

HISTORY NOTES

Jones County History & Heritage, Inc.

Volume 4

Spring 2007

About the Newsletter

This is newsletter #5 in the series on historic communities of Jones County, Georgia. The subject is the county seat of Gray, a proud participant in Georgia's Better Hometown program. This issue will cover Gray's history through 1920, with subsequent years addressed in a second issue.

Gray in its youth was a compact rural village with houses and businesses clustered around the railroad depot and crossing. The open fields surrounding it were planted in cotton, peaches, and other crops. Gray quickly established itself as a friend of progress and was designated county seat in the election of 1905, displacing Clinton.

Much of the early Gray has disappeared, replaced by the sprawl of strip malls, subdivisions, and highways with traffic lights, but enough remains to imagine what it must have been like. This newsletter is intended to help the reader discover the old in the new.

The editor wishes to thank the wonderful people listed on page 4 who so graciously have shared their newspaper clippings, pictures, and remembrances for this issue and the next one. And special thanks to Mary Anne Hamrick who got the ball rolling! ❖

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History of Gray 1886-1920

How Gray came to be

In 1886 the Covington and Macon Railroad Company began building a railroad from Macon to Covington (later Athens). The tracks passed through land owned by Congressman James Henderson Blount, and a depot (the present one) was built near his country home, which stood on the present site of 115 E. Clinton St. Blount (1837-1903) was a prominent lawyer, planter, and politician whose family were early settlers of Jones County. Most notably, he was a U.S. Representative for 20 years (1873-1893) and President Grover Cleveland's commissioner to investigate the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom by American revolutionaries in 1893.

An 1886 railroad survey calls the depot village *Blountston*. Exactly when this changed to Gray is unknown, but by January 1888, the masthead address of *The Headlight*, an early county newspaper, is Gray's *Station*. By April 1888, the name *Gray* appears.

County Ordinary Roland T. Ross suggested this name to honor James Madison Gray (1813-1874), considered the most prominent man in the county of his day. Like Blount, Gray was a respected lawyer, planter, and politician. He was a leading democrat both in the county and state, and active in promoting county advancements. During the Civil War, he outfitted the Gray Infantry, later Co. F 45th Georgia Regiment, and shared the bounties of his large plantation with those in need. He left the bulk of his estate to Mercer University to fund education for the boys of Jones County. *Note: Gray's plantation home was southeast of Gray, at 594 Nathan Roberts Rd. The original house was destroyed by Union forces in 1864. Gray rebuilt after the War. The front two rooms, porch, and steps of the present house were part of this postwar house.*

Gray's transition to county seat (1886-1907)

The 1886 railroad survey shows a small grid of streets around the depot crossroad. Two streets are named: Ross Street (Roland Ross was the county ordinary) and Clinton Avenue. Issues of *The Headlight* published in early 1888 show advertisements for H.A. Morgan's carriage shop and Holsenbeck, Winters & Company general merchandise store, which was bought out by D. D. Holsenbeck later that year. These issues are on microfilm at the Washington Memorial Library in Macon.

A town survey of 1904 shows expansion to Boundary Street on the north, Clinton Avenue east to some point before the present Childs Street, Forest Street to the south, and a small cemetery (Highview Cemetery) to the west. Clinton Avenue is now known as

Jones County History & Heritage, Inc.

(JCHH)

PO Box 2605
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JCHH is a private, non-profit organization formed in 2002 to promote an appreciation of Jones County's historic resources and foster their preservation, restoration, and revitalization.

If you are not currently a member, we invite you to join us by sending a check payable to JCHH to the address above.

Membership levels are:

Individual	\$ 25.00
Family	\$ 35.00
Patron	\$ 75.00
Bronze	\$ 125.00
Silver	\$ 300.00
Gold	\$ 600.00
Platinum	\$1000.00

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Publications: Carolyn White Williams' *History of Jones County, Georgia 1807-1907*, with a new index of names, is available for \$75 (or \$80 if shipped). Earl and Beth Colvin's *Fields of Stone: Cemeteries of Jones County, Georgia* is available for \$50 (or \$55 if shipped). Special bicentennial price of \$100 (or \$110 if shipped) for both through 2007. Send mail orders to the address above. Copies also may be purchased at the Jones County Chamber of Commerce in Gray, Georgia.

