

HISTORY

Gew
976.1
5

OF

PICKENS COUNTY, ALA.,

FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT

IN

Eighteen Hundred and Seventeen, to Eighteen
Hundred and Fifty-six.

7

BY NELSON F. SMITH.

+

Carrollton, Ala.:

PRINTED AT THE "PICKENS REPUBLICAN" OFFICE.

1856.

261629

DEDICATION.

To the Hon. L. A. GILKEY,
Judge of Probate of Pickens County,
And to Messrs.

JAMES T. BURDINE,
FERGUS McDOWELL,
WILLIAM GIBSON,
THOMAS C. LANIER,

Commissioners of said County.

GENTLEMEN :

Allow me to inscribe to you, as the custodians of the interests of the County of Pickens, the following pages.

Respectfully,

Your obd't serv't,

NELSON F. SMITH.

CONTENTS.

	page.
CHAPTER—I—Aborigines—The Heroic Period,	17
“ II—Organization of Pickens County,	23
“ III—The Earliest Settlers,	<u>30</u>
“ IV—More Settlers—Character —Land Sales and “Old Sol,”	40
“ V—Pioneer Life—First Mills,	46
“ VI—Public Functionaries pri- or to 1830,	51
“ VII—Judges of Pickens,	57
“ VIII—County Court Clerks,	74
“ IX—Sheriffs of Pickens—some Anecdotes,	79
“ X—Commissioners Court from 1830 to the present time,	110
“ XI—Circuit Court Clerks,	114
“ XII—Representatives of Pick- ens,	119
“ XIII—General View of Pick- ens County,	177
“ XIV—General View Continu- ed,	189
“ XV—Senators of Pickens,	211
Appendix.	

ERRATA.

Page 25, line two from bottom, Proffet Rrof-fet, should read, Robert Proffet.

Page 43, line 5 from top, read 1821 for 1822.

“ “ “ 9 “ “ “ \$1 25 for \$2,

and after that, whenever \$2 is put down as the minimum. The price had been reduced shortly before 1821, and the credit system abolished.— See appendix.

Page 46, line 13, Dr. Silas H. Cox. See appendix.

Page 61, line 2 from bottom, for 1851 and 1852, read 1831 and 1832.

Page 83, line 2 from bottom, see appendix for Mr. Jemison's correction as to the "people's choice."

Page 100, line 13, read 1847 for 1849.

A few subsequent errors are so palpably typographical, that corrections would be superfluous.

PREFACE.

No apology need be offered a candid public, for attempting the performance of a good deed, therefore, the author of the following pages, has none to make. If such a history, or any history, is needed for any useful purposes, then it is the privilege of any person to undertake it who has the requisite leisure and inclination.

It is not a matter of much importance to himself, to state that the author took a fancy to write historical sketches of Pickens County in the autumn of 1853, and proceeded to prepare the same, as early as January, 1854, portions of which appeared, throughout that year, in another form. Consequently, he is not indebted, for any suggestion, to the fact that similar historical efforts have been since undertaken by others. The intention of Mr. Blue, of Montgomery, to furnish a history of Alabama, by Counties, (not as yet carried out,) and Mr. Powell's history of Blount County,

(ably and admirably executed—published in the latter part of 1855,) were both unknown to him. Although Chapter First opens with an extract from the excellent history of Col. Pickett, yet the author had never looked between the covers of that work until this, his own humble effort, was over half completed. It affords him, however, much pleasure to acknowledge his indebtedness to both, Messrs. Pickett and Powell, for valuable suggestions and statistics.

It so happens, that in the prolific mine of Alabama history, the last named gentleman, and himself, struck upon two different sections of the same vein, the migration to Pickens being along the same track, explored by Mr. Powell, the emigrants being of the same class and origin—persons of the same name, often family connections, and, in some instances, the same individuals, have been met with. That extensive region once embraced within the boundaries of Blount, was the natural artery of travel from South Carolina and Georgia, as well as the direct one from North Carolina,

Tennessee and Kentucky. It, therefore, turns out, that investigations into the rich mine which has been sprung, (to keep the simile up,) descending down to the bottom of the deep well where truth is said to lie, two persons have approximated near enough to each other to gather up the same grains of the precious ore sought for.

In the summer of 1853, the author paid, for the first time, a visit to the spot where repose the ashes of some of his forefathers, with a view to learn, from distant connections, more than he then knew of his and their common ancestry. It was soon found to be a task not easily accomplished, to obtain correct information of persons who lived, and events which transpired, more than a century ago; so long ago, indeed, that the crumbling grave-stone had ceased to tell the brief story once inscribed upon it. It was not until after an entire week spent in searching public and private, municipal and Church records, that success attended the effort. A volume, with the title, "A history of the County of Berkshire, Massa-

chusetts," was placed in the hands of the enquirer, which proved the much desired "open Sesame" to the secrets of the past. It was a work of some pretensions, of over 450 pages, devoted to Revolutionary reminiscences, biographies of leading men, histories of townships, parishes and Churches, the Courts, aboriginal inhabitants, and purporting to "embrace an account of every thing important in the County, whether natural or artificial, civil, literary or religious," and actually containing the Geography, Botany and Natural History, even to the Entomology of the County.

To find, in a modest corner of this history, a few simple passages respecting the life and character of a remote ancestor, was very pleasant and satisfactory. It was a circumstance which caused the heart to throb warmly towards those "gentlemen in the county, Clergymen and Laymen," through whose instrumentality and labors the work had been prepared. It only remains to be added, that the unpretending volume now presented to the public, owes its existence to the facts here narrated.

Returning home in the autumn of 1853, with the impression upon his mind that he could render a substantial service to the people of his adopted county, by writing its history, he immediately set about the task of preparing his materials, and has been industriously employed for upwards of two years, in producing the imperfect sketches now submitted to them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

It is incompatible with the feelings of a generous nature, to be unmindful of obligations. The interest which has been manifested in my efforts to prepare these pages for the press, on the part of several gentlemen, entitles them to my sincere gratitude, and will not soon be forgotten. Of the importance of the aid which has been rendered me by others—indeed, all my information had to be procured from *some* source—some person, or persons, record, or records—history and not romance being the present object—of the importance and character of *said aid*, the reader may judge by reference to the Appendix.

Judge A. B. MEEK, of Mobile, has been so kind as to express his appreciation of my labors, in a communication of some length, from which the liberty is taken, to make the following extract:

Mobile, March 18th, 1856.

NELSON F. SMITH, Esq.:

My Dear Sir:—Your letter with accompanying sheets of your "History of Pickens county," was received two days since. For your kind consideration, in sending me these, you have my thanks. I have read the "History," with much pleasure. It exhibits great diligence and research upon your part, in performing for your county, a service greatly needed in all the counties of our State; and you have combined and arranged your materials in a most interesting manner. The people of Pickens, will owe you a permanent debt of gratitude, for thus rescuing from oblivion, the memories of their ancestors, of their pioneers, and of their public functionaries. If some one equally capable, would thus perform the enlarged part of "old mortality" for every county, Alabama would eventually have a History worthy of her character as a State. I look upon your work, and that of Mr. George Powell, as to Blount county, as most valuable contributions to our fund of historic knowledge. You will not fail, I trust, to lay your book,

when completed, before the Alabama Historical Society. * * * * *

Most truly, your friend,
A. B. MEEK.

A portion of the proof-sheets having been submitted to ROBT. JEMISON, Esq., of Tuscaloosa, as one of the early residents of Pickens, with a view to ascertain correct information upon some doubtful points, that gentleman was pleased to reply at considerable length, and to make many important suggestions. Mr. JEMISON writes as follows, of this enterprise :

Tuscaloosa, March 16th, 1856.

DEAR SIR:—I have read with much interest and pleasure, the pages of your forthcoming little History, sent me by Mr. A. E. Van Hoose. They have revived the recollection of many an incident and anecdote of by gone days, that were fast fading from memory—recalled, too, many a name once familiar, but not thought of for years. * * * * *

A few months ago, the Secretary of the Alabama Historical Society, James Van Hoose, Esq., of Tuscaloosa, transmitted me the "Transactions" of the Society, accompanied with a tender of "the privilege of membership," re-

questing me to write a history of Pickens County, and transmit him, what he was pleased to term "valuable," those sketches of Pickens which had already appeared in another place. The nature of the work I was solicited to perform may be seen from the Secretary's description, as follows:—"To write a history of your county, including its physical geography, its earliest settlements, its organization as a county, its progress at different periods, its different branches of industry, their extent and times of introduction, its natural resources, public improvements, the direction and extent of its trade, its various and successive public offices,—with such notices of the men and the occurrences that have marked the history of your county, as may seem to you worthy of being preserved"—and to omit nothing "from this narration which excited interest or became conspicuous in the county at the time of its occurrence—*since those facts may possess deep and philosophical interest at distant times and places, which seem trivial to cotemporaries in their immediate vicinity.*"

Noticing these same "sketches," referred to by Mr. Van Hoose, the editor of the Montgomery Advertiser & Gazette, Mr. Blue, a gentle-

man who is himself contemplating the preparation of a history of all the counties in Alabama, thus spoke of them at the time of their appearance :

“ We must commend in the strongest terms the editor of the *Pickens Republican* for the good service he is doing his own county and the State at large, for his series of sketches of Pickens county. With a desire to interest his readers with something better than the every day hacknied subject of politics, as well as to rescue such valuable information from oblivion, he has sought out diligently, and published numerous important and interesting facts and incidents connected with the early history of Pickens county. His course opens a new field for editors in the State, and we hope the example will be imitated in every county.”

For the above, and for other friendly and complimentary notices of the humble task I have undertaken, and which I have so poorly performed, I tender my grateful acknowledgments.

THE AUTHOR.

HISTORY OF PICKENS COUNTY.

CHAPTER I.

“ YOUNG MEN of Northwestern Alabama and Northeastern Mississippi! Remember that the bravest race that ever lived, once occupied the country which you now inhabit—once fished in your streams, and chased the elk over your vast plains! Remember, that whenever that soil, which *you now tread*, was pressed by the feet of foes, it was not only bravely defended, but drenched with the blood of the invaders. Will you ever disgrace that soil, and the memory of its first occupants, by submitting to injustice and oppression, and finally to invasion? We unhesitatingly give the answer for you.—No—no—never!”

This is a patriotic appeal to *us*, as tenants of the soil of Pickens, for our location nearly answers to the above. It is a just tribute to the brave Chickasaws, a tribe of Indians which once dwelt upon our Northwestern border. It is the eloquent closing passage of a Chapter of Mr. PICKETT'S History of Alabama, entitled “The French Battles upon

the Tombigbee." 119 years ago, this "good Bienville" passed through the now County of Pickens, at the head of over 500 soldiers, French and Indians, to attack the Chickasaws, on their own soil. He had to pass along up our winding river, the Bigbee, through nearly the whole length of this County, which he did in rude boats up as far as Cotton Gin, in the State of Mississippi. After several terrible contests with that invincible race, he was defeated in "the battle of Ackia, which lasted three hours, and resulted in glory to the Chickasaws, and disgrace to the French." 120 years ago, this wonderful man, who had for 30 years led a life of Indian strife in the Territory now embraced by Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi, betook himself to his boats in his retreat from his first defeat and last battle, and passed silently down by the sites of the now flourishing towns of Pickensville, Memphis, Fairfield, and Vienna, in this County, back to "Fort Tombecbee," (Jones' Bluff,) whence he descended to Mobile, and thence soon after, returned to Paris.—Bienville, "the good and wise," as Mr. PICKETT styles him, was another of the extraordinary men, such as France and Spain have produced their full quota of MEN and HEROES—such as the more fabulous days of Old Greece would have delighted to deify.

"Yes," exclaims the Alabama Historian, in another place—"Yes, citizens of the Counties of Montgomery, Coosa, Tallapoosa, Macon, and Russell, reflect that 137 years ago, (dating from 1851,) the French Governor of Louisiana, "the great and good Bienville," *walked* over your soil, and instituted friendly relations with its rude inhabitants, among whom not a solitary white man had then a permanent abode, and established a small colony upon the east bank of the Coosa."

As 22 years later, the same man "walked" upon the soil of Pickens, let us also "reflect." Let us "reflect," since such is the Historical fact, that another very remarkable character once "walked" upon our soil, a greater, though not better, than Bienville—none other than HERNANDO DE SOTO himself. According to authentic accounts, that wonderful adventurer, more than 311 years ago, crossed from the Big Black Warrior, in Greene County, diagonally through the whole breadth of Pickens, to the Little Tombecbee, somewhere in Lowndes County, Mississippi, leading his bold band of Knights, Cavaliers, Desperadoes, and Adventurers, "young, valient, and of the best blood in Spain,"—the bravest, and the most desperate of men, to the number of over 1000! This was in 1540, or about one year before his discovery of the Mississippi, and about two years before DE

Soto's death. Is it not worth a "reflection," that he was wending his way towards that great discovery, when "walking" over our soil? He passed north westerly through the Chickasaw country, the possessers of which, he tried in vain to conquer—fighting with them like his successor, Bienville, 150 years later, his last battle, the battle of *Alibamo*. Of this tribe, Mr. PICKENS says:—

"The Chickasaws have never been conquered. They could not be defeated by DE SOTO, with his Spanish army in 1541; by Bienville, with his French army and Southern Indians, in 1736; by D'Artaquette, with his French and Northern Indians; by the Marquis De Vandreuill, with his French troops and Choctaws; nor by the Creeks, Cherokees, Kicapos, Shawnees, and Choctaws, who continually waged war against them. No! They were the bravest of the brave! And even when they had emigrated to the Territory of Arkansas, not many years ago, they soon subdued some tribes who attacked them in that quarter."

Another great Warrior-hero was undoubtedly once within our borders. Not as there is record or living witness to attest it, but there is the well known fact, that the renowned Indian Chief, Tecumseh, visited almost, or quite, every aboriginal tribe in this State, upon his great Southward sojourn in 1812, breathing vengeance and extermin-

nation against the pale faces. He visited both the Chickasaws and Choctaws, the latter being proprietors of a part of the soil of Pickens. His most natural course from the Ohio to Florida, was to keep down the "Beckbee" and the Alabama Rivers, if he preferred the water route, or to strike across the country to the eastward if he retained his horses, so that he must have passed through our borders. If he made a "talk" to the Choctaws, it was as apt to have been on the rich prairies of Pickens, west of the Bigbee, as any where, that portion of the County being purchased of the Choctaws. Unsuccessful with the latter, he pushed on down to the more hostile Seminoles, and had better success. Returning through East Alabama, he crossed over this way, and is said to have visited the present site of Tuscaloosa, then a Creek village, and it is easy to believe this was his most convenient route back to Detroit.*

We have not been accustomed, as does Mr.

