

NEW MARINA — St. Clair Probate Judge Hoyt Hamilton (second from left) points out details of one of the many new boat marinas appearing on Logan Martin Lake. Looking over the scene are (from left) H. L. Edwards, St. Clair County agent; Hamilton; Charles S. Williams, commissioner, District Four, and Jim Hubbard, Auburn Extension Service.

Many Improvements St. Clair

EDITOR'S NOTE: Gleaming like some giant gem in the sun, Logan Martin Lake is brimming to its planned shoreline in St. Clair County. It and a sister lake, to be impounded behind Lock 3 Dam when it is completed, are expected to bring a more abundant way of life to St. Clair citizens. The following articles tell the story.

BY GEORGE COOK
Post-Herald State Editor
PELL CITY, April—The face of the land is being reshaped in St. Clair County. A whole new network of roads is being constructed. Others are

project, says Assistant County Agent Loyd Owens.

"The project is tailor-made for youngsters with a hankering to learn more about what makes their favorite transistor radio operate, or if they choose, they may learn enough to pass an FCC examination giving them a license to operate a ham station of their own," states Owens, a member of the Auburn University Extension Service staff in the county.

Requirements for the project include learning the international Morse code, along with basic theory of both radios and transmitters. Also learning FCC rules and regulations on operating privileges and procedures are part of the project.

The amateur radio project is a part of the over-all county 4-H electric program.

"One advantage of the project," says Owens, "is the service these boys could give the county in the event of disaster."

Another reason for introducing this project into Clay County is the appeal it has for both farm and non-farm members. "Not only are these boys learning about the field of electronics but they have a worthwhile hobby," believes the

plains. "I don't know of many farmers who wouldn't be happy to add money from such an operation to their current farm income."

Wiley Ellis of Etowah County recently joined the ranks of contract egg producers.

A former cattleman and row crop producer, Ellis and his son, Don, decided to grow contract eggs.

"Our main reason for adding layers was to make money," says Ellis. "We also believe that putting chicken litter on pastures will improve our beef program."

Ellis realizes that a 24,000 layer operation will require a lot of labor, but with the latest mechanical devices, he hopes to hold this to a minimum.

Each of his 8000 capacity houses have completely automatic feeders and waterers. To aid in cleaning waterers, each fountain has a drain to the outside.

The houses have 2000 back-to-back nests with room for an egg-tray and carrier between them. Eggs are picked up twice a day, placed on a carrier and rolled to the cooler where they are stored until picked up by the contractor.

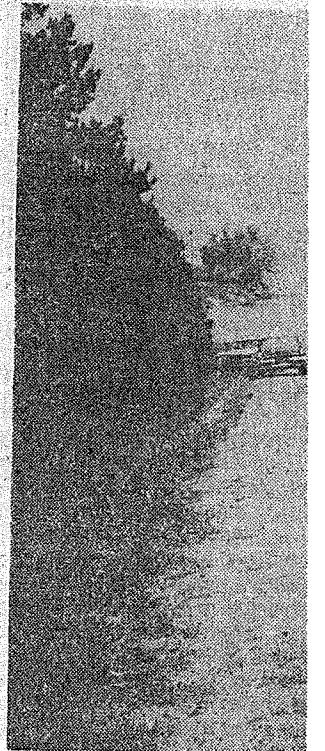
To help keep production up,

Police Arrest As Prowler

By Post-Herald
HUNTSVILLE, April 26—A youth in Madison County Jail as the result of breaking into homes and terrorizing the community for the past several months.

Police said James Edward [name] last night and is expected to be charged with two counts of first-degree burglary, one count of attempted burglary and one count of assault with intent to murder.

The youth was apprehended shortly after an attempted break into a house at 141-D North Mason-st. He is believed to be the same person who broke into the house earlier and struck a



FROM ROAD TO BO
 submerged this section of road, rerouted, but the older section is being used for launching ramp.

ements Under Way— air Is Getting New Look

being rerouted. Beautiful new homes are rising in new subdivisions.

