

Union Hill, Union Institute, Williams, Willie, and Woodland.

Hon. M. L. Duggan, Rural School Agent, thought so much of the schools of Jefferson County, that he made a stereopticon view to show to the backward counties of Georgia the progress that our county has made in consolidation and school buildings.

Jefferson County is proud of her Senior high schools. Any boy or girl in the county can reach one of these schools in an half hour ride.

Louisville Academy is housed in a handsome \$100,000 building, surrounded by a campus of eight beautiful acres with spacious grounds for athletics and playground.

This historic school was created by the legislature in 1784, the same year in which Franklin College, now the University of Georgia, was created.

Stapleton High School has the unique distinction of having erected a \$50,000 school building by public subscription of her own patriotic people.

Wrens Academy stands as a monument to the heroic and self-sacrificing efforts of Supt. C. C. McCollum, who has been at the head of this wonderful school for the past thirty years. Mr. McCollum has seen this school grow from a one-room shack with an enrollment of twenty-five pupils to the present

handsome structure, with an enrollment of over 400 pupils.

Bartow High School is today in one of the most up-to-date school buildings in the State, erected in 1923.

Wadley High School was the first brick school building erected in the county. The people of this fine community were not satisfied with the school accommodations, so in 1923 a new grammar school building was erected, which is the pride of the whole district.

Junior high schools are located at Avera, Grange, Moxley, Matthews, Stellaville, and Zebina.

These schools teach nine grades and have from three to five teachers in each school, with a term of at least eight months.

Avera and Matthews schools will soon be housed in new buildings, as bond issues were recently held.

The curriculum in these schools is in conformity with the regular work of our Senior high schools.

Instead of carrying the school to the children, the children are brought to the school. All transportation is handled by Ford trucks with standardized bodies; the drivers contract a salary for the year and furnish their own trucks.

There are twenty-eight Ford trucks operating daily over the county transporting over 1,000

children to the schools. Over one-half of the enrollment in our consolidated schools is composed of rural children. The average cost per day a child is less than ten cents.

Competent drivers and good roads enable our trucks to make schedule time and also guarantee to the parents the safety of their children.

It is not a question now of getting people to send their children to school; the great problem is to adequately care for the ones that are sent. All of our schools are crowded to capacity and the teachers are burdened with large classes.

Parents who have been sending their children only six months to the small schools are now sending them nine months, as they readily see the great opportunities that are placed before their children.

Our five high schools enroll eighty per cent, of the 2,700 white children in the county of school age. Louisville Academy has an enrollment of 450 pupils; 250 of this number are transported in the seven Ford trucks that operate to this school.

Wadley and Bartow schools have each enrolled 350 children with fifty per cent, of them coming from the country.

Stapleton, with an enrollment of 275 children, has over 125 from the rural districts.

Wrens Academy, with an enrollment of over 425

SCHOOL AT WADLEY PHOTO

children, has over fifty per cent, from the country. Louisville Academy has won literary honors for the past three years in the County Meet. In the Tenth District Contest in 1924, Louisville won the Literary Cup. A County Meet is held each year; all the schools of the county gather for athletic and literary contests. The interest of the teachers and children is stimulated weeks before the contests and the schools of the county are kept before the public eye.

Stapleton High School has always made creditable showing both in literary and athletic events. Stapleton won the County Basketball Cup recently, and the Augusta Trade District Cup the year previous.

Wrens High School won the County Basketball Cup in 1925, and the Tenth District Cup in 1926. Wrens school also won the Athletic Cup in the Tenth District Contest in Warrenton in 1925.

All teachers of Jefferson County have enrolled one hundred per cent, in the Georgia Education Association for the past three years.

The financial condition of a county always reflects upon the efficiency or inefficiency of the County Board of Education. Over \$125,000 is spent annually for the maintenance of the schools. In addition to the county-wide tax of five mills that is

WRENS SCHOOL

SCHOOL AT BARTOW

levied, the thirteen local school districts levy five mills for administration of the schools.

All money raised to finance the \$500,000 invested in school buildings is raised by bond issues in each local district.

Money for education is as much a preventive expense against ignorance and crime as the dollars spent on the army and navy prevent war.

The equalization of educational opportunities for all children is at last coming to be realized in our county. The child in the remotest country district has access to as good school in Jefferson County as the one born and bred in the largest towns of the county.

Our school system has developed a splendid community spirit and has broken down the long-standing barrier that has existed between the country and the town. The happy result of the \$250,000 bond election for Good Roads last November has proven the above statement.

