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June 4, 1985

WM Record File
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WM Project 16
Docket No. _____

PDR w/o encl.
LPDR w/o encl.

Ms. Donna R. Mattson
Section Leader
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Distribution:
REB MIB SOB HJM KERR
RDM DRM CER JOHNSON
(Return to WM, 623-SS) TR. JOHNSON II 73

Dear Ms. Mattson:

As per your telephone conversation with Kelly Haggard of my staff, I have enclosed copies of the additional information we have provided the Department of Energy on the Environmental Assessments.

Enclosed are the following:

1. "Fifty Golden Years", Richton Baptist Church, Richton, Mississippi, 1906-1956, Church history booklet.
2. "First Baptist Church", Richton, Mississippi, 1906-1981, Seventy-five years anniversary booklet.
3. "Richton, Mississippi - Comprehensive Plan - A Guide for Community Growth". 1974. South Mississippi Planning and Development District. (This plan has never been implemented due to the repository program.)
4. "Richton....Remembered and Retold", 1976, Authored by Mrs. Josie Pleasant Smollen Wilson.
5. Memo about recent seismic lines including oil company contact.
6. Memo about current drilling activity including oil company contact.
7. Memo about location of acid bogs.

We will continue to provide you with any additional information or comments we transmit to DOE.

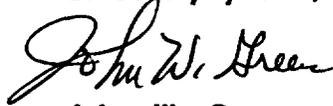
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Ms. Donna R. Mattson
June 4, 1985
Page Two

Thank you for your interest and I look forward to continuing the good communication flow we have with NRC.

Sincerely yours,



John W. Green
Interim Director

JWG:hpf
Enclosures

cy: Mr. Roger Gale, w/o enclosures

Mr. Daily Edwards

Fifty Golden Years

*sent to
do DRM
for Green
6/4/85
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Richton Baptist Church

Richton, Miss.

1906-1956



"Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it."

Ephesians 5:25

PASTORS OF RICHTON BAPTIST CHURCH

- R. J. LOPER, 1906-7, deceased.
A. M. SHEPPARD, 1907-8, deceased.
T. J. MOORE, 1908-10, deceased.
E. W. McLENDON, 1910-13, deceased.
S. G. POPE, 1913-15, 418 Second St., McComb, Miss.
E. R. HENDERSON, 1915-16, Verona, Miss.
J. B. POLK, 1916-18, 3424 Avenue K, Fort Worth 5, Tex.
J. N. McMILLIN, 1918-19, deceased.
J. L. LOW, 1919-28, deceased.
J. H. COTHEN, Sr., 1928-36, RFD No. 5, Hattiesburg, Miss.
T. R. COULTER, Sr., 1936-45, RFD No. 6, Laurel, Miss.
J. H. COTHEN, Sr., 1945-46, RFD No. 5, Hattiesburg, Miss.
J. F. BRANTLEY, 1946-51, Forest, Miss.
W. M. AVERETT, 1951—, Richton, Miss.

HISTORY OF RICHTON BAPTIST CHURCH

The church had been known as Beaverdam Church, and was located about half a mile north of the present Town of Richton.

In the year 1903 the railroad came through, known at first as the Mobile, Jackson & Kansas City Railroad. The road passed within a few hundred feet of the church building. The railroad officials soon ascertained that the church lot was in the midst of a plot of land containing valuable gravel deposits. An offer of purchase of the church property was accepted by the congregation, and an early evacuation of the premises followed as the railroad people desired to begin mining the gravel for use on their new roadbed.

In the meantime the Town of Richton had sprung up. Several Baptists were among the newcomers, and these at once began to plan for a church in the town itself. The fact that there was already an established organization, owning its own building only half a mile away made the situation more or less of a problem from the standpoint of an effort to join forces and locate the new organization in town. They were country people; we were town people, and not only that but newcomers, strangers to them. They were of course attached to their old church home as only good honest country folks can be. We had quite fully decided at the outset—in fact it was too obviously the thing to do to admit of debate—to have a Baptist church in the town, with their co-operation if we could, without it if we must. So far as I know there were no outward expressions of antagonism or jealousy on either side, and all feelings of this kind, if any, may have existed in the minds of the town people only. But it is evident that the situation was fraught with vexatious possibilities. It was our desire that all come together at the beginning and co-operate from the very first. The suggestion may have occurred to some of us that we go ahead, organize, build and proceed with the work, with the reasonable assurance that within a short while we would absorb the other organization, but at the same time we realized the possibility of its turning out the other way. A small rift to begin with might develop into an impassable chasm.

It was at this juncture that there came about the circumstances already alluded to, by which the already established organization came to be without a church home, presenting an opportunity of which we were not slow to take advantage. Whatever of possible objection or of factional jealousy there may have remained in the minds of our neighboring brethren, if indeed any such ever existed at all, was seemingly happily overcome and removed through the

good offices of Dr. F. M. Sheppard, a prominent Baptist who in the meantime had moved to Richton from a neighboring county. Dr. Sheppard was well-known among the older residents and well-liked by all, and his leadership of the movement toward co-operation and getting together resulted in the establishment of the Richton Baptist Church in the year 1906.

A building was soon in course of construction, the congregation in the meantime holding monthly meetings in the Methodist Protestant Church which had just been erected in the eastern part of town.

Rev. R. J. Loper, then of Hattiesburg, was pastor of Beaverdam Church at the time of its dissolution, and continued in charge of the new organization until January 1, 1907, being succeeded by Rev. A. M. Sheppard. He resigned the pastorate of the church January 1, 1908, to assume the office of superintendent of education of Perry County, to which he had been elected. Rev. T. J. Moore, then of Bay Springs, now deceased, was the church's pastor from January 1, 1908 to January 1, 1910, being in turn followed by Rev. E. W. McLendon, who came to us from Utica, Miss., and served the church till early in 1913. Rev. McLendon died in Texas in April of 1929.

Rev. S. G. Pope was the next pastor, taking up the work where Rev. McLendon left off and continuing for about two years, or till sometime in 1915. Rev. Pope came directly from Mississippi College where he had just graduated and is now located at McComb. He got married during his Richton pastorate.

Rev. E. R. Henderson from North Mississippi was our next pastor, serving until October 15, 1916. He is now located at Verona.

His successor at Richton was Rev. J. B. Polk, who remained on the field till about the middle of February, 1918. He was located in Louisiana at the time, and has since moved to Texas where he resides at 3424 Avenue K, Fort Worth.

After Rev. Polk left us the church spent a year looking about for a pastor. Rev. J. N. McMillin, then of the State Teachers College, then pastor at Louisville, Miss., very kindly agreed to come over twice a month and supply for the church, and with the distinct understanding from him that it was to be only a temporary arrangement until we could secure a resident pastor. He closed his work here on the 14th of February, 1919, and was followed by Rev. J. L. Low, then of Tylertown, now deceased. Rev. Low came on the field in 1919 and remained until November 1, 1928, a period of nearly ten years, and quite the longest pastorate the church had enjoyed, the average tenure of his predecessors having been only about two years.

Rev. J. H. Cothen, coming to us from Poplarville, took charge of the work, having succeeded Rev. Low November 1, 1928.

Rev. J. H. Cothen, sr. served as pastor from 1928 to 1936, a lengthy and fruitful pastorate. He was succeeded by Rev. T. R. Coulter, sr., who likewise had a lengthy and fruitful pastorate from 1936 until 1945. Rev. Cothen at this writing is retired and living near Hattiesburg, and Rev. Coulter is pastor in Laurel. Following the close of Rev. Coulter's pastorate, Rev. Cothen returned for a brief pastorate of about a year, 1945-46.

In 1946, the church extended a call to Rev. J. F. Brantley, who remained on as pastor for some five years, resigning in 1951 to become pastor at Forest, Miss. On October 10, 1951, Rev. W. M. Averett became pastor of the church and is at this writing serving as pastor.

BUILDING ACTIVITIES

As already stated the first church house was built in 1905 and 1906, during Bro. Loper's pastorate. Some financial help was received from the State Board and also from the General Association. The building was dedicated on the first Sunday of May, 1906, the sermon of the occasion being preached by Rev. A. V. Rowe, now deceased, then secretary of the State Mission Board. The cost of the first building was around \$3,000, including about \$700 for the pews. W. I. Denton, at that time a local contractor, built the church. It was the one-room structure which, enlarged twice later by adding more rooms, formed the building the present congregation was accustomed to for several years, and which was recently demolished for the erection of our present church home.

In about 1910, during Rev. McLendon's pastorate, there was added one large room, practically the size of the original, and which changed the building into the form of the letter L. Partitions were made in this to accommodate the rapidly growing Sunday School, which reached its zenith in attendance during those years, the average being around 300 for a while. It was at this time also that the pastorium was purchased.

The next item of building of importance was the addition of Sunday School rooms to the south side of the church house, at a cost of some \$3,000. This was during Rev. Low's administration.

Then followed the erection of the present edifice during the years 1928-29. E. C. Hearon & Sons, Hattiesburg, were the architects, and W. F. & L. H. Breland, New Augusta, were the builders. Total cost, exclusive of equipment, about \$24,000.

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT

The church was organized in 1906 with a membership of about 50. This grew to 300 or more the first ten years, since which time

the number has varied but little from 400 to 500, the present enrollment being 540.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

With the exception of the few months intervening between the evacuation of the old Beaverdam site and the occupancy of the new building in town a Sunday School has been maintained continuously for the past quarter of a century, having had its beginnings when in the early summer of 1904 fewer than a half dozen young people from the new community, with the co-operation of others living near the old church, succeeded in starting a one-class school. W. H. Grace, J. E. Johnson, A. R. Shoemaker, Dr. W. D. Mobley, S. L. Stringer, R. H. Mills and Dr. J. E. Green are among those who have at one time or another acted as superintendent.

B. Y. P. U.

The first Baptist Young People's Union was begun about the year 1910 and continued as a vigorous organization for a number of years, but afterwards lapsed into inactivity. It was revived about the year 1919, under the leadership of Bro. L. O. Murphy, and continues as a very helpful auxiliary to the church.

W. M. U.

The Woman's Missionary Union was organized in the church about the year 1909. Prior to that the women had maintained a Ladies Aid Society for a number of years. The work of the women through their organization, though conducted in a quiet and unassuming way, has meant more to the life and growth of the church than is often realized. Their showing in a financial way is always creditable. It is not unusual at Thanksgiving for them to send to the Orphanage a box valued at \$200 or more. Back in about 1910 they bought and paid for a church organ costing \$650; their contributions to missions used to run from \$300 to around \$500 a year, and my information is that the T. E. L. Sunday School class has raised and paid in on the new church building and equipment more than \$450. All this through their own organizations, as such, and over and above and aside from what they do as individuals and through the regular channels of the church proper.

OTHER AUXILIARIES

The Young Women's Auxiliary, the Royal Ambassadors, Girls' Auxiliary and Sunbeams are all going concerns within the church, and under consecrated leadership are and should be contributing factors toward a wholesome development of young Christian life in the community.

—J. R. S. EDWARDS.

RETROSPECT

(By Rev. W. M. AVERETT)

In recent years, Southern Baptists have turned our attention to the writing of the history that we have been making. It is in keeping with this sentiment that this Golden Anniversary of Richton Baptist Church is being observed. Looking back through Associational minutes, some interesting items of information have been gleaned which will enrich the happy memories of members of the church.

As stated in the history of the church, the original church was not Richton, but Beaver Dam Church. When the town of Richton sprang up, the church was moved to Richton. At the time of its constitution into a church, the Richton Church was affiliated with the Leaf River Baptist Association, and in 1912, when Perry County Association was organized, the Richton Baptist Church became an affiliate of that association. No Leaf River Associational minutes are available prior to 1911, but from the year 1911 some interesting name and facts appear. We review them here.

In 1911, O. O. Bennett is listed as clerk of Richton Baptist Church. J. S. Dees and J. E. Johnson represented the church in Leaf River Association, and Peter Bliss Green and Luther K. Turner were listed as licensed preachers. At that time all delegates to the association were men. Even the WMU report was read by a man. In that year the Richton Baptist Church reported 231 members, and reported \$25.25 given for Foreign Missions. An offering was taken for aged and infirm ministers. Obituaries that year were Mrs. Polly Holder and R. G. Walley.

In 1912, the year Perry Association was organized, S. L. Stringer was listed as clerk of the Richton Baptist Church and Oscar Russell was Sunday School secretary.

In 1913, a resolution was adopted by the association recommending that the pastors preach on stewardship every fifth Sunday, and that the churches recognize their duty with regard to this matter. It was stated that 85% of our conversions come through the Sunday School. A. M. Sheppard was listed as Sunday School superintendent, Mrs. Wirt Myers WMS secretary and Virgil Crawford as president of the BYPU. Holly McLendon was BYPU secretary. The pastor's salary for the year was \$491.40, and the property evaluation was \$800.

In 1914, J. E. Johnson and A. G. Brown were listed as delegates to the association, and the church property evaluation had increased to \$2,500, one-half of this sum being the value of the pastor's home.

In 1915, Richton Baptists figured in the associational organization. Rev. S. G. Pope, pastor of Richton Baptist Church, was moderator of the Perry County Association. J. E. Johnson was clerk and G. P. Walley was treasurer.

In 1917, it seems that for the first time women were delegates to the association. Delegates from Richton were Rev. J. B. Polk, Mrs. W. H. Clifton, W. R. Graves, Mrs. A. L. Favre, J. F. Backstrom, Mrs. C. S. Bentley and I. P. Purvis. Richton Church property evaluation was now \$3,500, and the pastor's salary was \$1,000 per annum. The total budget for the year was \$1,652.56. Other information in the associational minutes were that 51% of the population of Mississippi was Baptist. There were 170,000 white Baptists and 285,000 Negro Baptists. There were 1,600 white Baptist Churches in Mississippi. The WMU report for this year was read by Mrs. A. R. Shoemaker.

By 1918, the church property evaluation had risen to \$4,750. The pastor's salary had dropped back to \$587.50, the total budget being \$1,619.75 for the year.

Came the year 1922 and J. E. Johnson of Richton was moderator of the association. Brewer and Calvary Churches were received as member churches into Perry Association. Among delegates to the association in addition to names already mentioned, there were Grover Burnett, A. R. Shoemaker, Dr. R. M. Cochran and Dr. J. E. Green. J. M. Dees was listed as the clerk of the Richton Baptist Church. By this time, the membership had increased to 332, the property evaluation to \$5,250. The total annual budget was \$4,000, the pastor's annual salary was \$1,100 and gifts to the \$75 million campaign \$366.55 from the Richton Baptist Church.

Then, in 1924, delegates to the association included K. C. Rich, Rev. and Mrs. J. L. Low, C. P. Jones, Miss Lizzie Brown, W. D. Mobley, Mr. and Mrs. L. O. Murphy and Mrs. D. Thoms. G. S. Burnett was church clerk that year. Contributions to the \$75 million campaign dropped to \$288 from the Richton Baptist Church. The church membership dropped to 257, and the WMU had raised \$569.20 for mission causes.

In 1925, the names of C. C. Smith and E. C. Fishel are listed as delegates to the association, in addition to those already mentioned.

In 1926, delegates to the association included, in addition to others already named previously, J. R. McPhearson and V. R. Walley. Miss Lizzie Brown was clerk of the association that year. Mr. W. B. Odom was listed in the obituary column.

In 1927, E. C. Fishel was elected moderator of the association.

H. W. Powell was clerk of the Richton Baptist Church. This year, the Richton Baptist Church was listed as the only half-time church in Perry County, the rest of them being fourth-time.

Came 1930, and the names of Mr. and Mrs. Griffin Walley and Mrs. J. W. Courtney appear among the list of delegates to the association, along with Mrs. C. C. Smith, Mrs. Mattie McCoy and J. R. Boutwell. Mrs. L. O. Murphy was listed as WMS president in Richton and Mrs. C. C. Smith was Sunbeam leader. The property evaluation of the Richton Baptist Church was at a new high of \$31,000. Dr. J. E. Green was Sunday School Superintendent and L. O. Murphy was BYPU leader.

In 1931, the name of Pettis Walley appears as a delegate to the association, along with J. R. S. Edwards, Rev. A. M. Sheppard and Mrs. J. H. Cothen. Mrs. J. W. Courtney was WMS president that year, Mrs. Charles Hardee was GA leader, and Miss Lois Cochran was Sunbeam leader.

The year 1932 finds Pettis Walley listed as Associational BYPU leader, R. F. Johnson as clerk of the Richton Baptist Church, H. W. Powell as Sunday School superintendent, Mrs. D. Thoms as WMS president and Miss Jewel Brannom as Sunbeam leader.

In 1933, Mrs. J. H. Stevens is listed in the obituary column from Richton.

The year 1937 finds O. Z. Smith listed as Sunday School superintendent and J. R. S. Edwards as clerk of the Richton Baptist Church. On Richton's obituary list that year were Mrs. J. E. Currie, Mr. R. Hinton and Mrs. Eliza Jordan. One notable fact is that the Richton Baptist Church went full time this year.

In 1938, Clyde McArn is listed as a member of the associational finance committee, and J. W. Pope is listed as Sunday School superintendent. J. L. McCoy is listed as church clerk. The pastor's salary is increased from \$1,200 to \$1,800 per annum.

The year 1939 finds the name of Joe Boutwell in Richton's obituary report.

In 1940, W. D. Cochran read the Associational report on religious literature, and the missions report was read by Mrs. Carl Henderson. Among messengers to the Association were Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Moser, L. F. Sumrall, Mrs. Carl Henderson and Mrs. S. B. Carey. On the obituary list that year were Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Henderson, Curt Riley and R. F. Draughn. The annual budget for the Richton Baptist Church had jumped to \$7,754.93.

In 1942, Grady F. Koen was listed as clerk of the Richton Baptist Church.

And, in 1955, Joe H. Blackman is listed as BTU director, Arthur H. Caldwell as church clerk, and among delegates to the Association are found the names of Mrs. W. A. Carroll and Dr. N. W. Mills. The church membership reported is now 530. The obituary column from Richton Baptist Church included the names of Mrs. C. S. Bentley, R. C. Clark, Jim Guthrie, A. Moser, W. D. Rich, D. H. Turner and Mrs. Mary J. Rich.

At this writing, in 1956, our obituary column includes the names of E. E. Bush, Sr., Grafton Rich and J. A. Riley.



The original building of the Richton Baptist Church. The home of Mrs. Z. W. Wells now stands on the site of the original building.

In 1943, the Richton Baptist Church listed 511 members, and Mrs. J. E. Swann and B. E. Palmer were among the delegates to the Association from Richton Baptist Church.

The records of 1945 list Mr. and Mrs. V. L. Bassett among the messengers to the Association from Richton, and the clerk of the Richton Baptist Church was Griffin Walley.

In 1946, Mrs. A. M. Carlisle's name appears among the messengers to the Association.

The year 1947 finds listed among delegates to the Association the names of J. W. Pope, Mrs. Ira Jones, Willis L. Walley and Mrs. A. L. Moser. M. C. Meadows is on the obituary list this year.

In 1948, Roland Hinton is listed as treasurer of Perry County Baptist Association, C. L. Smith as clerk of the Richton Baptist Church, and among messengers to the Association are listed the names of Earl Hinton, Tommie Jean Wade and Mrs. J. N. Tait. The name of Mrs. P. M. Rounsaville is listed in the obituary column.

By 1950, T. E. Taylor was clerk of the Richton Baptist Church, and among messengers to the Association were listed Mrs. A. L. Fortson and Mrs. Henry Holman. The obituary list from Richton Baptist Church that year were Mrs. V. R. Valley, Mrs. J. L. Wright, Hugh Walley and J. L. McCoy.

In 1951, Joe Walley is listed as BTU director of the Richton Baptist Church, and Mrs. Carl Henderson as WMS president. The church reported 520 members, a \$90,000 property evaluation, a total budget of \$14,035, of which \$4,373 went for mission causes.

Came the year 1952, and corrections in the church roll resulted in a report of 473 members. Quite a few had united with East Side mission, and their records had to be adjusted. Property evaluation had increased to \$107,000, and a total budget of \$23,986.41 for the year. Of this sum, \$8,030.90 went for mission causes. Obituaries were A. M. Hinton, G. R. Lott, B. L. Morris and Mrs. J. A. Norwood.

In 1953, Pettis Walley became Moderator of the Perry County Baptist Association, Mrs. Perry F. Gibson was WMS president, and Wilson Bush was BTU director. The membership now increases to 494, and total budget is \$19,811, of which \$10,052 was for outside causes. Obituaries were Mrs. Victor Munn, Mrs. Myrtle McCoy, Dr. J. H. Newcomb, Mrs. Albert Smith, Sr., Mrs. Murdock Turner, Mrs. Lillie Walley and Sam R. Walley.

In 1954, Mrs. J. W. Courtney is again listed as WMS president. Obituaries were Carl Henderson, Mrs. Earl Hinton, Mrs. Bruce Jeffcoat, Calvin Murphy, Mrs. U. D. Neely and J. E. Swann.

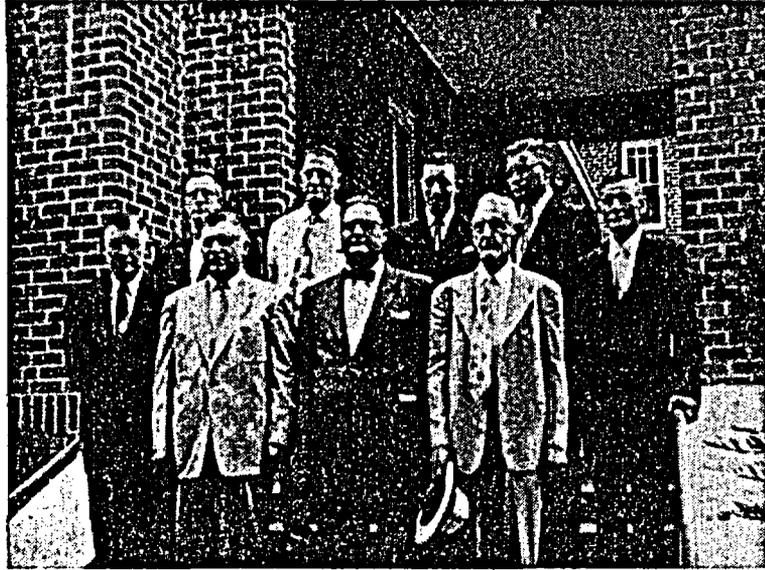
DEDICATION



MRS. C. S. BENTLEY, 1869-1954

On this, the Golden Anniversary year of the Richton Baptist Church, these pages are dedicated to one of our best-loved and most faithful members, who passed to her reward less than two years previous to the observance of the Golden Anniversary. Suggestion for this dedication was first made in a W. M. U. meeting when plans were under way for observance of the Golden Anniversary.

A GROUP OF THE DEACONS Of Richton Baptist Church



Front row (left to right): O. C. Ingram, J. W. Pope, Pettis Walley, C. C. Smith. Second row (left to right): W. A. Moser, C. L. Smith, Jos. H. Blackman, A. L. Moser, W. L. Brock.

O. C. Ingram is also church treasurer; J. W. Pope is chairman of the deacons and Sunday School superintendent; Pettis Walley, W. L. Brock, A. L. Moser, W. A. Moser and C. L. Smith are Sunday School teachers. Jos. H. Blackman is BTU director. C. C. Smith is Associate Superintendent of the Sunday School. W. A. Moser is also choir director.

Deacons not pictured above are: Geo. L. Granberry, Sr., L. D. Cochran, T. E. Taylor, Henry L. Jones and J. R. S. Edwards. The three latter are pictured elsewhere in this book.

A Group of the Sunday School Teachers and Officers



Front row (left to right): Mrs. W. M. Davis, Mrs. E. E. Bush, Jr., Mrs. W. L. Brock, Mrs. Keith Cochran. Second row: Mrs. J. N. Tait, Mrs. Stanton W. Johnson, Mrs. W. A. Moser, Mrs. Mary Alice Carroll. Third row: Mrs. L. F. Sumrall, Mrs. J. W. Pope, Mrs. J. C. Ivy, Mrs. A. L. Moser, Mrs. O. C. Ingram. Fourth row: Miss Elizabeth Brown, Mrs. Ira Jones, Sr., C. L. Smith, J. C. Hillman, W. L. Brock. Back row: Pettis Walley, L. L. Adkins, W. A. Moser, J. C. Ivy, A. L. Moser, Henry Holman, J. W. Pope and C. C. Smith.

More Teachers and Officers



Front row (left to right): Mrs. E. C. Whiddon, Youth Fellowship Director; Mrs. Lois Batte, Sunday School teacher; Mrs. Grady F. Koen, Sunday School teacher and BTU leader; Mrs. Henry L. Jones, WMS Social Chairman; Miss Marjorie Fike, organist. Back row: Arthur H. Caldwell, church clerk; T. E. Taylor, deacon; Grady F. Koen, Sunday School secretary; J. R. S. Edwards, deacon and Henry L. Jones, deacon and associational board member.

Officers of the W. M. S.



Left to right: Mrs. Edw. Cooper, literature chairman; Mrs. Melvin O. Edwards, Jr., BWC chairman; Miss Betty Jo Young, BWC secretary-treasurer; Mrs. C. C. Smith, circle chairman; Mrs. A. M. Carlisle, circle chairman; Mrs. Stanton W. Johnson, Young People's leader; Mrs. John Courtney, president, and Mrs. Hugh Walley, community missions chairman.

Other officers are: Mrs. E. C. Whiddon, vice president; Mrs. Perry F. Gibson, program chairman; Mrs. Quinnie Tew, Stewardship chairman; Mrs. W. A. Moser, Mission Study chairman; Mrs. J. H. Newcomb, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Ira Jones, recording secretary; Mrs. J. W. Pope, treasurer and pianist; Mrs. Henry L. Jones, social chairman; Mrs. Ward Adams, BWC advisor.

Other officers of the BWC are: Mrs. Walter McDaniel, co-chairman; Miss Velma Bond, program chairman; Mrs. Tom Meadows, Community Missions chairman; Mrs. Hobart Daniels, Literature chairman; Mrs. Lois Batte, Stewardship chairman; Mrs. Pearl Richie, Mission Study chairman.

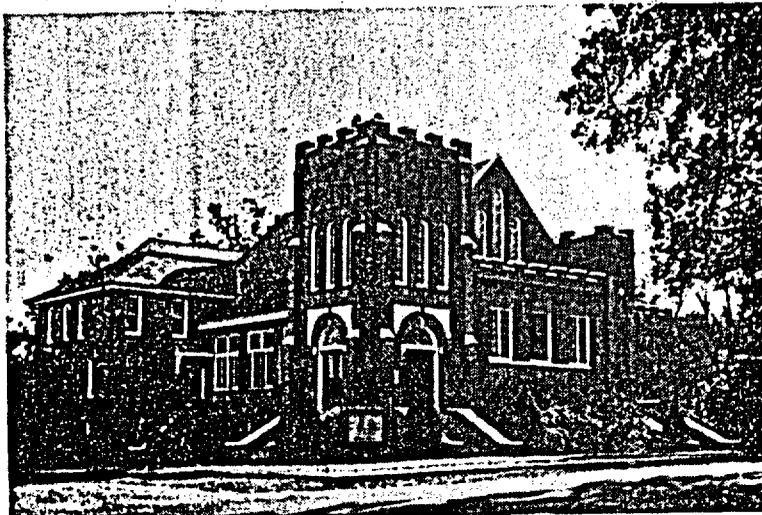
Other Officers



Upper picture (left to right): Miss Betty Jo Young, BTU secretary; Mrs. Pearl Richie, BTU worker and BWC officer; Mrs. J. C. Hillman, BTU leader and Hobart Daniels, Associate BTU director.

Lower picture (left to right): Mrs. Grady F. Koen, Sunday School teacher and BTU worker; Mrs. Vard Hillman, nursery worker; Mrs. A. M. Carlisle, Sunday School teacher, and Miss Olga Clifton, Sunday School teacher.

There are at this writing three living charter members of the church who still have their memberships in the Richton Baptist Church. They are: K. C. Rich, Mrs. E. H. Brown and Mrs. Harmon Young, Sr.



The building now occupied by the Richton Baptist Church. The cornerstone of this building was laid in 1928, during the pastorate of Rev. J. L. Low, and the building was dedicated in 1939 during the pastorate of Rev. T. R. Coulter, Sr.



The pastor's home. It was purchased from Mrs. S. F. McCormick in December, 1944. It is located just across the street from the church.



R. J. LOPER
PASTOR 1906-1907

1-40

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Miss.

Gulfport, Miss.
April 23, 1956

Dear Bro. Averett:

I am sorry I have kept you waiting. I had to get some of this from my brother older than I. I am sending the list of the churches he pastored, along with the picture.

My father was born in Newton County in 1856, and came to Jones County in the early 1890s. He was the father of 10 children, eight still living. One in Washington, one in Texas, six in Mississippi. I hope you can get the information out of all this that you need. And I hope to see you on that date. As ever in Christ,

ARNOLD L. LOPER

Elder R. J. Loper was ordained at Moselle Baptist Church around 1900. Elder Jim Merritt was pastor of the church where Elder Loper was ordained.

During his ministry he served several years in the mission field and as moderator of the Talahalia Association. The General Association, later the Jones County Association. These are some of the churches he helped organize, but we don't know the date or name. He began preaching at the age of 30 and passed away at the age of 93.

A. L. LOPER.



A. M. SHEPPARD

PASTOR 1908-1909

Conway, Ark.
December 10, 1955

Dr. W. M. Averett, Pastor
Richton Baptist Church
Richton, Miss.

Dear Dr. Averett:

Thank you for your letter and the request for my father's picture. Mama let me have the one enclosed and I hope it will serve satisfactorily for the cut.

I believe neither Mama nor I can recall any incident of special significance for the brief time that my father was pastor.

We all three, Mr. Street, Mama and I, deeply appreciate your including Papa among those whose contributions you will remember at the anniversary time.

I think the quality all of us, both his friends in Richton and his family, remember best about my father is his rugged—almost stern—loyalty to the principles of righteousness and Godliness. He possessed an excellent mind, keen insight for penetrating interpre-

tation of the Scripture, and a conscience always sensitive to the line between right and wrong.

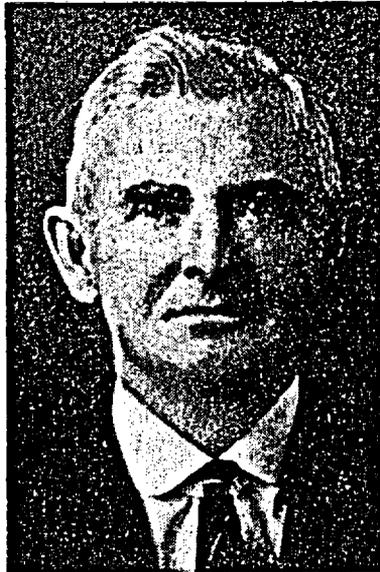
He left me a heritage of high standards, difficult to achieve—but I am still trying!

Every thought of Richton Baptist Church brings to my heart a flood of gratitude for all that the people of the church there have meant to me. I shall never cease to be grateful for every investment made in me, in ways of influence, expressions of kindness and material needs met.

You may be sure, on the day of your observance of the golden anniversary, that ours will be among the host of hearts turning that way in congratulations to all of you, in genuine gratitude for the history back of the day, and in earnest prayer that the years ahead may be the most fruitful yet.

Sincerely,

ROSALIND STREET.



T. J. MOORE

PASTOR 1908-1909

Brother Moore rendered yeoman service in pastoral, evangelistic and enlistment work during the first quarter of the present century. The fruits of his labors are still to be seen in central and southeast Mississippi. His ministry was marked by personal consecration, genuine faith, a saturation of Bible doctrines, including missions at home and abroad, and thorough organization. He laid broad deep foundations and others have builded thereon. Leaving the teaching profession after the beginning of what proved to be a large family, he began his ministerial work in Carthage and travelled from there to Harperville and Lena.

From that action, by a unique leading of the Holy Spirit, he moved to Prentiss. Not only at Prentiss, but in other communities of that section, Churches were organized under his leadership. Following his ministry there, he went to Bay Springs where he organized the Bay Springs Baptist Church. In connection with that work, he answered the call of a little group of Baptists at Richtor January 1, 1908. For that year he served the church one-fourth time. He would go down on Saturday morning and return to his home on Tuesday. He witnessed on Sunday at the little church building and for the rest of the time, by day and by night, from house to house. Quite a few of the adult members of this church

recall his visits in their homes and the homes of their parents. A second year the church was ready for half-time service. With characteristic devotion to duty he stayed on the field from Saturday before the first Sunday until Tuesday after the second Sunday. It was during one of those trips that he received a rush call back home and reached there just in time to welcome a fine baby boy, the last of a group of 11 children.

He was so deeply engrossed in the Lord's work, he took no time to prepare any sort of diary, but a few statistics gathered here and there bear record of the results of his noble service with the Richton Baptist Church. When he began his ministry the Church had a membership of sixty-odd.

His labors were rewarded by regular additions and healthy growth in Christian life and activities. In June 1908, a meeting of days was held in which Rev. J. P. Culpepper did the preaching, resulting in 62 additions. In October another meeting was conducted with H. R. Holcomb as the visiting minister, resulting in 46 additions. A third meeting was conducted in October, 1909, resulting in 41 additions by letter and 21 by baptism. Thus the membership in two years grew from about 60 to more than 200.

These were so thoroughly trained in doctrine, evangelism and missions that they were ready to go full-time service by 1910. Answering the call of the Holy Spirit this faithful servant of the Lord, moved on to other undeveloped fields.

(This article was prepared by Rev. Bryan Simmons, who, although much younger than Brother Moore, began his ministry about the same time and came to know, love and labor with him through more than a decade.)



E. W. McLENDON

PASTOR 1910-1913

Rev. W. M. Averett
Box 112
Richton, Miss.

Dear Brother Averett:

In your letter you ask if I might recall anything of my father's pastorate there in Mississippi. I do not know just what kind of material you are looking for, but as a kid I remember instances that might be of interest to you. One of these was the time Brothe Hinton came up to Papa at the close of a sermon and withdrew his membership from the church because he did not believe Baptist churches should have a baptistry. Papa at that time was trying to raise money to enlarge the church and to install a baptistry in the church.

I also remember old Dr. Peter Bliss Green, the local dentist. He was always a source of wonder to me, because of his old-fashioned dental drill, the kind that you pedaled to activate the drill. But to Papa, he was a source of agitation, because Peter Bliss Green liked to sing in the choir. He was not particularly musically inclined, but he compensated for this inadequacy by an almost unbelievable amount

of volume. The situation had reached a point of crisis—the other choir members were insisting that Papa do something to restore the quality of their music; in other words, Peter Bliss Green must go. After much meditation, Papa hit upon a solution; he created a committee of ushers to greet the people as they entered the church, take the offering, etc., and made Peter Bliss Green chairman of the ushers.

This arrangement worked fine until one Sunday night, after all the people were seated, and the choir had started to sing. Unable to contain himself, Peter Bliss Green left the group of ushers at the rear of the church, marched down the aisle, and rejoined the choir, again lending his booming voice to the otherwise harmonious rendition of "The Old Rugged Cross." Peter Bliss was ordained a minister while Papa was pastor there.

How well I remember Papa's passionate yearning for an organ to replace the piano used in the church services. After what seemed an eternity of waiting, the church finally was able to manage for an organ. This particular organ was the type that came equipped with a wheel, which someone must constantly turn while the instrument was in use. I was selected for this task, and during each service I sat beside the organ, hidden from the congregation by a screen, and turned the wheel on the organ at the appropriate times during the service.

One Sunday night, after a particularly long sermon, Papa gave the signal for the congregation to rise and sing the closing hymn; the organist started to play—but not a sound came out of Papa's new organ. After several moments of acute embarrassment on the part of both Papa and the organist, Papa rushed over and looked behind the screen—where I lay sound asleep.

In a short while the piano was back in its accustomed place in our church, and Papa never mentioned an organ again.

I regret that I was unable to locate a picture of Papa, but if I locate one in the next few weeks I will mail it to you.

Yours very truly,

E. W. McLENDON



S. G. POPE

PASTOR 1913-1915

2 yr

I join the number of pastors who entertain fond memories of their days in Richton. Arriving, as I recall, in the late Spring of 1913, I found a new, hustling, mill town of some 2,000 population. While there were a number of attractive residences, the town, as a whole was rather lacking in that character of beauty that the years alone can bring. I am sure that 40 years, with the growth of trees and shrubbery, have added much charm.

