BE00106.50

ROSINTON SCHOOL

No other single factor has contributed more toward the integration and expansion of Rosinton community than the consolidation of its schools.

Prior to 1919 the children of this community attended four separate one-teacher schools. On May 7, 1919 the County Board of Education secured a loan of $1,700.00 from the Baldwin County Bank, to which sum the State of Alabama added $650.00, for the purpose of building a consolidated school at Rosinton. This building, two classrooms and a library was the first in the county to be built on the State Aid Plan.

The original consolidation united the schools of Antioch and Rosinton in 1919-1920 with Miss Lillian Hodgson as principal and Miss Margaret McGrew as assistant. This consolidation was attended and made possible by opening up a new road, past the new school and entailed bridging Mill Creek which flanks the school property on the west. This new road gave ready access to the school and marked the beginning of wider community intercourse.

The original enrollment of one-hundred-forty pupils was permitted to continue their studies through the tenth grad in 1921 by the addition of a third teacher who used the smaller room originally intended for the manual training. The teachers at Rosinton that year were Mr. Howard Roper, principal, Mrs. Lillian Kennedy and Miss Annie Killingsworth, assistants. Mrs. Kennedy served Rosinton continuously from this appointment until illness, so serious that it resulted in her death, compelled her to lay down her books and her plans for "her children" in the spring of 1953.

The initial success of the consolidation and public acceptance of the idea bought the schools of Hollinger and Styx River together with Rosinton in 1923 when two more

BE00106.50

classrooms were built onto the school and a fourth teachers added to the faculty. This daily transfer of children from the latter school districts necessitated a common mode of travel therefore bus service was instituted in Rosinton. In 1925 a movement for further consolidation led to the building of a Senior High School at Robertsdale and bus transportation was furnished for all pupils above the eighth grade.

Parental interest in school matters led naturally to periodic meetings of adults in the school building where matters of common interest were discussed and divergent opinions resolved. These meetings, becoming more frequent with the years have crystallized into organizations which have been a potent factor in developing among the people of Rosinton a civic and social consciousness. In 1926 the first P.T.A. was organized with Mrs. A. Anderberg as the first president. The school has always had an active P.T.A. since that time. The Farmers' club and Helping Hand Club are two outstanding organizations and most recently the Rosinton Players may be noted as directly associated with the school, its activities, and the interests aroused there.

In 1941 a new room was added and a fifth teacher required to take care of the enrollment which by then had reached one-hundred-seventy students. About this time Mr. E. Lundberg was secured to teach music in the school and a piano was bought for the school.

1941 a water system was installed and in 1948 modern rest rooms were built.

A number a lunch plans were tried over a period of years. In 1938-1939 Mr. Norman Dawson sold sandwiches and drinks in a small building of their own which they brought to the campus. The mothers of the community took turns preparing meals at the school. This did not work too well and Mrs. Lott took over the management with

BE00106.50

mothers taking turns helping. Finally Mrs. Lott assumed full responsibility and for a while served lunches on a screened back porch of her home next door to the school. In 1946 the school began its lunch program with Federal Government reimbursement. Subsequent improvement in the school lunch room facilities and program have been continuous.

For years the urgent need for an auditorium was the subject for conversation whenever school-minded patrons met. At the beginning of the school year 1948-49 construction of a $35,000 brick auditorium was commenced. About one year later it was completed and on November 3, 1949 special dedicatory services were held. Now within its walls fellowship, hard work and much fine entertainment are shared by students, faculty, patrons and friends.

Many recent improvements have been made in the school and much equipment added. Perhaps the most notable and helpful is the large electric schedule schedule clock which helps so much to keep the school functioning in an orderly efficient manner.

Principals who have served Rosinton School are Miss Lillian Hodgson, Howard Roper, Lillian Kennedy, W.C. Johnson, M.C. Marchan, J. C. Tharp, O. F. Harper, W.C. McGowan, Roger Barnhill, George A. Strong, Omer J. Gebhart, Gerald P. Robinson, W.F. Taunton, David Petty and David Howell. Each in his own way has served and left an imprint on the school and on the community. For every good, both tangible and intangible we are grateful to these and the many who taught with them.

Remembering when they studied and played on its campus, patrons of Rosinton School experience a sense of patriotic pride and love for their Alma Mater; nevertheless,

BE00106.50

they are reminded that their children have for their school the same building, and they hope for the experience of "The Chambered Nautilus".

BE00106.SD

ELSANOR SCHOOL

The first Elsanor School was built around 1913, when Dr. Norton, a Chicago dentist, offered land and a monetary gift if the school would carry his wife's name, Elsa. Thus, the name of the school was derived from his wife's first name and the first three letters of their last name.

During the years of 1919-20, four schools comprised the Elsanor District – Elsanor, Bartling, Samatra and Seminole. In July of 1923, a building committee met to discuss the construction of a new plant. Completed during the fall of 1925, Elsanor Consolidated School would replace the three one-room houses. In May of the following year, a contract to erect an adjoining fourth classroom and auditorium was granted.

Around 1983-1984, the main school was remodeled, while only one year later on November 7, 1985, the old Elsanor School burnt to the ground. Fortunately, the first-grade classroom, kindergarten (old teacherage) and cafeteria were not damaged. The state fire marshal determined arson as the cause of the conflagration. A new complex was ready for the 1986-1987 academic year. In 1998, the facility was enlarged to include a new wing, which housed five classrooms, a workroom and restrooms.

The teacherage, which served as home for the principal, was converted first into a library and later, a kindergarten classroom. In July, 2000, the Baldwin County Board of Education was presented a Baldwin County Historic Marker for the old teacherage.

The current Elsanor School campus houses 14 homerooms, two resource rooms, the old teacherage, a cottage classroom, one portable, a library and computer lab, and school office.

ROSINTON SCHOOL

Situated four miles east of Loxley on County Road 64, Rosinton School has been serving the educational needs of its heritage population since 1919. The original site, which taught grades 1 through 10, was finally put to rest after decades of loyal community service.

The current facility, established in 1999, is beginning a new tradition with its 195 kindergarten through 6th-grade students. Sixteen full-time teachers, one part-time librarian and part-time counselor help them to shape their futures.

SOUTH BALDWIN CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGY

The county's two vocational centers are the combined efforts of W. Candler McGowan, who was Superintendent of Education at that time, and C. Wesley Grant, then Director of Vocational Education.

Opening in the fall of 1971 with Thomas W. Underwood as administrator, the Robertsdale Area Vocational Center began its curriculum with 10 programs. Some of the courses offered were Power and Diesel Mechanics, Drafting, Business and Office Education, Clothing and Building Construction. Trowel Trades was added the second year. As more funds became available, Distributive Education and Health Occupation Education programs were also adopted.

The school was very fortunate to have faculty members who could design blueprints and supervise the construction of several new buildings. In the long run, this independent-directed project saved taxpayers money and students learned invaluable hands-on-experience.



An enrichment program launched in 1979 helps students through additional training in mathematics, reading and communications. The building, which houses this program, was also built by students.

The General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) was administered to all sophomores enrolled in the Foley, Fairhope and Robertsdale high schools, who expressed a desire to attend the Robertsdale area Vocational Center. Test results were used as a tool to determine success among the different vocation areas. Students were encouraged to enroll in courses where aptitude and interest overlapped. SBCT currently arranges and conducts tours for all 8th and 10th graders in the Central and South Baldwin school zones.

The Advisory Council, along with craft committees, assisted faculty in designing the courses that would prepare students with entry-level work skills. In 1972, the Adult Evening Program created. Courses include computer programming, work processing, drafting (CAD), Heating/AC/Refrigeration, Welding and Health Care.

In 1975, Mrs. Catherine Barrett served as counselor over the Robertsdale and Bay Minette centers. Mrs. Barrett (now retired) then became Vocational Director for Baldwin County, and Mrs. Wanda Beasley stepped into the counselor position. Mr. C. Wesley Grant, also retired, was Associate Superintendent of Education.

After 10 successful years at the Robertsdale Area Vocational Center, Thomas W. Underwood retired to a life of leisure. He and his wife enjoyed this freedom after both helped many students to develop their talents.

The next administrator, Brent Walters, was a member of the original faculty. He served as instructor of Horticulture and Floriculture prior to becoming administrator. He retired in spring 1996. Vance McCrory, the current principal, will complete his 6th year in June 2002.

SBCT currently enrolls students from Robertsdale, Fairhope, Foley and Gulf Shores high schools. Courses offerings are as follows: Marketing, Drafting, Cosmetology, Child/Elder Care, Health Care, Welding, Building Construction, Horticulture, Auto-Technology, HVAC, Computer Electronics and Career Academics.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY CAN MAKE.

DURING ANNUAL CAREER FAIR DAY AT ROBERTSDALE HIGH SCHOOL, PARTNERS-IN-EDUCATION JOIN WITH TOMORROW'S LEADERS TO DISCUSS VARIOUS CAREER-RELATED TOPICS, INCLUDING WAYS TO PROVIDE BETTER GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES.

Elizabeth McClard

BL00106.50

Owen Cyfer

THE COUNTY SCHOOLS.

The Superintendent's Report of Their Condition.

BAYMINETTE, Feb. 26th, '98.

Editor TIMES:—

An Annual Historical Educational Report recently made to the department of education, for the year ending September 1st, 1897, shows that at the last census in August 1897 there were in Baldwin county 2578 white and 1242 colored children, making a total of 3820 children of school age. Of this number there were enrolled in the public schools of the county, 1157 whites and 670 colored; total 1827. There were organized and taught in the county during the scholastic year ending Dec. 31st 1897, 52 white and 14 colored schools. There were employed in the white schools 10 male and 42 female, in the colored schools 5 male and 9 female teachers. In the white schools there were 7 first grade, 6 second grade and 43 third grade; in the colored schools there were 2 second grade and 12 third grade teachers.

The average attendance for whites was 818, for colored 494; total 1312.

The average length of session taught for whites was 62 days, for colored 60 days.

There has been an increase of 218 whites over the census of 1895 and a decrease of 3 colored, making a total increase of 205.

The amount of poll tax reported for whites was $947.45, for colored $208.54; total $1150.99.

The amount of general fund apportioned, and balance on hand from former year was $3266.67, making a total of school funds for the year of $4417.66; of this amount there was paid out $4178.66, leaving a balance in state treasury of $344.00.

In connection with the above Historical Report, I desire to submit for publication a statement of school funds received and disbursed for quarter ending December 31st, 1897:

There was received $2.172.38; paid out to teachers as follows:—

Tp 1 north, range 2 east $138.00.
Township 2 north 2 east $45.00.
Township 2 north 3 east $45.90.
Township 3 north 3 east $90.00.
Township 3 north 4 east $17.00.
Township 4 north 3 east $120.00.
Township 3 north 2 east $82.00.
Township 1 south 2 east $90.00.
Township 1 south 3 east $8.55.
Township 1 south 4 east $50.63.
Township 2 south 2 east $45.00.
Township 2 south 3 east $281.00.
Township 2 south 4 east $18.00.
Township 3 south 2 east $44.00.
Township 4 south 2 east $20.00.
Township 4 south 4 east $60.00.
Township 4 south 5 east $103.80.
Township 4 south 6 east $18.00.
Township 5 south 2 east $175.00.
Township 5 south 4 east $90.00.
Township 5 south 6 east $68.00.
Point Clear school district $115.00.
Township 7 south 3 east $12.50.
Township 9 south 2 east $68.00.
Township 9 south 3 east $72.00.

Total amount paid out, including Superintendent's commissions $2014.82, leaving balance on hand $157.56.

The amount on hand is due to townships in which schools were commenced in first quarter but not finished. Very respectfully,

D. C. BYRNE,
County Sup't. of Education.

Baldwin Times March 10, 1898

School Teacher Selected.

ROSINTON, ALA., Oct. 15, '98.

Editor TIMES:—

The trustees and patrons of the school in township 5 range 4 east have this day held a school meeting and engaged Mrs. Elizabeth Wilkerson as teacher for our fall term. School to commence the 1st Monday in November. Term to extend four months.

J. U. COOPER,
H. M. COOPER,
W. W. GULLEDGE,
} Trustees

Rosinton School

BE00106.50

Ernest L. Dyess

4425 Highway 41 South Camden, Alabama 36726

Phone 334-682-4623
E-Mail: dyess@frontiernet.net

April 6, 1999

I LEARNED WORDS HAVE DIFFERENT MEANING AT McDONALD'S GRAVE

I was in the first grade at Rosinton school when I began to learn that words have different meaning. It started when my class was baited for a Rosinton tradition started some years before.

I well remember one of my classmates, who had been coached by an older student, asking Mrs. Higgins, if the story she had heard about McDonald's grave was true.

"Someone told me he would say "nothing," if you pat on McDonald's grave and ask, 'McDonald, what are you doing down there?!'"

Mrs. Higgins, who saw a way to teach through real life experiences, went right along with the game. "That's right! He will say nothing," was her reply. If you don't believe it, go out there and see for yourself."

That's all she had to say. The whole class ran for the door and the unmarked clay mounded grave located just behind the first grade room.

I knew the story of McDonald's untimely end. I guess all the kids in the community did. I also knew the big swamp between our house and the school (now Coopers Lake) was named McDonald's Swamp.

I had heard that McDonald moved to Baldwin County with many other early settlers. He built a cabin at the site of Rosinton School. But McDonald didn't believe in working for a living. He just made a practice of stealing from all his neighbors. After one of his fresh raids, the neighbors banded together to confront him. When they arrived, he jumped out a window and began to run which led to a shot and McDonald's death. He was buried on the spot.

One by one my first grade class patted the grave. "McDonald, what are doing down there?" was voiced by every student. Finally the silence touched us all and we slowly returned to class. I don't remember our spokesman. Only the words. "Mrs. Higgins, McDonald didn't say nothing."

"Didn't I tell you he would say nothing," she replied.

McDonald may not have contributed much to Rosinton while living; but in death, he sure helped a lot of kids realize that words do have different meaning.

Book explores relationship with God

By John Underwood
Associate Editor

When Earnest L. Dyess was a young boy growing up in Rosinton, part of his responsibility, as the oldest, was to take the Dyess family's milk cow out to pasture every morning, then bring them back in the evening.

"In those days, we grew all our food and depended on the cow for milk," Dyess said. "I knew that if I didn't get the cow back to the barn, we wouldn't have milk that night."

