

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 10, Box 2, Folder 11

Watson, Elbert L. "History of Gadsden"

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Gadsden History

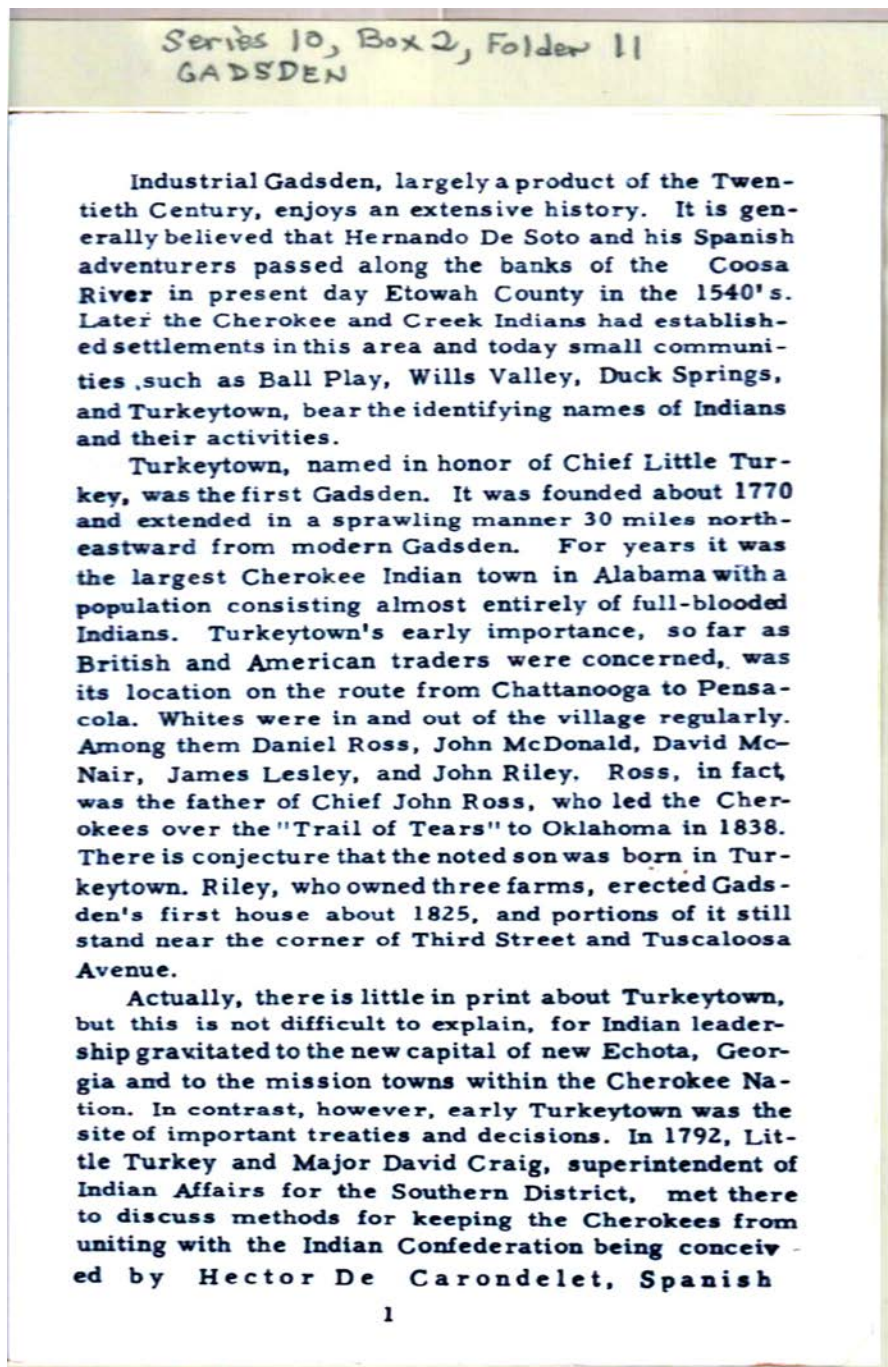
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**Places:**

Etowah County, AL

**Types:**

booklet



**Names:**

Craig, David, Major  
De Carondelet,  
Hector  
De Soto, Hernando

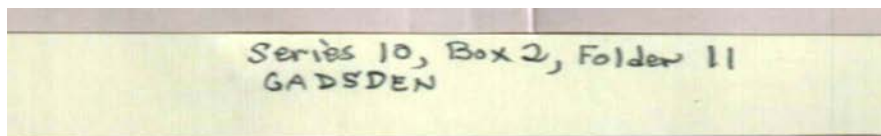
Lesley, James  
Little Turkey (Indian  
Chief)  
McDonald, John

McNair, David  
Riley, John  
Ross, Daniel

Ross, John (Indian  
Chief)

**Types:**

booklet



governor of Louisiana, for the purpose of warring on the Americans. Chief Little Turkey pledged his peaceful intentions and traveled for a while counseling against aggressions. Unfortunately, the hostile wing of the Cherokees, the Chickamaugas, had been so incensed by their chief, John Watts of nearby Wills Valley, as to head no advice. Watts was the nephew of Chief Tassell, who was brutally murdered by whites during a purportedly peaceful visit to Nashville in 1788. Shortly after his election to the office of Chief in March, 1792, Watts was wined and dined in Pensacola by William Panton, an unscrupulous Scotch merchant, who encouraged his enmity by reciting the tragic demise of Tassell. Upon his return, Watts, now thoroughly equipped with arms, ammunition, and gifts, issued a call for the Chickamaugas to assemble and he armed three companies of Indians and began raiding the frontier with vengeance. This intermittent though violent border warfare continued until November, 1794, when the Chickamaugas accepted peace terms after two towns, Running Water and Nickajack, were destroyed by a mounted army of Tennesseans.

