



Wallace School

Volume 35, Number 6

June 2008

The June Meeting

Tuesday, 24, 2008, 3:15 p. m.

Thomas E. McMillan Museum

The June Program

The guest Speaker is Olin Tisdale of Seminole, AL. Olin is noted for his entertaining and informative stories drawn from his varied experiences.

The following introduction and brief biography is by Olin.

Olin on Olin

According to the Mid-wife, Olin was found in the mossy fork of an old Family Tree in Escambia Swamp on 29 April of 1925.

His Naval career started 5 months later during the 1925 hurricane and flood. He was launched in a No.3 washtub under the kitchen table and covered by the oil-cloth table cover. It was the only dry



**Our Speaker for the
June Program, Olin
Tisdale**

place in the house, with the roof gone.

Seventeen years later (when some fool started a war), he was called to active duty for service in the navy and assigned to the Medical Corps. During his 31 years of active service, he served on three aircraft carriers, an attack transport, a refrigerated stores ship, and a fleet oiler.

Most of the last 10 years of his service was in Aerospace Medical Research where he operated test equipment and taught the use of life support systems to Student Naval Aviators and Astronauts.

After retirement, he earned his Florida State Nursing Home Administrator's License and spent the next 15 years managing Geriatric Care Centers in Escambia Co. Fla.

At every opportunity, when on "shore duty," he pursued a college education, and eventually earned his MA Degree in Pub-

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ECHS Meetings for 2008

July 22	November
August 26	No Meeting
September 23	December Christmas
October 38	Party TBA

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July Program

Guest Speaker Jerry Gehman of Atmore will present a program on the history of local railroads and their importance to the growth of the area.

Dues

Remember to check your records to see if you have paid your membership dues.

Equipment Failure, Memorial Day, and a Flood

We apologize for the late delivery of the May Newsletter. Basically the problem was that the printing machine for the company that we use for the newsletter was out of commission (for more than twenty-four hours) at the time that our newsletter was to be printed.

Although the printers had the May version of the newsletter by 8:00 a. m. on the Wednesday morning the week preceding the meeting, the printers were unable to get the equipment repaired until 3:00 p. m. on the following Friday afternoon.

They had scheduled printing the newsletter on either Thursday afternoon or Friday morning in time for it to be mailed on Friday. In spite of the fact that the printers stayed and worked overtime on the newsletter after the equipment was repaired, they were not able to get it ready to meet the post office's 4:30 p. m. deadline.

The newsletter was mailed on Saturday morning, but because the following Monday was Memorial Day, there was no mail delivery that day and so the newsletters could not be delivered on time.

Oh, yes, while working on our newsletter, the front room of the printing company, Husky Printers in Atmore, was flooded because of a thunderstorm. I have to give them credit. Part of the staff kept printing pages, stuffing them by hand, and using an old fashioned roller to fold and crease them. The rest of us were moving furniture, getting items off the floor, and helping those who were moping

Hopefully, most of you received your newsletter on the Tuesday of the meeting. We do our best to get them mailed so that they arrive on the Friday or Saturday previous to the meeting on Tuesday. In this way you have a reminder that the monthly meeting is coming the next Tuesday.

We mail all copies, except the ones to Florida residents, in Brewton, and they are usually delivered the next day. However, we make a special trip to Century to mail those with Florida addresses. In the past we have found that if we mailed the ones for Florida in Brewton, people in Century and Pensacola, etc. did not receive their newsletter for four or five days.

Just Briefly

From ECHS President Jerry Simmons

I am looking forward to hearing our speaker for June, Olin Tisdale. As I write this, he and his wife are winding down a vacation trip to Alaska, one place I would love to go visit. You'll notice I said "visit," because I had enough of cold weather while living up north during the 1980s.

It gets even colder in Alaska and stays cold longer than either Ohio or Massachusetts, the states in which I resided. I am sure Olin will pass on a little bit about their trip when he visits with us next Tuesday.

I often think of the exciting views presented to our forefathers as they trekked across the wilderness for the first time. It's always a thrill even now for me to travel through the Smokies and take in the breathtaking vistas afforded us there.

Maybe if I were among the pioneers I'd turn around and go back, back to the comfort and safety of the place I'd left, because of the daunting scenes of rough and untamed country. I'm thankful, though, that my own ancestors didn't do that; rather, they kept on until they reached that part of heaven called Alabama.

It's interesting sometimes to consider how they knew it

was time to stop their wandering – my mother's people in Conecuh County and my grandfather's people in Butler County. Something just told them that this was "far enough. You can't do better than this, so stop and settle down"

Those of you with roots in south Alabama might understand what I'm talking about.

There is absolutely no place like home. Sure, other places have advantages not available here, but so what? Other places are not home.

I lived in Escambia County, Florida most of my life and I couldn't wait to get back while I was away in the great white north. I thought I would never move again.

Guess what? I did move again, this time to Monroe County.

