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## **REV. E. C. GILLENWATERS**

Rev. Edward C. Gillenwaters was a conspicuous figure in Tishomingo before the war, and even at a later date he gained some prominence in political circles. He was born in Virginia in 1816, and at an early age decided that by helping to spread the gospel of the lowly Nazarene he could render more service to his fellowmen than in any other profession, so his education was such as to prepare him for the ministry. He joined the Cumberland Presbyterian society and for fifty years led a pure and consistent life, and no doubt was the direct cause of many of both sexes forsaking the ways of eternal darkness and walking upright in the path of Christian rectitude. Emigrating from Virginia to Alabama, Mr. Gillenwaters married Miss Eliza Jane Harris, of Jackson, in 1839, and in 1842 moved to old Tishomingo County, settling in Farmington, where for eight years he taught school and preached the gospel in Farmington and at different places throughout the county. At the October elections, in 1849, he was elected probate judge for a term of two years and in 1850 moved to Jacinto, the county seat of Tishomingo County. In 1850 he was also appointed school commissioner for the first district, serving for three years. In 1851 he was elected probate clerk and clerk on the Board of Police, serving four years. Upon the expiration of his term he moved to Corinth, and the same year purchased the general merchandise store of Messrs. McCalla and Davis, which he conducted for some

two years. Mr. Gillenwaters preached the first sermon in the new town of Corinth in 1855, in a brush arbor northeast of the location of the Corinth high school, and for several years was the resident pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination. In 1859, when the county was divided into two court districts, he was appointed deputy clerk for the Corinth district, and was also postmaster for the years 1857-9. He served as school commissioner for 1860-1, and operated a saw mill on the Tuscumbia, south from Corinth, during the same period. Being too old to serve in the army, he remained at home until the last call for troops, when he organized a company, but Lee surrendered before the company was ready for service. After the war, Mr. Gillenwaters served as mayor of Corinth and also as register in bankruptcy for this district. He moved to Gainesville, Texas, in the latter part of the 70's and embarked in the mercantile business. He died in 1883 and was buried in the Gainesville cemetery. Mrs. Gillenwaters is still living, and resides with her son-in-law, Mr. H. S. Brooks of Corinth.

Mr. Gillenwaters was an ardent and uncompromising prohibitionist, and the first to make any effort to curtail the whisky traffic in North Mississippi. He viewed with alarm the rapid and steady increase in the number of licensed grogeries in the county, and in 1850 called to his aid the efforts of a few fellow prohibitionists and waged war on the liquor traffic in almost persistent and uncompromising manner. When it is remembered that no license was required to sell vinous and spirituous liquors in quantities of one gallon or more, and only \$50 per year to retail by the drink or bottle, and that the average wholesale price on whisky was between fifteen and twenty cents a gallon, and therefore the cheapest article of commerce on the market, it will be readily seen that the task of the reverend gentleman was arduous in the extreme. But with commendable zeal and admirable persistence he followed the course laid down at the beginning, and the suppression of the saloon at Bay Springs in 1852 was the first mile post on the road to success. Burnsville and Rienzi were the next to fall into line, and later considerable headway was gained in a few county districts, but it was years after the close of the civil war before the saloon was entirely banished from the county.