Dyess remembers vividly a time growing up when a panther threatened the safety of his family.

"At night it would scream that sounded like the cry of a desperate woman," Dyess said. "One night daddy decided something needed to be done about it so he went out and shot at it. The cat's tracks were found the next day, but there was no sound to indicate that he had been hit; but we never saw or heard from him again."

After the incident, Dyess said, he followed the normal routine of taking the cow out of its pen each morning and letting it graze in the swamp. Then he would gather up the cow in the afternoon and take it back for milking to provide for his family that night and the next day.

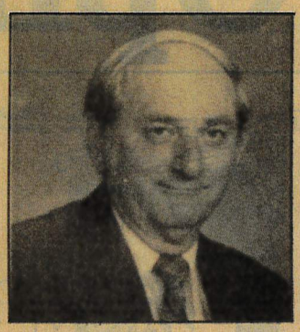
He always got the cow back before dark, however, for fear of the big cat lurking about . . . until one day.

"I went down to my cousin's house, and we got to playing one game or another," he said. "I can't remember what game it was, but it must have been a good one because before we knew it, it had gotten dark."

Dyess said a sinking feeling came over him, because he knew that he could not go get the cow and, most of the time, the cow would not return to the pen on its own.

"On the way back, I stopped and prayed, 'God, if you're real, please let the cow be in the pen when I get home,'" he said. "It was the first time I had ever sincerely prayed, and I knew right away that God had answered my prayer. I knew when I got home, the cow would be there."

Sure enough, Dyess said, when he arrived home, his mother had already milked the cow and did not even know that Dyess had not taken the cow back to her pen.



Earnest L. Dyess

Several years later, that experience became the inspiration and Dyess' prayer became the title of a book he wrote about his experiences with God and how God has touched his life and the lives of others he has witnessed to through his years as a lay preacher through the Baptist Church.

"I wrote each chapter of book so it would stand alone," he said. "Basically about my experiences with God. I wanted to write a book for common folk, which would be easy to understand and relate to."

After graduating from Robertsdale High School, Dyess joined the military, and was able to attend Auburn University graduating in 1951.

Inspired by his high school vocational agriculture teacher at Robertsdale, James Benford, he taught agriculture in Perry County for several years before taking a job with McMillan-Modell Paper Mill in 1967.

While at McMillan-Modell, he edited a publication called *Perpetual Harvest,* a quarterly outreach magazine which consisted of articles relating to the paper industry and historical articles.

While his experience as a child inspired the title of the book, two other experiences led him to write the book.

"The primary reason for came in 1974, when I had a heart attack on July 1," he said. "I passed out and had an unusual experience where I actually felt my spirit leave my body for about two minutes. I heard music, it was a sound that I haven't heard before and knew I was almost there."

That experience was the second time Dyess truly felt his life was in danger. The first was as a Merchant Marine on a ship off the coast of St. Petersburg, Fla.

"After training, we shipped out from Mobile on the day after the war (World War II) was over," Dyess said. In the middle of the Atlantic, the ship got caught in a hurricane.

The coal used to power the ship caught fire, and every one on board felt the ship was going down.

"Every wave covered the ship," Dyess said. "I was serving as a cook in the galley and everyone was ready to abandon ship. We were taking on water and they couldn't control the fire.

The ships Bosun appeared in the galley and said an S.O.S. emergency signal was put out and the ship was trying to get to the Azores Islands, but they did not know how much longer we can stay afloat.

"Then he said something that triggered my decision for Christ," Dyess said. "He said, 'It doesn't make any difference to me if it goes under or not.' That made me realize that I wasn't going to go out without Christ as my eternal savior, so right there I professed my faith.

"I got by myself and prayed to God, 'If the ship went under, I want to be with you.'"

Another reason for the book, Dyess said, was to give him a vehicle to share his faith with others, and to lead others to Christ.

Dyess has served as a lay preacher since April 1975 after receiving the call to serve through the Camden Baptist Church.

"I hope that when people read the book, they will come to know and accept the Lord," he said. "If I can touch just one person through this book, then I've accomplished what I set out to do."

Dyess and his wife, Rachel, have two children: Steve, who teaches vocational school in Coosa County, and Denise Johnson. Ernest and Rachel Dyess also have five granddaughters.

The book is available at Central Christian Bookstore in Robertsdale, Gospel Lighthouse in Foley, Open Door Christian in Fairhope, Page and Palette in Fairhope, the Corner Store in Bay Minette, and the Baptist Book Store on Dauphin Street in Mobile.

BE00106.50

Gulf Coast Newspapers
Classified Ads are
the key to finding

BE0106.50

Chapter Six

WINFIELD SCOTT DYESS JR.

VI. WINFIELD SCOTT DYESS JR. was born November 4, 1855 in Coffee County, Alabama; died October 21, 1921 in Baldwin County, Alabama. Prior to 1870, he moved from Coffee County, Alabama to Wayne County, Mississippi with his father, mother, two brothers and three sisters. Sometime before 1875, Winfield Scott Dyess, his parents, four brothers and four sisters moved from Wayne County, Mississippi to Butler County, Alabama where he was married to ELIZA JANE HOBBS, born August 3, 1849; died August 9, 1892 in Baldwin County, Alabama. This couple were married December 21, 1875. Eliza Jane Hobbs is buried in the Shilow Cemetary in Monroe County, Alabama and Winfield Scott Jr. is buried in the Dyess Cemetary in Rosinton, near Robertsdale, Alabama. This couple had:

A. ELIJAH LEWIS DYESS, born November 12, 1877 in Alabama
B. SARA VIOLA DYESS, born October 23, 1880 in Alabama
C. ANNIE DYESS, born February 11, 1882 in Alabama
D. GEORGE JASPER DYESS, born February 7, 1884 in Alabama
E. MINA L. MARTHA DYESS, born May 29, 1885 in Alabama
F. BETTIE ANN DYESS, born October 14, 1888 in Alabama
G. LULA DYESS, born June 19, 1890 in Alabama

D. Grandpa

WINFIELD SCOTT DYESS JR. was married second to ELIZA JANE JETER. She died July 8, 1918 and is buried in the Dyess Cemetary in Rosinton near Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. They had no children.

Grandpa

A. ELIJAH LEWIS DYESS was born November 12, 1877 in Butler County, Alabama; died October 26, 1924 in Baldwin County, Alabama. He is buried in the Dyess Cemetary in Rosinton near Robertsdale, Alabama. He married MARTHA S. MOSLEY, born September 29, 1880; died November 14, 1919. This couple have:

1. ADA RAEANNIE DYESS, born August 26, 1898 in Alabama
2. GEORGE WINFIELD DYESS, born July 15, 1900 in Alabama
3. MOLLIE PEARL DYESS, born February 18, 1902 in Alabama
4. EDWARD ELIJAH DYESS, born December 12, 1903 in Alabama — Daddy
5. WILLIS RUTHUAN DYESS, born October 12, 1905 in Alabama
6. JOSEPH JACOB DYESS, born July 11, 1907 in Alabama
7. JAMES MANUEL DYESS, born October 23, 1911 in Alabama
8. CECIL ISIAH DYESS, born June 7, 1913 in Alabama
9. GLADYS MARIE DYESS, born June 15, 1915 in Alabama
10. ALMA ALLIE DYESS, born March 2, 1916 in Alabama
11. Irma Dyess
12. William Dyess
13. Carl Dyess
14. Esther Dyess

aaa. MOLLY SUSAN COLLETTI, born April 20, 1978 in Fort Worth, Texas.

ac. CHANDA GAIL COLLETTI was born November 21, 1955 in New Orleans, Louisiana. She was married December 23, 1976 in Pensacola, Florida to WILLIAM DAVID WATKINS, born May 2, 1954 in Laurel, Mississippi.

ad. FERN LORINDA COLLETTI was born March 26, 1957 in New Orleans, Louisiana. She was married August 13, 1977 in Pensacola, Florida to STEVEN N. WARD, born August 14, 1956.

4. EDWARD ELIJAH DYESS was born December 12, 1903 in Baldwin County, Alabama. He was married December 19, 1926 to LOLA JEWEL SHUMACK, born January 18, 1906; died September 3, 1950 of cancer. They have:
   a. ERNEST LOUIS DYESS, born April 19, 1927
   b. BERNARD EDWARD DYESS, born September 19, 1930
   c. LOLA JEANETTE DYESS, born June 7, 1934
   d. GEORGE MARION DYESS, born March 24, 1936

a. ERNEST LOUIS DYESS was born April 19, 1927 in Baldwin County, Alabama. He was married August 10, 1952 to RACHEL HOGGLE, born May 7, 1934. They have:
   aa. STEVEN FOREST DYESS, born April 30, 1954
   ab. RACHEL DENISE DYESS, born September 19, 1956

aa. STEVEN FOREST DYESS was born April 30, 1954. He was married August 24, 1974 to DIANE LIDDELL, born December 13, 1952. They have:
   aaa. ASHLEY ELIZABETH DYESS, born November 15, 1977

ab. RACHEL DENISE DYESS was born September 19, 1956. No further information on her.

b. BERNARD EDWARD DYESS was born September 19, 1930 in Baldwin County, Alabama. He is an ordained Baptist Minister and he was married December 17, 1955 to ETHEL MARGARET HOOVER, born October 28, 1937. They have:
   aa. ROLAND BERNARD DYESS, born December 8, 1957
   ab. CYNTHIA MARGARET DYESS, born July 29, 1960
   ac. JULIE LEIGH DYESS, born November 23, 1963

aa. ROLAND BERNARD DYESS was born December 8, 1957. He was married December 18, 1976 to DIANNE McCORMICK, born October 16, 1958. They have:
   aaa. JERIMIAH ROLAND DYESS, born January 26, 1979
   aba. JONATHAN EDWARD DYESS, born December 15,

BE0106.50

1980

ab. CYNTHIA MARGARET DYESS was born July 29, 1960. She was married August 5, 1978 to LLOYD ALVIN WADE, born February 17, 1955.

ac. JULIE LEIGHT DYESS was born November 23, 1963.

c. LOLA JEANETTE DYESS was born June 7, 1934 in Baldwin County, Alabama. She was married June 29, 1952 to JOHN W. RYAN, born July 30, 1929. They have:
   aa. JOHN BARRY RYAN, born July 5, 1953
   ab. DOYLE GENE RYAN, born July 2, 1957
   ac. TWILA GAYLENE RYAN, born September 20, 1962

d. GEORGE MARION DYESS was born March 24, 1936 in Baldwin County, Alabama. He was married February 19, 1959 to RUBY JEANETTE HAMRICK, born February 10, 1932. They have:
   aa. TERESA LYNN DYESS was born October 6, 1959. She was married April 25, 1977 to WILLIAM KEITH NICHOLSON, born December 24, 1955.
   ab. MELISSA TANIA DYESS, born June 17, 1961
   ac. GEORGE GREGORY DYESS, born April 21, 1964
   ad. GINA MARIA DYESS, born November 14, 1968

ELIJAH EDWARD DYESS married second in September 1951 to BLANNIE MILLER BRACEWELL; died September 12, 1956.

ELIJAH EDWARD DYESS married third June 19, 1957 to LILLIE C. STORY, born July 21, 1903; died September 26, 1971.

5. WILLIS RUTHUAN DYESS was born October 12, 1905 in Baldwin County, Alabama.
   He has:
   a. WILLIE RUTH DYESS was born in Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. She was married September 18, 1951 to THOMAS R. AMISON, born in Foley, Alabama. They moved to Pasadena, Texas in 1965. This couple have:
      aa. JUDY LENORA AMISON was born October 13, 1952 in Foley, Baldwin, Alabama. She married TIMOTHY McCRORY from Houston, Texas.
      They have:
      aaa. CHRISTY MARIE McCRORY, born January 29, 1978
      ab. REBECCA LUCILE AMISON was born August 30, 1953 in Foley, Baldwin, Alabama. No further information on her.
      ac. SHIRLEY JOANN AMISON was born December 9, 1956 in Foley, Baldwin, Alabama. She married KEITH WAYNE GUILBEAUY. They have:

were divorced July 31, 1969. She married second April 26, 1974 to GEORGE STEPHEN SLOCOVICH.

11. ERMA ELIZABETH DYESS was born November 10, 1918 in Baldwin County, Alabama. She joined the Navy (Waves) Medical Corp in September 1942 and was discharged in December 1945. While serving duty at Charleston, South Carolina Navy Hospital, she helped monitor patients who had been among the first to use penicillin, as this was one of the first hospitals to use penicillin on patients. She was married October 21, 1944 in Neosho, Missouri to PAUL ALBERT COX, born March 24, 1919 in Twin Falls, Idaho. He served in the United States Army from June 1942 to January 1946 and was discharged. In 1945 while serving in the Army, he was transferred to Hawthorne, Nevada where our country's largest ammunition depot is located. July of that year brought Japanese Balloons floating over this area carrying bombs, but the wind currents helped to carry them over the Base Area, and they landed in a picnic grounds killing Five people. After leaving the Military Service, he became a jeweler in Mobile, Alabama; left Mobile and moved to Condon, Oregon; then moved his family to Klamath Falls, Oregon where he is employed with the State Highway Department designing highways. This couple have:
    a. LYLE WILLIAM COX, born in 1952
    b. DALE ANTHONY COX, born January 10, 1955
    c. PAULA LYNN COX, born February 26, 1957

    a. LYLE WILLIAM COX, was born in 1952 in Oregon. He a 1975 graduate of Oregon State University with a major in Political Science and Photo Journalism. He is employed with a newspaper in Albany, Oregon. No further information on him.
    b. DALE ANTHONY COX was born January 10, 1955 in Oregon. He attended Klamath Falls College in Klamath, Oregon, and is employed at Boeing Aircraft Company in Portland, Oregon. He was married September 11, 1976 to MARY LOU THOMAS.
    c. PAULA LYN COX was born February 26, 1957 in Oregon. She has a major in Home Economics from Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon.