However, that's just next door. My wife's people live here; this is where she went to school. I told her that where she is, is "home" to me. That is a sincere sentiment, simply proving to myself that home IS really where the heart is. And my heart lives in south Alabama, specifically as of now, Monroe County, Alabama.

Cane Syrup Helps Make a Boy's Career Decision

The following story about Olin Tisdale, our Speaker for the May Meeting, is a reprint of an article by ECHS president Jerry Simmons. The article first appeared as an Alger Sullivan Historical Society Column for May 8, 2008.

As with most company towns, Century had a commissary that was in essence a general store. The commissary sold everything from shoes and clothing to groceries and hardware. In truth, most local stores of the period were like that.

Transportation for more than a few miles wasn't as easily gotten back then as it is today. It became expedient for many home folks to have stores with most of life's necessities within walking distance or no further than a wagon ride away. During the fifties the immediate Century vicinity had Archer's, Bubba's, Hudson's, Frazier Johnson's, the commissary, and perhaps some others.

However, Saturdays meant downtown Flomaton, more so than Century, would be full of people, cars, trucks and horse- and mule-drawn wagons. Folks from all around came to town to get groceries, hardware, feed, and to bring the kids for haircuts. At one time there were as many as a dozen or more barbers in the two-block area from the railroad to Ringold Street, according to Joe Sunday. Joe's been associated with barbering for over half a century, starting out as a shoeshine boy in one of the local shops.

It was a special occasion when both Flomaton and Century and their outlying area folks could get to Flomaton to shop Edwards' and Lee's clothing stores, Ellis, Sparks' and Watson's grocery stores for groceries and meats, or Watson or McCurdy Hardware for tools.

A couple of special Saturday treats for the children might be to visit the Justice Rexall drugstore, where they could patronize the soda fountain, or to take in the Saturday "show" at the Jackson theater, consisting of a serial (you didn't dare miss a week because you'd not know if the hero/heroine would live or die), a western or two. This was a place

where you got popcorn and a Coke for a quarter or less.

The 5 & 10 cent store was another place youngsters would love to go into, to see if there were any new dolls or plastic soldiers or cars you could beg mama and daddy for.

Many young men found their calling when they worked after school and on Saturdays helping out in one of these stores. When I say "calling," it meant they found what they did not want to do as a life's vocation. Olin Tisdale is one of those young men.

Olin recently related to me the story of how he worked at the Alger Commissary as a teenager in 1938. One of his duties was to work the stock for the store and any other menial jobs that fell to his lot.

Mr. Radney worked for the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company and was the store's manager. He was always on the lookout for a bargain, so when a fellow came by one day selling syrup by the gallon bucket he listened to his spiel.

Radney had been buying the syrup, most of which would be sent to the Alger camps in the woods, from O.O. ("Double Naught") Tisdale of Bluff Springs, Olin's dad. But when this salesman promised he could provide the syrup at a greatly reduced price, Radney decided to buy his product.


Mr. Radney then told O.O. Tisdale he was sorry but he would not buy syrup from him any more. So, time passed and the promised cans of syrup came in, via boxcar. The problem was that the cooking of the syrup had gone wrong. It wasn't cooked long enough and it fermented right there in the boxcar. Needless to say, as the pressure built up in the caps, the tops popped loose and the expanded syrup seeped all over the boxcar. All 300 cans of it!

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Please patronize our new business members. Be sure to tell them you appreciate their support of the Escambia County Historical Society!


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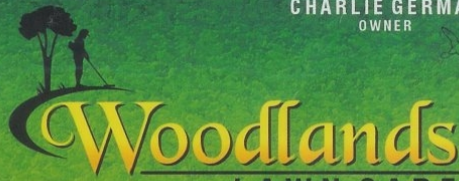
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City of Brewton Plans an Historic Monument

The city of Brewton is planning to participate in the statewide promotion sponsored by the governor's office on the Year of the Small Town.

Part of the plan is to erect an historic monument which will coincide with the third Saturday in June, 1010. That year is Brewton's 125th anniversary. Part of the celebration is to erect an historic monument.

The state wishes to know all the details of the monument (site, text, etc.) well in advance so all the monuments statewide can be prepared.

The city is requesting help from ECHS members on the details of the monument. The note from Steve Yuhasz, Director of Community Development for Brewton, states "We would like the group's participation and value your input."

The ECHS Library Committee

The Committee members (Ranella Merritt, Chair, Ann Biggs Williams, Jacqueline Stone, and Susan Crawford) have developed the following basic guidelines for loaning books from the Alabama Collection:

- Only members can borrow books.
- Books can be kept for a month.
- Members must pay for the replacement value of the book which will include the cost of shipping and handling if book is lost.

A list of the book collection will be placed in the Alabama Room with the letter R (for "Reference") by the title of books that cannot be checked out.

There will be a place to sign your name, the title of the book you are borrowing, and the date you borrowed the book.

The committee plans to do book reviews on books in the collection which will appear in the newsletter.

