



Dale Cox

Volume 39, Number 1

January 2012

The January Meeting

The Program: Election of Officers

And

Meet JDCC's New President

Thursday, January 24, 2012, 3:00 p. m.

The Program

Our bylaws state that we should elect officers every two years in January

Please come prepared to place names in nomination, but remember, you must have that person's agreement to serve before you nominate him or her.

The offices defined in the



Dr. Bain

bylaws are: President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Publicity Chair, Historian, Curator, and Editor of the Newsletter/Journal.

Also, Dr. Daniel Bain, JDCC's new president, will join us for the meeting.

Plan on attending in order to hear from and meet Dr. Bain.

Program for the February Meeting

Writer and historian Dale Cox, see picture below left, will be the guest speaker at February's meeting of the Escambia County Historical Society.

The author of ten books on Southern history, Cox will be speaking about his new release, The Claude Neal Lynching: The 1934 Murders of Claude Neal and Lola Cannady. The book deals with a violent outbreak that took place in the Florida Panhandle in October of 1934 and includes a large amount of material on Brewton and Escambia County.

A murder suspect named Claude Neal

was taken from the jail in Brewton by a raiding party of men armed with guns and dynamite. He was carried back to Florida and lynched deep in the swamps near Marianna. The book is now available at Amazon.com.

A resident of the quaint Panhandle community of Two Egg, Cox is the father of two grown sons - William and Alan - and is a former resident of Alabama, having lived in Dothan, Enterprise and Oxford. He maintains a website on Southern historic sites and points of interest at

<www.exploresouthernhistory.com>

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The February Meeting

February 28, 2012

The Thomas E. McMillan Museum

3:00 p. m.

News and Announcements



Darryl Searcy to Receive Statewide Award

On February 3, 2012, Darryl Searcy will receive the statewide award "Hospital Hero of the Year." Nominated by D. W. McMillan Hospital in Brewton, Darryl will be honored at a banquet in Birmingham.

In an email, Darryl writes that he has been interviewed by the local PBS station in Mobile for a short program that will be aired in Brewton (time for the program to be shown on the local cable network not yet known).

He says the program will emphasize his work in rebuilding the courtyards at D. W. McMillan hospital and the plant collection work that he has done for Pfizer, Johnson and Bayer which has taken him on exploratory trips to the Amazon in South America and to the jungles of India.

Genealogy Workshop



Old Masonic Lodge

Monroe County Heritage Museum will host its 11th annual Genealogy Workshop at the Old Courthouse Museum on Saturday, February 4, 2012. Sign-in & introductions at

8:30 am, program ends at 3:00 pm.

Dr. Gregory A. Waselkov, Director of the Center for Archaeological Studies at the University of South Alabama and Elizabeth D. Wells, Special Collections Librarian at Samford University, will speak at the Museum.

A box lunch will be served at the Old Masonic Lodge in Perdue Hill, where Margo Stringfield, Research Associate with the Archaeology Institute at the University of West Florida will speak.

Weather permitting, the day will end with a visit to a nearby archaeological dig and/or local cemetery of interest.

\$30.00 fee includes box lunch. Pre-registration deadline is 4:00 pm on Feb. 1st. Contact Monroe County Heritage Museum at <mchm@frontiernet.net or 251-575-7433>.

Jay Historical Society Has New Site for Museum



The New Jay Museum

The Jay Historical Society now has a new site for its museum, the Cannon Building, also known as the "5 and 10," and Shorty's Barbershop. The society is now work-

ing to prepare the building for its new role as a museum.

President of the society, Dorothy Diamond, has requested help for locating items for their "living history" displays: (1) an old chandelier (doesn't have to work or be expensive); (2) a small square table which would look like a "cook table" in an old kitchen. Something that the cook would stand beside to make bread or prepare food; (3) material for curtains, velvet-like, or throws; (4) antique looking lamps; (5) old photos of local churches and histories of local churches; (6) photos of life in the past, a photo of a baptism in a creek is given as an example; and (7) photos of students from local schools, especially of Chumuckla and Central schools.



A kitchen display at the Jay Museum of an old fashioned sink with water pump.

Pictures courtesy of the website [North Santa Rosa](http://www.northsantarosa.com) <<http://www.northsantarosa.com>>.

(Continued on page 3)

Kay Ross

The society lost one of its longtime members this month, Kay Ross

She and husband Joe always brought interesting items to ECHS "Show and Tell" programs and were the best of company on the field trips of the society. Kay, with Joe was also a member of the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society.

