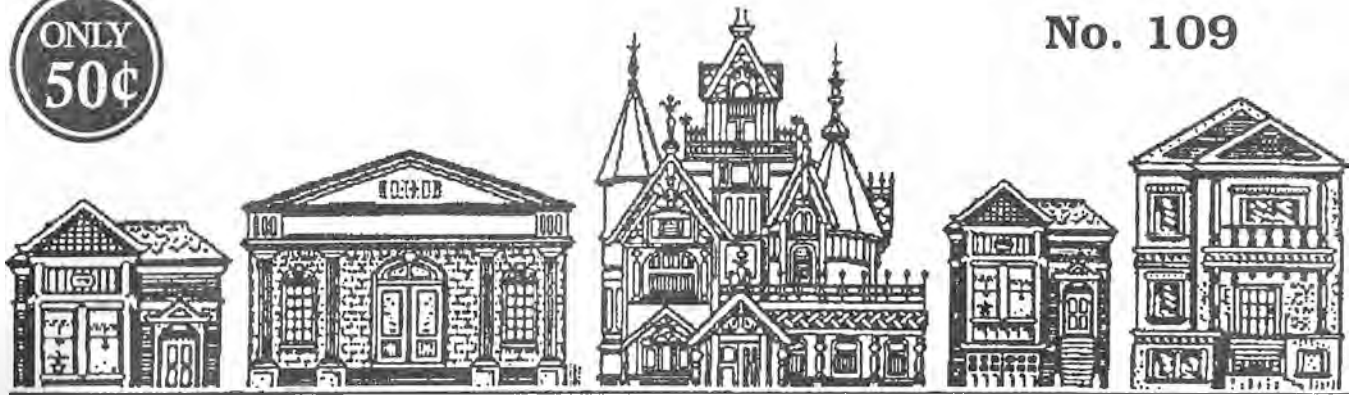


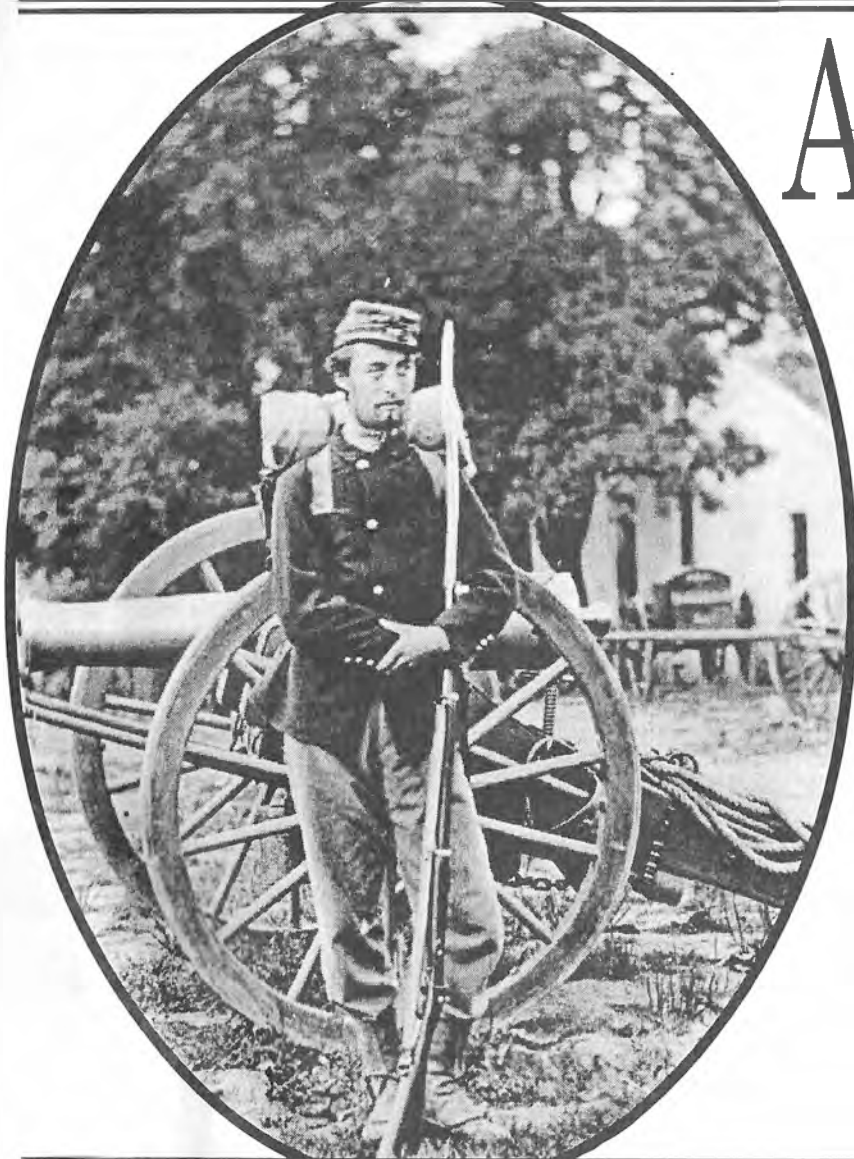
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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