* The well known Choctaw Chief, Pushmataha, is said to have thus addressed his people:—

"You know Tecumseh. He is a bad man. He came through our nation, but we did not turn our heads. He went among the Muscogees, and got many of them to join him. You know the Tensaw people. They were our friends. They played ball with us. They sheltered and fed us, whenever we went to Pensacola. Where are they now? Their bodies rot at Sam Mimm's place. The people of St. Stephen, are also our friends. The Muscogees

PICKETT, to consider Tecumseh only as a mere British emissary, but rather a *true patriot*. He loved his country and his race, and had the sagacity to foresee the fate which awaited the latter, if the "white man" was allowed to possess and cultivate the former. He hated the Anglo-Americans with a savage intensity, and no man, not even a DE SOTO, or a Bienville, ever used such super-human efforts to compass vast and lofty designs. "Reflect," therefore, reader, upon these proofs, that this noble Chief once "walked" over the soil of Pickens! What present inhabitant of this region would not pay a handsome sum for such a sight as this famous Warrior then presented? Five brothers and his sister, Tecumspense, a remarkable woman, accompanied him. At the head of a body guard of 30 Ohio braves, seated on horses, entirely naked except their flaps and ornaments, their faces painted black, their heads adorned with eagle plumes, buffalo tails fastened by bands

intend to kill them too. They want soldiers to defend them. (He here draws out his sword, and flourishing it, added:) You can all do as you please. You are all freemen. I dictate to none of you. But I shall join the St. Stephen people. If you have a mind to follow me, I will lead you to glory and victory!" A warrior rose up, slapping his hand upon his breast, and said: "I am a man! I am a man! I will follow you." All of them now slapping their breasts, a general shout went up, and GAINS, (General Gains,) was filled with joy at the result.

around their waists streaming out behind, and buffalo tails also fastened to their arms by means of bands, such a sight would now be a novel one to stride across our hills and plains. So too, would be the spectre of DE SOTO with his 1000 Spaniards, or of Bienville with his 500 French and Indians.

CHAPTER II.

ALABAMA was admitted into the Union, by Act of Congress, March 2d, 1819. The County of Pickens, while Alabama was a Territory, and before the organization of this County, was connected with Tuscaloosa, as a civil and political division, and, up to 1820, the Courts of that County had jurisdiction over all the Alabama Territory on the west of her. After Alabama's admission into the Union, at the 2d session of the Legislature, which met at Cahaba, on the 1st Monday in November, 1820, an Act was passed the 19th of December, following, creating the County of Pickens, and defining its boundaries. At that session, George W. Owen was Speaker of the House, Gabriel Moore, President of the Senate, and Thomas Bibb, acting Governor, William W. Bibb having died before the expiration of his term, but as ISRAEL PICKENS was elected Governor the

next year, our County was indebted to him for its name. The Act above referred to, designates a "temporary site for holding the Courts at the house of Jacob Dansby," and establishes three Election Precincts, one "at — Mullen's, on the road from Columbus to the Falls of the Warrior, one at James Heflin's, and one at the residence of Ezekiel Nash." Respecting the last named Precinct, it was not in this County or State, but the Elections for Pickens, were held at that place in the State of Mississippi, for several years. "The house of Jacob Dansby" is not now extant. It was situated some half mile north of the present residence of Mr. A. T. Henley, near the now flourishing town of Pickensville. Heflin's, (spelt in the Act, Heplin's,) is now known as the Garden, and Mullen's, as Mitchell's. Of the 52 counties of Alabama, Pickens was the 30th, organized December 19th, 1820, consequently, on the 19th day of December, ultimo, she was 35 years, or over one third of a century old.

The records of public proceedings, appear to have been very well kept in those early times, so far as they can be found, especially from the election of Levi W. Parker, Esq., Clerk of the County Court, at the first Election after the organization of the County. Upon a fly leaf of the oldest book of Records now extant, is found the following :

"*Mobile, Apr. 20, 1822, L. W. Parker: his Register for the County Court of Pickens County, Alabama State.*"

Into this seems to have been transcribed minutes of the May term, 1821. The County Court at that time was called the "Inferior Court," and consisted of five Justices, elected by the Legislature, with power to choose one of their number Chief Justice. It was under that regime that the first Pickens County Court Record thus runs :

"*State of Alabama, Pickens County. May term, 1821—Court present; Solomon Marshall, Thomas Shannon, James Newman, and Jacob Dansby. Solomon Marshall being nominated, was duly elected Chairman of the County Court of Pickens.*"

The Court then went on to dispatch a large amount of business, for there were then no Commissioners of Roads and Revenue, as now. They elected various officers, ordered many new roads, and besides held Court for civil, and litigated law business. It will not be amiss to quote the names of those persons found upon this old Record, as among the leading characters of our County at that time. In different capacities we find those of James Cox, Robert Cox, Jonathan York, Elijah Willbanks, Proffet Rrophet, Frances Flournoy, Isaac Taylor, James Heflin, Joshua Stock-

still, Herbert Beckman, Samuel and Joel Hundly, Thomas Lancaster, Malachiah Williams, Thos. T. Gore, Matthew Clannahan, Thomas Clemans, Peter Kilpatrick, John G. Ring, Joe. Tilly, the last two litigants.

OWEN SHANNON—Auctioneer.

HENRY ANDERSON—Treasurer.

JOHN BARKSDALE—Coroner.

WILLIAM E. WILLIS—Surveyor.

ADENO GRIFFIN—Sheriff.

LEVI W. PARKER—C. C. C. P. C.

The next record is a year later, when, May term, 1822, Sheriff Griffin, certified to the election of Solomon Marshall, John Barksdale, Robert Cox, and James Heflin, as Commissioners of Roads and Revenue, the old Court having been abolished by the Legislature the previous June, at the extra session of that year, and an election having intervened under the new law. Solomon Marshall continued to be Judge nearly ten years, or till 1830, under both organizations of the County Court. It will be seen that Levi W. Parker, Esq., who is now living near Franconia, in this County, and enjoying a green old age, was, 34 years ago, the first Clerk of the County Court of Pickens. He and Mr. Isaac Taylor, are the only persons above named, now (January 18th, 1856,) residing in this County, and but one or two of the rest survive.

The boundaries of this County are defined in the Act of December 19th, 1820, viz: A line shall commence at a point where the State line cuts the Tombeckbee River, running down the same, to the Greene County line, thence east on the said county line to the line dividing Ranges one and two, east of the meridian of St. Stephens; north of said line to its intersection with the Sipsey water of the Beckbee River; thence pursuing the meanders of that stream, to that point where the line dividing Ranges 12 and 13, west of the meridian of Huntsville, touches the same, north on said line to the Marion, south boundary line, west to the State line; thence on the said line to the place of beginning, which shall form one County, to be known and distinguished by the name of Pickens County. There have been several alterations of these limits. In 1823, a small slice was ceded to Tuscaloosa on the north east, and, in 1832, that portion of our present Territory, which is south of the Sipsey River, was ceded to us from Greene. At the next session, in 1832, the rectangular shape of the County was perfected by a further cession to us of "all that Territory west of the first sectional line, at or below the junction of the Sipsey and Tombeckbee Rivers, running due west to the Mississippi line," where, at the same session, an election precinct was es-

published, namely, at the house of G. B. Mobly, in that portion of the Territory purchased from the Choctaw tribe of Indians, and west of the Tombeckbee River, which has recently been added to the County of Pickens.

With these boundaries, the area of the County is about 980 square miles, its dimensions being about 25 and a half miles on the North, 30 on the South, and 36 from North to South, or an average of about 28 wide, to 30 long, including 20 complete and 11 incomplete Townships, containing about 627,200 acres. The present Court-House is very near the exact centre of the county.

The first election precinct established after the creation of the county, was at the extra session of June 21st, "at the house of — Cox, near Coldfire creek." At the regular session of the same year, it was "further enacted, that there be an additional election precinct in the county of Pickens, at the house of Charles M. Holland."—As the county became more populous, other precincts were established, to meet the convenience of voters; one at the house of Jesse Clements, in 1822, one at Robert Bridges, in 1823, one at John Davidson's, in 1824, two in 1825, at the house of William Sanders and Stephen Bennett, two in 1827, at Wright Roundtree's and Richard Jones, one at Solomon Bennett's, on Sipsey, in 1828, and

three in 1830, at James Ferguson's, George S. Ragsdale's, and George Trantham's, and in 1831, at Carrollton. These ten precincts, (7 of the 17 having been discontinued,) may be taken to indicate the more populous neighborhoods, at that period, the names of which will readily suggest their localities. We present below all the precincts at the General Election, in 1831, with a list of the Managers.

TRANTHAM'S.—George M. Trantham, Samuel Wilder, Robert Ellis.

BENNETT'S, on Sipsey.—Wm. N. Morrow, Benjamin Love, Charles M. Holland.

MYERS.—William Harris, Archelaus Taylor, Andrew Loftin.

MYERHOOF'S.—William Hamiter, Felix Ellis, William P. Gillespie.

PICKENS TOWN.—Elijah Willbanks, David Dorherty, Ambrose J. Rose.

CARROLLTON.—Norris Hendon, James D. Stanton, William Castles.

RAGSDALE'S STORE.—Thomas Spruill, Robert Henry, Henry Story.

MARTIN & DAVIS' STORE.—Oliver Clark, Benjamin Godfrey, James T. Burdine.

SANDERS.—Buel Sanders, Thomas DeLoach, William Kilpatrick.

FERGUSON'S.—Wm. D. Hargrove, James Ferguson, Daniel J. Hargrove.

Up to this time, (1831,) several now flourishing villages do not appear to have been known by

their present designations. We might name Yorkville, Bridgeville, Franconia, Vienna, Memphis, Fairfield, Reform, Gordo, and other central points of business. The number of election precincts are now more than double. Among the managers of the Presidential election of 1832, General JACKSON being then a candidate for his second term, we recognize several persons, still residents of Pickens, (some lately deceased,) viz: William Lang, Elihu Cox, James Garnett, L. W. Parker, Thomas Bradford, Jacob Colvin, Henry O. Love, James Gunter, Daniel Hargrove, Ezekiel Sanders, James T. Burdine, and David Woods.

CHAPTER III.

Those persons who transacted the business of the county at this early period of its history, are easily ascertained from the public records, and it may be interesting to name them in this place.

Elizabeth Proffet and Henry Anderson, took out letters on the estate of Robert Proffet, October 21st, 1822, with James Bayly and William Billington, as securities. Daniel J. Hargrove took letters testamentary to execute the noncupative will of Dudley Hargrove, in November 7th, 1823, Benjamin Williams, Peter Williams, and James

D. Lowe, being witnesses to said will. On December 1st, 1823, letters were granted to William P. Gillespie and Lemuel E. Singleton, upon the estate of Thomas B. Singleton, and to W. Miller, upon the estate of Mary Miller, the same month and year, making only four estates administered upon prior to the above last named date.

In the lists of apportioners, overseers, election managers, juries to review and mark out roads, and in whatever capacity acting, as appear upon the records of the Commissioners Court, in 1824, are found the following names:

“George H. Flournoy, Wm. Hargrove, Thos. Homes, Stephen Jenkins, Randall Sherrod, Caleb and Joseph Barnes, John H. Scott, Edmond Parkinson, Allen, Daniel, and Wm. Cox, Linsey Shoemake, David Bradford, Wm. Davidson, C. M. Holland, Thomas Brashiear, Samuel Wier, Burwell and Parks Ball, Thos. G. Sims, William Spraggins, Henry Robertson, Wm. Fowler, John Crunbull, Richard Jones, John Williams, Thos. C. Stean, Joseph Morehead, Alex. Martin, Underhill and Robert Ellis, James Peterson, Silas Forrester, James Smith, Hugh Harrison, Sterret Dobson, George Wilkins, John Billington, John Morfet, Wm. White, John G. Ring, Lewis Ellison, Silas and Charles Dobbs, Loderwick Robertson, Wm. and Joseph Jackson, Patrick Scott,

Thos. Harris, Aaron Phillips, William Wilson, John Petete, Andrew Porter, Thos. Woods, and Jo. Ellis."

On looking into the records of the Circuit Court, the dockets exhibit other names, which will be recognized as among the pioneers of this region. They are:

"Solomon Marshall, John Ward, Wm. Neighbors, Wm. W. and Wm. Carroll, Jno. W. Gilbry, Jno. McKinley, Flemming Thomason, Geo. Williams, Wm. Addington, Robt. Bridges, Stephen Doss, Andrew McCrary, Wm. McGehee, Saml. Alden, Alex. Merrell, Elijah Weaver, Gilbert and Gordon Saltonstall, John Gordon, Andrew Scott, James Lacy, John Stean, Ephraim Robertson, Chas. Teas, John Oxford, Abram Byler, Neely Dobson, Owen, Thomas, and Moses Shannon, Johnathan Ellison, Nat. Brown, James Powell, Wm. D. Denton, Stephen, George, William, Henry, and Bayley Johnson, Ellis Gore, Obadiah Mayfield, Simon Watson, Saml. Porter, Wm. Grant, Henry W. and John C. Ballard, Robt. Howard, Chas. Cox, J. B. Austin, Wm. and Sterrett Dobson, Lewis, Theophilus, and Daniel Clark, John P. Hill, Thos. Townsend, Archabald Straw, Mathew Parhem, Henry Hawkins, Jesse Stogsdell, James Lyles, Wm. Ricks, Sloan Spriggs, Loan Mullins, John O. Cary, Richard Harrison,

James Williams, Saml. Watson, James Rily, J. A. Ivy, Wm. T. Aycock, Saml. Bell, Wm. Gammell, Wm. McCombs, John Denty, Wm. Ring, James Silas, Hallaway Nall, George Wiggington, Robt. Clannahan, John Morehead, John McGlamery, John and Obediah Hooper, Thomas and William Adair, Hardy and Jesse Jones, Silas Forrester, James Templeton, and Joseph Scarborough."

Of the 187 persons who were among the fathers of the present generation, 34 years since, above named, we now recognize less than 20 survivors, residents of Pickens. Add to 187, 33 other persons, present as purchasers at certain public sales held prior to January, 1824, but of whom only four or five now live in this county, and it leaves us about 25 survivors out of 220. This is nearly correct, but it is not pretended that all the population, or the men, of the county, are embraced in this estimate.

The first settlement in Pickens county, was made by one Josiah Tilly, who located himself in the year 1817, near the well known Bluff of that name, upon the Tombeckbee, some half a mile above Pickensville, the same now owned by Mr. Zack Pulliam. Tilly came directly from Tuscaloosa, was a native of Tennessee or North Carolina, had lived a year or two in Tuscaloosa

county, and had married there the daughter of one Patrick Scott. He was better calculated for border life, having a far more decided taste for the customs of a backwoodsman, than for the refinements of civilization. He had a good deal to do with the Choctaws, was often their agent in little matters, understood their language, and was very popular with them. On one occasion he received from them the sum of \$25, to take a company of Choctaws over to Tuscaloosa to a *(tibbon)* or ball-playing.*

Tilly is represented as a kind-hearted and benevolent man. An instance of his good nature is handed down in connection with a law suit he had with the Choctaw Chief, Mashulatubba. Always preferring a life among the Indians, to remaining with his own family, he went to Mashulaville, Mississippi, and worked upon a house of the above named Chief, for which the latter refused to pay him. Tilly attached the negro slaves of the Indian Chief, (whom some said he decoyed to this side the line,) and this brought over to Pickensville Court, their master, Mashulatubba. The latter got drunk, and being in condition to be insulted and imposed upon, the plaintiff, Tilly, took home with him to his house

*Tibba—to fight, to decide.

his rival litigant, and took care of him, remarking to the Chief, who was rather boisterous, that although they were lawing one another in Court, yet they had been friends, and he would not see him abused. A bystander, whose name need not be mentioned, remarked, at the time, "that, Tilly, is a christian spirit, to render good deeds to our enemies." Tilly was an ordinary sized man, dark complexion, black eyes, and jet black hair, and a very heavy black beard. Altogether, he is said to have borne as much resemblance to the aboriginal race as to his own. He finally, about 1830, left this region, following off, or going with, a small tribe of Mississippi Choctaws, to Texas, with whom he was still living in 1855, having married an Indian woman since the loss of his first wife, and at the present time, at the age of about 70, his head of long black hair, and as white as snow, *he is surrounded by a young half-breeds.*

The next settler, was Jonathan York, another son-in-law of Scott's, who came with his family from Tuscaloosa, the next year, (1818.) He was, originally, from South Carolina, and was said to have built the first board shanty, ever erected in the county of Tuscaloosa. He settled near his brother-in-law, Tilly, on the road which now leads from Pickensville, to Columbus. He is said

to have been connected with an influential South Carolina family, and to have been proved of that connection. General Daniel Wright, of Columbus, a lawyer, and a man of influence at that time in Mississippi, is stated to have testified on a trial in the Circuit Court, at Pickensville, in a suit arising out of a horse-race, between York and Augustus B. Wooldridge, that Jonathan York was his elder brother. Of course, he could be only his half-brother. An unsuccessful effort had been made, to impeach the evidence of York's father and mother-in-law, (the Scott's,) in "the horse-race lawsuit."