Scholarship Committee

ECHS has established a scholarship fund with an anonymous donation of \$500.00. The scholarship will be given to a student at JDCC who is majoring in history, education, or other related disciplines.

The first scholarship will be awarded in September 2008. The money has been placed in an account in the

college bookstore and will be used the student to help pay for textbooks for classes.

Hopefully there will be more donations to the Scholarship Account since not only is it a worthy endeavor in itself but it also serves to give good publicity for ECHS.

Olin on Olin

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lic Institutional Management.

After retirement, he earned his Masters Degree in Coastal Zone Management. After retiring the second time, he

resolved to not "retire" again, and took up bee keeping and hay farming.

Ivan put an end to that, so he is now fishing, hunting, traveling, and being Olin.



The McMillan Museum and ECHS now offer free access to the online service, Ancestry.com, one of the best sources for tracing family history. However, access to this web service is available only from the Museum.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

A PLACE CALLED WALLACE

A Remembrance of Wallace

We have this note from the source for this article:

The author wishes to remain anonymous, but he sends best wishes to the last graduating class at the Wallace school.

Near the middle of Escambia County on County Road 40, situated on the west bank of Little Escambia Creek, is the rural community of Wallace, where I was born in 1929. Remembering back to the 1930's, my mother pointed out my birth place, a two-room shanty owned by a large logging company for whom my father worked.

When I was about one year old, the family moved from Wallace to Barnett Cross Roads, about five miles to the west, and I lived there among the cotton fields until I graduated from Wallace School in 1948 and went away to the army.

Except to visit family and relatives, I never returned to Wallace. Those cotton fields are now growing pine timber for the big timber and paper companies, and the Wallace I knew then does not exist now.

During the 1930's through the '40's, Wallace was a bustling community that greatly benefited from an economy when cotton was king and a pine tree was valued for its rosin and golden timber.

In its heyday Wallace could boast of its two large dry-good stores, Kelly's and Thompson's. Who could ever forget those pleasant aromas floating from the doorway of each store, tempting children and adults alike. Usually a crate of oranges sat near the door, raisins on stems were in open wooden kegs, and coffee beans were stacked high in burlap sacks. Mule harnesses made of fresh leather vented a most pleasing aroma.

About once a week a large wooden barrel came in by railroad. The barrel was filled with crushed ice and fresh-caught Gulf red snapper. A supper of the delicious fish was worth the long wait.

Candies were displayed in cases with glass fronts and bottled soda water floated in ice water, Knee-Hi, Royal Crown, Coke,

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Wallace school ca 1905

Top row:, L-R: Wheeler McDavid, Lee Elder, Willie Elder, Gertrude Hines (holding flowers), Clyde Webb (leaning against back wall), Minerva McDavid (in front of Clyde) Mae Belle Hines, Mammie Elder, Lucy Elder, Esther Hines, Rowena Elder, Dora Cardwell, the Teacher who is Mrs. Carrie McPhail, Clyde Owens, Joe McDavid, Mallory McDavid, Drew Elder, Viola Elder, Eugene Hines, Bertha Hines, Agnes Elder, Lena Cardwell

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A PLACE CALLED WALLACE

Remembrance

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orange and strawberry flavors most prominent.

There was nothing better than a moon pie, a Baby Ruth candy bar, or a bag of fresh roasted peanuts along with an orange soda. Every child wanted to grow up to be a store owner.

Wallace had a U.S. Post Office, run by the Murray family, and later by Barto and Bucie Andrews. There was the L&N Railway depot, managed by Mr. Curry.

An exciting time for our family was to ride the train from Wallace to Burnt Corn where our grandparents met us. It was a tiring and sooty journey, but who would dare miss the excitement of it all.

Of course, the real excitement was to ride on the flat-bed wagon as grandpa guided his team to a large house near Skinnerton in Conecuh County. Grandma never seemed to tire of saying, "Here's my baby, there's my child." To be hugged and crushed against her ample bosom was just short of living in Heaven.

During the autumn weeks, activity in Wallace came alive at

the cotton gin. Farmers from far and wide drove trucks and teams for several hour from places like Hanberry, Deer Range, Repton, Barnett Cross Roads, and many byways to Wallace. They came with cotton stacked high to be run through the gin.

Anticipation mounted as A. D. Kelly, the gin owner and broker, sat behind his desk and pulled at the cotton fibers to determine the staple before he made an offer for the baled product. A good price meant the children could have some candy as pay for helping with the harvest, and new clothes were bought for the next school term.

Some folks felt like in the final tally Mr. Kelly might have thrown in a few extra pennies so the children could be guaranteed to savor the treats at his store. When the elder Kelleys passed away, management of the gin and store fell to the son, Bill Kelly.

Just to the north of the cotton gin was a rosin still, also owned by Mr. Kelly, where barrels of rosin were brought from the timberlands, poured into large vats, heated to boiling by wood or coal fires, and the trash was skimmed off by men us-

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More Thoughts of Wallace from a Different View

By Mrs. Ouida Grissett

As best I recall, most of which came to me through bits and pieces of conversation with people much older than I, family lore, or things of common knowledge or through written articles.