A. ELIJAH LEWIS DYESS was married second May 12, 1920 to ROSE ROBINSON, PHILLIPS, born February 18, 1886; died March 20, 1955. By first marriage she had:
12. MERTIE PHILLIPS, born August 17, 1905; died December 20, 1957 in a car wreck.
13. ETTA PHILLIPS, born October 8, 1907

ELIJAH LEWIS DYESS and ROSE ROBINSON, PHILLIPS have:
14. WILLIAM W. DYESS, born March 4, 1921

BE00106.50

15. CARL BENGMAN DYESS, born April 10, 1923
16. ESTER DYESS, born February 22, 1925

14. WILLIAM W. DYESS was born March 4, 1921 in Rosinton near Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. He was married September 19, 1943 in San Francisco, California to BETTY LAVON EDEN, born January 4, 1921 in Bingham Canyon, Utah. This couple have:
    a. WILLIAM WINFIELD DYESS JR., born October 4, 1945 in California
    b. CLELA LAVON DYESS, born May 20, 1947 in Alabama

    a. WILLIAM WINFIELD DYESS JR. was born October 4, 1945 in San Francisco, California. He has a BS and MA Degree from Auburn University in Alabama. He was married August 24, 1968 to MARGARET McKAY. She is a Registered Nurse. They have:
        aa. WILLIAM WINFIELD DYESS III, born February 19, 1970
        ab. CHRISTOPHER DYESS, born August 23, 1972
        ac. JEFFERY SCOTT DYESS, born June 20, 1977
    b. CLELA LAVON DYESS was born May 20, 1947 in Foley, Baldwin, Alabama. She has a BS Degree from Auburn University in Alabama and a MA Degree from the University of Georgia. She was married August 4, 1973 in Athens, Georgia to OMER LEE REED. He is a Professor of Law at the University of Georgia. This couple have:
        aa. ADAM REED, born July 1, 1978

15. CARL BENGMAN DYESS was born April 10, 1923 in Rosinton near Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. He was married March 15, 1947 to LOUVERTA BRILL. They have:
    a. CAROLYN DYESS, born December 30, 1947
    b. RONALD DYESS, born April 17, 1950
    c. CARL BRUCE DYESS, born July 27, 1955
    d. KELLY DYESS, born August 15, 1963

    a. CAROLYN DYESS was born December 30, 1947. She was married June 21, 1963 to GEORGE BOYINGTON. They have:
        aa. AMANDA BOYINGTON, born May 22, 1966
        ab. CARLA BOYINGTON, born December 2, 1969
        ac. CASEY BOYINGTON, born August 20, 1973
        ad. EVA BOYINGTON, born July 19, 1977
    b. RONALD DYESS was born April 17, 1950.
    c. CARL BRUCE DYESS was born July 27, 1955.
    d. KELLY DYESS was born August 15, 1963.

16. ESTER DYESS was born February 22, 1925 in Rosinton near Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. She was married June 8, 1946 to

DONALD RIENDEAU. They have:

a. BARBARA RIENDEAU was born March 9, 1947. She was married to STEVE VASCO, and they are divorced. They have no children.

b. DONALD RIENDEAU was born October 4, 1950. He married SHERRY ALLEN. They have:
   aa. CHILD

ESTER DYESS and DONALD RIENDEAU are divorced.

B. SARA VIOLA DYESS was born October 23, 1880 in Greenville, Butler, Alabama; died March 13, 1974 in Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. She was married March 8, 1905 to JEROME SEAY, born June 25, 1884; died February 25, 1946 in Robertsdale, Alabama. They have:

1. BETTIE JANE SEAY was born June 24, 1911 in Baldwin County, Alabama. She was married August 25, 1926 to AUBREY LANGHAM, born November 6, 1908 at Bratt, Florida; died July 14, 1981 in Foley, Alabama. His Obituary—Mr. Aubrey A. Langham, age 75, a native of Bratt, Florida and a resident of Robertsdale, Alabama died July 14, 1981. Survivors include, wife, Mrs. Betty J. Langham of Robertsdale, Alabama, two sons, James Langham of Jemison, Alabama and Jerome Langham of San Bernandino, California. One daughter, Mrs. Virginia Bryant of Graceville, Florida, six grandchildren and one great grandchild. Funeral services were held July 16, 1981 at 2 p.m. from the Rosinton Road Baptist Church with Rev. Joe Langham officiating. Interment was in the Rosinton Road Baptist Church Cemetary. Funeral arrangements made by Mack Funeral Home. This couple have:
   a. JAMES HUBERT LANGHAM, born August 29, 1927
   b. BILLIE MERYL LANGHAM, born February 7, 1933
   c. JEROME CHARLES LANGHAM, born June 17, 1937
   d. SARALYN VIRGINIA LANGHAM, born April 30, 1943

   a. JAMES HUBERT LANGHAM was born August 29, 1927 in Baldwin County, Alabama. He joined the United States Navy in July 1945, serving with the Sea Bees on Saipan in the South Pacific. He was discharged in August 1946 and obtained a rank of Seaman Third Class. He was Married October 12, 1946 to SARA LEE JONES. They have:
      aa. WANDA ANN LANGHAM was born February 1, 1948 in Jemison, Alabama. She was married August 24, 1968 to SIDNEY M. CHAMBLER. They have:
         aaa. LARRY TYSON CHAMBLER was born October 1, 1972.
   b. BILLIE MERYL LANGHAM was born February 7, 1933 in Baldwin County, Alabama; died December 15, 1956 in a car

BE00106.50

wreck. He joined the United States Air Force in April 1952. His overseas duty was in Japan and England where he served as flight Engineer on a B-29. He was discharged in April 1956 and obtained a rank as Sargeant. Prior to his death, he was attending school at Murphy High School in Mobile, Alabama. He was married June 6, 1955 to CHARLOTTE PRESTON. They had no children.

c. JEROME CHARLES LANGHAM was born June 17, 1937 in Baldwin County, Alabama. He attended Robertsdale High School, the University of Maryland and received his BA and MA Degrees from Michigan State University, where he graduated with straight A's. He was number one in his under graduate class of over 6,000 graduates. He was also in the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He served in the United States Air Force from 1955 to 1976. While in the Air Force, the positions he held were: Cartographer, Photo Interpreter, Intelligence Specialist, AFIT, 1955 to 1964 (Enlisted); he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant July 1, 1964; was an Auditor, Headquarters Staff Officer, Squadron Commander from 1964 to 1976, and retired as Major October 1, 1976. After retiring from the Air Force, he was a Professor of Accounting at California State College at San Bernardino and also had a Management Consulting Practice. He previously owned and operated an Accounting tax service. He is active in the American Accounting Association, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and the Rotarians. He is past member of the Board of Directors and the Rialto Pony League (baseball). His Military Decorations are: Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal (2), Foreign Expeditionary, Medal, National Defence Service Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award and Small Arms Expert Marksman Award. He received a Beta Alpha Psi Scholarship in 1962, and is a member of The American Accounting Association, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Federal Government Accountants Association, Beta Alphi Psi, and Beta Gamma Sigma. He is a member of the Arrowhead Country Club and the Norton Air Force Base Officers' Club. He developed a number of innovative programs for the Air Force in the areas of training and management. He also developed a computerized model for accounting instruction at California State College in San Bernardino, California. He was married January 8, 1955 to BARBARA ANN DASHINGER, born December 3, 1939. They have:

   aa. DEBORAH JEANETTE LANGHAM was born January 5, 1956. She was married October 14, 1978 at Memorial Baptist Church in Rialto to STEVEN MELVIN KRATZ, son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Kratz of Rialto, California.
   ab. GEROLD BILLIE LANGHAM was born March 8, 1958 in

BE00106.50

Boisser City, Louisiana. He married CARLA ROTON from California. This couple have:
aaa. JORDON KYLE LANGHAM, born June 11, 1984.

d. SARALYN VIRGINIA LANGHAM was born April 30, 1943 in Baldwin County, Alabama. She married RALPH BRYANT, born August 30, 1939. They have:
aa. RONALD KEITH BRYANT was born June 12, 1962. He married DEBRA ANN McDONALD ROBERTS, born February 21, 1959. They have:
aaa. KALIN ASHLEY BRYANT, born May 16, 1984
ab. RANDALL GREG BRYANT, born June 30, 1967
ac. ANITA DARLENE BRYANT, born June 8, 1974

C. ANNIE DYESS was born February 11, 1882 in Butler County, Alabama; died May 6, 1917 in Rosinton, near Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. She married JIM D. SEAY, born October 14, 1881; died July 7, 1961 in Baldwin County, Alabama. They had no children.

D. GEORGE JASPER DYESS was born February 7, 1884 in Greenville, Butler, Alabama; died December 26, 1947 in Rosinton, near Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. His family moved from Greenville to Monroe County and stayed there for several years before moving to Baldwin County, Alabama. As a young boy, his leg was broken when he fell from a yearling. He was afraid to tell his father, so his leg got no medical attention. He had a limp for the rest of his life and suffered from rheumatism in his latter years. When he was a young man, he worked at a sawmill and farmed fifty acres of land with mules and horses. He loved to sing, fish and fox hunt. He was married December 16, 1908 to IDA BYRD, born May 18, 1884 in Monroe County, Alabama; died February 18, 1965 in Rosinton, near Robertsdale, Alabama. Her family moved to Baldwin County in 1900. She was a member of the Rosinton Helping Hand Club; and she loved quilting and sewing. They were Primitive Baptist. This couple had:
1. FANNIE OMILEE DYESS, born January 10, 1909
2. JAMES WINFIELD DYESS, born August 14, 1910
3. ELIZABETH DYESS, born December 22, 1911
4. JOSEPH ALLEN DYESS, born date not known
5. WILLIAM HENRY DYESS, born date not known
6. AUDIE MAE DYESS, born February 1, 1915
7. ROY ELIJAH DYESS, born November 20, 1917
8. SALLIE LUCILLE DYESS, born January 21, 1921

1. FANNIE OMILEE DYESS was born January 10, 1909 in Rosinton, near Robertsdale, Alabama; died June 28, 1981 in Foley, Baldwin, Alabama; is buried in the Rosinton Road Cemetary near Loxley, Alabama. Cancer was the cause of death. She loved to paint and write poetry; and was a member of the First Baptist Church in Summerdale, Alabama. She was married July 21, 1926 in Pensacola, Florida to HOWARD TAFT LANGHAM, born November 18, 1908 in Atmore, Alabama; died December 6, 1959 of cirrhosis of the liver in Mobile, Alabama. He was a truck farmer. They had:
a. GEORGE CLARENCE LANGHAM, born April 6, 1927
b. JOHNIE RAY LANGHAM, born November 26, 1931
c. MARRELL FRANK LANGHAM, born June 27, 1936
d. HOWARD HAROLD LANGHAM, born June 27, 1936

a. GEORGE CLARENCE LANGHAM was born April 6, 1927 in Rosinton, near Robertsdale, Baldwin, Alabama. He attended Robertsdale High School and spent a term in the United States Army. He was married May 7, 1944 in Baldwin County, Alabama to DOROTHY JEAN TURBERVILLE, born November 3, 1925 in Uriah, Monroe, Alabama. They have:
aa. CAFFIE LAFAYE LANGHAM, born August 14, 1943
ab. GEORGE CLARENCE LANGHAM JR., born September 23, 1945
ac. BONNIE JEAN LANGHAM, born May 11, 1947
ad. CHARLES ALBERT LANGHAM, born May 1, 1949
ae. ROBERT HOWARD LANGHAM, born October 10, 1956

aa. CAFFIE LAFAYE LANGHAM was born August 14, 1943 in Loxley, Baldwin, Alabama. She married HOMER NEIL SINCLAIR. They have:
aaa. JOHNIE MARVIN SINCLAIR, born April 3, 1960 in Loxley, Baldwin, Alabama.

CAFFIE LAFAYE LANGHAM and HOMER NEIL SINCLAIR were divorced. She married second to EDDIE ANTHONY DINK, born in Loxley, Alabama. They have:
aba. ERIC DINK
aca. EDDIE ANTHONY DINK JR.

ab. GEORGE CLARENCE LANGHAM JR. was born September 23, 1945 in Loxley, Baldwin, Alabama. He attended Robertsdale High School and served in the United States Army for several years and retired because of poor health. He was married August 14, 1954 in Baldwin County, Alabama to HOLLIE ANN PAUL, born January 6, 1947 in Baldwin County, Alabama. They have:
aaa. TROY PAUL LANGHAM, born January 16, 1965
aba. DOROTHY LAFAYE LANGHAM, born August 30, 1967
aca. TOBY WAYNE LANGHAM, born September 4, 1974

ac. BONNIE JEAN LANGHAM was born May 11, 1947 in



(my father and younger sister, Irma not long after mama passed away.

my father re married less than six months.

Within four years he had lost almost everything he had except the farm. His health broke and then he passed away.

How can a little girl express the feelings of loniness when she has neither parent to love or to share with? I felt that really no one cared one way or the other.

It was then that Ada & Ted took me to live with them and Irma went to live with aunt Sallie and uncle Jerome. I was about 7 years of age. There was a drastic change in my life. Ted and Ada was good to me. Ted always tried to treat me as his own and I grew up with Quentin, Velma

BE00106.50

room for one more. My father had a 40 acre farm, a saw mill and a grist mill where he ground corn into meal for the entire community. He was considered "well off" in those days. He had a large family (I was the 10th child born) but he raised almost everything we needed on the farm. It was a common sight to see my father and the rest of the men folks walking across the fields to see how the crops were doing while the women exchanged recipes and talked about the children. In the meantime, the children could find plenty of mischief to get into.

I shall always be thankful that my parents brought me up in a home that knew and loved the Lord. Many times I'd bring the big family Bible, which was so heavy that I could hardly carry it, to my father, put it upon his lap, climb up there myself and then I'd select a picture. "Tell me about this picture, papa," I'd say. I've always loved the stories of the Bible and my father could make them so real that you would almost feel you were there.

On the long winter evenings as we shelled peanuts or cut irish potatoes for the spring plantings, my father mixed in with the work a lot of teaching and singing. He taught his children to tell the truth, regardless of what it cost, and sometimes it cost my brothers especially, plenty, if they didn't tell the

BE00106.50

Mrs. Hastie,

Thanks for returing my call Sun. night. I would like to see buildings preserved which have meant a lot to me in the past, but my health is so bad I can't do much. I'll try to call a few to see if there is interest. We really enjoyed our tour in N. Baldwin. Some of the ladies just talked in the back when I was trying to hear you. Thank you again for guiding us. The young people at church are entertaining us this Fri. night. (the Sr's.)

I tried to highlight some things concerning Rosinton School. I attended Rosinton for 6 years & my 5 brothers also. In my oldest brother's book "God If you're Real, Let the Cow Be In The Pen When I Get Home", starts the first chapter when we lived behind Rosinton School on Grandpa Dyess' property. One chapter tells of Mr. George Strong, his scout master. It (the book is in its' 2nd printing and he has another one written. If he gets it printed it has a chapter about the Dyess cemetery in Rosinton.