Robert Proffett, settled at Pickensville, the same year, and also, John Barksdale, settled near that place, about the same time. The Ringold's, (Robert and William,) located below Pickensville about this date, and gave name to the Bluff, the Bigbee, still called Ringold's Bluff. Of others who settled in the same neighborhood as early as 1818, Elihu Cox, Wm. D. Barksdale and S. P. Doss, alone remain; the two first named, were boys. Burwell Ball came out from Abbeville District, in time to make a crop of corn in 1819. The first crop was made in 1818. The Coxes, James, Robert, and Daniel, planted and raised corn on their little new openings, as early as 1819. Others could be named, who were co-

temporary pioneers in the first settlement of Pickens county, among those, James Newman, Elijah Wilbanks, and John G. Ring. The last named, married a third daughter of Patrick Scott, in Tuscaloosa county. He was a Kentuckian, and the other two South Carolinians.

The earliest settlers of several interior counties of Alabama, are known to have been persons originally from South Carolina, who first migrated to Tennessee, and thence down the Tennessee river, into North Alabama, thence down the central routes of travel, along the old Indian trails and Military roads, cut out by United States troops in the Indian wars, under Gen'ls Jackson, Coffee, and others, passing into Madison, Limestone, Morgan, Blount, Tuscaloosa, and Pickens.* It was most convenient for them to follow this course as a channel of travel indicated by the natural conformation of the country—freer from the obstructions of hostile savages and rugged mountains, both which impediments were in their way, in crossing directly westward to the State of Georgia. Judge A. B. Meek, states in his address of last year, (1855,) before the Alabama Historical Society, that Tuscaloosa remained abandoned, (the Creeks having been nearly annihilated there,) until after the war (of 1812-'15,) when in 1816, the first settlers, *Emanuel York*, and John Barton,

from *Tennessee*, pitched their tents, and raised their crops of corn on the beautiful upland plain where now stands the city of Tuscaloosa. Mr. George Powell, in his sketch of Blount county, states that in 1815, several worthy citizens left the upper Districts of South Carolina, and removed to the State of *Tennessee*, and early in 1817, migrated to Blount. There being the positive evidence of some of the present oldest inhabitants of Pickens, that *Jonathan* was a native of South Carolina, that he came here from Tuscaloosa, and there from Tennessee, he was probably some kin to *Emanuel* York, the first settler of Tuscaloosa, whom Judge Meek says was from Tennessee. It appears that Pickens was settled only one year later than Tuscaloosa, though it must be borne in mind, that the latter at first included Pickens.

It has already been stated, that after a few years this county filled up rapidly with new-comers.—The emigrants poured down in swarms from the upper counties of Alabama. Morgan, Madison, Blount, and Jefferson, each contributing to the stream of migration, until, as has been said, those already here, grew uneasy at the prospect of a too dense population. A large part of the influx came either directly from South Carolina, or were natives of that State. Of the latter, might be named Levi W. Parker, Henry Y. White, and

the late F. W. Bostick, who, all tarried for a while in the county of Madison. It was natural for the pioneers to write back to their relatives and acquaintances in the old States, and influence them to come out. Young men went back and married—sons brought out their parents, and whole families followed the migration of a single member.*

*If it were necessary to confirm the statements contained in this Chapter, that are derived from the oldest living persons in Pickens, reference may be had to a sketch of Blount county, referred to in the text.

From 1816, the emigration was surprisingly rapid. The emigrants came from Madison, and in great numbers from Tennessee. They advanced along the old Indian trace, that led from Ditto's Landing, to Mud Town, on the Cahawba. Every fertile spot near this road was settled in 1817. Great numbers of emigrants came down the Tennessee river. * * * In 1815, several worthy citizens left the upper Districts of South Carolina, and removed to the State of Tennessee, and early in 1817, emigrated to Blount, and located in Murphree's Valley. They founded a prosperous and moral settlement. The members of this little settlement wrote numerous letters to their friends who lived in South Carolina, and induced many of them to emigrate early to Blount county; and it is singular, that from so small a beginning, the Carolinians and their descendants should now form the most numerous portion of Blount, although the Tennesseans had nearly two years the start and had choice of locations. * * * The South Carolinians settled very thick in the lower part of Blount, (now Jefferson,) and next to the Tennesseans, were the most numerous.

The importance of this statement, to a correct understanding of the origin of the first settlers of Pickens coun-

CHAPTER IV.

THE first white child born in this county, or before it was a county, or even bore the name of Pickens, was the daughter of Jonathan York, named Catherine, born in 1818. The first male white child was Edward L. Doss, son of Stephen P. Doss. The second white male was N. G. Barksdale, son of John Barksdale. The second *birth* among the emigrants, was that of a slave, the property of John Barksdale. The first few pioneers into the forests, west of Tuscaloosa, had to pack their corn on horses from east of the Warrior river, but in a year or two, the material for bread became plentiful enough, and never at any time, was there anything like a scarcity of provisions among the early settlers. The wilderness abounded with game, such as deer and wild-turkey, and so soon as cattle could be raised, they found the most ample ranges. A good cow, however, at first was worth \$50. The emigrants never had the least difficulty with the Indians, of whom this section had its full share. Indeed, the Territory of land between the Warrior and the Tombeckbee, was a reserved neutral hunting ground, of

ty, as also, for a knowledge of their characters, will be seen when it is remembered that from 1822 to 1827, there was a great influx of population from the lower part of Blount, or Jefferson, to Pickens.

both the Creeks and Choctaws, for many years, and the sole property of neither of those tribes.— Pushmattaha, the famous Chief of the latter, sometimes visited Pickensville. Mashulavubba was often there, and like his last named compeer, always the reliable friend of the white settlers.

A majority of the earliest emigrants were South Carolinians, as before stated, from the upper Districts of York, Fairfield, Abbeville, and a few other Northern Districts, especially those who settled near Pickensville and Yorkville, and also Bridgeville. But before the year 1820, there were a plentiful sprinkle of new comers from Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and even Virginia. Unlike some other counties, there never were any parties and feuds between the emigrants from different States, but on the contrary, quiet, peace, and concord prevailed in an eminent degree. The first settlers are said to have sprung mostly from respectable families in the olden States, induced by a spirit of enterprise, to seek new homes and possessions, in these then far western wilds, many of them bringing eastern notions of comfort and competency, with means in their hands, and often accompanied by several slaves. With such a population, three or four years was time enough to acquire comfortable domestic possessions. The settlement of Pickens

proceeded slowly at the beginning, insomuch that though the first adventurers are said to have been rather gratified at the prospect of having enough "elbow room," ranges for their stock, and cheap land for a long time to come, yet this was mingled with the apprehension that the sparseness of the population would materially hinder the establishment of schools for the education of their children. They are represented as moral and religious people, possessing strong inclinations for the blessings and enjoyments of good neighborhood and good society. Of course, there were exceptions, among an adventurous people, exposed to all the temptations of unrestrained border life. But in five or six years, emigration became very rapid. Facilities for travelling were greater from the old States, and there were other causes which operated to settle up this county, with a fresh tide of emigration. The best lands, or what were then so considered, were soon taken up. One of these causes, was the abandonment of the public lands in the eastern and upper counties, at the time they were brought into market. The poorer class, and many who were possessors of some property, were not rich enough to compete with the land speculators at these sales, and had to give up their little improvements and seek out other homes in the wilderness.

The first white settlers upon the soil of Pickens, as of all this region, were necessarily *squatters*. The lands were not brought into market until five years after Tilly located on the Bigbee, or in 1822. The interference of speculators at these sales, was also felt severely by the hardy pioneers of Pickens, and some of them lost their lands. They could have paid the minimum price of \$2 per acre, in the four usual annual installments, had they been let alone, but were not able to compete against the gangs of sharpers who appeared at the public vendues ready to out bid them, thoroughly posted up with all necessary information as to the numbers, location, and quality of each settler's lot. Although our State Legislature had passed stringent laws against the speculators, before the sales of the Pickens county lands, yet all the evil was not obviated. The snake was only scotched, not killed. Most of the first purchasers were obliged to make terms with their adroit rivals, in the land market. They generally found it best to effect "compromises" with the speculators, at 100 per cent on the government price, or as best they could with the different companies of speculators, before they were allowed to bid off their own lots at the minimum value. Mr. William Spraggins states that he purchased a portion of his land on those terms, but

had to pay more for the balance, on account of two rival speculators bidding against each other. How easy was it for those two *rivals* to have had an understanding, all the while, and to have divided the spoils with one another!

But one of the anecdotes told of Judge Marshall, who was generally called "Old Sol," shows that these speculators found, now and then, their full match. It runs that on their appearance, as usual, before the sales, the first Judge of the County Court of Pickens, was exceedingly happy to make their acquaintance. He told them, he was glad to see them, that he was in a condition to need their help, that he owed a good deal of money, had a large tract of good land, much more than he could purchase and pay for, if it was run; but that with their assistance, he might be able to retain it all. The speculators appeared very attentive to the polite Judge, and were all smiles and accommodation. They were willing to aid him upon almost any conditions, and proceeded to state their terms. They would bid off his land and let him have it at the usual advance rates of 100 per cent. "Old Sol" seemed equally pleased, save in one respect. He said it would never do to let a "speculator" bid for it, because his neighbors wanted his good land, and would bid against the speculators, but would not bid for it

against *him*, on account of his popularity with them. "O no, says he; let me bid off my land myself, and we can easily arrange the 100 per cent, and the other terms." It must be stated that these speculators did not exact the price agreed to be paid them by the settlers, (\$4 per acre,) in ready cash, but gave them time to pay by annual installments, upon giving security.—Such was the arrangement here meant. The result of these negotiations was, that Judge Marshall was allowed to bid off his lots, (the well known Gillespie place, near Bridgeville,) at the minimum price, (\$2,) without the least interference from either his friendly neighbors, or the "land sharks." At the last rap of the Auctioneer's mallet, the affable Judge addressed the crowd thus: "Gentlemen, I thank you for your kindness. Owing to the forbearance of my good neighbors, and the favor of these gentlemen, (casting a smile upon the speculators,) I have been able to purchase my land so low, that I find I shall have money enough to pay for it myself, without any assistance!" Judge Marshall had lost a large landed property in North Alabama, before he removed to this county, and had no idea of being ousted from possessions which he had improved, and rendered valuable, by a set of men whose business it was to profit by the toil and industry of others.

CHAPTER V.

If Tilly raised a little crop of corn in the year 1817, then that was the first crop ever planted by a white man on Pickens soil, but if he settled here in the latter part of that year, he could not have raised any crop before the summer of 1818. The Coxes, Robert and Daniel, claim to have planted corn in the latter named year. They are mistaken. *They* could not have raised corn prior to the harvest of 1819, and so it must be recorded in these chronicles. The Coxes are among the very first pioneers of this county. Elihu Cox is about the last of the original emigrants remaining, and Dr. Silas H. Cox, is at this time, the oldest survivor among us, of white children born in Pickens county.

The early settlers had necessarily, to suffer the usual privations of emigrants to a new country. rude and rough houses, little or no shelter for horses, mules, and stock, and entire destitution of society privileges. When they had grown their corn, they had no mills to grind it, and had to resort to the pestle and mortar, in preparing it for food. Wheat, which now grows so abundantly with us, was useless for bread, because there were no flouring mills. One may hear the

early emigrants talk of this primitive mode of beating out hommony in large wooden mortars, with a pestle suspended to an elastic pole, and of bolting off the hulls in deer-skin sifters. It is said that an ingenious Scotchman, David Chalmers, contrived a water power pestle, which at one period, pounded out most of the meal for the Pickensville settlers. It was simply a log having a trough dug in one end to hold water, poised on a pivot, to act as a see-saw. A little stream of water being let into the trough, filled it, and brought down that end, and raised the other end of the log, or pole, to which a pestle was attached. This poured the water out of the trough, and lightened that end, and let the pestle down upon the corn in the mortar. They tell an anecdote of one Daniel Johnson and wife, called "Rambler" Johnson, on account of his being so much in the woods, and loving his gun and a roving life, better than labor and domestic habits. His better half, was one day unusually busy, about her household cares, and needed help. She therefore took the maul and beat upon a log to call in her absent spouse, and when he came, told him, that as she was very busy with her washing, she had called him home to beat the hommony for dinner. Daniel replied, that he had heard her beating, and thought the hoe-cake was ready!—

But it must have been as early as 1819 or '20, that Henry Anderson built a corn mill near Pickensville, upon Boguechitta, (Big-Creek,) a "tub-mill," as its class were, and still are called, and that is said to have been the first mill in Pickens county. The public records in 1821, mention "Anderson's mill," and also, "Parker's *old* mill," in the same record, which indicates that the former had very little priority over the latter. The latter was on one of the branches of Bear Creek, near Corr's, or Mitchell's. Other mills were erected, nearly cotemporary, namely, Dorrah's, Donahoo's, and Gardner's, (built by one Walker;) also, Easterwood's, on Coldfire. Bonner's mill was built by Abner Cotton, and in a year or two, sold to Henry J. Townsend, who added a bolter, and ground the first wheat for Pickens county. It is said that the Coxes raised the first wheat as early as 1822 or '23, and carried it to a mill in Lowndes county, Mississippi, to be ground. But little wheat was raised in this county before 1830, on account of there being no good flouring mills.—Most of the wheat flour was brought up the river from Mobile, and, indeed, it is only since 1840 that the planters began to calculate upon a crop of wheat. Cochran's mills were built by Judge Solomon Marshall, now a fine flouring establishment. Other projectors of mills in the county

were Elijah Coons, Henry Townsend, Robert Jemison, William Lampkin, William Castles, and William Owen.

In a few years, nearly all the many streams of our well watered region were made tributary to the uses of man in a labor-saving capacity. Cold-Fire, Sipsey, Lubbub, Blubber, Magby's, Big and Bear Creeks, and even Kelley's Creek, were thus appropriated. The best evidence that most of them were erected with good judgement, is, their having been, in most cases, improved and kept up to the present time. It is true that some of these enterprises have turned out ruinously expensive, and others proved entire failures, owing to the great difficulty of constructing permanent dams upon the marshy bottoms.

The antiquarian reader must needs be informed that one of the first set of Pickens mill stones, is yet extant, and may be seen to this day. After the death of Henry Anderson, which took place in 1825, on the 5th day of July, in that year, these stones were appraised at \$5 00. Burwell Ball, Daniel Cox, Archibald Shaw, and Hezekiah Jones, were the appraisers of that estate, names familiar to us. How they afterwards fell into the possession of Pruitt McGowen, cannot be stated, but the same stones were removed to his residence, (3½ miles south of Carrollton,)

and used by him, for grinding peaches in the manufacture of peach brandy, and the upper stone still lies at the old distillery near the road side!

