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In The pages of this Volume

Ms. Caroline Herron was awarded the Dr. John Rison Jones Award for Southern History by the Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society in 2023. Her thesis was submitted as a portion of her requirements for a Masters in History awarded from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. As a resident of Huntsville her focus is on the years after the Civil War and the 20th Century.

The Huntsville Historical Review printed Part I of her dissertation in the Spring/Summer issue in 2024. The issue addressed her assessment of the city from its origin through the Civil War. In Part II she covers the events that converted the community into a National Treasure. The Editor

Cotton Mill City to Rocket City: How a North Alabama Frontier Town Reinvented Itself Again and Again
Part II

By Caroline Herron

The Mill Era

Origins

In his landmark text *The Promise of the New South,* exploring the experiences of Southerners after Reconstruction, Ed Ayers meditates extensively on the dualism of the Southern experiences and the divisions between the Southern experience, culture, economy, and politics and that of the wider national experience. Even as the late 1800s fostered an economic boom, a surge of immigration and accompanying labor force, and a nationalizing culture outside the bounds of the South, the Mason-Dixon line remained a barrier. Efforts at developing manufacturing in the South mostly flopped, "to many people, Southern industry seemed more of a charade than an actuality". Southern newborn industries were competing with Northern established industry for investment capital,

skilled labor, and the market even as "federal banking policy, railroad freight rates, absentee ownership, reliance on outside expertise, high interest rates, cautious state governments, lack of industrial experience- all these hindered the growth of Southern industry"[1]. Given these restrictions, the bulk of Southern industry that developed postwar was extractive; mining lumber extraction. These materials were then sent away to other markets better able to do the more lucrative work of finishing them into sellable goods. In this way, the South remained mostly colonial in economics, reliant on the technical capabilities of distant markets while stripping its own natural resources for survival.

There was, however, one major industry that thrived in the south; still, always, cotton was king. Textile mills were possibly the most successful and most lucrative of the Southern industries; all that was needed to establish a mill was a water source, a resource that Huntsville had in abundance. Textile mills also required very little by way of startup costs, and the labor demands required very little skill, all of which made it ideal for the postwar South whose largest resource was its plethora of low-cost unskilled labor. The number of textile mills in the South began growing in 1870 and by 1900, 32% of the nation's textile workers were in the South (up from 8% in 1870).[2] Perhaps most significantly, the textile industries, as opposed to the mining or lumber industries that also gained traction in the south, employed local people and largely used local capital to produce a marketable, consistently profitable product that maintained the most consistent boost to the local economy. Huntsville was one such beneficiary from the boom in the Southern textile industry.

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[1] Ayers, Edward L, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York, 1992), 104.

[2] Ayers, 111

The Huntsville Mill Boom

The post war languishing of the city of Huntsville lingered until 1880, when businessman D. L. Love from Mississippi advertised in Providence, Rhode Island of business opportunities in Huntsville. The antebellum cotton mills in North Alabama had been small, family owned, and mostly outside of the city proper; suffering from the war, the remaining mill closed in 1885 due to competition from the new, in-town mills. Love's advertisement was answered by a Rhode Island native named Joshua Coons, a trained cotton spinner who did much of the work in assembling Huntsville's first major mill. Coons approved a mill site, found officers for the mill, and persuaded the city to waive the mill's taxes for a decade; in 1880 the mill opened with 1,248 spindles, soon to add 4,000 more.

In 1886 brothers Michael and James O'Shaughnessy formed the North Alabama Investment Company (NAIC) with a $50,000 intended to aid the local economy and bring industry such as cotton mills to Huntsville. NAIC widely distributed pamphlets and advertisements to bring investors to Huntsville, pamphlets such as the 1888 "Huntsville, the Queen City of the South", which bragged extensively about Huntsville's existing factories, mills, schools, churches, agriculture, climate, and mineral resources. [3] Between this push and the turn of the century, Huntsville gained three more significant cotton mills. The Dallas Manufacturing Company was given free water from the city and fifty acres from the NAIC in 1892. The mill took its name from Trevanion Dallas, who came from the Nashville Cotton Mill, and its investors included $126,000 from locals as well as Dallas himself and an array of investors from New York, Philadelphia, Providence and Pawtucket, Rhode Island. In the same year Michael O'Shaughnessy and Joshua Coons united with South Dakota transplant Tracey Pratt to open a 5,200-spindle

[3] "Huntsville, Queen City of the South"

West Huntsville Cotton Mills Company and then the Merrimack Manufacturing Company arrived in 1900 due to the work of Tracey Pratt. Merrimack was unique in that it was headquartered in Lowell, Massachusetts and its investor pool was quite small- only 8 men. Between 1900 and 1902, four mills opened in Huntsville: the Lowe Manufacturing Company (owned by Arthur Lowe, president of the New England Manufacturer's Association), the Madison Spinning Company, the Rowe Knitting Company, and the Eastern Manufacturing Company.

With this surge, Huntsville was finally the manufacturing capital that investors had hoped for. Though the claims that the majority of funding for the mills was local are demonstrably false, there was considerable local benefit from the mills. In addition to the thousands of jobs available, some considerable proportion of the profits stayed local, the mills paid taxes that built Huntsville's infrastructure, and secondary industries built up to support the increase in population and prosperity.

Promotion

Early historians such as Broadus Mitchel in his 1921 text *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South* posited that the bulk of Southern manufacturing was built primarily on the back of local Southern investment, saying nothing stands out more prominently than that the Southern mills were conceived and brought into existence by Southerners. The impulse was furnished almost exclusively from within the South against much discouragement from selfish interests at the North, and capital was supplied by the South to the limit of its ability.[4]

In fact, this claim has largely been debunked since Mitchell wrote, with Huntsville as a prototypical example of a Southern success that depended heavily on the investment

[4] Broadus Mitchell, *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South*. Baltimore; Johns Hopkins Press, 1921. P 102

and connections of Northern businessmen, some of whom relocated either part time or full time to the city. In fact, prior to the arrival of these investors, the citizens made several attempts at the sort of improvements that the city would need to attract industry, to no avail. In 1880, the citizens of Huntsville proposed to print "a twenty-five to thirty-page booklet describing the lands, minerals, water power, manufacturing facilities, markets, climate, and social advantages of the area in order to induce immigration and capital"[5]. The town formed groups to raise funds for improvement of transportation routes; the Tennessee River Improvement Committee petitioned Congress to increase appropriations for the Muscle Shoals Canal, to no avail. Discussion of new railroad lines surfaced multiple times, though none was ever built to add on to the east-west line of the Memphis & Charleston. The townspeople were clearly aware of their need for infrastructure, and there was a desire to attract industry and investment, but these desires required an outside impetus to bring them to fruition.

The development of Huntsville and its success in the textile mills industry is inextricable from the names of a few significant individuals; namely, the O'Shaughnessy's and Tracey Pratt. The O'Shaughnessy legacy in Huntsville is not immediately discernible today; aside from the quiet residential O'Shaughnessy Street in the historic Five Points district, the name is virtually invisible. And yet brothers James and Michael were the driving force and the financial backing behind many of the most successful movements for industrial development in the city. The O'Shaughnessy brothers came from Ireland with their parents before the Civil War, and both boys were employed in their father's dry goods business in Cincinnati. During the Civil War, both were employed in the Department of the Treasury, Michael

[5]*Northern Dollars for Huntsville Spindles, 8*

in bookkeeping and accounting and James in the Quartermaster section. After the war, the brothers put their experiences to good use; the formed a commission house in Nashville and began acquiring cotton shipments in 1865. They opened a cottonseed oil factory, James moved to New York City and began making business contacts in the shipment and distribution of cottonseed oil. In 1881, Michael bought the site of the abandoned machine shops of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad in Huntsville, and built the Huntsville Cotton Oil Mill. Thus began the O'Shaughnessy's influence in the stagnant post-Reconstruction cotton village in North Alabama. The brothers recognized the confluence of the Tennessee River, the railroad, the abundant labor force, and the local cotton crop as a potential profit, and they had the means and the will to invest.

In 1886 the North Alabama Improvement Company was invested with $50,000 capital stock and a board of eighteen local citizens, two O'Shaughnessy brothers, and two men from Memphis, was to improve and develop the opportunities in the city of Huntsville. The local citizens came from a broad swath of Huntsville businesses: physicians, bookstores, court clerks, hotel owners, grocers, the president of the Huntsville Female College, bankers, and a single attorney. In addition to work on bringing Dallas Mills, the NAIC also worked to build the Monte Sano Hotel, a railroad up the mountain to the hotel, the renovation of the Huntsville Hotel downtown, a road from Huntsville to Guntersville, and a new railroad from Huntsville to Gadsden. The goal of each of these projects was to attract wealthy investors and capital as well as improve conditions for businesses in the city. The NAIC, in addition to investing directly in projects in and around Huntsville, made efforts at advertising and promoting the city across the nation. One way they accomplished this was the production of pamphlets such as *The Queen City of the South*, published and distributed in 1888 offering

unexcelled openings and inducements... for blast furnaces, rolling mills, steam forges, foundries, machine shops, boiler works, rail, fish-plate and spike mills, nail works, bridge and bolt works, furniture factories, planning mills, wagon, buggy and carriage works, car shops, boot and shoe factories, paper mills, starch works, and diversified industries of all desirable kinds, seeking healthy climate and good homes, cheap fuel, abundant water and raw material, with ample transportation for supplies and manufactured products, etc.[6]

In addition to their work with the NAIC, both O'Shaughnessy brothers built local residences that they used to varying degrees, and they both invested in the local Catholic church downtown. Colonel James bilt a fine home on Monte Sano called "Castle Delight", and frequently used it for entertaining friends and associates from across the country. Michael moved his wife and five children to Huntsville full time, building a luxurious home they called Kildare, completed in 1886 and still standing today.

