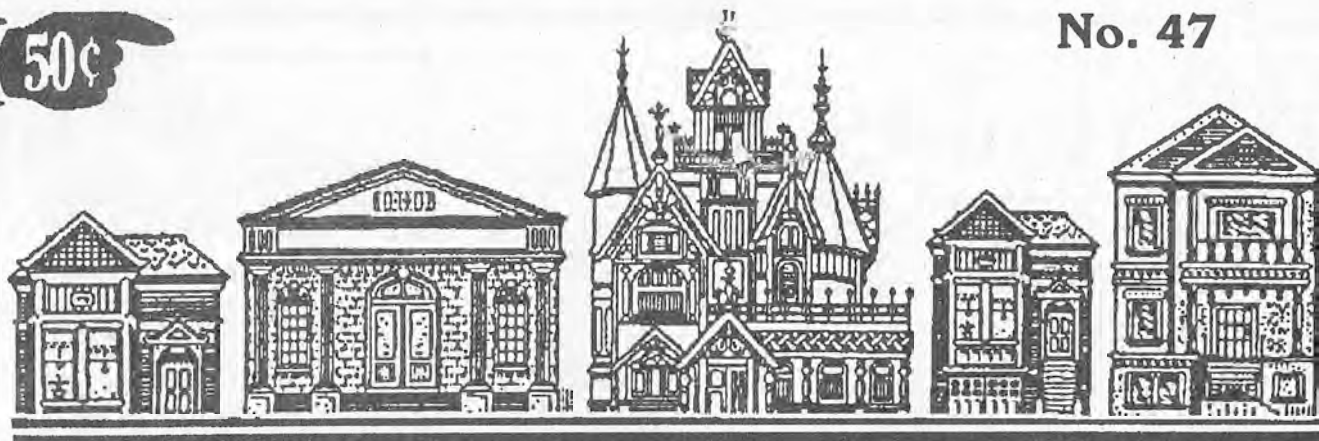


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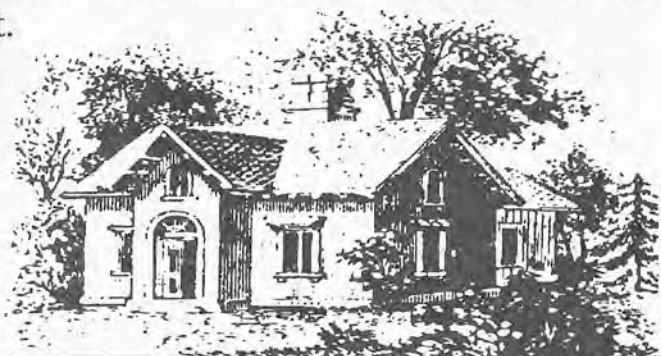
Old Huntsville



The House Mary Built

She worked until her hands were bloody, only to have a neighbor cheat her out of a year's labor. Even when vandals burned her home, she still refused to give up.

The true, inspiring story of a woman's determination to have her own home, at any cost.



Also In This Issue: "Bare Knuckles Jordan"

The House that Mary Built



Follow Meridian Street north to where it leaves the city limits, then look closely to the west at the brush and the kudzu vines that seems to cover everything.

If you look close enough, you will see what appears to be a large pile of stones. Closer examination would reveal that these stones are the remnants of what was once a structure. You won't see much, a few decayed timbers, a window frame lying haphazardly in the undergrowth and a hole where someone had started to dig a well, but quit in despair after encountering solid limestone a few feet beneath the surface.

There's nothing to indicate what kind of a structure it was or who built it.

However, old-timers recall, "It's the house that Mary built."

Mary Higgins was born in 1878 into a family which eked out a living as sharecroppers. Her early years were spent in the cotton fields and helping her mother take care of the large family. Her father, a drunkard, often ended up in jail after spending what little money the family had on booze.

It came as no surprise when, at age 15, Mary married.

Unfortunately, the marriage only lasted two years, ending with her husband being sent to prison for making illegal whiskey and leaving her with a year-old child. To make matters worse, her husband announced he had no intention of returning home once he got out of prison. Children, he said, were not his "thing."

Unskilled in any other labor, Mary began cleaning houses. She had an excellent reputation as a hard worker and a kind soul. Soon she had all the work she could manage. Though earning but little money, she managed.

She had worked at the Baker household for almost a year when she heard Mr. Baker describe a "worthless" tract of nearby land that had come into his possession.

Curious, Mary walked out to look at the land. It was a rocky, irregular shaped tract that seemed to be useless.

Mary had dreamed all her life about owning her own home on a piece of land that was paid for. And now, here was the land! If only Mr. Baker would sell it to her and if she could afford it.

The next Monday, she arrived for work in her best dress. As Mr. Baker prepared to leave for work, Mary mentioned, "That



Old Huntsville

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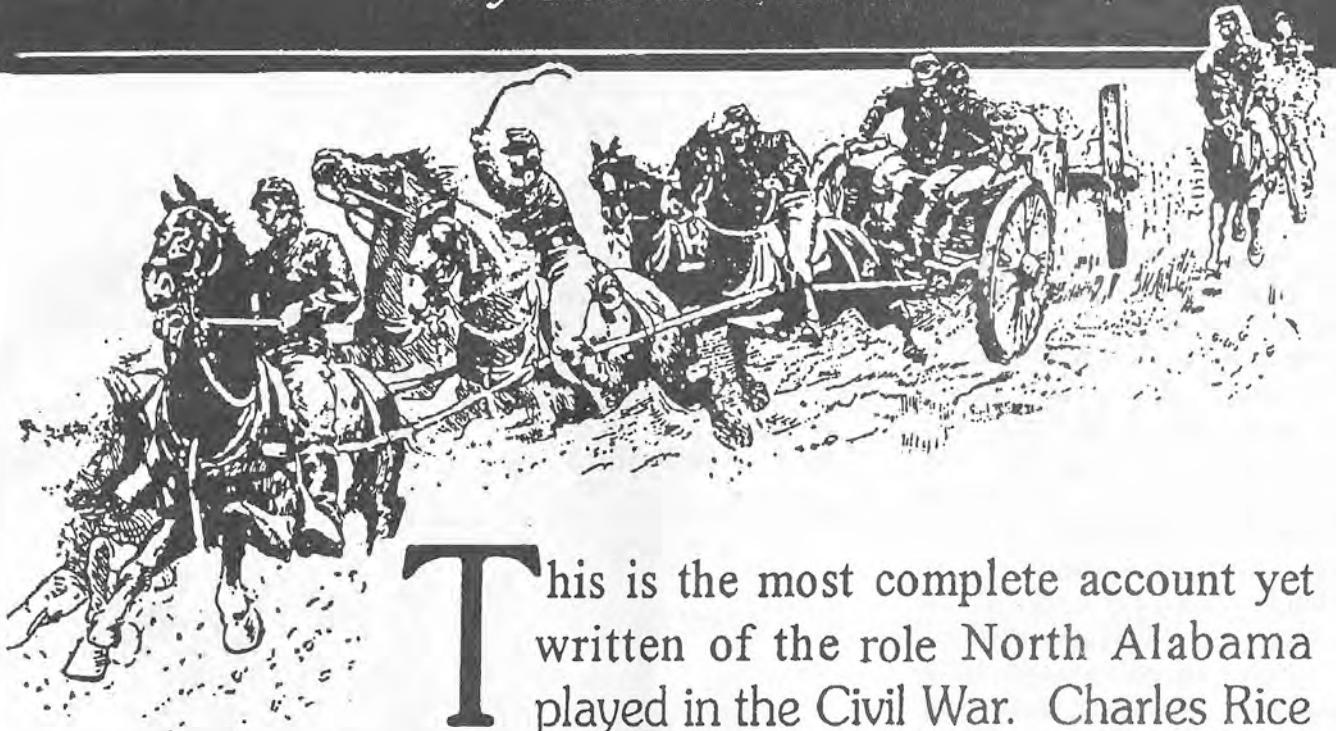
Tom Carney



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HARD TIMES: The Civil War in North Alabama

by Charles Rice



This is the most complete account yet written of the role North Alabama played in the Civil War. Charles Rice has become known as one of the foremost historians on the subject, and his stories have graced the pages of many publications, including those of *Old Huntsville Magazine*.

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land.”

“Would you be of a mind to sell it?” she asked.

Amused, Baker looked at his cleaning lady. “I might,” he replied, “but would you have the money to buy it?”

“No,” Mary answered, “but I have an idea.” Excitedly, she explained that if he would sell her the land, she would work extra every day and let the money go toward payment.

Probably because of her sincerity, or maybe just because it was such an unusual proposition, Baker agreed to the plan.

Mary’s life quickly settled into a routine. Work ten hours a day during the week, and on Saturdays, pack a picnic lunch and spend the day on the land she was buying. In her mind she could already see a house with a neat yard and flowers everywhere. Patiently she explained to her infant son how they were going to have their own home someday, and not owe anyone.

After almost two years, the land was hers. She had transformed the small piece of land into a veritable garden of Eden, with flowers everywhere in well-tended beds.

By this time, most people knew of the purchase and the woman’s dream of building a house. They also knew she had no money. “It takes money to build a house,” they would say, sadly shaking their head. “And though she’s a good woman, she still can’t afford it.”

Ignoring the comments Mary persisted in her dreams. The first Saturday, after the land was legally hers, she appeared at the door of a neighboring farm, whose land bordered hers.

This time she had a different proposition. She had noticed

that one corner of his land was unfit for planting because of the rocks. “She would clear the corner of all the rocks and haul them off,” she said, “for twenty-five dollars.”

Needless to say, the farmer took up her offer. He had been trying for years to cultivate that ground, but had broken so many plows he had finally given up.

Every weekend Mary would lift the rocks into a handcart, push them over to her land and add them to another pile she had gathered.

In the meantime Mary had

gathered scrap lumber, odd doors and even broken window casings. After clearing the land and collecting her twenty-five dollars, she ordered a load of sand and concrete from a local building supply company.

Now her life took a different routine. Every weekend she would mix mortar and place the rocks. Amazed, the local residents realized that the woman was actually building a house. A rock house.

When a friend asked how she intended to build a house all by herself, she replied: “You

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build a brick house brick by brick, don't you? I can't afford nothing else so I'm building a rock house, one rock at a time!"

The neighbor, whose land Mary had cleared, would often visit the site, just standing there and staring, as she continued her back breaking task. Then without saying a word, he would turn and go back to his house.

Late that fall, after Mary had almost completed the exterior walls, she arrived at her land one morning to find that her neighbor had erected a fence around the house she was building. Angriily she went to see him, demanding to know why.

"Mrs. Higgins," he said, "that house is on my property. You should have been more careful."

Almost in tears, Mary rushed back to town to see Mr. Baker and confront him with the news. After listening to her, Baker made an appointment with a lawyer, where Mary once again told what happened.

Mr. Baker, the lawyer, and Mary, with a copy of the deed in hand, went back out to the land where they carefully paced off the dimensions of the lot.

It was true. Mary had built the house almost twenty feet on the other side of her boundaries.

Most people expected her to give up on her dream. Her son was getting older, she had become a devout churchgoer and there just didn't seem to be much time for her to do anything else. Mary had in the meantime rented a house a few hundred feet down the road from her land to be closer to the house she hoped to build.

Instead of giving up though, the next Saturday morning found her back at work, once again patiently gathering rocks

and placing them near the new site she had selected. Work progressed much slower this time, but she persisted, often laboring until her hands became bloody from handling the jagged rocks. Many times, friends and neighbors would stop by, offering to help, but Mary always turned them down.

Mary hoarded every nickel and dime she could save in order to purchase concrete and building materials. By scrimping, she had saved almost forty dollars when fate once again intervened. A neighbor had taken sick and died, leaving a widow and a houseful of children and no way to take care of them. Resignedly, without saying a

word to anyone, Mary took her meager savings and gave it to the widow. During the influenza epidemic that hit Huntsville in 1917, she spent every spare moment taking care of neighbors and friends who had been stricken. Often times, she would show up unannounced with a pot of food for some family who were too ill to take care of themselves.

By 1925, the house was almost completed. Though not an attractive house, it was never the less paid for and it appeared as if finally Mary would have her own home.

Unfortunately, the night before she was about to move, vandals broke into the house, and

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after vandalizing it, set fire to it. Years of hard work went up in smoke in just a few minutes time. Seeing the flames Mary rushed to the site in an effort to extinguish the fire but it was too late.

A friend later said that was the only time he ever saw Mary Higgins cry.

Most people would have given up by now, but the next morning saw Mary back at the burned out shell of the house, gingerly picking through the rubble, trying to salvage what she could so that she might start over again.

Years passed, and the construction went much slower this time. What little money Mary managed to save for materials often went to some needy family. Age was beginning to catch up with her, and her body could no longer do the work it once had.

Her hair became tinged with grey and her son was grown and lived in Chattanooga. She still

spent every possible moment working on the house, but now it appeared, to most people, as if it was merely a dream that would never be finished.

Late one fall evening in 1932, she was trying to pull some nails from an old door casing she had salvaged somewhere when she felt a sharp pain in her side. Moments later she collapsed.

A neighbor later found her and carried her home. Within hours, the house was crowded with friends and neighbors, worried about the little lady's condition. A doctor was summoned and after examining Mary, pronounced her condition critical. "It's only a matter of time," he told the assembled crowd.

As is true in most cases like this, the ladies assembled in the kitchen, talking in hushed tones, while the men

gathered on the front porch. Possibly, they were all thinking of the many times Mary had helped them. There was not a person present who could not tell stories about Mary nursing them when they were sick, or of her giving what little money she had to help a neighbor. As they gazed down the road, they could see the walls of the house that Mary had so laboriously worked on all of her life. Now there was nothing they could do except sit on the front porch and wait.



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Abruptly, one of the men got up and left. An hour later he returned, with a truck load of building materials he had purchased. Without a word he unloaded the materials in front of the rock walls. The other men, within minutes, joined him.

They labored through the night by the light of kerosene lanterns. They knew this was their last chance to repay a gentle lady for a lifetime of generosity.

Early next morning, as the men finished hammering the last shingle on the roof, Mary Higgins awoke and asked one of the women tending to her what that noise was. "Mary," the woman said, "the men have finished your house!"

