

# ★ Lock Number Three In Setting

By FRANCES UNDERWOOD  
Times Staff Writer

"Lock Number Three" on the Coosa River at Greensport, 20 miles southeast of Gadsden off beautiful Rainbow Drive on the Lincoln Highway, is coming back into the foreground for a bit of retrospection.

Old-timers recall that Locks Numbers One, Two and Three were started in 1879 and finished in 1882 and were built by the United States government as an aid to navigation of the Coosa River in the days of the old steamboats.

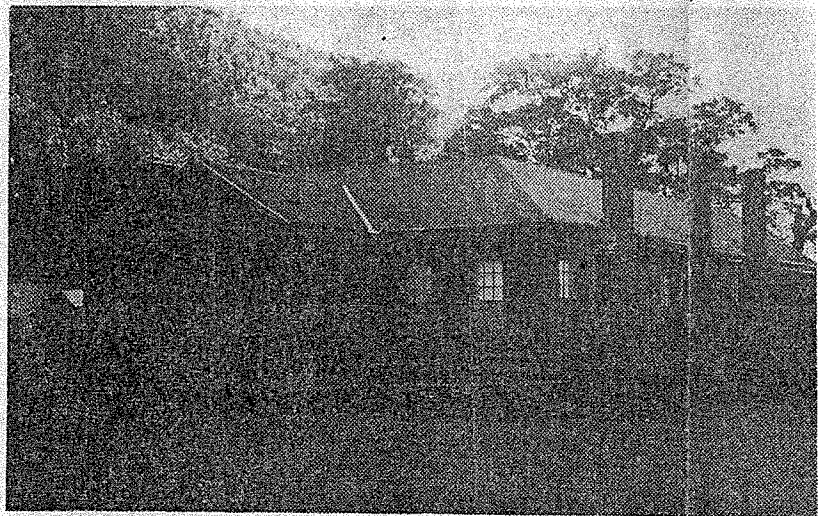
Three brothers, who were en-

gineers, were in charge of the building of the locks, which are still standing. These brothers were Maj. Mike Singleton, chief engineer and Jim and Joe Singleton. Maj. Singleton was the grandfather of Mrs. John Bass, Sr.

The land for these locks and dams was donated to the government by Jacob Green, whose descendants are still living on the verdant land, which they now lease from the government.

## HAND-HEWN STONE

The construction of these locks was of hand-hewn stone, three-foot square and laid with mortar,



**HOUSE OF CHIMNEYS**—This house built in 1930 by Jacobson, Abraham, was known by travelers on the steamboats which ply the Coosa River as "The House of Chimneys." It still is occupied by the wife of Acre Green, a descendant of Jacob Green.



**NOT AS HEAVY AS IT LOOKS**—Jerry Jones, vice-president of the Etowah Historical Society and son Bobby seem to be supporting one of the pillars of the lockkeepers' home ruins at Lock Three at Greensport. The column of stone blocks is more like the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

which has remained mostly intact for the long number of years since they were built. Channels through these locks were opened when the river was not deep enough for the steamboats to ply their way. The channels were 18 feet deep. The dams were to the north of the locks.

During the time of the construction of the locks, an epidemic of smallpox broke out among the Negroes and several of them died. They were buried at Lock Number Two.

In 1899, a firm came in and bought 1,200 acres for a cotton mill. The land was cleared, but the deal fell through. Some folk say, if this had not happened Greensport might have been the Gadsden of today.

## LOCK-KEEPER'S HOUSE

At each of the locks, a "lock-keeper's house was built, but only one of these is standing today. This house is occupied by David Green, one of the descendants of Jacob Green. Major Singleton

long as they remained in operation. The land on which he lived is still owned by the Bass family, according to report. The old home, made of stone, still has columns of rock standing, but has been partially destroyed.

The locks were discontinued in 1912 because of the railroads taking over the trade once given to steamboats on the Coosa.

And so the romantic era for the Coosa River during which period, steamboats plied her waters from Rome, Ga., to Greensport, Ala. was over. The name "Coosa" is translated from the Cherokee Indian language and means "canebreak" and "rippling" . . . the latter term appropriately describing this restless body of water.

