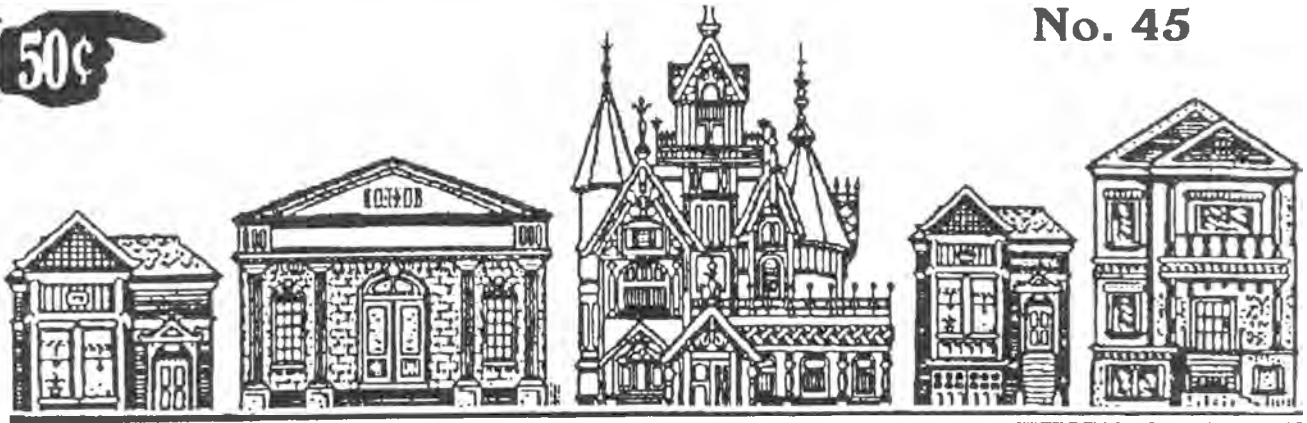


50¢

No. 45



Old Huntsville



THE "ONLIEST"
LIVING
CONFEDERATE
WIDOW
TELLS HER STORY

ALSO: "YANKEE SCOUTS AND SOUTHERN SCOUNDRELS"

THE "ONLIEST" LIVING CONFEDERATE WIDOW TELLS HER STORY

The 4th Alabama Infantry was one of the decorated regiments in the Confederate States Army. Young men from Huntsville, Sand Mountain, Decatur and the Shoals fought and sacrificed their lives under its banner.

Private William Jasper Martin, born almost 150 years ago was a member of the regiment. Though Martin has been dead for well over a half century, his widow is still alive, and now for the first time, tells all.

The first thing you see as you enter the small house is a Confederate flag on the living room wall. Its presence overpowers the room, giving visitors a sense of being in a museum.

"I got lots of flags," says the small gray haired woman as she looks thoughtfully at the Southern banner. "They used to give the flags to the Confederate widows and now all the rest of them is dead. Now I'm the onliest one left in the whole world."

Mrs. Alberta Martin grew silent as she remembered growing up in the small town of Opp,

Alabama. "Lord, those times were hard. People ain't got no idea today how hard they were."

She was born in 1907, the oldest of five children. Her family, like tens of thousands of others, was wed to the soil and cotton crops that never seemed able to produce quite enough to put food on the table.

At the age of 10, Alberta's life was suddenly shattered when her mother died of cancer. "Father would work in the fields all day and come home, take care of the house and do the cooking. You could look at his face and tell he was worn out all the time."

Alberta assumed the role of surrogate mother to the other children and by the time she was 12, was doing the household chores as well as the cooking and washing.

The area's economy, always dependent on cotton, was completely devastated by the boll weevil in 1915. Dirt farmers, with no other skills, were suddenly out of work with no way to support their families. Many families began the exodus to northern cities, while others remained behind, hoping the cotton crops would be better in the following years.

"I lied about my age," said Mrs. Martin, "and got a job in a cotton mill. You had to be 16, but no one really checked. I was working six and a half days a week, 10 hours a day for \$9.50 a week. It seemed like all the money in the world."

Although she was spending all of her time working in the mills and taking care of the house she still attracted the attention of the town's young men.

"We didn't do much courtship back then. We would meet at people's houses, have taffy pulls



Old Huntsville

Published By

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

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or corn shuckings and when it got time to go home, sometimes the boys would walk with us."

One of the men that walked her home was Harold Farrow, a debonair young-man-about-town. He was a taxi driver. A few months later he had swept Alberta off her feet and asked for her hand in marriage. Her father, though having reservations about the match, begrudgingly gave his permission. "You ever do her wrong," the father warned Farrow, "and I'll come and get her."

Her father's premonitions proved correct when it was discovered that Farrow was using his taxi business to bootleg whiskey.

"My father didn't have no use for whiskey or for people that fooled with it," recalls Alberta.

"He showed up at the house one day and said, "Get your stuff together, I'm carrying you home."

Within weeks she was granted a divorce, only to discover that she was also pregnant.

"My half-brother was growing a cotton crop and I moved in with him, helped take care of my father and do the housework. With a baby to take care of there wasn't much else for me to do."

She began noticing an elderly gentleman who daily passed the house on his way to a nearby store, where he would sit and play checkers all day. In the afternoon he would again pass on his way home.

Curious, Alberta began to inquire about the gentleman who seemed to spend all of his time playing checkers. "His name is William Jasper Martin," a neighbor told her. "He's near 85 years old and he was a soldier in the Civil War."

"I didn't know much about the Civil War, but I knew he was drawing a \$150 pension from it every three months. That was a lot of money!

"He was a good-looking man," Alberta recalls. "He had golden hair and a moustache,

weighed about 150 pounds and was a gentleman.

"He'd walk by and we got to talking over the fence. We didn't do no sparking, we just stood and talked. One day he just up and asked if I would marry him.

"Of course I said yes. You know what they say, 'It's better to be an old man's darling than a young man's slave.' Course I told him he'd have to ask my father."

The fact that Martin was 65 years older than her and 45 years older than her father did not seem to matter at the time. Martin immediately went to her father and, as was the custom in those days, asked for his daughter's hand in marriage.

Martin was born around 1845 in North Georgia. His family was typical pioneer farmers, with the only source of cash coming from the yellow gold that Martin's father occasionally found while prospecting the mountain streams.

Emigration was moving westward and it wasn't long before the Martins heard tales of the rich land in Alabama that could be had for next to nothing. In 1855, after selling their

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land and everything else that could not fit into the wagon, they loaded their personal belongings and trekked to Alabama.

The family settled on a small piece of land in Covington County, where they immediately began clearing the land in preparation for the next years cotton crop.

The Martins were an average southern farm family before the Civil War. They owned no slaves, depended on the land for their livelihood and generally kept to themselves.

William Martin was 16 when the war began in 1861. While many young men rushed to enlist, others stayed home and worked the fields, hoping the war would pass. Such was Martin's case.

For the next three years he watched as more and more of the young men in the community disappeared to become cannon fodder on faraway battlefields. Finally it was Martin's turn.

Though his pension papers have him as an enlistee, his wartime records list him as a conscript. Most likely he was "conscripted" by a "roving band of recruiters" and persuaded to enlist. The Confederacy was suffering from a lack of manpower and any able-bodied man not in uniform risked being labeled a traitor, and being shot or hanged.

On May 26, 1864, Martin was sworn in as a private in the 4th Alabama Regiment, Co. K, of the Confederate States of America.

He was immediately sent to Camp Watts, near Auburn, for basic training. Matthew Galoway, another new soldier at the camp, described it in a letter home as "...constant soldiering activities with much shouting and whistle

blowing. The tents are in a field of mud, made worse by men marching to and fro."

The 4th Alabama had already earned its laurels on the battlefields of the Wilderness, Manassas and numerous other places. It was the most respected regiment in Robert E. Lee's fabled Army of Northern Virginia.

For the citizens of Huntsville, the 4th Alabama Regiment was special. Many husbands, sons and fathers were serving with it. The Rev. William Chadick, husband of diarist Jane Chadick, served as chaplain, while Huntsville's own John Coltart was one of its first officers. The son of William Figures,

a local newspaper editor, was killed in the battle of the Wilderness and Col. Egbert Jones was the regiment's first commander.

Martin's training was cut short within days of arriving at Camp Watts when they were ordered to board train cars for Richmond: Yankee troops were threatening Lee's army at a place called Petersburg, and every man capable of carrying a gun was needed at the front. So great was the haste that most of the men had not even been issued uniforms or weapons before they were ordered to board the trains.

After days of hard travel they were greeted by frenzied military activity upon their arrival in the Confederate capital.



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Immediately after leaving the train, they were formed into columns, issued rifles and marched to the front, many still wearing the same clothes they had left home in.

Twenty-four hours after arriving in Richmond they were engaged in one of the bloodiest battles of the war.

Years later, in one of the few instances when he talked of the war, Martin recalled the screams of wounded men as musket balls and cannon fire cut a swath through the gray ranks.

The next two weeks were scenes of constant marching and fighting for Martin's unit. "We were so hungry that we would pick up potatoes out of the field and eat them raw while marching."

Its ranks thinned during weeks of constant battle. Company K was ordered back to Richmond for regrouping and on June 25 Pvt. Martin was finally issued a uniform.

He didn't talk much about his experiences during the rest of the war, except to say that when the fighting was over, "I laid my gun down and started walking home."

He returned home to a land devastated by war. Rich fields laid

neglected and overgrown and many once-elegant homes had only chimneys still standing. Martin's father had died in the war, his younger brother was killed in the fighting at Richmond and many of his neighbors were still unaccounted for.

Sadly, the ex-soldiers returned to the cotton fields. Many of them, after facing the horrors of war, found the solitude of working in the fields strangely comforting.

The next half century passed rapidly for Martin. He had married and raised a family of five children, only to see his wife fall ill and die. Time had also taken its toll upon his friends and now there were few people left who could remember the days when Martin wore the Confederate gray.

"Everybody knew Mr. Martin was in the war, but that didn't mean anything to me," recalls Alberta. "Onliest thing I was thinking about was what my father was going to say when Mr. Martin asked him about marrying me."

Reluctantly, her father gave his blessing, saying, "She's been married before so I reckon she

knows what she's doing."

"We went to the courthouse in Andalusia and got married by a judge. People stared, but we didn't pay them no mind."

A soft, serene smile played on Alberta's face as she recalled the marriage in 1927. "I always called him Mr. Martin. From the day we met to the day he died, he was always Mr. Martin to me.

"Mr. Martin, he had a bedstead and I had one so we rented a house and sat up housekeep-



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ing. We didn't have any other furniture so we used wooden boxes until we could get some."

Shortly after the marriage, Martin's daughter moved in with them. Oddly, Alberta was not intimidated by the fact that her new stepdaughter was 40 years older than her.

If the neighbors were surprised by the strange union, they

were even more surprised some months later when they learned that 20-year-old Alberta and 85-year-old Martin were expecting a child.

"Mr. Martin, he liked to have spoil that child to death after it was born.

"I remember Mr. Martin walking to town, all dressed up, with his little boy at his side

holding his hand. He was prouder of that boy than anything that ever happened to him in his life."

By 1932 there were few men left alive who could lay claim to being Confederate veterans. Martin had always shunned veterans reunions, even refusing to talk about the war much, except in an occasional reflective mood. But, he agreed to attend the one in Montgomery. Everybody knew it would possibly be the last one.

The reunion lasted three days. It was a somber affair, attended by the mere handful of survivors who once made up the great Army of the Confederacy. A reporter wrote: "... the veterans seemed lost in thought, as if remembering their fallen comrades and wondering how long it would be before they joined them."

Upon Martin's return home from the reunion he would sit on the porch for hours and stare into space. On July 8, 1932, feeling tired, he simply laid down on the bed and died.

"Mr. Martin was good to me," said Alberta in a soft voice, as she remembered the day she buried her husband. "He was good to the children and I missed him terribly after he was gone."

But time goes on, no matter how painful it may seem.

Alberta soon remarried and that union lasted 50 years, until 1982, when she was again widowed.

By this time even her neighbors had forgotten that she was once married to a Confederate veteran.

In 1992, Daisy Cave of Sumter, S.C., died and the news media across the country portrayed her as the last Confederate widow.

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"I heard about it, and I told them that I'm still here! I am the onliest living Confederate widow!" said Mrs. Martin with a touch of rancor in her voice.

Despite her protests the news media continued to assert that the last Confederate widow had died.