Suddenly, a strange sort of peacefulness seemed to sweep over Mary's face, before once again lapsing into unconsciousness. A few minutes later, the men, still sweaty and begrimed from their night's labor, arrived and after gently picking Mary up, carried her down the hill to her new house. Other men carried the bedroom furnishings, while some of the ladies hastily rushed ahead to hang curtains and place pictures on the walls.

We don't know if Mary ever regained consciousness again before dying a few hours later.

We like to think she did.

The house was sold after her death. The person who bought it, purchased it primarily for the land, and let the house fall into disrepair. People vandalized the house, taking the rocks to build fences and walkways.

Within a few years there was nothing left of the house that Mary built, except for the memories of a lady who refused to give up.



Old-Time Remedies

To cure dandruff on a baby's head grease his head with chicken-oil grease and rub for two minutes before wiping off.

A poultice made of hot baked onions will cure deafness

that is a result from headache and severe colds

The miseries (cramps) can be relieved by cleaning a mud dauber's nest and boiling it to make a tea.

To kill head lice, mix hog lard and kerosene. Rub on the scalp daily.

Children with sores or cuts on their feet should be careful not to walk barefoot in the morning, if they do they will get dew poisoning.

Pains - heat table salt in a cast iron skillet. When hot, put in a cloth bag, apply to the area where the pain is. Relief comes much more quickly than with a heating pad.

Patches & Stitches

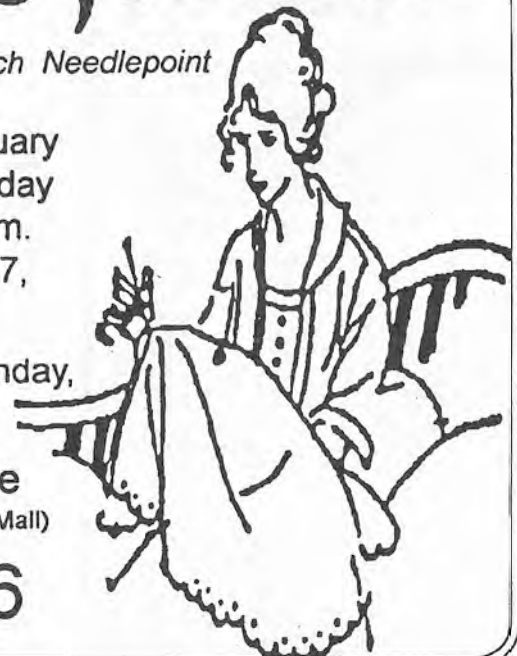
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The Mystery of 6654

Huntsville was in the grips of one of the coldest winters on record when in February, 1906, a stranger appeared at the Huntsville Hotel and requested a room.

The stranger, an elderly man, was dressed in summer clothing and carried no luggage. He asked for a room for two weeks and paid in advance with cash.

He also asked that no one, not even the maids, be permitted to enter his room. Instead of signing his name to the register, he wrote the numbers 6654.

The following morning he began a routine he would follow every day for the next two weeks. Eat breakfast at the hotel, walk three blocks to a barber shop where he would request a shave, sit on a bench in front of the

Courthouse for the rest of the day until finally returning to the hotel for dinner.

At the end of two weeks, the stranger disappeared. The manager of the hotel, worried about the man's strange behavior, finally entered the room. The room was exactly the way it was when the stranger had rented it. The bed had not been slept in and there was no sign anyone had been in the room since it was last cleaned, two weeks previously.

Adding to the mystery were six envelopes lying on the bed, addressed to different individu-

als around town. In each envelope were five one hundred dollar bills.

Later checking revealed that none of the individuals knew the stranger. They also had no idea what the money was for, or what the numbers, 6654, stood for.

Another Huntsville story that has never been explained.

If any of our readers know the answer to this mystery, or have any knowledge of the stranger's identity, please call Old Huntsville at 534-0502



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- 1 t. salt
- 1 t. ginger, ground
- 1/2 t. nutmeg, ground
- 1 egg white
- 1 T. cold water
- 1 lb. pecans, shelled

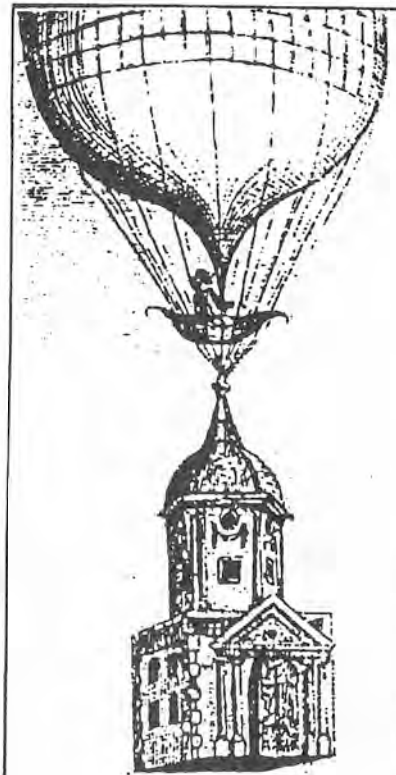
Mix together all the dry ingredients. In a larger bowl beat the egg white with cold water til frothy but not stiff. Add the dry mixture and mix well. Add the nuts and coat well. Spread nuts in a buttered jelly roll pan, 9x13". Bake at 250 degrees for an hour, stirring to separate every 15 minutes. Remove when dry and toasty, cool and store in an air-

tight container.

Golden Caramels

- 1/2 lb. butter
- 2 c. sugar
- 1 c. light corn syrup
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 2 c. chopped pecans

In a large saucepan, melt the butter and add the rest of the ingredients. Stir constantly til the mixture reached 240 degrees on a candy thermometer (maybe 5 minutes). Remove from heat, add nuts, pour into 8" square pan and cool. Cut into small squares and wrap individually in waxed paper.



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SAMBO



Never in the history of Huntsville or perhaps the whole state of Alabama, has there been a cat as famous as a Siamese named Sambo.

For, in the late fifties, Sambo started out as a pampered pet of Joyce and Tom Jones and became a well known photographic model, rising to the position of the city's chief endorser of civic drives.

Sambo's mistress, Joyce Jones, was a photojournalist for several metropolitan newspapers. Since cats are always good copy, it wasn't long before she found a way to press him into service.

His career started when he was staring down a hole in the kitchen baseboard. Since cats have weaknesses for concentrating on a possible mouse exit, the pose was a natural. The pictures were published in the *Birmingham News* and were seen all over the state. (The joke was on Sambo. It was not a rat hole into which he gazed, but an un-repaired hole from which a piece of metal had been removed.)

Then, the Jones embarked upon a repainting and re-papering session in the living and dining rooms, another golden opportunity came to cash in on a cat's natural curiosity.

The camera followed Sambo as he unrolled wall paper, dabbled in the paint, climbed a ladder and generally made a nuisance of himself until he was "fired." This picture story, entitled, *The Little Helper*, appeared in the *Nashville Tennessean Magazine*.

Sambo's pictures, with captions continued to appear in the *Chattanooga Times*, *Birmingham Post Herald*, *Birmingham News*, *Nashville Tennessean* and the *Huntsville Times*. Altogether, he appeared in print fifty-two different times.

Then, the state editor of the

Birmingham News, who had been looking for a continuing model, chose Sambo to appear from time to time in a series of pictures.

Throughout the year pictures of Sambo appeared as he celebrated Thanksgiving, Halloween, Valentines day and Christmas. In fact, in observance of the Yule season, Sambo became a poet, (with apologies to Samuel Moore), writing a holiday poem which appeared in many newspapers.

As Sambo increased in popularity, Joyce had him insured by the famed insurance company, Lloyd's of London, as a photographic model. And, naturally, a picture story of the event appeared in the print.

In addition to metropolitan newspapers, including the Associated Press, Sambo began appearing in his hometown newspaper, *The Huntsville Times*, more often. When the city observed its Sesquicentennial, Sambo proudly "grew" a beard as all the males were asked to do.

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He was made an honorary member of the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce. And as a result, an account of this event and other activities were published in a book commemorating the Sesquicentennial.

Since Sambo was such a well known character, the photographer was asked to let him sponsor civic drives. So, he appeared in print for the Red Cross, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Civic Defence, Blood Bank, Community Chest, Crippled Children's Clinic and the Huntsville Humane Society.

As a matter of fact, when a heart drive did not succeed, the chairman said woefully, "It was probably because Sambo was not asked to endorse it."

Through the years as Sambo's fame grew, from time to time people from throughout the state would stop by to see him and to sign his guest book. As an added honor, the Puss N' Boots Company sent him an unsolicited medal and certificate for "contributing to human happiness."

When Sambo passed from

his first life, the late Reese Amis, editor of the *Huntsville Times*, published a long obituary reviewing the life of the famous cat. And when the present courthouse was being decorated, then Commissioner, James Record, asked for a portrait of Sambo to be hung in a prominent place. For, he said, "Sambo is one of Huntsville's most outstanding citizens and deserves his share of recognition." As a lasting tribute to the famous feline, the portrait hangs today on the third floor of the Madison County Courthouse.

Now, Sambo's "pawto-biography" brings him into his ninth life. His mistress, Joyce Jones has compiled a photographic account of the cat's rise to fame and his interest in helping civic causes.

The book is entitled "The Cat With A Thousand Faces," and is available by mail from Sambo Books, 1108 Harrison Avenue S.E., Huntsville, AL., 35801.

Early Huntsville News

Papers and Politics don't mix!

Huntsville mayor, R.E. Smith, who engaged in a fight with J.E. Pierce, editor of *The Huntsville Times*, sat on his own case in the police court this morning. The case of Pierce was called first, and the defendant was discharged although he entered a plea of guilty. The mayor next called his own case and entered a fine of \$10 against himself because of the fact that he was the aggressor in the affray.

from 1912 Huntsville
newspaper

Get your Doctorate on the Chain Gang!

W.G. Maloney, a young man arrested today for riding trains contrary to the law, claimed in the police court this morning that he was making a study of the underworld and became a hobo in order to get a closer view. Mayor Smith imposed a 20 day sentence on him and informed him that he would be given every opportunity to make a study of hoboes and other members of the chain gang.

from 1913 Huntsville
newspaper



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A Yankee Soldier Writes Home

Huntsville, Alabama,
May 22, 1864

Friend Lucy:

I believe the last time I saw you there was something said about my writing to you when I arrived in Dixieland. However, it doesn't make any particular difference whether I was to write or not, as I claim to be an old friend with nothing to do and plenty time to do it in.

I will write you a few lines anyhow, if they are not so interesting, as George says, and we have been here nearly two weeks, and I am very much pleased with the place. I think this is the most beautiful country I ever saw. Nature has done everything for this country. Allowing me to use the phrase it is God's own land, beautifully supplied with the necessary, and blessings of life. You don't know about beautiful flowers up north. We have them here of every variety and description and the richest color imaginable. I wish I could send you a sample of them and have you enjoy them as they look here. Huntsville is enthusiastically a city of flowers.

There are several splendid churches and other public buildings here with stained variegated windows and other beautiful

embellishments too numerous to mention without taking all the space of this sheet with a description. There are a great many fine private residences in this city. I passed one the other day that particularly pleased me. It was built of freestone, in the Gothic style of architecture, the doors guarded by sculptured lions, birds, etc. The grounds were laid out in terraces covered with shade trees, evergreens and flowers. There were several fine arbors and I counted some twenty marble statues distributed throughout the grounds. I think if I was the owner of such a place, I would be contented, get married and settle down for the remainder of my life on this earth.

About the only drawback is

the weather. We are now having Illinois July weather in the daytime. The nights are cool.

We have excellent quarters in the Huntsville Court House. The whole of the second floor is assigned to us for practicing and sleeping rooms. Our dining room is just across the street. We have an old darkey and his wife to do our cooking and they are pretty good cooks. The General is pretty much pleased with his bunch and is going to get us the appointment of post band. If he does so, we will probably stay here during the war or until our time of enlistment is out. I am so well pleased with my position that I would not change positions with a captain. We are situated here, we enjoy ourselves, as we only have to play for the govern-



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ment about an hour and a half out of 24. The rest of the time we do what we please. The General gives us privileges that but few solders get. The band has been out serenading nearly every night since we have been here for the officers on such occasions. The best of wines and liquors are placed before us. To partake of this is an awful place for a temperance man. I don't think I am in much danger. I was never much of a hand to drink spirits and less so now than ever.

I will enclose my photograph in this and should be very much pleased to receive yours in return. It isn't as good as I could wish, but is the best I have. If this meets with your approbation, I shall expect an answer soon.

Most respectfully yours,

Theo. Pomeroy
1st Brigade Band
3rd Div. 15 Army Corp.
Huntsville, Alabama



Dear Editor



The foregoing letter, apparently from a Union soldier to a friend in Illinois, was found in an antique chest by the owner of a Davenport, Iowa auction service whose services were retained to settle an estate. Upon reading the original letter, my uncle, an employee of the auction service, copied the text exactly as it appeared in the original letter, and forwarded it to me in Huntsville.

This episode took place about 25 years ago and I've enjoyed reading and rereading the letter many times. I cannot authenticate the letter's origin as the original document was auctioned to a person unknown to my family.

Sincerely,
Janet E. Camp

Shaver's Top 10 Books of Local & Regional Interest

1. Prize In The Snow - Children's book by Huntsville Times columnist Bill Easterling (\$15.95).

2. Hard Times - The Civil War in Huntsville and North Alabama by Charles Rice (\$15.95).

3. Miss Mary Bobo's Boarding House Cookbook - Southern Dishes from Lynchburg (\$17.95).

4. Voices On A Cold Day - Collected columns by Bill Easterling (\$5.00).

5. Railroad War - Nathan Bedford Forrest's raid through North Alabama by Bob Dunnivant (\$16.95).

6. Maps Of Old Huntsville - Reprints of 1861 and 1871 Maps (\$10.00 each).

7. 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).

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

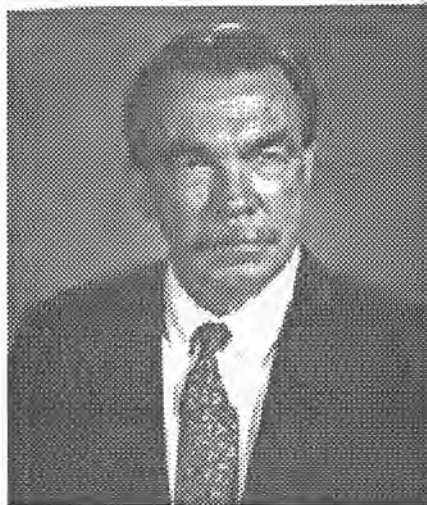
9. Glimpses into Antebellum Homes of Huntsville and Madison County, 8th Edition (\$10.00).

