

**Pictorial Memories**

of

**PAINT ROCK**

**Paintings By:**

**Norma Jean Skelton Brown**  
"Tince"

*Norma Jean Skelton Brown*  
*1934-1974-1975*

**MEMORIAL**

In loving memory of my beloved parents:

***James Washington and Thelma Houk Skelton***

And My Brothers and Sisters:

***Percy W. Skelton***

***Mattie Lavonne Skelton Campbell***

***Bertha Louise Skelton***

***William Harless Skelton***

***James Nelson Skelton***

*Ann B. Chambless*  
*256-574-3556*

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Also my special thanks and appreciation to my husband William V. Brown, and my children Philip and Gabrielle, and granddaughter Royale for all their help and encouragement.

To the friends that loaned their photographs and those that contributed the brief histories related to the paintings, I am most grateful. Too, we honor those that first saw the potential in this area known as Paint Rock, Alabama and the entrepreneurs that made it very prosperous at one time. But then . . . time and events took their toll. Back then, we had better prosperity and security in the love of God, caring families, friends and neighbors.

Assembled: December 2009

## FOREWORD

It was with pleasure when I first started this project of "remembrances" by borrowing a photograph of the School House from Bud Flanagan and doing a painting from it. Since then, I have completed paintings from my own photographs and borrowed others to work on scenes of Paint Rock. Then Chip Whitaker sent a photo of the "Hotel". That really whetted my desire to paint again and add to my collection.

In the meantime, I had received several requests for a print of certain paintings. Then the thought of an album that included prints of all the paintings was suggested. Since I had a brief history of each of the paintings, I asked a number of people if they were interested in contributing. They could update what I had or write their own brief history of the painting relating to their families. Several readily agreed and the idea of a pictorial album was finalized. With their encouragement more paintings were included, but the projection of others didn't materialize.

This Pictorial Memories album is not a history of Paint Rock per se, but a glimpse of the past with fond memories of that day and time (the 1930's - 1940's). May you find some humor, some actual information and a word of love from "The Word" of the Creator of it all.

**SO LOOK AND REMEMBER!!**

## FOREWORD

It was with pleasure that I read the project of "The Year of the Century of H. H. H." and was struck by the scope of the work. The project is a history of the past and a record of the present. It is a record of the past and a record of the present. It is a record of the past and a record of the present. It is a record of the past and a record of the present.

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## SO LOOK AND REMEMBER!!!

1971 edition - 1971

## History of Paint Rock, Alabama

**Paint Rock is a small town situated just west of the Paint Rock River on the western portion of Jackson County. Located at the feet of Keel and Nat Mountains, its natural beauty remains but the town is only a fraction of what it used to be.**

**John Kennamer, who was appointed by the Legislature to select a county seat of Old Decatur County in 1821, owned most of the land where Paint Rock was founded. \* The Town was originally called Camden and the Post Office was established there in 1836. The towns name was changed to Paint Rock in 1876 because of the naturally colored sand stone found in the area. It was the home of a large Indian population and is on the Cherokee trail of tears. The land was rich for agriculture and the railroad provided a necessary means of transportation and importing goods.**

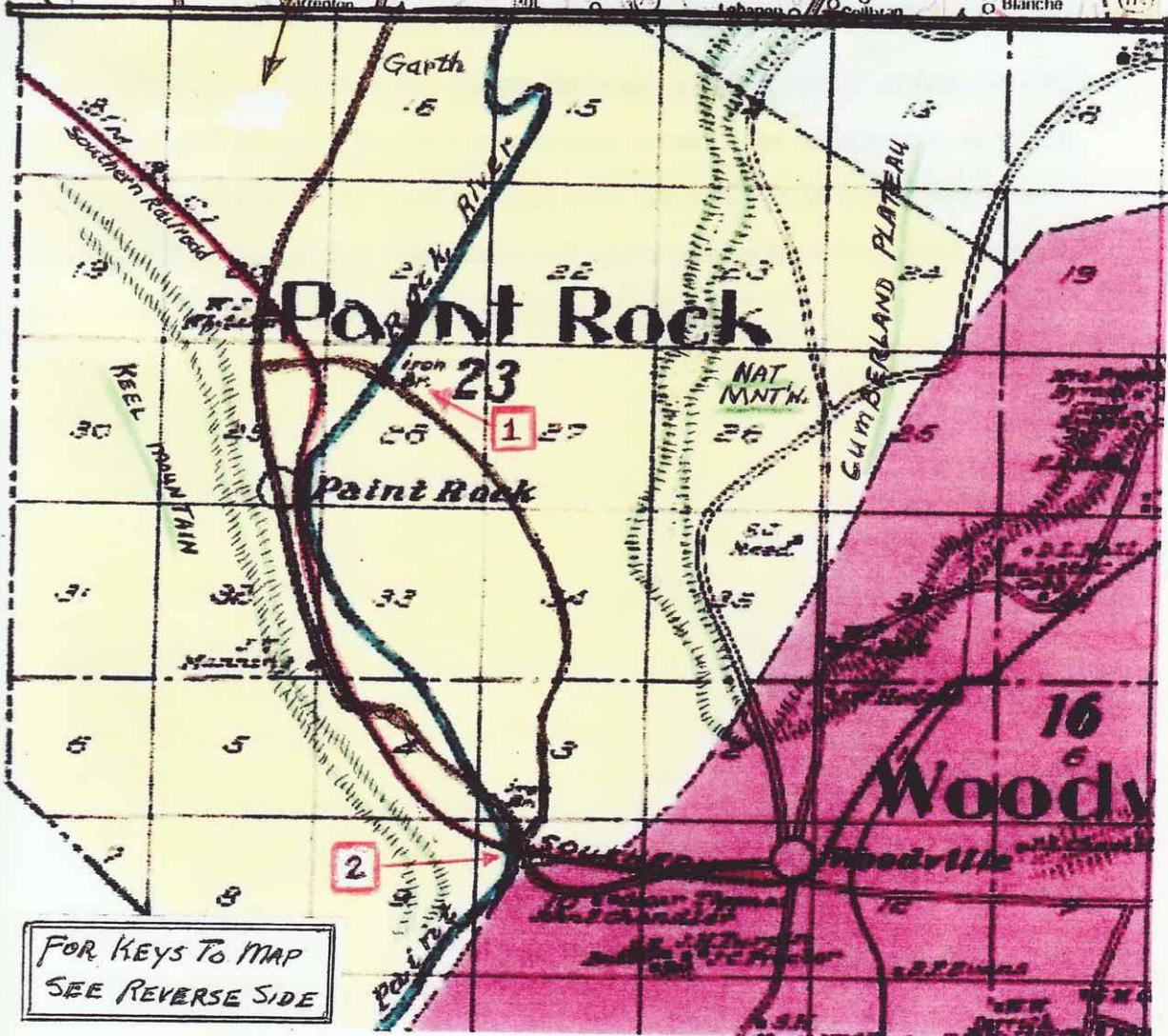
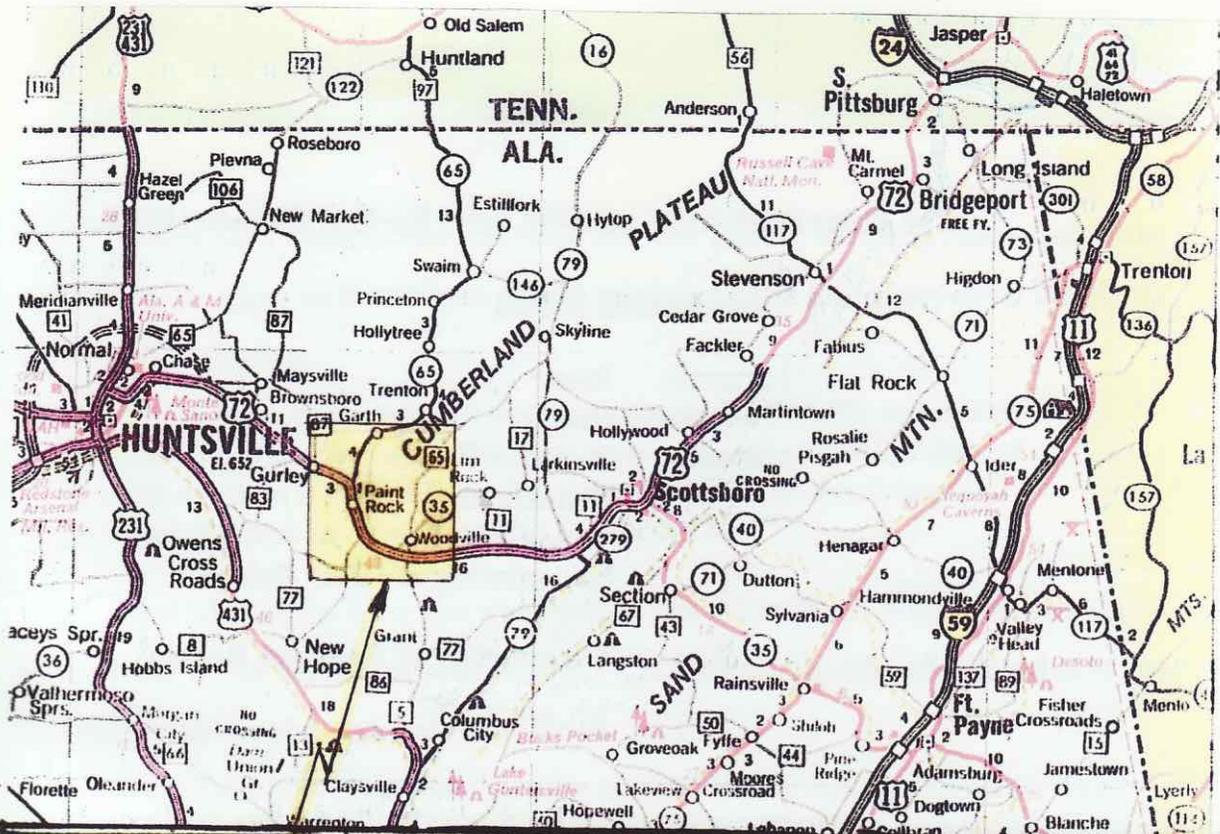
**Some early industries in Paint Rock included a water mill for grinding corn and wheat built by George Lily in 1879. A pencil mill was built in 1897 by Otto Gudenrath of New York, which initially employed about 65 people. He sold out to the Gulf Red Cedar Company, who enlarged the business to employ 175 people, until it was moved to Tennessee in 1911. There were two stave mills that made staves for whiskey barrels until prohibition forced their closure. There was also a hosiery mill that employed several hundred people, which was destroyed by the tornado of 1932. A chair factory operated by John O'Neal was a major source of employment until it closed in the early 1970s.**

**Paint Rock has been hit by three tornados. The first was January 17, 1870 and the damage was great to both businesses and home. The second tornado was April 25, 1880, which destroyed five houses. But the worse was March 21, 1932, and Paint Rock never recovered. The tornado entered Paint Rock at 7:05 P.M., destroying almost half of the homes in the town. Warehouses, the textile mill and most of the downtown building were either totally destroyed or damaged and six people were killed.**

**Progress, in the way of bulldozers paving the way to four-lane Highway 72 in 1975, took most of what was left of the business section of town, two churches and a number of houses. What was once a prosperous town in the early 1900's is now a small village.**

Rosemary O'Neal Jones

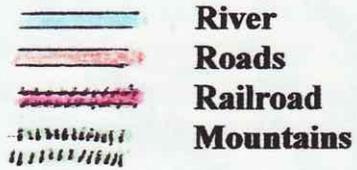
\* His log cabin stood near the foot of Keel Mountain, not far from the home site of the late E. R. Popejoy.



FOR KEYS TO MAP  
SEE REVERSE SIDE

**The Paint Rock Map possibly dates back to the late 1800's.**

**Key to map details**



**1**

**See painting of River Bridge**

**2**

**See painting of Railroad Bridge**

## MAP

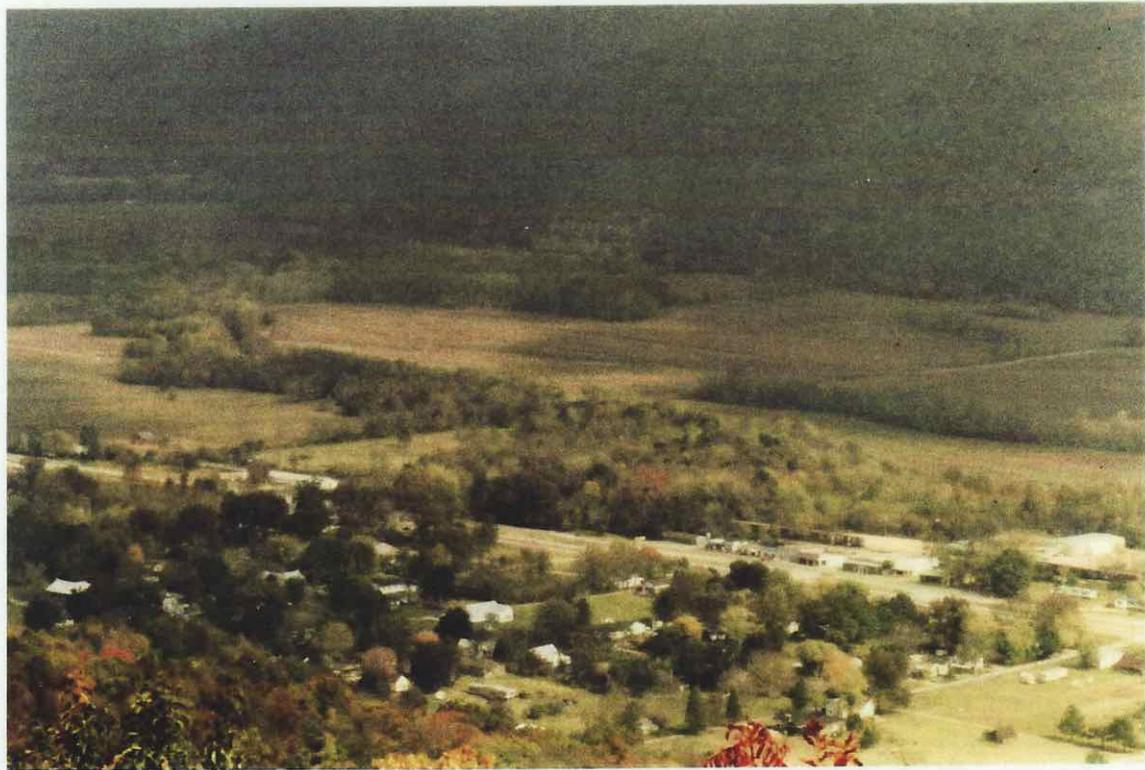
**When God created the Heavens and the Earth, dividing the water from the earth, He gave us a smidgen of His mighty power and glory with the River and the Mountains.**

*“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?” Isaiah 40:12*

**Keel Mountain is on the west side of the Paint Rock River. It gets its name from Jesse Keel who settled at the Chalybeate Spring on the point of the Mountain above the town of Paint Rock.**

**Nat Mountain is on the east side of Paint Rock River. It gets its name from Nat Wisdom who settled on the Mountain before the Civil War.**

**The convergence of the River, Railroad and Highway at this particular point, wedged between the two mountains, created the uniqueness of Paint Rock. All of these assets were utilized over the years, and contributed to all the joy and pleasure that was bestowed upon each generation since Paint Rock was founded.**



**Paint Rock, Alabama**

## PHOTOGRAPHS OF TOWN

Photographs of Paint Rock were taken from top of Keel Mountain, looking across the valley at Nat Mountain, from the Butler's home site. We would hike to the top of the Mountain by way of the cave to reach the home site – the view was worth it!

