East & West Railroad was completing its extension to Broken-arrow, in this county, 1883, the Georgia Pacific was also in process of construction from Riverside, on the Coosa River, the natural line between the counties of St. Clair and Talladega, to Leeds, near the boundary line between this and Jefferson counties. These points are, perhaps, about twenty-two miles apart; and for this distance, nearly the entire way was a forest in which, comparatively speaking, but few trees had ever been felled by the axe. All along the line of this road are iron, coal, limestone, sandstone and other fine building rock. Pine, oak, poplar and hickory abound in great quantities and between those points, in this county alone, there are already quite a number of saw mills and collieries giving employment to hundreds, where before 1883 but a dozen or more were engaged. The Georgia Pacific passes through much productive land in this county, where corn, cotton and peas grow luxuriantly, and many acres once believed by the old settlers to be nearly worthless, now in cultivation, and without fertilizing, yield readily a thousand pounds of cotton to the acre. The soil is loose and easily cultivated, and much of this land, belonging to the railroads, can be bought at low figures. A great deal of the country in this and adjoining counties along this route is rapidly settling up by thrifty Georgians and South Carolinians.

Riverside is a thriving village, growing up on the west bank of the Coosa River, within the last two years. It already has two large steam saw mills in operation, and there is no reason it should not have a dozen more, as saw logs can be floated down and tugged up to this point, and for fifty miles either way. Up or down the Coosa, no finer forests of long leaf yellow heart pine exists anywhere; besides there are to be found in great quantities, oak, hickory, poplar, gum, and other timbers valuable for the various purposes of industry. Riverside is, perhaps, about eighteen miles from Anniston and about forty-four from Birmingham, Ala., two young cities of such amazing thrifts and growth as to excite the wonder of all who visit them and are informed of their quite recent history of progress and development. I believe, situated as

it is, that Riverside is the best location for saw mills in the state. Several business houses are connected with this place.

Going west on the Georgia Pacific from Riverside about two miles is **Seddan**, a handsome little town lately sprung into life, with quite a number of pretty residences, several stores and two, perhaps more, saw mills.

About six miles west of Seddan is **Eden**, (modern, of course), situated right on the edge of the coal fields. It already contains a half dozen stores, a good hotel and church houses; saw mills have recently been added to its industries. It is a pretty place, well-located for growth and the outlook now is flattering for its becoming a place of considerable importance. Just now there is some talk of the railroad which connects with the Anniston & Atlantic near Talladega being constructed to form a junction with the East & West railroad at Broken Arrow, in which case it will cross the Georgia Pacific at Eden, and from that point extend up Wolf Creek to Inzer, where are located the Broken Arrow mines.

Continuing westward on the Georgia Pacific railroad, the next point deserving mention is **Cook's Springs**, a watering resort—said to be one of the finest in the world to regain lost health—where there is an abundance of sulphur, chalybeate and freestone water. This is a pleasant little station town growing up, containing two or three stores and a good hotel to accommodate summer visitors. Cook's Springs is in the hills—it would, perhaps, be nearer the fact to say in the mountains. More than fifty years ago it was frequented as a health resort by the early settlers of Alabama. There can be no doubt that the building of the Georgia Pacific Railroad and the increasing population of contiguous cities and towns, on account of the health imparting properties of its water, picturesque location and other advantages, will make these springs in a short time a famous place of summer resort.

After leaving Cook's Springs, **Brompton**, another promising station town of new enterprises is reached; then **Leeds**, in the Cahaba

Valley is next arrived at. Although repetition may create a doubt, I am bound to state the fact that it also shows rapid vitality in its industrial improvement. Leeds is in Jefferson county; so are DeBardeleben's new mines, which employ several hundred hands in the coal fields, and about which it is neither speculation nor an attempt to overrate the rapid development of this section, to add that at or about these mines in the near future a town with its thousands of inhabitants will be built up.

EDEN! (1887)

HER OUTLOOK! WHAT IT IS AND WILL BE!

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, October 5, 1887

Eden is one of the busiest towns on the Georgia Pacific Railroad, thirty-three miles from Birmingham, five miles from the Coosa River, and 30 miles from Anniston. Her history has never graced the pages of any book or adorned the columns of a city paper, but like a number of other favored towns in St. Clair, her superior advantages, excellent location, and thriving business deserve special recognition. As her name indicates, the town is an Eden—a Paradise for the money maker, the farmer, the merchant, the saw mill man, the miner and the preacher.

That it is a paradise for the preacher, we are a witness, for the people of this vicinity are a God-fearing and religious people, and their pocket books respond liberally to the performance of their church obligations. By way of verifying this statement, we will add that Tom Bowman and Sam Spruiell, who are now running a blacksmith and wood shop in conjunction and doing a good business, shoe every preacher's horse, regardless of the denomination, free of charge.

Although Mr. George Stephens mischievous propensities have

become proverbial, this will not interfere with any one who wishes to visit Eden. Like the other citizens, he will extend the hand of hospitality and be glad to see you.

Eden has some half dozen or more stores all doing a brisk cash business, four saw mills, averaging 25,000 feet of lumber daily, a good gin and grist mill, livery stable, two blacksmith shops, coaling, jewelry store, two good hotels, two churches, telegraphy, literary and music schools, and a number of other industries and enterprises, not above enumerated.

The saw mills alone work over one hundred hands. Mr. C. D. Alverson pays out a large amount of money to laborers each week. He paid out over \$200 in cash week before last, and his enterprise and liberality has helped materially to the upbuilding of Eden and her immediate surroundings. Few men have done more for a town than Mr. Alverson has done for Eden.

The Georgia Pacific Railroad, a grand trunk line from Atlanta to Birmingham, has also assisted in the building up of the town. It ships several carloads of lumber daily and a large number of its employees eat at Eden, putting considerable money afloat.

A pretty site for a natural lake is formed immediately in the town, and with a little effort on the part of her citizens, Eden could boast of a Lave View. A subscription for this purpose was agitated some time since, but the matter is at rest now.

We have not space for all that might be said in regard to the prosperity of the growing place, but we will add that her prosperity is assured—that Pell City, only one mile and a half distant, will not seriously injure Eden, but that it will rather aid in the material growth of the town and both grow and thrive hand in hand, united and in harmony.

KELLY'S CREEK (NEW LONDON) [1885]
Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, July 8, 1885

Mr. Editor: As you expressed a desire in your last issue to have the subscribers and readers of your paper, at the different post offices in the county, to send in locals for publication, I take upon myself the responsibility of writing a few words concerning our little village and the good people of whom it is composed. Our village which in this part of the country has, by some means, had the appellation of New London assigned to it, is situated in the south eastern corner of the county, three miles from the line of St. Clair and Shelby, and three and one half miles from the Coosa River, the line of St. Clair and Talladega counties. It is comprised of two dry good and grocery stores, one grist mill, one saw mill, one cotton gin, one wood shop and several families of clever people.

There is not much business being transacted here at present on account of the scarcity of money, but the merchants, farmers and people generally are anticipating better times financially when the coming crops shall have been gathered, for the outlook now is encouraging. Our farmers are putting forth herculean efforts to place their crops beyond the power of the dreaded monster, grass, while the weather is favorable, and unless some unlooked for disaster presents itself, they will succeed for their determination that respect is absolutely immutable.

Our people are honest, energetic and law-abiding people. We have no school here at present, but there is a flourishing school within two miles of us under the auspicious management of the proficient teacher, Prof. John R. Beavers of Shelby County, Ala. A Sunday school is to be organized at the school house of this place on next Sabbath, and it is to be hoped that the people of the community generally will put forth strenuous efforts to make it a success and a blessing.

H. M. Abbercrombie of this place has invented a perfect wonder in the way of a combination plow, which in a short time will be brought before the public, as it is now before the Paten Office awaiting examination in its order. Mr. Abbercrombie has thoroughly tested his plow, and it has proven to ben an absolute success, the farmer's

economizer.

Tempus fugit, and your patience tires, consequently, I will bid you good day, promising to call again, provided I see this in print. READER

STEAMBOATS IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY [1890]

Southern Aegis, February 20, 1890

Steam boats can now pass lock 1 to lock 2 in this county. The Clifford B. Seay, of the White Star Line, Rome, Ga., in charge of Capt. J. J. Seay, with an excursion party on board went through the lock to Ten Island. Capt. John F. Green of Greensport, was in charge of the gates when the steamer arrived last Saturday, the 8th inst., at 1 o'clock p.m., and opened them promptly, for the passage of the steamer to Lock 2, about three and a half miles below. Major Andrews is engineering the completion of Lock 2, and says the work will be finished at an early day.

CROPWELL [1895]

The Cropwell Enterprise, Cropwell, Alabama

Thursday, October 31, 1895

Interesting Reminiscences of this Enterprising Village

Short Biography of its Founder

Good work and good results of the old and well established firm of

Robinson & Jones

Cropwell, Alabama, is situated on the B. & A. Railway in the Southern part of St. Clair County, forty miles east of Birmingham,

fifteen miles west of Talladega; in the heart of Coosa Valley midway between Coal City and Kelleys Creek. Its location gives it advantages over any other village in this portion of the county, of which its enterprising citizens are not slow to take advantage.

The rich, well-watered farming land which surround it, the fine timbered land lying contiguous to it, furnish its sturdy yeomanry with constant, profitable employment. Its freedom from the miasmatic poisons incident to low swampy locations; its excellent church facilities; its school which runs eight months in the year and is taught by one of the leading educators in the county; its excellent citizenship, among whom Madame Grundy with her gossiping tongue does not reside, makes its home life all that could be desired by an intelligent community.

In addition to these advantages, the village contains one of the oldest and most successful business houses in the state, which carries everything in stock that the home and farm demand; it has a gin house built on the most improved modern plans, and a blacksmith and woodshop. The inhabitants of the village and surrounding country are thus furnished with the conveniences of more pretentious towns without incurring the increased expense of living.

Just west of the village is found one of the largest and boldest springs of pure clear water to be found in the county, and in the long summer days it is a pleasant sight to see the cattle wending their way to the stream which flows from this spring to slake their thirst.

During the past few years, marked improvements have been made in the dwelling houses of the village, so that now, for elegance and comfort, they will compare favorably with those of any village in the state.

Of the early history of this village and Coosa Valley, we know very little. The following facts, however, have been gleaned from men now living:

About the year 1853 Jno. W. Jones moved from Harpersville, Shelby County, to St. Clair County, and purchased the home and lands of Calvin Cox, which embraced the present site of Cropwell. The

dwelling house purchased by Mr. Jones was a double-log house with a 10 foot passway, puncheon floor and stick-and-dirt chimney, situated in the norther part of the present village. There were few lumber mills in Alabama in that day, and sawed lumber was hard to get. Mr. Jones built a hewed log store house opposite his dwelling, in which he did business for about two years. This was the beginning of the present village of Cropwell.

He then sold his business to W. H. and J. F. Curry. In 1856, Mr. Jones built the store house which, enlarged, is now occupied by Roberson & Jones. He also built a new dwelling house, selling his old home and a portion of his land to Rev. M. Hendrick. Mr. Jones did business in the new store until the winter of 1859-60 when he sold his home to R. W. Williamson. Of course, during the war between the states the village was at a stand-still. After the war, it began to grow until during the 70's it had five or six business houses.

In this day of railways it is hard for us to realize the inconveniences incident to business in Coosa Valley during the 50's and early 60's. Prior 1866, all the merchandise for Coosa Valley was shipped to Greensport and carted thence to the points of distribution. When the rive above Greensport was too low for navigation, the merchants were forced to haul their goods on wagons from Rome, Georgia. After 1866 until 1883 the merchandise of the lower valley north of Kelley's Creek was consigned to Talladega.

Prior to the Civil War the goods for this section were purchased in Charleston, S. C., and no item was sold by the retailer for less than 100 per cent profit. Bread stuffs, meat, sugar and coffee were not sold in a country store. Not only were all food supplies raised at home, but also nearly all the wearing apparel was made at the same place.

Credit was cheap and accounts were small. Every man paid his account or was ostracized from the society of the best people. Iron-clad notes and mortgages were unknown. The whole of Coosa Valley from Kelley's Creek to Broken Arrow did not expend more than \$2,500 per annum for all kinds of merchandise.

Whiskey was plentiful and very cheap, and fisticuffs were a popular pastime.

Politically the people were whigs and democrats. The democrats shouted for "Hard Money," Free Trade and Sailors Rights: while the whigs shouted for Protection and Internal Improvements. The democrats were in the ascendancy in St. Clair County.

Prior to 1861, a large majority of the people were illiterate. Schools were few in number and in most instances badly managed and taught.

There were but six organized churches in the whole valley from Kelley's Creek to Broken Arrow: Macedonia, Pisgah, Clouch Camp Ground, Coosa Valley, Broken Arrow and Dollars near Eden. The last named was called by the bad boys "dog level," because of the great number of dogs that attended all gatherings. So numerous and ill-behave were the dogs that attended church in those days that the good brethren were forced to create an unscriptural office to which they annually elected a worthy brother, known, obeyed and respected as the "Dog Pelter."

The country has so developed since those days until now every man in Coosa Valley is in easy reach of a church, where he can hear the word of God expounded, and of a school house where his children can obtain at least the rudiments of an education.

Cropwell and Coosa Valley extend a cordial invitation to all good citizens seeking homes.

THE FIRM OF ROBERSON & JONES

Jno. W. Jones, father of the junior member of the above named firm, and father-in-law of the senior member, came to Alabama from Petersburg, Virginia, in 1840 and located at Columbiana. He moved to Harpersville in the fall of 1847, or the spring of 1848, where he engaged in business until about 1853 when he moved to what is now Cropwell, St. Clair County. Here he built a store house in which he did business for about two years. He then sold out and was out of business for about a year clearing up out-standing business.

In 1856 he built the store-house which enlarged is now occupied by the present firm. Being a man of unusual business sagacity, and seeing the country about to be precipitated into civil war, early in 1860 he closed out his mercantile business and went to farming.

After the war closed in 1865, Mr. Jones formed a partnership with Col. W. T. Smith, now of Shelby Co. He soon sold his interest to Col. Smith and opened up a new store in Ashville. He sold out this business in a short while and, returning to Cropwell, opened up another store in which he continued to do business until his death in 1873. In the meantime, however, he was again in partnership with Col. Smith in the Drug & Grocery business at Cropwell, and in 1871-72 in a General Mercantile business at Wilsonville. In the winter of 1872, Col. Smith retired from this business at Wilsonville, and Mr. Densler succeeded to his place and was a partner when Mr. Jones died.

Mr. Jones made it a rule never to continue in business long without a change. He marshaled his assets once at least in every three years and passed them in review. He would not carry old goods in stock. He opened up a store at Branchville with Jno. Harden as a partner in 1857 in order to find an outlet for unsalable goods. He had many auctions for the same purpose. He would not permit a dollar of his to stand idle. Full of vim and energy himself, he had a profound contempt for an indolent man. Scrupulously honest, he despised a lack of it in others. He had fixed habits of business that rendered his entries in books absolutely correct. Such was the man whose business Mr. J. R. Roberson was called upon to continue in 1873.

Mr. Roberson's father died when he was quite a small boy. He grew to manhood without receiving much education. In 1869 he opened a grocery store in Cropwell, in which he continued until he succeeded Mr. Jones. Mr. T. M. Jones was at this time only fourteen years of age and possessed of a very limited education. He was employed by Mr. Roberson as a clerk and continued in this relation until 1881, with the exception of four months spent in taking a commercial course at Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

In 1881, the firm of Jones & Roberson opened a business in Talladega, while Mr. Roberson continued at Cropwell. In 1883 the business of the two houses were consolidated at Cropwell under the firm name of Roberson & Jones.

Nothing in the world succeeds like success; Roberson & Jones have had success from the establishment of the firm. From year to year their business has increased in volume until they are regarded as one of the leading mercantile firms in this section of the State. Every effect has its cause. Let us examine some of the causes that have produced this effect:

Their motto in buying, "We pay cash," speaks volumes. It enables them at all times to buy goods at the very lowest cash prices. The prices quoted by commercial tourists as the very lowest prices are not always accepted for the buyer, for the firm makes a special study of the markets and usually gets manufacturers prices on every thing handled by the firm. The firm is thus enabled to give their customers the benefit of the profits usually made by the "middle man." There is another item of cost which enters into the purchase of goods that the firm guards well: viz., cost of transportation. Railways sometime charge the unwary exorbitant freight rates. So true have Roberson & Jones been to their customers in this respect that merchants living in Coosa Valley on a Trunk line have had their goods shipped Cropwell in order to get advantage of the rates. Having guarded well every avenue entering into the cost of goods, the firm has been enabled at all times to meet legitimate competition whether at home or abroad.

The firm has studied the cotton business in all of its phases from the field to the factory, and its connections are such that enable it to pay the highest market price for cotton. Cost of transportation also affects the price of cotton, and to prove to their customers that Roberson & Jones are always on the watch to protect their interest, they at one time secured a better rate on cotton than that obtained by some of the cities near them.

In selling goods, Roberson & Jones have always made it a rule

never to sell an article for less than it is worth and make up its loss by selling another for more than it is worth: nor to pay for cotton more than it is worth and make up their loss on goods. They try to treat all their customers alike. They appreciate their patronage in the past, and will strive to merit it in the future.

The firm announces with pleasure to its customers that the business established by Mr. Jones in 1853 and continued by Roberson & Jones since 1883 will be at the same old stand ready to pay the highest price for cotton and to sell goods at the lowest prices during the fall and winter of 1895-96.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PELL CITY'S GROWTH [1902] IN THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS

From *The Coosa Valleyan*, Wednesday, October 29, 1902

Published at Pell City

The progress Pell City has made in the last eight months is even surprising to the most sanguine of those who feel and have an interest in the town.

True, it has made no great spasmodic or wildcat strides; it is not building up today to be abandoned tomorrow, but its growth from the start has been steadily and permanently increasing.

When the election for the position of the new court house came off on January 6th, 1902, the total number of inhabitants in the place would not reach sixty. The fact is, Pell City was almost what people said about it—"a wide place in the middle of an old field, where four railroads come together."

The town was started up on an elaborate scale during the early nineties when "wild-cat speculation," (if the reader will excuse the term)

was at its height.

During that period, the Maxwell brick building, the St. Charles Hotel, the Hercules foundry, the new Georgia Pacific depot, and other buildings were erected. The prospects for a city seemed to be great when a great calamity came over the whole country, and Pell City felt the full effects of it. But to add to this, misfortunes of an individual character, in the way of fire, swept away everything that had been done. The excellent St. Charles Hotel and the depot were burned.

The building called the Maxwell block is the only relic of the old town. It is now occupied by Le-Fils & Son, and Zellner & Spears, merchants, downstairs, and Hazelwood & Glidewell hotel upstairs.

The town continued dull or rather dead until March, 1902, although hope of its resurrection was established in the hearts of a majority of Coosa Valley's citizens in September, when Mr. Sumter Cogswell and family located here.

Mr. Cogswell having passed through the forlorn looking place a number of times on his travels as an insurance agent, and having once been a stock holder in the old original Pell City company, wondered that the junction did not take a rise in industrial development, situated as it is on the main trunk line of the Southern railway and on two other lines, giving a direct connection with the Louisville & Nashville and the Nashville Chattanooga & St. Louis, and also being a place of such excellent health. The final result of Mr. Cogswell's soliloquies was his moving to Pell City, which event we have just mentioned. He was, previous to this, living at Memphis.

The next thing was the new court house project.

There was some opposition to locating the court house at Pell City, but the election was sufficient proof that this was mostly confined to a few individuals, as Pell City won the prize by a majority over all her competitors combined. The only argument used in her favor was her convenience in the way of railroads, that is, that out of twelve beats in the territory of the new court house, all but one are connected with the town by rail directly. It was recognized as a place much more suitable,

the people had a great deal of confidence in it.

In the matter of the cotton factory there were few people who would acknowledge their belief that a cotton factory would be located here in the very near future, but some of those few who pretended to laugh and ridicule the idea, have since moved their business to Pell City.

It is hardly necessary to state that almost a revolution in the minds of a large number of people has taken place, and that, whereas, the skeptics were once blind, they now see, and whereas they were deaf, they now hear, and now, instead of coming up to the station, or junction, they say they are on their way to town.

Pell City's population is now about 600, besides the large number who are unable to find houses or rooms in the town to live in, and are compelled to live a few miles out and travel the distance daily to and from work. Houses are badly needed, quite a number of applicants for houses have to be turned away every day—Sunday included, and people wake up the president of the Pell City Realty Co. before daybreak to get in the first application for a house two weeks ahead.

Outside of the 120 new houses now under course of construction by the Pell City Manufacturing Co. fifteen or more new residences have been built by individuals, and all are occupied by families who are keeping boarders.

Two fine new dwellings to cost several thousand dollars each, are to be built at once. One by Mr. Geo. W. Pratt, president of the Pell City Manufacturing Co., and one by Mr. A. J. Draper, treasurer of that company, who has recently moved here from Boston.

Five new business buildings have been built within the last three months, and business lots have been sold for from \$250 up to \$500 upon condition that they must be occupied by brick buildings within a stated time. The lots sold at these prices could have been purchased last December, 1901, at from \$15.00 to \$75.

Residence lots now sold for from \$199 to \$200 were going in December, 1901, at from \$10 to \$25.

The Pell City Manufacturing Co. has commenced its first new mill

building, covering a space of 225 x 640 feet, two stories high, and they will build three other buildings of the same size. They have a modern ginning establishment including wagon scale, suction elevators, double revolving press, and 4 seventy-saw gins. They will put in a cotton seed oil mill immediately. The capitol stock of this company is \$600,000. They also have a warehouse 150 x 300 feet.

And as this issue goes to press we learn as a positive fact that a bank is to be established at once, with capital stock from \$50,000 to 100,000. Messrs. Tilton, of Atlanta, and Martz, of Chicago, are the principal promoters of the new enterprise.

Another industry just beginning, is Mitchell's Saddle and Harness Factory. The building is now going up, and Mr. Mitchell, the promoter of the enterprise, has moved his family to Pell City and is building a new residence. And thus Pell City grows, and with no effort on the part of its present promoters to "boom" the town. They are in no hurry, and have no desire to fluctuate the town with speculators. They have made no list price of lots, but the great demand for houses by the very best class of people, has made it impossible to hold or resist selling a few lots without impeding the rapid progress of the town.

And thus have we related, without any effort to stretch or spread out, the brief history of Pell City's rapid and permanent growth in the last few months; but in the same length of time from the present, the *Coosa Valleyan* hopes to double, or quadruple its next chapters in the growth of our city.

Bays D. Cather. Pell City, Ala., Oct. 14, 1902

A BIG CAVE! [CRAWFORD'S COVE, 1885]

By Wm H. Cather

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, November 26, 1885

An Exploring Party Stopped by the Cave River.
A Little Geological History

A Few Objects of Interest as seen by an *Aegis* Reporter
Dots from the History of St. Clair

A few weeks since, a party was formed for the purpose of exploring a mammoth cave, one of the numerous natural wonders of St. Clair. As no one had reached the farthest limits of the cave, and as no scientific nor satisfactory results had been obtained from former partial explorations, it was, of course, considered an object of intense interest both to geology and science, as well as to the people of the county. It is to be regretted, however, that the party was not successful on account of the depth of the water in the cave river, which, having no boat, stopped further operations in this direction.

This cave is situated in the limestone formation with an entrance at Crawford's Cove, about 10 miles west northwest of Ashville. Caverns of this nature are not uncommon in the limestone formations, though not often of such magnitude as this one very likely extends, and not unfrequently contain grand and picturesque scenery, besides much of scientific interest. The entrance is a hole which descends perpendicularly for twenty feet, situated almost in the road, a few hundred yards from Mr. Arch Walker's residence at the foot of Blount Mountain. A short distance below, a spring which has its source in the cave, where the spring branch crosses the road, the stratum of rock forming the roof of this probably immense cavern outcrops.

The cave extends under the mountain and its origin is probably partly coincident with that of the mountain and partly produced by erosion or the action of water. We did not have an opportunity of examining the surrounding country sufficient to form any definite idea concerning its geological relations and conditions, but the rocks in the immediate vicinity do not appear to have been very greatly displaced. The rock overlying and around the cave is a compact bluish-gray limestone, apparently very evenly bedded and of varying texture—on this account is rugged in some places. From a few fossils found, it seems to be of later formation than the Carboniferous system. Though we did

not examine as fully and closely as we would like to have done, the geological structure and formation of this cave, it, undoubtedly, is not very old.

After we get through the entrance we find ourselves in a spacious room several hundred feet in diameter. Upon first entering, a novice in cave exploring, experiences a peculiar feeling. The dim flicker of the torches penetrating the darkness only a few yards, revealing ghastly shadows flitting from one place to another, makes the scene altogether weird, fantastic and spectral. This feeling, however, soon passes away.

The roof is composed of one solid rock extending the whole length of the room, and which from soundings taken, seems perfectly firm above.

We will continue this article next week and give a few interesting things connected with its geology, as well as of the route to the cave, along which conditions indicate the presence of kaolin and copper, and, perhaps other valuable minerals.

December 2, 1885, Continued from Last Week

The floor of this room, as well as of the entire cave, is covered with a very fine and plastic clay, fusible at red heat, and which, when exposed to dry air, readily hardens. This clay would be useful for the manufacture of earthenware.

Leaving this room, going some distance north through a large passage, we were surprised to hear the falling and rushing of water to the left. This was the cave river or pool, though we can tell but little of its dimensions, as the combined force of over half a dozen large torches did not give light enough for us to see the opposite side. It is some distance, however, and about twenty or more feet deep. In the very dry seasons it may be crossed easily. The color of the water is a deep blue, and its mineral properties are strongly lime, with probably a tinge of iron or copper.

Pendant above this pool about thirty feet, are beautiful stalactites,

some of which are several feet in length. These are formed by the action of water, and the process is one of accumulation and not abrasion. The water is charged with carbonate of lime and carbonic acid. Before dropping from the roof or sides of the cavern, it loses, by evaporation, both water and carbonic acid gas, and a minute particle of carbonate of lime is deposited, which, in course of time, accumulates, hardens and forms the beautiful stalactite. After dropping to the floor, carbonate of lime is also deposited there, which makes the stalagmite.

These stalactites are commonly white or pale yellow, crystalline, when thin are semi-transparent, and are often fibrous. If they contain foreign matter, they are sometimes muddy looking.

From some place in this part of the cave, near these stalactites, a beautiful waterfall pours into the pool below, making almost as much noise as a small cyclone.

The party did not have a boat along, and as the water was too cold to swim comfortably for any distance, further explorations in this direction were stopped. This was a serious disappointment, as one who had been some distance on the opposite side before, reported that the finest and most interesting scenery and largest rooms were on that side.

Returning and going through a western passage, we saw a dome about ten feet in diameter and extending upward further than our vision could reach. Beneath is a table of rock which would be the very thing for cave parties to eat their dinner on. There are other passages containing objects of interest, but our limited space will not permit of description.

There was no flora in this part of the cave and the fauna was very limited, as we did not see even a bat. their absence is caused by the perpendicular descent of the entrance. The only fauna existing in this cave, probably, are the eels and fish in the river, but we did not secure a specimen.

The geology of this section of the country is very interesting, and, at some future time, may be noticed by us in these columns. In places there are indications of copper, kaolin and iron.

STEELE [1889]

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, November 7, 1889

A RAILROAD TOWN. ITS INTELLIGENT POPULATION
Fine Situation, and Prospects. Should be a thriving Town.
A good School Point.