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

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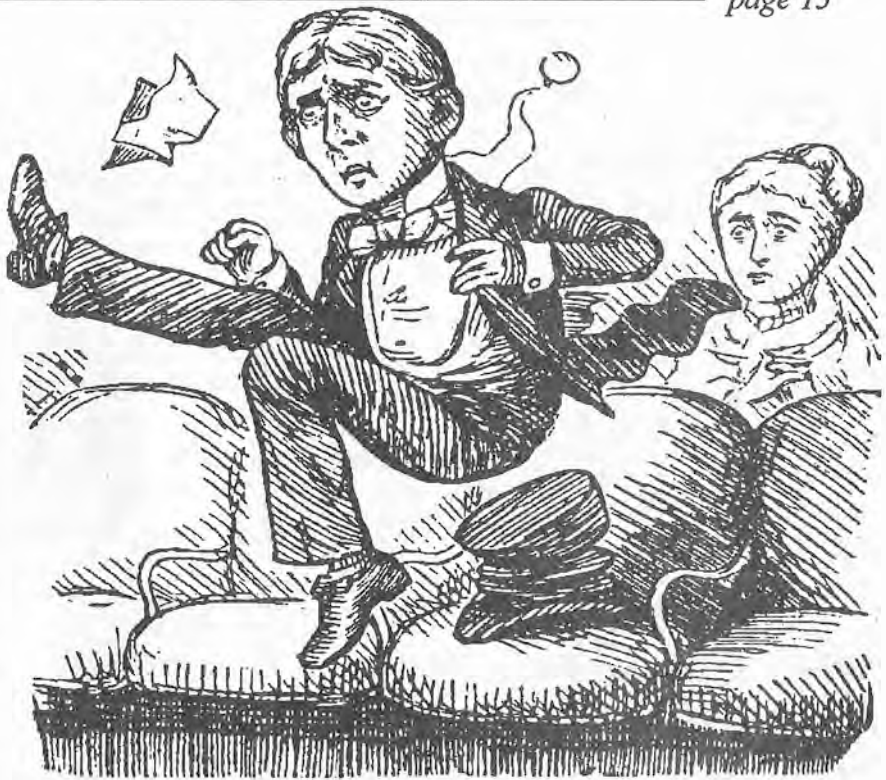
The Unluckiest Man In Huntsville

by Venita Helton

The unluckiest man in Huntsville lived down the street from us in a three-bedroom rancher with his wife, his mother-in-law, six or seven kids, and a pack of mongrels. Nobody was sure how John Jinx supported his family since he never seemed to go to work, so I suppose he must have been with the government.

From the side John resembled the Lazy S brand - sort of slumped at the top and curling around behind - and his hair always looked like his dogs had been licking it. He used the gap between his front teeth as a built-in cigarette holder; when he talked, the jiggling end of his Camel dribbled ashes all over the front of his tattered T-shirt. Magnified by his Coke bottle-bottom glasses, his watery blue eyes peered out at the world in a wistful sort of way. That expression never changed throughout the string of bad luck that earned him his nickname.

One of John Jinx's early cases of hard luck began on a sunny, windless day. His car was in the driveway, a johnboat strapped to the roof. No one was around. Then, without any warning, the johnboat fell off the car and broke in half, lengthwise.



John went out and wordlessly examined the wreckage, then got his sons to help him glue the boat back together. A week later, accompanied by his mother-in-law and three

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of his children, John put the boat in at Lady Ann Lake. After thirty minutes of yanking the starter cord, he determined that the motor wasn't going to start so he gave up and rowed the family to their fishing hole. Just as they got the worms into the water, the glue holding the hull together softened up and the johnboat divided in two. They swam ashore, and that was the last John Jinx saw of his boat.

Since the Jinxes didn't have much money, most family outings consisted of going riding in the car. So much rust showed through the white paint of John's '52 Chevy that it looked like an albino bullfrog with a rare skin disease, but it was paid for. Like most cars in 1966, it had no air-conditioning, which was okay with John because he had poor circulation.

One July afternoon when the road was hot enough to peel the rubber off your sneakers, John loaded the family and a few of the dogs into the Chevy for a

trip to Parkway City shopping center. Filling the Chevy with ten people and three dogs was like cramming spring-loaded cloth snakes into a can; John had to keep the windows closed just to prevent everybody from spronging out. As John drove by our house, we glimpsed human and canine faces pressed to the glass, sweating but smiling.

At Parkway City, John went into Montgomery Ward and purchased a gallon of red paint. He set it in the back window of the car, then took everybody to G.C. Murphy's to get band aids and whiffle balls.

After an hour the family squeezed back into the car, which was as hot as old Scratch's kitchen after sitting in the sweltering parking lot with the windows up. As John turned the ignition key, there was a terrific explosion and something struck him in the back of the head. He turned around to find his screaming family, the dogs, and the interior of the car covered

with blood. "We've been shot!" he yelled, feeling the back of his head for a bullet hole. Instead he found the lid from the paint can stuck to his hair. It took him a minute to figure out that the paint can had exploded in the heat. Despite gallons of turpentine, the car interior stayed pretty red and the dogs had to be shaved.

John had two stumps in his front yard, left over from the year before when his boys set fire to the mimosas because they wanted to see fire trucks. Those stumps bothered John, so he bought two large maple trees in burlap bags and set them on the driveway. After attaching one of the stumps to the rear axle of his car with a tow chain, he got in and gunned the engine. The tires spun and dirt flew but the stump held. John hollered for the boys to push as he revved the engine. Grinding and screeching, the Chevy abruptly surged forward. It wasn't until his wife banged on the window that John realized



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he was no longer moving. He found the rear axle several feet behind the car, the tow chain still attached to the stump. Those maple trees never did get planted.

Soon the Jinx septic tank began to act up, so John got Huntsville Utilities to run a sewer line to his house. When they finished, the front yard looked like a giant mole had tunneled across it. John didn't like the effect, so he steam-rolled the Chevy (fitted with a new rear end) up and down the sewer line to pack the dirt. After a couple of passes, the right front and rear wheels buried to the axles in the trench. John had to pay the wrecker \$26.50 to pull him out.

For Christmas 1967, John bought his two oldest boys Kawasakis. The children roared up and down the road, shattering the peace of Christmas Day. That night, someone stole the motorcycles. The police found the culprit, who led them to Archer Park where he'd buried the motorcycles. John Jinx got the bikes back but he never could get all the dirt out of the carburetors. From then on, his sons just coasted down the hill and made motor noises with their mouths.

When my father built a storage room onto our carport, John came over to see how it was done. He looked wistful as he considered the cost of materials. Thinking that he could build a shed more cheaply, he scavenged some 2x4s from an old shack near the dump, pulled and straightened the nails, then set to work in his backyard. His family brought out lawn chairs and watched. John saved time by not pouring a foundation, so before long he had a storage shed that

looked exactly like the shack from which he'd gleaned his materials. He pushed in his lawn mower and closed the door. His wife took a picture.

The next day, a whirlwind whipped through the neighbors' backyards, jumped a fence, and made a beeline for John Jinx's shed. Scooping the shed off the grass, the pygmy cyclone carried it ten feet into the air, then scooted out from under it. The shed seemed to hover for a moment, then fell to the ground. John came out to find total devastation. He didn't say a word, but his eyes looked very large and watery through his glasses. For years the heap of boards lay where they had fallen, like a monument.

One dark, rainy night, John Jinx was standing in a phone booth outside the Eagle's Club,

making an obscene phone call. Just as he breathed an intimate query into the receiver, he felt someone tap him on the shoulder. He turned to find a policeman immediately behind him. During the trial we learned that John was responsible for dozens of obscene phone calls in our neighborhood.

After all these years I can still imagine John Jinx's eyes behind those thick glasses, peering through the bars of his cell. They look wistful and a little bewildered. There is something else there, too: relief.

After all, what could possibly happen to John Jinx in jail?

Venita Helton is a novelist who lives in Huntsville. Ridiculous as it may seem, "The Unluckiest Man in Huntsville" is a true story.

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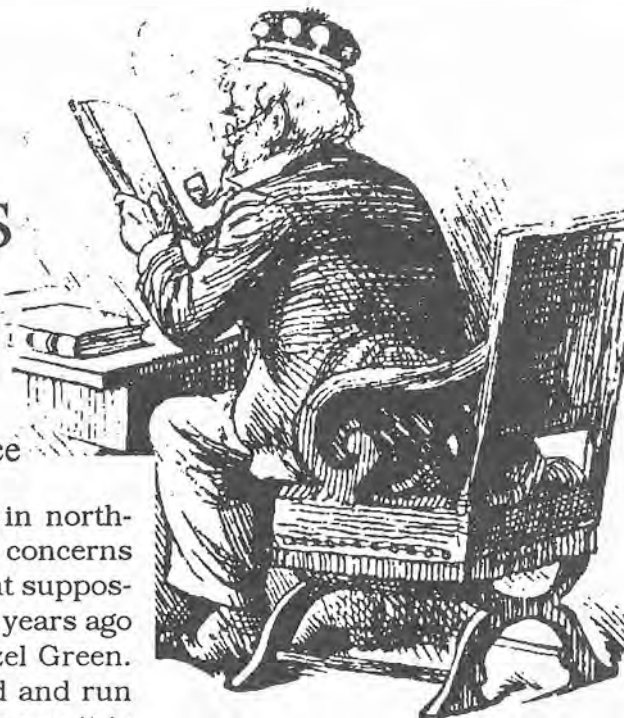
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Dead Man's Gold

by Charles Rice



An oft told tale in northern Madison County concerns a buried treasure that supposedly was hidden 130 years ago near the town of Hazel Green. Now don't get excited and run off to look for it, because it is said to have been found long ago. Well, it just may have been — if it ever existed.


The swashbuckling story concerns the quite respectable Townsend family, early settlers of our region and very wealthy

cotton planters before the War Between the States. We leave it to you to decide how much truth there is in the tale.

The patriarch of this old Madison County family was one Parkes Townsend, gentleman. Born in Lunenburg County, Vir-

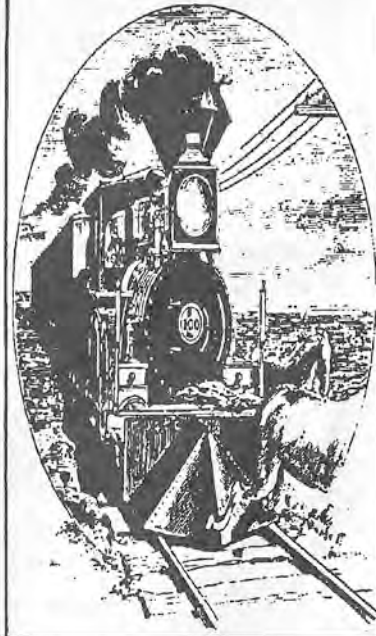
ginia, in 1795, Townsend had left his home in 1827 to seek new lands in Alabama. He grew rich here and fathered a large family before his untimely death in December 1849 at the age of only 54. Even after his property had been divided among his heirs, it remained quite impressive. In fact, in 1860, just before the Civil War, Townsend's widow, Mary, still held title to \$30,000 worth of land, while her personal property was listed at \$74,870. This was a virtual fortune in those long ago horse and buggy days. Townsend's son Daniel owned \$20,000 in land plus \$51,685 in personal property, while another son named Samuel claimed

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some \$18,120 in real estate and \$151,000 in personal wealth. Exaline Townsend, apparently a widowed daughter-in-law, owned land valued at \$36,000 as well as a personal estate of \$50,000. Clearly, the Townsend family was among the wealthiest in Madison County.

This much of the story is verifiable. However, what follows clearly falls into the realm of legend. According to old timers around Hazel Green, in 1862 some of the Townsend family became frightened at the approach of the invading Union Army. Realizing the "thieving Yankees" would take everything they owned, they loaded several barrels with gold and silver and drove off one evening after dark. Allegedly, a slave or two accompanied them. Stopping at a large walnut tree somewhere near Charity Lane, the Townsends ordered the slaves to dig a deep hole and conceal the treasure. Then, imitating the bloodthirsty pirates of the Spanish Main, these respectable Alabamians supposedly murdered the inoffensive slaves and threw their bodies into the pit. Refilling the hole, the Townsend men returned to their homes to quietly await the return of peace.

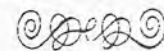
So what do you think happened next? You guessed it. Somehow the walnut tree mysteriously disappeared during the course of the war, and the Townsends could never find their treasure again. Foolishly, it would seem, they rented the land to a stranger — a virtual sharecropper, more or less. After about two years, the stranger up and disappeared one day. No one around Hazel Green ever saw him again, but he reportedly bought himself a fine farm in

Tennessee and lived there happily ever after!

A good story, right? But realistically, could such an event actually have happened in Alabama? Slaves in the antebellum South had few legal rights, but one simply could not go about murdering African-Americans with impunity. Surely, the Townsends' other slaves would have talked, and the Union Army would have taken action even if the Alabama authorities did not. Furthermore, were the Townsends really such a brutal lot? This prominent family remained in the area long after the war, and retained the respect of their neighbors — something that would not have been possible had they been viewed as

murderers.

Perhaps something really did happen back in 1862. Maybe the Townsends hid part of their wealth and could not find it again. And just possibly a tenant farmer did discover it and take off for parts unknown. But the rest of the tale has too much of the "Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum" in it to be believed. It sounds rather like some of the old boys at the Hazel Green town "liars' bench" had been reading about pirates, peglegs, and Long John Silver and simply decided to spice things up a bit. After all, the real fun in any story is the telling of it, isn't it? And now I have had my say.



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Hot Creamed Spinach

- 1 package frozen spinach, cooked and chopped
- 1/3 c. sour cream
- 3 T. butter
- 2 t. horseradish
- 1/4 t. tarragon
- 1/4 t. salt
- white pepper to taste

In a saucepan, put spinach and all ingredients. (Spinach should be hot). Stir well and heat slowly. Serve hot.

cover over the beans. Cover with lid and simmer for about 2 hours. Uncover and add the rest of the ingredients. Cook longer til the beans are tender. If you like it thicker, put half of the beans in a blender and add back to the mixture. Top with sour cream and chopped green onions, or try some of the new Tabasco Jalapeno pepper sauce.