Sometimes we would hike to the top of the Mountain and go north to the Chalybeate Spring for a drink of that odoriferous sulfur water! Ugh! Nearby there was an abandoned cabin in a pine thicket where we used the porch as a resting place. While resting, our silence was mandatory as we listened to the wind whistling through the pines. It was a haunting and mournful sound that penetrated your soul! You would never hear that sound from anywhere else because of the pine needles – not leaves.

## KEEL MOUNTAIN

The Mountain gets its name from Jesse Keel who settled at the Chalybeate Spring in 1841, and overlooked Paint Rock on the west side of the Paint Rock River. Robert L. Butler, former partner of Taylor Butler, owned part of the Mountain. Either he or a descendant built a home on the bluff overlooking the town of Paint Rock. It is still a focal point visible from the valley.

## NAT MOUNTAIN

Before the Civil War, a Nat Wisdom settled on the Mountain that now bears his name. Then only a few families had established homes there. With the success of Green Academy, many settlers came to Nat to attend the school.

The academy was started by the Missionary Association of the Congregation Church in New York City in 1890. They started with a two room school house and a cottage for the teachers. The school had to be enlarged and more teachers added after the first year. It cost the pupil \$1.00 per month. After they completed all their work, they were prepared to enter college.



THE Swimming Hole

## PAINT ROCK RIVER

The Paint Rock River is one of Alabama's most spectacular Rivers and one of the last free-flowing tributaries in the Tennessee Basin of Alabama. Many of the River's upper tributaries begin within Tennessee. The converging of Estill Fork and Hurricane Creek form the Paint Rock River that then flows past the town of Paint Rock.

It is the first major River to enter the Tennessee River below Guntersville Dam and is part of the upper Wheeler Lake section. Also, it supports a diversity of 100 documented species of fish as well as 45 mussel species. Two of the mussel species (pale lilliput and Alabama lampmussel) are found nowhere else in the world. One fish species (palezone shiner) is confined to the Paint Rock River and one stream in Kentucky.

Before the day of the railroad the River was used for transportation. Once the settlers came and had established themselves, they built skiffs, ferry boats, and barges to float bales of cotton and farm products down the River to the Tennessee. Larger boats were used to transport the cargo to New Orleans. After the smaller boats had discharged their cargo, they were reloaded with items the settlers needed (flour, pork, etc.) for the return trip. During that era, John Redman, an earlier settler, operated a boatyard on the River as well as an Inn on the stage coach route.

## THE SWIMMING HOLE

What an asset to have a “River” at your front door that brought all the joy and pleasure Summertime can bring. Not only did we get our exercise in swimming, but plenty of sunshine. Unbeknown to us, our young bodies desperately needed that vitamin D to enable calcium to be applied to our bones. .

\* \* \* \* \*

### Swimming Hole

Recalling the Swimming Hole in the Paint Rock River brings back very pleasant memories. The water in the swimming hole was not very deep (about six feet), but was always cool to cold because the River originated at the Tennessee – Alabama border and was fed by numerous springs as it progressed down stream.

While not knowing how a tree trunk got positioned at the Swimming Hole, it was the centerpiece. It was about 12 to 16 inches in diameter with one end embedded up-stream in the bottom of the river and the other end protruding about 4 to 5 feet at about a 45 degree angle downstream with the end being about 12 to 18 inches above the water level (depending on the level of the river). We used it as a diving board and would push each other off the end into the river. There was also a large boulder in the middle of the river bottom about 20 to 30 feet upstream from the end of the log that we could stand on while awaiting our time to get on the “diving board”. We improvised many games for having fun.

My parents told me not to go swimming before the first of May but many times they didn't know the water was not freezing – just cold!

We normally had swimming trunks or shorts on but sometimes we went skinny-dipping. When we did this, we put someone on shore to watch for adults and/or girls approaching. They would alert us so we could dress behind the willow bushes growing on the river bank. We also usually had a bar of soap stored in the bushes so that we could take a bath in the river if we needed one!

Orvid C. Roberts, Jr. (Bud)

Paint Rock River

The "Ole Swimming Hole" is always a memory that lingers in your thoughts of yesteryear. The kids of Paint Rock were lucky to have the River close to town so when after work, play or when we just got ready, we were skinny dipping in no time at all.

Billy Joe Flanagan

\* \* \* \* \*

Ole Swimming Hole

I learned to swim above the Dam where there was a Log protruding above the water. We would dive off of it or be pushed off by some of the fellows trying to become "King of the Log". With eight or ten fellows trying to become that King, the reign was short lived! It was a lot of fun as new fellows joined.

Not only did the River offer us the freedom to swim, but a short cut to the farm across the River. I was helping Dad farm and took the tractor to cross the River below the Dam and got stuck when the water started rising. Had to get one of the farmers that had a larger tractor to pull me out!

Odell Millsap



Paint Rock Dam

**PAINT ROCK DAM**  
**and**  
**REMNANT OF GRIST MILL**

The Dam was built to serve a water mill (built by George C. Lilly in 1879) to grind corn and wheat. The mill was owned by W. T. Black and operated by Remus Smith. Later the mill burned and the Dam partially destroyed by dynamite. The Dam was finally demolished in the 1950's when they dredged the river bed and cleared the banks to control flooding of nearby farm land. The land near the Grist Mill was sold for taxes and bought by J. S. O'Neal.

Fishing was another joy for the young and old. Either with pole using dough balls or worms, or fly fishing from the Dam that called for the expertise of a true fisherman! Such as Betty Merrill, who was there most every day using flies or helgramites (toe biters). She was always available with advice and help if you were truly interested in learning to fly fish or how to catch the bait. It was a comfort to see her close by.



Paint Rock River Bridge

## PAINT ROCK RIVER BRIDGE

The Iron Trussel Bridge – length of largest span 112.9 ft., total length 179.1 ft., deck width 10.5 ft., verticle clearance above deck 13.3 ft., was built in the 1800's.

Then they had to have wooden guard rails to keep the horses from bolting. Since the Bridge was high to accommodate the barges and ferry boats on the River, the rushing water could be seen through the cracks. That, plus the rattling and clatter of the horses hooves on the loose planks on the Bridge, could spook the horses. In that case blinders were not very helpful as all the commotion was below.

When my parents lived on the east side of the River and used the Bridge, my sister, Lavonne, had to be carried across. She would bury her head in Dad's shoulder, squeeze her eyes shut and hold on tightly until she could no longer smell or hear the water rushing by. After upchucking and almost passing out a few times, no question about how to cross the Bridge with her. Vertigo plagued her and took its toll during her life.

There were ten or more families living on farms on the east side of the River. But the growth of the town was on the west side of the River. So families left the farm and moved closer to the School. Having to walk a mile plus to School was one of the deciding factors in moving, as well as the need to find work elsewhere. Nevertheless, farms continued to produce and the Bridge was necessary. In due time, the wooden guard rails were replaced by heavy steel cables. They surely did give you a sense of security when you walked on the Bridge.

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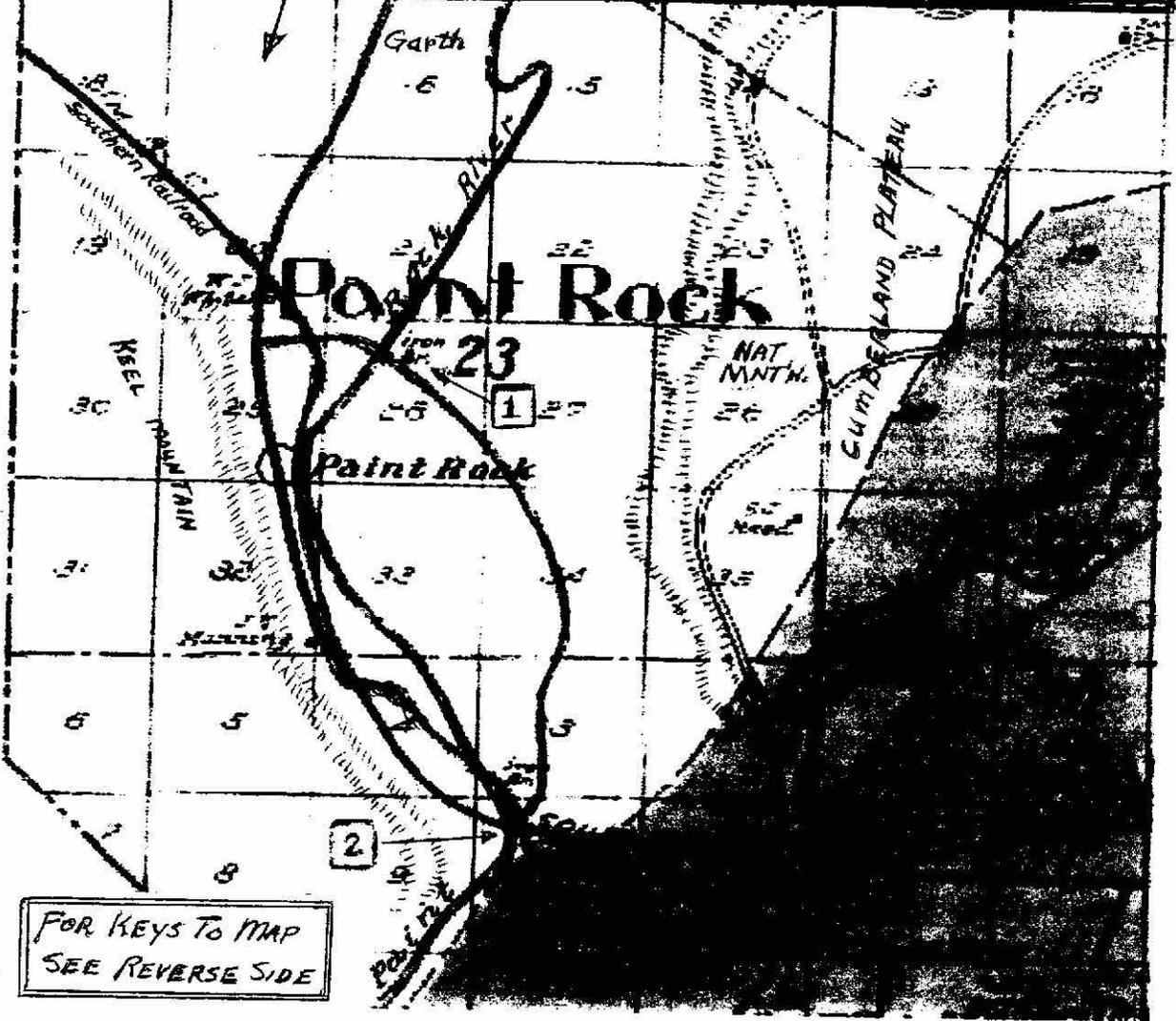
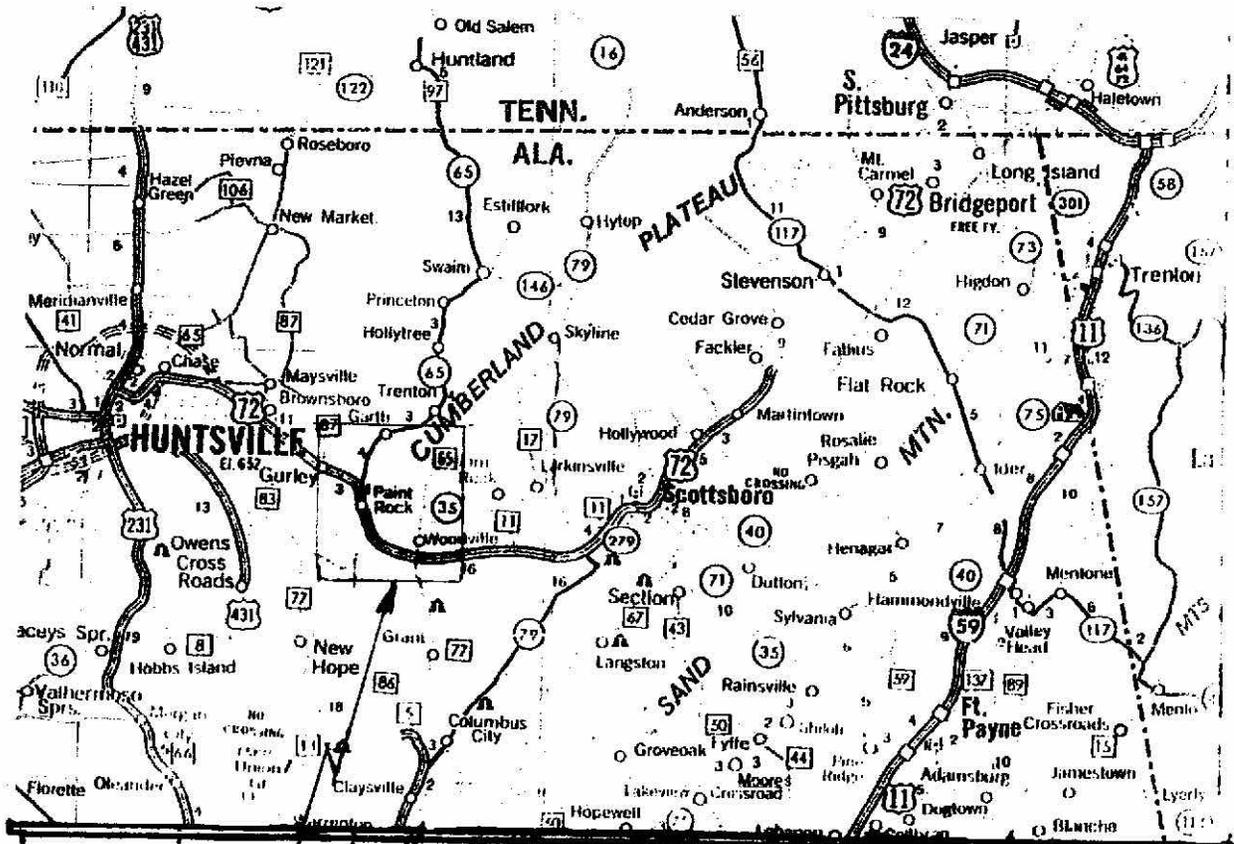
As time passed ownership changed and the use of the land for the most part changed too. The Bridge could not support the heavier farm equipment and the lack of money from Jackson County to update the Bridge meant that it became a skeleton of the past. Thus the Iron structure of the Bridge is still

standing. What a physical and historical relic! Just wish it could be restored as such and be used to cross the River as a tourist attraction.

