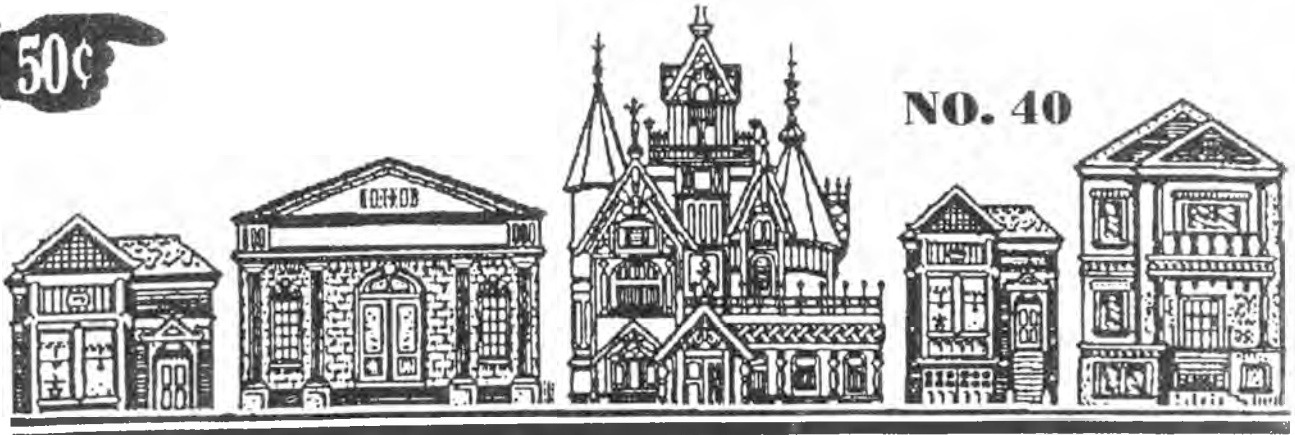


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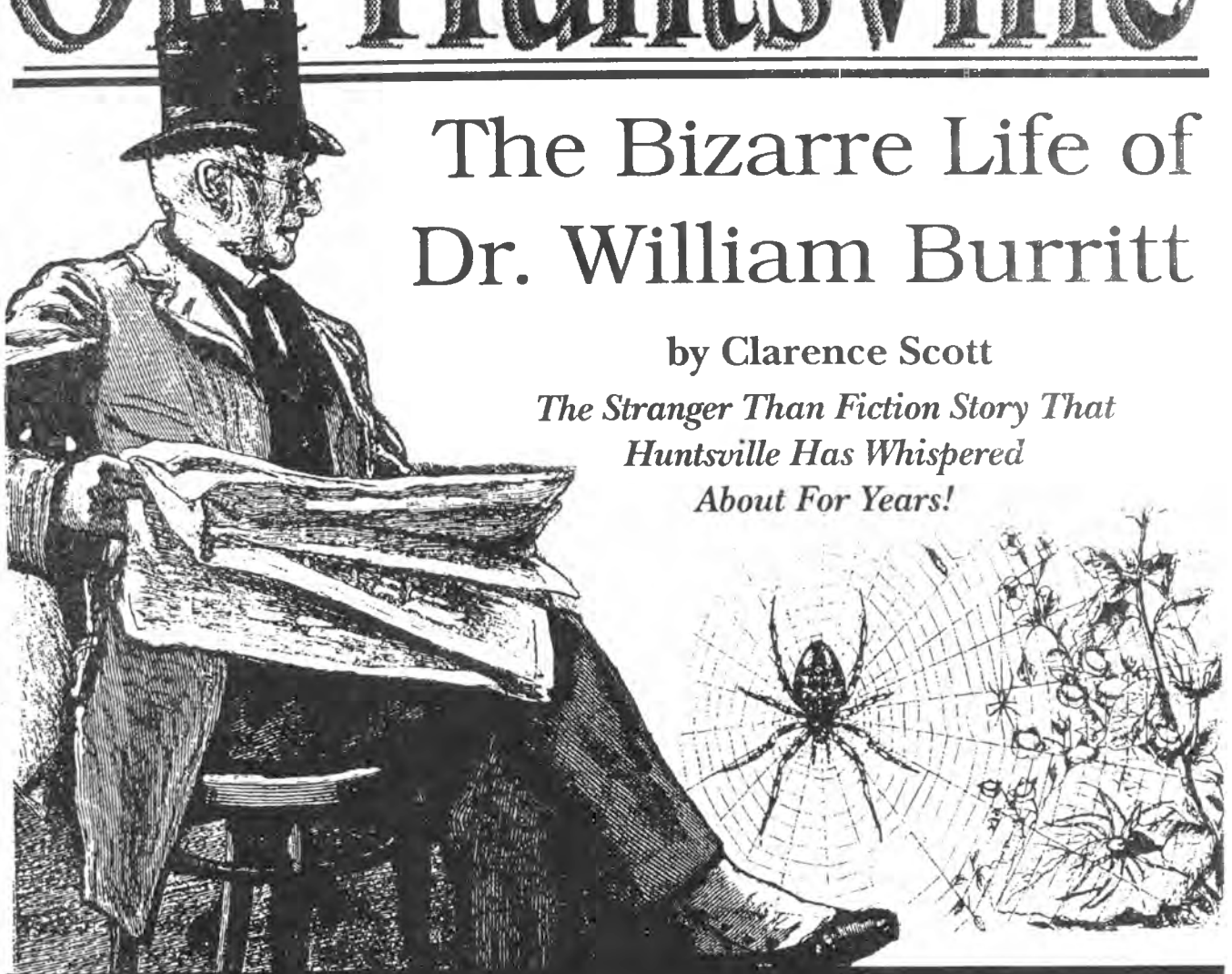


Old Huntsville

The Bizarre Life of Dr. William Burritt

by Clarence Scott

*The Stranger Than Fiction Story That
Huntsville Has Whispered
About For Years!*



Also in this issue: Early Days of Redstone Arsenal

The Bizarre Life Of Dr Burritt

by Clarence Scott

He was practically a recluse. Scorned by Huntsville's high society, (except for when they would stoop to ask him for another charitable contribution) he was ridiculed by most everyone else.

He lived in a fantasy world where the old South still flourished, where insanity was only whispered about behind closed doors and where bizarre behavior was acceptable if one had a proper pedigree and enough wealth.

William Henry Burritt returned to Huntsville after graduating from Vanderbilt Medical School in 1890 and was immediately accepted into the burgeoning city's social circle. Meticulously dressed and well spoken, Burritt seemed to epitomize the breeding and culture of the South.

Burritt's family were among the best known in Huntsville. His maternal grandfather, Black Bill Robinson, had served as sheriff in Huntsville between 1842 and 1852. After Black Bill's early death from cancer, his widow built the mansion known as Quietdale Plantation. Burritt's father was a well respected doctor who through various business dealings had accumulated a sizable fortune before his untimely death.

The only blemish on Burritt's

family biography was, to him, his mother, Mary Robinson Burritt. She had been displaying unpredictable behavior for some time and Burritt, painfully aware that three of her brothers had been certified as insane, was undoubtedly troubled. Although Mrs. Burritt was apparently, by today's standards, merely senile, her behavior caused a deeply rooted estrangement from her son.

Burritt lived with his mother, and liked to entertain his friends in their large home (20 rooms). Though there was ample money to hire someone to care for her, Burritt chose to celebrate his 21st birthday by having her committed to an insane asylum where she died 33 years later.

His subsequent actions raised eyebrows among Huntsville's gossips. He filed for a court order to name himself as the owner of his mother's estate.

Inconsistencies in Burritt's personal history have perplexed historians for years. Although biographies of Burritt have listed him as being in the lumber, mercantile and farming business none of it is actually true. These businesses were owned by his family and he listed his occupation as "retired" during this period.

Burritt, as a young man, began displaying traits of paranoia that would follow him throughout his life. When asked about his family or personal life he would give false answers. Interestingly, he never gave the same answer twice. Even records on file with the historic commission contains such a collection of erroneous information that many modern day researchers have thrown up their hands in despair.

In 1892 Burritt met Pearl



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Johnson, the daughter of a visiting Union officer. After a brief courtship of a few months they became engaged and then, for some unexplained reason, he insisted on being wed some place other than Huntsville or Alabama.

The bride-to-be was puzzled, as was the rest of Huntsville society, but nevertheless went along with his request. They were ultimately married in Denver, Colorado, with no friends or family in attendance.

The next few years would have been a comfortable period of Burritt's life if it had not been for his medical practice. He had none! Though he had graduated from medical school he had failed the state examination. This was a source of great humiliation for Burritt. His father had been a doctor as had his grandfather. And perhaps most importantly, the title of doctor carried much social prestige.

It would not be until 1898, after taking the examination three times, that Burritt finally received his license to practice.

Less than 30 days after receiving his license Burritt was again involved in controversy when his wife died suddenly. Church records listed her death as appendicitis but her family maintained it was caused by complications arising from an ill performed abortion. It took the intervention of concerned citizens and friends to prevent Pearl's three brothers from committing bodily harm to Burritt. From that time on, Pearl's family would have nothing to do with Dr. W.H. Burritt.

Burritt was appointed to the position of examining surgeon for the Bureau of Pensions in 1898. This was the only medical position

he ever held and it was largely an honorary one, as it basically consisted of examining ex-soldiers to see if their claims were justified.

Carrie Burritt Matthews, Burritt's only sibling, also became interested in the medical field during this time. Although not a doctor she contributed much of her time

to charitable causes, with the local hospital being her main interest. Her work was cut short when Burritt requested that she go to Waco, Texas to see a drug clinic he was interested in.

After several trips to Texas and back, she left Huntsville for Waco once again and disappeared. Invest-



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tigators never discovered a clue to her whereabouts and Burrirt never explained it.

Several months later, with Carrie still missing, Burrirt served as witness to her husband as he married another woman. Shortly afterwards he gained possession of

Carrie's estate, which provoked bitter anger among the Matthews family.

In 1889, while resting at his summer home on Monte Sano, he was summoned to treat a woman at the Monte Sano Hotel. The woman, Josephine Drummond, had caught diphtheria from drinking contaminated well water.

Josephine was not the type of woman that would ordinarily appeal to Burrirt. A widow, 20 years his senior, she was short, fat and had an overbearing nature, but, she was also very rich. She was the heiress to the vast Drummond tobacco fortune.

It was a whirlwind romance, culminating in an engagement announcement two months later. Again Burrirt insisted on being married out of state with no explanation given.

Life for Burrirt changed drastically after moving to Josephine's home in St. Louis, Missouri. He now lived in a household where servants catered to his every desire and he socialized with some of the most prominent people in the country. Trips to Europe and the Orient were

common and life was an extended holiday.

But there was something missing. Burrirt, clearly felt he did not fit in with St. Louis society.

He began to insist upon being called "Doctor" and would become furious when someone forgot. He changed his family history by omitting the fact that he had a sister and he claimed his mother was from a wealthy New York family. One day he would deny having been married before and then the following day would talk in glowing terms of his first marriage.

Declining to pursue a medical practice, the doctor became a self-styled inventor, claiming to hold over 40 patents. In reality most of the patents were absolutely useless, if not far fetched, and the only two patents that might have had any practical use were purchased from an employee of a tire manufacturing firm. Oddly enough, he never tried to make any money off the patents, preferring, apparently, to keep them as a conversation piece.

His attitude toward other people also begin to change during this period. Researchers at the St. Louis Historical Society maintain that Burrirt, while not cruel, was totally uncaring about anyone that didn't fit into his small circle of acquaintances.

Josephine's family was likely alarmed when they begin to hear stories of Burrirt's bizarre behavior, but had little say in the matter as long as she was happy.

Burrirt and Josephine returned often to Huntsville on visits. While the ladies of the town were awed by Josephine's display of jewelry, (she owned 196 diamonds and 76 sapphires) the men marveled at

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Burritt's apparent success as an inventor. Again, most everything that Burritt revealed about his life in St. Louis was a fabrication.

In 1923 while visiting Huntsville, Burritt became alarmed at the actions of his nephew, Burritt Matthews. Albeit there are still witnesses alive that can testify to his nephew's sanity, Burritt, acting in the role of a doctor, signed the papers to have him committed to the state insane asylum. As one of the reasons for the commitment, Burritt listed "insanity caused by smoking cigarettes."

The nephew died in 1941, according to a marker behind the Burritt mausoleum in Maple Hill cemetery.

Dr. Burritt gained control of his estate.

Josephine Drummond Burritt died of a heart attack in 1935 and Dr. Burritt immediately became persona non grata to her family and St. Louis society.

He moved back to Huntsville within a few months and one of the first things he did after returning was to have a mausoleum built in Maple Hill cemetery. The mausoleum contained places for nine bodies, two of which Burritt filled with his parents and his first wife.

Years later an employee of Burritt's told of accompanying him to the cemetery where Burritt showed him the bodies of his parents. According to the employee, they had both been placed in a single casket, filled with formaldehyde and with a glass "window" for viewing.

Burritt, perhaps remembering the good times he spent on Monte Sano when he was younger, purchased a large tract of land on the mountain to build his home on. In-

stead of sticking to conventional building methods he chose to build it with bales of straw. The bales were stacked to form the walls and covered with a coat of plaster. Though unconventional, everyone agreed that the house was noticeably cooler during the hot summer months.

Unfortunately, the day the home was completed and Burritt was to move in, an electrical short circuit in the basement caused a fire that totally destroyed the home. A

threatened lawsuit against Alabama Power Company produced a \$30,000 out of court settlement and Burritt immediately began rebuilding.

During this time Burritt's behavior began to change drastically. He had always been considered eccentric, and possibly strange, but now he seemed to develop a master-servant complex.

During many of his visits to the construction site Burritt would summon the workers while he ate lunch.

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He would then ignore them while he ate his meal, leaving them patiently standing next to the table, sometimes for as long as 30 or 45 minutes. Upon finishing the meal Burritt would dismiss them from his presence with no explanation given. Other workmen told stories of being ordered to clear the site of rocks, and even though they had wheelbarrows, were forced to carry the rocks by hand while Burritt sat under a tree and watched them.

In 1937 Burritt remarried but the marriage only lasted a short time. Again for reasons never explained, Burritt insisted on being married out of state.

The woman's friends, still living in Huntsville, tell of her being a virtual prisoner on the mountain.

According to her friends, Burritt would place live, poisonous snakes in her bed and warn her that the snakes were the guardians of his property. If she ever tried to leave the property, he said, the snakes would stop her.

When she finally built up the courage to leave, walking off the mountain in the middle of the night,

she immediately filed for divorce stating that she had "cause to fear danger for her life."