## PILGRIMAGE MADE

From the days of DeSoto until 1960, the Coosa has been writing history. In the era, just dawning, her waters will become a dynamic force for the betterment of mankind through hydro-elec-

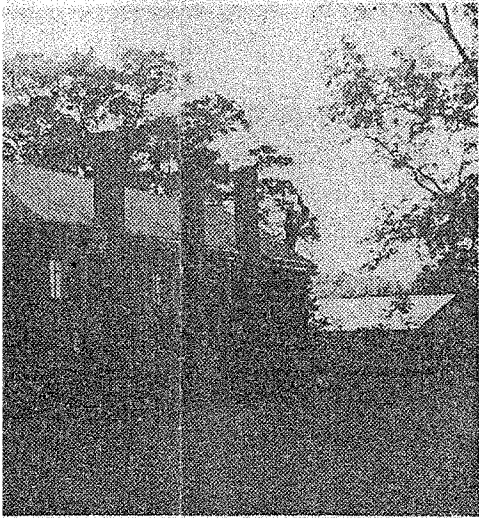
At a recent meeting of the Etowah Historical Society, Locks One, Two and Three were very much discussed. The old locks were made of stone, still has columns of rock standing, but has been partially destroyed.

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## BUILT IN 1830

The Abraham Green family lived in what is now the lockkeeper's house. It has been occupied by the Green family since 1830. The late Mrs. John Bass, Sr. died through the death of her husband. Her widow still m-

# Setting Of Old Southern Days★



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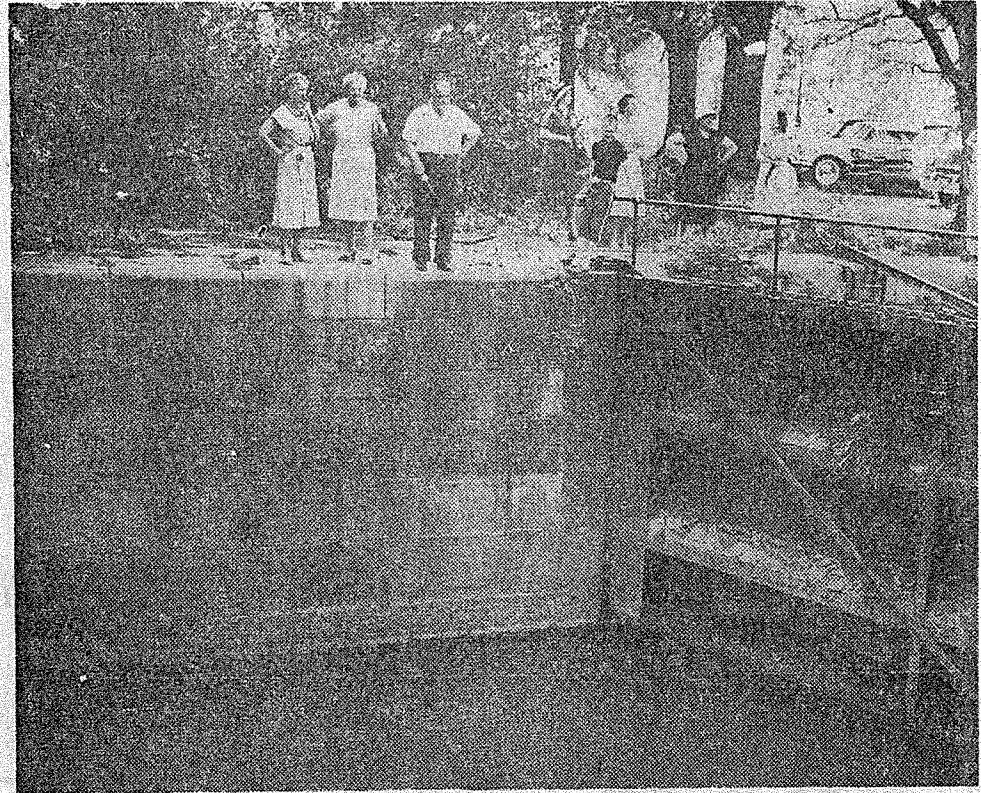
**ADE** of DeSoto until as been writing a, just dawning, become a dy- the betterment ough hydro-elec-

At a recent pilgrimage to Greensport of the Etowah Historical Society, Locks One, Two and Three were visited and a tour made of the ancestral homes of the Green Family. DeWitt Robinson, new president, was joined by a group of members with their families in the pilgrimage.

