

Jackson County Historical Society News

VOLUME ELEVEN, NUMBER THREE

APRIL 2004



“Sheriff Braselton and Grady Reynolds, as they stepped from the train last Saturday.”

early newspaper photographic rendering in the Jackson Herald, March 5, 1897

Newsletter

The Jackson County Historical Society News is published quarterly and mailed before the next meeting. Back issues can be obtained for \$2.50 each plus postage. Past newsletters can be viewed online at: rootsweb.com/~gajackso/

Queries

Send queries to be published before the next deadline, July 1, 2004. Send requests for information to the address below with a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Dues

The dues year runs from July to July. Checks can be written to the Jackson County Historical Society and mailed to P. O. Box 1234, Commerce, GA 30529:

Individual –\$10
Family –\$15
LIFE member –\$100

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Obituaries

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, February 6, 1891

Mr. John Carter was buried here (Hoschton) Sunday.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, February 6, 1891

Mrs. Tom Lott died the latter party of last week and was buried near Mr. Joe Cooper's, at the old Lott burying ground. She died happy and in her right mind. While Mr. Lott has lost a loving and good wife, Heaven has gained a precious jewel. When she was on her death bed she told her friends that she was not going to die –she was just getting ready to live.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, March 6, 1891

John Hancock was born in Jackson County, Ga., in 1811, and lived to near four score years. His father moved to Gwinnett County when John R. was a small boy. His father died there. His mother moved back to Jackson, and the care of raising him and three others and training devolved upon her. She being a strict Presbyterian, trained him up in the way that he should go, and when he was old he did not depart from it. His early education was limited to the common schools, but he was a student the most of his life.

He was converted when young and joined the Presbyterian Church. After his marriage to Rebecca Lyle he joined the Methodists, there being a church near him, and like Isaac and Rebecca they lived happily together for more than fifty years. Soon after his connection with the Methodists he was appointed class-leader and afterwards steward, which offices he held as long as he was able to do efficient work. He believed, taught, and experienced revealed religion—that is, he believed in the direct witness of the Holy Spirit witnessing with his spirit that he was a child of God.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, October 30, 1891

Mrs. Nancy Lyle, one of the oldest citizens of our town, and mother of Mr. J. A. Lyle, died at the home of her daughter in Hoschton on Wednesday morning. She was stricken with paralysis some time ago, and her death was not unexpected. Mrs. Lyle will be missed by many people in Jefferson, as she was a member of the Methodist church, and a zealous worker for the cause of Christ.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, April 22, 1892

Died, in Jackson County, near Hoschton, March the 3d, 1892, Sister Drusilia Williams, wife of Joseph Williams.

She was born December the 27th 1870, and was married to Joseph Williams, July the 16th, 1891. Drusilia was a lovely woman. She was loved and respected by all who knew her, and had been a member of the church three years. She had ever been an obedient child to her parents, and an affectionate wife to her husband, and faithful in a short Christian life, yet death has taken her mortal body as its victim. She has left a bereaved husband, a father and mother, a sister and brother, and many friends, who greatly mourn her loss, yet we believe our loss is her everlasting gain.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, October 30, 1896

Frank M. Lyle was born in Jackson county seventy years ago; he lived in said county until twenty-seven years ago, since which time, he lived in Rome and Atlanta, until October 15th, 1896, when he left for his home in heaven.

He was a member of the Methodist church a half century. He married Neoma Carroll in 1851. To them were born five children, one son and four daughters, who still live to honor the name of their precious, pious old father. Mr. Lyle was sick only a week, but was ready when the summons came. Services were held in Atlanta by Rev. W. M. D. Bond, and then the remains were brought to the home of his aged sister, Rebecca Hancock, in Jackson county, and buried in the family grave yard. Quite a host of friends and relatives were present to pay the last tribute of respect to the memory of this good man. He leaves an aged widow and five children to mourn their loss.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, January 22, 1897

Mrs. Gen A. Delaperriere died at her home near Hoschton on Wednesday night, January 13th, after a lingering illness. She had been confined to her bed for over three months, and death came as a sweet relief from pain at the end of a long life well spent.

At the time of her death Mrs. DeLaperriere was eighty-five years of age, and had spent a Christian life, having been a member of the Baptist church for many years. She was the mother of our fellow townsman, Dr. J. C. DeLaperriere, and leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn her death.

