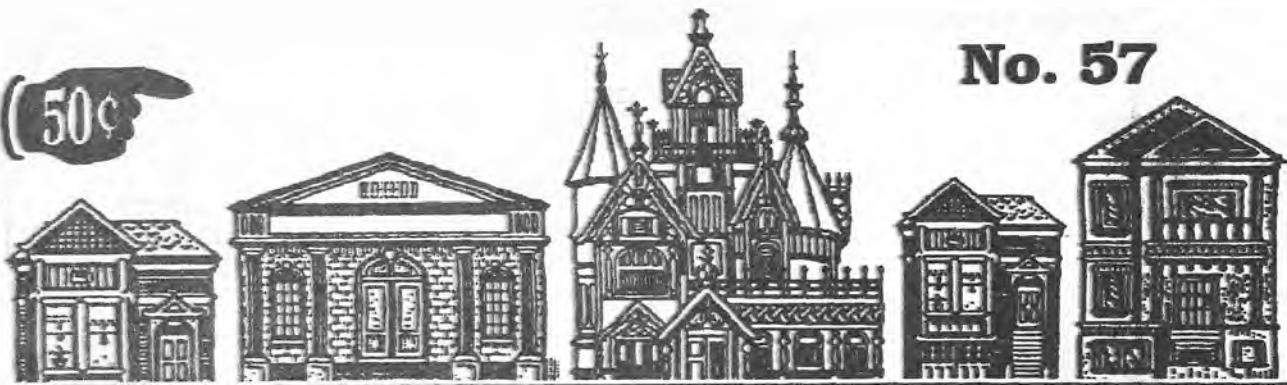


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No. 57



# Old Huntsville

## *Suffer the Little Children*



In 1900, Mill owners were among Huntsville's elite society. Their lives of privilege and wealth afforded their families every conceivable luxury. Just across the tracks lived the children who, toiling side-by-side with their parents, were the source for these riches. Separated by scant miles yet worlds apart, these two classes rarely chanced upon each other – until the day that Susie Priest was attacked.

Also in this Issue: Memories by Tillman Hill

# Suffer The Little Children

The news spread quickly throughout Dallas Village. Like a brushfire caught in cyclonic winds, the story passed from person to person, building on its own momentum and stirring emotions of anger and frustration that had been repressed for years.

Another young girl, Susie Priest, a ten year old mill worker, had been brutally raped. Crimes of this nature had become almost commonplace in the village but were usually ignored by most of Huntsville's citizens. Dallas village was outside the Huntsville Police jurisdiction and the sheriff, who depended on the mill owners for political support, rarely ventured onto their turf.

The mill owners preferred it this way as it allowed for more control of the workers.

Anger among the mill workers had been building for months. Most of them were ex-sharecroppers who had fled the fields in search of a better life, lured by the promises of the mill owners in search of cheap labor.

The Utopian life that had been promised the workers never materialized. Wages of 68 cents a day in 1892 for an able bodied male worker were reduced by 1900 to a mere 34 cents per day. Sixty-six hour work weeks were increased to 75. The female workers fared even worse, making on average

27 cents a day.

Even the homes that had been promised the workers seemed more like a fantasy than a reality. Dallas Mills had begun building a few "mill homes" in early 1900, but these were quickly claimed by the blue-coated foremen. The rest of the workers were forced to live in makeshift shanty towns, often with nothing but a piece of canvas to protect them from the weather.

The worst thing for the village residents, however, was the feeling of having become second class citizens. Families who for generations had been raised to be independent, now found themselves reduced to being referred to as "lintheads belonging to Dallas Mills."

From the groceries bought at the company store to the firewood burned in the kitchen stove, to the mill whistle that woke you up at 4:00 in the morning, every aspect of life in the village was controlled by the mill owners.

But, however harsh the conditions were, it was the children who suffered the most. There were no child labor laws and many families were forced to put their children to work in order to survive. Making on the average of ten cents a day, children would report to Dallas Mills at 5:45 in the morning and not get off until 6 that evening.

Mill owners actively encouraged the use of children as a "prime source of labor" and Huntsville newspapers praised the mills for teaching the kids "work ethics."

In Alabama, almost one out of every four mill workers were children.

A social activist of the times, Mrs. John Van Vorst, visited



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many of the mills and found conditions so appalling as to defy belief. One child, who was "going on twelve," had worked at a mill for almost four years. He had never attended school and worked a twelve hour shift six days a week.

Another child, working as a sweeper for ten cents a day, was only six years old. He had been working at the mill for almost two years.

Whatever maternal instincts the parents had were often suppressed by the overpowering need to simply survive.

On July 23, 1900, two sisters, Nellie and Susie Priest, 10 and 12 years old respectively, were on their way home for lunch break from Dallas Mills. As was their habit, they cut across the corner of a nearby field in order to save a few steps. Though they noticed a stranger

loitering nearby, he was the last thing on their minds. They had been working since 6:00 that morning and all they wanted to do was to eat lunch and rest for a few minutes before returning to the mill.

The man approached them, as if asking for directions, when suddenly, he knocked Susie to the ground and grabbed Nellie by the throat. Screaming and fighting, Nellie managed to break

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loose, only to see the assailant turn his attention to Susie, who was lying helplessly on the ground.

Terrified, Nellie ran back to the mill for help.

Several men, enjoying a last smoke before returning to work,

met her and after a brief questioning, gathered a group of other men to go with them in pursuit of the attacker.

The men found Susie Priest lying on the ground, curled in a fetal position, crying hysterically and with a trickle of blood running down her chin where she had been beaten. Her clothes had been brutally torn from her body and the ground bore evidence of the struggle that had taken place.

A brief round of questions established the assailant's name, Elijah Clark, a man twenty years old and employed part time as a teamster for a local freight company.

Within minutes, more men had gathered at the scene. As they learned what had taken place, their frustrations began pouring out.

"It ain't right," one man said. "They treat us like slaves, work us like dogs, and even our children ain't safe!"

"If they would pay decent wages," another man cried, "our children would not have to work and this would not have happened!"

Suddenly the spell was broken by two mill foremen who pushed their way through the crowd. "Back to work," they ordered. "Anyone not going back to work will be docked for the whole day!"

One of the men protested, saying that he was going to look for the assailant, "and the mill be dammed!"

He was fired on the spot.

Silently, the other men slowly returned to the mill. Regardless of how bad they were treated, the men could not afford to lose their jobs.

Though work resumed after lunch, there was a strong undercurrent of resentment among the workers. News of the rape was the topic of every conversation.

*continued on page 6*

# The Way It Was

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# Huntsville's Forgotten Children



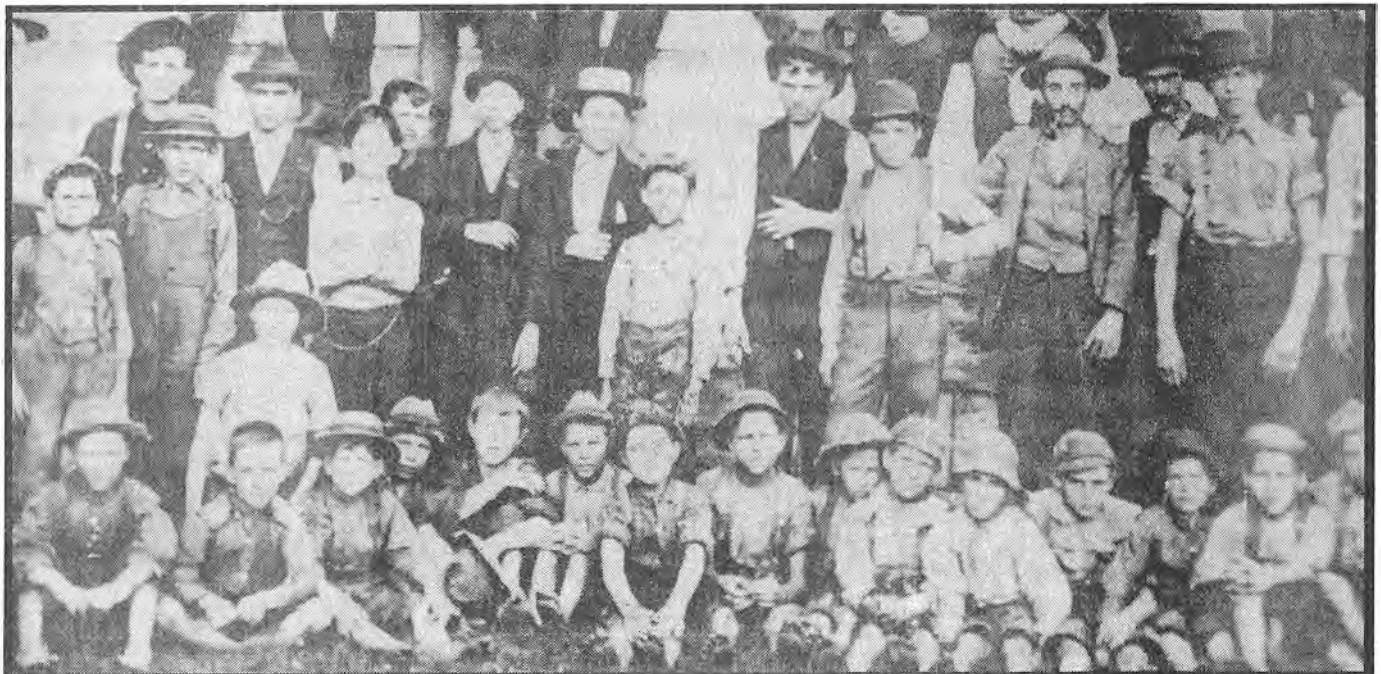
Georgie Baldwin, 9 years old and a Sweeper at Merrimac Mills. His work day began at 5:45 every morning. It ended every night at 6.



Madeline Causey is 10 years old in this picture and employed at Merrimac Mills filling batteries. Handling the battery acid left many children scarred for life.



Pinkie and Eltza Durham. Eltza was 12 years old in this picture and would be crippled for the rest of her life due to a mill accident. Her brother, Pinkie, was ten years old in this picture and already a seasoned mill worker. Accidents were common in the mills, especially among the younger workers.



Loom fixers at Dallas Mills in 1898. The children worked 11 hours a day, 5 days a week and 6 hours on Saturday. Photographs courtesy of the Huntsville Public Library

After digesting what was already known, people's anger invariably turned toward the mill owners for their callous policy of child labor.

Less than an hour later, with excitement already at a fever pitch, a ten year old boy, employed as a sweeper, was involved in an accident. A heavy piece of machinery had fallen and crushed one of his legs.

Again, the foremen were on the scene immediately, ordering people back to work.

As the workers watched the mangled boy being carried from the plant, the anger that had been building all day finally exploded. When one of the foremen grabbed a worker by the collar and ordered him back to work, the worker responded by knocking him to the floor.

Within minutes over 1000 employees of Dallas Mills walked out, effectively shutting the mill down.

News of the shutdown spread throughout Huntsville rapidly.

As the stockholders heard the news, they began calling the mill demanding that something be done. The mill manager, in turn, called the sheriff demanding the culprit who raped the young Priest girl be apprehended, "and fast!"

Undoubtedly, the manager was hoping that with a quick arrest, things would return to normal.

