

# History

OF

TOWN OF GIBSONVILLE  
NORTH CAROLINA

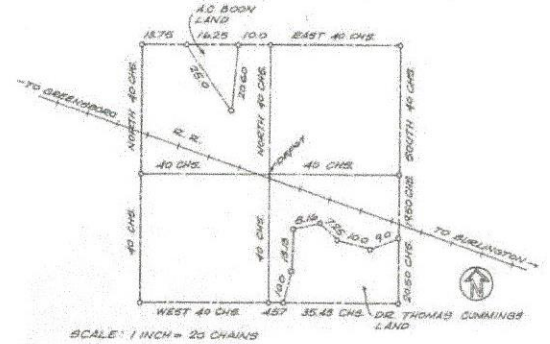
By Melvin O. Wyrick

## Centennial

February 18, 1971

1

### Earliest Map of Gibsonville



The above Plat shows the corporate limits of the Town of Gibsonville in the County of Guilford and Alamance of N.C. The bearings and distances are taken from the center of the Rail Road Depot and are as is shown above. Surveyed by me on the 30th day of March, 1894.

Joseph P. Albright

Gibsonville became known as the Town of Gibsonville on February 18, 1871 being chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly in its biennial session that year. It is not known who requested incorporation, but the name Gibsonville had already been applied to the community since the first Post Office bore that name on June 15, 1855, the date it first opened for business.

Gibsonville was named in honor of Joseph Gibson, son of Andrew Gibson, who was an emigrant from Edinborough, Scotland. Joseph requested that the community bear his name since he had no sons to carry on the Gibson name. Joseph's father was born in the year 1750, and was apprenticed in his early teens to a silversmith in Edinborough. The silversmith emigrated to America in 1765, landing in Charleston, S. C. Against the wishes of his parents, Andrew came with him, although only 15 years old. After Andrew became of age, he moved to Cheraw, S. C. where he opened a store of his own. About 1775 he moved to Guilford County, N. C., very probably in the community to be later known as Gibsonville, and operated a general store. He sued a man for debt before Esquire Freeland of Orange County. While at Esquire Freeland's home, he met his daughter, Jane Freeland, fell in love with her, and they were married the latter part of 1776. Andrew Gibson, who was the father of eight children, five boys and three girls, acquired quite a bit of property in land and slaves, and was considered well to do in his day and time. This is attested by his Last Will and Testament, date of February

24, 1823, a copy of which is on file in the Town Clerk's Office. Joseph was a recipient of a portion of his father's estate, and acquired quite an estate of his own.

The Gibson family did extensive farming, and some gold mining, which was really the community's earliest industry. One of the mines was located just south of the Gibsonville Cemetery on the west side of Springwood Road. Shafts, which had been dug fifty and sixty feet deep, now mostly filled, and mounds of earth and flint rock can still be seen on Gold Hill, the name it bore at that time. Another mine was located on the east side of Whitsett Avenue about where Bennett Sales Corporation building is situated.

In 1823, a few months after making his Last Will and Testament, Andrew Gibson died, and he and his wife are buried in the Gibsonville Cemetery. In the early 1840's James and Moses Gibson, sons of Andrew Gibson, and their families moved to Arkansas to live. Prior to leaving North Carolina, Moses, according to records, served as an elder in Bethel Presbyterian Church for 25 years. It is understood that the original Bethel Church was located near the Gibson family burying ground, now a part of the Gibsonville Cemetery. Joseph Gibson remained in Gibsonville and was responsible for grading the road bed for the new railroad from Raleigh to Greensboro. The grading of road beds for the railroad was usually performed by the citizens in the communities through which it passed. Joseph Gibson contracted with the State to work and grade 3½ miles of road bed on both sides of the county line for the sum of \$4,000.00 per mile. Slaves, owned by Joseph, did the bulk of the work. The road bed was begun in 1851, the building of the depot in 1854, and the first train entered the Gibsonville station October 9, 1855. Much information concerning the building of the railroad through Gibsonville can be obtained from the "Gibson" letters, copies of which are also on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

Joseph Gibson, who was born May 19, 1785, in Guilford County, and probably in the Gibsonville community, died January 25, 1857, and he and his wife, Mary A. Gibson, are also buried in the Gibsonville Cemetery. Other members of the Gibson family buried in the Gibsonville Cemetery are: John Freeland Gibson, son of Andrew; Eliza Ann Gibson, daughter of Moses Gibson; Nancy U. Gibson, daughter of Andrew, and her husband, George Clapp; Jane Gibson, daughter of Andrew, and her husband, Jesse Thompson; and Elizabeth Gibson, daughter of Andrew, and her husband, William Causey.

