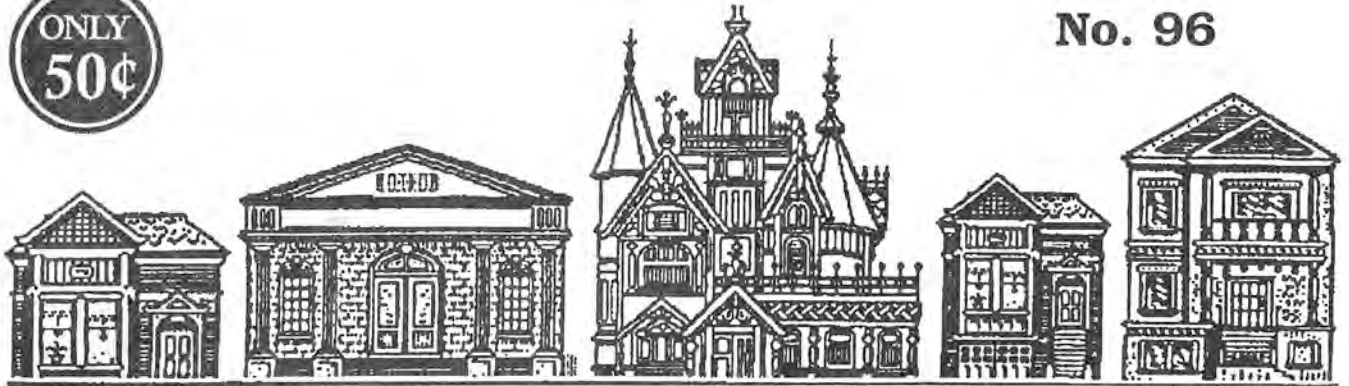


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## DEVIL MONROE

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Tennessee Valley*

The citizens of Madison County had good reason to fear the man known as the "Devil of the mountains." William Monroe Evans, during a span of almost thirty years, terrorized the Tennessee Valley, killing, hanging and burning anyone or anything that dared to stand in his path. Murder became synonymous with the name Devil Monroe.

Not even the Yankees, under General Mitchel's command, would be guilty of such savagery and cruelty.

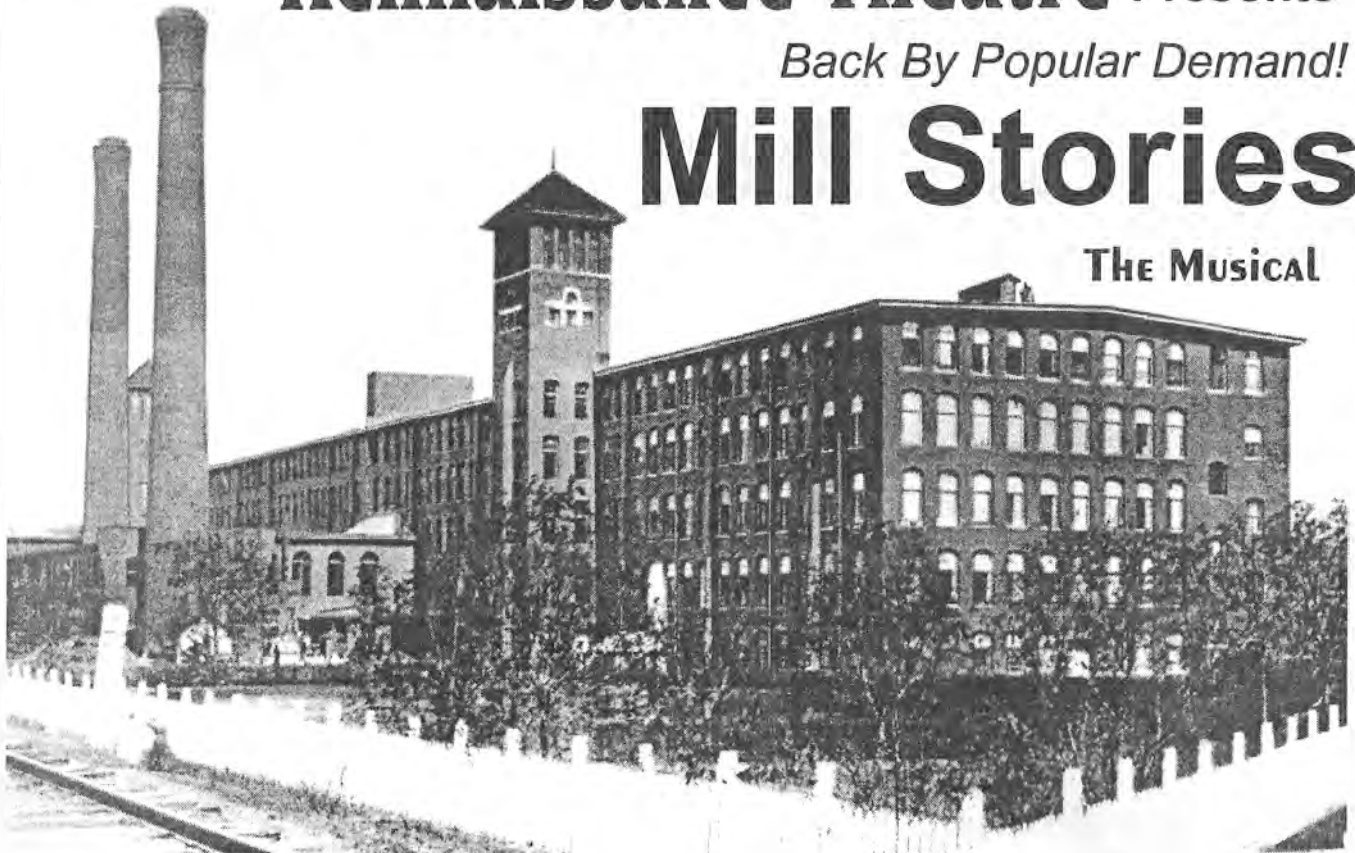
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# DEVIL MONROE

The citizens of Huntsville anxiously peered from behind drawn shades and locked doors as they watched a strange procession slowly make its way down the street. Heavily bearded and dressed in rough homespun clothes, with a shotgun lying loosely across the saddle, Devil Monroe led the caravan.

Next to him rode his son John, dressed in unkempt clothes and also carrying a shotgun. They were followed by two wagons surrounded and guarded by a motley, slovenly band of men, all heavily armed and eyeing the townspeople suspiciously.

In the middle of the strange caravan, riding in the two wagons, were the "Devil's" wives... all of them.

The townspeople had good reason to fear the man known as the "Devil of the mountains." William Monroe Evans, during a span of almost thirty years, terrorized the Tennessee Valley, killing, hanging and burning anyone or anything that dared to stand in his path. Not even the Yankees, under General Mitchel's command, would be guilty of such savagery and cruelty.

Evans was born on the Madison-Marshall county line around

1842 to a family that history has forgotten. From the few accounts available it seems as if his family eked out a living on a few acres of land where they worked halfheartedly at growing a garden and raising a few pigs. The farm, if it could be called that, was located in the mountains now overlooking Lake Guntersville.

Evans learned at an early age that the mountains, almost completely inaccessible and hidden from prying eyes, were perfect for hiding any livestock that happened to become separated from their rightful owners.

Finding the life of a brigand more to his liking than working on a hard scrabble farm, he quickly embraced his newly chosen career. Gathering about him a few other miscreants and establishing a base camp in the hills, he soon established himself as the leader.

The years preceding the Civil War were good ones for the band of budding desperados. Money had no real meaning to them as there were few places to spend it in the hills. They were content to rustle an occasional beef, and after driving it back into the mountains, slaughter it when they were hungry. The remainder of their time was spent lolling about the crude shacks and lean-tos they called home, drinking cheap homemade whiskey and boasting of imaginary exploits.

If ever the need for hard money arose, all they had to do



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was to sneak into the outlying areas of Huntsville, New Hope or Guntersville and burglarize someone's home.

Unfortunately the "lowlanders," as they were called, soon put two and two together and decided that they were financing the outlaws' life-styles through their involuntary contributions of beef. At first, the citizens were content to post guards, but try as they might, they could never catch the vermin in the act.

Evans seemed to find this highly amusing. Repeatedly, after confiscating some beef from its hapless owner, he would appear in town the next day as if daring someone to speak out against him.

Showing up in New Hope one day, after a particularly successful foray the night before, Evans began to taunt the farmer whose cattle he had stolen. The farmer was evidently afraid of Evans, and as the outlaw realized this, the more brazen his abuse became. Finally the farmer, unable to take anymore, mounted his horse and left town.

The whole incident might have ended there if Evans had left town too, but instead he chose to stay, along with his comrades, and spend the day drinking in a saloon.

Late that afternoon, with the sun still shining brightly, the brig-

ands wobbled out of the saloon to where their horses were waiting, when all of a sudden their drunken revelry was interrupted by a loud shout.

"Evans, I want my cattle back."

It was the farmer and in his hands, pointed straight at Evans, was a shotgun.

Evans made a sudden move, and when he did the farmer blasted away. Although the shot missed Evans, it tore a gaping hole in the shoulder of one of his men.

As Evans stood there unharmed, a cruel and vicious sneer spread across his face when he realized the farmer's gun was now empty. Slowly raising his revolver toward the defenseless farmer, Evans was heard to mutter, "self defense," as he cold-bloodedly killed his first man.

Where before, Evans had been a troublesome thief, now he was a killer. Many people later said that with his first taste of blood he had become the devil incarnate. And with his hideouts in the surrounding mountains it was not long before he became known as the "Devil of the mountains."