Early the next morning, word spread around Huntsville that Elijah Clark had been arrested and was lodged in the jail. He had readily confessed to the rape, though not sure what everyone was upset about. "After all," he said, "It was just a poor little mill girl."

As was hoped by the mill owners, most of the employees returned to work. At first it seemed as if the affair was over. Though disgruntled, the employees went about their jobs.

As the morning wore on, however, people began remembering another case that had re-

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cently been tried in the courts.

Albert Thompson, a twenty nine year old cavalryman stationed in Huntsville, had raped a woman and was sentenced to only ten years in the penitentiary. That very day, the same judge had also sentenced a Negro to ten years for "cursing" in the presence of women.

In their minds, the mill workers probably saw Elijah Clark receiving the same sentence--a slap on the wrist, in their opinion.

Someone, no one is sure who, angrily declared that Clark should be lynched. With the unspoken words finally out in the open, giving the workers a direction in which to vent their anger and frustrations, a mob began making its way toward the jail. Men, young boys, and in some cases, even women, were armed with shotguns, rifles and pistols.

At every street corner, the mob increased in size, and anger, as word spread. Wives who

had been preparing supper for their families, left the food sitting on the tables and joined the mob. Storekeepers, mechanics and lawyers all abandoned their businesses and joined the Dallas Mill workers.

Within the hour, the jail was completely surrounded by a mob of almost two thousand people demanding that Elijah Clark be handed over to them.

Sheriff Fulgham had received word of the mob's intentions and had hastily deputized six men to help guard the jail. Though armed with repeating Winchester rifles, the deputies' bravado quickly disappeared when faced with the relentless and bloodthirsty mob. Deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, most of the deputies beat a hasty exit out the back door.

The sheriff, however, decided to face the mob. Though inwardly sympathizing with the mob, he was never the less sworn to uphold the law. When

one of the mob demanded the keys, Fulgham declared they would "have to walk over my dead body first!"

Angrily the mob surged forward. Several of the men, armed with a large piece of timber from a nearby construction site, began battering the front door.

As the door gave way, the mob was met by the sheriff and the few remaining deputies, who immediately opened fire. Will Vining, an electric light worker, fell to the ground wounded by almost two hundred pellets of buck shot.

Cheered on by thousands of Huntsville's citizens, the mob next procured several sticks of dynamite which they placed next to the jail. Again they asked for the sheriff to surrender and again he refused.

At this point, Milton Humes and Daniel Coleman, two respected Huntsville businessmen mounted a nearby buggy and began an impassioned speech,

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imploring the mob to return home.

Their efforts were met by jeers and a fusillade of rocks.

The dynamite placed next to the jail had failed to explode and one of the mob, after checking the fuse, relit it and threw it inside the jail. The explosive wrecked most of the downstairs, but fortunately, the sheriff and his prisoner had retreated to the second floor.

Sheriff Fulgham, realizing the

seriousness of the situation, told the few remaining deputies they could leave if they wanted to. Both of the deputies left by jumping out a back window.

They then joined the mob besieging the jail.

Next the mob decided to try to smoke the sheriff out. A barrel of oil, a large amount of sulphur and several bushels of chicken feathers were placed on the ground floor of the jail and lit. Moments later, the jail was engulfed in a billowing cloud of nauseating smoke. The fumes were so bad that even the mob beat a hasty retreat.

Chief of Police D. D. Overton, who had been standing by and watching the crowd for several hours, now asked to be allowed to enter the jail and try to talk the sheriff into surrendering.

After convincing Fulgham of the helplessness of his situation, Overton assisted the sheriff out of the jail where he was placed in care of a doctor who treated him for smoke inhalation.

With the sheriff out of the way, the mob surged to the second floor where Clark was lodged in a cell. Fulgham had wisely thrown away the keys to

the cell and the mob was forced to use hammer and chisel to break in the cell.

The men went to work with a vengeance, interrupted only by a steady flow of sight seers filing through the jail. The whole time Clark sat in a corner of the jail softly moaning of the fate about to overtake him.

Finally the prisoner was taken into custody by the mob, and as they prepared to leave the jail one of its members mounted the jail steps and said:

"Now gentlemen, you must put up your guns. We are going to hang this man and if no one interferes, no one will be hurt."

Guarded by twenty armed men, Clark was escorted to the home of Susie Priest, who readily identified him. By this time the crowd had grown to almost 2000 people.

At this point Clark, wrecked by terror, lost control of his legs and had to be carried. When he made an effort as if to escape, a rope was placed around his neck and he was half-dragged the short distance to Moores Grove.

Waiting at the Grove was another crowd of almost 4000 people. This made a total of al-



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most 6000 people taking part in the mob.

The only pause in the mob's actions came when they called for Will Priest, an elder brother of Susie, to throw the rope over a limb of the tree. After asking if Clark had any last words to say, Priest slapped the horse on its side, leaving the accused hanging by the neck.

At first the crowd was silent, awed by the taking of a life. For a full ten minutes they simply stood and stared.

Suddenly, as if hanging itself was not enough, the young Priest grabbed a gun and began firing at the dead body swinging softly in the breeze. This served as a signal for the rest of the mob, who immediately began firing their guns also. A witness later reported that over 150 shots were fired at Clark's body.

The mob slowly broke up and began returning to their homes. The only excitement left was when an occasional young boy, egged on by his companions, would dart up to the body to cut a piece of fabric from the dead man's clothing as a souvenir.

Dallas Mills opened the next morning on time. The workers, though still embittered, realized nothing else could be done and the men, women and children wearily returned to work.

The owners and manager of the mill quickly took steps to regain control over the workers. The ringleaders of the mob, as well as anyone else who had voiced a complaint, were fired.

Susie Priest, along with her sister, brother and parents, were also fired.

In an attempt to pacify city officials, who blamed the mill for the destruction, the mill owners

offered to pay for the rebuilding of the jail.

Needless to say, no one was ever tried for the lynching. Though there was an estimated 6000 people at the scene, the official explanation given was "no witnesses."

Child labor, which had helped to spark the incident, was proclaimed to be nonexistent at the mill. One owner actually explained away the diminutive size of some of his employees by calling them "Mountain dwarfs."

In 1924, an exhibition of photographs taken by Lewis Hines was held in Huntsville. Hines had toured America taking photographs of children forced to

work in subhuman and appalling conditions. The photographs, in their stark black and white reality, portrayed the brutal and callous treatment of young children enslaved by the cultural revolution.

The event was well received by Huntsville's elite, with many people commenting on the cruelty of a system that would allow such a thing to happen.

The only thing they missed were the captions on some of the pictures that had been thoughtfully removed.

Many of the photographs had been taken in Huntsville...

..at the mills they owned.

*The End*

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# Boys Whipped By Sparrows



and clubs in order to save their eyes.

They tired before the sparrows did, however, and at last were obliged to beat a retreat to more thinly populated bird districts, while the feathered army huddled together and stared at them from a long limb.

from 1899 newspaper

A crowd of boys in Huntsville attempted to amuse themselves by throwing green apples into sparrows' nests near the mill last night, and succeeded in creating a very lively fight.

The trees were filled with thousands of birds, which stood the fun until it became monotonous, and then organized and made a fell swoop upon their tormentors.

They flew straight for the face, and it began to look very serious for the urchins.

Some of the boys ran to a safe distance and looked on, but the more adventurous waged battle. Two were picked at until their

faces and hands were covered in blood, and they were obliged to defend themselves with sticks



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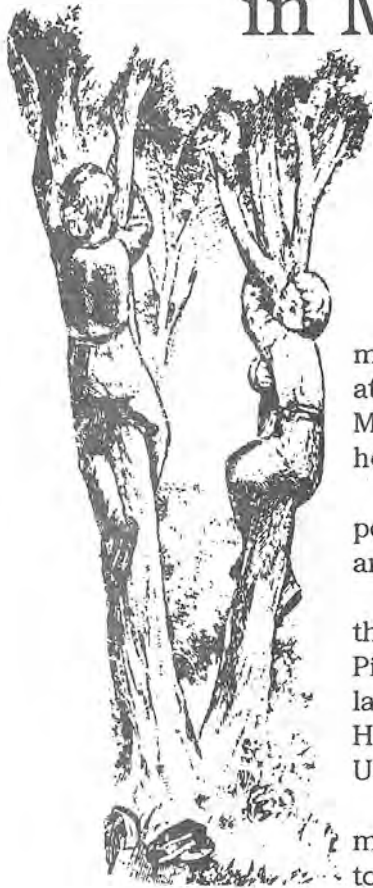
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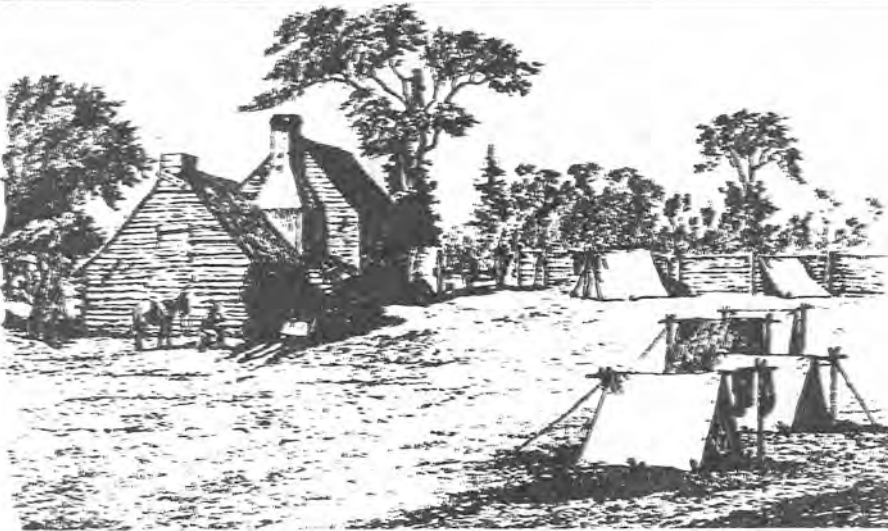
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## Buckhorn Tavern Celebration

*April weekend to be filled with Civil War activities for the entire family.*

The New Market Community Association, in cooperation with the Sons of Confederate Veterans and reenactment groups from across the Southeast will hold an authentic Civil War reenactment on April 20 and 21, 1996, at Sharon Johnston Park (north-east of Huntsville). The Madison County, Alabama event will coincide with the marking of 13 Confederate graves at Mount Parhan Cemetery and the placing of an historical state marker at the site of the old Buckhorn Tavern.

Buckhorn Tavern was an early wayside stop for pioneer settlers travelling the Winchester Road from Tennessee into Alabama. During the Creek Indian War of 1813-14, Colonel John Coffee stored supplies opposite the tavern and camped his forces (which included Davy Crockett) nearby for several weeks. The historic Inn was the location of a skirmish between Union and Confederate forces on October 12, 1863, when Roddey's Alabama Cavalry Bri-

gade clashed with Union horsemen in a brisk twilight encounter. Unfortunately, the original tavern building—long since converted into a private home—was torn down when the road was widened in the 1950s.

