

Jackson County Historical Society News

VOLUME TEN, NUMBER TWO

JANUARY 2003



photograph of Crooked Creek Church taken before it's demolition in 1966

Established July 23, 1803, the church is one of the oldest in Northeast Georgia. The original building was made of hand hewn wooden beams marked with Roman numerals and contained a one room school house until about 1910. The foundation was rotting in 1966 and was torn down, saving the wooden beams to be used in the new church building. Their early church minutes were preserved by their pastor Bill Carpenter.

The church will celebrate it's Bicentennial in July 2003. The Jackson County Historical Society meeting will be held at Crooked Creek Baptist Church on January 19, 2003 at 2:30 p.m. There will be a program on the history of the church and the Crooked Creek community.

NEWSLETTER

The Jackson County Historical Society News is published quarterly. Back issues can be obtained for \$2.50 each plus postage. Please send your Jackson County family connections with your dues and they will be published in the next newsletter.

Send queries to be published the month before the next issue. Next deadline March 15, 2003.

DUES

The Jackson County Historical Society's Dues Year runs from July to July. Checks should be written to the Jackson County Historical Society and mailed to the address shown below.

Individual	\$10.00
Family	\$15.00
Life Member	\$100.00

COLLECTION

The Historical Society family and community files, books and microfilms are located in the Heritage Room of the Commerce Public Library, 1344 South Broad Street, Commerce, GA. Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:00-6:00, Thursday: 10:00-8:00, Saturday: 10:00-5:00. Appointments can be made for assistance. e-mail: tina313@mindspring.com

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OBITUARIES

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, February 1, 1901

Mrs. Jesse Fulcher departed this life on last Thursday morning, at the home of her son in law, M. C. McDougald, and was laid to rest on Friday, near Winder. She lived in Athens until a few days before her death. She knew that her time on earth was brief, and it was her desire to die in the county where she had lived almost all of her life; and her wish was complied with; she died peacefully, surrounded by her loved ones. We extend to the bereaved family our deepest sympathy in this hour of affliction.

The Jackson Herald, April 12, 1906

Mr. N. J. Williamson went to the Wheeler memorial exercises in Atlanta, where he took pneumonia, and after an illness of little more than one week, died in Atlanta, at the home of his daughter, last Thursday. His remains were brought to Crooked Creek burial grounds, where they were interred Saturday.

Mr. Williamson was a good citizen, a cleaver man, and one of the best farmers in this county.

He made a gallant soldier in the War Between the States. He was a consistent member of the Baptist church.

He leaves a wife and several children.

He had a policy in the Southern Mutual Life Insurance Company and his wife and children will get \$850 to \$1,000 insurance.

Mr. Williamson was one of our best friends.

The Jackson Herald, April 16, 1908

In memory of Carey M. Johnson

The subject of this sketch died April 30th, 1906. Age 79 years and 26 days. It grieves us to record this sad event, but we feel it our duty, he having reared us from the cradle to young womanhood, and was almost a father to us. He was not a perfect man. He, like others, had his faults, but we will lay a veil over these, so they will not hide his good quantities, for they were many.

In his feeble breast beat a true heart, he often remarked that no one could tell him as well as his own feelings, that there was a Higher Power. He was a man who had trials and temptations, but alas, has laid down

the cross, and we believe is a rest. Oh, it was had to give grandpa up. The grave is an awful magnet, it draws us farther than we want to go, and we realize here, that there isn't a hairs breadth between this world and the next. He cannot come to us, we would not have it so, but we can go to him, such relief to our grief. He was laid to rest at Crooked Creek. The mound was covered with garlands of lovely flowers made by the hands of many dear friends.

Dora B. Mauldin

The Jackson Herald, May 28, 1908

Mrs. E.D. Welchel died at her home, in Red Stone, last Sunday, and was buried at Crooked Creek Church, Monday. Rev. J. G. Davis conducted the funeral obsequies. She had been ill for several months. Hopes of her recovery were entertained for awhile, but it became evident several days prior to her demise that the end was near.

