

Jackson County Historical Society News

volume ten, number THREE

July 2003



The Seaborn Shankle House, Commerce, Georgia, listed on the National Register of Historic Places

The Seaborn M. Shankle home was built, circa 1880, on to the front of the original house, circa 1840, now the kitchen. The Shankle family burial grounds are located behind the house.

The Jackson County Historical Society will ramble to the Shankle House after a meeting and program at the First United Methodist Church of Commerce on July 13, 2003, at 2:30.

NEWSLETTER

The Jackson County Historical Society News is published quarterly and mailed before the next meeting. Back issues can be obtained for \$2.50 each plus postage. Please send your Jackson County family connections with your dues and they will be published in the next newsletter. Past Newsletters can be viewed online at: rootsweb.com/~gajackso/

QUERIES

Send queries to be published before the next deadline, December 05, 2003. Request for searches and copies can be sent to the address below in a stamped, self addressed envelope or e-mail:

tina313@mindspring.com

DUES ARE DUE NOW!!! DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!!!

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

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

JCHS OFFICERS 2002-2003

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OBITUARIES

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, August 28, 1885

Mr. S. M. Shankle is dead. In his death Harmony Grove (with the growth of which he was so closely identified) loses one of its best citizens; most progressive and thorough business man; the church one of its best members; his wife and children a husband and father in the truest sense of those words. Mr. Shankle has lived in what is now a progressive business city, since it was simply a small trading post, and camping place for the wagon trains that hauled their produce from the mountains of Ga., and the Carolinas to Athens, which was then the market for all that section. The building of the N. E. Railroad gave this erstwhile trading post, an impetus citywards and its growth, all things considered, has been marvelous. To no one is more indebted for her growth and her good morals, than the man whose death this article chronicles. A good man is gone. In common with his numerous friends, we feel sad.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, August 30, 1917

Prominent Commerce Lady Passes Away

Mrs. Victoria Park Shankle, widow of the late Seaborn M. Shankle, died at her home in Commerce on Saturday night. Mrs. Shankle was one of the most widely known ladies of this section of the State. She was a woman of splendidly developed Christian character, whose life was full of golden deeds of charity, and whose death will be mourned by hundreds of friends and acquaintances.

Having been left a widow 32 years ago, with nine children to rear, Mrs. Shankle took charge of her husband's interests, and successfully operated them until her sons were old enough to assume charge. By her efforts, the estate of her husband was largely increased, and her life was a noble example to her children.

She is survived by the following children; Mrs. N. W. Perkins, of Atlanta, Rev. A. G. Shankle of Mansfield, La., Messrs. A. M. and L. P. Shankle of Commerce, Mr. Claud Shankle of Atlanta, Mesdames W. D. Shepperd and L. J. Sharp of Commerce. Another daughter, Mrs. W. B. Hardman, died six years ago.

History of Commerce First Methodist Church

The First Methodist Church was organized in 1843 and was known as Adeline's Chapel. The record shows that a Sabbath School was organized on the 18th day of June, 1843. This was located two miles south of town across the Athens Wagon Road (now the Commerce-Athens Highway) from the home and farm of the late Mr. T. P. Hudson, now owned by Mr. C. W. Hood, Jr.

(editor notes; C. W. Hood farm is now owned by Southeast Toyota Distributors.)

To this early church belonged as members, the Shankles, Hargroves, Hudsons, Gobers, and Butlers. The officers elected were: Christopher Sewell, Eli Shankle, Ruben Nash. The Board of Managers chosen were: James W. Shankle, William Johnson, H. B. Gober, William LeMaster, Linton C. Dunson, and William Gober.

The Adeline Church was torn down in 1851 and was moved to Harmony Grove, and located on Shankle Heights opposite the home of Mr. and Mrs. Billy White and belonging to the estate of Mrs. L. J. Sharp, the former Miss Pauline Shankle.

The church was again moved and located near the Old Farabee home on South Broad Street outside the city limits, some quarter of a mile on the East side of the railroad. The church was known as Sandy Level. The site is marked by a small graveyard.

In 1874, the church was moved to its present site, where a one-room frame church was built and the name was changed to Harmony Grove Methodist Church. The deed to the church lot was made by Seaborn M. Shankle on the 15th day of November, 1879 to J. P. Hudson, G. L. Martin, W. S. Alexander, J. C. Cambell, and S. M. Shankle, trustees and their successors in office.

In 1903, the church launched a building project using the old church as the main body. Additions were added and the name had become Commerce Methodist Church, with the changing of the name of the town.

This building was used until a campaign for the present edifice was begun in 1919 when the old church was torn down, a basement was excavated, and a modern cream brick structure was built.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, April 17, 1941

Grandma Wilson's Birthday Celebrated By Large Gathering

A large assemblage of friends greeted Mrs. Elizabeth Jane Wilson on the occasion of her one hundredth birthday Sunday, at her home north of town.