We started out last Saturday to take in Steele, one of the important towns in north St. Clair.

We had fixed for this trip the previous Saturday, but inclement weather, then, had the effect to defer our plans to another day. Last Saturday was an uninviting day; but we summoned all the courage we could beneath our coat to breast the stormy skies, mounting the hack at Ashville, 6 10 a. m., making close connection with the local freight at Whitney. On reaching the latter place, we found the train already there seemingly waiting for us, and glad enough not to be left, we were not long in boarding it.

The train soon run on to Steele, and dumped us out before it drew up to the platform, as it switched off to let the accommodation, due, pass. We noticed that a dozen or more persons boarded the accommodation for the Birmingham fair among whom we observed several familiar faces.

It was not long before we had the town sown with the *Aegis* and everybody reading it.

We regret that the state of the weather interfered with our opportunity to perambulate the thorofares, which we did not find in the best condition for pedestrian exercises in bad weather, and we suggest to the citizens of Steele to take the subject of side walks and avenues under

consideration.

We visited Messrs Gilbert and Hodges' sawmill, and had a pleasant chat with the former, whom we found to be well-posted about the resources of St. Clair County, especially those of Steele and the capabilities of the town. There is said to be good iron beds in the hills to the northwest of the town, and the charcoal industry—a new one—is flourishing condition. The material for the burning of the coal is abundant. We learned from Mr. Gilbert that his company expect to add a gin, compress, and grist mill to their other business next year.

The site of the town, on the A. G. S., is excellent for building purposes, there ought to be several additional industries started at that point. The principle business firms now operating at Steele are Hodges and Cox, Moore, and Trotter, all retail merchants, doing a fair business. Mr. Fred Smith, salesman at Moore's, and A. G. Wyatt, esq, salesman at Hodges and Cox', were actively engaged, most of the time, though it was an unfavorable day for the retail trade.

Owing to the fact that so many of the citizens were at the Birmingham fair, we did not have the opportunity to meet so many of them, and the continuous rain prevented the country folks from coming in; which limited our "handshake" somewhat on this first, but not last, visit to Steele. However, there were a number of the friends of the *Aegis* in the town—it could hardly be otherwise in any town in St. Clair County whatever might be going on elsewhere to attract its citizens away—and several more were added to our list before leaving.

We took dinner with our former townsman, Mr. L. M. Cox and his interesting and amiable family, and fared sumptuously. We regret that our stay among these hospitable and kind people was so brief. On boarding the down train at 1 40 p. m. for home, we barely had time to shake hands with our friend, Dr. J. M. Crump, who had been absent all day, and had just returned. On arriving at Whitney, we fell in with Judge Box, who had come down on the same train, on his way home from Calhoun County where he was holding his court, to spend Sunday

with his family.

Steele is a good school location, and should have one of the largest and best schools in successful operation in the county. The community is highly intelligent, and there is a large number of children in the town; yet we learned while there that the place is without a school; and the reason given is that the patrons are divided upon the question of a teacher. This should not be, if it is so; and, in our humble judgement, no such difficulty should stand in the way of the school.

Perhaps no town in this county pays more attention to literary matters than Steele—its people are refined and foster whatever tends to mental and moral improvement. They are a reading community—we had no difficulty getting every person we met, who did not already take the *Aegis*, to subscribe. In view of these facts, we were more surprised to find the community wrestling in the low ground of a literary school.

We hope that whatever difficulties exist, they may soon be overcome, and that it will not be long before we shall hear of Steele's fine school, flourishing under the fostering care of the good people of that refined and intelligent community. This would be as it should be.

BRANCHVILLE [1890]
Southern Aegis, May 1, 1890

Editor *Aegis*. Ashville, Ala.

The undersigned would respectfully say that he congratulates you for the great improvement made in the *Aegis*. It is now a very newsy and interesting paper and ought to be in the hands of every head of a family in St. Clair County as it has been a beacon of light in showing up the truth in regard to the great mineral and farming resources of this county.

The time is now at hand when the surplus capital of the East is

seeking profitable investment and it is an evident fact that their attention is drawn to North Alabama, and it is an evident fact that there is no county in north Alabama that can offer greater inducements to the investor or home seeker than St. Clair County, it being blessed with a good climate, pure water, fine timber, rich soil and inexhaustible treasures of minerals such as coal, iron, lime, fire-clay, building rock, and indications that we have some of the better metals such as silver, lead and copper. We have great reason to be hopeful for the future development of the hidden treasures of St. Clair County. The building of those furnaces at Ashville will show up the great hidden wealth around Ashville in the shape of Brown Iron ore of an excellent quality and the indications are from the scientific teachings of geology and mineralogy that silver and lead run with the Brown Iron Ore.

Thus you see that the developments shortly to be made at Ashville will open up a portion of the hidden treasures of the heart of St. Clair County.

Now we will not lose sight of the great importance of the rail-road shortly to be built from Gadsden to Leeds, running through one of the finest valleys in the state, having on either side of the valley heavy deposits of Brown Iron Ore, Coal and other minerals, with a belt of an excellent quality of yellow pine timber. This road will open up the heart and center of St. Clair County. Our isolated place, Branchville, will then take on a boom, when this road is built, equal to that at Ashville, Springville, and Pell City, from the simple fact that Branchville has such great natural facilities for a first class country town: it is situated in one of the most healthy localities of the state as has been proved for 65 years.

William Watson, one of the first settlers, who came to Branchville in the year 1819, was from North Carolina, and while on his way to some of the lower counties in the state, being charmed with the beautiful surroundings of Branchville in connection with the nice valley, made Branchville his home, and there lived for many years until his death. His dwelling still remains a very good comfortable log cabin, 65 years

old and it can be truthfully said that a case of chills and fever has never originated in this old homestead. And one of the finest springs of pure water in the state flows from the foot of the mountain, and the beauty of it is that it is so elevated that by conveying it in pipes, it will supply every house in Branchville. Now, in conclusion, I will say that St. Clair County has all the natural advantages to become, when developed, one of the foremost counties in the state.

J. H. Vandegrift.

THE GEM CITY [Ashville]

Its Situation Graphically Described
Its Easy Access to Billions of native Wealth
The Topography of its Surroundings Truthfully Stated
The Timber Region and Mountains of Ore that environ it
Its Beautiful Site and its vigorous streams and Springs
Other Local Situations lying Contiguous Augmenting the Features of its
Superb Situation
The Rich Agricultural Districts that Feed it.
The Out-look and Prospects presented fairly.
Nothing Exaggerated, but Reads like a Fairy Tale.

Southern Aegis, Thursday, June 13, 1889

Ashville is located in a picturesque valley between two red mountains, forty-one miles north-east of Birmingham, 22 miles south-west of Gadsden, thirty-four miles north-west of Anniston, and three miles from the Alabama Great Southern Railroad. It is one of the oldest towns in North Alabama. The place was settled, originally, by the Indians, and was called by them Lower Catawla. Subsequently the name was changed to Ashville, in honor of one of the pioneer citizens of

the county—Hon. John Ash—who was among the first representatives in the House of Delegates and state senator. Mr. Ash lived to a great age, having died only a few years since. He was a man of great influence and in every way an upright, useful citizen.

The place was selected for a town site by the early settlers of this part of the state, and before the state was admitted into the Federal Union, when they had the whole county to select from, and the town is beautifully located on a cherty formation at the foot of the Eastern Red mountain and near the East bank of Big Canoe Creek; it is free from mud, in the wettest seasons dry and pleasant.

In point of health, it is not surpassed in the state. We scarcely ever have any sickness in the place; likewise the health of the surrounding country is not to be surpassed.

In a stone's throw of the courthouse can be seen a number of large springs, the water of which boils from the bottom as clear as crystal, and is cold in summer, rendering ice unnecessary for drinking purposes.

One of these springs will run a mill. In fact for many years there was a mill, gin, and other machinery run by its waters within five hundred yards of its basin. These springs never fail. The volume of water thrown out by them is almost as great at one season as another, and would furnish water for a large city. In addition to the springs, Big Canoe Creek is within less than five hundred yards of the town. It is called a creek; it might well be called a river. In olden time, in less than a mile from Ashville, our forefathers launched on it their flatboats, laden with cotton and other products of the soil, bound direct for the city of Mobile. This creek empties into the Coosa River about fourteen miles from the town.

About eight hundred yards, or a less distance from the town, the creek runs up against a high line bluff on the East bank which continues for more than a mile. The land stretching out from this bank is high and dry at all seasons of the year, lies beautifully. Nature seems to have arranged this stream of water for man's convenience in the locating on its margin of industrial enterprises, for no more suitable sites for

factories and furnaces can anywhere be found than all along and upon the bank of this beautiful stream.

No place in Alabama is better situated or adapted to the building of machine shops and factories than Ashville. We have the locality and health, the climate, the water, the iron ore (both the red and the brown) the limestone and the coal, in three fields, near by.

Ashville is situated, as before state, between the two red mountains, being at the foot and within 600 yards of the one mountain on the east, and within four miles of the other mountain on the north west side of Canoe Creek valley. These mountains are filled with an abundance of red hematite iron ore, which assays from 45 to 60 per cent of metallic iron. This ore is easy of access, there being a gap near Ashville cutting the eastern mountain, and a level country across the valley to the western mountain.

A railroad can be graded across this valley at a cost of \$2,000 a mile. A railroad is now being built to Whitney from this place which will be within one mile of the western red mountain. Much of this ore is still in the hands of the original owners, and can be had on fair terms, while much of it has passed into the hand of strong corporations. Some of them are now preparing to mine and work this ore near Greene's spring, in Ashville. They have, as we are reliably informed, arranged for furnace sites with a view of locating there.

Just over on the Beaver Creek Ridge, two miles and a half south of Ashville, brown hematite ore is found in large quantities, and is excellent in quality. Thomas of Pennsylvania sometime since purchased some 12 miles of this ridge, the purchase coming up within less than six miles of Ashville. Much of this lead of ore from the Thomas purchase, on to Coosa River, a distance of 17 miles, is still in the hands of the original owners, and can be had on good terms.

Just over on Shoal Creek about two miles south of this Beaver Creek Ridge is also found an abundance of iron ore. We might say that within six miles of Ashville there is ore enough to run a dozen furnaces for one hundred years to come, also an abundance of lime of excellent

quality to be found on every hand. In fact Ashville is built on a bed of lime. Every grade and kind of lime known, is found in this section, and is to be had at within a few miles of the town.

The Coosa coal field comes up within six miles of Ashville. The Cahaba coal field or what is known as the Black Creek coal is within ten miles of the place and the upper Warrior coal field on Straight Mountain in Blount County approaches within ten miles of Ashville. All these coals make excellent coke, but the coal spoken of in Blount County, it is truthfully said, makes the best coke of any coal in the state.

A railroad running out six miles from Ashville will reach the Coosa coal field, and the Leeds railroad, which will soon be built from Birmingham by way of Leeds and Ashville to Gadsden, will in all probability pass through the Black Creek coal field. A road from Ashville via Whitney, ten miles long, will reach the coal in Straight Mountain. Three miles of this road is now being built from Ashville to Whitney. This road will pass through red mountain near Beason's mill on Muckleroy Creek. There the red ore can be thrown down to the cars, either on the right or on the left.

At the foot of Blount Mountain five and a half miles from Ashville, this road would pass through a bed of superior lime 100 feet thick, extending for miles up and down the mountain. The road would pass up the mountain, either at Green's Gap or Haithcock's Gap and on into this excellent coking coal.

While a large per cent of this coal field has been bought up by strong companies, yet there are thousands of acres of as good coal as that which has been purchased, and near Ashville, which can now be had at five and six dollars an acre.

This mountain, like the Red and the Shoal Creek mountains, is filled with an inexhaustible supply of sandstone of a superior quality, and can be purchased on one's own terms.

Dropping back to the foot of Blount Mountain on east side, this road could be extended into the Greasy Cove country, some five miles into one of the finest iron ore deposits in North Alabama. this is red ore

of superior quality and in great quantities. These mountain sides like those of Red and Shoal Creek mountains are lined with mountain oak. From these mountain slopes a million cords of tan-bark could be obtained.

The Canoe Creek valley is one of the most beautiful in North Alabama, and is very rich. Every crop which grows in this section could be grown profitably here, such as coin, cotton, oats, wheat, peas, beans and all manner of vegetables. More cotton is grown in St. Clair to the acre than in any other county in the state. (See United States census) One bale to the acre can easily be made. The soil produces from 40 to 60 bushels of corn, and two to three hundred bushels of sweet and Irish potatoes to the acre.

There are large quantities of kaolin near Ashville. Just over in Beaver Creek valley can be found inexhaustible quantities of fine clay, of the best quality. This deposit exists in places as much as eighteen feet in thickness.

The best pine belt, of long-leaf, yellow heart pine west and north of Coosa River is found bordering on the northern bank of Beaver Creek. This is one of the finest belts of timber grown anywhere in the state. It extends from Leeds to Coosa River, a distance of near 40 miles. It seems as if nature in making this grand timber boundary endeavored to put the crowning glory of native wealth here. This timber is in the hand of the original owners, and can be bought on easy terms.

Again, just south of Ashville and within one and a half miles of the latter is a section of country known as flatwoods, well-set with pine trees and post oaks; while not so good as the pine on Beaver Creek, yet it might be classed as good. These lands can be purchased from two to four dollars per acre. The timber is valuable, only awaiting transportation. The Leeds road will pass along parallel with the Beaver Creek forests and through this flat woods timber.

On Canoe Creek and on streams running into it, can be found an inexhaustible supply of fine hickory, white oak, ash, sweet gum, beech, and other valuable wood. Some of this excellent growth is now being

cut and shipped to wagon factories at Birmingham. These timbers can be purchased for one fourth of their real value. There is certainly not a better place in America to build wagon and carriage factories. Every thing to run the business can be had at the very door of the manufactories.

Every article made of iron and wood can be manufactured on as good terms in Ashville as at any other place in America.

There is said to be marble of good quality and believed to be in abundance some three miles south west of the town.

Now is the time to purchase iron, coal, lime, sandstone, timber and land near Ashville. All this kind of property will appreciate in value.

The people in this section are kind and hospitable, and perhaps there is not a more moral community anywhere than that of Ashville and its surroundings. The people extend a hearty welcome to all who propose casting their lot with us.

In six miles north of Ashville is what is known among us as the Chandler Mountain. The steep is eleven miles long and about ten miles wide. On top of this mountain, the lands are reasonably level from two to four miles in width. The soil is reasonably fertile. This is one of the finest places to grow fruits in the state. The Alabama Great Southern Road runs parallel with this mountain and near its foot. It is about 1000 feet above the surrounding country. The people up there never fail to raise good fruit crops. Much of this land is now owned by the U. S. government and can be homesteaded at only a few cents per acre. The region is well-watered with springs and ravines. It would be an excellent place to raise stock, especially sheep and goats. The scenery from the elevated plateau above is simply grand.

We would call attention to the fact that our creeks are filled with nice fish. Trout have been taken from Canoe Creek weighing as much as eight pounds. The brim is a fine fish, and is to be had in abundance in our waters. Very large fish are taken from the Coosa River.

The famous Ten Island Shoals in Coosa River are within 12 miles of Ashville. The U. S. government has been at work on these shoals for

years. The finest water power in the world for driving machinery exists at Ten Islands. Coosa River is a large and beautiful stream. Steamboats run on it from Rome, Ga., to Greensport, Alabama, twelve miles east of this town.

Ashville, with all its surroundings is bound at no distant day, to become a great manufacturing city.

There are no creeks or rivers to turn or any wells to bore in order to get water for any purpose. The water is here and in inexhaustible quantities, and as pure as can be had in Alabama.

These iron, coal and other mineral lands, with their valuable timber and water advantages, surrounded by a fine agricultural region, are coming into demand. Let those interested in such matters look in upon our section. It will pay to do so. It is only necessary to come and see and be convinced.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE TOWN OF EDEN

Pell City Times, Pell City, Alabama

April 4, 1906 and April 11, 1906

About one and a half miles west of Pell City is mountain girdled Eden. This town is situated on slightly elevated ground giving it a natural drainage by way of Wolf Creek. Mountains tower around three sides of it, and from the eastern side of the town the view to the west is grand: to the left is a mountain peak that can be seen miles away; directly west is another high mountain, partly cleared and set in fruit trees; in the far away distance Ball Rock Mountain can be seen in imposing grandeur.

Eden is an old town, and was formerly the principle trading point for the farmers for many miles around, but being sustained principally by the farms, it is not a large place, although its merchants do a thriving

and lucrative business.

The first man to go into business in Eden was I. R. W. Lewis, merchant, now deceased. He was the second postmaster of the place, and for many years he carried on business and kept the post office. He was a prominent man taking a leading part in church and town affairs.

W. P. Cowan, still a prominent man in the town, was the second business man in the town.

Two other prominent men closely connected with Eden's earlier history were Abner Lacy, who was Probate Judge of the county at the time of his death several years ago, and Andrew Zellner, who soon after the war was elected Probate Judge. Mr. Zellner was a highly educated, well-read man, but very severe in his religious belief and would never permit himself to be addressed as Judge, after his term of office expired.

On the West of town is New Hope Baptist Church. This church was established nearly half a century ago. The building used to stand just across the railroad near the trussel. Later it was moved to near its present site, where it and a school house became the nucleus round which grew the town of Eden, which first bore the name of "Manchester," but there being another Manchester in the state it was changed to Eden. Near the present Baptist church is an old graveyard where sleep many good men and women who have lived and worked in Eden.

In the eastern part of the town is the Methodist church. It is a modest, unpretentious building, but much good has been done in it. And there are many earnest Christian workers among its members, some of whom are Mesdames H. N. Laney, W. P. Cowan, H. B. Guy, W. M. Laney and Jack Kendrick.

There is a good three roomed school building comfortably equipped with many modern school necessities. And a flourishing school under the management of Prof. Goodrich.

There are many well-to-do families living in comfortable homes; and there are a few pretty flower yards and well-kept lawns.

Mrs. Martha Lewis and Mrs. Lizzie Cowan are pioneer women in

Eden. These two ladies, true representatives of the gentlewoman of a time that is past, have back of them many years of usefulness and helpful living. They are respected and loved by those who know them.

H. N. Laney has for many years been in the mercantile business. He is courteous and accommodating, and has built up an enviable reputation by his fair and upright dealings with his customers. His is one of the prominent families of the place, with a host of friends.

H. B. Guy, with the exception of a short time during which he was in business in Pell City, has for twenty years been a merchant in Eden. His reputation for honest dealing and truth can be no better expressed than by quoting a sentence the writer has often heard: "If Guy says it's that way, it is." He with his courteous and obliging son-in-law, J. O. Chancy, and his daughter, Mrs. Chancy, carry on a large and paying business. Mrs. Guy is a hospitable, popular lady, much liked by all who know her.

Mr. B. H. Hindsman, Mrs. S. H. Roberson, and Mr. George Stevens, are all well-to-do market gardeners, and estimable men.

J. W. Ramsey and estimable family live in the town, but Mr. Ramsey farms on an extensive scale.

Mr. J. C. Cornett and amiable wife have a commodious, comfortable home here. Mr. Cornett is one of those characters Opie Reid loves best to portray, genial, humorous, altogether quaint and original. His friends and well-wishers are those who know him.

Dr. Gray and Dr. Laney are two well-known and popular physicians of the place. Both have an extensive practice and both are much liked.

Mr. Thomps Inzer has one of the prettiest homes in the place. He is one of

GET THE REST FROM THE PAPER

C. M. Lewis lives in the old Lewis home, at the foot of Lewis mountain. We learn that Mr. Lewis is putting out Lewis Mountain in grape vines and fruit trees.

(Concluded From Last Week) Another Pioneer settler of Eden

was our present County Treasurer and fellow townsman, C. D. Alverson, who recognizing Eden's advantages as a good trading point for this side of Backbone Mountain, moved there from Cropwell in 1882. Eden at that time was to a large extent a cultivated field and Mr. Alverson tore down a fence and pulled up corn and peas from a space large enough to build his store. The town at that time was laid off in streets and lots and Mr. Alverson's store was built on Commerce Street. He was, and is, an energetic business man, and he did a thriving business. He and his popular wife resided there till her death in 1905, and were closely allied with the business, social and religious life of the town.

Mr. Sam Spruiell, now of Leeds, and Mr. D. T. Bowman, now living at Stewart's Schoolhouse, are two other men of integrity, and skilled in their trade, blacksmithing, who aided in the making of Eden. They were and still are much liked by a host of friends. Mr. Spruiell was also Justice of the Peace.

"Uncle" Johnathan Brown, who died a year or two ago, will long be remembered with loving respect. His was a simple Christian life, so close to his Master, so strong his faith, he strengthened the faith of the wavering and encouraged the disheartened.

So far as we can learn, Dr. P. G. Dunlap was the first professional man to reside in Eden. He is now a prominent physician in Adger.

Mr. Dickey, blacksmith, has resided in Eden several years. He was a skilled workman, and a substantial citizen of the town.

The Rev. Mr. Lovell and estimable family also reside in Eden.

Mr. James M. Garrett, our present popular Clerk of the Circuit Court, came to Eden several years ago, quite a young man. He identified himself with the best interests of the town in a public spirited manner. He and his estimable family still reside in Eden.

There are others who could be mentioned as aiding materially in the development of the town, but I fear making my article too long.

There is no better place in the county for dairying, market gardening and fruit growing than in and around Eden, and much of this business is carried on there.

A FEW HINTS CONCERNING THE TOWN OF BROMPTON (1897)

Southern Aegis, Thursday, April 22, 1897

Brompton's population are the members of fourteen families, giving her a population of fifty or sixty persons. But Brompton has no thoroughfare or County road.

Brompton has three general merchandise Stores, all of which are doing a reasonably fair business, though their customers come and go without a public road.

Brompton merchants sell and deliver each season from eight to fifteen cars of fertilizer, all of which is hauled home without a public road.

Brompton has one cotton gin, ginning for the public. Ginned last season 281 bales of cotton, all of which was hauled here and hauled home without a public road.

Brompton has one Grist mill which grinds corn for the public. The patrons thereof come and go without a public road.

Brompton has one Depot which does an average monthly receiving business of from \$250 to \$600 per month, much of which is lumber furnished by three saw mills that ship from this point; all being hauled here without a public road.

Brompton is located on the Southern Rail Road, 3-4 of a mile west of Karris Gap, in the Coosa Mountains, and 22 miles east of Birmingham, and has no public road.

Brompton has another very important industry to wit: a black smith shop, that does blacksmithing for a large number of farmers, all come and go without a public road.

And last but not least, Brompton has a post office which does an every day business. The patrons come and go without a public road.

She also sends out one Star route mail, but does not send it out over a public road.

T. E. Haygood.

OUR LOCALITY [SPRINGVILLE]

Springville Enterprise, August 24, 1876

Springville, Ala., located at the base of one of the most southerly spurs of the Alleghanies, is considered the second place of importance as a shipping point on the direct line of the Alabama and Chattanooga R. R. going south from its northern terminus until Birmingham is reached. The scenery around the Village and its vicinity is beautiful as any in the mountains. At the foot of the hill, in the form of a crescent, in the center of the Village, gushes forth many crystal springs from which flows a bright streamlet diagonally across the business portion of the picturesque village, affording sufficient water, if utilized to drive the machinery for a large factory of flouring mill.

A digression. At no very distant day, cotton that is produced in and near our beautiful valley, will be manufactured into yarns and different fabrics by utilizing the means of the natural advantages which a kind providence has so lavishly bestowed on this healthful mountain region, rich in mineral ores in such contiguity that it astounds the practical iron-mongers of the old world whilst prospecting here.

The reports that scientific engineers in interest of foreign bond holders of the first mortgage bonds of the A. & C. R. R. have recently made in regard to the vast wealth that lies hid beneath the surface of this immediate section, have attracted the attention and created a lively feeling with not only the bond holders, but has created no inconsiderable inquiry on the part of the practical miners of coal, iron, and copper, from the fact the minerals, building material suitable for furnaces, together with limestone, lie in such close proximity, that the intervening distance

almost amounts to nothing; thereby rendering them available, at much less cost, than ever found in their surrounding.

Thus, future development of the unsurpassed mineral resources, of this part of Alabama, our own section, is not only certain, but is being discussed in connection with the many and varied interests of the A & C R. R., and the difference interests pertaining thereto.

We state facts—and upon these, Springville has a note-worthy future, to say the least. Surrounded as it is, within easy stages, not only of coal, iron, limestone, and sandstone, together with water privileges for manufactories; also backed up by a fair county for farming and stock raising; thereby, rendering Springville second unto no point along the line of the A. and C. R. R. as a self sustaining, desirable and delightfully healthy point, especially ____ resort and retreat. [Paper torn] ____ courtesy, but real punctuality and well-established confidence, no fictions characters, but sterling worth.

Here there are churches of four different denominations, each having houses of worship creditable to the inhabitants even of a much larger place.

We need a well-established school of high standard, and are looking forward to the early accomplishment of our desires in this important necessity of all enlightened and intelligent communities.

PELL CITY The "Belle City of Alabama"

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

Wednesday, September 28, 1887

The Pell City Land Company are pushing things in a hurry. The editor of the *Aegis* saw the first lines in the survey of the streets run and had the honor to be the first to ride on the first engine that turned on the new Y of the T. & C. V. Rr. just completed on last Saturday evening at Pell City. The survey of the town and streets will soon be completed,

for Capt. Jno. Henderson, the engineer, is noted for his go-ahead-aliveness and energy. The streets and avenues are full width, the avenues running east and west, parallel with the Georgia Pacific railroad. The lots which are of good size, are already going at fair prices and will be placed on the market at an early day. We are officially informed that the Pell City Land Company will give a grand barbecue about the first of November. It will be a gala day of speech making and congratulation for St. Clair. The company and others say Pell City, the "Belle City of Alabama," is to be the coming capital of old St. Clair. We shall see what we shall see. In the meantime buy a lot at Pell City and keep up with the rising young town by reading the *Aegis*.

We give you facts. Already three roads have concentrated there and are completed. Already a large and commodious Union depot is closed in and will soon be completed. Already a large and commodious Union Depot is closed in and will soon be completed. Already six trains make connection there daily and a dozen more stop. Already she has telephone connections with Talladega, Anniston and other places. Already parties are negotiation for the erection of a large hotel and the land company will, at an early day, build a \$7,000.00 one. Already the city is being surveyed. Health is found here. It is the highest town on the Ga. Pac. Rr. between Birmingham and Anniston. It has excellent water facilities and besides is only three or four miles from coosa River.

What more is wanted to insure the prosperity and growth of the "Belle City of Alabama?" Soon she will have a newspaper. Ere long a college [high school] will be built and mercantile houses by dozens will spring up. A bright light is dawning upon old St. Clair. We are to have one city in her borders and that city bids fair to equal any in the state. More anon.

SUBSTANTIAL AND HEALTHY GROWTH OF PELL CITY, 1902

Bays D. Cather, Ed.
Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, October 29, 1902

The most commendable feature in the management of Pell City Realty Co., who own the town site, is probably its policy of resisting all temptation to encourage a "Boom" in real estate. The company has actually made out no price lists for its lots. The clamor for houses is now getting to be so urgent that it cannot much longer afford to keep its lots off the market without seriously impeding the growth of the town.

People have to have houses, and the best class of people like to own the land and build their houses to suit their own taste and needs.

Those built by the Pell City Manufacturing Co. (120) for its own employees are models of comfort and unreservedly attractive in appearance. Taken altogether, they are superior to any in the South for operatives by an industrial corporation.

