

**Chilton County's Mineral Springs**  
**By Derric Scott**

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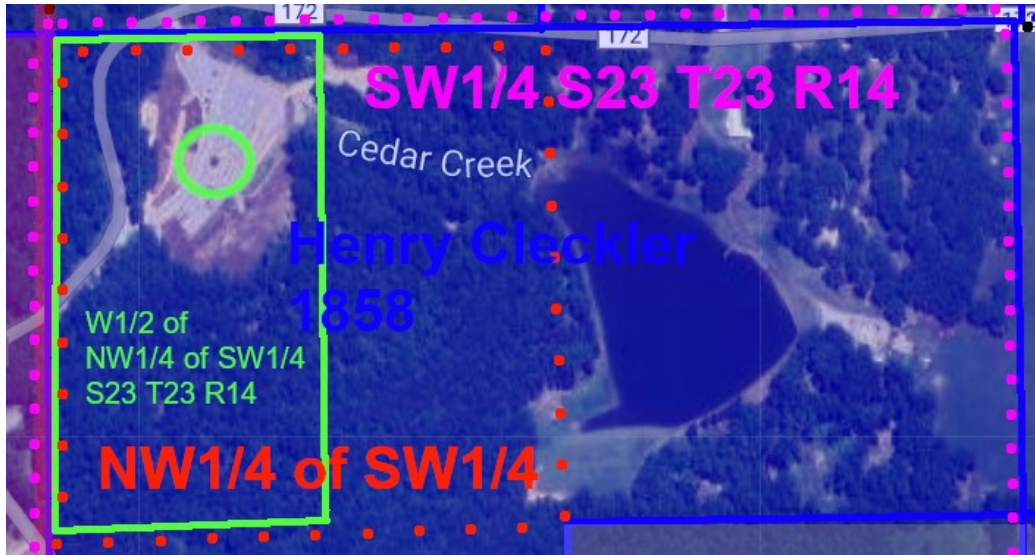
# Chilton County's Mineral Springs

## By Derric Scott

The water in the Mineral Springs Community of Chilton County has long been thought to have beneficial health effects. The area was known as "Mineral Springs" at least by the 1880s, when the church was mentioned with that name in the Dec 10, 1885 Chilton View newspaper. Shortly before May 3, 1888 the voting place in Beat 1 was changed from Mims' Crossroads to Mineral Springs.

### Henry Cleckler

The land surrounding the spring was originally bought from the U. S. Government by Henry Cleckler in 1858. He had previously acquired a neighboring section in 1855 and by 1860 he owned at least 320 surrounding acres.



Modern map of the area around the spring (indicated by the green circle).

Henry Cleckler married Elizabeth Betsy Robinson, who was the daughter of neighboring landowner Mordecai Robinson, the first Probate Judge of the newly formed Baker County (Dec 1869). The county name changed to Chilton in 1874, resulting in Mordecai Robinson being the **only** Probate Judge of "Baker" County. Note that sometimes they used an alternative spelling of Robinson – Roberson.

CSA Private Henry Cleckler died in an Atlanta hospital in April 1864 during the Civil War. The property then passed to his heirs, specifically his son William Pinkney "Pink" Cleckler. Henry's wife Elizabeth collected Alabama Confederate veteran widow's pensions from about 1890 until she died.

### Richard Coe and Daniel Partridge – Gregory and Coe Lumber Co.

The first mention of the actual spring in the newspapers was in December 1889 when the Chilton View wrote an article about new owners that were going to build hotel there. The new owners were Richard Coe and Daniel Partridge. These men were officers in the Gregory and Coe Lumber Company (and other companies) at the time. The deed of the transaction specifically mentions the spring: *"there is a spring of water upon (sic) in the northeast part and known as the Mineral Spring."* They bought the property from William Pinkney "Pink" Cleckler and his wife, Mary Laura Bean Cleckler, Dec 6, 1889. The sale was facilitated by Capt. W. A. Smith, whom it was said was to run the resort. This is the first documented attempt to use the spring for commercial purposes. A later description, in the July 7, 1932 Rockford Chronicle, of the earlier ca 1900 resort said it was "a large sixteen room hotel, bath houses, pavilions and lunch stands, occupying the hills around this famous spring."

