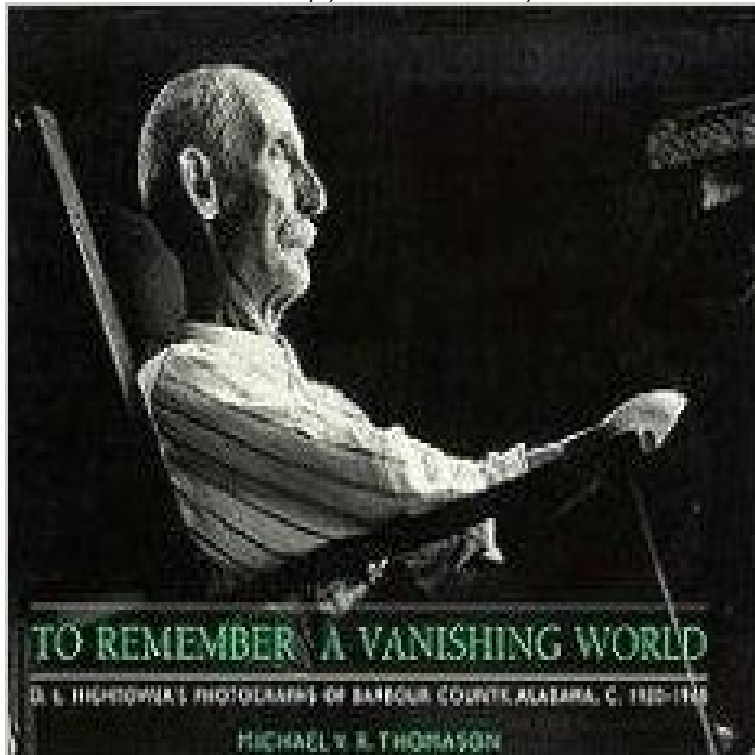


To Remember a Vanishing World: D. L. Hightowers Photographs of Barbour County, Alabama, c. 1930-1965



This remarkable collection of period photographs details day-to-day life and changing times in the Deep South. Draffus Lamar Hightower, 1899-1993, spent most of his life in Barbour County, Alabama. For many years he was the owner of a Chevrolet dealership, but he had another occupation as well. From his youth, he was fascinated with photography, and for fifty years he experimented with the craft both technically and artistically. Hightower, while participating fully in the 20th century, was also acutely aware of the passing of the heritage of the last one. From the early 1920s to the late 1960s, he made thousands of negatives of people, events, landscapes, objects, and buildings in Barbour County. His photographs are reminiscent of the documentary work of Walker Evans, Berenice Abbott, and other great 20th-century American photographers. Hightower created an incredibly complete and vivid record of the life of a rural Alabama county during a period of profound change-documenting everything from birthday parties and political rallies to farm scenes and the demolition of historic buildings so that future generations would not forget the world of their forebears. In 1990, Michael Thomason, historian and photographic archivist, began the long process of reviewing Hightowers collection of photographs, interviewing family and friends, and salvaging and printing the negatives, which by that time had begun to deteriorate. Thomason restored and printed 195 photographs and prepared accompanying essays that not only reveal the technical details of Hightowers labor of love but also tell the story of the human and economic changes in Barbour County during this period.

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