

Jackson County Historical Society News

VOLUME TWENTY, NUMBER ONE

NOVEMBER 2012



The Jackson County Historical Society will meet at the First Christian Church of Jefferson on Sunday, November 11, 2012, at 2:30 P.M. Susan Chaisson will present a program on Scott Ethridge, the founder and builder of the church. Harry Bryan will tell about the Tater House where Mr. Ethridge manufactured the “Miracle Ho’Low Block” used in the construction of the church and the adjacent Ethridge home. A tour of the home will follow the meeting. Those interested in joining the Historical Society are welcome to attend.

directions: From I85 N take Exit 137, turn right on Hwy 129 to Jefferson, turn left on 129BR/GA11 to downtown Jefferson, travel to

Jackson County Historical Society

P.O. Box 1234, Commerce, Georgia 30529

(706) 207-6889

Newsletter

The Historical Society's collection of books, files and research materials are housed in the Heritage Room of the Commerce Public Library. The Library has begun an expansion and renovation and moved to 2319 N. Elm St (former Video Warehouse) until the end of 2012.

For information call Tina: 706-207-6889

Dues run from July to July and can be mailed to:

Jackson County Historical Society
P. O. Box 1234, Commerce, GA 30529:

Individual -\$15, Family -\$25, LIFE members -\$100

JCHS Officers 2012-2013

President: Shirley Wilson
Vice-President: Marie Parks
Recording Secretary: Boniface McDaniel

First Christian Church of Jefferson

Organized May 24th 1908, with thirty four members, the church services were held in the Jefferson Presbyterian Church and the Court House. Construction began in 1911 with \$500 raised to begin. The church was completed and dedicated on July 14, 1912 by Rev. J. H. Wood. The Sanctuary was remodeled in 1962 and on February 18, 1968 the congregation, with 46 members decided to become a free church with every members voice determining the policies and plans as long as they are in accordance with the Holy Bible *excerpt from "Growing Pains"*



Jackson County Courthouse additions made of Ethridge blocks

Treasurer: Tommy Benton
Directors: James Mathis
Ann Jarrett
Jerry Legg
Past Presidents: the late, Joyce Ethridge
Ann A. Jarrett
the late, Richard Chambers
the late, Jean H. Booth
Betty Ann Mathis
James Mathis
Ralph Freeman
Carol Tanner
Marie Parks
Tina Harris
Charlotte Mealor
Caine Campbell
Mary Lynn Bell
Newsletter editor: Tina Harris

excerpt from "Growing Pains" by Harry Bryan

Scott Ethridge

In 1916, E. Scott Ethridge built a building for the purpose of curing sweet potatoes. It was a large concrete block building measuring fifty feet by a hundred feet. Spaced throughout the building were two feet by two feet holes in the floor covered with rabbit wire. Salamander heaters on the bottom floor were lit to provide heat to cure the potatoes. The heat rising up through the holes spread evenly throughout the building. The potatoes were delivered by local people and by the Gainesville Midland Railroad. There was a railroad spur directly in front of the building making receiving and shipping of the potatoes very efficient.

In a few years Mr. Ethridge closed his potato business and renovated the upstairs of the building into apartments. There was a wide central hall with eight rooms on each side. The "Tater House," after the renovation was also known as the "Po Folks Home." Those were the days before public housing and many low-income families lived there.

Mr Ethridge had a concrete business and manufactured county boundary markers, curbing, cement blocks and concrete culverts. His Factory was on the basement floor of the Tater House. (He attained a franchise on a

decorative cement block resembling a “granitoid” pattern that was patented in 1903 by O.U. Miracle and W. L. Dow in Minneapolis. Concrete fabricators purchased the device to make this block so they could produce the blocks in house. Scott Ethridge patented a stamp to imprint the patent date on the blocks. This information has been discovered since the publication of “Growing Pains” by Henry Bryan) This is an ashlar faced block with a hollow interior considered stronger than the solid ones. Stamped on the backside of each block was the inscription “Miracle Ho’Low Block pat’d June 8, 1903” The blocks were used in the construction of the Christian Church, the Ethridge-Daniel House, Ira Ethridge’s second gin house and some of the blocks were used in the trim work of Carter’s Bonded Warehouse.

Supplies for the concrete factory were delivered by the railroad. Cement ingredients were delivered through two 3x3 foot doors, one on each corner of the building. Water for the operation was pumped from a large spring. The spring was the source of Chrystal Branch that flows along the west boundary of the Ethridge-Stanton-Gurley House.

