

AGRICULTURE

When this area was first settled the large plantations were, of necessity, self-sufficient so far as possible. They raised corn, wheat, oats, barley, and rye for feed and food; cows, hogs, sheep, goats, oxen, horses, and mules for milk, butter, meat, wool, and work animals; chicken, ducks, and geese for eggs, meat, and feathers. Several of the largest plantations had their own cotton gin, saw mill, blacksmith shop, and commissary.

Cotton was the main cash crop and the whole economy revolved around the cotton crop and the price it brought. If a person farmed, he had a cotton patch.

There was some interest in diversification of farm crops as early as 1877 when the Fayette County Agricultural Club was organized. Members from the Inman area included D. A. McLucas, Daniel McLucas, E. B. Welden, J. B. Hightower, J. R. Tarpley, J. A. Banks, and Larkin Harrison. At their monthly meetings they discussed such things as diversification of farm crops; the best mode of preservation of potatoes; and the preparation of land and best mode of planting wheat.¹⁶

Cotton had its ups and downs through the years but the most severe "down" came in 1920 when the boll weevil struck. Nobody's crop was spared; farmers made only a fraction of the cotton they had formerly

1. Minute book of Fayette Co. Ag. Club

made. In succeeding years farmers learned to poison to prevent the boll weevil from ruining the crop and they continued to plant cotton--many of them because it was the only way of life they knew.

Before the time of the boll weevil, there were those who were looking for a better variety of cotton. John T. Burch introduced long staple (Sea Island) cotton to this area and grew it successfully on his farm for many years.

Dr. J. A. S. Chambers farmed as a sideline to his medical practice. Reading of a "miracle" plant that would stop soil erosion, he wrote off and imported kudzu seeds from China. Succeeding generations now regard kudzu as a questionable blessing--but it did stop the gullies!

The Woolsey Bank closed in 1927 and some local people lost their life's savings. Farmers held tenaciously to the land as long as possible and some were able to ride out the storm. With cotton bringing five cents a pound in the depression, the share-croppers were not able to sustain themselves. They began to move away to the larger towns where they hoped to get jobs.

After World War II, local farmers were more receptive to the idea of diversification of crops. John Ambrose Burch had raised broilers many years prior to this. In the late 1940's when broilers were a

(raising
chickens)

popular enterprise, M. T. Lamb, Paul Lamb, and Webb Mask, Jr., all ^{BUILT} put up chicken houses and put in broilers.

Frank Reeves had ^{RAISED} ~~had~~ laying hens from the time he was a teen-ager in the late 1930's and he expanded and continued this operation for over thirty years.

Donald and William Harp raised truck crops and produce, carrying truck loads of fresh greens, beans, peas, watermelons, etc., to the State Farmers Market ^{AT FOREST PARK} to be sold. In addition, they and their brother, John Burch Harp, had many acres of pasture land where they raised beef cattle. In 1977, John Burch and Donald ^{HARP} ~~Donald~~ are the largest farm operators in Inman.

In the early part of this century local farmers turned from the mule and plow to tractors and other farm machinery as it became available. It was not practical for every farmer to have his own threshing machine so from 1918 until the late 1930's, Mr. C. C. Reeves and his sons, Tom, George, Carlton, Hubert, and later, Frank and Grey, would move his machine from farm to farm threshing for cash or part of the crop. The day the "thresh" came was a big day on the farm. The hands would all turn out to help and the women were up early cooking for the threshing crew. At night the boys who worked on the threshing machine would spend the night sleeping in the straw wherever

the machine was located, ready to move to another farm the next day.

Another big day on the farm was hog killing time. This had to be on a cold dry day when the meat would not spoil while it was waiting to be preserved. After the hog was killed, it would be dipped into a vat of boiling water so that the hairs could be scraped off. The hog was hoisted up and split and the internal organs taken out. Everything was used. The entrails were cleaned and made into chitterlings; the liver, lights (lungs) and heart were ground into liver pudding; the brains were scrambled with eggs; the head and feet were cleaned and boiled and the meat was used in brunswick stew; the fat was rendered into lard; the bacon and hams were salted down and hung in the smoke house where they were cured and preserved for later use. This was always a cold job and a greasy job and, all too often, it was followed by people getting sick from eating too much fresh pork.

Prohibition and the depression combined made bootlegging attractive to some people. Names of the bootleggers are not readily available but evidence of their craft can still be found beside many of the streams in this area.

Two drouths have occurred in the recent history of this area. The first and most severe was in 1925, still famous as the "dry year".

In 1954 drouth struck again. Wells went dry and farmers had to haul water in large drums from nearby streams to water cows and chickens. More than one child was bathed in a single tub of water.