The staple food for man and beast, with American backwoodsmen, Indian Corn, grew abundant and cheap in a very few years. At the sale of the Dudley Hargrove estate, in 1823, corn brought only 25 cents a bushel on twelve months credit. The same year, in and near Pickensville, corn sold at public sales for 40 cents, and oats at 50 to 75 cents a bushel. At the sales of several estates during the years 1823 to 1826, inclusive, the value of personal property varied little from present prices, as is shown upon the returns. Corn, oats, fodder, cattle, hogs, mules and horses and everything except slaves, appear to have been estimated about the same as such property has been for ten years past.

Cotton was raised from the very beginning by the Pickens planters, then as now, as the easiest means of supplying ready cash for the payment of debts, and for procuring the necessaries or luxuries of life. They had a good river to depend upon to take off their surplus to a good market. Boats found their way up the Bigbee at an early period, with but little more difficulty than at present. If there are fewer *snags* now than then, there is generally a lower stage of water. The

settlement of this county, which began in 1817, as heretofore stated, may be considered as complete by or before 1823. It has been shown that prior to that date election precincts were established all over the county, mills were erected, and society was being built up in neighborhoods and small villages. The nucleus was already formed for Pickensville, Bridgeville, Yorkville, Lowe's settlement, King's Store, and there was, besides, a scattering population over the county. There is no census of the inhabitants of that period within the knowledge of the writer. Of whites and slaves, *five thousand* may be set down as not very wide of the mark.

CHAPTER VI.

IN gathering together such leading facts and incidents as go to constitute the history of a community, the safest authorities are always the public records, and this is a source of information which has been faithfully consulted by us. The county having been settled and organized as a civil community, as already stated, it is natural that the more prominent characters should figure upon the records of the county, in various capacities. It is interesting to note, in the pro-

gress of society, the history of individuals. Persons who enjoy the confidence of the public in a humble capacity, and discharge faithfully their duties, are seen to advance with the community, and rise to higher stations. For illustration, in the useful, highly respectable, yet modest office of Justice of the Peace, some who filled this office within the first two or three years from the first organization of the county, are found afterwards to have been promoted to offices of much more honor and profit. The same men are frequently found acting in different official stations of the humbler order.

Below is given the names of several persons who were the first Justices of the Peace in Pickens county.

In 1821, Jacob Danby and James Heflin.

In 1822, Thomas Shannon, Thomas F. Gordon, Joseph Parker, Jas. Newman, Hezekiah Williams

The next year, (1823,) in addition to some of the above, there appears to have been acting Justices, Silas Dobbs, Lawrence Brasier, Henry Anderson, Joseph Morehead, and Daniel J. Hartgrove.

The only other names upon record, as Justices of the Peace, prior to 1826, are Underhill Ellis, J. J. Hughes, J. W. Patrick, Thomas Nolan and Samuel Wier.

It illustrates what has been remarked, to exhibit the names of the first "County Court," some of its Judges, or Commissioners, being three of those above mentioned, as Justices of the Peace. The minutes read thus:

"May Term, 1821—Court present—Solomon Marshall, Thomas Shannon, James Newman and Jacob Danby."

On the 7th day of May, 1822, Mr. Sheriff A. Griffin certifies to the election of Solomon Marshall, John Barksdale, Robert Cox, and James Heflin, as "Commissioners of the Roads and Revenue."*

In 1823, the names of Underhill Ellis, James Newman, and James Bagley, appear also as members of this Court.

Again in 1824, this Court is found to consist of Solomon Marshall, as Judge, Alexander Martin, Charles M. Holland, James Newman, and Elias Fort, Commissioners.

At the general August election of the same year, (1824,) the following named persons were elected by the people, as Commissioners: James T. Burdine, Oliver Clark, Silas Dobbs and Thomas Davis. The next year, John W. Patrick was chosen Commissioner to fill a vacancy.

*The first business entry of the Court, is, that "George H. Flourney was duly elected Notary Publick." This is an office not now deemed necessary in this county.

At the August election of 1826, James Newman, Reuben Gardner, James R. Watts, and Wm. Crownover, were members of the Court of Roads and Revenue—Judge Marshall still presiding.—The County Court Judges were then elected by the Legislature, for the term of six years.

Other persons who filled this office prior to 1830, were George Wilkins, Thomas Holmes, Thomas Deloach, Thomas F. Gore, and David Bradford.

It therefore appears that one of the Commissioners of 1824, or over thirty years since, is a member of the Commissioners Court at the present time, namely, James T. Burdine, Esq., of Yorkville. Only two or three of all the others will be recognized as now surviving, and residing among us. Col. David Bradford is one of the latter. He is a man who has performed much public service, and ever possessed the confidence of his fellow citizens.

Below is a list of Tax Assessors and Tax Collectors for the ten first years of our county history, or up to 1830.

1st. Elijah Willbanks, elected for the year 1821 by the first old County Court, sitting as a Court of Roads and Revenue, composed of Solomon Marshall, John Barksdale, Robert Cox, and James Heflin, May term, 1822.

Elijah Willbanks, re-elected for the year 1823.

2d. Lawrence Brasieur, elected for the year 1824.

3d. Walter Gilkey, elected for the year 1825. Mr. Gilkey's bond was \$2,500.

Walter Gilkey, re-elected for the year 1826. The official bond was this year raised to \$3,000.

Walter Gilkey, for the year 1827, re-elected by an "unanimous vote." The county tax for this year was fifty per cent on the State tax.

4th. Thomas Trimier, for the year 1828, first tax collector and assessor, elected by the people.

Henry Anderson was elected the first Treasurer of Pickens, in 1821, which office he continued to hold for three years. This office was filled by the Commissioners Court.

George Wilkins succeeded Anderson in 1824, being appointed at the August term of that year.

James T. Burdine was elected County Treasurer in 1827, and held the office for the balance of this first decade of our history as a county, after its separate organization.

The first Coroner of Pickens, was John Barksdale, appointed in 1821.

The first county Surveyor was Wm. E. Wallis, appointed in 1821.

The first Auctioneer was Owen Shannon, ap-

pointed by the Court at the same period. Robert Henry was elected Coroner, as the successor of John Barksdale, in August, 1824.

Aaron Phillips, was the county Surveyor of the same period. He was re-elected in May, 1826, "for the next three years."

William Myatt was chosen Auctioneer at the same time. Myatt was also Coroner a year or two later.

William Castles was appointed county Surveyor in 1828.

It is a fact not to be omitted, in the history of the old pioneer, Josiah Tilly, that before he left Pickens, he was honored with the civil office of county Auctioneer, for one year.

Many other persons officiated in the minor offices of the county during the ten years prior to 1830, in the capacity of Trustees of Sixteenth Sections, overseers of the poor, and Surveyors of new roads. The last named was no light duty in a new country, requiring both labor and judgment. Besides those who acted as Sheriffs, Clerks, Commissioners, and who received the suffrages of the people as Representatives to the General Assembly, Pickens like every other community, had many respectable and prominent citizens, whose names do not figure on public records.—The early Ministers of the Gospel, are a worthy

class of men, whose ambition leads them along humbler but not less useful paths. These and others will be noticed in their appropriate place.

CHAPTER VII.

JUDGES OF PICKENS.

Hon. Solomon Marshall, was, as has been already stated, the first Judge of this county. He was elected by the people as one of the members of the old County Court, in the early part of 1821, his compeers Thomas Shannon, James Newman, and Jacob Dansby, making choice of him to preside over their Honorable body. Their minutes state that "Solomon Marshall being nominated, was duly elected Chairman of the County Court of Pickens." This officer was also styled Chief Justice, and under the old regime, he and his colleagues constituted a Court to try civil causes, as well as to act as a Court of Probate, a Court of Roads and Revenue, and to be the general custodians of the interests of their county. After the passage of the act for the election of Judges by the Legislature, George H. Flournoy, Esq., of "Pickens Town," was first elected, but he declined, and went himself to the Capitol, and at

his instance, Judge Marshall was elected by the Legislature.

Mr. Marshall came originally from the State of Georgia, at a very early period in the history of Alabama. He had been a member of the General Assembly of that State, and was a man of some prominence in his county, before he removed to North Alabama. He first settled in Madison county, and resided there several years. Being unsuccessful there, in business, as before stated, he removed to Pickens county. He had been unfortunate in relation to his pecuniary affairs in Georgia; from 1820 to 1830, he is identified with the history of this county. He was a man of fair judgement, active and energetic in business, engrossed in the acquisition of property, of more than ordinary education and intelligence, for his times among the pioneers. He is represented as popular with the people as might be inferred from his being twice elected one of the Commissioners of the County Court, and by the latter elected their Chairman or President, which made him Judge, or Chief Justice of the old county Court. He was a planter, settled the Gillespie place near Bridgeville, was a very hospitable man, fond of the society of his neighbors, and much esteemed by his acquaintances. It is considered an indication of popularity to be favored by the commu-

nity with a favorite appellation—"Old Sol," was the soubriquet bestowed upon the Judge. His natural shrewdness has been illustrated by his manner of disposing of the land speculators.—Another anecdote is told of him. A tradition runs of him thus:—Premising that Judge Marshall was considerably involved in debt, and often harrassed with suits, the reader is prepared for the following. On one occasion he was sued in four small cases before a Justice of the Peace, by a steamboat, for freight. Judgement went against "Old Sol," as it usually did, and he took an appeal to *his own Court*, the County Court then having jurisdiction in all cases of contracts, &c. When these cases afterwards came up in his own Court, he is said to have allowed Mr. Attorney Rose either of the alternatives of removing the case into the Circuit Court, or of taking judgment for the amounts without the statutory damages of 15 per cent. Not anxious for further 'delay' the attorney preferred the last horn of the dilemma. Like a 'just Judge,' he exhibited a fondness for the "end of the law," and appears to have practiced in the Courts pretty extensively, and always as the defendant in such civil cases, as debt and assumpsit. The records show that he usually let his suits run through all the gradations of litigation, judgment, execution, bond, forfeiture, and

the Sheriff's final endorsement of "satisfied."—The old Judge was, however, a thriving man while he resided in Pickens county.

In 1830, Judge Marshall resigned and removed to Panola County, Mississippi, where he resided to the time of his death, but a year or two since. He was over fifty years of age when he came to Pickens in 1820; consequently was over sixty when he left here, and died at the advanced age of about eighty-five years. Such is a brief sketch of the long life of the first Judge of Pickens.

Charles M. Holland, received an executive appointment in 1830, which he retained till the next session of the Legislature. He is also one of the first settlers of this county, nearly cotemporary with his immediate predecessor. Mr. Holland has been named above as one of the members of the Commissioners Court, elected in 1824. He removed to Panola County, Mississippi, about 1836, where he still resides. He is now aged about sixty years; is a highly respectable gentleman, a plain planter, of some means, and is still the Executor of the will of his father, the late Jacob Holland, of this county, and has frequent occasion to visit the Court of which he was once Judge, in that capacity. His father resided over Sipsev and died in 1852, aged nearly ninety years. The Holland family have re-

sided in Pickens over thirty years, and have extensive connections here still of high respectability.

Hon. Job H. Binion, was elected in Convention of the two Houses the 22d of November, 1830. He was not desirous of the office and resigned in a few months. Judge Binion is also a Mississippi planter and now resides in Noxubee County, a few miles from the Pickens line.

A Commission was sent to Reuben Gardner, Esq., as Judge Binion's successor by Gov. Gabriel Moore, but he did not qualify for the office, and will be more properly noticed in another place.

Hon. William Richards, better known to our citizens as Dr. Richards, was next commissioned by the Executive, and accepted the office. He was the fourth acting Judge of the county Court. The Doctor still resides in the north part of this county. He is an intelligent and amiable gentleman—no man ever said harm of Dr. Richards, nor do we believe he has an enemy. At the November term, 1830, of the commissioners Court, we recognize his official signature written in a steady strong hand.

Hon. George H. Flournoy, was elected to the vacancy occasioned by Mr. Binion's resignation, at the next session (1851 and 1852,) he being the representative from Pickens at that time. He

was the sixth commissioned Judge the county had, including Marshall, within a period of less than two years. We may have occasion to say more of Mr. Flournoy hereafter, in speaking of the lawyers of Pickens.

Hon. Samuel B. Moore succeeded Judge Flournoy by election at the session of 1834 and '35. He held his first County Court in July of the latter named year. His last act as Judge, was to make an entry respecting the estate of Walter W. Gilkey. He served out the full term of six years.

Governor Moore fills too important a place in the history of this county and of the State, to receive a mere passing notice. He was State Senator from this County at the time of his election to the Judgeship, and will, therefore, be noticed more at length among the Pickens Senators.

Hon. Henry Stith was elected Judge of the county at the session of 1840-'41, and continued in office until the early part of 1843. He was elected over Judge Moore, and had never resided in Pickens until he came here to fill the office of Judge. He came from Greensboro', in Greene County, where for several years he had been engaged in the practice of his profession, the law Judge Stith was originally from the State of

North Carolina. He was and is a bachelor; his age at the time of his removal to Pickens might be about thirty-six. He was a self-made man, was for several years a close student of law, in his own office, and made an excellent Judge; being a man of industrious habits, of strict attention to the duties of his office, and reducing to a system the labors of his important and responsible station as Judge of the Probate and Orphans' Court. He brought more patience, labor and energy into the discharge of the duties of his office, than any of his predecessors.

Judge Stith, is a gentleman of strict probity and honor, of moral and correct habits, with fixed principles, decided opinions, and an unblemished reputation. He practiced the law here several years after his resignation of the Judgeship, which he felt compelled to do from the inadequacy of the income to remunerate for its severe duties. He afterwards removed to Holly Springs, Mississippi, and lived there several years, but has lately returned to this county. For further details of Judge Stith's history, the reader is referred to a sketch of him as one of the Representatives of Pickens county.

Josiah Barker, received the executive appointment in February, 1843, and went out of office on the election of his successor in December.—

Judge Barker came from Tuscaloosa, and now resides in Gainesville, Alabama. He is at present, a preacher in the Methodist church, and is highly esteemed for his piety and usefulness.— He was a practising lawyer at the time he received the Judicial appointment.

Hon. Lemuel A. Gilkey, was the next Judge of the County Court of Pickens. He was elected at the session of 1843-'44, by but 3 or 4 majority over his rival, Z. L. Nabers, Esq., to succeed Judge Barker, or rather to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Judge Stith. The Judge was a very young man at that time, being only 21 years of age. He had been raised in this county from infancy, and may be considered as much a son of Pickens as though born in it. His father, Walter Gilkey, came from Union District, South Carolina, with his family, about 1820, resided one year in Marengo county, and came thence to this county, in 1822. He settled with his young family, in the wilderness, upon Cold-fire creek, near the present site of Jemison's mill, and for many years, and until his death, was one of the leading men of the county, as already stated.

