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VOL. 1 ISSUE 3

HOLIDAY ISSUE

1990

# Old Huntsville

A PUBLICATION FOR HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE

## Grace Hinds, Lady Curzon Marchioness Of Kedleston

Monroe were both soldiers in the Union Army. The two Hinds brothers made large purchases of property in a stricken but potentially rich valley and soon owned larger land areas on both sides of the Tennessee River near Decatur. Later when Monroe Hinds married,

*Continued On Page 2*

Royalty in North Alabama? Many people don't know it, but an Alabama native was both a countess and a marchioness. Her name was Grace Hinds Curzon, and she has a fascinating, almost rags to riches background.

There are lots of stories about this woman who was at one time a favorite in European society. But perhaps some of the most accurate information can be found

in the book, "The Life of Grace Hinds Curzon, Marchioness Curzon of Kedleston," compiled by Leon T. Hinds, in 1971.

Trice Hinds currently lives at 513 Randolph Avenue in Huntsville, and is a relative of the famous lady.

Grace Hinds was born in the Hinds-McEntire home, located near the downtown area of Decatur on Sycamore Street in 1878. The home was built by John Burleson about 1835 and overlooked the Tennessee River.

The story goes that both Yankee and Confederate Army chiefs used the house as headquarters during the Civil War. In fact, it was at the Hinds home that the battle of Shiloh was planned by General Albert Johnston.

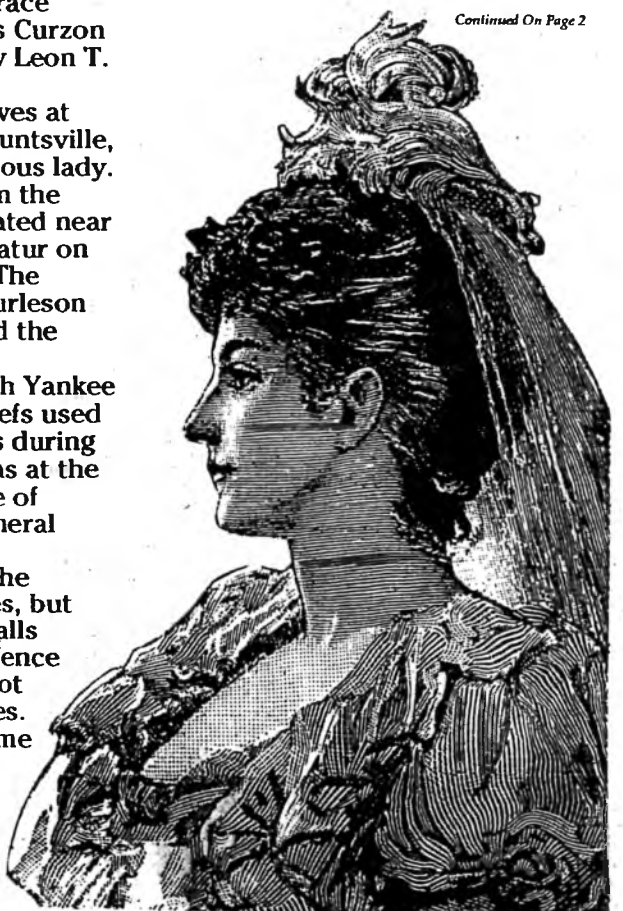
The home was spared the flames of the Civil War fires, but several large decorative balls which were atop the iron fence around the house were shot off during numerous battles.

After the war, Col. Jerome J. Hinds of Illinois and his brothers were so taken with the house that they made it their home. Col. Hinds and his brother



### This Issue

- Christmas Past.....4
- The Life & Times of James Bierny.. 5
- Health Shorts.....10
- Huntsville Trivia.....11
- Legends Of Old Huntsville.....11
- The French Parade.....13
- The Way It Used To Be.....15
- Predictions & Philosophy.....17
- America's First Bathtub.....18
- Bell Witch Of Adams.....22





# Old Huntsville

A PUBLICATION FOR HISTORICAL HUNTSVILLE

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he and his wife raised their children in the home, including their daughter, Grace.

Grace Elvina Hinds was born in 1878 in the upstairs room of the brick house in Decatur and was the third offspring of a family of seven. Her father was a U.S. Marshall during Chester Arthur's administration following Garfield's death and was United States Minister to Brazil.

It was later said that when she became famous she forgot her old friends, but she never forgot the old Decatur home. In her book, "Reminiscences," she wrote: "Decatur, Alabama, as I remember it, was a quiet, sleepy town, although my older friends used to tell me, with great pride, of the wealth and dignity of the vast entertaining and hospitality before the Civil War."

The Hinds moved to Huntsville when Grace was still a young girl, since her father was U.S. Marshall of the Northern District of Alabama.

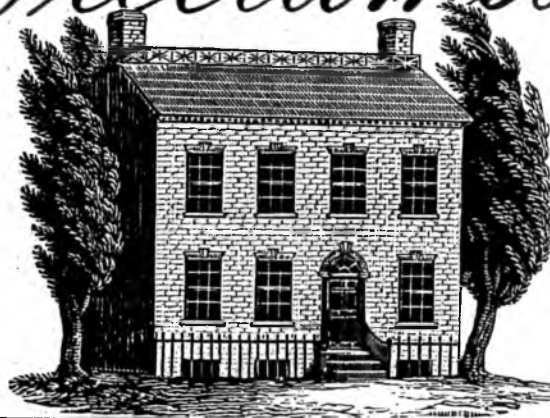
They lived modestly in Huntsville during his four-year term of office in a house on Grove Street almost opposite the Paul Davis home. While in Huntsville, the family attended the Episcopal Church and young Grace played in the area around Big Spring. Old-timers remember her as a bright child who appeared on the streets with long curls that her mother tediously wrapped.

While living in Huntsville, however, the family encountered some misfortunes. In April 1882 Grace's mother died and was buried in Maple Hill. In February of the following year, her father died and later in November 1888, Lucia, Grace's infant sister, died also. Another unfortunate incident that befell the family was day the home on Grove Street burned and the family had to move to a smaller house on the corner of Madison and Gates.

In 1890, Grace was 12 years old and the remaining family moved back to Decatur. From then on the

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story of a modest North Alabama resident reads almost like a fairy tale.

Five years after the family had moved from Huntsville to Decatur, Mrs. Hinds brother, John Trillia came to Decatur from South America to visit the family. He was fascinated by his young relative and offered to take her on a 3 month journey with him. Grace jumped at the chance.

While visiting there, the young Grace met and married an Argentinian millionaire and packer of London - Alfred Duggan - who kept herds in South America and was a native of Tennessee. Although she was never particularly happy with him, Grace gained experience, poise and education in London and before long had captured the hearts of European society. They had three children 2 boys and a girl.

After the death of Duggan, Grace was left with some \$25 million. On January 2, 1917 she married George Nathaniel Curzon, a widower, in a private chapel of Lambeth Palace. This was the second American heiress that Curzon had married. The ceremony was attended only by eight or nine guests, including children, and Grace had only one attendant.

Following this wedding, the couple moved to London where they bought the historic Bodiam Castle in Sussex. Built in 1386, this structure is considered the finest English example of medieval castles. There she lived with all the splendor and pageantry of medieval royalty and became a world famous hostess. Among her friends were King George V, Queen Mary, The Prince of Wales, the Churchills, the Queen of Portugal, Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt and others.

Grace was an extremely beautiful woman. Sir John Lavey, the most famous artist of the time painted her portrait. She was exceptionally youthful for her 36 years, which was probably one reason she captured so many European hearts. Curzon had a brilliant career behind him and was the idol of many women.

One of the ladies he eluded was Elinor Glyn, who later wrote a novel about a noble young aristocrat

who was ruined and deserted by a scheming American heiress.