In the picture on the right, Kay and Joe are in the group portrait of the ECHS visit to the Baker, Florida historical society. In this picture, taken at the Gator Café in Baker, Kay is seated in the front row, third from the right and Joe is standing in the back row, third from the left. #



News and Announcements *(continued)*

(Continued from page 2)

The Jay Historical Society can be contacted at <http://www.jayhistoricalsociety.org/>.

War Ration Books and the Letters of Etta Mae Holladay

The Society has received a small package of items found in a rental house in Friendswood, Texas. Ms. Angela Adlerz was cleaning out the house when she came across a couple of World War II Ration books with the name of Etta Mae Holladay and two letters addressed to Mrs. S.L. Holliday from her brother, Chester, in France, apparently in the Armed Services.

She sent these items to us with the hope we would place them in our vertical files and perhaps some day a family member, relation or family friend might run across them and return them to the family.

If you know of anyone by this surname who once lived on Route 4 in Brewton, please pass this information to them.

Note War Ration Books Good Resource for Family History Research

The website [Genealogy Today](http://www.genealogytoday.com/guide/war-ration-books.html) describes War Ration Books as good source for researching family history.

The books attempted to have the name, address, age, occupation as well as height and weight of the owner listed on each book.

Of course, the owner of the book filled out the information and completing it was not always enforced. Also, the information is in hand written form, is often in pencil, so the information can be hard to read.

Access to the website search for ration books can be found at <http://www.genealogytoday.com/guide/war-ration-books.html>. #



Snapshots



The first two pictures show ECHS members enjoying the Christmas Party at the home of Suzanne Kirby.

Pictured at the left, from the left, are Barbara Page, Darryl Searcy, and Carolyn Jennings.



In the picture above are, from the left, Jane McMillan, Sammie McGlotheran, Susan Crawford, Tom McMillan. And behind Tom, Lydia Grimes.



On December 13, 2012, ECHS placed its second historic marker, this one honoring Escambia County High School, the first public, county high school in the state.

Pictured above unveiling the marker at the dedication are, from the left: Howard

Shell, Mayor of Atmore; Sally Finlay of the Curtis Finlay Foundation, which sponsors the marker program; and Tom McMillan, ECHS president.

A current student from the high school is behind the marker helping to unveil it.



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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Peters Lumber Company



Since there are no pictures of the Peters Lumber Company available, the illustrations are of other large lumber companies from the area.

This picture, from the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society website at < <http://algersullivan.org/>>, shows the sawmill, powerhouse and mill pond of the Alger Sullivan Lumber Company at Century,

The following article is taken from the file "Peters Lumber Co. at Alco Station" in the Alabama Room. Part of a handwritten copy of material labeled "Escambia Sources of Wealth," this article is entitled "Number Two: The Peters Lumber Company."

The file on the Peters Lumber Company was compiled by ECHS Archivist David Allen.

The Peters Lumber Company

"The mills of this firm are located in Escambia County, Alabama, one mile south of the growing town of Brewton, to which they form a valuable adjunct.

"The mills, shops, store, post office, cages, and dwellings more pretentious, together with a flourishing school and churches, altogether form the beautiful and busy village of Alco; so named by the indomitable John T. Porter. He was an active man in the establishment of the first extensive mill plant on the site, which was known as the Alabama Lumber Company. Taking the initials of the words composing this firm's name, the name Alco was

formed, which was given to the new town, and adopted by the railroad company as the name of the station at this point.



Emma Theis, grandmother of member David Allen and wife of N. E. Theis, one of the managers of the Peters Lumber Co.

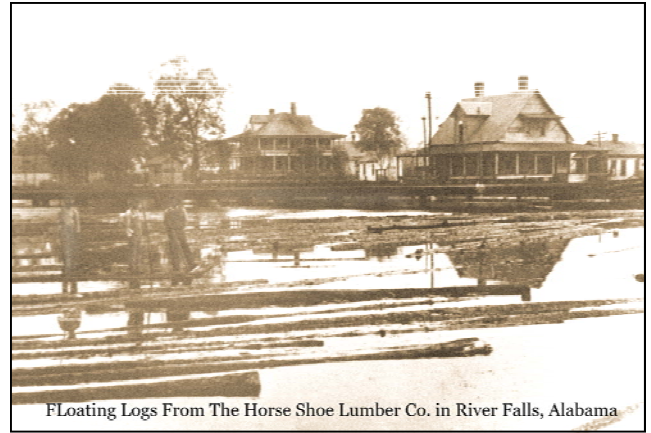
"The life of the whole village is in the mills, indeed enough people are given employment to form several small villages, though a large number of those are not employed at the mills direct, that are scattered over the vast stretches of timber lands owned by this company, engaged in cutting, hauling, and floating the logs to the mills.

