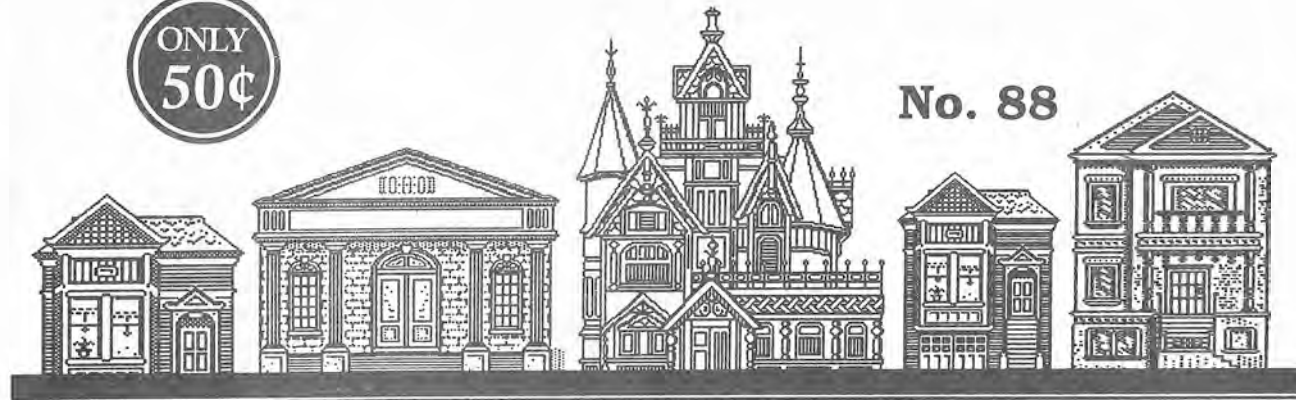


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No. 88



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



Covert Operations

The night jailer at the Madison County lockup eyed his prisoners carefully. They carried no identification and refused to give their names. For Huntsville in 1960—where everybody knew everybody—this was in itself an oddity.

A few days earlier, an employee at Redstone Arsenal reported that he had been approached by strangers who asked him to work with them on a project that was "vital to national security." They, too, had refused to identify themselves.

Were these events related? What in the world was going on?

Also in This Issue: An American in Exile

Covert Operations

O.T. Frazier, the night jailor at the Madison County Jail, cautiously eyed the three prisoners standing before his desk. They had been picked up earlier in the evening for disturbing the peace at a local nightspot. When arrested, the prisoners refused to give their names or any other information that might help Frazier identify them. For Huntsville, in 1960 where everybody knew everybody, this in itself was an oddity.

Frazier gave the order for the deputy, Ed Norton, to search them. A careful examination of their pockets revealed nothing about who they were or where they were from. Their billfolds were empty except for a small amount of currency. Reluctantly, Frazier picked up the phone and dialed the home phone number of L.D. Walls, the sheriff of Madison County.

Walls, mildly annoyed at being disturbed so late at night, listened as Frazier told of the arrest of the three strangers. At the end of the summation, Walls said, "Book them under John Doe's. Is there anything else?"

Frazier, choosing his words carefully, replied, "Sheriff, I think these are the men we were talking about yesterday."

Without waiting to hear anything else, Walls told Frazier to put them in the drunk tank, he'd be there in a few minutes. As Walls quickly got dressed he pondered the curious events of the last several weeks. For some time he had been hearing rumors of the strangers approaching people and offering them jobs for some type of military operation. A few days earlier while eating breakfast at a local greasy spoon, Leon Franks, an employee at Redstone Arsenal, approached him and told of being propositioned by the same men. One evening after work, he had walked to his car and found the strangers waiting for him. They appeared to know all about him and asked if he would be interested in working on a project vital to national security. At first Franks was intrigued but when the men refused to give any details, or even their names, he sensed something was wrong and cut the conversation short.

As Franks told the story, the sheriff had watched him carefully trying to gauge his credibility. Franks was a twenty-year veteran of the Armed forces, having seen action in WW II and the Korean War. He was highly deco-



Old Huntsville

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rated and well-known for his expertise as a small arms specialist.

Walls pondered the possibilities of the prisoners' identities. Even though the Civil Rights movement was beginning to take hold in the South, so far Huntsville had been quiet. While it was possible they could be Ku Kluxers, he didn't think so; he had too many informers in the Klan. Another possibility were the Northern agitators who were making a nuisance of themselves

throughout the South but that didn't sound right either; so far they had all been peaceful. "Whatever," Walls decided, "I will soon get to the bottom of it."

The prisoners were still standing in front of the desk when Walls entered the office. They had been joined by another stranger who appeared to be the spokesman for the group. Almost immediately the stranger, without identifying himself, ordered Walls to send his deputy out of the room so they could talk

in private.

Infuriated that a stranger would have the audacity to order him around in his own jail, Walls motioned for Frazier to remain seated. Turning to the stranger he then demanded to know "What in the hell is going on!"

Instead of answering, the stranger picked up the telephone and dialed a number. Mumbling a few words into the phone he handed it to the sheriff. The conversation was brief, lasting less

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than a minute with Walls saying nothing, just listening. After hanging the phone up he looked at the strangers for a long time as if he was having trouble deciding what to do. Finally he told the strangers they were free to go,

After the strangers had left, Frazier and Norton both asked what was going on. "I'm not sure," replied the sheriff. "Some kind of official government business." Almost as an afterthought he added, "But I'm going to find out!"

A short time later at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia a top-secret discussion was held. Though much of the minutes are still classified, one can be assured that much of it had to do with "those damn redneck officials in Alabama who are screwing up the Cuban operation."

When Castro first came to power it had been hoped he would steer Cuba toward democracy. Instead he openly embraced Russia and the Communist Party which put him on a collision course with the powers in Washington who were terrified of having a Communist country only ninety miles from Florida. At high level meetings between the CIA, the Pentagon and President Eisenhower, it was decided to overthrow Castro under the auspices of a Cuban revolution, supposedly engineered by right wing Cuban exiles.

At first it was decided that the CIA would recruit retired military personnel who would then train small groups of Cuban exiles. After the initial training the recruits would come together at some predetermined point where the CIA would supply

them with weapons and guidance for an invasion of Cuba.

Alabama was a prime recruiting area for the CIA. Not only did the state have a large number of retired military personnel, but its citizens were known to be fiercely patriotic.

Unfortunately, things went wrong almost from the beginning. Instead of using CIA personnel to enlist people, the agency, in an attempt to maintain "deniability," used contract agents, many of whom were unqualified and had little if any experience.

Many recruiting sessions consisted of telling the potential recruit, "we can't tell you what it is about, or what you will be doing, or who you will be working for or even where you are going but we need you and, no, the United States government is not

**Ready or not,
here I come.**

*Nana came to paint
the nursery.*

**EVERYONE CAME TO
THE BABY SHOWER.**

*Come next month,
everything will
be ready.*

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page 6
involved!"

In one fiasco, agents rented two rooms at a hotel in Decatur, complete with a stash of firearms and military training manuals, to interview potential recruits and judge their experience. Local law enforcement officials, after hearing of the guns, decided a gang was about to pull an armed robbery and planned a raid. Only quick intervention by top government officials prevented what could have been a public relations nightmare.

Needless to say, under these conditions, the agency was not very successful at building their "private army." Even worse, the whole affair had become almost common knowledge. Law enforcement officials from Decatur, Anniston and Birmingham were all demanding answers.

In Huntsville, Sheriff L.D. Walls was also trying to find answers. He called the State Attorney General's office and they told him to call the United States Attorney General's office. They, in reply, suggested he contact the State Department who in turn referred him back to the State Attorney General's office. Most people would have given up at that point but Walls was not a man to be pushed aside easily. Each reply only made him more determined to find out the truth.

The CIA knew it had a real problem on its hands. After much consultation it was decided to change direction and approach Governor Albert Patterson about using the Alabama National Guard to train the Cubans and provide support. There was already a precedent for it - in the late 50's select members of the Alabama National Guard had been used for clandestine missions in South Vietnam, when officially there was no U.S. mili-

tary presence in the country.

From all appearances this seemed to be the perfect solution. Gov. Patterson had served as a young Lieutenant on Eisenhower's staff during WW II and had acquired a reputation as a crime buster when he broke up the racketeers in Phoenix City. In addition, the Alabama Air National Guard was the only unit in the country still flying the B-26 bombers - the same type used by the Cuban Air Force. These bombers were important if the world was to believe it was a Cuban uprising.

In the late fall of 1960, Gov. Patterson met with Brig. General Doster who asked to "borrow" the Alabama National Guard for an undisclosed purpose in the national interest. Patterson was well aware of the "Need to know policy" of the CIA and asked but one question.

"Does the old man (Eisenhower) know?"

After being assured of the President's knowledge and approval, Patterson gave his consent.

Almost overnight, once the Alabama National Guard became involved, the whole project took on a professional tone. Selected guardsmen were released from duty, given new identities and sent to a top-secret base in Florida. From there many of them were transported, with false passports, to a secret base in Nicaragua that would serve as the staging area for the invasion. Other members of the guard traveled to Washington where they worked with the CIA in the planning.

Wives were given a post office number in New York where they could write to their husbands. Guardsmen were instructed in cover stories to ex-

Shaver's Top 10 Books of Local & Regional Interest

1. A Man Called Gurley - Nathan Bedford Forrest's Notorious Captain by Colonel Donald H. Steenburn, (\$19.95).
2. Glimpses into Antebellum Homes of Historic Huntsville, Alabama - New 9th edition, (\$14.95).
3. Back To The Moon by Homer H. Hickam, Jr. signed copies, \$23.95.
4. Ordinary and Sacred as Blood - Alabama women speak, \$11.95.
5. When Duty Called - Limestone County veterans remember World War II as told to Jerry Barksdale, (\$24.95).
6. Sword of "Bushwhacker" Johnston - The Civil War guerilla in Madison and Jackson counties - Edited by Charles Rice, (\$19.95).
7. Portraits In Time - A prize winning collection of stories of *Old Huntsville* by Tom Carney. Now in its 2nd printing, (\$17.95).
8. 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).
9. Storied Ground - Facts and Fiction of Maple Hill Cemetery by David Chamberlain, (\$12.95).
10. Law's Alabama Brigade at the battle of Gettysburg by Morris Penny, \$24.95.

