

**Walks through History
Historic Hampton
Courthouse Square & Hampton Cemetery
October 9, 2010
By: Rachel Silva**



Intro

Hi, my name is Rachel Silva, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. Welcome to the Walks through History tour of Historic Hampton! Before we get started, I'd like to thank Mary Ann Becton for her help organizing the tour as well as Alan and Jeanette Goolsby for allowing folks to ride in their car. Also, many thanks to those of you driving golf carts and those providing refreshments! There are 4 National Register-listed properties in downtown Hampton—the Calhoun County Courthouse, Hampton Masonic Lodge, Hampton Waterworks, and the Hampton Cemetery. Today we'll walk around the courthouse square, down Main Street, and back around to the cemetery before returning to the courthouse for refreshments.

Brief History of Hampton

Calhoun County was formed in December 1850 from parts of Dallas and Ouachita counties in order to provide residents with a more centrally located place to conduct official county business. Calhoun County was named after John C. Calhoun, the South Carolina statesman and 7th Vice President of the U.S. (under J. Q. Adams and A. Jackson). James Riggs owned a fine farm about 3 miles north of present-day Hampton, and the first county commissioners selected this site as a good location for the county seat. However, Mr. Riggs was not amenable to having the county seat on his property and refused to donate or sell his land for that

purpose. Therefore, Nathaniel Hunt, one of the first settlers near Hampton (1848) donated a portion of his farm in 1851 for the location of the county seat. The town of Hampton was named after Colonel John R. Hampton, a state senator from Arkansas at that time. Hampton officially incorporated in January 1853.

Mr. O. H. P. Black was the first person to settle inside the new town limits, and he established a store and became Hampton's first postmaster in 1851. Hampton served as an important trading post for the surrounding county until the outbreak of the Civil War. The county's able-bodied men went off to war, leaving the women, children, and older residents to raise crops so they could eat. By the time the war was over, there were no businesses left in Hampton. However, the town recovered quickly and reincorporated in 1871. I. B. and G. M. Strong opened a large store, as did the firm of Frost and Porter.

Since its early days, Hampton has relied on the timber industry, harvesting the area's vast forests of short leaf yellow pine, cypress, oak, red gum, and hickory. Whereas early trade relied on the Ouachita River, the construction of the St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas Railroad in 1883 through northwestern Calhoun County provided a better form of transportation for shipment of the county's timber products. Hampton remains an important asset for the rest of Calhoun County because of its location along U.S. 167, the major thoroughfare between Little Rock and El Dorado.

Calhoun County Courthouse (NR-listed 12/12/1976)

Calhoun County's first courthouse was constructed out of logs and completed by October 1851. It was used until 1859, when \$4,000 was appropriated for the construction of a permanent, brick courthouse to be situated on the courthouse square. The second courthouse was built on this site and was a 2-story building—the first floor was divided up into 4 large offices for county officials, and the courtroom was on the second floor.

In October 1905 the court ordered that a “new and modern courthouse...be built in Hampton...on the present courthouse site.” C. L. Poole was appointed Commissioner of Public Buildings, putting him in charge of courthouse construction, and he hired Little Rock architect Frank W. Gibb to design the building.

Frank Gibb: Frank Gibb is credited with the design of many buildings in Little Rock as well as 60 courthouses throughout Arkansas. However, were it not for his

father's interest in real estate development Frank would probably never have gotten interested in architecture at all. The family arrived in Little Rock in 1871 when Frank was only 10 years old. Frank's father, Edward, built spec houses and invested in real estate. During the 1880s, Edward Gibb built several houses in the Governor's Mansion HD.

While his father was making a name for himself in Little Rock, Frank Gibb was off at school in Missouri working on a degree in engineering. Frank attended the Missouri School of Mines in Rolla and returned to Little Rock after his 1882 graduation. He appeared in the Little Rock newspaper many times for his successes in school, but upon returning to Little Rock he was consumed by his father's business, and by the late 1880s he was designing houses for his father's clients without any formal architectural training.

Frank Gibb's obituary credits him with work on nearly 60 of Arkansas's county courthouses. In addition to the Calhoun County Courthouse, he also designed the Yell County Courthouse in Dardanelle and the Phillips County Courthouse in Helena. He also designed the Buckstaff Bathhouse in Hot Springs.

