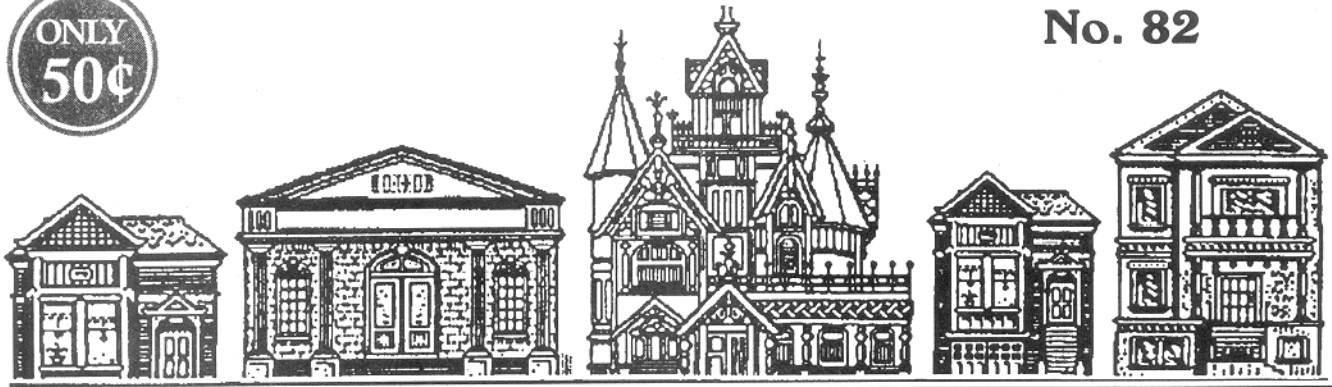


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No. 82



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



No Place For A Hero

by Thomas Frazier

Staff Sergeant Paul Bolden returned to a Huntsville that was already trying to put the war behind it and move ahead to the future. Times were changing rapidly and there wasn't much need for heroes any more.

"Later on, Paul must have traveled every road in this county trying to get a job, but he just wasn't qualified for anything. Oh, people were glad to pat him on the back and offer to buy him a drink, but there just weren't that many jobs for a person whose only skill was in killing people."

Also in this issue: Reconstruction in Huntsville

No Place For A Hero

There was nothing about the young soldier that could have been considered extraordinary. On the contrary, he was quiet, almost bashful and his slow, Southern drawl belied the shyness of a country boy who felt ill at ease wearing the stripes of a staff sergeant.

Even as a young boy, Paul Bolden never doubted that one day he would be called on to serve his country. The child of sharecropper parents, he had been raised as a son of the South, where duty and honor was a birthright, and heritage, no matter how rich or how poor, was something you fought for.

When Bolden was called up in the draft at the beginning of World War II he never questioned his obligation. With his occupation as a farmer he could have easily received a deferment. Many other young men in Madison County, fearful of receiving draft notices, had already decided that following the wrong end of a mule was preferable to

carrying a rifle and slogging through mud in some far away country.

Instead, on the designated day, Bolden rose before daylight and after kissing his mother good-bye and carrying the lunch she had packed for him in a tin pail, began the long walk to town.

Paul Bolden was later described by his superiors as a "natural soldier." Coming from a large family, he easily fit into the Army's regimentation and his quiet and unquestioning manner made him popular with his fellow soldiers. Years of hunting squirrels and rabbits around Hobbs Island had made him as comfortable with weapons as were the clothes on his back.

When the Allies launched the invasion of Europe in 1944, there was instant jubilation in the free world. People everywhere predicted the war would be over by Christmas. The Huntsville newspaper confidently predicted, "The struggle is won; all that is left is the mopping up!"

For the soldiers landing on the beaches of France however, the war had just begun. The next six months would be an unending horror of close-up combat, the kind that only riflemen can ever experience. Mud, fatigue and death became daily companions while the shadow of fear hung over every battlefield like a



Old Huntsville

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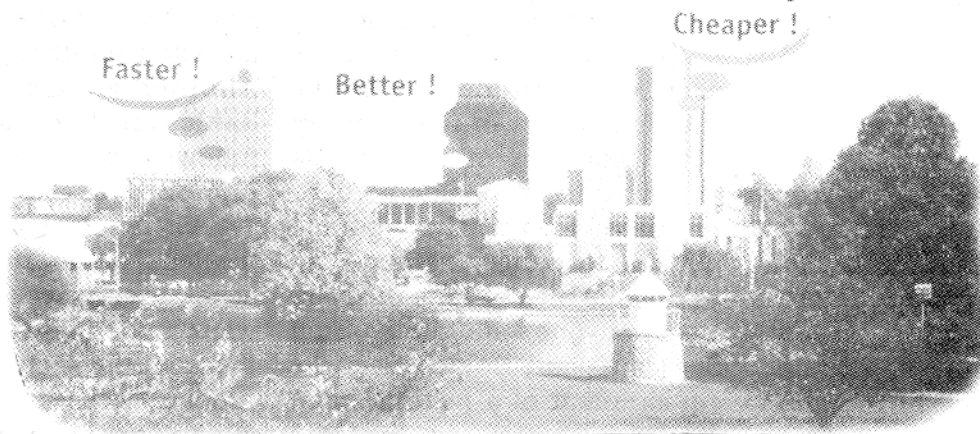


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dark shadowy fog.

"I was afraid the first day in combat," Bolden later recalled, "and I was afraid up to the last minute of the last day."

The 30th Infantry Division, of which Bolden was a member, fought its way across France, from hedgerow to hedgerow and from village to village, meeting a strong and determined German resistance at every point. Often times progress would be measured in feet, rather than miles, and marked by bodies rather

than milestones.

Though Bolden had taken much teasing about his rural background (his nickname was Alabama), the other soldiers soon learned to depend on the cool judgement of the "country boy." While many other sergeants led by ordering, Bolden led by example; frequently exposing himself to danger rather than asking his men to take the risk.

By anyone's standards, Staff Sergeant Paul Bolden was the embodiment of a fighting man.

In a small village in France he won the Bronze Star for Valor. A short time later, in another nameless village, he was awarded another Bronze Star. Another village and another battle won him the Silver Star, followed soon afterwards by two more Bronze Stars for Valor.

As the German Armies retreated from France there was a sense everywhere that the war was winding down. Thoughts of the next day's combat were replaced with visions of going

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home. Even the Huntsville newspaper, while still carrying the war news, was devoting more space to the events that would follow the surrender.

In December of 1944, Bolden and his squad were encamped in Pitit Coo, Belgium, a seemingly safe place where they could realistically expect to gain a much needed rest before embarking on the final push into Germany. Unbeknownst to them however, the German High Command had other plans for the small hamlet.

With much of Europe already in the hands of the Allies, and Germany's future hanging by a thread, Hitler decided on a bold gamble to regain the lost territory and stop the Allies' advance. The offensive would become known as the Battle of the Bulge and Petit Coo was destined to become ground zero.

The German army cut a swath of destruction through the allied forces that was unparalleled in modern military history. Within hours, soldiers who thought they were far behind enemy lines, found themselves captives of the fast moving SS and Panzer troops. Whole companies and divisions were completely surrounded and cut off. Adding to the disarray was the freezing weather and blizzard conditions described by many as one of the worst winters in history.

Napoleon once said that heroic conditions make heroic men. If that statement is true, then there were many such heroes during those first days when the outcome of the war lay in the hands of a few unshaven, frost-bitten infantrymen. Thoughts of Christmas, and of going home, were pushed aside as war weary men once again rose to their

duty.

One of those men was Staff Sergeant Paul Bolden, who on December 23 was pinned down in a muddy ditch by withering fire from a nearby farm house. His company had already taken many casualties from the house, and was being pounded by heavy mortar and tank fire. To remain in the ditch meant certain death, but to move was just as deadly.

Perhaps the best way to describe what happened next is to quote directly from Bolden's service record the action for which he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

"He voluntarily attacked a formidable enemy strong point in Petit Coo, Belgium, on 23 December, 1944, when his company was pinned down by ex



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tremely heavy automatic and small arms fire coming from a house two-hundred yards to the front. Mortar and tank artillery shells pounded the unit, when S/Sgt. Bolden and a comrade, on their own initiative, moved forward into a hail of bullets to eliminate the ever increasing fire from the German position. Crawling ahead to close with what they knew was a powerfully armed, vastly superior force, the pair reached the house and took up assault positions; S/Sgt. Bolden under a window, his comrade across the street where he could deliver covering fire. In rapid succession, S/Sgt. Bolden hurled a fragmentation grenade and a white phosphorous grenade into the building. Then, fully realizing that he faced tremendous odds, rushed to the door, threw it open and fired into 35 SS troopers who were trying to reorganize themselves after the havoc wrought by the grenades. Twenty Germans died under fire of his sub-machine gun before he was struck in the shoulder, chest, and stomach by part of a burst which killed his comrade across the street. He withdrew from the house, waiting for the surviving Germans to come out and surrender. When none appeared in the doorway, he summoned his ebbing strength, overcame the extreme pain he suffered and boldly walked back into the house, firing as he went. He had killed the remaining fifteen enemy soldiers when his ammunition ran out. S/Sgt. Bolden's heroic advance against great odds, his fearless assault, and his magnificent display of courage in reentering the building where he had been severely wounded cleared the path for his company and insured the success of its mission."

When the rest of the platoon advanced on the position, they discovered Bolden lying in a bloody and crumpled heap, a machine gun still clutched tightly in his hands. Inside the wrecked house were the bodies of 35 dead SS men.

A medic was quickly summoned and Bolden was transported to a field hospital. The harried doctors, after examining his wounds and failing to get a pulse, shook their heads and motioned for the orderlies to move the body into the next room where a makeshift morgue had been set up.

Several hours later while orderlies were placing another body in the room, one of them thought he saw a movement from Bolden. After carefully watching the body for a few moments, he hurriedly summoned the doctors who confirmed that Bolden was still alive.

Years later Bolden would confide to a friend that he still suffered from nightmares about being left for dead.