Richton was my first full time pastorate. What I lacked in wisdom I may have supplied in some measure by the vigor of youth. The church members, among whom were some of the choicest spirits whom I have ever known, were charitable, sympathetic and cooperative. Johnson, Shoemaker, Rogers, Bentley, Brown, Stringer, Story, Graves, Mobley, Favre, Stephens, Rich, Miller, Norris, Magee, Hinton, Byrd, Green, Walley, Nichols, Sheppard, Dees, with others that escape me for the moment, are the names of some whom I hold in grateful memory. The counsel of Bro. McLendon, my predecessor was quite helpful. After some months he left for a pastorate in Lafayette, La.

Well do I remember the large attendance at the worship services. For the morning worship we had good congregations, but at the

evening hours we had frequently had capacity crowds. The young people did much of their courting as they went to and from church. What inspiring audiences!

In those days we had a BYPU, consisting of Juniors and Seniors. I forget how they were divided according to age. Of course we have since separated the Intermediates from the other two and have added Story Hour and Adult Union.

I recall a well attended Sunday School study course in which W. E. Holcomb, later president of our Woman's College at Hattiesburg, taught the old Sunday School Normal Manual. In this book were combined Sunday School Organization, teaching methods, and Outlines of Bible History. Perhaps too much in one book, but it was good. There were a large number of awards.

Outstanding in my memory of Richton is a revival meeting in which T. T. Martin, the great evangelist, preached. In that meeting, as I recall, there came the largest number for baptism that any of my churches have received in one meeting. Baptism was administered in a mill pond at the edge of North Richton. It was on a cool, Autumn afternoon, and I became so chilled that Dr. P. B. Green finished baptizing the candidates.

And of course I shall never forget Richton, for it was there that I won her who became my wife, May Mize, then a teacher in the public school, who has walked with me in sunshine and in shadow and who is still my greatest earthly help and inspiration.

S. G. POPE .



E. R. HENDERSON

PASTOR 1915-1916

I was called to the pastorate of the church without a previous visit and trial sermon. This was due, perhaps, to the goodwill and words of my former schoolmates, A. R. Shoemaker and Joe Dee; S. G. Pope, another schoolmate and my predecessor, may have had something to do with it also. I arrived from Wynne, Ark., my former pastorate, Saturday afternoon before the first Sunday in January 1915. I was alone. My family, wife Lillone, son Rodney, daughter Eustice and Ione, visited in my father's home in Pontotoc County till our furniture arrived a week later. I was taken in hand by Mr. and Mrs. Farve and two-year-old son Woodrow, at their hotel at home. I was about sick with the flu. I preached Sunday morning with apologies for being sick. Too sick to preach that night. Dr. Graves soon had me all right. These kindnesses still cheer my heart.

We were soon set up happily and comfortably in the pastor's home between the church and the Bentley planer mill. We were glad to endure the noise and smoke, as others were, for we knew business was going on, and the business that was largely the life of the town. We still cherish many sweet memories of our brief sojourn in Richton. The people of the town and church were exceedingly kind and helpful to us. I believe I could mention every family of

he church, but I might miss some and too, it would make this too long. I shall mention the dentists, Dr. Copeland and Dr. Mobley, and the doctors, Dr. Graves and Mr. McIlwain. These gave their professional services without stint. It is a joy to have fellowship with preachers in a pastorate. There were three in this church, brethren Curry, Green and Sheppard. These endeared themselves to me by many considerations.

I will mention beloved Deacon J. E. Johnson, that I may tell this incident: We were holding a meeting in which I took up the study of the Gospel of John. We had run about 10 days. I seemed to be beating the air. No one said, "I am getting a blessing from the study, etc." At the close of the meeting Brother Johnson said, "I never got so much out of the study of John." I can recall now how this word of appreciation encouraged me, but I said to myself, "Why didn't you tell me sooner, I have needed to know whether anyone is getting anything out of this."

In looking over my sermon notes and outlines of studies of this period I have thought to myself, "I did some of my best preaching at Richton." This outline study of salvation I preached for the first time at Richton: "Three-fold Salvation; Salvation from the Penalty, Power and Presence of Sin; or put it this way: Salvation of the Soul, of the Life, of the Body"; or put it another way: Salvation that is Past, Salvation that is in Process, Salvation that is Future; or a believer can say: "I have already been Saved." He should be able to say, "I am being Saved," and he can say, "I hope to be Saved."

In preaching to lost sinners, I have tried to follow Paul's example, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I Cor. 2:2. This was a short way of saying what he says in 15:3-4, "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures." This is the gospel. It is, "The power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Rom. 1:16. This answers the question: "How can God be just and justify a sinner that believes the gospel?" It shows what keeps a sinner from going to hell when he dies. As a rule people do not learn this truth in great numbers. Religious people have so much to unlearn, that coming to the truth as it is in Jesus may be a long process. I am saying this by way of explanation of my short pastorate at Richton. At this distance I can look at this more objectively. There was not that response to the gospel I craved, and it was difficult to be patient and persistent in the face of an impatient element. Sixteen months was too short a period of time for the kind of preaching I was doing to come to fruitage.

may have taken out on the Lord and his elect, by leaving too quickly. Dr. Mobley said, "I think you are leaving too soon."

I suppose this personal note will be pertinent: After leaving Richton in April, 1916, I was country pastor in Pontotoc and surrounding counties until March, 1921. During this time another son was added to our family. I was pastor of Central Church, Grenada from March, 1921 until September, 1954. I am now living at Verona Miss. and preaching to country churches in Mississippi and Alabama. My wife still survives to be my indispensable helpmate and fellow-worker for the Lord. We are in good health, happy and busy as we have ever been. In our home we have a group of preachers to meet twice a week and study the Bible. They refer to it as "school." I have no greater joy than helping other preachers.

I hope there were some under my ministry during those few months at Richton, of whom I can say as did Paul to the Thessalonians, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" I Thes. 2:19.

I, of course, have had special interest in Richton, and still have. Every news note in secular or denominational press is read with interest. I will regard it a privilege to make the church and pastor and the community objects of prayer. May "You shine as lights in world holding forth the Word of Life."

I am yours in good hope through grace,

1-4-1956

E. R. HENDERSON



J. B. POLK
PASTOR 1916-1918

J. B.
3424 Ave. K
Fort Worth, Tex.
February 2, 1956

Richton Baptist Church, Richton, Miss.

Our well-beloved:

We thank you for your kind invitation to attend your golden anniversary. It is with deep regret that I have to decline, because of age. I am in my 86th year, and trips of that length must be a necessity. But no doubt those who knew me, and maybe others, will be glad to know that wife (in her 85th year) and I still live in our own home, and do your own house, yard and garden work, and either of us drives our own car anywhere we need to go. We praise God that it is as well with us as it is. To Him be all the honor and glory.

I wish for you a great day and that God may be with you in a great way; that the church may live and function in an ever-increasing way till Jesus comes again.

J. B. POLK



J. N. McMILLIN

PASTOR 1918-1919

404 Fourth Ave
Hattiesburg, Miss
February 11, 1956

Dear Mr. Averett:

My attention has been called to your letter in the Baptist Record concerning my father who was at one time pastor of the Richton Baptist Church. I understand that this is your second request, and I am sorry I overlooked the first one. Perhaps you know that he was head of the English department of what is now Mississippi Southern College at the time he was preaching at Richton. I was already married at that time, and cannot tell you much about his pastorate there. I wish I had a picture of him taken about that time, but the only one I now have was taken when he was very young, or in his later years. However, I shall send you one in a day or two, and, as I search among his papers, if I find anything concerning his Richton pastorate, I shall send that also.

I appreciate very much the honor your church is showing him and shall be more than glad to help in any way I can.

Sincerely,

TCHULA McMILLIN JACKSON
(Mrs. T. S. Jackson)



J. L. LOW

PASTOR 1919-1928

With great joy I speak this word concerning my devoted father, the Reverend J. L. Low, who for years was the happy pastor of the First Baptist Church, Richton.

He loved all Richton and especially the church to which both he and my mother, the late Julia Low, gave their lives without deour, deviation or the remotest reservation.

He loved Richton's First Church beyond all words fitly to express. It was his favorite in heart and mind, in soul and in body, in word and in deed. He loved and served it with rare unselfishness.

He prayed down the current building together with God's faithful Saints of the membership and fellowship of the church. He lived and loved and spent himself endlessly, eternally for the church.

The church was his heart and breath, his blood and brain. His first and last thought was of and for the church. He never thought of nor did he ever seek for himself anything. He gave himself and he people cared for him and mother.

Thus from the goodly works of the church came my Christian education at Mississippi Woman's College, Hattiesburg; and to Mis-

Mississippi College, Clinton, where my husband, the Reverend Barney Thames, found me, later to be wedded in the Richton church, now pastor of the Pecan Heights Baptist Church, Dallas, Tex.

My brothers, John, of nearby Laurel and James of Birmingham join me in saying that my fondest childhood memories of any church is the church at Richton where my father "preached the Word" and served God's great church as a "good man and full of the Holy Spirit and many souls were added unto His name."

MRS. BARNEY THAMES
5638 Churchill Avenue
Dallas, Tex.

John Low III (grandson)
518 W. 18th Street
Laurel, Min.



J. H. COTHEN

PASTOR 1928-1936 and 1945-1946

Hattiesburg, Miss.
December 8, 1955

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Miss.

Dear Brother Averett:

I received your letter of the third and appreciate the fact you are getting together the material for a history of the church there. But at present I am unable to get together any material that would be of any value historically. I am too far removed from the events that took place while there to be able to get them together so they would be of value for historical purposes. I failed to keep a record of the developments as they occurred.

You may be able to use these events: The time of the first pastorate, Nov. 1, 1928 to May 1, 1936. First baptismal service in new church March 30, 1929. Mrs. J. W. Pope first person baptized in new church.

My second pastorate there: July 1, 1943 to April 1, 1946. The two main events were the building of Eastview Mission Church house

and the purchase of the parsonage where you now live. But greatest of all was the fellowship in service with the church.

I hope you can use these suggestions. Come to see us. Yours in Christ,

J. H. COTHEN

Hattiesburg, Miss.
February 2, 1956

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Miss.

Dear Brother Averett:

In reply to your letter of January 30, 1956, I am enclosing herewith my cut for your paper. When through with it please return to me.

With reference to the first person baptized in the church there, here is what happened, and how. On Saturday night before the fifth Sunday in March, 1929, the Richton Baptist Church held the first service. At that service I preached the first sermon and at the close of the service baptized four candidates, the first of whom was Mrs. Pope.

On the following day the 5th Sunday in March, 1929, we began a ten-day revival meeting with Rev. D. Wade Smith doing the preaching. At the close of that meeting I baptized 53 other candidates and one month later, or in April of that year, Rev. Tom Ferguson, pastor of the Methodist Church there, used the baptistry to baptize one person. So you see, there were 57 people in all baptized before the Methodist preacher used the baptistry.

You may check with Mrs. Pope if you like.

J. H. COTHEN



T. R. COULTER, Sr.

PASTOR 1936-1943

742

Laurel, Miss.

Rt. 6

February 10, 1956

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Miss.

Dear Brother Averett:

I am sending you my picture cut. I served in Richton July, 1936 through August, 1943. Was pastor for nearly seven years. The church was half-time, salary \$1,200. Went to full-time, \$1,800.

Debt was heavy for depression days; the church was paying twice as much interest as principle. Part of this had to be raised on the street by committees. We paid out in a little over three years.

Finished the third floor of educational building, painting basement building and parts of it as often as needed. Reworked pastor's home. Dedicated the church building debt-free. We had a fine number to join the church during that time. I did not keep the record of that. You can find it in your associational minutes. My stay there was most enjoyable and you have some of the best people in the world to work with. Give them my love and regards.

Yours in Christ,

T. R. COULTER, Sr.



500

J. F. BRANTLEY

PASTOR 1946-1951

Brother Brantley came to Richton in April, 1946, and was pastor until August, 1951. During these years many were added to the church both by baptism and transfer of letter. The finances of the church, as well as the various organizations grew and became stronger. His work with the youth of our church and community was outstanding.

During these years, at different times, Mrs. J. C. McLeod, Miss Jackie Polk and Miss Miriam Graham worked with the young people and with the music.

The Hammond organ was purchased by special gifts from members of the congregation, as was a loudspeaker for the purpose of holding street services and the playing of records from the tower of the church.

During these years the special gifts of Mrs. C. S. Bentley were a blessing as they were through the years. Through her generosity the floor was refinished and covered with beautiful carpeting, the assembly room in the basement was furnished with new furniture and the church yard was re-landscaped. Through her gifts, to

the pastor went on a tour of our mission points in Cuba and to the Baptist World Alliance.

Brother Brantley served the Baptists of Perry County as the moderator of the association and in several other offices. His service to the community was to serve for four years as the county chairman of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, as a member of the first Housing Authority set up in the city, and as president one year of the Rotary Club. He was also active in the work of the Boy Scouts.

It was during Brother Brantley's pastorate that Gene Walley was ordained, and two others were licensed to the ministry.



W. M. AVERETT

PASTOR October 10, 1951—

The present pastorate began October 10, 1951, this undershe herd having come to Richton from Berkley, Calif., where he was f some years connected with the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Ser inary as a teacher of Hebrew Old Testament and Comparative Re gions. Our pastorate in Richton has been blessed of the Lord.

Our work has been set forward by several items of new equi ment and improved facilities in these years. One is a chime s purchased in January of 1952, which rings out twice each day. A other is a series of changes and improvements made in the chur basement whereby the Junior and Intermediate departments we made separate, and the Beginners and Nursery were made into d ferent departments. Additional chairs were purchased for the bas ment, and some new pews for the rear section of the auditoriu Maps and blackboards were installed in classrooms.

The membership of the church have been generous in the support of the program of the church, and generous with their gif for present material needs and facilities. Our appreciation to M and Mrs. J. W. Pope for the gift of the new pews in the rear the auditorium. One of our major improvements is the installati of a complete new heating and air-conditioning system in the enti

building, which greatly facilitates our summer program. Once we felt it necessary to cut our July and August activities to a minimum, due to the excessive heat, but now we can prepare our church calendar the year round without being handicapped by weather conditions.

PROGRAM
of our
GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY
JULY 15, 1956

9:00 Sunday School
11:00 Morning Worship, Dr. Chester L. Quarles
12:30 Opening Hymn
1:35 Invocation Rev. A. M. O'Neil
2:40 Welcome to Richton B. M. Stevens, Sr.
2:50 Retrospect C. C. Smith
3:00 A Sunday School Superintendent's Review
of Progress J. W. Pope
3:10 Recognition of Former Pastors and their Families
3:25 Recognition of Charter Members of the Church
3:30 "Baptist History and Its Importance" Rev. J. L. Boyd
3:45 Adjournment and Fellowship
4:00 Brotherhood and BTU's
8:00 Evening Worship

First Baptist Church

RICHTON, MISSISSIPPI



SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS
1906 — 1981



DEACONS - 1981

Seated left to right: Mr. Dee Smith, Mr. Archie Moser, Mr. L. L. Adkins, Mr. J. W. Pope, Mr. A. L. Moser.

Second row seated left to right: Mr. W. L. Brock, Mr. O. C. Ingram, Mr. Ervin "Pete" Jolly, Mr. Howard Touchstone, Dr. Jimmy McCalla, Mr. Joe Blackman.

Third row standing: Mr. Tom Sims, Mr. Alton D. Walley, Mr. Keith Cochran, Mr. H. E. "Es" Walley, Mr. Dale Wheat

Fourth row standing: Mr. Elmer Hillman, Mr. W. D. "Monk" Cochran, Mr. Warren Strickland, Mr. Grady Koen, Mr. Frank Jones.

HISTORY OF RICHTON BAPTIST CHURCH

The church had been known as Beaverdam Church, and was located about half a mile north of the present Town of Richton.

In the year 1903 the railroad came through, known at first as the Mobile, Jackson & Kansas City Railroad. The road passed within a few hundred feet of the church building. The railroad officials soon ascertained that the church lot was in the midst of a plot of land containing valuable gravel deposits. An offer of purchase of the church property was accepted by the congregation, and an early evacuation of the premises followed as the railroad people desired to begin mining the gravel for use on their new roadbed.

In the meantime, the Town of Richton had sprung up. Several Baptists were among the newcomers, and these at once began to plan for a church in the town itself. The fact that there was already an established organization, owning its own building only half a mile away made the situation more or less of a problem from the standpoint of an effort to join forces and locate the new organization in town. They were country people; we were town people, and not only that but newcomers, strangers to them. They were of course attached to their old church home as only good honest country folks can be. We had quite fully decided at the outset - in fact it was too obviously the thing to do to admit of debate - to have a Baptist church in the town, with their co-operation if we could, without it if we must. So far as I know there were no outward expressions of antagonism or jealousy on either side, and all feelings of this kind, if any, may have existed in the minds of the town people only. But it is evident that the situation was fraught with vexatious possibilities. It was our desire that all come together at the beginning and co-operate from the very first. The suggestion may have occurred to some of us that we go ahead, organize, build and proceed with the work, with the reasonable assurance that within a short while we would absorb the other organization, but at the same time we realized the possibility of its turning out the other way. A small rift to begin with might develop into an impassable chasm.

It was at this juncture that there came about the circumstances already alluded to, by which the already established organization came to be without a church home, presenting an opportunity of which we were not slow to take advantage. Whatever of possible objection or of factional jealousy there may have remained in the minds of our neighboring brethren, if indeed any such ever existed at all, was seemingly happily overcome and removed through the good offices of Dr. F. M. Sheppard, a prominent Baptist who in the meantime had moved to Richton from a neighboring county. Dr. Sheppard was well-known among the older residents and well-liked by all, and his leadership of the movement toward co-operation and getting together resulted in the establishment of the Richton Baptist Church in the year 1906.

A building was soon in course of construction, the congregation in the meantime holding monthly meetings in the Methodist Protestant Church which had just been established in the eastern part of town.

Rev. R. J. Loper, then of Hattiesburg, was pastor of Beaverdam Church at the time of its dissolution, and continued in charge of the new organization until January 1, 1907, being succeeded by Rev. A. M. Sheppard. He resigned the pastorate of the church January 1, 1908, to assume the office of superintendent of education of Perry County, to which he had been elected. Rev. T. J. Moore, then of Bay Springs, now deceased, was the church's pastor from January 1, 1908 to January 1, 1910, being in turn followed by Rev. E. W. McLendon, who came to us from Utica, Mississippi, and served the church till early 1913. Rev. McLendon died in Texas in April of 1929.

Rev. S. G. Pope was the next pastor, taking up the work where Rev. McLendon left off and continuing for about two years, or till sometime in 1915. Rev. Pope came directly from Mississippi College where he had just graduated and is now located at McComb. He got married during his Richton pastorate.

Rev. E. R. Henderson from North Mississippi was our next pastor, serving until October 15, 1916. He is now located at Verona.

His successor at Richton was Rev. J. B. Polk, who remained on the field till about the middle of February, 1918. He was located in Louisiana at the time, and has since moved to Texas where he resides at 3424 Avenue K, Fort Worth.

After Rev. Polk left us the church spent a year looking about for a pastor. Rev. J. N. McMillin, then of the State Teachers College, then pastor at Louisville, Mississippi, very kindly agreed to come over twice a month and supply for the church, and with the distinct understanding from him that it was to be only a temporary arrangement until we could secure a resident pastor. He closed his work here on the 14th of February, 1919, and was followed by Rev. J. L. Low, then of Tylertown, now deceased. Rev. Low came on the field in 1919 and remained until November 1, 1928, a period of nearly ten years, and quite the longest pastorate the church had enjoyed, the average tenure of his predecessors having been only about two years.

Rev. J. H. Cothen, coming to us from Poplarville, took charge of the work, having succeeded Rev. Low, November 1, 1928.

Rev. J. H. Cothen, Sr., served as pastor from 1928 to 1936, a lengthy and fruitful pastorate. He was succeeded by Rev. T. R. Coulter, Sr., who likewise had a lengthy and fruitful pastorate from 1936 until 1945. Rev. Cothen at this writing is retired and living near Hattiesburg, and Rev. Coulter is pastor in Laurel. Following the close of Rev. Coulter's pastorate, Rev. Cothen returned for a brief pastorate of about a year, 1945 - 1946.

In 1946, the church extended a call to Rev. J. F. Brantley, who remained on as pastor for some five years, resigning in 1951 to become pastor at Forest, Mississippi. On October 10, 1951, Rev. W. M. Averett became pastor of the church and is at this writing serving as pastor.

The fiftieth anniversary of the church was celebrated in 1956 under the capable leadership of Rev. Averett. Dr. Chester Quarrels spoke during the morning worship hour.

The East Side Baptist Mission was begun in November of 1957 as a Mission of First Baptist Church, Richton. During these years closing the decade of the 50's, Rev. Averett served as pastor and Billy Crosby served as Minister of Music.

... .. offering that day of \$302.60. The budget for that year was \$18,292. The revival in 1958 was led by Dr. James E. Southerland with 16 professions of faith.

In 1959, Billy Crosby was licensed to the gospel ministry. Also, that year a committee was appointed to draw up appropriate resolutions recognizing the long tenure of J. W. Pope and Pettis Walley as deacons. A copy was sent to the Baptist Record. The church purchased and installed partitions to put in the classroom areas at the rear of the sanctuary and donated 40 Modern Hymnals to the East Side Mission.

Gulfshore Assembly Grounds on the gulf coast was remembered by the church on February 21, 1960, with offerings in both services that day designated for Gulfshore. Later, Gulfshore remained in the budget for years with 2% going to this cause. Sunday, June 26, 1960 was designated as "Billy Crosby Day." A little later that same year, the nine year pastorate of Rev. W. M. Averett came to an end.

During the interim, before the church called the next pastor, the properties committee recommended repairing and refurbishing some rooms at the pastorium as needed. The committee who took on the task were, Mrs. G. L. Granberry, Mrs. O. C. Ingram, Mrs. Alma Lott, and Mrs. H. L. Jones.

Rev. James Terpo, then a student at William Carey College became pastor on February 26, 1961. George W. Cooke was Minister of Music at that time. In May of 1961, there was a dedication service as the church celebrated Christian Home Week. Also in June of 1961, a community survey showed 138 lost people and 113 unaffiliated Baptists. In December of 1961, Price Harris was called as Minister of Music.

"Operation Home Folks" culminated on Sunday, December 10, 1961. Emphasis was given to the church's effort to enlist those discovered in the survey. Lottie Moon Foreign Missions Offering that year was \$817.58.

In April of 1962 a Sunday School Record Attendance was set with 238 present for Bible Study. Evangelist "Step" Martin led the church in revival that year with 18 conversions. September of 1962 was an ordination service for Hobart Daniels, J. C. Hillman and E. B. Hillman. In December of 1962, an abridged edition of Handel's "Messiah" was presented with the Baptist and Methodist churches participating.

1963 was the year in which Rev. Terpo resigned and in which Jerry Meredith came as Minister of Music. In this year the church voted to participate in Church Development Program and was recognized at the Mississippi Baptist Convention for its progress. In September of that year, Alton Dale Walley and W. D. Cochran were ordained as Deacons.

In June of 1964, Rev. David Merrit became the church's pastor. In September of the same year, Keith Cochran was ordained a deacon. Also, that same year, the parsonage was renovated at a cost of \$542.00, and the church committed 2% of it's income to Associational Missions.

By 1965, the need for expanded space was seen and the proposed addition was estimated to cost \$60,000 without furnishings and fixtures. The building committee was composed of J. W. Pope, Chairman, G. W. Johnson, O. C. Ingram, Hubert Freeman, W. A. Moser, Mrs. J. W. Pope, Mrs. H. L. Jones and Mrs. Alma Lott. Total contributions that year were \$28,092.37.

September of 1966 marked the effort of the church to pay for its new building. "Investment Sunday" was September 11, 1966. Offerings that day totaled \$12,197. R. A. work prospered that year under the capable leadership of Stanton Johnson and the church stated its opposition to the legalization of liquor. In November of 1966, a committee was appointed to study the feasibility of a rotation system for deacons.

During the month of November 1967, a special day for an Indian Mission in Arizona was held. Rev. Charles Bush was providing pastoral leadership for the congregation. Total contributions were \$742. The church reported 8 baptisms that year and \$6,442 in mission giving.

In 1968, Rev. Tom Barron and his wife Hazel were honored at a church fellowship supper as new Missionary Appointees of the Foreign Mission Board to Indonesia. Father's Day was set aside that year for the church to retire its indebtedness of \$13,645.

In 1972, Rev. Marcus Finch became pastor and in that year the church voted to buy a bus at a cost of \$18,500.

In 1975, Rev. Fred Trexler was welcomed as pastor. The church ordained Bill Wade to the gospel ministry and Warren Strickland as deacon. New Choir robes were purchased that year and the nursery was remodeled.

The New Baptist Hymnals were purchased in 1976 upon the recommendation of Bill Wade. During that year, the Association established a Mission Center in New Augusta for the Director of Missions. The church made a contribution to that endeavor. During 1976, Terry Goodbread was ordained as a deacon and the church budget had grown to \$65,116.

In 1977, the church bought cushions for the pews and a drapery for the baptistry. Also that year, video-taping equipment was purchased and the church sent their new pastor, Rev. Raymon Leake and his wife on a tour of the Holy Land. Tom and Hazel Barron, home on furlough from Indonesia, told of their work there and presented the church with embroidered communion table cloths from Indonesia. The church sent them back to Indonesia with gifts that would be helpful in their work.

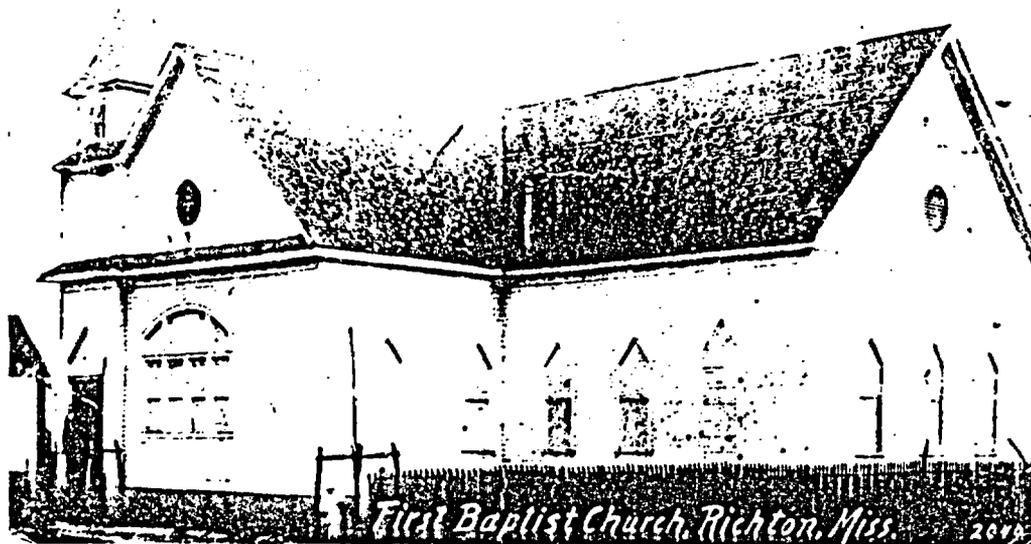
October of 1978 a family-life revival was held with the leadership of Dr. J. Clark Hensley, Director of the Christian Action Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. An organ was purchased in July of that year at a cost of \$13,014. Miss Eliza Backstrom died that year and generously left her home to the church. The decision was made to convert the property into a home for the Minister of Music.

In 1979, renovations began on the home left to the church by Miss Backstrom. Committee members were Mr. Joe Palmer, Mrs. H. L. Jones, Mrs. Charles Nicholson, Mr. H. E. Walley, Mrs. Ruby Pope and Mrs. Jennie Hillman and Mr. Joe Blackman.

A mission Sunday School was begun on July 22, 1979 with Mrs. Myrtice Adams as teacher.

That summer the young people went to Ridgecrest and on September 9, 1979, Sunday School set a record attendance of 248. The media center opened in September with Mrs. Charles Bush serving as chairman of that committee. Frank Calloway was called as Minister of Music and Youth in December of 1979.

In 1980, the Easter season was greeted with the first presentation ever of a Cantata with a full orchestra. That summer, youth and adults made a mission trip to Colorado, with efforts in Vacation Bible School, Backyard Bible Clubs and revival. Tom Sims was the revival preacher. The church purchased a van for the trip to Colorado at a cost of \$10,792. Special donations during 1980 included a piano to the sanctuary by Mr. Elmer Hillman and risers for the Children's Choir by Miss Elaine Moser.



THE FIRST CHURCH

As already stated the first church house was built in 1905 and 1906 during Bro. Loper's pastorate. Some financial help was received from the State Board and also from the General Association. The building was dedicated on the first Sunday of May, 1906, the sermon of the occasion being preached by Rev. A. V. Rowe, now deceased, then secretary of the State Mission Board. The cost of the first building was around \$3,000, including about \$700 for the pews. W. I. Denton, at that time a local contractor, built the church. It was the one-room structure which, enlarged twice later by adding more rooms, formed the building the present congregation was accustomed to for several years, and which was recently demolished for the erection of our present church home.

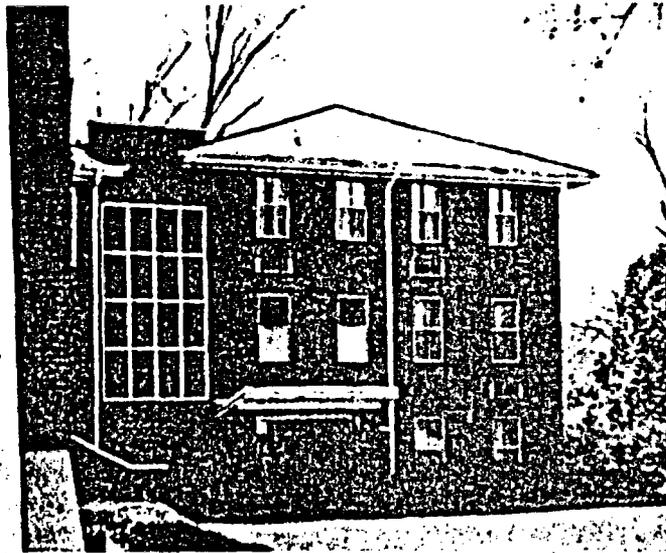
In about 1910, during Rev. McLendon's pastorate, there was added one large room, practically the size of the original, and which changed the building into the form of the letter L. Partitions were made in this to accommodate the rapidly growing Sunday School, which reached its zenith in attendance during those years, the average being around 300 for awhile. It was at this time also that the pastorium was purchased.

The next building of importance was the addition of Sunday School rooms to the south side of the church house, at a cost of some \$3,000. This was during Rev. Low's administration.



THE PRESENT SANCTUARY

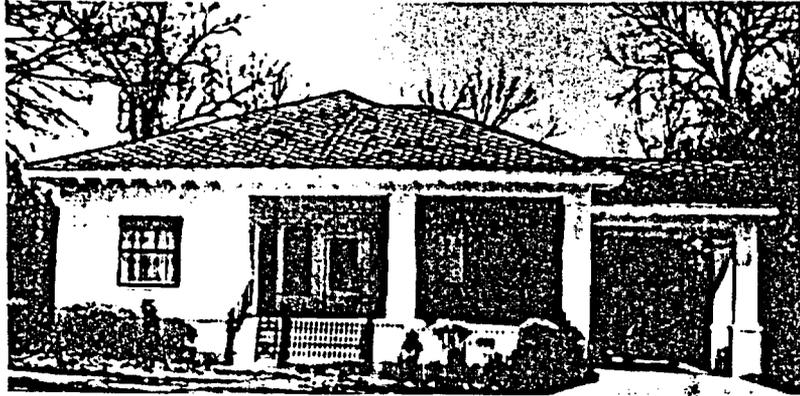
Then followed the erection of the present edifice during the years 1928 - 29. E. C. Hearon & Sons, Hattiesburg, were the architects, and W. F. & L. H. Breland, New Augusta, were the builders. Total cost, exclusive of equipment, was about \$24,000.



THE EDUCATIONAL ANNEX

In 1965, during the pastorate of Rev. David Merritt, an educational building was added. It contains a large Fellowship Hall, kitchen, office space for staff and secretary, Sunday school class rooms for four adult classes and five youth classes. It also contains a music library and a combination Youth Department area and Choir room.

At the time of the addition, it was decided that the sanctuary could be improved upon by remodeling the choir loft to accomplish a sense of balance. The building of the new addition and the remodeling of the sanctuary cost in excess of \$100,000. This was finished and paid for within two years.



THE PARSONAGE

The present parsonage replaced the Old Sumrall home at the corner of Cedar and Holly streets, as the residence of the pastor. It was purchased from Mrs. W. F. McCormick in December, 1944 and is located just across the street from the church. Rev. J. H. Cothen and family were the first to reside in the new parsonage.

The parsonage is very spacious and can accommodate social functions as well as abundant living area for the pastor and his family. The gracious old home contains three bedrooms, living and dining rooms, a study, kitchen and back porch. The chimney in the front room was removed to provide space for a second bath and closet. The house was redecorated with new carpet throughout and lovely wall paper through the hall, as well as ceramic tile bathrooms. The most recent addition to the parsonage was a sundeck.



THE HOME OF THE MUSIC MINISTER

Because of the generosity of Miss Eliza Backstrom who died in 1978, the church received her homeplace as was stipulated in her will. Several options for the use of the home were considered and final determination was made that it would be most useful to the church as a home for the Minister of Music.

Since the house was arranged in two apartments and since it was the decision of the church to make the house as comfortable as possible, extensive renovations were made. The house now has 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, living room, den, kitchen and carport and a glassed in side porch.

The house was first occupied in January of 1980.



R. J. LOPER
PASTOR 1906 - 1907

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Mississippi

Gulfport, Mississippi
April 23, 1956

Dear. Bro. Averett:

I am sorry I have kept you waiting. I had to get some of this from my brother older than I. I am sending the list of the churches he pastored, along with the picture.

My father was born in Newton County in 1856, and came to Jones County in the early 1890's. He was the father of 10 children, eight still living. One in Washington, one in Texas, six in Mississippi. I hope you can get the information out of all this that you need. And I hope to see you on that date. As ever in Christ,

ARNOLD L. LOPER

Elder R. J. Loper was ordained at Moselle Baptist Church around 1900. Elder Jim Merritt was pastor of the church where Elder Loper was ordained.

During his ministry he served several years in the mission field and as moderator of the Talahalia Association. The General Association, later the Jones County Association. These are some of the churches he helped organize, but we don't know the date or name. He began preaching at the age of 30 and passed away at the age of 93.

A. L. LOPER



A. M. SHEPPARD
PASTOR 1908 - 1909

Conway, Arkansas
December 10, 1955

December 10, 1955

Dr. W. M. Averett, Pastor
Richton Baptist Church
Richton, Mississippi

Dear Dr. Averett:

Thank you for your letter and the request for my father's picture. Mama let me have the one enclosed and I hope it will serve satisfactorily for the cut .

I believe neither Mama nor I can recall any incident of special significance for the brief time that my father was pastor.

We all three, Mr. Street, Mama and I, deeply appreciate your including Papa among those whose contributions you will remember at the anniversary time.

I think the quality all of us, both his friends in Richton and his family, remember best about my father is his rugged - almost stern - loyalty to the principles of righteousness and Godliness. He possessed an excellent mind, keen insight for penetrating interpretation of the Scripture, and a conscience always sensitive to the line between right and wrong.

He left me a heritage of high standards, difficult to achieve - but I am still trying!

Every thought of Richton Baptist Church brings to my heart a flood of gratitude for all that the people of the church there have meant to me. I shall never cease to be grateful for every investment made in me, in ways of influence, expressions of kindness and material needs met.

You may be sure, on the day of your observance of the golden anniversary, that ours will be among the host of hearts turning that way in congratulations to all of you, in genuine gratitude for the history back of the day, and in earnest prayer that the years ahead may be the most fruitful yet.

Sincerely,
ROSALIND STREET



T. J. MOORE
PASTOR 1908 - 1909

Brother Moore rendered yeoman service in pastoral, evangelistic and enlistment work during the first quarter of the present century. The fruits of his labors are still to be seen in central and southeast Mississippi. His ministry was marked by personal consecration, genuine faith, a saturation of Bible doctrines, including missions at home and abroad, and through organization. He laid broad, deep foundations and others have been builded thereon. Leaving the teaching profession after the beginning of what proved to be a large family, he began his ministerial work in Carthage and travelled from there to Harperville and Lena.