Judge Lemuel A. Gilkey, was a student at law at Lexington, Kentucky, he entered early into his profession, is a good lawyer, and a capable

and safe Judge. He held the office until nearly the expiration of his six years term, in 1849, when he resigned and soon after became a candidate for the Legislature. He was, like all the other candidates of his party, in that year, beaten, though lacking but few votes of election. With a like result he ran for the legislature in 1851; but it is too well known, that success in party politics is a poor criterion of merit, to require apologies for the Judge. If the sanction of the people is required to give a man the stamp of the genuine metal, then might be evidenced the fact that Judge Gilkey was elected to the same office of Judge of Probate by the people in May, 1855, by a handsome majority over all his highly respectable competitors. In political sentiment Judge Gilkey is, like his father before him, a Union man. He has hitherto been attached to the whigs, and is indeed the only Judge the Legislature ever elected for Pickens of his political views. It may be stated that the Legislature was strongly of the adverse side at the time he received their sanction over a competitor of their own sentiments. Judge Gilkey is a single gentleman and resides (where his present office would oblige him to live,) at Carrollton. If he serves out his present term he will have served in that office longer than any of his predecessors, not

excepting Judge Marshall, who held it about ten years. He is now in the prime of life with as fair prospects as commonly flatter the young and vigorous—*Sanus Animus in sano Animo*.

Hon. Zachariah L. Nabers received the Executive appointment upon the resignation of Judge Gilkey and held the office until the election of his predecessor by the next Legislature. Judge Nabers is a native of South Carolina. He came to this county a young man, soon after graduating from his Georgia *Alma Mater*, at Athens.

He has resided in this county eleven or twelve years, is a man of family, having married his first wife in Pickens. He is a lawyer and has also been editor and proprietor of a newspaper, the *West Alabamian*, published at Carrollton.—He is in political affinity with the Democratic party and was elected one of the Representatives to the General Assembly in 1855. He was the tenth Judge who qualified and acted in that capacity.

Hon. Martin L. Stansel was elected to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Judge Gilkey, at the session of '49-'50, but owing to the abolition of the old County Court he held the office only a few months. Judge Stansel is well known in this county, having been a resident of it from boyhood. His father, the Rev.

William R. Stansel, removed from Washington county, Georgia, when his son was seven years old. Judge Stansel is a gentleman of literary attainments, a graduate of the Alabama University and by profession a lawyer. He is a young man and at present single, having had the misfortune to lose a beloved companion. He resides at Carrollton.

At the last session of the Legislature, (1855-'56,) Judge Stansel was elected one of the Trustees of the University, his *Alma Mater*, an honor of equal value for the literary man and scholar to any position that could be enjoyed. His profession is the law, in which he has shown himself a thorough business man attentive to his clients and his duties.

From a series of sketches, mostly biographical, of the public officers of this county which appeared in the *Pickens Republican* in 1854, the following is taken:—

Hon. Tristram Shandy Thomas the present Judge of the Probate Court, was the first Judge of that Court and the first elected by the people under the new law. He was elected in May 1849 by a handsome majority over his single opponent, the last Judge of the old County Court, being himself the last Clerk of the same, a fact we may state with no disparagement of his rival.

Judge Thomas had been twice an unsuccessful candidate for office, against popular and strong men, who in the race came in not more than half a length ahead. In 1844 he ran for the Clerkship of the County Court against Gen. Bostick, and he had made a previous race with Mr. Sherrod for the same office in the Circuit Court. In August 1848 he was elected Clerk of the County Court which office he held till the abolition of that Court.

Judge Thomas is one of the earliest settlers of this county. He was born in 1800 in the county of Wythe, Virginia, whence he removed to Kentucky when a boy, and came from there to Pickens (while a part of Tuscaloosa) in 1818, resided, subsequently, one year in the State of Tennessee, and has spent most of his life in Pickens. His father, the late George Thomas, removed to this county with his family many years ago, but sometime later than his son, the old gentleman and lady, the mother of Judge Thomas, having both deceased within the last two or three years. He was an excellent citizen, an honest man, a good patriot and an orthodox whig of the old revolutionary stripe.

Judge Thomas has for many years been a licensed preacher of the Baptist denomination, and is at present in the constant habit of officiating

as such. He is a self-made man, of a naturally strong mind and sound judgment, with such practical education as a reflecting and inquiring mind can acquire by its own resources through industry and perseverance. As a judge we believe he studies what is fair and right, and if he ever errs it is owing to his too extreme caution lest he may do wrong. The dignity of a court is sustained as much by *decision* as by a too prudent halting between two opinions.

The present Judge of the Probate Court is indefatigably laborious—acting as his own clerk for the most part—courteous and obliging and ever at his post. He is the last upon our County Court docket both as Judge and Clerk.

Since the above sketch was written, the subject thereof has departed this life; Judge Thomas died the seventeenth day of June, 1854. His disease was an affection of the liver, with which he had been afflicted during his whole life. He left a large family of children and numerous relatives within this county, besides many friends to mourn their loss. Two years of the term for which he had been elected Judge, remained unexpired. He died as he had lived, a firm believer in Christianity, esteemed and deeply regretted.

The successor of Judge Thomas, by Executive

appointment, was Hon. A. B. Clitherall. Judge Clitherall, though a youngerly man, has filled so many important public stations and has been, and still is, so prominent a man in Alabama, that the author has been at some pains to obtain the following facts of his eventful life:

Alexander Baron Clitherall, youngest son of Dr. George and Caroline E. Clitherall, was born at Smithville, (Fort Johnson,) Brunswick county, North Carolina, on the 12th December, 1820.

On the death of his father, in 1829, the family removed to Newbern, Craven county.

In 1832-3, Alexander went to school to Mr. William Bingham, in Hillsboro', Orange county, North Carolina, and in 1835, went to the Preparatory school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. In 1836, he entered College, but in February 1837, his mother being about to remove to Alabama, he left College and returned to North Carolina, and thus ended his scholastic education.

In June, 1837, Mrs. Clitherall, with her son, came to Alabama, and Alexander went as a clerk into his brother's store, Maj. George B. Clitherall, in Greensboro', Greene county, Alabama. In 1839, he removed to Tuscaloosa, and entered as law student with the Hon. E. Woolsey Peck.

In January, 1841, he obtained his license in

the Supreme Court, but remained in the office of Chancellor Peck until July, 1842, when he removed to Pickensville, Pickens county, Alabama.

In November, 1845, he married in Noxubee county, Mississippi, Catharine G. Hayes, and in January 1847, removed from Pickensville to Carrollton where he now lives.

In 1842, Mr. Clitherall was elected Assistant Clerk of the Alabama House of Representatives to which office he was re-elected in 1843-'44-'45. In 1847, '49 and '51, he was elected Principal Clerk of the House of Representatives, but was defeated for that office in 1853.

Immediately on the defeat of Mr. Clitherall for the Clerkship, he was tendered and accepted the Clerkship of the Committee on the Judiciary of the House, and received on the floor of the House high encomiums for the manner and matter of several important reports on legal and constitutional questions, prepared by him. At the same session he was the Legislative reporter for the Advertiser & Gazette.

In 1853, he was a candidate in Pickens for the House of Representatives on the Democratic ticket and was defeated with the others on the same ticket.

In December 1853, he was elected Grand

Worthy Patriarch of the Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance, and served for that year as such, and such is his ardor and enthusiasm in the cause of temperance that it is very probable he is as proud of this as any one of the numerous honors he has received.

In March 1854, Hon. Turner Reavis resigned the Judgeship of the seventh Judicial Circuit, and Mr. Clitherall was tendered the appointment by Gov. Winston, which he accepted and held the Spring Term in that Circuit for that year. The Hon. E. W. Pettus was elected to the vacancy. Judge Clitherall was not a candidate before the people.

In June 1854, the office of Judge of Probate for Pickens county became vacant, as already stated, by the death of Hon. T. S. Thomas.— Judge Clitherall received the appointment and discharged the duties of the office until he was superseded by the election of the Hon. L. A. Gilkey, the present incumbent. For this office the candidates were Messrs. Gilkey, Clitherall, Eastland, Dunn, Kilpatrick, Ballard and Thomas. Judge Clitherall fell fifty-eight votes behind the successful candidate, being the second best in the race.

In 1856, Judge Clitherall was appointed, at the Montgomery State Convention in which he

was a Delegate, one of the Delegates to the Democratic National Convention, to assemble in Cincinnati on the first Monday in June 1856, to nominate candidates for the Presidency and Vice Presidency.

The Judge is now, as appears above, about thirty-five years of age, in the vigor and health of manhood's prime, standing somewhat over six feet in his boots and a mould to endure yet many a year's wear and waste of the gnawing tooth of time. He is eminently qualified for the duties of the official stations he has held.— As a Judge he evinced, both upon the Circuit Bench and as Probate Judge of our county both legal ability and business habits, added to quickness of perception and sound judgment. He is a ready and telling writer, and has used his pen not a little in political discussion and controversy, having been for some time editor of the West Alabamian, a Democratic paper at Carrollton.

Judge Clitherall is a professor of religion, and an active member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The leading characteristic of his mind, as a moral man, is to pursue the right, right onward, strait to the mark! His friends sometimes think him too direct and uncompromising in the pursuit of the main object, and that where he has failed he has to blame himself for using not

still acts in the public capacity of County Administrator, an office for which his previous position as Clerk, renders him peculiarly competent.

In 1843, Mr. Bostick was elected Major General, of the second division of the Alabama Militia, his competitor being a gentleman well known in this State, the Hon. Benj. F. Porter, in whom our friend found a "foreman worthy of his steel."

The General is not an ordinary character. He is possessed of much mental capacity, sagacity, and a sound judgement, is an excellent judge of men, with no little foresight and ability in laying out his plans, having far more intellectual calibre than is allowed him by his every day associates, simply because he is a deeper man, and possesses more mind than he has ever developed, or, probably, will ever develop at his time of life. Whenever great powers have lain too long dormant in a man naturally sluggish, they are not easy to be aroused, besides that, it needs early discipline and education to enable a man to use his natural talents. The distinguished phrenologist, Dr. Crane, of New Orleans, gave him a "charter" fully corroborating these views of the General.

General Bostick is a Democrat of the Andrew Jackson school, though a native of Abbeville. He was a Union man in the days of Nullification

and is so still. He is not so tied up to party but that he can sometimes vote for a friend, and there was talk of reading him out of the Democratic ranks in former days on this account. He is a man of strong feelings, perhaps prejudices. He possesses active conscientiousness, is naturally religious, and we venture the remark that he is thoroughly dissatisfied with himself whenever not in the active discharge of the regulations and obligations imposed by the discipline of the church to which he is attached by education and inclination. We never knew him to commit a mean act, though he might a rash one. He is hospitable, social, anecdotal, and understands the crowd—loves his friends and hates his enemies—which last, some author says, is neither the best nor the worst character in the world, and far better than some. Take care! You are never more mistaken than when you think you have the General. That is just the time he has got you!

They tell some official anecdotes upon the General of the olden time, but one must suffice as a specimen. It was in the early days of Pickens history while Judge Wm. Richards, whom we have had occasion to name, was presiding in the County Court, in a building which is still extant in the outskirts of Carrollton. It was winter,

and the weather cold and *dry*, the gentlemen of the Court, Officers, Lawyers, Judges and Jury, were cold and supposed to be *dry*. The alcoholic fluids were not then in as free circulation as is the genuine "Dexter" at this time in some of the counties of Pennsylvania. But even at that primordial day it was in great requisition if all accounts be true. The upshot of the matter was there was no *liquor* in town, *within the knowledge of the Court* and its attendants. At least, the Court had no official cognizance of there being any of the "good creature" about. We except the *Clerk*. He saw that the Judge was blue, the Jury cold, restless and blue, the Lawyers wore a gloomy aspect, all looking as if they would as soon be blue as not. The Clerk, our friend, the General, had foreseen this, and prudently provided against it. A few days before Court, he had purchased a supply of the "needful" from an itinerant wagoner, and at that blue moment happened to have then and there about his person, a short allowance of the "blue ruin"—so goes the tale—he turned his coat-tail towards the Court and took care to shake it so adroitly, *coram vobis*, his honor, as to display a small flask in his pocket.

Presto! The process of adjournment is said to have been gone through with in "double quick time," and for the remainder of that term, the

blue noses, red noses, and all the noses, seemed to set with their usual composed dignity upon their respective countenances.

We give this tale as told to us, but do not vouch for its authenticity, so let not our two respected friends, the Judge and Clerk of that period, hold us responsible.

Some eighteen months have passed away since the above sketch of General BOSTICK was prepared and published as an ephemeral newspaper article, but within that time, the subject of it has passed away from the earth! He died on the 22d day of January, 1855, suddenly of apoplexy, in the town of Carrollton, at home, surrounded by his family and friends, but unconscious of their presence. He was aged about fifty-eight.

Hon. T. S. Thomas, it has been stated, was the successor of General Bostick, as Clerk, being elected in 1848, and the last Clerk of the old County Court.

CHAPTER IX.

SHERIFFS OF PICKENS.

The officer who executes the decrees and mandates of Anglo Saxon laws as pronounced by ju-

dicial tribunals, is called *High Sheriff!* We are strongly tempted to venture a few learned passages on the origin, history and duties of Sheriffs under the common law, in imitation of Blackstone and other astute commentators, but as regards the first, it would run us back to time immemorial, and we all know his duties in modern days. To say that *Sheriff* was derived from two Saxon words, and was *vice-comes* in latin, because he was the Shire-officer and deputy of an Earl, would be too literal a *copy*. In very old times he was the "people's choice," to quote from an ex-sheriff of Pickens by the side of Blackstone, so that "commons might choose such as would not be a burden to them." Later the sheriff was elected by the King from three persons nominated by the Chief Justices, Barons, Chancellors and great State officers, and so on to this day, the choice being made *in crastina animarum*—on the morrow of All Souls.

By way of impressing our present excellent *vice-comes* with a realizing sense of the dignity of his station, we remark that in old times the High Sheriff was a Judge for all matters up to £40 sterling, a keeper of the King's peace, a ministerial officer of the Superior Courts of Justice, and the King's Bailiff. He was by the common law the "first man in the County," be-

ing "superior in rank to any nobleman therein," having numerous under-sheriffs, bailiffs and goalers, "who must neither buy, sell, nor farm their offices, in a forfeiture of £500!" He was *High Sheriff*, grand as a lord and had a *posse comitatus* as long as the tail of a kite—but these things are more simplified to suit our republican day and generation.

Mr. Adino Griffin, the first Sheriff of Pickens, removed early to this county from Abbeville District, South Carolina, and was elected in 1820. He served out his three years term, and is said to have made an honest and upright officer. He was a good natured and simple hearted man, with whose good nature his friends sometime took liberties. They have some anecdotes about him still extant, one of which exhibits the simplicity above named. Old Judge Lipscomb held the first Circuit Court here after the organization of the county, Mr. Griffin being then Sheriff. The anecdote runs that the Judge told the Sheriff to open Court.

Sheriff.—"I open Court? How shall I open Court? I don't know any more how to open Court than a bob-tail ram!"

Judge.—"Go to the door and say what I tell you." (Sheriff going to door.) "Now cry out O yes! O yes! O yes!"

Sheriff.—"O yes! O yes! O yes!"

Judge.—"Now open Court."

Sheriff.—"I open Court! I open Court! I open Court!"

Judge.—"Now you've done it!" (vexed at the officer.)

Sheriff.—"Now I've done it! now I've done it! now I've done it!"

So, at least, the account is, as we receive it, but some allowance must probably be made. Mr. Griffin removed to Mississippi in 1835 and died in Chickasaw county about two years ago.

Mr. David Taggart the second Sheriff of Pickens, still survives and resides at Yorkville, being now aged over seventy years. He came from Abbeville, also, was elected in 1828, served out one term of three years and made a respectable officer. He is the father of Mr. William Taggart, of Yorkville, and of the late Moses Taggart.

