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EDITORIAL

The several papers published in this issue of the Quarterly cover a wide variety of subjects and give interesting pictures of the times about which they speak. Memories of Governor Bibb, the Methodist Preacher's Diary, Samuel Bains, the Tennessean's letter to his wife and David Tate's letter to his nephew contrast strikingly with the Mexican War history and Dr. Summersell's political comments on Reuben F. Kolb but all these papers should be of interest to Alabamians and with that in mind they are published here.

GOVERNOR BIBB AND THE TIMES

Notes by John Dandridge Bibb as told to Col. A. J. Pickett

Swan Lake, Carrol Co. Missi. 1st Dec. 1847

Albert J. Pickett Esq.

Dear Sir

Agreeably to your request some two or three months, past, I have committed to paper a bundle of crude sketches of Alabama in its infancy. I have done so entirely from memory, having no document at hand to assist me. In thus attempting to record facts, many of them occurring thirty years ago, it is reasonable, there are some mistakes. What I have said is to the best of my recollection.

I send you the *first draft*, noted down from time to time as I found leisure. In reading them over, I discover many grammatical blunders, bad spelling, with many inaccuracies which I might have corrected by transcribing, but believing you will fully understand what I mean, I deemed it unnecessary labour. Whether perfect or otherwise, they are yours, either to burn or use as you may think best. If they shall be of any service in aiding you in your praiseworthy undertaking, I shall be grateful and my end accomplished. If otherwise, the labour has been but trifling. Since my return home I have seen and conversed with Col. Greenwood Laflore a native Chactaw who has promised to furnish me with traditionary sketches of his own tribe and also of the Chickasaw nation. When I obtain them, I will forward them to you. You are at liberty to permit my brother William's widow and my brother Benajah to peruse my scrawl as they may correct errors.

With consideration of high respect and regard, I am yours sincerely,

John D Bibb

First. In relation to the late Governor Bibb.

William Wyatt Bibb was born in Amelia County State of Virginia October 2nd A.D. 1781. He was the eldest son of Captain William Bibb a native of that State who was a man of plain practical sense with what men termed a good education for the time that he grew up. He held the commission of a Captain in the revolutionary war and was subsequently a member of the Legislature of his native state. William Wyatt's mother's maiden name was Sally S. Wyatt, born in New Kent County same state. She was a woman of superior intellect which had been cultivated by a fine education. She possessed great energy of character, all the traits of a most devoted mother and a heart teeming with the milk of human kindness. Captain Bibb immigrated to the state of Georgia when it was a wild frontier country and settled with his family on the Savannah River in Elbert County. He died in 1796 leaving his widow with eight children and the ninth born a few months after his death, (Benajah) Wm W. then being in his 14th year. The pecuniary condition of the estate was incumbered with debts, but by the judicious management of the widow, who was left sole executrix a scant sufficiency was saved from the wreck of an once comfortable fortune to give the children an Academic education. The subject of these notes previous to the death of his father had but little opportunity to advance in learning owing to the unsettled and frontier condition of the country. His mother soon afterwards sent him to an Academy at Washington Wilkes County under the superintendance of the then celebrated Hope Hull, whose fame as a Methodist preacher and "a son of thunder" was extensively known. Here he continued until he acquired such a knowledge of the branches taught at such institutions as to qualify him to enter college. He was sent to William & Mary in his native state where he remained about two years and then returned home. At the beginning of his 18th year, he commenced the study of medicine in the City of Augusta under Doctor Murray, a gentleman of high character in his profession. He attended two courses of Lectures in Philadelphia and in due time graduated as M.D. At the age of 21 he commenced the practice of his profession in the then flourishing Town of Petersburg, Ga. His devotion to study had much impaired a naturally feeble constitution, so that after a few years of laborious practice he gave up his profession and turned his attention to politics. About the time he commenced practice, he married Miss Mary Freeman only daughter of Colo. Holman Freeman of revolutionary memory, of Wilkes County. She was one of the most beautiful and accomplished ladies in her native state and made him a

most affectionate and devoted wife. She bore him four children. Two, only survived him, a son and daughter. The other two (twins) died in their infancy.

He was elected a member of the House of Representatives from Elbert County a day or two after he was constitutionally eligible. He served as a member four years with that devotion to his duties, for which he was, through life, peculiarly remarkable. During this period he acquired a share of popularity that is rarely gained by men at his early age. There was nothing during his sojourn in the Legislature of Ga calculated to call forth any extraordinary efforts. He however made several speeches that did him some credit.