The mild tempered and friendly Little Turkey believed that factionalism and aggressions, if continued, would cause the destruction of the Cherokee Nation. Survival, he concluded, lay in maintaining peace on the frontier. Evidently he excelled in diplomacy, for while working toward these ends he was able to retain respect of both races. In 1801, President Thomas Jefferson sent Little Turkey a golden chain as an emblem of Friendship. He promised to respect all existing treaties and protect the Cherokee lands from intrusions by the white people. Little Turkey passed away in 1818 and was succeeded by Pathkiller.

In August, 1813, the notorious massacre at Fort Mims by the Creek Indians brought the renowned Andrew Jackson into Alabama Territory to forcefully quash the uprising. Jackson and his Alabama-Tennessee volunteers cut across Marshall County down Sand Mountain into Wills Valley where they camped

**Names:**

Jackson, Andrew  
Jefferson, Thomas,  
President

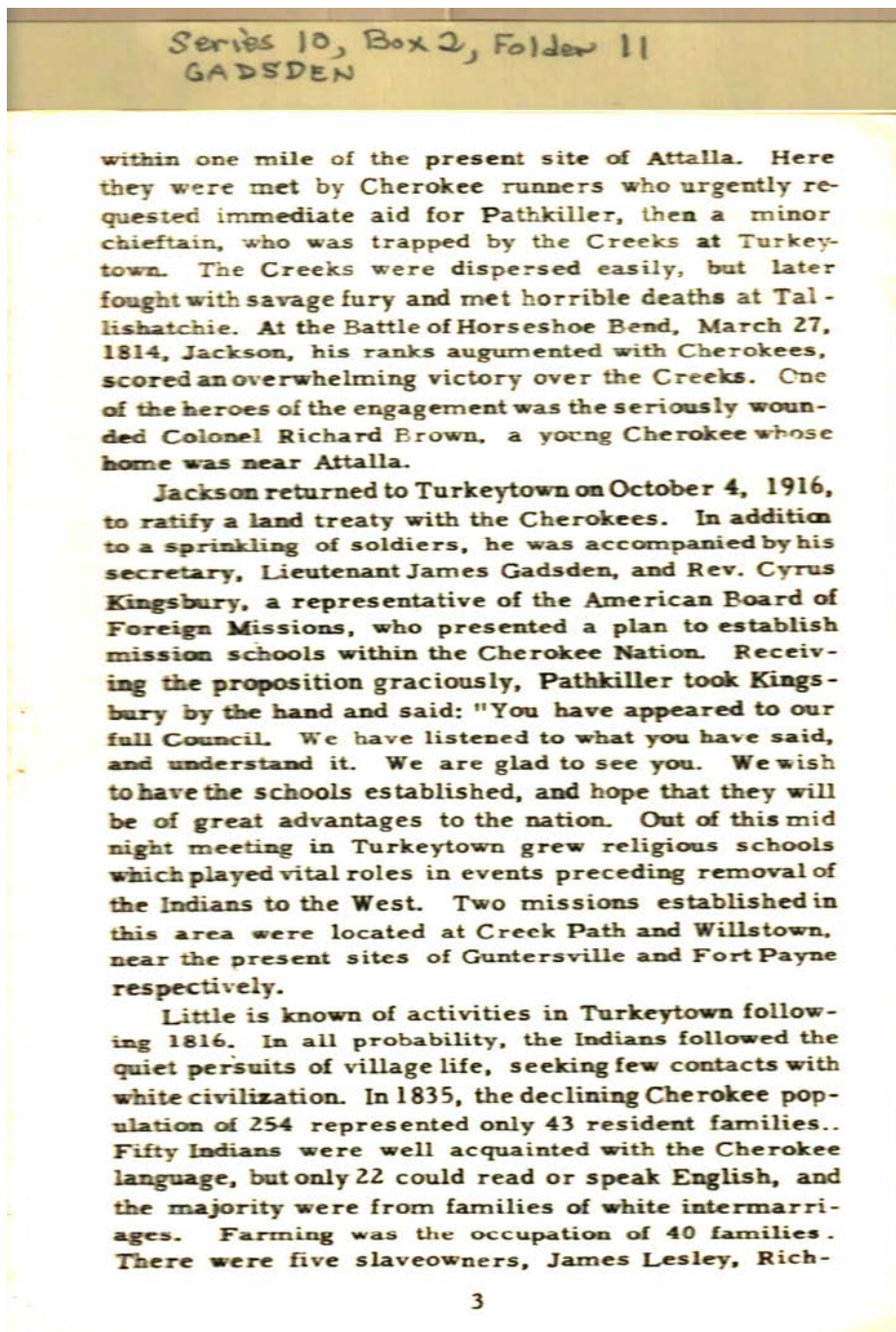
Little Turkey (Indian  
Chief)  
Panton, William

Pathkiller (Indian  
Chief)  
Tassell (Indian Chief)