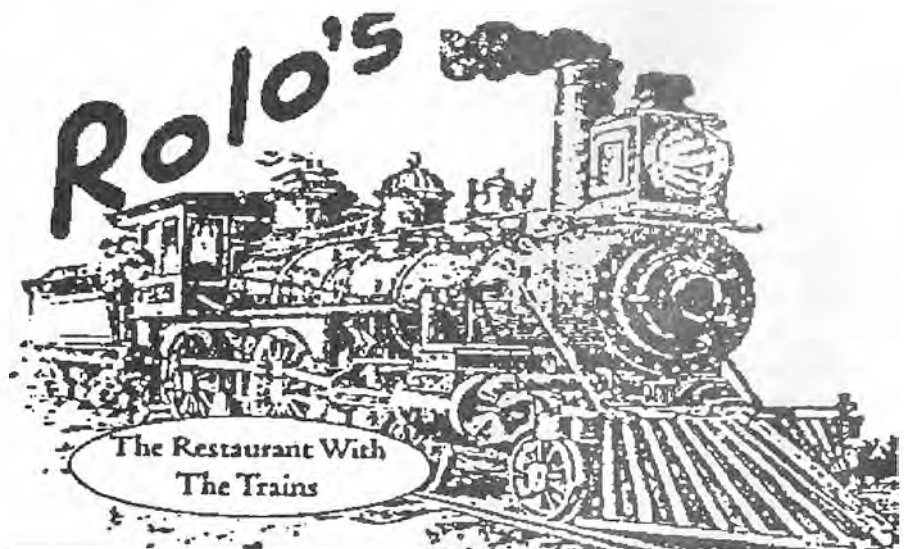
Layered Mexican Dip

- 1 16-oz. can refried beans
- 1/2 pkg taco seasoning mix, hot
- 1 carton sour cream
- 1 c. avocado mixture or dip
- 1 4-oz. can chopped green chilies
- 1/2 c. chopped black olives
- 2 large tomatoes, diced

Spicy Black Bean Soup

- 2 c. dried black beans
- 3 qts. water
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery
- 2 beef bouillon cubes in a cup of water
- ham hock
- 1 T. garlic powder
- 1 t. cayenne pepper

Cover your beans with water and let them soak overnight. Next day, drain the water and add more to cover with about 2"



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8 green onions, chopped, greens and all

1 1/2 c. chopped Cheddar cheese

sour cream to dollop on top
Picante sauce and chopped jalapeno peppers, to taste

Combine refried beans and taco seasoning mix. Spread the mixture in a 12x8x2 inch dish. Layer the remaining ingredients in the order listed. Serve with warm white tortilla chips.

Spices for Hot Blackened Fish

1 T. paprika

2 1/2 t. salt

1 t. onion powder

2 t. garlic powder

2 t. ground cayenne pepper

1 t. white pepper, ground

3/4 t. black pepper

1/2 t. dried thyme

1/2 t. dried oregano

Mix thoroughly and store in an airtight spice jar. Use whenever you prepare blackened fish.

Mouth Watering Rotini

1 box tri-colored Rotini (corkscrew) pasta

Bring large pot of water to boil, add the pasta. Cook for 8 minutes, no more. Drain in a colander, drizzling cold water over to stop it from cooking. Set aside. Put in large bowl and mix with 1/2 c. dried parsley.

In an 8-cup plastic container with a lid, combine the following:

1/2 c. olive oil

1/3 c. red wine vinegar

2 heaping t. prepared mustard

3 t. dried oregano

2 t. minced garlic

1 t. cayenne pepper, ground (more if you like it real hot)

Cover your container, shake very well.

Fast and Spicy Chicken Breasts

1 package chicken breasts, boneless and skinless

1 c. Kentucky Kernel Seasoned Flour (in your grocery store)

1 t. cayenne pepper, ground

1 c. green onion, chopped with greens

In a frying pan, pour about 1/2 c. olive oil. Heat until a piece of the green onion sizzles, put in the chicken that you have thoroughly coated with the flour and cayenne pepper. Heat on both sides for a few minutes til flour adheres to the chicken, then turn down heat and cook slowly for

about 20 minutes. Add the green onion, cook for another 10 minutes. If there is any oil left, make a gravy by adding a bit of water and stirring.

Hot Sausage Casserole

1 lb. hot sausage

1 c. Cheddar cheese, grated

6 eggs, lightly beaten

2 c. milk

1/2 c. butter, melted

1/2 t. dry mustard

1/2 t. salt and black pepper

1/2 t. garlic powder

Cook the sausage til browned, drain grease and layer the sausage on the bottom of a 12 x 8 x 2" baking dish. Sprinkle it with the cheese. Combine the eggs, milk, butter, dry mustard, salt, pepper and garlic powder in a separate bowl. Pour this mixture over the sausage and cheese. Refrigerate overnight, covered with plastic wrap. Next morning cook for 35 minutes at 350 degrees, or until set. Makes a spicy and warming breakfast for these winter days!

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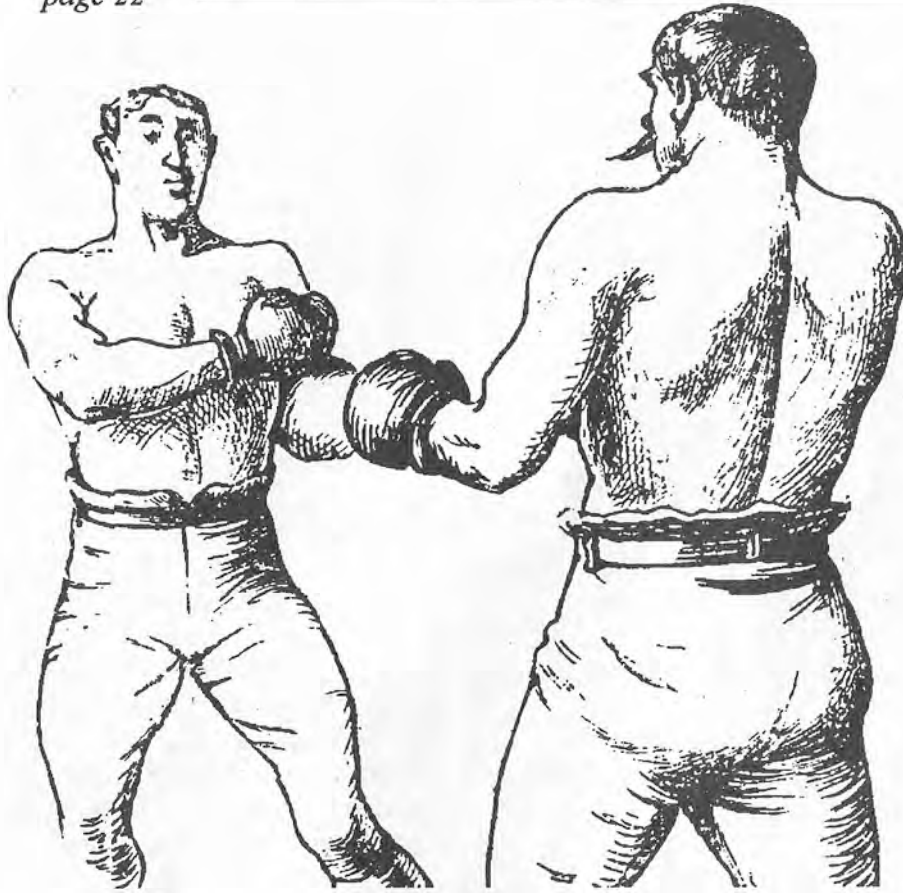
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Bare Knuckles Jordan

The crowd became silent as the huge man began wobbling on his feet. He looked at the crowd one last time, with a plea in his eyes, and then toppled over, crashing to the floor.

A bystander quickly rushed to the side of the sprawled form and after taking his pulse, exclaimed, "My God ! He's dead! What did you hit him with?"

"My fist," replied Bare Knuckles Jordan, as he wearily wiped the sweat from his forehead. "Just my fist."

For almost two years, Bare Knuckles Jordan was the undisputed Alabama champion of bare knuckle fighting. In a time when men were judged by muscle and brawn, and the speed of their fists, few people would have ever believed that Jordan Renfro, the son of a poor

dirt farmer in Madison County would have ever achieved fame.

His early years were spent doing ordinary farm chores and working in the fields. Most ac-

counts of the time agree he was not the athletic type, preferring to spend his time at the end of a fishing pole or, as he grew older, reading his prized collection of books.

At the age of sixteen his parents sold their farm and moved south, settling on a new farm located just outside of Birmingham. Jordan spent the next few years helping his father and would have probably lived out his life following behind the business end of a mule if he had not been bored one Friday evening. As almost anyone that grew up in the country can testify, there isn't a lot for a young strapping man to do once he gets his chores done. And besides, it was only a six mile walk into town.

Birmingham in 1890 was a boom town with saloons on every corner and painted women loitering on the sidewalks. There were professional gamblers offering the unsuspecting victim the chance of a lifetime, while in the back alleys, sleeping it off, were the remnants of last night's drunken sprees. All in all, it was a typical boom town atmosphere of the late 1800s.




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On this particular day the first thing Jordan did was visit Millie, his girlfriend. He had been seeing Millie on a regular basis for almost a year now and he was beginning to fall in love with her. Jordan believed that she loved him too. She only charged him half price.

Later that evening, after drinking to much and professing his undying love to Millie, Jordan left, to begin the long trek back home. Unfortunately, lurking outside of Millie's door were two surprises... Two would be robbers, down on their luck, who thought Jordan might be easy pickings.

With Millie standing on the porch, waving good bye to Jordan, the robbers went about their dastardly deed. Approaching him, one on each side of him, they demanded his money. Jordan later said that he didn't know if it was the whiskey or the fright that made him do it, but for what ever reason, he quickly lashed out at the bandits with his fist. The first bandit fell to the ground with a broken jaw and the second one followed an instant later. The whole fight was over in a matter of seconds.

Jordan quickly dismissed the whole affair and continued his walk home while Millie stood on the porch, deep in thought. This was a side of Jordan she had never seen before.

This is where the story gets real complicated. Yes, Jordan was in love with Millie, but no, Millie was not in love with him. The truth of the whole matter was that Millie had a steady Beau with whom she was infatuated with. And yes, you probably guessed it, this Beau, Lewis August, was a fight promoter.

Sitting there in Millie's room and listening to her while she

excitedly described the fight, August became intrigued. His last fighter had recently encountered injuries during a bar room disagreement (he had his nose bit off) and August was without a source of income.

"Let me get this straight. He swung two punches and knocked two people out. Is that what you are saying?"

"That's right," Millie exclaimed, "He's good! I tell you, he's the best I've ever seen."

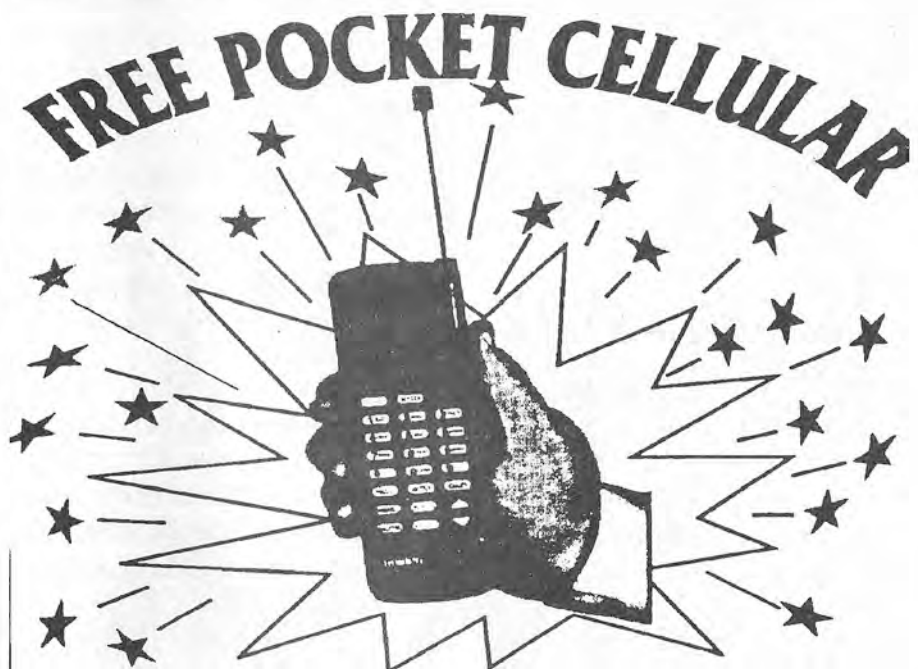
Needless to say, bright and early the next morning, Mr. Lewis August headed his buggy out to visit Jordan. As additional insur-

ance, Millie also went along.

"Boy, You can make more money than you ever dreamed about if you'll just trust me (famous last words). I'll do the promoting and you'll do the fighting. I'll invest your money for you and in just a few years, why, you'll be rich."

For a young man standing there in the hot sun, with the reins of a mule draped over his shoulders, this all sounded kind of far fetched. It was to be expected that Jordan would be a little hesitant.

continued on page 26



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AN EDUCATED MAN

Race car driver **Greg Hannah** was happy to pose the other day with **Gov. Jim Folsom** during the governor's stop at **Eunice's** breakfast tables before his election loss. Meanwhile, the widow of **Lewis Grizzard, Dedra**, stopped in for breakfast after a book-signing here. "Lewis always talked of Eunice's," she cooed sweetly.

Switzerland pastry chef **Chris Baumer** has transferred from here to a Bruno's in Atlanta.

Walt Anderson of Hughes Hardware in Madison brought his **Glenda** to a **Bud Cramer** political gathering the other week at the Hilton. Decatur collegians **Lee Henderson** and **Patrick Stanford** also showed up at the victory party.

Finnegan's Pub daytime bartender **Robert Schumann**

spent a week of batching while his Karen was in Memphis opening a new "Things Remembered" store.

Johnny Tona's Family Billiards was a grand place last week when carloads of Methodist youths invaded for an afternoon of billiards. Johnny doesn't allow drinking or smoking in his parlor.