Three of the five accredited high schools in the county are on a paved road known as Federal Highway No. 1, which runs from Fort Kent, Maine, to Miami, Florida. The present generation, and generations to come, will always sing praises to Hon. J. R. Phillips, member of the State Highway Commission, for his untiring efforts in getting this main thoroughfare through the county.

The experience of Jefferson County with the district and consolidated system has been most happy; and it is hoped that our entire rural school system throughout the State will be developed along the lines outlined in this short history.

### THE YAZOO FRAUD

The territory of Georgia extended to the Mississippi River on the west. By all the treaties the state held all that region in undisputed control. In 1789 a party of men in South Carolina organized themselves into a company, and named their organization the "South Carolina Yazoo Company". It was called Yazoo from a river and region of land near the Mississippi, once possessed by the Yazoo Indians, which this company undertook to purchase from Georgia.

Other companies were formed at the same time for the same purpose viz: "The Virginia Yazoo Company," with Patrick Henry at its head. "The Tennessee Company" was another corporation. These companies made application to the Georgia Legislature at the same time for grants of western lands. The agents of these companies worked with great energy, and much excitement prevailed. Soon, another company was formed, called "The Georgia Company".

Many began to look with distrust on these companies, while the agents painted, in glowing terms, the benefits that would come to Georgia by the sale of these lands.

The Senate passed the bill legalizing the sale of Georgia's western lands after nine days' discussion, and was signed by Governor Walton. By the provision of this bill, the three companies from South Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee—Georgia being excluded—received over twenty million acres of land in payment of two hundred thousand dollars or one cent per acre. This legislation produced great indignation in Georgia, but fortunately all the provisions of the grants were not fulfilled, and as the companies could not claim their lands, this sale was never completed. Other companies sprang up, and in 1794 the legislature received new proposals for the purchase of the western lands.

The companies were: "The Georgia Company", "The Virginia Yazoo Company", "The Tennessee Company", and "The Georgia-Mississippi Company". These companies applied for twenty-three million acres of land and offered five hundred thousand dollars for it, or about two cents per acre. George Matthews was governor. He opposed the passage of any bill granting these lands. Every argument was used to gain his approval. The bill

passed the legislature, but the Governor vetoed it. This checked the operations for a time, but the agents of the companies persisted with Governor Matthews, until he finally signed the act. A few days later, another bill was introduced into the senate with a new title, but in import the same as that which had been vetoed.

The Senate passed the fraudulent bill, and it received the signature of the Governor. The four companies who received land under this grant were, "The Georgia Company", "The Georgia-Mississippi Company", "The Tennessee Company", and the "Upper Mississippi Company". Thirty-five million acres of land were sold for five hundred thousand dollars, or for one and a half cent an acre.

Intense excitement prevailed, and great indignation expressed against the legislature, and the executive legislators were accused of bribery. William H. Crawford took an active part in the opposition, as did other men of prominence. The Georgia Senators in Congress were James Gunn and James Jackson. Mr. Gunn had accepted a prominent place in one Yazoo Company and, when he came home, found himself in great disfavor. Mr. Jackson violently opposed the scheme and when the bill passed and became a law, he resigned his seat in the senate, and returned to Georgia to fight the Yazoo fraud.

He was elected to the legislature, which was to meet the second Tuesday in January, 1796, in Louisville, the new capital of Georgia. The Legislature assembled, Governor Matthews sent a message explaining the state of affairs, and advised them to repeal the Yazoo Act of the past legislature. He told them the various companies had paid into the treasury the amount required, had cancelled all mortgages, and were in full possession of the land. The case had become complicated, and required careful legislation. On January 5, 1796, Jared Irwin was elected Governor. Both branches of the legislature had been elected, pledged to repeal the Yazoo Act. A committee of nine persons was appointed to investigate the validity and constitutionality of the act, of which committee, James Jackson was chairman. The committee reported that the fraud and corruption by which the said act was obtained, made it a nullity itself and not binding or obligatory on the people of the state.

A bill drafted by James Jackson, known as the Rescinding Act, was passed by both houses and signed by Governor Irwin Feb. 13, 1796. This Act states the fraudulent grounds upon which the Yazoo lands were obtained, and further declares it to be the sense of Georgia that the Yazoo Act is not binding upon the people, and that the money paid into

the treasury be refunded, and the grants considered annulled. A day or two after the passage of the Rescinding Act, it was determined to burn the Yazoo Act, and purge the records of everything relating to it. On Feb. 15, 1796, it was ordered by the legislature that a large fire be kindled in front of the State House, lit from the sun by a burning glass, in order to use fire from heaven to burn the obnoxious papers. The Senate and House met in the Representative Hall, and marched out in procession to a place before the capitol.