From that action, by a unique leading of the Holy Spirit, he moved to Prentiss. Not only at Prentiss, but in other communities of that section, Churches were organized under his leadership. Following his ministry there, he went to Bay Springs where he organized the Bay Springs Baptist Church. In connection with that work, he answered the call of a little group of Baptists at Richton January 1, 1908. For that year he served the church one-fourth time. He would go down on Saturday morning and return to his home on Tuesday. He witnessed on Sunday at the little church building and for the rest of the time, by day and by night, from house to house. Quite a few of the adult members of this church recall his visits in their homes and the homes of their parents. A second

year the church was ready for half-time service. With characteristic devotion to duty he stayed on the field from Saturday before the first Sunday until Tuesday after the second Sunday. It was during one of those trips that he received a rush call back home and reached there just in time to welcome a fine baby boy, the last of a group of 11 children.

He was so deeply engrossed in the Lord's work, he took no time to prepare any sort of diary, but a few statistics gathered here and there bear record of the results of his noble service with the Richton Baptist Church. When he began his ministry the Church had a membership of sixty-odd.

His labors were rewarded by regular additions and hearty growth in Christian life and activities. In June 1908, a meeting of days was held in which Rev. J. P. Culpepper did the preaching, resulting in 62 additions. In October another meeting was conducted with H. R. Holcomb as the visiting minister, resulting in 46 additions. A third meeting was conducted in October, 1909, resulting in 41 additions by letter and 21 by baptism. Thus the membership in two years grew from about 60 to more than 200.

These were so thoroughly trained in doctrine, evangelism and missions that they were ready to go full-time service by 1910. Answering the call of the Holy Spirit his faithful servant of the Lord moved on to other undeveloped fields.

(This article was prepared by Rev. Byran Simmons, who although much younger than Brother Moore, began his ministry about the same time and came to know, love and labor with him through more than a decade.)



E. W. McLENDON
PASTOR 1910 - 1913

Rev. W. M. Averett
Box 112
Richton, Mississippi
Dear Brother Averett

In your letter you ask if I might recall anything of my father's pastorate there in Mississippi. I do not know just what kind of material you are looking for, but as a kid I remember instances that might be of interest to you. One of these was the time Brother Hinton came up to Papa at the close of a sermon and withdrew his membership from the church because he did not believe Baptist churches should have a baptistry. Papa at that time was trying to raise money to enlarge the church and to install a baptistry in the church.

I also remember old Dr. Peter Bliss Green, the local dentist. He was always a source of wonder to me, because of his old fashioned dental drill, the kind that you pedaled to activate the drill. But to Papa, he was a source of agitation, because Peter Bliss Green liked to sing in the choir. He was not particularly musically inclined, but he compensated for his inadequacy by an almost unbelievable amount of volume. The situation had reached a point of crisis - the other choir members were insisting that Papa do something to restore the quality of their music; in other words,

Peter Bliss Green must go. After much meditation, Papa hit upon a solution; he created a committee of ushers to greet the people as they entered the church, take the offering, etc., and made Peter Bliss Green chairman of the ushers.

This arrangement worked fine until one Sunday night, after all the people were seated, and the choir had started to sing. Unable to contain himself, Peter Bliss Green left the group of ushers at the rear of the church, marched down the aisle, and rejoined the choir, again leading his booming voice to the otherwise harmonious rendition of "The Old Rugged Cross." Peter Bliss was ordained a minister while Papa was pastor there.

How well I remember Papa's passionate yearning for an organ to replace the piano used in the church services. After what seemed an eternity of waiting, the church finally was able to manage for an organ. This particular organ was the type that came equipped with a wheel, which someone must constantly turn while the instrument was in use. I was selected for this task, and during each service I sat beside the organ, hidden from the congregation by a screen, and turned the wheel on the organ at the appropriate times during the service.

One Sunday night, after a particularly long sermon, Papa gave the signal for the congregation to rise and sing the closing hymn; the organist started to play - but not a sound came out of Papa's new organ. After several moments of acute embarrassment on the part of both Papa and the organist, Papa rushed over and looked behind the screen - where I lay sound asleep.

In a short while the piano was back in its accustomed place in our church, and Papa never mentioned an organ again.

I regret that I was unable to locate a picture of Papa, but if I locate one in the next few weeks I will mail it to you.

Yours very truly,
E. W. McLENDON



S. G. POPE
PASTOR 1913 - 1915

I join the number of pastors who entertain fond memories of their days in Richton. Arriving, as I recall, in the late Spring of 1913, I found a new, hustling, mill town of some 2,000 population. While there were a number of attractive residences, the town, as a whole was rather lacking in that character of beauty that the years alone can bring. I am sure that 40 years, with the growth of trees and shrubbery, have added much charm.

Richton was my first full time pastorate. What I lacked in wisdom I may have supplied in some measure by the vigor of youth. The church members, among whom were some of the choicest spirits whom I have ever known, were charitable, sympathetic and cooperative. Johnson, Shoemaker, Rogers, Bently, Brown, Stringer, Story, Graves, Mobley, Favre, Stephens, Rich, Miller, Norris, Magee, Hinton, Byrd, Green, Walley, Nichols, Sheppard, Dees, with others that escape for the moment, are the names of some whom I hold in grateful memory. The counsel of Brother McLendon, my predecessor, was quite helpful. After some months he left for a pastorate in Lafayette, Louisiana.

Well do I remember the large attendance at the worship services. For the morning worship we had good congregations, but at the evening hours we had frequently had capacity crowds. The young people did much of their courting as they went to and from church. What inspiring audiences!

In those days we had a BYPU, consisting of Juniors and Seniors. I forget how they were divided according to age. Of course we have since separated the Intermediates from the other two and have added Story Hour and Adult Union.

I recall a well attended Sunday School study course in which W. E. Holcomb, later president of our Woman's College at Hattiesburg, taught the old Sunday School Normal Manual. In this book were combined Sunday School Organization, teaching methods, and Outlines of Bible History. Perhaps too much in one book, but it was good. There were a large number of awards.

Outstanding in my memory of Richton is a revival meeting in which T. T. Martin, the great evangelist, preached. In that meeting, as I recall, there came the largest number for baptism that any of my churches have received in one meeting. Baptism was administered in a mill pond at the edge of North Richton. It was on a cool, Autumn afternoon, and I became so chilled that Dr. P. B. Green finished baptizing the candidates.

And of course I shall never forget Richton, for it was there that I won her who became my wife, May Mize, then a teacher in the public school, who has walked with me in sunshine and in shadow and who is still my greatest earthly help and inspiration.

S. G. POPE



E. R. HENDERSON
PASTOR 1915 - 1916

I was called to the pastorate of the church without a previous visit and trial sermon. This was due, perhaps, to the goodwill and words of my former schoolmates, A. R. Shoemaker and Joe Dees. S. G. Pope, another schoolmate and my predecessor, may have had something to do with it also. I arrived from Wynne, Arkansas, my former pastorate, Saturday afternoon before the first Sunday in January, 1915. I was alone. My family, wife Lillone, son Rodney, daughters Eustice and Ione, visited in my father's home in Pontotoc County till our furniture arrived a week later. I was taken in hand by Mr. and Mrs. Farve and two-year-old son Woodrow, at their hotel and home. I was about sick with the flu. I preached Sunday morning with apologies for being sick. Too sick to preach that night. Dr. Graves soon had me all right. These kindnesses still cheer my heart.

We were soon set up happily and comfortably in the pastor's home between the church and the Bentley planer mill. We were glad to endure the noise and smoke, as others were, for we knew business was going on, and the business that was largely the life of the town. We still cherish many sweet memories of our brief sojourn in Richton. The people of the town and church were exceedingly kind and helpful to us. I believe I could mention every family of the church, but I might miss some and too, it would make this too long. I shall mention the dentists, Dr. Copeland

and Dr. Mobley, and the doctors, Dr. Graves, and Mr. McIlwain. These gave their professional services without stint. It is a joy to have fellowship with preachers in a pastorate. There were three in this church, Bretheren Curry, Green and Sheppard. These endeared themselves to me by many considerations.

I will mention beloved Deacon J. E. Johnson, that I may tell this incident: We were holding a meeting in which I took up the study of the Gospel of John. We had run about 10 days. I seemed to be beating the air. No one said "I am getting a blessing from the study, etc." At the close of the meeting Brother Johnson said, "I never got so much out of the study of John." I can recall now how this word of appreciation encouraged me, but I said to myself, "Why didn't you tell me sooner, I have needed to know whether anyone is getting anything out of this."

In looking over my sermon notes and outlines of studies of this period I have thought to myself, "I did some of my best preaching at Richton." This outline study of salvation I preached for the first time at Richton. "Three-fold Salvation; Salvation from the Penalty, Power and Presence of Sin; or put it this way: Salvation of the Soul, of the Life, of the Body"; or put it another way: Salvation that is Past, Salvation that is in Process, Salvation that is Future; or a believer can say: "I have already been Saved." He should be able to say, "I am being Saved," and he can say, "I hope to be Saved."

In preaching to lost sinners, I have tried to follow Paul's example, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I Cor. 2: 2. This was a short way of saying what he says in 15: 3-4, "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures." This is the gospel. It is, "The power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Rom. 1: 16. This answers the question: "How can God be just and justify a sinner that believes the gospel?" It shows what keeps a sinner from going to hell when he dies. As a rule people do not learn this truth in great numbers. Religious people have so much to unlearn, that coming to the truth as it is in Jesus may be a long process. I am saying this by way of explanation of my short pastorate at Richton. At this distance I can look at this more objectively. There was not that response to the gospel I craved, and it was difficult to be patient and persistent in the face of an impatient element. Sixteen months was too short a period of time for the kind of preaching I was doing to come to fruitage. I may have taken out on the Lord and his elect, by leaving too quickly. Dr. Mobley said, "I think you are leaving too soon."

I suppose this personal note will be pertinent: After leaving Richton in April, 1916, I was country pastor in Pontotoc and surrounding counties until March, 1921. During this time another son was added to my family. I was pastor of Central Church, Grenada, from March, 1921 until September, 1954. I am now living at Verona, Mississippi and preaching to country churches in Mississippi and Alabama. My wife still

survives to be my indispensable helpmate and fellowworker for the Lord. We are in good health, happy and busy as we have ever been. In our home we have a group of preachers to meet twice a week and study the Bible. They refer to it as "school." I have no greater joy than helping other preachers.

I hope there were under my ministry during those few months at Richton, of whom I can say as did Paul to the Thessalonians, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" 1 Thes. 2: 19.

I, of course, have had special interest in Richton, and still have. Every news note in secular or denominational press is read with interest. I will regard it a privilege to make the church and pastor and the community objects of prayer. May "You shine as lights in world holding forth the Word of Life."

I am yours in good hope through grace,

E. R. HENDERSON

1 - 4 - 1956



J. B. POLK
PASTOR 1916 - 1918

Our Well Beloved:

We thank you for your kind invitation to attend your golden anniversary. It is with deep regret that I have to decline, because of age. I am in my 86th year, and trips of that length must be a necessity. But no doubt those who knew me, and maybe others, will be glad to know that wife (in her 85th year) and I still in our own home, and do your own house, yard and garden work, and either of us drives our own car anywhere we need to go. We praise God that it is well with us as it is. To Him be all the honor and glory.

I wish for you a great day and that God may be with you in a great way; that the church may live and function in an ever-increasing way till Jesus comes again.

J. B. POLK



J. N. McMILLIN
PASTOR 1918 - 1919

404 Fourth Avenue
•Hattiesburg, Mississippi
February 11, 1956

Dear Mr. Averett:

My attention has been called to your letter in the Baptist Record concerning my father who was at one time pastor of the Richton Baptist Church. I understand that this is your second request, and I am sorry I overlooked the first one. Perhaps you know that he was head of the English department of what is now Mississippi Southern College at the time he was preaching at Richton. I was already married at that time, and cannot tell you much about his pastorate there. I wish I had a picture of him taken about that time, but the only one I now have was taken when he was very young, or in his later years. However, I shall send you one in a day or two, and, as I search among his papers, if I find anything concerning his Richton pastorate, I shall send that also.

I appreciate very much the honor your church is showing him and shall be more than glad to help in any way I can.

Sincerely,

TCHULA McMILLIN JACKSON
(Mrs. T. S. Jackson)



J. L. LOW
PASTOR 1919 - 1928

With great joy I speak this word concerning my devoted father, the Reverend J. L. Low, who for years was the happy pastor of the First Baptist Church, Richton.

He loved all Richton and especially the church to which both he and my mother, the late Julia Low, gave their lives without detour, deviation or the remotest reservation.

He loved Richton's First Church beyond all words fitly to express. It was his favorite in heart and mind, in soul and in body, in word and in deed. He loved and served it with rare unselfishness.

He prayed down the current building together with God's faithful Saints of the membership and fellowship of the church. He lived and loved and spent himself endlessly, eternally for the church.

The church was his heart and breath, his blood and brain. His first and last thought was of and for the church. He never thought of nor did he ever seek for himself anything. He gave himself and the people cared for him and mother.

Thus from the goodly works of the church came my Christian education at Mississippi Women's College, Hattiesburg; and to Mississippi College, Clinton, where my husband, the Reverend Barney Thames, found me, later to be wedded in the Richton church, now pastor of the Pecan Heights Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas.

My brothers, John, of nearby Laurel and James of Birmingham, join me in saying that my fondest childhood memories of any church is the church at Richton where my father "preached the Word" and served God's great church as a "good man and full of the Holy Spirit and many souls were added unto His name."

MRS. BARNEY THAMES

5638 Churchill Avenue
Dallas, Texas



J. H. COTHEN
PASTOR 1928 - 1936 and 1945 - 1946

Hattiesburg, Mississippi
December 8, 1955

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Mississippi

Dear Brother Averett:

I received your letter of the third and appreciate the fact you are getting together the material for a history of the church there. But at present I am unable to get together any material that would be of any value historically. I am too far removed from the events that took place while there to be able to get them together so they would be of value for historical purposes. I failed to keep a record of the developments as they occurred.

You may be able to use these events: The time of the first pastorate, November 1, 1928 to May 1, 1936. First baptismal service in new church March 30, 1929. Mrs. J. W. Pope first person baptized in new church.

My second pastorate there: July 1, 1943 to April 1, 1946. The two main events were the building of Eastview Mission Church house and the purchase of the parsonage where you now live. But greatest of all was the fellowship in service with the church.

I hope you can use these suggestions. Come to see us. Yours
Christ,

J. H. COTHEN

Hattiesburg, Missisip
February, 2, 1956

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Mississippi

Dear Brother Averett:

In reply to your letter of January 30, 1956, I am enclosing herewith my cut for your paper. When through with it please return to me.

With reference to the first person baptized in the church there, here what happened, and how. On Saturday night before the fifth Sunday in March, 1929, the Richton Baptist Church held the first service. At that service I preached the first sermon and at the close of the service baptized four candidates, the first of whom was Mrs. Pope.

On the following day the 5th Sunday in March, 1929, we began a ten day revival meeting with Rev. D. Wade Smith doing the preaching. At the close of that meeting I baptized 53 other candidates and one month later, or in April of that year, Rev. Tom Ferguson, pastor of the Methodist Church there, used the baptistry to baptize one person. So you see, there were 57 people in all baptized before the Methodist preacher used the baptistry.

You may check with Mrs. Pope if you like.

J. H. COTHEN



T. R. COULTER, SR.
PASTOR 1936 - 1943

Laurel, Mississippi
Route 6
February 10, 1956

Rev. W. M. Averett
Richton, Mississippi

Dear Brother Averett:

I am sending you my picture cut. I served in Richton July, 1936 through August, 1943. Was pastor for nearly seven years. The church was half-time, salary \$1,200. Went to full-time, \$1,800.

Debt was heavy for depression days; the church was paying twice as much interest as principle. Part of this had to be raised on the street by committees. We paid out in a little over three years.

Finished the third floor of educational building, painting basement building and parts of it as often as needed. Reworked pastor's home. Dedicated the church building debt-free. We had a fine number to join the church during that time. I did not keep the record of that. You can find it in you associational minutes. My stay there was most enjoyable and you have some of the best people in the world to work with. Give them my love and regards.

Yours in Christ,
T. R. COULTER, SR.



J. F. BRANTLEY
PASTOR 1946 - 1951

Brother Brantley came to Richton in April, 1946, and was pastor until August, 1951. During these years many were added to the church both by baptism and transfer of letter. The finances of the church, as well as the various organizations grew and became stronger. His work with the youth of our church and community was outstanding.

During these years, at different times, Mrs. J. C. McLeod, Miss Jackie Polk and Miss Miriam Graham worked with the young people and with the music.

The Hammond organ was purchased by special gifts from members of the congregation, as was a loudspeaker for the purpose of holding street services and the playing of records from the tower of the church.

During these years the special gifts of Mrs. C. S. Bentley were a blessing as they were through the years. Through her generosity the floor was refinished and covered with beautiful carpeting, the assembly room in the basement was furnished with new furniture, and the church yard was re-landscaped. Through her gifts, too, the pastor went on a tour of our mission points in Cuba and to the Baptist World Alliance.

Brother Brantley served the Baptists of Perry County as the moderator of the association and in several other offices. His service to the community was to serve for four years as the county chairman of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, as a member of the first Housing Authority set up in the city, and as president one year of the Rotary Club. He was also active in the work of the Boy Scouts.

It was during Brother Brantley's pastorate that Gene Walley was ordained, and two others were licensed to the ministry.



W. M. AVERETT

The present pastorate began October 10, 1951, this undershepherd having come to Richton from Berkley, California, where he was for some years connected with the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary as a teacher of Hebrew Old Testament and Comparative Religions. Our pastorate in Richton has been blessed of the Lord.

Our work has been set forward by several items of new equipment and improved facilities in these years. One is a chime set purchased in January of 1952, which rings out twice each day. Another is a series of changes and improvements made in the church basement whereby the Junior and Intermediate departments were made separate, and the Beginners and Nursery were made into different departments. Additional chairs were purchased for the basement, and some new pews for the rear section of the auditorium. Maps and blackboards were installed in classrooms.

The membership of the church have been generous in their support of the program of the church, and generous with their gifts for present material needs and facilities. Our appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Pope for the gift of the new pews in the rear of the auditorium. One of our major improvements is the installation of a complete new heating and air-conditioning system in the entire building, which greatly facilitates our summer program. Once we felt it necessary to cut our July and August activities to a minimum, due to the excessive heat, but now we

can prepare our church calendar the year round without being handicapped by weather conditions.

Rev. W. M. Averett served the church well until 1960 when he moved to Jackson and was pastor for some year there. Upon moving from Jackson, he became a teacher (always a love of his Richton days) in Clear Creek Baptist School in Kentucky. He spent a number of years training young preachers for their work in the gospel ministry. Continuing to teach until he was sixty-five in spite of several heart attacks, Brother Averett, now in his early 70's, retired to his home in Lexington, Kentucky where he and his wife are near their son. The nine years that Brother Averett spent as pastor in Richton are remembered with great warmth by both pastor and people.



DAVID L. MERRITT
PASTOR 1964 - 1968

It was the first day of July, a very hot day when we moved to Richton, Mississippi in 1964. We were met by very warm people and the flames of those friendships have grown through the years. Our lives have been greatly enriched by those friendships and by the strength of character of many of the people who are still faithful members there. We received many more blessings than we were able to give.

Two of the highlights of our four-year ministry: there was the erection of the Educational Wing of the church and the renovation of the auditorium and basement facilities. This debt was paid off in approximately two years time. Another highlight was the wonderful couples who came into the life and ministry of the church who have now become the strength and the future of the church. Many of them are still outstanding people. I remember with great pleasure the way the church family cared for and provided for my young family. They were truly concerned. They made us feel a part of the community.

As I look back, I realize how much God's will means because while I was there I realized I was in the center of His will and there is not a more comfortable feeling in all the world. Thanks to the people of the Richton Baptist Church for adding so greatly to all of the Merritt family.

The Calvary Baptist Church choir from Pascagoula, Mississippi, presented the musical drama, "The King Is Coming." This event resulted in a record crowd of more than 600 with many people unable to find standing room. It was sponsored by Mr. Archie Moser's Sunday School Class.

The nursery was remodeled, the sanctuary painted and the exterior brick of the old building cleaned and the trim painted.

First Baptist of Richton was host to an associational G. A. Luau. Our guest speaker, Miss Marjean Patterson, commented that she'd just returned from Hawaii and that the fellowship hall of First Baptist looked more Hawaiian than Hawaii. This was the result of Mrs. Bess Moon and many helpers' efforts.

God blessed us with baptisms and additions to the church during these years. He granted many spiritual blessings for which we were grateful.

The people of the First Baptist Church of Richton, Mississippi will always hold a very dear and special place in our hearts. We thank our Lord Jesus for the opportunity to serve and minister during these years to some of the best people on earth - the church family of the First Baptist Church of Richton.

REV. BILL HALE
PASTOR 1969 - 1970
Photo and write-up not available



MARCUS FINCH
PASTOR 1970 - 1974

Dear Church Family,

When I think of the years of my ministry with the First Baptist Church of Richton, the word that culminates my feelings is joy. For me as pastor and for my family, joy was experienced in so many ways.

The effective lay leadership in the church has allowed for a strong well-rounded church program which sought to meet the needs of every church family. Especially do I recall with great fondness the men who served as Deacons while I was at Richton. These men gave much needed counsel and guidance to the ministry of the church.

First Baptist Church of Richton has always had a dedicated interest in their young people. The addition of a second full-time staff member was a great step forward. The Minister of Music and Youth provided the young people with the best opportunities for Christian growth and recreation.

The mission-mindedness of this church is sufficient to warm the heart of any pastor. I remember the challenges of missions the church was constantly accepting. Two examples of these challenges are: First, the strong support and leadership that First Baptist Church afforded to the Perry County Baptist Association was so dynamic. Second is the year that Missionary Tom Barron and his family spent with us while they were on furlough. How we all grew in knowledge of what it was really like to be a missionary!

Genuine Christian love is the most outstanding characteristic of
First Baptist Church of Richton. This love was not only shown to the
pastor, but seemed to saturate the entire church family and spread
throughout the town.

May the Lord bless your next seventy-five years as He has so richly
blessed the first seventy-five.

DR. MARCUS D. FINCH



FRED TREXLER, JR.
PASTOR 1974 - 1976

Just before we moved into the parsonage, central heat and air was installed, and many more improvements made to make the pastor's home more enjoyable.

While we were in Richton, a full time Minister of Music and Education was called for the first time.

The children and youth choirs along with the puppets appeared on T.V. twice - once for a patriotic emphasis and once for a Christmas program.

The Church participated in America's Bi-Centennial celebration with many activities. One of these was the Christmas parade with a historical emphasis. The pastor rode a horse and depicted an old-time circuit rider and was followed by the church bus representing a current mode of spreading the gospel. The church had dinner on the parking lot and had a puppet show at the city-wide fair, many of the church people dressed in clothes of the 1776 era.

Miss Lizzie Brown celebrated her 100th birthday with a big party at Mrs. Alma Lott's house, and the governor of Mississippi sent her two dozen red roses and a telegram. She also received a letter from the President of the United States.



RAYMON LEAKE
PASTOR 1977 -

The pastorate of the First Baptist Church has been one of the greatest joys of my life. Throughout my tenure, the church has had a great spirit of unity and has made good progress.

The mission-mindedness of the church has been demonstrated repeatedly. The church always exceeds even the most ambitious goals we set for missions. Our Marches for Missions during the Christmas season have involved all of us in thinking about our responsibility for the Lord's work around the world. The church, and particularly the Golden Circle Sunday School class, have kept a watchful eye on the needs of Tom and Hazel Barron, our own missionaries in Indonesia. In addition, we help at all levels through a good level of support to the Cooperative Program. Perhaps the most gratifying mission experience has been seeing, not only young people, but many of our adults involved in mission activity during the summer.

We have done some things that had not been done before during the past several years. The establishing of a media center and the acquiring of video tape equipment are memorable. In addition, we started a mission Sunday School in the project house behind the Post Office. Unusual musical experiences including the presentation of the first music with full orchestra in Richton have been presented. For the first time, trips have been taken with senior adults to various places including Latchez, Bellingrath Gardens, Biloxi and Columbus.

Perhaps most memorable for me has been the care which the people of First Baptist Church have demonstrated for me. There has been great sensitivity to our needs and concerns. Both Gloria and I appreciate this are very much. For all these reasons, and more, we love Richton.

NOTES

NOTES

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Ronald J. Forsythe
Manager, Nuclear Waste Program

DATE: May 20, 1985

FROM: Kelly A. Haggard *KAH*
Nuclear Waste Specialist

SUBJECT: Seismic lines run by Chevron

In a telephone conversation with Henry Stevens of Richton, I obtained some information on the seismic lines that were recently run by Chevron. Three lines were run in Perry County.

1. North of Richton
T5N-R9W
Sections 20, 29, 30, 31
2. South of Richton
T4N-R9W
Sections 5 and 6
3. North of Richton
T5N-R9W
Sections 19-24 all the way to Greene County line

There was also another line run by an independent company in Section 19, T4N-R9W. There are a few oil wells in that Section.

Mr. Stevens gave me a contact at Chevron for these seismic lines.

T. C. Kiesler
Chevron Geosciences Company
2811 Hayes Road
Houston, Texas
713-596-2065

The lines were actually run by W. H. Simpson, 601-764-3560, in Stringer, Mississippi.

KAH:pf

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ronald J. Forsythe, Manager *RJF*
Nuclear Waste Program

DATE: May 15, 1985

FROM: Kelly A. Haggard *KAH*
Nuclear Waste Specialist

SUBJECT: Research of Oil and Gas Board Files

On the morning of May 15, 1985, I visited the Oil and Gas Board to do some research on oil and gas exploration in the area of Richton and Cypress Creek Domes. The following is the result of that research.

Between 1980-1985, three wildcat wells have been drilled or are being drilled in Perry County, Mississippi. Two of the wells have been plugged and abandoned. They are:

USA 27-5

Hughes Texas Petroleum Corporation
Location: Section 27, T1N-R11W
T.D.: 10,159'
Plugged: June 6, 1983

Crown Zellerbach Corporation, No. 1

Ladd Petroleum Corporation
Location: Section 33, T1S-R11W
T.D.: 14,520'
Plugged: June 2, 1981

One well is currently being drilled as of April, 1985.

D. R. Goodnight 13-11 No. 1

Texaco (formerly Getty)
Location: Section 13, T5N-R9W
Proposed T.D.: 12,500'
Formations to be tested: Lower Tuscaloosa and Paluxy

Contact: Al Horn
Texaco, Inc.
Post Office Box 60252
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160
(504) 595-1400

I also researched the field files of the area. The fields included Avera, Camp Shelby, Glazier, Ovett, North Sandhill, Sandhill, and Tiger. Most of the work in these fields between 1980-1985 has been recompletion of old wells. Only a few new wells have been drilled.

KAH:pf



Richton . . .

Remembered and Retold

Dudley G. Hansen

Richton . . .

Remembered and Retold

PREFACE

As I began getting material together for this publication, I had no intention of writing a preface. I intended you to take it all just as I had written it, perhaps of interest to a few, for information to others and even to entertain some.

Now as time draws near for final preparation before giving to the printer, I find there is much information that has not been gotten to me, that really should be included. But since I travel mostly by foot and telephone, you will just have to guess the whens, wheres and whos about some things, organizations and even dates and names.

Coming to Richton, in 1914, a bride, and declaring that I'd not stay here — the sidewalks were as scarce then as they are today — the weeds just as tall as now, and I had lived in a larger town, anyway. Yet, the Lord must have had something for me to do in Richton, for sixty-two ears later and much water gone over the dam, I'm still here and going.

You must remember that some information given has been handed down by word of mouth so may not be entirely correct. But who wants to go to court to prove such data and information.

Surely, you'll forgive me should I err, evidently some real historians have too.

So, please learn to read between the lines — more wisdom is often found there than in the written word.

Above all — remember — "Love is the theme; Love is supreme."

Your friend,
"Miss Josie"

The Why and the Purpose

Often in the past, pupils of the Richton School System have been assigned, in their history classes, the "homework" of securing information about the Town of Richton, its beginning, form of government and what keeps it going.

Having secured this information for my children and passed it on to others who have needed it, it has become evident that its preservation may be beneficial for future students and also a pleasure to other citizens who may have forgotten some of what is mentioned.

Realizing this need, and being a member of the Bicentennial Committee of the Richton's Woman's Club, Inc., and of the same committee of the Town of Richton, I am preparing this information for publication, which is being sponsored by the club.

DEDICATION

This volume is lovingly dedicated to the Youth of Richton of the past, present, and future, who love their town and who wish best of everything for it.

APPRECIATION

My sincere thanks to all who have "aided and abetted" in the securing of information, in the preparation for publication, and to those who have patiently listened as I inquired, explained and even solicited information from.

Josie Smollen Wilson (Mrs. L. A. Wilson, Sr.)

Background History

Many, many years ago, on the continent of North America, Indians roamed at will. However, with the coming of the white man, they moved and moved, usually leaving behind some evidence of their life in the area. In this section of Mississippi they did not make permanent camps any farther south than Beaver Dam creek, judging from places where artifacts have been found.

There is little doubt but that the first white people to cross our state were Hernando DeSoto and his men in the early 1500's, when they discovered the "great water," our Mississippi River and soon, moved on.

In 1699 d'Iberville with 81 military men and 200 colonists sailed into the Gulf of Mexico to Old Biloxi where they established Fort Maurepas. But it was not until 1801 that enough people had come into the area from various directions, to warrant this section to be given the status of a 2nd grade territory.

In 1805 the Choctaw Indians granted possession of their lands to the territory of Mississippi and in 1810 that part of the state, now the gulf section, was taken or bought from the Spanish land owners and in 1817 Mississippi, as we know it today, became the twentieth state in the United States.

Making of Counties

At one time, land now known as Wayne, Greene, Perry and Forrest counties, was all a part of Washington County. In 1809 Wayne County was organized; in 1811 Greene County was formed, then in 1820 Perry County was formed, with a total population of 2,021. In January 1906 the western portion of Perry County was separated from the Eastern and named Forrest County. And so it is today.

Settlers in Northeast Perry County

As early as 1809 pioneers began to move into what was later known as Perry County. Names recorded as being some of these are Thomas, Coleman, and Carter. Later there came Morris, Greene, Ball,

Granberry and McCallum families. Soon these were joined by the Stevens, Draughns, McCoys, McSwains, Tisdales and Denhams.

Most of these settled along Leaf River.

Just prior to the turn of the century other families came from North and East, homesteading in the NE section of the real Perry County. Most of these settled along Thompson, Gaines and Beaver Dam Creeks.

Among these venturesome people were the Rich, Edwards, Mills, Walley, Cochran, Newell, Henderson, Brown, Kittrell, Hinton, Bradley, Byrd, and Holliman families.

Tracing title to these lands is most interesting. Here's some of the description: "September 1, 1851, records in Jackson, Miss., describing 100 acres of land in NE corner Sec. 31, T5N, R9W under Choctaw Script #397 'Ah-pah-gah-ho-ka' patented to Bud Hinton." This along with other land in the same section from the U.S. to Bud Hinton.

Records also show that some land in Sec. 31 was a Land Grant to Jeremiah Willingham from the U.S., dated Nov. 10, 1859.

Since these dates some of the owners of what became Rich's Mill as well as land that is now Richton, have been Joseph S. Palmer and wife, G. L. Hawkins, Nancy and R. B. Bradley, S. B. Rich, Jesse Byrd, S. C. and Charlie Rich, H. M. McCallum, W. D. Rich, P. M. Anderson, T. W. Hinton, J. M. Griffin, C. H. Stevens, C. H. Smith, A. C. Henderson and wife, on to the present owner, Alton L. Edwards, a Rich descendant, and wife.

An interesting piece of information about this land is the story that tells of S. C. Rich (supposedly Capt. Steve Rich) purchasing about 200 acres of land at a sheriff's tax sale for the sum of \$20.00.

It was this Mr. Rich who "dammed up" Beaver Dam creek making a pond for the generation of power to run a grist mill, saw mill, and shingle mill which he constructed. Nearby was his home and a store where needs for home, farm and the mills might be purchased. A postoffice

was also located in the store.

This group of buildings was known throughout the area as Rich's Mill.

Rich Family Records

The Stephen C. Rich family migrated from South Carolina to this section of Mississippi. The exact year is not known. Names and dates of birth are given —

Stephen C. Rich, born July 25, 1836; Eliza West Rich, born April 16, 1839.

Children of the couple were — Edward Rich, born Oct. 30, 1859; Charley Rich, born Nov. 6, 1861; Martha Ann Rich, born March 15, 1863; William David Rich, born March 5, 1886; Nancy Ann Rich, born May 5, 1867; James Loyd Rich, born Jan. 23, 1869; John Rich, born Jan. 23, 1872; Kosciusko (K. C.) Rich, born Feb. 11, 1875; Stephen Berry Rich, born Feb. 11, 1877; and Mary Jane Rich, born Nov. 4, 1880. Mrs. Eliza West Rich died April 28, 1904 and Stephen C. Rich died Aug. 25, 1904.

Grandchildren of the Steve Richs living in 1976 are Jasper Rich, Corinne Henderson, Clara Edwards, Earl and Fewell Best and Mrs. Audry Best Edwards, all of Richton and Mrs. Eunice Burnett of Arkansas



Mary Rich Best



Two Rich boys, names unknown

Attractions to the Area

Once people began to settle in this part of the country, word traveled in every direction about the acres of virgin timber, lush grazing for cattle, mild climate, abundant water supply, and the availability of reasonably priced lands, even some land grants were still available.

The nearness to Leaf River was another attraction, for up to this point, trees that were felled for future lumber, had been hauled by ox wagon, or dragged to the river where they were bound into rafts and floated to the saw mills located near the river.

Then in 1902 something happened!

News reached the people in this vicinity that the Mobile, Jackson, and Kansas City Railroad, which had been built as near as Beaumont, about fourteen miles south of Rich's Mill, planned to extend the line to a point near the Rich property.

This was to change the entire way of life for these early settlers. Now they would be in a position to ship, by train, their logs, lumber, and even cattle to places where there were facilities to sell and trade. And by being able to go by train from town to town was a heartening thought, especially when previous ways of transportation had been by buggy, or wagon, horse drawn.

Coming of the Railroad

When in November, 1903 the M. J. & K. C. R. R. reached Richton, by that time a town had been laid out, platted by R. G. Hicks, people who had arrived with BIG plans were thrilled.

People had come from far and near to "set-up" saw mills, some portable, others of more permanent construction. Others planned to erect houses, some to open stores, and some seeking employment.

As the settlement grew, businesses and homes forming a real community, it was evident that the place should be named, so because the settlement a little to the North was called Rich's Mill, it was decided to name the new town Richton. And so it has been ever since.

Then in 1904 the officials of the

railroad honored the Rich family with a dinner at the Battle House Hotel in Mobile and officially made Richton a station on their line.

Richton Incorporated

On the first day of January, 1903, a map of Richton, Perry County, Mississippi was filed with H. M. McCallum, clerk, at the Perry County Court House in New Augusta which included the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 31 T 5-R 9.

And on Dec. 15, 1902 plat of W. D. Rich's addition to Richton described as follows: E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 31 T5 R9. R. G. Hicks was surbeyor for both pieces of land.

In 1905 it became evident that the town should be incorporated and run in an orderly and official manner.

This was done, according to records, on Oct. 14, 1905 when a charter of incorporation was granted by James K. Vardaman, Governor of the State of Mississippi and recorded in Gubernatorial Proclamation Book No. 2, in Jackson, Miss.

Description of land included within the corporation at that time was "Beginning at the NE corner of section 31, thence due East to the M. J. & K. C. RR, thence South on South road 180 yds., thence due East to West line of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 31 T5 N4 9W, thence due South to the SE corner of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 31 T4N, R9W, thence due East 255 yds.; thence due South to the S line of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 6 T4N R9W, being one mile; thence due East to the range line dividing ranges 9 and 10, being 1155 yds. then due N. on said line to the point of beginning, being in all 470 acres."

