

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



The Memoirs of Mai Taylor

A lmost two hundred years ago settlers began pouring into the Tennessee Valley. They found an untamed wilderness where few people had ever been before.

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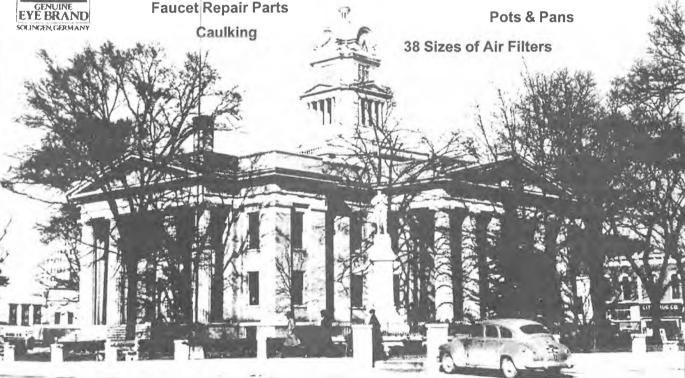
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The Memoirs of double log house near a pine for-Mai Taylor

The following memoirs were written in the early 1880s, when the author was eighty years old. He was the seventh son of George and Hannah Taylor and the father of Judge Thomas J. Taylor.

George Taylor, his father, was born in 1762 in Cumberland County, Virginia. In 1779, he married Hannah Jennings, the daughter of Miles Jennings who was a veteran of the French and Indian War.

was born in Oglethorpe **▲**County, Georgia in the year 1801, two miles from Lexington. My father was a native of Virginia and a soldier of the war of Independence. He entered the army in his sixteenth year and was first under fire at the Battle of Monmouth. This battle was fought on one of the hottest days on record and my father said that after the battle many of the British were found dead on the field without a wound.

Coming southward at the

close of the Revolution, my father settled at Lexington, Ga., then near the Chickasaw frontier.

My first recollections are of a est, a large cleared field adjoining. cultivated by Negro slaves. In summer a table of pine slabs was set in the yard between the dwelling house and the cabins. Around this, near sunset, were gathered my six older brothers and my older sister, tall lithe and graceful as a fawn, my mother with her kind loving face sat at the head of the table with my three year old sister at her knee and my baby brother in her arms. My father was then approaching middle age and was frequently absent or was detained by business until we small children had retired to rest.

Our country was a veritable land of plenty, the woods were full of game and the rivers of fish and cattle, sheep and swine fairly swarmed in the woods. We seldom had wheaten bread but we had Indian corn in great abundance from which food of endless variety was prepared. I don't think any cotton was raised but we had linsey and jeans and every family had its flax wheel and a little patch of flax, and then we had plenty of buckskins, the never failing resource of the backwoods man,

But this country was growing too thickly settled for the typical pioneer and my father belonged



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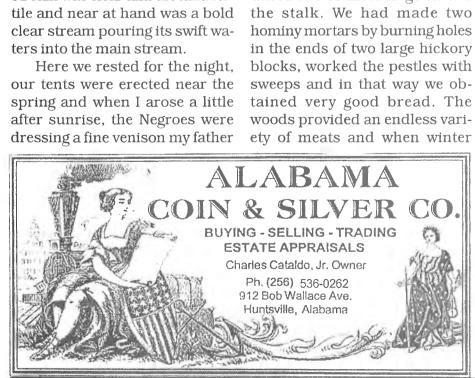
to this class. In the year 1806, with his wife and nine children and about a dozen Negroes he loaded up his wagons and pack horses and set his face westward. My father and his two oldest sons rode in front, followed by our two wagons with their Negro drivers and then came my mother and the two younger children on pack horses followed by Negro women and children, some on foot and some on horseback, while two of my brothers, sixteen and eighteen years of age with a trusty Negro servant brought up the rear. We traveled about fifteen miles per day over roads not well opened and frequently had to cut timber out of the road. We occasionally passed through or near Indian villages and my father being well up in the Cherokee talk was hospitably welcome and entertained.

My father had long desired to go to the great Bend of the Tennessee, so tarrying at Stone's River just long enough to lay in a month's supply of bread and salt, he turned southward and traveled steadily for about a week. One fine evening we came to Elk River. The stream was clear and the land fertile and near at hand was a bold

had shot and a large rattlesnake was suspended from the limb of a spreading beech tree near the camp. The day was devoted to the exploration of the country and every one pronounced it a goodly land and on the third morning the sound of the mall and ax and the crash of falling timber awoke the echoes. Soon the walls of a cabin began to rise, the ridge pole and end pieces were put on, boards riven from the heart of white oak covered it, puncheons hewed out from small logs split in the middle floored it.

Our family was alone and for months we had no visitors. This region did not seem to have been intruded upon even by the savages. The Indians had no traces of settlement in the neighborhood. We had dropped into the midst of an immense hunting ground with no one to molest or make afraid. We lived from the forest and with occasional visit Murfreesboro, the year passed by our family in a state of isolation.

The Indian corn on these fresh virgin lands grew to a height of twelve to thirteen feet and produced two or three large ears to







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came, we started a sugar camp in the hills where the sugar maples stood thickest and made a considerable quantity of sugar and molasses.

In a year or two, hunters began telling of a country still father south down towards the great Tennessee River. Soon there was considerable inquiry concerning this new and wonderful country and my father began to talk of moving further south.

So, in the spring of the year 1810 he (father) sold his improvement on the Elk river and came southward down the newly cut road until he struck Flint river at old Brownsboro, where there was a considerable colony of old friends. At this time a consider-

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able little village was forming at Hunt's big spring, known as the town of Twickenham and my father settled on a high hill north of Brownsboro.

A horse path leading from Brownsboro to Huntsville had been made from Flint river to Huntsville mountain. From there to Huntsville a road was blazed out nearly on the line of the present Bellefonte road, but many years passed before a wagon road was opened.

All the people living on Flint who drove wagons to town went up the river to the old Winchester road, crossing the river near the factory, then known as Woods Mill. On the west side of the river they skirted round the mountain through the open woods through the Mastin farm and round by the Green Bottom Inn just opened by John Conally, a prominent sportsman and a prominent man in his days. Horton's mill and Brown's mill had not been built yet and our grinding was done at Huntsville at a mill put up west of town by John and William Badlum. I, being one

of the younger boys, officiated as a mill boy, at first accompanied by an older brother or a Negro man or boy, but as I grew older, I made the trip alone.

Men living in this country now (1880) can have but little conception of the richness and beauty of the region between Brownsboro and Huntsville. With the exception of the mountain spur known as Cedar Ridge, it was one continued grove of magnificent forest. Wagons could be easily driven anywhere over the woods and a deer could be seen for a quarter mile through the forest avenues.

There was a house at the Nuchols Spring near Cedar Ridge and some two or three along the base of Monte Sano, near the cool sparkling springs on the south side of the Moore plantation. From Huntsville to the mountain top was one unbroken forest with small clearings made south of the road, one by Moses Vincent at Underwood's and another near the old Calhoun quarters.

There were a few straggling log cabins on the path from Steele's corner out as far as the Fleming place and several new houses among the trees from Holmes Street down Green Street towards the pike. From Steele's corner the road wound around a large pond where the water stayed all summer and which was full of green briars and old stumps and logs to where the ground began to rise into a considerable knell where the court house stands. Here stood at that time a little frame building used as a court house, and another north of it for a jail, which in a year or two was replaced by brick buildings which were a source of wonder to the young natives.

A trip to the Huntsville mill was a great holiday for the boys, as sometimes a dozen or more



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would come along together. In the crowd was generally some older person who could put up sacks for unfortunate boys who were dragged off by the rocks or saplings, and needles and thread also were forthcoming for repairs in case of damage. We generally started at sunrise, or before, and reached our destination in two or three hours, and as we tarried until all had obtained their grist, we reached home near nightfall. Thus we managed to spend the great part of the day in town and no exposition of the present civilized period ever delighted our souls as did the wonders of the new and growing little city.

We wandered around the spring cliffs and waded in the wide and sluggish waters in the swamp below. Somebody had started a tan yard just below the spring at the foot of the hill and the making of leather was a revelation to us. Then came the brickvard and the bricklayers and the carpenters and masons at work, and there was also a cotton gin run by Dr. Moore and a distillery above the mill, owned by Jas. Clemens.