"The location of this plant for business is admirable, being situated upon the railroad, and at the same time at the confluence of the two large creeks, Burnt Corn and Murder, which extend out to the northeast and northwest, and with their tributaries, tap thousands of acres of heavily timbered pine lands and afford a means of floating the logs from these lands to the mills.

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Peters Lumber Company *(Continued)*



Logs were floated down creeks and rivers but had to be either pulled to the waterways by mules, horses, or oxen or floated in log canals as show in the picture on the left.

Annie Waters mentions in her book, History of Escambia County, Alabama, that in 1889 the Peters Lumber company built a ditch near Bermuda to intersect Burnt Corn Creek. She also mentions that the Lumber Co. had installed an electric light system at the mill “with power sufficient to supply the principal residences (of Alco)” (History of Escambia County, Alabama, p. 214).

The picture, above right, is entitled “Floating Logs from the Horse Shoe Lumber Co. in River Falls. Three men are standing on logs at the left of the picture. The men are floating the logs down the Conecuh River. At left is a log ditch in Baldwin County, belonging to the Southern States Lumber Company.

(Continued from page 6)

“Up by the side of and parallel to one of these creeks (Burnt Corn), a well built canal has been dug for a distance of 30 miles for the purpose of floating logs to the mills, as this creek is too small to admit of logs being floated upon it except during a rainy season.

“Along the courses of these two streams for a distance of more than 30 miles, the Peters Lumber company owns thirty-six thousand acres of pine lands, and below at their confluence, like a greedy monster with open mouth are located the mills to ‘devour’ the logs as they are floated down to them. The resonant roar of the great gong reverberates through the country for miles around, as it sounds three times a day to indicate the hours of work. Hundreds of hands respond to its calls.

“In the year 1883, the first mill was built on this

site. It was an ordinary saw mill for squaring timber and its capacity was 75 or 100 sticks per day. Mr. George Harold owned and operated it. In the fall of 1885, he sold out to what was afterwards known as the Alabama Lumber Company and operated it with various changes in ownership for two years, when it was sold to the present owners.

“Mr. R. G. Peters, the largest stock owner in the company, is also conducting similar plants in other parts of the country. His lumber and salt works in Michigan are operated on a large scale. Mr. Peters is withal a practical, Christian gentleman, and makes his influence felt for good wherever he goes. His interest in this plant amounts to four-fifths.

“Messrs. J. A. Proctor, J. M. Ackley, and N. E. Theis form the balance of the company. Mr. Proctor is the secretary and resident manager, and the great success of the company is due largely to his

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Peters Lumber Company *(Continued)*

(Continued from page 7)

farseeing and systematic management. Mr. J. M. Ackley is the civil engineer of the company and has general management of the real estate belonging to it.

“When the property was purchased from the Alabama Lumber company, large additions and improvements were made. A new sawmill, planers, and dry-kilns machinery were put in. A large mill with a ‘gang’ of 32 saws was transplanted complete from Manistee, Michigan. It took a whole train of 20 cars to transport this. The company also ordered several car loads of Tennessee mules to be used in the logging operations (Annie Waters).

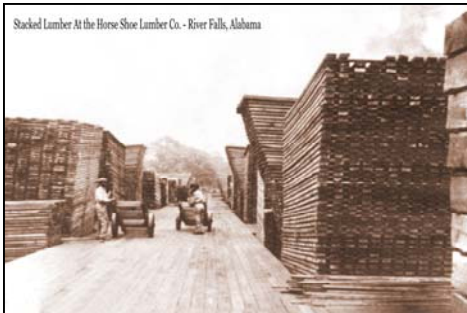
“A well equipped machine shop, which alone cost more than many complete sawmills, is located in the plant, and does all of the repairing, including iron turning, etc.