Michael O'Shaughnessy at Kildare source: Ryan, Northern Dollars for Huntsville Spindles p.8

The most significant of the O'Shaughnessy achievements in Huntsville was unquestionably the establishment of the NAIC and bringing Dallas Mills to the city. Eventually providing 1,200 jobs, Dallas Mills also established precedent for the mills that would follow it. Named for the manager of the mill, who managed the mill from its opening until 1902, Dallas Mill was a local enterprise funded entirely with non-local funds.

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[6] *Queen City of the South, p3*

Of the $500,000 capital stock set, T.B. Dallas and G. M. Fogg of Nashville and S. M. Milliken of New York invested $20,000 each, $276,000 was amassed from a collection of 44 subscribers (thirty two of whom resided outside Alabama, zero of whom is a recognizable Huntsvillian), nine northern businesses pledged $110,000. A total of $90,600 was pledged by Huntsville locals, but $25,000 of this came from the NAIC and $20,000 came from the O'Shaughnessy brothers, and there is some speculation over whether these pledges were ever actually fulfilled as in 1894 Huntsvillians owned only 16.7% of the common stock and 1.8% of the preferred stock.[7] However, 52% of the stockholders were Huntsvillians.[8] Clearly, the local population was largely invested in the mill as Mitchell says "to the limit of their ability", however, that limit was not sufficient. The bulk of investment began and continued to be outsiders for the Dallas Mill and those following.

Perhaps the next most influential achievement of the NAIC was in its death; in 1892, as the far-reaching O'Shaughnessy family finally overextended themselves (sunk, like so many others, in the Atlantic-Pacific canal project that would eventually be the Panama Canal, among other investments) the company essentially dissolved and subsequently sold off its real estate holdings in Huntsville. The properties were bought by the Northwestern Land Association, a group of South Dakota businessmen that included the next generation of wealthy investors looking to grow Huntsville. Even as Dallas Mills thrived and grew rapidly, William S. Wells, Willard I Wellman, and Tracy Pratt, as part of the Northwestern Land Association, came to Huntsville. [9]

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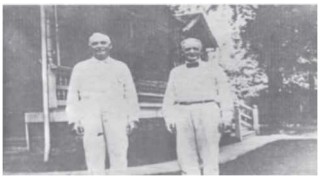
[7] Dallas Manufacturing Co. *Record of Stockholders Meetings*, 76-79

[8] Dallas Manufacturing Co., *Record of Stockholders Meetings",* 183-185

[9] Ryan, Patricia H. (2002) "Michael O'Shaughnessy and The North Alabama Improvement Company," The Historic Huntsville Quarterly: Vol. 28: No. 2, Article 7. Available at: https://louis.uah.edu/historic-huntsville-quarterly/vol28/iss2/7



Wellman (left) with Pratt
source: Ryan, Northern Dollars for Huntsville Spindles, 14.

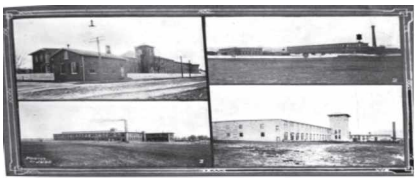
Tracey Pratt, Wellman, and Wells became the driving forces behind the next half-century of Huntsville's mill growth. With the power of the Northwestern Land Association behind them, contacts across the country, and the precedent of the O'Shaughnessy's successes with Dallas Mill, swiftly the West Huntsville Cotton Mills (often called the Coons and Pratt Mills) opened. The Northwestern Land Association, as did the NAIC before them, circulated pamphlets and booklets throughout the country advertising Huntsville. In addition to the larger mills, the group solicited small businesses as well. In 1899 the Merrimack Manufacturing Company of Lowell, Massachusetts announced their intention to build a mill in Huntsville; credit was given primarily to Tracey Pratt, with assistance from Wells, for negotiating with the Merrimack Co to bring the mill to Huntsville along with the jobs it supplied. With the construction of Merrimack Mill it was determined that the rapidly expanding city needed a system of streetcars to link the mill villages with the town proper, and once again Tracey Pratt took point on the project, investing the lion's share of the capital stock. This particular project saw Pratt unite with minority stockholders John F Waters and T Coleman du Pont, both of whom invested capital in the West Huntsville Land and Improvement Company, another organization to promote the city.

Left: Huntsville Streetcar route, connecting the Dallas and Merrimack Villages with Huntsville proper and creating the suburb. source: Ryan, Northern Dollars for Huntsville Spindles, 19.

In 1900 Pratt borough Huntsville's fifth successful cotton mill, Lowe Mill. The West Huntsville Land and Improvement Company donated nine blocks of land, Massachusetts businessman Arthur Lowe built a 10,000 spindle mill; once again the lion's share of the investment capital came from outside Huntsville. Pratt and Wellman were the only Huntsvillians on the board of directors of the mill. Later that year, Pratt was credited with bringing Rowe Knitting Company to the city as well; three blocks for the mill's village were provided by the West Huntsville Land and Improvement Company, the majority of the funding was provided from out-of-towners.

Underscoring the importance of out-of-town investment, in 1899 an attempt was made to finance "People's Cotton Mill" using local money in small increments; though $15,000 of the proposed $100,000 was raised in the first night of promotion, the project came to naught and no incorporation papers were ever filed.

The city made efforts to diversify the economy, as well, again using pamphlets primarily. In addition, the local newspapers were effective at touting the attributes of the city, often free water was offered as an inducement (as at Dallas Mills). In addition, citizens often purchased property and donated it to developers as an inducement to attract business. The Northwest Land Association and the chamber of commerce worked extensively, advertising and negotiating to attract diversified businesses, and were largely successful though the cotton mills remained predominant.



1908 Businessmen's League of Huntsville brochure collage of Huntsville mills. Clockwise from top left: Huntsville Cotton Mills, Lowe Mills, Abingdon Mills, and Huntsville knitting Mills. Source: Images of America: Huntsville page 83

Evaluation of the city's population growth through this period of investment and expansion is difficult, as the mill villages weren't incorporated into the city limits until the 1950s, thus the city census records show virtually no population growth through the 1890s. Modern approximations estimate that including the mill villages into the city might result in as high as 97% population growth over the course of the 1890s. [10]

African American Experience

The experiences and opportunities of African American Huntsvillians is more difficult to decipher than that of their white neighbors. In 1860 on the cusp of the Civil War, enslaved African Americans outnumbered whites[11]. In 1870, population of African Americans had risen to 15,740. By 1900(Census data on population of black people in Madison county in 1890-1900).

Though the cotton mills brought thousands of jobs to Huntsville and indubitably increased general wealth and opportunity in the county, these jobs were largely not available to the African American residents of the county. As in most other textile mills across the south, "the machine rooms of the cotton mills rapidly became the preserve of whites only"[12] Mill owners- motivated both by racial prejudice but also a desire to prevent friction within the mills- isolated black workers to jobs outside the mills. They were hired to work on the grounds as groundskeepers, construction workers, and laborers. "In 1890 African American 'operatives, laborers, and loom fixers,' including men and women, made up only 17.16 percent of southern mill workers and by 1930 had increased to only 29.82

[10] Northern Dollars for Huntsville Spindles, Ch 1
[11] US Census 1860
[12] Ayers, 114

percent"[13]. Black Huntsvillians, though a majority of the population, were largely excluded from the prosperity and opportunity that the mill era brought.

Local Reception of the Mills

Though local newspaper coverage of the movement of industrialization was largely laudatory- leaders such as Pratt and O'Shaughnessy were celebrated as local heroes and the advent of the mills was regarded as a positive- the mill workers themselves were not entirely welcomed by Huntsvillians. The newspapers covered a number of violent events in the mill villages- including the 1900 lynching of a black man named Elijah Clark. Accused of assaulting two Dallas Mills girls, Susie and Nellie Priest, the twenty two-year old Clark was arrested and taken to the jail. The night of July 25, a mob of Dallas millworkers armed themselves, dynamited the jail, dragged Clark back to their village and, in front of a crowd of 6,000 men, women, and children, hanged the accused. They then proceeded to fill his body with bullets and leave it as a warning. The violence was largely regarded by the local newspapers as disgraceful and reflected poorly on the mills and millworkers; though such lynching were far from unheard of in Madison county, this particular one was seen as the failing of the Dallas mills management, for failing to control their workers. This linguistic separation occurred frequently in newspaper reports of violence in the mill villages, demonstrating the lack of assimilation of the mill workers and the town at large. The mill villages weren't incorporated into the city limits until 1910, despite their significant growth. In the hierarchy of the city, the townspeople were at the top, then the millworkers decidedly below but also decidedly more

[13]Snow, Whitney Adrienne. "Cotton Mill City: The Huntsville Textile Industry, 1880-1989." Alabama Review 63, no. 4 (2010): 243-281. doi:10.1353/ala.2010.0006.

