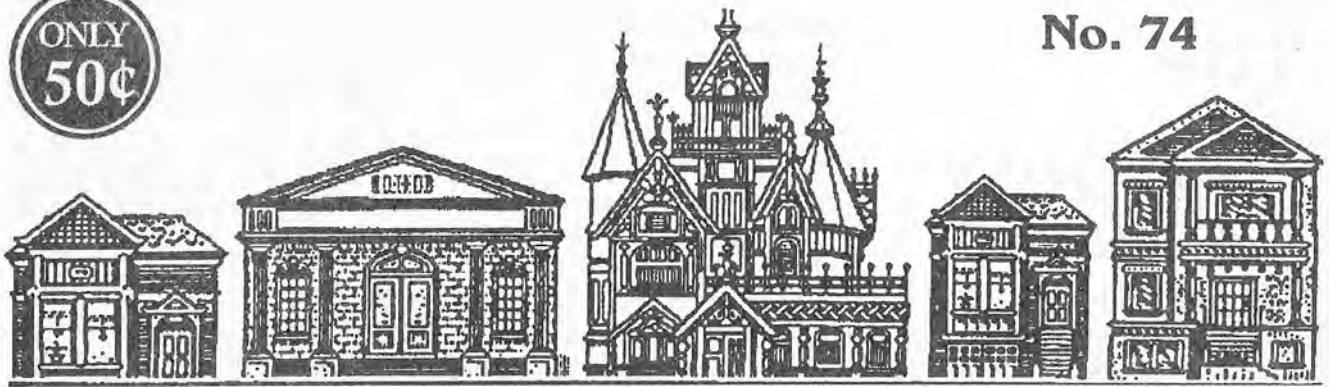


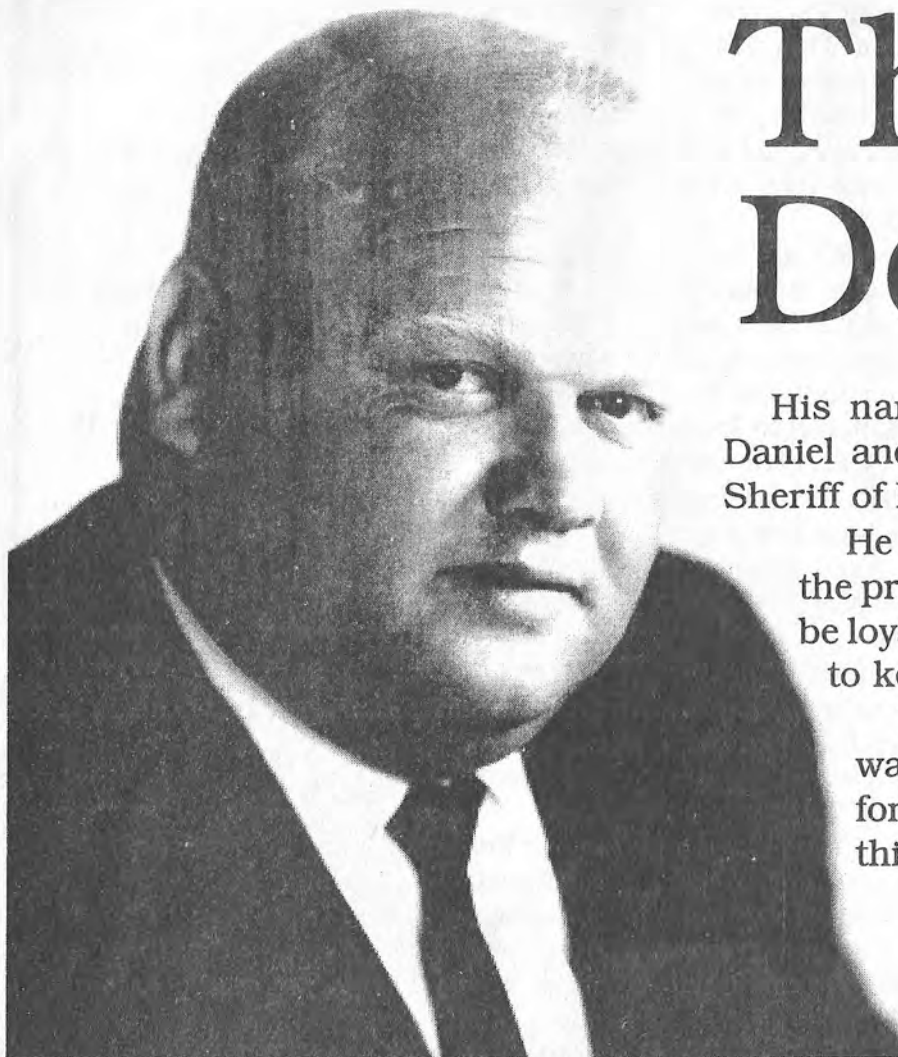
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No. 74



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



The Deputy

His name was Marcus "Bulldog" Daniel and he was the Chief Deputy Sheriff of Madison County.

He became a policeman when the primary qualifications were to be loyal to your fellow officers and to keep your mouth shut.

Keeping your mouth shut was important in Huntsville for almost everyone had something to hide.

Now everyone was asking the same question: "What would Bulldog tell about them?"

Also in this issue: "The King of The Snuffdippers Ball"

The Deputy

by Tom Carney

District Attorney Fred Simpson was at home on the evening of July 23, 1977 when he received the telephone call. Breathlessly, the caller relayed the news: "Bulldog Daniel, Chief Deputy Sheriff of Madison County, had been found dead in the park off of Drake Avenue."

"It's too early to know for sure," the caller continued, "but it looks as if he was killed by two shots from a shotgun."

Residents of Huntsville didn't have to wait for the news that evening to learn the details. Bulldog had been a highly popular law enforcement officer and news of his death swept across town like a brushfire. Rumors took the place of details and conjecture became facts as the news was passed from one person to another.

Within days it became almost impossible to separate the facts from the fiction.

In a city where the vast majority of people had moved here from other places, Marcus "Bulldog" Daniel was a rarity. Born in Huntsville, he played football for Joe Bradley High School and was trying out for the Samford University football team when he received his draft notice in 1951.

Though Daniel took part in some of the bloodiest fighting of the Korean War, it was his assignment as an M.P., that would have the most effect on the rest of his life. His superiors praised him as a natural born law enforcement officer for his ability to control drunk and unruly G.I.'s, a

feature probably enhanced by his 250 pound muscular physique.

After his discharge, Daniel returned to Huntsville and went to work at Hills grocery store as a meatcutter. Though the position was considered, "a good job," Daniel missed being an M.P. One day while cutting a pork roast for J. Lavin Carroll, the Chief of Police, Daniel asked about becoming a policeman.

The chief, after eyeing young Daniel carefully, told him to "go on down, get you a uniform and report in the morning." "Daniel didn't even wait to wrap the meat or pull his apron off," recalled an old friend. "Fifteen minutes later he was being fitted for a uniform! There wasn't no such thing as police training back then. They just put you in a uniform, gave you a gun and told you to walk a beat. If you stayed out of trouble for a few months they would then assign you a patrol car."

"We had some damn good policemen back then," recalls one veteran. "We didn't get paid hardly nothing, the cars wouldn't run half the time but we still managed to keep the law. To be a policeman back then you had to be a stand-up guy, and you had to have honor."

Daniel quickly earned the respect of the other officers on the force. "He was a cop's cop," recalled Bobby Smith. "When he would get hold of a case he just wouldn't turn loose until he solved it. That's why they named him Bulldog."

To some people, however, the name Bulldog had a different meaning. When a fight broke out in the yard of J.B. Webb, a well known bootlegger, Daniel answered the call. Pulling up in his patrol car, Daniel got out and casually lit a cigarette while



Old Huntsville

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watching a half dozen drunks going at it tooth and nail.

"Aren't you going to call for a backup?" asked an incredulous bystander.

"Hell, I am the backup," replied Daniel in a slow drawl as he carefully stomped out the cigarette before wading into the melee with both fists.

Daniel soon found out that being a policeman was much different than being an M.P. In Korea, it was a simple choice to arrest someone breaking the law,

but in Huntsville the choice was much more complicated. You had to know who was friends with whom, who supported whom in the last election and who was paying off.

The fact that bootleggers and gamblers were allowed to operate in Madison County was an accepted fact. "What were we going to do?" asked one old time deputy. "If we closed one place down, another would open up. If we arrested a bootlegger he simply paid a small fine and was

back in business the same day. At least, this way we had some type of control over them."

According to one small time bootlegger who ran a shothouse in West Huntsville, "It was called having an understanding."

Adding to the troubles of enforcing the law was the fact that the police force was woefully under-manned and underpaid. The county police worked on the fee system, meaning they got paid according to how many arrests they made. Deputies received a

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50 cents bounty per arrest while the sheriff received compensation for every prisoner who spent the night in the jail.

"We spent more of our time arresting drunks rather than patrolling," remembered a veteran of the force. "Often times the sheriff would come in on a Saturday night and check how many people we had locked up. If it wasn't enough, he would tell us to hit the streets and find some more. Left unsaid was the fact that the political system actually expected the sheriff to supplement the meagre funds allocated to the department. As one old time member of the county commission said, "If the bootleggers were going to break the law, why not have them help pay for the law?" Bulldog Daniel, having grown up in Huntsville, was well aware of how the system worked. After all, it was virtually the same system that had been in place, and thrived, since the turn of the century.

Dave Headrick remembered joining the police force. "First thing Bulldog said to me was, "get a haircut, get rid of those damn cowboy boots and learn to keep your mouth shut."

Headrick later said he would have been better off if he had listened to Daniel!

Keeping your mouth shut was an important part of being a policeman in Huntsville and people soon learned that Bulldog never talked.

Within a few years Daniel became an important part of the system. Whether it was a gambler wanting to make a "contribution" to a politician or a bootlegger wanting a message delivered, he was the one everyone went to. Some people also claimed he was the person to

see if you wanted to make a payoff or buy protection.

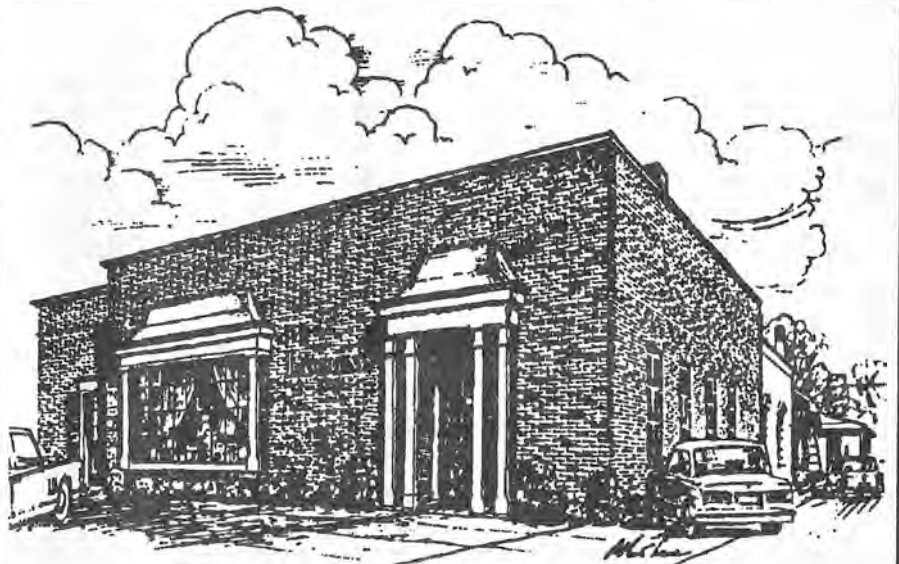
"He also became a damn good cop," a friend said. "His uniform and badge were the most important things in his life. He was just born into a system that was different than today's."

By 1967, when Jerry Crabtree was elected sheriff, the sheriff's department was going through a transition. Veteran police officers who had once patrolled half the county by themselves now found themselves riding in a patrol car with a college graduate half their

age. "Used to, if we knew someone had done something, we'd just arrest them and that was that," said one veteran. "Now we had to read them their rights, fill out reports and, if something went wrong, worry about our partners telling the same story. Hell, we had civil rights lawyers crawling out of the woodwork back then trying to make cases against us."

"Huntsville was growing up," as one local put it, "and so was the sheriff's department."

After hiring Daniel as his



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chief deputy, Crabtree began trying to modernize the sheriff's department. He successfully lobbied to get rid of the fee system and hired additional deputies. New equipment was purchased and a merit system introduced.

Unfortunately, part of the new equipment included over \$4000 worth of electronic listening devices, commonly known as "bugs." The sheriff's department later justified the purchase by stating the equipment was used to gather information on suspected members of the militant Minuteman organization as well as organizers of a city garbage strike. In a report to the Alabama Law Enforcement Planning Agency the sheriff's department stated the devices were used to compile over 200 files on people in Madison County.

Before long rumors began spreading that certain officers, acting on their own, were bugging the phone of a local judge. Other rumors claimed that a bug had been hidden in the room where the grand jury met.

"My office was even bugged,"

said Fred Simpson, "and I was the District Attorney."

The bugs worried Daniel. Although he supported almost anything that would help law enforcement he thought the officers had crossed the line. "It's going to bring in the F.B.I.," Daniel warned a friend.

Though the F.B.I. never investigated the wiretaps, the State Attorney General did, and with Daniel being the chief deputy he became the focus of most of the questions.

"Bulldog had been a cop for almost twenty years," recalled a fellow officer, "and he was loyal to the force. There was no way he was going to inform on another officer."

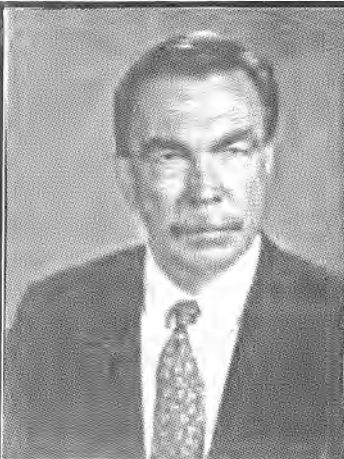
"They (the investigators) talked to Bulldog several times but when they couldn't find out anything the investigation just fizzled out. Later on, though, there was hell to pay. Bulldog called the officers into the squad room and cussed them out for almost a half hour. When he got done they (the officers) were more scared of him than the

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5. Found Among The Fragments - Courageous women in Yankee occupied Huntsville by Sarah Huff Fisk (\$15.95).
6. Long Ago in Madison County - written and illustrated in 1964 for young children by Kenny and Fisk (8.95).
7. Memories and History of New Market, Vol. II by the New Market Volunteer Fire Department (\$15.00).
8. Southern Railway: From Stevenson to Memphis, edited by Jack Daniel (\$24.95).
9. Genealogy On Line - Researching Your Roots - Web Edition by Elizabeth Powell Crowe (\$24.95).
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During the sheriff's election of 1974, the sheriff's department was bitterly divided. Most of the newer officers favored Crabtree, who was the youngest sheriff to be elected in the state's history, while the veterans favored Dave Headrick, a long time member of the city police force.