After the divorce Burritt seemed to sink deeper into the imaginary world that he had carved out for himself. With his home completed he spent much of his time in showing off the treasures and oddities he had collected from around the world. There was the bed that he claimed was 1200 years old and once owned by a Spanish king. Also displayed prominently was a set of china once owned by President Grover Cleveland.

Sadly, it was all a fantasy. The bed was purchased in a St. Louis secondhand furniture store and the china, a commercial variety, had never been owned by Cleveland or any other president.

Burritt developed a fixation with his health. Years earlier he had planted a large fruit orchard on his property and though he had always enjoyed fresh fruit, he now refused to eat any except for the first one to ripen on the vine. Toward the end of his life he refused to eat any food, preferring to drink goat's milk pro-

duced by his herd of dairy goats.


The last few years of his life were spent in loneliness. Though he had a few close friends with whom he maintained sporadic contact, he spent his time in seclusion, a virtual prisoner of the fantasy world he had created. Where once he had socialized with some of the richest people in this country, he was now reduced to trading his second wife's jewelry, as if they were mere baubles, in exchange for a few hours of conver-



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sation and company. Much of this jewelry ended up in a local pawn shop.

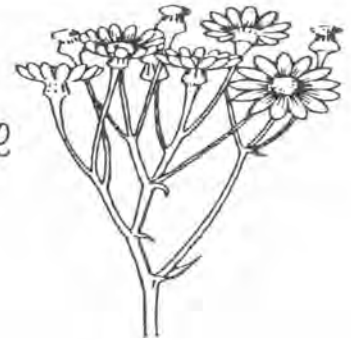
Dr. William Burrirt died in 1955, leaving his home to the city of Huntsville to be used for a museum. Although he had prepared a meticulous will, specifying where every cent of his money was to go to, strangely enough, he left no money for his own burial.

Editor's Note:

When the city of Huntsville took over the property, the house and lands were found to be infested with snakes. Another lingering mystery concerns the family mausoleum in Maple Hill cemetery. When Burrirt died it was discovered there was no room for his body in any of the nine crypts. There are no records and no one has ever been able to explain whose remains are interred there.



I'd Pick More
Daisies



If I had my life to live over again, I'd dare to make more mistakes next time. I'd relax, I would limber up. I would be sillier than I have been this trip. I would take fewer things seriously, I would climb more mountains and swim more rivers. I would eat more ice cream and less beans. I would perhaps have more actual troubles, but I'd have fewer imaginary ones.

You see, I'm one of those people who live sensibly and sanely day after day. Oh, I've had my moments, and if I had it to do over again, I'd try to have nothing else. Just moments, one after another, instead of living so many years ahead of each day. I've been one of those persons who never goes anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, a raincoat and a parachute. If I had to do it again, I would travel lighter the next time around.

If I had my life to live over, I would start barefoot earlier in the spring and stay that way later in the fall. I would go to more dances. I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daisies.

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News From 1907

Delsie Long, a young man from Marshall County was arrested in the Whitesburg precinct yesterday and brought here to jail on a warrant charging bastardy.

A warrant for the young man's arrest was sworn out in Justice Grimmett's court by Miss Daisy Bowers, a young girl of the Whitesburg community, who claims that the man promised to marry her sometime ago. Long is not 21, she claims and his parents have refused to give their consent for him to marry her.

For Sale - Two .5 acre tracts of land situated on West Clinton Street. This property will be sold at a bargain. See Boyd and Wellman.

For Sale - The Petty cottage, situated on East Randolph Street. This must be sold and will be sold soon.

Lost - on the street between Walker Street and Huntsville Bank & Trust Co., a star and crescent gold scarf pin with pearls. Reward if returned to the Bank & Trust.

I propose to open a private school for boys at my residence on East Holmes Street on Tuesday, the first day of October, 1907. I will teach whatever is necessary for entrance into the Sophomore class in



any college in the state of Alabama. Baseball and football will be in my curriculum, my fee is \$5 per month paid in advance. Chas. O. Shepherd.

For Sale - the Jim Pollard cottage situated on Madison Street. This is a charming piece of property and will go fast.

For rent - five room cottage on East Clinton Street, nicely furnished, garden in rear. Apply to Mrs. E. C. Yarbrough.

For sale - Very desirable and safe family horse and buggy. Can be seen at Bennett's stable. Apply to stable or Southern depot.

Pet Deer To Be Put in the County Court Yard.

Sheriff William Mitchell is in correspondence with various parties for the purpose of buying a pair of pet deer for the county court yard. They will make the yard look more

attractive. The unsightly pathways will soon be obliterated as the sheriff has placed a number of signs up bordering the pavement forbidding anyone from walking on the grass. Whomever violates this rule in the future will be arrested and fined.

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Mary Pickford, actress

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The Governors of Huntsville

by Jack Harwell

Naming a street after someone famous is a good way to ensure that they will remain famous even after they're dead. If you look at the names of some of the streets around Huntsville you'll see many examples of this. Andrew Jackson Way, for one, honors the general and president who passed through town in 1818 on his way to Horseshoe Bend to fight the Creeks. And many towns have a Washington Street and a Jefferson Street including ours.

It's also possible to have one street serve as a memorial to many persons and this is the case with Governors Drive. This route which runs through the medical district and out to West Huntsville was renamed in the 1950s to honor the Alabama governors who came from Madison County. Originally the street was known as Fifth Avenue and half a century ago marked the southern limit of the built-up area of Huntsville.

If you've lived here very long you can probably remember some of the Fifth Avenue landmarks such as the Fifth Avenue School or the Fifth Avenue Hospital which were located next to one another about where the North Alabama Rehabilitation Hospital now stands. The homes on the south side of the street between Memorial Parkway and

Harvard Road were already there in the '50s, and some of them long before that. My father-in-law who grew up nearby can remember when the street was first paved and it wasn't that long ago. If you look closely you can see the old concrete street markers which still read, "Fifth Avenue W."

During the expansion which took place in Huntsville during the '50s, Fifth Avenue became very busy indeed. When the new Alabama Highway 20 was built to Decatur it connected to the west end of Fifth, and was known as Four Lane Drive. Eventually the decision

was made to give the whole route one name and Governors Drive was created.

Nine governors of Alabama were either born here, lived here or were closely enough associated with Madison County to be memorialized here. Few of these men are household names today yet they are still a part of our local heritage.

Alabama's first two governors were brothers William Wyatt and Thomas Bibb. William was a doctor and onetime legislator from Georgia when he was appointed governor of the Alabama Territory by President Monroe in 1817. Alabama was originally part of the Mississippi Territory which included all of what is now Mississippi and Alabama except for the coastal areas which belonged to Spain. When Mississippi was admitted to the Union in 1817, the area to the east was organized as the Alabama Territory. William Wyatt Bibb was the Territory's first and only governor.

Governor Bibb's first service to Alabama was to establish the

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border between it and Mississippi. When the latter became a state its representatives wanted to establish the Tombigbee River as the state line which would have given Sumter, Choctaw, Washington, and Mobile counties to Mississippi. Thanks to the efforts of William Wyatt Bibb, the city of Mobile is today in Alabama and not Mississippi.

William Bibb was a delegate to the state constitutional convention in Huntsville in 1819. A reproduction of the building where he and the other delegates framed Alabama's constitution stands downtown, two blocks off the square. It is also where Bibb was sworn in as the first governor of the State of Alabama on November 9, 1819. The state capital was subsequently relocated to Cahaba; Bibb was the only governor to serve in Huntsville.

Alabama's first governor was also the first to die in office. William Wyatt Bibb died on July 10, 1820, of injuries resulting from a fall from a horse. He had served as governor for just eight months. He is buried at his family plot in Elmore County. His brother Thomas was elected to complete his two-year term.

Like his brother, Thomas Bibb had been a delegate to the constitutional convention. He made his home in Limestone County near Mooresville. His home called Belle Mina, later gave its name to the surrounding community. During his term the name of Cahaba County was changed to Bibb County to honor his late brother. When Thomas Bibb died in 1839, he became the first Alabama governor to be buried at Maple Hill Cemetery.

The first native born governor

was John Anthony Winston (1853-1857), who was born in Madison County in 1812. Winston first came to national prominence when he spoke at the Democrat National Convention in 1848. During his term as governor, he vetoed more than 30 spending bills, many of them authorizing state money for railroads, to which Winston was opposed. His frugality with state funds earned him the sobriquet, "veto governor." The year after leaving office, Hancock County was renamed Winston County in his honor. During the Civil War he led the 8th Alabama Infantry for twelve months, seeing fierce action during the early campaigns in Virginia. Af-

ter the war, he was elected a senator, but the Senate refused to seat him.

In addition to Thomas Bibb, four other governors are buried at Maple Hill. Clement Comer Clay (8th governor 1835-1837) was, like the Bibbs, a delegate to the constitutional convention. Originally from Virginia, he lived here from 1811 until his death in 1866. Before becoming governor he had also distinguished himself as the first chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court. After resigning from the court, he is said to have fought a duel with a Dr. Daddy Tate of Limestone County, for unknown reasons. Both men survived, though both

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were wounded.

Reuben Chapman (13th governor, 1847-1849) was the first governor to serve his entire term in Montgomery, the capital having been moved there shortly before he took office. He came to Huntsville in 1824 and was admitted to the bar the following year. Chapman practiced law here for one year, then moved to Morgan County. He was extremely land wealthy, with hold-

ings in Madison, Morgan, and Sumter Counties, as well as in Texas. Three days before his term as governor expired, the state Capitol burned down. He returned to Huntsville, and lived here the rest of his life. Chapman Elementary School (on Reuben Drive) is named in his honor.

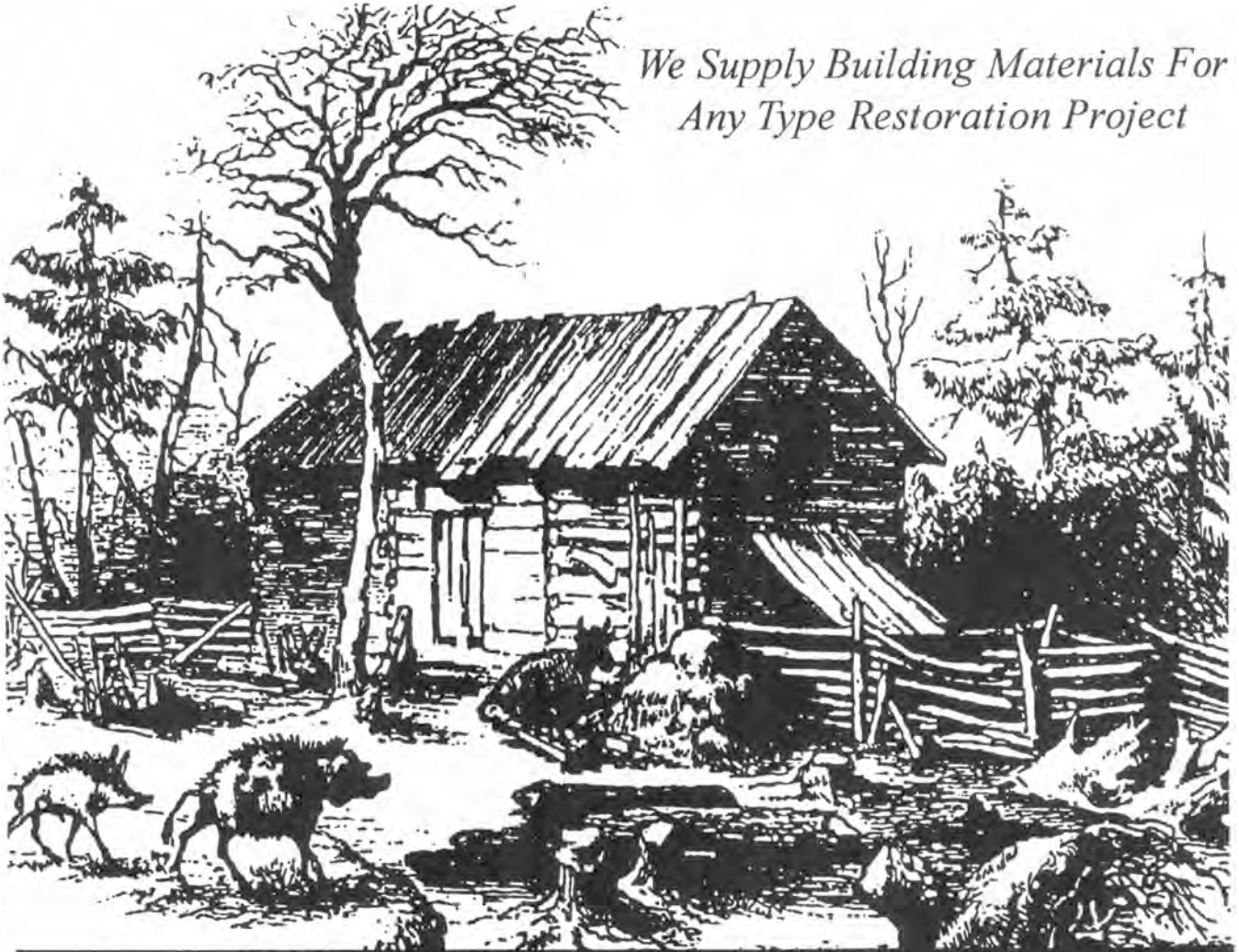
Robert Miller Patton (20th governor, 1865-1868) was educated at Green Academy and was a founder of the Bell Factory. Patton

was the first governor elected under the post-Civil War constitution. His predecessor, Lewis Parsons, refused to turn the office over until ordered to do so by the Secretary of State. Patton's plot at Maple Hill also contains the remains of his two sons, Robert and William, both of whom were killed at Shiloh.

David Peter Lewis (23rd governor, 1872-1874) grew up in Madison County and practiced law in Huntsville and in Lawrence County.

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When the Civil War broke out he opposed secession, although he signed the secession ordinance and served in the Confederate Congress. After the war, he changed his allegiance and was elected governor as a Radical Republican. When it came time to elect a senator to represent the newly readmitted state in Washington, there were two candidate, a Republican and a Democrat. The Democrat lost, and Lewis had to call Federal troops to the capital to enforce the decision. He later formed a separate state legislature to ensure that no more Democrats were sent to the Senate. Needless to say, his peers had few kind words for David Peter Lewis.

Finally, there is Edward H. O'Neal (1882-1886), born in Madison County in 1818. Like John Winston, he led an infantry unit in the Civil War (26th Alabama). His son Emmett served as governor from 1911 to 1915. Until recently, the O'Neals were the only father and son governors in Alabama history.

These are the men whom Governors Drive is intended to honor. But the story would not be complete without the mention of one other name. When the street was first expanded a suggestion was made that it be named in honor of the incumbent governor, "Big Jim" Folsom. But Folsom himself rejected the idea as inappropriate and suggested instead the name Governors Drive. In that way the name honors him as well

Life is what happens to you
when you are making other
plans.