Watts, John

**Types:**

booklet



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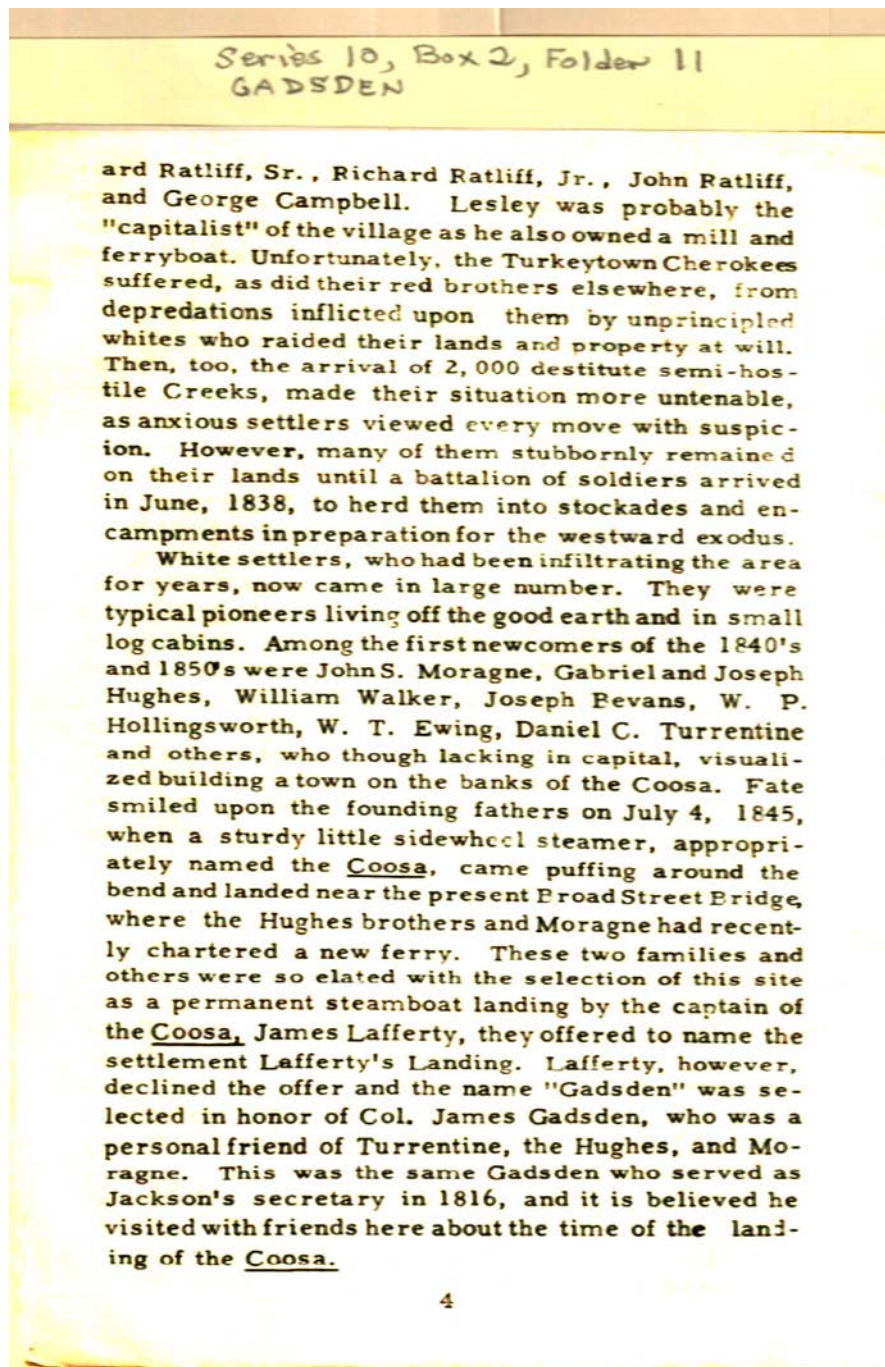
Brown, Richard,  
Colonel  
Gadsden, James, Lt.

Jackson, Andrew  
Kingsbury, Cyrus,  
Rev.

Lesley, James  
Pathkiller (Indian  
Chief)

**Types:**

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**Names:**

Bevans, Joseph  
Campbell, George  
Ewing, W. T.