The community of Wallace was situated on the L&N rail line that ran north and south from Selma, Alabama to Pensacola, Florida. The Wallace Road (now County Road 40) was of packed red clay and gravel, laid out east to west. The community of Wallace began to thrive and built up around that junction. Two general stores were located on the west side of the tracks, as well as a sawmill that was operated by Marshall Thompson. When the store and sawmill closed, Pete Thompson (son of Marshall Thompson) built a general store on the southeast side, adjacent to the railroad depot and various wood frame houses.

On the northeast side of the road stood a couple of homesteads, a cotton gin and a turpentine still. Across the rail line

and directly west of the cotton gin was the A. D. Kelly homestead. The home was originally occupied by Mr. Kelly, his wife, two daughters, Margaret and Liz, and a son, Bill. It's not difficult to remember the home and these names as the Kelly household was the only place around to have servants and grounds keepers. As far as this community was concerned, Wallace was their only world and the Kelly's owned the world.

After the death of the elder Kelly's (one having died within a short time of the other), the older daughter, Margaret, having married Ollie Gilmore, and she her husband continued to live in the Kelly home. The younger daughter, Liz, was a deaf mute and never married. Thus, she continued to share the house with her sister Margaret and Margaret's husband. At some point a companion was hired to look after Liz, as well as to assist in Mr. Gilmore's store.

One thing even more profound in my memory is that my mother, who was an excellent seamstress, was known to have an eye for copying the latest fashions featured in the Sears-Roebuck catalog. Her sense of draping fabrics and stitching was likely unsurpassed in the county.

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A PLACE CALLED WALLACE

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Margaret and Liz were her best customers and the two women kept my mom busy day and night at the old peddle machine. While mom was not adept at signing language with the deaf, Liz was more than adequate at making her wishes known that the bodice of an outfit was to be like this picture, the waist and skirt like so, piping here and ruffles there, and the sleeves and hems must be modest and in keeping with the times.

I recall an amusing incident that occurred when Liz brought to our house a dress pattern which had been purchased from the Robins & McGowin store in Brewton. Mama made the dress to perfection without ever taking the pattern from its slip case.

Liz, thinking that the pattern had not been followed returned the dress for remake. Much sign language, gyrations and fittings ensued until Liz was satisfied that the dress had indeed been made to exact specifications as called for in the unopened instructions.

The brother, Bill, built a fine home at the top of the hill next to the church, and he and his wife Helen lived there for a few years. They had two sons and he prospered financially as an entrepreneur in Wallace, as well as through connections with a bank located in Conecuh County. Young Bill continued to broker cotton, handling any and all cotton ginned and baled at the family enterprise.

When he had business to attend to in Wallace, he used a front room of the Kelly house as his office. It must be said that memories, which are rich in texture could be soft on fact, but this is what I remember about Wallace, and I would not be surprised if there were flaws in my memory as to the chronology of events.

The sons of Bill Kelly were near the age of my older brother. I recall seeing them as basketball players when the school they attended in Brewton came to play a return match with the Wallace basketball team. I don't recall what became of the sons, but I assume they continued in the footsteps of their father, and perhaps remained in the banking business.

I recall that Douglas Sowell (his father was also called Douglas) married a lady named Alma. Together they had two chil-

dren, Margarite and Doug. Mrs. Sowell taught classes for a number of years at the Wallace school. Douglas continued the works of his father, operating the grist mill that had been established. The grist mill was located on family property opposite the Wallace school on the south side of the road.

When I entered the first grade at the Wallace school, the teacher was Mrs. Marble (Brooks) Curry (her husband was the depot agent), and Mrs. Sowell was the 3rd grade teacher. Here I repeat that I assume she was the wife of the younger Sowell, Douglas, and daughter-in-law to the original family who settled in Wallace many years prior.

My older brother had entered school three years prior to me and my twin; at which time Mrs. Sowell was the first grade teacher. Mrs. Curry became an institution at the school, remaining for many years to touch and influence the lives of hundreds of students.

It was rumored for many years that the Sowell family had no trust in banks and all their money was stored in syrup buckets and buried in the grounds around the old homestead. Fact or fiction, I cannot say, but it did add an air of romance and mystery to the legends that surround the founding families of Wallace. In those depressed times it was not unusual that most families buried what little extra money they had -- all for that "rainy" day.

There stands today a large house on the east side of Wallace whose original owner was Walker Pruett. Mr. Pruett was a surveyor for the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company after the elder Sowell died or retired. The great house is built of hardwood lumber and other broad-leaf trees known to the Little Escambia swamps.

The most striking feature of the house is not the wide breezeway porches that surround it, but the steady flow of an artesian well that has been flowing for hundreds (perhaps thousands) of years.