Betty Talmadge, 1924

It Served Them Right

*from the Huntsville Gazette
September 21, 1890*



Sept. 18th 1890 Mary Herben and Mable Brown, daughters of prominent residents of Pleasantville, fought a prizefight in a 16 foot ring pitched in an old barn on the outskirts of that town at three o'clock Sunday morning.

The cause of the fight was rivalry for the attentions of a young man named George Woodward. Thirty-Eight rounds were fought, in which both girls were severely punished, but neither had the advantage, and the contest was declared a draw.

The combatants were stripped to the waist, and every part of their bodies exposed to view bore the traces of punishment. The referee, seconds and spectators were all females, friends of the principals.

Woodward has since declared that he will have nothing to do with either of the girls.

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Doctor Thrown in Jail For Threatening Lives of Dallas Residents

Attempts to Elude Officers by Whipping Up His Horse

from 1907 newspaper

Dr. B. J. Duckett, a practicing physician of Dallas Village, was arrested today and lodged in jail on warrants charging him with threatening the lives of two residents of Dallas and resisting arrest. His trial will come up this afternoon.

Complaints against Dr. Duckett were made by John Taylor and Robert Nichols, who charge that he had threatened to kill them. Papers were made out and it was the intention of the court to have the doctor brought in on peace proceedings. The papers were placed in the hands of Deputy Sheriff Robinson. The deputy saw the man he was seeking driving along Washington Street today and when he started toward him, Dr. Duckett whipped up his horse. There was a lively chase up the street and Deputy Miller joined in on the square. The prisoner offered resistance and the scene attracted a large crowd on the street.



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3. Re-Souled - A Spiritual Awakening - By Huntsville Native Dr. William H. (Bill) Goodson (\$13.95).

4. Wernher Von Braun: Crusader For Space - Pictorial Memoir of the Space Pioneer by Dr. Ernst Stuhlinger (\$29.50).

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

6. Mid-South Garden Guide - The Best Handbook for Zone 7 (That's us) Gardening (\$14.95).

7. Bottomless Well - Writer and Humanitarian Walter Terry's Novel of Growing Up in Huntsville (\$8.95).

8. The Right Kind of War - Huntsvillian John McCormick's World War II Novel, now in Paperback (\$4.99).

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

10. Historic Limestone County - Stories and History by Robert Dunnavant, Jr. (\$9.95).

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Letters To The Editor



Dear Sirs:

I have a bone to pick with you. The graphics "Soldier standing outside the field tent" you used for the War Of Yankee Aggression should be the stars and bars not the Stars and Stripes.

Thank you
Michael Mason,
Fayetteville, Tn.

Dear Editor

I have been away from Huntsville for 26 years. I was born 2/27/41 in Madison County I also lived in the Dallas area and went to Risen School. I skated on the sidewalks of Dallas. Also went to Tom's grocery store on McKinley. My sister and brother-in-law, Donald and

Agnes Johnson, lived in Dallas almost all of their lives. Yes, we were some that lived across the tracks. My aunt and Uncle McBride lived and worked in the Lincoln mills and village.

My mother Leona Williams Greenhaw worked on WPA. She had to really work hard to keep her job, as the men coming home from the war wanted jobs like her's.

My father, O. Greenhaw, was a bootlegger so you knew where he stayed most of the time. In one of your papers I read where people always helped each other. As my mother helped nurse Buddy Vickers as Aunt Lizzy didn't have enough milk. I have a twin, Shelby Greenhaw, and remember how the

folks were talking about Uncle Williams getting us milk (canned) from the black market.

Just writing this down brings back so many memories, good as well as bad. I was really sick one time, the doctor told my mom that I had kidney poison and would not live. Of course one stayed home back then and the doctors came to your home. The neighbors collected money to help pay for my medicine. It cost over 4 dollars per day back then. I couldn't have salt, sugar or grease and it was hard for people to feed me anything that I liked but they all pitched in and I'm well and doing great.

You might add in your papers that just because people move away, it doesn't mean that the old times are forgotten. I'm a much stronger person for having that background and the love of family and friends.

I also loved Mr. Fain and Rison School. I have forgotten some names but still feel the love that I got. I remember Brother Wilson, Baptist Church, in Dallas on Fifth Street. Nancy Williams was the Sunday School teacher there.



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Shirley Greenhaw
Russellville, Mo.

Dear Old Huntsville,

In 1992 I inherited an original letter written in 1853 from Franklin County, Tennessee. It was from my Great Grandmother Hunt's cousin, also a Hunt. Several names are listed but I don't know how they are all connected as to who my great grandmother's parents, brothers and sisters are. Please help me with John Hunt's brothers, sisters, parents, children's names. Maybe they will match some of the names in my letter. This letter is my only lead as to who her people were.

Joy Prevatt Glen
St. Mary, Florida

Fashion Hints From 1901



The latest idea in a bracelet is one of crystal and colored flat beads much like the old fashioned jet bracelets. It is sold at the glove shops for keeping the long gloves in place.

Some of the handkerchiefs shown this year are decidedly pretty. They are in white with border and over plaid of different colors and a wide embroidery in each square.

A handsome blue feather boa made alternately of quilted lace and feathers. The ends of the long feather tassels have lace and feathers like the boa.

A black and white illustration of a man in a dark suit and hat, kneeling on the ground. He is operating a large, vintage camera mounted on a tripod. The camera has a bellows and a lens. The man is looking through the viewfinder. The entire scene is enclosed in a decorative, Art Nouveau-style border with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns.

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Uncle Bill

by Walt Terry

My Uncle Bill was the premier celebrity of my father's family. I also had a flapper aunt who smoked cigarettes and danced the "Black Bottom," but even she couldn't hold a candle to Uncle Bill.

Uncle Bill was bad to drink, which his family futilely tried to hide from the world. One of the principal occupations of his more responsible brothers was intensive, too-frequent searches of the town's bars and bordellos for the recalcitrant Uncle Bill. He would vanish for extended periods, leaving wife and child wondering if they would ever see him again, wondering if the rent would be paid or if there would be food on the table.

Eventually the brothers would retrieve him, bedraggled and repentant, only to see it happen again after days or weeks or months. I think he must have taken a perverse pride in being unpredictable, even to himself.

His nieces and nephews were more tolerant of him. He was a Buster Brown and Poll Parrot shoe salesman - a rambunctious but personable man who, having never

completely left his own childhood, displayed an easy rapport with children, pulling out of his coat like a magician little metal "crickets" and whistles, the like of which were the accessory tools of his trade. He was an excellent salesman as long as he could stay off the booze and on his route.

My most important impression of Uncle Bill came at my grandparents' house during one of our Thanksgiving gatherings. The talk around a warm fireside flowed into many subjects. Uncle Bill was, as

far as anyone could tell, entirely sober. I was twelve years old and decided a joke I had recently heard was suitably for the occasion. At a pause in the conversation, I began: "This man at a football game kept saying, 'Ten thousand people, ten thousand people.' Finally a man sitting next to him said, 'Why do you keep saying that?' The first man said, 'Ten thousand people in this stadium and that Durn pigeon had to fly over me!'"

Judging by the eye-darting expressions and the stark silence, you'd have thought somebody had loudly passed gas or brazenly taken the Lord's name in vain. It was obvious I had misjudged the extent of my grandmother's prudishness and her children's indulgence of it. I was embarrassed as only a twelve-year-old boy in those days could be.

But then came Uncle Bill's booming belly laugh and a friendly slap on my knee and, like a sun bursting out of clouds, my world was bright again. And at that moment my love for that man was sealed forever.

As I grew older and eventually left home, I would hear occasionally of Uncle Bill, including



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news that his wife had divorced him. I feel sure my grandmother prayed earnestly for his wayward soul, which I guess uplifted her's if not his.

In the service during World War II, I got a rare letter from him requesting the loan of fifty dollars to get through an undefined "tough time." Without a moment's hesitation I sent him the money, knowing full well what it way needed for but saying to myself, "Well, what the heck? What else has he got to hold on to?"

A couple of years later I heard two stories of his demise; one that he had died in a veterans hospital somewhere out west (a laundered version?). The other story was that a bunch of enraged Cubans had cut and stabbed him to death in a bar.

At the first news of his death, I had no problem coming up with a few tears for the lovely old rapsca-lion who had rushed to the aid of a callow twelve year old in his moment of dishonor.



Then and Now

by Brooks Fulmer

Attending "Burcham Valley" one room school 75 years ago was quite different than school is today. This building was located beside a creek in the northwest corner of Lauderdale County, Alabama. We sat at double and triple desks and on benches. We used slates to write on, with slate pencils.

Our lunch was usually a cold biscuit, sausage and a baked sweet

potato. We ate sitting on a fallen log in front of the school. Boys and girls never ate or played together, even sat on different sides of the school room. By the way, churches had the same custom - with two front doors, men entered through one door, women through the other.

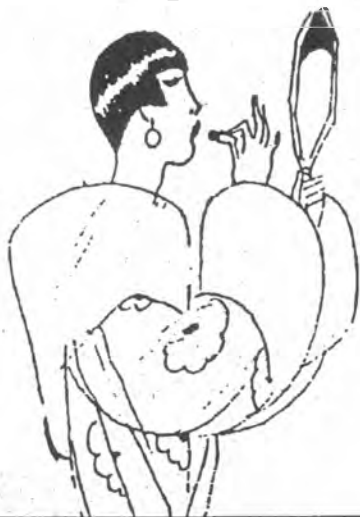
Needless to say, we had neither indoor nor outdoor plumbing, it was the students' responsibility to bring the water - a bucketful a day! One day a boy would have that responsibility, next day it would be a girl's. We all drank from the same bucket without a dipper, and one bucket would last us all day.

We had a stove in the middle of the large room for warmth during the cold weather. If the weather was too extreme we were dismissed and sent home.

We learned our lessons at home. So that when we had to go up front to recite, we wouldn't be embarrassed or reprimanded by a teacher who got paid \$10 a month, plus room and board.

Naturally we walked to school in all kinds of weather, crossing a "footlog" over a creek every day, whether the creek was "up" or not after a rain. As we walked the two

Hair Designs



by
Suz Crow

"Each person, a
unique individual"

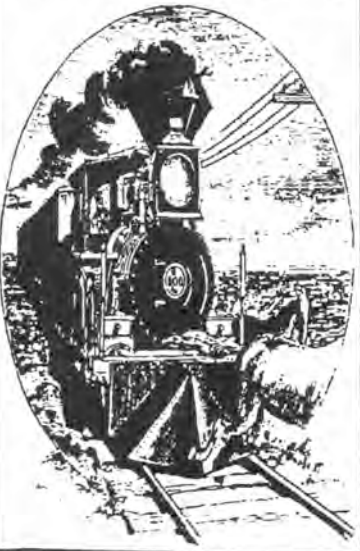
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miles to school, we would pick up other students along the way and even the teacher. Everyone walked.

We didn't realize that this "schoolin'" wasn't really so hard, back then. We even sort of liked it. Now they tell me that kids have their own cars to drive to school in, eat at the school cafeteria, use computers to do their multiplication tables and write their term papers. Some say that some of the students graduate nowadays without knowing how to read and write. What a shame! Maybe the old Blue Back Speller wasn't so bad after all. And just maybe some of the kids today don't want to get their learnin' as badly as we did 75 years ago.



**Moss Valley
Railroad Company**



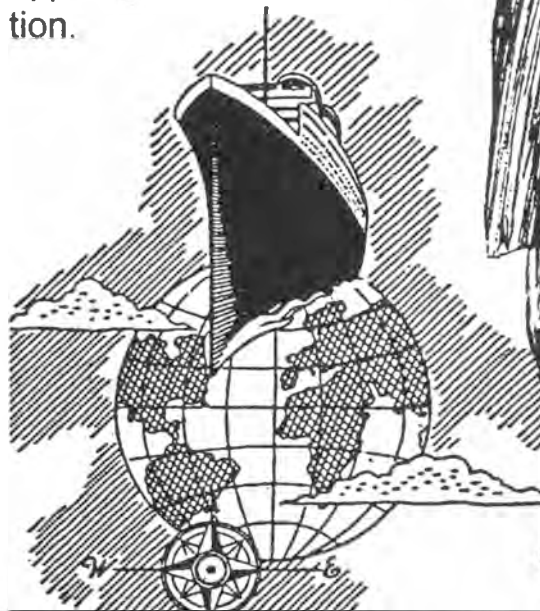
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SPRINGTIME FARE

Heaven in the Morning

- 3 T. frozen unsweetened pineapple juice concentrate
- 1 ripe peach
- 1 ripe banana
- 1 t. coconut flavoring
- 1 cup cracked ice

In a blender, place your first three ingredients. Add the ice and blend at high speed til very smooth. Pour into stemmed glasses and top with a maraschino cherry with a teaspoonful of the cherry liquid.

Serve immediately, and wait for the applause.

Stir-Fried Chicken

- A pound of skinless, boneless chicken tenders
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 t. garlic, minced (can be bought in jars mixed with oil)
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup sliced celery
- 1/2 cup water chestnuts
- 1/4 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

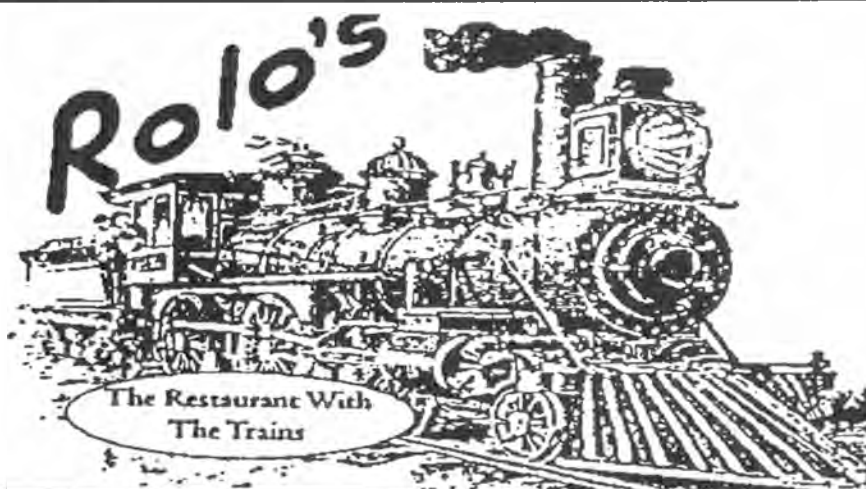
Heat olive oil in a wok or frying pan. Add skinless chicken pieces and cook until done. Add

garlic and continue to stir for three minutes. Remove chicken and garlic to a warm platter. Add more olive oil if needed and add onion, cooking for four minutes. Push onion to side of pan and add the celery. Cook celery for four minutes, push to side of pan and add water chestnuts. Cook for four minutes, push to side of pan and add mushrooms. Continue to cook vegetables for about five minutes and add cooked chicken. Mix well and serve with rice noodles.