Staff Sergeant Paul Bolden returned to a Huntsville that was already trying to put the war behind it and move ahead to the future. Times were changing rapidly and there wasn't much need for heroes any more.

"Yeah, they had a parade," one old-timer remembered, "and all the politicians made speeches and shook his hand and had their picture taken with him. But when the music died down most people just forgot about him.

"Later on, Paul must have traveled every road in this county trying to get a job, but he just wasn't qualified for anything. Oh, people were glad to pat him on the back and offer to buy him a drink, but there just weren't that many jobs for a person whose

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1. Portraits In Time - A prize winning collection of stories of *Old Huntsville* by Tom Carney (\$17.95).
 2. Sword of "Bushwhacker" Johnston - The Civil War guerilla in Madison and Jackson counties - Edited by Charles Rice (\$19.95).
 3. Early History of Huntsville, Alabama 1804 - 1870 by Brig. Gen. E.C. Betts - Edited and revised by *Old Huntsville*, with introduction by Tom Carney (\$12.95).
 4. Rocket Boys: A Memoir - A young boy builds and launches rockets - by Huntsvillian Homer H. Hickam, Jr. (\$23.95).
 5. Storied Ground - Facts and Fiction of Maple Hill Cemetery by David Chamberlain (\$12.95).
 6. Huntsville Entertains - A favorite cookbook back in print - by Historic Huntsville Foundation (\$18.95).
 7. Civilization Comes To The Big Spring - Huntsville, Alabama in 1823 by Sarah Huff Fisk (\$16.95).
 8. Law's Alabama Brigade In The War Between The Union And Confederacy by Morris Penny (\$37.50).
 9. Bloody Banners And Barefoot Boys - A history of North Alabama's 27th Infantry by Noel Crowson (\$19.95).
 10. Hard Times - The Civil War in Huntsville and North Alabama by Charles Rice (\$17.95).
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only skill was in killing people.”

Bolden and his wife, Violet, were invited to a special White House ceremony where President Truman personally awarded him the Medal of Honor. After placing the ribbon around Paul's neck, the President stared at it for a long moment before finally saying, “I would rather have that than be President of the United States.”

Bolden had always been extremely shy and now the events of the war, and winning the Medal of Honor, seemed to make him draw further into himself. Unable to find a job, he returned to sharecropping in an attempt to earn a living. He refused to talk about the war, or the medal.

This was to create even more problems for Bolden, as only a person raised in the strict social structure of a small Southern town could realize. People he had known for years, other sharecroppers, now shunned him saying that being famous made him “uppity.” On the other hand, many people went out of their way to criticize Bolden, saying “you would expect a Medal of Honor winner to make something out of his life besides being a sharecropper.”

There was no longer a place for a hero in his own home town.

Frustrated, Bolden followed the path of thousands of other people from North Alabama who went to Chicago to work in the factories. Even there, he could not find the anonymity he craved. Invariably, a co-worker, or a neighbor would ask, “Aren't you the same Bolden who. ...”

The next question would always be, “What are you doing working here?”

The truth is that Bolden probably could have capitalized on his medal if he had so de-

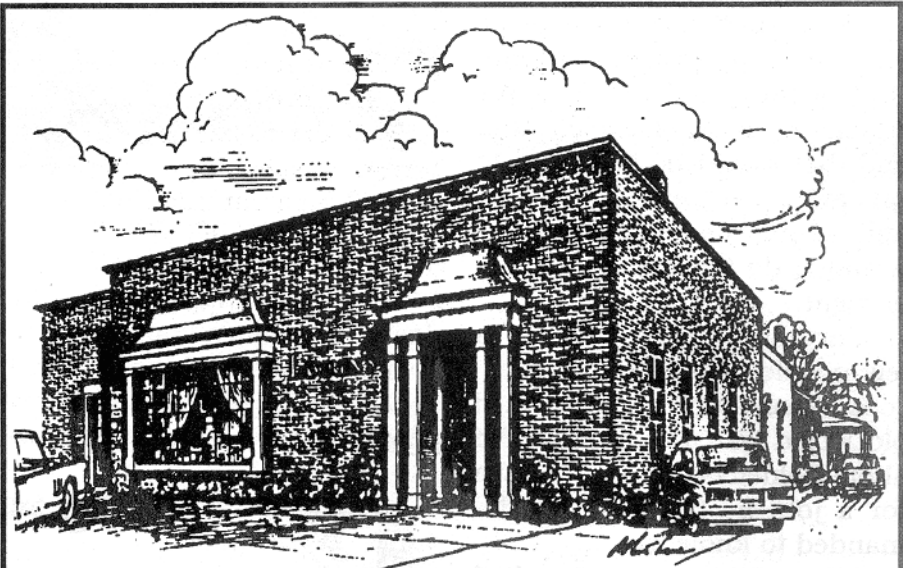
sired.

“There were always people with some kind of a scheme, wanting him to do this or that,” a friend remembered, “but they didn't really want Paul. They just wanted to use his medal to make money and Paul didn't feel right about it.”

As war clouds gathered in Korea, Bolden, despite being forty percent disabled, talked the War Department into letting him reenlist. Possibly, he felt he was returning to the one job he was good at. Years later, when asked about his decision to return to

the military, he simply said, “There was a war going on.”

If he had hopes of returning to the military as a warrior, his hopes were soon dashed when the War Department decided to use him for publicity purposes. At one point he was called on to give a speech. Reluctantly, he rose from his chair and after going to the podium, stood for a long time looking at the assembled crowd. “They told me I can talk about anything I want to,” he said, “but after listening to all these other people, I don't have much to say so if you don't



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mind, I'll just sit back down."

Though the military authorities were mortified, the crowd loved the bashful young country boy who didn't mind telling the truth. It was, however, the end of his speaking career.

After spending another six years in the military, Bolden returned to Huntsville. Again he was cursed in his efforts to locate a job. Though Redstone Arsenal was beginning to build up and there was a shortage of workers, no one had an interest in hiring a warrior with no peacetime skills.

"Paul applied at every office on the Arsenal," recalled a friend, "but people would look at his education and his background and that would be it. I tried to get Paul to tell them who he was, and about the medal, but he wouldn't do it. Said it wouldn't be right."

Fortunately, there were still a few people who believed in heroes. When a Colonel, a grizzled old World War II veteran, heard about Bolden being turned down for a job, he immediately demanded to know why.

"He wasn't qualified," replied the personnel clerk, "and besides all these other applications are in front of his."

"Not any more!" yelled the Colonel in a voice loud enough to be heard across a sizable part of the Arsenal. Grabbing the other applications from the clerk's hands, he angrily threw them into a nearby trash can. "You don't ask a man like Paul Bolden what his qualifications are. He's already proved them and people like you better be damn grateful!"

Paul Bolden spent his final years working as a microphotographer at Redstone Arsenal. Glenn Brooks, a co-worker, de-



Staff Sergeant Paul Bolden

scribed Bolden as a quiet, unassuming man who refused to be drawn into any conversation about his past. "It always amazed me," recalled Brooks, "how people worked next to him ev-

ery day without having the slightest idea he had been awarded the nation's highest honor."

Occasionally there would be a brief item about him in the papers, such as when President Kennedy honored him at the White House. For the most part however, Bolden tried to remain in the background, refusing to even give interviews.

One of the few people he felt comfortable with was Audie Murphy, a movie star and also a winner of the Medal of Honor. They would often visit one another, spending hours talking about almost everything... except the war. Perhaps there were some things heroes did not need to talk about.

Many people who knew him said that the older he got, the more the war preyed on his mind. His wounds began bothering him again and every pain brought back memories of a cold wintry day in Petit-Coo, Belgium.

Sometimes, seeking relief from the memories that were

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haunting him, he would take refuge in the dark corner of a bar where he would sit silently for hours, not talking to anyone, waiting for the alcohol to numb the memories.

Ed Norton, an old time Huntsville policeman, remembered talking to Bolden one night in a bar. "He wasn't the kind of man to talk much, but I kept at him to tell me what happened. Finally, after several drinks, he looked at me; I still remember the pain on his face that night."

"I didn't deserve the Medal of Honor," Bolden said in a low whisper. "Those boys that died, they were the heroes."

Paul Bolden died in May of 1979. Shortly before his death, in a reflective mood, he told his wife that he, and people like him, would soon be forgotten. "People will go on to other things," he said, "and there will be no place for old soldiers."

He was right. Two Purple Hearts, four Bronze Stars for Valor, a Silver Star and the Congressional Medal of Honor and few people even remember.

Footnote:

Shortly before we went to press, City Councilman Glen Watson notified us that he intends to take action to see what Huntsville can do to commemorate Staff Sergeant Paul Bolden, a true Huntsville hero.