The well to this day is on the front lawn of the house, west corner. At some point Mr. Pruett had capped the flow and installed a metal pipe down the hole which would funnel the water to a manageable stream rather than making a big pool in his yard. The home is owned and occupied by the Kurt Lisenby family today.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

A PLACE CALLED WALLACE

The Last Graduating Class

By Therold N. Searcy

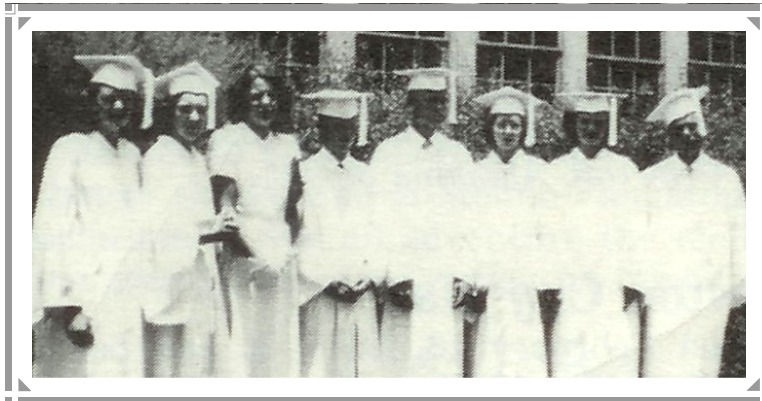
The modern brick structure of Wallace School (later known as the A. D. Kelly School) opened in 1928 and closed its doors as a school in 1968. The old building burned in early 1996. As a former student, one who started school there in 1st grade and was graduated from 12th grade, it is my contention that a 12th grade education from Wallace in those days was on par with an education from a junior college today.

Wallace had a fine school, grades 1 - 12, the only building around made of brick with an arched entryway and Winter Jasmine growing across the front. Children were transported in yellow busses and when classes ended, they lined up on the half-circle driveway out front to take kids home to Barnett Cross Roads, Wild Fork, Hanberry, Narrow Gap, the Magnolia Church area, and to many other farming and logging settlements.

The building contained twelve classrooms, two of which were in basement rooms. There was a large auditorium used for morning assembly once a week by the entire student body, for basketball games, for class plays, and for graduations.

In 1948, Wallace School graduated its last senior class of only seven students (Cornelia Tew,

Therold Searcy, Fanny Hobbs, Johnny Odom, Claude Pettis, Yvonne Butler and Ella Max Booth). Thereafter, grades 10 - 12 were bussed to W. S. Neal in East Brewton.



In 1948 Wallace School graduated its last senior class of only seven students. They were Cornelia Tew, ECHS member and author of the story on the school, Therold Searcy, Fanny Hobbs, Johnny Odom, Claude Pettis, Yvonne Butler, and Ella Max Booth. Thereafter, grades 10-12 were bused to W. S. Neal in East Brewton.

(Picture from Escambia County Heritage book)

severely crippled and he could barely walk, but somehow he managed to pull to the school grounds a little red wagon loaded with small bags of roasted peanuts, hard candy and chewing gum.



Front of the Wallace School

The school closed completely in 1968 and students went to Brewton or Flomaton. The building was used as a community center until fire destroyed it in 1996.

Still standing is the arched door-way, a reminder of excellence that used to be.

In fair weather students could al-ways expect to see their old friend Mr. Eddins, seated on a small folding stool near the water tower.

He was an elderly man, whose feet were severely crippled and he could barely walk, but somehow he managed to pull to the school grounds a little red wagon loaded with small bags of roasted peanuts, hard candy and chewing gum.

Mr. Eddins sat most of the day waiting for students to buy something of whatever he had on that day. In those days of the Big Depression in the 30's and followed by WW-II in the 40's, students had very few pennies to spend, but their good friend with the little red wagon could be seen patiently waiting.

If Wallace School had a museum that little red wagon should be on permanent display, as it is

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etched in the memory of so many former students.

B. G. Tew was the principal at Wallace, as well as being the algebra teacher and paddler of rowdy boys. His glaring stare could put ice water into the veins of any hot-headed youth.

One of the most respected men in the county education system, Mr. Tew lived to be around age 94 or 95; gone yes, but we'll never forget him.

Many wonderful teachers graced the classrooms at Wallace, but one of the most memorable was Louise Pettis (third from left in the picture), teacher of English and literature. She instilled in students the desire to achieve in life and to believe in following a dream.

The principal's office was the first room to the left when entering the building and across the hall to the right was a small library. Toilets were outhouses that had been set away from the school building; flush toilets came in later years when indoor toilets were installed.

The lunchroom was the favorite place of everybody, where the most excellent cooks (Bertha Morris, Ruth Crutchfield, Ivalee Lisenby, Dorothy Franklin and Illa Robinson) knew just what hungry kids needed. Who could ever forget those plates of beans, fried meat, turnip greens, cornbread and bowls of hot vegetable soup?