Bandito Burrito's second location across from Haysland on S. Parkway, is going great guns. **Jeff Milligan** even came home from Colorado Springs to manage it.

Floyd Hardin was the first person in line at his polling place on election day. Then he hurried to his **Jackson Way Barbershop** to tell everybody else how to vote. Nobody listened.

Paul Icolano is managing

Ryan's (South), where the efficient **Eddie Koger** is meat cutter these days. That's where **Letitia Diane Stroop** is waitressing.

Teledyne Brown's **Dave Kwit** and **Steven Bauer** will be part of the crowd when **Velcro Pygmies** perform at The Vapors in early December.

That was a fine post-election gathering we had at **Bill Webster's** place on Bell Factory Road the other night. **David Worley** drove up from Birmingham. **Joe Whisante's** friends **Ricky Hornbuckle** and **Carl Hudson** showed up, smiling over Joe being elected sheriff. Webster and his sons **Bert** and **Jed** have a special talent for hosting. **Skip Adkins** was in charge of roasting the turkeys. The guesl list included everybody from **Barbara Reed** and **Jeff Boshers** to ex-weatherman **Ken Rainey** and Boeing's **Ron Shepard**. **Kelly Robinson** showed up, as did **Dr. Jane Douthit** and husband **Jim** (she has the animal clinic in Madison).

We have just returned from three weeks in Florida, crossing paths with all sorts of former Huntsvillians. **Gary Bridge** and



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his mama **Louise** (she of Krispy Kreme fame) hosted our gang in Jacksonville. Gary's brother Wayne plays steel in **Vern Gosdin's** country music group. Then we hurried on to Daytona where we guested with famed bicyclist **Darius Keith** and his actor-son Damon. Later we crossed paths in Orlando with guitarist **George Hawkins**, the retired army colonel who once played guitar for the late **Doyle Brady**. Returning to Atlanta, we stopped for a visit with **Bill Grossman**, who sends his best to his pals here. Then we shared the stage with banjoist **Jim Connor** at a Carlisle School function near Boaz. It was good to get home.

The **Golden K Kiwanis** club is now meeting every Thursday at the new Senior Citizen's center. Now, they can cross the hall and take dance lessons after their meeting.

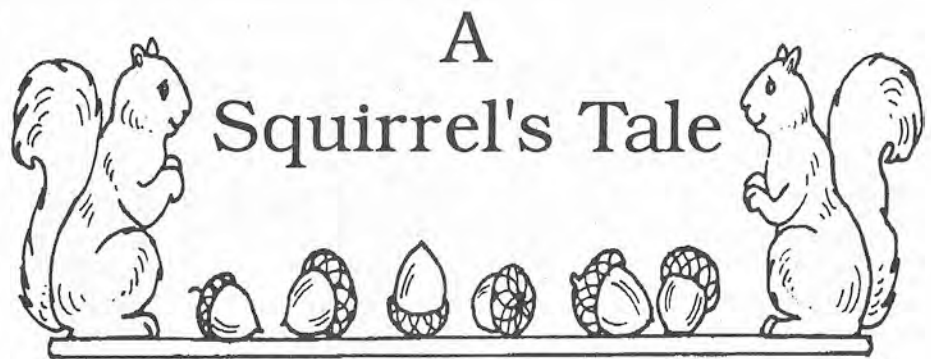
City Councilman Bill Kling, when asked to bring his favorite dish, picked up Gibson's Bar B Q, which he transported to Montgomery for a gala Thanksgiving dinner at his sister's home.

Bill is now holding town hall meetings at the public library the 2nd Wed. of each month at 7 P.M.

Admission is free, but bring your own gripes or ideas.

Welcome to Huntsville! **Joe Owens**, lately of Sun City, Arizona, recently visited our fair city and was so impressed that he has now become a permanent resident.

Oh Well, one more Yankee can't make that much difference!



A Squirrel's Tale

On July 19, 1934 Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Cooper of Memphis, Tennessee checked into a room on the sixteenth floor of the Lincoln Hotel in downtown New York City. They had brought with them a gift for their son Billy, a pet squirrel.

There was a window in their room that went to an air shaft going down to the third floor, and somehow the squirrel got through the window, falling to the third floor. When two hotel employees heard a strange thud in the air shaft, they investigated and found the squirrel, stunned and suffering from nosebleed.

They inquired at the desk, and found that some people were indeed missing a pet. The three were reunited, and the squirrel was lucky indeed to be alive. It has remained a record, the longest nonfatal squirrel drop in history.

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Enter "Mata Hari" Millie. "Darling, if you just made enough money, we could get married and I would never have to see another man again."

Good bye, farm.

Within the next several months "Bare Knuckles Jordan," as he was now called, established a record that few fighters would ever dream of duplicating. In Jackson, Mississippi, he knocked out three opponents in the same day. In Nashville he floored his opponent with the first swing. The reputation of the young fighter spread throughout the south and it seemed as if his fortune was made with money rolling in day after day.

Of course, August was wisely investing it.

But, as is true with most dreams, there was a flaw. Jordan was even more madly in love with Millie than before, but alas, Millie was still enthralled by August. Traveling together as they did, it must have made for awkward sleeping arrangements.

"Millie," Jordan would say,

"I'm getting tired of waiting. When are you gonna marry me?"

At the same time Millie would be pleading "August, darling, let's get married and drop this hick. We've got enough money."

Poor August. That's a heck of a spot to be in. "Jordan," he finally said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. We got this fight in Birmingham coming up and if we win, I'll give you your share of all the money and then you and Millie can get married."

Next he pulled Millie off to the side and told her, "Honey, don't worry. After this next fight that hayseed is history. We'll take the money, leave and get married and we'll get a fresh start somewhere where no one knows us."

The day of the big fight arrived. August had begged borrowed and scraped together every cent he could until he finally had \$25,000 for Jordan to enter the fight. It was to be a winner take all, no holds barred, fight. The money was given to a local attorney who would be act-

ing as the judge for the fight.

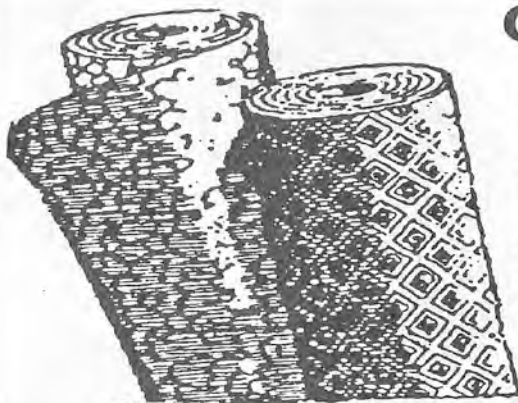
Barroom fighting, though illegal, was highly popular in early Birmingham. Normally a space would be cleared in the middle of the room for the fighters and the spectators would line the bar, drinking and wagering on their favorites. Fortunes would be won and lost by gouging eyes, biting ears and choking opponents.

The room grew silent as the opponents carefully sized one another up. Jordan's opponent quickly went on the offensive, swinging wild punches and kicking blindly, hoping that any one of them would make contact.

Patiently taking his time, Jordan held back, refusing to be intimidated. Finally ... there's an opening ... his opponent threw a wild punch and left himself wide open! Jordan curled his fist and with all the strength he could muster, sent it crashing into the hapless fighter's face!

The fight was over! The bar room was silent as Jordan knelt on the floor next to his opponent.

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The man was dead.

With every eye in the room upon him, Jordan looked at Millie beseechingly, begging her with his eyes to tell him that what he did was right. Unable to look at him, she left to find August, who had become lost in the crowd.

"Hold it right there, boys!" It was the Sheriff! "I'm going to have to arrest you. The charge is manslaughter."

From what little information we have, it seems as if the sheriff was making his rounds outside the saloon and when he heard the noise, decided to investigate. Upon entering and seeing the opponent lying lifeless on the floor, the sheriff arrested Jordan.

This is the point in most stories where the "good ending" begins, but unfortunately in this case, there is none.

Lewis August attempted to collect the money from the attorney, only to be told that Jordan would have to collect it in person, if and when he ever got out of prison.

August left town shortly afterwards, by himself, never to be seen in Birmingham again.

Millie quickly got over her grief, and set her sights on a new conquest. Two months later she married an attorney who had recently acquired a large sum of money ... \$50,000 to be exact. It was rumored that he also worked as a judge for Barroom fights.

Jordan Renfro was sentenced to ten years at hard labor on the charge of manslaughter. He served most of his sentence digging coal in a convict labor camp. When he was released in 1902, he worked at an assortment of odd jobs in and

around Birmingham but unable to adjust to a new life he began drinking heavily. For many years, he was a familiar sight in bars in the downtown area, telling stores in exchange for free drinks.

He never made any attempt to collect the prize money from the attorney.

By the time Jordan died in the early 1930s, he had become a hopeless alcoholic, sleeping on park benches and begging food and drinks.

According to legend, after the city buried him in a paupers' grave, an elderly gray-haired lady began visiting the cemetery. Once a month, for years afterwards, she would arrive in a chauffeur driven limousine, and while the driver would sit and wait, the old woman would wander through the unmarked

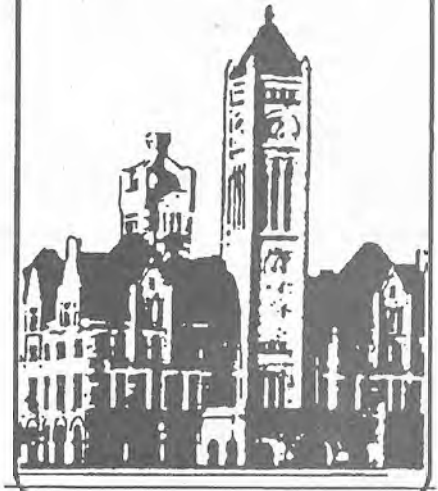
grave sites.

Her chauffeur later recalled, "It was if she was searching for something that she had lost.."

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News Of The Absurd

A lieutenant of cavalry in the Confederate Army had an unusual habit. Before the war he was a dry goods merchant, and was a very fleshy man. While selling goods, in the midst of a conversation, and even while drinking a whisky toddy, he would fall asleep. In a few moments he would re awaken, completely oblivious to the fact that he had gone to sleep, and continue the conversation.

The state University at Athens, Ga. received a singular endowment. An eccentric gentleman bestowed the sum of \$7,000 on the school, with the condition that the money should be invested for and during the lives of twenty-one persons, all children, whose names are listed in the deed, the interest to be compounded annually til the last one dies. It is estimated that the gift will be worth \$1,700,000 at the end of the contract.

The daughter of a clergyman dashed into the water to save the lives of two "women of the night." They left their rescuer senseless and exhausted on the beach without even inquiring her name. She has been ill ever since.

A man in Guntersville had some peculiar pests at his home. A few days ago his dog ran a large rodent about the premises for



some time, until it was lost to sight. Someone gazed accidentally into the large maple in the yard, and all were shocked to see the rat on the highest limb of the tree.

The Captain of the Italian steamer *Sirio*, who was in command when the ship struck the rocks of Spain and resulted in 300 drownings, died shortly afterwards of a broken heart.

A physician told the county medical society that one of his patients, a young woman, was attacked with frightful pains in her legs; that after two weeks of suffering she recovered, and it was found that she was six inches taller than before. The report was received in impressive silence.

*Never Raise Your Hand To
Children--It Leaves Your Mid-
section Unprotected.*

Robert Orben

Shooting And Stabbing In Hazel Green

One person shot blind,
another stabbed by his own
brother

We learn of two serious difficulties in the Hazel Green district, last week. On Tuesday night, a Mr. Talent shot William Weaver in the head, the ball passing through the only good eye Weaver had, leaving him totally blind. They were in a quarrel at Key's Mill, and it is said that there was a good deal of whiskey around. Talent was arraigned before Justice Fowler and after an investigation was discharged. Weaver was alive when last heard from and may recover.

The second affair was between two brothers by the name of Holloway, in the same district four miles from Hazel Green, last Friday, in which Gabe Holloway was cut in the abdomen by his own brother. There was a game of cards going on and Gabe Holloway was trying to induce his brother, who was engaged in the game, to quit playing and go to work, whereupon his brother grew angry, according to our information, and cut him. He is in very critical condition.

from 1878 newspaper



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Letters From Alabama

The following are excerpts from letters written by Anne Royall, who visited Huntsville while it was still in its infant stage. The letters provide a unique look at one of the most undocumented periods of our city's history.

January 1st, 1818,

Now here is the twentieth letter I have I written, without receiving an answer to one of them, until today-- and that is no answer I may say. What are you about? Have you got the blues again, or blacks; or are you in love? ...

But seriously, I am sorry to hear you mend so slow. I am convinced this climate would restore

you. It is summer here, compared to our country; the trees, many of them, are still green.

Huntsville; you will expect to hear something of this flourishing town. It takes its name from a man called Captain Hunt, who built the first cabin on the spot, where the court house now stands. In front of this cabin, which was built on a high bluff, there was a large pond, which is now nearly filled up by the citizens, Captain Hunt cleared a small field west of his cabin, the same year. This was between his cabin and the Huntsville Spring. He spent much of his time in waging war with the rattlesnakes, who were very numerous in his day, and had entire possession of the bluff at the spring. Thousands of them, it appears, were lodged amongst the rocks, and the Captain would shoot hundreds a day, by thrusting long canes filled with powder, into the scissures of the rocks.

Whether Hunt or the snakes acquired the victory, I have not heard, as he was compelled to abandon his settlement to a more successful rival, who purchased the land. This was Colonel Pope, who, in company with

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OAKWOOD COLLEGE

Dr. Manning, and others, purchased the land at a Land Office opened in Nashville; and though this sale did not stand, these gentlemen at this time own vast bodies of land around Huntsville, and are the wealthiest men in the Territory.

...The town stands on elevated ground, and enjoys a beautiful prospect. It contains about 260 houses, principally built of brick; has a bank, a courthouse, and market house. There is a large square in the center of town, like the towns of Ohio, and facing this are the stores, 12 in number. These buildings form a solid wall, though divided into apartments. The workmanship is the best I have ever seen in all the states; and several of the houses are three stories high, and very large. There is no church. The people assemble in the court house to worship. ...

...The citizens are gay, polite, and hospitable, and live in grand splendor. Nothing like it in our own country...

