

Judge Oscar Mitchell 9/23/82

I lived right across the street where the county hotel is. I lived there from January 1917 until I went to war. When someone asked me what I was gonna talk on tonight, I said at 88 it's too late to venture anything as to DeKalb's future. So I'm talking about people, events, and places. I know that DeKalb County is very proud that it's a home site of the largest area of colleges and universities in the state of Georgia. The oldest is Agnes Scott. It first was founded in 1889 under the name of DeKalb Female Academy. A few years later it was changed to Agnes Scott Institute. I have a picture of six local girls who lived in Lithonia. Back in those days the Georgia Railroad contained a Picayune train. It would leave from Atlanta at one end and Conyers at the other. And it stopped just like a streetcar was, anyone that wanted to get on, they could. So there was six young ladies from my hometown would get on a train at 7 o'clock, come to Agnes Scott and spend the day at the school, go back at 4 o'clock and get home at five. And you'd be surprised how many ladies living in Atlanta came out to Agnes Scott Institute. It later became Agnes Scott College and which I remember George W. Scott who was the founder of it named after his wife. Then Emory College came here in 1919 from old Emory College down at Oxford. You know how it came by the reason of Asa G. Candler giving a million dollars and giving 250 acres of land in which Emory was built. Emory first came to existence in the 1830s.

Another old college which is now located in DeKalb County in Oglethorpe. It was created in 1833 and then came Mercer, came to Atlanta first as the Atlanta Baptist College in the 1920s-30s. Mercer University took it over so you go to university there. Then you have Columbia Theological Seminary, which was first founded in Lexington, Georgia. Moved to Columbia, South Carolina and that's where it got its name when it came to Atlanta. And in addition to it we have the DeKalb Community College which is the earliest one I think was organized in 1926. And it's amazing how back in the 1880s and up till at least 1910 we had private schools for boys and for girls. Right here in Decatur, you had Donald Frasier School, which was a fine boys' school. Reverend Donald Frasier was a Presbyterian minister here in Decatur. And then out in Stone Mountain there was two brothers founded the Stone Mountain School for Boys and it has good scholarship and their main assets were athletics. They had a good baseball team, it was doing well. I had two brothers that went to that school and the head of athletics of the school was Sandy Beavers. And one day he walked in the school has kind of a little bad reputation because one of the brothers was accused of being a homosexual. And the parents just withdrew the boys just like that. So Sandy thought it was a good opportune time to buy the school and he went in to see the two brothers and he said "Your school's gone, I'll give you \$2,500 for it." And they sold it to him and what did Sandy do? In one year's time he moved the school to Gainesville where it's Riverside Academy now. And they're still doing pretty well, they spend their winters in Florida. Another...no that's all the colleges and boys I want to talk about.

I think one of the biggest assets for DeKalb County and for which I know you are proud, is the fact that they have they biggest Stone Mountain in the state of Georgia. And some of you here, I know Freeman there knows what went on cause he's getting up to my

age, recall the history of the Confederate Memorial. In 1912 there was a lady named Plane was the head of the UDC in Atlanta and she suggested that we ought to have Lee's head carved on the side of Stone Mountain. And they formed an organization to promote that idea, the Stone Mountain Memorial Association. And I think Miss Plane knew, got some Borglum who was a sculptor and she talked to him about it and he was very enthusiastic and he wanted to put the head there. He came down and took a look at the mountain and said that's appropriate for other figures on horses and it was his idea having these three figures there on the mountain. Well you know the history; Borglum was employed by this memorial association to erect that memorial on the mountain. Well it wasn't long until they got into some disagreement, things were going on, and they fired Mr. Borglum. And he immediately destroyed all of his models for this monument. They employed Augustus Lukeman next and he didn't stay very long and they fell of with him. So then they tried to do something to get things organized together and it went on for two or three years. Finally the man I think got the credit for building the memorial was your own Scott Candler here in Atlanta. What happen was the Venable family gave a grant to the memorial association to put this monument there. They didn't own the mountain because the [Audio cuts out till 7:00] put the monument on the mountain that the state would own. The state took hold of it, I think it was \$700,000 was voted by the legislature to buy the mountain. And the deal was consummated and from then on Scott Candler transferred his option to the memorial association. That's where the state of Georgia got it and now it's a part of state park system of Georgia.

