

PINTLALA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Next Meeting:

April 19, 2026 at 2:30 p.m.
Pintlala Baptist Church



c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Volume XL, Number 2

www.pintlalahistoricalassociation.com

April 2026

Goat cart ride, ca.1910, Garrett Family



Back Row, L to R: Cart driver, name unknown, Joseph Ernest, Janie Belle, Lottie
Front Row, L to R: James Ernest (in cart), Frank Edgar (in father's lap), Corrie Mae (kneeling)

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President's Message

As we look ahead to our April meeting on the 19th, I want to personally encourage each of you to make plans to attend. These quarterly meetings are an important part of what keeps the Pintlala Historical Association active and connected. They give us the opportunity to hear interesting quest speakers, share updates, discuss ongoing projects, and hear your ideas about how we can continue preserving and promoting our history. Your presence truly makes a difference, and we hope to see a strong turnout.

I also want to take a moment to remind everyone of the importance of annual dues. Membership support is essential to sustaining our work—from maintaining our collections to supporting programs and events throughout the year. If you have not yet submitted your dues, I encourage you to do so at your earliest convenience. Your continued support allows us to continue the work of our association.

Thank you for your commitment to the PHA and for the role each of you plays in keeping our shared history alive

Thanks,

Frank Ellis



IN MEMORIAM

Julianne Hataway (1937-2006) passed away on February 2, 2006 at her home near Fleta, was active in many community affairs. She and Sandra Lassiter were *PHA Newsletter* editors from 1998 to 2004. Their work was appreciated.

DUES ARE DUE!!

Dues were due in January. If you have not renewed, please do so. We hope you will support our money-saving decision to digitize the *PHA Newsletter*. Hopefully you will continue reading it, learning from it and just enjoying the work done by your fellow PHA members. The newsletter will arrive in your computer's mailbox, read online or print a copy to take to bed with you!

If you write a check, please note on the memo line how your funds are to be divided if over \$25.00.

THANK YOU!

PHA April 2026 Program

Pintlala Historical Association will meet on Sunday, April 19th at 2:30 in the Fellowship Hall of Pintlala Baptist Church. Our program will be presented by Nancy Jones Dupree who worked for 22 years as an archivist in the Research/Reference Room at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. She spent those years assisting historical and genealogical researchers, either in person or online, to find documentation for their research. The researchers came from varied backgrounds; perhaps from a small community in Alabama, other areas of the United States itself or from a foreign country. Beside answering the staggering number of questions, Nancy presented numerous genealogical workshops for those yearning to learn more about their ancestors.

Nancy retired in 2019 from the Alabama Department of Archives, but after several years away, she returned to part time work in the Digital Assets Department transcribing and reviewing transcriptions of digitized 19th and 20th century documents. Nancy is active in patriotic organizations such as the DAR.

We amateur historians are thankful for Nancy and her cohorts who work so patiently in the research Room at Archives and History. Thank you all!

Please attend our April 19th meeting to hear Nancy's story of her own personal family research. It will inspire you!



Nancy Jones Dupree

THE JOSEPH ERNEST GARRETT FAMILY OF PINTLALA

Editor's Note

In the months ahead the *PHA Newsletter* will publish a series of articles by Dr. Ina Garrett Slade and Dr. Tony Hopper regarding Ina's grandparents, Joseph Ernest (1874-1941) and Charlotte Mary (Lottie) Merritt Garrett (1876-1960), both natives of the Mt. Willing /Steep Creek areas of Lowndes County, Alabama. The Garretts made their way to Pintlala in Montgomery County around 1912. The research done by Tony and Ina was lengthy, in-depth, productive and interesting. Enjoy their efforts and be inspired to investigate your own families!

The Life and Times of Joseph Ernest Garrett

(1874-1941)

By Dr. Ina Garrett Slade

Joseph Ernest Garrett (J.E.) was a man of many talents who pursued a wide variety of life experiences. His roles as son, husband, father, teacher, preacher, writer, and civic leader provided him with a rich and rewarding life. This study will attempt to share factual information and personal details in order to bring life and color to his history.

Early Years

J. E. Garrett was born either May 3, or May 23, 1874 in Mt. Willing, Alabama (Lowndes County). He was the sixth of ten children born to James Madison Garrett I and Sophronia Arabella Mooney Garrett. Two of Joseph's older brothers, Jonathan Silas and Alexander Mooney died in infancy. A third brother Benjamin Milton died at age nine. Two sisters, Missouri Belle and Mary Alabama and four brothers, James Madison II, Ephraim Spencer, Samuel Jordan and William Emmet completed the family. The children grew up in the old Garrett home built by their grandfather Silas Garrett. The house was occupied continuously by family members for almost a century.

