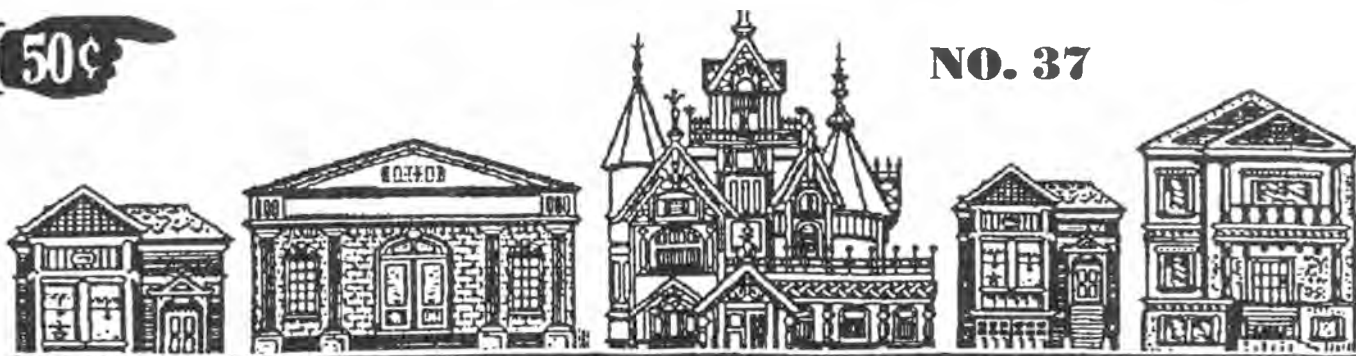


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NO. 37



Old Huntsville



The Life and Times of J. Otis King

by Dale James

He came to town in a worn out '42 Plymouth with all of his worldly possessions packed in it.

His wife was sad and the children were crying.

The Reverend J. Otis King was an old fashioned hell fire and brimstone preacher and after taking a look around decided Huntsville could use a man like him.

Huntsville would never be the same.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE "THE RUSSEL ERSKINE HOTEL"

J. Otis King, The Preacher

Even for a bootleg honky tonk, White Castle had the reputation of being a hell hole. Anyone itching for trouble in Huntsville in the early 1950s could get his fill at the White Castle.

Fights were so commonplace that the whitewashed building near what is now Meridian Street and Winchester Road carried the nickname "the Bloody Bucket." More than once the drunken violence ended in death.

Decent, churchgoing people considered the patrons of White Castle to be redneck, white trash headed straight for hell. Nothing good, they said, ever came out of the White Castle.

It was generally conceded to be little more than a stop off on what Hank Williams sang of as "the lost highway."

And that's what attracted the Reverend J. Otis King.

White Castle had been closed for more than a year — a victim of the violence it engendered — when King received an inspiration: Why not hold an old-fashioned revival in that very spot? Why not tear down the haven of sin that had ruined so many lives and use the lumber to build a home in which a family could enjoy a purposeful, God-fearing life?

The idea held a gold mine of public relations possibilities, and J. Otis King was just the man to mine every nugget. A gangling baptist preacher with a genius for attracting, and holding, attention, King wasted no time

putting his plan into action.

White Castle could seat just 300, hardly enough to hold the kind of soul-stirring revival King had in mind. But he surmounted that obstacle by placing loudspeakers outside, enabling people to listen from their cars. It may have been history's first curb-side worship service.

A faded photograph taken at the time shows King, clutching a Bible in one hand and a microphone in the other, perched atop the roof of the old honky tonk. *The Huntsville Times* carried a story about King's plans. Radio stations broadcast the dates for the revival.

He tore down the White Castle marquee and replaced it with a neon sign that read "Old Fashioned Baptist Revival, J. Otis King Evang.," then cajoled civic officials into posing beneath it for photos he printed on handbills and distributed in town.

King never went past the third grade, yet he was conducting multimedia publicity campaigns before most universities even taught them.

But more importantly, to be successful the revival needed someone who was bold enough to preach right from wrong, to call a sin a sin, someone who could preach Christian redemption with authority. And nobody preached the blood better than J. Otis King.

"If you're not born again, you're gonna cook," the loudspeakers boomed that first night. Sitting in their cars, the audience, many of whom had frequented White Castle before it closed, squirmed uncomfortably.

"What about your sins?" King pleaded, characteristically jabbing the air with his finger and stomping his foot and brushing back the lock of hair that always fell over his forehead whenever he preached.

More squirming. The humid Alabama night seemed suddenly to get warmer.



Old Huntsville

Published By
Old Huntsville, Inc.
716 East Clinton Ave.
Huntsville Al. 35801
(205) 534-0502

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“Your sins have made you so unhappy! There is a dread in your heart, there is darkness and fear! You’re afraid to get out and move down the aisle and you’re afraid not to! Oh! The bitterness of sin!

“As the choir sings ‘Must Jesus bear the cross alone and all the world go free,’ I invite you to come. ...”

And come they did. In King’s lifetime thousands responded to his efforts. In 1953 alone he baptized 422 people, the second highest number in the entire Southern Baptist Convention that year. (By contrast, Whitesburg Baptist Church — the largest Baptist church in Huntsville and one of the largest in Alabama, baptized fewer than 200 in 1987.)

The episode of the “Bloody Bucket” is but a single page from the life and ministry of J. Otis King, a ministry that was anything but conformist. King’s brash methods and personality — indeed, his very appearance — provoked controversy both among his clergy brethren and with an increasingly sophisticated public.

He was loved by some and hated by others, but he was never ignored.

His trademark white suit, white hat and string tie gave King an appearance like that of Colonel Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken fame (a comparison he encouraged), and made him one of the most recognized personalities in Huntsville.

He was known to thousands as ‘Brother King,’ or simply ‘Preacher.’

Before his death in 1983 his long-time radio and television ministries attracted a diverse group of followers that included some of the poorest people in Huntsville, as well as some of the most influential.

At a time when many clergymen were beginning to look, and act, more like business school graduates than preachers, King was the personification of old time religion.

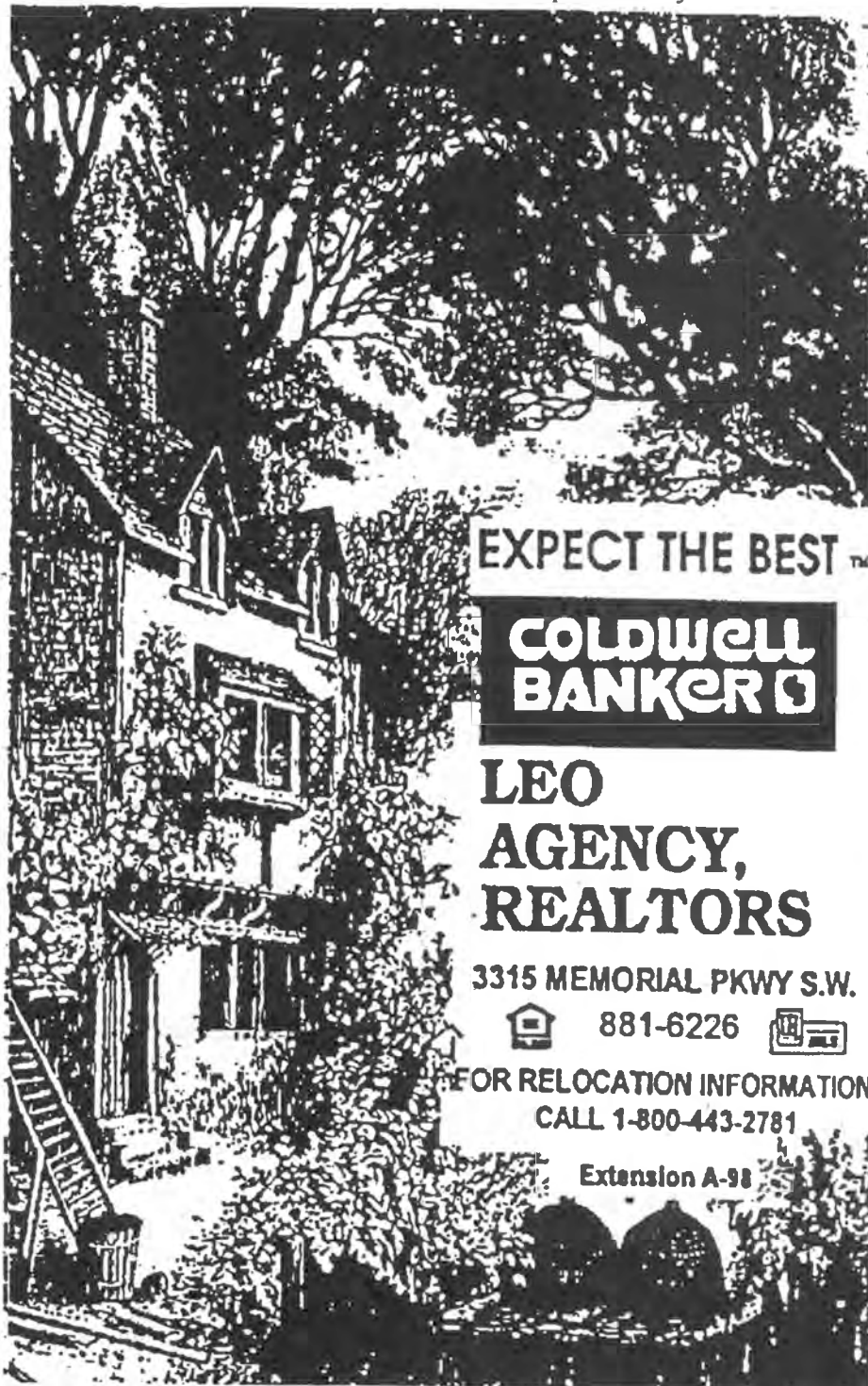
“Daddy was a hellfire and brim-

stone preacher ... he didn’t mince words. If you were going to hell, he told you that you were,” agreed Pat Fanning. The youngest of King’s five children, Mrs. Fanning worked with her father for many years as a singer and organist.

“Daddy was a showman,” she said. “He liked to use ‘object sermons,’ as he called them.”

One of the most notorious of those “object sermons” dealt with Herod’s beheading of John the Baptist.

At a predetermined point in the sermon, two uniformed policemen, drafted especially for the job by King, would enter the church carrying a silver platter covered by a cloth smeared with red paint. All eyes were riveted



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to the platter as King recounted the story of John the Baptist's gruesome death.

A palpable tension hung over the congregation until finally, at a climactic point in the sermon, the policemen whisked away the cloth to reveal a realistically gory "head" that would have done a Hollywood special-effects art-

ist proud.

"I still had the head till we finished up with Daddy's things," Mrs. Fanning sighed. "But what do you do with John the Baptist's head?"

King derived much of his style of preaching from Dr. Percy Ray, a Mississippi Baptist preacher who rose to fame on the strength of sermonic pearls such as "Red Lights on the Road to Hell," which was usually delivered in a darkened church and featured red lanterns and logging chains as props.

But even Ray would have been hard put to top J. Otis King's fertile imagination.

A sermon on Jesus as the bread of life might conclude with King passing out loaves of bread to an appreciative congregation. A sermon on the Resurrection would be preceded by a cryptic request for the congregation to bring a nail — big nails, rusty nails, bent nails — to next week's service.

The congregation had no trouble remembering the topic of last week's sermon when J. Otis King preached.

Occasionally King enlisted his daughter Pat to help dramatize his sermons. She still recalls being one of 10 young women from the congregation who dressed in white and carried burning lamps to illustrate the parable of

the 10 virgins.

"When he had his radio program," recalled Mrs. Fanning, "He called himself 'King of the radio.' When he held a revival, he'd arrange for free taxi service — "just call and tell them your destination is Third Baptist Church."

Not all of King's dramatic touches, however, were meant for show. The Rev. Ted Swann, former pastor at Sherwood Baptist Church, recalled one sage piece of advice King shared with him.

"Sometimes you have trouble getting along with people in the church," Swann explained. "It's something all pastors deal with from time to time. J Otis told me once, "Something that will really help your ministry is to stop preaching to them and start preaching with them."

"People are creatures of habit, they usually sit in the same pew every Sunday," said Swann. "J. Otis told me, 'If you'll slip into the church on Saturday night and sit in that person's pew and pray for him, it will change your ministry.' And it did, it helped me tremendously."

The Rev. G.D. Barrett of Huntsville helped King conduct his first revival and worked closely with him on numerous occasions.

"He wanted to be different and he made good at it," Barrett said of his longtime friend and associate. "He was down against tobacco, snuff and women wearing pants. He didn't hesitate to preach against that anywhere, anytime — or every time, if he needed to."

"He wouldn't call them slacks, he'd call it 'women wearing men's pants'," added Mrs. Barrett, who sewed the string ties that King wore when he could no longer find them in stores.

King was, in Baptist parlance, a pew jumper; no pulpit could contain him for long. Gesticulating freely, he was wont to pace restlessly during ser-

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mons and had been known to issue the altar call standing atop the piano. A favorite attention-getting device was to carry a straight-back chair up and down the aisle as he preached.

"I don't know what effect it had on anyone else," said one fellow Baptist minister who witnessed King preach several times, "but it kept my attention. I wanted to know what he was going to do with that chair."

But perhaps the most famous J. Otis King sermon of all — one that has assumed almost legendary proportions — came about by accident.

Casting about during his sermon for a way to drive home the image of Christ knocking at the door to people's hearts, King opened a door behind the pulpit and stepped into the hall, closing the door behind him. As the congregation sat stock still in the pews, King began pounding on the door and shouting, "Let me in! Let me in!"

There was a pause and the shouting began again, louder: "Why don't you open the door! Let me in, I tell

you! Let me in!"

King had, of course, unwittingly locked himself out. Unaware of his predicament, the congregation merely marveled at the intensity in which he continued to make his a point. The harder he knocked the quieter they sat.

Undaunted, King went out the back door of the church and to the befuddlement of the congregation -- could be heard talking loudly to himself as he walked around the outside, through the front door and up the center aisle, picking up the sermon where he had left off.

"He didn't miss a lick, he walked in preaching," Mrs. Fanning said. "A lot of funny things like that happened through the years, but Daddy was never defeated by them. He was never defeated by pain and heartbreak, either."

And there was plenty of both in King's life. Only those closest to him were ever aware of the personal pain and heartbreak he bore without complaint. When tragedy struck his own

family, the man who had brought so-lace to so many could find none himself except by his faith.

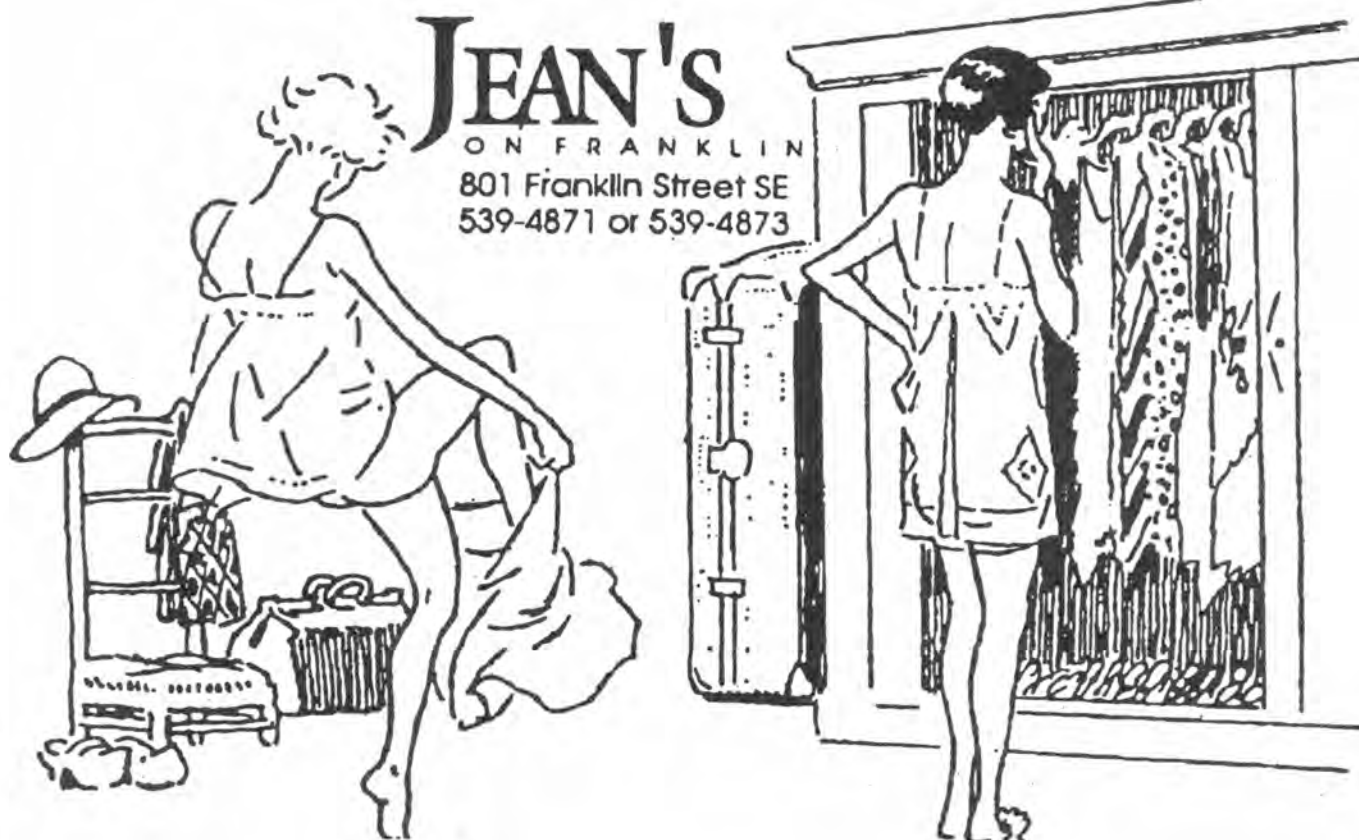
King joined the Baptist church as a youth of thirteen and remained a loyal Southern Baptist throughout his life. Asked once what he would be if he wasn't Baptist, King replied without hesitation, "I'd be ashamed."

Never formally schooled past the third grade, King learned to read the Bible with the help of his wife, Nina. Throughout his life King continued to spell phonetically, and his daughter Pat was one of the few who could decipher his literal renderings of words.

King's lack of education, however, never hindered his zeal for preaching. "I just open my mouth," he would explain, "and the words come out."

When the call to pastor Lincoln Memorial Church in Huntsville came, there was, for King, no choice but to accept that call.

