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EDITORIAL

This issue of the Alabama Historical Quarterly contains papers on the early history of the Mississippi Territory and the first decades of statehood of Alabama and Mississippi. There is an account of Fort Stoddert by Dr. J. D. L. Holmes and reminiscences dictated by George S. Gaines who lived in this area from 1805 until his death in 1873.—P. A. B.

GAINES' REMINISCENCES

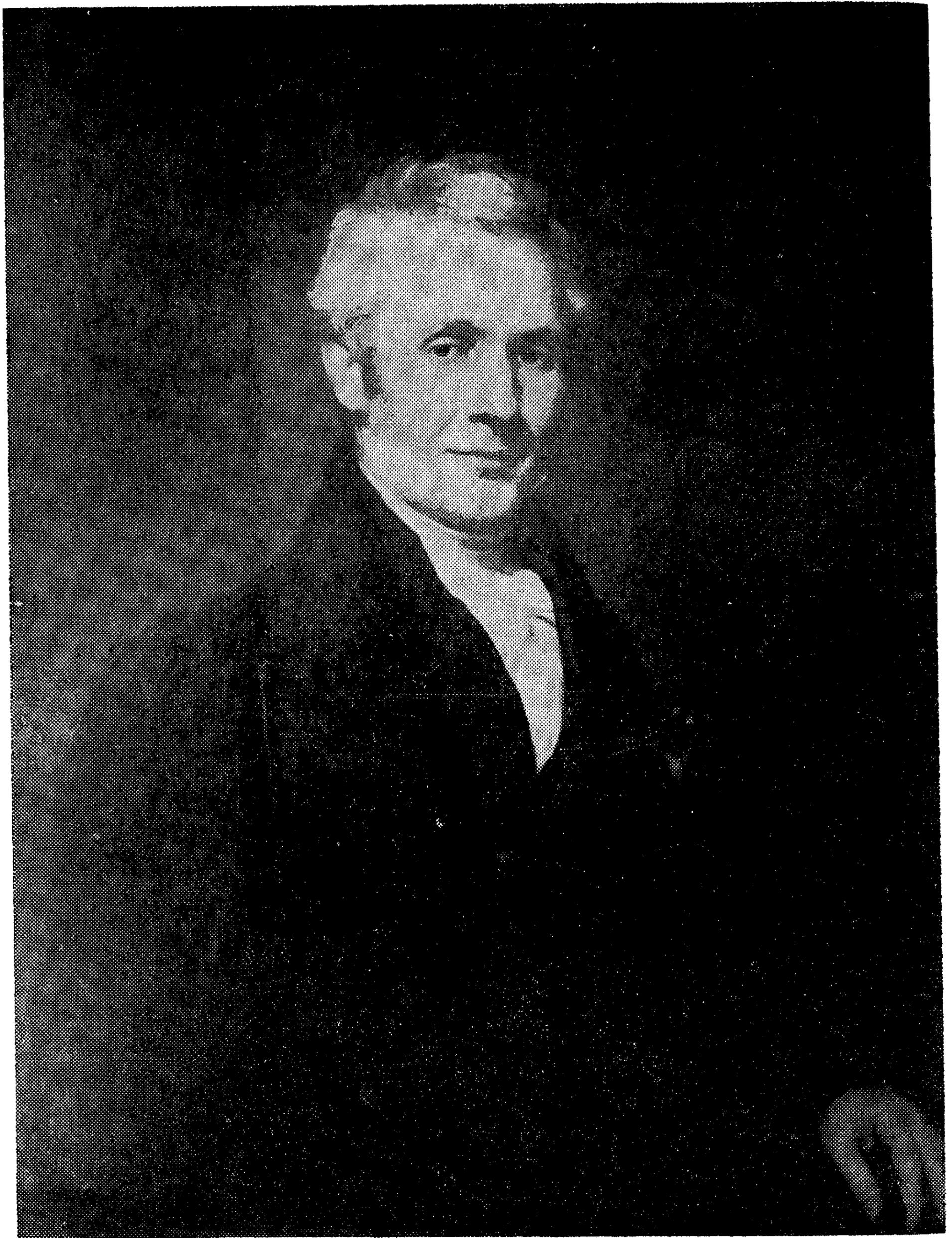
— PREFACE —

The Department of Archives and History has received many requests for copies of Gaines' Reminiscences; several requests have been made within the last three months. Therefore this account is now made available.

