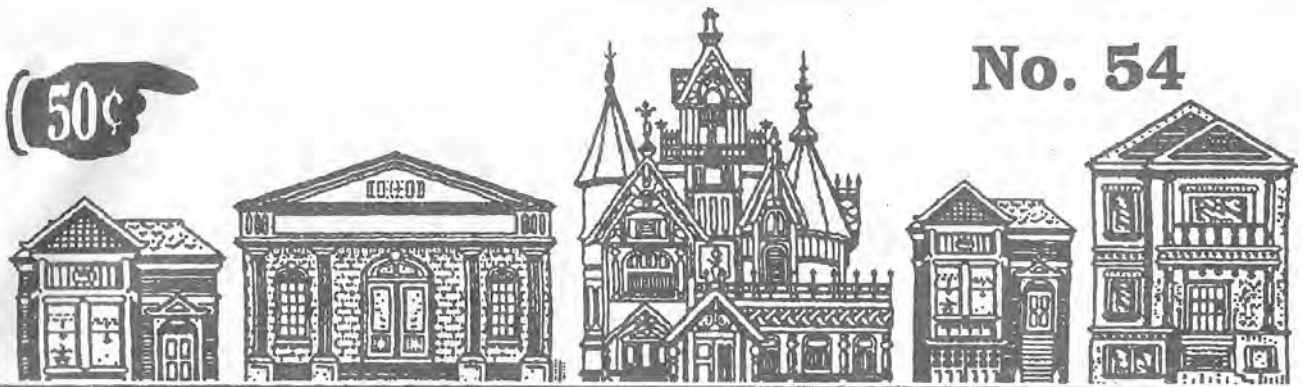


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Old Huntsville



Mrs. Clay of Alabama

Affair of the Heart

As a young woman, Virginia Clay walked the corridors of power both in Washington D.C. and Richmond, Virginia. As a middle-aged lady, she was linked romantically with one of the most revered men in the South. In her later years, most importantly, she knew how to keep her secrets...

Also in this Issue - The Mystery of Maple Hill Cemetery!

An Affair of the Heart

She captivated the hearts of Huntsville for three-quarters of a century. As a young woman she walked the corridors of power both in Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Virginia. As a middle aged lady she was linked romantically with one of the most revered men in the South and most importantly, in her later years, she knew how to keep her secrets.

Virginia Tunstall, better known as Virginia Clay, was born in Nash County, North Carolina on January 17, 1825. Three years later her mother died and her father moved to Alabama, where Virginia was placed in the care of an aunt.

The aunt assumed the task of raising Virginia to be a proper Southern lady, a task no doubt made harder by the young girl's vivacious and often inquisitive mind. At the tender age of fourteen Virginia was sent to a Nashville female academy to "complete" her education.

Virginia instantly became the toast of Nashville's society, with many eligible bachelors competing for her favors. At one point she became engaged to Alexander McClung, a native of Huntsville, but broke it off when she became infatuated with Clement Claiborne Clay, also of Huntsville.

Clement Clay was the epitome of Southern gentry. His father had been Governor of Alabama, a member of Congress and was also a wealthy planter

owning numerous plantations and slaves. Clement, besides working as a private secretary to his father, had also opened a law practice in Huntsville. For a young girl like Virginia, who never had a real family, it must have been a dream come true. She would often refer to her marriage, in 1843 at the age of 17, as "crossing the Rubicon of life."

The next few years were probably the happiest the couple spent together. Virginia fit easily into Huntsville's extensive social scene where her youth and vivacity endured her to the patriarchs of the plantation society. Clement's family, too, was won over by the young girl, and she soon found herself helping manage the Clay's vast plantation holdings.

If there was a dark side to this period it was possibly the fact that Virginia began to know her husband. Clement was typical of much of the aristocratic South in that he depended solely on his family name to advance himself in life. A hopeless hypochondriac and weak by nature, Clay soon began to look upon Virginia more as a mother figure rather than the wife she wanted to be.

Clement Comer Clay, Clement's father, possibly saw something in Virginia that was lacking in his son. Within a short while Virginia had become a trusted confidant and valued advisor to the senior Clay.

Two years after their marriage, Virginia and Clement began a life-style of sporadic separations that would continue for the next thirty-nine years. As a cure for his "continued illnesses," Clement, in the company of male companions, would often leave home for months at



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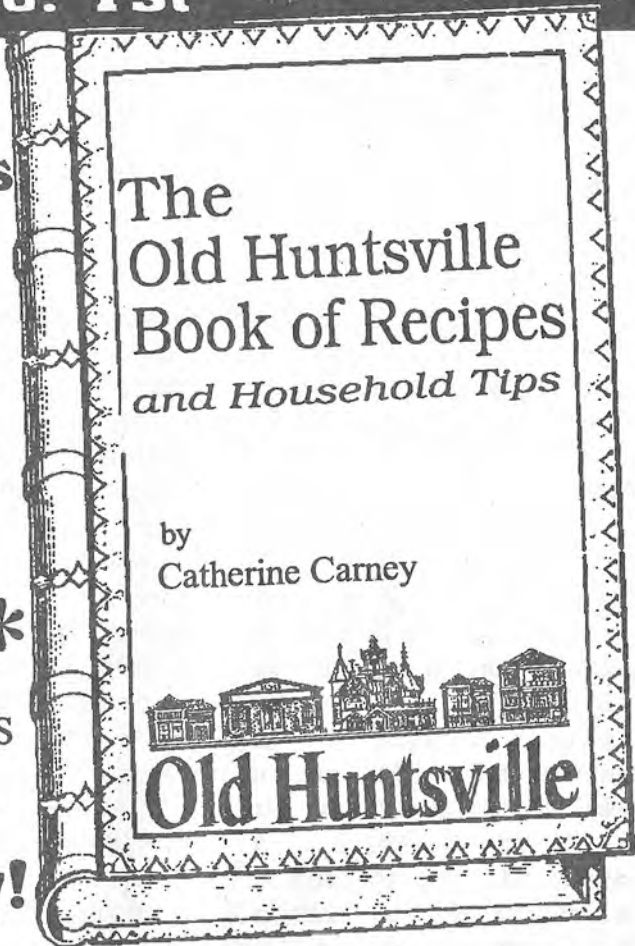
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a time touring the countryside by horseback. Virginia also began a lifelong habit of spending much of her time away from home, visiting relatives in Tuscaloosa, or friends in other cities.

During these separations, Clay often expressed fear of losing Virginia. In one of his letters he wrote, "...I fear some fellow will forget you are married and make love to you." One has to wonder if he was more worried about his marriage or his social prestige.

Although odd by today's standards, such marriages in the pre-Civil War period were common in the South. Divorce was unheard of and many people actually had no basis to judge a marriage on except for their parents who were often times also involved in hapless marriages.

In 1853, Clement Clay was elected to the United States Senate. Washington, D.C., at that time, was a place where a man was judged as much by a wife's social graces as he was by his political acumen. It was into this arena that Virginia would appear and reign over for the next decade.

The Southern culture and graces that had been instilled in Virginia since birth quickly made

her one of the most popular hostesses in the nation's capital. President Pierce and his wife became admirers of her as did most of Washington's elite. Her life became a constant string of parties, concerts and teas. Conscious of her role as part of the Southern Aristocracy, she made regular trips to New York where she would shop for the fine clothes she thought befitted her position. At one point she "complained" to a friend of having purchased over two hundred pairs of shoes.

Of all the people that Virginia met in Washington, it was a young senator from Mississippi who was to have the biggest effect on her life.

His name was Jefferson Davis.

Virginia Clay and Jefferson Davis had much in common. They were both ardent believers in Southern rights and both enjoyed the whirlwind of the capital's social life.

By all historical accounts, Davis's marriage had also began to falter.

Varina Davis, Jefferson's wife, detested the Washington social scene. Often pleading headaches and illness, she rarely attended any but the most im-

portant events. She realized, however, how vital it was for her husband to be seen at these affairs and when Virginia would agreed to accompany him, Varina was happy to give her blessing. Although there are few accounts of what Clay did during these times, one has to surmise that he stayed home, possibly working on the many congressional bills he was involved with.

The two couples became good friends. They spent much time together at one another's homes discussing politics and Washington gossip. Though Clay and Davis were both senators and worked together every day, it was Virginia and Davis who

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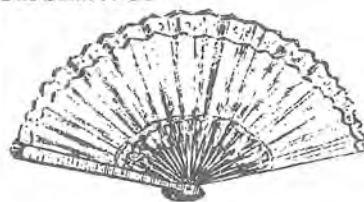
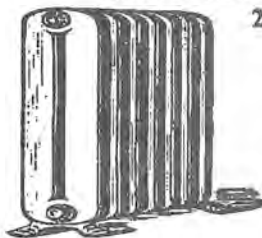


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developed the closest relationship. When Davis took sick, while his wife was out of town, it was Virginia who spent days at his bedside, wiping his brow and reading him the poetry he so much admired.

There is not much doubt that Virginia was enamored of Davis at this time. He was a handsome, wealthy and extremely powerful political figure and Virginia was well known for her flirtatious and captivating manner.

Virginia must have also been frustrated by her husband who seemed to be preoccupied with his health most of the time. Though still professing his love for her, he was rarely seen at her side. In one of his letters he actually seemed to be encouraging Virginia by writing, "...you have more fun without me."

Jefferson Davis often invited Virginia to accompany him on trips to inspect nearby military installations. One of these trips was to Fort Monroe, an installa-

tion just outside Washington that would become very familiar to both of them in the coming years.

If there was to be anything else besides an innocent flirtation, it was soon ended by events culminating in the Civil War. In 1861 both Davis and Clay resigned their Senate seats to return South. A short time after Clay reached Huntsville he was elected as a senator of the newly formed Confederate States of America Congress. Jefferson Davis, rather than remaining at his Mississippi plantation as he wished, was elected President of the Confederate States.

Virginia and Clement traveled to Montgomery to watch the new president be sworn in. Though Davis's schedule was crowded with people wishing to see him, as soon as he saw Virginia he ushered her into his office. He motioned for her to sit next to him, and thus she remained throughout the evening as he continued to receive visi-

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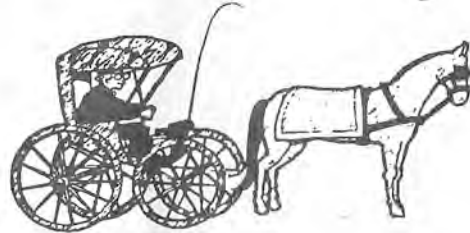
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tors. Perhaps in such a trying time President Davis found it comforting to have a dear friend near him.

Shortly afterwards, Davis offered Clay the position of Secretary of War. Clay was experiencing another bout of his sicknesses and declined, recommending LeRoy Pope Walker of Huntsville in his place.

When the new Confederate government convened in Rich-

mond it was almost a repeat of the old Washington days. Many of the same people Virginia had known before were now holding office in Richmond. The parties and social gatherings that had once been a hallmark of the old capital were now transferred to the new one, with Virginia Clay once again taking the lead.

Despite the unnerving news coming over the telegraph wires daily, or perhaps because of it, Davis once again began to seek Virginia's company. The relationship caused a whispering campaign that has endured to this day.

The condition of Virginia's marriage was no secret to the residents of Richmond. Adding fuel to the rumors was the fact that many of the Richmond ladies openly despised Varina Davis.

Clement Clay's relations with Davis had also become strained, partially because of the ineptitude of LeRoy Pope Walker, whom he had recommended. In a letter to Virginia, Clay actually pleaded with her to intercede on his behalf with the president.

In the spring of 1864 Clay was asked to go to Canada on a

secret peace mission. The war had been dragging on for nearly three years and many people believed the best way to end it was by negotiation. After settling into a Canadian hotel, Clay began a voluminous correspondence. Much of it dealt with secondhand gossip which he passed on to Richmond as intelligence. The most interesting letters, however, were addressed to a Virginia Tribble, a native of New York who also spent much time in Canada.

Containing such phrases as, "I long to lay my head on your bosom again as I hold your hand in mind," the letters leave no doubt that Clay had forsaken his marriage vows.

Meanwhile, events in the Confederacy had deteriorated to the point where Virginia Clay was forced to leave Richmond and seek refuge at a friend's home in Georgia.

On April 3, 1865 General Robert E. Lee was forced to retreat, beginning a march that would end at Appomattox, and leaving the way open for the Federal Army to march into Richmond. Hastily, the Confederate government made preparations to evacuate. Jefferson Davis and



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his Cabinet fled the already burning city in a railway car with no destination in mind except for "south."

Clement Clay returned from Canada and joined his wife in May of 1865 in Georgia, amidst the crumbling remnants of a nation they had once held so dear. Defeated troops were clogging every roadway and the Confederate dollar was worthless, leaving most people penniless. Worse though, were the rumors that all members of the Confederate government were to be taken prisoner and hung for their supposed role in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

Some reports state that Clay briefly considered fleeing to Texas, while others claim he was in a listless mood, unable to decide what to do.

The decision was made for them when several days later

they learned of Davis's capture by Federal troops in Georgia.

Again accounts of the actual events vary, with some saying that Clay proposed surrendering himself to the authorities, while another account quotes Virginia as saying, "We must join the President."

Regardless of how and why, a few days later the Clays joined Jefferson and Varina as prisoners of the Federal Government.

In Macon, Georgia they were placed aboard a train where they found Davis in a somber mood. Seeing Virginia enter the car, the ex-president immediately rose to embrace her while saying, "This is a sad day, Jinnie."

Virginia sat next to Davis while Clement took a seat next to Varina. Throughout the night they rode in silence, their thoughts only interrupted when the train stopped at a station and



Virginia Clay Clopton in one of the last photographs taken of her. Circa 1915.



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Union soldiers gathered to taunt and jeer the captives.

At Augusta, Georgia they were removed from the train and transported to a waiting boat. Throughout the journey, Virginia remained at Davis's side, often bathing his temples with eau de cologne when he would complain of headaches and engaging him in small talk in an effort to take his mind off the ordeal ahead.

Clement Clay remained morose and refused to take part in any conversation. Varina Davis virtually ignored the other prisoners.