Marinas are sprouting on new shores, their supporting timbers or metal members stilting into the water like the legs of Herons to shelter hundreds of boats which have begun to cluster on Lake Logan Martin.

New motels are springing up, a vibrance of hopeful energy is in the air.

Opportunity Opens

Altogether, this is the tapestry of new opportunity being woven by eager St. Clair County citizens.

For this great new industry of

recreation offers them their best hope for steady, gainful employment.

But this new economic opportunity has not spawned and grown altogether of its own accord.

It is being carefully nourished by St. Clair County leaders.

Had they simply sat around and waited for something to happen, everybody simply might have wound up on a road to nowhere—like old U. S. 231, which dips into Lake Logan Martin on both sides to vanish from view forever.

But U. S. 231 has been given a new route around northwestern

edge of the lake and the traffic which travels it now grows thicker by the day.

Gone Into Debt

"We've gone into debt more than a million dollars against our future gasoline revenues, but we had it to do," said Probate Judge Hoyt B. Hamilton, who only recently was elected president of the Alabama Probate Judges Assn.

"We just couldn't sit around. We've got to build roads to open up new subdivisions around this lake and make other recreational facilities possible."

The judge, who has just completed six years in his office, recalled that when he last campaigned his opponent criticised Hamilton because the latter had constructed a paved road of more than a mile to serve a new marina and restaurant on the lake.

"That man came to me and told me he was prepared to invest \$250,000 to begin with in his project if I would have a road built to serve it," Hamilton said. "He told me he would employ 15 to 20 people the year round."

Criticism Vanishes

Hamilton said he brought the subject up in his next speech and "I went on record there and then saying that I would build a road for anybody who could give 15 to 20 people of our county jobs the year round. I never heard the criticism any more."

"We've got a mighty lot of work to do," said Charles S. Williams, commissioner of district 4.

Williams saw a lot of good farmland in his district disappear beneath the rising water.

A whole community—Easonville—was dispersed elsewhere and the lake now covers its site.

Two fair-sized spring-fed lakes, each about 25 to 30 acres—were swallowed up by the larger body of water.

("On a hot day this Summer I'll bet there'll be some good fishing over those springs out there," said Hamilton with a smile.)

Nears Completion

Williams' road building forces are now finishing grading for paving of a new road from U. S. 231 to Logan Martin dam. A

county road will travel right across the top of the dam—as it will also on the Lock 3 dam.

But not all of the road problems lie in the disrupted pattern about Lake Logan Martin.

Hamilton said the county also has made application under the Appalachian Bill for funds to build a new connecting link between Ragland and Ashville which would connect Ragland with I-59 and Ohatchie and Anniston across Lock 3 dam.

The county also is seeking funds to raise the Bankhead bridge on old U. S. 78, which, if not elevated, will be just above the water level after the lake has filled.

The bridge is needed by persons living in the Ragland-Watts areas who work in Bynum across the river, Hamilton said. The bridge is about midway of the lake.

Industrial prospects for the area also have voiced an interest in keeping the bridge, he said.

That's the spirit of St. Clair today.

Build anew where needed and save the old when possible.

The county is even using those ends of old U. S. 231 which now dead-end into the lake. They've been converted to public boat launching ramps.

"We've got to widen them out to the full right-of-way, though," said Hamilton. "It's hard to turn around down there now."

Tomorrow: The lake.

Not For Dads

ATHENS, Tenn. (AP) — There was a new cast for the Easter cantata at the First Baptist Church of Athens.