One funny thing about Stone Mountain, you know how large it is, how much would you guess how many acres you could properly quarry granite on Stone Mountain. Anybody got a guess? 26. The Venables had a quarry on the side toward the Georgia railroad. They had a spur track run out to the mountain to get granite and that's all the space that you could quarry on Stone Mountain. You remember in fact at one time in its history it had a 100 foot tower on the top of the mountain. The report was that on the first floor was a saloon and on the second floor was a temperance society. The high wind came along there one day and blew it all down!

Now I lived during the period before, there's been three ages in my lifetime. That's a horse and buggy era, the automobile era, and the space-airship era. Back in the-when I was growing up as a boy there was one thing common to all your little towns and cities around here. You had a livery stables and every home had a hitching post. This day and time when you drive your car to a friend's house and stop you don't have to put in a parking meter but if you had a horse and buggy you had to tie your horse to something so you had a hitching post in front of every home. Another thing how times have changed...they've stopped building belfries in churches. You know the belfries was where the church bell would be put. They don't put them up in this day and time. Back in my day and time every church in town had a tower with a bell. It'd ring on Sunday morning to tell you it's time to go to church and they'd ring the bells on Wednesday night time to come to camp meeting. And when you had a funeral, all the funerals was held in churches at that time. The funeral would, from the church to the cemetery; they tolled the bell all the way till they get to the cemetery. And the way the dogs would howl!

Churches in my day and time were really the social center of a small town, where everything involving home. I can remember at Christmas time they'd go out and cut a big tree- holly tree. That's the reason you don't find no holly trees around here the churches

cut them all down years ago. And on Christmas Eve, each one of the three churches in my hometown would have gifts for every child in town, whether they belonged to the church or not. Another custom that has gone away in the funerals, there wasn't any funeral homes in my town and all the funerals were conducted, even for the colored people, were conducted in churches. They followed a custom that came to us from England that when the carriage left the church to go to the cemetery the men of the family and the pall bearers would walk behind the horse-driven hearse till they get to the cemetery. I can remember at the time I walked two or three times and the streets wasn't paved and that red mud was six inches deep.

There's another things that existed back in those days, from 1880 up until about the automobile age came along, was general merchandise stores. They had one near Decatur, they had one in Stone Mountain, they had two in my hometown. And the reason I know how they operated was because I worked in the summertime in one of these stores. Those stores carried everything from a needle to a two-horse wagon. They were the Sears Roebuck stores of that period. The one that I worked in was a two-story building; it was divided into the men's department, the ladies' department, a grocery department, and a hardware department. And upstairs was located what would be the mortuary today, selling caskets in the funeral. Down, about half a block away, would be the yard in which they carried lumber, building materials, coal, and things of that nature. And down another about a half a block was a mill which grounded wheat into flour and corn into meal, what a deal. Those stores sold mostly of course to the farmers. In the springtime a farmer would come in and ask for a credit and it depended on the size of the farm he had how much credit was going to be extended, one horse farmer or a two horse farmer. One horse farmer was allotted 30 acres to horse and mules. Those farmers, the merchant would enter on his books how much credit he's going to be given. And he would live on that credit until the crop came in, in the fall. Corn and so forth. I remember one time, I wasn't two year there. This particular store I'm talking about there was \$250,000 worth of merchandise sold to these farmers all around the country. Invariably a lot of trouble came in and in the fall when the crops were gathered, pay the debt, and I say that went on until what happened: the boll weevil. You know you're too young to remember the boll weevil. Well that impacted raising the cotton for any property at all and the majority of the crops that were raised at that time was cotton. That and the automobile ended the general merchandise store in small towns.

