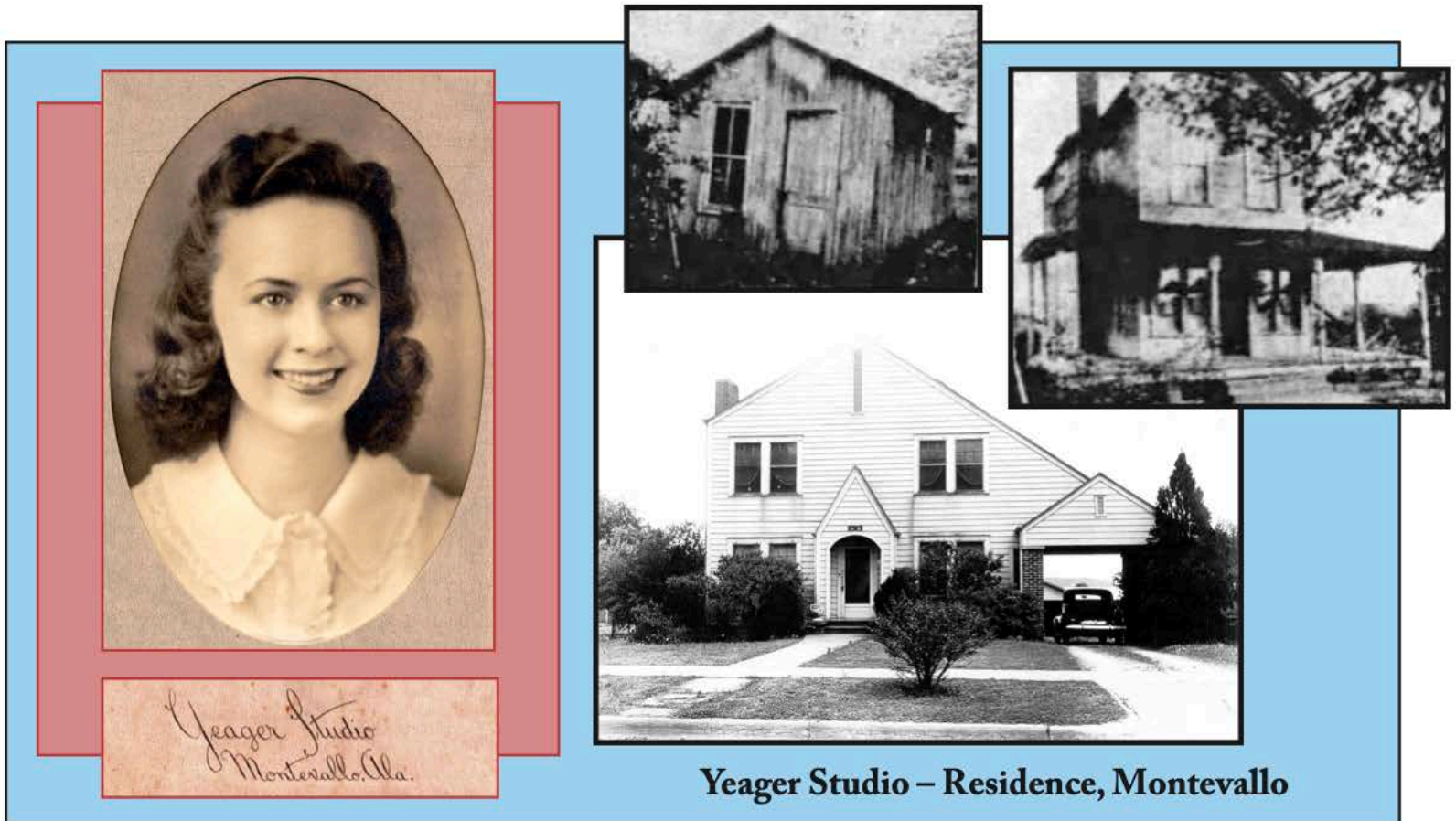


# News From Montevallo

BY FLORA B. SURLES



**Yeager Studio – Residence, Montevallo**

*This story on Yeager Studio, a commercial photography business that served Montevallo for 35 years from 1912 until 1947, appeared in a 1932 issue of the Shelby County Reporter.*

## Typical of Town's Building Progress

Perhaps no better or more graphic illustration of building progress in Montevallo during the past 20 years could be portrayed than that shown in the picture above.