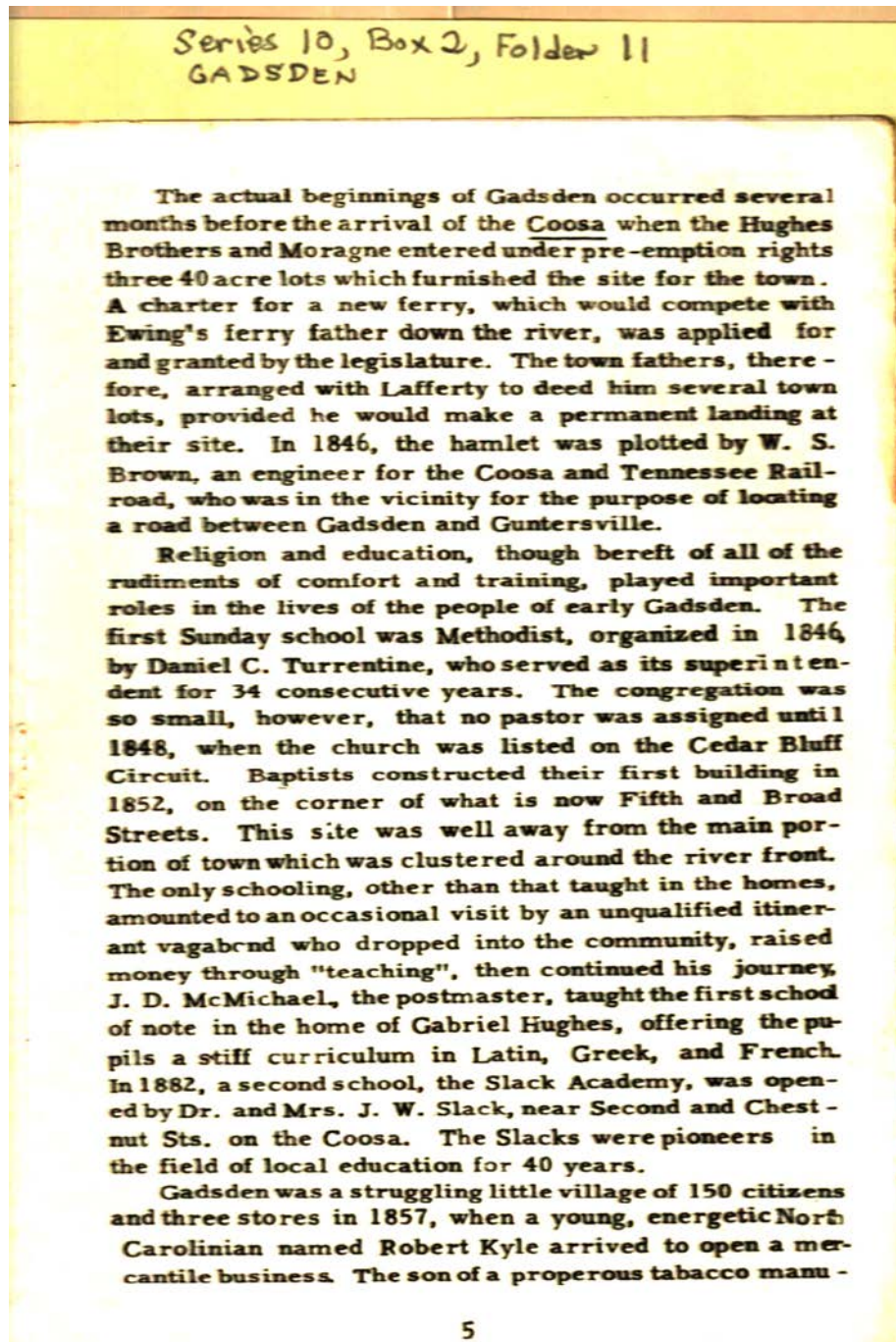
Gadsden, James,  
Colonel  
Hollingsworth, W. P.  
Hughes, Gabriel

Hughes, Joseph  
Lafferty, James  
Moragne, John S.  
Ratliff, John

Ratliff, Richard, Jr.  
Ratliff, Richard, Sr.  
Turrentine, Daniel C.  
Walker, William

**Types:**

booklet



**Names:**

Brown, W. S.  
Ewing,  
Hughes, Gabriel

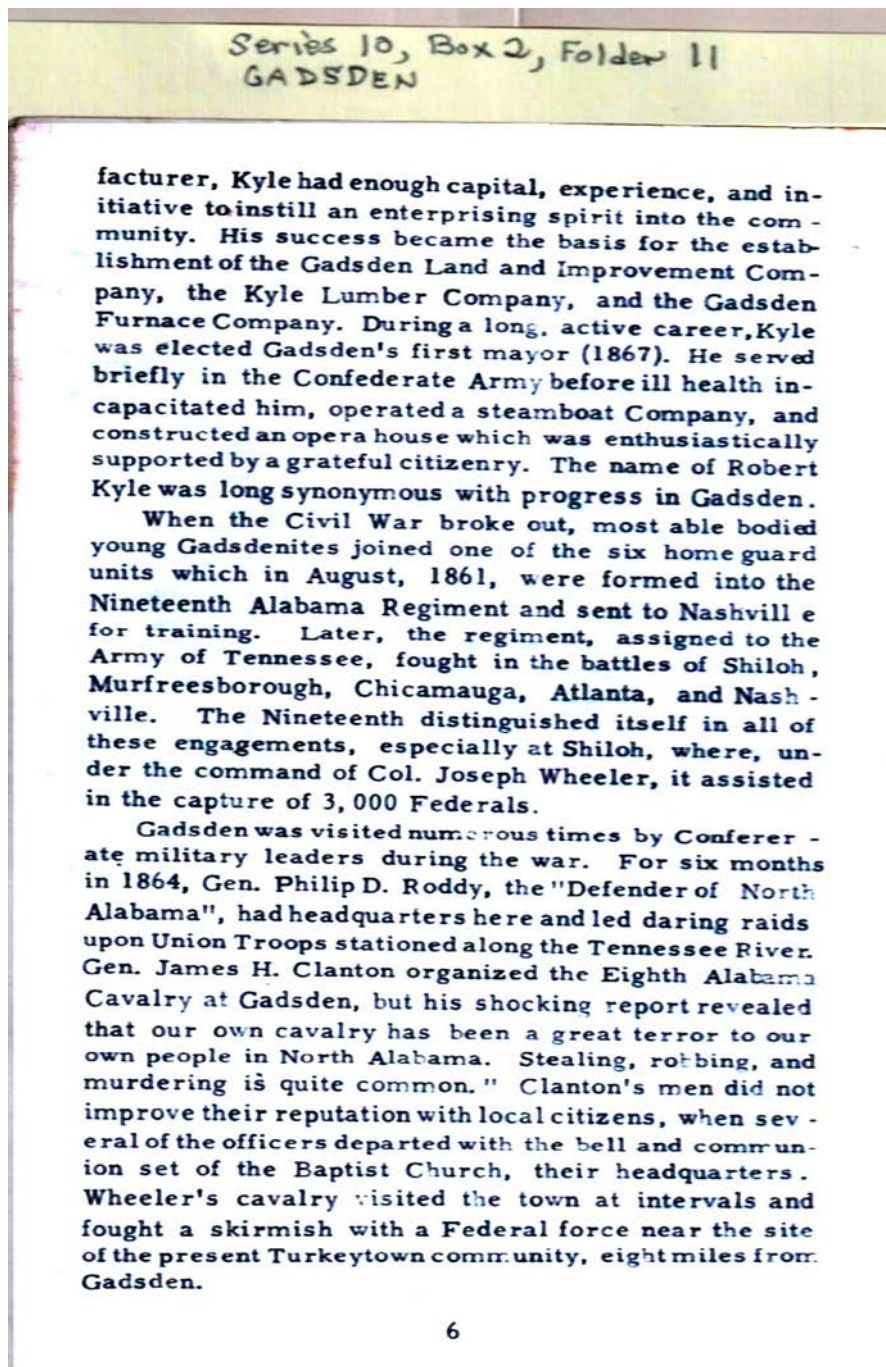
Kyle, Robert  
Lafferty,  
McMichael, J. D.