The reenactment will feature authentic War Between the States camps (cavalry, infantry and artillery), ladies and children in period dress, sutlers stores, two Confederate bands playing 19th century music on real 19th century instruments, and special activities for the children (including military drill, old time games, and sampler making lessons). There will be battles on both days, an appearance by General Fightin' Joe Wheeler on Saturday, and a recreation of the encounter between Captain Frank Gurley and General Robert McCook on Sunday. The Battle of Buckhorn Tavern will be Saturday and Sunday. Proceeds from the admission charge will go towards restoring Sharon Johnston Park (badly damaged in last year's tornado), purchas-

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# Lightning Photographs

*Extremely rare phenomenon took place in Alabama.*

from 1886 Newspaper

During a heavy thunderstorm that visited Sand Mountain, the evening of July 18, Miss Lillian Paul was in the dining room of her father's house, when she noticed a gleaming tray about which reflections from the lightning flashed incessantly almost like a flame.

Reaching for the tray to remove it, there came a flash of extreme brilliancy when she



placed the tray under the table and left the room. The next morning it was noticed that the tray bore upon its centre a profile of the young lady's head and face.

Mr. Leo Doft, the inventor of the electrical motor which bears his name, holds that "the picture was printed by light and not by heat, and that the flash was reflected from the face to the in-

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side of the opposite window pane and thence thrown upon the tray, producing an actinic portrait."

However curious this may be, this result is not peculiar to Alabama lightning, as the following incident, related by a northern newspaper: "We have heretofore published an account of a portrait supposed to have been photographed by lightning on a pane of glass in the window of an old farm house in this county.

Another instance of the same curious phenomenon has been found in the window of the Mansion House on the "Mount Eagle" farm, more generally known as the "Gentry Place." The portraits of four persons are plainly discernible - two men, a woman and a child. The faces are not all on one pane, that of one of the men and the woman being on adjoining glasses, the face of the other man on another, and that of the child on one of the lower panes; and the theory is that the party were all looking through the window during a thunderstorm, when a sudden flash of lightning, by some mysterious process, instantaneously fixed their features on the glass.

The existence of the portraits are of comparatively recent discovery, and have attracted many visitors.

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# PAINFUL Heel Spurs?



Sharp pain, aching or stiffness on the bottom of the heel is a very common ailment. The pain is often worse upon awakening in the morning, but may subside after a few minutes before a comfortable stride can be resumed. This discomfort can also be present following a period of extended rest and then resuming activity.

Heel pain originates deep within the foot, directly on the heel bone or within a ligament on the bottom of the foot called the "plantar fascia." Several layers of fatty tissue surround the heel bone, softening and absorbing the impact of walking or running. This fatty layer protects the bones and muscles of the heel. Below this fatty layer, a fibrous band of connective tissue (the plantar fascia) extends from the heel bone to support the bones which make up the arch of the foot. Pain results when these tissues become irritated or inflamed, or when small spurs grow on the heel bone.

Other causes of heel pain include gout, various rheumatic conditions, nerve entrapments, stress fractures of the heel and on rare occasions, bone tumors. Diagnosis of the exact cause of the heel pain is critical in alleviating the pain.

Treatment for heel spurs or "plantar fasciitis" may include anti-inflammatory medication, physical therapy, arch supports and surgical release of the plantar fascia. Several steps can be attempted at home before seeing your doctor. Taking aspirin or ibuprofen as directed, until the symptoms subside can help to reduce tissue inflammation. The use of heating pads followed by ice, applied to the heel, is an excellent way to also reduce the pain and inflammation. Avoid physical activities and wear a good supportive shoe.

Remember, never walk barefoot as long as the heel is causing pain. If these measures fail to resolve your painful heel, see a foot and ankle specialist.

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- 1/4 c. apple juice, unsweetened

Preheat your oven to 300 degrees and in a large bowl, combine the first 3 ingredients. Take a small bowl and combine the remaining ingredients. Drizzle this

over the oat mixture. Mix til all is moistened. Take a 10 x 15" baking pan and spray with a non-stick spray, then spread the mixture out on the pan.

Bake for 20 minutes, stir and back in oven for 5 minutes. Stir and back in for another 5 minutes. Cool in the pan, and store in an airtight container when completely cool.

(Chopped dates would be good with this, or use your imagination to add other ingredients.)

If you've never tried it, sprinkle some granola over your favorite vanilla ice cream!

### Oat Bran Muffins

- 7 1/2 oz. oat bran
- 1 1 t. baking powder
- 1 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 t. ground nutmeg
- 2 eggs
- 1 c. milk
- 1/4 c. honey
- 1 T plus
- 2 t. vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 t. vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 c. pecans, chopped fine

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees, and in a large bowl mix the first 4 ingredients. In a medium bowl combine the remaining ingredients except pecans, and mix well. Add the liquid mixture to the dry mixture and stir til all is moistened. Add pecans, use large spoon to add the mixture to 10 nonstick muffin cups or ones that you have sprayed with a nonstick cooking spray. Bake for 15 minutes until golden. Place on rack to cool completely.

### Peanut Butter Raisin Balls

- 1/2 c. peanut butter
- 1 1/2 c. raisins, chopped
- 1/2 c. nonfat dry milk



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1 t. vanilla extract  
1 T. water

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Shape into 9 balls and chill. This is great fun to do with your kids.

### Fried Beans

2 T. vegetable oil  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 c. chopped onions  
2 c. cooked pinto beans  
1 1/2 t. dried oregano  
1/2 t. ground cumin

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat, add the garlic and onions and cook til tender for about 10 minutes. Reduce heat to low, and mash the beans using a fork. Add the beans to the onion mixture, add remaining ingredients, cook for 5 minutes, stirring. Serve hot. This is great on tacos.

### Grilled Onions

2 large onions, sweet, sliced  
1 inch thick  
Soy sauce

Sprinkle the onion slices with the soy sauce and marinate for several hours. (Can be left overnight). Grill until tender/crisp and brown on both sides, turning once with a spatula.

### Black Beans and Rice

4 oz. shredded Mozzarella cheese  
1 c. ricotta cheese  
1 z. grated Parmesan cheese  
1/2 t. dried thyme  
1/2 t. dried oregano  
1/2 t. dried basil  
1/2 t. garlic powder  
Black pepper to taste  
6 oz. cooked black beans

3 c. cooked brown rice  
1/2 c. beef broth

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine the cheeses. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the Parmesan cheese to sprinkle on top of the casserole.

Add your spices and mix well. Add the beans, rice and broth, stir well. Place the mixture in a large casserole dish that has been sprayed with a nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle the reserved Parmesan cheese over the top of the casserole.

Cover and bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake for an additional 15 minutes. Serve hot with a good green salad and hot bread.

*For a delicious change, try adding some Spike seasoning to your rice dishes - you'll find it in the spice section of your store.*

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# The Wife's Commandments

From 1876 newspaper



1. *Thou shalt have no other wife but me.*  
2. *Thou shalt not take into thy home any beautiful brazen image of a servant girl, to bow down to her and serve her, for I am a jealous wife.*

3. *Thou shalt not take the name of thy wife in vain.*

4. *Remember thy wife to keep her respectable.*

5. *Honor thy wife's father and mother.*

6. *Thou shalt not fret.*

7. *Thou shalt not find fault with any dinner.*

8. *Thou shalt chew no tobacco.*

9. *Thou shalt not be behind thy neighbor.*

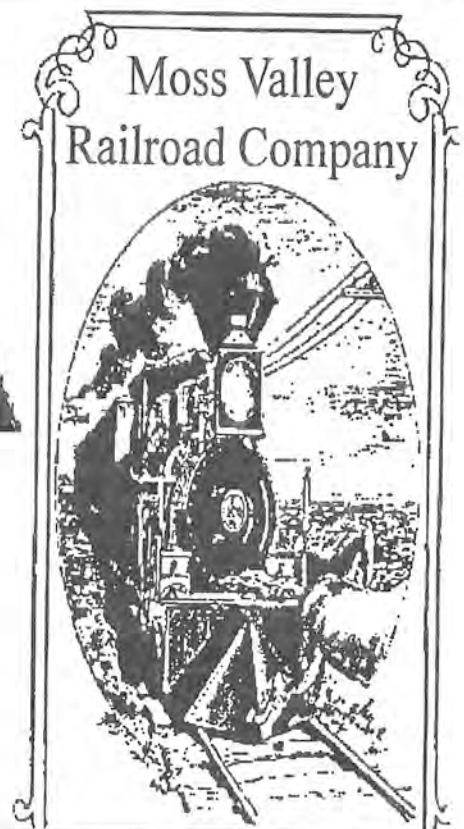
10. *Thou shalt not visit the rum tavern; thou shalt not covet the tavern keeper's rum, nor his brandy nor his gin, nor his whisky, nor his wine, nor his wife, nor anything that is behind the bar of the rum seller.*

11. *Thou shalt not visit billiard halls neither for worshipping in chance nor heaps of money that lie on the table.*

12. *They shalt not grow peevish, and contort thy beauty and physiognomy because of being called to foot store bills, which thy dear wife hath made without thy advice or consent; for verily she knows the want of the household.*

13. *Thou shalt not stay out after nine o'clock at night.*

14. *Thou shalt not set at naught the commandments of thy wife.*



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## Wickersham?

We saw yesterday the first deed that was ever made in Madison County. It dates in the year 1810, and is a conveyance by Zachariah Cox of one thousand acres of land to Martin Beaty. The body of land deeded lay immediately southwest of town, including the Big Spring, then called Hunts' Spring. The price paid by Beaty was one dollar per acre. Huntsville was then called "Wickersham," the name given it by Col. LeRoy Pope, one of the first settlers.

*from June 1866 newspaper*



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# Huntsville Heresay

By Billy Joe Cooley  
and His Unidentified Sources



Banjoist **Jim Connor** of **Kingston Trio** fame is compiling a book on impressive huggers, hugging and hugs. He'd welcome your input.

Coffee-table talk: a lady by the name of **Judy Scales** may throw her bonnet into the political arena for **Jim Putnam's** City Council job. **Glen Watson** is already running hard for the seat and is proving to be a serious contender.

**Bill Kling** has announced that he's going after the office of County Tax Assessor, currently held by **Waylon Cooley**, a youngster of 80 years old. Bill feels that his responsiveness to the public, community concern and a fresh outlook are what voters will be looking for this year.

Rumor is that the owner of a large Research Park firm is fast becoming a major political player on the local scene. Gossip has it that he and some other Research Park firms are backing **Dean O'Farrell** in his bid for mayor.

**Richard and Bianca Cox** have returned from a Caribbean cruise. Both came home with bronchitis.

Meanwhile **Frank Contreras** has returned from visiting his New Mexico kin.

Hot talk around town: **Steve Raby** is being talked up as a contender for the job of Huntsville lobbyist in D.C. Could this mean he is no longer interested in the mayor's job?

Thanks to **Mrs. Louis Azar** and those literary types who had me as their speaker on Tuesday night. I had resisted for awhile. Now they probably wish I had resisted further. It was fun.

Rumor is that a major politician is about to abandon the campaign trail and jump on **Loretta Spencer's** bandwagon. Could this be an omen of things to come? One thing you hear about Loretta everywhere you go: "She's a sweet lady."