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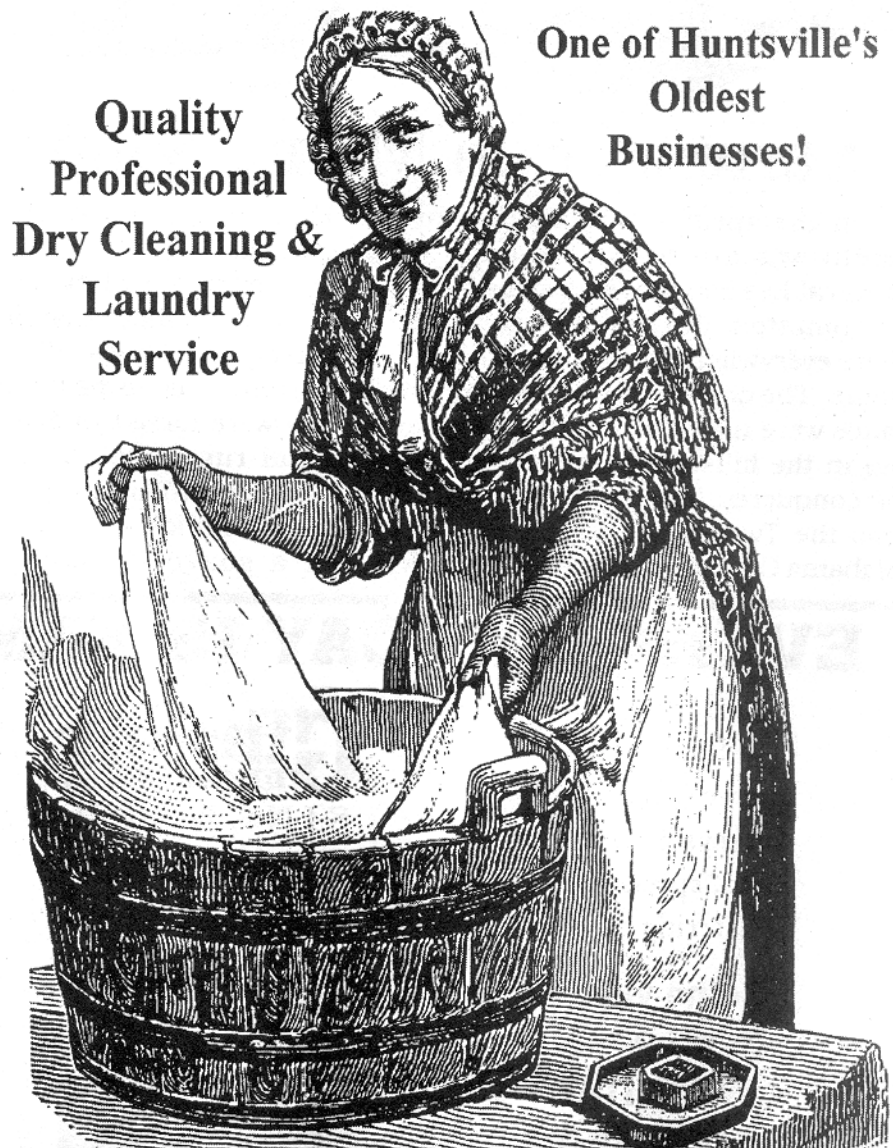
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Surrender on Monte Sano

In the spring of 1865, the South was a defeated nation. General Lee had surrendered at Appomattox. Confederate soldiers everywhere were returning home. The only organized resistance were the small bands hiding in the hills, who refused to be conquered. One such group was the Twenty-fifth Battalion, Alabama Calvary which operated

around Huntsville, commanded by Colonel Mead.

At war's end, the Alabama 25th numbered no more than a few hundred members. Too small and too weak to fight in battle, they were forced to conduct hit and run raids on the enemy supply lines. This not only harassed the Yankees, it also supplied a source of badly

needed food and weapons. It also incurred the wrath of General Granger, the commanding officer of the Federal troops stationed in Huntsville.

General Granger sent word to the rebel troops that, "Lee had surrendered and that they should lay arms also. The war was over." Colonel Mead, after consulting with his men, refused the offer.

Once again Granger sent word. "Officers could keep their side arms, and officers and enlisted men would be allowed to keep their personal horses. But they must surrender." If not, they would be treated as "outlaws and horse thieves." Colonel Meade still refused.

After weeks of constant harassment by the Federal troops, the Alabama Twenty-fifth was finally cornered near New Market on May 6th. A pitched battle was fought and twenty-five Confederates were captured, three of whom were executed on the spot.

The last remaining Confederate forces were badly split up and the command fell to the leader-

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ship of Major M. E. Johnston. With Federal troops everywhere, Johnston had no choice but to retreat once again to the hills. The Federal troops had threatened to burn the home of anyone caught helping the rebels. They were cut off from food and supplies and now they faced the prospect of being hung if captured.

Sadly, Major Johnston agreed to surrender. He was informed that Colonel Given would accept the surrender at place on Monte Sano Mountain, known as Cold Spring. Warily the Confederate soldiers made preparations, and on the appointed day at noon all 150 of them marched into the clearing.

The Yankees, undoubtedly, glad to see the fighting over had provided two brass bands and a ten gallon demijohn of brandy. As the paroles were being given, it began to rain. The roads soon became too muddy for the wagons to haul the captured weapons down the mountain, so the soldiers who had just finished surrendering were once again or-

dered to pick up their arms. They then marched to the depot where for the last time, they gave up their arms.

One of the most intriguing legends of that day concerns the weapons that were surrendered. While stacking arms at the depot, it was noted "that probably a sorrier set of guns could not have been gathered up in all of Dixie." Major Johnston later admitted to having hid his companies' weapons before surrendering. He also said "no better arms existed in the whole U.S., than those hidden."

No record has ever been found of these guns. After the war it was illegal for citizens to own military weapons so in all likelihood they are still hidden in some dark cave on the side of Monte Sano Mountain.

The romantic days just prior to marriage are like a snappy introduction to a tedious book.

Wilson Mizner

Egg On Our Face

Last month we mistakenly identified Homer Atchley as the person who supplied Aunt Eunice with her famous country hams. We apologize to Homer for all the teasing he's had to take and hope that he continues to read *Old Huntsville Magazine*.

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Advice to the Young "Safe Counsel," 1922

To the young folks, the amusements of their ancestors seem drab and dull. In order to be up to the minute they must dance the latest dances, know the newest jazz and wear the most extreme clothes. Smoking, gambling and drinking are excused in both sexes.

The modern method of dancing has done much to break down respect for womanhood. Modesty and decorum are flung to the winds. In their stead we have sensuality, coarseness and indecency. This evil can never be counteracted until parents realize the danger and do something

to raise the standard.

Jazz music has done much to corrupt dancing and to make it impossible for young people to learn the more refined forms of dancing. At the same time it destroys all taste for the appreciation of good music. Jazz and immoral dancing are so closely related as to make it difficult to separate them. The dances take their names from the animals and low things of life. The music furnishes the vulgar atmosphere.

Immodest dress - for some strange reason too many of our modern girls seem to enjoy being called flappers. She glories in the lustful looks and vulgar comments which her appearance calls forth on the street. With bobbed hair, three coats of paint and powder, with plucked eyebrows, artificial eyelashes and carmine lips, with low-necked, short-sleeved, and generously peekabooed waist, with an abbreviated skirt and rolled down silk hose just meeting below the knees, and all the rest of it, she blithely pursues her ill-fated

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course. If people turn to stare in horror-stricken amazement, she thinks her costume is a success; if she passes unnoticed, then something more must be done. Her sketchy costume cannot fail to arouse the passions of men and boys. To all outward appearances she is attempting to imitate the average age of the women who are arraigned in the morals court at 20 years old. And that accounts for the fact that the boy of today has learned more about vice and iniquity in 20 years than his father learned in a lifetime.

Increase of Burlesque or Leg Shows - Some of the so-called best people in the profession are using the shimmy shake in song, dance and pantomime. Barefoot dancing with naked limbs being shown through transparent nets, abbreviated skirts with flesh colored tights emphasizing the form and contour of the body by effective colored lights, are all a part of the nefarious business which escapes the ban under the guise of art.



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A Painted Church

We have not yet met the individual who approved the rather original style of painting the Church of the Nativity. The gentlemen members are painfully noncommittal and the ladies are equally painfully committal in their disapproval. "The painters in charge are jeopardizing their reputation," one remarked.

We understand that there is some discussion about painting the chancel blue, dotted with stars, and, we would suggest that a sea green carpet be laid, ornamented with fishes, a few whales and crocodiles etc.

Taken from 1891 Huntsville Democrat

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Huntsville, Alabama -- Brenda Hicox, owner

JOHN HUNT DEAD IN THE ASHES OF HIS CAVE HOME IN LIMESTONE COUNTY; HE LIVED 25 YEARS ALONE

Weird story of singular existence told of by Athens people, following death of the man of mystery of North Alabama.

Alone he lived, alone he died—did Limestone County's man of mystery, whose charred body was found in the ruins of his cave home, east of Athens on the Nick Davis road. The recluse was called John Hunt, when he went to Athens a quarter of a century ago and bought 25 acres of land near Athens. He dug his home, rather than having built it. Into the earth he bored and excavated a large room, over which he built a roof and called it home. In later years he added two more rooms, both underground. Hunt claimed his grandfather settled Huntsville and from the family name the city received its name. His pathetic death last week, under mysterious circumstances brought to light the weird story of the hermit's life. Hunt had been a federal army man during the Civil War and he received a pension from the government. Together with the money he received from selling a few farm products, he eked out a meagre existence. One of the strange features of the hermit's life, now being related by Athens people, is the fact that Hunt never sold a chicken, though he raised hundreds in the woods about his home. On the other hand, he treated them much as he would a human being. At noon he frequently rang a big bell to call them to be fed. The fowls would jump upon his

shoulders and he made pets of all of them. "They are too near and dear to me to be sold," he explained to curious visitors, who visited his dugout by the hundreds. The recluse treated them all with civility, but never claimed their friendship. When he first moved to Limestone, the section in which he settled had few people in it. Later it built up, but he continued to keep himself withdrawn from human

companionship. Recently, Negroes passing by the hut, found only the smoking embers left. A hurried investigation was made and in the ashes the body was found. It was buried by the people of the neighborhood in the Athens cemetery. It is declared that Hunt willed his strange house to Limestone County.

From the DECATUR DAILY,
December 21, 1916



Anyone who's happy with his passport or driver's license picture probably took it himself.

Ron Eyestone

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Autographed Books Available

Portraits In Time - A prize winning collection of stories of *Old Huntsville* by Tom Carney (\$17.95).

Sword of "Bushwhacker" Johnston - The Civil War guerilla in Madison and Jackson counties - Edited by Charles Rice (\$19.95).

Early History of Huntsville, Alabama 1804 - 1870 by Brig. Gen. E.C. Betts - Edited and revised by *Old Huntsville*, with introduction by Tom Carney

Rocket Boys: A Memoir - A young boy builds and launches rockets - by Huntsvillian Homer H. Hickam, Jr. (\$23.95).

Storied Ground - Facts and Fiction of Maple Hill Cemetery by David Chamberlain (\$12.95).

Prize In The Snow by Bill Easterling, with illustrations by Mary Beth Owens (\$15.95).

Civilization Comes To The Big Spring - Huntsville, Alabama in 1823 by Sarah Huff Fisk (\$16.95).