Some of the land was sold to the Nature Conservatory, some to a game reserve, some is still used for farming, and the remainder is waiting to be of service to it's owner. So the Old Road Bed (see map) was once again repaired for use to access the land across the River.

**Contributor:**

**Chip Whitaker**



FOR KEYS TO MAP  
SEE REVERSE SIDE



Rousseau Brothers Gen. Mdse.

## ROUSSEAU BROTHERS GEN. MDSE.

Before Butler & Butler, and Butler-Rousseau, Pleasant Woodall and Stephen E. Kennamer sold groceries and whiskey in the 1860's. Also, a Jewish couple, the Vorenburgs, sold goods there.

In the 1880's Canada Butler began selling goods in Paint Rock and was successful until his death. Then Taylor Butler, his brother, along with Robert Butler as a partner (who later withdrew) began operating the Store. In a few years Calvin Marcellus Rousseau joined the firm and the name changed to Butler - Rousseau and Company. They built a new three-story building in 1905.

The building was up to date for that day as it had a unique moveable ladder. It ran on a track that was anchored in a very high ceiling along the side of one wall - thus making the higher shelves accessible from the back of the building to the front. They sold a lot of merchandise including clothing, groceries, farm implements, buggies, wagons, feed, and caskets, plus the burial robes.

In 1929 the business was sold to C. M. Rousseau and continued to be prosperous. Then the tornado of 1932 destroyed the top two floors, but the antiquated ladder remained intact. The humble, most generous and beloved C.M. Rousseau died in 1935 and was buried at Bethel Cemetery near New Hope, Ala.

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1937 the sons of C.M. Rousseau, Calvin and Tom Rousseau, bought the business. It once again became the hub of the community by accommodating the Health Department in giving Typhoid shots. The boys of the neighborhood said "No" to that and took off to the mountain. Naturally they were rounded up and brought back! But one still balked as he had another way to escape, he thought, by climbing that high antiquated ladder that survived the tornado! He eventually had to come down kicking all the way! But they finally got him and the shot was administered.

Dendy Rousseau

They decided that the Store could use some more customers and offered a little excitement. Hence the Guinea on top of the Store. The word went out – whosoever caught the Guinea that Calvin threw off the top of the Store would be rewarded with \$5.00! Don't you know that \$5 was spent by everyone there over and over again! People came from the surrounding areas and off of the Mountain – you could sense and feel the excitement! A huge success!! I never knew who caught the Guinea or what happened to it, nor how many times this was repeated.

Behind the Store, we had a small “calaboose” but no sheriff. Also there was a blacksmith barn run by William and son, Sidney Branum, that forged iron for horseshoes. A lot of the boys carried a pocket full of “slugs” for their sling shots and became most accurate with them. Brother Harless had a deadly aim, and left handed too!

Mr. Bailey had a small business making chifforobes – all hand crafted. He had a nickname of “Cactus Jack” - think he was from Arizona or New Mexico – never heard anyone call him that though.

As long as the Store stood it was in business, but had to be torn down for a new four-lane highway in 1975.

The Rousseaus were loved by everyone and especially by me – my Aunt Hazel and Uncle Tom.

**POST OFFICE**

**(Formerly Paint Rock Bank)**

**The Paint Rock Bank was built in the 1900's and was successful for a number of years. After having financial problems it was made a branch of the Tennessee Valley Bank during the depression. It was closed out in March 1933. In 1934 it moved to Gurley and became Central Bank.**

**Roy B. Whitaker bought the bank building from First National Bank of Scottsboro in 1942. It became Warden's Cafe, a residence and a Post Office. Roy Whitaker became Postmaster in 1942 and retired in 1972. The Post Office was broken into three times in 30 years – no postal money was taken. The building was torn down in 1976.**

**Roy B Whitaker, Sr.**

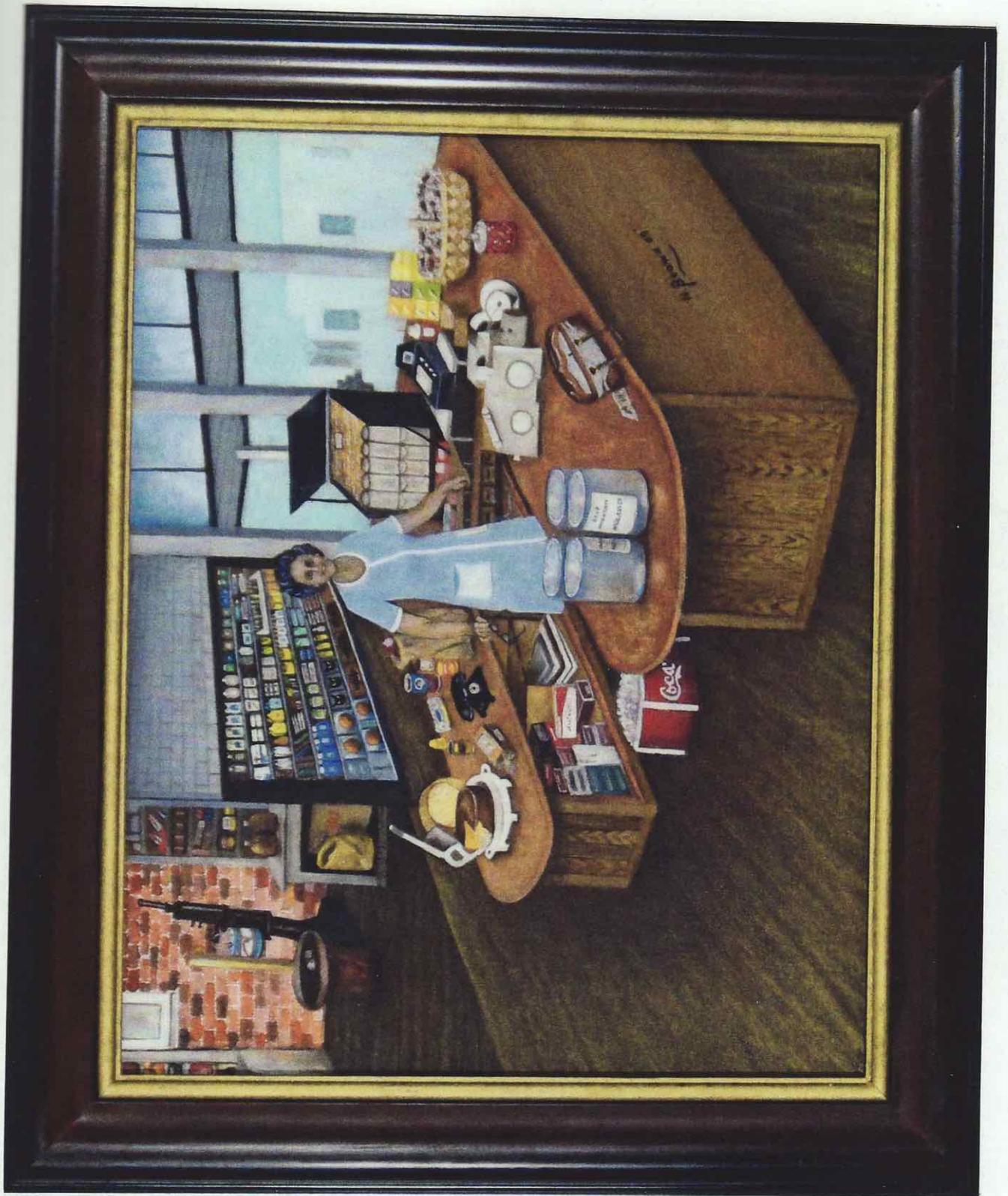
**\* \* \* \* \***

**Roy Baird Whitaker**

**1902 – 1990**

**Son of William Jackson and Mary Baird Whitaker, he grew up on a farm and was educated at Auburn. He taught in a one room school house at Salty Bottom, Hale's Cove and night school at Woodville for the GI's returning from the war.**

**Chip Whitaker**



Katherine Rousseau - Store

*died 9-2-2012*

## KATHERINE ROUSSEAU

*Katherine Durham Rousseau is known and beloved (feared by some I am sure) by many generations in Paint Rock. For years she put her mark on this small rural town in North Alabama which is nestled in a valley surrounded by hazy, forested mountains, with a river, that gets "out" during rains, and almost dries up at other times. This spot has a special place in the hearts of those who were born and raised there.*

*Katherine was born in 1915 on Sand Mountain in Northern Alabama, to Lionel, and Maybelle Arnold Durham. Her mother died when she was 9, and she lived with her Grandmother to help out with traveling salesmen who stayed in private homes because there were no hotels in the rural areas. These salesmen were called drummers. Probably because they "drummed up business. She remembers wading across the Tennessee River at Scottsboro during a dry season. Of course this was before TVA.*

*She and Calvin Rousseau were married in 1934, and she wore a pretty brown taffeta dress. They had one child, Jeannette. In the early days Paint Rock had a number of thriving businesses such as; Rousseau Brothers store, a chair factory, two other grocery stores, post office, beauty parlor, café, grist mill, hosiery mill, and a hotel. A raging tornado struck in 1934 which destroyed houses and businesses and there were several deaths. The damage was bad and the town was never able to fully recover.*

*Katherine spent the early years of her marriage as a housewife and taking care of her daughter. Times were hard, as it was the middle of the depression, and she started working at the store where she made her presence known. Men would sit around the store with their spittle from tobacco and snuff landing on the floor or the coal burning pot bellied stove where it would bubble and hiss. Miss Katherine thought it was "nasty" and put a stop to that, although with much grumbling from the men. Because she was at the store, she saw the needs of people. Giving candy to a child who did not have a penny, helping with welfare forms and food stamps, taking people to doctors, delivering groceries, waiting on customers, stacking groceries, sweeping the store, putting "cold drinks" in the cooler, along with taking food to sick people, were all qualities that earned her the respect of the townspeople.*

*Katherine was always known to speak her mind. Once a man said to her, Miss Katherine, I hear you made a comment about my driving. She said, "Well yes, I did. I said you were the best drunk driver I ever saw". She and "Miss Esley Flanagan", another Paint Rock legend who taught school many years, were best friends. Kat is a night person and would frequently stop by Esley's on her way home from the store which was anywhere from 9-11 o'clock at night, where they would discuss cakes (both liked moist cakes), ice cream (cooked or uncooked,) shoes, girdles, children, current events, and anything else that popped into their minds. They were working women, when most women were at home. Kat never wore a watch and never knew what time it was, so sometimes it would be very late before the session ended.*

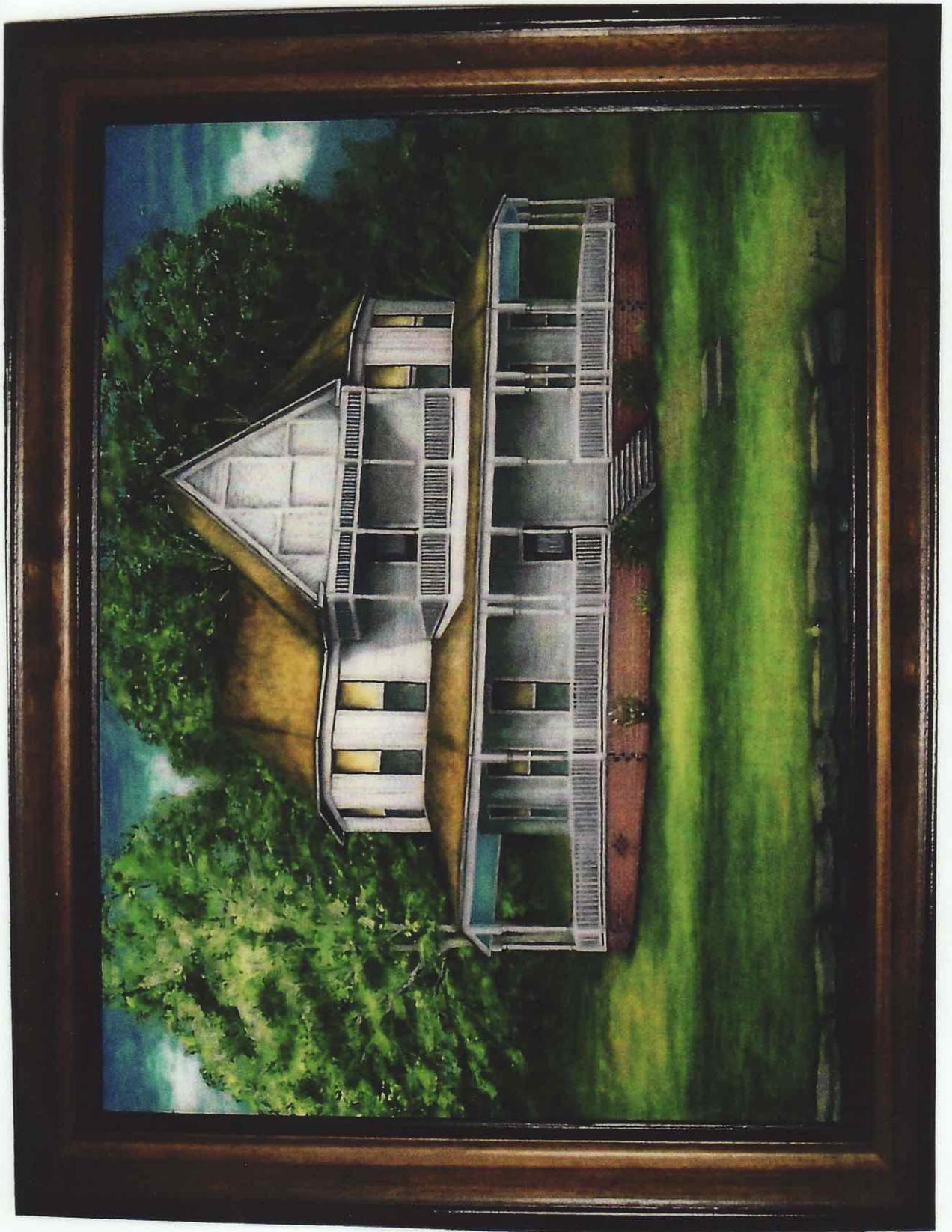
*A helping hand truly defined Katherine: In the 1970's she was on City Council, and in charge of the CETA workers who were cleaning up the town. With her tongue as a whip, they earned every penny, but the town looked great. She and James O'Neal started the Senior Center where seniors could eat at noon and socialize. They also got a safe water system installed. She started the cemetery fund to keep it looking nice, was a substitute teacher, sold antiques which she loved, and all of this while continuing to run the store after Calvin died. She also took care of Calvin after his stroke, as well as her aged father. Bud Flanagan said he did not ever want Kat bathing him when he was sick. "She will rub the skin off".*