You may not be interested in all of this, but I didn't know where to cut it off. Betty Seay Langham worked at Rosinton Cafe. for 2 years and I worked as part time sec. there for a few years. I was a bookkeeper and worked at Elsanor, Swift & Bell Fountain (rotated) until Mr. Erlandson became principal at Elsanor & Rosinton. My Dad & his siblings attended ~~Elsanor~~ Rosinton School also. I made a copy for Dennis Hastika & will let you know what I find out. Any help will be appreciated.

Thanks, Jeanette Ryan - 9[redacted]

BF00106-50

Jeanettee Ryan
22755 Co Rd 625
Rdale 36567

Don't let Rosinton School's history fall to wrecking ball

Commentary

I read with interest Graham Heath's recent article, "Last Waltz for Rosinton," sent to me by my sister, Jeanette Ryan. Needless to say, I was saddened by your headline and article.

I was raised within shouting distance of Rosinton School. Our house stood on the west bank of what is now Cooper's Lake. The school was my playground, both during and after school hours. It was a time of happy years which have lingered for a lifetime. I've thought a lot about my formative years after learning that a familiar landmark, still structurally sound, might soon pass into the annals of time.

The loss of the school comes at a time when our country so desperately needs landmarks - good landmarks - landmarks that stand for something - not for just one, but several generations. Such a place is the white frame building known as Rosinton School.

Let me share a few of my personal landmarks. I am sure every student who attended the school has his or her own special experiences. My daddy attended Rosinton. Like other students, he walked to school. Once he did some trapping along the way. However, one day he had the misfortune to catch a skunk which sprayed him with its rich aroma. "The teacher didn't send me home. She let the students vote to see if I should go or stay. I didn't get but one vote to stay and I think he was a fellow trapper," said Daddy when telling the story.

How is a tale like this a landmark that's worth remembering? Every child who voted for my daddy's departure had a firsthand experience in pure democracy. It's the kind of stuff that has made our country great. Years later, their voting made an impression on me.

As I grew older, I became interested in basketball. I loved my school and I wanted to see Rosinton win the County Junior High Championship. But, we had a problem. Rosinton only had eight grades. Ninth grade students went to Robertsdale. There were several schools like ours in the county; but the larger schools, with ninth grades, always won the championship.

When I was in about the fifth grade, I took it upon myself to correct what I saw as an unjust situation. I wrote Mr. Tharp, the county superintendent of education, a letter. I explained that Rosinton had just lost in the tournament because other schools had older boys and we needed a ninth grade to compete. I never heard from Mr. Tharp and we never got a ninth grade. But years later, I almost had a part in bringing that championship to Rosinton.

It happened during my senior year at Robertsdale in 1945. The war had left Rosinton without a male teacher to coach the basketball team. My brother, Bernard, was in the eighth grade and I recognized he and some classmates could be pretty good ball players. There was James Gill, Dewey Northcutt, William Campbell and a specially gifted boy named Buddy Hinote, along with several others.

I loved to play basketball and was expected to be a starter at Robertsdale. It was a hard decision to give up much of my playing time to be their volunteer coach; but I believed those boys, with a little help, could bring that county championship home to Rosinton. They almost did, but fell three points short in the championship game.

But, Rosinton is not without its championships, thanks to the community pride of Nolan Cooper Sr. Until the days of television and a host of other recreational activities, every community had a baseball team. When the GIs came home after World War II, baseball madness was the sport of the day in Baldwin County. Rosinton entered the county league with the big boys from Foley, Robertsdale, Silverhill, Bon Secour and Summerdale. Nolan led the community in building the finest park in the league. It sported a grandstand, bleachers and full-size board fence with advertisements from all the major businesses.

Clayton Hayes was the manager. He knew baseball! The championships usually came home to Rosinton. Baseball fever passed. The ball park was torn down for its valuable cypress lumber. A Rosinton landmark is no more!

I wonder if the Rosinton School, the community's major landmark for almost a hundred years, will suffer the same fate? I hope not. Somehow, the county Board of Education and the community should find a way to preserve that part of their heritage and keep the school where it is. Every citizen will be richer if they can.

Ernest Dyess is a resident of Camden and a native of Rosinton.

BE00106.50

The Independent
P. o. Box 509
Robertsdale, AL 36567

I read with interest the articles in the insert in last week's paper concerning, Preserving the Past for our Future in Big Beautiful Baldwin. Many of these landmarks bring back nostalgic memories of a way of life in Baldwin County when I was young. I heartily agree that we should give unending credit to the members of The Baldwin County Historic Society and others who have worked so diligently to preserve places, homes, schools, churches and buildings for the citizens of today as well as generations to come to enjoy.

I have been interested in writing about historical places for the past several years in order to leave a heritage for my grandchildren concerning how times were in the early part of my life. I was privileged to help put together a booklet of interesting history and old pictures of my church, Bethel Baptist, for the fiftieth anniversary in 1991. When I retired my goal was to preserve the little Elsanor School Building constructed in 1913. During my time of research and visits with descendants of early homesteaders in Elsanor community. I began to realize that as time and older people passed away I was loosing precious memories. Documenting the history and creating four large scrapbooks of pictures gave me a glimpse of my community's rich history.

Now, I hope to finish the spiritual journal of my paternal and maternal family as well as highlights of my life while living in Rosinton and Elsanor. Simple, yet maybe important facts my ancestors may be interested in when I am gone. Of paticular interest to me is the homestead of my great grandfather, Winfield Scott Dyess, and the Dyess Cemetery which he donated land for in Rosinton. His second wife was probably the first one buried there in 1918.

On June 12, 2000, The Baldwin County Historical Developement Commission recognized Elsanor's original school by placing it on the county's historical register and presenting the school with a Banner and Shield plaque. I would like to thank the Historical Society for the warm reception at the meeting and also commend Mrs. Patti Cooper for her diligence in filling out paper work in order for this to come about. Mrs. Cooper was unable to be present to help accept the marker, but Mrs. Becky Lundberg, Elsanor School principal, relates that the school would like to have a special program after school starts to involve the students and community when the marker is placed on the building. Hopefully, the building now used as a Kindergarten classroom will have been painted and restored by that time.

Mrs. Vera Bonner attended the school in 1921 and Lawrence and Arvle Moseley lived in the building when it was a teacherage. Many others have special recollections of the little school house. I was able to gain insight by talking to Mr. Virgil Buck, a former student and Elsanor resident.

So, thanks again to all who have shown an interest in sharing and preserving our history.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jeanette Ryan
22755 County Road 62 South
Robertsdale, Al 36567

BE00106.50

September 13, 1985

Editor
The Independent

Dear Editor:

I would like to ask your readers a question. Have you ever attended a funeral when you felt like that life had been well-lived and knew that the minister was not having difficulty finding words to console the family? On Friday, August 23, I attended the funeral of Mrs. Mattie Brill and realized that she was an outstanding person. Not that she ever did anything spectacular or was a person of importance, but that she worked hard to raise her family of ten children and loved her neighbors and friends.

She never complained because she had to work in the fields as well as cook, clean, and sew for such a large family. Sometime in the middle of the fifties she developed a blood disease in her right hand and arm and the doctors had to remove her hand and part of her arm. This never became a handicap to her and she never complained about it because she learned to write left handed, still sewed for herself and others and spent hours embroidering gifts. She learned to iron her sons starched white shirts beautifully. When tradegy struck her son's family she moved into his house to care for her grandchildren and for many years took care of her invalid husband.

In her later years I was priviledged to pick Mrs. Brill up for church services. On Wednesday nights I could see her fresh cut lawn surrounded by beautiful flower beds which was a special hobby of hers. I knew that one of her grandsons would cut her grass, but that she wanted to stay active and independent by doing this and by taking care of her chickens.

Sometimes she would appear at my invalid mother-in-law's door clad in her print dress, bonnet, and apron with a basket of fresh brown eggs. One day I carried her butterbeans from my garden and realized that I should have shelled them for her. She assured me that she could shell them. Her Kitchen would smell of fresh baked blackberry pie. I never did ask her how she managed to roll out the crust.

Mrs. Brill was always the first to respond whenever the pastor asked for a testimony. She always told how the Lord had abundantly blessed her and her family and how He had brought her through illnesses and tragedies.

I will always remember when my sister-in-law and I were in the hospital as the result of a bad accident and she prepared food for our families. I could go on but I'm sure that everyone can see what an inspiration Mrs. Brill was to others even though her life was filled with pain and hardship. She never knew the words "can't or impossible".

BE00106.50

Our Sunday School class will not be able to honor her with a birthday party this October, but we will remember her life with us.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jeanette Ryan
Rt. 1, Box 800
Robertsdale, Al.

BE00106.50

MY LIFE
BY
BETTY SEAY LANGHAM

I was born in Alabama in nineteen hundred and eleven on June the twenty-fourth in Baldwin County in a small community known as Antioch, which later was given the name Rosinton. I was an only child of very loving parents who had been married six years before I was born.

My childhood was very happy and some of my earliest memories are of Mama and me walking through the field to Grandpa's house. We crossed a deep ditch on a plank where the ditch curved or else crossed on another wide board under a big persimmon tree, or being in the field with Mama while she was hoeing and me playing under a shade tree. But we were always together.

We owned a twenty-acre farm, but didn't have any conveniences in our home. No one around did. We would go to the cotton field where Mama would pick cotton until noon and pack it in a big cotton basket, then after lunch we would go back and she would work late. Papa would carry the basket of cotton in on his shoulder with me in the basket, too. How I loved for him to do that.

Mama would then feed the chickens, milk the cows, and cook supper while Papa cut wood and brought it in for the stove and for the fireplace, if needed. They also had to pump water by hand and bring it in buckets. We had lamps for light. We had an outdoor toilet where we used a catalog for toilet tissue. Those were such happy days. We always had plenty to eat and wear and I got anything I wanted at Christmas time, but our wants didn't compare with the children today.

I had an aunt named Betty Ann after whom I was named. She was born blind and she was such a sweet person! She would spend several days at a time with us. I can remember Mama working in the garden close to the house and me "watching her." She loved to talk and laugh with her sisters' and brothers' children. We had so much fun.

Christmas time was especially lots of fun. All of Grandpa's children and grandchildren gathered there on Christmas Eve and though we knew nothing of Christmas trees in those days, or exchanging gifts, we all spent the night. Besides their six beds, the large living room had beds all over the floor. People didn't have much furniture, maybe a dresser, treadle sewing machine, sometimes a small table, and several "straight" chairs with cowhide bottoms. If you were lucky, maybe you had one or two rockers. So there was plenty of room and we all hung our long stockings up for Santa to fill. That was joy that children now know nothing about.

1911 Born
7 school
1918 yr.

I was seven when I started to school, which was Antioch School and real close to our home. It was a one-room school, which was about twenty-four by forty feet. It had a wood heater, a bucket of water for all the children to drink from, and an outdoor toilet. I did enjoy school so much and it gave me a chance to play with other children. We played volleyball and picked violets in the spring until we had a big washpan full. Our desks were long benches with something in front to lay our work on. It was all crude, but up to date then. My first teacher was Miss Hodgson. She was real strict and I was afraid of her.

School was across from H. Hinote Packing Co. on Co. Rd. 64

Pape still helped run the sawmill, grist mill, and cotton gin that he had a partnership in with uncle Eliga Dyess my grandfather and cousin Comer Hobbs (Mama's brother and cousin). I would go see him when I got in from school. The second year I went, the school was consolidated with Rosinton and Styx River. 1919 It was a two-room school and a library, which turned into a third room. The partition was folding doors and when Christmas came or school was out, each teacher had a play for their room and all the parents came. Then the doors were opened and we had an auditorium. The school now has eight rooms: (three portable) four baths, an auditorium, kitchen, dining room, and an office. We then carried our lunches and ate out on the grass under the shade trees, which were dogwood and just beautiful. We played baseball and basketball after we got too big to play in the playhouses.

Also, we liked to play hopscotch and different games. I had started playing basketball, also. Our school was heated by two big wood heaters. The wood was donated by the fathers and the boys took turns bringing it in. The girls had to sweep the floors. I had three more teachers while I was in school: Margaret McGrew, Mrs. Kennedy, and Mr. Tharp.

Mama's brothers and sisters all lived within walking distance. We would visit often. I had lots of cousins to play with, but that wasn't enough. I was always lonely. Mama and Papa showered me with lots of toys at Christmas time, and Mama was always buying me something pretty to wear, which I would have gladly given up for a brother or sister. So I claimed one of my cousins as my sister, a claim that has lasted through the years.

We would love to sit and listen to Grandpa tell of his younger days; how when he first moved to Baldwin County from Monroe County. It took days for the trip in a covered wagon, bringing all their belongings, cattle, hogs, and all. He also told about a train that ran just east of where Cooper's store now is, running from northwest to southeast. I never knew where it made its turn, but there was, until recent years, a trestle where it crossed Blackwater Creek just below Johnie Ray Langham's home (formerly the Dawson home). We used to go there fishing lots.

I also had a very dear friend, Eva Dawson. She came to see me lots and Mama and I would go down to her house. Mama and Mrs. Dawson were best of friends. One day we started home and Eva went part of the way with us. She always went as far as Antioch School, which was across the highway from Hinote's packing plant, which at that time was Aunt Mina's home. We always took a trail through the woods. We were playing leap frog. I had on a new hat. Eva leaped over me and knocked my hat off and sat on it. Can't you picture a real stiff hat after it was sat on? But we sure did have fun!

3 trail woods

Mama, Papa, and I would go places in our "top" buggy. There was just room for two in the seat and I would have to sit on a quilt in the front of the buggy. Sometimes I'd get them to let me sit on the back and I would jump off and run behind the buggy for miles. They never knew I did this. They couldn't see behind the buggy. We would go to Stapleton through the woods. That's the way the roads were. We would go to Magnolia Springs and stay for the weekend with aunt Mollie Wallace. The roads were all three-trailed.