Garrett's mother, Belle, came to Mt. Willing from Missouri with her brother, John Mooney, prior to 1861 to serve as teachers at the Magnolia Academy. Both were ardent Cambellites and well educated as teachers. Their mother, Sophronia Spencer Mooney, acted as secretary for Alexander Campbell at the college founded by the Campbellites in Bethany, West Virginia. Belle Garrett likely provided a great deal of her children's early education. Being a devout Christian, she certainly would have had a profound impact on their learning from the Bible.

United States Federal Census records provide clues to the movements and changes of J. E. Garrett's childhood and youth. The Census of 1880 shows him as six years old and living in Mt. Willing, Alabama with his parents. Census records of 1900 indicate Joseph was 26 years old, unmarried and living in the home of his cousins, Frank and Fannie Garrett Shackelford in Letohatchee, Alabama where his occupation was listed as teacher.

Joseph Ernest furthered his studies at Highland Home College in Crenshaw County, Alabama under the Alabama pioneer educator, J. M. Barnes. The 1914-1915 catalogue for the school lists Garrett as an 1898 graduate having earned an AB degree.

Husband and Father

Joseph Ernest Garrett of Lowndes County most likely met his future wife, Charlotte (Lottie) Mary Merritt, in the Mt. Willing area of Lowndes County where the couple became engaged at Christmas time of 1900. Rather than the traditional engagement ring, Joseph Garrett presented Lottie a gold watch with a small diamond in the center of the front cover. Her name and "Christmas 1900" are engraved inside the cover. The engagement watch has been handed down through three generations of Garretts and treasured as a family heirloom. According to published marriage records, the couple was married in Lowndes County on February 28, 1901 by W.H. Wild, M. G.



Charlotte Mary Merritt Garrett,
bride, ca. February 28, 1901



Joseph Ernest Garrett, groom,
ca. February 28, 1901

J. E. and Lottie were parents of six children: Janie Belle (b. 1902), Corrie Mae (b. 1904), James Ernest (b.1906), Frank Edgar (b.1909),

Lottie Ree (b. 1911), and William Silas (b. 1915). Four of the six Garrett children became teachers, one served in the U. S. Air Force, and one became an agricultural supervisor in Baldwin County, Alabama as a State employee. All of the children were well educated and devout members of the Church of Christ.

The 1910 Federal Census records indicate that Joseph Ernest Garrett was 36 years old, head of household, living on a farm in Lowndes County and was employed as a public school teacher. The 1910 census also included his wife Lottie and their four children, ages 7,6,3, and 1. According to an article in the newspaper, *The Citizen-Examiner*, of Hayneville, Alabama, J. E. Garrett was reportedly living in Sandy Ridge, Alabama in 1912.

What precipitated this move is unknown. However, a letter written by Garrett to members of Liberty Church of Christ in Pintlala, shared that he and his family had moved to the Pintlala community in late November of 1912, in order for him to begin serving as Elder at the church.

Family records document that the Garrett family lived in the Mosley/Powell house located on what in 2026 is called Mobile Old Road, while a new home for the Garretts was under construction on Mobile Road (Hwy. 31) . The home was built adjacent to Liberty Church of Christ. J.E. and Lottie Garrett's youngest child, William Silas, was born in the front bedroom of the Mosley/Powell home where neighbor, Dr. William Tankersley aided with the birth. The family moved into their new home sometime in 1916. World War I military records during 1917-1918 document that Joseph Ernest Garrett was a resident of Montgomery County at that time.



Garrett Family Home in Pintlala, Constructed 1915-1916, Family moved into home in late 1916. Renovation of Garrett home by Gaines and Ina Slade, began in 2002. All photos courtesy Ina Garrett Slade

Work as Educator

As written previously, Joseph Ernest Garrett graduated in 1898 from Highland Home College. Garrett's role as educator was documented as early as February 1894 in *The Citizen -Examiner* (Hayneville, Alabama) where it was reported that Professor J. E. Garrett joined other educators in Lowndes County for enrichment presentations concerning discipline, spelling, algebra and other topics.

