Before The German Settlement of 1873:

The Land and People That Became Cullman County

Second Printing

Gaylon D. Johnson

The Gregath Publishing Company
Cullman, Alabama
1982

IN DEDICATION

I would like to take this moment to dedicate this modest attempt at recording Cullman County's pre-history to those nineteen helpful persons listed in the index whom I interviewed while in the process of researching this manuscript. Without their valuable information and help in locating other sources, my task would have been much more difficult. To them goes my heart felt thanks, I feel honored that I have enjoyed the company of all of them.

In addition, I wish to thank my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alvin D. Johnson, my wife, and all my relatives and friends for their support. My sincere thanks to Dr. Leah Atkins and Mr. F. Wilbur Helmbold of Samford University for their invaluable help and support, and to Mrs. Ann Gregath for her encouragement and advice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.......... i

VITA.......... ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS.......... iii

TABLE OF ILLUSTRATIONS.......... iii

I. INTRODUCTION.......... 1

II. IN THE BEGINNING.......... 7

III. AVENUES OF TRAVEL AND POSTAL SERVICE.......... 18

IV. THE ECONOMY OF THE CULLMAN COUNTY AREA PRIOR TO 1860.......... 48

V. RELIGION AND EDUCATION BEFORE 1860.......... 63

VI. THE ELECTION OF 1860 AND THE SECESSION CONVENTION ELECTION IN THE HILL COUNTRY THAT BECAME CULLMAN COUNTY.......... 95

VII. THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD.......... 107

VIII. RECONSTRUCTION AND A NEW ERA BEGINS.......... 137

BIBLIOGRAPHY.......... 142

ABSTRACT.......... 151

TABLE OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1 - Map Showing Township and Ranges Within Cullman County and Counties from Which Cullman was Carved.......... 5

Figure 2 - Map of Territorial Roads.......... 22

Figure 3 - Map of Turnpikes Established Within the Territory Which later Became Cullman County.......... 25

Figure 4 - Major Roads Within the Southwestern Part of the Area.......... 38

Figure 5 - Map Showing Major Roads Within the Cullman County Area Around 1860.......... 44

I. INTRODUCTION

Cullman County, located in north central Alabama, was founded on January 24, 1877, which makes it the second youngest county in the state of Alabama--second only to Houston County which was founded on February 9, 1903. The history of Cullman County after its formation has been covered adequately through the years. In 1937, John Clinton Bright wrote his thesis, "Some Economic and Social Aspects of the History of Cullman, Alabama," which is included in volume three of Carl Elliott's Annals of Northwest Alabama. More recently, Miss Margaret Jean Jones has written two books, Combing Cullman County, published in 1972, and Cullman County Across the Years which appeared in 1975. These three works, while covering the history of the county since its creation, give little information on the region before the arrival of German immigrants in 1872 and the formation of the county in 1877.

One would think that the history of the area which became Cullman County should be included within the histories of the counties from which it was taken; however, that is not the case. Because most of the histories of the surrounding counties were written after the founding of Cullman County, and even after it was extended fully in 1901, most of these county histories refer only occasionally to the area comprising Cullman County. Of them all, the most information is found in A History of Morgan County, Alabama by John Knox, but he refers only to those items which have a bearing on the history of Morgan County. Consequently, a history of the present day Cullman County area, prior to the settling of the Germans and the founding of the county, has not been written. It is the purpose of this paper to give a history of this area roughly from the beginning of white settlement around 1800 to the end of the Civil War in 1865 and the coming of the German immigrants in 1872.

The writing of local history poses unique problems. In this case, the greatest problem is the large amount of material to be gathered from a variety of sources. Unfortunately, many sources have been lost. Public records are being misplaced or damaged every day, and many knowledgeable people are no longer with us. Therefore, it is also the purpose of this paper to gather some of this material before it is lost forever.

Walter M. Kollmorgan states in his work, The German Settlement in Cullman County, Alabama, that the first permanent settlers in the county were German immigrants.[1] Many others share this misconception and actually believe that the area was an uninhabited wilderness before the arrival of the German immigrants. An important purpose of this paper is to prove this assumption incorrect. The main evidence must be facts. Hopefully, these facts will give an accurate and real picture of what was going on in the area prior to the settlement of the Germans under the leadership of Colonel John Cullmann.

Before the formation of Cullman County (with its present boundaries as set in 1901), the Cullman County area was a part of several

---

[1] Walter M. Kollmorgan, The German Settlement in Cullman County, Alabama (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1941), p. 5.

different counties. Almost all of the area was a part of Blount County when it was formed February 6, 1818. Blount's northern and western borders ran the south township line of Township Eight South from the Indian lands to the headwaters of the Sipsey Fork of the Black Warrior River, then followed the river southward.[2] Almost all of present day Cullman County was in that northwest corner of Blount when it was established. That part of Cullman County north of the south border of Township Eight South was a part of southern Morgan County with a small amount in the Indian lands which was later formed into Marshall County. Later, Blount's western border was established at a line running due north of William Dunn's cabin, which was located just south of the Mulberry River, and three-quarters of a section east of the range line separating Ranges Three and Four West.[3] Soon afterwards on December 26, 1823, Walker County was created.[4] All of Cullman County west of the western border of Blount County and south of the southern border of Township Eight South was included in Walker County. It stayed thus until Hancock (Winston)[5] County was formed out of the northern part of Walker County on February 12, 1850. The line severing Winston from Walker was drawn running east and west splitting Township Twelve South

---

[2] Acts of the Alabama Territory, 1818, pp. 16-17.

[3] Acts of Alabama, 1822, p. 96.

[4] Acts of Alabama, 1823, pp. 82-84.

[5] Wesley S. Thompson, The Free State of Winston, A History of Winston County, Alabama (Winfield, Alabama: Pareil Press, 1968), pp. 140-141. Hereinafter cited as Thompson, The Free State of Winston.

equally.[6] No other boundary changes were made concerning the area under study until Cullman County itself was created.

Cullman County was founded on January 24, 1877. Originally the county boundaries were set as follows:

> Beginning on the range line dividing ranges five (5) and six (6) west, at the northwest corner of section thirty-one (31), township eight (8), range five (5) west; thence south along the said range line to the southwest corner of section eighteen (18), township twelve (12), range five (5) west; thence east to the western boundary of Blount county; thence north to the township line dividing township eleven (11) and twelve (12); thence east to the southeast corner of township eleven (11), range three (3) west, thence north two (2) miles to the southeast corner of section twenty-four (24), township eleven (11), range three (3) west, thence east to the middle of the Warrior River; thence northeastwardly along the meanders and middle of said stream to where it crosses the southern line of section twelve (12), township nine (9), range one (1), east; thence east to the line of Marshall County; thence northwestwardly along said boundary line to the northeast corner of section six (6), township nine (9), range two (2) east; thence west one mile; thence north one mile; thence west to the place of beginning.[7]

The boundary line as originally laid out split the town of Hanceville in half, leaving part in Cullman and part in Blount. This created so many problems locally that the residents petitioned the legislature to move the boundary line either one mile north or south. In 1885, the legislature responded and moved the line one mile north, putting all of Hanceville in Blount County.[8] The present boundaries were established in 1901 when the county boundaries were again amended.

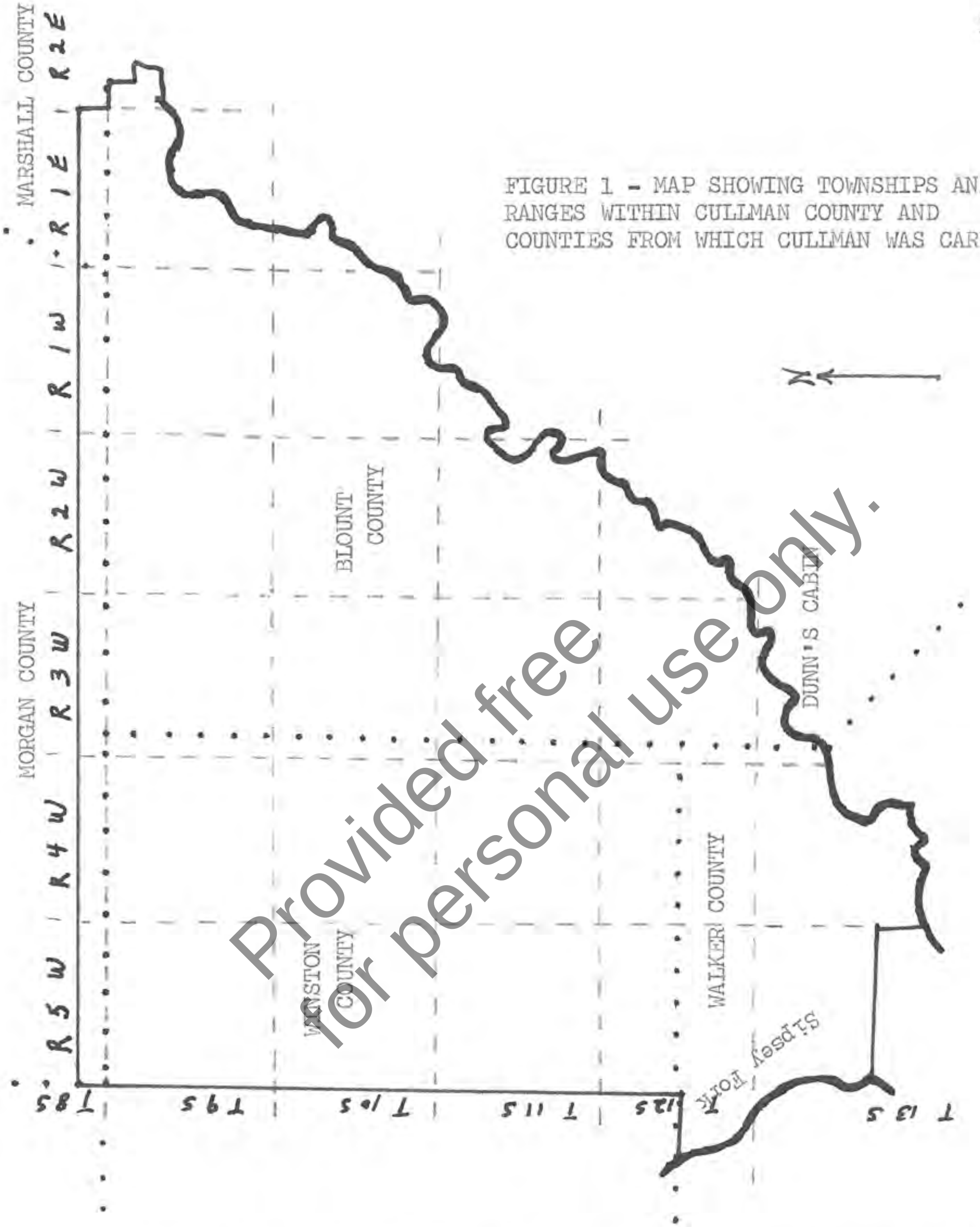
---

[6] Acts of Alabama, 1849, p. 90.

[7] Acts of Alabama, 1876-1877, p. 69.

[8] Margaret Jean Jones, Combing Cullman County (Cullman, Alabama: Modernistic Printers, 1972), p. 61. Hereinafter cited as Jones, Combing Cullman County.

FIGURE 1 - MAP SHOWING TOWNSHIPS AND RANGES WITHIN CULLMAN COUNTY AND COUNTIES FROM WHICH CULLMAN WAS CARVED


MARSHALL COUNTY
R 2 E
R 1 E
R 1 W
R 2 W
R 3 W
R 4 W
R 5 W
MORGAN COUNTY
BLOUNT COUNTY
WINSTON COUNTY
WALKER COUNTY
DUNN'S CABIN
Sipsey Fork
N
T 8 S
T 9 S
T 10 S
T 11 S
T 12 S
T 13 S

THE DOTTED LINES SHOW HOW THE CULLMAN COUNTY AREA WAS DIVIDED AMONG THE SURROUNDING COUNTIES PRIOR TO 1877, WHEN CULLMAN COUNTY WAS FORMED.

THE BROKEN LINES - - - INDICATE RANGE AND TOWNSHIP LINES.

At the southwest corner of Section Eighteen, Township Twelve, Range Five West, the boundary was amended to go due west to the Sipsey Fork of the Black Warrior River which it followed south to the southern border of Section twenty, Township thirteen, Range five West. At that point the boundary ran due east following the section line to the range line separating ranges four and five west. At this point the boundary turned due south to the Mulberry River which it followed northeastwardly until the original line was again met.[9] By this addition the present boundaries were achieved.

---

[9] Mr. Basel Mauldin of the Wilburn Community, Cullman County, Alabama possesses a copy of the first official map of Cullman County issued after the 1901 boundary change.

II. IN THE BEGINNING

Cullman County is an area of extremes, which to all but the most scrutinizing observer would go unnoticed. Located on the Sand Mountain plateau, the southern tip of the Applachian chain, the northern border parallels east to west the divide ridge separating the watersheds of the Tennessee River to the north and the Mulberry and Sipsey Fork of the Black Warrior River to the south. This northern border, characterized by rocky mountain sides and bluffs rising over 1100 feet above sea level, conflicts drastically in appearance with the rolling fertile river bottoms of the Mulberry River valley which forms the area's eastern and southern boundary. It is in the Mulberry River valley that the area dips to its lowest level at 300 feet above sea level.[1] The western border is again different, characterized by small creek valleys created by streams that work their way southward to the Black Warrior River basin. Inside this triangular area, the soil tends to be sandy in the northern areas but more fertile in the creek and river bottoms further south. Within these bottoms hardwood forests abound but give way to pine thickets which cover the more inhospitable ridges and crags.

Into this greatly varying area first came the prehistoric man most often referred to as the Indian. Evidence of his existence

---

[1] Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. 3.

tells us he was here during the Paleo Age approximately 14,000 years ago.[2] Although there are many sites scattered throughout the county, the earliest ones are located in the southwest area of the county on the Mulberry and Sipsey Forks of the Black Warrior River and in the Ryan's Creek watershed. Many sites, such as the large one near Bethany Church where pottery, burial mounds, and human remains have been found, date from a later period, but show that the Indian frequented this area consistently until the arrival of the White Man.[3]

The territory containing the Mulberry and Sipsey Forks and the Ryan's Creek watershed seem by far to contain more sites than the rest. But there are good reasons for this. In this area there was a plentiful water supply which sustained life and provided fish for food. Later as the Indian developed farming and a resulting partial dependency thereon, the fertile bottoms along these streams furnished the fields which he needed for farming.

Even after the migration into the river bottoms, the interior lands of the area remained important to the survival of the Indian. Scattered across the area are numerous sites which appear to have been temporary camps, inhabited by the Indians during the hunting and crop growing seasons of the year. Into these isolated areas the Indian came to fill their supply of meat before the arrival of winter. But just as important, these camps were probably also farming camps, far all are located near streams of water on fertile pieces of level cultivatable land. At many of these sites, such as the one on Lick Creek near Logan and the two sites on Ryan's Creek near Bethsadia, signs of agricultural activities have been found. At the sites near Bethsadia, mortars and pestles used for the grinding of corn into meal have been found.[4] At the site on Lick Creek near Logan, rounded impressions in a rock ledge near Shady Grove Church shows where corn was ground into meal. These fields that were originally cleared by the Indians were later cultivated by the white settlers when they came into the vicinity.[5] The Indians probably occupied these scattered sites during the growing and hunting seasons for several years. The end of spring flooding allowed the Indians to temporarily settle the sites and remain until the end of the fall hunting season. With the coming of winter the Indians would return with their stores of provisions to the large river valleys of the Tennessee River to the north and the tributaries of the Black Warrior to the south.

---

[2] Howard King and Don Wilbanks, Silent Footsteps (n.p.: Cullman County Archaeological Society, n.d.), p. 18. Hereinafter cited as King and Wilbanks, Silent Footsteps. Page 18 is illustrated with artifacts which date back into the Paleo Age found within Cullman County.

[3] Interview, Mr. Basel Mauldin, Wilburn Community, Cullman County, May 10, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Basel Mauldin, May 10, 1971.

The isolated hills served another purpose besides the gathering of food, for they offered a secluded quiet resting place for the dead. Powell, in his history of Blount County which was written in

---

[4] Interview, Mr. Ronnie G. Franklin, Bethsadia Community, Cullman County, April 8, 1972. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Franklin, April 8, 1972.

[5] Interview, Mr. A. O. Kilgo, Logan Community, Cullman County, January 6, 1972. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Kilgo, January 6, 1972.

1855, states that there were four groups of burial mounds northwest of the Mulberry River.[6] This would be in what is today eastern Cullman County. In the western part of Cullman County other burial sites have been located. Under the cliffs of Rock Creek, Indian remains have been found.[7] Near Bethany Church in the Wheat Community, mounds mark the site of a burial ground.[8] On Ryan's Creek near the junction of Simpson Creek another large burial ground was located on bottom land now covered by Smith Lake. Further up Simpson Creek, near the junction of Cane Creek or Murphee Branch, another single mound was found. On Dorsey's Creek several mounds have been located. Many of these are accompanied by camp sites which have given up artifacts such as pottery chips, celts, hoes, arrowheads, and hatchets.[9]

Artifacts found in the territory comprising Cullman County point out that local Indians did associate and trade with Indians of other areas. Flint, a necessary item for the manufacturing of arrow and spear heads, was found in the Tennessee Valley on the Flint Creek in Morgan County and near present day Wheeler Dam.[10] Red Jasper, which

---

[6] George Powell, "A Description and History of Blount County," Transactions of The Alabama Historical Society, July 9 and 10, 1855 (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: J. F. Warren, 1855), p. 59. Hereinafter cited as Powell, "History of Blounty County."

[7] Interview, Mr. William B. Mauldin, Flat Rock Community, Winston County, September 1, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview, William Mauldin, September 1, 1971.

[8] Interview, Basel Mauldin, May 10, 1971.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Interview, Kilgo, January 6, 1972.

was also used for points, was obtained in Tennessee. Arrowheads and spear points, often used for bartering, show how far-reaching trade may have been extended because within the area Cumberland points from Kentucky, Greenbrier Daltons from Tennessee, and Hardaway Daltons from the Carolinas have been found.[11]

At the time of the arrival of the white pioneers, the area composing Cullman County was a piece of territory claimed by three of the four major tribes in Alabama, the Creeks, the Cherokees, and the Chickasaws. The Creek and Chickasaw tribes had migrated into Alabama along with the Choctaws many centuries before the arrival of the first white settlers. These three tribes were members of the Muskogean family which probably originated to the west along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico and around the borders of the Caribbean Sea.[12] The Cherokee, a part of the Iroquoian speaking family, migrated via the Tennessee River valley into the northeastern part of Alabama to contend with the Creek and Chickasaw. The Cullman area may possibly have been claimed by all three and used by all three as a hunting ground.

Evidence supports the fact that control may have changed at different times. In 1761 or 1762 when Henry Timberlake, an ensign in the colonial forces of Colonel George Washington, came into the vicinity to sign a treaty with some of the Cherokee Indians, he came to Black

---

[11] Interview, Basel Mauldin, May 10, 1971.

[12] Peter Farb, Man's Rise to Civilization As Shown by the Indians of North America from Primeval Times to the Coming of the Industrial State (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1968), p. 161.

Warrior Town near the junction of the Sipsey and Mulberry Rivers.[13] With this location settled, the Cherokee undoubtedly controlled the territory to the north and east of the town back toward the heart of Cherokee territory. By the time of the Creek War, the Cherokee had withdrawn into the Tennessee Valley and the old Black Warrior Town was under the control of the Creek Indians. In October, 1813, Colonel John Coffee led an army of about 800 men across the Tennessee River at Muscle Shoals and down across present Cullman County to attack this town. Finding no resistance, the troops looted the town of a large quantity of corn and beans and put it to the torch.[14] With the completion of this military move, the Creek War was carried further south, and finally with the defeat of the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend by forces under the command of Andrew Jackson, the Creek War of 1812 ended.

Following the Creek War, treaties made with the Creek, Cherokee, and Chickasaw tribes opened up almost three-fourths of the state for settlement. Within the relinquished tract was the present day Cullman County area. As a war indemnity, the Creeks, by the treaty at Fort Jackson signed on August 9, 1814, surrendered their lands west and south of a line drawn from the Cherokee Crossing near Greensport in St. Clair County, down the Coosa to Wetumpka, then to the mouth of

---

[13] Peter A. Brannon, *By-Paths in Alabama and Some Houses by the Side of the Road* (Montgomery, Alabama: Paragon Press, 1929), p. 13. Hereinafter cited as Brannon, *By-Paths*.

[14] David Crocket, *Davy Crocket's Own Story As Written by Himself*, (New York: Citadel Press, 1955), pp. 66-67. Hereinafter cited as Crocket, *Crocket's Own Story*. See also--Albert James Pickett, *History of Alabama*, 2 vols. (Charleston: Walker and James, 1851, reprint ed., n.p. Arno Press, 1971), 2:293.

Summochico Creek at the Chattahoochee below Eufaula.[15] The boundary line which marked the northern line of the cession ran through present-day Cullman County, thus the southwestern part of Cullman County, formerly controlled by the Creek Indians was turned over to the United States government. On September 14, 1816, the United States commissioners signed a treaty with the Cherokee Indians whereby for $65,000 the Cherokees agreed to relinquish their claim to lands south of the Tennessee River and west of a line near the western boundary of present Marshall County. On September 20 of the same year, the Chickasaws agreed to sell to the United States for the sum of $124,000 all of their lands east of a line starting at Caney Creek in present day Colbert County, following the creek to its source, then straight to the ridge path atop the mountain, and due west to Cottonport Gin.[16] Cherokee and Chickasaw lands no doubt overlapped in the region relinquished, but within this territory lay the rest of Cullman County. By 1816 all of Cullman County was a part of the public domain.

The signing of the treaties did not herald the complete disappearance of the Indian. After the arrival of the first settlers, a few Indians were still living near Arkadelphia.[17] Other Indians re-

---

[15] A. B. Moore, History of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Alabama Book Store, 1951), p. 29. Hereinafter cited as Moore, History of Alabama.

[16] L. D. Miller, History of Alabama (Birmingham, Alabama: Published by the author, 1901), p. 91. Hereinafter cited as Miller, History of Alabama.

[17] Carl Elliott, comp., Annals of Northwest Alabama (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Privately Printed, 1965), 3:141. Hereinafter cited as Elliott, Annals, vol. 3.

mained as farmers on Rock Creek,[18] and some of the Indians who stayed to farm land on Simpson Creek were later buried in Valley Springs Cemetery. From time to time Indians would return to visit the final resting place of their ancestors and the land that their people once owned.[19]

Even before the removal of the red man, some white men had already viewed the land. Although Henry Timberlake visited the area in 1761 or 1762 and left the first account of the region, he probably was not the first to visit it. No doubt Indian traders, like the famous Indian countryman Sam Dale who traded with the Upper Towns in the Creek Nation,[20] visited this region before and after Timberlake's visit. Traffic later increased on the pathways that crossed the area, as the fringes of civilization pushed westward.

One of the earliest paths crossing this section appears on General Jackson's Campaign Map of the Creek War. On this map a path appears which starts at the head of the Muscle Shoals and follows a course southeastwardly to Fort Talladeegee.[21] The 1818 John Melish Map of Alabama shows this trail crossing the extreme southwest tip of

---

[18] Interview, Basel Mauldin, May 10, 1971.

[19] Ima Gene Boyd, comp., The Guthery Family of Cullman County Alabama (Akron, Ohio: Privately printed by compiler, 1969-70), This page is located between 29 and 29A.

[20] Thomas S. Woodward, Woodward's Reminiscences of The Creek or Muscogee Indians (Montgomery, Alabama: Barrett and Wimbish, 1859, reprint. ed., Mobile, Alabama: Southern University Press, 1965), p. 73. Hereinafter cited as Woodward, Reminiscences.

[21] General Andrew Jackson's Campaign Map of the Creek War, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Map Collection, Montgomery. Hereinafter cited as Jackson's Campaign Map.

Cotaco (Morgan) County.[22] This road is mentioned in the early Cotaco County records and is referred to as the Mitchell Trace.[23] The path probably took its name from General David Brady Mitchell who was a government agent among the Creek Indians during the early 1800s.[24] No doubt many Indian traders and persons traveling south used this route. Later, during the Creek War of 1812, Colonel John Coffee led a force of volunteers along this same trail. After crossing the Mulberry River, the force turned southwestwardly and sacked and burned Black Warrior's Town near the junction of the Mulberry and Sipsey Forks of the Black Warrior River.[25] Many of these volunteers later became settlers of Alabama lands after the removal of the Indian threat.

Permanent settlement actually began before the Creek War. According to Sandlin family tradition, Thomas Sandlin settled near the present Hanceville area on land granted to him by the government of the Mississippi Territory in 1802. The land, granted before the surveying of the area by the United States government, was marked by piles of rocks and marked trees.[26] The Blount County Land Tract Book notes

---

[22] John Melish, Map of Alabama, 1818, Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama. Hereinafter cited as Melish, Map of Alabama.

[23] John Knox, History of Morgan County, Alabama (Decatur, Alabama: Morgan County Board of Revenue, 1967), p. 132. Hereinafter cited as Knox, History of Morgan County.

[24] Woodward, Reminiscences, p. 91.

[25] Crockett, Crockett's Own Story, pp. 66-67.

[26] Interview, Mr. Alton Sandlin, Cullman, Alabama, December 11, 1978.

that the northwest corner of the southeast quarter of Section Fourteen in Township Twelve South, Range Three West was claimed by an old land warrant on which no name was given.[27] This tract of land is, in all probability, the land Sandlin received by his grant.

After the Creek War ended the Indian threat, the settling of land increased. Many settlers rushed in to take up new land before the government had a chance to survey it and offer it for sale at public auction. The government, in an effort to keep the "squatters" off these lands, forced many to leave, destroying their homes and planted crops. According to Speegle Family tradition, Daniel Speegle was treated this way when he first attempted to settle his family near Brushy Creek around the year 1816.[28]

After the opening of the area, the demand for good farms was so great that fertile bottom land was settled quickly. This rush was partially influenced by the ending of the Indian threat and the availability of new lands, but the economic situation both at home and abroad also played an important part. Following the War of 1812 foreign markets in Europe were reopened to goods produced in the United States. The demand for American-grown cotton increased sharply, and the price

---

[27] Blount County Records, Blount County Tract Book, Oneonta, Alabama, Entry for Section Fourteen of Township Twelve South, Range Three West.

[28] Interview, Mr. Clyde Speegle, Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, January 9, 1972. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972. Note: Mr. Speegle has done much research into the history of his family and the surrounding area. Much material was related to him by Mr. Houston Speegle, son of David Speegle and grandson of Daniel Speegle.

rose to thirty-four cents per pound in 1818. With such profits to be made, the sale of Alabama lands reached its zenith the same year.[29] Even though cotton prices dropped sharply in the following years, there was still enough stimulus to cause the river bottoms of the Cullman County area to be settled early and quickly by the overflow of small planters who could not afford the high land prices in the Tennessee valley.

---

[29] Thomas Perkins Abernethy, The Formative Period in Alabama, 1815-1828 (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1965), p. 84. Hereinafter cited as Abernethy, The Formative Period.

III. AVENUES OF TRAVEL AND POSTAL SERVICE

As settlers began to rush in to claim the available lands, settlements and communities developed. Roads were built within the area, and several were established which ran through the region to other parts of the state. This system of roads furnished arteries for transporting local goods to markets and bringing in goods which could not be manufactured locally. Just as important, this network of roads allowed communication with other areas to exist. Mail routes and post offices were established along numerous roads which not only made it possible for settlers to stay in touch with each other over long distances, but also allowed news to seep in from other regions of the state and nation.

Indian trails formed the foundation for some of the early roads. These trails existed prior to the beginning of white settlement. The most mentioned path which had an effect upon the area during this time period actually may have touched it only briefly at its northeastern corner. This road was the Black Warrior Road which ran from the Huntsville area south across the Tennessee River, up Brown's Valley, and down the south side of the Mulberry River to Black Warrior Town at the junction of the Mulberry and Sipsey Forks of the Black Warrior River. This important road, cut through the wilderness by Henry Timberlake in 1761 or 1762[1] only briefly touched the area, yet it closely

---

[1] Brannon, By-Paths, p. 13.

paralleled the Mulberry River which forms much of the eastern boundary of present-day Cullman County. Early pioneers traveling this road only had to cross the river to be in the best farming land of Cullman County. Unquestionably, many did just that, and this road appears on many of the early maps of Alabama.