elevated than both black Huntsvillians and farmers.[14] As Ayers put it, "The town people saw the operatives from the very beginning as people unlike themselves, as helpless women, benighted rustics, or failed farmers. For some, that perception of the workers fed a desire to minister to them, to help bring them into the fold of the progressive New *Comparison to other textile mill cities in the South* The issue of establishing a thriving textile mill economy in the south was a pressing one; textile mills were one of the only truly successful southern industries to come out of the plethora of "New South" attempts. The South could provide plentiful cheap labor, there was more than enough water sources for the mills themselves, and there was interest across the South. The problem, then, was investment capital. Even in Texas, the largest cotton producer in the country with a rapidly increasing population and plenty of will to develop the nascent industry struggled to amass sufficient investment. Even as eastern capitalists pledged hundreds of thousands of dollars in mills across Texas, they required local investment as well and nothing came of the schemes.[15] Though Ayers claims in his *The Promise of the New South* that "the textile mills were built with local capital and employed local people", this assumed a level of ability. Towns like Huntsville, which had precious little capital to invest to begin with, could never have formed a cotton mill (much less the five mills that Huntsville boasted by 1900) without extensive outside investment. Despite its own assurances to the contrary, Huntsville mills were not primarily locally funded; even the key figures like Pratt, O'Shaughnessy, and Wells were out of towners who adopted the community for investment. The later leadership like

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[14] Snow, 268-170

[15]Shennette Garrett-Scott. "'The Hope of the South': The New Century Cotton Mill of Dallas, Texas, and the Business of Race in the New South, 1902–1907." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 116, no. 2 (2012): 139–66. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24388316.

Pratt, Wells, and Wellman were all transplants who moved full-time to the city and remained there long-term.
South; for others, perhaps most, that sense of otherness bred only pity or contempt."[16]

Death of the Mills

The 1930s were difficult for everyone, but perhaps especially so for textile mills; the 30's not only held the Depression, but also boll weevils and plunging cotton prices, national strikes in both 1934 and 1936. Huntsville's mill workers participated in the 1934 strike which was largely unsuccessful. The fluctuating fortunes of the textile industry at large (increased demand with World War II, a postwar slump, a 1951 national strike) led to widespread closure of textile mills through the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. Huntsville paralleled this experience closely. The 1934 strike was most significant, beginning nearby in Gadsden, AL on July 12 and spreading to Huntsville on July 16. In the end, though the United Textile Workers considered it a victory, it was largely hollow. The strike left fourteen dead, hundreds arrested, and 420,000 idle nationwide and achieved virtually no gains for workers. In Huntsville, the strike cost the 4,500 strikers about $600,000 in wages, the strikers faced widespread discrimination afterwards with no increase in wages and worsening treatment. Though a case could be made for the strike having some impact on the social consciousness of Huntsville's 'lintheads', as textile workers were derogatively referred to, making some gains in the social inequality they had faced since the mills opened, that is the only gain they could honestly claim.[17]

In the wake of the strikes, and while floundering financially, the mills began to topple one at a time. The Rowe mill closed after the 1934 strike. Lowe closed in 1937. Dallas closed in 1949. Lincoln closed in 1955, leaving only

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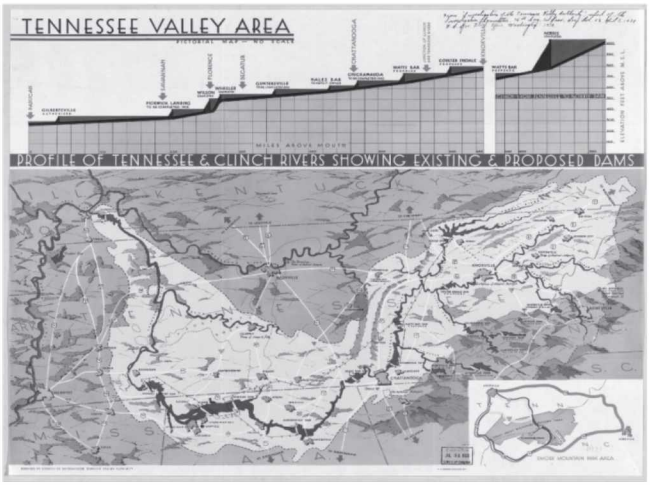
[16] Ayers 113
[17] Snow, 269

Merrimack in the former Cotton Mill City. With the dissolution of the city's industrial backbone, the threat hovered of becoming a no-industry ghost town as did so many Southern towns.

Tennessee Valley Authority



Proposed TVA dam projects in 1939, showing proximity to Huntsville. *Source: Tennessee Valley Authority. Tennessee Valley Area: pictorial map. [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939] Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/2008628288/.*

Huntsville is located in Northern Alabama, at the tail end of the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains and just north of the Tennessee River, which originates in the Appalachians at Knoxville before wandering southwest to Chattanooga, then further south across Northern Alabama, then looping northwards again to meet the Ohio River in Kentucky. Prior to 1933, the Tennessee was not navigable as far as Huntsville. In May 1933 as a part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, the Tennessee Valley Authority was founded as an attempt at regional economic stimulus to lift the agricultural regions of the Tennessee River Valley that

were hard-hit by the Great Depression. The Tennessee Valley Authority was a unique endeavor; a government agency tasked with the total development of a region, the TVA's mandate was vague and broad-reaching. Among other endeavors, the TVA attempted to control flooding, harness hydroelectric power opportunities, make the waterways of the Tennessee watershed more navigable, and generally take the Tennessee Valley from an underdeveloped agricultural backwater with virtually nothing to offer potential industry to a region of opportunity.[18]

In Huntsville, the TVA made the Tennessee River navigable up to the city itself, offering another transportation opportunity to add to the city's railroad line. By the 1940s, the TVA was embarking on the massive hydroelectric project that was to become its chief legacy; the dams that would bring inexpensive electricity to the Valley, and power the industry that was to shift Huntsville's future. Amidst the threats of the 1930s arose a powerful force that would come to dominate the next century of Huntsville's existence: federal spending. The Tennessee Valley Authority became the predominant spender in the area and made changes that would echo through the entirety of North Alabama in virtually every way. However, federal spending is not arbitrary, and the TVA was the first experience many Huntsville leaders had with maximizing the government's dollars, but it was surely not the last. Just as the leadership of a few significant characters united with a general willingness to press for change, the TVA era was characterized by a sense of local advocacy that had huge impacts.

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[18] National Archives. "Tennessee Valley Authority Act, 1933." Milestone Document. National Archives. July 19. 2023, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/tennessee-valley-authority-act#:~:text=President%20Roosevelt%20signed%20the%20Tennessee,and%20businesses%2C%20and%20replanting%20forests.

More than any other Tennessee Valley city, however, Huntsville embraced the booster ethos with a civil leadership dedicated to building a prosperous economy on a foundation of federal investment... no longer a sleepy southern cotton-processing center, Huntsville emerged as a regional nexus of high-paying, high-tech jobs, forcing the surrounding community to work ceaselessly to keep up with the economic, political, and social consequences of rampant growth[19]

Downs, in his text on the development and activity of the Tennessee Valley Authority, highlights the importance and effectiveness of local leadership in connecting and amplifying federal spending. "North Alabama had a number of draws for businesses interested in relocating: pleasant weather, ample resources, cheap non-unionized labor, and cooperative civic and state governments, promising lax regulations and financial incentives. Yet these benefits were prevalent in the emerging Sunbelt... For the Tennessee Valley to best its competition, TVA knew that enthusiastic and organized local and regional developers would be essential"[20] In fact, despite the obvious need and poverty in the south, the region received the lowest level of per capita spending during the New Deal Era (Figure X). This was in part due to Congress, but also attributable to a lack of local support for federal investment: "complaints about the threat to local wages and labor discipline were common".[21] Huntsville was a notable exception to this rule. As was the case with the NAIC and the Northwestern Land Association, North Alabama relied on the development of organizations that could amplify the voices of North Alabama's needs and the effectiveness of the TVA's dollars. Huntsville's embrace of

[19] Downs, 10
[20] Downs, 148
[21] Wright, 260

federal spending was unique in the south, and it allowed for the explosion of growth seen in the next half-century.

