

CROPWELL DISTRICT

The town of Cropwell is located in the north central part of Alabama near the Coosa River in St. Clair County. This old community consists of a variety of architectural structures and includes 19 buildings, a proposed park, and a cemetery. The Cropwell community was settled about 1820, when early settlers were able to buy ^{excellent} ~~fine~~ farm land for \$1.00 an acre. Town records indicate Cropwell's active participation in the Civil War in Company F of the 10th Regiment of Alabama Infantry. The Company marched from Cropwell and eventually arrived at Bull Run. Records ^{indicate} ~~show~~ activities from June, 1861, to October, 1864.

The Cropwell district makes up a part of Pell City; the closest site to Pell City is the Valley Hill Cemetery, which was donated by Jones Fall Roberson, Addie Roberson, and Pat Roberson, in 1924. Covering two acres of land, this lovely cemetery with its trees, boxwood shrubs, holly bushes, and pine trees, houses the bodies of many community leaders.

The site for the future city park is centrally located. The project for the park was organized by Miss Mary Mays and financially supported by the ~~Pell City Chamber of Commerce~~ ^{by the Pell City Chamber of Commerce}. This lovely park will be dedicated to the original Cropwell community, and will contain a native boulder which lists historical facts about the community such as the nearby-crossing of the Coosa River by Andrew Jackson.

Across from the site of the park is the Mays home, a two-story white Victorian home constructed about 1906. The builder, James Campbell Mays, ^{was} a descendant of the first settlers in Coosa Valley, the Bryants and the Buchanans. The house remained

The Mays Family

in the Mays family until 1966, when it was sold to Mike Harvey & later to
The Mays house has nine rooms and two baths; every room contains
a fireplace. A front view of the house offers a double full-
length porch, ornate Victorian spindles around the upper porch,
four square pillars, a wrought-iron balustrade and two front doors,
one on each level. The upper door is flanked with shutters, the
lower door has six panels, sidelight, and a broken pediment. The
roof is four-gabled with scale-shaped shingles and a hexagonal
turret on the right corner. The original veranda has been removed.

Before the organization of the Cropwell Baptist Church in
1889, the citizens of Cropwell worshipped at Mt. Pisgah (1828)
or at Coosa Valley (1840); they held their Sabbath school in the
Masonic Lodge. A storm leveled the building in 1927, but it was
immediately rebuilt in the original form, which is gabled in a
simple Colonial style. The one-story building has a brick foundation
and three square pillars at each corner of the portico. An
octagonal bell tower with louvres graces the top of the roof;
it is surrounded by a square balcony and balustrade. In 1961, a
new wing was added on the left side for Sunday School. The top
level of the wing has a narrow porch which runs the length of the
structure.

The post office, which sits on the same side of the road as
the church, was constructed in 1929 from rocks collected locally
by Dr. James P. Turner, postmaster. In its history the building
has served as both post office and drug store. The structure has
two entrances and a tin shed roof supported by square posts across
the front.

The old Jones-Roberson Store next door is now known as the Tims Shop. The store was built in 1897. Cropwell's first merchant, John W. Jones, used the store, which eventually was passed on to his ~~son-in-law~~ ^{father}, James R. Roberson. Presently, the ~~one-story~~ ^{2 story} ~~frame~~ ^{brick} building is used by David Tims and his wife as an antique store. A two-story Victorian commercial brick building with English garden wall brick design, the structure retains its antique quality with old wagons and wagon wheels in the grass behind the cross board fence. A typical Victorian architectural structure, the building has arched windows with header brick lintels and wooden frames. The terra cotta ornament on the windows and the inverted bay entrance ~~make~~ ^{render} the building worthy of attention. A shed roof with black asbestos shingles shades the bottom windows and double door. The interior is Victorian as well, with floor, ceiling, cabinets, stairs, and balustrade of stained pine. On the first floor is an office with wrought iron grill. A balcony surrounds the room with a balustrade of beautifully-turned spindles.

The site of the blacksmith shop and cotton gin lies across the street from the post office. The blacksmith shop existed until the 1920's on the spot where David Tims' ~~shop~~ ^{work} now stands. The cotton gin, which operated until the 1950's, was a vital industry to Cropwell. It was constructed in 1888, and was used actively until cattle raising and tree farms became more important money sources.

The two Roberson homes sit across from the gin site on County Road 34. John Roberson came to St. Clair County prior to 1820, becoming one of the oldest families in Cropville. His grandson, James Russell Roberson, acquired the land and ~~built~~ ^{built} the James R.

and bought
Roberson home as well as the store across the street. The home is a rambling two-story Victorian structure of symmetrical federal style. The Victorian element is the double portico with gabled pediment and triangular and scale singles. The *adda* Addie Roberson home next door is a large rambling *bungalow* bungalow. The distinctive veranda surrounds three sides of the front portion of the house and is supported by square pillars. Both homes are presently a part of the Nancy Roberson estate.

The Jones-Morton House is one of the older homes in Cropwell; it was constructed by Mr. Hardy Jones and is owned and rented out presently by Mr. J. T. Morton. The house is a two-story white frame square structure with hip roof and a large gable. Originally, a one-story porch extended the full length of the house, but it has since been replaced by a small porch close to the entrance.

The Cropwell district offers much of historical value to St. Clair County and Alabama with its structures and Civil War sites. The Alabama State Gazetteer of 1884 lists businessmen and farmers of Cropwell:

Alverson, C. D. & Co., genl mdse
Chandler, E. P., physician
Cropwell Academy
Dillon, F., lawyer
Drake, J. C., mill
Hardwick, J. O., steam saw and grist mill
Heaslet, B. C., genl mdse
Jacobs, H., blacksmith
Laney, J. W., justice of the peace and cotton gin
Lawler, A. J., cotton gin
McRae, D. A., genl mdse
Moncue, J. W., shoemaker
Robinson, Jr. B., physician
Robinson & Jones, genl mdse, cotton buyers, grain and fertilizers

Farmers -- P. Turner, T. McCay, J. F. Rowland, S. D. Kilgro,
E. R. Buchanan, William Ramsey, H. H. Alexander, William
Brodor, T. Font, C. T. Ewing, R. O. Hardwick, T. L. Graham,
B. C. Heaslet, A. J. Lawler, E. P. Chandler, W. A. Murchison,
F. T. Murchison, A. J. Donohoo, J. Hardwick, J. G. Black,
A. T. Watson, J. F. Robeson, W. C. Truss, H. F. Williamson,
J. W. Lowry, T. W. Moncrief, M. Leachmore, T. S. Willingham,
R. K. Robinson, M. B. McRae, N. Willingham.

The district has been nominated for the National Register of
Historic Places.

Cropwell Historic District

1. David & Betty Tims House
- *2. Mays-Harvey House
3. Allie Fant House
- *4. Cropwell Baptist Church
5. Cropwell Baptist Church Parsonage
6. David Condes House
7. Billy Bynum House
- *8. Cropwell Post Office
- *9. Jones-Roberson-Tims Store
- *10. James R. Roberson House
- *11. Ada Roberson House
- **12. David Tims Work Shop
site of old Blacksmith Shop
- **13. site of Cotton Gin
14. Mrs. Kage Fants House
15. Vacant House
16. Mr. & Mrs. T. S. Amters' House
- *17. Jones-Morton House
- **18. site of Future Park
19. Gloria V. Roberson House
20. "Country Store"
- **21. Valley Hill Cemetery

* significant structures mentioned in the report

** significant sites mentioned in the report

Lib

ST. CLAIR COUNTY PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL SURVEY

1. NAME Cropwell Baptist Church
(COMMON AND/OR HISTORIC)

2. LOCATION Cropwell - Township 17
Alabama

3. DATED FROM (APPROXIMATE) 1889

4. PRESENT OWNER _____

ADDRESS _____

(TOWN, STATE, AND ZIP CODE)

MAP REFERENCE:
PLOT NUMBER _____

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

5. CLASSIFICATION

A. OCCUPIED
YES ☒
NO ☐

B. PRESENT USE
Reg church
services

C. ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
YES ☒
NO ☐

6. DESCRIPTION

A. CONDITION (CIRCLE ONE)
EXCELLANT ☐ GOOD ☒ FAIR ☐ DETERIORATED ☐ RUINS

B. DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
(ALSO PROVIDE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE)

*white frame bldg — Stoop & Columns at
Entrance — Sunday School rooms add as a
wing in*

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

*It is a land mark in
Community first settled in 1818(?)*

8. COMMENTS

*Sunday School
rooms added -
blown down -*

9. FORM PREPARED BY _____
ADDRESS _____

(TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE)

10. DATE FORM PREPARED _____

2 Story

1 Brick (handmade) Store.

2 - Cropwell - Alabama.

St Clair Co. ~~Township~~ Sec 18 - Township 17.

Recorded Ashville Court House Vol 2 - page 154
Dec 25 Jan - 1901.

3 Built about 1899.

4 - David & Betty Tims - Cropwell, Ala.

5 -

2 story bldg made from brick which were made on premises - photograph attached.

The interior is in orig condition with good detail - Spindles & hand rail of stairs & balcony have interesting turnings - Office space enclosed with grill work still in tact. Some ^{hand made} counters, shelves & other equipment in good condition - Brass cash register still in use -

A well constructed bldg which has been in continuous use since built - It definitely represents ~~an~~ era - namely; the agriculture era of St Clair Co and is a ~~hand~~ significant land mark -

No Tims appreciates bldg but not in position to hold it indefinitely -

Brick Store

Vol 2 - page 154 - ashville, Ala

State of Ala

St Clair Co

Know all men by these presents,
that for & in consideration of \$1000 to the
undersigned Grantor S T M Jones & wife
Fanny Jones in hand paid by
Jas R. Roberson the receipt whereof is
hereby acknowledged be do Grant, Bargain,
Sell & Convey unto the said Jas R. Roberson
our entire indebtedness & interest in the following
described real estate to-wit:

One brick store House & Lot situated in
the Village of Cropwell & bounded on the so
by Buchanan's Ferry Road & on the west by
Coosa Valley Dirt Road & on the north by land
owned by Mrs Hardie Jones, thence along said
line Easterly to a point Forty six feet East of
the rear end of said brick store, thence
southerly along line between T M Jones dwelling
lot & said Brick Store House ~~lot~~ lot to
Buchanan Ferry Road. One cotton gin Warehouse
& lot, situated in Cropwell, Ala bounded on
the South by Gin House Lot & on the East by
Coosa Valley dirt & on the North by John B Robersons
dwelling lot & on the west by T M Jones land
bought from Mrs A J Lawler - over

Lib

ST. CLAIR COUNTY PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL SURVEY

1. NAME Drug Store & Post Office
(COMMON AND/OR HISTORIC)

2. LOCATION Cropwell
Alabama Township 12

3. DATED FROM (APPROXIMATE) 1929

4. PRESENT OWNER Miss Amanda Funderburg
ADDRESS Cropwell
Alabama 35054
(TOWN, STATE, AND ZIP CODE)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

MAP REFERENCE:
PLOT NUMBER _____

5. CLASSIFICATION

A. OCCUPIED	B. PRESENT USE	C. ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Post Office</u>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NO <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

6. DESCRIPTION

A. CONDITION (CIRCLE ONE)
EXCELLANT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED RUINS

B. DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
(ALSO PROVIDE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE)

Build of rock collected locally by Dr. J. P. Turner, who served as post master - The bldg combination drug store & post office -

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

8. COMMENTS

9. FORM PREPARED BY _____
ADDRESS _____
(TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE)

10. DATE FORM PREPARED _____

Lib

ST. CLAIR COUNTY PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL SURVEY

1. NAME Popwell Baptist Church
(COMMON AND/OR HISTORIC)

2. LOCATION Popwell, Town of 17
Alabama

3. DATED FROM (APPROXIMATE) 1889

4. PRESENT OWNER _____

ADDRESS _____

(TOWN, STATE, AND ZIP CODE)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

MAP REFERENCE:
PLOT NUMBER _____

5. CLASSIFICATION

A. OCCUPIED	B. PRESENT USE	C. ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Regular</u>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NO _____	<u>Services</u>	NO _____

6. DESCRIPTION

A. CONDITION (CIRCLE ONE)
EXCELLANT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED RUINS

B. DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
(ALSO PROVIDE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE)

*white frame bldg - steeple & columns at
Entrance - Sunday School rooms add as a
wing in*

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

*It is a landmark in the
community first settled in 1818?*

8. COMMENTS

*Sunday School
rooms added -
blown down -*

9. FORM PREPARED BY _____
ADDRESS _____

(TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE)

10. DATE FORM PREPARED _____

2 Story

1 Brick Chained Store.

2 - Cropwell - Alabama.

St Clair Co - Township Sec 18 - Township 17.

Recorded Ashville Court House Vol 2 - page 154

Dec 25 Jan - 1901.

3 Built about 1899.

4 - David & Betty Tines - Cropwell, Ala.

5.

2 Store bldg made from brick which was made on premises - photograph attached.
The interior is in orig condition with good detail - Spindles + hand rail of stairs + balcony have interesting turnings - Office space enclosed with grill work still in tact.
Some ^{woodwork} counters, scales + other equipment in good condition - Beans cash register still in use.

a well constructed bldg which has been in continuous use since built - It definitely represents ~~an~~ era - namely: the agriculture era of St Clair Co and is a good & significant land mark.

No time appreciates bldg let not in position to hold it indefinitely.

Brick Store

Vol 2 - page 154 - ashville, Ala

State of Ala

St Clair Co

Know all men by these presents that for & in consideration of \$1000 to the undersigned Grantor S T M Jones & wife Fanny Jones in hand paid by Jas R. Roberson the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged we do Grant, Bargain, Sell & Convey unto the said Jas R. Roberson our entire indebtedness & interest in the following described real estate to-wit:

One brick store House & Lot situated in the Village of Cropwell & bounded on the so by Buchanan's Ferry Road & on the west by Coosa Valley Dirt Road & on the north by land owned by Mrs Hardie Jones, thence along said line Easterly to a point Forty six feet East of the rear end of said brick store, thence Southerly along line between T M Jones dwelling lot & said Brick Store House ~~lot~~ lot to Buchanan Ferry Road. One cotton gin ware house & lot, situated in Cropwell, Ala bounded on the South by Gin House lot & on the East by Coosa Valley dirt & on the north by John B Robertsons dwelling lot & on the west by T M Jones land bought from Mrs A J Lawler. - over

To have & to hold to the said Jas R Roberson
his heirs & assigns forever & we do for
our heirs, executors & administrators
covenant with the said Jas R Roberson
his heirs & assigns that we are lawfully
seized in fee simple of said premises;
that they are free from all incumbrances
& that we have a good right to sell &
convey the same as aforesaid; that
we will, & our heirs executors &
administrators shall, warrant & defend
the same to Jas R Roberson his heirs
executors & assigns forever, against the
lawful claims of all persons -

Given under our hand & seal
this 25 day of Jan - 1901

F M Jones
Fannie Jones

J B Shurbett
Justice of the Peace

Lib

ST. CLAIR COUNTY PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL SURVEY

MAP REFERENCE:

PLOT NUMBER _____

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

1. NAME Dry Store & Post Office
(COMMON AND/OR HISTORIC)2. LOCATION Crowell3. DATED FROM (APPROXIMATE) 17294. PRESENT OWNER Miss Annabelle FunderburgADDRESS CrowellAlabama 35054
(TOWN, STATE, AND ZIP CODE)

5. CLASSIFICATION

A. OCCUPIED

YES ☒
NO ☐

B. PRESENT USE

Post Office

C. ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC

YES ☒
NO ☐

6. DESCRIPTION

A. CONDITION (CIRCLE ONE)

EXCELLANT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED RUINSB. DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
(ALSO PROVIDE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE)

Build of rock collected locally by Dr. J. P. Turner,
who served as post master - The only combination
dry store & post office -

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

8. COMMENTS

9. FORM PREPARED BY _____
ADDRESS _____

(TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE)

10. DATE FORM PREPARED _____



Main Street Cropwell In 'Earlier Days'

Historic Cropwell Giv



First Cropwell School

Back in the 1800's and on into the 1900's, the town of Cropwell was a farming community known as the "Cotton Gin Capital" of the area. The annual period from around August 1st to September 1st was the busy season for the cotton ginners.

The town became a beehive of activity during this time. There would be a daily traffic of people and goods lined up from the cotton gin to the stores and homes of the farmers from throughout the area.

Opened in 1888, R.L. McClellan's home, which spanned between Vincent and Fort Payne, was a proud chapter of the men of the 1st Alabama Cavalry Regiment which was organized at Montealvo, who marched off to fight in such famous battles as Frisburg and Battle of The Crater.