There's another thing that's gone ,and I don't know of but two in this section of the state that's still in existence and that's camp meeting grounds. There was one located, one that's still in existence down in Salem. I went to a family reunion here a couple of weeks ago and they've retained that campground has been going on for 160 years. The only time that it didn't have any camp meetings was during the Civil War. They had this old campground there and it's kept in perfect order. It's got a cemetery, a church, and a picnic grounds where you can go out and have a picnic. The other camp meeting ground is out here at Camp Gideon out beyond the College Park. I can only describe the ones that I went to in my family back in what is known as Rock Chapel. It was an arbor in which was open on all four sides and just a skeleton cover. It was known as a brush arbor. In other words, at the time of the camp meeting you'd go out and cut out the bushes and trees and put the green leaves over there to keep the hot sun off and that was known as a brush arbor. And later a roof was put on it. And they had what you called tin, and that

still exists down at Salem. The people would build a building, a very rugged sort of type building, with cabins down on the first floor for the ladies and an open room on the second floor for the men. And we'd go out there and stay two weeks and they always had the visiting ministers from their own congregations. This was a Methodist campground I'm talking about. You had a service in the morning, you had dinner, and then come back for service in the evening. That old Rock Chapel existed from 1840 until 1916, it's gone out of existence now.

It's the individuals who make your city and town. I'd like to report a few, of course there's many more than I'm going to refer to but these are the chief ones in my memory who did a great deal for the DeKalb County. The first family I want to mention is the Candlers. There were great brothers in this Candler family: Asa, Warren, and John. You all know Asa Candler was the one who gave the money for Emory, he also had a subdivision out in what is now known as Druid Hills. He was one time mayor of Atlanta, he was the one who constructed the Candler building, and I won't mention two things. He had one lawsuit in which a lady claimed he'd breach of promise. You remember that case where the lady down in New Orleans brought a suit against him, said that he had promised to marry her and I think it was all for money. But anyways the case came on for trial and the lawyers Mr. Candler employed were Weldon Cooley and Tom Long. She had been married and claimed to have had a divorce in Reno, Nevada so Cooley and Long went out to Reno and they found that her divorce was void. So they brought the evidence back, the case was tried in federal court, and the lady lost the suit because she was still married.

But anyway, his brother Warren was a bishop of the Methodist Church, I'm satisfied that most of you here remember him. Shorter stature but bigger brained. A leader in the church and a very determined man in that sort of leadership. One of the members of his congregation gave him an automobile so he thought he could take it out and drive it. When he got out on North Decatur road the first thing he did was hit a tree and it knocked him out on the ground. Well he was lying there when his neighbors came out trying to help him and see what could be done. One of them said, "Do you want us to send for a doctor?" He said, "No, send for a jackass" "What?"

He said, oh, I meant a veterinarian. He said, "Send for a veterinarian because a jackass was driving that car."

Another time a young man came into his office and said he was out plowing the other day and that he'd had a call to preach. And the bishop looked at him and he says, "Well what did that sign say?" And he says "PC" and the bishop says, "Well what is that?" and he says, "Preach Christ." The bishop shook his head and said, "No it says Plow Corn."

Another brother was John Candler and he was assistant general of this circuit, judge of this court, and served for four years on the Supreme Court of Georgia. He lived in Edgewood, he'd leave his office and go down to the old Union Depot and catch a train and get off at Edgewood. This particular day he was a little bit late and the train was moving out when he was trying to catch it. It threw him on to the wheels of the train and cut off part of his foot. So a friend of his, [??] who was a well known lawyer in Atlanta said, "So I guess you heard about John Candler's foot." He said, "Yeah, it cut off the wrong end though."

This [????] was a character, he'd served in Congress at one time and he practiced in Atlanta. Well one day he lost a case in the Supreme Court of Georgia and this particular lawyer he says, "Well Tinny, I think you'll be cussing that clerk won't ya?" He says, "Oh no, they're composed of men of character and intelligence but the only trouble is that men who have character have no intelligence and men who have intelligence have no character."