When they reached the fire, they formed a circle and reverently removed their hats. The committee appointed to obtain the papers and records handed them to the President of the Senate, that officer delivered them to the Speaker of the House; from his hands they passed to the Clerk and finally into the hands of the Messenger. The Messenger approached the fire and uttered the words: "God save the State, and long preserve her rights; and may every attempt to injure them perish as these corrupt acts now do". After which, he threw the papers into the fire, where they were consumed to ashes.

After this exhibition of scorn at official dishonesty the members slowly marched back to the house and resumed work. The persons who were interested in the Yazoo sales took offense at this act of the

legislature and united in a powerful effort to defeat the operation of the Rescinding Act. This was finally carried into United States Congress, and commissioners were appointed by the government to meet commissioners from Georgia, and settle the difficulty. An agreement was made several years later. Jackson, Milledge, and Baldwin represented Georgia and, in 1802, Georgia ceded to the United States all the territory now embraced by Alabama and Mississippi, and the Yazoo titles were turned over to the Government. The money that had been paid into the treasury of Georgia was refunded to the companies who had an interest in the Yazoo lands, and the United States paid to Georgia one million five hundred thousand dollars.

### LOUISVILLE

The legislatures had been meeting alternately, when possible, in Savannah and Augusta since Georgia was colonized, with a few exceptions, when it met in one or two other places. The inconvenience of getting to Savannah, from the up-country sections, caused a discussion about moving the assembly to a more convenient place of meeting. On January 26, 1786, when the Legislature met in Augusta, the following commissioners were appointed to select a location, viz: Nathan Brownson, William Few and

Hugh Lawson. They were instructed to find a site "most proper and convenient" for the end in view, whereon to erect public buildings; and, by way of further stipulations, was added the clause, "provided, the same shall be within twenty miles of Gal-phin's Old Town". On fulfillment of these conditions, they were authorized to buy one thousand acres of land and to lay out a part thereof into a town, "which should be known by the name of Louisville". Many difficulties hindered the completion of these plans, but finally, in the Constitution of 1795, the new town was designated as the capital.

One of the first things to occupy the attention of the people after establishing Louisville as capital was the cause of education. When, in 1796, the new county was laid out from Warren and Burke, a provision was made for establishing a school in Louisville to be a branch of the State University at Athens, founded in 1785. The school at Louisville was one of a group established about this time by the Legislature as feeders to the University, and is probably one of the oldest in Georgia. The commissioners to organize the academy were: David Bothwell, John Shellman, James Meriwether, John Cobb and Josiah Sterrett.

The town was laid off after the pattern of Phila-

delphia, the streets running north and south, east and west. Town lots were sold and most of proceeds used for the Academy. A grant of one thousand pounds sterling from confiscated property was also donated by the government. Many distinguished men moved to the capital, and here were enacted scenes that have made Georgia history unparalleled. Among one of the most important acts was burning the papers of the Yazoo Fraud in front of the State House which stood where the present court house stands. Presbyterians were the first to establish congregations in Louisville. These were followed by the Methodists and Baptists.

The first church in Louisville was built by Joseph Gamble, the father of Roger Lawson Gamble, Sr., and was on the lot where the public school stood before it was moved to its present site. It was afterwards surrendered to the Methodists, but on their securing a lot of their own, the old church, much dilapidated, was torn away. There are splendid churches now, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist, and an elegant and commodious brick school building recently completed. The wide, shady streets, beautiful homes with well kept lawns, and a hospitable people, make Louisville an attractive place for a home-seeker.

Several industries flourish here, among which are

an oil mill, guano mixing plant, planing mill, ice factory, good mercantile houses, and two banks. The population of the town is about fifteen hundred. The Dixie and Jefferson Davis Highways pass through this town.

The *Louisville Gazette*, founded in 1796, was one of the pioneer newspapers. The handsome oak press, purchased in England, used in publishing the paper, was afterwards sold to the *Georgia Messenger* at Macon. The *Gazette* has long since yielded place to the *News and Farmer*, the official organ of Jefferson County.

The Louisville and Wadley Railroad has its terminus here, and belongs to a class all alone, as it is not operated on Sunday. The road is on a paying basis. So much for Sabbath observance. Artesian water has improved the health of the town until it compares well with any section. A modern tourist hotel has just been completed on Broad Street.