Out of the Tennessee Valley near Muscle Shoals another important early path worked its way in a southeasternly direction into the region. The history of this road is not clear, but some clues may be found. The 1818 John Melish Map of Alabama shows that this road led south-southeastwardly from Melton's Bluff at the head of the Muscle Shoals to Jones Valley, and that it touched the southwest corner of Township Eight, Range Five West.[2] General Andrew Jackson's Campaign Map of the Creek War, which shows Alabama around 1813 or 1814, depicts the road continuing to Fort Talladeegee east of the Coosa River in the Indian Territory.[3] Mentioned in the early Cotaco (Morgan) County Court records, the road was referred to as the Mitchell Trace. It was mentioned in association with another road to be established from Centerville to the Trace at Section Thirty-One, Range Five West, Township Eight South,[4] and would have to be the one shown on the early maps of this region.

The course of the Mitchell Trace can not be easily located. The road came into Cullman County at its northwestern corner, and the

---

[2] Melish, Map of Alabama.

[3] Jackson's Campaign Map.

[4] Knox, History of Morgan County, p. 132.

scale of miles for Jackson's Campaign Map indicated that the road crossed the Mulberry River approximately thirteen or fourteen miles above the river's junction with the Sipsey Fork. If this estimate is correct, the Mitchell Trace would have crossed the Mulberry River in the vicinity of present-day Interstate 65. The course that the Trace took between these two points can only be speculated; nevertheless, the road was important. In 1818, Congress established a mail route from Huntsville to St. Stephens, and the Mitchell Trace was a part of that route.[5]

Two other roads that crossed the area also appear on early maps. The map of the Mississippi Territory[6] shows two roads in the area of the headwaters of the Tascoloosa [sic] (Tuscaloosa or Black Warrior) River. These two east-west roads intersected at a point labeled Flat Rock.

The southern road shown is most assuredly the one that became known in the area as the Low Gap Road. The road is, no doubt, an extension of the Indian trail described by Mary Gordon Duffee in Sketches of Alabama. The path Miss Duffee described led from Talladega across Cahaba, Shades, and Jones valleys northwestward across the Mulberry River to Arkadelphia.[7] The Low Gap Road commenced in the area of

---

[5] Brannon, By-Paths, p. 14.

[6] The Map of the Mississippi Territory, Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama. This map is probably from Mathew Carey's General Atlas which was published in Philadelphia in 1818.

[7] Mary Gordon Duffee, Sketches of Alabama, introduction and notes by Virginia Pounds Brown and Jane Porter Nabors (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1970), p. 61. Hereinafter cited as Duffee, Sketches of Alabama.

Arkadelphia and ran across Prospect Mountain to Dorsey's Creek, over Brushy Pond Mountain to Hunter's Ford near the Old Phillip's Bridge location, up Pigeon Roost and across country to Old Houston and finally to Mississippi.[8] These two combined suitably to match the southern road on the map of the Mississippi Territory.

The northern intersecting road shown on the map of the Mississippi Territory would be the old trail which ran from Gadsden through Blountsville, Garden City, and Crane Hill to Old Houston before continuing to Mississippi.[9] The junction of this road with the Low Gap Road is given as "Flat Rock" which was located on Flat Rock Creek. Today, just east of Old Houston on the Winston-Cullman line, there exists an area called Flat Rock which is on Rock Creek.

When white settlers migrated into the area, they found these Indian trails and later widened and worked them to form the first roads. The Indian was a natural born engineer at laying out roads and, even before the coming of white settlers, a great network of Indian trails connected the territories of the several tribes in Alabama. As a rule, most trails were fairly straight and took a course which encountered the fewest physical obstructions. Trails were laid out in consideration for fording streams, so many trails followed the watershed between large rivers, or ran to the north of large rivers where headwater streams could be more easily crossed.

---

[8] Interview, Mr. R. E. Brown, Valley Grove Community, Cullman County, June 22, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Brown, June 22, 1971.

[9] Marc Miller, editor, March of Progress in Cullman County (Cullman, Alabama: Cullman Tribune, 1969 edition) no pages (page 87 after cover). Hereinafter cited as Miller, March of Progress.

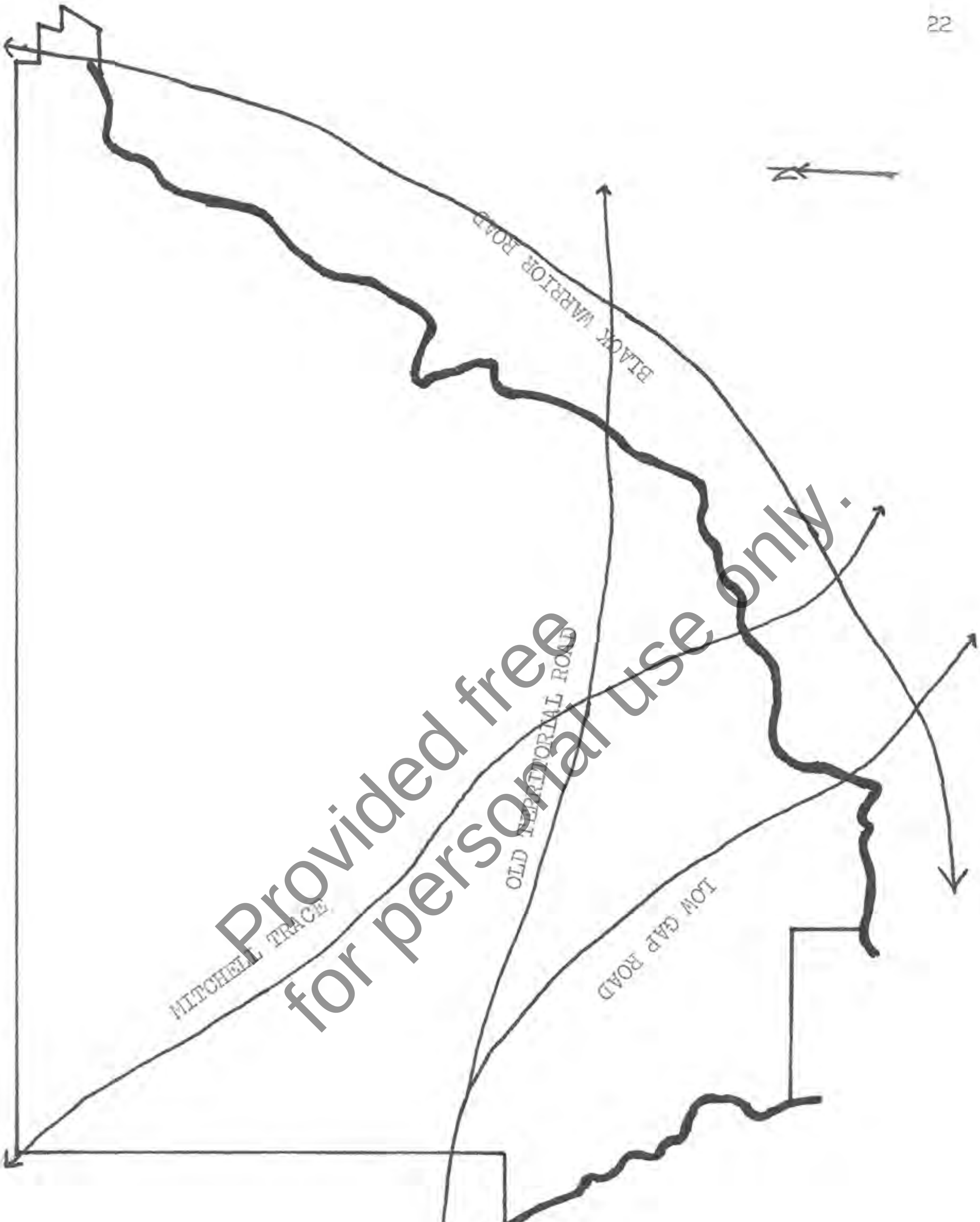

N
BLACK WARRIOR ROAD
OLD TERRITORIAL ROAD
MITCHELL TRACE
LOW GAP ROAD

FIGURE 2 - MAP OF TERRITORIAL ROADS

With the arrival of the white man, the matter of roads for communication as well as for commerce became one of the first priorities. Control of all public roads was settled by law during territorial days, and later all road laws including those concerning bridges and ferries were brought together into one law. Passed on December 21, 1820, this "Act to reduce into one the several acts concerning Roads, Bridges, Ferries, and Highways", turned the control of publicly-built roads over to the individual county court of commissioners. These courts were responsible for appointing juries to select new roads, as well as appointing workers, to work under the direction of court-chosen overseers in each district, along roads which were either already in existence, or in the stages of becoming a reality. The workers consisted of all white males between eighteen and forty-five years of age and all male slaves between the ages of eighteen and fifty. Only preachers and teachers were exempt, and anyone not wishing to work had to send a substitute, or pay $1 for each day that the obligation was not fulfilled. The total number of days that could be worked by anyone in a year's time could not exceed ten days.[10]

The overseer who was appointed by the county commissioners was the key figure in the supervision of road work within each district. While the overseer primarily supervised the workers in keeping the road under repair, he also had the duty of putting up road markers. These markers had to be set up at one mile intervals, and each had to give the distance to the county court house or to some other noted place or

---

[10] Acts of Alabama, 1820, pp. 46-49.

town. Where roads forked, the overseer had to erect sign posts giving places to which each road led. Each time that the overseer failed to put up a proper road sign, he was fined five dollars. If he refused to fulfill the duties of his job as overseer, he was fined forty dollars.[11]

Many of these public roads are found on early local and state maps of the area. This is of great importance since county records are lacking. But if local records are inadequate, state laws recording the chartering of several toll roads in the area are not. A number of toll roads, or turnpikes, were built across Cullman County by private promoters. While the county court of commissioners determined if roads were in satisfactory condition for public use, the establishment of the toll roads and the rates of toll were determined by the state legislature.

The establishing of toll roads was an important part of the development of the road system of the region. Toll roads were established by private concerns for the purpose of making money. In order to continue making a profit, the roads had to be kept in good condition. If the promoters failed to do so, the county board of commissioners could demand that all toll gates be opened until the road was put in proper repair. At the expiration date of the charters, these roads were turned over to the counties as public roads. These toll roads often connected distant areas, county seats, and market areas. Such roads allowed easier settlement, and facilitated communications

---

[11] Ibid., pp. 48-49.

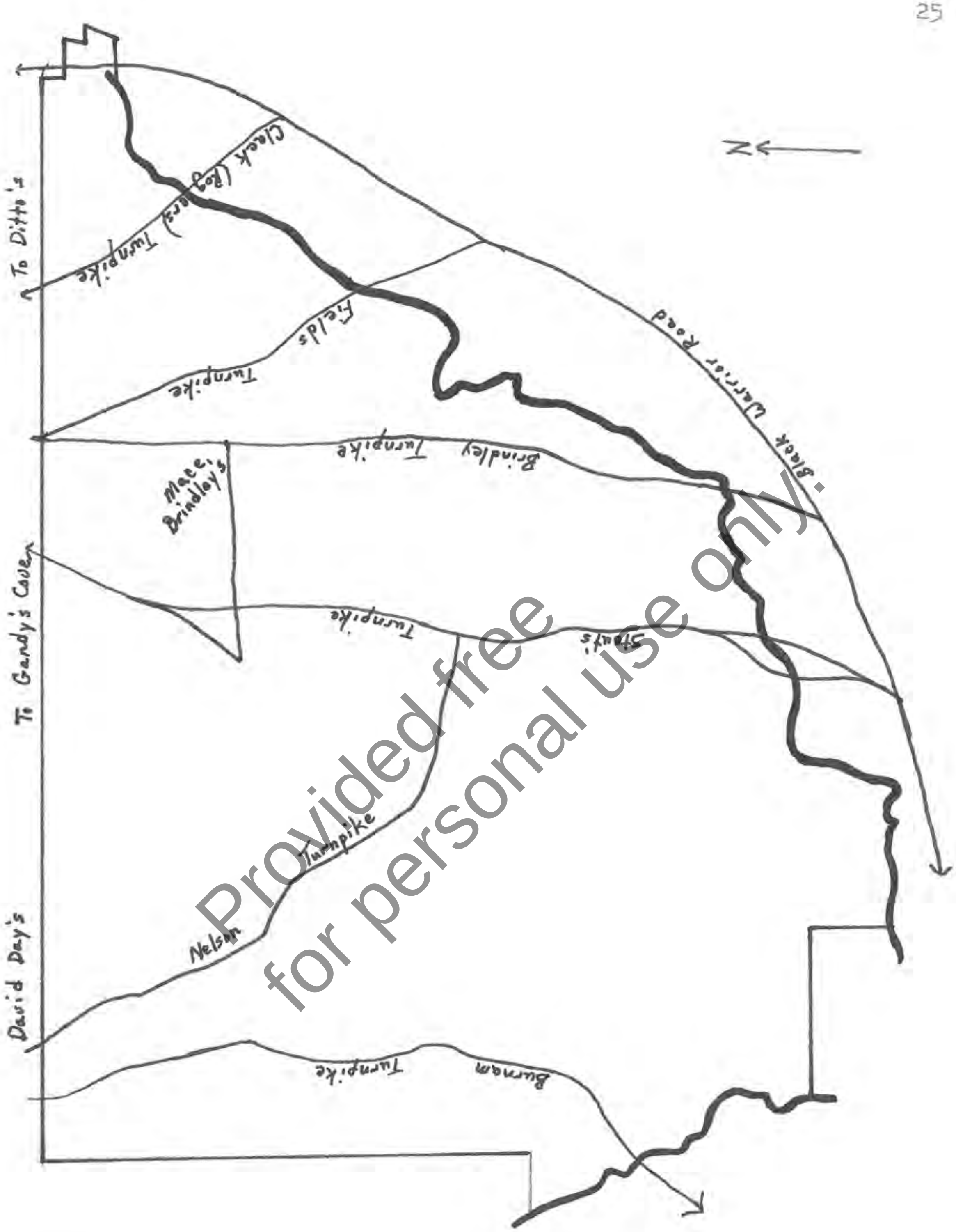

N
To Ditto's
To Gandy's Cave
David Day's
Cleck (Rogers) Turnpike
Fields Turnpike
Black Warrior Road
Brindley Turnpike
Mace, Brindley's
Turnpike
Stout's
Nelson Turnpike
Burnam Turnpike

FIGURE 3 - TURNPIKES ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE TERRITORY WHICH LATER BECAME CULLMAN COUNTY

and the passage of goods. Many of the early mail routes followed toll roads simply because they were the better roads.

The most important toll road crossing the present Cullman County area was the Stouts Turnpike. The history of this road, which opened up the central part of the Tennessee Valley in North Alabama to Central and South Alabama, began in the June 14, 1819 session of the Cotaco (Morgan) County Court of Commissioners. At that meeting a road was projected to run from Somerville to the southern border of Cotaco County, running through Gandy's Cove. One of the road jurors was Abraham Stout.[12] On December 23, 1822, the Alabama legislature passed an act giving Abraham Stout and his associates the right to establish a toll road leading from Gandie's Cove (Gandy's Cove) in Morgan County to either Baltimore, a little town on the Mulberry River, or Morgan's Springs near Blount Springs.[13]

The act establishing the Stout's Turnpike set down rules for construction as well as establishing the rates of toll to be charged. The road course had to be cleared of all obstructions for a width of eighteen feet, and of this, twelve feet had to be cleared level with the ground. Any sloping surface, such as a creek band or gully, had to be excavated in such a way as to allow easy passage of any means of transportation. All marshes, swamps, or creeks had to be bridged or causewayed, if necessary. For this effort, Stout and his associates were to receive the following toll: 75¢ for each four-wheeled

---

[12] Knox, History of Morgan County, p. 45.

[13] Acts of Alabama, 1822, pp. 90-91.

wagon, 25¢ for a two-wheeled carriage, 12½¢ for a man and horse, 6¼¢ for each loose horse, 3¢ for each head of cattle, and 2¢ for each hog or sheep. The obligations and rights granted by the act were given for a period of twelve years.[14]

The original act chartering the Stout's Turnpike was altered many times. In 1823, an amending act extended the road to Elyton, and extended the proprietors' rights to extract tolls there also.[15] In 1824, a further amendment reduced the toll by one half, but set the fine for by-passing toll gates at five dollars.[16] This, no doubt, was meant to encourage the legal use of the toll road. In 1826, the complete road from Gandy's Cove to Elyton was re-chartered on condition that Stout put the entire road in good repair before January 1, of the next year. The toll would still be one half of the original rate, but the charter time was made to extend for the next twelve years following January 1, 1827.[17]

Many of the antebellum maps of Alabama show Stout's Turnpike; however, generally it is represented only as a more or less straight line which it definitely was not. After leaving Gandy's Cove the turnpike ran in a south-westerly direction to Holmes Gap which is located just east of present day Vinemont. Running southward it continued through, or near, the present-day city of Cullman and on to the Good

---

[14] Ibid.

[15] Acts of Alabama, 1823, pp. 33-34.

[16] Acts of Alabama, 1824, p. 117.

[17] Acts of Alabama, 1826, p. 61.

Hope community. From Good Hope it continued south to Mariott Creek which it followed south toward the Mulberry River. Before reaching the river, the road turned south-west to the small river town of Baltimore which was located approximately in Section Seven, Range Three West of Township Thirteen South, which at that time was in Walker County. Until later amendments extended the road, the turnpike terminated near Baltimore. Later in 1835, another amendment gave Stout the right to improve and straighten the road in exchange for twelve more years of chartering.[18] Some straightening may have been done to this road in the southern area of the county. The course leaving Mariott Creek going to Baltimore may be such an instance. The 1838 La Tourrette Map of Alabama[19] shows the Stouts Turnpike running due south to the Mulberry River and continuing to Elyton.

At the point where the turnpike met the course of Mariott Creek, a settlement developed which included a post office. This small community, tightly squeezed between surrounding mountains, was on the line of Blount and Walker counties. At its orgin in 1833, the post office was located in Walker County on Pewterfork Creek. The first postmaster was Francis Atkinson. In 1835, the postal official was A. (Abraham) Stout after whom the community and post office was named. In 1837, Andrew J. Sparks was appointed, and the office remained in the Sparks family for the next six years with A. R. Sparks being appointed in 1839, I. R. Sparks in 1841, when the post office was moved slightly

---

[18] Acts of Alabama, 1835, p. 75

[19] La Tourrette Map of Alabama, 1838, Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

eastward into Blount County, and J. R. Sparks in 1843. From 1845 until 1853 there was not a post office at Stout's and other nearby post offices served the area. In 1855, Stout's was re-established for several years with S. S. Morrow as the postmaster.[20]

Stout's was the most important post office established on the toll road, but it was not the only one. While the community of Stout's was coming into being on Mariott Creek another community, Holmes Gap, was developing on the toll road where it followed Flint Creek out of the mountains into Morgan County. By the late 1850s, the community had grown sufficiently to need a post office. J. H. Scrugg's *Alabama Postal History* states that on April 1, 1859, there existed in Blount County a post office, Mount Alvis,[21] which the 1865 *Map of North Alabama and Georgia* places at Holmes' Gap.[22]

During the era that Stout was successfully operating his turnpike in the central part of the region, efforts were also being made to establish a turnpike in the western sector. In December, 1820, the Alabama legislature granted Thomas D. Crab and his associates the right to establish a toll road from the southern boundary of Morgan County in Ranges Four or Five West to the falls of the Black Warrior River.[23] This road was constructed, but it left its point of origin in a southwestwardly direction missing the Cullman area. In November of 1832, the legislature granted a charter to John C. Hawkins and his associates allowing them to establish a road from the southern boundary of Morgan County in Ranges Four or Five West by the nearest route to where Crab's road crossed the Sipsey Fork of the Black Warrior River in Walker County.[24] It is not known just how much, if any, of this road was finished, but it would seem that this venture failed because five years later another toll road was chartered to be built in approximately the same area. On Christmas day, 1837, the legislature authorized Nathaniel Burham (often spelled Burnam) and his associates to lay out a turnpike from Basham's Gap in southwestern Morgan County to Jasper in Walker County, thence to the Tuscaloosa County line.[25] This road traveled in a north-south direction in what was then the northeastern part of Walker County. It came into present-day Cullman County at its northwestern corner from Basham's Gap. Continuing south, it ran through the present-day communities of Jones Chapel, Crane Hill, and Wheat before turning south past Bethany Church enroute to the Sipsey Fork.[26] According to its charter, the Burnam Road had to be eighteen feet wide, twelve feet of which had to be free of stumps. Water courses had to be sloped to allow easy crossing, or bridged or causewayed. Rates were set at 75¢ for a four-wheeled wagon, 50¢ for

---

[20] Jones, *Combing Cullman County*, p. 157.

[21] J. H. Scruggs, Jr., compiler, *Alabama Postal History* Birmingham: Privately Printed, 1954), no pages (page 21 from first of material). Hereinafter cited as Scruggs, *Alabama Postal History*.

[22] U. S. Coast Survey, 1865, *Map of North Alabama and Georgia*, Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama. Hereinafter cited as *Map of North Alabama and Georgia*. Note: This map was compiled from state, local, and postal maps.

[23] *Acts of Alabama*, 1820, pp. 81-82.

---

[24] Acts of Alabama, 1832, pp. 10-11.

[25] Acts of Alabama, 1837, pp. 125-126.

[26] Interview, Mr. W. T. Reese, Jones Chapel Community, Cullman County, September 19, 1971. Note: Mr. Reese was for several years the road foreman or overseer on this road.

a two wheeled wagon, 25¢ for a two-wheeled cart, 12½¢ for a man and horse, 6½¢ for each loose horse, and 2¢ each for heads of sheep, cattle, or swine. Burnam was given the right to collect this toll for twenty years after the road was established.[27]

The Burnam Road was important to the development of the western section of Cullman County because the charter exempted the people of Walker County from paying the toll exacted,[28] and thus, to the people of the surrounding area, the road supplied a good route both into Jasper and the cities and towns of the Tennessee Valley, where items could be marketed and corn obtained.[29] On March 3, 1845, Congress established a mail route from Tuscaloosa, through Jasper to Somerville in Morgan County.[30] This route probably made use of the Burnam Road because, at the time, it was the shortest major route to take.

Between Stout's Turnpike and the Burnam Road, another toll road was established by the state legislature on December 23, 1832. This toll road charter was granted to Preston Nelson and his associates. The road was to run from the house of David Day at Day's Gap to the old Weeden place on the Stout's Turnpike in the present-day Good Hope area. The rate of toll was the same as that set for the Burnam Road except that four wheeled wagons were only charged 50¢. The requirements of construction were the same as both the Burnam and Stout Roads. The charter was granted for the term of fifteen years.[31] This turnpike formed the basis for what is now called the Day's Gap Road, which is shown on most county maps. In antebellum times it formed an important link in the Moulton to Gadsden Road. Before the advent of the steamboat on the Tennessee River, the road was much used in hauling cotton to Coosa where it was loaded on the railroad for shipment to Charleston.[32]

---

[27] Acts of Alabama, 1837, pp. 125-126.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Henry F. Arnold, editor, The March of Progress in Cullman County (Cullman, Alabama: Cullman Tribune, 1937 edition), no pages (page 7 of material). Hereinafter cited as Arnold, March of Progress.

[30] J. H. Scruggs, Jr., compiler, Alabama Postal Roads with Maps 1818-1845; Also, Early Forts, First Line of Communication 1736, 1744, 1812 (Birmingham: Privately Printed, 1954), no pages (p. 13 from first page of material). Hereinafter cited as Scruggs, Postal Roads.

In the extreme northeastern corner of the area, the legislature granted the charter for a turnpike which proved to be important. On January 7, 1830, Robert H. Rogers and his associates were granted the privilege of opening a road from Marston Mead's house to Ezekiel P. Wallis' house on the route to Ditto's Landing on the Tennessee River. This road was to be twenty feet wide, of which twelve had to be free of stumps. All banks had to be sloped, and tolls were set as follows: 75¢ for a four wheeled wagon, 25¢ for a two wheeled carriage, 12½¢ for a rider and horse, 4¢ for a horse or mule, 2¢ per head for cattle, and 1¢ per head for sheep, swine, or goat. The grant was made for ten years and the road had to be finished within the first three years.[33] Later in 1841, the proprietorship

---

[31] Acts of Alabama, 1832-33, pp. 66-67.

[32] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 55.

[33] Acts of Alabama, 1830, pp. 64-65.

of this road was given to Philip D. Clack who was given the right to draw toll until January 1, 1854.[34]

The Rogers, or Clack, Road was the original for part of present-day Highway 67. Its importance was great. It connected the road in Morgan County leading to Ditto's Landing which was the main river landing for Huntsville to the road leading from the Tennessee Valley to Tuscaloosa. The toll road shortened the distance from the Tennessee River Valley to South Alabama. In addition, Ditto's Landing was one of the important landings on the Tennessee River; much freight and many settlers moving southward landed here and consequently followed the toll road southward. On July 7, 1838, Congress established a mail route from Somerville to Brooksville in Blount County and on to Bennettsville. This mail route would have been in part over this turnpike.[35]

Nine days after the Rogers toll road was chartered, the legislature chartered another road in Blount County. This charter was given to Daniel Fields and his associates. The road was to commence at Edward Cox in Blount County and terminate at the foot of the mountain in Morgan County. The act specified that fourteen feet of the twenty feet wide right of way had to be cleared of all stumps, roots, etc. The toll was set thus: 50¢ per loaded wagon and 37½¢ per unloaded wagon, 25¢ per cart whether loaded or empty, 50¢ for a four wheeled pleasure cart, 25¢ for a two wheeled pleasure cart, 12½¢ for a rider and mount, 6¼¢ per loose horse, and 1¢ each per head of livestock.[36]

---

[34] Acts of Alabama, 1848, pp. 422-423.

[35] Scruggs, Postal Roads, no pages - page 11 from first page of material.

The Fields' Turnpike was an important part of the Sommerville-Blountsville Road. The road started near Blountsville and ran through the Mount Hebron community. After crossing the present day Holly Pond and Fairview areas the road continued to Somerville. This road was one of the main transportation routes between Blountsville and the Tennessee Valley area.[37] Because of its importance as the main route between Blountsville and Somerville many exemptions were made. Toll could not be charged mail carriers, military couriers, pedestrians, jurors or witnesses going to or from a court, or persons going to or from militia musters, court martials, elections, or church.[38]

The last of the toll roads established within the area during the antebellum period was the Brindley Turnpike. On January 11, 1834, Mace T. P. Brindley and his associates were given the right to turnpike two roads which ran into Blount County from the southern settlements in Morgan County. Brindley was given the right to cross any public road existent or planned. The road had to be cleared of stumps for ten feet of its twenty feet width, and it had to be graded for convenience on hills, banks, and water courses. For their effort

---

[36] Acts of Alabama, 1830, p. 61.

[37] Blount County Historical Society, The Heritage of Blount County (n.p.: Blount County Historical Society, 1972), no pages-page 75 from title page. Hereinafter cited as The Heritage of Blount County.

[38] Acts of Alabama, 1830, p. 62.

the group was to receive the following toll: 75¢ for each four wheeled carriage, 25¢ for each two wheeled carriage, 12½¢ for a horse and rider, 6¼¢ for each loose horse or mule, and 3¢ per head for each swine, cattle, or sheep. This right was given for sixteen years. For the first eight years the citizens of Blount and Morgan Counties were exempted from paying toll; however, during the second half they were not.[39]

Brindley's grant was later amended in 1836 to allow three more years to complete the roads granted to them.[40] The 1856 La Tourrette Map of Alabama[41] clearly shows that Brindley did complete his roads. The map pictures the turnpike starting at Blount Springs, continuing northward to William's at present day Hanceville, and onward to Brindley's home at present day Simcoe. At Brindley's, the road split, one branch continued north to Morgan County while the other branch turned due west to the western border of Blount, at which point the road turned northeast and ran into Morgan County. Both branches of the turnpike furnished a straight through road from settlements in Morgan County and the Tennessee Valley to Blount Springs. The western route crossed routes leading from Morgan into the mountains of Blount County. At its western-most point the road met the old Corn Road which followed the divide ridge between the

---

[39] Acts of Alabama, 1833, pp. 76-79.

[40] Acts of Alabama, 1836, p. 137.

[41] La Tourrette Map of Alabama, 1856, Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama. Hereinafter cited as La Tourrette Map of Alabama, 1856.

Tennessee and Black Warrior water sheds. This old road will be more fully covered later.

It is important to note that the 1856 La Tourrette Map of Alabama marked the location of Williams' on the Brindley Road leading from Blount Springs to Brindley's residence near present day Simcoe. This was the residence of James Allan Williams near what is today Hanceville.[42] Williams served as postmaster of Corn Grove Post Office which existed for a brief period in the immediate area during the late 1830s and early 1840s. Scrugg's Alabama Postal History lists the existence of the post office in 1839[43] and it probably endured for the traditional two year term. In addition to being postmaster, Williams also served as a postal rider, riding from Corn Grove via Blountsville to Elyton on mail runs that took two full days to complete.[44] Corn Grove post office was short lived, but several years later another post office called Hanna was established in the area.[45] This post office is clearly shown on the 1865 Map of Northern Alabama and Georgia which was compiled by the U. S. Coast Survey.[46]

In all six toll roads ran through the present day Cullman County area prior to the Civil War. In addition to these roads, there were county public roads which fanned out from and connected the

---

[42] Interview, Mr. Lewis Fanning, Hanceville, Alabama, January 12, 1972. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Fanning, January 12, 1972.