Through the activities of the local Soil Conservation Service farmers were impressed with the advantages of building farm ponds. Walter L. Burch and William Harp built two of the earliest around here. M. T. Lamb built his about 1955. Donald Harp built several which he used for irrigation as well as for watering cattle. Webb Mask, Jr., also built a pond on his farm. These ponds were stocked with fish and are used for recreation as well as for watering cattle.

HEALTH CARE

Dr. Elijah B. Welden settled in Inman in the early 1870's, soon after he finished his medical training, having been encouraged to locate here by Dr. I. G. Woolsey. At first he boarded with Thomas Lunsford but a short time later established his own home when he married Mary Frances Harp.

Dr. Welden made house calls riding on horseback. At times, when the river was up, he would have to swim the river to reach his patients.

With no drug stores easily accessible, Dr. Welden obtained drugs from Hampton and conducted a drug business in connection with his practice.

Dr. Welden is remembered as a very devout person. Dr. and Mrs. Welden and their ten children held prayer in their home every morning and every night. He was a steward in the Methodist Church for fifteen years.

Dr. James A. S. Chambers moved to Inman in 1894 and established his medical practice serving patients all over this end of Fayette County. He would set out in his horse and buggy to visit his patients and might be two or three days later coming home. Then he would sometimes just stretch out in front of the fire and sleep for a few hours and be gone again.

Before the techniques of immunization were known, it was accepted that all children would have measles, whooping cough, mumps, and chicken pox. Both children and adults were frequently the victims of typhoid, diphtheria, and smallpox. Typhoid was such a problem that Dr. Chambers used the top floor of his house as a sanitarium for recuperating typhoid patients.

Not many people could afford to have a doctor when their babies were born and they depended on midwives. Dr. Chambers trained Mrs. Florence (Hunnicutt) Forts to work with him in delivering babies. Later, when the County Health Department supervised and provided training for midwives, Florence continued her work and was highly respected for her ability to do a good job working with patients under home conditions. She would bake a ball of string in the oven while she baked potatoes and keep it in her bag so that she would have sterile string to tie off a baby's umbilical cord. Lacking drugs which a doctor might use, she would advise a patient to "blow in a bottle" to pass the afterbirth. As an added attraction, she would predict how many children the patient would have based on the "knots in the cord".

POLITICS

People from Inman have served in various levels of government through the years. Daniel Allen McLucas was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives for two terms, 1878-79 and 1880-81. Dr. J. A. S. Chambers was a State Representative during the 1917-18 term.

In county government, Dr. E. B. Welden, 1884-1890, and W. N. T. Harp, 1886-1890, were both county commissioners when the courthouse was remodeled in 1888. Walter L. Burch was county Ordinary for twenty years from 1929-1949.

In the great political rivalry within Fayette County between the Redwines and the Blalocks, most of the people around Inman tended to side with the Redwines. With their influence in business and government, the Redwines were in a position to control a number of jobs. They were constantly looking for good people to fill these jobs. The people who were employed by them remained loyal through the years and they influenced others.

After the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was adopted in 1920 giving women the right to vote, a few bold women availed themselves of the privilege, just to show that they could. There were those among them, though, who refused to reveal their age!

POST OFFICE

Inman Post Office was established on December 7, 1887, with John L. McLucas as the first postmaster. He named the town Inman for Samuel Inman of the well-known cotton trading firm of S. M. Inman & Co. of Atlanta. Daniel A. McLucas was the assistant postmaster.

Inman was described as being on the route from Brogden to Woolseyville ^{2 MI NW OF FAY} on which the mail was carried two times a week. I. G. Woolsey, Jr., was the contractor to carry the mail. This was a "Special Office" ^{2 MI S OF INMAN} to be supplied from Fayetteville. ¹⁷

The post office was located at McLucas Store about 100 yards east of the railroad, which was under construction. The population to be supplied by this office was estimated to be seven hundred fifty or more.

Other postmasters were John Ambrose Burch, Mrs. Mamie Welden Wills, Carl Welden, Miss Louise McLucas, Miss Fabie E. McLucas, and Miss Maggie McLucas. The post office was in the railroad station in 1939.

In 1946 Marvin T. Lamb was postmaster and he moved the post office to his new store on Highway 92. Mail was supplied by Star Route from Atlanta.

Mr. Lamb was postmaster until his retirement. James G. (Jim) Minter, Sr., succeeded him in 1958 and served efficiently until his death in 1967.

Every now and then the powers that be in Washington would take it in their minds to do away with the post office here and local citizens would launch massive letter writing campaigns and call on the influence of their congressmen and local politicians to stop it. After Jim Minter's death there was another attempt to close this post office. Local citizens were only partially successful in their efforts to keep it open: the post office department made it into a rural branch of the Fayetteville post office, with Mrs. Mary Alice Lamb as contractor and clerk-in-charge. She continues in this position.

In 1977, mail comes by mail truck on the route from Atlanta to Griffin. The post office is open from 7:30 until 10:00 AM and from 3:00 to 5:00 PM.