

# THE HUNTSVILLE HISTORICAL REVIEW

Volume 11

July—October, 1981

Numbers 3 & 4

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EDITOR  
HENRY S. MARKS

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HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA



## CONTRIBUTORS

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## GLIMPSES OF THE PAST: MADISON

by Rene Pruitt and Marsha Marks

Madison's history can be traced back to 1818, when John Cartright received a land grant from the Federal Government. It really began to develop when the Memphis and Charleston Railroad reached the settlement in 1856. By 1860 the town had been laid out, fifty lots approximately 66 by 198 feet having been prepared for development. In 1869 the community was incorporated. In 1880 the population was 410; eight years later it had dipped to 350 but had risen to 426 by 1912. About 1918 it contained a sawmill, two cotton "ginneries" and two gristmills. It also maintained a volunteer fire department. Of course, Madison has had its greatest period of growth since the advent of the missile age, but let us return to the "good old days" of a time long ago. Hope you enjoy these views of long ago.







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## "FLINT RIVER PLACE" IN ANTEBELLUM TIMES

by

William J. Stubno, Jr.

Among the plantation homes in Madison County to survive the Civil War is Flint River Place, located on Jordan Road north of Chase Creek. With shady trees, fresh air, and relative isolation from the cares of city life, the atmosphere is indeed pleasant. Northeast of the old plantation house is the Flint River, meandering its way down to Brownsboro, an early settlement in the area. To the south is Cedar Gap and the Southern Railroad tracks, at one time part of the route of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad that ran from Huntsville to Gurley. The history of all of the area can be traced back to the early land purchasers who bought their respective tracts from the Federal Government. The acreage upon which "Flint River Place" is located is among the earliest entries.

The plantation dwelling was specifically located in the northwest quarter of section 14, township 3 south, range 1 east, on 159.74 acres (certificate number 137) entered by Jesse Wilson of Rutherford County, Tennessee, on August 10, 1809.<sup>1</sup> Wilson was an early settler who later moved to Shelby County, Alabama.<sup>2</sup> On October 7, 1814, he and his wife, Betsey, sold this land, excluding 8 1/2 acres conveyed to Benjamin Wilson on October 5, 1814, to LeRoy Pope. The entire southeast quarter of section 11, township 3 south, range 1 east, was also included in the deed to Pope. The price paid by him for the land, amounting

to 312.19 acres, was \$4,500.<sup>3</sup> In 1820, Pope conveyed this land plus the southeast quarter of section 14, township 3 south, range 1 east; the northeast quarter of section 14, township 3 south, range 1 east; and 32 acres in the southwest quarter of section 11, township 3 south, range 1 east; to Dr. David Moore, a prominent Huntsville physician, planter, and statesman.<sup>4</sup> This tract, a total of 672.17 acres, was known at that time as "the Wilson tract of land, which the said LeRoy Pope purchased of Jesse Wilson, Benjamin Wilson and William Derrick...by reference to their deeds of conveyance and the patents from the United States."<sup>5</sup> In the deed, Pope also sold to Moore an acre of land with a cotton gin and two acres adjoining Moore's plantation near Huntsville. These additional three acres with substantial improvements accounted for the large sum of \$16,490 that Moore had to pay for the various properties.<sup>6</sup>

In 1843, Moore decided to dispose of the Wilson Tracts, and on November 7th, entered into a contract with Daniel B. Friend, a local planter. The agreement stipulated that Friend was to pay for the land in three installments: \$1,666.66  $\frac{2}{3}$  due January 1, 1845; \$1,666.66  $\frac{2}{3}$  due January 1, 1846; and \$986.00 due January 1, 1847.<sup>7</sup> After the bond was signed, Friend began building "Flint River Place," probably sometime in 1844 (see explanatory footnote for architectural comment and date of construction.)<sup>8</sup>

Born in Kentucky in 1802, Friend came to Madison County around 1826, when he married Maria Buchanan Bentley, daughter of Efford Bentley, a veteran of the Revolutionary War.<sup>9</sup> His wife, seventh in descent from



Pocahontas, had a brother, Henry H. Bentley, who was killed at the Alamo.<sup>10</sup> Though a planter, Friend also engaged in a cotton freighting business, known by the name of "Friend, Johnson and Company."<sup>11</sup> Land records further reveal that he speculated in real estate.

