

THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 276

Brewton, Alabama 36426

NEWSLETTER,
December 9, 1974

EDITOR,
Mrs. Carolyn Pugh McLendon

Dues and renewals-\$5.00 before Jan.1,1975
After Jan.1,1975 - \$6.00

CHRISTMAS PARTY - Our December meeting on December 17th at 7:00 p.m. will be held at our regular meeting place, the Jefferson Davis Junior College Student Center. Several of our local members, among them MR. DAN ROBERTSON, MISS KITA JANE BOYKIN, MRS. DORIS BRUNER and MRS. JEWEL WILLIAMSON, have agreed to "entertain" us with reminiscences of the first Christmas they remember and whatever they might like to share with the group. Also a few minutes will be taken to hear about the new recycling program here that might prove beneficial to the Society. Each person, whether member or visitor, is to bring a small historical memento or souvenir suitable for a man or woman of less than \$2.00 value. Use your imagination to make these "little gifts" add interest to the meeting. With a little ingenuity you could find a special item that didn't cost you anything! Put a gift card in the package with your name on it. The gifts will be numbered and numbers will be drawn for the gifts. Christmas refreshments will be served after the meeting. The public is welcome and invited to attend.

BARGAIN - The dues have been raised to \$6.00 for 1975, but you may pay only \$5.00 for membership if you pay your dues before January 1st. Dues are delinquent after March 31st. The Executive Board regrets the necessity for raising the dues, but postage and paper costs have continued to rise.

GIVE MEMBERSHIPS FOR CHRISTMAS GIFTS - Mrs. Gladys Byrd, membership secretary will be glad to send a receipt and membership card at your request.

ALABAMA HISTORY - 231 - This course will be offered again as a night class during the winter quarter at Jefferson Davis Junior College, taught by Rev. Charles C. Hays on Thursdays from 6:00-10:30 p.m. beginning January 2nd. You may audit the course at no cost except the books or, if you wish to take the course for credit the registration fee is \$32.50. Fees must be paid before January 2nd or pay a late charge. Rev. Hays is using "The Land Called Alabama" by Malcolm C. McMillan and "Origins of the New South" by C. Vann Woodward, as study guides. Rev. Hays enjoys history and lectures with enthusiasm, adding many things of special interest to give the class a keener awareness of our history both State and local. You won't want to miss a single class!

NEW MEMBERS - Since August we have taken in the following new members: Lt. Col. Linton H. Evans (Ret.), Mrs. J. W. Adkisson, Miss Fern Nix, Mr. Walter Holland, Miss Janie McCreary, Mrs. Edna K. Parker, Mrs. Gurdon A. Robinson, Mrs. Willa Robinson Hassel, Mrs. B. F. Stokes, Jr., making a total membership of 264!

GOOD NEWS! The senior citizens group under the leadership of Mrs. Helen Hildreth has agreed to assume the responsibility of assembling, labeling, stuffing envelopes and stamping our newsletters and quarterlies. Those of you who have helped with this task over the last two years, will rejoice -- it's almost too good to be true!

BROOKLYN PILGRIMAGE - You all must know by now that this was a most successful and enjoyable outing with approximately 150-160 people participating. Our thanks, though they seem inadequate, go to the following persons for their efforts and gracious hospitality in our behalf:

SHERIFF SCOTTY BYRNES and MRS. EVELYN JACKSON for escort service for the motorcade;

DR. and MRS. A. J. McCREARY for permitting us to visit Teddy, refreshments while there and booklets containing the history of the Plantation;

MRS. HATTIE LINDSEY, MISS DELIA RABUN and the other Brooklyn people for welcoming us and acting as guides at the Brooklyn Baptist Church;

ED LEIGH McMILLAN II for acting as guide to the cave and having roadway cleared to the cave;

MR. and MRS. THOMAS E. McMILLAN, ED LEIGH McMILLAN, and ED LEIGH McMILLAN II, for permitting us to visit peaceful Dozier Camp and furnishing coffee and cold drinks for our picnic supper;

MISS MARY LARKIN and MRS. ROCHELLE GARRETT for cakes for the picnic, and, last but not least,

THE PILGRIMAGE COMMITTEE, consisting of Mrs. Dumas Jennings and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. McMillan, for making all of this possible.