Born Elizabeth Jane Hood, daughter of Nathaniel and Louisa Hood on April 15, 1841, about one half mile distant from the place she now lives, she has spent her entire life in the same community.

When eighteen years old she was married to Henry W. Wilson who two years later joined Company B of the eighteenth Georgia Regiment and marched off to serve four years under General John B. Hood in the War Between the States. Returning after the War, he and Mrs. Wilson began the task of making a home and a living on the very little that remained. She, like all the women about her, took the raw material and carded, spun and wove the cloth as well as manufactured the dye for it from bark and berries. She also helped her husband in the fields and reared a family too. Thus was developed the habits of industry, thrift and frugality that became a part of her very life and remained with her until the present.

So long as she was physically able she helped with the housework. As age advanced and she could do nothing else, she selected as her job washing dishes three times each day. Later when this became too great a task, she would put the dishes away after the washing has been completed. She could always find a job.

She received her second eyesight several years ago and could see better without glasses than her daughter does with them. She enjoyed having members of the family read to her until only a few days ago.

All of her children were present Sunday to bring gifts and spend the day with her. They are: Mrs. J. W. Cartee, Covington; Mrs. J. L. Harbin, Jefferson; J. W. Wilson of Thomasville, N. C., and Mrs. W. J. Hendricks with whom she lives.

Friends from far and near were present to help celebrate this unusual occasion. Among those who paid tribute were J. C. Turner, Jefferson; Randall Evans, speaker of the House of Representatives; Hal Martin of the Atlanta Constitution; C. E. Hardy, Jefferson; Dr. A. A. Rogers; B.B. Sanders; superintendent of Commerce schools; H. F. Bray; H.C. Sims; A.O.Hood, Jefferson and others. H. Odell Williams was the master of ceremonies.

excerpt from the Jackson Herald, February 1, 1945
Commerce, Georgia as Seen Over Seventy Years Ago
by Jewett Barnett

Mrs. N. A. David of Nicholson, Ga., furnished the writer with the information contained in the following article. Mrs. David, widow of the late Kinch S. David, was born of the parentage of the late James Thomas Wilson, and Mrs. Mary Ann Lovina Perry Wilson, October 11, 1860, being eighty-four years old the past year, but she still possesses a wonderful memory. One really enjoys hearing her relate the many instances of interest in her past life, a few of which we are glad to reproduce here for the pleasure of the readers of this paper.

At the age of five she was moved away with her parents to Kentucky, the family, with some others who moved there, covered the distance in 30 days, driving mules, hitched to covered wagons. They resided on the farm of John Etherton, where her father constructed 100 hoghouses, these houses being so arranged that one trough supplied every one of them. You can imagine "what a trough!"

In 1872 her father decided to return to Commerce, Ga., and the same means of travel brought them back to their nativity. When they reached, The Tennessee River, near Albany, Tennessee, on what was known as the Turn-Pike Road, it was necessary to camp for several weeks before they were able to cross on account of high water. Upon refusal of the women to cross on the ferry boat, the wagons were carried over on the other side, being pulled through the river by the mules. She states that as they neared the center of the stream the wagon became un-coupled, thereby allowing the mules to take the front wheels right out from under them, and there they were—the men folks finally rescuing them.

After a safe journey, they landed in Commerce on December 12, 1872 it being known the Commerce without a railroad, however, the right-of-way was surveyed. They rented a small dwelling and settled down. Her father was a carpenter by trade and his services were demanded right off, since he constructed dwellings for Dillard Harber and Tom Harber; store-buildings for these and others.

The school building was a wooden structure with "shutter" windows and "punchun" seats. The seats

were what we call slabs, the smooth side up, and holes bored through each end with augers through which the staves projected. No backs, no desks. Other buildings were: Matt Keith, Jewelry Shop; John Ray, Blacksmith Shop; Bohannon, Harness Shop; C. W. Hood, Solomon Segar, Seaborn Shankle, Merchants. These all centered about where the two over-all plants are now situated. A paper was published by Stafford. The Baptist Church was built in the early seventies, Bob Cheney being the Sunday School Superintendent, and Miss Anna Cheney the first organist. Following this, the Methodist Church was constructed. The informant attended the ordination service when W. B. J. Hardman was ordained to preach for the Baptist denomination. The first doctor was L. G. Hardman, and the second, William Shankle.

The Southern Railroad was built prior to 1876, the time when the first train rolled into town. This was exciting times, as everybody in town was there to see the "Iron Horse" as she came puffing in. At this scene the informant was present, and dropping down to the present age for a moment, a few years ago, when the passenger train was taken off this road, she learned of the incident the day previous and forth-with made her plans to be in Commerce the following day, remarking: "I saw the first train come into Commerce, and I am going to ride the last one out." And, she did. It was a sad incident, since a progressive mind never likes to note a backward turn in life, but she went through with it.