On May 22, the journey came to an end. The final destination of Jefferson Davis and Clement Clay was to be Fort Monroe, the dark dank prison that Davis and Virginia had visited years earlier under much happier circumstances.

When Davis and Clay were transferred from the ship to the fort, Varina broke down and began sobbing uncontrollably. Virginia, watching the men being

escorted from the ship, clenched her teeth and proclaimed, "I should die before they should see me shed tears."

Several days later Virginia was released from custody and returned home to Huntsville. The scene she returned to was far different from the Huntsville she had left years earlier. The plantations were almost bankrupt and the former slaves had fled, leaving no one to tend the fields. Even the building on the

courthouse square, which had brought in a small rent every month, had been confiscated and was being used as an office by the freedman's bureau.

While most of her fellow Southerners had given up all hope, Virginia refused to accept defeat. Immediately she began a letter writing campaign on behalf of her husband and Jefferson Davis. Borrowing money from a local merchant she purchased material for a new dress and

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made preparations to go to Washington.

It was later reported that Virginia lobbied everyone of any importance on the prisoners' behalf. Often sitting in waiting rooms for days at a time, she would refuse to leave until she gained an audience with the person she sought. General Grant, after listening to Virginia's appeals, recommended Clement Clay be released.

Carrying the note from Grant, and accompanied by the widow of Stephen Douglas, Virginia went to see President Johnson at the White House. When Virginia began an emotional appeal, Mrs. Douglas dropped to her knees begging the President to release the men. Virginia remained aloof, refusing to kneel before a man she considered a traitor.

Finally after repeated appeals Virginia was able to get Johnson's word that the prisoners would be released from military custody.

Clement returned to Huntsville as a hero to the throngs who gathered to welcome him home. The exultation over his freedom

was short lived however as he and Virginia surveyed the financial wreckage left by the war. The Clays reluctantly realized the life they had once known was gone forever.

Many times adversity helps to bring a couple together, but in the Clay's case, it only served to widen the gulf. Clement moved to a cottage on the family farm in Gurley where he unsuccessfully experimented with being a farmer. Virginia refused to live with Clement and took an apartment in town where she spent most of her time.

Clement withdrew from the public eye, often seeking solace in alcohol. The fact that he was heavily in debt, and virtually living on loans added to the already heavy weight on his shoulders.

In 1867 Jefferson Davis was released from prison after almost 18 months imprisonment. On Davis's first trip to Alabama, he stopped in Huntsville to visit Virginia. If their friendship in the past had been merely an innocent flirtation, it was soon to take another course. Probably driven by memories of a happier time, Virginia seemed to be irresistibly

drawn to the ex-president. For the next six years she would be almost a constant companion of Davis.

Virginia began spending much of her time traveling, meeting Davis in Niagara Falls, Memphis, Sewanee and Charleston. Even when they were apart, they carried on a lively correspondence.

After one trip to Huntsville, Davis wrote Virginia, "The hours dragged by wearily after you left me at the station for the contrast with your sweet home was a sweet one. ...Let me hear from you as freely as your convenience will allow. ...Put on the envelope, "Personal."

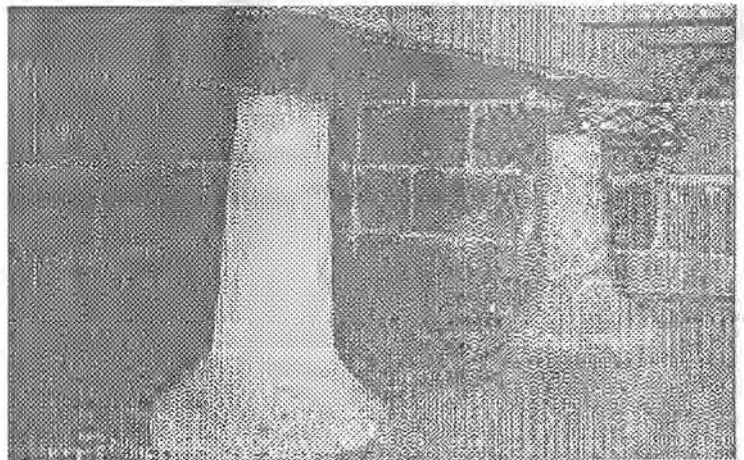
On Valentine's Day, 1871, Davis wrote, "It has been so long since I have heard from you. It seems so strange to be so near and yet so far apart."

Varina Davis almost certainly knew of the relationship between Virginia and her husband. Though she had never been particularly fond of Virginia, she now refused to allow Virginia's name spoken in her presence. As if following Clement Clay's example, Varina also withdrew into

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seclusion, spending much of her time in Europe, leaving Davis to live by himself in Memphis. In one nineteen month period they spent a total of sixteen days in one another's company.

The fact that the ex-president of the Confederacy was possibly having an affair of the heart was impossible to keep a secret. Tantalizing innuendos began appearing in the gossip columns. A Memphis newspaper chastised them for staying in the same hotel and a Cincinnati newspaper "wondered about the Ex-Senator from Alabama whose wife no longer felt bound by vows of fidelity."

Possibly the rumors would have died down if it had not been for an unfortunate incident on a Pullman car. Late one evening, after the passengers had retired to their individual sleeping berths, the conductor saw a shadowy form emerge from one berth and enter another. Alarmed, possibly thinking it was a sneak thief, the conductor hurried to investigate.

According to an article on the front page of the *Louisville Commercial*, July 15, 1871, the conductor discovered the ex-President of the Confederacy "occupying the berth with the married lady under his chivalrous protection."

When Davis refused to leave the berth, the conductor called his superior who "sternly ordered Davis to take another berth at once." Then, according to the *Louisville Commercial*, Davis "retired with deep disgust, and elevated his venerable form (in shirt and drawers) to the upper bunk."

The story created a sensation throughout the country. In Memphis, several hundred extra copies had to be printed at the request of news dealers. Davis never made any attempt to deny the stories.

Possibly because of the publicity, or maybe because of Virginia's return from Europe, their relationship seemed to end shortly afterwards. No longer were there enduring letters wait-

ing in the mailbox and Virginia's trips to Memphis stopped altogether.

Virginia remained in Huntsville where in 1882 her husband, Clement, died. She waited five years before remarrying. Her new husband was Judge David Clopton, an old friend and member of the Alabama Supreme Court. After Clopton died in 1892 Virginia moved to Gurley, to the farm cottage she had once refused to live in.

Virginia Clay Clopton, as she was now known, became a leader in the cause of woman's suffrage, traveling the country making speeches, and was active in helping organize the Confederate Veterans organizations. Her greatest tribute came when she was named honorary life president of the Daughters of the Confederacy.

In 1886, Jefferson Davis was invited to Montgomery, Alabama to lay the cornerstone of a monument to the Confederate dead. He stayed in the same rooms he had used twenty-five years ear-

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A rare photo of Jefferson Davis and Clement Clay after their release from imprisonment at Fort Monroe, Virginia.

lier when he was sworn in as President. Throngs of people once again flocked to the hotel to greet him and express their admiration for their wartime chief.

Sitting on a sofa, receiving guests, Davis looked up to see Virginia standing in the doorway. In a scene oddly reminiscent of another age, he once again motioned her to take a seat next to him as he continued to greet well wishers. Those were to be the last moments Jefferson Davis and Virginia Clay ever spent together. Two years later Davis

died.

Whatever feelings they both once shared were now consigned to history.

In 1904, Virginia published a book of her recollections under the title *A Belle Of The Fifties*. She was aided in this endeavor by diaries and scrapbooks she had been collecting for over a half-century. She made no mention of her alleged romance with Jefferson Davis.

Her diaries and scrapbooks, which found their way into the archives of a prominent university library, provided more

puzzles than answers for modern historians. Portions of her penciled-in diary, especially the dates of her trips after the war, had been meticulously erased. The diary for 1871, when the alleged Pullman car incident was supposed to have happened, was missing altogether.

In 1915, Virginia Clay Clopton died at the age of 90.

The young flirtatious girl who had captivated the hearts of so many, entered history books for the last time, as the *Grande dame of the Lost Cause*.

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The couple soon set up house together and began living a life as man and wife along with her children who were his great grandchildren but were now his stepchildren, making them their mother's uncles by marriage. After the granddaughter/wife sensed signs of approaching motherhood, a quick visit before a justice of the peace was arranged. When the child was born

it became the mother's son/great uncle, the father's son/ great grandson and the half brother and great great uncle of the other children.

Soon, however, her eldest son (the great grandson of its stepfather and the great nephew of his half brother) began a correspondence with his aunt who was also Dement's granddaughter. The aunt/granddaughter, upon hearing the news immediately notified her great uncle who was also Dement's brother who paid a personal visit to his great nephew who was his brother's stepson.

The great nephew/stepson and brother/great uncle then notified the judge (no kin) who issued a writ for the arrest of the grandfather/husband and granddaughter/wife. The child has been placed in care of its half brother who is also his nephew and his mother's uncle by marriage.

The trial is sure to attract a lot of relatives.



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Bottle Collecting in Huntsville



A Part of Our History

by Dottie Cutts

A bottle collecting hobby swept Huntsville in the mid 1960s and 70s. I was first drawn in through my son Bob.

One day, in the mid 1960s, he and a friend were in the Big Spring Park where the spring was undergoing one of its periodic renovations. He waded in and under a rock found one of Coca Cola's earliest brown Coke bottles. Excited about his find,

they stopped at an antique store in 5 Points. I shall always be thankful to that lady who took the time to tell a teenager the history of the bottle.

That started us on our bottle collecting adventure. We haunted flea markets at Scottsboro (First Monday), Tullahoma and Nashville. At first Bob collected any and all old bottles. He soon delved into Huntsville's history and was thrilled with every old medicine, soda, and spirits

bottle.

After finding a perfect Blorent Springs cobalt blue bottle, we traveled to Blorent Springs and found the location of the bottling works. The ground was strewn with thousands of pieces of cobalt blue glass. We gathered a box of the pieces and later used them with a quart and pint bottle for a display entitled "The Survivors."

Soon we discovered there were other people in Huntsville who were interested in this hobby. We banded together and founded the Huntsville Bottle Club, Inc. We even had our own bottle shows at the old Sears Mall. Early members were the Speegals, Mrs. Rosborough, the Pfeiffers, Freeman, Mclemore's, Hickox, Gordon Esslinger, Betty Root, Charles Bozeman and of course, the Cutts.

A boon to our collecting was the discovery of two early dumps in Huntsville. One was next to the old Naval Reserve Building, just south of the creek. It was to become a parking lot and we had to work fast. At night we would go down, lantern and spade in hand and dig for old bottles. It was a buried treasure of old brown Coke bottles which were very much in demand at the time. These we would use for trade or sale at the bottle shows that had sprung up all over the country. Bob would start the digging in my area then I would sit with a trowel in hand and carefully extract the bottles.

It was so exciting to find a previously unknown bottle. It would become more history to delve into.

Then another dump was discovered, perhaps a later date than the Naval Reserve, but still

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a treasure. It was located just east of Traylor Island behind the Double Cola factory. Bob was not old enough to drive, so I would drive him to the dump, he would start my area, then I could sit and dig to my heart's content.

Oh yes, I was bitten by the bug, too, by now.

This dump was full of Betterton spirits bottles. The saying was "Find A Better Betterton." We did find a beautiful puce colored one, one day, that is still in his collection.

By this time Bob had a paper route and saved his money to buy better bottles. One day he had gone to Scottsboro with a friend to buy a Log Cabin bitters bottle. He purchased the bottle and rushed home excitedly to show it to me. Unfortunately, in his excitement he tripped on the front steps and smashed the bottle. Several months paper route money lay in pieces on the steps. That was the closest I ever saw the teenager come to tears. I suggested we go to the dump and he could work out his frustration. Two nights later we had our club meeting and I told his story.

After the meeting Mrs. Rosborough invited us to stop at her house on Echols Avenue. There in her case was the exact bottle Bob had broken. She

reached in her case, brought it out, and gave it to him. What a beautiful thing to do! It is still one of his most cherished bottles.

We soon realized there were higher planes in bottle collecting, and Bob graduated to the historical flasks of the 1800s. I went to the older figural bottles. At the bottle shows we would sell or trade our dump bottles to get one flask. Our knowledge of history expanded with each new flask or figural.

Our interest in antique bottles never disappeared, but kind of slowed down as we aged. However, the other day I had a beautiful small, pontil marked flask given to me by a friend. It woke me up again. The tornado of 1989 destroyed my most prized figural of "Our Lady of Lourdes." I've never seen another one.

Now interest seems to have revived in bottle collecting. I hope the new generation enjoys it as much as we did.

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History You Never Studied In School



In 1904, an American tea merchant handed out the first tea bags as free samples, intending them to be torn open. People misunderstood and dropped the bags into the water. Darn if it didn't work!

Instant coffee has been around since 1838. Union Army soldiers during the War Between the States were issued packets of it, complete with sugar and dried cream. Coffee starved Confederates were always happy to capture the stuff.

Aviation hero Charles Lindbergh made the first solo

flight across the Atlantic Ocean in 1929. However, his family name was actually Mannson. Fortunately, his Swedish father changed it after emigrating to America. Otherwise, Lindbergh would have been known as Charles Mannson.

French monarch Louis XIV allegedly took only three baths in his entire life, one of them at the insistence of his mistress. Now you know why French perfume is famous. Incidentally, a survey a few years ago showed that the French still use less soap per capita than other nation in western Europe.

American french fries actually originated in Belgium. In England, they are called chips. American potato chips began when a Mohawk Indian chef at a Saratoga, New York resort blew his stack when a diner complained the french fries were too thick. The angry chef sliced the potatoes paper thin, thus inventing potato chips. They soon became all the rage.

When Briton D. J. Kennedy learned that some of the female track and field athletes at the 1928 Olympics had suffered painful bruises to their breasts, he created a specially padded undergarment for them. A French fashion designer named de Brassiere immediately added padding to his own line of lingerie. Women across Europe and America quickly took to the idea and have been wearing the things ever since. Of course, the ladies long ago shortened de Brassiere's name to just plain "bra."