Mama and I would walk to church on Saturday, but Sunday Papa would take us in the buggy. They just had church twice a month, on Saturday and Sunday. The church was where Grandpa always went to church. He gave the property it was on to be used as a church and cemetery. It is now known as the Dyess Cemetery. It was a small church, about twenty-four by thirty-six feet. It had all wooden window shutters, no lights, and no heat. We have been there when it was freezing weather and sat for two hours for two preachers to preach. Sometimes nearly everyone from church would go to one place for dinner, but the ladies never did mind. There was always a stove of potatoes baked, or potato custards made, some kind of vegetables cooked, plenty of ham, bacon, or sausage in the smokehouse, lots of eggs, milk, butter, or fryers. We couldn't run to the store for anything. We didn't need to anyway.

Around 1918, cars began appearing in our community. Papa bought an old roadster with no top and we felt very rich. Later, he and Uncle Jim bought a Model "T" touring car. We then took a trip to Monroe County where Mama grew up. Mama, Papa, I, Ted, Ada, and their children went in our new car and I can't remember who went with Uncle Jim in his. It took us the best part of a day to get up there. The roads were all three-trailed and full of sandbeds, but the pleasure we had was worth the slow trip. Seeing Mama's old home and where her mother was buried was very special (I never saw her).

It was a little country church called Shiloh near Frisco City, Alabama. The cemetery was then quite small and the town was called Jones Mill. Mama's old home was between Frisco City

and Excel, Alabama. We visited three of Mama's first cousins and playing with their children is a very fond memory of my childhood. Those days and those special cousins were always very special to me.

One winter there was an epidemic of what was then called influenza. People were dying all around with it. Of course, Papa and I took it. The Lord kept Mama well to wait on us. Cooking was no problem for we couldn't eat. We had a neighbor, Mr. Eli Garner, who was the worst person in the community to get drunk and was rough on his family, but, bless his heart, he was an angel to help keep the chores done and keep plenty of wood in. What folks did in those days was for love and not money.

Uncle Jim and Mr. Nick Hayes made caskets at the sawmill everyday. Lumber was always kept for that and it was free. Mama would scallop white material that looked like lace to fold over the corpse's face. Sometimes the caskets would sit on our porch all night. In those days when a person died, they were placed on a cooling board until just before they were ready for burial, before placing them in the casket. There was no embalming. Lots of folks passed away with the "flu," but finally the crisis was over. It took Papa and me quite a while to overcome the dreaded disease, but finally things were back to normal again.

Mama would take me over to spend the day with Fannie and Lizzie. While she and Aunt Ida visited, we would play. We would go up in the hayloft and swing for hours over the hay on a big rope with a knot tied in the end of it. Then we would go out in a very old, unused chicken house and put a board across the corners for an outdoor toilet. There were big cracks in the building and

it was next to the road that went through the field to Grandpa's. We were sitting there one day talking and laughing and all at once Mr. Loon Sims passed by and said, "Howdy, girls." Boy, were we embarrassed! My "adopted" sister, Fannie, and I laugh about it yet. And we shared so many other memories.

When I was in the sixth grade, the sawmill was moved to Stapleton for one year. It was four miles from school and way back in the woods, so I missed a whole year of school, but studied my books at home. I loved it up there, though. There was a big, flat rock in back of our house and it was larger than a patio. That's where I played. There were eight other families living there. Each had their own house with a rock chimney. They were nice, warm, little houses. All were made pretty much the same, except that the cook house and bunk house were larger.

The mill was set up on the edge of a creek and lots of summer nights, after we ate supper, Mama would take me down there and let me fish awhile. Sometimes I would catch some bream and that was a great thrill.

We would go down and up a hill so steep a vehicle could not go up and down. They had to go around the hill with all their logs and lumber. The lumber was hauled to Stapleton on wagons and put on railroad cars to ship to different places. The logs were brought in by ox carts. The carts were two large wheels about six feet high, joined together by an axle with a long tongue braced to the axle. The oxen were yoked together, two to a yoke. It would take three or four yoke of oxen to pull a load of logs. The logs were fastened underneath the cart with a big log chain.

After we lived there awhile, the men built a slab bridge over the creek and we could go to a big fishing hole near the river called the Big Eddy. To me it was a huge body of water which, in reality, was about the size of a big fish pond. It looked different through a child's eyes. My uncle also took us to a colored church one night which, in those days, was really something.

After about eight months in that location, they moved the mill farther on across the river. I never liked it there. I couldn't go fishing and it was flat, muddy ground. But it was easier to move the mill than haul the logs so far. We were not across the river over four months before we came back home. The mill was set up in its original place which later was replaced by Cooper's store. It was so good to be back home where on cold, frosty mornings we could see smoke pouring from all the chimneys in the community.

I began learning to cook while we were away. After we got back home, I started doing lots of it because I loved it. Mama told me in later years what hard biscuits I made, but they bragged on them, and I'd keep trying to do better all the time. We lived in a rather large house with a double chimney. There was one fireplace in the living room and one in the dining room, two large bedrooms with two beds each, a kitchen with a wood range stove, an outdoor toilet, and all our water was pumped by hand and brought in in buckets. We had to use a washtub for our baths. No one had electricity in those days. Our house had porches all around, except on two ends. It was built in an "L" shape. We were very

happy there. I can remember our first house. It was small and was built of six-inch square cut logs. It had a living room about sixteen by ten feet, a four-foot staircase, and bedroom about sixteen by ten. We had two beds in the back room where we slept and four beds in the two upstairs bedrooms. I loved to go upstairs and look out the windows over the community. There were two windows in each downstairs room, and a porch on each side of the house the length of the house. There were banisters built all around the porches, also benches. There was a walk from the porch to the kitchen porch. The kitchen was a room about fourteen by twenty feet that also served as our dining room. It had a side room for a pantry. All our windows were made of wood, so we had to use our lamps a lot.

I remember when they were sawing the logs for our new house. Papa picked out wide, heart boards until he got all he needed for the new house. After it was built at the east end of the old one, they moved the old house across the highway on twenty acres we owned. Uncle Jim and Aunt Lula lived there for quite a while. Aunt Betty died there. We all missed her so much. Papa later sold the house and land to Ted and Ada Cooper, and the home they have there now is still our two-room log house. Near by Antioch school

Aunt Lula had always lived in Grandpa's home, even after he died. It was left to her and Aunt Bett. He had a long double pen house. That meant a hall about eight feet wide and open at each end. It had a large living room with fireplace, and a bedroom on one end that would hold two beds, and two side rooms. One had two beds in it and the other had one bed. The other end of the house was the kitchen with a pantry and porch on the south side, and a

long porch all across the front with banisters and benches all around. The pump was on a walk at the east end of the porch, and on the west end was a shelf where the water bucket and wash basin sat. Grandpa always sat on the west end of the porch in a low chair leaned back against the wall. In my childish mind, I can still see him.

Uncle Jim later tore the old house down and built a more modern one, which is now owned by Robert King.

Our schools were taught quite different to what the schools are now taught. One teacher taught at least three grades. Each grade had a certain period for each subject. We all did our arithmetic on the blackboard during class. That didn't mean we didn't have to have it prepared beforehand. I loved all my classes, especially spelling, reading, and arithmetic. We did our spelling orally while standing in a line and often we chose sides and had spelling matches. We had to walk to and from school regardless of the weather. When the bus first started bringing the children from Styx River, Mr. Wilcox drove the bus. It was a one-ton truck with an open cab and a long seat on either side of the back, with just a low frame at the back of them. It would not hold over twenty children and it had no top.

Grandpa had died when I was about ten. 1921 We all missed him so much. We never thought much about our step-grandmother dying. She wasn't good to any of us, but it was different with Grandpa. He was so gentle and kind to all of us. Uncle Jim's first wife (Mama's oldest sister, Annie) died when I was seven and about two years later he married Aunt Lula (Mama's baby sister) and they lived with Grandpa as long as he lived. When Grandpa died, they

stayed on the old place and we could visit right on, as often as we wanted to, and that was quite often for Uncle Jim and Aunt Lula were both gentle and kind to all of us.

I've tried to give a picture of our homes and the kind of life we lived in those days, but one would really have to live the kind of life we did to even imagine the peace and tranquility we felt. There was no pressure to face; no bills to worry about; and no payments to make each month. There was less high blood pressure and fewer heart attacks. Those were such memorable days, even years.

Mrs. Kennedy was my teacher in four grades. I finished the seventh grade in her room. She had been principal all along; then they got a man in as principal, a Mr. Clifford Tharp. He was real young and we all treated him about like the other boys. He would play basketball with us like a kid. There were about twenty in the eighth grade, two in the ninth, one in the tenth, and one in the eleventh. The next year, the Rosinton bus started taking all past the eighth grade to Robertsdale High School. That was my last year in school. I had several boys that I liked to talk to, but I was never too fond of any of them.

We really had a big night at the end of school. I had to go lots at night to practice. Aunt Lula usually went with me. I had met Aubrey in January before school was out. I was fifteen in June, and after an eight-month courtship (which we did at our home, since I was never allowed to go anywhere; we had all the young folks there every Sunday) we decided to get married. We had planned to run away if Mama and Papa didn't let us get married. So on August the twenty-fifth, nineteen hundred and twenty-six, we went to Bay Minette and were married by Jessie Kessler, a justice of the peace. Mama, Papa,

Mr. and Mrs. Langham, Fannie and Howard, who had married July first, and Lizzie all went with us. It really flooded all day and all night, but a bunch of women had gathered at our house and had cooked us a big dinner, and some weren't even able to walk home that night. We never had a honeymoon. In those days, no one did. We stayed in the house with Mama and Papa over a year before we could start housekeeping.

There was a company then you could take orders for and deliver and get nice premiums. I started working on one and got a six-place setting of dishes, a four-place setting, a little center table, and some cook things. We had been married a year and four days when James was born, August twenty-ninth, nineteen hundred and twenty-seven. He was a miracle to us. To me he was a big, beautiful doll. I just loved to bathe and dress him and keep him fixed up nearly all the time. I never minded that I had all our clothes to rub clean on a rub board, boil them in the wash pot, and rinse them; then put them on the line to dry and iron them with wood irons.

We moved out to ourselves when James was about three months old. It was hardly a mile away, but we sure were proud to be in our own home. We lived on Aubrey's dad's place and were expected to be up there early every day for Aubrey to work in the fields and for me to help his mother. I did her washing, ironing, and cleaning. She had had a stroke before we were married and had kind of given up. I would sit James up in the middle of her deep feather bed, and he could sit up, while I was ironing with the old-fashioned, wood irons which we would heat winter and summer in the

fireplace. After two years of living there, we moved back into a small house near Mama and Papa, where Aubrey farmed their land. After a couple of years, they moved to Loxley, where Papa worked in Marino's store, and we moved into the big house again. We lived there for several years. Things were good for us. Aubrey drank lots, but we never went lacking for anything.

Fannie's oldest one (George) was a few months older than James and we had the most fun taking pictures of them when they were small. We took pictures of them in all kinds of circumstances. There wasn't lots of entertainment in those days, but we were never bored or lonely. Aubrey and Howard would get together and make "cane knockam," which was whiskey made from cane skimmings. They both drank a lot, but Fannie and I didn't sit and brood about it. We would spend the night at her house or mine and James and George played good together.

When James was five-and-a-half years old, Billy was born on February seventh, nineteen hundred and thirty-three. We didn't think we could ever be as foolish about a second child, but we were. He weighed eleven pounds and four ounces when he was born. I almost had twins, but the second baby had perished away, so he weighed enough for two. Where James had lots of black hair and weighed eight pounds, Billy was a baldheaded baby, just lots of fuzz on his head, but he was a precious baby, too. I can see him yet in my mind lying on a pallet flat on his stomach with his head high, kicking his feet. He was a good baby and we had enough sense by then not to spoil another.

We moved from Papa's house when Billy was nearly two and

moved down the road a short distance to the Tom Blair house that Mr. Langham had bought. We moved in the fall and at Christmas time Billy was so sick with pneumonia we almost lost him. We were so thankful when he was all right. Then in the summer he had colitis and almost died again. Mrs. Langham would keep the children for us to work in the fields and one year we picked up roots in a big "new ground" for fifty cents a day. It was freezing cold. We bought toys for Christmas with the money we earned. We could get lots then with little money. We didn't stay but two or three years there, but while we were there both the boys had the whooping cough. We then moved back to Papa's place.

The boys had a wagon with a wooden stake body and James could pull Billy, so the boys and I would take my pressure canner and go to Fannie's (they had moved into the Blair house) and we would can peaches and okra. One day we canned okra all day. It was late and we needed to go home, so we took our sun hats and fanned the canner until the pressure gauge was down. When we took the gauge regulator off, the canner was still full of steam. When we took the lid off and started taking our okra out, the jars weren't half full and we had one of the ropiest messes you ever saw. We still laugh about it.

When Billy was almost four-and-a-half, we had another son whom we named Jerome. He had lots of black hair and weighed nine pounds. He was born June the seventeenth, nineteen hundred and thirty-seven. He was a fat, healthy baby until he was fourteen months old. He had a virus and I had to wean him. I had always breast fed my babies, and there was no getting up in the cold at

night to fix bottles. He lost his fat then and was never chubby any more.

When he was about two years old, all the larger boys were getting bicycles. James wanted to get an old bike from someone, but we wouldn't let him. I needed a new range the worst way and we had managed to get an account with Sears by this time and for five dollars a month we could get nearly a hundred dollars worth of "stuff." So we ordered James a new, red and white bike. It came while he was in school. We set it up in the bedroom and when he came in, I sent him in the bedroom to get me a pair of hose. I was watching him and I'll never forget the expression on his face and him saying "I'll be John Brown." He forgot hose and everything. He got his bike out and rode a mile or more to the field where his daddy was. It was well worth me using my old stove a couple of years longer to see his happiness. After all, that was what our life was meant for--the happiness and wellbeing of our children.

I never worked away from home when the children were small and was with them for all their first words and first steps.

When they would get out to play, they would crawl under our big, old house, which was at least three feet off the ground. They would take a flat pint bottle or a piece of two-by-four and make them a car or truck and dig a trench to fit them. There were trenches all under the house, but they were so happy. A cousin's son, Teddy Cooper, a year older than James, would be under there with them.

When Jerome was four, we built a new home on eighty acres of land about a mile and a half away. There were lots of trees to be cleared out and all around our house were gallberry bushes. I dug up lots of them to make the yard larger and cleaner looking. They were fine for yard brooms, too, and everyone around kept their yards hoed clean, so they had to be swept every week. We also used a scrub mop with a homemade handle attached to a piece of wood about nine inches wide and eighteen inches long and two inches thick. There were two-inch holes bored all in it and we would have to take dry corn shucks and strip them and fill each hole. They were really a dirt getter, but after we poured soap powder and water on the floor and scrubbed it we would then rinse it until the water was clear. The floors would be so pretty, but it would take them awhile to dry.