It was a desolate day in 1945 when this self-described "shoutin'



preacher" came to Huntsville from east Tennessee, pulling into a service station in Five Points with his family and worldly possessions packed into a '42 Plymouth.

Of that day his daughter Geraldine Douglas said, "The children cried, Mother was sad and Daddy was happy."

A former member of the congregation recalled that the battered Plymouth King drove "was already completely wore out, but he wore it out two or three more times before the church bought him a new '50 Ford."

The church was located next to Lincoln Mills on Meridian Street, then Huntsville's main drag. Despite the growing presence of Redstone Arsenal, the mill provided one of the town's largest payrolls. World War II was over and times were tough.

The name Von Braun still lay somewhere in the future.

The congregation at Lincoln Memorial consisted largely of workers from the mill and their families, and during the next eighteen years King was to develop a lasting bond with them. Having struggled to earn a living as a farmer himself, he understood their needs as well as their dreams for a better life; he was one of them.

"I've seen the day," said Mrs.

Douglas, "when there would come a knock at the door and Dad would give someone the last dollar he had, even though we had no gas in the car and no bologna in the refrigerator. Because he said they needed it worse than we did."

Woody Anderson, who had just opened the Ford dealership he still runs today and who was to become one of King's closest confidants, recalled, "J. Otis' strong suit was people. There were people who were down and out ... alcoholics, drug addicts. They'd go to the back door of J. Otis' house — and he was not a wealthy man — but he would give them food and clothing. Above all, he'd counsel with them.

"He is a man who shouldn't be forgotten. He left his mark on disadvantaged people all over this town."

Never materially minded, King often found himself beset by financial troubles after leaving Lincoln Memorial in 1963 to enter full-time evangelism.

In addition to a faithful core of blue-collar followers, his radio and TV ministries also attracted a number of Huntsville businessmen -- including Anderson, real estate magnate Arthur Cole and clothier Leroy Cunningham -- who provided regular financial and in-kind support.

"Otis had some rough times financially. Money never meant anything to him," Anderson said. "I sold him a car one time and as he left he said, like he always did, 'I'll be praying for you.' And I told him, 'I'll be praying for you, too, Preacher -- praying you can make the payments on that car!'"

"One time I gave him a white suit, white shoes and a black bow tie ... that was kind of his m.o. He was prouder of that suit than if I'd give him \$10,000.

"I've had people who worked for me would take \$5, \$10 and stuff it in his pocket just about every time they saw him," Anderson added. "That's pretty much the way he lived. People that knew him supported him."

Explaining another reason for King's widespread base of support, Arthur Cole said, "Preacher King preached probably hundreds of funerals for people who didn't have a church, the people who weren't religious. And he never would admit it, but he didn't always take payment for it."

"The thing I remember about J. Otis is the good he done and tried to do for the sick and needy," Cole said. "In my opinion he visited more sick people than the majority of the other preachers put together. He was there every day.

"I remember one time he was in the hospital himself and I went down to visit him. But I couldn't find him, I had to hunt him up. He was up visiting the other sick people. He didn't have to know them; if they were sick he'd visit them."

Their first meeting remains indelibly etched in Lee Hutson's mind.

A young Baptist preacher from Mississippi, Hutson had just accepted the call to pastor Huntsville's Lincoln Memorial Baptist Church in 1963.

"I was in the backyard of the parsonage with some men from the church, putting up a fence, when my wife came and told me, 'Honey, there's a man at

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the door. He's wearing a funny-looking string tie. Says his name is J. Otis King."

"Well, tell him to come around back."

"I did, but he said he'd just wait for you in the house."

Hutson excused himself and went to meet the stranger.

"We shook hands and he stepped back to look at me," Hutson recalled. "Then he said, 'I heard they got a new preacher here, and I had to come see for myself. I've been worried to death they'd get some jelly-belly.'"

No one today would accuse Lee Hutson of being a jelly-belly preacher, but little did he realize on that day twenty-five years ago the battle he faced in establishing a viable ministry free of the long shadow of J. Otis King.

By any conventional ministerial standard King was a hard act to follow. He was the consummate performer. When he went on stage he had the knack of rendering other actors invisible.

King had fashioned a dynamic ministry at Lincoln Memorial during the eighteen years before Hutson's arrival and earned the loyalty and trust of the congregation. It would be a long time before they fully accepted the more conservative and low-key Hutson in his place.

"It took the folks 2 1/2 years," Hutson said matter of factly. "It got to the point in my life where I even preached a sermon on it: 'Moses is dead! Joshua's here!' The point of the sermon was to ask, Whose follower are you?"

Hutson labored in King's shadow literally as well as figuratively. A sharp dresser, Hudson had a fondness for white suits -- which by then had become King's trademark. When a fellow pastor asked if he were trying to imitate King, Hudson replied testily, "I'm not here to imitate anybody except Jesus Christ!"

Nevertheless, the white suit was quietly mothballed.

"I've never held any ill feelings toward J. Otis ... for any length of time," Hudson said, a smile, playing across the corners of his mouth. "He wouldn't let you. He got out of line on occasion, just like we all do. But he didn't stay out of line.

"If you asked me to describe in one word the type of preacher J. Otis was, I'd put it all in capital letters: EVANGELISTIC. Some pastors may not have agreed with some of his techniques, but the bottom line was, he got the job done. He raised a few eyebrows but people realized that he was for real. It wasn't put on."

"He was loved and hated, but he was more loved than hated."

Indeed, King seemed to stir opposing reactions. Many Baptists did disagree with King's style of ministry. His white suit and aggressive demeanor (King was sometimes accused of operating on the three-foot principle: Anyone who got within three feet was liable to be asked, "Are you saved?") smacked of a throwback to the days when Baptist preachers were depicted as uneducated, Bible thumping rednecks.

But many others secretly envied his courage.

"A lot of pastors were fascinated by J. Otis King," Hudson said. "And probably, hidden away in their heart of hearts, was a desire to be just a little like J. Otis. But they were just not bold enough."

One of the cruelest aspersions against King concerned the trouble he experienced rearing his twin sons, Boyce and Billy, and their well deserved reputations for raising hell. Boyce served time in prison and Billy, by all accounts, barely avoided doing so.

"I grew up going to jail and singing," said Pat Fanning, King's youngest daughter. "We'd go to visit my



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brother in Kilby or Atmore or wherever. ... Daddy'd go in and preach and I'd go in and sing and momma would 'amen.'"

It is, perhaps, one of the poignant ironies of ministry that preachers often spend less time with their own families than they do with those of their congregation. In an effort to compensate, many preachers attempt to inflict an unrealistic discipline upon their children — with sometimes tragic results.

"I was raised pretty strict for the times," Mrs. Fanning said. "I couldn't wear slacks or go to movies. ... I didn't go to a movie until I was eighteen. We didn't get a TV until way after I was married."

Her two older brothers, however, openly rebelled at their father's idea of discipline. Confided one of King's close friends, "There was nothing those two wouldn't do."

Speaking of them, Mrs. Fanning said, "Huntsville was a small town then and they had a reputation such that if anything happened, the police wanted to know if they were involved."

Her brothers' behavior and the heartbreak it caused left a lasting impression on their younger sister, who today does volunteer work with

troubled youth.

"It's hard for me to stand up and say you should do this and this, if my own aren't doing it," Mrs. Fanning said. "That's what momma and daddy went through."

"Daddy never talked about it much, but I don't remember him ever being embarrassed about it. He never let up on his preaching against sin, though I'm sure he preached many a Sunday with a heavy heart."

Boyce's fortunes began looking up when he was paroled in 1975. He had gotten a barbering license while in prison and the family prayed that this time it would last, this time he would put his life in order.

Those hopes ended abruptly when Boyce was killed, shot between the eyes at a local nightclub.

Boyce's death was a crushing blow to King, but it held a silver lining. After his brother's violent death Billy pieced his marriage back together and became a source of consolation to his father.

Mrs. Fanning deemed the turnaround in her brother's life nothing short of miraculous. "I saw the difference in his life," she said. "He became human again."

But J. Otis King's tribulations were not over. Billy was severely burned in an electrical explosion in Texas and soon died.

"I saw J. Otis after that," said King's friend and confidant Woody Anderson, "and when he walked it just looked like a man with the weight of the whole world on his shoulders. He had an inner strength that few other people have, but it was just almost more than he could carry."

King rushed out to Texas in a race against death. In his lifetime, he had witnessed the pain of countless other hospital rooms, but this time the pain he felt was his own.

"I left my family to see him," King said shortly before his own death. "I got to the hospital and I run to see him, I wanted to see him so bad. I walked into the room and Billy said, 'Dad, give me a hug.'"

King's voice caught, and he added, "But there wasn't much left to hug."

Then Billy, the prodigal son returned, asked to hear his father pray one more time.

Standing alone in that Texas hospital room, watching the life ebb from the son who had once caused him so much grief, King began to sing in a quavering voice: "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see."

James Otis King died Sept. 6, 1985. At his request the concluding hymn at his funeral was "Amazing Grace."

A special thanks to Dale James and the Huntsville Times for allowing us to reprint this article





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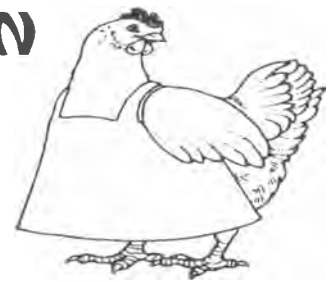
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by Lisa Whisnant

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- salt and pepper to taste
- 3 chicken bouillon cubes

Boil the above together until the chicken is done and tender. De-bone chicken and cut into pieces (reserve chicken stock).

Spread chicken in bottom of casserole dish that you've sprayed with Pam. Mix one can of chicken soup and 1/2 cup strained chicken stock and pour over the chicken pieces. Cover with sliced boiled eggs (if desired) and 1 can Vegall.

Mix one stick melted margarine, 1 1/2 cups self-rising flour, and 1 1/2

cups buttermilk. Spread evenly over top of chicken mixture. Pour 2 cups strained chicken broth gently over crust mixture. Bake in 350 oven 45-60 minutes or until golden brown.

(Editor's note) If desired, instead of the can of Vegall, make a fresh vegetable mixture. Take half a potato, cooked and diced, a handful of green beans, cooked, a couple of carrots sliced and cooked, and 1/4 cup corn Niblets, to equal a total of 2 cups mixed vegetables.

We shouldn't put off til tomorrow what we can do today, because if we enjoy it today, we can do it again tomorrow.

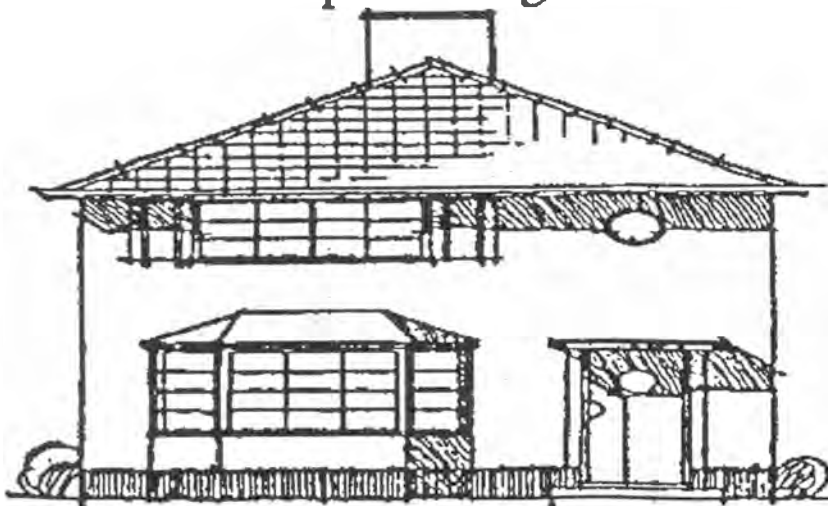
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The Clerk Who Lost His Job

One of the most common questions that *Old Huntsville* receives is "how do you come up with all those stories?" We would like to reply that all the stories are a result of methodical and painstaking research, but alas, we cannot.

Often times it is by pure accident. One of the best examples is a story about a man named Nicholas P. Trist.

Several months ago, while browsing through a stack of old documents in the Montgomery Archives we came across a mention of a Nicholas Trist, of Washington D.C., who had



applied for a position of clerk at the Huntsville Post Office in 1849.

Why, we wondered, had a person from Washington D.C. applied for a lowly clerk's position in a backwater community such as Huntsville? Arousing our curiosity even more was the fact that his application had been rejected.

After returning to Huntsville we called a researcher in Washington and requested any information they might be able to dig up about Trist.

Almost a month later we received a small package of mimeographed

newspaper clippings, excerpts from books and other general information.

Reading the information we discovered that Trist had been the chief clerk at the State Department under President Polk. Among his close friends were many members of Congress. From all outward appearances he was well on his way to becoming a rising star in Washington. His last government position was listed as "Peace Commissioner" to Mexico.

This was even more intriguing. We could not imagine a man with this kind of influence applying for a job, here in Huntsville, as a clerk.

Several more hours of investigation revealed that Trist had been sent to Mexico in 1847 by President Polk to help negotiate a peace treaty. It was supposed to have been a simple affair. All Trist had to do was to follow the instructions given to him by the powers in Washington.

Shortly after Trist arrived in Mexico it became apparent to Polk that he was not following instructions. Instead of the simple peace treaty that he was authorized to negotiate, Trist had come up with his own original plan.

Polk was furious when he heard about it. No doubt he believed that such harsh terms as the clerk proposed would lead to another outbreak of hostilities. Angrily, he sent Trist a dispatch ordering him to return to Washington at once.

Instead of obeying the President, Trist remained in Mexico continuing his own negotiations with the Mexican government. Almost a year later, on February, 1848, against Polk's direct orders, he signed a treaty with Mexico.

Faced with a treaty already signed, and with the Mexican government demanding that it be honored, President Polk and the Congress reluctantly accepted the agreement.

Finally returning to Washington, Trist found himself out of a job. His

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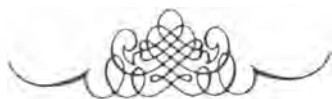
back pay and expenses were denied for not following orders and the powerful friends he once had now refused to talk to him. Broke, he began casting about for employment but soon discovered that he had been blackballed with all the government agencies.

He was even refused employment as a clerk in Huntsville.

Giving up on any prospects of a government position, Trist finally obtained a job as a clerk with a railroad company in Pennsylvania, with a starting salary of sixty-five dollars a month.

Interesting?

We thought so, too. Especially when we discovered that Nicholas Trist had been sent to Mexico to only establish diplomatic relations between the two countries and instead had negotiated a treaty, on his own initiative ... which gave the United States the territory that would later become Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and California.



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Phyllis Rogers,
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A PRESIDENTIAL DOG STORY

Years ago, in an attempt to identify with rural America, the President's first lady visited Hurricane Creek. She wanted to seem like an ordinary person which, of course, she wasn't. It was a hot day, the kind of scorchers that Alabama is famous for, so she and her entourage decided to stop at a store for a cold drink. While standing outside the store sipping her cold drink the first lady noticed a young boy who had a litter of puppies for sale. Approaching him she asked what kind they were.

The boy told her they were Democrats. She just smiled and shook her head.

After returning to Washington, the first lady told her husband, the President, about the boy and the puppies. They both agreed that the President should visit the boy personally. The next Saturday morning, the President followed by a large group of

reporters arrived unexpectedly in Hurricane Creek. The President approached the boy and began asking about the pups. "What kind of dogs are these?" "They're Republicans," was the boy's reply. With a confused look on his face, the President said "didn't you tell my wife that these were Democrats?"

"Yes Sir I did but they have their eyes open now!"

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My Beginning

by Thelma Jones Thomas

taken from "Precious Memories
... May they Linger."

Sometime on Sunday March 17, 1907 I made my appearance on Lawrence Street, Huntsville, Alabama. I was the second child of James and Bertha Gully.

Our parents were some of the first settlers in an area of Huntsville known as Douglas Hill. There was a house on either side of ours and one across the street. Ours was a very comfortable and nice three room house with front and back porches. As the family increased, there was an addition of two rooms. The front porch extended across the front of the house and around the side of the living room, forming an L-shape.

Often during the summer months, we invited friends, who attended church with us, to our home. We sat



on the screened back porch and visited. The porch was an ideal place for the occasion and also provided cool bedrooms in summer. Curtains made

of heavy material made it possible to use these bedrooms in winter.

My mother and father worked in the cotton mill known as Lowe Manufacturing Company. At one time my father also worked as an insurance agent. In addition he sold Sayman soap, salve and other articles that were well known in those days. Today, these articles can still be found on the shelves of some drug stores. There was quite a demand for these articles on his route. In those days, Irene and I enjoyed the times we got to go along with him as he traveled this route with horse and buggy.

At the time of J.D.'s birth, we were living on a large farm near the Tennessee River. Known as Pond Beat, it was part of a plantation in the early days. A dungeon, in which slaves were disciplined, was in the basement of that large southern mansion. The house was demolished in 1982, and the land on which it stood is part of the Redstone Military Reservation.

The Jones family occupied the house as a favor to Mr. Will Childress, overseer. Because Mr. Childress's wife was sick and in the Huntsville Hospital, Mr. Childress asked my father and our family to house-sit at Pond Beat until Mrs. Childress was able to return home.



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I started school at West Huntsville Elementary School when I was seven years old. We had chapel exercises each morning, the children would assemble in the auditorium and participate in a short devotion of songs and prayer. It was a happy time and all the children enjoyed this activity.

Mr. William Fanning was the principal of the school in my early days. He was succeeded by Mr. Ora Price. Miss Bessie King was the teacher that I remember best. She was born in 1895, and when she was my teacher her pay was \$45 a month. Miss King married Dr. C.H. Russell in 1920. By the time Dr. Russell died in 1950, Bessie had two jobs. She continued teaching and was also director of Huntsville Public Library's Heritage Room. The Northwest Huntsville Branch Library was dedicated in 1975, and was named the Bessie K. Russell Library.

One of my habits that didn't please my mother was my playing along the way home after I was dismissed from school. One afternoon I played just a little too long. When I looked up, Mama was coming to meet me, carrying a nice switch from a peach tree.

I never played along the way after that.

Mother regretted that incident; and years later in a conversation with me, she remarked that the discipline was too harsh for the deed, and that she was sorry. I had forgotten all about it, but Mama hadn't. She was a great Mama and I never forgot her teaching and administering discipline when it was needed.

The End

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1. The Sword of Bushwhacker Johnston - The Civil War in Madison & Jackson Counties (\$19.95).