In the years 1810 to 1811, there was but little increase in the population of the Flint River Colony. There were rumors of Indian wars and the little triangle which had projected itself beyond the state line, about twenty four miles along the northern limit and tapering to a point at Chickasaw Island (Hobb's Island) on the Tennessee River would have been in serious danger surrounded on all sides by two such powerful and warlike tribes as the Cherokees and Chickasaws. But fortunately both of these tribes remained friendly and when hostilities began the most of the war was south of the mountains on the waters of the Coosa and the Tallapoosa.

Huntsville had grown to a



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town of seven or eight hundred inhabitants and was driving a profitable trade with the Indians, among whom even at that time civilization was advancing. But many who had bought land at the land sales of 1809 delayed bringing their families to the new territory at a time when the temper of the Indians was unsettled and war appeared probable.

But with the year 1811, from some cause not then explained. the apprehension of Indian hostilities seems to have passed away and settlers began pouring into the country. East of Flint river, out towards Hurricane Creek, a large colony of German settlements were locating and among them was Jacob Derrick, a wealthy man who bought large bodies of land near the Indian boundary. In 1809 came John and Jehu Lawler, John Lamberson, Henry Harless and Richard Pockruss and John Paseur whose descendants scattered over North Alabama and many of whom now comprise some of the best citizens of Madison County.

John Brown purchased a large tract of land near Brownsboro, built a mill on Flint river and gave his name to the old village. The old town was laid off into lots and in the year 1812 it

was second to Huntsville in population and importance. Its population increased rapidly and it was the headquarters of the Flint River Navigation Company that at an early day shipped cotton and produce down the Flint river.

Everybody lived in log houses of various grades from the humble cabin daubed with clay to the hewed log house with plank floors, shingle roof, and the cracks chinked and finished off and painted with lime. Lumber was all sawn at saw pits by hand and it was a serious task to saw out the planks for a first class dwelling. For the accommodation of my father's large family, he built a square log house about twenty feet square with a side room. The floor was made of white ash plank, sawn at a saw pit, covered

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2362 Whitesburg Dr. Whitesburg at Bob Wallace Huntsville, Ala. 35801 with chestnut shingles, and the house stood with but little change and without being recovered for near fifty years. The kitchen and smoke house and Negro cabins were rude lob cabins chinked with clay and several of them with dirt floors.

East of the house was a slough or lagoon with many springs running into it and some boiling up from its bottom. The water in this lagoon was clear and cold, with tupelo trees grown up in the stream and along its borders. It was always swarming with fish and a haul or two with a seine generally supplied both white and black with an ample supply of fine fish. From this slough to the river was a body of rich bottom land covered with tall gum trees overtopping the heavy canebrake that covered the entire surface.

The road from Huntsville skirted the hills and crossed the river half a mile above old Brownsboro and a thick grove of beech extended down the river on its eastern side. Small game was abundant and occasionally bears and wolves were slain in the river bottoms, and catamounts and panthers on the mountains.

I and my brothers during these years did not eat much idle bread. My father was at this time careless in his business matters and left his farm to the care of my older brothers and the Negroes. These slaves were part of my mother's inheritance from my grandfather's estate, who had died and for that day had left a considerable estate. My mother's part consisted of two or three men with their wives and young families, and the labor of three or four men and about the same number of boys had to support some thirty in family, black and white, and to do this more land had to be

cleared.

So every spring there was a new ground of several acres to be grubbed and the brush and logs piled and on the canebrakes part was cleared and cultivated with the hoe alone. The older laborers had to cut the timber and split the rails. The boys drove the oxen, hauled rails, put up fences, and cut cane roots and grubs with the hoe and mattock.

There was but little money in circulation, iron and agricultural implements were scarce and dear and many common tools and implements were made of wood. The soil was wonderfully fertile, the seasons regular and a failure in crops was unknown. Our hogs and cattle were fat all year long in the cane brakes and a little corn



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During the winter months there was wild game, either fish flesh or fowl served at our daily meals with corn bread in abundance and nobody was ever in lack of the actual necessities of life. Sugar and coffee or tea were seldom seen. I do not think there was ever a pound of tea in my father's house and I have frequently heard him say that never to his recollection had he ever tasted the beverage.

There was a large quantity of good whiskey made in the country and nearly all the heads of families drank it habitually, yet there were but few drunkards in the community.

Nearly every body wore homespun clothing, jeans and linsey and buckskin in winter and cotton and flax homespun in summer. In an assembly of forty or fifty boys in summer at church or elsewhere you would not find half a dozen wearing shoes or coats until they were seventeen or eighteen years of age. Whether at a corn shucking or quilting, at church or at a wedding, the crowd

appeared barefoot and in shirt sleeves, their shirts washed white as snow and ornamented with copperas, dyed suspenders fastened before and behind with a large horn or pewter button.

We wore hats of plaited grass or straw in summer and of wool or fur in the winter. The hatter's trade was a flourishing one and any boy could get a good fur hat that would last five or six years who could furnish a hatter with raccoon or beaver or other skins enough to make two hats.

After a brief description of the 1812 Indian troubles the memoirs abruptly ended. His memoirs are one of the few first hand accounts of Madison County's early pioneers.

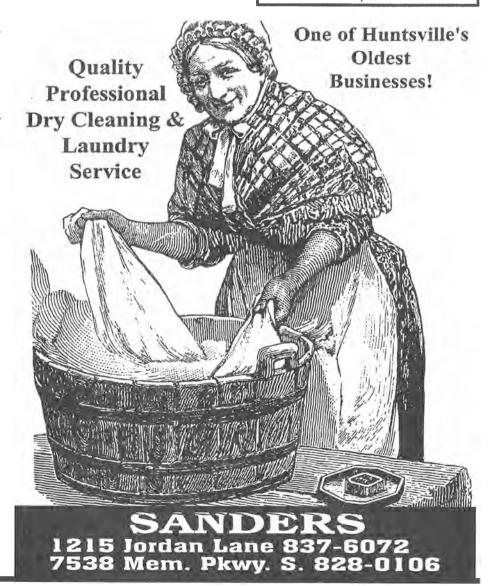


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- "By the year 2000, we will undoubtedly have a sizeable operation on the moon; we will have achieved a manned Mars landing; and it's entirely possible we will have flown with men to the outer planets."- NASA scientist Wernher von Braun, 1969.

- "Sensible and responsible women do not want to vote."-President Grover Cleveland in 1905.

- "We just won't have arthritis in 2000."- Dr. William Clark, president of the Arthritis Foundation, 1966.

- In 1902, Life Magazine printed a cartoon with the caption "Sight-seeing in 1920." It showed a group of tourists floating in a balloon while a guide pointed downwards saying, "That depression down there is where New York City stood. But with all its skyscrapers and underground tunnels it suddenly sunk one day and they haven't been able to find

it since."

- "God himself could not sink this ship."- Deckhand on the Titanic, April 10, 1912.

- The Associated Press' 1950 predictions on life in the year 2000 included a vision of Amazon women. The average woman, it forecasted, would be more than 6 feet tall, with muscles like a truck driver, and would consume food capsules instead of meat and potatoes.

- "I predict the Internet... will soon go spectacularly supernova and in 1996 catastrophically collapse."- Bob Metcalfe, InfoWorld, 1995

- "64K ought to be enough memory for anybody."- Bill Gates, 1981.



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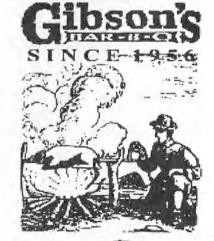
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2 bottles Champagne

3 cups club soda

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l tablespoon sugar

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Hershey's Kisses are called that because the machine that makes them looks like it's kissing the conveyor belt. all ingredients together in a large punch bowl. Decorate with the sliced fruit and sugared grapes. Serve immediately to make the most of the bubbles.