"Yes," she said, "I watched the movie, but it wasn't real. That was just a movie." she said speaking of the TV adaptation of Allan Gurganus' book, The Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All, "and it didn't have a thing to do with me. They didn't even talk to me."

Mrs. Martin's claim has been verified by numerous genealogical societies, the Daughters of the Confederacy and many government agencies.

Today she lives in a small frame house on the outskirts of Elba, Alabama. With her eyesight failing and a recent illness, she rarely ventures out of her home. Much of her time is spent sitting in an easy chair, in front of the old flag, and reminiscing of a time long ago when she found happiness as the young bride of an old soldier.

While the Confederate flag has become a symbol of hate and bigotry to many people, it somehow looks strangely appropriate hanging on the living room wall of the last living Confederate widow.

The End

THE WAY IT WAS

*The other side of
Huntsville's History*

Available at
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Hard Of Hearing

B'ham Man Takes Poison and Mother Congratulates Him



Harold Gentry, 32, yesterday phoned his mother to inform her that he had taken poison and would not be long of this world.

A short while later he again phoned to say he was growing weaker.

Mrs. Gentry, apparently hard of hearing, understood her son to say that he was going to Illinois where he was going to meet a man by the name of Mr. Beaker.

Mrs. Gentry congratulated her son, wishing him good luck on his upcoming trip.

Fortunately the incident had a happy, though embarrassing, ending when Gentry discovered he had taken a large dose of laxative, rather than poison.

from 1912 newspaper

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Grandma's Timeless Beauty Tips



For beautiful, shiny hair, try this. Beat together an egg with equal amounts (about one-third cup) of water and olive oil. Work the mixture into your dry hair, and leave on for an hour. Then simply rinse thoroughly, shampoo and rinse as usual.

Witch hazel works just as well for toning and tightening your face after washing it. You can buy this at any drug store.

For a healing cleansing cream, mix together 4 oz. of almond oil, 4 oz. pure lard or solid vegetable shortening, 1 oz. beeswax and 3 oz. aloe vera gel, as follows: melt the beeswax and the almond oil in a glass pot. Remove from the heat, add the lard and beat until smooth, then add the gel and beat again until smooth and cold. Use as a daytime cream, for sores, or as a night cream.

For a natural deodorant, mix together 5 drops of lavender, lemon or sage essential oil with 1/2 cup of water. Put in a pump-style container and shake it up good before spraying.

A yogurt-honey mask does wonders for your face. Mix together 1 tablespoon of yogurt and one tablespoon of honey. Apply to a clean, moist face and leave on for about 45 minutes. Rinse face well.

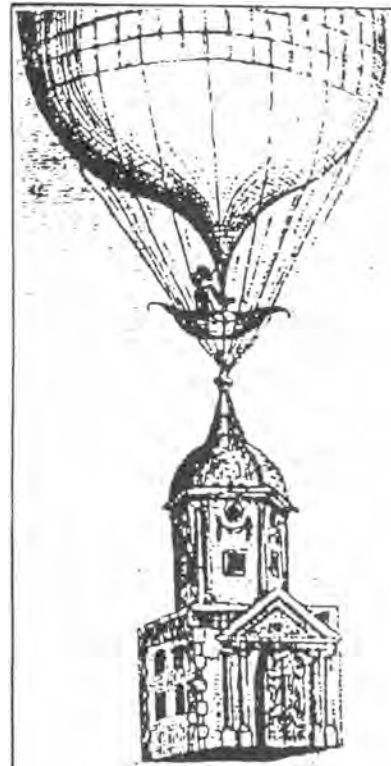
Ginseng Tonic tea - Bring

the following ingredients together in a pot to boil: 1/2 oz. Ginseng root, 1 tablespoon honey and 2 cups water. Remove from heat and cool it until it's drinkable. Drink 1 cup warm in the morning and one cup cold at night. Do this for no longer than 10 days.

Lavender/Rosemary Hair Oil Mix together 1 oz. oil of rosemary and 1/4 oz. oil of lavender. Use a brown or amber bottle to store the mixture. To use, put a few drops of the oil on your palm, brush your palm on your hair-brush and brush your hair. Brush your hair every day, bend at the waist, brush hair starting at the nape of the neck with long easy strokes to the hair ends. Do this about 100 strokes a day.

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An optimist is a father who lets his teenager take the car on a date. A pessimist is a father who will not. A cynic is a father who did.



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1882 Rules for Alabama Teachers

Actual guidelines as
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Alabama School System



1. Each day teachers will fill lamps and clean the chimneys.

2. Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal each day.

3. Make pens carefully. Whittle nibs to individual tastes of students.

4. Men teachers may take one evening each week for court- ing purposes, or two evenings if they go to church.

5. After ten hours in school, the teacher may spend the re- maining time reading the Bible or other good books.

6. Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.

7. Every teacher should lay aside a goodly sum from earn- ings to benefit his declining years so that he will not become a bur- den to society.

8. Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, fre-

quents pool or public halls or gets shaved in a barber shop will give good reason to be suspected of his worth, intentions, integrity and honesty.

9. The teacher who per- forms his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of twenty- five cents per week in his pay, providing that the Board of Edu-

cation approves.

Changes to the system were slow in coming. ...

In 1921, the Board of Edu- cation in Morgan County ex- pressed its opinion that all teach- ers employed in the county re- frain from dancing and other social amusements that detract from their moral worth and effi- ciency.

By 1927, the Board re- quested the Superintendent of Education to prepare and send to all teachers a letter in regard to improving social customs, emphasizing company at night during the school week and also car riding at night.

As late as 1931 the Morgan County Board of Education re- fused to employ married women as teachers in public schools.

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Heard Here and There in Huntsville - 1910

Huntsville Couple married on the Train

S. H. Wilson and Miss Nettie Saunders, both of Huntsville, were married yesterday on train No. 36 of the Southern between Woodville and Limrock, Alabama. The license was secured at Scottsboro and Squire Hold of that place boarded the train and performed the ceremony. They are registered at the Eastern Hotel in Chattanooga and plan to return to Huntsville to make their home.

Monte Sano Becoming a De- serted Village

The summer village on top of Monte Sano is rapidly becoming a deserted village, mostly all of the residents have moved down.

Only four or five families remain and they expect to move down Saturday. By the middle of next week, all of the summer cottages will be "away." The mountain air is cold in the mornings and up there the season is apparently far advanced into autumn.

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News Shorts 1909

Says He Can Find Water

*Responsible man will
locate big stream!*

A responsible business man of Huntsville has said that for \$200 he will find the main stream of the big spring on the Little Mountain and provide water enough to supply the city.

The gentleman wants the money for his trouble and it will not have to be paid him if he fails to find the stream.

The matter will probably be taken up at the next city council meeting and there may be something doing in regards to this.

No one Drowned Yet

That puddle in front of the Post Office cafe is still there. It has been there ever since the square was paved. A load of Iuka gravel would save the skirts of many of the ladies and prevent some hard words from being spoken by the gentlemen who must pass there after heavy rains. People walk through

the court house yard to keep from passing the unsightly place and this will finally hurt the business on that side of the square, for when the number of passersby is cut down, the rents go down also.

Is the County Responsible?

That deer in the court yard is going to cripple someone yet and who is going to pay the damage? Is the county responsible? Put the buck in a fenced-in corner of the yard or else have him removed entirely from the court yard. What's the

purpose of keeping a vicious animal in the way of travel?

Policemen On Horses

The policemen on day duty presented an imposing sight when they began their rounds on horseback. From now on every section of the city will be covered during the day by the mounted men. This has been the law for years but it has been neglected and many of the policemen found it more comfortable to walk than to ride horseback.



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City Wins Lawsuit!

Citizens Preferred Getting Feet Muddy Rather Than Part With Their Dollars

Judge T. Betts of the law and equity court heard several suits brought by the city of Huntsville against property owners who have contested the assessments against them for the cost of paving streets in front of their property. The judgments of the court in favor of the city against the property owners are as follows:



- Harry M. Rhett, \$250
- Miss Mattie P. Barnard \$250.
- Mrs. Maria Jones and A. L. Rison \$200.
- Mrs. Kate Caldwell \$250
- Leo Marscheutz and Mrs. Maria Jones \$300
- John R. Connor \$300
- J. N. Mazza \$140
- Mrs. Annie Powell \$175

from 1910 Huntsville paper

Shaver's Top 10 Books of Local & Regional Interest

1. The Way It Was - The Other Side of Huntsville's History. Rich and bizarre stories of Huntsville's past by native Huntsvillian Tom Carney (\$15.95).

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

3. Glimpses into Antebellum Homes of Huntsville and Madison County. 8th Edition (\$10.00).

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

5. Huntsville Heritage Cookbook - 95,000 copies in print (\$14.95).

6. Gumpisms: The Wit and Wisdom of Forrest Gump by Alabama's Winston Groom (\$5.00)..

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

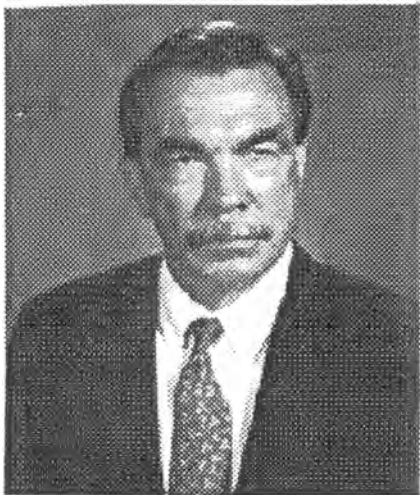
8. Photographic Memories - A Scrapbook of Huntsville and Madison County (\$9.95).

9. Antique Athens and Limestone County - A Photographic Journey 1809 - 1949 (\$19.95).

10. More Than Conquerors - Local author Kay Cornelius' inspirational historical romance set in Huntsville during the Civil War (\$4.95).

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North Alabama College, the School that Never Was.

by Charles Rice

To 19th century North Alabamians, the city of Huntsville was often viewed as an oasis of culture. Unlike many frontier towns which simply grew up more or less by chance, Huntsville was largely planned and settled by wealthy planters from Georgia and Virginia. Thus the city had its culture virtually imposed upon it almost from the beginning.

By the middle of the 19th century, Huntsville was celebrated for its Methodist Female Academy and Presbyterian Female Seminary, while many young men came to receive their education at the nondenominational Green Academy on East Clinton Street.

However, another little known Huntsville educational institute died stillborn as just one more casualty of the War Between the States. This was the North Alabama College, a cherished project of the local Presbyterian Church.

The idea seems to have

started in 1852 among the members of Huntsville's First Presbyterian. Many church members desired a Presbyterian men's school to serve as the equivalent of their highly respected Female

Seminary. The project took some time getting off the ground, however, and it was not until April of 1858 that the North Alabama Presbytery finally got around to electing a board of trustees to oversee the college.

Appointed as trustees were three prominent Huntsvillians: Dr. Frederick A. Ross, the distinguished minister of First Presbyterian, Dr. Lawrence B. Sheffey, a medical practitioner, and Isaiah Dill, a noted Huntsville attorney. The terms of service for the men were staggered, with Ross to serve one year, Sheffey two, and Dill three.

On May 14, 1858, the North Alabama College was incorporated under the laws of Alabama. Two months later, the Presbyterian Church negotiated the purchase of 140 acres of land from George Horton for the sum of

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\$7,000. The land was on the south side of Governor's drive a short distance beyond today's Huntsville Hospital East. The present residential area is even now known as College Hill.

Matthew W. Steele, son of the noted Huntsville architect George Steele, was awarded the contract to construct the impressive edifice. The three-story brick building was to be 125 feet in length and 65 feet in width. It faced northward toward the city of Huntsville.

Work commenced in early 1859 and proceeded steadily. "The North Alabama College is being built upon an eminence one mile from town," said the 1859 *City Directory*. "It is of the castellated style of architecture. The building is to be three stories high, with two towers. It will contain a lecture room and hall for societies. It is under the direction of the Presbytery of North Alabama, yet in the selection of professors it is allowable to choose them, irrespective of re-

ligious creed. It will cost when finished, from thirty to thirty-five thousand dollars."

The spring of 1862 found the North Alabama College almost completed. However, the fledgling school was never to open its doors. On April 11, 1862, a Union Army led by General Ormsby McKnight Mitchel seized Huntsville. Work was immediately halted.