2. True Tales of Old Madison County - Reprinted by the Historic Huntsville Foundation (\$5.00).

3. Warm-Climate Gardening - Barbara Pleasant's much needed gardening tips, especially for new Southerners (\$21.95 Hb/\$12.95 Pb).

4. Huntsville Heritage Cookbook - Silver Anniversary Edition. 95,000 copies in print (\$14.95).

5. Alabama One Big Front Porch - Kathryn Tucker Windham's classic book of tall tales (\$14.95).

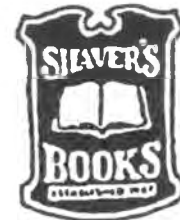
6. Encyclopedia of Southern Culture - Over 1,600 pages (regular \$69.95 now \$35.00).

7. Historic Limestone County - Stories & history by Robert Dunnivant, Jr. (\$9.95).

8. Wild Flowers of North Alabama - Over 100 full color photos with descriptions (\$15.95).

9. Glimpses into Antebellum Homes of Huntsville & Madison County (\$10.00).

10. Treasure Hunter's Guide to Middle Tenn. & Ky. Antiques, Flea Markets & Junk Stores (\$10.95).



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HAPPENINGS AROUND HUNTSVILLE IN 1881

A very unfortunate difficulty occurred at Madison last Tuesday in which Horace Clay was stabbed in the neck with a small knife by Joseph McDonald, son of Col. McDonald of Athens.

The store of Walker Bros., which is located near the railroad on Meridianville Pike, was entered last night between 11 and 2:30 o'clock by burglars and quite a quantity of goods carried away.

They effected an entrance from the rear door by pounding it open with an axe, and carried off Arbuckle coffee, flour, soap, snuff, salmon, candy, sausage and tobacco.

As soon as Mr. Walker opened the store this morning and found that he had been robbed, he notified the police who were soon at the scene and arrested a negro who lives near, and suspicion points to two other negroes who also live in the vicinity of the store.

Between \$25 and 30 worth of goods were stolen.

Home Destroyed - by fire last Sunday night - News of the total destruction of the home of County Surveyor Walter Jones's home at Greenfield has just been received here. The particulars were not given.

Lonnie Carter, the accommodating rural mail carrier on Route No. 2, had a smashup yesterday. His horse became frightened at a N.C. & St. L. train near Bell Factory, and tore his buggy

into kindling wood. He was uninjured himself.

Repair Shop - I have opened a watch, clock and jewelry repair shop at Dr. J.D. Humphrey's drug store and solicit the patronage of my friends and the public.

For rent - three rooms to a couple - rent reasonable. Call or address Mrs. J.T. Jones, 322 Randolph Street.

A meeting of the stockholders of the Huntsville Savings Bank and Trust Company, held at its office today; the

following directors were elected:

S.J. Mayhew, A.M. Booth, Lawrence Cooper, M.R. Grace, T.W. Pratt, C.C. Anderson and J.R. Boyd.

The Directors were very much pleased with the growth of the business of the bank - the deposits amounting to \$53,400.

This is a splendid showing for this institution. The Directors will hold a meeting on Wednesday for the election of the officers.



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A Fitting Obituary For A Yankee General

A telegram from Richmond, three or four days since, announces intelligence, through Northern papers, of the death at Beaufort, S. C., on the 31st inst., of his detestable lowness, Maj. Gen. O.M. Mitchel. No man ever had more winning ways to excite people's hatred than he. We have not space to do justice to his vices -- virtues he showed none, in his dealings with the people of North Alabama. He was "an undevout astronomer," who cannot be otherwise than "mad" -- a military coxcomb, without skill, theoretical or practical -- proud, vain, vindictive, vile, barbarous, who made war on combatants, unarmed men, women and chil-



dren and was, of course, a coward, who skulked from the presence of armed men. A signal instance of his cowardice was his personal retreat on the railway train from Athens to this place, for reinforcements, while a portion of his army was engaged at Athens, with an inferior Confederate force, and his failure to return thither with the reinforcements. No tears were shed

here for his reported demise, but fears were generally expressed that it was not so.

A patriotic sufferer in the noble county of Jackson, from Mitchel's insolence and barbarity, on hearing of his death, remarked that he had often said that a new hell would have to be established for the Yankees, and that he thought Mitchel or Turchin would be President, and he supposed the choice had fallen on Mitchel.

Huntsville Confederate. November 21, 1862

Editor's Note: General Mitchel was Commanding Officer of the Union troops who invaded and ravished Huntsville during the Civil War.

Rights are something that other people give you after you have fought for them.
Howard Henning
Retired Druggist

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The Lost Cemetery

by Tom Kenny

Between 200 and 300 men, women and children lie buried in an unmarked, unidentified graveyard on Redstone Arsenal property. The burial ground lies on the west side of Rideout Road 4/10 of a mile north of Gate # 9 of the Redstone Arsenal.

This cemetery, one of the largest in the area, mysteriously disappeared almost 70 years ago, only to reappear

in the following years as a cotton field. Despite the fact that many relatives of the deceased probably still lived in Huntsville at the time, not a voice was raised in protest.

How was this possible? How could a graveyard containing this many bodies simply disappear? Why was no legal action taken to protect the final resting place of so many people?



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These were the questions we asked when we first started investigating the story.

The only factual information we had was that it was probably a black cemetery and had been in existence for close to a hundred years before disappearing sometime after the turn of this century.

By checking old land records we were able to establish that the property the cemetery is located on was originally owned by James Manning who purchased more than 2,200 acres of land between the years 1809 and 1836. Manning was a prosperous plantation owner who owned a large number of slaves. It would be reasonable

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to believe that many of these slaves who died formed the nucleus of the cemetery.

In 1845 Luke Matthews purchased the land from Manning and renamed it as the Oakendale plantation. The 1850 census showed Matthews owning 71 slaves.

The property was sold to Elizabeth Davis in 1892. Mrs. Davis died in 1896 and the property was inherited by her son Lowndes H. Davis. The property was known as the Homestead plantation.

Later archeological research would prove that a burial was made in the cemetery as late as 1916 so we know the cemetery was still active at that time.

Upon Lowndes Davis' death in 1920, his will being set aside, the court ordered a sale of the property. The plantation was purchased by Kate Mastin Davis who conveyed it the same day to her husband Clarendon Davis, the president of a local bank.

In 1925, Madison County passed a cemetery ordinance requiring the marking and maintenance of existing cemeteries by the land owner. Knowledge of this ordinance was public knowledge and had been hotly debated for months prior to its passage.

Many land owners took advantage of this prior knowledge to remove signs of cemeteries on the property, thus avoiding the expenses of maintaining burial sites and at the same time acquiring an extra acre or two for cultivation.

In 1924 Davis sold the property to M.G. Chaney. Eighteen years later Mr. Chaney sold the property to the U.S. Government. No cemetery was indicated in the survey of the property or in the deed.

The cemetery, for all practical purposes, had ceased to exist. All the markers had been removed sometime in the 1920s and the land was now

under cultivation.

The government began an investigation to determine the location and identification of all cemeteries on Redstone Arsenal property in 1941. Rumors had been rampant for years of a "lost" cemetery located somewhere on the arsenal and, ironically, though they were not able to locate it they gave it a name. It was now referred to as "Elko Switch Cemetery."

During the government investigation Bill Driver of the Redstone Arsenal mounted an intensive search for information that would lead to the identification of the cemetery.

Using radio and newspapers he advertised for information concerning the evasive cemetery. No response.

Property searches were made in hopes of finding a clue in an old deed. No information.

Maps were consulted but none showed the old graveyard.

Churches had no knowledge of the cemetery.

Funeral homes never heard of it.

It was as though the graveyard existed in the "twilight zone."

When no results were obtained by the 1941 investigation, memories of the elusive cemetery faded into the background. No one talked of it anymore and none searched for it anymore.

In 1965 the State Highway De-

partment uncovered several unmarked graves in Section 7, Township 4 South, Range 1 West, during the construction of Rideout Road south of Route 20.

It was decided to relocate the highway 50 feet to the East in order

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prevent destruction or relocation of the graves.

A redesign of the interchange became necessary in 1987. The highway department notified the University of Alabama's Office of Archaeological Research and the State Archeologists. A preliminary survey of the area was made in December, 1987.

It was decided to conduct a complete archaeological and osteological study of the burial site. The name, "Elko Switch Cemetery" was given to the graveyard.

Only a portion of the cemetery was investigated, as only this portion was in the path of highway construction.

Fifty-six burials were investigated. The more interesting burials were the following described findings:

Burial #23: A black female about fifty years of age. Two skull fractures which occurred prior to death. These fractures could have been produced by a blow to the head or a gun shot wound.

A piece of lead found could have been a corroded bullet. Indications are the woman had been murdered.

Burial #28: A child between 3 and 5 years of age.

The skull had been sectioned and the frontal portion was missing.

Burial # 53: An adult male about 50 years of age. In grave a metal buckle and a U.S. enlisted man's button was found. Circa 1850-1900.

Possibly the body of a murdered Union soldier buried here to conceal the crime.

Burial date: pre 1870

Precise dating of burials was not possible due to an absence of records of the cemetery. A time span of from 1850 to 1920 is based upon investigation of the graves by the University of Alabama, Division of Archaeology made in December, 1987 and January, 1988.

After completion of the ar-

chaeological survey, the remains and artifacts were placed in coffins and re-buried.

With the identities of the bodies still a mystery, the authorities simply placed a stainless steel tag on each coffin stamped with the individual burial number.

The final resting place was marked by a solitary marker.

In the 1920s, when the headstones were removed, the area was still populated by a large number of blacks who worked as sharecroppers on the land. It is ironic to speculate that these share-

croppers, probably the descendants of the people buried, could have been ordered to destroy all traces of the cemetery.

How could this have happened? Unfortunately there can only be one answer ... greed.

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Boil the cabbage in salted water, fry a pound of sausages, put them in a deep dish, and cover with the cabbage. Top with 4 teaspoons of butter, sprinkle with pepper. Set in a warm oven (200) for four hours, season to taste.

Potato Pudding

To two pounds of white potatoes, boiled and mashed smooth, add one half pound of butter, the yolk of eight eggs, and the white of three eggs, one half pound of sugar, two gills (half a pint) of cream. Bake in deep dishes with a rich puff paste and rather a thick edging. Some persons put in one half pound of dried currants.

Macaroni Pie

Boil a quarter pound of macaroni in a dish of milk, with a large onion. Put a layer at the bottom, with some bits of butter, and some grated cheese sprinkled over. Cover with tender beefsteak, chickens or ham; grate on a few bread-crumbs; lastly, put on a layer of

macaroni and grated cheese, with bits of butter, instead of a crust. Bake very slowly.

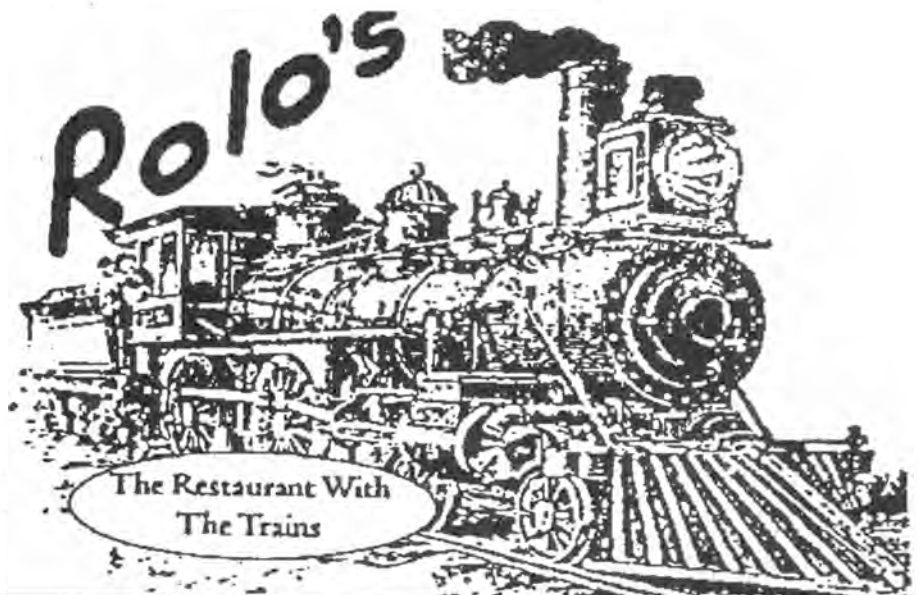
Gingersnaps

One heaping cup of flour, one cup of molasses, half a cup of sugar, the same of butter, and half as much of lard, one tablespoonful of ginger, a tea-

spoonful of salt. Mix all together, knead it stiff, roll thin, and bake moderately.

Apple Mince Pie

Take 12 apples, chopped very fine, add six beaten eggs, and half pint of cream. Put in 1/2 teaspoon each of cloves, cinnamon, ginger, black pepper and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Add 1 cup



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sugar and 1 cup raisins. This is very good.

Clinton Biscuit

Cut half a pound of butter into three gills (3/4 pint) of warm milk; put two pounds of sifted flour into a pan, and pour upon it the milk and butter; beat up two eggs, and add them, with a gill of brewer's yeast, to the other articles. Mix the whole well together. Knead the dough pretty hard on a board; make them into biscuit, and prick them. Let them rise on the pans, and bake in a very moderate oven.

Buttered water

Take a pint of water, beat up the yolk of an egg with the water, put in a piece of butter as large as a walnut, two or three knobs of sugar, and keep stirring it all the time it is on the fire. When it begins to boil, keep pouring it between the saucepan and a mug till it is smooth, and has a great froth; it is then fit to drink. It is good for a cold.

Lemon Drops

Squeeze and strain the juice of six good-sized lemons; mix with it powdered sugar till it is so thick it is stirred with difficulty; put in a preserving pan, and with a wooden spoon, stir it constantly, and let it boil till very clear, say ten minutes. Drop it in small lumps upon a marble slab. When cold they will come off readily.

Asparagus Loaves

Take two small loaves of baker's bread, make an opening in the top, and take out the inside. Fry the loaves a nice brown, and then fill them with asparagus prepared in the following way: Boil the asparagus in the usual way,

and reserve a few stalks whole. Chop the remainder into small pieces, add some cream and a bit of butter rolled in a little flour, with a very little salt, cayenne pepper and nutmeg, and boil it up. Fill the loaves, and put the whole stalks into the top for ornament.

Baked Cod

Scour the pan till very sweet and clean. Rub it with fresh butter, add a pint of water, a little salt and pepper, and a few cloves. Flour the fish well, stick on small bits of butter, and sift on a little pounded cracker. Lay the fish in the pan, and bake one hour, if moderate size. Take it out without breaking, strain and thicken the gravy, and pour it around the fish. Sliced lemons should be served with it.

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Yankee Go Home!

The following is an actual copy of a pension application filed by a disgruntled former Union soldier

The United States of America,
Northern District of Alabama, Madison County, Huntsville

On this 17th day of March, 1891, personally comes before me, a Notary Public for said county, Howard English, who having been duly sworn says he is an applicant for relief under the June 27 Act, Disability Pensions Claim No. 876791, late of the United States Infantry.

Applicant says that he is no longer able to provide for himself through meaningful work due to an injury received on July 21, 1879, and pleads that he be awarded the pension due him for his service in the United States Infantry.

Applicant says that his injury occurred in defense of the reputation and honor of the memories of his fallen comrades.

Money may talk but it is sure
hard of hearing when you call it.
Dale Cassidy, Guntersville

Applicant says that on 21th of July, 1879, he was at the rail depot in Huntsville, Ala., where he was accosted by a group of unrepentant secessionists. After Claimant had listened to numerous vile and slanderous utterings about the Union, and the citizens of the Union, he felt it his duty to defend the flag under which he had served, even at the cost of dire consequence to body and limb.

During the altercation he was

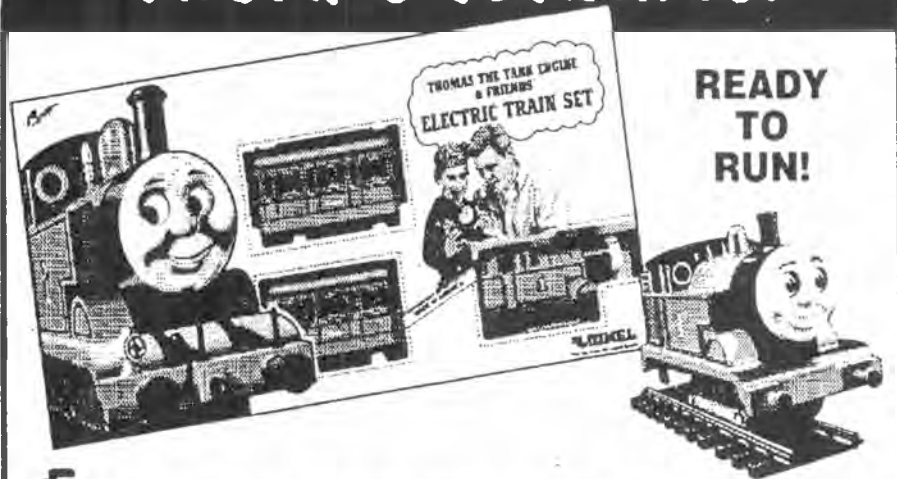
seized and physically thrown from the rail platform where upon he received numerous broken bones and cuts.

Since that time applicant has been unable to continue his chosen occupation as a woodworker.

Applicant says that he is without friends in Madison County willing to assume the care for him and he is ill afforded the expense of travel to Indiana from which he comes.

Signed, John Roberts

THOMAS TERRIFIC.



From the award-winning *Shining Time Station*, seen on PBS, Thomas the Tank Engine and his coaches, Annie and Clarabel, are chugging into homes and hearts everywhere.

Thomas and his coaches are just the right size for young hands. And children love to see Thomas' eyes move from side to side as he rolls along on the large-scale layout.