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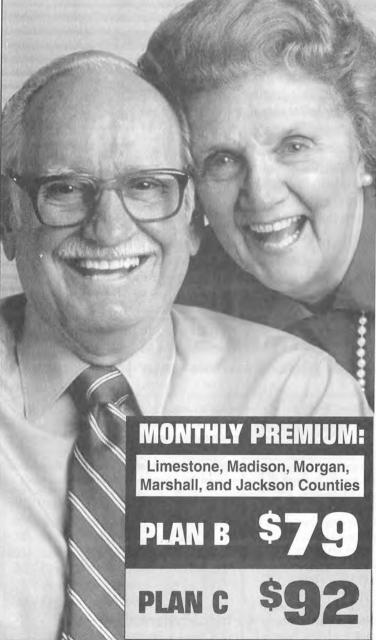
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Gurley's Contribution to the Major Leagues

by Jim Sandoval

On the 10th of September, 1919 the Philadelphia Athletics future Hall of Fame manager Connie Mack penciled in the lineup the name of Lena Styles, It was the first major league baseball appearance for William Graves "Lenar Styles." Among his Detroit Tiger opponents that day were future hall of famers Ty Cobb and Harry Heilman. Styles' debut was a happy one as the Athletics rallied for six runs in the bottom of the ninth inning to eke out a 6-5 victory.

Lena Styles was born on November 27, 1899 in Gurley. Styles, a catcher, in 1919 had been signed off the campus of the University of Alabama by the Southern Association's Atlanta Crackers team. The Crackers went on to

win the championship that season. Nine of their players, including Styles, were purchased for tryouts by Connie Mack. He went on to spend parts of five seasons in the major leagues with Philadelphia and Cincinnati. He spent seventeen years as a player in professional baseball including stints with Baltimore, Toronto, Reading, Newark. Pine Bluff and Greenville. With Baltimore he caught the legendary "Lefty" Grove and with Toronto a teammate was the great pitcher Carl Hubbell.

As his playing days were coming to a close Styles became a minor league manager. In 1934-5 he managed Pine Bluff in the East Dixie league. In 1936-7 he managed Greenville in the Cotton States league, finishing his career managing Anniston in the Southeastern league. After his baseball career, according to an obituary, he opened a tire recapping business in Anniston. He eventually returned home to Gurley to farm,

Styles passed away on March 14, 1956 in Huntsville and is buried in Gurley.

Lena Styles was posthumously elected to the Huntsville-Madison County Athletic Hall of Fame in 1991. According to a program for the Inaugural Banquet and Induction Ceremony, Styles was a talented story teller, troubadour and Irish tenor. It states in the 1920s he formed a minstrel show, raising enough money to build a new fire station in Gurley.

Madison County can be proud of men such as this that it has sent into the ranks of professional sports,



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The Kitchen Is The Heart Of The Home

from the year 1901

The woman is the heart of the family, but the kitchen is the heart of the home. Since the kitchen is such an important room quite a number of things should be considered to make it convenient, usable and cheery.

The size for ordinary families should be about 10 feet by 12 feet, but this will vary with the needs of the family. A kitchen medium in size is best because it is more easily kept, less steps being required to do the necessary work, thus saving the woman time which may be used for recreation.

Windows on two sides of the kitchen admit better light and give better ventilation. Nothing gets on a woman's nerves quite so much as working in a dark, poorly ventilated kitchen. For better ventilation a hood may be placed over range with a pipe connected directly into the flue. This will carry out smoke and fumes.

Artificial lighting must be placed to suit the worker. Quite a bit of time is wasted when light is back of the worker. Less light will be needed if walls and woodwork are of a light color.

December

- 5 Martin Van Buren
- 5 Walt Disney
- 8 Eli Whitney
- 14 James Doolittle
- 21 Joseph Stalin
- 25 Clara Barton
- 28 Woodrow Wilson
- 29 William Gladstone



29 - Andrew Johnson Birthdays

Only the woman in her own kitchen can place things conveniently for herself. The sink should be under a window. With a cabinet for small supplies, a pantry of medium size for larger utensils and supplies is necessary. A window in this pantry is very essential. All labels should face the front so that the woman of the home can easily find what she is looking for. A stool to sit upon while preparing food is a great help and saves tired feet and nerves. It is no longer considered lazy to sit down when preparing food or washing dishes.

A table in the center of the kitchen is one of the most convenient arrangements a kitchen can have. It saves time and steps.

The height of table, sink, stool and stove will depend on the individual. A person 5 feet 4 inches requiring a 32-inch height for working surface, and increasing 2 inches for every inch of the lady's height.

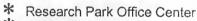
This is the age for beauty and color in the kitchen, but if you can't have both, beauty will have to be sacrificed for convenience.

It takes 3,000 cows to supply the NFL with enough leather for a year's supply of footballs.



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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

With pearls of wisdom contributed by the Liar's Table

Hi ya'll. It sure has been a short year and now it's time for Christmas! The year has been great, lots of happiness, joy, and sadness. But we must move on. Hope you'll stay with us and never miss an "Old Huntsville" issue. I enjoy them so much.

The picture of the month was our own pal **Tom Kennamer** of **Channel 48** TV. I forgot the young lady's name that guessed - but I owe her a big country breakfast!

Cynthia Parson had a wonderful art show, comprised of her beautiful paintings, at 801 Franklin Street. I saw lots of friends looking good - Mr. and Mrs. Frank Morring, also glad to see J.R. Brooks, and his lovely wife Kikki. Cynthia's mother and Dad (the Masseys) and her sister Caroline. Great crowd - met Joe, the owner of 801 Franklin Street and he's really a great guy!

There is a group of people called **Members of Towery & Towery** of America. And recently I fed a group of them here and

Mrs. Jack Towery of Fayetteville, Tenn., George & Della Guise, Vancouver, Wa., Leon Towery and Janie Mac Towery Huffman of Huntsville, Ala. They were really having a blast.

Robbie and Bill Hallsey and Jessie and Dennis Camalli gave me the honor of feeding them as they were touring Huntsville. Our sympathy goes to the Buck Brody family in the death of Mr. Brody. Been friends a long time and I love you all. Also, our sympathy to the Milton Pills family. Laura, we love you. Also to Lisa Fanning on the death of her daughter in law. I love you very much.

Byron and Tillie Laird brought their guests to breakfast which included Jim and Phyllis Blazer, (Ben Williams) Byron's sister, from Melbar, Florida and Gaylon and Dean Boyd. They enjoyed it so much. Lots of laughing going on.

The election is over so what next? A great big congratulation goes to our many elected friends, Bud Cramer, Tommy Ragland, Jane Smith, Mike Gillespie, Lynn Sherrod and Jerry Craig. May be some names I missed and if so, we love you too. I know you will all do us a great job!

We had a breakfast for **Bud Cramer** on election day and, boy did the people show up! The way he spends time talking to everyone shows why he's reelected every time.

We are going to miss **Harold Harbin**, **Mr. Billy Harbin** and **Mr. Frank Riddick** around the courthouse. You have worked hard and I wish for you all the very best life has to offer.

I've been thinking about old friends who once ate with me like Mr. Cecil Ashburn and Bill King (our state senator). Tom Carney told me that he had seen them both recently and I was so glad to hear about them. Come in to see me and have a good breakfast!

My son in law **Wayne Elkins** had a five bypass heart surgery. Been rough but he's doing well now. Thanks to you all for your

Photo of The Month

The first person to correctly identify the picture of this little girl wins a free breakfast at Eunice's Country Kitchen. So stop on by and tell Aunt Eunice who you think it is!

Hint: A beautiful News Anchor!





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Sandra Steele, President

love and concern.

We keep hearing gossip that a member of the city council has decided not to run again in the next election. Wonder who it could be?

Byron Laird had a successful book signing here at the restaurant on November 14 and greeted lots of his friends. His just published book called "Thou Shalt Not Boil Eggs in a Microwave" is chock-full of amusing stories. I well recall the incident he tells about the night he missed a turn and got us lost and out of gas between Birmingham and Cullman. They will make real nice Christmas presents!

My dear friend, Loyd Tomlinson, of the Outback Restaurant tells me he's really selling lots of gift certificates. Another good idea for a Christmas present for those who have everything!

Please attend the Christmas Play at **Twickenham Church of Christ** Dec. 15 and 16th - it's the best yet.

Congratulations to our "Mayor of Five Points" for getting the new gum named after him - "The Floyd Hardin Gum." Floyd is my good friend!

As I'm writing this column I get word that my dear friend **Jerry Tomlin** just lost his Dad. I'm so sorry and our sympathy goes to the Tomlin family.

Do you guys remember several years back that "Old Huntsville" had a cookbook that sold out in 3 months? That was back in 95. Well, Vol. II is here just in time for Christmas - Cathey Carney tells me it has even more recipes and Tips/Remedies than the first one! Shavers and Books A Million will carry it, and I'll have some here at the restaurant.

