

The Voice

of The Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society and Cobb Memorial Archives
Speaking about the Past to the Present, for a Better Future

The Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society Quarterly
Meeting Sunday, October 16, 2016, 3:00 p.m. EDT
The Ianier Room, H. Grady Bradshaw Library,
Valley, Alabama



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Valley's Historic Buildings & Village Design

Presenter: Atlanta Architect Peter Hand

Community members and visitors who attended the "Textile Heritage Day" commemorative program at Langdale Mill in August were captivated by the remarks of guest speaker, Peter Hand, an Atlanta architect who presently has an option to purchase the former Langdale Mill property from the City of Valley. Hand has graciously accepted our invitation to speak at our upcoming Fall Quarterly Membership Meeting.

Hand will examine the influence of some of the leading architects of Boston a century ago, who were retained by West Point Manufacturing Company to design public buildings for the mill villages. At that time, Wellington-Sears of Boston was sole sales agent for Valley textiles. The planned mill village of Shawmut was laid out by this New England design team to resemble that of Washington,

D.C. The name "Shawmut" is derived from a Native American tribe that once lived near Boston, Massachusetts.

Hand will also share his vision on the redevelopment potential of the Langdale Mill property. Located on the Chattahoochee River, the old factory site could be re-habilitated and re-purposed to attract businesses and tourists which would be an economic boost to the area while preserving a valued piece of historical real estate.

Members and the general public are encouraged to attend this final program commemorating the sesquicentennial anniversary of the beginning of our local textile industry (1866-2016). At the conclusion of the program, we will announce our next Civil War Battlefields Bus Tour, planned for next June.

President's Message

More and more I am coming to believe that there are certain people who have an innate desire to connect with the past. Whether a mere fascination or a higher calling, some among us possess an almost unexplainable drive to investigate, document, analyze and synthesize pieces of our personal and collective histories. Without a doubt, this phenomenon often becomes more apparent as we get older. Perhaps we have more time to reflect as life begins to slow down a bit.

Throughout the ages, sage wisdom, cultural tradition, and ancestral history have been passed down from generation to generation. As our society becomes more detached from its roots, it is incumbent upon all of us to teach our young people about the strength and character of our fore-bearers, while learning from their mistakes and successes, their challenges and triumphs. So, share

a fall afternoon with your grandchildren pouring over an old photo album. Visit a historical site or National Park. Browse the children's history section at the library or bookstore. Show them the ancestral home-place and talk about the cotton that once was king. Instill in them an appreciation of people and events of days gone by. Plans are currently being made for a 3rd Annual Civil War Battlefields Bus Tour.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of CVHS, I want to remind all our members just how much we appreciate your faithful support. We are now on Facebook, and are working to upgrade our website so that we all can connect in the present as well as to the past!

Malinda Powers

Gift to Cobb Memorial Archives for Purchase of State of the Art Microfilm Reader

In July the Board of Directors of CVHS presented Librarian Mary Hamilton, Director of Bradshaw Library and Cobb Memorial Archives, with a check for \$7,000 as a donation to share in the cost of an \$11,000 ScanPro 3000 digital microfilm reader and printer. Archivist Robin Brown is standing to the right of Director Hamilton. The donation resulted from revenue generated by the annual tours planned and executed by the Board and members of CVHS. For decades the mission statement of CVHS has stressed the support and promotion of the Cobb Memorial Archives and has recognized the Cobb Memorial Archives as the home of CVHS since the organization of the Archives.



**June 17-21, 2017 Tour
1862 Peninsula Campaign, 7 Days Battles,
Richmond, and Petersburg and
"The Crater"**

**Includes: White House of the
Confederacy, Museums, Harbor Cruise
and more!**

**Pick up a flyer at our upcoming meeting or
check out our website in a few weeks for
full details!**



Some Reminiscences of the Oldest Citizen

As published in *The LaFayette Sun* in 1902, 1903 and 1904

by George H. Black

Some months ago as editor of The Voice, I sought Don Clark's help to identify building locations in mid 19th century LaFayette. Don referred me to a series of descriptive articles by George H. Black which were published in the LaFayette Sun at the beginning of the 20th century. Don has copied the complete content of the articles to George H. Black on findagrave for the LaFayette City Cemetery. Reproduced below are only portions of the articles which describe people and places in LaFayette prior to 1860. Don and I highly recommend your reading on the findagrave posting the complete musings and reflections of an old man as he strolls about his home town. George H. Black was thoughtful, perceptive and a good writer in his time. The eighty-eight names mentioned in his articles are in bold type in this selected limited printing of George H. Black words. By Horace McLean Holderfield