The first part of Gaines' Reminiscences was published in the *Mobile Register*, June 19, 1872, with the title "Notes on the Early Days of South Alabama." This was followed, at weekly intervals through July 17, 1872, by the second through the fifth parts, bearing the heading "Reminiscences of Early Times in the Mississippi Territory, by Col. Geo. S. Gaines." The Department of Archives and History has a photostat copy of this part of the Reminiscences from the issues of the newspaper, and a script copy (varying in slight detail from the newspaper copy) probably in the handwriting of Dr. Vivian P. Gaines of Mobile.

There is a second series of the Reminiscences of Col. Gaines that was not published in 1872. The Department of Archives and History has a handwritten copy of this series, given April 21, 1908 by Dr. Vivian P. Gaines of Mobile, a grandson of George Strother Gaines.

As is stated in the first paragraph of the Reminiscences, Mr. Gaines, when almost ninety years of age, dictated his reminiscences. His amanuensis, if our copy is an accurate one, was sometimes very inconsistent in the spelling of proper names. Tombigbee is spelled in several ways, as are many other Indian names, and a few names of European origin. In this account we have attempted to use one form for each name. Punctuation has occasionally been altered. The indication of paragraphing in the second series has sometimes been a matter of guess.



Archives and History Dept.

GEORGE STROTHER GAINES

COL. GEORGE S. GAINES

In our issue of to-day our readers will find the Commencement of "Reminiscences of Early Times in the Mississippi Territory," written by the above named gentleman. We propose to follow this first installment in our Sunday paper until we lay before our readers the whole of the "Reminiscences" thus far written.

They were prepared by Col. Gaines during the summer of last year, at the request of Percy Walker, Esq., and by him presented to the "Franklin Society."

The manuscript consists of some sixty pages, and as they relate to this immediate section of country, and describe incidents and characters connected with the history of Mobile and the States of Alabama and Mississippi more than half a century ago, the "Reminiscences" cannot but be welcomed by our fellow citizens.

The aged author has, we are pleased to hear, promised to continue them whenever his health will permit. The paper, of which we print the commencement this morning, embraces the period between 1805 and 1815, and the narrative will be found of interest, especially to those whose memories lead back to the times when Mobile was a Spanish dependency, and could boast no higher dignity than that of a village of fishermen.

Let us say a few words about the author. In years ago, ere reverence for the truth, the inflexible integrity, the scorn of ill-gotten wealth and the almost equal contempt for undue fondness for pelf, combined with the high courtesy, the delicate consideration for others, which formed the standard of character of the Southern gentleman, had been crushed down with all their other ideals, it would not have been necessary to tell an Alabamian or a Mississippian who George Gaines was, the just, pure man, the friend and counsellor of the red-man, the wise and faithful pioneer of civilization in Mississippi Territory—the patriarch of two States.

Mr. Gaines is a North Carolinian by birth; but with the

salvo said to be dear to every North Carolinian heart, he was born "close by the Virginia line"; by a comical chance a family of nine or ten children, all born in the same house, were about equally divided North Carolinian and Virginian, as they happened to be born at one or the other end of the house, for the parental dwelling stood midway on the State line.

Col. Gaines unites in himself the bluest blood of old Virginia—Preston, Pendleton, Strother, etc.