Her remains were buried in the family burying ground.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, February 12, 1897

The subject of this sketch is in the person of David Smith, who was born on Reedy River, South Carolina, Feb. 18, 1808, and died at his home near Hoschton, Jackson Co., Ga., Nov. 19, 1896.

He married Miss Patsy Whaley in the year 1832, and lived happily with her until his death. The good Lord blessed them with nine children, seven of whom are living to mourn his death. He united with the M. E. church at Bethlehem, in his 24th year, and lived a devoted Christian till the day of his death. His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Bethlehem in the presence of quite a number of people. The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Rev. J. D. Milton. Mr. Smith, like all other men, had his imperfections, but in the main he was an honor to Christianity, was the principle founder of the church at Bethlehem, of which he was a member for a long time. It is hard to speak in terms too high of such a man. His heart and purse were ever open to the calls of charity. His exemplary life was one worthy of imitation. As it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst such a good man, we know that our loss is his eternal gain. His heavenly Father has only called him to come up higher.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, February 12, 1897

Mrs. A. V. Daniel, died of typhoid fever December 8, 1896, at her home near Hoschton, Jackson Co., Ga. She was sixty-nine years and four days old at the time of her death.

She was the wife of Mr. John A. Daniel, who preceded her to the grave fifteen years. For sixteen years she has been a consistent member of the Baptist church. She was the mother of eleven children, six of whom were around her bedside when the death angel came and bore her sweet spirit from earth to heaven. She leaves many relatives and fiends to mourn her death, but their loss is her eternal gain.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, October 21, 1898

Mrs. H. O. Attaway died at her home near town Sunday night at 12:15, after an illness of about three weeks. Her remains were interred Monday evening in Bethlehem cemetery. She was a true member of Bethabara church, where her presence will be greatly missed, but all are satisfied that their loss is her gain. She leaves a husband and six children to mourn her departure.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald March 5, 1897

Mr. W. C. Hunt, a Bellton Merchant, Decoyed into Jackson County and Killed and Robbed.

One of the foulest, most fiendish and most brutal murders ever committed has just come to light in the last few days. Mr. M. C. Hunt of Bellton was murdered in cold blood, robbed of his money and his body cast into the North Oconee river, in this county. Grady Reynolds and Bud Brooks committed the awful crime.

Reynolds is now in jail here, and confessed the whole crime, while Bud Brooks is still at large, but a posse of determined men are in pursuit of him.

A large reward is offered for the capture of Bud Brooks, dead or alive, delivered to the sheriff of Jackson County.

About five years ago a quiet gentleman from Anderson, S. C. opened a store in Bellton. While quiet and somewhat reserved, yet he was polite and courteous and strictly honest in business dealings and transactions, thereby making for himself many warm friends and building up a splendid trade. Such was M. C. Hunt, the man who was murdered. Mr. Hunt was a single man, had very few expenses, and did not spend money in extravagance on himself or throw it away in riotous living, therefore, he soon began to accumulate a snug little fortune.

But sometime last fall he decided to go back to South Carolina, where he was born and reared, and there open up business, so he began to sell his goods at reduced prices; many he sold at first cost. The volume of the stock had been considerably reduced and the volume of money greatly augmented by this transaction. Mr. Hunt would never deposit his money in a bank or put it in a safe for keeping, but always kept the money on his person.

Grady Reynolds, who lived in Banks County, near Bellton, but recently has been cutting cross ties in this county, not very far from Harmony Grove, learned that Mr. Hunt was selling out, and about a month ago proposed to take the entire stock of goods at first cost. The proposition was accepted, and on Friday and Saturday, the 12th and 13th of February, were devoted in taking an inventory of the stock of goods.