# Chilton County's Mineral Springs

## MINERAL SPRINGS.

**Purchased and to be Improved  
as a Health Resort.**

Last week, Capt. W. A. Smith, of Dixie, purchased the Mineral Springs property in best one of this county, for Messrs. Richard Cor, of Stanton, and Daniel Partridge, of Selma. There is on the property a bold, beautiful spring, strongly impregnated with mineral gushing out of the white pebbles. It is situated nine miles northeast of Clinton, six miles from Stras-

burg and seven from Jamison, and is the voting place for beat one.

The new owners have ample means and have made the purchase with the intention of erecting a commodious hotel and otherwise improving what they believe is a valuable property. They expect to have the hotel built, and the place well advertised as a health resort by the warm weather of next summer.

It is expected that Capt. Smith and his estimable wife will have charge of the hotel.

Dec 12, 1889 Chilton View

319

N. P. Clecker  
To  
Richard Cor.  
and Daniel Partridge

The State of Alabama  
Chilton County. We know all men by their presents; That we N. P. Clecker  
M. L. Clecker wife of the said N. P. Clecker for and in consideration of the sum  
of three hundred dollars to us in hand paid by Richard Cor and Daniel  
Partridge, the receipt whereof we do hereby acknowledge, do hereby grant,  
convey, sell, convey and assign unto the said Richard Cor and Daniel  
Partridge the following described parcel of land or real estate to wit:  
The West half of the Northwest quarter of the Southwest quarter of Section  
twenty three of Township twenty three North and of Range fourteen East ly-  
ing in the State and County aforesaid which parcel of land there is a Spring  
of water upon in the Northeast part and known as the Mineral Spring  
to have and to hold the foregoing premises to the said Richard Cor  
Daniel Partridge, and we do covenant with the said Richard Cor Daniel  
Partridge and their heirs and assigns that we are lawfully seized in fee of  
the aforesaid premises; that they are free from all incumbrances  
that we have a good right to sell and convey the same to the said  
Richard Cor Daniel Partridge and their heirs and assigns; and that we  
will warrant and defend the premises to the said Richard Cor Daniel Partridge  
and their heirs and assigns forever against the lawful claims and demands  
of all persons.

In Witness Whereof we the said N. P. Clecker and M. L. Clecker have hereunto  
set our hands and seals this sixth day of December in the year of Lord  
Our Thousand Eight Hundred and eighty nine.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of N. P. Clecker (Ss)  
M. L. Clecker (Ss)

J. M. Robinson

The State of Alabama  
Chilton County. I, J. L. Partridge a N. O. & off. J. O. in and for the said  
County in said State hereby certify that N. P. Clecker wife M. L. Clecker  
whose names are signed to the foregoing conveyance and who are known  
to us, acknowledge before us on this day that being informed of the con-  
tents of the conveyance they executed the same voluntarily on the day the  
same was made.

Given under my hand this the sixth day of December A. D. 1889.  
J. L. Partridge, N. O. & off. J. O.

The State of Alabama  
Chilton County. I, J. L. Partridge a N. O. & off. J. O. for said State and County  
do hereby certify that on the sixth day of December 1889 came before me  
the within named M. L. Clecker widow to me to be the wife of N. P. Clecker  
who being examined separately and apart from the husband and signing his  
signature to the within conveyance, acknowledged that she signed the same  
of her own free will and accord, and without fear, constraints or threats  
on the part of her husband.

In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand this 6th day of December, A. D. 1889  
J. L. Partridge, N. O. & off. J. O.

Chilton County. I hereby certify that the within conveyance was filed in my office  
for record on the 7th day of Dec 1889 and recorded in book 21 page 319  
J. C. Allen, Clerk of Chilton County, Alabama



The spring, ca. 1900 and steps up to the hotel and cabins.