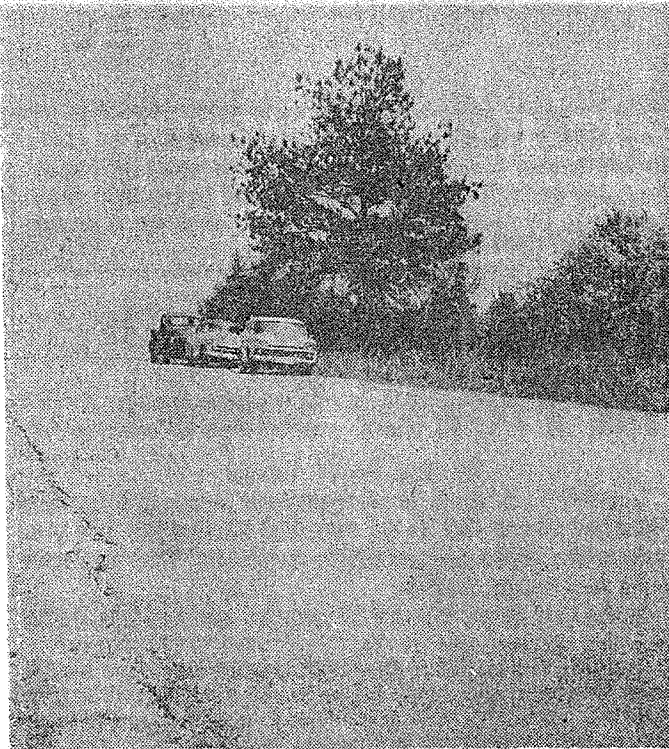
It was on the leg of choir director Ray Kickliter.

Leg of the minister of music was broken while he was teaching his daughter to use a skate board.

Advertisement

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AT RAMP — The rising waters of Logan Martin Lake old U. S. 231 in St. Clair County. The highway has been in use, now as a publicly-maintained boat

St. Clair News-Ages

Dec. 22, 1966

week

after

week

by bob cornett

BIG SOAP OPERA

There was a time not too long ago when citizens of this area and Alabama as a whole were shaking their heads and saying, "tch, tch, tch," about the goings-on within the confines of the Alabama Public Service Commission, where apparently no one could agree with anyone and dissension reigned supreme.

Now, it would seem that the combustion within our own local governing body, the St. Clair County Court of Commissioners, bids fair to put the PSC to shame.

The shenanigans that have developed from a fuss about a union for county highway employees has produced more histrionics, political hijinks and just plain sneaky in-fighting than an old-fashioned Keystone Kops comedy serial.

The furor began when Hoyt Hamilton, probate judge and chairman of the county commissioners court, balked at signing checks for road workers which provided for the deduction of union dues (a matter which had been pre-determined by a unanimous vote of the commissioners).

Well, on the face of it, this didn't seem like too big a problem. But Hamilton cited an apparently valid attorney general's opinion that a county governing body couldn't officially recognize a union as a bargaining agent for county employees, and the fight was

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on.

MOST OF the details you've already read in this newspaper. You know that a court order was issued by Circuit Judge F. O. Whitten, Jr. —who apparently would have just as soon stayed out of the whole thing — followed by an amended order which, broadly interpreted, told Hamilton to cut out the foolishness and sign the checks.

You also know that Judge Hamilton cut such a broken-field path in evading subpoena-servers as to make The Fugitive look like a rookie.

All of this led to Tuesday's ruling by Judge Whitten that Judge Hamilton was in contempt of court. The probate judge of the county was ordered — though not physically committed — to jail. The PROBATE JUDGE, mind you.

A sorry state of affairs, to say the least. Granting the probate judge the honest opinion of this column that he was probably on safe legal ground in refusing to play footsy with the union (I can't see that the county should have to keep books for the AFL-CIO), it must be said that his handling of the

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First Section**

the chimney with care, while

Continued from Page 1

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Continued From Front Page Week after Week—

entire affair was less than smooth.

THE CLUMSY and seemingly clandestine actions which led to the inevitable contempt ruling by Judge Whitten were, in my opinion, the calculated responsibility of Hamilton, for which he should have been — and apparently was not — prepared to be answerable.

Despite the fact that he lost this bitter battle, however, Judge Hamilton may have won the war, since on the morning of the contempt hearing (could this have been coincidence?) he called a special meeting of the commissioners court, at which time two of the commissioners — Charles Williams and H. N. Mize — completely reversed their former positions on the matter of the union, giving Judge Hamilton the weapon of his issue-deciding ex-officio vote (See inside page of this issue for the full text of the resolution adopted at that Tuesday morning meeting.)