Mr. Taggart is one of the first settlers of this county, and is one of its most respectable citizens. He is a plain planter, living in comfortable circumstances, esteemed by all who know him, and the patriarch of his neighborhood. He is cotemporary with those pioneers who settled at Yorkville very early in the history of Pickens. In politics, the old gentleman, like all his generation, has acted with the whig party.

Thomas Davis, third Sheriff, came from Abbeville District S. C., first to Kentucky, thence to Marengo, thence to Pickens, about 1819. He married a Lampkin. He was elected Sheriff in 1826 and served out his term. He removed to Choctaw county, Mississippi, where he still resides, a large planter, age about 55.

Mr. Henry White, the fourth Sheriff, came from Abbeville District, South Carolina, as early as 1823, with his father's family, Robert White, who died in Pickens. "Henry" as every body calls him, still survives among us, and is as fond of catching fish as ever, and as successful; he carries in his breast as guileless a heart as ever—a man that never had any enemy but himself. "Henry" is a bachelor, aged sixty-eight years. He was deputy under his predecessor during all his term and was elected to succeed him in 1829. "Henry" laughs as heartily as any one at the jokes they still preserve against him. One of these is that he came near being sent to jail on one occasion for contempt of Court. He was lying on a bench nearly asleep in the Court house when Judge Lipscomb having need for him, inquired—"where is the Sheriff?" Henry rose suddenly from his recumbent position crying out, "Here is the people's choice," and ever since that day he has been known as the *people's*

choice. Another anecdote he always takes in good part. It is said that he once levied on a tract of land to satisfy an execution, and took a bond for the *delivery of the said land at the Court House door of the County!*" Reuben H. Grant was Defendant in the execution, and Boly Conner, the first Representative from this county, was security. The question as to the liability upon the forfeiture of such a bond, may be left to legal casuists. Mr. White is as chivalrous as ever towards the ladies, and boasts of receiving a valentine last February, which he still carries in his pocket! "Uncle Henry" is a first cousin of Gen. Bostick and nephew of the late Mrs. Edwards,—he is a gentleman at heart and in the kindliness of his manners. It is a pity that one fault should mar so fine a character, and destroy his public usefulness.

Mr. Benjamin F. Roper was the next Sheriff, succeeding Henry White, whose deputy he had been nearly all his term, being elected in 1832. Mr. Roper left Virginia with his family in 1826 for this country, and on his journey had the misfortune to lose his first wife. He married his present wife in Pickens, Miss Montgomery was her maiden name. Mr. Roper is among the oldest settlers of this county, and has seen it in all the phases of its history, civil, religious and po-

litical. He has raised a large family here, and it is to be regretted that he has removed from among us to the city of Mobile. He is too well known to our readers to require a history from us, having been twice Sheriff of this county, and held several minor offices, besides having been the landlord of one of the Carrollton Hotels for many years. He sold out the Phoenix Hotel, now kept by the widow of General F. W. Bostick, in 1853, and has just opened the "Roper House" in the city of Mobile, where, for two seasons he has kept an excellent Hotel.

Mr. George G. Childs was elected in 1835, and served out his term making a fair-Sheriff. He came here from one of the New-England States, about 1828, and went to merchandising at Pickensville. Mr. Childs built the house in which A. T. Henly now lives, in that town. He has resided in Mobile of late years, was of the firm of Childs, Hibbler and Pearson, and is now engaged about the Mobile cotton houses.

Mr. John F. Nabers was the seventh Sheriff of this county, being elected in 1838 and serving out one term of three years.

Mr. Nabers was born in Madison county, Alabama, March 7, 1810, was raised in Jefferson county, this State, and removed to Pickens in 1835. He was elected Sheriff three years after he be-

came a citizen of the county, a fact which speaks well for his standing and popularity, and success at making friends, among strangers. He went into the Commission business at Mobile with the late Mr. Kelly after retiring from the Sheriffalty, and continued a copartner in the house of Kelly & Nabers until his death in August 1844. He left a widow, the present Mrs. Dunham, of Carrollton, formerly Miss Lacey, a lady whom he married in the county of Jefferson before he came to Pickens.

Mr. Nabers sustained a fair reputation as a public business man, lived respected and died much lamented. He was a man of popular manners, of a warm-hearted and generous temperament, true to his friends, and having a bold front to his enemies, if the truth has been represented to us. He held the office of Sheriff at a period when it was unusually profitable, and managed to save out of it a fair competency, being in moderate circumstances when elected.

Mr. B. F. Roper was again chosen Sheriff in 1841, and served out his second term as an efficient public officer. Mr. Roper having even been a decided whig in his political opinions, was both times elected as such.

Mr. William H. Davis was the next Sheriff of Pickens county, elected in 1844.

Mr. Davis was born in York District, South Carolina, in 1814, which renders his present age about 42. He removed to this county in 1833, and was engaged in the useful occupation, in which George McDuffee once engaged, that is to say, that of School-master, in the years 1834 and '35, at Yorkville, in this county, being then 21 years of age. In 1837, Mr. Davis went to Texas, and was a volunteer in the revolutionary struggle of that young Republic. In the two subsequent years he was employed as a surveyor of the public lands, and as deputy clerk in the Texas land office, using this resource as the means of recruiting his purse. He admits that he went out to sow his wild oats, and that in sowing them he scattered his pedagogical savings—his expression is, his *funds became exhausted*, and he alledges that he became disgusted with that country on account of its great destitution in law and morals, and hence returned to Pickens county in November, 1839.

The adventures of Mr. Davis in Texas were of a romantic, though rough and arduous character. He tells you "a plain and unvarnished tale," of being in the imminent deadly breach amid most of the horrors of war. He slept upon the ground in the woods six months. At one time, was lost three days in the forest, with-

out other food except sweet potatoes and jerked beef *minus* salt. In 1838 he joined a detachment under General Rusk, present Texas United States Senator, against the Caddo Indians. On one occasion he was detailed as one of the advanced guard to penetrate the swamps in search of the enemy. They took an Indian prisoner who turned out to be the son of the Chief of the tribe. This was near the town of Shrievport on the day before the treaty of peace, and so near did they come to a fight with the Indians that they were drawn up in battle array. The Indians came to a parley and finally agreed to deliver up their arms till after the war in Texas was over. At an encampment upon Red River, above Shrievport, Mr. Davis took part in an indignation meeting, and made a speech in favor of burning the United States Agent in effigy, because he was thought or known to favor the Indians and to wink at their depredations. The commanding General interposed and prevented the consummation of the act in the streets of Shrievport.

Mr. Davis again engaged in the favorite pastime of George McDuffee,* in teaching the young

*The Ex-Sheriff had a habit, whenever speaking of the respectable occupation of teaching, of referring to George McDuffee, of whom Mr. Davis is a great admirer, "Geo.

idea how to shoot, an employment which the writer of these sketches, has no intention, as whilom, a pedagogue, of disparaging.

Mr. Davis became a candidate for the office of Sheriff in 1841, but we have stated above that Mr. Roper was elected that year. In 1844 he was again a candidate and successful, receiving a majority of all the votes polled, his opponents being Messrs. Renfroe and Upchurch. Mr. Davis married the second daughter of J. T. Burdine, Esq., in 1842, his present amiable and accomplished lady—of one of the oldest families in the county, Mr. Burdine having removed from South Carolina almost as early as there are dates upon our public records. The history of Mr. Davis as a Sheriff, a commission merchant and business man, as well as a public man, is too well known to require enlargement at our hands.

The political views of Mr. Davis may be gained from the subjoined extract from a communication to the *Republican*, before the August election of 1851:

MR. EDITOR:—Allow me, through the columns of your paper, to address the voters of Pickens county on the momentous issues which now excite the public mind, and upon the decision of

McDuffee once taught school." The wags have pretty much laughed him out of the said habit.

which depends the perpetuity of our political fabric.

Fellow-citizens, I have no political interest to subserv. I have at this time no aspirations for official station. Being free from influences of such a character, I desire calmly to address you as freemen, and as American citizens. I rejoice in the appellation of an American citizen. It will afford protection to him who bears it in any part of the habitable earth, where civilization and knowledge have enlightened and dignified the human mind. The mere mention of the name of Roman citizen once afforded protection to the greatest apostle that ever went forth into the world with the sound of salvation upon his lips.

We shall, in a few days, be called upon in the exercise of one of the most inestimable rights of freemen, to elect representatives to Congress and also to the State Legislature. It behooves us, therefore, to examine the positions of those who seek our suffrages, who aspire to stations of such high responsibility. Upon the action of our representatives depends the fact whether the liberty, the rich inheritance secured to us by a noble and renowned ancestry, shall be transmitted free and unadulterated to our posterity—whether anarchy shall seize her bloody flag and wave it in triumph

over the broken and shattered fragments of the American Union.

The fact cannot be disguised that there is a party in our country which seeks the dismemberment of the Federal Union, and upon its moldering ruins the erection of a Southern Confederacy. Those who desire the accomplishment of this unhallowed object, depreciate the value, the blessings, the glory, the grandeur of that Union which Washington, the father of his country declared was the main pillar in the edifice of liberty. There is another party in the country which professes ardent attachment to the Union, but which advocates a doctrine that is as blighting and as deadly in its influence as the simoon of Sirocco, or the exhalations of the fatal Upas, and which, if triumphant in the ensuing election, will sooner or later, inevitably undermine the foundations of our national prosperity and break up the only republic on earth where man walks proudly and undisturbed in all the freedom of his nature—the only asylum where the oppressed and down-trodden of all nations are invited to come and partake of the waters running in freedom's land. This party is the most dangerous, because they are numerically strong, professing attachment for the Union, and at the same time advocating the same views of the most rabid

and immediate secessionist—the right of a State to withdraw from the Union whenever she may deem a cause sufficient, regardless of the interest of the remaining States. This party through the instrumentality of Southern Rights Associations, has lashed the public mind into a furious storm of excitement by pandering to sectional prejudices and sectional interest. Those who denounce the Compromise and the Georgia platform believe in the right of a State to secede from the Union and in that even they say it becomes the duty of the other Southern States to sustain her in the act of secession. Now, it is as demonstrable as any problem in Euclid that this doctrine is as “dangerous in principle and indefensible in practice as that of immediate secession itself.” Are you prepared, fellow-citizens, at this time, to give encouragement to sectionlists by electing representatives who advocate the same principles, who are actuated and directed by the same motives, and who breathe the same spirit of opposition to the Compromise which was considered at its passage, as a final settlement of the slavery agitation forever? I trust not. I call upon you in the name of our common country to break asunder the shackles of party. Walk forth independently to the polls and by your votes, put the seal of condemnation

upon the political paradox of the right of separate State secession. Are we now not free? are we not now independent, and in the enjoyment of all the rights, privileges and immunities of freemen? Let us not experiment with so dangerous a remedy as secession, for fear we may soon be called on to write the epitaph of liberty, like the man in health who took a dose of medicine and died under its influence. He wrote his own epitaph before he died in the following language: “I was well; I wanted to be better; I am here.”

In the Presidential canvass of 1852, Mr. Davis addressed a letter to two of the Alabama members of Congress, through the columns of the Washington (D. C.,) *Republic*, which cannot in justice to Mr. Davis, well be omitted from this sketch, particularly since its object was to press the claims of Mr. M. Fillmore, for a re-nomination at that time for President of the United States. Although Mr. Davis and other ardent admirers of President Fillmore, did not then succeed in placing him in nomination, yet, very recently, four years later, it is a significant fact, that a political party has made choice of that distinguished Statesman, as their candidate for the highest office in this government. But it is not designed to give a political bias to our modest history.

CARROLLTON, June 2d, 1852:

To Hon. James Abercrombie and Hon. Alexander White.

GENTLEMEN:—My attention has just been called to your letter published in the *Republic*, of May 12th, and addressed to the Chairman of the Carrollton District Convention. As Chairman of that Convention, I deem it proper for me to make a brief response to your letter, as well to vindicate the action of the Convention, as to express what I conceive to be the prevailing sentiment of the Union Whigs of the District, in regard to the propriety of being represented in the Baltimore Whig Convention.

The Convention over which I had the honor to preside, declared it inexpedient to hold a State Convention, to appoint delegates to the Whig National Convention, for the reason that all the objects proposed could be as well accomplished by the separate action of the several Districts.—It became necessary, therefore, for the Convention to take some action relative to the appointment of delegates for the State at large. Known as you were, to some of the members personally, and to all by reputation, to have been active, zealous, and reliable whigs, and above all, as devoted friends of the Union, it was thought the interests and honor of the Union Whigs of the

State, could not be confided to safer hands, or wiser heads. It was, therefore, resolved, so far as this District was concerned, to name you for that place. To our surprise and regret, you have thought proper to decline the appointment. We cannot doubt the purity of the motives by which you were influenced in coming to that determination. Your patriotic efforts in crushing the spirit of faction at home, and fanaticism abroad, in upholding the banner of the Constitutional Union party of the South, have been too often repeated and too long continued, to permit us to doubt for a moment, the sincerity of your convictions against the propriety of meeting in Convention our Whig brethren of the North.

Conceding thus much, I cannot perceive the wisdom of the course you propose for us to pursue, or adopt the conclusions of your judgment, and I think the Union Whigs of the District, and of the State, will be slow to adopt them, at least, without one more effort to preserve the unity and nationality of the whig party, and do justice to those few devoted men of the North, who, braving the contumely and reproaches of the factions of their own section, have interposed themselves, and the power of their official station, for the protection and preservation of our Constitutional rights.

To your recital of the grievances of the South, its just causes of complaint, and gloomy forebodings for the future, and the terrible struggle through which we have just passed, I have nothing to say in reply. The former is but a too truthful record of the growth of a power which, if not wisely met, threatens to destroy our most cherished interest, while the latter is too vividly impressed on the recollection of us all, to be easily obliterated, or wantonly renewed. But the simple question to be determined now, is this: When a Chief Magistrate, and he a Northern man, has discharged the duties of his great office with such scrupulous fidelity and impartiality as to wring reluctant applause from his bitterest opponents—when by so acting that Chief Magistrate has brought down upon his head the anathemas and most determined opposition of the factionists of his own section—when such a man is a candidate for re-election, shall we abandon him, without succor, without sympathy, and with no sign of recognition of his self-sacrificing devotion, to the tender mercies of *his*, and *our* common enemies? This, and nothing less than this is what I conceive we are called upon to do when we are asked to absent ourselves from the National Convention. No, gentlemen, if I understand any thing of Southern whig sentiment,

Southern whig *gratitude*, they will permit no such foul blot to stain their fair escutcheon. On the contrary, they will stand by those who stand by Millard Fillmore—while there is the faintest hope of rewarding eminent public services, rendered, in times of greatest peril, in their, and the country's behalf. But, with all due deference to your better judgment, I do not conceive the nomination of Mr. Fillmore as by any means hopeless, or improbable even. If the whole South is represented, as I trust it will be, it will present a solid phalanx in his favor, with the exception of the little State of Delaware, making one hundred and nine votes for him to start with. It will require but thirty-six more to secure his nomination, and I think I could show where and how he will obtain them. But that would extend this communication beyond the limits I design for it. Next to Mr. Fillmore in the regard and confidence of Southern whigs, is Daniel Webster. Should they fail in securing the nomination of their first choice they will, doubtless, gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of testifying to the Great Expounder their appreciation of his services by nominating, and electing him to the position to which his intense patriotism, his unflinching devotion to the Constitution and the Union have long entitled him.