The one thing that impresses one most favorably is the beauty of the scenery which the residents of Pell City will always have the privilege of enjoying, and another feature of still greater practical value is Pell City's health climate. There are no swamps and no mosquitoes, and so there will be attracted here a class of people who would hesitate before locating in a less mountainous country.

In 1900, the census gave Pell City 52 people—a recent school census develops the fact that the present population is about 600. By reason of the soil, beauty of its scenery and its exemptions from extremes of heat and cold, Pell City would make a fine winter and summer resort if it was not being developed into an industrial city.

PELL CITY (1902)
Bays D. Cather, Editor
Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, October 29, 1902

[Pell City is] Situated in the center of the iron, coal and cotton fields of Alabama, lying in the beautiful Coosa Valley, extending from the foot of the Back Bone Mountains to the banks of the Coosa River, in the Piedmont section of this great state, where the climate is temperate and healthful, where fevers and contagious diseases have never been known. [Pell City] Is an ideal location for a beautiful manufacturing and commercial city.

The Southern Railway, the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, the Birmingham and Atlantic Railroad, and the Lathrop and Hatten Railroad have their junction at this point, making Pell City a railroad center, with low rates of freight to and from the East and West, and placing it in close touch with the outside world.

The topography of the town site is perfectly adapted to proper drainage and sewerage. The land is high and dry and drains toward the Coosa River.

Waters suitable for manufacturing and municipal purposes is abundant and of excellent quality, being pronounced by chemists, after a careful analysis, to be absolutely pure.

The magnificent climate conditions of this section of Alabama, the fertility of the surrounding lands, its close proximity to the coal, iron and cotton fields, is all that could be desired for the maintenance of a large and prosperous community. There is no locality so favored by Providence as Pell City, with cheap labor, coal, cotton, iron and lumber at its very door.

In the mining of coal and the production of iron and steel, Alabama has surpassed her sister states. The immense furnaces of Birmingham, Bessemer, Anniston, Gadsden, Talladega and the surrounding country, together with the coal fields of St. Clair, the Broken Arrow, Warrior, Walker County and Pratt District, tell but little of the wonderful wealth and resources of this greatest of all the Southern States. Pell City is the center of the iron, coal, limestone and cotton interests of Alabama.

Ten thousand bales of cotton are raised annually within a radius of 10 miles of Pell City, producing a byproduct of 5,000 tons of cotton

seed; the cheapest and best steaming coal in Alabama (in fact in the South) is mined at Coal City, only five miles distant; this coal is equal, as is shown by analysis and results, to the famous Coal Creek coal of Tennessee, and Pocahontas coal of West Virginia. The Coal City mines are on the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, which has its terminus at Pell City. The cost of coal delivered at Pell City is less than \$1.50 per ton.

St. Clair County, in which Pell City is located, has a population of over 20,000, 80 percent of which are white; therefore, the very best native labor can be had in abundance and at very reasonable wages. These people are now engaged in farming and would welcome the building up of Pell City and the establishment of cotton factories, oil mills, and iron and woodworking industries. There being a large surplus of white labor on the farms, this surplus would naturally seek employment in the industries started at Pell City, and as results have shown by past experience of Southern mills, this class of labor is without equal in the United States. Being strictly American, they work with their employers in the upbuilding of their common country, and are not controlled by labor unions and such disturbing influences. This places a safety upon investments in the South that is not enjoyed by the North, East and West.

Pell City, with her invigorating and health-giving climate, with her competing lines of railroads, cheap cotton, cheap labor, with exemption from taxation for a period of 10 years on cotton fabric and rope factories, presents the ideal place and opportunity for the building of a city of cotton industries, such as cotton ginneries, cotton seed oil, knitting and cotton mills, with factories to make into garments the cloth of its mills—making a complete chain of industries from the seed in the fields to the finished garment.

ABOUT THE NEW COURT HOUSE [1902]

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, March 5, 1902

The *Coosa Valleyan* wrote its regular court house correspondent at Ashville last week to find out the definite action taken by the commissioner's court at its Feb. term, in regard to the new court house and jail.

The board accepted the deed to the site, which was made to the county by the Pell City Realty Co., and adopted two orders in view of the ordinance of the constitutional convention, providing for the court house and jail.

Order No 1, which deals with the issuing of bonds of the county to pay for the work, and carries into effect the ordinance on that point, by providing for the preparation of such bonds. The latter will be issued for amount of \$500 each, numbered from 1 to 20 to be sold a par and to be payable in lawful currency of the U. S. the first day of July, 1902, bearing interest at 4 per cent, paying semi-annually in lawful currency.

Said bonds are to be ready July first 1902, and bear interest from that date, if sold.

Any citizen of St. Clair can buy a bond or more, or all. The *Coosa Valleyan* urges that our own citizens buy all of these bonds, as it will be a good and safe investment for them.

The second order empowers the judge of probate to secure plans and specifications for the erection of the court house and jail at Pell City at lowest price possible without injury to the county, and obtain a competent architect to prepare plans, etc., and to superintend the work, if in his judgement, the best interest can be served in that way.

Such power invested in the probate judge is discretionary and he is to receive bids for the buildings to be erected until May 12th, 1902, when the commissioners will be in session again, and will, in open court, open said bids, reserving in their order the right to accept or reject any or all of the bids.

All that talk about getting an injunction against building the new court house and jail at Pell City is pure rot. It would be impossible to

knock the people out of their court house, since it is given them by the constitution—the highest existing authority of the state and which cannot be set aside without a vote of the people.

THE EDUCATIONAL RALLY and LAYING THE CORNERSTONE OF PELL CITY COURTHOUSE (1902)

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, July 9, 1902

At the very lowest estimate there were three thousand people present and no disturbance of any kind was had. People from abroad said it was the largest well-behaved crowd they ever saw and the largest crowd of good looking people ever seen together.

Does not this in itself speak chapters for Pell City and for St. Clair County: Does it not show a disposition on the part of the people to get higher where they can enjoy better things in life? An aspiration to get up on a higher level of social and educational development?

The *Coosa Valleyan* thinks yes. Better times are coming.

In that vast crowd could be seen republicans, democrats and populists, all mingling together as of one family and agreeing that education for the youth of our land was the paramount issue. What a glorious day it was! Could any boradminded person say the movement was prompted by any selfish motive?

Mrs. Spears, wife of our distinguished townsman, Col. N. B. Spears, has the education of the youth of St. Clair at heart; this is why she started the movement. To her is due the credit for its inauguration in St. Clair County and electing her as its corresponding secretary was a wise action on the part of those present. It was she who first wrote to the General Education Board; it was her who started the ball to rolling.

The great mass meeting at Pell City on July 4th was a grand success in accomplishing its object, and while to the estimable lady just

mentioned belongs the credit of starting it in this county, it would have been a flat failure had not the good people of this entire valley put their shoulders to the wheel like the noble men and women they are, and made it what it was. The success of the cause was due to these. They only needed to be told of the object in view, and they responded to the call as a unit and the result was the greatest, grandest, most enthusiastic gathering ever before held within the limits of old St. Clair County.

The veteran who presided over the deliberations of the meeting was the Hon. Jno. W. Inzer of Ashville, a better and more patriotic citizen than whom we have never known. For fifty years he has been a resident of this county and has always been open and outspoken in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the county and state. The part he has played in the building up of St. Clair County is greater than that of any other citizen. He is largely responsible for the building of the East & West railroad through the mining towns of Ragland and Broken Arrow to Pell City. He was the man for the occasion—a friend of the whole county.

The exercises were opened with prayer by Rev. P. M. Jones, whose prayer was very appropriate for the occasion. He invoked God's blessings upon the day and the cause for which the crowd had been assembled. He thanked the Almighty for all the rich blessings we, as His people, had been enjoying these many past years and asked that the people of St. Clair be continuously uplifted to a much higher level religiously, morally and intellectually than ever before; that the purpose for which the meeting was called might be speedily accomplished and that great and good things would continue to come to us, through to the end of time.

Hon. Joseph B. Graham's educational address on the occasion was the chief feature. Mr. Graham is a man of wide reputation as an orator and his message to the people of St. Clair County last Friday was a kindly note of warning; an inspiration to move forward; an appeal to good common sense; a magnificent exhortation to come up out of our

present condition as a people—to reach out and grasp the wonderful opportunities before us and to elevate ourselves to such an extent that we can overlook and be above all petty whims and prejudices. His speech, so ably delivered, was most thankfully received; it was the right sort of a message delivered at a most appropriate time and place. We wish we could publish it in *The Coosa Valleyan* but as that is hardly possible, suffice it to say that it was not merely a grand definition of the term education, but a most pointed lesson to those who would prefer to lag or hang back "letting well enough alone," as they call it, and a most noble effort in behalf of the ignorant and uneducated. Education along lines of industry.

Frank H. Lathrop, so well known in the business world as one of the most progressive lumber manufacturers in the south, a public spirited citizen—a man who came to St. Clair about fifteen years ago, investing his capital in building up its lumber and other manufacturing interests, made a sound and solid talk. He realizes the need of a large first class public school in St. Clair County, the value it would be to his county and not only that, he showed his appreciation of the fact by a free contribution of \$500 to the fund for the school in view. Mr. Lathrop did not talk long enough. We were delighted to see him present and to hear from him and to see that he was in excellent health. He is a citizen to be proud of and is never found wanting when there is need of someone to aid in building up St. Clair County.

Hon. W. S. Forman, Judge of Probate and Hon. N. B. Spradley, county supt. education, delivered most excellent addresses. They were with the procession for education; have always been thus. The judge was born and raised in St. Clair—a worker for the people while Mr. Spradley's record as a county superintendent and a citizen speaks well enough for itself to convince us that he is in sympathy with the movement, all over.

Miss Ney Cather's poem on "St. Clair County," recited by her, is published in this week's issue of *The Coosa Valleyan*. As the author of

this poem is the editor's sister, we will pass on, allowing it to speak for itself.

This completed the speeches for the morning and the election of trustees and other business was taken up.

Mr. J. W. Cospers, one of the valley's best citizens, moved that the following be chosen as a board of trustees: Hon. Jno. W. Inzer, of Ashville; M. C. Frame, of Easonville; Col. N. B. Spears, of Pell City; Col. Sumter Cogswell, of Pell City; W. T. Brown, of Ragland; J. W. Cospers, of Easonville; Hon. W. S. Forman, of Ashville. The above-named gentlemen were unanimously elected and Mrs. N. B. Spears was elected corresponding secretary.

Subscriptions to the school fund were then taken up and nearly \$2,500 were subscribed.

The Board of Trustees met in the afternoon and elected Col. Sumter Cogswell, president, and also an executive committee as follows: Sumter Cogswell, chairman. F. H. Lathrop, M. C. Frame, N. B. Spears, J. W. Cospers, W. T. Brown.

Mayor Spears then led the crowd over to dinner. The meat was well-prepared and served by Mr. Harris Tuck, of Coal City, who had charge of the barbecue. It is useless for your humble servant, the editor, to undertake to describe the delightful hour spent in partaking of the barbecued meats, and the excellent dinners prepared by the good mothers and daughters of the communities.

LAYING OF THE PELL CITY COURTHOUSE CORNERSTONE

After dinner, the first feature was was Bro. Daniel S. Jones' original poem which was written in his usual humorous style. We expected to have the pleasure of publishing this poem, but to our great sorrow, Bro. Jones lost it somewhere on the grounds. It was in a large yellow envelope, and we would consider it a great favor, if anyone finding it should leave it with *The Coosa Valleyan* for publication. We will send *The Coosa Valleyan* one year to any address for such person.

Mr. Jones made a great hit by referring to the different lights of Pell City, and it is to be regretted that his manuscript was lost.

Next Mr. Cogswell, in a most appropriate but short speech, introduced Mr. G. W. Pratt to the crowd. These two excellent gentlemen are South Carolinians, raised in Charleston and the first mentioned was named for the famous fort from which the first guns of the greatest war American has ever known was fired.

Mr. Pratt's speech was in referent to the undeveloped resources of the south and especially of Alabama, etc., and the opportunities for development. It created much favorable comment among the people, especially the reference to the policy which his cotton mill would pursue in the employment and treatment of labor. Mr. Pratt is a good talker, has a splendid delivery, and, as Judge Inzer well-says, "should continue in the field of oratory."

His short but pointed remark about good roads was well-received. Mr. Pratt is glad to become a citizen of this county and the people are equally as glad to welcome him. His work in this community will prove of vast benefit to the county in education as well as industry.

The cornerstone of the new courthouse was laid after Mr. Pratt's speech; Mr. B. F. Alverson laid the stone, after which a most appropriate prayer was offered by Rev. Lehs Law, invoking the blessings of Almighty God upon the occasion.

THE EDITOR [Bays D. Cather]

EXPLOSION OF DYNAMITE DESTROYS LIFE AND PROPERTY AT PELL CITY

The Springville Item, Springville, Alabama
Thursday, November 20, 1902

**Two Killed, Ten Seriously Hurt
Not a Building in the Town Spared – The New Court
House Damaged and the New Cornett Hotel
Totally Wrecked – Damage \$10,000**

The Southern Railway depot at Pell City caught fire early Monday morning and a lot of powder and dynamite stored therein exploded, killing two men outright and more or less seriously injuring ten others.

The depot was blown to atoms and buildings for blocks around were damaged, and that a dozen or more people were not killed is a miracle.

J. M. Hall, grocer, and Tom Whitfield, bricklayer, Cedartown, Ga., were killed instantly.

The seriously injured are:

B. A. Fite, agent Seaboard Air Line, right arm crushed, hip fractured and back sprained.

Colonel H. B. Spears, mayor of Pell City, left arm broken.

John Griffin, engineer Southern railroad, piece of wood driven through his body.

McLean Tilton, Atlanta, arm broken.

John St. Clair, conductor Southern railroad, gashed in body by glass.

W. A. Crowley, druggist.

John Hall, grocer.

M. J. Alsabrooke, policeman, ankle broken.

Frank Hightower, baggage master Seaboard Air Line railroad, cut.

Mrs. H. A. Cornett, gashes on face and head from glass.

Jim White, chest and stomach crushed.

J. D. Conklin, grocer.

John Burte, cut.

M. C. Seaborn, cut.

William Hoecake.

Ella Hawley.

The fire in the freight portion of the depot was discovered by M. C. Roop, the operator who was on duty at the time. There was a freight train on the siding at the time, with Engineer Griffin and Conductor Sinclair in charge. The trainmen answered the summons of Operator Roop and went to work helping to get cars out of the way and freight in the depot out.

The second section hove in sight while the depot was on fire and the engine was detached and brought into service as getting out cars, twelve in number, which were on the sidetracks and in close proximity to the depot.

All of a sudden there was an explosion, which was heard for miles around. Flying embers and bits of burning timbers scattered in all directions.

When the smoke had cleared away, the carnage was to be noticed instantly. The bodies of the two men who were killed instantly were found, showing that they had been giving what assistance was in their power to rescue property of the railroad company and to prevent buildings in the city from catching fire.

It was impossible to telegraph for any help, the wires going down in the explosion.

In the freight portion of the depot were stored cans and boxes of powder and dynamite. There were fifty cases of dynamite billed to the Alabama Coal, Iron and Railroad Company at Talladega, while there were explosives also in the depot for the Seaboard Air Line, which controls the East and West, which runs to Pell City.

Just before the explosion took place, the flames had a bluish color and some of the men working about the building noticed it. This was the powder on fire, it is thought. The explosives tore the building to atoms and made a hole large enough to bury the building which formerly stood there.

It was ascertained that nearly every building in the city had been

more or less damaged. Window glass was broken out in all directions. Fortunately no damage was done to the new cotton mill in the course of construction.

J. D. Hall, of Pell City, who was killed outright, conducted an establishment for the sale of refreshments.

Tom Whitfield had not been a resident of Pell City long. He was a brickmason and was working at the mill going up at Pell City.

The New Cornett hotel was almost wrecked. Besides every window in the house being blown out, there was much damage otherwise. It is estimated that the damage was no less than \$1,500.

The office of the *Coosa Valleyan* was badly wrecked.

It is stated that Colonel Pratt warned the people of the explosives being in the depot, but a miner who happened to be near gave an opinion that the dynamite could not explode without concussion and the advice of this man was accepted. The people went to work willingly in assisting to save the contents of the dept and for that reason were so close when the explosion took place.

The business men have already set to work to repair damages and to commence over on a larger scale than ever.

The stores, the hotel and the *Coosa Valleyan* will all replace their losses immediately.

Sumter Cogswell, president of Pell City Realty Company, who suffered the greatest loss in property, says the damages will not only be repaired, but greater improvement than ever will be made.

Engineer Griffin, who was standing some distance from the depot, had a splinter evidently about one inch square and several inches long driven through his body and the physicians state he will live. The piece of wood entered the body above the hip bone on the right side and came out above the same place on the left side, having passed through the body and on the inside of the backbone. The spinal column is not injured, but many of the muscles of the back are severed.

There is not a rat alive within a long distance of the depot.

A picture was carried through the air by the explosion to the yards

of the cotton mills nearly a quarter of a mile from the hotel. The glass was not broken and the frame was not cracked.

A watch was carried 200 yards and, when found, was running on time and seemed to be as good as before the accident.

THE PROSPERITY OF PELL CITY, ALA. (1910)

The Big Cotton Mill and a Few Personals of Prominent People

By Mrs. Mary T. Whitson

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, February 9, 1910

Pell City is 35 miles from Birmingham on the Southern R. R., is solid now. Years ago it had one or two ephemeral booms, but it is all right now and growing fast.

The prettiest part of Pell City is around the home of the president of the cotton mill—Mr. T. H. Rennie—and out toward the mill, with the moon high in the heavens full of glittering stars, with the wind sighing through the pine tops, you become filled with a dreamy, delicious languor, and the man who cuts them down is without sentiment.

Pell City has a population variously estimated from 1,500 to 2,000. The Pell City High School under the able administration of Prof. B. B. Pepper, who took charge Sept. 14, 1909, affords superior educational advantages. The increased enrollment has given the new principal much gratification; 166 the present number and five teachers

Prof. Pepper was born in Clay co., Ala., 1875. Was educated at the Fifth District Agricultural School with degree of A. B. He has taught successfully in several prominent schools in South Ala., came here _____verne, Ala., having the best of recommendations. Everybody here is delighted. Prof. Pepper is an enthusiast on the subject of education and is working hard to bring his school to a high standard of excellence.

The Pell City Manufacturing Company was organized in 1902 with

a capital of \$750,000. The Co. makes indigo Denims exclusively sold in N.Y., Chicago, Boston and St. Louis. Number of looms 720—spindles 21,000. The officers are T. H. Rennie, president; T. O. Nicholson, treas.; A. E. ___dyard, sec. Selling house, 65 Franklin St., Boston. President was born in New York; has been thirty years in the south, came here from Graniteville, S. C., where he was with the Graniteville mills twenty-___ years. He has a level head. So has Superintendent Thompson, who lives in a house designed by Ar___r Draper, son of Gen;l Draper, ___ist_r [minister?] to Italy. All the Drapers ___rried in Lexington, Ky.

Pell City is in the Seventh Congressional and Sixteenth Judicial Circuit. There are six lawyers, one bank and two or three Drs. in Pell City.

The *Progress*, a weekly paper with five or six hundred circulation is edited by the cashier of the First National Bank. [The editor was McLain Tilton.]

Hon. J. Gardner Greene, law firm of Starnes and Greene, leading firm in Pell City, is the son of Judge Jas. T. Greene, of Anniston, one of the best men that ever lived, who was a native of St. Clair Co.

Mr. Gardner Green was born in Ashville, Ala., ?April 16, 1878, was admitted to the bar in 1897. St. Clair County was known as a prohibition county, but through the aggressiveness of Gardner Greene who was the chairman in the anti-amendment campaign, he got a majority of 197. He worked indefatigably day and night and came out victorious. Mr. Greene was a first sergeant in the 5th U. S. Vols. and was at Santiago, Cuba, Co. M. He is possessed of a wide knowledge of men and things, having been for eight years in the department of Commissioner of Labor—a residence in Washington, if you have brains, is an education of itself. He is endowed with all of those qualifications that go to make a successful lawyer.

Mr. Greene took L. L. and L. L. M. at the Georgetown University, Washington, D. C. He has had so many honors conferred on him for so

young a man, I cannot think of them all. He was Assistant Adj. on the staff of the Commander in Chief of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans. Is a Shriner and Elk and member of the Episcopal church and K of P. Mr. Greene is a candidate for Solicitor of the 16th Judicial circuit.

Mr. W. A. Starnes was born in 1870, in St. Clair Co., and admitted to the bar before Judge D_wlin. Has been twice county solicitor. Mr. Starnes has been mayor of Pell City one term.

Mr. James M. Garrett, clerk of the circuit court, is one of the most popular officers in St. Clair County. Pell City is almost the same as a county seat, it being a branch of Ashville.

Mr. Garrett was born in this county July 4, 1862, of S. C. parents from the Laurens district. He was educated in the county's common schools. He is a man of irreproachable character, a deacon in the Baptist church and has been clerk of the St. Clair County Baptist Association and is president of the St. Clair county Musical Association. He is a self made man with an ambition to do good to his fellow man. I am of the opinion that the good in this world overbalances the bad—a great deal depending on one's environments.

Mr. C. D. Alverson, county treasurer, was born in St. Clair county Feb. 26, 1853, receiving a common school education, was elected county treasurer in 1904; was out one term and reelected in 1908. I think his election was contested twice and he won in the county and in the supreme court. He was formerly a populist.

Assessed value of St. Clair county between five and six million dollars, bonded debt \$85,000, running at 5 per cent for thirty years. Mr. Alverson is the son of B. F. Alverson who was born within five miles of Pell City in 1823. He laid the corner stone of the Pell City courthouse in 1902.

The present Treasurer is one of the cleverest men in the county.

The Bank has a capital of \$50,000. The mayor of Pell City, Mr. Pratt, is a prominent lawyer, a native of S. C. Smith & Pratt is the law firm, headquarters in the bank. The place has two fine drug stores.

Mr. L. A. Laney—general merchandise—has a handsome and spacious store filled with attractions of all kinds, one side devoted to crockery and glassware, etc. Dimensions 50 x 85 feet—beautiful plate glass front.

Four years ago Mr. Laney established his business in Pell City, has had a steadily increasing trade. No wonder his is so polite; both he and his wife are so accommodating. He was born in Dade Co., Ala., but grew up in Calhoun, one of the banner counties of Ala., was brought to this county when an infant, lived at Crane Creek, fifteen miles from Anniston where so many good people come from.

Pell City is a mighty nice town and is building up rapidly. Sorry not to have met Mr. Cogswell who is said to be a most important factor in the development of the city.

The popular headquarters for the weary traveller is the Cornett House, proprietor Mrs. Cornett, a nice Georgia lady. Her house is generally full, every room—good fare, clean beds and everything nice and comfortable is her highest pleasure to set before you; and she is a mighty nice lady.

RAGLAND! [1885]

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, November 11, 1885

What an *Aegis* Reporter Saw and Learned in One Hour.

The Coosa Coal & Coke Company's Mines

As they are Now and as they were in the Ante Bellum Days

Great advancement has been made in St. Clair County within the last few years in mining as well as other industrial operations. The contrast between its live and thriving towns and villages, rife with the hum of machinery, as they are now and their former condition a few years back, is marvelous.

The wonderful development, within so short a time, of the vast mineral resources of St. Clair, is strikingly illustrated in the progress made at the busy little town of Ragland on Trout Creek.

The Coosa, Cahawba or St. Clair coal field, as it has been variously called, is considered a part of the great Allegheny coal field; but till 1880, comparatively little was done in the way of mining engineering and the practical development of our mines.

In ante bellum days and about 1860-65, the coal seam at Ragland was worked by Messrs. Raglan & Co., by horse power alone. Not only was the mining conducted in the most primitive and costly manner, but the coal had to be hauled over the muddiest flatwoods roads to the railroad at Talladega, twenty miles distant, or to the Coosa, and then floated, in small boats or arks, down the river to the foundries in Montgomery, about 160 miles. Of these arks generally about two out of every three arrived safely at their destination, and upon this scanty supply the foundries of the capital had to depend, because the Montevallo coal contained much sulphur and ash and was entirely unfit for smelting purposes. This was the mode of operation until a few years ago.

At this time the mines, where worked by the Coosa Coal & Coke Company, under the general management of Capt. F. W. Horne, present a very different appearance. Everything is done by steam, electricity, and hydraulic power.

The underground work is under the supervision of Engineer Howard, who deserves great credit for his skillful and energetic operations as well as his vigilant precautions for the protection of human life.

The *Ageis* reporter, in company with Mr. A. T. Hodges, of Ashville, and under the guidance of Engineer Howard, had the pleasure of examining the mines and works for a short time.

The shaft slopes at an angle of near 40 degrees, and gradually decreases until it becomes almost horizontal. The vein or seam of coal is from two to three feet thick and is easily worked, the latest and most

improved machinery being used.

The steam system of ventilation used by Engineer Howard is excellent and, as the shaft is shallow, is used very beneficially, forcing plenty of air into every room and apartment of the mine. When the gate is opened the rush of air is great and continual. Good ventilation is one of the problems of mining engineering and is essential for the health of the miners.

Passing on through a network of tramways, continually dodging passing cars, we came to the pumping machinery. The method used is very effective. Ditches are so constructed as to collect the accumulating water in one place and from thence it is forced, by means of steam pumps, up a considerable angle to be utilized on the outside of the shaft.

Electric signals are used to signal the engineer of the engine which hoists the coal cars, etc. By simply pressing a button, a gong or signal bell, is struck and warning is given the engineer.

We paid particular attention to the systematic mining of Engineer Howard, who is a very clever, intelligent and experienced engineer. During the whole of his long experience as a mining engineer, he has never had a workman under his charge killed by falling rocks, or any fault in his management.

The roof of slate is solid and does not need much propping or supporting. Every precaution is used for the protection of life, and everything is run on the best and most economical plans.

The cars containing coal are raised by steam. A steel wire rope 1½ inches in diameter, is attached to an engine on the outside of the shaft and the coal is pulled up an incline plane, and dumped into chutes where it is sorted through different sized grates. By this means the large lumps are separated from the nut coal and loaded in cars, while the fine coal is carried through the sulphur washers. Here the water which is pumped out of the mines is utilized and the coal is thoroughly cleansed of sulphur and foreign matter by a system of troughs, gates, etc.

As the miners get 40 cents per ton and as the coal is easily mined, some of them get out 12 and 14 tones per day and make good wages.

The present capacity of the mines is about 200 tons daily. The coal is shipped to Brokenarrow and there coked, as Ragland is only a branch of the Broken arrow mines.

Under the present able management many new improvements are contemplated and everything is giving the best results.

RAGLAND, ALABAMA, 1909

By W. T. Brown, Pres. Ragland Coal Co.

St. Clair County News, Odenville, Alabama, June 3, 1909

Ragland, St. Clair County, Ala., lies in the upper end of Coosa Valley, two miles from that splendid river of that name. It is on the Seaboard Air Line railroad, forty-seven miles from Birmingham, one hundred and nineteen from Atlanta, Ga., twenty-two miles from Anniston, and twenty-eight miles from Gadsden. All of these are flourishing cities; therefore, Ragland occupies a commanding position on account of its close proximity to great markets.