The incorporation of the town took place just six years after the close of the Civil War and during "Reconstruction Days."

Just why the founding fathers laid off the boundaries of the town as they did, to include land in both Guilford and Alamance Counties, is not, and perhaps, will never be known. We, today, are sure they did not realize the many complex problems with which the Town is faced because of this division.

The Town of Gibsonville, when first incorporated, constituted an area of one square mile, with the exception of the lands of Dr. Thomas Cummings in the southeast section of town and that of Mr. A. C. Boon in the northwest section. It is understood that these men did not desire their lands to be located within the town limits. The center of the town was the railroad depot. A benchmark, showing the elevation of the Town at 721 feet above sea level, is located very near the depot.

Records from the office of Secretary of State show that the exempted lands of Dr. Thomas Cummings and A. C. Boon were added to the corporate limits in 1921. There were no new annexations to the town's limits until the year 1957 when a small tract of land owned by A. B. Owen and others on the eastern edge of the town was added. Since that time, there have been several annexations, and, today the area of the Town of Gibsonville is approximately 1.55 square miles. It is estimated that approximately 55% of the land area is in Guilford County while about 45% is in Alamance County.

Dr. Thomas Cummings, who lived in Gibsonville and owned quite a large tract of land, gave not only the right of way for the railroad through Gibsonville, but also donated two acres of land to the Railroad Company for a hitching lot. This two acre plot comprises all of the two existing grass plots in the center of town including the streets surrounding them.

Captain Billy Gilmer operated one of the first stores in Gibsonville. It was located where the Gibsonville Drug Store now stands. This store carried a line of general merchandise, hardware, and groceries. The building was a wooden structure and was operated prior to the Civil War.

Another store was operated by E. L. Smith and a Mr. Isley. It stood almost opposite the Boone Furniture Store. At the same time, Captain James Sutton operated a saloon there. In 1883, Henry W. Steele bought this store building and for a while it was the only store in Gibsonville. On Railroad Avenue, Joe Whitsett built a small wooden building for an engine and storage room for the new railroad. Later this building was converted into a store and post office. Barney Troxler was the Postmaster in this building. In 1887, this same building was used by the Minneola Manufacturing Company as a company store. John L. Whitesell operated the store and was also Postmaster. This building was later converted into a residence and still stands at 200 E. Railroad Avenue.

On Main Street, near the site of the Town's three story brick building, stood an ell shaped wooden building, erected by a Mr. Leonard and bought by Dr. G. E. Jordan, when he came to Gibsonville. In the front part of the building, which stood closest to the street, the first drug store was operated. In the recessed part of the building was the post office which had been transferred from the Joe Whitsett building across the railroad. Dr. Jordan's office was

beside the post office. In the year 1894, Dr. Jordan's half-brother, John H. Walker moved to Gibsonville from his home in northwestern Alamance County and became the Town's first druggist in this wooden building. About the year 1894, Dr. Jordan built the two story brick building at the corner of Main and Lewis Streets. This building was first occupied by a drug store in the western half, and Burke's Department Store in the eastern half. Dr. Jordan kept an office in the back part of this building facing Lewis Street. About 1906 Dr. Jordan constructed the three story brick building, adjoining his two story building on Main Street, and this was first occupied as a furniture and hardware store, operated by L. T. Barber and others.

According to information from Mr. H. S. (Bud) Lewey, the oldest business building constructed of brick was the W. R. Cobb building on Lewis Street. It was built by M. L. Fogleman, and the offices of Waynick Insurance Agency and Wade's Jewelers were last located there. This building was demolished a few years ago and replaced with a new building, which now houses the Gibsonville Savings and Loan Association and Service Beauty Salon. The oldest dwelling in town, still standing at 305 Alamance Street, is now owned by Mrs. Garland Steele.

One of the early meeting places was certainly around the town well, located alongside Piedmont Street, between the drug store and the depot. It was, of course, the windlass and bucket type, but it was a source of fresh water for the few business establishments and a place where tired travelers could refresh themselves. There is no record when this well was dug or when it was abandoned.