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plain their being away from their jobs and families. "We weren't supposed to know anything about it," said one wife, "but of course we all did."

"In a way it was almost like being back home," recalled one of the recruits. "Almost all of the men there were from Alabama. The others were mostly spooks (CIA) and we didn't have much to do with them. I think all of us felt uncomfortable with all the cloak and dagger stuff, but \$750.00 a month was a lot of money in 1960."

In the late fall of 1960, General Doster, who was acting as a liaison between the men in Nicaragua and the CIA, stopped by to pay a courtesy call on Gov. Patterson. As he started to leave he made the cryptic remark that "in a few months you will read all about what we are doing and the overthrow of Cuba."

Although Patterson had never been formally briefed, he had apparently heard rumors that gave him a good idea of the invasion plans. This placed Patterson in an awkward position. Though he was fanatically loyal to President Eisenhower, he was supporting J.F. Kennedy in the upcoming elections. He realized that if the invasion occurred before the election, the Republican nominee, Richard Nixon, would probably be swept into office as a result.

After much soul searching Patterson contacted Stephen Smith, Kennedy's brother-in-law, and told him he had to meet with Kennedy on important business. A short while later Patterson received a phone call and was told to fly to New York and check into the Barclay Hotel. Late that evening Kennedy showed up, and after being sworn to secrecy, was briefed by Patterson. By all accounts this was the first time

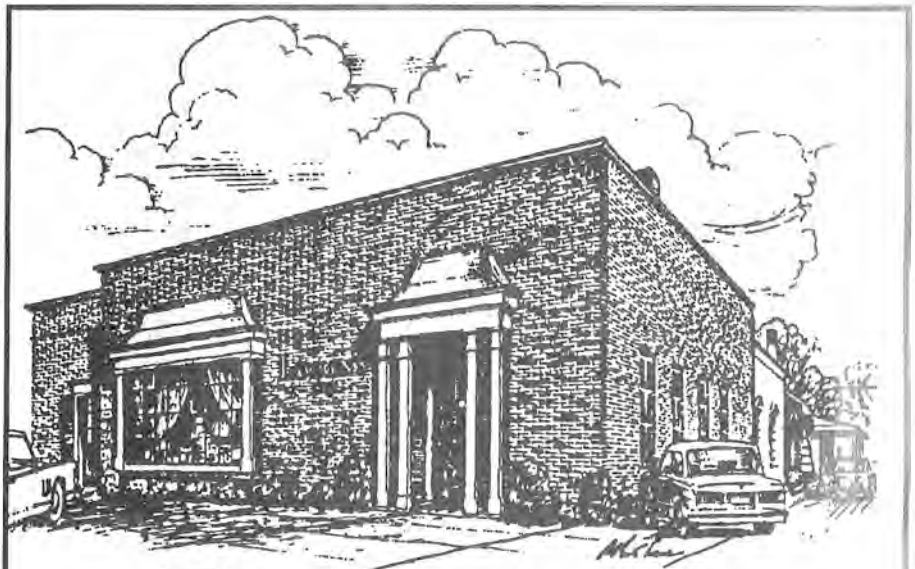
Kennedy knew of the proposed invasion.

Before Kennedy left, Patterson gave him a bag with ten thousand dollars cash as contributions. "That was the way things were done then," said Patterson later.

Though most historians have given Kennedy's stellar performance in the debates as the reason for his victory over Nixon, few of them realized that Kennedy possessed knowledge that gave him a secret advantage. By the third debate Kennedy and Nixon were tied, with many ob-

servers giving Nixon a slight edge.

Suddenly during the next debate, in response to an innocuous question, Kennedy dropped a bombshell by stating he supported armed intervention in Cuba. Nixon, in his capacity as vice-president was well aware of the invasion plans, but because of the secrecy, was forced to act as if he opposed any armed intervention. To have done otherwise might have jeopardized the whole operation. Ironically, Nixon's position that night caused him to be labeled as be-



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ing soft on Communism, a view that most Americans despised.

The information received from Patterson proved pivotal in swinging the presidential election to Kennedy.

While the country celebrated the election of a new president, Sheriff L.D. Walls was still trying to get an answer to his questions about the strangers. Phone calls were not returned and letters were seemingly ignored. Still, he persisted in his quest-- after all, he was the sheriff of Madison County and if something was going on here he wanted to know about it.

In the early spring of 1961, Kennedy gave the green light for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

"We spent most of the night before carrying the Cubans to the waiting ships and getting the aircraft readied," remembered one man. "Some of the boys had made plans to sneak aboard the ships with the Cubans but when the spooks heard about it they posted guards around the piers and searched the ships.

"All the Cubans were excited about going home. We had told them that when they landed on the beaches we would be supporting them with air strikes. One of the Cubans I got to know told me his wife was expecting a baby soon and if it was a boy he was going to name it John

Fitzgerald, in honor of the president who was going to liberate their country. I learned later that he was one of the first to die."

The Alabama guardsmen in Nicaragua were supposed to only provide training and support but as the operation began to falter, it was evident to everyone that something else had to be done.

"We heard everything on our radios," recalled one guardsman. "They were being massacred on the beaches and kept calling, begging for air support." The Cuban pilots who were supposed to fly the B-26s refused to take off. It was a suicidal mission, they claimed.

Frantically, the guardsmen radioed Washington begging to be allowed to fly missions and provide support. Washington refused, giving orders that no airplanes were to be allowed to take off. Finally, four members of the Alabama Air National Guard, unable to stand by helplessly while people were being slaughtered, ordered their planes made ready and took off for the short flight to Cuba. Three of the pilots were shot down and the fourth, pursued by Russian-made Cuban fighters, barely managed to make it to Miami. The government issued a statement saying the pilots lost were all Cuban nationals.

Without the promised air

support from the United States government, the Bay of Pigs invasion failed miserably. Now began the process of denial.

"We were still listening to the battle on our radios," recalled one Guardsman from Cullman, "when we got orders to leave. They didn't even give us time to pack. We left our clothes, equipment and everything else. We just stopped what we were doing at the time and boarded an airplane.

"All types of military hardware was left there-- crates of army 45s with no serial numbers, aircraft parked on the runway, radios - you name it - we just walked away from it."

After landing in Florida the guardsmen were searched for anything that might prove where they had been. The false identity papers and passports were confiscated.

"We were told to go home - this never happened. If anyone asked any questions we were to deny everything. I still remember the last thing they told me - the United States Government had nothing to do with this operation."

"The next morning I was back at my job in Cullman selling insurance. The whole thing seemed like a long nightmare, except I couldn't tell anybody about it.

The same day a spokesman for President Kennedy went on national television and declared that, "no American military personnel were involved in the ill-fated invasion."

A week later Sheriff L.D. Walls finally received a reply to his questions about the mysterious strangers. "...the men in question were employees of the Wildlife Protection and Research Control Board but have

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since been terminated... We have no knowledge of their present whereabouts."

There is not, and never has been, a Wildlife Protection Research Control Board.



*My mind not only wanders,
it sometimes leaves
completely.*

- David Franklin



A Lesson In Geography

John Lempley lived "up north" for years but occasionally visited relatives in the South. Once, while visiting kin in Mississippi he was pulled over by a policeman. The officer walked up to the side of the car, shined a flashlight in John's face and asked where he was going.

"To my grandmother's house," replied John.

"Boy, you been drinking?"

"No sir," was John's polite reply.

"Where you from, boy?"

"Chicago, sir."

"Don't lie to me, boy. I seen them Illinois tags on your car."

I am a Brownie!

The young daughter of William Howard Taft III, when asked to write a brief autobiographical sketch upon entering a new grade of



Girl Scouts responded: "My great-grandfather was President of the United States, my grandfather was a Senator from Ohio, my father is Ambassador to Ireland, and I am a Brownie."

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Bogus Booze

Judge Lowe Throws Liquor Case Out Of Court. Bogus Whiskey Not Illegal

from a 1920 newspaper

Garland Orr, of Hartselle, charged with obtaining money under false pretenses in connection with his alleged sale of 100 gallons of water to Floyd Jacobs, former deputy sheriff, was this afternoon held to the grand jury on \$1,000 bail by Judge W.T. Lowe, following his preliminary trial.

Floyd Jacobs, the complainant, took the stand as a witness and related how he was alleged to have been victimized by Orr. He said that he had contracted with Orr for the delivery of 100

gallons of whiskey and had met a man on a pike outside Albany during the darkness of night who had delivered to him ten containers of 10-gallons capacity each, which upon later examination were said to contain water. Jacobs could not identify the man delivering the spurious liquor.

Attorney for the defense, seeking dismissal of the case, declared the state had not proved anything against Orr. The defense contended that the state had not proved that the contents of the containers was not whiskey. The judge then recessed the court in order to ascertain the contents of the containers, after which the charges were cheerfully dropped.

The older you get, the harder it is to lose weight because by then your body and your fat are really good friends.

- Geradine Thomas



Murder at Sheffield

from 1900 newspaper

A.H. Motherwell, a son of James Motherwell, was shot and mortally wounded by Ed Catting, in Sheffield, on the night of the 17th inst. He was bidding Ed Catting good-bye, preparatory to leaving Sheffield to go to Huntsville. Eye witnesses say he squeezed Ed's hand a little, and Ed says: "I have a good mind to shoot you." And then he did. Ed has skipped out, but they have a good many men looking for him. There will be a reward for his capture.

