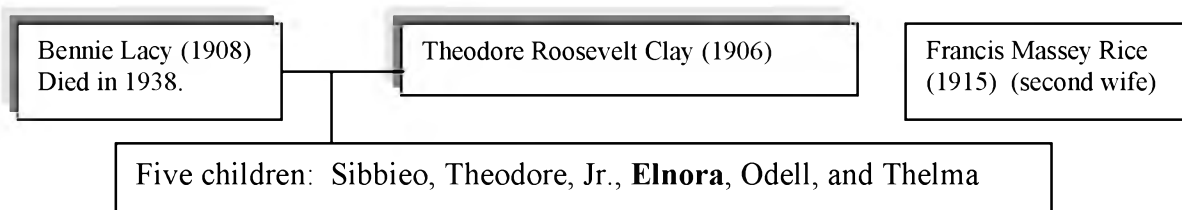


the fifth grade because children of sharecroppers were allowed to attend school only after the crops were harvested, but he was motivated and had a thirst for knowledge.

By 1927, Buddy and Octavia's son Theodore was a young man and had married Bennie Lacy, with whom he had five children (Sibbieo, Theodore, Jr., Elnora, Odell, and Thelma). Theodore R. Clay, Sr.'s wife, Bennie (born in 1908), was the daughter of Manch and Lucy Fisher Lacy in 1908. [Note: The family tree of Lucy Fisher Lacy was provided by Georgia Lacy Lanier and is included with the Felix Lanier and Georgia Lacy Lanier interview.]

Theodore wanted his own land, but his wife Lucy died in 1938 before that dream was to come true. Striving to provide a better life for his family, in 1940, he purchased a 100-acre farm with a FHA loan for \$5000. Elnora was young when her father moved her and her siblings from Pond Beat to their new home, several miles away from her grandparents. It was located on what is now the corner of Bob Wallace and Patton Road.



Having purchased a new home for his family, Theodore Clay married Francis Rice, who was born in 1915, the daughter of Will and Frances Massey Rice.

Walter Joiner remembered Theodore Clay's house well and described the circumstances that enabled Theodore Clay to buy it—President Roosevelt's "New Deal program." Walter described Theodore's house as being a two-story, built according to size of the family by the FHA standard. All such houses had a chicken house, barn, and a corral for hogs, and it was required that an orchard "be put out." [Note: Walter Joiner's comments about the New Deal program in the context of Huntsville and the pre-arsenal communities are presented in his interview in another section of this manuscript.] Walter's description of the house matched the one given by Elnora Lanier.

The Clay family did not enjoy their new home for very long. The following year, in July of 1941, "the Government took the farm." Theodore Clay, with five children and a pregnant wife, began the search for a new home.

In his submission to the book, *The Heritage of Madison County*, Theodore Roosevelt Clay, Jr. wrote the following:

Roosevelt's dream had just begun to come to fruition when he died in 1956. He was buried in Penny's Cemetery. Sibbieo, Theodore and Elnora had earned college degrees, Odell and Thelma were in college. Frances, determined to fulfill her husband's dream, continued to provide means for the other children to complete their education.