After the big house I'd kept up for so long, the new one was easy to keep. Although we still didn't have any modern conveniences, I did the housework and looked after Jerome. James and Billy were large enough to help their dad some, and Billy was his shadow. Wherever his daddy went, he went. We moved in nineteen hundred and forty-one, in September. By then James was fourteen and when the Japs bombed Pearl Harbor in December of nineteen hundred and forty-one I prayed he would never have to leave for service. We worked hard the next two years, but we had forty acres to farm by then, with all the tools and a team of mules to farm with. We always had a good garden, plenty of cows, chickens, and hogs, cane to make our syrup. We could take five dollars a week and buy the groceries that we didn't have for five of us and we had lots of company, too.

April the thirtieth, nineteen hundred and forty-three, we had our little girl. We named her Virginia. She also weighed nine pounds and was another baldheaded baby, but to us she was beautiful anyway. She looked healthy, but was sickly. When she was eight months old, we almost lost her with pneumonia, but with all her sickness she learned to walk and talk early. Jerome watched her one day while I milked the cows and he was pressing his face between the bars of the baby bed and she bit his nose. Boy, was he mad with her. Just wonder if he remembers it.

December sixth, nineteen hundred and forty-four, Aubrey's mother died. She had gotten worse over the years that we were married (her first stroke was in nineteen hundred and twenty-three). She had another light stroke and developed pneumonia and didn't last long. Very few people went to the hospital then, just had the doctors come to their homes. All of my babies were delivered at home and it was fifteen dollars for each of them, except Virginia--she cost twenty-five. Aubrey's dad didn't wait too long before he married again. He got a good woman who didn't mind work. He sold his forty-acre home with a large pecan orchard to Nolan Cooper and bought about five acres near Loxley. where Rosinton School stands

Aubrey worked for himself most of the time and also for the highway department. In the spring of nineteen hundred and forty-five, James was working with the highway department, also. He was draft age, so he volunteered for the navy. He took his physical and passed. It was in July when they called him. My world felt like it ended the night we carried him to catch the bus. I felt like I'd never see him again and Virginia cried for her James.

We had never been away from our children. He wrote regularly and his letters really sustained us. In six weeks when boot training was over, he came home for a few days, then was shipped overseas. We didn't hear from him in weeks. He had been sent to Guam or Saipan.

Shortly after this, my Dad got sick and we were busy again. He took bad December the twentieth and on February the twenty-fifth, nineteen hundred and forty-six, he passed away. Things were never the same after Papa died. Mama was afraid to stay by herself and never liked to be alone, so she moved in with us. At times she gave us all a rather rough time as she thought we should all do as she said. She didn't like for Aubrey to correct our children, so for years there was friction between her and Aubrey and I stayed on needles. Billy was thirteen by then and he was lots of help to his dad. Jerome was about ten, but he had his share to do, too.

James came home in August. His thirteen months in the navy were over. He went to Birmingham where Sara Lee Jones was working (they met their last year in high school) and he found a job in the coal mines, which he didn't like. They were married in October of nineteen hundred and forty-six. I loved her as I did James and was always so happy when they came to visit. Then they moved down here where James worked in Marino's in Loxley store for awhile. He had worked there as a very small boy, when Papa was working. He didn't stay there too long and started helping his dad farm. We rented some land about a mile away for an okra patch. One day, Billy, Jerome, and I started up there to work. I was on the tractor with Billy

and Jerome was standing in a wagon we were pulling. When we turned off the road, the wagon came loose. I happened to look back and Jerome was standing up, waving and laughing. I can picture him now and sometimes get tickled about it after all these years.

February the first, nineteen hundred and forty-eight, our first grandchild came. James and Sara had a little girl at Dr. Holmes' hospital in Foley. It was an upstairs hospital that didn't accommodate but a few patients. When they took Sara to her room, I went to the delivery room door where they had left the baby lying with nothing on. She looked so blue I wanted to go in and put something over her, and if they hadn't come back in when they did, I would have been in there. I loved that little tyke just like my own babies and she was a little doll. They named her Wanda Anne. We were so proud of her. When she was about eight months old, they moved to Chilton County. It was a sad time for us.

We had our other children, though, and life does have to go on. They did visit us as often as they could. We made our first trip to see them when Anne was fourteen months old. That was our first trip to Chilton County and we really enjoyed it. Billy took us. He was around seventeen by then and one of the most careful of drivers.

Not too long after this, Billy hired Jerome one cold day to go to the creek and help him wash greens. The next morning Jerome had the red measles, then Billy took them, and then Virginia, and finally, Aubrey. His dad never let them go anywhere if he heard of any childhood diseases around. I had four to nurse through the measles. I didn't have to cook much, though. They were all

BE00106.58

so sick and the older they were, the sicker they were.

I worked in nineteen hundred and fifty-one and fifty-two at the Rosinton School lunch room. I cooked for around eighty each day. Billy went to work a while before then at Brookley Field, where he worked until he left for the Air Force in April of nineteen hundred and fifty-two.

Jerome and Virginia had some great times after then, playing baseball and swinging from a limb like Tarzan and Jane; with Jerome preaching at her kitten's funeral. Lillie Jarman's dog had killed it, so they buried it and preached and sang. Also every little chick that died, they buried.

They put a lot of memories in a short time as Jerome had quit school halfway through the tenth grade, because his teacher failed him for having to miss lots to help his dad on the farm, when he was sick. He went to work with the highway department and soon met Barbara Dasinger, whom we all loved at first sight. They were married in nineteen hundred and fifty-five and in September of nineteen hundred and fifty-five he went in the Air Force. { Jerome is very successful in CA.

Billy had also gotten married in nineteen hundred and fifty-five, while on leave, to a girl in Prichard. She was Charlotte Preston and we always loved her for she was good to us. She stayed with us while he was in England for a few months and when he got back to Lincoln, Nebraska, she went to be with him.

After Jerome had been through his training, they made their home in Bossier City, Louisiana. While he was in training, Barbara stayed in Pensacola with her family. During that time, she had a darling, little girl, Deborah Jeanette. We were so proud of our

two granddaughters. They all seemed to love to come see us and would always sleep with me. That only left Virginia at home then and there were always so many empty places at the table; but we had to learn to go on.

We grew vegetables and hauled them to Mobile and before Billy and Jerome had gone in service, we both accepted Christ. So when things got rough, we knew we had a comforter.

In December, nineteen hundred and fifty-six, when Debbie was eleven months old, we were going to have them all home for Christmas. Billy had gotten his discharge in April and they lived in Mobile. We had gone over the Saturday before to help get them settled in their new home. The next Friday we got a big load of greens and early Saturday took them to Mobile; then went to Prichard and did some Christmas shopping. When we got back to Loxley, around noon, we found they had looked for us all morning. Billy had gotten killed in an accident the night before. I'll never forget that day as long as I live. It was weeks before we could even realize our son was gone. I then wondered if he was saved, since he had never openly confessed Christ. It really worried me.

One night after my nightly prayer begging God to give me a sign if he was O.K., I had one of the sweetest dreams. It seemed Aubrey, James, Jerome, and I were all at the cemetery where Billy was buried. Billy was in his open casket over the grave and I was crying. The boys told me to hush and pointed over the church. I didn't see anything and was crying again. They told me to hush again and pointed again. This time I saw the most beautiful white dove with a halo around it. In my dream, he had on his uniform,

Rosinton Road in Loxley now Light-house

even his cap, and I believe He was showing me Billy was saved while he was in service. From that time on I never worried about him any more, for I truly believe God answered my prayer. We had to pull ourselves together and go on for we did have other children whom we loved just as much.

Virginia was thirteen and when Jerome and Barbara came home again in June of nineteen hundred and fifty-seven, they took Virginia back to Bossier City, Louisiana, and she stayed for six weeks. That was the longest summer I ever spent.

Gary was born the next year and uncle Willie Seay took us to Bossier City for a weekend. We had such a wonderful time and that was the farthest we ever were from home. Except for a few days' visit when they lived in Pensacola, it was the only time we ever visited Jerome and Barbara, but oh, how we enjoy all the children when they can come home for a few days.

One morning shortly after Billy died, I was sitting alone waiting for daylight to come. Aubrey had gone to Mobile with a load of greens and God gave me a poem in memory of Billy. I would like for all the family to have one.

On February the seventh, in nineteen thirty-three,
God gave us a bundle, we thought it was to keep.
It was a darling, little boy with a broad and happy smile,
Who God, in all His mercy, lent us for awhile.

We watched him grow from year to year.
Our joy seemed so complete
With all the richest blessings laid down at our feet.
All too fast he was our son, who was serving Uncle Sam,
And every time he came back home, we knew he was more of a man.

He served four years in the Air Force, at home and overseas.
I always prayed to God each night to bring him home to me.
And then in nineteen fifty-five, in the month of May,
We got a letter from our boy; this is what he had to say:

"I'm coming home real soon, mom.
Guess what I'm coming for.
How would you like another daughter, mom,
To bring them up to four?"
It made us both so happy
To see him take a wife.
We felt with all his love and charm
They would have a rich, full life.

Then, we got the letter we had waited four years to get.
"We will soon be coming home, mom,
On April the ninth, nineteen fifty-six."
God sent him back as we had asked
To start their life anew.
They were so happy every day
It made the months seem few.

It made our hearts so very proud that they were in and out.
We were happy just to know they were somewhere about.
Then on December the eleventh, nineteen fifty-six,
They came for a little while.
He was so very happy. I now can see his smile.
"I'll be back on Sunday, mom, to see my brother's folks."
But when he came on Sunday, our hearts they nearly broke.
For he was killed the day before
And when he came home again
He was brought into the house by a lot of men.

Our hearts will never be the same, although we may smile.
We can thank God for the memories of the son He lent us for awhile.
We are left so lonely and sad to grieve for the dear one we love,
But if we trust and love our God, we will meet him up above.

We know God, in His mercy,
Does all things for the best.
While we are all here struggling,
Our Bill's gone on to rest.

Anyone who has never lost a loved one suddenly, out of the clear blue, can't know the heartbreak we went through. If I could not have called on Christ, our Savior, I don't think I could have gotten through the next year, but at times Billy was before me so plainly. I could picture him like he was when I would ride to Mobile with him, before he left for service, coming out of a store slinging his ring finger. His ring was a little large and he would

hold his thumb on the end of his finger and sling it. I could see his smile and hear him talk and laugh in my mind. The memories were sweet, but sad.

But time has a way of helping us to learn to live and accept things we cannot change, and having Jesus was such a comfortable feeling. Although our outward appearance was mostly always bright, when we had a family gathering there was always a missing plate at the table. I also started blocking things out of my mind. It was easier to say I don't know than face Billy being gone. Thank God I saw what was happening to me in time. I started working away from home some, just to be with people, and soon got back to a normal life again.

Mama was sick lots, and I had her to care for, so I gave up trying to work away from home. Although all together I worked away from home about three years. Life was like a treadmill and we stayed too busy to have a lot of time to think about anything except to keep busy with our work. And when Mama felt like going, I would take her to spend a day or two with Aunt Lula or Aunt Mina, or they would come and see her. She loved company, so there were lots of people coming in to see her since she was ailing. We were really tied down at home for the last seven years of Mama's life, but I always managed to care for her. She had a horror of the hospital and I had to promise her I would never put her in the nursing home. I told her I would care for her as long as I could crawl, and I practically did just that.

In the meantime, Virginia and Ralph had gotten married. He worked with the highway department and she worked at Vanity Fair. I kept Keith every day when he was well. Ralph would bring him by

and Virginia would come after him in the afternoon while they lived in Robertsdale. If he was sick, I would go down there. They eventually bought a trailer and the year Randy was born moved into our yard. How we loved those two little boys! They were our whole heart. I don't think we ever loved them any more than the other grandchildren, but we were so close to them.

When Randy was two years old, in nineteen hundred and sixty-nine, I had to have major surgery. After eleven days, I came home and Barbara came from Pensacola (where they lived for the year Jerome was in Korea) and took me to their place for a couple of days. I sure did enjoy being in their home. When I left, Randy looked like he had cried a week, but no one would tell me he had when I asked them. As soon as I came home, though, he had to come back and stay with me. They had built a brick home when he was a year old, but it was still close.

Mama stayed at Aunt Lula's while I was in the hospital and she came back real soon, too. Then, in nineteen hundred and seventy, she fell one night and broke her hip. It was hard caring for her then, but by God's help I made it. I had a big garden and canned and put lots in the freezer besides doing all my other work.

About two-and-a-half months after Mama fell, Anne and Sid got married. So Aunt Lula and Willis (my single Uncle) came over and stayed with her, and Johnie Ray and family took us to the wedding. It was the loveliest wedding and we enjoyed it so much and from then on Sid has really been our grandson. We got to go to Anne's graduation and wedding, which, due to sickness, has kept us from all the rest.

Mama was never able to get around again, except with a walker, which she started using too soon. We couldn't do anything with her and she wouldn't go back to the doctor. She was afraid he would remove the pin from her hip. I did the best I could for her, but couldn't give her the help she needed. It would have taken a therapist for that.

The boys and their families came as often as they could and Virginia and family were close, so it didn't seem too bad. Every once in a while Mama would go to Aunt Lula's for the weekend and Ralph and Virginia would take us someplace.

Then July eleventh, nineteen hundred and seventy-two, I passed out and fell and broke my hip. Mama was still in bed and it hadn't been long since I gave her breakfast. When I came to, that was the most excruciating pain I'd ever had. I dragged myself on my back and elbows to the phone to get Aubrey home. When he came, he got Virginia and she took Mama to Aunt Lula's. I was in the hospital twenty-one days and it was almost three months before I could get Mama back home. I soon learned to do all my work from a wheel chair, and waited on Mama for four months from the wheel chair. It wasn't easy, but with God's help, I made it.

About two months after my hip was broken, Ralph and Virginia moved to Graceville, Florida. I still couldn't get off the bed by myself and it almost killed me when they left. I sat up in bed and cried all night. Keith had been staying with me every day and did the cooking. He did a super job and he was only ten. He would even fry chicken and what he fixed had to be just right.

Some nights I would try to exercise my leg and would twist around and get it off the bed, then couldn't lift it back on.