Per Capita Federal Expenditures, 1933-1939

	Expenditures per capita	Percentage of US average
U.S.	$224	
West	306	137
Midwest	224	100
Northeast	196	88
South	189	84
Alabama	175	78
Arkansas	256	114
Georgia	171	76
Louisiana	221	99
Mississippi	228	102
North Carolina	143	64
South Carolina	198	88
Tennessee	183	82
Texas	205	92
Virginia	175	78

Fig. 6: Data adapted from Wright *Old South, New South* p. 260

Boosterism Controversy

Rocket City Era

Wartime Development

World War II was the lifeline that Huntsville- and the nation- needed. Between 1941 and 1944 the new chemical ordnance plants in Huntsville employed more than 17,000 people, many former mill workers. After the war, the shuttering of the wartime plants again could have left the city a ghost town. As the US began quietly preparing for war in the early 1940s, the Chemical Warfare Service requested the War Department acquire to prepare to furnish an extensive standing army with offensive chemical munitions. Congress obliged, passing $53,000,000 for procurement and supply in the supplemental appropriations bill passed in June 1940. On the whole, the southeastern textile states ranked lowest in the nation for federal spending; southern political representatives "gave low priority to attracting federal funds to their states and districts, if indeed they were not actively hostile"[22]

On June 8, 1941 Lt. Col. Charles E. Loucks, soon to be Executive Officer of OC Chemical Warfare Service and Major General Walter C. Baker, a former Chief of the Chemical Warfare Service visited Huntsville and, upon returning to Washington, filed a report with the Chemical Warfare Service. Shortly thereafter, the CWS recommended that of the nine suggested locations the Huntsville site was "more desirable, considering the matter as a whole, than any other location considered". The decision was based on the availability of 33,000 low-priced acres, access to transportation facilities, labor conditions, construction materials, power supply from the Tennessee Valley

[22] Wright, 259

Authority, operating personnel and raw materials, fuel, water supply, climate, health, living conditions, and sewage disposal. By July 3, 1941, the *Huntsville Times* was announcing the decision to construct a Chemical Warfare Manufacturing Arsenal near the city;

> Information received by The Times from Washington states that there will be two plants-separate and apart but adjacent. One will be the Chemical Warfare Service Plant, while the other will be the Ordnance plant for storage and care of the shells." The Chemical Plant will cost $41,000,000 while the other will cost $6,000,000. It was also reported that approximately 5,000 men will be required to operate the plant and approximately the same number of men for construction purposes.[23]

Shortly thereafter, the Ordinance Department decided to place a large chemical shell assembly plant and related facilities adjacent to the established Huntsville Arsenal. Thus the two facilities, abutting the Tennessee River to the south and adjacent to one another, formed what would become the 30,000+ acre Redstone Arsenal.

Ground was broken on the Arsenal on August 5, 1941, and the path of the Cotton Mill City changed irrevocably in ways the residents could hardly imagine. Over the course of the war the Arsenal peaked at 6,707 employees, 90% of whom were civilians and almost 65% of whom were women. January 1945 saw another milestone with the origins of the Fred Project, which was tasked with investigating chemical combinations as a propellant for the JR-2 bombs. This early foray into missile development would prove prescient.

Though the end of the war decreased the work done at the Arsenal, it did not entirely stop. Unlike many other

[23] July 3, 1941 Huntsville Times

production factories post-war, the chemical munitions produced on the Arsenal had to be destroyed and stored, and they returned to the point of origin for this task. By February 1947, this task was completed and Redstone went into standby status with a permanent force of 225 people. The only factors that likely prevented the Arsenal from being shut down and sold during 1948-49 was the slow process of demilitarization and decontamination; with the size of the workforce, the process moved slowly. In addition, several Arsenal buildings had been leased to private industries, and the leases required the arsenal to furnish utilities. In fact, the arsenal came so close to its own doom that there are anecdotal accounts of For Sale signs being hung on the fences multiple times, before the sale was delayed each time. Thus, the large Redstone Arsenal limped through the meager years of the later 1940s, surviving until its next calling fortuitously arrived in 1950.

In 1948, the Chief of the Ordnance Rocket Branch persuaded the Chief of Ordnance to centralize the Ordnance rocket research at a "rocket arsenal", and furthermore that this arsenal should be located at Redstone. By November 1949, the Huntsville Arsenal and the Redstone Arsenal had been united under the Redstone Arsenal command, now called the Ordnance Rocket Center. With a civil servant workforce of 720 people, Huntsville's Rocket City identity was born.

From this humble origin grew the Thiokol Chemical Corporation and Rohm & Haas began doing research and development for rocket propellant at Redstone, then the Ordnance Research and Development division of guided missiles moved to Redstone from Fort Bliss, Texas.[24] In 1950 Werner Von Braun and his team of German rocketeers moved to Huntsville. In 1960 the Marshall Spaceflight Center was established at Redstone, building the rockets that would take astronauts to the moon and

[24] Cleo Cason and Winona Stroup (1971) "The Early Years of Redstone Arsenal," Huntsville Historical Review: Vol. 1: No. 3, Article 12.

back. The Cotton Mill city was reinvented as the Rocket City.

Conclusion

Throughout Huntsville's continual evolutions and re-inventions, one factor has remained constant; a persistent and effective boosterism that allowed the city to harness the resources from without and empower the city to rise again and again. A small backwater town without significant geographical or political advantages, there is no obvious reason for Huntsville's eventual rise to be the most populous and fastest growing city in the state of Alabama other than the assiduous efforts of the right people in the right places at the right time; citizens like the O'Shaughnessys, Tracey Pratt, and Willard Wellman used their positions, connections, and wealth to bring communal good to the city and helped Huntsville rise from the ashes of the postwar South as an industrial force that punched far above its weight. As will become clear in later installations, this boosterism and city-wide reinvention was not a one time occurrence, but a hallmark of both the city's past and its future.

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THE STORY OF A GHOST TOWN: BALTIMORE ON THE MULBERRY FORK

by Robert S. Davis

In 1820, the state of Alabama was in an economic boom about to go bust, with Huntsville in the center, because of the national Panic of 1819. Towns were founded on the new state's extensive river network that would become cities that would feed coal, cotton, and more through the growing port of Mobile. One of these dreams, the town of Baltimore failed, as did Burnt Corn, the state capital of Cahawba, and the town of Vernon, although it could have become a city like Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma, or Tuscaloosa.

All that remains of this place is a cemetery in deep woods near the community of Arkadelphia, in modern Cullman County that is a field of dreams of successes like Cullman and historic ghost towns like the now completely vanished coal mining community of Stout's Mountain. Only the inscriptions of ten of the some 100 graves survive, marking the deaths of certain members of the Cannon, Mauldin, Price, and Rice families as early as 1839. The last readable tombstone record is for Margaret M. Price, 1857-1860. Likely, a church once stood just above the cemetery, its carefully cut foundation and chimney stones likely now covering some of the graves.

Baltimore was at the highest navigation of the Mulberry Fork of the Black Warrior, and the lowest ford, with access to Tuscaloosa and from there by steamboat to Mobile and the Gulf of Mexico. At that point, the slope on the east side of the river allows access. A gulley provides access up the bluff on the opposite side of the river.

Visitors Richard Breckenridge, David Crockett, and Anne Royall saw this area as a wilderness. In sometimes almost impassible early Alabama, the subsequent Baltimore Road, however, had access to the famed Abraham Stout Toll

Road, and from there north and northeast to the Tennessee River, including to Fort Deposit and Gunter's Landing.

Hardy Clements, formerly of Lincoln County, Tennessee, worked as deputy surveyor for the federal government in surveying federal lands in Alabama in 1818, and he would make the first claim for land in what became Walker County. The son of frontier entrepreneur Reuben Clements of Tuscaloosa, he would build a fortune in land, lumber, mills, and plantations. Clements made the first payment on 163.05 acres at the future site of Baltimore, Section 7, the intersection of Township Line 13S and Range Line 3W, Huntsville Meridian and Land Office, at the Huntsville land office on April 4, 1820.

Planning for the town began by December 5 when Clements transferred his claim to the 81.55 acres along the west side of the Mulberry Fork, the southeast corner of Section 7, to William Dunn, formerly of Greene County, Tennessee, but then a justice of the peace in Blount County. He shortly afterward became county judge (i.e., commissioner). This tract included the later famous Baltimore Ford, at the mouth of today's Dean Creek. Clements also assigned his remaining 81.5 acres, immediately to the west of Dunn, to George Morgan, a book dealer in Tuscaloosa. The area became known as Morgan Springs but shortly afterward was renamed Baltimore.

On that same day, John W. Lane of Limestone County, a speculator with holdings and residences across the state, transferred the remaining 81.55 acres on the Mulberry Fork to Daniel Dunn, a small farmer, Tennessee veteran of the War of 1812, and brother of William Dunn. Daniel would also buy 80.22 acres directly across the river from the federal government on March 24, 1821. He lived in Tuscaloosa.

Other people also invested shortly afterward in Section 7. Immediately to the west, small farmer Jonas Lyles of Jefferson County made his first payment on 81.55 acres on December 16, 1820, and obtained a federal land

grant/patent on November 28, 1822. He lived in Tennessee by 1830 and Arkansas by 1840, where he reportedly died in 1843.Manley Files of Jefferson County owned the last of the 81.55-acre tracts from the southeast corner across to the southwest corner of Section 7. A rancher, he was likely the first white resident of Tuscaloosa. He married Jane M. Dunn, sister to Daniel and William Dunn. Files invested in small tracts of federal land in the Blount and Walker County area.His brothers Abner, starting in the 1820s, and Jeremiah, starting in the 1830s, invested in lands northwest of Baltimore. The legendary land speculator Samuel Maverick claimed tracts in a neighboring section. Manytracts, almost entire sections, around the Baltimore area went unclaimed for decades, however.

In December 1820, Dunn and Lyles, with John Fowler, advertised in Huntsville's *Alabama Republican* newspaper the upcoming sale of lots in their new town to be sold on February 12, 1821. They offered a liberal payment plan. Baltimore's streets and town lots could hardly have had straight lines, as the land was bluff, flood plain, hills, and knolls.

John Fowler, according to legend initiated the local apple industry at Baltimore. He speculated on land but not in Section 7. A Baptist Minister formerly of Tennessee and North Carolina, Fowler died in 1849 and was buried in Blountsville. His daughter Elizabeth H. married James Nathanael Dunn, brother of Daniel, Jane M., and William Dunn.

On an 1837 map, Baltimore Ford appears as Dunn's Cabin. Why the Dunn family and their partners chose Baltimore as the name for their town is lost. Contrary to legend, no one connected with the town was from Maryland. Tuscaloosa did have ties to the city of Baltimore, such as through the national firm of Hallett & Butler of New York as early as 1818.