*In 1979 highway 72 was expanded to a four lane road, and Rousseau Brothers store was demolished along with half the town. A sad day. Miss Katherine was forced into retirement from the store she loved. She continued to work at another store across the street, as well as a gift shop until they closed, however it was never the same. Today the town is a wink as cars whiz by on the "four lane".*

*Always being creative and active, she mowed her yard on a riding lawnmower until she was 89, with her skirt pulled up (always a skirt, never pants). When the car broke down, she rode the mower to the Senior Center for lunch. In later life she became a member of the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Baptist Church, an important part of her life. Her travels took her to Ireland, Michigan, San Francisco, Atlanta, Washington, Williamsburg, and New York. Those were special times for her.*

*Katherine was opinionated, curious, compassionate, kind, caring, a tireless worker, and an institution in this little town that she loved.*

*Written by her daughter July 2009. Katherine is now 94, not able to live in her house, but still of sound mind. She continues to be interested in everything happening in Paint Rock, and mad as a hornet that age has caught up with her.*



Rousseau House

## ROUSSEAU HOUSE

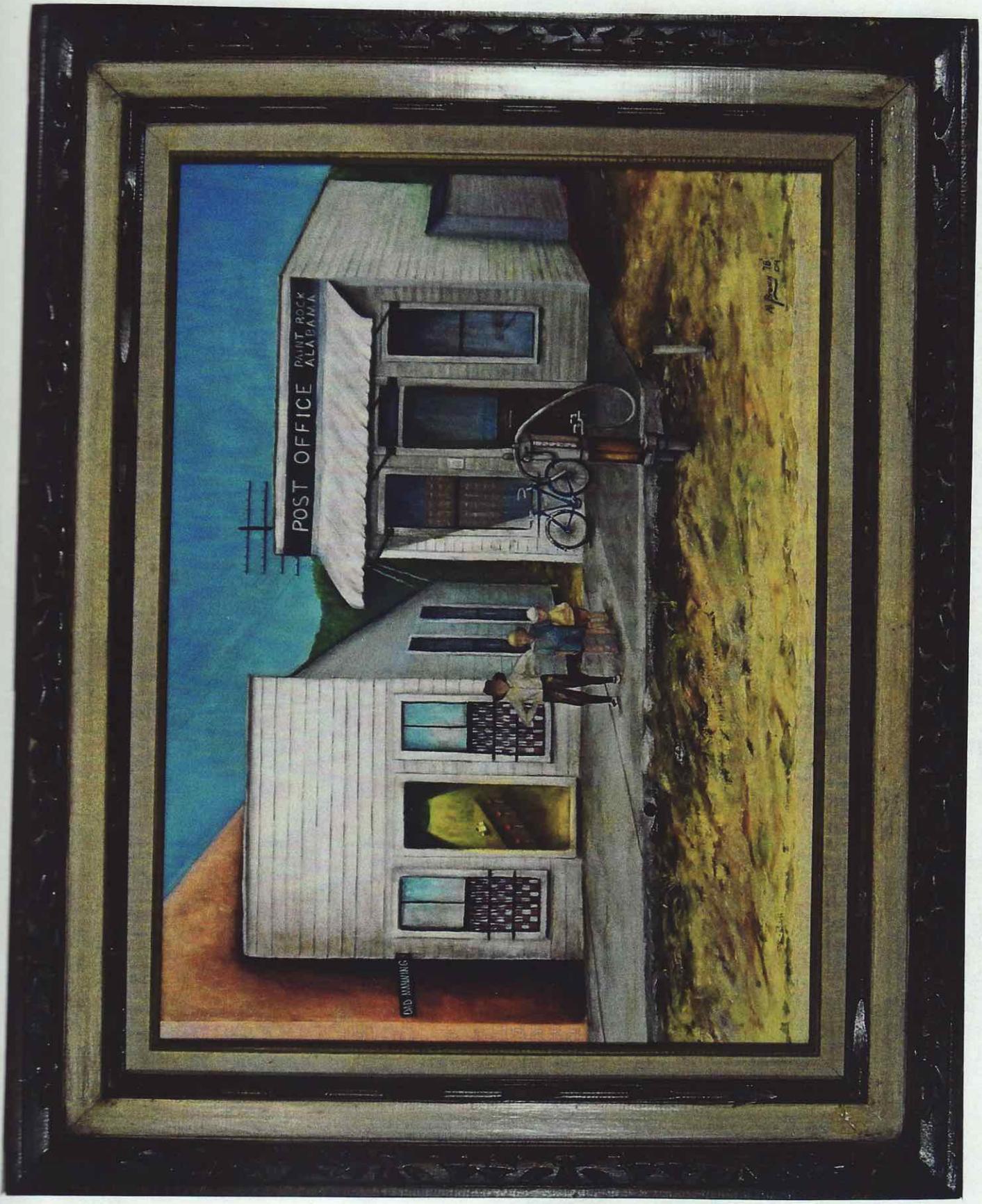
The house was built in 1910 by Calvin Marcellus and Adeline Butler Rousseau. They had three children, Geraldine, Calvin and Tom. Mrs. Adeline Rousseau died in February 1920 and was buried at Bethel Cemetery near New Hope.

Mr. Rousseau remarried to Ophy Dendy in 1921. They had three children, Maragem, Dendy and Martha. Mr. Rousseau died in 1935 and was buried at Bethel Cemetery also.

Mrs. Ophy Rousseau and family moved to Albertville in 1939. Mrs. Ophy Rousseau, a beloved mother and grandmother, died December 17, 1968 and was buried at Memorial Garden in Albertville.

The Rousseau house was sold to Winston Smith from Trenton and he rented it to the William Mize's family. Mr. Mize worked for the Railroad. Bob Ivey's family and Grady Manning's family also lived there at one time. The house was destroyed by fire in 1979. Paul O'Neal now owns the property.

Dendy Rousseau



Dad Manning & Old Post Office

## DAD MANNING & OLD POST OFFICE

Mr. Manning bought the Cafe from Bill Dewey Flanagan in 1927. He built the house behind it and lived there until he bought another house in the area.

He operated the Cafe until 1935 when he had to have eye surgery to remove his eye . . . then went blind in the other one. His daughter Hattie and husband Horace Hinson took over the business until 1941. They sold the building to Ophy Rousseau, and Hansom Keel bought it from her in 1946. He owned it until 1950 and sold it to Duck Allison. After the cafe closed, the building housed a grocery store and barber shop. Roy Whitaker was the last owner, and it was torn down in 1975.

Hattie Henson

\* \* \* \* \*

*Children in Painting: Clifford Porter Hill*

*Lucian Hill*

*Graham Phillips*

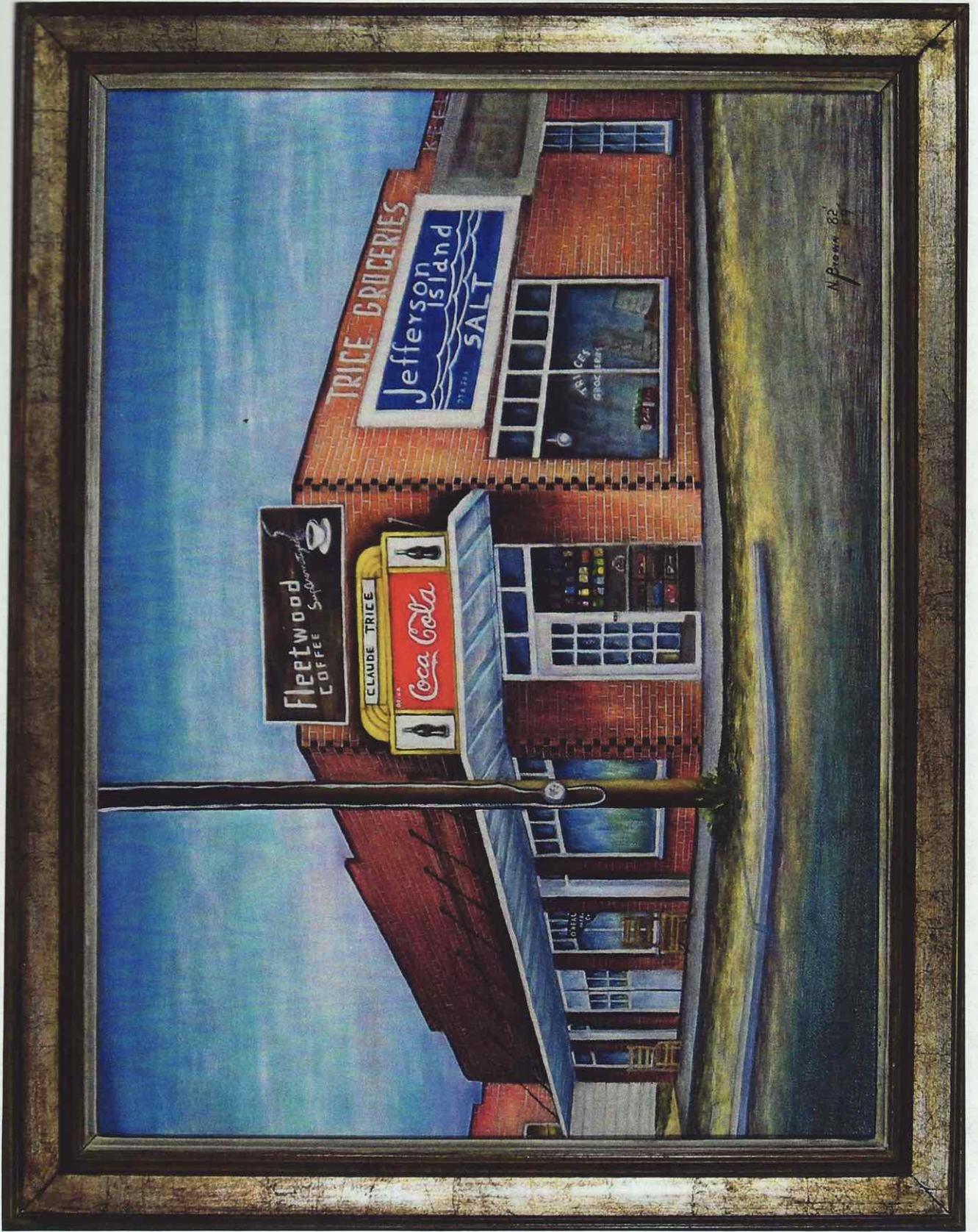
\* \* \* \* \*

THE OLD POST OFFICE was built in 1914, burned and rebuilt under Civil Service. William Harry Hill became Post Master and served for 27 years – retiring in 1941. Following his retirement, his son Lucian Hill became Post Master for five months. The building was torn down in 1950.

Lucian Hill

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1836, Camden (later Paint Rock) Post Office began serving the community. First J. Newberry was Postmaster, then a year later John Redman became Postmaster serving several years. The name was changed to the Redman Post Office around 1847, and then in 1850 changed back to Camden. Yet another change in 1876, to Paint Rock Post Office, as it is today.



O'Neal Manufacturing & Trice's Grocery

## O'NEAL MANUFACTURING CO.

The O'Neal Manufacturing Co. was established in 1937 during the depression years. They originally made porch gliders and porch chairs of wood and spring steel. Bernice Williams and owner John S. O'Neal were the original employees. Competition in the porch furniture proved to be too fierce which led to experimenting with making DC or straight chairs. Mr. Derryberry, an employee of Oak Chair Co. of Tennessee, was employed and brought to Paint Rock to establish the production. His knowledge proved to be successful for within six to ten months the factory was producing from 80 to 100 chairs a day. The original building, which was built for an automobile agency was soon outgrown and the machinery for the woodworking was moved below the railroad in the old corn barn, still utilizing the original building for bottoming and storage. Production ultimately rose to 1,200 to 1,400 chairs a day composed of several styles and models. The chair factory, operated by John O'Neal, was a major source of employment until it closed in the early 1970's.

The original building was built by the State Highway Dept. in 1933 or 1934 from the material of the O'Neal building that was destroyed by the "Storm" in 1932.

Mrs. J. S. O'Neal, Cleve Keel, J.C. Collins, Mrs. Effie Penny, Claude Trice, and J.T. Vandiver each had a business at the "corner" through the years.

The building was torn down in 1977 for the new Highway.