Elegant Broccoli Parmesan

- 1 lb. broccoli cut into thin spears and steamed
- 1/2 t. thyme
- 2 T. fresh grated Parmesan Cheese

Steam your broccoli for about 8 minutes, if you like it crisp-tender. Put on a platter, add just about a teaspoon of lemon juice, and sprinkle the Parmesan on top while hot. A quick grating of fresh pepper to taste, and it's ready to eat!



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Savory Roasted Onions

4 large onions, peeled and cut in half lengthwise

Olive oil spray

1 t. savory

4 t. balsamic vinegar
snipped parsley

In a shallow baking dish place your onions, spray lightly with the olive oil spray. Place the onions cut side down and bake at 350F until tender, about 50 minutes. When hot out of the oven, sprinkle with vinegar and parsley. This will serve 4, deliciously.

Greek Salad with a Twist

3 c. brown rice, cooked firm

1/2 c. chopped tomatoes

1/2 t. basil

1/2 c. chopped red onion

1/4 c. each chopped red, yellow and green pepper

2 T. chopped parsley

1/2 c. sliced black olives

1 c. feta cheese

2 T. red wine vinegar

1/2 t. garlic powder

1 1/2 t. olive oil

Combine the first seven ingredients in a large mixing bowl and toss gently. Put into salad bowls and top with a portion of the feta cheese. Take a small container with tight-fitting lid and combine the vinegar, garlic and oil. Shake to mix and pour over the salad.

Spiced Chicken

2 1/2 lb. chicken breasts

8 oz. Dijon mustard

4 oz. lemon juice

16 oz. dry white wine

1 t. tarragon

1 t. chervil

1 t. thyme

2 t. oregano

4 t. basil

Mix all together except for your chicken. Add the chicken and marinate in fridge for several hours. Bake at 350F. for 20 to 30 minutes, basting occasionally.

Granny's Hot Rolls

1 package dry yeast

2 cups warm water, divided

2 T. sugar, divided

5 t. oil

5 to 5 1/2 cups flour

Dissolve the yeast in 1/4 cup of water mixed with 1/4 teaspoon sugar, and set aside til foamy.

Combine the remaining water and sugar. Add oil, then yeast mixture. Stir in 4 cups flour and mix til smooth. Knead in additional flour, but add just a little at a time. Continue this way til the dough no longer feels sticky. (It's important that you get the right mix - the dough needs to feel "alive" and not tough) Shape the dough into a smooth ball and place in a bowl that

you have already sprayed with vegetable oil. Turn your dough ball in the bowl a few times, cover with a cloth and set aside in a warm place to rise til it doubles in bulk.

Punch down and knead lightly. Pinch off a piece of dough the size of a golf ball, taking hold of the outside of the dough and pushing it to the inside til all bubbles are worked out. Place balls in lightly oiled baking pan, set aside, cover and let rise again til double in bulk. Then bake at 375F. for about 30 minutes - this should make about 30 rolls.



A woman is like a teabag.

You don't know her strength until she's in hot water.

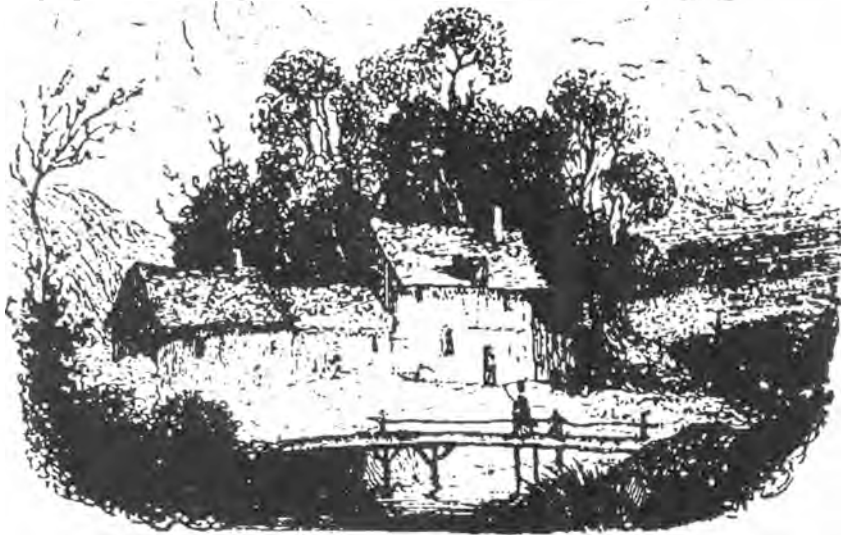
Nancy Reagan

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For Whom The Bell Tolled

by Jo Shaffer

Imagine being awakened in the predawn hours of a frosty winter's morning by the deep, somber tolling of an insistent bell - a bell that draws you from your warm bed and compels you to spend all the hours of daylight laboring in a dark and dingy factory. This sound was familiar to those who lived in Madison County in the 1800s, particularly for those employed by the Bell Factory, once the largest and most notable cotton factory in the state.

The mill had been operational since at least 1819 under several different owners. In those early days, cotton was bought from area Indians and processed into yarn by black slaves, using water power from the Flint River to operate the machinery. When the Bell Factory was acquired by Patton, Donegan and Co. in 1832 it consisted of a gin, gristmill, distillery and a textile mill on a ten-acre portion of a 100-acre tract ten miles northeast of Huntsville.

The main building was 3 1/2 stories high and included a water

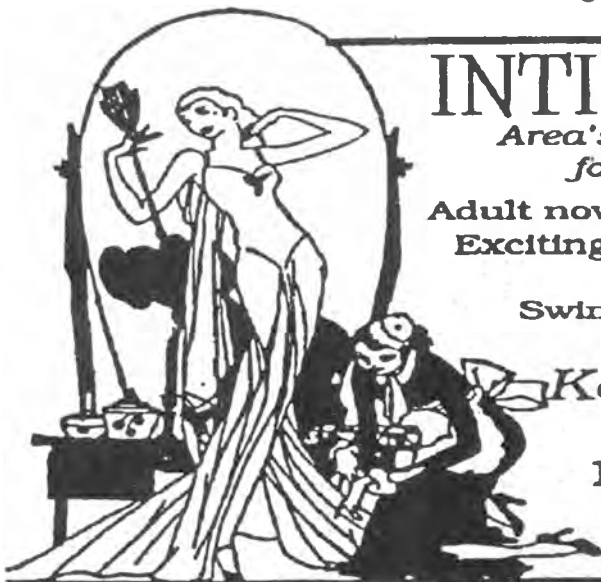
wheel room under the ground floor. The use of water power necessitated using a bell to summon workers since no steam was available at that time for a whistle.

Slaves were the major source of manpower at the Bell Factory. An 1827 account describes "Two Negroes (boy and girl) belonging to Ezek Moore were hired for \$70 (plus clothing) for 12 months." By 1850, the slave quarters at the factory site housed 118 people.

Details of their daily lives are not easily available, but it is known that Patton, Donegan and Co. bartered cotton cloth to Tennessee merchants for bacon and lard for the slaves. Corn was ground into meal at the site to make their bread. In an August 30, 1848 letter to a Mr. Alexander Russel, C. P. Cabaniss (Bell Factory Bookkeeper) wrote:

"We will have to buy this winter some shoes for our Negroes, & as you buy of us such goods as you want for your Negroes, we feel disposed to return you the favour. We want you to make us thirty pair of Negro shoes ... of the best quality you can afford at one dollar & twenty-five cents per pair."

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one of the owners, Dr. Charles H. Patton (brother of Robert M. Patton, Alabama's 20th governor). Mr. Cabaniss reported in one letter that Dr. Patton was "at the Factory -- 2 or 3 of the hands sick tho not seriously so."

Life in the Bell Factory community was probably not idyllic, as illustrated by the fact that the 1850 Census lists six of the 73 male slaves owned by Patton, Donegan and Company as runaways.

Operations at the Factory ceased during the Civil War. James J. Donegan was noted for his secessionist leanings, and two of his sons served in the Confederacy. Dr. Charles H. Patton, 53 in 1861, was Sergeant of the Silver Grays. At the onset of the war Alabama Governor Moore wrote to Patton, Donegan and Co. asking them to furnish cloth for soldiers' uniforms. Despite their outward patriotism, the telegraphed reply read:

"Letter answered. Cannot furnish soldier's clothes.

Patton, Donegan & Co."

It is interesting to note that in

1863 Union soldiers camped near the Bell Factory and even used the grain mill, but did not destroy it as they did so many others in northern Alabama. The original bell disappeared at this time, having been donated (or, more probably, confiscated) to be cast into cannons for the Confederacy.

During Reconstruction, Governor Robert M. Patton encouraged industry to reestablish itself with the promise that there were "20,000 widows and 60,000 orphans awaiting jobs in cotton mills" in his state. After the war, the number of workers in the Bell Factory numbered between 600 and 800 - most of them the aforementioned widows and orphans.

Though pay was low, hours were long, and conditions often deplorable, mill workers considered themselves better off than farm workers because they worked in the shade, lived in a community, and were paid in cash. In 1875, Mary Stillwell earned .35 cents for a 12-hour workday. From an interview with the *Huntsville Times* given July

6, 1955 when she was 96 years-old, she recalled, "We worked from six until six, with a little time off for dinner." During the winter when days were short, coal oil lamps were used to augment the meager sunlight. The lamps were hung on posts spaced throughout the rooms, with a bucket of water underneath each to douse fires (the Bell Factory had burned to the ground on June 30, 1841 and was rebuilt).

Competing mills and a major railroad shipping point built ten miles too far away contributed to the Bell Factory's closing in 1885. The abandoned building became the site of numerous lootings and vandalism; people allegedly took lan-

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terns and went in at night to clean the place of leather, cloth, and other valuable articles.

From a distance, the lanterns moving throughout the rooms took on the appearance of specters, giving voice to rumors of ghostly hauntings, and on the darkest of nights the sound of a bell may be heard in the distance.



In some stores you have to wait on yourself, while in others they hire salespeople to ignore you.

Emily Johnson, Mother

Newspaper Bloopers

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For sale - eight puppies from a German Shepherd and an Alaskan Husky.



Four-poster bed. 101 years old, perfect for antique lover.

Large dog for sale - eats anything and is fond of children.

Stock up and save - limit one.

Man wanted to work in dynamite factory. Must be willing to travel.

Get rid of aunts - Zap does the job in 24 hours.

Illiterate? Write today for free help.

Used Cars. Why go anywhere else to be cheated? Come here first!

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Vacation special - have your home exterminated.



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The Children of John Hunt

Beginning with this issue we will be printing a series of stories about John Hunt's children. Historians have always portrayed John Hunt, the founder of Huntsville, as an illiterate back-woodsman whose family, according to one local historian, "never amounted to much."

Descendants are an excellent source when researching an individual. You can learn much about the person by researching the children. It is the odd child that does not follow in the family's footsteps in some way. You be the judge.

David Hunt was born in Hawkins County, North Carolina, on Oct. 9, 1778, the first child of

John and Johanna Hunt. It's probable that David developed his sense of public duty at a young age from his father who had served as a delegate to the ratification convention held in Knoxville. The elder Hunt was also a captain in the militia and had served as sheriff and coroner.

In 1805 when John Hunt decided to move to the present day site of Huntsville, David chose to move to Winchester, Tn. David had been seeing a young lady by the name of Elizabeth Larkin in Tazewell and when her family moved to Winchester, David followed. They were married on Feb. 25, 1806. Although she was seven years younger than him she proved

to be a loyal companion and good mother. Their union produced 12 children of which all grew to adulthood.

Undoubtedly, hearing glowing reports from his family about the new lands, David and Elizabeth also decided to homestead in the newly opened wilderness. Strong evidence indicates that they first came to Huntsville before finally settling across the state line in Tennessee. They were the first white people to settle there and David has been recognized as the founder of Franklin County. Clinton Hunt, their son, was the first white child to be born in Franklin County.

David immediately began carving a homestead out of the wilderness. Within a few years he had one of the largest and most prosperous farms in Franklin County. The large home that he built was still standing 175 years later. Many meetings concerning the future of Franklin County took place in the home and it was also a popular stopping-off spot for visiting dignitaries.

cont. on page 47

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billy joe cooley

AN EDUCATED MAN

JIM WILSON, who retires in two years as a professor at UAH, joined friends for breakfast the other day at Eunice's. His wife **Judy** couldn't make it away from her job with Corps of Engineers. **Lance Harpeth** was making his first visit to the Country Kitchen. **Missy Ming Smith** and her Athens sister **Marty Ming** were at a corner table talking family stuff. In the next booth were **Sally Adair** and **Jean Mills**, who look more like sisters than sisters-in-law. They use the same hair stylist. Even **Ruth Weems** showed up, talking about a story she's written called *Contact?* I think it has to do with fly paper. **Kenny Walker** also arrived for breakfast at the round table. Regulars **Billie Haines** and **Liz Sisk** sipped coffee and talked about the complete set (four long cassette tapes) of *Sons of the Pioneers* music which they had bought at a great

bargain. By the way, those *Readers Digest* sets are available for \$12 (which includes postage) from 3804 Saturn Drive, Huntsville 35805. They cost twice that on TV.

MR. JACKSON has sold his House of Mandarin oriental restaurants and will emerge in another type of business.

We finally took some time off and roasted amongst the South Floridians for the last few weeks. Former Huntsville bistro owner **Gary Bridge** sends greetings from Jacksonville. His mom **Louise** (we remember her from Krispy Kreme here), brother **Allen** and nephews all have homes there.

When the *Dukes of Dixieland* concerted here last month they included, among other tunes, the original arrangement of "Dixie."

Only one true Southerner stood to attention. He's to be commended. Radio tycoon **Arnold Hornbuckle** (WAHR 99.1) said he would have stood, except that his rheumatism was flaring.

SOPRANO PAMELA Dale, who has an off-season home here, returns next month to her vocal duties with the San Francisco Opera Company. Meanwhile, she busies herself in community activities.

Johnny Tona's Family Billiards attracts a pretty big daytime crowd, including Wednesday afternoon classes by UAH billiards club. It was with sadness that we learned of the death of **Mr. Weeden**, the elderly black gent whose friendly face greeted us at Johnny's for so many years.

James and Dorothy Elkins celebrated their 50th anniversary at Ryan's Family Steakhouse (University Drive) on Jan. 22 with their kin: **Laura, Mark and Heather Loeb, Dennis Mahone, Aleisha Castillo** and others.

HUNTSVILLIAN Bobby Knight, who manages Rodeo



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FINNEGAN'S IRISH PUB

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(Next to Joe Davis Stadium)



Dance Club in Nashville, has been named Best Club DJ of 1993. He celebrated by taking mama **Carol**, sister **Rhonda** and all sorts of other kin on an excursion to Las Vegas. They all came back rich, of course. Carol operates Moody's Grocery on Oakwood Avenue.