At first Evans seemed to relish his new found notoriety. The people in the surrounding communities, never overly fond of him, now shunned him completely. Men that at least had tol-

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erated him before, now hung their heads and made excuses to leave whenever he entered a building.

This only served to enrage Evans and drive him to further extremes.

With no friends except his motley gang of brigands, Evans became embittered, some people claimed, at the whole human race. A person could look at Evans in a quizzical manner and find his barn burned the same night, a bartender that was slow to serve him might suffer a brutal beating.

The law was helpless. With no witnesses or evidence there was little the sheriff could do. Anyone who spoke up against Evans was destined to feel his vengeance.

When the Civil War broke out there lived in the northern part of Marshall County a man by the name of John Dickey; a man who was known for his hatred towards his neighbors. After federal troops took control of the area north of the Tennessee River, Dickey offered his services to the union commander. Dickey's hatred for his own people was wrongly interpreted as patriotism to the Union, and so the yankees commissioned him a captain of scouts with the power to organize a company to operate in North Alabama.

This new company was composed mostly of men who had deserted the Confederate army or had been dodging conscription. Many of these men were also wanted by the law.

Lured by the opportunity to pillage and plunder at will, Evans joined the company and found to his pleasant surprise that he was in his element. In the next few years John Dickey and "Devil" Monroe Evans cut a swath of vengeance across the Valley that would terrify even their own band.

Men were dragged from their homes and murdered, some of them in the presence of their families. Volney Elliot was shot in the back, Alfred Clark was hung near New Hope, Davis Russell was shot and his body cruelly mutilated. Fletcher Lewis was found murdered a few miles outside of Huntsville.

For most of them, their only crime was in crossing paths with "Devil" Monroe and John Dickey.

The Confederate army was powerless to stop these atrocities and the Federal government refused to. Evans, Dickey and men like them, the Federals reasoned, were helping the northern cause by keeping the rebel sympathizers in check.

By war's end, Evans and Dickey were the most hated men in the Tennessee Valley. Although legally operating under the aus-

pices of the Federal army, they had committed no crimes, the ex-confederate soldiers returning home saw things differently.

John Dickey, deciding discretion was the better part of valor, pulled up stakes and moved to Texas. Evans, with his small band of cutthroats, retreated into the hills above New Hope in anticipation of impending retribution.

An uneasy truce seemed to prevail for a while. The people in the valley stayed out of the mountains and Evans rarely if ever

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went to town. When he did, he was always carrying his shotgun.

Again, the whole affair might have ended there if Evans had not become smitten by a comely young lass on the outskirts of town. Soon he became a regular visitor to the young lady's farm in an attempt to woo her hand. The girl's father had no use for Evans. He repeatedly told his daughter that he would never stand for Evans marrying her as long as there was any life in his body.

To Evans, that was talk he could understand.

Riding up to the girl's home late one afternoon, he killed the father and carried the girl off into the mountains.

The good folks of New Hope were outraged. A mob began to gather and there was talk of bringing Evans to justice. The sheriff brought the men back to their senses. "No one witnessed the shooting except for the daughter," he said, "and if Evans is married to her now that means she can't testify."

In public, the men agreed with the sheriff but in private they had other ideas.

One of the little known facts about New Hope concerned the Masonic Hall in town. Besides being used for other functions, it

was also the meeting place for the local Ku Klux Klan. And it wasn't long before Evans and his wicked ways came to the attention of the local, night-shirted gentry.

According to popular legend, the Klan placed a two hundred dollar bounty on Evans' head and within days, he was playing dodge the bullet whenever he wandered down from the hills.

This was more than Evans' pride could bear. Calling his men together he laid plans to dynamite the Masonic hall and the Methodist church, both strongholds of his enemies. Fortunately for the towns people of New Hope, word of the scheme leaked out and before Evans could act, warrants were obtained for his arrest.

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After several long and hard days in the saddle the posse cornered Evans and his men near the present day city of Arab. The pack resisted arrest and in the ensuing gunfight six gang members were shot to death.

Evans escaped, though severely wounded. He hid in the mountains until his injuries had healed sufficiently enough to allow him to travel. Deciding that both Madison and Marshall counties were dangerous to his health, he moved his wife and what was left of his gang to the mountains of Morgan County.

Cast out of the hills that he called home and with no friends, Evans began to look for other means of solace. It didn't take him long to find what he was looking for.

Cloaked in the veil of religion and casting himself as a modern day Gabriel out to rid the world of wickedness, Evans proclaimed himself a converted man ... a prophet of God.

Of course, cattle and hogs kept disappearing and he still carried the same shotgun wherever he ventured.

Traditional religion must have weighed too heavily upon his shoulders. Instead of spending his time in church spitting hell, fire and brimstone, he began to have visions.

"God," he said, "has told me to punish the nonbelievers."

This punishment usually took the form of larceny, to the delight of his slovenly gang.

Next he had visions of many wives.

"God," he said, "has instructed me to take more wives so that our truth might be spread."

"Devil" Evans believed in practicing his newly discovered religion and it wasn't long before there were seven wives living in his

shanty, with a multitude of miniature devils playing in the yard.

It would be satisfying if we could, at this point, record that "Devil" Evans became a changed man, but alas, if anything, he became even more cruel. Despite his many wives (or maybe because of them) he began spending more time with his gang of brigands.

And now, with a bible in one hand and a shotgun in the other, he considered any livestock that wandered his way "donations for the Lord's work."

Evans would call on some hapless farmer, and with his shotgun lying across the saddle in front of him, inform the man that he would surely die and go to hell

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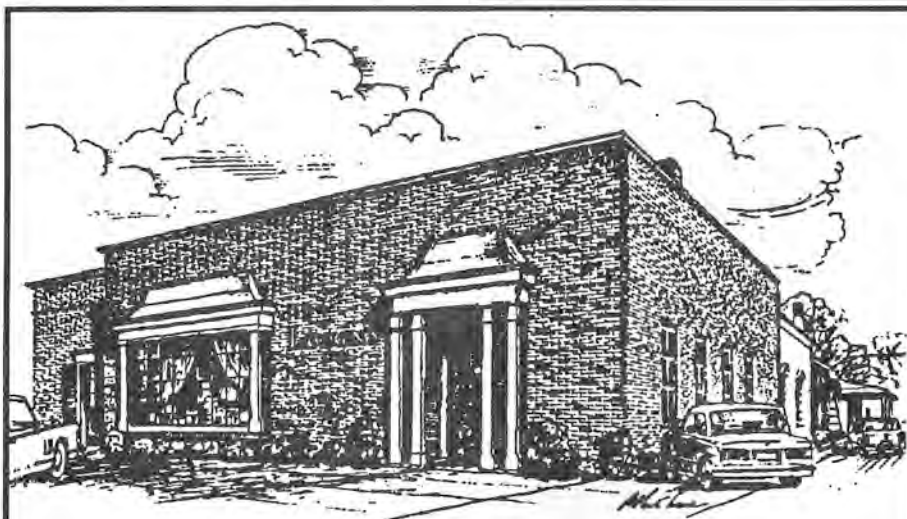


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unless he saw it in his heart to make a sizable contribution.

Whenever someone would protest they would find their home or barn burned to the ground. If they continued to protest, they became leading candidates for a midnight ambush.

Every grand jury that was impaneled between 1875 and 1891 tried to indict Evans for his many crimes, but through perjured testimony and intimidation of crucial witnesses he managed to overcome their every effort.

Many people began to think that the "Devil" was truly invincible.

In the summer of 1891, Evans and his son John were again out collecting contributions for their work. Unfortunately, a man by the name of Pierce Mooney returned home in time to catch the duo burglarizing his home. Mooney pulled his gun and began shooting and father and son headed for the woods.

The next morning as Mooney was feeding his livestock, he was ambushed in the back by someone firing a shotgun. Although in

critical condition, Mooney was able to crawl back to the house, where his wife sent for the doctor.

This was not exactly what Evans had planned for. A live witness could cause trouble. Evans knew Mooney was in critical condition so he waited in hiding for the doctor on the way to the patient's house. No doctor, he figured, no witness.

The physician, after being warned not to attend the wounded man, made as if he was going back to town. Instead, he cut through the woods and returned to the house by another route.

Next Evans and his son tried to run Mooney's wife off. Hiding in the woods they fired their weap-

ons at the house and in a loud voice warned her that if she did not leave, she too would be shot.

Meanwhile word had reached town of the dastardly attack and the "Devil's" attempt to silence the witness. That same afternoon Evans' son rode into town to pick up some supplies and was promptly arrested and carried to Baileyton for trial.

When Evans received word of his son's arrest he mounted his horse and carrying his shotgun, rode into town. As he slowly made his way down the street he could not have helped but notice the small groups of men gathered on every corner, eyeing him with hatred in their eyes.

Evans was arrested by the

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authorities before he even had time to dismount his horse. He too, was placed in an empty store building under guard until the authorities could decide what to do with them.

The father and son duo were not unduly worried. No witness, no crime.

The same stark realization began to dawn on the townspeople. Evans would go free and their families would continue to be terrorized.

Late that night, August 15th, 1891, a mob of almost two hundred people approached the store and demanded custody of Monroe Evans and his son. The guards offered up no resistance. The condemned men were tied up and marched outside to the nearest tree limb.

"Devil" Evans departed this world with a curse on his lips and the gleam of a fanatic in his eye. His son, John, began crying and begging for mercy as the noose was placed around his neck.

According to one account, seconds after the hanging took place a violent thunderstorm swept over the valley, with horrendous claps of thunder and solid sheets of rain pulverizing everything in its path.

"The Devil," they said, "was taking his due."