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Old Huntsville

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Old Beliefs And Superstitions

From the moment she marries, a woman should never drop or lose her wedding ring. Otherwise, bad luck may follow.

A sure cure for a person with tapeworm is this. Have the patient go without eating for 3 days. Then, with the patient in the room, cook a large steak. Hold it in front of the patient's mouth, and out will jump the ravenous tapeworm.

Those who wear diamonds are protected against leprosy, insanity, bladder problems, poison and the plague, according to an old European belief.

If your friend has a bad headache you should rub his or her scalp. The pain will be trans-

ferred to you, but it won't be as intense.

If you lose one of your hairs and it's picked up by a magpie who uses it to line its nest, you will have very bad luck within a year and a day.

If you want to avoid catching a cold, tie a red onion to your bed. Even better than that, carry it in your pocket during the day.

When dressing, always remember to put your left stocking and shoe on first. This way you will avoid bad headaches and other ills that may befall you that day.

If you've just had a tooth pulled, put it immediately in a glass of whiskey. Let it soak for an hour then drink the whiskey. You'll never again suffer toothache that ends in your tooth being pulled.

If you have hair long enough to weave into a braided bracelet, make one for your lover. His acceptance of this gift will signal his everlasting faithfulness to you.



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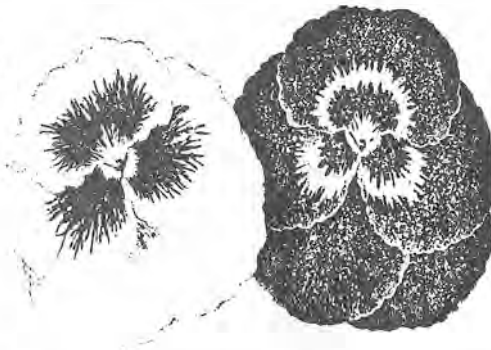
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Cold Weather Color in your Gardens

by Cathey Carney



I used to always feel a little sad when the last flower of summer would begin to fade--like my impatiens, periwinkles, geraniums, etc. They never could quite stand the intense heat of our Huntsville summers and therefore went through quite an obvious wilt, in spite of faithful waterings. So I would pull them up and maybe plant a few more ivy cuttings in my window boxes, but everything then was just green. Green is better than brown but I really liked the summer colors.

Then one year I noticed a bright, colorful little plant in the nurseries. I never thought much of pansies because they look rather frail and I wondered why people would buy them, only to watch them freeze into a pulp a few months later. But I bought a few, and stuck them in my win-

dow boxes and around a small garden area.

To say I was amazed at their endurance is an understatement. That year we had quite a cold winter, and even a bit of snow, but do you know what? Those little pansies continued to bloom all winter! I couldn't believe it. On very cold mornings I would notice that they looked a bit chilly, like I felt, but then by afternoon they were fine. I didn't water them a lot, but they were able to stand that as well as the cold. I became a big fan of the little flowers, and the ones I had continued to bloom up until spring. When it began to get warmer the blooms got a bit smaller and then went away, so I pulled them up.

They come in so many pretty colors--bright yellows, vivid purples, blues, pinks, rose and

burgundy as well as white. Those who love pansies like the look of the face of the flower - it's quite a cheerful appearance. There are plants with tiny blossoms, then some with blossoms maybe an inch or so across the blossom.

Last week I bought some for this fall and winter and the ones

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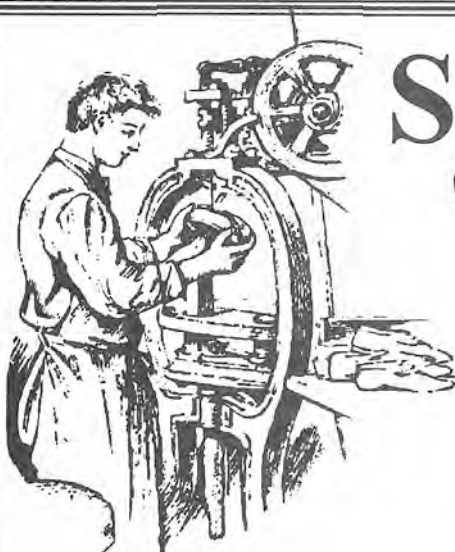
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I bought look like they're on steroids! I have never seen such a large blossom. I got my ruler out and measured those blossoms to be 3 to 3 1/2 inches across! I prefer the larger blossoms because it's hard to see small blossoms in my window boxes and the large ones look great from the road with the variegated ivy.

I looked several places before I found these giants - at Bennett's Nursery, just north of Winchester on North Parkway. Plus, their prices were very reasonable. They had such a large selection of colors that I was there 45 minutes trying to decide. But now I don't feel quite so sad that summer is gone and with it, those wonderful colors in my garden. A positive thought to cheer up some of those dreary winter days ahead.



Old Time Justice

The parties who went in search of the horse stolen from Mr. Luke Matthews, a long time and respected resident of Huntsville, succeeded in finding the horse and the four culprits responsible for its removal.

After brief negotiations the horse and the culprits were returned to Huntsville under guard. Mr. Matthews once again has possession of his animal and one of the thieves is now lodged in our jail.

The other three are still recovering.

*from an 1869 Huntsville
newspaper*

History of Podiatry

The advent of foot care can be traced back to 2500 BC in ancient Egypt.

Podiatry as a medical discipline began in 18th century France and England. It was then termed Chiropody.

Podiatry as we know it today has evolved into a specialized medical discipline that addresses surgical and nonsurgical treatment of the foot. This may include corns, calluses, bunions, heel pain and many more problems.

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- 1 egg
- 2 T. milk
- Cracker crumbs

Wipe cutlets; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Dip into the egg, beaten with milk, then into finely rolled cracker crumbs. Fry slowly in deep, hot fat til brown.

Huhner Sosze (Creamed Chicken)

- 1/2 chicken
- 2 qt. water
- Salt
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 1/4 c. flour

Cook chicken in salted water til tender. Debone and cut into small pieces. Bring 1 quart of broth to a boil and stir in flour. Make into paste with cold chicken broth. Cook until it thickens and add pieces of chicken and nutmeg. If desired,

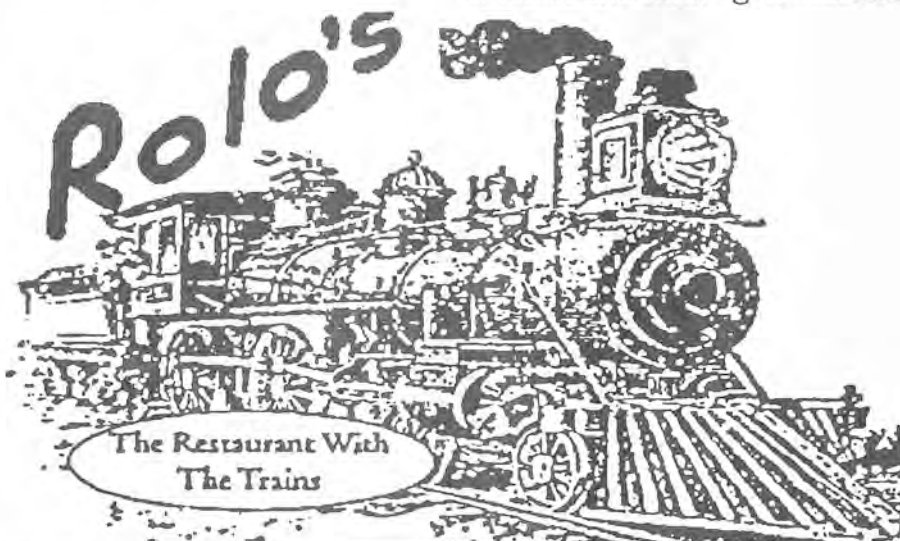
1/4 cup cream and 1 beaten egg yolk may be added. These last ingredients will make it a very rich sauce.

Potato Sausage Casserole

- 1 lb. bulk pork sausage
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup (undiluted)
- 3/4 c. milk
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 1/2 c. chopped onions
- 3 c. sliced, peeled raw potatoes
- 2 c. shredded Cheddar cheese
- Chopped fresh parsley

Brown the sausage, drain and set aside. Combine the soup, milk, onion, salt and pepper. In a greased 2-quart casserole, layer half the potatoes, half the soup mixture and half the sausage. Repeat, ending with the sausage.

Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until potatoes are tender. Sprinkle with cheese; return to oven, uncovered for 2-3 minutes and the cheese melts. Garnish with parsley.



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Potato Pancakes

7-8 potatoes (peeled and grated)
 2 T. milk
 2 T. flour
 2 eggs
 Salt to taste

Mix the potatoes with the eggs and other ingredients. Fry in a little oil and drain. Sprinkle with a little onion powder.

Obst Torte

1/3 c. butter
 1/3 c. sugar
 1/2 t. vanilla
 1 egg
 1 c. flour
 1 t. baking powder

Filling:

3-4 c. fresh,
 canned or frozen fruit sugar
 1 T. cornstarch
 1 c. whipping cream

Soften the butter, add the sugar, vanilla and egg. Mix well and add the sifted flour and baking powder. Mix and chill for 1 hour. Line the bottom and sides of a springform pan and bake at 375 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

Drain canned or frozen fruit, reserving the juice, or crush 1 cup of fresh fruit to make juice. Sweeten to taste. Boil the juice and mix cornstarch with a little sugar. Stir into the fruit and cook til thick. Fill the baked shell with the fruit and pour the cooled juice over the fruit. Decorate with whipped cream.

Brandy Balls

2 1/2 c. finely crushed vanilla wafers
 1 c. powdered sugar
 2 T. cocoa
 1/2 c. finely chopped walnuts
 1/2 c. brandy (or rum)
 1/4 c. white syrup (Karo)

Combine all ingredients. May add a little water (1 1/4 table-spoons) if necessary to form good balls. Roll in granulated sugar and store in covered container in refrigerator. Makes 4 dozen delicious balls.

These Recipes are from the Kurtzahn Kriefall Family Cookbook. It is full of good German recipes and sells for \$12.

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A Young Rebel

*from the wartime journal
of Ella Virginia Sanders,
written in 1863*

March 1st

I am writing with a light heart. The Yankees came as far as Town Creek, four miles off, but since our men had destroyed the bridges and water was high, they had to retire. They are burning and destroying property, compelling the people to pay the war tax, and insulting the ladies by searching them and even running their hands in their pockets. Father returned yesterday and Gen. Bragg will send troops to defend the valley.

March 4th

Yesterday I read Gen. Van Dorn's reply to the charges made against him by Brig. Gen. John Bowers, and I think with Pres. Davis, it is the clearest defence I have ever read. I pray this war will soon be over and all the Yankees in "Davy Jones Locker." I continue a notorious rebel. There is some talk of the eastern states forming a part of our Confederacy. I say, "Die First."

March 27th

Yesterday Lieut. Madding, Lieut. Davis, and Dr. Ed Ashford

spent the morning here. Cousin Joe Parrish and Capt. Montgomery, of Gen. Van Dorn's staff, were to dinner with us yesterday. Capt. Grant, of Forrest's Brigade is here for a few days. A year ago, while riding my pony, Monti, I threw a bouquet to a soldier in ranks while passing. I find Capt. Grant to be the soldier.

March 29th

I am trying to keep up my studies and daily horseback rides, as well as the course of reading I have mapped out.

April 8th

Col. Hannon was here last night with eight soldiers who were badly wounded. In Jan. 1861, when two companies of soldiers passed our gate, I was there with a beautiful little Confederate flag in my hand and officers and privates begged for it, but with a little impromptu speech, I gave it to a nice private, and he made a beautiful response. A member of his company told me last night that he pinned the flag to his horse's

head in the battle of Shiloh, and harrahed for me in the charge. I find his name is Lieut. John Smith.

April 11th

This morning, a year ago, I saw Federal soldiers surround the beautiful home for the first time, and solemnly ask for my father-- seventy-nine soldiers just to capture one man! We have had so much trouble since then.

April 26th

I am in Huntsville, a "Refugee." My sister, Laurie, and I came here when the Yankees were five miles from our home. Father will take Mother and Lizzie to a place of safety. We are with our Aunt.

May 2nd

We see much company but Sister says Mother would not approve of our having beaux, so I do not have as good a time as I might. I hear the Federal soldiers have reached our town, and that our home is burned.

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May 7th

Mother and Father went to Athens with the servants, and as the Federal soldiers have moved out of town, they are returning.

May 14th

Gen. Forrest arrived yesterday, also Father. They are going to visit Gen. Bragg on military matters.

May 15th

Yesterday as General Forrest drove by, I threw him some roses, and my glove unintentionally, went with them. He stopped, and laughing, said, "Challenged me, have you!?" "No indeed!" I cried, "I would rather appoint so brave a man my champion," whereupon he thanked me gallantly. Lieut. William Forrest was with him.



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Huntsville Heresay

By Our Unidentified Sources



Last month we called it right when we reported **Mayor Hettinger** would not run for another term. Now here's another prediction. Contrary to rumors floating around town, Mayor Steve will not resign before his term is up.

Larry Mullins is proving as adept at twisting political arms as he is at flipping hamburgers. Sources tell us that he will soon become known as the "billboard" king as his picture begins popping up all over town.

Ken Arnold seems to be strong with the youth vote. The main question there is going to be whether he can make any inroads on Twickenham. Remember the saying: "As Twickenham goes, so goes the money."

Look for perennial candidate, **James Steele** to throw his

hat in the ring. Once you meet James, it's hard not to like him.

Best bet for mayor's race: **Loretta Spencer**. The odds are three to one, against, right now, but if she enters we predict she will be in the run-off and make an excellent showing. Also, a local businessman is making plans to announce his candidacy at the last possible moment.

Johnny Cochran's response to being denied honorary citizenship? After he finished laughing, he was reported to have said, "Who cares?"

Three stars for his judgeship, **Bruce Williams**, who is a dedicated volunteer for the Huntsville Humane Society, and who took time from his busy schedule to work with the Society's annual "Walk Your Paws."