On the principal business thoroughfare of Louisville, there stands one of the most historic structures in America: the old Slave Market. It is one of the very few buildings of this character which time has spared. Around it cluster the fading memories of an old regime; and with the ancient harper in "The Lay of the Last Minstrel", it seems to sing:

"Old times are past, old manners gone,. A stranger fills the Stuart's throne."

There is no one in Louisville who can recall the time when the old Slave Market was built. The presumption is, therefore, quite strong that it must have been erected during the period when Louisville was the State capital and when the town promised to become an important commercial center. If such be the fact, it is not less than 120 years old, for Louisville was made the capital in 1795. Indeed, the commissioners to locate the town were appointed at the close of the Revolution, and the first steps looking toward the erection of government buildings at Louisville were taken in 1786. The center of population at this time was Galphinton, only nine miles distant; the planters in the neighborhood were large slave owners, some of them old soldiers, who were given extensive tracts of land for services in the war with England, and the erection of the Slave Market can be readily assigned to this remote period without the least violence to historic truth.

The wooden character of the building does not weaken the strength of this hypothesis. It was constructed of the best quality of post oak; and even to this day it is difficult to drive a nail into the tough fibers of which the wood is composed. The little structure stands in the middle of the street, where about it on every side pulses the life current of the old town.

On market days, when crowds gather from the surrounding plantations of Jefferson to shop in the village stores, when the circus comes to town, or when the campaign orator improves the opportunity of court week to stir the echoes of the stump, it seems to wear something of the old-time look and to be dreamily reminiscent of an interest which it once attracted.

For years after the late war, and indeed until times quite recent, it was customary for officers of the court to conduct legal sales at the old Slave Market. It was probably an inheritance from the days when slave property was here put upon the block and sold under the hammer, but when an issue was raised in regard to it, the custom was discontinued. While the old Slave Market of Louisville serves no practical purpose, it is an interesting memorial which the citizens of Louisville take pride in preserving, since there are few relics of the sort left, and it may be the only remnant of this kind which still remains—an authenticated fragment of the Old South.

On the outskirts of the town is the old cemetery, where several Revolutionary patriots sleep. The new cemetery, adjoining the recent school campus, contains the mortal remains of some of Georgia's most distinguished sons. In 1923, the old town commons for a hundred years owned by Louisville

Academy, and taken over a few years ago by the city of Louisville, was sold at public auction. It contained one hundred and ninety acres, and sold for two thousand and fifty dollars. The school is housed in a modern brick building situated further out, and has a splendid campus, a full corps of teachers, and every facility for teaching. The old school building has been torn down and moved. After the capitol was moved to Milledgeville, the state house was turned over to the county of Jefferson. It was used for some years as county court house, but became so dilapidated it was necessary to replace it which, in 1894, was in turn replaced by one of the handsomest court house buildings in the state, at a cost of \$50,000.

In excavating for the present court house the foundation of the old state capitol was disclosed, and by singular coincidence, corresponded with the plans for the new building. A slight skirmish occurred here on the last day of November, 1864; some Federal foraging parties were driven into camp by a small force of Wheeler's cavalry. Colonel Langley was sent out with four regiments and, after the exchange of a few shots, the Confederates slowly retired. The casualties were trifling on both sides.

In the office of the ordinary, Judge Jas. F. Brown,

and Clerk of the Court, Mr. Waller Murphy, there are many old and valuable papers, some of which are as old as the county. Land grants from King George, ancient wills, lists of beneficiaries of land lotteries just after the War of the Revolution, and many interesting documents whose value increase as years go by. These records, so well kept, and the halo of chivalry and patriotism that linger around those early days of our county's beginning, are legacies of immortal worth to the present generation.

#### WADLEY

In the year 1873, Mr. William Donovan operated a saw mill near the Central Railroad and put down a wood or tram road running from his mill to the point on the railroad now known as Wadley, then called "Shake Rag". Mr. Donovan saw that this would be a good shipping point in the future and conceived the idea of building a town. As he and Judge A. E. Tarver owned the lands on both sides of the road for a mile, he got the judge interested and made liberal offers to the Central Road if sufficient side tracks were put in to accommodate the business. A deed to 100 feet of land from the center of the track on both sides, of sufficient length to hold all side-tracks, was given by these two men. The Road built a freight house, put in side-tracks,

and made this a full station for all purposes. Later they built a passenger waiting room and put in telegraph equipment.