In entering school, the teachers being Bob Cheney, Mrs. Carter Parks and Morgan L. Parker, the informant recalls those happy days, remembering her classmates, many of whom we mention here: Jeff Hood, Ethelene, Bob, Will, Elnora, Sallie, Tom and John Hardman, Jim, Paul, Alice and Virginia Sheppard, Sue Pittman Starks, John Ash, John Skinner, Ella Seagraves, Josie Wood, High, Dow, Nezzie and Florence Parks, Ella Goss, Florence and Tish Ellison, Mary Williamson Appleby, Bonnie Wilhite, Lucy Wilhite Harber, John, Al, and Lula Deadwyler, Ida, Nelia, Maggie and Grogan Shankle, Dora, Julia, Tom and Millie Holland, Croff Henry, and Tom Massey, Nelia Sewell Harber.

The informant has on request that we are glad to make for her, as follows: Every school mate living is asked to drop her a card, and as soon as weather conditions will permit, she wants them to meet her at the

park in Commerce for a picnic lunch.

In 1879 her parents moved over near Jefferson on the Brockton Road, the informant became the bride of K. S. David on December 30, 1888, and following this she became a resident of this little town (Nicholson), where the family was classed among the most successful farmers in this section.

excerpt from Jackson Herald December 1947

Nicholson, Mrs. Nancy A. David Passes Sunday

In the death of Mrs. Nancy A. David, 87, Nicholson loses one of her oldest and most substantial citizens. She had been at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Earl (Maggie) Harris the past several weeks, little hope being entertained for her recovery, and death came on Sunday afternoon, December 7, 1947, about 3:00. Mrs. David had lived in this section practically all her life, where she won the admiration of a wide circle of friends, who are saddened at her demise.

Mrs. David was the widow of the late Kinch S. David, who preceeded her to the grave several years ago. They owned a nice home here and were interested largely in civic affairs which were for the betterment of the community.

She is survived by one sister, Mrs. E. E. Ogletree, Athens; two brothers, John Lord of Jefferson, and Robert Lord, Winder; one daughter, Mrs. Earl Harris, Union Point; two sons, John W. and Kinch E. David, both of Nicholson, together with a number of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted from the Nicholson Baptist Church on Tuesday, December 9, 1947, at 3:00 by Rev T. C. Hardman of Commerce, and the Rev. Edmond Perry of Milledgeville, and interment followed in the Nicholson cemetery.

(written in the summer of 1985, while she was a resident at B. J. C. Nursing Home. She died October 12, 1985)

Down Memory Lane

by Eula Stone Wilson

I remember the old Alhambra Hotel. It was across the street from the Depot. On Thanksgiving Day, when I was a school girl we had a holiday and several girls from my class spent the day with Jennie Sue Hardman, Charles and William's sister, on the Waterworks Road. While there we heard the fire siren. It was called the

Wild Cat Whistle then. We girls wanted to know where the fire was so we ran all the way back to Commerce and saw the old hotel burning. The only person I can remember who stayed at that Hotel was a Mr. Obe Hawks. He was a bachelor and he was bent over and walked with a cane. He was a brother to Mr. B. Hawks, who had a dry goods store on South Elm Street next to E. B. Anderson's bank, which was where the City Hall is now.

I remember when the post office was about where the Commerce Drug Store is now. Mr. W. D. Pierce had a Barber Shop next door. Mr. Lot Alexander was postmaster and Miss Earle Alexander worked there too. Later the post office was moved to the corner of South Broad and Central Avenue, where Mr. Lint Dunson was postmaster. There was a hotel run by the Bohannons. They had an old maid daughter, Miss Ida Bohannon. Next to it was the first hospital in Commerce. The first doctors I remember were Dr. Nelms and Dr. Hubbard and Dr. Leatus Sanders. Dr. Sanders had his office upstairs in the Eliday building. It was said he killed his patients and his brother M. T. Sanders buried them. He was an undertaker then.

I remember when the first telephone office was upstairs over the postoffice on the corner of South Broad and Central Ave. Mamie Barber was the first operator. She was crippled and walked with crutches. She later was married to my oldest brother. She only lived about 6 months after she married. That was in 1919. I'm still wearing the cameo that she gave my brother on a tie pin. It broke off and he gave it to me and I took it to P. A. Hughes Jeweler and had a band put on it and wear it on my little finger.

Mr. W. D. Mann had a dry goods store where the North Eastern Bank is. My Dad worked for him. When he went out of business, my Dad went to work for Harber Merchantile Co. on the corner next to Jays. When they went out of business, my Dad went to work for Dr. Hubbard at the drugstore, which is run by James Hope and Sonny Harber now. My Dad worked for Dr. Hubbard until he died in 1918.

