

*Three Dollars*

*Winter 1995*

***THE HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE***  
***QUARTERLY***  
***Of Local Architecture & Preservation***



*Preservation: for All Times and All Seasons*

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***THE HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE  
QUARTERLY  
of Local Architecture and Preservation***

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## ***From the Chair***

Dear Foundation Members:

Happy New Year! A big thank you to all of you who helped make all the Historic Huntsville Foundation events of 1995 so memorable. The most recent event was the Membership Tea, which Gayle Milberger and her diligent committee members worked tirelessly to make so successful.

If you haven't purchased your Harrison Brothers Bank yet, be sure to stop by the store and take note of these cast iron banks. They are replicas of a 1923 Chevy 1/2 ton delivery truck and bear a vintage Harrison Brothers logo on both sides. In addition to being a great accessory in your own home, these banks make wonderful gifts!

Historic Huntsville Foundation has been awarded the proceeds from the 1996 Victorian Cotillion which will be sponsored by The Gothic Guild in March. These funds will be used to make some much needed repairs to the facade of Harrison Brothers Hardware Store.

In May the Foundation will hold its biennial Movable Feast. Three homeowners in the Twickenham District have graciously agreed to allow us to use their gardens for the feast.

The Alabama Historical Commission has requested our assistance in compiling a list of endangered buildings. If Foundation members learn of an historic building in the Huntsville-Madison County area which may need preservation, please contact one of your Board members so that we may be aware of the situation.

As you can see, the new year holds opportunities for service to your Foundation and the Huntsville community as well as several interesting activities in which to participate. We look forward to seeing many of you involved in these activities in 1996!

## ***From the Editor***

"Two modern homes, constructed according to updated building codes, dressed in all the finery associated with houses of their high-rent profile, providing their owners pampered living." Sounds good. Sounds like the Sunday Real Estate section in the newspaper. So...what's the pitch? Where does historical preservation come in? The thrust of this issue is to invite readers to view preservation as a continuum, as much a concern to **new** home builders as old home remodelers. One does not have to build a historical "reproduction" or restore an old home to be a player in historical preservation. Build with an eye to the future as well as the past, and build well, for the ages.

Just as Huntsville has a history, so too does each of its neighborhoods. When a home builder consciously seeks to create a structure, a living environment, in harmony with the history of the neighborhood, then whether that district be one hundred years old, twenty or fifty years old, the new home becomes a part of the historical fabric and takes its place in the continuum.

Historical Preservation must be futuristic. Modern structures have their rightful, necessary place tucked in with the old. We should welcome them—especially when they display the pride in workmanship and design so evident in the Liddon and the Meiers-Edwards houses.

Of course we readers of the *Quarterly* love the old. Dr. Gammill's "yesteryears" and the Lipscomb place in Old Salem, Tennessee, take us back to the 1800's. Ironically, Dr. Gammill has added touches to his old house reflective of the Charleston-New Orleans flavor found in the newer Meiers-Edwards house, and the federal style of the Liddon's house conveys the same strength and simplicity found in the Lipscomb house.

What goes around, comes around. Preservation is for all times and all seasons.



**A House for All Time:  
The New Old House on White Street**  
*by Sim Liddon*

When my wife, Barbera, and I began searching for a lot on which to build, we looked in the old part of town, which still had an intimate, small town atmosphere about it. We favored one particular lot on White Street, one of perhaps five empty lots available in the historical district, and a visit to the courthouse determined the owner. But would he/she be willing to sell? A phone call that evening evoked the response: "I can't believe this. My wife and I are sitting here discussing whether or not to sell that lot, and you call asking about buying it." Well, we all felt providence was guiding us, and within three or four minutes a purchase price was agreed upon.

White Street is an old street, appearing on the 1861 map of Huntsville, but as far as I know this particular lot on the east side near its intersection with California Street had never before had a house on it. It is now part of what is called the Halsey-Yeatman addition, one of the oldest residential areas in Huntsville. However, when it was surveyed and divided into lots back in 1888, it was described on the original plat simply as "Building lots situated on the east end of Poplar Hill, owned by Messers. W. L. and C. H. Halsey and J. R. Yeatman;" not a subdivision or an addition but just "building lots." The land had been a part of the community of Twickenham before the name was

changed to Huntsville in the early 1800's, and much later the lot had been owned by the Harrison brothers, of Harrison Brothers Hardware. Over the years it had been used by area garden clubs for their plantings, and in clearing the lot hundreds of day lilly bulbs were unearthed by the bulldozer and given to various recipients, including the Burritt Museum. Boxwoods, Jackson vine, and cherry laurel had all been planted years before and were found on the rear of the lot.