The next week the following item appeared in the *Alabama Tribune* newspaper:

*"Rube Burrow was shot down by Carter and his name was lauded to the skies as a hero. Ford, in a most cowardly manner, shot and killed Jesse James but the state of Missouri paid him large sums of money. Both of these men had some redeeming qualities. They were true to their families and true to their friends. But this man had none.*

*He was not true to his country or his family. But the men who relieved North Alabama of the presence of this man are called by some misinformed persons, brutes and murderers.*

*Evans' poor wife is in a better condition. The man who wrecked her life and educated her son for the gallows is gone. She will no longer be insulted by the presence of her husband's harem. His gang is scattered to the four winds and peace and order have taken their place. The last stronghold of the devil in the Tennessee Valley has been destroyed and the people say Amen!"*



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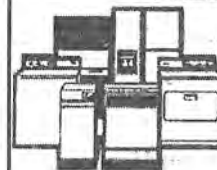
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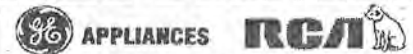
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# Letters From Huntsville



*The following are excerpts from letters written by Anne Royall, who visited Huntsville while it was still in its infant stage. The letters provide a unique look at one of the most undocumented periods of our city & history.*

Jan. 1, 1818

Now here is the twentieth letter I have written, without receiving an answer to one of them, until today—and that is no answer I may say. What are you about? Have you got the blues again, or blacks; or are you in love? ...

But seriously, I am sorry to hear you mend so slow. I am convinced this climate would restore you. It is summer here, compared to our country; the trees, many of them, are still green.

Huntsville; you will expect to hear something of this flourishing town. It takes its name from a man called Captain Hunt, who built the first cabin on the spot

where the court house now stands. In front of this cabin, which was built on a high bluff, there was a large pond, which is now nearly filled up by the citizens, Captain Hunt cleared a small field west of his cabin, the same year. This was between his cabin and the Huntsville Spring. He spent much of his time in waging war with the rattlesnakes, who were very numerous in his day, and had entire possession of the bluff at the spring. Thousands of them, it appears, were lodged amongst the rocks, and the Captain would shoot hundreds a day, by thrusting long canes filled with powder, into the scissures of the rocks.

Whether Hunt or the snakes acquired the victory, I have not heard, as he was compelled to abandon his settlement to a more successful rival, who purchased the land. This was Colonel Pope, who in company with Dr. Manning, and others, purchased the land at a Land Office opened in Nashville; and though this sale did not stand, these gentlemen at this time own vast bodies of land around Huntsville, and are the wealthiest men in the Territory.

... The town stands on elevated ground and enjoys a beautiful prospect. It contains about 260

houses, principally built of brick; has a bank, a courthouse, and market house. There is a large square in the center of town, like the towns of Ohio, and facing this are the stores, 12 in number. These buildings form a solid wall, though divided into apartments. The workmanship is the best I have ever seen in all the states; and several of the houses are three stories high, and very large. There is no church. The people assemble in the court house to worship.

Feb. 22, 1818

This day, the anniversary of our beloved Washington, was ushered in with all manner of rejoicing. The star spangled banner is now waving on the cupola, before my window, and an elegant ball is to conclude the day.

The companies are now marching before me, under arms, in a handsome uniform; they step light and graceful, and are tall fine looking men. Their Captain Howard boards with me; I mean in the same house. He is six feet in height, and one of the finest figures of them all, and has a martial look. He is a great favorite among the ladies, and is, doubtless, to open the ball this evening with some of the fairest of the fair.

I board with Major Rose, the

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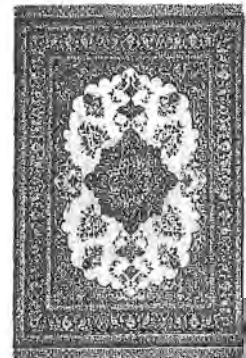


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merry old veteran mentioned some time back. He has met with a dreadful reverse of fortune since I first met him. He was then one of the first merchants in the place, but was overwhelmed in the general wreck, which prostrates so many of our merchants. But the Major is as merry as ever: keeps a tavern and boarding house; amuses himself with a pet crow; and sings "Jerry go Nimble."...

Captain Luke Howard, just mentioned, Mr. Tharp and Mr. Wooldridge, and the two Italians, are the only new acquaintance I have made. Captain Howard is an Irish gentleman, highly polished, and breathes the very soul of philanthropy and feeling. ...

Feb. 1818

The ladies of Huntsville, distance everything on the costliness of their dress; nor do I like their manners as well as I do the manners of the Florence ladies. They are always in the streets. But they are very beautiful women, and very familiar. The young gentlemen are rather better informed; are gay and lively; play and sing well. They often go out serenading, and have a thespian society, who entertain the citizens at stated periods.

Mrs. Royall settled in Washington D.C., where she wrote a book describing her travels throughout the South.

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To needle his guest, he cut the potatoes in sliver-thin slices and dumped them all in a boiling pot of oil. He fried them, removed them to a plate and served the guest. The crispy, greasy chips were a big hit with the gentleman, and so were born the classic potato chips. They were originally called "Saratoga Chips" in honor of the town the restaurant was located in - Saratoga Springs,

## Indian Pudding Recipe



2 cups boiling water  
1 cup corn meal  
4 cups hot milk  
1/2 cup molasses  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. ginger, ground.

Pour boiling water over the corn meal, add this to the hot milk and cook in double-boiler for 20 minutes. Remove from heat. Add the molasses or sorghum, salt and ginger, stir well. Pour mixture into a greased pudding dish. Bake at 250 for 2 hours. Serve with cream or ice cream.

A sharp tongue and a dull mind are usually found in the same head.



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# Huntsville Gossip

From 1899 newspaper

\* One of the best known men about town, who is reported ill with La Grippe, is really laid up from the effects of injuries received in a fight at a gambling house. The melee occurred several nights ago, and the gentleman in question was badly beaten over the head with a chair. It was thought at first that his skull was fractured, but this did not prove to be the case. The other men, as far as I can ascertain, were mere card sharks.

\* I referred not long ago to the open liaison of a beautiful young society woman, who is encumbered with a hubby somewhat her senior, and a young clerk in a downtown business house. About two days ago somebody notified a male relative of the frisky matron, and he came to Huntsville at once to see the lay of the land. He called on the clerk and notified him that he would fill him full of holes if he continued his compromising attentions and is supposed to have read the riot

act to the madame. As to this, of course, nobody knows, but his visit has certainly had a restraining influence upon the couple, and they have refrained from scandalizing the public since. I obtained this bit of gossip direct from a friend to whom it was confided by the gay lothario, and it is undoubtedly authentic.

\* Last Sunday the stewards of the Methodist church were, I am told, taken to task by the presiding elder for tendering their resignations from the board. The reasons they advanced for their action indicated nothing more serious at the bottom of the affair than obstinacy and a bit of anger because things were not run to suit them. Their resignations were not accepted.

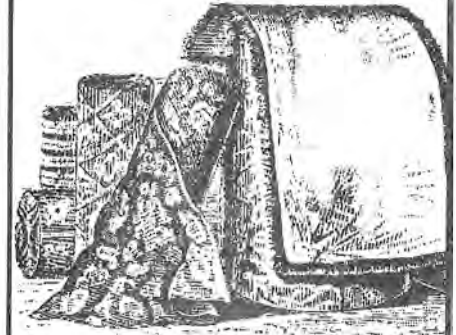
\* I understand that a very warm reception is awaiting a certain drummer when he next turns up at New Market. As the story goes, he engaged in a flirtation with a well known married lady, and wrote a very tender little note on the back of a business card. The lady's husband was out of town at the time, but when he returned she gave him the missive. Meantime the drummer had left town. The husband swears that he will thrash him within an inch of his life when he reappears. Moral: don't write notes.

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# Dear Editor



Dear Editor,

Your recent article, "Those Damn Revenuers," brought back many memories. My late wife's father was Willie (Bill) S. Lamon who served as a "revenuer" from the early 1920s to about 1958 when he retired. He worked for a time in Huntsville, Birmingham and Mobile before returning to Huntsville in about 1938.

While visiting the Lamons on their Limestone County farm, I recall many mornings when Mr. Lamon would arrive home cold, wet, full of chiggers and fighting mad after laying out all night trying to catch the men tapping a still. On other occasions he would stake out a house where he knew whisky was being sold but hard to find in the house. Sometimes it would be in a closet ceiling or behind a false wall. One particular bootlegger had a tank in the attic and had rigged a faucet in the kitchen to yield water when turned one way and whiskey when turned the other. If an agent had not tried to wash his hands it would probably not have been found. There were also occasions when a raid would get pretty scary if the bootleggers tried to put up a resistance.

I really appreciate the articles about Huntsville people. A few months ago you ran one about John Stegar and his Confederate service. His son, Alex Stegar, married my Aunt Eva Ormond and they lived in Maysville for many years. All, including John, are buried in the family plot at the Shiloh Methodist Church near Maysville along with my own

grandparents, Thomas and Martha Ormond. Thomas was in the 5th Alabama Infantry Battalion and served from First Manassas to Appomattox.

I have many ties to Huntsville and really enjoy your magazine.

Bill Ormond

Dear Editor,

My father was a "whiskey maker" for most of his life. While visiting him recently in the nursing home I read him the article about the revenuers. It brought back many memories for him. That was the first time I had seen him get excited in many years. He laughed and talked as if he was a young man again. He spoke highly of the agents, saying "they just had a job to do."

He said you had done a story about him years ago entitled, "Moonshine, The Law, and Sugar Tits." Would it be possible to get a copy?

Thank you for your fine publication.