VALLEY AND HILLS

While Ragland proper is in a valley, under which exists large deposits of bituminous coal, and through which runs a bold, clear stream called Trout Creek, it is surrounded by beautiful hills. On these hills are table lands, with sandy soil and clay foundation. All of the land in bottom and hill-top around Ragland is not what is generally called rich land, but all of it is productive under the touch of skillful industry, and it all responds liberally to fertilization.

Some of the lands are very fertile. The productions of the soil are cotton, corn, small grain, all the valuable grasses—natural growth and by cultivation—and the best of all, most luscious melons, fruit and vegetables. Apples, pears, peaches, cherries, grapes, water melons, cantaloupes and berries grow luxuriantly, and it only needs the touch of industry to make Ragland and vicinity a veritable garden-spot of the State.

NATURAL WEALTH

Valuable timber, hard-wood and pine, abound here, while underneath the ground repose valuable deposits of coal, iron, lime-rock, fire clay, shale, and best of all, the finest deposits of sand in the State declared so by foundry men and by builders in general, and the supply is declared to be inexhaustible. The health of the community is absolutely perfect at all seasons of the year, the climate is salubrious, and the atmosphere pure and invigorating. Natural springs of purest waters abound on the hillsides and in the valley. Free-stone, sulphur, lime and chalybeate waters and wells of lithia afford health to those who partake of these.

RAGLAND COAL MINES

Ragland Coal mines was opened in a primitive way anterior to the civil war, and from the present opening a tram railroad was built to the Coosa River where coal was dumped into barges and floated down the stream. After the war, the mines were abandoned, but in the early 80's when the East and West (now the Seaboard Air Line Railroad) was built, the mines were opened and were operated in a vigorous way, by the Ragland Coal Co., of which W. T. Brown is President.

The Ragland Coal Co. is making a reputation in the exclusive mining and shipping of the Ragland steam and St. Clair blacksmith coal. Both the steam and blacksmith are favorably known in the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

The company transacts its business principally through the mails, having no representatives or agents on the road, thus giving all the patrons of this excellent coal the benefit of the same price and the same treatment. These coals have been on the market about fifteen years and have steadily grown in public favor.

CEMENT PLANT

The Atlantic & Gulf Portland Cement Co. is now erecting a model plant just outside the city limits, in which they will spend one million dollars in building and equipping a model cement plant of the south,

with a daily capacity of three thousand barrels. Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, as well as home capital, is interested. Their success is assured as they have here altogether high grade limestone shale and coal in abundance.

BRICK PLANT

The Wilpicoba Clay Works with a capital of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, with the capacity of one hundred thousand building brick per day, all of Atlanta, Ga., capital, located about one quarter of a mile from the depot, are very successful. They are manufacturing common building and vitrified paving brick, as well as sewer pipe from a high grade shale that is found here and so far they have not been able to supply the demand for the material manufactured.

TOWN OF RAGLAND

The town of Ragland is yet in its infancy, but it has a prospective future bright with promises, because of its natural environments. It has an excellent public school, open absolutely free to all white children of school age, nine months in the year.

PROSPECTIVE CITY

W. T. Brown, President of the Ragland Coal Co., and owner of much of the land in and around Ragland, has determined to make here a flourishing town, and to build up a community of sturdy farmers, gardeners and fruit growers. To this end he has formulated the following plan:

He will furnish land for fifty families within four miles of the school house, each place to have at least forty acres. He agrees to furnish this land at from \$5 to \$10 per acre, one third cash, deferred payments one and two years with 6% interest.

The Coal mines, Cement plant, and Brick plant and other industries in and near Ragland will afford extra work to men of families from time to time, when they are not engaged on their farms or in their gardens and vineyards.

Besides the school and the churches, there are three flourishing lodges of secret orders in Ragland—Masons, Knights of Pythias and Red

Men. Mr. Brown, the promoter of the community, has recently donated a handsome and comfortable home with sixty-five acres of land to the superannuated Methodist preachers of the North Alabama Conference.

COOSA RIVER

Coosa River is only about one mile air line from the corporate line of the town of Ragland, and this fact adds wonderfully to the prospective values of the place and its surroundings. The Coosa rises in the mountains of north Georgia and flows southwesterly and southerly until it helps to form the Alabama River, a few miles below Wetumpka, Ala. It is 315 miles in length. Government improvements barely begun have opened to navigation the waters of this river from Rome, Ga., to Lock Four in Ala. It is confidently believed that the time is not far distant when the Coosa River will receive that attention from Congress to which its natural investigation for development entitles it, and that it will be made navigable the entire 315 miles of its length.

At lock four on Coosa River, only a short distance from Ragland, about six miles, a twenty-five thousand [?] water power plant is to be developed by the Ragland Water Co. which has been organized for that purpose. this power will be used at Ragland and other near points which will offer still greater inducements for manufacturing industries to locate at Ragland and community.

COOSA RIVER [1902]

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, February 5, 1902

Among the important waterways of our state may be mentioned the Coosa River. While it is not entirely open to navigation, it is safe to say that within 12 months the boats from Rome and Gadsden will be at Riverside. Already the work is going on rapidly at Lock 4, about five miles above Seddon, which point the steamboats can now reach. The fall from Greensport to Wetumpka, that portion of the rive in which the

rapids occur, a distance of 142 miles, is 367 feet. The total number of horsepowers that can be developed from the fall and water discharge on this part of the river is 382,882 horsepower. By the opening of the river to thorough navigation would give river transportation from these great water powers to all parts of the world, and would stimulate the development of these powers and their utilization for operating factories of all kinds until the Coosa River would soon be almost lined with factories, from its source to its mouth.

Doubtless on account of the lack of interest shown by those interested in the opening of the Coosa River, congress has not been very liberal in appropriation, money for that purpose.^f But in recent years more interest has been shown in this direction. A committee of which our esteemed fellow-citizen, Hon. F. H. Lathrop, of Riverside is a member, has been to Washington to bring to the attention of the rivers and harbors committee, the necessity of opening the Coosa. The work of this committee and others has accomplished much. A special to the *Age-Herald*, dated December 2nd, from Washington, stated that the Secretary of the Treasury, in his annual report, requests the appropriation by congress of \$265,000 for the Coosa River, all of which, except \$15,000 to be spent between Rome, Ga., and the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia railroad bridge. Thus, we are that the friends of this movement are not idle, and we think congress will not be slow to recognize the importance of connecting by water the interior of a great state with the markets of the world.

**NOTES OF GENERAL INTEREST
[ABOUT ST. CLAIR COUNTY], 1902**

By Bays D. Cather, Ed.

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, Alabama, October 29, 1902

Twenty-five years ago, our villages—few then compared of the number now scattered over the county—were almost in the backwoods. The log church and school house were in evidence as to our claim to civilization; generally the one building served for both purposes. During that interval our villages have come out of the woods, many of them reaching the proportions of prosperous towns, and the methods of society have changed with other progress.

Ashville, Springville, Easonville, Coal City, and a number of other towns have fine school houses separate from the church houses, governed by a board of trustees. These towns also have large and handsome church edifices, some of them have two or three, to use for each of the congregations which worship in them. Ashville has three church houses for the whites of different religious societies, and two for the colored people.

The improvement along this line is as well marked in the surrounding country in the large, commodious and comfortable houses of public worship, and in the school buildings erected within the last few years.

By these influences and associations, society has made great strides in social and educational attainment. The young people are growing up under better advantages, and as a result there is a marked degree of refinement and culture among them.

The county now has three newspapers published in it, one at Ashville, one at Springville, and one at Pell City.

The *Southern Aegis*, published at the county seat, was established in 1873. Its first issue was January of that year. It has outlived many of its contemporaries and continues under the same management.

The *Item*, at Springville, is a change in name only of the *News*, which began its existence in the first of 1896 and has been a prominent factor in the improvement and progress of its town ever since its first publication. It is published and edited by B. B. Cather.

The *Coosa Valleyan*, established in January 1902, in the brief

interval of its existence bids fair to leave its two county contemporaries somewhat in the rear in the race. It is managed and edited by Bays D. Cather.

Besides the improved church and school buildings in the larger towns, some of the latter have public halls, Masonic and K. of P. Lodge buildings in which to hold the meetings of these fraternities.

In the last 15 years, the town of Ashville has been built over anew, store houses and tenement houses taking the place of the old structures. the same may be said of Springville and other old villages, while in that time Cornelia, Riverside, Seddon, Eden, Ragland and Coal City have come up like magic from the ground.

There are two noted summer resorts in the county—the St. Clair Springs and Cooke's Springs.

Cooke's Springs was a noted health resort long before the war and has lost none of its reputation since as one of the best anywhere. It is situated on the Southern within easy reach of Pell City and Birmingham, and in a picturesque mountain region.

St. Clair Springs is situated within a few miles of Springville, contiguous to the A. G. S. division of the Q & C route from Cincinnati to New Orleans. It is a famous Southern summer resort, and is now undergoing great improvement to meet the enlarged demands on it in the hot season. It is noted for its varieties of sulphur waters, is beautifully located. Cornelia is its new name and the town is rapidly building up.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY'S MINERALS

The mineral ores in this county are easily mined, reducing expenses. The red iron ore near Ashville is in a vein from 4 to 5 feet in thickness.

Dr. Eugene Smith, State Geologist, and professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy in the University of Alabama, has analyzed some of this ore which shows:

Peroside of iron 68-1 81; only a trace of sulphur and very little phosphorous.

An analysis of the brown ore lying in a parallel ridge iwth the red, and at a distance of only two miles from the latter.

Analyses—Peroside of iron 81.746 Phosphorus and sulphur nearly extinct.

The Coosa coalfields range from 6 to 15 miles from Ashville, the county seat. The veins in some places underlie each other and are from 3 to 5 feet thick.

The Coal City and Ragland mines are the oldest and have been worked several years. The Ragland company has a demand for all its output and employs a large number of men. The coal, much of it at Coal City, is coaked at the mines, and there has been a demand for all the coke. The mine also employs large forces both in lifting coal and coking the latter. Three other mines have been opened in this field, and two are now operating.

Along the East and West—now the Seaboard Air Line—extension from Ragland to Pell City, the county is rapidly becoming an aviary of industrial movement.

Some of this coal has been analyzed and found to contain: Fixed carbon, 93.02. The percent of other matter, of necessity, is small.

Coke made from this coal is 66.63 per cent, or one ton of the former to one and one-half tons of the coal. An inferior coke is made at Broken Arrow mines, which is used by furnaces in making pig iron with satisfactory results.

The iron ores are of the red fossiliferous and brown hermatite. There are some outcrops of coal showing up in quality much better than those that are now worked.

The Cahaba field near Branchville has not yet been developed, but will be shortly, since the Central of Georgia purchase of a large acreage for no other purpose, assures this.

I might add that the clays in this county are highly valuable, and considered in connection with the other natural resources of timber, limestone, building rock of fine grades, and the mineral deposits, at no

distant day will make the county one of the richest in the whole country when all these things are brought into use as they will be. (Geo. R. Cather, Ashville, Ala.)

OUR NEIGHBORING TOWNS (1902)

Bays D. Cather, Editor

Coosa Vallean, Pell City, Alabama, October 29, 1902

EASONVILLE, commonly known as the dairy town, is situated on Coosa River 5 miles south of Pell City. It is a beautiful little town; has a splendid school and two churches. It is two and one-half miles from the B & A. Railroad, Cropwell being the depot.

The leading industry of this place is its dairy business. Mr. D. W. Wait, one of St. Clair's distinguished citizens, has made a decided success in this line, having established the Easonville creamery in Birmingham. Other dairy farms are conducted in the neighborhood, and despite the fact that this was a record breaking year for dry weather, the dairy business was a success. Pell City is the shipping point for the butter and cream of these dairymen. Mr. J. E. Box, Mr. J. W. Cospers and numerous others are engaged in the dairy business.

Easonville also has a flouring mill of 50 barrels capacity, but on account of being so far from railroads this has not done so well. There has been some talk of moving this mill to Pell City where special freight rates can be had for grain from the market, and where a first rate milling and stock feed business could be built up.

FOUNTAIN RUN. This is not a town but a settlement a few miles below Easonville. The chief occupation of the citizens is farming, but fishing on the Coosa is carried along in season to a large extent. Sometimes more than a thousand pounds of Buffalo, Sturgeon, Shad, and Catfish are caught in the Harmon traps. The leading citizens

of Fountain Run settlement are W. J. Homer, S. A. Fulmer, A. L. Gray, J. P. Tucker, W. L. Wadsworth, H. D. Turner, J. S. Harmon, T. G. Watson, F. P. Lee. There are others, we presume, but their names are not on our subscription book and we don't know who they are.

KELLEY'S CREEK. This is another settlement of good farmers, who appreciate the fact that their county is coming to the front now, and that Pell City will afford them a market for their produce.

EDEN. Eden is a beautifully situated town 2 miles west of Pell City on Southern Railroad. The principal business carried on is merchandising, farming and lumbering. In the race for the new court house, Eden stood next to Pell City. It is a good, healthy place and could be made a splendid summer resort. Among the leading business men are H. N. Laney, C. D. Alverson and H. B. Guy.

CROPWELL. Cropwell is two miles or more from Pell City on B. & A. Railroad. The principal occupation of its people is farming and merchandising. Here is located a large ginning establishment operated and owned by Mr. John Maddox, one of our county's best young men. Taylor Spradley, his superintendent of the gin, is well qualified to run it, and they do a large business.

COAL CITY. A lively mining town five miles North of Pell City on Seaboard Air Line Ry. It contains coke ovens and several mines in operation. Merchandising plays a prominent part in the business of the town and it bids fair to some day be a very large mining center. The Coal Branch Mine is owned and operated by The Alabama Coal, Iron, and Railway Co.

Alverson & Moore, leading merchants who recently burned out, have rebuilt and now are running a more complete stock than before.

INMAN is a mining station two miles above Coal City on

Seaboard Air Line.

FAIRVIEW is the home of our excellent county Commissioner Hewlett Chapman, and where our townsman W. T. Chapman, or "Chap," was raised. It is truly a fair view of the situation, being somewhat elevated—near the top of Backbone Mountain. It is also on the Seaboard Air Line.

RAGLAND. Ragland is a mining town seventeen miles north of Pell City, on Seaboard Air Line Ry. The mines are owned and operated by The Ragland Coal & Coke Co., Mr. W. T. Brown, president. The present prosperity and growth of Ragland is due to Mr. Brown's untiring energy and to the kind and yet business as like manner in which he treats his employees. The success of the Ragland Mines is due to the way he treats those who dig his coal. He is one of the county's self-made boys, having been reared up on a farm, to plow and hoe and cut wood. Watt is an example of thrift and enterprise.

BROMPTON and MOODY. Brompton, on So. Ry. about twelve miles from Pell City, is a station and the depot for Moody about two miles northward. Moody is the home of our venerable and respected citizen, Mr. Daniel S. Jones, who write us an article this week on fruit growing. Mr. Jones i author of Round Pond Points. He is the proprietor of Round Pond Nurseries which have made Moody famous for fine fruits, etc.

WOLF CREEK. A lively farming community in the south western part of the county. Butter, eggs, chickens, are produced in abundance. Mr. J. H. Walker is proprietor of Walker's store and one among the many good citizens.

SEDDON and RIVERSIDE. These two towns situated on Coosa River and on Southern Railway, 3 miles and 5 miles from Pell

City are made up of an intelligent and thrifty population.

Riverside is the home of Hon. F. H. Lathrop and of his great lumber business—the Lathrop Hatten Lumber Co. The enterprise of Mr. Lathrop has made this one of the greatest lumber mills in the Southern States. they own the line of railway which runs from Pell City down into Shelby County—within three miles of Calcis, the new county seat of Shelby and on Central of Ga. Ry. At Riverside there is a brick yard of a capacity of about 20,000 to 50,000 per day.

At Seddon there is a brush factory in operation by Bohemians, and three stores.

COAL CITY, ST. CLAIR CO., ALA. [1910]

By Mrs. Mary T. Whitson

St. Clair County News, Ragland, Alabama, August 4, 1910

There is everything around Coal City to build up a town. The surrounding hills show rich deposits of coal and iron and lime. All this section of Alabama is being developed. To this point the eyes of the whole union are turned and the "coin of the realm" glitters and fascinates and allures the seeker after wealth. There are some of the most beautiful building sites I ever saw all around Coal City.

St. Clair County is one of the wealthiest counties in Alabama. Her citizens, famed for hospitality, for morality and honor. Her soldiers fought with glorious valor and loyalty for the sovereignty of the Constitution, to the bitter end.

Mr. C. R. Fay, Coal City's popular postmaster, was born in Pennsylvania in 1871. Came South in 1901. Is connected with the Vulcan Coal Mines; is postmaster and proprietor of a general store. The office is fourth-class and no rural routes. There is not a more popular man in the county than the postmaster at Coal City.

Coal City has two churches and a half dozen stores, two doctors and several coal companies.

Mr. W. A. Savage has been in business here twenty-one years. He does \$20,000 worth of business a year.

Drs. E. C. and E. A. Harris are the leading physicians here. They located here twelve years ago. Their father, R. C. Harris, well-known in Alabama, was superintendent of a coal company for years. The family came from Frostburg, western Maryland, not far from Cumberland, the home of ex-Governor Lowndes and Senator Wellington, whom the writer remembers kindly, having made a tour of western Maryland in 1893.

The Drs. Harris graduated from the Medical Department of Howard College. Dr. Esau Alum Harris graduated from the University of the South in 1898, one of the most aristocratic schools in the Southern States. It is worth the price, if only to teach a boy to be a gentleman.

These young men have built up a remunerative practice and they are members of the County, State and American Medical Associations.

I have been out in the "wide, wide world," a long-time dependent upon my pen, and I have been treated splendidly everywhere, and if I have ever given offense in anything I have written, I am not aware of it.

[In] Mr. A. L. Pemberton, who has been railroad agent at Coal City, I met the first outspoken Socialist that ever came to this section. He is an interesting talker, is well-informed and is interested in the problem of life. If his ideas could be successfully carried out this world would be a paradise on earth. "No rent, no graft, no lying, cheating and swindling." Mr. Pemberton, who disclaims relationship with General Pemberton who sold out Vicksburg to Grant July 4th, 1863, was born in Williamsburg, Ky., in 1862. He began the railroad business with the Queen and Crescent. Business at Coal City averages the Seaboard \$10,000 a month. It has six daily passenger trains.

Coal City also has a mighty good hotel, the Hunt House. (I like the word "mighty.") If you want an immaculately clean bed, something good to eat—fried chicken—just go to the Hunt House. Mrs. Hunt has a

great "cabinet" full of all kinds of preserves. She does all her own work—cooks, cleans up her house, churns and treats her guests with the most gracious courtesy.

I met Mr. J. Z. Acker, of the big saw mill firm of Griffin & Acker, located near Coal City. Capacity 12,000 feet daily. The firm cleared \$75,000 last year. Mr. Acker is an Alabama man by birth. Has been here four years.

Mr. E. Griffin was born and reared near the famous battlefield of New Hope Church, Ga., where fell the gallant Alex McKenrde [sic], a captain in the "Orphan Brigade" of Kentucky, a friend of the writers.

The output of the Seaboard Coal and Coke Company is 300 tons per day. Opened up in 1883, the present firm has had it six or seven years.

Mr. W. G. Srodes, from Moundsville, West Va., is superintendent. Awful sorry not to have met him, as I wrote up in 1893 and the editor gave the sketch the most glowing headlines I ever saw.

Mr. H. S. Hanson, auditor and treasurer, was born in Memphis, raised and educated at Manpun, Wisconsin. A delightful person to meet. Headquarters of the company are in New York, 25 Broad Street.

Mr. J. S. Chamless has a saw mill of about 4,000 feet per day capacity.

ODENVILLE [1909]

By W. T. Brown

St. Clair County News, Odenville, Alabama, June 3, 1909

At the head waters of Cahaba and Beaver Valleys, this young and progressive town, nineteen miles west of Ragland and twenty-nine miles east of Birmingham on the Seaboard ?Air Line railroad, situated in the heart of the agricultural part of St. Clair County, is a prosperous and growing town. Excellent farms lie up and down these valleys, which

run east and west. Lying north and south rise up the beautiful mountains which carry coal, on the north within three miles and on the south in eight miles. These mountains also carry a high grade of both brown and red ore in large quantities. Copper of a high grade is also found near this prosperous town.

These table lands, like those in the Ragland vicinity, are well adapted for growing cotton, corn, small grain, and all of the valuable grasses, natural growth and by cultivation, as well as all classes of fruit and vegetables. And the valley lands: there is no place in the south where lands produce more in abundance corn, cotton, wheat, oats, vegetables, and any kind of produce. The nearness to one of the best markets in the south, Birmingham, Ala., makes this location especially favorable for truck growing, poultry raising, etc.

The State High School for St. Clair County is located at this place, and is open free to all except a small incidental fee to all who have passed over the 7th grade. A fine system of public schools is also carried on here. The town has a prosperous bank, with a number of prosperous merchants. The town has both freestone and limestone water with a gravity flow from pure springs of the mountains on the north and south.

Both the health and the morals of the town are excellent. No better selection could be made by small investors for permanent homes in the district described and St. Clair County, Alabama.

The climate of these hills and valleys is salubrious, mild and temperate, the springs are early and wonderfully balmy, the summers are long and even in temperature, the autumns are late and dry, and the winters are mild. Fruit growing, truck gardening, poultry farming, and general southern industrial farming of cotton, corn, small grain, hay and sugar cane, present most inviting features in these valleys, to the industrious and wide-awake home seeker and investor.

EDUCATIONAL RALLY AT ODENVILLE [1907]

Springville Item, Springville, Alabama, August 22, 1907

Last Thursday, the 17th, was a day of unusual interest in Odenville, Ala., having entertained over 1,000 of St. Clair's best citizens. There were representatives from Ashville, Springville, Ragland and Coal City and Branchville.

No sooner than the High School Bill had passed the House on the 10th, stating its purposes and requirements, when Odenville saw there was no reason why she should not be a successful competitor for the prize. Her citizens at once formed themselves into committee and went to work for an educational rally. The intention of which was that every one might become thoroughly acquainted with the requirements of this bill.

The speakers and other visitors for the occasion were on the east bound early train which was met by a decorated float, occupied by the reception committee, Dr. and Mrs. C. C. Brown and a bevy of lovely girls robed in white whose duty it was to bring to their notice why Odenville is an aspirant for the said school. Odenville is located in the fertile and beautiful Beaver Valley, its equal not found in the only 28 miles of B'ham on the Sea Board Air Line Railroad and is not only centrally located but is an altogether white settlement, the town is only two years old and is not strong numerically speaking, but there is strength in such promptness. Such earnestness, such unity, such energy and such hospitality as was displayed on this occasion. It was also brought to notice that Odenville has already a splendid school building in course of erection situated on a desirable eminence of two acres with the promise that three others shall be added and that every requirement shall be met that nature has not already provided. the healthfulness of the locality is unsurpassed. The climate is the best that Alabama affords. The citizens are an independent, refined home-loving people and an abundance of good water.

As nothing more could be desired, they repaired to Odenville's beautiful woodland, where everything had been prepared for a feast,

both physically and mentally, where they found a large and beautiful stand made of dressed lumber awaiting them. As introduction the reception committee rendered a song composed by Mrs. C. C. Brown, sung to the music of "Bonnie Blue Flag." These are the inspiring words:

Please listen unto us, kind friends,
Attention to us pay,
And fight for victory in the end,
And shout our glad hurrah,
We want the county school right here,
Supported by the state;
We must begin our work right now,
Before it is too late.

CHORUS

Hurrah! Hurrah! for the school at Odenville,
We must have that precious prize
If it be our Father's will.

Our dear old ville should have
The very best the state can give,
And to her country be a star,
Whose light will ever live
Division gives us strife you know,
But unity gives us strength.
So let us join our hearts and hands
And on to victory go.

Our progress wheel will begin to turn,
When the county school come here,
The boys and girls who go to learn
Will influence this great sphere.
The industries, both great and small,

Will come into our town.
But education is the power,
To make the wheels go round.

The song so enthused and electrified the assembly that it was called for several times during the day. The speaker of the day, Gen. W. W. Brandon, State Auditor, was then introduced by the chairman, W. T. Brown of Ragland in a few well-chosen words. The audience was at once captured and held spellbound for one and a half hours by his matchless oratory and earnest plea for the education of the Alabama boy and girl, giving all necessary information as to how to proceed to procure the said "High School" greatly adding to the enthusiasm and earnestness of the work so nobly begun.

Dinner was then announced, where 800 lbs of a variety of meat had been most deliciously barbecued and was served with breads, pickles, sauces, pies and cakes in abundance. At 2 o'clock, Hon. W. T. Brown of Ragland and P. A. Glenn of Branchville made short practical talks in behalf of education which were profitable and interesting who assured the assembly of their sympathy in their efforts and were at the command of the committeemen to aid in any manner in their power.

The afternoon and night trains bore the visitors to their respective homes, declaring that such men on committees as Messrs. Maddox, Scoggins, Veasy, Jones, Letaw, J. L. Hardin and Dr. Brown and others had made the occasion a success.

EASONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL [1890]

Closing Exercises. Many Fair Girls and Boys.

An Entertaining Program

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, June 26, 1890

It being my pleasant privilege to witness the commencement

exercises at Easonville High School, I will give your readers some account of them.

Monday night, June 16th, was given to recitations by the children of the primary department, presided over by Prof. J. J. Willingham. The recitations of the little ones reflected great credit upon both pupil and teacher. The children appeared thoroughly drilled. The music was furnished by the class taught by Miss Bessy Oden, of Childersburg. Her pupils acquitted themselves finely; and, for the short time she has had charge of the class, it was pronounced excellent.

Tuesday morning at 9 o'clock, the recitations and speeches of the larger pupils began. Each one performed his part well and did honor to the institution and its principal, Prof. I. W. Hill.

At the close of the exercises, Hon. W. J. Sanford, of Opelika, delivered the annual address. His discourse was brief, but crisp with wit, with which it was interspersed. In speaking upon the theme of Education, he touched beautifully on the education of the heart. He urged parents and teachers not to look to mental culture alone, but to bring out the higher and nobler impulses of the heart, to secure a solid foundation upon which to build.

Mr. Sandford [sic] was called upon to deliver the medals to the fortunate ones in the different classes. In Prof. Hill's school, two medals were awarded, one to the young lady for the best recitation and one to the young man who delivered the best declamation. In like manner two medals were awarded in Prof. Willingham's room. The first were awarded to Miss Lillie McLellan and Mr. Erastus Barker, of Cleburne county; the second to Little Maggie Stone and Master Minutt Hardwick, of Easonville.

Tuesday night the hall was not sufficient to seat the large crowd that assembled. Quite a number had to remain out and the house was literally packed.

The concert was a grand success, the songs and music rendered by the class were excellent. The walls of the music hall were filled with pictures and portraits—the work of the art class, taught by Miss Eula

Moore, of Opelika. At the close of the exercises that night, Mr. Thomas Roberts, one of the pupils, stepped out upon the stage and said there was yet one more act to perform that had been kept a secret from the professor. And after a very appropriate speech, presented Prof. Hill with a handsome silver water set in behalf of seventy pupils present. In his acceptance of the same, he thanked the school for their kind remembrance of him and assured them of his love for them; and ere he had closed his remarks, the tears were flowing freely, and the many good-byes that night said were but evidences that love among pupils and teachers reigned supreme.

On Wednesday morning, Prof. Hill took me around over the building, and showed me the different departments, also the work of the art class.