The general Mineral Springs community often had a column published in the local papers, usually entitled "Mineral Springs." These chatty columns detailed goings on in the area, church events, weather, health, and crop progress.

<p><b>Mineral Springs.</b></p> <p>Here we are as happy as linnets at Mineral Springs. I am indeed surprised that this place is not an ideal summer resort, since all its deficiency is equipment. Splendid locality, five miles east of Thorby, best mineral water in Alabama; lovely mountain views, and picturesque scenery. We have a singing society that meets bi-weekly, preaching every second Sunday; a good school—second to few country schools. It is not a college nor university, nor a professor teaching at, what sense is there in calling these little third, second, or even first grade teachers professor? If we were to advertise, as some schools do, we could say we have students</p>	<p>from five States, in the U. S. and some from Europe. We realize that gas is not what we need so much as honest, earnest effort, therefore we desist. Messers. W. E. Green, Willie Bean, Wiley Bran, R. N. Headley and Misses Mattie Bean, Viola Littleton, and Clara Robinson and Emma Gronquist were on honor roll last week. we are glad to have Mr. Charlie Bowles, from Autauga county in our school, Mr. Bowles will take a business course. Mr. W. E. Green will take a telegraphic course next Spring.</p> <p>Well, I guess the teachers are grinding out something big to say at the Institute. Just here let me say co-workers don't put your "fodder" so high that this humble novice can't get it. The sky is mighty</p>	<p>pretty as it is. If you will give me something practical, I'll thank you and do my best to apply it. As to listen is all I can do in Institute work I am partial to the practical talk. O! I forgot I can shake hands in some sort of way, even if it should be in a churning fashion. Mr. Robert Bean and Docia Bussy were happily married the 7th inst, we hope their ideal life may be perfectly realized in their future. There are a few who get sick, but when they get our panacea, (mineral water) they are soon well again. Our Thorsby neighbors haul the wonderful panacea away by cart loads. O! aren't you sorry for me, I am going to see my sweetheart get married Xmas eve. I'll be an old maid then won't I?</p> <p>UNCLE ZACK.</p>
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Dec 11, 1902 Banner – local community column from Mineral Springs Community

## Dr. R. B. McNeill and J. M. Robinson

It appears that around 1907 Dr. R. B. McNeill of Jemison and J. M. Robinson bought the property. The record of this sale hasn't yet been found. However they begin paying taxes on it in 1907, the same time that the newspapers report the transfer as well. In the next few years Dr. McNeill built a 23 room hotel on the hill above the springs and 4 cabins across the road. They paid taxes on the property at least through 1912. In his book "The Jemison Café" John Hayman says the hotel on the hill "was a two-story building made of wood, and it had a porch that ran all around the top floor."



Mineral Springs, a few miles from our town, is being fitted up as a sanitarium. There are many who testify to the beneficial effects of the mineral water there.

March 28, 1907 Banner - new sanitarium

Dr. McNeill is building some new houses at Mineral Springs, and we understand that he will erect a nice hotel there in the near future.

May 9, 1907 Banner - Dr. McNeill

Our people are getting a net work of telephone lines over the country here. The new line out to Mineral Springs is almost complete. Mr. J. M. Robinson is extending this line on to his mill and we understand that from there it will be connected with the Clanton line.

Aug 15, 1907 Banner - Telephone lines

Dr. McNeill is building a large hotel out at Mineral Springs. With the nice cottages that he already has there and this hotel, Mineral Springs will be well equipped for the comfort and pleasure of those who will spend the summer there.

April 23, 1908 Banner - Hotel

## Dr. J. E. Gowan

By 1920 Dr. J. E. Gowan from Clanton had purchased the spring and was paying taxes on it.

## William Thomas "Tom" Hand

In 1924 William Thomas "Tom" Hand, the lumberman from Jemison, purchased the property and built a new "resort" there and called it "Havengreen." In his book, John Hayman says that Hand "built a one-story building just below the spring" and that he used a gravity-fed water system to distribute the spring water and had a generator for electricity. He continued that the depression impacted the viability of the resort. Hand died in 1937.