February 22, 1818

This day, the anniversary of our beloved Washington, was ushered in with all manner of rejoicing. The star spangled banner is now waving on the cupola, before my window, and an elegant ball is to conclude the day.

The companies are now marching before me, under arms, in a handsome uniform; they step light and graceful, and are tall fine looking men. Their Captain, Howard, boards with me; I mean in the same house. He is six feet in height, and one of the finest figures of them all, and has a martial look. He is a great favorite among the ladies, and is, doubtless, to open the ball this evening with some of the fairest of the fair.

I board with Major Rose, the merry old veteran mentioned some time back. He has met with a dreadful reverse of fortune since I first met him. He was then one of the first merchants in the place, but was overwhelmed in the general wreck, which prostrates so many of our merchants. But the Major is as merry as ever; keeps a tavern and board-

ing house; amuses himself with a pet crow; and sings "Jerry go Nimble."...

...Captain Luke Howard, just mentioned, Mr. Tharp. and Mr. Wooldridge, and the two Italians, are the only new acquaintance I have made. Captain Howard is an Irish gentleman, highly polished, and breathes the very soul of philanthropy and feeling. ...

February, 1818

...The ladies of Huntsville, distance everything on the costliness of their dress; nor do I like their manners as well as I do the manners of the Florence ladies. They are always in the streets. But they are very beautiful women, and very familiar. The young gentlemen are rather better informed; are gay and lively; play and sing well. They often go out serenading, and have a thespian society, who entertain the citizens at stated periods. ...

Mrs. Royall eventually settled in Washington D.C where she wrote a book describing her travels throughout the Southeast.

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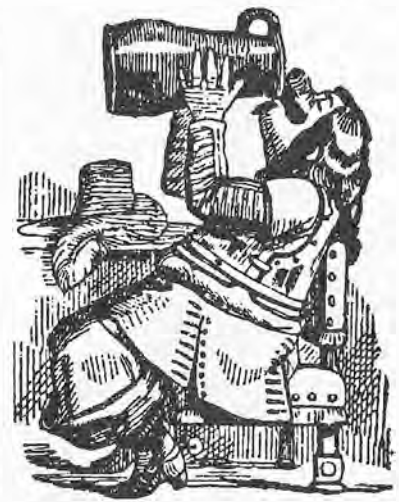
Messrs. T.G. Hewlett, Joseph W. Ellett, John Latham and T.A. Thurston made a raid into Blount County last week. They moved on Jere Cornelius at his home seven miles southeast of Blountsville. Latham and Hewlett went up to the house while the other two flanked on the outside.

Cornelius snapped his gun at Hewlett and then ran out and broke for a thicket. He encountered Ellett and shot at him, missing him. He reached the thicket and when Hewlett approached he was making ready to shoot. Hewlett got in a shot before he could and let him have

it in the belt. The shot, which would have either wounded him seriously or killed him, was caught by a belt which Cornelius was wearing and did not hurt him to amount to anything. Cornelius surrendered as soon as Hewlett shot.

W. Washburn, Hendricks, Brazeale, R.E. McAnelly, James Putnam and John Hand were likewise arrested and all of the parties were brought to Huntsville. Washburn, Brazeale and McAnelly were discharged upon an investigation. Putnam gave bond and Hand and Cornelius were put in jail.

Putnam had carried a bar-



rel of apple-brandy to Cullman to fire the throats of the Teutons. Cornelius, at the time he was arrested, had a double-barreled shotgun, two revolvers and a pair of brass knucks. He told them that they could kill him but they couldn't scare him a "damn bit," and the boys say that he wouldn't scare worth a cent.

from 1878 newspaper

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YOUR HOSTS: THE SANFORDS AND HAMPTONS



A Congressman Visits Huntsville

A very ludicrous scene occurred in our city last week which more than repaid the witnesses for the money spent to view it. At a popular variety theatre among the list of attractions was a series of tableaux statuesques, furnished by the young ladies of the ballet, attired principally in nothing. These charming ladies did not appear on the stage, but were reflected as lifelike as if real by the plan well known in optics as mirrors properly arranged, and by the means of proper lights and shades. To those familiar with the "ghost show," the system is understood. The statues are posed beneath the stage, and the glasses reflect to the audience facsimiles of the subjects as real as if the genuine flesh, bloods, tights and padding were before them.

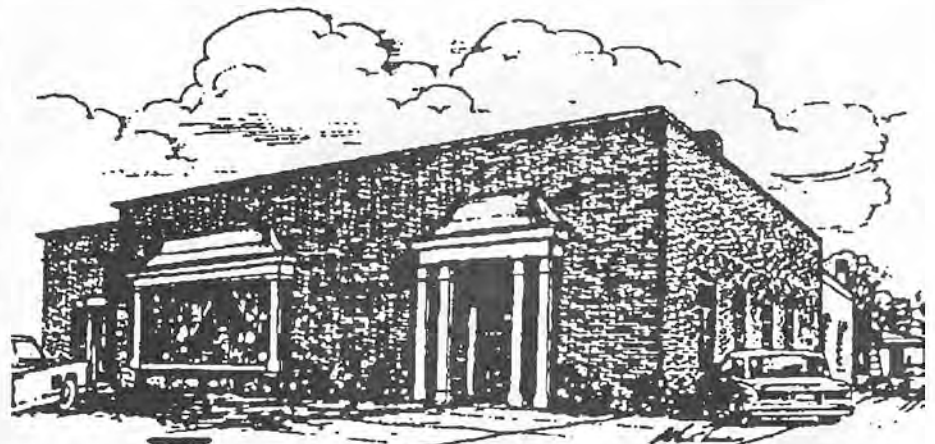
Now it happened that a well known Republican Congressman from an Eastern State strutted into the theatre one night last week, feeling just drunk enough to be open to the pleasures of the

chase of the variety ladies. He found his way into a box, and ultimately behind the scenes. It was dark there, and he groped around and struck the steps leading lower, and getting beneath the stage, saw the array of posed beauties before him. He gazed in awestruck wonder and great delight for a moment. One tableaux passed, another was arranged, it looked like three or four Hebes surrounding a half-reclining Venus of Canova. With a shout the Old Congressional sardine of Republican proclivities dashed into the group, sat solidly on the knee of the Venus, and entwining his arm about her neck, he cried out, "Send us a quart bottle of wine and some good cigars!"

At this moment the change of scene was made, the lights turned on and the vast audience started at the spectacle represented on the stage above. For a moment all was suspense and astonishment. Then there came such a thunder of applause and howling laughter that the roof quaked.

The Venus was also a kicker, and the audience next saw the benighted legislator lifted five feet in the air and dropped out of a window. When he picked himself up, he crawled away, muttering, "Well, if this is Southern hospitality, damn the South!"

from 1889 Democratic newspaper



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HOUSEHOLD TIPS BY
EARLENE

If you've smashed your finger in a door, get your significant other to grate some onion and add a teaspoonful of salt to the onion. Apply it to your finger and you should feel relief immediately.

For hoarseness or laryngitis, drink a mixture of 2 teaspoonfuls onion juice and 1 teaspoonful honey, 3 spoonfuls every 3 hours.

Another remedy for hoarseness is to boil a pound of black beans in a gallon of water for an hour. Drain the water, and drink 6 ounces of the liquid an hour before each meal. Next, see our remedy for "Flatulence."

For gas or flatulence, mix a teaspoonful of baking powder with a cup of water. Drink all at once. Or make some peppermint tea, and sip it slowly. And now you can call me names for recommending the black bean remedy for hoarseness.

Try a low-fat substitute for whipped cream by dropping a ripe banana and the white of an egg in a bowl, beat with mixer

on high til stiff.

Store ends and heels of bread in a plastic bag in the freezer, to use later when you make garlic/onion croutons.

If your cookies have become hard, cut a couple of pieces of orange or lemon peel in the cookie jar with them.

I knew that hairspray works really well when you're trying to remove ballpoint ink stains from clothes and wallpaper, but was very dubious about leather. My favorite wallet had a roller ink pen mark on it that I just couldn't get off with soap, so I tried the hairspray. Guess what? It worked like a charm, just required a little rubbing.

Iron your ironing board cover occasionally with heavy starch to help keep it clean and smooth.

For an unusual health tonic, try mixing a teaspoonful of honey with 1/2 teaspoonful of garlic juice.

Peppermint tea is not only soothing, but it will help you digest your food and get rid of that nasty indigestion after your meal.

No one knows why, but an excellent remedy for premenstrual tension in women is to take 2 capsules of garlic daily. You can buy them now with no smell or after effect.

While I'm on garlic, 2 capsules a day are also known to help soothe painful arthritis. Also, try rubbing a freshly cut clove of garlic right on your painful joints.

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Fast Lane Is That You Get To
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Building a House in 1912

by Nell Rulledge Porter

In 1912 my parents bought a track of virgin timber. They cleared enough trees and underbrush to build a house. They built a very small building in which to rive boards. The boards would be used to cover our house.

They spent alot of time riving boards. First, they sawed a log into the proper lengths. Then each rounded side was split off. That made it square, sort of resembling a small railroad crosstie. You could use a smooth stump, cut off about 3 feet high, on which to rive boards.

First they decided how thick to make the boards, then by using a froe (a thick-bladed ax), gave it a quick tamp with a maul. If the proper wood was used, the boards would quickly fall forward.

After the correct number of boards were made, they were seasoned. Boards used too soon would shrink, making holes in the roof. Daddy would use a dry stable, in the barn. He used a long plank, across the stable, tacking it at each end. He stood the shingles, teepee style, across the plank. Thus they would season. Usually they worked at riving boards at night by using a lantern or on rainy days when they couldn't get outside.

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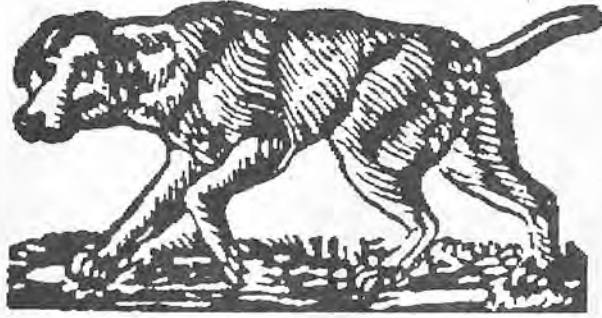
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A PENITENT DOG

Dog stories have become so common that they bear as much credibility as "fish stories," but the following is so well vouched for as to leave no possible doubt of its truth.

A lady in Huntsville owns a very intelligent dog named Jeb, of whom she desired to have a picture. She accordingly took him to a photographic gallery, and with the assistance of the artist, endeavored to make her pet take and keep a suitable position before the camera. The jittery dog however was not in an accommodating mood that morning, and, after repeated trials, the attempt to conquer him

was abandoned in despair.

"Go home!" the lady said, at last, pointing to the door. "You are a bad, naughty, naughty dog!"

The culprit changed instantly his saucy manner, and, dropping his tail between his legs, slunk away in confusion. All the rest of the day he seemed to realize that he was in disgrace, crouching in corners and wearing a shamefaced air. The next morning he was missing, not having come home at all the night before. All search failed to discover him.

About noon he reappeared at his mistress' doorstep, much elated, and fastened to his col-

lar was a very handsome photograph of himself. Upon investigation, this is was discovered.

When the photographer had gone to his gallery to open up that morning, there at the door was the same pooch who had refused to pose for any picture. It appeared that it had been waiting patiently for quite some time. As soon as the door to the gallery was opened, Jeb dashed upstairs to the same room they had been in the day before, and immediately leapt upon the chair on which he was supposed to pose, and did so now.

Seizing the opportunity, the artist made his preparations with all possible speed, and the result was the delightful picture which the four-footed penitent had taken home, a peace offering to his mistress.

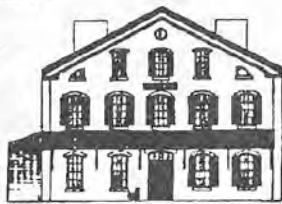
From 1913 newspaper

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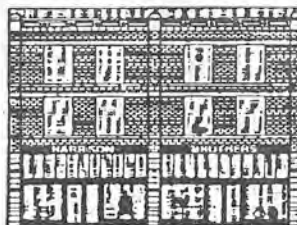


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The Horse Careens and the Rider Goes Under



Mr. J.E. Hall, who is engaged in business with Mr. E.S. Johnson, left Huntsville last Thursday evening to go to Brownsboro. He reached the Flint River shortly after sundown. Seeing that the river was rather high, he dismounted and tried to make his horse cross the stream. Several efforts were made to make Mr. Hall's horse cross the stream. Finally Sydney Johnson, a young colored man, undertook to ride him across. He had gotten midway across the

stream when the swift water began to bear horse and rider downstream.

The rider became alarmed, the horse careened, the rider went overboard and soon disappeared beneath the water. The horse landed across, a few yards below the regular ford. An effort was made that evening and next morning and again on Sunday, to see if anything further could be heard of Johnson, but without any success. He was undoubtedly drowned.

from 1878 newspaper

OLD TIME BARGAINS

House furnishing goods, Stoves and furniture at E.S. Johnson, corner Holmes and Jefferson St. - Opposite old Easley Hotel, known as the old Lumpkin Block

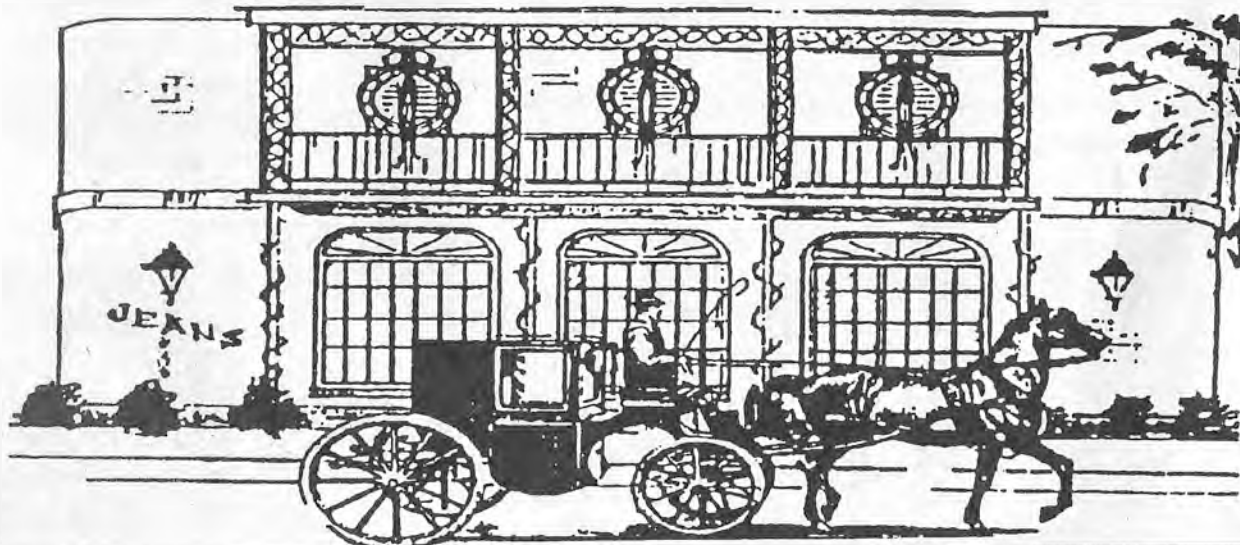
We are filled with a complete line of good and cheap Cooking Stoves, from \$6 to \$30. Cheap Bedsteads, \$2.50, and Chairs, 45 cents! Complete assortment of Gents and Ladies Trunks, from 75 cents to \$10!