And who doubts that the Constitutional rights of the South would be safe in the hands of Daniel Webster?

You say, "Our opinion is that the Union of the South would do more to secure the nomination of good Compromise men in both National Conventions by keeping aloof from, than by getting into them." If that be true, those "abolitionists" whom you decline meeting in Convention, are much cleverer fellows than I had supposed, and all that is necessary to secure the finality of the Compromise, or the passage of any measure beneficial to the South, is for Southern members of Congress to leave their seats and come home, and let the abolitionists have it their own way.

Again you say, "But why should we abandon this (the Union) organization?" The position of parties has materially changed since you left the State in November last. Then the Union party, flushed with recent victory, and strong in numbers, was formidable to its opponents, who lay powerless at its feet. Since then the Southern Rights party has been disbanded, and the old democracy reconstructed upon their ancient principles, the loaves and fishes. The re-organizers have drawn to their ranks all the leading democrats who co-operated with us in the re-

struggle, and it needs only the excitement of an election to draw after them the rank and file.— Standing upon their old platform the re-organizers present no tangible point for the Union party to assail, and a party without an antagonist cannot be kept long in existence. Whenever a like occasion presents itself, it will rise like the Phoenix, from its ashes; till then, its mission is accomplished.

That the Union whigs of Alabama will be represented in the Baltimore Convention is a "fixed fact." By the time this reaches you, our delegates will be on the way. So it will be with Georgia and Mississippi. Such being the case, I beg you, gentlemen, to reconsider your hasty determination, and to accept the position assigned you. Your position as the Union whig Representatives of the State, your acknowledged abilities and public services, will add dignity and weight to the delegation, and we hope, will not be without efficacy in controlling the spirit of faction, and securing the nomination of some good and true man, in whose support we can all cordially unite. Very respectfully,

Your ob't serv't, WM. H. DAVIS.

William H. Davis is a man of a respectable academic education, of considerable reading

and intelligence, possessed of much force as a speaker and debator, so much so that his friends might justly blame him, with such talents, for not becoming more eminent. Such advantages, added to his respectable port and bearing and his excellent qualities, ought to be brought into requisition as the means of rising in the world. He is, however, at the present time, again a candidate for the office of Sheriff of Pickens at the election in 1857.

Mr. Jesse W. Bryan, the late landlord of the "Exchange" was the next Sheriff, elected in August 1849, over two whig competitors, Mr. B. F. Roper and B. G. McAllister. Mr. Bryan is a native of Kentucky, was born in Christian county, August 17, 1819. His father migrated to Alabama in 1820 and settled in Sumter county where he was engaged in business with General Gaines at the Choctaw Agency, and died there when Jesse was only four years old. His mother's maiden name was Hawkins, she being own cousin of the renowned David Crockett. She settled at this place after the death of her husband and here she died. In 1840, Mr. Bryan married his present estimable lady, who is a sister of Mr. John Alexander of Carrollton. It is stated that the first Carrollton wedding was the marriage of one of Mrs. Bryan's daughter,

sister of our present subject. The history of Mr. Bryan is well known, since the last named date, to most of our readers. He engaged in business at Yorkville as a merchant, afterwards went to Mobile, returned to Pickens in 1840, and acted as deputy of W. H. Davis, whom he succeeded in the office, as above stated.

Jesse W. Bryan, Esq., enjoys a more extensive reputation than any of his predecessors, or successors, as we feel bound to set it down, with all deference to other rather celebrated gentlemen. His celebrity is of that enviable character which the Press alone can confer, and without which a great man is nowhere! It would be sheer affectation to *ignore* the clever story of "Cash and the Bear," or "Jess Bryan's Bear Fight"—a tale of three heroes, at least! which has been told, published, nay, stereotyped, from Oregon to Texas, which had its origin on the Gulf of Mexico, was about a "Bar," taken, for aught now known to the contrary, among the Rocky Mountains! The tale originally appeared in the West Alabamian from the pen of Judge A. B. Clitherall, showing how a native came it over a bear man. There is a rich vein of humor in this inimitably told story, which is a much better illustration of Judge Clitherall's ability to write, than anything said in eulogy of his powers. It runs thus:

Every man, woman and child in Pickens county, knows Jess Bryan. And to those whose circumstances unfortunately compel them to live elsewhere, we would say that Jesse is the present Sheriff of the county aforesaid. And furthermore, we have the authority of the present Secretary of State, for saying that he was the finest looking Sheriff who carried the returns of the last Presidential election to Montgomery.

On reaching Montgomery, Jess went to the Capitol and was introduced to the Secretary; "I am happy to know you, Mr. Bryan," said the affable Col. Garrett.

"I am happy to find you do," replied the Sheriff, "for since I put on these blacks I hardly know myself."

Jesse is our crack tale-teller, and many sides aches have the boys had from laughing at his nubbin ridge and Sourwood stories. One of his we will now give, premising that the gist of the tale consists in his rich mode of telling it, and that it must lose much by being read.

"Some years ago, before I got to be sheriff of this county, I was in Mobile, and on one day I saw a crowd moving out toward the Orange Grove; I joined it, and learned that a match fight was to come off between Jim Burguss's bull

dog and a tame bear, for five hundred dollars a side, one hundred forfeit.

"As soon as the ring was formed, the dog was turned loose at the bear, and after one round he stayed loose—no sort of talk could make him clinch again, and Burguss paid the forfeit and drew off the dog.

"Just as the crowd was about to disperse, a tall, raw boned native from Chickasaha, who was rejoicing in the ownership of a big bony, stump-tailed cur dog, sung out: 'I'll be darned if Cash can't take that bar.'

"'What will you bet of that?' said the owner of the bear.

"'I'll go my pile,' said raw-bones, and drawing out the foot of an old stocking, he shelled out twenty dollars. The bear man covered the twenty and the ring was again formed.

"'Now gentlemen,' said Chickasaha, 'I wish it to be understood as how nobody goes enter this ring but me an' Cash an' the bar, and nobody ain't got to speak or tetch but me.'

"This was agreed to, and the bear being unmuzzled, the word was given.

"'Look out, Cash; mind your eyes! Watch him, Cash!' cried raw-bones, as Cash, with a prudent regard for his own interests, kept at a respectful distance; his bristles standing up like

the teeth of a harrow. As soon as Cash had taken a position a little in the rear of his foe, and out of the range of his paws, his master shouted, 'take him, Cash!'

"With one bound Cash seized the poor brute by the root of the ear, keeping his body side by side with his enemy, so that the latter could not possibly strike him.

"'Keep outen this, ring, gentlemen,' cried the owner of Cash. 'Bring him *here*, Cash!' Cash, by main force, dragged the bear half around the ring, without once exposing himself to the furious blows of the animal.

"'Shake him, Cash!' Again the brave dog shook his foe until the bear's teeth fairly chattered with pain and rage. Still Cash, by keeping yard-arm and yard-arm with the bear, was as safe as if he had been in his master's cabin.

"The owner of the bear seeing that the bear could not bring his arms to bear, could not bear to see Cash bear the bear in such a bear-faced manner, and gave up the day.

"'You give it up,' said our man. 'Well then, gentlemen, clar the ring—Cash leaves when he do leave 'em. Hold him, Cash! You say it's my money, no discounts, no nothing? Watch your time, Cash. Let go, Cash?'

"With a single spring, Cash was ten feet beyond the reach of the bear's paw.

"'That's a right pert bear,' said raw-bones; 'but he ain't nigh such a good one as me and Cash has tuk. We got one this fall as measured nine feet from snout to tail tip.'

"'That's a lie,' said the discomfitted owner of the bear, 'you never *saw* a bear that large in your life.'

"'I haint? Well, I'll go you these two twenty dollars on that branch of the subject.'

"'It's a bet,' said the bear man.

"'Well, come down to George Davis', and we'll try the case.'

"The crowd all accompanied the parties, and we soon reached George Davis' Store.

"'George let me see that biggest bar skin I let you have a spell back,' said our man.

"Davis handed out the skin, and it measured nine feet *one inch and a half!*

"'Twenty to start on, and twenty are forty; and forty are eighty! Sweet J—s! Whoop! Come *here*, Cash. Good evening gentlemen,' sang the overjoyed native; and the last I saw of him he and Cash were eating ginger cakes at the market-house."

Mr. Barnabas G. McAllister, succeeded Mr. Bryan in 1850, the vote in the previous contest

between these two now ex-Sheriffs, showing a difference of only twenty-nine, a third candidate. (Roper,) being in the field. B. G. McAllister was born in Bedford county, Tennessee, and removed to Greene county, Alabama, with the rest of his father's family in 1826, where he remained until 1842. His becoming a citizen of Pickens at that time was what we may call accidental.—He was on his way from Greene with his mother, removing to North Mississippi, when, near the Garden, in Pickens county, his mother received an injury from a fall, which occasioned temporary delay, but meanwhile he became so well pleased with the location and people of Pickens, that he determined to settle here instead of continuing his journey. He settled near Pickensville—became one of W. H. Davis' deputies in 1845—ran for the office in 1847 and in 1850 was elected over Thomas P. Harper, receiving four hundred and thirty-five majority, the largest ever before received for that office in Pickens county. Avoiding, as is aimed to be done, all political bias in what should be an impartial history, it may be permitted to state, that Mr. McAllister was an independent whig candidate against the nominee of a secret party caucus, which at this day, nobody cared greatly to defend or apologize for, and that his large vote was as much owing

to that fact as it was to his own personal popularity. Coming among us an entire stranger, having no connections of family or influence to forward his interest, with nothing but himself and plain—"Mc" to aid his cause, his success should be deemed no little remarkable. He had the good fortune to create favorable impressions among the people.

As a public officer, Mr. McAllister has sustained a fair reputation. As a man of business, *prompt* and energetic—a man *respecting himself* and the *office he held*, and by his straight forward course, maintaining the confidence of the people which he was so fortunate as to gain by the performance of his duties, he stands with an unsullied reputation. It would leave this sketch incomplete not to state this important fact—that as one of our best Sheriffs he has saved for himself more than any other whose business was not greatly more profitable. It may be added, has saved fully as much for others.

In 1854, Mr. McAllister was elected Major General of the Alabama Militia, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Gen. F. W. Bostick. His majority over an opponent who lived in the county of Tuscaloosa, was very large.

In the spring of 1855, Gen. McAllister received

ed the regular nomination of the Know Nothing, or American party, of Pickens, as their candidate for State Senator, which he declined to accept. In the fall of the same year he removed to the State of Mississippi, and located himself in business at Aberdeen in connection with a large mercantile house.

The General is a bachelor of an age ranging between thirty-five and forty, but is yet considered a marrying man.

Tandy P. Duncan was the next, the last, and is the present Sheriff of Pickens county, having been elected in August, 1853. He was born in Fairfield District, South Carolina, on the fourteenth day of August, 1816, removed to Pickens in January, 1833, but the next year went to the county of Bibb, where he remained until 1838, when he returned to Pickens. He has held almost all the minor offices from Constable up to Sheriff, which are the gift of the people in our Republican country—was elected Justice of the Peace at Henry's precinct, in 1849, and tax-collector, in 1850. In 1849 he was beaten for the latter office by Peter McGee. Mr. Duncan's chief opponent was Jesse Bryan, the hero in the Bear Fight.

Mr. Duncan's term will expire in 1856, and therefore the proper time to speak in his praise,

or censure, has not arrived. His health has been for some time past, in such declining condition that he has been unable to transact the duties of his laborious office, save by deputy. Mr. Duncan has ever fulfilled the duties of the various trusts which have been imposed on him with entire fidelity. He is social in his nature and his manners, and popular with the people.

RECAPITULATION.

SHERIFFS OF PICKENS.

Adino Griffin, B. F. Roper, W. H. Davis, David Taggart, G. G. Childs, J. W. Bryan, Thomas Davis, J. F. Nabers, B. G. McAllister, Henry White, B. F. Roper, T. P. Duncan.

Of the above eleven, every man filled out his full term, (Mr. Roper two,) except of course, the present incumbent. The two Davises are not related, five are democrats and six are whigs—six, and until lately, seven reside still in Pickens county and four at Carrollton. Two reside in Mobile, and one out of this State—the other two are dead; the widow of one resides at Carrollton. Six, or more than half are South Carolinians, and four from the famous home of John C. Calhoun, the District of Abbeville. Of the other five, but one was born in this State. The Sheriffs of Pickens have been men of the people.

Self-made, plain, business men. Taken together, they will undoubtedly compare most favorably for efficiency and ability, with the same number of Sheriffs, for the same period, and length of time, of any county in Alabama.

CHAPTER X.

COMMISSIONERS' COURT.

Gentlemen who have, from time to time, filled the office of Commissioners of the Court of roads and revenue since 1830, deserve notice in this history. It is a responsible position, more of honor than of profit, but it is no sinecure.—The people generally seek to place in this office men of sound judgment, business habits, financial ability, and possessing a knowledge of the necessities of each and every section of the county. They need to be firm, impartial and honest; their duties, as prescribed by the act of 1821, were: “To levy the county tax, to lay out and discontinue roads, to exercise all the power in relation to roads, bridges, highways, ferries and canals which belonged to the Orphans' or County Court, and to appoint such county officers as were directed to be appointed by the (old

County Court.” and to be elected annually. The act of 1827 changed the tenure of office to three years, to take effect in August of that year.

There is no hesitation in saying, that the members of the Court, or Board of Commissioners, in Pickens, have possessed a large share of those qualities, required by the nature of their office, and have, by their economy and good management, thus far, maintained the credit and the respectability of the county in an eminent degree, within their sphere of action.

In August, 1830, David Bradford, Reuben Gardner, Thomas Deloach, and Thomas T. Gore, were elected as a new Court, of whom Reuben Gardner was re-elected. Mr. Gardner had been twice before elected by the people, first at the general August election, in 1826, again at the August election of 1827, the last time for three years, as above stated; consequently he had already been four years Commissioner.

These persons above named organized and held their first Court, August 10, 1830, Charles M. Holland presiding as Judge.

At the general election in 1833, William D. Hargrove, John Vance, Burwell Ball and Henry Sossaman, were elected by the people. In February, 1835, Bennett Atkinson was elected by the Court “To fill the vacancy of John Vance,

removed." In August of the same year, David Archer was elected by the Court "To fill the vacancy of Henry Sossaman, removed."

At the August election of 1836, John W. Middleton, David Archer, Robert Henry, and Burwell Ball, were chosen Commissioners, Samuel B. Moore being Judge at the time. These persons served out their full terms.

August 1839, Robert Henry, Burwell Ball, John Story and Thomas H. Wilson, composed the newly elected Court, and served until their three years term expired.

The successors of the last named Court, in 1842, were Robert Henry, Burwell Ball, Thomas H. Wilson and David E. Woods, the latter being the only new member. All served their full terms.

At the general election in 1845, Maj. Robert Henry, Col. David Bradford, Capt. James Gibson and David E. Woods, Esq., were elected Commissioners. All these gentlemen served out the full term.

The next Commissioners' Court, elected at the regular August election in 1848, was composed of David Bradford, James T. Burdine, James Henry and John H. Hargrove, who all served out their entire terms of office.

In 1851, at the August election, the new Court

consisted of Maj. Robert Henry, James T. Burdine, Thomas C. Lanier, and John Shockley.