The form of government for the town is Mayor and Board of Aldermen with the first elected officials being: W. D. Mills, mayor; members of the Board of Aldermen were Dr. Willis Walley, R. J. Hendrix, W. H. Grace, J. B. Cantrell, and P. M. Anderson. George Yarborough was elected clerk, to serve at a fee of \$5 per month.

Some of the mayors who have served since incorporation are D. O. Walley, C. C. Smith, A. T. Whitney, A. G. Brown, G. S. Burnett, W. E. Carter, Cal G. Ball, B. M. Stevens,

and H. N. Stevens.

Some clerks who have served for various lengths of time are P. M. Brown, Mrs. P. M. Brown, J. M. Dees, Fred Walley, David Thoms, Lafe Walley, Mrs. A. K. Phillips and presently, Mrs. Mable (Kenneth) Rich.

Among those who have served as members of the Board for long periods of time was Mr. A. M. Edwards who served between twenty and twenty-five years.

Present officials (1976) are H. N. Stevens, mayor; Board members, L. L. (Buddy) Adkins, O. B. Brown, Jr., A. K. Lovett, Robert Pope, and O. C. Ingram.

Since incorporation the town has extended its boundaries several times, has laid water mains and sewer lines, providing these facilities to citizens at reasonable rates. Has given permission to Mississippi Power Co. to furnish electricity for those desiring it. Other facilities are natural gas and a modern telephone service through South Central Bell T & T Co.

Early Times in Richton

Even before the railroad was completed to Richton, prospectors came to the area, purchased large tracts to timber, and contracted to cut trees from land not for sale.

Some of the earliest (after the McCallums) were J. B. Cantrell and John Graham who set their mill to cut the huge pines on property belonging to Mr. Tim Hinton, south of Richton. Following was P. M. Andersen from Moss Point, later joined by his father Capt. Andersen and brothers, John and Gus. From their beginning came the Richton Lumber Co.

Then came Mr. C. S. Bentley and Mr. E. A. Emery from Williamsport, Pa., and set up Bentley and Emery Saw Mill, about 1908.

Both Richton Lumber Co. and Bentley and Emery had purchased large tracts of timber located in Perry, Wayne, and Jones counties. Each operated "woods camps" with "dummy" lines for transporting the fallen timbers to the mills, which were equipped with modern machinery, to saw into lumber, planer mills and dry kilns to finish

the products ready for market.

And there was a "far-seeing" man from the county seat, Augusta, Capt. Ben Stevens, a well established businessman, from that vicinity, who saw the future of Richton and with his son, C. H. Stevens, came to Richton in the earliest days, built and stocked a store for his son to operate, and organized and constructed Richton's first bank, The Bank of Richton. Capt. Stevens was the president, and W. H. Grace, cashier; with P. M. Brown, asst. cashier.

The bank building, a handsome two story brick structure, later became the home for Richton Bank and Trust Co. Within recent years, they have removed the second story (which had been used for offices) and given both interior and exterior a "facelift."

B. L. (Fate) and J. C. Morris, other early comers, operated a cotton gin and turpentine still. With them came "Uncle" Dan Brown, perhaps the first black man to come to the Town of Richton to live. He was considered an expert at operating a turpentine still.

Then came the W. M. Dorsetts who opened a general mercantile store and also operated or as sometimes expressed, manufactured naval stores (rosin and spirits). The Dorsett home across the railroad from the store boasted a white picket fence with an arch over the "front" gate that bore the figures 1903.

Soon after they were settled-in, it became evident that there was need for people to board, so Mrs. Dorsett opened her home for a number of persons, mostly teachers.

With both sawmills in operation besides the smaller ones, the need arose for dwellings for employees, along with hotels and boarding houses. Soon there was Anderson Row (long); Anderson Row (short); Johnson Row, Red Line and Bentley Quarters.

Perhaps the first real hotel was the Richton Hotel, owned and run by Mrs. Mamie Green Hinton. Later this same place was in charge of the Favres; the W. H. Goodwins and back to Mrs. Hinton.

Other persons operating hotels and boarding houses in early days

were Mrs. W. F. Green, Mrs. A. R. Shoemaker and Mesdames Slay, Alexander, Brannom and McCarthy.

When Richton first had settlers, they had no ice plant, so ice was shipped here in railroad box cars, packed in sawdust. Mr. J. H. Stephens was perhaps the first "Ice man." Later Mr. McCarthy delivered to the homes by wagon.

Necessities for the business were a building to store ice in sawdust, a pair of ice tongs, an ice saw and scales for weighing.

Families

One family coming in 1904 from Jones County to Richton by wagon was that of M. M. McBride. The older daughter, though young, remembers the huge pine trees that were standing all over town and cutting of them to make way for the homes being built. This daughter now Mrs. Travis (Eva) Haynes of Ellisville and brother Virgil McBride of Laurel, enthusiastically tells of playing in the shavings at sights of these new dwellings.

The story goes that W. H. Dobbins set out in 1905 from Hattiesburg, for Richton, in a surry drawn by four horses. Aboard were his wife and three children and belongings. The family located in the northern part of town which was about the only place where houses were available at that time. Mr. Dobbins took his horses, managed wagon and perhaps other vehicles, soon had a thriving livery stable business. He was later joined by Sam McCormick, of Wayne County, who became owner of the first automobile agency — Ford.

Now it may be up to you readers to supply the first names of some of the early settlers such as Russells, Bounds, Vaughns, Swartzfagers, Moyes, Pulfords, and Baxters.

Even the Wrights, Maxwells, Grahams, the Rev. Curry, Danziger, Story, Yarborough, Dentons, and Millers. The Miller's sons were Reagan and Morris. The Currys were Tobe, Burnice and sister, Geneva. Bounds boys Rayford and Burwell. The R. C. Boone's family consisted of Harry Lee, Irvin, and Elizabeth.

Could go on and on with C. C. Dearman, Judge W. D. Mills, H. I.

Nicholson, J. L. McCoy's whose eldest daughter, Thelma was first white child born in Richton, W. H. Clifton, J. T. Backstrom, Z. W. Wells, J. B. Wallace, A. M. Davis, J. T. Wilder, W. E. and Eugene Carter, A. Moser, and H. B. Moore.

But back to families who lived just outside and saw how "green the grass is on the other side of the fence." Such as sons of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Edwards, just west of town. A. M. and J. R. S. Edwards were the "in-comers" who purchased land in town, built houses, held political offices and prospered. The Martin Edwards farm is now owned by a daughter-in-law, Mrs. J. R. S. (Mae) Edwards.

In the early 1920's Mrs. A. M. Edwards ran a millinery shop in the center of "middle" block of town. She did machine buttonholes and hemstitching.

From northeast of town came sons of General Pinkney Walley and wife; V. R. Walley, Hugh, Pettis, Lawrence, Bura, Willis, and Pearlle (who married Hobson Rich). Pettis alone survives, but each filled his place in the life of Richton.

Others Who Came

Descendants of the William Jeffcoats family who came "with the RR" tell they were the only Catholic family in the new settlement, but a priest came on horseback, or in a buggy, regularly, to keep them in touch with their church.

The J. F. Backstrom family moved into Richton from Greene County in 1906, built a nice home in town but farmed land outside the corporation limits. One son Bill, became County Superintendent of Education, Floyd and Miss Eliza taught.

A. Moser wrote that he ran the logging engine for B. & E. at Richton and Overt for 21 years.

There were four Milner families in Richton by 1910. The "Donkey" (Paul) Milners (sons had a grey donkey), "Baby" (Leland) Milners (children had been born very close together), and "Dog" (Hamp) Milner (raised fine dogs to sell). These were brothers. Then there was a cousin "Banker" (Wilson H.) Milner, cashier and vice-president of Bank of Richton.

A. M. and Mrs. Harris and three daughters — he ran the newspaper for a while and she played the piano at the movies.

Know very little about Cecil Purch, Richton's first depot agent, but according to RR statistics, he no doubt was "rolled" almost before he was accustomed to living here.

J. T. Wilder and family and A. M. Davis came along about the same time and were employed by Richton Lumber Co., Mr. Wilder as woods foreman and Mr. Davis as section (RR) foreman.

Richton Bottling Works

The Richton Bottling Works was operated by Mr. A. T. Whitney, who came with his wife and two sons from "up North" and joined other businesses in Richton. He, as shown in the picture, solicited Summer Business and especially recommended Grapico as a delicious family drink.

Danzigers was another store that offered a variety of wearables and dry goods. In fact almost anything one needed.

Carter's Meat Market sold fresh meats and even offered delivery to your home. He later owned a general merchandise store.

Andersen Mercantile Co. was first used as a commissary for Richton

Lumber Company, who paid off their employees with a kind of money to be spent at their store. Later the store was run as the other establishments in the town.

W. H. Clifton, a general merchandise store, also had an up-to-date millinery department. B. B. Pollocks was a dry goods and wearables store with Chambliss Hardware Co. being the same, except they offered groceries and hardware. O. Z. Thoms just South of Chambliss, handled furniture of every kind. Later he sold to Sep Hudson.

The bakery run by Andersen Mercantile Co. must not be overlooked, for what the bakers "Smitty" and J. V. Hanson produced were indispensable to the citizenry.

In 1907 the Richton Lumber Co. was given the privilege of operating an electric light plant in connection with their saw mill. This offered service to a limited number of businesses and families. Mr. S. E. Shannon installed the equipment for this and continued in charge of its operation. Then when Richton Light and Power Co. organized and purchased the plant from Richton Lumber Co. in 1925, Mr. Shannon continued in the new company's employ.

Evidently the mid-20s were times of crises in Richton.

Bentley and Emery had moved

their saw mill to Ovett and took with them many of their skilled employees. Richton Lumber Co. had ceased operation and advertised both equipment and animals (mules and oxen) for sale. A Mobile company purchased the equipment but no mention is made of who bought the animals.

The passing of these businesses caused both the people left behind and the merchants to ask the question "What will we do now?"

It did not take long to answer. The businessmen organized a Chamber of Commerce who investigated possible outlet for what was left in the woods "After the Slashings."

Cross ties for railroads came first, then came contracts with Masonite, Inc., in Laurel for pulpwood and with Hercules in Hattiesburg, to purchase the pine stumps when dynamited from the ground, it wasn't long until everyone had taken on new life.

And those owning farm land were spurred to do their part in growing grain, cotton and even foods to supply the needs of the community as well as to have canned at the factory in Laurel.

So, in 1924 the Gin owned by Perry Gin Company, turned out 1077 bales of first grade cotton.

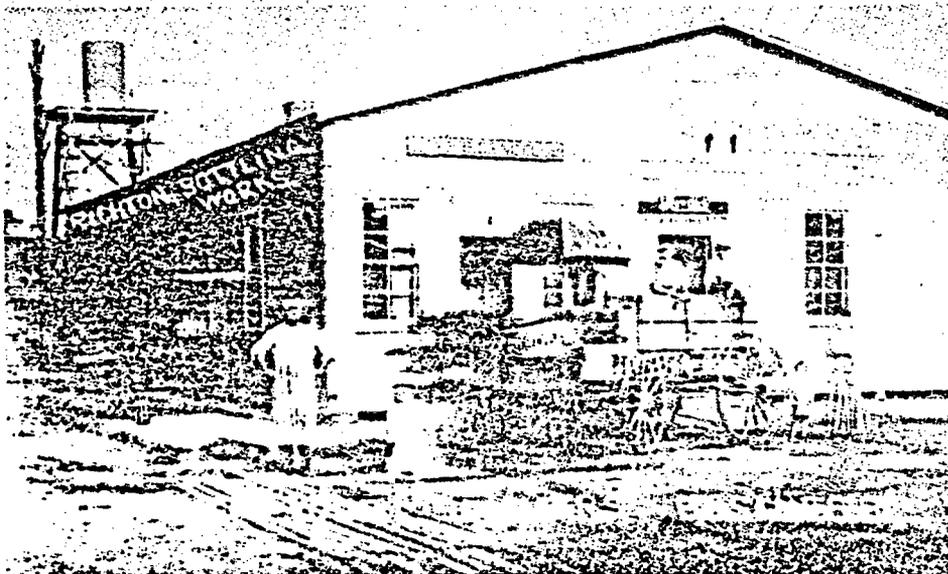
Land not suitable for farming was in many instances planted to pecan, peaches, satsumas and other fruit bearing trees. However the pecans alone survived until today.

Later the services of a Dr. Dockenwaddle were secured to assist in developing the growing of tung nut trees for the oil they produced which is used in paints. The trees on some farms produce nuts still, but there is no facility to crush and press the oil from these, as once was here in Richton.

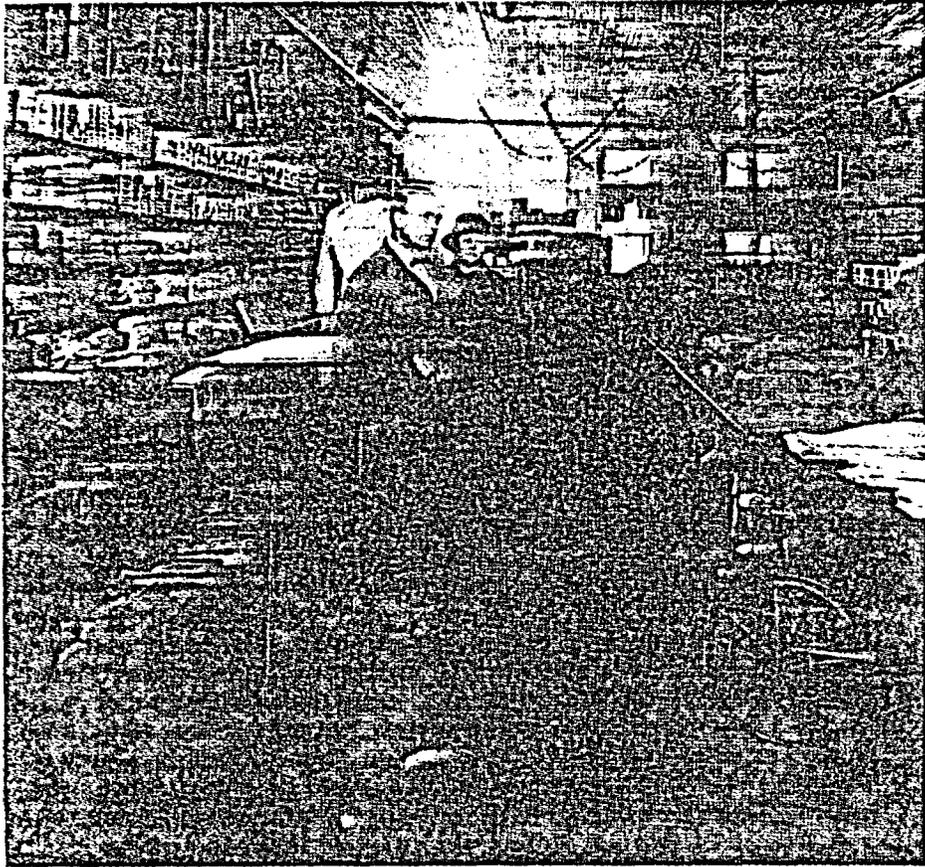
Stevens Earliest Merchant In Town of Richton

When in 1903 Capt. Ben Stevens left his son, C. H., in charge of the mercantile store he had recently opened, he left it in good hands, for as sawmills and other businesses began operation, C. H. saw that he had necessary products for their uses.

And from the small beginning, the



Richton Bottling Works



C. H. Stevens Co. — First store in Richton



Chancey Hardee Stevens

store rapidly increased in business so that by 1910 they had erected a new building that covered almost a quarter of a block, filling it with needs for home and farm.

Mr. Stevens was not only a shrewd business man, he was active in the development of religious and educational life of the growing community. He served as Chairman of the Official Board of the Richton Methodist Church for 20 years, and a

director of the Bank of Richton and the Richton Light and Power Co.

His wife was the former Myrtie Bell Russell, a music teacher. Their children were a daughter, Carrie, who died when she was about 20 years of age; and a son, Chauncey Bigelow Stevens, who after graduating from college entered the business with his father and remained until ill health made it necessary that he not assume responsibilities.

Chauncey's wife was formerly Irene McRainey of Collins, a very efficient music teacher. They had one daughter, Angela, now Mrs. Lew Wallace, who is an avid worker for establishing kindergartens in all public schools.

The Wallaces have two daughters, Nancy Jane and Pamela, and they are outstanding in various school and church activities.

Mr. C. H. Stevens passed away in October, 1928 and C. B. died in 1973.

Mail Service

As early as 1890 the people of this vicinity received mail at Rich's Mill store where it had been brought by carriers on horseback or in buggy. After the railroad reached Richton the post office was housed in a building in the town and was brought in on the train.

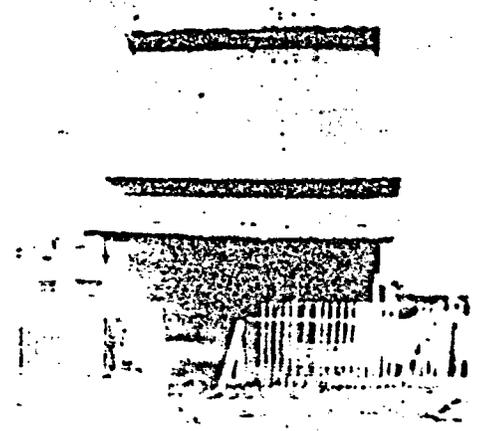
Today is distributed three ways in Richton: 1 — at General Delivery, 2 — in rented, individual mail boxes with keys, and 3 — by carriers in cars going into four directions on designated routes.

After the store post office, as Richton became a town, it was housed in a separate building in the center of town. As population increased, a large section of C. H. Stevens Co.'s brick store was rented for use. Then a separate building, the one where Richton Library now is, was used until in 1964 when the government constructed an attractive new brick building on the site of former Andersen Mercantile Co.

Lyndon B. Johnson was president at this time and sponsoring agency was General Services Administration.

The South end of the building is called The Federal Building and the North end is the U.S. Post Office, Richton, Miss. 39476.

Records are not available to verify names of all postmasters — so we take it from Mr. John McCoy, the first, and trust we have not missed any — Mrs. Rose Walley, Miss Elise



Richton's first Post Office

Thoms, Levi Jones, W. R. Smith, Miss Mary Frances Edwards, Miss Rovena Edwards, Allen A. Edwards, S. W. Johnson, Mrs. Louie Dell Minter, J. D. Buckalew, J. C. (Bill) Hillman, and W. A. Moser. (Some of these may have been acting postmasters instead of full-fledged ones.)

From Old Papers

A visit to Mrs. G. T. Breland, in her home near Beaumont, brought to light two copies of The Augusta Telephone published in 1909. The editor-manager was W. C. Sheppard and the title of the company publishing it was Perry County Printing Co. This was one of the papers that combined with the Perry County Review to form The Richton Dispatch in 1911.

And it was learned that two Richton men were elected to county offices, namely: A. M. Sheppard, Superintendent of Education, and J. E. Johnson, county treasurer. W. D. Mills was Justice of the Peace for Beat 3.

A Richton Dispatch dated in 1917 told that Mr. J. W. (Walter) Guthrie had been named by the mayor and Board of Aldermen, as Town Pound Keeper. This involved keeping the cows, pigs and other animals off the streets of the town.

His appointment followed the visit to town officials by concerned citizens, mostly women, requesting something be done about roaming animals that often broke through fences and nibbled vegetable and flower gardens. Mr. A. C. Brown was mayor at that time.

When impounded the owner had to pay a fine before the animal was released to him.

H. C. Bell was county agent the same year and warned farmers of the prevalence of hog cholera at that time.

The same year, the disease lagrippe was rampant in the nation. No doubt but that it was the beginning of that terrible flu epidemic.

And a letter dated 1910 has come to light — writer was A. Milton Sheppard who recommended J. Z. Roberts, of Richton, as a competent type-setter (this was done by hand in

those days) and honest and efficient in handling of business. He is the father of Mrs. Vera Mae Freeman, Richton; and Mrs. Vermell Brannon, of Avera.

Mrs. Breland has a post card mailed to her husband by Dr. Peter Bliss Green, then of Richton, a dentist, who was called into service during WW I. Dr. Green was in France and the postmark stamped on the card read like this "BASE CENSOR AEF Oct. 29, 1918 France."

One old newspaper of this vicinity advertised a Bijou Theatorium with admission 5c and 10c; meat markets, fruit and vegetable stands, and a Chinese Laundry operated by Tom Duck. Prices for his work were thus: Men's shirts 10c each; undershirts 5c; drawers 5c; socks and handkerchiefs 2½c each. But for a lady's skirt it was 50c to wash, starch and iron one.

Stores advertising in the 30s were People's Mercantile, fertilizers and feeds; Boyd's Cash and Carry Grocery; E. M. Gavin, horses and mules; C. H. Stevens Co., plows; Pan-Am gasoline; G. L. Granberry wanted to buy a carload of hogs at Perry Gin Co.

Then in October 1930 B. M. Stevens Co. (change in ownership); groceries and dry goods.

December same year advertisers were Richton Bank and Trust Co.; McCormick Motor Car Co., Standard Service Station, Sam Walley, Prop.; Jackson Drug Store (formerly Walley Drug Co.); Clayton Bankrupt Store; Gary and Co.; and "The Please You Shop" Miss Mary Hinton, owner.

Christmas greeters that year were L. O. Murphy, S. F. Hinton, Bennie's Pressing Club; Wells and Lott Drug Co.; B. A. Beard-Watkins; Richton Insurance Agency; Economy Market and Grocery, Crescent Mercantile Co. and Palmer and Edwards Barber Shop.

In January 1931 it was announced that the Richton Poultry Assn. was in operation (below Hintonville) with B. M. Stevens, president, and D. T. Willingham, manager.

At the same time an editorial asked the question "What do you mean by Panic?" — was it the same as the depression?

In 1932 grocery prices ran something like this — Pure Lard, 4

lb. — 30c; best steak — lb. 15c; cured ham — lb. 30c; sliced bacon — lb. 20c. Other prices included best ground coffee — lb. 14c; 24 lb. sack Blue Bonnet flour — 58c.

These can be compared by prices offered by Tip Dobbins, Grocer, in Sept. 1940 — pure coffee — lb. 10c; salt meat (side) — lb. 10c and sugar cured bacon — lb. 15c.

Then headlines in May 1932 Dispatch — CAR LOAD FLOUR TO PERRY COUNTY BY American Red Cross. Included were 220 barrels of flour in 24½ lbs. and 49 pounds size. Beat 3 committee for distribution of this was V. R. Walley, O. J. Batte and W. R. Hinton.

Gavin and Granberry also Bentley and O'Reilly offered for sale farm lands at \$2.50 to \$15.00 per acre. Some land closer to town at a little higher price.

Joe Palmer left to take a 5-chair barber shop at State College.

Mrs. H. O. Thoms entertained members of the S. U. Club.

Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Bentley and son returned from spending the summer at the Tivoli Hotel at Biloxi.

Funeral services were held September 12, 1940 for J. B. McIlwain in the Richton Methodist Church.

Richton Investment Co. was operating a gravel pit just East of town, using the Richton Lumber Co. old dummy line to haul cars of gravel for shipping to all points North and South — East and West.

Evander Edwards, son Allen, and daughter Rovena, have moved into town from the Good Hope community.

Automobile Agencies

Sam F. McCormick was the first auto dealer in this vicinity opening in 1914. Fords and Overlands were the cars he sold.

As the years passed and new cars were being made, other agencies were opened in Richton including the Hancock Chevrolet Co., owned by a Mr. McMurphy. This was purchased about 1934 from Mr. McMurphy by Sam Billy Carey. The business has remained in the Carey family since that time and today remains the only automobile agency operating in Richton.

For a number of years I. T. Jones

had the Pontiac agency and sold these cars along with farm equipment and appliances under the name of Richton Equipment Co.

Mr. Jones had been associated in Richton Wholesale Co. with J. H. McPherson and left the company to serve as County Agricultural Agent for Perry County.

Presently Mr. Jones is back at his home near Richton, retired (in a way) farming and raising cattle.

Political Picnics

Political picnics came at least every four years when state and county candidates for public offices would speak in their behalf before large gatherings. The favorite place for these picnics was under the large trees on the grounds by the side of the mill pond and swimming hole known in the early 1900s as Henderson's Mill, on Beaver Dam Creek.

For hours before noon you could smell the aroma of barbecue sauce, made from scratch by "Uncle" Alec Bozeman, as he applied it to the beef, pork, kid and mutton that was lying across metal bars placed over fire in a pit dug especially for this purpose.

Each family attending brought well filled baskets of food that was spread on the long tables at the noon hour to be eaten with the barbecue, usually furnished by the candidates or their supporters.

Another place where candidates presented their candidacy was from the packing shed (old one) opposite the track from the depot.

In a letter from Willie Wallace, a former resident of Richton, there was a band on hand to furnish music at the picnics, even as far back as 1906. He recalls playing the trombone in the band that year, but failed to give names of others who played in it. Mr. Wallace passed

away soon after he wrote me the letter, so I have no recourse to learn who the other musicians were.

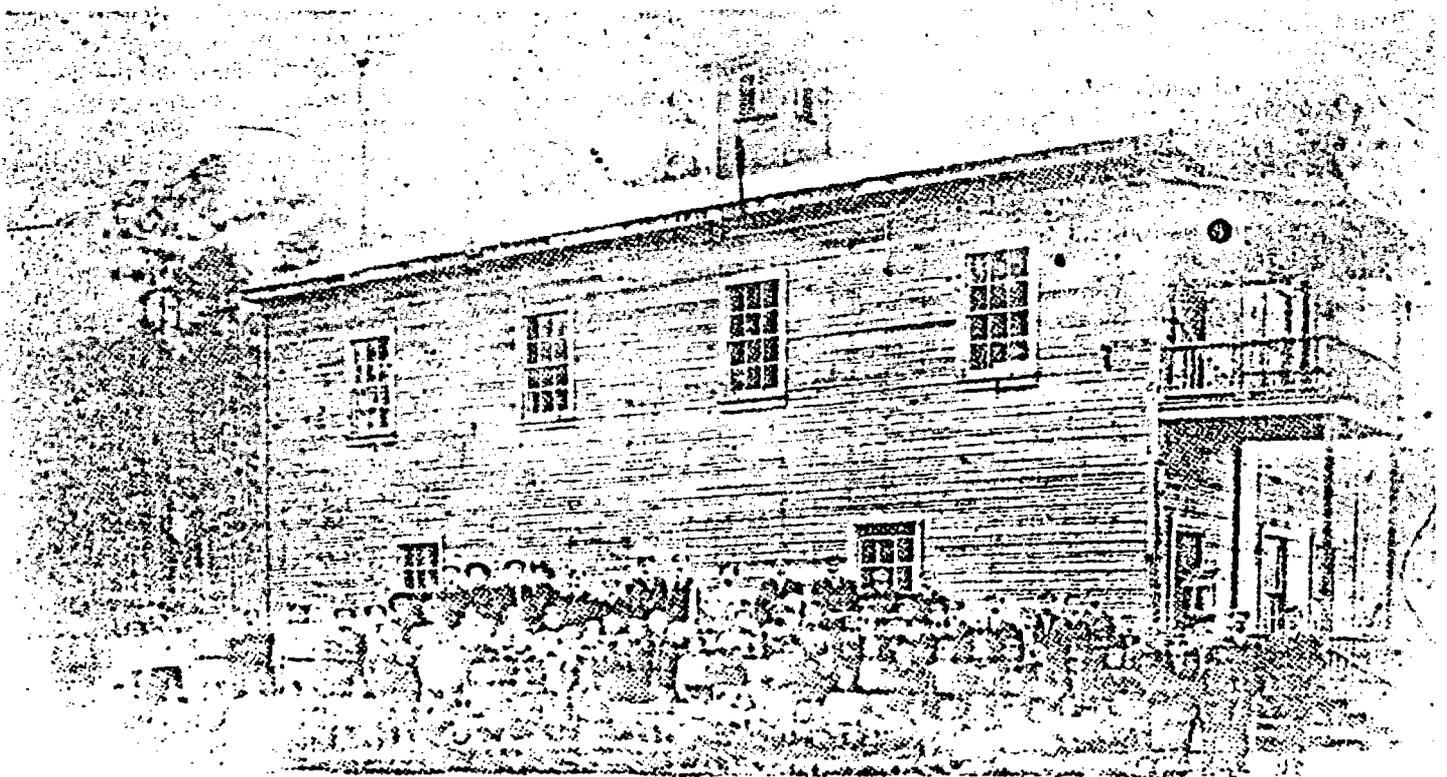
Richton Men Who Have Served In State Legislature

E. C. Fishel, Pettis Walley, Hugo Newcomb, I. Thomas Jones, Robert Lassiter and H. L. Jones, You remember any others.

Richton Public Schools

The first school erected in Richton was in 1904-05, a two story wooden structure on a lot about two blocks west of the Perry County General Hospital.

The school opened with an enrollment of 99 students and by Spring of 1906 had grown to 204. In the Spring of 1907 an epidemic of measles, mumps and whooping cough necessitated closing the school two months before the



First School in Richton

session was completed.

Principals (later called Superintendents) to the best of our information, have been J. E. Johnson, Herd E. Steele, Floyd Backstrom, A. M. Sheppard, S. L. Stringer, D. R. Jenkins, W. H. Powell, O. Q. McCormick, L. F. Sumrall, M. A. Peevey, J. C. Ivy, Anthony Manguno, Marion Sephton, and Terry Goodbread.

Some of the early teachers were Miss Laura Clark (later Overstreet), Miss Myrtie B. Russell (later Stevens), Miss Mattie Gillia (later Shannon), and Miss Lizzie Dearman.

The original structure was soon outgrown and had to be enlarged in 1907. Then by 1910 it became evident that a more modern and still larger building was needed.

By Ordinance No. 52 made by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Richton, the Richton School became a Separate School District on April 26, 1912. The School Board purchased land where the school plant of today is and erected a two story brick building. This was soon outgrown so an annex for elementary grades and home economics came into being.

In the early 1930's buses began bringing the high school students from the rural area into Richton School causing overcrowded conditions again, hence in 1936 the building now housing the auditorium and senior high school

was built with WPA assistance.

The cornerstone bears this information: Board of Trustees — B. M. Stevens, president; L. H. Webb, Pettis Walley, Willis Walley, and G. L. Granberry. Aldermen were V. R. Walley, B. B. Palmer, C. N. Pooley, Gavin Lott and C. L. Henderson. Cal G. Ball was Mayor and V. R. Walley was clerk for the Town of Richton. Laurence Walley was marshall.

Additions for office space, elementary grades, cafeteria, and work shop have been made, so our school continues to grow.

Not mentioned in the above is the nice Home Economics Department with commercial type sewing machine, not heretofore included in its equipment. These are for instructing students who may later be employed in factories using such.

The elementary department has the most modern equipment for instructing and correcting pupils needing remedial reading lessons.

The Athletic Department has a well-lighted football field, tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts and now boasts a handsome and modern gymnasium. These fill the need in physical education for most students.

Staffing the school is a superintendent, T. M. Goodbread; two principals, Wayne McLeod and Miss Elaine Moser. Forty-four teachers, three teacher's aides, seven cafeteria workers and

maintenance persons, including custodian and mechanics. Two secretaries and two bookkeepers are in the offices.

Twelve well kept school buses with competent, trained drivers, transport the pupils from rural areas.

Our black citizens have always had school facilities. When the original wooden structure became insufficient for their needs, a nice brick building was erected with classrooms and a cafeteria. This building was named for their principal Mattie Wayne Jones, who having attained retirement age, remained to see orderly transition of integration, which took place in 1968 and 1970.

Music In Richton

[Bands, Orchestra and such]

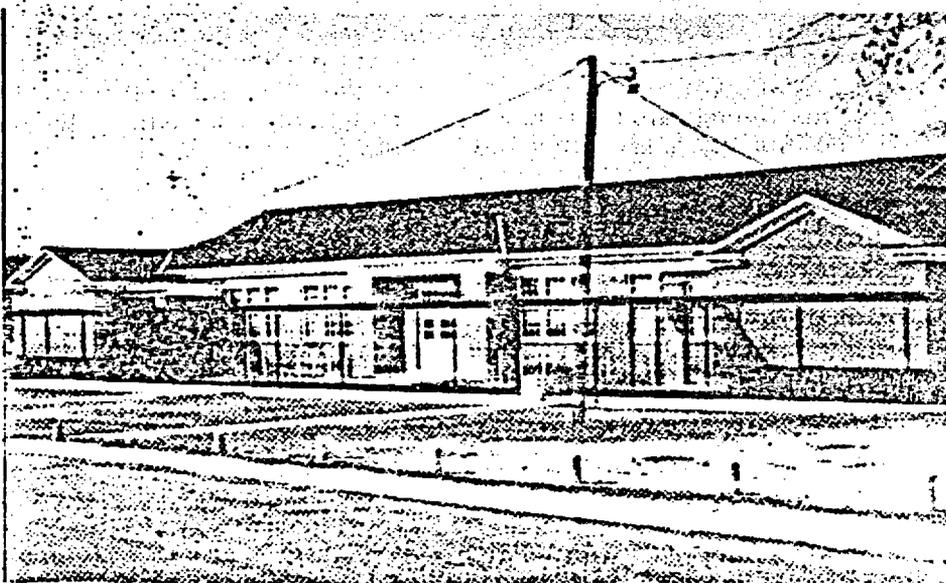
Either through Richton Public School, by private tutor or through the ingenuity of individuals, there has been the advantage of learning to play musical instruments. Choral and group singing has been a part of the extras offered the youth of Richton.

Through the courtesy of Edith Greene Hamilton of Jackson, who resided here and attended school, comes this about an orchestra's program given at Richton High School Friday evening, April 30, 1926.

Participating were: violinists — Edith Green, Forrest Mobley, Jessie Dorsett, Lois Wells (Tootsie), and Roderick Jenkins; horns — saxophone, W. T. Mobley, baritone, Harold Cox, cornet, Warren Black, melophone, Van Buren (Fats) Taylor; pianist was Josephine Odom and director was Miss Rosalind Sheppard. Others assisting with piano and directing were L. Marie Goodwin, (now of Mendenhall) and Gladys Webb (now Mrs. Lucius Cowan) of Hattiesburg.

Only partial information has been received about the orchestra of 1932-33. However some of the participants were Hugo Newcomb, Dorothy Spikes, Mary Lillian and Hertha McCormick, Gladys Ball, Neely Jackson, John Fishel, Bud Thoms with Daisy Stevens accompanying them at times.

Having a real band did not come



Present Richton School

until 1956, when Harold Hinton, of Hattiesburg was secured to organize, teach and have the students perform in real band formation.

The formation of a band came through the organization of a Band Auxiliary, project of the Richton Parent-Teacher Assn. Heading this project was Mrs. Daisy Thoms, Bill Hillman, and Joe Blackman.

Richton School has continued to have an active band with the exception of a very few years and have made splendid showing at home, as they attend games away from home and at the State Band Festival.

In Richton's "heyday" they boasted Lyceum courses each school year, with four to six special groups performing; and in summer for several years enjoyed a Chautauqua, usually under a tent, that offered a variety of entertainment.

Banks In Richton

very little record is available for the Bank of Richton. But with many other banks in our state it closed, at least for a while during 1930.

Following The Bank Holiday

With the Bank of Richton a thing of the past, a new bank was organized in 1930 with E. M. Gavin, president; T. W. Milner, vice president. This was the first organization of the Richton Bank and Trust Co.

However, in 1932 the Richton Bank and Trust Company was reorganized with B. M. Stevens, president; C. S. Bentley, vice president; and J. K. Hinton, L. D. Roberts, and W. P. Boutwell, directors.

John Stevens served as president for one year with T. J. Bentley as vice president and C. N. Pooley, vice president and cashier. T. J. Bentley became president in 1935. Mr. Bentley and Mr. Pooley sold their interest in the bank in 1940 to O. B. Bowen and D. P. Granberry, at which time J. W. Pope became president and O. B. Bowen vice president-cashier.

Mr. Bowen served in this capacity until his death in 1947 when active

management was assumed by J. W. Pope, O. B. Bowen, Jr., and W. F. Bowen.

Officers of the Richton Bank and Trust Co. as of January 1, 1976 are O. B. Bowen, Jr., president and CEO; J. W. Pope, chairman of the board of directors; W. F. Bowen, executive vice-president; W. S. Granberry, Senior vice president; Mrs. Jewell Walley and Mrs. Barbara Holcomb, vice president; Mrs. Carolyn Sanderson, cashier; Ben McIlwain, assistant vice president; Mrs. Gertrude Broome and Mrs. Kathleen Ruffin, assistant cashiers.