[43] Scruggs, Alabama Postal History, no pages-page 7 of material.

[44] Interview, Fanning, January 12, 1972.

[45] Scruggs, Alabama Postal History, no pages-page 21 of material.

[46] Map of Northern Alabama and Georgia.

different communities of the area. Court records which describe the establishment of the county roads are missing, having been lost in various ways down through the years.[47] But most of the early important public roads are shown on early maps, while some have been recorded in other documents or by tradition.

Alabama state law mentions two early public highways in the southern part of the area. On December 10, 1821, the legislature declared the Mulberry Fork of the Tuscaloosa (Black Warrior) River from the town of Baltimore to its junction with the Sipsie (Sipsey) Fork a public highway. Any obstructing of the waterway was punishable under the law.[48] About ten years later on January 15, 1831, another road concerning Baltimore was mentioned in state law. The legislature made it mandatory that every eligible person living within seven miles of the road that was to be built from Baltimore to Tuscaloosa, had to work on the road until the road was finished, provided that the number of days did not exceed ten days.[49] This road ran slightly northwestwardly before turning westward. It closely followed the course of present-day Highway 31 through Arkadelphia and across Dorsey's Creek. Shortly afterwards the road turned southwestwardly and continued to

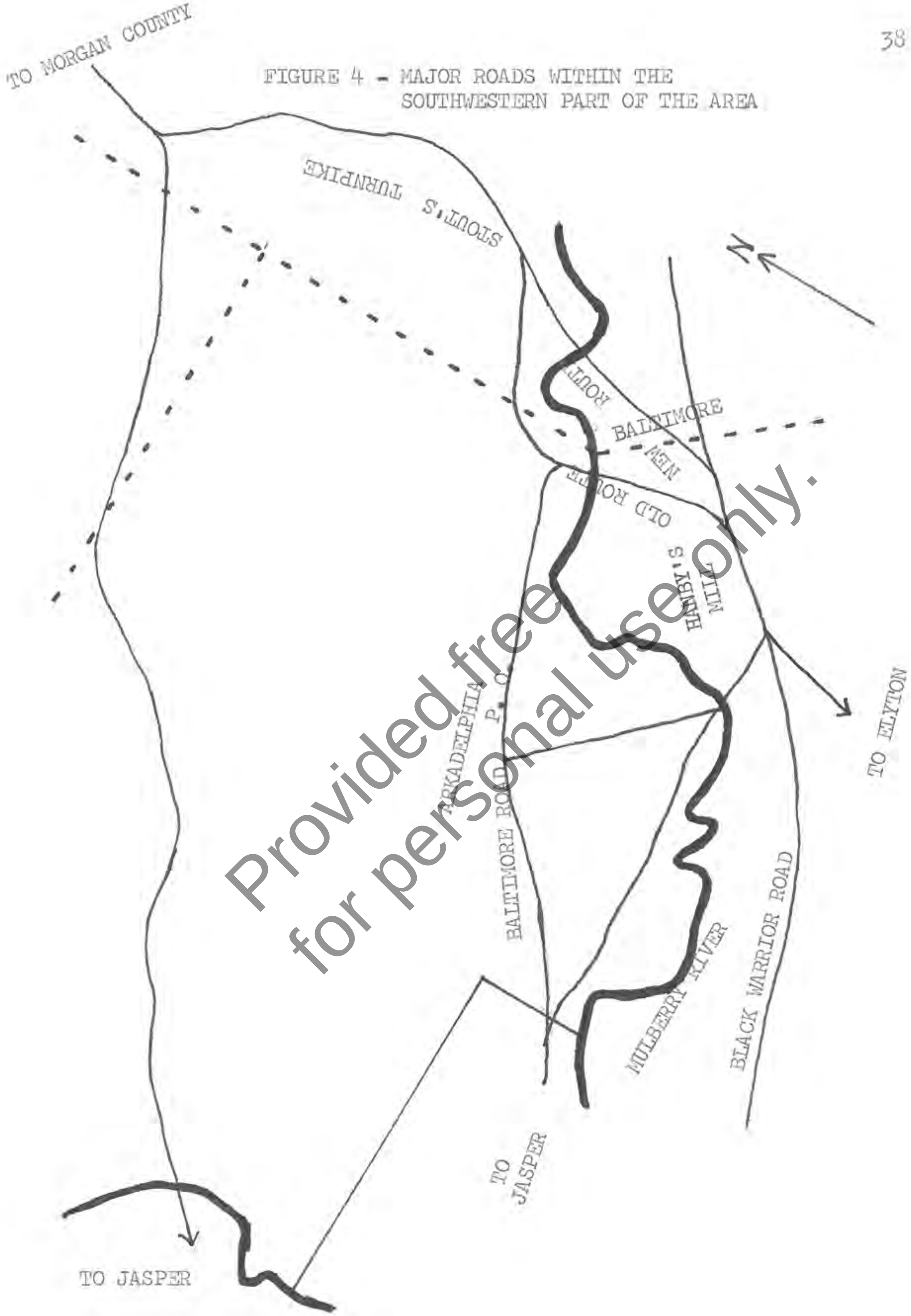
---

[47] Both Walker and Winston Counties lost their antebellum records in court house fires. A search of the records at Oneonta failed to turn up any early Blount County road records pertaining to the Cullman area.

[48] Acts of Alabama, 1821, p. 83.

[49] Acts of Alabama, 1830, p. 20.

FIGURE 4 - MAJOR ROADS WITHIN THE SOUTHWESTERN PART OF THE AREA


TO MORGAN COUNTY
STOUT'S TURNPIKE
N
NEW ROUTE
BALTIMORE
OLD ROUTE
HANBY'S MILL
ARKADELPHIA P. O.
BALTIMORE ROAD
TO ELYTON
BLACK WARRIOR ROAD
MULBERRY RIVER
TO JASPER
TO JASPER

the Sipsey Fork of the Black Warrior. At that point it left the present Cullman County area.[50]

It was along the Baltimore Road that the Arkadelphia Community developed. In 1855, a post office was established at Arkadelphia, taking its name from the community. John A. Donaldson was the first postmaster from 1855 to 1857, after which J. M. C. Wharton acted as postmaster up until the Civil War.[51]

After the completion of the Baltimore Road in the early 1830s, other roads were added to the network of roads in that section. The 1865 Map of Northern Alabama and Georgia shows a road leaving the Baltimore Road and closely following the Mulberry River until its crossing at Hanbe's Mill (Hanby's Mill) which was located on the Mulberry River in Section Thirty-five, Township Thirteen South, Range Five West. It was along this route that a post road was established between Jasper and Blount Springs by Congress on July 7, 1838.[52] After leaving Hanby's Mill, the road junctioned with the old Black Warrior Road which led up the river to Blount Springs and Blountsville. Between Hanby's Mill and Arkadelphia there was also a road which existed in the antebellum era. This road is shown on the 1865 Map of Northern Alabama and Georgia.

---

[50] Interviews with Mr. James G. Ballew, Central Community, Cullman County, December 1, 1971, and also Mr. Chester Jackson, Arkadelphia Community, Cullman County, August 22, 1972.

[51] Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. 151.

[52] Scruggs, Postal Roads, no pages-page 11 of material.

North of the Baltimore Road, but closely paralleling it in direction, there was another road which is shown on the 1842 Morse and Breese Map of Alabama.[53] Parts of this old road are still visible along its course. The road started at Stout's on Mariott Creek. It ran westward along Pewterfork Creek, then climbed up the mountain and across to the present day Breman area. The road followed Dorsey's Creek leaving it at the gap at Wilburn to continue southwestwardly toward the Sipsey Fork where it left the area and continued to Jasper. Highway 69 today follows part of this general course.

The road from Stout's to Jasper was met near the present day Breman area by a section of the Speegle Blaze Trail from the north. The Speegle Blaze Trail was blazed by the David Speegle family when it moved into the Ryan's Creek bottom at Brushy Creek around 1830. The road began at Cedar Plains in southern Morgan County. From there it ran up Lacon Mountain and continued in a southerly direction through present day West Point, Spring Hill, and Trimble to Brushy Creek.[54] Part of this distance, from near West Point to just south of Spring Hill, the Blaze Trail and the Nelson Toll Road followed a common course.

The blazing of the Speegle Blaze Trail by David Speegle and his wife, Winiford, is quite understandable for there existed at least three good motives. The family had friends and relatives at Cedar Plains. Winiford's parents, John and Elizabeth Cranford, resided for

---

[53] Morse and Breese Map of Alabama, 1842, Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

[54] Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972.

a time at Cedar Plains before moving into Walker County in the late 1830s.[55] In addition, the road was an instrument used by both David and Winiford in the pursuits of their individual callings. David was a Christian (Church of Christ) preacher who sometimes preached at services in the Cedar Plains area.[56] The road was essential to David's ministry. Winiford's calling was along medical lines--she was a midwife. Since there were few, if any, doctors in the area, Winiford was often called upon to deliver babies.[57]

The Speegle Blaze Trail was later extended on to Jasper by the Speegles when John and Elizabeth Cranford moved into Walker County around 1838. The road was extended from Brushy Creek up Simpson Creek to present day Breman. From there it followed the same course as the road leading from Stouts to Jasper.[58] Which of these two roads was established first is not known.

Along the northern boundary of the tract being studied, there still exists a road which had its origin in early antebellum days. The "Old Corn Road" was not just a road, but a network of roads. The road started near present day Vinemont where it was met by the western branch of the Brindley Toll Road. Following the divide ridge westward

---

[55] John Martin Dombhart, History of Walker County, Alabama (Thornton, Arkansas: Cayce Publishing Company, 1937), p. 173. Hereinafter cited as Dombhart, History of Walker County.

[56] Knox, History of Morgan County, p. 171.

[57] Interview, Mrs. Lula Self Bailey, Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, September 14, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Bailey, September 14, 1971.

[58] Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972.

the Corn Road had several branches dropping down many of the gaps and passes into Morgan and Lawrence Counties in the Tennessee Valley. Various sections of the Corn Road were used in several other roads of the area. The Speegle Blaze Trail and the Burnam Road made use of branches of it to work themselves up into the mountains. The Nelson Toll Road (Day's Gap Road) came up the mountain at Day's Gap which was a branch of the Old Corn Road, and followed the road eastward for a short distance before turning southward.

The Old Corn Road was the result of a local need. Settlers in the mountains because of drought, crop failure, or a need for additional stock feed, often needed more corn than they could produce. To get this grain they had to travel to the Tennessee Valley where the grain grew abundantly. The settlers in the valley also made use of the road. While they had the grain, they often lacked the water power to grind it. Using this road, they sometimes carried their grain into the hills to mills.[59]

Many of the public roads of the eastern part of the area are found on the 1865 Map of Northern Alabama and Georgia. This map pictures a road leaving Mount Alvis Post Office, which was located at about the intersection of the Brindley and Stout's Turnpikes, in a southeasterly direction toward Blountsville. In the area of Hanna Post Office at William's many roads are shown radiating in several directions. The road leading south is undoubtedly the Brindley Turnpike to Blount Springs. The road passing through Good Hope, where it met the Nelson Turnpike on to Blountsville, was a link in the Moulton to Gadsden Road.[60] This section of road would be at least as old as the Nelson Toll Road, and the section from Williams to Blountsville was no doubt laid out in the early 1820s to connect the community with the county seat. To the west, Hanna was connected by a road to Stout's so that a straight route existed between Blountsville and Jasper through Williams' and Stout's.

---

[59] Knox, History of Morgan County, p. 133.

In the southeastern section of the area another road is shown on the earlier 1839 David A. Burr Map of Alabama.[61] This postal coach road left Blount Springs and ran to Stout's. It was probably on this road that Sapp's Cross Roads Post Office was twice established, once during the early 1850s and again during the late 1850s. During both of these periods the post office at Stout's was discontinued.[62]

In addition to all of the roads listed, there was also a route stretching from Blountsville to Houston which was established after Houston was made the county seat of Hancock (Winston) County. The route made adequate use of the many roads already in existence. From Blountsville the route took the Moulton to Gadsden Road to Good Hope on the Stout's Turnpike where it turned southwestwardly to join the Speegle Blaze Trail which it followed to Brushy Creek. From Brushy

---

[60] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 55.

[61] David A. Burr Map of Alabama, 1839, Brantley Map Collection, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama. Hereinafter cited as Burr Map of Alabama.

[62] Scruggs, Alabama Postal History, no pages-pages 16 and 21 from first page of material.

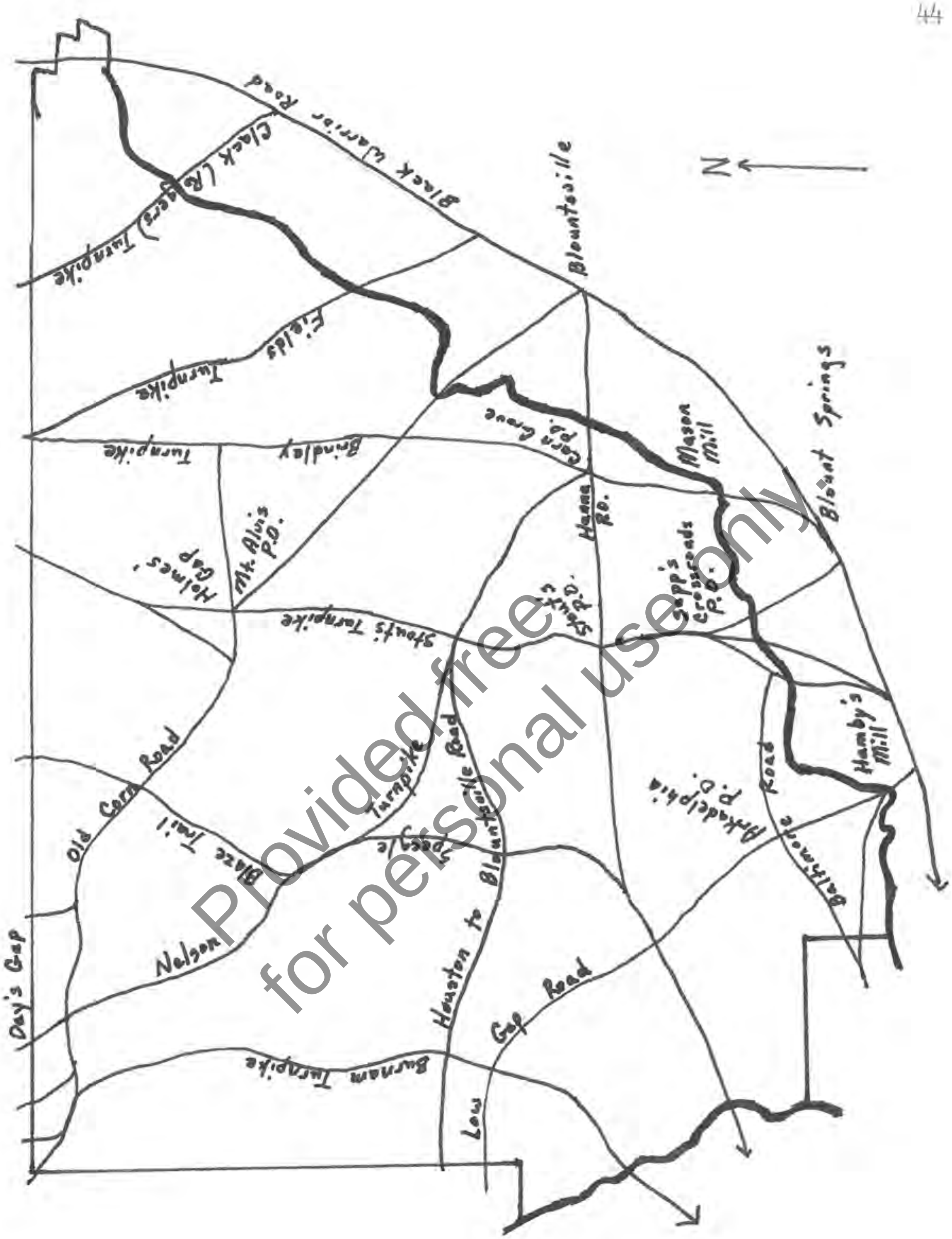

Black Warrior Road
Clack (Rogers) Turnpike
Blountsville
N
Fields Turnpike
Brindley Turnpike
Corn Grove P.O.
Mason Mill
Blount Springs
Hanna Rd.
Mt. Alvis P.O.
Holmes' Gap
Stouts Turnpike
Stouts P.O.
Sepp's Crossroads P.O.
Hamby's Mill
Arkadelphia P.O.
Baltimore Road
Old Corn Road
Blaze Trail
Speegle Turnpike
Houston to Blountsville Road
Nelson
Day's Gap
Low Gap Road
Burnam Turnpike

FIGURE 5 - MAP SHOWING MAJOR ROADS WITHIN THE CULLMAN COUNTY AREA AROUND 1860

Creek in the Ryan's Creek bottoms the old territorial road was followed westward to Houston.[63]

Besides the many major roads, there were other small roads which connected the small scattered communities. The larger communities, such as Stout's, William's and Holmes' Gap, had roads radiating from them going to most neighboring communities. These smaller roads along with the major public roads and turnpikes comprised a rather far-reaching network of roads which connected the bordering counties and different regions of the state.

The subject of roads, however, must include a discussion of their general condition. The turnpikes were usually kept passable. They were established to make money and, in order to do so, they had to be kept in good shape. Any turnpike not kept in adequate repair was opened by road commissioners to free public use, and they remained free until they were properly fixed. Needless to say, most operators kept their turnpikes in good condition, at least while it proved profitable to do so. Some of the more important toll roads, such as Stout's, were rechartered by the state on assurance that the roads would be put back in good repair and kept that way.

Roads maintained by the different counties were not always kept in as good a state of repair as the turnpikes. Many times people met their road obligation with as little work as possible even when under the supervision of overseers.[64] It was this tendency that caused the state to pass laws regarding Walker and Blount Counties, which sought to increase the amount of work done by increasing the work force available. An act passed on January 5, 1835, amended the Walker County road laws by forcing all eligible hands in the county to work on some public road no matter how far they lived from a public road.[65] Several years later another state law was enacted making all white males of Walker County liable to work on public roads, and exempting only overseers and apportioners.[66] A similar law had been passed for Blount County in 1845. All eligible persons previously exempted, such as teachers, preachers, road officials, and even the sheriff, were required to work on the roads.[67] What effect these laws had on the state of the road system is uncertain, but human tendencies do not change quickly, and probably neither did the condition of the roads.

---

[63] Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972. Also Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. XVI has a map which shows the road.

[64] Moore, History of Alabama, p. 296.

Geographic factors must also be mentioned when discussing road conditions. Those roads which ran in a north-south direction, or in a north-east direction followed the contours of the land. These were easily passable with little difficulty except during wet weather when mud posed a problem. The roads which led from the northwest to the southeast were much more difficult to travel. These roads crossed mountains and streams and other natural obstructions. The Moulton to Gadsden road followed this general direction and was much used during the early period of settlement by wagoners hauling Blount County

---

[65] Acts of Alabama, 1834, p. 62.

[66] Acts of Alabama, 1859, pp. 594-595.

[67] Acts of Alabama, 1844, p. 34.

cotton to Coosa. The difficulties were excessive and the route was almost completely abandoned. It was much easier and less expensive to haul the cotton to the Tennessee River and ship it by steamboat to Chattanooga.[68]

The Tennessee River was the closest year around shipping point for the area. Attempts were made to navigate the Mulberry Fork of the Black Warrior River which was declared a public highway by the state legislature in 1821.[69] This enterprise, however, was greatly hampered by the hazardous condition of the huge shoals above Tuscaloosa, and the low level of water in the Mulberry River during most of the year. Despite these factors, flatboats carrying staves, stock, coal, and farm crops (corn and cotton) from the Mulberry River valley did continue to descend the river to South Alabama markets.[70]

The part of the area affected by this river traffic was restricted to the lower Mulberry River valley; thus, most of Cullman County at that time was land locked.

The road network which developed in the territory grew out of public need. Turnpikes and public roads pierced the wilderness and led the small farmer to markets where he could sell his crops and cattle. The skilled craftsmen followed these roads back into the hills to practice their trades wherever needed. The road system, though bad in places, gave the area access to the outside and assisted in the development of the area's economy.

---

[68] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 55.

[69] _Acts of Alabama_, 1821, p. 83.

[70] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 53.

IV. THE ECONOMY OF THE CULLMAN COUNTY AREA PRIOR TO 1860

Before the Civil War, the economy of the area which later became Cullman County was basically agricultural. Industry developed very slowly, or not at all, and many occupations such as milling, merchandising, cabinet making, and blacksmithing tended to compliment farming by furnishing the farmer those necessary items which he himself could not produce. Attempts were made at varying the economy in the Mulberry River valley by mining local coal deposits, but although worthy of comment, they proved to be diminutive when the rapids of the Black Warrior River could not be rendered safe for river shipping. It was not until more recent years, when the problem of transportation was solved, that mining became highly profitable.

In the 1800s after treaties with the Creek, Cherokee, and Chickasaw Indians opened over three-quarters of the present state of Alabama for settlement, people began to pour into the area. The Indian danger had ended, and so had the War of 1812. With the resuming of foreign trade and the demand for cotton increasing, many planters and farmers in the coastal states began to look for new lands to cultivate. Their lands were worn out by many years of constant use and abuse, and they could no longer make a profit on land that repeatedly produced less and less each year. To them the rich lands of Alabama were a godsend.

With so many buyers wanting land, the price of land in the rich Tennessee Valley rose tremendously. Land in Madison County sold for as much as fifty-four dollars per acre. Further west, prices were even higher with one quarter section near Tuscumbia going for over one hundred dollars per acre.[1] When there was no longer any land left in the Tennessee Valley, many of the speculators and small planters and farmers who could not afford the high land prices turned south into the Blount County area.

The settlement of land in Blount was difficult. Madison County was the closest place to obtain supplies, and because of this the settler often had to carry everything that he would need into the wilderness with him. Usually instead of the whole family moving, several of the older sons would reside in the wilderness, clear fields and plant adequate crops of foodstuffs - usually corn - to feed the rest of the family upon its arrival.[2]

In many cases the settling took place before the purchasing of the land. Even though the land settled was not as good as Tennessee Valley land, speculation posed a great problem to these early "squatters." All public land had to be sold at public auction to the highest bidder. The small farmer had to bid against speculators for the land that he had cleared, planted, and improved. His own improvements

---

[1] Thomas Jones Taylor, A History of Madison County and Incidentally of North Alabama, 1732-1840, edited with an introduction by W. Stanley Hoole and Addie S. Hoole (University, Alabama: Confederate Publishing Company, 1976), pp. 44-45. Hereinafter cited as Taylor, History of Madison County.

[2] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 42.

actually increased the value of his land causing him to have to pay more or lose his land and improvements. In many cases, the speculators were willing to be bribed not to bid, but either way the squatter ended up paying more. In 1819, the state legislature passed severe acts against such open fraud, but past instances were not corrected.[3]

Many squatters, after losing their lands, pushed up further into the smaller creek bottoms. In order to elude the speculators they often chose inaccessible places and kept all improvements as crude as possible.[4] Later, laws would give these settlers preemption rights on lands they had settled and improved, thus guaranteeing everyone an opportunity to obtain land.

To these early settlers cotton meant money, not just to the planters who owned slaves and raised it almost exclusively, but also to the small farmer who raised it as a cash crop to help buy the extra items he needed. In 1818, when the sale of Alabama lands reached its peak, the price of cotton was 34¢ a pound. Because production increased, the price began to slide downward in following years until 1823 when the price was 11¢ per pound. Even though prices rose again in 1825, the effect was short lived, and prices fell back to 10¢ per pound. At that price, there was no profit to be made by the small farmer and little to be made by the slave owner.[5] Because of such low prices, cotton as a crop became less and less important. By 1836, the

---

[3] Ibid., p. 46.

[4] Ibid., p. 47

[5] Abernethy, The Formative Period, pp. 84-85.

cultivation of cotton in Blount County had almost been abandoned.[6] Further down the Mulberry River in Walker County, the same thing was occurring. When the financial panic of 1837-1838 occurred and many who were solely dependent upon the raising of cotton lost fortunes, Walker Countians were not affected as badly because cotton was not the principal source of income in Walker County's diversified economy.[7]

The handling of cotton during these early days of cultivation differed between the planter, who grew it as a main cash crop, and the small farmer, who grew it only as a supplimentary source of income. The planter took care to increase the cotton's quality and appearance which increased its value. The small farmer often handled cotton carelessly. Cotton was purchased by weight and since trash and moisture increased the weight, the small farmer made little effort to keep the fiber either clean or dry. The purchaser, who was usually the ginner, knocked off for the moisture and trash.[8]

During the years directly following the settlement of the area, there were several cotton gins located along the Mulberry River. One such gin belonged to William Dunn who lived along the Mulberry River near the town of Baltimore. An accounting of Dunn's property after his death in 1822 shows that he had in his possession an undivided amount of bulk cotton, which he probably had purchased from the growers in the immediate area, and two ginning machines, one with harness for a draft animal and one without.[9]

---

[6] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 46.

[7] Dombhart, History of Walker County, p. 35.

[8] Powell, "History of Blount County," pp. 47-48.

The cotton bought by ginners during this era was often cultivated rather crudely. The growers, wishing to commence cultivation as soon as possible, often only killed the trees in the area he intended to plant. He did this by either building a fire around the trunk or by girdling them. After a year or two the dead limbs began to fall. The small ones dropped first, but eventually the larger ones fell, crashing down through the growing crop, causing much damage and lessening the yield.[10]

Many people chose not to plant cotton, but planted corn instead. In the lands to the north of the Mulberry River, corn was of major importance. People living along major roads found that corn could be sold to settlers moving to new lands further south. These farmers, because of the existence of a stable, continuous market for their crop, were often able to pay for their land before those who grew cotton.[11] In years when corn yield was low, the demand would be greater and the price would rise. In years of large crops the price would be less because the demand would be decreased by the surplus. As a general rule, however, people who were in a position to sell corn as a food stuff were assured of a market. It was such a certain thing, Mace T. P. Brindley used a corn crop as part of the collateral

---

[9] Blount County Records, Miscellaneous Record, 1820-1829, Oneonta, Alabama, p. 11 of book and page 4 of session.

[10] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 46.

[11] Ibid., p. 47.

for a loan which he obtained from the State Bank of Alabama at Decatur.[12]

To settlers in the more inaccessible areas, corn was a major crop, and agriculture in general was subsistence farming. During the first years of settlement, stands, or stores, were so few and far between that practically everything that was needed was either grown or manufactured at home. Corn was of importance because it was not only a foodstuff but was also the prime ingredient in distilling corn whiskey, a substance which, among other things, could be used as medicine or currency. Corn liquor was always in demand at a premium price and was much easier to transport than bulk corn.[13]

Corn was also important as stock feed. Corn could be raised and fed to cattle, horses, or swine. When these were ready to be marketed, they could be driven to market. Many farmers in these remote areas raised stock for marketing. Mace Brindley, on his mortgage note to the Bank of Alabama at Decatur, listed eighty to ninty head of stock cattle and fifty to sixty swine.[14] The 1860 census for Winston County lists one John W. C. Jones of the present-day Jones Chapel area, as a stock raiser with property worth $20,955.[15] Many

---

[12] Blount County Records, Deed Book D, Oneonta, Alabama, pp. 129-132.

[13] Interview, Mrs. Lula Self Bailey, Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, September 14, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Bailey, September 14, 1971.

[14] Blount County Records, Deed Book D, Oneonta, Alabama, pp. 129-132.

[15] United States Population Census, 1860, Winston County, Alabama (National Archives Microfilm Publication), p. 1276. Hereinafter cited as Population Census, 1860, Winston County.

of the families such as the Wilhites, Drakes, Holmes, and Speegles who lived in the extreme southern part of Morgan County and the northern part of present Cullman County, engaged in the occupation of raising swine, which were then herded to South Alabama, sometimes as far as Mobile, where they were readily sold.[16]

Besides the growing of stock for the food market, many people participated in horse trading. Beasts of burden were of major importance to transportation and agriculture. Good draft animals were in constant demand and the hill country farmer, as an additional income, often participated in the business. David Speegle of the Brushy Creek area usually kept several horses for trading purposes.[17]

With the cultivation of corn, milling developed to provide a service for those who depended upon meal as an important foodstuff. Before the establishment of mills settlers either had to carry their corn long distances to be ground, or resort to the use of the crude mortar and pestle. Consequently, as the need arose several mills were erected in the area prior to the Civil War. These mill locations were often marked by good streams and the presence of a nearby major artery of travel.