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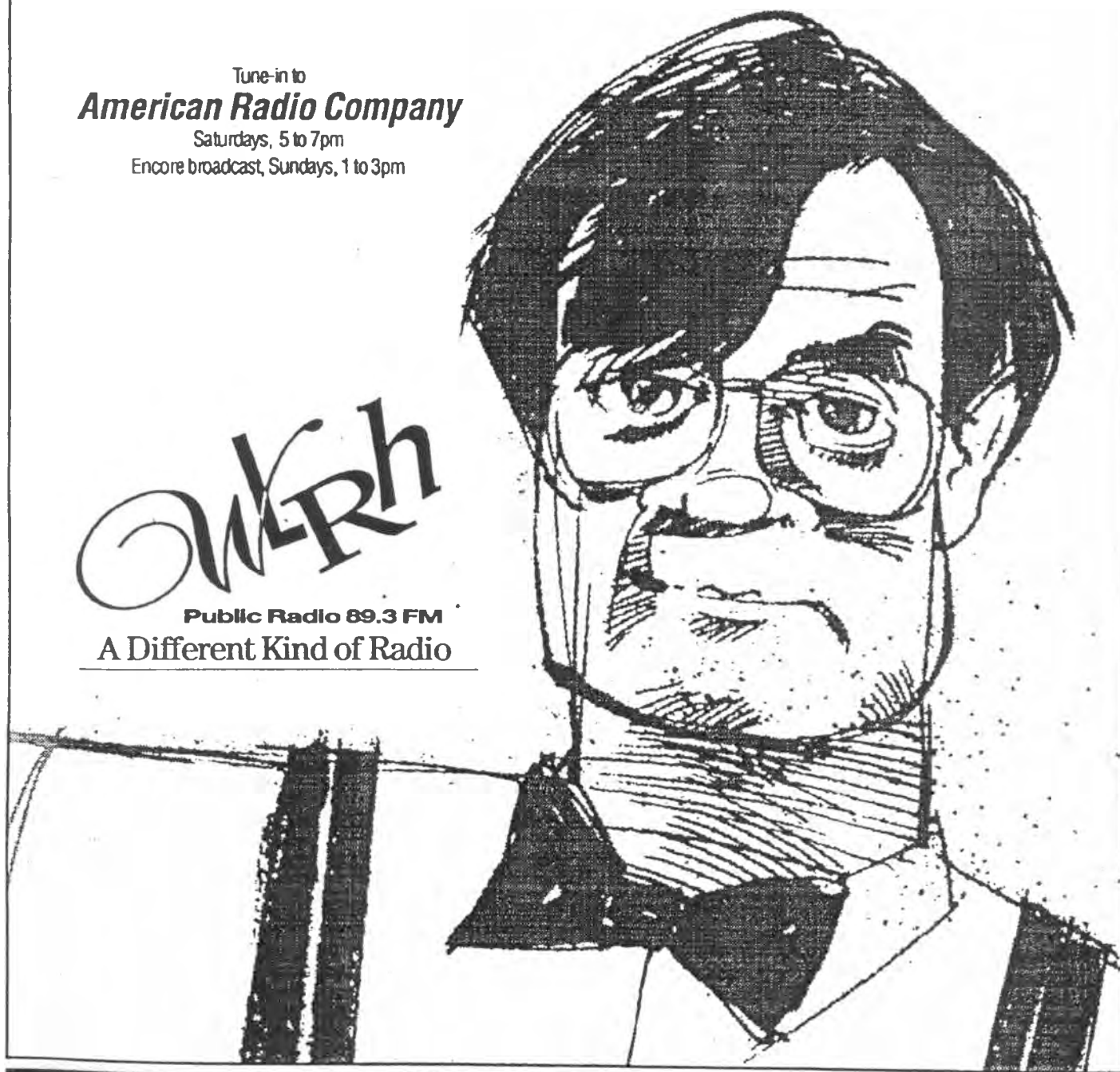
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Grandma's Health Remedies

If you have indigestion, try scrubbing an orange and eating some of the peel five minutes after eating your meal.

Add basil to your food while cooking. It will make your food more digestible and help prevent constipation.

Gently but firmly massage the back of the leg around the ankle. Massaging that area can relax tensions, stimulate circulation and soothe female organs.

Eat 2 ripe bananas a day to chase away the blues. They contain the chemicals serotonin and norepinephrine, which is believed to help prevent mental depression.

If you need a cheerful pick-me-up before going to work, wear clothes in the rose colors - pink and scarlets. Orange also helps.

Peppermint tea is wonderful for relaxing you and relieving moodiness. Drink it warm and strong.

If you ever get a bug in your ear, do the following. If it's night time, shine

a flashlight in your ear, bugs go toward light. If that fails to work, pour 1 teaspoonful of warm olive oil into the ear and hold it there for a minute or two. Then tilt your head til the oil and bug come out. If still you see no bug, gently fill your ear with warm water and tilt to pour out.

If you've had a busy day and your feet are really aching, sprinkle some cayenne pepper directly into your socks, or rub it directly onto the soles of your feet.

If your feet are very cold, rise up onto the ball of your foot very quickly, then back down again. Do this several times to increase the blood flow to the feet.

You had to get that perm, and now your hair is dull and lifeless. Try this - after shampooing, rinse with a combination of 1 cup of apple cider

vinegar and 2 cups water. Your hair will come alive and shine.

If you want more body for your hair, add 2 egg whites and the juice of 1/2 lemon to your shampoo. This will help with volume as well.

If you've got hiccups and can't get rid of them, try this: place an ice cube just below your Adam's apple and count to 150.

Had too many pinto beans and now you feel bloated? A strong cup of peppermint tea will give you quick relief, especially if you drink it while walking around.

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Most people know Walter Dilworth as a suave mild-mannered man who is content to sit behind his desk at Dilworth Lumber Company and watch the world go by. What people don't know is that lurking inside this unassuming personality is probably the best sales person in Huntsville, a gent with the instinct of a man-eating shark when it comes to closing a sale.

It wasn't always like this, however. Years ago when Walter first graduated from school and went into the family business he seemed destined to be a failure.

Every day his dad and his older brother, Penn, would go to lunch and leave Walter to keep shop. They would always return to find that Walter had

sold nothing.

"Why?" asked his dad.

"They just didn't need anything," Walter would reply.

This went on for months until finally Penn took Walter aside and had a talk with him.

"Brother," he said, "one of the best ways to sell something is to show people that by spending money now, they can actually save money in the long run."

The next day Mr. Dilworth and Penn went to lunch. It was an unusually long lunch and when they returned they found to their surprise that Walter had hired several new employees and was busy supervising them as they loaded a fleet of trucks with building materials.

"What's going on here?" demanded Mr. Dilworth.

"Oh, Mr. Johnson stopped by to pick up a gallon of paint," Walter replied as he busily checked off another load of lumber.

Penn was thrilled!

"You mean he only intended to buy paint and you talked him into buying all this other stuff, too?"

"Well, not exactly," replied Walter, as he motioned for another truck to pull up to the loading dock. "While he was waiting for the paint to be mixed he said he may as well pay his wife's bill. After showing him the bill I convinced him it would be cheaper to get a divorce and build his own place."

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AN EDUCATED MAN

THE TABLES were full at *Johnny Tona's Family Billiards* when we entered the other night. **Jason Wright** and pals were whizbanging away while **Steve Carlton's** crew held forth at nine-ball.

What a surprise to cross paths with some **Wright** hungry people in *Bandito Burrito*. **Walter, Beth, Grant** and **Cody Wright** of Edgewood Avenue made up a happy family. Speaking of **Wrights**, our longtime pal **Gary Wright**, who left WAFF-TV (Comcast 11) last year to forever repair TV cables for the Sacramento tribe, was back for a visit in October, making his headquarters at The Vapors and Club V.

That was quite a bluegrass fest the other weekend in Cahaba Grove. Even **Richard Weaver** showed up with wife **Cindy Schmidt** and her twins **Erik** and **Rex Noble** of Madison Crossroads. The twins will birthday Nov. 28. **Cindy Lou Anderson** of Kroger's deli (Oakwood) was a top cheerer. **Tommy**

Sheppard, who sells instruments at A.B. Stephens Store, was again the volunteer sound man.

ONE OF THE night bosses at Ryan's (University Drive) is **Dan Ezell** from LaFayette, La. He's been here several months. Meanwhile, at the other Ryan's, assistant boss **Jim Rutsey** is back at work after having a heart bypass. That's also where **Chris Campbell** has signed on as a staffer. It's also where we swapped tales with **Phillip** and **Stephanie Peters**, who brought son **Zakkary** to dinner. At the next table were Brewer pals **Tonya Morrow** and **David Adams**. The place was full, which made bosses **Steve Berley** and **Joe Wade** happy.

Pat Yim, daughter **Tiare** and son **Michael** were in Finnegan's Irish Pub the other night singing along with the karaoke. They had just left the **Rust** family's first reunion in 26 years. Then came Montessori's **Kenny Fox**, who helped things along.

The Big Spring Jam was loaded with people you know. **Mitch Starling** of G&G Security was there, as were our all-time favorites **Bob** and **Donnamarie Harris** (with babies **Zachary** and **Amanda**). Classical musician **Josh Simms** of Hartselle drove up to hear Three-on-a-String. Country singer **Charles Markham** and music store owner **Jack Robbins** were there celebrating their birthdays.

MR. JACKSON is having a successful anniversary discount (through Oct. 31) at his House of Mandarin. *Note to the old gang:* He's returned to the original Chinese menu, having discarded the gourmet items of recent months. His wife **Mona**, meanwhile, has introduced their tastes to Guntersville (Holiday Inn).

The staff in Ardmore's *Jones Drug Store* either goes to Auburn University or went there (or has football loyalty there). We repeated an "Auburn joke" in the store the other day. Owner **Nick Holland**, son **Brett** and **Jason Murph** reached for the lynching rope while **Joann Camp**, **Terrell Milby** and **Amy Reyer** looked in disbelief. Meanwhile, **Janet Mitchell** was waiting on customer **Hazel Mathis**, who taught 42 years at Madison Crossroads School.

TROUBADOUR **Tony Mason** and the aforementioned **Tommy**



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Sheppard still draw impressive crowds to Bubba's on Thursday nights. The latest bunch included **Peyton Powell** and **Chaz Martin** with a bevy of beauties: **Jennifer Fricke**, **Chari Radzelski**, **Heather Dill** and **Sissy Nalls**. That white limousine outside was for **Rusty Eaton** and party. He's with *Evans-Wheaton Inc.* of Atlanta.

Another successful downtown fall fest was the other weekend. Part of the crowd included banjoist **Rob Welch** of Grant, guitarist **Billy Matt Jones**, **Evan** and **Connie Powell**, and about five thousand others. Even **David Abston** showed up, as did Decatur's **Steve Marshall**. David told our *Old Huntsville* staff that his friend **Katherine Wilson** of herbal greenhouse fame has the best chow-chow in the world. She sells it on weekends at Limestone Flea Market.

Drummers **Randy Taylor** and **Ray Hansen** took time-about guesting with **Richard Cox's Big Band** the other night at the Depot Dance.

SUNDAY SERENADE! **Andrew Kent** and his Kmart co-worker **Danielle Rasnake**, with her brother **Bill**, kept the pool table busy Sunday night at **Glenn Bracken's Gold Rush Lounge** (The Mall) while the aforementioned **Charles Markham** kept the music flowing.

Cathey Carney, who publishes this magazine, and husband **Tom**, our copy boy, celebrated their fourth anniversary on Oct. 23 by attending the **Jack Daniel** international barbecue competition at Lynchburg.

OUR LYNCHBURG galpal **Patty Trigg** hosted a bluegrass "pickin' party" a few days ago at her mountaintop log home. Folk singer **Marilyn Powell-Greene** and hubby **Ron** helped make the dozens of musi-

cians feel at home. You remember **Patty** and her former husband **Elmo** as the talented team who wrote and recorded the Christmas cutie "*Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer.*"

DON KURTZAHN and sidekick **KIRK SHUBERT** were in Bubba's the other night helping **LeAnn** open some of her unforgettable birthday presents. Aunt Eunice, of country cooking fame, said they must have had a "heck of a good time" after looking at their faces the next morning.

ATHENS FIDDLING convention was a corker this year. Franklin, Tenn., guitarist **Cruz Contreras** showed up. He also joined the hundreds of musicians the next week at *Appalachian Homecoming*.

MICHAEL O'LOINSCIG has gone home to Ireland after visiting several days with his sister, **Ellen McAnelly**, who owns Finnegan's Irish Pub. That's where **Rick Estering** and **Beth Ray** sing the romance songs during the Saturday night karaoke singalongs. The great **Harry Barker** was also there, visiting from Boca Raton, with his pal **Ed Rudi** of Las Vegas. They're with Intergraph. Even

continued on page 63

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A Schoolboy Goes To War

The following article is reprinted from the Confederate Veteran, 1905. The author is unknown.

Being only a soldier in the ranks, I shall attempt to recite only that which I saw and participated in, from June 20, 1862, to May 9, 1865. The former being the date of my enlistment, the latter of my discharge, by parole, at the surrender of Forrest.

In April, 1862, the writer was a schoolboy in Huntsville, Alabama. On the morning of the 9th of that month Huntsville was occupied by the Federal army under General M. Mitchel. The school was disbanded, and the building seized for military uses. Soon after this event, in company with a schoolmate, I undertook to pass through the lines of the enemy and make my way to South Alabama.

(Editors Note: This school was

located on the grounds of what is now known as East Clinton School.

Being under military age, we had no trouble in getting permission to spend a few days with friends out of town, but having consumed more than the specified time in vain attempts to evade the enemy's pickets and cross the Tennessee River, we feared to return home. We communicated our plans and fear to the friends whom we were visiting, and he informed us of a small band of Confederate cavalry which was then organizing in the mountains of Madison and Jackson counties, and advised us to place ourselves under their protection.

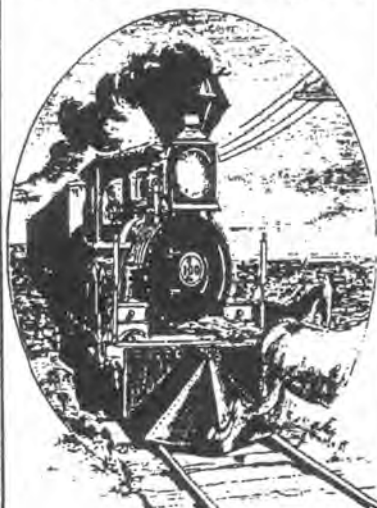
At this time there were many Confederate soldiers lurking in this section. A company of the Seventh Alabama infantry whose term of service had expired reached home only a few days before the enemy occupied the country and were biding about to avoid arrest. There were several from other commands at home on furlough or on account of sickness or wounds and many persons of military age who had not yet joined the army were concealing themselves.

General Bragg, who was then maturing his plans for the march into Kentucky, gave to Frank B. Gurley of Forrest's regiment a commission as Captain of Cavalry and ordered him to organize these men into a cavalry company and operate in rear of the enemy. When he reached his rendezvous, he had collected only about one dozen men. This number was rapidly increased to fifty or sixty. Though not members of this band my friend and I being under their protection were compelled to move with them from place to place while awaiting an opportunity to go south. At length seeing no opportunity of carrying out our original purpose, we on the 20th day of June entered our names on the company's roll being at this time respectively sixteen and fifteen years of age.

The service assigned to this company was both difficult and dangerous. The Tennessee River, with an average width of about eight hundred yards, turns to the southwest below Chattanooga and, entering the State of Alabama near Bridgeport continues this course to Guntersville, about fifty or sixty miles thence it turns to the northwest and passes out of Alabama at the northwestern corner of the State. The northern bank of this river was held by the enemy. In the four counties of Alabama lying north of the river there was a large Federal army numbering perhaps fifteen or twenty thousand men who occupied every town and hamlet and in due proportion of this force was cavalry engaged in scouring the country. This therefore was the field of our operations.

Our dangers were increased by the presence in this same section of a few unauthorized bands of guerrillas whose operations gave the enemy presumptive evidence that all the Confed-

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erate troops in that region were members of similar bands, in consequence of which we were all outlawed. Our commander therefore was compelled to discriminate nicely between the methods of war that were legitimate and illegitimate, and at the same time to exercise such control over the passions of his men as would prevent their resorting to the latter.

The rendezvous of the company was in the mountain region of Madison and Jackson counties. In the heights of these mountains we found a safe asylum after every collision with the enemy and from here as occasion was presented, we sent information to the Confederate forces south of the river.

There were frequent skirmishes between small detachments of our company and scouting parties of the enemy, and from time to time many of the enemy were captured, and either sent south of the river or released on parole. I shall not attempt, after so many years to record each of these small affairs. A few adventures of greater magnitude I will relate. The first of these was not creditable either to our courage or to our discipline.

The company started upon some errand the nature of which I do not recall. Our route lay to the south as if we would strike the river near Guntersville.


It was necessary to cross the Memphis and Charleston Railroad along which lay the largest bodies of the enemy. To avoid observation we made a night march. Many of the men had never been under fire and as we approached the point of greatest danger there was an obvious feeling of trepidation which increased as we advanced. Just before day we discovered that we were in close proximity to a cavalry camp. The company was halted for a moment but before the position or strength of the enemy could be ascertained the bugles sounded reveille.

In an instant there was a panic in our ranks. Vainly the officers commanded a halt and attempted to form the company. Both men and horses were so completely possessed by fear as to be uncontrollable.

As usual in such cases as soon as the stampede began the contagion spread like fire in a stable. Soon we were all in headlong flight. Every bush and tree was magnified into an enemy.

Every fleeing horseman thought the comrade first in his rear was a Federal cavalryman about to deliver a saber stroke. We ran until daylight revealed our folly. In the mean time we had become badly scattered and it required many days to reunite the command. It is but just to state that at this time many of our number were without arms.

On another occasion we received information of a small wagon train ap-



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proaching Huntsville on the Fayetteville turnpike under a light escort. By a night ride we succeeded in surprising and capturing those wagons, with a large quantity of supplies.

Soon after this we were ourselves surprised near New Market and lost one man badly wounded and two or three captured. Despite the surprise and discomfort we retreated in good order, and escaped among the mountains.

While these events of minor importance were taking place Captain Hambrick succeeded in crossing the Tennessee River with his company and united with us. Our entire force at this time consisted of two companies mustering about one hundred and fifty men. Thus reinforced we were prepared to act with greater boldness and to undertake enterprises of greater magnitude than we had formerly attempted. The enemy were using the Memphis and Charleston Railroad for the purpose of transporting troops and supplies. Even when our number were weakened we had several times interfered with their use of this road by removing rails at different points thus forcing them to station garrisons very near each other all along the railroad from Huntsville to Stevenson.

One of the stations occupied by a garrison was the Flint River bridge ten miles east of Huntsville. This covered wooden bridge was converted into a blockhouse, and furnished with bullet-proof doors at each end. When Captain Hambrick united with us, Bragg's army had already turned the enemy and were upon the march to Kentucky. Part of our duty was to obstruct the retreat of the force in Alabama and a plan was matured for capturing and burning this bridge. Our scouts learned that the doors were kept open during the day and that many of the garrison amused themselves bathing in the waters.