At an early age he removed with his father to Tennessee, from thence he was appointed Indian Agent and Factor for the United States to the Indians in Mississippi Territory. From that time (then under 20 years of age), to the present, when in two or three months he will number eighty-nine years, his life has been one constant and unbroken series of kind deeds, wise counsel and active, enlarged thought for the good of his people. With remarkable and admirable business qualifications, he brought to his intercourse with the haughty and suspicious savages a consideration for their rights, a deference for their habits and feelings, and an unvarying politeness that won their entire confidence, their perfect trust, until his simple word became their law, and his sympathy and kindness their abiding reliance. The part Mr. Gaines acted in the early history of Mississippi Territory, and subsequently, upon its division into the States of Alabama and Mississippi, was one of untiring interest and of great advantage to the young communities in which he was equally at home. His position as Indian agent had brought him in contact with the leading men of both States; his influence was either directly or indirectly felt in every measure of public importance for a long term of years, in fact, until the bouleversement of the war so strangely and anomalously altered men's relations to the soil they claim as their own.

Here in Mobile we are largely indebted to him for the accomplishment of the most important and gigantic work that has been achieved in the States of Mississippi and Alabama—the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. Originating in the active and far-seeing mind of one man, and persistently kept before the public by him until he made zealous converts to his scheme.



Ala. Dept. of Archives and History

ANN (GAINES) GAINES

Wife of George S. Gaines

Among its most active and efficient champions was Mr. Gaines, who devoted time and means to its accomplishment; he not only canvassed the State of Mississippi at different times to that end, but he spent entire sessions of the Legislature in Jackson for the same purpose, urging it upon the members day after day, never absenting himself until his task was done. For several years he was President of the Branch of the State Bank at Mobile, and in that, as in his other public trusts, kept his hands clean, and no one ever questioned his integrity.

Not the least remarkable thing about Mr. Gaines is his admirable style composition, so Addisonian in its purity and finish, and replete with the grace and tender humor of Charles Lamb. One ponders and inquires whence is derived the charm and beauty of style in the composition of a frontiersman, actively and constantly engaged, now in a sharp look out for the pecuniary interest of Government (for large transactions involving great amounts of public property were entrusted to him); again military duty, guarding his home and his neighbors from the cruel and stealthy savage, and then off on a negotiation to some distant tribe to secure its adherence to the Government in a time of great peril and uncertainty.

—*Mobile Register*, June 19, 1872—

NOTES ON THE EARLY DAYS OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Not long since the venerable George S. Gaines, now verging on to 90 years of age, and who moved to St. Stephens in the year 1805, deposited with the Franklin Society of Mobile some notes on the early history of Mobile and its vicinity. Thus, in the deep twilight hours of his life, when no longer able to use his pen, Mr. Gaines has dictated to an amanuensis the notes in question. We have found these notes of so much interest that we begin to-day to give them serial publication in *The Register*. We are indebted to the kind permission of the Franklin Society for the privilege of doing so:

Among the various means employed by the United States Government at the beginning of the present century to civilize and improve the condition of the Indian tribes within our borders was the establishment of trading houses for the accommodation of each of the large tribes, where the Indians could obtain necessary articles of merchandise, at reasonable prices, in exchange for their peltries, furs and other produce at full value.

Joseph Chambers, Esq. of North Carolina, was appointed United States agent to the Choctaw Trading House, and established it at Fort St. Stephens on the Tombigbee river in 1803. Mr. Chambers was appointed a commissioner, with Robert C. Nicholas, of Virginia, to settle land claims in what was then called the "Tombigbee Settlement," in the Mississippi Territory.