RECOLLECTIONS OF BRADLEY, ALABAMA, AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

By: Jesse F. Elliott

The Whitey still was located on Miller Creek, and was one of the earliest turpentine stills in this area, having been built in the early 1900s.

One of the stories told about this still was that the owner, being so proud of his new copper still, first ran off a charge of liquor before beginning to distill the turpentine. Not wishing to take the time to age this "white lightning" in charred barrels, he went all over the countryside collecting peach seeds to color and flavor his product.

Whitey was a thriving community sixty years ago. The Bagdad Land and Lumber Company owned thousands of acres of virgin timber from Milton, Florida, to Bradley, Alabama. In 1916, a railroad was built from Bagdad to Bradley. This company leased hundreds of convicts from the State of Alabama to work the turpentine. Large stockades were built to house the prisoners, houses built for the guards, and other buildings were erected to support this community. Guards were hired at \$40 a month and furnished a house to live in. Pine trees were tapped for turpentine three or four years before the actual timber cutting began. Once the trees were cut, the community began to die. Sometime in the 1920s the railroad was taken up and Whitey died. No trace exists of this thriving community now.

Bradley, Alabama, is situated near three creeks, Little Blackwater, Panther and Bear Creeks. None of these creeks could be used to float the logs out, so a large ditch was dredged nearby to float timber. Stories are told of men, who could neither read nor write, yet could figure to an inch exactly how many board feet would be in a log.

MORE ROBERTS COMMUNITY HISTORY - According to Mr. R.J. "Bob" Peebles, the people of the Roberts community had worked out a signal system to announce the birth of babies, and all the neighborhood would listen for the good news near the expected date of arrival. The signal was: one shot for a boy, two shots for a girl, and if there was trouble three shots, and the neighbors would know to bring help. The first time Mr. Peebles heard this signal was at the birth of Mark Manning.

MORE APPLETON HISTORY - To supplement the story by Mrs. Mary Jane Richburg in The Brewton Standard, issue of November 28, 1974.

APPLETON NOTES

by Mrs. Annie C. Waters

Nicholas Baggett and his family were early settlers of Appleton. Nicholas and his wife, Eliza (Betsy) obtained a passport from Georgia to the Bigbee Country through the Creek Nation in May, 1812 and eventually settled here. Baggett was a soldier in the Indian Wars. Betsy died February 9, 1908 at the age of 95.

James Augustus Tippins II and his family were early settlers of the lower Appleton area, settling on Burnt Corn Creek, on what is still today known as the Tippins' Eddy Road. Tippins was born in Tatnall County, Georgia, November 27, 1818, and was a brother of P.H.M. Tippins II and Sarah Eliza Tippins (who later married Green Shell) and Mrs. Charlotte Tippins Ashton (wife of John Ashton).

Mr. R.T.G. (Alphabet) Robinson as his friends called him, was postmaster on December 31, 1907 when the post office was closed and Rural Route Two took over the mail. Mr. Thomas Edgar Watson was the first carrier on Route Two, and his assistant was Mr. Curtis Hodges. At the top of Appleton hill at the forks of the road was placed a timber on which were placed a large number of mail boxes, and for a number of years Appleton was called "Box Hill."

In 1911, Mr. J.J. Thompson of Pollard, erected a sawmill on Mr. Ned Baggett's land at "Fish Trap" on Burnt Corn Creek. The timber was floated down the creek to Conecuh River where it was rafted and sent to market. At that time and for many ensuing years community picnics were held at Fish Trap and many a youthful couple from Brewton joined in the festivities.

FORGET

Forget the hasty, unkind words,
Forget the slander you have heard
Forget the quarrel and the cause
Forget the whole affair because,
Forgetting is the only way,
Forget the storm of yesterday.

Forget the knocker and the sneak,
Forget the bad days of the week,
Forget you're not a millionaire,
Forget the grey streaks in your hair,
Forget to even get the blues,
BUT DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR DUES.