**HEALTH RESORT IS OPENED  
UP AT MINERAL SPRINGS**

Mr. Tom Hand of Jemison was in Clanton Wednesday of this week. Mr. Hand made announcement that he has opened up a health resort at Mineral Springs, 7 miles east of Jemison, at what is know as Mineral Springs. He is going to call this new resort "Havengreen."

June 30, 1932 Union-Banner

**Havengreen Spa**  
(Mineral Springs)

Now Open--Room and Board \$1.00 per day  
Baths on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, 1 to 5 p.m.  
Beginning on May 5th

**W. R. BLOW Mgr.**  
Jemison, Alabama Route 2

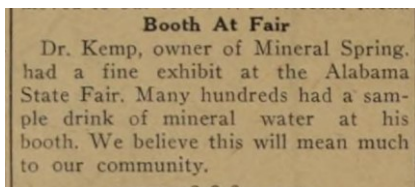
Apr 30, 1936 Union-Banner

## Dr. A. Marshall Price ownership and tragic death

In 1939 a Jemison "herb doctor" named Dr. Kemp bought the property.

It seems that Dr. Kemp's real name was Dr. Andrew Marshall Price and he bought the property from the Tom Hand estate. In the 1930s Dr. Price had moved to Jemison to practice as an herb doctor. The story recounted in John Hayman's book is that Raymond Reynolds painted the sign for the office and instead of painting "Doctor's Camp" he painted "Dr. Kamp" and so the name stuck. Hayman has a great deal of personal references about Dr. Price and his family in the book. Hayman said that Dr. Price maintained he was part Indian. He hired some Indians to dress-up and parade in front of his store and call him "Cousin Wahoo." That name also stuck with the Jemison locals. Hayman noted that Dr. Price was very successful by 1939, opened a new office, and purchased the Mineral Springs Sanatorium. Hayman describes the grand opening in October 1939 and says they sold BBQ plates for \$1.10 each.

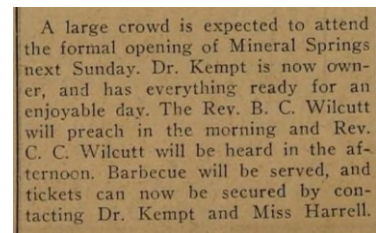
Dr. Price operated the sanatorium there for about 10 years.