The larger mills were those built on the Mulberry River. On the Brindley Turnpike near present-day Garden City, the Mason Mill was established around 1850. Originally the grist mill and an accompanying saw mill had been erected by Miles Hays, Richard Mason, and William Morris on land owned by Hays. In December of 1851, Hays and his wife for $640 sold their share to Mason,[18] whose name came to be associated with the mill. The 1856 La Tourrette Map of Alabama clearly gives the name and location of Mason's Mill.[19] Several miles further down the Mulberry River, the Hamby Mill was located on the road leading from Blount Springs to Jasper. This mill site is located just above the present Albritton Bridge. On February 15, 1856, the state authorized James D. Hamby and his successors to build a dam for a mill. The dam could not exceed four feet in height and could not obstruct navigation on the river during its flood stage. The Hamby Mill was built at the site of Prices' Old Mill.[20] Information concerning the Price Mill has not been found, but the title would indicate that it had existed for many years.

---

[16] Knox, A History of Morgan County, p. 133.

[17] Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972.

The mills built further back in the hills were much smaller in construction, and since many of the streams of the area ran very little during the summer, these mills were probably seasonal in their activities. Records of these small mills are rare, yet evidence indicates the existence of a few such mills. Blount County Deed Book F contains a deed probated May 5, 1846, which records a transfer of 120 acres of land by Thomas Sparks and his wife to the Bank of Alabama at Decatur. On part of this land stood a grist mill on Mariott Creek[21] near the Stout's settlement. The mill's date of establishment is not known, but its

---

[18] Blount County Records, Deed Book G, Oneonta, Alabama, pp. 587-588.

[19] La Tourrette Map of Alabama, 1856.

[20] Acts of Alabama, 1855-1856, pp. 128-129.

[21] Blount County Records, Deed Book F, Oneonta, Alabama, pp. 255-256.

location on a major turnpike would have made it accessible to many.

The census report of 1860 for Winston and Blount Counties help to establish the location of three other mills. The Winston census shows a mill wright, George Lester, living in Township Ten South, Range Five West, which would be in the area of present-day Jones Chapel.[22] Further to the east in Township Ten South, Range Four West, a miller, Alexander Williams, resided.[23] The William's Mill was located on Vest Creek, just east of the present-day Bethsadia Community.[24] The 1860 census for Blount County lists William Mayhall, a mill wright, and Z. Evens, a miller,[25] living in the northwest corner of the county near present-day Vinemont. There were probably several other smaller mills in the area, but these may have done only minute amounts of business which would not have given constant employment. John Nesmith, who moved into the present-day Crane Hill area in 1851, owned a grinding mill propelled by a horse.[26] The 1860 census lists him as being a carpenter.[27]

In this area, as in other areas, diversified occupations developed only after there was enough demand for them. Occupations closely

---

[22] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, p. 1252.

[23] Ibid., p. 1273.

[24] Interview, Franklin, April 8, 1972.

[25] United States Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Alabama (National Archives Microfilm Publication), pp. 68-69. Hereinafter cited as Population Census, 1860, Blount County.

[26] Arnold, March of Progress, no pages-page 116 from first page.

[27] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, p. 1262.

associated with farming, such as milling, blacksmithing, and wagon building, developed first out of a greater need. As the population grew, other occupations like carpentry, cabinet making, and hat making were added. By 1860, the eastern part of the area, which was at that time in Blount County, could boast a wide variety of occupations.[28] In the western part of the area, many of the same occupations did exist but on a lesser degree because the smaller, more scattered population would not support very many specialized craftsmen.[29]

In the Mulberry River Valley there were some early attempts to add shipping and mining to the economy. During the settling of the valley, speculators, supposedly from Baltimore, Maryland,[30] were attracted by the coal deposits and the shipping possibilities. A town site on the Mulberry River approximately seven miles west of Blount Springs was chosen, named Baltimore, and advertised as the "future emporium of boat building and coal mining in Alabama."[31] Many lots were sold at high prices and a few houses were erected.[32]

---

[28] Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Western Division. This division corresponds roughly with that area later made a part of Cullman County.

[29] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, Ranges Three, Four, and Five West. The Winston population census was taken by Township and Range. These ranges of Winston County were later made a part of Cullman County.

[30] Margaret Jean Jones, Cullman County Across The Years (Cullman, Alabama: Modernistic Printers, 1975), p. 20. Hereinafter cited as Jones, Cullman County Across The Years.

[31] Duffee, Sketches of Alabama, p. 19.

[32] Ibid.

During the early years of the town's short life span, the name William Dunn was frequently associated with it. On December 3, 1821, the Alabama legislature declared the Mulberry River navigable and a public highway.[33] Dunn, who prior to that date had examined the river from Baltimore to Tuscaloosa, was paid $120 by the state legislature for his services.[34] Soon after Dunn became involved in the infant shipping business in the town. The first of a few keel boats built at Baltimore was built by Elijah Cunningham in 1820,[35] and soon afterwards William Dunn sent the first flatboat piloted by William Jones down the river to Tuscaloosa markets. When the flatboat and its cargo, a load of staves, reached Tuscaloosa, it was sold and a keelboat bought for the return trip. The keel was loaded with 200 sacks of salt and other merchandise to be carried back up the river to Baltimore.[36] No doubt, Dunn was also one of the merchants of the town.

The trouble that Dunn's keel had on the trip back up the river shows one reason why Baltimore did not flourish as a shipping town. Twenty-six miles above Tuscaloosa, the Squaw Shoals stretched for seven treacherous miles, and about seven miles above the Squaw Shoals were the Black Rock Shoals. Because of these shoals, the loss rate for craft descending the river was about one in every eight. The trip up

---

[33] Acts of Alabama, 1821, p. 83.

[34] Ibid., p. 62.

[35] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 52.

[36] Ethel Ames, The Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama (Birmingham, Alabama: Book-Keepers, Press, 1972), p. 53. Hereinafter cited as Ames, Coal and Iron in Alabama.

the river was as difficult as the trip down the river was dangerous. The keel had to be unloaded and the cargo carried above the shoals. The boat had to be pulled up the shoals by the crew with the help of two local farmers. It took ten days to get the boat over Squaw Shoals alone.[37]

Along with the dangers and difficulties of the shoals in the Black Warrior River, another factor existed which could not be overcome. During the dry months the Mulberry River was too low to float the flatboats and keelboats; hence, shipping could not be done all year. Only during the freshets, or rises, was there enough water.[38] These factors, along with an epidemic during the 1830s which decimated the town's population,[39] tolled the final bell for what started as a grand undertaking.

Shipping during the rises did continue on the Black Warrior River and Mulberry Fork. Yearly, boats carried coal, corn, staves, livestock, and other products down to markets on the lower river. During the dry periods flatboats and keelboats were built and cargoes were collected. After the rains when the river began to rise, the boats were launched on their voyages down the river.[40]

Shipping difficulties may explain why the coal mining industry never really came into being prior to the Civil War. The town of Baltimore had been established to exploit the rich coal deposits in the area, and there were many such deposits. Michael Tuomey in his First Biennial

---

[37] Ibid., pp. 53-55.

[38] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 52.

[39] Jones, Cullman County Across The Years, p. 21.

[40] Ames, Coal and Iron in Alabama, p. 54.

Report on the Geology of Alabama (1850) stated that there was coal of good quality located on Dorsey's Creek. The main seam of this bed was thirty inches thick. He noted that the local smithies had exploited the deposit.[41] Further up Dorsey's Creek near the present-day Breman area, local settlers worked exposed seams in the mountainsides for their own use.[42] Later Tuomey reported many seams of coal in the river and nearby hills around the town of Baltimore.[43] George Powell, in his history of Blount County, stated that the demand for coal might one day justify a railroad being constructed to the junction of the Sipsey and Locust Forks. The rivers and the level valleys would make the collecting of the coal easier.[44] This railroad was never built before the Civil War and the deposits had to wait until the twentieth century before exploitation began.

It is significant to note that in the development of the economy of this area, slavery was not important. In 1820, there were only 175 slaves in Blount County,[45] and at that time Blount still included practically all of present-day Cullman, Winston, and Walker Counties with small parts of others. By 1830, Blount County, although decreased in

---

[41] Michael Tuomey, First Biennial Report of the Geology of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: M. D. J. Slade, 1850), p. 89.

[42] Interview, Mr. W. R. Garrison, Wilburn Community, Cullman County, January 10, 1972. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Garrison, January 10, 1972.

[43] Michael Tuomey, Second Biennial Report on the Geology of Alabama (Montgomery, Alabama: N. B. Cloud, 1858), p. 283.

[44] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 52.

[45] The Heritage of Blount County, no pages-page 18 from title page.

size, had 312 slaves, Walker County, which also included Winston, had 168.[46] The census returns show that most slaves were young, that there were more females than males, and that most of these females were in the child bearing age group. This might suggest that slave owners bought young slaves because they were cheap or bought females of child bearing age with the hope of increasing their number of slaves through birth. By 1860, the slave populations of the three major counties (Blount, Walker, and Winston) from which Cullman was carved, did not exceed seven percent of the counties' population. Blount had 666 slaves which formed six percent of its population; Walker had 519 which accounted for seven percent of its population; and Winston had only 122 slaves for three percent of its population.[47]

There were several reasons why slavery did not flourish in the hill area as it did in other parts of Alabama. Joseph Allan Hazel in his dissertation, "The Geography of Negro Agricultural Slavery in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, Circa 1860," points out that the soil of most of the hill area was shallow and existed over rock formations. Only one fifth of Blount's land mass and one tenth of that of Walker were not in this soil type.[48] The rich soil was to be found in the river valleys and there was not enough to allow a large scale plantation sys-

---

[46] United States Population Census, 1830, Blount and Walker Counties respectively (National Archives Microfilm Publication) pages 24 and 272 respectively.

[47] Joseph Allan Hazel, "The Geography of Negro Agricultural Slavery in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, Circa 1860," (unpublished doctorial dissertation, Columbia University, 1963), p. 255. Hereinafter cited as Hazel, "Geography of Negro Agricultural Slavery."

[48] Ibid., p. 35.

tem to develop. The climate, except in the lower valleys, was often unsuited for the cotton culture.[49] The hill climate was more suited for the growing of foodstuffs such as corn, peas and beans, potatoes, and stock[50], which took considerable less labor to produce. In addition, the area was land locked and was a part of the least accessible areas of the state. Transportation facilities by railroad did not exist during this era, and river facilities were unreliable and expensive.[51] Because of these factors slavery as an aid to agriculture did not develop.

By 1860, the Cullman area was composed of farmers and a few slave holders who mostly grew food crops or stock. Other occupations supported agriculture and developed as the demand and population grew strong enough to support them. But other developments were also unfolding besides an agricultural economy. Men have constantly strived for cultural refinement. On the frontier the time and place often made this a crude effort but nevertheless it was there. Man on the frontier carried with him a need for God and a desire for knowledge. Religion and education became important parts of the history of the present Cullman County area.

---

[49] Ibid., p. 51.

[50] Ibid., p. 54.

[51] Ibid.

V. RELIGION AND EDUCATION BEFORE 1860

On the Alabama frontier where change and danger were constant, most advanced forms of culture were neglected, not out of plan, but because the influential factors and the time needed to follow such endeavors were missing. The pioneer had little time, and subsistence always came first. However, two factors of culture, religion and education, were always present.

Religion in the Cullman County area was dominated by the two giants of the frontier religious sects, the Baptists, composed first of the Primitive and later the Missionary orders, and the Methodists. Both were structured to appeal to the frontiersman. In addition, other smaller groups such as the "Christians," Presbyterians, and Mormons were present and must be considered.

The Baptist faith lent itself to the frontier. The Baptist preacher was a man of the people, he had no training or special education in religion, and he was lured by the offer of cheap land just like any other pioneer. When people moved west to gain land, the Baptist preacher moved with them for the same reason they did. In this way, even before the prominence of the Missionary societies, there were Baptist representatives among the people as they moved westward. Equally advantageous for the Baptists was the democratic structure of their church bodies. Societies could be formed and governed internally without any outside direction, and they could ordain lay preachers whenever a need arose.

The history of the Baptists in the area which later became Cullman County must begin with the Primitive Baptists, a sect known for its adherence to the strict Calvinistic creed and its aversion to missionaries, Sunday schools, and ministers who were salaried or educated. But in each congregation in the early days of the Baptist faith there were reformers who brought about the missionary movement.

The first Baptist influence was from the Mount Zion Association which was formed in 1823. This association was composed of churches in what was then the Jefferson, Blount, Walker, and Marshall Counties area. At that time, Cullman County was a part of Walker and Blount Counties. At first, this association was missionary minded,[1] but contention became so great by the 1830s that the association became primitive in its views.[2]

Information concerning the Mount Zion Association is scarce, and a positive location for many of the churches in the association can not be made. There is no proof that any of the churches ever existed in what is now Cullman County; however, available information indicates that people living in the Cullman area did belong to churches of this association. A. Alread (Andrew Allred) of the Hanceville area was listed

---

[1] Avery Hamilton Reid, Baptist in Alabama; Their Organization and Witness (Montgomery, Alabama: Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1967), p. 24. Hereinafter cited as Reid, Baptist in Alabama.

[2] Ibid., p. 35.

as a licentiate at Mount Tabor Church.[3] The Mount Joy Church minutes contain the name John Roach. Roach lived in the area of Ryan's Creek in what is now western Cullman County.[4] Roach took a very active part in the Mount Joy Church, serving as clerk and associational delegate.[5] Roach was finally excluded because, several years prior to that time, he had shot a gun on Sunday.[6] Possibly other churches of the association also influenced the Cullman County territory.

Although records are not available to prove that a Primitive Baptist church from the Mount Zion Association existed in the area, there is proof that a Primitive Baptist church from another association did exist in the western section of the county. In 1844, while western Cullman County was still a part of Walker County, seven churches met at Bethel Church in Walker County to form the Lost Creek Baptist Association of the Primitive Order.[7] Two of the charter members, Sulpher Springs and Hopewell (now Mount Hope), bordered the Cullman area but were not in it.[8] It was not until the formation of Liberty Baptist

---

[3] Hosea Holcombe, *A History of The Rise and Progress of the Baptist in Alabama* (Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1840), p. 195. Hereinafter cited as Holcombe, *A History of . . . the Baptist in Alabama*.

[4] Carl Elliott, compiler, *Annals of Northwest Alabama*, vol. 1 (Northport, Alabama: Hermitage Press, 1965), p. 209. Hereinafter cited as Elliott, *Annals*, vol. 1. Roach was listed as living near William Calvert whose location is known.

[5] Mount Joy Church Minutes, Microfilm, Special Collections, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama, pp. 11-16.

[6] Ibid.

[7] *Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Associational Minutes for 1844*, Microfilm, Special Collections, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama, p. 1. Hereinafter cited as *Lost Creek . . . for (year)*.

[8] Ibid.

Church, near present-day Wheat, that a church of this association was formed in the present-day Cullman County area.

An exact date for Liberty's organization can not be established because of inadequate records. The first mention of Liberty is in the 1859 association minutes;[9] however, its establishment may easily have been several years previous to that time. The 1859 associational minutes list W. B. Day, James Blevens, and R. Givins as associational delegates and membership stood at seventeen. Since the number leaving the church equaled the number entering it, the membership for 1858 was also seventeen.[10] By 1860, the membership had grown to twenty-six, Blevens and Day were still delegates with Givins being replaced by A. Cornelias.[11] Membership had again increased by the next year. The membership for 1861 was thirty-five. Blevens and Day were assisted by Samuel Harberson in the delegate function.[12] The last set of minutes available before 1865 is for 1862 when membership fell to twenty-nine because six left by letter. Only two delegates, William B. Day and Samuel Harberson, were sent to the associational meeting.[13]

Liberty continued to exist at practically the same location until a few decades ago. Its long life can be partially explained by the

---

[9] Lost Creek . . . Minutes for 1859, p. 25. No minutes are available for the years between 1846 and 1859.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Lost Creek . . . Minutes for 1860, p. 5.

[12] Lost Creek . . . Minutes for 1861, p. 7.

[13] Lost Creek . . . Minutes for 1862, p. 8.

fact that it was located on the Burnam Road, a major artery leading from southern Morgan County to Jasper in Walker County.

While the Primitive Baptists were first in the area, the greatest Baptist influence did not come from them, but from the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association which can be considered missionary in nature. For this association there is not only a concise history, but several associational minutes available for the pre-Civil War period. Formed in July, 1820, under the name of The Big Bend of The Tennessee River Association, a name dropped the next year in favor of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, it was composed of nine churches in Lawrence, Franklin, and Lauderdale Counties.[14] The association was organized in an atmosphere of contention about missions and denominational activities, and although the anti-missionary faction was not in the majority, nevertheless, their presence did hinder the establishment of local home missions and home mission activities.[15] When this hindering element was overcome, the boundaries of the association began to move eastward into Lawrence, Morgan, Marshall, Blount, and Walker Counties.

Home missionary activities began in the early 1840s, and as a result, at least five Missionary Baptist churches were formed in the present-day Cullman County area. These were Good Hope, Hopewell, Flint Creek, Union and Arkadelphia.

Good Hope Baptist Church was the first church in the area to join the Muscle Shoals Association. Available statistics show that it was also the strongest congregation of the group. The church was admitted to the association in October, 1842.[16] The church was formed, probably as a result of a protracted meeting, in a well-settled community near the junction of two important roads, the Day's Gap road (Nelson Turnpike) leading from Moulton to Blountsville and the Stout's Turnpike which joined southern Morgan County to Elyton in Jefferson County. The earliest minutes available, those of 1845, show the church as having thirty-four members.[17] Associational delegates were John Fuller, William Jones, and M. Milligan, but Fuller and Milligan both absented themselves.[18] The membership for 1844 must have been fifty because the 1845 statistics state a net loss of sixteen members from 1844 to 1845.[19] The 1846 minutes show a membership of thirty-four whites and one black. Associational delegates were Martin Milligan, John Fuller, and T. Green.[20] The membership for 1848 was thirty-six with eleven having been added that year. Both J. Gerner and J. Milligan attended the associational meeting while S. D. M. Sims, who was a

---

[14] Reid, Baptist in Alabama.

[15] Ibid.

---

[16] Josephus Shackleford, *History of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association* (Trinity, Alabama: Privately Printed, 1891), p. 39. Hereinafter cited as Shackleford, *History of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association*.

[17] *Muscle Shoals Baptist Associational Minutes for 1845*, Microfilm, Special Collections, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama, single sheet - unpaged. Hereinafter cited as *Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for (year)*. Note: The membership figures in the 1845 minutes must be inverted because the 1846 figures give the membership as thirty-five with a net gain of one for the year.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] *Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1846*, p. 24.

licensed preacher, did not.[21] Considering that there had been a net gain of nine over the previous year, the membership for 1847 was twenty-seven. The large increase from 1847 to 1848 was no doubt due to the efforts of P. M. Musgrove and William Irvin who as home missionaries did extensive work in destitute areas of the association.[22]

Information concerning Good Hope Baptist Church during the 1850s is not as abundant as it was for the 1840s. J. Lansing Burrows' American Baptist Register for 1852 does give the condition of the churches of the Muscle Shoals Association for that year, and Good Hope's membership is given as thirty-six.[23] In 1854, associational records show that the church was represented by F. Fuller, J. Gerner, and W. Livingston; church membership was thirty-eight with J. K. Lynn serving as pastor.[24] The last available associational minutes for the period prior to the Civil War were for 1855. Good Hope and some of the other member churches in Blount County were not represented.[25] Even though Good Hope did occasionally suffer from not being represented at annual associational meetings, figures on membership show that the church was a relatively strong society during its pre-Civil War days.

The second church to join the association from the Cullman area was Hopewell, which entered in 1845.[26] This congregation may have been made up in part by the group that left Good Hope between the 1844 and 1845 associational meetings. According to available records, this church stayed weak throughout its antebellum period. In its early years it did not occupy its present site. According to tradition early services were held at "Old Hopewell" which was located about one-half mile southeast of the present day Hopewell Church. Old Hopewell appears to have been a community meeting house for Baptist, Methodists, and Christians.[27] On August 22, 1857, Nathan Watson, the owner of the land on which the building stood, deeded ten and one-half acres which contained the building, graveyard, and a spring to the Methodist group which met there.[28] The Baptists built a church on the property of William Edwards, and on October 29, 1858, Edwards deeded to the deacons of Hopewell Church the two acres on which the church stood.[29] A further agreement with B. M. Stephens by the deacons of the church gained the church the use of Stephens' spring as a source of water for the church.[30]

---

[21] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1848, p. 10.

[22] Ibid., p. 4.

[23] J. Lansing Burrows, ed., American Baptist Register for 1852 (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1853), p. 24. Hereinafter cited as Burrows, Baptist Register for 1852.

[24] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1854, p. 24.

[25] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1855, p. 14.

[26] Shackleford, History of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, p. 44.

Evidence reveals that Hopewell was never very large during the antebellum period. In 1845, when the church joined the association, membership stood at eleven. Associational delegates were R. Sandlin, John Edwards, and J. Miller who was not present at the associational conference.[31] In 1846, the same persons were again chosen as delegates,

---

[27] Interview, Mr. Lewis Fanning, Hanceville, Cullman County, January 10, 1972. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Fanning, January 10, 1972.

[28] Blount County Records, Deed Book I, Oneonta, Alabama, p. 480.

[29] Blount County Records, Deed Book K, Oneonta, Alabama, p. 48.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1845, single page - unnumbered.

but only Sandlin was in attendance. Church membership had risen by two to thirteen.[32] In 1848, Jonathan Edwards attended as representative to the conference; R. Sandlin and J. Edwards were also chosen but did not attend. Membership stood at twenty with five baptisms and six leaving by letter.[33] There had been a net loss of one, so membership for 1847 would have been twenty-one. From 1846 to 1847, eight members were gained. These eight may have been the eight that Good Hope lost during that same period. In 1850, R. Sandlin sttended as messenger; J. Edwards and William Bland were absent. Membership had fallen to fifteen.[34] In 1852 membership still stood at fifteen.[35] By 1854, membership had dropped even lower to thirteen. Two representatives, J. Pullin and J. Miller, absented themselves leaving only J. Edwards to attend the associational conference. The low church membership was partially due to not having a regular pastor.[36] The 1855 minutes give no information. This indicates that no delegate from Hopewell attended the associational conference. However, the minutes do list J. K. Lynn as Hopewell's pastor.[37]

Flint Creek, located near present-day Vinemont, was admitted into the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association at its twenty-seventh annual

---

[32] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1846, p. 24.

[33] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1848, p. 10

[34] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1850, p. 14.

[35] Burrows, Baptist Register for 1852, p. 24.

[36] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1854, p. 24.

[37] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1855, p. 24.

meeting in October of 1846.[38] While this date would make it the third church in this area to become a member of the association; tradition states that the church was formed much earlier in 1836 by J. C. Vincent and Rev. P. M. Musgrove who served as the church's first pastor.[39] No reason has been found for the long pause before joining the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association. The congregation may have delayed simply because of its small size, or because of constant fluctuations in membership. When the church joined the association in 1846, it had eighteen members of which six had been gained that year. The messengers to the association were Jacob Holmes, William L. Goodhugh, and Reuben Kelly.[40] The 1848 minutes show an increase of members to twenty-three. Of the three chosen messengers, C. L. Holmes, C. F. Yager, and J. Thomas, only Holmes was present at the associational meeting.[41] The 1848 figures show that from 1847 to 1848 there was a net loss of one member; therefore the membership for 1847 must have been twenty-four, an increase of six had been made from 1846 to 1847. The church's admittance to the association could have sparked this increase. Baptists in the area who were associated with churches of the association would probably not feel any hesitancy in joining a local church of the same association. By 1850, the membership had dropped back down to eighteen. C. L. Wilhite and W. W. Wilhite attended the associational conference as dele-

---

[38] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1846, p. 1

[39] Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. 137.

[40] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1846, p. 24.

[41] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1848, p. 10.

gates. J. K. Lynn, the church's pastor, was also a delegate but did not attend.[42] The membership from 1850 to 1852 stayed constant at eighteen church members.[43]

Between 1852 and 1854 a great change took place. During these years, J. K. Lynn served as pastor, and membership jumped to seventy-one, an unusually high number. Lynn, J. Holney, and T. Holbrook attended the annual associational meeting as messengers in 1854.[44] While other churches in the area did not send delegates to the annual meeting in 1855, Flint Creek did. The church body had grown to eighty members. J. K. Lynn, the pastor, J. Holmes, and O. Lawrence represented the church at the annual meeting.[45] No other statistics are available for Flint Creek Baptist Church for the period of time up to 1865. The church is in existence today and still has a strong congregation.

Besides these three churches, two other churches from the area also joined the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association before 1860. These two were Union and Arkadelphia. Union Church joined the association in 1858.[46] It was located in the area near the mouth of Mariott Creek and north of the Mulberry River. No information has been found. Arkadelphia took its name from the community and post office of the same name. While it was received into the association in October of

---

[42] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1850, p. 14.

[43] Burrows, Baptist Register for 1852, p. 23.

[44] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1854, p. 23.

[45] Muscle Shoals . . . Minutes for 1855, p. 24.

[46] Shackleford, History of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, p. 71.

1859,[47] tradition is that the church was organized in 1842 on land donated by Charlie McPherson.[48] No associational ties have been found for the church previous to 1859; thus, little can be said for its antebellum days. Pastors serving the church probably lived in the area.

At the fortieth session of the Muscle Shoals Association which met at Mount Pisgah Church in Morgan County in October, 1859, the five churches previously mentioned: Good Hope, Hopewell, Flint Creek, Union, and Arkadelphia, along with nine other churches in the Blount, Walker, and possibly Winston Counties areas, called for letters of dismissal for the purpose of forming a new association to be called the Warrior River Association.[49] Minutes, however, for the first five years of this association can not be found.

Contending with the Baptists on the frontier were the Methodists, who had some advantages. The Methodist Church gained much because its hierarchy, ranging from the bishop down to the itinerant circuit preachers, were appointed to their circuits or positions. Very often these circuit preachers were lacking in education, but zealous and completely willing to undergo hardships and deprivations. Circuit riders were often assisted by lay or local Methodist preachers and lay exhorters. In many areas classes were established and class leaders were appointed. If the religious organization was rather undemocratic, the same may not be said for the doctrine itself. The Methodist preacher proclaimed the doctrine of free will and free grace. This Methodist doctrine brought home to the pioneers that they were the masters of their fate, a creed highly acceptable to the frontier settlers.[50]

---

[47] Ibid., p. 74.

[48] Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. 67.

[49] Shackleford, History of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, p. 75.

Despite all the organization of the Methodists, not much is known about their efforts in Cullman County before the Civil War. Few items were recorded, less were kept, and practically none are centrally organized. To increase the problem, the borders of early circuits were not only vague and overlapping, but often changed or renamed on an annual basis.

Methodist efforts commenced in the area when Ebenezer Hearn crossed the Tennessee River in April of 1818 to survey the area south of the Tennessee River. His work resulted in the formation of the Cahawba and Tuscaloosa Circuits.[51] The area of present-day Cullman County could have been in the Tuscaloosa Circuit because it included all the territory forty to sixty miles wide up the full length of the Black Warrior River. This would have been all of Blount, Jefferson, Tuscaloosa, Hale, and parts of Pickens, Green, and Cullman Counties.[52]

Hearn was reassigned to the Buttahatchee area in 1819, but he exchanged with Thomas Stringfield. Stringfield organized the

---

[50] William Warren Sweet, The Story of Religion in America (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939), pp. 316-319. Hereinafter cited as Sweet, Religion in America.

[51] Marion Elias Lazenby, History of Methodism in Alabama and West Florida (n.p.: Methodist Publishing House, 1960), pp. 71-73. Hereinafter cited as Lazenby, Methodism in Alabama.

[52] Ibid., p. 91.

Buttahatchee Circuit which was renamed Marion Circuit in 1820. The circuit not only covered what is today Marion County but also parts of Lamar, Winston, Pickens, Fayette, Cullman, and part of Walker.[53] No doubt the Tuscaloosa and Marion Circuits overlapped on their common borders, and the Cullman area could have been considered a part of both circuits.

In 1823, another change was made when the Jones Valley Circuit was formed. It reduced the Tuscaloosa Circuit by taking in what was then Jefferson, Blount and part of Walker Counties. At this time the Cullman area was a part of Blount and Walker.[54] The part of Walker that was included was probably that part of the county east of the Sipsie Fork of the Mulberry River.