The building site determined, we proceeded with the house plans. Wanting the fun of designing it, and preferring to put my money directly into mortar and bricks, I drew the plans myself. From the onset the focus was on making sure the house looked old and fit into the historical district, which meant many walking trips through downtown Huntsville to get a feeling for its antebellum architecture.

Because the lot itself was somewhat narrow, seventy feet across being considered ample width for a residential lot back in 1888, there were restrictions as to what could be done architecturally. It was two hundred feet deep, however, and still quite buildable. And, as it turned out, a two story federal house could fit the lot quite nicely. The width of the lot, then, determined the general style and the dimensions of the house across the front. Its exact location on the lot was determined by the Japanese magnolia in the front and the big pecan tree in the rear, two of the many trees we wanted to save.

Barbera and I always liked the front porches we knew as children, where one could sit and rock and watch what is going on up and down the street. So a front porch was a necessity, except that federal houses had no front porches. Here in Huntsville, however, Victorian porches were added to federal houses years after they were build; and without knowing we were mixing architectural styles, we went ahead and planned for a porch. Wanting something a little less ornamental than the usual Victorian porch, we left off the scrollwork on the cornice, but we added octagonal columns. Tim Schremsher and Louis Booth, our builders, installed the columns in the historically correct manner with the columns themselves extending somewhat beyond the cornice.

One of our most important and hardest decisions was the choice of brick. The brick most recommended as giving an old, historical look was much too brown for our tastes. We wanted something more red, and we finally decided on a particular wood-





mold brick made in Columbus, Georgia. The single front step and the brickwork of the front walk was the suggestion of Bill Nance, artist and landscape designer, who helped with the back patio. You will notice one particular brick on the north edge of the front walk that is different and somewhat larger than the

others. Imprinted on it are the letters “P & Q Yazoo City Miss.,” with the letters “ss” backwards. P and Q stand for Pugh and Quakemeyer, the owners of the old brick yard which at one time stood atop what we as kids knew as “brick yard hill” in Yazoo City, Mississippi. The brick itself was taken from Barbera’s great grandfather’s house in Yazoo County when it was torn down years ago. This makes it the oldest item in the construction of the house, dating probably to the late 1800’s.

We decided to include a water table in the brickwork to give it a unique and distinctive look, and the brick company in Georgia sent more pieces for the water table than I had thought we needed or had ordered. There were enough left over to incorporate them into the top part of the back patio, something that looks very good, but was not planned until the bricking of the patio itself.



As just implied, the back patio itself is two tiered. I knew pretty much what I wanted for the bottom part, the planting areas on either side, the circular pool with a fountain, and the steps down to a semi-circular back area, etc. However, it took Bill Nance’s artistic eye to design the top part, with the planted areas and the wide steps down to the bottom level, done so that one could add a pergola if it were later desired.

The low stone wall bordering the lawn and planted area in the back was built by hand, my own hand, on several hot afternoons in the summer of 1993. Many of the stones came from the front porch of the house next door. They were renovating their porch at the time and needed to dispose of their debris. I needed stones; so it was good for both parties.





Designing the interior floor plan was fun. I wanted to open the front door and be able to look straight down the hallway, through the dining room, and out the back of the house to the patio, the pool and fountain, and beyond. And, from the beginning we knew we wanted large rooms with ten foot ceilings downstairs and nine foot ceilings upstairs. Although truly historical houses have higher ceilings, we felt that the ten foot ceilings downstairs would be enough to give the correct feeling of height and a sense of spaciousness. The three large entrances into the living room and the glass transoms above the doors add to the feeling of openness. But what we did with the back of the house adds even more to that feeling.

While we wanted the front to appear similar to the old historical houses nearby, we felt no such restrictions for the rear and more private part away from the public's view. Thus, once you get into the house it opens up, with



large sliding glass doors and transoms across the entire back and large plate glass windows in the sunroom.

We wanted our private living space downstairs, including the master bedroom and bath. The stained glass window in the master bathroom we bought locally. Barbera and I both preferred old stained glass to something new, and it probably came originally from an old church in this area. It was already about the right size, although we did have to add some border to make it fit properly. Another major feature of the inside was the use of shutters for the window



treatment, something we had seen in several historical homes here in Huntsville. The spindles for both the interior stairs and the outside porch railing were hand made by Tim and Louis from planks of poplar they obtained in Tennessee especially for this purpose. The flooring on the first floor was of five inch oak, simulating the wide planking found in the old homes.