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from 1878 newspaper

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The Forgotten Regiment

by Charles Rice



Of the many regiments from Alabama that served during the War Between the States, probably none is more unsung than the 106th U.S. Volunteer Infantry. The reason? Not only did this Southern regiment fight for the North, but its members (except for the officers) were all Alabamians of African-American descent. Black Southern Yankees — not exactly the sort of heroes one would expect people to write songs about.

Yet fight for their own freedom these brave men did, and it is one of the tragedies of our history that they had to do so against their very own State.

While slavery was just one of many causes of America's brutal four-year-long war with itself, it was obviously the issue which touched African-Americans most deeply. Whether free or slave, all black Americans longed for the day when their race could take its place as citizens with equal rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To help speed that day, they were willing to join forces with anyone, even the often brutal and racist soldiers from the North.

Ironically, the first black troops of the Civil War served the South. Best known are the men of the three regiments raised at New Orleans in 1861. These

Louisiana Native Guards, all free African-Americans, volunteered to help defend their State, hoping their show of unity with white Southerners would further the cause of their race. The North, however, flatly refused to accept African-American volunteers at this time, even Abraham Lincoln saying he did not want black men or Indians as soldiers. (The Confederacy, on the other hand, enlisted entire regiments of Native Americans, even commissioning one of them a brigadier general. Now which side, one might ask, was actually the more racist of the two?)

By 1863, hopes for a speedy end to the bloody conflict had vanished, and both North and South were running short of man power. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, its leaders could not bring themselves to draw upon the most obvious source of able bodied recruits: the black men of the South. The reason was clear. As Howell Cobb of Georgia put it, "If Negroes make good soldiers, then our whole theory of slavery is wrong." Rather than admit such a fact, the Confederate government delayed enlisting black volunteers until the final weeks of the war,

when it was too late to change the result. The North, having already abolished slavery in its own territory, had no such qualms.

The Federal government's decision to draft Southern black men had very little to do with idealism. Instead, it was simply the cold realization that a black man could stop a bullet just as well as a white one. The average Union soldier was dead set against the idea at first, but the men in blue quickly came around when they learned the officers of African-American regi-



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ments would all be white. Then there was a rush of volunteers, each seeking to receive a commission and earn higher pay. Wrote one of them, an Illinois soldier named Charles Wills, "I never thought I would, but I am getting strongly in favor of arming Negroes, and am becoming so blind that I can't see why they will not make soldiers." Added Wills, "The only objection I have to it is a matter of pride."

Undoubtedly, it was also pride that drove black Alabamians to enlist in the Union Army — that plus the promise of freedom to those who enlisted. However, many of the new soldiers in blue had little say in the matter. Yankee recruiting detachments simply rounded men up at gun point — often at church services, and forced them to enlist. If a slave belonged to a master loyal to the Union, his master supposedly would receive up to \$300 in compensation. In practice, any compensation due to the master, along with the

\$100 bounty for the soldier, usually went straight into the pockets of the men who had "encouraged" him to volunteer.

On February 25, 1864, the Adjutant General's Office in Washington, D. C., issued its General Order #5. One portion provided for the registration for the draft of "all male able-bodied colored persons between the ages of twenty and forty-five years." The Union conscript officers wasted little time in putting this into effect.

The Federal government would enlist four black regiments which they initially called the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Alabama Infantry (African Descent). However, only the last of these was really from Alabama, the others being organized in Tennessee and Mississippi. The 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment (African Descent) came into existence on March 11, 1864 at Decatur, Alabama. The brand new Yankees promptly received a scare when Forrest's Confederate

cavalry passed nearby on a raid. The black soldiers had reason to be worried. They were still unarmed and completely defenseless.

By May of 1864, the regiment had been fully armed and partially trained. It was assigned to garrison Pulaski, Tennessee. On May 16th, the name was changed to the 106th U. S. Infantry Regiment (Colored). The men probably never received more than their basic training, since they were intended only to perform guard duty along the railroads carrying supplies to Sherman's army in Georgia. Their only fighting, if any, was meant to be done from behind the walls of strong blockhouses and fortifications. There was considerable danger for them nonetheless, since the Confederate government was furious at the North for enlisting Southern slaves and refused to accept them as prisoners of war. Captured black troops were regarded as runaway slaves to be

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returned to their masters, if possible. On a number of occasions, however, black prisoners were simply shot.

The black Yankees also ran a risk of accidentally shooting a friend or relative, since many African-Americans were serving in noncombat capacities with the Confederate Army. As Somerville native Henry Humphrey, a former member of Company A of the 106th, which would enlist four black regiments the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Alabama, noted in 1868, his "other brothers went into the Rebel army. Can't say where they are now." The War Between the States truly was a fraternal war.

The 106th Regiment seems to have been something of an "orphan" of the Union Army. The unit numbered just four companies and the roster of commissioned officers (all white) shows none above the rank of captain. Furthermore, one wonders just how carefully the officers had been picked, since two of the lieutenants would themselves desert! Nevertheless, the black soldiers must have taken pride in their new status as free men and warriors. Their uniforms and equipment were identical with those of other Union regiments.

The 106th Regiment spent the remainder of the war guarding the strategic railway bridges between Decatur and Nashville. Most of the men probably never fired a weapon in anger. However, in the fall of 1864, many of them were unlucky enough to come face to face with Forrest's cavalry at Athens, Alabama.

Nathan Bedford Forrest was a man feared by most black Union troops. It was Forrest's cavalry that had attacked and captured Fort Pillow, Tennessee.

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in April of that year — no small feat for cavalry unsupported by infantry. However, some of Forrest's men got out of control and apparently many of the black prisoners were killed before Forrest managed to restore order. The North quickly played up the "Fort Pillow massacre," exaggerating what happened and using the incident for propaganda purposes. To the men of the 106th, Bedford Forrest was probably the last man in the world they wanted to see

A complex man, he served for a time as Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan before renouncing that organization and becoming an advocate of racial equality. Forrest was an untrained military genius. In mid-September 1864, he was ordered to make the raid he long wanted on Sherman's railroad communications. Forrest led his horsemen from Northern Mississippi to Cherokee, Alabama. After crossing the Tennessee River at Colbert's Shoals, he was joined by General Philip D. Roddey's Alabama cavalry brigade under Colonel William A. Johnson. On September 23, the Confederate "wizard of the saddle" arrived at Athens.

The Federal garrison at Athens was composed of soldiers from the 106th, 110th, and 111th U. S. Colored Regiments. There was also a detachment of white troops from the 3rd Tennessee Union Cavalry, making a total Union strength of slightly over 600. Opposing them were about three times as many Confederates, mainly combat veterans and confident of victory. Skirmishing promptly began, with Forrest's men finally driving the Union men through the town and into the fort.

The fort at Athens, a strong earthworks and blockhouse, was formidable indeed. A Union inspector had described it as "one of the best works of the kind I ever saw." The defenders had plenty of ammunition for their rifles and their two 12-pounder howitzers. Nevertheless, the black defenders still worried because of Forrest's reputation. Although more Union horsemen — 500 men from the 2nd Tennessee Union Cavalry — arrived on the scene, the cavalry commander refused an order from Colonel Wallace Campbell of the 110th to attack the Confederates. The Tennessee colonel said he did not want to "sacrifice his horses," but one suspects he was reluctant to take orders from a colonel of black troops. The Tennessee commander also pronounced the fort to be indefensible and retreated to Huntsville, carrying with him an appeal for

help from Colonel Campbell.

General Forrest was not about to waste his men's lives in a costly charge on the fort. Instead, he waited for his own artillery to come up. Early the next morning, the Confederate big guns began firing. Two hours later, Forrest halted the barrage and called for a truce. Forrest then staged one of his famous bluffs.

While meeting with two officers from the fort, Forrest had his men move repeatedly in and out of sight, at the same time telling the Yankees he had almost 10,000 men! Forrest also warned that his troopers might take no prisoners if they had to suffer heavy casualties charging the fort. Colonel Campbell stalled for several hours, desperately hoping for reinforcements. When none appeared, he finally gave in. Ironically a 300-man relief column from the 18th Michigan and



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102nd Ohio now marched into view, just in time to be captured by Forrest as well.

When the soldiers of the black regiments learned of Campbell's capitulation, they reportedly were shocked beyond belief. "When told that the fort had been surrendered," wrote a Union officer, "they could scarcely believe themselves, but with tears demanded the fight should go on, preferring to die in the fort they had made, to being transferred to the tender mercies of Gen. Forrest and his men."

But Forrest had won the fight. Seven officers and 159 men of the 106th thus found themselves captives in the regiment's first and only battle. Despite their fears, none of the captives were harmed. Yet true to Confederate policy, the black soldiers were not quite regarded as prisoners of war. Adjutant O. Poppleton of the 111th U. S. Regiment later forwarded to Washington a copy of the *Mobile Advertiser and Register* of October 1864. The Southern paper listed the names of about 570 of our colored soldiers who belong to the One hundred and sixth, One hundred and tenth, and One hundred and eleventh U. S. Colored Infantry Regiments, and notifying the former owners of such soldiers that they were at that time employed by the engineer department at Mobile, Ala., and for the owners to report and receive the pay due for the soldiers' services."

Six months later, however, the war was over and the soldiers of the 106th Infantry found themselves on the winning side. The prisoners at Mobile were freed and soon rejoined their comrades. Union regiments held victory celebrations, while the

war weary Confederates slowly made their way back to what remained of their homes. However, there would be no speedy return for the men of the 106th U. S. Infantry.

The Union Army's white regiments were quickly discharged and sent home to a hero's welcome, but the North's African-American regiments remained in uniform. After all, somebody had to occupy the defeated South and the task fell largely on the black men in blue. The 106th Regiment was kept on occupation duty until November 5, 1865. Then the four companies were consolidated with the 40th U. S. Colored Infantry. Not until April 25, 1866, more than a year after Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse, would the black soldiers from Alabama finally receive their discharge.

The men of the 106th Regiment returned home to a different world than the one they had known. No longer could African-

Americans ever again be considered property and be enumerated along with a farmer's pigs, chickens, and cattle. America was still far from a perfect place. But it was — and is — easily the best country anyone could think of.

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Letters To The Editor



Dear Old Huntsville,

About two or three weeks ago my friend and I were talking about old times. Neither of us could remember the story about "Murder of a Beauty Queen." Also I was remembering working with a nice lady 35 years ago. I had no idea where she lived now

Lo and Behold, I picked up a copy of *Old Huntsville* and there was the answer to both my questions. I could hardly wait to get home to read it!

In 1937, the year the beauty queen was murdered, I lived out in the Monrovia area. Now I live about two blocks from the place

where she was buried under the house. My friend had coffee with the murderer's wife in the kitchen with the table sitting over the spot where she was buried.

Also in the same edition I discovered a letter from my friend whom I had lost contact with over thirty-five years ago. Thanks to *Old Huntsville* we have now renewed our friendship.

Thanks for doing such a great job and we look forward to every edition!

M.L. Dupree

Dear *Old Huntsville*,
I teach school in Nashville, Tenn., and while in Huntsville recently picked up a copy of your book, *The Way It Was*.

I was fascinated! You managed to make history come alive, a fact that I personally can testify is hard to do.

By mixing the "so called" trivial stories of your city's past with its documented history, you successfully created the image of a city with real people and real emotions, as opposed to some tedious narration of the past that one might find in many of today's history books.

Keep up the good work.

Robert Cole
Nashville, Tenn.

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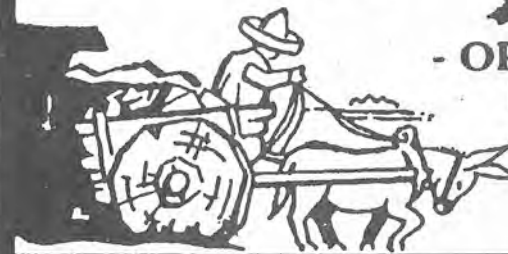
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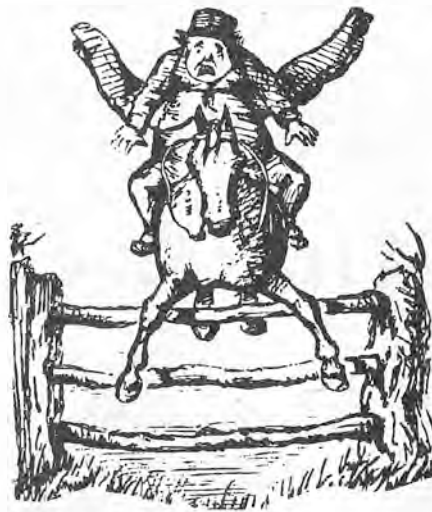
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Huntsville and Madison County

Naming an Early Huntsville Road

by Nancy M. Rohr

Robert Frost said stone walls make good neighbors, but in one case a stone dam didn't help neighborliness. From early days when the village of Huntsville was much smaller, names of local folks in the county remained on today's city map. In the southeastern part of the county Jeremiah Russel and his partner, James, decided to build a dam, establish a mill, help the local economy, and hopefully themselves.