Harper's Weekly, the famous New York illustrated newspaper, carried an engraving of the city one month after its capture. The North Alabama College is clearly visible in the drawing, looking for all purposes virtually ready for occupation. Later testimony revealed that the exterior of the building was, indeed, finished. The tin roof was in place, and the interior was also largely completed. The material required for the final touches was stored within the building. However, that is as far as it ever got.


The Union Army retreated from Huntsville at the end of

August 1862, but war time conditions kept the school from opening. In the summer of 1863, the Union Army returned, this time to stay for almost all of the remainder of the war.

Unfortunately for the Presbyterian Church, the winter of 1863-64 was unusually severe in North Alabama. In early 1864, Union General David H. Stanley, who then commanded in Huntsville, decided his men simply had to have bricks to build chimneys for their makeshift dwellings. He ordered the Union soldiers to take their bricks from the North Alabama College!

By the time the Yankees had finished vandalizing the beautiful building, almost all of Matthew Steele's fine work had been undone. The North Alabama College was left in ruins. It would never be rebuilt.

Impoverished by the war, First Presbyterian Church was left to foot the bill for their shattered dream. On August 25, 1866, the church was forced to



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sell the property and all that was left of the college at public auction to pay off the mortgage of \$3,300.

Many years after the war, First Presbyterian sought to recover its losses from the Federal Government. General Stanley wrote to the church in December 1891 to confirm that everything happened just as they said. On September 12, 1893, Joseph Wheeler introduced a bill into Congress to investigate the church's claim against the government. The wheels of government turn slowly, however, and nothing much had been done through December 3, 1901, when Congressman William Richardson reintroduced the bill. This time the matter was referred to the Committee on War Claims.

Testimony before Congress confirmed that the money to build the college was raised by contributions of Huntsville citizens, and that the trustees were a nonpartisan group that had nothing to do with wartime politics.

Huntsvillian Augustus Pryor, then 75, testified that he had seen the Union soldiers destroying the college building. Pryor added that after the Union troops left Huntsville, he saw at least a thousand brick chimneys standing at the Union campsite, which was about a quarter of a mile from the school.

On February 25, 1907, the Federal Court of Claims finally decided in favor of the church to the amount of \$7,600. After legal expenses were deducted, the church received \$5,320.

It had taken 43 years for the Presbyterian Church to receive what it was owed. Unfortunately, Huntsville never did get its hoped for men's college.

Want Ads From 1907



Wanted - agent for *Nashville Banner*. Pays forty dollars a month. Must be reliable and a hustler. See John H. Lackey, Huntsville Hotel.

Wanted - white woman for house work and place for a boy twelve years old for his board and clothes to work around the house or farm. Apply at Salvation Army quarters, 703 Pratt Ave., or call phone 181.

Lost - two \$10 bills, one gold certificate and a silver certificate, between Clinton and Madison Streets. Reward for return to J.M. McKee.

For rent - two furnished rooms heated by furnace. Men preferred. 242 Walker Street. \$1.50 a week.



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An Old Man's Last Hurrah

by Tom Carney



"Kind'a like squirrel hunting," the old man thought as he shifted position again, while cradling the shotgun loosely in his arms.

He had been waiting, hidden in the shadows of the overgrown hedge-row for most of the night. "Few more hours ain't gonna matter much," he thought, as he spit out a long stream of tobacco juice, narrowly missing the dog laying at his feet.

"Dog's getting old, too."

Suddenly the hairs on the dog's neck stiffened as it became aware of a car pulling into the gravel drive, the driver's face illuminated by the electric sign of the Maple Grove Motor lodge.

Pausing only long enough to make certain it was the prey he was after, the old man slowly stood, his arthritis making it difficult for him to move fast. Calling softly to the dog, and checking the shotgun one last time to make certain it was loaded, he headed for the motel room he had seen the driver

enter.

Doobie Sinclair, or Ol' Man Sinclair, as most people called him, had just celebrated his 87th birthday. Slightly irritated, he replayed the days events in his mind.

"Bunch of damn foolishness," he had thought. "Bunch of women running around telling me how young I look. Hell, I ain't young, I'm an old man. The whole passel of them acts like they been out in the sun to long."

"Just sit right there, Grandpa, and don't move," the young blond-haired woman said as she patted him once again on the side of the head. I'll get you a plate with some cake on it."

Sinclair winced inwardly as he moved his head out of the way. "She pats me like a dog one more time and I'm gonna bite her damn hand off. People think just because I'm old, I'm supposed to be treated like some yard dog."

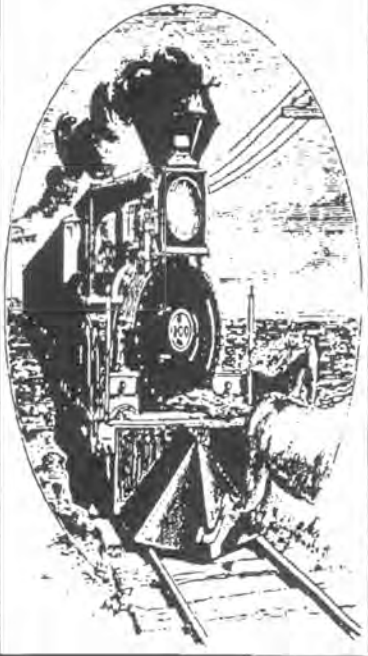
"Happy Birthday, Grandpa,"

the young man said as he entered the room. Rushing across the room, he bent and kissed his grandpa gently on the cheek. "Got you a present," he whispered as he bent closer while opening his hand to reveal a plug of chewing tobacco.

"Dennis, you give me that tobacco! You know that Grandpa ain't supposed to have that!" As if to emphasize her point, the blond woman jerked it out of the old man's hand, placing it on the mantle. "Now Grandpa, just you don't worry, I know what's good for you."

Silently, Sinclair sat and

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watched his brood of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren as they gorged themselves on his birthday cake. "Only 'fitten one in the bunch is Dennis," he thought, "and they're gonna sissify him too."

Suddenly his attention was

directed to Dennis, who was sitting in the corner whispering to his wife. "Good thing 'bout being old," the old man mused as he watched his favorite grandson. "people think you must be deaf too".

"Honey, I'm sorry. I just

stopped to have one drink, and I didn't mean to get into any gambling. It just happened."

"How much did you lose?" his wife asked, growing angrier by the second.

"Honey, now don't worry ..."

Continued on page 33



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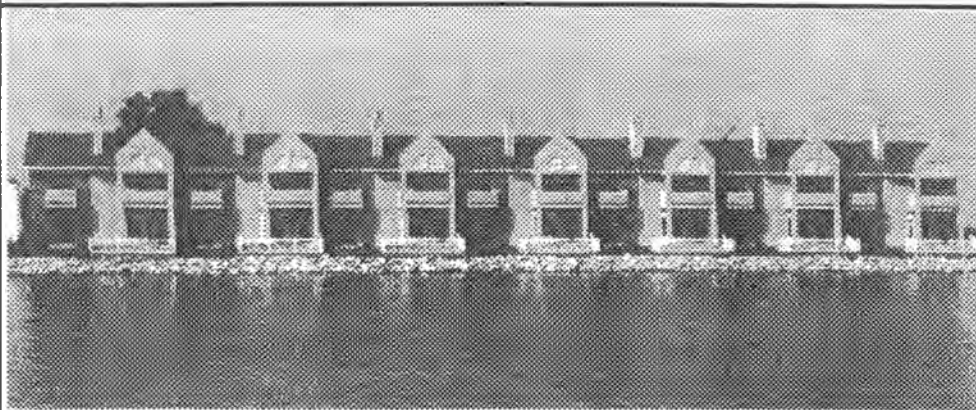
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Hearty Fare for Fall

Oven baked Chicken with Gravy

- 4 large chicken breasts
- 1 c. flour
- 1 c. water
- 1 1/2 c. butter
- Salt and pepper
- 1 t. seasoning salt
- 1/2 t. garlic powder
- milk or cream for gravy

Mix up the flour, garlic powder, salt, pepper and seasoning salt. Dip the cleaned breasts in milk, then in the flour mixture. Melt the butter in a large frying pan, brown the chicken. When nicely browned, add 1 cup of water, cover and cook in your oven at 375 degrees for about an hour. When the chicken is tender, add your milk or cream for a delicious gravy.

Chocolate Chess Pie

- 1 stick butter
- 1/3 c. cocoa
- 1 2/3 c. sugar
- 2 T. flour (self-rising)

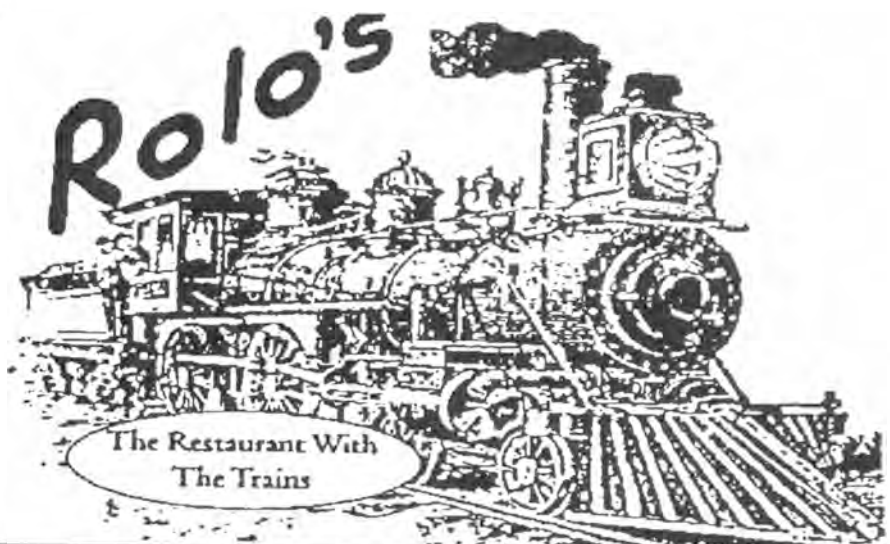
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 c. milk
- 1 1/2 t. vanilla extract

Slowly melt the butter and cocoa together over low heat. Beat your eggs, add the sugar and flour (that you've mixed together) to the butter mixture. Add the milk and vanilla and cook in an unbaked pie shell at 325 til done - about 35 or 40 minutes, or until it shakes just a little bit in the middle.

Cabbage Casserole

- 1 head of cabbage
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 small sour cream
- 1 8 oz. cream cheese
- corn bread crumbs
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 lb. ground beef
- dash garlic powder
- dash onion powder

Boil the cabbage til slightly



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cooked, set aside. Brown the meat and onion together and drain. Stir in the sour cream and cream cheese and keep stirring til the cheese melts. Drain your cabbage and pour it into the casserole dish. Add your meat mixture on top of the cabbage. Crumble corn bread crumbs over the meat. Pour melted butter over the casserole and bake at 350 degrees til the corn bread crumbs are brown and look crunchy.

Banana Walnut Bread

2 c. sugar
 1/2 c. shortening
 1/2 c. butter
 3/4 c. milk
 1 c. sour cream
 2 eggs
 4 mashed bananas
 3 c. self-rising flour
 1 1/2 t. vanilla
 1 c. chopped walnuts

Cream the sugar, butter, and shortening together. Add the other ingredients and beat it all up for about 4 minutes. Grease 2 loaf pans and pour in your batter. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

Steamed Broccoli

1 large bunch of broccoli
 1 lemon
 2/3 c. butter, melted
 1 c. toasted sliced almonds

Wash the broccoli and cut off the stems. Cut into bite-sized pieces. Toast your almonds and set aside. Steam the broccoli for about 8 minutes, then spoon into a large bowl. No water should be put into the serving bowl. Pour

the melted butter over the broccoli, then the juice of one lemon. Toss well and add the almonds. Toss slightly and serve.

Fettuccine Alfredo

1 12 oz. pkg. uncooked fettuccine
 1 c. grated Parmesan cheese
 1/2 c. butter, softened
 1/2 c. whipping cream
 2 T. chopped fresh parsley
 1/2 t. white pepper
 1/4 t. garlic powder

Cook the fettuccine per package directions, without salt and be sure to not overcook. Should be firm to the bite. Drain the water off completely and put the fettuccine in a large bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and toss well til everything is coated. This will make about 6 servings.

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To
His Excellency, Andrew Johnson
Military Governor of Tennessee

Bridgeport, Alabama,
February 2, 1865

Sir, I have the honor to enclose here within, petitions of James H. Hembree and C.W. Melton, my son-in-laws, praying to his Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, that they be permitted to take the oath of allegiance and return to their homes and families.

