lertford County Herald

PARKER BROTHERS

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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EDITORIAL

are and trumpet blowing are not required o announce that the Herald is presenting its Historical Edition this week. The size of the paper will suffice to do that. Quantitatively, the issue exceeds the publishers' expectancy; the quality of its text and pography can better be judged by those whose perpective is not dimmed by too close contact with the mechanics of producing the paper and, therefore, may well be left with the 40,000 or more readers the issue will reach.

The occasion that gave inception to the edition is the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of a postoffice at Ahoskie—on September 18, 1889. For thirty of those years, the Herald has been growing up with the town. Its present publishers will celebrate a quarter of a century with the paper one year hence. It will be time enough then to attempt to give an evaluation of that tecord, and the matter would not be mentioned here except to give character and background to the hope, which we now make, that this edition, though bulky in size, may not symbolize the end of growth and exansion of the town that gave life to this edition and all the others that have been published since W. en Shiph founded the Horald in 1909.

Sincere and profound thanks are due those volunteer authors who have contributed to this edition. To them must go the major share of credit for the textual matter of the paper, since they have done all but ten ercent of the job. The publishers are in their debt nd they may anticipate more than their share of effected glory for the excellent material the authors ave prepared and handed over for publication. Their wn interest in each particular assignment has been araded before the publishers for the real months as

bout the work of ass writing aterial, and the spirit of these volunteer contrib

Hald family. There were no extra workers employed should mean something. It certainly does to the publishers of this newspaper.

The commercial side of this undertaking was, of urse, necessary and proper to exploit, for occasions mis kind do not seldom present themselves. The ablishers have sought not to paramount that end of preferring to receive their pay-off in the knowledge at they have participated in an event promulgated to b honor to their native town and county. However, ; patronage has far exceeded what could xpected and extends beyond the bounds nd hopes---and the major portion of ple of our own trade area. For

> his edition. you are entere believe you will be, our complete. It is yours. Take th it.

History Of The Early Life In The Town Of Ahoskie, N. C.

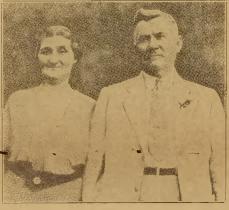
(Continued from page 3)

lude a commissary like the one in which he had been work He interested his boss in the venture, and sold him or idea of still further expanding his chain organization Thus, cane the first outside capital to help give the town a stat commercially—a practice that has continued until this lay and one that has largely built the present day town. The firm of Cockey & Powell began operations in the Fall of 1888. A new boller was installed and a cotton gin outfit added to the plant. The commissary did business on what is now the lawn of the Garrett residence, at the East end of Church street.

HERTFORD

Foreign capital b.ought in new blood from the surround Foreign capital b. ought in new blood from the surround-ing country to help run the business. Powell songht the servi-ces of his Bertie County acquaintance, David L. Myers, as a salesman in the mercantile branch of Cockey & Powell. Young Myers, then unmarried, took the job in December, 1889; and he has'remained in Ahoskie to help celebrate its Golden An-niversary, in the meantime marrying Miss Nellie Raynor, of Powellsville, and rearing his two children, Miss Ruby Myers, Raleigh, N. C., and Mrs. C. L. McKeel, of Greensboro, N. C. "xcept for these years, 1804, 1895 and 1896, which were spent in the Aulander store of Cockey & Powell and in Colerain, respectively, Mr. Myers has spent all of the 50 years in mercan-tile enterprises in Ahoskie; since 1897 conducting business under his own name, except for a few years that were spent in a partnership with the late Joseph (Jodie) T. Parker. He was

under his own name, except for a few years that were spent in a partnership with the late Joseph (Jodie) T. Parker. He was the town's first jeweler and for many years did both a general nercantile business and ran a jeweler's shop. For several years now he has engaged in the jewelry business solely. In less than a year after Cockey & Powell started their business venture young Powell, the resident manager, carried out more ambitious plans by renting a store nearer the rail-road and within a block of the postoffice that had just been established here in September. The sawmill and gin later became the property of J. R. Garrett, who purchased it from the Jenkins heirs, and moved the plant to Maple Street, in the