In the latter part of 1804 I was invited by Mr. Chambers to come to Fort St. Stephens and take charge of the Trading House, as his Assistant, with the understanding that he would resign after I became thoroughly acquainted with the business, and recommend me as his successor. I was then residing at Gallatin, Tennessee, in the employment of Messrs. John and Robert Allen, merchants. I gave up my situation with them, notified Mr. Chambers of my acceptance, and arranged to leave for St. Stephens in March, 1805, where I arrived by the slow routes of the Cumberland and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, thence via Mobile, in a small Spanish schooner to Fort Stoddard—the balance of the distance by land. The day after my

arrival at St. Stephens, being familiar with the business of a retail store, Mr. Chambers gave me charge of the Trading House, his time being occupied in the discharge of the duties of Register of the Land Office, and member of the Board of Commissioners for settling land claims.

I fortunately met with Col. Silas Dinsmore, United States Agent of the Choctaws, at Natchez, Mississippi, on my way out. He was en route to New Orleans to purchase supplies for a treaty, which was to be held at St. Stephens, with the Choctaw Indians, in May or June. We travelled together to New Orleans, where we were detained several days, while Col. Dinsmore was making purchases for the accommodation of the treaty. He chartered a small Spanish schooner to transport his purchases to St. Stephens. We both took passage in it, and after a week's voyage reached Mobile. The delay was in part caused by getting aground at "Grant's Pass" (since named). From Mobile we continued our voyage to St. Stephens (Fort Stoddard), and from that place we travelled to St. Stephens on horseback. Col. Dinsmore was an Eastern man (from Massachusetts). He was a scholar, and had travelled a great deal; he was formerly a purser in the navy; he possessed a large stock of useful knowledge, and his wit and humor appeared to be inexhaustible, which made him a general favorite; he was energetic and industrious in the discharge of his duties—in fact, he was the "right man in the right place" to aid in carrying out the humane policy of the Government toward the Indian tribes.

In June, 1805, the Indians met at St. Stephens, according to appointment. Gen. Robertson, of Nashville, was associated with Col. Dinsmore as United States Commissioner to hold the treaty, the object of which was to purchase the Indian claim so as to connect the "Tombigbee settlement" with what was then called the "Natchez settlement." A very large number of the Indians attended at the time appointed; and the ample provision made for their accommodation rendered their encampment lively and gay with dances, ball plays, "hide the bullet" and other games of chance.

The old Spanish fort St. Stephens, was located immediately

on the bluff of the river; one of the block-houses was in a good state of preservation and was occupied as the store. There was an extensive frame war-house, a room which was used as the land-office; and a frame dwelling, which had been the officers quarters, all enclosed on three sides with pickets and a ditch, the river forming the defences on the fourth. The frame dwelling was occupied as a residence by the United States Factor. The officers of the two companies of United States infantry stationed at St. Stephens, Indian chiefs and their captains, were invited every day by the Treaty Commissioners to dine with them in the Factor's house while the negotiations were proceeding.

Although the Indians seemed disposed to oblige their "Father," the President of the United States, they did not feel authorized to *sell*, but expressed a willingness to *talk* the matter over in the fall at Mount Dexter, near the present town of Macon, Mississippi.

I saw much of the Indians during their stay at St. Stephens, which caused both surprise and admiration; they were not such savages as I had imagined. As I have mentioned before, Col. Dinsmore made arrangements for the chiefs and their "right hand men," or captains, to dine every day with the Commissioners, officers of the army, and others. The table accommodated forty or fifty persons, half of whom were Indians. The bountiful supplies brought from New Orleans, and cooks furnished by the officers of the army, enabled the Colonel to offer a good dinner each day, with an abundance of wine, which the Indians greatly relished, participating freely in the wit and humor it brought forth. I remember an incident connected with one of those strange and pleasant festivities, which I will relate. A young lieutenant who sat by me became a little troublesome to the old chief, Mingo-Homa-stubbee, by asking a great many questions. It was so arranged that an interpreter sat by each chief for the convenience of conversation. The Lieutenant asked the old man "who was considered the greatest warrior among them?" (There were three great "Medal Chiefs—Mingo-Homa-stubbee, Mingo-Puck-shennubee and Push-matta-ha). The Chief answered, "I *was* considered the greatest warrior, but found it was not the case when returning from a visit we