John Martin O'Neal



Allison Candy Co. & Campbell Building

**ALLISON CANDY COMPANY**  
**Joe Avery "Duck" and Julia Faye Wynne Allison**

**Duck and Julia were both from the Stevenson area in north Jackson County, Julia from "Little Coon" and Duck from "Big Coon".**

**Duck came to Paint Rock to work for Little Candy Co. as a salesman. In August of 1937 he and Julia were married and bought the business in the fall of 1938. The business started out with three employees, Austin Russell, Duck and Julia. They used two cars with the back seat removed as their trucks. At first they sold mostly candy and notions. Later they added tobacco products and vending machines. When Duck died, the business had been in existence for 42 years and served six counties, Jackson, DeKalb, Madison, Morgan, Marshall, and Limestone. It had 14 employees and was referred to as the Candy House.**

**In 1989 a new building was built about one-half mile from the original building on Highway 72. At that time there were 24 employees, it was managed by their son Jimmy and son-in-law Bruce Hodges.**

**Both Duck and Julia were very active in the community and church. Julia played piano at the Paint Rock Missionary Baptist Church and taught the youth Sunday School class for many years. She had a heart for missions and was very active in WMU. Duck was a deacon at the church for many years.**

**Duck was a past mayor of Paint Rock and on the Jackson County school board in the 1950's. He was a board member of the new Jackson County Bank in Scottsboro when he died in September 1979. Julia passed away in March 2006. They had four children: Joe (deceased), Jimmy (deceased), Jane and Brenda.**

**The business was sold to two employees, Nelson Parker and Doyle Harbin in 2000. It is still located in the same building on Highway 72 and is now "Allison Wholesale, Inc."**

**Jane Allison Nevels**  
**September 2009**

**William Thomas Campbell**

**Born 1883**

**Birth Place: Sand Mountain in Northeast Alabama**

**Mr. Campbell married Lizzie Moon in 1902 on Sand Mountain in Northeast Alabama.**

**Mr. and Mrs. Campbell lived on Sand Mountain for a short period of time and then moved to Scottsboro, Alabama. Mr. Campbell was a farmer while living in Scottsboro.**

**Mr. and Mrs. Campbell moved to Trenton, Alabama in Paint Rock Valley in 1918. While living in Trenton, Mr. Campbell was a Deputy Sheriff, farmed and ran a grist mill.**

**Mr. and Mrs. Campbell had six children of their own and raised two nephews whose parents were deceased.**

**During the Depression in 1928, the Campbell family moved to Granite City, Illinois, so that Mr. Campbell could find employment. He worked in a granite and iron works factory seven days a week, 12 hours a day. The family saved enough money during this time to start a business when they returned to the South from Illinois. The family left Illinois in 1929 and moved to Paint Rock, Alabama.**

**In Paint Rock, Mr. Campbell opened a general merchandise store and later added the grist mill. The store was later operated by one of his nephews, and Mr. Campbell operated the grist mill until his death in 1964. After Mr. Campbell died, Mrs. Campbell sold the store and grist mill.**

Signed: Nellie Hunt  
Nellie Campbell Hunt (Daughter)

Signed: Cecil Campbell  
Cecil Campbell (Son)

Signed: Robert Smart  
Robert Smart (Nephew raised by Mr. and Mrs. Campbell)

Signed: Eddie Thomas Hunt  
Eddie Thomas Hunt (Grandson)

**William Thomas Campbell** Nov. 12, 1883 – April 3, 1964  
**Lizzie Moon Campbell** Sept. 5, 1883 – July 18, 1966

**Children**

**John Donald Campbell** Sept. 13, 1904 – Dec. 21, 1977

**Mary Cordie Lee Campbell** Sept. 1, 1906 – March 31, 1972

**William Floyd Campbell** May 3, 1911 – Oct. 22, 1922

**Nellie Veda Campbell** Oct. 29, 1913 -

**Isaac Boyd Campbell** Dec. 23, 1916 – Jan. 22, 2003

**Elbert Cecil Campbell** Aug. 29, 1926 -

**\*\*\*\*\* 10 Grandchildren \*\*\*\*\***

**\*\* Nephews Raised by William & Lizzie Campbell \*\*\***  
**(Parents Were: Frank & Adar Smart)**

**James Smart** Feb. 16, 1917 – Nov. 26, 1979

**Robert Smart** July 5, 1922 -



Paint Rock Hotel

## KEEL HOTEL

(Paint Rock Hotel)

Built by Dial Christopher (Major) Keel and wife Mary Frances (Fannie) Mead Keel. It had two stories, sixteen rooms, two baths, and a wrap around porch upstairs and downstairs.

Mrs. Mead's husband, Col. Lemuel Mead, was shot and killed without warning in Gurley in 1878. He was buried in the Old Cemetery in Paint Rock. The dispute was over sharecropping. He owned a large parcel of land in the surrounding area. Also he was an important figure in the Civil War with several successful exploits.

Later Mrs. Mead married Dial Christopher ( Major) Keel. He was Postmaster in Paint Rock at one time. The Mead's land was sold and the Hotel was built with the money in the early 1900's. The Hotel was never fully utilized after the tornado in 1932 that destroyed most of the town and the Hotel's source of revenue. It did suffer some damage from the storm. The Keels had five children and are buried in Paint Rock.

The Hotel had withstood the age of the time and many families lived in some of the rooms until it was finally torn down in 1950.

Chip Whitaker

\* \* \* \* \*

John S O'Neal bought the old Keel Hotel in 1941-42. He owned it until it was torn down in 1950. Mose O'Neal used the material to build a two-bedroom one-bath house which he sold to John Martin O'Neal in 1952. John Martin lived in the house until his death in 2006.

The house was built by Mose and Bernice Williams with boards on both the inside and outside of the studs. Another tornado could blow it over, but blowing it apart would be very difficult.

Rosemary O'Neal Jones



Depot

## DEPOT

The Railroad was built around 1850 and the first Depot was built in 1856. During the Civil War, the Depot escaped burning because it was under Federal control, but the rest of the town didn't fair as well. There was a brick Depot at one time and it was destroyed by the first tornado to hit Paint Rock in January 1870 – a second one occurred in 1880. The last one in 1932 took its toll of destruction and life. It blew the Depot off the tracks and was partially destroyed. It was rebuilt at the same location that year.

W.H. Hill became agent in 1888 and retired in 1945. A.H. Henslee and David C Roberts were also agents there. The Depot was torn down in 1971.

*In the background of the painting: the brick building is the Patterson Store, the wooden building is a warehouse, and apparently Jake Smothers and his Mail Cart had stopped by.*

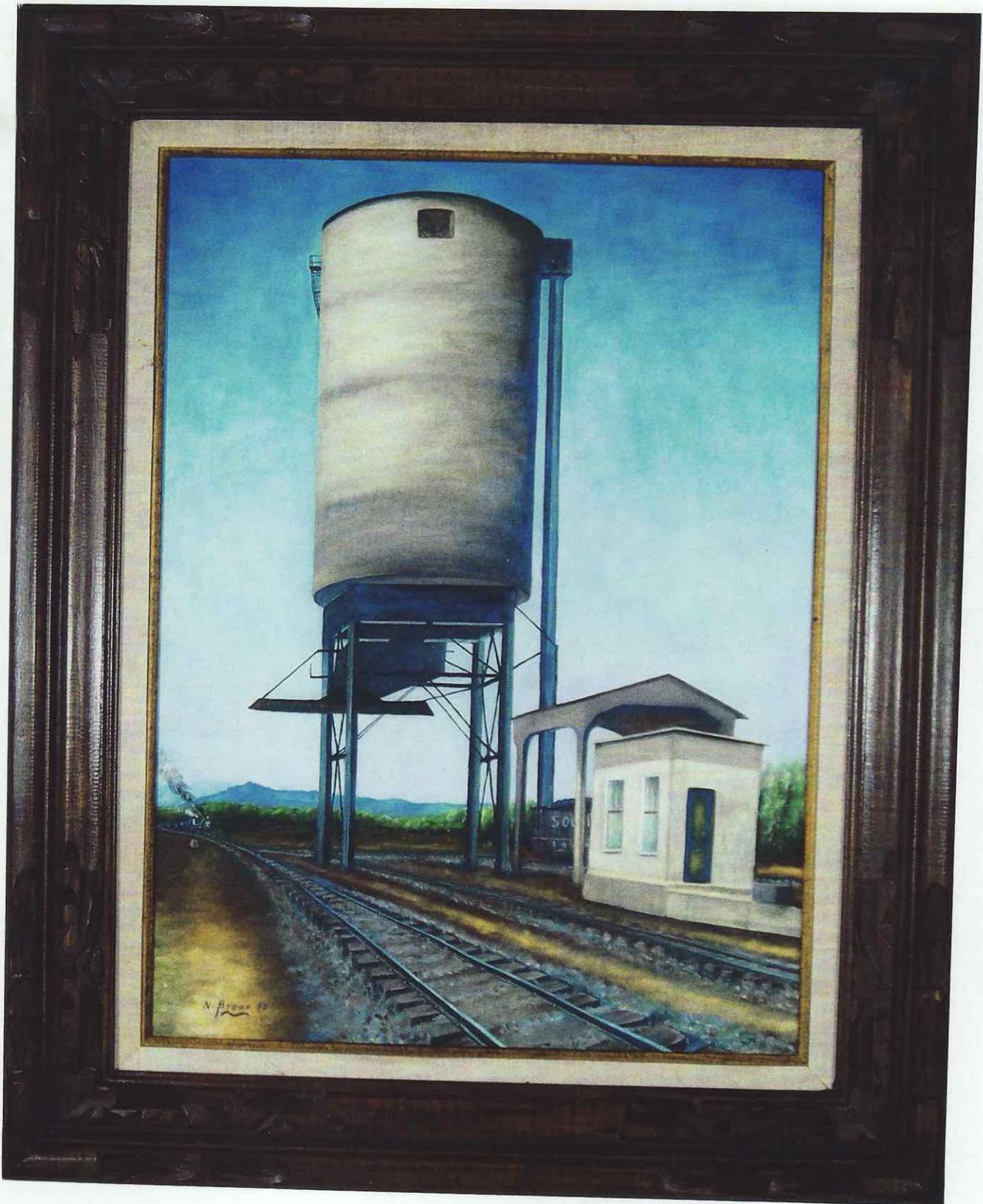
The trains offered entertainment from the first one that came through Paint Rock. The coaches were open and the coal burning engines would send heavy black sulphur smelling smoke and flying cinders through those openings that made traveling most uncomfortable. The travelers were given some friendly advice . . . “don't stick your head out the window”.

By the time we were meeting the train, the coaches had windows! The most memorable escapade was throwing snowballs at the passengers sitting by the windows. Their reflexes were excellent and they dodged every snowball we threw! As the train was pulling out they pointed their finger at us, laughed and waved “by”. That was worth it all!!

The train became our “weather forecaster” too. As the train approached the Depot, and the humidity was high, the train's whistle would emit a clearer, deeper and penetrating pitch indicating that rain was coming – so says an astute

observer "my Mom".

When that rain did come, what a sheer delight to hear the "roar" and see the rain as it came over and down the Mountain with its real fresh smell! Just enough time to close the windows!



Coal Chute

## COAL CHUTE

The 300-ton Coaling Station consisted of a 24 ft. diameter, reinforced concrete coal storage tank, overall height about 83 ft. ground to top of cover. The station was complete with a coal unloading and elevator system plus a 100-ton wet sand bin with drier system. Coal could be loaded to trains on the main track and one side track. A third side track was for unloading coal and sand.

The Nicholson Company of New York City constructed and erected a structural steel locomotive Coaling Station and Sand Handling Plant with air compressor in Paint Rock for the Southern Railway Company at a cost of \$33,297. The construction was to be completed in (90) working days using some local labor.

We were most fortunate that the Railroad chose our area, and so exposed us to what was required to make the railroad a success. Needless to say it left a void in our hearts when the Coaling Station was torn down in 1951.

We took advantage of its presence by exploring in, around and “up”. No telling how many times the mechanics of the coal chute were explained as each new kid had questions. But one that held the most intrigue was climbing the spiral staircase to the platform where the access door was located. We understood what a Bird's Eye View was, we could see all over Paint Rock – a real thrill!

Archie Millsap and Bill Houk first ran the Coal Chute. One time Bill Houk was found to be sleeping on the job! One night a passenger train needed coal and Bill was so sleepy that he gave them too much coal and it spilled over onto the ramp. The train was delayed somewhat – he was fired! Later the Union made the Railroad hire a third person and Bill was reinstated, but not at the Coal Chute!

Red Merrill, Hot Chandler and Ed Hunt worked there during the intervening years.



N. Brown 20

**Water Tank**

## WATER TANK

Built in 1929, probably by The Nicholson Company, to supply water from the Paint Rock River to the locomotives of the Southern Railroad Company. It was torn down in 1951.

Most everyone had to climb up the side of the Water Tank just to see what the water looked like in that great big wooden tub. We would hang on with one hand and use the other to see if we could make a ripple – we didn't! There were always daredevils around and they just had to go swimming in the water tank. Brother Harless was one of them! Many trains came through that needed coal and water. So the water had to be replenished every so often and timing was very critical for the swimming excursion!

The strip of land between the Railroad and the Highway, where the Water Tank was located, became our first and only Park – built by the WPA. It had tennis and croquet courts, a horseshoe area, swings, seesaws, basketball hoop and others that I don't remember. “Our cup runneth over” with the addition of the Park, the River for swimming and the Mountains for hiking.

I only remember one community social, that was organized by Mrs. Lula Mize, and it was a huge success. She handled the lemonade stand and stayed busy, busy because it was a hot day! That was the first time I ever tasted lemonade and it has been my favorite drink ever since.

I don't remember when the Park lost its charm, but it certainly filled a void for the time.



Paint Rock Railroad Bridge

## PAINT ROCK RAILROAD BRIDGE

The Bridge was built in 1914 by the Virginia Bridge and Iron Company, for the Southern Railway Company, over the Paint Rock River about two miles south of the Depot at Paint Rock.

It was designed according to the 1911 General Specifications for Steel Structures of the Southern Railway Company. It consisted of a single track through a riveted steel truss structure, with a span of 144 ft. and two deck plate girders of 77 ft. each. The traffic on the railroad and the then existing bridge had to be maintained with the least interference and interruption to the railroad operation until the new Bridge was completed.

This Bridge became very important to the 'Federalists' during the Civil War because of harassment by Confederate Colonel Lemuel G. Mead . . . as one of the telegrams so stated: "one Bridge (that over the Paint Rock River) is destroyed".

Lemuel G. Mead was born in Paint Rock in 1830 and became a farmer, a lawyer and Master in the Masonic Lodge until the Civil War intervened. In 1862 he was a Cavalry Captain of Company "C", 50<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry Regiment. He resigned and was recommissioned a Cavalry Captain and ordered to operate behind enemy lines in North Alabama and Tennessee. He quickly recruited a company of rangers. By the time his operations had begun in earnest his forces had increased and he was authorized to expand his company into a Cavalry Battalion.

His men constantly harassed the Union invaders, attacked the railroad, captured wagon trains and forging parties. His most famous independent operation was the seizure of the Union post at the Paint Rock River Railroad Bridge on Dec. 31, 1864. He captured Co. "G", 13<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry, and a Napoleon howitzer.

A letter from Col. Russell, Jan. 17, 1865, indicated that Gen. Nathan B. Forrest wanted Mead's battalion attached to his own command. On March 11,

1865, Mead was promoted to Colonel and authorized to reform his men into a regiment. Col. Mead's Tennessee Companies became the 27<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Calvary Battalion.