A Picture in a room in the Teacher's Lounge of the Wallace School. Picture above the bookcase is of Mrs. Tew, the principal's wife.

On the school ground was a water tower with an electric pump (something unusual for country folks), and a row of water fountains for sipping a drink. Walking to the backside of the playground one could drink from an artesian well. To sweaty students hot from recess play that was the best, the coldest, and the sweetest water in the world.

And we all remember Jack Crutchfield, the bus driver. Mr. Jack had to build his own bus before the new school opened at Wallace. He had an old truck, which he converted into a polished piece of transportation with a cover over the body and wooden benches along each side and one down the middle.

There were sapling poles fixed down the middle of the body for the children to hold onto. He took his job seriously and no child was ever left behind, because Mr. Jack kept a tight schedule and he

sounded his horn before reaching a house so the kids could run and jump on.

When the new Wallace school was built in 1928, and the small community schools were consolidated, Mr.

Jack was naturally named as a driver. He collected the children from the Long School and drove them to Wallace. In 1929 the county decided to give him a new bus.

Mr. Jack waited and waited for his new vehicle to arrive, no doubt dreaming of the bright yellow and black lettering. His plans were so vivid, recalls his grand-

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Wallace auditorium was used from 1928 until 1963

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daughter, his fussing and fretting about delivery delays, coupled with the long drive, the children began to say, "It's taking so long to get it out maybe it will be a palace by the time it gets here."

Regardless, the "palace" with its spanking new Bluebird body did arrive and Mr. Jack drove his yellow bus until 1952. No man was ever more proud of his charge than Mr. Crutchfield, and no man or woman will ever have a better safety record than Mr. Jack. I am told that when Mr. Jack retired, his son, Miles, took over the driver duties and drove the "palace" until his own death in 1965.



Wallace School: All pictures accompanying this article are courtesy of ECHS member Jerry Fischer



After the Fire

An article from the Brewton Standard on the history of the school says of the school after the fire, "Still standing is the arched doorway, a reminder of what used to be."



Fire destroyed the Wallace School in January of 1960

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A PLACE CALLED WALLACE

Anne Torrans Remembers The Elder Family

By Anne Torrans

Willie Elexander "Buddy" Elder, frequently called "Mr. Will," married Minnie Frances Hines. They raised eight children and lost a set of stillborn twins. He was a bridge gang foreman for the L&N Railroad so he was away from home a lot. He bought six acres from his brother-in-law Isaac Edward Hines and built his house close to the Hines place so his wife would have family nearby when he was not there.

The story is that he needn't have worried. He was a high tempered touchy man who didn't bother anyone and didn't take anything off anybody. He kept several loaded guns and was an expert with the bull whips he kept hanging by the doors. It is unlikely that anyone who knew him would have bothered his wife or children.

Mr. Will was known for being very strong willed and stubborn. He lost money in a bank failure once and never trusted a bank or a banker again. He saved money for his old age and hid it in tin cans buried around his place (There's nothing left there; he and his family dug it all up and used it so don't bother hunting for buried treasure!). He plowed and planted a big garden each year, had a cow and chickens.

He frequently brought a keg of oysters or a large whole red snapper when he came home from Pensacola. He brought them iced down, which was a new thing at that time. The two Hines/Elder families would cook and eat together, enjoying the very different food. His wife Minnie was quieter and more even tempered. She rarely

spent a night away from home. If she was at her brother's house as dark began to fall, she would laugh and say, "Well, night coming on. Guess I'll go smell of my own old sheets."

The oldest son, Leon Edward Elder, married the girl next door, Eva Hanberry. They moved to Birmingham where he worked in the retail shoe business and raised six children, including a set of twins. Rowena married Wheeler McDavid who died shortly after they married. She later met and married William Johnson Fishel of Washington, Kansas.

They farmed and raised their eight children in Kansas. Willie Ruth, who was called "Bill" as a girl but who used Ruth after she was grown, married Bertis Sawyer and had one son. She managed the corset and foundation departments at several Birmingham department stores, eventually moved to California to be near her son.

The next two girls, Viola and Agnes, carried on the family tradition and married brothers. Viola married Jephtha Randolph "Jepp" Burkett and had three sons. Agnes married Lymon

Burkett and had one daughter. They lived close to each other and were both sisters and best friends all of their lives. Hartwood married Flora Robinson and had three children, one of whom, Peggy, was Miss Alabama in 1948.

They lived in various places in Florida. James Augusta Elder married Lucille Sawyer. He drowned while on a fishing trip when he was only forty-one. The baby, Mary Edna, stayed in Escambia County. She married Lewis Eddins and had two daughters, both of whom married

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E. Hines and Ida Elder Hines with family, early 1900's.

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Elder Family

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and raised their children and worked in Wallace and Brewton.

Ida Elder married Isaac Edward Hines who was usually called "Mr. Ed." She was a delightful person, full of fun and fond of practical jokes. She was small and agile and entertained her grandchildren with such antics as doing the "duck walk." She and her sister Lottie were kindred spirits and loved being together.