This is "*Be Nice to Oscar Gutierrez Month*." He operates Burrito Bandito, where we enjoy the No Carne burrito. It's where **David Peebles** headed for food immediately returning from his Utah ski trip. Then he headed home to Memphis to visit his Ma and PA.

Thanks to **Michael Cranston** and his pals for inviting our crowd over to West Huntsville Baptist Church to hear **Evangelist Tim Lee** the other night. The sermon was great. Some of us needed it.

AUTHORESS Pat Everett was in Jackson Way Barber Shop the other day explaining to stylist **Chrissy Hardin** how she writes her stories. She has a book coming out soon. Meanwhile, **Barbara Hall**, the Parkway City Shoe Doctor, waited while son **Cally** got his hair cut by **P'Nut Wilson**. **Jim Hicks** has signed on as a barber at that establishment.

Jerry Don Blevins, who grew up as a star high school football player in my hometown of South Pittsburg, Tenn., is helping organize the Bean annual family reunion. It'll attract Beans and Beenes (plus other spellings and their kin) from all over to Huntsville's Ramada Inn on June 16, 17 and 18. Call him at home (881-5203) for details. They've engaged an excellent sto-

ryteller for the entertainment. My aunt was **Allie Bean** of Stevenson, so maybe they'll let me attend. **Marguerite Welch** is co-host.

Speaking of excellent gatherings, you're invited to the annual awards banquet of *Huntsville Chefs Association*. There'll be an open bar from 6 to 7 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 on Monday night, March 14, at Huntsville Country Club. Tickets are just \$20 and are available by telephoning 551-0989.

Randy Gillespie is sporting springtime clothes already, so fine weather can't be far away.

We dropped by the Hilton Hotel lobby the other night to hear **Charles Cruce** play lobby piano. Bartending there that night were the debonair **Peter Coe** and pretty **Audrey Brand**. Audrey's hubby

Ray is guitarist with *The Crawlers* at Jay's Lounge.

HERITAGE CLUB'S Mike Jones and **Greg Davis** made their first visits to Bubba's on Thursday night to hear **Tony Mason** and **Tommy Shepherd** perform their brand of weekly fun music.

DON'T BE surprised to hear powerfully pretty musical strands flitting around Airport Road on Friday night March 25. They'll be from **Bianca Cox's** first *Altereza* Concert of the season. The talented **Kenneth Turvey** will conduct the Huntsville Community Chorus's chamber choir and the *Altereza* Wind Orchestra in a presentation of Anton Bruckner music. Time is 7:30 in Trinity Methodist Church. Admission charge is \$12 for adults, \$9 for students and elderly. Desserts and coffee will be sold.

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Help Wanted

from 1862 Huntsville newspaper

Maj. G. W. Jones, C.S.A. Quartermaster in Whiting's Division, of the Army of Virginia, was sent here by the War Department, some weeks ago, to procure clothing for the troops of his brigade; of which the immortal Fourth Ala. forms a part. We learn from him that he has secured 110,000 yards of woolen goods, and wishes to have 4,000 suits of clothing made as rapidly and as well as possible. He invokes the aid of the ladies, whose

patriotism has never yet failed to respond promptly and efficiently. The clothing will be cut at Herstein's Store, and all who wish to make, or have made, any of the required articles, will please go there at once and procure them. The Government will pay good prices for good work. This will be a fine opportunity for females in want of work.

(Herstein's store is now the Schiffman Bldg.)



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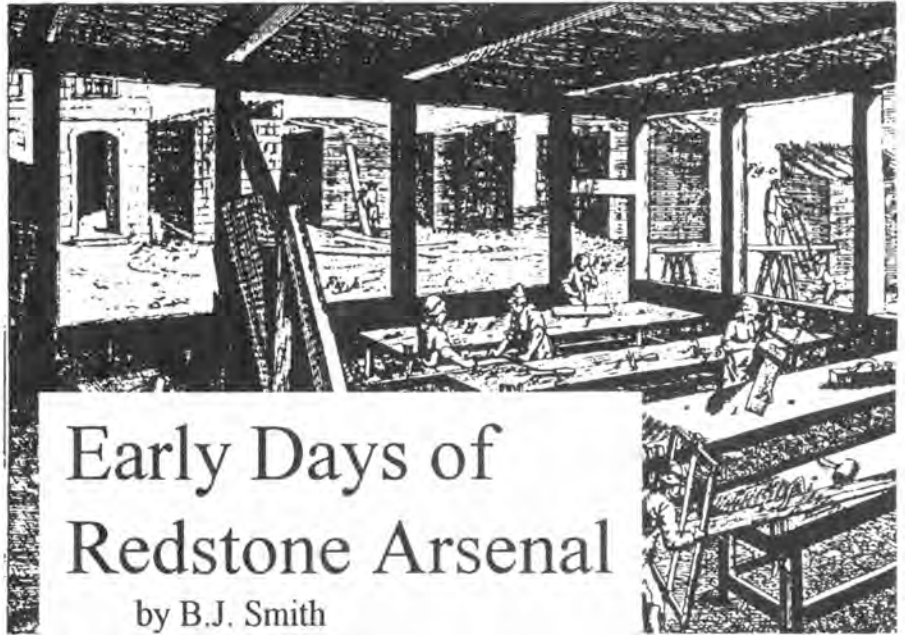
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Early Days of Redstone Arsenal

by B.J. Smith

The news was announced on July 3, 1941. The Chemical Warfare Service would install a chemical plant and a separate ordinance plant just south of Huntsville. The timetable set by the War Department, in Washington, was strict, if not impossible. Construction would begin within a week, and production would begin in six months.

The Government sent a number of officers and enlisted men immediately. Arriving in Huntsville, they discovered that the area set to become Huntsville Arsenal was still occupied by farmers and property owners. Their first job was to remove these residents, many of whom had no place to go. Though many of these families had lived on the land for almost a hundred years, they reluctantly moved when it was pointed out to them that the land was needed for the war effort.

Organization in those early days was difficult. Many of the government officials and local administrators had to set up offices outside of the Arsenal until permanent buildings were constructed.

A fact not commonly known

is that the gym of Huntsville High School served as one of the first "office buildings" for the influx of new employees. In fact, office space was so limited that many churches, schools, and other buildings in Huntsville were used as the "Arsenal" until initial construction was finished.

Eventually, workers began moving into newly constructed buildings. Many local employees formed car-pools, as the Government called for conservation of gas and oil. When one of these cars broke down, which was fairly often, four or five workers became stranded, unable to work that day. To make matters worse, construction concentrated on buildings, and not on roads. Following heavy rainfall, the dirt and clay roads running throughout the Arsenal became treacherous "seas of mud." In probably a "first" for Huntsville's government workers, women were instructed to wear pants, not skirts, to work as they often had to trudge through knee deep mud to get to their workplaces.

One problem unique to the

Arsenal's early history were the road blocks at the guard gates, creating long lines of overheating cars. The road blocks were designed to stop workers from sneaking alcohol off the Arsenal. Grain alcohol was used as an ingredient for some gasses, but many workers found it more profitable (and enjoyable) to use it for other "purposes." Workers initially smuggled the alcohol off the Arsenal in buckets, jars, and other containers but when the guard at the gate was "tightened" they were forced to use more ingenious methods.

To make it through the road blocks, many of the would-be bootleggers stored the alcohol in their car's radiators. Not a bad idea. Unless, recalls one worker, the car began to overheat in the long line. The aroma of the "still" would lead the guards directly to the smuggler's car causing several of the workers to spend part of their wartime service in the local jail.

As production began to increase, the demand for workers became hard to meet. Most of the able-bodied men were in uniform and the few left were reluctant to work in a chemical plant. Ads were placed in newspapers throughout the country but there were still not enough labor to supply the Arsenal's requirements. As a last resort, job recruiters periodically drove through the streets of Huntsville, announcing available jobs with a loud speaker attached to their cars.

Anybody who wanted a job and was willing to work soon found themselves employed on the Arsenal. There were no technical qualifications necessary required. For many of the new employees, this was to be their first job off of the family farm. Though many of them

were barely literate, they proved to be hard workers easily adaptable to the rigors of a wartime economy.

Producing chemicals was an indefinite science. New workers seldom received any training before taking their place on the production lines. Mistakes were made, and the workers learned from them. Eventually, the process grew in efficiency and safety.

Some side effects from the production of chemicals did persist. Dyes of different colors were used to create smoke bombs and the dyes would also color the skin of the workers. The dye could not be washed out conventionally. It had to wear off in time. It was quite common to see workers with brightly colored skin. You could literally tell which gas a worker was producing by the color of their skin. Arsenal employees could be seen walking around Huntsville colored blue, red, yellow, and violet.

A Huntsville native who worked at the Arsenal in its early

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days recalls dating his wife who also worked there. "Her skin was dyed violet and mine was yellow. When we got married that summer even our best man was colorful! His skin was green! My wife was so pretty that we all teased the best man about being green with envy."

Occasionally a worker would come into contact with a hazardous chemical such as white phosphorus. For these situations, deep holes were dug inside the building and filled with water. The workers were instructed to jump in, hopefully to rinse off the burning chemical. Fortunately the holes were seldom used.

As expected from a chemical and ordinance plant, Huntsville and

Redstone suffered their share of fires and contaminations. However, from the first day of construction to the end of the War, only nine deaths were recorded. These fatalities resulted from the production of chemical weapons, which were not used at all in World War II. Ironically, more deaths occurred on the Arsenal from chemicals than any battlefield during the War.

Huntsville Arsenal went on to earn many safety awards and medals, including nine "E" flags for production excellence and a national championship for most man-hours worked without a single lost time accident. (1, 440,000 hours).

Not all of the jobs on the Arsenal were directly related to the production of chemical weapons. One employee actually had the designation of being the only official "Spider Killer" listed in federal records at that time. When production lines were being built, certain areas became infested with large black-widow spiders. With the production line employees afraid to enter some of the buildings and after more conventional methods had failed, the government finally hired a man to kill the spiders. Though he became known as the Spider Man, it is not known whether or not he wore a cape.

Other employees were in charge of growing and harvesting corn and hay to feed the horses, chickens and pigs, which were raised on the Arsenal. The horses were used early on by a cavalry patrol unit. The pigs and chickens were raised to help feed the numerous workers on the Arsenal. Neither project proved cost effective, and both were eliminated as part of the Arsenal's first "cut back."

Part of the huge Arsenal complex was used as a prisoner of war camp. When the allied offensive in Africa began, large numbers of German soldiers were captured and many of these were sent to camps in America. It is estimated that as many as seven hundred prisoners were kept on the Arsenal. Many of these prisoners became converted "Southerners," and returned in later years as tourists. Ironically enough one of the prisoners had relatives who would move to Huntsville in a few years as part of the German rocket team.

By in large, though, Huntsville Arsenal's main objective was to produce and load chemical weapons. Ammunition such as incendiary bombs and artillery shells were also produced, but in much smaller quantities. The end of the War resulted in a decline of interest in chemical weaponry. Huntsville Arsenal was ordered to be decontaminated and demilitarized, and eventually sold off. Fortunately, this process took longer than the Government had expected.

During this time, Redstone Arsenal was being considered as the home for rocket and missile research. In October, 1949, Redstone Arsenal and Huntsville Arsenal joined to become the new Ordnance Guided Missile Center. The Huntsville Arsenal was officially closed, and the new Redstone Arsenal was born.

Redstone Arsenal, whose sole reason for existence was to help defeat the German war machine, would now look to the Germans for its rebirth.

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Carroll Grocery Store

by Ruby Crabbe

The graveled road on 5th Street, now better known as Andrew Jackson Way, had felt many a little bare foot going across it to Carroll's Grocery Store. J.D. and Flossie Carroll were two of the nicest people a person could even want to meet.

I remember this one day in particular, Mama had sent me to the store, and as usual, I was barefoot. The weather had gotten cold but a lot of the kids back in those days didn't have shoes to wear no matter how cold the weather got.

So there I stood in Carroll's grocery store with my feet as bare as the day I was born. Mr. Carroll called his wife over to where I stood and told her to put shoes and socks on "this Child's feet and legs."

And what beautiful shoes and socks they were! The knee-high socks were fit for a queen to wear. And those shoes ... I didn't even want to pull them off when Mama put me to bed that night. Mr. Carroll told me to send my sis, Eva, over to

his store so he could fit her with shoes and socks also.

Next day in school my Sis and I thought we were in "High cotton," with those new shoes and socks. Late that evening I saw Mama going across the road to Carroll's grocery store. I didn't have to ask her

why she was going - I already knew. She was going to thank those people for their kindness and generosity in making two little barefoot girls very happy.

Years later Bill and Christine Thigpen took over the Carroll grocery store. Christine was the daughter of J.D. and Flossie Carroll. I would be at a loss for words in trying to describe what kind of people the Thigpens were. Just by their everyday living and the love they shared with their fellow man spoke more than words ever could. They never hid their love of God, and like the Carrolls, made everyone feel special and loved.

Now when I ride down Andrew Jackson Way and see the place where the Carroll grocery store used to be, my mind goes in reverse and, again, I feel rewarded and blessed by the kindness the Carrolls and Thigpens showed that little barefoot girl.

The End



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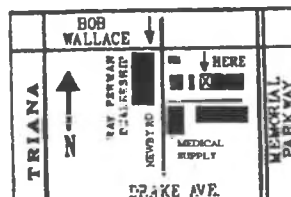
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Stale tobacco smoke is the worst lingering smell - to get rid of it just put a few teaspoonfuls of ammonia in a large bowl of water and set it in the room. The room will smell fresh in the morning.

To make rice beautifully white and keep the grains separated when boiled, add a teaspoon of lemon juice to every quart of water in which it has cooked. You will not notice the lemon flavor in the rice.

If you've run out of ideas on decorating children's birthday cakes, try this. Take a few animal crackers and dip them in frosting, either several different colors or all the same color. Stick them around the edge of the cake.

Tired of that dry, itchy winter skin? Use your old leftover suntan oil in the shower and smell good at the same time! Just soap down as usual, rinse, then pour some of the oil on a washrag and spread over your back, arms and legs.

Remember to throw those wood ashes into the garden or around trees and shrubs to keep the soil sweet.

When trying to stretch whipping cream by adding the white of an egg do not whip together. Beat the cream and egg separately and combine when ready to serve. The cream will be of a much better consistency.

When you finally find something that you have been looking all over the house for, put it back in the first spot you thought it might be in. That's probably where it really belongs.

A very effective makeup remover is Crisco. Just massage it onto your skin and wipe off with a tissue.

To keep your cookies moist, put half an apple or a slice of fresh bread in your cookie jar.