We hoped to be able to get near enough to capture this bridge by a sud-

den dash. We dismounted in the woods and approached as near as possible under cover. Many of the Federals were bathing in the river, others were amusing themselves in various ways. We felt that the prize was almost in our grasp. Just then the sentinel on duty discovered us and fired. Instantly there was a rush of the whole garrison for cover.

The bathers had no time for dressing, but ran, some with their clothing in hand, and others, probably, without gathering up their clothing. The heavy doors closed with a bang. Our plan had failed. We fired a few shots and retired. This incident afforded amusement to us for many days.

The progress of the Confederate army through East Tennessee now began to necessitate the removal of large bodies of Federal troops from West Tennessee and Mississippi to East Tennessee. This line of march lay just along the border of Tennessee and Alabama. Learning of their passage through that section, we moved in that direction in order to observe their march. While watching what is locally known as the Gum Spring road, we learned that a Federal General had passed with an escort of only four or five hundred cavalry. He had several hours in advance of us, but the prize was too tempting to be easily relinquished, and we followed upon roads parallel to his line of march. At night he encamped near Buck Springs. It was night when we reached the neighborhood of his camp.

Nearly the whole night was spent in securing guides and getting the necessary information as to the location of his camp. When these were secured the night was far advanced, and a plan was hastily communicated to the men for surprising the camp and capturing the General. We approached as near as prudent on horseback, dismounted, and divided into two parties to attack on opposite sides.

One of these parties reached its position at a fence about one hundred

yards from the camp, and found the Federals already astir. They waited patiently for the preconstructed signal, but before the other party was ready for the attack the Federals had mounted and begun their march. This officer, who came so near falling into our hands, was General George Thomas.

This force, which might have been dispersed by surprise in camp, was too large for us to attack upon the march, and as we could not prudently follow them further, we turned back in the direction of our rendezvous. Without halting to rest or eat, we marched rapidly by the most obscure roads, and about 9 o'clock in the morning again crossed the Gum Spring road at a point about eight miles from New Market, Alabama. As we crossed this road, we noticed that troops had recently passed. We were halted and formed in line parallel to the road, in the open woods.

Captain Gurley, mounted on a large gray mare, turned down the road in the direction from which the Federals

had come and rode two or three hundred yards. We saw him turn and start back at a gallop, and in another moment we saw four cavalymen in pursuit. As soon as he reached our position he turned and ordered a charge. The Federals discovered us at the same moment and fled. Our column entered the road, left in front, which threw Gurley's own company in advance. We had pursued about a quarter of a mile, when we began to overtake a body of cavalry, among whom we emptied our double-barreled guns with fatal effect.

Those of us in front passed many of those and left them to be captured by the men behind us. We soon became intermingled with them and from that point no man can describe the melee except as he saw it just around himself. We passed a wagon camp upon the side of the road, and here a few of our men held up. The rest of us entered a long lane. Every thing in front of us was panic-stricken and in full, headlong flight. Cavalrymen aban-

doned their horses and took to the woods. Foot soldiers crouched in the fence corners, and made way for our passage. We had struck the head of McCook's division on the march, and for a mile and a half or two miles we tore a path through it like a tornado in a forest of pine trees. There must have been much disorder among those troops, who were not apprehensive of attack, for at no point in this distance did we come in contact with an organized body of troops. They were in small companies and squads, apparently without organization. And these as we overtook them, would surrender or take refuge in flight to the woods.

While in this lane we overtook two Federal officers riding in a buggy. As we came up with them we fired, and one of them was struck. The other, surrendering, hastily announced that the wounded officer was General McCook and appealed for help. Captain Gurley, who was with the head of

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the column, stopped and caused the wounded General to be carried into a house near by, where he could expire. The fatal bullet had passed through his body, coming out near the buckle of his sword-belt. As three or four were firing at this party when the General fell, it will always be a matter of doubt as to who fired the fatal shot.

During the halt at the wounding of General McCook, this writer with one other companion passed forward, and from a considerable distance kept close to the rear of the fleeing Federals. As we reached the end of the lane a Federal officer just in front of me threw himself from his horse and fled into the woods. Being determined to kill or capture him if possible, I turned my horse into the woods after him, being at a full run. About twenty feet from the road my horse ran under a swinging grapevine which caught me about the middle of the body. I was suspended for a moment in mid-air, with my feet tangled in the stirrup, then my saddle girth broke and I fell heavily to the ground. Just after I left the road, my companion overtook and captured several musicians on foot.

While I was busily repairing the effects of my disaster, several of our comrades passed and in a short distance

were saluted with a volley from an infantry force that had formed across the road. At this volley they turned and fled, except one whose horse being unmanageable carried him into and through this body of infantry where he escaped to the woods with no injury except a wound in his horse.

Though we had now discovered the presence of a large infantry force, we took advantage of their demoralization and returned over the ground that had been covered in the melee and gathered up the spoils of our victory.

These included a considerable quantity of arms and other material of war and many prisoners. A great many of the latter however not being closely guarded during the fight had escaped to the woods, and soon rejoined their friends. Some persons who passed over the entire distance of our pursuit reported the number of killed as twenty-one including General McCook. This report we could not verify as it was necessary for us to retreat as soon as the enemy began to rally. Among our prisoners was one of General McCook's staff. Most of the prisoners captured were Germans and could not speak English. We retreated as soon as we had secured the spoils, and found safety in our stronghold in the moun-

tains

When the demoralized troops of General McCook were reorganized, they began to execute their vengeance upon the defenseless inhabitants of the country. Every house along the line of their march, for many miles, was burned to the ground. Even the family who had sheltered their unfortunate commander in his dying moments and ministered to his last wants suffered the common fate. These citizens were wholly innocent of complicity with us. It is to be hoped that this terrible vengeance was not the venting of the blind fury of the common soldiers and that it was not authorized by the officers in command.

Among the trophies of this fight was the sword which had been presented to General McCook by the Congress of the United States and which bore upon its blade an inscription com-

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mentatory of his gallantry. This sword was returned to his family after the war by Captain Gurley.

The results of this skirmish were highly beneficial to the inhabitants of that region, excepting those who were in the immediate vicinity and who suffered as before described. It put an end to the depredations of straggling parties, and forced the enemy to keep in compact bodies in marching. To those who were the immediate actors it brought another benefit. Through the Federal officer who was captured, communications were opened with the Federal authorities and our officers were enabled to show their commissions, and obtain for us recognition as regular Confederate troops with all rights of billigerents.

In a few days our prisoners were released on parole and these paroles were respected by the Federal authorities.

The reputation of a brave, skillful and honorable officer of the Confederate army demands that I should so far depart from the thread of my narrative as to relate the aftereffects of this adventure upon Captain Gurley himself. I believe no statement has ever been published that puts this affair before the public from the Confederate standpoint.

The reports of this skirmish that reached the north caused great indignation. It was charged that General McCook fell by the band of Gurley himself after having surrendered. One statement was, that he was murdered while lying sick in an ambulance. Captain Gurley was represented as a desperado, and declared to be an outlaw. In 1863 this gallant officer was captured. Instead of being treated as a prisoner of war, he was incarcerated in the State penitentiary of Tennessee, and held there until the close of the war.

In the first election after the war he was honored by his fellow citizens of Madison County, Alabama with the

office of sheriff. While holding that office, the malice of political enemies trumped up the old charges against him and he was arrested, heavily ironed, thrown into jail, tried by a military court and condemned to death. In all these proceedings there was great haste, and the conviction was entirely upon false testimony. A reprieve was granted by the President until he could himself investigate the matter, and after a careful hearing of the evidence, he overruled the sentence of the court and set Captain Gurley at liberty.

It is certain that the McCook fight was as great a surprise to us as it was to the enemy. We accidentally ran into them. We fought without premeditation, deliberation, plan or purpose; our

success was wholly due to the fact that, to use one of General Forrest's expressions, we got the bulge on them.

Had we known what lay before us, it is probable we would have withdrawn without firing a shot. Had we with deliberate purpose made a cavalry charge upon a division of Federal infantry we would have shown ourselves as courageous and as well disciplined as the famous Light Brigade, whose heroic charge into the valley of death, will live in history, in story, and in song while humanity retains its admiration of heroism.

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To destroy bugs, take two ounces of quicksilver and the whites of two eggs. Beat them together till they become a froth. Apply it with a feather.

For windows that freeze to the sill in winter - sprinkle a little salt on the sill and the windows can be raised without difficulty.

Do the most unpleasant task of the day first - it will have a good psychological effect.

To darn hosiery at night, place a lighted flashlight into the foot.

For dampness in your closets, place camphor in a cheesecloth bag and hang it in the closet.

To get rid of those black heel marks, use a cloth dipped in kerosene and rub dry. This may remove black scuff marks on light colored shoes.

If you smoke and are troubled by brown cigarette stains on your hands, remove them by rubbing lemon juice on them.

To prevent your shoes from squeaking, punch small holes in the sole back of the ball of the foot, with an ice pick. This will let the air escape and cause the squeak to disappear.

Do not place your piano close to an outer wall, as it may get damp. Keep it out of direct draft. A piano should be tuned at least twice a year, and strike the keys occasionally if it is not used often.

To clean your papered walls, use stale bread rubbed on them.

To extinguish a chimney on fire, throw upon it some handfuls of flour of sulphur, or stop up the aperture of the chimney with a very wet blanket, and the flames will soon be extinguished. Water will increase the flames.

Use petroleum to remove mildew from leather.

Never starch linens that are to be packed away, or they will crack. Rinse out all the starch, dry and fold. Cover

with plenty of paper or cheesecloth covers. If your linen is white, cover with blue paper to prevent it from turning yellow.

To keep your eggs fresh all winter, take them as soon as they are laid and brush them with olive oil. Dry thoroughly, and put them in a box with layers of bran or ashes. Cover the box tightly, to entirely exclude the air.



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Dallas Ragmuffins

by Ruby Crabbe

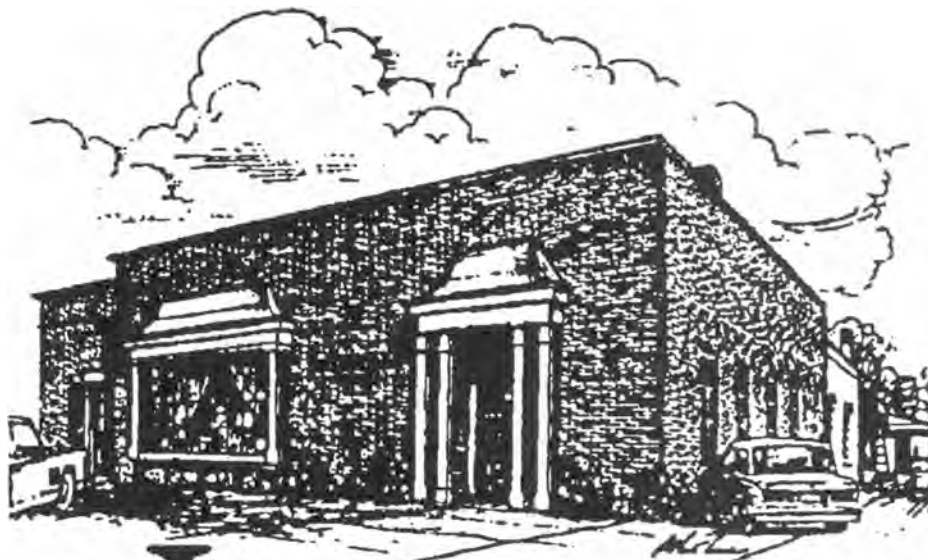
A lot of the old-time ways we grew up with in Dallas Village are obsolete, and thank goodness for that. Like doing away with the garbage—the back alleys behind the houses were littered from one end to the other with everything imaginable. Didn't use garbage cans, just threw the garbage over the back fence. Every so often workers from Dallas mill would bring a big truck with big shovels and scoop all the trash up and haul it to the trash pile. Then a familiar sight would always be seen of kids in the trash pile, going through all that garbage to see if they could find a "treasure."

Getting toilet tissue back in those days was no problem. On certain days a worker from the textile mill would go down the back alley and throw several rolls into the outdoor toilet house. The toilet room was built onto the end of the barn. In fact, on Rison Avenue the barn had two toilets. One on each end of the barn. The houses were duplex, so if two families occupied the house they had their own private "bath-

room." In those days we called the barn the "coal house" because everyone used coal to heat with and for the cook stoves. When we ordered a ton or two of coal, it was shoveled into the coal house through a little window on the back of the barn.

All the yards on Rison Avenue were fenced so a lot of people would stretch another fence between their house and barn to stable their cow for the night. Each morning the cow would be taken to the pasture until late evening and then brought back home

for the night. Us kids took turns with this chore. Sometimes the larger kids in our neighborhood would chase our cow, get her flustered, and away she would run. Have you even seen a cow in high gear? Let me tell you, our cow could run! And have you ever seen little short legged kids trying to catch a cow? One boy in particular (we called him the bully of the village) had a habit of chasing our cow every morning. I was eleven years old, and this bully of a boy was around 16 years old. One day the workers from Dallas



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Mill had just cut the briar bushes from up and down the back alley and left them lying where they had fallen. Next morning on our way to the pasture, this big bully jumped out from his hiding place to chase our cow. Well, I was ready for him. Boy was I ready! I grabbed the biggest thorn bush I could find and did I ever work him over. I got him hemmed up into a corner, and the more he hollered and yelped the faster I raked that thorn bush over him. That boy must have left our territory for awhile because never again did I see him lurking in any hiding place.

After our morning chores were finished, off to school we would go. We passed this one certain store every morning on our way to school, and every morning the store owner would be picking up small rocks and putting them into a paper sack. Being kids and eager to seek knowledge, our curiosity got the better of us so we asked him why was he picking up so many little rocks. He gave us a straight answer and an honest one at that. He was picking up the rocks to put with the dried beans to make them weigh heavy.

According to a lot of people in Dallas Village, that man sure spoke the truth because their beans were full of rocks.

Next stop was school. Most of the kids wore "hand-me-downs" with plenty of patches. I'll never forget this one teacher at Rison School. She made fun of our hand-me-downs and patches. Her favorite name for us was "Dallas Mill Ragmuffins." I'm sure a lot of my old school buddies still remember that teacher. I know I'll never forget her and the names she called us. But despite all the hurt that teacher caused us, I'm sure we were still the happiest kids in Dallas Village, even if we were little "ragmuffins."

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Conscience

I remember reading, when a very little child, about a young girl who was in the habit of going to an upper room or loft where there was a store of apples. She went from time to time to steal the fruit, but she always met with something that greatly troubled her. There was in that room an old oil-painting. It was a large face, the eyes of which go to every part of the room the little girl might go, and seemed to follow her to each corner of that old store-room. They appeared to say as she stooped down to take up the apples, "Ah, I see you. It is very naughty. You are sure to be found out." This so annoyed the little culprit that she was determined to put a stop to the threatening of these two staring eyes. So she procured a small knife, and a pair of scissors, and struck them out.

Ah, but there were still two large holes in place of those glaring eyes, so she never could look at them again without thinking of the eyes, and what they used to say to her. She had put out the eyes, but she had not, nor could she, get rid of her conscience. Moreover, the very means she had used for sinning without rebuke only served to discover her guilt, for what had befallen the painting came to be found out, it led to such inquiries as at last to reveal the whole truth.

From 1870 Newspaper

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear O.H.

Enclosed find a check for 6 back issues of the John Hunt issue as well as a subscription.

I am a descendent of James Walker who came into north Madison County about 1805. Four generations remained in that area and are buried in Miller Cemetery in Plevna, Alabama. I'm not sure where the original James Walker is buried, though. Maybe you can find it in some of your research.

William D. Walker,
Lebanon, Tenn.

Dear Editor,

I really enjoy your magazine and try to find each issue but I am not always able to find it and would like to subscribe.

I remember in the 1930s; probably around 1937-38 there was a murder or some kind of attack in old Lowe Mill village or west Huntsville Area and a mob of people went to the jail to get the person who was arrested for this attack. I believe the name of the woman who was murdered was Vivian Woodard. I was a small girl at the time and cannot remember much about it but some of it remains in my memory. Also there was another murder and a woman buried under a house in the

West Huntsville area or old Merrimac Village; it seems as if someone in this case was named Putman and it was also in the same time frame. It seems as if the man who had murdered the woman was still living in the home at the time the body was found. I wonder if you had run across these two cases in your research of Huntsville?

Mrs. Lenza L. Moon,
Ardmore, Al.

To the Editor,

Please enter my name on your subscription list - I found my last copy at a book store in Florence, Alabama in 1992 - later I went back and there were no more. The one I got at the time, I enjoyed very much!

Nancy Davinci, Fairfield, Oh

Dear Editor,

The purpose of this letter is to suggest a subject that you may wish to research and if successful, to run an article about in *Old Huntsville*.

I was raised on Grimwood Road in Madison County, and as a boy I heard my mother refer to the "Mike White Storm." She said that a man by that name was hung in Huntsville sometime in the 1800s. I don't recall if the hanging was legal or the other kind. Anyway, the night after the hanging, a terrible storm hit the area that was always referred to as "The Mike White Storm."

My mother's maiden name was Duanna White. She was born in 1882.

Her family lived near where Beaver Dam Creek crosses Pulaski Pike. In telling the story of "The Mike White Storm" she always added: "He was a White man, but he wasn't any kin to us."

I enjoyed reading a recent issue of your magazine and would appreciate information on subscriptions.

David Grimwood,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Sir:

I was visiting Huntsville this past summer and the owner of the bed and breakfast I stayed at shared her copies of *Old Huntsville* with me. I would like to use them in my classroom - please advise how to get them for myself.

Sarah Hall, Tell City, Indiana

To Old Huntsville,

It sure feels good knowing that John Hunt chose to stay in the town he founded rather than leave and head for someplace else. As a part time hobby, history fascinates me, and it was always difficult to find much information about Mr. Hunt. I hope you have more stories about him and his family in the future.

Regards, Jimmy Miller, Madison

Dear Sir:

I was visiting Huntsville from my home in Clinton, Oklahoma the early part of the summer and picked up two issues of *Old Huntsville* - #32 and 33.

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I didn't read these for several weeks after I returned home. When I did read them I found them to be very interesting to me as my mother's family was - is - a part of Huntsville and northern Madison County around New Market. Family names are HOWARD, PETTY, CARLETON, WRIGHT, BRAGG, THOMAS and GOLDEN.

Mrs. Mainon Wood, Clinton, Ok

Dear Old Huntsville,

I look forward to each issue and I save and protect them, as a collector's item. I love the old history and the writings about the Civil War period and the early settlement of north Alabama. You have a great little magazine and I predict it will grow in years to come.