At the age of 25 years when barely eligible he was called out by the people of Georgia to represent them in the Congress of the U. S. He obeyed the call and was honorably elected. The system of voting in Georgia was by general ticket and not by district. He took his seat in Congress the first time at the session of 1806 (I think) During his service in the representative department of the Nation he was an active and efficient member. (I was too young at that period to attempt *to record* from memory the measures and subjects in which he took a conspicuous part. For correct information I refer you to the history of *the times* and to such private documents as you may *be able* to procure from *his widow*).

His cotemporaries at his first election were Bolling Hall, George M. Troop and Howel Cobb. I do not distinctly recollect in what year he entered the senate of the U. S. His career in Congress terminated in the year 1816. when he recd the appointment of Governor of Alabama Territory from President Monroe. At the commencement, and indeed throughout his congressional career he was identified with the Republican party. In the state of Georgia, there was scarcely any political distinction known. The state was republican throughout with a few individual exceptions. William H Crawford at the commencement of Doctor Bibb's political life, had already taken a conspicuous stand as a public man and then gradually grew up in the state a division known as the Clark and Crawford parties. These parties grew out of a spirit of rivalry between those two men, which at first was more of a personal than general character. In the course of time however others took sides until the whole state became more and more affected either on the one side or the other. There were, however, many exceptions of men who kept aloof from the contention. This sort of party spirits at last grew to such

a point that a Clark man could scarcely be induced to vote for a Crawford man and also the reverse. Doctor Bibb took rank with the Crawford party. Still in all this strife, Georgia was Republican which ever party prevailed.

His appointment as Governor ensued on the division of Mississippi into two Territories, Miss—and Alabama. Both Territories were acquired under the provisions of the Ordinance for the Government of the North Western Territory (which you will find in the old Mississippi Digest). The Governor of Ala-ba was vested with the whole power of organizing the Territory by the appointment of all Officers, civil and military. This responsible trust was performed by Governor Bibb with fidelity and judiciousness. When he rec'd the appointment of Governor, he was a citizen of Georgia. In the summer of 1817 he visited Alabama for the first time and purchased a home on the Coosa & Alabama Rivers.

Here he removed his family in the winter of 1817 where they resided in comfortable log cabin until his death. It was not required that the Governor should reside at the seat of government, he being invested with the power of appointing a Secretary of the Territory who resided there in the absence of the Governor and on such occasions, his powers & duties were commensurate with his. Henry Hitchcock, a gentleman of a high order of talent of sterling integrity and industry, was appointed by the Governor to fill this important office, the duties of which, he discharged with fidelity and credit. The seat of the Territorial Government was located at the Town of St. Stephens (the history of which you would do well to examine) on the Tombeckbe River. At the first session of the Legislature the duty of appointing one Delegate to Congress devolved on them. John Crowel was elected. The priviledges of a Territorial deligate in Congress were limited by withholding the rights to vote. In every other respect his priviledges were those of state Representatives. He had the right to present petitions to discuss all questions before Congress, to receive equal pay &c. John Crowel was not talented, but the Territory at that time had no one else to spare that would have done any better.

The Governor usually made two or three trips to the seat of government during the recess of the Legislature in order to consult with his Secretary and to make the necessary arrangements to meet emergencies.

During this time a second Indian War had commenced and was

raging with great annoyance and sometimes loss of life to the frontier settlers. This was carried on by such parties of the Creeks as were dissatisfied with General Jackson's Treaty and were making their way South to join the Seminoles in Florida. On one occasion as the Governor was returning from the seat of Government to his residence with no attendant but his servant Peter, he having a brace of small pocket pistols and Peter armed with a little double barrel gun, he stopped at old Fort Dale to eat his snack and graze his horses. Two or three families only resided in the neighborhood of the Fort and one family immediately at the place. The Governor departed on his travels at about one O'clock and in two hours afterwards, the family residing at the Fort were attacked by a party of wandering hostile Creeks and cruelly murdered and scalped. The wife, had, a short time previously gone to a neighbor's house and on returning instead of being greeted by her husband and five children whom she had left a short time before she beheld their bones smouldering in the ashes of her dwelling. The Governor narrowly escaped their melancholy fate.

