

January 14, 2010

To: Members of the Birmingham-Jefferson Historical Society

What: Quarterly Meeting

Date: **THURSDAY**—January 14, 2010

Time: 6:30 p.m. Social and Refreshments

7:00 p.m. Business, Annual Election, and Program

Where: **EMMET O'NEAL LIBRARY**— Crestline Village

Speaker: David Dionne, Executive Director

Red Mountain Park

Subject: Red Mountain Park



## NEWSLETTER OF THE BIRMINGHAM-JEFFERSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



**David Dionne** is Executive Director for Red Mountain Park. Prior to joining Red Mountain Park Dionne served as Chief of Trails and Natural Areas for Anne Arundel County, Maryland. David was selected to be the first Park Superintendent of the Baltimore & Annapolis Trail Park in 1987 and developed a park operations plan that included many innovative volunteer initiatives, trail operations practices and policies, and community building programs.

Since 1987 Anne Arundel County has expanded its trail program to include several new trail projects that have been recognized nationally and internationally as models for trail operation and safety.

Dionne is recognized for his leadership in trails management and has been appointed to many important committees and panels. In 1997 David was asked to be a member of the White House Millennium Council's Green Ribbon Panel on trails, where he helped set up the Millennium Trails Program. In 1999 he became a member of the National Endowment for the Arts' Committee for Art on Millennium Trails. From 2001 until 2005 David was the Chairman of the National Board of Trustees for the East Coast Greenway Alliance, a non-profit corporation linking local trail projects between Maine and Florida into a continuous 2900-mile route. In 2005 David was appointed by Governor Robert Ehrlich, Jr. to be the Chairman of the Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee where he served until 2007.

In addition to his years spent with the Department of Recreation and Parks, Dionne has served a total of 31 years of leadership for non-profit entities such as the East Coast Greenway Alliance, Severn River Lions Club, and Friends of Anne Arundel County

Trails. David has extensive experience on trails all across the U.S., and he also has a wide range of experience in the wilderness. He has solo hiked through Yellowstone National Park several times, hiked larger sections of the Appalachian Trail and C&O Canal National Historic Park, climbed in the Grand Tetons, sea kayaked along the Maine Sea Trail and attended four professional development courses at Outward Bound schools in the North Carolina and Maine wilderness.

David is a 1979 graduate of West Virginia University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Wild Lands Administration, and a 1997 graduate of Leadership Anne Arundel. He has been featured or keynote speaker at park and trail conferences more than 50 times throughout the county. David now lives in Hoover, Alabama with his two children, Natalie and Cameron.

### **COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

This will be my last meeting as your president, and I hope you can indulge me in some personal remarks as I leave office.

I wish to thank all of you for the honor and privilege of serving this fine society. The original term of office was to have been 1 year, but I have now completed three years, and I wish to step down. New leadership is desirable for the growth of any organization, and on January 14th you will elect new officers and a new Board for 2010.

Likewise, Bayard Tynes has served as Vice President for at least 4 years, during which time he successfully helped to organize, and now leads, the development of the Birmingham Jefferson History Museum. This past year has been doubly difficult for him. But his successes have been evident for all to appreciate.

During my terms, I have had great help and assistance from many of the Board members and society members. My special thanks to Harry and Jeannie Bradford. Harry took over dual jobs of secretary and treasurer; and Jeannie has been cheerfully handling the refreshments — a big job.

Many thanks to Carolyn Reich who has worked diligently and successfully on the labor-intensive chore of membership recruitment. Past-presidents, Charlie Speir and the late Tom Caldwell have been very helpful to me. Craig Allen, Jr. was my immediate predecessor as president, and he passed on records and excellent advice to get me off to a reasonable start, and I thank him. Ann Hillhouse was a great treasurer, and early on guided me along on money matters of the Society. M. E. Lokey volunteered her expertise and energy in organizing a historical field trip; and although the society was deterred by the high cost of traveling, I appreciated her hard work. It would have been a good trip. Several of our own members, including Alice Williams, Jim Bennett and Cathy Crenshaw gave us some of our best programs. Bob Kracke has done a beautiful job of editing our successful Newsletter. Tom Badham has furnished valuable historic family records for our News Letter, and also has photographically documented our meetings in his capacity as volunteer unofficial photographer. His photos will be electronically preserved in our permanent society records. Someone else who has performed a necessary task is Bob Edwards. He has acted as door greeter, and has managed the

sign-in book faithfully for years, and I appreciate his dedication. Marvin Whiting with his great knowledge of local history has always been a great resource.