Earl Frazier later described the campaign as one of the dirtiest he had ever seen. "One of the cops had placed a bug on Headrick's phone trying to dig up dirt and Headrick had half the sheriff's department feeding him information about Crabtree."

Daniel had supported Crabtree for almost eight years but now he was starting to have

doubts. "The bug on Headrick's phone was what finally did it," Frazier said. "Daniel knew that Crabtree didn't have anything to do with it but was scared that if things like this went on any longer it was going to leak out and cause another investigation."

It was no surprise to anyone when, after Headrick was elected sheriff in 1975, he kept Bulldog Daniel as his Chief Deputy. They had known one another for over twenty years and were best friends. It was an odd relationship for many people to understand though for Daniel was not just the chief deputy, he was also Headrick's mentor and sometimes father figure.

"I remember one time when Bulldog came to work one morning in a bad mood," said a veteran of the force. "I was standing in the hallway talking to the sheriff when Bulldog came up and angrily asked me why I wasn't out on patrol. Before I could reply he turned and started to walk off when suddenly he stopped and looked back at the sheriff."

"Get a haircut!"

Headrick later said his first day in office was an eye opener. "I had only been sheriff for a few hours when a man, claiming to represent local bootleggers, asked for an appointment to establish payoff prices! I didn't even let him finish. I hollered for Bulldog and told him to get this

The old county jail on Washington Street. Said one veteran, "If we didn't have enough prisoners locked up the sheriff would tell us to hit the streets and find some more."



man out of my office."

"I could just see the headlines in the paper: "New Sheriff Takes Payoff on First Day!"

Whether intentionally or not, that set the pattern for the events to follow. If someone wanted to talk to the new sheriff they had to talk to Bulldog first. Any changes in the department had to be cleared with him as well as any statements to the press. This caused a certain amount of talk in the department, especially among the officers who had supported Crabtree.

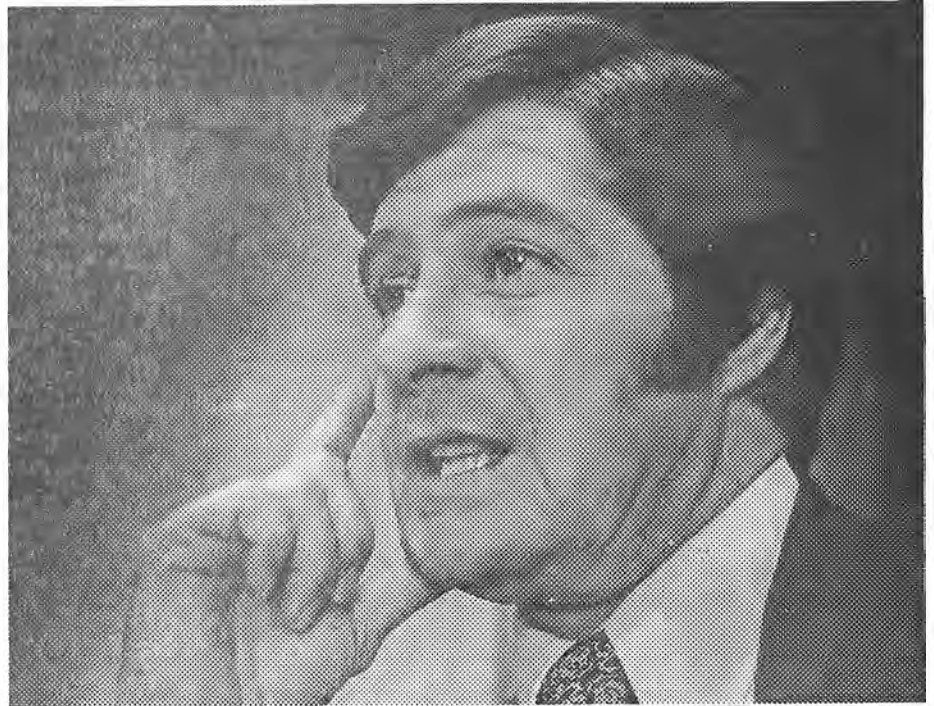
And there was plenty to talk about. Everyone, friend or foe, agreed that Dave Headrick was not exactly your typical sheriff.

"Wine, women and song are all right for the person on the street," recalled Headrick, "but once you become sheriff you are supposed to become holy. I got accused of a lot of things but I was never accused of being hypocritical! I liked to drink, I liked pretty women and I liked to play poker but so did everybody else in Huntsville."

"Hell, I thought they were electing a sheriff. I didn't know they wanted an angel."

Before long everybody in town had their favorite story about the sheriff. "He was seen singing on stage with Franky Lowery at a local nightclub -- he lost \$1200 in a poker game -- he got into a fight on an airplane when they refused to let him drink his own liquor -- he was seen partying with go-go dancers."

Headrick was a talented country music singer and that too often got him in trouble. In one incident, after just cutting a new album, he walked into the Peppermint Lounge and after



Sheriff Dave Headrick: "They didn't want a sheriff to enforce the law; they just wanted someone to keep the murderers and riffraff off the streets."

getting on stage announced that he was the High Sheriff of Madison County and had a new record for sale. "Anybody that wants a copy can pay Chief Daniel who is stationed beside the door and will be watching everyone who leaves." Needless to

say, many bar patrons were more than happy to oblige the sheriff.

"We were just having fun and everyone knew it," said Headrick, "but the way the story came out it sounded like extortion!"

Regardless of Headrick's wild antics no one ever accused him

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of not being a good law enforcement officer. Several months after taking office he met with Daniel and talked about his plans to "clean up Huntsville."

After listening patiently for a few minutes Bulldog interrupted the sheriff. "Who are you going to arrest?" he asked. Are you going to arrest "XX"? He uses the mayor as a character reference. Or how about "XX"? He was the best man at Judge "XX's" wedding and is in tight with "XX." You want to go after "XX"? Forget it! You try that and the people in Montgomery will have your job next week! You better remember that Huntsville's a small town and you have to work with these people"

"I laughed," said Headrick, "but the next day at the courthouse I started looking around. Bulldog was right. They didn't want a sheriff to enforce the law, they just wanted a sheriff to arrest the murderers and keep the riffraff off the street."

To a community used to a sheriff keeping a low profile, Headrick was a radical departure from tradition. Unfortunately he attracted the attention of the wrong people.

The State Attorney general's office, still smarting over the wiretapping episodes a few years earlier, began taking a quiet look at the new sheriff of Madison County and the F.B.I. began questioning friends and associates about possible corruption in the department. Even the Internal Revenue Service got into the act by probing into Headrick's income and expenses.

Probably more dangerous, though Headrick didn't realize it at the time, was the attention he was attracting to the local gambling and bootlegging industries.

Federal authorities had been

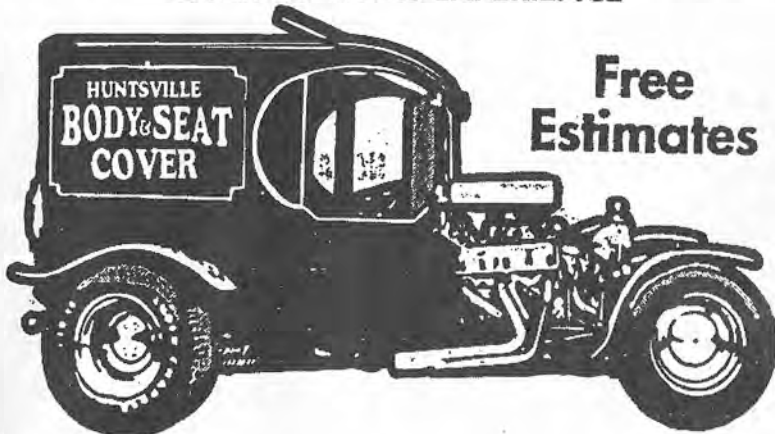
working on an indictment of the Schlitz Brewing Company, in Milwaukee, when they uncovered allegations that the company had paid a local beer distributor \$42,000 to promote their beer. Investigators then began probing beer sales in Madison County and soon discovered

it to be one of the "wettest" counties in the nation.

The tiny town of Triana, Ala., with a population of only 228 people, sold 320,064 cases of beer in one 12 month period. That was equal to 1,404 cases of beer for each resident. New Hope, population 1,300, sold 379,265

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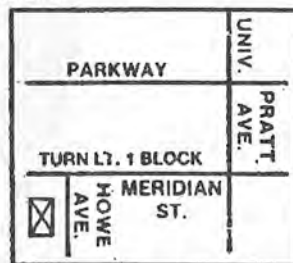
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cases of beer in the same period. Many people assumed Headrick was being paid to turn a blind eye and as he became the focus of investigations it began to draw more attention to the bootleggers. It would almost be an understatement to say they were not happy with the current publicity.

And then there were the gamblers. Bookies and card games had been operating openly in Huntsville for years but now that authorities were taking a close look at bootlegging and payoff's, they too came under the magnifying glass. The fact that Bulldog and Headrick both were avid card players only made the matters worse.

"Things got so bad," said one bookie in business then, "that the F.B.I. was parked out in front, state investigators parked in the alley, and the *Huntsville News* on the telephone all at the same time."

"It wasn't any secret that Dave Headrick had to go. His partying and carousing was bringing the heat down on everyone."

"Bulldog knew I was in trouble before I did," remembered Headrick. "He came in my office one day and after closing the door, told me to sit and listen. He told me that rumors were flying all over town about investigations and that the word on the street was they would continue until something was found to indict me with."

"At first I was incredulous but after thinking about it for a few minutes I realized the seriousness of the situation and asked Bulldog what he thought I should do."

"Just do your job and keep your mouth shut," he replied, "and let me see what I can do!"

If Daniel thought he could

make the investigations go away, he quickly learned differently when he himself became the focus of the criminal probes. The investigators had long suspected that Bulldog was the middleman and the only person that could connect Headrick with the alleged payoffs.

The campaign against Daniel was subtle at first. An investigator would call him at work to pass on gossip about which of his friends were talking to the F.B.I. and odd things, like the

week's menu for Kilby Penitentiary, began arriving in the mail. Strange cars would park in front of his house with the motor running, rapidly driving off whenever someone approached. Try as they might however, the investigators soon realized they had reached a stalemate. No one was going to provide any information about Headrick or Daniel as long as they were in office.

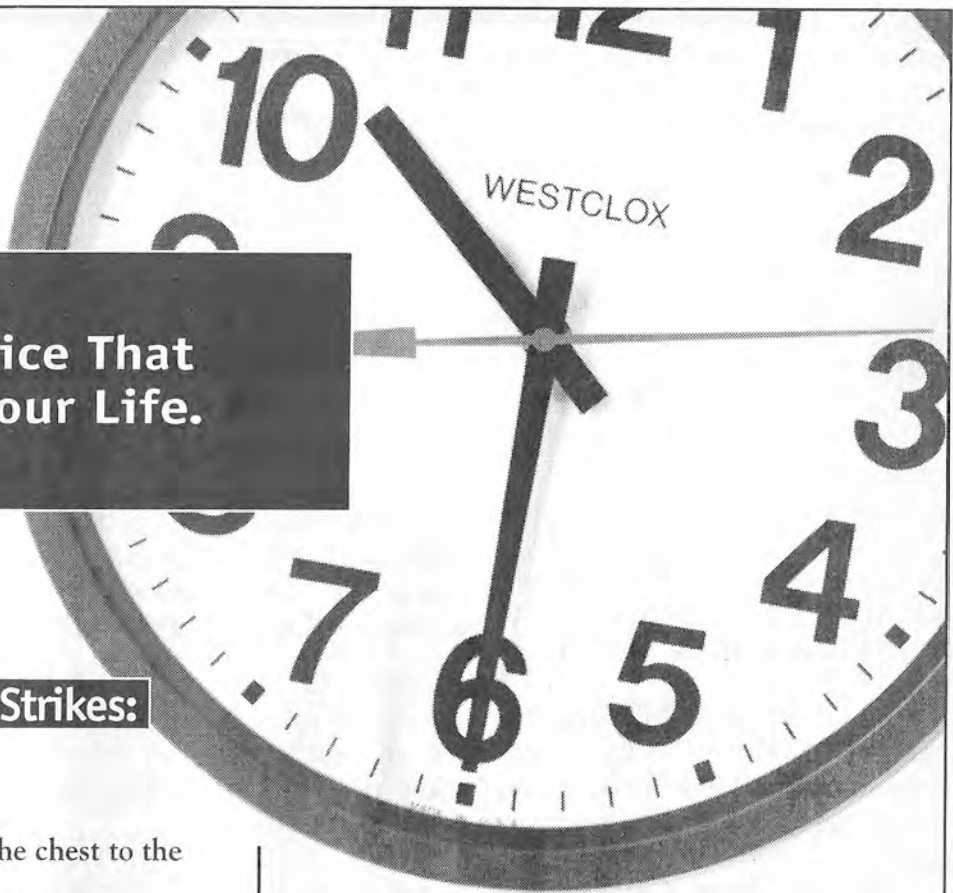
Ironically, it was the sheriff's department which finally pro-
continued on page 12

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vided the authorities with the break they needed. On June 15, 1977, Headrick was involved in an altercation with two young soldiers at a local nightclub. When the sheriff ordered the soldiers to leave and they refused, they were taken to the county jail. What happened next soon became a subject of controversy.

One of the soldiers testified in court that Headrick and another police officer, Lt. Graves, assaulted him in the jail. Headrick claimed that any beating was done by Graves alone, and while Graves admitted his participation, he swore that Headrick, too was involved.

"I know it sounded bad, "recalls an old veteran," but you gotta remember, in 1977, people just didn't cuss out cops and get away with it."

The jury chose to believe the soldiers version of the events and on Nov. 10, 1977, Sheriff Dave Headrick was sentenced to 90 days in jail on a federal misdemeanor charge.