I would sit there until Aubrey got up and get him to lift my leg back on the bed. I felt so useless and helpless. I didn't think I could possibly bring Mama back so soon, but she wanted to come home, so they brought her back. I was never so happy as when I began using the walker; then I could leave it in one place in the kitchen and hold on to the cabinets to get around.

Fannie had been so good to me while I was in the hospital and after I came home. She would come every week for a long time and clean house for me. She and I had always helped each other when our babies were small and she had not forgotten me in time of need.

I had lots of time to think while I was in the hospital and I really grew close to the Lord. I could never have made it without Him. To this day I hate to hear anyone say, "I can't." It's a lot easier to try and see what you can do and one thing I found out: if you leave God out of your life, He will set you down where you have time to think about Him. He sure did me. And although it was a year before I could get around good, I always had my work done and took care of Mama.

We always had a big garden, which Aubrey now had to work. He also had to gather all of it, but I would fill the freezer and can what needed canning. I would go to bed tired at night, but satisfied over my day's work. Of course, I was up lots at night and sometimes it was real bad. Mama was lots worse.

March the thirteenth, nineteen hundred and seventy-four, she passed away at the age of ninety-three. I had never been away from her very long at a time and we really missed her.

Aubrey was working, so I threw myself into lots of long-denied housework. I painted and changed her room and we decided, as we had a chance, we would go to Graceville and see Ralph, Virginia, and the boys. So we went early on Saturday and came back Monday. Virginia was looking for Anita then, but we went to Dothan Saturday afternoon and went through the mall. We had such a good time. It was time to leave for home all too soon. We had to get back and start working again. Aunt Lula was at Fannie's. She was down with a broken hip. She had fallen just before Mama died and didn't have anyone to stay with her. So we visited her often, but Aubrey felt bad lots even then.

Johnie (Fannie's son) Ray and family would come get us on Sunday afternoon to ride around with them. We always enjoyed it so much. Johnie and Billy were always so close and he seemed like one of our boys. They came by nearly every Sunday, and when he had a recurrence of the brain tumor he had about five years before, we were very concerned for him. After he had surgery again, we never saw him. He didn't live but a few days and after he was gone we really missed him.

After Mama passed away, James came down and took us for a five-day vacation. Below is a highlight of our trip.

OUR TRIP

Thursday night, June the twenty-seventh, nineteen hundred and seventy-four, James came down in his camper to take us on a little vacation. Early Friday morning, the twenty-eighth, we got up and ate breakfast, loaded up the camper, and at 6:45 a.m. left for Graceville to see Virginia and family. We got there shortly

after ten a.m., had a nice visit before we ate the delicious lunch she had prepared; and, of course, during that time enjoyed Keith and Randy and rocked Anita. She's a little doll and only three weeks old. After Ralph got off work at 3:30 p.m., he, Virginia, James, and Aubrey went to Dothan and got groceries. I baby sat and sure enjoyed it. I didn't have a minute's trouble with them and sure enjoyed being with the boys again. And, of course, it gave me a chance to get acquainted with Anita.

We were ready to leave Graceville at 6:45 Saturday morning. We took Keith with us. We were on our way to Auburn to see Anne and family. We saw some beautiful scenery and I have never seen so many peanuts, which they process at the peanut mills and bag for shipping, to be made into peanut butter and oil. We saw some of the most beautiful homes set up on the hills and lots of beautiful trees around them. They looked like old, colonial homes and I called them mansions on the hilltop. We saw some of the prettiest flowers that I'd never seen before and the trees were the most beautiful green. The roads winding around the hills were all lovely. It was wonderful.

We went through Tuskegee (a colored community). I'd heard of it all my life, but had never been there. The scenery wasn't outstanding, but to me it was historical. There were some pretty homes there; not too many white folks lived there. We got to Auburn around 10:15 a.m. Anne and Sid have a beautiful home nestled in the pines upon a hill. She took us out riding over the campus at Auburn. It was unbelievable that one college could cover so many acres, or it seemed miles to me. It's a real hilly

town and beautiful. We went by the places where Anne and Sid had stayed while they were in college. They have some homes there that really look like mansions.

She even took us out in the country to see their garden and gave us lots of vegetables. We then went back and ate the wonderful lunch she had fixed, and in the afternoon we went to Opelika, which was about four miles away, to see Sid. He runs the Super Drug Store there. Ty was a little show-off and we really enjoyed him. He called Keith "Keki." We rode around all afternoon and had a lot of silly fun. We sat up visiting until 11:00 Saturday night and were ready to leave there at 7:20 Sunday morning on our way to Birmingham. That was Sara's day off and we wanted to be with her all we could. We went through Tallassee, another town I'd heard of so much. On this route I had never seen as much cotton as I saw that day and more pretty homes set up on little hills with well-kept lawns and such pretty flowers. It made me think of a picture in a book.

We went on through Chilton County and got a basket of peaches, which were delicious. It made me homesick to travel over where we stayed twelve weeks one summer. We got to Birmingham between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. We rested until we ate lunch and started out again.

We rode over Birmingham; part of the roads were over the mountains part of the time and you could see the valley full of houses with the iron man standing real high in the center of the valley. The Interstate is cut through the mountains, which are beautiful. The hotels and motels are sitting on top of the mountains. We also went to the Farmers Market, which was one more sight to remember.

I'd never seen so many people or so much produce in one market. After we left there, we went by the Liberty National Insurance building. Seeing that, you can imagine why insurance is so high. We then went through the "swanky" section of the city and saw more mansions.

I never did describe James' and Sara's house in Birmingham. It's brick and has a story book roof, real steep. It has three sections to the roof like it was three buildings. The porch has archways and they have a pretty back yard with lots of shade trees. It's an old place, but I loved it.

On Monday morning, James took us to Chilton County where we visited Mr. and Mrs. Posey (Sara's aunt and uncle), the property Sara's mother left them in Clanton, and to their home where we had spent the summer a few years before. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson lived there and seemed to be a nice, elderly couple. They let us go through the house. He makes tiny model trains that will run. It was amazing, especially to Keith. He took pictures of them.

Everywhere we went they gave us fresh vegetables. When we went back to Birmingham around noon, we carried pole beans, squash, and peaches James bought. We went by a hamburger stand when we got back to town and got burgers and French fries, then went on to the house and ate lunch. After lunch, he took us to the Liberty Super Market. It was the largest market I was ever in. We bought groceries, then went back and loaded them in the camper and the rest of the day we snapped beans and fixed them to can when I got home. During it all, we were having a wonderful time visiting with James as Sara had to leave at 2:00 p.m. to go to work. We sat up and

visited until 10:30 p.m. and Tuesday morning, after James went to T.C.I. and got his paycheck, we left for home. It was 9:30 a.m. when we left Birmingham. The ribbon of road was lined with cars, but being an interstate highway we made good time. We came through Jemison and got some peaches, then headed for Baldwin County.

We had never been on the Interstate over Montgomery. The traffic had always been so congested through there, it seemed odd to just see the town from a distance. At 12 o'clock, we stopped and James fixed us a drink and we ate crackers for our lunch. We got home at 3 o'clock. It was good to be home, but we had so many sweet memories of our trip, more than I could ever put down on paper. That was the end of our vacation for June and July of nineteen hundred and seventy-four, but the memories will never end.

I was real busy the rest of the week getting all our vegetables canned that were given to us on our trip. Keith stayed with us for six weeks and we had lots of fun. Keith and I would go fishing in Bill Middleton's pond and late one evening we caught several big catfish. We were so excited until it came time to clean them, but we got it done. One day we went to Cooper's Lake. By Rosinton School We took our lunch and spent the day. We never caught much down there, but Rel Cooper never charged us and we enjoyed feeding our bait to the small ones anyway. It was always so lonely when he had to go home.

When James and Jerome came home every summer, they would always try and take us to see Virginia and family, mostly for overnight. James was always in the camper and after Aubrey got to feeling so bad he could lie down while we rode. We made a few trips down

BE00106.530

there before he began feeling so bad. We always had such wonderful times when we were with all the children.

August the twenty-fifth, nineteen hundred and seventy-six, we were married fifty years. The children planned an anniversary celebration for us. They all were here, except Barbara, Debbie, and Gary. They lived in California by then, so Jerome flew into Birmingham Airport and came down with James. Keith had come over and was helping me clean house. He insisted I move some things from the living room to the bedroom, which I agreed to. When James and Jerome came, it was after dark. Keith went out to help them bring their things in and here they came in with a big stereo. We were so proud of it and have enjoyed it so much. That was our gift from the children. It just fit where Keith fixed for it. He sure fooled me. The party was great.

Randy soon began coming over for a couple of weeks in the summer and we enjoyed having him, too. He was no fisherman, though, so we never went fishing, but he would help me clean house and cut grass and I would go to the book store with him. It would kill us all over again when they went home.

The other grandchildren came to see us and we would enjoy them so very much, but they didn't get to stay long at a time.

Debbie came home for two weeks in October, I believe, of nineteen hundred and seventy-seven. She spent one week here and one with her other grandparents in Pensacola. We had the most fun with her dressed in Aubrey's old, big overalls. I often think of that time, the memories are so sweet. Then, I believe, it was the following summer when Jerome came home that Gary came with him.

BE00106.50

Carla came for a week while they were here and we fell in love with her on sight. Gary and Keith played and sang at different places and I was so proud of them, my heart swelled with pride. I went to all the singings I could, but Aubrey wasn't well then and I couldn't go all the time. We feel we are so blessed. All our grandchildren play and sing for the glory of God and lead Christian lives.

Keith started working when he lacked two years being through high school, and going to school and working didn't give him much time to spend with us. He graduated in nineteen hundred and eighty and started working regularly. Randy had to baby sit with Anita and he couldn't come. So most of the time we sit alone. With Aubrey's health gone and me sick lots, at times we wonder if the struggle to go on is really worth the effort it takes to keep things going, but then I think about what our Savior suffered for us and I know the price is small compared to what He paid that we might have eternal life.

When Jerome came home in the summer of nineteen hundred and seventy-eight, he carried us to Graceville one Sunday and we spent the day with Ralph, Virginia, and the children. It was a long, tiresome trip for one day, but we sure had a good time and Virginia had such a good dinner. Keith started playing and singing with a young gospel group that night and for about a year and a half or more they were together until they each went their own way to enter college. They were a nice bunch of kids and we liked them all. They came to our church once and went to Foley once and to other different churches.

February the twenty-eighth, nineteen hundred and seventy-nine, Aubrey had a stroke, and though most of the work was mine after that, it wasn't too bad. I would always ask God for strength, patience, kindness, and love, and He always answered my prayer. On June the third, James and Sara came down and spent the night with us, and the fourth we got up early and went home with them for a couple of days. We stopped in Frisco City as we went on, at Grandma Dyess' grave, where I hadn't been since nineteen hundred and twenty-six, just before we were married.

Winfield Scott Dyess, Jas wife Eliza Jane Hobbs

We also stopped at an old, colored church. It had once been a nice building, but wasn't in use any more. The lumber in the floor was so pretty. Sara and I went in looking around and the first thing that happened was an old owl came flying across the church. I got out of there fast and she laughed at me, but no owl was going to hit me like it did the window.

We had gone through Selma like we used to go when we went up there. We stopped in Jemison and got four plate lunches and went on to the house and ate dinner. We had never seen their new house and I just couldn't get enough of going through it. It was so pretty. They have a long sun deck and that was my favorite spot late in the evening. After we ate, we rode around and found a pretty peach orchard where we could pick our own peaches. It was such fun and reminded me of the summer we spent up there when we picked peaches for James.

When we started back home we left early and went by Auburn to see Anne and family. She had prepared a delicious lunch for us and after we had eaten we went to Opelika to see Sid awhile before we

BE00106.50

left. Ty was so cute. He was taking violin lessons and he played a tune or two for us. When we left there, I did like I did at James' and Sara's; I went all over the house again, for I wondered if we would ever get to go again and I wanted to remember all of it. It was such a wonderful visit. As the months went by, Aubrey gradually grew worse. The children all came home as often as they could to see us.

When they did come, we were all so happy, but we couldn't ride around as we once did because their dad couldn't sit up long at a time. Just before he got disabled to go to church, he had joined the church I belonged to. That really made me happy. Joe Langham, our pastor, was so good to come visit us. They started a tape ministry from the church and one of the ladies from the church brings the Sunday service over on Monday and plays it. We enjoyed it so much, also the fellowship with Mrs. Oden. One never knows how precious church is to them until they get where they can't go. We have lots of time to think about our Savior and we know He understands. And I pray each day each of our family will draw closer to Him. We love each of them and know morally they're perfect in our eyes, but we want them to live in the will of God and be under the blood of the Lamb, so they will always be safe. And when we leave this life, we hope to be with all our loved ones in Heaven through eternity.

April second, nineteen hundred and eighty-one, Aunt Lula passed away. We miss her real bad, but know she's with our Savior. Then on the third, Fannie had to go in the hospital for a week. The doctor is afraid she has cancer, but she still puts her faith in God.

BE00106.50

She's the only sister I've ever had, so I'm praying she will be O.K. But we're all getting old now and we know our days are drawing to an end. All we can do is be prepared to meet our God.

Sunday, April nineteenth, nineteen hundred and eighty-one, this was a wonderful Easter. Aubrey has felt real bad, but Ralph, Virginia, and the children came on Friday afternoon and stayed until Sunday afternoon. We enjoyed them so very much. They went to church and Joe and Hazel Langham (pastor and wife) came back with them for dinner. We all had good fellowship and enjoyed ourselves.

These are the highlights of my life. I could never take the time to write every detail. So I'll still be praying when we all leave this life we will all be joined together in Heaven with our darling Bill.

BE00106.50

EPILOGUE

So much has happened in the past six months. If the Lord hadn't been with me, I don't think I could be here to write this. Aubrey's health had gotten so bad. On April 2, 1981, Aunt Lula passed away. Age She was a second mother to me. I had not gotten to visit her regularly the past year, but I missed her, just knowing she was gone. James, Sara, Anne, Sid and Ty came down that weekend, so they took me to the funeral. We got Clarence Langham to stay with Aubrey while we were gone.

Fannie had gone into the hospital for tests on the third of April. I'm sure the doctor told her what her trouble was, but she kept trying to be O.K. She spent a few days in the hospital before they let her come home. Sometime the first of May, she had to go back in the hospital and the doctor said she was in the last stages of cancer. On May the twenty-eighth, she passed away. She was the only sister I'd ever known and we talked to each other from two to four times a day. I was lost after she was gone.

