

## JEPHTHA HILL BLAKE

"J. H. Blake, appointed by Governor Miller as Sheriff of Colbert County to succeed Herbert Moore filed his bond in the probate office Thursday morning and took the official oath before Judge N. P. Tompkins.

The occasion for gubernatorial appointment came by reason of the conviction at a recent session of the federal court of Sheriff Moore on charges of violating the prohibition law which, Attorney General Thomas E. Knight has ruled, caused the Colbert County sheriff's office to be vacated.

The Attorney General set out in his opinion that in the event the judgment of the lower court is reversed by the Supreme Court, to which tribunal appeal has been made, Sheriff Moore must be restored to office.

The new sheriff is a prominent Sheffield citizen, head of the Blake Transfer Company and has had a broad business experience.

There were a number of applicants for the appointment it was stated, among whom were Al H. Horton, S. Briggs Wright, A.D. Logel, W.R. Burns, and H. Cobb. Blake it is understood was not a candidate but was appointed by Governor Miller voluntarily to end a deadlock that had been created by pressure brought to bear by other candidates and their friends."

Information from *The Sheffield Standard*, October 30, 1931

"Sheriff J. (Jep) H. Blake announces his candidacy for the office of Sheriff of Colbert County, subject to the action of the Democratic voters in the May primary.

Sheriff Blake was appointed to fill an unexpired term. He has made an enviable record as sheriff, during which time he has enforced the law on all alike and endeavored to operate his office as economically as possible. He points with pride to his record of no person in his custody while sheriff being mistreated in anyway. He launched the movement to provide wholesome entertainment for the prisoners the jail (obtaining a radio), which has helped to maintain order among the people incarcerated there.

Sheriff Blake has been a citizen of Colbert County for 30 years. He is a member of a prominent family, his father before him being a progressive, active citizen who took a great interest in the progress of the county and the welfare of the people.

Sheriff Blake is an alumni of Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn University), continuing his studies there after graduating from the Sheffield schools and attending the State Normal school at Florence (University of North Alabama). After returning from Auburn, he was associated with the Sheffield Company for a number of years, later being employed by the Southern Railway.

In 1916, Sheriff Blake went to the Mexican border where he was second in command of Company K, Second Alabama Infantry. He went across during the World War and served as commander of Company D, 106 Supply Train for one year. When the war was over, Sheriff Blake returned to Sheffield and entered the transfer business, which he operated until he was appointed sheriff.

Sheriff Blake solicits the support of the people of Colbert County on the merits of his records as their public servant and he pledges his best effort to continue maintain his record, if elected."

Information from *The Sheffield Standard*, January 5, 1934

WORDS OF APPRECIATION – To the voters of Colbert County

I deeply appreciate the support given me Tuesday by the voters of Colbert County, who placed me in the lead for run-off primary as a candidate for Sheriff, June 12<sup>th</sup>.

To those who supported those of my opponents not in the run-off, I ask your earnest consideration of my merits and qualifications and I sincerely solicit your support and vote.

If elected I shall endeavor to serve you as in the past, giving you a clean, honest sheriff's administration with law enforcement on all alike.

I am asking for a full term, feeling that I am entitled to this as a loyal Democrat, who has endeavored to make you a faithful public servant. Democrats have always believed in giving a man a full or second term.

Due to the fact that four weeks of Court is at hand, I may not be able to see you before the Primary, June 12<sup>th</sup>, as I must attend to the duties of my office, and I shall be very grateful for your influence and support and in return pledge you the best administration possible for me to give the people of this county. You are cordially invited to study my record, and consider my qualifications. Your friend, J. (Jep) H. Blake"

Paid Political Advertising by J. H. Blake in *Tri-Cities Daily*, May 5, 1934

Mr. Blake was defeated in the runoff election by John Sockwell by a vote of Blake – 2251 and Sockwell – 2369.

Mr. Blake was born on October 31, 1889 and died on September 27, 1950 and is buried in Sheffield Oakwood Cemetery.

He was the son of the late Dr. W. H. Blake, Sr. He came to Sheffield in 1901. Except for the period he attended API and served in World War I as a lieutenant in the transportation corps, he resided in Sheffield. He was born in Lineville, Alabama.

He was a member of the city school board for 20 years and had been postmaster of Sheffield for 12 years.

Mr. Blake was one of the most beloved and respected citizens of Sheffield. He was for a number of years a member of the Rotary Club.

Some information from *Tri-Cities Daily*, September 27, 1950