

# Columbus as it was during the war 1861-65

In this story I will give the recollections of a boy of the various manufacturing interests as they were at that time. Every body was engaged in recruiting the army for the defense of the South and it was largely done by the soul-stirring music of the drums and fife. Consequently they were in demand, and as the supply was limited and no more to be had from the north, we had to look elsewhere for them. At that time there was a music store conducted by Brands & Tomer, situated near the site of J. A. Kiron Co. They commenced the manufacture of drums and fifes and supplied as many as needed. Matches was a needed article also. Mr. Sam. Thum at the Alabama end of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street bridge established a plant for the manufacture of matches. The Caveta factory at the sea end of the bridge where Miscegee Mill No. 1 now stands made white goods, jeans etc. Next below stood a large six story building, called the Carter factory, it was never used for any purpose that I can recall until, John D. Gray & Co established an iron foundry about the year 1862 for the making of Castings, Symp. Kettles etc. The Eagle Manufacturing Co, with two mills occupied a part of the present plant, of the Eagle & Phoenix Co. They manufactured Cotton cloth and wool jeans, the latter was mostly used for uniforms for the army. The Palace Mills stood near where stands Mill No. 3 now stands. Where corn meal and some flour was ground for army and home consumption. Greenwood & Gray occupied the warehouse (now occupied by Sol. Lee Co) for the storage and sale of Cotton, and contained 7000 bales when it was burned in 1864 by an incendiary. Who was subsequently mortally wounded in a fight with a Rebel engineer named Thomas Campbell, and before he died confessed to burning the warehouse, post office and the buildings from Whites book store to the store now occupied by the "Ladies Haberdashery". And the night he died was to burn the Eldorado Saloon now occupied by the "Newark Shoe Co" and J. F. Scarborough. The Land warehouse occupied the present site. With the yard chocked contained 15000 bales of Cotton. Fontaine warehouse now the upper part of the W. C. Bradley Co warehouse, was occupied by Warrick & G and contained 700 bales of Cotton. Adjoining on the south was the Alabama Warehouse King and Allen proprietors with 20000 bales. The Naval Iron Works (Now Columbus Iron Works) Maj. Warner in charge. Manufactured various articles for the Navy, including Cannon. Here the breech loading cannon, which now lies in the basement of the Court House. Was made. And said to be the first attempt in the South. It proved to be a failure. Just across the street where the planing mill of the "Columbus Iron Works" now stands, was the rolling mill and a large machine shop. The rolling mill was visited every night by a good crowd as it was a novelty and interesting sight to see the men putting the red hot scraps through the rollers and making bars of iron to be manufactured in various needed articles. In forward at Lloyds Corner, was the nail factory. Where nails were cut from bars of iron, turned out at the rolling mill. The Empire Mills. Geo. W. Woodruff, proprietor Corner Front and 9<sup>th</sup> Sts was busy day and night grinding corn for the army and home consumption. Down on the Omnibus below 5<sup>th</sup> St and near the river, was a small brass foundry owned and operated by Owens and Timon. An oil cloth factory owned by Brands & Tomer was situated on the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave and 4<sup>th</sup> St. Their product was largely used to make army equipment. Such as belts cartridge boxes etc. A glass factory was built at the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> St and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave but proved a failure. The ammunition factory or Arsenal was situated near the Mason division of the Central RR, and 10<sup>th</sup> Ave where the Columbus RR crosses the Southern RR. Heavy tan yard at the foot of Wynnes hill. The Confederate wagon shops occupied the present site of the Y. M. C. A. building and grounds. Capt. Chrusar, Supt. At the old Presbyterian Church, where now stands the 10<sup>th</sup> St School. Was a knitting mill and button factory. Peanut oil mill on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave north of Murray building. Shoe manufacturing plants on both S East and SW corners of Broad St, about 500 or more men were employed here mostly negroes. Mr. Tibbets a cripple was the Supt. Wooden soled shoes as well as leather was turned out here for the army. Government shops occupied corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave and 14<sup>th</sup> St (South side) Here was situated a planing mill and shop for the manufacture of ammunition cases. Blacksmith shop for various forging and a large foundry for various castings including Cannon.

Just across the street (north) was the celebrated Hairam Ross plant where sabres, Bayonets, fixels and accoutrements were manufactured also harness. They occupied from the center of the block running north and south from 14<sup>th</sup> St to the present site of the "Southern Overall Co"

On the southern part of the site of the Eagle Co stood the shops of Greenwood & Gray where sabres and Mississippi Rifles were manufactured under the supervision of Mr. J. P. Murray for many years a noted gun

of this city. The grindstone question was a serious one with the Hoimans in the early part of '63. Grindstones was used for grinding and polishing salvers and the stones could not be had as they were a northern product. Some one cried "Woke". The stone was found in Russell County, Ala about 2 miles from the city, that answered admirably. John Keller (brother in law of the Hoimans) had a lamplack and oil cloth factory on Second Ave near 23<sup>rd</sup> St. The new Arsenal building was located along the track of the "Montgomery and West Point RR" just west of Linwood Cemetery, and was only finished a short time before had a very few exceptions.

The Moffett warehouse occupied the site on 6<sup>th</sup> Ave from "Dinner Grocery Co" to 13<sup>th</sup> St. Greenwood and Gray, proprietors containing 15000 bales of Cotton. Above the city at that time was the City Mills at the present site which made meal and flour when they had wheat. Rock Island Paper Mill Co, from which a great deal of paper used by the CS government was made here. It was situated on the Alabama side of the river a short distance above the City Mills. The Columbus (Clapps) factory was situated on the well known site. They were cotton and woolen goods and in connection with the same had a grist mill which was noted for the fine quality of <sup>corn</sup> meal ground there. Also a tan yard and shoe manufactory. They also owned the bridges across the river, as there are two islands at the bridge site, it took three bridges to span the river. A short one in the center and two longer ones on the Alabama and Georgia banks, but there were no piers needed for the bridges. It is hardly necessary all the last mentioned properties were also burned.

The Walker hospital was located at the "Commercial Hotel" site. Lee Hospital at corner 12<sup>th</sup> and Broad Sts (Carnard Building) Another in the Sammis and Rooney building where the Grand Theatre is now located.

Banks building. East side Broad above 13<sup>th</sup> St (3 story building) was also a hospital. The Court House and the negro Baptist Church corner front and 11<sup>th</sup> St.

The Cairns Convalescent Camp was situated from 19<sup>th</sup> St north to 20 St and from 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave to the branch on the eastern boundary.

First soldiers home was on corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Broad Sts on the site where now stands the office of the Empire Mills.

"The old Wayside Home". Stood where station No 4 of the Fire Dept now stands

Geo. J. Burns.

Columbus Ga Nov 30<sup>th</sup> 1920