E. and W. Clinton Street (Gray Hwy). Portions of the other streets remain.

Many of the first settlers came from Clinton, the county seat until 1905. Some of the earliest families were the Mortons, Stewarts, Comers, Bonners, Glawsons, Greens, Turners, Ethridges, Johnsons, Goddards, Pattersons, Braggs, Morgans, Blounts, Bushes, and Roberts.

The first publisher of *The Jones County News (News)*, Mark Greene, was a colorful and opinionated promoter of Gray and the Victorian ideals of progress, civic pride and responsibility, and high moral standards. His early newspapers provide a lively view of life in the growing town, and they are fascinating to read. Issues for 1895-1924 are on microfilm at Washington Memorial Library in Macon. *Note: Mark Greene's home and office stood near the SW corner of W. Clinton and Madison streets.*

In its early years, lots in Gray had space for barns and livestock. An early house and lot that reflect the rural nature of that era lies on the outskirts of town at 157 Rt. 129N (Eatonton Hwy). T.S. Bush built this house in 1895, and later it was sold to the Cecil Roberts family. In the year the house was built, the *News* reports that the cattle drive to Macon had passed through Gray. Another item of interest states that the weather had been sufficiently cold for hog killing in Gray.

The most important topic of 1895, though, was the location of the county seat. The old county seat of Clinton was in decline, with no railroad access, a condemned courthouse, and a substandard jail. Besides Gray, the railroad towns of Bradley and James were proposed for county seat. However, the *News* notes, "There is one town in Jones that don't want the courthouse. Haddock Station is satisfied with the progress she is making and don't want to be bothered with a sheriff, jail and an addition to her legal fraternity. Happy Haddock!"

In 1896, the *News* reports that Col. James Blount will clear his pine orchard near the depot and divide the land into lots for sale. A store of this era was W.E. Morgan's General Merchandise, which stood on the present site of Gray Drug at 126 W. Clinton St. A photo of this store shows the name *W.E. Morgan* painted over another name, faintly visible. It possibly could be *D. D.*

Holsenbeck and thus would be the store of 1888 referred to on p. 1.

In 1897, several houses were to be erected, tramps were a nuisance around the depot, and Gray's first school was built near the intersection of the present Childs and Morton streets (building later destroyed). In 1899, *Sunny Home*, the residence of Francis M. Stewart, Sr., was built on the outskirts of town (the house, which stood on the site of Five Oaks Shoppes at 197 W. Clinton St, burned in 1945. Charlie Washburn built the present house.)

In 1900, an election to move the county seat from Clinton failed by two votes (359 to 361). In 1905, another election was held. Mark Greene writes in the *News* just prior to the election, "If all is guided by the light of reason and sound judgment the setting of next Tuesday's sun will mark a new era, and be but the beginning of a

brighter and more prosperous dawn for the people of Jones.” The citizens overwhelmingly voted (1289 to 51) to move the courthouse to Gray, which had the advantages of a central location, railroad accessibility, and eagerness for growth.

The courthouse and a jail were erected in 1905 on land that had been owned by Judge Richard H. Johnson. The law office to the left of the courthouse at 116 S. Jefferson St. was Judge Johnson’s and later his son’s, Judge Holmes Johnson. Guy Anderson, whose law office was across the street, bought the office for his son, Pierce Anderson, attorney for the City of Gray for many years. The current owner, attorney Bert King, intends to apply for inclusion of the building in the National Register of Historic Places.

Gray prospered as the new county seat. In 1905, the Bank of Gray was established as a branch of the Jones County Bank of Haddock. The bank was chartered under new ownership in 1909. D.V. Childs, Sr., a director under the new charter, eventually assumed ownership and shepherded the bank through the Depression with the aid of President Roosevelt’s Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The Bank of Gray stood in the same general area (103 Atlanta Rd) until its recent move to 282 W. Clinton Street. The original poured vault is still in place in the small building to the right of 103 Atlanta Hwy. Though the bank is now part of Security Bank, several members of the Childs family are officers.

By 1907, Gray had grown enough to build a new two-room schoolhouse on a lot donated by the Gray Land and Improvement Company (Civic Center area, 161 West Clinton St.). The previous year, the Gray Village Improvement Club had formed for the “betterment of ourselves, our children, our homes, schools, and village.” One of their first projects was to plant shade trees on the new school lot and to show moving pictures at the courthouse to benefit the new school.