At a subsequent period the Governor arrived at the eastern Bank of the Tombeckbe opposite St. Stephens on his way to the seat of government, several travelers were in company. The River was very full and the ferry boat leaky, and frail, he was travelling in a one horse *Dearborn* the body of which was water proof. They entered the Boat and when about half the distance across it was found to be in a sinking condition. He could not swim and his situation was perilous, his faithful servant Peter true to his Master speedily loosened the horse from the vehicle and turned him into the River and requesting his Master to seat himself in the carriage, by his skill in swimming carried him safely to land. The Governor did not forget Peter in his dying hour. Nearly his last words were, addressing himself to one of his brothers, "On account of his fidelity to me, it is my will and earnest desire that my servant Peter have his freedom after the death of his first owner."

At the expiration of the territorial Government a constitution was formed and Alabama became one of the sister states of the Union. Governor Bibb was elected first Governor of the New State and about the expiration of half his term he died on the — of July 1820. His death was occasioned by the falling of his horse which so injured him that after suffering excruciating pain for several months he expired at his residence in Autauga County. Calm collected and peaceful, surrounded by his family and many of his relations and friends he departed in the 40th year of his age. Few men ever lived of more habitual industry and

devotion to all the duties, public and private, he was called on to perform. As a husband and father he was most affectionate and kind, as a relative and friend, faithful and sincere and as a public servant, he was true and honest. By his concillating disposition and suavity of manner, he had endeared himself to a large circle of friends. He was credulous to a fault, and many who knew this trait in his character availed themselves of it to act with deception and insincerity towards him. In stature he was 5 feet 10 inches high with a delicate and weakly frame. His weight, when in health not exceeding 125 pounds. His face was strongly marked with signs of deep thought and intelligence, his eyes dark, his annunciation clear and distinct and his language chaste and pure. If he excelled in any one trait, it was in the selection of words and sentences. He was never known in conversation to utter a word that he would have been ashamed to pronounce in the circle of the most refined female. Vulgarity of every character and description exciting in him the most palpable disgust.

During his administration of the Territorial Government his duties were laborious and severe. Many important trusts were confided to him, most of which had necessarily to be performed by men of his selection and appointment for whose faithfulness he ever held himself responsible. Amidst this multiplicity of Territorial offices to be filled and tho many of his relations resided in the Territory, he never but in one instance appointed one of them to office. The exception was made in favour of a brother whom he appointed Territorial judge in Montgomery County. This course was not prompted from the absence of regard for his family connexions, for he loved them most ardently, but from the sensitiveness of his character. He has been heard to remark that a public officer should be like Caesars wife. He carried out this course during his long service in Congress. He never would recommend, or apply for office for a relation.

In addition to other important duties, an act of congress was passed donating to Alabama a certain quantity of Land for the purpose of a seat of Government. He was called on to select the land and the site. He chose Cahawba and surrounding lands, believing it more central and eligible than any other place where the public land was unsold, ----- (you know its fate) See page 17. The Congress of the United States also donated to the State seventy two sections of Land for a Seminary of learning which he was required to select out of the unappropriated land in Alabama. He appointed commissioners for this purpose, and the selection was made of the best and most valuable land in the State. A great

portion of this land was located in the rich valley of Tennessee River in the Counties of Franklin and Lauderdale. (By adverting to the history sale &c of those Lands, you will find that the State institution was more richly endowed than any College in the United States.*)

At the death of Governor Bibb, the constitution of the State devolved the office on the President of the Senate for the time being. Thomas Bibb being President of the Senate became acting Governor for the unexpired term.

In the early settlement of Alabama, the immigrant had many difficulties and privations to endure. Those that now occupy splendid mansions erected on spot of ground, where within the memory of living man, and even within the compass of the last thirty years, the forest grass grew in its native luxuriance and the wild deer basked in interrupted repose, can have any correct knowledge of the suffering of those who first planted their stakes and stretched over them their cloth covering to shield their wives and little ones from the "Peltings of the pitiful storms," and whose only dependance for sustenance was on the uncertain success of capturing the game they had frightened from their resting places. The County of Madison north of the Tennessee River as its boundaries are now defined but with little variation was insulated having no civilized neighbors except on the North, being surrounded in every other direction by Indian Territory, was settled in the year 1808. The land office at which those lands were sold was located at Nashville, Tennessee until the County became sufficiently populated to protect the public funds from rogues and robbers that infested the neighboring mountains. In 1812 the office was moved to Huntsville a large portion of the rich lands of that County having been purchased for settlement by wealthy planters from Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia N & S Carolina and they were speedily settled by the purchasers. In a few years the thick foliage was made to give place to fine plantations and "the wilderness to blossom as the rose." At the time Alabama became a State this county had attained a high state of improvement. Even at that period Huntsville had become a Town of considerable extent and was a place of gaiety, fashion and refinement. Many intelligent citizens had located there. (I refer you to the history of the Creek War)