On May 18, 1850, Friend and his wife sold their plantation home of 672.19 acres, described "as the place the said Daniel B. Friend purchased of Doct. David Moore, and known as his Flint River Place," to LeRoy H. Jones.<sup>12</sup> Title to the land, however, was under dispute due to the fact that David Moore had died in 1845 before the condition of the bond between Moore and Friend could be completed.<sup>13</sup> Friend stated that he paid the balance of the purchase money to Moore's executors, Stephen S. Ewing and George P. Beirne. Notwithstanding, Friend still did not have title to the property at the time that he sold it to Jones. Subsequently, Friend petitioned the Orphans Court to compel the executors to convey to him title to the land. On September 9, 1850, the Court ordered the executors to issue Friend a deed of conveyance, clearing the title. Five years later, they complied with the order, giving LeRoy Jones, through Friend, undisputed ownership of the tract.<sup>14</sup>

LeRoy H. Jones, "highly respected" by his contemporaries, was a moderately well-to-do farmer.<sup>15</sup> Throughout most of the 1850's, the plantation owner lived at "Flint River Place." In 1858 he sold it to Samuel O. Nuckles for \$17,532.50, an increase in price reflecting the fact that farm values had risen dramatically in Alabama between 1850

and 1860.<sup>16</sup> Diversification of crops and methods of soil fertilization were among the reasons for these higher land values in the state.<sup>17</sup> Fortunately for Jones, his plantation was still being appraised at \$9,000, the year before he disposed of it.<sup>18</sup> With the sale of his property, Jones moved to Arkansas "and engaged in planting. . ."19

Samuel O. Nuckles, the new master of the Flint River plantation, was a Virginian by birth. Among the wealthiest planters in the area before the Civil War, he held assets of \$90,000.<sup>20</sup> Shortly after his death in the early days of the conflict, his heirs, being of the landed aristocracy, were harassed at various times by Union troops. On one occasion, a number of their slaves were actually taken away by the occupying forces.<sup>21</sup> After the war, the Nuckles estate remained in litigation, in large part due to the Reconstruction Government.<sup>22</sup> This problem was all too familiar, not only in Madison County, but also throughout the South. Prominent Southern families, loyal to the Confederate cause, were losing their fame, their fortune, and their honor. The civilization they once knew was gone. Yet the memory lived on in the songs, in the memories, and in the gracious homes of antebellum times.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Government Tract Book, p. 149, Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, Alabama; Margaret M. Cowart, Old Land Records of Madison County, Alabama (Huntsville, Alabama: By the author, n.d.), p. 241.

<sup>2</sup>William H. Branley, Three Capitals (Birmingham, AL: By the author, 1947; reprint ed., University: University of Alabama Press, 1976), p. 32.

<sup>3</sup>Deed Book B, pp. 93-94, Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, AL

<sup>4</sup>Deed Book F, pp. 131-132, Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, AL; Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1921; reprint ed., Spartanburg, S.C.: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1978), pp. 1222-1223.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Probate Court, Record Book 12, p. 104 and Deed Book AA, pp. 140-141, Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, AL.

<sup>8</sup>Flint River Place is a good example of the early Greek Revival Period (1835-1850) in Madison County. Although elements of the previous Federal Era, including the three-bay plan and the gable-ended chimneys, are present, the trim is of a larger scale. This characteristic is most noticeable in the trim around the windows. The fireplace mantels are also of a heavier, simpler design, typical of the 1840's. An increase in price from \$4,319.33 1/3 to \$9,000, the price Friend sold the property for in 1850, is another indication that the house was built by Daniel B. Friend. This increase reflects an improvement to the real property. Such