An Obituary: *The LaFayette Sun* June 20, 1906

“**Mr. George H Black**, one of our oldest citizens, died at his home on Monday last. He was in the sixty-ninth year of his age, having spent all of his long life in LaFayette, coming here an infant in his mother's arms from far away Ireland. Mr. Black was a consistent member of the Methodist church and on many occasions during his last severe illness expressed his faith in the Redeemer. He willingly obeyed the call to the other world. Mr. Black was a most gallant soldier of the Confederacy and served through the entire period of the war, the most of the time with **General John Morgan**. He was a loyal son of the South, his adopted Land, and few men cherished her traditions as he cherished them in his heart of hearts. In his death, we loose a good citizen, the church a devoted adherent his family a tender and loving father and brother. He leaves one son, George and two daughters, **Misses Mary Jim** and **Hattie**, and a brother, **Prof. R. E. Black**. The funeral took place at the Methodist Church last Monday afternoon, conducted by **Rev. E. M. Glenn** and assisted by **Revs. Bledsoe, Murray, and Anderson**.”

Beginning on February 19, 1902, George H. Black wrote, “Walking along the street the other day, I fell into a retrospective mood, and had gone out some distance out of the way before I realized it. I found myself on the West Point Street, and having nothing special at hand, concluded to stroll on to the corporate limits, or outer gates of the city and mark the changes, which the flight of time had brought.

As I walked on I was reminded that it was Indian summer, and at its best. The summer verdure was gone, and the brown and purple was in its place. The air was mellow and still almost to solitude, but as I passed the cultivated fields along the way I heard the merry song of the harvest cricket, calling the husband-man to come and gather the fruits of his toil. Who that has once heard, in the fall of the year, the plaintive cry of the cricket in the old time rock hearth,

telling the good housewife that winter is at hand and it is time to make a fire to warm her nest, can ever forget it? –No words can tell its pathos. A little farther on I found the husbandman gathering the juice of his cane---evidently he had heard the crickets call---so much for the “cricket.”

Arrived at the outposts of the city, I paused on the property, now of **Mr. Henry Pate**. I recognized a grove I once knew but the house, that stood within it, had disappeared---I went to the spot where it had been, but could find neither stick nor stone---even the ashes were blown away---such are the ravages of time.

When I first knew the place there lived there a man by the name of **Brittain Stamps**. He was a farmer, a good citizen, a pious, God-fearing man-a deacon of the Baptist Church and

often I have seen him worshipping in the old Baptist Church, which has also passed away. He was sheriff of the county during the 40's. He had a large family – none of them are left here, and none of his descendants, unless it be the **Woody** family, still living in the county.

Coming back towards town, the next place, where a residence stood then, was where the beautiful home of **Judge J. J. Robinson** and of his son, **Jim**, now is, everything about which denotes thrift and prosperity. There lived there when I first knew it an old gentleman by the name of **Michael Dickson**. He was a Presbyterian minister, county surveyor and was also a school teacher. Just this side of his home and in sight, strange to tell, is still standing the little schoolhouse where he taught. He was a good man, but ruled his school with a firm hand, for he had some pretty tough boys to handle in those days. It was an accident if a day passed without some of them getting a flogging. I went into the little old house after all these years. It surely shows the marks of time. I looked upon the spot where I used to sit and study my lessons and watch the squirrels playing in the trees that grew around it, and listen to the note of the wild turkey gobbler as he strutted defiance to all rivals on the adjacent hills, interspersed with the longing calls now and then to his mate. Good-bye little old house: I have probably crossed your portals the last time. It is now occupied by one of Mr. Robinson's tenants.