The other Candler I'll call your attention to is Charles Candler, who was at one time on the head of the Railroad Commission of Georgia, which has ended...Public Service Commission. And his son Scott Candler, now there was a determined individual. I knew Scott during all of his career and he was one man that made up his mind he was going to go to a certain place or do a certain thing you couldn't change him. And he'd do it promptly; he wouldn't delay anything at all. He was one time mayor of Decatur and served as County Commissioner, and he was the sole Commissioner. I've examined the history of DeKalb County and they've gone with one commissioner, two commissioners, three commissioners, five. And I've come to the conclusion that the most progress was made in the county when they only had one county commissioner. The story they tell about him is I think true too. General Motors was considering making an assembly plant and Scott went after them to get it located in DeKalb County. That went on for some time and finally they agreed to meet Scott on the position that they wanted to put the assembly plant, which is out near Doraville. They got out there and they finally told Scott everything's good except one thing, you haven't brought the water out here. And he said is that all that you want out here? And they said, "That's it." He said, "I'm the sole commissioner and I call a meeting of the commission together. I move to extend the waterworks to this location. I second the motion, the motion carries." I say that's getting things done.

I'm sad to say that the DeKalb New Era is not still in existence, I don't understand their not printing that. It was a newspaper that covered DeKalb County like they do. They had correspondence in every section of this, of the state, of the county. It was weekly and if you want to go back and know the history of DeKalb County, go back and get some of the old issues of the New Era and you'll find it.

Another man that made a lot of history in this county was George F. Willis. Back during the Prohibition days there was a so called tonic that was put on the market named Tanlac. I guess nobody here is old enough to remember Tanlac but it came out during Prohibition and the reason it was so popular was because 60% of it was alcohol. He was a state agent, covered the whole state, about Tanlac they tell a story that this man had a bird bath and this man poured some Tanlac in the bird bath and hummingbird came along and took two sips and when last seen he was chasing a hawk. Anyways, he decided he wanted to do something for old Ingleside, which was a small village down the road. He looked it over and he wanted to put in something like an English village in the business section of town and he bought a thousand acres out of his money. He got his architect and he built the business buildings there and began to open up streets and mark out the lots but unfortunately the Depression came on. He lost every penny he put into the project but look at what it is today, it's a beautiful residential section all due to the fact of George Francis Willis.

Many years ago there was a lawyer in Atlanta named R. P. Jones, he had a young son that I think was 10 or 11 years old at the time, who was frail and his father concluded

that what he needed was to live outdoors. So he acquired a home near East Lake and moved out there and this young lad went out every day and got his exercise practicing golf. You know where he ended up? At St. Andrews Scotland, champion of open, amateur both British and American. Bobby Jones.

I think my lawyer brother Jim will probably remember the litigation that went on between the Atlanta Georgia power company and the city of Decatur. Prior to when the Georgia Power company formed it was the Georgia Railway and Electric company and they're the ones that put in the electric railway system in the city of Atlanta and ran it. They obtained a franchise from the City of Decatur to bring the streetcar from Atlanta to Decatur and that franchise was granted for 99 years. Part of the franchise was the fare should be five cents. Well, prices began to rise and the fare wasn't paying the deal so they came to Decatur and asked them to change the fee and they wouldn't change. Then litigation started; it was in this court at least a half a dozen times, it went to the Georgia Supreme Court twice, and once to the Supreme Court of the United States. And it finally ended up that Decatur won the suit. In this second episode between the power company and Decatur my friend represented, along with the city attorney here, the city of Decatur. Decatur decided that the streets needed to be paved and they paved the streets, and the streetcar lines ran right into the street, so they paved between the tracks of the power company. And after they did that they assessed the power company for paving that length between the tracks and they said they wouldn't pay it. That litigation then started and went on for 10 years. It was three times in this court here, it was three times in the Supreme Court of Georgia, and three times in the Supreme Court of the United States and it lasted 10 years! You know what finally happened? They lost all the way up and down and when they finally paid off the interest it was more than the principal.

Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit, which this court is a part of, was first created in 1885. It was composed of the counties of Clayton, DeKalb, and Douglas. Today DeKalb is alone and the man who served longest...I bet Jim could tell me that. Frank? Yes, from Stone Mountain.