**Business Brief: Hewlett-Packard Company** employees were very busy in January moving into their new, expanded location. The single-tenant building, located at 935 Explorer Drive in Research Park, was most recently called "The IBM Building."

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Don't discount the talents and agenda of mayoral candidate **Herb Dixon**. He's selling himself as "the man with the plan." As a retired colonel and a college instructor he will pull some votes.

Congrats to my neighbor **Mathew Smartt**, who came in fifth in the state wrestling tourney the other day. His mom is pretty **Karen Smartt** of Huntsville Hospital.

**Mark Hall's** City Council seat is drawing a lot of attention even though he has two more years to serve. Informed sources tell us that **Ronnie Reed** is already lining up support for a run against him.

For the weekend late-night partiers down-town, we were saddened to hear of the demise of **Jay's Lounge**, one of the better alternative night spots in the downtown area. The band who made the lounge famous, the **Crawlers**, are very much in demand and are already being courted by clubs all over town whose customers are looking for the "best blues sound in town." Jay's Lounge was a favorite among locals and visitors alike, and had been in operation for almost half a century.

**Bud Cramer** is spending his time out in the county drinking Double Colas, eating Moon Pies and shaking hands. Reliable sources close to Bud say his campaign is being tailored against **Hugh McInnish**, whom they expect to win the Republican primary.

**Wayne Parker**, congressional wannabe, has proven so adept at

raising money that people are starting to compare him with **Dywane Freeman**. Parker's innermost campaign strategists say they are running their campaign, that the people will speak and that Wayne will be elected.

**Political move of the year:** Look for a black candidate to declare at the last moment for mayor. With a dozen white middle class conservatives splitting the vote, chances are excellent for a candidate who can carry the black vote as a block.

**Ken Arnold's** mayoral campaign has been quiet for the past month. According to political guru **David Driscoll**, Ken will make his move when the time is right. Look for some shrewd strategy to come into play.

**Winslow Hill** and wife **Jimmie**, who grew up near us in South Pittsburg, Tenn., have joined the mall walkers in Parkway City.

Good morning to **Jason**

**Gibbs** who has bought Martin's Men's Store in Boaz. That's where **Melvin Williams** bought a red suit last week.

Now that **Larry Mullins** has officially declared for mayor, wife **Brenda** is already being referred to as "first lady" by regular patrons of Mullins Drive-In.

Another mayoral hopeful, **Joe Perkins**, has declared he will run a low cost campaign. Says he: "Most people already know who they will vote for so there is no need to spend a lot of money on such a lost cause."

Pretty **Donna Smith**, who was once my copy girl, now has her dental practice at the corner of South Parkway and Charlotte Drive.

**One final note:** "What Mayoral candidate recently gave a talk to a group of Huntsvillians and asked for questions from the audience; the first question being: "Is **Aunt Eunice** really going to run for Mayor?"

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## Memories

*A collection of short stories about growing up in Huntsville, Ala.  
Taken from a soon to be published book by Tillman Hill.*

### Keeping Clean

In the early years it was not as easy to keep clean as it is now. You had to heat your water and put it in a number 3 wash tub to take a bath. The men and boys could go to the barber shop and take a bath. There, a bath cost a nickel and then they went up to a dime. But the women had to use the number 3 wash tub.

It was not uncommon for someone to have lice, bedbugs or the 7 year itch. A health nurse would come to school and check

everybody's head. If you had lice you went home and got rid of them.

We never had lice or bedbugs. I will never forget my mother each morning as she made up the beds, pulling the ticking down on the edges of the mattress and looking for bedbugs.

Today I never go to a zoo and see a mother monkey pick up her little monkey and start looking in his fur for fleas that I don't think about how my mother

used to grab me every time I got close enough for her to grab me and look my head over to make sure I did not have lice.

I said my family never had lice or bed bugs but we all had the 7 year itch. One time in particular I remember my mother had us to rub down in sulfur and grease.

A few years earlier, my uncle had gotten killed in an accident at Lowe Mill. He had 3 kids and one of the teenage girls had come to live with us. She could be hell on wheels sometimes.

Back to the 7 year itch. My mother had just gotten us all cured of the 7 year itch with sulfur and grease when my cousin threw a mad fit and went to stay with some friends of ours over on Lincoln Avenue. Unfortunately, they had the 7 year itch and my cousin brought it back to us.

The process you went through to get rid of it is well remembered. You had to wash all your clothes and the bed sheets. Then everybody took a hot bath and rubbed down in sulfur and grease.

This one particular time, it was cold winter. One by one the

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water was heated and put in the number 3 wash tub. After one of us would take a bath, the tub was taken to the back yard and dumped. More water was heated and one more of us would take a bath and be rubbed down in sulfur and grease. My daddy was the last to take a bath.

As I said it was very cold so we took our baths in front of the wood cook stove in the kitchen. We had the most beautiful cook stove I have ever seen. It was white porcelain with a big warmer on top and a water reservoir on the end. It had a beautiful chrome rail in the front of it. We cooked on it up to the 1950s.

When we moved from Barrell Street to Meridian Street we got an electric stove. I don't remember what happened to the wood cook stove but I would give anything to have it today. I can close my eyes and still see every detail about that stove.

Well, back to my daddy getting rid of the itch. My daddy was built just like I am. He had a big

chest, big shoulders, good arms but a skinny butt. He was standing up in the tub drying off with a towel, bent over and bumped his butt on that beautiful chrome rail on the front of the stove. He started to holler and scream and everybody ran into the kitchen. There he stood, buck naked and very mad. Needless to say he gave my cousin hell for bringing the 7 year itch to our home.

Many years later, we had many a laugh over the incidents of that day.

### General Jack

Very early in World War II, I served under a very tough general, "General" Jack McCulley. General Jack came to me with an idea that seemed to be a very good way to pick up a few dollars. The general was two years older than I and had a good business head on him.

At that time Western Union Telegraph Company was the best way to get a message to someone out of town since very few people

had telephones. The telegraph company ran their lines on poles down the railroads from one town to another. They had taken down their old poles and put up new ones.

The old poles belonged to anyone who would go after them. The ones where people could drive a wagon or truck to did not stay there long. But the poles from Oakwood Avenue to Miller's Crossing were still there.

So the general said what we needed to do was to start us an army and saw the poles up and split them into kindling to start fires with. By this time the mill was running 3 shifts a day, 6 days a week and we could sell the kindling wood easily.

Jack was going to be the "General" and I was to be the "Lieutenant." We organized a pretty good sized "army" and went to work. We used my daddy's crosscut saw, and sawed the poles up and got them off the railroad. We began to make money hand over fist and we would buy dinner for the army

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every day.

But the day of honor and glory was when the general and myself went to the store and bought sun helmets, like the ones you wear in the jungle, for the whole army. The general marched us down Barrell Street with P.F.C. Egee Fisher as flag bearer carrying the American flag.

We all were very proud. We marched to the rock fence and into Mr. Peeler's year where we ate and had a good time. Then General Jack and myself got into a fight and everybody got mad and went home. The army busted up. All good things have to end.

But I think everybody won. The troops had a good time, good food, a sun helmet, good work experience and their people had not had to fix them dinner for a month or two. The telegraph company got rid of the old poles. Those who had bought the kindling had gotten a good deal, and I guess Jack and myself had done all right after we split what money that was left.

Sometime in the 1980s. General Jack McCulley presented me with a certificate that promoted me to full Colonel in the Lincoln Militia. That made me very proud.

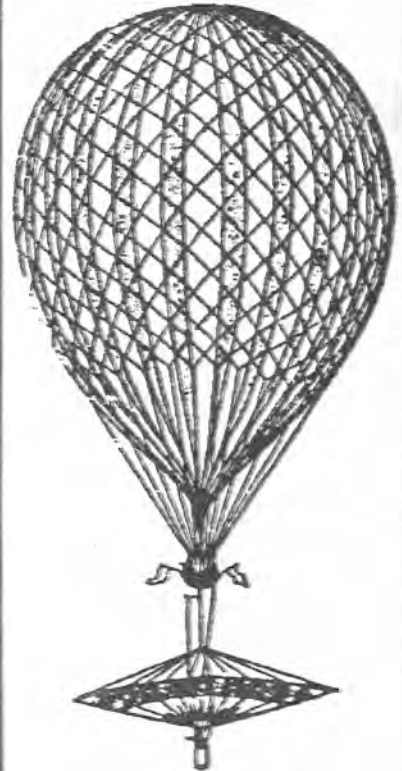
### A Lesson Learned

After I quit Dillard's Cafe and went to the Huntsville Times, a girl in my class got the job I had at the cafe. She lived about 2 1/2 blocks from the cafe and got off at 10:30 or 11:00 at night. I started walking her home, but could not go all the way to her house because of her daddy. I would walk her to a fruit stand around the corner and say good night there.

I didn't like the idea that I could not go to her house. I asked her one night if her daddy would whip her if I went all the way home with her. She said, "No, he wouldn't whip me, but I don't know what he'd do to you."

I thought about that for a day or so. I guess the way you learn to do things when you are kid sets a trend that stays with you all your life.

I thought, what is the very worst thing that can happen to me? I decided that the worst thing was that he would give me a good beating. I had already had a few good beatings by now and it was not that bad after it was over with. So I told her that night I was walking her all the way to her house. This was in the hot summer, and everybody sat up on the porches until it got cool



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before going to bed. When we got closer to her house I saw that her daddy was sitting on the porch swing. We had been holding hands but we stopped that. I think our hands were wet because she was scared and I could hear my heart beating very loudly. So loud that I was sure her daddy could hear it, too.

Well, we walked up to her house and I spoke to her daddy. I asked him how he was doing and I said something about how hot it was. The girl said good night and went into the house. He started to talk to me some, mostly just "small talk." I stayed a few minutes and left.

I could not have been treated more nicely and I walked her home many more times after that.

I think the moral of this story is when I am confronted with bad times, I try to think about what is the worst thing that could possibly happen to me. If I learned to accept the worst thing that could happen, then I could go hit it head on. I have used this approach all my life and it has worked out pretty good so far.



Help Kiwanis  
Help Youth

## Jim Britt Buried Here

### Son of Yankee Spy Was Inmate of Poor House For 66 Years

*from 1933 Huntsville Newspaper*

Jim Britt, who has been an inmate of the county alms house for the past 66 years died yesterday at the age of 72 years old, after an illness lasting for four weeks.

Jim Britt was the son of Kinch Britt, an infamous spy in the employ of the Federal Government during the Civil War. Kinch Britt was rumored to be the cause of many atrocities committed here by the bushwhacking gangs that terrorized the Tennessee Valley. The senior Britt was reportedly killed by Captain Mac Robertson during an attempted raid on a house he was visiting at the time.

After Kinch Britt's death, his widow placed their son in the county alms house before hastily leaving town. Jim Britt was 6 years old at the time.

Jim Britt spent the next 66 years, with no friends or family, as a ward of the county and a resident of the poor house. It is believed that Madison County holds the record for maintaining a person in the poor house for the longest period.