Speaking of politics, no column would be complete without mention of **Aunt Eunice**. It's impossible to be around her without realizing common sense makes a lot of common sense.

Councilman Jim Putnam could have serious trouble in the next election. Rumors about town tell us **Glen Watson** is already testing the waters. It looks as if plenty of the big names are already flocking to his side.

Fob James blew a gasket when he learned of the brutal attack on **Aunt Eunice**. Look for him to be in Huntsville soon, eating ham and biscuits at her Country Kitchen. Sources in Montgomery tell us they have learned that **Hillary Clinton** may be planning a visit to Huntsville next June or July. Wanna bet she eats ham and biscuits too?

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Hottest story floating around Downtown is about the **Committee of Ten**. No, it's not ten people; it's Ten Thousand Dollars. Insiders tell us the money will go to the person who runs against a certain councilman when he comes up for re-election.

If you want to know which way the wind is blowing on the mayor's race, keep an eye on **Dwight Jennings**. Though we have already heard who he is supposed to be supporting, we are waiting for proof on this item.

Paul Bryant, son of the legendary "Bear" Bryant has given the University of Alabama a gift of \$10,000,000.00. Yep, that's right - ten million!

Check this one out! A delegation recently visited **Councilman Bill Kling** to talk to him about running for another office. Though we have been unable to confirm which office, we do know that his parents are moving back to Huntsville from Sarasota, Fla., after a twelve year absence.

Keep a close eye on **Mike Marshall** of *The Huntsville Times*. He might be a Yankee but he knows how to write a story that will leave tears in your eyes. People are already starting to compare his writing with **Lewis Grizzard**. The man definitely has a future in the sunny South!

Our wise, benevolent and intelligent editor, **Billy Joe Cooley**, is recuperating at home after his recent heart surgery. Remember him in your prayers.

Tim Morgan, our local law

and order man, seems to be a shoo in for his next term as District Attorney. Lots of people would like to run, but are wary of Tim's popularity.

Wayne Parker, gonna run again candidate for Congress, was seen in D.C. recently, raising money at the home of a powerful lobbyist. Republican officials in Montgomery, though they won't admit it openly, seem to be laying their bets on **Hugh McInnish**.

We are starting to hear talk around the coffee table about **Faye Dyer**. Rumor has it that many of her friends are saying she will run against **Mike Gillepsie**.

Those City Hall guys who have their eyes on county jobs can look beyond the tax assessor. Incumbent **Wayland Cooley** says he has no plans to retire. "I'd be bored to no end," says he.

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The Lady Had Distinction



from 1866 newspaper

Clarissa Douglass, a lady of dubious distinction, was up before Squire Figg yesterday on a charge of stealing clothes from Huntsville's merchants.

Miss Douglass' downfall was her penchant for fine clothing which she said, "is necessary for a lady in my changed position," hence she began a monologue describing why each article of the purloined clothing was essential to maintain her position in our fair city's society.

She found her purse would not withstand so heavy an outlay, but the clothes must be had. Recalling the raids of the late war, she decided to undertake one of her own, and if successful, would be clothed as well as the best of them.

Her raid ended on a sour note when she attempted to leave a store with three dresses in an egg basket, and two hats perched daintily upon her head.

She was brought up before the august presence of Justice Figg, who after hearing evidence of the state, bound Clarissa over in a bond of \$100.00. No one appearing to endorse for her, Clarissa went down to the corner of Clinton and Green streets to board until the court is held.

Up In Smoke

The Greatest Case of Dog eat Dog that we ever heard of, says one of our exchanges, was that of a young man, who loved to smoke a good cigar, and an insurance company.

The young fellow bought 2,000 extra fine cigars, and had them insured for their full value, smoked them up and demanded the insurance, claiming that they had been destroyed by fire. The case was taken to the court, and the judge decided in favor of the young man.

The insurance company then had the young man arrested for setting fire to his own property, and the same judge ordered that he pay a fine and go to jail for three months.

from 1898 newspaper



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Hard Times



by Helen Miller

The Depression touched everyone. For us, it meant cut out this and cut down on that, but we always had enough to eat thanks to Daddy's skill in hunting. My two piano lessons at Mrs. Nita Stokes' were cut to one a week and finally cut out altogether. It didn't bother me too much. I dreaded those long practice hours. There were too many more important things I had to do--only God knows what they were.

The sheets on my bed were wearing out and Mama made more out of rough yellow domestic. I complained and she said, "Shut up and be thankful you still have a roof over your head; that's about all we have left." She made pillow cases out of flour sacks.

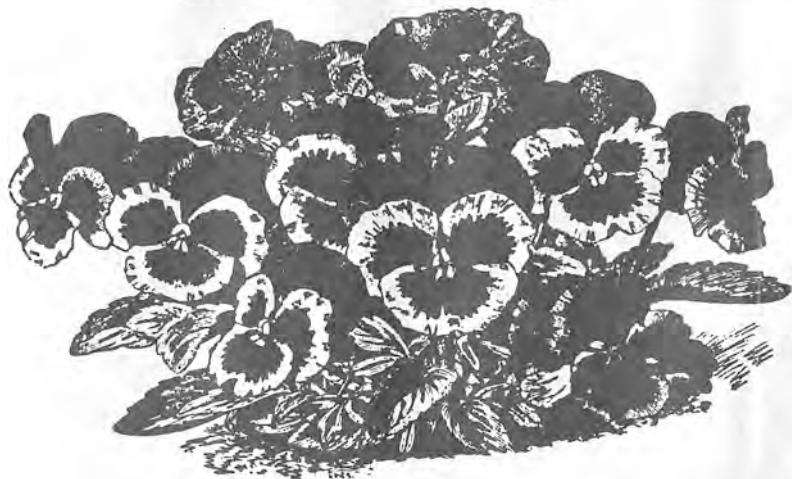
Every day or two, transients would come by asking about yard work in exchange for food. There was always baked sweet potatoes, collard greens, and venison stew in the kitchen, so Mama fixed a plate and listened to their stories. Some were go-

ing south and some were going north looking for work. I recall going into the kitchen one day where she was washing dishes to see tears streaming down her face. She was shaking her head back and forth and sobbing, "I can't go on much longer, Lord." I guess she had tied a knot and was trying to hang on.

We often made fudge candy that I sold for five cents a package for my school money, and we sang songs like Stephen Foster's "Hard Times Come Again No More." Robbing and stealing were almost never heard of and the front door was seldom locked. Some folks' electricity was cut off because they couldn't pay their bill. Mama complained because ours was a bit over two

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dollars a month and she stopped using the electric iron. I recall she would often build a roaring fire in the kitchen stove on a hot summer day to heat up the old black flat iron if we had some pressing to do.

For entertainment we would go over to Uncle John's and listen to Amos and Andy. Daddy read *The Charleston News and Courier* and accepted every word as factual as if it had come straight from the New Testament. Franklin Roosevelt started campaigning and vowed to change things for us. Thank goodness he was one president who lived up to his promises. Things did get better but perhaps the adversities made us a little stronger and more dependent on God.

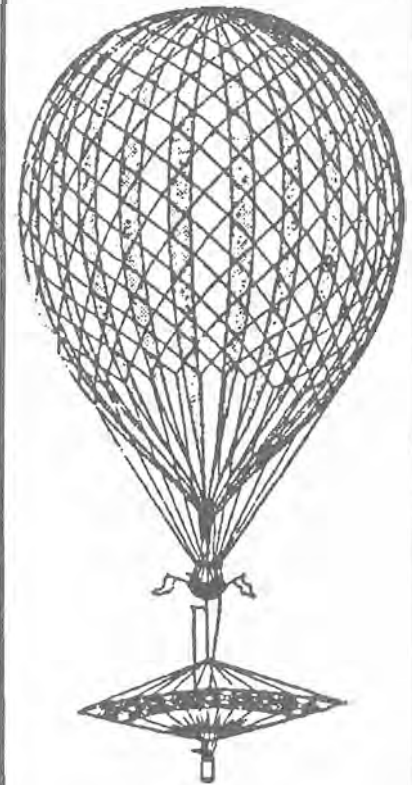
The End

In Memory

Mrs. Helen Elizabeth Miller had published several of her stories in Old Huntsville Magazine over the previous several years. Last summer she passed away, and we lost a very dear friend. She was a native of South Carolina but had lived in Huntsville with her husband, Tom, for the last 20 years.

Helen wrote a book for her three granddaughters from which we have taken excerpts. She wanted them to know what it was like to grow up during the Depression--the good and bad times. She had a way of looking at life with a wonderful sense of humor and love. Helen was a true Southern lady in every sense of the word.

She will be very much missed.



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The General Who Wasn't

Huntsville was the birthplace of six generals of the War Between the States: Confederate Major Generals John Hunt Morgan and Jones M. Withers and Brigadier General LeRoy Pope Walker, and Union Brigadier

Generals David and William Birney and Thomas T. Crittenden. However, another "almost general" was also a native of Huntsville and Madison County. His name was Edward O'Neal and his parents were among the earliest settlers of North Alabama.

Edward Asbury O'Neal was born near Huntsville on September 20, 1818. His parents, Irish on his father's side and French Huguenot on his mother's, had moved to Madison County from South Carolina. O'Neal received his education at the LaGrange Academy and then returned to Huntsville, marrying here on April 12, 1838. Two years later, however, O'Neal moved to Florence and thereafter made that city his home.

When the Civil War began, O'Neal promptly volunteered to defend his native state. He left for Virginia by rail in June, 1861, as senior captain of a battalion of three companies. O'Neal's men became part of the 9th Alabama Infantry Regiment, and O'Neal was elected major. He rose in

rank quickly, becoming lieutenant colonel in October, 1861 and taking over command as colonel in March, 1862.

O'Neal earned a reputation for bravery and skill, being wounded twice in battle. He commanded a brigade at Chancellorsville, and was recommended by Robert E. Lee for promotion to brigadier general. However, something must have happened at Gettysburg to change Lee's mind. O'Neal again

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commanded a brigade in that ferocious struggle, and while there are no complaints on record about O'Neal's conduct, Lee withdrew his recommendation. The Confederate Congress had already issued O'Neal's commission, but complied with Lee's wishes and did not delivered it. O'Neal's promotion was then cancelled.

Edward O'Neal commanded his regiment through the end of

the war. He was often referred to as General O'Neal, and many people apparently believed he was one. However, the courageous officer was never officially more than a colonel. Always a popular figure, O'Neal was elected Governor of Alabama twice, in 1882 and in 1884. He died at Florence on November 7, 1890, and is buried in his adopted city.

However, Edward O'Neal

does hold a unique distinction by being the only governor of Alabama whose son was also elected governor. Florence native Emmett O'Neal was elected in 1910, and became the first Alabama governor to occupy the executive mansion in Montgomery. His father would have been proud.



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A Tale Of Two Friends



Earl Frazier and J.B. Webb had a strange relationship. They were good friends and spent much time in one another's company. They shared the same friends, and had even once talked about opening up a garage together.

Unfortunately, J.B. Webb was a bootlegger and Earl Frazier was a deputy sheriff whose job was to put bootleggers out of business.

Huntsville, in the 1950 and '60s was a much different place than today. It was still a small rural community, where everyone knew everyone and a man's word was his bond.

J.B. Webb's bootlegging enterprise operated out of an old frame house off of Monroe street. It was reported that he began the first "curb service" in Huntsville. A customer could pull into an alley next to his house, blow their horn, and someone would take their order. He stocked a wide variety of beers, whiskeys and an occasional jar of moonshine, all of which found a ready market among Huntsville's citizens.

Webb and Frazier had been friends for years when Webb heard the new sheriff was looking for another deputy. Immediately he sent word to the sheriff, recommending Frazier for the

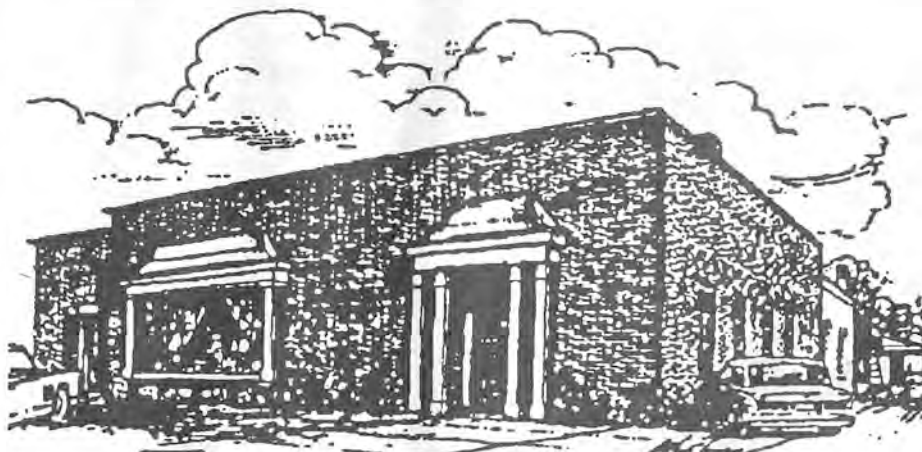
position.

Earl Frazier was well qualified for the job. He was honest, a native of Huntsville, and above all, a man whose physical size demanded instant respect from any would-be law breakers.

The same day after being sworn in as Madison County's newest deputy, Earl stopped by to express his thanks to J.B. After exchanging greetings, the two men sat down at the kitchen table to enjoy a drink and talk of old times, much in the same manner they had done for years.

Their conversation was interrupted, however, by the loud blowing of a car horn in the alley next door. Webb disappeared outside, took the order and then came back in the house to get the merchandise.

"I wish you hadn't done that," drawled the deputy as he watched Webb retrieve two bottles of whiskey from the cupboard.



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"Why?" replied Webb, not really paying attention.

"Cause now I got to arrest you for selling!"

Strange as it may seem to people today, Earl had sworn to uphold the law regardless of his personal friendships. Even stranger was the fact that Webb respected him for it.

Arriving at the jail, and preparing to make bond, Webb realized he had no money with him. Of course, the deputy immediately loaned him the money to get out of jail!