Aubrey was getting worse all the time and I needed a morale builder so bad. Fannie was always great on that. Our life settled down to a daily routine of trying to make my loved one as comfortable as possible. He had gotten in so much pain. All we could do was look forward to the children coming home in June. James and Jerome came home on the twenty-fourth and Keith, the twenty-fifth. On Sunday, James and Keith went home. When Jerome and I got up Monday, Aubrey was worse and he kept getting worse until we had him in the hospital by eight o'clock on July first. He seemed to know the first week he was in there, but the second week he didn't know anything,

BE00106.52

so it seemed. On the fourteenth of July, he passed away at around 5:15 p.m. Part of my life seemed to stop at that hour.

Everyone was wonderful to us, but the pain and loneliness was always there. He had always been so warm and when I kissed him last, he was so cold.

After a week at home, I left for California with Jerome for four weeks, then went on to James' for two weeks. I thought I had everything under control when I got home and inside a week my nerves had put me in the hospital for five days. I've been fighting them since I came home and by lots of prayers, I've finally gotten a deep, inner peace. It's still lonely and I miss my darling so bad at times, but I feel with God's help He will give me strength to endure until He's ready for me to leave this world, too.

BE00106.50

From:
Mrs. Jeanette Ryan
22185 C.R. 62 S.
Robertsdale, AL. 36567



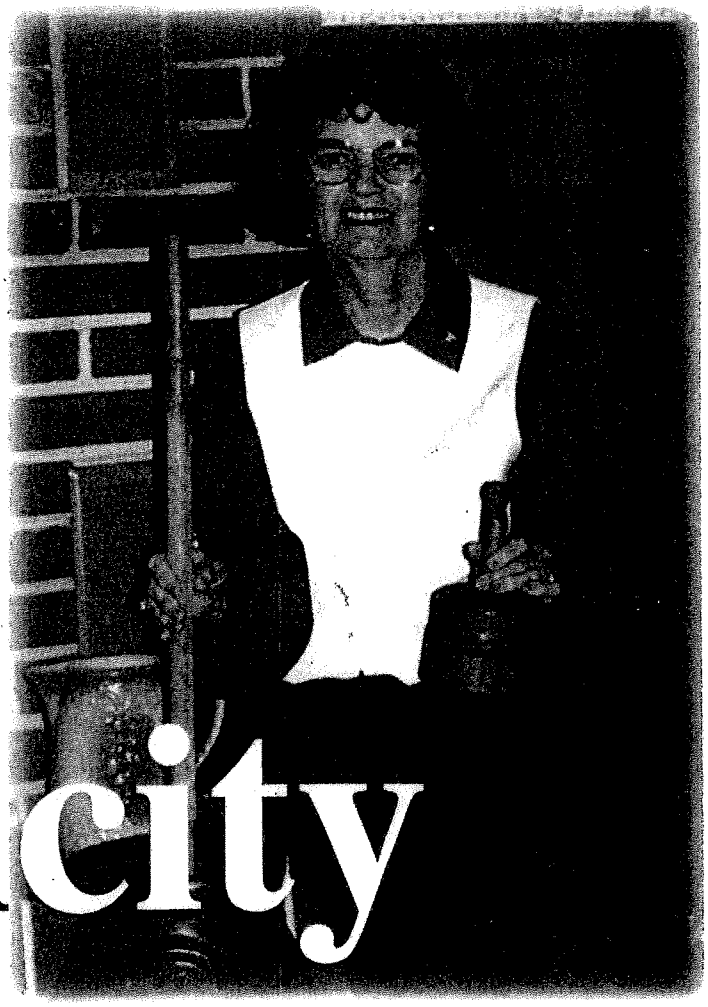
FIRST CLASS

Baldwin County Board of Education
Attention: Ms. Harriet Outlaw - Historic Info.
2600 N. Hand Ave.
Bay Minette, AL. 36507

BE00106-50

Mrs. Davida R. Hastie
P. O. Box 69
Stockton, AL 36579

Several months ago, we asked for contributions from our readers about their experience with the coming of electricity to Baldwin County and the past 60 years of service by Baldwin County EMC. We received this story from Mrs. Jeanette Dyess Ryan of Rosinton (right). I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I did. I'm sure it will bring back memories for a lot of people! ◆



Life before and after electricity

By Jeanette Dyess Ryan

Hard Times of Family Survival

During the 1940s, living conditions in Baldwin County were very primitive. We were in the middle of World War II. Our family was just concerned about surviving from week to week in our home in the Rosinton community. My brothers and I walked two or three miles back and forth to school each day depending on where we lived. My cotton dresses and made overcoat were not nearly warm enough. I could hardly wait until I reached school so I could warm my cold feet by the big pot-bellied stove in my classroom. Once my brother came to school barefooted on a cold winter day. He told the teacher he forgot to put his shoes on. His first grade teacher warned him for three days that he must wear shoes. She finally realized he didn't have any shoes, so she took matters into her hands and made arrangements for him to have some shoes. We trudged those tiresome roads in heat, rain and cold. Once we turned back because of snow.

Some of the teachers walked to school also, but always arrived in plenty of time to have the fire burning and the room warm. It was very difficult trying to do our homework with the four of us hovered around the table with only a kerosene lamp for light. Once a week on Monday wash day we helped pump water from a pitcher pump in the back yard to fill the big black wash pot used to boil the clothes in. I enjoyed stirring them around with a smooth white stick, but had to be extremely careful not to get too close to the fire. Then we filled the big number 2 tubs. Mama scrubbed the soiled clothes on the rub board before she rinsed them. After they were rung by hand, we hung the sheets and towels on a rope clothes line, pinned them with two-prong clothes pins and lifted up the prop in the middle so they wouldn't drag the ground. The work clothes were hung on a barb wire fence. We also had to pump buckets of water for drinking, cooking, washing dishes and bathing in the wash tubs. Everybody drank out of the same dipper in the water bucket, but never seemed to have many colds and viruses that are so prevalent today.

The two or three black heavy irons used to iron our stiffly starched apparel were heated by the fireplace or on the iron cook stove. Mama had a large kettle on the stove full of simmering hot water to use to wash dishes in the big dish pans. That stove really did cook some good biscuits and cornbread, but the house got pretty hot in the summer when it was fired up. Our rock fireplace which Daddy built heated our house. The problem was it would burn your legs until they turned purple if you stood too close for long. Your back was cold and your legs blistering. Lots of wood had to be chopped.

To sweep and clean the floors we had brush brooms made from sage grass and bound together with twine. You could really see the dust balls flying all over the house as they escaped their hiding places. If our floors were rough planks, we sprinkled sand over them and scrubbed them with a scrub brush made out of corn shucks. It had a round

BE00106.50

smooth handle which was whittled out of wood and a board with holes in the bottom to stick the shucks in. As we rinsed them with buckets of clean water, the sand, dirt and water ran through the cracks. At night our feet would be so cold we couldn't stretch them out even though we had tons of heavy homemade quilts piled on the beds. The quilting frames hung from the ceiling during winter. The neighbors gathered at each other's houses for a quilting party. Before we started school, my brother and I would crawl underneath and play. I liked to recognize the squares from my homemade dresses.

It was usually my job to churn the clabbored milk in the brown churn until lumps of butter came to the top. Then we had good fresh butter to eat and buttermilk to drink. Mama hand-milked our faithful cow, Daisy, twice daily until my brothers were old enough to take turns. Fresh milk was a necessary part of our daily nutrition. I can't ever remember going hungry, but sometimes we scraped the bottom of the meal barrel before Daddy could take the corn to the grist mill in Robertsdale to get it ground.

Mama used bleached flour and cow feed sacks and whatever material she could get to make our dresses, shirts, sleeping clothes and underwear on her Singer treadle sewing machine which she bought by selling a cow she raised. She kept the knees of the pants patched, too. We might have been poor, but were clean and neat. Mama's past time was spent embroidering and sewing for others.

Daddy made syrup when I was young by using a syrup mill which had been my

"We helped pump water from a pitcher pump in the back yard to fill the big black wash pot used to boil the clothes in."

Grandpa Dyess'. I can still remember my feelings of sorrow for the old mules as they walked around and around in a circle so the mill could squeeze the juice out of the sugar cane. But I also remember my joy when I was able to taste the sweet cane juice before it was boiled into thick syrup.

The Day the Lights Came On

Living conditions continued pretty much the same with our family moving to several different houses until I was about 10. In 1944, we lived in a house owned by the Ard family behind the Ellison and Hankin's family farms. One day as I walked the dusty lane coming home from school and turned the curve to the small hollow I could see a truck parked in front of the house. I could see it contained a lot of wire and other supplies as I passed it. Inside the house I saw Mr. W.M. Gulledge, the community electrician, running wires upstairs and cutting small holes in the top of the ceiling. When he finished his job, I went outside while they turned on the power. I was afraid those electric wires might short out and explode causing the house to catch on fire. Since it evidently worked, I ran inside to see the whole house ablaze with the brightness of sunlight shining from those small, white bulbs with long pull strings hanging from short chains. It was an incredible experience for me to do my homework without having to smell the rancid odor of the old kerosene lamp. It took my eyes awhile to adjust to the glow of a million lights, but it was an experience I will never forget.

Instrumental People

I later heard that Mr. and Mrs. Alton Hankins Sr. were instrumental in bringing electricity to our rural Rosinton community so soon. It happened through President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Rural Electricity Act. The Farm Club had put Mr. Hankins in charge of getting electricity in rural Baldwin County. Mrs. Hankins went from house to house to get approval from neighbors to set up power poles. Electricity was first turned on in 1938, changing Rosinton forever.

Although we had electricity, it would be a few more years before the other major appliances would come. After the war was over, we stood in line in Mobile to purchase a heavy, reconditioned electric iron which made ironing so much easier. When we purchased our first old home and moved closer to Robertsdale we owned a wooden type ice box. The ice man would deliver ice a couple of times a week so we could have cold sweet tea once in a while. He had big tongs to lift the 50- or 100-pound blocks of ice made at the ice house in Robertsdale. It was a memorable day when we received our new Philco refrigerator from a store in Robertsdale. I never complained about having to defrost it. We had cold milk all the time now.

A wringer type washing machine was later bought on time payments and placed in our little shed out back. A long hose ran from the electric pump to fill the machine and tubs. We ordered a

See Electricity, page 10

"The two or three black heavy irons used to iron stiffly starched apparel were heated by the fireplace or on the iron cook stove."

"It was an incredible experience to do homework without having to smell the rancid odor of the old kerosene lamp."

BE00106.50

Have questions? We have answers.

Q *I'm new to this area, and I've never heard of an electric co-op. What makes Baldwin County EMC different from any other power company?*

A A co-op (short for cooperative) is a private business organization that is incorporated with the state, just like any other corporation. Unlike traditional corporations, however, the cooperative does not sell shares of stock. The cooperative is founded so a group of people, usually neighbors, can provide themselves with goods or services not economically available otherwise.

These people become members of the cooperative, and must be actively using the services or buying the products of the co-op to belong. Each member pays a small membership fee, and the business obtains its funds from loans or proceeds from the business operation.

Although every business must make a profit to be successful, the cooperative is a not-for-profit organization, and all profits over expenses are returned to the members. In the case of your electric cooperative, this is done by accumulating capital credits to the member's accounts, and paying them out as the financial condition of the business allows.

Each member of the co-op has one vote in cooperative business meetings, which take place once each year. At the annual meeting, the members elect a board of trustees that is responsible for establishing policies and supervising the management of the business. They may also vote on additions or changes to the bylaws, which were established when the co-op was first incorporated.

Because Baldwin County EMC is a co-op, owned by the people it serves, your management and employees are local residents who are neighbors and friends. They share your concerns and are responsive to your needs because they live and work in the same communities as you. The concept of *neighbors helping neighbors* is not a new idea. In fact, Benjamin Franklin formed the first successful cooperative in the United States in 1752. The idea has been around for a long time, and your rural electric cooperative, Baldwin County EMC, celebrates it's 60th anniversary this April.

We are proud to be a co-op, and proud to share in a long tradition of service to our friends and neighbors!◆

Electricity

Continued from page 9

small device to place in the tub to heat the water. The only problem was it sometimes would shock you if your feet were wet when you unplugged it. I volunteered to do the wash in the summer. The old electric pump which came with the house would give me a shock, too. If the motor clicked on, I took a stick to turn it off when fetching water for the house. Once my young cousin touched it and she couldn't turn it loose. I ran to pull the power switch. No ground wire I guess. It was a Godsend when the pipes were laid bringing cold water to the kitchen sink.

The most pleasurable little connection to the world we finally purchased was a little Zenith radio. How we enjoyed listening to the World Series, "Amos and Andy", "Jack Benny" and the "Top Ten Countdown" songs of the week. It played loud and clear on Saturday nights as the stars of the Grand Ole Opry performed. That radio was a prized possession.

After I married, other conveniences such as an indoor bathroom, electric stove and hot water heater would be a blessed reality. The real highlight of our unbelievable entertainment came when Mr. Virgil Bodle delivered our first black and white screened television. It was a Motorola and lasted for years. The picture was snowy at times, but how the kids enjoyed watching "Captain Kangaroo," the cartoons and "The Wizard of Oz." Those were the days when families could sit down and watch any show with their children and not have to censor it.

The smaller appliances came gradually. Since I enjoyed cooking, I always asked for appliances for gifts. I still remember the sturdiness of my first heavy duty Doermeyer mixer and my first toaster, both Christmas gifts. I sewed our clothes on a portable Singer sewing machine. A small Electrolux vacuum cleaner was obtained one day from a door-to-door salesman with a small down payment and monthly installments. In 1967, we moved into our total electric brick home which took a year for our family to build. Year by year other inventions were obtained. The latest one is a new bread maker which I'm trying to master. You guessed it. It was a 1996 Christmas gift.

Now, I feel fortunate to have a warm house and everything I need. I have lived in two different worlds, the primitive of the past and the convenient comfort of the present. I believe these life experiences have helped me appreciate life more and the material possessions granted me by living in rural Alabama. I wouldn't want to go back to the old days and old ways when living conditions were so hard, but sometimes I think my children and grandchildren have been the disadvantaged ones by not experiencing the thrill of the world as it progressed.

Our total electric home made sense 30 years ago, and it is still saving us cents today!◆

CO-OP SECTION CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