While the Civil War phase is commemorated with a historical marker, many of its historic landmarks are those interested in the progress of the town. The White House and wheeled

Perhaps the last building of the old town, which has become known as the "White House," recently was rudely up and



... And As It Looks Today

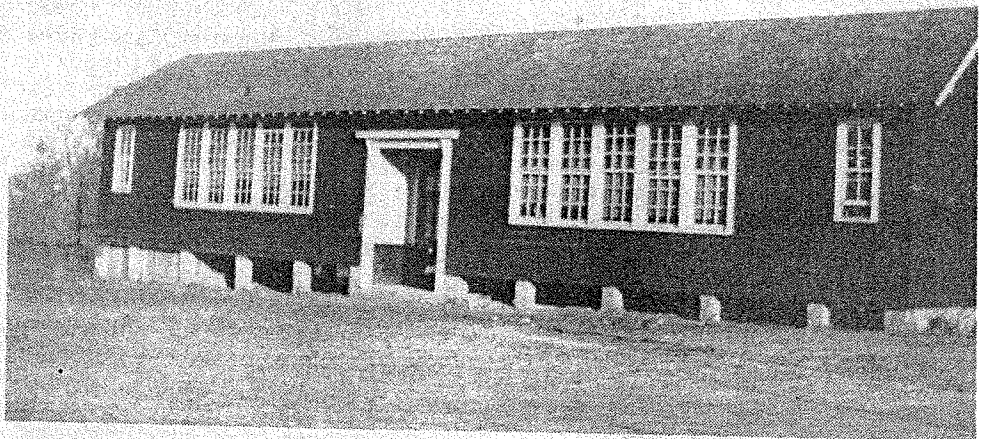
Giving Way To Progress

In the 1800's and on into the 1900's, the peaceful, proud little community known as Cropwell came to life during the period from around August 1 through November. It became a beehive of activity during those months when there would be a daily traffic jam on Main Street, with wagons lined up in the cotton gin all the way back to the church, as farmers throughout the area brought their cotton to be ginned.

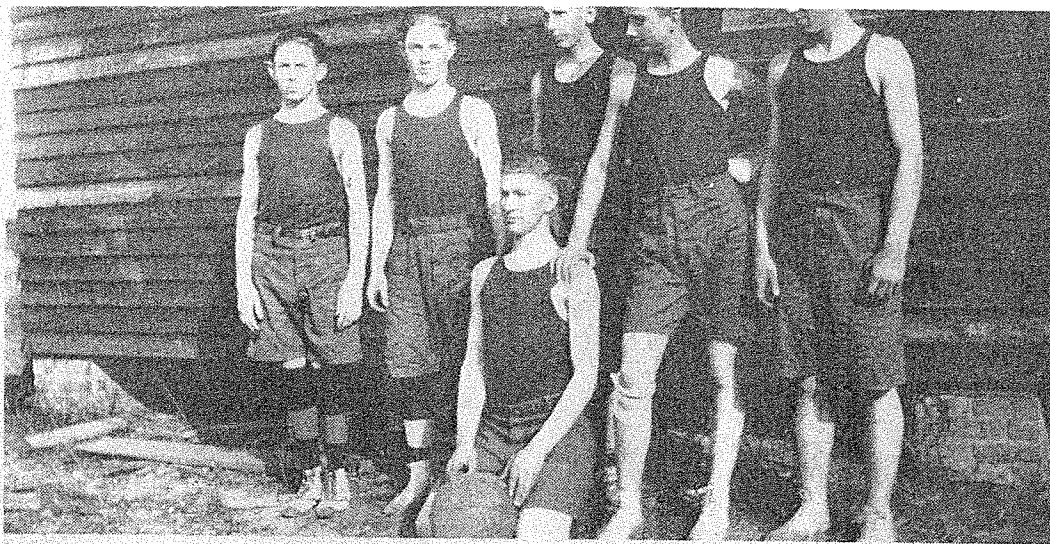
In 1888, R.L. McClellan's cotton gin was the only one in Cropwell and Fort Payne. It is just one of the pages from the town's history, which spanned the Civil War and includes the story of the men of Company F of the 10th Alabama Infantry, which was organized at Cropwell and mustered in at Fort Payne. They marched off to eventually distinguish themselves in battles such as Fraser's Farm, Salem Church, Gettysburg, and the Battle of The Crater.

The Civil War phase is being recorded for posterity and commemorated with a historical marker, much of Cropwell's history. Many of its historic places have faded away. And there is a growing interest in the preservation of the few remaining historic buildings. The fear that progress will gobble them up unless quick action is taken to prevent it.

The last building of real historic value, the old Roberson School, has become known simply as "The White House," and is now seriously on city property adjacent to the site of the new school under construction. An historic twin, "The Green School," was rudely uprooted from its resting place near the site and wheeled away to a foreign location amid a protest from preservationists.



...This School Built In 1918



Cropwell School Boys' Basketball Team

complex, sound an ominous warning.
House.
"We are certainly not against it," a spokesman said recently. "We are for the center and all the rest of it. But we want to play an important part in promoting the city council certainly should be condemning The White House. (It is) rather than building."
The preservationists are under no illusion, "and we will not let the memory of the well," and supervised by that grand old man Roy Gibson, among others... Its people of Eden and Pell City are proud, hard working, God-fearing.
Progress has already obliterated the unkempt White House stands as a Gateway To Logan Martin. It is pathetically whispering to pass on that is Cropwell's.
The preservationists would not let it be transformed into a shout; that they would be restored as an everlasting reminder to visiting tourists about the rich history. It doesn't seem like an awful lot.



Looney House Painting Presented

Mrs. Vivian Qualls of Steele proudly displays a stunning painting of the Looney House presented this week to the St. Clair Historical Society for eventual display at the historic Looney House in

Beaver Valley by Mrs. Braysie Burrett of Oneonta. Mrs. Qualls said the watercolor painting should be a beautiful addition to the St. Clair County landmark. (Photo By August Lehe)

Fifth
High
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warning for the fate of The White

gainst progress," a preservation
are happy to see the fine new civic
t we also feel that historic sites play
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Otherwise, they will be destroying

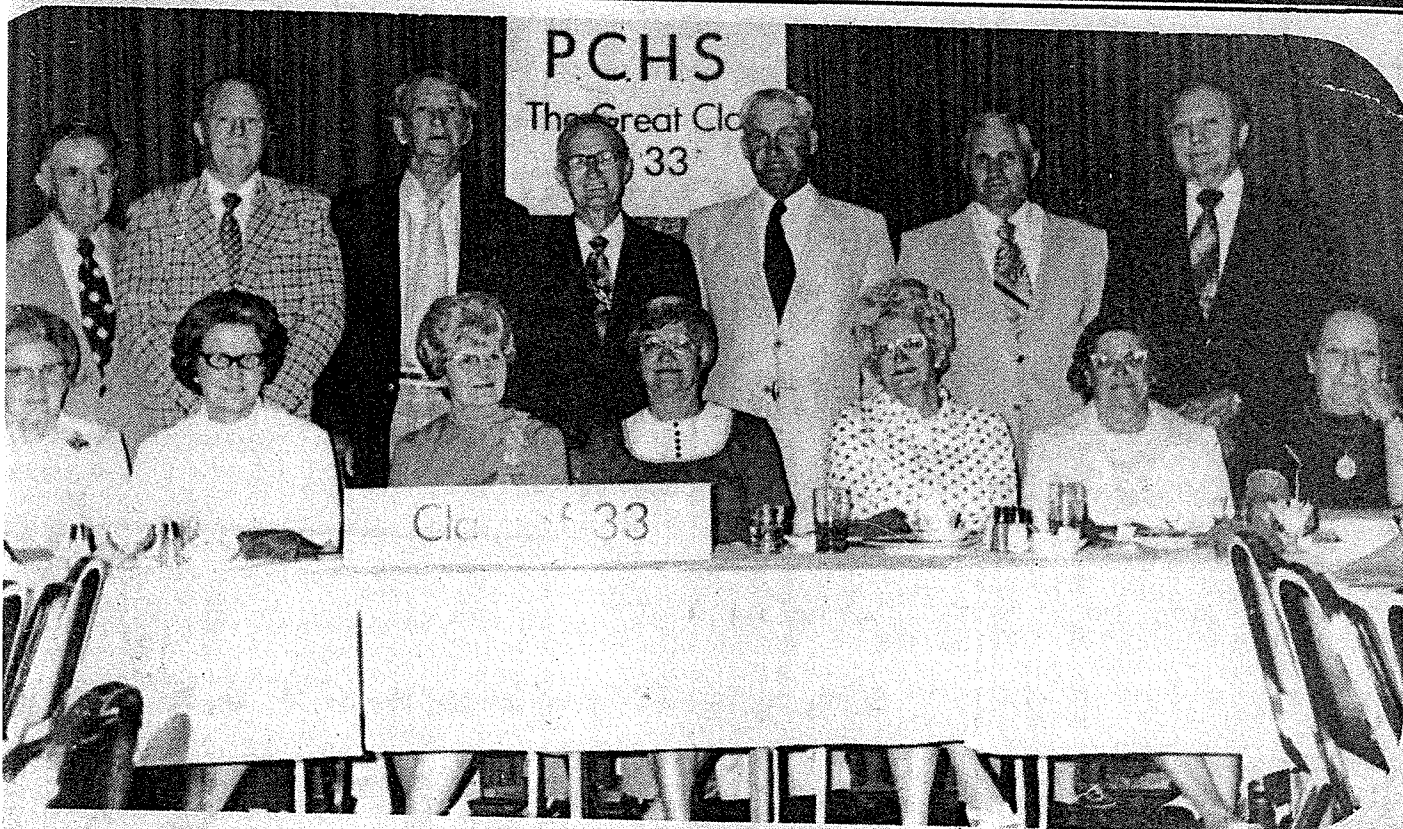
erstandably proud of the "Old Crop-
of its proud past...Its fine schools,
an of St. Clair County education, Mr.
s old postoffice, which served the
during the Civil War period...Its
ng people.

ated most of the memory, and the
alone, largely unnoticed at "The
Lake," a single, weak beacon
ing tourists about the prideful past

much prefer that the whisper be
The White House be preserved and
nder to local citizens and a message
i history that is Cropwell's.
ot to ask, really.



... Girls' Team With Coach Roy Gibson



Class of 1933

teen of the 40 members of the 1933 graduating class of Pell City School met at the Holiday Inn, Riverside, Sunday for their annual reunion. Herman Donahoo of Birmingham presided the luncheon meeting. Guests included wives and husbands of class members present and Mr. and Mrs. Roy Gibson. Class members present, seated from left, were Mary Rowland Funderburg of Birmingham, Nannie Smith Sims of Cropwell, Gursie Rowe

Traywick of Montgomery, Myra Smith Ginn of Anniston, Nell Box Clem of Chattanooga, Tennessee, Oleana Beavers Braden and Lois Austin Moore of Pell City. Standing, from left, Solomon J. Zackie of Birmingham, William J. Vinson of Birmingham, Forrest (P.H.) Lewis of Byerville, Ohio, Doyle Sims of Vincent, Jimmie Hardwick of Pell City, James T. Funderburg and Robert Herman Donahoo of Birmingham.

Ala
School
Journal
Oct 1923

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in securing a larger presentation from
the mills of the Valley at the confer-
ence next year. He has promised to do
so. I believe that every man who at-
tended went away with a deeper sense
of his responsibility towards both his
company and his employers and I feel
indebted to those who made it possible
for me to attend this conference."—
Horace L. Pratt, Shawmut Mills, Shaw-
mut.
It is proposed to have these confer-
ences as a part of the regular summer
school work in industrial education at
the University of Alabama.

Marvelous Growth of the Crop- well School

In October, 1915, Mr. Roy Gibson
began teaching a "one-teacher" school
at Cropwell in St. Clair County. There
were 60 boys and girls, the usual type
of "ragged beggar" school house and a
conspicuous lack of equipment.

For three years Mr. Gibson literally
taught himself into the hearts of the
people, patrons as well as pupils, and
when in 1918 he decided to spend the
summer with them to help in planning
a bigger and better Cropwell School, a
five-acre tract of land was secured and
a \$5,000 school building was erected.

In 1919, the Delco Light Company of
Birmingham offered to the community
in St. Clair County making the best
showing in general club and community
work, a Delco light plant. Cropwell en-
tered the contest and won the plant.

By this time people had begun to
move within "singing distance" of the
Cropwell school and the enrollment
grew to the extent that two additional
class rooms were needed. No sooner
said than done, and while they were
about it, the people invested \$3,000 in
the two rooms and equipment for the
school, making the total value of the
plant somewhat over \$10,000, not in-
cluding the piano, a gift to the school
from a wide-awake school improvement
club.

When Mr. Gibson went to Cropwell
a high school was not even in the
completion of the eighth grade in a one-
teacher school had meant the end
educational opportunity for most of the
boys and girls of the community. These
young people now have a high school
but the outstanding point of the Crop-
well School record is that every pupil
who has finished there has been to Flor-

ence, Jacksonville, Judson or Hollins for
further training.

A visitor to the school recently had
the privilege to witness the plan for de-
veloping initiative in individuals and in
groups. The little fourth grade young-
sters had entire charge of the chapel ex-
ercises. No grown-up appeared upon
the scene. The group had selected one
of its members as master of ceremonies
to announce the several features. A
fourth grader read a passage from the
Bible and lead in prayer, the fourth
grade lead the singing, presented a clever
little play, and finally challenged the
fifth grade to a relay race.

Never was there exhibited finer school
spirit, better fellowship, greater pride in
being a part of a school family. From
the youngest high school boy to the tiny
kindergarten child, the church entered with
interest and enthusiasm into the spirit
of the program.

Pupils are made to feel that they
have a responsibility in all class activi-
ties as well as social ones. The visitor
happened to walk into one of the high
school rooms at a time the principal
had been called away. The class was
carrying the lesson on in a serious and
well-regulated manner.

And the children of Cropwell can
read. Furthermore they like to read.

In talking with Mr. Gibson about his
work he says this is his eighth and best
year at Cropwell.

That many things are connected with
his work which afford him great pleas-
ure but his greatest joy is the 160 loyal
boys and girls. He states that com-
munity co-operation is practically one
hundred per cent, and that he has never
made a request of the people that they
did not grant.

Mr. Gibson visits every home in the
community and if he has an enemy they
are ashamed to admit it.

RESEARCH UNIVERSITY AT THE NA- TIONAL CAPITAL ADOPTS CO- OPERATIVE PLAN

Students to engage alternate six weeks in
college and in industry.

A pair of students selected for each job, one
to be working while other studies.

First university to adopt plan of combining
studies with practical work.

Engineering school of University of Cincin-
nati evolved co-operative plan.

Greatest device yet invented for reducing
cost of higher education and for making col-
lege work practical.

Business men enthusiastic for plan where
tried.

Research University will start all day-time
students on the co-operative plan on October
1. The plan involves close co-operation be-

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



Federal Records Center
111 W. Winnebago Street
St. Louis 48, Missouri 63118

August 27, 1965

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Mrs. Laura K. Gray
Pell City Library
1905 1st Avenue North
Pell City, Alabama

Dear Mrs. Gray:

The following information is furnished in response to your letter dated August 23, 1965.

Rural Route #1 was established at Cropwell, St. Clair County, Alabama, on February 1, 1908. The Rural Carrier and his dates of service was:

John M. Alexander February 1, 1908 to *

*Records show no other Rural Carrier assigned to Route #1 other than Mr. Alexander. Apparently this route is still active. Roster cards for active route which will show the date that the Rural Carriers services were terminated, and the names and dates of service of subsequent Rural Carriers are in the custody of the Director of Personnel, Regional Office, Post Office Department, Memphis, Tennessee.

Rural Route #2 was established at Cropwell, St. Clair County, Alabama, on June 1, 1908, and discontinued on June 15, 1919.

The Rural Carrier of Route #2 during that period was:

John B. Rowland June 1, 1908 to June 15, 1919.

Rural Route #2 was re established at Cropwell, St. Clair County, Alabama, on July 1, 1919, The Rural Carriers of the re-established Route #2, and their dates of service were as follows:

John B. Rowland July 1, 1919 to December 31, 1919

Robert S. Jones January 2, 1920 to February 29, 1920

No service on Route #2 on January 1, 1920.

Charles W. Scott March 1, 1920 to July 31, 1920

No service on Route #2 on August 1, 1920.

Robert S. Jones

August 2, 1920 to October 16, 1920

No service on Route #2 on August 17, 1920.

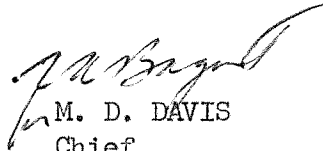
James Castleberry

October 18, 1920 to December 31, 1932

Rural Route #2 was discontinued on December 31, 1932.

Any additional information subsequent to that which we have furnished
May be obtained from the Director of Personnel, Regional Office,
Post Office Department, Memphis, Tennessee.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M. D. Davis", is written over the typed name.

