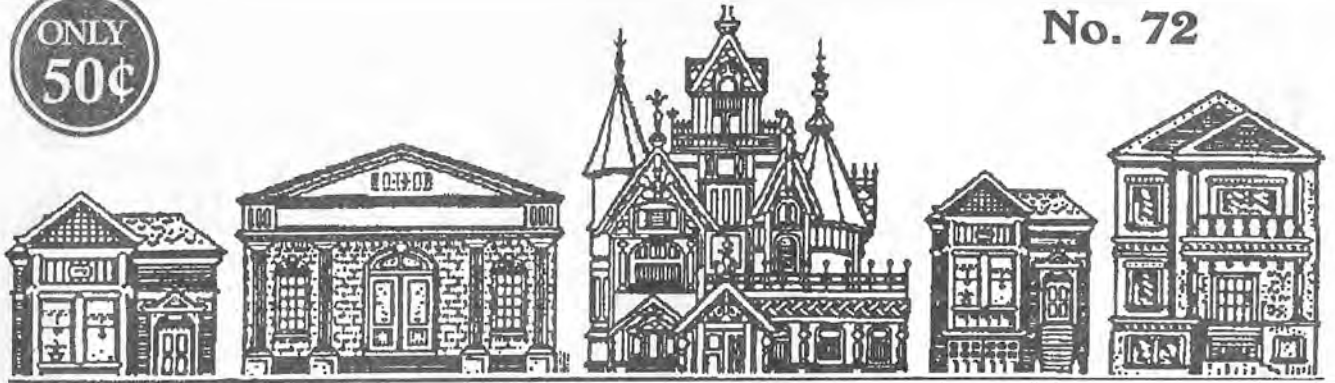


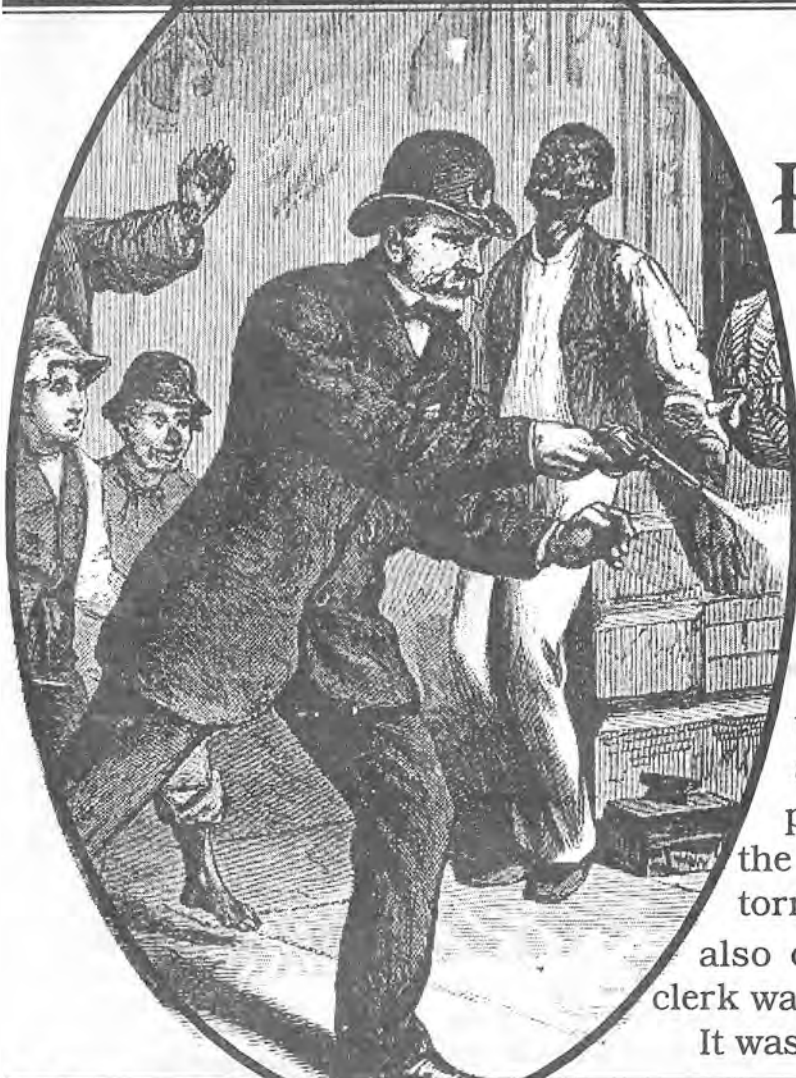
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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



POLITICS, HUNTSVILLE STYLE

What started off as an investigation of campaign finances quickly turned into one of the most notorious scandals in Huntsville's history.

The National Guard occupied the courthouse; the Chief of Police and his chief deputy resigned; a prominent judge was murdered; the sheriff committed suicide; an attorney with ties to the whiskey ring also committed suicide; an ex-court clerk was indicted for murder. ...

It was politics Huntsville style.

Also in this issue: "The Legacy of John Harrison"

Politics, Huntsville Style



Huntsville, in the year 1916, was permeated to the core by corruption, graft and crime. The sheriff and chief of police were openly involved in whiskey rings while elected officials sold patronage and took kickbacks for city and county contracts. Almost nothing could be accomplished in the city of Huntsville unless someone was paid a fee.

Ironically, the political system itself bred corruption. Most of the wealthy politicians who could afford to fund their own campaigns were turned out of office in the last century and now the newer breed had to find other sources of money. Adding to their difficulty was the fact they were notoriously underpaid.

Often times the total expenses of running the sheriff's office or the police department was actually more than the budget allowed.

Left unsaid but acknowledged by everyone was the fact that elected officials were expected to find ways to make up the difference.

Fortunately for the officials there was plenty of money to make up the difference. Moonshiners had to pay a certain fee each month to stay in business and bootleggers who brought whisky in by the boatload from Chattanooga paid for the right. The people who distributed the

whiskey also had to pay as did the lowly shot houses where it was sold by the drink. Even the taxicab drivers who hauled the whiskey from the river to town paid each month.

It was reported that the total "taxes" on the whiskey was more than the cost of manufacturing and transporting it.

Corruption was not confined to whiskey alone. People who ran gambling establishments paid off every month and the three local bordellos paid according to the number of "ladies" they employed.

If a person wanted a contract to sell supplies to the city or county they were expected to make a contribution, and continue that contribution as long as they held the contract. If a person needed additional temporary labor, convicts could be leased from the jail for a nominal fee. Even road repair in front of ones home carried a price if you wanted it done in a timely manner.

Though the corruption was no secret, it was almost impossible to prove. Trusted "bag men" were employed to collect the payoffs that were then delivered to a local attorney. The attorney, after taking his share, would split the money up among the various officials. These officials in turn, after taking their share, would pass the money down to



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trusted confidantes who would pay off the various deputies, clerks, road foremen along with anyone else who might be deserving.

It was later alleged that these payoffs extended all the way to the state capital in Montgomery.

In the summer of 1916 the whole graft system was in danger of collapse. Numerous unsolved murders and charges of election fraud had brought about demands for grand jury investigations.

W.T. Lawler, who had recently been elected to the position of County Probate Judge quickly became the main focus of one investigation. Evidence had surfaced that he and his political opponent, David Overton, had each spent in excess of \$20,000 in the last campaign although they had both pledged to limit their expenditures to \$1000.00.

Now the public was demanding to know where this huge sum of money came from.

On the morning of June 15,

1916, Judge Lawler's wife called the sheriff, Bob Phillips and reported her husband missing. She and her sister had attended the Chautauqua at East Clinton school the night before and her husband was supposed to have met them there.

When he failed to show up Mrs. Lawler returned home where she anxiously paced the floor all night worrying about what might have happened to her husband. Early the next morning Lawler's Maxwell automobile

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was discovered parked in front of the courthouse. Its seat was saturated with dew. Obviously it had set there all night.

Many people automatically assumed that Lawler had left town to avoid testifying before the grand jury.

Sheriff Phillips quietly reassured Mrs. Lawler that her husband would surely show up once things had settled down. "I wouldn't worry too much if I were you," Phillips told her.

Phillips himself, though, had plenty of things to worry about. The night before, at 3:00 a.m., he had been summoned to the courthouse where he met a bloody and disheveled David Overton.

Overton was forty-five years old and had lived in Huntsville all his life. For fifteen years he had been a policeman and for ten years had been chief of the police force before resigning to serve five years as Clerk of the Circuit Court. He was also one of the major players in the whiskey ring that controlled Huntsville.

Now, as Overton sat in a chair facing the sheriff he unfolded a story that would ultimately destroy the very foundations of Huntsville's corrupt political system.

The day before, Overton and Lawler had met and talked briefly of the necessity of standing together in defending themselves against the expected grand jury indictments. They agreed to meet that same evening in the offices of Robert Spraggins who was a mutual friend.

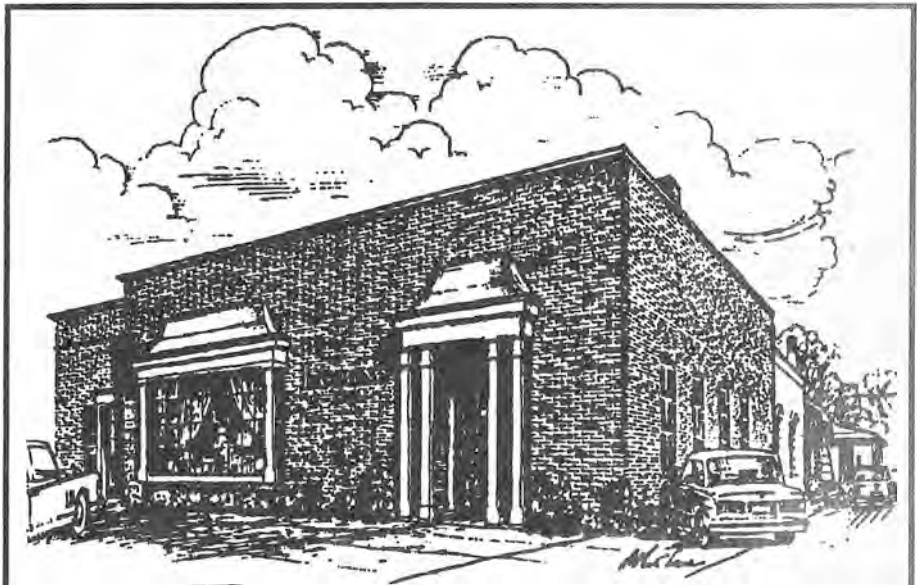
"At about 8 o'clock," said Overton, "I was waiting on the street near the First National Bank. Lawler met me and said he had phoned Spraggins.

Spraggins wanted to go to the Chautauqua and asked us to postpone our conference until the next morning.

"My buggy was hitched close by. Lawler suggested we drive around while we talked. We drove down Whitesburg Pike until we came to the bridge when I thought that was far enough and turned the horse around. But Lawler wanted to talk some more so we got out and, after we scouted around for any unwelcome eavesdroppers, stood on the bridge and talked.

"Lawler had a list of all the grand jurors, some his friends and some mine. He wanted us to start that night calling them and trying to get things fixed up. I said that would cause too much talk... calling them so late at night and everything.

"The talk started agreeable enough but when I stuck to my idea the Judge got mad. Words led to blows, and he got out his pocket knife and started hacking me. I had been sick, lost forty or fifty pounds in the last couple months and the Judge was big



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"I had a gun and when he started cutting me I pulled it and began hitting him with it. When he still wouldn't stop I shot him. I left him lying on the bridge and came back here."

As Phillips listened to the story he immediately realized the impending danger. If the body was found it would spur new investigations and if Overton was arrested it would raise even more questions.

Not sure of what to do, Phillips picked up the phone and called Shelby S. Pleasants, a local attorney. Pleasants was alleged to be the person who handled the payoffs to the local officials.

Pleasants, also, quickly realized the danger they were all facing from any additional investigations. After listening briefly, he offered the sheriff one piece of advice, "... cover it up. Let people think Lawler left town because of the grand jury."

Sheriff Phillips turned his attention back to Overton who

was sitting in a chair weak from loss of blood. "Go see Charles Nalls," the sheriff told Overton. "Tell him to go get Percy Brooks and they'll help you get cleaned up and make an alibi."

Charles Nalls was the Circuit Court Clerk and Percy Brooks was a part time deputy who ran the ferry at Whitesburg. He also oversaw the boatloads of whiskey that were unloaded there.

Nalls and Brooks drove Overton to an empty house on Whitesburg drive where he changed clothes and got his wounds dressed. They then drove back to Overton's home where Sheriff Phillips was waiting.

"Was the body still there?," asked Overton. "Don't worry about it," replied the sheriff. "It's taken care of. Just act like nothing has happened."

The following day as speculation about Lawler's disappearance grew an anonymous note was sent to deputy sheriff N.L. Pierce. "If you drag that creek down there under the bridge at

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 2. *Sundial's Little Book of Word Trails* by Public Radio's Harry Watters (\$6.95).
 3. *Prize In The Snow - Award winning children's book* by *Huntsville Times* columnist Bill Easterling (\$15.95).
 4. *From Huntsville to Appomatox - History of the 4th Alabama Regiment* by R. T. Cole (\$32.95).
 5. *Law's Alabama Brigade in the Civil War* by Morris Penny (\$37.50).
 6. *Mid-South Garden Guide - The best book for Zone 7 (that's us) Gardening* (\$16.95).
 7. *Found Among The Fragments - Courageous women in Yankee occupied Huntsville* by Sarah Huff Fisk (\$15.95).
 8. *Long Ago in Madison County - written and illustrated in 1964 for young children* by Kenny and Fisk (8.95).
 9. *Southern Railway: From Stevenson to Memphis*, edited by Jack Daniel (\$24.95).
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Whitesburg," the note read, "you'll find something interesting."

Pierce showed the note to Phillips who, though he knew what the note referred to, dismissed it as, "probably bootleg whiskey hid in the creek."

Never the less, a few days later when he had some spare time, Pierce decided to check the tip out. A cursory inspection of the creek and surrounding brush turned up nothing but as Pierce walked out onto the bridge his attention was drawn to what looked like fresh spots of red paint. A closer inspection however revealed what appeared to be blood spots that someone had clumsily tried to cover with paint.

Pierce now realized the note was referring to some other crime rather than whiskey.