A Soldier's Diary

Dec. 25, 1863 – Christmas night. Awoke to the notes of the bugle calling us to get ready to move. Struck tents at 8 A.M. Roads much better than those we have passed. Marched fast most of the time, having to go much out of the way to avoid swamps or bluffs. Marched quickly along, thinking of home and what they were doing on this Christmas day. No crackers for supper, so we made up the Christmas supper on parched corn and coffee. During the night rained heavily.

Also in this issue: A Mill Village Christmas

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A Soldier's Diary

Tens of thousands of Union soldiers were either stationed in, or traveled through, Huntsville during the Civil War. While a few left brief accounts of their experiences here, none detailed the everyday life of a soldier.

Recently *Old Huntsville* came into possession of the diary of Jenkin Jones, a private with the 6th Wisconsin Artillery Battery, who was stationed in Huntsville from January to June of 1863. The record he left stands as one of the most detailed accounts in existence of a soldier's life in Huntsville. The diary consists of over three hundred pages of which excerpts appear below.

Dec. 25, 1863 - Bellefonte - Christmas night. Awoke to the notes of the bugle calling us to get ready to move. Struck tents at 8 A.M. Roads much better than those we have passed. Marched fast most of the time, having to go much out of the way to avoid swamps or bluffs. Marched quickly along, thinking of home and what they were doing on this Christmas day. Came into camp late in the near the county seat of

Jackson County (Scottsboro). The buildings burned and gone to ruin. No crackers for supper, so we made up the Christmas supper on parched corn and coffee. During the night rained heavily.

Dec. 26 - Larkinsville - Four small crackers for breakfast. Struck tents in drenching rain. Warning given not to enter houses as smallpox was prevalent. One house had five patients, another a corpse.

Dec. 30 - Cold and cloudy day. Dressed the two hogs brought yesterday and salted them. The chickens hung up for New Year's. Women and boys in camp trading cornbread for coffee and salt, etc. with the soldiers.

Jan. 2, 1864 - Dance held in town by Alabam girls and Yankee soldiers. Running rumor afloat that we are to leave for Huntsville. Don't like it.

Jan. 7 - Leaving for Huntsville. The roads are frozen and very rough, the weather extremely cold covering our clothes with ice and sleet. The troops marched fast and kept warm but the (wagon) train moved slow, wagons sticking in ruts, mules giving up and lying down in the road, to receive beastly oaths from the impatient wagon masters. Came upon the officer's wagon on side of road, axle tree broken, where we had to stop and take on the load and it followed in the rear with a pole



Old Huntsville

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Jan. 9 - Huntsville - Natives say it is the coldest day known for years. Animals and wagons covered with ice. Coming around the point of the bluff we could see Huntsville in the valley three miles distant. Marched through the town with colors flying and bands playing, much to the satisfaction of the large crowds of contrabands that flocked at every corner. Came into camp a mile north of town on Russel Hill.

Jan 10 - Not withstanding that all were tired from the march of the last three days, camp reverberated with the sound of ax, saw and lumber, erecting quarters for the third time this winter. Our tent is back with the boys on the R.R.

Jan. 11 - Worked quite hard all day building fireplace. Had to carry much of the bricks on our shoulders but we completed it by night and had the satisfaction of sitting in front of a fire in the evening. Draws well.