The school building has lately been completed, and, of itself, is one that speaks well for the people of Easonville and vicinity. But indeed the citizens of that community are famous in our county for their hospitality—and as might be expected, the doors of the homes of Major Maddox, Mrs. Cosper, Mr. D. Wait, S. P. McLellan, esq., Dr. Steadham, and many others, were thrown open wide to receive the many visitors during the commencement.

That night according to a prearranged programme, ere the twilight had faded, the crowd began to assemble at Cropwell Baptist Church to witness the marriage of Prof. Hill and Miss Laura Jones, of Cropwell. Messrs. W. N. Maddox and T. K. Roberts were ushers and they did their utmost to see that each one was seated comfortably.

At 8:30 o'clock as the wedding march was being played by Miss Mollie Oden, the following attendants took their places beside the altar preceded by the ushers, that is Prof. John W. Lockhart and Miss Fannie Law; Mr. E. T. Barker and Miss Alice Carter; Mr. Jno. L. Stone and Miss Ida Roberson; Mr. John T. Patilla and Miss Julia Jones; Mr. Jno. W. Jones and Miss Connor Scraiggs. Last but not least Mr. Hill, bearing upon his arm his bride handsomely attired in cream satin and point lace, wearing in her hair orange buds and flowers. The ceremony

was performed by Rev. Mr. Wilks. The church was beautifully decorated with choice flowers. The bridal party left that night for an extended trip north by way of Atlanta, Ga.

Mr. Editor, if you are in doubt about the hospitality of this people, go down on the 4th proximo and be convinced. A. Friend.

A SCHOOL EXHIBITION [BROKEN ARROW, 1890]

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, July 3, 1890

Broken Arrow, June 24. The entertainment given by the pupils at Broken Arrow Academy last Friday night was quite attractive.

The crowd began to congregate before sundown and by eight o'clock there was a very large and attentive audience present, to witness the closing exercises of Prof. J. W. Miller's school. In fact the crowd was so immense that it looked as if nearly [?] were standing, and a great number could not even get in the building. When eight o'clock arrived, the audience became restless and impatient and when, at last, the curtain arose and disclosed to our eager inquiring eyes the beautifully decorated stage so tastefully arranged, the excitement was great and everyone on the qui vive of expectancy. Those handsome boys around us did not seem to be looking at the beautiful bouquets that rendered the stage so much more attractive, or rather, they were not looking at "the wild flowers," but at the cultivated "human flowers," pretty girls.

The programme is as follows: Prayer and address by Bro. Howell; Song of welcome, by the school, which was made affective by the charming Miss Addie Jones' accompaniment so nicely executed.

Recitations by Miss Linda Conner, Mark Hamilton, Willie Drummond; Camp Polka by Miss Daisy Daughdrill; Recitations by Miss Ada Howell, Lulla Alverson, Aurellia Jones, Mary Howell, and George Adams; Camile Polka, Miss Julia Drummond; Recitations by Mr. John Savage and Miss Nora Alverson; dialogue "The happy little wife," Miss

Jessie Howell and Mr. Wessle Barber; Recitations Master Effie Hamilton and Miss Annie Drummond.

The dialogue "A changed housewife" was very nicely performed by Misses Addie Jones and Annie Drummond, and Messrs. Geo Adams, Will Wilson and Effie Hamilton; Recitations by Misses Sarah Jones and Julia Drummond, entitled Pyramids not all Egyptian and pronounced one of the best that was recited; Recitation, Calude Alverson was very comical.

Recitation by Miss Minnie Barber; Composition by William Wilson; Recitation by Miss Daisy Daughdrill. The drams "Uncle Dick's Mistake" was highly entertaining and very nicely acted by Misses Mary Harmon and Sarah Jones, Messrs Geo. Adams, Claude Alverson and Master Willie Drummond.

Solo by Miss Daisy Daughdrill; Recitation by Miss Mary Harmon. We much say that the little farce entitled "Wide enough for two" was one of the best things of the kind we ever saw, very interesting and extremely comical, the actors Misses Julia Drummonds and Daisy Daughdrill, Messrs William Milam, Abner Jones, Claude Alverson, Richard Jones and John Savage, all carried their parts out well and so thoroughly understood it that there was not a flaw.

Then comes a touching valedictory touchingly recited by Mr. Abner Jones and lastly a song by the school, illustrated by a beautiful cross of white flowers which made it very effective and pretty. If we were allowed more space we would try to tell more about how nicely everything came off and how thoroughly the pupils were trained. As it is though we will only exclaim "three cheers for Prof. Miller and his interesting school;" everyone acquitted themselves nicely and we would especially mention that tall handsome fellow they told me his name was Will Milam, his performance was excellent and he seemed perfectly at home on the stage. We wanted so much to hear him recite but were disappointed. We enjoyed it immensely and would be willing to go twice the distance to another such entertainment.

We learned during the evening that Prof. Miller teaches next term

about 5 miles from Coal City near Fairview. We congratulate him on his success and we could not make him a better wish than that he will be as popular and universally liked as he was at Broken Arrow.

ODENVILLE: A WORD ABOUT THE FIRST SETTLERS

St. Clair County News, Odenville, Alabama, July 16, 1908

In 1810 only five families lived in this section. They were: Obidiah Mize, who owned the farm and built the old brick home now owned by P. W. Shockley; Bennie Wills owned what is now known as the Hodge farm; Mr. Hutcherson owned the J. L. Hardin farm; Amos Rowland owned the Forman farm; Mr. HDarmon owned the Frazier farm; and Billy Oliver lived at the farm on Canoe Creek, now known as the Hammonds Mill. These people had their milling done at Guntersville, ninety (90) miles away. [1810 would seem to be an incorrect date.]

Many of our citizens claim the hour of relationship with these sturdy old pioneers.

The old brick home, now owned by P. W. Shockley and occupied by his son, H. W. Shockley, was built by Obadiah Mize ninety-eight years ago. [Incorrect date] He was one of the five original settlers of this vicinity and was the grandfather of our well-known and influential citizens Jas. A. and Lewis M. Mize.

The brick which were used in this building were burned in a stone's throw of the hosue. Perhaps the thought never entered this patriarch's mind that this same clay would figure largely in building a city which the present generation hope to see at no distant day—and in which his decendents are taking an active part.

Old Liberty Church was built in the year 1835 and Cumberland Presbyterians organized with Rev. Jas. S. Guthrie as pastor, and its first

Elders were Rev. Peter Hardin and Chris Vandegrift. The old original log church was in a few years replaced by a larger log house which was finally burned.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY OFFICIALS (1893)

The Southern Alliance, Friday, May 12, 1893

W. S. Griffith, Editor and Proprietor

Not being desirous of a newspaper controversy, but, in as much as some reflections and insinuations have been made against some of our county officials by the *Aegis*, we feel that it would not be amiss to enquire, who, and what, are these men whom the people saw fit to elect to office by perhaps the largest majorities any set of county officials ever received in St. Clair.

We will first notice our worthy representative, Hon. W. S. Foreman, who is comparatively a young man. Mr. Forman was born and reared in St. Clair county and has lived here all his life, he is the son of Hon. Jas. Forman, who once represented this county in the State legislature. W. S. Foreman is one of our largest tax payers, his interests are identified with the people of this county, he is a true alliance man and a warm friend to the masses, and we believe he carries no prejudice against any class. He has been twice elected to represent the people of this county in the legislature, and notwithstanding the fact that, he was dubbed "the blazed face mule," he has ever been true to his convictions and to the people he represented, and we understand he wields a great influence in the legislature, and he not only has, but is entitled to the respect and confidence of the people of the county.

Next we notice our Probate Judge, A. G. Watson. Mr. Watson was born and reared in Talladega county and lived there until the year 1867 (with the exception of the time he spent in the war,) when he moved to this county and made school teaching a success for several years. Being a

one-armed confederate soldier, he in 1874 became a candidate for tax-collector and was elected to that office for several terms in succession, he was not only an efficient but a very popular officer, and was never defeated before the people. Judge Watson is thoroughly identified with the people of St. Clair, he is also a true alliance man, and his warm heart fully sympathizes with the laboring people.

Next we refer to our efficient and painstaking Circuit Clerk, N. A. Hood, who was appointed to fill out the unexpired term of W. H. Caldwell, resigned, and last August was elected by the people of the county to again serve them in the same capacity, which was the highest endorsement his fellow citizens could give him. He was born and raised in this county, he has property in the county and is, and has always identified himself with the best interests of the county, having lived nearly all his life on a farm within a few miles of Ashville, and until he went into the clerks office he devoted his time to farming, except when engaged in preaching, (for he is a Baptist preacher,) and we believe he still fills the pulpit of some church regularly each Sabbath.

J. R. Neely, our sheriff, and Thos. Neely, our county Treasurer are brothers, are native born and raised near Ashville, and belong to one of St. Clair's best families. Rufus has lived all of his life on a farm, Thos. has been for several years in the mercantile business. They both own property in the county and of course are fully identified with the people of the county.

N. B. Spradley, our County Superintendent of Education, moved to our county in 1889 from Calhoun county, he is a mechanic by profession but is a good farmer, and has made what property he possesses by the sweat of his brow in honest toil, he feels a common interest in the welfare of the county as shown by his efforts to advance the cause of education.

Jas. A. Box, our tax-collector, is a native county man, is a brother of our honored townsman, Judge Leroy Box. Mr. Box was raised on a farm and is a farmer by profession, and no man in the county feels a deeper or more sincere interest in the welfare of the farmers and laboring people of this county than he.

J. W. Cospers, our hustling tax-assessor, is a son of Dr. Cospers, deceased. Jim, as he is familiarly called by all who know him, was, we believe, born and raised in this county on a farm near Easonville and he is now engaged in farming, all of Mr. Cospers interests are in this county, and no one doubts that he will work in future, as in the past, for the best interests of the farmers of his county.

Our worthy board of County Commissioners, B. M. Hill, S. J. Hare, H. A. Bridges and W. A. Murchison are all energetic, wide-awake gentlemen. They all own property in the county and are fully identified with its every interest.

We will next notice the war records of these men. W. S. Forman, Thos. Neely, N. B. Spradley, J. W. Cospers and B. M. Hill were all too young for the war.

Judge Watson volunteered in April '61, and belonged to the 37th Ala. regiment, was wounded in the battle near Atlanta. As evidence of his love of county we need only look at the empty sleeve he carries as a testimony of such.

Mr. Hood left Ashville in Capt. Coldwells company, June 17th, '61, being only 17 years old, he belonged to the 10 Ala. regiment, was severely wounded at the battle of Sharpsburg, from which he never sufficiently recovered to do infantry service and transferred to the cavalry where he served under Gen. Wheeler till the close of the war.

J. R. Neely was too young to go out at the commencement of the war, but when old enough, he volunteered, went to Gen. Wheelers command, and served until the close of the war. Jas. Box, we are informed, went to the war and made a good soldier, but our information in regard to him at this time is limited.

H. D. Bridges, W. A. Murchison, and S. J. Hare were all in the army and each of them had good war records.

Citizenship nor war records will suffice in this age, and we should know the political records of these men, but why take space to give their political records? Sufficeth to say that they always and at all times have stood by the time-honored principles of Jefferson, the father of

democracy. Some of these men stood in the front ranks during the dark days of reconstruction, never did one of them waver or fall out by the wayside, when the interest of the country was at stake.

MORALS.

Hood, the two Neely's, and Hare are members of the Baptist church, Judge Watson, Box, Cospers, Spradley, Hill, Murchison and Bridges are members of the Methodist church. Forman is a member of the Presbyterian church.

Messrs Hood, Forman, Hill, and Murchison belong to the Masonic Fraternity. Messrs Watson, Hood and Forman belong to the Knights of Pythias.

As a matter of citizenship, St. Clair county is the equal of any in the state, and she has had many good officers, but as a whole, did she ever have her offices more honorable or efficiently filled, notwithstanding they were not elected on the organized democratic ticket.

BEAVER VALLEY

(Blankenship and Pearson Shooting Affair [1893])

Southern Alliance, July 13, 1893

Ed. *Southern Alliance*. I will try to give some facts in the Blankenship and Pearson shooting affair, which occurred at Hammonds old mill, on July 1st, at a fishing party. J. D. Forman, of Branchville, went to Justice Strange and swore out a warrent for Walter Blankenship, which was placed in the hands of Const. Rogers. Said Const. made the arrest on the same evening and brought the prisoner before Justice Strange.

Monday at 8 o'clock a.m. was set for the preliminary hearing. The warrant was sworn out for murder, or an attempt to murder. In the interval the prisoner was in the custody of Const. Rodgers with a good guard. During the excitement there were rumors afloat that there was some danger of a lynching to take place on Sunday night, July 2nd. The Const. and posse with the prisoner lay in the woods. On Monday, July 3rd, there was a large crowd gathered at Evergreen, with Justice Strange and W. C. Martin, of beat 18, on the bench to mete out justice to the accused man. The case was called, and the state announced not ready for trial for the lack of counsel and asked the court to continue the case until July the 6th, it was granted. The court after hearing statements from parties that saw the man that was shot, said he, Pearson, being still alive the case was bailable under the law. So the court fixed the bond at \$3,000 for his appearance on the 6th of July. The excitement had not abated and a demand was made on Justice Strange for a sufficient guard to protect the prisoner and bring him safe to the court at Evergreen, which demand was complied with. The defendant, Blankenship, did not try to make bond and of course he was placed in jail at Ashville. On the 6th all parties appeared, with J. W. Inzer for the defense, and J. F. Osbourne and M. M. Smith for the prosecution. Dr. Vandegrift, physician of Pearson, was put on the stand by the state, and the court decided from Dr. Vandegrift's testimony that the wounded man, Pearson, would recover. Then the case was made out against Blankenship for assault with intent to murder. Inzer then waived the examination for the defense. The counsel for both parties agreed for the court to set the bond, which was placed at \$1,500 for his appearance at the next term of the circuit court. In 25 or 30 minutes defendant made bond and it was approved by Justice Strange, and the defendant was set a liberty. The above is about all that can be said of the case as far as facts are concerned. Now the cause of this trouble. It is reported that about 12 months ago Blankenship and Pearson had some words. At the fishing party is the first time they had met since the first trouble between them. Report says that Pearson and his brother attacked Walter Blankenship,

trying to force him to retract something he had said, he refused and they both jumped on him and forced him to make friends with them after they had cuffed him about. After he, Blankenship, got away from them, he went and got a shot gun and called on them later, that was when the shooting was done. Reporter.

WHITE WRIGHT, TEXAS (1894)
Southern Alliance, January 4, 1894

Dec. 25th 1893

I left Seddon, St. Clair County, Ala. with my family as an emigrant ____
18th Inst. Our trip was ve ____ leasant owing to the train being so
crowded with emigrants nearly all of whom were on their way to Texas.
__ came through safely and landed Ball's Texas on the _5th at a p__

____.
We have had fine weather since we came here, we have been looking for
a disagreeable time, with the mud and the so-called Northerns. I am
located five miles north of White Wright, in Fannin Co. in the Black
Prairie land which is said to have grown one bale of cotton per acre, it is
the most fertile land I ever saw, the soil is from 3 to eight feet deep.
The average cotton crop is one half bale per acre, corn 70 bu. wheat 35
to 40 bu, oats 75 to 100 bu. per acre. Fruit is said to grow fine here,
vegetables about equal to St. Clair. We are said to be in a healthy
section of country, I can see no cause for sickness here, we have good
water and plenty of it. The great advantage this country has over
Alabama is that she does not have to have guano furnished her to make a
good crop. It has large bodies of land, and being smooth we can use
tools to cultivate twice that amount of land with the same labor. W. J.
Manning.

A VETERAN OF '36

Tells a News Reporter an Interesting Story.

James Anthony Pike, who shot the
Indian in the Hog's Skin in the
Seminole War. His life
and Adventures.

HOW HE KILLED THE STRATEGIC INDIAN

Out in St. Clair county there lives a famous old historical character who was in Birmingham last night. He is James Anthony Pike, the hero of a story which is familiar to almost every school child who has ever read the history of our country.

It is an incident connected with the war between the government troops and the Seminole Indians in 1836, commonly known as the Seminole War. The scenes of the

MANY BLOODY BATTLES

of this war were laid in what is now the State of Florida. For seven successive nights the sentinel placed on duty near a large oak stump on the border of one of the many Florida swamps was found dead next morning. The eighth night it was with difficulty that the commanding officer of the army could find a soldier who was willing to go on duty at the dangerous post. Finally James Anthony Pike, the hero of our story, stepped and volunteered to do duty at the fatal post, and discover, if possible, the cause of the death of his seven comrades. He swore before leaving camp he would shoot the first living thing he saw. It was a hog, and he kept his word and fired. When the hog's skin rolled off there lay a dead Indian warrior, the man who had killed the seven pickets.

PIKE'S STORY

Mr. Pike, who is now seventy one years old, was in Birmingham last night, and gave a News reporter an account of his life and adventures. While waiting for the train at the depot, he recited to the reporter many interesting incidents of the Indian wars and old times. When asked to tell the story which has made him famous, he said:

"I am a native of Walton county, Ga., having been born there in 1819. When an order for recruits came in 1833, for the Seminole war, I went along with the company of seventy-seven other fellows. We were all volunteers.

"About the time we reached Florida, General Scott, who was in command of our army, had been accused of siding with the Indians, and it was even said that he had an Indian wife. He was ordered to come to Washington for trial, and while he was away, General Gaines was put in command of the army.

INDIAN CHIEF INTERVIEWED

"The Indian chief asked for an interview with General Gaines," continued Mr. Pike. "It was arranged that the interview was to take place in a grove, and that each was to have two guards with him. I was selected as one of the guards for General Gaines. I was instructed not to wait for the Indian chief or his guards to do any act of violence, but to shoot if they made any attempt whatever to do General Gaines an injury.

"The talk lasted about an half hour, and just as the Indians turned to leave, one of them wheeled around suddenly and fired his pistol at General Gaines, knocking out two of his front teeth; my gun ready cocked, and aiming at him I pulled the trigger and the Indian dropped dead, pierced through the breast with a load of buckshot. Indian chief and his remaining guard fled."

SENTINEL FOUND DEAD

"A few days later," continued the old picket, "A picket who had been put on duty at a large oak stump near a swamp, was found dead with several big knife wounds in his breast. For six successive nights the same thing occurred, and seven of our best men were killed. When Gen. Gains sent for me and asked me what I thought was the matter, I

told him that it must be some smart Indian trick, and offered to go on duty at the dangerous post that night myself. I concealed myself behind the stump, lying flat upon the ground with my gun cocked, and my hand upon the trigger. I had lain in that position about an hour, when I heard before me the

GRUNTING OF A HOG.

I peered into the darkness and saw before me what seemed to be a hog coming straight toward my hiding place. I had resolved to shoot the first living thing I saw in front of me, and so I aimed straight at the hog and pulled the trigger. The firing of my gun brought a number of men to the spot, and they went up to where the hog had dropped. The hog's skin had rolled off and there before them lay an Indian warrior with a gun and knife clasped tightly in his hands. It was he who killed the seven pickets.

THE ACT REWARDED

"Gen. Soctt soon returned. He had been tried, acquitted and promoted to general-in-chief of the United States armies. When he heard of the killing of the Indian in the hog's skin, he sent for me and promised that I should be rewarded for the act. Some days later he handed me a paper, which was a government decree, exempting me from poll tax, road tax, or any of the state taxes. I was only seventeen years old then, and I have never in my life paid a cent of poll tax. or worked on the roads."

Mr. Pike left on the 10:30 p. m. Georgia Pacific train for Pell City, near which he operates a large saw mill. His health is not good, and he is quite feeble. He was accompanied by two of his grandsons, and he had been in Birmingham for the first time in several years.

The Birmingham News copied in the *Southern Aegis*, February 6, 1890.

OUR OLD PEOPLE (1890)

Southern Aegis, 1890

For several issues in 1890, the *Southern Aegis* ran a short column titled "Our Old People" in which they gave brief biographies of citizens of the county. These columns are given here in their entirety.

April 3, 1890. Mr. **M. L. Inzer**, of Springville community, this county, is in his 78th year--has lived in this county most of his time since 1852--was married to Miss Nancy Moore in March in 1848, the latter now 65 years old. Eight sons were born to them, two of whom are now living, eight daughters, all of whom are living. They have forty-three grand children living, and twelve great grand children. Mr. Inzer has been a missionary Baptist for forty-nine years, and his wife about forty-four years. In politics, Mr. Inzer has been a life long democrat. Both are in good health for their age.

April 3, 1890. Mr. **A. M. McClendon** of Springville is in his 77th year--has lived [in] St. Clair about 72 years in his present community. His parents moved here from North Carolina, when he was about 5 years old. In religion has been a consistent member of the Baptist church for 47 years; in politics a life long democrat. He was married to Miss Moriam Pearson in 1835. Four sons, of whom three are living, and seven daughters of whom five are living, have been born to them. They have had sixty-four grand children of whom fifty-four are living, and there are nine great grand children. Mrs. McClendon is about the same age of her husband.

April 17, 1890. **G. G. Crawford**, of Springville, is now 85 years old. He came from North Carolina in 1835 and has lived in St. Clair, Shelby and Blount counties up to date--was married to Miss Milly Massey in 1823, raised 11 children. There are about 30 grand children and several

great grand children. He has been a professor of religion 62 years, living a consistent Christian. In politics was a Whig. He is now in feeble health, having recently been confined to his bed for about 11 weeks, and is now living with his son--his wife being dead about 2 years--who is cheerfully administering to the temporal wants of his aged father in his affliction.

April 17, 1890. **Moses Pearse**, of Springville, is now 67 years of age--has lived in St. Clair County 64 years--was married to Miss Mary Gregory, who is about the same age. They raised 12 children, 4 of whom are dead. Husband and wife have been members of the Baptist church about 48 years and are in reasonable good health, especially Mrs. Pearse who is able to attend to all her household affairs. They have 21 grandchildren. In politics Mr. Pearse has been a life long democrat.

April 24, 1890. Mr. **J. T. Steel**, of Steele's, was born in Rutherford County, N.C., Oct. 15, 1802. He will be 88 years old his next birthday. He was married to Susanna Lutes in the year 1835, Jan. 23d, a Methodist minister named Henley officiating. In 1851, they moved to Alabama and settled on Clear Creek, five miles above this place where they lived three years, and then moved to their present home at this place now known as Steele's Depot. Eight sons have been born to them, six of whom are still living, and four daughters, of whom three survive. They have 40 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren. The old lady is almost as pert as a girl, is able to do all her house work. Brother Steele has been a member of the Baptist church 69 years, his wife has been a member 60 years.

April 24, 1890. Esquire **Strange** of Beaver Valley was born in Chester District, S. C., Oct. 20, 1813. He moved to Ala. with his father in childhood, settled in Beaver Valley in 1828, where he has ever since resided. He was happily married in his 22d year to Miss Margaret Byers with whom he lived until her death, Sept. 24, 1885. Nine

children were born to them. Seven are yet living--five boys and two girls. They have all made their mark in the world. One is a lawyer, one a doctor, one a mechanic and two (Joe and Marshall) successful farmers. Mr. Strange married his second (present) wife Dec. 31st, 1889, and is now with bright face enjoying his honeymoon. In politics Mr. Strange has been a democrat and has been highly appreciated as a competent, safe man which is seen from the fact that he served as county commissioner for 19 years, as county superintendent of education one term, county surveyor, justice of the peace and postmaster nearly all the rest of his life.

In religion Bro. Strange has been a prominent member of the M. E. Church South for nearly 20 years, holding official relation and taking the lead in all the forward movements of the church. May he yet live long to serve the county and church and have a large entrance into the joys beyond after death.

May 1, 1890. **Rev. T. S. Logan** was born in York district, S. C., in the year 1814, February 23rd, and came to St. Clair County about the year 1833; was married to Nancy Mauldin in the year 1835. They had six children born to them, two sons (both of whom are dead) and four daughters, all living. They have 19 grandchildren living. Mrs. Logan was born in 1818, Jan. 25th, and died the 27th of Sept. 1889. The old folks were industrious in old age as in youth. Parson Logan has preached all over St. Clair County, was for many years Tax Collector of this county. About the commencement of the late war, he was elected Judge of Probate but did not serve his term of office out as the law did not allow him to hold two offices of honor and profit at the same time, he being at that time tax collector. He is now partially deaf but is able to work yet. He is making a very good plow boy in his seventy-seventh year. Our old folks will soon be gone, it makes us feel sad when we think of it.

May 8, 1890. **Mr Thomas Green**, of Springville, was born in

Virginia the 3rd day of March, 1805, and moved to St. Clair County 66 years ago. He has been a member of the church for 16 years and is still in very good health. In politics he has always been, and is yet, a democrat.

May 8. 1890. **Samuel P. Owen**, father of our fellow townsman B. F. Owen, was born in Haywood County, N. C., on Feb. 18, 1812. His father moved in this country in the year 1818 and settled on Will's Creek not far from Attalla. Bro. Owen has lived in this county the greater part of his life. He was married to Miss Roxana Watson Jan. 29, 1833. They lived together about 35 years and have had born to them ten children, seven of whom are dead. sister Owen died in 1868. Since that time Bro. Owen was married to Rhoda Johns, his present wife. He is very feeble at present. The good old man is about done his work. He was converted in 1833 and for many years was class leader of the Methodist church, and he was a good one. He is one of our best theologians; he holds rigid regard for truth and right and wants to see professors of religion live holy lives according to the requirements of the Bible.

May 15, 1890. Esq. **Sam B. McBrayer** was born Sept. 12, 1815, in Henderson County, North Carolina. He moved to St. Clair County, Ala., in early life, and settled in Beaver Valley, where he has resided ever since. Esq. McBrayer has been a very prominent member of the M. E. Church South for more than 40 years, having served as steward 20 years and as trustee all the remaining part of his time since joining the church. He has been a true democrat and served as Justice of the Peace and Township trustee.

Esq. McBrayer was married to his present wife Dec. 31, 1843. To them there have been born twelve children--five sons and seven daughters. Six of their children are living and have families of their own. Twenty-five "little prattlers" call Esq. McBrayer grandpa. Besides, there are four dead. What a throng there would have been had

all his children lived to raise families.

Uncle Mc is in very good health for a man of 75, and bids fair to live some years to bless the church and community of which he is a member. So mote it be!

May 22, 1890. Dear *Aegis*: As it is in order to report the ages of our old people, I will say to you that Mr. **Russel Davis** was born in Franklin County, Georgia, in the year 1807. He was married to Nancy Ann Southerland in 1828. They had seven children--three boys and four girls of whom five are still living. He has living 53 grandchildren and 37 great, great grandchildren--total 90. The old gentleman is now in good health. He was totally blind three years, but now can see how to read fine print. He has been a member of the Baptist church about 40 years. He never bought ten bushels of corn for bread in all his life, and has never used tobacco. From all appearances he bids fair to become a centenarian.

June 12, 1890. **James Gillmore** was born in Wilkinson County, Ga., June 10th, 1809; moved to Alabama, Barbour County, years ago; married Mary M., his wife, January 18th, 1836, in Wilkinson County, Ga., where she was born, May 2nd, 1818. They have had 14 children, 8 of whom are living; 53 grand children; 11 great grand children; have been members of the Baptist church 52 years. Although 81 years old, Mr. Gillmore is in good health, active and never uses spectacles. His wife is 71 yrs. old, is in good health and can go about the neighborhood without help.

August 7, 1890. **Burl McClendon** was born Dec. 5th, 1802, was married to Nancy Crump in 1820, who died october 13th [18th?], 1857. He married a second time July 1858, Elizabeth Reeves, who died Nov. 20th, 1889. He has lived in St. Clair since 1815, and at his present home 58 years, and has 17 children living in the county.