In the early 1830s, circuits were again changed. Around 1832 Blount Circuit was formed.[55] Blount Circuit included not only Blount County, but also that part of Walker County which had been a part of the Jones Valley Circuit. Anson West infers this in his book, A History of Methodism in Alabama, when he states, "The first item of Methodist history in Walker County, Alabama which the records have preserved is that of a quarterly conference for the Blount Circuit . . ."[56] Practically all of Cullman County would have been in the Blount Circuit at that time. It was not to stay that way very long. On December 11, 1833, a Walker Mission for Walker County (Winston County was a part of Walker County at that time) was organized.[57] Walker Mission served Walker County until 1835 when the name was changed to Jasper Circuit. Jasper Circuit served the county until 1838 when the county was divided into Jasper Circuit and Walker Mission. The Walker Mission at that time occupied the eastern part of the county and in the early 1840s was often associated with Blount Circuit.[58] After 1850, neither West or Lazenby gives the circuits for the area, probably because circuits were more or less limited to the boundaries of counties except in instances where counties were occupied by more than one circuit.

---

[53] Ibid., p. 97.

[54] Ibid., p. 139.

[55] Ibid., p. 96.

[56] Anson West, A History of Methodism in Alabama (Nashville: Publishing House Methodist Episcopal Church South, 1893), p. 549. Hereinafter cited as West, History of Methodism.

It is quite impossible to state when and where the first Methodist congregation was organized in the present-day Cullman area. The first meeting places were probably private homes. The circuit rider was at first concerned not with establishing societies, but establishing a circuit and meeting places. He went where there were people who needed him, and because of this he often preached in places the names and locations of which were never recorded. Thus, when Hearn came into the area in 1818, he probably preached in several places along the populated Mulberry - Black Warrior River Basin.

It is not known where the first Methodist Church was established in the present-day Cullman County area, but there is evidence to prove the existence of several congregations. One piece of evidence is a

---

[57] Lazenby, Methodism in Alabama, p. 235.

[58] West, History of Methodism, p. 549.

recorded deed that shows that a Methodist Church was located at Stouts Gap near present-day Beech Grove. The church was placed near the point where Mariott and Pewderfork Creeks came together. On October 29, 1837, Abraham Stout and Sarey Stout, for the consideration of one dollar, gave a deed to the trustees of a Methodist church then in existence in Section Five, Township Twelve South, Range Three West. The land deeded is described as starting at the northwest corner of the Methodist meeting house and running south twelve and one half poles (rod?), then east thirteen and one half poles, then north twelve and one half poles, and finally thirteen and one half poles west back to the starting point. This tract was deeded to the trustees who were William Stout, Moses Hanna, Jeremiah Jones, Jr., William H. Rackley, and Robert Pickel. All ministers using the church had to be in good standing with the Methodist General Conference, and to the ministers was given the charge of filling any vacant trustee seat.[59] At the time of the giving of the deed, it would appear that the church was already well established. The church building was already in existence and under the supervision of five trustees. Usually it took several years to get to the point of building a church building. The congregation qualifies as one of the earliest Methodist congregations in the area.

Down the Mulberry River several miles another early Methodist society existed. This church, Shiloh, was located on the Old Baltimore Road in a community later known as Hamby's Mill. During this time the area was a part of Walker County. The church was formed between 1823

---

[59] Blount County Records, Deed Book B, Oneonta, Alabama.

and 1832 when Jefferson, Blount and part of Walker Counties were in the Jones Valley Circuit. An exact date for the church's founding can not be given, but Lazenby states that it was formed during this time but later than 1823.[60] Little more is known of this church, but because of its location on a major road in a densely populated area, it probably was a major preaching place for the Methodists.

North-west of Shiloh on Dorsey's Creek near present-day Breman, another Methodist church was established prior to the Civil War. This church is Sandlin's Chapel, by tradition named in honor of Alford Sandlin who was converted there and afterwards was an important member of the congregation.[61] The earliest class records available are for the year 1857. Rufus Nickolson evidently was the class leader. The letters C L appear by his name. The letters P C also appear by his name. This could mean that he was also the preacher for the circuit, or that he simply was pastor of the church. The male class for 1857 had twenty members, the female class had thirty-three members of which three were colored members.[62] The records continued until the war. Notes beside names give reasons for excluding persons' names from the class list.[63] The record shows that many people, women and men, died during the period from 1860 to 1865.[64]

---

[60] Lazenby, Methodism in Alabama, p. 139.

[61] Interview, Garrison, January 10, 1972.

[62] Class Book or Record of Sandlin's Chapel Methodist Church Beginning in the year of 1857, pp. 1-2. Typed copy obtained from Mr. W. R. Garrison of Wilburn Community, Cullman County, Alabama.

[63] Ibid., pp. 1-5.

[64] Ibid.

Several miles east of Sandlin's Chapel, in that section of the area which was at that time a part of Blount County, another Methodist church was in existence. This church was known as Woodruff's Chapel. The building was originally used as a community meeting house for all sects.[65] On August 22, 1857, Nathan Watson, for the sum of fifteen dollars, deeded the ten and one half acres on which the church building, graveyard, and a spring existed to the trustees of the Methodist church with Mathew Woodruff and Drury McPherson. The land was a part of the east half of the northwest quarter of Section Twenty, Township Eleven South, Range Two West.[66] There is no honest way of telling how long the church had existed before the deed was made, but the dense local population along with the fact that a building and graveyard existed at the time of the granting of the deed would presumably point out that the location at least was several years old.

For these churches there is definite evidence to show existence before the Civil War. Needless to say there were others but evidence of existence in these cases is dependent upon tradition and circumstance.

In the western part of the area, there is a possibility of the presence of at least two other Methodist churches which may have been founded prior to the Civil War. It is very possible that a Methodist church existed at present-day Jones Chapel during the 1850s.[67] During this decade a Methodist minister, John G. Jones, moved into

---

[65] Interview, Fanning, January 10, 1972.

[66] Blount County Records, Deed Book I, Oneonta, Alabama, p. 480.

[67] Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. 145.

the area.[68] With his arrival a congregation was presumably formed.

To the south of Jones Chapel, below present-day Crane Hill, another Methodist church, Livingston's Chapel, today exists which probably predates the Civil War. This church was chartered immediately after the Civil War on June 26, 1867, by a Rev. A. B. Watson.[69] This could have been a re-chartering since some of the other Methodist churches were re-chartered after the war. Another clue may be found in the adjoining cemetery. The first person buried there was an O'Rear child who died in 1854.[70] Conditions also favor an early existence. The church was located on the Burnam Turnpike, a major road leading from Walker County north to Morgan County. Also, many of the families forming the church were in the area prior to the war. Evidence, though circumstantial, would favor Livingston's Chapel's pre-Civil War existence, but probably not under that name.

In the eastern part of Cullman County, the tradition is that a Methodist church was started near what is today Fairview. This church body was formed in 1850 as the result of a prayer meeting called by a family named Lawrence.[71] Several miles west of Lawrence's Chapel as the congregation was called, another Methodist preaching place was

---

[68] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, p. 1252.

[69] Simeon Calvert and William B. Mauldin, A Brief History of Livingston's Chapel Methodist Church (n.p.: Privately produced, n.d.), p. 1.

[70] Interview, Mrs. Author Lott, Livingston's Chapel Community, Cullman County, Alabama, September 1, 1972. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Lott, September 1, 1972.

[71] Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. 43.

established just south of Holmes Gap (near present-day Vinemont). This one was called Mount Zion,[72] and its location on the Stout's Turnpike no doubt was a major factor in its strategic placement.

There were, in all probability, other Methodist churches located in the area that is now Cullman County. In the 1860 Census of Blount County's Western Division there are four Methodist preachers listed: Peter Foust, Mathew Woodruff, who was located near Hanceville, John N. Johnson, and Solomon Clyon.[73] Each of these probably pastored a church in the immediate area.

Unlike the Baptist and Methodist sects, the Christian sect, or Church of Christ which is labeled by many as "Campbellite," did not add many churches in the area before the Civil War, but there is evidence to be found in county histories, church records, letters of membership, census records and family traditions that three did exist.

The seeds for these churches were presumably sown in the Tennessee River Valley during the 1820s and 1830s by such persons as Elisha Randolph, B. F. Hall, Tolbert Fanning, and Alexander Campbell.[74] These men and others advanced the doctrine of strict adherence to the Scripture. One of the earliest established Christian societies was established at Cedar Plains in southern Morgan County.[75] It was probably at this church that David Speegle, who was living in that area

---

[72] Ibid., p. 145.

[73] Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Western Division, pp. 12, 54, 58, and 71 respectively.

[74] Knox, History of Morgan County, p. 170.

[75] Ibid.

about 1830[76], was converted to the Christian faith. Later when Speegle moved to Ryan's Creek in what was then Walker County, he erected a log structure to be used as a school and Christian church. This church was built about 1832 or 1833 and given the name Brushy Creek.[77] Speegle faithfully pastored his church and occasionally preached at Piney Grove Church in southern Morgan County.[78] On March 5, 1859, David Speegle and his wife Winiford deeded to the Christian Church at Brushy Creek the church building, land for a grave yard and a nearby spring for a water source.[79]

A close review of the one remaining pre-Civil War church book gives a light into the nature of the congregation and into the discipline or church creed under which it functioned. The first name on the list of members is that of Alen R. Self who serviced the church as pastor. The second name is that of David Speegle the church's founder and a lay preacher. Speegle shared the post of deacon with Thomas Calvert. On the pages following the first inscriptions are listed the names of the roughly sixty members of the church.[80] These names were the names of the early pioneers of not just Ryan's Creek bottom but of the surrounding areas also. Apparently the congregation kept a close

---

[76] Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Knox, *History of Morgan County*, p. 171.

[79] Deed for Brushy Creek Church in possession of Clyde Speegle, Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama.

[80] Brushy Creek Church Book in possession of Clyde Speegle, Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama, pp. 1-12. Hereinafter cited as Brushy Creek Church Book.

watch on its membership; notes beside names indicate that persons were excluded for fornication, adultery, joining other religious sects, rioting, and intemperance. No favoritism was shown; David Speegle's own son, Carol, was excluded for fornication.[81]

Although the church at Brushy Creek was quiet remote, it was in communication with other surrounding churches, and Speegle himself often preached in southern Morgan County. Membership letters found in the book show that membership was often shifted from other Christian congregations such as the Williams congregation at Old Hopewell (Woodruff's Chapel) and Lost Creek Church of Christ in Walker County.[82] There is even one letter transferring membership from Mount Zion Baptist Church in Morgan County.[83]

Brushy Creek's sister church in the area was the William's congregation at Old Hopewell near present-day Hanceville. According to family tradition this church was formed sometime in the late 1830s or early 1840s by James A. Williams, one of the early settlers in that locale.[84] In all probability this is the "Christian" Church that George Powell speaks of in his history of Blount County.[85] In 1858, a letter recommending a Susan Allen to other Churches of Christ was received by

---

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid. Membership letter of Susan Allen from the William's Congregation, Membership letter of Hannah Elizabeth Calvert from Lost Creek Church.

[83] Ibid. Membership letter of Heron and Martha Allen from Mount Zion Baptist Church.

[84] Interview, Fanning, January 10, 1972.

[85] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 57.

Brushy Creek. The names of the elders were James A. Williams and W. M. Self.[86] The actual size of this congregation is not known, but the facts that the church had two elders, was located in a densely populated area, and had existed for a number of years would indicate that the church organization was stable and probably contained twenty to thirty or more members.

There is also the possibility of a third Christian Church formed somewhere near present-day Bethsadia in the decade before the Civil War. During the 1850s a Gilbert Brown moved into that area. The 1860 population census lists his occupation as a Christian Clergyman,[87] and since his name is not listed on the Brushy Creek Church book, it must be assumed that he was not a member of that body. It is very possible that he ministered to the needs of a different society in the area.

Following the Baptist, Methodist, and Christian sects, others played minor roles in the religious life of the area. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church had a congregation at Summitt in Blount County[88] which bordered the Cullman area. No doubt this church had some influence in the early religious development of the eastern part of the

---

[86] Brushy Creek Church Book, Membership letter of Susan Allen from the William's congregation.

[87] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, p. 1273.

[88] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 57.

county. One of the local settlers, William P. St. John,[89] was a Presbyterian minister.[90]

The Mormon sect must have made contact in the area, for at least one family joined the sect. The William P. Calvert family of Ryan's Creek bottoms left the area to move westward with other Mormons. Calvert, his wife, and one daughter died in September of 1846 at Council Bluffs, Iowa while in winter quarters preparing for their move westward.[91]

While religion developed rapidly prior to the Civil War, the progress of education during the antebellum period, although it started early, was slow. Before the Constitution was ratified and a permanent government formed, the original colonies had struggled under the clumsy Articles of Confederation, administered by the Congress of the Confederation. But although this body was weak in power, it did manage to pass some good farsighted legislation which affected education. Just such an act was the Land Ordinance of 1785. While the Ordinance's purpose was to provide for the surveying and selling of land to pay off the national debt, it also included the provision that the sixteenth section of each township of land was to be set aside for the benefit of public

---

[89] Blount County Records, Blount County Tract Book, Oneonta, Alabama, Entries for Sections Twelve, Thirteen, and Fourteen of Township Nine South, Range One East.

[90] Biographical Memoranda for Finis E. St. John, Library Files, State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[91] Dewel and Dolores Lott, Compilers, Our Calvert Kin, 2 vols. (Hartselle, Alabama: Privately produced, 1973), vol. 1, p. 4. Hereinafter cited as Lott, Our Calvert Kin.

education. Efforts to use this sixteenth section in Cullman County were begun prior to the Civil War.[92]

The first efforts to establish public schools in the area seems to have occurred in the eastern area (Blount) and along the Mulberry River which flowed through the eastern part of Walker County. In these areas the land was substantially better for farming, and this factor caused these areas to be populated earlier. The northwestern part of the area was rough and irregular with much sandy soil, but little bottom land suitable for large scale farming. The area's population grew slowly during the first few decades, and efforts for public education were retarded because sixteenth section lands were often worthless.

From records available in Blount County, public schools were to be supported through the sale at public auction of sixteenth section lands.[93] Tractbook records show that this was also the policy followed in Walker County.[94] (Walker County contained all of Winston County up until 1850 when that county was established as Hancock County.) Each

---

[92] The present-day Cullman County area during this time period was a part of Blount, Walker, and Winston. Of these only Blount still possesses any sixteenth section records.

[93] Blount County Records, Sixteenth Section Records, 1831-1851, Commissioners of School Lands, Oneonta, Alabama, pp. 18-19. Hereinafter cited as Blount County, Sixteenth Section Records.

[94] Walker County Records, Walker County Land Tract Book, Jasper, Alabama, Records for Section Sixteen, Township Thirteen South, Range Five West show that Henry Tuttles bought the east one half of the northwest quarter of Section Sixteen, which was at that time a part of Walker County, on December 24, 1841. Hereinafter cited as Walker County, Walker County Land Tract Book.

township undertaking the action of selling school lands acted independently of any governing body. The three elected commissioners of each township were responsible for the selling of the land at public auction, for the surveying of the different tracts sold, for the annual report made to the state legislature, and for the answering of any inquiries made by the county government. These commissioners, who were bonded to the governor, took the money from the sale of the lands and deposited it in the state bank. There the principal was held in trust and only the interest could be withdrawn for school use. This practice later resulted in the loss of all such funds when the state bank failed.[95]

The quality of the sixteenth section land was the prime consideration in determining the price for which the land sold as well as the order in which it was sold. The better parts of the sixteenth sections along the Mulberry River were sold first, and these tracts also brought the better prices. The first note of entry concerning the Cullman area in the sixteenth section records for Blount County was a report sent to Marston Mead, the judge of Blount County. The report was sent by Robert Pickle, James Jones, and George J. Jones, all school commissioners of the Sixteenth Section of Township Twelve South, Range Three West. Proceeds of $120.18 3/4 were noted for the sale of 240 acres. The average price was 50¢ per acre.[96] This price was large when compared with prices for land tracts in the same section which were not suitable for farming. On February 9, 1856, Robert McMurray and Jesse G.

---

[95] Moore, History of Alabama, pp. 332-333.

[96] Blount County, Sixteenth Section Records, pp. 9-10.

Jones who were then commissioners of Section Sixteen, Township Twelve South, Range Three West filed a report for the sale of sixteenth section land. Only one eighty acre tract of school land, the east half of the southeast quarter brought as much as 50¢ per acre. One eighty acre tract not suited for farming only brought 3.8¢ per acre.[97] As the population grew and people began to spread out into the less desirous sandy hill land, mention is made in the records for other sixteenth sections. These later entries of sixteenth sections, which were inadequate for farming, show the worthlessness of some lands that were set aside for education. A good example is this one:

> State of Alabama September 29, 1854. We
> Blount County the undersigned trustees
> of Section sixteen of Township ten Range one West in conformity with the requisitions of an act of the Legislature approved 18, February 1854, to assertain the value of all the sixteenth sections in the state remaining unsold, beg leave to report to the Honorable J. C. Gillespie Judge of Probate that said sixteenth section is worth thirty two dollars and no more, and even cannot be sold for that much.
>
> Yours Respectfully,
> Enoch Allridge
> James Powell, Senior
> Nickolas Powell
> Trustees.[98]

The land was only worth 5¢ an acre and could not be sold at that; furthermore, the cost of surveying this worthless land was $6.00.[99] Public education could not be advanced when situations as this existed.

It is ironic that sixteenth section benefits did the opposite of what they were meant to do. In the Tennessee Valley and Black Belt

---

[97] Ibid., p. 79.

[98] Ibid., p. 81.

[99] Ibid.

areas where sixteenth sections were of great value, the farmers and planters were able to send their children to private schools. In the hill counties, where the farmers could not afford private education, the sixteenth sections were all but worthless.[100]

The Public Schools Act of 1854, brought about by persistent agitation for a revision of the school system, did much to advance the progress of education in hill areas where sixteenth section funds were inadequate or nonexistent. The need for this revision was expressed by the people of the state as a whole, and especially the hill counties, when a statewide election was held in the fall of 1853. This election gave the people the opportunity to consolidate the sixteenth section funds to form a general fund from which each township school would draw funds in proportion to the number of students in its school. The present-day Cullman County area overwhelmingly favored such a fund. The results are as follows:

COUNTY	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	FOR CONSOLIDATION	AGAINST
Blount[101]	9 South	1 East	28	0
	10 South	1 East	11	0
	9 South	1 West	0	0
	10 South	1 West	8	0
	9 South	2 West	11	0
	10 South	2 West	0	0
	11 South	2 West	25	0
	12 South	2 West	27	0
	9 South	3 West	9	0
	10 South	3 West	5	0
	11 South	3 West	17	0
	12 South	3 West	30	0
			171	0

---

[100] Malcolm C. McMillan, The Land Called Alabama (Austin, Texas: Steck-Vaughn Company, 1968), p. 151. Hereinafter cited as McMillan, The Land Called Alabama.

[101] Election Files, Consolidation of 16th Section Funds, Blount County Results, Department of History and State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama. Hereinafter cited as Election Files, Consolidation of 16th Section Funds, ___________ County Results.

COUNTY	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	FOR CONSOLIDATION	AGAINST
Walker[102]	13 South	4 West	3	0
	12 South	4 West	12	0
	13 South	5 West	11	0
			26	0
Winston[103] (Hancock)	11 South	4 West	11	0
	9 South	4 West	7	0
	10 South	4 West	9	0
			27	0
		GRAND TOTAL	224	0

No returns were given for some of the townships which were located in Walker and Winston (Hancock) Counties. Either no one voted in these areas or there may not have been anyone to vote in these townships.

The financial situation reflects to a large degree the quality of education that existed, not just in the immediate area, but in practically all hill county areas. Most school terms were short. Because of the small pay, teachers were persons who often could not succeed at anything else.[104] The school buildings were the worst looking buildings in the neighborhood. They were usually built crudely of logs, and had only a single door and few windows. Heat was provided by fireplaces or, rarely, wood stoves. Teaching materials and books were few.[105]

Despite the problems, several attempts were made to establish schools in the area before the Civil War. Blount County records show that a school was held in Township Twelve South, Range Two West in 1841.

---

[102] Ibid., Walker County Results.

[103] Ibid., Hancock (Winston) County Results.

[104] Moore, History of Alabama, p. 330.

[105] McMillan, The Land Called Alabama, p. 152.

The teacher was paid $46.00 for teaching the school. The same entry shows that the trustees had also chosen the teacher for the year 1842. The amount to be paid this teacher was $93.66 2/3.[106] A report by the trustees of school lands for Township Twelve South, Range Three West shows that more than one teacher was contracted to teach in that township in 1841.[107] Other townships in the area in Blount County may not have been able to establish schools until much later because of scattered population. As late as 1852, Blount County had only eight schools, but this changed with the Public School Act of 1854. By 1860, eleven teachers lived and presumably taught in the Division of Blount County alone. These were Andrew P. Hunnicutt, David Huddleston, C. C. Powell, John Murphree, Larkin Felton, William Stephens, James C. Wallace, Delaney J. Parks, John A. Donelson, Murry M. Couch, and William Wilaford.[108]

There is very little information to be found about the efforts to establish schools along the Mulberry River basin in Walker County before the Civil War. Some school land, the east half of the northwest quarter of Section Sixteen, Township Thirteen South, Range Five West, was sold to Henry Tuttle on December 24, 1841.[109] Whether or not this money was applied to the establishment of a school is not known, but by 1860 there were six teachers in the Arkadelphia, Hamby's Mill, Gap area

---

[106] Blount County, Sixteenth Section Records, p. 31.

[107] Ibid., p. 34.

[108] Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Western Division, pages 3, 7, 9, 28, 37, 47, 52, 60, 64, and 65 respectively.

[109] Walker County, Walker County Land Tract Book, Section Sixteen, Township Thirteen South, Range Five West.

on the Mulberry River in then Walker County. These were Gideon Gilbert and William Frazier in the Hamby's Mill area, John Dunkin, Milton Reed, and Lucy Reed near Arkadelphia, and William Adams at Gap.[110]

In Winston County, from the time of its creation up until the Civil War, the land tract books show that none of the sixteenth section lands were sold. Presumably all funds were drawn from the public education fund created by the Public Education Act of 1854, and from tuitions. The lack of population, however, did not lessen the desire for education. When David Speegle settled along Ryan's Creek in the early 1830s, he built a building to be used as a church and a school.[111] Since the Ryan's Creek area was one of the more populated areas of Winston, it is probable that this school was one of the four which existed in the 1850s.[112] By 1860, the census shows that there were several teachers that were living the eastern Winston area. Hiram Dermid taught the local school in Township Ten South, Range Five West, James M. Wooten was a teacher of penmanship in Township Eleven South, Range Three West, and Thaddeus McKinn was the teacher in Township Eleven South, Range Four West.[113] In addition to these there were no doubt others who taught school as a minor occupation. Just such a person was Jesse Lott,[114]

---

[110] Population Census, 1860, Walker County, pp. 64, 67, 81, 85, and 87 respectively.

[111] Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972.

[112] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 197.

[113] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, pp. 1252, 1261, and 1268. Note: Winston County census was taken by range and township.

[114] Interview, Lott, September 1, 1972.

who was living in Township Eleven South, Range Four West in 1860.[115]

As a whole, education in the area did not grow as fast as religion had. The zeal was not there, parents more often felt that children should learn skills that would help them sustain themselves in life and that these skills could be learned best by the parents' side. Financial problems also hampered education, but it did advance slowly, and this advancement should be recognized. However, progress in education and religion did not continue unhampered. The Civil War greatly crippled the efforts of religion in this hill country, and education was brought almost to a complete halt.

---

[115] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, p. 1264.

VI. THE ELECTION OF 1860, AND THE SECESSION CONVENTION ELECTION IN THE HILL COUNTRY THAT BECAME CULLMAN COUNTY

In the history of the United States, probably no other election has had more impact than the election of 1860, for with this presidential election the last breach was created which led to the dissolution of the Union and the Civil War. In Alabama, the election split the people of the state on the burning issue of secession.

In 1860, Cullman County did not exist, but was a part of several North Alabama hill counties. The large majority of the area at that time was in northwestern Blount County, and eastern Walker and Winston Counties.[1] Therefore, in order to gain an understanding of the area's feelings concerning secession, one must look at the results of the presidential election of 1860 in these three counties. From these results we may obtain the area's opinion and learn how these influenced the election of county delegates to the Secession Convention.

All three counties, Blount, Walker, and Winston were staunchly Democratic in the Jacksonian tradition and had repeatedly supported that party through the years. The only opposition to the Democrats had come from the Whigs. Yet it was never formidable. In presidential elections the Whigs were never very strong in Blount County. Only once were they able to poll over 20 percent of the votes cast and that was in the 1848

---

[1] The map on page five shows Cullman County and how it was divided among neighboring counties before its establishment.

election when the vote was 134 for Taylor and Fillmore to 526 for Democratic candidates Cass and Butler. The Whigs had polled only 20.30 percent of the popular vote.[2]

In Walker county which included Winston before 1850, Whig influence was greater. In the 1836 election Hugh C. White polled 40.86 percent of the popular vote against Van Buren.[3] This vote, which was the highest Whig vote ever cast in that county, was probably the result of the split in the state Democratic party due to the Creek Indian controversy and to Jackson's partial loss of prestige which developed as a result of his mode of handling the South Carolina nullification crisis.[4] No doubt other factors also entered into it. The Whig policy of internal improvements had some following. At that time efforts were being made to improve down river navigation on the Warrior River by clearing the Squaw Shoals.[5] The fact that internal improvements on the river would allow planters and businessmen shipping goods and produce to use the river more efficiently influenced the voting of many in Walker County. In Blount the urge to vote for internal improvements was not as strong since only a very extensive series of locks could make any of her waterways navigable.

---

[2] Clanton W. Williams, "Notes and Documents: Presidential Election Returns and Related Data for Ante-bellum Alabama," _The Alabama Review_, II (January, 1949), p. 99. Hereinafter cited as Williams, "Election Returns," 2.

[3] Clantion W. Williams, "Notes and Documents: Presidential Election Returns and Related Data for Ante-bellum Alabama," _The Alabama Review_, I (October, 1948), p. 291. Hereinafter cited as Williams, "Election Returns," 1.

[4] Moore, _History of Alabama_, p. 170.

[5] Dombhart, _History of Walker County_, pp. 33-34.

The Whig minority continued over the years, and in part help to explain the Whig votes cast in the election of 1860 for Bell and Everett, the Constitutional Unionist candidates, but not completely. The relatively small percentage of 51 votes or 4.9 percent of the votes cast in Blount, 103 votes or 12.09 percent in Walker, and 40 votes or 10.26 percent in Winston[6] were probably not completely the results of a Whig turnout, but a combination of Whigs and independent Democrats who were Unionists in spirit and thus favored Bell's nationalistic platform.

The split Democrat vote is more difficult to analyze. Breckenridge in each county carried about 52 percent of the popular vote. Douglas carried 443 votes or 42.60 percent in Blount, 303 votes or 35.56 percent in Walker, and 147 or 37.69 percent in Winston.[7] Breckenridge's majority may be explained largely by the simple fact that he was a Southern candidate,[8] but Douglas' support in the three counties was probably due to several factors working in his favor.

The presence or absence of a Jacksonian Democratic tradition affected Douglas' support greatly. In the hill region where Jacksonian Democracy had consistently been strong, Douglas received better support. He carried four counties in the Tennessee River Valley; Madison, Marshall,

---

[6] Williams, "Election Returns," 2, pp. 72-73.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Durwood Long, "Economics and Politics in the 1860 Presidential Election in Alabama," Alabama Historical Quarterly, XXVII (Spring and Summer, 1965), p. 55. Hereinafter cited as Long, "Economics and Politics."

Lawrence, and Lauderdale.[9] And of the seven counties in which Douglas ran second (Blount, Jackson, Morgan, St. Clair, Walker, Autauga, and Coosa) five are in North Alabama. Out of the twelve counties in which Douglas ran first or second nine were in North Alabama, the stronghold of Jacksonian Democracy.

The influence of the press was instrumental in molding the attitude of the voters. One of the most important and influential papers in North Alabama was the Southern Advocate of Hunterville edited by W. B. Floures who was a Douglas supporter. In an article of August 1, 1860, Floures stated that "the Democratic Party is divided is true - Why; and who are responsible for it? Clearly Colonel Yancy and his policy . . ." and that the "first duty of all who love their country can be discharged by voting for Douglas."[10]

Influential North Alabamians also stepped forward for the sake of the Union. 1860 was a great year for campaigning, especially for the pro-Breckenridge factions. William L. Yancey personally had come to North Alabama to speak at Huntsville, Decatur, and Athens. His associates had scoured North Alabama, speaking in every nook and cranny.[11] Frequently Yancey and his followers were challenged by North Alabamians, the most noted of whom was Jeremiah Clemens. In speaking, Clemens was no match for Yancey, but to North Alabama he was their hero. He was a native North Alabamian, born in 1814 at Huntsville. He had practiced law in North Alabama, held the position of United States Attorney for Middle and North Alabama under Van Buren, had organized and led a company of volunteers to aid Texas in its fight for independence, had been a Representative to the state legislature, had raised and led a company of volunteers for the Mexican War, had been elected to the United States Senate, and was a writer of some note.[12] To the people of North Alabama he was a great person who dared to challenge the representatives of the South Alabama clique which now wanted to drag the state out of the Union. Clemens, by word and by pen, wielded an incalculable influence upon North Alabamians in favor of the Union. His influence, along with the idea that Breckenridge was as factional as Lincoln was sectional, probably drove many to vote for Douglas.