Sadly, after his death in 1932, Gibb's family cleaned out his office and apparently discarded most of his architectural drawings and records. As a result, it is nearly impossible to clearly identify his works.

Courthouse architecture

On October 14, 1909, the court approved a construction contract with E. L. Koonce of Fordyce for the construction of the courthouse. The building was completed sometime in October of 1910. It features some Classical and Romanesque-style details like the rounded arch window and door openings with keystones, a rusticated brick foundation, a dentiled cornice, and multiple towers of differing height. It is the most architecturally significant building in Hampton and Calhoun County. Over the years, the courthouse has benefited from our agency's County Courthouse Restoration Grants, which helped fund multiple window and masonry repair projects. This is truly a beautiful courthouse!

Jail addition: A one-story, brick wing was constructed in 1969 on the southeast corner of the courthouse and housed a 6-cell county jail. The current county jail was built in 1996 outside of town.

Lawn: When the courthouse was built, the grounds were about level with the dirt streets surrounding it. A wrought iron fence was built around the courthouse to keep free-ranging livestock off the grounds. A 1911 photo shows steps constructed in several locations to allow people to walk up and over the fence. The streets were later cut down to a lower grade, necessitating the construction of retaining walls around the courthouse lawn. The current concrete curbing around the courthouse lawn was constructed in 1935 with WPA labor.

We will return to the courthouse at the end of the tour to see the inside of the building and have refreshments.

West side of the courthouse square

In the 1950s, there was a large feed mill on the west side of the square. Before that, there was an ice house run by Manx Tobin on the northern end of this west block.

Northwest corner lot

Mary Ann Becton's grandparents, Riz and Maude Lyon, lived in a house on this corner. The house burned in 1971, and sometime after that, South Arkansas Telephone Company purchased the property and built the current building. Prior to that, the telephone company had been located on the north side of the square.

North side of courthouse square—going from west to east

Emmett and Nelly Furr had a service station on this corner, and their house was behind it. Mr. Furr later installed an automated ice house.

Calhoun County Bank—The Calhoun County Bank was moved from Harrell to Hampton and opened in Hampton on November 11, 1939. The bank had a fence around it to keep free-ranging cattle and hogs off of Mr. Bennett Harrell's roses. The bank was featured in Ripley's Believe it or Not because of this fence. The fence was removed in 1953 when the bank was remodeled (plus stock laws had been passed by that time). Since 1953, a drive-up window has been added and several additions constructed on the building. In 2006 a gabled roof was installed to replace the old flat roof, and the building was remodeled again at that time.

North side of Main Street from west to east, starting at Main & 2nd St.

Corner building with clipped corner entry—was Sturgis Drug Store before becoming Wells Drug Store (David Wells's parents owned it).

Next building with same kind of black awning—this was the office for the **Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS)**. The ASCS was an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture. It administered programs concerning farm products and agricultural conservation. It granted loans to farmers; purchased farm products from farmers and processors; administered land allotment and marketing quota programs; shared the cost of resource conservation and environmental protection measures with farmers and ranchers; and supervised civil defense activities relating to food. It also managed the inventories of the Commodity Credit Corporation. The ASCS was established in 1961. In 1994, the ASCS was merged with other Agriculture agencies to create the Farm Service Agency.

After the ASCS moved across the street, Wells Drug Store purchased the building and opened a doorway in the interior wall between the two buildings. Mrs. Tommy Wells (female named Tommy) put in a gift shop on this side and later made it a clothing store.

Red brick—Pete Oliver's Barber Shop

Red brick with projecting cornice and black awning—was Bratton's Hardware Store. He sold it to Kenneth Dunn and Pete Reddin, and they opened a hardware store there as well. Then A. G. Tomlinson (also had businesses on Center Lane of court square) had a feed store there. After this, the building was divided up into several businesses (mini-mall style), and it is currently home to Petals and Stems flower and gift shop.

Red brick with flat, silver awning—The post office moved here from its previous location on Center Lane (east side of the court square).

White building (Shelter Insurance)—Housed Travis Watson's jewelry repair and a radio repair shop.