Oct 12, 1939 Chilton Co News

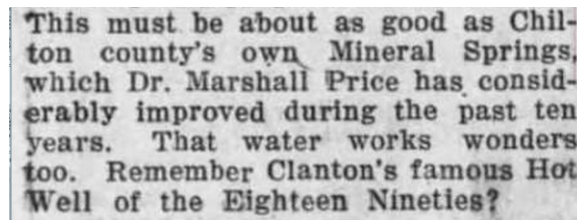


Oct 19, 1939 UB



Oct 26, 1939 CCN

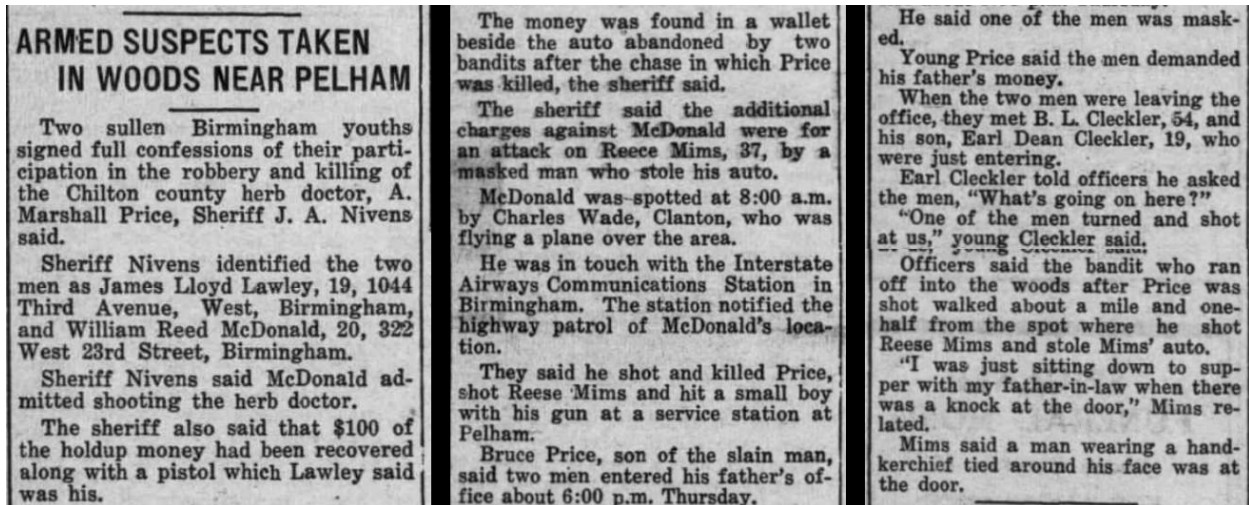
Dr. Price improved the property and near the end of 1940 he had added "42 new rooms to the building already there – 10 cabins, a swimming pool, and a fish pond." He also was building a "tabernacle to seat 5000 people for the purpose of holding evangelistic meetings, etc." Hayman said that Dr. Price added the second story to the one-story building below the spring, that was built by Tom Hand (the 42 new rooms?), and that Dr. Price built two artificial "lakes" below the building for to create a "peaceful appearance" (the swimming pool and fish pond?).



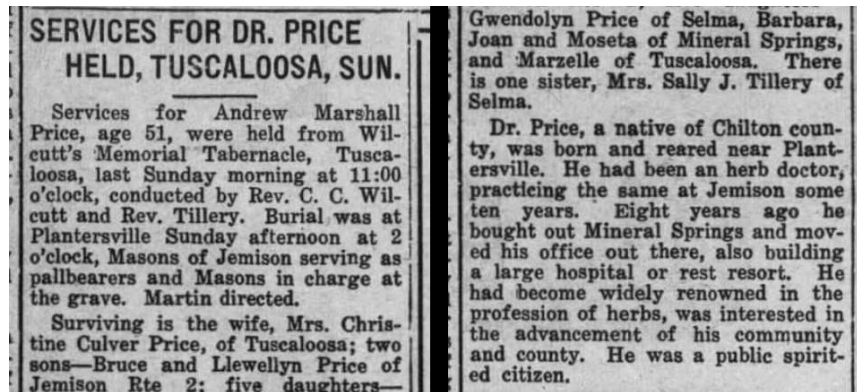
Feb 3, 1949 Union-Banner

In 1943, Clanton's Dr. Virgil O. Campbell partnered with Dr. Price. Both held office hours at the spring and at Jemison.

Tragically Dr. Price was murdered during a robbery and subsequent pursuit on December 1, 1949. He was buried in Plantersville.



Dec 8, 1949 Union-Banner



December 8, 1949 Union-Banner

## The Treasure

After Price's death, articles were published describing some IRS activity and large amounts of money that he had hidden underneath the slab of his office and other places. This may have been the reason that he was a target for the robbery. There were many milk cans of silver coins uncovered. The IRS ultimately ruled that all the taxes were paid on the money and so there was no action taken against him. However there was no explanation of his reasoning given. There were a few newspaper articles about the money back in April, at the time of the investigation, which may have been the catalyst for the robbery.

## Chilton County's Mineral Springs



**Dec 11, 1949 Montgomery Advertiser article on Dr. Price's hidden money.**

## Columbus C. Conway

The Price family owned the property until it was sold to Columbus Conway in 1953. It was operated by Dr. J. C. McCoy. (Conway's brother Arnold may have been a dentist in Jemison – per some vague references in Hayman's book and "D.D.S." on his tombstone).

