

## Reconstruction 1866-1900



After the Civil War, the area was in utter devastation. It took two years before the land healed and crops made. People ate grass and the **bark off trees**.

One man killed a **skunk** and buried it to repress the smell. Within a month, he had dug it up to eat it.

Two brothers who survived the war as **prisoners** of the Union were released. They arrived in Memphis by train and walked home to Boswell in August 1865. They both died of **starvation** a year later.

Salt was impossible to buy. People collected **dirt** from the smokehouse floor where **salt drippings** from curing meat had fallen. They added water which dissolved the salt and then boiled out the water. It was the only source of **salt**.



**Fabric** was unaffordable for years. People wore **rags**.

## Devastation



As if things couldn't get any worse, the **Great Tornado** of 1866 took roofs off buildings and downed trees on the mountains south of town.

The **Great Fire** of 1868 wiped out the trees that remained. The fire was so intense it produced a light bright enough to read by for miles around.



Life was equally difficult for newly freed slaves. Fear drove them out of the area. There had been **362 slaves** in 1860. By 1870, there were **164 free blacks**.

## Progressive Farming

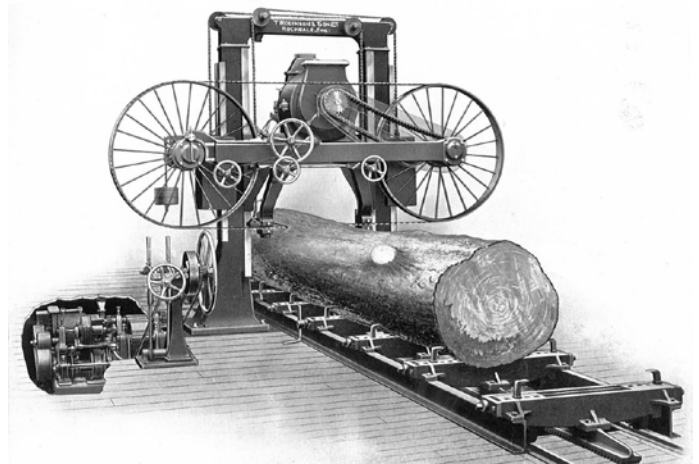
Slowly, but surely, the people recovered. Virgin yellow pine timber, cotton, and cattle brought renewal.



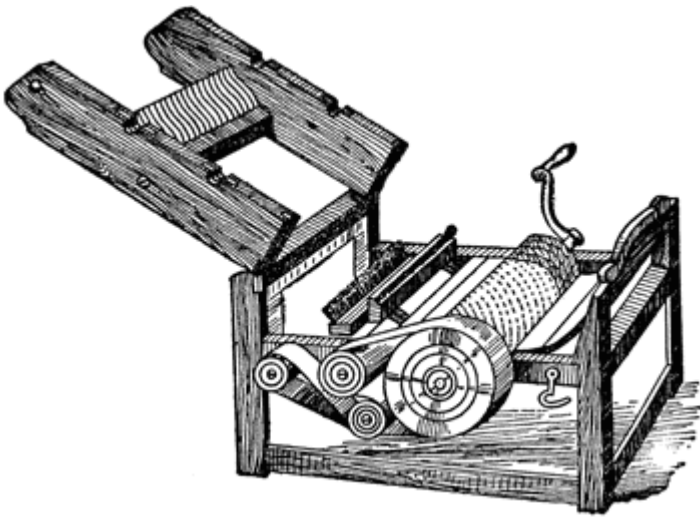
In 1871, **Benbrook's Water Mill** began grinding flour. John Quincy Wolf claimed the flour from the grist mill produced **superior biscuits** to modern-day flour.

Jess Thrasher built a saw mill at Iuka in 1886. The rough sawn lumber sold for \$0.50 per hundred board feet.

**Scott's Bandmill** between Pineville and Wild Cherry produced the first finished lumber in the area about 1890.



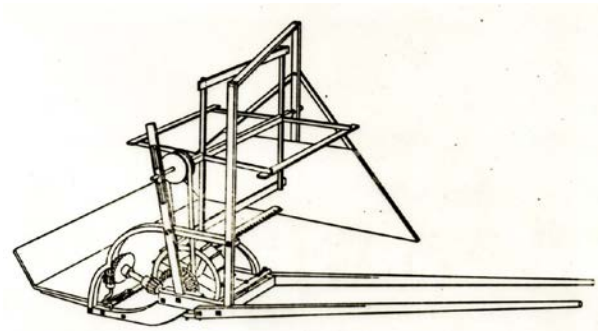
## Progressive Farming



Early **cotton gins** had no feeder, condenser, or other labor saving devices. Around 1890, better gins were built. Andy Killian built the modern cotton gin after 1900.

**Mechanized flour mills** built at Mountain Home, Barren Fork, and Mammoth Spring eventually closed the Benbrook Mill in 1880.

In 1888, Rodney Thompson bought the first **grain reaper** in the county. He also bought the first **pure bred hogs** in the area. The Rodney community is named in his honor.



Bill Killian, Henderson Wayland, James Thrasher, and William Gentry bought the first **grain separator** in 1888.

Through their **ingenuity** and **hard work**, the people made a recovery and began to prosper again.

# The Ferry



Charlie Aiken was issued the first license to operate a ferry at Calico Rock on April 9, 1896. A **ferry** continued to operate in town until 1966 when the bridge over the White River was opened.

In the early 1900s, the cost to travel the ferry was:

<b>Wagon, 4 horses, 1 man</b>	<b>75 cents</b>
<b>Wagon, 2 horses, 1 man</b>	<b>50 cents</b>
<b>Vehicle, 1 horse, 1 man</b>	<b>40 cents</b>
<b>1 man, 1 horse</b>	<b>25 cents</b>
<b>1 man</b>	<b>10 cents</b>
<b>Horses and cattle</b>	<b>10 cents each</b>
<b>Sheep and hogs</b>	<b>5 cents each</b>

## **Reconstruction 1866-1900**

- 1866 Great Tornado**
- 1867 Ellis opens first store after the Civil War**
- 1868 Great Fire on the Mountain**
- 1870s Small circus comes to Pineville**
- 1871 Wrought iron cook stoves first sold in area  
Benbrook's Water Grist Mill**
- 1875 First fireworks at Christmas in Calico Rock**
- 1879 Post Office re-established**
- 1880 Charlie Aiken General Store opens  
Benbrook's Mill on Piney Creek closes**
- 1888 Rodney Thompson buys first grain reaper  
Four farmers buy first grain separator**
- 1896 First ferry licensed at Calico Rock**
- 1897 Fire destroys all but one building**