The Ethridge-Daniel House

excerpt from the National Register by Guy Banchar

The house was constructed following E. Scott Ethridge’s completion in 1912 of the First Christian Church of Jefferson using the same building material. Scott Ethridge and his wife Emma Jane Shields Ethridge lived in the house and allowed their daughter Faye Ella Ethridge and her husband Claude Young Daniel to reside with them until the Daniel family grew too large. Claude and Faye had six daughters: Emlyn, Rose, Nancy Marjorie, Mary and Faye. Mary was born in the house, lived on Sycamore Street, then moved back into the house while in high school.

Major alterations in the property took place between 1920-1950. This included a new roof with an entirely different pitch, the removal of bay windows from the front of the house, removal of the second story parapet on the north facade, and removal of the porch roof balustrade.



Scott Ethridge’s house was in built 1912 of the Miracle- Ho’Low Blocks



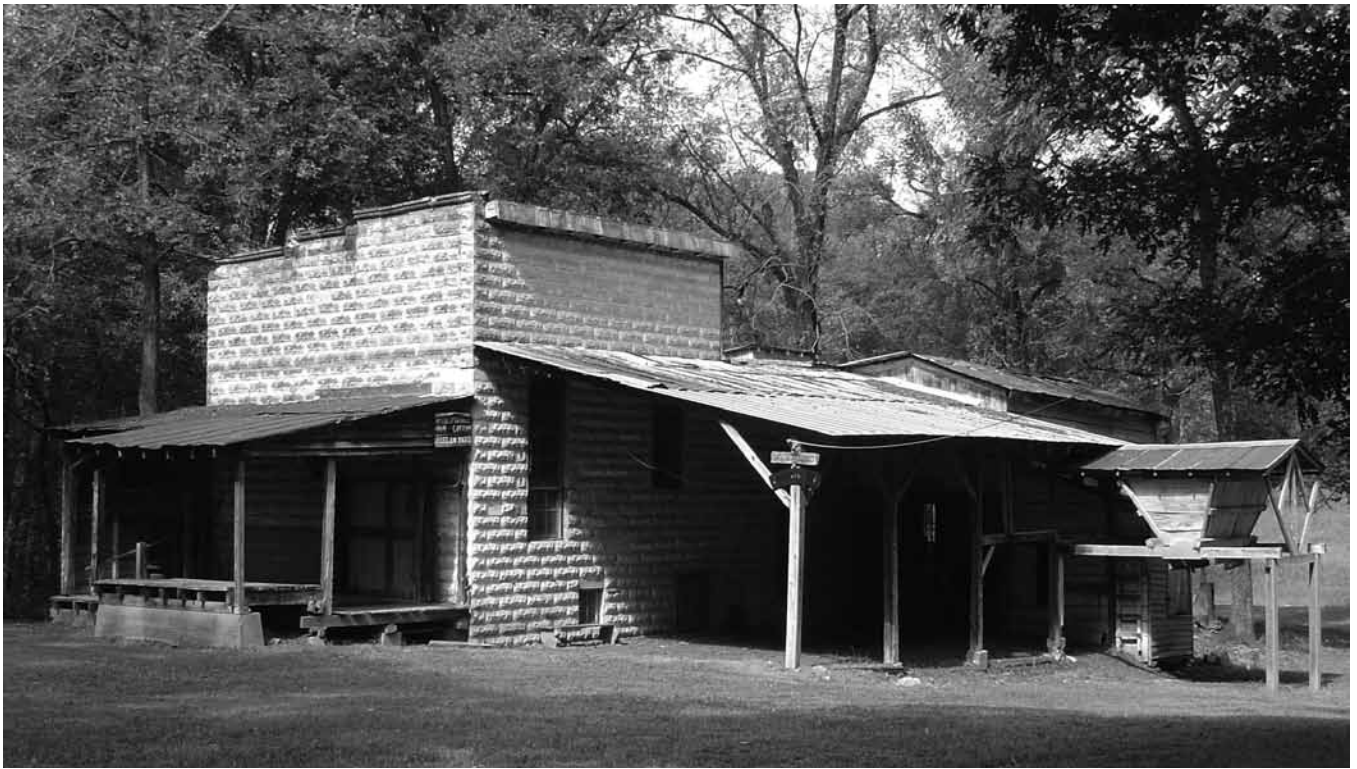
Elmer and Mag Venable house, circa 1904

Built of the Miracle Ho'Low blocks. It is located on Highway 124, south of Jefferson in Jackson County.