"Getting only ninety days was the worst thing that could have



Earl Frazier, longtime deputy sheriff and friend of Bulldog: "Would you turn against all of your friends?"

happened to Headrick," recalled a local attorney. "If he had gotten at least a year they would have probably dropped the other investigations."

After Headrick was convicted, Governor George Wallace appointed Bob Eddy as the new sheriff. Immediately after being sworn in he called Herman Daniel, Bulldog's brother and also a long time deputy sheriff, into his office.

"Bulldog's got to go."

Herman recalled Eddy saying, "My people don't want him and if he stays he's going to be indicted."

"He just wasn't the same after he left the force," recalled Eunice Merrill. "He used to come by the restaurant all the time and he had always been a quiet person but now he would sit there and drink his coffee and stare into space. He used to carry his gun in his pocket and whenever he sat down he would reach for it and move it out of the way. Now when he reached for it there was nothing there. I thought he was one of the loneliest men in the world at the time."

"He was in one hell of a situation," remembered a close friend. "If he didn't cooperate with the authorities he could literally spend the rest of his life in jail. But if he did, he would become a pariah. Hell, everyone in Huntsville had something they wanted to hide and now they were all wondering what Bulldog would say about them, if he talked."

With Headrick and Bulldog

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out of office it became easier for the prosecutors to find people willing to testify.

"I admitted making payoffs to 'XX' and 'XX,' remembered one prominent bookie, "but this was ridiculous. I told them I had never given a penny to Bulldog and why should I? I was operating in the city and Bulldog was the county law. If I was paying off the county where was the city supposed to have been? Playing tiddly winks?"

"They accused me of lying and said they were going to call me before a grand jury. If I told the same story they would indict me for perjury."

"I figured this was a good time to take a vacation. A long one. Out of state."

"I heard from Bulldog while I was serving my sentence at Lampoc in California," recalled Headrick. "He seemed almost resigned to what was happening. 'It's just a matter of time,' he wrote."

On June 7, 1978 Dave Headrick and Bulldog Daniel were indicted on felony racketeering charges. The indictment alleged 39 counts of conspiracy and bribery involving organized gambling in Huntsville and Madison County. If convicted they were facing up to 40 years in jail.

"After I got out, I went to Montgomery to talk to 'XX' about the indictment but he wouldn't talk to me in his office," recalled Headrick. "I met him that evening at the Holiday Inn and he told me there wasn't nothing he could do. The whole thing was causing trouble for too many people and someone had to take the fall."

"About a week before the trial was scheduled to begin Bulldog called me and said he wanted to

talk. 'XX' had already told me the state was trying to cut a deal with Bulldog to get him to testify against me but we had been friends for too many years for me not to meet him."

"We met on Bankhead Parkway at one of those scenic pull-offs where you can see all of Huntsville down below. Neither one of us spoke about the upcoming trial. We just sat there on the rock wall in silence watching the flickering lights below."

"Several times Bulldog started reminiscing about something that had happened many years earlier and began to chuckle about it. Then his voice would trail off and there would be silence again. I asked him if he remembered my first day on the force."

"Yeah," he replied laughing, "and you still need a haircut!"

"As we walked back to the car we shook hands and he told me good luck. I told him that he was my friend and to go ahead and do what he had to do. I would understand."

"I never saw him alive after that."

Three days after the death of Bulldog Daniel, Dave Headrick appeared in Federal court in Florence and pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to accept bribes to protect gambling operations in Madison County and was sentenced to four years. Without Bulldog, much of the government's case had essentially collapsed.

"I believe I could have fought and won," said Headrick, "but it just wasn't worth it any more. My best friend was dead, my career was destroyed and I was broke. All I wanted to do was to go somewhere and

crawl in a hole."

Though Coroner Sam Spry had ruled the death of Bulldog as suicide many people refused to accept the ruling. Most people in Huntsville had heard the rumors of Bulldog supposedly implicating prominent people in the rackets and now it was easy to believe he had been murdered to keep him quiet.

"I heard the same rumors and that's why I asked for a grand jury," said Fred Simpson. "So many sto-

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ries and exaggerations had been told I knew no one would believe it until the facts were laid out. The bottom line is the grand jury, the coroner, the state toxicologist, the attorney general's office, the FBI, the sheriff's office and the Huntsville police all investigated it and they all agreed it was suicide. If it was murder, every one of these offices would have had to conspire to keep it a secret and that's impossible."

"Huntsville can't keep a secret that well!"

With Bulldog's death officially ruled suicide only one question remained... why?

Perhaps the best answer was given by Earl Frazier, an old time veteran of the sheriff's department, who when reminiscing about Bulldog several years ago, was asked why he thought Bulldog committed suicide. Frazier was silent for a long time, almost as if he was remembering his own days of wearing a uniform. Finally after what seemed like an eternity he slowly replied.

"Would you turn against all of your friends?"

In 1985, Dave Headrick was awarded a pardon from the State of Alabama.

Important Facts Everyone Should Know!

According to eminent psychiatrist Alfred Adler, no highly successful bridge player is normal mentally.

The inventor of transparent silk underwear for women was Lady Duff Gordon, a noted British costume designer.

A shipment of rare coins to the Warsaw Museum was admitted into Poland under the classification of "dried fish" in order to save the museum a heavy tax.

In 1930, more than 99% of the family heads in the United States enjoyed net incomes of less than \$10,000.

The greatest movie fan in the world is President Gomez of Venezuela, who sees an average of 340 films a year.

A church in Haines City, Florida, is equipped with com-

fortable rocking chairs in place of straight back pews.

If a year's apple crop of the United States were all to be made into apple sauce, there would be enough of it to spread a layer 1/2" deep over the entire District of Columbia.

As late as 1874, there were no goldfish in the entire United States of America.

Fleas can be taught almost everything a congressman can.

Mark Twain

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Tips from Earlene

To brighten your white grout, use white shoe polish, the kind with an applicator top. Simply wipe on the grout, then wipe your tiles with a damp cloth, allow to dry, then buff.

Did you know that you can get rid of unpleasant odors just by lighting a match?

If your hangers don't glide across the clothes rod, just rub it with waxed paper or a candle.

Many women have reported recently that St. John's Wort, an herb that is now found in pill form in drug and discount stores, does an excellent job in dispelling the symptoms that go along with Premenstrual Syndrome, or PMS. It eases irritability, depression, stress and anxiety almost immediately.

To have the taste of dumplings without the work and fat calories, try this. Buy a package

of flour tortillas, quarter the stack, then cut into eighths, pie style. Continue to cut into small pieces. Use a handful or so for a medium pot of soup, like chicken soup. Let simmer for about 10 minutes, delicious! These tortillas can be frozen also!

Don't order fresh fish from a restaurant on a Monday. Most establishments don't get fish deliveries over the weekend, so Monday's fish is last week's delivery.

Freshen your wooden bowls and cutting boards by sprinkling the surface with salt and rubbing with half a lemon.

If you sprinkle some baking soda into the laundry hamper you will minimize odors from soiled or wet clothing.

Attach a mirror to your closet ceiling so that you can keep track

of what you have on the top shelf.

Want a clever hideaway for your treasures? Cut a hole at the approximate location and of the size of a heat vent in the wall and attach a vent cover. Paint it to match your other heat vents, and you'll have a great hideaway.

Looking for a way to store your shoes? Buy a few of those screw-in door stops, and mount them somewhere on your closet walls to use for hanging your shoes.

If you are trying to save money on fuel but want a new car, look for the lightest car you can live with. A heavy car is a gas guzzler.

To stay warm and cozy this winter, and save money at the same time, buy a fluffy comforter in place of an electricity sucking electric blanket.



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Penne Pasta with Peppers

- 3 T. olive oil
- 1 each red, yellow and green peppers seeded and sliced thin
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced
- 1 t. dried thyme
- 10 oz. penne or other hollow pasta
- 3/4 c. ricotta cheese
- 3/4 c. plain yogurt

Saute the peppers in the oil over medium heat for 3 minutes, add the garlic, zucchini and thyme and saute another 5 minutes. Cook the pasta in boiling water for 8 minutes, pour in colander and run a bit of cold water over it. Combine the cheese

and yogurt in a blender and process til smooth. Stir the cheese into the pepper mixture and toss with the pasta.

Raw Veges with Soy Ginger Sauce

- 1/4 c. soy sauce
- 1/4 c. water
- 1 t. sherry
- 1/2 T. fresh ginger, grated
- 1 t. vegetable oil
- 1/2 t. sugar
- 3 carrots, peeled and cut into sticks
- 1 head broccoli or cauliflower florets
- 5 button mushrooms

Whisk the soy sauce and all

remaining ingredients except the vegetables. Let it stand for 30 minutes. In the meantime slice and chop the veges and toss them together in a bowl. Strain the liquid soy mixture to remove the ginger strings from it and pour over the raw veges.

Curried Fried Rice

- 5 T. vegetable broth or water
- 1 T. soy sauce
- 1 t. fresh ginger, grated
- 1/2 t. salt
- 2 T. vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 T. good quality curry powder
- 1 c. fresh green peas, steamed 23 minutes, or frozen peas, thawed
- 3 1/2 c. cold, cooked brown rice

Combine the first 4 ingredients in a bowl and set aside. Heat the oil in a wok or skillet over medium high, add the onion and carrots and stirfry 3 to 4 minutes. Add the curry powder, stir in well, add the peas and stirfry just til heated, about a minute. Add the rice, stir in well to mix, add the sauce. Remove from the heat and toss to mix well.

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Stir Fried Red Potatoes

- 3 lbs. red or new potatoes, whole and unpeeled
- 3 t. vegetable oil
- 1 t. red pepper flakes
- 1 t. ground cumin
- 1 t. garlic powder

Boil the potatoes til just soft, 15 or 20 minutes. Cut into cubes when cool enough to handle. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When hot, add the pepper flakes and cumin and garlic and stir for about a minute, then add the potatoes, salt and pepper. Stirfry til browned on all sides.

Spicy Rice and Black Bean Salad

- 2 c. vegetable broth or water
- 1 c. rice
- 1 T. white wine vinegar
- 2 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 t. chili powder
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 t. thyme
- 1/2 t. oregano
- 1/2 t. Dijon mustard
- 1 c. black beans, cooked (canned OK)
- 1 red pepper, seeded and sliced
- 1 green pepper, seeded and sliced
- 1 Jalepeno, seeded and

- minced
- 2 T. fresh cilantro, chopped
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced

Cook the rice in the broth or water til done. In the meantime, combine the next 7 ingredients in a bowl and whisk well. Toss the cooked rice with the black beans and peppers and then with the dressing. Chill for an hour or longer, then add the cilantro and scallions.

Hungarian Pork Chops

- 4 lean loin pork chops, trimmed of fat
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/4 c. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 c. chicken broth
- 1 c. dry white wine
- 1/4 t. unbleached all purpose flour
- 1 t. Dijon mustard
- 1/2 t. dried thyme
- 1/2 t. dried sage

Brown the chops and onions in the olive oil in a heavy skillet over medium heat. When browned, add the broth and wine. Cover and simmer for an hour. Slowly sprinkle flour into the sauce while stirring, cooking til smooth, for about a minute. Add the mustard, thyme and sage. Heat thoroughly and serve at once.

Green Bean Stew

- 1/4 c. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 3 c. fresh cut green beans, 1" pieces
- 3 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 2 T. minced fresh parsley

Steam the beans in a steamer for 7 to 10 minutes. Saute onion and garlic in the oil in a large skillet for 5 minutes or tender. Stir in the green beans, tomatoes and parsley. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.



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When his wife ruined dinner by under cooking the roast, Noel Carter grew livid and fumed silently. In the middle of the night he kicked her out of bed and she suffered a broken neck, dying shortly thereafter. Carter, a night watchman, received a twelve year prison sentence. He was released after seven years for good behavior and remarried. This time his wife burnt the roast and Carter screamed, "You cook like a goat!" He then stabbed her to death. He received an 8 year prison term.

217 Italian wine merchants were arrested in 1969 for producing and trying to market

nearly 3 million gallons of a mysterious wine brew which consisted, in part, of ox blood, ammonia, and banana skins and contained not a single grape.

"New York" magazine reported in 1973 that an eggplant bearing a striking resemblance to the beleaguered President Nixon had been purchased by a Manhattan housewife in a midtown supermarket.

The Rockefeller family selected the Mexican artist Diego Rivera to paint the enormous mural which was to dominate the main lobby in Rockefeller Center. As the magnificent work neared completion in 1938, someone noticed a familiar bearded face in the foreground of a group of workers. The artist acknowledged that the face was that of Lenin leading the proletarian masses to victory, and that, "the deformed little syphilitic girl in the corner symbolized life under capitalism." Although over \$21,555 had already been invested in the mural, young Nelson Rockefeller, who was in charge of interior decorating, ordered that it be chipped away, piece by piece.

Stumped by an especially tough crossword puzzle, a puzzle addict in West Germany stuck with it though the night, repeatedly waking her sleeping husband for assistance. The fourth time she woke him he became violently enraged and strangled her. The court acquitted him on

grounds of temporary insanity.

In England a 50 year old bricklayer suffered a fatal heart attack after laughing uncontrollably for nearly an hour at "The Goodies," a prime time television comedy show. His wife told reporters that she planned to write to the show's producers to thank them, "for making my husband's last minutes so happy."

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The Huntsville Public Library is the most visited public building in the state of Alabama?

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Hotel has an adult Bicentennial revue featuring a topless Betsy Ross and, for the finale, a nude Statue of Liberty.

In 1931 Joe "Mule" Sprinz of the Cleveland Indians caught a baseball tossed from a blimp hovering 800 feet in the air. Sprinz handled the ball flawlessly, receiving it in an over stuffed catcher's mitt, but the impact sent a shock wave through his body that broke his jaw.

Two farmers in Iowa sued neighbor Henry Bockman for letting his bull break loose and wander through their pastures where, they claim, it impregnated forty-three purebred Holstein heifers in a single afternoon.

A woman in West Germany somehow got the idea that a good

scare will excite a man more effectively than any aphrodisiac. So, according to police reports, she hid in the bedroom and greeted her husband with a bloodcurdling scream as he walked in the door after work. The terrified spouse bolted through the locked bedroom door, tripped over a chair, and plunged through a window. He was hospitalized for over a week.

When his wife Carmelina died in 1959, Dr. Katsuabruo Miyamoto of Japan embalmed her body and then slept next to it in their conjugal bed for ten years. When police discovered that he had covered up his wife's death, the good doctor was fined three thousand dollars, which he paid by selling his house.



It's The Law...

