

- ESCAMBIA ECHOES -

published  
by  
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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Mrs. Carolyn Pugh McLendon, Editor

Annual dues - \$ 6.00

NOTICE OF MEETING - Tuesday, April 15th, at 7:30 p.m. at Jefferson Davis Junior College Student Center

Program: PICTURES AND SLIDES of OLD HISTORIC PLACES IN MONROE COUNTY

Speaker: Charles Raymond Floyd of Monroeville,  
Member of Monroe County Historical Society

Mr. Charles Raymond Floyd comes to us through the efforts of Bert Campbell, Jr. Haniel Croft, formerly of Brewton now residing in Monroeville recommends Mr. Floyd highly. Our neighboring county of Monroe has recently launched forth in their historical preservation endeavors by having the Monroe County Courthouse established as a museum and listed on the National Historic Register. April 4, 1975 has been designated as "Lafayette Day" in Monroe County marking the 150th anniversary of the visit of Revolutionary War General Marquis de Lafayette to Monroe County in April, 1825 while en route from Montgomery to Mobile. The General arrived via the Alabama River and spent a while in the home of John Dellet at Claiborne after which he was guest of honor at a banquet and made a speech in the Masonic Hall. The Dellet home is still standing today, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Willie Deer, and has a treasury of antique furnishings. William Barrett Travis, of Alamo fame, was said to have studied law under Judge Dellet at Claiborne.

Having made pilgrimages to Conecuh and Baldwin counties, it seems fitting that we plan our next pilgrimage to Monroe County which joins Escambia County on the northwest.

NAME-THE-NEWSLETTER CONTEST WINNER - Miss Helen Robertson of Brewton submitted the winning entry "ESCAMBIA ECHOES" while Miss Mary Brantley of Atmore submitted the alternate entry "ESCO ECHOES," the entries being so similar, awards were given to both ladies. We appreciate the interest shown in the contest. The Committee had quite a job selecting from the following, all of which were significant: "Our Heritage," "Escambia Heritage," "Spirit of '76," "The Early Escambian," "Creeks-End," "The EscAla," "Pine Paths," "Old News and New Notes."

NEW MEMBERS - J. F. Mitchell, Jr., Brewton; Edward Chase Earle, Jr., Reedville, Va.; Mrs. John (Katherine Pugh) Smith, Montgomery; and Mrs. W. B. (Miley Mayo) Cariker, Kountze, Texas, making a total of 289.

NOTICE OF DUES - Look at the mailing label on this newsletter. If your name and address has an "x" by it you have not paid your dues of \$6.00, also we held back your copy of the March quarterly pending payment of your dues which were due March 31st. If we have made any mistakes please do not hesitate to let me know. At this point there are 95 members who have not paid their dues for 1975. We need your financial support, especially in view of the active role we should take in the upcoming bi-centennial celebrations.

TO CELEBRATE THE BI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES, your Historical Society plans to publish a book or booklet containing several lengthy Escambia County histories that we have not yet published in the quarterly. This is not to be considered as THE history of Escambia County that we hope to someday publish containing a complete story of Escambia County. If you have anything suitable for this publication, please submit it to Miss Janel Redditt, Miss Helen Robertson and/or Miss Rita Jane Boykin who constitute our Bi-Centennial Committee. In addition the Society will participate in other planned activities as well as possibly having a special celebration of its own--perhaps a "Martha Washington" Party.

TENNESSEE HISTORY AVAILABLE - A listing of books available on the various counties in Tennessee and other books relating to the history of Tennessee has been received from Charles Elder, Bookseller, 2115 Elliston Place, Nashville, Tennessee 37203, including one on Tennessee's Bell Witch, also Adair's History of the American Indian, reprinted from a 1735 publication.

WRITTEN ESPECIALLY for the use of The Escambia County Historical Society was the following story of the Hampden Ridge settlement of Conecuh County north of Castleberry, by Miss Elizabeth Autrey Riley of Evergreen. These extra efforts by our senior members are especially appreciated and we hope that more of our senior members will take an active part in helping to preserve our history.