Now I can't get along without telling you something about my hometown. There was a Professor Greek who came and had a private school in what is now Lithonia. And he gave it his name; he chartered the town in 1853. Two Greek words: *lithos* and *onia* meaning "rocky place" and believe me it is a rocky place. As a matter of fact, there's granite that runs all the way from Rockdale County up to Fulton County; underground rock. And when they were building the Candler building, when they got to the north end of the Candler building they ran into Stone Mountain granite, real granite, and they had to blast it all out. You go down the Georgia Railroad today and on each side you'll see as you go along outcroppings of granite. The town was settled mostly by what they call stone masons. There are three places in the United States where they cut the stone in the summer, the winter. The winter was in Vermont, one in North Carolina, and the other was the state of Georgia; they'd go from one place to another. As a result we had a lot of Scotsmen, Welshmen, and Irishmen to come to my hometown as stone masons. And you go there today and you'll find the names of Kelly's and Jones, Davison's and Deed's and McArthur's. A great many of them stayed and married. There was one named Don Riley who was chief of police and on Saturday nights these Scots would get a little bit high and Don would have to pick them up and take them down in what we called the camelboose. It was a one room rock building with an iron grated door on it with great big teeth. So this

Saturday night Don picked this guy up and took him down to the camelboose. Well while Don was opening the door with his key the Scotsman got behind him and pushed him in the jail box, shut the gate and he locked it. So he goes down to the mayor and he says,

“Mr. Mayor where’s your chief of police?”

“Oh he’s up there on Main Street there”

“Oh no, can’t find him”

“Well I don’t know where he is”

“Well you come with me and I’ll show you.” So he took him down to the jail and there was the chief behind bars. You know what he **[indecipherable]** so he resigned, moved to Fulton County, and ended his career as a lieutenant on the county police force. Those Saturday nights was something in Lithonia. There’s one thing though that Lithonia never has done. Ordinarily when someone achieves something famous or there’s some famous name they put up a marker. You know, he did so and so here. Well you know, Sherman after he burned Atlanta spent the first night in Lithonia, and they didn’t tear that house down until just a few years ago. And you know what there’s never been a marker placed on that marking ‘Sherman slept here.’

There’s one man that I didn’t mention that I meant to go over, there’s one or two that I’ve got here on my list that I’ll get back to. In 1830 there was a man named Joe Ballenger Bond that moved from Hall County, he bought him 200 acres in what is now Rock Chapel, and moved his family there. He brought his family of six children and built him a home there and he was a devout Methodist and he got all the Methodists in that area, which was a farming area about four miles from Lithonia, and they organized this Methodist church which today is known as Rock Chapel. It gets its named from the mountain of rock, 50 feet high, that used to be 50 feet high right close to where the church is, and that’s where it got its name: Rock Chapel. Well, he gave 16 acres of land in which today the Rock Chapel church and the cemetery and where the old camp meeting arbor used to be. That camp meeting went on from 1842 until the World War I, 1916. One of the farmers in that area was named Ezekiel Lee and this man Bond was the lay leader of the Methodist church and in other words the presiding elder lived in Gainesville and he got around to these churches once a year and in between this man Bond was lay leader of that congregation. Well a member of that congregation, Ezekiel Lee, had a son named James Wideman Lee. This young lad, when he was about 17 years old, Bond saw the potentialities of his career as a minister and urged him to go into the ministry, and the boy did. Now this was his career, without a college education, he began to serve in churches here in Georgia. He served at one time at Trinity in Atlanta. Then he moved to St. Louis, Missouri where he was the minister of the largest southern Methodist church in the southern Methodist area.

He had two sons named James Wideman Lee Jr. and Ivy Lee, he put both of them through Emory College and when they finished the two boys went to New York City and opened up the first public relations office in the United States. They were able to represent such clients as the Pennsylvania Railroad and that type of people. Well of course all of you remember a man named John D. Rockefeller, talking about the senior here, who was in the 1890s the only billionaire in the United States. The way he acquired that wealth, he would get money in which he would loan to people and in turn they would give him the security deed on the property. Just before the depressions in the 1890s he loaned two brothers a big huge piece of property in Minnesota. He loaned them \$60,000,

they couldn't pay it when the loan fell due and he foreclosed and bought the property himself and when the conditions got better he sold it for \$600,000. That's the way he made his fortune mostly, you know he started the Standard Oil Company. Well his young son John D. Jr. knew his father had a bad reputation among the public as a selfish man. So he thought he could do something to get him to use his money for some benefit. So he went to Ivy Lee in New York City, this public relations man, and told him what he was trying to do; get a better image of his father. Well under the advice of Ivy Lee he says what you need to do is set up the funds for two things: for general education purposes and for health. He agreed to it and that's where the general education fund started and the Rockefeller Institute was set up. He put in 400 million dollars for those two projects. You know what the assets of those two projects is, which are still in existence today? 800 million is what it is today. Well that did help Rockefeller but another thing; Rockefeller did give the money that started the University of Chicago; that's quite a thing in itself. Well I tell you that story representing what the grandson of Ezekiel Lee of Rock Chapel did for John D. Rockefeller.