A recent letter from the office of Secretary of State indicated that the original Town Charter provided for a magistrate, three commissioners and a constable to govern the newly created Town. The first election was held by the Sheriff of Guilford County, but no records are available to show who these first elected officials were. Another letter from the Secretary of State, which shows that the Town Charter was amended in the year 1905, provided that a Mayor and five Aldermen would constitute the governing body. Based on this fact, John L. Whitesell was the first elected Mayor, and S. V. May, W. R. Cobb, H. B. Owen, F. M. Smith and C. N. Cone were the first elected members of the Board of Aldermen. According to information handed down from one generation to another, the embryo town apparently was a very rough place. There were three very popular saloons, all located in wooden buildings. One of the structures was located at the northeast corner of Main and Piedmont Streets where the present Summers' Building now stands. Another was on Main Street, about midway between Lewis and Piedmont Streets, while the third stood on Railroad Avenue just west of the present Minneola Mill office. It has been said that groups visiting saloons engaged in big fights and that it was not safe to be on the streets after dark, especially on Saturday nights.

About the year 1883 Mr. Henry W. Steele came to Gibsonville from the Friendship Community in Alamance County. He was a man of strong moral character. Finding the Charter of the Town lost and the town government not functioning, he secured another Charter and an election was held. He was elected the first Magistrate or Mayor after the town was reorganized. One of the first acts of the new administration was to tax the saloons so high that all three were forced out of business.

The earliest doctor in the community was Dr. Thomas Cummings, already mentioned. Dr. A. P. McDonald and Dr. Joe McLean, both of whom lived on Greensboro Road near Sedalia, also had patients in Gibsonville. In the early 1890's Dr. G. E. Jordan moved here from Alamance County. He had studied medicine under Dr. George Kernodle of Altamahaw and had also received professional training in Richmond and Baltimore. He served both as a doctor and a builder of Gibsonville until his death in 1915.

The business life in Gibsonville really began in 1887 when Mr. Berry Davidson sold his mill at Altamahaw and chose Gibsonville for his new location. One year after his arrival, he built the oldest part of the present Minneola Plant of Cone Mills Corporation. He, with his nephew, Mr. Joe Davidson, gave the new mill a fine start. In 1893 he sold this mill to the Cone family of Greensboro, N. C., who has operated it since that time. Mr. Davidson then showed his faith in Gibsonville by building the Hiawatha Mill. In 1905 he sold this mill to the Holts of Burlington, N. C., who renamed it the Gem Cotton Mill. The Holts operated this plant until about 1929 when it was closed during the depression, which had just begun. It is now, with quite a bit of remodeling, the Gibsonville plant of the Liberty Hosiery Mills, Inc.

Mr. Berry Davidson was truly a pioneer mill builder in North Carolina. He was born in Randolph County in 1831. At the age of 14 he served his apprenticeship under Solomon Dickson, a millwright of Alamance County. During his life, he built twenty-three grist mills, three saw mills, fourteen cotton mills, ten water power plants, and three churches. Twenty-four years of his life were spent in cotton manufacturing. Often he was called upon to solve knotty problems for cotton mill operators in our State. He was a man whose word was his bond. Once in court when called upon to prove a statement, he answered that he did not have to prove it, he said it himself. Records show that Mr. Davidson served as Mayor of Gibsonville from 1907 to 1911, but it is believed he served as Magistrate (or Mayor) at an earlier date. Oddly enough, his son, D. M. Davidson, ran against him in 1913 and won. Mr. D. M. Davidson has the distinction of having served longer than any other person as Mayor of Gibsonville. Both, father and son, in the capacity of Mayor, took the lead in making Gibsonville grow to be a respectable place in which to live and work.



D. M. DAVIDSON served as Mayor of Gibsonville a period of 20 consecutive years, a record which no one has approached as yet.

Records indicate that there have been only two cases in the Town's history where father and son have served as Mayors. The case of Berry Davidson and son, D. M. Davidson, is mentioned in the preceding paragraph, and the other is that of Henry W. Steele and J. Garland Steele, father and son respectively.

The first church building constructed in Gibsonville was the Methodist Protestant Church under the leadership of Mr. Berry Davidson shortly after he moved to Gibsonville in 1887. This church was located at the corner of Church and Wharton Streets, site of the present Central Baptist Church. Very little change has been made in the appearance of this building. Sharon Lutheran Church organized next on December 21, 1893. The first services were held on the lower floor of the Masonic Lodge, then located on West Main Street. On January 23, 1898 the first service was held in the new church building, located at the corner of Sharon and Burke Streets, now the site of the Gibsonville Christian Church. In 1939 a new site was purchased from M. J. Rankin at the corner of Alamance and Meadow Streets and an