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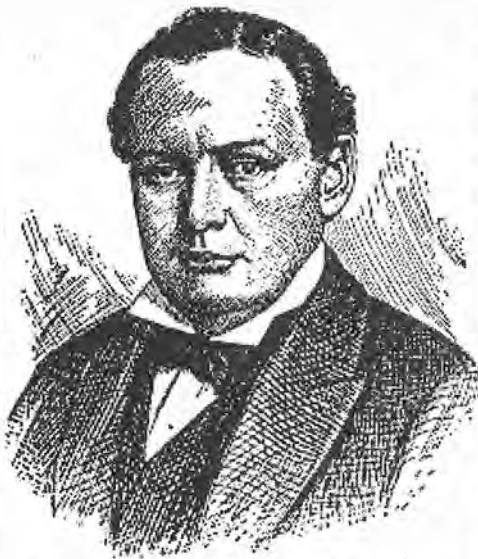
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One Good Turn Deserves Another

In the late 1880s, a poor Scottish farmer by the name of Fleming was working in his field one day when he heard a distressed cry coming from a nearby peat bog. On inspection he found a young boy, mired to the waist and scared to death, screaming for someone to help him as he vainly struggled to free himself. Farmer Fleming rescued the youngster from what would certainly have been a slow and terrifying death, and sent him home with a warning to be more careful in the future. The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's pitiable thatched-roofed hut. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life.

"Nae, I canna accept payment



for saving the wee lad," the poor farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own boy came to the door of the family hovel. "Is that your son?" The nobleman asked. "Aye," the farmer replied proudly. "I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to be a man you can be proud of." And that he did. In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of penicillin. Years afterward, the nobleman's son

was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? Penicillin. The name of that nobleman was Lord Randolph Churchill. "Winston" was the name of his son, who had twice been saved by Flemings.

*Just when I was getting
used to yesterday,
along came today.
- Kenneth Young*

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rest of the person who had just been burgled.

James Barry, born in poverty in 1799, completed Edinburgh Medical School by age 14. After an apprenticeship, the youngster entered the Medical Service of the British Army, where Dr. Barry rose to the position of inspector general of the hospitals. A slight, eccentric, colorful figure, the doctor pioneered many "modern" medical practices, but also made bitter enemies, fought duels, and once horsewhipped a fellow officer in public. The doctor's inability to get along with colleagues forced an early retirement. A few years later, the doctor's death shocked the world, when it was discovered that "he" was a "she"!

son to use her card. All went well until he signed the charge slip with the forged name, but then put down his real home phone number.

For those who think women could only be teachers or housewives before the women's movement, the 1909 Census found over 8,000 female doctors, 3,000 women preachers, over 1,000 female architects, 2,000 female saloon owners, 400 female electricians, and even 200 female blacksmiths. For some reason, the Census only found two women in the U.S., who chose to work as roofers.

Absurd News

On a cold night in Birmingham, the police caught a homeless man who had just burgled an apartment to steal some warm clothes. When he was taken to the station, the police found a small quantity of drugs in the pocket of the jacket he'd stolen. They returned to the apartment, where they found more drugs, resulting in the ar-

A young purse snatcher in Pensacola, Florida decided to use the stolen credit card, but he knew that clerks would be suspicious of someone so young using a credit card. So he forged a note from his "mother" saying that she was too sick to get out of bed and that it was OK for her

A famous turn-of-the-century prankster, Brian Hughes, once caused a panic at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He simply placed a bag of burglary tools and a half dozen empty picture frames on the front steps one night.

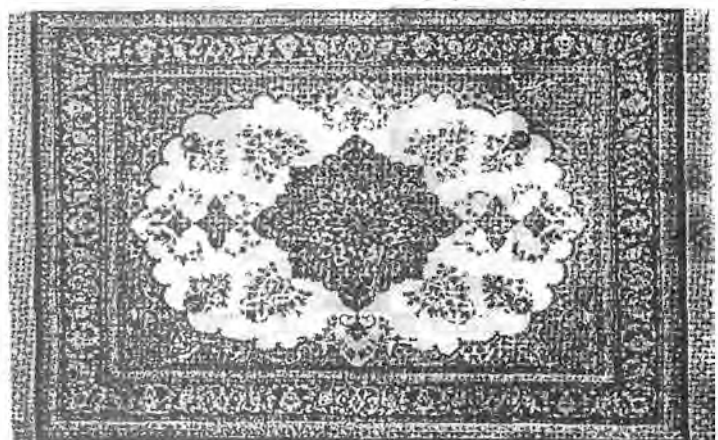
Insanity is the only means of relaxation.
- Shelby Phillips

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From Around the World

OLD HUNTSVILLE TRIVIA

1810 - First Courts of Law established in Huntsville.

1813 - Andrew Jackson and Davy Crockett camped at the intersection of Lincoln and Holmes on the way to fight the battle of Horse Shoe Bend.

1862 - Huntsville occupied by Yankee troops.

1865 - Remaining Confederate Troops surrender at Cold Springs atop Monte Sano. This marks the end of the Civil War for Huntsville.

1868 - A judge from Athens is shot when 1500 members of the Ku Klux Klan break up a meeting of former slaves and radical Republicans.

1883 - Frank James, the brother of Jesse James, is acquitted of robbing a federal payroll (no, the James brothers did not commit any robberies in Huntsville).

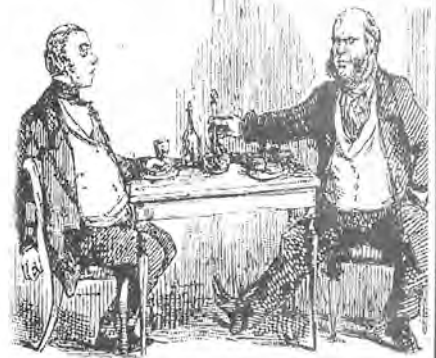
1892 - First long distance phone call made from Huntsville. The telephone directory had 32 names listed.

1893 - A circus elephant dies while performing here. Its remains were hitched to a double team of mules and dragged to an empty lot in the 500 block of East Clinton Avenue where it was buried.

1904 - Allen Hutchens dies in the first automobile accident to take place in Huntsville.



How Do People Acquire Power And Influence?



Power shapes everything and everybody. Unfortunately, it is too often true that power corrupts. So when you acquire power, use it benevolently, not selfishly. Use power for good ends, not evil. You'll come out a winner and everyone else will, too. So much for the sermon, Now, here's how to acquire power:

1. Be intense. Perform every task you have as if it were the only thing that mattered in the world

2. Don't tell anybody everything about yourself. It's not a matter of secrecy, it's a matter of mystery. The powerful person listens. The only time he talks about himself is when he wants to change the subject.

3. Don't waste time. Do two hours worth of work in 45 minutes. Powerful people spend as much time on a project as they need to and no more. Events don't control powerful people; powerful people control events.



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Love Kills Love!

The Huntsville Cotton Mill was created by the efforts of D.L. Love, a businessman from Mississippi. Traveling throughout the Southeast, Love aroused interest in Huntsville, found subscribers for common stock, and persuaded the city to pass a ten year exemption on taxes.

As the cotton mill began to prosper, such was not the case for its organizing genius, Apparently in his gallivanting around the country, Love fell in love with the young and beautiful Ada Johnson of Huntsville. But, following the demands of a busy travel schedule, Love did not press his suit in time. The news-

paper on September 21, 1881 announced the marriage of Ada Johnson to Mr. John F. Lanier of Madison County. The paper further commented: "The Huntsville public was greatly surprised that Miss Ada, whose hand had been sought by so many suitors, had at last succumbed to Mr. Lanier's offer of marriage."

None was more surprised than Mr. Love, who, when learning of the betrothal, lost his temper and sought to avenge his loss by besmirching her character.

So foul were his accusations that the young husband did what honorable young men of breeding were expected to do in such cases. He went to Greenville, Mississippi and killed Mr. Love.

Defended by Huntsville attorney Capt. Milton Humes, young Lanier was completely exonerated. The judge announced from the bench, "It is my opinion that he did just what I or any other man of honor would do, and I therefore discharge the prisoner, and bid him go hence without delay."

Barber Poles

The barber pole with spiral stripes is a relic of the days when barbers were also surgeons.

As early as the fifth century A.D., the barbers in Rome extracted teeth and treated wounds as part of their professional work. When the London barbers were incorporated in 1461, they were the only persons practicing surgery in the city.

The white area in the barber pole represented the bandage used in bloodlettings and the red stripe represented blood. American barbers added a blue stripe, perhaps to make the colors conform with those of the national flag.



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A Rebel In Blue

Of all the Civil War veterans that called Huntsville home, Maj. S. F. Sweinhart must have been the most unusual.

Major Sweinhart was a member of an Ohio volunteer regiment and had participated in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war. While stationed in Alabama, he was captivated by the warm climate and the natural beauty of the Tennessee Valley.

When the war was finally over and the soldiers had stacked arms for the last time, Major Sweinhart moved to Huntsville, determined to make it his home. Feelings were running high at the end of the war, so it is not surprising that he was greeted with scowls and bitterness.

"Damn Yankee," the Huntsville natives would say as they passed him on the streets. "Damn Rebels," the Major would mutter under his breath, while looking straight ahead.

But time has a way of healing all wounds and as the Major grew into old age, he began taking his place on the old courthouse bench, reliving and refighting the battles of his youth. An old Yankee officer and old Confederate veterans, with nothing in common except the blood spilled on battlefields years before.

Slowly the town began to accept the old soldier and the scowls he used to encounter on the streets turned to smiles. Sweinhart became involved in community affairs and became active in veterans affairs. Of course the only other veterans in Huntsville were ex-Confederates.

In 1927 Major S. F. Sweinhart was awarded the highest accolade ever given to a Yankee by Confederate veterans. The story can best be told by a newspaper article of the day.