The next place was on the spot where **Wm. Darden** now lives, but the old house is gone. There lived there a lawyer by the name of **Jas. E. Reese**. He had children and has long since passed away. Coming down to the foot of the hill there was at that time a beautiful sandy-bottom, an historic spot known then as the "Battle Ground" of the schoolboys. The fights were made up during day at school, and when we reached the sandy bottom after school, coats and hats were thrown off and the "vidette" was placed on the hill to watch lest the teacher should be coming to town. A ring was made and one of the boys entered it with a chip on his head – the other walked in and knocked it off and the fun began. Next morning after school was opened with prayer, the master scanned the faces of the boys and if he found a scratch on one he was called up and a court-martial held. If the

accused was found guilty, it involved his opponent also and what the good old man gave them as in Indian lingo "plenty much". We soon out-witted him, however, by cutting off all the finger nails of the fighters. The good old master moved to Texas and has long since gone to his reward.

It is sad to think of all those boys that went to school then. This writer is the only one left here now. South of the road at that time was all forest, and in a grove of large oaks, in the year 1844 during the campaign of **Jas K. Polk** and **Henry Clay** for President, there was a barbecue and political speaking. I then heard, for the first time, the gifted **Wm. L. Yancey** make a speech, who afterwards played such a prominent part in the secession of the South from the Union.

Climbing up the hill from the "battle ground," we come to the home of **Col. Jno. S. Jemison**. It is the same house, though much enlarged and improved. There lived there at that time a man by the name of **Dr. Hudson**, probably the leading physician of the town. He had a large family and emigrated to Texas in the early 50's where one of his daughters, **Miss Mary** became the wife of a Texas Governor (Richard Bennett, Jr.). One of his boys from the State fell, not far from me, on the bloody battle field of Chickamauga.

Just across the street there lived a man by the name of **Bacheldor**, a merchant, who kept a general store for many years on the corner, where his grandson, **Mr. Walter B. Wood**, has erected the most imposing building on the square, now occupied by **Mr. W. B. Nichols** as a furniture store and post office, and also by the *LaFayette Sun* office. One of his daughters, **Miss Sarah**, still lives at the old home, and three others, **Miss Lizzie**, **Mrs. Hightower** and **Mrs. Wood** are still living there, and can tell much about the early days of LaFayette.

The next Place where there was a residence is what is known as the **McNeil** place. There lived there a man by the name of **Elliott H. Muse**, one of the best and most popular men that ever lived in the town. He was clerk of the circuit court for many years. One of his sons was the first man from LaFayette who fell in the Civil War. One of his descendants is here now.

Geo. Muse, the Atlanta clothier, is his son and was born here.

Just across the street, on what is now a vacant lot, was a female school kept by a lady by the name of **Walker**. What impresses me about this is that the larger girls used to chase the smaller school boys like myself who had to pass by on our way to school to kiss us. I thought then it was “awful,” but learned since then that it wasn’t near as bad as we thought it was.

The next house was where **Mrs. Duke** now lives. There lived there a good old man by the name of **Bacon**, who went to his reward a long time ago. He was the great grandfather of **Dr. Scarborough’s** children. And next was the house, which is now the Baptist pastorium. There lived there, when I first remember the place, a man by the name of **Geo. D. Hooper**, a lawyer and a brother of **Johnson J. Hooper**, famed as the author of “**Simon Suggs**”, whom I often saw in the flesh in LaFayette.

In my other communication while on the subject of old man Dickson’s school boys, and their “battleground” I tried to think of some one of the boys that used to “scrap” some there in those days, now might be living today and track him up, but failed to do so. But since then one (John Smith Prather) has come into my mind who was considered a first class fighter, when a boy. I suppose he was at the time 12 or 13 years old, a chunky built little fellow, and somewhat picturesque in his “getup”. In warm weather he generally went barefooted as all the other boys of his age, and older ones too. He wore one leather “gallas” over his right shoulder, his left pants leg rolled half way up his knee, and with a little cap setting on the side of his head, he looked the fighter he was. He was not a vicious boy at all, but seemed to fight just for the fun of it. Boys in those days and for that matter, me too, prided themselves very much on their physical manhood.

Time rolled on as it always does, and he quit school and went to learn the printer’s trade and grew up to be a good, peaceable and useful citizen and extremely fastidious in his dress. He and his partner published our county paper for many years up to the Civil War, served through it, and when it ended he was Colonel of his regiment, the 8th Confederate Cavalry, a regiment noted for its fighting qualities, and no

wonder one of our fellow citizens, **Capt. Robt. Moore**, was one of his captains. After the war he and his partner, both LaFayette boys, picked up their old outfit and went to Atlanta. It was in ashes just as General Sherman had left it, and began the publication of the first newspaper there after the war. “The Atlanta New Era”, which became afterwards “The Atlanta Constitution” and remains so. That little boy is now an esteemed citizen of Atlanta. God bless and keep him through life. And thereby hands a little story personal to this chronicler.