Our friends **Steve** and **Jean Brandau** spent Thanksgiving with their 21 month old granddaugh-

ter in Iowa. Talk about proud grandparents!

We hear **Karla** and **Ed Gniadek** are going to spend Christmas with their family in Pennsylvania.

Ken Follett's new mystery novel should be in the bookstores any day. The story takes place in the 1950s and much of the plot is based here in Huntsville. For more details check out the web site, **Huntsville.about.com.**

Our dear friend **Loretta** sure has been a busy woman since she was elected mayor. She is a good person and has a big heart. We are lucky to have her.

For all the people who have asked my advice about the perfect Christmas present, I recommend the gift of Love ... it doesn't cost anything, it will be cherished forever and it will make us all better people.

I wish you and yours a great and merry Christmas and hope to see you during the holidays. That's all for now but just remember I love all of you! One Meal, One Customer at a time.



NO PULES.

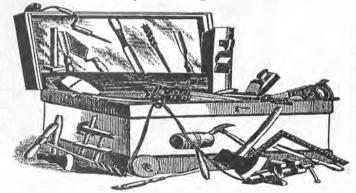
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Christmas Treasures

Savory Roast Loin of Pork

1 3-5 lb Pork Loin

2 T. garlic powder

4 T. black pepper

1 T. dill weed

Salt to taste

Rinse pork loin, pat dry. Spray entire loin with garlic flavored vegetable oil. Roll in mixture of the spices, rub into the meat generously. Place pork in small pan that you've sprayed with oil, bake for 20 minutes per pound, uncovered. Remove and let rest for 5 minutes, make gravy with the drippings. Slice and enjoy. This is delicious with a sweetened, smoky apple barbecue sauce.

Poor Man's Boursin

2 sticks butter, softened

2 8-oz. Packages cream cheese, softened

2 t. minced garlic

1/2 t. oregano

½ t. marjoram

½ t thyme

1/4 t. basil

1/4 t. white pepper

½ t. dill weed

In electric mixer combine the butter with cheese, add spices. Mix til smooth, pack into container, place in fridge at least a day. This will keep for several weeks, can be served with crackers, vegetable crudites, or sliced fresh French bread.

Broccoli Casserole

2 heads fresh broccoli

4 T. butter

l onion chopped and sauteed in butter

l can cream of mushroom soup

2 eggs, beaten

1 c. mayonnaise

1 c. grated sharp Cheddar cheese

3 1/2 c. cubed stuffing

Combine all ingredients except dressing and butter in baking dish, spread dressing on top. Pour the 4 tablespoons melted butter over the dressing and bake for 60 minutes in 350 degree oven.

Cranberry Apple Cobbler

1 ½ c. raw cranberries

5 c. tart apples, peeled, cored and sliced

1 t. cinnamon

1/4 c. butter, melted

1 t. nutmeg

½ c. brown sugar

½ c. flour

1/3 c. oats

1/4 c. pecans, chopped

1 T. lemon juice

Place cranberries and apples in large greased baking dish, sprinkle lemon juice on top. Mix flour, oats, brown sugar and nutmeg together, sprinkle over the fruit. Pour melted butter over mixture and sprinkle with cinnamon and pecans. Bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes.

Stuffed Pumpkin

18-inch pumpkin

1 c. cranberries

½ c. dates

½ c. walnuts, chopped

1 c. tart apples, cored, peeled and chopped

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1/4 c. brown sugar
1 t. cinnamon
½ t. ground cloves
½ t. ground allspice
1/4 t. nutmeg
1 t. lemon rind, grated
1 t orange rind, grated

Cut top off the pumpkin, save. Scoop out the inside and combine all ingredients - fill pumpkin. Bake without top for 45 minutes in 350 degree oven. Place top on pumpkin and continue baking for 30 more minutes. Serve warm.

The Toasted Bishop

Stick 8 cloves into each of 2 small oranges and place in roasting pan, bake at 325 degrees for 45 minutes.

To $1\ 1/4\ c$. water add the following:

1 cinnamon stick

2 pieces blades of mace

8 allspice berries

1-inch piece of ginger, peeled

Boil all rapidly, til about a third reduced. Put the roasted oranges, 4 pieces lump sugar and grated rind of one lemon (with juice) into the liquid in a large, warmed serving bowl. Pour a bottle of port into a saucepan and heat gently, don't boil.

Pour the port into the serving bowl and stir well. Sprinkle a little grated nutmeg over all. This is worth making to see how it scents up your kitchen!

Christmas Pick-me-Up

1 T. powdered sugar 1 egg with dash of salt

1 t. Brandy

Separate the egg, beat yolk til thick and lemon-colored, add sugar and brandy and beat again. Blend the white of egg that you have whipped to a stiff froth. This will be so thick you think you can eat it eat it with a spoon, or you may add 1 cup milk with a bit more sugar - gives added strength.

Gluwein

2 liters red wine (Cabernet Sauvignon)

l liter white wine (Chardonnay)

2 c. brown sugar

4 T. whole cloves

8 cinnamon sticks

1 frozen orange juice - 2 qt. size

2 cans water

½ c. lemon juice

Pour all in a large crock pot and heat to boiling. Turn down to about 300 degrees and let steep for 2 hours. Strain out the cloves but leave in the cinnamon sticks. Pour into mugs to serve, add a fresh cinnamon stick.

This will really warm you up on a cold winter night - they serve this on the ski slopes in Switzerland!

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Hot Spiced Cranberry

Juice

4 c. cranberry juice 1/4 c. orange juice 3 whole cloves Honey to taste

Combine, heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove cloves and pour. Add cinnamon sticks to stir. Makes 4 servings.

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A Miserly Man

Lived in Misery and Filth but Died with \$30,000 in his Boot

from 1899 newspaper

A few years ago there lived a miser by the name of Thomas Hussey - his name almost indicated his character. He owned one of the most valuable lots on South Perry, in the heart of the city, and on this lot this curiosity of natural history dwelled in an old-fashioned, antiquated and dilapidated frame house. It was an eyesore to the rich inhabitants who resided in their palatial residences on this most prominent and fashionable street.

He lived all alone in his glory or misery, and cared for no one in particular but himself. He worshiped but one God and that was the golden calf in the shape of money. There was but one familiar tune that he became infatuated with, that he loved above all others, and that was the jingling of the many different coins when he was counting his untold wealth.

He accumulated most of his fortune about middle age-shoemaking when everything was high and he got a good price for his work. He was considered one of the best shoemakers in the South. He did good satisfactory work and got a good price for it. He invested in Wall Street stocks and bonds and was very lucky, and this helped to increase his wealth.

He was very economical in his dress and also in eating. He bought what few clothes that he wore at secondhand prices. He would go to market and buy refused scraps of meat, commonly called dog meat by the butchers.

He would purchase stale bread from the bakers at reduced prices. He slept on a bunk or cot that a menial slave would refuse to sleep on, on account of the vermin and filth. He used to tell the boys that the best friend that he ever had was his mother, and that the next best friend he had was his money.

He took an annual trip to New York every year. However bad that he wanted to go he would place himself in a great deal of incon-

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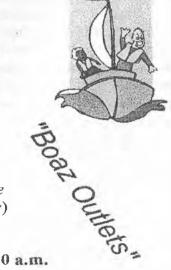
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venience in waiting until he could get reduced rates. The ticket agent said that he would make a double daily trip to the union depot for a month inquiring for cheap tickets.

So finally the tickets came and he concluded to buy one. The ticket agent told him the price of same. It took him about fifteen minutes to count out his dollars, halves, quarters, nickels and copper cents for the price of the ticket. He told the ticket agent when he put down the last copper cent with a trembling hand, and with a pitiful voice, "take it all, I believe you would take the last cent a poor man had." The agent said it was like taking his heart's blood for him to part with his money.

This was the last trip he made to New York. This was in the year 1897. He was found insensible on the streets by the police shortly after. They took him around to the station house, and when he was searched they found over thirty thousand dollars stuffed down in his bootlegs. When the fact of his arrest was published in the papers, two women claiming to be relatives and whom he recognized, called and had him moved to their house where he soon died.



Everyone has a photographic memory - it's just that very few of us have the film.