Educators of the late 1800s and early 1900s faced their share of difficulties. Transportation to schools was undependable as county roads were in poor condition and made even walking to school a challenge for students, teachers and principals alike. Another hindrance for participation in public schools was the lack of regimented health care. Vaccines and medicine in general were often unavailable. Classes would be interrupted due to outbreaks of diseases. An example of this type of interruption was found in the March 16, 1899 edition of *The Citizen-Examiner* (Hayneville, Alabama):

“Mr. J. E. Garrett who has been teaching a flourishing school at Fatama, Wilcox County, has returned home, his school having been closed on account of an epidemic of smallpox at Fatama.” Another published record of dire health in schools appeared in the same newspaper of January 1900. It informed the public that the Letohatchee School was closed due to an outbreak of scarlet fever.

History of J. E. Garrett's Education Career

An earlier *Citizen-Examiner* news article of October 1899, reported that the State Board of Education awarded Professor Garrett a First Grade Teaching Certificate, which was the highest level attainable other than a Life Certificate. *The Citizen-Examiner* newspaper (Hayneville, Alabama) in December of the same year informed readers that Garrett served on a committee of educators who organized teachers' meetings in Fort Deposit (Lowndes County). Garrett spoke to the group on Physiology. In April 1901, Garrett gave the welcoming address at a teachers' meeting in Letohatchee, presided over the election of officers and spoke on “Cultivating the Reading Spirit”.

Ernest Garrett held many education positions in various locations across central and western Alabama. Below are listed, chronologically, some documented events in his professional life as an educator:

1899—Principal- Fatama, Wilcox County

1901—Principal - Letohatchee High School-*Montgomery Advertiser* records that “the school is under the sole management of Joseph E. Garrett and has had the most prosperous year of its history. Professor Garrett is a scholar of high excellence.”

1913-1915—Teacher- Grange Hall, Pintlala, Alabama

1916—Principal- Sellers, Alabama School

1919—Principal-Lapine, Alabama School

1922—Principal-Orrville Consolidated School, Dallas County, Alabama

It is likely that there were other locations for Garrett's employment, but are unknown through family documents.

Oral family history suggests that J. E. Garrett taught Latin and Greek at Highland Home College but no records have been located to confirm this. Family member, Ina Slade, is in possession of an inspiring handwritten commencement address, “The Importance of Living Right” delivered by Garrett at Highland Home College, year unknown. (Available from writer of this article)

Minister of God

During the same time frame that J. E. Garrett was employed as an educator, he began to preach the Gospel in various churches primarily in Montgomery and Lowndes counties. He often accepted invitations to preach at small churches without a regular minister. Garrett led Bible studies, performed baptisms and marriages, conducted funeral services, preached sermons and led Gospel meetings. In all of J. E. Garrett's endeavors, the Bible and its teachings were his guide. He was an avid and devoted student of the Bible.

J. E. Garrett enjoyed sitting in his front porch swing or under the trees in his yard discussing and debating points of scripture with friends who were also preachers. T. Furman Cauthen was one of those friends. He wrote the following in a brief history of Liberty Church of Christ: "Brother Ernest and I spent so many pleasant hours together studying and meditating ." Pintlala native, Sarah (Tweet) Garrett Moore shared memories of her Pintlala childhood with the Pintlala Historical Association in a 2010 letter. "I remember sitting in on the Elders meeting for Liberty Church. Cousin Ernest, who was very liberal and uncle Frank Shackelford, who was very conservative and my dad, Reid Garrett would be in the big swing as I played on the steps. They would have their Bibles open on their laps. They would often disagree—at times rather heatedly, each using his Bible to prove HIS point. My Dad was always the peacemaker. They always presented changes in unison. Despite arguments, they loved and respected one another."

Eventful Years

The Greenville Advocate of July, 1901 reported J. M. Barnes and J. E. Garrett were holding "Protracted Services" at the City Hall in Greenville, Alabama where they would be preaching day and night for several days. J. E.'s friend Furman Cauthen related the following in a brief history of Liberty Church: "In the winter of 1939 a spark from the flue set the south roof ablaze, but under the calm leadership of Brother Edgar Garrett (son of J. E. Garrett) the flame was quickly extinguished. Services were continued in Brother Ernest Garrett's home."

Garrett wrote a dated letter to the Liberty Church of Christ in December 1940, asking to resign his duties as Elder due to poor health. This letter was a time for reflection by Garrett as he remembered: September 1905, when he was called to preach at Liberty Church; the time in 1912 of moving his family to Pintlala and being made an Elder. Little did the Church or Garrett know that he would be gone in less than a year.

Prolific Writer

Creativity and the desire to express his thoughts, opinions and beliefs led J. E. Garrett to produce many writings in varied formats. His works included poems, historical and geographical essays, letters to editors of regional newspapers based on his opinions on a variety of subjects. When thoughts came to mind,

J. E. Garrett would write them down in pencil on whatever paper was available, such as school tablets or exam booklets. Many of his compositions have now been transcribed and scanned in an effort to preserve his works.