improvements which enhance the land's value usually include buildings, fences, and other additions to the property. It has also been the author's experience that an individual who bought land for a homestead, usually built his house on the property shortly after the agreement to buy the land was signed. Since Friend entered into an agreement with Moore to buy the land in November 1843, it is logical to assume that the moderately wealthy Friend began building his house in the following spring of 1844. In any event, it is known that he built the house between 1844 and 1850, or circa 1844. (Note: In an 1857 real property tax record, the only one to survive between 1815 and 1870, the notation states that the property is assessed at \$9,000.) Interview with Harvie P. Jones, A.P.A., noted architect and expert in the field of architectural preservation, Huntsville, Alabama, April 1981; Probate Court, Record Book 12, p. 104 and Tax Assessment of Real Property for the year 1857, LeRoy H. Jones, Maysville #3, Deed Book X, pp. 576-577, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, AL; John W. Reilly, The Language of Real Estate (Chicago: Real Estate Education Company, 1977), p. 216.

<sup>9</sup>Pauline Myra Jones and Kathleen Paul Jones, "Genealogy of the Harris and Allied Families," Huntsville, Alabama, December 1929, p. 98. (typewritten.); Marriage Book 3, p. 469, Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, Alabama; "Census of 1850, Madison County, Alabama," typewritten copy by Pauline Jones Gandrud and Kathleen Paul Jones, Huntsville, Alabama, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Wyndham Robertson, Pocahontas and Her Descendants (Richmond 1837; reprint ed., Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1968), p. 51; Jones and Jones, "Genealogy," p. 98.

<sup>11</sup>Circuit Court, Record Book 46, p. 45, Department of Old Records, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, Alabama; Census of 1850, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>Deed Book X, pp. 576-577.

<sup>13</sup>Frances Roberts, "Dr. David Moore, Urban Pioneer of the Old Southwest," The Alabama Review 18 (January 1965): 45; Deed Book AA, pp. 140-141.

<sup>14</sup>Deed Book AA, pp. 140-141.

<sup>15</sup>"Death of LeRoy H. Jones," Huntsville Independent 4 March 1880, p. 3, Census of 1850, p. 195.

<sup>16</sup>When Jones sold the Flint River tract to Nuckles in 1858, the property was surveyed using the chain measurement. In those days measurements were not always accurate, according to G. W. Jones and Sons, Civil Engineers. Therefore, the twenty-acre difference between the deeds of 1850 and 1858 did not mean that there was more land being sold in the 1858 conveyance, for it was, according to the latter instrument, "the tract of land sold and conveyed to...LeRoy H. Jones by Daniel B. Friend...the 18th day of May 1850." Deed Book BB, pp. 358-359, Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, Alabama; Weymouth T. Jordan, Ante-bellum Alabama Town

and Country. (Tallahassee: The Florida State University Press, 1957), p. 136.

<sup>17</sup>Jordan, Ante-Bellum Alabama, p. 136.

<sup>18</sup>Tax Assessment of Real Property for the year 1857, LeRoy H. Jones, Maysville #3.

<sup>19</sup>Jones, Huntsville Independent, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Census of 1860, Madison County, Alabama (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, Roll 653, 1967), p. 293.

<sup>21</sup>Probate Case 2484, Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse, Huntsville, AL.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

WILSON TRACT, known later as  
"FLINT RIVER PLACE"

YEAR	ACREAGE	VALUE
1814	312	\$ 4,500
1820	672	n/a (other property involved)
1843	672	4,319
1850	672	9,000
1857	672	9,000

## HISTORIES OF THREE CHURCHES IN MADISON COUNTY

contributed by

Mrs. Maxwell (Velozease A.) Harper

### [EDITOR'S NOTE]

*The following histories were developed by Mrs. Harper, a long time member of our society. She has been instrumental in preserving the history of this area. She was the catalyst for obtaining the "Old Madison Church" for the Burritt Museum and the old South Carolina Church Bell for Sharon Johnson Park and has donated historical materials to several high schools as well as to the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library. A descendant of pioneer families of the area, she has taught school in Madison and Huntsville. Mrs. Harper has been honored by the American Association of University Women, for this organization has named a scholarship in her honor. Mrs. Harper also is a graduate of the Southern Baptist Seminary, attending this institution at the same time as her husband, Reverend Maxwell Harper. She received her M.R.E. degree in 1949.*

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON, ALABAMA

The Madison Baptist Church was organized before the turn of the twentieth century. At first, meetings were held once a month in a Masonic Hall that stood on the west side of Sullivan Street, the Rev. Spears of Trinity Mountain serving as pastor. The present church property was acquired May 5, 1884, but the Rev. Stockton was pastor when the first church building facing Sullivan Street was constructed.