When those of us who survived the great tragedy returned to our homes, we had left in peace, happiness and plenty four years previously, we found a scene of desolation and universal poverty – no money, nothing to do to make money, and the “ration” question staring us in the face. We began to look about for some place to go to where we might get work. I concluded to try New York, but it took about three times as much money to get there as it does now, and it was certainly scarce. After scratching around diligently I found about half enough to make the trip. I then thought of our boys in Atlanta, and went up there and told them of my dilemma. Our hero scratched his head and said he had an idea. He said he would give me an agency to get subscribers for “The Atlanta New Era” and told me if I could travel on that I need not mind about the subscribers. It put me through all right til I crossed the Ohio River into Indiana. The conductor came around and said ‘ticket’ and at the same time looked at me. I handed him my paper. Then he eyed me a little closer. I have on my old Confederate clothing. Then he said “Johnnie, I am very sorry but that won’t go on this side of the river,” and I would have to step off at the next stopping place, but I didn’t. That is I got off, but got on again.

Just a short distance south of the “battleground” is our beautiful cemetery. I passed it by unintentionally before, but is a very necessary adjunct to the town and worthy of notice. When I first saw it there were only a few graves there under the native trees of the forest. We called it a graveyard at that time. It had not risen to the stature of a cemetery. There were no monuments there then, but only wooden railings, or stones gathered up in the woods marked the last resting place of the dead. The facilities for

getting monuments had not come about – railroads. For many long years I have been following the remains of neighbors and friends to this sacred spot and many a sad scene have I witnessed there, as some family has gathered around a grave to pay the last tribute of affection to their departed ones. I think there are about thirty Confederate soldiers buried there. These are the men who fell early in the war and were brought home, but after the conflict became bloody and men began to fall by the thousands, they were laid away in trenches on the battlefield, and there they must remain uncoffined and unknown til day of judgment. The graves of those in the cemetery have been marked with headstones by the Daughter of the Confederacy. It has been my custom for many years past on moonlight nights in the summertime or early fall to visit our cemetery. But few, if any trespassers go there at night, in fact I have seen none, nor have I seen any of those uncanny things which superstitious persons (and indeed we are all more or less so) seem to think have their habitation in such places. The nearest I have ever come to seeing anything of the kind was “Jack with his lantern” one time - not there however.

Two or three hundred yards beyond this hallowed place was in those days a gruesome spot, where the county had planted a “gallows tree” for the execution of criminals. There, for the first time, I saw the legal tragedy enacted. School was turned out that the boys might witness it. I can almost see it now. A bright sunny day, the deep green woods and the great crowd of curious people and the little boys up in the trees that they might get a better view. Then the culprit came riding on his coffin, a giant descendant of Ham, by the name of **Tom Ross**, who had killed a white man by the name of **Stoneake**. He cast his eyes on the death trap, ascended the scaffold without the slightest tremor, spoke not a word, and amid the deathly stillness, was launched into eternity. That impressed me more than all, though I have witnessed many executions since, notably once during the Civil War.

After the bloody battle of Perryville, Ky., **General Bragg** was forced to leave the state and his line of retreat lay through the Kentucky mountains, which have since become

famous as the “land of feuds”. Those mountain people were mostly Union people, and many of them who did not go into the army stayed at home and were accustomed to secrete themselves in the mountains and shoot Confederate soldiers contrary to the laws of war, and they made use of the occasion of Bragg’s army marching through the mountains to shoot his soldiers, of which I have a feeling recollection myself. I had gone into a cornfield to gather some ears for my horse, when I heard the crack of a rifle, and the bullet pierced the stalk I was pulling an ear of corn from. Perhaps it was his corn - I didn’t ask. These men were known as “bushwhackers” – we killed some of them and captured others on that march. I saw five dead in a pile one day, and a notice pinned on top of them stating that “The Texas Rangers had passed that way”. When that portion of the army which had the prisoners in charge reached the famous “Cumberland Gap” they stopped long enough to hang them to a large white oak tree that threw out two immense limbs at right angles to its body. There were sixteen in all, but one fellow was so opposed to being hung that he was knocked in the head with an axe. The others were hung to the white oak tree. In that gang was a man by the name of **King** and his son. He had been a captain in the Northern army and while that army was down in Mississippi it was said that he had stood over a lady with a drawn sword and compelled her to buckle on his spurs, and that she told him then that he would be hung. He afterwards deserted and went back to his home in the mountains and raised a company of “bushwhackers”. I passed through those mountains six or eight times during the war and had several perilous adventures.