It is illegal to ride or drive a goat in a race over Wilmington, Delaware streets.

Silver City, New Mexico, forbids any woman to be seen on the streets garbed in any part or entirely as a man.

It is against the law to ride a mule to church in the town of Honaker, Virginia.

Essex Falls, New Jersey, forbids any dog to bark, rooster to crow, or duck to quack between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

It is against an ordinance of Jacksonville, Oregon, for Indians to pitch their wigwams within the city limits.

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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

With pearls of wisdom contributed by the Liar's Table



Well, another year is here and we're a bit older. Now, if we can just become wiser!

Congrats to my good friend **Phil Williams** who just threw his hat in the ring for the Governor's race. It's been a long time since we have had a governor from Huntsville.

Coffee pourer of the month award goes to **Jeff Enfinger**. Rumor has it that he is the front runner in the State Senate race. Good Luck, Jeff!

Our heart goes out to **Mrs. Tillie Laird** on the loss of her mother on New Year's day. We are remembering you in our prayers.

Everyone is gearing up for this year's political season but none is working harder than **Sandra Rhodes** who is running

for Madison County Superintendent of Education.

Quiet as a mouse would describe **John Cockerham** who is running for a city council seat! Wonder what he is up to? Whatever it is, we're betting it will be on the front page of the newspapers!

Rumor has it that some of Huntsville's prominents have been seen on Monte Sano smoking cigars and telling tales.

Folks around the coffee table are all excited about **Mary Jane Caylor** deciding to run again for State Board of Education. She's one dynamite lady and we are all lucky to have her!

Gossip has it that our friend **Larry Mullins** is raising Cain with the Community Develop-

ment Board trying to get more money for the Northeast and Southwest. If anyone can do it, he can.

Folks tell me that my friend, **Ms. Mayor**, is doing a wonderful job and is going to have a long career as mayor. She did a heck of a job in clearing the roads of ice and snow last month.

The Mayor of Five Points, **Floyd Hardin**, is tickled to death with all the young people moving into the neighborhood. Floyd is the one man in Huntsville that no one would dare run against if he ever ran for office.

Bill Kling has been quiet about his intentions to run again for city council but we are betting he will. He was recently seen buying a new pair of walking shoes to wear while knocking on doors.

Loyd, from **Outback Restaurant**, told us last month he was going to do something special for his sweet wife, **Marci**, for the holidays. Well, I heard he took her on a trip and even made a stop by Victoria's Secret so she would have something to wear!

The rest of you husbands should take note!

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Twickenham Church of Christ has a new children's pastor, **Jeremy Loveless**, and **Eddie Lerick** brought him by to get him officially certified as a Huntsvillian by eating a ham breakfast.

Our county commissioner **Mike Gillespie**, commissioner **Jerry Craig** and mayor **Loretta Spencer** all showed up with me to help cut the ribbon to dedicate the new parking lot at the Senior Citizens Center. My buddy, **Tim Morgan**, had a prior appointment and couldn't make it but he sent his P.R. person, **Miss Heather**, who was a breath of fresh air.

Tim, you better hang on to her - she is quite a lady!

Folks in the know are calling **Don Siegleman** and **Dwayne Freeman** the "Dynamic Duo," in their bid for Governor and Lt. Governor. Good luck, guys! It's

going to be a great race.

With the death of **Tillman Hill**, I lost one of the best friends I've ever had. Tillman was known for his love and concern for other people and never asked anything for himself. Our love and sympathy goes out to his family.

My friends **Susan** and **Jim Kirkland** just returned from Michigan where they spent the holidays spoiling their only grandson, **Chris**. He's 1 year old and according to Susan, "the cutest, brightest little guy in the world." Typical grandparents!

You can tell it's an election year by reading the local newspaper. Every day there's a new political scandal.

That's all the gossip for this month but just remember: "I love you."

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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: local Preacher



Last month's picture was
Susan Kirkland

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Three Caves

by Chip Knight

The name "Three Caves," came about long after this former limestone quarry, or mine, had ceased operation. During the years it was active it was known simply as the "rock quarry" and it was not looked upon with the nostalgia commonly felt for it today. It was loud, as both dynamite and crushing machinery were used in its operation, and loaded trucks spilled stone on what were rapidly becoming residential streets, particularly along Hermitage Avenue.

The rock quarry was first opened in 1945 on land owned by Madison County near the old County Poor House, and was well out from town in an area of pastures and nurseries. For the next seven years the quarry supplied crushed limestone for road construction in Huntsville, notably for Governors Drive which was known then as the, "Four Lane Highway" because it was the only one around.

The rock quarry started out like most others in the area, as an open pit operation. Blasting in the pit occasionally caused problems with large rocks being blasted hundreds of yards and dropping on the Poor House and, once, on a brand new 1949 automobile. As the quarry grew, the operators found that they had to go deeper and deeper to get to the desirable limestone. The dirt and rock on top of that was known as overburden, and had to be blasted and removed from

the site. This caused a growing problem which they finally solved by turning it into an underground mine. By going underground they avoided the effort and expense of removing the overburden and there was little danger of damage from the blasting.

Mining operations ceased in 1952 because of a large number of complaints and because the cost of underground mining

became more expensive as the mine grew. By that time, three large entrances had been created and work had begun on a fourth. Rock was drilled and blasted carefully to leave large supporting pillars while the rest of the rock was removed. This method, called "room and pillar" mining, was used when the amount of overburden was large compared with the available rock.

When operation of the quarry

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ceased, the site was simply abandoned. Unfenced, the old mines gave a generation of children a place to explore and teenaged couples a place to find privacy. It was even rumored about town that one rather well known citizen had been found there with another man's wife.

The area remained largely out of the public eye until the year 1962 brought the Cuban Missile Crisis, and Madison County decided that the site would be an excellent location for a fallout shelter. An Engineer Company from the Alabama National Guard spent several weekend drills removing debris and otherwise cleaning the place up, but the crisis soon passed and the effort was dropped before emergency supplies of food and water were stocked.

Once again the old rock quarry was pretty well forgotten. Then, in 1978, movie producers found several sites in the Huntsville area which were ideal for a film to be called *The Ravagers*, which was about the time following a nuclear war. Although the film starred Richard Harris and Ernest Borgnine, it was not par-

ticularly successful, perhaps because people did not want to even think about a nuclear war, much less spend the time watching a movie about it.

In any case, the quarry was the location for a number of scenes in the movie, and the open area was filled with trucks, power carts and trailers. Another location used in the movie was the Space and Rocket Center. There, the normally gleaming white missiles were covered in a rather mottled gray that made them look old and abandoned.

As with most films shot on location, there were a number of parts which were filled by local area residents. Among these were musicians Tony Mason and a fiddler known as Monte Sano Crowder. When filming was completed, the old quarry was again quietly forgotten.

In the 1980s, local land developers began to believe that they could build houses on the steeply sloping and cave-ridden limestones of Monte Sano Mountain. One reaction to this was the formation of the Huntsville Land Trust, which was

dedicated to preserving not only Monte Sano itself, but any other undisturbed lands in the area. The Land Trust bought over 500 acres of the west face of Monte

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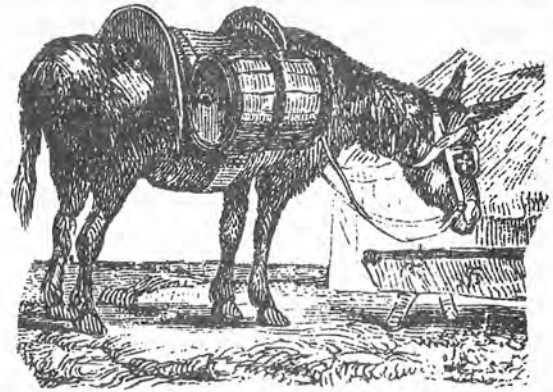
Sano from private owners and got others through the City of Huntsville with the help of the Land and Water Conservation Funds, which is a State agency. The Madison County Commission donated the acreage which included the old rock quarry, now known as "Three Caves" to the Land Trust.

The area around the three caves is now fenced, much to the chagrin of youngsters seeking to explore and of young couples wanting privacy. The cliffs around the mine are sheer vertical, and several people have been injured falling from them. The "caves" have now become a well known attraction. Volunteer groups, the Boy Scouts and others, have built trails, so to speak, throughout both the mined area and the land around it which have made it for the first time, really safe to explore. The Land Trust conducts tours of the "caves" on a regular basis and special tours can be arranged if needed.

Perhaps the most interesting thing is that, although the old quarry, mine, or whatever you want to call it, was never really a cave—it is becoming one. A stalagmite, which grows from the floor of a natural cave, is growing in this old abandoned limestone mine, and the numbers of brown bats which call this place home is growing. Perhaps, one day, it will even look like a natural limestone cave.

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There Goes My Mule!



by Bob Cork, Sr.

The year was 1895. Mom and Dad lived in the Romulus community. Dad was a farmer and a mule trader.

One day a fellow came to the house to buy a mule. He didn't have enough money to pay for the one he wanted, so he told Daddy, "I'll pay ya what I have and pay the rest when I gather my crop."

As the man led the mule off, he turned and said to Daddy, "If it'll make you feel better, I'm a Deacon in the Baptist Church."

Daddy, being a Methodist, turned to my mother. "What's a Deacon in the Baptist Church?"

"The same as a Steward in the Methodist Church," she replied.

Daddy slapped his hand to his forehead and said, "Oh, Lord, there goes my darned mule!"

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Letter from a "damnyankee"

The following letter was written to Mrs. Martha Hendricks of La Porte, Indiana, by her 19 year old son James.

Private James J. Hendricks was a member of Company A of the notorious "Anderson Redlegs," a Union outfit that was a terror to North Alabamians in 1864. Officially known as the 12th Indiana Cavalry, the regiment's colonel, Edward Anderson was actually tried for murder in Nashville in 1865. The war was hard on the family of Martha Hendricks, since two of

her sons (including James) died of disease and a third was killed at the Battle of Gettysburg.

James Hendricks wrote this letter on August 18, 1864 from Brownsboro, Alabama. One suspects he exaggerated the Confederate casualties considerably. At least, there is no confirmation in the Official Records.

Dear Mother,

We have just came in from a wild goose chase and I have eaten a good dinner of hardtack and meat and now I am clear for to-

day. There is no news to write that would interest you as I know of unless it is a little affair that happened yesterday. A squadron of bushwhackers lay in ambush waiting for the train when some of the Anderson redlegs, or the mudsill 12th, came up in their rear and fired a single volley. Killed 18 and the remainder scattered and ran, but unlucky for them they ran into another scouting party which captured nine more. The remainder was seen down the river about three miles and I have been trying to catch them.

I would like to catch the leader of their band, but he does not let us see him. I have his description and want to stay until he is caught. If I get a sight of him he is gone. I can hit him twice out of three times [at] five hundred yards.

But the mail is fast going out so you must excuse haste and poor writing. Cal [his brother] is getting along very well. I am well.

This from James Hendricks.

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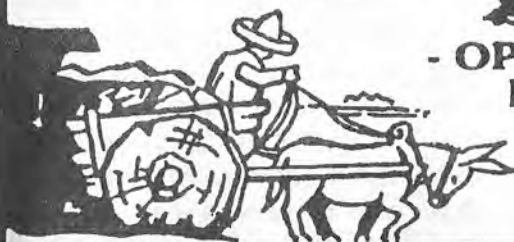
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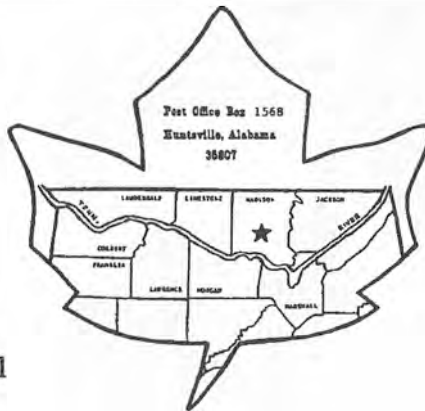
BETWEEN BOB WALLACE & DRAKE AVENUES



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.



Computers and Genealogy

Do you really need a computer to do genealogy? No, of course not. However a computer can help you organize your genealogy materials into a format that is usable and readable. However the problems arise when budding genealogist assume that a computer can take the place of real old fashion, nose to the grindstone research. Most people who ask about using a computer in their genealogy think they will be able to turn on the computer, hook up to an Internet server and "find the family." It's not that simple!

The best goal for any genealogist to accomplish is reduction of the paper clutter we seem to accumulate. All genealogists accumulate paper stuff, like wills, probate records, birth and death records, newspaper clippings, bible records and such. All these paper artifacts should be kept in a file folder neatly in a file cabinet, eventually. It would be perfect if we had an index of every type of material we have on every individual we have in our database. Right? That is one thing the computer is wonderful at.

With the different genealogy

programs on the market today, we can pick one that will help us organize our files. Each time you "find" a document or piece of information on an individual, we enter that information into our genealogy computer program along with the place, or source, of where we found the information. That is what we call documentation of our "evidence."

Even though you may still have the original document in the file cabinet folder, it could be handy to look at the computer screen and look at a compilation as a whole. This can help you decide if you have forgotten to look for something, like a death certificate. Having everything in a computer database enables you to have a neat computer printout to take with you to the library, courthouse or archives. This way you know at a glance what materials you have and what you need to search for. I use this method because it enables me to travel light.

One thing I have also found helpful is to highlight the areas that are missing information, such as a family group sheet with all the spaces highlighted that are empty. At a glance I know I

should look for the missing puzzle pieces instead of something I may already have. This saves time and money.

While each of us has been tempted to head to the library and find the goodies, common sense will hopefully prevail and you will spend plenty of time in preparation for your trip to the library. The computer can help us accomplish this if we follow a few rules.

Recently on a sign above a cash register in a local business I saw a sign that read, "Those who fail to plan, plan to fail." If we start with a good genealogy program, and spend adequate amounts of time entering information from our home sources, (remember our pedigree and family group sheets and personal interviews from the last edition of *Old Huntsville*?) into the database with the sources we have up to this time; we will have at the touch of the printer button a compiled version of the information we know at this time.

Once you have a printout of the family group charts and pedigree charts of individuals in your database you are ready for some more homework. Take out the highlighter color of your choice and mark all the empty spaces on the charts. If a birth date is missing, or a death date, mark through that space with a highlighter.

Once you have done that you will be able to plan your trip to the library, courthouse, or archives for that information. By using these computer generated charts as your study charts, you will automatically know what information you need. Don't plan to find all birth dates for a family in one day, but take one person or two as a project for the day and see if you can find all

the information on that person.