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Segregation Laws And The Mailman

by James E. Taylor

From 1926 until 1-565 took our property in 1990, my parents' home was on Mitchell Drive which was a couple of blocks from Pulaski Pike and West Holmes Street, both of which were predominantly black neighborhoods. Around 1931 when I was 10 years old, I became fascinated with the black postman (Clarence Powers) who delivered our mail primarily because of his gentle manners and his mode of transportation. He delivered the mail by driving a horse and carriage. The carriage was enclosed much as in the manner of the small enclosed trucks of that day.

After the war, I returned to work at the Russel Erskine Hotel

and in 1947 was made manager.

Around 1948 or 49, the local postmaster contacted me and advised that Clarence's fellow workers at the post office wanted to give him a retirement party but didn't know how to get around the state segregation laws. (Remember - in 1948 there was only one post office in Huntsville and not very many postmen). Our blue room would seat 50 persons which was about the number in attendance. In the center of a dividing wall, there was a door to an adjoining room. We removed the door and placed a separate single table for Clarence in the door to give him the appearance of being the guest of honor, which he was. Thus, we legally beat the segregation laws.

I recall it as being a beautiful retirement party. As I recalled this event in later years, I only regretted that I failed to tell Clarence that I was that young teenager that he delivered mail to in the thirties.

If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of payments.

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Christmas In A '47 Green Plymouth

by Theresa Hanvey Fallwell

Huntsville, Alabama in 1950, was, like most cities and towns in the United States, very concerned about the international crisis in Korea. President Truman's actions headlined newspapers daily, and strange words such as Chunchon and Pyongyang cropped up in hushed, foreboding adult conversations. However, "war talk was generally moderated at the nightly dinner table, and, since television and its twenty four hour news coverage was not yet a reality, most children remained blissfully oblivious to the turmoil and fear in those days so closely following World War II. I was one of those children steeped in innocence, and fortunate enough to live in a place with a family that sought to maintain the sanctity of childhood regardless of the obstacles.

My family moved back to Huntsville in 1945. Dad worked for Mr. Underwood at the Southern Cotton Oil Mill, and Mom taught at Rison School with Mr. Fain as Principal. My brother, Wayne, and I went to Lincoln School where he was in Miss Mitchell's fifth grade and I was in Mrs. Sibley's second grade. We walked back and forth to school every day. The high point of our trip home was a stop at Condra's for a frozen pop sickle, and the ever present hope of finding the advertised, free nickel frozen inside. Home was a four room house on Virginia Boulevard that my parents built themselves with discarded, wooden Redstone Arsenal boxes that had been used to ship munitions overseas during World War II.

The 1950 Christmas season started off with a great deal of promise despite world troubles, and milk skyrocketing to .24 a gallon. Mom and I had been busy preparing gifts, making gum wrappers, tinfoil star ornaments, and baking Grandma's jam cake in time for the season. Then the day after Thanksgiving events began to change. First, I broke out in a red rash Mom diagnosed as measles. She put me to bed and darkened the room. In those days,

the combination of sunlight and measles was thought to cause permanent eye damage. Then, just one day later, Mom took a terrible fall and hurt her ankle. Dad called Miss O'Neal, Dr. James Burnett Laughlin's nurse, and requested a house call.

'Dr. Jim," a tall, distinguished looking man with a full head of gray hair and dark-rimmed glasses, came to our home that evening. He began examining Mom's grotesquely swollen ankle while retelling and laughing at his own well-worn jokes. Suddenly, he turned serious and began to

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examine me more closely. He announced that I did not have measles, but a much more serious disease, scarlet fever, that required quarantine. His experience with infectious diseases when he worked for the national health department caused him to act very prudently. He instructed Dad to remove my brother from the house and not let anyone come in direct contact with me. Dad immediately drove my brother the sixteen miles to Grandpa and Grandma McGehee's house in Upper Hurricane Valley. Dr. Jim returned to his office in the Times Building where he retrieved medicine and peppermints for me. For days, Dr. Jim stopped by our home during his house calls to check on my progress and make certain that both me and my scarlet fever were contained.

This turn of events, Mom and me bedridden, my brother dispatched to my Grandparents, and Dad making runs among all of us and working, seemed to evaporate the promise of a great Christmas. Being a seven year old, I began to complain miserably, particularly about the prospect of missing the Christmas parade. Mom attempted to allay my distress with games, stories, and songs, and Dad put up a sweet-smelling cedar tree that extended all the way from the corner of the bedroom to the door. Despite all their valiant efforts. I would not be consoled.

Early on the afternoon of the Christmas parade, December 3rd, Dad, in his old gray, felt fedora, peeked his head from behind the cedar tree sporting a grin from ear to ear. He told me to get my chin up off the floor as he began stripping quilts off of the bed. He tossed me into the middle of the quilts and rolled me up just like I'd seen him roll hundreds of

cigarettes. With me giggling and questioning his purpose, he placed me in the back seat of our green '47 Plymouth. After he gathered Mom, we drove toward Church Street. I could scarcely contain my excitement. I just knew we were going to the Christmas parade.

Dad pulled the '47 Plymouth into the Huntsville Railroad Depot, working his way around pull cars, trucks, piles of railroad ties, and other obstacles until we were very near the back of the Depot. Dad parked near the old Charleston and Memphis Railroad roundhouse which was now part of the Southern Cotton Oil Mill. He knew just where to park for the best view of the parade.

The day was terribly cold, even at 2:00 in the afternoon with the car heater running. Mom and I snuggled in closer together to share our quilts and our warmth. As I rubbed a ghostly circle on the window, I could see the parade

forming and moving toward Jefferson Street. Dad pointed out Police Chief Carroll and Captain Chambers of the Highway Patrol as they wandered through the crowd. Chaos seemed to reign with prancing horses, all varieties of pets attached to children, floats decorated with seasonal themes. bicycles with crepe paper streamers wrapped in the spokes and







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streaming from the handlebars, and children dressed in costume. Hopalong Cassidy was popular that year and at least a dozen kids had that costume. One girl had a blue dress and red shoes like Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz. The boy who won the twenty five dollar Huntsville Times' prize was dressed like Daniel Boone, complete with several howling, blue tick hounds tied on ropes and all going in different directions. High school bands from Arab, Huntsville, Scottsboro, and Guntersville were noisily coming into formation.

While we watched the parade forming up and exiting the staging area, Dad zipped his coat, turned his collar up, and left the car. A few minutes later, he reappeared with Santa in tow. Santa, in his red suit and bigger than life, bent over and peered at me through the frosted window. Up close, I thought he looked like Mr. Alton Lynch. Santa didn't say a word, just smiled and waved his white gloved hand. I was awestruck and speechless as he walked away and assumed his place at the end of the parade in the Forty et Eight locomotive, a refitted school bus chassis, decorated to the hilt. Daddy later told me that Santa was traveling in the

Forty et Eight locomotive because it honored a group of forty mules and eight heroic men that rode together in a box car in France during World War I. With the Forty et Eight locomotive pulling out of sight and the last strains of Christmas carols still ringing in my ears, Dad pulled the '47 Plymouth back out onto Church Street. He announced his final surprise of the day, a trip to Mullins Cafe for a rare treat, takeout. Ten hamburgers. Dad was my hero-- he had found a way to save the Christmas parade and the day.

The parade was just the first Huntsville Christmas event I was to witness from the back seat of the '47 green Plymouth. Next came the Yule scenes at the Big Spring Park. Two life-size depictions, a Nativity and Santa Claus, designed by Mr. Howard Winkle, were made of plywood and completely lit up. Near the softball diamond across the lagoon from Canal Street was a stable with Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus and three spectacular angels riding high on a golden staircase. Santa Claus, his sleigh, and eight reindeer were on top of the bath house headed for the North Pole with an Eskimo on a sled showing the way. The bath house was strung all around with sparkling lights, and a huge Christmas tree was in front of the playground office. Dad





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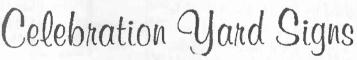
drove us around time and time again so we could take it all the glow and glitter of the lights.

The next event to which Dad chauffeured his cargo of patients was the living Christmas tree presented by the Madison County Girl Scouts. This event happened on the Courthouse Square. About fifty girls dressed in flowing, white robes with golden crowns stood on risers to form a tree. They sang Christmas carols, and Mrs. Joyce Jones read the poem, The Night Before Christmas. Dad parked across the street from the Courthouse in front of City Drug Store. We peered out the back window to see the living tree, and with the car window cracked just a little, the beautiful sounds of Christmas carried on a cold wind and permeated the '47 green Plymouth.