Two additional guest bedrooms, a bath, and a large walk-in storage room are upstairs. In case a future occupant will need more bedrooms, however, we painted the storage room and finished it out with shutters and molding similar to the rest of the house. And, because a bathroom would be needed if two bedrooms are added, we brought the plumbing upstairs and marked it on the subflooring to be found if needed later. If the second floor is ever remodeled, and a door is needed at the front of the storage room; a frame for a doorway can be found in the wall between the storage room and the upstairs sitting area, behind the built-in cabinets.

Barbera and Maria Bosley, our decorator, selected the interior paint colors. They chose Williamsburg colors from Martin Senour; Paprika for the sun room, a teal color called Apothecary Shop Blue for the living room, Sweet Honey Yellow for the hallway and dining room, and Beatrice Blue for the bedroom. The only color downstairs that was not a Williamsburg color was the bright red in the kitchen, which was mixed to match some favorite hand-painted pottery and dishes done by Gail Pittman.





Besides the choice of colors, we also agonized over the selection of molding. Although federal houses had no molding, we sure wanted some. A variety of choices were considered, and we decided eventually on a combination of four pieces, the two principle pieces being of a concave and a dentil molding. Two that, interestingly enough, we had originally rejected when considering them separately.

For the sake of esthetics, we used a copper standing seam metal roof on the front porch; and for the sake of our pocketbook, asphalt shingles were used over the two story part of the house. The rear of the house posed problems. Because of the extremely low pitch of the roof over that part of the house, the possibility existed that rain water would run off very slowly, possibly accu-



mulate and cause a leak. For financial reasons, I considered both a corrugated metal roof and a specially applied asphalt shingle roof. But there was still the clear possibility of a future leak. So, in the end, a standing seam metal roof was the only sensible option.

A second construction related problem at the rear of the house concerned fire regulations and the installation of the brick on the second story, above the roof I just mentioned. The building regulations had changed only months before, and any brick had to rest on nonflammable material all the way

to the ground. Previously the steel beam on which the second story brick rested would have been tied in to wooden studs, but this was no longer possible. An engineer designed metal posts to uphold the beam, and the whole affair was secured with large bolts to a concrete foundation, requiring a large crane for the installation.

All in all, building the house was a lot of fun, and the most-prized compliments came from the many, many workmen who came in for some particular project and said, "Boy, its really a job remodeling one of these old houses, isn't it?"



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*Sim Liddon has been in the private practice of psychiatry in Huntsville for over twenty-five years. Barbera, his wife, has lived in Huntsville only nine years since they were married in 1986. They have known each other since she was three and he was five years old, having grown up together in Yazoo City, Mississippi. He went on to Vanderbilt University, Johns Hopkins Medical School, did a residency in Rochester, New York, and was on the staff at several universities before moving to Huntsville in 1970. Barbera went to Mississippi State University for Women and to the University of Mississippi, and had lived in Gulf Port and Jackson, Mississippi, before eventually moving to Huntsville. She is an active volunteer and presently serves on the Board of Directors of the HHF.*



**A House for All Seasons:  
Number Six Cruse Alley**  
*by Sarah Dudley Hall Edwards*

The enduring character and seeming permanence of Twickenham is comforting in changing times. Recent additions to historic Twickenham blend graciously with existing homes. This is due primarily to the vigilance and efforts of those who organized the Twickenham District Preservation Association in 1965. The residence at Number Six Cruse Alley is one example of a relatively new Twickenham addition. It is a town house (contemporary open plan). Although it is consistent with and harmonizes with neighboring homes, it is comfortably integrated into its own time and its own place—the essence of balance and proportion. The basic structure, circa 1972, with wrought iron balconies reflects a classic Charleston influence. According to the Nashville architect, Batey Gresham, the home is a product of a client and architect "love affair." Mr. Gresham and his wife Ann were good friends and neighbors of the clients, Fred and Anne Meiers, in Nashville. The architect was familiar with the Charleston area and the homes along the South Carolina coast. "Typically, the structures were one room deep with verandas facing the water." Anne Meiers' home state is the neighboring state of North Carolina. Number Six Cruse Alley is the manifestation of Anne and Fred Meiers' success in communicating to Batey Gresham the distinct atmosphere or ambiance they were seeking in their Huntsville home.