The church was in the Liberty Association; at the annual associational meeting on Sept. 17, 1892, a membership of thirty-six was reported.

In the early years of the church, Sunday School services were held on Sunday morning and

and worship services in the afternoon. The pastor of the First Baptist Church, Huntsville, preached to the Madison congregation in these afternoon services.

In 1900, with the Rev. T. H. Johnson, pastor, the final payment was made on the church debt, and this same year the church building was turned to face College Street.

The Sixty-Seventh annual meeting of the association was held at the Madison Baptist Church in 1904. At that time the Rev. J. A. Jenkins was the pastor and there were twenty-five members. However, the church was without a pastor from 1909 until 1915, but faithful members kept the church going.

During the pastorate of the Rev. John L. Whorton (1923-1924) the space now occupied by the pulpit, Sunday School rooms and choir loft was added to the building. The Women's Missionary Society was organized in 1924. The Rev. Pat Brock was called to serve the church full time in 1944. He was also the first pastor to live in the parsonage.

The church conducted its first Vacation Bible School in 1946 without a pastor. The Rev. Walker Bynum came to serve the church later in that year. During the pastorate of Rev. Bynum a bus was used to furnish transportation for Sunday School and worship services.

A renovation of the church building and parsonage was made in 1953, during the pastorate of the Rev. Maxwell Harper (1951-1955). A complete new entrance was added to the church. The church membership had increased to seventy by that time. Rev. Robert E. Thompson was the next pastor.



The church launched its third building program in 1958. At this time J. D. Douthit, Jr. was pastor.

In 1960, the church purchased a lot adjoining the original church property on the south. It also filed an article of incorporation at the probate judge's office and sold bonds to finance construction of the largest educational unit, which was completed in 1961, with the Rev. George Siquefield, pastor.

The church name is now the First Baptist Church of Madison, Alabama and it has now voted to build a new pastorium and a third educational unit, for the present membership is two hundred and nine.

*The writer was interested in preserving the original church building. Largely due to her efforts it is now part of Burritt Museum (pioneer village) on Monte Sano, having been placed on the mountain in January, 1980. She was also the catalyst for obtaining the "Ole Virginia Church" bell for the Sharon Johnson County Park.*

#### HILLSBORO HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

Madison-Liberty Association, Huntsville, Alabama

The church was organized by a group of Baptists in this area of Huntsville on December 15, 1955. From December 22, 1955 to May 1956 Rev. E. Maxwell Harper, a graduate of Southern Baptist Seminary, served as interim pastor. Redstone Arsenal was expanding and many new families were moving into the area.

The church was organized with 81 members, most of whom transferred from the Huntsville

Park Baptist Church. They called their new group "The Unity Baptist Church". The services were held in a room called The Teen Canteen, over Walker's Drug Store at the corner at 3318 Park Blvd. The next meeting place was in the J. J. Bradley School. (The congregation was very careful in the use of the school building.) The first Easter meeting was at the school, with lunch served afterward and an Easter-egg hunt held for the neighborhood children.

In March a pastorium (at 3703 Park Blvd) and a small church building (at the southwest corner of Park Blvd. and Ridgecrest) was purchased from the Merrimack Church of God (now Parkway Church of God). When this church was built on a lot owned by Merrimack Manufacturing Company (now Huntsville Manufacturing Co.), the surrounding area was called Merrimack Village. This was the first permanent location of The Unity Baptist Church, on the southwest corner of streets that are now called Triana Blvd. SW and Drake Avenue. On April 22, 1956 the Sunday School attendance was 145.

Under the leadership of Rev. Robert E. Thompson, 1956-1958, the present location, 3614 Drake Avenue SW, was secured. The first educational unit was built facing Hillsboro Road in 1957. The church name was changed to Hillsboro Heights Baptist Church on March 17, 1957.