Up until that time Hamilton had been confronted with the more dedicated opposition of commissioners J. B. Walters and Clyde Morrow, who had used the apparently - reluctant votes of Williams and Mize to make their cause unanimous.

WITH THE recently-re-elected Mize and cohort Williams having done an about face, however, Walters and Morrow may now have to face the dismal prospect of defeat on the union matter.

Of the turnabouts, Walters says angrily, "Hamilton sweet-talked them back onto his side." He says that he told Mize following the Tuesday meeting, "You don't have the backbone you were born with." Mize, Walters says, grinned, replied, "Merry Christmas," and departed.

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So what have we now? Charges. Counter-charges. Indictments. Rulings. Opinions. Appeals.

One could scarcely say with any degree of immunity from contradiction that it is a pretty situation — and one which could inspire in St. Clair Countians any feeling of confidence and trust in their elected officials, who daily carry on the important governmental and fiscal affairs of the county.

For Judge Hamilton you have to say that his stand was, to be charitable, a non-political one, since it scarcely figured to win him votes.

For non-wavering commissioners Walters and Morrow you have to say that their dedication was equally as bulldog-ish as Hamilton's.

And for Williams and Mize you could perhaps say that they had rather switch than fight.

IF WE had a soap commercial and a little background organ music, we could sell the whole blurb to the TV people.

Meanwhile, seemingly overlooked by everyone in the midst of this political square dance is the fact that, even now, Noel-Noel is being caroled without, and stockings are being hung by the chimney with care, while some 30 to 40 ridiculously-low-paid laborers — my neighbors and yours — have not received a cent of their bi-monthly pittance in more than a month.

Will someone please take time out to tell me just what the devil is going to happen to them during this season-to-be-jolly?

Will Judge Hamilton, true to his natural Baptist heritage, visit their oversized broods with baskets of goodies under his arm?

Will union officials and sympathizers throw in a Christmas tree and a bowl of oranges?

Tune in this same time tomorrow and let's see if there's a Christian in the house.

Lost
Now

Jan 5, 1967

County Case Set For State Supreme Court

Probate Judge Hoyt Hamilton is free on bond pending a hearing on his appeal to the Alabama Supreme Court on a conviction of contempt of court in circuit court in Pell City.

The contempt citation by Circuit Judge F. O. Whitten Jr., came after Judge Hamilton had refused a court order to sign county payroll checks containing deductions from each check for union dues of the employees.

In his hearings before the court and in public statements the Probate Judge has given as his reason for not signing the payroll checks with the deductions that he did not believe it was legal for him to deduct union dues from the employee's checks. He backed up his opinion with a ruling on a similar case from Jefferson county in which the Alabama high court had ruled that such deductions were not legal. He also had an opinion from the Alabama Attorney General that such deductions were illegal.

Judge Hamilton says he has signed all employee payroll checks for November and December without any union dues being deducted.

Judge Hamilton's complete statement is as follows:

"My primary duty is to see that St. Clair County's business is lawfully administered, and that the monies belonging to the County are not paid out improperly or without authority, to anyone. There has not been at any time any intention on my part to deprive any of the county employees of any compensation due them for services rendered to the county. I have consistently attempted to get to St. Clair County's employees

the entire amount of the monies due them. I do not have on file in my office any authority from any county employee to withhold any part of their compensation except for retirement and insurance purposes".

"As of this time I have never received an order from anyone that was clear and concise and founded on any legal basis for withholding any other monies. I would like to have it clearly understood that I recognize and respect the Circuit Court as being the highest judicial tribunal in this county and I certainly recognize the fact that all its lawful orders are to be carried out to the letter. It is my judgement, however, that a legitimate question of the legality of the Judge's order in this case exists and it is my understanding that the proper method to pursue is to file an appeal. This has been done and done within the time allowed by law. It was done before any contempt citation was served on me and it is my feeling that I should not be held in contempt for simply trying to get a hearing on the merits of the matter and to carry out the appeal which is provided for by the law."