August 7, 1890. **Louisa Reeves** was born September 12, 1799; was married at the age of 14 years; had 17 children, 8 girls and 9 boys. Came into the county in 1818. Her husband Anderson Reeves died April the 21st 1852.

AMONG THE PEOPLE (1892)

Personal and Other Items from all parts of St. Clair

Advance-Journal, Ashville, Alabama

February 12, 1892 and March 11, 1892

Rev. T. S. **Logan**, now living five miles north of Ashville, is one of the oldest and most highly respected citizens and Christian ministers. He was for many years the most popular and extensively known man in this county. No man stood higher in the esteem of the people than T. S. Logan. There was eloquence and pathos together with good thought in his preaching that brought out the people to hear him and he wielded a mighty influence for good. He was for many years Tax Collector of this county and no one could beat him while he ran for that office. He was elected Probate Judge of the county once, but not having resigned his office of Tax Collector before his election to that office, he was declared not eligible. The writer's recollections of Bro. Logan are almost as far back as memory can go.

The first time that my memory can bring up of special mention being made of him was while a meeting was in progress near Ashville in which several distinguished ministers were engaged and it was asked who was doing the best preaching, and the reply was made, "Tis Logan." He came out of the fodder field in his shirt sleeves and copperas breeches on and beat the whole of them.

Now, Bro L. will take no exceptions to my telling about his copperas breeches for they were very popular breeches in those days. I remember to have seen a whole regiment of men on the muster ground, for the men were called out in military array to drill several times in the year, and by far the large majority would have on coppers breeches and

the principal part of the others would be "stone dye" and "purple." "Stone dye" was made from the red iron ore, and "purple" was made by getting sweet gum bark and maple and boiling them in water. Coosa Valley, according to the number, seemed to furnish the greatest number of copperas, Springville the greatest number of stone dye, and Branchville and about Ashville the thing was a little more mixed with purple, but copperas breeches was in the lead all through. So you see, gentle reader, Bro. Logan was on the popular side, and one of the boys and with the boys, for there was no morals at state in wearing or not wearing copperas breeches.

Bro. L. has never gone with the multitude where moral or principle have been involved, but has maintained a consistent Christian life amid all the changes through which he has passed and honored by his life the truth he has preached.

He holds his physical and mental powers well for one so advanced in life, being now nearing, if not past, his four score years. He has never used spectacles and reads the finest print. His hearing has been very bad for years. His sun of life is soon to set, and the people of this generation owe him their tender regard and gratitude for his life of high moral virtue, Christian conduct and good citizenship. From Abraham down through all ages, the best of men have made blunders and so may have he, but his purposes and aims have been high as his life has given testimony.

Abe **Green**, of Greensport, was one of the old settlers and noted men and farmers of this county. He owned all the land on both sides of the river at Greensport, and had a large number of acres in cultivation and a large number of servants to cultivate it. When the boats first ran down the Coosa To Greensport, a company of men wanting to build up a town tried to get him to divide his land up into lots and sell it to them or others and build up a big town, but he preferred the farm to the town, and would not sell any. The land was rich and fertile, and Uncle Abe was a good farmer, raising an abundance of corn, wheat, oats, cotton,

fine hogs, cattle, horses and mules and everything needed and indeed lived upon the fat of the land in every sense. His table was well supplied with fresh fish caught from the river by an old servant or himself, or some one of the many people who would often come over from Jacksonville, Talladega and other places for recreation and to hunt and fish and have a good itme at Abe Green's. For he always had plenty in those days and he loved to enjoy it wiht his frinds. He was a social man and enjoyed joke, kind and ture hearted. Fond of hunting and would often bring in the "big buck" or turkey, for they were plenty in thsoe days. The writer's most intimate acquaintance began in 185-'57, while pastor of the church then at Greensport. He was an attentive, orderly church member. He George Wood, James Whistenant, two other large planters on the other side of the river, had built them a large church house at Greensport with a large seatin gcapacity in the rear for th servants and they were members of the same church with the wites and they wopul;d be present when preaching to the whites and special service wouldb e held for them, but they took no part in church business.

Abe Green was agood man and citizen; he died a few years since at Talladega and now sleeps beside is good wife (who passed on many years before) in Hopewell cemetery, thiss county.

Roland **Hood** was born in this county and spent all his life here fexcept a year or so spent in an adjoining county, and his name is very familiar to all the people about here, and especially those east of here. He was, for many years before his death, a constant sufferer from rheumatism, and did not get out much among the people, and he was not seen often except at his own home, seven miles east of Ashville, where he was honored. He was a plain unassuming man, noted for truth and honesty. He was reared up in farm life, and was an industrious, thrifty farmer. He never thought of making a living any other way than frowing it out of the earth. He never thought of getting the hard earnings of his fellow man by cunning or fraud. He was a good husband and father; a good neighbor and devoted Christian citizen, one who feared God, loved his church and brethren, neighbors and friends

and enjoyed their association, and loved to have them visit him at his home, around his hearthstone, and always made them feel welcome, and his house was often visited by them. The writer cannot call to mind the first recollections of Uncle Roland, but has known him as far back in the distance as memory can bring up. He loved the farm and farm life, and a friend of his who was helping him clear off some land told me that about ten years before his death when he first became afflicted, having fallen down one day while at work and could not get up easily, he said, jokingly: "Come boys and knock me in the head, for I will never be of any more service here." O, for more of that class of men who desire to be of service to the world and only desire their honest dues! He died in 1889, having past his three score and ten, leaving a good wife who yet is lingering on the shore. Well done, faithful servant, rest from thy labors, for thy sufferings are o'er.

Thomas **Rickles** of Crawfords Cove occupies a high place in good citizenship in this county. He is one of the oldest and most highly respected, because he is an honest, upright, truthful, affable and kind Christian citizen. Religiously, he is liberal and catholic in spirit and loves to worship God with all Christian people. He is an industrious and thrifty farmer, and diversifies his crops and raises almost everything he needs at home. He stands at the head of the list in growing fine watermelons, potatoes, cabbage, turnips, fruits of various kinds and raises his own wheat, meat, butter and honey. Not long since the writer was asked to go home with him and cut a 40 pound watermelon, but Rambler had not sufficient strength in his hands to cut it, but it was cut, to the delight of several parties standing by. He loves to entertain friends at his home and speak of the goodness of God manifested every where. Sober minded and true, now past three score and ten, soon to pass over the river and rest forever more.

John R. **Dean** of Beaver Valley is one of our honest industrious farmers who stays at home and attends to business. He does not risk everything on cotton, but raises corn, wheat, oats, makes his own meat and raises everything he can for home use. He has 11 in family and his

store account for a year is not more than \$50. He has been absent from home one night in fourteen months and then on pressing business.

Rambler

TALKS ABOUT PEOPLE

Advance-Journal, Ashville, Alabama

Friday, May 6, 1892

James G. **Dycus** has been a citizen of this county for nearly forty years and has been made to pass through fiery trials and deep waters, yet amid it all he has proved himself the good citizen and true soldier. He has been a life-long farmer and stirs the soil for a living. He is an honest and true man and you always find him with the harness on pulling in the right direction. So you can rely upon Bro. Dycus if he finds you are for the right. He is now not far from sixty and is a devout man, one that fears God and eschews evil. Stand firm, Bro., until the last armed fore expires.

David B. **Moore**, of Coal City. Yes, here is "Bro. Moore," "Uncle Ben," "Judge," or whatever you please to call him, yet he is the same under all the names; now in his seventies, with silvery locks, head white, yet full of vim up to the brim. Full of life and good cheer, and if you can't hear him talk you must have a dull ear. He is social, generous, full of hospitality and kind, yet courageous and bold, like Gideon of old; and, if necessary a friend to defend, he would beard the lion in his den. He is full of enthusiasm, strong in his convictions, firm and ready to speak them out so you may very soon find out where he stand on any question. He was for many years a good farmer, but now runs a hotel at Coal City. The writer has known him personally and very intimately for more than thirty years. He is an active and zealous church member;

a high minded, honest and honorable Christian man. A lover of good society and a strong temperance man. A lover of good people and battling for the right, but soon must doff the helmet and lay the armor down and may the path of life shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

Daniel McCullough, of Crawfords Cove comes up in our memory and was thro' many summer's sun and winter's winds, one of our most solid and worthy citizens. He was a man of great faith and religious zeal. He loved to meet his brethren and talk about the trials of life and the comforts of religion, and possessed great enthusiasm and undaunted courage. What he believed he believed with all his heart and was bold to speak it. He came to this county thirty-five or more years ago and lived near here all the time until his death, which occurred a few years since, in his seventies. Uncle Daniel was a good farmer-citizen and battled for the right and his influence was in the interest of good morals and virtue. He was a life-long member of the M. E. Church and was an active worker until the Master called and the soldier laid his armor by to dwell in peace at home.

Samuel Reed, of Trout Creek, now Ragland, was a noted and valuable farmer-citizen of that community for many years. He was quiet, law-abiding and orderly in every way. He was industrious and attentive to business, striving to make a living in that old fashioned, time-honored and honest way, growing it out of the ground, and the writer would not under value other laudable vocations or callings, for they are needed in their place. But the man who by honest labor produces a living by growing it out of the earth, deserves the most honor and gets the least in general. Bro. Reed was a man of good morals, high minded and true. A good church member and valuable in his community, for it was not cursed but blessed by his having lived in it. He died several years since, but the writer holds him fresh in memory. J. F. Reed, our worthy friend of Ragland, is his son.

John G. **Barber**, of Broken Arrow, is one of our best citizens, now in his sixties and has been here all his life. The writer has known him as far back as memory can recall and has known him as one of the most quiet and peaceful farmer-citizens, having plenty of his own business to attend to and doing it and not interfering with his neighbors, and by so doing he has been a thrifty farmer and made a good living at home. And now in his old age he is testing the mercantile business. He is a man of good morals, sober, and a highminded Christian man, a good church member and a valuable citizen.

ST. CLAIR'S OLD LAWYERS [1901]

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, October 2, 1901

In a conversation with Judge John W. Inzer, the oldest and most successful representative of the legal profession now living in St. Clair County, he gave us a brief statement of his recollections of some of the old lawyers who figured prominently at the Ashville bar before and just after the war--a subject that will be of historical interest to many of our readers. The judge said: "I will say a few things about the lawyers who were living in St. Clair County when I came to Ashville on the 8th day of January, 1851. At that time there were but five lawyers living in the county and all resided in Ashville, vis: Burrell T. Pope, John T. Tomason, Rufus W. Cobb, Thomas Hayden and William C. Griffin."

Col. Burrell T. Pope was by birth a Georgian, he came from his native state to Wetumpka, and from there to Ashville. He was in his day one of the ablest and most profound lawyers in this part of the state, his _____ soon became very extensive throughout northeast Alabama. He was a man of very high moral character and a noble Christian gentleman; an active member of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and a lover of his church.

In the fifties he became a candidate for congress, on the platform that slavery was morally and religiously right, and in support of his views he carried with him the Bible.

Col. Pope, as he was familiarly known, was an earnest opposer of the ordinance of secession, and did all in his power to defeat it. After the close of the war and at the election for congressman in Nov. 1865, he was chosen to represent his district, and he went to Washington and asked to be allowed a seat in that body, and notwithstanding his great opposition to secession and love for the union, he was turned down by the house and refused the seat which his people had sent him there to occupy as their representative. In 1867 he was appointed Judge of the circuit in which he lived; the duties of office were discharged by him with ability and great fairness.

This position he held at the time of his death which occurred in 1868. Some years before his death he moved from Ashville to Gadsden, where he resided when he died.

Judge John F. Thomason was a native of Alabama and of St. Clair County. In January 1856, he was about fifty years of age, a man of great natural ability, possessed of exceedingly fine judgement. The judge succeeded well at the bar until his eyesight failed him. He then commenced merchandising, or rather, I would say returned to that business, having in early life been a merchant. He was an exceedingly upright and earnest business man and a true friend. He died at St. Clair Springs in the year 1867.

Rufus W. Cobb was born and reared in Ashville and practiced law here until 1858 when he moved to Shelby County where he formed a law connection with Gen. John T. Morgan. Rufe, as he is familiarly known, was a success from the start. At opening of war, he carried a company into the 10th Alabama Regiment, subsequently he resigned on account of his bad health and came home. After regaining his health he again entered the service and there remained until the war closed, when he settled in Perry County, where for some two or three years he and others tried their hand in cotton growing. Having tired of this, Rufe

returned to Shelby, where he lived until recently. While in shelby he practiced law and was for a long time a leader in the state Senate, and a member of the constitutional convention of 1875, then Governor of the State and afterwards probate judge of Shelby County. Gov. Cobb, as we now know him, is a man of sound morals, high integrity and a true friend. He was one of Alabama's best governors. He low lived in comfort and ease at Woodlawn, Ala.

Thomas Hayden was a young man born and reared in Jacksonville, Alabama, a partner in the law office of Judge Thomason. Hayden succeeded well and made money. At the opening of the war, he enlisted and was elected first lieutenant of Co. A. 10th Alabama Regiment, and was soon promoted to the position of quartermaster of the Regiment. This position he held giving great satisfaction tot he end of the war. At the close of the war he moved to Talladega where he remained until his death a few years since. Tom as he was familiarly known was a clever kindhearted man and one of the best and most obliging neighbors on earth.

William C. Griffin was born and raised in what was then known as Benton County, Alabama. He came to Ashville in the early fifties, and for years had charge of the Ashville Academy. He subsequently read law and in 1855 was admitted to the bar. He opened an office in Ashville, but soon moved to Haynesville, Lowndes County. He went through the war and after its close returned to Haynesville, where he continued in his profession, and engaged in the business of planting. Griffin was fortunate in all his undertakings. He was a good man, a Christian gentleman, a successful school teacher, a good lawyer and planter. He died a few months since at his home in Haynesville.

A 1908 LETTER AND POEM FROM ALFRED F. HAWKINS
Company "I," 29th Infantry, Philippine Islands
St. Clair County News, September 3, 1908, Odenville, Alabama

Fort William McKinley, Manila P. I., July 20th, 1908
Editor "St. Clair County News," Odenville, Ala.

Dear Sir:--

As I am a native of St. Clair County and have the honor of knowing most all the people in the vicinity of the "News," I would be glad if allowed space to let my relatives and friends hear from me by means of a few lines through your columns.

I was born in St. Clair, near Odenville, in the year 1876, and lived there until war was declared with Spain in 1898[?], when I volunteered my service and went to Cuba, but was very much disappointed upon my arrival in Santiago to find that I was a few days too late to see actual service. I did garrison duty there for eight months and returned to the United States. Shortly after my arrival in America, the Insurrection broke out in the Philippines when I again took the Army fever and tendered my services to Uncle Sam for three years in the Philippine Islands. I was sent to New York City by rail and from there, taking the U. S. transport "Kilpatrick" by way of Suez Canal, to Manila, stopping from one to two days in the cities of Gibraltar, Malta, Port Said, Columba, Singapore, Suez City and from there to Manila, covering a distance (according to the register on the ship) of 17,000 and some miles from New York. The Kilpatrick being an exceedingly fast boat, we made the trip in 56 days. I landed in Manila on the 18th day of January, 1900, and was soon sent to my regiment on the island of Pansy, some 300 miles away, and I must state here that shortly after joining my regiment my fighting fever was reduced to a very normal degree, owing to the hard service and the long and frequent hikes.

I remained in the Philippines two years and seven months and during that time was stationed on eight different islands.

I returned to the United States in August, 1902, by way of Japan, and landed San Francisco, Cal., making a completed trip around the world.

I came back to St. Clair and remained there and in Jefferson until

1906, when I was attacked with another severe case of the Army fever and again enlisted, this time in the Hospital Corps, U. S. Army, in Nashville, Tenn. I was sent from there to St. Lewis, Mo., landing there on the day of the Frisco earth quake. From there I proceeded to Washington, D. C., where I took a three months course in the Hospital School of Instruction. While in this school, I was among fifty selected men to make a trip to Boston, where we exhibited everything pertaining to the Hospital Corps at the big medical convention, opening of the New Harvard Medical college. We were there eleven days and received a very pleasant welcome during our stay. We returned to Washington and were soon ordered to Chickamauga Park, Ga., to the annual army maneuvers. I was down there three months when I again received orders to proceed to the Philippines.

On the 5th of February, 1907, I boarded the S. S. transport "Logan" and in a few minutes I was once more on my way to Manila, where I landed one month later. I was placed on duty in one of the military hospitals near Manila, as ward master. This being a scout post and all my patients were Filipinos, I became very much dissatisfied, as I did not like the idea of waiting on (as I call them) bamboo soldiers. I tried hard to get a change of station, but I was unsuccessful. After remaining there and toughing it out for eight months, I saw in the Manila papers to my very pleasant surprise that my old regiment had arrived in Manila. So the first thing I did was to go down to the captain's office and put in an application to transfer back to the 29th Infantry, which was returned to me approved in less than two weeks time. So I am at present back in my old company now stationed in Manila and am as pleasantly situated as one could wish to be.

I have eight months and twenty-four days more to serve and then I am coming back to dear old St. Clair.

I will be discharged in Frisco, April 13th, next, and am anticipating meeting all my relatives and friends at the Bethel's, Liberty's and Friendship's memorials next May.

I beg to remain a sincere friend to the "News" and its many

readers.

P.S. I enclose for publication a piece of poetry that I composed while soldiering in the Hospital Corps at the Scout Hospital above mentioned.

I am just a common soldier in the blasted Philippines,
I like my slum and hard tack, my bacon and my beans,
I like the weary marches, in the sloppy mud and rain,
But I have had enough of it and wont take on again.

I don't like to be a soldier for it really is no treat,
And when I joined the army I was crazy with the heat,
But the time is surely coming when I take the good-bye train
And I'll have you all remember that I wont take on again.

Three long years in all I've soldiered beneath the tropic sun,
Down in Mindanao with Moros, Scrapping Goo-goos in Luzon,
Now I'm back near old Manila, tanned as back as mortal sin,
And there's one thing I must tell you, that I wont take on again.

I don't believe in scrapping, in fact I never did
But I always got my needings since I was a little kid.
I never knew what trouble was, until here I drew my rein,
But I'm sorry now I did it and wont take on again.

Take me away from old Manila, from its mouldy walls of moat,
Let me turn in my equipments, pistol, belt and rubber coat.
Take me back to God's great country from the land of too much rain,
And you will find one little Freddie that will never take on again.

Take me back to old Alabama, to my mother old and gray,
To my friends who are waiting and I'll with them surely stay,
Let me see their smiling faces, let me take them by the hand,

And I never more will leave them to go and scrap for Uncle Sam.

For I've learned my lesson and I guess I've learned it well,
For I've heard the bullets whistle and I've heard the Goo-goos yell.
But I've had enough of soldiering where you spend your life in vain,
And I think a man is crazy if he ever takes on again.

Please don't say I'm talking rag-time or shooting off my air too free.
For I've had enough of it so you can't make fun of me,
I say give me my discharge, turn me loose upon the plain,
And I'll eat grass with the cattle before I'll ever take on again.

I'd just like to tell you one thing and impress it on your mind,
That a boy who likes these islands is a very hard one to find.
For three years here is quite enough for almost any man,
So take me back and let me live on my dear old uncle's land.

One more thing I'd like to tell you, then I'll close this dizzy rhyme,
I'll be a goodie-goodie boy and try to do my time,
But on the day I'm discharged, I'll tell you with a grin,
That I'll bet a hundred dollars that I'll not take on again.

If I live to leave this islands and get back to Birmingham,
I'll spend my days there with my mother and bid adieu to Uncle
Sam,
For I've had enough of scrapping, had enough of the Philippines,
I'm tire of looking at phobie mowen [women?], I'm tire of eating
pork and beans,

I'm tired of waiting on bamboo soldiers, tired of giving them quinine
pills,
I'm tired of hiking over rocky mountains, tired of climbing tropical
hills;

Soon my friends I'll be in Frisco, then I'll take a south bound train,
Bidding farewell to the dear old Army, for I'll never take on again.

Alfred F. Hawkins,
Hospital Corps, U. S. Army.

**SPRINGVILLE BOY GETS COMMENDATION
FOR SERVICE IN AFRICA
CLIFTON D. MIZE**

Undated newspaper clipping from 1944
Newspaper unidentified

At a North African service command base a group commander made a commendation to two of his men saying, "For their alertness, intelligence, and devotion to duty, these men are to be commended." Back of this commendation is a highly exciting story. Pfc. Clifton D. Mize, son of Mr. and Mrs. James A. Mize, Rt. Two, Springville, Ala., and Theodore V. Landry of Clinton, N.Y., serving with the air service command depot repair squadron in Africa recently were guarding an abandoned air field. A high wind was blowing and the night was black and rainy. Through the elements they detected the faint drone of an aircraft. Seconds later the plane came out of the "soup" to attempt a landing. It missed the runway by almost a quarter of a mile. "We've got to get that runway illuminated someway, Mize," Landry said. "Grab those gasoline cans quick." Frantically the men worked, placing the gasoline cans along each side of the runway and igniting them. Upstairs a bewildered pilot and his crew, fresh from the states and over strange country for the first time, spotted the improvised beacons and decided to feel their way down once more. Sensing the fact that the storm would make the crude flares inadequate, the men on the ground supplemented

their aid with flashlights. The pilot was able to discern the lights but not the men. When the aircraft was finally set down it had missed Landry by twenty feet and came even closer to Mize. A much relieved pilot shook hands gratefully with two other Americans and exclaimed, "So this is Africa."

Pfc. Mize has been overseas since November, 1942. He has been awarded the good conduct medal and the Middle Eastern Theatre Ribbon.



[The Commendation]

HEADQUARTERS
ARMY AIR FORCE SERVICE COMMAND
MEDITERRANEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
APO 528

8 JUN 1945

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation

THRU: Commanding Officer, Air Force General Depot No. 3, APO 528

TO: Pfc. Clifton D. Mize, 34264829, 17th Depot Repair Squadron

1. The report concerning your actions on the night of 5 January 1944 in assisting in the safe semi-emergency landing of a B-24 airplane has been brought to my attention. At the time the landing was effected, you, accompanied by Corporal Theodore V. Landry were guarding a B-17 airplane which had been left at an advance airfield at Depienne, Tunisia, for salvage.

2. At about 1900 hours with darkness and a severe storm

approaching, you sighted a B-24 aircraft circling the field. Acting without previous instructions, you and Corporal Landry immediately lighted gasoline fires to outline the runway and stood by with flashlights to assist the pilot in making a safe landing.

3. I desire to commend you for this valuable service. The alertness and initiative you displayed in this incident are in keeping with the highest precepts of the military service.

L. F. WHITTEN
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

DEATH OF REV. HEZEKIAH MOOR [1864]

Southwestern Baptist, February 4, 1864

Editors S. W. Baptist--Dear Brethern:

In July last we wrote you a letter informing you of the death of our much beloved brother Rev. Hezekiah Moor. We suppose that you did not receive the letter. We now write again. Bro. M. was one of our most useful ministers in these parts. Ever zealous and faithful in the cause of Christ, a devoted friend of the South, ever the friend of virtue and the opposer of vice, he stood the unflinching advocate of our holy religion. Few men possessed such energy--energy untiring. For several years the laborious missionary of the Cannan Baptist Association, and after the organization of the East Alabama Baptist Convention, he labored as her missionary.

At the breaking out of the war, Bro. M's devotion to his country,

and thinking at the same time he might be still of service to his Lord's great commission, forced him to cast his lot among the brave defenders of his native soil. Accordingly he, in the summer of 1861, volunteered and served his country for about two years in the 20th Ala. Reg't. Ever the same devoted servant of christ, and true to the interest of the South, he shrank from no duty filling several important offices, always ready to instruct the erring, as remarked by one of his regiment, "He was the same man in the army that he was at home."

But alas! death has cut him down. Having returned home on furlough, he found that much mischief was being done by robbers in this county--among the evils they had burned his father's gin house and were robbing his neighbors, and it seemed would ruin the country. Bro. M. gathered a company of men and was indeed successful in catching them. But alas! about the middle of May 1863, as he was returning home alone, a wretch secreted himself by the way, and committed the awful deed and fled.

Thus has passed away a faithful servant of Christ and a true patriot. Bro. M. was in the 42 year of his life--having been preaching 14 years--connected with the church 27. He left a wife and seven children to mourn his loss, with many churches and brethern. He was a citizen of Jefferson county, Ala., born in this [county] in the year 1821.

"Servant of God well done, / Rest from they loved employ; / The battle fought, the victory won, / enter thou they joy."

AN OLD LETTER WRITTEN IN 1864 by J. A. COLLINS TO HIS FATHER

Coosa Valleyan, Pell City, May 5, 1904

Near Marietta Ga., June 20th, 1864

Dear Father:

I hasten to answer your letter of the 12th inst, which found me puny but able to be up with the company. I hope this will reach you and find you and family all well. I received the shoes and paper you sent by Mr. Curry. Nothing could have been more acceptable at this time than paper and envelopes. We are near Marietta in line of battle contending against the enemy we have been fighting and retreating for forty four days. Johnson I think intends to hold them at bay here for awhile. If the yankees never get Atlanta until they break through Johnson's line they will never get Atlanta. We are expecting an attack every minute the cannons are roaring now. Father, I will write giving you our casualties. As I wrote home the other day giving them we have not lost any since the 27th of May. Colonel Hunley and One hundred and ninety six men got captured the other day while our pickets and forces on the right gave back and the enemy flanked Col Hundley. Father, the Georgians have stayed at home. We had a Captain two

Lieutenants and thirty six men to go to the yankees the other night while on picket. They belonged to the 54th Virginia Regiment in our division. I heard last night that half of the 17th Alabama went over to the yankees. It has been raining here for several days. We have to take it as it comes. General Polk got killed the other day. I hear that General Hardee was wounded. I heard from Tobe and Marion Grisson yesterday their division was fighting but they were safe I have been with the Company everyday since the fight commenced. Scott Bradford was captured the other day.

Father, this war is an awful thing I think our men ought to take some steps to stop this war. Several of our company are sick.

Father, the box of provisions you sent me by express came to Dalton, I heard but being in line of battle I could not get it and we retreated in a few day. I don't know what became of them, will write to the agent there to know if he moved them with him. I am sorry to know that they are lost, but am glad to know my parents are so willing and able to administer to my wants.

Father I would be glad to see you up here at any time and if I get wounded I want you to come and see me and if I get killed I hope to meet you all in heaven. I hope that God has forgiven me of my backslidden state. I pray every day and night and feel like if I could be at home again [I] could serve God better than ever and it would be a pleasure to me to do so. I can't improve in prayer as would like to. I

pray for you and family in every prayer, it seems that God has spared me for some purpose.

I don't need anything in the way of clothing.

Father, I think the two fights here and at Richmond will end this war.

Father tell the children to endeavor to meet their brother and sister in heaven who has gone before. Tell Ann Judson I think of her case often She is old enough to know good from evil.

I am as black as a negro, it has been three weeks since I have had any clothing to wear that was clean and don't know when I will get any more.

James Frank and Dave Hale were capture.

We have no Chaplin to our regiment and it has been some time since I have heard a sermon. The boys told me they wanted you to come out and preach for them I have commenced to read the testament through and have got to Romans.

Give my love to mother and all the children and "Howdy" to the negroes. Tell them all to write to me.