Lord Curzon became Viceroy of India, as well as Lord Viscount, Earl, Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House of Lords. The King of England conferred Curzon with the title of Marquis and Grace received that of Dame of the Order of the Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire.

All was not storybook perfect, however. Grace was extremely independent and as early as the first year of their marriage, while Curzon was struggling to regain the heights which he achieved in India in 1939, they had a habit of living apart.

Curzon had a great dream of becoming the Prime Minister of England. He failed, but did fill many important government posts. He was a controversial figure, attacked by some as a tyrant and a political turncoat and praised by others as a beneficent ruler of India and skilled negotiator and shaper of England's postwar policy.

He kept five or six mansions, country manors and town houses and that included two or three castles. He was a collector of castles, a man said to have artistic taste and a reverence for antiquities.

He died in 1925, literally in a harness, which he wore for 48 years because of the constant pain he suffered from a back injury. He was still making plans for his future on his deathbed.

Lady Curzon, Marchioness of Kedleston, a woman who won approval wherever she went, wrote her memoirs in 1955, something she had wanted to do for a long time. King George V knew that she wanted to do this, but persuaded her to wait for a least 25 years after Lord Curzon had died. She wrote the book 30 years after his death.

Grace Hinds, the little girl who grew up on Grove Street in Huntsville, lived with the

opulence and pageantry of medieval royalty. It was a long way from the cotton fields of her North Alabama home.

Submitted by James Record, Sr.

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*The sins we do... two by two,  
we pay for one by one*

# Christmas Past

A couple of days ago, while thinking about the upcoming Christmas and New Year holiday seasons, I wondered - just what were the gift-giving traditions of "Old Huntsville"? The holiday season in "Old Huntsville" always brought families and friends together. People traveled great distances then and now to celebrate the results of a long and hard work year. Besides, the gifts we shared with our families, friends and visitors always brought an assortment of cakes, candies, nuts, and coffee during their holiday visits. Coffee as a holiday gift-giving tradition interested me, so I spent a little time researching the custom in our area. Since coffee was not a product of the United States in the early 1800's it was scarce, hence valuable. Only Kona Coffee (Hawaii) is now commercially grown in the United States. But I digress, coffee beans made their way to Huntsville (in the early 1800's) by water and land.



The green (unroasted) coffee beans were shipped down the Tennessee River, and off-loaded at Ditto's Landing and at the Paint Rock/Flint River(s) nexus with the Tennessee and brought to Huntsville by wagon and flat boat barge, respectively.

The first canal in Alabama, the Indian Creek Canal (opened 1827 - finished 1831), was used to haul cotton to the Tennessee River and delivered coffee and other supplies back to the Huntsville market.

In 1827, coffee in Madison County cost seven cents more a pound than cotton. During the Civil War a Union soldier, Duquense Hays, wrote in his diary that: "Coffee was one dollar a pound and none was to be had." By 1886, coffee had dropped to twelve cents a pound . . . the same price as one whole chicken. It seems that whatever the price, we had to have our coffee. When commercial shipping was weather-bound or non-existent, local farmers/merchants would pool their money and send a buyer East (into Tennessee) to resupply the town. Substitutes, like acorns or additives, like chicory were used when times were tough. During the 1890's Elizabeth Humes Chapman (Changing Huntsville) writes: "Every household of any pretention bought coffee and sugar by the hundred pound sack, flour by the barrel, sides of bacon, and bushels of meal. Coffee was roasted in the pan and ground in a small hand-mill on the kitchen wall or a smaller one which could be held in the grinder's lap. The grains (beans) were put into an open top, passed through a grinder, and fell into a little drawer in the bottom. Experienced cooks knew exactly how much coffee to grind for a meal."

It seems that our ancestors drank a medium or dark roast that was roasted in a pan on top of a wood stove, ground in the kitchen, and brewed with fresh spring water. Those folks knew the secret of a good cup of coffee. That secret is: the closer your cup of coffee is to the roast the better/fresher it is to taste!! Nowadays we have a much larger selection to choose from; i.e., regular or decaffeinated, flavored or dessert, and coffee

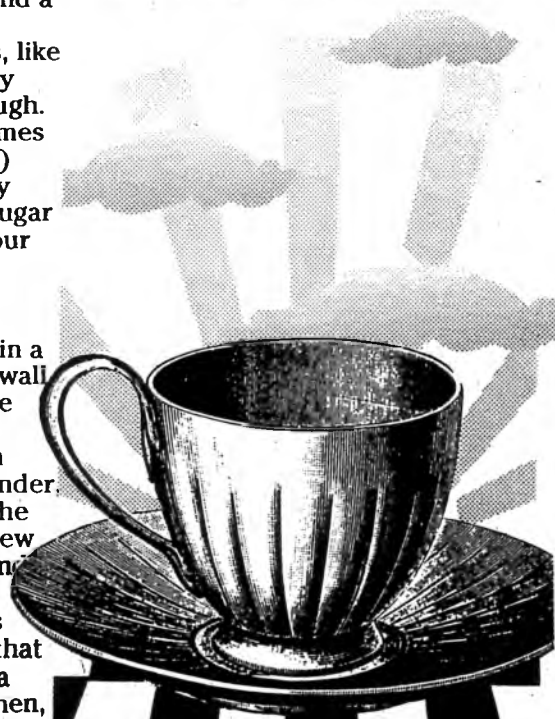
beans from around the world. Coffee beans can now be roasted and blended to satisfy any taste.

So, if you are tired of giving (and getting) ties and socks consider coffee as a gift this holiday season. By the way, there is a local coffee roaster located one block from the headwaters of Indian Creek Canal . . . on Jefferson Street.

Submitted by Steven Terracin. He and his wife live in Five Points and are currently writing a book on espresso.



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# The Life & Times Of James Bierny

Probably one of the most colorful and eccentric characters of all time to reside in Huntsville had to be James G. Bierny. Mr. Bierny was born in Danville Kentucky in 1792 into a wealthy, slave-holding family. After attending the College of New Jersey (now Princeton) he moved to Huntsville in 1817.

Bierny was a failure at cotton farming; he had neither the experience nor inclination to do better. He possessed numerous slaves, earning his living by renting them to other plantation owners. Citizens of Huntsville began to talk of his eccentric ways when he started promenading around town with a black slave whom "he described as his best friend".

At this time James Bierny had become interested in the Abolitionist movement and became an avid spokesman for its ideas. Anti-slavery meetings were held regularly at his home on East Holmes street, opposite its intersection with North Lincoln street.

When the first state legislature met, Bierny was one of its members and remembering this, the town people were tolerant of his

unorthodox ways. In a few years his fame as an agitator had spread causing the "American Colonization Society" to offer him a post as its "General Agent for the States of Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas Territories."

James Bierny, upon receiving the offer, asked for time to think it over so he could "consult his conscience." In reality he had asked for time so he could begin to sell his slaves. At about the same time he began to publish a series of letters in the local newspapers condemning slavery and dealing rudely with the south.

By now the Huntsville citizens' tolerance had worn thin. He was "invited and persuaded" to leave town. A publication of the times states that "wisely he sought some other shore, where those who knew him less might praise him more."

In 1835 Bierny moved to Cincinnati where he published the "Philanthropist", the cause of numerous riots and threats. In 1837 he was again invited to move.

Next he moved to New York where, in 1840 the Liberty party selected him as their Presidential candidate. He garnered 7,100 votes and in 1844, when he was again persuaded to run, he attracted 15,812 votes. He lost the Presidential race but had ensured that slavery would be a major issue in any political race for many years to come.

James Bierny had two sons, both born in Huntsville. David Bell Birney graduated from Andover and became a lawyer in Philadelphia. He served the North as a general in the Civil war and was twice faced with charges of dereliction of duty. The charges were finally dropped.