"All payrolls for the month of November and both payroll periods for the month of December have been signed by me covering all wages and services performed by all county employees during these two months and the payrolls were delivered to the Commissioners on December 22, 1966".

"Contrary to rumors and reports circulated over St. Clair County I have not been in jail."

ALABAMA

THURSDAY, DEC. 22, 1966

St. Clair - News - Register

NOV 22 1966

Judge Hamilton Cited For Cases Now Go To Supreme

Probate court judge Hamilton was cited for contempt of court for his attempt of circumventing the union dues deduction. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has ruled that it was legal for him to roll checks for county employees. On St. Clair probate court judge Hamilton was cited for contempt of court at a lengthy trial Tuesday. He was placed in jail and purged himself. He must sign the appeal to the Alabama Court and necessary signed.

Circuit Judge Hamilton Jr., who issued an order requiring him to sign the appeal, found the probate court judge in contempt of court at a lengthy trial Tuesday. He was placed in jail and purged himself. He must sign the appeal to the Alabama Court and necessary signed.

This will be the appeal to the Alabama court growing out of Judge Hamilton's ruling from the first time legal for him to roll checks for county employees because he said the Supreme Court has ruled that it was legal for him to roll checks for county employees. On St. Clair probate court judge Hamilton was cited for contempt of court at a lengthy trial Tuesday. He was placed in jail and purged himself. He must sign the appeal to the Alabama Court and necessary signed.

d For Contempt: upreme Court

Probate Judge Hoyt Hamilton was found in contempt of circuit court here Tuesday in a case growing out of the judge's refusal to sign a county payroll deducting union dues from the payroll.

Meanwhile two members of the County Commissioners Court who had previously asked that the union dues be deducted from their payroll checks reversed their decision and signed a resolution empowering the probate judge to sign the checks without deducting the union dues.

Circuit Judge French Whitten Jr., who issued the original order requiring Judge Hamilton to sign the payroll checks, found the probate judge in contempt of court at the end of a lengthy trial Tuesday. He ordered Judge Hamilton to be placed in jail and held until he purged himself, meaning that he must sign the checks or stay in jail. Judge Hamilton's lawyers immediately filed notice of appeal to the Alabama Supreme Court and necessary bonds were signed.

This will be the second appeal to the state's highest court growing out of this case. Judge Hamilton has contended from the first that it was illegal for him to sign payroll checks for county employees because he said the Alabama Supreme Court had previously ruled that it was illegal for county employees to belong to a labor union. On this basis the St. Clair probate judge contended that for him to sign payroll checks would be illegal and constitute recognition of the union. The Supreme Court has

been petitioned to rule on this phase as well as on the conviction of Judge Hamilton on the contempt of court ruling.

County Commissioner H. N. Mize introduced a resolution in commissioners court Monday that approved action of Judge Hamilton in refusing to sign payroll checks with union dues deducted. He made the motion to pass the resolution and Commissioner Charles Williams voted with him. Commissioners J. B. Walters and Clyde Morrow voted against the resolution but Judge Hamilton voted 'aye' and the resolution passed.

The resolution empowered the probate judge to pay all county employees any wages due them without deducting union dues. It was brought out in the court trial that Judge Hamilton had signed the regular payroll checks without deducting the union dues and that a number of employees had called for and had collected their checks. He noted that the other checks were in the hands of the county treasurer and could be had at any time.

The resolution further stated that any employee of St. Clair county who elects to belong to any labor union same shall be his own responsibility and shall personally assume any obligation which he has for paying his own dues as he so desires. By adopting the resolution Commissioners Mize and Williams withdrew from the case.

Judge Frank Embry, Charlie Robinson and Gerald Swann represented the commissioners in court. Pat Buchanan and Jim Klinefelter represented Judge Hamilton.