J. Lowery



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# Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

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



Hi! Hope everyone is well and happy. Lots of things happened since last month. School is out and children are having a wonderful time swimming and playing. It's great to see children so happy.

Congratulations goes to **John Malone** for guessing the picture of the month. It was our very own Chief of Police, **Chief Owens**. He sure was a cute little boy and he's doing a great job!

This has been a great political month with all the politicians coming around trying to get your votes. A big congratulations goes to **Rodger Jones**. He ran a great race and says to tell all of his friends who worked so hard for him, "A big thank you!"

We are so proud of **Tommy Ragland** for winning his race. Love you and **Clarise!**

Our mayor, **Loretta**, is out

working all the time. She's always in such a hurry to get from one job to the next.

**Albert and Suzanne Rausch** visited from San Francisco to attend the Scoble family reunion. With them were **John and Loden Scoble**. Great people and they really loved Huntsville.

My sympathy goes out to my dear friends, **Jim and Susan Kirkland** on the death of Jim's sixteen year old niece, of Dothan. She had fought a battle with cancer for so long.

Congratulations to my grandson **Benjie** and his new bride, **Lori**. They had such a beautiful wedding. I love you both!

**Jane Smith** stopped by to visit with me recently. She's a really good person and we need to get her elected.

Sympathy goes out to the

**Carlos Kirpatrick and Kenneth Payne** families. They were two fine young men who used to eat with me when they were in high school.

**Byrom Laird and Miss Tillie** just returned from a great trip to Alaska. They had a wonderful time.

**Joe Whisante** stopped by to eat with me recently. He works so hard for the folks of Madison County.

**General Link** met **Glenn Watson** with a group of friends to have breakfast with me a couple of weeks ago. The General and **Miss Judy** will soon be moving back to Huntsville. That's great!

Councilman **Dick Hiatt** brought his family and his in-laws by last week for some ham and biscuits. They are all wonderful folks.

I predict that a young lad I've

## 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: This is a busy lady around the courthouse.



Last month's photo was Chief of Police, Compton Owens

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known for a long time will make his mark as a politician some day. Watch out for **Derek Simpson** - he's a great young man and will do good in any office he ever runs for.

If you haven't noticed already, check out the **pretty girls** on pages **5** and **39**. We are such hams! Seriously, I don't think we can do enough to support **Huntsville Hospital** or **Bud Cramer**. Both, in their own ways, have done so much for the people of Huntsville.

A big get well to **John Crump** who recently had heart surgery. Get well and come see me soon!

Lots of my friends said they really enjoyed the **Concerts In The Park** at the Big Spring. Remember, it's every Monday night during the summer.

Some of my new friends, **Joan Gray Williams** and her mother, have been stopping by regularly. Joan is the boss lady at AAA Printing and is a wonderful person.

**Roger and Diane Christopher** and their lovely daughter have just returned from a great Florida vacation.

**Ben Robb** had breakfast with me the other morning and wants to say Hi to all of his friends at Mountain State Park.

**Bud Cramer** brought his daughter and grandson by for breakfast, and boy is he the proud Grand-Pa!

**Tim Morgan** is all smiles these days now that he doesn't have to run against anyone in the election. Tim is a great District Attorney and a wonderful friend.

We must compliment our pal, **Pat Jason Stringer**, on his promotion with the Old Navy store. We know he will do a good job.

The **Wal-Mart Senior Expo** was a great success! Many, many great people worked hard for it and a big thanks to all of them.

Thousands of people attended and the **Coasters** were **WONDERFUL!**

Well, the big night finally came - the big retirement party for my good friend **Olin King**. The crowd went wild when he sang "My Way," one of "Ole Blue Eyes" songs. Olin, you really did it your way and we are all so proud of you. Now that you are retired there's no excuse for not stopping by for breakfast more often!

**Mirian and Will Halsey** brought their special friends, **Ed and Sue Walsh** by for a visit. It was great to see them.

My family, **Don, Wanda, Brad, Stan, Whit and Joanne** were all here visiting from Orlando, Fla. It was so good to have them home.

The folks over at **Shaver's Bookstore** tell us that **Fred Simpson's** new book, **Sins Of Madison County**, is jumping off the bookshelves. You better get one while they last!

That's all for now but just remember, I love all of you.

*Don Stringer*

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## All American Sweets

### Scotch Apple Pie

- 3 large tart apples
- 1/2 c. white sugar
- Juice of one lemon
- 1 stick butter
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1 c. flour
- 1/2 t. cinnamon
- 1/2 c. pecans, chopped

Peel and sliced your apples into the pie pan. Cover with white sugar and drizzle the lemon juice over it. Cream the butter with the brown sugar and work in the flour, add cinnamon and nuts, mix til crumbly. Top the apples with this mixture and bake at 300 degrees for 25 minutes.

### Toasted Pecan Brittle

- 1 c. sugar
  - 1 c. pecans, chopped and toasted
  - 2 t. butter
  - pinch soda
- Cook the sugar in an iron skil-

let, stirring constantly til it forms a syrup. Remove from stove and stir in the pecans. Add butter and soda, pour onto greased cookie sheet to cool, break into pieces when cool and store in airtight container.

### Just Sinful

- 1 box chocolate cake mix
  - 1 12-oz. pkg. chocolate chips
  - 3 eggs
  - 1 box confectioner's sugar
  - 1 stick butter, melted
  - 1 c. chopped pecans
  - 1 8-oz. package cream cheese
- Mix your cake mix, butter and 1 egg - press this mixture into a buttered 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Top with a cup of pecans and the whole bag of chocolate chips. Mix the confectioner's sugar, cream cheese and 2 eggs, spread this on top of the chocolate chips and pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes. Cool before you cut, this

won't last long.

### Simple Carrot Cake

- 2 c. sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 t. cinnamon
- 1 1/2 c. cooking oil
- 2 c. self-rising flour
- 3 c. grated carrots
- 1 c. chopped pecans

Mix the sugar, oil, cinnamon and eggs. Fold in the flour. Add your carrots and nuts. Bake at 325 degrees for about 45 minutes.

Icing:

- 1 box Confectioner's sugar
  - 1 8-oz. package Cream cheese
- Mix well and ice cake.

### Divinity

- 3 c. sugar
  - 2/3 c. white corn syrup
  - pinch salt
- Let the mixture boil til it forms hard balls in water or threads from a spoon. Pour slowly into thoroughly beaten whites of 3 eggs.

Add one or 2 cups of chopped nuts and beat til all thickens.

### Pecan Brown Sugar Cheesecake

- 1 graham cracker crust
- 3 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, softened
- 1 1/4 c. packed brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- 2 T. flour



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- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1/4 c. butter, softened
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. finely chopped pecans

In a large bowl mix the cream cheese and brown sugar. Add eggs, beating well after each addition. Add the vanilla and flour, beat well. Pour into graham cracker crust. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes, remove from oven and let cool.

In the meantime, melt the butter in a small pot over medium heat, add the sugar and pecans, cook just to boiling.

Pour this mixture over the cooled cheese cake, cool slightly before serving.

### Vanilla Wafer Cake

- 1 c. butter
- 1 c. vanilla wafer crumbs
- 3 eggs
- 1 3-oz. can flaked coconut
- 1 c. sugar
- 1/2 t. baking powder
- 1 c. chopped pecans

Cream the butter and sugar til fluffy. Then blend in your vanilla wafer crumbs and baking powder. Beat in your eggs, one at a time, then stir in the coconut and pecans. Pour onto a greased 9x9" square baking pan and bake at 325 degrees for 40 minutes.

Cool, then cut into squares or wedges.

### Cherries Jubilee

- 2 16-oz. cans dark sweet

cherries, with juice

- 1/4 c. granulated sugar
- 2 t. cornstarch
- 2 T. grated orange peel
- 1/2 c. brandy or cognac
- 1 pound cake
- vanilla ice cream, optional

Separate out the cherries from the juice, set cherries aside. Mix the sugar and corn starch together, mix in the cherry juice. Cook in small pan over medium heat til mixture begins to thicken and is smooth, about 5 minutes. Stir in the cherries and orange peel. Gently heat the brandy in a pan, pour over heated cherries. May flame, if desired.

Stir gently and ladle cherries jubilee over slices of pound cake or slice of vanilla ice cream.

### Peanut Butter Pie

- 1 3-oz. Cream cheese
- 1/2c. peanut butter
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 8 oz. Cool whip
- 1 t. vanilla
- 1 9-inch graham cracker crust

Put all ingredients into a bowl. Mix well. Pour into crust and chill.

Politicians are the same all over. They promise to build a bridge where there is no river.

- Nikita Krushchev

The trouble with life in the fast lane is that you get to the other end in a hurry.

- James Dunn

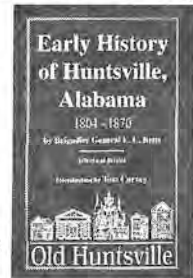
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# A Family Feud

The period following the Civil War was an era of painful reminiscing. Families whose names and fortunes were intertwined with our country's history were reduced to the status of common laborers after the collapse Confederacy.

For many of these the only source of pride left were the family names and the connections to other families they had built through marriages and friendships. While many people spent the rest of their lives boasting of their relationships, others, fearful of the consequences, remained silent.

Such was the case of David Humphrey Todd.

By the time David Todd moved to Huntsville in 1865, he had already lived an eventful life. Born in 1832 into a well respected Kentucky family, David had enlisted in the Kentucky infantry at the age of fifteen where he saw action during the war with Mexico. In 1849, while still in Mexico, he received word of his father's death from

cholera.

David's father left a large estate but he also left fourteen living children, some of whom immediately contested the Will.