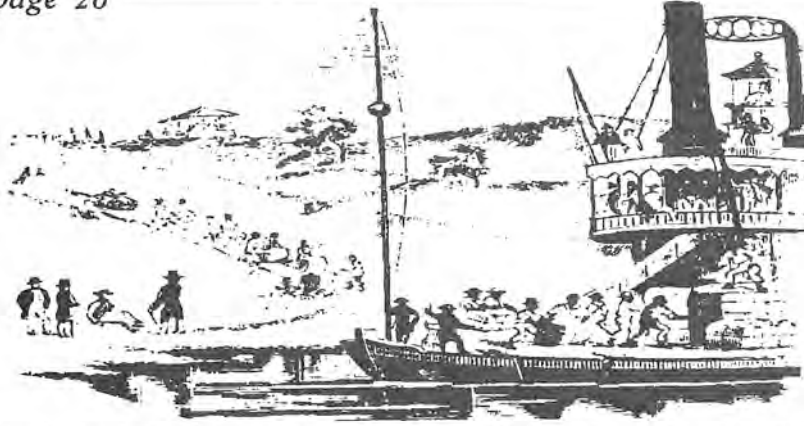
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## WHITESBURG, RIVER TOWN

by Jack Harwell

About the time that the town of Huntsville was being laid out early in the last century, other settlements were springing up all over the county. These were generally located along well-travelled routes that brought the new migrants into northern Alabama from the large population centers to the east. A large number of these arrived from Virginia, entering Alabama by way of the old Winchester road.

By 1810 there was a long string of settlers' homes stretching from the Briar Fork of the Flint River, between Huntsville and New Market, southward almost to the river. The area near the river was not well populated, partly due to its proximity to the Indian lands, which still included what is now the southeastern corner of Madison County.

One of the first of those who were willing to make their home on the river was John Ditto, who for a number of years operated the river landing at that location that bore his name. The Tennessee River was a popular route for merchants and travellers, and Ditto's business did well.

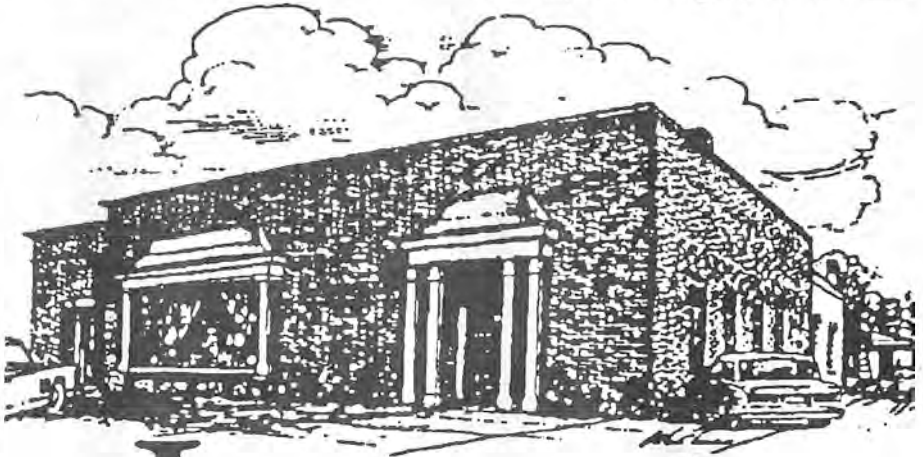
About the time that John Ditto was running his riverside trading post, James White came

to Huntsville. Like many transplanted Easterners, White had money and was looking for business opportunities. In 1811 he went into business with Alexander Gilbreath, who was

possibly the first merchant in Huntsville. White and Gilbreath operated a store on Gates Street, a block south of the courthouse.

White later bought large plots of land at the site of Ditto's Landing on both sides of the river. The population of this area began to grow soon after the county boundary was extended to the Flint River (it was extended to the Paint Rock, its current alignment, in 1836). John Ditto's old trading post became a real town, and it was incorporated by the legislature two days before Christmas 1824. The town was named Whitesburg for the man who owned the land where it was located.

The borders of Whitesburg correspond roughly to the lim-



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its of the marina and park which are located there today. The town was located at the southern terminus of the highway to Nashville, and that and its proximity to the river brought in a considerable amount of traffic.

In the days before trucks and trains, the rivers bore much of the nation's commerce, and many flatboats laden with Alabama cotton stopped at Whitesburg on their way to New Orleans. Often these boats would take on "shoals pilots" at Whitesburg, who would guide the craft through the treacherous Muscle Shoals down river. Once calmer water was reached, the regular pilot would take over and the shoals pilot would be put ashore, to return home on foot. This long walk from Muscle Shoals to Whitesburg (or, in some cases, Decatur) was not considered exceptionally tiresome at that time; many of the river pilots who accompanied their boats down the Mississippi would return home the same way, up the Natchez Trace. Richard Anderson, a longtime river pilot and resident of Huntsville, is said to have walked from Huntsville to Whitesburg every day — before breakfast.

Whitesburg, and other communities on the Tennessee, remained little changed for many years, even in wartime. Unlike some parts of Madison County, Whitesburg was relatively quiet during the Civil War. Occasionally Southern soldiers and sym-



pathizers would smuggle arms and troops across the river to the Union-occupied north bank under cover of darkness. Federal troops confiscated all ferry craft when they could find them. Records show that a skirmish took place at Whitesburg on May 29, 1862, but provide no details.

For most of a century after the war, Whitesburg remained a quiet little village, like many others throughout the South. The road to Huntsville was macadamized and turned into a turnpike. A railroad line was built to the river, but Whitesburg was bypassed. Eventually the town's charter expired, and its post office was moved. But Whitesburg, the place, remained.

There were no schools in Whitesburg, and children might have to travel a mile or more to reach one of the one-room schoolhouses, some of which were privately operated. One resident who grew up in the area in the 1890s recalled years later the first public school he attended, in a log cabin heated by

*continued on page 38*

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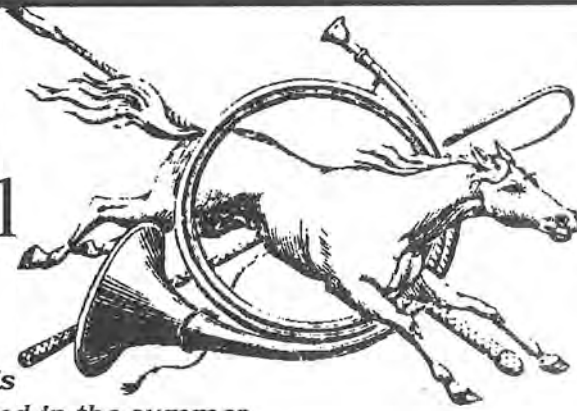


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# The Musical Horse



Excerpted from his book to be published in the summer

by Billy Joe Cooley

Farmer Albert Guffy kissed wife Bessie good-bye and drove off to the city, some 40 miles away, to shop for a new tractor.

"Look after that sick horse while I'm away," he had told her. "You might need to use a funnel to pour some laxative into her. There's a gallon jug of castor oil on the shelf in the barn."

With those scant instructions he had driven away.

Bessie, being a dutiful farm

wife, went into the barn and examined the horse, which in fact was a fine stallion. She determined that it, indeed, was seriously constipated.

She reached for the funnel, but it was not to be found. Albert had probably left it in another shed.

"I'll just have to make do with something else," she thought. Just then she spied her grandfather's old army bugle

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hanging on the barn wall, where it had been since his return from the war 40 years ago. That would work just fine as a funnel.

Although she had lived on a farm most of her life, she didn't have much experience with doctoring the larger animals. Where should the funnel be placed? She wondered. The obvious place would be in the horse's mouth. She tried, but the horse would just shake his head violently and look the other way.

Then Bessie remembered the nature of the horse's problem. She walked around behind the animal, raised its tail and inserted the bugle's mouthpiece deep into the most obvious opening. Then she reached for the gallon jug of laxative oil on the shelf.

The shelf was just a bit too tall for comfort, but she managed to get it while holding the trumpet in the other hand and bring it down to the table beside her. That's when she made her mistake. She forgot to look at the label.

What she thought was the mineral oil was in fact a jug of kerosene, which Albert kept around for hand-scrubbing after working with greasy farm equipment.

Bessie tipped that big jug of kerosene up and poured at least a half-gallon of it into the trumpet end of the bugle. In two seconds flat that fine horse bolted to attention, let out a bloodcurdling neigh and ran out of that barn faster than any horse a person might see at a race track. It disappeared down the country road so fast that Bessie only got a glimpse of its tail, held high, as it rounded the bend and headed down the creek road.

A half-mile down the road sat the Williams brothers, Craig and

Cameron, fishing on the creek bank and finding little to talk about, which is what they did on days when the fish weren't biting. This had been one of those days. At least up to now.

"What's that strange noise?" asked Craig, turning his head in the direction of the Guffy farm but expecting no answer from his brother, who didn't know much about weird sounds.

Then they spied the Guffy's horse racing down the road. Each time the horse's hind legs would hit the ground there would blast forth a loud musi-

cal sound from the bugle inserted in its body.

"Well," said Cameron, not believing what he was seeing, "I've never before seen anything as splendid as a musical horse."





		
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# Old Huntsville

## From The Year 1935

### HAUPTMANN ADAMANT

FLEMINGTON, N.J., Jan. 2—Bruno Richard Hauptmann came to trial for his life today subdued but still adamant against the charge that he murdered the Lindbergh baby.

The start of the trial carrying to a climax the crime of the century—the infant's kidnaping and slaying—brought Hauptmann face to face openly for the first time with the father of the victim, Col. Charles A. Lindbergh.

Supreme Court Justice Thomas W. Trenchard, sitting with Judge Adam O. Robbins of the Court of Common Pleas, called the first session for 10 a.m. Eastern Standard time, in the ancient Hunterdon County Courthouse. This peaceful colonial hamlet, swollen suddenly from its normal proportions of 2,700 persons to a boom town of 3,500, heralded the trial busily, but without excitement.



### Beer and Cheese For Babies Urged

MADISON, Wis. Jan. 3—If your baby shows nervousness by crying easily, jumping at strange noises and sleeping badly, give him a piece of cheese and a sip of beer, says Dr. H. Curtis Johnson. A leading child specialist, Dr. Johnson said that American cheese, fresh and mild, is exceedingly beneficial in nervous cases. Beer, he added, is rich in vitamin B and the anti-neurotic vitamin contained in yeast. "Lack of calcium

in the blood often causes nervousness in babies and adults," Dr. Johnson said, and that "American cheese is an excellent source of the needed minerals."



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# CROONER PAYS OFF

## Bing Crosby Ailing, Friends say He's Sick Over Bama's Win

**Hollywood, Jan., 3**—Bing Crosby was confined to his home today. The singer-actor said he had a bad cold. Friends say he was sick because Stanford lost to Alabama in the Rose Bowl game New Year's day and Crosby lost with the Indians.

Crosby estimated he lost about \$750 on the game and said "nearly all" the fraternities at universities in the Southern football conference would soon be playing table tennis at his expense.

He recently sang the popular

song, "Stars Fell on Alabama," and dedicated it to Alabama's football team.

"I explained that although I dedicated the song to the boys from Alabama, I was rooting for Stanford—and willing to bet on Stanford," Crosby said.

"A day or so later boys in a dormitory at the University of North Carolina offered to bet me a table tennis set on Alabama.

"I took that bet, but told them if Alabama lost each of them could write a letter to my bosses telling them why I ought to get a

raise in pay."