William Birney, the other son, was educated in the north and abroad. During the war he became commander of a regiment of black troops. He is probably best known for the book he wrote about his father, titled "The Life And Times Of James Bierny".

William explains that his father left Huntsville because "moral conditions were so depraved and shooting and drinking brawls so frequent that one's life was not safe there."

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## "SOAP AS SHE OUGHT TO BE"

Holidays are over and it's time to clean up the mess. Naturally we don't cotton to the idea of store-bought soap, so here is how you can get around those new-fangled ideas.

To make lye soap you first have to figure out how to get lye. (You can buy commercial lye in the store now, but that sort of defeats the idea of not buying the soap in the first place!)

The best source of lye for this "purist soap" takes advantage of those wood ashes from the fireplace that you never know what to do with anyway.

Hickory works best. Collect your hickory ashes and put them in an ash hopper. Pour water and as the water passes through the ashes and drips slowly into a barrel it is bona-fide lye water.

Put 1 1/2 to 2 quarts of lye water in a kettle along with 4 1/2 to 5 pounds of grease. (Bacon drippings, lard, suet renderings and any other grease will all work.) Add grease to the lye water and

boil, stirring constantly until thick like gravy or jelly (about thirty minutes). Pour into shallow pan and let harden. Cut the hardened soap into cakes and clean those holiday pots and pans. (p.s. don't tell your family you are cleaning with pig drippings and lye!)

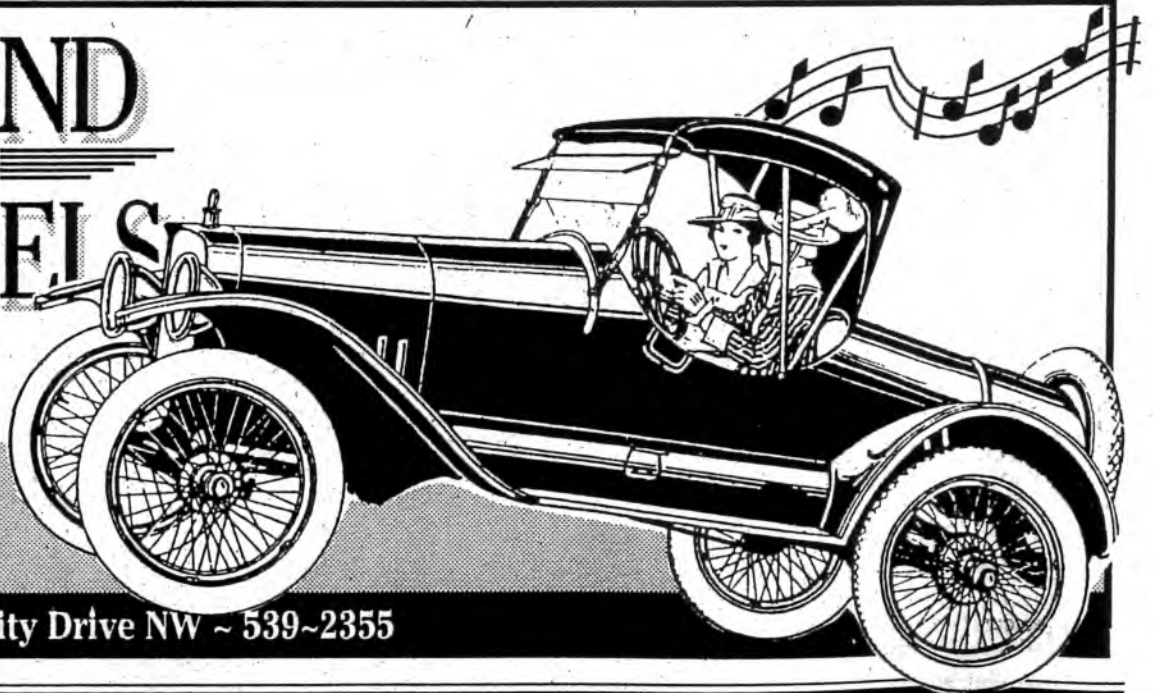
Submitted by Ron Eyestone

## Ain't Life Great

If you could locate the information about your direct ancestors for only 20 generations (not including any sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, or cousins), you would discover that you are descended from well over 1,000,000 people and over 500,000 of them would be your great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great grandparents and each of them would probably have over 500,000 other descendants - not counting you!

*It's quite all right to live it up,  
as long as you can live it down.*

# SOUND ON WHEELS



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## Civil War

In the spring of 1865, the South was a defeated nation. General Lee had surrendered at Appomattox. Confederate soldiers everywhere were returning home. The only organized resistance were the small bands hiding in the hills, that refused to be conquered. One such group was the Twenty-fifth Battalion Alabama Calvary which operated around Huntsville, commanded by Colonel Mead.

At wars end, the Alabama 25th numbered no more than a few hundred members. Too small and too weak to fight in battle they were forced to conduct hit and run raids on the enemy supply lines. This not only harassed the Yankees, it also supplied a source of badly needed food and weapons. It also incurred the wrath of General Granger, the commanding officer of the Federal troops stationed in Huntsville.

General Granger sent word to the rebel troops that "Lee had surrendered and that they should lay arms also. The war was over". Colonel Mead, after consulting with his men, refused.

Once again Granger sent word. "Officers could keep their sidearms, and officers and enlisted men would be allowed to keep their personal horses. But they must surrender". If not, they would be treated as "outlaws and horse thieves". Colonel Meade still refused.

After weeks of constant harassment by the Federal troops, the Alabama Twenty-fifth was finally cornered near New Market on May 6th. A pitched battle was fought and twenty-five Confederates were captured, three of whom were executed on the spot.

The last remaining Confederate forces were badly split up and the command fell to the leadership of Major M. E. Johnston. With Federal troops everywhere, Johnston had no choice but to retreat once again to the hills. The Federal troops had threatened to burn the home of anyone caught helping the rebels. They were cut off from food and supplies and now they faced the prospect of being hung if captured.

Sadly, Major Johnston agreed to surrender. He was informed that Colonel Given would accept the surrender at place on Monte Sano Mt. known as Cold Spring on May 11th. Warily the soldiers made preparations, and on the appointed day at noon all 150 of them marched into the clearing.

The Yankees, undoubtedly, glad to see the fighting over had provided two brass bands and a ten gallon demijohn of brandy. As the paroles were being given, it began to rain. The roads soon became two muddy for the wagons to haul the captured weapons down the mountain. The soldiers who had just

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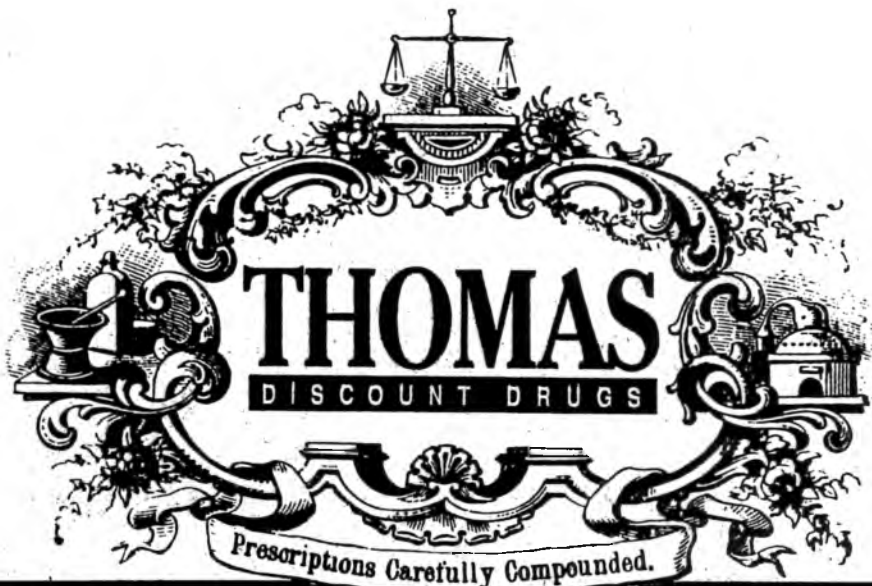
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finished surrendering were once again ordered to pick up their arms. They then marched to the depot where for the last time, they gave up their arms.