---

[9] In addition Douglas also carried Mobile due to the efforts of John Forsyth, editor of the Mobile Register.

[10] Southern Advocate (Huntsville, Alabama), August 1, 1860.

[11] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 9.

In the election, Blount County gave Douglas 4.91 percent more than Winston, and 7.04 percent more than Walker. In his article, "Economics and Politics in the 1860 Presidential Election in Alabama." Durwood Long states a relationship that may be used to explain why Douglas received more support in Blount than in the other two. Long points out that there was a strong relationship between industrial and commercial farming counties and Douglas support.[13] Mobile, Lauderdale, and Madison counties all went for Douglas, and all were industrial counties with a diversified agriculture. Blount could not be classified as an industrial county, but it did have a commercial agricultural economy more fully developed than those of the other two counties. This

---

[12] William Garrett, Reminiscenses of Public Men in Alabama For Thirty Years (Atlanta: Plantation Publishing Company, 1872), pp. 176-179.

[13] Long, "Economics and Politics," pp. 48-52.

commercial farming would naturally associate it with an industrial county. George Powell in his work on Blount County states that Blount produced large quantities of wheat, oats, tobacco, wool, peas and beans, Irish and sweet potatoes, and butter; and to a lesser degree cheese, barley, rice, and rye.[14] Blount was also well known for its orchard fruit, especially its apples.[15] No doubt most of this produce eventually went to Huntsville or Chattanooga toward the north or to Mobile. Blount's high support of Douglas in the light of this relationship can be seen as the transmission of political influence through business contacts.

These factors, while not putting Douglas first in any of the three counties, did give him a strong second place. Douglas' percentage plus Bell's support averaged about 47 percent of the popular vote cast in each county. This by itself can be translated as meaning that 47 percent of the people cast their votes for candidates who did not want secession. In addition the percentage was probably higher because Breckenridge himself was not an avowed secessionist; therefore, part of his supporters were probably also against secession.

Clarence P. Denman in his book, The Secession Movement in Alabama, claims that "The election of Lincoln was the decisive factor in turning public opinion in Alabama in favor of secession."[16] In the counties of Walker, Winston, and Blount opinion did not turn that much,

---

[14] Powell, "History of Blount County," p. 56.

[15] Ibid., pp. 49-51.

[16] Clarence P. Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama, Alabama State Department of Archives and History Publication (Norwood, Mass.: Norwood Press, 1933), p. 87. Hereinafter cited as Denman, Secession Movement.

as can be seen by the candidates elected in each county on December 24, 1860, when the delegates for the Secession Convention were elected. In all three counties more votes were cast for delegates to the Convention than were cast during the Presidential Election of 1860.[17] In all three counties men were elected who were later placed in the Cooperationist group. They were often divided as to what action to take, although frequently they expressed the view that cooperation among the Southern states ought to precede action.[18]

In Winston County, the delegate chosen was a Unionist. Chris Sheets polled 515 votes or 80.11 percent to defeat Dr. Andrew Kaeiser who polled only 123 votes or 19.89 percent of the votes cast.[19] Sheets, a twenty-one-year-old teacher, was a Unionist as his later actions proved. He was elected because his views were in agreement with a majority of the people of his county.[20] As a delegate he always supported the views of his constituents, and never varied from them.

For the Walker County delegate, the conservative faction brought out Robert Guttery, a fifty-nine year old farmer who owned twelve slaves, and was worth approximately $64,000.[21] Guttery, an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist Church, was one of the leading men in his

---

[17] Blount County total presidential vote 1040, for Convention delegate 1310; Walker County total presidential vote 852, for delegate 939; Winston County total presidential vote 390, for delegate 643.

[18] Walter Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1905), p. 28. Hereinafter cited as Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction*.

[19] Thompson, *The Free State of Winston*, p. 116.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ralph A. Wooster, "Notes and Documents: The Alabama Secession Convention," *The Alabama Review*, XII (January, 1959), p. 75. Hereinafter cited as Wooster, "Alabama Secession Convention."

community, although he had never held a public office.[22] Guttery polled 796 votes or 84.77 percent of the votes cast to defeat a Secessionist, whose name has not been preserved, who polled 143 votes or 15.23 percent of the total vote cast.[23]

Blount County with two representatives in the state General Assembly due to her larger population was allowed two delegates to the Secession Convention. The Cooperationist candidates were John S. Brasher and William H. Edwards. The Secessionist candidates were W. H. Musgrove and William B. Deaver.[24] The Cooperationist candidate John S. Brasher was a thirty-nine-year-old school teacher who lived in the Ogee Community in south-central Blount County.[25] He was a Methodist minister also, and he held several charges in Blount County and adjacent areas. In real and personal property he was worth approximately $800.[26] His objections to secession were so strong that, according to rumor, he was later forced to flee to the North for protection.[27] His colleague, William H. Edwards was a thirty-four-year-old school teacher from northeastern Blount,[28]

---

[22] Dombhart, History of Walker County, p. 212.

[23] Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850-1860, Alabama State Department of Archives and History Publication (Wetumpka, Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Company, 1935), p. 195. Hereinafter cited as Dorman, Politics.

[24] Denman, Secession Movement.

[25] Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Subdivision 1, p. 80.

[26] Wooster, "Alabama Secession Convention," p. 73.

[27] David Darden, "Delegates to the Alabama Secession Convention," Alabama Historical Quarterly, III (Fall and Winter, 1941), p. 378.

[28] Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Eastern Division, p. 54.

who held real and personal property worth appriximately $500.[29] Edwards had served as Representative from Blount to the state General Assembly from 1857 to 1859.[30] The two Secessionist candidates were more financially afluent. William Musgrove, sixty-five years old, from west-central Blount held real-estate and personal property worth $5285.[31] In the field of politics Musgrove was no newcomer. He had represented Blount County in the state Senate from 1835 to 1838, and in the General Assembly from 1828 through 1833 and was re-elected in 1841 for one term.[32] Musgrove's colleague, William B. Deaver was a forty-eight-year-old father of nine children, who held real estate worth $5000 and personal property worth $22,600.[33]

In the Blount County election the Cooperationists received jointly 1487 votes or approximately 63 percent of the total votes cast. The Secessionists received 858 votes or about 36 percent (there were a few scattered votes for other candidates).[34] This was the highest percentage received in any of the three counties by Secessionists. This is probably due to the fact that Musgrove and Deaver were more prominent and influential.

---

[29] Wooster, "Alabama Secession Convention," p. 73.

[30] W. Brewer, Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record and Public Men (Montgomery, Alabama: Barrett Brown Steam Printing and Book-binding, 1872; reprint ed. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Willo Publishing Company, 1964), p. 143. Hereinafter cited as Brewer, Alabama.

[31] Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Western Division, p. 23.

[32] Brewer, Alabama, pp. 142-143.

[33] Population Census, 1860, Blount County, Eastern Division, p. 91.

[34] Denman, Secession Movement, p. 161.

With all four delegates chosen, there were among the group two Unionists, Sheets and Brasher, and two conservatives, Edwards and Guttery. All four followed the dictates of their constituents during the Convention.

On January 7, 1861, the Convention met at Montgomery with full attendance. That same day the fate of the convention was made apparent when the Secessionists captured the residing officer's seat by a vote of 53 to 45 to make William M. Brook, a Secessionist from Perry County, President of the Convention over Robert Jemison Jr., of Tuscaloosa. That same day a simplified resolution was passed unanimously not to submit to the administration of Lincoln and Hamlin.[35] This was the last resolution presented that had the backing of both sides.

The next day a Committee of Thirteen was formed to determine the Convention's course of action. The Secessionists had seven members under Yancey; the Cooperationists had six members under Clemens. The reports, the Secession Ordinance of the Secessionists, and the plan for Southern cooperation by the Cooperationists, were delivered four days later. The majority report of the Secessionists, was accepted by a party vote over the efforts of Clemens to have the minority report substituted in its place.[36] The Cooperationists all signed the minority report except Sheets and Brasher.[37] When it had become evident that the majority report would be passed, Clemens "acting upon the conviction of a lifetime, calmly and deliberately" walked with the Secessionists into revolution.[38] With him finally walked the Coosa and Talladega Counties delegates. The Ordinance was passed by a vote of 61 to 39.[39] The actions of Clemens made Sheets bitter, and he refused to sign the minority report, which the Cooperationists had drawn up as a means of absolving themselves of the consequences of the Secession Act.[40] No doubt Brasher's refusal to sign came about due to similar thinking and feelings. Edwards and Guttery both signed the minority report.[41]

---

[35] William R. Smith, The History And Debates of The Convention of the People of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: D. Woodruff, 1861), pp. 44-55. Hereinafter cited as Smith, Debates.

[36] Moore, History of Alabama, pp. 419-421.

[37] Smith, Debates, p. 80.

After the passage of the Ordinance, Edwards of Blount took the floor briefly to state his views. He stated that he had opposed the Ordinance because he felt that separate state action was unwise. He sincerely believed that the Ordinance should be submitted to the people because it did not represent the wishes of a majority of the electorate. If it were not, then his county as well as North Alabama would be disappointed, and he and his colleagues would have failed in their goal. He was not prepared to say whether the people of Blount would acquiesce in the decision or not, but he felt that feelings would run high. He ended by saying:

> Sir, when I return home, I am duty bound to state to my fellow-citizens the actions of this Convention, and in doing so, I will here state, that I

---

[38] Ibid., p. 118

[39] William H. Brantley, Jr., "Alabama Secedes," The Alabama Review, VII (July, 1954), p. 178.

[40] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 118.

[41] Denman, Secession Movement, p. 146.

> will use no effort on my part to excite them to rebellion.[42]

Soon after the passage of the Ordinance the hall was opened to the public, and a pressure movement was started to get dissenters to sign. Sheets, the true representative of the mountain whites later to be called "Tories"[43] was pressured and when he did not yield, he was dragged from the hall by a furious crowd and hauled into jail without legal charges having been brought against him. There he stayed until the Convention was over.[44] Fifteen Cooperationist later signed the Ordinance, but neither Guttery, Edwards, nor Brasher ever signed it; however, they did sign the "Address to the People of Alabama."[45] Sheets, in jail, could not sign. More than likely, he would not have signed it anyway due to the fact that it stated that those whose names appeared thereon would not sign the Ordinance until notified by their constituents. Sheets felt that he already had the permanent views of his constituents.

After the Convention all returned to their homes in the hill counties. Sheets found his constituents furious and willing to march on Montgomery to avenge his insult at the hands of the Secessionists.[46] All three counties throughout the duration of the coming war would be hotbeds of desertion and dissension.[47]

---

[43] Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 110.

[44] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 119.

[45] Denam, Secession Movement, p. 146.

[46] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 120.

[47] Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 110.

VII. THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD

Most people in Alabama believed that after secession, the cooperative elements would finally come around to the secessionists' views and join in the war effort. Jeremiah Clemens, the "supposed" leader of the cooperative element, held this idea.[1] In some instances this was true, in others it was not; the people of the hill region, the "hillbillies," especially resented the move. To them Chris Sheets, the Winston County representative to the Secession Convention, and the others of North Alabama who had refused to sign the Secession Ordinance grew in stature. Sheets was especially looked upon as a hero, for his defiance had resulted in his imprisonment. When the Unionists of Winston heard of the way their representative had been handled, many volunteered to go with Sheets back to Montgomery to burn the jail in which he had been incarcerated.[2]

After the close of the Secession Convention, war activities began almost immediately. In Blount County a company was immediately formed under the leadership of William H. Musgrove. Named the "Avalanche Company," it consisted of 112 men.[3] In Walker County, "The Warrior Rifles" was formed. It was composed of sixty-eight privates and

---

[1] Dorman, Politics, p. 150.

[2] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, pp. 29-30.

[3] William H. Musgrove to Governor A. B. Moore, undated (late Summer, 1861), Governor A. B. Moore's Letters. Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

fourteen officers. But the company would not enlist for either three years or for the duration of the war because about five of every seven men were married, and they feared leaving their families in an area with so much Unionist sentiment where no help for their families would be forthcoming.[4]

At first, the Unionists took a defensive attitude hoping to be left alone, but such was not the case; the Tories, as they soon were called, were constantly harassed. Josephus W. Hampton of Walker County wrote Governor Moore that some persons existed in Walker County that denounced the Ordinance, and refused to recognize the new state flag. These persons had been denounced as "Rebels" and "Tories," but to no avail. He stated that:

> Now we are willing to use more harsh means to rid the county of all such men. If we use these harsh means, and make an example of a few, in order to set others right, would it not meet the approbation of your Excellency; especially in such times as these?[5]

Those loyal to the Confederacy had several ways of harassing the Tories, but the most popular seemed to have been pole riding or rail riding. The loyalists would visit a Tory's house, get him out, and ride him around his house on a rail or pole. This was undertaken to make him come over to the right side.[6]

---

[4] Captain B. M. Long, Lts. Borden, Wooten, and Sheppard to Governor A. B. Moore, June 16, 1861, Governor A. B. Moore's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[5] Josephus W. Hampton to Governor A. B. Moore, July 2, 1861, Governor A. B. Moore's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[6] Silas Morphew to Governor A. B. Moore, June 4, 1861, Governor A. B. Moore's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

Under the pressure of such a burden, Tory reaction became positive. About June 1, 1861, a mass meeting was held at Houston, county seat of Winston County, by a number of prominent men, not only of Winston but of the surrounding counties. Plans for a future convention were laid, and the site was set at Looney's Tavern in central Winston County. The date was the Fourth of July.[7] By this time the laying-by of crops would be finished, and because the meeting was held on Independence Day more "patriotic" people would attend. To spread the news six horsemen volunteered to ride out of Houston in six directions for six days telling everyone that they saw of the future meeting. The areas to be covered were all of Winston County, southern Lawrence County, northwestern Blount County, western Marshall, northern Walker, northeastern Fayette, southern Franklin, and Marion County.[8]

On the date, 2500 to 3000 people met at Looney's Tavern. Most were from northwestern Alabama, but some were present from neighboring states.[9] A Resolutions Committee was appointed to be headed by Tom Pink Curtis to draw up a set of resolutions. The resolutions were read to the crowd by Curtis:

> First. We commend Hon. Chris C. Sheets and the other representatives who stood with him for their loyalty and fidelity to the people who they represented in voting against secession first, last, and all the time.
>
> Second. We agree with Jackson that no state can legally get out of the Union, but if we are mistaken in this, and a state can lawfully and legally

---

[7] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 5.

[8] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[9] Ibid., p. 3.

> secede or withdraw, being a part of the state, by the same reasoning, a county could cease to be part of the state.
>
> Third. We think our neighbors in the South made a mistake when they bolted the convention and the Democratic pary, resulting in the election of Mr. Lincoln, and that they made a greater mistake when they attempted to secede and set up a new government. We, however, do not desire to see our neighbors in the South suffer wrong, and therefore, we are not going to take up arms against them; but, on the other hand, we are not going to shoot at the flag of our fathers; Old Glory, the flag of Washington, Jefferson, and Jackson. Therefore we ask the Confederacy on the one hand and the Union on the other, to leave us alone, unmolested, that we may work out our own political and financial destiny here in these hills and mountains of North Alabama.[10]

The last sentence, when coupled with the second resolution, sounded very much like a statement advocating secession from the state. Indeed, before the convention and during it, there had been talk of some of the northeastern Alabama counties uniting with counties from eastern Tennessee and northwestern Georgia to form a new state to be called "Nickajack."[11] The idea never developed, and likewise Winston did not actually secede. In the election of that same year Chris Sheets was elected to the state legislature from Winston County.[12]

During about the same time that the convention was being held at Looney's Tavern, the Tories were organizing on the local level to protect themselves. The meeting was followed by an outburst of intimidation and harassment by the loyalists against the Unionists who had attended

---

[10] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[11] For more on the subject of "Nickajack" see Elbert L. Watson, "The Story of the Nickajack," The Alabama Review, XX (January, 1967), pp. 17-26.

[12] Brewer, Alabama, p. 585.

the meeting. Some of them were met by the loyalists and cursed bitterly. Many were threatened with loss of citizenship. Persons in the hire of Loyalists were fired, and Tory sharecroppers were ordered to move away from their crops and dwellings.[13] The natural move by the Tories was to organize to protect themselves. When they did, they were viewed as a potential danger. In a letter to Governor Moore dated July 4, 1861, Silas Morphew of Walker County stated that the company which he was a member of, the National Union United States Men and Home Guards, had been formed to keep secessionists from rail riding men with Union sympathies, and to keep down all insurrections, especially if a threat to their families and property was posed. He lastly stated that "we all are in favor of living under the old Constitution that has all ways garanteed /sic/ unto us our Rights, and will live under it, . . . until the independence of the Southern Confederacy is acknowledged . . ."[14]

The defensive attitude of the Tories, however, was not acceptable to the Loyalists who were becoming more and more afraid. No doubt much of the fear was caused by the fact that many of the harassing Loyalists had been met by groups of Tories from which they had received sound beatings.[15] The looming situation was so feared by Confederate Loyalists that many wrote to Governor Moore demanding help. Captain William H. Musgrove of the "Avalanch Company" of Blount County wrote Moore a letter

---

[13] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 31

[14] Silas Morphew to Governor A. B. Moore, June 4, 1861, Governor A. B. Moore's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[15] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 31.

on July 6, 1861, stating that Toryism in Winston, Marion, Fayette, and sections of Walker and Morgan Counties (he left out Blount County) was so strong that they were preparing to fight against the South. He had heard from different sources that the Tories, numbering 1000, were preparing to destroy Jasper, the county seat of Walker County, and Arkadelphia, a small country town in Walker County which were sympathetic toward the Confederacy. He advised that troops in regiment strength be sent to Jasper, and he offered the use of Blount County troops.[16]

The Tories did not destroy the two towns, but such appeals from the Confederate Loyalists of the area did cause the governor to seek further information on the situation in the hill counties. The man he chose to investigate was George S. Houston. After his trip through Walker and Winston counties, Houston wrote the governor that there was no need for troops, and that the people would do what was right "if they knew it." He blamed the strife of the area on the previous elections which had stirred up much bitterness and animosity.[17] His feelings were backed by those of E. H. Foster of Lawrence County who accompanied Houston on his trip. In his letter to Governor Moore of September 9, 1861, Foster stated:

> I have the pleasure to announce to you that we are now witnessing the fruit of our labors in those mountain counties . . . Walker has completed and offered one company and has two more almost complete. Winston

---

[16] Captain W. H. Musgrove to Governor A. B. Moore, July 6, 1861, Governor A. B. Moore Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[17] George S. Houston to Governor A. B. Moore. August 27, 1861, Governor A. B. Moore's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgemery, Alabama.

> will do as well in proportion to its population. From all we count in sections of country heretofore reported as disaffected the war feeling is as high as elsewhere.[18]

Unfortunately it seems that what Foster was seeing was not enthusiasm by the masses, but by the Loyalists. Of the 128 loyal citizens in the County of Winston (those who had voted for secession), seventy joined the army.[19] P. C. Winn later wrote on December 7, 1861, that there were organized companies in the county which drilled regularly with the avowed purpose of defending the Union.[20] Others of the area simply did not care, but only wished to be left alone. These men later came to be called "mossbacks," people who did not necessarily favor the Union, but were trying to evade the conscription, a title said to come from the fact that they lay in the woods until moss grew on their backs.[21]

While many from the present Cullman area were of the Tory and mossback factions, there were many who did fight for the South in various companies formed in Walker, Blount, Morgan, and various other counties. It was not uncommon for several of the eligible males in a family to volunteer. Mace Brindley, who lived in what is today the northeastern part of Cullman County, had four sons who volunteered for the Confederate Army. Their names were Gabriel, Asa, Van Buren, and Mace Pete.[22] Likewise, the

---

[18] E. H. Foster to Governor A. B. Moore, September 9, 1861, Governor A. B. Moore's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[19] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 35.

[20] P. C. Winn to Governor John G. Shorter, December 1861, Governor John G. Shorter's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[21] Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 113.

[22] Opal Adams, A Profile of Gabril Hanby, 1785-1826 (n.p.: Blount County Historical Society Pamphlet, n.d.), no pages-page 8.

four oldest sons of Thomas Barton Parker of Dorsey's Creek joined the Confederate Army. They were John, Jim, William, and Perry.[23] Others, such as Fleming Fuller, who owned considerable holdings just south-southwest of where the present-day town of Cullman now stands, also joined. In 1863, Fuller enlisted in Captain Stephens' Company. He was later released due to injuries and he died in 1865.[24]

Many persons around the small town of Arkadelphia joined the Confederate Army. In this community the post office served as the enlistment office for the local area.[25] Some who volunteered here were Benjamin Franklin Tingle, who enlisted August 25, 1862, as a private,[26] and William Franklin Wright, who enlisted in the Spring of 1863, as a private in Company G, 8th Alabama Cavalry under Captain Wharton.[27] Another man who entered the Confederate Army from Arkadelphia was Charles Drennen. At the start of the war he had been attending the University of Alabama. He left in 1861, enlisted, and was elected first Lieutenant of Company F, 28th Alabama Infantry. On December 31, 1862, during the Battle of Murfreesboro, he was promoted to Captain for gallant and meritorious service.[28]

There were two other post offices at that time in what later became Cullman County; one was Mount Alvis near the community of Holmes'

---

[23] Elliott, Annals, vol. I, p. 220.

[24] Memorial Record of Alabama, 2 vols. (Madison, Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1898), 1:800.

[25] Dombhart, History of Walker County, p. 47.

[26] Ibid., p. 363.

[27] Ibid., p. 381.

[28] Ibid., p. 184.

Gap, and the other was Hanna, near the present-day location of Hanceville. Probably due to its location so near the Tennessee Valley and the Federal lines, Mount Alvis was not used as a mustering in area during most of the war. There were many who enlisted at Hanna. The nearby farm of Billy Self, often referred to as Fort Self, was used as a muster and drill field.[29] Several companies composed of men from the hill country and from the territory along the Mulberry River were assembled and trained there. During their musters they used trenches, breast works, and gun emplacements which had been constructed.[30]

Besides Fort Self and Arkadelphia, a small structure on the Baltimore road west of Arkadelphia was also manned by the Confederates as a lookout post to keep an eye on activities in the hill area.[31] These three served in part to protect these immediate areas from hostile actions by Tories.

In many cases, whole families enlisted but not on the same side. The David Speegles family of the Brushy Creek area is an example. David Speegles had four sons and three sons-in-law who either joined or were conscripted into the Confederate Army. One son and one son-in-law survived.[32] Also three of his sons, David, Carroll, and Thomas, fled behind the Federal lines at Huntsville, later becoming members of the First Alabama Union Cavalry.[33] This situation was common in many families.

---

[29] Elliott, Annals, vol. 3, p. 140.

[30] Arnold, March of Progress, no pages-page 10 from front.

[31] Interview, Basel Mauldin, May 10, 1972.

[32] Miller, March of Progress, no pages-page 30 from front.

[33] Speegles Geneology furnished by Mrs. Calvin Johnson, Mount Olive, Jefferson County, Alabama, See also Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 207.

Although some of the people of eastern Winston did join the army early in the war, enthusiasm was never that great. Many people in the hill area saw the war as a rich man's war, a war to save slavery. Why should they fight to save an institution which had no meaning to them? As a Winston Countian, James Bell, aptly put it, "All they want is to git you pupt up and go to fight for there infurnal negroes and after you do there [sic] fighting you may kiss there hine parts for o (all) they care."[34]

Early in the war the Loyalists tried to blockade the necessities of the Tories. Most stores were owned by the Confederates and these refused to sell goods to Tories.[35] In Winston County the only stores that would have anything to do with Tories were William Dodd's and Taylor's. These were hampered when the Confederate Loyalists bargained with wholesalers to refuse to sell them any goods.[36] There was no sympathy for Tories in Jasper or Arkadelphia which were loyal to the Confederacy, or at Blountsville or the Williams' settlement near Hanna Post Office; therefore, the Tory was soon without a source of supplies.

Tories even met with difficulties in having their grains ground into flour and meal.[37] There were not that many mills in the area. The Mason Mill and others on the Mulberry River were located in areas sympathetic to the Confederacy, and these areas were too many miles from the hill areas sympathetic to the Union. The only mills that were open to the Tories of the area were the small mills in the hill area. Alexander William's mill on Vest's Creek was such a mill.[38] Tories would have access to this mill because Williams himself was a Unionist and a member of the First Alabama Union Cavalry during a part of the war.[39] Access to this mill was limited to the first part of the war, however, because according to local tradition the mill was destroyed by General Forrest's troops.[40]

---

[34] Hugh C. Bailey, "Notes and Documents: Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama," Journal of Southern History, XXII (November, 1957), p. 525.

[35] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 41.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., p. 41.

After the first couple of years of the war, the Tories were without a source of supplies. Salt was especially becoming harder to get. To obtain this vital commodity, the people resorted to boiling the dirt out of the floor of their smoke houses.[41] There was a salt lick located near Hanna Post Office,[42] but it was not accessible to the Tories. Laws were passed by the state legislature to furnish salt to the counties in proportion to their population. Preference, however, was given to the families of soldiers who were allowed to buy it at base cost.[43] It did very little to relieve the need in the hill counties

---

[38] Population Census, 1860, Winston County, p. 1273.

[39] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 207.

[40] Interview, Franklin, April 8, 1972.

[41] Interview, Mrs. Lula Self Bailey, Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama, August 28, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Bailey, August 28, 1971.

[42] Elliott, Annals, vol. 3, p. 141.

[43] Bessie Martin, Desertion of Alabama Troops From the Confederate Army (New York: A. M. S. Press, 1966), p. 178 and pp. 180-181. Hereinafter cited as Martin, Desertion.

because authorities allotted only small amounts,[44] and these allotments were to the families of Loyalists.

Alcohol was also an important commodity because of its medical value. On December 8, 1862, the state legislature approved a law forbidding the distilling of whiskey from grain. This law, it was hoped, would cause more grain to be furnished for the war effort. However, the governor could grant exemptions to individuals who petitioned him if it was for the welfare of the people.[45] By Governor Shorter's administration local communities were in great need of medical alcohol. Many petitioned him for the right to distill enough to meet medical purposes. On January 13, 1862, the citizens and a local doctor, Dr. C. C. McAnnally, of Arkadelphia petitioned Governor Shorter to allow P. M. Alford to distill fifty bushels of corn.[46] The Unionists in the hill area never tried to observe this law. They had always made whiskey, and it was as important to them as the potato or corn patches. Even though a scarcity of field hands, lack of work stock, and constant harassment by Confederate partisan rangers greatly decreased the amount of grain that was grown, some whisky was undoubtedly made, and some of this was even smuggled into the Federal lines where it was sold.[47]

---

[44] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 42.

[45] Acts of The Called Session, 1862, And of the Second Regular Annual Session of The General Assembly of Alabama (Montgomery, Alabama: Montgomery Advertiser Book and Job Office, 1862), pp. 43-44.

[46]* Petition of the Citizens of Arkadelphia to Governor John Shorter, January 13, 1863, Governor John Shorter Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[47] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 176.

Probably the most hated of the acts of the war was the Conscription Act passed in April of 1862. Enrollment officers were sent into the hill counties to enlist eligible persons. The reaction was varied. While many fled into the coves and hollows of the hill country, many simply did nothing, but remained at home and continued to work their fields. These men easily fell prey to the partisan rangers. The partisan rangers were old men and young boys not eligible for service who were formed into irregular cavalry units to assist the enrollment officers, and to act as a home line of defense against the Unionist elements. The partisan rangers would send a man word to show up on a certain day to be mustered in, and if he did not show up they came for him. Tommy Calvert of the Brushy Creek settlement in eastern Winston received such a notice. Seeing that to refuse would bring hostility upon him and his family, he showed up on the specified day and was mustered in.[48] Gilbert Self of the same area also showed up on the day appointed to him, and was mustered in. Later when two of his brothers went to help his wife with his crop, the partisan rangers suddenly came upon them while they were working and arrested and dragged them away into the service.[49]

Many men acting individually noted what happened to many who did nothing and went into hiding. They stayed in hiding throughout the war or until they could reach safety behind Union lines. Tillman Powell hollowed out an area under the hearth stone of his fireplace. Whenever danger approached he hid there. Later he fled behind Union lines and became a Union soldier.[50] Thomas Wilson, a resident of the area near the present day Wheat community, hid out during the complete duration of the war. He came out only to help the wives of soldiers with their crops or to make shoes for those who needed them.[51]

---

[48] Interview, Mr. Homer Calvert, Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama, June 11, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview, Mr. Homer Calvert, June 11, 1971.

[49] Interview, Brown, June 22, 1971.