The Charleston effect was enhanced over the next several years. Additions included a garden room, veranda, and pool-side cabana by architect,

David Crow. His plans also included the brick patio and Roman style pool. Harvilee Harbarger developed the garden with extensive evergreen plantings. Southern magnolia trees were placed at each corner of the brick and iron wall surrounding the property. These refinements were completed in the early 1980's.



The architectural proportion, balance, and continuity of Number Six Cruse Alley are supported by several themes: the palladian windows, pineapple (hospitality symbol), exterior and interior shutters, high ceilings, paneling, and extensive crown molding.



A picture tour of the first story of the home will reveal that it is of modest size in comparison with neighboring homes. However, the style, quality, and classic appointments make it in Anne Meiers words "a small jewel!"

## The Foyer



Above the double front doors, two hand-carved 19th-century griffins stand guard.\* On the eastern wall, a 19th century hand-carved mirror rests on and is integral to the matching wooden entry opening into the formal living room. Cartouche, a scroll type ornament, is an architectural feature of both the griffins and the mirror. A curved staircase leads to the second story. The foyer sets the formal stage and color scheme for the rest of the house. The twenty inch crown molding, in three distinct sections, stair steps, rail spokes and trim are painted in three complimentary shades graduating from a soft beige to a golden tan. Popular designers like Mark Hampton refer to the color scheme as "palomino."



\* In Greek mythology, the Griffin was a creature with the body of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. Griffins drew the chariot of the sun; they also guarded a golden treasure that the Arimaspians, a one-eyed Scythian people, tried to steal.



## Breakfast Room and Kitchen



Some think of Six Cruse as "New Orleans" style. The twenty foot ceiling room with balconies inside and outside, palladian windows, brick floor and hanging ferns gives just such a feeling as does the galley kitchen. The kitchen's special feature is solid walnut cabinets that extend to the ten foot ceiling. A large watercolor, by a local artist, of a lobster on a tray with artichokes and a dish of drawn butter further add to the "New Orleans" effect. This milieu does not conflict with the original Charleston theme envisioned by the clients and translated and accomplished so successfully by the architects Gresham and Crow.



## Living and Dining Rooms

By today's standards, the painted paneled living room and dining room are large. Between the two rooms is a fireplace with a classic mantle, faced with Italian marble, and a marble hearth. Two doors on opposite ends of the fireplace lead past small library nooks into the dining room. Colonial windows in the living room are repeated in the dining room at the opposite end of the house.



## Garden Room

A wall of palladian windows and doors look out to the courtyard, pool and cabana area. This spacious room with its brick floor, abundance of light, columns, eleven foot ceiling with wide paneled beams, and variety of plants, make it a most inviting room for relaxation.



Architects:

Batey M. Gresham, Jr.: Gresham, Smith and Partners, Nashville, Tennessee.

David A. Crow: The Crow, Peters, Neville Group, Huntsville, Alabama (American Institute of Architects).

Note: The architect (Mr. Gresham) tells the story of the brick facing on the house which was an antique sand-faced finish selected to blend with the homes in the historical district. The bricklayers were instructed to brush and wash the brick. They did—with wire brushes! This process removed most of the sand faced finish.

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*Sarah H. Edwards, DPA, is employed by the U.S. Army Missile Command. She has a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences from the University of Oklahoma, a Masters and Doctorate in Public Administration from Nova University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. She is a member of the Church of the Nativity and the Huntsville Music Study Club. She is the wife of Merle D. Edwards (Dan). A native of Columbus, Ohio, Dan came to Huntsville in 1956, and was associated with the defense industry until his retirement in 1985. A World War II Army Air Corps pilot, Dan continued flying as a hobby for many years.*





## **The “Door to Nowhere” Leads to “Manure Manor”**

*by Elise H. Stephens*

On the road to Falls Mill, a destination much esteemed in this section for its Living History, its real-life, daily milling of the grain that makes our bread executed on 19th century water-powered, steam-generated machinery by a genuine miller Chaucerian in his lively authenticity (see letter, last issue), one encounters other delightful sights and amusements. On recent trips to Falls Mill, I have had the good fortune to meet and be utterly charmed by Dr. James C. Gammill, recently returned from years in France and more recently a sponsoring member of the HHF. Welcome home, Dr. Gammill and welcome to HHF.