"He was invited to dinner this week to attend a dinner given by the Daughters of the Confederacy to members of the Egbert Jones Camp of Confederate Veterans at the home of Robert A. Moore, acting adjutant for the Third Brigade, Alabama Division. He was welcomed with hand clasps and smiles. After dinner, the old veterans invited him to attend their business meeting. When discussions lagged a little, Maj. Sweinhart who had remained in a corner deep in thought, rose and stood at attention. "Men," he said, with a shake in his voice, "I've lived down here so long I feel like I belong here." His voice quivered again as he added, "And by golly, I want to belong to you." The Confederate veterans gave a hearty cheer, and one of them proposed Maj. Sweinhart for membership. The proposal was accepted immediately and "the major" was accepted as a member of the camp by unanimous vote. He now belongs to the Egbert Jones Camp of Confed-

erate veterans and is believed to be the only Union soldier in the country who has experienced such a transformation."

When Major Sweinhart died, an honor guard consisting of Confederate veterans stood guard during the funeral ceremony. His body is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery, next to the other veterans he had grown to love.

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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

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



Bobby Goodwin was the lucky winner of a breakfast at my place for guessing last month's photo was **Cathey Carney**. She's the Boss Lady at *Old Huntsville Magazine* and she recently took my advice and saw Dr. Horn and had hip replacement surgery and she's doing great!

I want everyone to remember that September 2 starts **Crime Prevention Class** for any Seniors and it is held once a week at the Senior Center for 9 weeks. This is really a great program on how to stay safe and I hope to see a bunch of my friends there and it's absolutely free!

My good friends, **Byrom** and **Tillie Laird** are celebrating their golden anniversary this month. Congratulations on 50 great years together.

Bryson Hill, Era Campbell and **Lucille Shockley** all cel-

ebrated their birthdays with me recently. They were joined by **Henry Shockley** who came along for the ham and biscuits! Happy Birthday!

We sure had a lot of fun watching **Jodi Sisk** open up all of her cute baby gifts down at my restaurant during the baby shower we gave for her. Baby should be here any day!

I sure was surprised and honored when I was selected by the **Brotherhood/Sisterhood Award** along with four others from the community. Thanks to everyone who supported us and that great organization!

I'm writing this while eating dinner at the **OutBack Restaurant** but wouldn't you know that the **Boss man (Lloyd Tomlinson)** is vacationing in Florida! What a rough life! But that's O.K., **Brian Ekstrom** took care of me. Look

out Lloyd, he's good!

Rumor is that **Jenny Askins**, daughter of **R.J.** and **Sandra Rhodes**, is due to go back on the **Board of Registrars** come October.

LeRoy and **Nelda Johnson** celebrated their 50th anniversary by eating breakfast with me and then I heard a few days later that they lost her mother, who was 97. I'm so sorry for your loss.

Well, I sure hope that everyone got to see **Willard Scott** at the VBC but I sure was tickled to have him come back to my place for breakfast. I always enjoy his company.

It was a special party when we celebrated one of my sister's, **Mrs. Ruth Moon**, 90th birthday. She had a great time with lots of flowers and cake. Happy Birthday!

Photo of The Month

The first person to identify this child 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: "In the news."



Last month's photo was
Cathey Carney

A Helping Hand

- * Grocery shopping
- * Last minute shopping
- * Laundry & dry cleaning pickup or drop off
- * Post office visit
- * Parcel pick-ups
- * Carry pets to veterinarian
- * Flower or gift delivery
- * Standing in line
- * Waiting for delivery or repair person
- * Help with parties



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August 18 is the birthday of my good friend, **Mrs. Reba Neaves**. Wonder what number this one is?

People are already whispering names of people who may run for political office next year. Gonna be a big election!

Old Huntsville lost a good friend and writer when **Charles Wrenshall "Chip" Knight, Jr.**, passed away recently. He's going to be missed.

Our good friend **Billy Lee** (a legend in his own mind) made his solo debut at the Monte Sano home of **J.J.** and **Claudia Shoefer**. Billy's popular group, **Pizzazz** played a garden party celebrating the upcoming nuptials of **Lawrence French** and **Christy Buhmann**. During the day Billy is a master barber at his shop, **Billy's Barber Shop**.

My sympathy goes to the family of **Delbert Williams** on the death of his mother.

We hear that our friends **Barb** and **Ron Eyestone** are thinking of opening up a bed and breakfast. They've had lots of practice at it lately and loved it so much.

Everybody get ready for **Sins Of Madison County**, a book by Fred Simpson, due out in a few months. Only an ex-District Attorney could write such a book.

It's time for the second annual **"Path of Honor,"** at the Senior Center. Last year I was selected and got to put my hands in the cement down there. Among the seven honorees this year is none

*The nice part about
living in a small town
is that
when you don't
know what
you're doing,
somebody else does.*

other than our own **John Malone**, who will be honored with the others at a dinner at the Von Braun Center's North Hall on Thursday, August 19. As most of you know, John took a new job in Nashville. I love you John and congratulations on this honor and your new job.

I don't know about you, but when I see **Sheriff Whisante** and **State Senator Enfinger** sitting at my **Liar's Table** and in walks our friend **John Glenn** from Safety City to join them, I wonder what's going on. John just retired from Safety City and maybe they know something about his political future that we don't. Well, you never know with politicians.

I want to close by just saying how much everyone's prayers and thoughts concerning the loss of my sister, **Lena Kilpatrick**, meant to me. During the hard times, friends and family mean everything!!

I love all of you so very much.

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Old Mountain Recipes

Ozark Hoecake

- 2 c. corn meal
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/2 t. baking powder
- 1 t. melted fat

Combine the first 3 ingredients. Add the melted fat and stir in enough water to make a soft dough. Make into small cakes about half an inch thick and bake on a hot greased griddle til brown, turn to brown on the other side. (Probably could use a frying pan).

Honey Dew biscuits

- 1 c. fresh butter
- 1 c. strained honey
- 2 c. flour
- 1 c. sugar

- 1 c. sour cream
- 1 t. soda
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 egg

Mix all ingredients well and bake in greased and floured muffin pans - cook at 400 degrees until done.

Bachelor's Pie

- 1 1/2 c. cooked beef (cut up in hunks)
 - 2 c. milk
 - 4 t. flour
 - 1/2 chopped onion
 - 3/4 c. cooked carrot, diced
 - 1/2 c. celery, chopped
 - 1/2 chopped green pepper
 - mashed potatoes
 - Garlic powder, salt & pepper
- Combine the onion, celery,

beef, and pepper in big skillet with a little cooking fat added. Brown slowly and stir constantly. When browned add the rest of the ingredients, stir til pretty hot, pour into a greased baking dish. Spread some mashed potatoes with grated cheese. Bake at 390 til brown and cheese is melted.

Corn meal stuffing

- 3 c. chicken broth
- 2/3 c. corn meal
- 2 1/2 c. bread crumbs
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2/3 c. chopped celery
- 2 small onions, chopped
- Sage, salt, pepper, garlic powder

Heat the broth til boiling. Add the corn meal while stirring. Cook for 10 minutes, add the bread crumbs, egg, celery and onions. Then add the seasonings and let sit for about 5 minutes.

Catfish Soup

- 2-3 lbs. Catfish filets, cut up
- 2 qrts. Cold water
- 1 sliced onion
- 1 chopped celery stalk
- salt & pepper
- Bay leaf, parsley, thyme
- 1 c. milk
- 2 T. butter

Place all ingredients in a stew pan and over slow fire be-



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gin to simmer. Stir occasionally and cook til fish falls to pieces.

Tater Puffs

2 c. mashed potatoes from day before

- 2 T. butter
- salt and pepper
- ½ t. garlic powder
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ c. cream

Combine all ingredients and form into small balls. Either bake in the oven at 400 til done or fry in deep fat.

Blackberry Pudding

- 2 c. sugar
- 2 c. flour
- 1/3 c. butter
- 2 c. boiling water
- 1 t. salt
- 2 t. baking powder
- 1 c. milk
- 2 c. blackberries

Cream 1 cup sugar and the butter together. Add the flour, baking powder, salt, milk and mix. Pour the blackberries on top, then pour 1 cup sugar and 2 cups of boiling water. Bake at 350 degrees until top is golden brown. Takes about 50 minutes to cook. Good with whipped cream.

Peanut Butter Pie

- 1 c. corn syrup

- 1 c. sugar
- ½ t. vanilla
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1/3 c. creamy peanut butter
- Unbaked pie shell

Blend all the filling ingredients. Pour into unbaked shell and bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 and bake for 30 minutes longer. The filling should appear slightly less set in the center than around the edges.

Apple Crisp

- 1 qt. Sliced apples (peeled and sweetened to taste)
- 2/3 c. brown sugar
- ½ c. flour
- ½ c. oats
- 3/4 t. cinnamon
- 3/4 t. nutmeg
- 1/3 stick butter

Pour sweetened apples into a pan which measures about 8" square. Mix all the other ingredients together and pour over the apples. Bake for 35 minutes at 375 degrees.

Dill Pickles

- 2 qrts. Water
- 1 qt. Vinegar
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. salt

Bring all ingredients to a boil and let stand til cool. Use 5 or 6 quart jars and pack with large cucumbers, then add one large bunch of dill to each quart. Fill

each jar with the vinegar mixture. Don't seal tight for 2 or 3 days.

Homemade tomato catsup

- 1 gallon tomatoes
- 1 qt. Vinegar (or less if this is too strong for you)
- 1 qt. Sugar
- ½ t. red pepper
- 1 t. allspice
- ½ t. black pepper
- 1 T. salt

Crush the tomatoes through a sieve. Combine all ingredients in a large pan and cook slowly til thick enough. Bottle or put up in jars.

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Who's The Big Spender On Business Trips?

The majority of business travelers don't fit the stereotype of expense account spenders, according to a recent MasterCard International study conducted across the U.S. Those who occupy the higher rungs of the corporate ladder are often penny pinchers who want, "a good, clean, quiet, comfortable room at a fair price."

This group represents 36% of those questioned in the study, which aimed to produce a picture of the typical business traveler who makes 10 or more business trips per year. The next largest group, accounting for 34%, is made up mostly of sales and middle management personnel, who are cost-conscious and consider themselves bargain hunt-

ers.