In 1907, the Baptist Church was completed on the site of the present church (134 W. Clinton St.). The first church was a white frame building, which burned in 1943. Also, construction began on the Methodist Church, a wood frame building, on land donated by Annie Griswold Johnson. It was replaced in 1915 by the present church on the same site (118 S. Jefferson St).

In 1907, the *News* reports that lumber for two houses had arrived. One was for Frank S. Johnson, manager of the Planter’s Warehouse (cotton) and county treasurer, and the other was for R. H. Bonner, ordinary for 18 yrs. Only the Bonner house remains at 166 W. Clinton,

across from the Civic Center. Mrs. Bonner and her sister, Miss May Stewart, lived there into the mid-1900s. The Johnson house (recently burned) was to the left of it, and a third house (owned by the Bilderbacks) was to the right.

Two other houses were built in 1907. The house of Rev. E.W. Sammons, county school commissioner from 1902-1924 and a founding member of Gray Baptist Church, is at 128 Rt. 129N (Eatonton Hwy). Judge F. Holmes and Addie Kate Johnson’s house is at 115 E. Clinton St (former site of Col James H. Blount’s country home). This house was known for its beautiful grounds.

Other gleanings from 1907 issues indicate houses owned by Dr. J.W. Anderson, L.C. Morton (lumberyard owner), C.R. Smith, Mrs. J.H. Moring, Richard Brown, and H.C. Souther (corner of Dolly Street and W. Clinton St.; house stood into the 1970s).

Gray prospers (1908-1920)

A 1908 railroad survey map in the archives of the Georgia Historical Society in Savannah identifies various properties along the railroad. On the present Hwy 18 S were Dr. J.W. Anderson’s lot, an African-American Church, the Gray Gin Mill Company, and a brick warehouse (must have been the new Planter’s Warehouse). On the present Cumslo Rd were a railroad cattle chute, the depot, and Bush & Smith warehouse. On the present Atlanta Hwy business strip were Bush & Smith General Merchandise Store (acquired in 1915 by D.V. Childs) which included Ellis Bragg’s beef market and C.W. Bragg’s barbershop, the Bank of Gray, W.E.Morgan’s General Merchandise Store and livery stable, C.R. Smith’s store, and lots owned by T.C. Morton and W.E. Morgan. By 1909, the Gray Drugstore is advertising in the *News*.

In 1910, a much-needed hotel was built by F.H. Houser, a peach buyer from Fort Valley, to accommodate court session and other visitors. The hotel stood into the 1940s on the vacant lot to the left of 147 Madison Ave. Later Mrs. W.E. (Lovie) Morgan ran it with the help of her sister, Queenie Huff.

Around the corner from the hotel site is another early house at 111 Dolly Street. A c. 1910s sketch by Telamon Cuyler of the view from the front door of the courthouse shows this cottage facing Clinton Street (it was moved and turned when the highway was widened) along with several other similar cottages now destroyed. This sketch can be seen at

The D.V. Childs house (134 E. Clinton St.) was built in 1914; it was the first house in Gray to have electricity (Delco generator). The houses opposite and to the side were built earlier. Early owners of these houses were the Mortons at #125, Clem Roberts at #130, and Sam Hungerford at #133.

The population continued to grow, and by 1917, a new 6-room brick schoolhouse and auditorium had been completed on the site of the previous school (Civic Center, 161 W. Clinton St.).

To take us to 1920, here are some newspaper items from the two preceding years. W.H. Mulligan moved into his new brick general merchandise store on the site of his former stand (store stood into the mid 1900s on the site of 127 W. Clinton). A new school truck is picking up children in the outlying area, and the attendance soon will reach 160. Several businesses related to autos and trucks are open: C.R. Bowen's auto shop, Everybody's auto shop, Dixie auto repair, Morgan's auto service (car rental), and the Gray Auto Company (Ford dealer). Chambliss Pharmacy is established, with A. C. Kitchen's barbershop in the same building. A 1919 ad for Bonner & Childs (later D.V. Childs' store) general merchandise says, "There will be money, lots of money, circulating from our wonderful peach crop in Jones so take this hint—come to our 'bargain store' and make your peach money buy your full value." Other stores belong to C.W. Bragg, C.S. Bryant, W.E. Morgan, Smith & Hudson, and Middlebrooks & Morgan. Bonner & Greene have an insurance agency, and Smith, Hudson & Bonner are ginners. ❖

Eula Pitts Morgan

Miss Eula Morgan, Gray's oldest citizen (any other contenders?), will be 100 on New Year's Eve, but it's hard to believe! She is agile and active, warm and vibrant, and brimming with intelligence and curiosity. She cooks and keeps house, is a daily participant at the Senior Center, and a faithful member of St. Paul AME Church. She is much loved by her large family and numerous friends.