In 1961 the second phase of the building program was occupied. The new Sanctuary opening was Sunday, July 31, 1966. Mr. Paul Tuggle, architect, designed this beautiful structure.

## MONTE SANO BAPTIST CHURCH

Madison Baptist Assoc., Huntsville, AL

In February 1958 the First Baptist Church purchased three acres of property on Monte Sano at 604 Monte Sano Blvd. SE, at a cost of \$9000, with \$1,750 assistance from the Alabama Baptist State Board. This property was used in the summers of 1958 and 1959 for Vacation Bible Schools. In August 1959, Rev. E. Maxwell Harper was speaker during the tent revival. With the help of The First Baptist W.M.U., the first Baptist members living on the mountain had previously organized a W.M.S. Circle.

On October 27, 1960 Mr. Glenn Halcomb, chairman of First Baptist Missions Committee; Rev. Maxwell Harper, and interested mountain families met in the home of Mr. M. L. Smith. The M. L. Smiths have in their possession a table napkin signed by those present at this meeting. Several of these people had met in previous planning meetings with the pastor of First Baptist Church.

First services of Monte Sano Baptist Chapel were held on December 4, 1960, in the adjoining homes of Mr. M. C. Cherry (3513 Wildwood Drive SE) and Mr. W. R. Allen, Jr. (3511 Wildwood Drive).

In December services were held by Mr. Ira Bledsoe, Dr. J. I. Riddle, and Rev. Hoyt Vassar, while Rev. Harper completed his work with the Mt. Zion Church, Morgan Baptist Association.

Rev. Harper, a resident of downtown Huntsville, was able to assist in the beginning visitation. He was pastor from January 1, 1961 to January 1, 1964. Rev. Harper was a graduate of Howard College (Samford University) and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

On March 12, 1961, the Chapel moved to a rented house (Rock House) at 307 Monte Sano Blvd. A second house was rented on Fearn Street. The group left the house on Fearn Street and rented the old Methodist Church on the southwest corner of Monte Sano Blvd., and Nolen Avenue, when the Methodists entered their new building in May, 1962. Their property joins the Baptist property, which was bought in 1958.

Throughout its life, the Chapel was financially self-supporting. For example, in 1961 offerings totaled \$6,683.28, in 1962 \$10,050.39 and in 1963 \$11,066.71.

In 1963 Mr. Paul Tuggle, architect, was employed to plan a permanent building. By November of 1963 the building fund was \$8,100.

Rev. Keith Weekly, a graduate of New Orleans Seminary, became pastor on January 19, 1964. The conversion of the Chapel into a church took place on June 28, 1964. The church entered its new Sanctuary at 604 Monte Sano Blvd. on the first Sunday of January, 1966. Dedication of the new Sanctuary was on February 20, 1966.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS:

by H. S. Marks

The Sunshine Belt, Madison County and Huntsville as extolled in 1907.<sup>1</sup>

The accompanying article, although written in the early 1900's, seems remarkably up to date (except for the values and prices of goods and services offered here at that time.) What was, perhaps, imagined three quarters of a century ago has come to pass in the space age. Also, if we sometimes forget the many advantages offered to us today in our daily hustle and bustle, this article on Huntsville and Madison County will remind us of them. It is given verbatim.

Under a new commercial and industrial evolution, the well-known and familiar saying that "Westward the star of Empire takes its way," must be changed to read, "Southward the star of Empire takes its way." Beyond all controversy, in the future of this country, the star of empire will shine as brightly in the southland sky of this great republic, as it ever shone in the east or the west and the greatness and grandeur of the commercial factors of the common country will receive some of their brightest luster from the great South, as it swings more and more fully into the broad line of universal progress. In these respects, northern Alabama will stand in the front line, and in northern Alabama, Madison County, in the famous Tennessee Valley with the beautiful city of Huntsville as its central point will, to use an army phrase, "stand on the firing line."

The climate is all that can be desired, as the temperature is scarcely ever too high for comfort in summer and very seldom is it uncomfortable in winter. The winters are just cold enough for perfect health. Residents who have lived in every section of the Union declare the climate of North Alabama to be the best all

around climate they have found. Since the first settlement of the country, in the nineteenth century it has been locally celebrated. Sunstrokes are unknown. The annual rainfall averages forty-five inches, distributed nearly evenly throughout the year, making crop failures practicably an impossibility.