After the war ended, the Union army demanded his surrender – his reply “I see no military necessity of doing so”! He was declared an outlaw and there is no evidence that he ever surrendered! He just rode his horse across the Tennessee River and continued to hold out on Brindley Mountain. Then he simply disbanded his men and told them to go home.

Lemuel Mead eventually took the oath of allegiance to the Union at Montgomery and was allowed to return to Jackson county. There he returned to his profession as a lawyer in Scottsboro, served a term as Jackson County Sheriff and became active in Democratic party politics.

As previously stated he was killed in a dispute over sharecropping in 1878 at Gurley, Ala. He was buried in the Old Cemetery in Paint Rock.

What a tragedy to go through the war with honor and respect to be shot and mortally wounded without warning. The killer continued to shoot him as he laid on the ground as if it were premeditated. He then fled to Texas, but later captured and returned to Alabama for trial. Since Col. Mead was armed when he was killed, the jury found the killer not guilty on the grounds of self defense. The injustice then continues today, but one day “. . . every one of us shall give account of himself to God”. Rom. 14:12.

NP, RD 4/21/1862

From the *Richmond Daily Dispatch*

April 21, 1862

The situation  
From the North

The progress of our army in Alabama is most satisfactory. A few days ago we were enabled to announce the occupation of Huntsville by General Mitchell. To day we can report a most important advance still farther South, on the authority of a dispatch received at the War Department from Nashville, stating that on Saturday morning two expeditions were started from Huntsville by railroad. One under Colonel Sill, of the 33d Ohio, went east to Stevenson, the junction of the {Nashville &} Chattanooga with the Memphis & Charleston Railroad, at which point they seized 2,000 of the enemy, and returned without firing a shot. Colonel Sill captured five locomotives and a large amount of rolling stock. The other expedition, under Colonel Turchin, of the 19th Illinois, went west {on the Memphis & Charleston RR} and arrived at Decatur in time to save the railroad bridge, which was then in flames.

Gen. Mitchell now holds 100 miles of the Memphis & Charleston road, thus securing our position at Huntsville and its vicinity.

OR, Series 1, Vol. 16, Part 2, Page 834

Chattanooga, Tenn., September 16, 1862

Col. Samuel Tate  
Demopolis, Ala.

I telegraphed to you this morning a dispatch from General Bragg calling on you to repair the Memphis & Charleston Railroad. The general desires me to impress upon you the importance of making no delay in putting the railroad in running order from Stevenson to Huntsville. The road is but little damaged; but one bridge (that over Paint Rock River) is destroyed. I do not know the condition of the road beyond Huntsville, but will ascertain it in a day or two. Telegraphic communication with Huntsville is reopened. Locomotives and cars have been passed over to the right bank of the river at Bridgeport, and I expect the road to be opened to Murfreesborough by the 23d instant. I will give you every assistance in my power to repair your road. Please inform me what steps have been taken on the work.

Sam. Jones  
Major-General



**United Methodist Church**

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

On the frontier when a Settlement was established, religion was soon to follow. The Methodist, Baptist and Church of Christ were prominent churches on the frontier. So a neighborhood meeting house was built for all denominations to preach in, alternating the Sundays. Also, it was used as a Schoolhouse on week days. As the Settlement grew, so did the individual denominations and their wish to establish their own church building.

The Methodist Church organized a Society that had a governing body of bishops. They had a policy of beliefs in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and that the good news, "the gospel", was to be carried to other frontier Settlements. This task was carried out by dedicated men known as "Circuit Riders". Many Circuits were established, such as the Paint Rock Circuit in 1824, which continued for three years. The North Alabama conference was organized in 1870 and the Methodist Churches in the south were included.

The custom of sharing the pulpit was a carry over from the past. Thus the Methodist and Baptist Churches shared the pulpit in the Church of Christ building in Paint Rock until the Methodists built their own church in the 1900's. Their first pastor was Ben L. Dobbs. It was a beautiful, quaint country church showing the craftsmanship and the dedication of the people that maintained it, serving and worshipping our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It stood as a "beacon of light" until the Congregation dwindled to a few members. In 1996 the remaining members decided to discontinue worship service and the final service was held on November 17, 1996. The Methodist Conference officially closed the Church at their assembly in June, 1997. At that time the Conference offered to give the Church and the property to the town of Paint Rock. But the Town Council never acknowledged that "offer" one way or another. The Conference then sold the property and the Church was eventually torn down.

**It was the dream of Willie Chandler, member and secretary of the Church, that the Paint Rock Methodist Church would be preserved, and submitted it for registration in the Historical Society in 1977 as it was the only historical building ( built in the 1900's) in Paint Rock that had survived the 1932 Tornado. Apparently that didn't materialize. That was a very sad day for those of us that admired the beautiful , quaint Church, and the demise of a special place to worship our God and Savior. It held many fond memories of the people that worshiped there and of their pride and joy of a very beautiful Church.**

## **PAINT ROCK METHODIST CHURCH**

I will relate a few notes on Paint Rock Methodist Church. Most of the old records have been destroyed. The first building was a community church with the Methodists, Baptists and Church of Christ all taking Sunday about. This building was located uprear the mountain where the old Paint Rock Cemetery is located. This was started about 1884. Mrs. B. Williamson Little told me that she played the piano for the Methodists and her sister, Leona Williamson O'Neal played the piano for the Baptists. About 1897, the Methodists built their own church on land that was donated. There was a steeple bell tower that was blown away in the terrible tornado in 1932. Several people were killed and much damage was done to the prosperous town.

During the 1970's, a lot of people moved away and membership began to fall off. Only a few faithful members were left to carry on God's work in the Methodist Church. On November 17, 1996, the final service was held in the building. Those present for the last meeting were Mrs. Ozell Womack, Mrs. Shirley Saint, Mrs. Carrie Hayle, Mrs. Catherine Rousseau, Mr. & Mrs. John Martin O'Neal, Cokie Barclay and Pastor, Nancy Engle.

Some of the earliest members were the Hills, Keels, Barclays, Elkins, Kennamers;, Henslees, Meads, Putnams, Chandlers, Jones, Clemons and Woosleys.

Some of the Pastors were Barclay, Brown, McCay, Webb, Jackson, Peck, Heltons (both Mr. And Mrs. Al), Albright, Wright, Gunnin, the Kingsberrys, and Bruce Morgan (wife Ida). Nancy Engle was the last pastor.

It was decided in 1996, there were too few people to continue services. So the church was turned over to the Methodist Conference to be officially closed at Assembly in June, 1997. Later, the Conference sold the church to Ira Laney, a United Methodist minister. He in turn, sold it to a Holiness or Church of God. Because the termites had destroyed much of the wood, the new owners tore it down and burned it. The pews were sold to the Three Springs School in Paint Rock Valley. We heard some of the windows were saved to be used in another church. A mobile home now stands on the lot where the Paint Rock Methodist Church used to be.

The building is gone, but Jesus is alive today in the hearts of each living person who is or has ever been a part of the Paint Rock Methodist Church.

April 23, 1998  
Tennie Law Clemons  
Catherine Clemons Cameron



## CHURCHES

During the Summer months, the Churches conducted baptismal services in the Paint Rock River above the Dam and our swimming area.

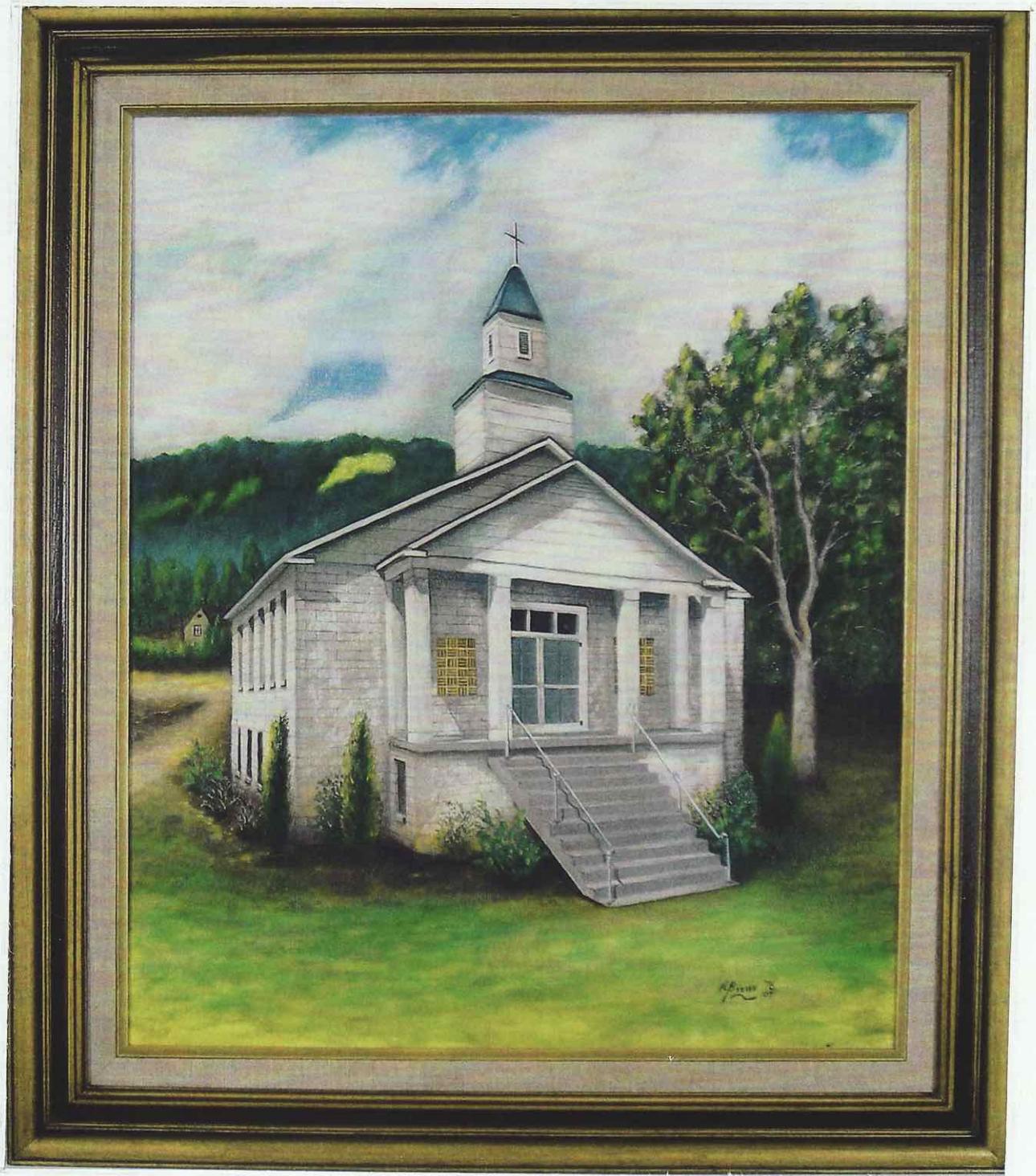
*“Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures;” I Cor.15:1-4*

There in the baptismal service in the River, the physical was translated into the Spiritual Living Water of the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. “They glorified Him” and received His gift of salvation and of eternal life with Him in His glory.

*“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”*

**John 3:36**

**There was a time when YOU WERE NOT, but there will never be a time when YOU ARE NOT.**



Baptist Church

## **Paint Rock Missionary Baptist Church**

**The buildings have changed, the people have changed, some of the history was lost and some just never recorded but today we celebrate the never changing one, our Faithful God—**

**The year was 1884. The first church building was located next to the mountain by the old cemetery. The Baptist, Methodist and Church of Christ took turns each Sunday using the building. The Methodists were the first to build their own building in 1900. But soon after this we decided to build our own building too. Mr. Robert Butler from Swaim in Paint Rock Valley was a great help in getting the church organized and the building ready. It was 1906 and the Paint Rock Missionary Baptist Church was organized.**

**In 1932 a terrible tornado ripped apart Paint Rock. The entire city was almost destroyed and our little one room Church was badly damaged. It took three years but in 1935 the church was rebuild and with expansion—we are now a two-room church. As much of the material from the first church as was possible was used to rebuild the new and bigger church.**

**Some notable expenses from 1945-46 were:**

**\$50.11 for Critical Food Situation in Europe  
\$20.28 for Christmas Offering to the State Orphanage  
\$18.33 was given to both Home and Foreign Missions  
\$23.17 was given to the Cooperative Program  
\$34.08 to the Christmas Community Offering  
\$700 for the Pastor's Salary**

**In January of 1946 the church started the first Baptist Training Union. With the growth in the church the church decided to build a larger building. It would be a concrete block building with a basement. No one had much money in those days and church members did the work. Tom Campbell and Archie Milsap dug the basement out by hand and Lizzie (Mrs. Tom) Campbell and Faye Carolyn Flanagan moved the dirt with a wheelbarrow. That basement became the focal point for lost of good fellowship. All the church socials were held there with a long table down the middle loaded with all kinds of good food and a second table for the desserts. Mr. Ed Hunt bought the old two-room church**

and he used the material to build his home, which still stands at 53 Jones Street. On May 28, 1950 the new white church was dedicated.

In the 1950's and 60's our church was blessed by the musical abilities of Esley Flanagan at the organ and Julie Faye Allison at the piano. Mrs. Esley would bounce on the piano bench to the tune she played. Today, those positions are being held by Brenda Turner and Peggy O'Neal on the organ.

In 1957 the Church bought the first Pastorium from Lucy Lehman and the rent money was used to repay the loan. Around 1975 the Pastorium was sold to Lora Jackson.

In 1958 the church elected Trustees. They were Bud Roberts, Bill O'Neal and Duck Allison.

In the early 1970's the State Highway Dept. gave us notice they were going to take our building to build a 4-lane highway. Catherine Rousseau was willing to swap some land with us and we built our present building. During this process of rebuilding we met in the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Baptist Church.

1983 we purchased the property joining the Church for \$3800 from Ruth Jones Bennett. In 1986 under the leadership of Mylon Metcalf the church began to make plans for a new fellowship hall, classrooms and a kitchen. On July 6, 1986 the ground breaking ceremony was held with George Sinquefield, a former pastor and Dr. Noel Walker our associational missionary as the speakers. On December 7, 1986 the Fellowship was dedicated—it was complete and it was paid for.

God has continued to show His Faithfulness to our church. In 2004, under the leadership of Charles King, we purchased the Baugh property behind our church. It is also paid for. We have torn the house down in order to build a Life Center. God has continued to grow and bless His church. To God be the glory great things He has done.