Before the week was out, Crosby said groups from nearly half a dozen universities in the South wanted the same wager and he took them all.

Today he was preparing to pay.

## 30 Hours a Week Fight Is Started

**WASHINGTON, Jan. 3**—

The fight over a compulsory 30-hour week opened officially today with Senator Black, Democrat, Alabama offering such a measure and two technicians of Brookings Institution assailing the idea.

Black contended a new bill he had drafted would put millions to work and create the purchasing power necessary to enable business to stand the change.

### Own a Huntsville Legacy.

*George Hunt, grandson of Huntsville's founder, John Hunt, built this elegant Victorian cottage in 1885. Today, it stands, authentically restored, to remind us of graceful southern days gone by. Recognized by State and National Historic Registers, the Hunt home is a treasured piece of Huntsville's history.*



*515 Randolph Avenue is placed in the heart of the Huntsville's Twickenham district. This lovely home is beautifully landscaped with a courtyard complete with gazebo and three-tier fountain. The ceilings are 11 feet high, and the floors are crafted with heart of pine. The home has five fireplaces, a parlor, a formal dining room, den, three bedrooms and three baths. For further details, call Julia Parker.*

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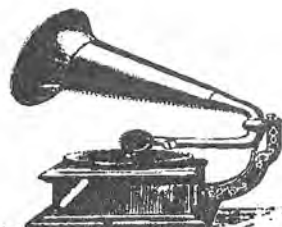
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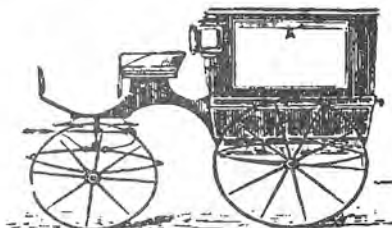
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# Early History of Huntsville

Excerpted from Edward Chamber Betts'  
*Early History of Huntsville, Alabama 1804 - 1870*

As an introduction to this chapter, the author asks leave to quote briefly from a letter written in 1815 by John W. Walker, later United States Senator, to his friend at Washington, W. H. Crawford, then Secretary of the United States Treasury: "Huntsville is situated around the finest spring in the world; the spring forms a semicircle 100 feet wide, and at a trivial expense the stream can be made navigable for batteaux to the Tennessee river; which is only ten miles distant. The market house is of brick; the jail of wood. In its immediate vicinity are five cotton gins. The average land in the

county will produce 1,000 pounds of cotton to the acre, and 800 bales will be this year's crop. The land is also admirably adapted to tobacco raising. Besides the gins in Huntsville, there are twenty in the county."

As the beginning of this, the second era in the growth of the settlement, is the ending of the first at which lands were bought, the inhabitants were primarily engaged about the business of establishing their homes. Most of the wealthier citizens built houses along the south of the town, just out of the town limits, ranging from Pope's - now Echols' - hill on the east, to the

spring bluff on the west, along what is now Williams Street, which was lined with towering oaks and stately poplars; while others erected their houses along what is now Maiden Lane, just south of a rugged and picturesque bluff, upon which was later situated the home of LeRoy Pope.

After the matter of housing the settlers had been properly disposed of, the attention and energies of the entire community seem to have been directed to the development of the economic interests of the town.

The first storehouse on the east side of the square was built

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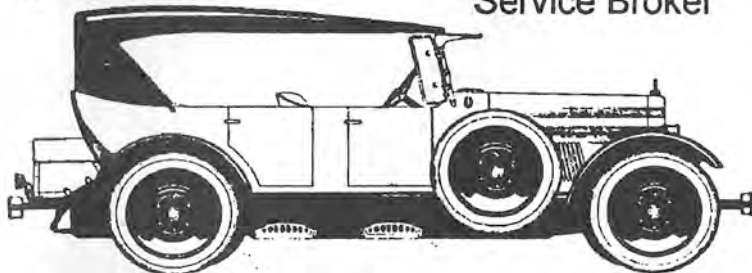
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by Neal B. Rose, LeRoy Pope and John Hickman. For a number of years the first and only paper in the territory was the "Madison Gazette," published at Twickenham by Mr. Parham, having been established in the early part of 1812, as a weekly. Later, in 1816, this paper changed hands and was thereafter published by T. B. Grantland, under the name of "The Huntsville Republican."

As early as 1803 the Territorial Legislators conceived the idea that taverns were institutions peculiarly subject to governmental control, even to the extent of fixing the rates to be charged; however, notwithstanding this, hotels or taverns were numerous in Twickenham. On the west side of Jefferson Street, just off the square, on the site of the old Huntsville Hotel, C. Cheatham owned and operated a tavern, and just across the street, in the center of the block, Archibald Madera ran his tavern, which was headquarters for the delegates to the Territorial Constitutional Convention held at Huntsville in 1819.

Between these years, the population of this, the oldest English settled town in the State, was of slow growth, notwithstanding that Madison county then held within its limits more than one-half the entire population in that scope of country which later became the State of Alabama. Nevertheless, during this period the business and commercial interests of the settlement grew by leaps and bounds. Many cotton gins and mills of various characters were located in and around the town. The author will be pardoned for here digressing, and recording

the fact that the first cotton gin in the county and probably in the State, referred to by a chronicle of the times as a cotton factory, was erected by Charles Cabaniss on Barren Fork of Flint river, soon after the land sales in 1809. When the court house was completed in 1816, it was flanked about on all sides by handsome brick storehouses, and in all parts of town many elegant and costly homes had been erected and many more were in the process of completion. This material growth of the town represented the skill and handiwork of two brothers, Thomas and William Brandon, who came into the community in 1810, with nothing but their mason's tools, and in these few years had trans-

formed the crude log hut settlement into the brick and mortar metropolis of the territory, it had by this time become.

Though engrossed in the development of their own wonderful county, the fires of patriotism still burned brightly in the souls of Madison's men and women. On October 13, 1813, General Andrew Jackson, and his command, after marching from Fayetteville to Huntsville in five hours, halted at what is now the intersection of East Holmes and North Lincoln streets, for rest over night, having learned on arriving here that the report of the "rapid approach of the Indians was exaggerated." General Jackson and his command the next day continued their march



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through the country of hostile Indian tribes to Horse Shoe Bend, where that sanguinary battle was fought with the Creek Indians. Nor was their departure unattended, for the county had contributed liberally of its men; four companies from Huntsville, one the "Mounted Rangers," under the command of Capt. Eli Hammond and a fifth company from Hazel Green, with Captain Jack Mosley as its commander, had joined General Jackson's forces here.

In those strenuous times, when safety lay in one's ability to shoot a muzzle-loading-flint-lock-squirrel-rifle, "military preparedness" was not merely a fad to be indulged according to political exigencies, and universal military training, in a measure, was a reality. The duty of every male citizen to bear arms in defense of his country and be subject to its call, was not a myth. To the accomplishment of this end, laws governing the same in the territory had been enacted, which, we have observed, were made to apply to Madison county, on February 27, 1809. It was required of the commanding officers of the companies that they enroll "every free

white male who shall have been ten days in their respective beats, each beat in the county having one or more companies, and who shall be above the age of eighteen and under the age of forty-five, and shall give notice to such person of his enrollment."

Thereafter militia duty or service was compulsory upon males so enrolled. The regiment was required, by law, to hold a muster once a year, and the company once every two months and oftener, at the discretion of the commanding officer. During the war of 1812 the settlement had furnished its quota of men to defend the country. Two companies, one under the command of Capt. Jack Mosley, and the other with Captain Gray as its commander, went forth from Huntsville; however, both companies were mustered out without having seen service in actual war.

At the end of this era, between the years 1813 and 1816, there was a pronounced inflated condition of affairs. Land values, which, in some instances, had increased tenfold, bear unmistakable evidence of this forward tendency of things and events in the life of the settlement. The

southwest corner of the square, known in later years, as the Schaudies corner, sold in 1811 for \$715.00, and without having been improved with a costly building, brought \$1,500.00 when sold during the last year of this period; and it is said by a narrator of those times, that this instance of the rise in property values, is a fair index to the advance in the price of all property.

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vances in the wealth and financial resources of the settlement, as a town, the per capita wealth of the individuals of the community kept pace. During this period, and especially the latter part thereof, large sums of money were invested in slaves, which were brought to the town in great droves by slave traders, and readily disposed of to the inhabitants of the town and county.

The growth of the entire scope of country, now forming Alabama, had been commensurate with the spirit of the times, and in order to properly care for the governmental interests of its inhabitants, Congress by act of March 3, 1817, created the Alabama Territory, with St. Stephens as its seat of government, and William Bibb as governor.

This seems to have been the one remaining thing to do for the complete emancipation of prosperity, which appears to have run riot in Huntsville during this pe-

riod. When we scan history's record of the epoch making things and events which crowded in upon each other during these years, we see the reflection of prosperity's contest with itself to accomplish something more potent for the good of the county than the thing just preceding.

Agreeable to an act of the Legislature of the Mississippi Territory of December 11, 1816, on the first Monday in February, 1817, LeRoy Pope, John P. Hickman, David Moore, Benjamin Cox, John M. Taylor, Thomas Fearn, Jesse Searcy, Clement C. Clay, and John W. Walker, as commissioners, opened books at Huntsville for subscription to the capital stock of the first banking corporation organized in Alabama, then a territory, styled, "The President, Directors and Company of the Planters' and Merchants' Bank, of Huntsville." The authorized capital of the Planters' and Merchants' Bank, was \$500,000, divided into five thousand shares of the value of \$100.00 each, of

which five hundred shares were treasury stock, to be held for the space of ten years, subject to the right of the State to purchase the same.

On September 7, 1816, the first issue of the weekly paper, the (Huntsville) Alabama Republican appeared, which, as we have observed, was formed from the Madison Gazette, already discontinued. B. Grantland was its editor; later, Messrs. Boardman & Adams became its owners and editors. In 1817 the Government Land Office was moved from Nashville to Huntsville; shortly thereafter the land sales of 1818 took place. Judge Taylor, in his history, tells us: all things considered, the sale of Madison county lands in 1818, created as great excitement as did the California gold fever in 1848-49.

Bidding at these sales was spirited, and the average price paid ranged from \$50.00 to \$54.00 per acre. Much of this land was bought in by people from all sections of the South, many of whom afterwards settled here. The greater number of the purchasers at the former sales in 1809, acquired additional acreage at these sales. Chief among the new settlers who purchased at these later sales were numbers of cultured and wealthy Virginians, who brought with them large droves of slaves.

This recognition of the fertility of the soil and appreciation of the phenomenal future ahead was shared by some of the nation's greatest men who foresaw an investment in the ownership of these lands, which promised a rich reward. Most noteworthy among these national figures was General Andrew Jackson, who acquired vast areas of Madison county lands. General Jackson's visits to Huntsville



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were not confined to attendance upon land sales alone. His frequent sojourns here made him intimate to this settlement, which held for him the highest esteem and warmest regard.