M. D. DAVIS
Chief
Reference Service Branch

THE HISTORY OF CROPWELL

In the year 1815 a group of relatives in South Carolina banded together and started out for St. Clair County, Alabama to settle and make new homes there. They were the John Roberson, Williamson, Truss, Coleman, and Jeremiah Collins families. All of them except the Collins family had a covered wagon in which to travel. Mr. Collins could not afford a wagon so he made a crude "slide" on which to transport a few belongings and his family rode in the wagons with the relatives. The Collins family was from Virginia but had come on down to South Carolina to join in the trek to Alabama. This group of kinspeople settled in the vicinity of what is now Cropwell and they were the first white people to settle there. Soon other white settlers came. Some of these early families were as follows: Buchanon, Jones, Fennel, Castleberry, Bowden, Allen, Brewster, Alexander, Turner, Lane, Roland, Heaslett, Coley, Mencrief, and Murchison.

These first settlers bought some of the finest farm and timber land in the valley for \$1.00 per acre. Most of them prospered. Even Mr. Collins who had slid in on a homemade slide found a way to get possession of hundreds of acres of fine land and more slaves than he could call by name.

On July 24, 1833, a postoffice was established as Coosa at Cropwell. It was located about a mile from Truss' Ferry. On November 15, 1834, the name was changed to Diana. The name was changed from Diana to Cropwell on October 20, 1837. The Cropwell postoffice was discontinued on July 25, 1866 but was reestablished on June 10, 1867. The names of the postmasters and the dates of their appointments are as follows:

James Roberson	November 24, 1833
P. H. Castleberry	February 19, 1835
John D. Fennel	October 20, 1837
Russel I. Allen	November 6, 1840
John Collins	September 29, 1843
John W. Jones	January 7, 1854
Amasa L. Bowden	April 10, 1860
T. I. Fowler	June 10, 1867
Mattison Hendricks	August 5, 1867
James R. Roberson	January 23, 1873
W. L. Dollar	January 20, 1898
William G. Sides	February 14, 1899
Hardie Jones	October 25, 1901
James P. Turner	March 30, 1907
Albert R. Jones	August 15, 1914
John B. Shurbet	October 20, 1915
Amanda Funderburg	December 13, 1928

Another little postoffice on what is now Cropwell Route was established in 1901 and discontinued in 1908. It was Fountainrun and was located in the Harmon settlement two miles west of the Coosa River. Mr. J. O. M. Hardwick was the only postmaster to serve that little postoffice.

Most of the early people of Cropwell were Baptist. They attended the Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church which was established in 1828, the Coosa Valley Baptist Church which was established in 1840, and the Sedden Baptist Church which was organized before the Civil War. The few Methodists, including the McRaes and Laneys, belonged to the Easonville Methodist Church. Before any of the churches were organized camp meetings were held at Easonville and on

Camp Creek. Later in 1888 the Cropwell Baptist Church was organized. Long before the Cropwell Baptist Church was organized and built the community had its own Sunday School which was held in the Masonic Building.

The very early settlers of Cropwell provided a school of some kind for their children. At first the schools were taught in dwellings. The parents paid the teacher's salary and provided fire wood for fuel. After the Coosa Valley Church was built it served as a schoolhouse, also. Mr. Owen Hardwick was one of the early teachers to teach in that church. He taught in the late 1840's. A Mr. Brickhouse was teaching in the Coosa Valley Church during the Civil War when the Wilson Raiders came galloping up the valley road. One of the Yankees who rode ahead of the main band of raiders pulled on his reins and stopped long enough to warn Mr. Brickhouse and to have him to dismiss school and hurry the children off home.

After the Civil War the Cropwell children walked to Easonville and attended a school which had been built there. Around 1880 a new school, called Coosa Valley High School, was built where Preston Wadsworth's home now stands. It served both the Easonville and the Cropwell communities until 1888. It was to this Coosa Valley High School that Mr. I. W. Hill came as principal. During the 1887-1888 term a movement was made to have the school moved to Cropwell. Mr. Jim Roberson offered to give the level plot of land below what is now Mr. Fall Roberson's home (toward Easonville) on which to locate the new school. Mr. Hill was highly in favor of the new location and when he left for vacation he thought that plans were definite to build there but Easonville decided to build her own school in the center of the community for two reasons: First: She didn't want to lease the school to Cropwell, and, second: A school located in the center of the community would enable the children living in the lower part of the

community to attend a better school. When the Coosa Valley School had been built, the parents of lowere Easonville had moved the little "first school-house" down there so that their children would have a school nearer to them. That little school was called Harmon school and it enabled little children to attend more regularly than if they'd have had to walk all the way to Coosa Valley High School. The teachers who taught in the Harmon school were Mr. Jim Hardwick, Miss Mattie Abbott and Mr. Thomas Harliss. They were conscientious teachers but they were not as good as Mr. Hill and the people in that part of the community were anxious for Mr. Hill's school to be located nearer instead of farther away from them. So, in 1888 the new school was built at Easonville. The following year, 1889, Cropwell built a new school. It was a two-story building located about a quarter of a mile from the present school. It was to this school that Mr. Roy Gibson came as principal in 1915. In 1918 the present school was built at Cropwell. Mr. Gibson remained there until 1926. He had a well disciplined and orderly high school and was the most beloved principal that Cropwell ever had. The school remained a high school until 1929. In the early years of the school's history the people of the community supported their school well. Back when the state could pay for only a short term of school the patrons of that school contributed money for teachers' salaries in order to have longer terms of school. Cropwell was also the first community in the county to vote for the three mill tax for the support of schools.

Cropwell has always been an agricultural community. Cotton has always been the principal crop. The Colemans, as early as the Civil War years, owned a steam gin. Part of Cropwell's cotton was ginned there. Part of it was ginned at Drake's Mill at Easonville and part of it was ginned at the old Laney horse-drawn gin. Robersons began to operate a steam gin at Cropwell in 1888.

In 1840 John W. Jones, who came from Peterburg, Virginia, began to operate a business at Cropwell. That store will exist under the name, James Roberson Sons. Another successful business of Cropwell was a store operated before the Civil War by William T. Smith. It fell into decline after he left to fight in the Confederate Army where he became a colonel. In 1927 a drugstore was built at Cropwell and was operated by Dr. James P. Turner.

During the Civil War some of the Cropwell men served with distinction in the Confederate Army. In 1861 Company C of 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment was organized at Cropwell with Major J. D. Truss as it's captain. William T. Smith, a member of the outfit won many promotions and rose to the rank of colonel of the 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment. This regiment was engaged in about twenty-four battles during the Civil War. They included Second Manassa, Sharpsburg, Fredricksburg, Wilderness, Chancellersville, Gettysburg, Spotsylvania Courthouse, Salem Church, and Crater. The regiment was distinguished for its action at Crater and Salem Church.

The first United Daughters of the Confederacy chapter in St. Clair County was organized at Cropwell on July 20, 1914. It was called the John W. Jones Chapter.

The first Masonic Lodge in St. Clair County was organized at Cropwell before the Civil War.

In 1886 the B&A (Birmingham and Atlantic Railroad) was built by Rogers Brothers Lumbering Company and it ran through Cropwell. It was built primarily to transport lumber but it had a passenger car and it carried mail. There was a depot at Cropwell. Mr. Ben Heaslett was the depot agent.

Vera Wadsworth



Mrs. Eliza Hardwick Willingham.

Although 80 years old, Mrs. Willingham has registered and intends to vote for the first time since the enfranchisement of the women. Thankful that women have come into their rights and trusting that they may exercise the ballot intelligently is the words of this good lady. At the beginning of the Confederacy Mrs. Willingham delivered the flag emblematic of states rights to a bearer of a company of Confederate soldiers, and she knows what war means, and she still possesses that same fighting spirit that was so characteristic of the true Southern women of 1861-5. Being fully aware of the democratic party's aid to the South during reconstruction, when this section was filled with free negroes and carpet baggers, a few of whom are still among us, and that the traditions of our fathers and mothers may be preserved, she, in her old days, consecrates herself politically to the democratic cause. Tho' age has impaired her sight she still reads and is well posted on current matters politically. She has always been and today is as strong for democratic principles, and has always been loyal, even during the sweep of populist days. Believing that all women in the exercise of their new rights should pay the debt that the women of her age and young owe the democratic party. She will, on November 2nd, cast her ballot for the democratic nominees, and keep forever untarnished white supremacy.

A section of the town of Seddon, known as Seddon Shores, is now a part of Pell City also. This includes the old West residence, land where the Fishing Creek Methodist Church stood, the old cemetery, and the home of Dr. John Roberson. Seddon was settled in 1880 when the Georgia Pacific Railroad was built. It was incorporated that year with a population of five hundred. The people came there to live from Truss's Ferry (Ferryville), one mile away on the Coosa River. It was a lumber community for Empire Lumber Company. The town was named for Thomas Seddon, who was the first Secretary of War for the Confederate States under Jefferson Davis. The first merchant was J. K. P. Lacy. Dr. Henry Green Crump was the first doctor. Other pioneer settlers were Jake Maddox, W. H. and W. N. Roberson, and Harvey Bell. When the timber supply was exhausted the mills moved away. Today part of the tiny village stands dismally amid dreams of the past.

* The town of Cropwell now is also part of Pell City. Soon after the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, a group of friends and relatives from the Laurens and Abbeville districts of South Carolina came seeking a new home in the wilderness. They were the John Roberson, Williamson, Truss, Coleman, and Collins families. They homesteaded near the Coosa River on land where today Cropwell and Pine Harbor stand. Soon other families joined them: Buchanans, Bryants, Joneses, Fennels, Kilgroes, Castleberrys, Bowdens, Allens, Brewsters, Alexanders, Walkers, Turners, Laney, Rolands, Heasletts, Coleys, Mays, Moncriefs, and Murchinsons. These people secured the finest farm and timber land in the valley for a dollar an acre and prospered on it. Jeremiah Collins, who could not afford a wagon and had brought all his worldly goods on a crude "slide," soon owned hundreds of acres of fine land, a good home, and more slaves than he could call by name. These pioneers cleared land, established roads and mail routes, and built churches and schools. They operated stores, grist mills, distilleries, and tanneries. Their entertainment consisted of fox hunting and horse racing.

In 1833 a post office was established about a mile from Truss's Ferry. It was first called Coosa, but was changed to Diana, and, in 1837, to Cropwell. James Roberson was the first postmaster. There was another early post office nearby in the Harmon settlement which was called Fountainrun. J. O. N. Hardwick served as postmaster there.

Neighbors

Much of Southeast's Sod Origin

When one thinks of getting the lawn in shape for summer, every homeowner dreams of a lush green yard bordered by beautiful colorful flowers and varied shrubs and flowering trees. One of the ways that homeowners can get that lush green lawn is by laying sod on carefully prepared ground. Sod provides an instantly beautiful lawn.

In Alabama and in much of the Southeastern United State, a large portion of the sod put down each day originates right in St. Clair County, on a farm just off 231 South in Pell City. Owner of the Surfside Sod Farm Dick Wall is a grass farmer who provides this turf for lawns. At the sod farm, sod is sold both wholesale and retail, and it can be picked by the buyer at the farm or delivered in one of Wall's trucks which is equipped with a boom unloader.

Business at Surfside is good for two reasons. Sod sales are related to the amount of construction going

on at a given time, and right now construction business is good. Second, Wall works hard to produce and sell healthy, disease and insect free grass.

Soil testing, fertilizing, and insect and disease control are important aspects of Wall's operation. He works with Pell City Gold Kist manager Bill Jones on bulk blend fertilizer and other production needs.

Grass farming is a science. When a sod harvester cuts, it is automatically guided over the grass, digging and cutting the turf into pieces 16 x 24 inches. It is like a big tractor with a huge spatula and three pizza cutters. The harvester's conveyor moves the cut sod pieces to the back of the machine where a worker stacks them on pallets that measure 48 x 48 inches.

When the sod comes up, there are two inch rows of grass left on the fields. A huge Rototiller turns the

In Business

nates In Pell City

grass that is left back under to create new plants. The land is then rolled and smoothed and watered, made ready for the new sod that it

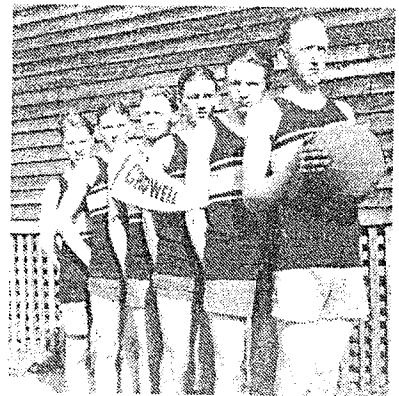
Sod that is delivered on a particular day has never been cut for more than 24 hours. It is a living product, and fast handling insures preserving the quality. About 60 percent of the farms sod sold is for residential use, 30 percent for commercial use, and the other 10 percent goes to football fields and golf courses.

The sod farm is actually five separate farms growing three kinds of grass: Centipede, Tifton Bermuda, and Emerald Zoysia. There are 850 acres sown in sod. The Zoysia is the most difficult to grow and is the most expensive grass grown at Surfside. Both Zoysia and Centipede take two years of growth before they are ready for harvest. Wall's says volume business is in Bermuda grass because it takes only twelve months to produce, and it has a lower sale price.

Sod farm employees work with 17

irrigation guns and 63 pieces of equipment. Being a grass farmer is toughest when the summer is hot and dry as it was last year. During that time they average putting out an inch of water a week on all of the 850 acres of sod, and that requires almost constant moving of irrigation guns. In addition to watering, there is always fertilizing, mowing, vacuuming, and other manicuring to be done.

A native of Indiana with a degree in engineering from Purdue University, Walls came to Pell City to buy the sod farm after he and a partner sold a fabricating business in Birmingham. He had no experience in farming, but he has increased acreage on the farm and last year sold 500 acres of grass, many of them transported by his trucks that carry 900 yards of sod away from the farm at a time weighing up to 65,000 pounds. With an 850 acre yard as his responsibility, Dick Wall of Surfside Sod Farm is quite a busy man.



CROPWELL HOOPSTERS—
This picture of the Cropwell Basketball Team was made in 1920. Unfortunately, the men pictured are all unidentified. Do you know who they are?

HISTORY OF CROPWELL

(ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALA.)

By Amanda Funderburg
Cropwell

In the year of 1815 a group of relatives in South Carolina banded together and started out for St. Clair County, Alabama, to settle and make new homes there. They were the John Roberson, Williamson, Truss, Coleman, and Jeremiah Collins families. All of them except the Collins family had a covered wagon in which to travel. Mr. Collins could not afford a wagon, so he made a crude "slide" on which to transport a few belongings and his family rode in a the wagons with the relatives. The Collins family was from Virginia but had come on down to South Carolina to join in the trek to Alabama.

This group of kinspeople settled in the vicinity of what is now Cropwell and they were the first white people to settle there. Soon other white settlers came. Some of these early families were as follows: Buchanan, Jones, Castleberry, Bowden, Allen, Brewster, Alexander, Turner, Laney, Roland, Heaslett, Coley, Moncrief, Murchison, and Fennel.

These first settlers bought some of the finest farm and timber in the valley for \$1.00 per acre. Most of them prospered. Even Mr. Collins, who had slid in on a home-made slide, found a way to get possession of hundreds of acres of



AMANDA FUNDERBURG

1867
James R. Roberson—Jan. 23, 1873
W. L. Dollar—Jan. 20, 1898
William G. Sides—Feb. 14, 1899
Hardie Jones—Oct. 25, 1901
James P. Turner—March 20, 1907
Albert R. Jones—Aug. 15, 1914

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from Diana to Cropwell on October 20, 1837. The Cropwell postoffice was discontinued on July 25, 1866, but was reestablished on June 10, 1867. The names of the postmasters and the dates of their appointments are as follows:

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND
RECORDS SERVICE WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

According to the records of the P.O. Dept. now in our custody, the P.O. at Cropwell, St. Clair Co., was established as Coosa on July 24, 1833. Its name was changed to Diana on Nov. 25, 1834 and to Cropwell on Oct. 20, 1837. It was discontinued (sic) on July 25, 1866 and reestablished on June 10, 1867.

Names of PM's and dates of their appointments were:

James Roberson—Nov. 24, 1833
P. H. Castleberry—Feb. 19, 1835
John D. Fennel—Oct. 20, 1837
Russel I. Allen—Nov. 6, 1840
John Collins—Sept. 29, 1843
John W. Jones—Jan. 7, 1854
Amasa L. Bowden—April 10, 1860
T. I. Fowler—June 10, 1867
Mattison Hendricks—Aug. 5,

PAGE SIX

1908.

Reports of the P.M.'s of Cropwell and Fountainrun to the P. M. Dept. contain the following site location data:

Cropwell—Dec. 5, 1913

5/8 of a mile So. of the B'ham & Atlanta R.R. Tracks.

Dec. 7, 1915.

193 7/11 rods west of the B'ham & Atlantic R.R. tracks.

February 10, 1917

1074 yards, So. East of the B'ham & Atlantic R.R. tracks.

June 2, 1943

208 miles So. West of the So. R.R. tracks.