Early on the morning of December 23rd, Dr. Jim made his last scarlet fever house call where he declared me free of disease and dismissed the quarantine. As a special treat for being such a good patient, he suggested that my brother and I might like to take advantage of Mr. Fritz H. Thomas', manager of the Lyric Theater on Washington Street, gift to all children of Huntsville, a free showing of the Wizard of Oz. I was ecstatic. Dad, Mom, me, and the '47 Plymouth made the trip out to Hurricane Valley to retrieve my brother. From there we went to the Lyric Theater to see that wonderful movie.

On Christmas Eve, the family once again crawled into the '47 green Plymouth. This time we drove down California, Wells, Jefferson, Monroe, and Williams Streets just to look at the lights. Everybody had beautiful, well-lit trees or candles in the window. My brother and I had a contest to see which side of the car had more trees in windows. When we got home. Mom made hot chocolate with peppermint sticks for stirring. We sat on an old, wooden apple crate with our backsides to the coal stove that Dad had stoked up heavily to warm us. Just about the time we sat down there was a loud commotion outside: someone was playing, Here Comes Santa Claus, calliope style. Daddy flung the front door open, and Mom grabbed coats for us. Outside was the Forty et Eight locomotive with Santa Claus making a "Cracker-Jack" run. American Legion, Post 37, members and guests escorting Santa Claus included Louis Tumminello, W.L. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Collins, Mr. and Mrs. James Record, James McKee, Frank Rice, W.E. Kerr, S.A. Stephenson, and G.W. Smith. Throngs of kids appeared to receive gum, fruit, and "Crackerjacks" from Santa who was riding on the cowcatcher at the front of the locomotive.

As the locomotive and its flashing lights and sirens turned toward Oakwood Street, we walked back to our home still picking up candy and gum. I overheard Mom say to Dad, somewhat wistfully, "I wonder what Christmas will be like next year. The Times said that the city merchants are going to increase Christmas activities if this crisis in Korea does not break out into a full scaled world war." The word war passed through my consciousness in a fleeting fashion,



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but I was too focused on the really important stuff to question Mom's comment. After all it was Christmas Eve and I had been a good girl all year. I was no longer sick and my family was together. From the corner of my eye I saw the '47 green Plymouth silhouetted in the night, and somehow I knew, that Christmas, 1950, in Huntsville, Alabama had already exceeded all my expectations, and Christmas morn' was still to come.



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1 large onion, chopped 6 ounces cooked bacon, crumbled

1/4 cup chopped celery, or to taste

2 teaspoons dill weed 1 cup lite mayonnaise 1/2 cup regular mustard salt and white pepper to taste

In a large pot, boil your potatoes in plenty of water til tender. When cooked, allow to cool slightly, then cube with skin still on.

Place in fridge for at least an hour, covered in a large bowl.

In a small bowl mix the mayonnaise, mustard, dill weed and salt and pepper. When potatoes are cool, add the mayonnaise mix and stir very well. Mix in the onion, bacon and celery, mixing well after each addition. Back in fridge for at least 3

hours.

To serve, add garnish on each plate of chopped parsley, sprig of fresh dill and a few dandelion heads for color.





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A The Labour Labour Letter

From Quartzburg, Idaho April 26, 1895

Dear Ibby. I wrote a little last night will try to add a little noon 12 M. The boys are complaining a little now about not getting any money. Hope we will hear from Charlie to night will tell you if we do. I do not like to take your money for my self my little girl. I would rather use money that you did not have to work hard to earn. I think it would be just as well for me to make out the papers and send them to you and then you can send direct to Scranton. It will cost \$15.00 for drawing outfit and first mon. tuishon. I will also want some thin foolscap paper to write my lessons on in answer. Then the postage and expressage on the above.

If this should go on and Frank would like to come out he could have the benefit of the Schools instructions as well as my self. You would then have some one to come with you out here. Yes I can meet you in Boise if you want me to but do you think we can stand the extra expense it will (be) an additional \$2.50 at the Hotel beside \$1.00 for dinner two days provideing I whould walk both ways and if I wroad one way it would be \$7.00 both ways. \$10.00 with your fare added to the above then all baggage over 40 lbs costs two cents per lb. so you can see what it will cost.

Mother says (Gyfr?) has a baby that is the reason she got her breath so harde. What was it that was broken. I do not think you

will not kneed a smaller trunk you can bring that much with you and send the rest by freight just as you please. If we have to build we can put up a shell large enough to put up a partition of cheap calico and make it do untill we find out wheather the mine will pay or not. I do not like to invest very much in a house as it is not worth one cent when you leave it. as no one would buy it and it is just that much lost. If you have not sent me any money when you receive this just keep it and I will send you the papers. I will not get to write enough in this but will try and write some more in a day or two again. Yes I will tell you when ever I feel bad or any thing goes wrong did you think I would not. I am in a hurry to night as the P Master wants all our letters mailed at the burg. They have to have so many letters to cancel or it seases to be an office and at present the number is getting small. I have been just handing them to the stage driver in the morn. as he goes by. if the office is changed will have to walk 3 mi. to get our mail.

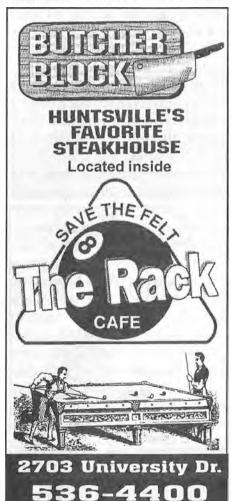
Yes you can not come to quick to suit me. although I have no place to take you and board is only \$6.00 per week. and just common at that. will have to close for this time will love you hugely when you get out here don't you forget it Good by with love to you and Ernest and you.

From the old boy Geo.

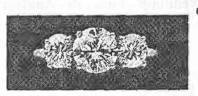
Editor's Note:

This letter was provided by Billie J. Haines of Huntsville.

It was written by his grandfather, George Hartsock Haines to his wife, Ibby while prospecting in Idaho. Both grandparents are buried in Shiloh Cemetery at Ryland, Alabama.



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Edward O'Neal The General Who Wasn't

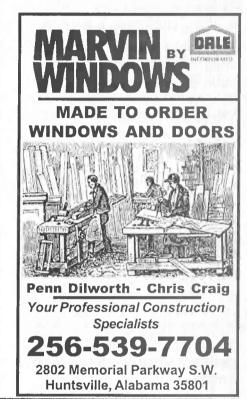
Huntsville was the birthplace of six generals of the War Between the States: Confederate Major Generals John Hunt Morgan and Jones M. Withers and Brigadier General LeRoy Pope Walker, and Union Brigadier Generals David and William Birney and Thomas T. Crittenden. However, another "almost general" was also a native of Huntsville and Madison County. His name was Edward O'Neal and his parents were among the earliest settlers of North Alabama.

Edward Asbury O'Neal was born near Huntsville on September 20, 1818. His parents, Irish on his father's side and French Huguenot on his mother's, had moved to Madison County from South Carolina. O'Neal received his education at the LaGrange Academy and then returned to Huntsville, marrying here on April 12, 1838. Two years later, however, O'Neal moved to Florence and thereafter made that city his home.

When the Civil War began, O'Neal promptly volunteered to defend his native state. He left for Virginia by rail in June, 186 1, as senior captain of a battalion of three companies. O'Neal's men became part of the 9th Alabama Infantry Regiment, and O'Neal was elected major. He rose in rank quickly, becoming lieutenant colonel in October, 1861 and taking over command as colonel in March, 1862.

O'Neal earned a reputation for bravery and skill, being wounded twice in battle. He commanded a brigade at Chancellorsville, and was recommended by Robert E. Lee for promotion to brigadier general. However, something must have happened Gettysburg to change Lee's mind. O'Neal also commanded a brigade in that ferocious struggle, and while there are no complaints on record about O'Neal's conduct. Lee withdrew his recommendation. The Confederate Congress had already issued O'Neal's commission, but complied with Lee's wishes and did not deliver it. O'Neal's promotion was then cancelled.