Even before meeting Dr. Gammill, Dot Johnson and I had stopped at his enchanting home on the David Crockett highway, just down from the Simmons-Shadow house at Beans Creek. On that visit I photographed the



exterior and the vista as best I could through the side-windows of Dr. Gammill's front and back doors. The elegant brick Georgian house has a kitchen in the rear which Dr. Gammill had renovated, with the emphasis on innovate, to resemble a French-Swiss chalet with windows open on the back to view the Cumberlands and a loft for cozy sleeping. Betwixt the kitchen and house, Dr. Gammill has added an inviting, sun-lit, open-windowed garden room The Door to Nowhere which is actually an 18th Century French Louis XV wardrobe door backs onto the kitchen loft and fronts the intimate garden room. Dr. Gammill, ever the romantic,

explains that while the "door on the one hand leads to nowhere in concrete reality, symbolically it leads back to a part of old Salem's past."  
(letter, Jan. 2, 1996)



Dr. Gammill sent me three articles, and visits to the area generated more information about historic Old Salem, a stopping off point in the migration of families into North Alabama. Once a thriving cotton port, Beans Creek connecting to the Elk River, the Elk connecting to the Tennessee River, Old Salem's flatboaters met up with Huntsville's hearty mariners near Florence and made their way to New Orleans. Richard W. Anderson, one of Huntsville's legendary figures, whose monument in Maple Hill is the tallest and also the marker for the Huntsville meridian, foot-raced it back to Huntsville just as Peter Simmons, John R. Patrick and Dick Holder did to Old Salem.

Fertile fields and rising demand led to the creation of cotton gins and grist mills to serve a growing population with names familiar to us: Beans, Russells, Hunts, Larkins, Cowans and Crocketts. A Frenchman added his name, W. A. Rachielles, to the mix when he took over the direction of the milling machinery and wool cards run day and night at the original Mann and David Mills, predecessors of Falls Mill. This early French connection is only one Dr. Gammill is fond of recalling. The fact that his home, built circa 1810–1830 (letter, Nov. 27, 1995) is located on the Old Stage Road or the Winchester-Huntsville Road, connecting stagecoach travel from New Orleans to Philadelphia suggests a New Orleans/French connection that Dr. Gammill has elaborated throughout his home by the placement of wrought iron. He laughingly refers to the house's condition as being "over-wrought."

The house would not have been the only thing over-wrought, if that nice Tennessee patrolman had given me a ticket for speeding. On my latest visit with Dr. Gammill, Harvie Jones accompanied me. I'm sure it was his presence in my automobile that dissuaded the highway patrolman from giving me a ticket. I knew then, though, that we were probably in for an adventure. Sure enough. The Door to Nowhere was leading to somewhere. Harvie knew of the old Lipscomb house and wondered if Dr. Gammill knew how to find it. Lo and behold Dr. Gammill could not only find it, he could tell us all about it, as it turned out to have been the ancestral home of his Aunt and Uncle, Anne and Lipscomb Noblitt.

A short ride and an invigorating hike through a field surrealistically dotted with 1940's and 50's filling station gas pumps, huge rubber tires, and abandoned pieces of farm machinery brought us to the gate of the property. Once over the gate, we found ourselves surrounded by cows and generous helpings of their patties. Picking our path carefully, we wound by a 1940's Chevrolet truck rooted to its place with a tall tree growing out of its hood. I couldn't help but think of William Christenberry, a photographer worthy of this wonderful landscape.

The Lipscomb House sits on a rise so that it commands all that it surveys, even if it is now in what can only be called a cow pasture. The house is in awful shape, flooring is gone, windows out, just a remarkably durable, thick-walled, barn-backed, bovine-haunted edifice remains. Yet we were struck by its stark beauty, compelling symmetry and aura of past respectability. This noble structure cries out for restoration. It is not too late.



Harvie exclaimed that this is an excellent example of a tidewater-type cottage. His surmises, including the approximate age of the house, were later confirmed in a letter from Dr. Gammill which included the following information he had secured from his esteemed Aunt. Lipscomb family records reveal that William Lipscomb, son of Thomas and Mary Smith Lipscomb, married Ann Day Cooke, daughter of William and Ann Nelson Cook, in Louisa County, Virginia, on December 20, 1796. About 1826 William moved to Franklin County, Tennessee and purchased 468 acres of land for \$3,740 in 1828. On this land he built a seven-room, brick house “following closely the architecture of the early Tidewater, Virginia houses.”