Mr. Cliff Barber worked with my Dad, F. R. Stone, at Harber's Merchantile Store. He later became sheriff of Jackson County and just 2 months after my Dad died he was killed trying to capture a prisoner. Mr. Barber was married to Miss Gussie Carson, the

daughter of Mr. George Carson who lived on North Broad Street in a beautiful home which was later torn down like many other old beautiful homes for progress. Next to it was the Deadwyler home.

Mr. Jeff Hood's beautiful home on North Elm Street was also torn down. All the beautiful trees were cut. I used to walk to school every day from Washington St. and well remember the trees. That was before they were all cut down, before the streets were paved and the old school house was across the road from the First Baptist Church. Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Carreker were teachers for several years. Mr. Carreker was superin-

tendent. I can remember all my teachers from the 1st grade up to the 11th. Miss Bessie Singleton(1st), Miss Eunice Little(2nd), who later married Abit Nix, Miss Louise Miller(3rd), who later became a missionary to a foreign country, Miss Carolyn McGarity(4th), Miss Lillie Poole(5th), Miss Estelle Hood(6th), Mr. Nat Long, Kenneth Bray, Arthur Cox and the Carrekers until I finished in 1922.

The J. T. Quillian home was a beautiful one. Mrs. Quillian, we called her Miss Fee, she was my Sunday school teacher and I spent many happy hours at her house. She was always entertaining us kids and we



The Alhambra Hotel was a popular place for twenty-three years. It was built in 1891 and burned in 1914. The name was changed in 1903 to the Commerce Hotel to correspond with the new name of the town.

The Alhambra Hotel's porch was a favorite gathering place for some of the local residents.

Pictured in the photograph on the adjoining page, left to right:

C. A. Goodin, Oscar Deadwyler, Bill Thomas, Richey England, Dr. C. E. Pittman, and Ed Farrow.

loved her. Their beautiful home was torn down to make room for an overall plant.

The beautiful old home of Mrs. Alice Hood, who had 3 children, C. W., Mary and Ruth, was torn down and Commerce Brick and Lumber Co. is there now.

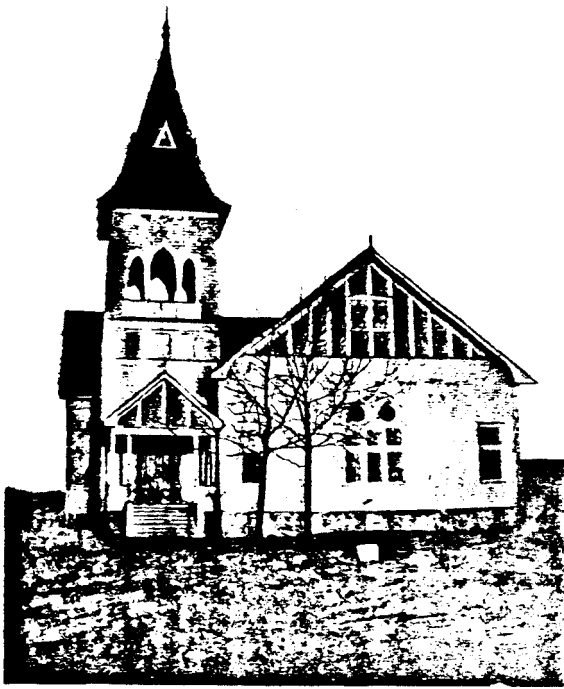
To my knowledge the E. B. Anderson home, where Miss Claire lived so long is still there. It is a beautiful old home. It is now being used for a wall papering school.

I can remember when Williford, Burns and Rice had a big Department Store located where Blue Bell Mfg.

Co. is now, the entrance facing Central Ave. To make change for a customer there was a little cab car overhead that would carry it to the main office in the back of the store. In a few seconds it would come whizzing back with your change.

Mr. J. F. Shannon was editor and owner of the Commerce News for many years. Later Mrs. P. B. Traywick was editor and until recently wrote a column "Dear Samantha" which was very enjoyable. We miss it very much, but a time comes when one has to retire and live a quieter life.





Commerce Methodist Church building from 1874 until 1919 when it was torn down and a modern cream-colored brick structure was built.

The Historical Society will meet at the First United Methodist Church of Commerce on July 13, 2003 at 2:30 p.m. A History of the Church will be presented by Tommy Benton. Collections of photographs and documents of the early membership to the present will be exhibited. At the conclusion of the program there will be a ramble to the former Seaborn M. Shankle House and family grave site.

Location: The church is located at 54 Cherry Street, across Broad Street from the Commerce Fire Station. The Shankle House is owned by James and Shelley Williamson at 124 Cherry Street, across Cherry Street from Commerce City Hall.

Jackson County Historical Society

P. O. Box 1234
Commerce, Georgia 30529