Jan. 12 - Pleasant in the middle of the day but freezing at night. Busy most of the time completing our shebang (hut). It is 6 ft. by 8 ft. Very small but quite cozy for two soldiers. Door is in front, 18 in. by 30 in. Bunk is in the back, 4 ft. wide. At the foot of it is a hardtack box for cupboard, etc.

Jan. 13 - Wrote letter home. Mail arrived. None for me. Sadly disappointed.

Jan. 16 - A ball was announced to be held tonight in town and many of the boys attended, but found to their chagrin that it was a Negro dance. Some returned crestfallen, others enjoyed the joke by tripping with the colored sisters.

Jan. 17 - Walked over town. Visited the waterworks of the city, which is the largest of the kind in the South with the exception of the one at Columbia, S.C. A large stream gushes from the solid rock under the courthouse, which is dammed about four feet and propels a large water wheel which works a powerful force pump that forces water all over the city, furnishing a hydrant at every corner. Pump is enclosed in a neat stone house. Returned to camp for supper and evening roll call, then we walked back again. The (Presbyterian) church was very neat and filled with soldiers, but one woman in the audience. Good to be once more listening to an earnest speaker and hear old fashioned tunes.

Jan. 18 - An idle day in camp. Nothing of interest. Griff and myself went to town on pass, made a few purchases.

Jan. 20 - Health good. Plenty to eat and nothing to do. Foragers brought in several hogs. Gave us a piece of ribs which we roasted before the fire. A fine dinner. (Two men) in our Battery in jail in town for robbing an old gray haired

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Negro after dark while on his way home from camp, where he had been to sell corn cakes.

Jan. 21 - Drill call sounded at 9 A.M. and we fell in. Lieutenant Clark drilled us in infantry drill for half an hour and then had the chief of the platoon take over. The same in the afternoon. Rather awkward at first, but it is easier to remember than to learn.

Jan. 22 - Arose with a slight cold and swollen face from the inflamed nerve of defective tooth. On fatigue all day hauling rubbish from front of Battery.

Jan. 24 - My face much swollen yet and exceedingly painful. Was on guard first relief. The weather was warm and I felt unwell, sick headache and aching limbs, but I stood my guard. Clothing inspection by Captain Dillon. He was very particular, found much fault with the service worn clothes in which we have marched through rain and mud, sleeping on the wet ground, etc. He seemed to have little sympathy with his privates, but is determined they shall look well.

Jan. 25 - A delightful night to stand guard. Mail came in while I was on. I received one from brother T.L., which I read by the pale light of the moon while walking my silent beat, contrary to military rules.

Jan. 26 - Another beautiful day full of sunlight and comfort.

Drill call sounded as usual but instead of drilling we policed about three acres of ground by order of Captain Dillon. Teams sent to Flint River and returned at night with the remaining four guns. Rumors of a rebel cavalry advancing. Two regiments gone out, others under orders.

Jan. 27 - Reveille sounded at 5:30 A.M. Blankets to be hung out for airing, quarters to be swept out and clothing brushed for inspection at 9:00. Train cars came by this afternoon for the first time, the whistle of the train responded to by a hundred cheers by the boys. Cavalry came in, reported rebels repulsed.

Jan, 28 - Notified I was to go on foraging detail. Fell in with long (wagon) train under quartermaster of 18th Wisconsin. Went on turnpike and traveled about eight miles on winding road but beautiful country. Obtained plenty of corn on a large plantation which all the whites had left, leaving a large flock of Negro women and children unprovided for. They seemed delighted to see us until some of the boys took unallowed privileges with the chicken coop.

Jan. 29 - Drilled in forenoon and afternoon. The Captain drilled us for about thirty minutes and appeared well pleased. He is getting very strict. Put one of the boys on extra duty, all day for slight mistake at guard mount this

morning. Rebel cavalry still reported very active.

Jan. 30 - No drill and rain pre-

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vented parade in afternoon. Dr. Coleman sent for J.D. and myself and presented us with a can of condensed milk for building up his chimney.

Feb. 3 - Instead of the usual drill this morning, was general policing, ground to be swept, about five acres. Guard house and kitchen to be whitewashed. A well started. I climbed Russel Hill for evergreen boughs for brooms in company with a couple of others and managed it so as not to return until nearly recall. That is the soldier's strategy - Do no more than you can.