Alabama continued to be a Territory about two years when at the end of that time the population was found to have increased to the requisite number to authorise the organization of a state Government. An act of Congress was accordingly passed ordering elections to be held for

* His meaning is not clear, but is set out as he entered it. Ed.

members of a convention to form a constitution. At this period the Counties of South Alabama were thinly populated owing to the more recent extinguishment of the Indian Title to the land covering those Counties. That population was like *Josephs Coat*, composed of many colours. In and about the embryo Towns that had started into existence were found *Black Legs* of every description, Rowdies, sharpers, Land pirates, the honest Forester or planter, the sober and astute merchant, with now and then a Parson whose time was too much occupied in providing for the wants of his household to be able, however, willing, to do justice to his sacred calling.

The County of Montgomery seemed to possess attractions more enticing to foreigners than those of the surrounding Counties. The cause of this was, that the lands were first sold, they were considered to be of a better quality and immigration had been more rapid to it. Bordering on the noble Alabama River another inducement was offered of future wealth and grandure. The Town of Montgomery had taken an earlier start than other neighboring villages. At first two Towns had been laid out on the River and on different fractions of land. A company of gentlemen formed their Town on the lower Bluff and called it Alabama. Andrew Dexter, a gentleman of great enterprise, laid out his Town beginning at a line where the Court house now stands running east embracing the ground where the State Capitol is built and called it Philadelphia. The company owning the lower Town in order to prevent competition, had, purchased the Fraction of land embracing the present steam Boat Landing and extending to the Court house, thereby cutting Philadelphia off from the River. This was done at the price of \$70 per acre. After paying to the Government the first installment under the former system of selling the public lands, forfeited its to the Government. This policy was intended to prevent the land from being entered by any other person or persons, as it could not be done without paying the full amount for which it originally sold. Finding however that the *dexterous Dexter* had outstriped them in Town making, the company repurchased the fraction and entered into an arrangement with the owners of Philadelphia by which the two Towns were amalgamated and assumed the new name of Montgomery in honor to the memory of Major Montgomery who was killed in the Creek war at the battle of the Horseshoe.

It may not be uninteresting to state that thirty years ago Andrew Dexter, pointed to the square on which the new state house now stands and emphatically remarked to the writer, "Here Sir is Capitol Square, and tho, it may not be used as such, during my life, yet the time will

come when the Indians Title now within the chartered territory of Alabama shall have been extinguished, that a noble edifice will arise here to be known as the Capital of the State of Alabama." *Prophetic words.*

The Territorial Legislature at their last session, designated Huntsville as the place for holding the Convention, as there was a good prospect of the members and such strangers as might attend, finding better accommodations than at any other place in the Territory. The Convention was composed of a body of men highly respectable in their character and intelligence. Indeed many of them would have graced any deliberative assembly. When they met on the important subject of creating a sovereign state, and forming for its government a constitution intended to exist through all future ages, each one, seemed to feel, the heavy and responsible duty incumbent upon them. In the outset, there were many formidable difficulties to overcome. The members were for the most part, strangers to each other. Their respective capacities for the various and complicated business of legislation, was not known. Some of the members manifested an itching to lead off and sought occasion to become conspicuous and establish a name for themselves. When it is recollected that the various offices of state, from Senators in Congress down to the lowest grade, Judges of the different circuits &c. were to be filled at the session of the Legislature succeeding the Convention, no surprise should be excited for the manifestation of this spirit. (*I regret the want of the Journals*). John W. Walker of Madison County was elected President. He was in every respect qualified for and worthy of the important station to which he was elevated. In their incipient deliberations, it was soon manifest that it would not be an easy matter to agree on the principles and details of a Constitution, composed, as it was, of members from different states, and each one bringing with him all the partialities and prejudices of state preferences, together with various and contrary views relations to the policy of the new state, seemed to render, an agreement, almost hopeless. Finally the plan of lessening the number of *actors* until a foundation could be lined on which to build, was adopted. For the purpose it was resolved by the convention that a committee of fifteen should be appointed by the President, whose duties were to draft a skelliton or "Projet" and report the same for the action of the whole body. To allow the committee time for the performance of this work the convention adjourned for several days (I could tell many amusing anecdote of some of those members not of the committee, during this recess of several days. Among others, Littlepage Sims one of the members whose weight was about 300 lbs took it into his head to attend a *Puppet show* at night.