David Lawrence and Nellie Raynor Myers

ed section of town. The new Cockey & Powell store was building belonging to Thomas Eley, on the corner of a and Catherine streets—the same spot where Baker & ker now operate a store. Other mercantile operators in hoskie that year were: Freeman & Riddick, Church Street, arrett (A. E.), Down (Doss), & Harrell, and the combination pre-postoffice of J. A. Copeland, the latter two on Main

interial, and the spirit of these volunteer contributes has sustained and given added impetus to the nor share of writing done by the publishers.
Acknowledgment is also made and appreciation pressed to all those who have eagerly cooperated in mishing facts, documents, and pictures for the edit. But for their assistance, given to volunteer auts and to publishers, it would never have been sible to gather together so much historical fact and terrations.
There is a sentimental side to this occasion, too. It is company building stands, was awarded to San Woodard, a Menola contractor, who employed J. R. Garrett to assist him in its construction. When the building had been raised and shut in, a violent wind storm blew its timbers apart and top-spice is the handliwork of the regular force of the Hald family. There were no extra workers employed in the help to do a 50-page planned job. To enbers of the craft in other newspaper shops that ould mean something. It certainly does to the publishers. ood in the new town, and Powell, dis-

advertising matter as a disseminator of merchandising news. The press also turned out the first newspaper for Ahoskie. It is recalled by Mr. Myers, who continued to work with the firm in its successive moves to larger quarters, that salesman, printer Belch, who had come over irom Bertie County to work in the "Big Store", did some expert work in advertising layouts and printing; handling the small newspaper (of hand bill size) during his odd moments. One of the most success in sales events ever held in the entire country around was Cockey & Powell's One Day Sale, which was advertised for miles around, particularly "down in Bertie". Belch did the printing and Myers distributed the handbills. "The folks look ed at me like I was crazy going around tacking up those signs," says Mr. Myers. "But, we sold more than \$700 worth of goods on that day." Other similar sales days were held and the busi-ness flourished until Powell, fushed by his success at trading. tor, took over the liquidation of the business. B. G. Williams H. Overton. Powell, after a brief stay at other rented to Thomas H. Overton. Powell, after a brief stay at other the tor rented to ther and rented one side of the store for his own business venture, later building his own store as a subsequent chapter



the Town of Abos hells and Hayses, w They were built and occupi rnished "The Makings of a embers of the families of J (See Chapter III, History

will reveal. On May 29, 1890, two months after the first passenger train had run over the completed Norfolk & Carolina Railroad line, the railroad company purchased a tract of land from the Mitchell family and began clearing away the trees preparatory to construction of a depot. Until that time, an improvised depot made from a box car had been in use. Of the land pur-chased for a depot site, it was said by the late John E. Vann, of Winton; "I knew Ahoskie before it was born . . . The town developed very rapidly and I remember where the old road from Winton to Ahoskie cossed the railroad . . . The first railroad depot in Ahoskie was a box car . . . The area required by the railroad company was in the woods and it used to be rabbit ground where the dopt stands." Mr. Vann, who was attorney for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad for many years, was testifying in a case being heard in Hertford County su-perior court, involving the assessment for paving of part of this same property years later. Testifying in the same trial, Dr. J. H. Mitchell, who owned the property in question, describ-ed it this way: "That part of the land now known as Railroad Street in the town of Ahoskie was in the woods. . . A gum stood right in the corner of the warehouse when it was built . . . It was all woods in (1890)." The railroad company did not immediately build its new, depot; but the trees were cut down and an open space cleared away for the building, which was to come later and bring with it another chapter in the history of Ahoskie. On May 29, 1890, two months after the first pa

. Chapter V

AHOSKIE GETS A CHARTER

AHOSKIE had its railroad, postoffice, large chain depart-ment store, saw mill and gin, and a school and Baptist church; but there was no such thing as a corporate town un-til January 24, 1893, when the General Assembly enacted into the law the bill of Representative W. P. Taylor, incorporating the town. It was House bill number 167, and read as fol-

id town shall be as fol-of Main street by the six hundred yards each

are elected and qual

be the officers of said town: rs, F. Powell, W. S. Dukes, and I'missioners, 1... H. Downs. act shall be in force from and after its

ratification. Ratified the 24th day of January, A. D., 1893.