attractive edifice was built, which serves as its place of worship today. In 1895 the Baptists, under the leadership of Mr. Johnnie Fogleman, were organized, and the first three services were held in the Methodist Protestant Church. In joint agreement with the Lutherans, they used the Masonic Lodge to hold their services until their new church was completed. In May 1896 they held their first service in their new church, which had been constructed at the corner of Piedmont and Joyner Streets where it stood until 1951 when a new and modern building was constructed. The Methodist Episcopal Church was the third to organize, this taking place in July 1907. Services were held in the Masonic Lodge, the Methodist Protestant Church, the Liberty Hall and finally in the old Green School Building until their new church at the corner of Church and Joyner Streets was completed about 1911. A new and beautiful structure now stands in the place of the original building. There are today in addition to the above churches, the Gibsonville Christian, the Evangelical Methodist, the Church of God, the Gospel Center, the Kingdom Hall, and the Central Baptist Church.

The earliest schools in Gibsonville were subscription schools, maintained with tuition paid by each pupil attending. One was held in the old Masonic Lodge, a two story wooden building then located on E. Joyner Street across from the present Gibsonville Baptist Church. Another, known as the "Yellow School Building," because of its color, was situated near where the present Central Baptist Church now stands. A third school was located near Friedens Church. In the year 1903 a group of citizens met and decided to build a public school and include the Friedens community in the district. The school district was organized, and taxes were voted to finance the project. During 1903, three acres of land was purchased from Mrs. Creasy Lewey, mother of Miss Alice Lewey, for the site of the first public school in Gibsonville. A seven room wooden structure with an auditorium in the center was completed in 1904 on the site of the present primary and cafeteria building. It became known as the "Green School Building" because of its color. It was abandoned in the fall of 1923 when the present two-story brick building was opened for use. In April of 1924 the old "Green School Building," which had served its usefulness, caught fire and burned.

The first principal of the "Green" School was Mr. W. W. Davidson, half-brother of Mr. D. M. Davidson, and the first two teachers were: Miss Etta Mendenhall (Mrs. J. W. Burke) and Miss Bertie Clifton.



Picture of the "Green" School Building located on E. Joyner Street about where the present school cafeteria and primary class rooms are located. It was the first graded school in Gibsonville and was erected in 1904. The building burned in April 1924.

An old R. G. Dunn & Company book (later known as Dunn & Bradstreet), dated July, 1891, showed the following businesses listed in Gibsonville:

Population 100    Banking Town—Greensboro  
H. Albright—Distiller  
A. C. Boon—Fertilizer  
Eureka Mill Company—Flour and Saw Mill  
D. P. Foust—G. S. Mill & Company  
J. B. Gerringer—Distiller  
G. Ingle—Distiller  
Minneola Manufacturing Company  
W. C. Michael—Saw Mill  
John F. Overman—Tanner  
D. Patton—Distiller  
H. W. Steele—General Store  
J. B. Summers—Mill  
J. M. Sutton—Distiller

The first livery stable was located near where the present Boone Furniture Store on W. Main Street is located. It was first operated by E. L. Smith and F. Marion Smith. This building, which was a large open shed, was first used by E. L. Smith as a storage place for hay, which he bought, baled and shipped. J. R. Pettigrew bought this business from the Smiths and operated it for years until the advent of the automobile made it impossible to continue. Before discontinuing the business, Mr. Pettigrew moved the building to about

where the office of Dr. Charles Phillips is now located (corner of Minneola and Smith Streets) and operated it there until it closed. The livery stable, which had a special room for "drummers" to spend the night before being transported to areas such as Ossipee, Altamahaw, Whitsett and other areas, was very active in its days of usefulness, particularly since students attending the popular Whitsett Institute depended upon its services for transportation.

In the year 1901, thirty years after incorporation, records show there were 80 homes, 2 cotton mills, 3 or 4 merchandise establishments and about 500 people in Gibsonville. In the year 1921, fifty years after incorporation, records show there were approximately 500 homes, two cotton mills, one hosiery mill, a chair factory, and approximately 1300 population. Today, there are more than 700 homes, more than 60 business houses, 7 industrial plants, more than 10 well maintained churches, a Southern Association approved public school, and for the first time, more than 2,000 population.

One of the first taxicabs, or car for hire as it was first known, was operated by C. W. Overman. His principal run was also to and from Whitsett Institute. Mr. Overman also operated the first chair factory in Gibsonville and the first movie house. A tanning yard was operated outside the city limits on Bethel Church Road by Thomas Overman, father of C. W. Overman. Other early cars for hire were operated by Jim Whitesell, Everett Ingle and Jim Diamont.