The location of the city of Huntsville, with its 20,000 population is unequaled in the picturesqueness of its beauty and the ever inviting charm possessed by its surrounding scenery, presenting views of mountain and vale that never grow old and on which the eye never tires to gaze--a delight and an inspiration. Nature secured for this city ample and admirable drainage. Its high elevation being 640 feet above sea level, and its distance from the river gives it absolute security from the night fogs and miasma of still water lakes. The air is pure, sweet and light. Its streets were macadamized sixty years ago and its free macadam and gravel pikes run out to the adjoining state and county boundaries and to the Tennessee River, giving the county about 180 miles of free pike roads. No city in the county is so amply supplied with pure cold water, or has a superior system of water works.

Huntsville is well supplied with schools. There are public and private schools enough to educate all the children of the city. Large public schools are controlled by the State Board of Education. The banking institutions of Huntsville are synonyms of strength wherever they are known and they are distinctively representative of the city in their personnel as well as their enterprise. Each of the four banks of the city has its own peculiar methods and we find here a commercial people of varying styles of business catered to in a manner enabling them to prosecute their operations to the point of success. The banks referred to are two national, one private, and a savings bank and trust company. Most of these banks are paying 4 per cent interest on time deposits of money. This

will appeal to business men, as evidence of a stable condition of our finances. The deposits have increased steadily in recent years and are now growing at a well-nigh phenomenal rate.

Huntsville enjoys a fine trade in retail and wholesale jobbing lines, and her merchants are among the best in this country, their commercial rating first-class. The tributary country to this city, which does much of its trading here, comprises some ten counties in Alabama and Tennessee. All commercial lines of trade are fully and well represented, and what Huntsville wants and has a place for is, not more merchants, but more factories.

The soil of Madison County is what is known as the famous red clay, running down in many cases to a depth of twenty feet. A recent soil survey by the Department of Agriculture of the United States Government elicited the fact that this red clay is the same as the famous Hagerstown, Maryland, clay loam, and has been demonstrated to be one of the most productive soils for wheat, corn, peas, fruits, vegetables and all general agricultural crops. The solidity of the subsoil causes this land to retain fertilizers without leeching.

In a word, the soil of Madison County is unsurpassed in fertility and durability. It needs only the same care and attention which is observed by the northern farmer in cultivating his lands to grow every crop raised in the north together with cotton, sweet potatoes, peanuts and every variety of fruit. The country is a paradise for vegetable or small fruit farming, for the reason that work in this class of farming extends throughout the year, the farmer being able to plow all through the winter months, and the violets blooming in the fields the year round. Land is rapidly advancing in price.

The average price of good well improved and desirably located farming lands in Madison County can be bought at from \$12.00 to \$30.00 per acre, all owing of course to character and extent of improvements and distance from Huntsville; and in some instances and localities, lands can be had as low as \$10.00 per acre, but when a man pays from \$15.00 to \$30.00 per acre for land in this county, where lands are cheap, he is getting lands that will easily yield more clear dollars per acre than lands that are now selling in many portions of the North and West at from \$75.00 to \$150.00 per acre. We mean what we say, and can prove it.

If you are a manufacturer you will find here mountains of limestone ready for burning; quarries of sandstone ready to be chiseled into form; immense forests of hardwood of forty different varieties ready to be made into anything from a lead pencil to an antique oak or black walnut chamber set, all to be had at hand, or nearly at cordwood prices. For your factories you will find water without limit, of a quality that will make steam in your boilers without foaming; coal for your fuel at \$2.00.

All in all, Northern Alabama, and especially the Madison County part of it, has a great future before it. Its present material wealth, and the widening out and the geometrical development of this wealth is pleasant to contemplate.