“All of the business is conducted on a gigantic scale, and will interest the visitor who may have half

a day to spend in looking it over. A definite idea could be formed only in this way; yet to men of experience in this line the following facts and figures will tell volumes:

- ◆ Average cut square timber per day – 90,000 cubic feet
- ◆ Average cut rough boards per day – 125, 000 to 150,000 feet
- ◆ Average price received for timber – twelve & one half cents per cubic feet
- ◆ Average price received for rough lumber - \$11.00 per 1000 feet
- ◆ Average price for dressed lumber - \$14.00 per 1000 feet
- ◆ Number hands employed over all –286
- ◆ Average monthly expenses - \$13,000
- ◆ Value of ditch - \$60,000
- ◆ Value of whole plant - \$500, 000”

(Continued on page 9)

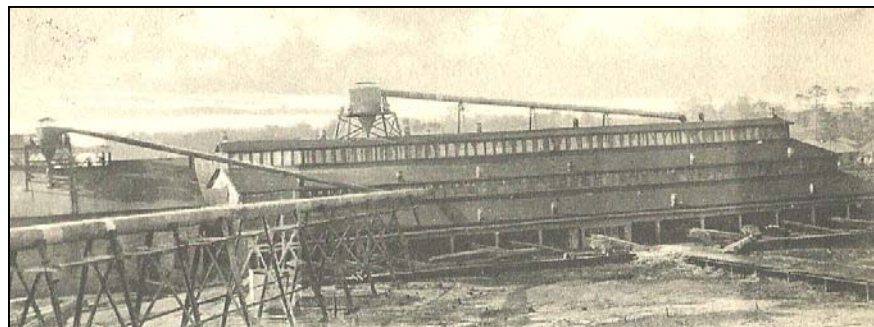


Stacked timber at Horseshoe Lumber Co. at River Falls, Alabama.

Below, Planing Mill at Jackson Lumber Co., Lockhart, Alabama



Bagdad Land & Lumber Co. Commissary in Munson, 1917.

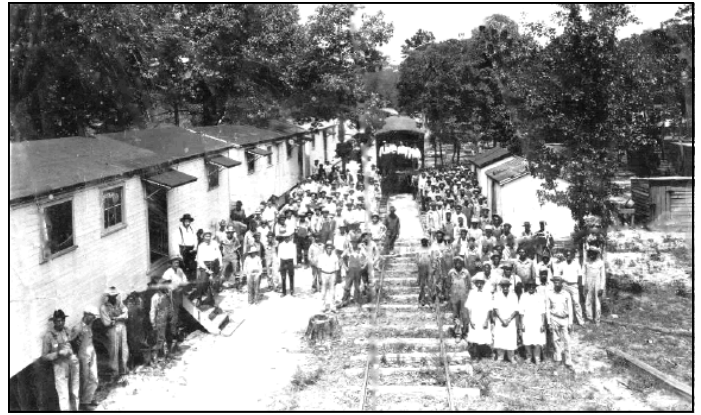


The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Peters Lumber Company *(Continued)*



This picture from 1906 depicts the logging crew at Camp #10 of the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Co. Photograph from the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society web site.



This picture shows the "big bosses" inspecting an Alger Sullivan lumber camp. They can be seen standing in the back of the train car on the tracks. From the Alger Sullivan Historical Society website.

(Continued from page 8)

(The facts and figures on the operation of the mill are from the Standard Gauge January 22, 1891).

Big Log Camps of Peters Lumber Company

This article is also taken from the Alabama Room file on the Peters Lumber Company. Originally published as a newspaper letter to the editor, entitled "For the Leader," it is signed only with the initials H. C. The name of the particular newspaper and the date are not given.

"Mr. Editor:

"Many of your readers have visited the immense milling plant of the Peters Lumber Co., at Alco, but comparatively few have visited the Logging camps and are not familiar with the sources which supply the large number of logs sawn daily. A few facts and figures from a recent visitor there, will doubtless surprise and be of interest to some.

"In the northwest part of Conecuh county is located the camp known as No. 5. It is 5 miles from Brewton, which is their post office and supply station.

"The buildings are substantial and comfortable, comprising office, commissary, sleeping rooms, dining hall, kitchen, butcher shop, barber shop, stables, blacksmith and work shops, and locomotive house. There are four miles of railroad with various switches reaching out over the timber belts. One hundred and seventy five men are here employed.

"At sun rise, the forest rings with sounds of saw and ax. As the trees are felled, they are hauled to the nearest branch of the railroad on carts, the wheels of which measure nine and one half feet in diameter, drawn by mules and oxen, of which 120 are employed.

"Two trains are busy hauling from the various landings to the company's ditch where they are unloaded and floated 25 miles to the mill boom.

