

Huntsville's Technological Evolution

A Technical History of Greater Huntsville, Alabama from 1800 to the Present

There have been many books written about the historical development of Huntsville and Madison County, Alabama. Most of these have centered on the cultural aspects, and there has certainly been much of importance from this standpoint. Others have diverse emphases; one masterpiece of the early 1970s – *A Dream to Remember*, in multiple volumes by James Record – is a highly detailed history of Madison County government. However, it is the author's opinion that the technological evolution of Greater Huntsville provided the foundation on which this region stands – and, until now, this has not been given an end-to-end treatment.

This book is divided into five eras; these and the approximate dates covered are Origins and Maturing (1800-1890); Manufacturing (1890-1949); Rocket City (1949-1970); Diversification (1970-2000); and Present and Beyond (2000-?). There is also a Prologue and an Epilogue, both included as an integral part of the text.

In addition to documenting the technological evolution in a series of eras, a major attempt was made to cite the individuals and groups that made it happen. Greater Huntsville – a term for the city and much of the surrounding Madison County that was adopted when the city limits were not enlarged as needed – is now primarily a Federal Government metropolis. Correctly, the political aspects of this are acknowledged, and detailed information about the many agencies and associated contracting firms are included, but the people deserve and are given full credit. There are about 1,150 individuals noted in the book – covering over two centuries

The author, Raymond C. Watson, Jr., Ph.D., P.E., has been an engineer since 1942, and has been intimately involved with many of the technical activities of Greater Huntsville since 1960. His overall career combined a broad variety of industrial and academic positions, and he is still fully engaged as a consultant and technical historian. His recent books are *Solving the Naval Radar Crisis* (Trafford 2007) and *Radar Origins Worldwide* (Trafford 2009).



Paperback: \$20.44 Hardback: \$30.44 E-Book: \$3.99