## C. C. CONWAY BOUGHT OUT MINERAL SPRINGS

Mr. Columbus Conway of Jemison has acquired the Mineral Springs property including the hospital, office building, lakes, etc. Work is now under way repairing the place, which Mr. Conway expects to place into operation within a few weeks. His plans are to place there a medical doctor, an herb doctor, and probably a chiropractor, together with full personnel to operate the hospital and full resort facilities.

The place has not been in active operation since the death of Dr. Marshall Price, former owner, in December, 1949.

Mr. Conway plans on a formal opening, probably in July or August and hints that it may include a barbecue together with other allied functions.

**June 4, 1953 Union-Banner**

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
0- **DR. J. C. McCOY** 0  
0 **Chiropractor** 0  
0 **Office At Mineral Springs** 0  
0 **Specializing In Treatments For** 0  
0 **Arthritis, Neuritis, and All** 0  
0 **Forms of Rheumatism** 0  
0 **Mineral Baths. Daily And** 0  
0 **Weekly Rates for those who** 0  
0 **Care to Stay at Hotel** 0  
0 **JEMISON, ALA.** 0  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

**May 27, 1954 Union-Banner**



## Chilton County's Mineral Springs

**MINERAL SPRINGS NOW IN BEST SHAPE EVER**



Mineral Springs has always been a favorite spot to Chilton county and to many from other nearby areas. The entire area, now owned by Mr. C. C. Conway of Jemison and operated by Dr. and Mrs. J. C. McCoy, is better prepared as a resort and health center than ever in the long and eventful history of Mineral Springs. The hotel can comfortably accommodate up to forty guests, and Dr. McCoy is prepared to furnish steam baths from that naturally impregnated mineral water, as well as to give massages.

The land of the area was entered by Pink Cleckley in 1880, and the history has been varied ever since. Other owners have been Seaburn Headley, Richard Coe of Stanton and Daniel Partridge of Selma, Pink Cleckley again, then it was acquired by J. M. (Doctor) Robinson and Dr. R. B. McNeill. When Coe and Partridge owned it, a hotel was built and the resort was operated by Capt. and Mrs. Smith.

Following the Robinson and McNeill ownership, Dr. J. E. Gowan - of Clanton owned it for five years, selling to Tom Hand of Jemison. From the Hand estate it went to Dr. A. Marshall Price, and it was under his ten-year tenure that the springs made their greatest progress. Assisting Dr. Price were Dr. V. O. Campbell and Dr. H. P. Hanna. December 1st, 1948, Dr. Price was shot down near Union Grove while chasing some bandits who had robbed him. He died a few hours later.

The present management is doing great work with this Chilton county resort center, although they have been there only a few months. It bids fair to become an outstanding health resort for this section of Alabama.


Mr. Conway and Dr. and Mrs. McCoy plan on having an open house and formal opening of the place some time in this coming May, when there will be a barbecue and many other attractions for the visitors.

March 4, 1954 Union-Banner article



May 27, 1954 Union-Banner – photos enhanced.

**SUFFERERS OF**  
**Arthritis, Sciatica, Neuritis, Lumbago, Neuralgia**  
**AND ASSOCIATED CHRONIC CONDITIONS**  
**Kidney, Stomach, Nervous, and Gall Bladder**  
**INSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT THROUGH NON-SURGICAL,  
NON-MEDICAL METHODS**



**Massages, Hot Mineral Baths, Manipulations, Mineral Water To Drink, Physiotherapy,  
Spinal Therapy, Health Food**  
**Open Year Round. Dining Room Open To Public. Excellent Foods.**  
**OFFICE HOURS FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 8:00 P. M.**  
**We Recommend Our Establishment As An Ideal Place To Come For A Complete Rest  
For a Recuperative Vacation — Or To Revitalize Your Health And Joy In Life To The  
Fullest Possible Extent.**  
**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT**  
**REASONABLE WEEKLY RATES. WRITE OR PHONE 6415**