Feb. 7 - Attended church (Episcopal). Gothic style, poorly arranged for sound. The civilians were apparently of the aristocratic class, mostly women equaling the military in numbers ... careful always to omit the prayer for the president of the U.S.A. - Collection plate was passed which was returned well laden with soldiers "greenbacks." The money of the government they will not pray for is very acceptable.

Feb. 8 - Several articles were stolen from camp lately and a guard was detailed to watch the quarters. At 3 P.M. assembly was sounded and all men prevented from entering their quarters while they were searched. One revolver

was recovered. Dillon very angry.

Feb. 9 - Called on before finishing my breakfast to go foraging. Two wagons from the battery fell in with a train of 150 wagons. Drove fast nine miles south - where there were 100 Negroes at work for the government, husking corn, protected by infantry. Soon loaded and started back at head of train. Arrive in camp not very tired but exceedingly hungry, having had nothing since morning.

Feb. 13 - No drill or parade but we did not get paid off. Camp unusually active during the day, Ball playing and the boxing gloves in constant use. At night a merry dance went on in the open air with music from the fiddle and bow. Ladies dispensed with from necessity.

Feb. 20 - As soon as breakfast was over I hitched up a new team and drove out to a confiscated fence a mile off, for a load of lumber as the Hungerford brothers were desirous of coming in with us, and we must build a bigger hut. After we were all loaded, a guard commanded us to unload but after some talk allowed us to leave in quiet with our lumber.

Feb. 22 - On foraging detail. Traveled in south westerly direction for 15 miles. Walked most of

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the way. Jerked our corn from a 500 acre field. Returned by sun-down, awful tired and with severe sore throat. Eve was mounted and procured four chickens and a hog in exchange for coffee. Also got a mutton. At night a grand ball was to be held by shoulder straps (officers) in town, but they failed to find but four ladies to join in the festivities. They ended in a drunken carousal, their maniac yells rending the midnight air.

Feb. 25 - Reported at sick call and was excused from duty. Four desperate big powders of quinine, opium, etc. to be taken. Returned to quarters, burned the powders and went to bed. Could eat nothing all day.

Feb. 28 - Went to the Presbyterian church. A sermon fraught with southern principles. P.B. Moss, after a short illness, died very suddenly. It was unexpected by all and spread gloom over the camp.

Feb. 29 - Rained heavily all night and continued through the day without interruption. Funeral ceremonies for Moss. In charge of Sergeant Hood ... followed by a caisson on which the coffin was placed. The procession marched about two miles passing through town. Chaplain offered short prayer before the burial. It was a solemn but tearless scene. Comrades paying the last tribute of respect to a fellow soldier.

March 1 - A dreary rainy day. Huddled indoors all day. Whiled away the heavy moments as best we could, dominoes, etc.

March 4 - Evans and myself went to the city on pass. Visited the Christian Commission rooms. Bought stamps. Also went to the colored school under charge of Chaplain of 17th Colored. Had school teachers, being volunteers from the ranks. One class of youngsters was taught by a large

Negro. All seemed attentive and anxious to receive the instruction but poorly imparted to them.

March 5 - Smallpox quite prevalent. Lieutenant Clark is down with it. Paddleford was sent off last night to smallpox camp. His case is quite advanced.

March 8 - Henry Robson taken to smallpox camp having been sick in camp for nearly a week. On duty hauling wood for the cooks both morning and afternoon.

March 9 - Rainy evening. Privates had a grand ball tonight at the Alabama Hotel. I understand they had a grand time. No officers allowed. Forty ladies attended. Lieutenant Clark little better with the smallpox.