Above all, I must sincerely thank my number—one advisor and mentor, Tom West. Without his ever-present help and advice, the past three years could have been a disaster. We worked well together. We recognized and respected a degree of hard-headedness in each. We both recognized my profound ignorance, and I recognized his historic knowledge of the Society and his depth of knowledge of Alabama and regional history. We were always able to work out any differences. In my personal opinion, Tom is a true treasure, and the glue that holds this society together.

The society has enjoyed the services of an excellent Board of Directors, whose members have advised me and supported me and tolerated me during the past three years. I appreciate you all. And I thank the membership for your faithful attendance and support in so many ways, which have made my tenure in this office a real pleasure. As you can appreciate from the above comments, it takes a society to operate a society.

The more members who can contribute in small or large ways, the stronger, more enjoyable, and better will be the society. I plan to continue to serve in any way that I can. I will try to help out in any task requested of me by the leadership, but will continue to try to spot needs that require attention, and work to fill those needs. All members have that same obligation.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2010 NOMINEES**

President: Jim Bennett

Vice-President: Alice McSpadden Williams

Secretary/Treasurer: Harry Bradford

Board of Directors

Kathy Criss Adams Herbert F. Griffin Carolyn H. Reich

Craig Allen, Jr. Ann B. Hillhouse Charles A. Speir

Thomas Badham George L. Jenkins Thomas M. West, Jr.

Thomas N. Carruthers, Jr. Robert R. Kracke Ed Stevenson, MD

Yvonne Crumpler M. E. Lokey

## **Board of Directors Meeting November 20, 2009**

Your Board of Directors met on November 20, and this is a summary of some of the actions and discussions that occurred. Some of these items will require discussion and a vote by the entire membership; and such actions will be brought to a quarterly meeting later, since the new administration will have an opportunity to further consider

them before definitive actions are taken. They are being summarized here at this time to give the membership time to consider them in an informal way, and bring their opinions to the new administration.

(1) Name Change

Since the beginning of this society, there have been public misunderstandings caused by the existence of two historical societies bearing similar names in our geographical area. With the advent, now, of the historical museum, these misunderstandings are being magnified. It was proposed, and voted unanimously in the affirmative by the Board, that the name of our society be changed to **THE JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.**

(2) Constitutional Amendments

(a) During the past several years, there have been difficulties in scheduling our quarterly meetings at certain places and definite dates. The Constitution rigidly designates the months of the year; the week of the months; and the days of the weeks that the quarterly meetings shall be held. The Board feels that more flexibility in wording of the Constitution would allow adaptation to circumstances,

And therefore be beneficial. An amendment will be presented to the membership at a later date for approval.

(b) The Constitution does not designate any specific number or frequency of meetings of the Board of Directors. An amendment will be presented to designate definite dates or numbers of meetings.

(3) Society Awards

Many organization recognize actions, contributions or outstanding accomplishments of members, or others, in the primary interests of the organization, by giving recognition awards. The Board felt that this would be beneficial for our society to do, so the president appointed three members of the board to an Awards Committee to further consider this concept as it applies to our historical society.

## **Editorial Note to the History of the Bessemer Coal Mine & Land Company 1886-1948**

By Robert R. Kracke

Thomas Badham has been gracious to pull together this history and make it available to your editor for publication in the Newsletter. Thomas's father, Henry Lee Badham, Jr., the author of the history, divided it into segments representing each president of the company. In this issue, we are publishing Parts I, II and III, representing the presidencies of Henry F. DeBardeleben, William Burney and William A. Courtney. Their presidencies ran from 1886 to 1890. We owe a great debt of thanks to Thomas Badham for making this available to us.

If you recall, your editor did a book review of Alabama blast furnaces in the last issue as an introduction to this history. Inasmuch as Badham's history is divided into eight parts,

space limitations require that we divide the next installments into at least two more issues of the Newsletter. It is hoped by the staff of the Newsletter that you enjoy the reading of the founding and development of this significant industry, which in and of itself was responsible for the founding of Bessemer and the area around which this industry was centered. It tells the story of great entrepreneurs who had the vision and fortitude to gamble great sums of money in the production of iron and steel.