While there, it being very warm and the house crowded, he pulled off his *Convention Coat* and *waistcoat* and laid them in a window, and while he was amusing himself, some thief stole his garments with all his money. The worst of it was, that he was so big that he could not find a coat in the whole City that he could put on. The consequence was, a member of the convention was seen walking about the streets in his shirt and pants for several days, before a taylor could make other garments)—After a most boisterous session of 4 or 5 days, the committee agreed on their report and the convention again met to receive it. When this committee first convened, there seemed to be as little hope of successful operations as there had been in the Convention. When however, some of the would be great men had shot their arrows in loud and windy speaches a spirrit of concession and compromise sprang up among them and the document was agreed to, not however, without some of them swearing to undo it all before the convention.

This document contained many absurd provisions (as you will discover by reference to the journal) and although many members of the committee were opposed to portions of the *projet*, yet to carry the affair before the convention where it would be altered and revised, it was agreed to by them. Among other strage things was that of allowing Madison County Two Senators. The Madison County delegation went upon the principle, that inasmuch as the ratio of representation would be limited, to a certain number (Maximum) and a large residuum would be left in that populous county, it was proper that that residuum should be represented in the Senatorial department inasmuch as they would not be represented in the other Branch. In the progress of the Convention, this document was taken up in Committee of the whole, section by section and altered and amended as they might agree. It was at last reported to the Convention when any member would call attention to any section he chose and offer his amendment or alteration. (The journals will inform you the balance)

John W. Walker, (President) was considered to be decidedly the most talented member of the convention. At this time he was much emaciated and his phisical powers greatly weakened by consupcion, yet on several occasions he displayed great wisdom and talent in the speaches he made. He was of ordinary height, refined manners considerable powers of elocution, a profound statesman suavity of manners and commanded the entire attention of the members of the Convention whenever he attempted to address the body of them. He presided with dignity and

impartiality and gave entire satisfaction to all parties. His death was a calamity to the state which was in need of his wisdom and intelligence.

Judge Toulman, another member, was a man of much learning and was a considerable speaker, but being a Foreigner he failed to obtain that influence among the members which many a man of his talent would have acquired under more favorable circumstances. Israel Pickens, was modest and unassuming. His speeches were plain and unastutious, short and to the point. He was an admirable man and much respected by his colleagues.

Wm R. King is known to you personally. Doctor Henry Chambers possessed strong native powers with a highly cultivated mind, much dignity of deportment. He seldom spoke, but when he did so commanded general respect and attention. In after years he was elected to the Senate of the U. S. but died before he took his seat. Henry Hitchcock, A. F. Hopkins, John M Taylor with a number of others were men of considerable intellectual powers.

An appropriation was made of \$20,000 either by the Territorial Legislature or by the Convention (I have forgotten which) for building a State House at Cahawba which was effected by an after additional appropriation at which the first session of the Legislature of the state of Alabama and convened in the winter of 1819. I recollect no particular circumstances of this or any succeeding legislature more than you will find in the journal. At some one of the after sessions a string of revolutionary men introduced into the house, by Colo. Wm R. Picket for the alteration of the constitution, which passed and was lost in the Senate by the casting vote of the President (Nicholas Davis) a majority of 2/3rd being required to pass them. Among other amendments imbraced was one to alter the tenure of Judicial terms of service from that of "good behavior" to a term of years. This amendment was subsequently made.

The members of the representatives appointed for the first few sessions presented a heterogenous set of materials, as to appearances capacity and views. A sufficient number of men however were always there to perform, correctly the duties of legislation. Among others was your honoured Father, to whom the State of Alabama owes much. As regards the passage of the State Bank Charter, you will find in the charter itself, and the journals all the details. I particularly refer you to the protest of the minority in the Senate and its final passage.

P.S. The Lots in the new City of Cahawba were sold at high prices, from the belief on the parts of purchasers, that the seat of Government was permanently located. Many fine and expensive buildings were speedily erected and a number of wealthy and highly respectable citizens and families settled there and lived and moved in a style seldom excelled even in cities whose destiny was more fortunate. When afterwards, the seat of Government was removed properly fell and became of no value, and many who had invested their *all* were ruined. Some houses decayed and rotted, others were floated off to some more fortunate location and again built up for various uses.

