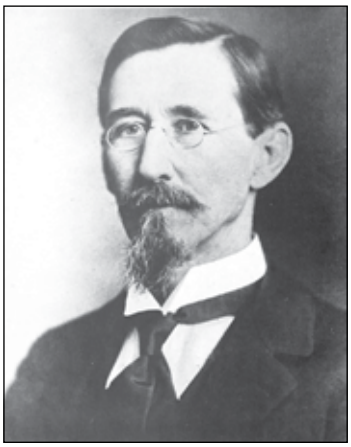
MONTEVALLO
Main Street
Memories

The Reynolds / Rogan House

by Clay Nordan
Montevallo Historical Society

As we have previously established, the intersection of Main and Middle streets has been considered "the center of town" for as long as anyone can remember. Beginning in the 1890's the handsome victorian home you see here was erected by Capt. Henry Clay Reynolds on the parcel of land at the southeast corner and became, along with the Kroell house across the street (1900), an elegant architectural landmark admired for many years by Montevallo citizens and visitors alike.

Capt. Reynolds came to Montevallo following his service in the Confederate Army during the Civil War and earned great success, along with his son, in the general mercantile and newspaper business in Montevallo. His popular store was located in what, until recently, had been an interior section of the old Victory Auto dealership building on Main Steet near the city hall. Over the years, he also became a principal landowner in the Montevallo area.



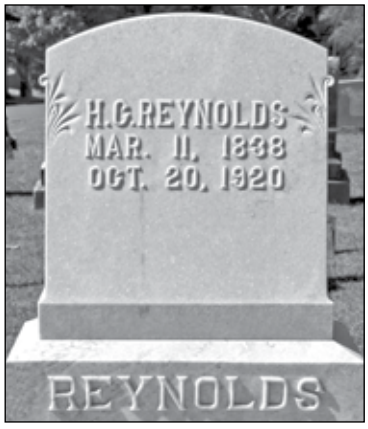
Capt. Henry Clay Reynolds

Reynolds is also remembered as the first president of The Girls Industrial School of Alabama (Reynolds Hall was named for him) whose energetic efforts to promote and establish the school in 1896, even though he had no background in education, are credited as the primary reason the school was able to attract female students from all over the state and enjoy success from the beginning.

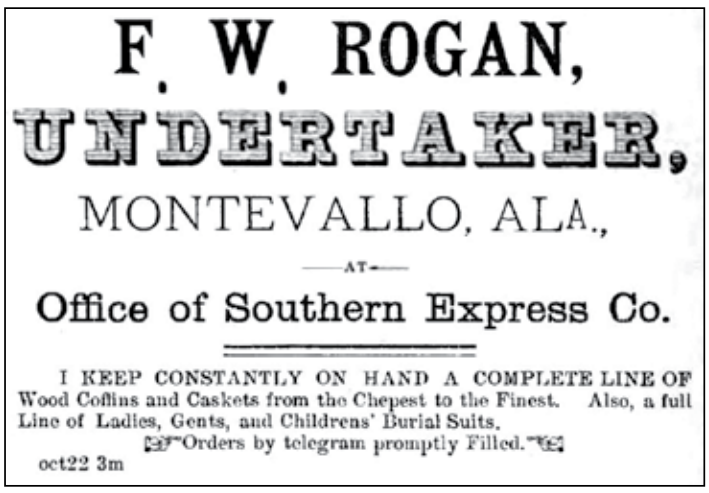
Capt. Reynolds' house is said to have been a meeting place for years for congressmen, senators, governors, and other political figures and is believed to be where he drew up the plans for the girls' school. Along with his wife, Mary, H.C. Reynolds is buried in the Montevallo City Cemetery.

Following his passing in 1920, the house became the home of F. W. Rogan and his wife Belle (Reynolds' daughter) and is where they raised their children. In a previous installment, we featured Mr. Rogan, his store at the corner of Main and Shelby streets, and his various businesses. The Rogans lived in the house for decades and it eventually became known locally as the "Rogan House".

Along with the Kroell house and other large and impressive houses and commercial buildings nearby, the Rogan house also became the victim of progress. When local businessman, R. E. Whaley, bought up the block to make way for his new Whaley Shopping Center development around 1960, the Rogan house was demolished and carted away.



Until then, Main Street and its side streets had presented a balanced mix of residential and commercial buildings whose co-existence contributed a slower feeling of home to downtown. With the advent of Mr. Whaley's new conglomeration of retail stores, those days became memories of a different time.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MONTEVALLO MAIN STREET MEMORIES is adapted from the series, THROWBACK THURSDAY, a **Montevallo Historical Society** and **Montevallo Main Street** partnership started in 2018. Each installment revisits commercial and residential life on Main Street and in the downtown area in the early to mid-twentieth century. The series remains available online and may be viewed at **www.historicmontevallo.org** under "Local History".