Professor Garrett wrote a lengthy and thorough description of the Mt. Willing community in Lowndes County where he grew up. He included detailed information on geographical features of the area such as creeks, hills, bluffs and homes. The names of every family living in Mt. Willing were included. These names have recently been compiled into a listing, available from the writer of this biography. Unfortunately, Garrett did not date this work.

Another of Garrett's historical essays titled "A Lost Fort" was published in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, of March 27, 1922. This essay discussed Andrew Jackson, Fort Crawford, the massacre at Burnt Corn Creek and how Murder Creek got its name. A unique article by Garrett was published in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 21, 1920 titled "Locust Year". Another sonnet, "Rain Drops" describes tiny rain drops joining together to forge a mighty impact on the hills and valleys they touched. This poem reflects Garrett's deep belief in his Creator.

Community Advocate

J. E. Garrett possessed concern for his community and its citizens, not only through his education career or ministerial endeavors, but for their general well-being and civic involvement. He set an example through personal civic responsibility.

Garrett's efforts to organize a successor to the National Grange of the Patrons of Animal Husbandry, Pintlala Grange #175 proved successful. He promoted a community meeting in the March 2, 1917 *Montgomery Advertiser* for the purpose of organizing a chapter of the Farm Loan Association of Pintlala. By the 1890s the popularity of Granges began to wane. July 21-23, 1891 the last meeting of the Alabama Grang-

es took place in Pintlala at the Grange Hall located on Federal Road. The Federal Land Bank was organized as the National Farm Loan Association (NFLA) on August 17, 1917 and continued to hold its meetings in the Grange Hall. The Federal Land Bank is still a viable organization in 2026. The Pintlala NFLA issued a resolution honoring the work of Joseph Ernest Garrett as organizer, founder and president of the Pintlala chapter. This resolution was presented to Garrett's family after his death in 1941.

Garrett's keen interest in appreciating, teaching and preserving local history was clearly evident in a postscript to an undated letter to the *Montgomery Advertiser* :

"P.S.—We need an historical society organized in each county to mark the places of interest. Alabama history is the most poorly taught subject in our public schools. The principals of the county high schools should take the lead. A great many pupils know more about the old Greeks than they do about Jackson or Dale. Our history should be vitalized. There is no State in the Union with a brighter list of heroes and deeds than Alabama. I believe Alabama laws should be taught in every grade of school."

The End of a Life Well Lived

Joseph Ernest Garrett died on June 14, 1941, from heart-related complications. He was a man of many talents, driven to achieve and resolved to live out the tenets of his faith. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Montgomery, Alabama in the Garrett family lot. Engraved on his tombstone is a quote from one of his favorite scriptures: Second Timothy, 4:7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Furman Cauthen, friend and fellow Minister of God, was a student of Professor Garrett's at the school in Lapine. Cauthen delivered the eulogy for Garrett's funeral which was conducted at White Chapel Funeral Home in Montgomery.

SOURCES

Archival Family Records:

Handwritten notes /letters by Joseph Ernest Garrett
 Handwritten letter by William S. Garrett, 1989
 Oral family history and stories
 Funeral Eulogy written by T. Furman Cauthen, delivered June 15, 1941
 Brief History of Liberty Church of Christ, 1938-1944, by T. Furman Cauthen

Booklets and Records

Highland Home College Catalogue, 1914-1915
 Grange Hall Records, 1873-1939 (source unknown)

Newspapers.com

The Citizen Examiner, (Hayneville, Alabama)
The Greenville Advocate, (Greenville, Alabama)
The Montgomery Advertiser, (Montgomery, Alabama)

United States Federal Census Records for the listed years: 1880,1900,1910,1920

World War I, United States, Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918

Acknowledgements

My deep appreciation to:

Alice Carter for her invaluable assistance in writing, editing and typing this work
 Margery Henry for sharing materials regarding Liberty Church of Christ, Pintlala, Alabama
 Dr. Tony Hopper for his excellent research skills and ability to fit many individual historical facts into this larger essay
 Ina G. Slade



**PINTLALA HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

*c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, AL 36043*



NEXT MEETING

APRIL 19, 2026

2:30 P.M.

**PINTLALA BAPTIST
CHURCH**



Join the Pintlala Historical Association

Please mail completed form & dues to:

Pintlala Historical Association

Ina Slade, Treasurer

15212 Highway 31

Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone (Home & Office) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Areas of Interest _____

If you are interested in genealogy, please indicate family surnames _____

\$25.00 Annual Dues