But I am about to get entirely off the track. Going from the “gallows tree” through the woods over towards the Cusseta road, we come to a house in the crest of a high hill and overlooking the road. When I first remember it there lived there a man by the name of **Sam Pearson**. He was a lame man, went on crutches and was Judge of Probate of this county. He afterwards moved over into Tallapoosa County and died there. After him here lived in the same house a man by the name of **Asa Simmons**. He was a very substantial citizen and planter of considerable means. He was also a Baptist

minister and a man of much sterling worth. But he had the microbe of the frontier in his blood and left this beautiful country, and followed the course of the wild bee westward. He had two sons who were my schoolmates, the other was a physician, acquired a fortune and died in Louisiana, only a year or two ago.

After Asa Simmons there lived in the same house a man by the name of **Jefferson Faulkner**. He was a lawyer, and had been Judge of Probate in Randolph County before coming here. He was also a Baptist minister and well known to many people yet living in this county. He raised a company of cavalry and went to the war and belonged to the 8th Confederate, **Col. Jack Prather's** regiment. He moved to Montgomery and died there, and was the father of **Col. Jeff Faulkner** now of Montgomery, another LaFayette raised boy. Well and favorably known all over Alabama and carries in his bosom a heart as big as his head. That house is standing there yet solitary and alone, is the property of our fellow citizen **Mr. Yancey Burton** and now occupied by colored tenants. While Judge Faulkner lived there, there came a young man, perhaps a relative from Randolph County to board with him and attend school, at that time a first class one going on in the male building, now occupied by the colored people. In a short time some boys took him out to initiate him. It was said that when the firing began he broke out and was never seen at the school any more. I believe the boys have kept that up to this day.

The next house coming towards town by the roadside was occupied when I first remember it, by a widow by the name of **Gregory**, what became of her – my memory lost its record – it is now owned by a colored man. Coming on towards town we cross a little clear running stream singing merrily on its way to the sea, just as it did fifty years ago, when another generation of men daily crossed it, and watered their horses in its cooling water. Climbing a hill we come to the site of the old Baptist church, where another generation once worshipped. The old church was sold, and a new one erected in a different place. It was converted into a barn, and the winds came and blew upon it, and it fell to vice no more.

The next old landmark was torn down

only a short time ago, and a new one erected in it by **Mr. Geo. E. Collins**, its present owner. It was in this old building where I first went to school when a small boy. A lady by the name of **Miss Mary Patton** taught a juvenile school there. I remember how she took me on her lap, and talked kindly to me. Kindness to children is never forgotten while life lasts. Just in the rear of this house a Creek Indian by the name of **Hardjo** was hung for murder before my day, but I have heard the older people tell about it, how he sang their death song on the gallows, and gave their terrible war whoop which went echoing down the valley, and died with the stoicism characteristic of his race. There was no other house on that side of the street then. The Presbyterian Church was erected somewhere around 1848. There was only a few Presbyterian families here but they were wealthy, and built the present church that they might worship in their own. They were involved in the general ruin of the war and are dead, or scattered and gone. But alas! The little church is standing there yet, a pathetic object waiting for a better day. The street leading south from the courthouse in LaFayette is known as Oak Bowery street, and if followed a distance of twelve miles would take us to a little village of that name, so called from the wide spreading oak, which once cast their pleasant shade upon its streets.