Red brick on end of block—Mr. Corley's Dry Goods Store. Then Ms. Beatrice (pronounced Bee-atris) Ivy moved her clothing store from its location on Center Lane (east side of court square) to this building.

Go down driveway on south side of Main St. to the Hampton Waterworks

Hampton Waterworks (NR-listed 10/5/2006)

The Hampton Water tower and associated well house were constructed by the Pittsburgh-Des Moines Steel Company for the Public Works Administration in 1937. Since its construction in 1937, the well house has been overshadowed by a large garage/workroom addition. However, the addition was built prior to 1956, so it's still considered "historic."

The Public Works Administration (PWA) was a New Deal agency established in 1933 during the Great Depression. The purpose of the PWA was to put people to work on projects that would benefit the general public and stimulate the local economy. Municipalities and private contractors applied to the PWA for funding of new construction projects that would truly result in a beneficial resource. Projects were financed by grants, loans, or a combination of both.

In the 1930s, Hampton was in need of a better public water supply, so the city applied to the PWA for a waterworks. On July 21, 1936, the PWA awarded a \$15,000 loan and a \$12,191 grant for the project. The contract was awarded to the Pittsburgh-Des Moines Steel Co., and the project was completed on March 31, 1937. It has a capacity of 50,000 gallons. In 1975 Hampton received money to build an additional 100,000-gallon water tank to keep up with the city's needs.

South side of Main St., from east to west beginning at driveway

Current Driveway—this was the site of a Dairy Queen built by Mack Pierce and later sold to Mr. Teater.

Building on east corner of block—D. K. Blann had a radio and TV repair shop here, and by 1963 this building housed a Dairyette.

Yellow painted building—Hampton TV & Appliance Store run by Joe T. Dunn. Has basket bond brick work.

West side of yellow painted building...also has basket bond brick work—Dime store.

Next two buildings feature rectangles of inset yellow header brick.

Split Endz—This was Dr. Rainwater’s office. Later the ASCS moved here briefly from their office across the street before relocating again to a building further to our west on this block.

Next red brick w/ rectangular inlay—Kashway Grocery

Bradshaw (another rectangle in upper façade)—Was a Dollar Store owned by Mildred Loveless.

215 Main (No Boundaries Ministries)—Also has basket bond brick. Hollis Bray CPA office. Had a door in the back that opened into the next building to the west, and both buildings shared the same heating and cooling unit.

217 Main (Ashlyn’s)—Myrtle’s Café was located where the right hand side of this building is now, and the plate glass window on the left side was a vacant lot at that time. After Myrtle got out of the business, someone tore down the original café building and constructed the current building, taking up the entire space. The ASCS ultimately ended up locating in the right hand side of this building. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) office was located in the left side of the building, and another office, the Stabilization Conservation Service (SCS) was behind FHA.

Large building (Hampton Heating & Air)—Has interesting running bond or stretcher bond brick work with alternating brick colors. This was J. O. Newton’s Hardware Store. He was known as Mr. Obb Newton.

East side of Courthouse Square, going north to south

Vacant lot with fence—The building on this site housed Boyd and Arlene Garrett’s Dry Goods Store and was later A. G. Tomlinson’s Grocery Store. When it burned in the early 1980s, it was Bill’s Dollar Store.

Buff brick building—was the location of the Joy Theatre. Boyd Garrett, who owned a dry goods store on the corner, owned the Joy Theatre. Then he sold it to W. T. and Merle Blann, and while they owned it in the 1950s, it burned. The storefront used to have a ticket booth and different doors. The building was reconfigured and renovated, and Mr. Tomlinson opened a furniture store there (you can still see the Tomlinson Furniture sign).

Calhoun County Abstract & Title Co.—Post office before it moved over to Main St. location we mentioned earlier.

Library—Was a grocery store (maybe A. G. Tomlinson’s before he moved down the block?) and later was Beatrice (Bee-atris) Ivy’s dress shop.

Hampton Masonic Lodge Building (NR-listed 5/20/2008)

The Hampton Masonic Lodge Building was constructed sometime between 1918 and 1923 (there was a one-story building here before that time). It is the only 2-story building in downtown Hampton and is the most elaborate commercial building on the courthouse square. Its upper façade features decorative rows of diagonally oriented brick as well as rows of buff and yellow brick above the second story windows and transom windows.