Betty Rutnam  
July 29, 2009



School House

## PAINT ROCK SCHOOL

The first public school was taught in a one room log cabin located near the foot of Keel Mountain. In 1886 another one room school building was constructed across the road from the Old Cemetery and used until it was destroyed by fire in 1905. It was rebuilt the same year near the highway with two class rooms and a music room.

In 1928 more rooms were added and it became a Jr. High School with six teachers. The School had oiled wooden floors that were oiled every year. Every room had a potbellied stove that used coal for heat. Uncle Felix Rousseau, the janitor, would bank the hot coals with ashes at the end of the day to start the fires the next day. Odell Millsap reminded me of "the essentials" - our outdoor privies, and the outdoor water spigot as our water fountain. They fulfilled the purpose!

The hopes of building a high school fell through when additional land could not be purchased and this building was torn down in 1952.

Since the old School building had to be replaced, but not as a high school, another building program was begun in 1949 at the same location. Plans were for two class rooms and a lunch room. By the time the school building was completed in 1952 they had added two more rooms and a kitchen-dinning room.

The School was consolidated with Woodville's in 1965.



"Miss" Esley

### Miss Esley

*Unto one servant He gave five talents to another two and to another one -- according to their several ability. He that had received the five talents went and made them other five talents. Then the Lord returned and reckoned with them. Lord, thou delivered unto me five talents I have gained five more. Likewise the other servants gave their accounts. His Lord said unto him well done thou good and faithful servant enter thou into the joy of the Lord. -from Matt. 25:15ff*

Can you imagine getting advanced degrees in "Faithfulness, Obedience, and Service" from our Creator? They surpassed all the degrees given by the worlds most prestigious universities and lasted as long as the recipient lived. God's degrees are for eternity!

God gave "Miss Esley" five talents including "teaching" with those degrees. "He" honored and blessed her with 40 years of teaching in the same School, including a life time of teaching Sunday School, playing the piano and later the organ in the Baptist Church. Having the Holy Spirit as her teacher she grew in wisdom, knowledge and discernment to meet the challenge in helping every child in each of her classes to think, to learn and to do the best of their abilities.

There was no such thing as the "arts" but we experienced the thrill when we were in the "operettas" at the end of the school year. She selected and directed the program with joy and devotion to the task at hand!

Plus, the reading of the "classics's" that brought immeasurable pleasure that left an enduring imprint on our minds. Not only the title but the story itself! She truly did "enter into the joy of the Lord".

*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. 3:16*

*"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou*

**liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deuteronomy 6:6-7**

**“Train up a child in the way he should go and, when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6**

**“He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him early.” Proverbs 13:24**

Since we had Bible reading and prayer in school, our teachers were quite serious with God's instructions. So when discipline was required, they administered the appropriate punishment!

So it is with great respect and appreciation that I wish to honor her by including her in the Pictorial Memories. Her life demonstrated the utilization of God given talents with family, Church and community, touching all of our lives in one way or the other.

## MEMORIES OF MISS ESLEY MULLENAX FLANAGAN

By Faye Carolyn, Billy Joe and Jane

Dedicated to James "Bud" Flanagan

### Faye Carolyn

Esley Mullenax was born November 28, 1903 in Pisgah, Alabama. Died January 20, 1977 in Paint Rock, Alabama. Married William Thomas Flanagan April 14, 1928.

Four children: Billy Joe, 1930, Faye Carolyn, 1932, Bud (James) and Jane Ellen, 1938. The arrival of the twins, weighing a total of five pounds, perhaps changed our lives more than any other event.

Mamma was blessed with a God Given Gift: teaching, guiding and instilling self esteem in all children and this was especially true when molding the lives of her four children. She set goals throughout our lives, encouraged us, bragged on us as she planned our future step by step. Her primary goal was COLLEGE and it never occurred to us there was any other option!

Example of goals: At ages 6-7, Billy Joe and Faye Carolyn were introduced to her planned-goals beginning with washing dishes. With her supervision we stood in chairs turned backwards, reaching the sink as we mastered our dishwashing skills. We passed that course. Supervision was no longer necessary. At supper time at the dining room table we talked, laughed and listened to Mamma's spelling binding stories. Afterwards she immediately walked in the living room, sat at the card table and worked her crossword puzzle, completely ignoring us. Using this same technique we improved our self esteem and became more responsible with job after job until we left home.

Teacher: Walking to school in sleet, snow, sunshine, and dealing with health problems, it didn't seem to affect her determination and love of teaching. Not only was she ranked with the best of teachers, she was revered for her reading: "Soul of Ann Rutledge", "Tom Sawyer" "Little Shephard of Kingdom Come" and our beloved "Uncle Tom's Cabin". Having read these books for years, she just flipped the pages, glancing around playing on our emotions. Uncle Tom's death was her masterpiece. I can see and feel it now: sixth - seventh grade boys and girls, with our heads down on our desks sobbing.

Miss Esley had a key to the church!! She spent hours practicing the piano and organ for the Sunday Services, but more importantly this was her time to have a special relationship with God and find peace within herself. That was a blessing for her.

Throughout all our educational pursuits from elementary school through college, Mamma was the best and most influential teacher we ever had. Her teaching techniques were not only academic, but we learned to explore the world outside of Paint Rock. After leaving Paint Rock we have lived and worked in many places, but until this day our roots are still in Paint Rock.

THOUGHTS OF MAMMA  
BILLY JOE

Growing up in Paint Rock was an adventure basically because of the character of the town. The character of the town at the time when I grew up was influenced by several people. One of which was my mamma, Esley Flanagan. The following thoughts are rambling and in no order or even in complete sentences.

I remember:

The smile on her face when daddy gave her the fur coat

Building the fire around the wash pot to wash our clothes

Feeding the little chickens out the back door

When she got the wringer for the washing machine

Climbing to the spring on Keel Mountain with her 6th grade class every year

Sitting in the swing on the front porch late one night as I slipped out the front bedroom window. As I crawled out, I saw her, turned around and went back through the window without a word spoken

Walking down the hill to the post office and Rousseau's store every day

Sitting on the porch in her rocking, reading the Huntsville Times, then cooking supper.

All of us eating on the back porch talking "loudly" during the summer time and waiting for Katherine and Calvin to come by after they closed the store

Mamma sitting in her chair every Saturday night, studying her Sunday School lesson. She loved to teach that class.

Even though she never saw me play football, Hamp Keel brought her to several of my basketball games.

Putting gold and silver stars on the chart in the schoolroom for our clean ears, hands and finger nails.

Writing to companies to send samples of toothpaste and soap to give her students

Even though she had a hard way to go in life, she accomplished so much.

When I read "The Greatest Generation" by Tom Brokaw, my thoughts centered around mamma and her inner strength. What an influence she has been to us!

MY MOM LOVER OF BOOKS  
JANE

As I sit here and let my life drift back to my life in Paint Rock, it brings many happy memories to the carefree life at that time. But this is not about the time I spent in Paint Rock ---it is about my mom Miss Esley who taught all of us siblings and gave us a respect for education---as a result we all became teachers at different times in our lives.

Paint Rock did not have a library, but a bookmobile would come by ever so often to bring books to the Rousseau Store. We kids would go upstairs to read the books to each other. I remember my sister Faye sitting and reading to us.

My mom taught me to love and enjoy books because of the books she read to us through out the school year. She was a wonderful story teller and took us on the adventures in the books. She had us laughing with Tom and Huck, crying with Abraham Lincoln over the loss of his first love Ann Rutledge, and screaming for the Little Lizza to cross over the Ohio River to her freedom.

She showed me how to go anywhere in the world through reading. I had many exciting adventures by using my imagination. I could go anywhere, be any person. I could smell the exotic flowers in Japan, swim in the oceans, and climb the Alps. I was Heidi living on the snow covered Alps, Melody in "Gone with the Wind", and Hans Brinker skating in Holland. What wonderful adventures for a girl in Paint Rock!

Several days when Faye, Billy Joe and Bud were picking cotton, I stayed home to help Mamma clean house. I was the best at cleaning the house, but not a very good at picking cotton. I was nine years old when I discovered this box of books that were my mom's. There were a lot of books but I remember reading the "Good Earth", "The Scottsboro Boys" and "Gone With the Wind." Later my mom received a set of encyclopedias which we kids read over and over. I had such a hunger for books!

As a result of Mamma being a wonderful story teller and encouraging me to read, I continue to read and take adventures everyday. And often my memories drift back to the classroom, I can still visualize Mamma reading and mesmerizing me as she read my favorite books.

Thank you mamma for your influence and opening up new horizons for me so I could become my own person. Thank you for giving me courage to love life and to live it to the fullness of everyday.

Your loving daughter,  
Jane



Lela Mae Duncan Whitaker

**Lela Mae Duncan Whitaker**

**1907 – 1988**

**Lela Mae, daughter of Sam Duncan of Hollywood, was educated at Jacksonville State College. She first taught in Fort Myers, Fla. and in 1930 came to Paint Rock to teach the third grade. There she met and married Roy Baird Whitaker in 1937. They had one son, Roy Baird Whitaker, Jr. (Chip), and a grandson (deceased).**

**Chip Whitaker**

**\* \* \* \* \***

**She taught school in Paint Rock for 40 years and retired in 1970. So it is with great respect and appreciation that I wish to honor her by including her in the Pictorial Memories. Her life demonstrated the utilization of God given talents with family, Church, and Community, touching all of our lives in one way or the other.**

**Chip Whitaker**



Backyard Barber

## BACKYARD BARBER SHOP

Ollie Manning, the Barber, giving Milton Popejoy a haircut and "Rip" his best bird dog "Ole" ever owned ( having had him for eleven years) was overseeing it all.

At Mr. Manning's home in the back yard, an ancient oak stool under a shade tree, a galvanized tub turned bottom up for a work table with scissors, brush and comb completed his Barber Shop.

Ollie Manning started barbering by cutting his brothers hair when he was 12 years old. He used a bone comb and cut it all off the thickness of the comb. He soon perfected his trade by leaving the hair a little longer. After that, the "Barber Shop" was open during the summer months, mostly on Sundays when the farmers had time to get a hair cut. The customers didn't make appointments – just waited their turn. Sometimes he had six waiting so they decided that hand clippers would shorten their wait time – not that it mattered to some of them. Everyone chipped in and Wash Skelton ordered the clippers from Sears Roebuck & Co.

"Thank you" was the price he charged until after World War II, then it was "four bits" (50 cents). He usually had about twelve customers a week. After cutting hair for 75 years he only had one or two a week. An era ended for a man of humble spirit that fulfilled the needs of others. He styled a hair cut, by practicing on his brother, that became very popular in the later years – a "crew cut". You have to admire that younger brother for submitting to the learning process!

Our beloved Ollie Manning was born in 1893 and died in 1981 with a legacy of a keen sense of humor, humility and love for his neighbor.

**Milton Eugene Popejoy**

**1898 – 1978**

**A farmer by trade and raised some goats too. Hence his nickname “Goat” spelled with a capital “G”.**

**He became mayor of Paint Rock in 1955 and served five consecutive four-year terms. In 1976 he declined to serve for the sixth term due to his age and health.**

**During his tenure as mayor he mapped the graveyards and kept them updated, especially the new graveyard. He also scheduled maintenance for each graveyard, which was greatly appreciated through the years. His love of Paint Rock was manifest when he saw the recovery of the people from so many devastating events. He so much wanted the town to become prosperous again and became its devout booster. But, that wasn't meant to be.**

**He certainly was the epitome of a southern gentleman and his good manners came from the heart. He never came in the presence of a lady without tipping his hat and stepping aside for her to pass. He would always open the door for a lady. Oh my could he sing base if you could get him to sing with the choir at special events.**

**The era of chivalry – what a legacy that Milton exemplified.**

## MEMORIES OF PAINT ROCK

Phyllis Skelton Clay

Memory is history and there is much history surrounding Paint Rock, Alabama, with its people, places, and beauty. It's a remarkable history of "Wash" and Thelma Skelton, their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and of all the other inhabitants of Paint Rock who have something very powerful in common-ties to Paint Rock, Alabama. This connection has contributed to making us the people we are. Oscar Wilde spoke well when he said, "Memory . . . is the diary we all carry with us," and our lives' diaries are filled with anecdotes of the people and discoveries of the valley and that little place along Highway 72 that we still call home even though we've lived in California for sixty years. Three of the four children of Harless and Jean Skelton – Phyllis (Clay), Mike, and Mark Skelton are privileged to share some of their personal diaries.

Our yearly summer road trips from California to Paint Rock from the '50s to the '90s, lasted through 2,500 miles of nonstop driving: in the early years it was Route 66 through the blast furnace deserts of San Bernardino and Barstow, California, Flagstaff and Winona, Arizona, and Amarillo, Texas, and on to the unusual red dirt cities of Gallup, New Mexico, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. In later years it was I-40, bypassing many of these early stops, but allowing us to reach our much-anticipated destination sooner. There was a noticeable heightening of excitement when we would reach Huntsville and speed on during the final leg of our journey down Highway 72. Passing through Gurley, past the Piggly Wiggly and Lydia's antique store, coming around the bend to pass the old Paint Rock school and Allison' candy company building, we'd eagerly note by the markers that we were close and we knew our grandmother Mrs. Thelma Skelton and Aunt Louise would be waiting for us at the top of the road where their home was located. We don't remember if their turnoff road had a name in the early years, but we sure knew where to turn off 72 to get to where we wanted to go. In later years this road actually had a name – Knolton Road, and THAT'S the road where our memory diaries were imprinted in our hearts and minds. Our visits to these two wonderful women would expand to include the rest of our relatives – the Skeltons, Browns, and Campbells, along with other friends and family members of Paint Rock and the surrounding area.