You had to watch yourself with one of them. Once when Ida was visiting Lottie she came into the kitchen when Lottie had set a large open can of tuna on a work table and turned her back to walk to the other end of the kitchen. Ida picked up the can of tuna, got under the work table and hunkered down in the corner.

Lottie came back with a bowl, ready to mix the tuna and couldn't find it. She started talking to herself, asking if she had gone crazy. She walked back to see if she had left it by the sink, didn't find it, and kept muttering to herself. While her back was turned Ida reached up from under the table and set the tuna where Lottie had first put it.

When Lottie came back to her work table and saw the tuna she was really exasperated, still talking to herself about not seeing something right in front of her face and that she must be losing her mind. She set the bowl down, went back to the other end of the kitchen, and Ida reached up and took away the tuna again.

When Lottie got back to the table the tuna was gone again. This time she was totally exasperated and said "Damn! It's not a joke, I am crazy." At this point Ida came out from under the table and was upset because she had aggravated her sister into saying a cuss word. Lottie teased her for years about being the Devil's helper.

Mr. Ed Hines farmed and sometimes worked at building houses or running a sawmill. He was a very progressive man for his times. He believed in education, probably because he went to school only two years in his life. He read books and educated himself.

He found the money to subscribe to the Mobile Register and spent Sunday afternoon on his porch reading his Bible and the Sunday paper. He paid the extra fees to allow three of his four oldest girls to continue in school until they were 18. (There was no high school in Wallace at the time. You could go to school until you were 16 and could pay to go two more years.)



World War I Era Picture of Wallace Hines on the Right. Picture courtesy of Anne Torrans.

When his two boys reached high school age there was a high school in Repton and haughter Esther lived there. Gene and Clifford lived with their sister and went to high school there. Mr. Ed supported improved farming early. He worked with the 4H program helping his daughter Bertha by plowing an acre for her to plant tomatoes.

He bought and used the first syrup thermometer in the Wallace area. He studied law books on his own and was the Justice of the Peace for the area for many years, continuing until just before he died. He performed marriages for many of the area residents on the front porch of his house. Just before he died he was in a hospital in Mobile.

His physician picked up his hands and told him, "Mr. Hines. I didn't know there was a man left in the world who worked hard enough to have calluses like that in his hands." He never minded the work because he wanted to own his own land and be his own boss.

Ed and Ida Hines had eight children. One child, a girl named Eunice Ruth, was stillborn. The last child, a boy

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named Otto, died of a fever just past six months old. The marker on their graves does not have the girl's name. When we put the marker there no one knew she had been named.

Recently a part of a page from an old family Bible was read more closely and we learned that she had been named. Two of the others died young. Gertrude had measles as a child, was left with a leaking valve of the hear, and died of heart failure in her early 30s. Gene was working for the railroad in Houston, TX. He worked in rain and cold during a storm, making up freight trains, caught pneumonia and died in about 10 days. He was in his early 30s.

Esther married Dannie Lee Falkenberry from Tunnel Springs who was a conductor for the L&N Railroad. They lived in Wallace for a time but soon moved to Repton. Esther taught piano and played at church for many years. After she was widowed she managed the lunchroom at the Repton school. They were both active members of Repton's First Baptist Church.

They had two children. Mildren Grace Falkenberry attended Judson College and graduated from Bob Jones College. She married Joseph Horace Lewis, who was career Army, served at Normandy, and returned as a Lt. Col. While he was overseas Mildred taught at Repton High School. They maintain homes at both Birmingham and Repton.

They have one daughter, three grandsons, and two great-granddaughters. Dannie Lee Falkenberry Jr. attended the University of Alabama and married Doris Herron of Tuscaloosa. He was killed in an automobile accident in Colorado Springs in 1956. He had a son, a daughter, and four grandchildren.

Mae Belle Hines married Russell Anderson Torrans of Mobile, a widower with two small children. He was foreman of the pressroom for the New Orleans Daily States and for the Shreveport Times. They lived in Shreveport, Louisiana from 1930 until his death in 1964 and hers in 1980. Mae Belle was very active in community affairs, including working as a volunteer at the USO during WW-II and serving as president of the PTA.

Both were active in the First Baptist Church of Shreveport. They had a son and daughter. Michael Edward Torrans graduated from Northwestern University (LA) and obtained a Master's degree from LSU. He married Ola Ann Greer of Logansport and had two sons and one granddaughter. He served nine years of active duty and retired as a full colonel from the active Army reserve. He died of heart failure in 1998.

Ida Annie Torrans obtained degrees from Northwestern (LA) State, LSU and also from Michigan State University. She taught at Auburn University, Western Illinois University, University of Montevallo, and at Louisiana State University in Shreveport, from which she retired in 1998.