paid President Washington at Philadelphia." "How did you make the discovery?" enquired the Lieutenant. "The President sent us in a ship to New Orleans," said the Chief, "and when we were at sea, entirely out of sight of land, a storm came upon us. The waves were so high they seemed almost to kiss the clouds, and the ship rolled about among them until I thought that we would never again see the beautiful hills and valleys, forests and streams of our beloved country; and our bones would lie scattered on the bottom of the strange waters instead of resting peacefully with our departed relations. All this alarmed me—I found that I had not the firmness in danger and the utter fearlessness of death of a great warrior, and concluded to go down in the cabin to see how my friend Puck-shennubbee was affected by this (to our party) new and strange danger. And what do you think he was doing?" The description of the storm attracted the attention of every one at the table. The Lieutenant eagerly asked, "What was he doing?" "Why," said the old Chief, with a very grave face but a humorous twinkle of the eyes, "Why, he was making love to an old Squaw we took along to cook for us, and he seemed to be as unconcerned about the danger as if he was at home in his own cabin sitting by the fire, and listening to the songs of the winds among the trees!" The roars of laughter that followed this "denouement" drowned Mingo-Puck-shennubbee's indignant denial of it. The Lieutenant did not attempt any further conversation.

Puck-shennubbee was as remarkable for his modesty and simplicity of manner as Mingo-Homa-stubbee was for his wit and jolity.

The Indians met according to appointment in the autumn of 1805, and our commissioners were successful in the purchase of land to connect the Tombigbee and Natchez settlements. But the strip of land was narrower than was desired by the Government. It was bounded south by "Ellicott's line;" east by the ridge dividing the waters of the Alabama and Tombigby; north by a line beginning at a point near the northeast corner of what is now called Clarke county, Ala., and crossing the Tombigby at "Fallectabrenna Oldfield," a few miles below Tuscahoma bluff; and crossing Chickasawha near the present north-

ern boundary line of Wayne county, Miss., crossing Leaf River at or near the northern bounday line of Perry, thence running west to the Natchez settlement. "Ellicot's line" crossed Mobile River a few miles below Seymour's Bluff, striking the Mississippi above Baton Rouge. The Tombigbee settlement in 1805 was composed mainly of a few planters on the river (who were generally owners of large stocks of cattle) and persons employed in the care of the cattle. There was also a small settlement east of the Alabama river, ten miles above its confluence with the Tombigbee, known as the "Tensaw settlement." Mr. Mimms, a man of considerable property, resided near Tensaw Lake, and was surrounded by a pleasant neighborhood composed of the Lingers, Duns, Thompsons, and others. William and John Peirce, merchants, had a store near Mimm's. Of the original settlement I recollect Mr. Bates, who resided at Nanahubba Bluff; Mr. Hollinger, who resided a few miles above, and was one of the largest planters; his plantation was situated on the "Cut Off Island." McIntosh's Bluff was occupied by a Mr. Johnson. Some eight or ten miles above McIntosh's was the small village of New Wakefield, the seat of justice for Washington, the only county in the settlement. In the neighborhood of the village resided the Mungers, Hinsons, Wheats, Baldwins, and other families, names not recollected. Mr. Young Gaines resided about ten miles higher up the river. Major Frank Boykin, a Revolutionary officer, Thomas Bassett, Bowling, Brewers and Callers were Mr. Gaines' neighbors. John McGrew lived near St. Stiphens. He owned a plantation on the east side of the river, opposite St. Stephens. Mr. Baker resided on the first bluff above St. Stephens, Col. Bullock and Mr. Womack lived also in the neighborhood.