In the early 1830s, Jacob Green hired a Mr. Crowe, a builder from South Carolina, to build the homes for his entire family. The first, of course, was for himself. This home is still standing and is now owned by the McIntyre Family and is located just off Rainbow Drive on the Greensport Road. This home was two-story and is still in good repair.

**BUILT IN 1830**

The Abraham Green home, located in what is now Greensport, has been occupied continuously by the Green Family. Peter Acre Green, the last to occupy this house, died three weeks ago. His widow still maintains the old homestead. Some remodeling has



**'OLD LOCK NUMBER THREE'**—In the path of progress, soon to give way to one of the dams in the Coosa development program, this old lock built by the U. S. government in 1879 was the scene of a pilgrimage by the Etowah Historical Society. Looking over the old lock are, from left, Mrs. Mary Harrison Lister, Mrs. William Chalmers, Leslie C. King, Mrs. Ralph McClendon, Mrs. Augustus McClesky, Mrs. L. C. Dick, Mrs. Leslie C. King and young Bobby Jones.

been done on the inside, but the house, as it was originally built, has been kept as to the exterior, still having the original siding and floors, which were four inches thick with the planks from eight to 10 inches wide. At this house, there is an outside chimney to each room and it was referred to in the days of the steamboats as "House of Chimneys" by travelers on the Coosa River.

The kitchens of both of these houses originally were built away from the houses as the Green Family owned hundreds of

slaves and the serving of meals from the kitchen to the dining room was no problem. Since those days, the kitchen has been added to the homes for the sake of convenience.

The same builder was used to construct the Billy Whisenant house, just below Greensport. Mrs. Whisenant was Miss Luceta Green. And the fourth house built was the Jacob Ross Green house, a son of Jacob, who married Miss Elizabeth Boyd, daughter of Judge Samuel Boyd, a wealthy landowner in St. Clair.

Calhoun and DeKalb counties. This house is still standing and Mrs. Nanie Lou Meharg, granddaughter of Jacob Ross Green is living there at the present time. Judge Boyd was an ancestor of Mrs. Jerry Jones of Altalla and the Hugh Agricolos.

Instead of cotton mills being the industry, as expected in bygone days, the people have turned to cattle raising and the Green Family is still prominent in the community, still taking an active part in the promotion of that area.

## Coosa-Alabama River

(Editors note: This is the second in a series of articles on the Coosa-Alabama River written by Fourth District Congressman Kenneth A. Roberts.)

Paddle wheels churned the placid waters of the Coosa-Alabama River in the 10th Century as steamboats heralded the arrival of the basin's most colorful era.

The steamboat "Harriet" in the fall of 1821 ushered in the era. Numerous boats followed.

The "Coosa" steamboat ran between Greensport, in Calhoun County, and Rome, Ga. Later on the Alabama, a 155-foot stern wheel snag boat, the "Wm. J. Twining, was put into a service by the government to remove snags and keep the waterway clear.

Economic and social development which had clung to the meanderings of the river and its tributaries at the turn of the century now took on new increase under the influence of the pad-

dle-wheeler.

Even before the War Between the States, industrial products were transported. Iron produced in Calhoun County, for instance, was flat-boated to market in Wetumpka.

During the War, the riverway helped move the materials of destruction and even the battles themselves ultimately reached the Coosa-Alabama banks.

An intriguing incident was when Cummins M. Lay, (father of the organizer of the Alabama Power Company) steered the steamboat "Laura Moore" from Rome to Mobile to prevent Union forces from taking it. The harrowing trip was the first and only by a steamboat through the rapids of the Coosa.

