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WELCOME to PUDDLEVILLE

A LOOK INSIDE ADEL, GA

It was known to Native Americans as *Tallassée* (The Hunting Ground). Not even the Native Americans that moved and hunted through the area had settlements there. It was too wet and too swampy, especially in the winter. But it was to become a rich agricultural area in the hands of the early settlers of what is now Adel, Georgia, the county seat of Cook County.

"Land was cheap," said Dillard Ensley, president of the Cook County Historical Society, retired educator, and lifelong resident of Cook County. "It was cheap because it was swampy and not fit for much of anything, but people wanted to own land so they came to swamps filled with yellow pines and wiregrass, rich with nutrients for cattle to graze on. They drained many of the swamps and filled the land to build it up enough for habitation. Thirty to thirty-five families came from Buck and Montgomery counties. Their names were Shaw, McCranie, Lindsey, Patterson, Parrish, and Hutchinson."

It was a hard life on unyielding land, made harder by the lowness of the land. The elevation was a little over two hundred feet above sea level, and the winter rains created a boggy area. Puddles of water were everywhere. Roads at times were virtually impassible. Some winters, the rain was so heavy that water ran across the floors of people's houses. With their unique sense of humor, the people dubbed the settlement Puddleville. And so it began.

In 1814 the southern part of Georgia, officially declared Indian Territory by the federal government, was given to the state of Georgia. In 1819, the state of Georgia created two counties: Early County to the north and Irwin County in the south. Part of Irwin County became Lowndes County in 1825. In 1856, part of Lowndes County became Berrien County. On January 1, 1919, Adel was officially recognized as the county seat of Cook County, an area carved out of Berrien County.

In early 1873, Berry Wells and Joel J. "Uncle Jack" Parrish applied to the United States government for a post office with Parrish as Postmaster. They saw on the application that the name must be unique in the state. After brainstorming names and reviewing a list of every post office in the United States, Parrish reportedly selected

four letters within the name of PhilADELphia. Wells and Parrish searched the list of Georgia post offices and the list of post offices in other states. Finding no Adel, they settled on that name for the new post office. (There was later to be a town named Adel in Iowa.)

On July 22, 1873, the U.S. Post Office Department officially established the Adel Post Office in Georgia. For some time, Parrish ran the post office out of his home, but he later built a new structure. When the Georgia-Southern Railroad came to the community, the railroad named its station "Daphne." Parrish, realizing that the railroad would dictate the center of activity for the community, moved the post office nearer to the train station. The railroad officials demanded that the post office name be changed to "Daphne." Uncle Jack Parrish refused; the post office was there before the railroad was. The railroad renamed the station "Jewette" and demanded again that Parrish change the name for the post office. Again he refused. Shortly afterward, the "Jewette" sign on the depot was replaced by the sign "Adel."

Agriculture was—in the early days and to a large extent today—the principal business of Cook County and the city of Adel. One drives past fields of cotton, tobacco, and peanuts in the countryside, with Adel as a central marketing city. At one time, there were four large tobacco warehouses in the city. In 1939, Adel led the state in prices commanded for its tobacco crop. Watermelons, cantaloupes, tomatoes, bell peppers, cabbage, and other vegetables are still grown on farms in the county.



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