Take the highlighted charts and think about where you could find that specific information. Write down a "shopping list," in your computer's word processing program, and print out the results or, on a yellow legal note pad, of sources you would like to check for your next research trip. With your highlighted, computer generated family group sheets and pedigree charts, yellow legal note pad (for notes) pen or pencil and adequate change for copies, along with your "shopping list" you may now want to go seek and find! When you reach the library or courthouse, refer to your shopping list for the sources you wanted to look at.

As you check these sources make a note of whether you found what you were looking for or not. In other words write down **ALL** the book and pages you looked at, and note if they were

productive or not. This will save you time later on. Instead of re-checking a source, you will know if you did not find the record there. Did you find a missing part of the puzzle today?

While at the facility, write in the highlighted spaces what you found and where you found it. This needs to be detailed as such; book, page, facility found at, reference number of the book. Review before you leave what you did not find and why, make a note of this. When you're finished... head home and turn the computer on. Hopefully you will have many wonderful hours of input time ahead of you!

In the next issue we will discuss, "Computer Genealogy Programs, What they will do and what they won't."

The Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society's, Annual Spring Genealogy Conference, 3-4 April, 1998 will feature many

classes on computer genealogy. We are privileged to have as one of our speakers Richard White from the Huntsville Madison County Public Library, who also is the coordinator for USGenWeb and ALAGenWeb. We have booked many nationally known speakers in the field of genealogy for this area wide conference.

Please write to our address for information about the conference.

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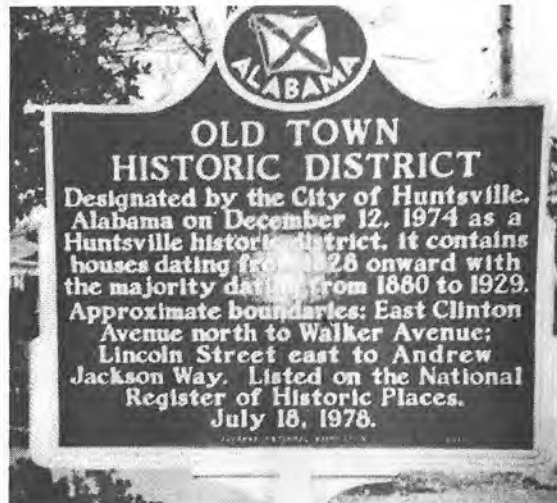
Huntsville's Old Town District

City neighborhood listed in the National Register of Historic Places

by Ranee Pruitt

Huntsville is home to two nationally recognized historic districts. The older, the Twickenham District, includes much of the original area of early 19th century of Huntsville and is best known for its antebellum homes. The Old Town Historic District was created not long after Twickenham. Old Town contains a mixture of home ranging from beautiful antebellum dwellings and late Victorian gingerbread homes to simpler cottages and middle class houses of the early 20th Century. There is even Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired dwellings in Old Town. Old

Town thus is an architectural district, featuring styles found through all of Huntsville's long



history, from the 1820s right up to the present.

The founders of the Old Town Historic District are Charles and Frances Rice of 118 Calhoun Street. In 1972 they began restoring their mid-1850s home, which had stood empty for years after having been used as apartments. But the catalyst for the district was Hall Bryant Jr., who decided that another district was needed and told architect Harvie Jones that the Rices were the perfect ones to do the job. Mrs. Rice says she accepted the task, "not realizing how much work I was getting into!" Originally it had been intended to add the Old Town area to the Twickenham District. However, the Twickenham Board of Directors rejected this proposal and the more difficult task of establishing a new district began.

The first task involved having the City Attorney draw up the necessary paper work. Then the leg work of gaining the necessary signatures on petitions asking for the establishment of the district had to be performed. Although a few volunteers assisted, the Rices themselves did the lion's share of

Old photograph showing the corner of Calhoun Street and Clinton Avenue. The building in the background is the old East Clinton School.



the work.

By August, 1974, the Old Town District had passed its first hurdle and been approved by the Huntsville Planning Commission. The City Council took the next step and recognized Old Town as a city historic district. With the support of then mayor, Joe Davis, the Rices tackled the next obstacle of achieving recognition for the district from the State of Alabama. The final bridge was crossed in 1978, when the Old Town governing board was informed by Senator John Sparkman that they had achieved the highest distinction: inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Old Town Historic District today is a thriving part of

the community. Property values have soared since the creation of the district, and the quiet tree-lined streets continue to attract new residents to the neighborhoods. Old Town has also contributed a relatively new tradition to Huntsville: the Christmas luminaries. While the candle-lined streets are now common to both Old Town and the Twickenham District, as well as other parts of Huntsville, the luminaries first appeared about 1975 in front of Frances Rice's home.

Having lived in the southwest for many years, the Rices were familiar with the Hispanic tradition of placing luminaries along the roadways at Christmas time. Supposedly, this was to lead the way to the manger where the in-

fant Jesus lay. Twenty-two years ago, Mrs. Rice and three of her neighbors decorated their walks with luminaries. The next year, Frances Rice, Wilma Page (wife of Judge Bill Page), and Dana Tatum gained the approval of the fire marshal to place luminaries along city streets in both Districts and around the court house square.

From that simple beginning, the popular tradition of today has grown.

There are two ways to go to jail in Alabama - commit a crime or be elected to office.

Anonymous

The Dill home, built in 1855, is just one of the historic homes located in Old Town.



Old Huntsville

From The Year 1944

FAMILY REUNION IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC—The tides of war washed Marine Private First Class James R. Dobbs, Jr., 20, and his father, Navy Chief Petty Officer J. R. Dobbs, both of Decatur, Ala., onto the same Pacific island for their first meeting in 18 months and then quickly whirled them apart again.

The boy - veteran of the assaults upon Saipan and the Marshall Islands - was on duty with his artillery unit when called to the battery office to see his dad.

Before the father's ship sailed, they spent one day on the island and three together aboard ship.

FROZEN FOOD ENTERS NEW ERA

Mr. "Chick" Russell, owner of Star Market, has installed the first self service frozen food counter in North Alabama. He invites all of his friends and customers to come by and see this latest marvel of the modern age.

P.O.W. Camp For Arsenal

300 to 500

Prisoners Expected

July 1944: Word was announced yesterday that Chambers Construction Company of Athens has been awarded a \$24,000 contract to build a facility on the Arsenal to house between 300 and 500 German prisoners of war.

The prisoners, from Rommel's Africa Corps, are expected to begin arriving in Huntsville within a matter of weeks. These will be the first prisoners held in Madison County since the Civil War. The War Department is expected to send a detachment of guards, fluent in the German language, to oversee the prisoners. No plans have been announced as to whether the prisoners will be expected to work but it is commonly assumed they will be hired out to local cotton farmers.

TURNER RECEIVES BRONZE STAR

According to an Army dispatch, the Bronze Star for heroic service has been awarded to Staff Sergeant Leon Turner, 24.

Turner is serving with a medical battalion of the 8th infantry division in connection with military operations against the enemy in France. His citations reads: "Although his duties as ambulance platoon leader did not require his presence in the front lines, Sgt. Turner displayed great courage in driving a litter jeep over terrain exposed to heavy enemy shell fire in order to permit the evacuation of wounded men, ignoring warnings from line officers that the danger was too great.

"On August 27 Sgt. Turner led a litter squad over a route exposed to heavy mortar fire, reconnoitered a new route for evacuation, and returned three times to supervise and assist in the removal of wounded men from their exposed position. His personal courage and devotion to duty were an inspiration to his men."

OLD HUNTSVILLE - YESTERDAY'S NEWS TODAY

Bombs Rain Down on Berlin!

LONDON, Dec. 5:—Berlin was besieged today as nearly 2,000 tons of bombs rained down from the sky, part of a daring daylight raid by American forces. Their fighter escorts shot down 80 German planes over the Nazi capital.

The force of 800 fighters and SS0 bombers took off from air bases in Britain, and found their targets in munitions and tank factories. The Luftwaffe made one of its rare appearances in strength but the Nazi fighters were apparently unable to answer the challenge. Clinging together in packs of 100 or more, the Nazi Messerschmitts and FockWulfs concentrated on small groups of the bombers but the American fighters wouldn't let them in.

Huntsville Connected To The World By Airline

Spirit of Huntsville Off On Maiden Flight

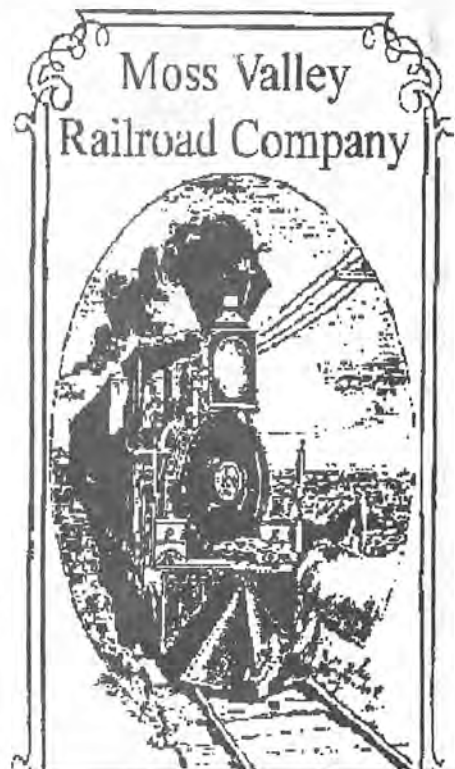
Nov. 1944: A crowd of almost 7000 peopled gathered early this morning to watch the takeoff of the first regularly scheduled passenger airplane from this city. Pennsylvania Central Airlines inaugurated the service by announcing daily flights to Birmingham. Regular scheduled flights to Nashville and Atlanta are expected to follow soon.

The airplane making the initial flight was appropriately named "The City of Huntsville," and was christened by Miss Susie Spragins. Mr. Jim Hill purchased the first ticket for the price of \$7.00.

ARMY AIRPLANE CRASHES HERE

Bulletin: Three Army aviators wergroup they were attached to have been at the Arsenal for several months taking part in exercises geared toward the invasion of Japan.

Names of the deceased aviators have been with held pending notification of next of kin by the War Department.



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"Nineteenth Century Ancestors and the Records They Kept"

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Von Braun Convention Center-North Hall-Huntsville Alabama

Desmond Walls Allen, owner of Arkansas Research, a publishing Company; past president, life member and member of the board of directors of Arkansas Genealogical Society. Her topics will be **"American State Papers & Carter's Territorial Papers," "Creative Problem Solving," & "Cite Your Sources: How & Why."**

Tony Burroughs Internationally known genealogist, author, teacher and lecturer. He teaches genealogy at Chicago State University and is the president of Black Roots, a genealogy service and supply company. He has received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Genealogical Society. His topics will be **"Black Roots, Tracing the Family Tree," & "Problem Solving in African-American Genealogy"**

John Philip Colletta, Ph.D. Well recognized, genealogical lecturer and publisher. John is a Faculty member at the National Institute on Genealogical Research.(National Archives, Washington DC); Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (Samford, Birmingham AL) and Institute of Genealogical Studies (Dallas TX) Topics of interest to all will be: **"Passenger Arrival records, 1820-1957 [and a brief overview of pre-1820];" "Passenger Arrival Records: Advanced Problem Solving."** Also **"How to Assemble and Write a Genealogical Work that is Both a Reliable Document and a Readable Story,"** and **"From Proposal to Final Product: Commercial Publishing in the Field of Genealogy"**

Frazine K. Jones Taylor; BS in Business Commerce from Knoxville College, Masters in Library and Information Studies from Atlanta University, Peace Corps Volunteer. Frazine is the Head of the Ready Reference for the Department of Archives and History in Montgomery Alabama. Her topic will be **:"Tracing Our African-American Ancestors in Alabama,**

Little Known Resources at the Alabama Department of Archives and History."

Michael R. Bradley Ph.D. is professor of history at Motlow College, Tullahoma Tennessee. 'Ol County Boy,' as he is so fondly referred to, will warm our hearts at the Friday night Banquet Meal with **"Stories from the Land of Cotton."** This wonderful orator will also lecture on two wonderful topics **"Union Provost Marshall Records for Southern Middle Tennessee and Northeastern Alabama,"** and **"The Forgotten Tullahoma Campaign of 1863."**

David M. & Francis Robb are independent museum consultants. David is the past Director of the Huntsville Museum of Art. Francis works closely as consultant for the Humanities Foundation. They will conduct a workshop on **"Photograph Dating, Identification, Interpretation, Organization and Caring for Your Family Photographs."**

Robert Scott Davis, is a Professor and the Director of the Family & Regional History Center at Wallace State Community College, Hanceville AL. 'Bob' has written 27 books, and over 600 Hundred articles on genealogical interest.. His topics will be

"Researching Your Indian Ancestor in the South," "Research at the National Archives," "Getting to Know Georgia," and "Researching in Georgia"

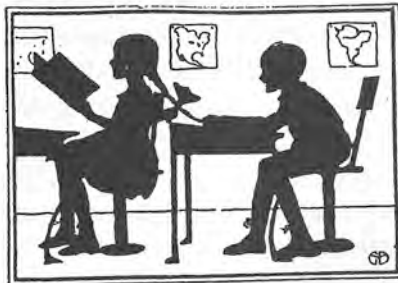
Richard White of Alabama Gen-Web and Huntsville Madison County Public Library and **The Huntsville Genealogical Computing Society** will present **"Computers & Genealogy, What's in it for Me."** Internet Genealogy and **"Picking the Right Genealogy Program"**

The **"Rolling Indian History Museum"** offers a hands-on look at area Indian Artifacts and History.

For registration form contact the
Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society
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call 532-5971 leave message on answering machine or
pick up a form at the Huntsville Madison County Public Library

History They Never Taught You In School



Did you know that F. L. Maytag, the founder of the Maytag Company, manufactured automobiles? In 1909 Maytag established the "Maytag Mason Car Company" in Waterloo, Iowa. In its day (1909-1911) the Maytag was considered a very fine automobile. Maytag produced the "Hill Climber," the first automobile to climb a 50 degree include with eight men on board—a feat no other car of the day could duplicate.

F. L. Maytag sold his interest in the car company in 1911 to concentrate on his ever growing washing machine business. On another interesting note, his plant manager and his chief automobile designer, Frank and Al Desenberg, went on to produce their own automobile.