Then the little city must have a name. Mr. Donovan was a good friend of Mr. William Wadley, the president of the Central Railroad, therefore he gave it the name of Wadley. Lots were staked and sold at public auction. Mr. Tarver built a store house, and the first merchant in the town was S. L. Peterson. Mr. J. A. Spann built a dwelling and small store and occupied them. In 1874, Murphy and Bedingfield built a store and did a general merchandise business for several years. Lots were sold on Main Street, and the town slowly grew.

A short line of Railroad reaching from Wadley to Louisville was surveyed and completed. Mr. William Donovan gave lumber and a lot for a school building, and Mr. George Johnson, citizen of Wadley, taught the first school. Mr. T. S. Calhoun gave a lot for the Methodist church, and Mr. William Donovan gave the lot on which the Baptist church stands.

The Wadley Southern, and Stillmore Air Line connect with the Central at Wadley, making it a fine railroad center.

Wadley has a splendid brick school building, with a new brick addition to accommodate the increasing number of children.

Several flowing artesian wells furnish an abundant water supply, and a new light plant is being installed. Wadley is an important lumber shipping point, and has several good mercantile stores, also a bottling plant, and a good hotel and bank. It is situated in a fine farming section. The people are quiet, industrious and hospitable.

### BARTOW

Ten miles south of Louisville lies the village of Bartow. It is situated on the Central of Georgia Railroad, in a fine farming section. The land is rolling, furnishing fine drainage. In 1859 there were only two dwellings, one just back of the George Palmer house, owned now by Lamar Smith, which was occupied by the overseer of the railroad construction force. The other house was near where the school house stands, and was occupied by Mr. William Spier, who kept a commissary for the railroad hands. During this year Reverend Russel Johnson and Mr. Marcus Evans came over from Burke county and Mr. Johnson bought the home of Mr. Spier while Mr. Evans occupied the little house used by the railroad man. They opened a mercantile business and the next year began building colonial homes side by side. Both of these homes were used for many years to entertain traveling guests.

The first year Rev. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Evans came over to this place which was then called Spier's Turnout, they began plans to have a school. Mr. George Palmer, a young graduate of Emory College, was secured, and boys and girls came from the surrounding country to board and go to school. An epidemic of typhoid fever in 1860 claimed Mr. Johnson's oldest son, Alex, as victim, and his was the first grave made in the cemetery. The war interfered with the school but as soon as possible it was resumed.

A better name for the place was being sought, and this was furnished by the death of General Bartow at the first battle of Manassas, July 21, 1861, who, when he left home said, "I go to illustrate Georgia". So Spier's Turnout became Bartow.

Two sons of Mr. William Spier were brought home to sleep on their native soil and are buried in one grave. They were not killed in the same battle but at the same time, and their bodies reached home together.

In November, 1864, Sherman's army came, and tore up the railroad, and for a few years the country around was desolated, as Bartow was in the main path of the army, being near the old Savannah road. Soon, however, the town began to resume a more normal condition. Business improved, the school,

taught for so many years afterwards by Judge J. K. Kinman, flourished. In the 80's Mr. W. C. Smith built a hotel and large store, also a Methodist church, across Williamson Creek a mile south of Bartow, and for a few years business centered in the new site, but soon returned to North Bartow.

The Methodist Church was torn down and moved to its present situation, and the Baptist congregation who also had a church across the creek near the bridge, sold it and built a new church on its present site. A few years later, Mr. H. E. Smith planned a new school house, for which bonds were sold and the house built. This in turn has been moved from the campus and given to the negro school, and a modern one story building erected, for which \$45,000 bonds were sold the past year.

The town owns and operates an electric light plant, has a dozen or more private artesian wells, a daily bus line to Augusta, a strong bank, several good mercantile houses, guano mixing plant, two gins and being the center of the finest farming section of the world, enjoys an immense trade.

The religious and social life of the town has been its trade-mark. Bartow sent out one foreign missionary to Brazil, Miss Elizabeth Murphy, a granddaughter of Judge A. E. Tarver, who himself was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist church.