When the building was constructed, it housed the Hampton Masonic Lodge upstairs and a variety of mercantile businesses and doctor’s offices downstairs. In XXXX year, the Masons started to construct a new building one block off the square (to south), but the lodge “black-balled” a man who wanted to join, so he didn’t get in. He was so angry that he burned down their new building before it was finished.

On April 9, 1948, Len Harrell and Boots Johnson opened a Western Auto store in the building. Maude Harrell and her husband, Garland, moved back to Hampton from Memphis in 1954 and took over the Western Auto store for her brother and brother-in-law (Len Harrell & Boots Johnson).

Part of the time when Western Auto was in the building, the upstairs was used as the toy department. Carroll Newton remembered his mother telling him that Santa’s workshop was upstairs, and he wouldn’t get anything for Christmas if he went up there. He didn’t go upstairs in the building until he was a teenager.

In 1994 Maude and Garland Harrell sold the store to Charles Newton. Then the county bought the building, and it is currently being renovated to become part of the Calhoun County Library.

Upstairs in the old lodge after the Masons moved out...

- ❖ International Paper Co. had an office
- ❖ Farm Security Administration office

- ❖ Mr. Roy Lemon opened a garment factory upstairs (before moving to the American Legion Hut)
- ❖ Several doctor's offices upstairs
- ❖ When Buddy Owens was Mayor of Hampton, he had an office upstairs
- ❖ In 1972, Alan and Jeanette Goolsby started the *South Arkansas Accent* newspaper there
- ❖ When Angus Benson ran the Chamber of Commerce, they had an office
- ❖ Phil Foster's law office
- ❖ Lignite office (when people thought money could be made from mining lignite in Hampton...1980s?)

Red brick building to south—Dr. Dunn's office was in the left hand side, and a government office was on the right. Later, this building housed the revenue office, and at another time, it was the selective service (draft) office.

Buff brick building with clipped corner—Johnnie and Bertha Rayborn's (Raybern's) Grocery Store. Later an office for International Paper Co.

Southeast corner lots

Haynes Feed & Farm Supply—on the corner was Coot Johnson's Grocery and Feed Store.

Next door to him going south was Sam Small's Shoe Repair Shop. Mr. Small was deaf and mute, and he communicated by using written notes. Dr. Tom Dunn moved from his office on the courthouse square to a building to the south of Mr. Small's Shoe Repair. Dr. Dunn stayed here until 1953, when he moved out to a new clinic.

South side of courthouse square, going east to west

In the vacant lot, there was a blacksmith shop run by Mr. Alfred Stringfellow, and his sons, Weldon or "Skinny" and "Little Alfred," worked there with him. They also ground corn out behind the shop.

The western corner of the south block used to house a jail (it was the 3rd county jail, and the construction date is not known—records lost). It was a 2-story, brick jail with four cells upstairs for prisoners. It was torn down in 1967, and the jail annex was built behind the courthouse in 1969. Current jail built in 1996 (outside of town). Mary Ann Becton remembered prisoners lowering money down to

children from their cells and asking the kids to go buy them cigarettes. The children didn't think anything about it and did as they were told. When they returned with cigarettes, they would tie them back on the string so the prisoner could hoist them up.

Southwest corner lot & Hampton Cemetery

The Hampton Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was located on this site as early as 1850 on land given them by early settler Nathaniel Hunt. The Methodists built a new church here in 1901, and the old building has been drastically altered with additions to create its current appearance—including the reorientation of the building from facing east toward First St. to facing north. In 1912 the Church of Christ purchased this property from the Methodist church because the Methodists wanted more land on which to construct a parsonage.

Hampton Cemetery (NR-listed 6/8/2009)

The Hampton Cemetery was listed on the National Register in 2009 for its intact collection of late 19th and early 20th century funerary art. This is a unique cemetery because it lacks modern grave markers—the City stopped allowing people to be buried here about 1920 because there were no more burial plots available. So after that time, you could only be buried here if you had already purchased a plot. Of the approximately 139 burials in the Hampton Cemetery, 36 graves are unmarked (and there could be more unmarked graves...). There is only one non-historic burial in the Hampton Cemetery, and that is the grave of Lucille Tobin Cochran, who got special permission to be buried here with her family in 1977.