After completing the task of taking stock, Reynolds told Hunt that he and his partner, Bud Brooks, had saved money out of the cross tie business and had deposited it in the Harmony Grove bank, and that they would be obliged to go to Harmony Grove for it. This was acceptable to Mr. Hunt, and on Monday, February the 15th, the

two left Bellton together in Mr. Hunt's buggy with face turned towards Harmony Grove. This was the last ever seen of Hunt in Bellton. On Wednesday Grady Reynolds returned to Bellton in Hunt's buggy, and driving Hunt's horse. He also had Mr. Hunt's watch, ring, pistol, knife, and bill of sale to the stock of goods. He opened the missing man's store and went to selling goods at enormously reduced prices, selling many articles from 50 to 60 percent, below cost. He told the people that he had bought Hunt's entire business out, and that Hunt said he was going to Carson City, Nevada, to see the prize fight between Corbett and Fitzsimmons. The horse and buggy were sold to Quillain Bros. for \$100. Reynolds endeavored to get possession of Hunt's trunk and another horse he had at Bellton, but in this he was not successful.

Reynolds remained in Bellton until the next Monday, when he turned over the store to Joe Borders and Tom Wilson (who once lived near Holly Springs), and said he had to go back to Harmony Grove and complete the cross tie contract he had down there with the Northeastern.

Rumors about the missing man began to fly thick and fast. Some said one thing and some another. About this time Mr. McGhee, the depot agent of Greenville, S. C., was returning from Atlanta, and when the train stopped in Bellton, stepped off and heard the rumors about the missing man. As soon as he arrived in Greenville he communicated the news to Colonel C. J. Hunt and Dr. W. T. Hunt, citizens of Greenville and brothers of Mr. M. C. Hunt. The brothers left at once for Bellton, where they ascertained all the facts connected with their brother's departure, and immediately they swore out a warrant for the arrest of Grady Reynolds.

Two posses of men left Bellton to search for Reynolds, and the officers at Harmony Grove were wired to arrest him if he could be found. The telegram was put into the hands of Marshal Scott Jackson, who knew Reynolds, and knew that he had been getting cross ties over on Mrs. Butler's place, just above the iron bridge between here and Harmony Grove.

Before Jackson left the train arrived bringing some men from Bellton, one of whom, in company with Marshal Jackson, left in search for Reynolds. Just before reaching the Butler place, the gentleman from Bellton said he probably had better stop. Scott Jackson went on alone. Hearing the sound of an axe, he went in the direction from whence the sound came, and soon saw Reynolds. There was Reynolds, bold, daring, desperate.

Would it do to try to arrest him without assistance? This, and many more thoughts passed through Jackson's mind as he looked from behind a tree at Reynolds. "Shall I go back for more help or shall I arrest him alone?" thought the marshal. "I will arrest him or die in the attempt." With this determination he walked quietly towards where Reynolds was at work.

Reynolds did not see him until Marshal Jackson was in a few feet and spoke. Reynolds looked up, when the marshal said, "Consider yourself under arrest. Put your axe down." But Reynolds did not put the axe down. "Put your axe down." Said the marshal, and at the same time pointed an ugly revolver at Reynolds, who then obeyed the commands. Handcuffs were placed on the prisoner and he was carried to Harmony Grove. From here he was carried to Bellton, where he was confronted by Colonel C. J. Hunt and Dr. W. T. Hunt, brothers of the man whom he was charged of murdering. This was on Wednesday. For two hours that afternoon the brothers quizzed him, but got no confession from him. That night Colonel C. J. Hunt was given a little pistol, which was found on Reynolds. Colonel C. J. Hunt knew that it was his brother's pistol, and one he prized very highly and would not part with for love nor money.

The next morning he went to Reynolds again, stood directly in front of the prisoner, looked him steadfastly in the face all the time he talked. Directly he presented this little pistol, and said to Reynolds, vehemently: "Where did you get that?"

"From Mr. M. C. Hunt," said Reynolds.

"How did you get it?" asked Col. Hunt.

"I bought it," answered the prisoner.

"You did no such thing, and you know it," said Col. Hunt. "You went off with my brother and murdered and robbed him. You robbed him of this pistol after you had killed him. I know my brother is dead, and that you killed him, and that his body is somewhere between Bellton here and Harmony Grove, or in the river. We propose to have his body, matters not at what cost, and we are going to prove that you murdered him."

This made the prisoner wince. He wouldn't look into Colonel Hunt's eyes again, but looked steadily at the ground.

"Now sir," said Col. Hunt. "We propose to send fifty men from here and get five hundred down at Harmony Grove, and we are going to show you my brother's dead body in less than 24 hours."

With this Colonel Hunt left Reynolds, and secured the services of several people, and was going to secure the services of many more, when Reynolds made a clean breast of the whole thing, telling all about the killing, and where the body would be found.