A page from the memoirs of Capt. Ike Herman, a native of France, who espoused the cause of the South during the War Between the States, gives some incidents about Bartow in the spring of 1864. The hospital in Atlanta, at whose head stood Dr. Crawford, had run out of provisions and Mr. Herman, who was a patient there, but able to do some duty, was appointed by Dr. Crawford to go on a foraging expedition. He gave Mr. Herman ten thousand dollars of new Confederate bills, in denominations of five to one thousand dollars. The currency had deflated and they did not expect the money to buy much, but the Central Railroad kindly gave two box cars, and stationed one each at Bartow and Davisboro. By advertising in the county papers, and by word of mouth, the news was carried far and near. Mr. M. A. Evans was active in gathering up supplies for this car as well as all during the war. Mr. Herman gave a partial list of the largest contributors. Mr. Warren of Louisville sent a four-horse wagon load of flour, free of charge; Judge Tarver sent a heavy load of meats, chickens, eggs, butter, etc. Mr. B. G. Smith sent a hogshead of hams, shoulders and sides of meat nicely cured, 100 pounds of lard, chickens, eggs and sweet potatoes; in fact the farmers of that section, all well to do, vied with each other as to who could

do the most. The car was filled with the choicest provisions, all given freely; Mr. Herman was not allowed to pay for anything. Many poor women would bring their last chicken, and refused to take a penny, saying they were sorry they could not do more. Old linen tablecloths were ravelled, and bags of lint and bandages were brought. That night the car was forwarded to the hospital in Atlanta with special instructions as to the perishable goods, and the money that was sent for food was returned to Dr. Crawford to buy sheets and other things for the wounded men.

In years to come, stories of the World War will be told around fire-sides—but the horror is too recent to dwell on the subject much now. Bartow women, as well as thousands over the land, met day after day, to knit, and cut garments and sew and pray. To the mothers who had boys in camp or over seas, each stitch was a prayer—but so many were mercifully spared the agony of waiting for one who never returned.

### MOXLEY

Moxley is a little station on the Louisville and Wadley Railroad about half way between the two towns. It is an attractive rural community, with a good school, and Methodist and Baptist churches.

A small modern dairy is located here, managed by Mr. Craig Carswell, and owned by him and his sister, Miss Helen Carswell, whose face and gentle ministrations have brought cheer to many sick rooms.

Farming is the chief occupation, with some lumber industry. The people live well, are happy and contented.

### STAPLETON

Stapleton was first a country post office known as Spread Oak, and this was shortened to Spread. It is located in the 1460 Militia District, at the junction of the Georgia and Florida, and Savannah and Atlanta railroads.

In 1885, when the Augusta, Gibson, and Sandersville railroad was built, now known as the Georgia and Florida, the name was changed to Stapleton in honor of Col. James Stapleton.

At that time there was only one store and a few homes. The town was incorporated in 1906, and has steadily increased in population, which at present is about five hundred. Financially and morally the town ranks far above the average. In the history of the town and community there has never been a murder committed among the whites.

This is an agricultural section, and is considered

among the best farming lands in the country, lying on a ridge which is the highest point in the county. The chief crops are cotton and grain; the lumber industry has rapidly increased in recent years.

In 1888 a school building was erected. Later this was found to be inadequate for the needs of the community, and in 1916 a modern brick building was erected on a hill overlooking the town. Eight acres of land was donated for a campus by Mr. James Stapleton. Stapleton has the distinction of having the only brick building in the county and possibly in the state, built by voluntary subscription. There is no bond indebtedness against her school building. In the recent mental tests of schools made by the state, Stapleton ranked first in the county.

There are two churches, Methodist and Baptist. Among the first settlers of this community was George Stapleton, Sr., who served throughout the Revolutionary War, and is buried at his home place near here on land granted him by the government for war service. The place has never been sold, and is still in possession of his descendants, J. T., J. D. and S. J. Dickson.

George Stapleton, Jr., served as major in the war of 1812 under Gen. Andrew Jackson. After the war he retired to his home in Stapleton and was a successful planter. At the close of the Civil War,

when Pres. Jefferson Davis was fleeing from the Federal troops, he passed through this section, and his horse being jaded, he exchanged it with Major Stapleton for a fresh one. At the time of Mr. Davis' capture the horse was in his possession. For thirty-three consecutive years, either in the Senate or House of Representatives, Major Stapleton represented Jefferson and Warren Counties in the legislative halls of our state. He was ordained to the ministry in 1865. Col. James Stapleton, son of Major George Stapleton, Jr., and grandson of George Stapleton, Sr., served his country as lieutenant and captain in Confederate Army, and was promoted to rank of colonel. He served in the legislature sixteen years. In 1877 he was ordained to the ministry and served several churches until the time of his death.