Law's Alabama Brigade In The War Between The Union And Confederacy by Morris Penny (\$37.50).

The Bottomless Well - Growing up in Huntsville, Alabama by Walter S. Terry (\$8.95).

Hard Times - The Civil War in Huntsville and North Alabama by Charles Rice (\$17.95)

Wernher von Braun - Crusader for Space. - An illustrated memoir by Ernst Stuhlinger and Frederick I. Ordway III (\$32.50).

Shadows on the Wall - The Life and Works of Howard Weeden - by Frances C. Roberts and Sarah Huff Fisk (\$16.95).

Book Signing Party, Dec. 12

David Chamberlain, author of Storied Ground, Facts and Fiction of Maple Hill Cemetery, will sign his book from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Morris Penny, author of Law's Alabama Brigade in the War Between the Union and Confederacy, will sign his book from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.



For all of your Christmas Shopping

Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

With pearls of wisdom contributed by the Liar's Table



Congratulations to all of the winners in the November election. No real surprises such as **Joe Whisante** for Sheriff and **Bud Cramer** in Congress again.

A special congratulations to **Jeff Enfinger** who was elected State Senator and **Patrick Jones** who won the Legislature position.

Now that I need help pouring coffee, all the politicians have vanished.

My sympathy to **Carolyn Redd** in the loss of her father and also to **Charlene Gibson** in the loss of her uncle.

I sure was happy to be able to present a check for \$1000.00 each to the **Senior Center** and the **Children's Advocacy Center**. The money came from selling coffee mugs that were donated by Senator Jeff Enfinger and designed by **Cynthia Parsons**. Helping a charity is a special feel-

ing and I want to thank everyone who bought one of the mugs.

Rumors are already flying about who is going to be running for mayor, but don't count out **Ms. Mayor. Loretta's** doing a great job and is a mayor whom we can all be proud of-- and I'm so pleased with all the Christmas decorations going up Downtown. It reminds me of how it used to be.

Speaking of potential mayoral candidates, Congratulations to **Larry Mullins** on the huge expansion for his restaurant. That place is so big we heard he had to give the waitresses road maps. Looks nice!

The **Holidays are here** and I want to warn everyone to be especially careful while out there shopping. Crime is much higher at this time of the year and all of you need to think about signing up for the Crime Prevention pro-

gram in March. It's held at the **Senior Citizens Center** and my good friend **Pat Colson** helps to run it. It's nine weeks long and a lot of fun, too!

Everybody needs to buy **Tom Carney's** newest book, **Portraits in Time**. It's about Old Huntsville and sells for \$17.95. Yours truly did the introduction. If you want one just call me. This would make a great Christmas present!

I was glad to read the footnote at the end of this month's lead story on **Paul Bolden**. I hope the rest of our City Council agree with **Glenn Watson** about doing something to commemorate him. Paul was one of us, and we should recognize our own.

Congratulations to **Doris** and **Wayne Elkins**, my daughter and son-in-law, on celebrating their

Photo of The Month

The first person to identify the little girl 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: Television personality



Last month's photo was Jeff Enfinger

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birthdays. Also, a happy birthday wish goes to **Angie Koob** who is 22 on December 7.

For all of you early morning people like me, don't forget to watch **Toni Lowery** and **Gary Dobbs** on **WAAY TOO EARLY**. They are giving away toys everyday until Christmas. They are two sweet people and I am proud to call them my friends.

I'm very pleased to hear that **John Malone's** dad is on the mend after a serious illness. He is a good man and that explains where John got it from!

Hot rumor around town is that **Tom Glynn** has someone special in his life but all I know is he hasn't brought her down to meet me. What about it, Tom?

I want to wish **Jib McClain** a speedy recovery after being in a car accident. Please, folks, everyone be careful while driving over the holidays.

One of the highlights this past month was being invited to the **Wood Carvers Convention** at the **Round House**. They let me draw the lucky winner for the Christmas tree!

My special friend, and a wonderful lady, **Babs Roper**, is celebrating 60 years of being in business as **Ropers Florist**. It sure doesn't seem that long!

I sure was happy to see **Don Siegleman** win the governor's race. Now, lets see what happens about the lottery! Let me know what y'all think!

My church, **Twickenham Church of Christ**, is having its Christmas program on **December 11 & 12**. Everyone is invited. It's going to be a special treat for everyone.

Jim Kirkland guessed last month's baby picture of **Jeff Enfinger**. Jeff hasn't changed a bit, has he?

A big thanks to everyone who

came out for my **Annual Arthritis Breakfast**. Once again, you helped raise a lot of money for a worthy cause. People who live in Huntsville should count their blessings for we have some of the biggest hearted people in the world living here.

I know **R.J.** and **Sandra Rhodes** have enjoyed having **Christi** home for several weeks before going off to a new job. She is a smart and pretty lady who will go far!

My granddaughter, **Donna**, and her husband **Todd** have just finished building their new home and got it done in time to for their first Christmas tree. It's so good to see young people in love.

I hope everyone has a special holiday season this year, and please, pick up the telephone and call someone to tell them you love them. That's the best present you can give anyone.

Well, that's all for now, but remember, I love all of you.

Don't Enfinger

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Depression Recipes

Buttermilk Biscuits and Chicken

- 2 c. buttermilk
- 3 lbs. chicken
- 1/2 c. flour
- 2 T. parsley
- 1 t. salt
- 1/2 t. pepper

Soak a cutup chicken in buttermilk for at least an hour. Combine flour, parsley, salt and pepper and use to dust the chicken. Brown the chicken in a heavy skillet with grease, and place in a baking pan. Pour all the buttermilk (except a cup needed for biscuits) into the skillet and stir well to loosen drippings. Drizzle this over the chicken and bake, uncovered,

for an hour at 350 degrees. Make your biscuits and serve with the hot chicken.

rinse with cold water. Great with cabbage!

Potato Dumplings

- 2 medium potatoes
- 1 egg
- 1 t. salt
- 1/2 t. pepper
- 2 c. flour

Grate the potatoes, add salt, pepper, egg and flour. Mix well - if the dough is too stiff add a bit of water. Cook by dropping lima bean size portions of the dough into boiling water (I like to put my raw potato balls onto a plate and scrape them off into the water with a butter knife.) Cook from 7 to 10 minutes, drain and

Cabbage and Potato Dumplings

- 1 small onion
- 1 T. butter
- medium head cabbage
- Salt
- Paprika

Chop the onion and brown in lightly browned butter. Add the finely chopped cabbage with the salt and paprika. Fry slowly til done - about 20 minutes. Add the dumplings and mix well - serve.

Chicken Gunk

- Chicken gizzards
- bread dressing
- mushrooms
- onion
- white gravy

Par boil the gizzards for 10 minutes. Mix the dressing, mushrooms, gizzards, onion and white gravy. Spread in a well-greased 9 x 13 pan and bake at 350 degrees for an hour.

Oyster Dressing

- 1 1/2 loaves of day-old bread



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(not moldy)
 water
 1 stalk celery
 2 medium onions
 1 pint of oysters
 white pepper
 celery salt
 sage

Dry the bread in the oven. Don't toast or brown it. Take out and moisten in water, squeeze dry. Cut the celery and onions fine and cook them til tender. Steam the oysters and cut into small pieces. Mix ingredients and season with white pepper, celery, salt and sage.

Hash

leftover meat
 1 onion, sliced
 cold potatoes, cubed
 1/2 c. water
 1 c. celery
 parsley

Take the leftover meat from a roast and cut fine. Add the onion and cold potatoes. Cook slowly for a few minutes then add water and celery cut fine with a bit of parsley. Cook til the onion is done.

White Gravy Sauce

Put bacon grease, sausage grease or lard into a skillet. Melt and add 3 tablespoons of flour. Brown the flour and stir con-

stantly, adding water or milk to make the gravy thickness you want. Good with added black pepper and salt to taste. Use for biscuits or potatoes.

Next Day Cookies

2 c. brown sugar
 1 c. shortening
 2 eggs
 1 t. vanilla
 2 1/2 c. flour
 1 t. salt
 1 t. soda

Cream the sugar, shortening, eggs and vanilla together. Then sift the dry ingredients together and add to the creamed mixture. Roll into long rolls (4) and keep cool til morning. Slice thin and place on a floured cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 8-10 minutes.

Oatmeal Cake

1 c. oatmeal
 1 c. boiling water
 1/2 c. lard
 1 c. sugar
 1 c. brown sugar
 2 eggs
 1 t. vanilla
 1 3/4 c. flour
 1 t. soda
 1/2 t. salt

Pour the boiling water over the oats and let stand for 5 minutes. Mix up the cake and bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes.

Grandma's Bread Pudding

1 loaf dried bread
 1 t. vanilla
 3/4 c. sugar
 2 eggs
 1 c. warm milk

Mix all in a big pan, pour into a baking pan. Bake for 35 minutes at 350 degrees.

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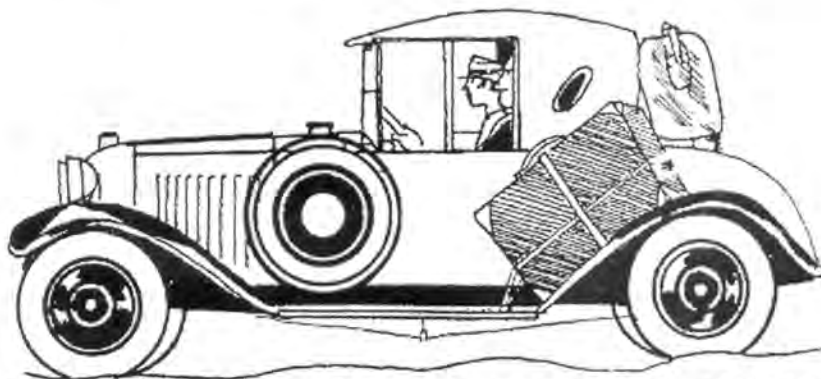
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WHEN HUNTSVILLE WAS HOME TO THE SUPER CHIEF

by Ken Owens

It's difficult to imagine that, if history had taken a different course, automobile manufacturing could have meant more to Huntsville than the space industry.