The Richton Dispatch

Time was when newspapers were not required to keep a file of papers printed. However there came into our possession an issue of The Richton Dispatch dated September 20, 1912, marked Vol. VII, No. 7. This told it was the 7th year of publication and the 7th week.

Something else is told just below the masthead — that two papers had been combined to form The Dispatch. These were Perry County Review, established in 1906 and The Augusta Telephone established in 1909. Consolidation date was September 1911.

Also a motto for the paper was this: "Devoted to Civic Righteousness, Educational and Moral Development of Perry County — Whatever concerns the people concerns us." Have no idea when all this was dropped.

Dr. Willis Walley was editor, proprietor, hiring various people to run the business. Subscription was \$1.00 and remained that for a long time.

In 1915 L. A. Wilson, who had been in charge of the business for a year, was given the opportunity to purchase it; this he did. Then in 1955 his son, L. A. Wilson, Jr., purchased the business and is owner-editor in 1976.

In 1933 the senior Mr. Wilson became ill to the extent he could not continue operation of the office, so his wife, Josie Wilson, became publisher and operated the entire business for twenty years. She learned to manipulate all the machinery and equipment necessary

to edit and print the paper and do job work, with the exception of linotype. When an operator was not available, she often took metal and copy by bus to Lucedale, where "Cotton" Sellers, editor of the paper there, would set type for the Dispatch, after he had gotten his paper out.

Her noted column which still runs each week first appeared about 1940 when a sunken place in the street blacktop was noted, as dangerous.

During this same time Mrs. Wilson served as Executive Secretary for Perry County Red Cross and as a member of the County Election Commissioners.

Since purchasing the Dispatch, L. A., Jr. has added much new equipment and erected a modern building. His son, Larry, is a fourth generation Wilson entering the profession. His great-grandfather W. R. Wilson, also was a newspaper man. Assisting at the office is Mrs. Dean Wilson, L. A.'s wife, and even when needed, Leigh Ann, their daughter, steps in to do her "bit."

Richton Light and Power Co. Incorporated

The charter of incorporation for Richton Light and Power Co. was granted November 4, 1924, with C. H. Stevens, president; B. M. Stevens, W. M. Dorsett, T. W. Milner, and S. F. McCormick, directors.

The Mississippi Power Co. purchased the business when they began running their power line in this direction, and so they continue serving our area efficiently until today.

B. M. Stevens Mayor Of Richton Thirty Years

Prior to becoming mayor of the Town of Richton, B. M. Stevens, prominent merchant of the town, served as a member of the Board of Aldermen of the town for 15 years.

Among other participation in civic and religious affairs of the community, he served as chairman of the Official Board of the Richton Methodist Church 32 years and was chairman of the Board of Trustees of Richton Separate School District for approximately 23 years.

He was District Governor of Rotary International and at one time was president of the Mississippi Forestry Association and a director of the Mississippi Power Co.

Being an enthusiast in preserving the Methodist Seashore Assembly grounds and seeing that various buildings were erected, the new cafeteria on the grounds was named in his honor.

Mrs. Stevens, the former Alrean Nicholson, has been a definite part of the life of the community and in civic and religious activities. She served four years as president of the Mississippi Conference W.S.C.S. and was instrumental in the erection and financing of the building on the Seashore Assembly where for reasonable rates, rooms might be rented by persons attending conference meetings and other affairs. This bears her name — "Arlean Hall."

Thier children, Ben M. Stevens, Jr., now of Hattiesburg, H. N. of Richton, and Forrest, of Laurel, are affiliated with the businesses B. M. Stevens Co., Richton Tie and Timber Co., and Richton Ice and Produce Co. The son-in-law, D. O. Thoms, and wife, Daisy are each a part of the companies mentioned above.

Churches Have Important Place

Of course there had been churches in the vicinity of Richton prior to when it became a town. However it was a Methodist Protestant Church that was first erected in about 1904 in the town. This was located about two blocks to the east of the railroad.

In time other denominations began to be organized and until they could build sanctuaries of their own, they worshipped in this first church.

We have no record of what happened to the members of the first organized church, though in the picture section you will find a reproduction of how it looked in 1905.

United Pentecostal Newest Church In Richton

The First United Pentecostal Church of Richton held their first service on August 8, 1970. Rev. G. C. Killingsworth had agreed to pastor and assist about 20 people in building the church.

The Mississippi District of the United Pentecostal Church agreed to furnish the members in Richton a mobile church unit, but it was three months before it was available, so services were held in the Richton

Women's Club Center. In November 1970 the mobile church unit was readied and services were held in it until we moved into the present building in May 1972.

Rev. Gerald Davis was elected pastor of the church in September 1972. He served until October 1974 when Rev. Larry Webb became the pastor. He is still serving in 1976.

Dedication services were May 19, 1973.

Board of Directors is composed of James Earl Dunnam, L. M. Odom, and Ray West.

The church has grown from an attendance of 19 the first Sunday to a record of 163 and averaging about 85 in attendance.

The sixth anniversary was held August 8, 1976. Good attendance, wonderful service.

L. M. Odom, Director

First Baptist Church, Richton

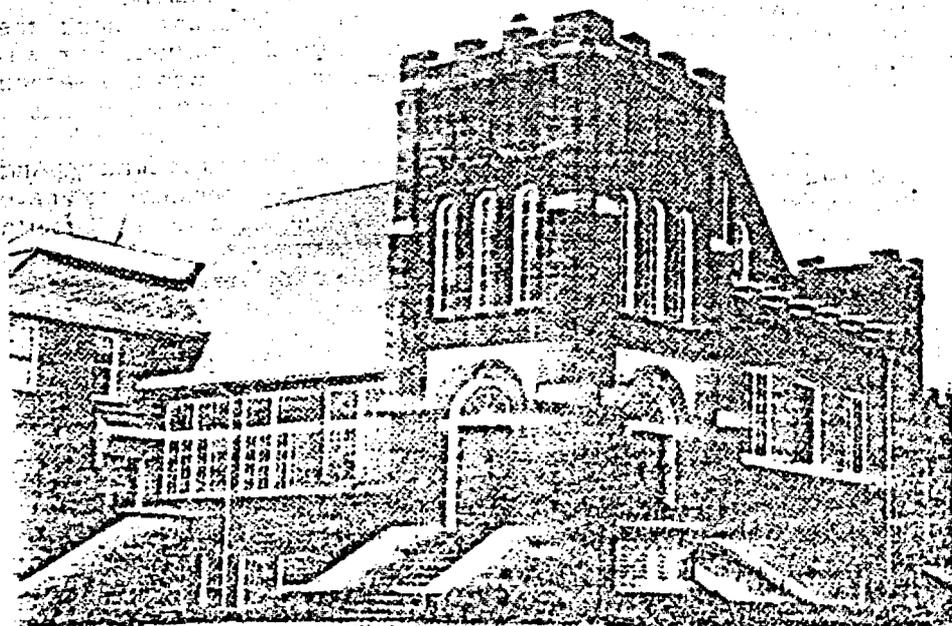
The First Baptist Church (Southern) of Richton was organized in 1906 and during that year they erected a building one block west of the railroad on what is now Highway 42; cost was \$3,000.

In 1928-29 the beautiful structure they now occupy, was constructed for an approximate cost of \$24,000. Since that time additions and other improvements have been made.

Among names of ardent members have been S. L. Stringer, J. E. Johnson, A. G. Brown, V. R. Walley, G. P. Walley, W. H. Clifton, A. L. Favre, J. F. Backstrom, A. R. Shoemaker, W. D. Mobley, G. S. Burnett, C. C. Smith, E. C. Fishel, J. L. McCoy, R. Hinton, L. R. and L. D. Cochran and Mesdames David Thoms, C. S. Bentley, J. W. Courtney and numerous others.

Pastors having served the church have been Reverends R. J. Loper, A. M. Sheppard, T. J. Moore, E. W. McLendon, S. G. Pope, E. R. Henderson, J. B. Polk, J. N. McMillan, J. L. Low, J. H. Cothen, T. R. Coulter, J. F. Brantley, W. M. Averett, James Terpo, David Merritt, Bill Hale, Marcus Finch and presently Fred Trexler.

At the observance of the church's 50th anniversary, the booklet with program and history, titled "Fifty Golden Years 1906-1956," was



First Baptist Church, Richton

dedicated to Mrs. C. S. Bentley, a faithful, devout member who passed away two years prior to the Golden Celebration.

Today the church continues to expand its sphere of service.

Central Baptist Church

Central Baptist Church of Richton (Missionary) was organized on July 7, 1967 with eight charter members. These were Bro. and Mrs. Eugene Murphy, Bro. and Mrs. W. S. Walley, Bro. and Mrs. Rayburn Freeman, Miss Donna Kay Hinton and Mrs. Lavonia McLeod.

The church first started meeting in the Community Center, then on September 24, 1967 they moved into a mobile mission unit which was furnished by state missions.

On October 12, 1969 the church was blessed to move into their new building which is located on Highway 15 N just outside the city limits.

Present enrollment of the church is 85.

The following men of the church have answered the call to the ministry while members — Rayburn Freeman, Richard Carlisle and I. L. Stinson.

Serving the church as pastors have been Reverends Eugene Murphy, Medrick Savell, Thelbert Hill, John Loden, Bobby Dansby, B. L. Smith, Vernon Boykin, and Richard Carlisle.

United Methodists In Richton

Organized as the Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1905 with three charter members, namely C. H. Stevens, C. C. Dearman, and Mrs. Leotis (J. B.) Cantrell, membership now numbers about 270.

The first building on the lot where the present structure stands, was occupied in 1907. Addition was made to it in 1925. This was demolished in 1952 to make way for a handsome new brick structure with first services being held on Easter 1953. This was destroyed by fire Feb. 2, 1962, but was rebuilt and used for the first time on May 26, 1963.

In 1939 a Uniting Conference was held at Gulfport and the Richton church became a part of this conference and was known as the

Methodist Church of Richton. Then later the Methodist Churches and United Brethren Churches united thus becoming the United Methodist Church. And Richton today is known as the United Methodist Church of Richton.

Pastors who have served the Richton church have been Reverends J. M. Massey, C. H. Ellis, W. J. Dawson, R. S. Gayle, L. Carley, R. P. Fikes, J. L. White, G. P. McKeown, M. L. Burton, W. B. Alsworth, F. B. Ormond, A. W. O'Briant, M. M. Black, T. A. Ferguson, J. T. Weems, W. A. Terry, E. L. Ledbetter, L. D. Haughton, E. A. Kelly, R. M. Matheny, D. H. McKeithen, A. M. O'Neil, Otho M. Brantley, James Walker, Denson Napier, Roy Eaton, George Currey, L. Shaw Gaddy, and M. L. McCormick, Jr.

Cooper's Chapel United Methodist Church

Standing about the center of Bentley addition to Richton is a remodeled wooden church building known as Cooper's Chapel United Methodist Church with the Rev. M. A. Hayes as pastor.

The original building was erected during the pastorate of the Rev. Cooper in 1921 and was named for him. At the time the church was organized it was a Methodist Episcopal Church.

Pastors having served the church have been Reverends Raye, Cooper, Chatman, J. J. Ford, Mason Brown, Wiggins, Taplin, Garr, Jordan, Webb, Hills, Berry and Hayes.

While the membership is small, the attendance is good and so is the Christian fellowship.

Information by Charlie Turner

Sweet Pilgrim Baptist Church Organized In 1908

To whom it may concern:

The Sweet Pilgrim Baptist Church in Richton was founded in 1908 with Rev. William Mallory as pastor.

The wooden frame structure was built soon thereafter and was located just south of the Mid-South Manufacturing Co. factory.

The first deacons were Albert Jones, Benson Dunn, J. M. Franklin and Dave Walker.

Several years later the Rev. W. D. Ridgeway of Hattiesburg became the pastor and served until he offered his resignation in 1960.

At this time the Rev. L. W. Bolton, Sr., of McLain served as interim pastor. And in 1961 he was duly selected and is continuing to serve as pastor in 1976.

In 1961 the church started to construct a new block and brick church where the original one stood, but were unable to complete it because of vandalism interference.

The land where the old school building stood was purchased and we are now in the process of completing a new block and brick church which was begun in 1972. It is located in Bentley Quarters.

Rev. Linwood Bolton, pastor
Mrs. Johnnie Ann Green, secretary

New Hope Baptist Church Church History 1905 - 1976

The history of the New Hope Baptist Church dates back to September 1902 when a religious man by the name of Dan T. Brown came to Richton and decided to organize a church with only a brush arbor overhead.

A Rev. Ed Hubert learned of the Christian endeavor and decided to lead the group as minister. A tent was secured and services were held under until enough money was raised to build a church.

As more Christians joined the band, a special pastoral day was decided upon. It was the second Sunday of each month and thus it remained until 1970 when it was changed to the fourth Sunday. And in 1972 they decided to have services the second and fourth Sunday afternoon of each month.

The first building committee was as follows: Sister Helen Beardsley, Sister Josephine Jones and a missionary called "Mother Rodgers" (Mrs. Charlotte Rodgers). They also worked hard to select a name for the church and soon it became known as the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church.

A day was set aside for installation of officials who were Deacons George McGowen, Dan T. Brown, Dave Harper, and Sam Rigsby. Rev. Jim Barlow acted as moderator and

Bro. Ed Hubert was installing pastor.

This building burned later so a second church was erected on land purchased from W. M. Edwards for the cost of \$30.00. Lumber for the church was donated by Richton Lumber Co.

Years and events have gone by, making history for the church. Pastors who have served have been the Reverends G. L. Kelley, R. T. Thomas, W. D. Taylor, L. E. Fairley and present pastor the Rev. C. D. McSwain.

Deacons other than those mentioned previously have been Anthony DeLoach, Ben Price, Mack Peyton, John Hall, Elbert Hinton, C. L. Anderson, Anthony Strong, Fronia Brooks, Charlie Powell, Billy James Sanders, King Everett, Richard Gaines, and Leroy Watts.

In 1965 a new brick building was erected, and added to the interior have been a new piano, tiled floors, aisle runners, and drink machine. A choir director was named. Former musicians were Sister Willie Mae Strong, her daughter Antholene, and Mrs. Nancy Bolton. Now Mrs. Mary F. Woodsen is pianist with Mrs. Nancy Bolton assisting.

Membership has increased tremendously with young and middle aged converts.

Yes, these have been 71 glorious years within a building and 3 in a tent, totaling 74 years for Christ and we hope to have many more and that Rev. McSwain, now in his 25th year as pastor will continue to serve and progress with us.

Essie B. Haney, clerk

Richton Church of God

There is a Richton Church of God on Highway 15 a few blocks north of the Richton Post Office. The building has been there for a number of years but no one seems to be able to give us other information. Understand that Rev. Rosier Foxworth was the organizer for the church which at one time had a nice size congregation.

Richton Masonic Lodge No. 477

Information from Grand Secretary T. K. Griffis, of Meridian, Miss., dated August 23, 1976 as requested by Joe Palmer, of Richton.

Charter for the Richton Lodge No. 477 was granted February 21, 1906. Officers were as follows: Worshipful Master — F. M. Sheppard, Senior Warden — W. D. Mills, Junior Warden — A. M. Edwards. Other members were D. E. Edwards. Dr. Willis Walley, Edward W. Rich, G. E. Mills, C. C. Dearman, Z. W. Walley, B. L. Morris, J. S. Palmer (Joe's grandfather) and Joseph Walley.

The lodge has continued active through the years and as of September 1976 the officials are: Worshipful Master — Jimmy White, Senior Warden — Howard Touchstone, Junior Warden — Joe Brewer, S. D. — Lamar Edwards, J. D. — Cecil Ray Edwards, Tyler — P. L. Felts, Secretary — Alton Dale Walley, Treasurer — Pete Jolly, and Chaplain — J. A. Bullock.

First Officers and Charter Members of the Richton Chapter of the Order of Eastern Stars

Chapter No. 162 of the Order of Eastern Star, Richton, Miss., was organized December 1, 1920 and constituted June 3, 1921, Mrs. Nellie McGowan being officer in charge.

Officers and charter members of this organization were: Worthy Matron, Mrs. Annie Taylor Todd; Worthy Patron, Grover S. Burnett; Associate Matron, Mrs. E. C. Fishel; Secretary, C. Hardee Stevens; Treasurer, Mrs. Herta A. McCormick; Conductress, Mrs. Ella Mills Burnett; Associate Conductress, Mrs. Eran Guyton Green; Chaplain, Dr. Joseph Green; Marshall, Mrs. Annie Laurie R. Dorsett; Organist, Miss Pearl Green; Adah, Mrs. Mae Edwards; Ruth, Mrs. May Montgomery Kyzar; Esther, Mrs. B. B. Pollock; Martha, Mrs. Mamie Peebles Cochran; Electra, Mrs. Maggie Dobbins; Wardern, Mrs. Julia Andersen; Sentinel, E. C. Fishel.

Members, not officers — Mrs. Dora J. Andersen, Mrs. Ida Beal Simmons, Mrs. Myrtie B. Russell Stevens, Mrs. Lela Mae McCoy, D. D. Simmons, W. M. Dorsett and G. C. Todd.

Officers in 1976 are: Worthy Matron, Mrs. Eddie Lee Gentry; Worthy Patron, Joe Palmer; Associate Matron, Mrs. Rose Smith;

Associate Patron, Gavin Walley; Secretary, Mrs. Doris Touchstone; Treasurer, Mrs. Annie Davis; Conductress, Mrs. Theresa Scarborough; Associate Conductress, Mrs. Mable Walley; Chaplain, Mrs. Doris Walley; Marshall, Mrs. Margie Odom; Organist, Mrs. Mary Dee Odom; Adah, Mrs. Cora Williford; Ruth, Mrs. Lois Batte; Esther, Mrs. Ethel Touchstone; Martha, Mrs. Shirley Touchstone; Electa, Mrs. Myrtis Adams; Warder, Howard Touchstone and Sentinel, Willie Odom.

Emory Memorial Home

No story of Richton would be complete without mentioning the benevolence of the late Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Emery (of Bentley and Emery Saw Mill Co.) who gave their beautiful Colonial-type home, just outside the Town of Richton, to the Missionary Bands of the World, headquartered in Indiana.

One specification was that Rev. Mable Cooper, an ordained minister, be the superintendent of the home which was to house unmarried mothers and their babies until suitable arrangements could be made. And should it ever cease to be used for such the property would revert to the Emery heirs.

This service under Christian influence touched the lives of hundreds of young women.

Several years after Sister Cooper died, the main building burned and the property remaining was purchased by Dr. and Mrs. Edwin L. Cole for a cattle farm. They soon constructed a lovely stone home where they reside with their four children.

Public Library A Reality

In the fall of 1955 Mrs. Lura Currier of the State Library Commission spoke at a meeting of the Richton Women's Club regarding a proposed library program for Richton and Perry County.

At this meeting Mrs. B. M. Stevens, Jr. was named Library chairman and she proceeded to lay foundation for this project, by securing a place in the City Hall for it. She also called for an

organizational meeting.

This meeting was held April 1956 when Mrs. W. E. Moak was named president with Hubert Freeman as vice chairman; L. A. Wilson, Jr., secretary and Mrs. Marguerite Phillips, treasurer.

Board of Directors were Mesdames B. M. Stevens, Jr., Joffre Phillips, O. C. Ingram, D. O. Thoms, and W. E. Moak.

A charter of incorporation was issued for Perry County Library Association. It was opened for service in Richton on May 5, 1956, and continued opening every Tuesday and Friday for some time.

The first donation of books and cash for the library was made by the Richton Woman's Club, that had worked wholeheartedly to bring this facility into being.

By October 1956, a bookmobile was in operation throughout Perry County, and on September 25, 1966, a building in the town of Richton was officially opened as the Richton Public Library. The building had been renovated by the Town of Richton in cooperation with the Federal Library Services and Construction Act.

This library was designated as headquarters for the newly organized Pine Forest Library Association which is jointly supported by the city officials of Richton, Boards of Supervisors of Perry, Lamar, Covington, Greene, and Stone counties and the Mississippi Library Association.

In 1976, twenty years later, we find here books for all ages, information about almost anything, services for the blind and physically handicapped, story hour for children during the summer, reading programs, and special exhibits of arts, crafts, and hobbies.

And July 1976 also finds a group of newly organized "Friends of the Library."

Serving as director for Pine Forest Library Association is Mrs. Carrie (E. C.) Whiddon with Mrs. Jean Lyon as assistant.

Those serving the Richton Library are Mrs. Dorothy Jones, Librarian; James Freeman, Bookmobile Librarian; Doris Newell and Greg Dement, clerks; and a newly added member, Julie Myrick, trainee.

The motto, originated by the merchants of Richton back in the twenties, is being used by the library — "If we don't have it, we will get it for you."

Health Services Available

Public health services have been available in Perry County since the state department first named a full-time physician, nurse, and technician January 1, 1926. Among the earliest services rendered to the people was the administering of preventive shots for typhoid fever and other diseases, physical checkups in school and general sanitation program.

However when hospitalization was needed the patient had to be taken by whatever transportation was available to hospitals in Hattiesburg, Laurel, Jackson and even sometimes to Mobile, for proper treatment.

Then in 1963, after much controversy, the Perry County General Hospital was erected in Richton. Pressure had been made from all sections of the county that it be located elsewhere. But H. L. Jones, supervisor Beat 3, showed those "with the last say," that in Richton there were facilities not available elsewhere in the county; such as sufficient water supply, ample sewage, electricity, natural gas, the land on which to build and people to staff it.

Inscribed on the cornerstone is: Members of Board of Supervisors of Perry County — Bura Conway, Beat 2, president; H. L. Jones, Beat 3, F. T. Deakle, Beat 4, Roy McKenzie, Beat 1, and I. A. Garraway, Beat 5; Ruth W. Carley, clerk; John M. Dunnam, County Attorney; I. Tom Jones, II, Representative; Ross Barnett, Governor.

With 22 rooms as a beginning in 1967, an addition of 22 other rooms, all private, gives the capacity of caring for at least 44 persons. Modern equipment in each room and elsewhere in the building gives service seldom found in small hospitals.

Administrators have been C. N. Steele and G. G. Posey.

Physicians serving here are Drs. W. E. Moak and Edwin Cole.

Also available is individual

Perry County Family Care Clinic

Dr. John M. Beaman
at 302 Bay Avenue
Richton, MS

Opened...August 1983

Presently, 1976, the SE Mississippi Growers Assn., with Frank J. Hegwood as chairman, owns equipment for sorting and handling the cucumbers, peppers, peas, snap beans, okra, sweet corn, and watermelons they grow.

Sometime these ventures are successful and other times, not so good. However these farmers seldom give up "growing things" for they love the land and know people need food everywhere.

Richton Rotary Club Then and Now

"He profits most, who serves the best" has a special meaning to Richton Rotarians as they repeat it each week when they meet.

The first charter was presented to the Richton Club by Dr. J. L. Johnson, president of Woman's College, Hattiesburg, on April 15, 1925. According to minutes kept by secretary L. A. Wilson: officers were B. M. Stevens, president; J. E. Green, vice-president; Wilson served as treasurer also.

Charter members were, besides the above, S. F. McCormick, the Rev. M. M. Black, C. G. Ball, D. R. Jenkins, T. W. Milner, T. J. Bentley, C. H. Stevens, J. C. Thoms, David Thoms, Dr. E. M. Gavin, Dr. S. F. Hinton, E. C. Fishel, J. H. McPherson, L. O. Murphy, W. M. Dorsett, G. S. Burnett.

Date of last meeting with minutes was May 30, 1931. Three members continued to meet on Wednesday for lunch in the name of Rotary, so that when application was made for re-enstatement of the organization, it was granted on April 18, 1934.

Officers for 1976 are the Rev. M.

L. McCormick, Jr., president; John Bush, vice-president; and I. T. Jones, secretary-treasurer.

The club sponsors Richton Boy Scouts today. In past a boy was sent to Boys State in Jackson and each month a high school boy was honored as Junior Rotarian at their luncheon meetings. Contribution to Adult Cripple Clinic at Memphis was also made yearly and several from Richton profited from its services.

Richton Woman's Club, Inc.

In December 1925 some of Richton's alert women met and organized the Ever-Ready Club and in January 1926 the club affiliated with the Mississippi Federation of Women's Clubs.

Charter members were Mesdames W. R. (Marie Dorsett) Smith, E. C. (Doris) Fishel, L. A. (Josie) Wilson, J. C. (Ava Lee) Thoms, S. F. (Hertha) McCormick, B. M. (Arlean) Stevens and T. W. (Nancy) Milner and Misses Elise Thoms and Madelyn Dorsett.

In 1933 the club name was

changed to Woman's Progressive Club with a selection of the yellow daffodil as club flower and colors of green and gold were chosen for club colors. The club motto from the beginning and continues in 1976 is "Duty, Service, America is You and I."

The name of the club was once again changed, this time to The Richton Woman's Club, Inc., so that it might own property and operate a club house and community center. This final name change took place in 1961 when they purchased the Presbyterian Church which had not been in use for several years.

Various projects have been sponsored by the club such as two junior clubs; the planting of trees in the main section of town (in 1976 just two of these are standing); crepe myrtle was planted along Highway 15 North but it has disappeared. The club sponsored Christmas lighting contests for a number of years, Girl Scout troops for a number of years, and other worthwhile projects.

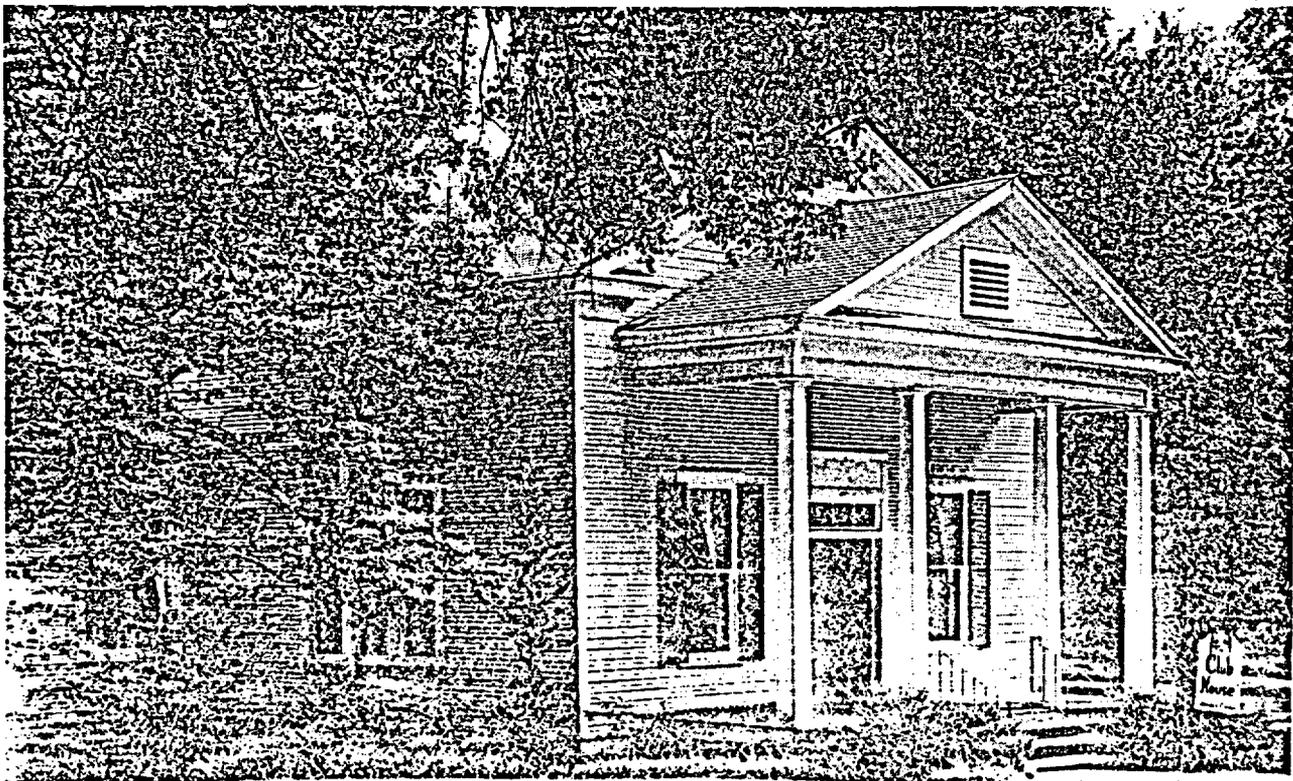
Most outstanding has been the fact that the Woman's Club was the

first in Mississippi to have a Fine Arts Festival yearly. This began in 1962.

Presidents have been Mrs. L. A. Wilson, Mrs. B. M. Stevens, Mrs. J. C. Thoms, Mrs. T. W. Milner, Mrs. F. M. Wilson, Mrs. S. F. McCormick, Mrs. E. C. Fishel, Mrs. Hugh Walley, Mrs. R. F. Suffling, Mrs. O. Z. Smith, Mrs. J. T. Carley, Mrs. David Thoms, Miss Carrie Russell, Mrs. Reuben Pollock, Mrs. Rex Phillips, Mrs. O. B. Bowen, Mrs. D. O. Thoms, Mrs. M. A. Peevey, Mrs. I. T. Jones, Mrs. Joffre Phillips, Mrs. Charles Holcomb, Mrs. Carrie Whiddon, Mrs. O. B. Bowen, Jr., Mrs. J. C. Ivy, Mrs. C. E. Carley, Mrs. Pettis Walley, Miss Elaine Moser, Mrs. Ronald Rahaim, and Mrs. W. E. Moak.

Home and Garden Club Richton, Mississippi

The Home and Garden Club of Richton, Miss., was organized on October 5, 1935, in the home of Mrs. Annie Davis with eight charter members. By 1936, the membership



Richton Woman's Club House

had increased to 16. The 1976 enrollment is 36 members, one of whom is an honorary member. Mrs. Annie Davis is the only charter member of the club.

In February 1940, the club was federated under the leadership of Mrs. Thelma Walley; and since that date, the club has participated in many national, state, and local projects. It has also co-sponsored with the Woman's Club worthy civic projects.

An annual local project, first begun in 1943, is the Clean-up Campaign. Spring flower shows have created much club and civic interest. The first show was held on May 6, 1938, in the showroom of McCormick Motor Company.

In 1939 a Christmas Tree Trail was sponsored by the club to encourage the homes to celebrate the Christmas season with lighted Christmas scenes, trees, and doorways. In 1940, the club lighted the first community Christmas tree. Later, a Santa Claus parade, represented by school, business, and civic organizations, became the official beginning of the Christmas season in Richton. In 1974 a nativity scene, placed on the grounds of the Perry County General Hospital, was added to emphasize the religious aspect of the season.

An important 1975-76 project of the club was participation in the "Avenue of Magnolias," a state-wide beautification plan for all highways entering the state of Mississippi. In the fall of 1975 the club undertook the landscaping of the grounds of the Perry County General Hospital. In the early spring of 1976 the club planted several magnolias along the highway running north and south through Richton.

Ushering in the Bicentennial year, the club promoted an "Avenue of Flags" lining the business district of Richton from the Richton Medical Center to the Sunflower Food Store.

During the forty years of the club's progress much cleanliness and beauty have been created, not only locally but also throughout the state, because of the dedication of home-loving, beauty-loving women of Richton.

Richton Jaycees

In 1955 a group of young men organized the Richton Junior Chamber of Commerce. A charter dated May, 1955 lists the following charter members: Joe Blackman, president; Dr. W. E. Moak, first vice-president; Earl Boszor, second vice-president; Dr. Robert Mayfield, treasurer; L. W. Godfrey, secretary. Other members were Ward Adams, W. F. "Bill" Bowen, Gene Dobbins, Hubert Freeman, B. H. Hammons, Charles Holcomb, L. V. Jennings, Jr., James P. Lee, John M. Lee, Kenneth Neely, Willie Odom, A. P. Rahaim, Dr. James Roddy, Otho Sellers, Henry Stevens, J. H. "Red" Walley, Carl E. Walley, E. C. Whiddon, Conoy Williams, J. D. Buckalew, and Bobby Joe Walley.

The Richton Junior Chamber of Commerce has undergone many changes in the last twenty years, among them, its name. Today, October 1976 the original organization has changed to Richton Jaycees. It is affiliated with the state and national organizations of the same name.

By far the most outstanding project of the Richton Jaycees is the Jaycee Swimming Pool. Located on Jaycee property formerly owned by the Johnson family, the swimming pool was built in 1961. It has served as a recreational meeting place for children, teenagers, and parents for these many years. Along with the pool, the Jaycees have built a meeting place (commonly referred to as "Hut") for themselves as well as other groups, and two lighted tennis courts that are well-used by townspeople.

Another recent project was the selection of Miss Glenda Meadows as Miss Richton. She went on to Vicksburg under the sponsorship of the Jaycees to become Miss Mississippi of 1972 and participated in the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, N.J.

Today the active Richton Jaycees have several projects among those being the lighting of the downtown street of Richton at Christmastime with recently acquired pole bracket lights. They also sponsor Little League Baseball which operates in

the spring and summer and effects approximately 80 boys.

Other projects include trash can maintenance for schools and downtown businesses and Honey Sunday, a state-wide project with the benefits going to the Ellisville State School.

In May 1973 a recommendation was sent from the State Jaycee Headquarters to Ron Rahaim, president of the local Jaycees for achieving 1000 Club — being one of the outstanding chapters in the State of Mississippi.

The Tabernacle Used

In the fall of 1924 work began on the 115x115 feet Tabernacle, with a seating capacity of about 2400 persons, that was to serve for the Gipsy Smith Revival.

The internationally known evangelist, born of a gypsy father and British Lady in England, began the Richton revival on Sunday, November 23, 1924, and concluded on December 14, 1924.

The tabernacle was filled to capacity every night.

Assisting were Charles Allen, song director; and Floyd Clark, pianist.

Evangelist Smith's messages brought such a powerful feeling of the Holy Spirit that lives of the people in this vicinity have displayed the effects throughout the years.

The revival was not to be the last activity in this spacious building, for plans were made to hold the Annual Richton Fair there, it could have been considered the Perry County Fair. This was held in September, 1925, and proved to be the most successful ever held.

Communities exhibiting included Whitfield, with Frank Ware, sponsor; Prospect, with J. H. Brown in charge; Oak Grove, with Prof. L. M. Scarborough; Buck Creek, Mrs. J. R. S. Edwards; Progress, Prof. T. L. Lewis; Hintonville, Prof. D. C. Leech. Good Hope and Richton were also exhibitors.

These fairs continued until the building was demolished; as did the indoor basketball games, for which the interior of the building was reconstructed.

One other memorable occasion

took place under the tabernacle. This was when Evangelist Billy Sunday brought a message on February 7, 1927.

This prominent evangelist was conducting a revival in Mobile, Ala., and took his "day off" to come to Richton through the courtesy of the G.M. & N. RR.

He preached to the largest crowd ever assembled in Richton, using the 23rd Psalm as basis for his sermon.

His wife "Ma" Sunday was with him as was his song leader, Homer Rhodeheaver, and pianist Bob Matthews and wife. Several railroad officials also accompanied him.

Richton has had its whittlers and its carvers. Way back when — K. C. Rich would sit on a pile of crossties near the depot to carve and whittle objects which he would give to the youngsters as they stopped to visit with him. Later, J. C. Vanderslice, town marshall, would whittle away on piece after piece of cedar. Then there are "Preacher" Touchstone and W. T. Burnett, who seem to have a picture in their mind before they start carving. Both make most interesting objects, appropriate for exhibits.

David Thoms Served 22 Years With Tax Commission

Governor Hugh White appointed David Thoms as Field Representative of the Homestead Exemption Division of the Tax Commission of

the State of Mississippi on November 7, 1938.

And when he retired on August 27, 1960, H. P. Taylor, Division Chief of the State Tax Commission, wrote in his letter to the Chancery Clerks, Tax Assessors and city clerks through the state, the following:

"The State has never had a more efficient, loyal and devoted employee than Dave Thoms. And in his sphere of operations, I know of no one who made a greater contribution to the program than he did."

Locally Mr. Thoms was a participant in civic and religious activities having been a member of the official board of the Methodist Church over 40 years and served the church as superintendent of Sunday School and Lay Leader.

His wife, the former Ruffie Moore, daughter of a Baptist minister who had served the Richton Baptist Church in its early days, performed her part in the life of Richton, as a mother, church and civic leader, besides teaching in the rural and city schools for many years.