After summoning more help and borrowing a boat from a nearby farmer, Pierce began dragging the bottom of the slough. Finally, just as dusk was settling, the grappling hook snagged a heavy object. It proved to be the body of a man, who had been

bound with rope and weighed down with a heavy piece of iron. All the men instantly recognized the body as that of Judge Lawler.

Leaving his companions with the body Pierce rushed back to town to inform the sheriff of his gruesome discovery.

Pierce later described the sheriff as "being shook up over the news."

Minutes later, while David Overton was eating dinner he received a phone call from the sheriff. After a brief, whispered conversation Overton hung the phone up, walked out the door and disappeared. Even his family claimed not to know his whereabouts.

News of finding Lawler's mangled body swept across town like a wind blown brush-fire. Incredulous wonderment quickly turned to anger as people began to wonder who the murderer could be. Within hours crowds began forming in front of the courthouse demanding to know what progress was being made in the investigation.

Judge Allen, fearful of mob action requested help from the governor to help keep the peace. The same day three companies of the National Guard were sent to Huntsville where they promptly took up posts around the courthouse, jail and fire station.

The first break in the case came when, acting on a tip, Deputy Pierce arrested Charles Nalls and Percy Brooks. The back seat of Nalls' car was saturated with blood and a pistol that had been recently fired was found in his desk.

When Sheriff Phillips learned his deputy had arrested Nalls he was terrified. He knew it was just a matter of hours before his own involvement became known.

With his entire life crashing down around him, Phillips went into his office and closed the

Common sense is very uncommon.
-Horace Greeley

Downtown Huntsville street scene around the time of Judge Lawler's murder.



door. He signed a few papers, tidied up his desk and then placed a pistol next to his right temple and blew his brains out.

News of Sheriff Phillips' suicide horrified the people of Huntsville; none more so than Nalls who had been expecting the sheriff to suppress the investigation against him.

Angrily, Nalls called Shelby Pleasants demanding he do something to get him out of jail. This was the last thing Pleasants wanted to hear.

Pleasants had spent years building up a thriving law practice; helped in a large extent by his ties to the whiskey ring. He knew that now it was just a matter of time until his own role as the "payoff" man was exposed.

Fearing the consequences of an investigation and trial, Pleasants locked himself in his office, and with the pistol alleged to have been the murder weapon, committed suicide.

With all their alibis committing suicide, Nalls and Phillips decided to cooperate and named David Overton as the murderer.

With the sheriff dead, the chief of police, A.D. Kirby, temporarily took over the investigation, but, within hours of assuming his new duties, Kirby himself became the object of an investigation. It quickly came to light that he too was heavily involved in the whiskey ring.

Deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, Police Chief Kirby and his chief deputy resigned.

Common sense is in spite of, not as the result of education.
-Victor Hugo

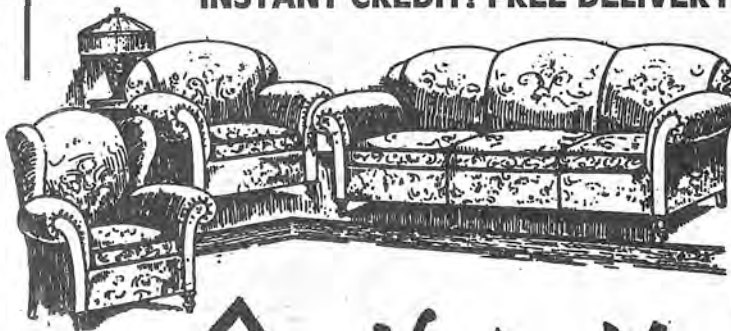
By now the governor had become involved. He appointed a new sheriff to take over the investigation and caused a warrant to be issued for the arrest of David Overton. B.M. Miller, later to become governor, was named as a special judge to try the case.

On September 25, Overton was arrested in Smithville, Tenn., and returned to Huntsville for trial. During his months on the lam he had traveled exten-

sively throughout Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee, accompanied by his wife and family. At first he pleaded innocence to the charges, disclaiming all knowledge of the incidents described by Nalls and Brooks.

Unfortunately for the surviving known members of the whiskey ring a plea of innocence by Overton meant that he, Nalls and Brooks would all stand trial and probably implicate other un-

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known members in their efforts to go free.

On the second day of the trial Overton suddenly changed his plea to guilty and exonerated Nalls and Brooks. His testimony was collaborated by the wives of Nalls and Brooks who testified that their husbands had been home asleep during the night of the murder.

It was later alleged that Overton's change of heart was caused by members of the whiskey ring who assured him that if he took the fall alone, they would influence the jurors to find him innocent.

On November 25, 1916, the jury found David Overton guilty of murder and sentenced him to death. He was transported to the Birmingham jail to await execution.

To say that Overton was bitter would be an understatement. He now realized that he had been offered up as a sacrifice. With him in jail many of the other investigations ceased.

Overton, facing death by hanging, frantically began calling politicians and other influential people he knew who had profited from the whiskey ring. If he was hoping they would use their influence to gain him a pardon, he was sadly disappointed.

They refused to accept his calls.

Next he began writing letters. They too went unanswered.

With no other options available, Overton contacted officials in Montgomery and expressed his willingness to testify about the corruption in Huntsville and Madison County.

Two days after his message was received in Montgomery a jailor "accidentally" left Overton's cell door unlocked. Overton and five other prisoners escaped. Minutes after the escape the po-

lice received an anonymous tip that Overton was hiding in a grove of trees several miles from the jail.

Oddly, the police arrived at the scene before Overton did and were about to leave when they spotted him approaching. Later speculation claimed he

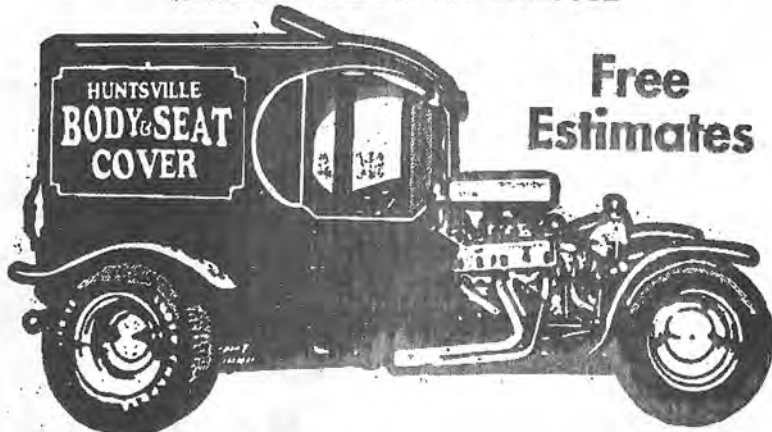
was waiting for an automobile that never arrived.

In the ensuing gunfight David Overton was killed. Also killed were any chances for a thorough investigation of corruption in Huntsville.

Although the whiskey ring could undoubtedly breath easier

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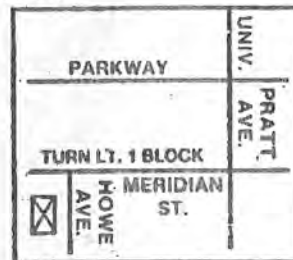
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with Overton's death there were still other loose ends needing to be tied up.

Charles Nalls, who was bitter from his time in jail, and his forced resignation as circuit court clerk conveniently died of a "virus" several months later. The son of Sheriff Phillips was reportedly about to make public a list of people involved in the corruption when he was found dead, the victim of a "suicide."

Percy Brooks, who claimed to be the only person "who had all the facts," was run over by a train in Sheffield. A witness later claimed to have seen a stranger push Brooks in front of the train but the allegation was never investigated.

With all the main players in Judge Lawler's murder dead the public quickly turned its attention to other matters.

The whiskey ring returned to doing business as usual.

The Will



In 1899 Miss Mollie Teal died, willing her property to the city. Miss Teal stipulated in her will that in order for the city to acquire title to the property it had to be used for the benefit of the public. Also, according to legend, she insisted a sign be left in place above the front door. The sign read "Welcome Back."

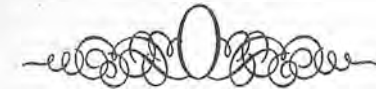
The various city officials were aghast at the idea of using it for office space. Finally, with time running out, they persuaded a local charity to use it for a hospital.

This was the beginning of Huntsville Hospital.

Miss Mollie Teal was a Madam. The property was a bordello.

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--Ambrose Bierce

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A Tale Of Two Brothers



Brothers Billy and Charlie had a dream. They wanted to build a hospital where patients could receive specialized care. That would also serve as a research and teaching center.

Such an idea in the late 1800s was considered absurd, to say the least. For many patients of that era, checking into a hospital was equivalent to a death warrant. Unsanitary and crowded conditions, combined with medical practices, often bordering on quackery, was enough to convince most people to take their chances at home.

Also opposing the idea were many prominent members of the medical community who distrusted the "newfangled" ideas of

the two brothers.

Huntsville was without a true hospital at the time. When several of the community's leaders heard of the idea, they immediately contacted the brothers who were living in Minnesota at the time.

Also in Huntsville's favor was the fact that the United States Surgeon General had recently declared the city as one of the healthiest places in the country.

In April, 1896, Charlie was induced to visit Huntsville. He took an immediate liking to the city and after extensive negotiations, purchased a parcel of land.

The land was expensive:

\$2,500 in cash and another \$3,000 in bank stock.

Unfortunately for Huntsville, civic leaders in the brothers' hometown also heard of their idea. By offering attractive inducements of land and money the brothers were persuaded to build their hospital there.

Several years would pass before our city finally got a hospital. It is interesting to note, however, that if the brothers' dreams had worked out here, the hospital, instead of being named Huntsville Hospital, would have been named the Mayo Clinic.

The brothers, Charles and William Mayo, never returned to Huntsville.



If a child annoys you, quiet him by brushing his hair. If this doesn't work, use the other side of the brush on the other end of the child.

--Anonymous

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In the early 1900s watercress cultivation began in Huntsville. This was one of the few places in the country where an abundance of fresh spring water and limestone, combined with moderate winter temperatures, made its cultivation practical. Growers would often ship over one million bunches of watercress to points all across the country.

"Cressie," as old-timers used to call it, was grown in ponds similar to the way rice is grown in China. The water level would

be kept at about six inches during the growing season. When frost threatened, the level of water would be raised, the constant degree temperature of the water protecting the plants from damage.

Colder winters and the expense of shipping were cited as the two primary reasons the business declined here in Huntsville. With the advent of air freight the railroads discontinued most of their express freight trains. Watercress became too expensive to ship by air and too perishable to ship by regular freight train, thus ending another era of "Old Huntsville's" history.

Try the following recipe:

Potage Cresseniere

- 1 lb. Potatoes
- 1 T. salt
- 1 1/2 pints milk

One bunch of Watercress
1 oz. butter

Peel the potatoes, wash them and boil them in salt water until tender. Drain, crush them with a potato masher, and when free from all lumps add boiling mild salt while the potatoes are cooling, wash and pick the watercress and chop roughly. Add to the soup and cook for five or six minutes. Take off the fire and add the butter. Pour into a hot tureen and serve. Serves 6-8.

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Remembering the Cotton Mill Strike

by Ruby Crabbe

When I was a youngster growing up in Dallas Village, so many things happened it would be hard for me to remember them all. But the things I do remember, like the "Famous Strike" at Dallas Textile Mills, will be spoken of forever. The picket line in front of the mill was long and the strikers were tired. Some of them carried large banners proclaiming the strike and warning people not to cross the line.

I can't remember who all took part in cooking food for the strikers, but I do know that my mother, Josie Allen, did. My step-Dad, Mr. Lonnie Allen, took part in the cooking as well. Every day at noon he and Mama would fix hamburgers and coffee for the strikers. Now when I say hamburgers I mean it would be such a large sack full it would be hard for us kids to even carry them. Plus, we carried a pot that held three or four gallons of hot steaming coffee. I remember one night several of the union members had a meeting at this certain house. During the meeting someone spoke up and said, "Boy, what would I give right now if I had all the good fried chicken

I could eat?" At that remark the lady of the house got up and excused herself from the meeting. It wasn't long before the odor of good fried chicken just filled the house. It appeared that three good sized fryers had been roosting on a water pipe right outside the back door. Don't know whose chickens those were but they were never seen roosting again.

I remember the union members and the nonunion members having a little get-together on 5th Street, now known as Andrew Jackson Way. The union members were on one side of the street, the nonunion members on the other. On the union side a large platform had been erected, and on top of it was what appeared to be a machine gun.

Don't know if it was the real thing or not but a lot of people didn't hang around long enough to find out. And on top of that platform stood Bill Jaco. He was singing loud and clear, "We shall not be moved." That song generated a lot of angry offensive yells, but did that bother Brother Bill? No way, it only made him sing louder and louder, "We shall not be moved!"

*Children begin by loving
their parents. After a time
they judge them. Rarely, if
ever, do they forgive them.*
—Oscar Wilde

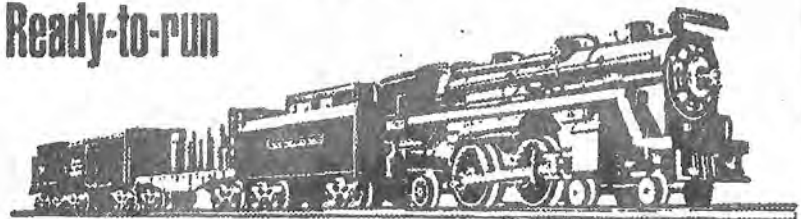
*The best way to convince a
fool that he is wrong is to
let him have his own way.*
—Josh Billings

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An Old Cook's Secrets

Keep your salt in a small bowl. When you season, use your fingers instead of a shaker, you'll be less likely to oversalt.

Cold water brings out flavor, while hot water seals it in. Therefore, always start a stock with cold water.

To give your rice a good Mediterranean flavor, add a bit of olive oil and lemon zest to the cooking water.

For easy clean-up while your pots are still hot, drizzle with a little vinegar, sprinkle with salt, rub with a sponge and rinse.

Keep a special carafe handy for red wines left over from your dinner table. When you've collected enough, use it for sauces and salad dressings.

New way with potatoes: Wrap each baking potato in aluminum foil with a dab of butter, a dash of garlic powder, a grind of fresh black pepper and one or more of the following: chives, dill, tarragon, rosemary, parsley. Bake at

425 degrees for 25 minutes. Great flavor and low in fat!

Peppermint tea is great for moodiness. Drink it warm and strong, it will relax you.