I had considerable leisure during my first summer at St. Stephens, and wrote a good deal in the Land Office, recording claims, etc., which gave me an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with most of the "settlers" while they were in attendance at the Land Office prosecuting their claims for land. The various classes of land claims, Spanish warrants of survey, donations by act of Congress to first settlers on public land, pre-emptions to more recent settlers, brought rich and poor to the Land Office. I remember there were British patents in the Land Office—whether for lands in this or other

districts I do not remember, I have no recollection of their being recorded or acted upon by the Commissioners.

At this period our admirable system of State and general government worked well—each independently in its own sphere.

The Territories were treated as young States, and received aid and encouragement from the Federal parent during their minority. Washington county being cut off from the balance of the Territory by a wilderness of more than a hundred miles in width, was favored this year with a Territorial Judge—Harry Toulmin, formerly of Kentucky. He settled with his family at St. Stephens, organized his court, in the administration of which, and his examples of strict integrity, energy, and industry, exercised an improving influence in the settlement. The judge was a man of much learning, generous and hospitable almost to a fault. Soon after the ratification of the treaty at Mount Dexter, in 1806, the eastern and northern boundary line of the “cession” was run by Col. Dinsmore. When the Colonel reached the Tombigby, in running the northern boundary westward, he learned the “Captain” of Tuscahoma village threatened to prevent him from crossing. He suspended the survey and came down to St. Stephens and invited Young Gaines and myself to accompany him in a pirogue to Fallettbrenna Oldfield to quiet the Indians should they attempt to interfere with the survey. We accordingly went up with Col. Dinsmore; and upon arriving at Fallettbrenna, the Colonel gave orders to prepare a post and plant it on a mound he threw up. While this work was progressing the captain of the Tuscahoma village marched up with a number of warriors, all looking fierce and malignant. Seeing Young Gaines, the captain entered into a conversation with him, and the matter was soon amicably arranged. Mr. Gaines had influence with the Choctaws, owing to his kindness and fair dealing with them.

By this time I became pretty well acquainted with the manners and customs of the Choctaw Indians. Polygamy was not forbidden. In some instances a very active hunter would have two wives: but one wife was generally the rule. Courtship was conducted in this wise: A young man becoming pleased with a maiden proposed for her to her maternal uncle (the

eldest brother of her mother), often accompanying his proposal with presents before he could obtain the uncle's consent. When this was obtained the maiden was soon won. Such was the chastity and modesty of the females, jealousy on the part of husbands was rarely or ever heard of. Instead of burying their dead the corpse was wrapped in a blanket and placed on a scaffold in the yard of the family. The scaffold was ten or twelve feet high. The body remained on the scaffold until the flesh became so much decayed as to separate easily from the bones, when a professional bone-picker was sent for to take down the body, separate the bones from the flesh, wash them clean, and lastly lay them in a small box made for the purpose. After this the box was deposited in the bone-house of the village. Every day while the corpse was lying on the scaffold the relatives near at hand seated themselves around, and covering their heads with a blanket or other garment, would weep and lament for half an hour. If any of the relatives were travelling, they would seat themselves by the path-side, cover their heads and weep at the same time of day agreed upon with the mourners at home. The funeral ceremonies finished the relatives and friends enjoyed the feast prepared, thus ending the season of grief. Their amusements were ball plays, a few games of chance and dances. The ball plays by the men were enjoyed by both sexes. The dances were much enjoyed by the young people. Their rules of propriety were strictly observed generally. The eldest brother of a family was considered governor of the children of his sisters. The fathers of children seemed to have but little to do with their management. The mothers managed the children and appeared to take great pleasure in their well-doing; the girls assisted their mothers in their various duties, the boys amused themselves with blow-guns, bows and arrows, rarely ever being required to do any work. The mothers and their daughters cultivated their "truck patches," performed all the duties appertaining to the household, or camp, etc. The men were all hunters—that seemed to be considered their whole duty. They built the cabins. Beside the cabin in which they lived each family had another called "the hot house," to sleep in during cold weather. The walls were made of poles and mud, and the whole structure made as air tight as possible, leaving one small door. The fire was built in the middle of the dirt floor, a small apperture was