A later stroll through the family cemetery located within earshot of the house brought forth more family history. Both William Lipscomb and his wife were buried there. William's stone tells us that the date on which he was born also marked his death, January 17, 1774– January 17, 1829. Tomb stones also tell us that N. J. Lipscomb, daughter of Jno. and Sallie Lipscomb, born July 17, 1832 married Robert Newton Mann on October 30, 1851. N.J. (Nannie) died Dec. 29, 1895. Robert Newton, born March 1, 1825 died Nov. 23, 1903. This Robert Newton Mann partnered with Azariah R. David to build the three-story brick mill at Factory Creek which became known as Falls Mill. What at first appears as ironic, that the road to Falls Mill leads to a quiet family cemetery is no more so than that the Door to Nowhere leads to Manure Manor. Old Salem is a magical place. As Deborah Roop wrote in a May 12, 1988 Huntsville *Times* article about Falls Mill, "Drive 40 miles north of Huntsville and end up about 100 years in the past."

Dr. Gammill's letter accompanying the family's data breathes more life into the facts:

"I had Thanksgiving dinner at my sister's & brother-in-law's house in Tullahoma. My aunt and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. H. Lipscomb Noblitt were also there. At my request, my aunt went to considerable trouble to look up her notes on the Lipscomb house which we visited (alas, it could now be called "Manure Manor.") in Beans Creek. . . Probably my uncle's great-great-great grandfather had a nostalgia for a family home in Louisa County, Virginia. If the dates are correct, poor man, he must have died when the house had barely been completed or else was under construction. His widow, according to what was handed down through generations to my uncle, was a very pious lady and walked, as in Biblical times, each Sunday to the Beans Creek Church."

Dr. Gammill concluded his charming letter with the following whimsical gesture which I fully endorse!

"Perhaps meantimes you and Mr. Jones could find some rich Alabamian to buy and restore the old Lipscomb house in Beans Creek, and Mrs. Jones could receive truck loads of good Tennessee manure for her garden!"

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## ***The Planter's Railway***

*by Paul Harncourt*

This is a book about the first railroad to bring the Mississippi River Valley and the East Coast of America together—the Memphis & Charleston Railroad (M&C). The excitement of seeing a railroad being born is followed by the pains of being caught in a Civil War and eventually absorbed by the Southern Railway. Most of the details given are from newspapers of the day and the Annual Reports of the M&C.

The book starts out with what is called the 'Excitement Period,' where many of the unknown details about the beginning of railroads in the North Alabama, Southern Tennessee, and North Mississippi areas are brought together. We read how the M&C builds two separate railroads to come together into one. One extends from Tuscumbia to Stevenson Alabama (to link up with the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad being built at the time), and the other from Memphis eastward toward Tuscumbia.

We see the final spike driven on the M&C, in the year 1857, just five years to the date of its beginning. There are actual details on how the railroads were surveyed and then built in those days; with oak stringers and with half inch straps of iron nailed to wooden rails, before iron "T" rails were introduced from England. We learn how they were operated by "Captains," or "Runners," and how the railroads were powered before there were locomotives—with mules and horses pulling the cars. Ultimately with technology they overcame the problems they faced.

The Civil War literally and physically almost destroyed this fledgling railroad. The details of this period are taken from the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion as compiled by the government in the late 1800's, and the Annual Reports of the M&C.

Both armies alternately destroy and rebuild the railroad, fighting along its length, a stretch called "The Great Vertebrae of the South" by Southern generals. There is the capture of Huntsville, without a shot being fired in the town. Skirmishes between warring parties, in the countryside along the railroad, abound. The populace of the areas managed their lives in the face of these deprivations, and the railroad survived.

The book ends with a section on the post war era. There we see how the troubled times of the late 1800's affected the fortunes of the M&C. Attention is called to the shortsightedness of the minority M&C stockholders, and the ultimate destruction of the profitability of the railroad, until in 1897 it is absorbed into the Southern Railway System.

For railroad buffs there are any number of railroad firsts that will surprise you as you read the "Excitement" section. And for the Civil War buffs, you will be pleasantly surprised at some of the important events that transpired along the M&C line. The book contains a reference section and composite charts of the locomotive roster of the M&C for those looking for reference material.

Railroad enthusiasts and Civil War buffs will want to add this novel account of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad to their collections.

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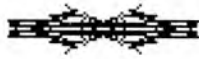
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