Moragne,  
Slack, J. W., Dr. &  
Mrs.

Turrentine, Daniel C.

**Types:**

booklet



**Names:**

Clanton, James H.,  
General

Kyle, Robert

Roddy, Philip D.,  
General

Wheeler, Joseph,  
General

**Types:**

booklet

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GADSDEN

In the Spring of 1863, a young heroin, Emma Sansom performed a courageous act which has memorialized her name throughout Alabama and the South. On April 21, Col. Abel D. Streight of the 51st Indiana Regiment slipped out of Eastport, Mississippi, with 1,600 selected men to make a quick raid across North Alabama for the purpose of striking railroad communications in Rome, Georgia. Two days later General Nathan Bedford Forrest, stationed at Spring Hill, Tennessee, was ordered to pursue Streight and thwart him if possible. With approximately 600 men, Forrest set out, and by marching day and night, he was able to cross the Tennessee River at Courtland, Alabama, on the Twenty-sixth. By the night of the 29th, he caught Streight's rear guard at Day's Gap. The running fight began the next morning and continued with little respite throughout the next two days and nights.

On the morning of May 2, young Emma, barely 16 years old, rode down the road to attend school classes at the Slack Academy. Becoming ill along the way, she turned her mount around and arrived home minutes before the dog tired Federals came galloping by her home. Taking a burning ember from the Sansom stove, one of the men applied it to the wooden bridge across badly swollen Black Creek. With the bridge destroyed, Forrest's pursuit was stopped for a few hours, giving Streight ample time to move without delay to his objective at Rome. Fortunately, however, Emma knew of a trail about 200 yards above the Sansom home where cows sometime crossed in low water. Mounting General Forrest's steed with him, she led the Confederates to the crossing and within 30 minutes they were again in hot pursuit.

Any hope that Streight had in reaching Rome was dashed when John Wisdom made a night ride from Gadsden to warn the citizens of the approaching Federal vanguard. On the morning of May 3, with over half of his command asleep from exhaustion, Streight

**Names:**

Forrest, Nathan  
Bedford, General

Sansom, Emma

Streight, Abel D.,  
Colonel

Wisdom, John

**Types:**

booklet



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GADSDEN

finally capitulated. Forrest marched the captives to Rome where a gala celebration took place in his honor.

Another Civil War drama occurred at Gadsden in October, 1864, when the remnant of the Army of Tennessee camped here for two days. General J. B. Hood, the Commander, conceived of an ambitious plan for moving the army from Atlanta to Nashville in order to strike Sherman's supply line and force him out of Georgia. Hood was met in Gadsden by General P. G. T. Beauregard, the newly appointed "Military Commander of the West". With their advisors, the two men adjourned to the Baptist Church where they spent most of the night studying maps and reports. Finally, Beauregard reluctantly granted permission for Hood to execute the proposed plan when it became apparent that President Davis strongly favored the move. The soldiers, however, revealed no such misgivings. When the announcement was made they were heading for Tennessee, there arose from the many encampments that genuine Confederate shout so familiar to every Southern soldier, the Rebel yell, and the men, many of them barefooted, marched out of Gadsden with alacrity. Two months later the army suffered disastrous defeat in the rain and mud in Nashville.

In 1867, Etowah County was carved out of Cherokee, St. Clair, Marshall, Calhoun, Blount, and DeKalb counties and given the name of "Baine" in honor of Col. D. W. Baine, who had been killed on June 30, 1862, while serving with the Fourteenth Alabama Regiment. When military governments were established in 1868, Carpetbaggers protested so vigorously the county's name was changed to Etowah in 1869.