In the teens, the Town had a one man street force in the person of Mr. Peter May, who cared for the ditches and drain pipes. Mr. May was also a considerable land owner, owning at one time the majority of the houses on May Street.

In the teens and early twenties, the Chautauqua, which was the main annual show, was widely attended. The shows were sometimes held in large tents, erected on one of the two railroad grass plots, and sometimes on the second floor of the currently owned Masonic Building on East Main Street. These shows were sponsored principally by the Gibsonville merchants.

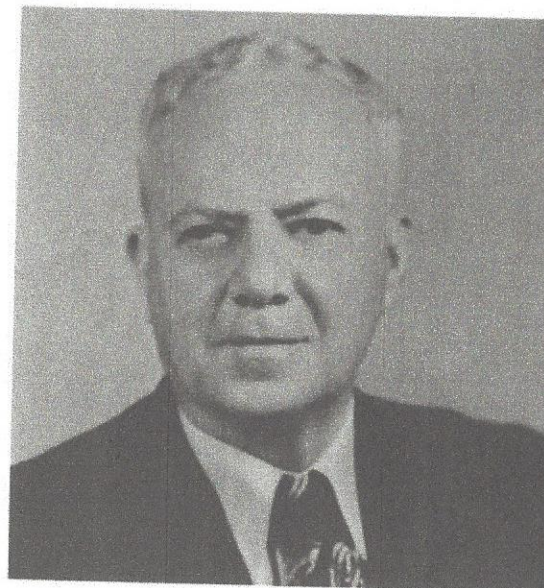
The first State PTA office, which housed the office of the Treasurer, was located on the second floor of Burke's Department Store. Mrs. J. W. Burke, better known as "P. T. Burke," was the first State PTA Treasurer, and she served without compensation. Also, the office space was furnished gratis by Mr. and Mrs. Burke.

The Bank of Gibsonville was the Town's first bank, established in the year 1907. The first Directors were: W. H. Mendenhall, who was the first President, F. M. Smith, J. L. Whitesell, W. C. Michael, Dr. G. E. Jordan, H. P. Bowman, S. L. Murray, J. W. Boring, who was Vice President and Cashier, and W. R. Cobb. It was first located in the Summers Building at 205 E. Main Street, where it remained until 1912 when it was moved to the present location. In 1969 the bank merged and became a branch of the First Citizens Bank & Trust Company.

Old N. C. Highway # 10, one of the first numbered highways in North Carolina, originally came through Gibsonville. It followed

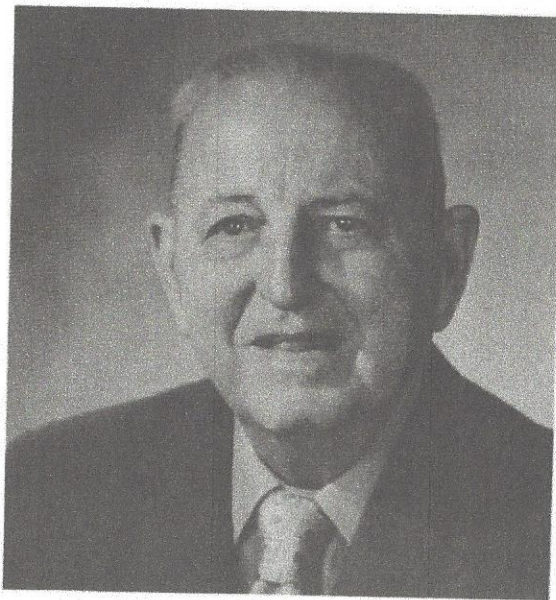
a part of the route of Highway # 100 today except that it formerly crossed the railroad at the depot and then west on Railroad Avenue to Whitsett Avenue. It was also one of the first macadamized roads in the State. About 1920 the railroad underpass was constructed and the highway changed to the route Highway # 100 runs today. Highway # 70 was built about 1931, removing the bulk of traffic from Gibsonville.

The first garbage site for the Town was located on land owned by A. B. Owen outside the corporate limits beyond the southeastern section of Town. Since there were many gullies on this property, Mr. Owen permitted the Town to dump garbage here from the early twenties to the 1950's. Mr. Owen was very generous in that he not only permitted without charge the use of his land for garbage disposal, but also donated several lots to the Town for deep well sites. The next garbage site was on the City's property at the site of the present southside sewage disposal plant. This land was used until 1963 when the City began using the present 45 acre tract on Springwood Avenue Extension, which was purchased from the L. D. (Bud) May Estate.