The town was in the line of Sherman's march to the sea, and the usual plunder of homes and stock was suffered. A small skirmish occurred here in which one Yankee was reported killed. One of the early residents of the town was Captain I. F. Ad-kins, who served as captain in the Civil War. For a number of years, until his death, he was county surveyor. Others were Captain Douglas, J. T. Glover, Sr., T. J. Dickson, W. R. Hammet, James Denton, Aaron Denton, W. E. McNair, S. M. Mc-

Nair, William Clark, Jasper Vining and W. T. O'Neal. One of the prominent men of the town is David Denton, who served as lieutenant under Gen. Stonewall Jackson, in the army of Northern Virginia. He was noted for his generosity, and it was largely through his efforts that the Baptist church was built. Also he was the largest contributor to the new school building.

### STELLA VILLE

Stellaville, like several rural communities, grew into a town with the church and school as the life center, May 15, 1817. Years before the school came into existence, a Baptist church was built near Brushy Creek and called Darcy's Meeting House. This was later changed to Way's Church, and is one of the strongest country churches in the county. It has been served by the most noted Baptist ministers in the state, among whom, none were more beloved than Dr. W. L. Kilpatrick, who was pastor there for a long period. The congregation soon realized the need of Christian education, and discussed plans looking toward that end.

In 1868 Mr. Elkanie Rogers gave a good sized tract of land adjoining the church lot, on which a two roomed frame building was erected, and called The Stellaville High School. Homes were built

near the school, and families moved into them, boarding pupils who came from adjoining counties and South Carolina to attend this school, which took rank at once for its high ideals, and the Christian character of teachers and pupils. The best teachers possible were secured, men with strong Christian characters. Rev. Milton A. Clark who, afterwards for thirty years, was a missionary and teacher for the Indians in Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, and Prof. V. T. Sanford, of the San-ford family of Mercer University, were among the teachers. O. C. Pope, Prof. Spurgeon Jackson, and Mr. H. E. Smith taught there also. An appreciable percentage of pupils who were in this school under those teachers developed into fine Christian characters.

Commencement occasions were events to be remembered, lasting three days and nights. Large crowds of people attended, and dinner was served in the grove each day. A sermon by the best preachers that could be obtained, and a literary address by some brilliant lawyer, were features of marked interest. There was only one house in Stellaville when the school was established, and that was the dwelling of Mr. Bill Way for whom, through his generous benefactions, the name of the church was changed from Darcy's Meeting House to Way's Church.

Being off the railroad, it was never much of a business place, but the people were noted for their Christian character and abundant hospitality. It was said by Dr. Kilpatrick that in a radius of four miles there were more refined Christian homes, and better educated people than any place he knew. One event in the school life of the higher classes in the year 1872 will be recalled with amusement. The teachers decided to take the older pupils to Stone Mountain. They had to go in wagons to Thompson; there a train was chartered. It was an important occasion. The young men of the school bought beaver hats to wear. By the time they all got back home, the young men were disgusted with beavers, as covered wagons and crowded trains were no places for such head-gear.

The church and the school worked for the good of the people, and so were a success. The old school building was burned in 1878, and a two-story house erected which has been improved and remodeled. Mr. Joe Oliphant built the first framed house near Stellaville in Jefferson County. When the school house was remodeled in 1920, the Woman's Club assisted in many ways by salvaging old window sashes—repairing them, painting the building inside and out. The men gave days of work. When the school was first established, John Jones, Joshua Jor-

dan, John Brinson and Noah Smith were largely instrumental in maintaining the school, which for a long time was the only High School in the county or in this section, outside of Louisville.

The town was first called Sistersville, but in 1871 the name was changed to Stellaville, for Stella Brinson, the young daughter of John Brinson. It was incorporated as a town in 1892. One of the most loved men of the town was Dr. J. W. Pilcher, who literally gave himself, time and talent for the good of the community. A P.-T. A. works quietly but efficiently in school and community. The leading industry is agriculture.

#### MATTHEWS, AVERA

Matthews, and Avera are important towns of several hundred inhabitants each and situated on the Georgia and Florida Railroad. They each have a fine school system, several mercantile houses and a bank.

#### WRENS

According to our oldest records, the land now embracing the town of Wrens was first owned by John Wren, grandfather of W. J. Wren, Sr. Tradition has it that he traded for the land, giving two blind horses, valued at \$25.00, as full payment for the same.

During this early period the community center of this section was Pope Hill, an inn on the stage line of the old Quaker road leading to Savannah.