One of the most intriguing legends of that day concerns the weapons that were surrendered. While stacking arms at the depot, it was noted "that probably a sorrier set of guns could not have been gathered up in all of Dixie". Major Johnston later admitted to having hid

his companies weapons before surrendering. He also said that "no better arms existed in the whole U.S. than those hidden".

No record has ever been found of these guns. After the war it was illegal for citizens to own military weapons. In all likelihood they are still hidden in some dark cave on the side of Monte Sano Mountain.



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HOUSEHOLD TIPS BY

# EARLENE

Keep linoleum clean by wiping daily with a damp cloth. For thorough cleaning some housekeepers use hot water and a little soda or sapolio.

Cream is more easily whipped when moderately cold and not too fresh, that skimmed from the milk of the night before being about right.

Clean zinc with kerosene oil.

Clean copper with turpentine and fine brickdust, soda is also good.

Fat from mutton, lamb, geese, turkey or ducks will give an unpleasant flavor to anything with which it is used, and many good cooks consider that its best place is with the soap grease.

## Thank You!

We would like to thank our many readers for their support. You are responsible for whatever success that we have enjoyed over the last six months. We hope we will continue to bring you Huntsville's history in the same manner as we have in the past.

# Pecan Delights

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup of brown sugar
- 1/3 cup of melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup of (Powdered Milk)
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Do not use mixer. Beat eggs with fork. Blend sugar & butter, add vanilla and mix well. Add flour-stir and add nuts.

Grease and flour small muffin pans. Fill 3/4 full and bake 15-20 minutes at 325° (Thin drizzle or sugar cream frosting optional)

Ed Till

Many Thanks to Don Johnson for his "Best Old-Fashioned Fruitcake Recipe In the October edition of "Old Huntsville."

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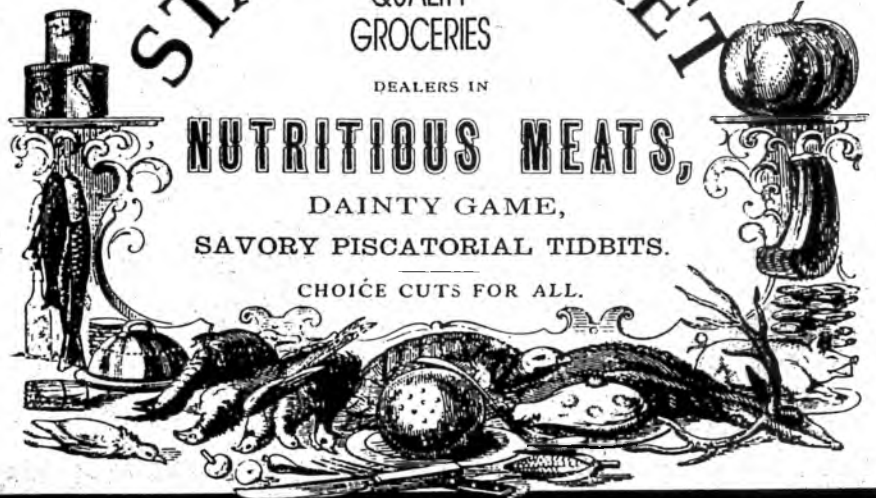
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 Revelation 22:2 - And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*



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 Picture Clear  
 Teens Exciting  
 Arms Inviting  
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 Brides-Grooms  
 Honeymoon Over  
 Mind Sober  
 Wash, Cook  
 Play Rook  
 Baby Comes  
 Mother Hums  
 Baby Cries  
 Daddy Sighs  
 Children Grow  
 Always Go  
 Teens Arrive  
 We Survive  
 Leaves Home  
 Must Roam  
 Lonesome Feel  
 Wounds Heal  
 Mind Wanders  
 Sits Ponders

Fran Lovelady

*History teaches us that people seldom learn anything from history. If they did, they wouldn't keep repeating themselves.*

# Health Shorts



## The Wedding

The following announcement was received yesterday from the bride:

Sydney F. Kirkpatrick has given up the aimless life of bachelorhood to marry the beautiful Miss Jennie Smith. The lovely Miss Smith was dressed in the latest expensive fashions direct from Nashville and was attended by numerous bridesmaids. The altar was covered with an astounding array of beautiful flowers arranged by the bride. Said the bride after the ceremony, "We have cut loose the moorings of a life of loneliness and have launched our grand ship on a sea of matrimony." Mr. Kirkpatrick is a mechanic.

Taken from an 1899 publication

In court news this week, Sydney F. Kirkpatrick was awarded a divorce from his wife, the former Miss Jennie Smith of this city. In court, Mr. Kirkpatrick's only testimony was "She talked to much."

Taken from 1900 publication

### Doctor Sez:

Today more people are concerned about keeping in good health through proper dieting than ever before. One particular aspect which gets a lot of attention is cholesterol, and the effect it has on one's own personal health. A report issued by the U.S. Surgeon General last year identified excessive fat consumption as the nation's primary dietary priority.

Cholesterol is closely allied with fats. It is a fatlike substance found in foods of animal origin and too much of it in the diet can cause a formation of plaque on the walls of arteries. Eventually the arteries get clogged, and this condition could lead to a stroke or heart attack, which kills hundreds of thousands of Americans annually.

This can be avoided through proper diet and being aware of the importance of keeping the cholesterol level in our bodies at an acceptable low level. Cholesterol is found to be high in foods such as whole milk dairy products, egg yolks and meat, especially

beef and pork, and the intake of such foods should be moderate at best. Cholesterol is much lower in fish and poultry. The American Heart Association recommends that our diet include generous amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables, lean meat and poultry, fish, grains and low-fat dairy products.

Periodically, we should have our cholesterol level checked, and lowered where necessary through proper diet and/or medication. Medicine combined with a low cholesterol diet can slow and even reverse the buildup of fatty deposits, thereby reducing the risk of heart disease.

The control of the level of cholesterol in the blood stream is extremely important in adults, as well as in children. Proper diet is the best assurance of maintaining such a low level. In addition to diet, regular exercise, bring weight to a normal level and abstaining from smoking will have a beneficial effect on blood cholesterol.

Submitted by Dr. Annelie Owens

## Barb's Kitchen

### GRANDMA'S LACE COOKIES

- 2 sticks butter, softened
- 3 cups brown sugar, packed
- 1 egg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 4 cups quick rolled oats

\*\*\*\*\*

With mixer, blend butter and sugar. Add egg, vanilla, salt. Blend in oats. Put a light coating of oil on cookie sheet. With a tablespoon make small balls on sheet and don't overcook. COOL completely before removing from cookie pan or they'll all stick together.

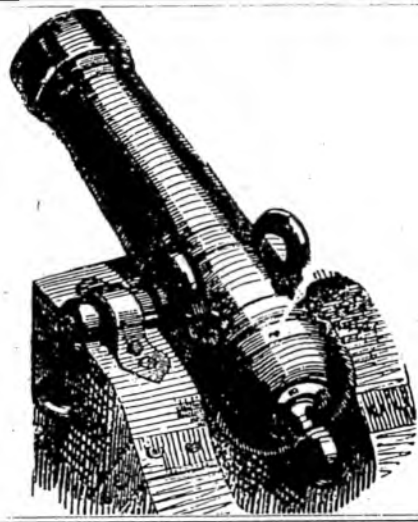
Cook at 325 for 8 minutes



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**Old Huntsville Trivia**

**1802**

John Ditto builds a lean-to shack against the bluffs of the Big Spring. After a short while he moves to the Tennessee River to what is now known as "Ditto's Landing". Five years later, John Hunt discovers Huntsville.