The little one-room "shack" shown at the top left was the first photographic studio of which the town boasted. It was operated by Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Yeager, more than 20 years ago. A sky-light in the roof furnished the needed rays for indoor camera action. The building was located at the side of the Yeager residence, the property now occupied by Prof. and Mrs. C.B. Richmond.

As time went by and it became evident that the business of photography could become a reasonably

profitable enterprise in Montevallo, the Yeagers enlarged their plant, moving it over to the present site. The building shown at the top right of the picture then became the home of the business, providing for an enterprise which had bigger and bigger demands made upon it with the growth of Alabama College and the increased population of the town.

Three years ago, Mrs. Yeager, who has carried on the business independently since her husband's death, erected the building at the bottom of the picture, a modern residence-studio, on the site of the second building.

From the attractive entrance of this two-story English style frame building of ivory color with green trim, one enters a large reception room. At the rear are located a small sales room, a commodious workshop, and the charming dinette and kitchenette which make part of the residence apartment.

From the reception room one enters the large, modern studio upstairs with its conventional backgrounds

and ample sky lights. Here also are located a small dressing room for use of Mrs. Yeager's clientele, and her own living apartment.

## Contrast Representative

The contrast shown in the outward appearance of the three buildings in the picture is typical of that represented in a number of residences and other buildings in the town of Montevallo, many of which have undergone improvement within the past five or ten years, and particularly since the streets were improved three years ago by paving.

Contrary to an idea current in the minds of many, even of older Montevallo residents, Mrs. Yeager did not succeed her husband in the business of photography. It was she who initiated the enterprise.

## Outgrowth of Natural Talent

Mrs. Yeager's entry into the photographic field was really the outgrowth of a natural talent, the development of which, as has been the case in the lives of many women who have launched into business ca-



reers, was necessitated by economic circumstances.

Her husband had been a professor of mathematics. His health failed, which necessitated his retirement from the school room. He undertook a stock farm business, which paid none too well.

Meantime, an intimate friend of the family, the late Miss Anne Kennedy, professor of history at the Alabama Girls Industrial School, who saw the possibilities of more than "pastime" in Mrs. Yeager's amateurish attempt at water color sketches and portrait painting, urged her to develop her talent against the time of economic need.

Twenty-five years ago a business career for a woman in a small Alabama town was not looked upon in the same light it is today. Mrs. Yeager confesses that she was "a bit timid" about it. She had a great deal of respect for Miss Kennedy's opinion, however, and confidence in her counsel. And so it came about that Mrs. Yeager entered a school of photography at McMinnville, Tenn., and prepared to launch a business in which she has succeeded.

It was not she therefore, who assisted her husband in the business of photography, but it was Mr. Yeager who assisted her.

WHEN IN MONTEVALLO CALL AT

# YEAGER STUDIO

Work for Schools and  
Colleges a Specialty

We make the pictures for TECHNALA and A. G. T. I.

Before his death, Mr. Yeager did much of the work connected with making outside pictures, but all inside sittings were taken care of by Mrs. Yeager, as was most of the developing and printing of films.

### Large Territory

Not only does Mrs. Yeager take care of the immense volume of photographic business which originates on the campus of Alabama College to meet the demands of student publications, the college news bureau and the individual requirements of the large group of students; but she also takes care of the needs of the immediate community and those of surrounding communities, and counties. She does the high school

work for Centreville, Columbiana, and Clanton. Her assistant is Miss Pearl Cahoon.

"Like all others who have undertaken the development of a business," Mrs. Yeager said when interviewed for this story, "I have oftentimes met with discouragement and disappointment, but economic necessity and a genuine love of my work have forced me on. I believe that photography comes well within the pale of woman's work. What I have done, others can do; for the secret of whatever success I have met with has been merely a matter of hard work coupled with a determination to succeed in that in which I have been most interested, and in which I feel my greatest talent lies."



**The specially designed house that Mrs. Yeager built on Highland Avenue for her photography studio as well as her residence remains today on the corner of Highland and Plowman Streets. At some point the carport was enclosed and a two car garage was added. A new second front entrance provided access to an apartment occupied by the new owner, Mrs. W.E. Montgomery. The original entrance was then used to enter the former studio portion of the building, which Mrs. Montgomery rented for housing to Alabama College faculty members and their families.**