It is interesting to note what some Gadsden folk were doing in 1870. According to the Federal Census of that year, W. L. Whitlock was Judge of State and John M. Moragne, a young man of 26, the Judge of Probate. There were two attorneys, B. T. Pope and Joe A. Walden, and 19 year old Joseph Wynn was

**Names:**

Baine, D. W., Colonel  
Beauregard, P. G. T.,  
General

Davis, President  
Forrest,  
Hood, J. B., General

Moragne, John M.  
Pope, B. T.  
Sherman,

Walden, Joe A.  
Whitlock, W. L.  
Wynn, Joseph

**Types:**

booklet

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GADSDEN

studying hard to complete his law course. R. O. Randall, formerly of New York, owned a successful silversmith business, while L. Condon manufactured saddles. Two hotel keepers, W. J. Sibert and F. W. King, were listed. M. R. Wright and J. S. Petty were the community physicians. Other men and their occupations included John Carlton, barber; T. H. Whitby, Bible agent; R. B. Kyle and J. P. Moragne, merchants; and John P. Gunn and C. C. Porter, dentists. The ministry claimed R. J. Hale, A. C. Ramsey, Enoch Ellis, and Wimby Melton. Among the leading farmers were R. B. Rhea, B. B. Whorten, R. B. Kyle, J. P. Ralls, and T. J. Walker. The principal crops were corn, wheat, and potatoes. There was some molasses, honey, cotton, and tobacco. Swine and sheep were raised and butter was in abundance.

Although Gadsden was virtually untouched by the horrors of war and the ravages of Reconstruction, the people, nevertheless, loyally supported efforts to oust the Radicals from control of the State Government. One incident which aroused local feelings happened in 1869 when the Fifth U. S. Cavalry stationed at Turkeytown, arrested Samuel Roberts on charges of horsetealing. After being whipped, Roberts was tied behind a wagon and compelled to follow on foot. Approaching Gadsden, he was placed in an enclosed wagon, but was discovered by his friend, Colonel Kyle. When released the next day, Roberts was almost out of his mind. Lon Grant, editor of the Gadsden Times, fearlessly wrote on April 30, 1869, that "such injustice makes the blood boil. . . and the fingers tingle to pull the trigger again on our oppressors." While Radicalism was at its worst, the county remained staunchly Democratic. In 1874 the electorate gave George S. Houston a healthy margin of 1,404 to 315 in his resounding gubernatorial victory, and the following year by a vote of 1,157 to 5 sanctioned the adoption of a new state constitution.

Ten years after the war, Gadsden was no longer a plodding little village. It contained over 2,000 in-

**Names:**

Carleton, John  
Condon, L.  
Ellis, Enoch  
Grant, Lon  
Gunn, John P.  
Hale, R. J.

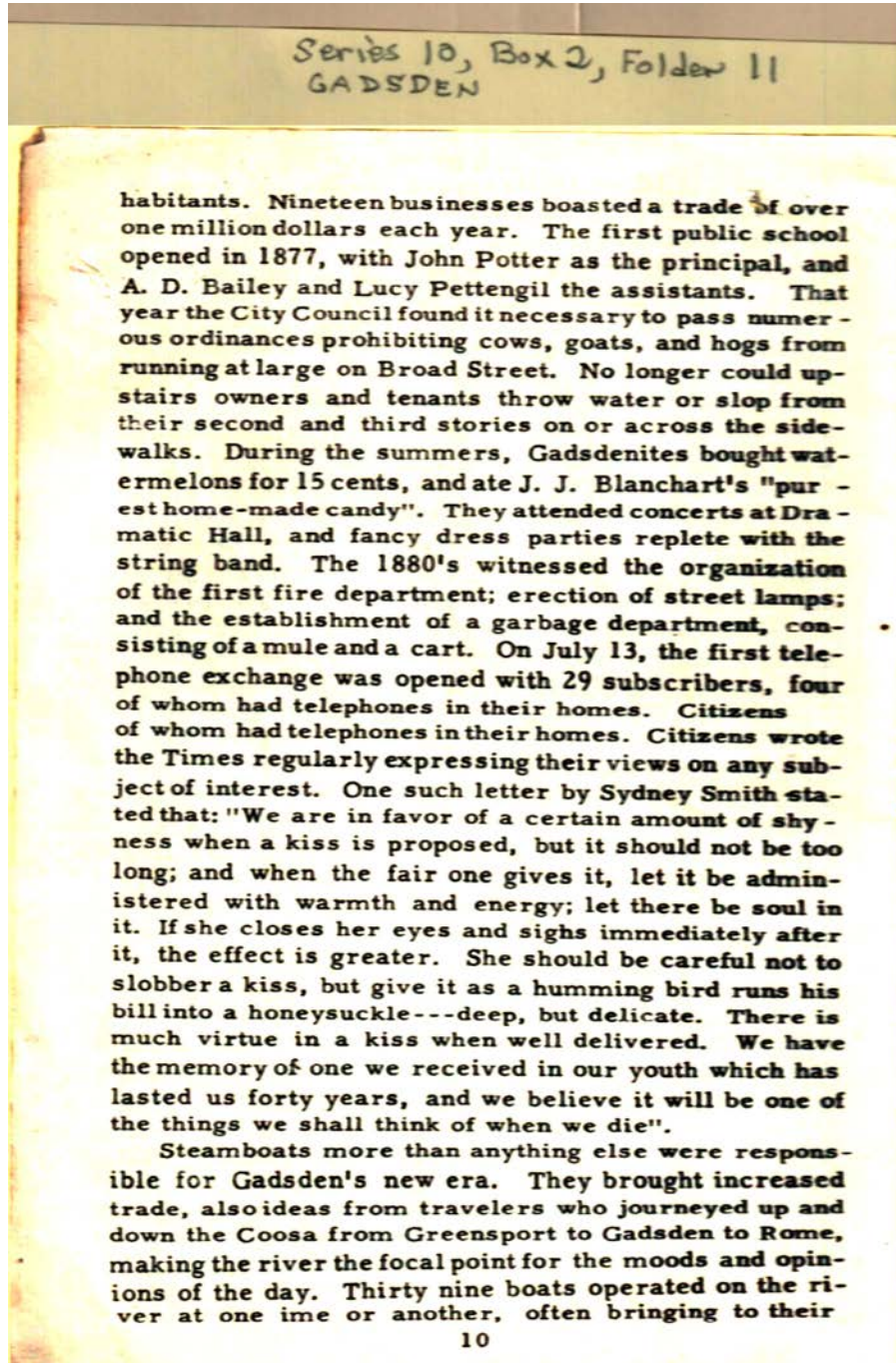
Houston, George S.  
King, F. W.  
Kyle, Colonel  
Kyle, R. B.  
Melton, Wimby  
Moragne, J. P.