Miss Eula and a twin brother, the youngest of 15 children, were born to Gus and Frances Smith Pitts. The family lived on the old David Blount Place, later Bateman Farm, by the present government camp on Cumslo Road. Her parents were charter members of Turner Chapel AME (200 Dolly St), and her father, who was an ordained minister, was a steward there. She attended the school at Turner Chapel as well as Mrs.

Maggie Califf's one-room school (still standing) near St. Paul AME off Lite'N'Tie, just northeast of the intersection of Rt. 129 S.

After her marriage, Miss Eula lived for a time in the old Jacob Hutchings house that stood near here. Jacob Hutchings was the master stonemason responsible for much of the 19th century stonework in the county. A granite marker in his honor stands at the courthouse above the retaining wall granite that he originally had hewn to form the walls of the early 19th century jail in Clinton.

She and her late husband, Claude Morgan, were married for 57 years, and raised two sons, Carlton and Clyde Morgan, both deceased, and a foster daughter, Hazel Pitts. She has 5 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

Before she married, Miss Eula cooked for Gray's physician, Dr. J. D. Zachary. Eventually, she began assisting him with deliveries and mother and baby care. She came by it naturally. Her grandmother, Frances Seabrook, had been a midwife, and Miss Eula had accompanied her on her rounds. Also, she was frequently called on to provide medical advice and assistance to members of her community.

She proved so adept that Dr. Zachary asked her to apply for a State midwife license in 1953. The county public health nurse, Mrs. Lillian Young, supervised her training for this. She worked with Dr. Zachary until his retirement, and after that, on her own for 3 years. Later, she provided private nursing to a number of families.

Miss Eula is an inspiration and one of the people who make Gray a Better Hometown! ❖

Newsletter Sources

Thanks to the following for their contributions to this newsletter: *Marguerite Anderson, Bobby Bentley, Bill Bragg, Margaret Briscoe, Elaine Childs, Marguerite Childs, Thad Childs, Patsy Childs, Kema Clark, Pat Daniels, Max Davis, Cecil Ethridge, Charles Farrar, Alice Golson, Mary Anne Hamrick, Danny Greene, the late Louise Kelley, Bert King, Harriet Madison, Eula Morgan, Berta Morton, Beebe Parker, Ruth Grier, Frank Stewart, Sally Wicker.*

References

Colvin, Earl and Beth. *Fields of Stone: Cemeteries of Jones County, Georgia*, Milledgeville GA. 2004.
Williams, Carolyn White. *History of Jones County Georgia*. Macon GA, 1957.

Websites and newspapers acknowledged in text.

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Volume 5

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About the Newsletter

This is newsletter #6 in the series on historic communities of Jones County, Georgia, and it is the second issue concerning Gray, the county seat since 1905. The subject is commerce in Gray from about 1920 to 1960. The next issue will cover Gray's infrastructure.

Many thanks to the former and current residents of Gray who shared their remembrances and so patiently answered the numerous and sometimes repetitive questions. If there are errors and omissions, the editor welcomes corrections!

Special thanks to Margaret Souther Briscoe, whose childhood home stood in the heart of the downtown area. She was a treasure house of information with memories back to the 1920s, and great fun to be with.

P.S. Copies of this and previous newsletters on Gray (1886-1920), Round Oak, Caney Creek, Juliette, and Wayside are available for \$2 each at Kema's Bookstore, Atlanta Hwy, Gray GA.

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Gray's Business District ca 1920 – 1960

During the 40 or more years covered in this newsletter, the business district was situated around the railroad tracks and stretched southwest to the courthouse. Over time, some businesses quickly rose and fell, but quite a few endured for several decades with changes of ownership and/or locations.

The old railroad depot, courthouse, and the original vault of the Bank of Gray (inside *The Jones County News* building, west end of the Atlanta Hwy strip) are probably the only remaining structures that predate the 1930s. There was a spurt of growth in the 1950s with a 65% increase in the population between 1950 and 1960 (866 to 1330), and that period is especially well represented in the buildings that remain, many of them brick.