Ratined the 24th day of January, A. D., 1895. The first three years of the 1890's prepared the way and set the pace for the future physical development of the town. It witnessed the first mass migration of outsiders into town, most of them coming from nearby farms in Hertford and Bertie counties. The three plantations--Mitchell, Jenkins, and Hayes-were on the way out as strictly farm lands. A few spots had already been sold off and others were to feel the effect of the first real estate boom that came simultaneously

population in the town's early days and before it was in he population in the town's early days and before it was in-orporated. There were other Negro families, one of them saac Newsome, whose family still occupies a foremost place in the activities of the race. One of the early residences in the tew town was that of "Uncle Gram", who was a painstaking appenter and builder within his own right. It stood on the ot now occupied by the J. O. Carter home. It was later mov-d, and his second residence (on the corner of Church and laple streets), which was under construction and never com-deted over a period of 8 or 10 years, was demolished and arried away when the area h which it was located became the own's main white residential section. The house was a three-tory frame structure, with many gables, a steeple, and a libercarried away when the area In which it was located became the town's main white residential section. The house was a three-story frame structure, with many gables, a steeple, and a liber-al supply of ornamental devices that set it apart as the town's most pretentious home project of the early days. The build-er of that house still lives in Ahoskie, and is the owner of a modern residence in the colored section. "Uncle" Isaac, whose son, John H. Newsome, was Ahoskie's first rural letter car-rier, died several years ago. Other early Negro settlers, who contributed much to the progress of the race and whose off-spring still live in and around the town, were: Press New-some, who can a shop and store near the first railroad depot, and was the father of Whid. Brode, Rome, and Carey New-some: Chas. and Margaret Jenkins, parents of Hunter Jen-kins; John Jenkins, who lived near the first school building; and Charles Trunmell, who was the town's first butcher and market man. Truthmell, a jolly, good-natured soul, was famed for his pack of vicious bulldogs that ran down and help butcher the cattle he bought from the countryside. They were feared by men, beasts, and other dogs of the town and neighborhood, but were vigilant guardians of their master and his meat products day and night. His shop was located in the colored section of town, but he conducted a delivery to all homes of the town, his cart with bulldogs trotting un-derneath it making house-to-house rounds when there was beef to sell. beef to

About the time Jack Parker began plotting the Mitchell operty and before he had sold any of the West Main Street ts, Charlie Trummell, the butcher and market man with te vicious bulldogs, carried on an extensive business in uying and butchering cattle on the block that lies next to the wallstad. The maintained a cattle corral, dog pen, slaugh-ter pen, and all the other operations incident to the mone-poly he had set up for himself. All of the block, bounded by Railroad, Church, Mitchell and Main streets, was enclosed Railroad, Church, Mitchell and Main streets, was enclosed by a worm rail fence, except the corner on which the Mit-chell hotel now stands; and cows, steers, some hogs and other saleable livestock were impounded for slaughter. Trummell lived in a small shack near the center of his reservation. The slaughter victims were purchased and brought in from farms for miles around. The industry was shunted away from this spot and Trummell moved to colored town, after the real estate boom got up steam and there was demand for business lots next to the railroad. "T remember sitting on the steps of Cockey & Powell one

"I remember sitting on the steps of Cockey & Powell one evening with a friend, and we counted the population of Ahoskie. Black and white, large and small, there were exact-ly seventy-two souls." Such is the testimony of Thomas R. Belch, the young Bertie man who had accepted the position





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