The once close family was torn asunder. Brothers, sisters, and cousins refused to talk to one another. Complicating matters even more was the fact that his half sisters husband, an attorney, was selected to represent one side of the family while a cousin acted as counsel for David and his brothers.

Most of the Todd family had never accepted the brother-in-law. At various times they had described him as an oaf, a country bumpkin and low trash.

Adding fuel to the fire were the politics of the brother in law. His radical beliefs had become a source of shame to the Todd family.

The Will was eventually settled, with the brother-in-law winning, but the family had suffered a split from which they would never recover.

Whether out of resentment or longing for more adventure, when David received his discharge at the end of the war, he soon enlisted as a mercenary in an attempt to overthrow the Chilean government in South America. Not much is known about his ex-



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plots in Chile except that he barely escaped with his life by hiding on a ship leaving the country.

Strangely enough, though he spent the next several years in China, he was never able to escape the presence of his brother in law. As the years passed it seemed as if more and more people associated him with the young attorney who was gaining national stature.

At the beginning of the Civil War David enlisted in the Confederate service as a Captain. By this time his brother-in-law had become one of the most hated people in the country and his political beliefs had caused the Todd family to suffer a split from which it would never recover. Out of the fourteen children, six supported the Union while eight cast their lot with the Confederacy.

With the stigma attached to his brother-in-law's name, it is doubtful if David told anyone of his kinship. When David was erroneously reported killed during the battle of Vicksburg, it probably suited him well as he was finally out of the shadow of his notorious in-law.

David kept a low profile during the years after the war. While convalescing in a military hospital in Marion, Alabama he married Susan Turner, a native of Huntsville who had fled south when the Union forces occupied the Tennessee Valley.

With no home to call his own, Todd returned to Huntsville with his bride where he became involved in her family's business. He was considered a leading citizen of Huntsville by all who knew him. His wife was a devout member of the Church of Nativity where their daughter was confirmed in 1866. Their home, on the northeast corner of Franklin and Gates, was a meeting place

for many influential people of Madison County.

If there was anything odd about David Todd during these years, it was his reluctance to talk about his family. Even many of his closest friends knew nothing about him except that he was an ex-Confederate soldier.

David Humphrey Todd died August 4, 1871 at his home here in Huntsville and was buried in the Turner plot at Maple Hill Cemetery. There is no tombstone to mark his final resting place. The only marker on his grave is a flowering magnolia tree, a fitting symbol of the old South whose struggles had torn his family apart.

Ironically, the best selling book at the time of his death was a book about his despised brother-in-law ... "The Life of Abraham Lincoln."

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# The State of Medicine

In the latter part of the 1800s the surgeon general of the United States declared Huntsville to be one of the healthiest places in the nation, second only to West Point. Hopefully this did not come about as a result of the medicine and home remedy ads advertised in the Huntsville newspapers.

One of the greatest claims of that day was made by Swift Specific who advertised that its product cured cancer and also helped you sleep at night. Rangun Roote Liniment also claimed to cure cancer and ease aching muscles. What made this claim so miraculous was that you could also use it for your horse.

Prices were reasonable too. Indian Wild Bark promised to cure your cancer for only \$3.50

and for another fifty cents you could purchase a bottle of Works Scalp Lotion, guaranteed to stimulate your mental processes.

Local newspapers often carried testimonials from citizens attesting to the miracle cures of these products. W. T. Hutchens, a well known citizen of Huntsville, claimed in a newspaper ad that "Dr. Humphrey's Blood Purifier" cured his rheumatism in only three days.

And for the ladies, there was Scott's Elixir, which guaranteed to ease cramps and to provide a better disposition. The Elixir lived up to its promise to provide a better disposition but it also provided a terrible hangover.

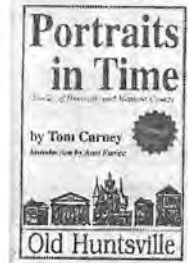
Another well known Huntsville citizen, John Hill, advertised a cure for addiction to opium and whiskey. Evidently, it did not work as the same newspaper also carried an article about him being fined for "public intoxication."

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# Know Your Rights

## WHAT NOW, GRANDPA?

As mentioned in two earlier articles, grandparents in Alabama (and in many other states) have recently obtained statutory rights to visit with their grandchildren. Now, it appears that some of these broad sweeping statutes are not fully valid.

The United States Supreme Court, in a recent decision involving a Washington state grandparent visitation statute, ruled on June 5, 2000 that the Washington statute is too broad and deprives fit parents of their fundamental right to make decisions concerning the care, custody, and control of their children, a right protected by the Fourteenth

Amendment to the United States Constitution. "So long as a parent adequately cares for his or her child (i.e., is fit), there will normally be no reason for the State to inject itself into the private realm of the family to further question the ability of that parent to make the best decisions concerning the rearing of that parents children."

The decision concerns only the Washington state statute. "We would be hesitant to hold that specific non-parental visitation statutes (such as the Alabama statute) violate the Due Process Clause as a *per se* matter" and it is up to state-court adjudication to evaluate the Alabama statute in light of the decision. So, what's likely to happen to the Alabama grandparent visitation statute?

The facts in the Washington state case are important. The State passed a law allowing any third party to seek visitation with a child. The paternal grandparents in question asked for the right to visit more extensively with their grandchildren after the mother only was willing to allow monthly visitation. The parents of the children had never married and the father of the children had committed suicide.

The Alabama statute provides that "there shall be a rebuttal presumption in favor of visitation by any grandparent." Similarly, in the case decided by the U.S. Supreme

Court, it was noted that the state court inappropriately applied the presumption favoring grandparent visitation. It gave no consideration to the parent's determination of her evaluation of the children's best interest. In effect, it improperly placed on the parent the burden of *disproving* that visitation would be in the children's best interest and thus failed to provide any protection for the parents fundamental right to act in the child's best interest.

Alabama courts will have to determine the scope of grandparent visitation rights in light of this decision. It is likely their rights will be narrowed and the burden of proof will be shifted to the grandparent.

So, Grandpa, if you are denied the opportunity to visit with your grandchild and ask an Alabama court for help, you may find yourself involved in lengthy litigation and the outcome is not now predictable.

*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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# Samuel King Davis

## The Mysterious First Settler of Huntsville

by: Robert Edward Davis  
and Lynn Wilhelm-Melberg, Ed.D.

What would have been the destiny of Huntsville had John Hunt not built his house on the foundation laid by Samuel Davis at Big Spring? Historians have always stated that John Hunt was the first settler in Huntsville; however, this is in error. Isaac Criner and Stephen McBroom were the first white men to settle in Madison County (which was then Mississippi Territory) around 1802. A few years later Samuel Davis headed the second colony to the area and settled at the Big Spring. Davis cleared a small patch of land near the Big Spring bluff and began erecting a log cabin. The unwritten law of the frontier was that once a man began improvements on the land it belonged to him, therefore Davis had no qualms about leaving the unfinished cabin to return to Tennessee for his family.

When Samuel Davis and his family returned to Big Spring, they discovered that John Hunt had arrived and moved on to the land he had cleared. Hunt had also completed the cabin Davis had begun and had moved into it.

Davis vowed he'd "live neighbor to no man who'd use another's logs"; and moved north to what became known as "the Ward Place" in the New Market area. Thus John Hunt became known as the city's original founder.

Samuel King Davis was born on December 24, 1755 in Beverley's Manor, Augusta County, Virginia. He is said to have been the youngest of Nathaniel and Sarah Davis' eight

sons and of Welsh Descent. Around 1758, Nathaniel Davis, then only about 36 years of age was killed by the Shawnee Indians in a massacre on Kerr's Creek. In later years, Davis would state in his application for a Revolutionary War Pension, that he had been reared by his Mother and eldest brother, Captain John Davis.

In 1776, Samuel Davis, at the age of 21, enlisted in Captain Robert Craig's Company of Colonel Christie's Regiment, in Washington County, Virginia. The years 1777 and 1778 found him was assigned to regiments guarding and defending the frontier forts, which made up the "Clinch Settlement", then in Rutherford County.

In 1779 Davis was in Kentucky at Wafer's Station on the

Salt River and was part of a campaign against the Shawnee Indians under the command of Colonel Benjamin Logan. The company organized with several others at Elkhorn Station (near Lexington, Kentucky). From there, they marched to Riddle's Station for provisions and then to a Shawnee town on the little Miami River, probably in Ohio. After marching to the Ohio River above the mouth of Licking Creek, Colonel Logan and his men attacked a town defended by the British. Even though the battle was unsuccessful and nine men were lost, the Revolutionists burned the major part of the town.

In 1780, Davis entered the service again on a campaign against the Cherokees. Davis stated in his pension application that sometimes he was "an informal substitute" for his brothers who had families before he did. In the early years of our country, military service could be performed by a sub-

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stitute (usually paid), or men with families could find another person, (usually a relative, as in the case of Davis) to fulfill their duty.

In 1797, Davis moved to Maryville, Blount County in East Tennessee. He lived there until moving into northern Alabama around 1805. Family history tells of Samuel Davis and several of his grown sons going to the Big Spring; which he decided would be a suitable place to settle. Water was plentiful, the soil was rich, and the woods were filled with game. In spite of the thick underbrush and rattlesnake infestation, Davis cleared the site and prepared his logs and foundation.

Family lore has it that when Samuel Davis went back to Tennessee, others became aware of his find. Historians have written that Isaac Criner, (said to have been a cousin of Samuel Davis') was believed to have checked out the Big Spring as a homesite; but chose not to settle there because of the great numbers of rattlesnakes present. It appears that Davis and Hunt lived near each other in Tennessee; and this is probably how the word of Davis' find got out. It has also been reported that John Hunt visited with Isaac Criner in Alabama. Regardless, Hunt became aware of the the Big Spring area and settled there.