Italian chefs use this delicious dressing for steamed vegetables: Mix roasted sesame seeds with plain yogurt. Pour over steamed broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage or use as a dip for raw vegetables (I would add a bit of garlic or onion powder).

When you're tired of cooking in the kitchen try this: When the weather starts getting chilly at night and you're in the mood for a good fire in the fireplace, take a couple of large sweet potatoes and wrap them well in heavy-duty aluminum foil. Wait til you have some good red-hot coals in the fireplace, then place the potatoes in the middle of them. Ours take about 45 minutes to

an hour, and we unwrap them, cut them in half and add a bit of butter, salt and fresh-ground black pepper. You wouldn't believe anything could taste this good on a cold night!

Chicken roasted in Pastry? Sure, do it this way. Make a dough of flour and water. Roll out in a large circle. Sprinkle the cavity of a whole chicken with rosemary, stuff with 2 lemons that have been cut in half. Wrap the chicken in the dough and roast it, the wrapping of bread will absorb all of the fat (Just toss it out) and will make your chicken extra healthy.

For extra crispy veges and lettuce for your salads, do this. Put all the ingredients, cut and ready, into a large bowl, without dressing. Cover the veges with a couple of layers of damp paper towels, put in fridge for an hour or two before you eat.



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RECIPES

Thanksgiving Fare

Baked Turkey

When buying turkeys under 12 pounds, you should allow 1 pound per serving. For heavier birds, allow 3/4 pound per serving. Wash your turkey and dry it, rub the cavity with garlic powder and a bit of salt.

Brush the bird with oil or butter. Sprinkle liberally with garlic powder, onion powder, salt and pepper. Stuff with your favorite stuffing. Lay 4 strips of bacon across the breast evenly. Place small amounts of foil over the wing tips, ends of legs and tail tips. Place the turkey breast side up in the middle of a large baking pan.

Cook the turkey according to the directions on the package.

They normally take about 4 hours or so, then you want to take it out of the oven and let it sit for 10 minutes or so before carving.

The drippings that are left over in the pan make wonderful gravy, when mixed with chopped up cooked giblets and flour. I normally cook the giblets early Thanksgiving morning, because they take a couple of hours to cook.

Savory Glazed Ham

1 5 lb. ham
1/2 c. firmly packed brown sugar
1 T. cornstarch
1/2 t. ground cloves
1/4 t. ground ginger

1/2 c. lemon juice

Place the ham in a shallow baking dish, and begin cooking it according to the instructions on the ham. In a small saucepan combine the brown sugar, cornstarch, cloves and ginger. Add the lemon juice and heat, stirring constantly until thickened. Spoon the glaze over the ham during the last 30 minutes.

Spinach Rockefeller

2 10 oz. packages frozen chopped spinach
1/4 c. dry bread crumbs
1/2 c. green onions, chopped
2 eggs
4 T. melted butter
1/2 c. Parmesan cheese, grated
1/2 t. minced garlic
1/2 t. minced thyme black pepper to taste
1/4 t. salt
6-8 tomato slices
1/2 t. garlic salt

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Cook the spinach according to the package directions and squeeze dry. In a large bowl add the spinach and all ingredients except last 2, blend well. In a 2 quart baking dish arrange the tomato slices. Sprinkle with the garlic salt. Spoon the spinach mixture on each slice, shape like a dome.

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Bake in oven for 20 minutes and serve hot.

Sweet Potato Soufflé

2 c. mashed, cooked sweet potatoes

- 1/3 c. sugar
- 2 T. butter
- 1/4 c. hot milk
- 1/8 t. salt
- 1 t. vanilla
- 2 eggs

Mix all ingredients well. Bake in buttered glass dish (1 1/2 quart) at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle 1/2 c. chopped pecans over potatoes, then top with miniature marshmallows and back in oven for 10 minutes and marshmallows are browned.

Apples and Cranberries Crisp

- 3 c. diced apples
- 2 c. raw cranberries
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. quick oats
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. chopped pecans

Mix the cranberries, sugar and apples. Mix last 3 ingredients. Put dry ingredients on top of the apple mixture. Cut 1/2 stick of butter up and place

pieces over the dish. Bake for 1 hour at 325 degrees.

Barb's Famous Green Bean Casserole

2 cans green beans 1 can water chestnuts, sliced and drained 1 can sliced mushrooms, drained 1 can cream of mushroom soup 1 t. garlic powder 1/2 c. chopped cheddar cheese 1 medium onion, chopped salt and pepper to taste.

Mix all ingredients and place in casserole. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Remove from oven, sprinkle evenly a small can of Durkee fried onions over casserole, and back in oven for 58 minutes and onions are toasted.

Eggnog Pie

Graham cracker pie shell
1 envelope unflavored gelatin

- 1/3 c. sugar
- 1 1/3 c. milk
- 3 egg yolks, lightly beaten
- 3 egg whites
- 1/4 c. sugar
- 2 T. dark rum
- 1/2 c. heavy cream

Combine the gelatin, sugar, milk and egg yolks in a sauce-

pan. Over medium heat, cook til the mixture comes to a boil and remove it from the heat. Chill for 20 minutes, stirring a few times. Beat the egg whites into soft peaks and gradually add 1/4 cup sugar.

Beat til thick. Add rum to the chilled egg yolk mixture. Whip the cream and fold it along with the egg whites into the egg mixture. Pour into the graham cracker pie shell and don't serve til you've chilled it for at least 4 hours.

A church debt is the devil's salary.

--Henry Ward Beecher

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The Legacy of John Harrison

by Richard Smallwood
(Great Grandson of John Harrison)



Robert S. Harrison, son of John Harrison, continued the family tradition.

On December 27, 1983, Mr. John W. Harrison, the last Harrison brother, died. On July 31, 1984 the heirs to the Harrison Estates sold the building, land, fixtures and contents of 124 South Side Square to the Historic Huntsville Foundation for the sum of \$105,000. This ended the private ownership of what was, at the time of its sale, the oldest business in continuous operation in Huntsville, having been originally established in 1879 and established in Huntsville in 1883.

The story of this store began on August 30, 1855 in White County, Tennessee when John Harrison married Miss Mary Kelley, a descendant of a Mecklenberg County, Virginia Revolutionary War Patriot, George Crowder. The children of

this marriage became the original Harrison brothers of Harrison Brothers Hardware.

Little is known about the origins of John Harrison. For reasons still not clear, his descendants listed his birthplace as: 1. Tennessee, 2. Quebec, Canada, 3. New York City, 4. Ireland; and (with more than usual inventiveness), 5. "On the High Seas." On his Tennessee Confederate Pension application he stated he was born in Quebec, Canada of parents who were from Ireland. It is far from clear as to when he entered the United States, but there are two versions of what else happened. In both versions his Irish father is the Captain of a merchant ship and he a cabin boy.

The first version states that

while his father's ship is in port in New Orleans, he and his brother (name unknown) are offered money to take horses and provisions up the Mississippi River. These provisions would be used to feed crews who floated timber rafts loaded with trade goods down to New Orleans. When he and his brother reach their destination, they are not paid, but are robbed, beaten and deserted. Because of adverse weather conditions, they are unable to float down the Mississippi River and must walk back to New

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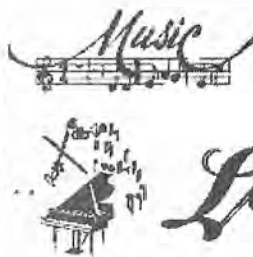
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Orleans. When they arrive in the city their father's ship has sailed. While waiting for the father's ship to return, they work in the area. However, employment opportunities in New Orleans are seasonally dependent and finally each brother has to strike out on his own, never to see the other again.

The second version states that his father treats John so harshly that he jumps ship in New Orleans when the ship docks. John wants to put a great deal of distance between him and his father, so when he hears of cheap lands in Tennessee being opened for settlement, he seizes the opportunity.

Whatever the true story John Harrison becomes a farmer. As regiments are being formed to fight in the Civil War he walks to Shelbyville and joins the Confederacy as a Second Lieutenant, in Company A, 38th (Murray's) Tennessee Infantry Regiment in Oc-

tober 1862. In 1863, he resigned his commission because of ill health. Upon returning home John returned to his White County farm. In 1865, he moved his family to Dekalb County, Tennessee and became a tanner. In 1880, he was elected Register of Deeds for Dekalb County.

In 1879, John's two oldest sons, James B. (born 1857) and Daniel T. (born 1860), started Harrison Brothers in Smithville, Tenn. The business started as a tobacco factory. In 1886, the brothers bought a drug store wherein they sold crockery, tinware and iron cookware. As their business increased, their only sister, Cora (born 1863), kept the books.

On August 24, 1882 John's wife died, and later that year he remarried. None of the children liked their stepmother and there seemed to have been family problems, so all the children

moved down to Huntsville, including the youngest, Robert (born 1872). Huntsville was selected by James, who had visited here while buying for the Smithville tobacco factory. Once in Huntsville, they operated at various locations in the downtown area, but in 1895 they moved to the South Side Square location. They also had a store in Decatur, but closed it to concentrate their efforts in Huntsville. Near the end of his life John Harrison moved to Huntsville to be nursed by his children. He died in 1914 and is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

James Harrison married Sally Holmes of Smithville and built a house at what is now 315 White St. They had three children, William (who lived in Chicago), Frank, (who lived in Detroit), and Elizabeth (who mar-

cont. on page 22

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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

*With pearls of wisdom
contributed by the Liar's Table*



A special Happy Birthday to my very special friend, **Dolly Davis**. As most of you know, Dolly is the mother of our **Jan Davis**, our local astronaut.

Kelly Wise stopped by the restaurant recently and I was very impressed. She's in the running for Public Service Commissioner.

Howard Grizzard is improving with his broken leg. We miss you, Howard!

Herb Dixon, who ran for Huntsville City Mayor in the last election is starting to make some noise about running against **Bud Cramer** for his U.S. Congressional seat. Political pros around here claim Herb might do better by just saving his money.

We are really enjoying our new elevator at **Twickenham Church of Christ**. I hear that **University Baptist Church** is are talking about getting one too.

A recent conversation with good friend **Sandra Rhodes** indicates that she has reached the conclusion that her entrance into either race (City Council seat 2 or County Superintendent) will bring her a strong showing of support. Insiders tell us that she is leaning toward the County job but won't make a decision until the first of the year.

Congratulations to **Jerry and Jami** who are now proud grandparents of **Brennon Wayne Bell**, born October 13, 1997.

Coffee pourer of the month award goes to **Mike Lowery**. Wonder if his wife knows how handy he is in the kitchen?

Looks like our illustrious **City Council** is bickering again. Maybe we should replace their desks with a liar's table and give **Ms. Loretta** a ruler to rap their knuckles with!

I believe it's going to be a great

Halloween for **Sarah, Katherine and Darby!** They were the cutest goblins on Monte Sano and had bags of candy to prove it.

I had some great out of town guests, **Mike, Chris, Angie** and "little" **Chris**, grandson of **Jim** and **Susan Kirkland**. He celebrated his 1st birthday and had a great party!

Could the rumors be true? We keep hearing about **Larry Mullins** for mayor in 2000. True or not, lots of people are talking.

If you read my column several months ago you will remember that I predicted **Don Siegleman** would be running for Governor. Well, it's official now and he's coming on strong. Look for him down at the restaurant eating ham and biscuits before long!

Well, here is the **BIG NEWS** from me... November 18th from 6:00 AM., until noon, I am giving my **Arthritis Breakfast**. We'll be giving away lots of door prizes and raffling off a computer. We'll be having lots of local celebrities doing duty as waiters: **Sheriff Joe Whisante, D.A. Tim Morgan**, lots of our judges and many, many more. Tickets are \$10 and you can pick one up at my restaurant. Call **1-800-879-7896** to get one.

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than ever, it's because **Loyd Tomlinson** finally listened to me and now serves Potato Soup every day!

Some of my friends over in Arab invited me to have lunch with them at the **El Rancho Restaurant** and **Mayor Hart** presented me with a key to the city. They really are some great folks!

Birmingham businessman **Tom Jenkins** brought all his associates with him to breakfast because he heard I was a Jenkins and he's trying to claim kin to me.

The Twickenham Church of Christ is having a variety show featuring "**The Music of Forest Gump**" on Sunday night, **Nov. 2nd**. The show starts at 7:45 pm. Wear a baseball cap and bring enough chili for your family plus one guest.

My good friend **Cliff Hill** has passed the bar exam and is practicing law now. I know you are not

supposed to recommend attorneys but I **can** recommend Cliff as a genuinely good person.

Madison Academy will host their annual "Southern Tradition" on Saturday, Nov. 1st, between 9 am and 3 pm. Wonderful food and great holiday shopping!

Congrats to **Charles and Margaret Merryman** on the birth of a grandson, **Michael Alexander**, born recently to **Charles and Barbara Merryman** in Jasper.

Overheard at the liars table: Will the last person leaving St. Louis please turn the lights off.

Hats off to the **Huntsville Times** for their series on pollution in the Tennessee River. We need more investigative articles like that.

Smile, have a good day and remember that God loves you and so do I.

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Photo of The Month

The first person to identify the little boy in the picture below wins a breakfast at Eunice's Country Kitchen. So stop by and tell Aunt Eunice who you think it is!

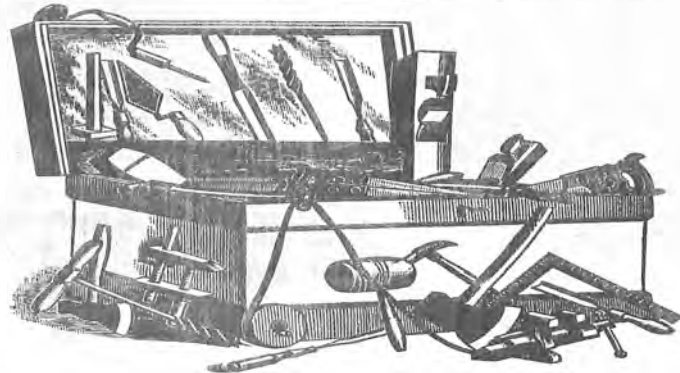
Hint: well-known legal fellow.