**1816**

James O. Crump delivers a load of oranges to Huntsville from Mobile in only 28 days. The newspapers of the day stated that it was remarkable that only 6 out of the 1000 spoiled.

**1817**

First school of dance opens. The school was located above Talbot's Inn and was run by John B. Grantland.

**1820**

Planters Hotel advertises breakfast for 37 1/2 cents. Lodging for the night was 12 1/2 cents while a stable for a horse cost 50 cents.

**1824**

First bank robbery in Huntsville. The Planters and Merchants Bank was robbed of \$25,000 and a \$2000 reward was offered.

# Legends Of Old Huntsville

## THE INVITATION

The following story was told to me by an old gentleman at a local bar one night. He was not really all that old but you could tell that the years of whiskey had taken their toll. When I first saw the man he was trying to talk the bartender out of a free drink. He looked like one of the homeless people that are becoming more and more common to Huntsville. He was unshaven, dressed in filthy clothes, his hands were trembling from the effect of yesterday's alcohol.

Taking pity on the old character, I called him over and told him that I would buy him a drink if he would sit and talk for awhile. Being curious, I asked what made him live that kind of life.

This is his story, for whatever it is worth.

"Get out of that car, boy. I clocked you doing 95 miles an hour all the way from the crossroads."

"Boy, you better have a good reason for high balling it thru my town, or else you're gonna have a reservation in the downtown hotel, compliments of the police department. Now speak up boy, if you got an excuse I want to hear it."

Stan Douglas, standing there on the side of the road late that night, started to speak, thought better of it, and held his hands out for the handcuffs. There was nothing he could say. If he did, who would believe him?

Stan Douglas had lived in Huntsville for about three months when he received the invitation. Transferring here from New York had disrupted his social life and there had been few occasions to make new friends. His job took almost all of his time. When he came across the invitation in his mail slot, his first impulse was to discard it. But on second thought, which was better? Sitting in a lonely apartment by yourself and watching the ball fall on TV or spending New Year's Eve partying with a bunch of strangers? Anything was better than

Continued on Page 12

**1828**

New water reservoir is built on the courthouse square. It was a two story building with the reservoir occupying the first floor and chambers for the city council filling the second floor.

**1861**

Church bells from the Episcopal, Presbyterian and Methodist churches were melted and made into cannon. The cannons were captured by the Yankees in 1862.

**1891**

James A. Clark was arrested for riding a horse while intoxicated.

**1909**

Huntsville Ice Creme Co. was first in nation to use paper cartons.

**1910**

U F O is spotted over Huntsville. It was described as a "cigar shaped vessel headed in a northwestern direction traveling at a great speed."

*There are two times in a man's life when he should not gamble: when he can't afford it, and when he can.*

*Opportunity knocks only once, but temptation bangs on the door for years.*

another night with nothing to do.

The invitation was an unusual one. It came in an envelope with a Confederate stamp on it. The handwriting was done in an old fashioned style and was difficult to read. Carefully cutting the stamp off the envelope, he wondered what kind of a nut would give away a valuable collectors item. He decided to attend.

The card stated that the party was being held "to honor our brave lads in the Confederate gray who are doing battle to defend our Southern way of life against the Yankee invasion."

Stan, figuring that it was a costume ball, rented a uniform.

Following the enclosed directions was not easy and before he knew it, he had gotten lost. The woods seemed to get darker and a fog had started moving in making it very difficult to see. Finally, after driving for what seemed like forever, he spotted a huge house perched on top of a hill surrounded by forest.

Parking his car on the side of the road, he made his way up the drive. He was instantly pleased that he had decided to attend.

All of the people were dressed in civil war costumes. The grounds were lit by old fashioned coal oil lanterns and there were even horses and carriages waiting in the drive. Not seeing any one that looked even remotely familiar, Stan made his way to the table that was serving as the bar. When he asked for a beer, the old man behind the table looked puzzled. "Son, I don't know where you are from, but around here we drink whiskey." Laughing at the old man's role playing, Stan said "Sure, give me a whiskey then."

Taking his drink in hand, Stan walked around, watching the people. There were a lot of beautiful women, but it wasn't long before his attention was drawn to one particular lady. She was tall, dark headed and beautiful. Unfortunately, she was also surrounded by other men. Stan stood off to the side, in the shadows, and watched. As she talked to the other men, her attention kept wandering to the stranger who was watching her. Finally, unable to control her curiosity any longer, she broke

away from the group she was with and made her way over to where Stan was standing.

As soon as they met, every one at the party was aware of the intense feelings between them. It was truly a case of love at first sight. They talked, they held hands, and danced the old time waltz together. They fell in love.

Stan, not used to drinking whiskey, began to feel a little woozey and not wanting to make a fool out of himself, decided he had better call it a night. Promising Anna, the beautiful stranger he had just fallen in love with, that he would return the next day, he went home while he was still able to drive.

The next morning Stan was at his office early trying to find Anna's number in the phone book. Not having any luck he resigned himself to waiting until that evening before talking to her.

That evening he followed the exact route he had driven the night before but things looked different. The house was there, but it could not be the same one. This house was old and dilapidated. It looked as if no one had lived there for many, many years.

Wondering where he had made the wrong turn, he stopped at a country store to ask directions. It was an old store, something like you would see in a Norman Rockwell painting. It even had the dog sleeping on the porch.

No one knew anything about a house that fit the description of the one he had visited the night before. As he was about to leave, almost as an afterthought, he asked about the old deserted mansion down the road.

"Son, that used to be the old Walters plantation. At one time they owned all the land around here for miles in every direction. Seems as if they had a daughter by the name of Anna, who fell in love with a Confederate soldier by the name of Stanley somebody. Anyway this Stanley promised to come back but he never did. They say that the Walters girl just pined away of a broken heart and the family up and moved to Texas after she died."

"Got a picture of her back here if you want to see it. She sure was something."

The picture was old and cracked, hard to make out some parts of it, but there was no mistaking the tall, beautiful, dark-headed lady, or the man standing next to her. He was looking at himself.

Terrified, he got back in his car and started toward town. He was scared - he was in a daze - he was not watching how fast he was driving when the constable stopped him.

Stan did not care any more. He did not care about his job or his house or any of the things that we take for granted. The only thing that mattered to him any more was the old tattered picture that he placed on the table in front of me.



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# French Parade

Huntsville woke up one morning in the late fall of 1818 to see one of the strangest processions in its short history pass thru town. Hundreds of French citizens dressed in ceremonial uniforms with sabers and colored sashes, heavily jeweled ladies clothed in the latest fashions, all headed toward southern Alabama to try and recreate the glory of France in the Alabama wilderness.

It was an odd fate that brought these people to Alabama. When Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, the elite of French society was forced into exile. The European countries refused their request of asylum for fear of antagonizing the new French government. America was their last remaining hope.

Supporters of the defeated general had already been welcomed in Philadelphia, but the city was not large enough to absorb the many hundreds of exiles now making their way across the ocean. After a series of hasty meetings called by the leaders, it was agreed that they should send out emissaries in search of a new home.

Many months later the scouts reported back. They had found a land where all the immigrants could settle. It was a fertile land where vines and olives would flourish.

The group split into two parts. The first group followed the coastline down to Mobile and the second group went overland, passing through Huntsville on the way. Months later, after a hard and dangerous journey, the two groups met again at the Tombigbee river. Here the French aristocrats found only a few huts built of logs and

clay. They named the settlement Eaglesville in honor of Napoleon, but soon, envisioning a new world of friendliness among the peoples, they rechristened it Demopolis. The small towns around it began to take names such Arcola, Linden and Moscow, all symbols of the past glory of the French empire under Napoleon.