In the early days of America, March 25th was celebrated as New Year's Day instead of January 1st, and it was so until 1752, when the British Parliament adopted the present calendar. The custom of New Year's resolutions originated with the Romans, who based it on the idea that a person has control over

his own future, while the past is beyond control.

Gold was actually discovered in California on March 9, 1842 — long before the famous find at Sutter's Mill touched off the Gold Rush of 1849. Francisco Lopez, an employee at the San Fernando Mission near Los Angeles, was hunting wild onions in Placerita Canyon. According to legend, he took a nap in the shade of an oak tree and dreamed he would find gold. When he awoke and went back to work, the first onion that he pulled from the ground had tiny nuggets dangling from the roots. The Placerita Canyon gold mine was worked from 1842 until 1848. However, the mine's owners wisely kept its existence a secret. Unfortunately for John Sutter, he didn't, and claim jumpers stole almost everything Sutter owned.

Robert Edwin Perry, a rear admiral in the U.S. Navy, led polar explorations that proved Greenland is an island. He also oversaw construction of a spe-

cial ship named the *Roosevelt*, the first ship ever built in the United States for the purpose of Arctic exploration. It was from this ship that Perry and his explorers landed the expedition that discovered the North Pole on April 6, 1909.

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After The War

From "A Dream Come True"

by James Record

Although the war was over, the gaping wounds of dissent, bitterness, and remembrances of brother battling brother stretched from Washington to Huntsville, to Mobile and New Orleans. Madison Countians would never forget the approximately 400 native sons who lost their lives in the struggle. Residents of Huntsville only gaped half curiously when Union forces disinterred 278 Union soldiers at Maple Hill Cemetery, moving the remains to the Chattanooga National Cemetery.

Real efforts were now being made in Alabama and Madison County to reconstruct things as they had been before. Efforts were doomed to failure, however, as Reconstruction of another type

was destined to be forced on the people of the South—the long, strong arm of the Federal government. A long, bitter period was to follow, with newcomers to the South, referred to as Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags—thought of as Southern traitors—taking over. Much of the money and property that was left went to these people, who controlled the elections, the commerce, the farms, and the emancipated Negroes.

The Confederacy lay in ruins. Alabama was under military rule after the state legislators failed to ratify the 14th amendment to the United States Constitution, a reconstruction amendment on civil rights.

Huntsville and Madison County, one of the few regions within the Confederacy which

had initially fought against secession, struggled for survival.

The ghosts of war were all too real.

President Andrew Johnson, a former visitor to Madison County, attempted to carry out reconstruction policies, enacted by Congress, in a humane, forgiving, type way, but apparently was too lenient with Southerners, at least in the Congressional eye. His approach caused, a furor, particularly among Congressional Republican "radicals", including Thaddeus Stevens in the House, and Charles Sumner in the Senate.

A flagrant challenge to Johnson's reconstruction actions came in early 1866 when the Congress voted a resolution that no Senator or Representative from a secessionist State would be admitted to either body until Congress itself decided that State was entitled to representation.

Congress flatly refused to seat the representatives and senators sent to Washington



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from Alabama. All it took to blackball an Alabama senator or representative was a simple majority vote.

That action, in and of itself, was the gargantuan weapon used to wrest reconstruction out of the hands of President Johnson and set unbearable policies upon the South.

Several theories accounted for the attitude of harsh repercussions against the South. One was that the South had simply "committed suicide" by its act of secession. Another was that the South, as a conquered territory, deserved no rights, no self government at all.

Madison County's hero, Captain Frank B. Gurley, in jail for five months with a hanging sentence over his head, was surprisingly released after much work

on his behalf. Just before his arrest, he had been elected Sheriff, had received his commission, and began work, in 1865. The town of Gurley, sometimes referred to as Gurley's and Gurleyville, was named for him.

A former Huntsvillian became the political king of the hill. Robert Patton, born in Virginia, but a Huntsville resident when he was nine, and a student at Greene Academy in his early years, won the governorship over M. J. Bulger of Tallapoosa County and William R. Smith of Tuscaloosa County. He replaced Parsons, appointed provisional governor in 1865 by President Johnson.

Patton, a founder of the famous Bell Factory in Madison County, at the time of his election a resident of Florence, was

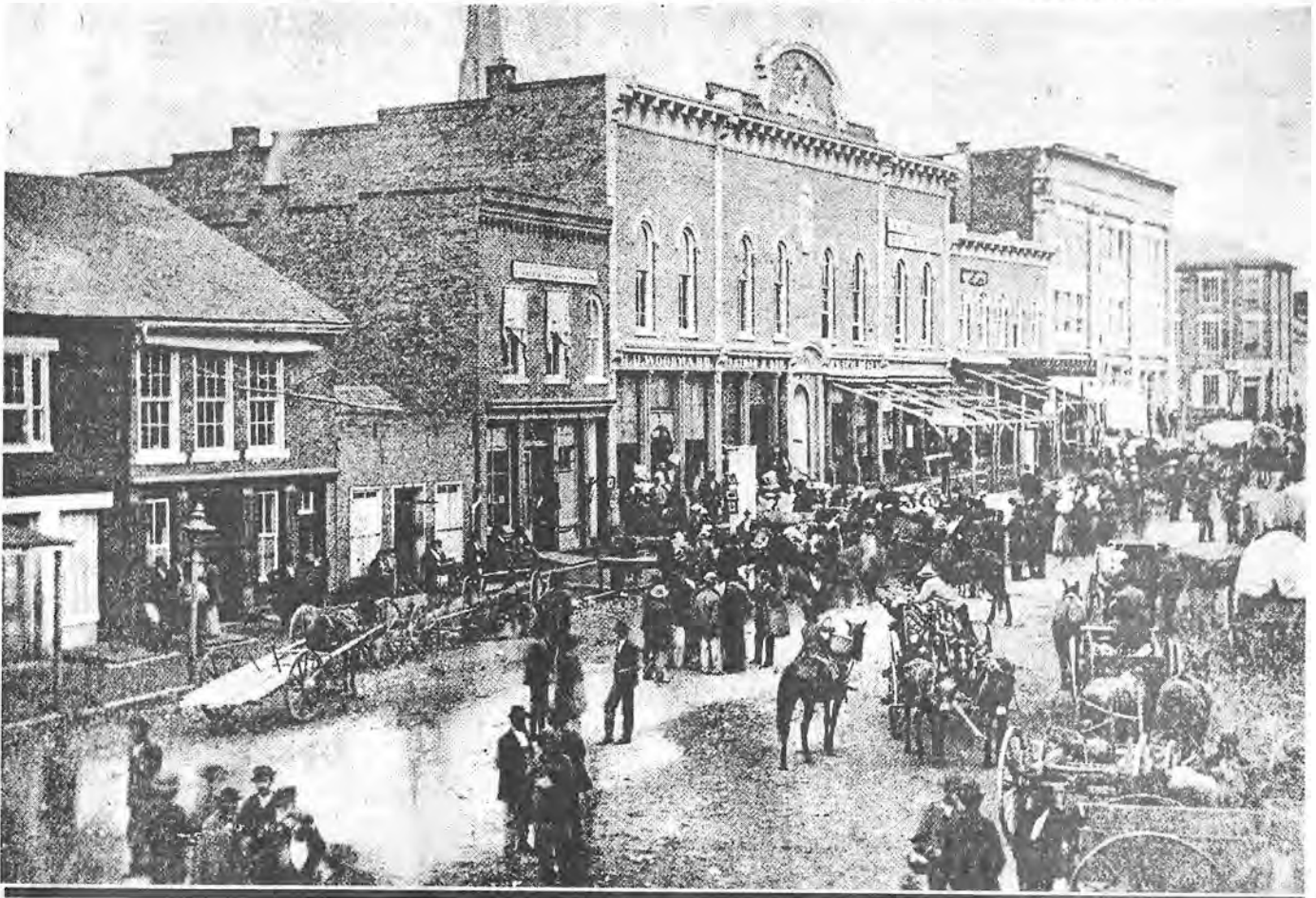
in for troublesome years.

The Radical Republican aims would bring no benefit to Alabama. Some historians claim the radicals deliberately attempted to stir trouble through the state. If the reconstruction was to be peaceful and orderly, the Northern "moneymen" and their Republican cohorts could not gain political strength.

That philosophy, at least, may have accounted for a gathering at Pulaski, Tennessee on May 4, 1866, just a month after the President issued a proclamation that the insurrection had ended, and about a month after passage of a major Civil Rights bill on April 9.

Southerners, determined to protect their heritage and way of life, and equally determined to fight the newly acquired free-

View showing the East side of the Square shortly after the Civil War.



doms of slaves, formed a secret vigilante organization.

Such was the birth of the Ku Klux Klan, the white hooded night riders determined to strike back at the North to prevent the radicals capturing the future potential wealth of the South. Their first leader was former Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the first Grand Wizard. The organization was later formally disbanded in 1869, although insurgent groups continued to masquerade as KKK's. In actuality, the KKK did not again exist as an organization until 1915, when it was again formally organized, in Atlanta.

Life had never been as rugged before in Madison County, even during those years when pioneers struggled to bring civilization to the Indian infested region. County minutes still



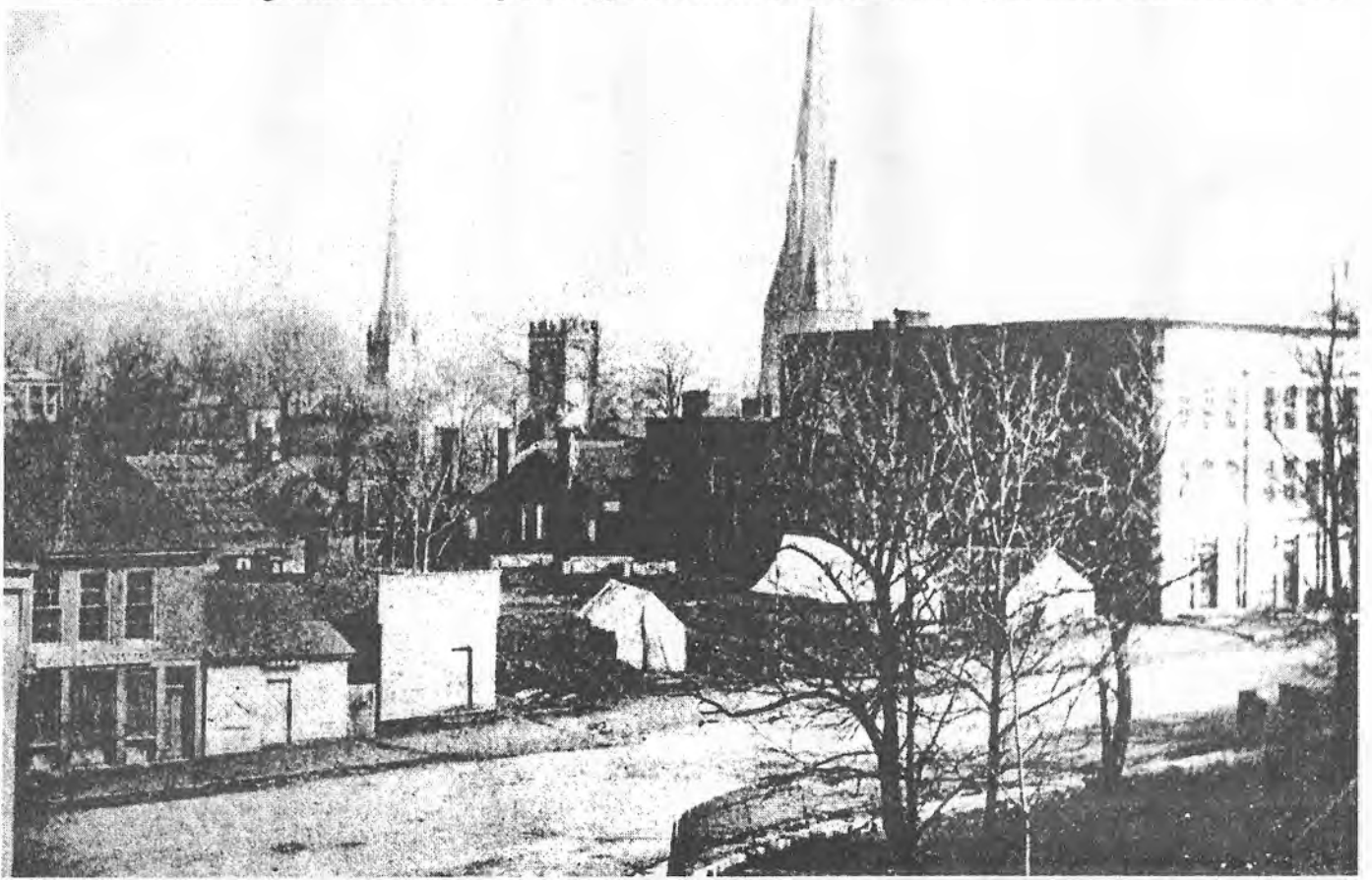
View of the South side of the Square.

showed 1866 payments for war-time, such as payments to A. J. Jones and R. S. Spragins for having removed county records to Blountsville during the war.

Factories had closed, jobs were scarce, and money for services rendered seemed only a

dream; far from the harsh facts of life. Even so, however, the community of Gurleyville was established as a post office during 1866, with William M. Dunn as its first postmaster. The post office name was changed to Gurley in 1883.

Another view of the East side of the Square. Notice the U.S. Army tents on the vacant lot.



And in spite of everything else, Fordyce and Rison Banking House opened in 1866, to remain a potent factor in local community affairs until 1948, when First National Bank acquired it. The N. C. and St. L. Railroad also began operation in Alabama during 1866, while Western Union made its appearance on the local scene, having acquired the lines of the Magnetic Telegraph Company.

Starvation was not an unheard of condition in Madison County. Colonel John B. Callis, head of the Freedman's Bureau, in 1866 traveled to New Orleans bringing back corn and bacon to distribute to the destitute of North Alabama. Madison County got 500 sacks of corn and 2,500 pounds of bacon for 999 destitute freedmen and 679 refugees, which was turned over to civil authorities appointed by the Governor. Madison County and Huntsville government officials purchased 1,388 acres of land from R. C. Brickell, south of Huntsville, for a new poorhouse. The property was acquired but later sold, in 1870, to J. D.

Vandeventer at which time the County bought 200 acres from Joseph Rice two miles from New Market. At that time, a new log cabin poorhouse, with J. McLeod and Joseph R. Latham as contractors, was built at a cost of \$2,950.