The following is a partial list of businesses, with approximate dates in some cases. The exact locations are given if known.

Atlanta Hwy (Hwy 11) Strip

This area by the tracks was Gray's "Main Street," and it has been altered so much it is difficult to say what was where when. Early in Gray's history (probably in the late 1800s or early 1900s) in the late 1800s), oak trees were planted by the tracks to beautify, cool, and shade the area. George Wallace, Jr. remembers the spectacle of the huge flocks of starlings swirling into the big trees in the 1930s. They fell victim to progress when the road was widened in the early 1940s. It must have been a sad day when the sawing began!

For many decades, the anchor of downtown Gray was D. V. Childs' general merchandise store, a large two-story building of red brick with a corner entrance (south end of the strip, general area of the parking lot by *The Jones County News* office). Like Wal-Mart, it offered one-stop shopping—groceries, clothing, fabric, household items, hardware, farm implements, and Purina feed. Nolan P. Sammons ran the dry goods section, with Dr. J. D. Zachary's office above.

C. R. Smith constructed the building around 1905, and it was Bush & Smith General Mercantile before Mr. Childs bought it in 1915. On the second story were the Masonic Lodge, Claude Bryant's telephone exchange (followed by Ralph Lineburger's telephone company), and Joe Ben Jackson's law office. Mr. Jackson's son, Judge George Jackson also had a law office there at the beginning of his career. The building was demolished in 1971 to make way for a new Bank of Gray, also owned by the Childs family. Patsy and Frank Childs continued to operate

Childs' Department Store for a number of years in the former location of Mr. Childs' insurance agency on the strip. At this writing, an antique store and sandwich shop operated by Patsy Childs' daughter-in-law, Paige, has just opened in this area.

While the building was standing, Dolly Street, which now dead ends at Madison, continued by it to the business strip (Atlanta Hwy). In the 1920s, on the other side of Dolly St. (corner of W. Clinton and Madison) were Claude Bryant's store with an ice house in back, A.C. Kitchens' barber shop, and Charlie Greene's meat market.

In the 1930s, Sam Hungerford built a Gulf service station and drugstore on this corner (the present Emergency Management Services building with the mural on it). In 1951, Francis and Emily Farrar took over the drugstore and had variety items and a soda shop. By the 1940s, W. E. Knox owned the Gulf station, and eventually the fire department was located there. Mr. Knox was also the Gulf Oil distributor. His office was in a building on Dolly St. (demolished), across from the telephone company at 116 Dolly St. The oil tanks were between Madison and N. Jefferson.

Early on, to the north of Childs' store, were the Bank of Gray (established 1905), W. E. (Gene) Morgan's general store with coffins and a horse-drawn hearse in the back, and the post office. In 1927, Sam Butler, Sr. opened his auto garage at the north end of the block, behind the post office, according to a notice in *The Jones County News*. Dennis Greene's auto body shop was next door.

The Gray Hotel, built in 1910, stood into the 1940s behind the strip on the vacant lot to the left of 147 Madison St. In its latter years, Mrs. W.E. (Lovie) Morgan operated it as a boarding house and public dining room with the help of her sister, Queenie Huff. Many of Gray's young, single teachers and professional women boarded there, and were much in demand to play the piano and serve as hostesses at the Kiwanis Club dinners held at the hotel. Quite a few married Gray's eligible bachelors.

Joe T. Glawson had a shoe repair shop in the strip in the 1930s-40s. The Rural Electrical Association (REA) was organized in 1939, and its first office was in the strip (109 Atlanta Rd, site of Kema's Book Store). Later it moved to the outskirts of town on Hwy 22 (small frame building on the rise across from Jackson Brothers Repair Shop). The

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Publications: 1) Newsletter series on historic communities of Jones County, \$2.00 each, Kema's Bookstore, Atlanta Hwy, Gray GA. 2) Carolyn White Williams' *History of Jones County, Georgia 1807-1907*, with a new index of names, \$75 (or \$80 if shipped). 3) Earl and Beth Colvin's *Fields of Stone: Cemeteries of Jones County, Georgia* and 4) *Butternut and Gray*, \$50 each (or \$55 if shipped). Send mail orders for books to the address above. Books also may be purchased at the Jones County Chamber of Commerce and Kema's Bookstore in Gray GA.

post office was to the left of the REA office (site of 107 Atlanta Rd, Wesley Music).