Last month's picture was **Cynthia Clare Parsons**

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John Harrison

cont. from page 19

ried a Moyer). All members of this family, except Elizabeth's daughter (who moved to Texas) are buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

Daniel and Cora never married. Daniel built two houses on White Street, that are now 403

and 405. Cora died in 1936 and Daniel died in 1940. They are also buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

Robert married Helen Fraser of Huntsville and built a house at what is now 401 White St., but lived for 35 years at 314 W. Holmes Ave., (the W. R. Rison House). They had three children Daniel (born 1898), John (born 1901), and Mary Margaret (born

1904). John and Daniel were the last Harrison Brothers.

Helen Fraser (no relation to Dr. Thomas Fraser) was the daughter of John and Margaret Muir Fraser, both first generation Scottish immigrants. Historically, both the Fraser and the Muir families were involved in horticulture. John and Margaret had met while participating in Grange activities in Allentown, Mo. They married in St. Louis County, Missouri, then moved to Huntsville to find a suitable location in which to grow fruit trees and rosebush stock. John Fraser established Huntsville Wholesale Nursery which supplied the majority of roses to Sears, Roebuck & Co. Originally the nursery and the family home was on Stringfield Road where the Vulcan Rock Quarry is now located. Later the nursery was relocated north of Bob Wade Lane and a new family home was built at what is now 427 Eustis Ave.

All three of the sons of this marriage went into the nursery business. John took over Huntsville Wholesale Nursery, Oliver

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*History is nothing but a
pack of tricks that we play
upon the dead.*

--Voltaire

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started Fraser Nursery in Birmingham and James created the Fraser nursery in Huntsville. The Huntsville Fraser nursery extended from California Street on the west, to about Owens Drive on the East, Locust Ave., on the North to Fagan's Creek on the South. He built a house at what is now 1000 Locust Ave. In 1929 when James decided to get out of the nursery business, he subdivided his nursery as Monte Vista Estates which contain streets named Harrison and Fraser Avenues.

Robert Harrison and his two sons ran Harrison Brothers Store until the death of Robert in 1952, whereupon, Daniel F., and John W., ran the store until Daniel died in 1981. John then carried on along until his death in 1983.

The daughter, known as Margaret, left Huntsville after graduating from high school. After a year in college, she moved to Washington D.C., and started working at the U.S. Department of Agriculture where she met my father, Harry Earl Smallwood. There were three children from this marriage Robert E., Richard A. and Helen M.

Daniel married Lucille Coons. They had one child who died soon after birth. John W. married Carroll Drake, and there were no children, so in many ways the store was their child. While we nephews were required to work at the store during the summer months, there was no offer for us to enter the business. As a matter of fact, in all conversations, the Uncles encouraged us to pursue other occupational endeavors.

When John died, the heirs realized that the store could not be operated as it had in the past. Profit margins would have to be raised, parking was restricted, there was slow turnover of most of the inventory, and the store layout was very labor intensive. Mrs. Robert Eslick had contacted me before my uncles' death and asked if the family would consider selling the store to the Historic Huntsville Foundation. The heirs felt that the Foundation would be the only possibility for continued widespread community support and the preservation of the store's ambiance. For that reason the

Foundation's offer was accepted while higher offers refused.



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Buck Hughes grew up in Tuscaloosa and played football for Paul Burnum's Tuscaloosa High School Black Bears from 1926 to 1929. In his four years on the team, the Black Bears went undefeated and claimed the myti-

cal national high school football championship each year! Buck captained the team his senior year in 1929 and scored three touchdowns in the state championship game against Besse-

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mer. He scored another three touchdowns in his next and final high school game; the national championship game against St. Louis.

It was only natural that Hughes would move across town in 1930 and play for the Crimson Tide of the University of Alabama. During his career at Alabama, Hughes played for two of Alabama's greatest coaches, Wallace Wade and Frank W. Thomas. There he played with the immortals of Alabama football, "Bear" Bryant, Don Hutson and Johnny Cain.

Interestingly, his most memorable game for the Crimson Tide was a 0 to 2 loss against Fordham University at the fabled Polo Grounds in New York City on October 28, 1933.

Fordham, the best team in the east was host to "Dixie's football pride," the University of Alabama. The crowd that day was 60,000 strong. For Hughes and the rest of the Crimson Tide that number was about 40,000 more than they were used to playing in front of.

A mighty defensive struggle from the start, Hughes intercepted a Fordham pass on the Alabama five yard line late in the first quarter but moments later, Fordham blocked a Dixie Howell punt for a safety and that's how the game ended — 2 to 0. "I played 60 minutes that day," Hughes said. "We'd been playing before crowds of 20,000. They had 60,000 that day. The papers said it was the biggest crowd they'd ever had for a football game." Although Hughes and his teammates lost that day, they went on to finish 7-1-1 and win the Southeast Conference championship. "It was a good year," Buck Hughes said. "But my biggest thrill was that day at the Polo Grounds."

After graduating from Alabama, Hughes would coach at Howard College for one year. He then landed a position on the Alabama squad as an assistant coach. He became head coach at Russellville High School in 1936 until he joined the United States Navy soon after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Decem-

ber 7, 1941. He would go on to serve four years in the Navy during World War II and after being discharged he worked for the Veterans Administration in Tuscaloosa for two years.

Football called for Buck Hughes again and he became the head coach at Huntsville High in 1948. There he succeeded Joe Dildy who had only a year before succeeded another North Alabama legend, Milton Frank.

Hughes coached the Huntsville High Crimson Panthers for six years with his best record coming in 1949 when the team lost only to the Decatur Red Raiders.

After resigning as head coach, Buck Hughes went in to real estate for a couple of years then joined the Hawk project office at Redstone Arsenal. He now lives in retirement here in Huntsville and Huntsville is the better off for having the likes of Larry "Buck" Hughes amongst us.



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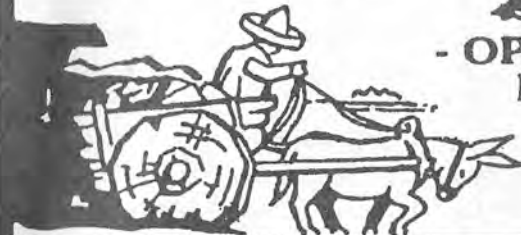
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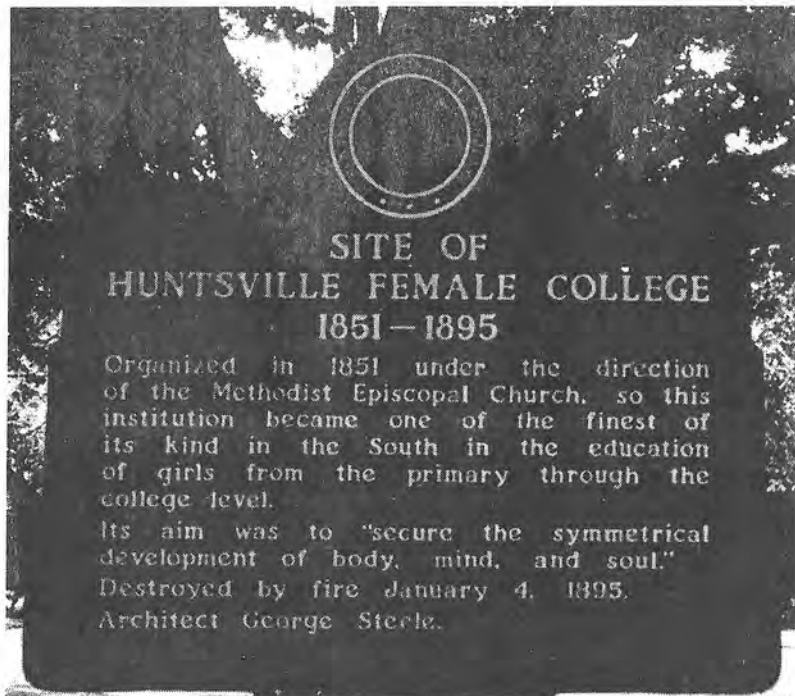
Historic Madison County Landmark

by Raneë Pruitt

A long time symbol of pride for old Huntsville were its two distinguished schools for young women. The Huntsville Female Academy was run by the Presbyterian Church, while the Huntsville Female Collège was owned by the Methodist Church. While both of these would probably be considered no more than private high schools today, their curriculum and standards were much higher than those of our present public schools. It was a mark of distinction to be able to attend one of Huntsville's female institutes, where young

women were educated to become ladies in the finest sense of the word. The women were instructed in the arts, mathematics, science, music, classical languages (Greek and Latin), modern European languages (especially French), as well as the social graces. A graduate would leave school at a level almost comparable to a liberal arts graduate from a university of today.

The Huntsville Female College is probably the better remembered, since the Female Academy did not really recover from the Civil War. The Huntsville Female College first opened



in 1851 as the Bascom Female Institute. It received its charter from the Alabama Legislature on January 27, 1852. During its first four years, classes were held in the downstairs rooms of the old Eunomia Masonic Hall, home of Helion Lodge #1 F & AM. In June 1853, the cornerstone was laid for the college's own building on Randolph Avenue three blocks east of the courthouse square. It was com-

pleted in 1855 and the college moved in. The impressive four-storey red brick building measured 164 feet long and 52 feet wide. A columned portico graced the front of the college, while the surrounding grounds were beautifully landscaped. On December 21, 1855 the charter was amended to change the name to the Huntsville Female College.

Mrs. Jane H. Childs was appointed the first temporary principal of the college. Mrs. Childs had been running her own private school in Huntsville, and her school in effect became the college. In 1853 Rev. George W. Everhart was named the first president.

Student life at the college was strict enough to give today's students thought. Proper dress was required at all times, with no "ostentatious" display of jewelry permitted. The college's motto was "Good Success," and the emphasis was on hard work and respect for one's elders. Students received demerits for failing to meet the standards both aca-

demically and in conduct. A total of 20 demerits meant dismissal, a disgrace that no young lady was eager to face!

By 1861 the enrollment at the Huntsville Female College was approaching 200 students, with about 70 boarders coming from other States. Then that terrible fraternal war began and life in the South was completely disrupted. In April 1862, Huntsville was captured by the Yankees and

classes at the college were indefinitely suspended. Though Huntsville would change hands many times in the war, classes would not be resumed until after peace returned. The Female College was looted and vandalized while it was used as a hospital by the Union Army, but otherwise the building survived intact. Several years after the war, the college was able to reopen. The school continued to prosper in the post-war years, becoming noted all across the region. Then one day a mysterious fire brought it all to an end.

At 11 o'clock AM on January 8, 1895 a student discovered smoke in the hallway on the fourth floor. It was immediately reported to Dr. A. B. Jones, then president of the college, who raced to turn in an alarm at the fire department. The horse-drawn fire engine sped to the scene and two hoses were quickly connected to the fire plug in front of the college. The firemen dragged the hoses up to the

fourth floor. Oddly, no flames could be seen, even though the smoke by now was billowing from the rooftop and filling the hallways and classrooms. The firemen cut several holes in the ceiling and through the tin roof to try to discover the cause. It was then found that the entire roof was ablaze beneath the tin!

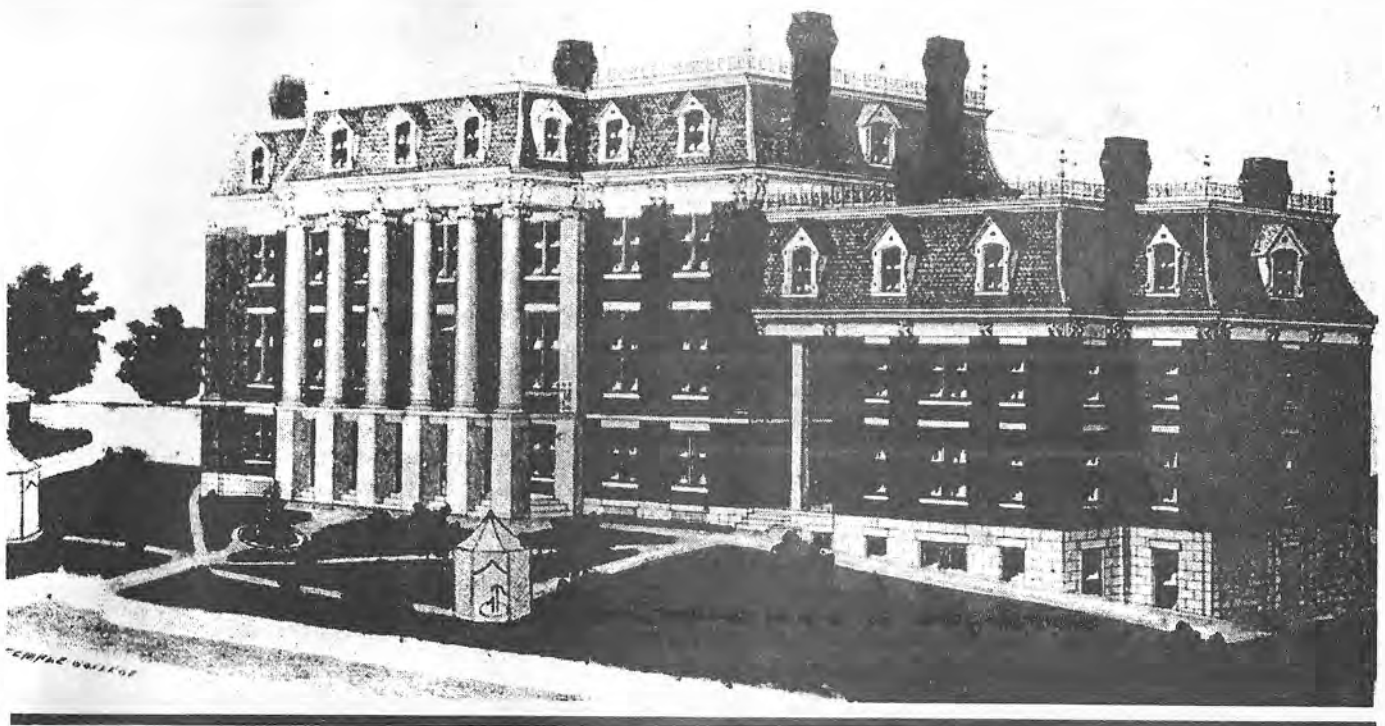
The fire fighters were handicapped by the nature of the building. The hose would be turned on the flames in one small classroom, only to have them break out again just 20 feet away in another room. One courageous fireman daringly climbed out of

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A group portrait of one of the graduating classes sitting before the college around 1890.



Huntsville Female College, located on Randolph Street, burned down in 1895.