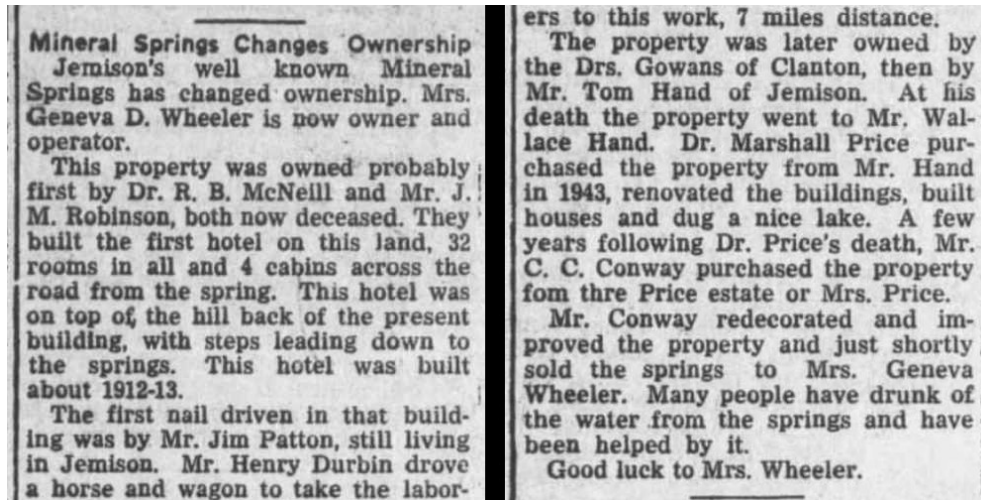
**Mineral Springs Health Resort Hotel**  
**Where The Goddess of Health Waved Her Magic Wand**  
**DR. J. C. McCOY, Chiropractor** **JEMISON, ALABAMA**

May 27, 1954 Union-Banner advertisement

## Later Owners

### Geneva D. Wheeler

Columbus C. Conway sold the property to Geneva D. Wheeler and husband Spurgeon on March 17, 1959.



April 9, 1959 Union-Banner

At the end of the Vietnam War, when the U. S. was evacuating Vietnamese refugees, a family or two were housed in the building.



Alabama Media Group photo at ADAH, August 1975

## Chilton County's Mineral Springs

No other documentation of activities at the site after this point has been found. It has been said that "Bear" Bryant stayed there on occasion and that he had his own room. It has also been rumored that Bryant had an ownership interest at one point. No documentation of this has been found to date.

### **Guy B. Adderhold**

Over a period of years, from 1975 until Jun 8, 1979, the Wheelers worked on selling the property to Guy B. Adderhold and others. After a mortgage, a default, and a public sale, the property was finally owned by Adderhold.

### **King's Ranch, Inc.**

The property was sold again in December 22, 1983 to King's Ranch, Inc. (in covenant with the State of Alabama Department of Youth Services). The sale was from the Adderhold heirs, Deborah Hardesty and Melanie Gusmus.

### **Alabama Department of Youth Services**

August 13, 1991 the King's Ranch, Inc. sold it to the Alabama Department of Youth Services.



## Alabama Mineral Springs, LLC

Around 2021 the property was acquired from the State of Alabama and plans were made to bottle and sell the water again.

<https://alabamamineralsprings.com/>

They have photos and videos in their gallery on their website as well as news articles and more. Some examples:



Original condition of the site, ca 2021.



Image of the spring head (constructed about 1908) from Alabama Mineral Springs Inc., ca 2021.



## Chilton County's Mineral Springs



**Saturday, July 17, 2021, old building stripped and burned. Spring in small building to right.**



**Saturday, July 17, 2021, old building stripped and burned. The spring is in the small building to right.**



## Chilton County's Mineral Springs



New building nearing completion.

Since its discovery in 1889, this mineral rich spring water was utilized in an onsite healing center till the 1980s.

Bottled at the source in beautiful Mineral Springs, Alabama from a free-flowing Artesian spring originating from an aquifer averaging 215' deep.

This water has been analyzed to contain a variety of essential minerals and 6 of the 7 electrolytes. Please scan QR code to learn more.