The County, on June 10 1866, voted that Probate Judge James H. Scruggs, along with John M. Humphrey, be authorized to purchase 20 days rations for the county's destitute. Prices at that time included eggs 25¢ per pound; ham 27¢ per pound; and coffee 87¢ per pound. Few could afford these "outrageous" prices.

Despite poverty and confusion, the push toward Reconstruction continued in Madison County. Judge Robert S. Spragins, administrator of the estate of James Clemons, laid out 50 lots in the village called Madison, laying the foundation for the incorporation of the town of Madison in 1869.

Work was underway, too, to encourage repair and erection of buildings destroyed or damaged during the Civil War. Somehow,

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entitled through Social Security. The annual enrollment period ends March 31. The place to enroll is the Social Security Office. If S. S. does not cover your premiums, the State's Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program may do so. The QMB program is a Medicare Supplement administered by the Medicaid Agency. It also covers Medicare deductibles and co-payments, assuming you have no other insurance. To be eligible for the QMB program, you must be eligible for or enrolled in Medicare, and your income cannot exceed the poverty level: \$678 per month for an individual and \$905 per month for a couple. There are also resource limits. If your income is between 100 and 135% of the poverty level, you may still be eligible for some assistance. Madison Co. residents can get more info by contacting the Medicare Agency in Decatur,

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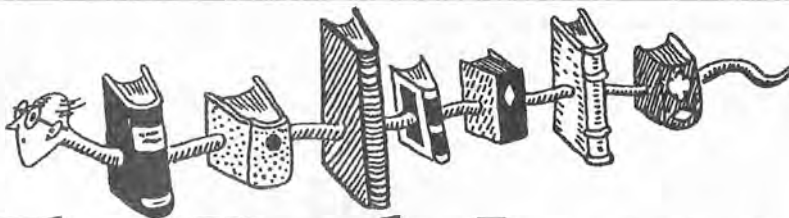
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the City of Huntsville managed to purchase 50 acres from Matthew Steele to add to its cemetery, and even managed to get a cedar fence built around the cemetery by Douglas and Company, since the old fence had been destroyed by Union soldiers. During the year 1866, the city financial statement showed the city to have spent \$23,000.

During 1867—the same year that Jefferson Davis was released, with Horace Greeley going on his bond—Alabama became a part of the third military district, including Georgia and Florida. General John Pope commanded the district, and decreed that no liquor would be sold enlisted men in Huntsville. Military headquarters in Huntsville were set up at the Calhoun House, and the Calhoun property on the East side of the square was used as a stable for Union horses. Headquarters were moved, later in 1870, to a 25 acre site on former Governor Reuben Chapman's property.

One of Huntsville's earliest recorded disagreements between the Mayor and Governing body

occurred in 1867. The aldermen wanted to buy a new fire engine, but the Mayor opposed it on the grounds that it would become necessary to hire a fire chief. The aldermen won out, voting on July 15 to buy a Rotary type engine for \$5,000. The engine would be named after R. W. Coltart. The county agreed to provide costs of operation for one year, with the city agreeing to buy uniforms for the fire company.

General George B. Meade succeeded General Pope in December 1867 and in March 1868, issued an order consummating reconstruction. All Civil officers, whether by military appointment or by failure to have successors qualified, were ordered to turn over their office to properly elected officials in July 1868.

State expenditures rose to \$1.4 million for the fiscal year 1868/1869, compared with \$.8 million in 1866. The new Governor, William H. Smith, who walked away with the race in 1868, carried Madison County's A. P. Applegate, classified as a

carpetbagger, into office with him as the state's first Lieutenant Governor, an office set up by the new Constitution.

The Republican Party had gained the stronghold they wanted. Smith and Applegate were Republican, and 28 Republican Negroes were elected to the Alabama legislature.

Republicans now dominated both houses of the legislature and the courts as well.



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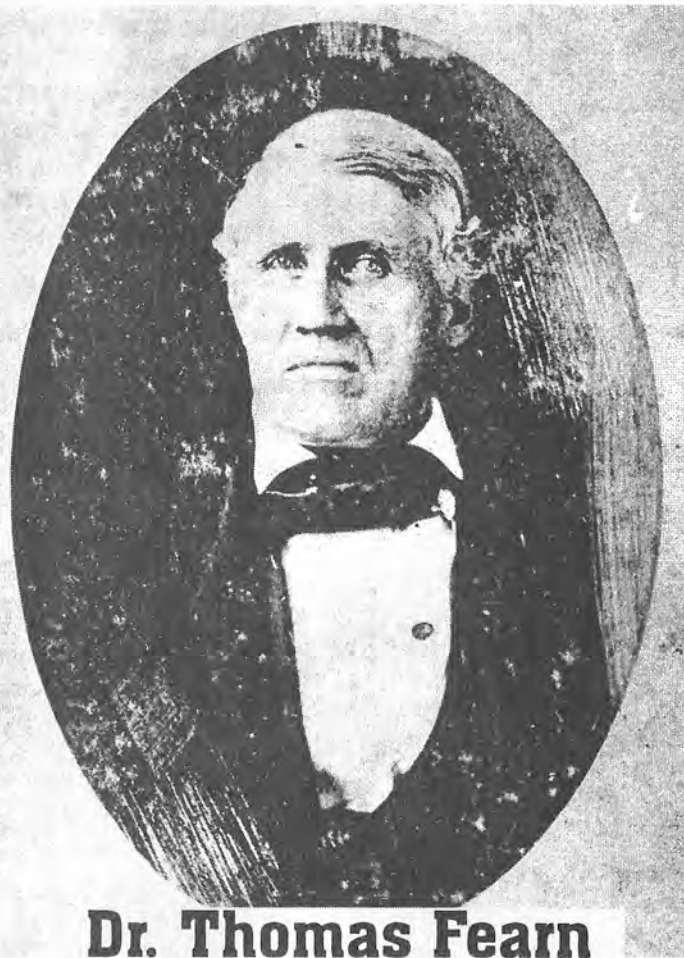
THE INDIAN CREEK CANAL

by Pat Carpenter

The Tennessee River was the commercial artery during the early days of Huntsville's settlement. Efficient transportation of goods can make or break any adventure. Huntsville's location of just ten miles from the mighty Tennessee was one of the decisive factors of its early growth. Water can mean life or death. Water gave life to Huntsville's transportation capabilities and also to its people from the enormous spring around which the city itself had begun.

A number of prominent Huntsville men received a charter from the State of Alabama dated December 21, 1820, to open and improve navigation on Big Spring and Indian Creeks from Huntsville to Triana. A notice was published in the (Huntsville) Alabama Republican dated Friday, April 27, 1821, of this act to incorporate the "Indian Creek Navigation Company" and plans to proceed to open books of subscription for stock in the said company the following month at the Planters' & Merchants Bank in Huntsville. The amount of each share was fixed by law at \$50. LeRoy Pope,

Thomas Fearn, Stephen S. Ewing, Henry Cook and Samuel Hazard were listed at the bottom of the newspaper article as



Dr. Thomas Fearn

commissioners. Several articles ran in this paper shortly thereafter one of which was notification of an election for five directors of the said company on Wednesday, May 26, 1821. The work of completing the canal extended over a period of time.

Success became doubtful and the canal seems to have been deserted except for Thomas and George Fearn whose efforts were crowned with success. On January 27, 1823 the following was advertised in the (Huntsville) Southern Advocate:

"The Indian Creek Navigation Company is prepared to ship cotton to the Tennessee River. It is not completely finished but will admit the passage of boats."

The canal had now come to be known as "Fearn's Canal," and continued slowly until final completion in 1831. Public interest now flourished and plans began for improvement of the canal to enable passage of large river steamers. On July 7th, 1835 a notice was published in the (Huntsville) Southern Advocate as follows:

"On the 20th of July books will be opened by the Huntsville Canal; to render the stream navigable for large boats, at a cost of \$150,000.00. Thos. and George Fearn."

Lack of documentation or evidence to the contrary gives conclusion that this venture was not successful. Overcome by other events, the canal disappears into the pages of history with no further mention of it in the aforementioned or other local newspapers. There is a

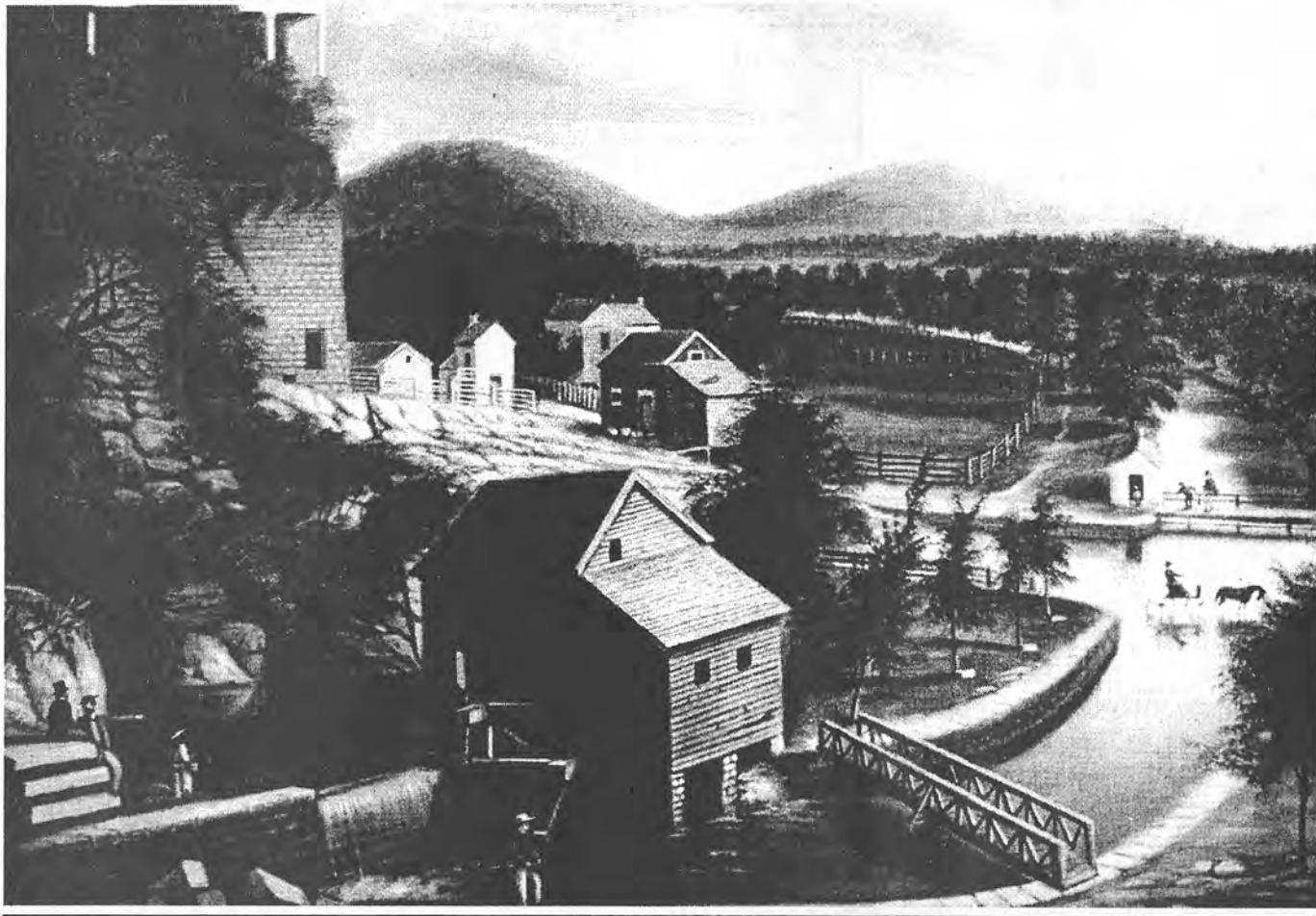
break in the files of the local papers of this time from the year 1837 to 1844.

One of the major events that the canal was undoubtedly overcome by was the completion of an efficient roadway called the Whitesburg Turnpike between Huntsville and the Tennessee river.

However, you can still visit the spring that was the beginning of this canal and a small portion of the canal across from the utility building. You can also go to the Heritage Room of the Huntsville Public Library and see pictures of the canal, portraits of Dr. Thomas Fearn, and the beauty of Huntsville as it retold in the photographs, books, and pictures located there.



An early rendering of the Big Spring showing the Indian Creek Canal



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For very oily skin use safflower oil found in any grocery store.

A good facial mask a tablespoon of honey mixed with a teaspoon of strained lemon juice. This is a French woman's secret for beautiful skin. Apply to clean, dry face and leave on for 10 minutes rinse with tepid water.

A Letter From Decatur

Decatur,
September 24, 1878

Messrs. White:

I am here as a volunteer to assist the few devoted men and women of Decatur to nurse the fever stricken and bury the dead, and as I have a few moments of leisure I thought it might be interesting to the folks at home to get an unvarnished statement of facts.

We have the yellow fever here in its most malignant form. Out of eight cases, six have been laid beneath the sod. The two cases we are now on, Charles Austin and Mat Todd, are doing very well and I think will recover. There are two sick among the Negroes, but I don't think they have the fever as yet. Almost all of the white people have left town and gone into the country. There are a few colored people left and they are doing all they can to help us. The business houses are all closed, except two: Scott's and Stewart's. The late one is kept open by Capt. Smith, who has orders from that noble hearted citizen, Capt. John Stewart, to let those that remain in Decatur have what they need, with or without the money.

Among the citizens that remain are W.W. Littlejohn of the Polk House; doctors Cross, Wise, Young, and Collins; J. Henry, Postmaster; Capt. H.G. Thomas, Todd, Jones, McDerment,

Carter, and Thomas of the post office, Gus McCan and two or three others. The doctors are very devoted to the sick. Capt. Thomas is chairman of the visiting committee for the whites. He is everywhere caring tenderly for the sick and encouraging the despondent. The citizens of Decatur will never forget him but will remember him as one of the heroes of '78. Bob Chardavoyne, colored, is in charge of the colored visiting committee and is a good worker. Gus McCan is in charge of the burial committee.

The town is lonely and desolate, and a mantle of sorrow and grief is hanging over us. We are working night and day to prevent the spread of the disease. The few brave men who have risked their lives will long be remembered by the citizens of Decatur. We think we have laid the last one to rest. In walking the streets,

one sees the black spots on the streets, marking the place where bedding removed immediately after death was burned. The town is silent as a grave. The few people remaining are sad, and the question most asked is, "Are there any new cases?"