March 13 - Delightful Sabbath morning, T.J. Hungerford very



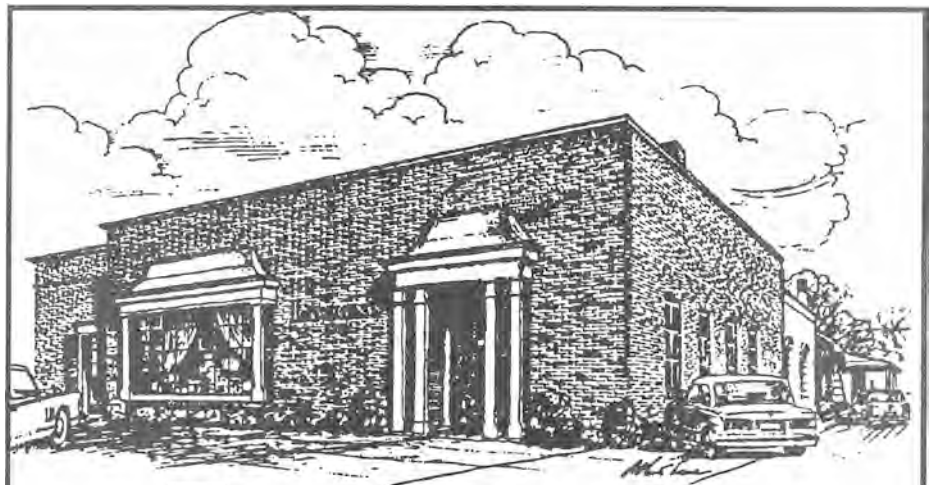
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sick, heavy fever and hard breathing. Bathed him, towels kept around him. Afraid he is going to have a fever. In the afternoon walked to town where in a crowded house of soldiers and citizens I listened to an excellent practical sermon on the ten virgins, wise and foolish.

March 14 - Was on detail of 20 men to go foraging with two days rations in haversacks. Fell in at 9:00 A.M. to go with brigade teams thirty in number. A ride of 30 miles brought us to the corn field at 3 P.M., two men to a wagon. Jerked it from the rows and in about an hour started back. Drove hard until sun down. It was very cold and blustery and not in the least enticing to sleep out doors but necessity compelled it.

March 15 - Teamsters and boys up early. Went into a citizen's house to procure my breakfast. Had warm biscuit, buttermilk, etc., for 50 cents. Walked nearly all the way to camp where we arrived at 11:00 A.M.

March 16 - Tommy Hungerford continues quite ill. Fever has left him but he suffers from inflammation of the lungs. Confined to his bed all the time.

Byrom Babcock taken to the hospital last night and M. Murphy today. Hauled wood in the afternoon.

March 18 - Formed funeral procession and marched to the funeral of M. Murphy. Chaplain officiated at the grave.

March 22 - All were surprised this morning upon looking out to find the ground covered with snow. Many were the thoughts of sleigh rides, hills, girls, etc. by those that are to enjoy such. One party I saw, as I went to water. They had rigged up a sled with young mules hitched to it, and a sonorous cow bell for music. They paraded the streets of Huntsville and were looked upon by the native fair as crazy.

March 23 - Snow all gone by

night. Hungerford apparently a little better but very weak. Set up long enough to make his bed and bathe him. No mail.

March 25 - Four more recruits arrived from Wisconsin, having been left behind sick when the others came. Two horses died today, which is the same every day.

March 26 - The train from Nashville today came by way of Decatur. Generals Sherman and McPherson were on board and are now in town where the headquarters are to be established.

March 29 - Our camp was visited today by Mother Bickerdyke with four mule teams loaded with good things from the North for the soldiers. Left us three barrels of potatoes, turnips, carrots, etc, one barrel of sauerkraut with one of

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dried apples. May God bless her noble, self sacrificing spirit.

March 30 - Turned my sick horse out to die this morning. Obtained a pass to go to the city Called at shoemaker's shop, fixed my boots, and took a ramble through town to the cemetery and spent a half hour meditation among the sacred dead. Here are coward, patriot and traitor. Truly all earthling passes away and leaves no faint traces behind. At dress parade we were looked upon by four Northern ladies.

April 1 - Although the day was wet and dreary the boys played well the part of April Fool and it was one continuous jest all day. The bugler blew the breakfast call half an hour early, calling out the men in the rain to awaken to the fact it was April Fool.

April 8 - 59th Indiana went out to reinforce Whitesburg. Deserters say that the enemy is making preparations to throw a pontoon bridge across the river. Rumor says John Morgan was in town with a load of wood.