A narrator of the times records that General Jackson's visits to the hostelry of one Connally, the "Old Green Bottom Inn," were oft repeated. There, as legend has it, General Jackson "raced his horses and fought his cocks." A portion of this once famous tavern, and it was famous, being the mecca of sporting men from all parts of the South, still stands. Likewise, at this writing, the dining-room of the Inn and the table off which General Jackson ate are still preserved. That portion of this old tavern, which was constructed of gray limestone, still remaining, is now occupied by the president of the State Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes, at Normal, Alabama, four miles north of Huntsville. The proprietor of the tavern was a race horse breeder of no mean renown, for here at the "Old Green Bottom Race Track," which was operated as an inn, he raised and trained "Gray Gander," the fastest horse then known to the racing world.

The first census for Madison County, taken in 1816, shows a population of 14,200. What per cent of this was colored, is not known. That history, in its record of events, properly interprets them to be a reflection of the boom spirit of the times, cannot be doubted, when we learn that in 1820, just four years later, the second census was taken, revealing an increase in the population of the county of over 5,000. There were then, in all, 19,565

inhabitants; 10,242 of whom were white, and 9,323 colored. The aggregate population was three times that of any other county in the State; while the white population itself was in the same proportion to that of any other county.

The first and only bank, for a time in the State, being located here, and the Government Land Office, tended to make it the axis around which revolved all things

commercial and political pertaining to the Territory. Land values had reached their zenith. Railroads being then unknown, perforce, navigation was regarded as the only possible medium of transportation. A feverish enthusiasm was manifested on all sides in the lock and dam project of the Indian Creek Navigation Company, to render the Big Spring branch and Indian creek the artery of commerce to



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the Tennessee river, and thence to the outside world. The town was crowded with people; hotels were taxed to their utmost limit to lodge the throngs of transients; the bank itself was inadequate to the times, and could not care for the commercial interests of the community. So general was the recognition of the merited yet over weaning mastery and domination by Huntsville of the commercial and political life of the whole State, that, in spite of its geographic location, the economic necessity and advantage of making Huntsville the capital of the State was boldly contended for by her prominent men, and freely admitted by other leaders of thought from all parts of the State.



## Whitesburg

*Continued from page 27*

a wood stove. "We children would go out in [the] woods, chop a tree, cut it up," wrote C.D. Hobbs in 1962. "That was our fuel." The seats, he wrote, were boxes, and the desks were "split logs with pegs in them."

With the opening of the Clay Bridge in 1931, the character of Whitesburg was permanently altered. No longer was it the end of the line. Now motorists could drive back and forth between of Madison and Morgan counties. The road became a state highway extending to Birmingham.

But if Whitesburg was doomed, its name would live on. The bridge became known as "the Whitesburg bridge." When a second span was completed in

the 1960s to carry south bound traffic, it became the Whitesburg bridge too.

Today the Huntsville - Madison County Marina occupies the land where the town once stood. A plaque at the picnic area marks the location of John Ditto's store and the town of Whitesburg. There is an excellent view of the river here. And even though most of the boating traffic nowadays is of the pleasure variety, river travellers still stop for supplies at Ditto Landing — just as they always have.

*Nothing is quite so annoying as to have someone go right on talking while you are trying to interrupt.*

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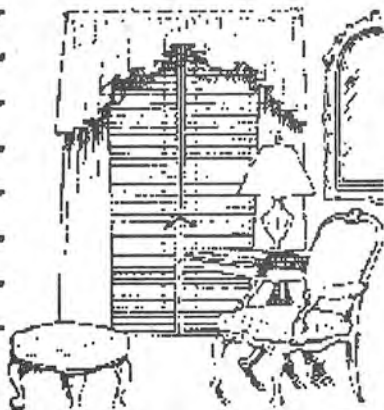
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For stomach cramps, give the patient a half glass of water into which a teaspoon of the tincture of ginger and 1/2 teaspoon of soda has been dissolved.

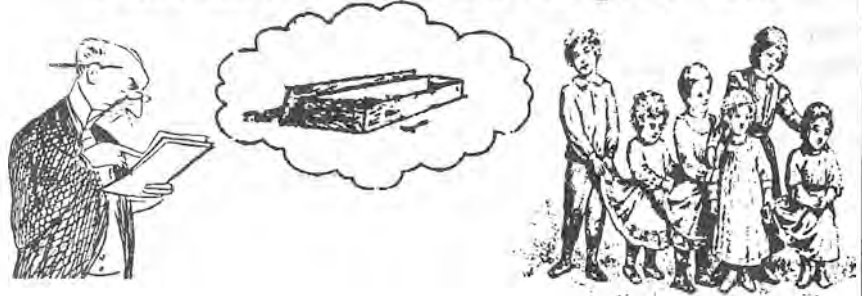
Sickness of the stomach is most promptly relieved by drinking a teacup of hot soda water. If it brings the offending matter up, all the better.

A teaspoon of ground mustard in a cup of warm water is a prompt and reliable emetic and should be resorted to in cases of cramps in the stomach from overeating.

Powdered resin is the best thing to stop bleeding from cuts. After the powder is sprinkled on, wrap the wound with soft cotton cloth. As soon as the wound begins to feel feverish, keep the cloth wet with cold water.

*These historical remedies are for your reading enjoyment only. Please consult your physician if you are having any medical problems.*

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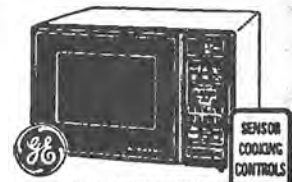


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## Cousin Blanche Was Mean

by Eric McKeever

Cousin Blanche was a big, heavy girl with dark hair and a terrible temper, just like her Mama. Her mother was my mother's sister, Aunt Marg. We went to visit Aunt Marg in the 1930s, and we had to stay overnight. There wasn't much in the way of accommodations at that time, you had to take what you got. What we got was all the children in one bed.

There was Sis and I, Jane and Timmy, Blanche and Billie, and I think another very young child. The girls were all the same age about 7, and the boys were all the same too, except 2 years younger. The girls were big and strong, also very physical and quick to hit. We were arranged in bed, all the girls with their heads at the headboard, all the boys with their heads at the foot

of the bed. Young girls have sharp toenails, too, it is a fact of life. You did not move your feet or legs very much. Our mothers collectively supervised the arranging of the children in bed. There was Aunt Beulah, Aunt Marg, and my Mom, Millie. There was but one solitary light hanging in the middle of the room, which when turned off, left the room utterly pitch black. There was some murmuring among the children for a few moments, then all was quiet.

I was surprised to find myself getting punched in the ribs. This was followed by an angry whisper from Sis, "You peed!"

"Did not!"

"Did too."

"Did not!"

"Then who did? I'm wet!" "I'm wet, too."

"Bet it was Timmy, be just like him. Give him a hit."

Cousin Timmy had a sweet and gentle personality, if you hit him he wouldn't hit back, unlike all the others. By this time there were pushes and shoves, with murmurs and accusations going on all over the bed. Somehow, in the darkness, everyone had gotten sprinkled. The accusations got louder, the pushes got stronger, and the hits got hard. Pretty soon there was a small riot in that bed, all in total darkness.

The door flew open and the light came on like the crack of doom. The three angry aunts entered the room, enraged by the disturbance. Aunt Marg was carrying a yardstick. Each mother thrashed her own children in turn, passing the yardstick around as needed. The bed was now filled by weeping and snorting children. Then Aunt Marg noticed a soaking wet dishrag on Blanche's head.

"Young lady, what's that all

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about?" Aunt Marg demanded in a very loud and frightening voice.

"I'm doin' away with myself, Mamma!" Blanche wailed.

"What!! Izzat so? Well, I ain't gonna have none of that around here!" exclaimed Aunt Marg.

Whap! Whap! Whap!

Cousin Blanche got 3 more smacks to make her change her mind about self-destruction.

The rest of us were totally mystified by the wet dishrag. That was what had dripped on us and caused all the trouble in the first place. This time when the light was turned off, the room was silent as a grave, no one even breathed very loud.

The next morning Sis asked Blanche what she was trying to do with the wet dishcloth on her head. Blanche explained that Aunt Marg had told her, "If you get your head wet, you'll catch your death of cold, and that will be the end of you." Blanche had been punished before going to bed for being naughty, we never did know what she did. For spite, she decided to do away with her-

self. Her plan was to creep into the bathroom after the light was turned out, get a wet rag, soak her head, get pneumonia and be lifeless in the morning. Then Aunt Marg would be sorry. Blanche had not considered that dripping cold water over everyone in the bed would call attention to her actions.

When the rest of us found out what Blanche had done, and that

we had all gotten thrashed for nothing, there were hard feelings. The sentiment leaned to the idea that we would help Blanche on her way if she tried anything like that again. I was always cool to Cousin Blanche after that.



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## Absurd News

A man was found dead on a country road in Kentucky, with fourteen bullet holes in him, and the coroner's jury rendered a verdict of "death by undue excitement."

The maddest man in Georgia is James Leigh. He was a candidate for the Georgia State Legislature and being a conscientious man voted for his opponent, who was elected by just one vote majority.

An Arkansas sheriff carried a bullet in his head for thirteen years and when they removed it the other day he became foolish. They are looking for someone else to shoot him again.

In a 1937 court case, Harry Strickland, age 23, denied he had burglarized the home of a friend as charged. He testified he had been invited to a crap game and his host cleaned him out of all his 25 cents with loaded dice. "How did you know they were loaded?" The judge asked. "Because," he replied, "they were my dice."

In other court news of that year, an Indian named Mollie John pleaded guilty to a liquor possession charge, but offered this explanation: "A white man

dropped the bottle from an airplane and it fell smack dab into my pocket." Judge E.B. Hart complimented the man on his imagination, but fined him \$25 anyway.

January 1938: Central Convict Camp officials sent their trusty, new, well-trained bloodhound named Mutt out for a trial run yesterday. Today they all went out to hunt for Mutt.

Possibility of a Christmas parole for 42 prisoners in the Alabama penitentiary were less bright today. Howard Hill, state probation officer, left the convicts' holiday applications in his parked car outside his office. The car was promptly stolen.



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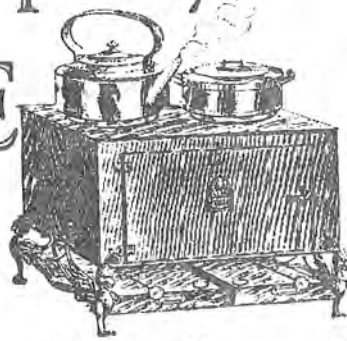
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# Household Tips by EARLENE



While in your car, to feel how cold or hot it is outside just touch the inside of the windows--in no time you'll be able to judge the actual temperature outside by touching.

Place a charcoal briquette in your toolbox--it will absorb much of the moisture and keep your tools from rusting.

In the summertime, to kill unwanted grass, just pour a little Heinz vinegar (white) in crevices and between bricks.

For a great diamond polish just put one Efferdent tablet in a glass of water and let your diamonds soak for about 5 minutes.

To make your hangers glide over your closet rods just spray a coating of WD40 on the rod (move clothes out of the way and don't spray too heavily) and wipe lightly with a rag.

To get those mineral deposits out of your steam iron, just fill the water compartment with white vinegar, then steam iron a soft rag until the vinegar level drops to low--fill up with water and do it again. Your iron will be like new!

To keep hair coloring from staining your face and neck, just rub the area with a bit of Vaseline before you start to color. When finished, just wipe off the Vaseline.