A. B. OWEN served as a member of the Gibsonville Board of Aldermen for a period of 40 years, a record which perhaps will never be equaled. Mr. Owen also served as town treasurer during the majority of his terms.

The Gibsonville Fire Department was organized in early December of 1923, shortly after the water system was completed. It was a volunteer department, consisting of a Chief and nineteen firemen. The first Chief was Mr. A. Koch, who was also the Town's first Water Superintendent. Mr. Koch did not serve long as Fire Chief, but was succeeded by Mr. G. B. May, who held this position for more than thirty-three years. The first fire equipment consisted of five hose reels, with 200 to 300 feet of fire hose on each, located in small tin buildings near thickly settled areas. A siren, capable of being heard all over town, was located on four light poles on a lot on Lewis Street. The purchase of the first fire truck, a brand new Model T Ford, was made in 1925. The department today has a practically new and modern fire truck (1966 Ford), a good used (Mack) truck and a 1500 gallon tanker. The Town is also served by a modern fire alarm system.



G. B. MAY served as Gibsonville's Fire Chief for more than 23 years, longer than any other person. He also served as a Town Alderman for several years.

The water and sewer system was begun in 1922 and completed in 1923. Two deep wells, one 75,000 gallon water tank, and a 154,000 gallon ground reservoir served the Town for several years. Two Imhoff Tanks served the Town's sewage disposal needs for several years. Today the Town has six deep wells in operation and an additional 125,000 gallon water tank. The Town has over the past several years rebuilt the two sewage treatment plants so as to provide secondary treatment as well as primary treatment.

Some of the City's streets were named in honor of well known persons: **Joyner Street** in honor of Professor J. H. Joyner who was principal of the Gibsonville Public School for several years and who also owned considerable real estate in the Town; **Eugene Street** in honor of Mr. Eugene Holt, one of the owners of Lawrence S. Holt & Sons industrial plant, better known as the Gem Cotton Mills; **Owen Street** in honor of Mr. A. B. Owen, who served 40 years as a Town Alderman, one-half the life of the Town up to the time of his last term, and who also was a considerable land owner; **Wyrick Street** in honor of the present Town Clerk, M. O. Wyrick; **Steele Street** in honor of J. Garland Steele, former Mayor of Gibsonville, who owned land along this street; **Cummings Street** in honor of Dr. Thomas Cummings, mentioned earlier; **Wharton Avenue** in honor of Mr. Lee A. Wharton, the Town druggist for many years and who lived on this street; **Madkins Street** in honor of Walter Madkins, long time resident of Gibsonville; **Hill Street** in honor of Mr. W. Claude Hill, also a long time resident; **Whitesell Street** in honor of J. Connie Whitesell, owner of property adjoining this street when it was first opened; **Burke Street** in honor of J. W. Burke, Gibsonville merchant, Town Alderman and member of the Board of Guilford County Commissioners; **Apple Street** in honor of James M. Apple, long time Gibsonville resident and a Confederate veteran; **May Street** in honor of Peter May, already mentioned; **Gerringer Street** in honor of N. Lee Gerringer, who owned land and lived near this street; and **Wood Street** in honor of H. D. Wood, long time resident on this street. **Smith Street** in honor of F. M. Smith, and **Huffines Street** in honor of L. T. Huffines. Lewis Street was actually named for the Lewey family, which owned land along this street, but a misspelling of the word on the record was never changed.

Mr. Henry R. Story was the Town's first full time Town Clerk. He served from October 1922 to December 1924 when he became ill and had to resign. He was followed by Joe T. Allen, a local Attorney, who served briefly. M. O. Wyrick was appointed in 1925 and served a period of 13 months, being succeeded by J. A. Nuckols, who served about 18 months. Wyrick returned to the office on March 1, 1928 and has served continuously since.

Very few Gibsonville citizens have held public offices higher than that of Mayor or Alderman. It is believed the reason for this was due to the fact that Gibsonville lies on the very Eastern edge of Guilford County and the very Western side of Alamance County, and thus remote from the political centers of both Counties. We have records, however, of some of our citizens serving in higher political offices. James M. Sutton served as a member of the North Carolina

House of Representatives, representing Guilford County; Joe A. Davidson, L. T. Barber and J. W. Burke served as members of the Board of County Commissioners of Guilford County. Mr. Davidson and Mr. Barber both served as Chairman of the Board while Mr. Burke served several years as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Berry Davidson, prior to moving to Gibsonville, served as a member of the Board of County Commissioners of Alamance County. Mrs. Edward M. Burke has served on the Guilford County Board of Education since 1951.