April 11 - A little after noon we were startled by a terrible explosion near the depot. A caisson of the Illinois Battery had exploded while returning from drill, killing six men instantly and

wounding two. A very sad affair. Bodies torn to shreds. Drew clothes. I got a new blouse and pants.

April 18 - Rained very heavy all night. 18th Wisconsin Infantry broke camp at the public (court-house) square and came up on our left.

April 20 - I was rendered half crazy all the forenoon by the greatest of plagues - toothache in back tooth. After dinner Dr. Griswold laid siege to it. After taking a hitch on it, it came out and bothered me no more.

April 26 - Reached Whitesburg by noon. Found the boys well and in good spirits, very neatly quartered in Ft. Hall with one company of infantry with them. After supper Evie and I went fishing in the Tennessee River, dropped our lines and watched the rebels on the opposite side on picket. Breastworks are to be seen but apparently vacant.

April 29 - Took box to express office this morning to send home, had to obtain permit from Provost Marshal. The express office was crowded so I had to wait nearly two hours. Boxes, Barrels and bundles - no end to them.

May 3 - Broke up camp early this morning and went into camp

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nearer to town. Our battery near the depot on the race course, a large open green, very pretty for summer quarters but rather low for wet weather. Teams hauling down lumber, etc for quarters.

May 5 - Our camp is very nicely located. A pretty brook runs in front of the battery which the boys have dammed up to make deep enough for a pleasant bath. Water to cook and drink is hauled from the big spring.

May 8 - Grazed horses in the afternoon near a Negro meeting which I attended. After an earnest discourse from an old gray haired Negro and a prayer which would compare with many a white man's, the sisters got happy which was truly amusing and I could not help but laugh although I should not have.

May 9 - Sent to work on the fort (on Echols Hill). The hill being so rocky, very tedious work. Forrest said to be moving on this place, hence the haste to complete the works. All the Negroes in town pressed in and put to work.

May 11 - Started early to the fort, worked hard in the forenoon loading wagons with dirt to be

hauled to the wall. After dinner helped lay foundation for heavy guns.

May 12 - All army followers, sutlers, corespondents, etc. were ordered out this morning to work on the fort, a tough pull for them but justifiable and highly acceptable to the soldiers. Let them dig alongside the but slightly darker complected baker and hotel waiter. Another sprig of chivalry working with the Negroes under guard for saying "no damn yankee could make him work." Yankee bayonet did it though.

May 17 - Packed up in great haste with the report that Madison Station is in the hands of the rebels. Battery ordered aboard train, three days rations, one blanket. At dusk we halted by the smouldering ruins of Madison depot, burned down and occupied by stragglers from the 13th Illinois.

May 18 - Awoke before daylight, numb with cold (at Madison). Sought the fire around the ruins. Picked up my breakfast from scraps of hard tact scattered. Started for Huntsville at noon. Arrived at 5 P.M., being gone twenty four hours.

May 22 - Very warm. Traded sugar for milk. Made a fine bread pudding for dinner. A train of thirty cars loaded with grey-backs captured by Sherman passed North, very dirty and filthy looking clothes.

May 24 - The boys as of old are doing steep jay-hawking, breaking into gardens, cheating sutlers, etc. Guards stationed on every corner.

May 29 - In the evening a bevy of staff officers visited camp, but were so beastly drunk as to be unable to carry themselves with propriety, racing their horse after Negroes, etc. Their conduct would be disgraceful to a private, One of the staff officers of Sherman among

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June 7 - A squad of eight men under Sergeant Dixon went as escort to a picnic party composed of "shoulder straps" and Southern ladies to Bird Spring, six miles distant. Had a good dinner, champagne in plenty and dancing. Enjoyed themselves well.

June 10 - Abraham Lincoln nominated for president. Drilled under Lieutenant Hood. Condemned horses turned out. Drew rations, hard-tack instead of flour. What does this mean?

June 14 - All the wounded and sick sent north from hospitals here. Long awaited order received this afternoon: Hold ourselves ready to march at any time.

June 15 - Weather fine. Health good. Green peas for dinner. Division concentrating at this place. Two soldiers, 2nd Brigade, married to girls they found at Scottsboro.

