

**Oak Tree Hotel, Raymond, Mississippi,  
owned by Howell Hall, father of Rosa Hall,  
wife of "Savez Read. He courted her at this Hotel.  
After Howell's wife died, he remarried Mary Elizabeth  
"Eliza" Read, aunt of "Savez" Read, John Jeremiah Read,  
and their siblings.**



*Old Oak Tree Hotel was located where the S.O.S. Service Station stands today. It burned around 1910.  
(Photo courtesy of Mrs. Mary Adams, Private Collection)*

### About the hotel today:

The OAK TREE HOTEL was located on the site where the S.O.S. Service Station is today. The owners of the hotel lived in the large house just below the hotel. The house is still standing - across from the Railroad Depot - but is in ruins. It was a very fashionable hotel also well known throughout the country. A large oak tree stood beside the two story hotel. Town records describe it "as a handsome structure painted white and trimmed with green. Across the entire front up and down stairs was a wide porch surrounded by balusters. Many windows with green shutters also opened across the front of the building. The ground being lower in the rear of the building allowed space for several rooms

*under the main floor, among them being a barber shop. Just over these rooms was a large dance hall considered the finest in the country. These walls, on many occasions, echoed to the strains of southern music as happy parties glided over the floor in the Virginia Reel." (History of Raymond, Mrs. Jane Brent)*

It was from this hotel that Sargeant S. Prentiss delivered his famous Bed Bug Speech. It is said that during the night he was awakened by a bedbug and he rose and proceeded to address the enemy with "*all the mock gravity at his command.*" He spoke with such eloquence using all the persuasive powers, as if some great result fringed upon his successful pleading. The entire hotel was aroused by his thrilling speech!

The Oak Tree served the town of Raymond - and - the many guests that frequented the area until it burned after the turn of the century. Two old hotels lost to history - but - not to the "imagination" of those interested in recreating romantic images of what life was like in Raymond – long, long ago.