Mac and Pat Hungerford constructed several buildings in the strip in the 1940s as well as a tennis court and park with pecan trees near the north end of the block. They also built Lynka Skating Rink, named for daughters Lynn and Karen, on the outskirts of town on Hwy 129 just north of Northfork Ct. (site of Mid-Georgia Propane Gas office).

In 1943, the Gray Theatre, a Martin & Thompson Theatre, opened on Christmas Day in the former site of R. A. Lowe's bowling alley. James Balkcom operated the theatre into the 1960s.

In the 1950s to 1960s, W. E. Knox and Frank Childs had insurance agencies and were partners at one time. Jesse and Helen Glawson had a dry cleaner, which they sold to Zane Greene and his mother. Zane and his wife Anne operated it as Alert Cleaners in the 1960s, and later sold it to Sara and Jack Godard. In the late 1940s/early 1950s, Alvah and Estelle Greene operated The Snack Shack. Herald Henderson and Joe Ben Jackson had the Gray Trading Company (clothing and household good). Between these businesses was Mary Altman's beauty parlor. John Childs built his supermarket in

1952 (111 Atlanta Rd., present tenant is Curves).

By the 1940s, the office of Dr. J. D. Zachary, who practiced medicine from 1911 into the 1950s, was on the corner of M.L. King, Jr. Blvd. (115 Atlanta Rd, site of The Meat Shop). Dr. Zachary estimated that he delivered over 2,000 babies in Jones County during his career. The office was surrounded by trees, with a park to the side. His home was around the corner at 110 MLK, Jr. Blvd, and before that, in the 1920s, he lived in the house across the street on the corner of Madison St.

Junction of Hwy 129N/18S and E. Clinton St.

On the northeast corner of East Clinton St. and Hwy 129N (site of The Crossing) was the City Service Station, which opened in 1935. Cecil Roberts ran it for a time. Later, it became the Power Oil Station. In the late 1940s, Mr. Roberts built and ran a grocery store on 129N beside the service station (red brick building, currently a beauty parlor). Grady Blasingame bought the business in 1959, and operated it in the 1960s.

The first business on the southeast corner (present retail building adjacent to the Gray Motel) was Luther Morton's two-story frame building (probably a general store), built in the early 1900s. His lumber yard stood behind it on 18S. In the 1920s, Charlie Bowen had an auto garage in the building. Dances were held there on Saturday nights, and at one time, the family lived on the second floor. Another tenant was Bryant's store.

By the early 1940s, a Sinclair station stood on this site. Louise and Lewis Ethridge ran a café to the side of the station, followed by Cecil Robert's meat market. Emmett Bragg ran the service station around 1942-43, and Fred Greene ran it later. The service station was replaced with Charles Washburn, Jr's. and Mr. Willingham's Gray Lumber & Supply.

In 1951-52, Mr. Washburn built the "ultra-modern" Gray Motel and a restaurant on the site. The restaurant, operated by the R.E. O'Neals, was called *Flagalina*, derived from the crossroads destinations: Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas. Later the name was changed to the Townhouse.

South of the corner, on Hwy 18S, there had been a cotton gin and warehouse in the early to mid 1900s. In the late 1940s/early 1950s, several buildings were constructed in this vicinity. Gray's first city hall building was donated by Charlie Washburn, Jr. and moved from his lumber yard on

the outskirts of Gray (east on Hwy 22, on the left side across from several businesses). It had been his 3-room office. After it was moved, it was veneered with brick from a demolished service station. The building has been incorporated into the present City Hall complex that was constructed in the 1970s.

In the 1940s or early 1950s, Dennis Greene moved his auto repair business from the downtown strip to the concrete block building south of City Hall. South of that, Herbert Greene opened a meat processing and freezer locker business in the 1940s. Later Jim Carpenter took it over.

West Clinton St. to Courthouse

Gray Feed, Seed, and Fertilizer (beside the depot building on Railroad St.) was established by Milton Bowen about 1948 and by 1952/53, Howard and Floyd Childs had taken over the business. Howard's son, Ponder, is the present owner.

In the early 1940s into the 1960s, Milton Greene supplied the county with coal that heated some of the older houses. The train would drop the coal by the feed store for loading into the delivery truck.

Across from the depot (site of 120 W. Clinton St), JoJo Greene established a Standard station in 1947, which he ran until 1952. Alvah Greene (his father) and Jack Greene (his brother) were Standard Oil distributors from the early 1940s -1980s. The tanks were behind that station (present school bus lot on Ross St.).