Tell Ann I wrote to her on the 17th of this month, I wrote to you on the fourth.

I will close may God bless you and family in your old age is my prayer pray for me, Write soon and give me all the news.

Tell mother and the girls to write often.

I remain your son until death.

T.[sic] A. Collins, Jr.

Co. H. 30th Ala.

Mrs. Collins.

Mc. was taken with me and left Vicksburg at the same time we did but go sick on the road. I left him with Lewis Grissom near Raymond.

He afterwards went on to Brandon and went to Meridian where he is now with his Uncle. He was troubled with Diarrhoea, but not seriously. I think he will be home in a few days. Thomas Bell was captured at Bakers Creek.

Very Respectfully

Wm. H. Burn

REUNION OF THE 10TH ALABAMA REGIMENT [1887]

At Springville on the 2nd

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, Wednesday, September 7, 1887

The reunion of the Tenth Alabama regiment at Springville occurred upon last Friday, the day appointed for the meeting. The meeting was called to order by the former president and upon roll call the following members responded:

Company A--I. H. Riggs.

Company F--J. B. Martin, W. T. Helton, S. C. Murchison, Daniel Helton, I. H. Mobly.

Company D--A. J. Nunnelley, A. G. Nunnelly.

Company B--J. F. McLaughlin, J. T. Bell, W. S. Brown, W. M. Higgins, J. E. Williams, Tom J. Hickman, H. J. Sharett [?]

Company C--T. A. Lee.

The same officers and executive committee was re-elected. By a resolution of A. G. Nunnelly, all Alabama soldiers present were invited to enroll their names and take part in all the exercises of the meeting.

The following names were enrolled:

13th Ala. Co. H--Laface.

4th Ala. Cavalry and 7th Ala. Infantry--Prof. S. L. Roberson.

19th Ala. Co. C--R. B. Bairn.

18th Ala. Co. C--Dr. J. M. McLaughlin, and Co. D, John Pierson.

25th Ala. Co. D--Moses Pierce, Co D James D. Jones.

58th Ala. Co. H--A. W. Woodall and Co. D, W. M. McClendon, Jas. Pearson, Newton McBrayer, L. H. Presley, J. H. Hendon, D. A. Adderholt, C. L. Owens.

51st Ala. Co. H--W. P. Herring, T. W. Truss.

62nd Ala. Co. H--Jas. D. Coupland, E. M. Adderholt.

19th Ala. Co. K--B. B. Cornelius.

51st Ala. T. L. Nunnelly.

Gen. Forney and Judge Box, the orators of the occasion, not being present, Prof. Roberson addressed the audience. His speech was short and did not measure up to the expectation of those who had heard him on other occasions and subjects. It was to the point, however, and your reporter is sorry that he did not get a copy for publication. He spoke of the honesty of the purpose of the soldiers of the confederacy; the object of these reunions and the determination of the soldier to build up the waste places of the south. He does not like the phrase "New South. "It is the 'Old South' with the rags shaken off." He left immediately after his speech, with Prof. Ellis for the Institute at Branchville.

H. I. Shorod then gave some reminiscences of camp life, which was appreciated by the audience.

Major Truss made a few appropriate remarks.

The President, after repeated calls, made a good speech. He is witty and said a great many funny things. He complimented the hospitality of Springville in the highest terms.

The turn out was not large on account of a misunderstanding of the day.

It was a pleasant sight to see the old veterans meet each other with a hearty shake of the hand.

The dinner was spread in the large store house belonging to Dr. Wilson. It was first class in every respect. B. M. Hill our *little* man had charge of this department, and wore a broad grin all day.

Prof. McLaughlin had to take a dose of soda and vinegar not long after eating.

The soldier of the 10th Ala. wore on the breast a blue badge.

In the dining room hung a small flag, 4 x 8, carried through the war in the hat by B. B. Cornelius.

The day will be long remembered by the people of Springville. We love to honor those who survived the bloody conflict. Their presence points our memories back to those of our loved ones who died upon the fields of carnage and whose bones lie bleaching upon the hills of Virginia and other places.

**EX-CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS ORGANIZE, CROPWELL
[1889]**

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama, November 7, 1889

Pursuant to a call issued some time ago, the ex-confederate soldiers assembled at Cropwell, Oct. 25, for the purpose of permanent

organization.

Albert G. Watson was elected chairman and R. D. Willingham secretary. The chair stated that the purpose of the meeting was to organize a confederate veterans association and elect delegates to the confederate association which meets in Birmingham, Tuesday, 29th inst.

Resolution, offered by Maj. J. D. Truss, and adopted.

1. That a committee of three be appointed by the chair to draft a Constitution and By-Laws for the organization of this confederate veterans association in St. Clair Co.

J. D. Truss, John W. Long, and J. K. Jones were appointed as committee, with chairman added.

On motion, the following resolution was offered and adopted.

That any member of this organization that may be in Birmingham on the 29th to be recognized as delegates from this association.

On motion adjourned to meet on 4th Saturday in Nov., at 2 p. m.

A. G. Watson, Chairman

R. D. Willingham, secretary.

Echo

**MUSTER ROLL of COMPANY D, TWENTY-FIFTH ALABAMA
REGIMENT [1899]**

Southern Aegis, Ashville, Alabama

June 29, 1899

For the information of many relatives and friends of Company D, Twenty-fifth Alabama Regiment, I herewith submit a list of the names of those who went to the army from this county in September 1861. I also try to show what became of the dear boys whose memory will ever remain fresh with me as long as life lasts. I have gone over the list from memory. If I have made any mistake, I would be glad for any old comrade to correct me.

This company was known as Nixon's Company. Doubtless many who live today remember this company as they marched out of Ashville on that bright and beautiful 5th day of September, 1861. Very respectfully, J. E. Earley.

A. W. **Nickson**, captain, died since the war in Mississippi.

R. A. **Earley**, first lieutenant, killed by the bushwackers in time of the war.

W. P. **Mangham**, second lieutenant lives in Louisiana.

J. E. **Banks**, third lieutenant, died in the army in 1862.

W. A. **Hayden**, first sergeant, whereabouts not known.

J. E. **Earley**, second sergeant, lives in St. Clair county.

R. A. **Green**, third sergeant, killed in the Battle of Shiloh.

H. L. **Morris**, fourth sergeant, lives in Jacksonville, Texas.

E. M. **Kidd**, first corporal, killed at Murfreesborough.

G. W. **Jones**, second corporal, died in Cooper, Texas, in 1896.

Thomas **Humphries**, third corporal, lived in Arkansas when last heard of.

A. J. **Lawley**, fourth corporal, died in prison in Alton, Ohio, in 1864.

H. J. **Springfield**, ensign, deserted in May 1862, lives near Chattanooga.

J. M. **Alexander**, private, died in the army in 1861.

F. M. **Arnold**, supposed to have died in hospital in the army.

John **Arnold**, died since the war in this county.

Jeptha **Ashton**, was sick and left on the road during Bragg's march to Kentucky and never heard of again.

Mack **Baget**, lives in St. Clair.

T. J. **Bowlin**, died with measles in the army.

W. L. **Bowlin**, died with measles in the army.

L. **Blackstock**, supposed to have been killed in battle at Richmond, Ky.

J. **Birchfield**, killed since the war in Florida.

L. J. **Banks**, lives in St. Clair.

Isaac **Clements**, died in Texas since the war.

John **Clements**, deserted in 1863, now lives in Blount county.

James **Clement**, died since the war.

E. L. **Crow**, mysteriously disappeared in the army.

Jeff and Frank **Crow**, sick and left on roadside on Bragg's march to Kentucky and never heard of again.

M. V. **Cleveland**, deserted in 1863, his whereabouts not known.

C. **Cockram**, lived in Texas when last heard of.

S. J. **Crump**, died since the war in Talladega county.

W. J. **Craig**, missing in the battle of Atlanta.

Lewis **Collins**, discharged, his whereabouts not known.

W. M. **Chapman**, lived in Mississippi when last heard of.

J. W. **Clardy**, sent to the hospital and never heard of again.

John W. **Clayton**, died in the army.

James **Clayton**, died in the army.

G. W. **Davis**, missing and never heard of again.

Dan **Dulaney**, discharged on account of age, died since the war.

R. J. **Dunn**, lives in Arkansas.

J. W. **Early**, died with measles in the army.

R. A. **Ellis**, killed at the battle of Chickamauga.

Marion **Engle**, died in the army.

James **Falks**, died with measles in the army.

A. J. **Gross**, deserted, died since war.

J. M. **Galbreth**, died with measles in the army.

G. P. **Green**, discharged on account of age and died since the war.

J. H. **Green**, died at Corinth in the army.

H. R. **Hawkins**, killed in a cyclone in 1883-4.

W. B. **Hawkins**, killed in the battle of Chickamauga.

Henry **Huff**, killed in the battle of Missionary Ridge.

J. H. **Huff**, died at Corinth in the army.

John **Huff**, died with measles in the army.

William **Huff**, died with measles at home during the war.

Thomas **Higginbotham**, disappeared on Bragg's march to Kentucky.

James **Higginbotham**, lives in this county.

John **Humphries**, lives in Arkansas.

G. W. **Isaacs**, deserted, courtmartialed and shot a Dalton.

A. J. **Inglett**, died with measles in the army.

J. W. **Ingram**, lives in St. Clair.

W. L. **Jones**, killed in the battle of Atlanta.

T. M. **Jordan**, missing during service in the army.

F. M. **Johnson**, died at Corinth.

L. N. **Jenkins**, lives in St. Clair.

W. L. **Keith**, died since the war.

O. C. **Ketchum**, courtmartialed and drummed out of service, don't know his whereabouts.

John **Love**, supposed killed at Richmond, Ky.

A. G. **Love**, lost on Bragg's march to Kentucky.

William **Laton**, lives in St. Clair.

Mat **Lowe**, deserted and died since the war.

J. H. **Mauldin**, deserted and went to the Yankees, died since the war.

I. Q. Melton, lives in Calhoun, has been a preacher since the war.

Joe **Mauldin**, died at Corinth.

J. P. **McCrorry**, died since the war.

A. J. **Mote**, disappeared mysteriously.

T. J. **Mangham**, lives in Louisiana.

L. T. **Marion**, died in the army.

T. J. **Mize**, lives in Texas.

Lewis **Nix**, died since the war.

J. C. **Nelms**, deserted at Chattanooga, his whereabouts not known.

Wm. **Nickols**, discharged, died since the war.

John **O'Neal**, killed at Shiloh.

P. C. **Pinson**, killed at Shiloh.

W. H. **Prince**, transferred, his whereabouts not known.

Walker **Ross**, died at Corinth.

John **Rich**, died since the war.

James **Rich**, lives in Texas.

Thomas **Simpson**, died in the army.

B. F. **Steed**, lives in this county.

John **Stone**, killed at Murfreesborough.

T. J. **Stevenson**, missing in Bragg's march to Kentucky.

W. T. **Simmons**, died with the measles in the army.

M. P. **Simmons**, killed at Chickamauga.

Rufus **Simmons**, shot for deserting, at Dalton.

J. W. **Sheffield**, died since the war.

B. F. **Smith**, deserted and died since the war.

John **Smith**, died at Corinth.

Malone **Smith**, deserted and lives in this county.

Lee **Thomason**, killed at Chickamauga.

J. A. **Tucker**, deserted and killed by home guards.

R. J. **Vann**, discharged on account of age and died since the war.

J. W. **Vann**, when last heard from was in Mexico.

W. J. **Wood**, died at Corinth.

Wm. **White**, supposed to be living in this county.

J. G. **Winzer**, died at Corinth.

Wesley **Wilson**, lives in this county.

N. E. **Wright**, killed at Atlanta.

James **Wilson**, lives in this county.

J. T. **Watson**, died at Corinth.

A. J. **Williams**, died with measles in the army.

OPEN LETTER TO J. E. EARLEY

Ruston, La., June 24, 1899

Dear Ed.:

The Muster roll of Company D, Twenty-fifth Alabama Regiment, C.S.A., awakens in my mind some painfully pleasant memories. I expect to preserve the copy of the *Alliance* containing this roll, furnished by you as a sacred memento, the few remaining days of my life. I for one of old Company D, desire to thank you for publishing this roll.

You say you furnished this roll from memory. You certainly have

a wonderfully retentive memory. I had forgotten the names of some of the dear boys to whom my love was once attached "with hooks of steel." You know I once knew all the officers and men of the Twenty-fifth by both name and feature, being so closely and intimately associated with them as sergeant major of the regiment, but now most of them have faded from my memory. Alas! how few of us are still living.

You say Lieut. W. P. Mangham is living in Louisiana. He died September 26, 1897, at Rayville, La. A. J. Inglett did not die of measles during the war. He committed suicide this year in Texas. He spent one night with me here in Ruston in the fall of 1897. You, perhaps, remember he was a hopeless, though not helpless, cripple. He was one of the five who left my office in a body to enter the army, of whom I am the only one living.

I think, Ed., you are mistaken as to where M. P. Simmons was killed. My impression is he fell at Shiloh, though I may be mistaken. Be that as it may, a better soldier never faced leaden hail, shot and shell. I can also say that, although shot for desertion, a braver soldier never went out from beloved old St. Clair than Rufe Simmons. He ought not to have died as he did.

Oh! how vividly your muster roll calls to mind many scenes through which we passed 37 and 38 years ago. How I loved those boys who stood and marched side by side with me in "those days that tried men's souls."

These reminiscences are sadly sweet to me, and I am sometimes tempted to write a brief history of Company D, and would if I had all the data.

Cannot M. M. Fulghum give us the muster roll of Company A, Tenth Alabama? You know, I was with that devoted band at the close of the war, and was captured with "Morg" at High Bridge three days before Lee surrendered.

Ed, "When the roll is called up yonder," I hope "we'll be there."

Thos. J. Mangham.

CONFEDERATE VETERANS GATHER [1903]

The Springville Item, Springville, Alabama, August 20, 1903

B. B. Cather, Editor

On Monday, August 17th, 1903, one of the most unique and interesting reunions was held by the "Old Ex-Confederate Soldiers" in the Baptist church at this place. The gathering was planned by Maj. Jno. G. Harris, of Montgomery, and our ex-state superintendent of education, who is conducting a series of meetings in the Baptist church.

At 11 o'clock, some sixty of the old veterans, living in and around Springville, assembled in that church, singing, praying and reading of the scriptures was engaged in, after which short talks were made by Rev.

J. S. E. Robinson, A. W. Woodall, S. W. Henry, J. B. Robertson, J. H. Vandegrift and B. B. Cornelius, after which another old time song, "How firm a foundation," and then Maj. Harris spoke at length on "Religion in the Camp."

During his talk, men were seen weeping all over the entire church. He spoke feelingly and eloquently. His touching incidents of dying soldiers sending back to their loved ones at home their last words, trusting in the Savior, was exceedingly impressive. He urged them to endure hardness as a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He made an impassioned appeal for the maintenance and support of the "Old Soldiers Home" located at Mountain Creek. He said that information had reached him that there were "old confederates" in some of the poor houses of the state. He characterized this as a foul blot on the escutcheon of our people. Men, who had left all and for four years endured the trials and dangers of war, in their old age deserve a better fate. He eulogized the "great hearted Jeff Falkner," who was the promoter of the "Old Soldiers Home." He said he stood in the very forefront of philanthropist, and urged all who were present to aid in the great work. His reference to this matter met with a hearty and sympathetic approval and good will resulted.

After Maj. Harris closed his splendid address, the people sang "Shall we gather at the rive," and all the old soldiers went in front of the pulpit and shook hands and told each other good bye. During this

proceeding, there was not a dry eye, and it moved the young people to tears when they saw the gray-haired heroes weeping. It was a scene that will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

Maj. Harris deserves the thanks of all our people for planning this gathering; it was an object lesson that neither poets nor painters nor authors could describe; it simply beggars description. Springville never has, and perhaps never will witness such a scene again.

The following is a list of those present, giving their company and regiment in which they served:

Maj. Jno. G. Harris, 20th Ala., Reg. Pettus brigade.

Jno. S. E. Robinson, Ashville, Co. G. 58th Ala. regiment.

L. M. Mize, Branchville, Co. G 58th Alabama regiment.

-. M. Glenn, Argo, Co. B 2nd reg. Inzer's southern department.

W. C. White, Caldwell, Co. A. 5th Tennessee cavalry.

G. W. Mullican, Calhoun Co., Co. G. 34th Ala. regiment.

J. H. Vandegrift, Branchville, Co. E. 18th Ala.

-. R. Hunnicutt, Oldtown, Co. B, 7th reg cavalry.

J. D. Jones, Cornelia, Co. D. 25th Ala.

-. Lawson, Cornelia, Co. F. 30th Ala.

J. R. Glenn, Argo, Co. A. 58th Ala.

Jno. R. Dean, Beaver Valley, Co. G. 58th Ala. reg.

J. M. Lankford, Caldwell, Co. A. 58th Ala.

A. H. Baswell, Beaver Valley, Co. L. Philips Legion.
T. K. Vann, Cornelia, Co. B Hardee's Batallion.
L. F. Clayton, Trussville, Co. A. Stuarts guards, under Forest.
A. C. McConnell, Branchville, Co. B. 58th Ala.

The following all live in and around Springville, this being their postoffice.

J. K. Simmons, Co. O., Hardee's Batallion.
W. H. Dunson, Co E 56th Ga. regiment.
J. W. Laster, Co. A 58th Ala.
W. L. Chandler, Caldwell, Guards 3rd La[?]. reg. Capt. Gunnels.
J. E. Colly, Artillery, Capt. E. D. Crafts.
W. A. Hudgins, Co. B 13th Ga. Infantry.
Darius Smith, Co. F 19th Ga.
B. B. Cornelius, Co K 19th Ala reg.
S. A. McClendon, Co. H 58th Ala reg.
Thos Hooper, Co. J 12th Ala. Cavalry.
Jno McClendon, Co. H 32 and 58th Ala.
Moses Peirce, Co. D 25th reg volunteer.
A. W. Woodall, Co. H 58th Ala. reg.
J. B. Robertson, Co. C 3rd Ark.
I. J. Spruiell, Co. H 32 and 58 Ala.

Jesse Taylor, Co. C 19th Ala.
W. T. Helton, Co. F 10th Ala.
T. L. Nunnelley, Co. A 51st Ala.
Wm. McClendon, Co. H 32 and 58th Ala.
S. W. Henry, Co. I 20th Ala.
C. J. Patterson, Provost guard, Talladega.
J. H. Hendon, Co. I 18th Ala.
Capt. J. M. McDaughlin, Capt C 18th Ala. reg.
A. M. Bradford, Co. A 10th Ala.
John J. Hannah, Co. A 2nd Ala cavalry, Furgerson's brigade.

COL. INZER SECURES BATTLE-SCARRED FLAG [1903]

The Springville Item, Springville, Alabama, August 27, 1903

Copied from the *Birmingham News*

Selma, Ala., Aug. 25. Col. J. W. Inzer, of Ashville, St. Clair Co., was a distinguished visitor at Selma yesterday on his way home from Orrville where he has been visiting the family of B. F. Ellis and Lewis Johnson. Col. Inzer with Messrs Ellis and Johnson have been holding a kind of reunion of the old Fifty-eighth Alabama Regiment of the Confederate States of America. With him Col. Inzer brought the battle scarred flag that floated above the regiment on eighteen battlefields and twice as many more skirmishes.

The flag was in excellent state of preservation despite the many rents that time and the bullets of the enemy had made in it by the leaden hail that poured through the lines of the Fifty-eighth regiment during those troublesome times from April 1861 when it was first presented to the regiment to the surrender, when the regiment went out of service in Meridian.

Just before the regiment started to the war in April 1861, the flag was presented to it by Miss Carrie Evans in Mobile. She was a sister of Mrs. Augusta Evans Wilson. A few weeks after Miss Evans presented the flag to the regiment, she was married to Col Bush Jones, the commander of the regiment.

How the flag came into possession of Col. Inzer reads somewhat like a romance. At the close of the war when the Fifty-eighth was about to surrender, Lieutenant Jim Freeman, the color bearer of the regiment, took his pocket knife and cut the flag from its staff and stuck it down his boot leg, and with him it was lost sight of for a number of years. For at least twenty-five years, survivors of the old regiment tried to find traces of Freeman, the old color-bearer who had gotten away with the emblem of the regiment that was so dear to the hearts of every soldier who had fought beneath its colors, but they were unsuccessful until during the term of William C. Oates as governor of Alabama.

One day Governor Oates received the flag from a son of Freeman living in Indiana. The old regiment's color bearer having passed into

the beyond some years previous. Governor Oates gave the flag to Col. Inzer as he was the lieutenant colonel of the regiment and served with the regiment from its organization until November 1863, when he was captured at the Battle of Missionary Ridge and was sent to Johnston's Island where he remained a prisoner until the close of war. The Fifty-eighth Regiment was in the first part of the war between the states known as the 9th batallion.

The old battle flag was looked at with awe by the younger generation on the streets yesterday, while the vets would have almost been willing to have fallen down and worshipped it or have fought for it again. Col. Inzer is proud of the old flag of the Fifty-eighth and would give up any of his earthly possessions before he would part with the flag of his beloved regiment and for which he fought so hard.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF CO. "F" 10th ALABAMA [1906]

As They Appeared on the Original Muster Roll

Pell City Times, Pell City, Alabama, October 4, 1906

Montgomery, Ala. June 20th, 1901, Mr. J. R. Coleman, Riverside, Ala.

Dear Sir: I have the honor to hand you as per request, list of members of Co. "F" 10th Ala. as they appear on the original muster roll.

James D. **Trap**, Capt.
Wm. T. **Smith**, Capt.
Robt. N. **Allen**, 1st Lieut.
Wm. T. **Smith**, 1st Lieut.
Wm. E. G. **Hardwick**, 1st Lieut.
James **Williamson**, 1st Lieut.
Jno. R. **Castleberry**, 2nd Lieut.
Elias M. **Cook**, 2nd Lieut.
Wm. E. G. **Hardwick**, 2nd Lieut.
James **Williamson**, 2nd Lieut
Abner K. **Wait**, 2nd Lieut.
Elias M. **Cook Jr.**, 2nd Lieut.
Wm. E. G. **Hardwick Jr.** 2nd Lieut.
James D. **Cunningham Jr.** 2nd Lieut.
James **Williamson Jr.** 2nd Lieut.
Wm. T. **Smith**, 1st Sergt.
Sidney T. **Coleman**, Sergts.
William W. **Kilgro**, "
William E. G. **Hardwick** "
Geo. W. **Milam**, Corps
Thos. P. **Coleman**. "
J. G. **Wait**, "

Opamua A. **Walker**, "
Peter C. A. **Funderburg**, Mus.

PRIVATES

Acuff, Nathan T. Dead

Abercrombie, H. M. "

Abels, Richard N. "

Barber, James "

Barber, Henry F. Dead

Benson, Geo. P. "

Braden, William M. "

Bruster, B. C. M. "

Bibby, James H. "

Brickhouse, Jno. B. "

Buckanan, Edward R. "

Coleman, Jas. R.

Clowson, Jas. R. Dead

Clowson, Sylvester "

Cannaday, A. H. "

Cook, Joseph H. "

Cheper, Solomon F.

Cunningham, J. D.	"
Corley, B. H.	"
Dickson, Geo M.	
Davis, Robert G.	"
Dunlap, Robt. G.	"
Davis, Wm. E	
Davis, Cyris	"
Dobbins, John C.	"
Dobbins, B. S.	
Davis, Jepe	"
Elmore, Geo. W.	"
Holl, Henry	"
PRIVATES	
Harrison, E. F.	Dead
Helton, Alex W.	
Helton, Daniel	
Hitchcock, Jas	
Howell, J. M.	Dead
Inzer, Edward L.	"

Jenkins, Lewis R. "

Jones, Green E.

Jordan, Wm. H.

X--Jordan, Wm. W.

X--Kee, Wm. D.

Lewis, Chas. H. Dead

Lewis, Geo. W.

Lewis, Ambros T. Dead

X--Lancaster, Thos.

Mobley, Murial

Murchison, Sam O.

McCoy, Robt. P. Dead

McCoy, David "

Martin, Jno. F. Dead

Martin, T. J. "

Martin, John B.

X--McMilburn Sargeant

Murchison, D. P.

Mark, Wm. H.

Mullins, Andrew J. Dead

Miles, Thos. J.	"
Ma__s, Wm.	
Masters, Jasper N.	Dead
Martin, Jno. C.	"
Nivens, Wm. B.	
Nivens, Jepe	
Nichols, John W.	Dead
Patterson, Jas. W.	"
Patterson, Jno. M.	"
Patterson, James	"
Pilkington, A.	"
Roberson, Willis H.	
R_sperp, Richard W.	Dead
Rumsey, Thos. J.	"
Roberts, Elija J.	"
Steadham, Jas. H.	
Turner, Benjamin	Dead
Turner, Elisha	"

Tuck, Alonza C.

Tuck, Elija B.

Weatherly, John T.

Weatherly, Levy H.

Wooten, J. T.

Wright, Jno. Dead

Wright ,Young B. A. "

Watts, Jno. W.

X__Walker, Wm. H.

Williams, John E.

Williamson, James

RECRUITS

Abercrombie, W. T. J.

Biddy, Wm. R.

Braden, Braxton

Brewster, A. J.

Casey, Jeremiah

Casey, John F.

Cobb, Wm.

Cook, Jno L.

Crawford, J. M.

David, A. J.

Dickson, John C.

Graham, Martin V.

Hardwick, F. M.

Helton, Thos. W.

Hendrick, W. B.

Hendrix, Jno. K.

Johnson, Thos. M.

Jordan, Wm. H.

Lewis, John D.

Mark, Hiram W.

Martin, Chas.

X__Metcalf, Jno. C. [O?]

Milam, J. B.

Mobley, Henry I.

Mobley, Samuel

Murchinson, Jno A.

Murchison, W. A.

Nevins, Willis R.

X__Pilkinton, John S.

Roberts, Elija J.

Roberts, Wm. T.

Rowland, Jas. F.

Smith, Theodore M.

Sullivan, Jas. V.

Wait, Abner K.

Walker, Wm.

Weatherly, Wm. M.

Williamson, W. T.

Willingham, Jas. E.

Willingham, Jno. J.

Willingham, Randolph D.

Willingham, Robt. T.

Yates, Tillman

SUBSTITUTES

Casey, Moses R.

X__Pruitt, Jno. D.

The letter "X" placed before names, indicates the deserters. Hope this is satisfactory.

Very Resp't

W. W. Brandon, Adjutant General

It may be of interest to add that there are only four of the old soldiers now living in this county, and they are Messers. Tom Helton, W. H. Roberson, Sam Murchison and James R. Coleman.

CONFEDERATE REUNIONS AT ODENVILLE, ALABAMA, 1911-1916

This is a collection of articles gathered from St. Clair County, Alabama, newspapers from 1911 through 1916. They deal with Odenville and county-wide Confederate reunions. From reading the articles, it seems that the first St. Clair County-wide organization of the veterans was formed at Odenville in 1911. Also, a reading of these articles will show, I think, that the Daughters of the Confederacy had local organizations throughout St. Clair County, but a county chapter was begun at the 1913 reunion in Odenville. There are many Confederate veterans' names in the articles, and a full index is given.