Many men in eastern Winston County resisted the draft and banded themselves together and fortified the bluff on Ryan's Creek where Tommy Calvert had previously distilled whiskey.[52] These Tories, some of which were armed with rifles produced locally by William Royal Bates,[53] refused to be drafted into the Confederate Army.[54] Many of these men were later smuggled into the Federal lines by George Kilgo.[55] It is not known whether these men tried to reach Colonel Streight when he came to southern Morgan County in the Summer of 1862, or not. A group from western Winston had been led by Bill Looney into Decatur in early July of 1862. When Looney stated that many others waited in the hills of Winston, Streight was ordered to march to Davis Gap in southern Morgan to bring in others who would be waiting there.[56] Among the group

---

[50] Interview, Mr. Titus Powell, Valley Grove Community, Cullman, County, Alabama, August 23, 1971.

[51] Interview, Mr. John Sinyard, Wheat Community, Cullman County, Alabama, September 15, 1972.

[52] Interview, Mr. Ernest Calvert, Trimble Community, Cullman County, Alabama, June 13, 1971. Hereinafter cited as Interview Mr. Ernest Calvert, June 13, 1971.

[53] Interview Mr. R. E. Brown, Valley Grove Communtiy, Cullman County, Alabama, May 30, 1972.

[54] Interview, Mr. Ernest Calvert, June 13, 1971.

[55] Interview, Mr. Homer Calvert, June 11, 1971.

[56] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 48.

of 150 waiting for Streight was Chris Sheets, who himself had been hiding. He personally encouraged all of the group to join.[57]

Streight's short stay in the area did not allow the Tories much time to get to Davis Gap. Streight in his report of July 16, 1862, stated that one party of thirty-four men was within twenty miles of the camp on the morning that his troops had to start back to Decatur.[58] Streight regretted that he had to leave so soon and requested that he be allowed to take his regiment back into the mountains south of Decatur for a period of two weeks. He felt that by doing this he could easily raise two regiments of Tories.[59] Such was the dissention in Winston County alone that in 1862 a bill was introduced into the Alabama legislature to abolish Winston County. The vote was 28 for and 34 against — very close indeed.[60]

The condition of the Tories, and of the hill country as a whole, grew pathetic. Families that had been well-off were reduced to the lowest poverty. Men were either forced into the Confederate Army directly, into the Federal forces indirectly, or made to hide out in the hills and take chances on getting caught and killed. It actually made little difference for in any case the family would still receive harsh treatment from the hands of the partisan rangers, suffer the same want, and be lowered to a state of poverty. John R. Phillips of Marion County,

---

[57] Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 115.

[58] Malcolm C. McMillan, The Alabama Confederate Reader (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1963), p. 173. Hereinafter cited as McMillan, Reader.

[59] Ibid., p. 175.

[60] Martin, Desertion, p. 100, footnote 158.

in his The Story of My Life, tells of the treatment of his family at the hands of the partisan rangers.[61] Phillips was a Tory and a two-time deserter from the Confederate Army; therefore, the treatment of his family could at least be partially justified on the grounds that his family was the enemy. The same treatment toward the families of Confederate soldiers cannot be justified. While Tommy Calvert was away in the Confederate Army, the partisan rangers raided his house taking all of the meat and food, and driving his cattle away, leaving his wife and children completely destitute.[62] This practice of raiding the homes of loyal persons grew so bad that by 1864, it resulted in many persons writing letters to the governor. Governor Watts in February of 1864, received a letter from Edward C. Betts of Courtland in Lawrence County. Betts in his letter stated that:

> . . . The truth is that the whole of North Alabama at least, is and has been for the last six or eight months in a condition of utter anarchy . . . The evils with which this community is afflicted arise . . . (from) the licentious conduct of the Confederate cavalry who roam over the country invading the privacy of families, robbing the farmers of their horses and mules, shooting down or driving off their stock without consulting the owners - depriving helpless families of their last means of subsistence . . .[63]

Likewise William Shepard of the Blountsville area wrote to Governor Watts on May 22, 1864, complaining that he had been arrested

---

[61] John R. Phillips, The Story of My Life (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Privately Printed, c. 1923), p. 41. Hereinafter cited as Phillips, Story of My Life.

[62] Interview, Mr. Homer Calvert, June 11, 1971.

[63] Edward C. Betts to Governor Thomas Watts, February 22, 1864. Governor Thomas Watts Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

by Colonel Patrick Rice of the Third Cavalry Confederate without cause, and had been sent to Rome, Georgia, where he was held under arrest. While he was under arrest his home, as well as the surrounding countryside was sacked, and all the stock driven away. He asked that Rice be brought to trial and that he be given assistance in the recovery of his property.[64]

The actions of the partisan rangers were even more barbaric, not only did they loot the homes of Tories and Loyalists alike, but very often they set themselves up as judge and jury. If a Tory was captured he was often treated hideously on the spot. J. C. Thompson, a Tory living in the Dorsey's Creek area, was killed by a Confederate soldier (probably a partisan ranger) in 1863. Sympathetic neighbors buried him in the small cemetery which is now located behind Sandlin's Chapel Methodist Church. Beside him is the grave of his wife Delona Ann Thompson who, probably due to the hardships resulting from the death of her husband, died the same year.[65]

While killings were often and cruel, the partisan rangers also knew how to use torture. A man by the last name of Elms was overtaken on the Old Houston to Blountsville road just east of Crooked Creek. Thinking that Elms might know the location of hiding Unionists, the rangers threatened to hang him if he did not volunteer information. Elms would not talk so they strung him up to a nearby tree. Before

---

[64] William Shepard to Governor Thomas Watts, May 22, 1864, Governor Thomas Watts Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[65] Gravemarkers of J. C. Thompson and wife at Sandlin's Chapel Church, Breman Community, Cullman County, Alabama.

death came, the rangers came to the conclusion that maybe he was not lying, and they cut him down. He lived many years afterwards, but his neck had been injured, and he carried his head in an odd position for the rest of his life.[66]

While the partisan rangers often used extreme measures to find the location of secluded Tories, the Tories likewise used estreme measures to protect themselves. Once when a local resident was discovered to be a spy for the partisan rangers, an elaborate plan was formulated. A party was given and the spy, thinking to find mossbacks present, attended and walked into a trap, and he was disposed of quietly and permanently.[67]

Hard cruel treatment made the Tories grow revengeful. Into their number were coming many others, deserters from both the Union and Confederate Armies. These deserters, who were often well armed, united with the Tories to form bands to defy the rangers, conscription officers, and often the Confederate cavalry itself. With such an advantage the bands began to make life miserable for the Loyalists of the hill areas.[68] Deserters from the Confederate Army were numerous in the area. The Huntsville Confederate of May 14, 1863, ran a bulletin advertising rewards for the return of five men from Company K, 19th Alabama Regiment, residents of Jackson, Marshall, and Blount Counties, and twelve men from Company D, Russell's Rangers, 4th Alabama Cavalry, residents of Morgan, Marshall, and Blount Counties. One of these was Nathaniel Homes

---

[66] Interview, Brown, June 22, 1971.

[67] Interview, Speegle, January 9, 1972.

[68] Moore, History of Alabama, p. 441.

(Holmes) a resident of the Mt. Alvis Post Office area. He had enlisted at Falkville in southern Morgan County, and after a few months had deserted.[69]

Many of the soldiers who deserted from the Federal Army were members of the First Alabama Union Cavalry which was made up of Alabamians. Usually soldiers on both sides deserted for about the same reason; concern for their families caused by the trouble that existed in the area. James Calvert, a Confederate soldier, in a letter to his wife dated November 18, 1863, showed a concern for his family resulting from Union activities in Walker County. He added that if she needed him that he would come home because he thought more of his family than he did the Confederacy.[70] Fear of the revenge of the opposition was always a great incentive which caused many desertions among soldiers from the area on both sides.

That the families of Confederate soldiers faced many hardships is undeniable. When their husbands left for the army, many women were faced with the responsibilities of having to do things that they had never done before. While Joseph Allred, from the Hanna Post Office area, was away, his wife, Emily, swam the Mulberry River several times to carry corn and wheat to the Chamblee Mill to be ground into flour and meal.[71] The plight of Mrs. Marion Berry of the present-day Joppa area, who at the death of some of her children had to build their

---

[69] *Huntsville Confederate* (Huntsville, Alabama), May 14, 1863, advertisement - reward for return of deserters.

[70] Lott, *Our Calvert Kin*, vol. 2, p. 498.

[71] Elliott, *Annals*, vol. 3, p. 142.

coffins and bury them, is a typical example of what many faced.[72]

When the Tories gained strength, revenge drove them to raiding the homes of their more prosperous opponents. The home of Mace Thomas Payne Brindley was raided by a group of Tories from southeastern Morgan County. The next morning one of the daughters was sent into Morgan County to buy corn from a distant relative. The long trip forced her to spend the night. At the supper table the family was suddenly startled by a fox call, and immediately one of the older boys left the house and gave the all clear sign for a group of local Tories to come out. Brindley's daughter was disgusted to find that some of the men wearing clothes which had been stolen from her home the previous night.[73]

In western Winston and eastern Marion, the revenge of the organized Tories was not so much directed at pillaging the homes of the Loyalists as it was toward punishing those persons that had caused their families so much trouble — the partisan rangers. John Stout of Marion County gathered about him a large group of Tories and deserters and made it so hot for the rangers, that they were forced to withdraw from the region.[74] When Confederate cavalry units were sent in to capture the group, it simply withdrew behind the Federal lines. The results of their actions were important — they diverted troops from the front lines where they were needed, and at the same time, they acted as a buffer between the Federal lines and the Confederate forces. In June of 1863,

---

[72] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 192.

[73] Miller, March of Progress, no pages-page 65 from front.

[74] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 89.

a company of Morgan's Rangers were driven from the hills of eastern Winston County by a group of Unionists,[75] and a strong force under General Pillow was commanded to gather up the deserters and drive them back into the Confederate Army. The Tories and deserters from the Union Armies were to be driven out of their strongholds, and if possible captured. He was successful, to a degree, but the deserter was as much trouble in the army, for there was no way to keep him from walking out the first chance he got.[76]

The presence of such a large number of Unionists in the hill counties led Union commanders in North Alabama to send out recruiters. These covered almost all of the disaffected areas, often at great danger. John Phillips, a member of the First Alabama Union Cavalry served for a while as a recruiter and regretted having done it. After reaching Day's Gap, his group stopped to rest, and was ambushed. Two were killed, the others scattered.[77] Another recruiter, who had even more of a close call, was a Corporal Stoll. In 1863, he and a group of four men were heading down the Burnam Road toward where it intersected with a road coming from the east. Before they reached this intersection, they were captured after a small skirmish with a group of Confederate cavalry which had been sent into the area to assist the conscription officers. Two of Stoll's men were shot during the skirmish, and he and the other two were to be hanged the next morning as spies. That night Stoll

---

[75] Captain Nelson Fennel to Governor John Shorter, June 28, 1863, Governor John Shorter's Letters, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

[76] Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 102.

[77] Phillips, Story of My Life, p. 71.

managed to escape, and make his way to Houston where he was concealed until he was able to return to Federal lines.[78]

During the course of the war the area that now comprises Cullman County was invaded by two Federal forces, Streight's and Rousseau's.

In later April, 1863, Colonel Streight started out from Tuscumbia with about 1700 men, with the intention of marching across Sand Mountain, through Blountsville to Rome, Georgia in order to cut the railroad running from Atlanta to Chattanooga. To draw attention from Streight, General Dodge was to start an advance up the Tennessee Valley. Streight's forces consisted mostly of mounted infantry. However, only half were mounted, the other half was expected to forage for mounts along the way. Foraging was also decided upon because it would further demoralize Confederate sympathies in the area. With Streight's force were two companies of the First Alabama Union Cavalry under Captain D. D. Smith. These Unionists, mostly from the area, were to act as guides.[79]

On the 28th of April, Streight's forces reached Moulton. Up until that time foraging had not produced the needed mounts. Moulton itself was also empty; the people had sent all valuables into the hills south of the town upon first hearing of Streight's advance. These possessions, slaves, valuables, livestock, and mounts, were later found and captured by Streight as he moved on toward Day's Gap where he made camp at dark on the 29th of April. Streight recorded in his account that "Many of Captain Smith's men (Alabamians) were recruited near this place, and many were the happy greetings between them and their friends and relatives."[80]

---

[78] Miller, March of Progress, no pages-page 87 from front.

[79] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 72.

While Streight's troops slept that night, General Forrest's Troops were drawing closer and closer. Forrest arrived within four miles of Streight in the early morning of the 30th. He rested his forces, sending only a small scouting force ahead to watch Streight. The next morning, as the Union forces commenced winding itself up the narrow gap road, Forrest ordered his artillery to open up on Streight's rear. Streight's rear guard, still cooking breakfast, scattered, leaving the captured supply wagons and supplies behind.

Fearing possible flank attacks from Forrest's forces, Streight pushed past the intersecting roads at the top of the mountain to a ridge running across the main road. From this vantage point Streight twice repulsed Forrest. The second time resulted in the capture of two of Forrest's artillery pieces. While Forrest reorganized, Streight pulled out unnoticed, leaving behind only a small force of skirmishers.

While Streight was at Battleground, as the place is now called, many of the settlers came out to the battlefield. One such person was the wife of Private William Milligan, who had ventured out with their small son to see her husband. The small boy noticed two men lying on the ground with red handkerchiefs over their faces. It was not until later that he was told that they were not "sick" but dead.[81] Another

---

[80] War of The Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series 1, vol. 23, part 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), p. 287. Hereinafter cited as O. R.

[81] Interview, Mr. Carlton Milligan, Valley Grove Community, Cullman County, Alabama, March 14, 1971.

visitor, John Byrd Minter, ventured out also, and witnessed some of the rough battlefield surgery in practice when he saw a soldier's leg amputated with a handsaw. The Confederate forces used the nearby house of Emily Day as a hospital.[82]

After sneaking away, Streight's force moved speedily onward. At Crooked Creek, skirmishing became so sharp that a showdown was inevitable. Streight chose a strong position on a nearby ridge called Hog Mountain. Here until about 10 p.m. a battle raged. The troops often fought in hand-to-hand combat, and the faces of the soldiers were often lit up by the light of the firing muskets. General Forrest had three horses shot from under him during the course of the battle. After much fighting Streight was forced to retreat when some of Forrest's men managed to get behind his lines and tried to stampede the Union mounts. Streight left behind him some thirty wagons and teams, along with the artillery previously taken from Forrest.[83]

Before evacuating this position on Hog Mountain, Colonel Streight established a field hospital for those of his command who had been injured too badly to travel. Assistant Surgeon William Spencer of the 73th Indiana Regiment was left in charge of the wounded. He later reported:

> No sooner did the Vandals come up to our hospital than they robbed both officers and men of their blankets, coats, hats, boots, shoes, rations, and money; and subjected them to the most brutal and humiliating

---

[82] Knox, History of Morgan County, p. 131.

[83] General Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, The Campaigns of Lieutenant-General N. B. Forrest . . . (Memphis, Tennessee: Blelock and Company, 1868), p. 261. Hereinafter cited as Jordan and Pryor, Campaigns.

> indignities. Not only was the bread, meat, sugar, and coffee taken off; leaving our poor wounded boys in a half naked and starving condition. Even combs, pocket knives, and other articles of use were forced from the helpless sufferers . . .
>
> The loyal citizens would have gladly offered all the comfort and relief in their power; but the brutal rebel guard would not allow the poor sufferers to receive a cup of milk even, nor a piece of bread, from that source. The ingenious tact of women occasionally was too much for the vigilance of the rebel sentories: and some of our boys were the recipients of some kind of favor.[84]

Forrest's hostility went so far as to chastize the local citizenry. A local resident, a Mrs. Penn who was a widow, was the subject of gross indignities because she had two sons in Captain D. D. Smith's companies that were accompanying Streight. She and her daughters were robbed of everything. They were driven from their home which was then sacked; all the outbuildings were burned, and mules were turned in to graze on growing crops.[85]

Twice during the resulting flight Streight lay ambushes to slow Forrest. The first one was about three and one-half miles south of present Spring Hill, and Forrest broke it up with his artillery. The second was on the banks of Ryan's Creek.[86] At this ambush, Forrest again used his artillery. The opposing sides view the results of the battle differently. Forrest thought that the Union troops had fled in panic.[87]

---

[84] Edwin C. Bearss, "Colonel Streight Drives for the Western and Atlantic Railroad." Alabama Historical Quarterly, vol. 26, no. 2 (1964), p. 172.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Rucker Agee, Forrest-Streight Campaign of 1863, a report prepared for the 100th meeting of The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 26, 1958, p. 25.

[87] Jordan and Pryor, Campaigns, p. 264.

Streight in his official report stated that a successful ambush had forced Forrest into stopping for the night.[88] During the halt, Forrest's soldiers burned the local mill owned by Alexander Williams, a local Unionist.[89] Even as Forrest's troops were doing this, Streight's Union troops were looting the area around Hanna Post Office near present-day Hanceville.[90] Both forces left the area, but only after having done considerable damage through looting and destroying private property.

The second Union raid through what is now Cullman County, was General Lovell H. Rousseau's quick movement, which was not as dramatic as the Forrest-Streight chase. Rousseau's venture was rather uneventful because he was ordered not to give fight and to avoid all encounters. Rousseau's forces left Decatur on July 10, 1864.[91] That night the force of 2500 men camped at Somerville, and the next day the force hit the road at dawn southwest on the Old Stout's Road. Soon the force was following the road up Holmes' Gap onto Sand Mountain. At the top of the climb they reached Mt. Alvis Post Office. At this point three other roads came into the Stout's Road. The force took the road leading southeast toward Blountsville. The night of the 11th saw them camped in Brown's Valley near Blountsville.[92] The next day they continued their route of destrucion, not having faced any opposition in the Cullman area.[93]

---

[88] O. R., series 1, vol. 23, part 1, p. 290.

[89] Interview, Franklin, April 8, 1972.

[90] Interview, Fanning, January 10, 1972.

[91] Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 68.

[92] Edwin C. Bearss, "Rousseau's Raid on the Montgomery and West Point Railroad," Alabama Historical Quarterly, XXV (Spring and Summer, 1965), p. 21.

[93] McMillan, Reader, pp. 263-264.

Education and religion suffered greatly as the war progressed from year to year. At first, both continued as normal, but as the war grew closer and the split loyalty and resulting hatred and violence became evident, both suffered crippling, almost paralyzing effects.

Education suffered a paralyzing blow. With bands of men of different loyalities openly riding the roads, many children were kept home for their own safety. Many of the older boys had to stay home and help support the families. With fewer children attending schools, the teachers often lost their exempt status, and were thus forced to leave the area or join the Confederate army. All of these factors usually resulted in schools being suspended early in the war.[94]

Religion fared little better than education during the war, for it also felt the sorrow of the times, especially in the last years. For a while, things were relatively normal, but slowly as different loyalties began to split the people, the congregations grew smaller. Some members joined the Confederate army, but many were Union sympathizers. After the Conscription Act was passed, these Unionists had to flee to keep from being forcefully drafted. To come out of hiding for church services was impossible for a man who was lying low to keep from being drafted. Likewise, it was impossible for a man to come out of hiding to attend a funeral even though it might have been a member of his own family. It was not uncommon for conscription officers, or rangers, to watch a grave until a mossback or Tory came out to look upon the final resting place of a wife, or child; at which time the Tory or mossback

---

[94] Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction, pp. 215-216.

would be arrested.[95]

Leadership in many churches grew less when the men left. Many lay leaders, as well as ministers, no doubt went willingly. In Unionist areas many were forced into service. Allen Self, the minister for the Christian congregation at Brushy Creek was just such a person. While Allen's brother, Gilbert, was away in the Confederate Army, Allen helped Gilbert's wife with her crops. One day while he was working in the field, the conscription agents saw him. They arrested him and forced him into the Confederate army despite his exempt status.[96] After Self's departure, David Speegle, the founder and a deacon of the Brushy Creek Church, filled his position for the rest of the year.

Although the condition in the area under study was worst during the later part of the war, it is surprising to note that two new churches were formed in the area during the war period. Enon Baptist Church was formed in 1861[97] and became a member of the Warrior River Baptist Association. Toward the end of the war, Dorse's (Dosse's) Creek near present-day Bremen was also added.[98] Dosse's Creek and nearby Arkadelphia were pastored during the middle years of the war by Rev. B. V. Shirley.[99]

---

[95] Phillips, The Story of My Life, p. 45.

[96] Interview with Mr. R. E. Brown, Route One, Cullman, Alabama, May 31, 1972.

[97] Jones, Combing Cullman County, p. 138.

[98] "Minutes of the Warrior River Baptist Association held with the Hopewell Baptist Church, on the fifth day of September, A. D. 1865," Christian Herald (Moulton, Alabama), November 3, 1865, p. 55. Hereinafter cited as "Minutes . . . Warrior River . . . 1865," Christian Herald.

[99] Herbert M. and Jeanie P. Newell, History of Fayette County Baptist Association (Birmingham: Bonner Press, 1968), p. 57.

Associational records available give a grim picture of the state of religion in this period. In 1864, the churches of the Warrior River Baptist Association met at Arkadelphia Church. Of the twenty odd churches that made up the association, only sixteen were in attendance. The condition of religion was considered so bad by those in attendance that two full-time preachers were appointed to preach to destitute churches and communities, and one other preacher was instructed to help on a part-time basis.[100] The minutes of the September 5, 1865 associational meeting at Hopewell gives the general condition of religion at the end of the war. The Committee of the State of Religion reported that ". . . we find religion is at a low ebb, and the churches generally are in a cold state." Because of the condition, a minister was elected to work full time to supply needy churches.[101]

In the last couple of years there was great sorrow in the churches of the area. A good example is the circular letter written by H. W. Hamilton for the 1864 associational minutes of the Lost Creek Baptist Association:

> My Dear Brethern: This is a time of great trouble, when almost the entire population of our once beautiful and happy country is now wrapped in badges of mourning for dear friends that have fallen on the battlefield, and . . . my own mind is worse troubled today . . . one of my sons, Jacob Hamilton, fell mortally wounded, and left on the battlefield . . . near Atlanta . . . Oh, my soul what has become of him . . .

Hamilton finishes thus:

---

[100] "Synopsis of the Minutes of the Warrior River Association for 1864," Christian Herald (Moulton, Alabama), November 3, 1865, p. 55.

[101] "Minutes . . . Warrior River . . . 1865," Christian Herald, p. 1.

> And now, my dear brethern, it becomes my painful duty to announce to you the death of my oldest son, Barton Hamilton, who was killed . . . near Atlanta . . . Thus . . . I commenced this address to you in trouble and finish it in sorrow and grief.[102]

When the war ended in the spring of 1865, what is today the Cullman County area was a ravaged land. Most of the articles needed for rebuilding were lacking. Cattle and draft animals were almost nonexistent due to raids and pillagings. The social and religious life which had existed before the war had dwindled to almost nothing. Old loyalities had been either smashed or highly strained by sympathies toward different governments. To those who were left and had lived in the area during the war and to those of both sides who were returning, was left the job of rebuilding.

---

[102] Lost River . . . Minutes for 1864, pp. 2-3.

VIII. RECONSTRUCTION AND A NEW ERA BEGINS IN THE HILL COUNTRY

Now that the Civil War was over, the long and arduous task of rebuilding had to be undertaken. In the hill area of North Alabama the task was often complicated by the fact that neighbors and even members of the same families had served on opposing sides during the war. Often times hatred resulted between these two adverse factions which hindered cooperation. Some families, like the Calverts, were split by loyalties during the war. For many years afterwards, the factions would not associate with each other and referred to the other as "Cavetts." But old hatreds were resolved, some easily because many people were simply thankful that the war was over, while others took longer and were resolved only after proper revenge had been made. John Stout, a Unionist guerrilla leader from Marion County, was murdered for some cruel actions that he had taken against Southern loyalists.[1] Besides personal feelings, other problems also existed. Many homes and farms had been destroyed. Farming implements and stock were scarce. Fields, which had not been tended, had to be rebroken.

During the same period that people were trying to rebuild, governmental functions were slowly returning to normal. The *Christian Herald* of Moulton in its October 13, 1865 edition, contained information announcing that Dr. F. W. Sykes, a candidate for the state senate for

---

[1] Thompson, *The Free State of Winston*, p. 98

Lawrence, Winston and Walker counties, was to speak at Arkadelphia on October 31, 1865; at the Speegle Precinct (Brushy Creek and surrounding areas) on November 1, 1865; and at the Jones Precinct (Jones Chapel and surrounding areas) on November 2, 1865.[2] In the October 20 edition the paper gave a list of the candidates running for Congress in the Sixth Congressional District. The candidates were C. C. Sheets, J. J. Geers, T. J. Foster, J. W. Garth, and J. B. Moore.[3] Little is known about the election, but whoever was elected was rejected by the radicals in Congress along with the other elected officials from the seceded states.[4] Local government in the area under study was slow to improve due to hatred among factions. In Winston County where the conflicts were the worst, a grand jury did not meet until 1867. The jury did report that during the two year lapse the disposition of the people had calmed greatly.[5]

The institution of religion also had ground to a near halt during the war. The 1865 minutes of the Warrior River Baptist Association stated that religion at the end of the war was at a low mark, and that Sunday Schools had not been attended and that missionaries had not been able to engage in their duty during the previous year. A full-time missionary was appointed to work constantly in the association's area.[6]

---

[2] Christian Herald (Moulton, Alabama), October 13, 1865, p. 45.

[3] Christian Herald (Moulton, Alabama), October 20, 1865, p. 49.

[4] Thompson, The Free State of Winston, p. 126.

[5] Ibid., p. 101.

[6] Christian Herald (Moulton, Alabama), November 3, 1865, p. 55.

In the months following the end of the war, much progress was made. Churches were reorganized and different denominations began to hold revivals. Hopewell, shortly following the end of the war, had a successful revival.[7] The Methodists during the era of rebuilding held large camp meetings near present-day Cold Springs.[8] These revivals in different churches were often brought about by Civil War veterans who had served during the Civil War. Tillman Powell, a settler of the area who served as a Union soldier, became a Methodist preacher and served this area for many years.[9] Shortly after the war, Gabriel L. Brindley, a Confederate soldier, answered the call to preach and later served as pastor in local Baptist churches.[10] No doubt the work done by different faiths and their ministers did much to lessen the hatred of the local people.

While rebuilding was taking place, a new era in the area's history was being created. The seeds for this change had been sown a few years before the war started. In 1858, the Alabama legislature commissioned John T. Milner to survey and locate a railroad to connect the navigable waters of the Alabama River at Montgomery to the navigable waters of the Tennessee River at Decatur. The construction of this railroad, the South and North Alabama Railroad, was halted by the Civil War.[11]

---

[7] Ibid.

[8] Elliott, Annals, vol. 1, p. 219.

[9] Interview, Mr. Titus Powell, Valley Grove Community, Cullman County, Alabama, May 29, 1971.

[10] Jones, Cullman County Across The Years, p. 93.

[11] R. E. Steiner, "Dedication of the John T. Milner Bridge," Alabama Historical Quarterly, XX (Fall, 1958), p. 558.

After the war the railroad was acquired by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in 1871. It was to the general manager of this railroad that Colonel John Cullman turned for assistance. Cullman, who had long since had dreams of forming a German colony in America, was almost assured of success when the general manager, Mr. Fink, made him the land agent for railroad lands along the line from Decatur to Montgomery.[12] Cullman set aside roughly 349,000 acres on Sand Mountain for his colony and in April 1873, the first five families arrived. By January 1874, one hundred and twenty-three families had settled in the colony.[13]

While the young colony was growing by leaps and bounds in size, it was also having its share of economic hardships. Many who had arrived during 1874 had not had time to plant crops, many planted too late for crops to make, and many had planted fruit trees and vines which would take years to produce. Many of the colonists had been accustomed to farming richer soil, and to them the sandy soil appeared too poor to produce anything. The merchants, of course, had goods to sell, but many were too poor to buy because they had expended their funds just to reach the area. Had it not been for the older pioneer settlers, the colony might have starved to death. These pioneers showed the colonists how to grow crops such as vegetables and cotton that they would need for food and money.[14]

---

[12] Elliott, Annals, vol. 3, p. 18.

[13] Ibid., pp. 18-19.

[14] Ibid., pp. 22-23. Also Jones, Combing Cullman County, pp. 14-15.

The small town of Cullman prospered and increased to the extent that the required number of 9,500 people needed to form a county was soon reached. After overcoming opposition from Blount County and South Alabama officials in the legislature who felt that the area was still economically insecure, the county was officially proclaimed by Governor Houston on March 15, 1877.[15]

Those who assert that there was nothing in the region before the German immigrants are mistaken. There were people in the area. Communities were settled, churches of several denominations were established, schools were in session, roads that crisscrossed the area had been built, mail was being delivered and sent, and tradesmen plied their trades. A tragic war had devastated the countryside and much that had been was destroyed; however, many survived to rebuild, and while the rebuilding was taking place, much needed aid was given to a small colony of Germans who had settled on Sand Mountain.