She was a Christian lady. She leaves a husband and six little sons to mourn her death.

The Jackson Herald, March 10, 1911

Mrs. Emma Brock Elrod, who fell some time ago and sustained a broken limb; died at her home in Winder on Friday. The burial occurred at Crooked Creek Church on Sunday at eleven o'clock. Mrs. Elrod was the sister of Messrs. A. H. Brock of Jefferson, E. S. Brock and Neal Brock of Jackson County, and W. S. Brock of La Grange.

The Jackson Herald, January 28, 1915

The friends and acquaintances of Mr. W. H. Elrod and family were shocked to learn of his death at his home in Carl on Monday. He died suddenly.

Mr. Elrod was a former citizen of Jackson county, and lived at one time in Jefferson. He was a quiet, Christian character, who carried the principles of his religion into all the affairs of his daily life. He was a member of the Baptist church and his body was brought to Crooked Creek burial ground in this county on Wednesday and laid to rest. Rev. C. A. Strickland of Talmo conducted the services. Mr. Elrod was about seventy years of age, and in early life he was wedded to Miss Simpkins, a daughter of a former prominent

citizen of Jefferson, and a sister of Mrs. A. H. Brock and Mrs. J. H. Strickland. She and eight children survive him. They are Mrs. Ida Prickett, Mrs. W. T. Chandler, Mrs. O. D. Arnold, Mrs. A. H. Wright, Mrs. Mert Blakely, Miss Ethel Elrod, Messrs. Henry and K. A. Elrod.

BLACK HISTORY

The Jackson Herald, July 22, 1881

Mitch Goss, the champion colored debater in this section, in discussing the question of "who deserved the most credit, Columbus for discovering America, or Washington for defending it," said that he did not redeem it very unnecessary to masticate as to how much honor was reserved by old Columbia for crossing the mighty deep to let men come here and perambulate this State of Jackson and Banks counties, and quietly took his seat amidst great applause.

(editor note: The Johntown Debating Society was organized in 1884 with encouragement from the business men in Harmony Grove. Occasionally a debate was held at the old Strickland Hall or in R. L. Hardman's Hardware Store.)

The Jackson Herald, July 17, 1891

Colored Teachers

Will take notice that the sixth annual session for the Jackson County Colored Teachers' Association will be present, and that all who can will bring classes with them. The program is full of things of good promise. The welcome address will be delivered by S.M. Strickland, and the annual address by the president. Among other features D. L. Rakestraw will illustrate his methods of teaching writing, W. B. Humphries will conduct a reading lesson, and Mattie B. Davis will illustrate her methods of teaching numbers. These and other subjects will be discussed by the members present. Prof. R. R. Wright, president of the State Colored College, and Rev. G. V. Clark of Athens will both be present and will address the meeting. The County School Commissioner is specially invited to be present.

E. H. Haygood, President

The Jackson Herald, January 17, 1907

Notice to the Colored People of Jackson County
Mr. A. O. Patterson is here this week working for the Sterling Mutual Life Insurance Co. of Georgia. Its home office is Madison, Ga, and its manager is F. C. Foster, Jr. This company insures only members of the colored race. It is patterned after Mr. Darwin's company in Athens, and Gov. Candler's company in Atlanta. A full division of the company is 500 members. Each division has its officers. The president of the Jefferson division is D. L. Rakestraw. There is no more honorable or trustworthy colored man in this county than Fayette Rakestraw. Mr. Patterson proposes to get up a full division here during the next few months.

CROOKED CREEK NEWS

The Jackson Herald, August 3, 1900

Married in the State Road, near Clarksboro, on Sunday, 22 day of July, Miss Leila Tolbert to Mr. Wm. Mize, Squire John L. Smith officiating.

Crooked Creek and Antioch singing choirs have united, and meet once a month at each place. They make nice music, and are improving at every meeting.