Later, in the 1870's, the government made improvements on the river.

Saffold Berney, a chronologer of the day, reported this result on the Alabama: "The work done

has resulted in clearing the channel of dangerous snags and overhanging timber; in improvement of the worst bars...Boats run by night as well as by day, at all stages of water....."

In 1890, an estimated \$10 million in freight was carried on the Alabama River. Three large steamboats were making regular round trips between Montgomery and Mobile.

On the Coosa, water travel was less ambitious. From Greensport to Rome steamboats navigated at all seasons; but south to Wetumpka, the river's 142 miles was a tortuous route, with varying pools, high shoals, and jagged rocks.

If these obstacles could be removed, leaders reasoned, the river could be navigable from Rome to Mobile. Interest in such a plan sparked creation of the Coosa-Alabama River Improvement Association by William Patrick Lay and other Valley residents.

The government in the '80's built a series of low-lift rocks and dams on the upper Coosa, but they were determined to be impractical and were abandoned. Upland silt settled in the

stream beds, making them too shallow for large boats, and railroads began assuming most of the responsibility for hauling freight.

A hopeful era was dying and a blossoming dream had received its first disappointment.

University, Ala.--The fifth annual Food Service Conference for Alabama Hospitals and Nursing Homes is set for March 18-19-20 at the University of Alabama.

The conference is planned to help non-professionally trained persons who work in hospitals nursing home food service.

University, Ala.--With the close of the first semester for 1957-58 less than two weeks away, University of Alabama students are already looking toward second semester registrations and schedules.

First semester examinations will be held January 21-27.

Non-credit courses for Medical Assistants is a new offering in continuing education made available to professional groups by the University Extension Division.



BY JERRY BRYAN  
News outdoor editor

Water-tunity" is a  
chry new word which I  
for the first time last  
ek in a national mag-  
ae. I was more intrig-  
when it was noted the  
d was Alabama con-  
ted. It was Alabama  
ver Company's intro-  
tory to their promotion  
directed at national in-  
try. The timing of the  
lication and a planned  
ket to H. Neely Henry  
ke with Dick Scott and  
ave Lavies was entirely  
incidental.

A tour of the newest Ala-  
poco lake with the two Ala-  
bama Power public relations  
men had been in the works for  
more than a week.

This 10th in the Alabama  
Power lake system can well  
be the fishiest of the lot. Its  
330 miles of shoreline im-



JERRY BRYAN

pounding 11,200 acres of water  
do not represent the biggest of  
the Coosa chain but it affects  
more people than any of the  
others. The gates were closed  
in April. It is now at full pool.

The new lake washes the  
feet of Gadsden almost a  
stone's throw from the busi-  
ness district down Broad  
Street. For its whole stretch  
stands of trees and bushes  
were left as havens for fish  
and fishermen.

H. Neely Henry Dam was  
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by the site of historic Green-  
sport-Ohatchie ferry crossing.  
For more than one and a  
quarter century the old Ferry  
shuttled wayfarers in fertile  
Beaver Valley from Calhoun  
to St. Clair Counties or re-  
verse. At its founding in 1832  
it was manned by slave labor  
pulling oars. The motorized  
version developed with mod-  
ern travel.

LIKE THE PASTURE  
LANDS flooded by the broad-  
ening beam of the impound-



WHERE HIS BEEF CATTLE ROAMED DAVE EVANS NOW REAPS RETURNS FROM  
... Evans shows Dick Scott and Dave Lavies where old ferry crossed river for century and

sed into limbo. A new road  
across the dam connects the  
counties and replaces the wa-  
ter route.

Agrarians like Dave Evans  
opportunistly shifted their ac-  
tivities to accommodate the  
new development. His may be  
a characteristic case.

Many of his broad valley  
acres, where he ran a sub-  
stantial herd of beef cattle,  
were inundated. The old  
Panther, he was a guard on  
the 1919 Birmingham-Southern  
football team) accommodated  
himself to the situation. He  
cut his herd by half; built a  
large dry storage marina,  
launching ramp and docks on  
the waterfront of portion of  
the pasture; a store for boat-  
men and fishermen's needs,  
and started a new career.