May I suggest an addition to the magazine, I know that this could get out of hand and could increase the size and the distribution.

Have you ever considered including a section on genealogy research? This would be listing family surnames and people seeking other people who are doing family research. Family genealogy and *Old Huntsville* certainly goes together. I am sure that someone at the Huntsville library 3rd floor would gladly assist you in this undertaking. Huntsville library has one of the best genealogy records in North Alabama - thanks for considering this.

Virgil B. Van Sandt, Lacey's Springs, Al

Old Huntsville,

I am a third generation native of Huntsville and Madison County, and enjoy reading *Old Huntsville*. I feel that it is a link to the precious past that is quickly slipping away. Thanks for all your efforts.

Jan Lasater, Huntsville

Dear Old Huntsville,

I recently read, with much interest, your story about John Hunt. My grandmother was the great grand

daughter of John Hunt.

Her family left Alabama and were some of the first settlers in Huntsville Texas.

Though the family only visited Huntsville, Ala. every twenty years or so, the family always considered it their ancestral home.

My grandmother told me many stories about the days when the family lived there. She always talked about two men by the name of Pope and Coffee who conspired to steal Hunt's land.

She told me that she had always heard the story about when John Hunt died, Pope tried to attend the services. Hunt's son, or grandson, ordered Pope off the land at the point of a gun.

In 1860 or 1870 a storm knocked down many of the headstones in the cemetery. Instead of being replaced, many of them were used for building a house.

The year before my grandmother died she heard that the city had built an airport on the site of John Hunt's grave. She was very upset.

My sister and I have been working on transcribing her memoirs and will send you a copy as soon as it is completed.

Mattie Pierce, Dallas, Texas

Dear Old Huntsville

In regard to your story about John Hunt, the Sively cemetery was not the same one as the Acklin cemetery. They were actually separated by several hundred feet. My father had people buried in the Acklin cemetery.

He told me that the cemetery was destroyed in the last century and many of the headstones were not replaced. The cemetery sat on the side of a little knoll several hundred feet from the present day Sively cemetery. Today it a runway for an airport.

Kenneth Derrick, Chicago, Ill.

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Remembering When

by Carty C. Vining

When I read a column in the *Huntsville Times* written by Bill Easterling announcing the end of the light-green, returnable Coca Cola bottle memories of my own life in the country began to stir.

I, too, tasted my first Coca Cola in a country store many years ago.

It was in this same store that I first saw a radio, and heard a broadcast of the Grand Ol' Opry on a Saturday

night. It was a battery radio with three tuning dials on the front and a horn type speaker that sat on top. A Philco, I think.

Childlike, I'd stop and gaze at the speaker. The music was so real and natural I'd wonder why I couldn't see the artists. It was a miracle to my small mind how music could be sent like that from one place to another. There wasn't much music in our lives in those

days.

The Coca Cola box was just an icebox with a sliding top. A chunk of ice inside and a lot of cold water. Ice was never plentiful in the country. It had to be brought from Huntsville twenty miles away. There was no delivery service either.

The Coca Colas were never cold; just cool. But they were good!

Mr. Reynolds owned the general store, and stocked most of the things country people needed. Everything from dry goods to hardware. But in those days of no electricity or refrigeration, meat and produce were limited. Most country people grew and preserved their own anyway.

Sometimes on Saturday night I'd help Mr. Reynolds' sons restock their peddling trucks. "Rolling Stores" they called them. Often I'd candle the eggs they had collected and place them in crates. Twelve dozen to the crate. They were then taken to Huntsville where they were sold or exchanged.

Candling eggs was easy and didn't require much skill. The candling device had a small light in it. An egg was placed in a slot and the light came on. If the egg was fresh it would be clear.

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If it had dark spots, or was completely dark, it was discarded.

Country folk were pretty honest in those days. Not many of them had money, so their produce was about all they had to trade on.

After work we'd all sit around on nail kegs and listen to the Grand Ol' Opry. My reward would be a Coca Cola, and I really enjoyed it!

In those years the store was lighted by gasoline lamps. Compared to the kerosene lamps used in most country homes; they were great.

Gasoline lamps had a metal base; usually of brass. A small amount of gasoline was poured into the base which had a small, built in compression pump, to force the gasoline upward to the twin mantles. There was a small valve in the stem to regulate the flow of gasoline and air. The mantles were lighted by a match.

The store's gasoline tank was underground just as they are today, but gasoline was pumped by a hand pump into a round measure at the top of the pump. It was then drained into a car, or a can by a hose similar to the ones on modern pumps.

Later Mr. Reynolds installed a Delco generator in a shed at the back of the store. This was a real revolution in lighting for the countryside.

The generator was powered by a Briggs & Stratton gasoline engine, and provided 32 volts of direct current to the entire place.

At night the light on the front porch could be seen for miles shining through the darkness.



1893 Court News

Fuller Discharged: The oft-continued case against Wm. A. Fuller, charged with bigamy, was ended yesterday by the discharge of the prisoner. When Fuller was brought into court for trial the prosecuting witnesses failed to appear and could not be found, there was nothing left for the court to do but to discharge the prisoner. Mrs. Fuller,

number two, had been in the court room before the case was called, but could not be found when she was wanted.

For Hog Stealing: In court yesterday M.D. Hammer was placed under a \$500 bond for grand larceny. He was accused of stealing a hog from a colored man, named Felix Hawkins, and the evidence against him was strong enough to warrant binding him over to await trial.

taken from 1893 Huntsville newspaper

Our interest should be in the future because that is where we are going to spend the rest of our lives.

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Kenneth Corley
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Howard Weeden Southern Lady, Poet and Artist

by Michael Kenny

We are all too familiar with fictionalized accounts of southern women. But for 100 years appreciators of Maria Howard Weeden, known to the world as Howard Weeden, have kept her life, her works and memory of a true southern lady alive. A plaque on the Federal-style house, located on Gates and Green Streets in Huntsville, attests that it is "the home of poet-artist Howard Weeden."

Born on July 6, 1845 in the very house that stands today, Howard - as she chose to be called, adopting the family name of Scottish ancestors as her given name - was tutored as a lady. Her father, Dr. William Weeden, died before she was born and left the family with the beautiful townhome, a complement of servants, plantations properties, and other real estate from which the family's income and lifestyle was derived. Early in her life she dem-

onstrated a talent for drawing, and received lessons from a local portrait artist - Mr. Fry.

During the Civil War, when Huntsville was occupied by Federal troops, the Weeden House, known as "Aspen Place," was taken over by the Commander of the occupying army. Mrs. Weeden and her daughters Kate and Howard were forced to move into the adjacent servants' quarters. As family members were in the Confederate Army, the relationship between the family and the Federal officers, who had taken over the house, became intolerable. The family, feeling as prisoners and hostages in their own home, fled Huntsville with their servants accompanying them and went to Tuskegee in South Alabama. There Howard met Dr. George W.F. Price and his daughter, Elizabeth Price, who became a lifelong friend, supporter and biographer of her life. At the Tuskegee Methodist College for Women, Howard studied painting and developed her exquisite talent in watercolor.

After the War, the Weeden family returned to their family home in Huntsville. What was valuable in the home had either been stolen or destroyed. The family fortune gone, Howard turned to painting to help provide needed income for the family. Howard

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conducted art classes for little girls and produced hand-painted greeting cards and placards. This work further contributed to the development of her particular and unique, largely self-taught style. She also wrote poetry and her works were published under the name of "Flake White" in the "Christian Observer," a Presbyterian paper.

In the 1800s. Southern writers

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became recognized - especially with their stories of old plantation life. Howard Weeden read these stories and not only emulated the art of the day - she surpassed it. She was adept at drawing flowers, animals, decorative designs, and portraits.

While attending the Columbia Exposition at Chicago in 1893, she saw the unflattering sketches of Negroes by the leading illustrators of the day. Seeing this challenged and inspired her. She began to paint portraits of blacks accurately, and with dignity. It was a style unusual for any era. Due to fragile health and modest finances, she was unable to travel and so used local people around Huntsville as her subjects. With delicate care, using a brush with only three hairs, she recorded for posterity, both visually and poetically, the character and dignity of the vanishing race of ex-slaves.

She chronicled her subjects in watercolor with the accuracy of a portrait photographer and the sensitivity, simplicity and feeling of a painter. But Howard Weeden went one step further - she wrote words to her pictures.

Her "Mammies" were not caricatures, but real as the beloved persons themselves as a few lines taken from "When Mammy Dies" attest:

"We're always young till Mammy dies, but when her hand no longer lies, as once it did upon our head, we feel that youth with her has fled."

Uniquely blending pictures and poems she illustrated the gaiety, the sadness, the real lives of people with more than dramatic technical skill - it was genius. In her poem "The Worst of War" she relates in 16 lines more than the horror of war - she captures the utter sadness, loss and personal tragedy felt as the ex-slave recalls taking the riderless horse of his slain young master and officer back home:

"I led his horse back home where dey sat expectin' him - an' I saw Mistis'

and Master's hearts when dey broke, an' dat was de worst of war."

The verse she said wrote themselves out of the Negroes' own words.

As the reputation of this refined, gentlewoman grew - orders came in from all over the world for her works. In 1898, her little published book became the premier Christmas gift. She had to do all she could to meet the demands with what her pervasive ill-health and nearsightedness would allow.

Praises came from near and far. Joel Chandler Harris, referring to the highly popular and published Southern writers of the day, called her the "Best of us all. ..." Extolling the virtues and realities of black people, she demonstrated her own uncommon, gracious brilliance. Pertaining to the ex-slaves she painted and wrote, the "New York Times Book Review" of December 30, 1899 stated that, "She revealed the whole race."

On April 12, 1905 she died at her home. But Howard Weeden passed on a treasure of extraordinary published works, which include; "Shadows on the Wall," "Bandanna Ballads" published by Double Day and McClure in 1899, "Songs of the Old South," and her last book "Old Voices."

Today, one may visit the home in which Howard Weeden lived and worked and see examples of her work at the Weeden House Museum, 300 Gates Avenue.



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News Of The Absurd

When the Smith and Wesson Company opened a golf driving range in 1984 in Springfield, Massachusetts, they didn't consider the sea gulls in the area. The driving range was forced to close a week later after flocks of the birds began bombarding company executives, motorists and neighbors with hundreds of golf balls they would pick up, fly into the air with, and drop.

One group that quickly responded to an appeal to donate clothing to survivors of an earthquake in Armenia was a Washington, D.C. nudist club.

A lady in Birmingham, Alabama filed a lawsuit against the maker of hair care products after her hair burst into flames, as she was standing in 96 degree weather waiting for a bus. A passing policeman worked fast to help put out the flames, but the lady claimed to have suffered permanent disfigurement.

Randy Myer, city public information director in Lexington, Kentucky, paid \$400 for a set of steel-belted tires that were "bulletproof, spikeproof and bombproof." A month later he had a flat running over a ball-point pen. "It still wrote," he claimed.

Researchers at Georgia Tech paid

volunteers \$15 to fall down a flight of stairs as part of a project to find out how a body falls.

A man by the name of Lawler Samson was arrested in Florida after a woman reported that the 65-year old man was hugging and kissing trees and telephone poles. His \$32 fine was suspended with the understanding that he would not break any other laws for a year.

A Greek monk who died in 1938 at the age of 82, was probably the only man in existence who never laid eyes on a woman. His mother died when he

was born, and the infant was whisked away to a monastery. He spent the remainder of his days completely isolated from female society. Women and even female animals were prohibited from entering the monastery, a tradition that dated back more than nine centuries earlier, to the founding of the retreat.

A funeral home in Pensacola, Florida offers an unusual service to its customers. For those who have to work odd hours and cannot find time to visit deceased loved ones, the funeral home has a drive-through window for drive-by viewing. Customers don't even have to get out of their cars.



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The Russel Erskine Hotel

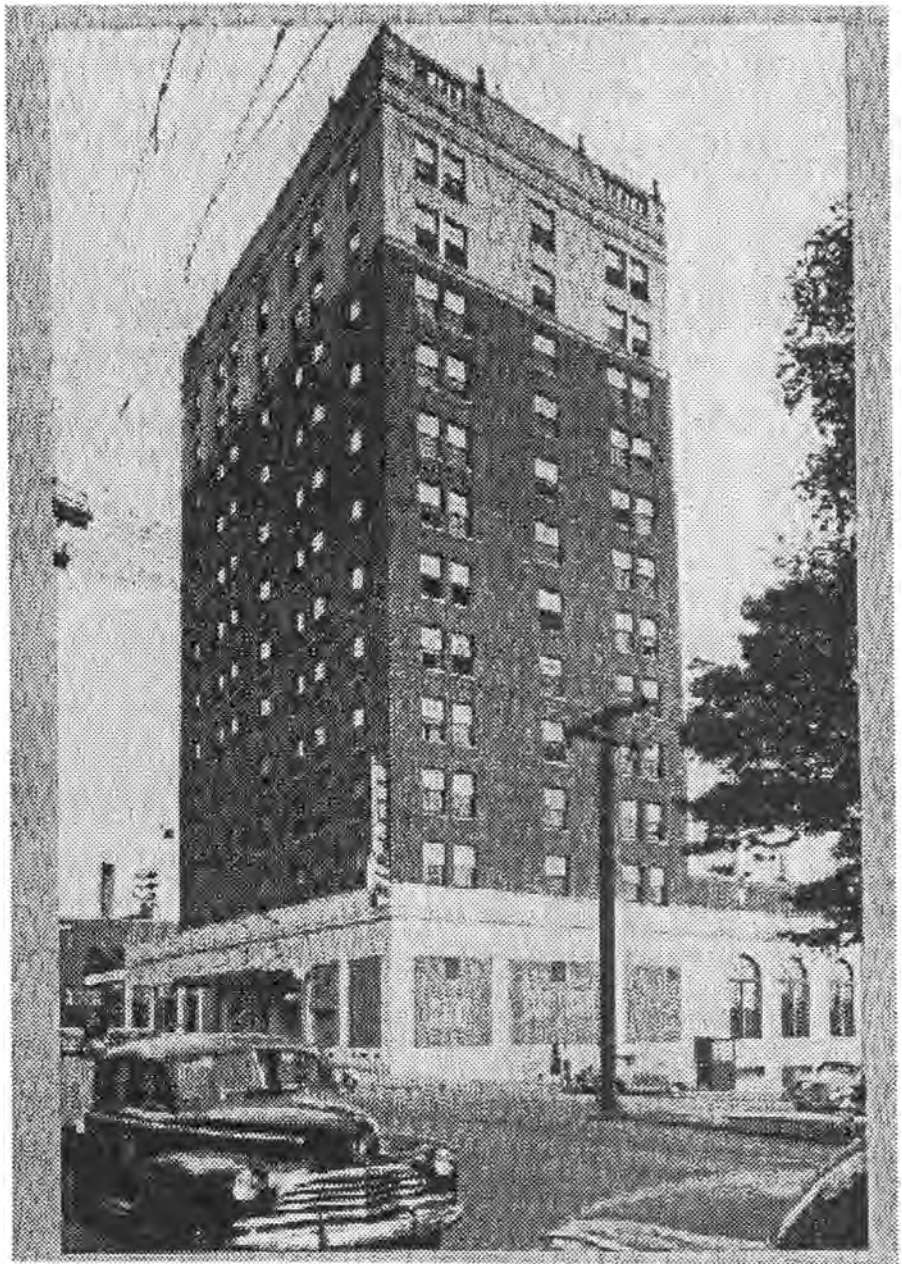
by Mike Kenny

More than nostalgia - the Russel Erskine Hotel still stands as a monument to a bygone era, a time when Huntsville was young and growing. Now that there are other and newer monuments and skyscrapers the Russel Erskine Hotel has taken a lesser - but still significant role.

Albert Russel Erskine was the onetime president of the Studebaker Corporation. Though he did not have an important financial interest in the hotel, it was named for this local person with national prominence.

According to local folklore the hotel ran into financial trouble before it was ever completed. In an attempt to raise more money the owners came up with a plan to name it after Erskine, a local hometown boy made good, hoping to interest him in investing in the venture. When the hotel was dedicated Erskine came to Huntsville, listened to the speeches honoring him, ate the free food, drank the free liquor, stayed in the free suite and then went back to Detroit without spending any money!

As each city has its prominent hotel - the Russel Erskine was "the place to go" in Huntsville, Alabama. Officially opened on January 3, 1930, in the midst of the Great Depression at a cost of 1.5 million dollars, it was and still is a splendid building - 12 stories high and 132 rooms. It became one of Huntsville's leading attractions and



immediately became a popular spot for conventions and travellers.

Besides the convenience and availability of a large hotel in Huntsville, visitors noted the "completeness" and "exquisiteness" of the furnishings in 1930. It was also noted that such modern conveniences of the day as an electric fan and an RCA radio were in each room. One satisfied guest, Dr. George Alden of Massachusetts, wrote the hotel saying that the Russel Erskine was the best appointed and gave the best service of any hotel during his trip. The Russel Erskine became the shin-

ing jewel of Huntsville.

It was Huntsville's best advertisement and many balls and gatherings were held in its splendid ballroom and banquet rooms.

In the decade of the 1940s, the Russel Erskine grew and prospered with the development of the Army's newly founded Chemical Warfare Arsenal. Rooms during the war years were easily filled and the guests were more than adequately served by a staff of over 100 persons. High ceilings, chandeliers, an inviting comfortable lobby with scurrying bellmen, enter-

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tainment, fine dining on tables with white linen tablecloths, and a barber shop on the premises seem uncommon to the average traveller today - but the Russel Erskine was the premier hotel in North Alabama. It was before the widespread use of motels, "no frills," and budget accommodations.

After the War, as the Nation's economy sputtered - the Russel Erskine was merely changing gears. In 1949, with the advent of the Rocket Center, the hotel again had no problem filling rooms. The hotel continued its success throughout the 1950s. and in 1955 the Russel Erskine commemorated its 25th anniversary with a week-long celebration. From 1937 until its closing, the hotel turned a profit each year.

But as motels began to be built on the perimeter of the city, the hotel not only had to deal with competition - but also a change of taste and choice of potential guests. In the 1960s. the movement of commercial activity away from downtown areas in many American cities hastened the demise of many hotels and businesses. The stately Russel Erskine Hotel, so proudly rooted on Clinton Avenue, could not move with the new development and economic opportunities outside its

downtown site. Measures to uplift and revive the hotel were short lived. But even after the heyday of the hotel, people and organizations still came to fine luncheons and meetings there. In March of 1971, the Russel Erskine Hotel closed its doors to transient guests. Its only business thereafter was to cater to conventions, civic clubs and special accommodations.