Representatives obtained a land grant from the United States government signed by President Monroe. The grant was for four townships, each six miles square, at a price of two dollars an acre made payable 14 years after the signing of the contract. The grant stated that this land was set aside for the cultivation of the grape vine and olive.

Then came the period of hope and enthusiastic labor. Veterans of many a victorious campaign began a new battle - against nature and the elements. Dressed in their rich uniforms, they cleared the land, ditched it, and plowed it under. Their wives, delicate ladies still clothed in Parisian gowns, milked the cows, carried water to the men in the fields and cooked the meals over an open fire in the fireplace. From old letters and stories of elderly people who knew the settlers emerges a picture of their existence in this harsh wilderness. The whole community began to take on the appearance of a French

*In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

hamlet. Life was easy in some ways, there being plenty of wild game and vegetables from the gardens. Often at the end of a hard day the settlers would gather in a clearing with their musical instruments and sing the songs of their far away homeland while Indians and Yankee traders looked on with bewilderment. Aristocrats and their ladies, who had last danced at the imperial court in Versailles, now performed the same delicate steps by the light of a bonfire in a forest clearing.

General Desnouettes, richest of the exiles and the acknowledged leader, spent his entire fortune in clearing and cultivating the land. In the middle of his estate, and near his home, he built a log cabin. In this cabin he placed a bronze statue of Napoleon. Heaped at the statues feet were swords and guns that he had captured in battle. On the walls were the captured banners and colors of the regiments that he had commanded. This cabin soon became a shrine to the settlers. Men would sit outside its door and smoke their pipes while talking of their former service under Napoleon. The ladies would bring the children to the cabin and tell stories of the homeland as the children gazed wide-eyed at the guns and swords.

Colonel Raoul, another exile, was not so fortunate in material wealth and found agriculture to be entirely distasteful. He soon lost his land and became a ferry man, transporting passengers across the waters of French creek. His wife, the former Marchioness of Sinibaldi and once lady-in-waiting to Queen Caroline of Italy, cooked flapjacks for the hungry passengers.

No people would have been more unfitted for the job of bringing the forest under cultivation. Not only were they inexperienced in farming but the weather was against them. Each winter the frost would destroy what they had so painstakingly labored over all summer. The colony might have survived however, had it not been for a stunning misfortune.

They had settled on the wrong land.

Continued on Page 14



It was discovered that the land they held title to was located miles away, in the midst of swamp and canebrake. Immediately, aggressive American squatters began filing land claims to the land that the French had cleared. Sadly the French people moved deeper into the forest. The hope that had once fueled their ambitions was gone. Slowly the colony gave up its existence until the only reminder of them were the French names they had given to surrounding landmarks.

As the colony died, the French settlers became scattered across the southern part of the United States. A large number of them moved to New Orleans, while General Desnouettes was finally given permission to settle in Belgium. He drowned off the coast of Ireland when the ship on which he was traveling struck a reef. Colonel Raoul went to Mexico where he became a soldier of fortune.



## HANDYMAN

In 1900 most of the colleges were considered boring and "stuffy" by the people that had to suffer through them. A & M was no exception. The schools young band leader, after being forced to endure one too many performances of the "classic's", concocted a secret plan to enliven the performance and keep his band members awake.

Without telling anyone, he rewrote a piece of music, and to divert attention, he entitled it "Greetings to Tossaint L'Overture". The band members did not notice the change until they had started playing the piece. It was an instant hit. Even the normally staid president began tapping his foot.

The piece the band played that day was "My Ragtime Baby" and the director was William C. Handy, destined to become known as the father of the blues.

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## The Way It Used To Be

By Vaughn Stuart

When you get in the sunset years of your life, you have the privilege to look back down over the road that you have trod and think about the characters that you met on the way. The thoughts of some will bring a smile and others will bring another reaction. Some you will never forget and the memories of the others may dim or fade away entirely. Most of them will warm your heart.

Being a jack-leg cartoonist, I got to know several "names" in this field on a casual basis. I once met Chester Goul who drew the comic strip character named "Dan Dunn", who claimed to have rivalry with "Dick Tracy" but I never thought that much of the strip. I knew briefly a guy named

George Litchy, who drew a cartoon feature called "Grin and Bear It". When we lived in Atlanta, I knew a nature cartoonist named Ed Dodd, who drew a popular national strip called "Mark Trail".

My favorite cartoonist of them all was Roy Crane, who originated Wash Tubbs and this strip has been called "The Greatest Adventure Comic Strip of All Time" and it was that. Crane is also credited with being the greatest pen and ink line cartoon strip illustrator of all time. In his later years, he resorted to using a commercial shading technique that we used to call "craft-tint" in the old days, and he became the master of that. Mostly, however, he was the master storyteller.

He enthralled me with the adventures of Wash Tubbs and Captain Easy. He met Easy in a prison in some faraway country. His pal before Captain Easy

was a tall, slender, happy-go-lucky guy called "Gosy", if my memory serves me correct. His first girl friend's name was "Roxy Hart". Roy Crane spent his last days down in a place called Indian Springs near Miami. I tried to look him up several times but his phone number was always unlisted. I never was anything but a "jack-leg" cartoonist and probably the best thing that I ever done was a trade magazine comic strip called "Washroom Charlie".

However, I did write the dialogue for the national known comic strip, "Popeye" for about a six weeks period and I'll tell you how it happened.

The creator of the Popeye strip was a man called "Segar". When he died, the syndicate hired a fellow named Zabola to do the cartooning with the dialogue being written by a well-known New York humorist named Tom Sims.

Sims had been doing the dialogue for Amos and Andy on radio for years.

Along about that time the creator of "Blondie (and-Dagwood)" was a feller named Chic Young, who had a drinking problem and would draw up his

strips six months at a time to allow for a "vacation". On one of those trips he disappeared from the New York scene for a two year period. The syndicate saved the strip by hiring Tom Sims to do a strip renovation. They took the old "Blondie" strips and pasted over new words in the balloons with Sims providing the gags.

Sims had some age on him and moved from New York to a little country community named Ohatchee, near Anniston and this is where I got to know him. He was a popular figure around Anniston, and he and I belonged to the Quarterback Club.

A football freak named "Lummux" had penetrated the scene in his "Popeye" strip dialogue. I was doing high school banquet chalk talks and illustrated many with quick sketches of the character Lummux. Tom Sims saw one of two of them. Along about that time he heard that my wife and I were moving to Atlanta, and he approached me with an idea:

"Why don't you draw up a comic book and use Lummux as the central character after you get set up in the trade magazine field

Continued on Page 16

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in Atlanta?" I told him that I would and after we got to Atlanta, I did write a dialogue for the proposed comic book but never did go as far as drawing up any cartoons. On my first trip back to Anniston, I brought the notebook with the Lummux dialogue and showed it to Tom, explaining to him that I was so busy in the trade magazine work that I could never find time to finish it. He said he liked the dialogue and asked me if he could keep it and I agreed.

One of my co-workers in the advertising field was a big fan of the Popeye newspaper cartoon strip and was vastly interested in the antics of the character called "Lummux". One day he showed me the current strip which had Lummux getting mixed up with some big-time gamblers. They poured cement into the football in an effort to break the toe of the star player and kick off man, Lummux, but it never phased the great Lummux. He lifted the ball high in the air and it came down on the head of the receiver and drove him deep into the ground.

I instantly recognized the dialogue as being the one that I had given to ole Tom in the notebook and hastened to make the claim to my trade magazine friend.

"That's a dialogue that I wrote myself. That guy is stealing my stuff,"

I grinned.