The old gridman has now  
just about run the scale in  
vacations. Cattleman, sheriff  
of St. Clair County for one  
term; operator of the famed  
old ferry for 10 years, and  
now marina proprietor.

Some 15 or more miles up  
the river another group of  
natives are moving boldly  
with the new industry. Rain-  
bow Marina Corp. with Fred  
Fitts, Frank Roberts and Jay  
Troutman teamed, is complet-  
ing a big marina just a mile  
from Rainbow City on the  
Glencoe Highway.

Big fills have created a  
horseshoe-shaped marina with  
160 boat slips. Work is going  
forward on a restaurant and  
accessory store. When complet-  
ed this will be one of the  
largest marinas on the entire

acres swell to around 137,000  
Alapoco lakes acreage. When  
three projects now under con-  
struction are finished it will  
give Alabama Power Compa-  
ny more than 146,000 acres of  
water behind its dams. This  
represents roughly 25 per cent  
of all the fresh water of the

state, wild rivers, ponds or  
whatever. Since this is all free  
water, for boating, fishing,  
water recreation and indus-  
try, Alabama Power might  
well propound an ad headed,  
"Water-tunity."

The projects yet to be  
completed are the elevation of  
Lay's water level by 14 feet;

addition of  
Jordan D  
Walter  
Wetumpk  
These  
power  
lopmer  
with  
creat  
ments.

Week  
Exchange

The Birmingham News

pounding 11,200 acres of water do not represent the biggest of the Coosa chain but it affects more people than any of the others. The gates were closed in April. It is now at full pool.

The new lake washes the feet of Gadsden almost a stone's throw from the business district down Broad Street. For its whole stretch stands of trees and bushes were left as havens for fish and fishermen.

H. Neely Henry Dam was thrown across the Coosa hard by the site of historic Greensport-Ohatchie ferry crossing. For more than one and a quarter century the old Ferry shuttled wayfarers in fertile Beaver Valley from Calhoun to St. Clair Counties or reverse. At its founding in 1832 it was manned by slave labor pulling oars. The motorized version developed with modern travel.

**LIKE THE PASTURE LANDS** flooded by the broadening bosom of the impoundment the old ferry found its widening reaches too long for its creaky crossing and pas-

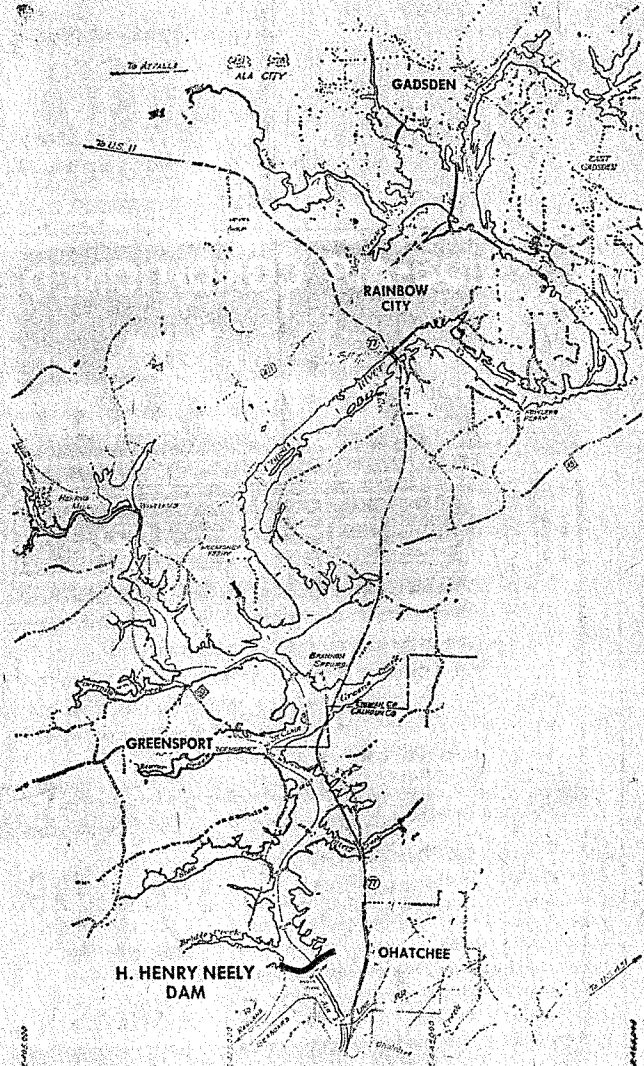
football team) accommodated himself to the situation. He cut his herd by half; built a large dry storage marina, launching ramp and docks on the waterfront of portion of the pasture; a store for boatmen and fishermen's needs, and started a new career.