Though June and July were not the most ideal travel months to visit Alabama with its stifling humidity and heat, that's when we were able to "come home". And even though my grandmother eventually had an air conditioner installed in her front living room window, it was rarely used until advancing age made life decidedly easier to do so. While we felt like we were wilting away, our lively grandmother would carry on as if it were a balmy 72°. With pride we realize our grandmother had always been an honest, hard worker, and fiercely protective of her family; moreover, she also represented so many other hard working and honest folks in the Paint Rock Valley. What admiration we had for

her and so many other good folks. And like so many other typical Southerners, she'd cook the most mouthwatering meals: biscuits with ham and gravy, bacon, pinto beans, fried okra and all sorts of goodies on her wood burning stove as well as on her electric stove. Then it would be on to tend to the garden, picking the best vegetables in the country. We remember greeting the goat "Stupid", watching our Mama Skelton wring the necks of chickens to prepare dinner, cooking delicious fried peach pies, making barbecue sandwiches, or helping to make ice cream. Sitting on the front porch snapping green beans we could wave and often visit with the people who'd pass by. A Southern wave was far different than a California wave! We loved the way people would drive or walk by and casually, almost imperceptibly, lift a finger or hand to acknowledge our presence. Another noticeable difference was the sounds of Paint Rock Valley. The quiet was so different from the roaring planes, helicopters and freeway noise of California. In "PR" we actually heard birds and the blowing of the train whistles. Paint Rock residents might think nothing of a train whistle, but that sound was magical for us. We might also sit under the apple trees in the back yard sipping iced tea trying to "cool a spell", but unfortunately we spent more time swatting mosquitoes rather than snapping green beans and "cooling a spell". Vegetables from the garden tasted sooo much better than the picked -too-early vegetables found in our California markets. On most days we'd talk and try to stay cool until either the sun went down or a thunderstorm passed over. That booming thunder and those bolts of lightning bringing lots of rain were so different from California where we'd most often experience a barely noticeable drizzle. Pounding rain on the tin roof of Mama Skelton's house gave those Alabama storms some real punch! To this day, it is one of our fondest memories – rain on a tin roof. The power of those storms seem to represent the rugged landscape and the strength it took for people to conquer it and create a life for themselves and their families. To accommodate those Alabama rains, wide deep drainage ditches were everywhere. There is no such thing in southern California so during our visits to Paint Rock we grandchildren would challenge each other to jump the ditch. During one of our challenges, our youngest brother, Mark, barely missed embedding both feet straight into the side of the ditch and surely would have broken both ankles had he succeeded. Obviously we "city slickers" weren't so slick and realized we'd be much better off walking "downtown" or around the streets of Paint Rock. And going "downtown" was a great treat!

We'd always head for Rousseau' store to buy an RC or Orange Crush, peek at the goodies in the display cases, look at the high-back chairs and pictures hanging above our heads and wonder what other treasures were waiting at the top of the wooden staircase. We'd sit in the store's window seat looking outside to see who'd pass by. The store was truly another world for us with its wooden floors, high ceiling fans, and array of items. After satisfying our thirst and only a small part of our curiosity, we'd set out for the post office or around the streets or across the highway to visit friendly folks like Miss Annie Ardis, Mr. John Martin O'Neal, Mr. Ole Manning, the Rousseau's and the Flanagans – just to name a few. Or we'd bravely cross the highway to get to the Paint Rock Bridge lying

deep within the trees and vines, or to the railroad tracks. We still can't figure out why it was so much fun for us to put pennies and quarters on the railroad tracks, watch the trains squash them, and then scramble to retrieve those newly flattened coins. Phyllis has one of these quarters fifty years later and still smiles at the simple but wonderful adventure this was for us. Mike was fascinated by the train whistles and never failed to raise his arm, give the imaginary whistle cord a tug, and wait for the train engineer to blow the train's whistle as it passed us by. Shrieks of delight always followed. We all still love the sound of train whistles today.

In the early years we hunted for, and excitedly found, arrowheads and visited the cemetery at the top of the road where we'd try to imagine the lives of those buried there. Those upright though tilted, weathered, barely legible, granite tombstones gave us no answers to our questions. What had brought them to this small valley? What events shaped their lives? Had they been satisfied with their lives? What were their ancestors and their descendants like? All were questions we didn't know the answer to, but nevertheless kept our imaginations fired up as we talked about the many possibilities that influenced their lives and ultimately found them laid to rest in Paint Rock. During day trips away from Paint Rock we eagerly traveled to Scottsboro to hunt for, and bargain for, treasures found at First Monday. We also traveled to Gurley or to Guntersville to visit with family and friends, but we always came home to Paint Rock. In the evenings, we tried to catch lightning bugs in canning jars and listened as the crickets and katydids provided the evening's music.

During other trips home, we remember the Flanagan "boys" taking Phyllis' husband Doug and hiking up the mountain to climb the water tower and look out over the valley. We brought our father Harless home for the Paint Rock reunion in July, 1983, and we know this gathering was one of the highlights of his, our grandmother's, and our lives. What a superb day it was for all of us. People were all so friendly and we were touched by the kind respectfulness and friendliness everyone showed us. The pictures and items on display at the school were a wonderful exhibition of the town's history and we loved it! Our dad spoke of this event for months afterward, always in the most excited way. On other trips home we still went "downtown" though the store and chair factory were gone. We went treasure hunting at the site with our Uncle Jim and retrieved cosmetic and medicine bottles long ago tossed behind the store. Who had tossed these items aside? What promises had been advertised? We have held onto those mementos, despite not knowing the answers. What we do know, though, after all these years is this: the people and events of this place left their marks on folks scattered across the country, including those of us 2,500 miles away. Sweet home, Alabama. Our home is where our hearts are.

With fond memories:    Phyllis Skelton Clay  
                                 Mike Skelton  
                                 Mark Skelton

## REMEMBERING

Whereas we could only go swimming, fishing and "goofing off" down at the River in the Summertime, the Mountains offered four seasons of special joy and gladness.

Not only did we have our picnics and hiking, but the exploration of the bluffs that cascading water had exposed over the years. On the way to the "Cave", we passed by a huge rock that we dubbed "loaf bread rock" because of its shape. We could scramble over it, but certainly could not sit on the sharp edge that was exposed! So that decision, made from previous experience, we admired it's majestic form and went on our way.

The Fall "goodies" awaited us as we trudged along the foot of the mountain from Ben Webb's hollow to Mr. Walter Gwathney's molasses mill for our rationing of some sugar cane to chew – what a treat! When they were cooking the syrup, we would get some of the skimings to sample. Mind you, all this wasn't accomplished in one day! As long as the season lasted we were quite neighborly! Then off to find the last of the Summer grapes, Halls and muscadines. You could smell the muscadines if you didn't see the vine. We would look on the ground for those that had dropped, then look up! We stayed clear of the persimmons until we had frost – you surely would pucker up otherwise! A wonderful taste treat then.

And then there were the loggerhead and scalybark nuts which were easier to crack. The black walnuts were a must find for Christmas baking, especially my Mom's black walnut cake. She never used a recipe for anything, but the main ingredient was "love" and the joy of serving others. I cherish those days of growing up and later on, returning home on vacation for my special treats that were awaiting! Each of us had our favorite and usually timed our vacation accordingly.

Oh the beauty that each of the seasons would bring emphasizing "His glory" by the radiance of color that penetrates your heart and mind with their richness. Such as in the Fall when God's spotlight, the sun, would shine on Nat Mountain across the way as the shadow of Keel Mountain slowly progressed up Nat Mountain and the leaf colors faded. (. . . *"the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* James 1:17)

*"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf,"* Isaiah 64:6.

After nature had disrobed the beautiful Fall clothing of the trees, the forest floors had a new carpet, one of many colors that only God could design. Take a walk on God's newly laid carpet and you would see the native ferns and other hidden treasures along the way. You would feel that peace that only God can give.

*"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* Phil. 4:7

But then, this too shall fade and become the padding for next years carpet.

*"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." Eccl. 3:20*

During the Winter time when the Fall clothing is being recycled, the anatomy of all the trees and bushes, their trunks, limbs and twigs are exposed. Some trees were beautifully balanced in form, some had died, others were bent, snarled broken and dying and would not see another spring. Smaller trees and bushes were well anchored and would survive, others would not – a pictorial of life! So are our hearts revealed to "Him" as are the trees.

*"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Heb. 4:13*

God honors and blesses those trees and bushes with a special beauty that reveals a different aspect of "His" glory and presence . . . SNOW!!

*"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of "His" head like pure wool; "His" throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire." Dan. 7:9*

Not only is the white Snow beautiful, beneficial, and devastating at times, but it is representative of the attributes of God's holiness and righteousness. The "hair of His head like pure wool" speaks of His infinite wisdom, the Just and the Justifier.

*"To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be Just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26*

*"And His raiment became shining, exceedingly white like Snow, as no fuller on earth can whiten them." Mk. 9:3*

*"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18*

*"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Ps. 103:12*

Snow, Snow and Snow and its significant applications! It falls ever so softly, gently and silently until everything is covered and clearly defined. You see and feel the stillness of nature as you are mesmerized with the breath taking beauty of it . . . a touch of the Master's hand!

*"For He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain and to the great rain of His strength." Job 37:6*

Not only does God reveal His Sovereignty, Holiness, Righteousness and Wisdom through His creation, but gives us a glimpse of His holy abode and our future home with Him in our ice storms.

*"Fire and hail; snow and vapor; stormy wind fulfilling His work;" Ps. 148:8*

They can be so devastating, but they do show us another form of His glory. Oh what a thrill and delight to see the radiance of all colors when the ice crystals are refracted by God's sunlight. Just think all of those beautiful colors are representative of His Precious stones that are to be the foundation for our new heavenly home.

*"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner*

*of precious stones . . . and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Rev. 21:19-21*

*"Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." John 14: 6*

In December our most celebrated day of the year is the birth of our Savior, The Lord Jesus Christ.

*"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:6-7*

*"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14*

But wait that isn't the end of the story.

"Jesus" was betrayed - - -

*"Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying, whomsoever I shall kiss that same is He: hold Him fast" Matt. 26:48*

Jesus was crucified - - -

*"and they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted My garments among them and upon My vesture did they cast lots" Matt. 27:35*

"Jesus" died - Why? - - -

*"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scripture:" I Cor. 15:3-4*

"Jesus" ascension and Return - - -

*"And" while they looked steadfastly toward Heaven as He went up behold two men stood by them in white apparel: which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:10-11*

"Jesus" warning before returning - - -

*"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be." Matt. 24:21*

"Jesus" coming - - -

*"and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other." Matt. 24: 30-31*

After Winter your senses return - - ! You note that the sun is brighter,

warmer and the days are longer - the earth is being resurrected! If you look closely, you'll see a tiny speck of green in the swollen buds. By the next day you would see all shades of green and other shades of colors as the trees and bushes leaf out. Plus the beautiful dogwood blossoms, wild flowers and wild azalea fragrances invade the air waves.

*“And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herbs yielding seed and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.” Gen. 1:11*

Dad, being a true natural horticulturist, would check on his cuttings that he had grafted on another fruit tree. One time he had a pear tree that he had grafted six other kinds of pears on it. It produced the seven different kinds of pears!! He had a special box that he would have for rooting cuttings - - - you never knew what was rooted until it was planted somewhere in the yard.

He also had all kinds of fruit in the yard - plums including Damson, sweet and sour cherries, apples, pears, peaches and grapes of all varieties. He had strawberries and a huckleberry bush transplanted from the mountain. The blackberries grew wild so he didn't bother transplanting any. But we protected a wild Hemalary berry that was a much larger berry than the blackberry that grew at the end of the garden. It made the most delicious jelly, but was the devil to pick because of the large thorns. You can imagine all the jams, jellies, and apple butter and canning of fruit that Mom did.

The garden was Mom's joy. That first peak of Spring - out came the Farmers' Almanac to study and schedule her plantings! Then the banter would start: Dad - “I plant in the ground!” She would start in February with potatoes and English peas and sowing her tomato seed for plants to be transplanted later.

We grew our own corn for cornmeal. We had a hand operated corn sheller that helped with the shelling of the corn. Then off to Mr Campbell's grist mill for grinding. We would start canning as soon as the produce was ready - using a pressure cooker or the open kettle method. Afterwards came the sourcroust, chow chow, corn and pepper relish, etc. She was proud of the quality and quantity of her canning. We were blessed!

*For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.” Isaiah 55:10*

If you have never eaten country sausage and home cured hams - you really don't know what eating good food means!! How can anyone not be aware of Southern fried chicken, and chicken in general as “company is coming”!

We still had time for swimming in those hot Summer days. We usually saved our hiking for the weekends as our hikes would take several hours. When a dear friend lived with or spent the Summer with his Grandparents, he would get his Uncle's horses and we would go horseback riding. I'm not sure if the stirrups were ever adjusted enough for my short legs, but I surely felt as tall as anyone on that horse! Those times bring back very special memories of joy and pleasure.

So how could anyone not be proud to have grown up in Paint Rock or have lived there? We had nature's finest playground, dedicated educators with Bible reading and prayer in school. Not only were they public school teachers but were Sunday School teachers as well. Whether or not the children would follow up by going to church, they did hear the Word of God.

*"So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it!" Isaiah 55:11*

Love of God, family, friends and neighbors was there in every facet of being a PAINT ROCKER!! As my husband says – you can take a Paint Rocker out of Paint Rock, but you can't take Paint Rock out of a Paint Rocker!

Summer ends and the cycle of Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer starts all over again. But not for us as our life will continue one day in - - -

*“. . . in a body fashioned like unto His glorious body “ Phil .3:21*

*“ Less we forget, Even everyone that is called by My Name: for I have created him for My Glory, I have formed him: yea, I have made him” Isaiah 43:7*

*“My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand” John 10:27-28*

I thank God for my caregivers, Mom and Dad! Their vows of love and commitment for each other in sickness and death were in part for their children too. Their sustaining love and support were always there for each of us in our inevitable health problems, and for us to accept life as it is and not as we would wish. They knew and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior.

After Dad died unexpectedly, Percy, my older brother filled that void with his love and guidance for the whole family. Especially for Mom and Lou through those difficult days and through out his life.

Since Harless, Lavonne and I had moved, brother Jim was still there and was a great comfort and help to them and became the head of the house! He, being the baby of our family, was our special love.

In growing up, my sister Lou was my special caregiver and became one for whole family. She taught me the joy and pleasure of nature as we had many outings together. I never knew or understood the toll it took on her health until later. So I'm looking forward to a family reunion one of these days where the shout of laughter will ring out once again!

Yes, many things happened in Paint Rock that brought sorrows, heartaches, pain and sadness for all of us. When Adam sinned God put a curse on the earth (Gen. 3:1-19) and that evil caused by Satan (Isaiah 14:12-15) has permeated every generation since. But that influence will come to an end one

day when the Lord returns.

We received the publicity of an Event that we did not create but was a contributor by our location and by the way it was handled by higher authority. Many books and opinions were written, but the truth of the matter is known only by God.

*"For the Word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Rev. 4:12.*

The past is the past for us, but not in God's sight for there is His TOMORROW - -

*"when everyone will have to stand before Him one day. Rev. 20:11-15.*

*Norma Jean Skelton Brown*

*"Tince"*

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