left in the roof for the escape of the smoke, a low scaffolding to sleep on was fixed to the walls all around. The "Choctaw Nation" was divided into three districts. Each district had its principal chief. Mingo-Puckshennubbee ruled the western district situated west of Pearl river. Mingo-homa-stubbee was chief of the northern district which adjoined the Chickasaw country. Pushmattaha ruled the southeastern district. His residence was near the present site of Meridian, Miss. Major John Pitchlyn resided in the northern district, near the mouth of the Octebbeha on the Tombigby. I became acquainted with him soon after I took charge of the Choctaw trading house in 1805. He appeared then to be about thirty-five years of age—his face strikingly handsome denoting mildness and firmness of purpose. I was proud of my position, and determined to make myself useful in the civilization of the Choctaws, and availed myself of every opportunity of conversing with Major Pitchlyn on the subject; and I was delighted to find he took a deep interest in it. I was informed that he was "a self-made man"; that he was the son of a British commissary, and accompanied his father, when quite a small boy, in a journey the old gentleman was making through the Indian country from South Carolina to the "Natchez settlement," on the Mississippi. His father was seized with a sickness in the Choctaw Nation, and never reached his destination. He died, leaving the boy to struggle for himself among the Indians.

Maj. Pitchlyn accumulated property, and took a wife when a young man from a powerful family of the natives. He was appointed United States Interpreter, and was highly respected by the Indian agents and officers of the army. His property consisted mainly of horses and horned cattle. I was told before I met him that he was a "natural gentleman," possessing the material requisites belonging to that character. I found this opinion of him true. He educated his children as thoroughly as practicable in those days. Maj. Pitchlyn's influence in the northern district was considered by the United States Agent so important in carrying out the views of the Government in the advancement of civilization that he was rarely called upon to exercise his office as interpreter, except at treaties or the payment of Indian annuities. Middleton Macky was also U. S. Interpreter to the Choctaws. Col. Dinsmore kept him at his

residence, and when he travelled about among the Indians, took this interpreter with him. Col. Dinsmore established his agency office in the valley of Chickasawha, near where Quitman, Miss., now stands. He removed in 1807 to the valley of Pearl river, a few miles above the present site of Jackson. He seems to have inspired his employees, blacksmiths, wheelwrights and others, with an ardent desire for the improvement of the Indians. Their "truck patches" were enlarged, and now and then one was enclosed with fencing. Poultry began to enliven their yards; and the hog was now to be seen among them. To their patches of corn, potatoes, beans, pumpkins, etc., cotton began to be added. The white men among them introduced cows and horses, and many Indian families became owners of these useful animals. Col. Dinsmore rendered all the aid he could to the missionaries. That valuable institution known as the "Mayhew Mission," and several other schools were established in different parts of the nation and nothing occurred to check the progress of civilization and improvement of the domestic arts until 1812. The Chickasaw country adjoined the Choctaws on the north. The language, manners, and customs of the two tribes were nearly alike. It is quite probable that they were originally of the same tribe. Everything that I have said about the manners and customs of the Choctaws will apply as well to the Chickasaws. There was a mildness and appearance of civility in these tribes which distinguished them from their neighbors the Creeks and Cherokees. Whether this was natural, or was owing to their former intercourse with the French people of Louisiana, I am unable to determine. The object of Mr. Chambers' mission to the South—that is, the establishment of the Choctaw trading house, a land office, and to aid in the adjudication of land claims in the Tombigbee settlement—having been accomplished, he resigned his appointment in the latter part of 1806, and returned to his native State, North Carolina. I was appointed his successor in the Choctaw trading house; and Thomas Malone my assistant. Thomas W. Maury, of Ablermarle, Virginia, was appointed Register of the Land Office and Lemuel Henry, Esq., Receiver of Public Moneys.