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Some 15 or more miles up the river another group of natives are moving boldly with the new industry. Rainbow Marina Corp. with Fred Fitts, Frank Roberts and Jay Troutman teamed, is completing a big marina just a mile from Rainbow City on the Glencoe Highway.

Big fills have created a horseshoe-shaped marina with 160 boat slips. Work is going forward on a restaurant and accessory store. When completed this will be one of the largest marinas on the entire Coosa. Jim Weeks is set up to manage it.

Henry Lake's impounded

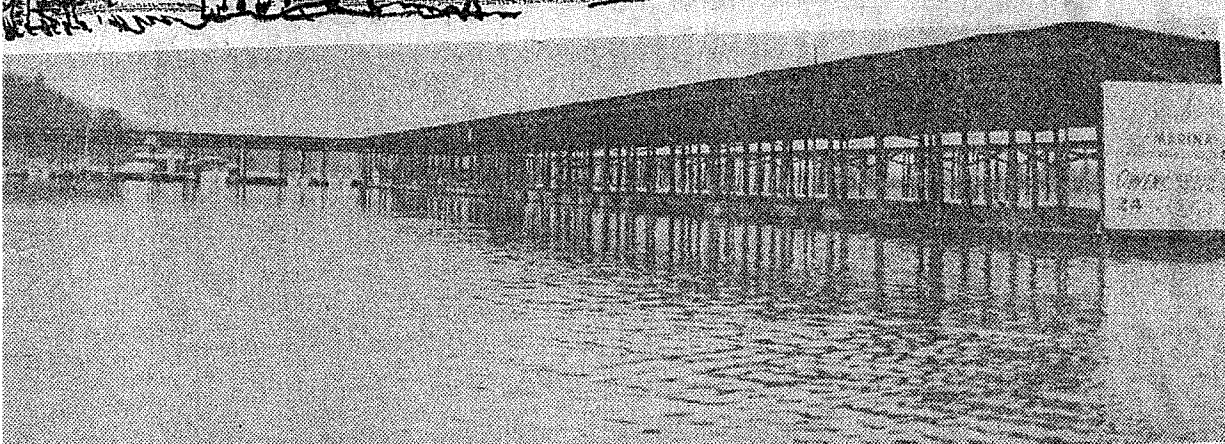


**WHERE IS H. NEELY HENRY LAKE?**  
 ... Map shows general location of new impoundment

July 24, 1966

The Birmingham News

# Alabama Outdoors



**SOLUNAR TABLE**  
WHEN TO FISH OR HUNT  
by  
Richard Alden Knight

PREPARED FOR THE N  
AM. P.

Date, day	Min.	Maj.	Min.
July			
24 Sun.	11:45	4:10	11:15
25 Mon.	11:55	5:00	12:55
26 Tues.	....	5:50	2:05
27 Wed.	12:20	6:35	3:20
28 Thur.	12:50	7:25	4:25
29 Fri.	1:30	8:15	5:20
30 Sat.	2:15	9:50	6:45
31 Sun.	3:10	9:50	6:45

MARINA CLOSE TO RAINBOW CITY ON GROUND FLOOR OF WATER RECREATION BONANZA  
Before 160-slip marina is completed proprietors find themselves in boat storage business with a third of stalls taken

**Afield and on Stream**

Newest lake is real beaut