Edward Clifford Hines married Marguerite Fisher of New Orleans. They lived most of their lives in Toledo OH where he was a master machinist and union steward at the Sun Oil Company. After retirement they lived in Birmingham until his death. She now lives in a nursing home in Otterbein OH.

Bertha Kate Hines married Cecil Columbus Washburn of Kellyton, AL. He was a printing pressman and an old friend of Russell Torrans who introduced them. They lived most of their lives in Galveston TX where he was the pressroom foreman for the Galveston Daily News. After retirement they lived in Birmingham. Bertha is presently living at Garden Park Nursing Home in Shreveport LA.

David Hartwell Elder's family came to America from Scotland in the early 1600s. They lived in Virginia and migrated on south to Tennessee and Georgia. David was born in Georgia in 1836. He and his wife Nancy Caroline Graham Elder came to Alabama from Russell County, GA in the period immediately after the Civil War.

He had been married before and had three children. The first wife and children died of the fever and he married Nancy in 1868. The last seven of their nine children were born in Escambia County, five of the seven in Wallace.

Their children were:

- David Monroe Elder, born 1869 in Opelika, AL
- Willie Elexander "Buddy" Elder, born in 1871 in Russellville, GA

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- Ida Elder, born 1874 in Atmore, AL
- Walter Jackson Elder, born 1877 in Wallace, AL
- Leonard "Red" Elder, born 1881 in Wallace, AL
- Myrtle Lee "Mertie" Elder, born 1883 in Wallace, AL
- Lottie Lorene Elder, born 1886 in Castleberry, AL
- Grover Cleveland "Cleve" Elder, born 1890 in Wallace, AL
- Wallace "Mutt" Elder, born 1893 in Wallace, AL

Walter Jackson Elder married Josephine Jordan of Greenville and had one daughter, Opal Virginia Elder. He died of typhoid fever before his daughter was born.

Grover Cleveland Elder was the family wanderer. He was in the army during WW-I and for several years after.

Four of these Elders moved to Mississippi.

Somewhere the Elders met the Hines family from Burnt Corn. As often happened in those days of big families, three of the Elders married three of the Hines family. All three families settled in Wallace, raised their families there, and are buried in the Methodist Church Cemetery.

Lucy married Jesse Steele, lived in Wallace and raised a family.

Mamie married Ransom Beasley, lived in Wallace, had four sons and is buried in the Wallace cemetery. Some of them and their families still live in the Wallace/Brewton area.

McClain married Lelia Mildred Simmons and had two sons and two daughters. He attended a seminary in Texas and was a Presbyterian minister for part of his life.

Remembrance

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ing fine mesh nets attached to long poles.

The hot rosin, amber in color, was poured into containers, sealed, and shipped to manufacturers for processing into many useful products, one of which was turpentine. School children often took field trips to the still to see how turpentine came to be that foul smelling medicine that was rubbed on a child's chest to treat colds and croup.

Many Afro-Americans lived in Wallace, hired as laborers for the cotton fields, and to chip the pine trees to make the rosin run. They lived on the north side of the village, segregated from the whites who lived in the logging camp on the south.

Down by the railroad tracks was a juke joint for the blacks (it would be called a dance hall, honky-tonk, or tavern today) owned and operated by a big black man named "Gobaby." I don't know how he got that name but it left an impression on me. After more than 70 years I still remember it.

Every Saturday night the place was jumping to the beat of a piano, a banjo, and a tambourine, and there was dancing inside and outside the small building. There were a few courtships, some drinking, and an occasional fist fight. Often Gobaby had to step in and break it up, then steer the combatants back to the dance floor.

White folks could purchase a pint of liquor there, and sit in the car or on the wagon bed and listen to the music, perhaps look up to the sky and gaze at a bright moon peeking over the tall trees of the Little

Escambia swamps. perhaps do a little spooning of their own.

Following WW-II, the economy of Wallace suffered as young people migrated to Mobile and Pensacola to seek good paying jobs. Farming became unprofitable and Wallace lost its cotton gin and the rosin still.

Afro-American residents moved to the larger towns of Brewton, Flomaton, Atmore, Monroeville and Evergreen, where there were schools for their children, and jobs were more attainable. The availability of an automobile in every family soon killed the railway passenger service and the L&N depot closed.

Owners of the two big stores died and their heirs, not wishing to lose everything in a depressed economy, closed the stores or let them fall into decay. Ollie Gilmore, son-in-law to the elder A. D. Kelly, ran the old Kelly store for a number of years.

In time it was closed and Mr. Gilmore built a new place on the east side of the tracks called Gilmore's General Store. The old store was torn down. Pete Thompson followed in his father's footsteps as a proprietor and also opened a smaller store, after selling the sawmill commissary to Ashley Grissett.

Remaining in Wallace today at the start of a new century are just a few homes and three churches, Pete Thompson general store, and the railroad tracks. The village never grew big enough to have street lights to block the glow of starry nights, so anyone wanting to stargaze should go to Wallace and look upward. Some of us can still see the memories.

**THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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