For a fun toy for your cat, crumple up a piece of aluminum and throw it. Cats love that scratchy sound.

For those women who like the sheer look, match your bra to the color of your skin, not the color of the blouse.

Children will act like their parents, in spite of every effort to teach them good manners.

Anthony Doran, engineer

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*Advertisement from 1907
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The Diary of Nadine Turchin, Wife of the Mad Cossack

Nadine Turchin was the wife of Col. John Turchin, whose troops were responsible for the sacking of Athens. He later appeared before a court martial in Huntsville, presided over by James Garfield, where he was found guilty. Through political intervention the charges were later overturned and he was promoted to the rank of General.

July 14 Huntsville, Alabama

On the 12th our camp at Salem was broken up at sunrise, and the 1st Brigade of the division marched off, following the road to Huntsville where the 2nd Brigade had been sent the previous day. We were at the head of the column under the command of General Mitchel. The commander of the cavalry (Stanley) was at the head of the two divisions.

Having marched 16 miles, we encamped for the night at New Market, an old town lost in the midst of cornfields and forests, de-

populated of its men. The next day, in rainy weather and on a very bad parish road, we continued our march under torrents of rain. With painful efforts we advanced the enormous distance of six miles. On these six miles we had to cross three streams swollen by the rain. Then we were forced to stop for the night some 12 miles from Huntsville. The First Division, which was ahead that day, went on.

In this camp of sorts we rested somewhat; then foragers were sent out into the country to bring in all horses, mules and male Negroes that could be found. For at last we were in the territory that the President's Emancipation Proclamation had freed. Since then, we are all busy here with the seizure of items of Rebel property, mentioned above, and it seems up to who will take the most mules, horses and Negroes.

Yesterday morning we crossed the twelve miles separating us from

Huntsville, and after a long delay at the gates of the city we came to camp a hundred paces from there. The headquarters of the division was lodged in a shaded enclosure with beautiful old trees that Southern landowners have the common sense not to cut down on their property.

Huntsville is the rendezvous of all the rich landlords and other influential people of Georgia and Alabama who flee the heat of their plantations, unhealthy during the summer months. At present it is empty

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of most of its population, Bragg's retreat having been a signal of departure for all those who hate the North and do not want to be molested by the soldiery of the Abolitionist army. However, Huntsville does not lack inhabitants. I believe the worst of them have stayed.

No news from the Army of the Potomac; our postal service is very badly organized, nothing reaches us, no mail, no newspapers - and that when there is a railroad, and trains are running no farther than thirty miles from here, and when there is constant communication with the army headquarters.

In these last marches across the country I retraced with some pleasure places through which we went last year with much discomfort at the head of our infantry brigade. I found the country more beautiful, fields and forests were the same, climate just as excellent. The Secessionists had deserted in large numbers; our troops were not as much insulted as previously because the Rebel spirit was dampened by terror.

July 18. Huntsville, Alabama

We have been here for four days, and these four days have been occupied marvelously. Each day the cavalry is sent out in different directions wearing itself out, traveling rugged mountain paths, confiscating horses, mules and Negroes. You would think that through these procedures our resources would increase from day to day. But this is not so!

For today they are busy making restitution of what they had taken yesterday, and the harmless inhabitants of the regions, who decide to bring to town a few bushels

of corn, obtain what you may call a "protection," that is, a paper covering their property that is not specified. This allows them to add that of their neighbors - exempt from all confiscation.

In this manner people who would sacrifice their last penny for the cause of the rebellion receive a guaranty of security from the Union generals, and may keep their thousands of bushels of grain for "their own army," this is the expression generally used in facing the Union Army.

Just today, after dinner, I overheard from a short distance a conversation between some of our officers and a Secessionist lady who came to claim her personal property. The lady, an audacious female, as they all are in the face of our cowardice, was prattling, laughing, and intermingling her conversation with the following phrases: "Most certainly, I would sacrifice my last (penny) for our own cause, but I find it very difficult to have to give up my property for an enemy cause."



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Tips From The Penny Pincher



This is a great idea for those of you who have hoop or hanging type earrings that can hang on a thin rod. I wanted something to keep my earrings easy to get to, visible and easy to use, and this is what I came up with.

At a home improvement store, such as Lowe's super store on South Parkway, buy two of the heavy brass coat hooks. Buy one thin brass rod, about 1/8" thick. Find a place in your home where you have wall space about two feet long by 6 inches, against the wall.

Place your coat hooks about a foot and a half apart and attach them to the wall. Place your rod in the hooks and cut off excess, bending down the two edges. Now take your

hoops and other earrings that can hang on a rod, and they are easy to spot and out of the way!

Cathey C.

Dear PP, Make coupon clipping really worth the money. Don't clip for products you will normally not buy. Try to shop at the stores that double or triple the worth of your coupon, and file your coupons with those that will expire soonest at the top. Keep coupons-you don't use for your friends, and have them do the same for you.

Holly Starr, Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Penny,

I found great and inexpensive way to clean and soften handbags, coats, furniture and other leather items. It's cold cream! But be sure and test the spot first before proceeding to rub the cream on the entire item.

Sarah James, Long Island, NY

To PP,

I tried something that turned out to be pretty tasty. Instead of paying a lot of money for that peccan ice cream topping, make your own. Just chop up about a cup of pecans, spray a pot with Pam and add about 2 cups of brown sugar. Slowly heat til the sugar begins to stick, then add about a cup or so of water. Add 1/2 top of cinnamon and nutmeg, ground. Stir and cook for 3 minutes or so until it looks syrupy. Cool slightly and pour into a container that you can keep in the fridge for later. Sinful!

Cathey, Huntsville, Ala.

Dear Penny,

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kets. Sometimes you really have to dig, but when you come up with that one-of-a-kind treasure it's worth every minute. Also, you might try some of the unclaimed baggage stores, even though I understand that the airport personnel sometimes get first choice!

Johnny Edmonds, Scottsboro, Ala.

Dear PP,

When you rent that weekend automobile or truck, check whether your own automobile insurance or credit card covers rental insurance, whether your homeowners' insurance protects your luggage against damage, and the extent of your

medical coverage while traveling. That way you won't be convinced by the rental agent to buy expensive and unnecessary collision, personal effects and personal accident insurance. If your credit card company does cover rental insurance, remember that you must use the card to rent the vehicle.

Ron Eystone, Madison, Ala.

Here's a crouton recipe from Jackie, publisher of "The Penny Pincher"

Begin by slicing bread - I prefer whole wheat - in 1/2" squares. Spread a thin layer of olive oil, about 203 tablespoons, around the bottom of a 9x13" baking pan. Stir in approximately 3 cups of the diced bread pieces. Stir so as to coat the bread with the oil. Bake in oven at 350 until croutons are dry and toasty. Make seasoned croutons by sprinkling with garlic and herbs before baking. I use Mrs. Dash "Garlic and Herb" seasoning.

From Cathey - "I haven't tried these yet but will. A few of the things I might try is spraying the bread lightly with Pam "olive oil" spray, then sprinkling the croutons with Parmesan cheese, onion powder or garlic powder, or Spike,

which is a great natural seasoning blend you can find in most health food shops and comes in salt-free as well."

Dear Penny,

I love to use herbs and spices and have found that I can save money but NOT buying them at the grocery store. I look for my favorites at health food stores or drug stores, even stores like Walmart are carrying more food nowadays. Also, I found a great way to make popcorn taste good (the air-popped variety). I pop it dry, then sprinkle on just a bit of olive oil. I then add my favorite flavorings like Spike, garlic powder or Molly McButter's Garlic Butter powder, for a low calorie delicious snack.

Jenny Marroquin, Dallas, Tx.

Editor's Note:

For those of you who have thought about sending for a free copy of "The Penny Pincher," the time couldn't be better. The ideas that you get are imaginative and workable, and with health care costs coming soon to all of us, you could already be saving money. Send a .29 cent stamp to: The Penny Pincher P.O. Box 809 Kings Park, N.Y. 11754-0809

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The Lost Towns of Mullin's Flat and Pond Beat

by Tom Kenny

Located a few miles outside of Huntsville were once two thriving communities by the names of Mullin's Flat and Pond Beat. Today, if one tried to locate them, all one would find are manicured fields fenced in by the fences surrounding Redstone Arsenal.

Most of us are familiar with the government, in time of need, taking the land a house or a business sits on, but few people realize that at the beginning of the Second War whole communities were erased from the face of the earth.

Pond Beat got its name from a

series of ponds, Mack Pond, Rock Pond, Round Pond and others that extended from Pond Beat nearly to Triana.

The two communities were separated by a branch of Indian Creek. Mullin's Flat was north of the creek, Pond Beat to the south. These old communities lacked electricity, plumbing and telephones. Some of the houses had dirt floors and makeshift heating.

Many of the people occupying these communities were poor, very poor, but others were quite affluent.

In Mullin's Flat there were over fifty black families and five white families. The community was not integrated but everyone got along very well.

Many of the residents were tenant farmers, providing labor for the land owner in exchange for a place to live and a share of the crop, usually a third or a fourth.

Most of the land was owned by individuals who were the children

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or grandchildren of former slaves. They farmed the land, owned businesses, stores, gins and mills and ran their own communities.

Peddlers called, "rolling stores" visited both communities once a week, selling household goods, foodstuffs, sweets and personal needs.

Mail was delivered by horseback. The riders came from Talucah in Morgan County by ferryboat, delivered the mail and ferried back home. Later mail was delivered by automobile.

The three room, wood framed, Silver Hill School of Mullin's Flat was located off present Dodd Road had an enrollment of about 150 black students.

The school was financed partly by the Julius Rosenwald Fund of Chicago to help black schools in the South. Rosenwald funded one-third of the money, the State of Alabama funded one-third and the balance was supplied by the Mullin's Flat community. Most of the community funding was supplied by several of the wealthy black farmers.

James P. Burns who died in 1919 of double pneumonia, was a resident of Mullin's Flat. He operated a general store, a blacksmith shop and forge and a carpentry shop which specialized in the manufacturing of caskets. There is a good possibility some of the caskets found in the archaeological investigation of Elko Cemetery were made by Mr. Burns.

The Horton School, located in Pond Beat, like the Silver Hills School, was funded jointly by the Rosenwald Fund, the State and the Community. In the early days of Pond Beat there was a large southern mansion and plantation near the

Tennessee River. The building was demolished in 1982. The land became part of the Redstone Arsenal. The house had been occupied at times by the Childress family and the Jones family.

The government moved rapidly in its efforts to acquire the lands of Mullin's Flat and Pond Beat.

The Quartermaster General filed a petition on July 23rd, 1941 for the seizure of the lands.

The U.S. District Court of Northern Alabama entered an order granting possession of the lands to the Government as of noon July 24th, 1941.

The Federal Land Bank of New Orleans, acting as a consultant to the Government made an appraisal of each tract.

Most of the land owners ac-

cepted the evaluation. A few owners went to court to protest the Government evaluation and offer.

The Government permitted the land owners to remain in possession of their property until crops were harvested.

The Churches in the two communities merged and formed the Center Grove United Church. When their congregations were forced to move the original church was dismantled and moved to the corner of Jordan Land and Mastin Lake Road in Huntsville.

Many of the old residents of the two communities believed the large black ownership (about 80%) of the land was influential in the area being chosen for the arsenal.

When the Government decided to build the arsenal, the prop-



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erty owners had no choice, but to sell. As one old resident said, "They set the price and we had to accept it."

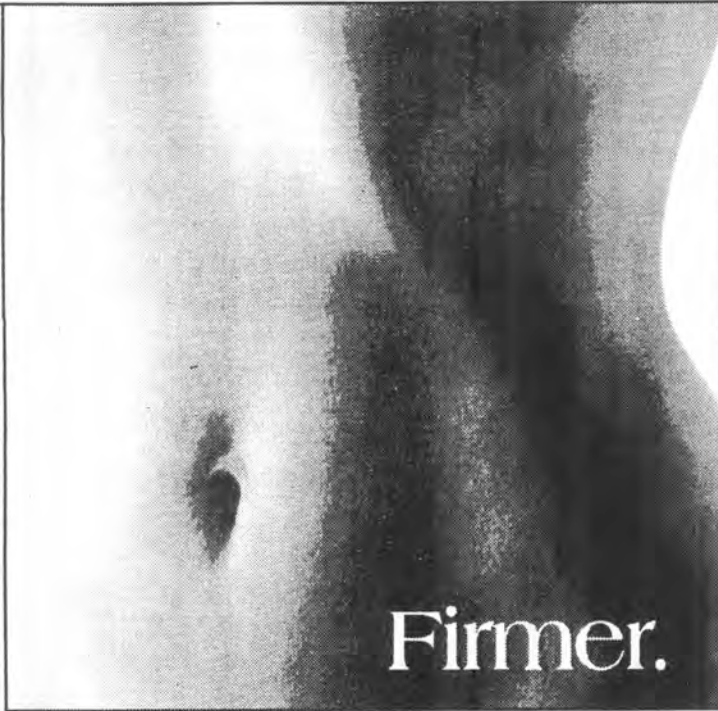
But, the coming of the arsenal was a Godsend for many of the tenant farmers and their families, even members of the land owners families benefited.

Most of the residents of these communities got good paying jobs working for the Army and the Army contractors, and many of these displaced people were able to buy

homes which without the Arsenal takeover they would never have been able to do.

The Lord does work in mysterious ways. What appeared to be a disaster for many of the families of Mullin's Flat and Pond Beat, became truly a blessing.

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Young Lady Implicated in Murder

*from 1907 Huntsville
newspaper*

The sensational killing of Charles Drake, a well known young farmer, by his cousin Houston Clark, at the home of P. Overton a few days ago, has another development in the arrest of Miss Mazie Overton as an accomplice in the murder. Miss Overton is the fair-haired daughter of the man at whose home the tragedy occurred. She was implicated by evidence uncovered in the coroner's investigation and her arrest followed immediately.

Today she was brought to Huntsville and admitted to bail in the sum of \$2,000 after a hearing before Judge Betts.

Clark and Drake were first cousins and they had been having trouble for some months. They met at the home of Overton and after a quarrel, Drake was struck over the head with a heavy stick and almost instantly killed.



The Doctor Sez

by Dr. Annelie Owens

Alzheimer's disease goes back almost one hundred years. It was first discovered in 1906 by a German doctor, Alois Alzheimer, when he had a 51 year old patient suffering from memory loss and an inability to reason. To date it is still an incurable disease. It is the most common type of dementia; a progressive irreversible brain disorder that primarily affects the elderly and slowly steals the victim's capacity for thought. As it progresses, it causes the loss of memory, judgment, and abstract thinking; over time, even ordinary tasks become impossible.

It is believed that about four million Americans have Alzheimer's and it is the cause of death for over 100,000 people in the United States per year.