Fountainrun

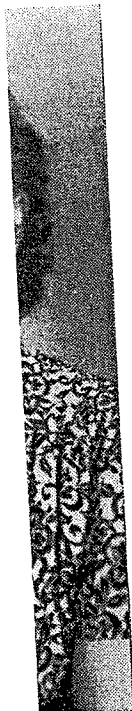
April 19, 1900

2 miles West of Coosa River and 5 miles No. of Kelly Creek.

Another little postoffice on what is now Cropwell Route, was established in 1901 and discontinued in 1908. It was Fountainrun and was located in the Harmon settlement two miles west of the Coosa River. Mr. J. O. M. Hardwick was the only postmaster to serve that little postoffice.

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THE BAMA

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The early settlers of Cropwell provided a school of some kind for their children. At first the schools were taught in dwellings. The parents paid the teacher's salary and provided fire wood for fuel. After Coosa Valley Church was built it served as a schoolhouse, also. Mr. Owen Hardwick was one of the early teachers to teach in that church. He taught in the late 1840's. A Mr. Brickhouse was teaching in the Coosa Valley Church during the Civil War when the Wilson Raiders came galloping up the valley road. One of the Yankees who rode ahead of the main band of raiders pulled on his reins and stopped long enough to warn Mr. Brickhouse and to have him dismiss school and hurry the children off home.

After the Civil War the Crop-

and it enabled children to attend more regularly than if they'd had to walk all the way to Coosa Valley High School. The teachers who taught in the Harmon school were Mr. Jim Hardwick, Miss Mattie Abbott and Mr. Thomas Harliss. They were conscientious teachers but they were not as good as Mr. Hill and the people in that part of the community were anxious for Mr. Hill's school to be located nearer instead of farther away from them. So, in 1888 the new school was built at Easonville. The following year, 1889, Cropwell built a new school. It was a two-story building located about a quarter of a mile from the present school. It was to this school that Mr. Roy Gibson came as principal in 1915. In 1918 the present school was built at Cropwell.

Mr. Gibson remained there until 1926. He had a well disciplined and orderly high school and was the most beloved principal that Cropwell ever had. The school remained a high school until 1929. In the early years of the school's history the people of the community supported their school well. Back when state could pay for only a short term of school the patrons of the school contributed money for teachers' salaries in order to have longer terms of school. Cropwell was also the first community in the county to vote for the 3 mill tax for the support of schools.

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THE BAMA POSTMASTER

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When the Coosa Valley School had been built the parents of lower Easonville had moved the little "first schoolhouse" down there so that their children would have a school nearer to them. That little school was called Harmon School

began to operate a steam gun at Cropwell in 1888.

In 1840 John W. Jones, who came from Petersburg, Va., began to operate a business at Cropwell. That store still exists under the name, James Roberson Sons. Another successful business of Cropwell was a store operated before the Civil War, by William T. Smith. It fell into decline after he left to fight in the Confederate Army where he became a colonel. In 1927 a drugstore was built at Cropwell and was operated by Dr. James P. Turner.

During the Civil War some of the Cropwell men served with distinction in the Confederate Army. In 1861 Company of 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment was organized at Cropwell with Major J. O. Truss as it's captain. William T. Smith, a member of the outfit won many promotions and rose to the rank of Colonel of the 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment. This regiment was engaged in about twenty-four battles during the Civil War. They included Second Manassa, Sharpsburg, Fred-

(See HISTORY on Page 7)

SEPTEMBER, 1965

man, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson. He also has served under seven postmaster generals: James A. Farley, Frank C. Walker, Robert E. Hannegan, Jesse M. Donaldson, Arthur E. Summer-

and also from some other sources, however, that next year he might decide to go into some kind of business on a part-time basis, but plans for this are not definite as yet.

"I am grateful to the patrons of the Shawmut Post Office for their fine cooperation during my years as postmaster," Strother said.

HISTORY

(Continued From Page 6)
ricsburg, Wilderness, Chancellersville, Gettysburg, Spotsylvania courthouse, Salem Church, and Crater. The regiment was distinguished for its action at Crater and Salem Church.

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In recent years, this has been a prosperous farming community. Quite a few developments have come along. Latest is an airport, which isn't completed yet. We are just above the Logan-Martin Dam.
SEPTEMBER, 1965

Editor's note: Leslie told us his retirement will not keep him "from being with some of the dearest friends I have, the Postmasters of Alabama."

He added he is "proud to be a member of NAPUS and appreciate all that it has done for the postmasters." He said he wishes he had been able to do more in our Chapter, but due to bad health that struck him and his wife in 1958 and 1960, he was "limited in what I could do, and that was mostly my job as Postmaster."

We're happy that you will continue to be with us at meetings, Leslie.

REMEMBER

'D-DAY'

OCTOBER 15

THE BAMA F

Cropwell -



Roberson Home - Victorian



past and present

BY JENNA WHITEHEAD
NEWS Feature Editor

Cropwell was a farming area — cotton predominantly, but corn in great abundance also — for the livestock. Thus, a history or picture of Cropwell in that of a rural, agrarian area, where most of the families in the area lived outside the town.

Cropwell had a history prior to the arrival of the early white settlers, but with the advent of the white man, and the establishment of businesses and homes in Cropwell, the history became busier, and more settled.

Speculation has run in the vein that the name Cropwell was chosen for the community because of the fine quality of crops in the area, but more likely is the story that the name came from John Cropwell, first elected representative to the legislature from St. Clair County.

The first settlers in this area were the Robersons, Williamsons, Truss's, and Colemans and Collins. According to local history, these families arrived about 1815, in covered wagons. Jeremiah Collins, however, brought his household goods to the area on a sled.

The first post office in the area — Coosa — was located about one mile from Truss's Ferry. That was the year of 1833. In Nov., 1834, the post office changed from Coosa to Diana, and in Oct., 1837, the Diana post office became Cropwell, which has been an established office since that time with the exception of a year from 1866-67.

Present day Cropwell has more buildings and houses than at any point in its history, but much of the area's history remains on paper rather than in physical reality.

The first mercantile business in the area was established in 1830 when John W. Jones moved into the area from Petersburg, Va. Jones built a store on the site of David Tims Antique Store. Tims store was

torn down, others erected and the town maintained its own.

In 1927, Dr. James P. Turner built a drugstore, a stone building with rocks gathered from the Cropwell area. The old drugstore now houses the Cropwell Post Office and the residence of Miss Amanda Funderburg, who was postmistress in Cropwell from 1928-1970.

The earlier houses in the area are gone — no longer does one find the log and frame houses of the settlers. The residences remaining, however, are reflective of turn-of-the-century Victorian construction — as in the Mays-Silas home with a fireplace in each of the nine rooms, the two story white frame Victorian home sym-

metrical federal style, built by the Roberson family; the Jones-Morton home built by Hardy Jones; and the Ada Roberson home, a green, rambling dwelling.

There are 21 structures in the Cropwell area which is now an historic district. One of the structures is the vest-pocket park containing Cropwell's historic marker — commemorating St. Clair County's Company "F" of the Alabama 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment, which was organized in Cropwell; and the Valley Hill Cemetery, two acres given by the Roberson family for a cemetery.

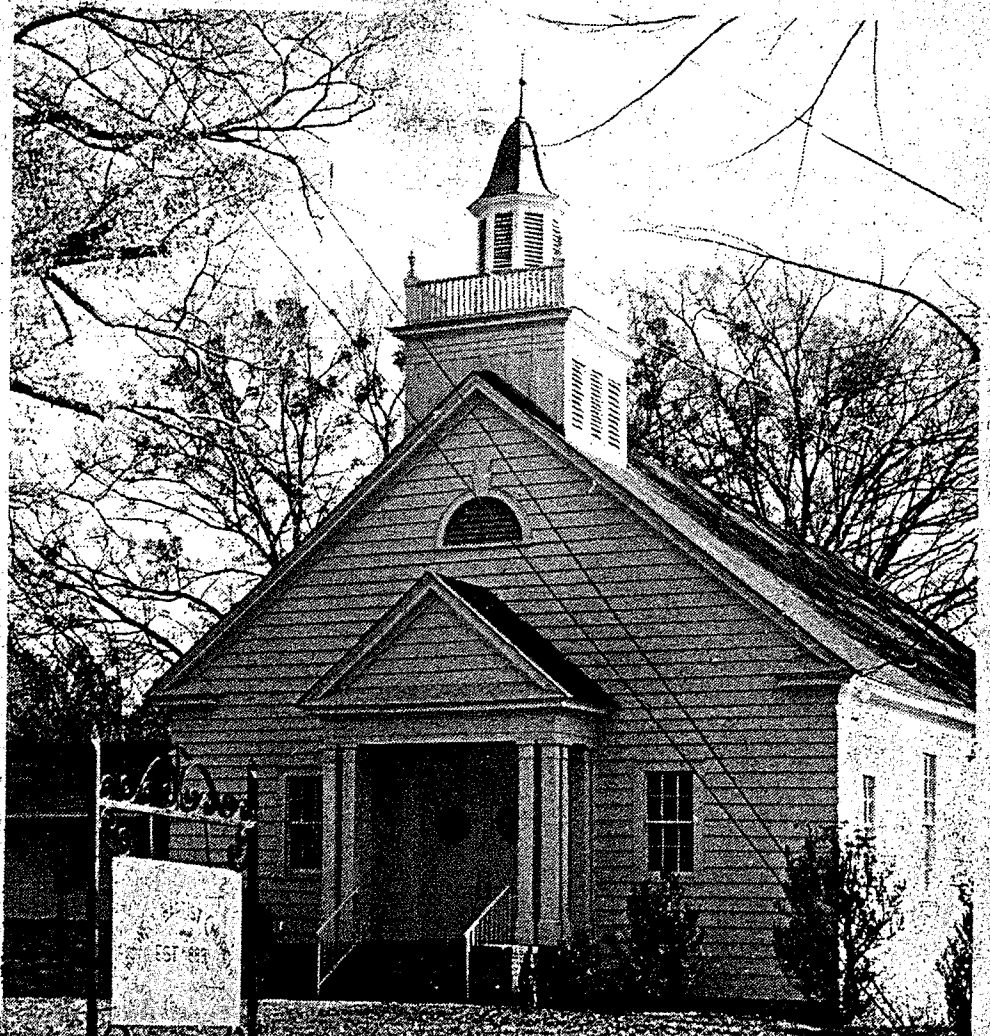
The cemetery contains 175 boxwoods and 35 holly trees, and is located between highway

231 south and highway 34.

Tims Antique Store now handles the furniture and fashions of the era in which Cropwell was coming into its own, rather than cheese, shoes and anything to coffins, which Roberson's offered its customers.

Cropwell now has an airport, a country club, the Town and Country Store which handles a great deal of business for persons coming to the area to enjoy lake recreation, but the community continues with some of the same families, and so many of the memories of the past.

NOTE: Historical information contained herein, courtesy of Miss Amanda Funderburg.



Cropwell Historic Marker



Roberson-Times Store



Boxwood And Holly In Cemetery



Jones-Morton House

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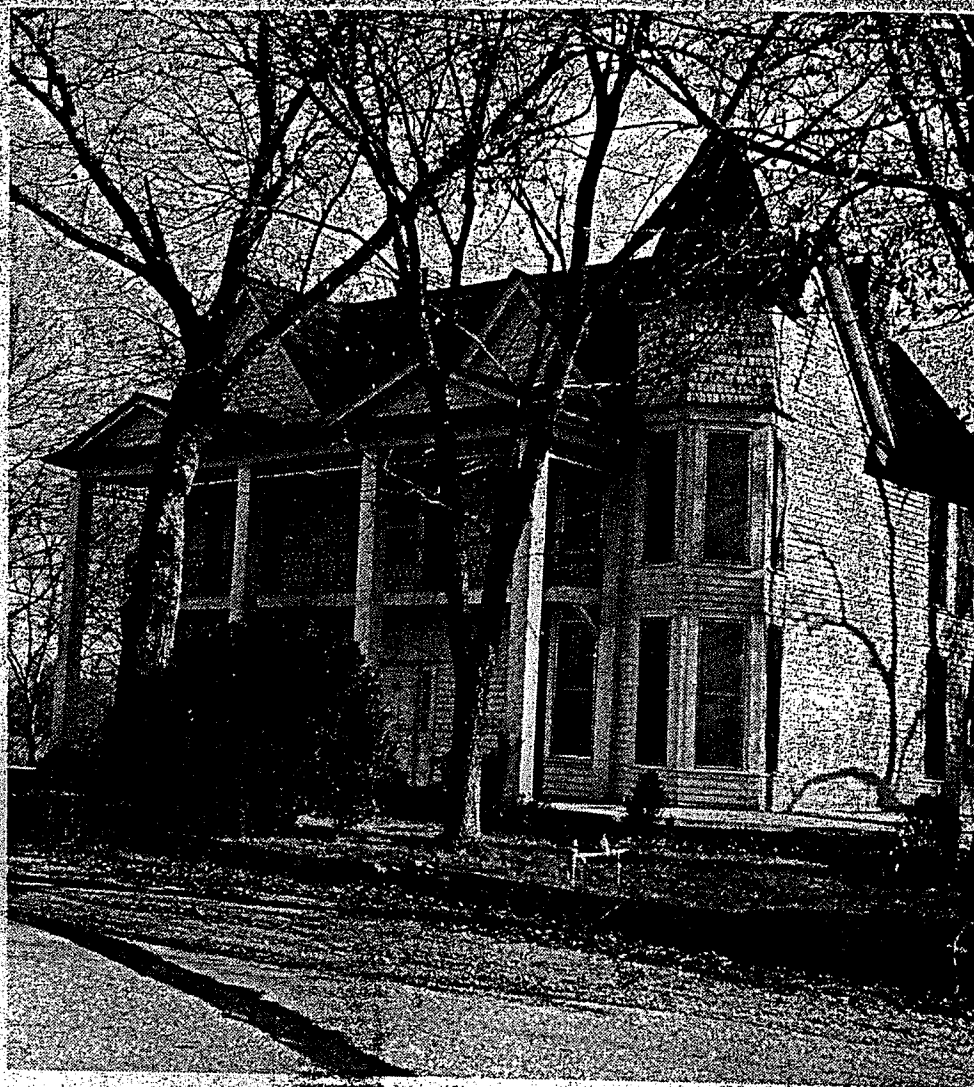
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Cropwell Baptist Church Estate - 1888



Mays-Silas House



Cropwell Post Office, Built 1927

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Cropwell Newspaper Printed In

THE CROPWELL EN

VOL. 1.

CROPWELL, ALABAMA, THURSDAY, OCT

CROPWELL.

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

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 pass-way, puncheon floor and stick and dirt chimney, situated in the northern 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. S. 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 to 1860 all the merchandise for Coosa Valley was shipped to Greensport and carted thence to the points of distribution. When the river above Greensport was too low for navigation,

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-behaved were the dogs that attended church in those days that the good brethren were forced to create an unscriptional 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

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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.

incident to business in Coosa Valley during the 50's and early 60's. Prior to 1853 all the merchandise for Coosa Valley was shipped to Greensport and carted thence to the points of distribution. When the river above Greensport was too low for navigation, the merchants were forced to haul their goods on wagons from Rome, Georgia. After 1866 until 1888 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 ostracised 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 fist-cuffs 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

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 unsaleable 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

er Printed In 1895

LL ENTERPRISE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1895.

NO. 1.

in Pisgah, Clouch Camp Coosa Valley, Broken Ar. dollars near Eden. The was called by the had level," because of the ber of dogs that attended gs. So numerous and ill- ere the dogs that attended hose days that the good ere forced to create an office to which they an- ed a worthy brother ed and respected as the r." The country has so ince those days until now in Coosa Valley is in easy urch, where he can hear God expounded, and of so where his children a learn the rudiments of a Cropwell and Coosa and a cordial invitation to zens seeking homes.

OF ROBERSON & JONES.
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built the store-house d is now occupied by m. Being a man of

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

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.

Easonville.

The cold wave has reached us, and frost has made its appearance.

The farmers are quite busy gathering their crops. Cotton is opening very fast. We think by the first of December it will be all picked.

Cropwell must be on a big boom. We see several bales of cotton going by to be ginned and marketed there. We hear that Mr. McLellan has ginned as many as twenty one bales several days, and in all something over five hundred bales. Also that Messrs Roberson & Jones are "strictly in it" so far as the cotton market is concerned. Hurrah boys! That's right, boom-up your town and accommodate the farmers all you can. May be we will get up a boom in our town too, some of these days. We know that your accommodations and facilities for ginning, handling and buying cotton cannot be excelled and so we cannot blame the people for going there.

