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The Vintage Rabun Quarterly

From Courthouses to Hotels *Over 100 Years of Downtown Clayton*

Clayton's Main Street has seen a lot of progress since it was first photographed in the early twentieth century. As changes continue, in this issue of the *Quarterly*, we are highlighting photos from various decades. They were all made from South Main, looking north, with Black Rock Mountain always in the background.



The Rabun County Courthouse was in the town square on Main Street. It was built in 1880 and moved in 1908.



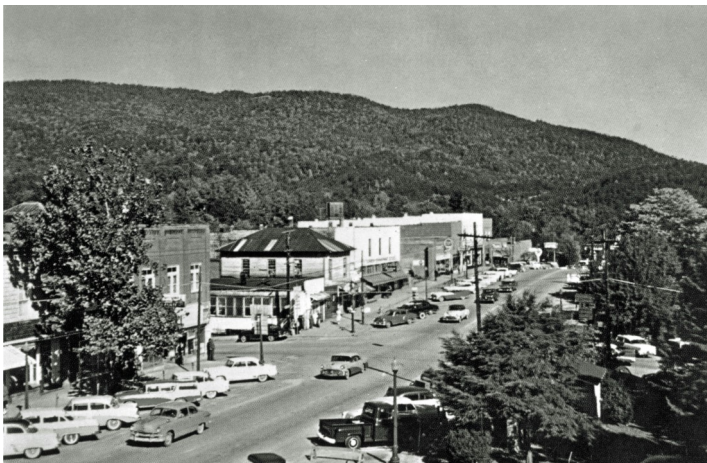
This circa 1915 photo shows the courthouse building has been moved. In addition to the telegraph poles lining the street, there are the electric poles erected by Thomas Roane in 1914 to provide power to more than 50 homes and businesses in Clayton.



We are dating this photo in the 1920s due to the abundance of Model T Fords. Main Street was paved in the 1920s, though this appears to still be unpaved.



Main Street in 1948



Main Street in 1958



Main Street in the mid-1960s



South Main Street in 1912 showing construction of buildings in what was then called the Derrick Block, now referred to as the Reeves Block

Savannah Street has also seen many changes. Originally named Courthouse Street, it was renamed shortly after the Bleckley House hotel, operated by Savannah Bleckley, was moved to the end of the street.



West Savannah Street in February 1909 - a muddy road looking west toward the courthouse.



West Savannah Street in the 1950s - looking west toward the courthouse.



This photo of East Savannah Street in the early 1900s (looking up the hill toward Main Street) shows the wooden buildings on the south side of the street.

East Savannah Street looking east with Screamer Mountain in the background. The brick building seen here was built in 1924 and replaced the wooden ones in the photo above. The building is now White Birch Inn. On the hill at the end of the street is the Bleckley House hotel. It was moved, and the hill was graded down in 1964 and Savannah Street was extended east to the new Highway 441.



In this modern day photo of East Savannah Street, the laundromat in the center of the photo was previously a grocery store. White Birch Provisions now stands on the site. G&B (Grapes and Beans) Restaurant occupies the white building next to the Clayton Flower Bed.

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- Please visit our museum and research library on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 11:00 until 3:00.
- Group tours by appointment



The Blue Ridge Hotel and annex occupied a sizable portion of the west side of North Main Street for many years. The hotel was torn down in 1949.