So soon as Cahawba was laid out, the Land office was moved from Milledgeville Georgia, where the land about Montgomery had been offered for sale, and located at Cahawba. A great deal of the public domain and particularly River Lands were sold at enormous prices. Large amounts Yazoo scrip had been Issued by the General Government redeemable in the purchase of public land, the scrip was held by capitalists who had obtained it at \$40, in the hundred which enabled them to compete, with money holders with tremendous odds. The consequence was, that when a collision ensued between those who held *scrip* and those who had not, the lands were bid up to a high price. The Land sales were usually attended by large crowds. Often 3 or 4,000 persons might be seen scattered over the plain in Booths and tents. Some basking in the sun shine or shade as the season might render most comfortable, waiting the progress of things and discussing the ways and means of obtaining land at the lowest possible price. At one time a company was formed to defraud the Government by preventing opposition, so as to buy the land at Government price and resell it public sale among themselves at whatever it might bring After paying the Government its due the overplus was divided among the stock holders. Thus enormous sums of money were gained by the cunning and sagacious while the more ignorant were often fleeced.*

*This statement to Colonel Albert J. Pickett is set out as written, not edited—Ed.

KOLB AND THE POPULIST REVOLT AS VIEWED BY NEWSPAPERS

By

Charles Grayson Summersell

(Dr. Summersell, head of the History Department of the University of Alabama, was born at Mobile, February 25, 1908. He was educated in the schools of Mobile and finished Barton Academy, in 1925. He graduated at the University, 1929, received his Master's degree from the University in 1930, and his Doctorate at Vanderbilt University, in 1940. He taught for a time at Phillips High School, Birmingham, and Murphy High School, Mobile, and commenced his work at the University of Alabama in 1935. Dr. Summersell served in World War II, and is the author of a number of historical papers and contributions to historical and educational journals in recent years. This paper was prepared some years ago and the author is still collecting material for a more extended study.)

PART I

Early Years

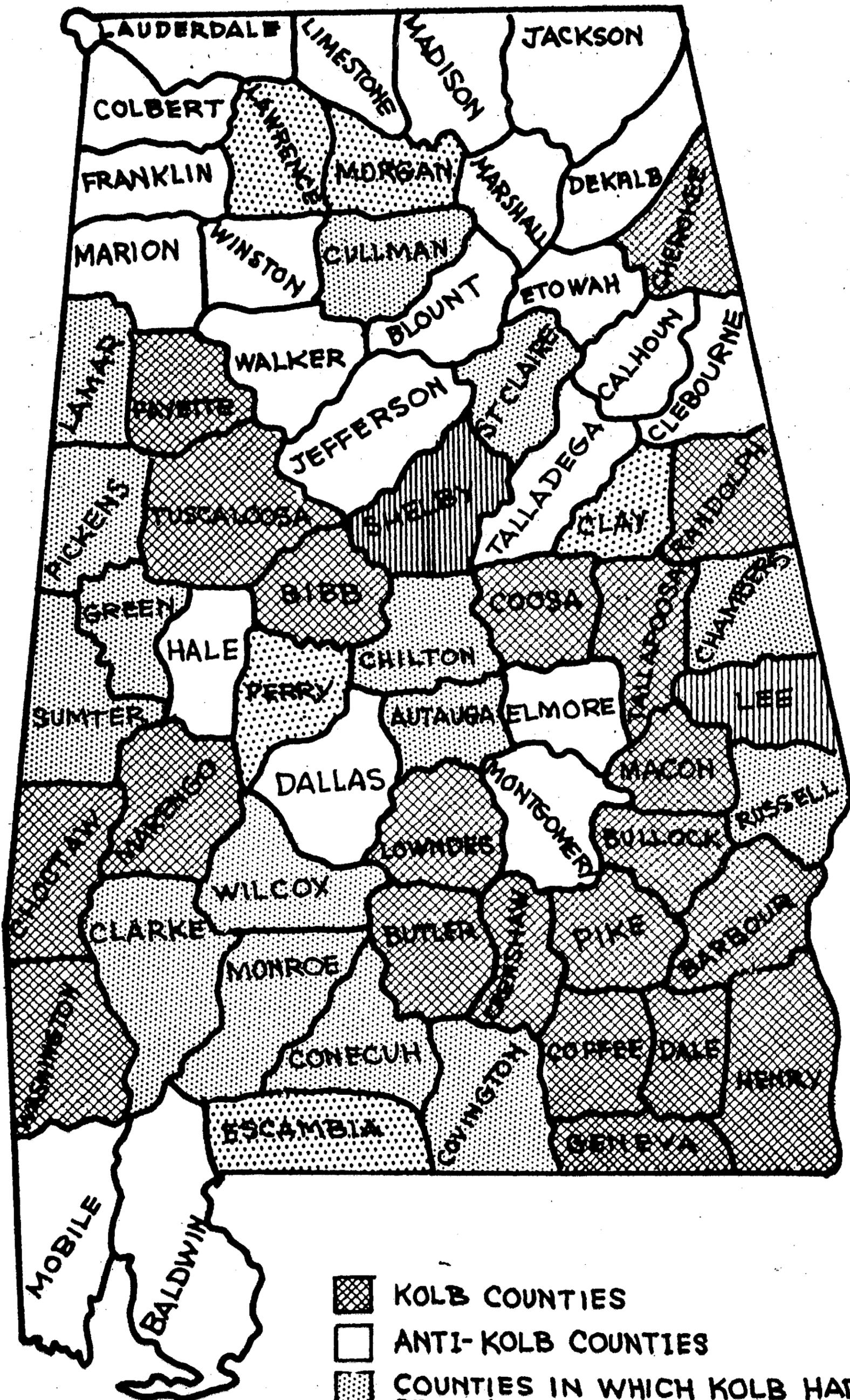
In mid-April 1839, to David Cameron Kolb and his wife, Emily Frances Shorter, was born a son whom they named Reuben Francis Kolb.¹ Two weeks after the baby was born the mother died, followed two years later by her husband. The two-year-old orphan was taken into the home of his grandfather, Reuben C. Shorter. This Dr. Shorter was the brother of John Gill Shorter, one of the war governors of Alabama, and also of Eli Sims Shorter, an Alabama congressman.²