Several weeks later, Earl again arrested Webb for selling liquor. And once again he made bond for his good friend.

Arresting his friend became almost a regular occurrence. Finally, exasperated, Earl told Webb, "We gotta do something! I can't afford to post bond for you no more."

Webb understood Earl's predicament. Every time he was arrested it cost his friend \$100.00; money that could not be returned until after the court date.

Finally, Webb went to the bank, borrowed \$500.00 and gave it to Earl. "This way," he

said, "I figure I'm good for another five arrests!"

Periodically, just before elections or holidays, Huntsville's finest would stage raids on the community's bootleggers. Though it was a nuisance, J.B. Webb accepted it as the cost of doing business.

One time, however, he received a tip about an impending raid that worried him. He had just received three cases of an expensive Scotch, part of his Christmas stock, and could not afford to have it confiscated.

Hurriedly placing the liquor in the back of his pink convertible, he drove to Earl's house where he hid it inside of a shed behind the house. If the neighbors saw him they paid no attention as Earl and J.B., were continuously borrowing lawnmowers and tools from one another.

Just like clockwork, the police arrived the next day and raided the premises. After they left, Webb sat down at the table to have a drink when Earl walked in carrying a package.

"J.B.," he said, "I just wanted to come by early and give you

your Christmas present."

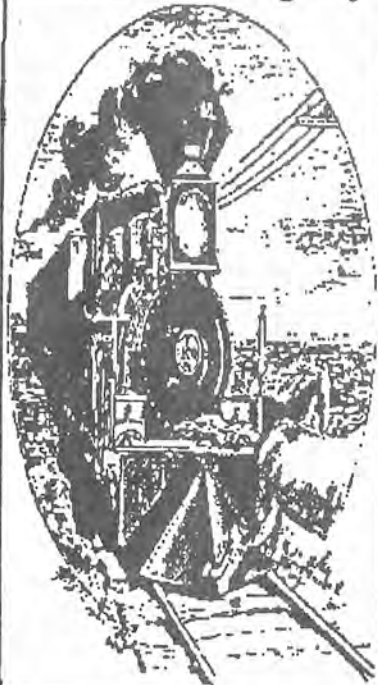
The old bootlegger, after expressing his thanks, opened the package to reveal a bottle of expensive aged Scotch.

Touched by his friend's generosity, Webb asked, "Where did you ever find such good Scotch?"

"Oh, it's nothing," the deputy replied, "I was cleaning out my woodshed the other day and I found a few cases I must have forgot about, so I figured I'd give them for Christmas presents."



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The Miracle Worker



In the late fall of 1958, a strange caravan pulled into Huntsville. After erecting a large tent on an empty lot, near Washington and Pratt Avenue, they immediately began passing out handbills throughout town.

"Religious Revival," the handbill read. "Come see the sick healed and miracles performed before your eyes."

Traveling revivals were nothing new to Huntsville. Almost yearly, miracle workers or religious healers would appear in town to stage week long revivals promising to heal the bodies and

save the souls.

Of course, the faithful were always expected to make generous donations.

This revival troupe, however, was different. Just how different soon became apparent when Huntsville got a good look at the newest miracle worker.

A tall man, slim with dark hair, Preacher Ramone was clad in a stylish suit, crafted from light burgundy satin, heavily inlaid with gold brocade.

He was just different enough to stir the curiosity of Huntsville's natives. The first

night there were maybe 15 or 20 people scattered throughout the large tent, waiting to be healed, saved, or amused.

The show opened with Preacher Ramone giving a passionate plea to the faithful. After working himself to a feverish pitch, he motioned to his helpers waiting in the wings. Slowly, with a chorus of singers singing softly in the background, the helpers rolled a coffin onto the stage.

Just as the choir finished, and with everyone in the audience waiting to see what would happen next, Preacher Ramone raised the lid of the coffin to reveal a body.

"Folks," he cried out. "I promised you a miracle and I am going to show you one! We're gonna pray over this body for 7 days and 7 nights and on the 7th night the body will rise from the dead!"

Needless to say, the next night the tent was almost full of expectant and curious people staring at the body lying on stage.

Of course, Preacher Ramone did not neglect to take contributions. Every few minutes a plate

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tions. Every few minutes a plate would be passed, with the preacher exhorting the people to help him continue in his work.

The tent was full on the third night, and overflowing by the fifth. On the sixth night, police had to be called to help with traffic control. The plates that had been passed around the first nights were now replaced with dishpans, and even they were not large enough to hold the money donated by the thousands of people who were now showing up each night.

Photographs of the coffin, with the body, were sold for \$2.00 apiece, and for an extra donation, one could actually go up on stage and place their hands on the coffin. For another \$1.00 the people could have their picture taken with Preacher Ramone, in all of his burgundy glory.

Early on the morning of the seventh day, people began flock-

ing to town from points all over North Alabama. Eagerly they gathered in the field around the tent, waiting, and talking of the miracle scheduled to happen that night.

By 5 o'clock in the evening the crowd waiting was estimated to be over 4000 people.

And they waited.


Finally, around 8:00 PM., a small delegation took it upon themselves to enter the tent to see what was holding up the show. The chairs were still in place, the coffin still sitting on the stage, propped in an upright

position ... but the body was gone!

So was the choir, Preacher Ramone and thousands of dollars that had once belonged to Huntsville's citizens.

The following week, a creditor from Louisville, Kentucky, showed up with a court order to repossess the tent.

One good thing about being bald is - it's neat.



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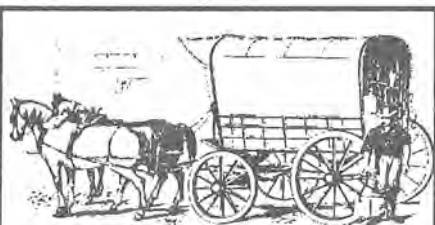
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Old Huntsville

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ESTRAY

Taken up running at large in the city of Huntsville, a mule between a mouse and a creame color, about fourteen hands high, with a brown stripe across the shoulders and down the back, branded I.C. on the left shoulder, and S. on the back. The owner will come foward, prove property, pay charges and take it away.

George W. Denkins
City Marshall

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LOST OR STOLEN!

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and two milkcows to the infidels of the dark who seem to be continuously preying upon the trusting manners of our townspeople. A liberal reward will be paid.

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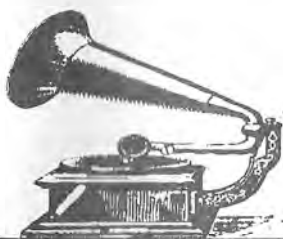
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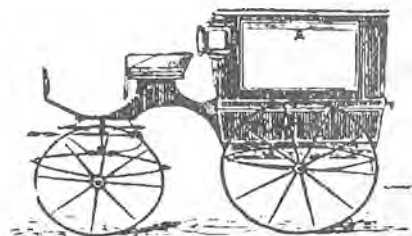
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Texas Martyrs,

The Huntsville
Volunteers of 1835

by Charles Rice



Everywhere people gathered, the story was the same. The talk was all about Texas. A large Mexican army under General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna had just entered the province, determined to disarm the Texans and strip them of their political rights. True, Texas was part of the Republic of Mexico, and what happened there was really none of the United States' business. But most Americans viewed the conflict as a struggle between democracy and a corrupt military dictator. "An Appeal for Texas," reprinted in the *Huntsville Democrat* on November 4,

1835, emphasized this viewpoint.

"The new settlers were governed by the Federal constitution given them by the Mexicans," said the appeal. "They respected, honored and obeyed it. ... They have not trespassed upon the rights of their Mexican neighbors. What then has brought this war upon them? ... The insatiable cupidity, the burning thirst for extended rule, the grasping ambition of Mexico's despot, Santa Anna."

While the Mexican government may rightly have viewed the American settlers as of question-

able loyalty, the fact remains that it was Santa Anna, the President of Mexico, who sparked the conflict. Elected as a liberal in 1833, Santa Anna had responded the following year by abolishing the Mexican constitution, claiming the people were not ready for democracy. (Obviously not. They elected him!)

Over the next thirty years, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna would continue to plague Mexican politics, alternately being driven from the country in disgrace and then amazingly being recalled to assume the presidency. For now, however, the question in everyone's mind was what would become of the Texans.

Most Huntsvillians naturally

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sided with the Texans in spirit, but few felt the distant Mexican province was their concern. One local resident disagreed. His name was Peyton Short Wyatt and he promptly began recruiting volunteers to go and fight for Texas.

Not quite 31 years old, Peyton Wyatt was still single. A native of Charlotte County, Virginia, he evidently had come to Huntsville as a young man. A popular fellow, he had been made clerk of the circuit court. Military life obviously appealed to Wyatt, since he had founded the city's first gentlemen's company, the "Huntsville Guards," in 1829. The young Virginian had even been elected a colonel in the Alabama militia. When it was known that Peyton Wyatt would head the company, other adventuresome Huntsville men hastened to volunteer.

Chosen 1st Lieutenant was Benjamin F. Bradford, while Oliver Smith was named 2d Lieutenant. William Wallace was elected 1st Sergeant, George Thayer 2d Sergeant, Henry Shelby 3d Sergeant, J. D. Rains 4th Sergeant, and Oliver Brown ordnance master. Peter Allen, a free African-American, volunteered as the company's musician. Allen no doubt enlivened the march with his well known skill on the fife.

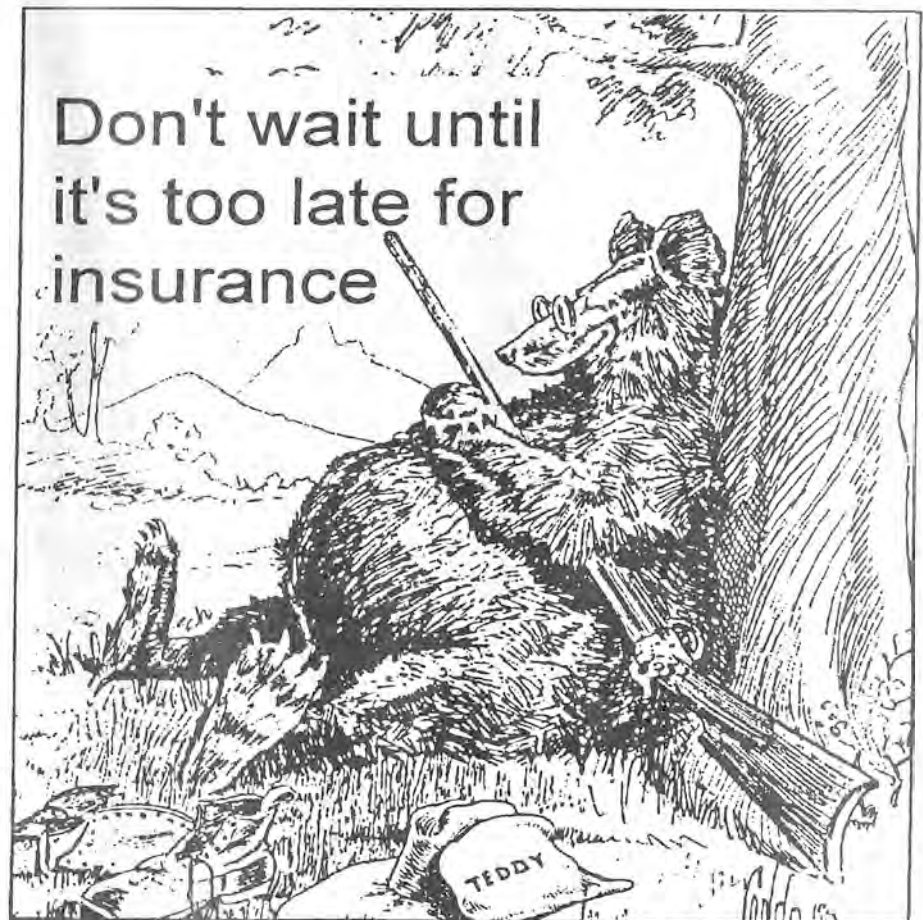
Sunday morning, November 8, 1835, now numbering about 30 men, Wyatt's volunteers began their journey. "They set out in the midst of a heavy rain," reported the *Huntsville Democrat*, "a good omen of their willingness to bear hardships and endure to the end." The volunteers marched west down today's Holmes Avenue, escorted to the top of Russell Hill by the Hunts-

ville Guards. "The company would no doubt have been much larger, had time been allowed for recruiting," said the *Democrat*. "As Texas was actually invaded, Col. W. thought it best to take up line of march forthwith — hoping to gather recruits as he proceeded — under which impression he carried with him about fifty extra stand of arms. The parting scene at Russell's Hill between the 'Volunteers' and the 'Guards' and especially between the latter and their old commander (Col. Wyatt) was truly affecting." Few could have realized they were gazing upon most of the volunteers for the last time in this life.

The Huntsville Volunteers continued west to Decatur,

where they may well have taken passage on the new Courtland, Tuscumbia and Decatur Railway, one of the earliest in the nation. Huntsville citizens eagerly followed the company's progress by the brief reports that appeared in the newspapers. Thus they learned the Huntsville men left Tuscumbia on November 13, taking passage by riverboat. From Memphis the Volunteers sailed down the Mississippi to Natchez, leaving the river to march overland across Louisiana and thence to Texas. It was a tiring trip, and Wyatt later recommended that others take the easier ocean route via New Orleans.

On December 7, 1835, the Huntsville Volunteers arrived at



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Nacogdoches, Texas. Peyton Wyatt wrote from there three days later. He had gained about 20 recruits along the way and had joined forces with a rifle company from Louisville, Kentucky. "I reached here at the head of seventy men, a few days ago — fifty musket men, or a company of heavy Infantry, and twenty Riflemen, comprising a company of Light Infantry, under Capt. [A. B.] King from Kentucky; the whole being under my command as a battalion. Our Battalion is fast recruiting in number, and I hope, before we reach St. Antonio, will count 150 or 200 strong.