She was one of ten women chosen in 1972 as a "Beautiful Activist," because of her contribution to the life of her community.

Richton Woman First To Hold Elective Office In County

The J. T. Carley family moved to

Richton from Lyman, Miss., about 1934. Mr. Carley purchased Ward's Pharmacy in Richton and his wife Mrs. Ruth Wilder Carley, became agent for Perry County Department of Public Welfare.

And in 1952 she was installed as the first woman in Perry county to hold an elective office, that of Chancery and Circuit Clerk. This office she held until her death in 1965.

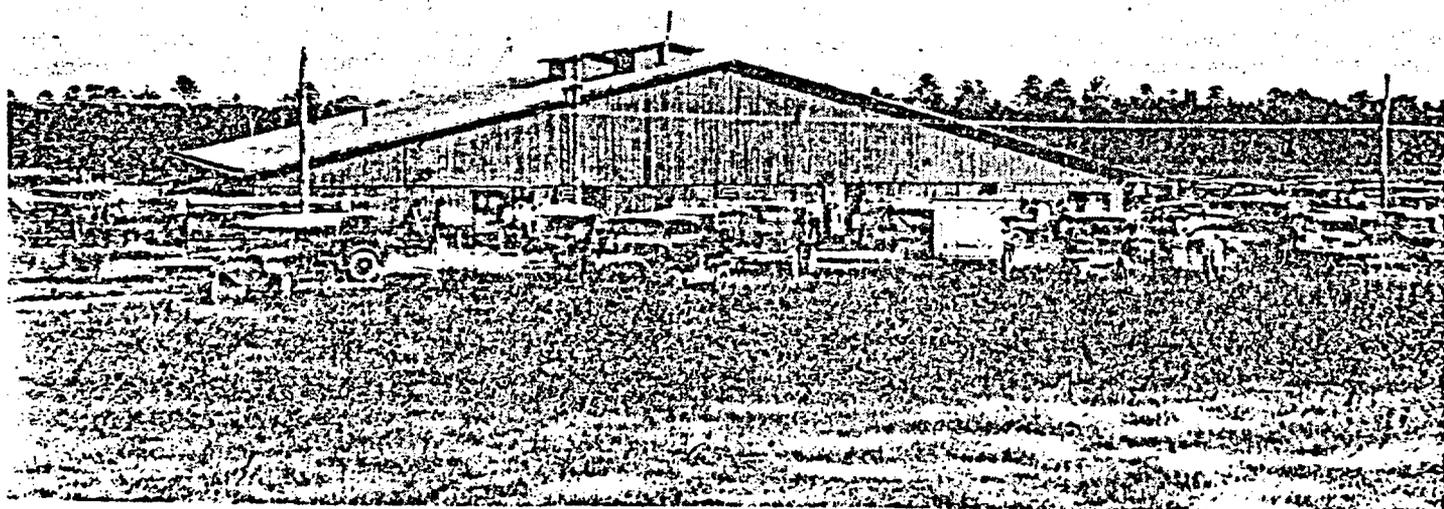
Carley Son A Two Star General

Excerpts from a letter written at request of Mrs. Wilson:

"Shalimar Florida
14 July 1976

"Dear Miss Josie:

"It was good to talk to you again. It brought back wonderful memories of years and times gone by as we talked near the same oak trees that shaded us forty years ago. Such kind memories. We lived in the old Andersen house across from the Thoms until it burned — then purchased the house now owned by Goober Walley. For forty years it was our home. You know this era better than I, and you knew Ruth and Jack Carley who made it such a lovely home and place to grow up. My father was the gentlest man I have ever known, one of those rare human beings who truly liked doing things for other people. My mother was brilliant, ambitious, devoted to



Tabernacle

many things, and loving. A very strong person, who thought it a sin not to be involved and who did so much for her family, Richton, Perry County and the state of Mississippi.

"As for me, I always wanted to go to West Point or Annapolis and be in the Army or Navy. I don't know why, I just did. I have never had any regrets. It must have been the right choice for me.

"I entered West Point in 1942 graduating in 1945. The life that followed was demanding and exciting and always seemed important to me. I served in Japan, Alaska, Korea, France and Vietnam and many places in the United States. I went to war three times and helped quell the 1967 race riot in Detroit and in Washington, D.C.

... I was twice presented the nation's highest award for meritorious service, the Distinguished Service Medal; the third highest award for valor, the Silver Star; three Distinguished Flying Crosses and other medals. I reached the rank of Major General and have retired, making our home in Shalimar (Fort Walton), Fla. Am now president and part owner of a small auto parts manufacturing business. It has been a good life ...

"Please excuse typing — I am rusty, probably need a refresher course from Marjorie Phillips, who taught me typing in the first place.

"Sincerely,

"Jackie (John T. T. Carley, Jr.)"

General Carley's wife is the former Lollie (Laura) Bing. They have a son, Chris, who is a U.S. Army Captain, and a daughter, Terry, a graduate student of Florida State University.

The Senior Carley's other son, C. E. (Ted), owns Carley's Drug Store in Richton, and their daughters, June, (Mrs. L. Nap Cassibry), and Beth (Mrs. Shield Simms), live in Cleveland and Columbus, Mississippi, respectively.

Sons of the J. E. Johnsons

Seldom does a family have more than one son attend and graduate from one of the U.S. Military Academies. But a Richton family set a record when a fourth son graduated from Annapolis Naval Academy in 1938.

The first son of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Johnson, long time residents of Richton, Fred, graduated from the Naval Academy in 1924. Ten years later he died while on duty in Hong Kong, China. His rank at that time was lieutenant.

Stuart Johnson was the second son to receive appointment to Annapolis Naval Academy. He graduated in 1932. His retirement was in 1960, his rank was Captain in the Naval Aviation.

Jimmy Johnson (James I'm sure) was the third to enter the same academy. He graduated in 1934 and retired in 1962, a captain in the Naval Aviation. Presently serves in the Naval Reserve.

While serving with the RAF in England in 1940, Jimmy located and directed RAF bombers to the German battleship "Bismark" which was sunk.

The fourth son attending Annapolis Naval Academy and the third to be a part of Naval Aviation, was Cecil Johnson who graduated in 1938. At retirement his rank was Captain also, and honors received are the "Navy Cross" and "Distinguished Flying Cross." He was cited for leading a torpedo squadron in the Battle of Midway.

And this is not all — in the year of 1944 Mrs. Nancy (J. E.) Johnson, mother of these sons mentioned above, was signally honored by Richton friends and by the Government Authorities for having seven sons on duty with the U.S. Armed Forces at that time. The special recognition took place in the Richton Baptist Church at a Sunday morning service.

The four other sons serving were A. L., Bill, Stanton and Guy Johnson.

Olympic Honors To Cochrans

To two of the sons of the late Mr. and Mrs. L. R. Cochran came special honors and recognition as they competed in International Olympics.

In 1924, the eldest son, Commodore Cochran (now deceased), ran in the relay races when the Olympics were held in France. Not only was he a gold medal winner, he set a new record for the USA.

The other son receiving honors is Roy B. Cochran, now retired and living in California.

Roy had prepared for the 1944 Olympics, but due to WW II being in progress, the event was called off. Hence he had to train four more years. By that time he was 29 years of age which is old for an athlete. But that did not deter Roy.

While awaiting the Olympics of 1948, he continued his education, receiving his doctorate from the University of Indiana. He then went to California where he continued his athletic development as he ran for the Los Angeles Athletic Club, who were his sponsors.

1948 was soon at hand, so to England he went for the Olympics. Here he ran in the relays and 440 low hurdles winning in both. His time in the latter was 51.1 seconds.

Have learned that Roy gave his medals, shoes and other trophies to the Los Angeles Club for their Hall of Fame Exhibit.

This information came from these men's youngest sister, Penny Cochran Smith, of Owensboro, Kentucky.

These men still have two brothers residing near Richton, W. D. Cochran at Hintonville, and Keith Cochran on the old home place on Cochran Road.

Richton Minister Edits Upper Room

The Reverend Maxie Dunnam, son of Mr. and Mrs. Murdock Dunnam, of East-side community near Richton, has the distinction of presently serving as editor of The Upper Room, a Daily Devotional Guide published in Nashville, Tenn. This is an interdenominational, international and interracial publication published in 36 languages.

A graduate of Richton High School, U.S.M., and the School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, Ga., he was ordained as a minister of the United Methodist Church by the Mississippi Annual Conference and has served churches in Beaumont, McLain, and Leaf, Miss. And while pastoring at Gautier organizer Trinity Methodist Church, Gulfport, where he served for five years. He was senior pastor at West

Anaheim United Methodist Church, Calif., and organized Saint Andrews by the Sea at San Clemente, Calif.

From Anaheim he went to Nashville where he served as Director of Discipleship until he was elected by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church to serve as editor of The Upper Room.

Maxie is married to the former Jerry Morris of Atlanta, and they have three children, Kim, Kerry, and Kervin, and reside in Mt. Juliet, Tenn.

Homesteads Not Too Successful

Attempts have been made by organized groups, both private and governmental agencies, to provide homesteads for interested persons with plans for payment to suit the individuals.

Richton Subsistence Homestead program was approved in January of 1934. Fifteen houses were erected, each on 80 acres of cut-over land. The houses contained five rooms, were of wood and painted white. Each had a well, a chicken yard and barn.

But for some reason the original plan went awry. However they were eventually sold to substantial citizens, who have made a nice contribution to the community.

Another homesteading project was in 1934 also. Southern Gardens purchased land north and west of Richton. Twenty families came to see the property, some bought and remained for a while. Others looked and returned to their former homes in the Mid-west.

Only one person of the original comers remains. He is Robert Prussing, son of one of the original investors.

The men responsible for the Southern Gardens, Inc., venture were Messers Hughes, Cornish and Schulz, the latter being field manager.

Richton Women In Military

Richton women responded early when in 1942 they were allowed to join various branches of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Jean Wilson became a member of WAAC in the fall of 1942, remained through WWII and was discharged

January 1946 with the rank of captain. She was then invited to return to service in 1949. This she did after receiving a law degree at the University of Mississippi. She was retired in January, 1969, with the rank of Lt. Col. and had served as Deputy Director of WAF for four years. Lt. Col. (ret.) Wilson is now a practicing attorney at Gulfport, Miss. She is the daughter of Mrs. L. A. (Josie) Wilson and the late Mr. Wilson.

—
Velma Phillips, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. M. P. Phillips, volunteered in January 1943 and served in the WAAC until December 19, 1945. Basic training was at Ft. Oglethorpe, Ga., and she attended State Teachers College, Lexington, Kentucky, for special training and made corporal. Later she was assigned to the post office at Ft. Monmouth, N. J., and from there she was sent by Postal Inspector to the Port of Embarcation in New Orleans to complete her tour of duty.

She married Allen A. Edwards who served as post master, Richton, beginning in 1934 for 14 years, and then as rural carrier until his death.

—
Ollie Mae Holland was another volunteer for the WAAC in January, 1943. She was sent to Ft. Oglethorpe, Ga., for basic training. From there to Richmond, Va., to Army administration school then assigned to Signal Corps at Ft. Monmouth, N.J. She was assigned to Regimental and Post Headquarters until Dec., 1944 and was sent to Staten Island, N.Y. for special training in organizing new WAAC company at Rhodes General Hospital in Utica, N.Y. in Jan., 1945. Here she remained until Dec., 1945 when she had earned enough points for a discharge.

She is the daughter of Mrs. J. B. Holland and the late Mr. Holland.

—
Dorothy Mae Palmer Russell entered the WAF of the U.S. Navy in 1943 upon graduation from Richton High School, and served until WWII ended, at the U.S. Naval Base, Pensacola, Fla. She presently resides in Charlotte, N.C.

Miss Clyde Edwards, an R.N. from Richton, was during WWII a member of the U.S. Army Nurses Corps. Later she worked at VA hospitals in New Mexico. She is now retired and residing in Richton. She is the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Edwards.

An honor came to Shirley A. Bolton, daughter of Lou Ella and Clyde Bolton, of Richton, when she graduated from Jackson State University in May 1976 and received appointment as 2nd lieutenant in the U.S. Army having been in the ROTC in college. She is now stationed at Fort Sam Houston, Texas as a Recruiting Officer for Co. D, 1st Bn. A. H. S. Brigade.

Richton Group Entertained

A Hattiesburg newspaper clipping of the year 1954 courtesy of Mrs. Bernice Edwards Horne of Meridian tells this story:

"Among those attending Friday's luncheon at Forrest Hotel honoring Richton town officials and civic leaders were: J. W. Pope, bank president; O. B. Bowen, Jr., bank cashier and alderman; Arthur Lovett, Ford dealer and alderman; Ben Stevens, mayor of Richton; M. A. Peevey, Supt. of Richton School; B. H. Hammons, businessman and alderman; and A. M. Edwards, alderman."

The luncheon was a "good neighbor" gesture given by the Hattiesburg City Administration and their Chamber of Commerce.

Sorry we cannot reproduce newspaper pictures.

Questions And Answers

1926 Booklet On Perry County

Q — What is the average rent for office space in Richton?

A — \$10.00 per room per month.

Q — How many hotels has Richton?

A — Four.

Q — What is the average house rent in Richton?

A — \$15.00 per month.

Q — Are there available sites for factory construction?

A — Yes. Plenty of them.

Q — Are new industries exempt from taxation?

A — Yes.

Q — What can be grown in Perry county?

A — Practically anything that can be grown elsewhere.

Q — What are the principal crops?

A — Cotton, corn, and sweet potatoes, peaches, canteloupes, watermelons, Irish potatoes, sugar cane, figs, and garden vegetables.

In December 17, 1926 issue of The Richton Dispatch we find that the Richton Rotary Club entertained a group of a Federal Committee from the Department of Interior along with officials of various railroads of the United States at a "Home Grown Dinner."

This was served by the ladies of the local chapter of OES and consisted of — turnips, cabbage, string beans, butter beans, field peas, English peas, mustard, beets, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, okra, pepper, cucumbers, cauliflower, lemon, peaches, apple, raspberry jelly, pear preserves, grape jelly, quince, pecans, hickory nuts, grapes, satsumas, black walnuts, pumpkin, corn, onion, ham, bacon, sausage, turkey, quail, squirrel, rabbit, chicken, syrup, honey, peanuts, garlic, kumquats, rice, milk, eggs and lettuce.

W.P.A. Helped Lots

The Works Progress Administration created during the depression of the 1930's was of untold benefit to the Town of Richton and surrounding area as well as the people who participated in the program.

The town's water system was enlarged, a sewer system installed, and streets were "black-topped."

A canning plant and sewing room were operated as was a school lunch room for eligible pupils. A recreation program, library service, adult education and special training of youth through the N.Y.A.

The CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) at Camps 8 and 24 were engaged in reforesting the almost denuded lands around us. Today we are reaping the benefit of this work.

The W.P.A. ended in 1943.

Oil Wells

Drilling for oil in the vicinity of Richton was done extensively from

1951 to 1954. A number of wells produced a thick oil, but the cost to make it usable was at that time almost prohibitive, so all were temporarily sealed except one on the S. F. Hinton property which is pumping, as far as we can learn.

This year, 1976, tests are being made to see if it is feasible to open the former holes on B. M. Stevens property.

Depot Agent

Mr. Dan Spikes served as depot agent for GM&O RR at various points along their line. Over 30 of these were at the Richton station. The Spikes still reside in Richton.

Tornado 1958

A devastating tornado dipped just East of Richton and tore through Perry, Greene, and Wayne counties on a Wednesday night in February, 1958.

Several lives were lost and unestimated damage to homes, crops, trees, barns, and such.

Feed Mill In Richton

Few people in Richton know that persons needing such can bring their grain, silage, and so forth to Rahaim's Feed Mill that is situated just back of their Sunflower Food Store. Here it is ground, crushed, and mixed with modern, commercial equipment, made ready to feed cattle or chickens according to one's need.

This business was begun by the late A. P. Rahaim in 1950, about the time he opened Rahaim's Grocery Store in north Richton.

Mrs. Rahaim and son, Ron, are operating the new Sunflower Food Store, the Feed Mill, and a washateria.

Sunset Cemetery

It was in 1925 that Dr. E. M. Gavin worked to have the Richton Cemetery named and fenced; with Senset Cemetery, 1925 in the arch at the entrance. Nicely graveled driveways were established and lots for burial systematically laid out.

A plat was filed at the City Hall so persons might select lots they

desired. No one seems to know anything about it today 50 years later.

From a check of graves, the earliest, legible date on a tomb is the year 1906.

Jones Funeral Home

For many years there were no facilities in this section for taking care of the dead and preparing the body for burial, except it be done by family and friends.

Usually each town had a merchant who handled coffins, later called caskets, and there was always someone equipped to make coffins of wood. These they lined with soft cloth and covered or painted them on the outside. And in lieu of a hearse (not many small towns could boast such) wagons and later trucks were used to transport the coffin to the cemetery.

As for Richton, when the road from here to Hattiesburg became good enough not to get stuck, Hulett Funeral Home offered all burial services to Richton and other surrounding towns.

In 1941 H. L. Jones and F. E. Davis realized the advantage of having a funeral home in Richton to serve the people. So the building where Opal's Fabric Shop is (in 1976) was secured and a funeral parlor opened. Jones and Davis combined to form a Burial Association for their business, selling policies as was being done in the larger places.

The convenience of the location of Davis-Jones Funeral Home caused the concern to grow and soon Mr. Davis had formed an association in Beaumont and Mr. Jones secured property across the railroad where the Jones Funeral Home now stands, and erected a small but efficient building for that time.

Today the business has grown until they have in the new brick building an office, reception room, two parlors, a kitchenette and chapel where religious services are held.

Of course there are rooms for the embalming and other preparation for burial, as well as display and stock room.

Joe Tucker and Joe Norris are morticians and J. C. Dykes is assistant.

Girl Scouts Very Active

Records show that Girl Scouts have been organized in Richton since 1950 and with the exception of a few skips have had successful years.

1950-1953 leaders were Mrs. Ben (Nan) Stevens, Jr., and Mrs. Thomas (Lanelle) Jones; then Mrs. Mary Beth Mayfield, Mrs. Peggy Chambers; Mrs. Marcus Trigg; Mrs. J. C. Ivy, Mrs. Joan Stevens, Miss Elaine Moser, Mrs. A. M. Anderson; Mrs. Roy Eaton.

A skip — then in 1974 Mrs. Ben (Lana) McIlwain organized a troop of Brownies. In 1975 Mrs. Glen (Francis) Rich took the Brownies and Mrs. McIlwain had a Junior Scout group.

In 1976 Mrs. Rich has one Junior group and Mrs. Bonnie McLain another Junior group; with Mrs. Billy Carey (Brenda) leader for one troop of Brownies and Mrs. Peggy Nicholson another troop of Brownies. At present there are four active troops involving 60 girls and four leaders.

Two other troops are in the making.

One active group of Cadettes with Miss Nancy Wallace and Miss Shelia Felts as leaders is carrying on their program.

Richton National Guard

Unit history: The Richton National Guard unit was originally organized and extended Federal recognition on March 3, 1952 as Battery C, 204th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion (Automatic Weapons), located in Richton's City Hall Building, with strength of one officer, one warrant officer, and 45 enlisted men, and commanded by Captain Perry F. Gibson, local manager of the Mississippi Power Company. Battery C was attached to the Headquarters, 204th Antiaircraft Battalion, located in Laurel, MS and was commanded by Lt. Col. Rupert (Hugo) Newcomb.

A new armory was constructed west of the Richton High School and the unit moved into the new facilities in February 1956.

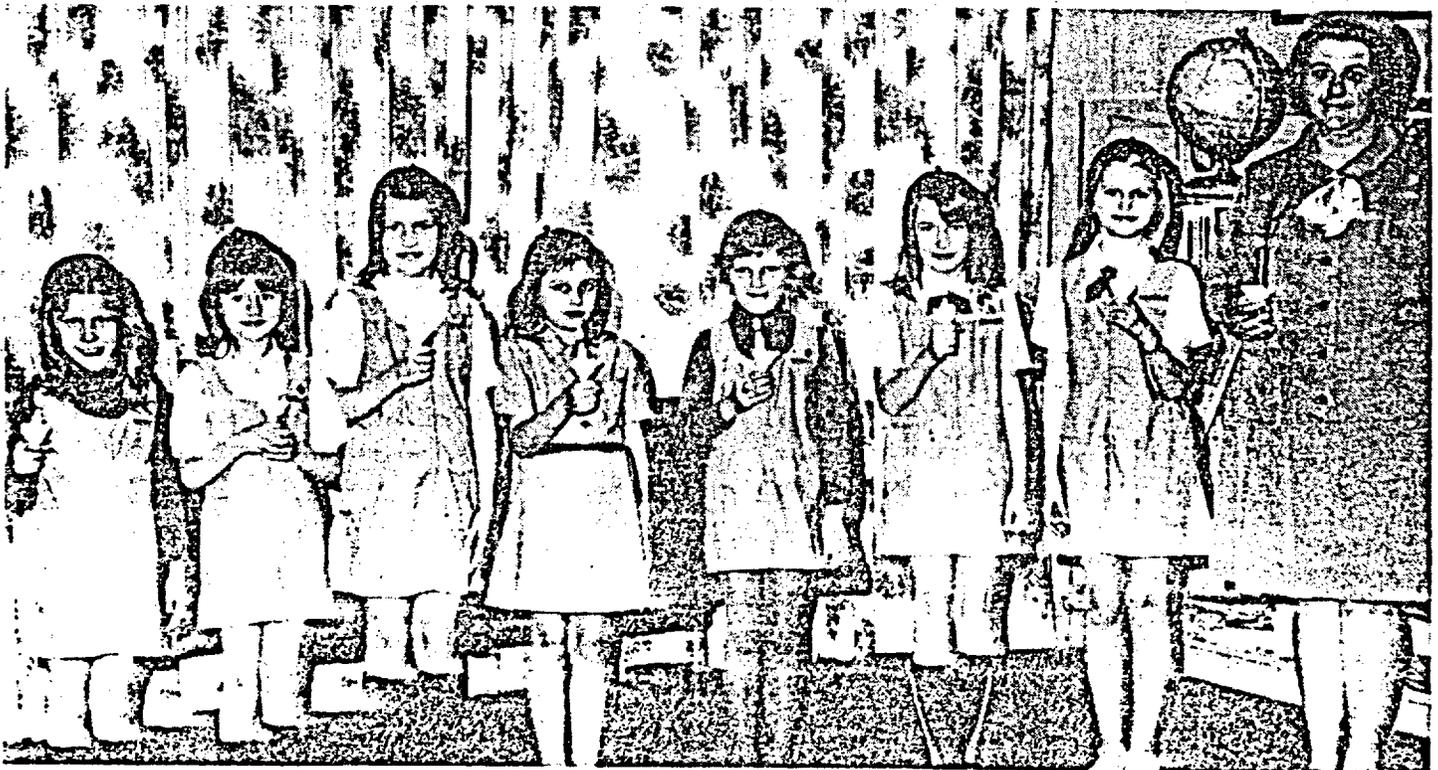
The Richton National Guard unit was reorganized and redesignated on May 1, 1959, from Battery C,

204th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion to Third Platoon, 193d Transportation Co. (Tactical Carrier), and was attached to Headquarters, 150th Transportation Battalion, located in Meridian, Miss., and was commanded by Lt. Col. G. V. (Sonny) Montgomery, who is now a United States Congressman from the 4th district of Mississippi.

The unit was again redesignated as Detachment 2, 785th Transportation Company on February 1, 1972, and was commanded by 1 Lt. Floyd V. Shannon Jr., and remained attached to Headquarters, 150th Transportation Battalion, which at that time was commanded by Lt. Col. Billie B. Curtis, of Meridian, Miss.

The Richton National Guard Unit was further reorganized and redesignated on Nov. 1, 1973, as 785th Engineer Detachment (Utilities), commanded by 1 Lt. Ronald Claytor Lassiter and was attached to Headquarters, 114th Support Group, located in Hattiesburg, Miss., and commanded by Col. Elmo E. Bell.

At required strength level, this



Girl Scouts

unit provides for maintenance of utilities at installations of from 2500 to 4000 individuals; provides post engineer-type service in overseas or theater of operation installations; maintains utilities service and repairs, including maintenance of environmental equipment (air conditioners, heaters, and refrigeration equipment).

Since the Richton National Guard unit was originally organized on March 3, 1952, the unit has been commanded by the following officers: Captain Perry F. Gibson, Captain Mitchell Asmar, 1 Lt. Madison C. Moore, Captain J. C. (Jake) Ivy, Captain (now Lt. Col.) Clyde Sellers, Captain (now Major) George M. Copeland, 1 Lt. James E. Winstead, 1 Lt. Floyd V. Shannon, Jr., 1 Lt. Darrell Manning, 1 Lt. Ronald C. Lassiter.

The unit employs one full time technician to maintain the facilities, records and equipment. Chief Warrant Officer Hobart Daniels has

been employed with the National Guard as unit technician for 25 years.

The Richton National Guard unit has been called upon to serve in State emergency duty several times, since being organized. The unit has participated in: Riot Duty; "Operation Chlorine" at Natchez, Miss.; Flood Duty, in Forrest and Perry County in 1961; "Operation Camille" on the Gulf Coast.

B. M. Stevens Co. Expanded In 1949

During the year 1949 the B. M. Stevens Co. expanded its business from the two buildings usually occupied to four.

This modern up-to-date "Country Store" was composed of a main store and a warehouse (feed, fertilizer, etc.). Now there has been added a new hardware building and a lumber building. These all were officially

opened on May 14, 1949.

Changes in the main building are a beauty shop with modern equipment, new offices, rest rooms, a gift section and a "snack" bar.

Mr. Stevens became associated with this business with his uncle, C. H. Stevens, in 1911 after graduating from University of Mississippi. And following Mr. C. H.'s death, B. M. acquired the interest of his heirs in the business in 1930.

Company officers in 1949 were B. M. Stevens, president; B. M., Jr., H. N. Stevens and W. A. Moser, vice presidents; Stanton Smith, treasurer; D. O. Thoms, secretary.

Managers were Gavin Walley, Hardware; Sammie Imbragulio, Appliances; Mrs. Griffin Walley, Gift department; A. K. Phillips, mgr. groceries; W. M. Davis, manager market; Mrs. M. L. Carter, dry goods; H. L. McIlwain, men's wear; Frank (Nap) Johnson, warehouse; Bruce Jeffcoats, lumber; W. A.



B. M. Stevens Co. [Main Store]

Moser was in charge of credit and finance.

Two Firsts For Bud

August 23, 1967 the Richton Municipal Airport was officially opened for use. And it was Richton's own D. O. (Bud) Thoms who piloted and landed the first plane at the airport.

He was flying a 4 place Cessna with Alton Hessler, of Laurel, as passenger.

The other first is that he was named the first chairman of the Pine Regional Airport Authority. And at its dedication in the summer of 1976, he was master of ceremonies. This airport gives all forms of air service to people of the Hattiesburg-Laurel territory.

Of importance to this area is his membership on the Board of Directors of Jones County Junior College for 27 years.

His wife, Daisy Stevens Thoms, joins him in both civic and religious activities of the town and

community. The sharing of her musical talents with one and all has endeared her to both young and old, alike.

And their sons, David, Joel, and Richard are following in their footsteps.

Housing Projects Units Dedicated

In November 1953 members of Richton Board of Aldermen, the mayor of Richton and the Housing Authority members met at the "Pa" Bowen apartments for a dedication ceremony.

This project, the first non-farm, rural project in Mississippi, is composed of twenty units, eight of these at one location and named the "Pa" Bowen Apartments; the other has twelve units and is called the Mallory Apartments.

Pictured here are from left L. A. Wilson, member of the housing committee; D. O. Thoms, chairman of the committee; O. B. Bowen, Jr., member of board of aldermen; Ben M. Stevens, mayor; Clay Ingram,

board of aldermen; Cal Ball and D. A. Hardin, housing committeemen; and Hobson Rich, executive director of the projects.

Two additional groups of low-rent apartments were completed in the summer of 1976 and officially opened in September. One group is named Walley Apartments and the other is the Rich-Richie units.

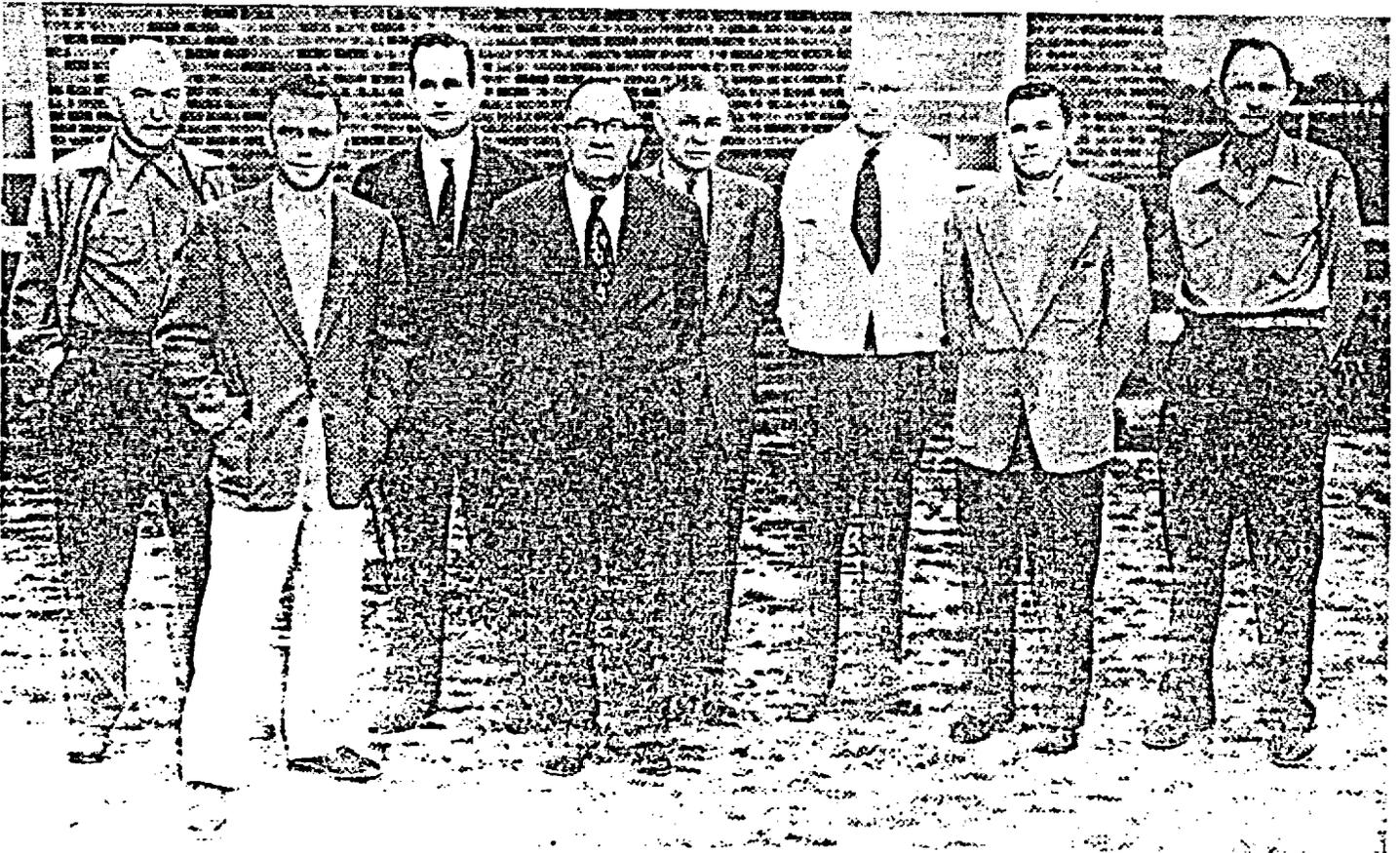
O. B. Bowen Jr.

Served As Bank Comptroller

An appointment of O. B. Bowen, Jr., Richton, to serve as Comptroller of the Department of Bank Supervision for the State of Mississippi, was made by Governor Paul B. Johnson in 1967.

This was an honor seldom given a small-town banker and Richton is justly proud. Mr. Bowen served through 1969.

Other than this responsible position, Mr. Bowen served in the U.S. Navy during WW II for 4½ years being discharged in 1946 with rank of Lt. Commander.



Richton Housing Authority and city officials about 1953

Mr. Bowen is presently chairman of the Administrative Board of the Richton United Methodist Church and is Chief Executive Officer of the Richton Bank and Trust Co.

His wife, Mrs. Marguerite Bowen is an efficient member of the Richton School faculty and participates in various civic activities of the town.

Beautification Of Richton Continues

The beautification program for Richton has been in process for many years, and will continue as long as there are unkept sections of the streets and lots.

The town's beautification commission has worked out plans for continual improvement of public property and assist with plans for property owners who wish to cooperate.

Already the fronts of many of the buildings in Central Business District have been re-done to fit into plans already made. And the landscaping of both sides of the three blocks included in this area will not have proved unprofitable. Included in this improvement is the surfacing of parking areas, too.

As a part of this beautification program, the Richton Woman's Club submitted the Phillips Dry Cleaners as their entrant in the "Business for Beauty" contest and this establishment received top honors in the state, according to publicity given on August 11, 1970.

Richton's Beautification Commission is composed of Robert Pope, chairman; Joe Blackman, and Mesdames W. E. Moak, D. O. Thoms, O. B. Bowen, Jr., W. F. Stevens and Rex Phillips.

Richton Does Have Boy Scouts

Under the leadership of Joe Blackman, the Richton boys continue to have the opportunity of being one of many Boy Scouts of America.

Their activities have been varied through the years with prominent men of the town as Scout Masters.

From older citizens we learn that Mr. W. H. Clifton and Mr. T. W. Milner worked with Boy Scouts back in 1912 and 14. Then in 1928 R. F. Suffling, a former Scout Executive,

moved to Richton and finding no scout organization at that time, began to recruit boys who were desirous of being a scout. They met, they camped, and they worked as most scouts do.

In years that have followed there have been interested men who have taken time to continue to develop the program.

Richton Scouts who have become Eagle Scouts are Frank Jones, C. M. Shannon and David Thoms. If there are others their names have not been made available to us. Neither do we have names of the Scout Masters. But you know who you are or were.

Hail to the Boy Scouts of America who make fine men.

Richton's First Miss Hospitality

The month of June had been set aside for the 1954 Hospitality Month for the Town of Richton. The Richton Rotary Club and the Richton Woman's Club joined together to select a Miss Hospitality and to formulate plans for arrangements and entertainment of visitors.

Miss Angela Stevens, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Stevens, was chosen Miss Hospitality of Richton, and functioned during that June as Hospitality Hostess. She was also privileged to attend the festivities at the Buena Vista Hotel, Biloxi, when Miss Ann Bush, of Laurel, was selected Mississippi's Miss Hospitality.

Miss Mississippi 1972-73

Sponsors for Miss Glenda Meadows, as she entered the State contest for Miss Mississippi, were the Jaycees of Richton.

In July 1972 during gala festivities at Vicksburg, Miss Glenda Meadows, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Meadows, of Richton, was crowned "Miss Mississippi."

Richton's young lady was everything one could wish for as she represented our state on so many occasions. And as she relinquished her crown on July 21, 1973, these words were addressed to the Jaycees of Mississippi by Glenda's chaperone, Mrs. Samuel Katz:

"You are to be congratulated for having selected such a delightful

young lady as your representative to Atlantic City.

"You can be very proud of her poise, charm and dignity. It was a pleasure to meet her and work with her. I'm sure she will continue to represent her state very well."



Angela Stevens
First Miss Hospitality



Glenda Meadows
Miss Mississippi



**Richton's Centenarian
Miss Lizzie Brown**

"Miss Lizzie" Brown, named at birth Mary Elizabeth Brown, is the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Brown who came to Richton in 1910. This daughter was born at the old Brown homeplace near Augusta on June 19, 1876.

At the age of 17 Miss Lizzie took the teacher's examination, passed it and taught school in Perry County for several years. She also was employed in the post office at Richton for a while and in the clerk's office in the court house at New Augusta.

During WW I she took special training for work with the American Red Cross, taught Sunday School and sang in the choir at the Richton Baptist Church and participated in other civic and religious activities. At 100 she is still going and always thinking of others.

