

THROUGH THE EYES OF AN ACTIVIST - DIXON V. ALABAMA (1961) AS TOLD BY JAMES MCFADDEN

On February 25th, 1960, students at Alabama State College made a decision to stand up for what they believed in. These students marched to the Montgomery County Courthouse and sat down at the “Whites Only” lunch counter and asked to be served. Instead of receiving a meal, they were told to leave and the grill closed. They were removed by police and stood peacefully in the hallway outside of the restaurant before leaving. After this initial sit-in, students continued to hold peaceful rallies and demonstrations that complied with the law.

Despite holding peaceful demonstrations and not being arrested, Alabama Governor John Patterson, chair of the Board of Education, called a special meeting where he advocated for the students’ removal. Nine students were expelled and twenty removed for the next term with no notice and no chance to defend themselves. This led to a landmark lawsuit, Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education, that became the cornerstone of the right to due process college students enjoy today.

This map lists the locations that were important to the activists at the time as told by James McFadden, one of the expelled students on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the initial sit-in. In addition to James McFadden, the board also expelled Elroy Embry, St. John Dixon, Edward E. Jones, Bernard Lee, Joseph Peterson, Leon Rice, Howard Shipman, and Marzette Watts. Eleanor Shepard intended to participate in the sit-in that day, but was dissuaded from going with the men as they feared for her safety at the hands of law enforcement.

- LOCATIONS BASED ON IMPORTANCE TO STORY
-  ACTIVIST HOUSING
 -  TRENHOLM'S OFFICE
 -  TRENHOLM'S HOME
 -  LOCATION OF SIT-IN
 -  MEETING LOCATION
 -  ORIGINAL ENTRANCE ASC
 -  RALLYING POINT



MARY BENNETT
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MONTGOMERY 1960
PROJECT

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