The Jackson Herald, January 25, 1901

The young folks had a very pleasant singing on last Sunday night. The singing choir, which meets at Antioch, Prospect and this place, met at the residence of Mr. S. A. Segars. There is much good being done in this way. Let every one take a part in this good work.

The young folks had a very nice dance at the residence of Mr. C. Yarbough, Thursday night.

The Jackson Herald, February 22, 1901

At the residence of John L. Smith, Esq, occurred the marriage of Mr. Henry Walton and Miss Irene Archer, a run-away couple. Esquire Smith has been noted in the past for uniting such couples without hesitation. But on Sunday, February 10, H. N. Williamson stole on of his girls, Miss Pearl Smith, which didn't please the Squire so well.

The Jackson Herald, January 17, 1907

Miss Norma Alexander has a fine school at this place.

The Jackson Herald, June 7, 1907

R. O. Williamson and L. J. Vondereau have consolidated their threshing machinery, and will do excellent work this season. Mr. Williamson has already won a reputation as a fine thresher.

The Jackson Herald, September 22, 1927

Crooked Creek Church Celebrates 125th Anniversary
The members of the Baptist Church of Jesus Christ at Crooked Creek are planning to celebrate the one hundred and twenty fifth anniversary of the founding of this church.

The Church is located in Jackson County, about ten miles from Athens, and is one of the oldest Baptist churches in this section of the State. The anniversary will be celebrated on Saturday, September 24th at the church where an all day singing will be held and a big barbecue will be given and several speeches will be delivered.

The celebration is in the nature of a home coming of all the former members of the church and their descendants and it is expected that there will be a great revival in interesting of this church, which had done so much for the spiritual life of the part of Jackson county and even of Athens and Clarke county.

When the University of Georgia was founded at Athens for several years there was no well established church at Athens of the Baptist denomination, and many of the University professors were accustomed to attend the service of the church at Crooked Creek. Prof. William Rutherford of the University was a constant attendant of this church for nearly half a century.

Several prominent speakers have been invited to deliver speeches on this occasion, among the number being Dr. J. C. Wilkenson of Athens, Dr. J. J. Bennett, Canton, Professor R. E. Park, Athens, Thomas J. Shackelford, Athens, and H. J. Rowe, Athens.

The father of Mr. Rowe, who was also named Hugh Rowe, was for many years the clerk of this church. He taught school there in this neighborhood for a number of years and was one of the most prominent educators of his day. He came to Jackson County from

Liberty county, having graduated as a young man at old Penfield college, where he was educated for the ministry. He was a profound student and all of his life was recognized as one of the foremost Latin and Greek scholars in the country.

Some of the ancestors of Professor R. E. Park were also members of this church, having been transferred from Cabin Creek Church in the same county.

A number of preachers for the years have been called to preach at Crooked Creek Church. Among the number are Reverend J. F. Catulett, J. B. Davis, H. J. Goss, and Rev. F. M. Stark. the Rev. J. B. S. Davis was a relative of Chas. W. Shackelford late of Clarke County, and the Reverend Goss was the father of Dr. Isham H. Goss, a prominent physician of Athens. Reverend F. Stark, was the father of Judge W. W. Stark, of Commerce.

Dr. J. J. Bennett, while still a young man just graduating from the University of Georgia, was called to preach, at that church during the early part of his ministry.

Some time since it was proposed that the church should be moved over to the railroad and a new one founded, but it met with strenuous opposition from the members of the church and from the Baptist denomination at large. They regarded The Baptist Church of Jesus Christ at Crooked Creek as one of the most valuable assets of their denomination.