Wrens as a town had its beginning in 1884 with the building of the Augusta Southern railroad. At this time W. J. Wren, for whom the town was named, built a home here and a store. Dr. C. H. Raley, W. H. Beall, C. J. Fleming, and others located here and the Wrens community life began its growth.

The town is located at the physical junction of the Augusta Southern, now the Georgia and Florida, and the Savannah and Atlanta railroads, 32 miles from Augusta, 120 miles from Savannah and 148 miles from Atlanta. It is also on State Highway Routes, number 17 and number 24, Federal Routes, number I, Woodrow Wilson Memorial Highway, Jeff Davis Highway, and Cotton Belt Highway. The town is just above the meeting of the Piedmont and Tidewater regions, on the great divide between the Savannah and Ogeechee rivers. This location gives it an altitude 300 feet higher than Augusta or Columbus, no feet higher than Macon or Milledgeville, higher than Athens and about the altitude of Rome. A resident physician said that if his practice depended alone upon the sickness of Wrens, he would starve to death.

Among the first buildings erected in Wrens was a building for the public school. For several years this building served the double purpose of church and school. The first church built in Wrens was built by the Associate Reformed Presbyterians in 1895, and the first sermon delivered in Wrens was preached by Dr. D. G. Phillips, Sr. The Baptists built a church in Wrens the following year, and the Methodists located a church here in 1904.

As the town has grown in population it has grown in industry. The first suction gin of Jefferson County was located in Wrens in 1896. In 1900 a large roller flour mill was built in Wrens, a woodwork factory was added. And later to these industries were added a cotton seed oil mill, a machine shop, an ice factory, a lumber factory, a Coca-Cola bottling plant, etc.

Wrens has two depots, two automobile stations, stores, wholesale and retail, cotton warehouse, hatchery, and a weekly paper, *The Jefferson Reporter*. The town is supplied with artesian water, and has electric current both for power and lights. The substation of the Aiken Railway and Electric Corporation is located here, also the exchange of the Bell Telephone System.

Perhaps the outstanding growth of Wrens has been in its school. Wrens Institute was organized

in 1899 and was accredited as a high school in 1909. In addition to the regular high school courses it now offers vocational work in Teacher-training, Home Economics and Vocational Agriculture. It has a faculty of fifteen teachers and an alumni of 340 members. The present school building was built in 1919 at a cost of \$65,000.00.

In its short history Wrens has grown to a population of 1,250, and is now the trade center of an extensive section so that such corporations as the Standard Oil Co., the Coca-Cola Co. and similar organizations are making it the distributing point for their products.

At this time the Georgia Cotton Growers Co-operative Association is locating in Wrens one of their Community Centers, and the Woodrow Wilson Highway is being paved through the town.

Location and healthfulness, a progressive people with the spirit of co-operation and Wrens has become a good town.

## ZEBINA

Zebina, a town on the Savannah and Atlanta Railroad, is a rural school center—Matthews is on the Georgia and Florida railroad and has a good school system.

## BETHANY

Just a mile north of Wadley is the small village of Bethany, an almost forgotten town, once the centre of culture, and a type of *ante-bellum* refinement. A large two story building in the middle of a spacious campus sheltered the school, presided over by some notable educators, among whom were Capt. Jack Cheatham and Col. James K. Kinman.

A Methodist church was near the campus and, in 1868, one among the first District Conferences was held here, at which time there was a great revival. Bishop Pierce and his father, Dr. Lovick Pierce, were among the pulpit orators. Great crowds attended, bringing provisions and using unoccupied rooms and dwellings, and the occasion was like a camp meeting.

During the war Mr. S. Z. Murphy, who had charge of the orphans in Savannah, refugeed with them to Bethany. Afterwards he made his home there. Capt. Eli McCroan, Messrs. Milledge and Nelson Murphy were also residents of Bethany. The Donovan brothers, Tim and William, lived in and near the town. Dr. William Hauser, Mr. William Gary, Rev. J. M. Cross and Mr. William Brown were all residents of this quiet, peaceful, little town, in which the spirit of the old-time South

was shown in the exquisite courtesy and courtly manner of men and women of that day.

Later the town of Wadley, on the main railroad line, attracted the people, who gradually moved there or elsewhere, and now, with the exception of a few scattered homes, the place is a forlorn settlement, though tied to the heart-strings of many, because it is the hallowed ground where rest the remains of loved ones.

# History of Jefferson County

## War Between the States

By W. L.  
PHILLIPS

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,  
Never doubted clouds would break,  
Never dreamed tho' right were worsted, wrong would triumph  
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake—  
—*Browning.*