The body of the dead man was found in the river, about half a mile above the iron bridge that spans the Oconee river, between here and Harmony Grove, just where Reynolds said it would be found, and within two hundred yards of where the murderer was arrested by Scott Jackson. It was dragged out of the river at exactly the spot where Reynolds said it would be found, and exactly in the condition he described. There was a hole in the back of the head, besides being also badly bruised. The shirt had been lifted and the body split open with an axe just over the heart down to the bowels. Several holes were jobbed in the bowels with a pocket knife, and the body was weighted with heavy rocks.

The body was carried to Harmony Grove, where it was dressed, put in a nice casket by Undertaker W. W. Jordan, and sent back to South Carolina for burial.

Coroner M. P. Wood empaneled a jury and held an inquest over the body of M. C. Hunt before it was sent back to his native state for interment. The testimony was quite voluminous, but no very important facts were developed in the trial.

Reynolds' confession and the finding of the body of the dead man so aroused and enraged the people that there were rumors of lynching Reynolds, but he was ushered off to Hall county jail by Sheriff Mundy. But before going away from Bellton he made the following confession, in the presence of Col. C. J. Hunt, Dr. W. T. Hunt, Col. Fletcher M. Johnson, Sheriff A. J. Mundy and others:

"I did not kill M. C. Hunt myself, but Bud Brooks did it. We had been planning the robbery of Hunt for some time before he was killed. I knew Hunt was going to quit merchandising at Bellton, so I went to him and proposed to buy him out, and the trade between us was made. We went through the stock of goods on Friday and Saturday, the 12th and 13th days of February, and found that the stock amounted to \$1,008.33, and Hunt made a bill of sale of the goods and put it in his pocket. I told Hunt I had the money in the Harmony Grove bank, and that I would go with him down, there Monday. Before leaving, I told Hunt to put his gun in the buggy, as we would go to Mrs. Butler's, where I had been boarding for sometime, and there we would find lots of birds. Hunt agreed to this, as he was

very fond of bird hunting. We drove along pleasantly together, and reached Mrs. Butler's about two hours by sun, or earlier, put up our horse, and I told him that we would hunt up Bud Brooks, who was familiar with the country. We found Bud getting cross ties, and he quite work and went hunting with us. Hunt was a fine shot, and bagged several birds. Just before sundown we found, a covey, one of which Hunt bagged. I was just in front of him, and Brooks in his rear. Bud says, "Yonder is a bird, let me shoot him." And he took Hunt's gun. Hunt then looked to see the bird, when Bud struck him a terrible blow in the back of the head with the gun. Hunt fell to the ground, and as he fell, uttered a cry: "Oh! Mercy, I'm murdered;" and reached for his pistol, but was hit another powerful blow, when he fell back dead. We then got an axe and split the body open just over the head. We took all the money he had. I got about five hundred dollars and the bill of sale of the stock of goods, and Bud got fifteen hundred dollars or more. We carried him to the river, which was about 200 yards away. I carried the head, while Bud held the feet off the ground, and we placed him in the river. We put a big rock on him and tied that to him also. We then went back to the house. Bud went one way and I went another, but both of us got there about the same time. Mrs. Butler asked me where the other man was, and I told her he was at the iron bridge waiting for me, as he felt too tired to walk up to the house.

When Bud Brooks heard of Reynolds being arrested, he skipped out.

Brooks came from Oglethorpe county, and his mother, brother, and a number of relatives live near Five Forks. Marshal Jackson and others have been in hot pursuit of him, but so far he has evaded arrest.

Col. C. J. Hunt offers a reward of \$100 for the body of Brooks, dead or alive, and half the money found on his person.

Bud Brooks is 5 feet and 10 inches high, weighs 160 pounds, has black hair, black mustache, dark eyes, set close together and deep in the head; about 31 years old, has big scar on left side of chin running from corner of mouth down, has big scar on cheek below right eye, and when last seen was wearing a cap, sack coat and vest, with plaid purple; was seen last near Five Forks last Saturday.

Reynolds was brought to Jefferson last Saturday by Sheriff Braselton and Deputy Sheriff Patrick on the noon train, and has been in Jackson county jail since then.

A large number of people met the train, and Reynolds asked the sheriff, "What does all that crowd mean?"