Baltimore, Alabama, had potential. The promoters credited the site with five or six known springs of good,

consistent water, and the river had fertile river bottoms for corn and wheat. The area had limestone for fertilizer and coal. Reportedly, boats of 100 feet in length could pass down the Mulberry Branch in five months of the year to Tuscaloosa. The legislature authorized the extension of the Stout toll road from the town to the road between Blountsville, Elyton [today's Birmingham], and Tuscaloosa. On January 15, 1831, the legislature impressed labor of every man within seven miles to build a road between Tuscaloosa and Baltimore.

Basel Mauldin descended from the area's families. He heard stories that Baltimore had 400 people, a bridge over the Mulberry Branch, various stores, houses, and a stockade for defense against attack by bands of Indians. William Dunn operated a cotton gin. James D. Hamby built one of the first grist mills nearby and there was also a significant local iron works. In 1825, George Morrow signed with Carter Tarrant and James Thompson as security on a loan of $2,000 by the Bank of the State of Alabama to Jacob W. Brooks. Morrow signed the note in Baltimore, Alabama.

The town's fate was decided by the river. On December 3, 1823, the Alabama legislature voted to declare the Black Warrior River from Baltimore to its junction with the Sipsey River as a public highway and paid William Dunn for surveying the river to Tuscaloosa. Elijah Cunningham built the first of the long, narrow keelboats at Baltimore, likely at the lagoon below the cemetery, but for trade between Tuscaloosa and Mobile. The vessel left with a shipment of coal in 1820.

Below Baltimore, however, a boat had to navigate a waterfall and the Black Warrior River's shallow rocky Squaw Shoals. William Jones set off from Baltimore carrying a cargo of staves for William Dunn by flatboat. This vessel and its cargo went for sale in Tuscaloosa to purchase a keelboat, 200 bags of salt, and other

merchandise. The boatmen, however, found the river impassible for the loaded keelboat to make the return trip. For ten days, with the help of two local bachelors, they unloaded and reloaded the boat so that a cable could pull it through the rocky shallows. Reportedly, crews lost one in eight boats just by trying to cross Squaw Shoals. In 1835, Richard Chilton and James Cain cleared boulders from the river bottom, but that stretch of the river remained dangerous.

Baltimore had other problems. Farmers along the river could build their own canoes, flatboats, keelboats, and rafts to haul coal, corn, cotton, lumber, wheat flour, enslaved people, and even livestock to Tuscaloosa and beyond. They could avoid transporting their goods through the shoals to Baltimore. This town's great promoter, William Dunn, died at nearby Sulphur Springs on October 17, 1822. His brother sold at least half of his Baltimore area holdings in 1829. Severe downturns in the price of cotton in the late 1820s and the 1830s made paying back loans on that investment impossible. Deeds in book B (1830-1835) for Blount County show, by the 1830s, Huntsville banks foreclosing on real estate. Legend also has Baltimore plagued with epidemics that decimated its population. No town arose on the Black Warrior River basin to succeed where it had failed.

Famed writer Mary Gordon Duffee left the only eye-witness account of Baltimore. She only wrote of it as short-lived, with overpriced town lots and a few houses. The founders never received a formal patent (federal title)to the land and no town lot map, or original deeds to lots, survive. Any lot owners likely could not sell their holdings and moved on.

Some of the people who knew Baltimore became notable elsewhere. For example, Huntsville merchant Luther Morgan, formerly of Saratoga Springs, New York, had a store nearby at Sulfur Springs in a crude log and bush "wigwam" or lean-to where he kept a chained bear and once

hosted the famed Tennessean David Crockett, recovering from a fever he acquired exploring the Black Warrior River. He acquired other sulfur springs eight miles to the east where he built a hotel and stage stop that would begin Blount Springs, a nationally renowned health resort (1843-1914). His grandson was John Hunt Morgan, the famed Confederate cavalry commander. The legal troubles over town lots in Tuscaloosa of George Washington Morgan, Luthor's brother and an original investor in Baltimore, became Alabama case law. His son, John Tyler Morgan, became a general in the Confederate army and, for thirty years, served as the United States Senator from Alabama. Samuel Maverick's son would move to Texas and, from his scheme to falsely claim stray livestock, comes the word "maverick" for an independent-minded person.

The town was likely gone by 1830. In Section 7, Elijah Cannon claimed 40.78 acres on November 28, 1836, and received the patent in 1839, and Giles C. Jones would file a claim for more of the land on February 13, 1837, however; they were both small farmers. The whole section, including the site of Baltimore, then went abandoned for many years.

What became the site of Baltimore began in Blount County in 1818, became Walker County in 1823, returned to Blount in 1877, and became part of Cullman County in 1901. In the 1850 census, local families, such as Joseph Dean, George Rice, and James Rice, were small farmers and ranchers. Few of these families had enslaved people but, after emancipation in 1865, Major Reid, the only person formerly owned by nearby Allen Reid, would establish the Marriott Creek Colony, now the adjoining incorporated African American town of the Colony that prospers to the present.

Most of Section 7 passed to the North and South Railroad in 1873 as a federal contribution to the cost of its construction, eight miles to the east. Joseph Dean, formerly of Lincoln County, Tennessee, however, had moved to Alabama by the 1840s and bought 77 acres in Section 7

beginning on December 26, 1854, with additional land in neighboring Section 6. Despite being barred from Homesteading land until 1875 because of his Confederate service, Joseph acquired the site of Baltimore and passed it on to his son Elias, whose descendants still hold it in trust. The 1902 map of Cullman County shows the Dean farm and a Gum Spring School House at the site. Local thoroughfares still carry the name the Baltimore Road, which gave its name to a school in Walker County. In its last decades, Baltimore Ford had a ferry and a bridge. The Colony has established a small park there, in Arkadelphia, just off Highway 91.

The history of Baltimore demonstrates that while Alabama has always been a land of promise, not everyone's dreams succeed. Why some ideas fail can be historic mysteries worth exploring.

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The Federal Occupation of Huntsville and Women of Alabama

By Marjorie Ann Reeves

It has been 163 years since the United States experienced combat zones inside its borders and today a casual acquaintance with the challenges in faraway lands are observed through the lens of the media without experiencing a war or occupation. American society is isolated and insulated from the pain and anguish. In the 1860s, citizens of the South experienced the Goth returning again and again to destroy their homes and lives during the War Between the States. Numerous men and women wrote journals of their lives during the war. From these journals, we read what they experienced and develop an understanding what the ones that did not write suffered in the war. A young lady during that period put it plainly, "It is all very well for you to talk, you who have never known the wrongs that we have had to endure; you know nothing about the war."[25]

Alabama's lack of major battles within its borders produces little thought in discussions about the war but there were 194 running military clashes mainly in North Alabama until 1865 when Federal General Wilson and his troops rambled through the middle of Alabama burning and destroying what was left with Confederate General Forrest's men nipping at their heels.

The Tennessee River dips into North Alabama and gave the Union Navy an avenue to attack with their gunboats patrolling waterways through Alabama. A major naval battle was fought in Mobile Bay during 1864.

It is estimated that 100,000 Alabamians joined the Confederate Army and in the beginning were sent to

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[25] Cummings, Kate, *Kate: The Journal of a Confederate Nurse*, Louisiana State University Press, © 1959

Virginia to help protect the Confederate capital. Because the state was divided about succession, several counties threatened to succeed from the state. When Lincoln called for volunteers to fight the South about 2,700 Alabama men joined the Union army to fight against their own kin.

Most of the new soldiers were yeoman, farmers raising food crops to feed the state. Beginning in 1861, they were still on the farms preparing the fields for planting. Leaving their families meant taking care of the farm fell to the women. They plowed, planted, conducted the harvest, cut wood, tended to the animals, and took care of the remaining family members and neighbors. The women, left as head of the household, had no protection from the Federal invaders or outlaws and often became victims. Farming communities were plundered, destroyed, and crops burned by Federal invaders throughout the war.

Meanwhile in the city of Huntsville, where thousands of Federal invading soldiers took control, the women did what they could to defy the Union's efforts to crush their rebel spirit. After war was declared and before the invasion of North Alabama, the women of Huntsville made uniforms for the men in the Confederate army. They used everything available to furnish the men clothing while fighting for their homeland. When the invasion came, the women helped their men escape from the city. They took supplies sewn in their clothing to the Confederate soldiers as often as they could while under the prying eyes of Federals in town.

Federal General O.M. Mitchel invaded Huntsville on April 11, 1862, at the crack of dawn with over 8,000 soldiers to conquer half that number of civilian women, children, slaves, freemen, and the elderly. The Memphis & Charleston (M&C) rail line dipped into North Alabama making it a valuable tool for transporting troops and supplies to the army, it was fought over by both sides, Union and Confederate. When Union General Mitchel came into Huntsville, train cars were running on the M&C line through Huntsville and Mitchel's men captured "18

engines, 100 fright cars, 6 passenger, 2 baggage, a large number of smaller cars."[26] Two passing cars held Confederate soldiers, one got away but one was captured that held wounded soldiers coming from the Shiloh battlefield.