Many well-intentioned plans of a succession of owners to revive the hotel were unsuccessful. Consequently, the hotel was auctioned off to the First Alabama Bank in 1975 for \$300,000, which included the furnishings. Interestingly, this was far less than the construction cost of \$1,500,000 in 1929. If this was not indignity enough to the landmark hotel, in May of 1979 its contents went on sale. For thirty days the hotel was opened to the public to buy whatever they wanted.

The First Freewill Baptist Church bought the ballroom's main chandelier and the lobby's four metal chandeliers within the first half-hour of the sale. Visitors and buyers rummaged through the halls of the once proud hotel, looking at price tags on the furnishings, and eventually removing the trappings of the hotel. Perhaps they bought for their own use, to resell, or to obtain a precious keepsake of the place that held for them a fond memory of a "Cotton Ball," an unforgettable evening for a debutante, or honeymoon. By any account, it was the wake of the hotel.

Ironically, in 1978 the Russel Erskine Hotel was considered as a county-state work-release center for the Department of Corrections. Reportedly, a proponent of the idea said that, "It looks like the building was just built for this purpose."

Finally and happily on September 15, 1983 the Russel Erskine reopened its doors as a high-rise complex for the elderly and disabled. Renovated for \$3.6 million by local business people working with the Huntsville Preserva-

tion Authority the memory, the brilliance, and the hotel building itself has been revived. Huntsville's premier landmark of the 30s and 40s remains, except now it serves to house its residents permanently - not as temporary guests. While the new tenants still share much of the same ambiance of this venerable building as the former occupants, still there is a distinction between a hotel and a high rise apartment house. But one fact is indisputable, the new residents still have magnificent views from their windows and residents of any time have lived in a part of Huntsville's history.

Note by James Record:

Russel Erskine, born in 1871, was a native Huntsvillian who achieved fame as the president of the Studebaker Automobile Company. Among the many charitable causes he was involved in was Maple Hill Cemetery. He added an extension in 1918 and erected the present entrance as a memorial to his mother, Sue Ragland Erskine. He is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery in the same annex he added.

A Real Jail

In 1866 the brick jail of Somerville, burned to the ground. The prisoners were carried to Blountsville and held there until a wooden building was built to replace the old jail.

In 1965 this house still stood - the property of J.R. Ransom, merchant, former mayor and justice of the peace at Somerville.

What makes this item unique is the fact that the room in which the prisoners were confined has walls thickly studded with nails to prevent jail breaks. Ninety-six kegs of nails are said to have been used in this preventive measure!

Often Served Desserts of 1860

Green Corn Pudding

Take a half dozen ears of green sweet corn (good size) and with a sharp pointed knife split each row of kernels, and scrape from the ear. Mix with this pulp two eggs, well beaten, two tablespoons sugar, one of butter, one salt-spoon of salt, half pint sweet cream, and one dozen crackers - grated or pounded very fine. Mix well together, and bake three hours in a pudding dish in a slow oven.

Brown Betty

Take two dozen fine, large apples, and cut them into thin slices, pare them if preferred, but it is not necessary. Crumb up a loaf of stale bread. Take a deep pudding dish, put in a layer of bread crumbs, then one of apples, sprinkle over them some brown sugar, put in a piece of butter, and any spice that may be preferred, then sprinkle in a very little cold water. Put on another layer of crumbs, and then the apple, sugar, butter, spice, and water again. Go on until the dish is full, making the top layer of apple. Bake in a quick oven. Eat hot, with sugar and butter, or wine sauce.

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The Youngest Soldier

by Norman Shapiro

Of the many claims that prevailed after the War Between the States as to who may have been the youngest Confederate soldier, Berry H. Binford's chronicle was certainly one of the more valid ones. Berry was a member of the large Binford family who were early and prominent residents of Limestone, Madison and Morgan counties, Alabama. His first cousin, once removed, Peter Binford, volunteered for the infantry despite being almost 44 years old and was probably the first person from Huntsville to die in the war when he fell sick and died in Virginia, May 20, 1861.

Berry was born in Limestone County, Alabama, on April 14, 1854. His father, Dr. Littleberry H. Binford, was a surgeon in the Confederate Army. The boy, when about 9 years old, struck out to find his father and reported to General Wheeler who took him to be a Federal spy sent in by some of the Union people. The General kept an eye on the little chap, and finally turned him over to Col. Josiah

Patterson, Commander of the 5th Alabama Cavalry, who knew Dr. Binford and at once assumed the care of the boy. As he would not go back home, a pony was secured for him, a gun was sawed off the proper length and he was recognized from that time on to the end of the war as a soldier.

It is said that young Binford and another boy, not much older, undertook to do a little special service at one time. They went out between the lines, somewhere up in North Alabama, threw up some small breastworks and awaited the advance of the Federals on the opposite side of a small river. The column came in sight and the boys opened fire as if backed by an army, which the Federals naturally supposed to be a fort. The boys held the fort a whole day and when night came on they scampered off and rejoined their command several miles away.

Berry H. Binford died while on a business trip to Monroe, Louisiana, September 12, 1889. Some years later, Col. Josiah Patterson wrote on June 26, 1897, "B. H. Binford came to my regiment when a mere child. I would say that he was not exceeding twelve

years of age. He was the son of Dr. Binford, a well known physician in North Alabama, whom I knew well. The father, when I saw him, represented that the boy had such a passion for the army he thought it best not to control him, because otherwise he might run away and join some other command. Binford was certainly the youngest soldier I ever saw, and he performed the duties of a soldier with alacrity. He was a child in arms, but bore himself in an astonishingly manly way."

With regard to "a child in arms," a Mr. W.R. Johnson of Nashville, Tenn., also wrote in 1897 in Confederate Veteran, "I am the youngest Rebel in existence; was fourteen months of age when, on the 19th of May, 1863, I lost my right arm while held to my father's breast when fighting in the saddle for our dear but lost Confederacy."

When you are right no one remembers. When you are wrong, no one forgets.

Earl Frazier

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know well enough and therefore are always afraid, it should happen.

One sees few whites almost not as many as blacks which are very friendly giving up the hat to the soldiers. We perpetually have 50 to 80 blacks that must hew timber for new fortresses, or do other work. These were slaves in the country about (here) and must work whether they want or not, there is always a guard by them. I have good hours since I am the company's bugler, (I) need to do no watch, and no rifle to carry. Only to practice an hour each morning. However, the boys have it fairly hard, every other day on picket, and each day a unit goes out to scout after bushwhackers, but up to now have found



A Soldier's Letter Home

A fact not commonly known in Huntsville is that many of the Union troops stationed here during the "Late Great Unpleasantness" were Germans who could neither speak nor write the English language. The following letter was originally written in German.

Huntsville, Alabama 6 Aug 1864

Dear Brother-in-law & Sister'

May these bare lines meet with you in good health. I am so far right hale and hearty. I want to let you know in short how it looks here and what

happens. We have so far been fortunate, having still lost no man through the enemy, although the bushwhackers are fairly thick in the vicinity.

Our regiment lies near the city on a hill where (there) is a fortress with 8 cannons which can be used over the city and all around the whole region. The city is very beautiful but has gained much damage through the war already. We have no danger, only if we should be attacked at night, and if that happens the whole city will explode into the air and burn up, what the citizens



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no opposition. Last night the report came that a 400 man enemy cavalry was approaching, whereupon the pickets were immediately doubled, but did not let themselves be seen just yet, should they attempt it, so we are ready for them, in order to welcome (them) warmly.

The land here is excellent and very much cotton was planted, but the fences are all gone, therefore (they) must widen deep ditches around the fields as fences. For 2 weeks it has rained almost every night here, huge bad storms move through the valley. The old man who lives in the flat, his son who is in our company, you know him also, he is a handsome big boy, will probably die, since he has an extreme fever. Yesterday he was admitted into the hospital, and last night he jumped from the window 3 stories high since he is sometimes out of his head. I visited him this morning, he said he had not hurt himself, that can't be. We all regret his loss since he was an excellent corporal.

There is talk in circulation that we are coming to Indiana for the election, which I much doubt since we are

necessary here, still it could be possible. We are 310 miles from Indianapolis, it is very hot here, but yet we have good water, there is a spring here as large and even stronger as the long branch. I wanted to receive a few lines from you, how you are and what gives otherwise. I wait already next to 2 weeks for a letter from Susanna, and still have none, what is the reason, I do not know. Many greetings to Fredrich, Kaspar, Calander, Graf, Stollens, Brebner, and all acquaintance. The next time I will write more, since I am in a hurry. If we should come to Indianapolis, then I will also come home, the company can go as it wants. In anticipation of your answer, I remain Your dear brother-in-law and brother

My address is John Drexel, Company CO 13th Ind. Cav. vol 5
Huntsville, Alabama

A good memory is what enables you to remember a mistake each time you repeat it.
Laura Hambrick
Housewife

Whiskey in Hollywood, Alabama

Before the Eighteenth Amendment was added to our Constitution, all alcohol (legal) was shipped into Hollywood by railway express. Until the "spirits" could be claimed by the customer, they were stored in the depot. (In Hollywood the freight depot, the passenger depot, the express depot, and the Western Union telegraph office were the same.)

Someone, name unknown, between the years 1880 and 1890, tried to drain the whiskey from the barrels by boring holes through the warehouse floor. Something went wrong. The whiskey went everywhere but where intended. Someone struck a match to find the problem and correct it. A lot of good drinking whiskey went up in a flash and Hollywood needed a new depot minutes later.

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From the desk of James Record

Actor Harry Rhett Townes' life is the success story of a Huntsvillian who became a star of stage, screen, radio and television.

Born on Eustis Street on Sept. 18, 1914, to Charles Lee Townes and Dean Halsey Townes, he graduated from Huntsville High School in 1933, where he was elected class president. Then he attended University of Alabama for three years and graduated from Columbia University in New York City. His career as an actor began in 1936 in a Broadway theater production. Critics were quick to take notice of the young actor and within a short time he was offered parts in many other plays. After several years as a New Yorker, Townes was drawn to the lure of the Big Screen in Hollywood.

Hollywood was in its heyday and Townes worked with many living legends. One of them, Spencer Tracy, became a close friend.

A diverse actor, Townes played a wide variety of roles ranging from appearances on *Gunsmoke* to *Shakespeare's Twelfth Night*. He gained

national recognition with his performances as John Wilkes Booth on *G.E. Theater* and *The Andersonville Trials*, in which he starred with Charleton Heston.

A special tribute to Townes' success occurred when he was chosen to be Parade Grandmaster in Palm Springs, Calif.

A man of deep convictions, he surprised many of his Hollywood constituents in 1955 by entering an Episcopal seminary. He was ordained into the priesthood by Bishop Roback in the Los Angeles Cathedral.

Remembering the happy years of childhood, Harry moved back to Huntsville in 1989. Ironically he now lives just two doors from his boyhood home.

While performing together in a production of *Tobacco Road* he met and fell in love with Sally Sanderson-Day. They were married in Santa Fe, N.M., on Aug. 14, 1991.

The acting career of Harry Townes spanned over a half century, during which time he gave ample reason for all Huntsvillians to be proud.

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How To Use Your Telephone

These are the actual rules taken from a 1917 telephone book.

1. Use The Directory. Never try to remember a telephone number. It's all right if you do remember it; but to try to remember is to begin to guess. If you have the least doubt about it, look it up and thus save time and trouble. (As a matter of fact, you know, you have no more right to disturb a subscriber by guessing that his number is the one you want than you have to disturb him in any other entirely needless way.)

2. Spell Out All Numbers, by giving each figure separately, as "Main one, three, seven, nine," for "Main 1379." The following of this rule is essential to good service. A majority and "thirteen," "twenty-three," and "thirty-three, etc., which sound so much alike over the telephone; also to the fact that subscribers do not correct the operator if she repeats the wrong number.

3. Speak Distinctly, especially when giving the number to the operator, and when talking over a toll line. Talk into the mouthpiece, loud and close enough so they can hear you easily.

4. Answer Your Bell Promptly. A ring means a friend is calling you - don't make him wait, or perhaps miss you entirely.

5. Call Central by giving the crank two or three quick turns. Don't ring too long. Always ring off when



through talking.

6. Until Your Bell Stops Ringing, do not remove the telephone from the hook.

7. Be Brief but courteous to the operators. We require them to be so to you. They have no time to converse with you. Courtesy, like virtue, is its own reward, but pays extra dividends in connection with the telephone ser-

vice. Try it! P.S. By the way, when you know that a false call is due entirely to your careless use of the wrong number, why not acknowledge it to the "innocent bystander" who answers the call? Why leave the operator to shoulder the blame?

8. Call For "Information" when you can't find the telephone number you want, or to get answers to any questions regarding subscribers' names, numbers and addresses.

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The Manager. To be most effective they should be not only prompt but should describe accurately the trouble encountered. Many forms of trouble look alike at first, and most of them we will not know about till you tell us. If you can't get Central at all, call up from a neighbor's or send us a postal card.

10. **Advertise That You Have A Telephone**, but don't put its "number" on your letterheads, bill heads, cards and wagons. Why? Because this only increases the amount of trying to remember such numbers by the public -- also the continued use of obsolete numbers -- which in turn only hurts the service and doesn't help your business at all. Think this over.

*The older a man gets, the faster
he could run as a boy.*

Roger Moore
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Make Your Own Cosmetics

Lemon hair spray

You will need one lemon and 2 cups of water. Take your lemon and chop it up well in a wooden bowl. Add the lemon to the top of a double boiler in which you have put the 2 cups of water. Simmer til the mixture is reduced by about half. Strain this through cheesecloth or a fine silk cloth and pour the liquid into a pump type sprayer. This is gentle, with no alcohol or chemical additions, and can be used for children as well as adults.

Facial mask

1 tablespoon yogurt
1 tablespoon honey
Mix the two together and apply to you clean, moist face. Pat this mask onto the skin for a moisturizing and penetrating application that will hydrate and soothe the face, and help to



clear up skin problems.

Perfect skin oil

1 ounce each of soy oil, safflower oil, wheat germ oil, orange oil, peanut oil, corn oil, and vitamin E oil. Mix in 3 drops each of lemon oil and orange oil. Mix all in 8 ounce bottle and store. This is excellent for use on body and face, as a moisturizer and skin food.

Underarm Deodorant

5 drops of lavender or lemon oil
1/2 cup water
Mix the above in a pump bottle, shake up each time before use. Spray directly to the underarm area.

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General Household Directions from 1860



If possible have the washing done on Monday, as there is no more sure sign of a poor housekeeper than to delay the washing till the latter part of the week, when it can be as well done on Monday but for the lack of energy and decision.

Let there be no neglected corners in any part of your establishment. In some homes, the front rooms are kept nice, while others are in a disorderly state.

Inspect your cellar and wood-house often, and let every place be kept neat.

You can best purify water by straining it through a sieve or flower-pot, in which are poured pounded charcoal and fine sand.

To keep a turkey in its enclosure, clip the outer wing feathers at the top - just one side.

To wash your black silks - warm some beer, add some milk to it, then wash your silk in this liquid, and it will give it a fine color.

Children should not be permitted to use spices with their food, to avoid acquiring a taste for them.

Apples should remain out of

doors in barrels till the weather becomes too cold. Pick them over occasionally, as one defective apple may injure the lot.

When a cask of molasses is bought, draw off a few quarts, else the fermentation produced by moving it will burst the cask.

Soup should never be permitted to remain in metal pots, families have sometimes been poisoned in this way.

Use of a little salt in sponge cake, custards, and the articles used for desserts made of gelatin, rice, sago, tapioca and macaroni is a great improvement, giving both body and flavor.

The best means to preserve blankets from moths is to fold them and lay them under the featherbeds that are in use, shaking them occasionally.

Bread and cakes keep moist in a tin. A closet, called a safe for keeping food in the cellar, is an important convenience for keeping meat, bread, milk and butter.

The following tips are taken from an old book sent to us by F.M Loyd of Bridgeport, Alabama, called the American Practical Cookery-Book," Many thanks to Mr. Loyd for loan of the book!

Don't wait for an unpleasant surprise...

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The President's Visit to Huntsville

by Jack Harwell

On a spring day in the year 1819 the President of the United States came to Huntsville -- unannounced and on horseback! James Monroe, then in his third year in the nation's highest office, was in the midst of a tour of the southern states, accompanied by his private secretary and an army officer. He had left Washington on March 30 and made stops in Norfolk, Charleston, and Savannah before turning inland. He was enroute from Athens, Georgia to Nashville, Tennessee when he rode into town on June 1st.

The timing of the president's visit couldn't have been better, for Huntsville was in the midst of preparations for the state Constitutional Convention. Excitement mounted as word spread of the great man's presence in the city; even the prospect of impending statehood was momentarily overshadowed as the President rode through the streets in plain sight of all.

The manner of Mr. Monroe's arrival caused almost as much a stir as the presidential visit itself. At a time when heads of state traveled in gilded carriages accompanied by a small army of soldiers and attendants, the President's simple mode of travel appealed to everyone and reinforced their image of America as a country gov-

erned by people like themselves. The citizens of Huntsville took an immediate liking to their president, who spoke freely to anyone who greeted him.

Nonetheless, the visit was a major event, and a committee was soon appointed to greet the President more formally. The committee was headed by none other than Clement Comer Clay, the head of the committee to draft the Alabama State Constitution. LeRoy Pope, at that time Huntsville's most prominent citizen, was there also. The committee called on Mr. Monroe at his inn, where Mr. Clay welcomed the President to the city and invited him to a formal dinner to be held in his honor the next day at 4 o'clock.

The next day, Wednesday, June 2, more than one hundred of Madison County's most respected citizens gathered in a large assembly hall to honor the President. In addition to the food, there were a number of toasts -- 21 of them, according to the Alabama Republican, the weekly newspaper that was published here at the time. There were salutes first to the country, the Constitution, and the memory of George Washington, and eventually a toast to the territory of Alabama, proposed by the President himself. Each toast was accompanied by cannon fire and appropriate music. It must have been noisy that afternoon.

On Thursday, the President and his party departed for Nashville. He left behind him many new friends, for he had favorably impressed everyone with his down-home manner. Many of them accompanied him several miles on his way northward. He now seemed to be "more like a plain citizen than the Chief Magistrate of a great nation," stated the Republican. "The unostentatious manners of this truly great man are eminently calculated to endear him to everybody, and more particularly to those who had associated ideas of reverential fear, with human exaltation."

It was no surprise that the Monroe administration came to be known as the "Era of Good Feeling."