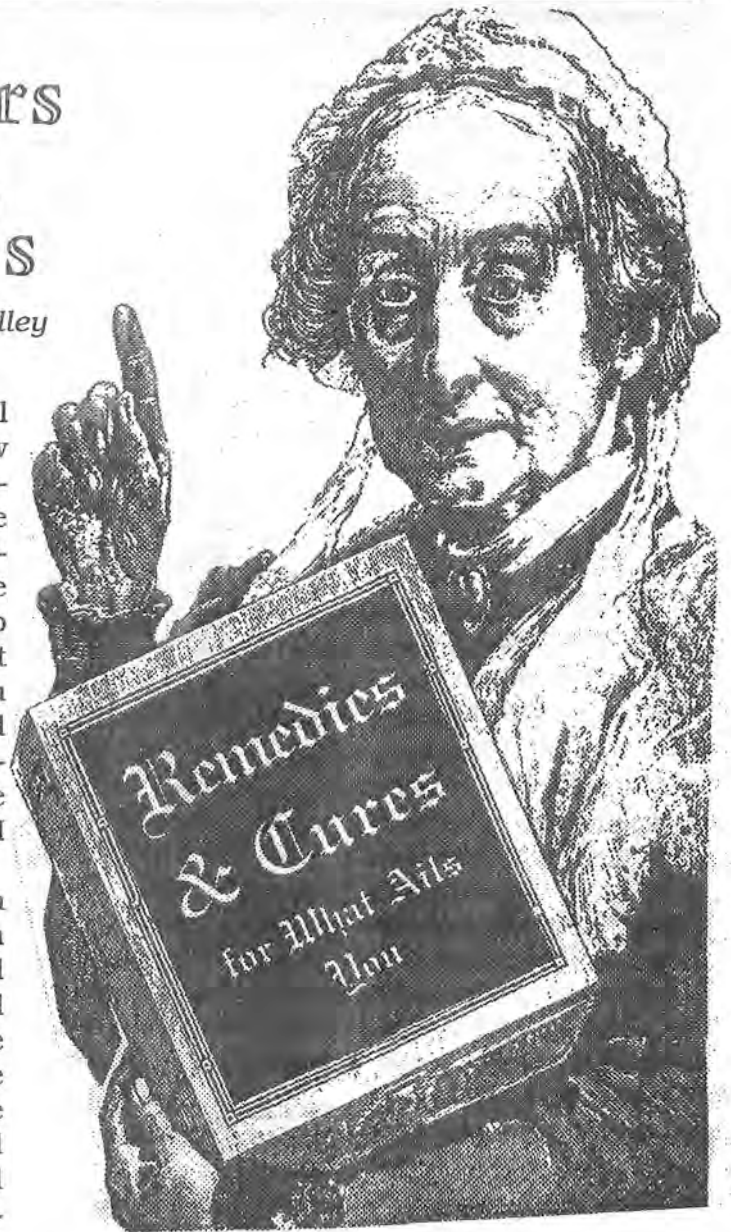
Rural Healers of the 1920's

*An excerpt from the memoirs of Victor Nunnelley
by Phoebe Nunnelley Terry*

Health care of the 1920s and earlier in rural Alabama was vastly different from what we know today, and would be looked upon by most as voodoo or witchcraft. It was a strange mixture of home remedies, and individuals with unexplained—almost magical—powers. Just how far back these methods of health care go I wouldn't attempt to guess, but my honest opinion is that some, if not all, came over on the *Mayflower*. Scoff at it as you may, some of the early remedies which were frowned upon and finally outlawed by the American Medical Association have never been recaptured by the very ones who helped to stop the practice. By that I mean the doctors themselves.

I'll relate here about the two Estes sisters, Laura Jane and Julina. One could draw out fire and both could stop the flow of blood. These sisters married two brothers named Durham. Laura Jane married Uncle Will Durham and Julina married Uncle Onnie. They were no kin to me; everybody in the community called them "Uncle." They were hardworking, law-abiding citizens, well respected in the community. Both couples lived to a ripe old age and raised a big flock of kids. I had no experience with Laura Jane except hearing what people would say who saw what she could do when it came to stopping blood. People who witnessed this ability all said it was miraculous. No matter how fast the blood flow, the instant she was told the name of the person who was bleeding—they didn't even have to be in sight of her—the blood would stop instantly. Some said that a certain verse in the Bible had something to do with it. It was also claimed that she could transfer the power to stop blood to another person before she died. But if she did there was never any sign of it, and I know every one of her surviving relatives. None of her daughters claimed to know one thing about it. Nor does anyone else in this county that I've ever heard of.

But it was Aunt Julina who really made a believer out of me when it came to drawing out fire. I'd lived close to this family all my life, except for



the times when I was working away from home. I had heard all about Julina's reputation as a burn doctor, but I was still skeptical. I believed that her treatment was most likely for someone who "almost" got burned—that is, up until about 1955.

Uncle Onnie and Aunt Julina lived about a half-mile from me at the time, and I was renting some land right close to their house. I was plowing corn one day with a two-horse cultivator. I carried my sweeps (cultivator blades) to the house to sharpen them when I went to my noon-day dinner. I liked to keep them very sharp and had done this many times. I had this electric forge on which I heated one side of the sweep at a time and then hammered it out sharp on an anvil.

The forge was outside and the sun was shining. Now, you can't tell when iron is hot just by looking at it in the bright sunlight. Both sides of the sweep had been heated, which gave it a dull, bluish color. I had pulled it out of the forge, when something else got my attention. I picked it up and made the serious mistake of taking hold of the side that was still red-hot. My hand made a frying noise and the smoke went about two feet high. The sweep stuck to my hand and I had to sling it loose.

Well, I knew at once that it was by far the worst burn I'd ever had. And the next thought that come to mind was that I was in the middle of a crop and would not be able to hold the plow handle. The pain was so intense that I just turned around a time or two, then got in my car and started down the driveway. I

thought at first of going to town, but I knew it would take half a day to see a doctor, if at all.

By the time I reached the county road I thought of what one of Julina Durham's sons, Luke, had told me about a man who was working at a syrup mill and fell into a pan of boiling syrup. He only managed to keep from going all the way in by throwing both hands into the boiling syrup to hold his body out. Luke said his mother was at the mill at the time and that she drew the fire out leaving the man without so much as a blister. I thought to myself, "boiling syrup is mighty hot." Then I turned toward the Durham place instead of town. When I got to the house Mrs. Durham was standing in the doorway just like she was expecting me. I said, "Mrs. Durham, I don't know if you can help me or not. I've re-

ally got a bad burn."

In a kind and gentle voice she said, "That won't be a bit of trouble." She then took my hand in both of hers and her hands felt as cold as ice. The pain stopped instantly. She did some kind of *mumbojumbo*, then said, "Wait about fifteen minutes and I'll draw it again." I walked out on the back porch where Mr. Durham was sitting in the swing. By that time the pain was coming back fast. Every place my hand had touched the red-hot sweep was burned stiff as a board, and had turned a dark brown color.

When she called me back in, the same thing occurred as the first time, except that the pain did not return as severely as it had before.

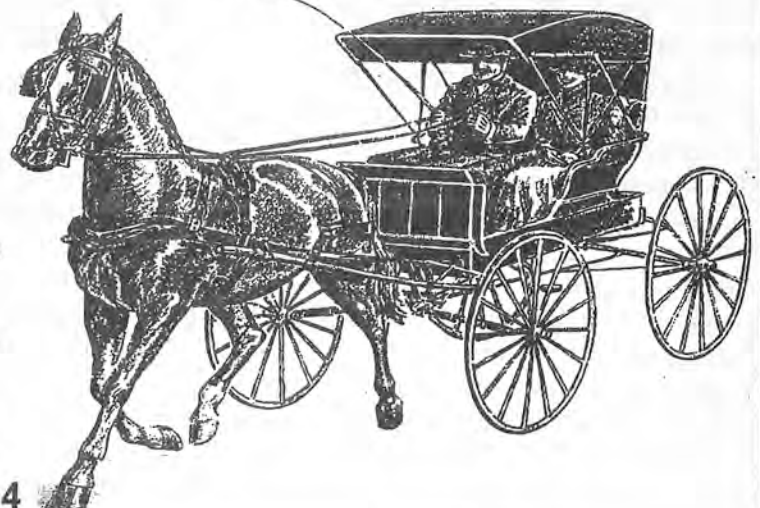
Any kind of burn always left me with a blister, so I said, "I

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Old Huntsville

From The Year 1932

LINDBERGH BABY KIDNAPPED

Charles Augustus Lindbergh Jr., 20 month old son of Colonel and Mrs. Charles A. Lindbergh, was kidnapped between 8:30 and 10:00 last night from his crib in the nursery of the second floor of the Lindbergh home in Hopewell, N.J.

Apparently the kidnapping was carried out while the Lindberghs were eating dinner or shortly thereafter. The baby's nurse, Mrs. Betty Gow, visited the nursery about 8:30 and found everything in order there. When she returned at 10:00 the crib was empty.

Muddy footprints that trails across the floor from the crib to an open window bore mute testimony as to how the baby had disappeared. Mrs. Gow dashed downstairs. "The baby's been kidnapped," she shouted. Colonel Lindbergh raced to the nursery, followed by his wife. Mrs. Lindbergh recalled that earlier that day she had tried to fasten a screen on the window in the nursery but had been unable to.

Satisfied that there was no mistake and the baby really was

gone Colonel Lindbergh telephoned Chief of Police Charles Williamson. The chief drove to the home accompanied by another officer.

Outside the door they found Colonel Lindbergh. He was bareheaded and wearing an old black leather jacket such as he frequently wears on his flights.

Scanty information is available at this time but authorities express confidence that the perpetrators will be brought to justice within a matter of hours.

American Nazi Party Offers Reward

New York: Leaders of the American Nazi Bund offered a \$1000.00 reward for the safe return of the Lindbergh child.

The announcement came only minutes after the Bund received word of the kidnapping. In a prepared statement released to the press early this evening the party called for its members to be vigilant and help the authorities in any manner possible.

20,000 Veterans March On Washington

Military takes control
of city under seige

Washington: Over 20,000 veterans have descended upon Washington demanding immediate payment of bonuses they were promised for their service in the Great War.

Congress had earlier passed a bonus bill but payment was to be delayed until 1945.

Today Washington is under a virtual siege with many government buildings taken over by veterans groups, many of whom are wearing their decorations from the war.

Soup kitchens, organized under military lines, have been set up on many street corners to feed the columns of men pouring into the city from every direction.

With the police powerless to control the marchers, the military authorities will assume control of the city in this time of crisis.

Meanwhile, in other business on Capital Hill, Congress voted itself the largest pay raise in history.

OLD HUNTSVILLE - YESTERDAY'S NEWS TODAY

MIRACLE PLANT INTRODUCED TO MADISON COUNTY

Crowds line up early to get free Kudzu plants

Huntsville: Crowds began forming early this morning at the Farmers Market as officials began giving out free seedlings of the famed Kudzu plant.

Kudzu is highly prized in the Orient as a food and livestock fodder. More importantly for the farmers in this region is its ability to stop and control erosion on lands depleted by continuous growing of cotton.

Kudzu is reputed to be able to grow and thrive in any type of soil and under the most adverse weather conditions. The plant was introduced to Georgia two years ago and, in one experiment, completely covered a barren section of land (7 acres in size) in less than eight months.

Mr. J.C. Lowery and Mr. Kenneth Perry have announced plans to grow and market the plant commercially. "We could be

the Kudzu capital of the world," Perry said as he made the announcement.

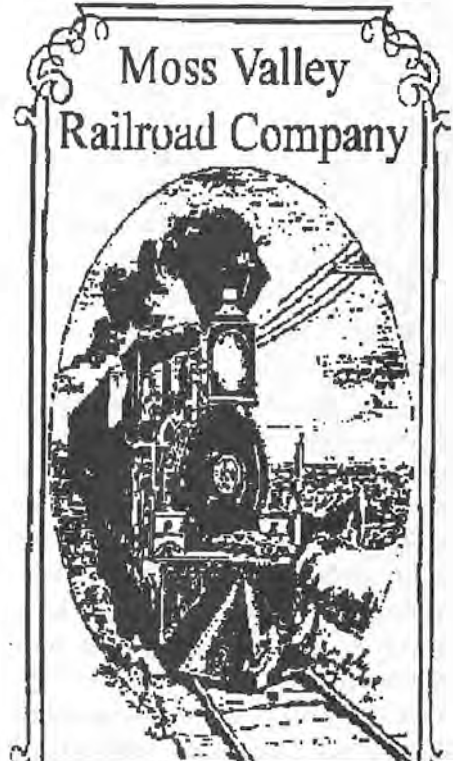
The plant with its plush foliage is considered very attractive and several farmers have announced their intentions of planting the vine next to utility poles to decorate the roadside.

Al Capone Goes To Jail For Tax Evasion

Chicago: Reputed mobster Al "Scarface" Capone was convicted today on charges of defrauding the government out of almost thirty million dollars in income tax. Capone's lawyers have announced plans to appeal on the grounds that the income tax is unconstitutional.

Kildare Hotel Opens

Huntsville: Plans were announced today to reopen the former McCormick estate on Oakwood Ave., as a hotel catering to business people visiting Huntsville. Mrs. W.T. Williams has been named as manager and plans are under way to hire a chef from a large northern hotel.



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Rural Healers
cont. from page 29

need to plow; can I put something like lotion on it to keep the skin from breaking?"

She told me that the skin wouldn't break, to just go on back to work. I asked, "What about wearing a glove?"

She answered, "It won't hurt anything, but it won't help anything either."

I just couldn't get it out of my head that the hand was going to blister, as any other burn would have done. But she assured me that it wouldn't, and it didn't! That's not the end of the story, either. None of her family ever had a blister from a burp. Since her death twenty years ago, I've never heard of any other person who had the gift of drawing fire, nor do I expect to. I think her oldest son Grady summed it up best when he said, "It don't make sense, but it works."

The controversial madstone was supposed to have power over rabies. I had no actual first-hand experience with the madstone, as the rabies vaccine had already been perfected by the time I came along. But I have listened to some people who were born around the turn of the century and before who believed in it wholeheartedly. Also I have read several articles on the subject which corresponded identically with what these local people had to say about it.

Personally, I doubt that the stone had any real merit or curative powers. But I will relate here what the ones who believed in them had to say about the application. This madstone was a stone that was formed in the stomach of a cow or deer. They varied greatly in size. I don't remember ever hearing any "dead-

line" on how long a person had to get to this madstone treatment after being bitten by a rabid animal, but I do remember the procedure itself quite clearly.