Our school is doing finely under the supervision of Mr. Bynum, and

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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 "mid-
dle-man." There is another item of
cost which enters into the purchase
of goods that the firm guards well;
viz., cost of transportation. Rail-
ways sometime charge the unwary
exorbitant freight rates. So true
have Roberson & Jones been to their
customers in this respect that mer-
chants living in Coosa Valley on a
Trunk line have had their goods
shipped to 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 le-
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home or abroad. The firm has stud-
ied the cotton business in all of its
phases from the field to the factory,
and its connections are such that en-
able it to pay the highest market
price for cotton. Cost of transpor-
tation also affects the price of cotton,
and to prove to their customers that
Roberson & Jones are always on the
watch to protect their interests, 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 an-
other for more than it is worth: nor
to pay for cotton more than it is
worth and make up their loss on

...some of these days.
We know that your accommodations
and facilities for ginning, handling
and buying cotton cannot be ex-
celled and so we cannot blame the
people for going there.

Our school is doing finely under
the supervision of Mr. Bynum, and
his efficient assistant Miss Laura
Davis.

Mr. W. C. Honston has returned
from Georgia where he has been to
recuperate his health. He is look-
ing well and has opened his school at
Cropwell. We understand he has a
good school. We wish you much
success Prof.

Miss Forney, our accomplished
music and art teacher came a few
days ago. She already has several
pupils and has promise of several
more. We wish her much success
as we know her to be quite a talented
young lady and feel sure she will
give perfect satisfaction.

R. L. McLellan left for Birming-
ham the 30th ult. where he will
spend a few days and then go on to
Mobile to take another course of lec-
tures in the A. M. C.

The Epworth League meetings
have a large attendance and we
think are accomplishing a great deal
of good.

The time for our annual Confer-
ence is drawing near, and we hope
all who can will attend.

At the request of the Pastor of
the First Methodist Church of
Talladega, our Pastor, Rev. McJ.
Howell, preached for them on the
fifth Sunday. We hear he preached
a fine sermon and all who attended
were much edified thereby.

There is much sickness in our vi-
cinity and Dr. Steadham has been
kept quite busy.

W. H. O.

Subscribe for this paper.

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A Picto St. Cla Pride

Dams are imp

By TISA MOORE
News-Aegis Reporter

PELL CITY—Everyone around Logan Martin Lake looks forward to summertime—skiing, fishing, and just good times. Have you ever thought what Pell City would be like without the lake?

Prior to 1964, there was no lake in Pell City because there was no dam. For some of us it is hard for us to imagine life without them. For others, the dam is all in the name of progress.

In 1957, the Federal Power Commission gave Alabama Power a permit to study development on the Coosa River. Little did they know that the development would be the biggest waterway development undertaking carried out by investor capital.

Begun in 1958, the 10-year project was to complete seven new hydroelectric plants and refurbish two old plants by 1968, with a budget of around \$250 million.

Progress brings change and the construction of the dams certainly

The powerhouse is 295 feet long. Its six spillway gates are each 40 feet wide. The capacity of each spillway gate is about 12,567,000 gallons per minute. Across the dam is the highway that connects St. Clair and Talladega counties.

The Army Corps of Engineers has the responsibility of overseeing the development of the nation's navigable waterways.

The Corps supplements low flows during dry months and controls flood waters. The reservoir is lowered during the dry fall-winter periods. From October 1 to April 1 the elevation is the normal maximum of 460.

In the month of April the reservoir is filled. By May 7 it is the normal summer maximum of 465. Fluctuations occur from day to day due to the Logan Martin Power plant, which generates the power for electricity.

The dam is a great source of revenue for St. Clair County. A huge portion of Pell City's sales tax is generated from the lake through

man of the Power.

He became attorney General and then went to the U.S. Supreme Court until 1917.

Martin entered the U.S. Army during World War I and served in the Signal Corps.

After the war he was appointed Montgomery Circuit Judge. He moved to Birmingham as a predecessor of Bingham, Williams, and then to Alabama in 1959.

Martin was a lawyer and a member of the Board of Directors.

He died in 1968 before the completion of the dam that was named after him.

Also in the family is Henry D. Greensport, a

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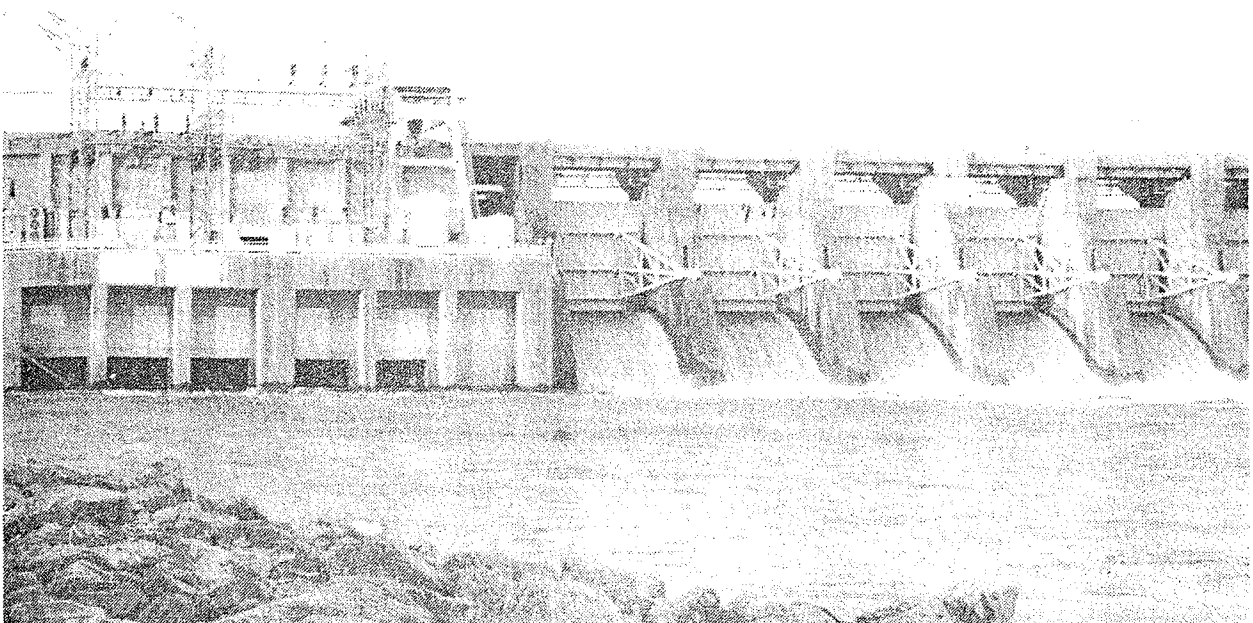
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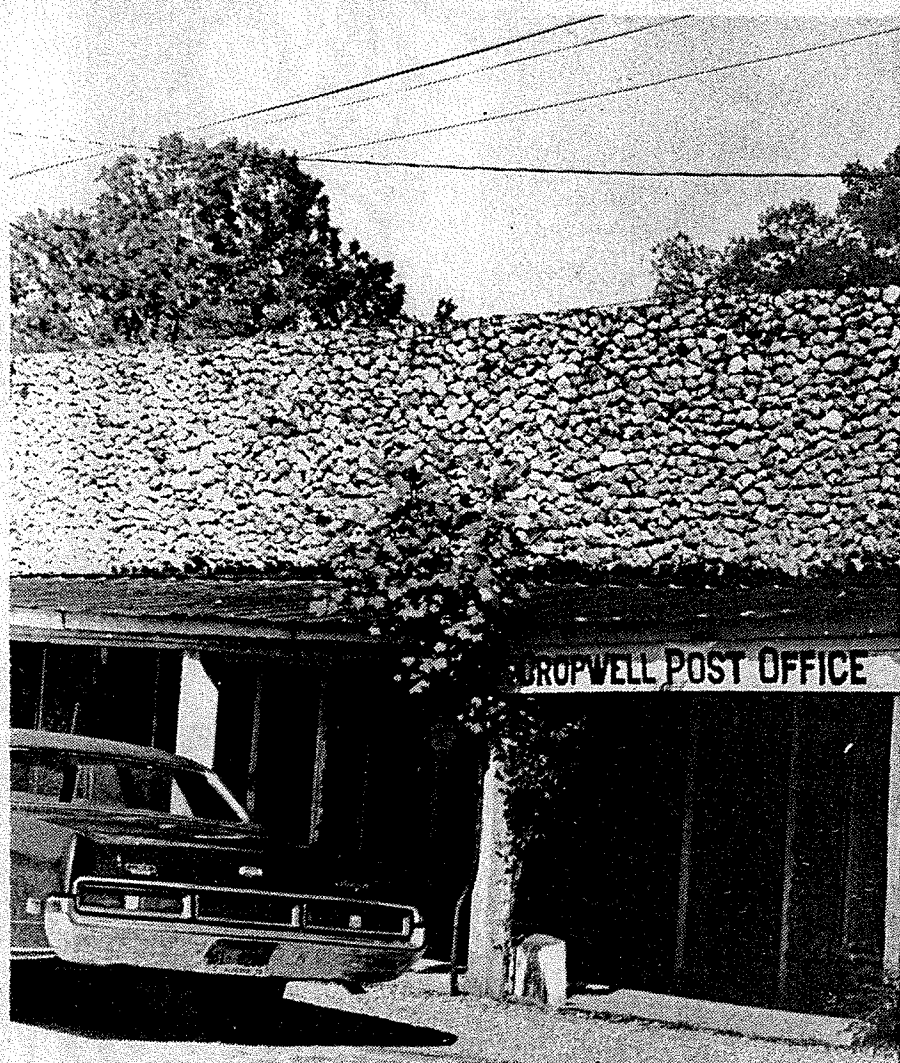
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CROPWELL

A Proud, Colonial

BY MATTIE L.

There is a very small village down in South St. Clair County, on the banks of the Coosa River, which will carry you back in history to the 1820's. This village is Cropwell, and although it is today a part of Pell City, it wears with dignity its own laurels.

The first white people came to this place to live soon after Jackson's treaty with the Creeks opened this part of the Alabama Territory to settlers. The first to come were the Roberson, Williamson, Truss, Coleman and Collins families. They came from South Carolina.

Word went back to others about this "land of opportunity" and soon new families were moving in. Some of them were Buckhannon, James, Bessie, South...

Samira, who settled near... were married. Ira Harmon of the Great Smoky Mountains... him to Alabama when he... the Coosa River and from... river would be his life. He floated his first flatboat on the Coosa to Wetumpka. River like the back of h...

The jutting cliffs that p... bends, the menacing rock...



CROPWELL, USA

Wonderful History

THE TEAGUE CROW

Fountainrun soon after they was born among the foothills tains but his parents brought as a small boy. He grew up on he beginning he knew that the was yet a young boy when he ver the dangerous "rapids" of He grew up knowing Ole Man s hand.

ject into the river, the abrupt

Inzer's 58th Alabama Regiment, was made up of Cropwell men. This company carried a flag made by Mrs. Randal D. Willingham. She was Eliza Hardwick Willingham and was truly a Southern lady, loved and respected by all citizens of Cropwell and the men were proud to fight under the flag she had made for them.

There is a lovely Victorian home in Cropwell which is known as the Mays' place. Today the house is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Mike Harvey. The Mays' family (they intermarried with the Buchannons) were among the earliest people to come to Cropwell. Their plantation, many fertile acres along the banks of the Coosa, continues

By 1833 they had a post office which was called Coosa and was located about a mile from Truss's Ferry. The name of this office was changed to Diana and later to Cropwell. Miss Amanda Funderburg, recently retired after 42 years as Cropwell postmistress, will entertain you well with bits of history and folklore about the early postmasters.

This community grew. The young people met at school, at church socials and in their homes for quilting parties and corn huskings. There were weddings galore and soon there were kissin' cousins and cussing' cousins!

Ask Mr. Pat Roberson about the early settlers. He could write a book and how we wish he would! He will tell you that Cropwell's first merchant was John W. Jones who came from Virginia. Mr. Jones's daughter, Addie, was married to J. R. Roberson and eventually the store became James R. Roberson Sons. This store had a long life and the service it rendered the cotton farmers was invaluable.

One son, J. Fall, operated the store and farms while the other, Pat, was a Pell City banker. They both have been leaders in church and civic activities. Mr. Pat Roberson survives his brother. Today the old store building is a fit setting for David Tims' antique shop.

Spend some listening time in Cropwell and you are sure to hear someone tell about Ira Harmon and his wife,

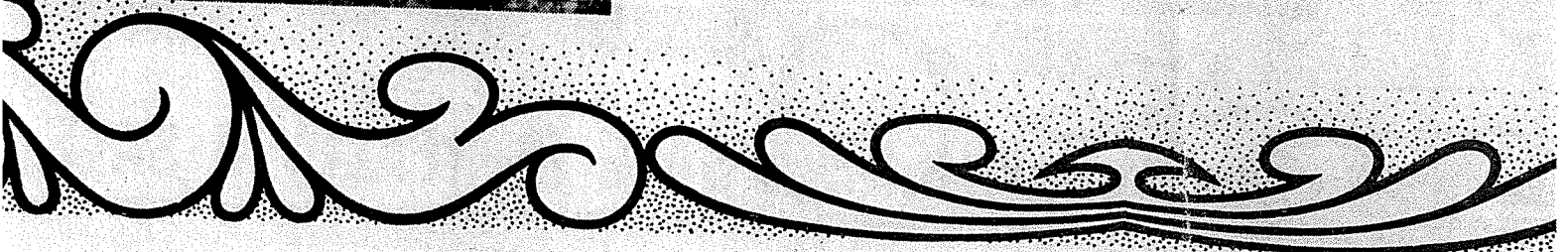
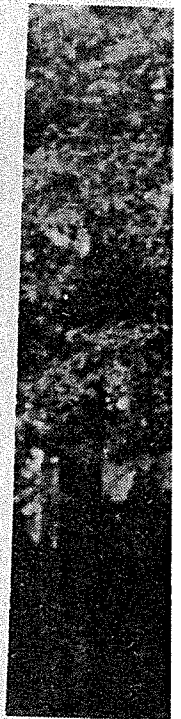
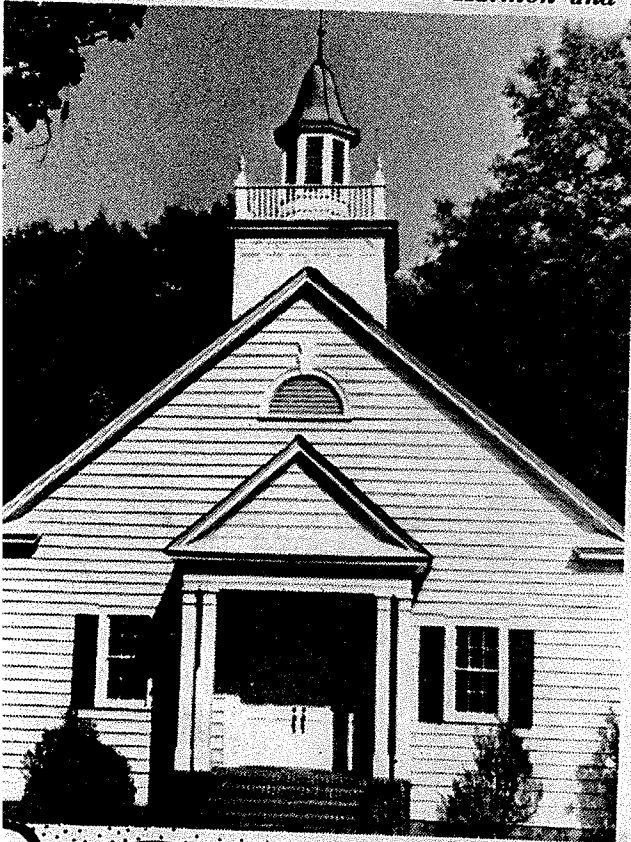
without a doubt you will hear about Jeremiah Collins, that likker drinking, horse racing, gambling fellow who declared that he would some day be the richest man in the state. You will learn that his son, Jesse Collins, defied his father and became a Baptist preacher.

Jesse Collins was a great believer in missions when this was a controversial subject with the Baptists and he helped to establish Missionary Baptist Churches at Ashville, Hopewell, Broken Arrow, and Coosa Valley. The most remarkable thing that he accomplished was to baptize Jeremiah when his father had reached the ripe old age of ninety-two. Tied the frail old body to a kitchen chair and ducked him in the muddy Coosa!

That war which has been an albatross around the neck of the South for more than a hundred years will surely get into the conversation when the talk is of Cropwell's history. You will learn, keeping silent and listening closely, that the village played well its role in the Civil War.

A company which became part of the 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment was organized with J. O. Truss as captain. He was later promoted to Major. William T. Smith was a member of this company and he rose to the rank of Colonel. Colonel Smith — known locally as Little Billy — was a leader in bringing about law and order in the county during Reconstruction days.

Company C, which became a part of Colonel John W.



ear and listen closely and hear about Jeremiah Collins, a racing, gambling fellow who one day became the richest man in the county. His son, Jesse Collins, defied his father as a preacher.

He was a believer in missions when this country was in contact with the Baptists and he was a member of many Baptist Churches at Ash Grove, and Coosa Valley. The fact that he accomplished was to get his father had reached the ripe old age of 80 in his frail old body to a kitchen in the muddy Coosa!

an albatross around the neck for a hundred years will surely get a new lease on life. The talk is of Cropwell's deepening silent and listening to the role in the Civil War.