Returning to the outskirts of LaFayette the first place of ancient celebrity that meets our attention is a spring, known as "**Wright's Spring**" dating far back in the past as a place of resort for picnics, barbeques, public speaking, etc. There is something gladsome and restful always associated with the spring. Bidding good bye to the old spring and coming on towards town, we soon cross one of those happy little brooks dancing over the rocks and carrying its little mite to distant seas just as it did fifty years ago. Climbing up a rugged and rock hill we soon come to the old school house upon its summit where we will pause a little and indulge in the flood of tender memories that come trooping through the mind and still linger around this once hallowed spot. The old house looks somewhat dilapidated, and its surroundings are also changed – the woods once grew close around it on every side and in the early spring

time the dogwoods unfolded their snow white blossoms, and the wild birds sang and built their nests un-cared. But now the forest has been cut way – the inevitable cotton patch has encroached upon its once hallowed ground and the landscape looks bare and bleak. The land on which this old house was built was donated to the town for school purpose by an old citizen by the name of **Wade Hill** some time during the forties. School, school boys and teachers were all in a crude state in those days and it was said a teacher could not teach more than one term, as the boys would make it too warm for him and he would have to get away. The old citizens were in despair about the school and turned the whole matter over to the Presbyterians. They established what was known as the “East Alabama Presbyterian High School” and sent to the celebrated Jefferson College in Pennsylvania for a teacher. He came, a beardless boy twenty years old by the name of **McKinney**. When the old men saw him, they laughed and laughed – they thought a trick had been played on them. They told the young man he would not stay here a week – he smiled and said nothing. When the day came for the school to open a good many of the citizens went over to the schoolhouse to see what was going to happen. The teacher opened the school with prayer and then began explaining his mode of teaching, which was simply grading the students, putting each one strictly on his own merits. We listened in wonder at this new order of things. He then told us he felt assured that we were gentlemen, and would expect each one of us to prove it. His predecessors had always appealed to the savage in their nature, and the boys had answered in kind – he appealed to the better part of their nature and they responded accordingly. There were to be no more whipping and resistance to teachers. The new order of things prospered from the beginning and soon both students and citizens were in love with the teacher. The rich farmers of the county sent in their boys, the reputation of the school went abroad and young men came from all over the state.

We had monthly public exhibitions in speaking, dialogues, spelling bees and so on, and the people were delighted with these occasions of recreation and entertainment. The success of this school gave a new life to the cause of

education in LaFayette. The Baptists established a male school also and procured a teacher from Harvard College. Also a female college, which was presided over by the **Rev. John Bledsoe**, a sincere and devoted man and the father of our fellow citizen, **Dr. W. C. Bledsoe**. The Methodists also established a female school, which was presided over by the **Rev. B. B. McCraw**, afterwards Chancellor. Thus we had four schools, in the full tide of prosperity, and LaFayette was known abroad for its educational facilities and healthy locality. All these school buildings have passed away except the “old school house” on the hill, which still stands as a memento of its former glory.

There are some incidents connected with school days then which might begat a passing interest. One morning early a neighbor boy about my own age and myself reached school first. When I went to my desk to deposit my books, I was horrified to find a dead man lying under it. He had taken his seat there, written a few lines, which were lying on my desk, and shot himself. Ten lines ran thus - “My dear sister, **Annie**, I have lived for thee. I die because I cannot help thee.” That was all. What unhappy train of circumstances led this untimely fate we never knew. He had been here but a short time – was a Scotchman and a tailor. Every town had its tailor, as ready – made clothing had not come into general use. He was an intelligent man of good appearance. He was buried by the hand of charity in our cemetery and all vestige of his grave is gone.

The old “school house” had been occupied by the colored people for many years as a school for their children, which our town has generously allowed. If we had been told that the descendants of our former slaves would one day go to school, there we could not have believed it. What a commentary on the mutability of human affairs!

Bidding adieu to the old house and looking across the Oak Bowery road we see an old time residence in a grove of oak. When I first knew this place, there lived there a man by the name of **Jas. F. Dowdell**, one of the most prominent and wealthy citizens of the county. He was our representative in Congress for two or more terms, and was known there as the Christian gentleman from the “Alabama bloody

seventh district" in contra-distinction from some of his predecessors there who were said to be somewhat wild, one of whom committed suicide in Washington, while on a protracted spree. He was truly a good man, than which a higher tribute cannot be paid to any man. He was Colonel of the 37th Alabama regiment in the civil war. He was father of our present fellow citizen, **Judge J.R. Dowell** of the Supreme Court of Alabama and **Mr. J. S. Dowdell**, one of our prominent merchants.