Tales — Tall and Short

In the mid 1920's the Wilson Family owned a small white, wrinkled face monkey named "Pat," a gift from Mrs. Wilson's brother, Bill Smollen, who brought him back after a stay in Central America.

There was at the same time, living in Bentley Quarters, Aunt Lacey,

who claimed to be half Indian. Someone who had seen the monkey told her she should see it — for it looked just like her.

Next time Aunt Lacey came to town (she was nearly 100, she said) she stopped and asked to see Pat.

When I called, he jumped to my shoulder and "Che-che-cheed" as if to ask "Who is this?" I told him he had a visitor and asked him to shake hands with her. Out went his right hand and as she started to take hold to shake, she seemed very surprised, drew back and said, "Look! I swear fore God — the palms of his hands are jist like mine," surprised.

Did you hear about the Richton boys back about 1910 who discovered the paraphernalia used by lodges who met in the old wooden structure behind the stores? Well, when they did, they donned it all from plumed hats to swords and had a parade right there in the building. Wonderful, but it occurred only once.

Then there is the story of the Richton blacksmith who made his own coffin and stored it on the rafters of his shop. Do you suppose he ever guessed why so many youngsters visited him? Or that he noticed how they eyed every section of the building? Some said they saw it, and it was black.

Quite a character, the man John Elkins who lovingly called his children little "rullickses."

One night after the neon sign STEVENS had been placed atop the B. M. Stevens Co. warehouse, a man in a car stopped when he saw the nightwatchman and asked "Can you tell me how to get to Richton?" The reply came "You are in Richton." "Well," said the traveler, "from that sign I thought I was in Stevens."

Mr. Johnson owned a topless touring car. And each Sunday saw that his wife and five children (then) were in the car and off to church they went. Then when services were over they loaded the children in and started for home. One Sunday as they bumped across the railroad track, one of the boys hollered "Pa,

Pa, Pa" to which his father said, "Hush, we'll be home in a few minutes." The same words again and then again, stopped though. Upon arrival at the house, unloaded the car and noticed, one boy was missing. Upon the father's inquiry one of the sons said, "Pa, that's what we tried to tell you. Junior fell out of the car when you bumped across the track."

After Mr. Cantrell got his saw mill going and a house built, he went back to Purvis to claim Miss Leo Williamson for his bride. And back to Richton they came to set up housekeeping. Included in Mr. C's activities was a trip by train to Mobile, regularly, to get the "payroll" for the hands at the mill and such produce as needed for the commissary.

One evening the train was extremely late in returning, so Mrs. C. locked the bedroom door and retired. In no time at all she had fallen asleep, only to be aroused by a sudden noise. She listened, but no more noises. However, to be safe, she climbed out the window and ran across the street to the hotel for assistance.

After searching in and around the house, they went to the "front" room where extra supplies for the commissary were kept, and there lay Mr. C. fast asleep across boxes of supplies.

Was a scolding in order?

Pleasant Memories

In the early 30s it wasn't usual for Richtonians to have an opportunity to ride in an airplane, but L. A. Wilson, Jr. recalls riding with Mr. Cal Ball in an auto-gyro affair that was sponsored by the oil company for which Pettis Walley was local agent.

And he recalls a pilot and his wife who landed in the highway to Hattiesburg. They remained for a while, refueled and flew passengers here and there for several days, for a fee, of course. Riding with him this time were Dr. J. H. Newcomb and Hebe Walters.

Then in 1936 Alton Hessler, of Laurel, brought his plane down to the field of Mr. Jim Pate Edwards in the Good Hope Community. He

charged for rides also.

It was in 1937 that Hessler was the first person to land on the WPA airport situated a little west of Mr. Sam Rich's farm.

Today, the airport south of town is used by numerous people.

Physicians Who Have Served Richton

Through the years Richton and community have been fortunate to have splendid and efficient physicians at their service.

Included among these have been Doctors Willis and Dave Walley, F. E. Lee, F. M. Sheppard, R. M. Cochran, J. W. Copeland, W. R. Graves, and S. B. McIlwain. Others serving have been Doctors J. E. Green, E. M. Gavin, J. H. Newcomb, J. H. Slaughter, C. R. Garraway, Brown Mills, Robert Mayfield, C. C. Moe, "Streety" Hamilton, James McQueen, Jimmy Bass, Walter Brown, H. L. Fridge and today E. L. Cole and W. E. Moak.

Doctors of Dental Surgery have been W. D. Mobley, A. F. Copeland, S. F. Hinton, P. B. Green and James Roddy.

FINALE

Of course not every person who has lived in Richton, or every business that has operated here, has been mentioned in this story. Hence my suggestion, that someone pick up where I left off and prepare a supplement which no doubt would be very interesting.

Yet — here is a question — what of Richton's future?

We still have people, farms (including tree farms) and industries here and nearby, along with stores of every variety, so it behooves us to once again evaluate what we have and where we stand, for as we live and serve, so shall it be to us.

Richton does have the will to

carry on and must do as part of the old PTA song says "We will pull together always, that's the motto of the PTA." Let it be the motto of the citizens of our area as we look to a brighter future.

Businesses In Richton October 1, 1976

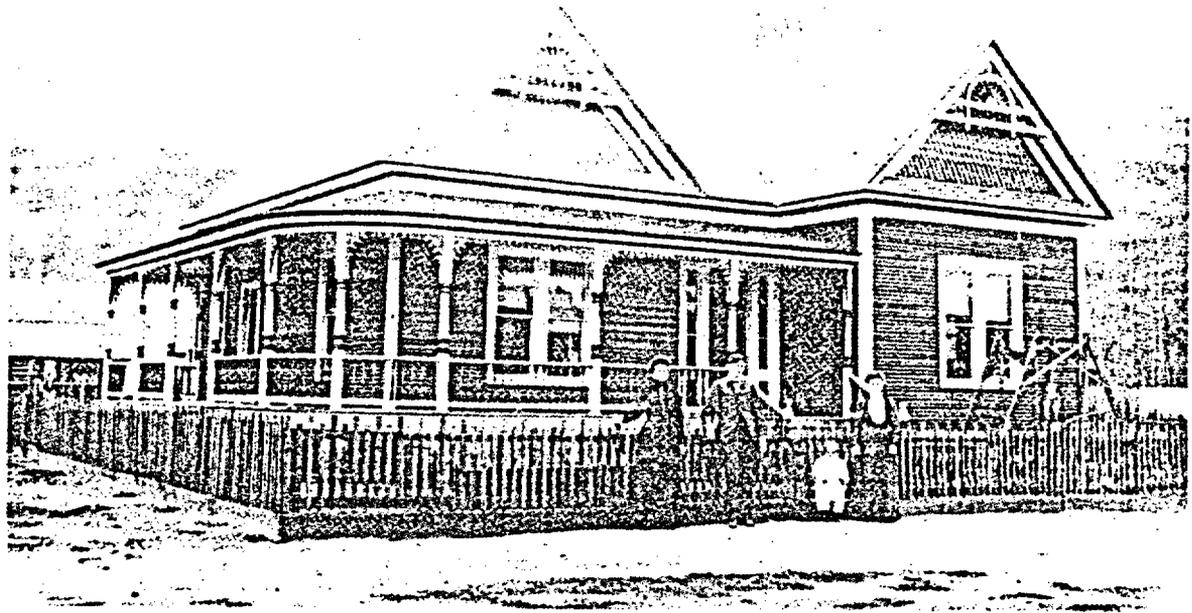
Joslyn Mfg. and Supply Co., an international concern with plants in Canada and Europe, primarily producing in Richton wood blocks for floors.

Blossman Butane Gas Co.
Shirley's Beauty Shop
Richton Bank & Trust Co. Branch
Sunflower Food Store
Rex Phillips Oil Co.
Washateria
Sue's Beauty Shop
Clark's Service Station
Lovett Enterprises
Mr. Quik
Gatlin's Grocery
Walter's Auto Parts
Freeman's Barber Shop
Jones Service Station
Pittman and Holliman, Attorneys
Nicholson's Barber Shop
Casey's
Strickland's Drugs
T.W.L.
Brock's Furniture
Richton Acceptance Corp.
B. M. Stevens Co. (4 buildings)
Carley's Drugs
City Hall
Trigg Furniture
Joe Blackman, Insurance
Joe Myrick's Rebel Hamburger House
White's Discount Drugs
Carey Chevrolet Co.
Bilco Co. Contractors
Perry Auto Supply
Cloth Barn
McDaniels Service Station
Phillips Cleaners
Jack's Auto Supply
Tucker's Radio and TV
Western Auto
US Post Office

Carl Howard State Farm Ins.
Firestone Home and Auto Supply
Cooley's Cafe — Main St.
Bill's Dollar Store
Masonic Lodge
Opal's Fabrics
Dr. J. W. Roddy, Dentist
Richton Bank and Trust Co.
Henderson's Standard Station
Mississippi Power Co.
Pine Forest Library, Richton Branch
Jeffcoats TV Shop
McIlwain's Washateria
Packing Shed
White's Time-Saver Grocery
Standard Oil Bulk Station
Perry County General Hospital
Walco Oil Co.
Mabel's Beauty Salon
Fire Station
The Richton Dispatch
Washateria
Auto Repair Shop
Oliphant Florist
Freeman's Barber Shop
Jerry's Beauty Shop
Mid-South Mfg. Co.
"Red Rose" Cafe
Richton Medical Center
Richton Ice and Produce Co.
Richton Health Unit
Dewitt's Body Shop
Jones Funeral Home
Camille's Beauty Shop
Police Station
Cooley's Cafe
Sewing Center
McDonald's Upholstery
Williams Florist
Rahaim's Feed Mill
Hwy. 15 Package Store
Marcell's Seafood Restaurant

Photographs from:

The J. W. Popes; Mrs. C. B. Stevens, Mrs. Audrey Best Edwards; Joe Hinton, Mrs. Ruby Carter, Mrs. Dale Gentry, Mrs. D. O. Thoms, H. N. Stevens, and no doubt others not mentioned. Thanks just the same. And to Mrs. Charlotte (Ron) Rahaim for typing copy and other assistance. Couldn't have done without her.



Home of Mr. and Mrs. Berry Rich

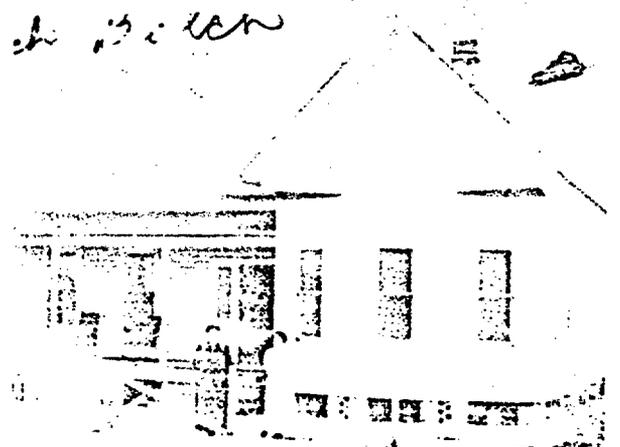


Home built by Mr. C. S. Bentley

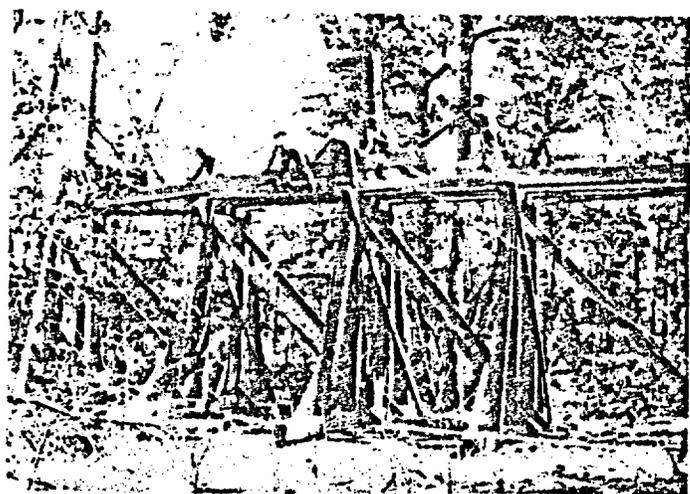
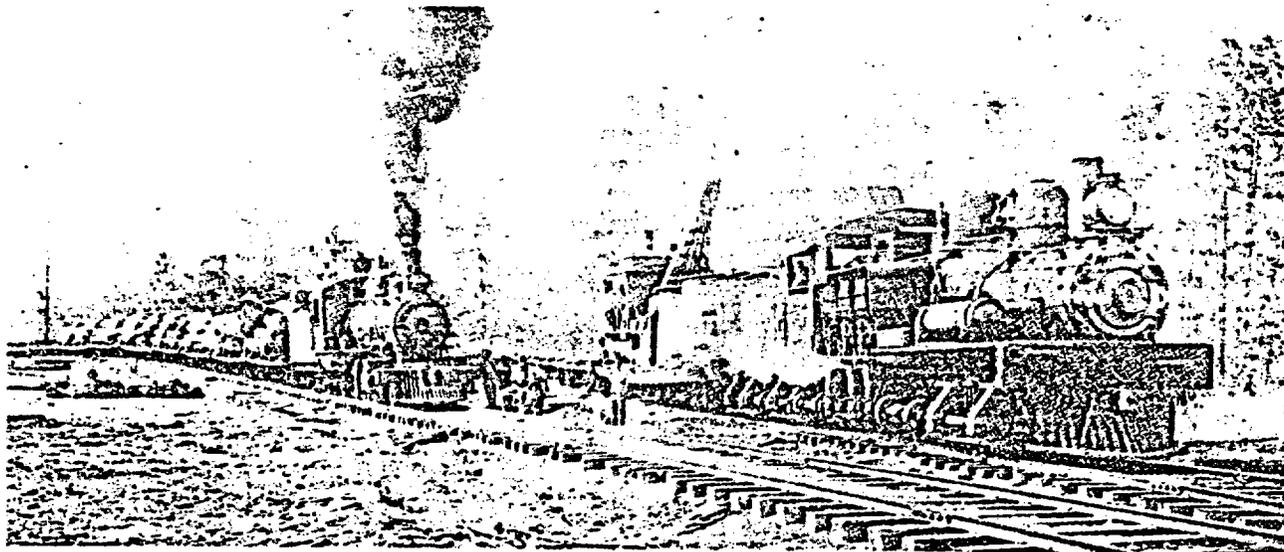
Early Homes in Richton



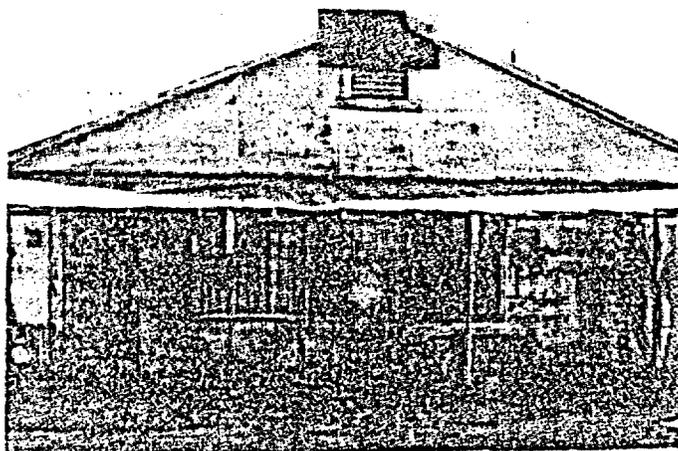
Home of Mr. Grace, Bank President



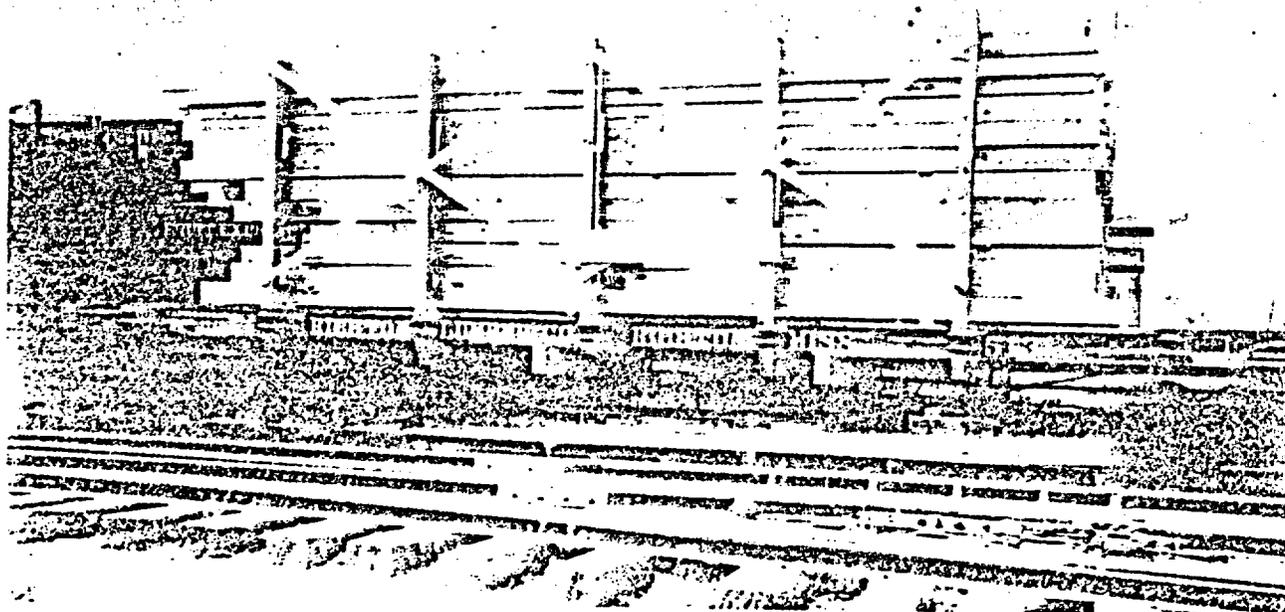
Home of Mr. [Ice] Stephens



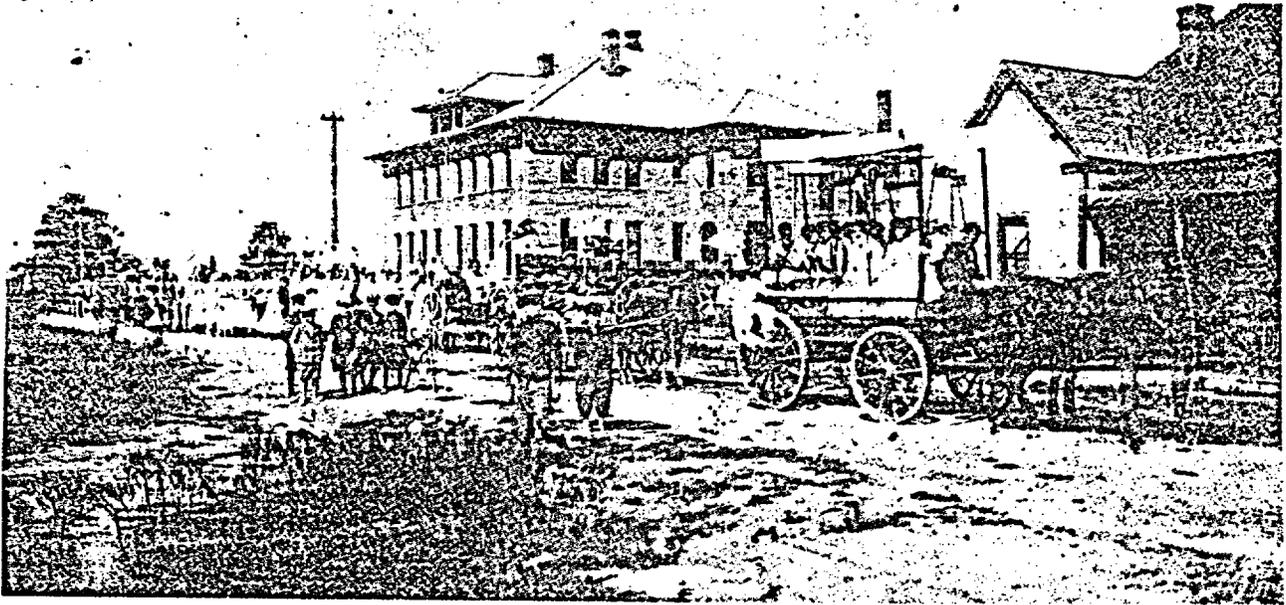
Richton Lumber Co.



Old Red Rose Cafe

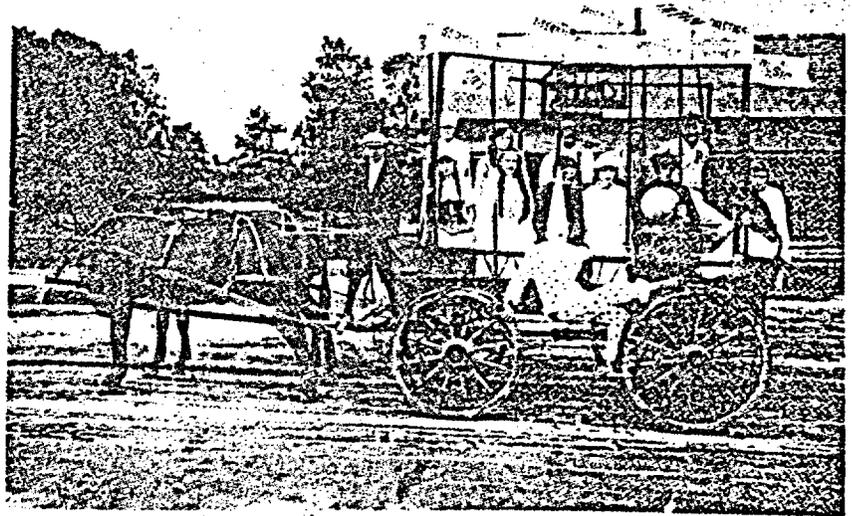


Richton Lumber Co. Railroad Line

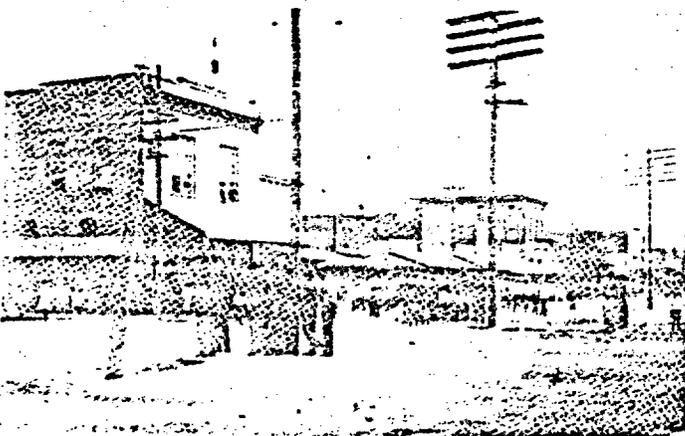


Richton High School Parade

**Waiting
for the
Parade**



1912 Parade Float



BIRTHDAY PARTY AT DOBBINS HOME

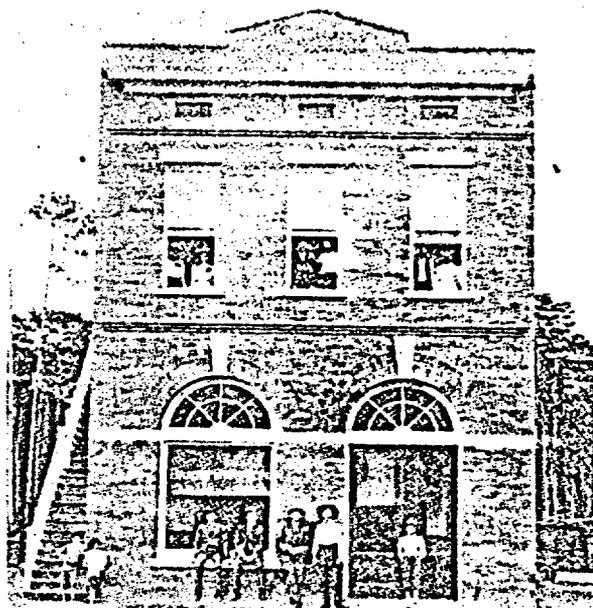
Front row: D. K., Dudley Moore, Lillian Shannon, Kate Durham Polk, Gavin Baxter, Tip Dobbins, Mabel Dobbins, Aronld Milner.

Back row: Olga Clifton, Mildred Carter, Mary Crenshaw, Marjory Moore, Wilson Dobbins, K. D. Curry, Pauline Moore and Chauncey Stevens.

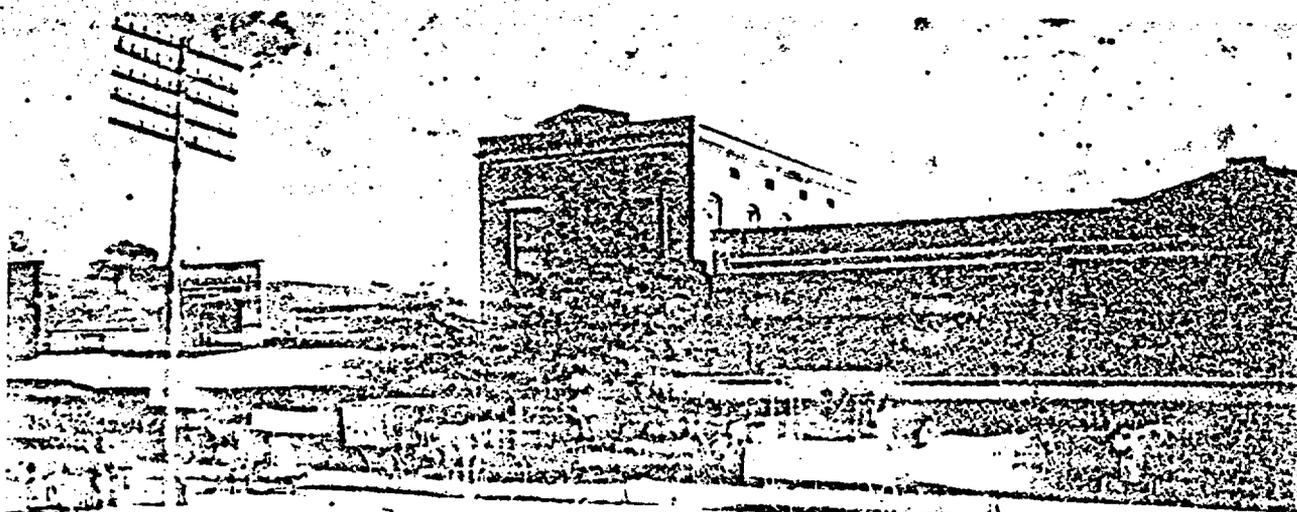


JUNIORS 1917

Alma Couch, no name next two — then Myrtle Melvin, Deanie Danziger, Arlean Nicholson, Julia Sigrest and Helen Moore.



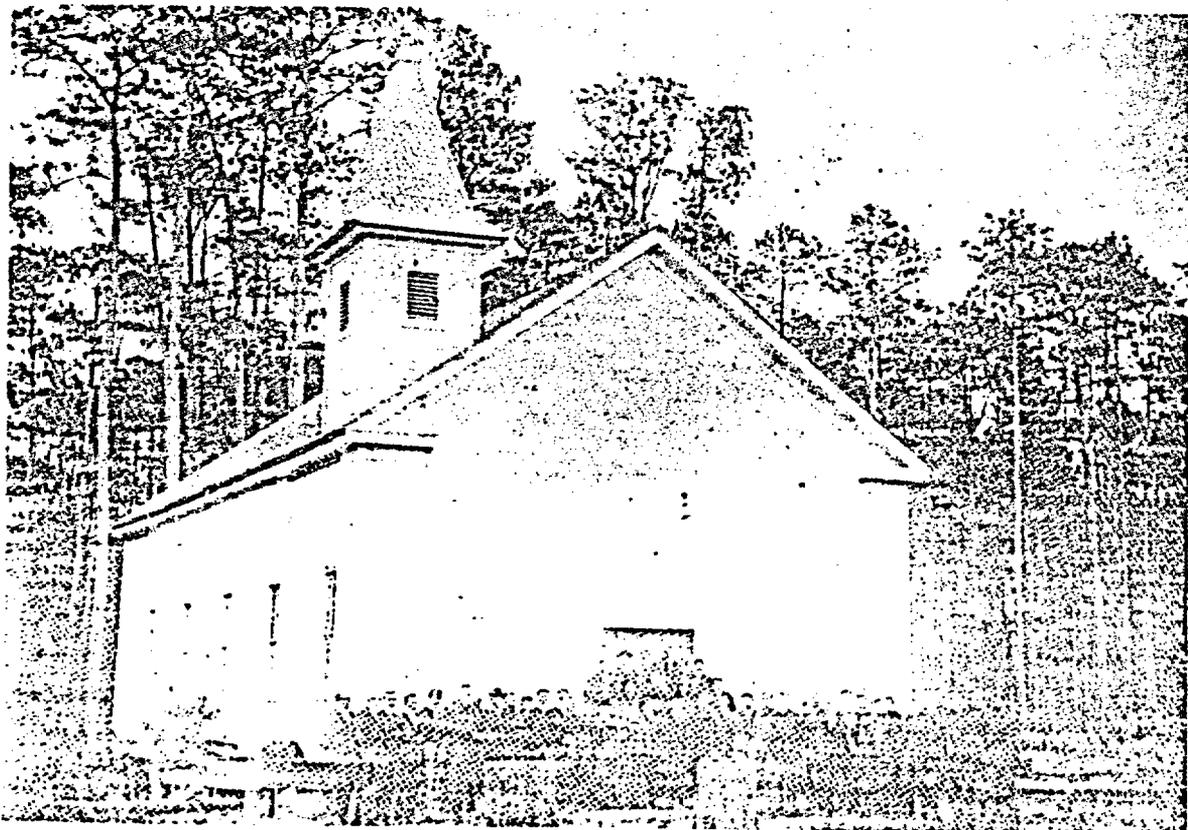
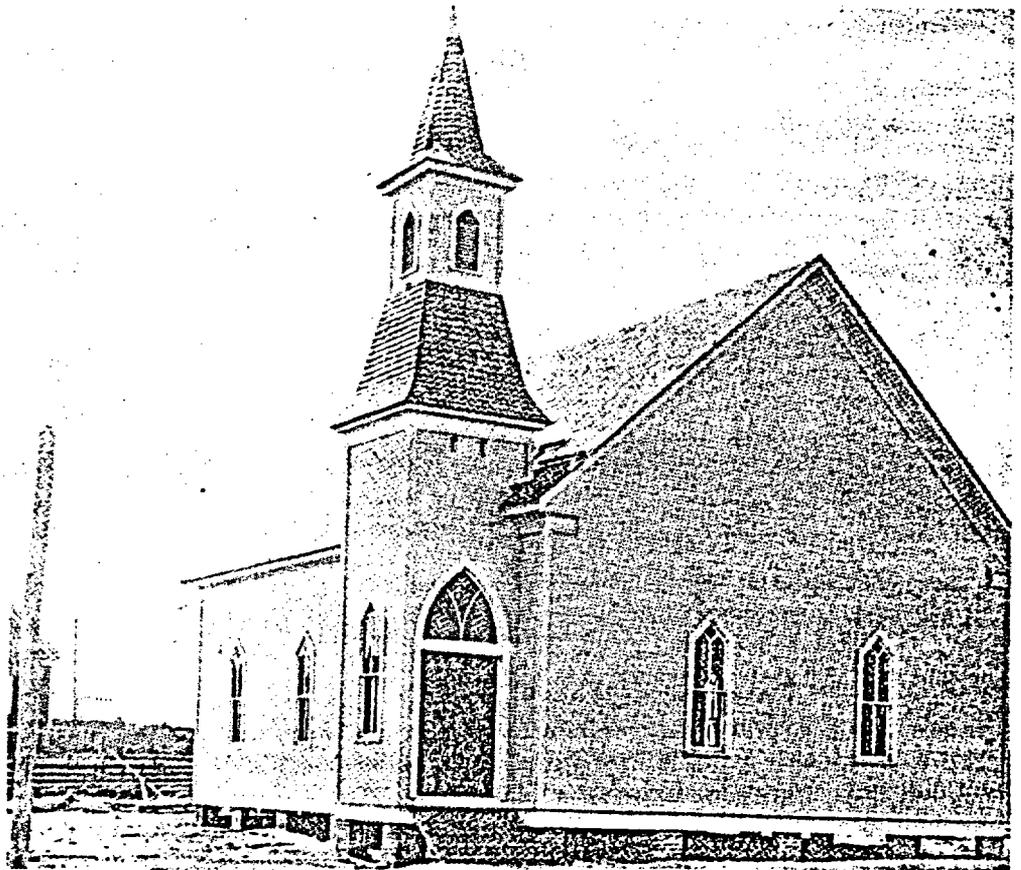
Richton's First Bank



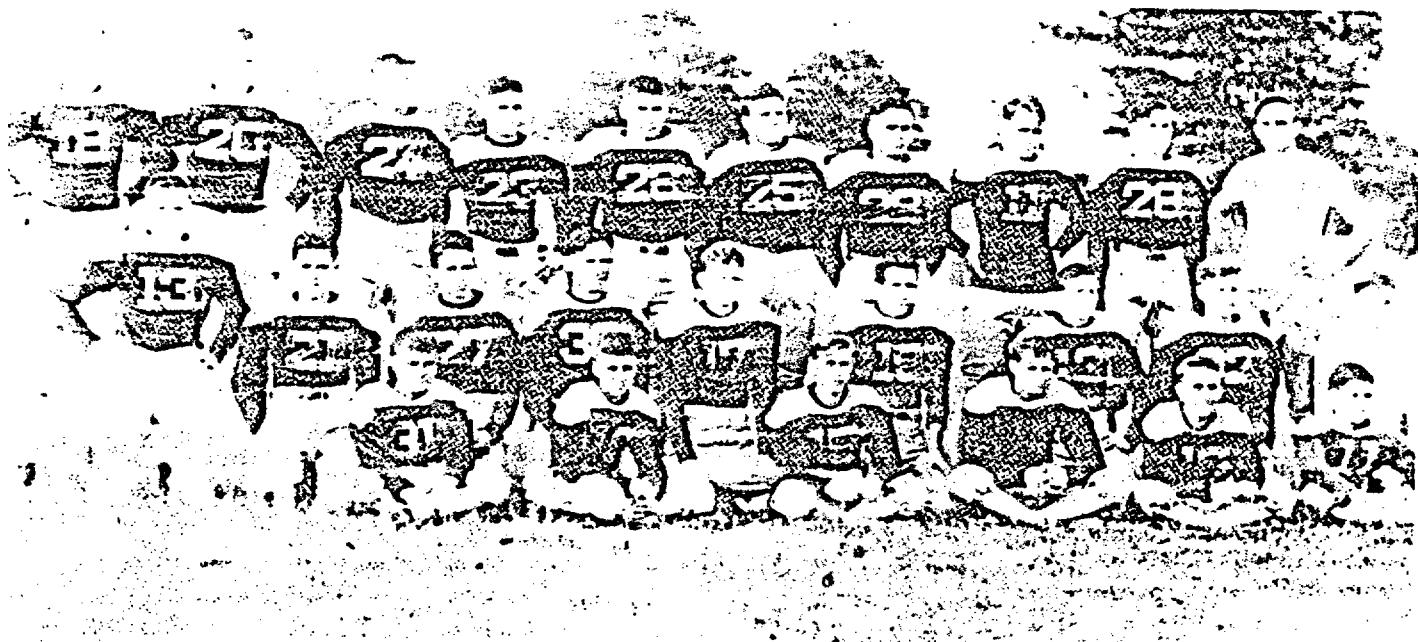
Downtown Richton

This picture of the Richton ME Church South, was copied from a post card mailed to Rev. W. J. Dawson at Morton, Miss., and dated May 25, 1909. Mr. George Yarborough, member of the Richton church and trustee of the property, had written to this former pastor of Richton's church, telling him that attendance at SS averaged 115 and progress was being made in completion of the building.

Rev. Dawson's son, Hendrix Dawson, of Jackson, and Thomas Henry Smith, also of Jackson, are responsible for the copying of this picture for us and deserve our sincere thanks.