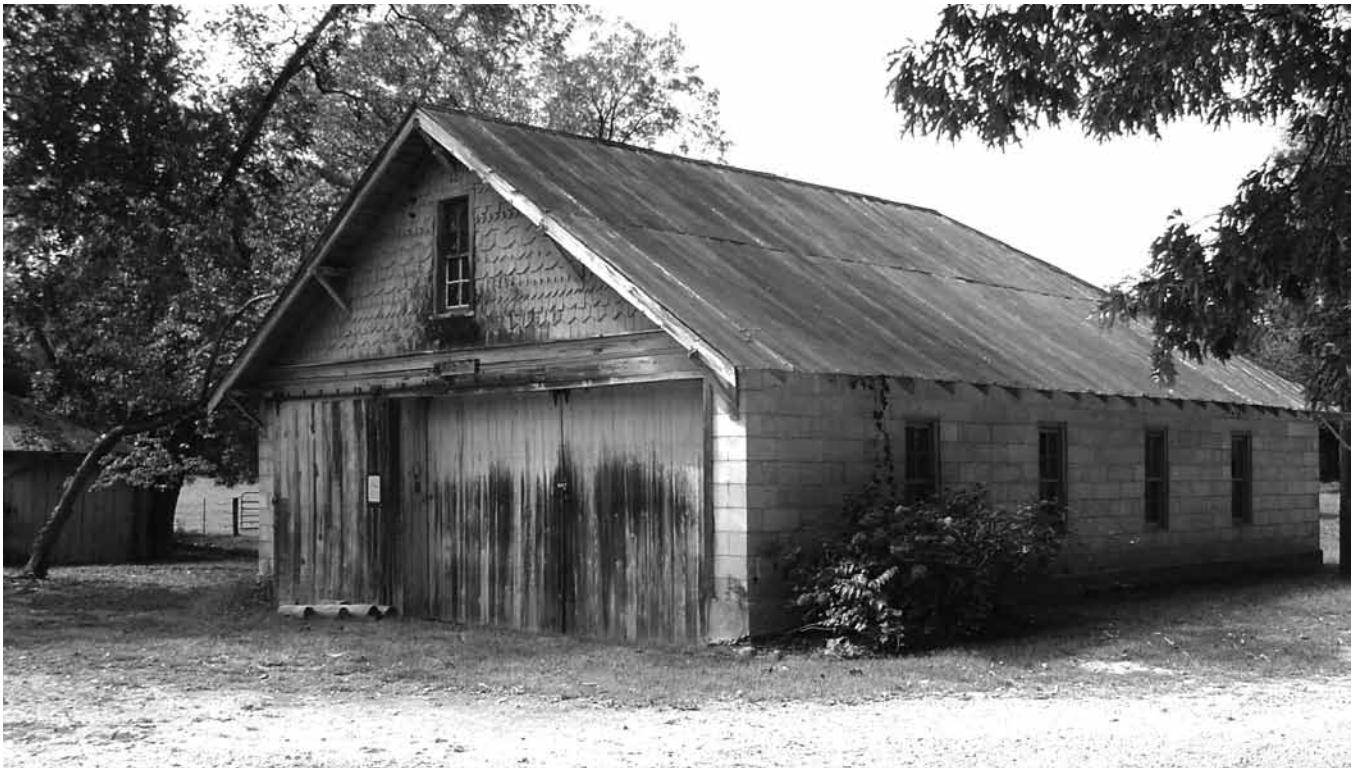


The W.H. Smith house was built in 1914.

Dr. Smith also owned the red brick building next door where he had his dentist office. He and his wife Ossie Johnson Smith (she was a Johnson from the farm of Galilee Church Rd) pressed their infant son's feet into the concrete floor of the vestibule at the front door with the date 12/4, 14. Either April 12, 1914 or December 4, 1914. Dr. Smith had lived through a tornado as a child when he lived in Hoschtton with his parents and he wanted a very strong house to live in. The form that the blocks were made with existed into recent times but was destroyed by the previous owners. It is believed that Scott Ethridge made the blocks.



Photos taken on the Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm. Owner, Ira Ethridge was the brother of Scott Ethridge. Top photo: Cotton gin built circa 1910 using Miracle Ho'Low Blocks. Bottom photo: Mule barn, circa 1916 of blocks by Scott Ethridge



Top photo: Garage built in 1923 by Scott Ethridge. Bottom photo: Corn crib with the inscription on the lintel "1916" and decorative treatment around the lower sides by Scott Ethridge.

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Scott Ethridge also made the paving stones around the Jackson County courthouse