Edward O'Neal commanded his regiment through the end of the war. He was often referred to as General O'Neal, and many



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people apparently believed he was one. However, the courageous officer was never officially more than a colonel. Always a popular figure, O'Neal was elected Governor of Alabama twice, in 1882 and in 1884. He died at Florence on November 7, 1890, and is buried in his adopted city.

However, Edward O'Neal does hold a unique distinction by being the only governor of Alabama whose son was also elected governor. Florence native Emmett O'Neal was elected in 1910, and became the first Alabama governor to occupy the executive mansion in Montgomery. His father would have been proud.

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Mr. Shelton had been drinking heavily for the past two or three days, neighbors had heard violent arguments between him and his wife. His death resulted from the drinking, together with an overdose of morphine administered by physicians.

Yesterday evening at 5 o'clock Dr. Hugh Boyd was summoned to attend Mrs. Shelton who was ill from nervous prostration, and after attending to her was called into an adjoining room by Mr. Shelton, who requested a hypodermic injection of morphine, insisting that he was suffering intensely. The doctor gave him the dose.

About 10 o'clock last night Dr. W. C. Maples was called in to see Mrs. Shelton, and he, too, was called upon by Mr. Shelton for a hypodermic, which Dr. Maples administered, not knowing of the one given by Dr. Boyd.

At 1 o'clock Mr. Shelton was discovered to be dead by Dr. Hugh Boyd.

Mr. Shelton was a young man of fine business ability, and had been associated with his father, H. H. Shelton, in a prosperous mercantile business here for several years. He was 32 years of age and leaves a wife and 3 children.

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SLAVERY

The Forgotten Story Of How It Began In America

publicized, the first African Americans actually arrived in what is now the United States in 1619, one year before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. This historical omission should not surprise us too much, since many "politically correct" history books almost ignore the fact that Virginia was founded in 1607. This makes the Pilgrims practically Johnniescome-lately, which would never go over in Boston.

Critics of the South also conveniently ignore a landmark event that took place in Virginia in 1654. This was nothing less than the beginning of lifelong slavery for generations of black Americans. Massachusetts had legalized enslaving red Indians in 1646, after defeating the Pequods in King Philip's War.

African American slavery began with a simple legal suit brought by an obscure Virginian named Andrew Johnson. It seems Mr. Johnson had pur-

chased the services of a black man named John Casor. Casor was an indentured servant bound to his master only for five years.

Indentured servants were immigrants who could not afford to pay their own passage. Instead, they would bond themselves to the captain of a ship, who would auction their services to the highest bidder on arriving in America. The purchaser thus paid for the immigrant's passage, and in return the immigrant belonged to his master for a number of years. As often as not, these "temporary slaves" were white (both male and female) and were treated no better than black slaves would be in the centuries to come. In fact, indentured servants were often treated even harsher, since their master had no long term interest in their health. A master could also sell an indentured servant. and it was not unusual to see a free black overseer marching a group of white bond servants to an auction. Once a servant had

worked out his indenture, of course, he (or she) was freed and became a citizen. If male, he would be granted 50 acres by Virginia to start his own farm.

John Casor had already completed his indenture but Andrew Johnson still kept him in bondage, which was a serious legal offense. Casor complained to a neighbor named Parker, who told the authorities. Frightened, Johnson reluctantly set him free. However, Casor had no money of his own and entered a new indenture with Parker, who was obviously more kindhearted than Johnson.

When Andrew Johnson learned that Casor had bound himself to Parker, he was furious. Johnson promptly went to court, arguing that he had brought Casor to Virginia and if anyone had a right to Casor's services it was the man who paid his passage. Surprisingly, the court sided with Johnson and ordered Casor to be his servant for life.

John Casor thus became the first black slave in America.

So who was this despicable Andrew Johnson? Like Casor, he was himself black. Andrew Johnson was apparently one of the original 20 Africans who had been sold as indentured servants at Jamestown by a Dutch sea captain in 1619. Gaining his freedom a few years later, Johnson went on to become a prosperous tobacco plantation owner. In 1651 he imported five indentured servants, one of them the unfortunate John Casor. Ironically, slavery in the American South was thus unknowingly begun by an African American who in a few years would see his people suffer the same fate

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- An argument for the good health of Huntsville speaks for itself in the little fact about the old Negro who had lived here 106 years and during all that time he you. had not lost more than a year's time from actual labor.

- It is remarkable how some people can wear good clothes, sport around and enjoy life and not work. We were never able to work that combination.

- Next time you drive into town, you'll be wanting during your stay a real good drink. Something to quench your thirst to stay quenched. Drink Coca-

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- John Griffin and Jim Brown, colored, were arrested and placed in jail here by Deputy Sheriffs Pierce and Robinson on charges of gaming and public drunkenness. Deputy Pierce also found a concealed razor on the person of Brown. Griffin it is believed is wanted in Gadsden on a charge of murder and will be held here until officials of that place advise disposition.

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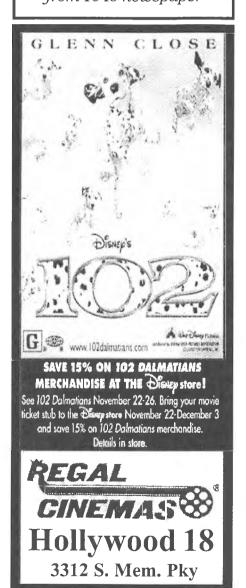
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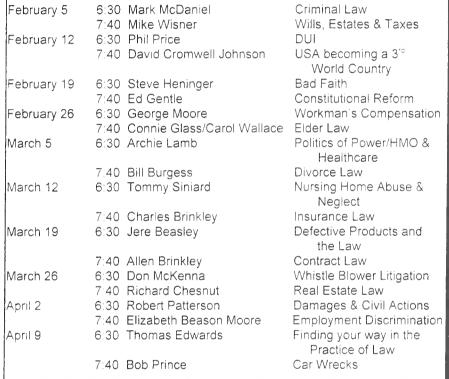
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Murder On Green Mountain

by Fred Simpson

As the sun rose on Oct. 17, 1961, there was no hint that the day would be any different than thousands of others. Like countless small southern towns, Huntsville awoke to the new day in a lethargic manner.

Old man Putnam, an employee at the downtown pool hall leaned on his broom debating whether the sidewalk was dirty enough for him to bother sweeping it. Earl Frazier, a deputy sheriff, was sitting in his patrol car reading the newspaper and drinking coffee. For some odd reason though, he was having trouble concentrating.

Across town, William "Bill" Bowen was having the same problem. He had shown up for work at the regular time that morning, but was having difficulty focusing on the day's business. The previous day he had gone door-to-door soliciting pest control contracts and one person he had called on was a lady by the name of Janice Thomas. Now, try as he might, he could not get her

out of his mind.

No one would have described Bowen as a ladies' man. Short, chubby, with a reddish complexion, he had a history of violent outbursts. Complicating the image that he tried to present was a perpetual shortage of money. Al-

though he had recently been hired as manager of a local pest control firm and given a small raise in salary, a local finance company was calling him every day threatening to repossess his car.

Finally, giving up on any pretense of work, he grabbed his jacket and told an employee he would be out for the rest of the day. His first stop was at Clayton Allen's bootleg joint on Stevens Avenue. There he ran into one of his closest friends, James B. King, with whom he shared a bottle of beer. They rode around for a while before stopping at the First Na-

tional Bank where Bowen made a deposit for his company. Next they decided to stop at the Pullman's Cafe, where they drank more beer and killed time by shooting pool. When King casually mentioned that he had recently purchased some "bennies," Bowen insisted they go get them.

Bowen had a history of drug abuse and was addicted to amphetamines.

After dropping King off at the Fairground Cafe and picking up a bottle containing some 600 bennies, Bowen went back to work. Again his thoughts turned





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to the woman he had seen the day before. At about 2 p.m., Bowen decided to visit the woman again.

Janice Thomas' home was in the Green Mountain area in a wooded, secluded spot some 500 vards from the nearest neighbor. Bowen had left a termite control book at the Thomas home the previous day and it seemed the perfect excuse to regain entrance to the residence.

Approximately three hours later, at 5:45 that evening, Huntsville Police received word of a murder. Janice Thomas' husband had returned home from work and discovered his wife's bloody and mutilated body sprawled on the floor of their home. Thomas felt her pulse to see if she was still alive. She was not.