It went like this. First, the stone was soaked in warm whole milk. Then it was applied directly to the wound. If the animal was rabid, the stone would stick to the wound for several minutes and then fall off. Then the application was repeated for as long as the stone would adhere to the wound— usually about three times. If the animal was not rabid, the stone would not latch on, thereby guaranteeing the patient a clean bill of health.

Come to think about it, I never have read or heard of a

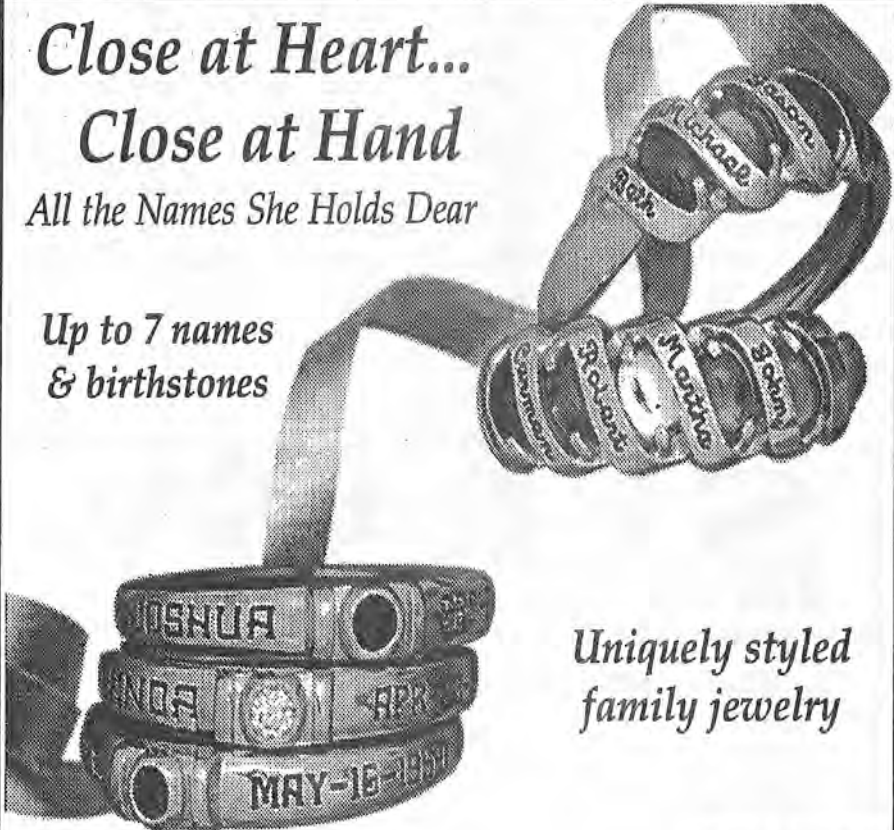
person being treated by a madstone who contracted the disease. But on the other hand, there was at that time no lab test that would tell if the biter was really a carrier of rabies or not.

During the twenties and thirties all babies had to have the services of a "thrash [thrush] doctor" at one time or another. Whether the people endowed with the power to "cure" the affliction were effective or not, the condition itself was real enough. Thrash is a painful, inflammatory condition of the mouth and stomach. The baby was in distress until he could be carried to the local thrash doctor.

There were several different things that qualified a person for

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this title, none that the people involved could have any control over, but purely matters of circumstance. One qualification was that the future thrash doctor could never have known his or her father.

I would probably have never known nor cared anything about it, but my older half sister was a bonafide thrash doctor. And most certainly not by choice, I can assure you. Not by a long shot! Although she was not much more than a child herself, no mother in our community ever doubted her expertise, and to my knowledge there was never any need for a "follow-up" treatment. None of us at home ever spoke of her as "half sister." But in this case I'll have to mention it, since her father's death before she was born endowed her with the gift of curing the thrash. We younger kids used to tease her by calling her "thrash doctor," adding to her reluctance to practice her art. When a mother would come to the house with a young patient, my sister would run into the back room. Then Mama would take the baby and follow her, telling her in no uncertain terms to "doctor" the baby. I never saw that actual operation performed, but was told that it consisted merely of the doctor blowing a breath into the baby's mouth.

I have never gotten up the nerve to ask Sister if she got an outside doctor for her own kids. But I won't forget what a mad bluster she could put up when one of us kids called her "thrash doctor." We just knew that she would wring our necks if we didn't run!

My father told me that when he was growing up in the 1880s and '90s, no degree was required for practicing medicine. He said

that anyone with a little imagination and a few pills and remedies could become a doctor overnight. Now, this policy may not have extended nationwide, but in rural Alabama and Georgia of that day, it was common practice. My father lived in the period when both people and horses were bled to "purify the blood"—probably by the same doctor! Believe it or not, there were also *specialists* in those days. When I was a small boy during the 1920s or perhaps the early 30s, a *cancer specialist* passed our house at intervals. Anyone who saw this man would never forget him, for his mode of travel was vastly different from anything I have ever seen before or since. Horse and buggy rigs were common during this period, but nothing like the one this man had.

He drove a large black horse hitched to a buggy, which in itself was not unusual, but everything about his rig was coal black. The horse, the high top buggy, the harness, the man's suit and hat were all black as

midnight. I guess the most unusual thing was the elaborate harness trappings. The horse was totally surrounded by a kind of network that reached from his midsection almost to his feet. The straps of this harness arrangement seemed to be about three feet long, about three inches apart and made from some sort of very flexible material. They looked to be about a quarter inch of diameter. Each strap could move from bottom to top according to the movement of the horse. I never knew the man's idea about the harness arrangement, but I believe it was intended to repel flies. It might have helped with some types of flies, but in the middle of horsefly season, I have seen giant horseflies so aggressive that they would try to eat a bulldozer. Nothing would faze them short of death.

The doctor sat far back under the black canopy of the buggy, never speaking to anyone, looking straight ahead like a statue. All I ever knew of this one was when he passed someone would

cont. on page 40



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A New Beginning: The Year 1950

From "A Dream Come True"

by James Record

By December 30, 1949, the arsenal had 698 civilian employees and 342 military.

With 1950 about to roll onto the calendar, the future took on a bizarre reminiscence that the new decade at least sounded like the beginning of the last, the 1940s and a World War.

Peace had seemed only a fleeting glance since the horrors of World War II only a scant five years earlier.

But 1950 brought the first direct confrontation between Communism and the Free World, in a tiny Asian country many Americans had never heard of before, Korea.

By August, 500 members of the 1169th Engineers Combat Group from Madison County left for Fort Campbell for refresher training and were off to Korea for the bitter struggle. By July, General Douglas MacArthur was named Commander-in-Chief of United Nation forces in Korea. Sgt. R. C. Alverson became the first casualty from Madison County on August 13.

The Korean struggle hung heavy and foreboding on the hearts of Madison Countians at home. The rest of the nation also feared that World War III was at hand, a war that no one could win, particularly if the power of the atomic bomb was unleashed. Observance of the first Armed Forces Day in Huntsville was a somewhat uneasy one.

In Huntsville, the same year

of 1950, another operation almost overlooked on the national scene, came about as those from another war became permanent residents in the area, as the foremost experts in missile rocketry began to arrive, finally.

The German rocket team, including Dr. Wernher von Braun, arrived in Huntsville, including 130 German-born scientists; 180 General Electric contract employees; 120 civil service employees and 500 military, to form a nucleus in missile technology for the United States Army. Major James P. Hamill and an advance group, including Gilbert Appler, first arrived on April 15 to establish the headquarters. This was the year, too, that von Braun's prediction that we would

reach the moon was given wide publicity. By December 31, there were 2,000 on the Arsenal, up 1,200 from January 1, 1950.

On August 9, the community prepared a tremendous barbecue for newcomers to the county. Over 2,700 attended. Members of the newly organized Officers Wives Club, headed by Mrs. James Hamill, attended.

During the year, too, Eddie Rickenbacker, hero of World War I aviation history, visited Huntsville, in his capacity with Eastern Airlines, urging better facilities for the Huntsville airport. Other famous visitors during the year included Patty Berg, Charlie Spivak, Art Mooney, and Hank Williams. In 1949, Elliott Lawrence, Artie Shaw and Ted Weems had been here.

As the arsenal grew, so did Huntsville and Madison County. The city, in 1950, built a new city hall annex and fire hall on Madison Street. W. W. Scott got a \$16,000 award for construction of a new bath house for the Big

As Huntsville began building rockets, Harrison Brothers Hardware was still a family enterprise. Seen below in a 1950s photo are David F., Robert S., and John W.



Spring pool, designed by architect Wilmot Douglas, while Council President John Broadway pointed out that Huntsville had no sales, garbage, income or cigarette tax. A new bath house was also constructed at Goldsmith-Schiffman field and the south bleachers there were replaced, increasing the seating capacity from 2,300 to 3,500.

Huntsville's first "open" tennis tournament was begun and the county remodelled the courthouse northeast basement corner to make room for the License Inspector. And the Huntsville Hospital had 3,384 admissions served by their staff of 44, with a budget of \$272,000. In 1975 the staff numbered way over 1000.

Meanwhile, another operation closed. The Rent Control office headed by Marvin Green since 1945, closed. Now, for the first time, the office of Inferior Court Judge was made elective, on a county wide basis, having previously been voted on only in the city of Huntsville. At the time, the Huntsville fire department had 22 employees, and five

pieces of equipment while the police department numbered 30 men, using 16 vehicles.

In other activity, the Terry Heights and Wells Avenue areas voted to come into the city; A \$210,000 addition to West Huntsville High School was announced; the Tennessee Natural Gas Company line was built and began serving North Alabama, as the City of Huntsville bought out the Alabama Gas Company for \$39,000, with the first Manager to be Price Aycocock.

During 1950, there were 435 homes built in Huntsville, but they were inadequate to serve the housing shortage, so the Chamber of Commerce, with a total budget of \$11,566, carried a listing of rental houses.

Also in 1950, Ideal (Ready) Bakery announced a plant, and the First National Bank remodelled, removing its balcony and raising the building ceilings. The Madison County Boat Harbor was finally completed and the \$120,000 Flint River Bridge on Hobbs Island Road—the county's longest—was begun.

Bill Kling (Senior) took over operation of the defunct Valley Packing Company on Bell Street; subdivisions began springing up right and left, during 1950, such as Magnolia Terrace, Hillandale, Edgewood, Lee, Colonial Hills, and Sunrise Terrace. Federal approval was given for 120 arse-nal military homes; The Grand Theatre was remodelled; the County approved purchase of a Bookmobile for the library; and the First Lutheran Church in Huntsville was established with William W. Hartman as Pastor. George Hart succeeded Hartman in 1951.

Madison County became the first completely electrified county in Alabama with rural and urban users paying the same rate. And, wonder of wonders, the budget for the ten community chest agencies was reduced, with Dr. Thomas Gibson as drive chairman.

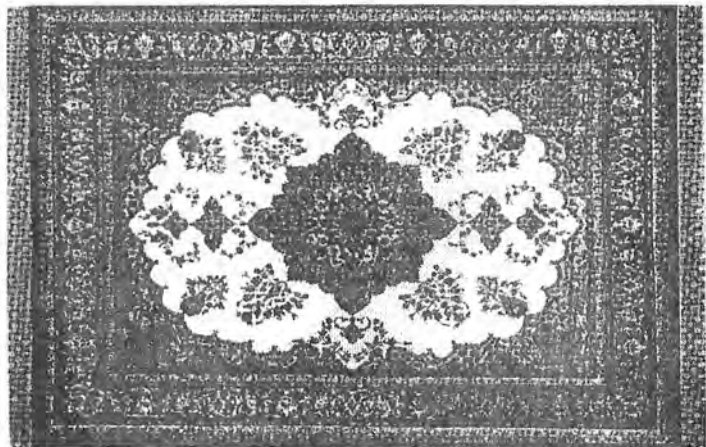
In the county regions, Hazel Green, Madison, Madison Cross Roads, Owens Cross Roads, and New Hope completed elementary schools to tutor the growing

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From Around the World

young population. During 1950, the county school system had 43 schools, including 23 lunch-rooms.

There were 407 teachers and the schools still let out at cotton picking time.

In the political arena, Huntsville's Roy E. Blair was tapped by Governor Folsom to become State Revenue Commissioner, while Huntsville's Paul Styles was appointed a member of the National Labor Relations Board. Alabama's Yolande Betbeze, was honored even more, being voted Miss America, the first Alabama girl to ever reach this plateau.

While there was no major

blue law protests in Madison County during 1950, the Ministers Association did espouse a popular cause of protesting showing of movies that starred Ingrid Bergman, the ministers considering such a glorification of adultery.