After finding his homestead taken Davis moved to the New Market area where he prospered.

By 1819 he had purchased over a thousand acres of land and had become a successful farmer. His pension application states he was the first white man to plant corn in Madison County. Although Davis and his family performed much of the farm work themselves, records show that at the time of his death he owned about 10 slaves and their children.

Samuel Davis applied for a Revolutionary War pension in 1832 and was awarded a sum of 26 dollars and 66 cents per year.

Davis was a highly devout Christian man believing in the Presbyterian faith. The family has said that they were "blue-stockings" Presbyterians. These were strict Cumberland Presbyterians; given this name because of the thick, blue stockings the women and girls were required to make and wear.

A six acre tract of land owned by Davis, near Mountain Forks of the Flint River, was used as a campground for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. It was given the name of the Mt. Parron Camp Ground and is now locally known as "Graveyard Hill". It is considered one of the oldest Cumberland Presbyterian campgrounds in Madison County. The Rev. Robert Donnell was said to have been one of the first "traveling preachers" at this campground.

In his will, Samuel Davis left this campground to the Mt. Parron Congregation as a camp-

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## Glenn Watson Keeps His Promises

ground; and he specified that this tract would forever be used as such. It is the final resting place of Samuel Davis, his wife Jane (Jenny) Allison, and many of their descendants. Many of Madison Counties earliest known names are found there such as Criner, Pettipool, McCain, and Williams. The cemetery also contains a section where the slaves of these early pioneers were buried.

Unfortunately, today many of the graves are unmarked. Tombstones were destroyed in the 1950's or 60's when loggers, lured there by the abundance of large cedar trees, unlawfully entered and cut timbers.

Samuel Davis lived on his

homestead just northeast of present day New Market until his death in 1842. Even though his dream of settling at Big Spring did not come true, records indicate that he lived a peaceful and prosperous life. He was not only an integral part of the legacy of the settlement of Huntsville, but he also left an indelible imprint on the community, which came to be his home. Long after he was laid to rest on that quiet little hill overlooking the Huntsville-Winchester Highway, his descendants continued to make contributions and improvements to New Market, Madison County, and the City of Huntsville.

Samuel Davis' grandson, William Newton Davis, was a successful farmer and elder at New

Market Cumberland Presbyterian Church. During his tenure as elder, he gave liberally of his time and money for construction of the church building. He also served one term as Madison County tax collector.

Two of Samuel Davis' great-great grandson's made contributions within the city of Huntsville. In the early 1950's, Robert Edward (Rob) Davis Sr., a World War 11 veteran, was appointed Secretary to Senator Bob Jones and spent several years in Washington DC, aiding in the representation of Alabama. Robert was a teacher by heart and profession; and spent over 35 years with the Huntsville City School System. He died in 1987 and is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

Another descendant, Joe W. Davis, was Mayor of Huntsville from 1968 to 1988. This man is a story in itself because of the many things that the Davis administration left to the City of Huntsville. He died in 1992 and is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

What would have been Huntsville's destiny had John Hunt not confiscated Samuel Davis' land at Big Spring? The most obvious is that we might now be living in "Davisville" or "Davistown". Being a close family man, and well imbued in his faith, there would probably have been little other difference. He was not a "public man" nor one who was eager for fame. Therefore, it is supposed that he would have quietly gone about his way, nurturing his family and lands, and causing no furor with his neighbors.

The longest odds in the world are those against getting even.



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# The Last Slave

*The following interview of Tom Moore was conducted in 1948. He was reputed to be the last surviving person in Madison County born into slavery.*

If my body had to suffer all the misery that my eyes have seen I would have been dead a long time ago. I don't remember too good the things that happened yesterday, but the old things, the things that happened when I was young, I remember good.

I was born in 1843. Mr. Ben (Benjamin Tyson Moore, his master) wrote the date down in an old family bible. My mama, she was bought in Mobile when she was a little girl and brought to Mr. Ben's place. Mama said they paid \$700 for her. I never knew my daddy, don't even know what happened to him.

Mr. Ben, he was a cotton man. The first thing I remember is pulling bolls. After all the cotton was picked, we'd go thru the fields again and pull all the cotton bolls that had opened late. That winter, when it would get cold, pick the cotton out.

I remember we had this boy on the place, his name was Buck, and he kept running off. The paddy-rollers caught him clear up next to Nashville onetime. His mama did the cooking for the big house. When they caught this boy they brought him back and tied him to a big tree out next to the cabins. When Mr. Jim started whipping this boy they had to lock his mama in the smokehouse, she was carrying on so much.

Before then, sometimes if we went to the door of the kitchen,

she would give us a bite of whatever she was cooking. But after they whipped her boy and we saw the look in her eyes, we never asked for no food that she fixed for the white folks!

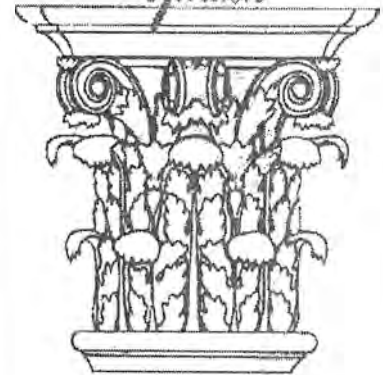
When the war (Civil War) came along all the men got ready to go off and fight. Mr. Ben, he sent me and my uncle to take care of his kin. It was just like we were in the army. We took care of the horses, cooked for them and fixed their clothes and stuff. Course we didn't have to put up with all that marching back and forth and yelling.

After bout a year the war heated up real good and the Captain sent us back to Alabama. He had this big red horse that he had took from a Yankee soldier and we rode that horse all the way back to Alabama, Yankee saddle and all!

We were working in the fields when we heard the war was over. Mr. Ben, he came out to where we were working and told us that he had orders to tell us all that we

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were free. He said that anyone that wanted to stay could but everyone else had to be off the place by sundown. Most everyone, after Mr. Ben left, just threw down their hoes and started walking to town.

They had this place in town where all the colored folks had to go to get registered. We got there, me and Sally, my wife, and they asked us what my name was."

"Tom," I said.

"What's your last name."

"Don't have none," I said.

"Who was your master," they asked me.

"Mr. Ben Moore."

So they wrote me down as Tom Moore and I been a Moore every since then!

I took up with this Yankee soldier and started working for him. He was a good man and when he got out of the army he carried me home with him to Indiana. I lived up there for about two years working in a stable but I was miserable the whole time. You wouldn't think a man could miss cotton

fields but I sure did. Finally I got W. Foster to write a letter asking (the Moore family) if I could come back home.

I didn't wait for no answer, I just started walking toward Alabama. When I got here Mr. Ben, he told me that we could stay in the old quarter but he couldn't feed us. We'd have to take care of ourselves.

It was too late in the year for anything but turnip greens. We lived most that whole winter on turnips and rabbits. Didn't have no gun, the Ku Kluxers wouldn't let us have none, we trapped the rabbits in boxes.

Those were hard times and not just for the black folks. Everyday you could see men and women and children, black and white, walking down the road with no place to go to. The war just tore this country up good.

I seen a lot over the years but times ain't really changed that much. People just hate more now than what they used to.

# Huntsville In 1907

Helen Evans, a young white woman who keeps a quiet place in the city, was placed under arrest yesterday afternoon by policeman Pamplin on a charge of operating a blind tiger. Several bottles of beer were found in the cooler and the woman protested that she kept them there for her own individual use. She made bond in the sum of fifty dollars and appeared in the police court for trial this morning. Dr. Lacy Mastin, city physician, testified that he had prescribed for the woman and directed her to drink beer. The case was dismissed.



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# Miss Baker, Huntsville's First Lady In Space

by Clarence Scott

On May 28, 1959 two monkeys (a squirrel monkey named Baker and a rhesus monkey named Able) were strapped into the nose cone of a Huntsville-built Jupiter ballistic missile and blasted into a fifteen-minute sub-orbital space flight to test effects of this new environment on mammals before man would risk himself in his quest for the stars.

Although both monkeynauts survived the historic flight, Able died soon after reentry when medical instruments were being removed from his body. Miss Baker, the sole survivor, would go on to live an incredible twenty-five more years while becoming one of the world's most famous and adored monkeys.

Miss Baker was born in a Peruvian jungle in 1957. She was taken from her habitat shortly thereafter and was subjected to an intense preflight program to condition her to being strapped into a miniature couch during her flight for mankind. She was a spunky little squirrel monkey all her life. Her first response to humans after the flight was to bite

her handler. Her last act before her death in 1984 was again to bite her handler.

In between she became the cornerstone and prime attraction of the Huntsville Space and Rocket Center. She was in no small way responsible for the museum's growth and popularity that today has reached international proportions. Miss Baker was beloved by children all over the world and in her lifetime received thousands of letters and appeared on twenty network news shows over the years. Typical letters to Miss Baker usually inquired of her health and would ask her if she needed or wanted a new friend. Children also were curious if Miss Baker saw any Martians while in space and one child wrote and wondered if she had seen Jesus during her celebrated journey.

The care, love and attention Miss Baker received from the Huntsville Space and Rocket Center was outstanding and deeply felt. The little monkey (14-

ounces) was under meticulous medical care during her entire life in captivity. Besides her Huntsville veterinarian, the Yerkes Primate Center's monkey specialists in Atlanta were always on call in case of any dramatic change in Miss Baker's condition.

In the late fall of 1984 Miss Baker passed into legend. Her death was mourned worldwide for she was the little squirrel monkey that blazed a trail into space that men and women would later follow.