## **The History of the Bessemer Coal, Iron and Land Company From 1886 to 1948**

By  
Henry Lee Badham, Jr.

### **Part One**

#### **Henry F. DeBardeleben, President, 7 January 1886 to 5 January 1888**

The Bessemer Coal, Iron and Land Company had its beginnings in Charleston, South Carolina, 23 March 1886. A small group of gentlemen, all interested in the DeBardeleben Coal and Iron Company, met in the office of James N. Adger to listen to Henry F. DeBardeleben's proposition to buy 4,040 acres of land in the vicinity of the works of the DeBardeleben Coal and Iron Company for a town site. The estimated cost was \$50,000 or more.

All were given the right to participate in proportion to their holdings in the DeBardeleben Coal and Iron Company. James N. Adger and Company was appointed fiscal agent to collect the subscription as needed by Mr. DeBardeleben.

This original group were: Messrs. David Roberts, Robert Adger, Moses E. Lopez, J. E. Adger, Augustine T. Smythe, James B. Murdock and Andrew N. Adger. Mr. DeBardeleben, founder of our company and Bessemer, was probably the most colorful and resourceful of our pioneer industrialists. He built the Alice Furnace, 1880, which for the first time demonstrated that coke iron of excellent quality for open hearth steel could be made from coal, iron ore and limestone of this district.

Its success was extremely important to this district's development. It promoted a tremendous boom in furnace building, in which Mr. DeBardeleben had a most active part; building five furnaces himself in Bessemer. The success of Mr. DeBardeleben's Alice Furnace, in Birmingham, attracted the attention of Mr. S. H. Woodward of Wheeling, West Virginia, who had bought a large acreage of iron ore and coal lands here in 1869. He sent his son W. H. Woodward to report on Alice Furnace. Mr. Joseph Woodward, II, says, in *Alabama Furnaces*, that Mr. S. H. Woodward was so impressed with his son's report that he returned him to Birmingham with his brother and \$400,000 to build a blast furnace, 150 coke ovens, open iron ore and coal mines, and construct 8 miles of railroad. Woodward built, in 1883, a furnace midway between the

ore vein on the southeast and the coal field on the northwest of their property, within a mile of the tract of land Mr. DeBardleben afterwards selected to be Bessemer. At a meeting of the Charleston group with Mr. DeBardleben in Birmingham, 28 July of 1886, Mr. Roberts suggested that the town be called Bessemer and that the Company be named Bessemer Land Company, after Sir Henry Bessemer the inventor of the then prevailing process of making steel. Shortly afterwards, the Company's name was changed to Bessemer Land and Improvement Company. January 6, 1887, Probate Judge N. T. Porter commissioned Messrs. DeBardleben, Roberts, Lopez, Smythe and Adger as a board of Corporators of the Bessemer Land and Improvement Company. On that day, Books of Subscription were opened and the 25,000 shares subscribed, all payable in lands, by the following:

**Names: Shares:**

Henry F. DeBardleben 12, 495  
Robert Adger 687.50  
J. E. Adger 687.50  
David Roberts 1,062.50  
Mrs. Belle S. Roberts 812.50  
D. Roberts, Special 1,250  
Augustine T. Smythe 750  
Andrew M. Adger 687.50  
M. E. Lopez 750  
Alex Brown and Sons 625  
J. E. Edgerton 125  
J. Adger Smythe 62.50  
Ellison A. Smythe 62.50  
W. M. Wallace 125  
W. S. Manning 250  
Jas. S. Murdock 125  
John H. Murdock 62.50  
Colin C. Wyllie 2,000  
John F. Gordon 1.125  
Dillyn Parrish 625  
W. P. Pinckard 625  
William Berney 5

**Total 25,000**

January 7, 1887, the first stockholders meeting of the Bessemer Land and Improvement Company was held. The Company was capitalized for \$2,500,000; only issue, common stock of \$100 par value. It was voted that 20% of the stock held by each subscriber, amounting to \$5,000 shares, be placed in the treasury to be used to induce industries to locate in Bessemer and to build up the city of Bessemer.

The stockholders selected as their first Board: H. F. DeBardleben, Andrew M. Adger, William F. Berney, all of Birmingham; Augustine F. Smythe, Moses E. Lopez, David Roberts, all of Charleston, South Carolina. Officers elected: Henry F.