My friend would not believe me until I accurately predicted the contents of every daily Popeye strip for several weeks in advance. Then I would brag to him every day, "You're talking with a guy who writes the dialogue for "Popeye." He would grin.

Submitted by Vaughn Stewart

*A good conscience never cost nearly as much as it's worth!*

*Naked and nude mean the same thing, except that naked sounds like a surprise, while nude suggests it was done on purpose*

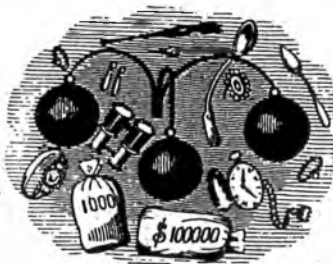
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An Alabamian who had been employed in a cemetery, some time since went to Washington to draw his pay.

After receiving the amount, the paymaster, discovering a sabre cut on his face, remarked; "You were in the army during the war?"

"Yes," said he.

"What command were you in?"

"In General Fitzhugh Lee's command," said he.

"Did you have the audacity to apply at a Federal cemetery for the work when you were in the rebel army?"

"Yes," replied the Alabamian.

"I helped to kill them and I thought I had a right to help bury them".

Taken from an 1869 publication - Huntsville



## Predictions & Philosophy

Predictions and prophecies of the future have existed since before Biblical times, and history is replete with accounts of seers - some right, more wrong. Why do we get caught up in wanting to glimpse what hasn't happened yet? Criswell, a noted psychic predictor, explains it simply: "All of us are fascinated by the future because that's where we'll live the rest of our lives." Can't argue with that.

Much of the fascination has to do with current events. All of us are asking, "What's going to happen in the Middle East?" And, "Is there really going to be a giant earthquake in early December this year?." So we look to find early answers to get a jump on what's going to happen.

One of the more notable psychics was Nostradamus, who wrote his predictions 400 years ago. Two thirds of his predictions have already been fulfilled, including World War I, Hitler's rise and fall (in his writings Nostradamus named the dictator as "Hisler") and both Kennedy assassinations. He has a pretty solid track record, all in all. Of particular interest are his Quatrains 9 and 10, which specify that an evil Arab leader will mount an army of nearly a million men and march East. The astrological configuration he gives points to August 2, 1987.

He missed the event by three years (not bad for a 400 year old prediction) but got the day exactly! We are indeed approaching troubled times, according to Nostradamus. In conjunction with the Middle East unrest, Nostradamus also sees a meteor, about a mile in diameter, strike the earth in the Indian Ocean, causing tremendous tidal waves and - guess what else? Earthquakes! The interesting thing about the meteor impact prediction is that many other psychics, including the modern day Jeanne

Dixon, have also predicted this event. Edgar Cayce (1877-1945), the most famous psychic healer and clairvoyant of this century, made numerous predictions regarding natural disasters.

Among them are: Drastic and sudden changes in the earth's surface before the year 1998 due to shifts in the polar axis, resulting in the disappearance of northern Europe below the ocean "in the twinkling of an eye"; the submerging under the sea of southern Alabama, Georgia, North and

South Carolina; Japan destroyed by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Short of a meteor hit or polar axis shift, how might one know that an earthquake is imminent? Many scientists believe the key to an early warning system is our observation of animal behavior. One of the most earthquake prone countries in the world - China - has long

been involved in a quest for reliable quake predictors. After considerable research, the Chinese government's earthquake office published a pamphlet that lists animal peculiarities that may occur if an earthquake is going to happen. It states:

- Cattle, sheep and horses refuse to go into their pens
- Rats abandon their hiding places
- Chickens fly into trees
- Pigs break out of their pens
- Ducks refuse to enter the water
- Dogs bark wildly for no apparent reason
- Snakes emerge from their winter hibernation
- Pigeons are frightened and won't return to their nests
- Rabbits, ears upright, jump around erratically and crash into objects
- Fish jump out of the water as if frightened

Continued on Page 19

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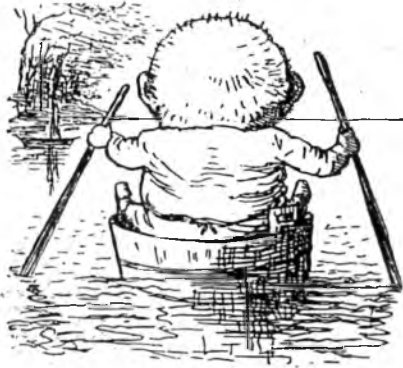
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## America's First Bathtub

Bathtubs are so common that few of us have stopped to think about the history behind them. Most of us just fill them up and use them and that's that! You don't give your bathtub a second thought until you go to clean it.

I went to an old set of encyclopedias that we own and looked up the word "bathtub", only to find out that they have been around for a long time. What I found out about bathtubs might surprise you - it certainly surprised me.

The very first bathtub to be installed in America was created by a man named Thomas Martin. He moved from Fairfax, Virginia to Huntsville in 1808 along with his wife, Sarah, and her parents. When the Martin family first settled here, Huntsville was known as Twickenham but the founding fathers soon changed the name to Huntsville. The Madison County population was boasted to be 2,545 and this did not include the Cherokee and Chickasaw Indians that also populated the area at this time.

The Martin family settled into a house that he built and completed in 1816. Martin's home was considered a mansion and the first of its kind to be built on the northwest side of Monte Sano Mountain. The home was located a few hundred feet from the Cold Spring that would later become a scenic attraction when the Monte Sano Hotel was in its prime as a summer resort.

Martin was a hard working dairy farmer who was noted to produce annual earnings of about \$2000.00. He proved to also be an enterprising young man by carving America's first bathtub out of the mountain's limestone bluffs. This limestone dinosaur was described as being five feet long, 19 inches wide and 12 inches deep, with a hole carved out of one end for drainage. He placed the bathtub in his milk house and used it there.

Perhaps the reason that he did not install the tub in the main house could have been because of a bizarre law that required people to place their washtubs outside the home, preferably in the backyard somewhere.

Huntsville became the first city in the U.S. to start a water works system. Martin used hollowed out red cedar logs that were piped some 500 feet to provide running water to fill his bathtub.

The limestone dinosaur spent the better part of a half century up on Monte Sano mountain. After that, the tub was moved to a home that Martin had built for one of his daughters on Holmes Avenue. Martin was so fond of his tub that he, too, moved into his daughter's home. That was in 1863 and the tub remained there until the year 1934. At that time it was uncovered during excavations for the downtown post office. During that operation, a part of the tub was broken off. It has been said that for many years the tub sat unnoticed in front of the Post Office Cafe. After that the tub was completely forgotten.

Maybe the next time you happen to be downtown, you will take a closer look around. Times do change, and America's first bathtub could still be around, perhaps as part of the foundation for one of our new buildings.

Or maybe it's now just a part of the curb that leads to the courthouse.

The important thing to remember is that folks in Huntsville, Alabama were the first in all of America to have a bathtub with running water installed in their milk houses.

Submitted by Kathleen E. Harvey

### MORE ON TUBS

It could have been that the reason Thomas Martin came to Huntsville to invent the bathtub was that it was against the law at that time in Virginia, to take a bath more than once a month. In Boston, Massachusetts, it was found to be illegal to take a bath without a doctor's prescription. In Kentucky, one had to go before the "board of select men", in order to obtain a permit before taking a bath. Here in Huntsville, the inns and hotels had notices posted prohibiting bathing on the premises. But some people must have ignored the laws because in Montgomery, Alabama they found it necessary to pass an ordinance forbidding bathing in the courthouse square fountain.