The business of the trading house increased its popularity—brought hunters from all parts of the nation. Hunters of the Creek settlement at the falls of the Black Warrior came fre-

quently to trade; and I had occasional visits from Creeks residing beyond the Alabama river. All appeared to be well pleased with our trade. My instructions from the Superintendent of Indian Trade made it my duty to be careful not to sell the Indians a damaged article of goods without pointing out the damage and reducing the price to what I considered its actual value; when blankets, shawls, or cotton and linen goods appeared to me to be lighter or more flimsy and less durable than they purported to be, to point out the defect and reduce the price also.

In 1807 surveyors were put to work "running out" Clark and Washington counties, dividing into townships, etc.; surveying private claims, etc. Settlements began to extend higher up the river on both sides; also westward on Chickasawha, Leaf and Pearl Rivers. Wayne, Green and Perry counties (now in the State of Mississippi), were organized in 1807. The counties were settled by emigrants principally from North and South Carolina and Georgia. Col. James Caller represented Washington county in the Territorial Legislature. The capital of the Territory was the village of Washington, a few miles above Natchez. Col. Caller was enthusiastic in the discharge of his duties. At this time the settlers were too much occupied in building cabins, and opening land for cultivation, to interest themselves with politics or elections. Members of the Legislature, however, were elected; and the militia was organized according to the laws of the Territory. Col. James Caller was the leading politician of the Tombigby settlement.

Nicholas Perkins, Lemuel Henry, R. H. Gilmore, J. P. Kenedy, Samuel Acee, Sallie and Joseph Carson were the lawyers of Washington county. The three first were living in the county when I came. We were almost entirely dependent on itinerant preachers for religious services.

The celebrated Lorenzo Dow was among them. I avoided taking any interest in the county or Territorial politics; I never attended any of the political gatherings, but ordinary civility compelled me to hear a good deal of what was going on from persons visiting the land office, which continued in the old Spanish Fort, St. Stephens.

The country south of Ellicott's line, considered a part of the purchase of Louisiana from France, continued in the possession of Spain. Some difficulty had occurred in passing goods to the trading house by Mobile, where duties were exacted on Government goods, and on peltries and other produce received in exchange from the Indians, which caused the Government to forward supplies for the trading house via Pittsburg, thence down the Ohio and up the Tennessee to Colbert's Ferry.

(The late Gen. Edmond P. Gaines, when a Lieutenant, was appointed Collector of Customs for the Mobile District, and kept his office at Fort Stoddart. He held the office for five years.)

In October, 1810, I received instructions from the Secretary of War to proceed to the Chickasaw Nation and endeavor to obtain permission of the Indians to open a wagon road from Colbert's Ferry to Cotton Gin Port, on the Tombigbee, and make arrangements to transport the goods thence to St. Stephens. I set out immediately, in obedience to my instructions; had an interview with the leading chiefs of the Chickasaws, who objected to opening the wagon road, but promised me facilities and safety for the transportation of the goods for the Choctaw trading house, on pack-horses, at a very moderate expense. Lieut. Gaines, by order of the War Department, had, six or seven years before this time, surveyed and marked out the road I was instructed to open.

I continued my journey to Smithland, at the mouth of the Cumberland, where I found the supplies in the charge of Wood Brothers, with the exception of lead, which I was instructed to purchase. Hearing that a boat load of lead had been sunk in the Ohio, below Fort Massac, I proceeded to the place, and, aided by the commanding officer at Massac, I purchased the quantity required, brought it up in a public barge to Smithland, engaged a careful bargeman and crew, with a good barge, to transport the goods found there, and with the lead I had purchased, to Colbert's Ferry, on the Tennessee. I then returned on horseback to Colbert's Ferry, made arrangements for receiving and "packing" the goods to Maj. Pitchlyn, at the mouth of the Octibbeha, below Cotton Gin Port. I proceeded