Next door (left side of 115 W. Clinton St, site of Ready Mix USA office), was Horace Greene's Shell station, which Horace Harrell later ran as an Amoco station.

Adjacent to this station (right side of 115 W Clinton St, site of Ready Mix USA office) was Mark Greene's house, which by the 1950s had become Judge George Leonard Jackson's law office. Mark Greene began publishing *The Jones County News* in 1895, and the *News* office was behind the house at least through the 1950s, and after that it was a legal office. Mr. Greene's daughters, Vera and Etta (referred to in one breath as "Vera 'n' Ett) had begun publishing the paper by 1928. Later, Walter Toulson was the publisher.

By 1950, the brick strip of storefronts west of 115 W. Clinton St. had been built. Clayton Kitchens' barbershop was the first occupant, and the pole is still there on the far left. Mr. Kitchens was still in business until a few years ago. Jewett and

Nell Tucker opened the Gray Café in the middle, and the post office moved from the Atlanta Hwy strip into the far right space in 1951. Later, a new post office was built at 154 W. Clinton (site of Gray Police Station).

Farrar's variety store took over the space vacated by the Gray Café. Berta Morton remembers walking her elementary school class down to Farrar's to sample the wonders of the store. She would give each of them a nickel to spend, and they would walk out with sacks overflowing with far more than a nickel's worth, courtesy of Mrs. Farrar.

By the early 1950s, W.E. Knox had built the Gray Gulf Station west of the brick strip. Later Bill Davis owned it, and Alfred Ethridge operated it into the early 1970s. Mr. Davis opened his CPA office in 1960 in the present building on the corner of Dolly and Madison streets. This building, built by the Hungerfords, was originally divided into apartments. Mr. Davis also was the publisher of *The Jones County News* until the early 1980s.

The original tenant on the corner next to the station (site of 127 W. Clinton St.) was Will Mulligan's grocery store, which had been in business by the 1920s. George Wallace remembers it from his childhood in the 1930s as being a dark, windowless, and mysterious place with a corner entrance that you stepped down into (because of the raising of the highway). Harris and Emmett Bragg opened Bragg Appliance on this site in 1952. Gus Butler, Jr.'s garage was behind it on Ross St. (still called Butler's garage).

West Clinton St to Baptist Church

Henry and Lena Souther's house stood on the west corner of W. Clinton and Madison St. from as early as the 1920s into the 1970s. Frances Allen, one of the Souther daughters, had a beauty shop in it for many years before it was demolished.

Proceeding west, the present brick storefronts were built in the early 1950s. Cecil Powell, a pharmacist, opened Powell Drug Store in the far right corner of this strip in 1952. Folds Restaurant was beside it in the 1950s and early 1960s, and in the 1960s, Dr. Marcus Stewart had an office in this strip.

In the general vicinity, Callan Mulligan ran the bus station and a Texaco station in the 1940s (buildings were demolished). Milton Greene opened Gray Electric & Service in the early 1950s in a building (later burned) in the area of the present

Gray Dry Cleaners (120-B W. Clinton St.). He sold appliances and TVs, repaired appliances, and had gas pumps (building burned). Harris and Emmett Bragg (Bragg Appliance) got their start there. Later JoJo Greene had a Standard station in the building at 120-B W. Clinton.

The small brick building to the left of 120-B W. Clinton St. was Dr. H. B. Jones, Jr.'s medical office from 1955 until his retirement (probably 1980s).

In the very early 1900s, W.E. Morgan's General Merchandise stood on the corner across from the Baptist Church (site of 126 W. Clinton St.), and Henry Ethridge had a blacksmith shop on Dolly Street behind the Baptist Church. Henry Morgan operated the store later.

Dottie and Jerry Walker operated Gray Drug Company in the present building on the corner from about the 1970s until the new Gray Drug was built on the Hwy 18 bypass.

And last but not least, Miriam's Flower Shop opened in 1959 on Stewart Avenue. Miriam Ethridge and her husband Cecil operated it into the late 1900s. Mrs. Ethridge was a very skillful and talented florist who produced countless decorating schemes and arrangements during her long career.

Whereabouts Unknown

Several auto dealers advertised in the 1920s-30s: Gray Motor Company, Barron Motor Company, and Chambliss Motor Company, which later became

Newsletter Sources

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