Mr. Melton's wife is dead and his daughters, six and three years of age, are dependent upon me for their support.

My husband died in 1854, and I am now in destitute circumstances, having a family of my own to support and care for, and not one male member of my own, or daughter's family to render me assistance.

In the present conditions of the country, it is impossible for females alone to gain a livelihood.

My daughters cultivated a small field of corn the past season, with their own hands, which would have been sufficient to subsist us through the winter, had we been permitted to gather

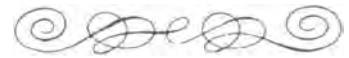
it, but it was all taken by the soldiers, and we are left destitute.

Mr. James Hembree's wife is in very poor health, and has no means of support for family and two children, aged eight and four years.

I respectfully submit the enclosed petition to your kind considerations and action in behalf of the widowed, and their children.

I am Sir
Your Humble Servant
Lucy Johnson

Mrs. Lucy Johnson was the cousin of Andrew Johnson, Military Governor of Tennessee, who later became President of the United States after Lincoln's assassination. There is no record that Johnson ever responded to his cousin's plea.



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Legends, Myths and Tales about Animals



Give a dog a piece of meat that you have had in your shoe for 4 days and the dog will follow you.

If anyone steps over a dog, he will not grow any more.

If you are in your teen age and put cream on your face and let a cat lick it off, you will have a heavy beard. (We hope you are a man).

If a rabbit crosses your path from right to left, be very careful not to walk alone in the dark for three days.



You will have bad luck if you kill a toad.

If you do not spit when you see a toad you will be sure to grow a wart on your hand.

It is said that horses can see ghosts, and if you place your head between his ears you will see them also.

Your dog will not stray from home if you pull three hairs from his tail and put them under the doorstep.

It is said that if you wish to see stars, place your head close to the hind feet of a kicking horse.

When your dog lies down with his tail toward the house, a man is coming.

It causes bad luck to move a cat.

If you see a dog chase a cat up a weeping willow, your sorrows will go up in the tree, that is, they are gone.

Good luck will come to your house the next time a white cat comes to stay.

You can avoid alimony if you do one of two things: either stay single or stay married.
Joan Liebrock, housewife

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CHOW-CHOW by **Catherine Wilson** has passed all the right taste tests and she sells it in her booth in Limestone Flea Market.. Sure makes beans and such more palatable.

My birthday, which was Sept. 8, was celebrated in part by a trip to The Vapors to hear the Canadian group U.S. We have their new CD, "Live at Leeds." **Jeff Everett**, who has Moontown recording studio, was there.

Arab's **Steve Ryan** and Montgomery's **Steve Williams**, Northwest Airlines ramp agents, are regulars these days at Quincy's in Madison. That's where Grissom grad **Angela Rothrock** is cashier between sessions at Auburn. Also at Quincy's for lunch were **Mike** and **Sheri Prenovost** and week-old daughter **Sydney**. Their pal **Dustin Echols** looked on admiringly.

P'NUT WILSON, stylist at Jackson Way Barber Shop, visits her Smoky Mountain hometown twice a year and brings back interesting tales. Meanwhile, barber **Floyd Hardin** spins yarns about Corinth, Miss. While we were there, in strolled thespian **Patrick Johnson** ("Pip-pin" and "Tom Sawyer"), who is a big fan of southern gospel music and helps his brother **Chris** perform his illusions for various churches.

Ryan Sasse, 4, brought ma and pa **Thomas** and **Suzanne** to Ryan's for dinner the other day. His dad's with Holiday Inn. At the next table was **Jerry Brunaugh** with a battery of friends, including the **Fujios** (**Michelle, Heather, Cindy and Hirome**), **Katie Lutes, Don** and **Jean Kenyan** and **Barbara** and **Colleen Madsen**.

COLUMBUS, Ga., is where

Greg Davis has been transferred to work for Downlink Communications. He got there just in time for the deluge. His last night here was spent playing pool with pals at **Johnny Tona's Family Billiards**. That's a good parlor, which doesn't allow smoking, drinking, swearing, gambling and such.

The latest staffer at Finnegan's Irish Pub is **Eric Artrip**. His first customers the other day were **Michael O'Connor, Mark Olson** and friends.

Mr. Jackson, wife **Mona** and son **Michael** hosted a humongus 12-course Chinese engagement dinner for daughter **Lisa** and her chosen, **William Lee**. I was there with **Miss Eunice** of breakfast fame.

Speaking of **Miss Eunice**, her Country Kitchen was swarming last weekend with scads of people. **Trudi Long** brought guests **Gina Cushing** of Miami, **Betsy McClellan** of South Carolina and **Allen Lang** of Houston to the round table. Then came Congressman **Bud Cramer** with his staff and supporters. At the next table were **Tanya** and **Aworetia Black** with guests **Dan**



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Cox of Seymour, Ill., **Huff** and **Margaret Ward** of St. Charles, Mo., and son **David Ward** of Tansania.

GRADY REEVES' grandson **Todd** (Robert's son) has joined the staff at Office Depot.

Joe Juntunen of Carlton, Minn., has put together a good book, "Hooray for the Old Times." My advice to people who want to relive "the good old days" is to turn off the television set and the air conditioner.

Dixie and **Honey**, popular karaoke DJs, spin their singalong laser discs Tuesday and Friday nights at Cocktails Lounge. Lots of vocalists turn out.

HERBERT'S BARBECUE just off I-65 at Franklin, Tenn., attracts lots of Huntsvillians. **Bert and Shirley Gordon, Sandra Brockman, Nicole Shelton, Barbara Long** and **Marty and Joyce Calvert** are among them. Bossman **Wilson Herbert** was helping his mom, **Mrs. Bubba Herbert**, celebrate her 93rd birthday when we were there last.

Michael Castrillo of Bookstar wrote a review of **William Buckley's** "Essays of a Libertarian Journalist" and has received a nice letter of thanks from the author.

This is "Be Nice to Oscar Month" at Burrito Bandito. He has opened a second thriving establishment at the intersection of South Parkway and Whitesburg Drive.

Mac McKisson and **Randy**

Mullins are two of the assistant managers these days at Ryan's.

Gary O'Brien of Chick-Fil-A has become expert at steam-cleaning white shirts, in case you need to know.

This is the month we trek off to Roanoke, Va.'s Hollings College to watch **Kevin Streit** marry his **Virginia**. Kevin's a Grissom grad who now runs Las Vegas and is a helicopter tycoon of some sort.

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An Untold History

by Don Steenburn

Early in the Cold War, Huntsville's Redstone Arsenal was already deeply involved in providing Army missile support for our country's defense.

However, not everything associated with this everyday effort could be classified as grim preparation for a possible war.

Here are but two humorous tales associated with the business of development and managing deadly guided missile systems that have been going on since the end of WWII right here



at the arsenal.

Many of us may remember the German V-2 rocket, that came to Huntsville with Wernher von Braun, that once stood on a concrete pad in front of a building on the arsenal that has long since been removed.

Some may recall that there was a tongue-in-cheek attempt to "fire" this missile!

On 4 June 1954, at the completion of the thirty-six week course, a graduation exercise was held on the lawn in front of the early Ordnance Guided Missile School headquarters.

At the very end of the address by Colonel Snooks, the School Commandant, a dozen smoke-whiz bombs were detonated in the base of the rocket.

Emerging from the cloud of dirty white smoke and his shock, the School Commandant canceled all student departure plans and held the entire class over another day.

That V-2 never left the

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ground - the culprits disappeared!

Missiles and whiskey were never designed to mix, but mix they did - in this true tale that began early in WWII.

In an attempt to pay off part of its initial war debt, England gathered up, over the strenuous objections of the local inhabitants, every drop of Scotch whiskey, over and above their skimpy wartime ration. 50,000 cases were loaded in the cargo hold of an ill-fated ship on its way to New York.

Leaving its last port of call north west of Scotland, in a dense fog, the ship struck some sunken rocks and began to take on water. As the ship was being deserted by the crew and slowly sinking, out of the fog came a flotilla of local residents who proceeded to relieve the sinking ship of its cargo. Case after case was lifted from the hold and transferred to the little boats and spirited to shore. The ship finally sank. The authorities were enraged at the actions of the local islanders and actually sent a battalion of troops to recover the loot.

The resourceful culprits hid their treasure in every conceivable hiding place to include rain gutters, hay mounds, hanging by strings in the outdoor privies, buried under trees and headstones, in cisterns, and every nook and cranny on the little island. Very little was recovered by the unenthusiastic troopers and the story receded in the pages of folk lore as an isolated incident overshadowed by the years of bitter war. This story was later romanticized in a novel entitled, "Whiskey Galore" by Compton Mackenzie and the basis of the movie, "The Tigh Little Island."

During the height of the Cold War, General Shinkle, the commander here at Redstone Arsenal, sent a young captain to the British firing range in the Outer Hebrides, northwest of Scotland, to assist the British Army in solving a problem with their, American manufactured, CORPORAL missile system. Little did he know at the time that he would be involved in the sequel to the whiskey story, just described.

After exhaustive checks and test, missile UK32 was erected on the launcher ready to fly. The launch of a large missile is nothing short of spectacular. The roar of its engine is deafening and earth shattering; the awesome plume of fire and smoke is always a little frightful, and the total experience is one that is never forgotten as it is difficult to imagine that it is

man-made. After an uneventful countdown the gleaming white missile lifted slowly and majestically from the earth. Then it happened — the engine shut down and instead of rising-heavenward, it dribbled out about a half mile into the bay and disappeared with little more than a spectacular splash.

The evaluation team realized that this was exactly why they were there and this missile had to be recovered. Royal Navy divers, attached to the station, went down and told of the missile laying on the bottom of the bay and nearby the hull of an old ship.

Would you believe that the ship found by the Navy salvagers, fifteen years later, was the very same whiskey-laden ship that never got to New York with its liquid cargo?

After duty hours, the enthu-



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siastic divers with all their eager helpers made trip after trip and retrieved a total of eighteen cases of the precious, well aged, pride of the Scots.

Four hundred and thirty two bottles were transferred to an empty station Quonset hut and laid out on the floor.

Now picture if you will, forty-four men sitting cross-legged on the floor tenderly wiping oily scum from each of the bottles. It seemed that every person authorized to be on the missile firing range that were able to come were there for what was about to happen.

To the Station Sergeant Major, a big man, the epitome of what a real British Sergeant Major should look like, went the honor of uncorking the first

bottle.

This was accomplished with much pomp, ceremony and flourish, and at full attention, he raised the bottle to his lips and took a hearty draught. A look of utter disbelief came over his face as he spit the mouthful out onto the floor.

In a frenzy all the bottles were opened and not one, not a single drop in all the four hundred and thirty-two bottles was fit to drink.

Salt water had worked its way through the corks during the years on the bottom of the sea and ruined every single bottle!

Have you ever seen forty-four grown men cry?



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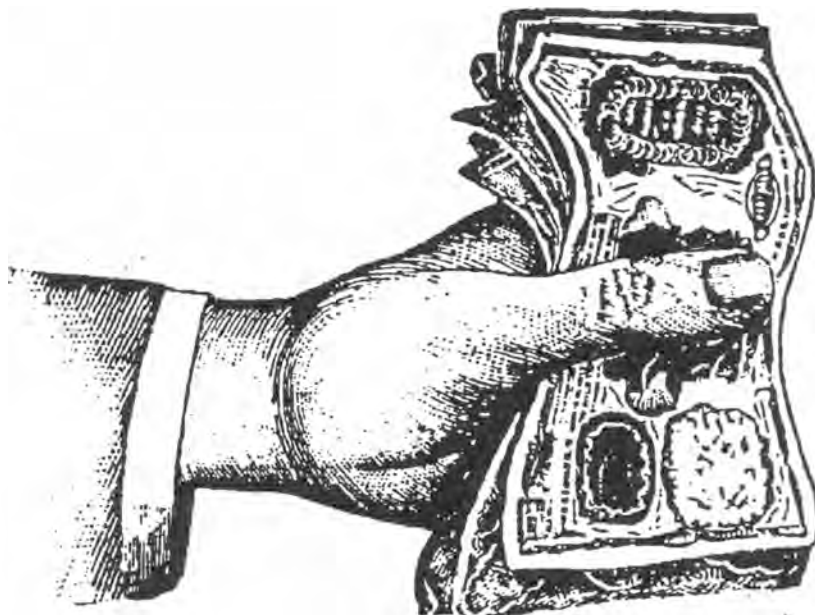
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Miss Bessie

by Jean Tyrone

The silver-haired woman sighed with relief as she stepped inside the house. She was glad to be home and eager to get into her slippers and her blue gingham house dress. She was a bit tense, still fretting over something she'd said to a co-worker that afternoon. Would it be all over Huntsville tomorrow that "Miss Bessie" had finally gone senile as she neared eighty?