#### HAMPDEN RIDGE - 1816 - 1975

After the Revolutionary War, also War of 1812, there was an influx of immigrants from Virginia, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas and even a few from the New England States, settling in Alabama, where they found the climate delightful, forest abounding in game, virgin timber, rich fertile soil, with many flowing streams and refreshing springs. Here, they decided was truly Utopia.

Coming from the "Isle of Wight" in Virginia, was a strong, ambitious young gentleman, full of the pioneer spirit, looking for an ideal place to settle, a place where he could settle permanently, and free from the Indians' rage. As in that era of our Southern History, the Indians had commenced to drift to the West - or to Florida as this state was reluctant to accept the presence of immigrants and tried to discourage any one they thought would be trespassing on their land. He first stopped in North Carolina with relatives, and here, he met his Waterloo. Alexander Autrey forgot all his original plans and ambitions when he saw, met and fell in love with Parthania Bulloch Irvin, a charming young lady from Georgia, who was spending several months in an uncle's home, attending a select private school. She was young, lovely, vivacious, proud, intelligent and came from a wealthy family. She was sixteen,

very petite. Alexander Autrey was six feet and four. They married; and naturally Parthania was anxious to return to her native home in Georgia and show to her parents and friends, what she had captured and accomplished in North Carolina. Both were proud of their lineage. Parthania Bulloch Irvin was a lineal descendant of Gov. Robert Irvin, first Governor of Georgia. She was proud of her mother, who was a Bulloch of Georgia, and was closely related to the late President Theodore Roosevelt, and amusing to say, Parthania gave each of her sons, for their middle name, the name of Bulloch.

This young couple left Georgia in the early 1800's with a train of immigrants, coming to Alabama, first stopping in Clarke County for a short period of time. Here Captain William Autrey, the father of Alexander, who had accompanied his son on this expedition, died, from wounds he sustained in the Revolutionary War. Alexander wasn't satisfied; he wanted to see more, so on to Conecuh County he came, settling in the deep forest, about six miles southwest of Evergreen, near Old Sparta. Here, they built their first home, which was a log cabin, from logs Alexander Autrey and his slaves felled from his own land. When their family grew, they built a large two story rambling house, painted white, with green blinds. A house, typical of that period of time. Alexander had in nails, driven on the wine cellar door, 1816, the nails going from top of door to bottom. Alexander Autrey named his estate Hampden Ridge in memory of his mother, who was Elizabeth Hampden, of Virginia. Alexander Autrey was the lineal descendant of the first Alexander Autrey, who came to America with his close friend, De Soto, the explorer, and when De Soto was buried in the mighty waters of the Mississippi, Alexander Autrey, the first, was one of those who helped to locate the body of the explorer, to his watery grave.

Parthania Irvin Autrey was reared very tenderly and carefully, but she had the indomitable spirit and will, as her husband, so side by side, they lived and conquered so that when they arrived at a ripe old age, they owned thousands of acres of land and over two hundred slaves.

Schools, Churches, Post Offices, and communities, bore the name of Hampden Ridge, which was settled in 1816.

This is a true fact of the history of Hampden Ridge, first settled and owned by Alexander and Parthania Autrey.

There is a Methodist Church which was built just a few years ago on a road between Castleberry and Belleville where the members from the nearby Hampden Ridge Community previously worshipped in a church building. On one of the pews in this Methodist Church one will find a bronze plaque, bearing an inscription honoring the memory of Alexander Autrey and wife, Parthania, who gave the land for the original Methodist Church.

From old Mexico, California, and Texas, the men bearing the name of Autrey, which is French, have proven they inherited the traits of their ancestors, Alexander and Parthania, as they are men of distinction, following in the footsteps of their forebears--showing ambition, courage and were fearless. Major Macajah Autrey, who fell at the battle of Alamo, was a nephew of Alexander Autrey. He was a lawyer practicing in Tennessee, when he heard the call to go to the aid of Texas. He accompanied his dear friend, David Crocket, and ironically, they fell, and lay side by side in death in the Alamo. Out from Hampden Ridge were many wonderful men and women, who owed much to the couple who came to Alabama, and settled in Conecuh County at Hampden Ridge.

-Contributed by a great granddaughter,  
Elizabeth Autrey Riley