In 1852, by virtue of one of those changes which our unstable legislation is constantly producing, another election for County Commissioners resulted in the choice of the same persons, last above named. At the October term, 1853, Whitaker W. Guyton was elected by the Court to fill a vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Maj. Robert Henry. Mr. Henry had been a member of this body since 1836, with the exception of the term of three years, when his son, James Henry was Commissioner. The cause of his retiring was his declining health, infirmity and old age. He made one of the most efficient public officers the county ever had.

In 1854, a new Court was elected, composed of James T. Burdine, Esq., Capt. William Gibson, Col. William McCracken and Col. Fergus McDowell. The next year (1855) the same gentlemen were all re-elected and constitute the present Court, with the exception of Thomas C. Lanier, chosen to fill a vacancy occasioned by the decease of Col. William McCracken. Col. McCracken died soon after his re-election, in the autumn of 1855, respected and lamented by all who knew him, both as a public officer and private citizen. T. C. Lanier, Esq., his successor,

was Commissioner from 1851 to August 1854: His unanimous election by his present colleagues is an ample certificate to his fitness for the office and the estimation in which he is held by the people of this county as a Commissioner. Of the other members of the present Court, special mention has already been made of Mr. Burdine. Capt. Gibson, and Col. McDowell are plain farmers, men of prudence about their own affairs, and not therefore, less likely to take care of the public interests. The vote which the people have given all these gentlemen, at different times, is the best eulogy they can receive. Their presiding officer, Judge L. A. Gilkey, has been spoken of at length, in another place in this volume.

CHAPTER XI.

CIRCUIT COURT CLERKS.

Peter Kilpatrick was the first Clerk of the Circuit Court and held the office through one term, going out in 1825. This gentleman was a prominent citizen of Pickens for several years of its earliest history. He now lives in Mississippi. John Barksdale died soon after his election,

serving out but a small portion of his four years term. He was one of the first settlers of Pickens, was father of Berryman D. Barksdale, one of the County Court Clerks, father of Mr. Jas. Barksdale and of Mr. William Barksdale, the latter still a resident of Pickens county.

Reuben H. Grant held the office but a short time, by judicial appointment. He was quite a public character as agent for the Choctaw Indians for many years. He was succeeded by Thos. F. Callahan, who was elected by the people in 1826. Mr. Callahan served out his first term and was re-elected in 1830, but for some alleged irregular conduct, one of the Circuit Court Judges displaced him in a still more irregular manner and appointed Charles M. Holland, clerk *pro tem* in his place. Mr. Callahan carried his case to the Supreme Court, where he was reinstated. He was, however, impeached afterwards, and broken from his office. His fault was a too common one of that day, intemperance, a failing not yet obsolete among men. This gentleman subsequently went to Texas as a volunteer in the revolutionary cause of that Republic, and is said to have been one of the victims at the Alamo, along with Crocket and other brave men who there fought and died as heroes. He is represented by those who knew him well, as a high-mind-

ed, chivalrous gentleman; as a man of great personal popularity, and of much ability, fond of excitement and adventure, and perhaps better fitted for border life than for sober citizenship. He came from Abbeville, South Carolina, to Pickens while a young man, and was still young when he fell at Alamo.

John Adams was elected to succeed Mr. Callahan, at the August election of 1833, and served through his term. He was a native of Tennessee, came to Pickens about 1829, and left it soon after he went out of office, and was afterwards a Mobile commission merchant. During his clerkship this gentleman contrived to gain an *extra* to his name, and was sometimes called John Quincy Adams, it being about the time his *namesake* was prominent before the country. While clerk of the Court, Mr. Adams carried on merchandize at Carrollton in the house occupied by the Republican newspaper, and now owned by its present proprietor, the author of this work.

Samuel Wier was elected in 1837. This gentleman also came from Abbeville District, South Carolina, so prolific in its migrations to Pickens county. He went out of office in 1841, and died June 28, 1842, as the marble slab which stands in the Carrollton burial ground informs the passer by. His consort, who lies by his side followed

him only a month later. The large orphan family left behind have grown up in this community where they are well known and respected. The deceased was a brother of Mr. Andrew Wier, of Carrollton, and of Mr. James Wier, who are too well known to need eulogy. Mr. Samuel Wier is always spoken of as an honest and upright man, a good citizen and a loss to society. The Wier ancestry were Protestant Irish, which is as valuable an inheritance as an American need boast. The parents of these brothers (and of several sisters and other brothers,) came from Northern Ireland about sixty years ago. They were Presbyterians like most of the Scotch-Irish people who inhabit the shores of the North channel. James Weir, above named, was born in Ireland, but the younger members of the family are natives of South Carolina.

James B. Sherrod, the late Clerk, was the successor of Samuel Wier, elected in 1841, and re-elected in 1845, and again in 1849, having held the office till last August, (1853,) or for a period of twelve years, being the only person ever twice elected, except Callahan. He ran for the office in 1853, but was defeated. Mr. Sherrod came from North Carolina to this county about 1837, following here some of his relatives, but at a much later period. He is a nephew of Randall Sher-

rod, Sr., who was one of the very first pioneers of these parts, coming out from the old North State, as early as 1819. Mr. James B. Sherrod retired from the office with a handsome profit from his twelve years service and labor, and soon afterwards removed to Pickensville, where he and his family at present reside, at the old Henly place. He owns a plantation near Fairfield, and devotes his time to Agriculture.

In the canvass of 1855, Mr. Sherrod was the nominee of the American party of Pickens, and became a candidate as such, for the Legislature. He received a highly respectable vote, but fell short of an election, the regular Democratic ticket prevailing that year. Mr. Sherrod had always been an active Democrat, and as such, a pretty ardent party man. Although he makes no pretensions to public speaking, yet, before that canvass was over, he had learned to make a respectable effort on the stump.

Cornelius B. Sanders succeeded Mr. Sherrod, and is the present Circuit Court Clerk. He is a native of Raleigh, North Carolina, whence he removed to South Carolina, Spartenburgh District, when a small boy, thence to Union District, where he was raised, and he was about twenty-one years old when he came into Pickens, where he has since resided. His first vote was cast here in 1836

for Hugh L. White, for President, and since that day he has been a whig in politics. Mr. Sanders held several offices of profit and trust, before he was elected to his present office, such as tax-collector, census-taker, assessor and the like. He has been and still is a regular preacher and pastor of the Baptist denomination, and is so well known to the citizens of this county, that it is unnecessary to become prolix in eulogy. He is attentive to the duties of the office, attending personally to business and to the calls of the public.

CHAPTER XII.

REPRESENTATIVES OF PICKENS.

The rapid settlement of this part of Alabama, was unprecedented in the history of the new States, as has been already hinted at in the foregoing pages. The causes of this sudden filling up of the country by whites within the first few years after the organization of Alabama as a territory, and her admission into the Union as a State, have also been briefly noticed. We have the authority of Col. Pickett, in his history of Alabama, to corroborate what has already been

said of this subject. The facts, however, above stated, were gleaned entirely from conversations with our old citizens before the writer ever read Col. Pickett's valuable work.

Merely natural causes, or the natural course of things, could hardly have precipitated such a rush of emigrants upon a new country. War might do it; gold might do it; a fanaticism might do it, as in our day we have seen whole regions of our newly acquired, or newly organized territories, peopled up as by magic. Let California and Kansas be witnesses. But man is not so gregarious an animal as to move in flocks or swarms, without some adequate motive ahead, or pressure behind. What contributed to settle Pickens so rapidly was the latter. Speaking of the Congressional canvass in 1828, in the Madison District, between Capt. Nicholas Davis and Governor C. C. Clay, (that District being then composed of the counties of Madison, Jackson, Limestone, Lauderdale and Lawrence,) Mr. Pickett remarks that the government of the United States had sold all the lands in the other counties of the District, except the two first named, in 1818-19-20, under the credit system, which then prevailed, at such enormous prices, as under the change brought about by the reduced prices of cotton rendered many unable, and

nearly all the *original* purchasers unwilling to pay for them. Consequently, nearly all the lands in those counties had been relinquished or forfeited, including, in many instances, the dwelling-houses, gin-houses and other improvements, and the question was, whether adequate relief should be obtained for the former purchasers, and those holding under them. Judge Clay and Capt. Davis were both advocates of pre-emption rights, to the settlers on public lands, and relief to the unfortunate purchasers, who had relinquished or forfeited. Such was the migration about the period above named, (1828,) of these disturbed North Alabama settlers to Pickens, that she was found entitled to three Representatives in the General Assembly, at the second apportionment of members.

The Act of Congress, dividing the Mississippi Territory, and erecting the Eastern part of it into a Territorial Government, under the name of Alabama, was passed March 1st, 1817. Pursuant to this Act, the first Territorial Legislature met at St. Stephens, on the 19th of January, 1818, seven counties, viz:—Madison, Lauderdale, Limestone, Mobile, Baldwin, Washington, and Clarke, being represented. The county of Tuscaloosa was established at that first session, including within her boundaries the whole present area of Pick-

ens. The next and last session was held at the same place in the Autumn of the same year, (1818) at which session the then county of Tuscaloosa, including Pickens, was represented. At this second session, Gabriel Moore was Speaker of the House, and James Titus, President of the Senate, Wm. W. Bibb, Governor. James Titus had been the *sole* Senator, at the previous session, holding regular daily sessions to decide upon the Acts of the House, and opening and adjourning with all due formality. The first House was composed of thirteen members.

In 1819, the Convention to form the State Convention, under the Act of March 2d, of the same year, convened in Huntsville, on the 5th of July. The county of Tuscaloosa, (still including Pickens,) was represented by Marmaduke Williams, and John L. Tindal, two gentlemen well known to many of our readers. Some of the leading members of this important body, were Arthur F. Hopkins, Israel and James Pickens, Thomas and John D. Bibb, Nicholas Davis, C. C. Clay, A. P. Bagby, R. Saffold, Wm. R. King, Harry Toulmin, Gabriel Moore, John W. Walker, and Marmaduke Williams.

Hon. Marmaduke Williams, whom we are entitled to consider our own Representative in that Convention, and who represented us as late as

1823, before Pickens had a separate representative, and who afterwards often represented Tuscaloosa county, was a member of Congress from North Carolina, before he removed to Alabama. At the first general election under the new State Constitution of Alabama, he was a candidate for Governor, but was beaten by his opponent, William W. Bibb, receiving 7,140, and wanting 1202 votes of an election. Mr. Williams was several years Judge of the County Court of Tuscaloosa, and was long a prominent man in the State. He was an old fashioned National Republican, always anti-Jackson, and after the breaking up of the Republican party, a Henry Clay Whig.— He resided in Tuscaloosa until his death in 1851, and died at an advanced age respected and lamented.

The apportionment of 1823, under the Constitution, gave Pickens county one member of the House of Representatives, and, at the August election of 1824, Mr. Boly Conner was chosen to the State Legislature. He was chosen again the next year, and served once or twice subsequently, alternating, as it happened, with Lawrence Braisier for a year or two.

The burning of the State-house at Montgomery and the consequent destruction of the public records, has rendered it inconvenient to obtain

all the journals of the House, in order to obtain from them such an exact account as would be entirely reliable authority. It is found that the recollections of the oldest inhabitants disagree as to the times and number of times that Messrs. Connor and Brasier represented Pickens. It is believed, however, that the order of succession, prior to 1829 below presented is correct.

Boly Conner, Esq., was one of the first settlers of Pickens. He came from Tennessee at an early period, was a plain planter, a popular man in his day, and after enjoying the honors conferred upon him by his fellow-citizens of Pickens, he removed to the State of Mississippi and died there about 1840.

Lawrence Brasier, Esq., came to Pickens from Marengo, was twice elected as above narrated, was a candidate the third time and beaten by Flournoy, removed out of the State soon after his defeat and still resides in Northern Mississippi. He resided in the North part of Pickens, where yet reside several worthy and respectable citizens of the same name, his relatives.

Hon. George H. Flournoy was the next Representative from Pickens county. He took his seat in the House at the eleventh annual session, began on the third Monday in November, 1829. Mr. Flournoy has been noticed as one of the

Judges of the County Court, elected at the session of 1831-'32. He is said to be a man of fine abilities and of much influence in the county at one time. He removed to Mississippi about 1836, and died at Starkville in that State in 1840, comparatively a young man.

John C. Kilpatrick represented Pickens at the twelfth annual session. He was also a member of the House at the succeeding session. The name of this gentleman often appears upon the public records of Pickens county in its earlier history. He was tax-collector in 1829, or the year before he was elected to the Legislature.

Dr. Peyton King, a cotemporary member of the House from Jefferson county, at the session of 1830-'31, and subsequently Senator from Pickens for two terms, found Kilpatrick a troublesome member. The Doctor narrates that Col. Kilpatrick was the cause of defeating a favorite bill of his own for appropriating money to buy seventy-five or one hundred negroes to work on some important roads in the winter, and the navigable streams in the summer. "It was lost," says Dr. King, "by the obstinacy of the then member from Pickens county, Col. Kilpatrick, although the latter pretended to favor the bill." John C. Kilpatrick left Pickens county very abruptly in the year 1835. Mr. William Wil-

son, one of the very earliest settlers of Pickens, who has been mentioned already, a resident of the North part of Pickens, was shot down in the summer of 1835, at home, near his own door, about twilight. He survived only twenty-four hours and his frequent dying declaration was that he came to his death by the hands of this person. They were neighbors and had had a misunderstanding.*

The writer feels a desire to draw the veil over dark and mysterious deeds. Yet, truth must not

*Twelve years afterwards, the writer was employed as an Attorney, to bring suit upon a note given for the purchase money of a female slave, sold by the Administrator of William Wilson, and purchased by George G. Child, one of the Sheriff's of Pickens, noticed above. One thousand dollars was recovered out of Gen. F. W. Bostick and James B. Sherrod, two of the Clerks noticed above. They were Child's sureties, and the latter was insolvent. Wilson had refused to sell this woman to Kilpatrick, and hence a misunderstanding between them. He never would part with a slave, and it was in accordance with his last request, while enduring mortal agony from the shot which caused his death, on account of this slave, that he wished she alone might be sold out of the family, for he could not bear the thoughts that she should remain in it longer. This woman was therefore sold, as stated, purchased by Childs, passed through several hands, disappeared from this county, and it is intimated is most likely to be now found wherever Kilpatrick may be, provided both are still alive. The writer cannot reconcile it with his duty to place side by side the names of good and bad men, without the least discrimination between good and bad actions.

be concealed by one who undertakes to speak faithfully of the past.

Mr. Kilpatrick, as has been stated, was tax-collector in 1829. It is narrating facts that were notorious at the time, to state that Robert Jemison, Jr., Esq., now State Senator of Tuscaloosa county, then a resident of Pickens and an influential man in Pickens, issued a handbill charging Kilpatrick with defrauding the county Treasury as tax-collector. It may be further stated, that Goodloe White, brother of Henry White, caused the evidence of defalcation to be nailed upon a tree in the town of Carrollton.

William Wilson, above spoken of, lived at the present residence of Mr. James Gunter, a well known citizen of Pickens county, who afterwards married the widow of the deceased. Dr. B. F. Wilson, the present State Senator from Pickens, Mr. Jason Wilson and Dr. William C. Wilson, all of Carrollton, are all sons of the unfortunate man who was shot so mysteriously. There were no arrests made at the time, and no indictments found against any person or persons.

George H. Flournoy represented Pickens in the years 1832-'33, being the fourteenth and fifteenth annual sessions. Pickens had now had ten years of political and civil life, with only one member of the lower House. The apportion-