Bessie King, born on Adams Street in 1895 to John and Mattie King, was the descendant of some of Huntsville's earliest settlers. Her great-grandfather, a prominent cotton grower and plantation owner, had settled here in the early 1800s.

Her parents later moved to Eustis Street where she and her older sister grew up. Wanting to assure that Bessie had education and training in Southern gentility, her parents sent her to a private school for girls, the Butler Training School. She wondered if they'd made that decision af-

ter seeing her one too many times hanging from a hickory sapling with her skirts all aflutter. That had been one of her favorite pastimes on family trips to Monte Sano Mountain.

After graduating from Butler's at 16, she began her first teaching job in a one-room schoolhouse in Love's Hollow on the Tennessee River, earning \$45 a month. She'd often recalled her intense homesickness during lonely nights in the room she rented for \$10 a month.

She eventually went on to get her college degree in education from Athens College. Today, Miss Bessie could hardly believe how fast 45 years of teaching had flown by. She'd overlapped her job at East Clinton Elementary with a part-time job at the library. That allowed her to help many students with their homework in the evenings. With mandatory retirement at 70, she took on more duties at the library and entered a second career.

Recalling nearly eight decades, Miss Bessie let out a long sigh and reminded herself that she needed to change into something comfortable. She was tired but she wouldn't take anything for her work in the library's Heritage Room. She enjoyed helping folks find out more about Madison County's colorful history, and she didn't mind a bit giving them a boost up into the branches of their family tree. She liked to tell people that genealogy was addictive, "just like dope." Oh, dear, she thought, that reminded her of how she'd shocked a young colleague at the library this very afternoon. Miss Bessie shook her head. She forgot she still had her hat on. She felt it shift, and strands of hair tickled her neck. She removed her hat pins and hat and put

them away. Pretty soon the bun she'd pinned up so neatly that morning was unraveling faster than a loose thread on a cheap petticoat.

Soon Miss Bessie stood at her dresser, fixing her hair. Suddenly, she grew keenly aware of her reflection in the mirror. Her "twin" stared at her. Miss Bessie tried hard to out stare the woman in the mirror. The other woman seemed to be growing younger and younger. Bessie soon remembered her wedding in 1920 to Dr. Christopher Hugo Russell. She met him while teaching in Farley when he showed up for supper at the boardinghouse where she was staying. My, how she missed him. Too many cigarettes had taken him from her in 1950, but she was happy to have shared a life with him for 30 years.

Back in the 1920s a married woman was not allowed to teach, so Bessie King Russell set up housekeeping. The young couple's happiness turned bitter-sweet when they lost their first baby at the age of nine months. But they were blessed with a fine son two years later. C. H. Russell, Jr., had grown up to serve his country in World War II and later made them the proud grandparents of five. Finally, the law about teaching was changed and she was able to return to her chosen career.

Miss Bessie couldn't help smiling at all those fond memories. But that stubborn woman in the mirror wouldn't go away. Well, Miss Bessie would just have to settle up with her. She was tired of ruminating over what she'd said to that co-worker. Yes, the cud of regret was tasting mighty bitter.

Miss Bessie had always taken tremendous pride in con-

ducting herself as a proper Southern lady. She now felt compelled to hold herself accountable.

Accountability was surely as much a mark of a Southern lady as it was of a gentleman.

She had been on her way out of the library around five o'clock when suddenly she'd found herself retracing her steps to the front desk. Still sitting there was the young colleague to whom she'd already bid good-bye. The woman had smiled and asked, "Forget something, Miss Bessie?"

Miss Bessie had leaned close and said, "I just got to wondering—have you ever tried smoking any of that 'pot'? Seems mighty popular with young folks these days."

The young woman shook her head vigorously and whispered, "Goodness, no, Miss Bessie! It's against the law."

Miss Bessie had nodded slowly, giving the girl a few moments to reconsider her answer—another throwback to her teaching days. But the young woman had fallen silent. The corners of Miss Bessie's mouth

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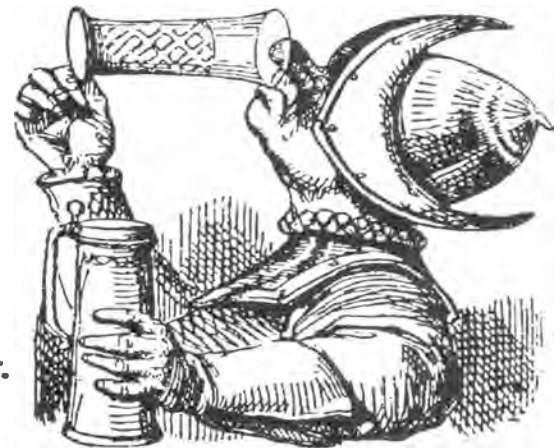
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quivered. A grin was trying like tarnation to bust loose. The elderly woman bit her bottom lip, then said softly, "Didn't you ever wonder what it'd be like? I've halfway considered trying it before I leave this old world."

The young woman's lower jaw dropped open as if it had a broken hinge. Miss Bessie could have sworn she heard it creak, but it was only a high-pitched whine rising up from the girl's throat. Just then a customer came to the desk.

The young librarian looked mighty grateful for the interruption, so Miss Bessie headed for home.

Now all evening long she'd pondered her outrageous comments. All told, though, Miss

Bessie felt she'd done very few shocking things in nearly eight decades. Of course, it depended on who was telling the tale, she reckoned.

In her early teaching days in West Huntsville, a group of women had come after her with knives and hatchets. They were cotton mill workers and mothers of her students, all riled up because Miss Bessie had asked permission for the children to shower weekly at the YMCA and bring a change of underwear. Every year those children were literally sewn into their winter clothes and not allowed to change until spring. The mothers had been furious at the thought of their children's modesty being violated by a radical teacher.

Well, Miss Bessie thought, I reckon I've gone "radical" again. Later that night she tried again to face down her "twin" in the mirror. She said, "Reckon you made a fool of yourself today but there you stand, trying to look innocent." The shoulders in the mirror simply shrugged.

She turned away from the mirror but could still feel the penetrating gaze of her twin. Suddenly, she whirled around, pointing a finger at the other woman, who couldn't control a twinkle in one eye. Then Miss Bessie saw the other one's mouth move. Her reflection was trying to tell her something.

Well, the least she could do was listen. After all, she'd known this woman all her life.

A familiar voice said, "Bessie King Russell, you know doggone well you can't live eighty years in a town like this and not indulge your natural curiosity about folks and what they do. Remember, our Southern heri-

tage is nothing but a crazy quilt. It's got smooth silk squares right next to rough wool ones. It's got dainty white stitches next to meandering threads as yellow as old kite string."

Miss Bessie found herself nodding in agreement. The voice continued. "Our heritage includes Mollie Teal as well as Mary Chambers Bibb and Lurleen Wallace as well as Tallulah Bankhead."

Miss Bessie nodded again. She tried to make eye contact with her twin, but the woman had the nerve to yawn right in her face. Miss Bessie turned away and got into bed. Lying there in the dark, she could have sworn she heard soft chuckles coming from that mirror. But the sound actually comforted her, as if somebody were laughing with her, not at her.

Miss Bessie smiled and said, "Hush up, now. We both need our beauty sleep. And we'd best forget about that 'pot.' Lord knows, we don't need anything to make us move any slower these days."

Huntsville was blessed with the delightful Mrs. Bessie King Russell for nearly eighty-five years. She was a walking encyclopedia of regional history, an outstanding teacher to several generations, and a dear friend to the whole town. To honor her, the branch of the library on North Memorial Parkway was named for her. Around 1980 she moved to California to live with her son.

She died peacefully there in December 1981 at the age of 86. Many in Huntsville still have a favorite "Miss Bessie" story to tell, and *Old Huntsville* gladly adds another to keep the heart of the legend beating.

The End

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An Old Man

continued from page 19

"How much?"

Reluctantly and with much anguish, Dennis finally confessed. "All of it."

"Three hundred dollars! Dennis Sinclair, I've had it! I'm walking out this door and if you don't have that money back by first thing in the morning you can forget you ever knew me!" With that she rushed out of the room, slamming the door so hard it knocked a picture off the wall.

Ol' Man Sinclair watched as she stormed out of the house. "Better off without her whining, but still \$300 is a lot of money."

He had already known what had happened. The men down at the store where he played checkers had been talking about it all week. A tin-horn Yankee gambler was hanging out in the bars and hustling people in card

games. He was staying down on Meridian Street. Sinclair grimaced as he thought about it. His grandson, Dennis, was a good boy, but when he had a couple drinks he was easy prey for any smooth talking hustler.

"Come on Grandpa, time to go to bed," said the blond headed woman as she made a big show of patting him on the head.

Old Man Sinclair laid silently in bed for a long while, waiting for the house to grow still. When almost 45 minutes had passed since hearing the last sound of any movement, he slowly got out of bed, groping for the overalls lying on a chair next to his bed. Cautiously, being careful not to make any sound, he made his way to the mantle in the living room.

Biting off a large chew of the tobacco, he stood still for a long moment, savoring the rich taste of the nicotine. "Only damn present I got that a man can enjoy, and they want to take it away from me, too."

Casting his eyes about the darkened room he let them settle on his grandson who was sleeping on the couch. "Good boy," he thought, "at least he understands."

Abruptly, he reached up above the mantle and took down the shotgun hanging there. Silently, he made his way to the front door and after closing it gently behind him, whistled softly for Dog.

"Bout midnight," he reasoned after looking at the stars. "Take my time and I ought to be there about two o'clock, bout the time the bars close."

He knew he had the right man after seeing him enter the motel room. Flashy dressed, alligator shoes and with hair all slicked back.

Awkwardly, his joints stiff from crouching so long, the old man approached the door and knocked several times.

"Who the hell ...?" The gambler jerked open the door and after taking a long look at the

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old man standing there clutching a rusty shotgun, burst out laughing. "What's the matter, old man, someone take your sugar tit?"

Things were not working out the way Sinclair had planned. All he wanted to do was talk to the gambler and persuade him to give Dennis back his money. Now the man was laughing at him.

"Maybe you want to gamble some," the tin-horn said, as if it was the most hilarious thing in the world, while at the same time trying to slam the door shut in his face. "Save your time, old man, I never lose!"

Suddenly, for the first time in months the old man spoke, his voice barely a whisper, the gambler had to lean forward to hear the words.

"You lost tonight," the old man whispered as his fingers squeezed the trigger of the shotgun, sending a thousand pellets into the tin-horn's legs.

Careful not to get blood on his overalls, the old man reached down and pulled the wallet from the man's pocket. Counting out exactly \$300 and counting it again to make sure, he stuffed the bills into his pocket and started to leave when he noticed a bottle of Old Forrester whiskey sitting on the table next to the bed.

"What the hell, he ain't gonna drink it tonight," he thought.

As quietly as he had left, the old man made his way back home, pausing only long enough to place the bills in his grandson's pocket. The sun was just beginning to peek over the far end of the cotton field as he pulled his overalls off and got

back in bed.

"Just in time, too," he thought, as he heard the sound of his granddaughter entering his room to check on him. Suddenly, the feet turned and ran from the room.

"Ma, the granddaughter shouted, in a voice calculated to raise the dead. "Grandpa's been drinking again!"

Peeking out of the corner of one closed eye, he watched as they gingerly picked up the nearly empty bottle and prepared to consign it to the trash heap.

"Damn fool women, he thought, "won't let a man be a man!"

This story was told to Old Huntsville by a Huntsville attorney, whose father had told him the story.

Although the gambler identified him, and Sinclair actually confessed to the shooting, no one ever believed the story.

He was never charged with any crime.

In order to tell the story, we have changed certain parts of it.

*Is the story true?
Probably.*

Owens Cross Roads Farmer has Bumper Cotton Crop

R. A. McKelvie, of Owens X Roads, brought two bales of cotton into this market Saturday, and sold them at \$887.50 net after all deductions.