A part of the 10th Alabama was organized with J. O. Truss as captain and Major William T. Smith as first lieutenant. He rose to the rank of colonel and he was known locally as Little Billy — about law and order in the early days.

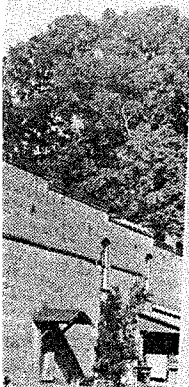
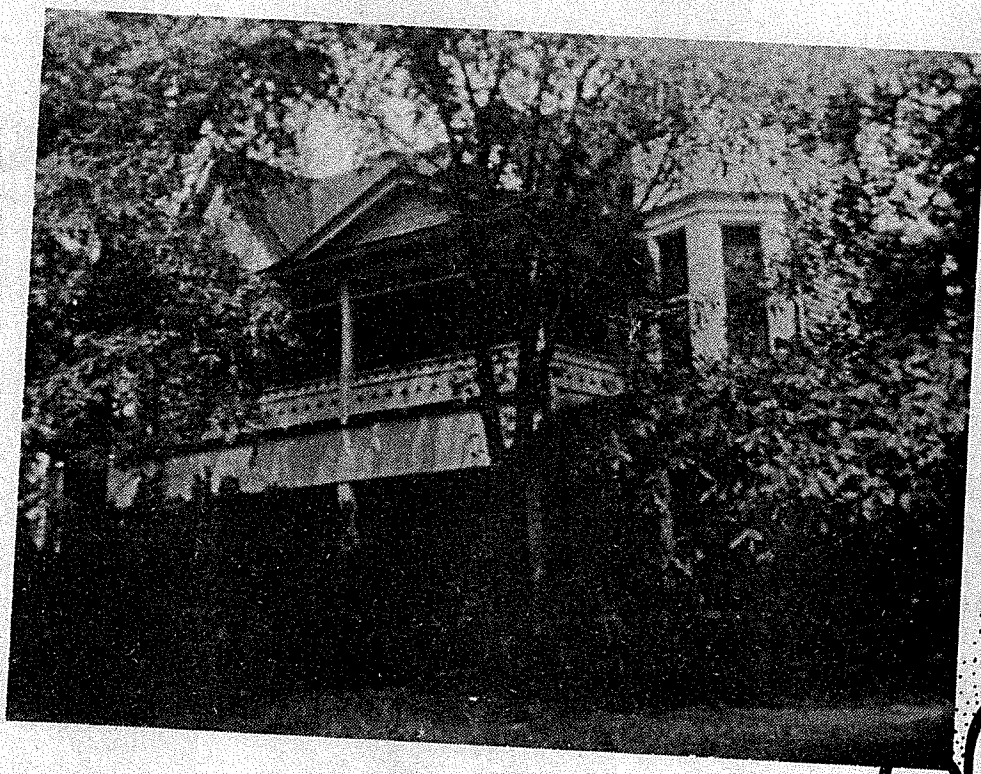
A part of Colonel John W.

from the Indians to the astronauts — that's a record! The house in Cropwell was built around the turn of the century.

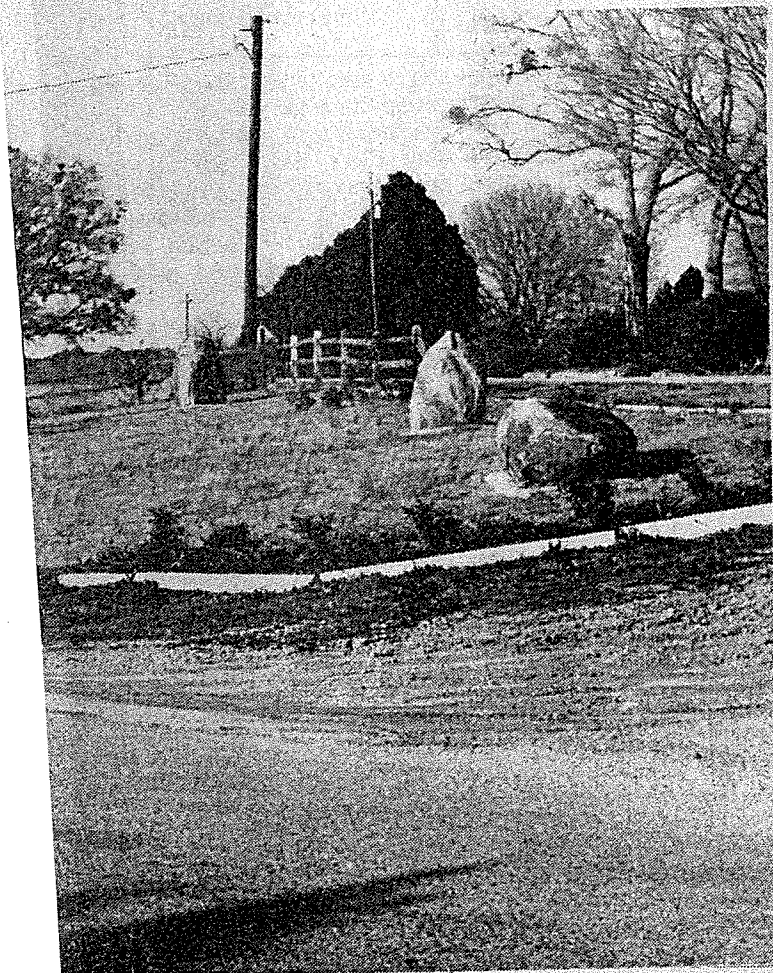
Should you visit Cropwell, don't miss the Baptist Church. Its architecture is a delight to lovers of beauty. It was organized in 1888. Prior to the establishment of this church, Cropwell citizens worshipped at Mt. Pisgah (1828) or at Coosa Valley (1840). Long before the church was built Cropwell folks held their Sabbath School in the Masonic Lodge, which was the first lodge to be located in St. Clair County.

There are many delightful events from Cropwell's history that should be written. The remarkable thing about the village is: it's there — and so little changed! It is villages such as this that have made America great and this one should be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

On Saturday, April 8, at the Community Center at Odenville, the St. Clair Historical Society was organized. Anyone interested in the history of the county is cordially invited to become a member. The initial membership fee is \$5.00. The next meeting will be at the same place (Odenville) on April 30th at 2:30 p.m. A number of projects are now pending and the first business of the society will be to make a survey of the county in search of old houses, old diaries and documents, and of other memorabilia should be of interest to every citizen.



k: a bit ry told



owell Park

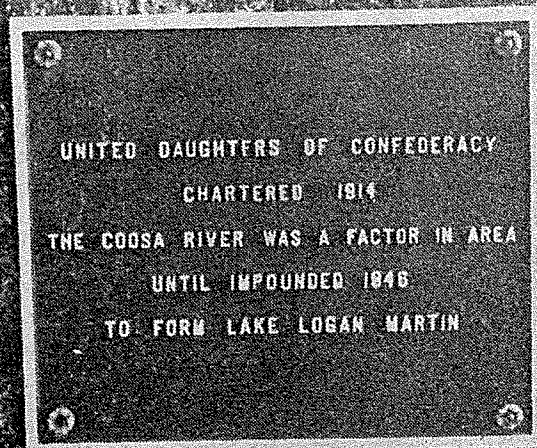
time lodge building was used for the Sabbath School.

worth A group known as the United
e post Daughters of the Confederacy
na in was chartered in 1914...the
ed to Coosa River was impounded in
1837. 1946 to form Lake Logan
was Martin.

87 the General Andrew Jackson
antic crossed the Coosa River during
ll. the Creek Indian War (1813-14),
n, the one mile from Cropwell.

on in Also presented is a list of
ptist names of soldiers who
Prior "mustered in the Confederate
n, the Army under an apple tree at

Cropwell. They marched to
Montevallo, 75 miles away,
there boarding a train to join
Gen. Robert E. Lee's army in
Virginia.



U. D. C. and Logan Martin

— ELECT —

CLEMONS ROE

PROBATE JUDGE

ST. CLAIR COUNTY

Subject to action of Democratic Primary
May 4, 1976

Your Vote and Support Will Be Appreciated

(Pd. Pol. Adv. by Clemons Roe, Pell City, Ala.)

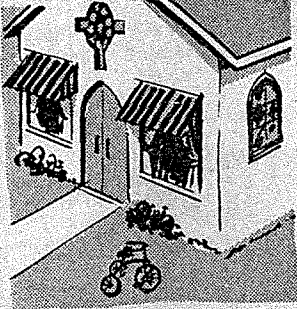
do you know...

direct dialing

by Will Bernard

Qualifying As A "Church"

Four families moved into a house that was zoned for single occupancy only. When the neighbors complained in court, a spokesman for the group pointed out that the zoning law made an exception for "churches."



Then he said:

"We think of our house as a little church, because we all belong to the same religious denomination. Furthermore, although we work at regular jobs during the day, we have several hours of religious instruction every week."

But the court decided that these factors were not enough to convert the house into a church—and that the families were in violation of the law.

It is not unusual for zoning ordinances to allow churches in an otherwise residential neighborhood. By and large, as in the above situation, a place won't qualify as a church unless there is some degree of public worship.

Consider another case.

This time, the building in dispute was being used for religious retreats on weekends. During these retreats the participants would engage in study, meditation, and worship services—all under the supervision of a priest.

Despite the objections of neighbors, a court found sufficient emphasis on the religious life to make the place acceptable as a church.

Sometimes a zoning law will exempt not only churches but also any building that is "put to a religious use." Such wording broadens the possibilities.

Thus, under this kind of law, a court allowed a day care center to be operated on church-owned property. The court said that in view of the community's need for day care centers, this could reasonably be classified as "conduct with a religious purpose."

A public service feature of the American Bar Association and the Alabama State Bar Association.

© 1975 American Bar Association

COTTON GIN BEGAN OPERATION 1888
CROPWELL BAPTIST CHURCH BUILT 1899
PRIOR TO THIS, LODGE BUILDING WAS USED
FOR SABBATH SCHOOL



Building of Cropwell Baptist

ANYONE CAN PROMISE...
NOT EVERYONE
CAN PERFORM



ELECT
L.D. Quarles

Probate Judge

ST. CLAIR COUNTY

—Honest
—Conservative
—Innovative
Leadership
Ability
—Impartial
To All

Subject to Democratic Primaries, May 4 and
May 25, 1976.

Paid Political Advertisement-David Quarles,
Son of L.D. Quarles.

by Lo

ELECT

A. C. SHELTON
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 19

"A FULL TIME
FOR A FULL

...Served as Senator from C
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equal basis with other Sena

...Has a thorough knowle

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...Has supported all leg
public health.

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and Chairman of the Educ

...Received a citation fro
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... Received a citation
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much legislation failed to

...Served several years o
Committee.

...Operates tht largest
Northeast Alabama which
more active and alert than

...Will spend one day a w

Paid political advertise
Alabama.

Resting on its laurel

Sleepy little Cropwell charming relic of past

BY BOB HAWKINS
News staff writer

CROPWELL

This community in deep South St. Clair County was settled in the early 1800s by people who came down from the Carolinas in covered wagons, except old Jeremiah Collins who was in the group, but he had his team hitched to a sled and slipped in.

Old Jeremiah and his friends started something that boomed for nearly 100 years when cotton was king and corn his queen.

A WEEKENDER headed for the blue waters of Logan Martin Lake on the nearby Coosa is likely to miss the little burg when he breezes through.

Cropwell is a sleepy little dot on the map, and its folks would just as soon keep it that way. There's a postoffice, general store and antique shop and that's about all.

When Jeremiah and his party pulled up here in 1812 they established one of the first really active communities in Alabama, complete with a school, church and houses which all looked alike. One member of the settler party was an architect and builder, but he relished conformity, and built the houses right out of Queen Victoria's handbook.

Pat Roberson, a retired banker and Civil War buff without peer, recalls that Cropwell furnished some of

the finest leaders in that great conflict.

ONE OF the more dashing Yankee chasers was Capt. James Truss who served with honor through the war. Capt. Truss came out of the war intact and sought his fortunes elsewhere. He was such a leader they named Trussville for him.

Another was William Smith, who rose to the rank of colonel. Col. Smith was so small his troops joked that they could always tell where the colonel was because his saber dragged the ground.

Most communities have their legends and spook stories. Cropwell has a couple of dandies. While watering his horses one day, a Mr. Collins saw the reflection of a coffin in the water with him in it. Supposedly, Mr. Collins died the same day.

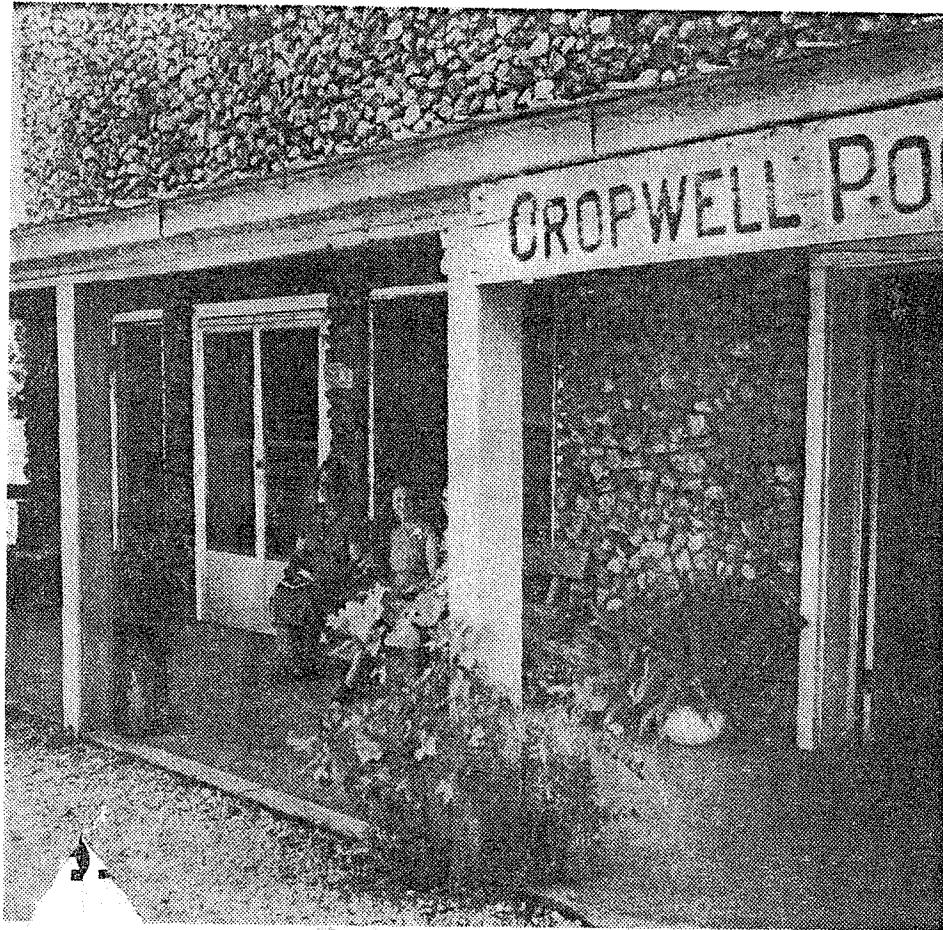
A Mr. James Mays swore he would never ride in a hearse, and he never did. His 18 slaves toted him to his final resting place, while the mourners walked behind.

Cropwell boasts several illustrious sons, including a couple of college presidents, a congressman and a state superintendent of education.

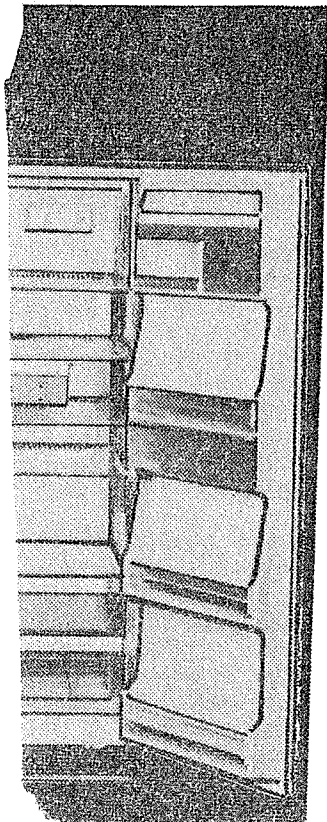
SILENT MOVIE star Mary Pickford once paid a pop call on Cropwell. Seems she and husband Jimmy Rogers were flying to California when their plane conked out. The beautiful Mary slept in Cropwell, but no one recalls in what house.

Progress caught up with Cropwell a few years ago when Alabama Power Co. built Logan Martin Dam and a road had to be built around the town. It now sits there whiling away the time, a charming remnant of the past that looks very much like one of those towns seen in western movies.

rs with exc.