*Recently a park has been established and dedicated to Miss Baker. The park, located just west of the Senior Center on Drake Ave., has been named "Miss Baker's Walk In The Park" and is available for both public and private events.*

*A fund has been established to ensure the park will be maintained so that future generations will remember the little monkey that placed Huntsville in the forefront of the race into space.*

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# The Hanging of Mills Jenkins

by Evelyn Hayden Hodge

Mills Jenkins was born 13 January, 1805 in Bertie County, North Carolina. He came with his parents, brothers, and sister to Madison County in the early 1800s and settled in what is now known as Big Cove. Mills Jenkins grew up to be a respected citizen and a prosperous farmer.

During the Civil War, cotton was such a necessary commodity that buyers paid for it in gold. Also during the war there was a group of men in Madison County known as scalawags, who had pledged allegiance to the Union only so they could prey on their neighbors. They would hang around the cotton market and make mental notes of who sold cotton that day. Then that night they would call on them and rob them of their money.

Mills Jenkins took a wagon load of cotton to Huntsville to sell, and he too was paid in gold. He had heard about the scalawags and how they took peoples' money, so he was determined that they would not get his.

After he arrived home that afternoon, he took his daughter

with him out to the pasture gate. There he lifted a piece of timber, which he had buried between the gateposts. He put his gold coins in the trench and replaced the timber on top of them. He told his daughter that if anything should happen to him she would know where the money was.


Just as he had suspected, along in the night, he heard "Hello, Hello." Mills pulled on his clothes and went outside. There they were - masked and on horseback. They told him they wanted his gold. He told them that he wasn't going to give it to them. They insisted, and he still refused. They threatened him, but he stood firm.

When the scalawags realized Jenkins was not going to talk they took him out to the pasture through the very gate where he had hidden his gold. There, after trying again to make him talk, they hanged him from a tree. When they thought he was dead, they cut him down and left him lying.


Sometime later, the dew and the cool night air helped to revive him. After he regained consciousness and made it back to the house he told his family what had happened. Though he assured them that he was all right, he decided to spend the rest of the night under the hay in the barn, just in case they came back looking for him. He later said that he recog-

nized some of the men by their voices but he never sought revenge.


Mills Jenkins lived another twelve years until his death at age 70. His hanging was just another cruel incident in a war where neighbors fought neighbors.



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# A Penitent Dog



Dog stories have become so common that they bear as much credibility as "fish stories," but the following is so well vouched for as to leave no possible doubt of its truth.

A lady in Huntsville owns a very intelligent dog named Jeb, of whom she desired to have a picture. She took him to a photographic gallery, and with the assistance of the artist, endeavored to make her pet take and keep a suitable position before the camera.

The jittery dog however was not in an accommodating mood and, after repeated trials, the attempt to conquer him was abandoned in despair.

"Go home!" the lady said, at last, pointing to the door. "You are a bad, naughty, naughty dog!"

The culprit changed instantly his saucy manner, and, dropping his tail between his legs, slunk away in confusion. All the rest of the day he seemed to realize that he was in disgrace, crouching in corners and wearing a shame-faced air.

The next morning he was missing, not having come home at all the night before.

About noon he reappeared at his mistress' doorstep, much elated, and fastened to his collar was a very handsome photograph of himself. Upon investigation, this is what was discovered.

When the photographer had gone to his gallery to open up that morning, there at the door was the same pooch who had refused to pose for any picture. It appeared that it had been waiting patiently for quite some time. As soon as

the door to the gallery was opened, Jeb dashed upstairs to the same room they had been in the day before, and immediately leapt upon the chair on which he was supposed to pose, and did so now.

Seizing the opportunity, the artist made his preparations with all possible speed, and the result was the delightful picture which the four-footed penitent had taken home, a peace offering to his mistress.

*From 1913 newspaper*

## For The Sick

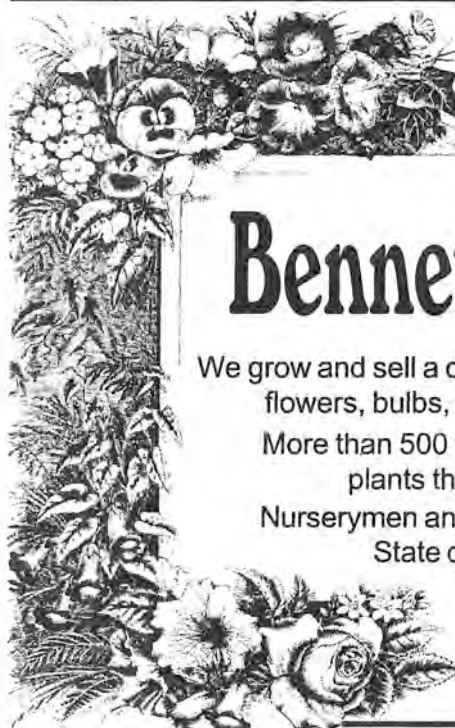
A little girl and her mother were attending Mass in the city's oldest Church.

"Mama, I feel sick."

Mother says, "Hurry around behind the church."

"When Peggy returned in just a few minutes, her mother asked, "Did you get there in time?"

Peggy: "I didn't have to go that far. There's a little box on a stand just inside the door that had a sign that says, 'For the sick'."



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I was married by a judge;  
I should have asked for a  
jury. -George Burns

# Huntsville Education During The Depression

by Jack Harwell

When Herbert Hoover was sworn in as the nation's 31<sup>st</sup> president on March 4, 1929, he looked out over a country with seemingly limitless possibilities. In his inaugural address Hoover spoke of an increasingly complex civilization in which education would play a vital role. "Self-government can succeed only through an instructed electorate," he said. "The more complex the problems of the Nation become, the greater is the need for more and more advanced instruction." The new president spoke of the need for educated citizens who would serve as leaders of the future. He also emphasized that "education is primarily a responsibility of the States and local communities," and so it was. But Hoover's plans for an educated citizenry would soon have to take into account the realities of the Great Depression, and the nation's public schools, including those in Huntsville, would face an economic crisis on a scale not seen before or since.

By the time Hoover entered

office, the growing city of Huntsville was already recognizing the importance of an instructed electorate. Between 1920 and 1930, the city's population grew by 44% -- from 8,018 to 11,554. During that same time, enrollment in the city's schools nearly doubled. Significantly, attendance at black schools was rising even faster than at the white schools. Two new high schools -- one white, one black -- had opened in 1927; that same year, East Clinton and West Clinton elementary schools had been completely renovated. And beginning with the 1924-25 school year, the city's schools offered a twelfth grade for the first time.

But all the local progress in education came to a halt with the onset of the Depression. After that, there was no talk of building or renovating schools; the concern was keeping the existing schools open. Funding from the state, which had been paid in full, began relying increasingly on borrowed money, and by 1932 the state was in debt to the tune of \$5,000,000 for school funds. Partly because of the reduced tax

revenues (since there was so little income to tax), the county, state, and federal governments could provide almost no money for schools until the mid '30s.

One of the few consistent sources of revenue for city schools came from a 3 mill *ad valorem* tax passed by the city in 1923. The tax came up for renewal in 1931, and it was feared that the hard-pressed citizens of Huntsville would be unwilling to vote to increase their tax burden two years into the depression. But the issue passed at the urging of the city council and the superintendent of city schools, William G. Hamm. Even the students got involved in the issue, two thousand of them marching through downtown to support the measure.


Even with the tax in place, the schools' financial straits grew ever more dire. By 1935, revenue from the tax had dropped by a third,




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and total funds available for schools by a fourth. Still, the city provided nearly all the funding for education and managed to keep the schools afloat.

The other financial crisis in the schools concerned the wages for those who worked there. A teacher in the Huntsville city school system in 1931 was paid \$1,012 a year, somewhat lower than his or her counterparts in other parts of the country but considerably higher than the state average. One of the first steps the city took to reduce expenditures in 1931 was to cut teachers' salaries by 10%. Other cuts followed until, by 1935, the yearly pay was down to \$863 - a drop of 15% in four years. Other schools system employees saw their pay cut as well. Even with drastic reductions in educators' wages, the city had difficulty meeting its payroll. When cash was not available, payment was made in the form of "certificates of indebtedness," commonly known as "script." By the end of fiscal year 1933, the city had paid out over \$14,000 in script. Later, when the teachers attempted to redeem the script for cash, they were seldom able to get face value.

By 1936, the worst of the depression had passed, except, it seemed, in the schools. In February of that year, Limestone and twelve other counties were forced to close their elementary schools for lack of funds. Five more counties, including Lawrence, would do the same in March. Some Madison County schools locked their doors as well, while others were kept open by money pledged by county commissioners. But the city schools remained open throughout the crisis, if not without some anxiety. Toward the end of the school year in May, the city issued an official statement assur-

ing teachers that they would be paid in full for the entire year.

Relief finally came to the Huntsville city schools in the form of a 2% sales tax passed by the state in 1937, part of which was earmarked for education, something which had never been done before. Previously, state funding for schools had come from the general fund, and there was some opposition at the time to changing the usual practice. Nevertheless, the effect of the tax bill was immediate and dramatic: In the 1936-37 school year, state appropriation for education was paid in full for the first time in five years.

Today, the Huntsville city school system operates five high schools, eleven middle schools,

twenty-eight elementary schools, and several specialized facilities. Enrollment is about 25,000, more than twice the city's population in 1930, and the school budget is in

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the millions. The need for an educated public that Herbert Hoover foresaw is disputed by no one, and certainly by no one in Huntsville; the world has become more complex than Hoover could have imagined. The issue today is how best to meet the nation's educational needs, whether through increased funding for public schools or through publicly-funded vouchers for private schools, of which there are more than a dozen in the city alone. However the issue is resolved, it is illustrative of how much education has changed since the uncertain times seventy years ago, when public schools had to struggle just to stay open, and private schools weren't even an option.