Reuben spent his boyhood in Eufaula, his birthplace, in the home of Dr. Shorter. He received his early education in the public schools of Eufaula. His grandparents sent him to Howard College, then at Marion, but he did not remain long. He left without even consulting his grand-

¹Richardson, Mrs. L. J., Letter, April 8, 1930; *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 24, 1918; Owen, Thomas M., *History of Alabama*, III, pp. 992-995. Writers differ in setting his birthday on April 15 and April 16, 1839.

²*Advertiser*, March 24, 1918; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, p. 63; Owen, III, pp. 992-995; *Memorial Record of Alabama*, II, pp. 705-706.

VOTE IN THE CONVENTION OF 1890



-  KOLB COUNTIES
-  ANTI-KOLB COUNTIES
-  COUNTIES IN WHICH KOLB HAD MOST DELEGATES
-  COUNTIES IN WHICH KOLB HAD FEWER DELEGATES THAN SOME OTHER CANDIDATE
-  TWO DELEGATIONS: KOLB AND ANTI-KOLB

parents, and entered the University of North Carolina. Kolb joined a fraternity, Delta Chi, and made a good record in school. He was graduated June 1, 1859, when he was barely twenty years old.

In 1859 Kolb settled in Macon County near Tuskegee and undertook the management of a large plantation. The next year he married Mary Caledonia Cargile, who was also of a Barbour County planter family.³ Kolb married shortly before his twenty-first birthday. He moved back to Eufaula in the fall of 1860. He was doing well with his farming and was beginning to take an interest in politics when the war came. Kolb was the youngest delegate to the secession convention in Montgomery in 1861.⁴ He voted for secession, and joined the army at the outbreak of the war.

Kolb enlisted at Pensacola, Florida, and remained stationed there for some time.⁵ In April 1862, the Barbour Light Artillery was organized with about 325 officers and men,⁶ Kolb being one of the four lieutenants of the company. The company was sent to Montgomery where it was divided into two companies, two more companies added, and made an artillery battalion of Hilliard's Legion. After the organization was sent to Chattanooga, three of the four companies were equipped as infantry. The other company was placed under the command of Kolb, now a captain, and it became known subsequently as Kolb's Battery. Kolb and his men fought it Kentucky and in east Tennessee. The battery had reached Augusta, Georgia, on the way to North Carolina, when Johnston surrendered to Sherman.⁷ In the Battle of Chickamauga Kolb displayed real heroism, especially in the bloody attack which the Confederates made the first night of the battle.⁸ During the Battle of Atlanta he suffered

³Richardson, Mrs. L. J., letter. Miss Cargile's name was given by the *Advertiser*, March 24, 1918, as Sallie. It was given by her daughter, Mrs. Richardson, as Mary Caledonia. She was the daughter of Thomas Cargile and Louise Hudspeth, both of Eufaula.

⁴Clark, p. 63.

⁵Richardson, Mrs. L. J., letter.

⁶Brewer, Willis, *History of Alabama*, pp. 703-704.

⁷*Ibid.*; Clark, p. 63, *Memorial Record of Alabama*, II, pp. 705-706.