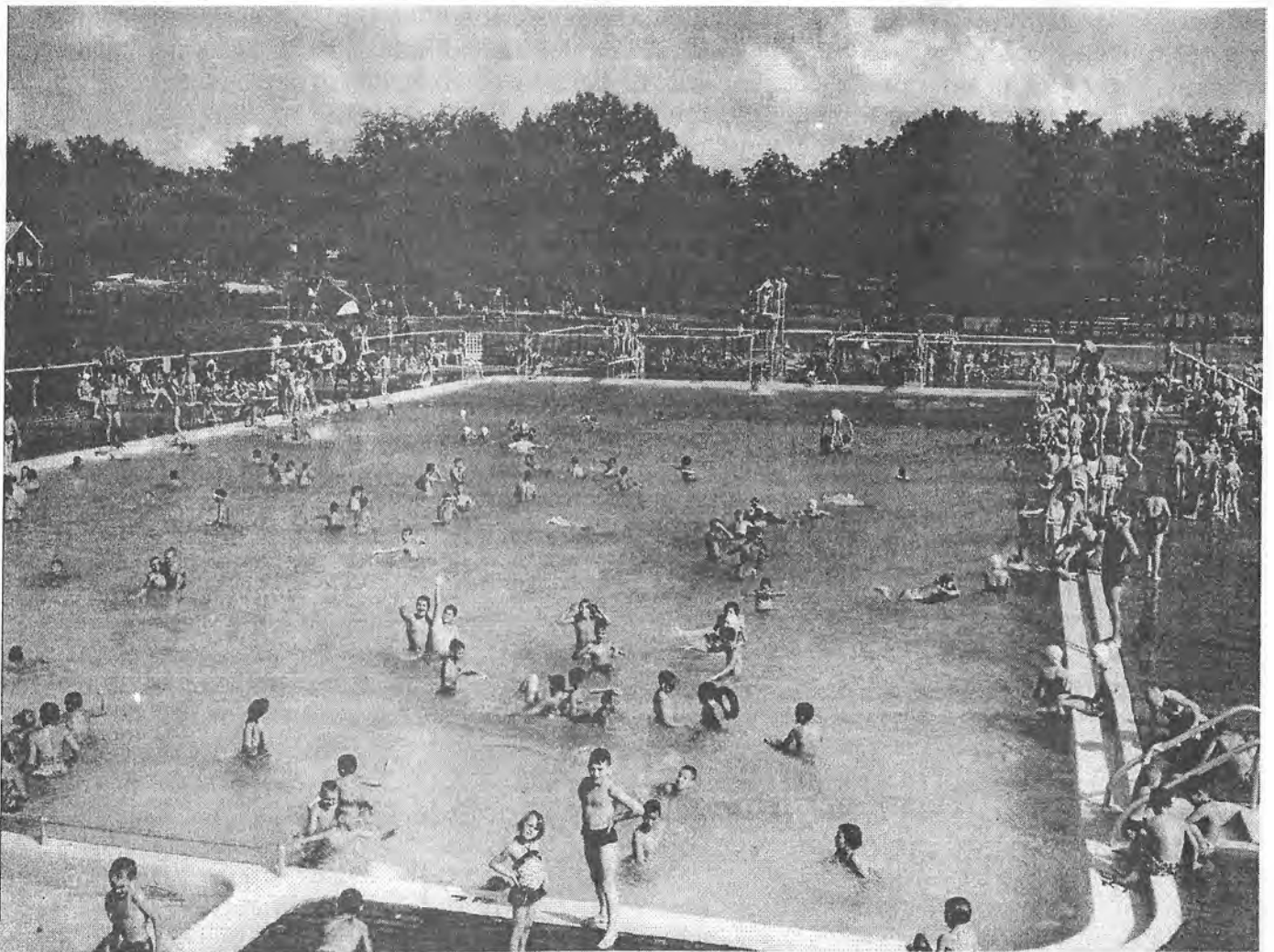
Prices in 1950 had some interesting highlights. As one person said, "every hen these days is laying a golden egg." A record high for eggs was brought on by cold weather. Eggs reached 95¢ a dozen, the highest since 1947, when they reached 78¢. During the year, too, eleven restaurants and two hotels raised coffee to the ridiculous high of seven cents per cup. The three dairies,

Meadow Gold, Whiteway and Chapman, raised sweet milk one cent per quart, to 23¢.

Eleven prisoners escaped county jail in November, 1950, but they could not have been comfortable. Records show that the thermometer hit zero degrees on November 25. Local natives commented that the temperature had been seven degrees below on January 27, 1940; six degrees below on January 31, 1936, and ten degrees below in 1898.

Construction began to pick up in 1950. The Railway Express added a building at the depot; the Country Club expanded to the West with a forty acre acquisition; A new Bypass road (Chase)

The swimming pool in the Big Spring park was a popular place for kids on hot summer days. Rather than let it be integrated, the city fathers filled it in.





100 Jefferson Street in early 1950s.

stopped most of Alabama A&M's trespassing problem; and Redstone Homes was announced. But some of the old went in 1950.

The J. Emory Pierce rock home at Five Points was demolished to make way for the Mutual Savings Life Insurance Company.

A UFO came to Madison County, too, in 1950. Carl Allen Williams and Walton Hughes, out at Madison, declared that they had seen a round object spitting flame about 100 feet above the ground in the area. Members of the newly organized St. Joseph's

mission in Huntsville hardly knew what to believe.

The end was shown by prophetic water engineers for Huntsville's Big Spring and its fourteen million gallons of water per day, for a water system. Most Huntsville natives didn't believe it, but the engineers stated that the time was not far off when the city would have to get its drinking water from the Tennessee River. The Health department stated that the water was unsafe, too.

Out at New Market, Pickett Esslinger obtained the first television set for that area. He did

Star Market located in Five Points advertised "fancy" groceries and "fine" meats. It was the first grocery store in Huntsville to have air conditioning.



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You may already know that low wage families or individuals may qualify at tax time for Earned Income Credit. However, you probably don't know that there are different ways to apply for it.

First, you can apply for the Earned Income Credit when you file your 1997 Federal Income Tax return.

However, if you qualify for the credit, you can also arrange to receive part of it before the end of the year. Give your employer a Form W-5 (available at the IRS office), and your employer will include part of the credit regularly in your pay. This is only available if you have at least one qualified child. This method reduces the amount of your refund due at the end of the year, but that can be an advantage to certain debtors.

Also, if you qualified for the Earned Income Credit in past years but failed to file for it, you still may be able to file an amended tax return for that year.

This column is provided as a public service by Legal Services of North-Central Alabama, Inc., a nonprofit corporation providing free legal help to low income persons in a 5 county area.

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not see color, however, for 1950 was the year that the FCC authorized the first commercial television color broadcasting to CBS.

The same year of 1950 saw the nation's first round table conference on Atomic Energy, held in Huntsville, about eight months after Huntsville and Redstone Arsenal were consolidated.

In politics, Oliver McPeters, supposedly entered in the Sheriff's race as a joke, upset Floyd Green in the Democratic primary, and went on to win the general election.

At New Market, a robbery caught the attention of the county, but in a manner different from the usual. The robber, later caught, was referred to as the "gentleman bandit" because of his polite manner.

A big event came to pass for the kids during 1950 when the first Santa Claus parade was held in downtown Huntsville.

The End

A Compassionate Sentence

Following are the exact words of a sentence handed down by a Texas Judge in 1842

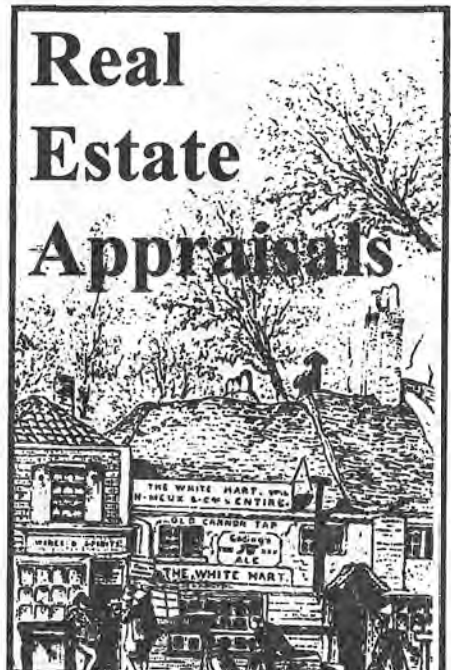
"The fact is, Jones, the court did not intend to order you to be executed before next spring but being as the weather is cold and the jail in such miserable shape, with much of the glass in the windows broken, and owing to the great amount of prisoners already in the jail and considering the hardships it would impose on the sheriff to have to look after you, and cook for you, until next spring and considering the fact that there are not enough blankets for all the prisoners I feel as if you would undoubtedly not be comfortable in such surroundings.

Therefore it is the order of the court, that in order to alleviate your sufferings and provide

the compassionate care a man in your present situation requires, that you shall be hung as soon as possible tomorrow morning when the sheriff has finished his breakfast or as soon as possible thereafter."



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Huntsville Female College

Cont. from page 27

a window and stood on the cornice work outside the roof, directing a hose into the flames. Suddenly, the spectators gathered below were horrified to see flames burst out behind the fireman, cutting off his escape! Their cries alerted him to the danger, and many covered their eyes, thinking he would jump rather than burn to death. However, the fire fighter "coolly clambered down the tin gutter-pipe to the ground four stories below," reported the Huntsville *Weekly Mercury*.

It was now obvious that the building could not be saved, and all efforts shifted to trying to salvage what they could. Even a dozen of the college's 20 pianos were carried out, but the newspaper noted that they "received such rough handling they may be of little use hereafter." Following the fire, "only the bleak walls and tall, lonesome looking chimneys stand today where yesterday stood the pride of Huntsville, the Alma Mater of her daughters and mothers." But at least no lives had been lost in the fearsome disaster.

The building and its con-

tents had been insured, and Huntsville hoped its Female College could be rebuilt. However, it was never to be. The school instead was moved to Gadsden, Alabama. All that remains to be seen today is the cut-stone wall on East Clinton Street behind the former college. That plus the many blackened bricks that Randolph Avenue residents still dig up in their gardens.

On May 31, 1959 an historic marker was unveiled at the site of the Huntsville Female College. Present for the occasion were 17 former students of the college. Alas, even they are gone today.

Seventeen women who formerly attended the Huntsville Female College, are pictured here at the ceremonies unveiling the State Historical Marker on Randolph Avenue. They are standing, left to right: Mrs. Joe E. Cooper, Mrs. Alice McCravey, Miss Minnie Rodgers, Mrs. Willie Lee Mitchell, Mrs. I.B. Wyatt, Mrs. W.W. Herron, Mrs. Frank Ware, Mrs. H.M. Rhett, Mrs. Will Bryant, Miss Kate Halsey, Mrs. Humes Patton, Miss Abbie Cross. Seated, left to right: Mrs. Egbert Blair, Mrs. G.S. Johnston, Mrs. Will Wall, Mrs. Tom Freeman and Mrs. Tom Hay.



Rural Healers

cont. from page 33

say, "There goes that old cancer doctor." I've never found anyone who knew where he came from, nor where he was going. But evidently he had a pretty good practice, for he made his rounds for years.

The other cancer doctor was a woman. Her maiden name was Highsaw, but she married a man named Swafford. I do have some knowledge of her success with cancer. My father-in-law, James Henry Holaway, had a bad cancer on his lower neck just above his back. His son Claude was carrying him for treatment in Birmingham. After several trips Claude told me that he had been

informed by the doctors that he was not to bring Mr. Holaway back, that he couldn't be helped. It was at that time that he started going to this woman who had the reputation for curing cancer.

To the best of my recollection, this occurred sometime in the 1940s. Anyway, the law was making some strong efforts to stop this kind of practice, which they termed "quackery." Mrs. Swafford told my brother-in-law that the law had been after her and that she was afraid to treat his father. He argued that it could be done without the knowledge of the law, and so she finally agreed to take that one final case.

I don't remember ever hearing exactly how many trips Mr. Holaway made to her house for treatment, but I don't believe it was more than two or three. He told me himself that he had never felt such pain as when she put

the treatment on. He was completely cured, but there was a sinkhole in the back of his neck where the cancer had been. He lived on for years after that and finally died in 1957, but not from cancer.

I worked on a job with Mrs. Swafford's grandson many years after this occurrence. He said that yes, he could remember the law coming out to their house and nearly scaring his poor grandmother to death. He also said that as far as he knew, she got her remedy out of the woods. As a result of this expedience and others, I am convinced that society was successful in eradicating the self-taught doctors who knew some things that modern medicine has yet to catch up with. The last of these "doctors" took their secrets with them when they died.

The End

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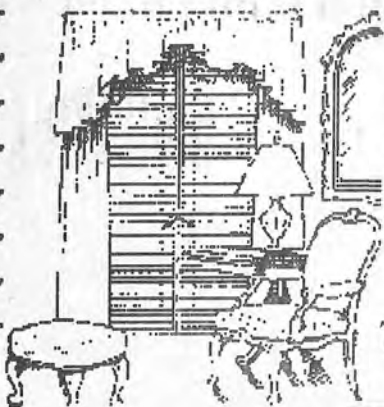
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Home Sweet Home...

And straight to the jailhouse

by Charles Edwin Price



*John Ross, Cherokee Chief
1790 -1866*

Involving oneself in Indian affairs these days is considered politically correct. No so 162 years ago. John Howard Payne probably thought that he was doing the right thing when he allied himself with the Cherokee Indians. Other whites, however, didn't see it that way. Instead of being praised for his brave stand, Payne found himself arrested with the chief of the entire Cherokee Nation. Then both men were unceremoniously tossed into the slammer.

Perhaps the entire episode could have been avoided if only his captors knew what a celebrated man they had incarcerated. Apparently, they believed he was just another hack writer wanting to make a quick buck with a sensational book. Not so: Payne was in dead earnest and he was no hack.

Born in New York, Shakespearean actor, playwright, and composer of the song, "Home Sweet Home," Payne was making a tour of the United States when he became aware of the political box the Cherokees were being forced into. He determined that he

would write a history of the Cherokees so that other whites would understand their problem with the government in general, and President Andrew Jackson in particular. He enlisted an enthusiastic Chief John Ross' help in the project.

Ross was the first elected chief of the Cherokee nation. One-eighth Cherokee himself, "Little John" had founded a town, Rossville Landing, and had served as its postmaster. By the time the late 1820s rolled around, Ross was one of the richest men in Georgia, a planter with 200 acres, slaves, and income from a number of other ventures. This made Ross' white neighbors uneasy if not some-

what jealous. They didn't like rich Indians.

Jackson, under whom Ross had served under as a lieutenant at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, was a zealous Indian hater. As president, Jackson was determined that the Cherokees would be removed to a place called Indian Territory, now known as Oklahoma. The Land Lottery of 1832 had divided the Cherokee land among the whites. Now the freshly signed Treaty of New Echota (1835) made things even worse. Some members of the Cherokee Nation had signed away the rest of their lands.

Ross was livid. In the old days he would have armed himself with a tomahawk, gathered together a few kindred souls, and gone on the warpath. But now he lived in a time when the only difference between most Cherokees and whites was their skin color. Cherokees owned land, slaves, went to Christian churches and, in general, acted like they, themselves, had also arrived on the Mayflower.

Under the present circumstances, John Ross did what any good white man would have done; he got himself a lawyer and filed a lawsuit to recover the land lost in the lottery. Then he gathered 16,000 Cherokee signatures on a petition, demonstrat-

cont on page 44

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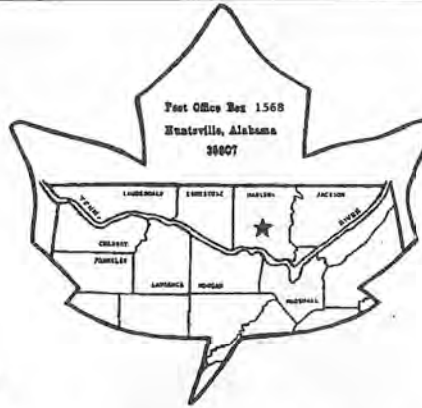
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Searching For Our Ancestors

by Gay Cushing Campbell

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




"Discover Your Heritage."