I referred to these young ladies coming to Agnes Scott by the picayune [?] train. Georgia Railroad, I think back up about 1910 or a little bit later, maintained the train would leave Atlanta early in the morning and take a load that wanted to go east of town to Conyers and a train coming from Conyers; and it would stop just like a streetcar would, picking up people all the way along and that was known as the picayune [?] train. Ever stop to think the picayune [?] at the time that went from Lawrenceville to Atlanta, from Gainesville to Atlanta, from Jonesboro to Atlanta, and from Conyers to Atlanta, and also from Marietta. Suppose MARTA instead of digging all under the ground had made some arrangements with the railroad, look how much money they would have saved if they did it. Now, what's going to happen to your MARTA system here in Atlanta; it'll end up just like the subway in New York City, you'll be too scared to ride on it. But hindsight is better than foresight I guess at times.

Well, I spent about five months out there, six months, Camp Gordon First World War. You know all the buildings was constructed hastily and put up for the troops to be trained for the war. And the contractors was northern contractors, they thought it was just like Florida down here, you never needed any heat. They put up these big barracks, taking care of about 150 men, one stove in the center of the building and around the top had ventilators just like in a shop, you know let the air out. Then these poor boys sat there and lived in those quarters, they say that the 82<sup>nd</sup> Division was trained out there and I was there during the whole time. At times there was 60,000 men training there and today you go out there and you don't see one sign that Camp Gordon's ever been there. They say that more men died from the flu out at Camp Gordon than was killed in France.

Another man that I just got to say something about, I was with him for 16 years, that's a man by the name of William Schley Howard. He was also in Conyers for one period; he was Solicitor General over there in the Stone Mountain 2nd. He was trying a murder case in Newton County down in [??] and the lawyer for the defendant was Bunk Kupple [?]. Well he was man that was specialized in criminal cases; he was a lawyer from Macon, Georgia. And when he'd get up talking to the jury he'd shout, holler; you could hear him two blocks away. Just shouting and hollering, hollering, and hollering. In this particular case after he had made his argument to the jury Mr. Howard got up and the first thing he said was, "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury," talking to the court. He picked up



a chair and began to hit the floor with the chair and Judge Roane [?] said, "Mr. Solicitor, what are you doing?"

"Well I'm just answering Mr. Kuple's [?] argument." Another occasion, Mr. [???] he was a great lawyer, one day we were trying a civil case and [???] was the lawyer on the other side would ask the witness on the cross examination, the witness would answer something, and he thought he'd scored a point. And when he thought he'd scored a point he would turn around to the jury and grin, like you know. So Mr. Howard got up and made his argument to the jury and he said, "So I guess you noticed how this lawyer would think he made a point, turn around and grin to you."

They said, "Yes, yes."

He said, "It reminds me of the story of the sapsucker," a little small bird about that big. He'd land on the side of a big oak tree, peck three times, and run around to see if the hole was through.

Another occasion that he was examining the witness for the prosecution, he was representing someone in a criminal case, and Mr. Howard got him on the cross examination. He had some question and the witness came back to Mr. Howard and said, "Now you and I grew up together and you just oughta be a better lawyer, a better lawyer than you've been a man." He said, "I pray for you every night."

Mr. Howard said, "You're wasting your time, your prayers don't go any higher than you can spit."

There's another man that I want to call your attention to that did lots for DeKalb County, That was Joel Hurt. He was man that lived on what is now Hurt Street in Atlanta, he built the Hurt building, and was a man that really built up Druid Hills. You'll find all your shrubbery running through Druid Hills, trees and things of that nature, he went all over the world to collect those things and put them all along the streets and that's the reason Druid Hills is so pretty today.