### OUR PLEDGE

For every bottle sold, Alabama Mineral Springs will donate a portion of the proceeds to support humanitarian efforts to those in need and promote recycling programs.



**PURELY REFRESHING SPRING WATER**  
WITH NATURALLY OCCURRING ELECTROLYTES

**500 mL (16.9 FL. OZ.)**

Mineral Content (mg/L)	
pH	7.3
Bicarbonate*	161
Calcium*	53.1
Chloride*	1.72
Lithium	.007
Magnesium*	.36
Phosphorus*	.04
Sodium*	1.3
Silica	12.66
TDS	172
*Naturally occurring electrolytes	



**100% Recyclable Container**

For water quality and more information, please call  
**1-844-267-9287**

or visit  
[alabamamineralsprings.com](http://alabamamineralsprings.com)

**In God We Trust**

CT, HI, ME, NY 5¢ **CA CRV**  
OR 10¢



5 33504 22111 9

## A Bold, Beautiful Spring Impacted Local Historycutlines

July 29, 2021

The mineral springs circa 1910. (Contributed)

2

The room of a gazebo covering the mineral springs can be seen in this 2018 photo. (Contributed)

By Billy Singleton  
Community Columnist

In December 1889, the *Chilton View* newspaper included the announcement, "Last week, Captain W. A. Smith of Dixie purchased the Mineral Springs property. There on the property is a bold, beautiful spring, strongly impregnated with mineral water gushing out of the white pebbles." The article concluded "The new owners have ample means, and intend to erect a commodious hotel and otherwise improve what they believe to be valuable property. The large hotel is be utilized as a health resort and will be finished by summer."

The resort and adjoining property was purchased in 1905 by physicians J.M. Robinson and R. B. McNeil. In addition to the hotel, the new owners erected cabins to accommodate guests. The new health resort became a prominent recreation and vacation spot for people from all sections of Alabama and nearby states. Visitors arrived by horse, wagon and from the L & N Railroad depot at Jemison to partake of the restorative powers of the water.

Situated on top of a hill, the 40-room hotel afforded a panoramic view of the pine forests surrounding the retreat. Guests could take advantage of the therapeutic natural springs by descending a series of wooden steps that led to a small gazebo where they could relax and enjoy the quiet solitude of nature or the company of friends.

By 1930, the effects of the economic depression resulted in a decline in the number of guests visiting the resort. Eventually, the hotel was torn down; the materials sold and utilized for the construction of private homes and other structures.

In 1938, the deteriorating facility was purchased by renowned herb doctor Andrew Marshall Price. The Union-Banner Newspaper informed readers that, "Under the ownership of Dr. Price, The Springs have undergone considerable improvement and development. A forty-room hospital has been constructed and electricity has been brought in by the Alabama Power Company."

Known as the Mineral Springs Sanatorium, the facility included a hospital building with a combined café and drugstore. The hospital was located beside a wooded hill overlooking two large artificial lakes. In his office, Dr. Price would diagnose the diseases of patients and prescribe herbal remedies. The facility also offered hot and cold baths using water drawn from The Springs, a steam room and spa. The staff of the sanatorium allowed residents of Chilton and surrounding counties to fill containers with the invigorating water of The Springs at no costs.

The history of the Mineral Springs Sanatorium came to a tragic end on a frigid night in December 1949 as two young men from Birmingham robbed the hospital. Giving chase in his car, Dr. Price caught the culprits on a road near Union Springs. During the ensuing confrontation, Price was shot by one of the offenders and succumbed to his wounds.

Following the death of Dr. Price, ownership of the property passed among various groups that included the Mineral Springs Backwoods Village and Gardens, The King's Ranch and the Alabama Department of Youth Services. According to a history published in "The Heritage of Chilton County," legendary football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant was once an owner of the property.

Today, nature has reclaimed much of what remains of the popular resort and sanatorium. In the calm of early evening however, the faint sound of the bold, beautiful spring transcends history as the sparkling water comes gushing out among the white pebbles.