"They just want to see you," replied Sheriff Braselton.

He was asked if he was afraid of being lynched.

"No," said he, "if I am given a chance, I am not. I ain't afraid of a thousand men if I am just given something to work with. No, sir; I don't give a d--n for these lynchers."

He was assured that no one was there for the purpose of lynching.

The photographer met the sheriff and prisoner, and when he learned that his picture was about to be taken, said; "Hold on, boys. Wait till I get a shave and get on a Sunday shirt."

But the photographer would not wait, and his picture is presented on this page. (this picture is on the cover of this newsletter)



Photograph of Marshal Scott Jackson, who jeopardized his own life when he arrested Reynolds.



Photo of the Longview School house taken in 1915. Information from the Educational Survey of Jackson County Georgia

Location: Three miles north to Walnut and three miles west to Hoschton.

Grounds: Area, two acres; titles in local trustees. Grove in rear, open in front; partly improved; lawn well mowed; ample playgrounds; adjoining church lot; no school garden; one toilet in average condition.

Buildings: Value, \$1000; two class rooms, each 40x30x12; badly planned building; large room above, no cloak rooms; unpainted; unfinished; fairly well lighted; well kept.

Equipment; double patent desks; good blackboards; one chart; no maps; no globes; no pictures; no library; good well on lot; individual drinking cups at the well.

Organization: two teachers; 8 grades; 70 pupils; no industrial or club work; 24 weeks' school year, divided into two terms of 16 and 8 weeks.

Maintenance from State fund only \$280

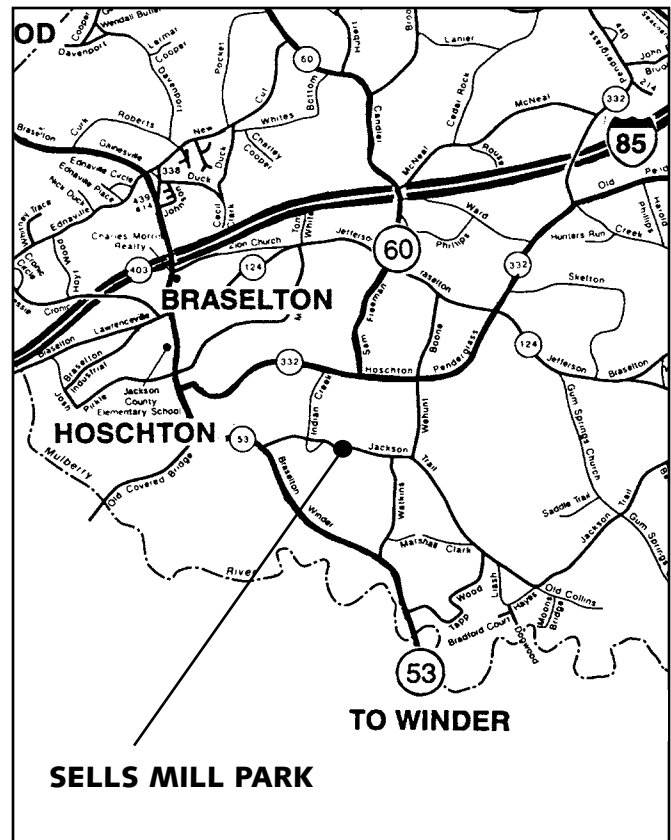


1916 class picture of Longview School. Teachers, Lenora Vaughn and Elizabeth Elrod are standing on the far left.

The Jackson County Historical Society will hold its annual picnic at Sells Mill Park on April 28 at 6:30 p.m. A program by Bill Summerour on his Cherokee Indian artifacts includes an interesting collection of daily cooking and hunting items and utilitarian wares.

The Grist Mill and Dam were built in 1914 by Frank Sells. The large out crop of granite rock throughout the park are part of the roots of Stone Mountain. The park was purchased in 2000 by the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department and opened in 2002 to the public with a playground and pavilion.

Directions: from I-85, take the Braselton exit 129 east on highway 53, travel through Braselton and Hoschton, at Zack's Gas Station turn left onto Jackson Trail Road, travel 1 mile to Sells Mill Park is on the right.



Jackson County Historical Society

P.O. Box 1234 Commerce, Georgia 30529