Another man I want to talk to you about because he was my neighbor, he lived right next to me for a number of years, and that was Jack Davison. He came from Aberdeen, Scotland in 1885 to Lithonia, as I said about the stone masons; married a local girl. He worked as a stone mason for some three or four years and one day he came to my father and said, "I'd like to have a land of my own, I'd like to buy one but I haven't got any money. Could you loan me \$600?"

My father said, "Yes, I'll loan it to you."

Well he loaned him the \$600 and he started working and instead of having one employee he had ten cutting cobblestones and his big client was the city of Cincinnati. You know cobblestones in those days was used to pave the streets instead of what we use today, the cement. Well he did well and bought more land and finally he bought the biggest quarry land down at Lithonia; flat rock quarry. Then came the demand for crushed stone, which his three sons was in the business with him, and it became all crushed stone business. They crushed stone for paving as well as little pebbles for bird seed, like a canary. And shortly after his death his sons carried the business on and the report I got, I don't know how accurate it is but it's probably accurate, that \$600 had grown to \$8 million, they sold the business for \$8 million. That illustrates that if you have the will to do it, no matter where you were born, in Aberdeen, Scotland or in Decatur, you can do it.

Now I'm going to make a remark or two; there's events, persons, and places. One of the stone cutters that came to Lithonia in the 1890s, about the middle of the 1890s, was

a Scotsman who came by the way of Belfast, Ireland; a very attractive man, who lived awhile next to my family. One summer there was a [???] named Lincoln McConnell, I doubt if anybody here remembers him, but he was the Billy Sunday of his day. He held parlor meetings all over the south. While he was in Lithonia he went to the Presbyterian church service and heard this Scotsman sing; had a beautiful tenor voice. He was so taken with him that he begged him to go with him on the evangelist meetings and lead the singing, which he did. Later he became a minister of the Presbyterian Church and at the time I knew him he was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Macon. He had a younger brother that came to the United States, went to Emory, and graduated in the class of 1910 with a very famous historian named [???] Malone. When he graduated he entered the Methodist ministry, he served churches in Alabama and Georgia; one time he served Druid Hills Methodist Church. He moved from Alabama to DeKalb County, his son is with us today, and in the words of Paul Harvey, "Now you know the rest of the story."

Thank you very much.

*We have about 8 or 10 minutes left on the tape, do any of you have any questions you'd like to ask?*

*Audience member: I'd like to know the names of the general merchants there in Lithonia where you were working.*

Well the one that I told you the story about was my father's store, A.J. Hardware [?] and across the street was J.C. Johnson and Sons; the building is still there.

*Audience member: I don't have a question but I'd like to make a comment about a judge's report. I was looking at some older years the other day and in 1918 I saw a letter that the judge wrote for France to J. A. Hall, and he said Dear Mr. Hall, the Decatur Board of Trade deserves great credit because yesterday I was in a bookshop and I saw some postcards showing Decatur's Agnes Scott College. He also said, as an afterthought, I saw Scott Candler yesterday too. That was what you wrote that to Mr. Hall.*

*Audience Member: I would like to ask you how long you were at Oxford and describe the life there.*

Oh, it was wonderful, wonderful. In my last year of high school, very few boys from Lithonia went to college, very few; the principal of the school was a college man. In my last years he says, "Any of you that want to go to college, after you graduated from here, I'd be glad to course you in extra subjects in the afternoon." I took Greek and German in high school, and when I went to Oxford I was half freshman and half sophomore. I attended that summer school until the following year I went in as a junior, but the amazing thing about my experience down at Oxford at that summer school, I was walking down the main street there walking to the college grounds when this awkward looking man, very handsome fella, walked up and introduced himself; said that he wanted to know where Seoney [?] Hall was; that's the headquarters, you see. And you know who that man was? Bishop Arthur Moore. Many years later he became the bishop. Well one thing about Oxford, three fourths of the teachers were PhD's, I don't know where they

lived on \$1800 and \$1200 a year, I don't know. But there was a well-balanced faculty and the education was solid.