Coming on toward town the next house was where **Mrs. Wright** now lives. There lived a man of wealth by the name of **Thomas K. Smith**. He was deacon of the Baptist church. He was of the pioneer stripe and early left here, and immigrated to Arkansas. I was at his home once just before the war while tramping through those old wilds on a "wild goose chase" and he seemed contented and happy in hunting the wild deer that was abundant around him. A man by the name of **Nolen Wright** bought his home here. He was a very rich man, but died many years ago. The original house was burned down some years ago, and the present one has been erected on the spot. Mrs. Wright, his widow, still lives there, a very old lady cared for by a dutiful son in her last years who is now her only companion.

Passing on to where the **Hon. J. Thos. Heflin** has build a home, there lived there a Presbyterian family by the name of **Forbes**, but as to what became of them, after leaving here, my memory does not serve me well. The next place was where **Dr. Gaines** now lives. When I first knew this place a man by the name of **Col. Charles McLemore** was living there. He was one of the earliest settlers and lived here among the Indians for some time. He was the most popular man, politically, who ever lived in this country. He was our State Senator, and also president of the Senate of Alabama for many years and was well known all over the state. In his day the old Whig and Democratic parties divided the people. Col. McLemore was the leader of the Whig party. A short time before the war, the Whig party was broken up, the northern Whig going into the Abolition party, and the southern Whig into the American or Know-nothing party, but many of the old Whigs joined the Democratic Party. Never before, or since,

did political feeling become as bitter. Life long friends and neighbors became estranged, and it was feared for some time that some unlucky circumstance might precipitate a bloody conflict right here among us. It is thus men sometimes let politics take away their better judgment. It was then Col. McLemore met his first defeat by only a few votes. He was candidate for re-election to the Senate.

I can never forget one occasion when he spoke before the campaign. There was a tremendous crowd present to hear him. He came upon the platform, strode back and forth awhile with his head hung down as if in a spirit of sadness. He then stepped to the front, folded his arms and silently surveyed the great crowd. He saw there many old gray-headed Whigs who had stood by him for many years with unbroken loyalty til now. He began thus,

"I feel like one who treads alone,
some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed."

And such a speech followed as only he could make. He was a fine looking man and a born orator. He was a frontiersman and a natural leader of men in a new country. It was his custom to go out west occasionally and I have heard him say that when night over took him in a very thinly part of the country he dismounted, tied his pony and slept by the roadside and rode on the next morning til he found a place where he could get refreshment for himself and pony. He died on one of those visits, but his remains are buried here in our cemetery. Some of his descendants are still living here. **Misses Bettie and Helen McLemore, Mrs. Annie Allen and Mrs. Geo. Burnett** are his grandchildren and **Mr. Robt. Baugh**, former agent of the Central railroad here, is also his grandchild. His two sons, **Col. Richard** and **Kenan McLemore**, are buried by his side in our cemetery. **Mrs. S. A. McLemore**, the widow of Col. Richard McLemore is still living there. Kenan McLemore was educated at the West Point Military Academy and was an officer in the U.S. Army, but resigned and cast his lot with the south. He fell in command of a brigade at the battle of Sharpsburg. He was my closest boyhood friend, my classmate at school and the

best boy I ever knew and a true Christian, and I feel assured he has a home in that better world where war is no more.

Just across the street where **Mr. Zach Schuessler** now lives was the home of a doctor by the name of **Bacon** (Edward G.). He was the leading physician of his day in LaFayette. He immigrated to the west many years ago and died there. The next place is where **Mr. Geo. Collins** now lives. A man by the name of **John C. Smith** lived there. He was a very substantial citizen and died there. He had several children, but none of his descendants are here now. **Mrs. Sue Finney** was the last of them, who remained, and she is gone now. Across the street where **Dr. W.C. Bledsoe** now lives, there lived a man by the name of **Matthew Phillips**, He was a lawyer by profession and died many years ago. He was the father-in-law of Dr. Scarborough. The next place is where **Mr. Roby Buckalew** now lives, but the old home is gone and a new one has been build on the spot by **Mr. Jas. C. Griffin** who now is the owner of the place. A very prominent and wealthy citizen lived there by the name of **Robt. Baugh**, a lawyer by profession. This is

getting already too long and I will pass on to the old hotel building on the south west corner of the square. When I first knew this old house it was kept by a widow lady by the name of **Mrs. Reed**. She was a lady of strong qualities and well situated to the wild primitive days in which she lived. If that old house had a tongue it could tell many a tale untold of tragic or comic nature, or political caucus, and intrigue, etc. On one occasion a man accused of cattle stealing was corralled and captured there by a band of regulators known as the "Slicks" and tied to a post oak tree that grew on the square and publicly whipped. I have seen the dead bodies of two prominent citizens that were killed on the street and carried into the little parlor of this old house. In those days LaFayette boasted of three hotels upon the corner of its public square, the other buildings have passed away and this old house has been abandoned to the bats and owls and such other trespassers as can find lodging there."