DeBardleben, President; Andrew M. Adger, Secretary; William Berney, Treasurer; Augustine P. Smythe, Solicitor.

Mr. DeBardleben visualized Bessemer as being the logical center of this district for making steel. Jones Valley broadens here to approximately three and one-half miles. Red Mountain, to the southeast, contains enormous quantities of red ore.

To the south and northwest are thousands and thousands of acres of coal lands. Centrally, enormous quantities of Trenton Limestone of the purest quality crops out vertically.

Here, we find these three essential elements for making steel closer together than in any other place on our continent. Consequently, Mr. DeBardleben knew his district was destined to grow for some time. In view of this situation, Mr. DeBardleben was certain that Bessemer would be the center of a large population; surrounded by ore mines, coal mines, limestone quarries, blast furnaces, steel mills, pipe plants, foundries, machine shops, brick plants, heavy and light manufacturing plants of all types.

He believed this so thoroughly he was willing to invest his own money and time in actually building these industries. This vision was shared to the same degree by the members of the Board and the stockholders. They were under no delusions that this happy state of affairs would come about automatically. They knew it could be accomplished only by their personal efforts and inducements by the Company to prospective industries.

The Company's policy to get industries was to either give them a cash bonus, or Bessemer stock, or donate lands to them, or make loans to them or any combination of these different methods. The amount of help given was based upon the estimated value of the industry to the growth of Bessemer. There were already some industries nearby. On Red Mountain were several ore mines. The DeBardleben Coal and Iron Company's furnaces were located where the Pullman Company is at present (1947). The Woodward Company has furnaces in operation only a little over a mile away.

The first resolution passed by the Board was that the President be authorized to donate to a railroad to be built from Bessemer to and into Murphree's Valley, \$100,000 of the \$500,000 treasury stock held by the Directors as trustees; if, in his judgment, so much was necessary. The railroad did not materialize. The next resolution was that the President be authorized to employ a corps of engineers to lay out the town of Bessemer into streets and lots. February 17, 1887, a resolution was passed that 10 acres and a bonus of \$100,000 of the treasury stock be donated to a Mr. Jones and his associates of Wheeling, West Virginia, provided they located a rolling mill in Bessemer. This resulted in the Bessemer Rolling Mills, the first industry the Company located in Bessemer. It is now owned and operated by the T. C. I. Company (1947).

During the early part of 1887, the prospects of getting blast furnaces, rolling

mills and other heavy industries to Bessemer was given a great deal of publicity. Also that lots in Bessemer would be offered for public sale on April 12, 1887, was widely advertised in the *Age-Herald* and by other means. Quite a crowd gathered for this sale. First sale was to Mr. Walter Davis for \$93.75 a front foot. Other business property was sold for \$50 a front foot. Residential lots sold for \$10 a

Front foot. It was reported that total sales for that day amounted to more than \$400,000. The policy of the company was to sell for one-fifth cash with notes for the balance payable in one, two, three, or four years while the Company retained the mortgage on the property. Two days after the opening sale of lots to the public, the Board had a very heated discussion as to what to do with the \$84,401.11 cash the company received from its first sales of real estate. Mr. Smythe wanted the money to be used for building up the town. This was voted down. Finally, by a standing vote, a dividend of 2 1/2% was declared. All voted for this except Mr. A. M. Adger who voted "no". This dividend took \$52,397.50 of the cash. Thus, Mr. DeBardeleben and his associates (within a year) got back their original investment. At this time, everything looked most promising for continued sales of real estate. It was to be thirteen long years, however, before another dividend could be declared.

After this the Company went about it in earnest to create a city. Ground was donated for churches, schools, railroad terminal facilities and dummy lines. The Company had to build a water works and donate the land for a light plant, fire department and a cemetery. By autumn of 1887, the population of Bessemer had already reached two to three thousand.

The first child, William Berney Haney, was born October 14, 1887. The Company made a gift of a lot to him. The City's early growth was phenomenal. In 1889 the city was granted a charter. The following year a bond issue of \$30,000 was issued and a City Hall erected. The boom did not last. The census of 1900, however, showed a population of 10,000 within two miles of the center of the business section.