"During our whole route from Natchitoches to this place," said Wyatt, "we have been received with open arms, and treated with distinguished respect. At St. Augustine we were met at some distance from the town by the inhabitants, & escorted to our quarters, where we had the pleasure of hearing an appropriate address from Dr. Brown, a gentleman who claims his nativity from our town. Thence we proceeded to Nacogdoches, where we were received with demonstrations of particular good will, and quar-

tered in the house of the Chairman of the Committee of Vigilance and Safety. All of our wants have been kindly attended to by the citizens of this place. Baggage wagons and Jersey carriages for our sick procured; arms, ammunition and provisions furnished us, although in the way of arms, you know, we were pretty well supplied before we left Huntsville. In short, everything has been done for us, which could contribute to our safety and comfort.

"On last evening I had the pleasure of receiving an elegant gold watch, presented to me by Major George A. Nixon, of this place, Chairman of the Committee of Vigilance and Safety for Nacogdoches. At St. Augustine I was presented with a very fine horse, with full Spanish rigging, by Col. A. E. Johnson of that place." Clearly, the Texans were grateful for their help.

The Huntsville Volunteers had arrived in Texas to find the situation seemingly favorable. San Antonio had fallen to the Texas forces, and Texas troops now replaced the Mexican garrison at the old mission known as the Alamo. Furthermore, Santa Anna was having problems of his

own. "One of the recent reports in Texas," Wyatt told the *Huntsville Democrat*, "was that Santa Anna was compelled, at the head of 2,000 men, to countermarch upon Zapatecas, which was in a state of rebellion." The Texans realized that Santa Anna would eventually march against them, but they did not expect him for at least a month or two. In fact, prospects for military action seemed so remote that Peyton

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45	155	260	460
50	205	360	660
55	270	510	960
60	410	798	1535

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Wyatt left on furlough, sailing from Matagordas Bay in mid-February 1836.

Wyatt reached Huntsville several weeks later, and informed the local papers of the situation. He said about 1500 American volunteers had already reached in Texas, and he had seen another 300 ready to leave at New Orleans. Oddly enough, Texas still had not declared its independence, but Wyatt felt that it would happen soon.

Peyton Wyatt fully intended to return to his company, but he was fortunate to be absent. For a cruel fate awaited the men from Huntsville, one they could never have foreseen. Unfortunately, the Huntsville Volunteers had been placed in the command of Colonel James W. Fannin, who led a mixed force of Texans and Americans. Fannin candidly admitted, "I am a better judge of my military abilities than others, and if I am qualified to command an army, I have not found it out." Fannin's small army included two other companies from Alabama, the "Red Rovers" from Courtland and a company from Mobile. Fannin's command also contained volunteers from Georgia, as well as a handful of Polish refugees, willing to take part in any struggle for freedom.

With Santa Anna busy subduing Zapatecas, it was decided to send Fannin's men to raid Matamoros, Mexico. General Sam Houston opposed the raid as senseless, but he was overruled. Moreover, with Sam Houston on furlough, Fannin was the senior Texas commander. Before the expedition could even start, however, the Texans learned that Santa Anna's army was already marching against them.

Colonel Fannin moved his headquarters to Goliad, the site

of a Spanish mission founded in 1749. Fannin considered uniting his strength with Colonel William B. Travis at the Alamo, but decided to remain at Goliad and fortify the town. It was a blunder that would cost Texas both of the commands.

Unfortunately for Fannin, the right wing of Santa Anna's army was commanded by General Jose Urrea, a very capable officer. On February 26, 1836, Urrea's men surprised a small detachment of Texas cavalry, killing or capturing most of them. On March 2, another detachment was nearly wiped out by

Urrea's men. With Travis's command isolated and surrounded at the Alamo, Fannin's continued presence at Goliad was both unnecessary and unwise. Nevertheless, instead of retreating, Fannin continued to fortify his position. Food and ammunition were in short supply, but Fannin doggedly stayed where he was. "Hoping for the best, and prepared for the worst," he wrote on February 28, "I am in a devil of a bad humor."

On March 12, a portion of the Huntsville Volunteers were sent with a detachment of Georgians to rescue a few Texan families

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trapped at an abandoned mission. Their task completed, the men should have returned promptly to Goliad, but the Georgia officer commanding decided to seek a fight. He soon found more Mexican soldiers than he hoped for, and his men used up much of their ammunition in a pointless skirmish with Urrea's cavalry. To make matters worse, the Alamo had fallen on March 6, and Santa Anna's entire army was now on its way to Goliad.

With no cavalry of his own, Fannin was completely in the dark about Urrea's movements. On March 17, he at last decided to retreat. Even then, he took his time about it. The retreat, which did not begin until the morning March 19, was painfully slow. Captain Jack Shackelford of the Red Rovers and Captain Burr Duval repeatedly urged Fannin to keep moving until he reached the shelter of the woods at Coleta Creek. Stubbornly, Fannin refused to listen. He halted his command in an open expanse of prairie three miles from the creek. And there Urrea's army found him and attacked. Quickly surrounded, the Texas defenders had to fight with no water and with little ammunition. No one was more to blame than the inept Colonel Fannin.

Fannin's 300 green volunteers fought courageously throughout the afternoon against Urrea's 1,000 Mexican veterans. "It was a very sad sight to see our small circle," said a survivor. "It had become muddy with blood. Colonel Fannin had been so badly wounded at the first or second fire as to disable him. The wounded shrieked for water which we had none to give

them." The Texans managed to kill 50 of Urrea's soldiers and wounded another 140. They lost nine of their own killed and 51 wounded. The Texans' artillery, manned in part by the Poles, played a major role in holding off the Mexican regulars. With nightfall, most of Fannin's men could have escaped in the dark. However, they refused to abandon their wounded.

On the morning of March 20, Urrea's own artillery arrived. The Mexican big guns easily outranged the Texans' small cannon, and General Urrea soon sent a surrender demand. Colonel Fannin had little choice but to comply.

What happened next provoked a controversy that continues to this day. Fannin's men were marched back to Goliad and held under guard. They had surrendered as prisoners of war and expected to be treated as

such. (Signed by both Fannin and Urrea, the surrender terms specified that the officers were to be paroled and the enlisted men held as prisoners until they could depart from Mexico, not to take up arms until exchanged.) However, General Santa Anna had different plans. He had decided to execute every one of the prisoners to discourage others from coming to Texas.

"The Mexicans had always said that Santa Anna would be at La Bahia [Goliad] on the 27th, to release us," recalled a surviving officer. "Accordingly on that day, we were ordered to form all the prisoners. We were told we were going to bring wood and water, and that Santa Anna would be there that day. We were ordered to march all the officers at the head of the file, except Col. Fannin, who lay wounded in the hospital." The prisoners were heavily guarded as they

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"marched out on the Bexar road, near the burying ground, and as we were ordered to halt, we heard our companions shrieking in almost agonizing tones, 'Oh, God! Oh, God! Spare us!' and nearly simultaneously the report of musketry. It was then we knew what was to be our fate."

Some of Fannin's men broke and ran for the distant trees, but only a handful made it to safety. The rest were shot, bayoneted, or clubbed to death. A Mexican officer's wife managed to save a few by concealing them on the parapet, and the men remembered her as the "Angel of Goliad." (Her husband repaid her by deserting her.)

Almost all of the Huntsville Volunteers were among the dead. Benjamin F. Bradford, who commanded the company after Wyatt's departure, somehow managed to survive. "Nearly the whole of my company was killed," he wrote his brother after his escape. "Of 47 men, rank and file, 43 are numbered with the slaughtered. Two privates, my 4th Sergeant and myself were all who escaped." It was a black

day for many families in Huntsville.

Ironically, Santa Anna's Goliad Massacre completely backfired. While technically he might have been justified in killing the prisoners as domestic rebels and foreign intruders, his mass murder of United States citizens enraged the American public and only increased support for the struggling Texans. Unfortunately, it also created a false impression that Mexicans were a treacherous and violent people, which helped lead to the Mexican War ten years later.

When news of the atrocity reached the United States, meetings were held all across the country to raise volunteers to defeat the brutal tyrant. An unbelievable \$100,000 was raised in one just day in New York, while 500 volunteers assembled at Natchez. Here in Huntsville, Captain William Robinson organized another company and invited "all persons who feel an interest in the triumph of Liberty over Despotism" to gather at the courthouse on May 2, 1836. Though they did not yet know it,

General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna had already been taken prisoner, captured following his crushing defeat by Sam Houston at San Jacinto on April 21, 1836. The Mexican dictator was found disguised in the uniform of a humble private, fearful of being punished for his bloody deeds.

With Santa Anna's capture, the war was won. The Republic of Texas was independent and would remain so for another nine years. Then, in 1845, Texas would choose to join the United States of America.

Sadly, the part the Huntsville Volunteers played in Texas' War of Independence is almost unknown today. Captain Jack Shackelford of Courtland escaped death at Goliad (spared because he was a doctor) and his martyred Red Rovers have attained at least a small degree of fame. But the other Alabamians who fought and died for Texas' freedom have been forgotten in their very own state. Even by the time of Judge Thomas J. Taylor, who wrote his History of Madison County, Alabama just 40 years later, the fate of the Hunts-

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ville Guards had become clouded. Taylor has Peyton Wyatt raise his company "in the Spring of 1836" and march them to Texas after "the news of the bloody tragedies at the Alamo and Goliad," arriving too late to join in the fighting. Wyatt then "came back with many of his command," instead of just the four men who actually survived! Taylor also garbled the name of Peter Allen, the black fifer, calling him "Peter Daniels" and having the Goliad martyr die in some unknown spot, killed by Mexican soldiers who offer him the choice of playing the fife for their army or dying. "Peter Daniels" heroically refuses to change sides and is subsequently shot. While the circumstances of Allen's death are quite likely true, one wonders how Judge Taylor managed to get ev-

erything else so wrong!

Judge Taylor to the contrary, Peyton Wyatt did not remain long in Huntsville. On February 8, 1837, he married his 17 year old sweetheart, Miss Frances C. Routt. Soon after, he returned to Texas to stay. Wyatt received a bounty grant of 330 acres for his service, and represented Red River County in the Texas Congress in 1838. He died of tuberculosis in Memphis on October 24, 1847, at the age of 42, while returning to Texas from a visit to Huntsville. His young wife apparently contracted the disease from him, since she died at age 34, on September 10, 1854.

And what about the Goliad Martyrs? It was many years before their resting place was marked. Santa Anna had the bodies stripped, stacked like cordwood, and burned in the

field where they were murdered. For two months the charred remains lay exposed to the weather. Then on June 3, 1836, Texas General Thomas Jefferson Rusk ordered the remains buried in a common grave just outside the walls of the presidio. In 1852, a Goliad survivor named Joseph Barnard erected a marker over the mass grave of his comrades. However, this simple stone soon disappeared, perhaps stolen by a morbid souvenir hunter. Finally, more than a century after the tragedy, the State of Texas erected an impressive memorial over the grave of the fallen heroes. It bears the names of the 300 plus victims. The list includes 43 of the Huntsville Volunteers — now honored in Texas, but forgotten in their own home town!

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The Mystery of Maple Hill

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"A funeral procession is passing. A flag is thrown over the coffin. Must belong to the artillery, as there is a cannon in the procession. The band of music from headquarters is playing a dirge. These funeral processions pass two or three times a day of late, and sometimes there are two coffins in the hearse at the same time. When a member of the cavalry dies, his horse is led in the procession, a chief mourner, with the blankets and accoutrements of the deceased thrown over him, which looks inexpressibly sad."

So wrote Mrs. Mary Jane Chadick of Huntsville in her diary on June 11, 1862. The funerals she was describing were those of her enemies, Yankee invaders from Major General Ormsby Mitchel's hated Union Army of occupation. Yet these young men were Americans nonetheless, and even amidst the passions of the brutal War Between the States, this gentle Southern woman could be touched by their deaths. After all, she was a mother herself, and somewhere up North another

wife or mother would be weeping.

Incredible as it may seem, the resting place of these defenders of the Union has been lost to history. These missing graves constitute the Mystery of Maple Hill Cemetery.

The city of Huntsville, Alabama, changed hands no less than nine times during the Civil War, and soldiers of both armies were buried in Maple Hill. About

180 Confederate dead rest in the old section of the cemetery, each marked with a tombstone reading "unknown." In recent years, research has discovered the names of about half of these Confederates from their regimental muster rolls, though no one can know who is buried in which grave.

However, a distressingly large number of the Union war dead simply seem to have vanished. These men must lie somewhere in Maple Hill Cemetery. But where?

About five years after the war, the Federal Government hired a contractor to remove the Union war dead from North Alabama to the National Cemetery at Chattanooga, Tennessee. The bodies of 122 white Union soldiers (including some from Reconstruction) were exhumed at Huntsville and taken by rail for re-burial at Chattanooga. The remains of 35 black soldiers and civilian employees were also moved. However, a careful reading of the names in the National Cemetery reveals that many of the Union

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dead are unaccounted for. This is especially true of the men who lost their lives during the first Union occupation in the spring and summer of 1862.

For example, the records of the 37th Indiana Infantry list four of its members as having died in Huntsville: Privates John M. Shepherd, Joseph Hamilton, Elisha G. Patrick, and Eli Cooper. Not one of them rests at Chattanooga. Similarly, the 10th Wisconsin Infantry lost five men in Huntsville in 1862: Privates Nicholas Colton Jr., Miles Halsey, John T. Hudson, William W. Leroy, and Dwight P. Frank. Colton died of wounds, the others from disease. Yet the remains of only one man from the 10th Wisconsin was moved to Chattanooga. The others presumably are still at Maple Hill.

The fact that the one 10th Wisconsin grave at Chattanooga

is marked "unknown" provides a clue to what must have happened. Presumably, once a regiment marched away from Huntsville, the graves of its dead were neglected. The soldiers of both armies marked their graves with wooden headboards, and the crude markers disintegrated after only a few years. Huntsville's citizens would have respected the Union graves, but they had little inclination to maintain the resting places of their late enemies. Indeed, the South was so impoverished in the years immediately after the war that the wooden Confederate markers were allowed to disappear without being replaced! Thus both the Union and Confederate dead became largely unknown.