But that's exactly what might have happened, if the Keller automobile achieved the success it could have.

The story began thousands of miles from Huntsville, in San Diego, California. As World War

II was drawing to a close in 1945, many defense jobs were being phased out. John Lefield recognized that, and decided he'd better get involved in something else before he was out of a job.

Together with S. A. Williams, and Studebaker executive George Keller, he developed a fiberglass compact car called the "Bobbi" in California.

Although still in the prototype stages, the Bobbi seemed to fill a niche in the auto market for smaller cars. It weighed only 800

pounds, very light even by today's standards. After some refinements and development, they were ready to go to work on Phase Two: marketing the car.

The advertising and promotion were handled by S. A. Williams, with considerable success. The media was interested and published articles harking the car's virtues and advantages. Williams also bought advertising space in newspapers and magazines to further push the wave of favorable response. Potential investors displayed interest and the press continued to be favorable.

Things were going just fine until California officials dug up some dirt in Williams' past that threatened the entire project. Apparently he'd been involved in some questionable business dealings before, including stock swindle and counterfeiting. Not exactly the kind of reputation needed to launch a business venture. The press turned the Guns of Navarone on Williams personally, speculating that this venture was probably a scam and referred to his prison record as proof.



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Keep The Fantasy Alive

What the project needed was a significant geographical change. The operation was moved to Alabama when the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce contracted Keller to find civilian use for an empty aircraft manufacturing facility there. Investor Hubert Mitchell of Hartselle was impressed with the idea of the Bobbi and its potential. He joined the firm and bankrolled most of the early operation.

It didn't remain long in Birmingham; Mitchell wanted it closer to home, and Redstone Arsenal was just the place. The year was 1947, and the

Arsenal was also welcoming post war industry development. The old Betchler-McOne airplane plant was chosen as the site, and the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce was elated. The name was changed to Keller Automobile Company. About 130 workers were employed and things geared up toward a promising future. Keller had been a respected and successful executive with Studebaker, so the name change was significant — and helpful for market recognition.

Plans and production forged ahead. Painstakingly, early models called the Keller Super Chief were assembled, mostly by hand, at the Redstone Plant.

The Super Chief, a subcompact station wagon, was really ahead of its time. The cabs of these cars were all wood. In addition to the station wagon, plans were in the works for convertibles with options such as front or rear mounted engines. It seated 5 people and claimed 35 MPG with engines manufactured by Hercules (known mainly for tractor engines).

Keller Automobile Company even had an engineering office in

Detroit for the purpose of obtaining parts for the car while it was being developed and prototyped. The Hercules engines were contracted from the Detroit office, as well as other miscellaneous parts (the Super Chief used Buick hubcaps, for example).

The Super Chief was to have sold for about \$900. The production line on Redstone Arsenal was slated to produce 16,000 cars the first year, then 72,000 the year after that. George Keller used his contacts in the automotive business well to propel the project along. The car appeared in some significant auto shows in New York and Detroit, and was well received by the public.

Financial backing was positive, too: Keller successfully sold

\$2.5 million of the company's \$5 million stock offerings, obtained dealer franchise commitments totaling \$450,000 from all around the country, and was one day away from hundreds of millions of dollars of additional backing-- when he died suddenly of a heart attack in October of 1949.

At that point, the wheels fell off, so to speak. Big backers choked, stalled and backed out, convinced that the company couldn't produce without Keller.

Mitchell couldn't find an individual to replace Keller in the 90 days granted in the stock option contract; the stock was removed from sale and the company had no choice but to dissolve operations and go out of business. Only 2530 cars were actually produced on Redstone

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Arsenal during the firm's brief life span, and the dream of thousands of "Made in Huntsville" Kellers on America's roadways never materialized. It's hard to imagine, but interesting to speculate what if the Keller really succeeded and made it big? Would Huntsville be comparable to Detroit in auto manufacturing? And could a modern aerospace city peacefully coexist with a successful automotive one?

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Charles Dickens



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Granny's Fresh Apple Cake

2 eggs
 2 cups sugar
 2 sticks margarine, softened
 1/2 tsp salt
 1 tsp soda
 1 tbsp cinnamon
 3 cups flour
 3 cups diced apples
 1 1/2 cups chopped pecans



Mix thoroughly first six ingredients, then mix in flour. Mix in apples and nuts. Spray Bundt pan with Pam. Drop mixture evenly in pan and bake at 300 for 1 to 2 hours. Cake is very dense and moist.

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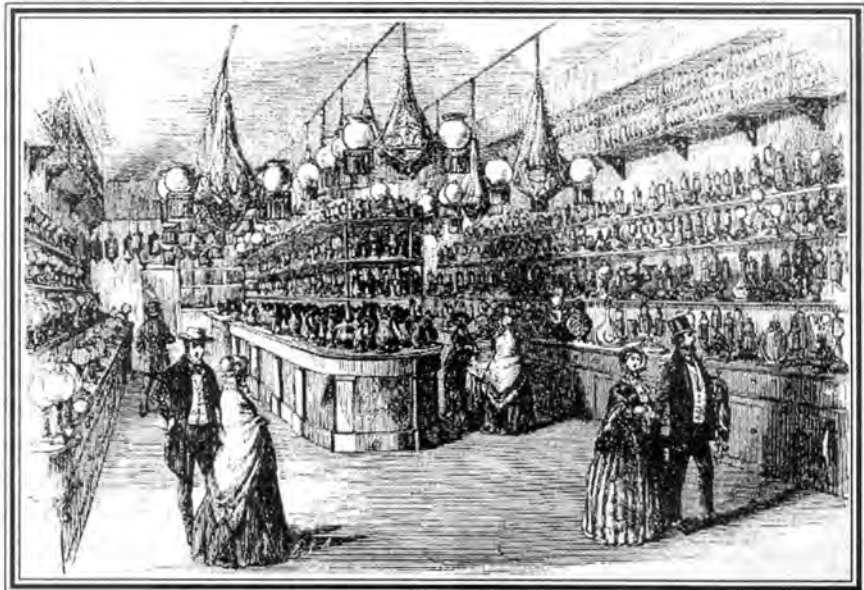
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Old Huntsville

From The Year 1861

Lincoln puts stress on saving union, not slavery

Washington, D.C., March 3

As soldiers with fixed bayonets watched from rooftops and along the Capitol plaza, Abraham Lincoln was sworn in today as President of the United States, a nation that is already divided by the secession.

The tall, 52 year old Illinois lawyer, sporting a newly grown beard, arrived in Washington by secret train 10 days ago, heavily



Despite the fact the country is in the middle of a rebellion, Lincoln insists that the Capitol be completed.

guarded because of assassination threats.

As he stood on the east portico of the Capitol today to take his oath, he sought to reassure the nation of survival, saying, "The union of these states is perpetual ... No state upon its own mere motion, can get out of the union."

Then, determined to hold out his hand to the Southerners not in the crowd here, he said: "I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break the bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Earlier in the day, Lincoln and his wife, Mary, emerged from the Willard Hotel, where they have been staying, for the ride to the Capitol in President Buchanan's carriage. A few drops of rain had fallen, but just enough to settle the dust along the Pennsylvania Avenue parade route.

Kansas against slavery

Washington, D.C., Jan. 29

After a protracted struggle over the issue of slavery, Kansas today joined the union as a free state. In 1858, President Buchanan, acting under the influence of his powerful Southern Cabinet, had recommended that Congress accept a pro-slavery constitution that the territory's voters had rejected earlier that year. The House voted to resubmit it to a popular vote. Once again, it was rejected. A new constitution, framed by the opponents of slavery, was prepared at Wyandotte in the fall of 1859. A majority of the territory's settlers accepted it. Kansas thus became the nation's 34th state.

Guns For Dixie

Huntsville: J.R. Young and Company have announced plans to begin manufacturing six pound cannons at their facility near the depot. It is expected to be the only manufacturer of cannons in North Alabama and will supply companies being formed locally.

Jackson is hero at Battle of Bull Run

Manassas, Virginia, July 21

The first thrust by Union forces toward the new Confederate capital of Richmond has been repulsed. The retreat became a rout, with sightseers and congressmen fleeing along with the troops. A Union army of 34,000 men, mainly raw recruits under Brigadier General Irvin McDowell, met a Confederate army led by General Pierre Beauregard that was waiting behind a small creek called Bull Run, three miles from Centreville, Virginia. Both commanders knew their untried soldiers would have difficulty with surprises, so they moved their armies cautiously. McDowell tried to attack the Confederate left flank but moved too slowly to turn it. Regiments went into battle piecemeal, and at first it looked as though the Union forces would win. The Confederates rallied behind Thomas Jackson's brigade of Virginians, who stood fast. Seeing the Virginians' brave stand, General Barnard Bee cried, "Look, there is Jackson standing like a stone wall," a catchy description of the general. Moments later, Bee was fatally wounded, but the Southerners held. They soon began getting fresh reinforcements, and these brigades simply punched the battle weakened Union line. At first, the Federal retreat was orderly. But it soon was transformed into a rout that did not stop until the troops had returned to Washington.

First income tax is voted to aid war

Washington, D.C., Aug. 5

In an effort to finance the Civil War, President Lincoln today signed into law the first nationwide income tax, making citizens with incomes above \$800 a year subject to a 3 percent annual tax. Up until now, the government relied mostly on borrowing to support the effort. And it collected only \$1 in taxes for every \$8.52 that it borrowed. The Confederacy, meanwhile, has been even more handicapped in raising revenue to finance the war. Taxation is unpopular in those states, too; the population is sparse, and there is a limited market for Confederate bonds.

The administration has assured members of congress that the tax is a temporary one and will be rescinded once the insurrection is put down.

War News From Huntsville

Huntsville: County officials have authorized payment of \$1000.00 to John S. Dickson for equipping Capt. Jones and Capt. Tracy's companies with uniforms. Also included in the bill was payment for furnishing pantaloons to Capt. Gaston's company.