He brought his cotton in the seed as most farmers are doing at this time of the year and he got a high price per pound for his cotton in the seed. Mr. McKelvie says he has beaten all his neighbors far and near this year and has brought in two bales, being the first farmer with two bales this season from his neighborhood.

from 1910 newspaper

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HOUSEHOLD TIPS BY

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Tips from Earlene

Try throwing a pinch of dry mustard in your scrambled eggs before cooking for a real taste treat.

To brighten your aluminum pots, fill them with water to which you have added a couple of slices of lemon, and boil.

If you screw a hook onto the end of your broom you will not only save the bristles from resting on the floor, but you can use the hook to pull down your window shades if they go too high.

Kerosene will soften boots or shoes that have been hardened by water and will render them as pliable as new.

Thoroughly washing your hair once or twice with a solution of salt and water will keep it from falling out.

When rayon garments lose their body, try giving them a gelatin dip. Just dissolve a teaspoon of gelatin in a quart of water and rinse.

If you ever get one of your soups too salty, just cut up a couple of potatoes in it and you will find that you have saved your dish.

To hasten the process of creaming butter and sugar when making a cake, add a little hot milk, then cream.

If you rub a little sage onto your next pork roast prior to cooking, you will find that it adds a wonderful flavor.

To save shortening in biscuits, use peanut butter for half of the fat. You will find that it adds good flavor and plenty of richness. Cut it into the flour along with the other fat and proceed as usual.

For a fast and easy dessert, put thick apple sauce between layers of gingerbread cookies or vanilla wafers, alternating layers until dish is full.

To use small leftover rolls, hollow out the inside, spread with butter and toast slowly in the oven. Then fill to overflowing with tasty meat stew - this is very good!



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Huntsville Streets

by Jack Harwell

Two of southeast Huntsville's busiest streets, Weatherly Road and Bailey Cove Road, are also two of the oldest. Both appear on turn of the century county maps, and were probably there long before then. Their names come from two otherwise unremarkable men who lived nearby in the last century.

When engineer Thomas Freeman first surveyed northern Alabama lands in 1809, his work took him all over the territory. He noted which areas were the most desirable, and then came back and bought land in all of them. Among the places which struck his fancy was the little valley southeast of the city of Huntsville which we call Jones Valley. Freeman may have been the first person to take notice of the scenic beauty of the valley. Many more would follow.

More than 20 years after Freeman's survey, a Scottish immigrant named Peter Weatherly came to the valley. Old land records show there were several Weatherlys who came to Madison County in the early 1800s, but most of them settled the

northern and western parts of the county. Only Peter is known to have bought land in the southeast. The land records show that on December 20, 1833, Peter Weatherly bought 40 acres in section 5 of township 5 south, range 1 east.

The Weatherly land was located on the eastern slope of a small mountain about midway down the valley, and directly across from a small cove. It was where Torino Drive is located today. Over the years, Peter Weatherly added to his landholdings until he owned 640 acres - a full section. The Weatherly Heights subdivision, the Camelot subdivision, and Mountain Gap school are all located on this land.

Little information about Weatherly exists today. Items

from early newspapers real he was born in County Berwickshire, Scotland, about 1795. He lived for a while in Loudon County, Virginia before coming to Alabama. He never married; according to the 1850 census, he lived with his nephew, James Weatherly, and owned several slaves.

Peter Weatherly died on May 13, 1872. According to his obituary in the *Huntsville Advocate*, he was 70 years old. The *Advocate* further reported, "He was an old honest, and respected citizen of the county who attended to his own affairs and never meddled with those of his neighbors." Having no direct heirs, he willed his land to his nephew, James. Weatherly's Will also mentioned one Ann Weatherly, described only as a mulatto, "in

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consideration of her care and attention." She may have been a former slave, but that is only speculation.

It may have been around the time of Peter Weatherly's death that one Lewis W. Bailey bought a half section of land (320 acres) about two miles north of the Weatherly home. Bailey was the son of a Huntsville policeman who hailed originally from Mississippi. He was born in 1844, and married in 1868. Bailey's land was located in what is now the Huntsville Hills subdivision. It started at Bailey Cove Road and extended a mile to the east, into a small cove on the side of Huntsville Mountain.

Whether Peter Weatherly and Lewis Bailey ever met is unknown. But both are recalled today by the streets which bear their names. The streets appear on a 1911 county map, and follow the same routes today that they did then. The map also shows a church, called Bailey's Chapel, near the intersection of Bailey Cove road and Old Carriage Lane. Just to the south of the church, and just a quarter-mile north of where Grissom High School is stands today, was a school called Cedar Point.

But the streets are not the only monuments to Weatherly and Bailey. The hill where Weatherly's original 40 acres were located is now known as Weatherly Mountain, and the cove on the far side of the mountain is Weatherly Cove. Box Canyon Road runs through the middle of it. The area where Bailey's land was located is shown on topographical maps as Bailey Cove.

The valley where Weatherly and Bailey lived remained rural in nature well into this century.

As late as 1948, none of the roads in the valley were paved. As the city grew in the 1950s and '60s, more and more people moved into what by then was known as Jones Valley. Eventually the entire valley was taken into the city limits. Today it is one of the most desirable residential areas in Huntsville.

If you drive down Bailey

Cove Road or Weatherly Road today, it's hard to imagine that these were narrow, unpaved country roads just 50 years ago. Those days are gone forever, but the names Weatherly and Bailey will always be with us.



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UNUSUAL TRAVEL TIPS

BY CATHEY CARNEY



Did you know that it's possible to do exercises in the car while driving? That chewing on ice could save your life? That you can avoid some very real high-way scams? It sounds hard to believe, isn't it? Read on - It IS possible.

Safety on the Road: While you are traveling, there are road conditions that are critical to watch for. During rainstorms, watch for puddling on the roads and interstates. Many accidents happen that way, it's possible to hydroplane which means your tires are riding on a thin layer of water and they are basically useless, and you have no steering

or brake control. When you see puddles, drive cautiously and try not to brake or accelerate.

Always be on the lookout for chunks of truck tires, rocks or metal pieces on the road. Any of these could easily cause a blow-out if you hit them and if you have a blowout with a front tire it could mean an accident.

Policemen say that while you are in a city, keep your doors locked and windows most of the way up, to prevent anyone from forcing their way into your auto. When you are on the road, however, such as interstate driving, leave the doors unlocked.

Don't take any medicine that makes you drowsy before traveling. The monotony of the road can put you to sleep before you know it. But anytime you feel you need a little pick up while driving, **ALWAYS** have a cup of crushed ice to chew on. This is one that is amazing because it works. Try it the next time you are driving, you will be very surprised. Don't get the large cubes, however, if possible because you don't want to take the chance of choking. That's a good reason not to chew on jawbreakers or big chunks of anything else while you are driving.

ALWAYS try to pump your own gas. You wouldn't believe what scams occur to people who trust gasoline employees who pump their gas, then tell them something is wrong with their auto. Upon examination (even though nothing is wrong) you may be told that your muffler looks funny, or you've got a leak (and you really don't). This could lead to lost time for you as well as lost dollars for a scam that fools a lot of people.

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Also, while we're discussing gas pumps, don't gas up at a station that is refueling with gas trucks. It means they (1) are either low on gas and you'll get the dregs or (2) they just filled up and the new gas is mixed up with the dregs and/or water. It's better just to go on to the next station where you don't see them refueling and you'll get clean gas.

Exercising on the road: Yes, it is possible to exercise while driving but you need to be careful. One of my favorites is the arm exercise. Just hold the steering wheel with both hands, palms facing inwards, like normal driving. Press equally with both hands, pushing towards the center of the steering wheel. This one is good for the upper arms

and that flab under the arms.

A good leg exercise is to have your car in automatic cruise, then press your knees together, hard. Hold for a count of five seconds or so. Relax, and do it again. This helps the upper legs.

My favorite is the face exercise. Start with as big a smile as you can make. Hold the smile, really tense up the front of your neck and raise your eyebrows as high as possible. Just scrunch your face up (keep your eyes open, of course) and hold for about 5 seconds. Relax and try again. This time make an "O" with your mouth, scrunch your face down as hard as you can, then go into a big smile. It's a little hard to describe but when you try it, you'll get the idea. Great exercise for the facial muscles, but you may look a little silly. Just ignore the people driving by and staring at you - at least YOU know what you're doing.

Above all, be safe and obey the law. If sleepy, always pull over! And never do anything while driving that might lessen your concentration.

Next issue - Reading and writing on the road, great snacks to take with you, and more safety tips.

TRAVEL TIP OF THE MONTH FROM HUNTSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sgt. Jim Smith of Huntsville Police Dept. gave us a great tip the other day, that not too many folks are aware of. Whenever you have car trouble and are stranded, day or night, just find a phone and call 911. Tell the dispatcher that you are having car trouble and you need an officer on the scene. One will be sent out and he will call a tow truck for you, and if necessary, stay with you until the tow truck arrives.

This is especially beneficial for senior citizens and women traveling alone.

Our hats are off to the Huntsville Police Department for their dedication.

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Melt chocolate, stir in butter, then water, then sugar and salt. Cook, stirring, for 15 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in the almond extract. Store in sterilized bottles, allow to cool before putting it in the fridge. Will keep for 6 months.

Frozen Chocolate Banana Pops

- 6 firm bananas
- 12 wooden sticks

- 1 c. chocolate sauce (above)
- 1/2 c. shredded unsweetened coconut
- 1/2 c. pecans, chopped fine

Peel your bananas, cut in half width wise, and insert a wooden stick to make a banana pop.

Dip the banana first in chocolate sauce, then in the shredded coconut and nuts. Wrap a plastic bag around the banana, leaving the stick out. Use a twist tie to secure the bag around the stick, and put in fridge to freeze, about 2 hours.

This is also good with peanut butter and sweetened condensed milk, mixed - instead of the above. Use with chopped peanuts. Let your imagination go wild!

Italiano Bread Crumbs

- 2 c. stale bread
- 1/2 c. Parmesan Cheese, grated
- 2 T. parsley
- 1 t. oregano
- 1 t. basil
- 2 t. garlic powder (less if you prefer)

Crunch up the stale bread into crumbs, put on a cookie sheet in a thin layer. Bake at 250 degrees for 20 minutes and cool.

Combine all ingredients together and store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 2 months. (Probably can be frozen in Ziploc bags for at least a year).

The average amount of sleep needed by the average person is usually fifteen minutes more.

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Yankee Scouts and Southern Scoundrels

by Charles Rice

On March 18, 1864, Captain James E. Daniel of Company C, 50th (formerly 26th) Alabama Infantry Regiment, penned a letter to Confederate Secretary of War James S. Seddon. "I would most respectfully request that Lieut. Ephraim Latham of my company be dropped from my Muster Roll for the following reason, vizz he de-

serted to the enemy last June and is now Captain in the enemy's service."

Understandably, Captain Daniel's letter was promptly forwarded through the proper channels to Richmond and the disloyal lieutenant dropped.

Eph Latham was typical of the "homemade Yankees" who supported the Union cause in North Alabama and East Tennessee. He

was a man who had rallied to the South's defense in 1861, but for reasons of his own had switched sides. In Latham's case, at least, the reason was understandable. It was simply a matter of pride.

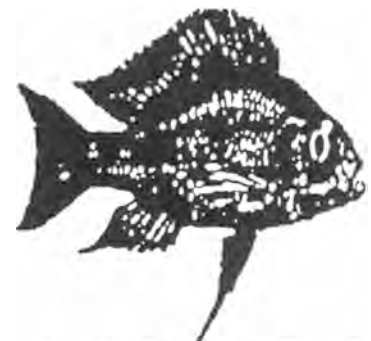
Ephraim Latham was a native of Jackson County, Alabama, located in the mountainous northeastern corner of state. Born in 1838, he was a son of Jonathan Latham,

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who had represented Jackson County in the State legislature just before the war. The Latham family were among the earliest settlers of the area, arriving from Tennessee at least by the 1820s. The Lathams were mostly laborers and small farmers, respectable people but poor.

When Lemuel G. Mead of Paint Rock began recruiting his Confederate company in the fall of 1861, Eph Latham was among the first to volunteer. He must have been a popular young fellow, for his comrades elected him their first sergeant. Latham was enrolled as such on September 17, 1861, becoming the senior NCO of the "Paint Rock Rifles." However, the man chosen first lieutenant apparently declined to serve and Latham advanced to junior second lieutenant just 13 days later.