The United States Bureau of the Census shows the following population figures for the Town of Gibsonville, beginning with the year 1880:

1880 .....	111	1930 .....	1605
1890 .....	120	1940 .....	1753
1900 .....	562	1950 .....	1866
1910 .....	1162	1960 .....	1784
1920 .....	1302	1970 .....	2024

It can be observed that the Town had a gradual growth in population up to the year 1950. It is to be noted that the year 1960 showed a decrease in population for the first time in the history of the Town. The decrease was due largely to the Minneola Plant, which, between the years 1950 and 1960, sold approximately sixty tenements on First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Streets and had them moved out of the area. The sixty families would certainly have constituted as many as 260 to 275 persons, and, had they remained in the city limits, it would have meant an increase instead of a decrease in population.

During World War I, Gibsonville furnished its quota of men in this conflict. According to the Greensboro Daily News, date of June 24, 1917, a total of 123 men (95 white and 28 negro) from Gibsonville registered for service. Three brothers, Will, Frank and George Hornbuckle, sons of Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Hornbuckle, fought overseas and all returned to Gibsonville. It is believed that only one Gibsonville boy, Robert Sutton, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Sutton, was killed in service. When the conflict ended November 11, 1918, there was great excitement and joy because it seems that all the church bells in town rang and all the mill whistles blew on that morning at 11:00 o'clock. Only a few of these veterans are living in Gibsonville today, among them being: Paul Jordan, Ernest Anderson, Jim Riley, Ogbert Ingle, George Webster and Herman E. Clapp.

The Great Depression hit this town in 1930, as it did all other towns and communities in the United States. The Mills went on short time and some closed their doors. One of these in particular was the Gem Cotton Mill, which did not reopen. Most people had their salaries and wages reduced, and a few were glad to get work at ten cents an hour. Quite a number of towns and cities in North Carolina were not able to meet the payments on their bonded indebtedness and had to reissue their bonds, thus defaulting. The Town of

Gibsonville weathered the storm and never became default in its bond and interest payments. Many people were on Government relief and some worked on WPA projects. Several such projects were performed in Gibsonville, among them being: sodding of the banks at the railroad underpass; construction of two or three unpaved sidewalks; and installation of a sanitary sewer line. The Bank of Gibsonville also weathered the storm by keeping its doors open for business, except for the "holiday" demanded by the Federal Government. It also paid all depositors without loss.

On December 7, 1941 the United States was again embroiled in a World War because of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Many of Gibsonville's young men had already volunteered for service, or were drafted, even before then. Charles Willis Mann, who was born in Gibsonville but who was not living here at the time, was the first Gibsonville boy to be killed in action. He was on one of the warships bombed and sunk by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor. W. D. Hammer, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Hammer, was considered the first Gibsonville casualty in World War II. The V.F.W. Post here is named in his honor. Several Gibsonville boys lost their lives in this conflict as is attested by the number of "Gold Star" mothers living today. During the war, gasoline and some foods were rationed. When the war ended in 1945, quite a number of the young Gibsonville veterans did not return to make their homes in Gibsonville, but rather chose other localities, which had more favorable job potential.

Available records show the following men served the Town as Mayors: John L. Whitesell 1905-07; Berry Davidson 1907-11; W. A. White 1911-13; D. M. Davidson 1913-33; J. G. Steele 1933-37 and 1939-41; Dr. P. T. Garrison 1937-39; R. A. Thomas 1941-45; W. G. Boon 1945-55; Paul W. Edwards 1955-61; and Melvin Randolph 1961 to present time. It is definitely known that Henry W. Steele served as Mayor (or Magistrate) for several terms, and the names of John Paylor and Charles Bradshaw have been mentioned as possible Mayors (or Magistrates).