A payment of \$127.50 was made to J.M. Venable for supplying foodstuffs to the troops.

Michael Callaghan received payment of \$50.92 for bacon furnished to the Polish Regiment of Louisiana while in Huntsville.

In other news, the Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian and the Cumberland Presbyterian churches have donated their church bells to the Southern cause. The bells will be shipped to Holly Springs, Miss., to be cast as cannon.

First telegram sent across continent

Sacramento, California, Oct. 24

The first transcontinental telegram was transmitted today, sent from this city to President Lincoln in Washington by Stephen Johnson Field, chief justice of the California Supreme Court. It will be followed by a message from the mayor of San Francisco to the mayor of New York City. The effort to build a coast to coast telegraph line has been made urgent by the outbreak of the Civil War. Crews working from both directions met to join lines at Fort Bridger in the Utah Territory. The cost of sending a message is \$6 for every 10 words.

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They don't make heroes like Roy Rogers anymore

by Chuck Yancurra,
Mayor of Madison, Alabama

Roy Rogers was a hero to me and my friends when I was a kid growing up in Crafton, Pa., as he was to kids all over the United States.

Most adults my age can remember the Friday afternoons we hurried to the movies after school to see the westerns.

We could get in for a nickel and popcorn was a nickel. I usually didn't have another nickel for a soda. But somehow, that never seemed important. I also enjoyed going with my parents to see stars such as Roy Rogers on Saturday nights. They had special prices then, and I could see a double feature, get popcorn and a coke for 25 cents.

Those prices seem unreal now as does the death of Roy Rogers. I guess I just expected him to live forever, or at least not leave this earth until after I had made my exit.

Those guys who made the westerns seemed larger than life. All the kids my age loved seeing not only Rogers, but the Durango Kid, Red Ryder and Beaver, Gene Autry and his horse, Champion, Hopalong Cassidy, Jimmy Wakely and others.

And their sidekicks: Pat Garrett, Pat Buttram, the comic relief for Gene Autry, Gabby Hayes, Andy DeVine and Froggy Somebody. The cowboys always had beautiful young cowgirls in the picture, but I don't remember the same girl playing in any particular star's pictures, other than Dale Evans in those star-

ring Roy Rogers and his horse, Trigger.

Dale Evans and Rogers' romance turned out to be real, and they were still married the day he died.

I actually met Rogers once, although it was under tragic circumstances.

One of his adopted sons was stationed at Bladenheim, Germany, where I was also stationed. If my memory serves me cor-

rectly, the year was 1972.

At a bar one night, the young soldier imbibed too much hard liquor, later choking on his vomit, and was found dead in his bed the next morning.

It says a great deal about the kind of person Rogers was by how forgiving he was of the battalion commander.

However, the group commander was not as forgiving, and the battalion commander was relieved of his command.

I always thought it would be easier to give up a child serving his country if he had been killed while performing his duties, than to lose him in a seemingly senseless act such as the way that the young Rogers' death occurred. At

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least it would make some sense.

In the movies Rogers made, the good guy always won. In the case of his adopted son, no one won.

He and his wife also had a Down syndrome child, and Dale Evans wrote a book, which may still be in print, called "Angels Unaware," about their child and other such children.

Unlike some of the movie and sports stars today, no one ever heard of Rogers being involved with prostitutes, or drugs, or even a speeding ticket, much less a DUI.

He was a real hero. And they just don't make them like that anymore.

Troubled Marriage

Decatur, Ala. Ordered by the court not to molest his wife, Stephen J. Kennedy was jailed for heaving chunks of cheese at her.

The original court order was obtained when Mrs. Kennedy complained her husband was in the habit of locking her in the privy. The couple is reported to be having difficulties with their marriage.

New Child Labor Law Will Not Hurt Factory At Huntsville

Huntsville, April 8 - The new child labor law adopted by the Alabama legislature will not affect any of the cotton mills in Huntsville. The report had been circulated that the operation of the law would compel 300 children to quit working in the Dallas mill, but this is emphatically denied by W. R. Rison, general manager of the Dallas company.

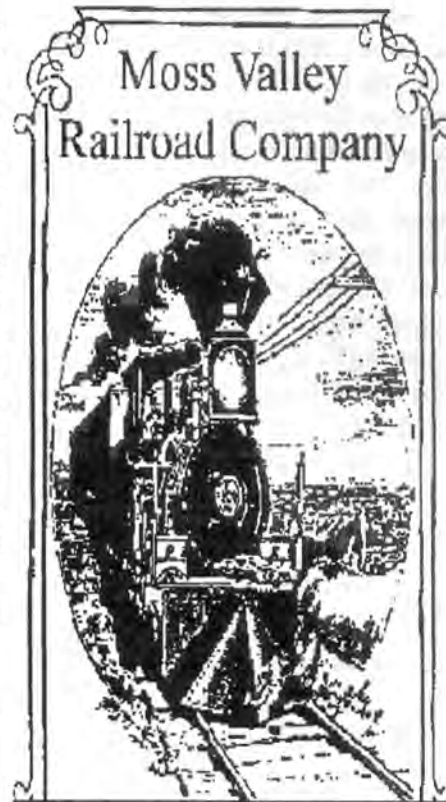
Mr. Rison states that it is against the rules of the company to employ any child under 12 years of age, and if there are any younger operatives, their ages have been misrepresented by their parents.

Other representatives of the mills praised the mills' policy in providing work for children who would otherwise become vagrants and a nuisance to peaceful society. The spokesman also said that many of the children alleged to be under the lawful employment age of twelve were merely stunted in their growth, giving a false impression to people investigating mill conditions.

Mills in other states have overcome this problem by having potential employees swear they are at least twelve years of age, thereby relieving the mills of any legal responsibility.

Factories in Alabama are expected to implement the same policy.

From 1903 Newspaper



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Notes From The Golden K Kiwanis

Old Huntsville Magazine Readers and Golden K Kiwanis Club Make A Great "Reading is Fundamental" Team.

Reading is Fundamental is the nation's largest and oldest nonprofit children's literacy organization. Since the organization was founded in 1966, Reading is Fundamental has put more than 163 million books in the hands and homes of America's children without cost to them or their families. *Old Huntsville Magazine* readers of Huntsville, Alabama, have made a significant contribution to this program. They have for several years, through the purchase of the magazine, placed books in the Head Start Program in the City. The "paper boys" of the Golden "K" Kiwanis Club have a great sense of accomplishment when delivering the magazines to their routes and collecting your coins. They know their effort will lead to support of their reading and several other programs designed to meet the needs of children and youth.

The Huntsville Golden "K" Kiwanis Club works through the Jean Dean RIF/Alabama Kiwanis Foundation, headquartered in Opelika, Alabama, which is the largest Reading is Fundamental program in the nation. It has averaged giving annually well over 14,000 at risk young children, primarily three to five years old, three, age appropriate books

each to have at home. Often these are the first books in which the children have their name inscribed and which they can call their own.

According to the Major Emphasis Committee of the Golden "K" Kiwanis Club, Golden "K" has for the last several years placed about 560 books per year in the Head Start Programs at Council Court, Meridian Street and Kenwood Drive. On the average these donations amount to about \$1,512.00, per year, and when matching grants are justified and awarded, the dollar contribution amounts to a little more than \$25,000.00, per year.

According to the current Committee, Luther Adams, Joe Sloan, Don Royston, Bill Brown, Bill Hunter and Shelsie Ross, all those who read to the children are members of Golden "K," whose average age is 75.8 years, and the wives of club members. The wives are great readers and the children respond to them in wonderful ways. Every reader has a marvelous time when placing the books in the hands of the children. The person in charge

of a particular Head Start reading location arranges with the individual Head Start teacher for a date and time for reading. On arrival, the readers get to know their group of children. After a familiarization time, the reader leads each child to participate in activities. They are shown a special place in the book for his or



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her name and assists in placing the name in the book. The fact that the book is their very own is discussed and made personal to each child. After these preliminary things are finished, each child is led to follow page by page as the book is read. Most readers go away from the experience feeling a sense of joy and satisfaction.

The feeling of joy and sense of accomplishment at the end of readings could be the jogging of memories of reading to one's own child or grandchildren, but most think it comes from the bright eyes and enthusiasm of exploring new thoughts by the children. Children are our greatest possessions and our future, aren't they!

This year Golden "K" will launch another book for children program. A book titled "Bad News Bears Go To The Doctor" will be given to the Madison County Health Department for children who are getting their first and repeat shots. The arrangements for the delivery of 1,000 of these books are being finalized with the pediatrician, Dr. Williams. Dr. Williams says these books will help children and parents to bridge the fear that most all have when going to the doctor, and, most of all getting a shot.

Readers will be interested to know some of the other youth related programs of the Golden "K" Kiwanis Club which are supported by the proceeds from *Old Huntsville Magazine* and other fund raising projects. This year's budget will, with the other great service organization of Huntsville, give some support to the Boys and Girls Club, the Children's Miracle Network, the Northeast Science Fair, Calhoun College scholarships, Hands on

Science Center, Crime Prevention in Schools, Opportunity Center, and miscellaneous other youth projects.

Thank you readers of *Old Huntsville Magazine*! The entire fifty cents you pay for the magazine goes toward paying for these books and other projects supported by the Golden "K" Kiwanis Club. Club expenses are paid entirely out of dues, attendance fees, and an attendance donation.



A Prolonged Courtship

After a prolonged courtship, Edward T. Lowery and Elizabeth Gentry were married Saturday in a simple ceremony at a friend's home. All seven of their children were in attendance.

The couple has no plans for a honeymoon.

from 1923 newspaper

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SCHOOL DAYS AT **JOE BRADLEY**

In 1914, a four room frame building was erected on Triana Pike at the present school site. The enrollment during the first year here averaged seventy-five pupils to a room, making around three hundred pupils for the four room building. Attendance however, was still very erratic and continued so until the passage of the compulsory education laws.

It was during the period 1907 to 1919 that the state and county first began to levy taxes to make available funds adequate for the support of a good general free education program. Through this increase in funds, it was possible for the county to engage more teachers than ever in its history. With the greatly increased enrollment and the additional teachers, the four room school at Merrimack became entirely inadequate.