The remaining 30% are the big spenders - usually young and highly paid - who like fashionable hotels, expect impeccable service and don't worry about cutting travel costs. They tend to take long trips and like to participate in sports and group activities while away.



Chicken Thief Caught On McClung

From 1900 newspaper

The thievery of chickens that has plagued Huntsville for so long has finally been stopped.

Last week an alert delivery man for a local druggist pursued the thief down McClung Avenue until finally stopping him by hitting him with a bottle of Castor oil. Jake Newsome, the delivery man, said that he knew the man was a chicken thief because he looked shifty and was carrying a bag of chickens.

At the trial the next day, J. K. Malone, the chicken thief, claimed the chickens were his and he was training them so he could sell them to a circus when it came to town. That was the reason he had them in a bag.

The judge asked Malone to make the chickens perform, and when he couldn't, sentenced him to six months at the county farm.

The sheriff kept the chickens for evidence.



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To Live and Die in Dixie

by Helen Miller

I always knew the Good Book reminded us to "fear the Lord and keep His commandments," but I feared Dr. Durant a lot more and his commands were a lot harder to keep. "Sit still." "Open your mouth." "Close your mouth." "Get your hands out of my way."-- were just a few of his demands.

There was no such thing as novocaine back in the 1920s or at least Dr. Durant wasn't aware of it and I was sure the holy men of old had him in mind when they wrote about the man "down yonder with the horns and pitchfork."

His office was in a small brown building downtown next to the post office and on occasion I had to be all but dragged down there for the routine visit.

Back then I couldn't care less how my mouth looked but apparently Mama had other ideas. Perhaps she was planning to challenge a friend who had said that I could never be a silent screen star because I could never be silent. I already knew I was the ugliest kid on my side of town with my face a total mass of freckles, ears that poked straight out from my head, fine straight hair that wouldn't hold a curl and legs that were much too fat, so getting one snagged tooth fixed wasn't going to help my looks much.

Dr. Durant's reception room was bare and boring. No receptionist or telephone-- just a few

straight chairs and a potbellied stove with a kettle on top. It had a strange medicinal odor that hit you right in the nostrils as soon as you opened the door and heard the little bell jingle. I never smelled anything like it anywhere else, and if I had been kidnapped, blindfolded and carried there, I would have known exactly where I was, how to get out, which way to turn, and the quickest route home. Dr. Durant would hear the bell and open the door from the small room where he kept the crucifixion chair. Looking over his glasses he always greeted Mama and then begin a thirty minute inquiry about the health and welfare of every neighbor of the Harrelson

clan. I wished to goodness he knew the Dukes and Mounagers of South Georgia (relatives on my mother's side)-- there would not have been any time left for me. Once inside the small back room he came at me with a buzz saw in one hand and a little mirror on a stick in the other. Every time he hit a nerve, overboard I would jump, for by then I was all alone in the middle of a storm at sea with the wind in my face and whitecaps forty feet high. It was after sessions like this that I welcomed his most comforting command of all, "Now take a sip of water and spit!"



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Birmingham Man Poisoned. Mother Congratulates Him

from 1912 newspaper

Harold Gentry, 32, yesterday phoned his mother to inform her that he had taken poison and would not be long of this world. A short while later he again phoned to say he was growing weaker.

Mrs. Gentry, apparently hard of hearing, understood her son to say that he was going to Illinois where he was going to meet a man by the name of Mr. Beaker.

Mrs. Gentry congratulated her son, wishing him good luck on his upcoming trip.

Fortunately the incident had a happy, though embarrassing, ending when Gentry discovered he had taken a large dose of laxative, rather than poison.



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Many used car dealers are reputable and honest. Some used car dealers are not.

In the past, some victims of dishonest used car dealers have found that the dealer has closed his business and disappeared before the victim can have a remedy.

To fix this problem, Alabama has enacted legislation that provides some protection to consumers who buy used cars. Now, before a used car dealer can be licensed, he must obtain a \$10,000 bond. This bond is conditioned that the dealer must

comply with the conditions of any contract made by the dealer in connection with the sale or exchange of any motor vehicle, and must not violate any of the provisions of law relating to the conduct of the business for which he is licensed.

If the consumer obtains a judgment against the used car dealer but cannot collect on the judgment because the dealer has disappeared, the consumer can get help from the Alabama Department of Revenue. This state agency will collect on the bond, on behalf of the consumer, any judgment for any loss as a result of any violation of the conditions of the bond.

This is not a big protection, because the limit on the bond is only \$10,000. Claims against the bond are processed on a first-come, first-served basis and once the \$10,000 limit has been paid out, there is no further protection.

Already, a number of Hunts-

ville residents who have been cheated by fly-by-night used car dealers, have recovered their damages from the bonding company with the help of the Alabama Department of Revenue.

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. To make a donation or receive information on how you can help, contact.

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An American In Exile

The Arthur Rudolph Story

One morning in 1984, Huntsvillians awoke to find astonishing headlines in their newspaper. Arthur Rudolph, a prominent member of the Von Braun German Rocket Team had been found, these many years later, to have committed war crimes during World War II and had left the country in disgrace rather than face his accusers in court. The Justice Department, anyway, was saying that this was the case.

The townsfolk were shocked. They were proud of the Germans. They had made Huntsville what it was today. From an ordinary small cotton-producing town with a Confederate soldier keeping watch over the courthouse square, it had become a bustling, cosmopolitan center of the Tennessee Valley, known across the country for its shining scientific accomplishments. To the people of Huntsville the Germans had proven themselves time and again through the decades since their arrival. They were good people. Never before had there been any reason to doubt that.

Some still didn't doubt it. While others ducked their heads, being too timid to pry into so sensitive a political matter, the old timers, an association of former rocket scientists and their friends, formed a defense fund and set out to determine the facts. What they and others eventually uncovered was even more startling than the original accusations against Rudolph.

Arthur Rudolph claims he was lured into a trap. The knock

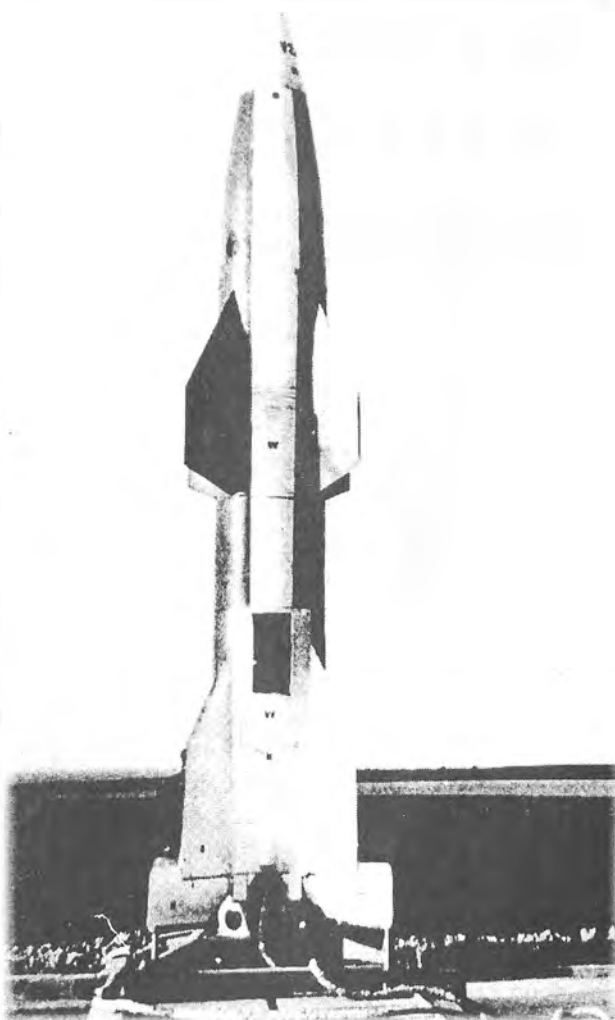
on the door came in September 1982. "My wife and I had been in Germany for a visit," Rudolph explained. "And while we were gone an interesting thing happened. Our daughter Marianne received a phone call and someone asked her, 'Are you the daughter of Arthur Rudolph?'"

Marianne told her mysterious and unidentified caller when her parents would return and asked the purpose of the caller's question. "Just a routine check," he answered.

The day after the Rudolphs returned, a registered letter was delivered. It was from something called the Office of Special Investigations, or OSI, the office within the Justice Department which Rudolph later learned was established for the sole purpose of prosecuting Nazi war criminals. The OSI was asking to speak to Rudolph concerning his wartime activities in Germany. Rudolph responded in a way which he later described as, "dumb, dumb, dumb... dumb!"

Without consulting a lawyer he packed up his yellowing papers from four decades earlier and went for what he thought would be a harmless discussion with the OSI representatives.

He had always told the truth about who he was, where he had been during the war, and what



he had done: He had grown up in a small village in Germany where his family were modest farmers. After college, made possible by selling off part of the farm, he went to work in Berlin where he became an amateur rocket experimenter. When the depression came and he was out of work he used his hobby to land a job with the German Army.

At Peenemuende he worked with Wernher von Braun and was assigned responsibility for V-2 Rocket production. When the British bombed Peenemuende, the V-2 production line was moved to an underground plant where forced laborers from the Dora Concentration Camp worked alongside German civilians. At the end of the war he was

captured by Americans and brought to the United States.

That was it. This was the story he told when he was captured and he had repeated it many times since. The story had been good enough for his captors, and at that time he was an "enemy alien."

Since those far away days he, with this same story always in view, had been given American citizenship, given a top secret clearance, developed the Pershing Missile for the Army and the Saturn V for NASA, and had been given high awards for his outstanding work.

Rudolph said he was unconcerned. He met his questioners from the OSI, three affable young men, and repeated his story one more time. "We were too trusting," Rudolph's wife Martha later said. "The interview was so harmless and friendly, very friendly. When it was over they shook hands with Arthur and thanked him for coming." Then, of course, they accused him of being a war criminal.