Members from the Church minutes book, 1850

Soloman Chandler
Walter Mitchell
John Kinney
Johnson Freeman
Jerome Miller
Robert J. Millican
Elijah Hall
Groves Human
A. D. Stapler
James Kerlin
Mary Damron
Deborah Smith
Elizabeth Mitchell
Sarah Hainey
Nancy Chandler
Massey Chandler
Harriett House

Margaret Damron
Esther Thurman
Judith Miller
Jane Sharp
Elizabeth Thrumond
Tilitha Kinney
Charity Shields
Elizabeth Kerlin
Susan Wood
Viney Miller
Arsena Pittman
Rachel Morris
Rebecca Anglin
Melinda Kinney
Sarah White
Mary Chandler
Eviline Nichols
Penina Weeks
Louisiana Millican
Mary Espy
Amanda Millican
Sarah Ann Cheley
Elizabeth Write
Martha F. Millican
Melissa Stewart
Caroline Golden
Rhody Hall
Margaret Langston
Sarah Kerlin

Colored people

Samuel, belonging to the Widow Strickland
Milledge, belonging to the estate of Few
Mack, belonging to the estate of Few
Thomas, belonging to J. R. McCleskey
Molly, belonging to Archer Moon
Fanny
Odenia
Elizabeth, belonging to J. R. McCleskey
Mary, belonging to Dock Haden
Patsey, belonging to Bro. S. Chandler
Elmina, belonging to John Shackelford
Judah
Amy, belonging to J. C. Chandlers estate
Lucy, belonging to the Widow Hayes
Susan, belonging to J. J. Flournoy

colored church members continued...

Sarah Wimberly
Mary Anglin
Adam, belonging to Esq. Bell
Tilman belonging to Ezekial Boggs
Mabetta Kinney
Josiah Hardy
Mary Hardy
James Smith
David Smith

Ehriam Smith
Sarah M. Smith
Robert White
Sarah White
James D. Kerlin
Sarah Kerlin
Sarah A. Kerlin
Levina Bowles
Caroline Bowles
Nancy G. Mitchell
Charles Anglin



photograph of the sons of John Wesley Massey. Standing; Joe and Ed, seated Rufus and Billy.

excerpt from "This is My Song This is My Story"
by Mrs. Lydia Nix Massey

Rufus Massey was born on August 25, 1871. As a young man, he bought a 125 acre farm from his father on Kings Bridge Road, between Nicholson and Center, built a two room house and in 1888 married Mae Potts. He and his brothers worked for their brother Billy's tile business in Atlanta and later in Chattanooga. In 1899, while on business in Atlanta, Rufus caught Tyhoid Fever, nearly killing him and leaving him partially paralyzed for the remainder of his life. In 1908, he had settled down to a life of farming, when Mae died after the birth of their first child, Bonnie Belle. A year later he married Pearl Whelchel and they had six children; Leonard Wesley, Martha Ethelyn, Donald Bradley, Laura Leta, Rufus William and Mildred Ruth. A stairwell and a three room addition were added to the upstairs of the house and a bathroom added to the house later. Pearl was known to be a fabulous cook and Sunday dinners were a grand occasion at her house. Cousins from Chattanooga and Greenville came during the summer and stayed for weeks and had a big time. They made room for Aunt Caroline Williams, J. W. Massey's sister in law, in her aging years. After Aunt Caroline died, J. W. and Miss Addie were moved into the house with Rufus and his family. Lucy Massey, Billy's oldest daughter, came from Chattanooga to help Pearl care for J. W. in his last weeks of life.

Rufus Massey served on the Jackson County Board of Education for 28 years, 1920-1948. In recognition of his service, the board named the old two-room grade school on Kings Bridge Road "Massey's School" The teacher's for this school usually boarded with Rufus and his wife Pearl. He was a member of the Order of Odd Fellows, and a devoted member of Crooked Creek Baptist Church, which he served as clerk for 35 years. He was 85 when he died in May 6, 1956.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Blacks Creek Baptist Church in Madison County will be celebrating their Bicentennial on February 9, 2003. Their pastor is Bill Carpenter, who was the pastor for Crooked Creek Baptist Church in 1966, when they built their new church and preserved their early church records.