Mrs. Bradford, a widow, led several of the ladies to General Mitchel to ask permission to take care of the wounded soldiers on the train. Mrs. Chadick, a minster's wife, wrote in her journal: "The object of the visit then was stated to Mitchel by Mrs. Bradford, when, instead of a direct reply, he went on to speak of the very great surprise he had given us that morning, and expressing great surprise on his part that we had no reception prepared for him! Mrs. Chadick wrote, "`I had it in my heart to let him know that we had a grand reception prepared for him at Corinth, but considering that discretion was the better part of valor, kept silent."[27] The ladies carried food and drink to the wounded soldiers aboard the car.

General Mitchel, being the first to invade Huntsville, made oppressive rules for the captured citizens to follow such as having to take the oath to the Federal Government (the South's oppressor) before buying anything including food, and have permission to travel anywhere, near or far. Mitchel allowed his men to burn surrounding communities near Huntsville and rob citizens in the city. Burning the communities left families homeless refugees. He supported Colonel Turchin in the sacking of Athens. Union General Buell, Commander of the Army of Ohio, wrote that "General Mitchel allowed his federal soldiers to be lawless: destroy,

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[26]Harncourt, Paul, *The Planter's Railway*, Heritage Publishing Company © 1995.

[27]Rohr, Nancy, *Enduring Voices, Women of the Tennessee Valley: 1861-1865*. Huntsville Madison County Historical Society, 2023.

rape, arson, and plundering without punishment."By the time Mitchel was transferred from Huntsville, his nickname had become "Ohio Monster Mitchel" by the citizens.

Women raped during this time of war, were too ashamed to tell anyone or if witnessed, had to live in fear and humiliation for the rest of their lives. It was not only the federal soldiers that plundered and abused the citizens, a growing number of outlaws were to be feared. With the majority of men gone, the outlaw population grew with no restraints. They murdered, stole, and raped at their pleasure and entertainment without any law enforcement to hamper or stop them.

Soldiers kept journals during that period too. Colonel John Beatty, 3rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, wrote in his journal, "The men of Huntsville have a patient endurance of military rule. The women, however, are outspoken in their hostility and marvelously bitter."[28] Many of the women's journals describe their feelings toward the Federal invaders. They were bitter at being captive, aggrieved by the ill treatment toward them, hated the destruction the soldiers did to their homes, and the pillaging. Miss Mary Frances Fielding told one Federal soldier, "maybe when all the men are killed, you'll have the glory of conquering women and children, but we won't give up before."[29]

Official records and journals tell that Negros fought on both sides, often without a choice. The Federal soldiers surrounded a Negro church in Huntsville and after the service when the men came out; the Federals gathered

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[28] Col. John Betty, 3rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. https://www.minecreek.info/confederate-forces/john-beatty-a-union-soldier.html

[29] Rohr, Nancy, *Enduring Voices, Women of the Tennessee Valley: 1861-1865*. Huntsville Madison County Historical Society, 2023.

them up and sent them to Nashville to build fortifications, thus taking them away from their families. Many ran to the other side hoping for help but little was given because the Federals were more interested in caring for their own men. The Negros had it rough either way they went because they were not considered citizens at that time. Many Negros accompanied their masters to battle. Even free men volunteered to fight for their homeland serve the Confederate Army. The ones that had a certain amount of freedom but were mistreated by the Federals turned to the Confederacy. Many journals during the period discussed what Negros experienced and their reaction. Miss Cassie Fennell wrote in her journal, "The Negros here are badly frightened by the Yankees because they treat the Negros very badly over in Madison and Limestone Counties...We have not, as yet, had but two Negros go with the Yankees. The Yankees are surprised themselves at our Negros remaining at home when nearly everybody is losing theirs."[30]

Miss Cassie Fennell was educated in D.C. then came home to Guntersville right before the beginning of the hostilities. She kept a detailed journal of her feelings about all that happened in Guntersville and in Huntsville. Raised in Ohio, Mrs. Chadick married a preacher who was sent to Huntsville to preach in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church where he joined the Confederate Army. She kept a detailed journal on what was happening in Huntsville during the period of the war. Mrs. Otey was married to an invalid, an older man, and they lived in the country outside of Huntsville. She wrote about the continuous problems of protecting the animals and food supplies from the Federals that raided her plantation routinely.

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[30]Copy of a portion of Cassie Fennell's journal can be found at the University of Alabama Huntsville, Archives.

The children growing up during the war developed a hatred for northerners that lasted a life time and carried on for generations. The children saw how the war affected their family and many stories were passed down for generations.

Huntsville changed hands many times; the Federals came then they left, the Confederates came then left, the Federals returned then left, and so on. The period in between the Federals gave the citizens a breather. Mrs. Virginia Clay wrote about her experience as a refugee. Her husband was sent to Canada by President Davis leaving her without a place to be while Huntsville was captured. Virginia wrote "Of the months of '63, the story of my life is one of continuous change"[31]

Miss Kate Cumming of Mobile volunteered her time nursing the wounded soldiers after the Battle of Shiloh and Chickamauga. She provides us with information on being a young single woman nursing men and the daily attitudes one had to deal with about what she was doing for the men. It was more favorable for a married woman nursing men than young single woman.[32] Miss Augusta Evans of Mobile, a well known author at the time of war, broke her engagement to a northerner because he supported Lincoln. She devoted her time helping the wounded and supporting the Confederacy in many ways. Mrs. Juliet Hopkins sold her land and gave over $500,000 to the Confederate government to build hospitals which she ran for three years. She was shot twice while rescuing wounded men from a battlefield. After the war, she was left with a bad limp and nothing to live on. Fannie Beers writes about being on the battlefield, "The dead lay around us on every

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[31] Clay-Clopton, Virginia, *A Belle of the Fifties; Memoirs of Mrs. Clay of Alabama, Covering Social and Political Life in Washington and the South, 1853-66.* Doubleday, Page & Company, 1904.

[32] Cumming, Kate, *Kate, The Journal of a Confederate Nurse.* Louisiana State University Press, 2012.

side, singly and in groups and piles; men and horses, in some cases, inextricably mingled. As I passed my arm under his head (wounded soldier) the red blood saturated my sleeve and spread in a moment over a part of my dress. We went on, giving water, brandy, or soup; sometimes successful in reviving the patient, sometimes able to only to whisper a few words of comfort to the dying. My hands and dress and feet were bloody, and I felt sick with horror."[33]

By the end of the war, everyone in the South was suffering. The women had been working throughout the war to support the men in the field: their husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles, nephews, cousins, and friends. As the men came home after the war, broken and wounded, the women continued to work to help them. The women formed groups across the South to help raise funds to house the homeless veterans, help the widows and orphans, support veterans' camps, and paid for monuments to honor the beloved men who served their country. These groups of women across the country organized into the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and continue to honor the men and women, white and black, who will fight for their home and country during a war.

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Virginia Clay's Georgia Friends

By Harry Gatzke

Virginia Clay was absent from her home in Huntsville during most of the Civil War. Her husband, Clement C. Clay, Jr., served in the Confederate Senate and Virginia was with him in Richmond. When he was not re-elected, Jefferson Davis kept him in service to the Confederacy by sending him on a mission to Canada in 1864. He traveled there to meet northern men hoping to negotiate an armistice. Virginia could not accompany him on this dangerous journey. She also departed the Confederate capital with its hazards and hardships due to the nearby battlefields. Returning home to Huntsville was inadvisable since North Alabama was occupied by the Union Army. She traveled through the Carolinas, along the way visiting with friends and members of her extended family and after several months arrived at Redcliffe Plantation where a cousin was daughter-in-law of the proprietor, Senator James H. Hammond. Redcliffe was in South Carolina, only a few miles from Augusta Georgia. When Sherman departed Atlanta to march through Georgia, his initial movement led some to believe he would attack Augusta. In her memoir, *A Belle of the Fifties*, Virginia describes efforts to conceal Redcliffe's silver before Sherman's anticipated arrival but Sherman turned south toward Savannah and Virginia experienced no contact with Sherman's army. To provide readers of her memoir a glimpse of Sherman, Virginia resorted to a second-hand tale. Her chapter on events of 1864 concludes with the following story.

* * *

"Apropos of General Sherman, when a month or two later I was in Macon, I heard a very excellent story. A party of his men one day dashed up to the house of a Mrs. Whitehead, a fine old lady (a sister of my informant), and demanded dinner at once. The lady long since had learned that resistance to such imperative demands would be in vain, and preparations were at once begun for the

meal. Notwithstanding her obliging and prompt compliance, the men immediately started foraging in the poultry yard and the outhouses beyond. One of the officers penetrated the servants' quarters, and entered a cabin in which a young black woman lay sick.

"What's the matter, Sis?" he asked, in a tone that was meant to convey sympathy.

"Ain't no Sis of yourn!" was the sullen reply. "God knows I ain't no kin to no Yankee!" At that moment an infant's cry was heard.

"Hello!" said the officer. "Got a little pickaninny, hey? Boy or girl?"

"Boy chile! What's that to you?" snapped the woman.

"What's his name?" persisted the soldier.

"Name's Wheeler, dat's what 'tis!" answered the invalid triumphantly, and the colloquy ended abruptly.

As the soldiers sat down at the table, someone, going to the door, saw Wheeler's men come tearing down the road flat on their horses. Instantly he shouted back to his companions, "Wheeler!" but they, believing the cry to be a ruse, continued to eat. The sounds of the galloping steeds soon became audible, however, and a stampede that was highly amusing to the now relieved household took place through doors and windows. When General Wheeler arrived, he found a steaming repast already prepared, and a cordial welcome from Mrs. Whitehead and her family, including "Sis."'