Petty, J. S.  
Porter, C. C.  
Ralls, J. P.  
Ramsey, A. C.  
Randall, R. O.  
Rhea, R. B.

Roberts, Samuel  
Sibert, W. J.  
Walker, T. J.  
Whitby, T. H.  
Worten, B. B.  
Wright, M. R.

**Types:**

booklet



**Names:**

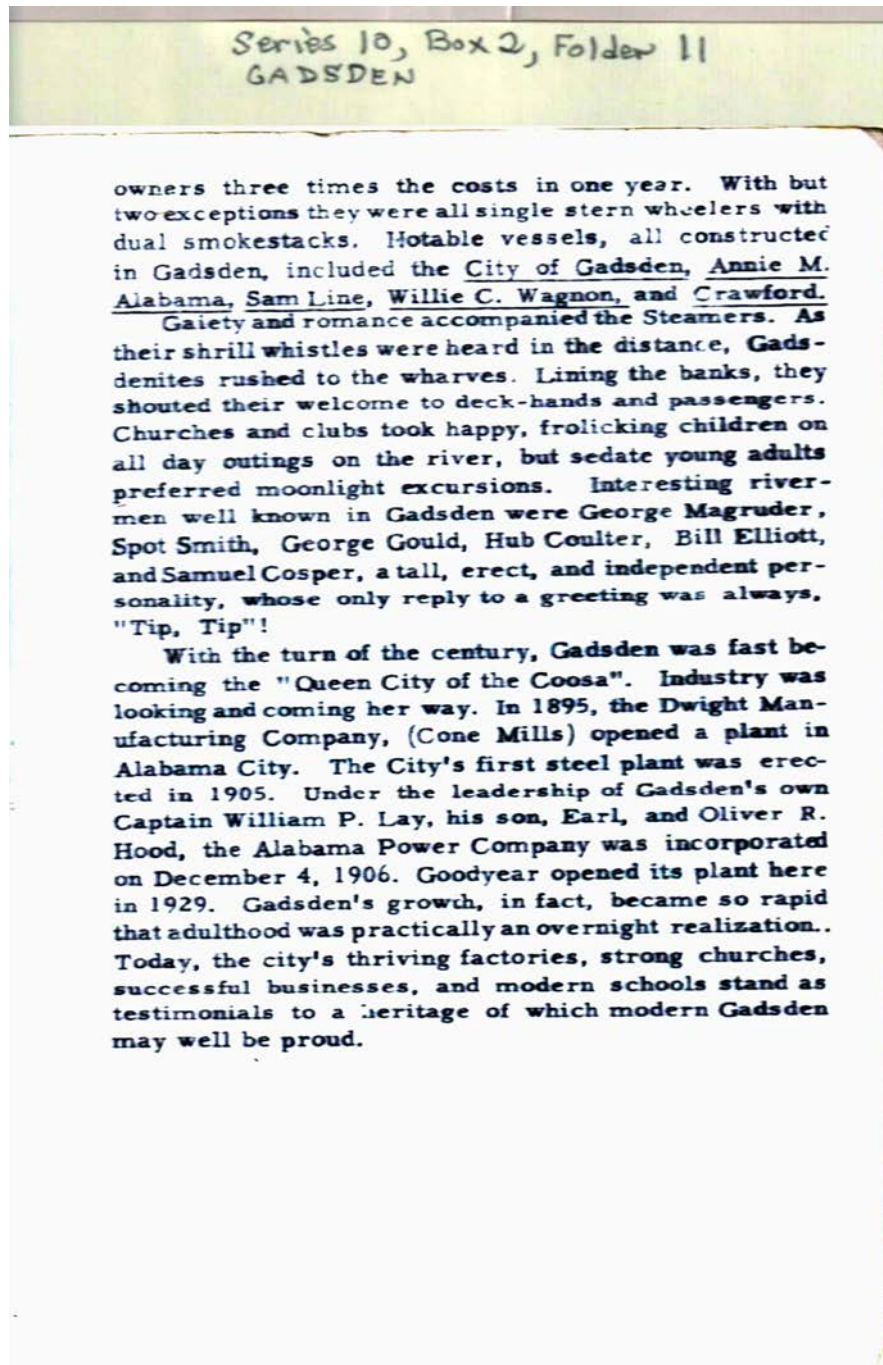
Bailey, A. D.  
Blanchart, J. J.