This was so even with men who died comparatively late in the war. For example, the 13th Wisconsin Infantry's records

show that nine of its men died in Huntsville between June 1864 and January 1865. Just two of these were moved to Chattanooga; Private Luman Palmer and another marked "unknown."

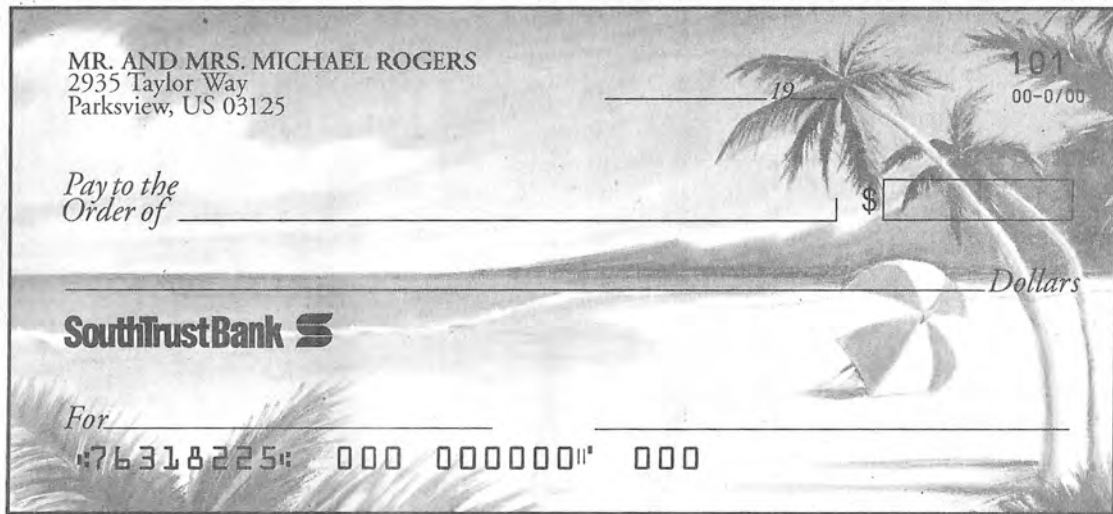
So where can these Civil War soldiers be? *Old Huntsville* telephoned the National Cemetery at Chattanooga and asked them, "If they're not here," the Cemetery's spokesman replied, "then they must still be in Huntsville." The number of missing Union soldiers may be as high as 300 or more. One would have to examine the muster rolls of every Union regiment that passed through Huntsville to find out. The bodies of a few men from more affluent families might have been moved home after the war, but the others obviously are still in Maple Hill. The Union war dead reportedly were buried in the corner of the cemetery near where the Confederate dead rest. This grass covered area of Maple Hill is relatively free of tombstones and seems the logical place to look for the lost Yankees.

Only a year or so after the war, women across the South began placing flowers on the graves of the wartime dead. Generously, these ladies decorated the graves of their recent foes as well. Northern women heard about the practice and pushed for the creation of a national Memorial Day. Less forgiving than their Southern sisters, the Federal holiday honored only the soldiers of the North. In the early 1950s, however, the United States Congress corrected this and passed legislation declaring Confederate soldiers and sailors to be United States veterans. Thus the last handful of aged Johnny Rebs received Federal

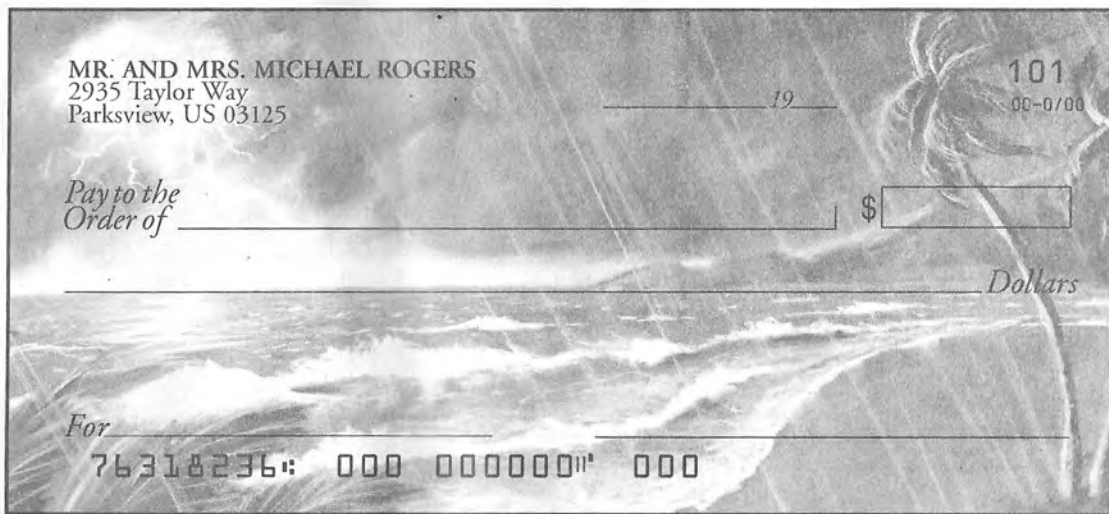
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Maple Hill from pg. 46

pensions and the veterans of both sides are entitled to equal respect.

For many years the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans have paid annual tribute to the Confederate dead at Maple Hill Cemetery. But what of the Union soldiers who also sacrificed their lives for the cause they believed in? How can we honor their memory if we don't even know where they rest? This is the tragic part of the mystery of Maple Hill.

(If you have any family traditions or other information regarding the resting place of the lost soldiers, please contact Old Huntsville. Your assistance would be appreciated.)



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Huntsville Democrat, Jan. 13, 1836

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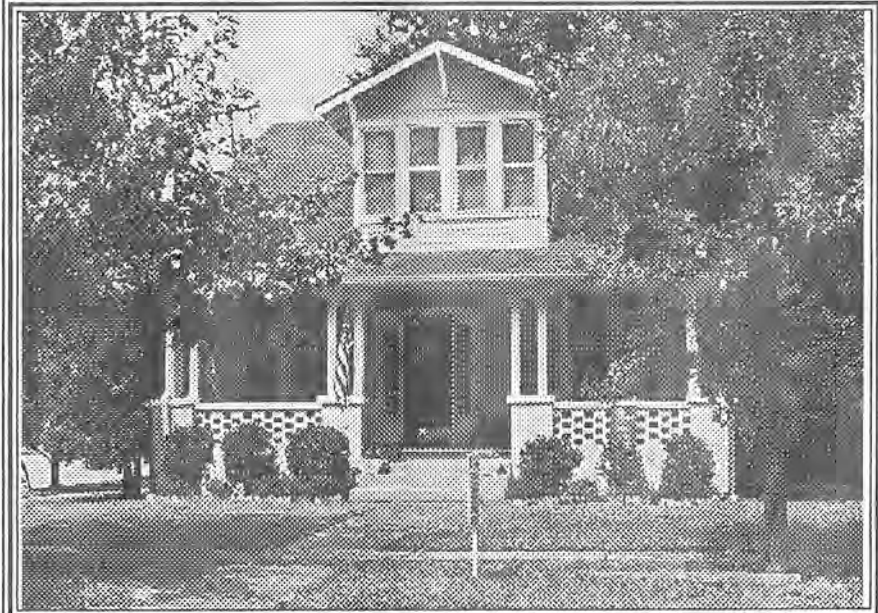


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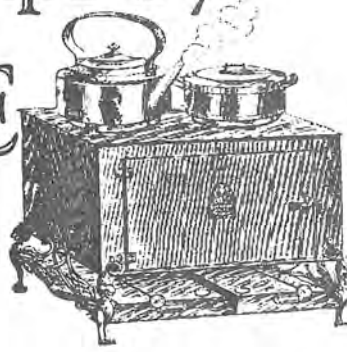
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Household Tips by EARLENE



If you are going to work and notice a stain on your off-white suit, just cover it up by rubbing baby powder onto the stain.

To loosen an old pane of glass, just pass a red-hot poker slowly over the old putty. Trying to insert drapery hooks into the fabric? It'll be much easier if you first coat the hooks with a soapy film.

Club soda works wonders for removing grease from double-knit fabrics.

To get tar out of clothing, soak the spot with raw linseed oil. Allow it to stand until soft, then wipe with a soft cloth that you have dampened with the oil.

Just to ensure you'd be able to prove your car is yours one day, after a theft, just drop a business card with your name and address on it down the window slot.

To avoid milk spills when your child is trying to hold on to his/her cup, just wrap two rubberbands around the cup, about two inches apart, where the little hands will take hold. This will make it easier to hang on to.

Use nonstick vegetable spray to lubricate squeaky hinges, sticky locks, etc.

For an inexpensive stain for your unfinished wooden picture frames, use ordinary shoe polish. Put on one coat and let it dry. Apply a second coat. When dry, apply a good paste wax. Brown polish looks like walnut, oxblood will look like mahogany and tan will look like a light maple shade.

A zipper will slide easier if you rub it with a lead pencil. Before you wear a new garment, touch the center of each button with clear nail polish--this will seal the threads and buttons will stay on much longer.

If your favorite nail polish has turned gummy or hard, just place it in a pan of boiling water. In no time it will be good as new.

For a natural toothpaste, dip your toothbrush into some mashed strawberries and scrub. This will remove yellowing and stains.

Place fresh, cold cucumbers sliced on top of your closed eyes to rid them of redness and puffiness.



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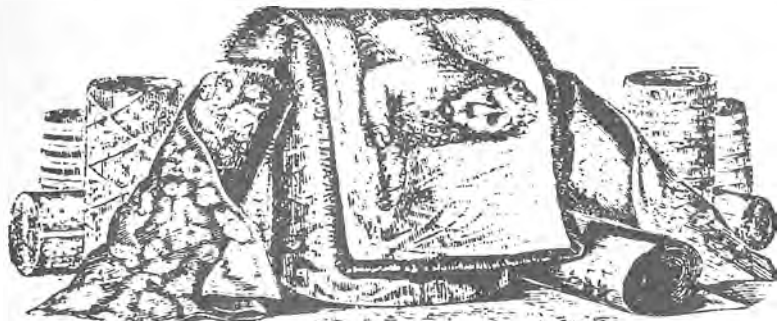
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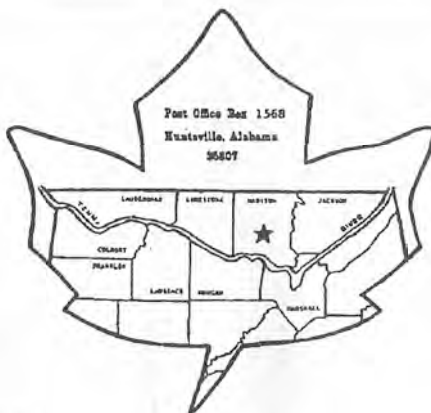
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Searching For Our Ancestors



A monthly column provided by the Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society to aid people in their genealogical research.

WHITWORTH, DUNNIVANT, SANDERSON, DEDHAM Looking for any information about Daniel Whitworth, b 1806 in Virginia d 1860/62; m Elizabeth Dedman 1833 Madison Co AL. Also need information about Calvin H. Sanderson b 1816 in AL m Ellen ___? and Pinky Jane Grimes b 5 Dec 1850 AL m John Henry Dunnivant.

*Rebecca Valenzuela, 87
Conway Acres, Auburn, AL
36830*

CHISM, CHISHOLM, MCPHERSON Seek information on Chisholm family buried Chisholm family Cemetery, Florence, Lauderdale Co, AL. John 91 yrs b 1838 VA m Ester, Green Co KY. Is there a connection with George Chism b 1798, Barren Co KY? George m Eleanor McPherson d 1855 Coryell Co TX, d/o Jehue and Margery Nichols McPherson of SC. Deed records exist of John and Mary Chism selling property in Barren Co 1807-1816. Any help appreciated.

*Phyllis Schultz Lamb, 9800
Pagewood, #2107, Houston, TX
77042*

MORRIS, WILLIAMS Timothy Wilson Morris b 21 Feb 1833 Jackson Co AL (CW record and Death Cert) s/o Cal? Morris d c1835. Timothy's mother m 3 times; 1st ___? dau Mary; 2nd Cal? son, Timothy; 3rd ___? Williams and more children. Tim went to TX c age 25. Have not found on 1850 census. Any information appreciated.

*Virginia Morris Harbin, P. O.
Box 352, Ada, OK. 74821*

LEWIS, DANIEL, HALL, WOOSLEY, WILKINS Need proof John Lewis b c1770 Albermarle Co VA m Susan Daniel in KY; son John, Jr. b c1812-14 Lincoln Co TN. John Jr. m Elizabeth ___? b TN; son John F. (Franklin) Lewis b Feb 1 847 Jackson Co AL m 29 Aug 1 867. Malinda Susannah Jane Hall, b 28 Feb 1847 GA, d/o Nathaniel D. Hall b 7 Jun 1823 NC m Martha Elizabeth Bell Wilkins b c1828 NC. Who were parents and siblings of Nathaniel and Martha Wilkins Lewis? Martha d 1851-1859; Nath m Sarah Woosley 1859 Jackson Co AL.

*Virginia Morris Harbin, P. O.
Box 352, Ada, OK. 74821*

WINTER(S)□, MCDANIEL, MILLSAP, MORRIS, ELLIOTT Lavina (Elliott or McDaniel) m Daniel Winter in AL, son James b c1835 AL. Lavina in Cass Co TX bef 1838 as a widow, received 640 acres land. Dau Caroline Elizabeth Winter b Feb 1841 TX m 1st: May 1859 Timothy Wilson Morrism; 2nd or 3rd: 1847 William Millsap. Need proof of Lavina's maiden name, and marriage to McDaniel or Winter. Also need information about her parents and siblings.

*Virginia Morris Harbin, P. O.
Box 352, Ada, OK 74821*

DAME, RIDDLE Seek information on Andrew and Sarah Dame, ch. of John Dame Jr. Court records of Marion Co TN, 5 Sep 1842 appointed John Jr.'s sister, Elizabeth and husband Elisha Riddle, guardian of Andrew and Sarah. Other ch: John, Elizabeth, Valentine and Matilda were bound to John Dame Sr. Valentine m Nancy Cline and d OK. Will share information.

