

# OCCUPATION & RECONSTRUCTION

The destruction of Atlanta and downfall of the Confederacy brought devastation to Cobb County.



Richard L. Brooks plowing his field with his horse "Old Fanny" in 1919. He operated his own blacksmith shop in Smyrna, and when he died was the oldest blacksmith in Cobb County.



Robert Daniell built his home in 1872. This picture is from 1885.

More than a quarter of all Southern men of military age died during the war, leaving many families destitute. After the surrender, paroled ex-Confederate soldiers returned to a war-torn county. Many found their homes burned and began life again with almost nothing. Reconstruction came with new political realities and enforced military rule.

Whatever their loss, everyone welcomed peace, and citizens had a new optimism for 1866. With the railroads repaired, Northerners arrived in droves, derogatorily termed "Carpetbaggers" for their cheaply made luggage. They mostly settled in towns seeking any economic and/or political opportunity.

Robert Daniell and Martin Ruff rebuilt Concord Woolen Mills after the Union destroyed it on July 4, 1864. In 1869, the *Marietta Journal* reported the woolen factory had "32 looms and 600 spindles"

Originally owned by Cherokee, the house was later converted to a blacksmith shop. The home sat on a 400-acre tract in the Concord-Nickajack area. Confederate Col. Solon Z. Rice moved into the house with his bride. They are shown here with their oldest child, a family servant, and their dog.



that would employ 52 operators, along with other laborers. Daniell and Ruff sold the still-bustling mills in 1872. Robert Daniell went on to become a respected farmer, using progressive

machines and methods. He was the first to raise 100 bushels of corn on one acre of land in Cobb County.

New land settlement patterns emerged in rural areas. Landowners leased smaller tracts to farmers — both white and black — for cash; more often they allowed them to farm acreage with an agreement that the harvest would be shared. These farmers were called sharecroppers and struggled to make a living growing corn or cotton. Gradually, people rebuilt homes, and conditions improved. For decades, farmers plowed up lead bullets, iron cannonballs, and other reminders of the war as they turned the soil.

An advertisement for the Concord Woolen Mills in 1877.

**WOOL ROLL CARDING!**  
**AT CONCORD WOOLEN MILLS,**  
 Smyrna, Cobb County, Georgia.

WE respectfully inform our friends and old customers in the country, that we are now ready for Carding. Bring on your Wool and have it carded, or Exchange for Concord Cloth or get the cash for it if you wish. No delay or waiting over. Cards run day and night if necessary to keep up. Comfortable quarters furnished when parties have to remain over all night.

For the convenience of our customers living above Marietta, we will receive wool to be carded or to be exchanged for Jeans, &c., at the store of J. BENNETT, Marietta, and will take it from there to the Factory and return it once in every week free of charge.

**MERINO, OR ANY KIND OF WOOL,**  
Carded without being Napped. 17¢ the sum to bring sheet to put the Rolls in. 23¢ Rates for Carding, 20 cents per pound, or 1-3/4th toll. We pay cash, or exchange Cloth for Wool shipped to us.

May 17th, 1877. RICE, LOVE & PORTER, Proprietors.

The covered bridge with the dam in the background.