Get a lawyer they later wrote to him, and we will discuss the evidence "amassed" against you. In the discussions that followed they assured Rudolph's lawyer that they had the goods on his client. They had eye witnesses, they had documents.

Furthermore, Rudolph could expect harsh punishment. They were going to take his means of livelihood-- his NASA pension, and they were perhaps going to take the citizenship of his wife and daughter. But they were offering him a choice.

If he would agree to leave the country and renounce his own citizenship they would let him keep his pension and would not move against his family.

It would take pages to cover

Rudolph's agony at this turn. Rudolph claims he was innocent and abhorred the proposed agreement. On the other hand he was in poor health, having had a heart attack, and did not have the financial wherewithal to wage what would be a very expensive legal battle whose tentacles would reach across forty years and two continents.

Furthermore if he didn't submit to the OSI demands he put at risk his family and his livelihood. In the end he signed the agreement, went to Germany and renounced his citizenship.

Sadly, the very people who had trumpeted Rudolph's success in the space program now turned their backs on him without even examining the evidence. A cursory glance at the news merely confirmed the government's case that another "Nazi" was being kicked out of the country.

It was not long before rumors of the threats and intimidations used to strip Rudolph of his citizenship began to reach Huntsville. People who had known and worked with Rudolph for years shook their heads in wonderment. The old timers, and especially one of their number, Walter Haeussermann, started digging deeply into the OSI's story.

In a word what they found was that the OSI has been dishonest. They had actually doctored one document they had presented to Rudolph's attorney, making it appear to be something it wasn't. They had submitted a list of witnesses to the German government which was found to be bogus. They had said they could link Rudolph to the "sabotage reporting network." Not only could they not do that, but they could not even prove the existence of such a

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And so it went. The OSI's case seemed to be entirely fabricated. It appeared as if the only evidence against Rudolph was the testimony that he himself had given in years past to military intelligence, the FBI and the State Department. They had all cleared him, and had even granted him a Top Secret clearance.

Still, the OSI insisted it had evidence that would prove Rudolph guilty "in thirty seconds." Part of the so-called evidence they had refused to release, until a request under the Freedom of Information Act was filed, actually included an admission ticket to the Alabama Space and Rocket Center.

Another file had Wernher von Braun, the father of the Space Program, listed as a security threat because of his German background. But no new evidence linked Rudolph with war crimes.

People with more than a cursory interest discovered that the funding for the OSI was in danger of being cut off and they were under pressure to come up with a "high" profile case. Basically, the whole government's case seemed to consist of the fact that forced labor was used in the facility Dr. Rudolph worked in, a fact he never denied. The government however, ignored the fact that the laborers were assigned and controlled by the S.S., with the scientists having no say on their assignments or working conditions.

According to the government's definition of war crimes, merely being in a place where forced labor was used made a person guilty. The fact that Rudolph was ordered there and had no say in his assignment

was deemed irrelevant.

On the other hand, if he was truly guilty of the alleged crimes, why did the government wait so long to say anything? Did our government consider his technical knowledge so important that they were willing to wait until he was no longer critical to the space program?

After being exiled from the United States, Rudolph was thoroughly investigated by the German government, who cleared him of all wrongdoing and found him of good character and gave him citizenship.

Dr. Rudolph left the country he had grown to love and moved to Hamburg, Germany. Ironically, though he possessed a Top Secret clearance, he was forbid-

den by the OSI to reenter the United States to try to clear his name.

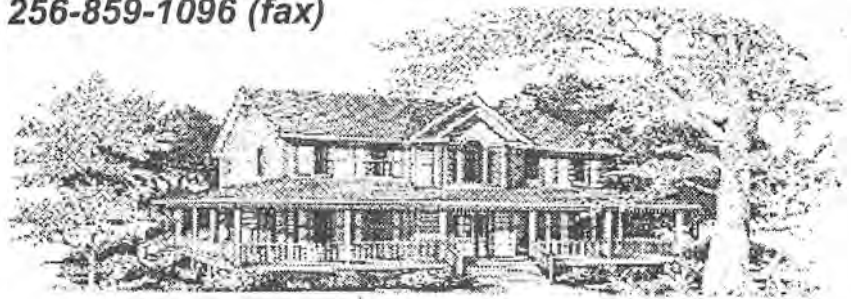
Dr. Arthur Rudolph died in Germany. His final years were spent in frustration as he tried hopelessly to get someone in the U.S. Government to reopen the case. A friend who knew him well said that Rudolph could never understand how the government used him for so many years and then exiled him when they were finished with him.

War criminal or victim, Dr. Arthur Rudolph left a legacy that changed mankind's life forever. Part of that legacy can be viewed at the Space and Rocket Center - the towering Saturn V Rocket that helped put America on the moon.

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Huntsville Happenings From 1910

Huntsville Couple Married on the Train

S. H. Wilson and Miss Nettie Saunders, both of Huntsville, were married yesterday on train No. 36 of the Southern between Woodville and Limrock, Alabama. The license was secured at Scottsboro and Squire Hold of that place boarded the train and performed the ceremony. They are registered at the Eastern Hotel in Chattanooga and plan to return to Huntsville to make their home.

Monte Sano Becoming a Deserted Village

The summer village on top of Monte Sano is rapidly becoming a deserted village, mostly all of the residents have moved down. Only four or five families remain and they expect to move down Saturday. By the middle of next week, all of the summer cottages

will be "away." The mountain air is cold in the mornings and up there the season is apparently far advanced into autumn.

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\$4,400 will buy a well improved farm 7 miles from Huntsville. This farm is 150 acres, 100 in cultivation, 50 acres in woods and pastures. A good number of springs and a good well on the land. There is a barn for horses and one for hay, several other outbuildings and a nice orchard. If you want a good improved farm look this one over.

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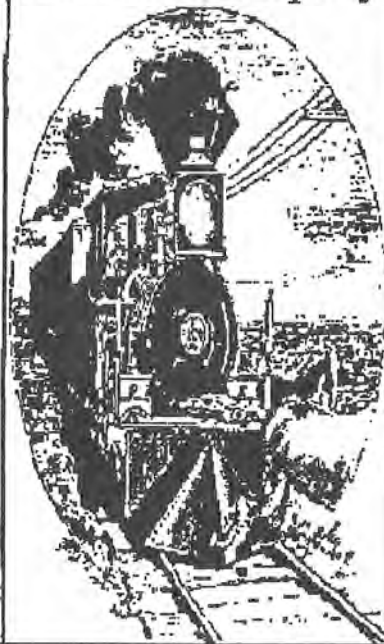
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When Duty Called

When duty called, men from Limestone County, Alabama responded. The Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. That's all they needed to know. Most of them farm boys and some the sons of merchants, they kissed pretty wives and sweethearts good-bye and boarded ships, turned green with the rolling seas and sailed for places with exotic sounding names of which most had never heard. Not a single one knew for sure if he'd make the return trip.

Eighty-nine didn't. But others lived to tell their stories, of the parts they played in history's greatest confrontation-- World War II.

Athens attorney Jerry Barksdale has long been fascinated by their stories. Five years ago he began to seek out and interview as many local veterans as he could find. He published their stories in the hometown newspaper; and veterans, their families and history buffs not born until decades after the war couldn't wait for the next installment to relive those heroic moments.

They read about the exploits of the 18 year old flight chief of the *Memphis Belle* and the indignities of a young black soldier who "couldn't sleep with whites, couldn't eat with whites, but was permitted to die with them." They were surprised to learn that the first Limestone County resident to volunteer was a woman and they learned how the most decorated veteran in the county



earned his medals. Encouraged by the welcome his series received, he decided to compile the stories in *When Duty Called*. The publication of Barksdale's book comes at a fitting time. The nation and the world are looking back at the close of a century on events that reshaped the political geography of a planet. Barksdale employs a straightforward, non-flowery writing style, wisely allowing the aged warriors to tell their own stories. But the author's patience, awe and love for these men comes through on every page. It is evident that he sat for countless hours quietly listening. The storytellers cried for the buddies-- grinning next to them in the foxhole one moment and blown to shattered remnants of humanity the next. They bumped along in a crippled B-17, parachuted into the dark unknown, and suffered yet again the frozen feet, hunger pangs and deprivations of an enemy prison camp. They resurrected ghosts long buried and poured out their anguish, their love, and above all their pride.

"Never has a braver generation answered the call of duty," says Barksdale. "They survived the Great Depression and vanquished the legions of darkness.

Their deeds will live forever in the hearts of free people."

It's a book, not only worth reading, but one you'll want to save.

When Duty Called may be purchased at **Shaver's Bookstore, 2362 Whitesburg Drive at Bob Wallace Avenue, Huntsville, or order directly from Jerry Barksdale, 212 South Marion Street, Athens, Alabama 35611, (256) 233-0525 fax: (256) 233-8698 or E-Mail: JBARKS1248 @ AOL.COM.**

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Dear Daughter

September 20, 1891

Mrs. Sally Sandlin

Dear Daughter:


I seat myself this beautiful Sabbath morning to answer your letter that I got from you some-time ago. I was glad to hear from you and to no that you was well and doing well. Sally, I have nothing to rite to you that would interest you, no more than we are all well, hoping that this will find you and Len both well. Well, Sally I have got your picture and Len's lying by me, thee look pleasing and it looks like they both want to say something to me. What to rite. Well, I recon that you think that I mite rote to you sooner. I could have rote a letter a long time ago, but I was just hoping you would rite. That is the only reason that I have for not riting sooner. Well, Sally if you will excuse me for not riting no sooner, I will try to rite you a letter once a month. Dear Daughter, if I could see you with your glossy black hair & rosy cheeks, loving smiles, tender words & kind heart with them lilly white hands clasp my one, that would been briter to me than the britest star that ever shone. Sally there ant many days that passes but what I think of you. Sally, I recon you would like to no something about how times is here. They are very hard times here. Money for horses & cattle & hogs cheap, corn & wheat is a

very fair price. Sally I recon you would like to no what sort of a crop we have got. We made 60 bushels of wheat, a few oats & I have got about 2 acers of cotton. We have got a fine corn crop. We ant tending much of our land in corn. The land that we rented will make 10 barrels per acer. I have got a fine sweet potato patch made rite smart of arch potatoes. No cabbis, no garden, no chickens, hardley heap of ducks. Sally we had squirrel and chicken for breakfast this morning, two big

possomes for dinner. I dont no what for supper yet. I must close for this time. Sally you & Len write to me just as soon as you get this so no more. I remain your affectionate father over till death.