The 26th Alabama saw some of the fiercest combat at Shiloh, overrunning the Union camp. "We turned a goodly number of their blue bellies up to the sun and drove them before us most beautifully to their gunboats," wrote Lem Mead. Eph Latham was deep in the fighting, struggling manfully to win victory for the South.

The costly battle — the bloodiest in American history up to that time — was a draw. The 26th Alabama had lost 123 men killed or wounded out of the 700 they took into the fight. Latham's company had one man dead and seven wounded.

Eph Latham continued to serve the South throughout the remainder of 1862. He marched into Kentucky that summer with Braxton Bragg and went into camp with Bragg's army at Tullahoma,



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Tennessee. On the retreat from Tullahoma to Chattanooga in November, however, something happened that would change Latham's life forever. The company muster roll notes ominously that Latham was "Left at Chattanooga, Tenn. under arrest."

On December 13, 1862, Latham appeared before a court-martial. His offense does not now seem so terribly serious. It was charged that Latham did "on the 3d day of the march fall behind his command and there remained in the rear of the wagons, instead of with his company." Ordinary soldiers "straggled" often enough, but as an officer, Latham was supposed to set an example.

The unfortunate young lieutenant was sentenced to be "suspended from rank and command for the term of one month, during which suspension he will remain with his Regt." He also would forfeit one month's pay. Hardest to bear, perhaps, was the requirement that he be reprimanded by his colonel before the entire 26th Regiment.

His harsh sentence completed, a chastened Lieutenant Latham was restored to his rank and privileges.

On February 28, 1863, he was sent back to Jackson County on recruiting duty. However, his recent disgrace was too bitter to be forgotten. Returning home, Eph Latham made up his mind. He wrote to Colonel Coltart and told him he had "concluded to join the Yankees."

If Latham bothered to resign from the Confederate Army, there is no record of it. But on August 28, 1863, he was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Union Army. Latham did recruit some 72 men, but he did so for his former enemy. On September 4, 1863, Brigadier General James A. Garfield — later President of the United States — ordered Latham's men to be armed and mounted and stationed as scouts along the railroad on both sides of Larkinsville.

Eph Latham's Alabama Union company quickly attracted Confederate attention through an unfortu-



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nate incident. Kibble T. Daniel, a respected citizen, was at his plantation on Paint Rock River when he learned that Federal troops were nearby. Daniel and a friend rode out to investigate and were fired on from ambush by two of Latham's men. Daniel was fatally wounded and Southern sympathizers were outraged.

On September 10, 1863, Ephraim Latham's men became Company A of the 1st Alabama and Tennessee Vidette Cavalry Regiment. Dubbed the "Jackson County traitor" by pro-Confederate newspapers, Latham was promoted to captain. Latham seems to have conducted himself honorably as a Union soldier, but he hardly found himself in the best of company. In fact, another of the 1st Vidette Cavalry's companies was led by the notorious Calvin Brixey, a deserter from the 16th Tennessee Infantry. Brixey's

name would become a byword in East Tennessee for murder and mayhem.

The Union Army was obviously less than satisfied with the performance of the 1st Vidette Cavalry. Many Northern soldiers viewed the regiment with contempt, calling it the Alabama Tory Shebang. Such condescension can hardly have healed Latham's injured pride. Nevertheless, he continued scouting until June 16, 1864, when the entire regiment was disbanded. It was apparently no great loss to the Union.

Eph Latham later used his Unionism to gain a few appointed offices under Republican administrations. He frequently spoke with pride of his service to the Union.

However, he conveniently forgot to inform his Republican friends that for an even longer period of time he had been a devoted soldier

of the South.

If Ephraim Latham left something to be desired as a soldier, at least he had legitimately worn the uniforms of both armies. No such aura of authority covered the actions of another "homemade Yankee"—the notorious "Captain" Ben Harris. Without doubt, Ben Harris was one of the most vicious killers ever to roam North Alabama.

Benjamin R. Harris was born in Alabama about 1823, probably in Marshall County. He married in 1846 and raised a family on his farm in southeastern Madison County. However, Harris was never very successful, and he moved his family west in the mid- 1850s. First to Arkansas and then to Louisiana. By 1860, he was working as an overseer on a plantation in Natchitoches—a vocation that tells much about his character. (Slave driving was hardly a job for one

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Harris evidently stayed out of the war until the fall of 1863, when he turned up again in Madison County, employed as a scout for the Union Army. Although he was simply a civilian hired by the day, Harris clothed his followers in Union cavalry uniforms. He appropriated to himself the rank of captain.

"Captain" Harris soon became a figure to be feared in North Alabama. One of his main functions seems to have been procuring horses for the Union Army, and it was this that led him one day to the north bank of the Tennessee River opposite Buck Island.

It was December of 1863 and only two days after Christmas. Harris had stopped for breakfast that morning at a riverside plantation. After eating, Harris announced that he was taking his band of about 30 men over to the island to see what they could find. What transpired there has gone down in history as the Buck Island Massacre.

Buck Island today is well known to boaters on the Tennessee River. Back then, however, it was a fertile area of some 80 acres thickly covered with hardwood forest.

According to tradition, a Union woman of Henryville named Charlotte Kennamer informed "Captain" Harris that her pro-Confederate in-laws had hidden their livestock on Buck Island. If the story is true, she had as good as signed her own relatives' death warrant.

What happened next was described years later by the sole survivor, Charles L. Hardcastle. A private in Company C, 50th Alabama

Regiment—Eph Latham's old outfit, Hardcastle had been home on furlough.

"About ten days before the expiration of my leave of absence we were alarmed by the sudden appearance in the neighborhood of the notorious Ben Harris and his gang of marauders. Knowing that if we were caught we would in all probability share the fate of many others who had been killed by this murderer. I, together with James M. Kennamer, F. M. Kennamer, and Porter Kennamer, sought refuge in Buck Island, where Ben Kennamer had already driven his cattle, and constructed a rude cabin for shelter

of himself and family in case of necessity, and in order to prevent his cattle being stolen by various parties of foragers." The four men were soon joined by old Mr. Kennamer himself.

Early on the morning of December 27, the refugees were rudely awakened from their sleep by a loud knocking on the door and a demand for their surrender. "To our dismay," said Hardcastle, "we found that we were in the hands of Ben Harris!" Harris promised to spare their lives if they would raise their concealed boat and help him ferry the stock across to the north bank of the river.

However, once they had done

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this, the prisoners were marched down to the river bank and informed they would be shot.

Ben Kennamer, 69 years old and the patriarch of the local Kennamers, had known Ben Harris for many years. The senior Kennamer pleaded for their lives, but all in vain. Harris insisted they must die.

"In looking back over this horrible experience," said Hardcastle, "it still seems to me that the prayer Porter Kennamer made for himself, and for all of us, as we stood there within minutes of eternity, was one of the most earnest appeals to the mercy of the Eternal Judge of Man that ever fell from the lips of the mortal." Port Kennamer handed Harris several small items and asked him to give to his wife and children. Bloody Ben agreed, but kept them for himself.

Harris then coldheartedly lined up his victims and began shooting them one after the other. When one revolver was empty, his men would hand him another. "I being at the foot of the line was the last one," said Hardcastle, "and at the flash of the first pistol-shot aimed at me at close range I fell to the ground as if dead. The ball, which wounded me, passed through my right arm, for I turned sideways to them as they shot me, and the bullet cut the artery in my arm. When they were dragging our bodies to throw them into the river, they stopped to feel my pulse, but, fortunately for me, they felt the side which had already been wounded."

Not finding any pulse, Harris' men tossed Hardcastle into the river with the others. "As I plunged into the water, unfortunately, I became

slightly strangled and coughed. Someone said, 'Stick your sabre into his d—d body,' but I had floated out from the bank, beyond the reach of this weapon, when they shot at me again but missed. As they fled I held my breath and sank under water, and they turned and left me for dead."

Hardcastle floated some distance downstream before he managed to pull himself ashore. The icy water of the Tennessee River slowed his pulse and probable kept him from bleeding to death. He managed to reach the home of his brother-in-law and had his wound treated. Hardcastle recovered and eventually returned to his regiment, one of the few men ever to survive an encounter with the horrible Ben Harris.

Following the Kennamer massacre, Harris led his gang to Paint Rock. There they, "took Mat V. Rich from his house, carried him to a creek about a mile distant, where they murdered him and threw his

body into the creek," reported the Rome, Georgia, Courier. They also "killed David Lemly, William McCay and Mr. Hodge, the last named aged about eighty years." Such was the Union "war service" of Ben Harris and his band.

Harris continued scouting for the Union and terrorizing Southern civilians until near the end of the war. He died on March 5, 1865, but just how he met his end is unclear. As a trooper in the 15th Pennsylvania heard it, relatives of Harris' victims finally caught up with him and settled the score. A member of the 3rd Tennessee Union Cavalry recorded a rumor that Harris and his entire family had been poisoned. This last tale seems most unlikely, since Harris' family outlived him. (Mrs. Caroline Harris took her own life in New Hope on January 5, 1876. Her children then moved to Texas.)

Perhaps Ben Harris died of natural causes, possibly pneumonia. But a story once told in Marshall

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County provides another possibility. It concerns an itinerant carpenter named William Hart. It seems Hart, whenever angered, had an unfortunate habit of taking a knife to anyone, whether friend or foe.

Back in the 1920s an elderly resident of Guntersville related an incident that apparently took place in the winter of 1865. It seems that Will Hart was waiting for a ferry on the Tennessee River when a dozen or so Union cavalymen approached. The horse soldiers began insulting Hart, who had little choice but to bear it in silence. Accompanying the Yankees was someone referred to simply as "Harris."

When the ferry was ready to cross the river, only Hart and Harris went on board. Once away from the shore, Hart attacked Harris with his knife, cutting him unmercifully. Hart fled on the opposite bank and was never seen again. Could this have been the fate of brutal Ben,

or was it just a coincidence of names? We will probably never know.

If Ben Harris was the region's most bloodthirsty killer, then a man named John Dickey was not far behind. Born in Alabama in 1829, John W. Dickey was a resident of Cottonville in Marshall County. He was a moderately successful farmer with a wife and four children, but a man who knew him wrote that Dickey was anything but a model citizen. Dickey, recalled A. M. Nabors in 1891, "was noted for his hatred toward his neighbors and cruelty and brutishness to his wife and children."

When the Union Army returned to North Alabama in late 1863, John Dickey hastened to offer his services as a scout. Like Ben Harris, Dickey was simply a civilian who was sometimes hired by the Yankees. But he imitated the brutal Ben by dressing his band in blue uniforms. Dickey,

naturally, insisted on being called captain.

John Dickey was generally paid \$3.00 a day when he worked. His "company" of some 15 or 20 men supported themselves by simply stealing whatever they fancied. While Dickey had successfully dodged the Confederate draft, many of his gang were deserters—mostly from the 49th Alabama Infantry. These men had been captured at Port Hudson, Louisiana, and sent home to await exchange. Rather than return to the army, they had joined John Dickey. Most of them had a score to settle with their neighbors, and many were the murders charged to them.

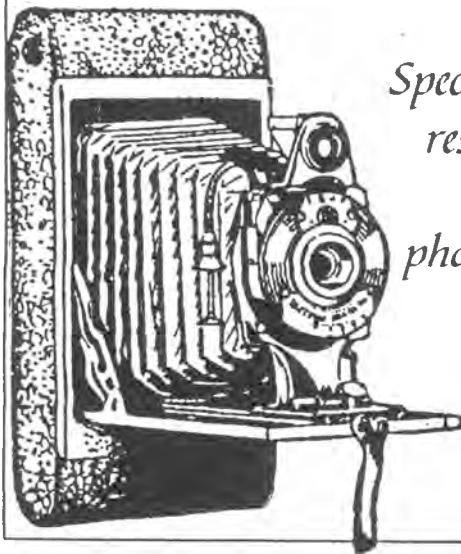
Dickey's men ruthlessly shot down every Southern sympathizer they encountered. Chivalrously, they spared the women and children, merely robbing them and burning them out of house and home. Dickey sometimes roamed as far afield as Chattanooga, scouting and spying for the Union Army. Mostly, however, he contented himself with the safer business of terrorizing women and children. Dickey's "company" disbanded about the end of 1864. John Dickey then joined Ben Harris briefly in January 1865, scouting for the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry.

Dickey survived the war in considerably better shape financially than he had started, moving to Kenamer's Cove and opening a tanyard.