Richton Methodist Protestant Church



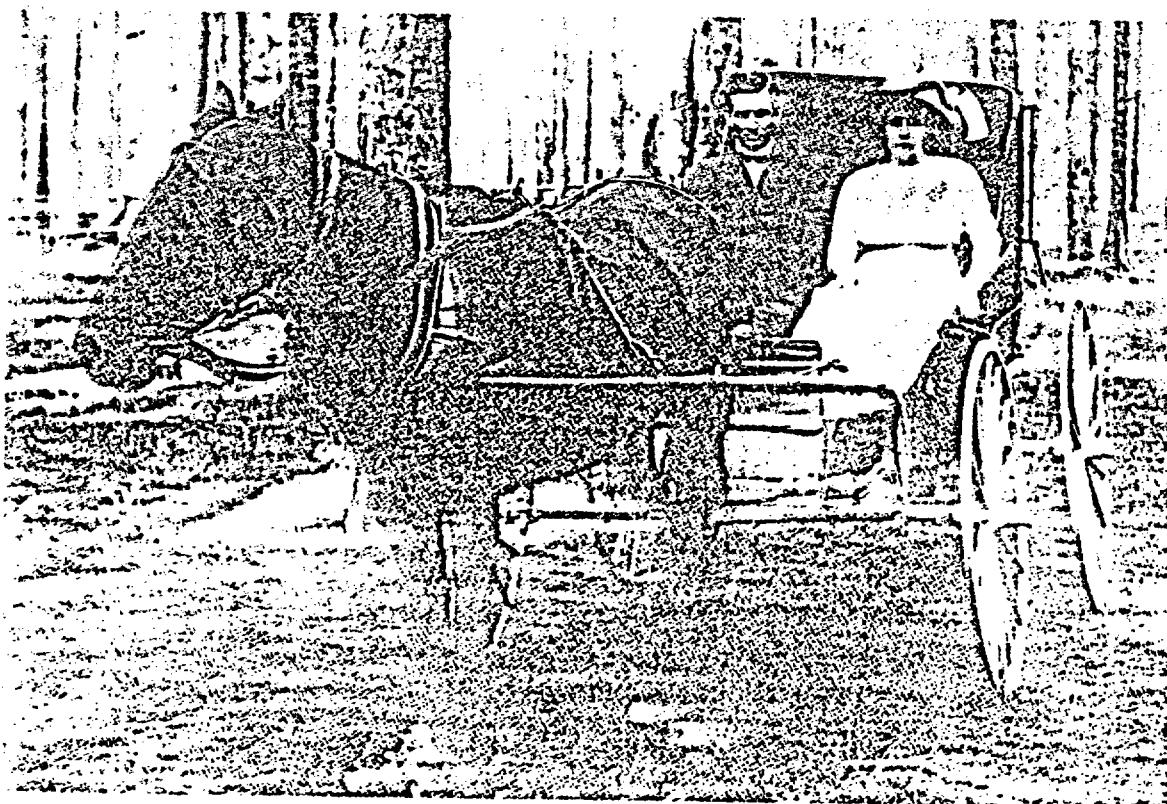
RIGHTON'S FOOTBALL TEAM OF 1941

Before you read names below — how about checking faces and see how many you recognize?

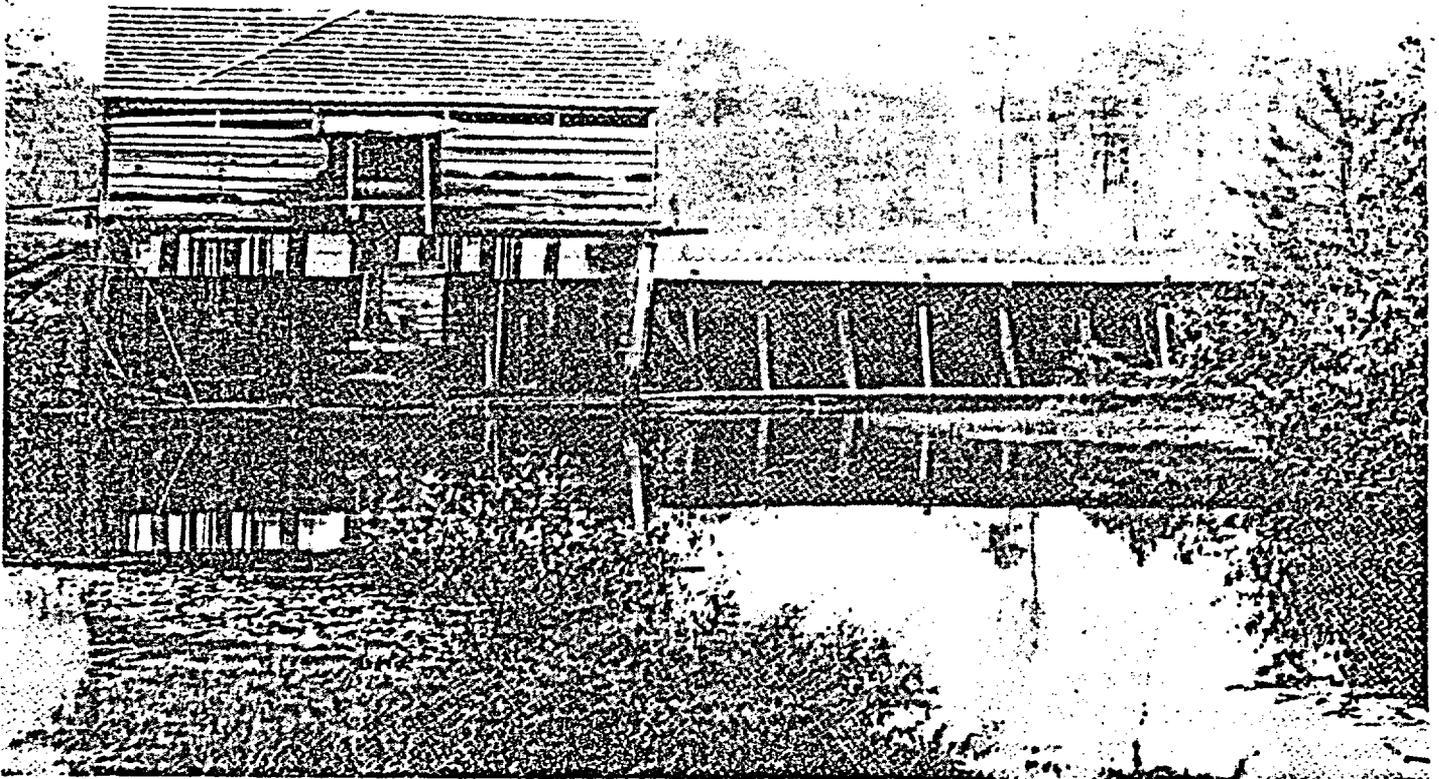
The six seated are: 31, Billy Rae Carey; 10, Otho Sellers; 15, "Dit" [Bernard] Blount; 14, Ray Walley; 16, Joe Luther Sumrall; and 11, Harold Brewer.

Kneeling are: 13, Gamaliel Turner; 21, Jack Munn; 27, Harry Emmerson Phillips; 30, Grover Smith; 17, L. O. Murphy; 19, Gene Dobbins; 12, Herman Brewer; 22, J. D. Coulter and one out of uniform at end is J. P. Newell.

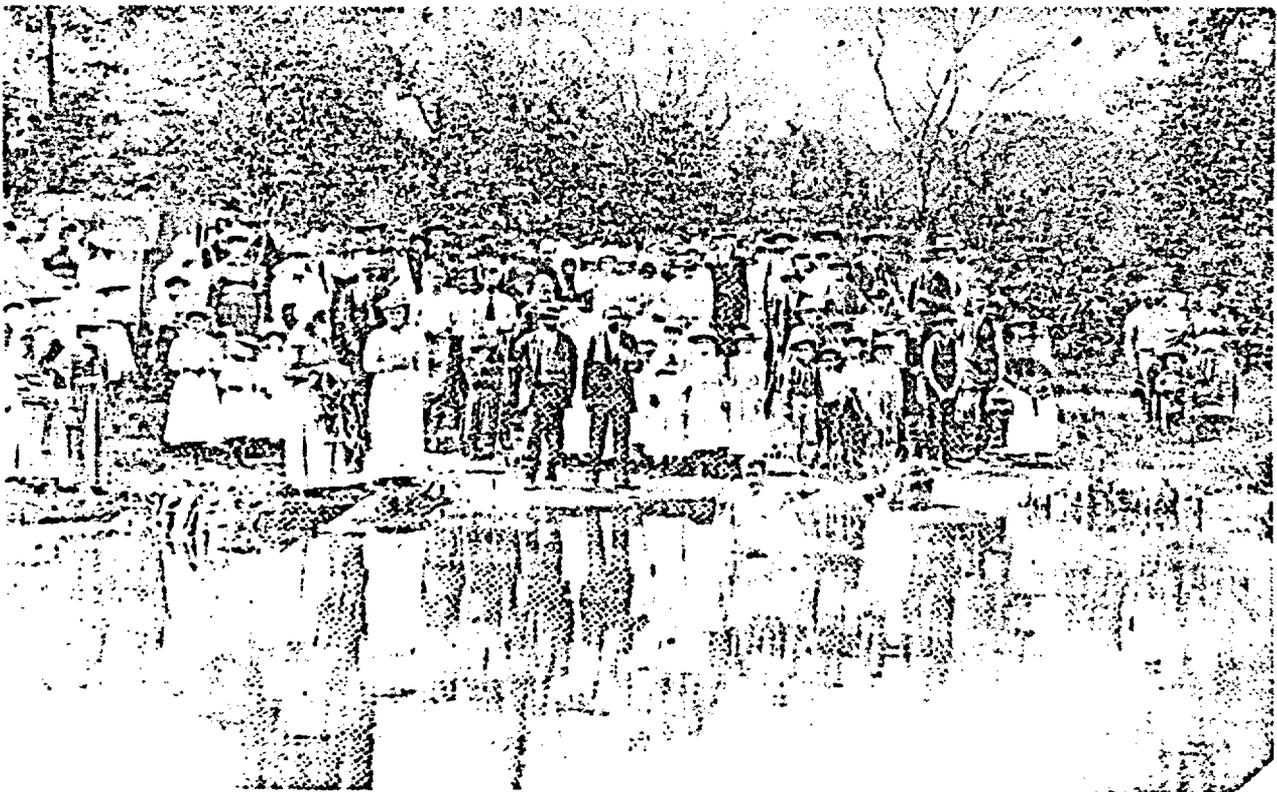
Now for the top row: 18, Ward Adams; 20, Hobart Daniels; 24, Hiram "Monkey" Walters; 23, Virgil Myrick; 26, Bob Meadows; 25, Eual Cooley; 29, Thomas Trigg; 11, Tropy Bush; 23, Henry "Nick" Stevens and Coach Jake Ivy.



Honeymooning



Rich's Mill-Beaver Dam [what's left of it in 1940]



Old Fashion Baptizing

On A Sunday Afternoon



Ruby Dobbins — Arlean Nicholson

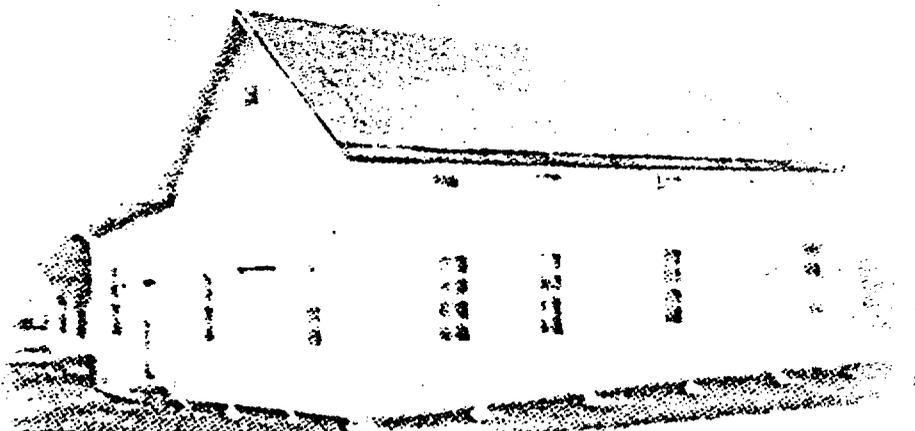
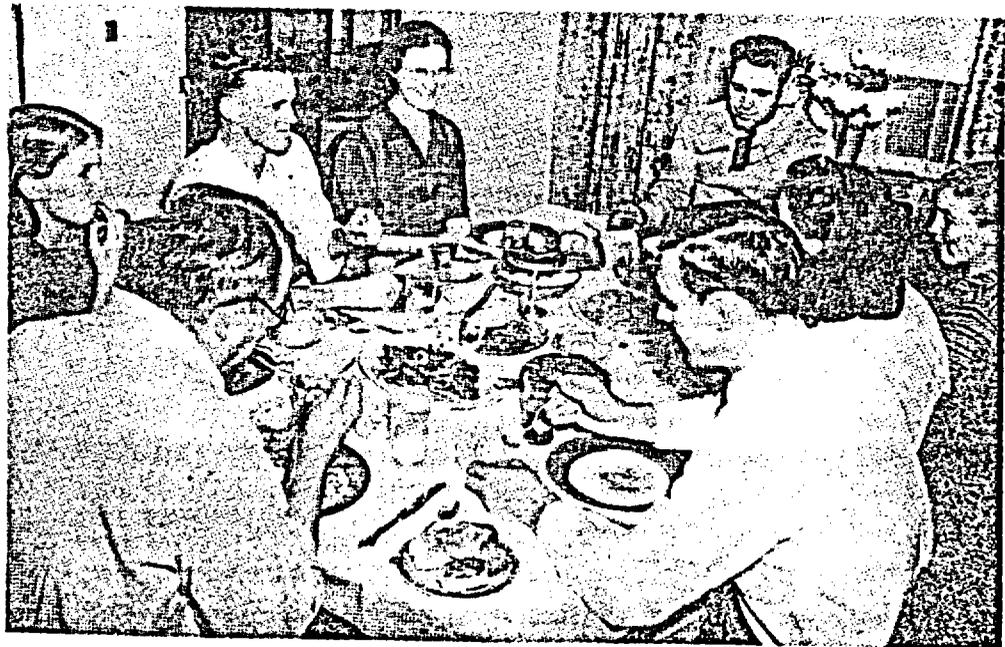


Bernice Curry — Frank Wilson



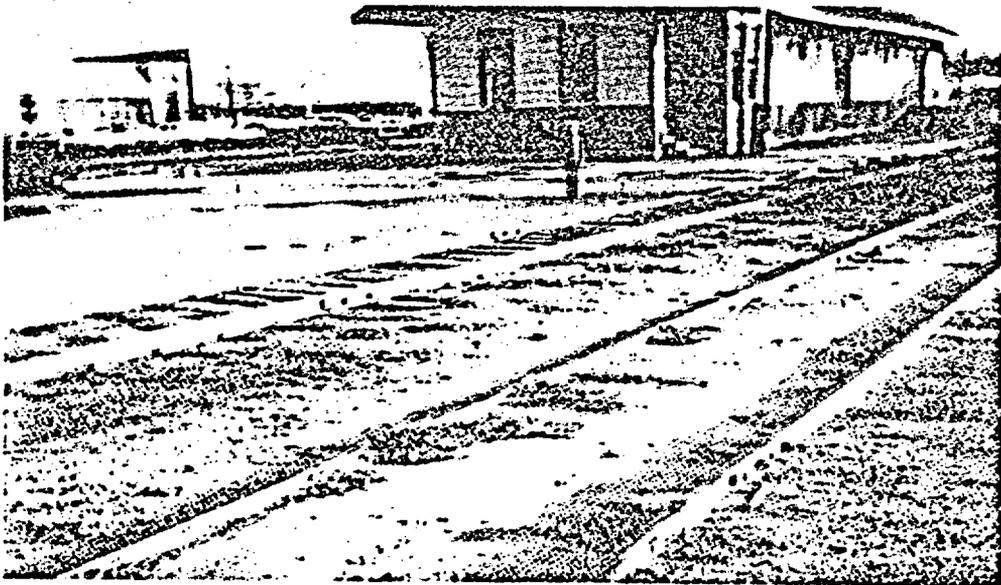
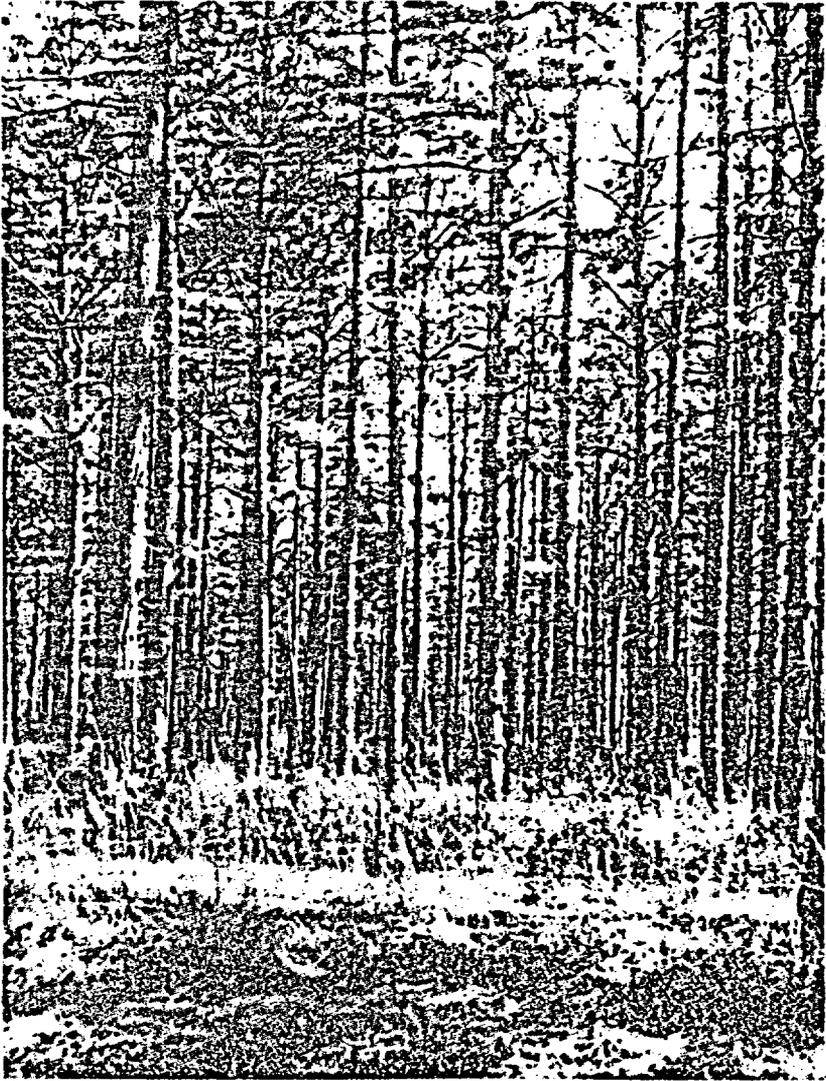
Arlean Nicholson — Bernice Curry

L. A. Wilsons host men stationed at Camp Shelby on Thanksgiving 1941.

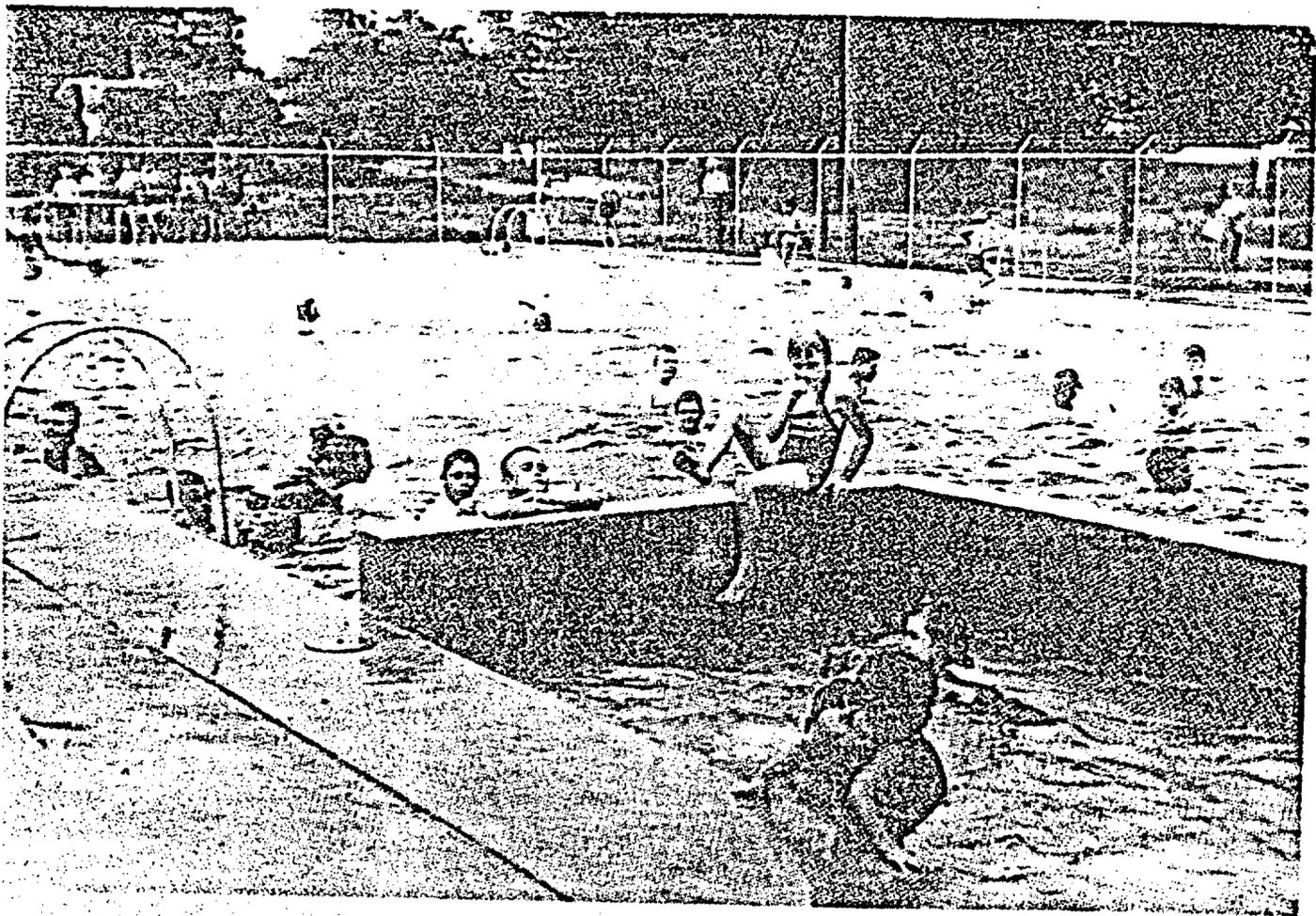


Richton Dispatch

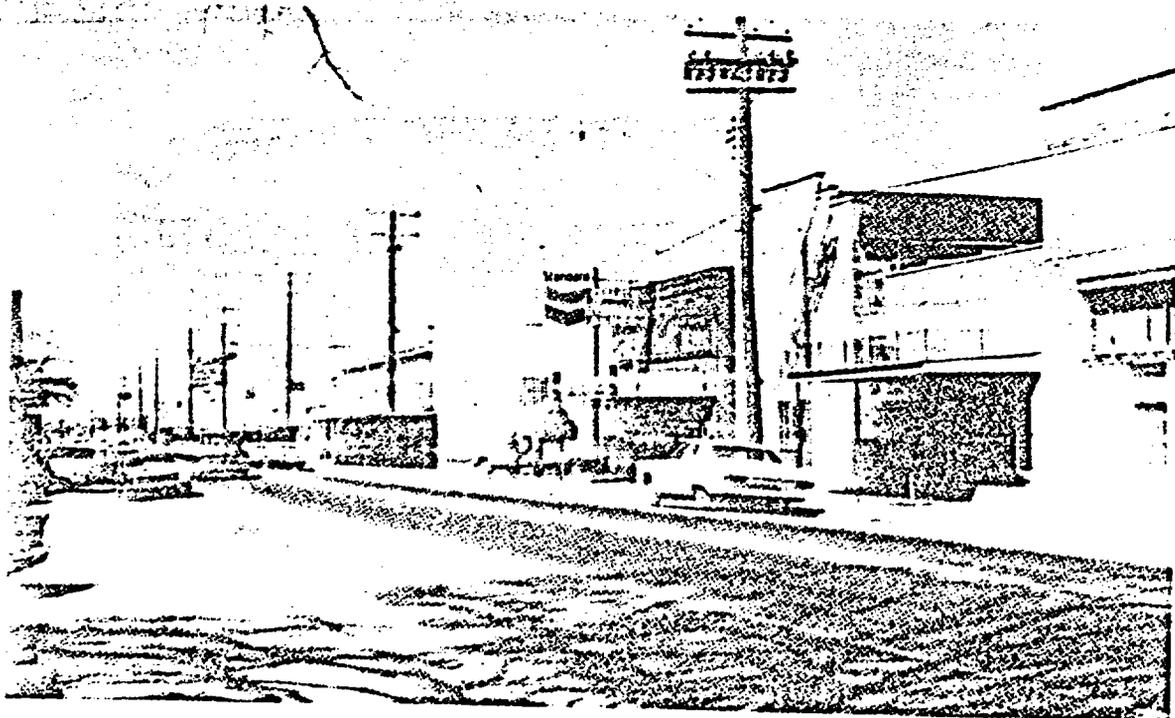
**Our Present
and
Future**



Goodbye Depot



J. C. Swimming Pool



A part of Richton Today



Josie Pleasant Smollen was born August 22, 1893 at Old Crystal Springs, Miss. She was educated in private and public schools at Crystal Springs and Brookhaven, Miss.

She married Lemuel Albert Wilson on August 9, 1914, and moved to Richton and became active in religious, civic and cultural circles.

She continues today as a teacher of fourth generation children in Sunday School of Richton United Methodist Church.

Her children are L. A., Jr., printer-editor; Jean, retired AF officer and attorney; Marion, printer and worker with AA; James W. [Jack], International Trade, Ghana and Togo, West Africa; and Joan Holden, elementary teacher.



1974

**RIGHTON
MISSISSIPPI**

COMPREHENSIVE

FACADE TREATMENT

In order to make the central business district an active thriving core, new development and new customers must be attracted. Facade improvements to each commercial structure can accomplish this in Richton. The sketches shown here depict one way the core structures could be renovated with a minimum of construction and cost. In the past, there have been several attempts on the part of individual merchants to improve their store fronts. Most of the efforts helped but there was a lack of a unifying theme to coordinate them. These sketches supply a theme to follow by using harmonious colors, uniform awning heights where possible, similar accessories (lighting, shutters, planters, etc.) and sign controls.

By selective painting, small details and architectural features that are extremely costly today could give a style and character to the entire central business district. Using earth tone paints on the facades will give the pedestrians a warm, intimate feeling rather than an impersonal, cold feeling that harsher colors bring about.

Very little construction is recommended. Only those awnings which are in need of repair are raised in the sketches to provide a more uniform height. Railings have been added to a number of the buildings' windows as have planter boxes in an effort to provide still more uniformity. Many of the stores have large expanses of ugly glass and these have been broken by mullions in an effort to provide some eye relief and give more character at the pedestrian level.

Additional attempts to create pedestrian interest include store front lighting and pedestrian signing. Store front lighting consists of suspended and bracketed lamps of similar design throughout the central business district. Advertising signs of appropriate size and taste should be either suspended from the awnings or placed flush on the store fronts at a uniform height. These small signs would free the windows for uncluttered, pleasing displays which would help lure pedestrians into the stores.

In addition to pedestrian signing, the business district needs to develop a sign control system in which the names of the businesses are placed on simple signs of appropriate size at a uniform level above the awnings. This improves the overall attractiveness of the stores and also allows the businesses to identify themselves adequately.

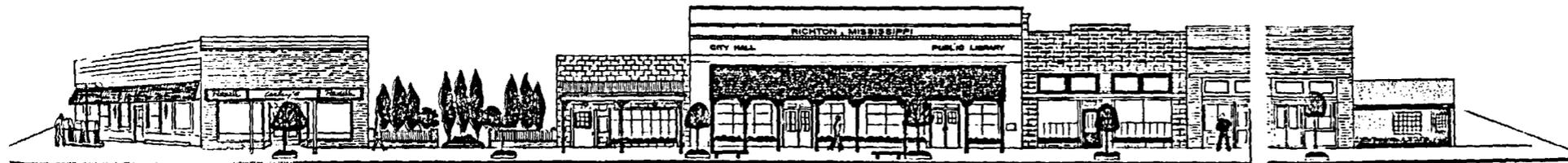
Richton and its citizens could have a unified and aesthetically pleasing appearance in the downtown area by implementing a program of upgrading and improving the downtown environment. By working with individual buildings, parking, landscaping, and the street and its furniture, Richton's central business district will become a sound asset to the community.



EAST FRONT STREET BETWEEN AVENUE E AND AVENUE D

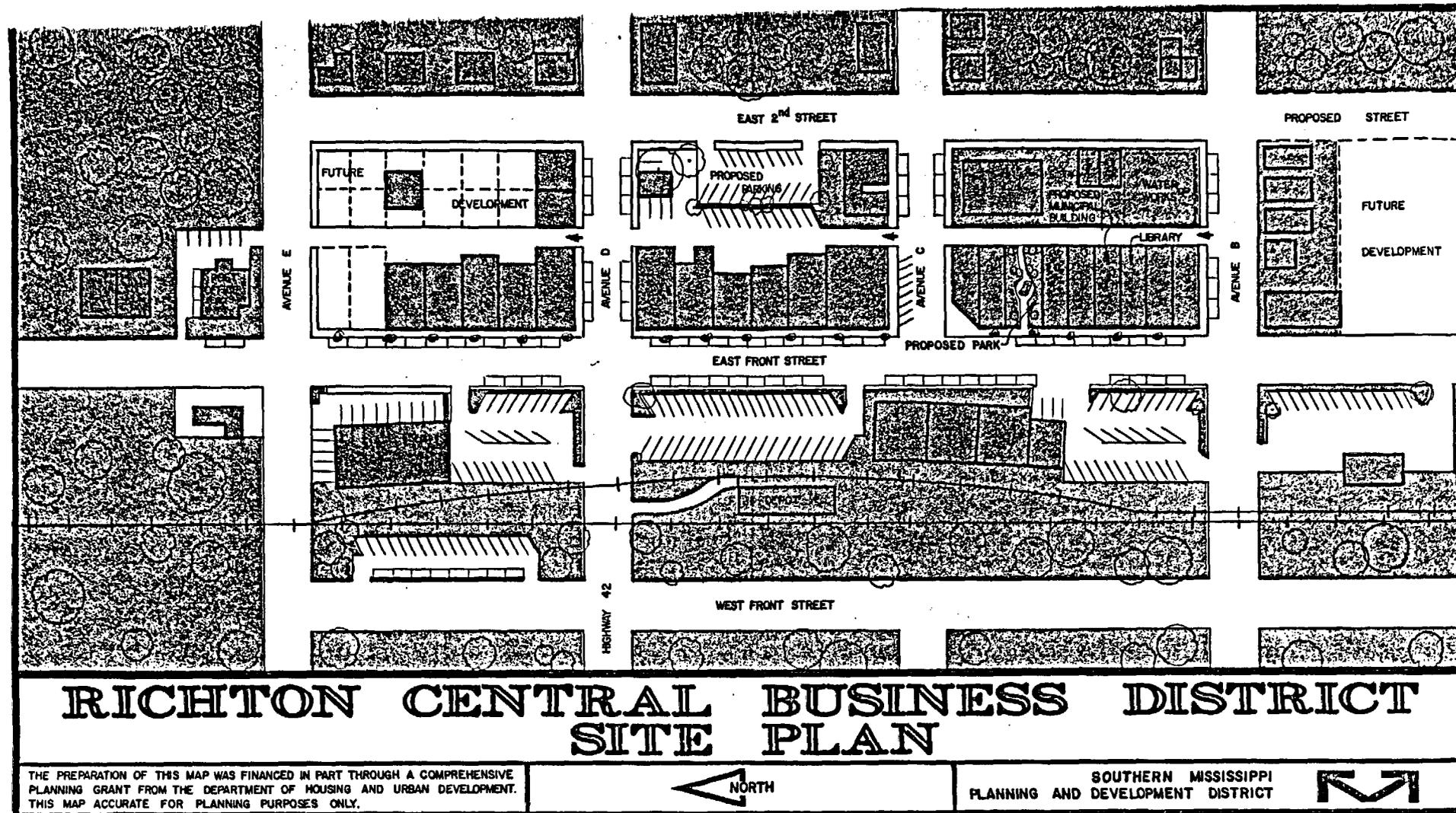


EAST FRONT STREET BETWEEN AVENUE D AND AVENUE C



EAST FRONT STREET BETWEEN AVENUE C AND AVENUE B

FACADE IMPROVEMENT SKETCHES



DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

The fundamental goal of this site plan is to develop a design which will systematically stimulate economic growth and improve the appearance of Richton's central business district.

This plan is one that the city can and should implement if the core of Richton's retail business is to become unified and remain a recognizable unit. At present, the central business district is faced with traffic congestion, vacant buildings, and a shoddy appearance. Richton's retail trade area is a large one, drawing people from the entire northern portion of Perry County. However, if something is not done to alleviate the central business district of its problems, Richton will begin to lose retail trade to other areas. The central business district redevelopment and beautification plan is aimed toward enabling the downtown area to achieve the much needed appearance of the viable trade center it is.

Street and Sidewalk Improvements: This should be one of the first steps in redevelopment. Sidewalks should be developed as shown on the above plan and existing sidewalks should be cleaned and the cracks repaired. The alleys should be paved and made one-way to facilitate more off-street loading and unloading. At present, the grade crossings are very rough and need reworking to further improve traffic circulation downtown.

Parking: On-street parking in Richton should be restricted to those areas shown on the plan to help relieve traffic congestion in the streets. The existing off-street parking lots need more circulation control. By providing the lots with one entrance and one exit and using angle parking, less confusion and better utilization of space will result. The proposed parking lot will be primarily for merchants and employees who now park along the streets and alleys. The utilization of this lot will remove congestion from the alleys and improve their use for off-street loading and unloading.

By controlling the access into the lots, controlling the circulation in the lots, and restricting on-street parking, the central business district's appearance will be enhanced by removing the confusion and congestion from the streets.

Landscaping: The proposed landscaping scheme for Richton's central business district involves expanding the existing street tree plantings in planter beds along East Front Street. The existing plantings are too widely spaced and it is recommended that additional trees be placed midway between these trees. The proposed trees will be of the same type as the ones now in place with a low maintenance ground cover in the planter beds. These plantings will provide visual relief to the passerby and create a more relaxed shopping atmosphere.

The proposed park near City Hall will be a passive area, with shade trees and benches where shoppers can relax and employees can lunch. The use of street trees, sidewalk benches, and the proposed park will help to unify the downtown area and provide a pleasant shopping experience for Richton's citizens and visitors.

**THIS PAGE IS AN
OVERSIZED DRAWING OR
FIGURE,
THAT CAN BE VIEWED AT THE
RECORD TITLED:**

**"RICHTON, MISSISSIPPI
FUTURE LAND USE MAP"**

WITHIN THIS PACKAGE

NOTE: Because of these page's large file size, it may be more convenient to copy the file to a local drive and use the Imaging (Wang) viewer, which can be accessed from the Programs/Accessories menu.

D-01

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			6.	
7. Author(s) Southern Mississippi Planning & Development District, P. O. Box 2057, Hattiesburg, Miss. 39401			8. Performing Organization Rept. No.	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address Community and Area Development Division Mississippi Research and Development Center Post Office Drawer 2470 Jackson, Mississippi 39205			10. Project/Task/Work Unit No. CPA-MS-04-26-1005	
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12. Sponsoring Organization Name and Address Department of Housing and Urban Development 300 Woodrow Wilson Boulevard West Jackson, Mississippi 39213			13. Type of Rept. & Period Covered FINAL	
			14.	
15. Supplementary Notes Prepared in cooperation with the Richton Planning Commission				
16. Abstracts This report consists of a series of studies including population, economy, land use, transportation, community facilities, and downtown design proposals. These studies present an inventory of existing conditions and plan for future growth and development in Richton, Mississippi, in an efficient and orderly manner.				
17. Key Words and Document Analysis. 17a. Descriptors				
17b. Identifiers/Open-Ended Terms Richton, Mississippi				
17c. COSATI Field/Group				
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