Mr. William Berney was a great believer in the future of Bessemer and personally built the Grant Hotel, costing \$25,000 and erected several boarding houses. Colonel Joseph A. Yates of Charleston, South Carolina, the father of Mrs. Richard Bowron, formed the Carolina Realty Company and bought one hundred lots within the city limits for \$10 per front foot, payable one-fifth cash with the balance in one, two, three or four years with interest. Col. Yates also had the privilege of taking an additional one hundred lots at the same price within twelve months. He was given this price concession provided he erect, within one year, not less than thirty-five buildings to cost \$750 each. The Company agreed, also, to sell him 400 feet between 18th and 19th Streets for \$3,500 on the same term provided, within twelve months he would erect thereon a substantial row of three story brick stores. The imprint of our Carolina friends had been left — the business lots sold the Carolina Company is still called the Charleston Block and Carolina Avenue is the name of the first avenue on the south side of the Southern Railroad.

The City of Bessemer, even before the end of its first year of existence, began to have its problems. There had been some very costly fires; insurance rates in the unprotected town were prohibitive. The need for a city water works was so pressing that the Board authorized the President to go ahead and build one for \$100,000 and arrange for the adequate disposal of sewage looking to the future needs of the city. The streets were quagmires; many of the houses and buildings could only be reached in rainy weather on foot and with great difficulty. This necessitated heavy cash outlays for street improvements, which the Company has continued to this day.

As early as October, 1887, the citizens and investors in Bessemer began to send petitions to the Company wanting to know what they were going to do about the above problems, and what the Company was doing about bringing in the industries they had heard so much about? Mr. David Roberts and Mr. Berney were generally delegated by the Board to look into, make recommendations and to answer such petitions.

## **Part II**

### **Mr. William Berney, President—January 5, 1888 to April 8, 1889**

Mr. DeBardeleben resigned as President January 5, 1888, but remained on the Board and continued to dominate the affairs of the Company. Mr. William Berney was elected President in his place. No reason or explanations were given for Mr. DeBardeleben's resignation. At this and subsequent meetings, the Board approved substantial aid for three enterprises to be established in Bessemer by Mr. DeBardeleben:

- (1) To the Bessemer Firebrick Company, five acres, 25 shares of stock and a loan of \$10,000
- (2) To the Little Belle Furnace (a charcoal furnace) 25 acres, 24 shares of stock and a loan of \$60,000 signed by Mr. DeBardeleben and Mr. Lopez.
- (3) To the Bessemer Steel and Iron Company, for erection of two coke furnaces, 100 acres of land and 2,000 shares of stock.

These proposed enterprises were to be the mainstay of Bessemer. The Bessemer Firebrick Company, just south of the Pullman Plant, is now owned by the Laclede Christy Clay Products Company. The Bessemer Steel and Iron Company built the Robertstown furnaces. All the furnaces in Bessemer were bought by T. C. I. Company and, after being run for many years, were finally dismantled when T. C. I. concentrated at Fairfield and Ensley.

The policy of accepting stock of the Company in payment on land and notes was first used in 1889. With modification and changes, this policy has been used from time to time to the present date. It was agreed then that the Company would

accept stock in payment on notes and for land at 50¢ on the dollar. Mr. Berney, June 2, 1888, requested the Directors to look for another President as his duties were too burdensome for the good of his health. No action was taken until April 8, 1889. In the meantime, Mr. William A. Courtenay, of Charleston, South Carolina, who had quite a reputation as a promoter, was considered.

### **Part III**

#### **Mr. William A. Courtenay, President—May 8, 1889 to April 3, 1890**

Mr. Courtenay, after studying the affairs of the Company, proposed this plan: That another company be formed with a capital of \$1,250,000 whose business would be to locate and operate industries in Bessemer; that our company take ten percent of the stock of the proposed company on an exchange of our stock, at par, for their stock at 25 percent of their par value and give liberal grants of land to the industries to be located. The board was much impressed with this scheme and Mr. Courtenay's ability to carry it through. Great secrecy was to be kept until the time was propitious to announce it to the public. Mr. Courtenay was made President, May 8, 1889, at a salary of \$5,000 per annum and a commission of 1% on the sales of lots as collected and realized. The Board was so eager to carry out Mr. Courtenay's plan that they passed this resolution:

That, it is the sense of this Board that all the assets and resources of this Company should be applied with as little delay as possible towards the locating of new enterprises in Bessemer or in other ways developing the material interests and prosperity of the Company; that, the President be requested to investigate into and report the best method of carrying this resolution into effect.