In 1919 the Merrimack Manufacturing Company, aware of the deplorable overcrowding, began the construction of a larger school building at their own expense. The original frame structure was extended and renovated, becoming part of a beautiful modern brick school building. This handsome edifice was named the "Joseph J. Brad-

ley School" in honor of the agent of the Merrimack Manufacturing Company.

The new building was completed in 1920. Cecil V. Fain was principal then and continued through 1922. In speaking later of his years at Joe Bradley, Mr. Fain listed the following "firsts" as belonging to the community: the first high school in a suburban area of Huntsville, the first Boy Scout Troop in the county, the first camp for youth in the county, the first Girl Scout Troop, the first American Legion post, first vocational high school and first school for adults to learn to read and write.

In 1923, E. F. DuBose became principal of the school, having served as assistant principal under Mr. Fain. At that time, the school offered many high school subjects, vocational studies, domestic science, school sport participation, adult training in various subjects. In 1925, the Merrimack Company enlarged the school again, providing additional rooms and a large auditorium.

In 1926, the Joe Bradley School became an accredited high school. The 1927 class, first to graduate at the school, had as

Know Your Rights



New Health Insurance available for low income families

The State of Alabama has recently announced implementation of a federal health insurance program for children which supplements Medicaid by providing free or low premium coverage for children who live in households with income below 200% of the federal poverty level. It is called *All Kids*.

Under *All Kids*, households with children under the age of 19 who are otherwise uninsured, can apply for *free* health insurance provided by Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Alabama and/or (in certain counties) by Prime Health, if household income is less than 150% of the federal poverty level. For example, a household of three people qualifies if monthly income is less than \$1,706.26.

If the household income exceeds 150% of the federal poverty level but is less than 200%, household children qualify for *All Kids* upon payment of a *limited fee*. The annual premium is only \$50-\$60 per child for the first 3 children and there is no additional premium for 4 or more children. Additionally, there may be a copay of up to \$5.00 per service.

To qualify, a child must be under age 19; an Alabama resident; a U.S., citizen or an eligible immigrant; not be covered under any health insurance (including Medicaid); not be in an institution; and not be eligible for dependent coverage under state employees' insurance.

Applications are available at the local County Health Department as well as many clinics.

All Kids supplements existing Medicaid programs, including coverage for *pregnant women and children under age 6*, who qualify for *free* Medicaid if they live in households with income below 133% of the federal poverty level; and for *children between the ages of 6 and 19* who qualify for *free* Medicaid if they live in households with income below

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

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their session room teacher, Mrs. J. B. Clopton (the Miss Annie Bradshaw, who had taught the first school in the community twenty-six years before). At this time, the school had a faculty of nineteen teachers and was continuing to grow. Additional rooms and a library study hall were added in 1929.

By 1944 the Joe Bradley School stood as one of the finest accredited consolidated graded and high schools in the south-east.

It had an enrollment of 800 students, 22 teachers and offered courses in Home Econom-

ics, Shop, Commercial, Sciences, Music, etc.

In 1951, the Huntsville Manufacturing Company made a gift of the entire school property and facilities to the Madison County School System. The class of 1951 was the last to graduate from the Joe Bradley School. In 1952 high school students from the suburban areas of Huntsville began attending Butler High School, the new consolidated modern high school located in West Huntsville.



For Sale



Three pairs of Gents clothing at a cheap price. Owner is in jail and will not need them for ten years. Clothing may be seen at Murphys Boarding House.

from 1899 newspaper

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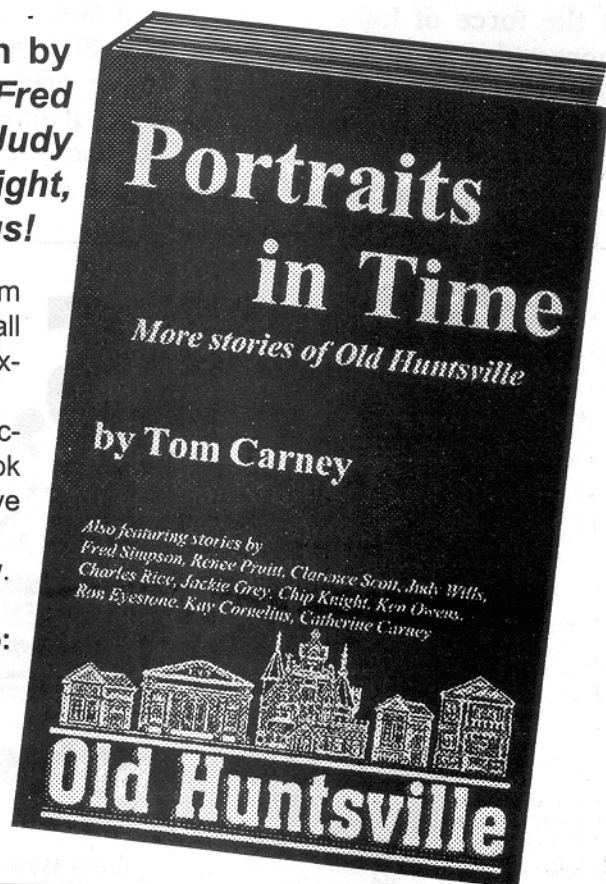
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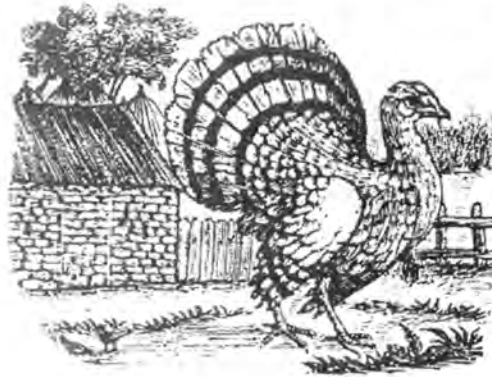
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The Origin of a Holiday Tradition



from a 1923 publication

The average American would not feel satisfied with a Holiday dinner which did not include roast turkey, cranberry sauce and the other foods which custom has taught him to expect on that occasion. This is the one meal of the year when the menus in millions of American homes, whether rich or poor, are all more or less alike.

What you eat, according to dieticians, is largely a matter of habit, and in nothing, perhaps, is the force of habit stronger, more widespread and more uniform in its results than in the case of America's Thanksgiving dinner.

"We eat the things which

have come to be typical of the Holiday season," says Mary Lee Swann, a well known writer and lecturer on cooking, "because our fathers and grandfathers and our still more remote ancestors have always done so. It's a habit like that which makes us start our breakfasts with fruit and cereal and top off our dinners with a piece of pie or a dish of pudding.

"It is remarkable how the fashion set by the Pilgrims in the Thanksgiving meal to which they sat down in 1621 has persisted for 300 years. We, still follow their original menu so closely that if one of the old Pilgrim housewives were to return to earth today she would prepare a

Thanksgiving dinner that would be essentially the same as what our modern cooks prepare."

Of all the millions of Americans who eat turkey on Thanksgiving Day there are but few who can tell why their Pilgrim ancestors chose the particular things for their first Thanksgiving dinner and thus established over 300 years ago a custom which is destined to continue for centuries to come.

When autumn of the year 1621 rolled around it found only 50 of the Pilgrim colony on the

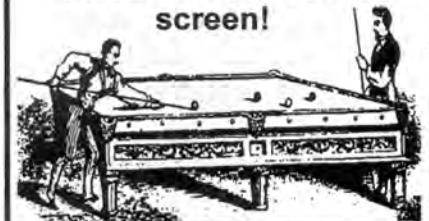


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shores of Massachusetts Bay left alive after the ravages of cold, hunger and disease. But in spite of all the hardships they had endured and the dangers that were still to come this pitiful little handful of survivors felt they still had abundant reason for being thankful. So Gov. Bradford sent out into the woods a party of four hunters "to shoot wild fowl that the homesick infant colony might, after a more special manner, rejoice together."

The results of this hunting expedition explain how it happened that roast turkey formed the principal dish at the colonists' Thanksgiving feast and why millions of pounds of this typical American bird are eaten every Thanksgiving Day.

The game which Gov. Bradford's hunters went after and which they came back with their bags full of was wild turkeys, the direct ancestors of the fowls which are now so thoroughly domesticated.

Thus the turkey became one of the favorite fowls of the American people. So great was its popularity just after the Revolution that it came very near appearing on the Great Seal of the United States instead of the eagle.

The selection of a national emblem stirred up a lively controversy. Benjamin Franklin was among those who had favored the rattlesnake as an emblem, but later he became an earnest supporter of the turkey. He was much disappointed when the eagle was finally chosen, but found some consolation in the fact that he thought it looked a good deal like a turkey.

"I am not displeased," said Franklin in a letter to the Society of the Cincinnati, "that the figure is known as a bald eagle,

but looks more like a turkey. For, in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true native of America.

"He is, besides (though a little vain and silly, it is true, but not the worse emblem for that), a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to enter his farmyard with a red coat on."

One of the objections to the choice of the turkey as national emblem was its foreign sounding name. But this is no serious reflection on its Americanism. The turkey is said to have received its name from the fact that its discoverers confused it with the guinea fowl, which originally came from Turkey.

*School days can be the
happiest days of your life,
if your children are old
enough to go.*



Weak and Weary

A young beau, at his sister's evening party, began to sing "Why am I so Weak and Weary?" when a little brother brought the performance to a close by yelling out, "Aunt Mary says it's because you come home so late and drunk almost every night!"

From 1870 Newspaper



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Reconstruction in Huntsville, Ala.

*Excerpted from "Early History of Huntsville, Ala., 1804-1870,"
by Brig. General E.C. Betts. Originally published in 1909 and
now available from Old Huntsville.*

To no Southern reader of this chapter does the term here used, as the caption of this subdivision, convey the idea, that, beneficent processes of the orderly rebuilding of its material resources and the reassembling and adjustment of its social and governmental functions, were now in operation in the South. To him the term is the perfect personification of all that is infamous, re-destruction rather than reconstruction proper.

