

*The Riser House*

# *Riser House Is City's Oldest*

Mrs. A.F. Riser is the proud owner of Pell City's oldest home, a rambling two-story white house reminiscent of deep South plantation life. It actually was a plantation home when Green Evans and his wife, Sarah, built it in about 1891. According to old deeds recorded in the courthouse at Ashville, Mr. Evans owned considerable acreage here.

Evans owned the house for nine years, selling it in 1899 to C. J. Hamilton. In 1902 H. A. Cornett sold the home to J. Z. Hazelwood, but no record is available of the transaction from Hamilton to Cornett. The Hazelwoods helped to establish

firm. Representing his area in the State legislature, Moore was instrumental in amending the state constitution to allow St. Clair County, a branch county seat to be located in Pell City. Mrs. Moore organized Pell City's first PTA in 1924. She sold the house in 1939 to Thomas N. Eatman who owned it 17 years, selling to the present owners, Dr. and Mrs. Arthur F. Riser in 1956. Dr. Riser who died in 1971 had been one of Pell City's leading physicians.

The stately old house has a gambrel roof with a severely plain entablature supported by

place home are the Evanses, Rowes, Alversons, Raglands, Hazelwoods, Fowlers, and the Eatmans from whom Dr. Riser purchased the house in 1956. Mrs. Riser's love for the place reflects her faith in American traditions.

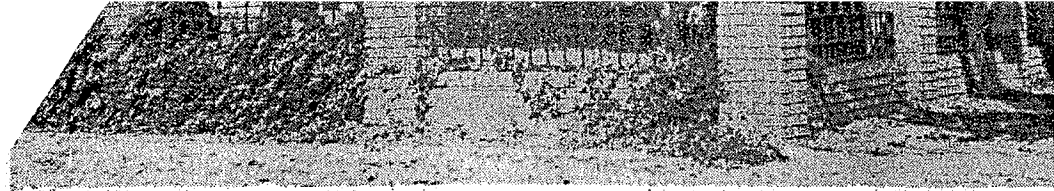
Every piece of furniture in the house is authentic—either an original, or a true reproduction—and represents a style current in Southern farm homes during the late nineteenth century. One especially fine piece, and likely the oldest one, is a walnut secretary of the early eighteenth century vintage. It was made for an ancestor of Mrs. Riser who lived in

# *Bank Organization*

(Excerpted from "The History of St. Clair County,"  
Lou Teague Crow, 19

In 1903, The Bank of St. Clair County was organized by Sumter Cogswell as president, Frank H. Lathrop as vice president, and McLain and J. Mantz as cashiers. In 1910 a new charter was obtained, and the bank was named First National of Pell City. The name was changed in 1911 to Union State Bank. It was the first bank to be established in St. Clair County and has continued in the public confidence since. There was another bank of short duration called City Bank and Trust Company which was in operation from 1910-1911. Today there are two strong banking houses in Pell City, Union State Bank and Peoples's Bank. Also there is St. Clair County Savings and Loan Association.

The first Sunday School in Pell City was organized by Mrs. Carol Alverson, D. Cather, Sr., and Fred Miller, with the assistance of many others. It was held in the building which stood on the corner of Pell City Drug Company building also served as Cather's printing shop was at that time the site of the present building. The Pell City News, printed on wooden boxes and grocery were used for Soon church services in this building on Sunday. From this humble building the Pell City Methodist Episcopal Church came being. The Presiding Elder came down from Georgia to help with the organization. The church building was erected on the site of the present



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Evans owned the house for nine years, selling it in 1899 to C. J. Hamilton. In 1902 H. A. Cornett sold the home to J. Z. Hazelwood, but no record is available of the transaction from Hamilton to Cornett. The Hazelwoods helped to establish a hotel in Pell City.

Maggie A. Green acquired the house in 1910 and lived there for a short time. Maggie A. Green's husband, James T. Green, descendant of revolutionary war veteran, served as county judge.

The next owner was a Mr. Burns who owned the local telephone company. During Burns' ownership, some of his telephone employees resided in the house.

About 1920, Mr. James L. Ragland purchased the home. He served as postmaster for Pell City from 1923 to 1936.

In 1933, John Moore traded some property and acquired the house. He helped organize Pell City Hardware Company and served as the First president of this early Pell City commercial

firm.

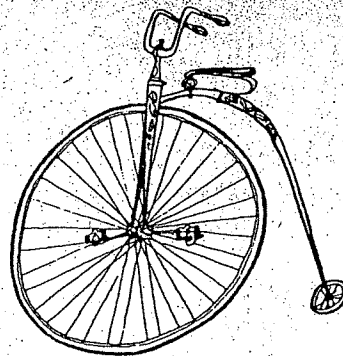
Representing his area in the State legislature, Moore was instrumental in amending the state constitution to allow St. Clair County, a branch county seat to be located in Pell City. Mrs. Moore organized Pell City's first PTA in 1924. She sold the house in 1939 to Thomas N. Eatman who owned it 17 years, selling to the present owners, Dr. and Mrs. Arthur F. Riser in 1956. Dr. Riser who died in 1971 had been one of Pell City's leading physicians.

The stately old house has a gambrel roof with a severely plain entablature supported by slender square pillars. There are no pilasters. The three windows opening on the upstairs veranda and the two on the first floor veranda lack ornamentation; their pink louvered blinds are their only decoration. The small window panes are of blown glass. Their simplicity is relieved by the beautiful sunburst transom over the front door. The chimneys at either end of the house are of handpressed brick.

When you step across the threshold, you at once see that Ann Riser has done a superb job of restoration, for you feel that you have stepped back in time to a bygone era in Southern history. The house has had many different mistresses down through the years, and each has given it loving care. Some of the families who have called this

place home are the Evanses, Rowes, Alversons, Raglands, Hazelwoods, Fowlers, and the Eatmans from whom Dr. Riser purchased the house in 1956. Mrs. Riser's love for the place reflects her faith in American traditions.

Every piece of furniture in the house is authentic—either an original, or a true reproduction—and represents a style current in Southern farm homes during the late nineteenth century. One especially fine piece, and likely the oldest one, is a walnut secretary of the early eighteenth century vintage. It was made for an ancestor of Mrs. Riser who lived in Virginia, and it had a very long hazardous journey before it finally reached Pell City.



In 1903, The Bank of St. Clair County was organized with Sumter Cogswell as president, Frank H. Lathrop as vice president, and McLane Tilton and J. Mantz as cashiers. In 1910 a new charter was obtained, and the bank became First National of Pell City. The name was changed in 1918 to Union State Bank. It was the first bank to be established in St. Clair County and has served the public continually ever since. There was another bank of short duration called Pell City Bank and Trust Company which was in operation from 1910-1911. Today there are two strong banking houses in Pell City, Union State and the Peoples's Bank. Also located there is St. Clair Federal Savings and Loan Association.

The first Sunday School was a Union school and was organized by Mrs. Carol Alverson, Bays D. Cather, Sr., and W.H. and Fred Miller, with the help of many others. It was held in the building which stood behind Pell City Drug Company. The building also served as Mr. Cather's printing shop, as he was at that time the editor of The Pell City News. Small kegs and wooden boxes from the grocery were used for seats. Soon church services were held in this building on Sunday night. From this humble beginning, the Pell City Methodist Episcopal Church came into being. The Presiding Elder came down from Gadsden to help with the organization. A church building was erected on the site of the present building.

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Independence