The first basic rule in beginning genealogy is, 'do your homework.' Until you find some basic information at home, you will not be able to begin your research. Often people expect to come to the library, input their names into the computer, and pull up the entire history of their ancestors' lives. Sorry, it just does not work that way! You can come to the library, and find books that will guide you in your search. First, you must fill out a Pedigree Chart, the basic of all genealogy forms. The Pedigree Chart begins with you. You will fill out your birth date, birth place, marriage date and marriage place. Then you will move onto your parents. Your father's information will go on the line above (and usually a little to the right) of your name. The space toward the bottom, directly under his information, is for your mother. Fill this out in the same manner with the same type of information, but using her facts. Then, if you can, fill out your Grandparents'

When I meet people, some for the first time, some I have not seen in a while; they invariably get around to the "So what do you do?" My answer, "Genealogy Research," throws some for a loop. I have met many people who do not know what genealogy is, but many more who have said, "Oh, I always wanted to do that, but did not know how to get started."

Day after day, people come into the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Heritage

Room, in an effort to connect to their family from long ago. As we mature, we realize that running to the mall does not have the same importance, as reconnecting with our family. Slowly fading are the days of sitting on Grandma's front porch, Grandpa sharing the stories of, "The hardships of school life in the Old Days." Whether dead or alive, rich or poor, speaking or not speaking; families have important links to your life. In this series of articles for *Old Huntsville*, we will discover how to



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names and information. You may have to seek help at this point from your parents, if they are still living, or from an aunt or uncle. Often they will have saved obituary notices on their parents' deaths that will help you fill in names, dates and places. If not, a trip to the family cemetery may help provide you with dates from the tombstones. Remember, complete names, places and dates are important. Equally important is where you got the information. Ten years from now, when you need to go back to the original piece of information (so you can finish your family book), you will want to know where you found it. If being known as a credible, reliable researcher is important to you, then document "all" of your work. What may seem minuscule at the moment, may seem monumental tomorrow.

Now that you have completely filled out your pedigree chart with as much information as you know (or can fill out at home) fill out a family group sheet on each family on the pedigree chart. A three-ring binder, with index folders will help you organize your family groups. Many find it better to separate the maternal (mother's side) into one three-ring binder, and the paternal (father's side) into another three-ring binder. Start each binder with a pedigree chart, then include the family group sheet showing as many facts as you have, place them according to birth order (or age), in indexed system. If you start off organized, you will become a productive and less frustrated researcher. It is not necessary to spend a lot of money on fancy filing systems. Begin with the basics. The family group sheets - pedigree charts

are available at the Heritage Room! You can study the 'How to' books at the Heritage Room, FREE! If you need to photocopy some pages from one of the 'how to' books, it's ten cents per page. At the library, you may check out books on genealogy research or pick a genealogy video tape to get started.

Your biggest investment to get you started right, is you time. Genealogy is NOT a one hour project. If you bite off more that you can chew at this point you will become frustrated and may even likely give it up as a lost cause. Don't fall victim to this habit. It can and does become a rewarding "Hobby."

At this point you may be ready for the library! Since you have visited the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Heritage Room for your study guides you have become familiar with

where things are located. If you are not, sign in at the front, and feel free to stop at the large circular desk to talk with someone about why you are there. Ask for instructions on what is available and how to use microfilm. The first thing you will need is basic instruction on using a microfilm machine.

A wonderful tool, the United States Federal Census will help you discover your heritage as long as you follow a few basic rules. The US Federal Census has been taken every ten years since 1790. The information you can expect to find varies with the year in which it was taken. These rules for the census are available at the library. The last census made available to us is the 1920 US Federal Census. This protects the right to privacy of those who may still be living. By progressing backward through the 19th

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Century census, you should be able to take your ancestors from cradle to grave. Problems arise when a genealogist tries to jump back too fast without gathering the valuable facts that take them to the correct ancestor. If you are having trouble working with the census material this is the time to evaluate why you are having trouble and ask for help. Complete the census information on each family you have in your notebooks.

At this point in your genealogical endeavor, you may want to consider additional instruction. Genealogical Societies meet on a regular basis. They provide their membership with speakers who enlighten them on topics of interest. Membership fees vary. The Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society covers topics from nine Alabama counties each quarter in the publication, *Valley Leaves*. It has valuable information like, Bible records, wills and estate settlements, military records, tombstone inscriptions, probate records and much more. For the modest fee of \$18 per year, you will receive the quarterly, and newsletter with meeting information, if you live close enough to attend meetings. Visitors are always welcome at general meetings. The society sponsors many informative workshops during the year to enhance your genealogical skills. The 1998 Spring Genealogical Conference will be April 3-4 with a variety of speakers. The speakers have been chosen to suit the skills of all genealogist. Why should you become a member of a genealogy society? The association you have with other genealogists is worth the price of membership. A society has genealogists of all levels that are willing to assist

others develop their skills. Also a society has connections with other societies and national societies that keep you informed of new advances and opportunities in the genealogical field. To join, send your name, address and phone number and surnames you are working on to the above address; or stop by the Heritage Room and leave your information at the desk.

In the next issue of "Discover Your Heritage" from the Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society; we will discuss "Computers in Genealogy."

For more information,
write to:

Tennessee Valley
Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1568
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Home Sweet Home

cont. from page 40

ing that the majority of the Nation did not approve of the Treaty of New Echota. His weapons were words, not bows and tomahawks. But Jackson was a man of few words. The feisty president was not about to let a little half-breed, whom he was trying to get rid of in the first place, get a word in edgewise. In short, Jackson had had enough of "Little John" and his "educated" brethren. Ross was branded a troublemaker and banished from his fine home in Georgia. At the time of Payne's visit, Ross and his wife Quatie were holed up in a log cabin in Southeast Tennessee.

Ross was glad to see Payne. He needed all the help that he could get from the whites. He had attempted to publicize his

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people's plight in the press, but had been largely unsuccessful. He was understandably desperate. The Cherokee were about to be forced from their homes and made to settle in a flat, desolate land, an arrangement that made about as much sense to him as cornbread made without cornmeal. Therefore he gave Payne all the help with his book that he could. Maybe, Ross thought, the book would provide the needed publicity. Unfortunately, word of the scheme leaked out. This made the whites understandably nervous and they were determined to do something about the upstart Indian and his literary cohort.

On the night of November 7, 1835, the Georgia Guard crossed the state line and appeared at Ross' door. They arrested both Ross and the surprised Payne, and spirited them across the state line to the prison at Spring Place.

John Payne's composition, "Home, Sweet Home," was a favorite song of the times and on their way to Spring Place, the captors entertained themselves by singing. Payne, looking for an opening to escape, tried to impress the Guard by telling them he was the composer of the song. His captors, of course, refused to believe him. As far as they knew, the stranger was only Ross' ghostwriter. Both of the prisoners were lodged in jail.

Ross was incarcerated for nine days while the unfortunate Payne cooled his heels for almost 13. When the identity of the famous John Howard Payne was finally revealed, an uproar of righteous indignation was heard from sea to shining sea. An embarrassed Georgia Legislature immediately swung into action.

They officially condemned the guard, not for arresting the innocent Mr. Payne in the first place, but for illegally crossing the Georgia state line and arresting him in Tennessee.

The Legislature's final word to the guard on the matter was duly chronicled in the *Georgia Journal*; "Your committee conceives that the guard transcended their power in crossing the line of the State of Georgia to arrest an individual out of the limits of this state."

Payne's book about the Cherokees was never written and, as history so tragically records it, Ross and the Cherokee were soon removed to Indian Territory. His wife, Quatie, died on the so called "Trail of Tears."

In the West, Ross went on to more controversies and finally

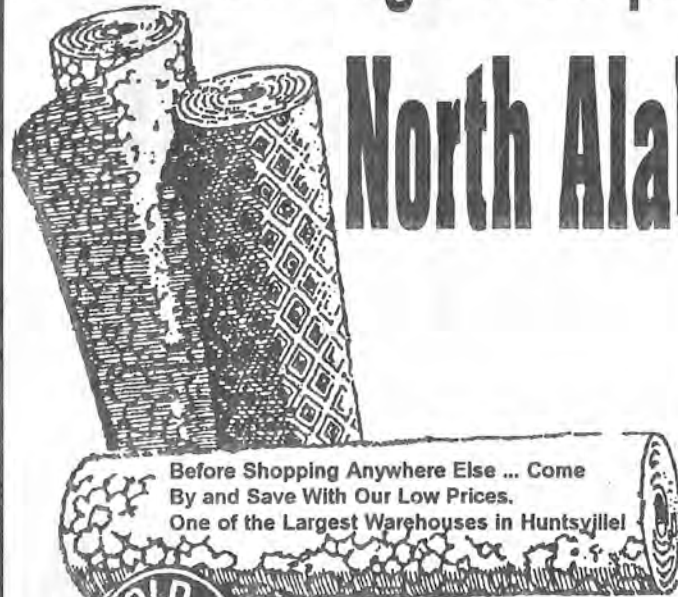
died in 1866. John Howard Payne went back north and to the theater stage. He died in 1852.

In 1883, Payne's body was reinterred with honors in Washington D.C., amid great ceremony. On that occasion a great chorus sang the song that, almost a half century before, had been sung by a rabble of Georgia Guard as they escorted its author and the Chief of the Cherokee Nation, side by side, to prison.

The man who has nothing to boast of but his illustrious ancestry, is like the potato--the best part under ground.
--Thomas Overbury

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Please No More Soldiers!

by John Crow



When the Spanish American War began, the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce sent representatives to Washington, D.C. to establish Huntsville as a troop encampment. At that time it was claimed that next to West Point, New York, the healthiest place in the country was Huntsville.

As many as 14,000 troops were scattered in and around Huntsville. The 5th Ohio, the 5th Cavalry regulars, and the 69th New York were at or close by Brahan Springs. The 10th and 2nd Cavalry were in West Huntsville. The 2nd Georgia was on the William Moore place. The 5th Maryland, Co. D. Engineers, and the 1st Florida were on the Steele place. The 8th Cavalry 3rd Pennsylvania, 7th Cavalry Regulars, and 16th Infantry Regulars were on the Chapman places. The Provost Guard consisted of twenty-eight tents pitched on the Calhoun lot near the square. It seemed that Huntsville was a merry place to be at this time with the increased social activi-

ties taking place for the soldiers. Many of the more prominent families even used some of the soldiers as local estate guards.

All was not "sweetness and light" however as there was a marked increase in the number of local taverns and other undesirable houses.

In one instance a group of drunken, rowdy soldiers were arrested and temporarily interred in the basement of the courthouse. They discovered boxes of papers and set fire to them, "for the fun of it." Before the fire was discovered and put out, many valuable county records were destroyed.

Apparently this and other incidents didn't set well with many Huntsvillians. When the Chamber of Commerce moved to secure Huntsville as a permanent encampment they were turned down by the War Department which cited a "Petition signed by a number of Huntsville citizens begging, that no more troops be sent here."

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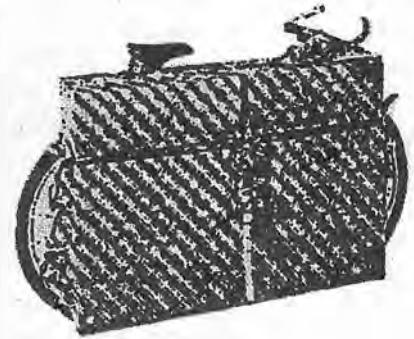
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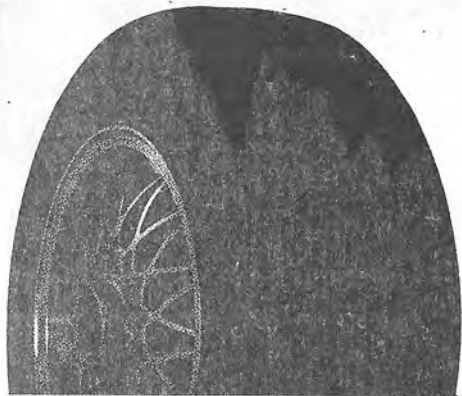
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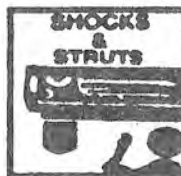
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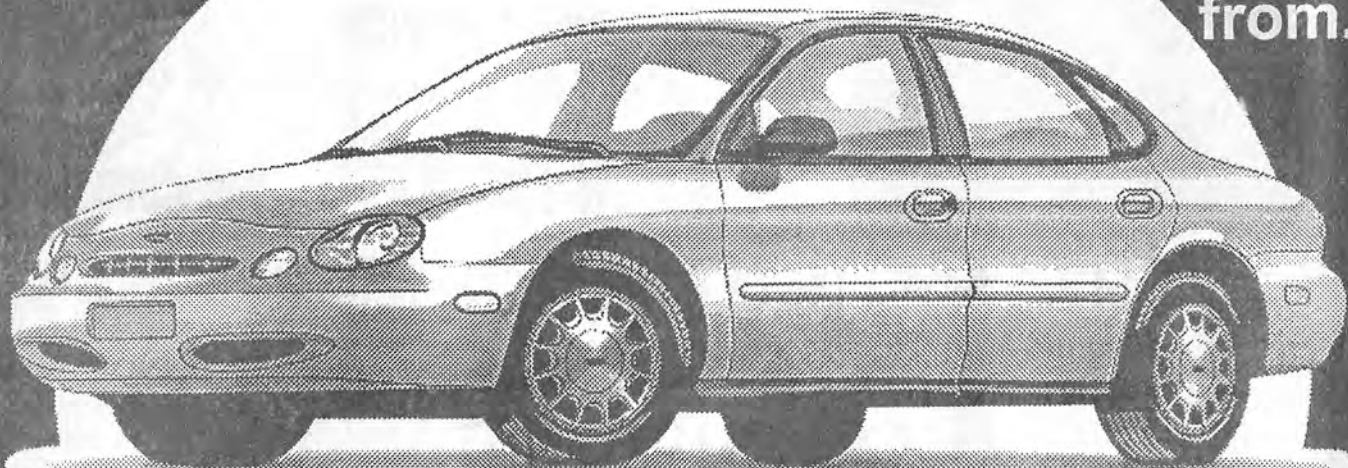
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