Letter written by Henry Rutledge to Sally & Len Sandlin. Submitted by Nell Rutledge

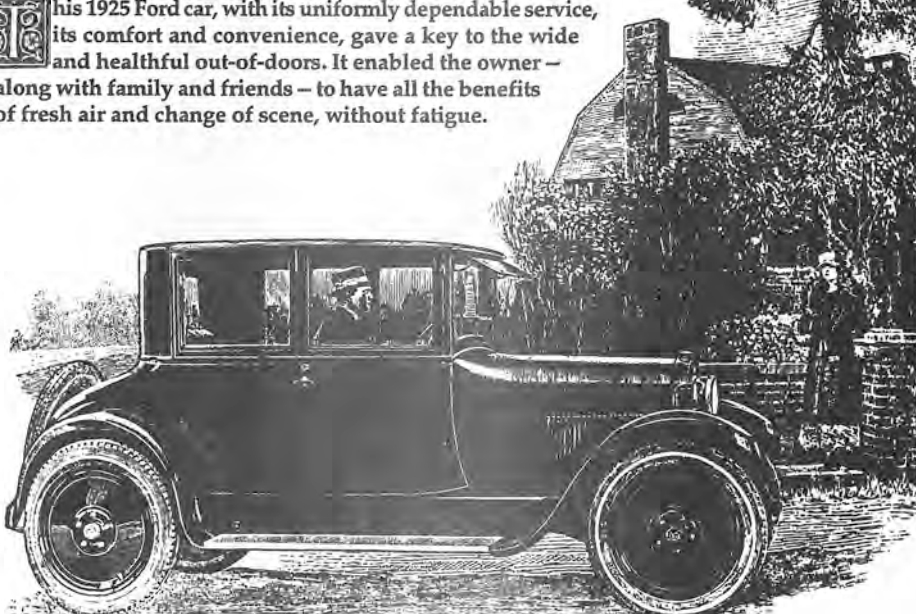




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A Splendid Little War

by Jacquelyn Procter Gray

Jim Donnell studied the face of the impatient conductor as the train engine idled. "Well Jim, are you coming with me to Cuba, or not?" His brother-in-law called again over the noise of the train. Jim was standing outside holding a load of firewood for his sister's cookstove. He shifted his weight as he pondered his choice. He could stay here in his life of boring predictability, or he could go to a foreign country and experience exciting adventures at the expense of Uncle Sam. The train slowly rumbled forward. "Ah, to hell with it!", he said as he threw his load of wood on the ground. Without stopping to tell his sister good-bye, he was running to the train.

When Teddy Roosevelt brought his Rough Riders through the Deep South on their way to Tampa, Florida, they were greeted by cheering crowds eager to shower them with support and admiration. Ladies brought pails of milk and fresh fruit, and smiling young girls asked for but-



The Buffalo Soldiers

tons and cartridges as souvenirs from the polished soldiers. Tired old men who had fought for the Confederacy cheered the flag of the United States, because more than three decades after the Civil War, they were finally proud to be Americans. Only the old women did not smile at the joyous celebration around them. Looking into the exuberant faces of men anxious for blood and gunpowder, they saw the reflection of husbands, brothers and fathers who never came home from the Civil War.

In early 1898, escalating hostilities between the Cubans and Spaniards threatened to turn into a full-scale war. The United States sent the battleship *Maine* down to Cuba as a measure of protection for Americans who

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might get caught in the middle of the conflict. The inevitable happened when an explosion aboard the *Maine* sunk it on February 15, 1898, killing 260 aboard.

America's involvement in the Spanish-American War has been blamed on William Randolph Hearst, who used the crisis as a vehicle to showcase yellow journalism at its worst. The cause of the sinking of the *Maine* was never determined, but Hearst smelled a story that would sell, and with the encouragement of sensational newspaper reporting, Americans demanded nothing less than revenge. On April 25, the United States declared war on Spain.

Teddy Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary of the Navy at this time.

He and good friend Leonard Wood were promoting U.S. involvement in the crisis, and in order to personally participate, Roosevelt resigned his position to raise a company of rugged fighters from the frontier known as the wild and woolly West. Wood became the Colonel of the First Volunteer Cavalry Regiment because he had military experience that Roosevelt lacked; Roosevelt took the second-place command as Lieutenant Colonel. Worried that they would not have enough volunteers to fill a regiment, they were surprised when they were inundated with applicants, many of whom were turned away. What they ended up with was a curious mixture of lawmen, ranch hands, ex-cons

using aliases, and even more unusual, Roosevelt's former Harvard classmates who spent their leisure time atop polo ponies. Applicants from Princeton and Yale, along with members of the elite Knickerbocker and Somerset men's clubs rounded out the group of Easterners destined for the training camp in the untamed Southwest. These Ivy League dandies converged in San Antonio for training with tough and rugged cowboys who had nothing in common with them, except how to ride and shoot, and a desire to fight.

Becoming a Rough Rider was the fulfillment of Roosevelt's fantasy of being a cowboy. Although at first they resisted the name, newspapers and even military

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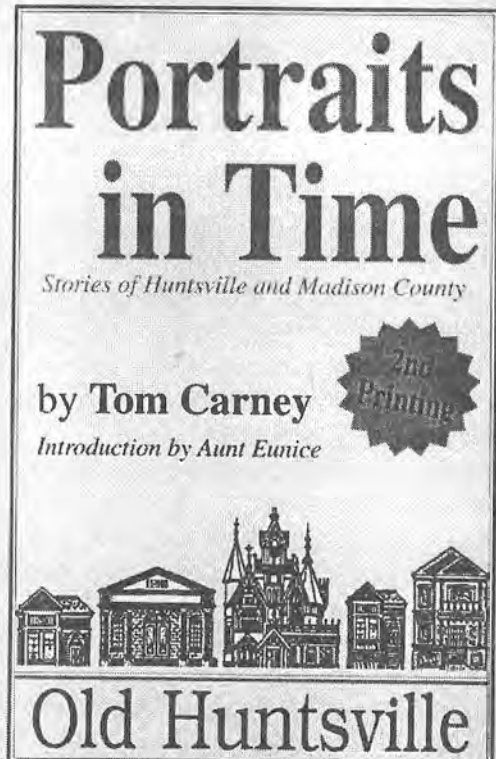
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communiques referred to the First Volunteer Cavalry Regiment as the Rough Riders, and the name was finally adopted by them as well. After extensive training in San Antonio, the unit developed a cohesiveness that would keep them together well into the next century.

After months of training on horseback, their efforts were for naught. The horses had to be left behind at Tampa because of inadequate transport facilities.

Americans were once again headed for war and this time, North and South alike had a common enemy. Newspapers enthusiastically reported each and every development. *The Huntsville Weekly Democrat* reported a new item of the American soldiers' uniform. A small flat medal made of aluminum was stamped with the soldier's name, rank, and specifics of his regiment, to be worn around his neck on a chain. For identification purposes in case of death, it is known by the soldiers who still wear them today as dog tags.

Confederate hero General Joseph Wheeler was now a resident of Alabama. At the age of 62,

he intended to fight in Cuba. Although by law, he could not hold a commission in the U.S. Army after having a commission in the Confederate Army, he insisted that he would not be left out. He was actually handpicked to become a Major General, commanding the cavalry Division of Shafter's Santiago expedition. In a scene that caused his men to do a double-take, Wheeler directed one attack yelling, "We've got the Yankees on the run!"

Whether he was suffering from battle fatigue, the yellow fever he had contracted, or the 80-proof cure that was used to cure the fever, will never be known.

Huntsville resident Kibble Johnson Harrison was anxious to fight in the war. He was in the process of organizing a regiment of volunteers from Limestone, Madison, and Jackson counties when he came upon his brother-in-law, Jim Donnell, outside his sister's home in Greenbrier. Jim was a bachelor in his late 30's, and on this particular day, he was out gathering wood for his sister's cook stove. Harrison was on the train that ran directly in front of the house when he

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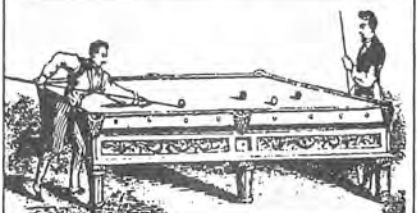
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hailed to Jim carrying his armload of wood. Unknown to them at the time, they would play a significant role in the destiny of another native of Alabama whose heroism would bring him fame and the Congressional Medal of Honor.

On June 3, 1898, the Spanish fleet was inside Santiago Harbor off the coast of Cuba. Richmond Hobson, an ensign from Greensboro, Alabama and son of a Confederate veteran, proposed a scheme to sink the old American vessel *Merrimac* at the entrance of the harbor, thus preventing the escape of the Spanish fleet and forcing the Spaniards into combat. Expecting certain death in the operation, Hobson and seven other volunteers created an explosion on the ship, while under heavy gunfire from the Spaniards. As the burning *Merrimac* sank to the bottom of the harbor, Hobson and his volunteers scrambled into a raft, and while still under gunfire, they miraculously made their way to shore to the waiting Spaniards who promptly took them as prisoners of war.