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The following are documented animal forecasts as they relate to previous earthquakes:

1. Alaska (1964): Kodiak bears left their hibernation spots and took to the hills before Alaska was hit by the 8.4 "Good Friday" quake.
2. Talcahuano, Chile (1835): All dogs left town before an earthquake struck.
3. Friuli, Italy (1976): Just hours before the town was struck by a 6.5 quake, terrified animals apparently knew something was up. Cats fled to the countryside, dogs barked ceaselessly, deer rushed down from the mountains and caged birds tried to break free.
4. Oga Peninsula, Japan (1939): 30 pound tuna beached themselves prior to the quake, and there were also reports of groups of octopus coming ashore and acting as if intoxicated.

So, will anything happen the first half of December? I don't know about you, but I'm keeping an eye on my dog. If you've got a gas water heater, bolt it down. And it probably wouldn't hurt to have Stevie Ray Vaughn's "The House is Rockin" tape close by . . . just in case.

Submitted by Ken Owens



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## Growing Up

When I was a young boy, I grew up here in Huntsville surrounded by more kinfolk than you could shake a stick at. My Daddy used to say, that if they weren't kin to us now, they would be if they stayed in one spot long enough. One of my uncles was Earl Frazier, a deputy sheriff at the time.

Being like most other kids, we had a tendency to get into trouble now and then. Among other things, we figured if we were old enough to almost shave, we must be old enough to drink a little liquor. I was the tallest, so I was nominated to do the buying.

At that time there was a bootlegger in town by the name of J. B. Webb. Every so often, us kids would pool our money and I would go visit J.B. for a 6-pack. The nine of us would go park on some dark road, share the six beers, and wonder if we were getting drunk yet. Course, we would all smoke cigars and sprinkle perfume on one another so our kinfolks wouldn't catch on.

This went on for a good while, and being worldly men like we were, one night we decided to try some whiskey. Having already done our research, we knew exactly how much a half pint cost. So I go strolling into J.B.'s on my tiptoes, chest polked out, and carrying exactly \$1.49.

J.B. looks up from his chair and says, "What will it be, a six-pack?"

In my most manly voice I reply, "Oh no, sir, a half pint of Sunny Corn Whiskey tonight."

Without even looking up, J.B. responds, "Can't do it, son. Your Uncle Earl said don't sell you nothing but beer."

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## LONG MAY SHE WAVE

It is sad, but true. On any important national holiday - like Veterans Day - when I travel around this city of Huntsville, I can see that in some neighborhoods about 98 percent of the homes do not display the flag. Either they have no interest in flying the flag, which I doubt, or they just do not have a flag in their home, which is probably true.

The National Flag is a symbol of our unique American way of life. All one has to do is learn how it is in other countries to appreciate what we have in our own country. Here we have a nation built on the principles of individual freedom, responsible government and human equality. When we display our flag at home, we are showing our pride in our country and for what she stands. When we show respect for our flag, and pay it homage, we are restating a dedication to our heritage, and our resolve to continue it. If you have a flag in your home, display it at any time but particularly on national holidays.

If you do not have a flag in your home, get one and display it with the pride that only a good American can show.

Civic organizations in Huntsville should urge their members to display their flags, and to encourage their neighbors to do the same.

The flag of the United States was established by Congress to come into being on July 4, 1818. It initially had twenty stars with one star added with the admission of each new state. Stars have long been used to denote sovereignty and dominion symbolically since ancient times. The color blue signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice; red is for hardness and valor; and white means purity and innocence. So let's go, Huntsvillians - if you consider yourself to be a good, proud American, how about showing your true colors?

Submitted by Chuck Owens

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*Character consists of what you do  
on the third and fourth tries.*  
James Michener



## How Slavery Was Brought To America

Pete Lawson unexpectedly distinguished himself in a recent history examination. The question was how and when was slavery introduced into America. To this he replied - "No women had come over to the early Virginian colony. The planters wanted wives to help with the work. So in 1619 the London Company sent over a ship load of girls. The planters gladly married them and slavery was introduced into America."

Taken from Huntsville publication 1872

## Old News

Huntsville police arrested Claude Little the week past for circulating counterfeit money. His method was to walk into a business, ask change for a bogus twenty, and walk out with two legal ten spots. Mr. Little would never have been found out but for the fact of a suspicious barkeep who caught him passing a counterfeit . . . ten dollar bill.

From a Huntsville publication - 1874

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# The Bell Witch Of Adams

One of the most widely known and documented cases of the supernatural in Southern folk lore is the story of the Bell Witch of Adams, Tennessee.

The fame of this particular legend is due to the numerous sightings and odd occurrences surrounding the cave which the spirit supposedly inhabits.

John Bell and his family moved to the midlands of Tennessee from North Carolina in the early 1800's, and he became a well respected and influential farmer in the community of Adams. The problems began when the family began hearing scratching and gnawing sounds on their bedposts at night, and the children were mysteriously thrown from their beds on a number of occasions. When Bell's crops began to fail miserably, and much of his livestock fell ill and suddenly died without any explanation, he decided to leave his 1000 acre farm in

Adams and try his luck in Mississippi. However, the haunting spirit is thought to have remained in a cave located on the old Bell property, as that was the location of many strange events.

Once, General Andrew Jackson, responding to reports of singing heard from within the cave and other unexplained phenomenon, decided to journey from his home in Nashville to investigate. However, when his carriage approached the cave, the wheels mysteriously locked and Jackson gave orders to the driver to turn around and head back to Nashville.

Strange occurrences have continued to the present, and a few years ago, several reporters arrived in Adams with plans to spend the night in the cave, but lasted only a few hours before fleeing without a word. And just last Halloween, a reporter from Nashville attempted to televise a tour of the cave, but was thwarted when the video equipment malfunctioned and his notes on the history of the witch were lost.

The cave is open sporadically for public tours, but the current owner of the cave is very protective of the property and only opens it to the public two or three times during the year. If you do make it to Adams, don't miss seeing the Bellwood Cemetery where the graves of the Bell family are surrounded by a large stone fence and tower built to prevent the Bell Witch from ever harming them again.

Submitted by Stefanie Callaway

*To err is human...to blame it on someone else is even more human.*

*Experience is something you get when you are looking for something else..*

*A fanatic is one who can't change his mind, and won't change the subject.*

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*A good example of minority rule is a baby in the house*

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*One of the toughest things to learn is ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not.*

*Thomas Henry Huxley*

*A mixture of scotch and water spoils two good things.*



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*Next to knowing when to seize an opportunity, the most important thing in life is to know when to forego an advantage.*

*Benjamin Disraeli*

# A Letter To Home

Lee Shirer  
Somewhere in California 1889

Mr. Robert Shirer  
Meridian Road  
Huntsville, Alabama

Dear Papa,

I do not think I will be able to come home for Christmas. It is such a long way and not much money. I think about you and the family all the time. I wish you could be here to see the sights I have seen. California is truly a grand place. I have got a job at a sawmill now. I am throwing slabs. When I get some money ahead I am going to send you some picture cards of places I have seen.

I went to San Francisco with the men I work with. The city must be as big as Huntsville and Decatur both. It is something to see the ocean. You can throw a fish up in the air and the birds will fight over it until one gets it and flies off with it. Some of the birds are as big as a turkey.

Some of the men I work with are going to go off gold hunting. They want me to go but I said no. I don't think there is any gold left here. We did not find as much to pay for our beans this year past. There are men all over the hills and all the good places are gone. The way to get rich here is to open a cooking place. The food is bad and most of us would rather be hungry than eat it.

I had to sell the horse. I had run out of money and no one to turn to. But don't worry - I will send money to pay you for it. I hope my letter gets to you by Christmas and tell everyone that I send my regards. I will surely be home Christmas next year.

Your Dutiful Son,  
Lee

(Editor's note: Lee's father received one more letter from him, postmarked Seattle, Washington the following year. The family never heard from him again)

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716 East Clinton Street  
Huntsville, AL 35801

Do not send original material as we cannot be responsible for lost manuscripts.