The final article was published April 13, 1904.

Cobb Memorial Archives Report by Robin Brown

This fall I invite you to join us for a Coca-Cola and the pause that remembers - Cobb Memorial Archives has completed its exhibit on the local Coca-Cola bottling plant. "Better by the Bottle: The Story of the West Point Coca-Cola Bottling Plant" is in-place at the H. Grady Bradshaw Library. In the early 1900s, Mr. George Cobb Sr. became associated with the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Columbus, Georgia through his brother-in-law, Columbus Roberts. By 1911, he purchased the franchise rights to West Point and LaGrange, Georgia as well as Chambers County. His son, George Cobb Jr., took over the business in 1930. With steady leadership and innovation, the Cobbs' business thrived, consistently earning high per capita consumption numbers.

I would like to extend a hearty thank you to Elinor Crowder, a member of our library board of trustees, who has been instrumental in writing the narrative for the Coca-Cola exhibit. Her time, expertise, and support were greatly appreciated and have enhanced the caliber of the exhibit. The Archives is fortunate to have willing and able volunteers donate their time and talents. Mr. Mickey Burdette has been hard at work indexing the *WestPointers*. He is making strides in this ambitious project. Once completed, the Archives will have an index of names mentioned in every issue of the company magazine which spanned 1953-1966.

Please stop by the Archives this Fall to learn about our collections, our research aids, and to see the Coca-Cola exhibit. In the meantime, check us out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/cobbmemorialarchives/> and our blog at <https://cobbmemorialarchives.wordpress.com/>.



Holiday shopping with top art & craft vendors!

Fredonia Heritage Day!

FREE TO ALL! Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016 10-5 Eastern time Caken'bakewalks!

Showcasing Our Southern Musical Heritage



Featuring Joyce Cauthen, Alabama Humanities Foundation Road Scholar demonstrating the old-time Southern music that came before bluegrass and country

+ Hear 1900s music



played on actual Edison cylinder and Victrola record players!



STAR WONDERS GOSPEL

History display: old tools, machines, artifacts, maps

Old-time craft demonstrations

Children's fun & learning activities!

Great holiday shopping!

Great BBQ!
Corn dogs! Hamburgers & Hot Dogs! Fried Fish! Polish Sausage! Grilled Chicken Wraps! Funnel Cakes! Fried Pies! and More!



RED MOUNTAIN WHITE TRASH

On Stage:

Red Mountain, Kevin Dunn, Amber & Dixieland Bluegrass, Star Wonders Gospel, Wiregrass, Lucille Allen Johnson, Whistlestop Pickers, Java Jammers, Tom Scott, Crystal McDaniel, Stormin' Norman & Charlotte Parker, Members of the New River Band, Jeanette Davis

+
A Fiddlin' Showcase!

Fredonia Community House, 6160 Chambers County (AL) Rd 222
Facebook: [FredoniaHeritageDay](#) – Vendor spaces: 334-499-0115

A NNUAL DUES

The annual dues of the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society are due each year on the first of January. Dues are \$20.00 per individual and \$5.00 for each additional member of the same household, and \$5.00 for any student who is still in school and is under 21 years of age. Other membership levels include Benefactor-\$250; Patron-\$100; and Friend-\$50. For any NEW member who subscribes after September 1, their membership will be for the remainder of the current year and also the following year. In becoming a member you will receive a quarterly newsletter *The Voice* that will inform you of quarterly meetings, new publications, articles of historical interest in the tri-county coverage area and upcoming events.

Please make checks payable to CVHS and mail with your name and full address to The Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society, Inc., 3419 20th Ave., Valley, AL. 36854



Enoch Henry Johnson 1867-1936
Born in Ripville, Chambers County.
Moved to Autauga County in 1896.
Prize winning Alabama Fiddler.



The Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society
Cobb Memorial Archives
3419 20th Avenue
Valley, Alabama 36854