Southern Aegis, Ashville

May 31, 1911

OWEN TO ODENVILLE / July 4th

"State Archives of History Owen of Montgomery has accepted an invitation extended to him by Hon. Jno. W. Inzer to attend the Reunion of Confederate Veterans at Odenville July 4th. He will bring the flag of the 32-58th with him. It will be an interesting event and many interesting speakers will be on the grounds."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

June 8, 1911

ODENVILLE TO GREET VET'S

"Odenville promises to be a picturesque center on July 4, the National holiday. Merchants and others of the pretty spot in St. Clair County are working hard to make the day's program a complete success from every standpoint and also to greet the old soldiers who will gather there from all parts of the county.

"Thus far Odenville is the only town in the county that has announced any plans for the National holiday and therefore it may be taken for granted that on that day there will be visitors in plenty there.

"It is stated that there are to be some able speakers present and that there will be a variety of amusements that will please both young and old.

"Mine host [M. L.] Drake of the Cahaba Hotel is making special preparation for the National Holiday. He is also catering to the summer guests and has promise of having his hostelry well filled throughout the warm season."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

June 15, 1911

VETERANS PREPARE FOR CELEBRATION / Object of the Fourth of July gathering at Odenville is to be Two Fold

"The most desirable objects are sought to be accomplished by the coming Fourth of July celebration at Odenville. The first of these is a reunion of the Confederate veterans of St. Clair County, and the second the raising of funds to meet debts on the public school building.

"So far as the gathering of the county veterans and their friends is concerned, the success of this is already well-assured. Veterans will gather from all parts of the county, and special plans are being made to give them good times around the camp sites.

"For the success of the second proposition, the committee must depend on the generosity of the visitors. This committee will provide the means of raising a fund by furnishing excellent refreshments which it will be up to the visitors to purchase.

"The entire occasion promises to be a great success. For a pleasant and entertaining Fourth of July, St. Clair County people cannot do better than to be at Odenville."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

June 29, 1911

ODENVILLE'S REUNION

"There is every reason to believe that the gathering of the old soldiers of St. Clair County at Odenville on the Fourth of July will be a notable event in many ways. In the first place there are many of these veterans who delight in nothing quite so much as they do a chat with their comrades, but who, for various reasons, are unable to attend either the states or general reunions of the Confederate Veterans. Right in their own county many, if not all, of these difficulties will be removed, the time occupied by travel will be small and most of the day will be spent in renewing fellowships of years gone by. It was a wise move on the part of the people of Odenville to make this gathering the feature of their Fourth of July celebration. The veterans will doubtless appreciate it as will their numerous friends and relatives.

"It is understood that at the gathering of Confederate Veterans at Odenville on July 4 there will be started a fund for the purpose of raising a monument to the memory of St. Clair County. To contribute to such a cause should be an honor to every citizen of the county. Other counties in the state have erected such tributes to the memory of those who fought for the Southern cause and this county could not do no [sic] better than follow in their footsteps."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

June 29, 1911

CONFEDERATE VETERANS OF COUNTY TO MEET THERE /

Many speakers / Dr. Thomas M. Owen of Montgomery and Judge John W. Inzer of Ashville on the program--Visitors Requested to bring Basket Lunch

"People of Odenville are finishing their preparations for the gathering of the old soldiers of St. Clair County with them on July 4. The grounds have been cleaned up and tables arranged for in the grove and other places. Also on the school house grounds there have been tables built which tables will be loaded down with refreshments which are to be sold, the receipts going toward the debt now on the school house property.

"It is expected that every Confederate veteran residing in St. Clair County as well as some from the adjoining counties will be present. Dr. Thomas M. Owen of Montgomery, who is in charge of the bureau of archives and history at the state capitol, is to be present and address the veterans. Judge John W. Inzer, who suggested the gathering at Odenville, will also be present and deliver an address. Other speakers are also expected and with plenty of singing the program will be an attractive one.

"The committee having the arrangements in charge stress the point that this celebration is a 'basket lunch affair.' In other words, the people of Odenville do not expect to supply luncheons for all who come to the reunion on the Fourth of July, but rather that the visitors shall bring their own supply. Plenty of tables will be prepared in order that these basket lunches may be spread thereon.

"One of the interesting features of the celebration will be the presenting of the old Confederate flag to the veteran soldiers.

"The refreshment table at the public school building will be in charge of Mrs. W. T. Hodges, Mrs. S. M. Cummings, and Mrs. L. M. Mize. The committee on entertainment is composed of Dr. C. C. Brown, W. T. Hodges, B. S. Hodges and M. L. Drake."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

July 6, 1911

REUNION AT ODENVILLE A GREAT SUCCESS / OLD SOLDIERS
WELCOMED / Visitors Come From All Parts of St. Clair County / Flag
Unfurled / Surviving Members of the Fifty-Eighth Alabama Regiment
Reverently Kiss their old Banner as tears Stream down Their Faces.

"Standing beneath a canopy bedecked with the stars and stripes, St. Clair County men of the old Fifty-eighth Alabama Regiment wept as

they gathered around the flag that once floated above their heads amid the carnage of battle. Many of them, perhaps all of them, had not seen the banner that led them onward in many a charge since the day of Appottomax when the standard bearer of their regiment tore it from the staff and hid it away in his soldier blouse in order that it might not find its way into the hands of the enemy.

"The scene at Odenville was one that will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Prior to the unfolding of the flag, Judge John W. Inzer, himself a member of the Fifty-eighth Alabama, had talked to his old comrades and those from other regiments for about fifteen minutes during which talk he was listened to with marked attention. Judge Inzer talked of that old flag which was so soon to be unfurled again by him, until his comrades were almost impatient for a sight of their bullet-ridden banner once again, but soldier-like, they waited as for the word command.

"At last came the moment when the Judge carefully unwrapped the cloth that held the flag enclosed. All eyes of the veterans were glued upon his movement and to them at least, it must have seemed that their comrade was unnecessarily slow. Hardly had the final wrapper been removed and the flag unfolded to their gaze before one old soldier, whose locks had been whitened by the years that have passed since as a young man in all the vigor of his manhood he followed his loved flag, stepped quickly forward and grasping tenderly the hem of the banner

raised it reverently to his lips, his tears streaming down his face the while.

"One by one his comrades followed him until there were gathered around that flag, probably for the last time, about fifty survivors of the regiment. Who can tell what were their thoughts as they gazed on that loved bunting? Many of their comrades had gone forth from old St. Clair County to fight beneath its folds to fall on the battlefield fighting to the last for their cause and their homes. Many had returned from that bitter struggle maimed and wounded and possibly the thought it might be the last time they would gaze on that flag came into their minds, but certain it is that there was not a dry eye in that group as one old comrade, his face literally bathed in tears, dried those tears on the blood-stained colors of his old regiment.

"Bare-headed and with his right hand extended in the direction of 'Old Glory' which was proudly floating in the breeze, Judge Inzer stood in the center of the group telling with pride but with trembling voice about the men who had carried that flag as the shots of the enemy shrieked through the ranks of his comrades leaving many of them wounded or dead on the battle field. There was no bitterness in his voice nor was there a word uttered against the men once his foes. But one thing did he declare that neither he nor his comrades were rebels, but that they were fighting for the principles of the constitution as it then was and they interpreted it.

"As a background to this inspiring scene, there were grouped around the speaker's stand the youth of St. Clair County and many of its noble women both old and young. The attention of these was invited by Judge Inzer to the flag under which many a woman had been widowed and many a child made fatherless, and he urged them always to remember the cause for which they who were gathered so closely around him had fought.

"This was the closing scene of a morning that had been fraught with much that was of interest and instruction. Gathered from all parts of St. Clair County, the veterans of the Confederate Army who fought in the war between the states met in reunion. There were more than fifty of them present, not all from one regiment, but from different organizations that had gone out from Alabama to help make up that gallant army to fight a foe considerably stronger numerically and with money to provide the provisions of war which were so hard to obtain by the Southern army. These old comrades were met at the train by a band of young girls dressed in white, decorated with red, white, and blue ribbons and as these old soldiers stepped from the train, they once again heard the sounds of good old 'Dixie' as it was sung by the fresh young voices of this band of girls gathered to greet them.

"Nothing could have been more aptly arranged than this by the people of Odenville as a greeting to their guests of the day. No sound of brass or cymbals could have appealed so directly to these war-

honored veterans as did the singing of their favorite tune. They were keyed up to the highest pitch of sentiment and patriotism before the first line of 'Dixie' had been sung and they gallantly waved their hats in acknowledgment of this great compliment paid to them.

"Moving to the grove, these comrades renewed long-time-ago acquaintances and, assembled beneath the canopy, they talked over again the days when the sinking of the sun meant the funeral note for some of those who had fought by their side. Colonel Sam Will John, of Birmingham, was the first speaker of the day. Gathered in front of him was an audience of approximately 800 people who had gathered in Odenville to spend the Fourth of July and to pay their respects to the veterans of the Confederate Army.

"Colonel John had brought with him a map of the country immediately around Richmond and took his hearers through the scenes of the strife during the time the Northern army was laying siege thereto. The speaker was interesting throughout and his talk was highly instructive. He was listened to with great attention.

"Following Colonel John, came Robert Lee Wyatt, of Odenville, who delivered a brilliant oration in which he dwelt on the cause of the South and paid the men of the Confederate Army a high tribute for their valor.

"Judge Inzer concluded the exercises of the morning and aroused his comrades to a high degree of enthusiasm.

"After lunch the veterans gathered again and formed a camp which will be known hereafter as the **St. Clair Camp**. The officers are to be named later on.

"The afternoon meeting was addressed by Gardner Greene of Pell City, who spoke of raising a monument to the veterans of St. Clair County. The suggestion was taken up with enthusiasm by the people who had assembled around the veterans, and resolutions adopted.

"Among the veterans present were A. H. Battles, J. K. Ensey, L. V. Simpson, W. H. Moore, J. T. Johnson, J. F. Wyatt, D. B. Treece, J. S. McLendon, Ab Crow, W. C. White, J. K. Simmons, L. M. Cox, Jas. B. Beason, T. J. Turner, G. M. Simpson, Pickens Hardwick, M. M. Fulghum, Robert Oldham, C. H. Tuck, Hugh Hurst, J. H. Rankin, L. Bowling, E. T. Otey, J. J. Weems, A. T. Thornberry, J. S. E. Robinson, A. W. Woodall, J. T. Courson, J. M. Langford, A. L. Owen, J. C. Williams, J. M. Melton, W. E. Braden, J. D. Morgan, G. W. Rowe, J. G. Courson, J. A. Mize, J. M. Scott, J. H. Early, A. J. Little, and J. J. Hannah."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

July 6, 1911

IN MEMORY OF ST. CLAIR VETS, / People of the County assembled
at Odenville Vote to Raise Fund To Erect a Monument

"Out of the reunion of St. Clair County veterans there has been started a movement to build at some place to be selected within the county a suitable monument to the memory of all those who went from this county to take part in the war between the states.

"The plan to build this monument was started by Gardner Greene of Pell City who in an earnest speech to the people of the county gathered at Odenville urged that a fund be immediately raised for this purpose. In his speech, Attorney Greene paid a great tribute to the old soldiers. He also said that counties all through this state and other states of the Union had erected monuments to the memory of their Confederate veterans and he thought it was high time for the people of St. Clair County to follow this custom. The idea met with instant approval, and the following resolutions were adopted:

"Resolved that we the people of St. Clair County *en masse* assembled at Odenville, Ala., on July 4, 1911, do hereby declare that we organize for the purpose of soliciting funds for the erection of a monument to the memory of the Confederate soldiers who enlisted from St. Clair County for the war between the states, 1861 to 1865.

"Be it further resolved that a committee of twelve be appointed by the chairman to arrange the details to solicit funds and to select a suitable place or places for such a monument.

"The committee has not as yet been named."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

July 6, 1911

PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTY / Grove at Odenville
Filled With Merry Parties Well Prepared with Basket Lunch

"Everyone who went to Odenville for the Fourth of July celebration on Tuesday last appeared to have a delightful time of it. While it was called a day for the reunion of the old soldiers of the county, yet this was not the only enjoyable feature. After the speech making of the morning, the ground in the grove was quickly covered in spotless white table cloths, baskets were speedily produced, and the hungry were promptly fed.

"It was little short of a miracle at the amount of eatables that came from the baskets, and certain it is that none went away hungry. There were many there from Pell City, Coal City, Ashville, Springville, Branchville, Ragland, and, in fact, from every part of the county and during the lunches they gathered in their separate places to partake of the good things to eat.

"The speakers of the morning were entertained by Mr. [Dr.] and Mrs. C. C. Brown. Professor [J. O.] Sturdivant and his faculty ___ care of a number of people at a ___ lunch. Mrs. F. M. Morris was hostess to about half the people who were down from Ragland. It was one of the biggest picnic parties ever held in St. Clair County.

"The Cahaba Hotel was also ____, and Proprietor [M. L.] Drake and his wife were kept busy serving dinner for more hours."

St. Clair County News, Ragland

July 11, 1912

FOURTH CELEBRATED / ODENVILLE ITEMS

"The 1912 reunion of the St. Clair County Confederate Soldiers was held in the Odenville Park on Thursday last, July 4th, and though a number of dinners were held in other parts of the county the same day, a large crowd gathered here in honor of the boys who fought for the lost cause, or as expressed by on, not lost but immortal cause.

"The reunion was called to order by Judge John W. Inzer, the president, after which a song was sung and prayer was then offered by Rev. J. K. Ensey. Judge Inzer then delivered an extempore speech, the speaker of the day being detained on account of sickness. Judge W. S. Forman also made a short talk which was full of pathos and praise for the boys of '65. Other talks were made, but space forbids our giving them all.

"At the last reunion which met here in 1911, a committee was appointed to secure crosses of honor for the veterans desiring them, it being necessary for the veterans to make application in order to procure these crosses, 22 having applied, this number was received and

delivered. Miss Minnie Woodall, of Springville, being on of the committee, was present with the crosses and in an appropriate speech presented the veterans with the token of honor, Mrs. J. O. Sturdivant pinning them on. The following received them: A. H. Baswell, A. M. Bradford, C. G. Beason, D. E. Cason, J. D. Coupland, J. K. Ensey, G. R. Cather, W. L. Fornby, M. M. Falgham, G. G. Golden, Frank Harrison, W. T. Hodges, J. W. Laster, Lewis M. Mize, Columbus J. Pike, J. S. E. Robinson, I. J. Spruiell, W. J. Spruiell, J. C. Simmons, J. A. Savage, T. J. Turner, and Jas. F. Wyatt.

"Odenville was again voted the reunion which meets next year on the first Saturday in August. The 1912 reunion was a success and the 1913 will no doubt be enlarged upon. Dinner was served on the grounds and there was plenty for all. The old soldiers will always receive a hearty welcome at Odenville."

Ragland Advertiser

July 3, 1913

ODENVILLE, Odenville News

"The old Soldiers' Reunion meets at Odenville on the Fourth. We are always glad to have the old veterans and their friends."

Ragland Advertiser

July 31, 1913

ODENVILLE.

"The Confederate Veterans' reunion of St. Clair County will be held here on August 9th. Be sure to come and bring your friends and a well-filled basket."

Ragland Advertiser

August 14, 1913

CONFEDERATE VETERANS / Of St. Clair County Meet in Odenville.
Veterans / Have Large Crowds at Reunion.

"The Confederate Veterans of St. Clair County met in convention at Odenville on Saturday, August 9th. The day, though warm, was ideal and there was a large number of the veterans and their friends out. The Grounds were in charge of the ladies of the Methodist church, who served a bounteous dinner and furnished light refreshments during the day.

"The morning session was called to order by Judge J. W. Inzer, after which Brother G. M. Simpson offered prayer.

"After roll call by W. T. Hodges, it was found that five members had been called by death. These were L. V. Simpson, Branchville; C. H. Tuck, Coal City; A. T. Thornburg and S. M. Cummings of Odenville;

and Chas. L. Owen of Margaret.

"The chairman, Judge Inzer, made a talk on raising funds for a monument for the old soldiers of St. Clair County.

"Senator W. T. Brown read Order No. 9, given by General R. E. Lee at the close of the war. Rev. N. A. Hood, as chairman of the monumental committee, says Alabama furnished about 65,000 soldiers for the army, St. Clair county about 1200. He says U. D. C. have done most of the work of raising money for all the monuments in the state. A vote was then taken to see if money would or could be raised to build a monument and was carried unanimously.

"The meeting then adjourned for dinner.

"DAUGHTERS OF THE CONFEDERACY FORM COUNTY ORGANIZATION.

"The afternoon session was opened by Hon. W. T. Brown of Ragland, after which the local chapters of the Daughters of the Confederacy met together to form a county organization. Miss Minnie Woodall called the meeting to order and the following officers were elected for the year: Mrs. W. T. Brown of Ragland, president; Mrs. J. O. Sturdivant of Odenville, vice president; Mrs. Pat Roberson, second vice president; Miss Irene Embry of Ashville, secretary; Mrs. W. T. Hodges, [Odenville], historian. The president of the county chapter, together with the presidents of the local chapters [were] to constitute the

executive board.

"A resolution was made and passed to raise not less than \$2000, with the help of the Sons of the Confederacy, for the erection of a monument to the soldiers of St. Clair County.

"Another resolution made and passed was that there be presented at the next legislature a bill asking that at least one-fourth more than the present pension fund be set aside as a sacred fund to be kept where it can be used only for the purpose of paying the pensions of the old soldiers, to many of whom it means the necessities of life.

"It was suggested that the county chapter supply refreshments at the Confederate Veterans reunion, the money made to go into the funds.

"The county historian will, with the help of the historians of local chapters, gather together the lives and services of individual soldiers, which will later be put into book form and preserved as a record and memory of the brave men who fought so well. Many incidents and events that might otherwise be lost forever will be preserved and handed down to posterity.

"The county chapter will hold its annual meeting each year in connection with the Confederate Veterans reunion, at which reports from the local chapters will be read. The county chapter will each year send delegates to the state convention of the U.D.C.

"The following officers were chosen for the coming year: Judge J. W. Inzer, chairman; W. T. Hodges, secretary and treasurer.

"The meeting then closed to meet again at Odenville annually on the Friday before the fourth Sunday in July."

Southern Aegis, Ashville

August 27, 1913

LETTER

"Dear Aegis: "As will be remembered at the Co. Reunion of the Confederate Soldiers which was recently held in Odenville, the Historians of the local chapters of the U.D.C.'s were given the task of getting up all information possible of the twelve hundred (1,200) soldiers more or less sent to the war of the 60's by St. Clair.

"These leaders realize how utterly unprepared they are for this work unless they have the earnest co-operation of the county papers and veterans. Therefore they have decided to try to reach each and every old soldier through the press asking them to reply in letter to the undersigned who has been appointed Co. Historian and who would feel honored to have letters from every surviving soldier giving the names of those who enlisted with them and the place up-to-date. Who were the officers? What battles were they in? Who were killed or wounded or taken prisoner? In fact, any and everything of interest is what is wanted. Very likely some reports will be similar, but that is all right. Please send them in at your earliest convenience. Not only old soldiers

are solicited but many interesting incidents can be given by others which will be gladly received.

"Will you please not only respond to this request but help to reach every surviving soldier in or out of this county who enlisted in St. Clair.

"Respt. Mrs. W. T. Hodges, Co. Historian, Odenville, Ala."

Southern Aegis, Ashville

September 11 [18], 1913

ODENVILLE.

"The play, *A Southern Rose*, was given last Friday night, September 12, at the [St. Clair County] High School building for the benefit of the Daughters of the Confederacy. The following took part: Mrs. B. S. Hodges, Misses Dovie Newton and Ollie Shockley; Messrs, Bert Mize, Paul Ward, Will Vandegrift, Winfred Watson, Carl Hurst, and Erskine Vandegrift. Music was rendered by Misses Russell and Portis. The play was good and all the participants did well. The entertainment was successful.

"Quite a number of people came over from Springville to attend the play Friday night."

Southern Aegis, Ashville

August 19, 1914

"The St. Clair County Confederate Veteran's reunion met at Odenville August 15 with a large crowd present.

"The morning exercises were opened by prayer by Dr. George Simpson, and he was followed by an address of the president, Judge John W. Inzer, of Ashville. N. A. Hood was elected temporary chairman because of the indisposition of the regular secretary, W. T. Hodges.

"After the address of the president, W. H. Hodges of Odenville welcomed the visitors. Senator Watt T. Brown, president of the Alabama School of Trades and Industries, made an interesting address. Also the Misses Mildred Montgomery and Elizabeth Hodges of Ashville delivered lectures. The U.D.C.'s had a number of the boys and girls of Odenville sing songs appropriate to the occasion.

"After the meeting of the old soldiers, there was a meeting of the county United Daughters of the Confederacy, in which the main topic discussed was the raising of funds for the county monument to the old veterans now under contemplation for erection. Mrs. Watt T. Brown was elected president and Mrs. Hodges was elected secretary.

"After re-electing the former officers, the meeting adjourned to meet at Odenville the third Thursday in August, 1915.

1916 REUNION

There is no article reporting a Confederate Reunion in the existing 1915 county papers; however, August entries in "Odenville Rt. 1" and "Odenville" local news columns report that several from the Odenville area attended the reunion.

Southern Aegis, Ashville

August 16, 1916

"The Confederate Veteran Association of St. Clair County will convene at Odenville at 12 o'clock noon on Friday, August 18, 1916. All members of the association are earnestly requested to attend this meeting. John W. Inzer, chairman."

There was no article reporting the reunion of 1916. A reading of the existing county papers of 1917 and 1918 turns up no announcements or articles about Confederate Reunions for those years.

The Confederate Memorial was eventually erected in Ashville and was dedicated Thursday, April 26, 1923, as part of the Ashville centennial celebration. The *Gadsden Times-News* for April 27, 1923, quoted in full below, states that the monument was erected by the Ashville Daughters of the Confederacy. The record, however, shows

that the drive for the monument was begun in Odenville in 1911 as a county-wide effort to honor the Confederate veterans of St. Clair County. No doubt after Ashville was chosen as the location, the U.D.C. of that town became the driving force that brought the project to fruition.

Gadsden Times-News

April 27, 1923

2,000 PEOPLE AT / ASHVILLE THURSDAY / Home Coming and Unveiling / of Monument Was / Great Event.

"Yesterday was the biggest day in the history of Ashville when that town celebrated its 100th anniversary with a double event, the anniversary and the unveiling of the Confederate monument which was erected by the good women of the town who are members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

"The town was gaily decorated for the occasion and the scene that met the visitors on arriving in the town was a most pleasing one. Many old residents were present who had not been back to the old home town in years and many happy reunions took place.

"The boy's band from Pell City made music for the occasion and many complimentary remarks were made of the music furnished by the Industrial school band.

"The big parade started off the program and at its conclusion the

people gathered around the speaker's stand in the court house square where O. R. Hood, of Gadsden, made the address of the day.

"At the unveiling of the monument, Mrs. E. L. Huey, of Bessemer, made the address, which was a most enjoyable one to the large audience.

"The fast Acmar team trimmed the Ashville baseball team by the score of 9 to 6 with Crow on the mound for Ashville. Up to the seventh inning, Ashville was in the lead but the two final innings were the undoing of the home team.

"Many Gadsden people went down for the celebration and the crowd was estimated at from 1,500 to 2,000 people. The day was a success in every particular."

The Ashville Public Library Newsletter for April, 1991, records the following about the dedication.

"Leste Decorating Co. of Birmingham decorated the streets and houses with flags (U.S., Alabama and Confederate) and bunting. Mrs. Mary Robinson Hodges moved her piano to the courthouse lawn and members of a quartet, Mrs. Inzer Baird, Mrs. Stella Box Hodges, Mrs. Bob Nunnally and Mr. J. P. Montgomery, sang. Mattie Lou Teague Crow and Sally V. Inzer pulled a red ribbon to unveil the monument. The Avondale Mills Band led the parade. Veterans, UDC members, school children and floats representing each business followed the band. Tables were constructed (from lumber) and placed just within the

sidewalks completely around the sides of 'The Square.' One of the finest dinners was laid on the long tables and no one left hungry. The Hon. O. R. Hood, of Gadsden, was orator for the home comers and centennial. Mrs. Huey, State President of the U.D.C. delivered the memorial address at the Unveiling. This was a St. Clair County-wide event celebrating Ashville's Centennial."

MEMORIAL UPDATE

On a Halloween night many years ago, the memorial statue was vandalized, the gun being removed. For a long, long while the veteran on the square stood without his weapon.

Howard Wertz, of the St. Clair Camp #308 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, felt strongly that the gun should be replaced; therefore, under the guidance of Charles Joiner of Clark Memorial, a gun was made and properly placed on the memorial. Once again the Confederate soldier on the Ashville Square has his weapon.

On a sun-filled September afternoon in 1991, Camp #308 held a rededication of the memorial. At this event were George Sisson and Wesley Mize, two men whose fathers fought in the Civil War. So, the memorial stands today in sunshine and rain, in good times and bad times as a tribute to St. Clair's men who fought so valiantly for the Southland. The wise man who passes by today will pause to ponder the sacrifices and hardships experienced by our ancestors.

Speak to me of days gone by,
Of battles won or lost,
So I'll remember years from now
Just what those battles cost.

JIM GEORGE IN THE CIVIL WAR

Taken from a speech of Judge John Washington Inzer

Made at Odenville, Alabama

At the laying of the corner stone of St. Clair County High School

St. Clair County News, July 23, 1908

By no means has St. Clair at any time failed to furnish her full quota of soldiers in every war which has occurred since she had a being; commencing with the Indian war, the Mexican war, the Civil war or war for Southern independence, 1861-5. Pardon me when I say that I was in a command with perhaps four hundred of them from St. Clair and that no braver or truer soldiers ever shouldered a musket, nor made more sacrifices, for love of county.

Just over there in these hills on the head waters of Shoal creek and in less than three miles from this spot, a soldier boy was born and reared to young manhood, not surpassed in courage and patriotism by any one

and who fell in front of the enemy with the flag of his regiment in his hand, in one of the Virginia bloody battles bidding defiance to the foe when he fell mortally wounded with a minie ball piercing his breast near the heart; and when lying on mother earth dying and while in the very throes of death, some one requested him to lower the flag as it was drawing a deadly fire of the enemy. This noble soldier boy said no, never shall this flag be lowered in the face of the enemy so long as there is strength in my fingers to grasp the flag pole, and strength in my arm to support the flag; at this moment a true soldier a member of the color guard, answered no, never shall this flag so long as our color bearer is able to uphold it and that banner did wave in front of the enemy until the cold icy hand of death released his grasp, and then as the flag was falling it was grasped by a member of the guard and never permitted to fall to the earth. Sent for units arrived, the regiment marched forward. Victory perched on this blood stained banner, and the soul of noble soldier was lacking in the sunshine of eternal glory. This color bearer was Jim George as we familiarly called him of the 10th Alabama Regiment. This is but one instance in thousands which took place during that most desperate war, showing courage and patriotism, and I give it to you because we are near the place of his birth, and many of you remember this soldier boy.

Should the stars and stripes in the future be in danger, the sons of the confederate soldiers will be first to rescue, and the zeal and

patriotism which was exhibited by their fathers in the defense of the stars and bars, will be shown by them in the defense of the stars and strips.

Here the speaker looked around seeing a dozen or more old confederate soldiers who served with him during the war and whose courage had been shown on many bloody fields, remarked that he verily believed and knew that if the flag of our common country was in danger this day these gray-headed veterans would at once fly to the rescue. The fire as shown by the flash in their eyes and their responses indicated that they were ready and willing.

The speaker then announced he with the aid of others in the name of the people of St. Clair County now placed this corner stone in place as the corner stone of the High School of the County of St. Clair.