---

[15] Jones, Combing Cullman County, pp. 23-24.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

1. Church and Associational Records

Brushy Creek Church Membership Book in possession of Clyde Speegle. Rt. 1, Crane Hill, Alabama.

Brushy Creek Church Deed in possession of Clyde Speegle. Rt. 1, Crane Hill, Alabama.

Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Associational Minutes for years 1844, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, and 1864. Microfilm, Special Collections, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

Mount Joy Church Minutes. Microfilm, Special Collections, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

Muscle Shoals Baptist Associational Minutes for years 1845, 1846, 1848, 1854, and 1855. Microfilm Special Collections, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

Sandlin's Chapel Methodist Church Class Book or record beginning in the year 1857. Typed copy obtained from Mr. W. R. Garrison, Wilburn Community, Cullman County, Alabama.

2. Alabama Governor Papers

Moore, Governor A. B., Papers. Alabama Department of Archives and History. Montgomery, Alabama.

Shorter, Governor John G., Papers. Alabama Department of Archives and History. Montgomery, Alabama.

Watts, Governor Thomas, Papers. Alabama Department of Archives and History. Montgomery, Alabama.

3. County Records

Blount County Records. Deed Books B, D, F, G, I, and K. Oneonta, Alabama.

Blounty County Records. Miscellaneous Record, 1820-1829. Oneonta, Alabama.

Blount County Records. Sixteenth Section Records, 1831-1851. Commissioners of School Lands. Oneonta, Alabama.

Blount County Records. Blount County Tract Book. Oneonta, Alabama.

Walker County Records. Walker County Land Tract Book. Jasper, Alabama.

4. Alabama Territorial and State Documents

Acts of the Alabama Territory, 1818.

Acts of Alabama, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1826, 1830, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1848, 1849, 1855-56, 1859, 1876-77.

Acts of the Called Secession, 1862, And of the Second Regular Annual Session of the General Assembly of Alabama. Montgomery, Alabama: Montgomery Advertiser and Job Office, 1862.

Alabama, State of, Election Files. Consolidation of Sixteenth Section Funds. Department of History and Archives, Montgomery, Alabama. Results for Blount, Walker, and Hancock Counties.

5. United States Government Population Census

United States Government Population Census, 1830. Blount and Walker Counties, Alabama.

United States Government Population Census, 1860. Blount, Walker, and Winston Counties, Alabama.

War of The Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1889.

6. Contemporary Maps

Burr, David A. Map of Alabama, 1839. Brantley Map Collection, Special Collections, Samford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

Carey, Mathew. Map of The Mississippi Territory, 1818. Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

General Andrew Jackson's Campaign of the Creek War, c. 1812. Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Map Collection, Montgomery, Alabama.

La Tourrette. Map of Alabama, 1838. Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

La Tourrette. *Map of Alabama, 1856.* Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

Melish, John. *Map of Alabama, 1818.* Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

Morse and Breeze. *Map of Alabama, 1842.* Agee Map Collection, Birmingham, Alabama.

U. S. Coast Survey. *Map of Northern Alabama and Georgia, 1865.* Agee Map Collection, Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, Alabama.

7. Contemporary Books and Accounts

Burrows, J. Lansing, ed. *American Baptist Register for 1852.* Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1853.

Garrett, William. *Reminiscenses of Public Men in Alabama for Thirty Years.* Atlanta: Plantation Publishing Company, 1872.

Holcombe, Hosea. *A History of The Rise and Progress of The Baptist in Alabama.* Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1840.

Jordan, General Thomas, and Pryor, J. P. *The Campaigns of Lieutenant-General N. B. Forrest* . . . . Memphis, Tennessee: Blelock and Company, 1868.

Pickett, Albert James. *History of Alabama.* 2 vols., Charleston: Walker and James, 1851: reprint ed., n. p.: Arno Press, 1971.

Smith, William R. *The History and Debates of The Convention of The People of Alabama.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: D. Woodruff, 1861.

Taylor, Thomas Jones. *A History of Madison County and Incidentally of North Alabama, 1732-1840.* Edited with an introduction by W. Stanley Hoole and Addie S. Hoole, University, Alabama: Confederate Publishing Company, 1976.

Tuomey, Michael. *First Biennial Report of the Geology of Alabama.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: M. D. J. Slade, 1850.

_______. *Second Biennial Report on the Geology of Alabama.* Montgomery, Alabama: N. B. Cloud, 1858.

8. Reminiscences and Recollections

Crocket, David. *David Crocket's Own Story As Written by Himself.* New York: Citadel Press, 1955.

Phillips, John R. *The Story of My Life.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Privately Printed, c. 1923.

Woodward, Thomas S. *Woodward's Reminiscences of The Creek, or Muscogee Indians.* Montgomery, Alabama: Barrett and Wimbish, 1859: *reprint* ed., Mobile, Alabama: Southern University Press, 1965.

9. Contemporary Periodical Articles

Powell, George. "A Description and History of Blount County," *Transaction of The Alabama Historical Society, July 9 and 10, 1855.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: J. F. Warren, 1855. pp. 31-65.

10. Contemporary Newspapers

Christian Herald. Moulton, Alabama. October 13 and 20, and November 3, 1865.

Huntsville Confederate. Huntsville, Alabama. May 14, 1863.

Southern Advocate. Huntsville, Alabama. August 1, 1860.

11. Geneological, Cemetery Records and Related Material

Biographical memoranda for Finis E. St. John. Library Files, Alabama State Department of Archives and History. Montgomery, Alabama.

Boyd, Ima Gene. *The Guthery Family of Cullman County, Alabama.* Akron, Ohio: Privately Printed, 1969-1970.

Gravemarker of J. C. Thompson and wife. Sandlin's Chapel Church. Breman Community, Cullman County, Alabama.

Lott, Dewel and Dolores, compilers. *Our Calvert Kin.* 2 vols, Hartselle, Alabama: Privately Produced, n. d.

Speegle Genealogical Material provided by Mrs. Calvin Johnson, Mount Olive, Jefferson County, Alabama.

B. SECONDARY SOURCES

1. Unpublished Dissertation

Hazel, Joseph Allan. "The Geography of Negro Agricultural Slavery in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, Circa 1860." Unpublished doctorial dissertation, Columbia University, 1963.

2. Articles

Bailey, Hugh C. "Notes and Documents: Disloyality in Early Confederate Alabama." *Journal of Southern History*, XXIII (November, 1957): pp. 522-528.

Bearss, Edwin C. "Colonel Streight Drives for the Western and Atlantic Railroad." *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXVI, No. 2 (1964): pp. 133-186.

Brantley, William H., Jr. "Alabama Secedes." *The Alabama Review*, VII (July, 1954): pp. 165-185.

Darden, David. "Delegates to the Alabama Secession Convention." *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, III (Fall and Winter, 1941): pp. 368-426.

Long, Durwood. "Economics and Politics in the 1860 Presidential Election in Alabama." *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXVII (Spring and Summer, 1965): pp. 43-58.

Steiner, R. E. "Dedication of the John T. Milner Bridge." *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XX (Fall, 1958): pp. 556-563.

Watson, Elbert L. "The Story of the Nickajack." *The Alabama Review*, XX (January, 1967): pp. 17-26.

Williams, Clanton W. "Notes and Documents: Presidential Election Returns and Related Data for Ante-bellum Alabama." *The Alabama Review*, I (October, 1948): pp. 279-293.

Williams, Clanton W. "Notes and Documents: Presidential Election Returns and Related Data For Ante-bellum Alabama." *The Alabama Review*, II (January, 1949): pp. 63-73.

Wooster, Ralph A. "Notes and Documents: The Alabama Secession Convention." *The Alabama Review*, XII (January, 1959): pp. 69-75.

3. Books and Pamphlets

Abernethy, Thomas B. *The Formative Period in Alabama, 1815-1828.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1965.

Adams, Opal. *A Profile of Gabril Hanby*, 1785-1826. Blount County Historical Society Pamphlet, n. d., Oneonta, Alabama.

Agee, Rucker. "Forrest-Streight Campaign of 1863." Report for the 100th Meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. June 26, 1958.

Ames, Ethel. *The Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama.* Birmingham, Alabama: Book-Keeper Press, 1972.

Arnold, Henry F., ed. *The March of Progress in Cullman County.* Cullman, Alabama: *The Cullman Tribune*, 1937.

Blount County Historical Society. *The Heritage of Blount County.* n. p.: Blount County Historical Society, 1972.

Brannon, Peter A. *By-Paths in Alabama and Some Houses by the Side of the Road.* Montgomery, Alabama: Paragon Press, 1929.

Brewer, W. *Alabama, Her History, Resources, War Record and Public Men.* Montgomery, Alabama: Barrett Steam Printing and Bookbinding, 1872; reprint ed., Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Willo Publishing Company, 1964.

Calvert, Simeon, and Mauldin, William B. *A Brief History of Livingston Chapel Methodist Church.* Pamphlet, n. p.: Privately reproduced by the authors, n. d.

Denman, Clarence P. *The Secession Movement in Alabama.* Alabama State Department of Archives and History Publication, Norwood, Massachusetts: Norwood Press, 1933.

Dombhart, John Martin. *History of Walker County.* Thorton, Arkansas: Cayce Publishing Company, 1937.

Dorman, Lewy. *Party Politics In Alabama From 1850-1860.* Alabama State Department of Archives and History Publication, Wetumpka, Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Company, 1935.

Duffee, Mary Gordon. *Sketches of Alabama.* Introduction and Notes by Virginia Pounds Brown and Jane Porter Nabors. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1970.

Elliott, Carl, compiler. *Annals of Northwest Alabama*, 4 vols.—. Northport, Alabama: Hermitage Press, 1958, vol. 1.

________. *Annals of Northwest Alabama*, 4 vols.—. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: W. B. Drake and Son, 1965, vol. 3.

Farb, Peter. *Man's Rise to Civilization As Shown by the Indians of North American from Primeval Times to the Coming of the Industrial State.* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1968.

Fleming, Walter. *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1905.

Jones, Margaret Jean. *Combing Cullman County.* Cullman, Alabama: Modernistic Printers, 1972.

________. *Cullman County Across The Years.* Cullman, Alabama: Modernistic Printers, 1975.

King, Howard and Wilbanks, Don. *Silent Footsteps.* n. p. Cullman County Archaeological Society, n. d.

Knox, John. *A History of Morgan County, Alabama.* Decatur, Alabama: Morgan County Board of Revenue, 1967.

Kollmorgan, Walter M. *The German Settlement in Cullman County, Alabama.* Washington, D. C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1941.

Lazenby, Marion Elias. *History of Methodism in Alabama and West Florida.* n.p.: Methodist Publishing House, 1960.

Martin, Bessie. *Desertion of Alabama Troops From the Confederate Army.* New York: AMS Press, 1966.

McMillan, Malcolm C. *The Alabama Confederate Reader.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1963.

________. *The Land Called Alabama.* Austin, Texas: Stect-Vaughn Company, 1968.

Memorial Record of Alabama. 2 vols. Madison, Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1898.

Miller, Marc, ed. *March of Progress in Cullman County.* Cullman, Alabama: *The Cullman Tribune*, 1969.

Miller, L. D. *History of Alabama.* Birmingham, Alabama: Privately Printed, 1901.

Moore, Albert Burton. *History of Alabama.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Alabama Book Store, 1951.

Newell, Herbert M. and Jeanie P. *History of Fayette County Baptist Association.* Birmingham, Alabama: Banner Press, 1968.

Reid, Avery Hamilton. *Baptist in Alabama; Their Organization and Witness.* Montgomery, Alabama: Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1967.

Scruggs, J. H., Jr., compiler. *Alabama Postal Roads with Maps, 1818-1845; Also, Early Forts, First Line of Communication, 1736, 1744, 1812.* Birmingham, Alabama: Privately Printed, 1954.

________. *Alabama Postal History.* Birmingham, Alabama: Privately Printed, 1954.

Shackleford, Josephus. *History of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association.* Trinity, Alabama: Privately Printed, 1891.

Sweet, William Warren. *The Story of Religion in America.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939.

Thompson, Wesley S. *The Free State of Winston; A History of Winston County, Alabama.* Winfield, Alabama: Pareil Press, 1968.

West, Anson. *A History of Methodism in Alabama.* Nashville: Publishing House - Methodist Episcopal Church South, 1893.

4. Interviews

Mrs. Lula Self Bailey. Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama. August 28, 1971 and September 14, 1971.

Mr. James G. Ballew. Central Community, Cullman County, Alabama. December 1, 1971.

Mr. R. E. Brown. Valley Grove Community, Cullman County, Alabama. June 22, 1971 and May 30, 1972.

Mr. Ernest Calvert. Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama. June 13, 1971.

Mr. Homer Calvert. Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama. June 11, 1971.

Mr. Lewis Fanning. Hanceville, Alabama. January 10, 1972, and January 12, 1972.

Mr. Ronnie G. Franklin. Bethsadia Community, Cullman County, Alabama. April 8, 1972.

Mr. W. R. Garrison. Wilburn Community, Cullman County, Alabama. January 10, 1972.

Mr. Chester Jackson. Arkadelphia Community, Cullman County, Alabama. August 22, 1972.

Mr. A. O. Kilgo. Logan Community, Cullman County, Alabama. January 6, 1972.

Mrs. Arthur Lott. Livingston Chapel Community, Cullman County, Alabama. September 1, 1972.

Mr. Basel Mauldin. Wilburn Community, Cullman County, Alabama. May 10, 1971.

Mr. William B. Mauldin. Flat Rock Community, Winston County, Alabama. September 1, 1972.

Mr. Carlton Milligan. Valley Grove Community, Cullman County, Alabama. March 14, 1971.

Mr. Titus Powell. Valley Grove Community, Cullman County, Alabama. May 29, 1971 and August 23, 1971.

Mr. W. T. Reese. Jones Chapel Community, Cullman County, Alabama. September 19, 1977.

Mr. Alton Sandlin. Cullman, Alabama. December 11, 1978.

Mr. John Sinyard. Wheat Community, Cullman County, Alabama. September 15, 1972.

Mr. Clyde Speegle. Brushy Creek Community, Cullman County, Alabama. January 9, 1972.

ABSTRACT

The researching of this paper has been an interesting, yet very difficult, adventure. My initial interest in local history was aroused by various family traditions, that had been handed down through the years. Later, the statement of Walter M. Kollmorgan, which stated that the Germans were the first permanent settlers in the area, served as the stimulus, that was actually responsible for bringing this project into existence.

The research that followed may be broken down into the following three areas: the searching out of primary sources; the seeking out of interviews, family genealogies, and cemetery records; and the gleaning of material from relevant books and periodicals.

The gathering of primary sources started with the plotting of tract book entries on a range and township map of Cullman County. These entries facilitated the locating of significant people during the researching of census reports. County deed books and records yielded important deeds and information about property, and the Acts of Alabama added much information about roads and turnpikes. Contemporary maps helped locate roads, post offices, and other significant locations. Religious records established the existence of early church societies and religious activities among the different religious sects. Contemporary newspapers and periodicals gave valuable accounts of events and happenings.

Much time was involved in traveling about the area gathering information through interviews. This search yielded not only historical facts and family traditions, but also many family genealogies which proved useful. Visits to many old cemeteries yielded other facts about settlers and events.

Many books and periodicals were carefully read and contributed much useful information. The histories of the surrounding counties contained valuable information as well, and general histories of the state, while only contributing general information, also proved very helpful.

BEFORE THE GERMAN SETTLEMENT OF 1873
THE LAND & PEOPLE THAT BECAME CULLMAN COUNTY
By: Gaylon D. Johnson

A

ABERNATHY, Thomas Perkins, 50.
ADAMS, Opal, 113.
ADAMS, William, 93.
AGEE, Rucker, 131.
ALBRITTON, 55.
ALFORD, P. M., 118.
ALLEN, Heron, 84.
  Martha, 84.
  Susan, 84, 85.
ALLRED, Emily, 125.
  Joseph, 125.
ALLRIDGE, Enoch, 89.
AMES, Ethel, 58, 59.
ARNOLD, Henry, 31.
ARNOLD, 115.
ATKINSON, Francis, 28.

B

BAILEY, Hugh C., 116.
  Lula, 53.
  Lula Self, 41, 117.
BALLEW, James G., 39.
BASHAM'S Gap, 30.
BATES, Riley, 120.
BEARSS, Edwin C., 131, 132.
BELL, 97, 100.
BELL, John, 116.
BERRY, Mrs. Marion, 125.
BETTS, Edward C., 122.
BLAND, William, 71.
BLEVENS, James, 66.
BORDEN, Lt., 108.
BOYD, Ima, 14.
BRANNON, Peter, 12, 106.
BRANT, 114.
BRANTLEY, 101, 105.
BRASHER, John S., 102, 104, 105, 106.
BRECKENRIDGE, 97.
BREWER, 103, 110.
BRIGHT, John, 1.
BRINDLEY, Asa, 113.
  Gabriel, 113, 139.
  Mace, 25, 34, 52, 53, 113, 126.
  Mace Pete, 113.
  Van Buren, 113.
BROOK, William M., 104.
BROWN, 119, 124.
BROWN, Gilbert, 85.

B

BROWN, R. E., 21, 120, 134.
BURNAM, 81.
BURNHAM, Nathaniel, 30.
BURROWS, J. Lansing, 69, 73..
BUTLER, 96.

C

CAMPBELL, Alexander, 82.
"CAVETTS", 137.
CALVERT, Ernest, 120.
  Hannah Elizabeth, 84.
  Homer, 119, 120, 122.
  James, 125.
  Simeon, 81.
  Thomas, 83, 119, 122.
  Tommy, 120, 122.
  William P., 86.
CAREY, Mathew, 20.
CASS, 96.
CLACK, Phillip D., 33.
CLANTON, W. Wm., 96.
CLEMEN, Jeremiah, 98, 99, 104, 105, 107.
CLYON, Solomon, 82.
COFFEE, John, 12, 15.
CORNELIAS, A., 66.
COUCH, Murry M., 92.
COX, Edward, 33.
CRAB, Thomas D., 29.
CRANFORD, Elizabeth, 40, 41.
  John, 40, 41.
CROCKETT, David, 12, 14.
CULLMAN, Col. John G., 2, 140.
CUNNINGHAM, Elijah, 58.
CURTIS, Tom Pink, 109.

D

DARDEN, David, 102.
DALE, Sam, 14.
DAY, David, 25, 31.
  Emily, 131.
  William B., 66.
DEAVER, William B., 103.
DENMAN, Clarence P., 100.
DERMID, Hiram, 93.
DITTO, 32, 33.
DODDS, William, 116.
DODGE, Gen., 128.
DOMBHART, John, 41, 51, 96, 102, 114.

D
DONALDSON, John A., 39.
DONELSON, John A., 92.
DORMAN, 107.
DORSEY, 37, 40, 79.
DOUGLAS, 97, 98, 99, 100.
DRAKE FAMILY, 54.
DRENNAN, Charles, 114.
DUFFEE, Mary Gordon, 20, 57.
DUNKIN, John, 93.
DUNN, William, 3, 51, 58.

E
EDWARDS, John, 70, 71.
  Jonathan, 71.
  William, 70.
  William H., 102, 103, 104, 105, 106.
ELLIOTT, Carl, 1, 13, 65, 114, 115, 117, 125, 139, 140.
ELMS, 123.
EVENS, Z., 56.
EVERETT, 97.

F
FANNING, Lewis, 36, 70, 80, 84, 132.
  Tolbert, 82.
FARB, Peter, 11.
FELTON, Larkin, 92.
FENNEL, Capt. Nelson, 127.
FIELDS, Daniel, 33, 34.
FLEMING, 106, 113, 114, 127, 132, 133.
FLEMING, Walter, 101, 106.
FLOURES, W. B., 98.
FORREST, Lt. Gen. N. B., 117, 129, 130, 131.
FOSTER, E. H., 112, 113.
FOSTER, T. J., 138.
FOUST, Peter, 82.
FRANKLIN, Mr. Ronnie, 9, 56, 117, 132.
FRAZIER, William, 93.
FULLER, Fleming, 69, 114, 121.
FULLER, John, 68.

G
GANDY, 26, 27.
GARRETT, William, 99.
GARRISON, W. R., 60, 79.
GARTH, J. W., 138.
GERNER, J., 68, 69.
GEERS, J. J., 138.
GILBERT, Gideon, 93.
GILLESPIE, J. C., 89.

G
GIVINS, R., 66.
GOODHUGH, William L., 72.
GREEN, T., 68.
GUTTERY, Robert, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106.

H
HALL, B. F., 82.
HAMBY, James D., 55.
HAMILTON, H. W., 135.
HAMPTON, Joseph W., 108.
HAMLIN, 104.
HANBY, 37, 39.
HANNA, Moses, 78.
HARBERSON, Samuel, 66.
HAWKINS, John C., 30.
HAYS, Miles, 54.
HAZEL, Joseph Allen, 61.
HEARN, Ebenezer, 75.
HOLBROOK, T., 73.
HOLCOMB, Hosea, 65.
HOLMES FAMILY, 54
  C. L., 72.
  Gap, 27, 29, 82.
  J., 73.
  Jacob, 73.
  Nathaniel, 124, 125.
HOLNEY, J., 73.
HOUSTON, George S., 112.
HUDDLESTON, David, 92.
HUNNICUTT, Andrew P., 92.
HUNTER, 21.

I
IRVIN, William, 69.

J
JACKSON, 93, 109, 110, 138, 140, 141.
JACKSON, Andrew, 12, 19, 20.
JEFFERSON, 110.
JEMISON, Robert, Jr., 104.
JOHNSON, Mrs. Calvin, 115.
  Jno. N., 82.
JONES, 19, 20, 53, 80, 81, 138, 139.
JONES, George J., 88.
  James, 88,
  Jeremiah, 78.
  Jesse G., 88, 89.
  John C., 80.
  John W. C., 53.
  Margaret Jean, 1, 4, 7, 29, 39, 57, 59, 72, 74,

J

JONES, Margaret Jean, 80, 81.
    William, 58, 68.
JORDAN, Gen. Thos., 130, 131.

K

KAEISER, Dr. Andrew, 101.
KELLY, Reuben, 72.
KILGO, Mr. A. O., 9, 10.
    George, 120.
KING, 8.
KNOX, John, 1, 15, 41, 54, 82, 130.
KOLLMORGAN, Walter, 2.

L

LAWRENCE, 81.
LAWRENCE, O., 73.
LAZENBY, Marion, 75, 77, 79.
LESTER, George, 56.
LINCOLN, 104, 110.
LIVINGSTON, 81.
LIVINGSTON, W., 69.
LONG, Capt. B. M., 108.
    Durwood, 99.
LOONEY, 109, 110.
LOONEY, Bill, 120.
LOTT, 125.
LOTT, Mrs. Author, 81.
LOTT, Dewel and Delores, 86.
LOTT, Jesse, 93.
LOWERY, Julius, 120.
LYNN, J. K., 69, 71, 73.

M

MARTIN, Bessie, 117.
MASON, Richard, 54.
MAULDIN, Basel, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 81 115.
MAULDIN, Wm B., 10, 81.
MAYHALL, Wm., 56.
McANNALLY, Dr. C. C., 118.
McPHERSON, Charlie, 74.
McPHERSON, Drury, 80.
McMILLAN, Malcolm C., 90, 121, 132.
McMURRAY, Robert, 88.
MEAD, Marston, 32, 88.
MELICH, John, 14, 15, 19.
MELTON, 19.
MILLER, 115, 126, 128.
MILLER, J., 70, 71.
    L. D., 13.
    Marc. 21.
MILLIGAN, Carlton, 129.
    J., 68.

M

MILLIGAN, Martin, 68.
    William, 129.
MILNER, John, 139.
MITCHELL, Gen. David B., 15, 19, 20.
MOORE, 45, 88, 124.
MOORE, A. B., 13, 107, 108, 111, 112, 113, 138.
MOORE, J. B., 138.
MORPHEW, Silas, 108, 111.
MORRIS, Wm., 54.
MORROW, S. S., 29.
MURPHREE, John, 92.
MUSGROVE, Capt. 112.
    Rev. P. M., 69, 72.
    Wm. H., 103, 107, 111, 112.

N

NELSON, Preston, 31, 42.
NESMITH, John, 56.
NEWEL, Herbert M., 134.
    Jeanie, 134.
NICHOLSON, Rufus, 79.

O

O'REAR, 81.

P

PARKER, Jim, 114.
    John, 114.
    Perry, 114.
    Thomas Barton, 114.
    Wm., 114.
PARKS, Delaney J., 92.
PENN, Mrs. 131.
PHILLIPS, 127, 134.
PHILLIPS, John R., 12, 121, 122, 127.
PICKLE, Robert, 78, 88.
PILLOW, Gen., 127.
POWELL, C. C., 92.
    Geo., 10, 60, 84, 100.
    James, 89.
    Nicholas, 89.
    Tillman, 43, 47, 51, 58, 59, 84, 119, 139.
    Titas, 120, 139.
PRICE, 55.
PRYOR, 131.
PULLIN, J., 71.

R

RACKLEY, Wm. H., 78.
RANDOLPH, Elisha, 82.
REED, Avery H., 64.
    Lucy, 93.

R
REED, Milton, 93.
REESE, W. T., 30.
RICE, Col. Patrick, 123.
ROACH, John, 65.
ROGERS, Robert H., 32, 33.
ROUSSEAUS, Gen. Lovell, 132.
RYAN, 8, 40, 83.

S
SANDLIN, Alford, 79.
Alton, 15.
R., 70, 71, 79, 80.
Thos., 15.
SCUGGS, J. H., 29, 31, 36.
SELF, Alen R., 83, 184.
Billy, 115.
Gilbert, 119, 134.
Riley, 115.
W. M., 85.
SHACKLEFORD, Joseph, 68, 74.
SHEETS, Chris, 101, 104, 105,
106, 107, 109,
110, 121, 138.
SHIRLEY, Rev. B. V., 134.
SHEPARD, Wm., 122, 123.
SHORTER, Gov. John, 118, 127.
SIMS, S. D. M., 68.
SINYARD, John, 120.
SMITH, D. D., 128, 131.
Wm. R., 104.
SPARKS, A. R., 28.
Andrew J., 28.
I. R., 28.
J. R., 29.
Thos., 55.
SPEEGLE, 120, 124.
SPEEGLE, Carol, 84, 115.
Clyde, 16, 40, 41, 45,
54, 83, 93.
Daniel, 16, 93, 115, 134.
David, 40, 41, 54, 82, 83,
93, 115, 134.
Family, 16, 54.
Genealogy, 115.
Thomas, 115.
Winiford, 40, 41, 83.
SPENCER, William, 130.
Wm., 92.
ST. JOHN, Wm. P., 86.
STEINER, R. E., 139.
STEPHENS, B. M., 70.
Capt. 114.
William, 82.
STOLL, Corporal, 127.
STOUT, 26, 27, 28, 31, 78, 82.
STOUT, Abraham, 28, 78.

S
STOUT, John, 126, 137.
Sorey, 78.
Wm., 78.
STREIGHT, Col., 120, 121, 128, 129,
130, 131..
STRINGFIELD, Thos., 75.
SWEET, William, 75.
SYKES, Dr. F. W., 137.

T
TAYLOR, Thomas J., 49.
THOMAS, J., 72.
THOMPSON, Delona Ann, 123.
J. C., 10, 93, 105, 123,
126, 137, 138, 238.
Wesley S., 3, 93, 105, 106,
118, 120.
TIMBERLAKE, Henry, 11, 14, 18.
TINGLE, Benjamin, 114.
TUDMEY, Micheal, 59, 60.
TUTTLE, Henry, 92.

V
VAN BUREN, 96, 99.
VINCENT, J. C., 72.

W
WALLACE, James C., 92.
WALLIS, Ezekiel P., 32.
WASHINGTON, Geo. W., 11, 110.
WATSON, Rev. A. B., 81.
Elbert L., 110.
Nathan, 70, 80.
WEEDEN, 31.
WEST, Amson, 76.
WHARTON, Capt., 114.
J. M. C., 39.
WHITE, Hugh C., 96.
WILAFORD, Wm., 92.
WILBANKS, Don, 8.
WILHITE, C. L., 54.
Family, 54.
W. W., 72.
WILLIAMS, Alexander, 56, 117, 132.
James Allen, 35, 36, 84, 85.
WILSON, Thomas, 120.
WINN, P. C., 113.
WOODRUFF, Mathew, 80.
WOODARD, Thomas, 14, 15.
WOODWARD, 14, 15.
WOOSTER, Ralph, 101.
WOOTEN, James, 93.
Lt., 108.
WRITHT, William F., 114.

YA Y
YAGER, C. F., 72.
YANCY, Col. Wm. L., 98, 104.