We have plenty of nurses, medicines, and provisions, thanks to generous citizens of the U.S. Capt. Hurd of Cincinnati, and Dr. Cantwell of Decatur, now in Mansfield, Ohio, who each telegraphed us to draw on them \$1,000 if we needed help.

Truly, Eli P. Jennings

*How awful to reflect that
what people say of us may
be true.*

--Logan P. Smith

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Two spoons accidentally placed in a cup or saucer at the table denotes a coming marriage in the family.

It is a bad omen to have a picture drop from its frame.

It is considered unlucky to kill a swallow, wren, robin or ladybug. The coming of a strange cat to the house is considered good luck.

A child running between friends is considered bad luck.

It is said that in order to last, the home should be shingled in the dark of the moon. It is considered bad luck to move on a Saturday.

A child born with thick hair will die rich. It is also said to be unlucky for a child to see itself in a mirror before it is a year old.

To enter a house by one door and leave by another is unlucky.



If a lady's apron becomes untied while she is preparing a meal, someone is talking about her.

It is unlucky to have clothes mended while wearing them.

To be startled by a snake signifies a coming sickness.

To break a needle while sewing on a new garment is a sign that the owner will live to wear it out.

It is an evil omen to postpone a wedding after the time has been set.

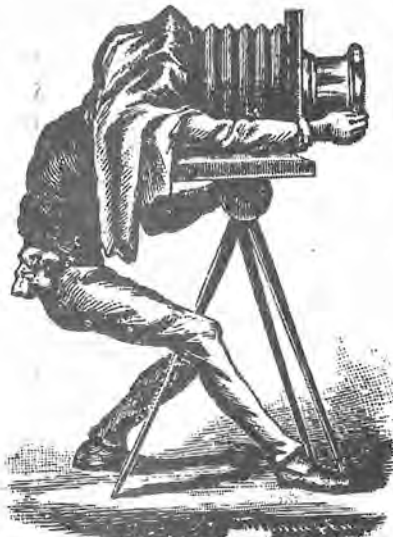


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King of the Snuffdippers' Ball

The Legend of Monte Sano Crowder

Stories have been written about most of the historic places in Huntsville, but one you will never see in the history books is a place that carved its own niche in this city's history for over a quarter of a century. It was a place that a lot of people will never forget and some people would like to forget. During this time Monte Sano Crowder reigned supreme, as King of the Snuffdippers' Ball.

Monte Sano Crowder was born on the mountain that he was named for in 1914. When Monte was only six years old his mother died, leaving his father with a whole house full of kids, and very little money. Monte's father was a natural musician and often, when times were especially hard, would wrap his Sears and Roebuck fiddle in an old flour sack and "take off fiddling for a week or two, in order to keep food on the table."

Monte began fiddling when he was about ten years old. His dad kept his fiddle lying on the bed and while he was fixing supper, Monte would slip into the bedroom and saw very quietly on

the fiddle. His dad came in one day and told him to "go ahead and play it, only don't break anything." From that day on, Monte was a fiddle player.



Like his father, Monte and his brothers were all natural born musicians. In 1928, Monte and his brothers began playing together as the Crowder Brothers. The oldest brother, A P., was the

manager of the band. A.P. Crowder later moved to Illinois where he became known as the top fiddle player in the state.

Monte recalls that back in those days people would plan barn dances sometimes a year in advance. There would be cold drinks and ice cream and the street would be roped off with sawdust spread down for people to dance on. Sometimes the dancing would go on till the wee hours of the morning. The band tried to charge \$15.00 a night for the entire group; three or four dollars apiece was pretty good money in those days.

"Times were gettin' kind of lean back then and I was gettin' tired of chopping cotton, so one day I tell Leon, my brother, I say Leon, let's go to Texas or someplace where we can make music and make a little money, too. Leon, he looked at me and laughed and said, 'we can't play that good!' Well, by Golly, we can at least try, I told him." The next day we took off for Texas.

"We were hitchhiking and didn't have no money so we carried our cotton sacks with us. We

figured that if we didn't make no money making music, we could still pay our way by picking cotton. It's a good thing we had them sacks, 'cause when we got to Texas, they had mosquitoes as big as birds and we had to crawl into those sacks to sleep, otherwise they would have eat us alive.

"Well, we got to Texas and we started making music on the sidewalks. We would stand there and play all the tunes that we knew and if we were lucky someone would put a little spare change in the hat, and then we could eat again. We had been doing this for a couple of days when this guy with a medicine show hires us to play for his show. We would make music, people would gather around, and then this medicine man would sell his goods. We spent that whole summer in Dallas making music. That's when we got to thinking that we were genuine musicians."

Monte returned to Alabama, convinced that he could make a living playing the fiddle. In 1937, Slim Daniel gave Monte his first job in Huntsville. Word of the young man and his fiddle playing spread throughout the Tennessee Valley, and it wasn't long before he was in great demand.

"Those were the days when a man put his heart and his soul into his music. I remember back in 1939, or maybe '40, when some guy by the name of Hank Williams called me and wanted me to make music with him. I played with him for a while, but he wanted to go to Louisiana and make some records. I told him that I didn't care nothing about being famous, I had everything I wanted right here in Huntsville."

Hank Williams went to Louisiana where he auditioned for the "Louisiana Hayride," the show

that was to propel him into worldwide fame within a few years.

In 1941, a man appeared at Monte's door and asked him to take a job playing for a square dance. The man told Monte that they weren't making much money and couldn't afford to pay anything except a percentage of the gate. The square dance was commonly known as the "Snuffdippers' Ball" and Monte was to play there for the next thirty two years.

The Snuffdippers' Ball was located upstairs at the old Temple Theater, in a room normally used for union meetings, on Jefferson Street. The lot on which it stood is now a parking lot for the Heritage Club. Walking down the street years ago, the

only evidence you would see of the ball was a narrow doorway and a long, steep set of stairs. No signs, no neon lights. You had to know what you were looking for in order to find it.

"You had to climb the steps, pay a fifty cents admission, and then you'd be in this big room. The room itself wasn't much to look at, it was just a big room with a few chairs on the side, had a place to sell potato chips and soft drinks, and yes, back in the old days it even had spittoons for people that dipped snuff or chewed tobacco

"But it wasn't the room that made the ball, it was the people. Use to, most everyone lived out in the country and they had to work hard for a living, and Saturday night was the only night

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they had to have a little fun and let off a little steam. There would be people dressed in their Sunday best, their hair slicked down, and a Sunday go to meeting shine on their shoes. And over there, against that wall, would be the boys that picked cotton all week, still dressed in their overalls. Grandpa would be back in a corner holding court with all the other men while the Missus would be sitting there clapping her hands to the music. There would be so many people packed in that smoky room that it was a wonder that the old wooden floor didn't just cave in with all that stompin' and dancin' going on.

"Lord, if that old building was still there, and if those walls could talk, there would be a thousand ghosts in that room, and they would all be tapping their feet to the memories of all the music that was played there."

With the new fiddle player taking the lead, the Snuffdippers' Ball became an instant success, with throngs of people lining up in front of the door hours before it opened. Its success created a new entertainment district downtown. No alcohol was served on the premises of the Ball, so bars began to spring up around it to cater to the thirsty crowds. An old-timer claims that "you could always tell when Monte took a break. When the music stopped, the people would swarm out of the Ball, like bees on honey, headed for the bars, but when Monte picked that fiddle up again, the bars would empty out and the sidewalks that were crowded with noisy people a few minutes earlier would grow silent."

By this time the Snuffdippers' Ball had acquired such a reputation that it was posted "Off Lim-

its" to military personnel, as far away as Nashville, Tennessee. Ironically, this was one of the few places of entertainment downtown that did not serve alcohol, but a lot of people had bottles of "cough medicine" in brown paper bags, sticking out of their back pockets.

Monte recalls, "There was never no trouble inside my place. It was all outside. I would tell those boys that if they wanted to fight they could go outside and

do it. I wouldn't put up with that in the Ball. Why, there were folks that would drop their kids off with us while they took off to the bars!"

The fact that Monte was a professional wrestler, undoubtedly helped persuade some of the local rowdies to keep the peace. He first stepped into the ring in 1937 and over the next 15 years would wrestle as a professional in over 200 matches, under the name of "The Breakdown Wres-

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tlar." Asked if he was any good, Monte replied, "I didn't win very much, but I made me a little money."

Earl Frazier, a retired Madison County deputy sheriff, recalled working Jefferson Street in front of the Ball every Saturday night. "We never had no trouble in the Ball itself, but whenever the band took a break we got ready. A lot of those boys would go outside and try their best to see how fast they could get drunk. Most Saturday nights, we would arrest ten, fifteen or maybe sometimes even twenty people on the sidewalks in front of the Snuffdippers' Ball. It wasn't really as bad as it sounds, most of them were the same people every week. The sheriffs department had regular customers back then.

"One night, me and Ed Norton was working the sidewalks in front of the Ball. We had already arrested one drunk and had him in the car and we were putting the handcuffs on another one, when a third drunk staggered by. When I saw the third one, knowing that we didn't have any more room in the car, I reached over and tapped him on the shoulder and told him that he was under arrest. Just walk on down to the jail, I told him. We'll be down there directly to take care of you.

"Sure enough, in about 15 minutes, when we got to the jail to drop off another load of pris-

oners, there the guy was sitting on the curb waiting for us to put him in jail. Something like that would never happen today."

Life was treating Monte pretty good in those days. Monte recalls, "I was married and had a son. I was making a little money and only had to work one night a week. Somewhere around 1947 or 1948 some guys come to me and asked me if I wanted to do a radio show. It was WHBS, and was down there where we pay our utilities at now. So I asked these guys, what was in it for me?"

They told Monte, "We are going to sell twelve sponsors at \$3 apiece, and you'll get \$12 and we'll get \$24."

"That didn't sound like too bad a deal to me so I became a radio announcer. I'm making twelve bucks an hour for sitting there talking just like I been doing all my life for nothing. I had this show called 'Crowder's Corn Crib' and I talked and played music. Only thing I didn't like was doing the weather. Most of the time the weather forecast back then was wrong, so they would give me this sheet of pa-

per with the weather on it and I would go on the air and say, 'I don't believe a word of it, but this sheet of paper says that the weather is gonna be...'

"Only thing was that this job was interfering with my fishing. Got to where every time they wanted me at the station, the fish would be biting. Well, anyway, they call me in the office one day and tell me that I have to choose between fishing and doing radio. That was a dumb thing for them to do, 'cause I had my fishing rod in the car all ready to go."

In 1972, progress caught up with the Snuffdippers' Ball. Nightclubs began selling drinks over the bar, a practice not allowed until the late sixties, and most had free entertainment. People who had been going to the Ball for years slowly began to drift away, and Monte was forced to close it down.

Monte Sano Crowder, the King of the Snuffdippers' Ball, became one of the most well known fiddle players in the Southeast, recording numerous tapes and records, with his music being used in two movies produced here in Alabama.

At the age of 83, Monte doesn't play the fiddle much anymore. His hands have become gnarled with age and it's hard to make the bow fly across the strings the way it once did.

"When you get old, there ain't much to do except sit under a shade tree and drink Double Cola and remember. You try to remember all the things you've done and all the people you've met.

"And if you're lucky, you remember how much you loved every minute of it."

The difference between a taxidermist and a tax collector, is the taxidermist takes only your skin.

Mark Twain

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The Man With No Name



John W. Hanner, a staff writer for the *Brooklyn Gazette*, while visiting Alabama in 1847, wrote a story about a slave in Huntsville who belonged to a Mr. McLemore. The slave had been born on the place where he lived, but had never traveled more than a half mile away from home.

Apparently, the slave was born retarded, but had become a favorite of his master. Although able to perform simple chores, the man was unable to care for himself. He slept in the main house, where someone could watch over him.

Mr. Hanner described the slave as a very large, but calm, person who was never known to tell a lie. His voice was low and his enunciation slurred. He never became angry or excited about any of the ordinary things of life. Like all other slaves at that time, he was unable to read or write.

What made the slave so unusual was the fact that he was a mathematical genius. The man did not know one figure or letter from another, but was able to add, subtract, multiply, and work complicated mathematical problems in his mind faster than most people could on paper.

Word of his unusual ability

spread and before long he became a local curiosity. The Rev. John C. Burruss and Thomas Brandon, prominent men in the early days of Madison County, heard of the strange slave and decided to see for themselves.

Some of the questions used in testing him were as follows:

"What is 99 times 99?"

Answer: "9,801."

"What is 74 times 86 1/2?"

Answer: "6,401."

"How many 9's are in 2000?"

Answer: "222 with 2 over."

"What is 321 times 789?"

Five second pause.

"253,269."

"What is 7 times 9,223?"

Two second pause. "64,561."

"What is 3,333 times 5,555?"

This was the only question that seemed to stump the slave. He pulled at his clothing, wrung his hands, sucked his thumb and then ran out of the house into the yard where he began skipping and leaping into the air.

Satisfied that they had finally been able to best the slave genius, Burruss and Brandon were about to leave when the slave ran back into the room.

"18,514,815," he shouted to the bewildered questioners.

A week later he was able to

recall to the men what the last problem, asked him on that day, had been.

He never had an explanation as to how he arrived at the answers, stating only, "I studies it up!"


When word of the slave's uncanny mathematical gift began to spread, his master was besieged by requests from people wanting more information. One group of learned professors, from Nashville, spent three days with him in an effort to prove trickery. All attempts failed as the slave answered each question correctly.

Finally, in a last effort to discredit him, one of the professors asked how many stars were in the universe. The slave jumped up, ran out of the room and didn't returned. Almost an hour later the professor found him hiding behind a woodshed.

"You don't know the answer!" exclaimed the jubilant professor.

"Yes sir, I knows the answer ... there jest ain't no word for a number that big."

No one knows whatever happened to the slave who was a mathematical genius. Years later, people could not even remember his name and he became just another footnote in Old Huntsville's history.



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**\$5,863
 Discount**

'97 FORD TAURUS GL

**\$2,000
 Rebate**



Stk.#7F979

- 4-DOOR SEDAN
- PREFERRED EQUIPMENT PKG. 205-A
- SPEED CONTROL
- FRT./REAR CARPETED FLOOR MATS
- AM/FM STEREO W/CASSETTE
- POWER LOCKS & WINDOWS
- 6 WAY POWER DRIVER'S SEAT
- ALUMINUM WHEELS
- LIGHT GROUP

\$15,997

AFTER REBATE

**1.9%
 Financing**

* Special Rates In Lieu of Rebates with Approved Credit Through Ford Motor Company