While 11 men attempted to escaped from Camp O and were eventually recaptured, one was successful. The typical sentence for crimes such as larceny, distilling, and anything that was not murder, was one year and one day. For charges such as assault, murder, or manslaughter the sentence was typically 5-10 years. However, most men were released or paroled within five years. Only one man was recorded to have been sentenced to life, Robert Porterfield. He was charged with murder in the first degree, sentence to life in prison in 1919. He was moved to Camp O sometime before 1930, when he was already 60 years old. He was paroled in 1936 – probably because he was sick and could not work – and he passed away within a couple of weeks.

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The Breeding Family

The Breeding family of Morgan County is a known biracial family significant for their legacy of biracial relationships, a Supreme Court case over the execution of a will, and the first time an all-white jury voted in favor of a person of color. Samuel Breeding (1799-1852) brought his family to Morgan County in the early 19th century. He owned an extensive amount of land in east Morgan County in the vicinity of Somerville. Samuel Breeding was one of several slaveowners in North Alabama that openly fathered children with his enslaved women. Although Samuel had many biracial children – not all accounted for – it was one of his legitimate, white sons that helped to make Morgan County history.

William Breeding (1822-1899) was Samuel's oldest son, one of four brothers and eight sisters in the large, antebellum Breeding family. Although William fought with the 11th Alabama Cavalry in the Confederate Army, he had an enslaved woman for his common law wife – Sopharina Breeding. The couple had at least four sons together.

Anti-miscegenation laws forbade such a relationship. William's family lawyer, General Samuel M. Morrow, advised him to be clear and strong in his will to ensure his sons inherited his land. Conflictingly, Morrow did not condone interracial relationships, however, he also felt that any white man's "sexual freedoms and civil rights, [included] the right to choose their own wives and control their own property."

Sopharina passed away in the 1880s and despite William's careful planning, when he passed away in 1899, the execution of his will caused a family uproar. John Breeding, one of William's brothers, protested the will on the grounds that his brother, "William Breeding left no children." As a "full brother," John believed himself entitled to the estate. At this time, Millard Breeding (b. 1857) contested his uncle's claims and stated to the court, "I am a natural son of William Breeding, deceased. I propounded his will for probate,

(Left) Excerpt from 1930 Census with State Convict Camp