BUILDING IN CROPWELL REPRESENTATIVE OF ANOTHER ERA
 . . St. Clair community rich in legends, history of Alabama



Golfers Notebook

Cropwell's new course takes shape

BY FRANK McGOWAN, News sports writer

Work on the latest golf course, the 18-hole Champions Pine Harbor Golf and Country Club, is moving at a good pace with officers looking towards an August '69 opening.

Located at Cropwell, Ala., the Pine Harbor layout will measure 6,700 yards on completion with 11 par four holes, three par five holes and four par three holes for a par 71.



McGOWAN

T. C. Casaday Jr., is president of the club, with membership limited to 400. More information may be obtained from Cassaday at Pine Harbor Marina or by writing Post Office Box 55 at Cropwell.

In addition to the golf course a clubhouse and swimming pool will be opened May 1. Two tennis courts are under construction.

Officers in addition to Mr. Casaday are Elbert Jemison Jr., vice president; Don Waters, secretary-treasurer, and A. W. Jones, general counsel.

FIRST PRO-AM of the year under the Alabama PGA Dixie Section is set for Monday at Selma Country Club, Bud Burns pro.

PGA president Gene Williams is expecting the dogfight to be part of a two-day program at Selma.

The annual dinner meeting of the pro group is set for Tuesday night with an outstanding pro and amateur to be honored for their golf work. The Alabama Golf Association works with the PGA on the selections.

Other dogfight dates include Arrowhead Country Club, Montgomery, March 10, Dave Atnip pro; Musgrove Country Club, Jasper, March 17, Travis Hudson pro; Altadena Valley Golf and Country Club, March 24, Dick Cline pro.

The March 31 date will be open with most of the PGA members competing in the Heart of Dixie pro-am at Saugahatchee Country Club, Auburn, that weekend, March 29-30.

AUGUSTA MASTERS committee has announced an additional list of invited players including Birmingham's Hubert Green, a fourth-place finisher in the 1968 National Amateur.

Other players on the additional list include Bruce Fleisher, Dave Stockton, Frank Boynton, Marty Fleckman, Lou Graham, Robert Barbarossa, John Bohmann, Rick Massengale and Allen Miller, III.

There are 59 invitees on the Masters list with seven other players to be added, bringing the total to 66.

Oct. 12 - 1969

Around Alabama

Pell City course well named as 'Champion'

BY JIMMY BRYAN
News sports writer

They named the new golf course Harold (Blue) Williams, Booty Monroe, Elbert Jemison, Billy Deyo and friends dug out of the red clay near Pell City correctly . . . they're calling the Pine Harbor layout Champions, and that's appropriate . . . it'll be a championship golf course in a year or two, believe me . . . only 13 months under construction, Champions is playable already and it's getting some play from approximately 100 members.

The course has it all . . . hills, valleys, trees, water and sand . . . it has doglegs, uphillers, downhillers and straightaway holes . . . for some mysterious reason, the back nine has out-stripped the front nine . . . the fairways and greens back there are the equal of many much older courses around the state . . . membership target is 400, and there's much more to offer than golf . . . tennis courts are in use, a swimming pool glimmers behind the refurbished clubhouse and equipment is available in the up-to-date pro shop . . . it's less than an hour from Birmingham and Anniston, and worth a look . . . you're welcomed.

A lifetime love c

PELL CITY

THE FIRST REAL indication of this came with the draft. His name was the second called in the first major draft of the World War Two era. But he was quickly dumped, and classified 4-F because of an injury sustained while trying out for the Auburn football team.

To prove that the idea will be a success, a seaplane from Vancouver, dropped down the other day just to look the lake over.

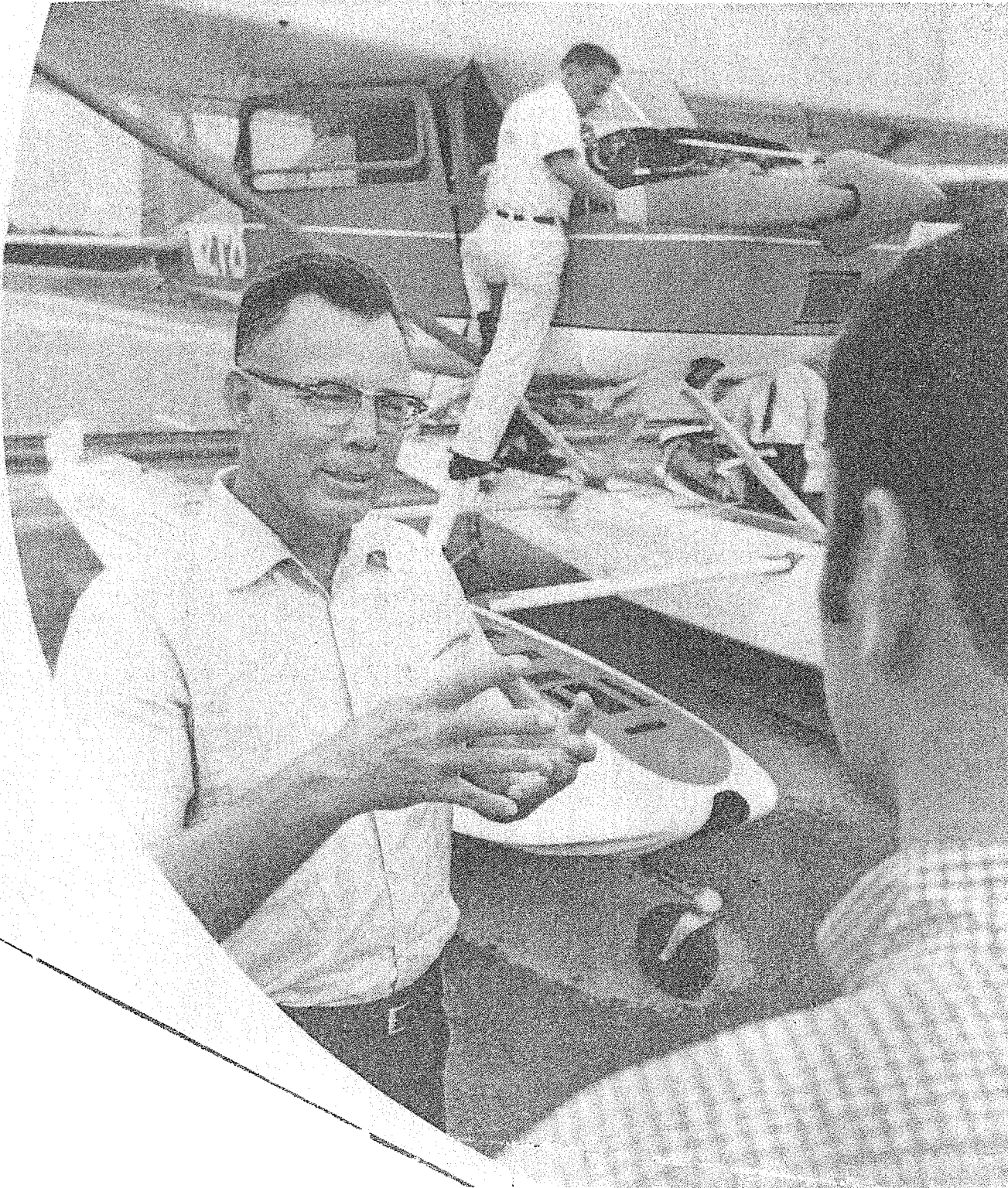
Casaday's new
ject: A landing
for seaplanes

[illegible]

Classified - Financial

Sunday, September 28, 1969

affair with flying





HERE'S HOW THE WELL-DRESSED GRADUATE LOOKED
... Back In 1920, That Is

Pictured above are members of the Class of 1920, Cropwell High School, which held a reunion last week at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Gray, Sr., in Pell City. From left to right, they are: Sally Boley Goodwin, Addie Scott Stephens, Addie Scott Gray, and Ethel Boley Morris. Elizabeth Knight, Scott, Mary

Class Of '20 Reunites —All Six Of Them

The Cropwell High School graduating Class of 1920 — all six of them — got together recently for a brief but enjoyable reunion with one of its members, Mrs. Addie S. Gray, at the home of her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Gray, Jr.

The six ladies, shown above in their graduation picture, met on the birthday of one of the members, Mrs. O. B. Morris of Riverside, and spent an enjoyable two hours reminiscing and looking at school pictures which their former teacher, Mr. Roy Gibson, brought along for the

Algebra, Plane and Solid Geometry, Rhetoric; Ancient, Medieval and Modern History and History of England; the works of Shakespeare and Dickens and other English writers and Literature.

All members of the class attended college. Two, Miss Mary Mays and Mrs. Elizabeth Knight Scott, went to Judson College. Miss Mays, after graduating from Judson, attended Randolph Macon College in Virginia later became a buyer for a large Baltimore firm.

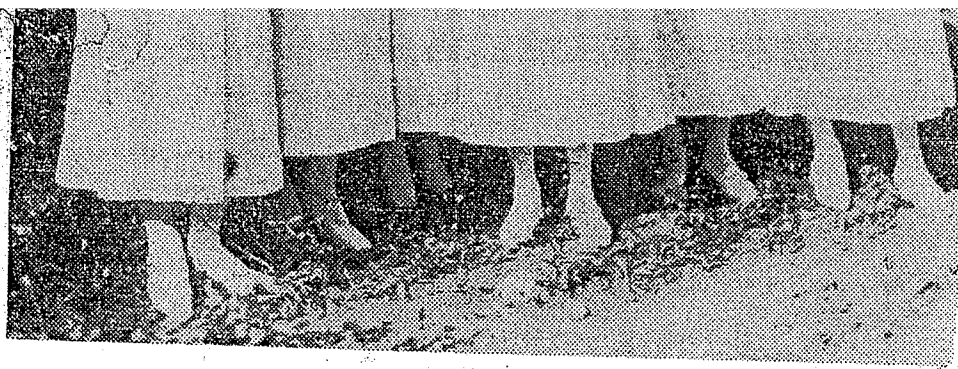
Three attended Florence State Normal School.

CLASS REUNION —

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

all the members are related by pairs. Elizabeth Knight, who later became a sister-in-law of the Scott girls, is a first cousin of Mary Mays; Addie and Annie Scott are sisters; Sallie and Ethel Boley are aunt and niece.

All were present for the re-



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CLASS REUNION —

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

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All were present for the reunion, along with Mr. and Mrs. Roy Gibson. Other invited guests, who were also Cropwell graduates, were Mrs. Millard Lawley, Mrs. Leonard Scott and Mrs. Cecil Gray, Jr.

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There are several remarkable aspects about the class which graduated 48 years ago, perhaps the most notable being that all six and their teacher are still living and active in public affairs.

For instance, four of the six taught school, and one is still teaching. All acquired third grade teachers' certificates after they had finished the eighth grade at Cropwell.

THEY WERE taught a variety of subjects by one teacher — Mr. Gibson — including English, Grammar, Arithmetic, Agriculture, Health, Spelling, Reading, Geography, Alabama and United States History; first year Latin, Cicero, Caesar,

Algebra, Plane and Solid Geometry, Rhetoric; Ancient, Medieval and Modern History and History of England; the works of Shakespeare and Dickens and other English writers and Literature.

All members of the class attended college. Two, Miss Mary Mays and Mrs. Elizabeth Knight Scott, went to Judson College. Miss Mays, after graduating from Judson, attended Randolph Macon College in Virginia later became a buyer for a large Baltimore firm.

Three attended Florence State Normal School. They were Mrs. Ethel Boley Morris, Mrs. Annie Scott Stephens and Mrs. Addie Scott Gray. Mrs. Stephens, then Miss Annie Scott, graduated from there, later taught in various counties throughout the state. She is now employed as bookkeeper at Pell City Rexall Drug Co.

Mrs. Addie Gray reared a family of three and, after 40 years, graduated from Alabama College with a major in Social Science and a minor in English. She is now teaching third grade at Iola Roberts School.

THE OTHER members of the class are homemakers.

Another unique aspect is that

Cont'd To Back Page

FIRST SECTION

P.C. Council authorizes funds

By DAVID HAYNES

PELL CITY — Bids for construction of a new fire station building at Dropwell opened at Monday night's City Council meeting ranged from just over \$50,000 to nearly \$80,000.

Thirteen construction firms responded to the city's request for bids, but two bids had to be disallowed because the contractors were not properly licensed by the state. City Clerk Bettie Scott explained that state law requires that any contractor bidding on a city project must be licensed as a contractor by the state. The two bids were not opened.

The new fire station will be a metal and masonry structure measuring 50 feet by 60 feet with two 12-foot-wide bays and living quarters for six men, according to Fire Chief Ben Windsor. The new facility will be located on city-owned land adjacent the Civic Center Complex, Windsor said.

Low bidder on the job was Cosper Construction Co. of Pell City with a bid of \$50,878. The next lowest bid came from C.A. Wilson and Sons of Ashville at \$61,363.

Other bids received were: Amcon Construction Co. of Birmingham, \$75,924; Childers

Construction Co. of Boaz, \$66,251; Martin Construction Co. of Anniston, \$66,671; Miller, Allison and Miller Construction Co. of Anniston, \$79,243; Associates of Decatur, \$64,244; A.H. Nation Construction Co. of Bir-

for new Cropwell fire station

mingham, \$71,842; Sunbelt Contractors of Birmingham, \$76,125; Ralph Williams Construction of Springville, \$67,568.

The bids were turned over to the Fire Department Committee for study to determine if they met specifications. In another construction-related

item, the council approved the rezoning of an area near the Industrial Park off Highway 78 from M-2 to R-2.

The council action, which was recommended by the city Planning Commission, paved the way for construction to begin on a new subdivision in the area.

Charles Fields, whose Albertville construction company is developing the subdivision, told council members his company has \$250,000 in Farmers Home Administration money now and plans to begin construction shortly on the first 10 houses.

A subdivision map of the area showed 32 lots and room for several additional lots in the area that was rezoned.

Fields said his company plans to use all the local labor possible in the project.

Another area on the south end of town along U.S. 231 was also rezoned by the council. The area from the Big Bull Restaurant and Marina and Town and Country Food Mart was changed from R-1 to B-2.

Clerk Scott pointed out that an error was made on a zoning map making the rezoning action necessary.

Pell City awards bid for construction of new fire station at Cropwell

By DAVID HAYNES

PELL CITY — The low bid from Cosper Construction Co. of \$50,878 for a new fire station at Cropwell was officially accepted by the City Council Monday night.

Fire Department Committee Chairman Charles Lockridge recommended that the bid be accepted, including several minor changes in increasing insulation and using thicker concrete. He said even with the additional \$1,500 to \$2,000, the Cosper bid was much less than the next higher bid of over \$60,000.

The new fire station will be built near the Civic Center at Cropwell, a short distance from the converted lunchroom now being used by the

12-foot bays and living quarters for six firemen.

A ground breaking ceremony will be scheduled for later this week to officially start construction on the new station.

Council members unanimously agreed to accept a settlement of \$14,992 from the insurance company representing the Coca-Cola Company in an March accident involving a city garbage truck and a company truck. The city has already purchased a new truck for about \$29,000.

A public hearing was scheduled by the council for 6 p.m. June 23 at City Hall to hear citizen's input on a proposed revision of the city code.

City Clerk Bettie Scott said the draft

said it also brings municipal codes into compliance with state statutes and building codes.

The code was last revised in 1936, the clerk said.

Councilman Paul Turner called for an energy usage survey of municipal buildings and vehicles to determine where waste could be curtailed. Council members agreed with his idea, but no official action was taken on the survey.

Mayor Hugh Williamson said that Alabama Power Co. would inspect buildings for inadequate insulation and other energy waste free of charge.

Turner also mentioned a letter he recently received on conversion of city vehicles to run on propane rather than gasoline.

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Turner also mentioned a letter he recently received on conversion of city vehicles to run on propane rather than gasoline.

Police Chief Ruble Bowlin said he understands the city of Brewton has cut their fuel costs in half by switching to propane.

Councilman Forrest Walls pointed out that the initial cost of conversion is usually paid for in fuel savings in about two years. It was also mentioned that vehicles running on propane run cleaner and last longer.

Council members expressed an interest in having someone explain the pros and cons of a conversion of vehicles to propane at a future meeting.

The council discussed attending a June 3 public hearing in Montgomery on a new sewerage treatment facility for Pell City. The clerk said federal funding for such projects has been held up but that some money could be released in November.

In other business, the council discussed clearing the sidewalk on Martin Street from Cogswell Avenue to Iola Roberts School. The walkway is now blocked by signs and curbs installed by local restaurants.

HISTORY OF CROPWELL

(ST. CLAIR COUNTY, ALA.)

By Amanda Funderburg
Cropwell

In the year of 1815 a group of relatives in South Carolina banded together and started out for St. Clair County, Alabama, to settle and make new homes there. They were the John Roberson, Williamson, Truss, Coleman, and Jeremiah Collins families. All of them except the Collins family had a covered wagon in which to travel. Mr. Collins could not afford a wagon, so he made a crude "slide" on which to transport a few belongings and his family rode in a the wagons with the relatives. The Collins family was from Virginia but had come on down to South Carolina to join in the trek to Alabama.