* * *

Catharine Whitehead Rowland

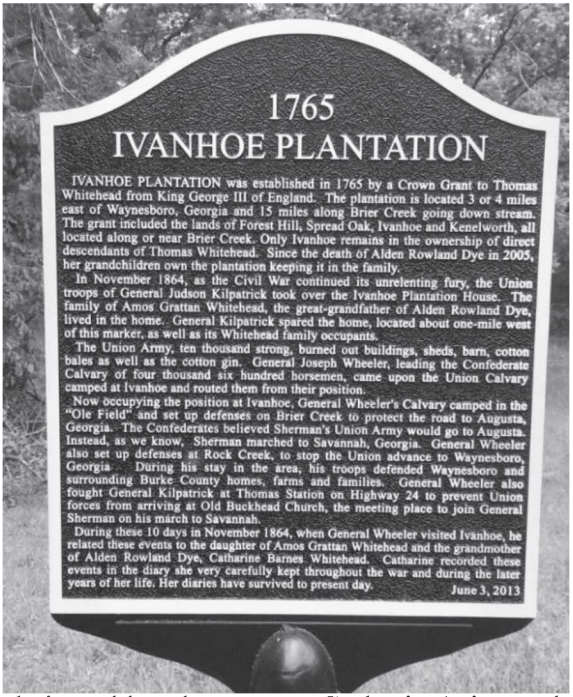
Virginia's story is a second-hand account of an event. One fact missing from Virginia's tale is that Mrs. Whitehead's 25 year old daughter, Catharine Whitehead Rowland, was present that day. When Catharine's husband joined the Confederate Army, the couple closed their home in Augusta and Catharine moved among the homes of several members of her family. Her grandmother, Mrs. George Winter, resided in Augusta. Her parent's

home was Ivanhoe Plantation, 30 miles south of Augusta. Catharine made frequent trips between Ivanhoe and Augusta. Upon her husband's departure, Catharine also began a diary. A typical entry was about family events. Occasionally she recorded her thoughts about the war. Her comments about the Confederate cause were all supportive. An account of a military setback was usually accompanied by an expression of hope for eventual military success. Her presence at Ivanhoe when Sherman's men arrived produced a first-hand, contemporaneous description of the incident which was the subject of Virginia's story. Coincidentally, Catharine's journal also contains accounts of her encounters with Mrs. Clay and her assessment of Virginia's story telling skills!

One evening in late October of 1864, before Sherman's army departed Atlanta, a social gathering occurred at the home of Catharine's aunt in Augusta. Catharine assisted in preparation for the event. In her diary she lists attendees, including "Mrs. Clement Clay and Mrs. Paul Hammond" - Virginia and her cousin. Catharine's description of the evening's festivities is summarized in a single sentence: "Mrs. Clay is one of the most fascinating women I ever met, being highly cultivated & extremely entertaining & witty, she was the life of the party, & after the company left she amused us all relating anecdotes, one of a spoiled child was very amusing." To Catharine, Virginia Clay's presence made the event unforgettable. She obviously believed Virginia's talent as a storyteller was exceptional. Catharine and Virginia would meet again in 1865.

One month after the party, the Yankees invaded Ivanhoe on the last Sunday in November. The incursion's disruption of the normal Ivanhoe routine is evident in Catharine's diary, which contains no entry on that day nor the next. On Tuesday Catharine returned to her journal with an exceptionally long entry. Catharine's description confirms several aspects of Virginia's tale of the event: Yankee soldiers came into the house; a meal was demanded and prepared for them, a hurried departure occurred when Confederate troops approached, and a slave child was born

that day and given the name Wheeler. Catharine's journal provides additional details, which show that parts of Virginia's tale are apocryphal.



Virginia Clay's story leaves to her reader's imagination the size of the party of Yankees and the length of time they remained. A reader might reasonably assume that only a small group came and sat around the table to begin the meal. The length of time that they remained at Ivanhoe could be imagined as only long enough to prepare a meal plus a short interval before their sudden departure. Catharine's journal records times of arrival and departure and identifies by name some union officers. The Yankees arrived in two groups. The first group arrived around 10:00 AM. This contingent was an advance party that consisted of several hundred cavalrymen. Catharine states that "The first detachment of Yankees behaved very well considering they were Yankees," The second group arrived six hours later at 4 o'clock. This contingent was the remainder of Sherman's cavalry division, led by General Judson Killpatrick. The second group was much more destructive, but Catharine reported that they found nothing that had been buried. About one half hour after the second group started arriving, the Confederate cavalry led by General Joe Wheeler was heard to approach. The result of Wheeler's

appearance was a hasty departure of the entire Union force. Catharine states that a sharp skirmish occurred near the house, but no one was killed.

Catharine's diary confirms that a meal was demanded by the invaders and was prepared for them. An officer said he wished that dinner would be prepared for six officers. The meal was upsetting to Catharine. She writes: "it was very galling to me to see them sitting at our table where we had so often sat & I could scarcely refrain from expressing my feelings but I felt it was best for me to say nothing. It was very hard for me to keep silent but I hope I shall one day meet them on neutral ground where I can give expression to my feelings." If the Yankees had been forced to abandon the meal, certainly she would have rejoiced and recorded that fact in her diary. Catharine includes no indication that the meal was interrupted by Wheeler's arrival.

About a third of Virginia's tale of the incident at Ivanhoe is devoted to the conversation with a young slave woman that ends with the declaration that the child's name is Wheeler. Catharine's journal also tells of a child named Wheeler. The last sentence in Catharine's journal entry is: "Dolly had a son, born the day the Yankees were here & I named it Wheeler after Gen. Wheeler as he was an instrument in God's hand in delivering us from the Yankees." While the Yankee soldiers remained at Ivanhoe, Catharine could not know that her family would be rescued. Naming of the child, which was her privilege since it was her property, must have occurred after the hasty departure. In light of Catharine's journal entry, the conversation in Virginia's tale is certainly a fabrication.

During January 1865 Sherman remained in Savannah, planning his next campaign. In Augusta concern was again raised that Sherman would attack that city. Catharine recorded in her journal the military commander's request that all non-combatants leave Augusta. Mrs. Clay was also being encouraged by correspondents to leave Redcliffe Plantation. Virginia wrote to General Howell Cobb, who was temporarily stationed in Augusta, asking to place

herself under his protection during the move. Cobb wrote back that he was expecting orders at any time to relocate to Macon and that she needed to move to Augusta and be ready to proceed west at a moment's notice. Catharine's diary records that from January 24th to the 26th, Virginia Clay was a guest at the residence of Catharine's aunt who had hosted the October party. During this time Catharine had daily contact with Mrs. Clay and "enjoyed her society to the fullest extent." The recent invasion of Ivanhoe by Sherman's soldiers was certainly an interesting event likely to be part of any conversation. Virginia Clay may have heard of the incident at Ivanhoe from Catharine, a witness of the event, rather than from a second-hand source in Macon. Virginia and Howell Cobb departed Augusta and traveled to Macon at the end of January. Virginia would later return to Augusta, but not by her own choice.

In *A Belle of the Fifties* Virginia writes that on February 10th, Mr. Clay joined her in Macon, having learned of her whereabouts from "friends in Augusta". Catharine's February 8th diary entry records that Mr. Clay visited Catharine's aunt, from whom he learned where his wife was and "left immediately for Macon as soon as he found out that she was there." With assistance from Catharine's aunt, the Clays were reunited.

Mr. Clay's first action after returning to Confederate territory had been to seek his wife and assure that she was safe. With that accomplished he traveled to report on his mission to Jefferson Davis, while Virginia remained in Georgia. He reported to Davis at the beginning of April as the Confederate government was preparing to abandon Richmond. Mr. Clay traveled with the Davis party as far as Danville, Virginia, and then separated from Davis to return to his wife. His plan then was "to seek the other side of the Mississippi, there to join the gallant Kirby Smith, and make a last stand for our cause," while his wife returned to Huntsville. When he learned that he was suspected of being involved in the plot to assassinate Lincoln, his plan changed and he surrendered to federal authorities. Accompanied by Virginia, he was transported to the

North. In transit the Clays passed through Augusta, Georgia. In *A Belle of The Fifties* Virginia provides the following account of their passage through Augusta.

* * *

"Upon our arrival in Augusta, I asked Colonel Pritchard for the privilege of driving in the carriage assigned to us to the home of a beloved friend, Mrs. George Winter. Upon my promise that at the hour appointed I would be responsible for Mr. Clay's appearance on the boat which was to take us to Savannah, Colonel Pritchard gave a somewhat reluctant consent and we drove rapidly away. As had been the case in Macon and Atlanta, the town was in commotion. This visit to our friends was almost an error; for, greatly excited at our appearance among them, they embraced us in hysterical alarm, and begged my husband even yet to fly. To add to the distress, neighboring friends, hearing of our presence, hastened in and joined their pleadings to those of our hostess. The scene was unendurable to Mr. Clay, and, literally tearing ourselves from their embraces, we re-entered the carriage. The horse's heads were turned at once toward the river where our custodians awaited us."