## Recipe For Candied Violets



Remove violet heads from their stalks and wash carefully. Bring one cup of water and one pound fine grain sugar to a boil in a medium saucepan. When the mixture reaches 240 degrees F on a candy thermometer, boil for one minute longer and then reduce to a simmer. Drop blossoms in the mixture, a few at a time and let simmer for one minute. Carefully remove blossoms with a slotted spoon, drain well, and place on a cookie sheet covered with wax paper and allow to cool, turning occasionally until hardened.

The candied blossoms may be eaten by themselves or used for cake decorating. Store in airtight tins or jars.

Dinner is ready when the smoke alarm goes off.

## Pecan Delights

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup of brown sugar
- 1/3 cup of melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup of powdered milk
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Do not use mixer. Beat eggs with fork. Blend sugar & butter, add vanilla and mix well. Add flour - stir and add nuts.

Grease and flour small muffin pans. Fill 3/4 full and bake 15 - 20 minutes at 325'.

## Money Woes

According to a recent survey seventy per cent of people who become millionaires by winning lotteries are broke within five years. Sixty-three per cent became divorced and another twenty-nine per cent were found guilty of writing worthless checks.

Some girls never know what they are going to do from one husband to the next.

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## Woman Commits Suicide in New Hope

Miss Lena Vann, a popular young lady of New Hope, committed suicide by swallowing some poisonous drug yesterday. News of the affair reached our city of a telephone message from Mr. G.M. Haden who phoned to Probate Judge W.T. Lawler. Mr. Haden asked that the coroner be instructed to hold an inquest but was told that this was not necessary. Miss Vann was at the home of her aunt, Mrs. Mary Vann, who heard a strange noise in the girl's room and upon investigation found that the young lady was in an unconscious state and apparently was dying.

Medical aid was summoned and everything was done that was possible to save her but to no avail. The young lady was popular and her character was considered most estimable. The cause of her act is not known to any of her relatives or friends, who are all in shock after the news.

*from 1907 newspaper*

## No More Spitting on the Sidewalks

Mayor Smith has given the police department instructions to arrest all parties caught in the act of riding bicycles on the sidewalks. Two arrests for this offense have been made and the mayor has assessed the fines of a dollar each against the defendants. More arrests are expected as authorities take steps to enforce the law.

Spitting on the sidewalks is also a practice that must be stopped and a fine awaits all parties who thoughtlessly commit this offense again in the future.

*from 1907 newspaper*

## Mayor Orders Hides Removed

The board of Mayor and aldermen met in session last night. Nothing of special importance was transacted by them. The City Marshall was instructed to notify Mr. H. Wind to have the hides at the store on the corner of Clinton and Washington streets removed at once and not have any stored there during the summer. This order also applies to all dealers in the same line whose houses are offensive.

*from 1895 newspaper*



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# Long May She Wave

It is sad but true. On any important National holiday - like Veterans Day or Memorial Day - when I travel around this city of Huntsville I can see that in some neighborhoods about 98% of the homes DO NOT display the flag. Either they have no interest in flying the flag, which I doubt, or they just don't have a flag in their home, which is more likely true.

The National Flag is a symbol of our unique American way of life. All one has to do is learn how it is in other countries to really appreciate what we have in our country. Here we have a nation built on the principles of individual freedom, responsible government and human equality. When we display our flag at our homes we are showing our pride in our country and for what she stands. When we show respect for our flag, and pay it homage, we are restating a dedication to our heritage (no matter where our ancestors came from) and our resolve to continue it.

If you have a flag in your home, display it at any time but especially on National holidays. If you don't have one, get one and dis-

play it with the pride that only a true American can show. Civic organizations in Huntsville should urge their members to display their flag, and to encourage their neighbors to do the same.

The flag of the U.S., was established by Congress to come into being on July 4, 1818. It initially had twenty stars with one star added for each new state. Stars have long been used to denote sovereignty and dominion symbolically since ancient times. The color blue signifies vigilance, perseverance and justice; red is for hardness and valor; white means purity and innocence. So LET'S GO, Huntsville! If you consider yourself to be a good, proud American - how about showing your true colors?

*Note from the Golden K Kiwanis in Huntsville:*

*During some meetings during August 1994, we had considerable discussion about the American Flag and whether anyone had the right to burn it in protest of any issue. We had pros and cons among our membership with the majority of them in favor of coming up with a petition indicating our disfavor with anyone burning or otherwise insulting the American standard. George Orlip and Luther Adams led the way in coming up with this petition.*

One member was prompted to write the above article for publication in "Old Huntsville" magazine.

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# Citizens Told To Take Oath Or Do Without

Huntsvillians were subjected to numerous inconveniences and hardships during the Civil War.

Among the impositions inflicted upon them by the Federals was the requirement that, before a person could obtain food or supplies, he or she must first swear to an oath of allegiance to the U.S. Government.

The affidavit of an applicant for family supplies, issued on May 9, 1865, to one Martha McMillen, tells the story in a few words. It follows in part:

"I, Martha McMillen, being duly sworn, depose and say that I reside in the county of Madison, and State of Alabama, and that I am in all respects true and loyal to the government of the United States, and that I will in all things so deport myself, bearing true faith and allegiance thereto, and to the best of my ability protecting and defending the same; that the supplies, invoices of which are hereto attached, are necessary for the use and consumption of said family during the ensuing month; that no part thereof shall be sold or otherwise disposed of by me or of my authority, connivance or consent, except for the sole use and consumption of my family, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief no application has

been made for any permit for the same or like supplies, to any other officer or agent, and that no supplies for the same family for the period mentioned, have been or are expected to be applied for elsewhere, or elsewhere obtained."

The invoice attached to the affidavit included:

Nine yards of calico at 30 cents per yard	\$2.70
Seven yards of calico at 30 cents per yard	\$2.10
Two pair of shoes at \$2.50 per pair	\$5.00
Four yards of calico at 30 cents per yard	\$1.20

Total \$11.00

Those who claim they can take it or leave it have probably never had it.

# Unusual Remedies

To get your hair really clean, massage one tablespoon of baking soda into it while shampooing. Rinse well.

To improve and preserve your eyesight, get your left earlobe pierced. Buy a gold earring and wear it. It seems that the area of the lobe where it would be pierced is the same acupuncture point that affect eyesight.

If you're in a very warm room and feel faint, run cold tap water over the inside of your wrists. Ice rubbing will do the trick as well.

To improve your memory, eat 6 raw almonds a day.

Tapping your nails on tabletops will make them grow faster.



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# Did You Know

\* Hatchet in hand, Carrie Nation spent Feb. 15, 1901 thrashing vice in Topeka, Kansas in her continued crusade against the evils of alcohol. The six-foot tall crusader vowed never to rest until all saloons had been closed. She and her army of 500 men and women laid siege to the town joints, leaving in their wake a flotsam of splintered kegs and fractured glass.

\* On Feb. 9, 1900, Dwight Davis, a very talented college tennis player, offered his silver tennis trophy weighing a little over 40 pounds - for anyone who can beat him at that year's match against England to be played at Newport, Rhode Island

\* On October, 24, 1901, thousands of amazed spectators watched as Anna Edson Taylor, 43 years old, passed safely over the Niagara Falls in a wooden barrel. Suffering only from shock and minor abrasions, she offered some very sage advice - "No one should ever try this."

\* On the tenth anniversary of Prohibition in America (January,

1930) the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company reported that deaths from alcoholism among its policy holders in the previous year was six times the rate of ten years earlier.

\* In the 18th century ladies were the biggest users of snuff.

\* On June 11, 1831, Mr. Moses Alexander, ninety-three years of age, married Frances Thompkins, who was one hundred and five years old on her wedding day, in the town of Bath, New York. The following day the newlyweds were found dead in their bed.

\* More inhabitants of the American Colonies fought for the British than for the Continental Army, during the American Revolution.

\* The Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, the longest vehicular tunnel in the United States, was opened to traffic on May 25, 1950.

\* The U.S. Patent office issued Thomas Edison Patent #200,521 for a "Phonograph or Speaking Machine." He still holds the individual record of nearly eleven hundred other inventions.

Santa has the right idea -  
visit people once a year.  
- Victor Borge

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# The Last Gathering

The Grants first moved to Jackson County, Alabama, around 1834, settling on 200 acres of land granted to Thomas Grant for his service in the War of 1812.

By the time the Civil War began, Thomas Grant had nine grandsons. Five of them enlisted in the Confederate army, while the other four became Union soldiers. All of them served in North Alabama, within a few miles of where they grew up. In 1864, while cutting wood, Thomas Grant suffered a fatal heart attack.

Word was sent to all the children and grandchildren of the upcoming burial. The next day saw the whole family gathered at the cemetery to pay their last respects. Five young men dressed in Confederate gray stood on one side of the casket and the four Union men stood on the other

side. When the time came to lower the casket, all nine young men helped, and when it was done, they looked at one another across the grave. Slowly and almost awkwardly, they reached across the still open grave and shook hands with one another.

Almost seventy-five years later, Mrs. E. Grant still remembered the tears on her uncles' faces that day. She said it was almost as if they were saying their last good-byes before they got back on their horses to return to the war.

Out of the nine grandsons, four were killed in battle, one was captured and died in a Federal prison, and two others were wounded.

The family never got together again.

It is better to deserve honors and not have them than to have them and not deserve them

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