Hobson, who had by now been promoted to Lieutenant, was held as a prisoner in the Morro Castle along with the seven other brave men who blew up the *Merrimac*. Unfortunately, the ship sunk longways instead of sideways, and the Spaniards escaped. This detail however, did not dampen America's enthusiasm for the brave men. *The New York Times* voted Hobson one of the most popular heroes of the war. On July 6, Huntsville's Captain Kibble Harrison of the 5th US VI, and Jim Donnell, his 1st Sergeant, were among the men who liberated Hobson and his collaborators. Jim Donnell even acquired a souvenir from the rescue opera-

tion, an enormous skeleton key to the door of the Morro Castle.

Another group of fighting men that finally made their way into the history books was the Buffalo soldiers. So-named by the Indians because the texture of their hair reminded them of the wild beasts that roamed the Southwest, the two infantry and two cavalry units had been assigned out west to keep the peace in areas populated by Indians. They cheered at the news that they were headed for the conflict in Cuba. John "Black Jack" Pershing acquired his nickname when he became commander of the all-black Tenth Cavalry. Four men in this unit went on to earn the Congressional Medal of Honor for acts for heroism. They were nicknamed "Smoked Yankees" by the Spaniards and went on to serve as part of the occupation forces in Cuba after the war.

Almost as quickly as it began, in August 1898, the Spanish-American War was over. Cuba was liberated from Spain and the American soldiers, many of whom were suffering from yellow fever, began the journey back



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home.

Jim Donnell carried home to Greenbrier more than just a souvenir key to the Morro Castle. He brought with him something that captured the curiosity of people from miles around-- a Cuban boy. The boy, about 10 years old, was visited by folks from all over the area who were eager to see this orphan of war. His dark skin was the subject of much speculation. He wasn't black, he wasn't Indian, so much discussion and examination were required as they pondered the answer. He even took turns living with different families in the area for months at a time. Whether or not he was actually an orphan became irrelevant in light of the excitement of having this young foreigner in their country.

Huntsville was quick to extend a helping hand in appreciation of the brave men who fought in the Spanish American War. Poor rations and fever had taken a severe toll on the soldiers' health. Several encampments were established in Huntsville,

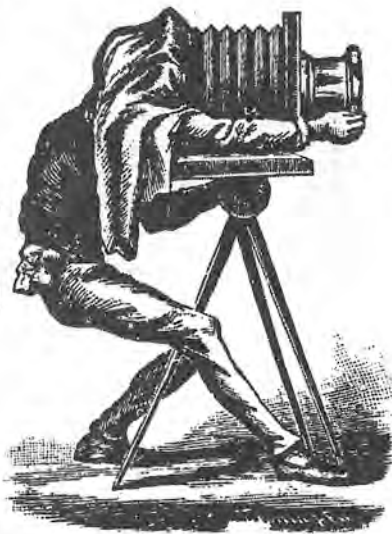
largely on the reputation of the healthy climate which was reputedly second in the nation only to West Point, New York. Social activities were quickly arranged for the entertainment of America's finest. Moonlight suppers, barbecues and dances were orchestrated to keep up the spirits of the soldiers.

The soldiers who garnered the most press in the following months were the Buffalo Soldiers of the 10th Cavalry. Although they were segregated from the white troops and had to surrender their arms upon arriving back at Florida, they presented the most impressive figures in uniforms. They were outstanding in local as well as national parades, and attracted many visitors. Although they were not able to escape the obvious racism of the time, they did receive more public accolades for their roles in the war, and their merits were reported far and wide.

By March 8, 1899, the last of the Spanish-American veterans

encamped in Huntsville were gone. The souvenir skeleton key which was brought home by Jim Donnell from the Morro Castle, hung on a nail in his nephew's house for the next 85 years until it was stolen by a mentally ill relative with a history of psychotic episodes. The Cuban boy stayed in the area for about another ten years until he left for Birmingham and was never heard from again. The only reminder of the many soldiers who occupied this area is a knoll known as Cavalry Hill near the intersection of Winchester Road and University Drive. This was the Buffalo Soldiers' camp first named for Joseph Wheeler, then changed at Wheeler's insistence to honor Albert Forse, the first U.S. Cavalryman killed in the charge at Fort San Juan on July 1, 1898.

Lt. Richmond Hobson received the Congressional Medal of Honor and stepped into a future of Alabama politics. Joseph Wheeler entered politics as well, and "Black Jack" Pershing went



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on to command the army that pursued Pancho Villa and his bandits into Mexico in 1916. Pershing then became a major figure as he commanded the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe during World War I. Teddy Roosevelt's status as a Rough Rider helped propel him into the U.S. Presidency as the rest of the Rough Riders went back home to their ranches and bank jobs. The Rough Riders held reunions every year beginning in 1899 in Las Vegas, New Mexico, because the largest contingent of volunteers came from the New Mexico Territory. Although they met in various cities throughout the Southwest for the next few years, they eventually went back to Las Vegas where they held their annual reunions in conjunction with the honorary Rough Riders Rodeo. The last surviving Rough Rider traveled to the 1968 rodeo from his home in New York, bringing an end to an era steeped in American pride.

Huntsville, and the United States gradually went back to business-as-usual, temporarily interrupted by the "splendid little war" and its aftermath. Before the war, there was a question of whether or not black men should be allowed to fight. Any question as to whether they could be counted on to bear arms for the United States and alongside other white soldiers, had been answered by the soldiers themselves.

The biggest accomplishment of America in 1898, was the unity of men from different cultures, economic backgrounds, races, and the beginning of the healing of one nation which, until then, had barely coexisted under the same flag. Was America's involvement in the war carefully planned by the U.S. Government to accom-

plish the healing process? It certainly worked.

Jim Donnell's return to Greenbrier after the war was just as dramatic as his sudden leave on the train. He paused outside his sister's house long enough to gather an armload of firewood. After an absence of more than a year, he walked inside the house, dropped his load of wood and announced to his awestruck sister, "Here's your firewood, Octavia." As Donnell was dying of throat cancer, he asked two black men to personally dig his grave and pack the dirt over him, when the time came. After his death in 1930 however, someone else was hired to dig his grave at the family cemetery in Greenbrier. After the mourners had left the cemetery, the two black men removed their shoes and com-

menced to packing the dirt tightly so "Jim Donnell don't come back to haint us."

Donnell remained a patriotic American to the end.

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-Inez Deaver

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If you would like to stimulate digestion or if you've had too much to drink, take a teaspoon of the mixed herbs and place in a small prewarmed teapot. Add one and a half cup of boiling water and steep for 5-10 minutes. Flavor with orange pieces and honey. Strain the tea and drink. Your herbal mixture may be used again, after your bath. Take the muslin bag and rinse out in clear water.

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Theft Proof Watermelons

by Jim Harris



One summer evening, a group of boys in the Merrimack Mill Village decided to steal some watermelons from a nearby patch, as boys are apt to do. The patch was in the back yard of one of the village houses, up close to the house.

As the boys sneaked into the yard, the owner of the patch was inside the house (windows open) and heard the raiders making their assault on the much desired melons.

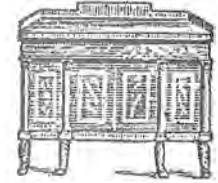
The man watched while the leader, a boy named Jack, walked into the middle of the patch.

Jack spotted a particularly interesting melon and decided to test it for ripeness-- because there's no sense in stealing a melon that's not ripe.

Jack leaned over and thumped the smooth, green, rind. Just as Jack thumped, the owner flipped on the back porch light. In a panic, Jack stood up and yelled to his partners in crime, "Run for it boys, he's got 'em wired!"

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Old Huntsville



On Hurricane Creek

by Tom Carney

I pulled off to the side of the road and took a long look at Riverton School. There wasn't much left that I could recognize. The buildings had all changed, and looking into the faces of the young bright-eyed children, there wasn't much that I could identify with, either.

I fell in love with Sally Baker while going to Riverton School. She was the most popular girl in school, and I was a runny-nosed little kid five grades behind her. I was also nine years old and she didn't know I existed.

Mrs. Riddick was my school teacher, and my mother's, and my uncles' and aunts' and every-

one else's in Hurricane Creek. She began teaching at Riverton part-time during the second war, and she just never left. I hope there's a plaque or something in her honor inside the school.

We used to ride the bus to school. The best thing about riding the bus was that it would stop at Bobby Bragg's store, giving us a chance to load up on Cokes and candy. Bobby Bragg was every boy's hero. He would fish all summer and hunt all winter. If he wasn't in the woods or on the creek bank, he would be sitting in front of the wood-burning stove, swapping stories with all the other men. It's strange how a brief fleeting thought can stir emotions and cause a longing for times gone by. Using the excuse to myself that I needed gas anyway, I decided to drive on over to Hurricane Creek and visit the Bragg's store.

Stopping my car in front of the store, I stood there for a moment. I remembered the benches in front of the store and the old cotton gin next door. And if I squinted my eyes just right, I could almost see the old school bus unloading its cargo of laughing, giggling children. After pumping my own gas, I walked inside to pay for it. Nothing had changed. The building seemed smaller than I remembered, and the canned goods seemed a little dustier, but I still remembered it. Bobby Bragg was still sitting in front of the old wood-burning stove; only his hair was gray now and he seemed to move a lot slower than I remembered. He looked at me with a quizzical look on his face as if he was trying to figure out what a stranger was doing stopping here. I paid and left. He didn't recognize me, and it was just as well. Sometimes it's hard to go home.

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great chunks of virgin territory, Boylston began to worry. Where would it all end? How much land would be left for his grandchildren to enjoy? Or his great-grandchildren?

For years he stood helplessly by while developers, outdoor recreationists and even other farmers pillaged the countryside. Then one warm summer day in

July of 1944, he did something a bit unusual to protect his farm. He climbed in his pickup and drove to town, stopping to collect his attorney and then headed to the courthouse to file a new property deed. In that deed (still on file in the Barnwell County courthouse) the 76 year old farmer gave explicit instructions that upon his death part of his property would be deeded over to God. Throughout the years various individuals and businesses have tried to contest the deed by going to court, but the deed has always been held valid. Today, Barnwell County, Georgia, is the only place in the world where God holds legal title to a piece of land.



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