Pettengil, Lucy  
Potter, John

Smith, Sydney

**Types:**

booklet



**Names:**

Annie M. Alabama  
(Steamer)  
City of Gadsden  
(Steamer)  
Cospers, Samuel

Coulter, Hub  
Crawford (Steamer)  
Elliott, Bill  
Gould, George  
Hood, Oliver R.

Lay, Earl  
Lay, William P.,  
Captain  
Magruder, George  
Sam Line (Steamer)

Smith, Spot  
Willie C. Wagnon  
(Steamer)

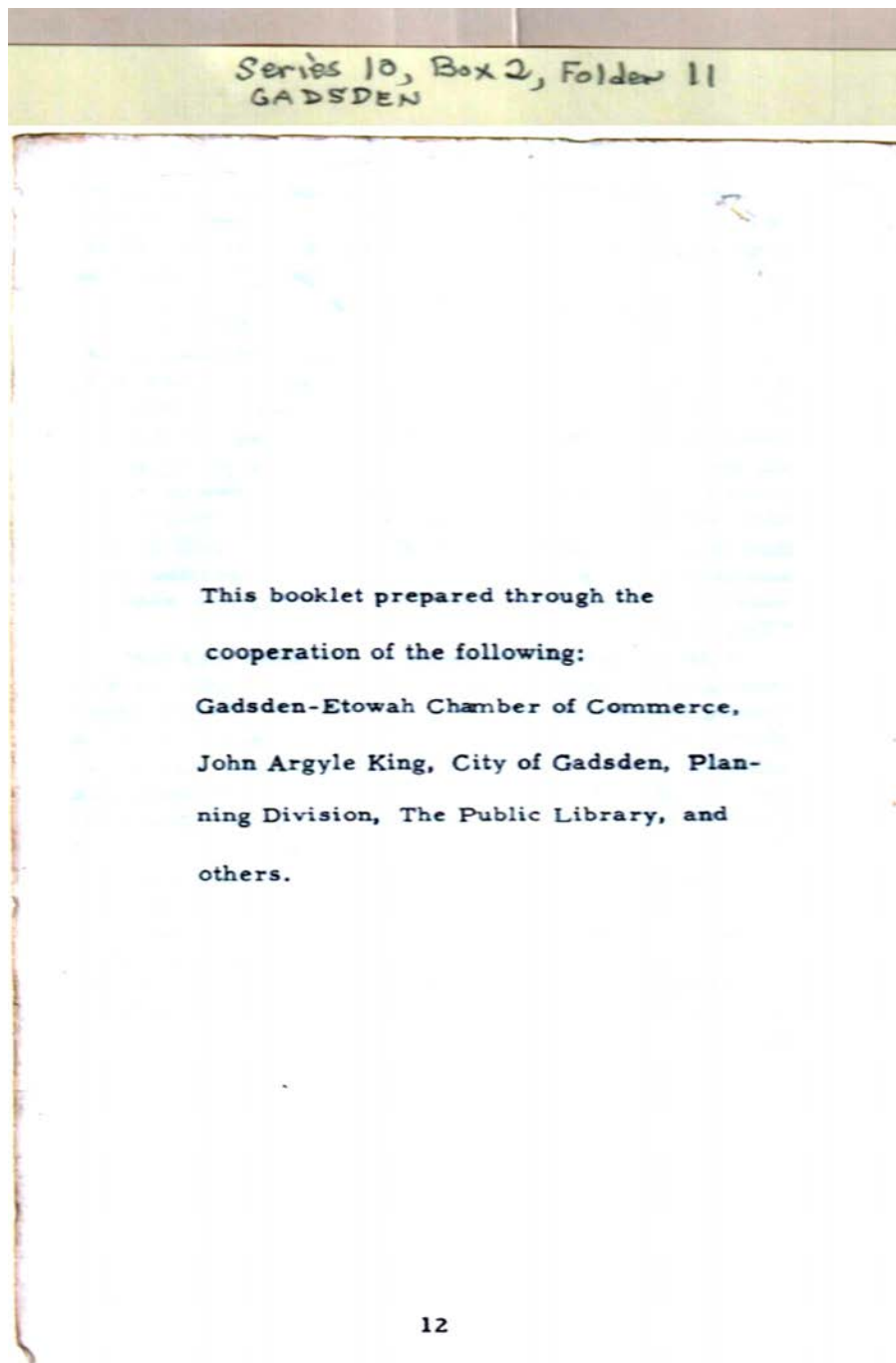
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**Names:**

King, John Argyle

**Types:**

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# Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection

**Preferred Citation:** Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Archives and Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

**Collection Scope and Content:** The Collection of 114 Linear ft. includes a total of 156 Archival Boxes. The Frances Cabaniss Roberts collection covers the historical records of the Cabaniss Roberts family. This collection contains extensive correspondence records of the Cabaniss Roberts family circa 1830 to 1930.

**Archives/Special Collections Access Restrictions:** None

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