⁸Details concerning Kolb's part in the battle appeared in eulogies delivered at his death. One by Senator John Bankhead, Sr., who was present at the battle, is especially illuminating. These eulogies are contained in a dozen undated, unnamed clippings in the possession of Mrs. L. J. Richardson. See also Brewer, pp. 703-704.

a leg wound. A memorial to Kolb's Battery still stands on the battlefield of Chickamauga.⁹

After the surrender Kolb returned to Eufaula and resumed cotton planting.¹⁰ Since cotton planting was not very profitable at the time, he also entered the wholesale grocery business with two partners. The firm was known as Kolb, Couric, and Hayes. He was also engaged for a time as a cotton factor.¹¹ Kolb's first child was Emily Frances, who married Lucius J. Richardson. His second child, Reuben, was born in 1862, and his third, William Howard, in 1878.¹² During the reconstruction period Kolb was active in helping to rid the state of the carpetbag-scalawag regime. On one occasion he is said to have taken a handful of whites and routed a large number of riotous Negroes.¹³

When the panic of 1873 swept over the state, Kolb abandoned the cotton business altogether and began raising watermelons.¹⁴ He grew a prize melon which he called the Kolb Gem. Seed catalogues advertised the Kolb Gem as "America's most famous melon."¹⁵ Kolb did a flourishing business raising melons and shipping the seeds. In 1888 he cut about 200,000 melons for seed. It is said that carloads of Kolb's products were shipped to all parts of the country.

The era of farmers' organizations was approaching. The Grange was organized in the nation in 1867.¹⁶ In 1873 the Grange came to Alabama.¹⁷ The organization grew so rapidly that within two years it had reached its maximum growth with a membership of approximately 17,000 in the state. Within six years the organization was almost completely dead, having been supplanted by other organizations, especially by the Farmers' Alliance. The Alliance entered the state in 1887 and

⁹Photograph of memorial in the possession of Mrs. L. J. Richardson.

¹⁰Advertiser, March 24, 1918; Richardson, Mrs. L. J., letter

¹¹Moore, A. B., *History of Alabama*, I, p. 698.

¹²Richardson, Mrs. L. J., letter; Owen, III, p. 995.

¹³Richardson, Mrs. L. J., clippings. The newspaper account said that twelve white men routed ". . . three or four thousand negroes."

¹⁴Moore, I, p. 695; Clark, p. 63.

¹⁵Clark, p. 63

¹⁶Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁷Owen, I, pp. 666-667.

became the principal farmers' organization from the outset.¹⁸ In 1889 there were in Alabama the following farmers' organizations: The Patrons of Husbandry (Grange), the Alliance, the Alabama division of the Farmers' National Congress, the State Agricultural Wheel, and the State Agricultural Society. Of these Kolb was closely associated with at least three. He was president of the Alabama branch of the Farmers' National Congress, and actively associated with the Agricultural Society and the Alliance.¹⁹ He seldom lost an opportunity to speak to the numerous conventions held by these organizations.

Kolb seemed to have been fashioned for the post of commissioner of agriculture. When Judge E. C. Betts of Huntsville, Alabama's first commissioner of agriculture, resigned, Kolb was appointed to take his place.²⁰ He was selected for the position over ten rivals of whom Hiram Hawkins, the master of the state Grange, was one.

Kolb worked hard as commissioner of agriculture. In 1888 he made two trips to the Northwest to induce new settlers to come to Alabama.²¹ On the second trip Kolb was accompanied by fourteen other prominent Alabamians. They carried a special railway car containing exhibits of Alabama products and resources. This "Alabama on Wheels" was hauled free by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad through Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio. It is estimated that a quarter of a million people saw the exhibit. Large quantities of Alabama advertising were distributed to the states by "Alabama on Wheels."²² Vegetable and fruit farming especially profited by Kolb's advertising.

In 1889 the legislature passed an act creating Farmers' Institutes and placing them under the direction of the commissioner of agriculture.²³ The institutes were meetings at various convenient centers of the farmers

¹⁸Clark, p. 59.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 66; Moore, I, p. 698.

²⁰Clark, p. 60. The Hawkins Bill established the state Department of Agriculture, in 1883. Governor O'Neal appointed Betts to the position and re-appointed him in 1885.

²¹Clark, p. 64; Moore, I, p. 699; Richardson, Mrs. L. J., clippings.

²²Richardson, Mrs. L. J., clippings; Moore, I, p. 759; Clark, p. 64. Kolb claimed that one thousand new settlers and one million dollars of capital were brought into the state in this way.

²³Moore, I, pp. 698-699.