Audience member: *Do you recall what the bed and board cost then?*

Yes, we had a room, there was two very fine ladies ran the boarding house called the steward house; two old maids that ran this boarding house. The boarding, which included meals, was \$22 and a half a month. The tuition was \$150 a year, what is it now, about \$6000? Anyway, Oxford was two miles off the Georgia Railroad. Funny thing about the Georgia Railroad, when it first was built the city of Covington wouldn't let them come through, exactly like Decatur. They had first planned for the Georgia Railroad to end at Decatur but you know Decatur wouldn't grant them the right of way, that's the reason it ended up in Atlanta. But anyway, on the transportation we had at that time, there wasn't any taxis, there was a mule car that had tracks and held about 10 people on it and was pulled by a mule. So they get talking and they'd say, "You know the driver of this car is a MD?" And he'd go, "Yeah, Mule Driver!" But those were very fine years.

Audience Member: *Judge, this series is co-sponsored by the Decatur-DeKalb Bar Association and since you have given a large part of your life to the judicial branch, have you got any comment about the health of the legal system or the judging business?*

Well the legal system is just like every other thing, business, social relations and so forth, has grown with the times. It's hard to make any comparison to 50 or 60 years ago, the legal system has grown just like your doctors and dentistry and the ministers and priesthood too, that's what they come with change.

Audience Member: *As you think back over most of the interesting and sensational cases over your active time, did you witness any of the Leo Frank case or participate in it?*

No, but I read the record.

Audience Member: *What are some of the most interesting cases that you can recall? Any that you think would be of general interest.*

Well I guess every client thinks his case is interesting but of course not all of them are. I guess the most unusual case that I participated in was what they call the two governor case. At the time the governor died before the general election and at the time the legislature elected the highest man who was his son Herman, and of course that finally went to us and then the Supreme Court of Georgia. That's probably the most interesting case I've had anything to do with. Two judges, Judge Hendricks [?] tried one part of the case and I tried the other. After the case had been tried and the public interest grew out I got a postcard one morning addressed to Judge Hendricks [?] and addressed to me. And the only thing on the back of it was, unsigned, 'You two are the biggest jackasses in the world.' So I wrote a little note on that to Judge Hendrickson [?] and I said 'This has been sent to me by mistake because I'm descended from a long line of mules.' I guess that's about the most interesting case we had. There are worsen sentences in the supreme court.

*Audience Member: Back in the horse and buggy days, how long would it take to go from Lithonia? Suppose you were coming to Decatur, took most all day didn't it?*

No paved road, dirt road. What we used to do, my mother would go shopping, buying clothes just for us for school time and I guess in the summer time; go to Atlanta to buy an outfit. She'd ride to Decatur, it took about 50 minutes or it took about an hour to get up here. Put the horse and buggy in the livery stable, catch the five cent streetcar to Atlanta and do your shopping, and by the time you got back here and got back home it was night. Leave at daybreak.

*Audience Member: You mentioned your family reunion, did you have good attendance at it?*

We had between 150 and 200; one family came from Oklahoma.

*Audience Member: And could you tell us how the old ones happened to come to DeKalb County? Do you know?*

Oh yes, yes. The original family came from Virginia to Elbert County and after the second generation one son went to what is now Newton County and the other one went to Morgan County. And my great great grandfather named Thomas [???] he had 15 children, the last two were twins, and one of the twins was killed in the Civil War. He had six brothers who served in the Civil War and he had 16 grandchildren that served in the Civil War; he's buried in the [???] Cemetery, which is pretty close to the Old Salem campground. They came in those days when they heard offers of new land, you know and you could buy it at a dollar an acre.

*Audience Member: Do you know how many generations it goes back from Virginia till they came across the Great War?*

They came from England. When I was in England, when I retired I went and spent six weeks in England, there's six streets named [???] in London, there's seven named Bond, the Bonds came from England too. Liverpool same thing, it's an old English name. The first one I know anything about was Charles, back about 1650, and he's the original one that came from England.

*Audience Member: Well Judge you've brought a lot of honor to this county and you've given us a very interesting hour and I think we ought to give you a round of applause.*