This group of kinspeople settled in the vicinity of what is now Cropwell and they were the first white people to settle there. Soon other white settlers came. Some of these early families were as follows: Buchanan, Jones, Castleberry, Bowden, Allen, Brewster, Alexander, Turner, Laney, Roland, Heaslett, Coley, Moncrief, Murchison, and Fennel.

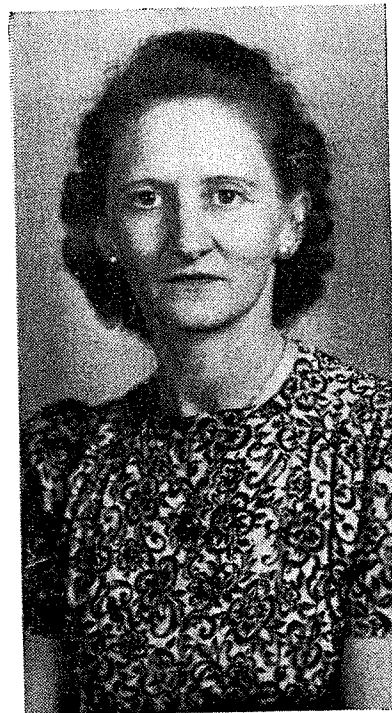
These first settlers bought some of the finest farm and timber in the valley for \$1.00 per acre. Most of them prospered. Even Mr. Collins, who had slid in on a home-made slide, found a way to get possession of hundreds of acres of fine land and more slaves than he could call by name.

On July 24, 1833, a postoffice was established as Coosa at Cropwell. It was located about a mile from Truss' Ferry. On November 15, 1834, the name was changed to Diana. The name was changed from Diana to Cropwell on October 20, 1837. The Cropwell postoffice was discontinued on July 25, 1866, but was reestablished on June 10, 1867. The names of the postmasters and the dates of their appointments are as follows:

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND
RECORDS SERVICE WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

According to the records of the P.O. Dept. now in our custody, the P.O. at Cropwell, St. Clair Co., was established as Coosa on July 24, 1833. Its name was changed to Diana on Nov. 25, 1834 and to Cropwell on Oct. 20, 1837. It was discontinued (sic) on July 25, 1866 and reestablished on June 10, 1867.

Names of PM's and dates of



AMANDA FUNDERBURG

1867

James R. Roberson—Jan. 23, 1873

W. L. Dollar—Jan. 20, 1898.

William G. Sides—Feb. 14, 1899

Hardie Jones—Oct. 25, 1901

James P. Turner—March 20,

1907

Albert R. Jones—Aug. 15, 1914

John B. Shurbet—Oct. 20, 1915

Amanda C. Funderburg—Dec. 13, 1928

A post-office was established at Fountainrun, St. Clair Co., on Sept. 26, 1900, with James O. M. Hardwick appointed as the only PM. It was discontinued on May 31, 1908.

Reports of the P.M.'s of Cropwell and Fountainrun to the P. M. Dept. contain the following site location data:

Cropwell—Dec. 5, 1913

5/8 of a mile So. of the B'ham & Atlanta R.R. Tracks.

Dec. 7, 1915.

193 7/11 rods west of the B'ham & Atlantic R.R. tracks.

February 10, 1917

1074 yards, So. East of the B'ham & Atlantic R.R. tracks.

June 2, 1943

208 miles So. West of the So. R.R. tracks.

Fountainrun

April 19, 1900

2 miles West of Coosa River and

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Cropwell

In the year of 1815 a group of relatives in South Carolina banded together and started out for St. Clair County, Alabama, to settle and make new homes there. They were the John Roberson, Williamson, Truss, Coleman, and Jeremiah Collins families. All of them except the Collins family had a covered wagon in which to travel. Mr. Collins could not afford a wagon, so he made a crude "slide" on which to transport a few belongings and his family rode in a the wagons with the relatives. The Collins family was from Virginia but had come on down to South Carolina to join in the trek to Alabama.

This group of kinspeople settled in the vicinity of what is now Cropwell and they were the first white people to settle there. Soon other white settlers came. Some of these early families were as follows: Buchanan, Jones, Castleberry, Bowden, Allen, Brewster, Alexander, Turner, Laney, Roland, Heaslett, Coley, Moncrief, Murchison, and Fennel.

These first settlers bought some of the finest farm and timber in the valley for \$1.00 per acre. Most of them prospered. Even Mr. Collins, who had slid in on a home-made slide, found a way to get possession of hundreds of acres of fine land and more slaves than he could call by name.

On July 24, 1833, a postoffice was established as Coosa at Cropwell. It was located about a mile from Truss' Ferry. On November 15, 1834, the name was changed to Diana. The name was changed from Diana to Cropwell on October 20, 1837. The Cropwell postoffice was discontinued on July 25, 1866, but was reestablished on June 10, 1867. The names of the postmasters and the dates of their appointments are as follows:

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND
RECORDS SERVICE WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

According to the records of the P.O. Dept. now in our custody, the P.O. at Cropwell, St. Clair Co., was established as Coosa on July 24, 1833. Its name was changed to Diana on Nov. 25, 1834 and to Cropwell on Oct. 20, 1837. It was discontinued (sic) on July 25, 1866 and reestablished on June 10, 1867.

Names of PM's and dates of their appointments were:

James Roberson—Nov. 24, 1833
P. H. Castleberry—Feb. 19, 1835
John D. Fennel—Oct. 20, 1837
Russel I. Allen—Nov. 6, 1840
John Collins—Sept. 29, 1843
John W. Jones—Jan. 7, 1854
Amasa L. Bowden—April 10, 1860

T. I. Fowler—June 10, 1867
Mattison Hendricks—Aug. 5,



AMANDA FUNDERBURG

1867

James R. Roberson—Jan. 23, 1873

W. L. Dollar—Jan. 20, 1898

William G. Sides—Feb. 14, 1899

Hardie Jones—Oct. 25, 1901

James P. Turner—March 20, 1907

Albert R. Jones—Aug. 15, 1914

John B. Shurbet—Oct. 20, 1915

Amanda C. Funderburg—Dec. 13, 1928

A post-office was established at Fountainrun, St. Clair Co., on Sept. 26, 1900, with James O. M. Hardwick appointed as the only PM. It was discontinued on May 31, 1908.

Reports of the P.M.'s of Cropwell and Fountainrun to the P. M. Dept. contain the following site location data:

Cropwell—Dec. 5, 1913

5/8 of a mile So. of the B'ham & Atlanta R.R. Tracks.

Dec. 7, 1915.

193 7/11 rods west of the B'ham & Atlantic R.R. tracks.

February 10, 1917

1074 yards, So. East of the B'ham & Atlantic R.R. tracks.

June 2, 1943

208 miles So. West of the So. R.R. tracks.

Fountainrun

April 19, 1900

2 miles West of Coosa River and 5 miles No. of Kelly Creek.

Another little postoffice on what is now Cropwell Route, was established in 1901 and discontinued in 1908. It was Fountainrun and was located in the Harmon settlement two miles west of the Coosa River. Mr. J. O. M. Hardwick was the only postmaster to serve that little postoffice.

Most of the early people of

THE BAMA PO

Cropwell were Baptist. They attended the Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church which was established in 1828. The Coosa Valley Baptist Church which was established in 1840, and the Sedden Baptist Church which was organized before the Civil War. The few Methodists, including the McRaes and Laney, belonged to the Easonville Methodist Church. Before any of the churches were organized, camp meetings were held at Easonville and on Camp Creek. Later in 1888 the Cropwell Baptist Church was organized. Long before the Cropwell Baptist Church was organized and built the community had its own Sunday School which was held in the Masonic building.

The early settlers of Cropwell provided a school of some kind for their children. At first the schools were taught in dwellings. The parents paid the teacher's salary and provided fire wood for fuel. After Coosa Valley Church was built it served as a schoolhouse, also. Mr. Owen Hardwick was one of the early teachers to teach in that church. He taught in the late 1840's. A Mr. Brickhouse was teaching in the Coosa Valley Church during the Civil War when the Wilson Raiders came galloping up the valley road. One of the Yankees who rode ahead of the main band of raiders pulled on his reins and stopped long enough to warn Mr. Brickhouse and to have him dismiss school and hurry the children off home.

After the Civil War the Cropwell children walked to Easonville and attended a school which had been built there. Around 1880 a new school, called Coosa Valley High School, was built where Preston Wadsworth's home now stands. It served both the Easonville and the Cropwell communities until 1888. It was to this Coosa Valley High School that Mr. I. W. Hill came as principal. During the 1887-1888 term a movement was made to have the school moved to Cropwell. Mr. Jim Roberson offered to give the level plot of land below what is now Mr. Fall Roberson's home (toward Easonville) on which to locate the new school. Mr. Hill was highly in favor of the new location and when he left for vacation he thought that plans were definite to build there, but Easonville decided to build her own school in the center of the community for two reasons— first, she didn't want to lose the school to Cropwell; and, second, a school located in the center of the community would enable the children living in the lower part of the community to attend a better school.

When the Coosa Valley School had been built the parents of lower Easonville had moved the lit-

and it enabled children to attend more regularly than if they'd had to walk all the way to Coosa Valley High School. The teachers who taught in the Harmon school were Mr. Jim Hardwick, Miss Mattie Abbott and Mr. Thomas Harliss. They were conscientious teachers but they were not as good as Mr. Hill and the people in that part of the community were anxious for Mr. Hill's school to be located nearer instead of farther away from them. So, in 1888 the new school was built at Easonville. The following year, 1889, Cropwell built a new school. It was a two-story building located about a quarter of a mile from the present school. It was to this school that Mr. Roy Gibson came as principal in 1915. In 1918 the present school was built at Cropwell.

Mr. Gibson remained there until 1926. He had a well disciplined and orderly high school and was the most beloved principal that Cropwell ever had. The school remained a high school until 1929. In the early years of the school's history the people of the community supported their school well. Back when state could pay for only a short term of school the patrons of the school contributed money for teachers' salaries in order to have longer terms of school. Cropwell was also the first community in the county to vote for the 3 mill tax for the support of schools.

Cropwell has always been a agricultural community. Cotton has always been the principal crop. The Colemans, as early as the Civil war years, owned a steam gin. Part of Cropwell's cotton was ginned there. Part of it was ginned at Drake's Mill at Easonville and part of it was ginned at the old Laney horse-drawn gin. Robersons began to operate a steam gin at Cropwell in 1888.

In 1840 John W. Jones, who came from Petersburg, Va., began to operate a business at Cropwell. That store still exists under the name, James Roberson Sons. Another successful business of Cropwell was a store operated before the Civil War, by William T. Smith. It fell into decline after he left to fight in the Confederate Army where he became a colonel. In 1927 a drugstore was built at Cropwell and was operated by Dr. James P. Turner.

During the Civil War some of the Cropwell men served with distinction in the Confederate Army. In 1861 Company of 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment was organized at Cropwell with Major J. O. Truss as it's captain. William T. Smith, a member of the outfit won many promotions and rose to the rank of Colonel of the 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment. This regiment was engaged

camp meetings were held at Easonville and on Camp Creek. Later in 1888 the Cropwell Baptist Church was organized. Long before the Cropwell Baptist Church was organized and built the community had its own Sunday School which was held in the Masonic building.

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When the Coosa Valley School had been built the parents of lower Easonville had moved the little "first schoolhouse" down there so that their children would have a school nearer to them. That little school was called Harmon School

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(See HISTORY on Page 7)

(From the Valley Times-News, West Point, Ga., Lanett, Ala.)

Leslie D. Strother is retiring today, (July 30, 1965) after serving as postmaster in Shawmut for 31 years and three days, a record of which he is justly proud. He became Shawmut's postmaster on July 27, 1934, when the post office was located in the northeast corner of the store building on the Circle in Shawmut.

The present brick building on the Circle was occupied by the post office in 1937, and an addition was made to the building in 1948.

* * *

RECEIPTS OF THE post office in 1934 were \$2,069.16, and in 1964 receipts reached a total of \$15,997.01.

In addition to Strother, the post office employs three clerks, Mrs. Ruth Heggood, James L. Shurett and Mrs. Willie Mae Akin. The four postal employees together have a total of 95 years of service—Strother, 31 years; Mrs. Heggood, 28 years; Shurett, 20 years; and Mrs. Akin, 16 years.

Strother has served under five presidents: Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson. He also has served under seven postmaster generals: James A. Farley, Frank C. Walker, Robert E. Hannegan, Jesse M. Donaldson, Arthur E. Summer-

field, J. Edward Day and John A. Gronouski.

* * *

UNITED STATES Congressmen under whom he has served are Miles C. Allgood, Joe Starnes, Albert Rains and George Andrews.

Strother was born in Columbus, Ga., and moved to Shawmut in 1908. He is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. I. D. Strother.

Prior to becoming postmaster, he was employed as assistant overseer in the Shawmut Mill. He is a member of the First Baptist Church of Shawmut, and is the teacher of the Men's Bible Class of the Sunday School.

* * *

STROTHER IS married to the former Miss Mary Katherine Williams of Flehop, Ala., in Elmore County, and the couple has one daughter, Mrs. Gaines Meadows, of Shawmut, and three grandchildren.

When asked what he plans to do after retirement, the genial postmaster said, "I plan to just take it easy for the rest of this year—maybe travel about some, and also fish some." He added, however, that next year he might decide to go into some kind of business on a part-time basis, but plans for this are not definite as yet.

"I am grateful to the patrons of the Shawmut Post Office for their fine cooperation during my years as postmaster," Strother said.

Editor's note: Leslie told us his retirement will not keep him "from being with some of the dearest friends I have, the Postmasters of Alabama."

He added he is "proud to be a member of NAPUS and appreciate all that it has done for the postmasters." He said he wishes he had been able to do more in our Chapter, but due to bad health that struck him and his wife in 1958 and 1960, he was "limited in what I could do, and that was mostly my job as Postmaster."

We're happy that you will continue to be with us at meetings, Leslie.

REMEMBER

'D-DAY'

OCTOBER 15

THE BAMA POSTMASTER



(From the Northern S

HEAD PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS — Rayn and Julia Robbins, who are brother and sister, bot president of the professional organization of their r sions. Raymond is currently serving as president of ture Travelers, Inc., the Alabama organization of V ture Salesmen. Julia, postmaster at Fultondale, is Alabama Chapter, National Association of Postma: vice president and a member of the Board of Dire bama Retail Furniture Assn., and recently was elect Traveler of the Year." She has been appointed to : tional Resolutions Committee while attending the i tion in Omaha, Nebraska in October. She served as the Alabama Chapter, National Assn. of Postmaster: She has received certificates of recognition from b Controller and Regional Director for outstanding duty as a postmasters and has received a citation States Treasury Dept. for patriotic service in furthe Bond program.

JACKSON

(Continued From Page 1)

Roden and daughter and son, Loretta and Bruce, Pisgah; Mr. Elvin Kennamer, Mrs. Kennamer, and sons, Dewade and Rodney, and daughter, Paula, Section.

Mrs. Kathryn Lea, Mr. Lea, and daughters Shearland and Larue, Flat Rock; Don Gilbert, Flat Rock; Mr. J. T. Carroll, Mrs. Carroll and daughter, Pat, Stevenson; Mrs. Iris Smith and grandson, Holly-

tree; Odas Say ville; Miss Mar: Mrs. Gennie Lis tin, Rainsville Campbell, Trent

We hope to h ing just after th tion. We have : Jackson County, attendance at always have son visitors whom have.

District Meetings For Association Year

November 12, 1965, Thunderbird Motel, Mobile (c and 8.

February 18, 1966, Stafford Hotel, Tuscaloosa, Dis.

April 14, 15, 1966, Val Monte Resort, Guntersville

May 19, 1966, Pine Harbor, Pell City, Dis. 4.

Sept. (date not set yet) 1966, Kowaliga, Dis. 6.

HISTORY

(Continued From Page 6)

ricsburg, Wilderness, Chanselersville, Gettysburg, Spotsylvania courthouse, Salem Church, and Crater. The regiment was distinguished for its action at Crater and Salem Church.

The first United Daughters of the Confederacy chapter in St. Clair County was organized at Cropwell on July 20, 1914. It was called the John W. Jones Chapter.

The first Masonic Lodge in St. Clair County was organized at Cropwell before the Civil War.

In 1866 the B&A (Birmingham and Atlantic) Railroad was built by Rogers Brothers Lumbering Company and it ran through Cropwell. It was built primarily to transport lumber but it had a passenger car and it carried mail. There was a depot at Cropwell. Mr. Ben Haslett was the depot agent.

In recent years, this has been a prosperous farming community. Quite a few developments have come along. Latest is an airport, which isn't completed yet. We are just above the Logan-Martin Dam.

SEPTEMBER, 1965