The cemetery lays within the original tract of land conveyed by Nathaniel Hunt and his wife, Roxanna, in 1850 for use as a county seat. The earliest marked burial in the cemetery is 1878, but the unmarked graves are presumably older than this. Most of the burials took place between 1910 and 1919. There were 41 during this decade.

Although there is no formal entrance to the cemetery, it is thought that one originally accessed the cemetery from the east on First Street, and there was a “T-shaped” lane heading west toward the tree line.

There is not another public cemetery inside the Hampton city limits, but there are numerous others out in the county (Camp Ground Cemetery on Tinsman Rd., Means Cemetery off Hwy. 167 N, Pickett Cemetery off Hwy. 167 S, New Hope

Cemetery toward Woodberry, Earnest Cemetery, and Dunn Cemetery off Hwy. 278 toward Camden).

Biographical Sketches:

Captain James Lynch and Sarah Dunlop Lynch:

This is probably the most interesting story associated with the Hampton Cemetery. It all needs to be prefaced briefly with an explanation of the Mormon Church at that time in history.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, commonly called the Mormon Church, was founded by Joseph Smith, a farm boy from western New York. The Book of Mormon was published in 1830 based on dictations from Joseph Smith, who claimed that he was translating the text directly from golden plates revealed to him by an angel. According to the text, Mormon was the name of a 4th century prophet–historian who compiled and abridged many records of his ancestors into the Book of Mormon. The book is believed by Mormons to be a literal record of God's dealings with pre-Columbian civilizations in the Americas written by prophets and followers of Jesus Christ. It is regarded as another testament in the Bible.

The Mormon congregation immediately stirred up the country with the practice of polygamy. So they headed west, converting people along the way. However, every time they settled some place, they were persecuted by their neighbors because of their different religious views. Joseph Smith and his son were even murdered by an angry mob in Illinois.

Brigham Young assumed the role of leader, and in the winter of 1846, the Mormons journeyed from Illinois to their promised land near the Great Salt Lake, where they could practice their religion free from persecution. However, the federal government remained at odds with the Mormon Church, and when Utah Territory sought to become a state, the federal government was skeptical because of the Mormon practice of polygamy as well as accusations of destroying records. So in 1857, President James Buchanan sent federal troops west on a secret expedition to Utah, where soldiers were supposed to “quell the rebellion” and take control from Brigham Young. Because tensions were running high and the Mormons were quite paranoid, they attacked a wagon train from northwest Arkansas on its way to California. The attack came to be known as the Mountain Meadows Massacre and took place in Sept. 1857 near Cedar City, Utah. 121 innocent people were killed and 17 children survived. These children were given to Mormon families to raise as their own.

Captain James Lynch served in the U.S. Army and became involved in the government's effort to retrieve the 17 surviving children and return them to their families in Arkansas. The soldiers were initially unable to get the children, so Lynch organized his own effort. He transported the children to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where they were taken back to their homes in Arkansas and Missouri. However, even after Lynch retired and moved to Texas, he kept in touch with one of the massacre survivors, Sarah Dunlop.

Sarah Dunlop was blinded during the attack (gunpowder in her eyes?). She and her sister, Rebecca, settled in Woodberry. Captain Lynch, still a bachelor, came to visit the girls and ended up winning Sarah's hand. They were married on December 30, 1893, when he was 74 and his blind bride was 38. The Lynches operated a store in Woodberry before moving to Hampton, where they lived with A. G. Moses and his wife.

Captain Lynch's grave was unmarked, presumably because there was no money left in his estate when he died (Sarah died before him). The DAR placed a marker on his grave in 1998.

W.C. Dunn (1869 – 1918)

W.C. Dunn was the Calhoun County Treasurer from 1896 to 1902. Buried along side Dunn are his *two small daughters*, (1903 – 1905), and an *infant son* (1908). Dunn died on October 10, 1918. Toward front-interesting children markers.