After the close of the war, and military discipline was relaxed, conditions became unspeakably depraved. Huntsville and her citizens suffered "depredation, robbery, murder, arson and rapine" at the hands of marauding

hordes of "tories," "scalawags" and federal and Confederate "deserters." The county was overrun with this scum of humanity, the flotsam and jetsam of ignominy itself. For a great while the local traffic in whiskey was enormous. The streets were crowded with the drunken and debauched, and lawlessness stalked abroad unbridled. These conditions were accentuated by the presence, in large numbers, of ladies of easy virtue; who by their indecent demeanor in all places, and especially public thoroughfares, lent an air of degradation to the entire community.

There can be little doubt that lawlessness had reached dangerous proportions, when we learn

that the Provisional Governor Parsons, a "loyal" Union man, deemed it necessary to invest the mayor of Huntsville with special and extraordinary powers to suppress violence. These deplorable conditions were not confined to the town alone but existed throughout the county.

Former citizens of the county, who had become "tories" during the war and through fear had left the country, now returned to vent their hate and avenge their own self-imposed dishonor, upon the defenseless, who had lain down the weapons of war and taken up those of peace. Their lust for blood and insatiable desire for revenge knew no bounds and recognized no ties. Confederate veterans now pursuing the arts of peace, were deliberately shot and killed while seated with the remnants of their families around their firesides, and while at work in the fields.

These general conditions and special influences cooperated to make the seven years of reconstruction infinitely and inestimably more harsh, cruel and inhu-



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man than the four years of bloody war itself. In addition thereto there was another specific factor more potent than all these and wider in scope which threatened the very existence of civilization at the South; the Reconstruction Acts, passed by Congress, aided by Constitutional Amendment.

The administration of these acts was largely entrusted to the illiterate and unknowing "carpet-bagger," who was aided in his persecutions by that most unprincipled of all men, the "scalawag," a coward by nature and a thug and grafter by preferment.

We have already learned that the bureau at Huntsville had projected "Union or Loyal Leagues," for political purposes. As these leagues became stronger, after the ballot was given the negro, many negroes were elected to office through its influence. The higher and more important offices were preempted by the "carpetbaggers" and held at the hands of the "Black Man's Party."

These leagues having become strong in membership and powerful in politics, under the protection of the Union troops garrisoned here, became very disorderly and obnoxious. The conduct of the members was offensive to the last degree.

The league meetings were held at night. Going to and from the meetings the members would

march through the streets, armed, in military formation, and execute drills about the court house. The meeting over, many of them would loiter about the streets, acting boisterously; using abusive and obscene language, discharging firearms and making threats of violence; taking particular care to make themselves most offensive to those they especially disliked. In short, the "carpetbaggers" contrived every conceivable means of intimidating the Southern whites into submission.

More or less encouragement was given these disreputable bodies and their policies, by the waning opposition of a certain element of the whites; who were beginning to organize themselves into "loyal" bands, proclaiming the North; renouncing and denouncing the Confederacy and all it had stood and fought for.

Nicholas Davis presided at one of these "unconditional union mass-meetings," held at Moulton, in Lawrence county. This meeting was very thinly attended and represented no considerable portion of the sentiment of North Alabama, though eleven counties sent delegates. A little later such a meeting was held at Huntsville, with no better attendance.

Prior to the election of 1868, the Ku-Klux, were not active, locally. Though from time to time

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individual corrections were administered by small bands of Ku-Klux.

With the result of the election of 1868, came a realization of the enormity of the danger to the white man and his social institutions, and the extent of his dilemma. After this election Huntsville and surrounding country had well organized Klans of Ku-Klux.

The Ghouls, or privates of the Klans in Madison county, when in active service, in addition to the regulation disguise and mask, wore red flannel trousers with white stripes down the sides, and around the waist a brace of revolvers.

Prior to the election of 1868, few deeds of violence were committed by the Klan; for, up to that time, the superstitious and the timid and credulous "carpetbaggers" were easily subdued and held in check by mere threats of violence or warnings from the Klan. But, later when the detestable and more knowing "scalawag" began to get in his work, the warnings from the Klan were less effective. The "carpetbagger" was encouraged to stand his ground, and the negro was relieved of his superstition, in a large measure, by the slowly percolating realization that the Klan was not composed of spirits, "hants," but flesh and blood.

The Ku-Klux at first encouraged people to believe that they were the outraged "spirits" of departed masters, returning to "hant" them for their erring ways. They led people to believe that "Hell froze over" to allow these spirits to pass on their way back to earth.

The credulity of the freedman was not only taken advantage of by the Southern whites, but by

the Northern whites, as well. His ostensible new friend capitalized his friendship to the detriment and financial loss of the negro. The fraudulent schemes devised by sharpers from the North to separate the negro from his money, were novel, numerous and varied. The most pretentious and lucrative of all these frauds was the sale of four painted sticks. The negro was told by the faker from the North—in whom, hailing from these parts, till the Freedman's Bank failed in 1874, he had the utmost faith and trust and believed implicitly), that the land upon which these sticks were set up, where so ever it might be, became his, ipso facto. A document purporting to be a deed accompanied each set of sticks.

After the spring of 1868, the newspapers frequently carried Klan warnings and threats. Printed warnings were posted in prominent places. These public documents dealt with conditions and obnoxious persons, generally. Individuals, who by their conduct and associations had become undesirable and were deemed a menace to the peace and welfare of the community, received notices and warnings in person, and some times by posting on their premises in conspicuous places. These offenders

were given a limited and fixed time to depart. Failing to take heed, they were captured and severely thrashed and ordered, and in some instances, made to leave. Be it said, however, it was not often necessary to administer a thrashing; for as a general thing the first notice received by an individual, signed "Ku-Klux-Klan" was obeyed without undue loss of time and without argu-

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ment. These warnings were frequently ludicrously misspelled and always written in a disguised hand.

The Klan at Huntsville, deeming I. D. Sibley an undesirable citizen, sent the following warning, written mostly in "plain English," to him, which explains itself:

"Mr. Sibley, you had better leave here. You are a thief and you know it. If you do not leave in ten days we will cut your throat. We ain't after the negroes; but we intend for you damn carpetbagger men to go back to your homes. You are stealing everything you can find. We mean what we say. Mind your eye."

This notice to a "carpetbagger" illustrates the viewpoint of the South with clearness; namely, the negro himself was not primarily to blame for the conditions, but the "carpetbagger" and "scalawag" were. It was the latter that the South held responsible for the continued disordered state of affairs; and to the adjustment of these conditions, set about ridding society of these pests. Under the administration of State and local affairs by the "carpetbaggers," they became more and more aggressive. A good portion of the best land in the county was in possession of these people, who asserted false claims to it. The activities of the Ku-Klux became more strenuous and purposeful as the

oppression of the "carpetbag" regime grew. During this time, additional troops were sent to Huntsville to suppress the Ku-Klux, but to no avail. Later, martial law was declared over Madison county. Even this did not seriously impede the work of the Klan as a social regulator. It had inaugurated an "Invisible Empire," which had grown in strength until its decrees were far more potent and its power more dreaded than that of the visible commonwealth which it either dominated or terrorized. It is said, too, no doubt with truth, that many of the federal soldiers, stationed here, looked leniently upon the activities of the Klan, so evidently inaugurated in sheer self-defense and decency, by an oppressed and downtrodden people.

During the reconstruction period there were elected, from Huntsville, three State senators, "carpetbaggers," Spencer, Hinds and Sibley. The self-interest which governed the activities of these unworthy solons, and the manner in which they were willing to wreck the county to further their political ends, is revealed very clearly and unmistakably by their opposition as senators to any legislation which might emasculate the Ku-Klux-Klan of power. Though the Ku-Klux had them marked, and they dreaded the power of the Klan, they desired the existence rather than the extinction of the Klan. For the reasons, as stated by

them, in moments of rare candor, that the continued strife between the whites and blacks enabled them to make effective speeches against the former and thereby obtain the negro vote.

The most famous parade and "riot" of the Ku-Klux-Klan occurred at Huntsville just before the presidential election of 1868. A body of Ku-Klux 1,500 strong rode into the city and paraded the streets. Both men and horses were disguised with masks and sheets. All of their evolutions were executed with the greatest precision, skill and silence. The freedmen were in a frenzy of fear. One of them fired a shot; imme-

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diately a riot was on. The negroes fired randomly and the unmasked whites indiscriminately. The unmasked whites returned the fire. The Ku-Klux fired not a shot, but formed a line and looked on silently. Several negroes were wounded. Judge Thurlow, a "scalawag" of Limestone county, was accidentally shot and killed by a stray bullet. The whites who participated received only slight wounds. The military authorities arrested some of the Ghouls, who were released later. This was known throughout the North as one of the greatest "outrages" committed by the Ku-Klux.

This is only one of many similar "riots" enacted in the South, and accredited to the Ku-Klux-Klan, as "outrages."

By the year 1870, the mission of the Klan had been accomplished in a large measure. So nearly readjusted and normal had conditions become, that the need of its protection practically had ceased.

Early History of Huntsville, Ala., 1804 - 1870, by Brig. Gen. E.C. Betts, is a fascinating glimpse into the past century, complete with early photographs, that gives a detailed accounting of Huntsville's early history that is almost impossible to find in any other place.

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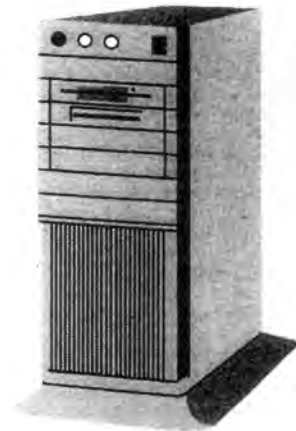
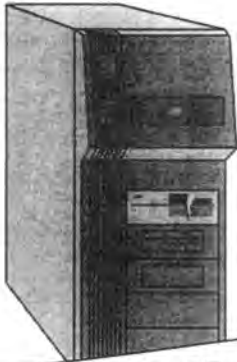
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