Available records also show the following persons serving as Town Aldermen: S. V. May, W. R. Cobb, H. B. Owen, F. M. Smith, C. N. Cone, H. P. Bowman, W. F. Gerringer, Z. W. Mangum, W. J. Jennings, A. P. Wynne, J. W. Burke, D. F. Ridge, L. T. Barber, W. A. White, J. W. Apple, Peter May, C. H. Phillips, A. B. Owen, R. H. Pegg, J. H. Walker, L. A. Wharton, J. V. Dick, H. F. Huffines, Dr. J. B. Walker, W. P. Hornbuckle, Sam Webster, O. W. Mann, J. L. Robinson, J. P. Edwards, T. L. Saunders, J. T. Rountree, Paul Jordan, H. P. Lucas, G. B. May, P. F. Ridge, R. L. Seaford, J. C. Whitesell, B. W. Loy, W. G. Boon, Ralph Allen, T. E. Stough, Carl Allen, J. Ed Summers, C. R. Wicker, Dr. P. T. Garrison, D. M. Davidson, R. A. Thomas, Paul D. Waynick, Edward M. Burke, Paul W. Edwards, Ralph C. Foster, Frank H. Robertson, Finley B. Curtis, Melvin Randolph, B. C. Boyles, Sr., J. O. Harper, A. J. House, Richard E. Woodburn, W. J. Randolph, James A. Drummond, Worth G. Overman, Braxton Riley, Hurley Paylor, Freeman G. Yow, W. Hal Laughlin, Joe N. Ledbetter, Paul C. Walker, Larry M. Gerringer, Sr. and Harold G. Younger.

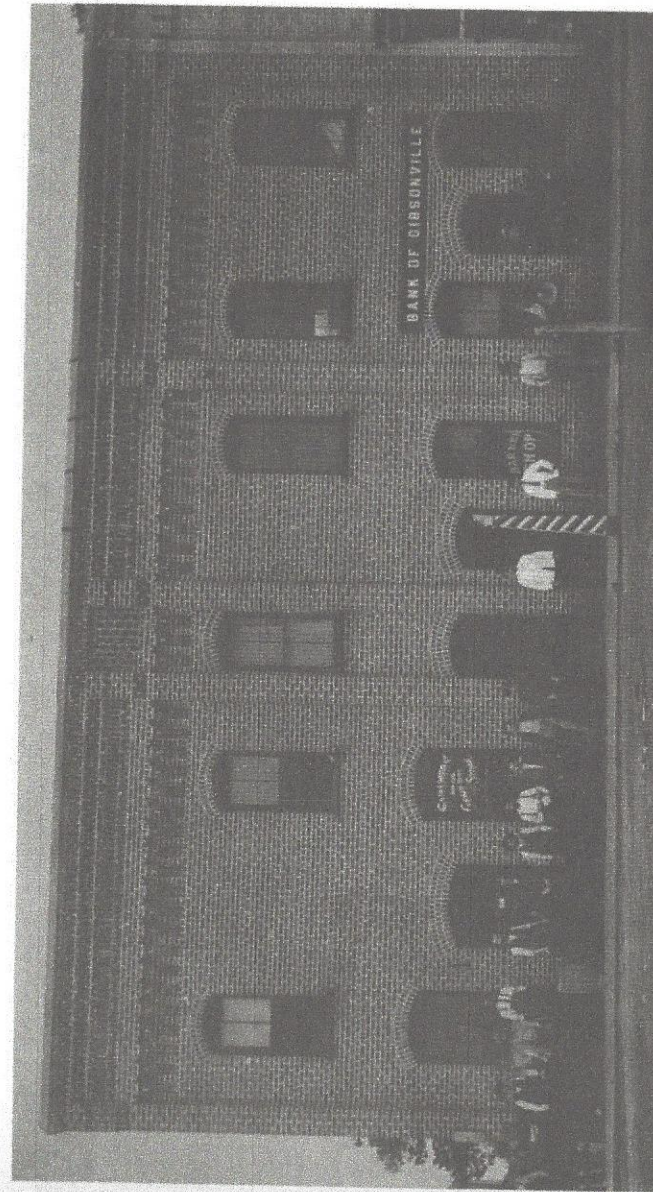


The area of the Town now consists of approximately 1,000 acres of land or 1.55 square miles. Fixed properties of the Town now total more than one million and a quarter dollars. The assessed valuation amounts to approximately ten million dollars. Better than 95% of the city streets are paved.

The present elected officials of the Town of Gibsonville are:

- Mayor — Melvin Randolph
- Aldermen: Ralph C. Foster
- Larry M. Gerring, Sr.
- W. Hal Laughlin
- Paul C. Walker
- Harold G. Younger

Footnote: The author wishes to thank everyone who has contributed in any way toward making it possible for this booklet to be published, especially Mr. D. M. Davidson. There are perhaps some errors and omissions but they are certainly unintentional.



The Rufe Summers building was built at the corner of Main and Piedmont Streets about 1906. The Bank of Gibsonville (the Town's first bank) opened for business in this building in 1907.

