

money. I didn't have any money. So I said, "I done what Mr. Nelson told me to do. He's done took my mules to Decatur."

Nelson said, "Well, he can bring them back, can't he?"

I said, "Yes, I guess so, and you can take your land and go to Hell."

Wesley Thomas said he found out later that even though Nelson told him to get the tractor of his choice, Nelson's friend Pete Estes had an Alice Chalmers dealership that he wanted him to buy from.

About that time, Wesley Thomas got word from his wife's uncle about a place.

Mr. Dobbins, my wife's uncle, said he had an interest in the Darnell place, and he'd be glad to rent it. Mr. Dobbins carried me up there and showed me the farm.

The Move to Madison County

Wesley Thomas described the move:

While we were moving, somewhere around the dam [Wilson Dam], I saw Roosevelt in a parade. Henry Ford was in the process of trying to buy the dam. It was never approved. He wanted to do manufacturing in the Shoals. They went so far [in planning for the purchase of the land] that there is a place east of the Shoals called Ford City.

We moved the family. The McCormick boys, farmers nearby, had a couple of trucks. I hired them to help me move.

Spraggins was president of the First National Bank then. He died and Mr. Lowery became president of the bank. Lowery bought it from Holmes who was one of the first men who originally owned it. They were land speculators—Jeff Terry, W.I. Dobbins, S.O. Holmes. Dobbins was from Limestone County. Holmes son owned Holmes Furniture Store and they had their offices in the furniture store.

The Property of J.E. Whitaker (C-99). The parcel to which the Thomas family moved is a large parcel (C-99) that was owned by J.E. Whitaker. Thomas said Whitaker didn't live on the land he owned. The land was farmed by renters and share croppers. Richard Darnell was the foreman who oversaw the land for Whitaker. This was once part of the old Shreve Plantation.