The Jackson Herald, May 24, 1901

Battle of King's Tan Yard

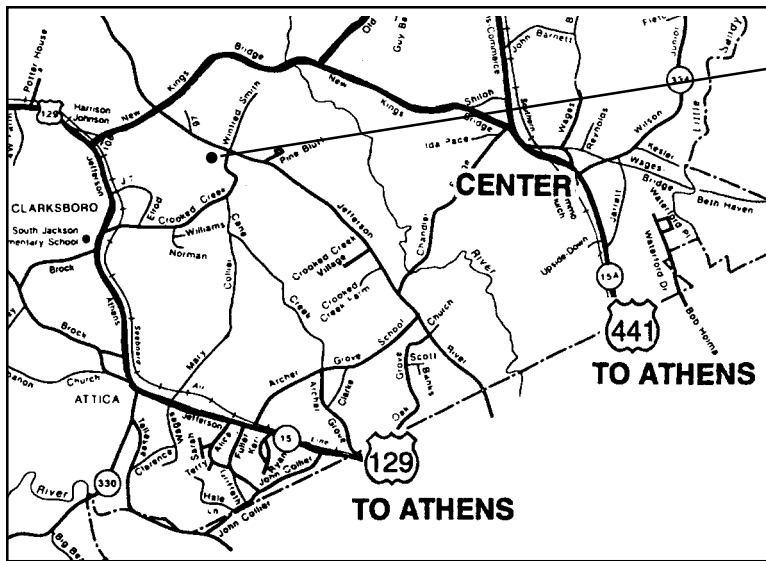
There are perhaps comparatively few persons living upon Jackson County soil today who are cognizant of the fact that towards the close of the War Between the States there was a battle between the Federals and Confederates within her borders. This is, nevertheless true. It occurred while Gen. Sherman occupied Atlanta.

Gen. Stoneman was sent out upon a raid through Middle Georgia, and was met by Maj. Gen. Williams of Kentucky, Cerro Gordon Williams of Mexican War fame, who defeated him at some point north of Macon. Gen. Stoneman retreated in the direction of Athens, and in passing out of Watkinsville he asked a little girl if there were any soldiers at Athens. Thinking she was telling the truth, she replied, "Yes, sir; lots of them;" when the fact of the matter was far different.

Capt. Ed Lumpkin, hearing of Gen. Stoneman's approach, with his company, had placed his battery of artillery in position at the paper mill, so as to cover the road in the direction of Watkinsville. As soon as the head of the column of raiders made its appearance, Capt. Lumpkin opened fire upon them; and, being convinced that the little girl at Watkinsville had told the truth, Stoneman turned his course to the left; and, coming into Jackson County, encamped for the night at King's Tan Yard. Gen. Williams pursued, after defeating Gen. Stoneman, and overtaking him at this camp about daylight, completely surprised him; and, in the fight which followed, killed a large number of the Federals, and took 500 prisoners. The Federals retreated, but kept up a running fight from King's Tan Yard to Price's Bridge, a distance I suppose of five or six miles. Many of them in their frantic efforts to escape forced their horses into the Mulberry River, and were killed while vainly endeavoring to urge them up the opposite bank. Gen. Stoneman escaped, and made a beeline for Atlanta.

King's Tan Yard is near the line of Jackson and Gwinnett counties, on the place now owned by Mr. Richard Pentecost, and the bullet holes in the walls at the old building are there today. Price's Bridge is about one and a half miles south of Hoschton over the Mulberry River.

This was the only battle in the War Between the States which occurred in Jackson County. S. P. Orr



Crooked Creek Church
6202 Jefferson River Road

Take Highway 129 from Jefferson to New Kings Bridge Road and turn left. Travel 3/4 mile to Jefferson River Road and turn right. Travel 3/4 mile to Crooked Creek Baptist Church on the right. The Jackson County Historical Society will meet at Crooked Creek Church on January 19 at 2:30 p.m.

JACKSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 1234, Commerce, Georgia 30529