The first officers on the scene were Sgt. Butler, Officer Hogue and Detectives Owen and Shay. After securing the area they began a preliminary investigation. The partially clad body had been found sprawled on the floor amid a large amount of blood. The murder weapon, a large butcher knife, was still imbedded in the victim's neck. This was said to have been the most cold-blooded and ruthless murder in Huntsville history. Within hours every available policeman was assigned to the case with only one order: "Find the murderer!"

Unfortunately for the detectives there were no clues, no witnesses, and no one in the neighborhood had reported seeing anything unusual.

Late that night, with policemen all across Huntsville working overtime in an effort to find the killer, an unmarked police car pulled into an alley behind Lincoln School on Meridian Street. The driver of the car, an experienced investigator, waited patiently for a

figure to emerge from the shadows and slide into the front seat with him. The man was an informer, a small time hustler who periodically traded information to police in an effort to stay out of jail. Tonight he was informing on two of his friends who had recently broken into a grocery store.

The investigator, after writing down the information, prepared to leave when, almost as an afterthought, asked about the murder that had occurred that afternoon.

"I don't know nuthin' about that! I swear I don't!""

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the informer's denial. So the investigator kept prying. The informer, who had several possible charges pending against him, finally told the detective that he would name the killer in exchange for having his name kept out of the case. A deal was quickly made and within minutes the officer had a name: William Bowen, the informer's best friend.

In a matter of hours the police had a printout on the suspect.

"William Bowen, 30 years old, dishonorably discharged from the U. S. Army, twice convicted of assault with a deadly weapon, one count of auto larceny and four counts of burglary and grand larceny."

During one of the assaults he had killed a man for which he spent time in the penitentiary.

At 7:30 on the morning after the murder, Bowen showed up at the pest control company he worked for. Although he had no idea the police were searching for him, he realized it was probably just a matter of time. Retrieving a sawed-off shotgun from the supply room and a bottle of amphetamines from his desk, he told a co-worker that he would not be back that day.

Another employee of the pest control company later told police that Bowen had long scratches on his face and was acting in a highly agitated manner.

At 9:20 a.m. Bowen cashed a \$900 check at First National Bank on the Parkway. Bowen had either found or stolen this check a year before. He had no trouble forging the payee's name, E.H. Drake, to the check.

Paranoid and terrified that police were closing in on him, Bowen drove to Birmingham, taking pills and drinking alcohol all the way. After abandoning his car at the Quick Park parking lot on the corner of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., he walked to a post office, where he mailed a letter and \$200 to his wife.

The letter read:

"My darling, I am sorry about this, but I couldn't help it, but remember I do love you. Here is \$200, use it good, pay Ed for the gas. I will find some way to come to you soon. The police are after me, I do love you. Bill."

Bowen next took a cab to the Sears Roebuck Shopping Center and bought a suit, shoes, shirts and underclothes. After completing his purchases he checked in at the Plaza Hotel where he bathed and changed clothes. The amphetamines he had been taking all day made it impossible for him to remain calm enough to stay in one place. Two hours later he hailed a Yellow Cab and asked for a ride to Atlanta. The cabbie, after making sure he had the \$56 to pay the fare, agreed to take him.

In Atlanta he registered at a cheap hotel under the name of James Patrick. Around 11 p.m., in an attempt to learn what was happening in Huntsville, he



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placed a long distance call to the Fairground Cafe. Norma Dauberry, an employee, answered and the operator told her it was a long distance call for James B. King.

King, who often frequented the cafe, was present. He accepted the call and after a short conversation, told Norma it was Bowen trying to get him to come to Atlanta. He wasn't going to go, even though Bowen had offered him \$20 for expenses.

The following morning after drinking a bottle of cognac and taking more pills, Bowen called his family to learn what was happening. His wife told him that the police had already been to their home, and questioned her.

Bowen, in his drugged and drunken stupor, next called Sgt. Henshaw at the Huntsville Police Department and said he knew the police were looking for him. The booze and pills had warped his thinking to the point that he thought the noise he had earlier heard outside his room was the Atlanta police. He imagined that they had surrounded the building and were getting ready to tear gas his room.

Bowen told Henshaw that he would turn himself in if Henshaw would call the cops off. Henshaw, playing for time and trying to keep the conversation going, agreed, providing that Bowen would return to Huntsville immediately and give himself up.

Bowen immediately took a cab to the airport where he caught an airplane flight to Huntsville. Upon arriving in Huntsville, he took another cab to the police headquarters where he surrendered.

Ironically, the plane also carried two Huntsville policemen who were unaware of their fellow passenger's identity.

At police headquarters, Bowen was quickly ushered into an interrogation room where they began to question him. At first Bowen denied everything, even claiming the scratches on his face had occurred when he was wrestling with a friend. Finally when all other attempts at getting Bowen to talk had failed, he was confronted with a statement from an informer linking Bowen to the murder. The police refused to identify the informer.

Probably realizing that it was useless to deny it any longer, Bowen confessed to the brutal slaying, giving the following account:

As he drove toward the Thomas home the afternoon of Oct. 17, he had already planned to rape Mrs. Thomas. When she answered the door she recognized

him and asked if he had come for his termite book. After chatting for a few minutes, Bowen, emboldened by the drugs and alcohol, told her that he wanted to "love her."

Ignoring her pleas that her husband would be home from work soon, Bowen forced her into the bedroom where he made her begin undressing. His conscience began to bother him at this point and he apologized to Mrs. Thomas saying, "Mrs. Thomas, I am ashamed of myself and I can't go through with this." He started to leave when Mrs. Thomas, terrified, ran past him toward the kitchen.

Afraid that she was going to call the police, Bowen ran after her and began beating her about the head with a rolling pin that was lying on the kitchen counter. Dur-



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SALMON BAR 6 GRILL 975 AIRPORT RD 882-0459 ing the struggle Mrs. Thomas managed to scratch Bowen on his face before she was knocked to the floor, unconscious. Bowen, afraid she would identify him, grabbed a butcher knife from a kitchen drawer and began stabbing her.

She was lying on the floor, "making a funny noise," as he stabbed her approximately 30 times. After the murder Bowen regained his composure and went around the house wiping away all fingerprints that he could remember having made.

Bowen claimed that after hitting Mrs. Thomas' head with the rolling pen his mind went blank. He had been taking amphetamines and opium daily and had injected some that morning. According to his account, he had become addicted to it while serving in Korea during the war.

"What will happen to me now?" Bowen asked an officer after finishing his confession.

"Friend, you've just bought yourself a one-way ticket to hell. You gonna ride the lightning!" was the reply.

Although, he was employed at the time, Bowen claimed to have no resources with which to hire an attorney and the court appointed James W. Baker to represent him.

On Nov. 14,196 1, William S. Bowen Jr. was arraigned. A trial date was set for Dec. 5, 1961. Before the trial, lawyer Baker offered to plead his client guilty to first-degree murder for the reduced sentence of life in prison. The offer was rejected, so Baker pled his client "not guilty by reason of in-

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sanity."

Circuit Judge Elbert Parsons presided over the case which was prosecuted by Solicitor Thomas N. Younger and his assistant, David L. "Dea" Thomas. The trial's outcome was almost a foregone conclusion. The state paraded a steady stream of witnesses in front of the jury to collaborate Bowen's confession. which was the state's whole case and had been obtained with the help of an informer. There was no hard evidence that Bowen was the killer, only his word and that of the informer, who ironically testified as a friend of Bowen.

The jury took less than two hours to render a verdict of guilty. Bowen stood before the judge with his hands clasped in front of him, apparently unmoved as the judge sentenced him to death. His only comment was that he "deserved it."

Later, Bowen asked for a meeting with prosecutor Younger. After shaking hands Bowen broke the ice saying "no hard feelings."

Younger replied "It's just a job."

On Jan. 15, 1965, some three years after his conviction, Bowen ate a heavy meal and went unassisted to the death chamber where he joked with guards as they strapped him in the electric chair, preparing him to "ride the lightning."

Bowen died without ever knowing the identity of the friend

who had betrayed him and sent him to the chair.

The informer was killed in a honky-tonk brawl a few years later.

Fred Simpson is the author of <u>Sins of Madison County</u>. The book tells in vivid detail of Huntsville's darkest period; a time when mobs ruled the streets and vigilantes lynched people with no interference from the authorities.





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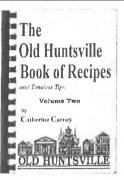
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