Most often Alzheimer's disease afflicts people in their sixties and seventies. Through medical exam and other tests, doctors can determine that Alzheimer's is probably present, but a positive diagnosis can only be made by physically examining the brain after the victim

succumbs to the disease. It usually shows itself very gradually and runs its course in from two to fifteen years. The average length of progression is seven to nine years. It is not a natural part of aging but a progressive, dementing, fatal brain disease. It is not easily diagnosed and it is a disease which knows no social or economic boundaries - it is found in all segments of our population.

In the beginning of this disease, victims gradually show signs of losing their mental faculties and exhibit minor memory loss and mood swings. As the disease progresses sufferers can still function, but have difficulty with complicated tasks. Speech is slowed and decision-making is impaired. After a while, the short term memory of the patient is very poor, and they may fail to recognize members of their family and

persons they have known for many years. Eventually the patient requires care 24 hours a day, and they cannot find their way around at all. They are totally disoriented and lose all control of their normal personal habits. Patients become vulnerable to infection and illness and this terminal stage finally leads to coma and death. Another victim claimed by Alzheimer's Disease.

This disease is potentially curable but it will take much research and public support to minimize the emotional and financial nightmare for victims and their families in the years ahead. If you are inclined to make a charitable donation to a worthy cause, keep the Alzheimer's Association in mind.





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The Civil War's Homefront

by Lillian W. Dale

The following memoirs were originally published in 1899.

Shall I tell you of some of the "makeshifts" to which we were driven during the war? Well, one of the hardest things to come by was sugar, and by the second year of the war it was impossible to buy even the commonest brown sugar in the South. My grandmother possessed a loaf of white sugar that she treasured very carefully, and only used on extra occasions, and when the war was over she still had a small piece of it.

The best substitute we had for sugar was molasses, or sorghum, made from Chinese sugar cane. It was used in coffee and all kinds of desserts, and when one got used to it, did not taste so badly. Preserves were made by cooking berries and fruits in sorghum molasses, and as all the essentials were plentiful, we

made them in large quantities.

Cake was also made with sorghum. In the South we do not think it is Christmas unless we have boiled custard for dinner.

One Christmas we had no sugar for even this favorite delicacy; so we decided to make it with sorghum. It was of a rich, golden color, and certainly the prettiest, if not the best, I ever saw.

Real coffee was almost as scarce as "hens' teeth," and many things were tried as substitutes. Grandma had a sack of coffee when the war began, and she divided it into small quantities, and hid it in various places, so that if some of it was found and taken she would not lose it, so by this means we usually had our coffee, part Rio and part Rye, without the "O." Some of our neighbors used parched corn, okra, sweet potatoes, etc.

Another thing very hard to procure was salt, and that was indispensable. Part of the time during

the war it was impossible to buy it for love or money. Then it was that those who owned old smoke-houses with dirt floors were considered very fortunate. The dirt floors were dug up for a depth of several feet, and the dirt put up in hoppers.

Water was then poured over it, and, as it soaked through, it was put in kettles and boiled down till it made a dark-looking salt that answered very well to preserve meat. The stock did not like it.

Many times was our house searched, on various pretenses, by the Yanks. Sometimes they were looking for Rebels supposed to be in hiding there; sometimes for arms, etc., but whatever reason they gave for doing so, everything that at-



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tracted the fancy or the upidity of the searchers always disappeared with them.

Once my father had purchased a pair of "store shoes" for my little sister; they were very difficult to procure in those days, and she was consequently very proud of them.

A few days after a band of "searchers" came. The shoes were hidden on top of an old wardrobe, and we hoped they would not be discovered, but one man got up on a chair, and soon found them, and carried them off. My sister was only nine years old, and it almost broke her heart to lose her new shoes. My father talked to one of the men whom he knew about her grief, and he promised to bring back the shoes if he could. He was as good as his word, and brought them back next day, to my sister's great joy. I do not think anything else was ever returned to us.

At the beginning of the war my father wore a handsome overcoat of the style known as a "Lord Raglan," with wide sleeves and big pockets. As the Yanks always appropriated such articles of wearing apparel, it was kept in the darkest corner of the darkest wardrobe. New Year's day, 1863, was one of the coldest days ever known in the South. One of the Federal Generals, Hatch I think it was, was quartered in our town with his command, and they roamed over the country for miles. As we lived only a short distance from town, they almost crowded us out of the house, in order to get to the fire that very cold day. Their invariable salutation on coming in was, "It is rather coolish today." In order to keep warm I put on my father's "Raglan," and filled the pockets with silver spoons and other valuables; they threatened

to take it from me, and asked the servants if it was not a man's overcoat.

One morning, just as our breakfast was ready, a party of Yanks appeared, took their seats at the table, devoured the whole breakfast, and, as they left the table, each man put his knife and fork in his pocket. As such things were not easily procured in those days, we had to eat with our fingers for some time afterward.

One day my father was standing on the front veranda when two Yanks rode up; one of them pointed

his pistol at my father's head and demanded his pocketbook. My father remonstrated, told him he had quite a large family, black and white, depending on him for support, and but little money. The Yank cursed him and said: "Give me your pocketbook or I'll blow your brains out." My father handed him his pocketbook, and the Yank looked through it rapidly, taking out the money, about \$30.00, including a \$10.00 gold piece, then threw the book at my father's feet, with the command "See that you say nothing about this." A neighbor of ours,

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a Union woman, was present, and saw and heard it all; she said: "Well ! I never would have believed it, if my own eyes had not seen it, and my own ears heard it."

We all wore homespun dresses in those days, the work of our own hands, and sang with great enjoyment:

"Three cheers for the home-pun dress the Southern ladies wear."

What happiness when our sweethearts "who wore the gray" came home from long absences! How we listened, with delight, to every word they uttered; to their glowing descriptions of camp life; of the battles in which they had participated, and how enchanted we were with the glorious vision of the time "when this cruel war should be over," and the South victorious!

How we venerated the names of Lee and Stonewall Jackson, of Jeff Davis and Alexander Stephens! -- and their names are still dear to every Southern heart.



Ghastley Discovery at Bird's Spring

Human Skeleton Found 15 Feet from Entrance, Arousing Much Interest In Late War!

from 1888 Huntsville newspaper

On Monday evening last, Mr. G.A. Lippincott, of this city, accompanied by his brother in law, Mr. Hicks, started to explore a cave at Bird's Spring on the property of S.W. Harris and their exploring tour satisfied them enough to warrant another, and a more searching one to take place at an early date.

One of the curiosities of the cave trip was the discovery of a skeleton near the main entrance of the cave, the skull, and several bones of which are now on display at the office of Mr. Harris on Eustis Street.

A Mercury reporter saw the skull last evening which was that of a full grown person, but how the owner of that "dead head" came to inhabit the cave is a matter in which the field of conjecture is wide.

During the late great unpleasantness both armies alternately camped on the Harris property and the bones now exposed to view may be those of some stalwart soldier of one of those armies. How he came to be buried in a cave will probably never be revealed in this world, but the ghastly, grinning skull reveals the fact that the Bird's Spring cave has been trod by mortal feet before Mr. Lippincott and his kin explored it.

Mr. Lippincott informs us that there are two apertures leading right and left after entering the cave, and he is determined to find out where they lead to, or at least satisfy himself to the probable dimensions of the cave.

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Children of John Hunt

Cont. from page 25

Records indicate that David Hunt was a prosperous businessman engaged in buying and selling land. He also had an interest in a mill and a mercantile business. At the beginning of the War of 1812, David received a commission as Major. Apparently at his own expense he raised and equipped a company of soldiers to join Andrew Jackson who was organizing an army in nearby Fayetteville.

During the battle of New Orleans, Major Hunt distinguished himself by his bravery and composure while under fire. Almost a hundred and fifty years later the author Alfred Leland Crab admitted to having patterned one of the characters in his book, *Home To The Hermitage*, after Major Hunt.

After returning home Hunt became a staunch supporter of Andrew Jackson. When Jackson began his run for the presidency, Hunt gave a huge dinner for him at which it was reported that almost four hundred people attended. Oddly enough, in today's world, there are no indications that Hunt profited in any way from his friendship with the new president.

Hunt was well respected in the community. There are numerous records of him being chosen as administrator of wills and witnesses to various legal matters. In 1840, with political fever running high, he was chosen to serve as judge for the 1840 presidential election in Franklin County.

David Hunt died on Jan. 27, 1847 and was buried at the Larkin

family cemetery in Huntland. His wife outlived him by 17 years.

All of Hunt's children went on to become respected members of their community. His son, Clinton, became especially interested in the education of his daughter and sent her to a private school. In 1856, when Clinton's daughter decided to study music, he ordered a piano from New Orleans at the "exorbitant" cost of \$1000. The piano was later donated to Belmont College in Nashville, in memory of Clinton

Hunt. The founder of the college, Joseph Acklin, was Clinton's first cousin.

Descendants of David Hunt still own much of the same land that he carved out of the wilderness back in 1807.

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Curtis Johnson, machinist

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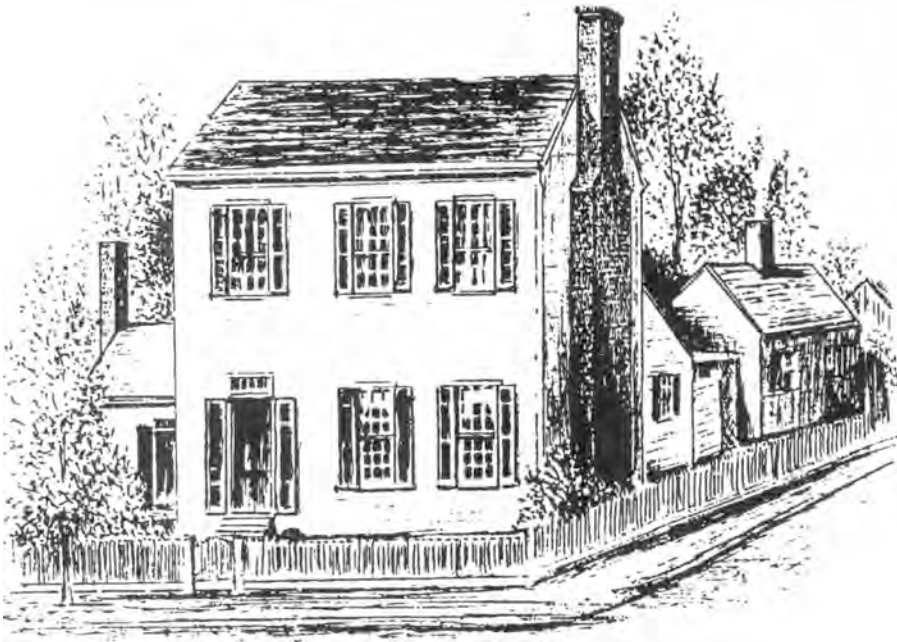
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Constitution Hall Park

by Mike Kenny

In 1819 there were said to be 260 constructed houses, primarily built of brick and stone, in Huntsville. The early settlers, mostly from Georgia and South Carolina, welcomed the 44 delegates from 22 counties of Alabama on July 5, 1819 to establish Alabama as the 22nd

State of the United States.

The early 19th century was a time for intelligence and stamina. The lack of hard currency caused the need for bartering and self-sufficiency. Growing one's own food

and preserving it, obtaining cloth from spinning wheels and looms, and the need for neighbor to help neighbor demonstrated the era's attachment to earlier times than our own. To recapture those early days, to offer the person of today something unique and special the notion of a "living museum" was born. A request by the Huntsville Historical Association to establish what is known as Constitution Hall Park met with a positive response from the city council, the Madison County Commission, and then governor Albert Brewer. The project to reconstruct the Historical Area and Site of Alabama's Constitutional Convention began in 1970. Governor Brewer stated that, "The project will be an authentic replica of the buildings which existed during that period of our State's History." Financing the dream, however, has taken awhile.

Groundbreaking occurred in 1977, with Mayor Joe Davis and Dr. Jimmy Wall removing two spadefuls

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of earth. Constitution Hall, the main building in the reconstruction project and the site of the signing of the Alabama Constitution on August 2, 1819, was a two-story frame building. Later it was used as a theatre, and was torn down in 1821. Four other buildings that existed at the time of the Alabama Constitution would also be reconstructed. They included a printer's shop on the site where John Boardman printed the original Alabama Constitution and the Alabama Republican newspaper. The law office of Clement Comer Clay (a leader in the Constitutional Convention, later governor of Alabama and U.S. senator) would be reconstructed. It was there that the United States Post Office and Land Surveyors were housed. Also to be reconstructed was the residence of Stephen Neal, Madison County's First Sheriff ... and the site of the Huntsville Public Library, the first library in Alabama.

Before the construction began members of the Alabama Archaeological Society uncovered 3,000 artifacts from five diggings. Found at the site were early automobile headlight lenses and ornamental radiator caps. Digging more: wavy 19th century glass fragments were discovered. Digging deeper, the archaeologists found conical lead bullets and percussion caps from the Civil War, the foundation of an antebellum cotton warehouse, fragments of clay pipes, dishes, jewelry, hardware, animal bones, and flint projectiles used by Native Americans from much earlier times.

One dig reported the finding of two human teeth, which a local dentist identified and indicated that holes in them were made by an early

electric drill or treadle drill from the late 19th century. To the relief of the diggers and sponsors of the project no human skeletons were found. While members of the Archaeological Society, volunteers, and students were using brush and trowel to uncover the site's early history ... planners, historians, and architects of the firm of Jones and Herrin conducted extensive research on the paint, colors, hardware, blacksmith items, and construction techniques used in 1819. Two and one-half years of study went into acquiring the knowledge of buildings and furnishings of that era. What appears to the visitor today is what would have been seen 175 years ago: solid and crude construction, but not shoddy. The buildings were designed to look rough, but they are solidly built. Purposely the fireplaces were constructed with less than perfect lines, the walls set with less than perfect dimensions, and the sidewalks were designed and laid with uneven surfaces to recreate what would have appeared in 1819.

Opened on Law Day in May, 1982 as more than a visual representation of the 19th century, Con-

stitution Hall Village became a Museum of Living History ... where lost arts and old techniques are revived and seen by visitors. Children can see blacksmithing and printing done on a 19th century hand press. They may receive a copy of an 1819 newspaper. One can get a glimpse of the domestic life of the time and see soap-making and woodworking. The guides to this journey back in time are costumed interpreters able to give the visitor the feel and aura of bygone days ... whether by the smitty exhibiting his skills with hammer and anvil or a bonneted matron spinning wool, the effect is one of authenticity.