Fortunately the site of the dam for their mill was well situated for local farmers to bring their corn along the lane to the creek near what is now Mt. Gap Road. The farmers in the neighborhood must have been very pleased not to have to travel farther for their milling.

Unfortunately the dam, built that Spring by the two

friends across the stream, was much too stout, The neighbor on the other side of Aldidge Creek, Mrs. Elizabeth H. Fennell, took the men to court at the October term in 1826. Mrs. Fennell, the plaintiff, said the defendants erected and maintained a high dam; "which dam, obstructed the waters of said creek and caused them to rise, fall back, and overflow the banks of said creek above said dam and upon the plaintiffs said lands and cover and overspread large portions of said land of the plaintiff, to wit, twenty acres, which were and have been thereby constantly injured and rendered unfit for and inaccessible to tillage planted or other use or avail... and to render useless a certain never failing spring upon the land of Hubbard H. Fennell."

(Do remember the court clerk was paid for the number



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The devastation was such that Mrs. Fennell sought \$2000 for injury and damages.

Witnesses were called to testify, expenses for their trip into town were paid, but the defendants were found not guilty. Mrs. Fennell had to pay the court costs!

Now really angry at this expense and her still wet lands, Mrs. Fennell took the two men to court again the next year for the same offense. This time the jury found for the plaintiff, Mrs. Fennell, and on November 10, 1827, the court assessed the damage at \$20 against them.

However the clerk's fees, attorneys' fees, tax fees, printer fees and execution fees also had to be paid by the defendants.

Milling was never a profitable business, and when the sheriff sought the damages of \$20 and fees that now totaled \$143.27, it was found the defendants had no goods or chattels. In May of 1828 Sheriff Neal sold their wright tithes and claim for \$20. All he could find on the property of value was sold to pay the costs. He also sold forty head of goats, property of the second partner. The amount raised was \$39.75.

One assumes the dam was lowered to drain the nearby flooded Fennell property. Over the years, one might say the second miller had the last laugh; it is his name that is remembered today when one turns off Weatherly Road to the south. We can be glad the lane was remembered, not by the herd of goats but the more pleasant sound of Todd Mill Road.



Go To Court and Party Afterwards

Lady Sues Man for Breach of Promise and other Citizens Declare a Festival

A young lady of Huntsville has brought suit against a young man for breach of promise in marriage. The trial will come off at the Court House, next Tuesday night April 9, at 7 1/2 o'clock. The following lawyers will represent the case:

Judge Thos. C. Barclay, as residing officer, Mr. Herman Humphrey and Oscar Hundley for plaintiff, and Mr. Walter Oliver with other professional aid for defendant. In connection with this court, the ladies of the church will give a festival for the benefit of their church. A pleasant time is anticipated and all are cordially invited to attend. Admission only 25 cents.

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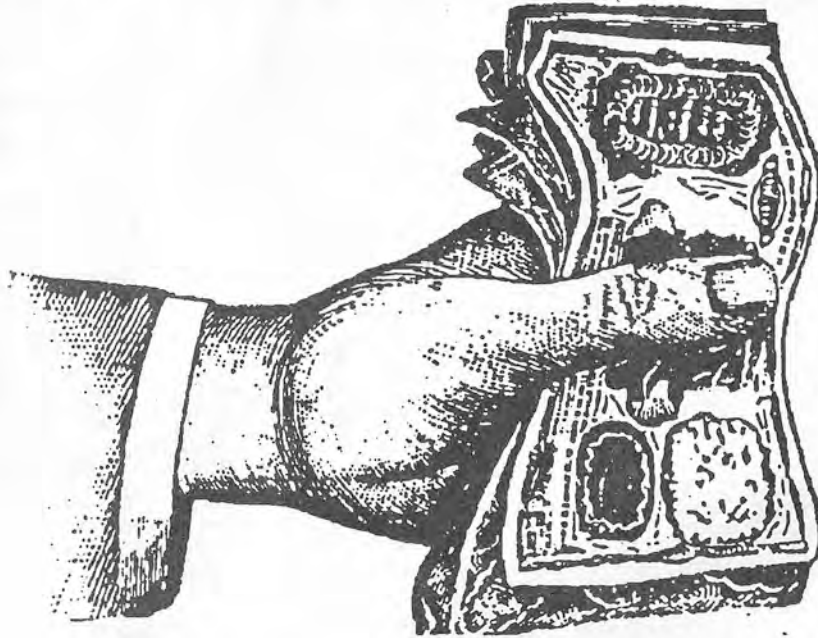
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How To Improve Your Posture and Prevent Back Problems

Good posture is not just for looks although it will no doubt improve your appearance and self confidence. It can actually prevent back and neck problems.

Poor posture can strain both muscles and ligaments making you more vulnerable to injury. Check your posture in a full length mirror. From the front your shoulders and hips should be level. Your kneecaps should face straight ahead and your ankles should be straight, not rolling inward. From the side you should see a slight inward curve behind your neck and your lower back, with your upper back curving outward. Your abdomen should be pulled in so it doesn't thrust out farther than your chest. If your abdomen thrusts out, the curve in the small of your back will arch inward too much increasing your risk for lower back pain. Below are some tips for

correcting posture problems.

Of course no amount of advice on posture can correct the damage done by obesity, lack of exercise, sleeping on a bad mattress, or standing or walking for long periods in high heels. Some common sense, a low fat diet, regular exercise, good shoes, a decent bed, and good posture can certainly help prevent many back problems. Regular chiropractic evaluations and adjustments when needed may also help. For those who already have back problems, chiropractic care has been repeatedly proven effective for the relief of common low back pain.

Chiropractic care together with improved posture may in many cases be able to reverse the problems created by the past, but ultimately prevention is the best policy.

So walk and sit tall and get a regular chiropractic checkup.

Tips For Correcting Back Problems

1. When standing or sitting think tall. Think of a string attached to the top of your head pulling it straight up. Relax your shoulders and let gravity pull your arms down. Then pull in your stomach, tightening the abdominal muscles and let your pelvis tip up slightly in front which should decrease the curve in the small of your back. Hold in this position for a few seconds then release. Repeat the exercise throughout the day both sitting and standing.

2. When standing for long periods, reduce stress on the lower back by putting one foot or the other alternately on a low stool or a similar object.

3. When sitting, sit all the way back in a chair, not on the edge, with your shoulders against the chair back and your chest high (imagine that string pulling your head straight up). Your feet should reach the floor with the knees slightly higher than your hips. This reduces the curve and stress in the small of your back.

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The Doctor Sez

by Dr. Annelie Owens

The common cold can be caused by any one of several hundred viruses, and it is probably the most common of all human illnesses. Treatments for a cold, today, are not much better than they were years ago. A cold is usually confined to the nose and throat but the same viruses can also infect the larynx and the lungs. An ordinary cold clears up in about 3 to 4 days, and it should not last longer than a week.

There is really no way to treat the common cold. Over-the-counter medication can help relieve the symptoms. The best course is adequate hydration with plenty of fluids -even chicken soup is recommended because it increases the flow of nasal secretions and relieves the symptoms of congestion.

A cold is rarely spread by sneezing, but is usually transmitted when someone with a cold coughs or sneezes into their hand and touches some common item that is subsequently touched by another. The germ is then picked up when that unsuspecting person rubs his eyes, nose or mouth. The symptoms begin about 2 to 5 days after a person contracts the virus: runny, stuffy nose, sneezing,

mild sore throat, mild cough and headache. There is no cure, but the best prevention is to wash your hands frequently, and to stay away from those who have a cold.

Cold and flu infections are the most common causes of cough. Some people are not sure of the difference between a common cold and influenza. While a cold may cause major annoyance, it is a mild illness. Not so the flu. Influenza is a serious in-

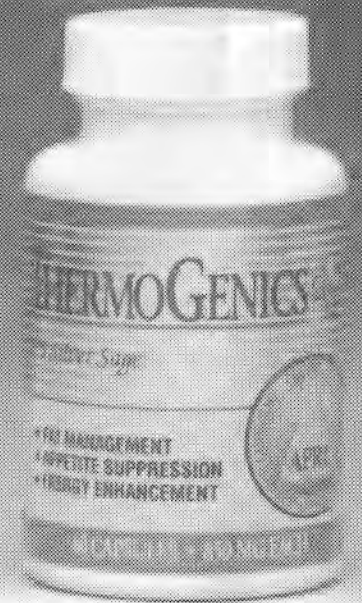
fection caused by a specific virus. High fever, a severe cough and swollen glands or a severe sore throat are not associated with a cold indicating a more serious illness. Such symptoms, or a cold that hangs on over 9 or 10 days should be cause for a visit to your family physician.



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We have five cats this month. Cimmarron is a six-month old female orange tabby. She loves to play, and chasing bugs is her current favorite sport. She has an older friend,

Ginger, who is 2 1/2 years old. She is also an orange tabby, but more sedate than Cimmarron. She has a very loud purr and enjoys watching the QVC shopping channel with her foster Mom. Both cats are declawed.

We have a mother cat and two kittens that are not Ark cats, but we are trying to find a good home for them, as well. There is no fee for these cats since we haven't spayed them or given them any shots. However, if you want to donate for the food and kitty litter, it wouldn't be refused. It's not a requirement. A good home is what we would really like for this family.

Call the Ark at 882-6609 if any of these pets suit your fancy and if you are looking for something special, call us about that too. 1,200 cats were turned in to Animal Control last year. There were Maine Coon cats, long-haired Himalayans, Persians and right now there is a most unusual cat. It is a white one with blue eyes and a calico face.

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Albert Gallatin, American Statesman

by Jack Harwell



When the brand new town of Huntsville was first laid out in 1810, the names of the streets were selected to honor well known Americans of the day. The four men who had served as President up to that time, Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison, all had streets named for them, as did other great statesmen such as Benjamin Franklin.

One other prominent individual who was so honored, though highly regarded in his day, has been somewhat neglected on the pages of history, his memory all but lost in the shadows of his more famous contemporaries.

Albert Gallatin, for whom Gallatin Street was named, served his country in both houses of Congress, as well as in the cabinet of President James Madison. His greatest achievements, however, were in the field of international diplomacy.

He was born Abraham Alfonse Albert Gallatin in Geneva, Switzerland, on January 29, 1761. He was descended from nobility, and as befitted his position, he received an excellent

education at the Geneva Academy. But Europe was too small to contain his ambitions, and in 1780, at the age of 19, he emigrated to America.

When Albert Gallatin arrived in the new world, the American Revolution was in a decisive phase. Just a year later, Cornwallis would surrender his army, as well as British sovereignty over the colonies at Yorktown. Gallatin personally played no part in the war; he first went into private business in Maine, and later taught French at Harvard.

After the war, Gallatin settled in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Many British colonists had migrated to southwestern Pennsylvania, where Fayette County is located, after France's defeat in the French and Indian wars had ensured British control over the frontier. Though not yet 30 years old, Gallatin soon became a wealthy landowner in Fayette County. He also operated a general store.

It was inevitable that someone of Gallatin's means would become involved in politics. He was strongly opposed to the Fed-

eralists, who believed in strong central government, and was a delegate to the state anti-Federalist convention in Harrisburg in 1788. The following year he was named a delegate to the state constitutional convention, and in 1790 he was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, where he served three terms.

As a state legislator, Gallatin displayed exceptional financial ability by working toward reducing the state debt. Also among his top projects was the abolition of slavery and the development

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of public education.

When western Pennsylvania corn growers initiated the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794 as a protest against the federal government's taxation of corn liquor, Gallatin sided with his fellow Pennsylvanians. This was the first test of the new government's authority, and his association with it was a source of much regret to Gallatin, although he came to oppose the more radical elements of the rebellion, and worked to restore peace.

Gallatin was elected to the United States Senate in 1793, but was expelled soon afterwards. The reason stated was that he had failed to meet a requirement regarding length of citizenship, but some believed he had been victimized by political enemies. His constituents responded by sending him to the house of representatives, where he served three terms.

In the house, Gallatin helped organize the Democratic-Republican party, the ancestor of the modern day Democratic party. As a leader of the opposition he continued to speak out against Federalist policies, particularly in the area of spending. He inaugurated the house committee on Finance, which later became the House Ways and Means Committee.

In 1800 Thomas Jefferson became the first Democratic-Republican elected President. He was able, for instance, to justify Jefferson's purchase of Louisiana in 1803. He also enforced an embargo against England and France and urged Congress to levy taxes as war with England approached.

It was during the Jefferson administration that Meriwether

Lewis and William Clark undertook their exploration of the Louisiana Territory. They followed the Missouri River until it split into three branches in what is now southern Montana. The longest of the three forks they named the Jefferson, after the President. Another was named for James Madison, then Secretary of State. For the third, they chose the name of another public figure who was much admired - Albert Gallatin. That is how a Huntsville city street came to have the same name as a river in Montana.

When Congress declared war on England in 1812,

Gallatin made it his mission to bring the war to an end as soon as possible. War, he felt, would be fatal to the prosperity of the nation, which he had worked so hard to build up.

His opportunity came in 1813, Czar Alexander of Russia offered to mediate negotiations to end the hostilities. The British, however, refused mediation, preferring to negotiate with the Americans directly. So Gallatin joined the U.S. Peace Commission in Ghent, where he was largely responsible for arranging the peace treaty.

Because of the diplomatic abilities he had displayed in end-

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ing the war of 1812, Gallatin was named Minister to France in 1816. During his service in France, Gallatin helped resolve disputes with the British regarding fishing rights and the U.S.-Canadian border.

Albert Gallatin retired from public service in 1831 and died in Astoria, New York on August 12, 1849. He left behind a legacy that endures until this day, and though, here in Huntsville, thousands of people drive down Gallatin Street every day, few people know anything about the remarkable man it was named after.

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Ron Eyestone, traveler



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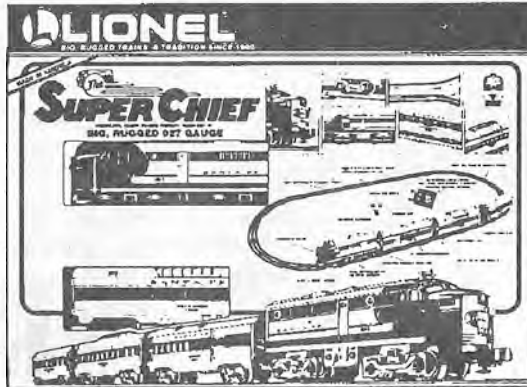
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