Looking back from the perspective of the 20th century, it is difficult to understand why the Union Army tolerated such cold-blooded killers as Ben Harris and John Dickey. Permitting these brutes to roam around in Federal

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uniforms only encouraged hatred against all who wore the Union blue. Perhaps the Northern authorities simply did not care.

It was the success of Ben Harris and John Dickey that inspired "Captain" John T. Sparks. Sparks was a comparative latecomer on the scene and remains an illusive figure. Almost the only evidence of his existence comes from his war time activities. Sparks had enlisted in Eph Latham's Union company at Larkinsville back in September 1863. He is described on Latham's roster as a 38-year-old private, born in Spartansburg District, South Carolina.

When Latham's company was disbanded in the summer of 1864, Sparks apparently created one of his own. It is first mentioned in January 1865, when Union Brigadier General Charles Cruft noted the garrison at Larkinsville consisted of a detachment of Indiana cavalry and "a sort of amateur gathering of mounted men, calling themselves 'Alabama Scouts,' under Captain Sparks, say thirty or forty in number."

The Sparks gang lasted just long enough to make a reputation for brutality. Among Sparks' followers was a boy only 14 years of age. Sparks gave every captured Confederate to this youngster to shoot. Finally, a detachment of the 4th Alabama Cavalry was sent to eliminate Sparks and his band of cutthroats. The horse soldiers found Sparks in Jackson County and killed most of his men in a gunfight. However, the teenage executioner was taken alive.

One of the Confederates, Samuel Tipton Lindsay, had re-

venge in mind, for his brother, William B. Lindsay, had been murdered by the boy. "You ain't gonna shoot me are you?" the boy reportedly asked "Tip" Lindsay. Lindsay replied, "Damn you, you killed my brother, so look down this gun barrel and see if I ain't."

In fact, during the last months of the war the bitterness between the unauthorized "home-mades" and the local Confederates was such that neither side took prisoners. Captured Confederates were shot on the spot. "Homemade" Yankees caught alive were sent on the "short road to Gadsden." This normally long journey had become considerably more abrupt.

John Sparks survived the war, but not for long. Several weeks after the surrender, Sparks was captured by a posse that came from Fort

Payne to get him. Unable to find a suitable rope, the men from Sand Mountain hung Sparks with a wild grapevine.

YMCA Nearing Completion

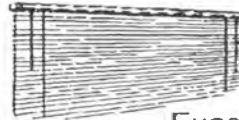
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The Doctor Sez

by Dr. Annelie Owens

How often have you heard someone say, "Go to a doctor? What for? I'm feeling great." It is just not in our nature to go to a doctor for a checkup when we are feeling well. Of course, another reason that keeps some people away from the doctor, unless it is absolutely necessary, is the cost.

We all know that when it comes to cancer, early detection is very important. The best way to hope for early detection of a malignant tumor is through a medical checkup. Early treatment can result in success before it causes symptoms. At the turn of the century, there was little or no hope for the patient with cancer. Today the cure rate for some cancers is in the neighborhood of 50%.

Cancer occurs at all ages, but it is much more common with advancing age. Today, people are living longer. Life expectancy for the average American today is about 75-78 years. Twenty years ago, it was about 70 years. This year it is estimated that one million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer.

There are certain warning signs that we should watch for

according to the American Cancer Society: change in bowel or bladder habits; a sore that doesn't heal; lump in the breast or elsewhere; unusual bleeding; persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing; obvious change in a wart or mole; and a nagging cough or hoarseness. Any of these warning signals should be good cause for a visit to your doctor.

In 1991, the American Cancer Society provided guidelines for cancer checkups for the average "healthy" adult who does not have any signs of symptoms to suggest malignant disease: men and women cigarette smokers age 35 and over should have a yearly chest x-ray examination. Men and women over the age of 40 should have an annual rectal examination that includes a test for blood in the stool. Women

should do a breast self-examination monthly.

Physician examination of the breast should be done every three years between the ages of 20 and 40 and yearly after that. A breast x-ray exam should be taken every 1-2 years between the ages of 35 and 50 and yearly after that. Pelvic examinations for women between the ages of 18 and 40, including Pap tests, should be done at least every three years. After age 40, this examination should be done on a yearly basis.

The important point to know is that the earlier cancer is diagnosed, the better is the chance for cure.

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Dear Editor,

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A few issues ago you ran an article about Dr. Burritt. You described a man completely different from the one I knew. I knew him as a kind and generous individual. When my mother had errands to run, he would take care of me. Some of the things he would do for me was give me peppermint stick candy, play the music box in the living room for me to listen to, taught me some notes on the piano, and played hide-and-go-seek with me in his house.

He gave to many charities and had many friends to visit him, as I remember as a young boy. This is a side of Dr. Burritt that you failed to describe in the article you printed.

Louie Tippett,
Huntsville, Ala.



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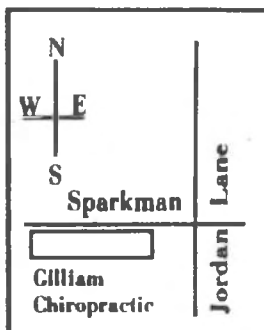


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Alabama Miracles



A Book To Warm Your Heart

Money was scarce in the 1930's, not just in Alabama, but across the nation which still was crawling out of an economic depression never before or since rivaled.

A kid in those days was lucky just to have clothes, whether handed down by a neighbor or an older sibling. To get something new was unheard of.

But, Woody Castleberry, who today is retired, got a brand-new pair of overalls in the 1930's.

The youngster couldn't believe his luck. The pants actu-

ally fit and they were 401s, the kind that everybody wished they had.

Sporting his new clothes, Woody left his Walker County home one evening to spend the night with his friend who lived a couple of football fields distance up the road.

The sounds of crickets filled the warm night air as Woody skipped to his friend's house.

School was out and the world was just right for the seven year old--especially one who had new overalls. Woody and his friend played outside well past dark. Then, they went inside.

Before tumbling into bed, both boys hung their overalls onto the bedposts.

But, Woody's friend did not have the same new 401's that Woody had. His, like the ones Woody had just handed down to his little brother, were faded and getting too short and too tight.

After whispering a while, the boys fell asleep only to be wakened by crashing sounds in the next room.

Woody's friend explained that his brother had come home drunk and it promised to be an ugly scene, as it always was when he drank too much.

"You'd better go home before it gets worse," Woody's buddy urged.

In the dark, Woody reached for his overalls and bolted out the door, hoping not to be caught in the crossfire of whatever the drunk brother was hurling around the house.

Racing up the dirt road, Woody struggled to run and pull on his overalls at the same time.

"Funny," he thought, "they feel too little."

It was then that the young-

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his friend's britches. His still were hanging in the dark on the bedpost.

"Tomorrow," he thought, "I'll go back. No way I'm going to-night."

When Woody reached home, his family was asleep. Because back then nobody locked their doors, Woody tiptoed in and crawled into his own bed as his heart still pounded, partly out of fear of the enraged brother and party because he had almost set speed records sprinting home.

Woody woke the next morning to the sounds of his mother weeping in the next room.

He walked up behind her to see her staring off into the distance where smoke puffed into the clear morning.

About that time, Woody saw his daddy trudging up the road, his head lowered, his voice soft. "It's too late," his dad called to his mother.

"There's nothing left, just a few burning embers, everything is destroyed." Woody's mother waled as she looked toward the neighboring house.

Woody suddenly realized what had happened. The house where he had left his overalls had burned to the ground.

"Mama," he called, stepping around where she could see him.

The young woman, tears streaming down her face, stooped to embrace the child she had believed was dead.

Woody's story is among a couple of dozen detailed in a book recently released by Seacoast Publishing. The book, called Alabama Miracles: Real Life Stories to Warm the Heart and Lift the Spirit, recounts angel-like stories which happened to people living in Alabama.

Another of the tales involves

a six-year-old girl who was trapped in a burning house. As her parents struggled to get inside to rescue her, she stood in the foyer, unable to cross the flames blocking the front door.

Thinking of the back door, Macy remembered that it would be dead-bolted and she had never been able to unlock it herself.

It was at that moment that she felt a hand take hers, and she was filled with a peace she had never before felt.

She was led to safety and left alone in the backyard. Within minutes, Macy's mother raced from the front yard and scooped the girl into her arms.

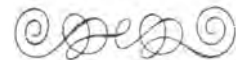
"Macy," she cried as rain pelted them, how did you get out?

"Daddy got me," she answered.

It was at that moment that Macy's daddy, still holding his two other youngsters whom he had carried from the burning house, heard what Macy said.

"It wasn't me," he said, "I was trying to get back inside for you."

Alabama Miracles: Real Life Stories to Warm the Heart and Lift the Spirit is available in Huntsville at Books-A-Million stores.



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A Yankee Soldier

Excerpts from the Diary of Col. John Beatty

April 4, 1862 As we approach the Alabama line we find fewer, but handsomer houses; larger plantations, and negroes more numerous.

April 9 Moved at six O'clock this morning. Roads sloppy, and in many places overflowed. Marched sixteen miles.

April 15 Resumed march at six this morning. Passed the plantation of Leonidas Polk Walker. He is said to be the wealthiest man in North Ala-

bama. His domain extends for fifteen miles along the road. Reached Huntsville at 5 in the afternoon.

April 20 At Decatur. The town is as ugly as Huntsville is handsome. There is a cane brake near the camp, and every soldier in the regiment has provided himself with a fishing rod.

April 24 Our forces are on the alert. Before leaving this place, the rebels built a cotton fort, using in its construction probably five hundred bales of

cotton. Today we filled the bridge over the Tennessee with combustible material, in case we find it necessary to retire to the north side.

April 27 The Tenth and Third crossed to the north side of the river and Colonel Burke, of the Tenth applied the torch to the bridge. In a few minutes the fire extended along its whole length, and as we marched away, the flames were hissing among its timbers, and the smoke hung like a cloud above it.

April 28 Ordered to move to Stevenson.

May 2 Took the cars for Huntsville. At Paint Rock the cars were fired upon, and six or eight men wounded. I had the train stopped and taking a file of soldiers, returned to the village. The telegraph line had been cut, and the wire was lying in the streets.

Calling the citizens together, I said to them that this bushwhacking must cease. Hereafter every time the telegraph wire was cut we would burn a house; every time a train was fired upon we would hang a man; and we would continue to do this until every house was burned and every man hung between Decatur and Bridgeport.

I then set fire to the town, took three citizens with me, returned to the train and proceeded to Huntsville.

May 10 Have been appointed President of a Board of Administration for the post of Huntsville. After an ineffectual effort to get the members together, I concluded to spend a day out of camp, so I strolled

**Elect
Charlie
Norment
Sheriff**

Paid political ad by friends of Charlie Norment

over to the hotel, took a bath, ate dinner, smoked, read, and slept until supper time.

May 11 Attended divine service with Captain McDougal at the Presbyterian church. The edifice is very fine. The audience was small, the sermon tolerable.

May 16 Appointed Provost Marshal of the city. Have been busy hearing all sorts of complaints, signing passes, sending guards to this and that place in the city.

May 23 The women are outspoken in their hostility. A flag of truce came in last night from Chattanooga, and the bearers were overwhelmed by favors and visits from the ladies.

July 3 It is exceedingly dull; we are resting as quietly and leisurely as we would at home. There are no drills. Tomorrow is the Fourth.

July 4 Thirty four guns were fired at noon.

July 7 Am detailed to serve on court martial. The first case to be tried is that of Colonel J.B. Turchin.

July 14 Turchin's brigade has stolen a hundred thousand dollars worth of watches, plate, and jewelry, in Northern Alabama.

August 3 The gentlemen of the South have a great fondness for jewelry, canes, cigars, and dogs. White men rarely work here. Judging from the number of stores and present stocks, Huntsville, in better times, does a heavier retail jewelry business than Cleveland or Columbus. Diamonds, rings, gold watches, chains and bracelets are to be found in every family. The negroes buy large amounts of cheap jewelry, and the trade in this branch is enormous. One

may walk a whole day in a Northern city without seeing a ruffled shirt. Here they are very common.

August 7 General McCook was murdered near Winchester, yesterday by a small band of guerrillas. When the Dutchmen of his old regiment learned of the unfortunate occurrence, they became uncontrollable, and destroyed the building and property on five plantations near the scene of the murder.

August 8 The night is exceedingly beautiful; our camp lies at the foot of a long range of mountains called the Montesano.

August 25 Ordered to move.

August 29 We are at Dechard, Tennessee. I am weak, discouraged, and worn out with idleness.



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