A. G. Moses was a farmer. His son was Colter Hamilton "Ham" Moses, secretary to 3 Arkansas governors and one-time president and chairman of the board of Arkansas Power and Light. Lake Hamilton in Hot Springs is named for him (and the city park in Hampton used to be as well). Very interesting marker—toward front—Woodmen of the World topped by a draped urn.

Maggie Blann's row of markers is very sobering—mother and 3 infant sons in a row.

J.D. James (1839 – 1907)

James was a Mason, a Cumberland Presbyterian Minister and Calhoun County Judge from 1894 to 1900. His wife, *Adaline James (1847 – 1897)*, his daughter, *Lena May James Stringfellow (1872 – 1895)*, and a grandson,

Collie O'Dell James (1901 – 1903) are buried along side J. D. James. Also toward front—3 adults on obelisk and infant nearby. Good symbolism—Masonic square & compass, wreath, and obelisk.

Thomas N. Means (1855 – 1915)

Thomas served as the Calhoun County Examiner, County Judge, County Clerk and Deputy Clerk from the years 1890-1896. His wife, *Belle Black Means (1855-1940)*, and two daughters, *Motsy Means (1885 – 1900)*, and *Belle Means (1888 – 1888)* are also buried in the family plot. Toward front.

George B. Adams (1847 – 1936)

George was the County Coroner from 1886 to 1888. His first wife, *Mollie E. Tobin Adams*, aged 25 years 3 months 15 days (*no date*) is buried beside him, as is their son, *Dannie J. Adams (1878 – 1880)*. George's second wife, *Virginia M. Adams (1859 –1912)*, and their son, *Daniel T. Adams (1896 – 1912)* are also buried in this family plot. It is notable that the wives were sisters. Good markers—presentational hand pointing at Bible and sleeping child on another. Front left.

Manx H. Tobin (1877 – 1952)

Manx Tobin was Mayor of Hampton for a number of years, and finished the unexpired term of treasurer for his son, Barnett, in 1950. Manx died on May 15, 1952. Flat marker—toward left middle.

Dr. J. S. McCranie (1828 – 1884)

Dr. McCranie was a Mason and a physician who lived on the Pickett place. His death was the reported result of combining fish and buttermilk. He died on July 4, 1884. Masonic square and compass on his marker—toward middle left of cemetery.

A. P. McCann (1890 – 1918)

A. P. McCann was the Calhoun County Treasurer from 1914 to 1918, and had been elected to the position of County Judge at the time of his death. He had been the previous owner of *The Arkansas Plaindealer*, bought by Mack Owens, Sr., in 1914. The paper, at the time of purchase, was also known as the *Arkansas Plaindealer*. McCann's wife, *Glenna McCann, (1887 –1918)* is buried beside him. The McCanns died during the flu epidemic of 1918. Shortly before their deaths, they also lost an *infant son (1917)*, who is buried along side them. Toward back left.

W.H. "Hal" Tobin (1873- 1950)

Tobin served as County Tax Assessor from 1945 to 1950. His wife, *Birdie Wooley Tobin (1888 – 1916)* is buried beside him. Toward back—flat marker.

Henry Clay Black (1845 – 1931)

Henry was the County Surveyor from 1882 to 1892. Buried beside him is his wife, *Tabitha Black (1849 – 1904)*. Henry died on October 12, 1931. Tabitha's marker has an interesting drape over it—back right hand corner of cemetery.

Various symbolism on markers, especially point out the obelisks (Egyptian symbol of a ray of light coming directly to earth), urns (Egyptian and Roman symbol of death), drapes (veil between earth and heaven or life snuffed out), pearly gates (entering heaven), doves (soul ascending to heaven), lambs (innocence and usually on child's grave), cherubs (for children), weeping willows (sadness of death and mourning), Woodmen of the World (log on stump symbolizes life cut short & height of log symbolizes age), finger pointing up (to heaven), crown (sovereignty of the Lord), wreath (victory over death), roses (beauty and brevity of life), etc.

The Hampton Cemetery Committee has done a lot of work maintaining the cemetery and repairing grave markers. Thank Mary Ann Becton again for all of her hard work!!

Talk about the restoration of Elnora Tomlinson's marker—lifting the cradle coping up out of the ground and stabilizing it before replacing it. Before they did this, it was mostly buried under the ground.

Return to courthouse for refreshments!!