"This camp supplies the mills daily about 700 logs or 120,000 feet and is operated at a cost of \$250 per day. A portable saw mill at the camp cuts lumber for building and repairing.

"One of the most interesting features is the culinary department presided over by an excellent cook at a salary of \$75 per month.

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Peters Lumber Company *(Continued)*



The team of mules pulling a log (picture above on the right) and the team of eight oxen pulling the huge log above suggest the size of the long-leaf-pine trees, part of the virgin forests which once covered the southeast.

The top two pictures are from the digital collection at the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH). Pictures are dated 1909-1919.

The picture on the right shows a logging camp of the Jackson Lumber Co. at Lockhart, Alabama. The logs will be loaded on carts pulled by the horses and mules in the background and carried to the mill or to the location of another means of transporting them (water or train). From the [History of Florida](#) website.



(Continued from page 9)

With five assistants, work in this department begins at 2 a. m. and ends at 10 p. m. Cooking for 175 men is no small item, the reader will realize when told that 300 eggs are required for breakfast and 50 gallons of coffee is daily consumed.

It requires one barrel of flour daily and one crate of cabbage is sufficient but for one meal. One regular butcher is employed. In justice to this department, I would add that the fare is far better than is found at the average hotel.



The two trains depicted here are not from Peters Lumber Co. but the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Co., courtesy of the Alger-Sullivan Historic Society,

“The various divisions are superintended by competent foremen all under the general management of Mr. R. F. Theis who is one of the most clever and affable gentlemen it has been our pleasure to meet. To this gentleman for many favors, to Mr. Thomas Fincher and his excellent horse “Billie,” and the foremen of various departments, we are indebted for much information and many courtesies shown us.”

(Continued on page 11)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Peters Lumber Company *(Continued)*

(Continued from page 10)

Peters Lumber Company in Ashes

The following article on the destruction of the Peters Lumber company is from the Ed Leigh McMillan Collection.

“About three o’clock Tuesday afternoon a dense volume of smoke was seen in the direction of Alco. But no alarm having been sounded, it was not seriously considered until pretty soon a runner came and stated that the mills, planners, dry houses, machine shop, lumber yard, etc. of the Peters Lumber company were being consumed by fire.

This information quickly spread, and in a few moments, dozens of our citizens were on route to the scene of the conflagration.

“A pair of horses was hitched to the fire engine and the run made in a double-quick time. But when

the crowds reached Alco, it was evident that to attempt to check the fire would prove useless, as it had already gained very great headway.

“The efforts of nearly everyone were directed to saving adjoining property – the office, warehouses, and commissary. A steady stream of water was played on the angry flames by the Brewton Fire Department, though the hose was too short to be effective.

“The fire originated in the machine shop, a spark having ignited shavings in front of the furnace door. The big pump was also located the same roof. The fire spread with marvelous rapidity, leaping from building to building and licking them up as if they had been timber. The whistle could not sound the alarm from the fact that it was among the first things

(Continued on page 12)



The picture to the left shows logging teams of the Jackson Lumber Co., Lockhart, Alabama.

The postcard on the bottom left, entitled “Off to Work,” also depicts Jackson workers. Both pictures courtesy of the [History of Florida](#) website.



The postcard to the right entitled “Log Train, Sanford” is from the ADAH digital collection.



The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Peters Lumber Company *(Continued)*

(Continued from page 11)

consumed.

“By five o’clock, the entire plant, which covered several acres, was a mass of flames. The mills had been idle for a few weeks, and were to have started up soon.

“General Manager Loot was in Michigan when the news reached him, and he hastily returned, arriving at Brewton this morning.

“From what we were able to gather, the loss will reach (estimated) at least \$150,000. There was a great quantity of rough and dressed pine and quite a lot of fine cypress lumber on the yards and under the sheds, which is a complete loss, as well as the very expensive machinery and outfits employed which cost, when erected a few years since, some \$200,000.

“This was one of the finest and extensive lumber and timber manufacturing plants in the south, and the loss at this time is to be regretted. Hundreds of people are dependent upon this corporation for meat

and bread, and the burning ill to some extent affect business. Many here and in the county adjacent will be thrown out of employment, as well as those on the ditches and railroad who supplied the concern with logs.

“Colonel Ackley, when interviewed by a reporter for this paper, could furnish no facts regarding the loss, but from what he said the amount will be, with insurance, in the neighborhood of \$60,000.” #

Annie Waters states that the loss was estimated at \$100,000, plus 20,000 feet of lumber. She says the company decided not to rebuild but had their logs sawed at Pollard and delivered by a tram road, so that the mill still operated but at a reduced capacity (History of Escambia County, Alabama, p. 215).