For Huntsville, the excitement was just beginning. Just a month after the President's visit, the state Constitutional Convention met in the assembly hall at the intersection of Franklin and Gates Streets. Before the year was over, at that same location, Thomas Bibb would be sworn in as the first governor of the new state of Alabama. The estimable Mr. Clay would go on to serve his state as Senator, Representative, and Governor. LeRoy Pope later became county judge.



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First Lots Sold in Huntsville

The letter copied below gives an authentic account of the transaction which resulted in Twickenham, now Huntsville, becoming the county seat of Madison County, and the first sale of town lots in Huntsville:

Sugar Forest, 11th Jul., 1810

Messrs. Jackson and Anderson.

I returned yesterday from Huntsville. Major Walker and myself after several days hard negotiations with the Commissioners, did on the 5th July inst., enter into terms for fixing the seat of Justice and laying out a town at Huntsville.

You may readily expect from the delay that we had much difficulty in establishing that as the permanent site—we had Col. Ward against us in and throughout the whole proceedings, with all his eloquence and oratory as well in the Cabinet with closed doors, as in a Stump Speech to the populace.

The terms are these, the town was

first laid out say to the amount of sixty acres, with the public square in the center, we then run a line through the center and gave to the Commissioners their choice half, or side of the town to the amount of 30 acres at \$23.50 per acre, the proprietors bound to convey all their right under government with a quit claim deed only—giving the town free use of the water for all necessary and ordinary purposes, but reserving to the proprietors the sole right of the soil in and around the spring and its branch, so that they may at any time erect any machinery they may think proper, etc.

On the 5th in the evening we opened the sales, and the Commissioners finding lots sell well immediately opened theirs, which impeded the sale of ours, they sold 24 lots and we sold 4 in the whole 28 lots sold for upward of \$8000 dollars, the Commissioners have yet to sell 10 lots and the proprietors 34 — We concluded it would be better to postpone the sale for a further notice when I think you will have no reason to complain of your speculation. I have with me a plan of Twickenham, the seat of Justice for Madison County, Mississippi Territory, and a copy of the articles of agreement between the proprietors and Commissioners, etc. which I will have the pleasure to lay before you in a few days

Lots sold for \$750, — 715 — 617 — 500 — 616 — 515 — 385 — 367 — and from that down to \$100 on the outside — the proprietors have yet four lots on the public square that are equally valuable with those sold.

I am, Gentlemen, yours with esteem

John Coffee

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ALABAMA'S LOST CAPITAL

by Stefanie Callaway

When the Alabama Constitutional Convention first convened in 1819, the most pressing matter at hand was the location of Alabama's permanent state capital. The temporary site in St. Stephens was considered too far to the south, and the Huntsville site, near the Tennessee line, too far north. Governor Bibb quickly recognized the need for a more central location for the state's first seat of government.

After much discussion, a site was agreed upon. The point where the Cahaba River met the Alabama River in Dallas County had all the requirements outlined by the commission formed to select the site. Its proximity to the two rivers and central location made it a perfect choice for cottonshipping as well as governmental functions. And the fact that much of the land being considered was owned by wealthy, politically important planters was not overlooked. The site was officially approved in November of 1818

and while the new capitol was being developed, the temporary capitol was moved to Huntsville.

In October of the following year, Governor Bibb announced that the layout of the new capital town of Cahaba was complete and lots were to be auctioned off to the highest bidders. Using the city of Philadelphia as a model, the planners named the streets running north and south for trees, and streets running east and west were named for famous men.

Prospective landowners from all over the state rushed to the area and quickly bought up the choice property. The first Capitol building, a large, two-story, brick structure, was erected with much fanfare and it soon was surrounded by a bustling, burgeoning, boomtown. By 1820, the capital town of Cahaba boasted two newspapers, and many fine shops, churches, and doctors and lawyers offices stood on its tree-lined streets. With its fine residences, many of them stately brick mansions, and private boarding houses

catering to state dignitaries and legislators, Cahaba was considered not only the governmental but also the cultural center of Alabama. The social whirlwind of the town culminated in an annual gala at the grand Bell Tavern, an event attended by the most influential and wealthy residents of Alabama. It was not an uncommon site to see ladies and their escorts dressed in the most elegant fashions of the day, trudging along, up to their knees in mud, intent on being among the first visitors to Alabama's most talked about social gathering.

Then in 1825 the first death knell for Cahaba sounded. A devastating flood of the Cahaba River destroyed a large portion of the capitol building rendering it all but useless and many of the fine homes, schools, and flourishing businesses of the town suc-



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cumbed to the raging waters. A decision was made after much heated debate to move the capital to Tuscaloosa. Cahaba struggled to regain its position as a leading cotton shipping point, and as the seat of wealthy Dallas County, it did remain vital for a time. But when the Civil War broke out the town's young men deserted Cahaba to defend their besieged flag. The abandoned buildings of Cahaba became the site of a prison for captured Union soldiers called Castle Morgan and by October 1864 housed over 2000 prisoners.

When the Civil War was lost, a society that depended mainly on slave labor was destroyed. After another devastating flood in the Spring of 1865 struck the crumbling town, the combination of war, flood, and economic destruction brought a final and rapid demise to the grand old town. When the county seat was moved to nearby Selma, the majority of Cahaba's inhabitants went with it, leaving Cahaba a virtual ghost town.

Ironically, just before the turn of the century, the site of the former illustrious capital was bought for \$500 by a former slave. The town was razed, and the bricks and lumber were carted

off to help build neighboring towns, leaving the land to eventually return to its natural state.

Today, the only remnant of Cahaba is a historical marker at the turn onto a dirt road about 5 miles southeast of Selma. Walking along this road, the only evidence you might find would be a few crumbling bricks, or maybe a hand full of rusty, hand-forged nails under the overgrown brush and shrubs that have reclaimed the site that was once the capital of Alabama.



Jail Break

A prisoner in the Limestone County jail recently received a letter containing merely a lock of hair wrapped in the leaf of a small book. The jailer did not consider the souvenir important enough to be delivered, but a few days after came a similar enclosure, and yet another.

This aroused suspicion, and the sheriff took the matter in hand. He examined the leaf of the book. It was only that of a common novel, twenty-six lines on a page. Then he studied the hair and noticed the small quantity of the gift. Counting the hair he found them of unequal length, and twenty-six in number, the same as the lines of the page.

Struck with the coincidence, he laid the hairs on the line of the page which they respectively reached, beginning at the top with the smallest hair. After some trouble he found that the end of each hair pointed to a different letter, and that these letters combined formed a slang sentence which informed the prisoner that his friends were on the watch, and that the next time he left the prison to be examined an attempt would be made to rescue him. The sheriff laid his plans accordingly, but the rescuers fell into their own trap.

from 1875 newspaper

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THE DOCTOR SEZ

by Dr. Annelie Owens

An aneurysm is a permanent swelling, or ballooning outward, of an artery usually caused by the weakening of the vessel wall. This condition can be caused by congenital weakness in the blood vessel walls, high blood pressure, infection, arteriosclerosis and some types of injuries. An aneurysm can form anywhere in the body, but the most common areas are the arteries of the brain, and the aorta. The aorta is the large major artery through which the heart pumps blood to the rest of the body.

Sometimes an aneurysm will produce some symptoms, but it is possible that a person can have one without knowing it. These may only be detected on an X-ray or be felt during a physical examination. Sometimes an aneurysm will press on an internal organ, causing pain or other problems. Also, a person may feel a pulsating sensation in the area of the large abdominal aortic artery that could be caused by an aneurysm. If the supportive strength of the artery is weakened as a result of congenital defect, normal pressure of blood in the affected artery causes a balloon-like swelling. Such aneurysms, called saccular aneurysms, are nearly

always found in arteries at the base of the brain. Because of their shape and the manner in which they cluster together, they are known as "berry" aneurysms. Nothing can be done about these aneurysms since a person will not be aware that there is one unless it breaks.

Aneurysms can cause trouble in many ways. Rupture is the major danger. Depending upon the location and amount of bleeding, a ruptured aneurysm can produce shock, loss of consciousness and death. An aneurysm can swell so much that it damages neighboring organs, nerves, or other blood vessels. Also, it can disturb the flow of blood - resulting in the formation of dangerous clots in the blood vessel. This could result in heart attack or

stroke. Sometimes an aneurysm will bleed into the wall of an artery and block some of its branches. This occurs most often in the aorta.

Surgery is the usual treatment for an aneurysm, but this can be difficult depending upon its location and size. Abdominal aneurysms, as well as those in peripheral arteries, are usually a less serious problem. The best ways to prevent aneurysms are to take steps to prevent or slow down atherosclerosis and to keep your high blood pressure under control. If you have any symptoms of an aneurysm or if you have an unexplained development of a lump anywhere on your body, especially on your abdomen, and particularly if it throbs, your physician should be consulted immediately.

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Suicide at the Russel Erskine

"Suicide!"

"A man is on top of the Russel Erskine Hotel and he's gonna jump!"

Within minutes all the citizens of downtown had heard the news. Eagerly, almost morbidly, they rushed to the scene of the impending tragedy. The street in front of the hotel became a mass of swirling humanity as crowds jostled for a better look.

"Someone said he works at the Arsenal and he just got a letter from his wife saying she is leaving him."

This news, by some unidentified source, was quickly consumed and spread by the four winds to the crowds

who were now grasping at every morsel of new information.

Suddenly the still night air was rent by the screeching sounds of police cars arriving on the scene. Emerging from their cars the policemen began pushing the crowds back with night sticks, trying to establish some sense of order.

"Be careful. He's got a gun," yelled a voice from out of the darkness.

The crowd ran scurrying for cover and the policemen quickly ducked behind their automobiles for safety.

When a few minutes had passed with no shots being fired, the throng, now emboldened by the latest developments, began surging forward. The crowd now numbered in the hundreds and was growing larger by the minute.

While the police were frantically working to regain control, the sounds of a woman screaming emerged above the noise of the mob. The crowd had inadvertently pushed her into a store front window, breaking the glass, and now she was running hysterically down

the street with blood streaming down her arms. Before the police could reach her, another woman began screaming. This woman had been knocked down by the crowd jostling for a better look.

Sensing that something had to be done, and quickly, the brave officers of the Huntsville Police Department drew their pistols and resolutely began making their way to the front entrance of the hotel where the unseen assailant lay in wait.

There was no hesitation in the purposeful stride of the policemen on that cold day in 1942. This was their town and this was their job. Someone had to take charge and they were the ones.

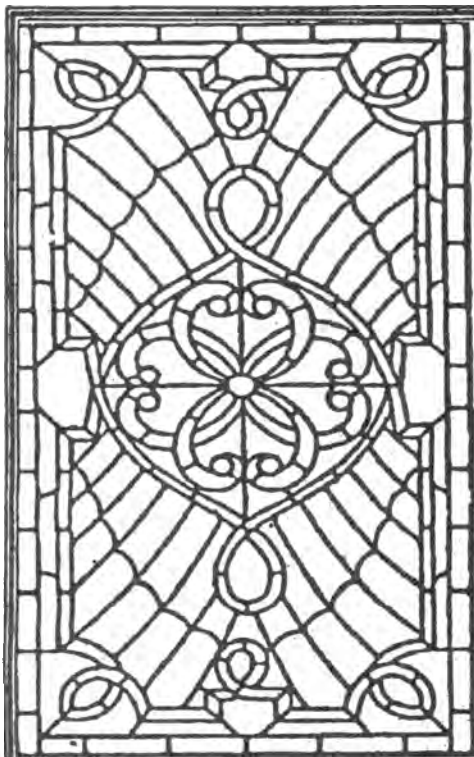
Cautiously, with their guns drawn, they took the elevator to the top floor. The men were silent, probably thinking of their loved ones and the danger that lay ahead.

History does not record the name of the first policeman to exit onto the roof, ready to do battle with the fiend lurking in the shadows. Nor is there the name of the man who, after receiving the dear John letter, tried to commit suicide.

You see ... It never happened. There was no Dear John letter and there was no man man on top of the hotel.

Some unknown person had started the rumor and within minutes downtown had been caught up in a frenzied state of anticipation. Every rumor became fact and every fantasy became reality.

And with every passing year the story became even more exaggerated. To this day there are people who will point at a spot on the sidewalk in front of the old hotel and tell you that it is where the "Dear John" jumper ended his life.



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Letters To The Penny Pincher

Dear Penny

Save your 1/2 gallon milk cartons. Remove staples from the top, wash and dry them thoroughly. Stack them away. During the fish and shrimp season, seafood can be placed in cartons, covered with water, stapled shut and placed in the freezer. After the cartons are frozen they can be stacked upright or sideways to conserve room in the freezer. The seafood will taste very fresh when thawed.

Millie McDonald, Jackson, Tn.

Dear Penny

Stop spending money (and calories) on high-priced sodas. Instead, take a slice of lemon, squeeze it into a tall glass. Fill with ice then water. It's an inexpensive refresher and a great weight-loss aid, too. My kids even ask for "lemon water" instead of soft drinks.

Eileen Cleary, Glenside, Pa.

Dear Penny,

This is for people who really enjoy shopping. Don't take any money or credit cards with you when you go.

This tip will always save you money.
Tom Carney, Huntsville, Al.

To the Penny Pincher,

Buy your favorite soap on sale with coupons. Get at least twelve bars to make this work. Unwrap each one, and stack them neatly in your towel closet. As they dry out, you will find that the soap will last longer in your shower or bath, and the smell is terrific!

Cathey Carney, Huntsville, Al.

Think carefully before purchasing a service contract on a new product you have purchased. Some of them are excellent, but others will likely never be used, and therefore are a waste of money. If they weren't such a great money maker for the company, you wouldn't see them offered on so many different items.

A good example of "after purchase options" that will eat up lots of your money wastefully is the choice of extras you can buy after purchasing a new car. We bought a new car one year ago. The salesman explained that the auto dealer makes most of his money on those extras, not on the sale of the car. He told us to just say "no" to all the various things they would try to sell us. We did, and saved several thousand dollars.

Alan Iglehart, Penny Pincher Ed.

Dear Penny,

I have friends who once owned an elegant restaurant, in Port Jefferson, who used to decorate the tables with flowers from funeral homes. Amusingly, the restaurant was located in what once was a funeral parlor!

Elena Eritta, Nesconset, NY

Did you realize that 36 million trees are destroyed each year to make disposable diapers? It takes 14 trees for each baby. Cloth diapers can be used for hundreds of times, can be handed down to the next child, and can later be used as cleaning rags.


The Penny Pincher, Kings Park, NY

Editor's Note

As the economy gets tighter, it will be up to each of us to find and use creative ways of saving money. You will find so many ideas in each issue of the Penny Pincher, you will save each copy, as we do. A subscription is only \$12 a year, and comes out monthly. Send a check to The Penny Pincher, P.O. Box 809, Kings Park, N 11754-0809 or send a stamp and a SASE and get a free sample!



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Robert May



Cont. from page 27

Kenny Fox drove in from Madison.

Congrats to **Annelie Owens** on shooting an eagle the other day on the sixth hole (from 50 yards out) at Redstone Arsenal golf course. That is difficult. I, myself, almost had a hole-in-one yesterday, but my ball clipped the toe of a giraffe.

Bobby Ledbetter Sr. was in El Mexicano Restaurant the other day reminding us that his educated daughter, Johnson High grad **Kathy Dulong**, teaches Spanish at South Pittsburg High School.

CELEBRATING a birthday on Sept. 28 was **Monkee Childress**, manager of Moody Monday's nightery. He and pals gathered at The End Zone for the big event.

T-Bird Huck and Chicago's popular Blues Busters will play the Turning Pointe Oct. 28 & 29, then at a Halloween bash in Monte Sano amphi-

theater on Sun., Oct. 31 with Microwave Dave's Nukes, the Crawlers and the Blues Report. Blues and jazz musician John McFarland entertained at The Point the other night while **David Peebles** and pals listened.

Mike Esslinger drove from Nashville to breakfast at Eunice's with his pal **Billy Thompson** the other day. At the next table were **Brad and Vicki Korb** with Indiana visitors **Eric and Lisa MacDougall**. **Charlie Taylor's** son **Justin**, 8, showed up sporting a *Fancy Floyd* haircut.

Piper Blevins with **Clark and David Williams** are happily operating the just-opened *String Shop* music store in Parkway City.

Wes Starr, drummer for the Hal Ketchum band, made a surprise appearance at Jay's Lounge a few weeks back to check out **The Crawlers**, the house band. If you have not seen this band, then check 'em out. They are **GOOD!**



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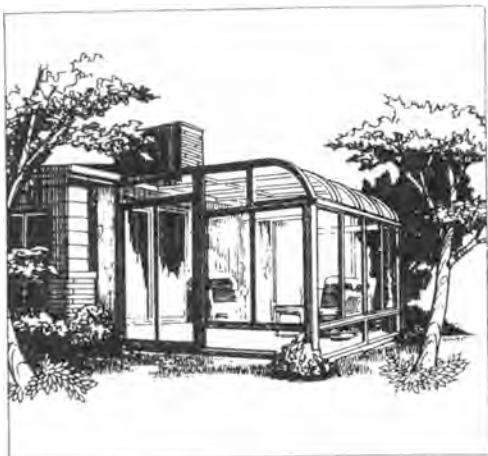


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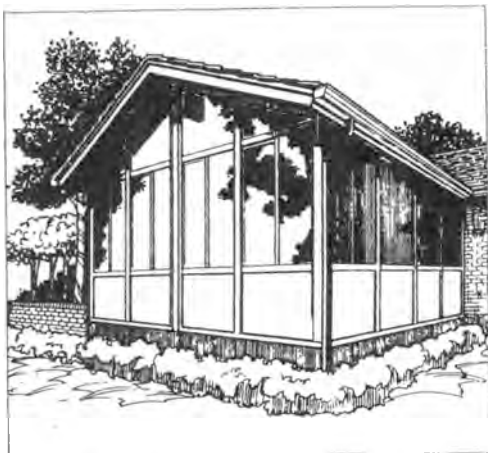
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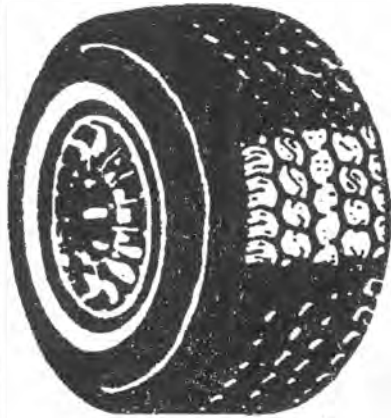


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