*Virginia Hayes, P.O. Box 624,
Minco, OK 73059*

WEST, SIMPSON Seeking parents/siblings of Mary T. E. West and Richard Simpson m 7 Jul 1837 Marshall Co AL, and connection to West and Simpson households in 1840 Marshall Co Federal Census.

*Mary B. Stauble, 7503
Beulah Church Road, Louisville,
KY 40228*

JACKSON, PRIDE, HIGH What is connection between Wilford Jackson (d 18 Apr 1877, age 63 yr, 6 mos), Mary J. Jackson (d Jun 1893 age 75 yrs, 8 days), and Nathaniel J. Pride (b 6 May 1795 d 23 Oct 1875)?

Jacksons are buried in Nathaniel J. Pride Cem., Colbert Co AL. Are these Jacksons cousins to the Prides through Ruth Jackson High, mother of Sallie High Pride and grandmother of Nathaniel). Pride?

Emmilou Chandler, 5202 Coventry Drive, Riverside, CA 92506

BAKER, THOMAS, THOMPSON, MASON Anna Eliza Thomas/Thompson b 12 Sep 1852, TN? appears in 1860/70 Madison Co AL census as a HH member of Dr. William Mason. Anna m John Webster Baker 7 Oct 1870 Jackson Co AL. No family record exists to learn her exact surname, or anything about her parents. Her family seeks any information about her parents and is eager to contact any Baker descendants.

Sandra L. Walker, 4705 Shoalwood Ave., Austin, TX 78756-2814

BYRD, ADAIR Trying to locate grave of my ggg grandfather, William Byrd, a Baptist minister in Madison, Limestone and Franklin Co AL who died after 1850. His wife, Lydia Adair, is supposed to be buried in Burleson Graveyard, Flint, AL. Need birth, marriage and death dates. Will exchange information.

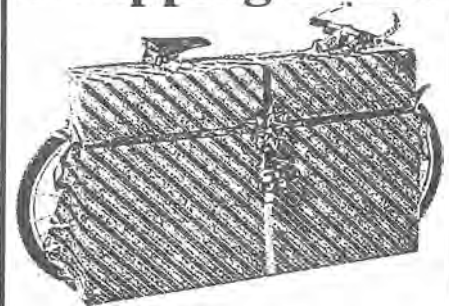
Margie Byrd Little, 1810 Willowbend, Kelleen, TX 76543

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Hazel Green: Where The Hazel Nuts Grew



by Jack Harwell

If you spend any time traveling about Madison County, you will find communities whose origins seem to be lost in the mists of history. But each one has a story to tell.

During the early part of the last century, people flocked to what is now North Alabama from the more populated areas back east. Two of the more popular migration routes intersected about 14 miles north of John Hunt's cabin at the Big Spring. One was the road leading south from Nashville, where the sales of lands in the area were re-

corded. The other road ran east-west toward Athens and was known as the Limestone Road. Also known as the Military Road, it brought many settlers to Alabama from the Carolinas and Virginia.

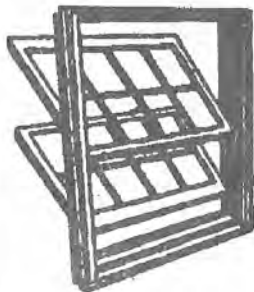
By 1809 this crossroads had become a busy place. With both hotels and stores, and a spring for watering horses, it was becoming a real town, rivalling the settlement at the Spring to the south. It was during this period that the little community became known as Hazel Green. Travelers passing through the town were struck by the abundance of green hazelnut bushes there. Thus the place where the hazelnuts grew became Hazel Green. One version of this story suggests that the name was bestowed by none other than Andrew Jackson. This is certainly possible, since the general and future president was a frequent visitor to Huntsville.

Thomas McGeehee came to north Madison County in 1815 and built a mill on a fork of the Flint River about two miles north of Hazel Green. Another settler, Charles Cabiness, built a cotton gin in the same area. Both the

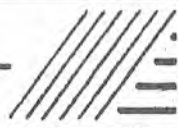
McGeehee mill and the Cabiness gin are believed to be the first operations of their kind in Madison County, and possibly in the state.

So rapid was Hazel Green's growth that the town incorporated in 1821. Five trustees were elected in August of that year, and later there were a treasurer and a constable. At this time, perhaps three or four hundred people lived in Hazel Green, making it the third largest city in the county, behind Huntsville and Triana. A post office had been established in 1819. But the City of Hazel Green was destined for a short life, for the articles of incorporation were repealed by the state legislature in 1830. Hazel Green has been unincorporated ever since, although in the last twenty years there has been some sentiment to reincorporate.

During Hazel Green's days as a popular stopover for Huntsville-bound travellers, one of the favorite lodging places was the Round Mound Inn. Located one mile east of the town, this structure was built in 1847 by a woman with a questionable past. Elizabeth Evans Dale had moved



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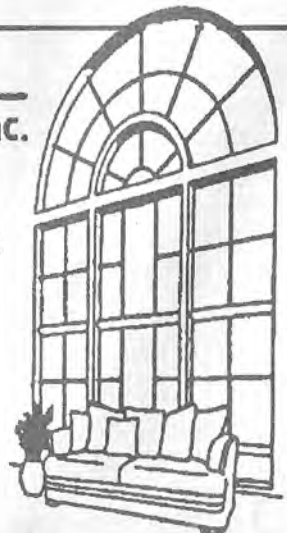
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to Hazel Green in 1835, having recently married a man named Gibbons. Gibbons died shortly after arriving in Hazel Green. His widow remarried — but her new husband died soon after. She then married Alexander Jefferies, who owned a large plantation in the area. Eight years later, Jefferies passed on as well, and some locals began to whisper about the woman whose husbands seemed to die mysteriously.

Elizabeth was a woman of great beauty, which she would retain well past her youth, and had no trouble attracting rich and influential men. Not long after burying Mr. Jefferies, she married Robert High, a Limestone County legislator. He lasted three years. In 1846, Elizabeth married for a fifth time, this time to Absalom Brown, a merchant of New Market. It was during her marriage to Brown that Elizabeth began construction of the inn, but he was not around for the opening, having died suddenly. Now the rumors were mentioned more openly. It was said that Elizabeth hung the hats of each husband on a rack in an upstairs hallway. Supposedly, the burial of Absalom Brown on the grounds of the inn took place late at night.

Elizabeth's sixth marriage, to Willis Routt, fared no better than the others. He soon followed his predecessors to the grave. She then began keeping company with D. H. Bingham, a local schoolteacher. But then matters finally came to a head. A neighbor, Abner Tate, published a book which specifically charged Elizabeth with the murders of her husbands. Tate believed Elizabeth and Bingham to be responsible for legal problems he had been experiencing. The

couple brought libel charges against Tate, which were later dropped. Elizabeth sold the inn in 1854 and moved to Mississippi, where, it is assumed, she spent the remainder of her life.

Hazel Green's first residents were attracted to the area by the abundance of fertile farmland, and the town would always remain a farming community. The wealthy cotton planters of antebellum days were replaced, after the Civil War, by small tract farmers. Meanwhile, the center of population of Madison County shifted to Huntsville.

The road to Huntsville eventually became a paved state highway, which was widened to four lanes in the 1950s. Until interstate highways were built, it remained the main road from

Huntsville to Nashville. Many of Hazel Green's natives took jobs in Huntsville. But change always came slowly to Hazel Green. A survey done in the mid-50s listed 88 cars—and 70 tractors.

The past yields slowly, but inexorably. The Round Mound Inn burned down in 1968. A traffic light now stops traffic at the crossroads where travellers once watered their horses and marvelled at the hazelnut bushes. But Hazel Green is still a town centered at a single crossroads, just as it was 175 years ago. And away from the main roads, land is still being farmed, just as it was in the days of Andrew Jackson.



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In the spring of 1872, a young soldier visited Huntsville with an interesting proposition for our city's leaders.

He wanted to supply Huntsville's police force with uniforms. Although many Northern policemen already wore uniforms, the idea had not caught on very well in the South, partially because of the cost.

For the small towns still recovering economically from the Civil War, even a small item like uniforms was considered exorbitant.

The young soldier, however,

had an idea. At the end of the war he had seen hundreds of thousands of Federal uniforms lying useless in warehouses. After purchasing a quantity of them for a pittance, he had a tailor in Cincinnati alter them.

Now he was traveling the South, offering the modified uniforms at a price much lower than the competition.

Whether or not he was the salesman who actually persuaded the city to clothe its policemen in blue has been lost in history.

We do know for a fact, how-

ever, that two months after his visit our policemen had uniforms.

Despite his skills at salesmanship, the young soldier's business never really got off the ground. Faced with the prospect of failure, the young warrior once again returned full time to his military career.

Unfortunately, that too ended in failure. Years later, the young soldier, George Armstrong Custer, was killed at the battle of Little Big Horn.

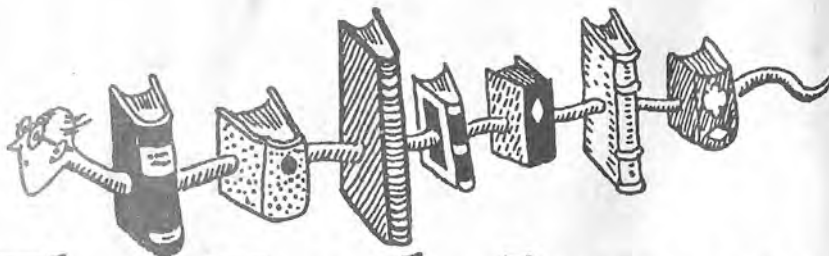


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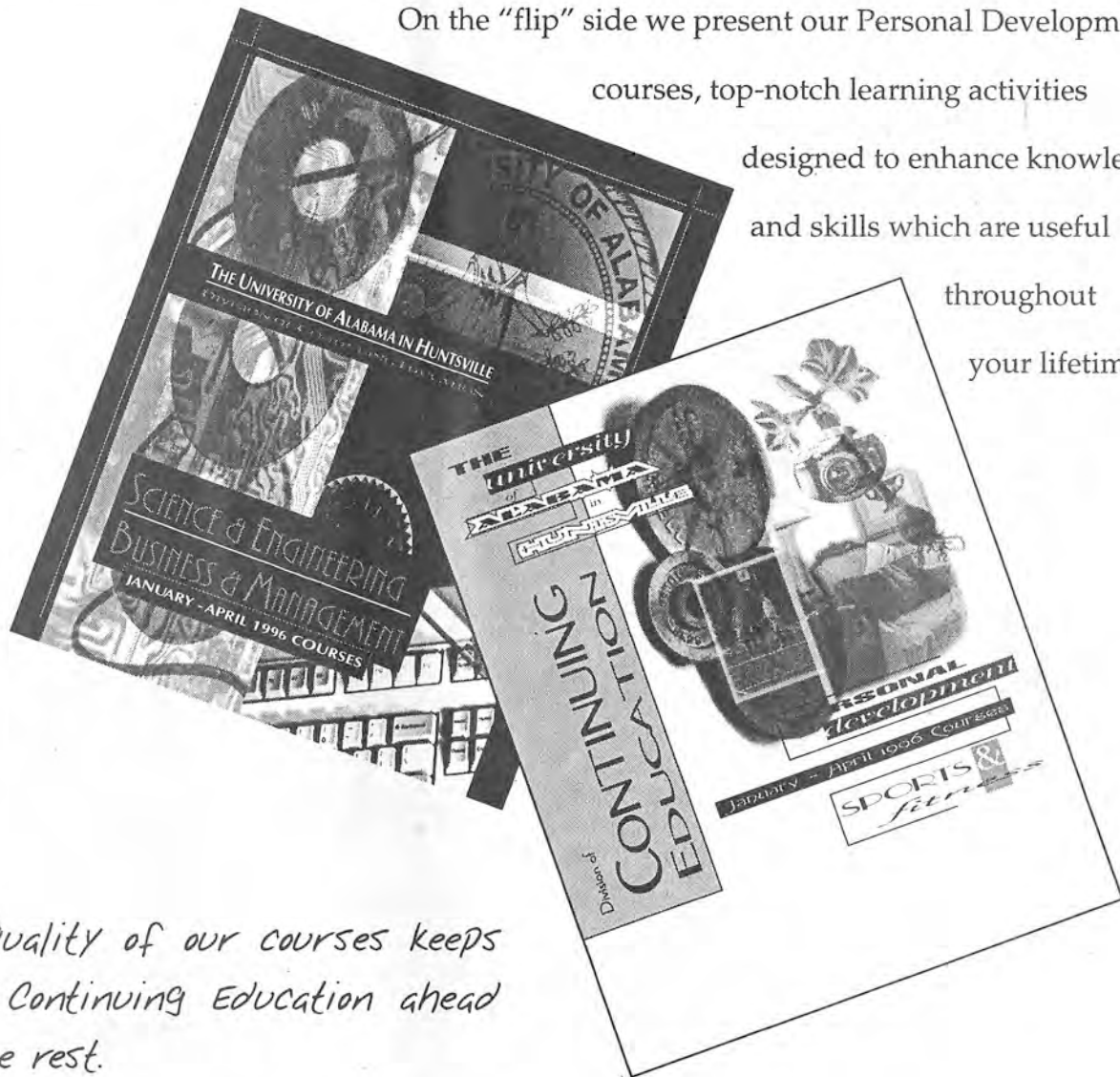
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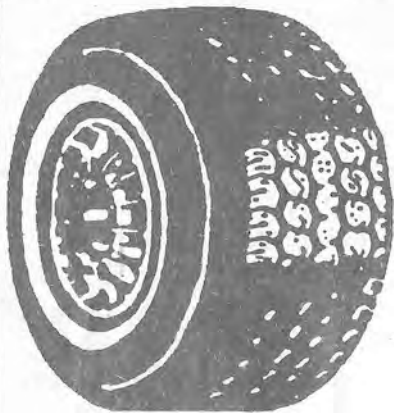
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