Let us go to the highest official authority for this information. From the reports of the census of 1890 we may learn the average value per acre of farm products in all the states. The figures compiled by the census statisticians were for 1889. The average for the whole country and for the different sections were as follows:

The United States-----	\$6.87
All States except the South-----	6.35



North Atlantic States-----	\$9.88
North Central States-----	6.03
Western States-----	6.76
The South-----	7.18

With the price of cotton this ratio becomes much greater in favor of the South. As it stands, the average annual value of farm products in the South is greater than the average of all the great agricultural states of the Central West, greater than the average of the expensively maintained irrigated farms, orchards, and gardens of the far West, and scarcely surpassed by the average of the enormously rich and populous Eastern and New England states, where agriculture has its highest development.

Huntsville maintains a businessmen's club, made up of 500 enterprising citizens, where the stranger may apply, either in person or by letter for the information he may desire. The Secretary of this club will promptly attend to all these matters. No matter what you want, apply to him. He is himself a bureau of information.

Footnote:

<sup>1</sup>From "Counties of Alabama. Their Resources, Their Riches and Their Characteristics." In Alabama, Serial No. 27, Bulletin of the State Department of Agriculture and Industries, J. A. Wilkinson, Commissioner, 1907.

## BOOK REVIEWS

YOUR ALABAMA & THE STORY OF ALABAMA, by Virginia Van der Hamilton (Viewpoint Publications, Inc.)

Here are two excellent textbooks of Alabama history, designed for the fourth and ninth grades. Alabama history is a required subject throughout the state at those two levels. The basic difference between the two grades is the greater degree of detailed analysis offered in the upper one.

It is the author's contention that "awareness of history begins close to home" and her purpose in writing these textbooks is to "build upon a natural interest in the history of one's community . . . [for] a small stream leads to a river and an ocean, so the pursuit of local and state history can carry teachers and students into the history of this nation and of this world."

That she has admirably succeeded is due in no little part to her unique ability, in three times of academic scholarship, to write, to convey thoughts and moods as well as factual data. She learned to write as a journalist before turning to the academic world, acquiring her doctorate in history at the University of Alabama. Currently she is professor of history and head of the history department at the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

The textbooks are very well organized, divided into six sections, each comprising at least several chapters. Each chapter has a section devoted to places to visit and things to do within Alabama that students can choose from, and, if carried out either individually

or by groups, will make our past much more relevant to the student. Awareness is also heightened by the use of visual aids. Maps, sketches and photographs are integrated with the text, pleasing aesthetically and adding to the educating process.

Both these textbooks are highly recommended; not only for students but for adults, newcomers to the state as well as "home grown". We are, at last, getting first-rate histories of the state into the classroom.

STONES RIVER - Bloody Winter in Tennessee, by James Lee McDonough (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981), \$14.50). xiv, 231 pp.

Less than 100 miles from Huntsville and 80 miles from Madison County occurred one of the significant battles of the Civil War. Stones River, in percentage of killed and wounded to those fighting there, ranks with any of them, with the carnage producing 24,000 casualties on both sides. Thus the battle should really be remembered for the ineptitude on the part of both high commands. Bragg and Rosecrans, Confederate and Union Commanders, respectively, were later to lose what reputation was left to them after Murfreesboro, at Chickamauga and Chattanooga.

The author, a Tennessean and author of the highly acclaimed Shiloh--In Hell Before Night, has produced a first-rate study of the battle. Like the late Bell Wiley, he has utilized letters, diaries and memoirs very well, providing the reader with a feel for what misery the common soldier had to endure during the events leading to the battle as well as the engagement itself.

I would like to suggest a trip for our own membership. Everyone read this book and then tour Stones River National Battlefield, maintained by the National Park Service. This could easily be done in a day and the park service would provide us with a guide. Let me know. But do read this book.

THE EDITOR

The Huntsville Historical Review is sent to all members of the Huntsville Historical Society. The annual membership is \$5.00. Libraries and organizations may receive the Review on a subscription basis for \$5.00 per year. Single issues may be obtained for \$1.00 each.

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The editor and Board of Editorial Advisors are primarily interested in articles and documents pertaining to Madison County. Articles on the history of other sections of the state or area will be considered when they relate to Madison County. All copy, including footnotes, should be double-spaced with the footnotes typed on separate sheets at the end of the article. The author should submit an original and a carbon.