Use a level teaspoon of Nestea mixed with two teaspoons of water--make a paste and use it with a cotton ball to get scratches out of wooden furniture.

Put petroleum jelly around the top of your nail polish bottle to keep it from ever sticking shut.

Try something new with Coca Cola. Pour a bottle of Coke into your toilet bowl, let it sit for an hour. Brush it out good and flush. Coke takes stains out of vitreous china, according to Heloise.

Eat two servings of yogurt a

day and canker sores will soon disappear.

To keep shoelaces from fraying, dip the ends into a dab of Elmer's glue.

If you have an ailing plant, give it two teaspoons of Geritol per week. In a few months you should begin to see fresh and healthy green growth.

Listerine does a good job at getting rid of acne, just dab on at night with a cotton ball.

To prevent lint from sticking to your clothes in the dryer, just throw in a pair of L'eggs pantyhose into the dryer along with your clothes.



## Lane's Interior Fashion Center

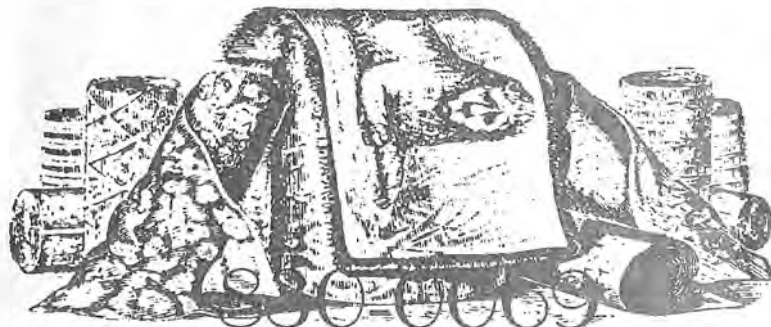
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# Searching For Our Ancestors



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

**Earl H. Taylor**, 2060 7th St. La Verne, CA 91750-4411

My family arrived in Huntsville in 1808 when it was Mississippi Territory. The family estate was 160 acres directly north of Huntsville on Brier Fork, three miles north of Meridianville and Moores Mill. My gr gr gr grandfather, **Joseph TAYLOR**, died in 1809 and his widow **Jane TAYLOR** bought 160 acres of land. She remarried in 1816 to a man named **John WLLIGAN**. She later divorced him and died in Madison Co. She had children: Isaac, Peggy, John, Pleasant, Gideon, Matilda C., and Albert Calhoun (who is my ancestor) TAYLOR.

Three of the brothers married Cavett girls who I assume were sisters but may have been cousins. My cousin and I are writing a TAYLOR family book and are having trouble tracing the families of the children who stayed in Alabama. Many of the family moved to Aliceville, Pickens Co, AL in 1831, then on to Noxubee Co., MS about 1848 and on to Texas where they were found in the 1850-census in Williamson Co. Many are still unaccounted for and were presumed to have stayed in AL. We

have not been too successful searching in the census. What we need are the Tax records for Madison Co. AL. We have been unable to access them in regular channels such as the county courthouses, or Mormon records etc. We would be very grateful and willing to pay all expenses involved for Madison Co, Tax records from 1809 to about 1840-50.

**Editor's note:** TVGS has published a History of Madison Co, edited by Dr. Frances Roberts in 1967. This has been reprinted and is available for \$12. Many TAYLORS are mentioned and surely they are of your family as they lived on Briar Fork in

northern Madison Co. A Captain Joseph Taylor was a prominent man having served as a commissioner of roads and revenue. He is reported to have emigrated to Arkansas after the Civil War where he died.

Perhaps your family will be included in the Squatters Census of 1809 published in Valley Leaves Volume 6, 1971. Good luck on finding descendants of these Alabama Taylor's, hopefully they will see this and send you reams of information. Please send us a copy of your book when it is finished.

**Willie Cannaday Lawyer**, 2410-2 Mallard Lane, Beavercreek, OH 45431-3666

I am in the process of searching for information about my great-grandfather, **Graves Bolen CANNADAY**. He was born in Madison Co, AL in 1823/24 and moved from there to Missouri in 1828/29 then returned to Madison Co., AL around 1834/35 where he remained for about six or seven years.

Apparently his mother, Sarrah remarried to a Mr. CLAMPIT(t) sometime in 1836/7 in Madison Co. I have information that Graves' brother, **Hugh H. CANNADAY**, was born

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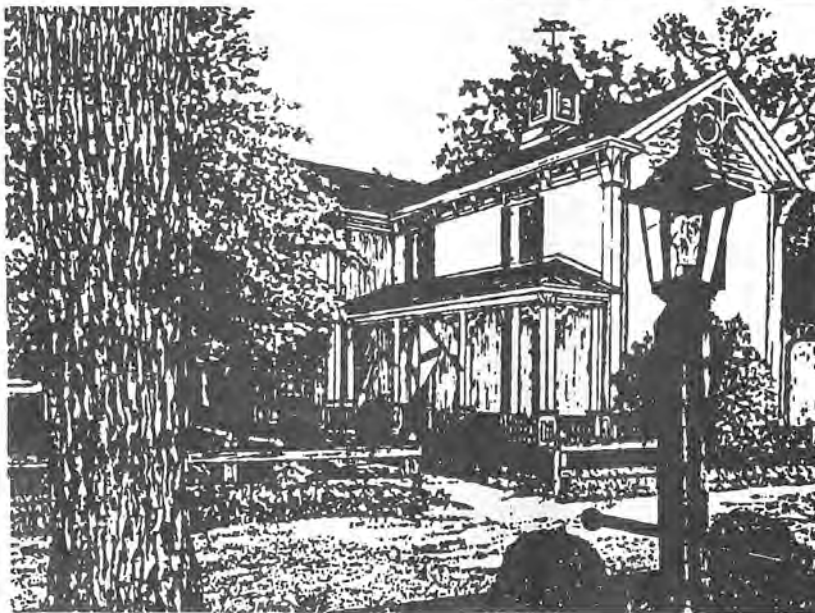
in Madison Co, on 12 Mar 1825. There is a possibility their father's name was Reilly or. \* William Cannaday (KENNEDY). Are there birth, marriage, tax, church (Baptist) records in Madison Co or within your society for the dates listed above? I hope there are records available also I would like to have the name of a researcher that I can contact to search the records available. Thanks in advance for any help and/or information you can supply.

**Editor's note:** There should be marriage records for this time period in the county court house. Huntsville Library's "Heritage Room" has the published indi-

ces to the early marriage records. Several Baptist church's have published histories that could be examined in the Heritage Room, birth records may not be available. I am sending you a list of people both Certified Genealogist and Certified Record Searchers and several not certified but through researchers that are willing to do research in and around the Tennessee Valley. You should write to one of them for price and availability.

**Karol Collier, 455 Co. Rd. 358, Clanton, AL 35045**

I am researching my family that came from the New Hope and Bridgeport area and have reached a brick wall. Please tell



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me the best place to check for information when I come to your area. The family I am looking for were on the 1880 census of Madison Co: **G. W. MC GAHA**, 28; wife **M. E.** 37; **S. E. LANE**, 11, stepson; **M. J. CARPENTER** 11, stepdaughter; **Charles CARPENTER** 9, stepson and **Harvey CARPENTER** 7, step son; **F. L. MC GAHA** 2, and **M. MC GAHA** 4 months. I am the great granddaughter of Charles Carpenter. We know nothing of his mother and siblings.

In 1870 we found a Charles and Mary Carpenter in the census. This Charles must have died between 1873-77 when Mary married G. W. Mc Gaha. Was he the father of my Charles? Charles was born 1869/70.

**Editor's Note:** The Huntsville Heritage Room in the Public Library ranks up there with the top Genealogical libraries in the country. Their collection of

around 40,000 books and thousands of microfilm provide excellent coverage of Alabama and the Southern states. In addition they have something for every one of the states and most countries.

The periodical collection is tremendous, partly due to the exchange of our publication, *Valley Leaves* with more than 150 societies in the US and Nova Scotia. Many of their patrons subscribe to periodicals and donate their copies to the Heritage Room. TVGS has established a fund to bind periodicals, only full volumes are bound and none are displayed before binding. Contributions are appreciated for this worthy project.

In Jackson County visit the Jackson County Archives as well. They have an excellent collection of local records.

Traditionally TVGS has sponsored a spring seminar in March or April. This year's seminar is set for April 20, 1996. The

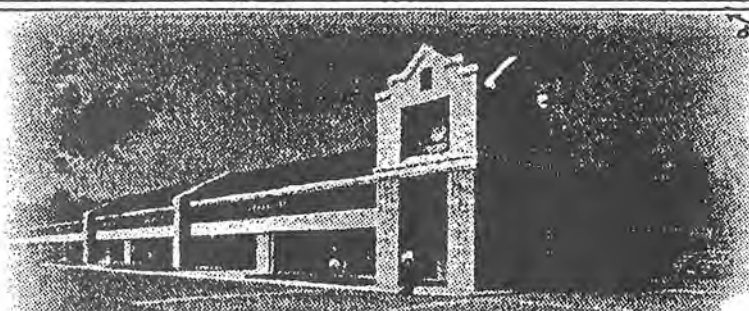
speaker will be Sandra Hargreaves Luebking of Western Springs, Illinois. Some of her topics are: "I Want To Be The Ancestor of A Genealogist" and "Lies of The Night and Other Bright Lights." Cost of \$25, includes 4 lectures, lunch and great hand-outs. Send fee, name, address, phone number, e-mail address and unlimited surnames before April 10, 1996 to TVGS, P. O. BOX 1568, Huntsville, AL 35807.

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Local wags predict the "Hotel de Riddick" will do a landslide business on its opening day as many of Huntsville's shiftless elements compete for the reward and a place in the history books.



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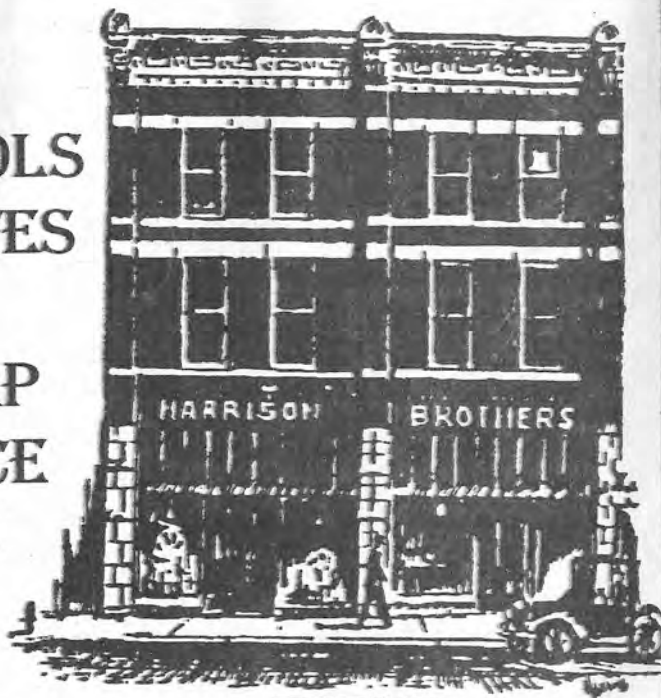
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