Nothing ever seemed to come of Mr. Courtenay's plans and hopes. He worked particularly hard to locate a cotton mill in Bessemer. He dealt with Boston operators and in particular with a Mr. Sampson, who promised to put a 20,000 spindle mill in Bessemer if the Company would subscribe half the capital. But, when told that the Company was ready to put up their share, he had apparently forgotten the promise. Mr. Courtenay believed so thoroughly in the need for a cotton mill in Bessemer that he wanted the Company to build one. Mr. DeBardeleben did not believe a cotton mill in Bessemer would bring in a large enough payroll to warrant the investment.

Mr. DeBardeleben submitted a report to the stockholders April 3, 1890, of all donations and loans made by the Board:

Company Donations Land Stock  
Bessemer Iron and Steel Company 100 Acres 2,000 Shares  
Little Belle Iron Co. (Debardeleben) 50 Acres 25 Shares  
Bessemer Rolling Mills 1,000 Shares  
Bessemer Manufacturing Company Approx. 2 Acres 5 Shares  
Bessemer Dummy Line 3 Acres 250 Shares  
Bessemer Firebrick Company 5 Acres 25 Shares

Bessemer Ice Company (J. H. Hard) 1 1/2 Acres 5 Shares  
Beggs Foundry 1 1/2 Acres 5 Shares

**Total 163 Acres 3,335Shares**  
**Loans Amount**

Little Belle Iron Company (DeBardeleben) \$ 60,000.00  
Beggs Foundry \$ 5,000.00  
Bessemer Rolling Mills \$ 25,000.00  
Bessemer Firebrick Company \$ 10,000.00

**Total \$100,000.00**

Then Mr. DeBardeleben requested an expression from the stockholders approving or disapproving of those donations and loans. He stated that while he and other members of the Board had voted those donations, they had also had a share in receiving them. They could find no capital elsewhere willing to take the risk of investments in manufacturing here, so he, and other members of the Board, found that they must take the lead. They had voted themselves only such bonuses as they should have voted to anyone else who was willing to do so much for the town.

He wanted this matter thoroughly understood and ventilated, so that when values in Bessemer should thereafter reach high figures he could not be reproached for what he and the Board had done. The stockholders approved all the Board's actions and went on further to say that they policy should be encouraged and the Directors could be assured that any action taken by them in this direction, to any extent in their judgment, would be wholly commended and supported by the stockholders. This resolution was carried unanimously.

At the Board meeting following, Mr. Courtenay asked that his resignation be accepted, stating that the man preeminently fitted for the Presidency was Mr. DeBardeleben whom he nominated. Mr. DeBardeleben was elected unanimously. From all records it appears that Mr. Courtenay was sincere in all his actions. The glowing prospectus he wrote about Bessemer was an outstanding work. His foreword, typical of the style used and bearing the facsimile of his flourishing signature, follows:

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**Published at**  
**Bessemer, Alabama**  
**1889**

The progress made in the discovery and development of the mineral wealth of Alabama during the past few years has been so remarkable and the results disclosed so astounding as to transfix the attention of the iron producing and manufacturing interest of the country. Bessemer, the most marvelous issued of that development, the scene of the greatest progress; the physical centre of the richest and

grandest known deposit of iron ore and coal on this continent is properly a subject of more than ordinary interest to those who may consider this progress a matter of concern or advantage.

Accurate and practical information is given in these pages which aggregated will afford the reader a fair conception of this section and its resources.

Wm. A. Courtenay,  
President.  
Bessemer Land & Improvement Company  
Bessemer, Alabama,  
July 1, 1889

This issue's featured historical markers.....

**Union Hill Cemetery**  
**Union Hill Methodist Episcopal Church**  
**Union Hill School**

This cemetery is the final resting place of many of Shades Valley's pioneer residents.

A few of the earliest headstones date from the mid-1850's. Descendants of these settlers helped mold the cities of Mountain Brook and Homewood. Located on property to the east of the cemetery was the Union Hill Methodist Episcopal Church building which was completed in 1874 on property donated by Pleasant H. Watkins. This church was founded in 1867 near the Irondale Furnace and moved to Union Hill in 1873. After extensive renovation to the church in 1928, the name changed to Canterbury Methodist Episcopal Church. Union Hill School opened in the church soon after its completion. The school closed on the opening of Shades Cahaba School. The church was torn down when Highway 280 was improved.

(Erected by the Birmingham-Jefferson Historical Society.)