A careful eye can see the great lengths that went to recreate this time and special historical place. Modern aids and technology are carefully hidden from view. It was reported that archaeological diggings in the area have unearthed type from early printing presses. This gives added authenticity to the print shop located in the Village. The plants typically found and used in 1819 and the manner of planting customary for the day were followed by the landscapers. Many

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period furnishings, implements, and tools were donated to the Park giving an added dimension and significance to this magnificent recreation'

In the opening year 12,000 persons visited the Park. Now the attendance is over four-times that. Many have availed themselves of the tours, puppet shows, dinners, and workshops. Many more people are expected to attend each year. With the continued support of private citizens, agencies, and businesses the growth will continue. Constitution Hall Park continues to expand and sets the pace for the revitalization of downtown Huntsville.

Interest and support for the Park continues. A fine old 1848 building was donated in 1991 by the local Coca-Cola Bottler. The structure was moved to a plot on Gates Avenue and Fountain Circle. The land was given to the Park by the City of Huntsville. So in walking around, one can see aspects of the Village that look unfinished, that still need restoring ... such as the 1848 House near the main complex. Splotches of paint can be seen on Constitution Hall, and there are excavations. One can easily see that the project is ongoing and expanding. Happily, talk and dreams are backed-up by real plans, support, and fine-looking results. The donation of many items large and small demonstrate a participation on many levels.

Perhaps, it all shows that if there is a good idea, the willingness to make it happen, and the cooperation of many ... much can happen.

In that regard all associated with Constitution Hall Park have recaptured the spirit of that earlier time ... the values, and the dedica-

tion that began what we know now as the State of Alabama. By looking backward and valuing past contributions, Huntsville's future and the maintaining of a valuable historical treasure known as Constitutional Hall Park can be assured.



The law presumes a man innocent until he is found guilty. Then if he has any money left, his lawyer continues the presumption. Robbie Marin, paralegal



Speedy Justice

From 1890 Huntsville newspaper

A speedy and conclusive trial was that of Ed Morrison, who killed young Henry Hunter in Madison County, Ga. a few weeks since. Eighteen minutes' argument for the defense, sixteen for the prosecution, twenty for the judge's charge, twenty for the jury and then the verdict. One hour and fourteen minutes after the evidence closed the jury returned a verdict of Guilty.

He was hanged the morning next.

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Newly Found Documents Prove that First Profes- sional Play Ever Held in the Mississippi Territory was Staged in Huntsville

Other than an occasional lecturer or a visiting politician, there were few amusements in early-day Huntsville. In the winter of 1818-1819, N.M. Ludlow, a manager for a troupe of actors, visited Huntsville and staged the first professional play ever performed in Alabama. In 1871 he wrote the following account of the performance.

Our commencement at Huntsville was with considerable misgiv-

ings of success. First, because the town was very limited in point of population and, secondly, because there did not appear much expression of a desire to witness theatricals. Both of these apprehensions disappeared, however, as we came to understand that the wealthiest and best informed classes, those from whom we really obtained our principal support, resided not generally within the town limits, but from two to five miles around in the

adjacent country, being mostly planters, and men of wealth and leisure. These would frequently come to town in their carriages and bring their families to witness our performances; and they soon began to consider theatrical amusements necessary to their pleasure. As our company was so very small, and half of it entire novices, we were much troubled to find pieces we could place before the public with any probability of affording satisfaction; but, with some skill in managing on our part, and a large share of indulgence on the part of our auditors, we succeeded, I believe, in meeting their expectations.

The opening play was Tobin's comedy, in five acts, called the "Honeymoon," but cut down by me to three acts, and performed under the title of the "Duke's Marriage;" the first time, I imagine, it was ever played under that name. The whole piece was not badly played, except that Mr. Flanagan made the Span-

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ish count an Irish count. Our opening farce was Sam Foote's "Liar."

We were not able to procure musicians enough to form even a quartet band, so had to rely upon one instrument, a piano, played by an Irishman named Thomas, who gave marches and waltzes during the intervals of the entertainments. The price of admission was \$1 for each person, adult or child, to which no one objected; by this rule every seat was made to "tell," and we were not much annoyed with crying children.

Now I will desire of my readers to bear in mind that this was the first company of professional actors that ever performed in Alabama, throughout the whole Territory or State.

We performed in Huntsville about ten weeks, giving entertainments only three nights of each week,—Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. We could not, with our novices, get pieces ready oftener; and even then had to make many "repeats." Our season may be said to have been a success, inasmuch as we gave pretty general satisfaction; and though we made little or no money, we did not leave the town in debt, or fail to pay our company their weekly salaries. We made many pleasant acquaintances, who seemed anxious to have us return at some future day.

Most people prove it's not necessary to understand things in order to argue about them.

Arthur Vinette, salesman

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- 1 c. whole wheat flour
- 2 t. baking powder
- 1/8 t. baking soda
- 1/2 t. salt (optional)
- 1/2 c. raisins or chopped prunes

Before starting, pour boiling water over dried fruit and let it soak. Whisk egg with milk, molasses and oil. Add bran and stir. Set aside. Take a second bowl, mix the dry ingredients and fruit. Mix in the liquid mix. Do not overbeat. Fill muffin tins 2/3 full in oiled cups and bake about 20 minutes at 375F. Do not overcook.

Wheat Germ Muffins

- 1 1/2 c. whole wheat flour
- 1 c. wheat germ
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 T. baking powder
- 6 T. nonfat dry milk powder
- 1 c. water
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 3 T. oil
- 2 T. honey or molasses
- 1/2 c. raisins
- 1/2 c. sunflower seeds
- 1/4 c. chopped almonds

Preheat oven to 400F. Combine your dry ingredients in a bowl, the liquid in another. Slowly add the liquid ingredients to dry, stir only enough to moisten. Don't be concerned about lumps. Spoon into greased muffin tins, bake for 20 to 25 minutes.



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The Muir Family History

by Richard Smallwood



One of the most difficult types of family relationships to trace are those of a female line where no male line exists. While many people might know that a relationship exists, without a male line, there is simply no one name which everyone can identify with. The Muir family of Madison County is such a family, consisting of descendants of four sisters whose parents lived in St. Louis County area of Missouri.

The Muir family came to the United States from the City of Stirling, Scotland and settled west of St. Louis Missouri in 1852. The male side of the Muir family originally lived in the Campsie Mountain region of Scotland. Their ancestral town of origin was Clacken, which is located just North of Glasgow. The Muirs were, by tradition, foresters. They had to leave Clacken for Edinburgh in the late eighteenth century when the paisley cloth industry was transferred to India to take advantage of cheaper labor. Later, the Muirs moved to the Stirling area. The female side of the Muir family, the Bennets, lived in the Parish of Logie for hundreds of years. The village of Blairlogie is located just Northeast of Stirling and was noted as a health spa be-

cause of its tuberculosis free goat's milk.

The Scottish immigrant, William Muir, travelled to the United States in 1847 as a ship's doctor. He first landed at New Orleans but, not liking the area, worked his way to St. Louis as a tailor. By 1852 he had raised enough money to buy ship passage for his wife and two daughters.

William and his wife Ellen eventually had a total of twelve children, consisting of eleven daughters and one son. Two daughters had the same name. (It was a Scottish custom that, if a child died, then the next child born (of the same sex) would be given the same name.)

William Muir suffered from a bad hip. During the War Between the States, because of his bad hip, he did not join the military. At that time the need for food was so acute that William became heavily involved in the science of agriculture. He pursued this interest for the rest of his life. He was an associate editor of Coleman's Rural World, an associate editor of the Illustrated Journal of Agriculture, a Secretary of the Missouri State Horticultural Society, and an active member of the Missouri Grange (a secret farmers' association). It was through

William's Horticultural Society activities that led to the family's eventual move to Madison County, Alabama. In 1870, another immigrant Scotsman, John Fraser, was brought into the St. Louis area, by local businessmen, to attempt to establish a rosebush industry. While the climate and soil was not conducive to growing roses, John Fraser joined the local Horticultural Society and thereby met the Secretary's daughter, Margaret. As they say, the rest is history. In 1871 John and Margaret married. They had one daugh-

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ter, Annie, while still living in the St. Louis area. In 1873 John entered into a partnership with a Major W. F. Heikes, who had established the Huntsville Nursery in Huntsville, Alabama. John Fraser, his wife and daughter moved to the Huntsville area in 1874, where he started growing roses. Later on he established his own nursery business.

John and Margaret Fraser had a total of six children - three daughters and three sons. Each son eventually became associated with their own nurseries; James established Fraser Nursery, John Jr. inherited the management of Huntsville Wholesale Nursery and Oliver started Birmingham (Alabama) Nursery Company.

His daughters' marriages were as follows: Annie married George McLaughlin, a farmer on Winchester Road and had nine daughters and one boy. Among her children were: Sister Mary Josephine, who taught at St. Mary's school on Holmes Avenue; Nell Hinshaw who is in her 90's; Blanche, who married Virgil Destefano, of Destefano's grocery; and Carroll McLaughlin, who was a minor political action figure around the county. Agnes married Robert Leatherwood, a lawyer from Meridianville. Their married life began with great promise and expectations but was soon marred by two tragic events. Their only child died as an infant and because of the emotional pain associated with the Huntsville area, they moved to Birmingham. In Birmingham, Robert's thriving law practice was abruptly terminated when he was hit on the head with a pipe, wielded by a disgruntled opponent in a law suit. He wasn't killed but was unable to function appropriately for the rest of his

life. Lastly, Helen married Robert Harrison, one of the original Harrison Brothers of Harrison Brothers Hardware store. They had two sons, Daniel and John, and one daughter, Margaret. Only Margaret, who married Harry Smallwood, had children.

Margaret Muir Fraser stayed in contact with her family in Missouri and family members exchanged visits. In 1876 one of Margaret's sisters, Ellen ("Nellie"), married Oliver Fleming White in Madison County. They lived in Meridianville and had seven children - six sons and one daughter. The daughter, Duanne Ellen, married Rolland Oristes Grimwood. This marriage ended in tragedy. Rolland Grimwood died when a limb, on a tree he was cutting down, broke off and hit him squarely on the head. He left a pregnant wife and six very young children. Soon after his death his widow's house burned. His widow never remarried, and was able to hold the family together. She was so successful that in her later years she was given an award for outstanding achievement to agriculture by the Madison County Council of Home Demonstration Clubs. Being a modest person, she did not attend the award ceremony.

Mrs. Grimwood's children included Mrs. John Tyler Darwin, who taught school at Meridianville; Mrs. Martha Shinkle of Meridianville; Bobby, who farms near Hazel Green and William, who was associated with Grimwood Insurance Agency in Huntsville.

Two other children of Ellen Muir White were Robert and John White. Robert White and his children Robert Sublett White and Jan Deraine White were born in and

lived in the home place of Oliver and Ellen White. John White married Juanita McNeil and their children were William White (who died very young) and Mrs. Betty Jacks.

The third set of Muir relatives who settled in Madison County was a child of Ann Muir (sister of Margaret and "Nellie") and her husband, David Cox, a Scottish immigrant. Ann and Davis met and married in St. Louis and then moved to Denver, Colorado. One of their daughters, Cornelia, married a cousin, William White, in Denver and moved to Madison County. They had three daughters.

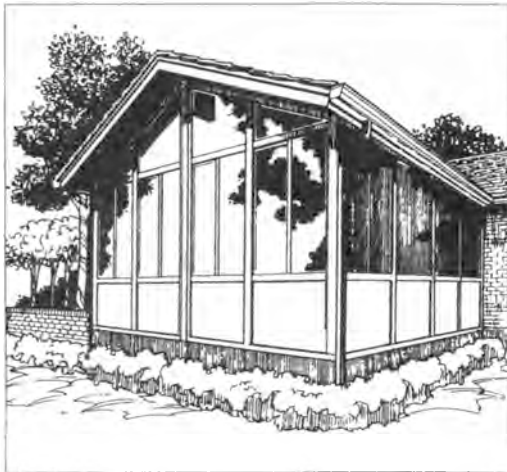
The last set of Muir relatives who came to settle in Madison County was a child of Janet Muir (another sister of Margaret and "Nellie") and her husband, Charles Brisley, and English immigrant. They met and married in St. Louis. One of their daughters, Fannie, married a cousin, James White, in St. Louis County, Missouri and then moved to Meridianville. They had five children - three daughters and two sons.

While members of this family are spread across America, those who move away try to keep in touch. One of the unique features of this family is that primary records are being kept by David Grimwood (son of Rolland Grimwood) in Richmond, Virginia; David Fraser (son of James Fraser) in Atlanta, Georgia; O.W. Fraser, Jr. in Los Altos, California; and Beth Province (a granddaughter of Janet Muir) in Bethesda, Maryland; and by relatives in St. Louis, Missouri and Madison County, Alabama.

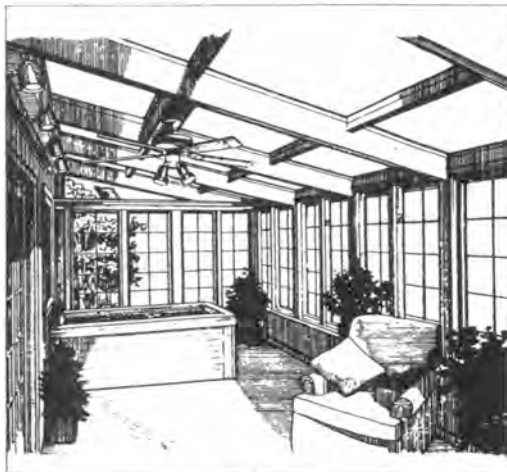




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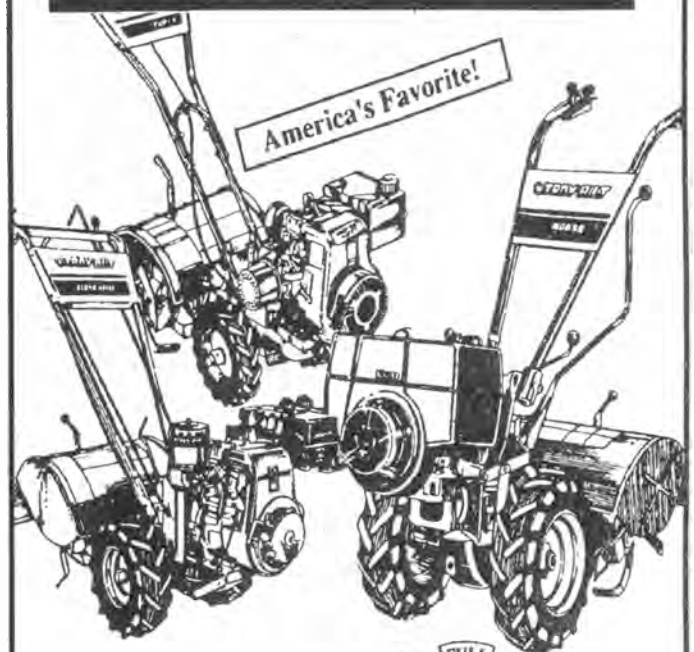
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