
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 276
Brewton, Alabama 36426

Newsletter,
September 10, 1974

Editor,
Mrs. Carolyn Pugh McLendon

Annual Membership Dues- \$5.00

NOTICE OF MEETING - Our regular monthly meeting will be held September 17, 1974, at 7:30 p.m. at the Jefferson Davis Junior College Student Center. Mr. Robert Hunter Jones, Jr., President of the Conecuh County Historical Society, has graciously agreed to come to present a program on the Brooklyn area and its families, legends and traditions. He will bring with him some old family pictures, mementoes, and treasures, of the Feagin, Johnston, Autrey, Wadsworth and Allen families. Mr. Jones is no stranger to us. You will recall that he presented a program related to the Old Beulah Church and Cemetery preparatory to our pilgrimage to Jay Villa two years ago. This Brooklyn program is to prepare us for our 1974 Fall Pilgrimage.

FALL PILGRIMAGE - Brooklyn, Conecuh County, Alabama. Mrs. Dumas Jennings and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas McMillan are firming up plans for our Pilgrimage to Brooklyn and will announce the date and arrangements at the meeting.

HELP! Several of the members are of the opinion that we are moving much too slowly in gathering information to be used in compiling an Escambia County, Alabama History. We need volunteers to research the histories of the various communities and towns, many of which have been totally neglected as far as written history is concerned--for instance, we have little or nothing on Appleton, Roberts, Bradley, Dixie, Boykin, McGowin, Robinsonville, Canoe, Wawbeek, to name a few. We are told that there was once a flourishing village with a hotel, mill, school, churches, post office, etc. at Roberts, Ala., but we have nothing in our files to prove or disprove this statement! We need family histories and genealogies, histories of the various industries, etc. Your help will be appreciated, and your records copied and returned to you promptly if you will submit it.

Escambia County "HEADSTONES AND HERITAGES," several have asked for information on ordering the Escambia County Cemetery Record as published by Mrs. Lennis Elliott Shelton, Leslie Shelton and Reginald McFarland. Members of this Society may order same for \$16.00 which includes postage and handling, from Mrs. Shelton, 2616 Poplar Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36107. It has 106 cemeteries in Escambia County listed and is indexed.

PAYETTE COUNTY, ALA. HISTORY "LOOKING BACK," Volume III, will be on sale December 20th. Prepublication price is \$5.50 before September 15th (this includes postage). Names of 10,000 people who lived in the county before 1900 included--1819-1899 land grants, professional people 1839-1939, people named in wills 1844-1887, 15 years of marriage records, soldiers of three wars and many others. Order from Mrs. T. H. Robertson, Treasurer, Fayette County Historical Society, Fayette, Ala. 35555.

"PEOPLE AND PLACES IN CONECUH COUNTY, ALABAMA, 1816-1860" with map showing early homesteads, are still available for \$5.00 from Mr. Robert Hunter Jones, Jr., Conecuh County Historical Society, Evergreen, Alabama 36401

"A Brief History of Baldwin County" published 1928 by the Baldwin County Historical Society, are also still available for \$3.00 and may be ordered through Mrs. John M. Hastie, Box 69, Stockton, Ala. 36579.

STICK AND DIRT CHIMNEYS
Escambia County Style

By: Rev. R.W. Brooks, circa 1930

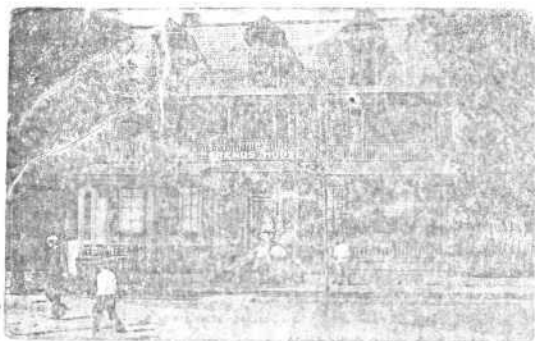
On the street this week I shook hands with a young man by the name of Still, and that reminded me of my knowing his grandfather. Many years ago, along about 1871, in the now obliterated town that was formerly at Miles Crossing, I knew a man by the name of Richard Still, they called him Dick Still. He had a little boy by the name of Ike Still.

Dick Still built stick and dirt chimneys. To talk about a stick and dirt chimney to this generation, is like talking to them in Greek, as they don't know what you are talking about. In my boyhood days they were as common as houses, in fact, when I was a little fellow, I thought when folks had brick chimneys, and glass windows, they were rich folks. Well, Dick Still knew how to build a stick and dirt chimney, and his boy Ike was his helper. As brick was scarce, and a long ways to haul and very heavy the chimneys in that forgotten village were all made that way.

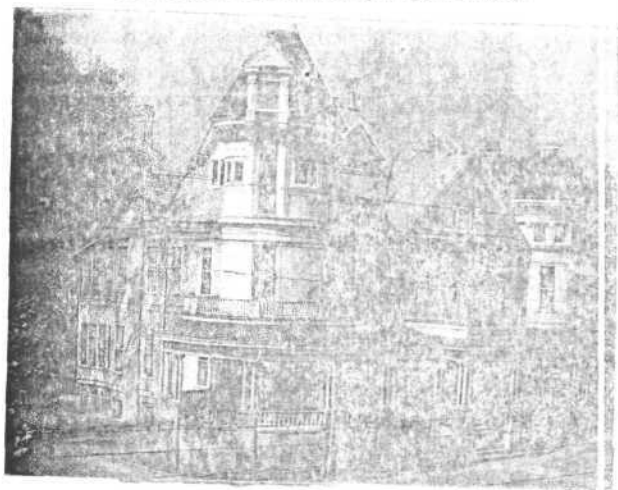
A description of one will be interesting to the younger generation. If the house was a log house, the body of the chimney was made of logs. If the house was a plank house, the foundation was of lumber, in a box shape up about six feet high. On top of that the chimney builder placed strips of wood, with mud usually about the consistency of what your Ma makes when she makes up biscuit dough. That mud is put on the strip of wood and pressed down and then they are ready for another strip of wood. The strips of wood get shorter and shorter making the draft of the chimney get smaller as it goes up like those you see of brick. When the draft reaches the right size, it is carried up till it gets two or three feet above the top of the house. A wider strip is used for the last piece to make the flare that you see on brick chimneys.

The hearth was made of mud and called the 'back and hobs.' Why it was called "hobs," I don't know. The mud in there was about five inches thick to keep the fire from burning the box. As the chimney is being built, mud is smeared all over the strips so that the fire will not burn them. When properly built they are a pretty good substitute for a fire place.

Before my father went to the Civil War he built a house and put a stick and dirt chimney to it. That was in Butler County in 1860. I went to that same house and someone had torn the chimney down and built a brick one. This was all the change that had been made in the house my father built in 1860. Well, old man Still was a good chimney builder, and his grandsons live out towards McCullough now. The old gentleman has been dead many years and Ike passed away more than ten years ago.



Located where Roberts Motor Company now stands



McGOWIN home, Brewton, Alabama
Located where Jernigan's Home Furnishings is today