* * *

Virginia's request was to return to the home of Catharine Rowland's aunt where she had attended the party in October and later was a guest while awaiting Howell Cobb's orders to depart for Macon. Virginia's account, published forty years after the event, includes phrases like "almost an error", "embraced us in hysterical alarm" and "tearing ourselves from their embraces," which heighten the sense of drama in her narrative. A description from a second source, recorded soon after the event, could either corroborate or moderate Virginia's dramatic account of the visit. Catharine Rowland would likely have either witnessed or heard of the incident. However, her diary is silent on this subject. As prospects of a Confederate victory diminished, her enthusiasm for chronicling events of the day must have lessened also. On March

17, 1865, Catharine wrote in her diary, "It is with a heavy heart I write in my journal to-night for I …". With that sentence fragment her Civil War journal ended about one month before Lee's surrender.

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Meet the Author: *Harry Gatzke moved from Georgia in 1967 to join the aerospace workforce in Huntsville. After supporting a number of different NASA and defense programs, he retired from Teledyne Brown Engineering in 2007. With more free time, he took an increased interest in local history and joined both the Huntsville Madison County Historical Society and the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table.*

Mayor Edmund Irby Mastin, a Man Tortured by the Federal Government

By Marjorie Ann Reeves

Looking back at Huntsville mayors, there have been many interesting individuals but none equals Mayor Edmund Irby Mastin. Born and raised in Huntsville, Alabama, he did not start out as one that would be signaled out to have such an experience but fate chose him. The Mastin clan came from France during the American Revolutionary War to assist the colonies. Moving from Maryland to Alabama, the Mastin line became very successful in Huntsville. Edmund's parents were William J. Mastin, lawyer, and Mary Irby Mastin produce three sons and two daughters. All three sons went to war in the 1860s but only two made it back to serve Huntsville.

William F. served as Adjutant General with General Buckner during the war. The second son Lt. Gustavus Mastin accepted the flag for the Huntsville Guards company when they were organized in Huntsville. Later he became commander of Company F, 4th Alabama Infantry. He was slain at the Battle of Seven Pines, Virginia, in May of 1862. The flag was taken from his body by a Union soldier who personally returned it to the Mastin family at a Huntsville Veterans Reunion 28 years later. The third son Edmund was a 1st Lieutenant at LaGrange College when the war began, he was first assigned as a drill-master, later commissioned as Adjutant of the 8th Arkansas Infantry Regiment. Edmund was captured at Charleston, Tennessee, on December 28, 1863, while serving as Adjutant General of the 4th Division Cavalry under General Joseph Wheeler. When captured, Edmund was first sent to Camp Chase prison in Ohio.

Edmund's destiny wore an overcast future. From Camp Chase, he was transported to Fort Delaware, one of the worst northern prisons for Confederate soldiers. There 600 Confederate officers were chosen to leave on August 20,

1864. Edmund was not chosen but bought his way onto the list by trading a $300 gold watch for a place in line. They were allowed to believe it was for exchange and all were excited about going home.The 600 prisoners were put on an old cargo freighter outfitted for prisoner transport and shipped to Morris Island in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. From Delaware to South Carolina, the 600 men were in the belly of the ship for two weeks having to live with the vomit from the ones that became sea sick. They were not allowed to come up on deck but one at a time to visit the water closet. They were in the hold of the ship with no fresh air, light, and short of water and food during the hottest time of the year.

The prisoners were finally put out on Morris Island to exist under the shelling of the Union and Confederate Armies all day and night. They were there for 43 days on a starvation diet and living in fear of being hit by a shell at any time or gunned down for any reason. The Federal Government stated reason for holding these men in this position was to punish the South for the treatment of the Union Soldiers in Andersonville. The difference was the South was unable to feed, clothe, or give the Union prisoners medicine due to the blockade set up by the Federal Government. The prisons became overcrowd because General Grant and Edward Stanton stopped the exchange. Grant knew the Southerner soldiers would go back to their units and continue to fight where the Northern soldiers would go home. In the 38th Congress, 2nd session, "Rebel prisoners in our hands are to subjected to a treatment finding its parallels only in the conduct of savage tribes and resulting in the death of multitudes by the slow but designed process of starvation by the mortal diseases occasioned by insufficient and unhealthy food and wanton exposure of their persons to the inclemency of the weather." The Lane Resolution #98 was proposed by Indiana Senator Henry Smith Lane. He wanted unreasonable retaliation and retribution.

In October, the Federal government decided the Confederate prisoners on Morris Island were not needed anymore, but General Foster chose to keep control by separating the men with half going to Fort Pulaski and the other to Hilton Head still on a starvation diet but moved to damp quarters during the winter months. The prisoners became increasingly sicker developing scurvy, dysentery, pneumonia, and bronchitis. The stronger officers helped the weaker ones during those torturous time. The ones that were able to live through this "hell on earth" were maintained there even after the end of the war; they were finally release by the Federal Government in June of 1865.

The two Mastin brothers that came back home to Huntsville found ways to serve their community. The oldest, William, died while serving as mayor Huntsville in 1871. After spending two years starving in Federal prison, Edmund came home to work in the family grocery business, was a contractor on the Memphis and Chattanooga Railroad, and operated a brick manufacturing, contracting, and construction enterprise. Edmund followed his brother in community work serving as City Clerk of Huntsville for four years then served as Mayor for three terms, 1883-1889.

Mayor Edmund Mastin tried to be of help to all the citizens of Huntsville. He wrote a letter to help Mrs. Susie S. Todd receive a Mexican War Widow's Service Pension which was $8.00 a month. He worked with Joseph Wheeler on his efforts to be elected into Congress. He helped find the real cop killer instead of allowing an innocent black man to be hanged. Mastin was described as a genial and accomplished gentleman, and deservedly popular with all classes. He was a member of the Egbert Jones Confederate Veterans Camp of Madison County, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and the Knights of Pythias fraternities. Edmund passed away at the age of 52 with his interment in Maple Hill Cemetery.

Edmund's obituary ran in the Huntsville Gazette on April 28, 1894

> Death of Hon. Ed I. Mastin
>
> It has been many years since the death of any public man of the city has caused as deep and genuine sorrow among white and black as that of Ex Mayor Mastin, which occurred at Sheffield, Wednesday night, April 25, 1894, after an illness of some months.
>
> Whether as Clerk of the City for four years, its Chief Executive for three terms or as an enterprising business man furnishing employment to needy working men, he was chivalrous, kind, and considerate, faithful to duty, exact in his dealings and alert to the public welfare.
>
> What was true of his public life was true of his private life and the nobility of the man stamped itself indelibly in the hearts of his friends in public life as well as those nearer and dearer in the more sacred confines of private life. Peace to his ashes.

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The Huntsville Historical Review; Editorial Policy

The Huntsville Historical Review, a biyearly journal sponsored by the Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society, is the primary voice for local historians to document Madison County history. This journal reflects the richness and diversity of Madison County and North Alabama and this editor will endeavor to maintain the policy established by his predecessor with regard to the primary focus of the Review and the material it includes.

A casual examination of every community in the world reveals the character of its citizens and, if you look closely, voices from the past express their expectations for the future. Today is based upon our collective experience and the socialization of our ancestor's existence.

Although this publication focuses on local history, we cannot forget that what happens here has roots often connected to state, regional, national, and international events. In an effort to build on past traditions and continue the quality of our *Review,* an editorial policy will be implemented to guide contributors who wish to submit manuscripts, book reviews, or notes of historical significance to our community. The Historical Society wants you to submit articles for publication. We will assist you toward that goal.

Presentations to family and acquaintances become oral history. Publishing your story in the Review insures you and your story are immortal. You can contribute to our history through the *Huntsville Historical Review.*

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Please submit an electronic copy of your article or book review to arleymccormick@comcast.net or send to:

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Box 666
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Review Content and Style

- There is no limit on word count. The manuscript can be divided into parts published in separate volumes of the Review.
- In matters of form and style, a good guide is *The Chicago Manual of Style.*
- If you choose to include footnotes, the preferred citation method for full articles would be best.
- Manuscripts should be in Times New Roman 12-point font. Microsoft Word (not PDF)
- This is a guide and not intended to discourage the creative process nor constrain authors from contributing to the Review.

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Please limit your book review to topics relevant to local, state, or southern history. A good review should clearly and concisely describe the nature, scope, and thesis of a book that would be relevant to Madison County history. Emphasis on local and regional history will be given in order to help readers expand and contextualize their knowledge. Your review should be helpful to the general reader interested in Madison County or North Alabama and these are good rules to follow when writing a book review:

- Your first obligation for a book review is to explain the subject of the book and the author's central thesis or main points.

- Your second obligation is to evaluate how successfully the author has made his/her point. Is the author's argument reasonable, logical, and consistent?
- Your third obligation is to set the book into a broader context. If you can, place the book into a wider context by looking at broader issues.
- Your fourth obligation is to render a judgment on the value of the book as a contribution to historical scholarship.

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- Please limited to 250 words and include contact information.
- The editor has the right to alter or delete wording or information.

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• Write in the active voice and past tense.
• Cast your sentences in the positive.
• Topic sentences should be clear and straight forward statements of what the paragraph is about. Every sentence in a paragraph should work to explain the topic sentence.
• Write in the third person.

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Membership in the Society will give you an opportunity to express your interest and participate in preserving the history of Huntsville and Madison County. Enjoy the opportunity to be with other individuals who share your interest in our history by attending the Society's four meetings a year, each one featuring a speaker of local or regional note. A membership includes subscription to *The Huntsville Historical Review*.

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