The men are shown in the lumber stacks of the Horse Shoe Lumber Company, River Falls, Alabama. The mule is ready to pull a load stacked in the cart to the left.



Train on Southern States Railroad near Muscogee, Florida.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Pensacola-Molino-Flomaton Bus Line

This article, submitted by Robert Bradley, was placed online on the Escambia County (Alabama) History Facebook site by Lygia Dawkins Corley.

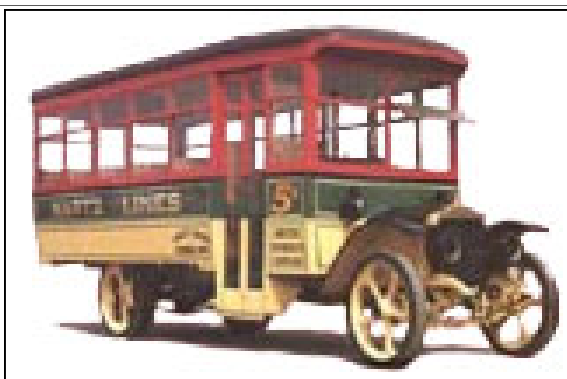
"Simon Bradley of Gonzalez, Florida married Roberta Presley of Sardine, Alabama at Flomaton on April 18, 1913. For several years, Simon supported his growing family by working as a foreman on the construction of a bridges for the L&N Railroad in Alabama. In the mid-1920's, he returned to Northwest Florida, where he established a bus line which ran from Molino to Pensacola.

"He built his first bus using a Model-T Ford truck chassis. The body was made of wood and was painted a bright mustard yellow. The seats were wooden benches.

"He placed a whistle on the exhaust pipe of the bus. As he approached each stop, he would blow the whistle to alert potential passengers of his approach, allowing them time to get ready. According to his son Simon Jr., "you could hear the horrible racket for miles." But apparently it worked well.

"The first bus was so successful that Simon decided to purchase a new bus and to extend his line to Flomaton. Thus began what may have been the first Alabama/Florida interstate bus line.

"Simon purchased a new Dodge bus and hired a sign painter. Boldly painted upon the door of the bus was the title of the new company - "The Pensacola-Molino-Flomaton Bus Line." The entire family, Simon, Roberta and their children, Alton, Helen and



This 1908 Mariz/White bus is still owned by the Frank Martz Coach Company. The bus is still operating. It is considered the oldest antique bus in the country and it is still operating. I

It has won many antique awards and is currently on display at the Bus Museum in Hershey Pennsylvania.

Picture and information from <http://www.martzgroup.com/history.asp>.

Simon Jr., moved to Century, where they lived with Roberta's mother Amanda Jordan Presley.

"Each morning, Simon would cross the state line to pick up his first load of passengers. On the way to Pensacola, he would drop the children off at Tate School in Gonzalez. He picked them up on the way home at the end of the day.

"When they arrived home, the children were required to clean the bus and to wash the windows. As a reward, they were allowed to keep anything they found. A day's haul for the enterprising youngsters might include

small change, snuff boxes, tokens or even a pocket knife. The seats at the rear of the bus occasionally yielded straight razors which they weren't allowed to keep!

"The success of the bus line seems to have been inexorably linked to the 'boom or bust economy' fostered by developers and profiteers in the Pensacola area. In fact, business was so good that Simon began to make an additional run from the L&N depot in Pensacola to the old Gulf Beach.

"In 1929, things began to change dramatically. With the onset of the Great Depression, local businesses began to falter and the flow of shoppers and tourist declined. Finally, Simon was forced to sell the bus and move back to Gonzalez. Later he repurchased the bus, but on the day he was to make his first trip, it caught fire and was destroyed.

Although the Pensacola-Molino-Flomaton Bus Line came to a fiery conclusion, it was an adventure the children would never forget. "#

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
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<u>Wildflowers of The Escambia CD</u>	\$12.50	\$10.00
<u>History of Brewton and E. Brewton (sc)</u>	\$51.00	\$45.00
<u>Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook</u>	\$46.00	\$40.00

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year. Give a membership as a gift!

ECHOES, The newsletter for the Escambia County Historical Society, a 501 (c) (3) corporation, is published monthly except November. Comments are welcome. You may email the Society at escohis@escohis.org or call 251-809-1528.

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