June 19 - Relieved from guard at 9 A.M.. Stayed in camp reading papers received by mail. Four hundred rebel prisoners passed through on their way north. One train stayed at the depot most of the afternoon. Citizens and soldiers flocked around to see the sights. Some ladies tremblingly inquired for friends and relations, others pressing to bestow a smile upon those they sympathized with.

June 21 - Enoch Johnson died at 10 A.M. His disease was congestive chills and typhoid fever. Was one of the detachments that late in the evening followed the corpse to the grave. Silently, without a word of prayer, we buried him in a rude coffin and without a thought, hastened back to camp to prepare for the morrow.

June 22 - Reveille sounded at 2:30 A.M. and quietly we broke camp and marched at 5 A.M., with but one regiment ahead of us

in the column. Marched through town in fine style and soon beautiful and dreamy Huntsville was placed among the past. Bathed in the clear waters of Flint in the evening.

Private Jenkins was discharged at the end of the war and returned to his home in Wisconsin where he became a minister. Although Jenkins was patriotic and supported the war he was later proud of the fact that he had never "pulled the trigger of a gun aimed at a fellow man." He died in 1916.



Pet Deer to be Put in the Courtyard

from 1907 newspaper

Sheriff William Mitchell is in correspondence with various parties for the purpose of buying a pair of pet deer for the county courtyard. They will make the yard look more attractive. The unsightly pathways will soon be obliterated as the sheriff has placed a number of signs up bordering the pavement forbidding anyone from walking on the grass. Whomever violates this rule in the future will be promptly arrested and fined.

Private School To Open

I propose to open a private school for boys at my residence on East Holmes Street on Tuesday, the first day of October, 1907. I will teach whatever is necessary for entrance into the Sophomore class in any college in the state of Alabama. Baseball and football will be in my curriculum, my fee is \$5 per month per student, paid in advance. Charles O. Shepherd

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The Affair At Madison Station

An account of the Union raid on Madison, including rosters of the units participating in the affair. Also included are historical sketches of the main combatants as well as histories of the various units compiled from official records by Lloyd C. Lanphere. An absolute must for anyone interested in local history. Proceeds go to benefit the Madison Station Historical Preservation Society.

To order call 464-0751

Grady Reeves, The Promoter

by Billy Joe Cooley

I was on my way home from the Korean War, my soldiering days far behind, when I stopped off in Huntsville to visit my old radio pal Grady Reeves. It was the summer of 1954 and I was anxious to get back to familiar ground.

Grady had always called me "Boondocks," a reflection on my rural raising, so I called him the Cincinnati Flash, a throwback to his hometown. I stopped by WBBF, where he was a record spinner and a part-time show promoter. They told me that he had gone out to the Madison County coliseum on Holmes Avenue. I went out there.

"Come on, Billy Joe, you can help me with the show I've booked in here," he greeted.

The coliseum in those days had no end walls, since it was primarily used for cattle shows and such.

"What kind of show have you got promoted here?" I asked.

Grady explained that a Nash-

ville agent had called and said he had a large bunch of traveling musicians who needed a night's work while passing through here on their way to Tuscaloosa.

"The whole bunch will perform and it's only costing me \$600," he said. "I ought to make a good profit. I helped unfold and set up chairs.

At about 5 P.M., a long Cadillac limousine pulled up and about a dozen people got out. A rack on top of the car contained suitcases, guitars and amplifiers. It looked like a band of gypsies. The car was old, half covered with mud and resembled something that had traveled across a lot of plowed fields in recent days. The musicians and singers were about my age, so we sat around and gossiped for a couple of hours. They were fascinated with Grady's tales about his days as a sportscaster.

About an hour before showtime the audience started trickling in. Most were older people. They paid \$2 a person, which was the going rate for a concert in those days.

A few people showed up. Very few.

Grady lost about \$200 on the show. It was the first the I had seen a grown man whimper.

The show was excellent and it was a shame that so few people saw it.

When the show was over I helped the gang get the stuff repacked atop that old limousine

and bade farewell to Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Elvis Presley. Little did we know that each was to become a super star.

When someone says they approve of something in principle, it means they haven't the slightest intention of putting it into practice.

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Melee In Hazel Green Leaves One Person Blind - Another Stabbed By His Own Brother

from 1878 newspaper

We learn of two serious difficulties in the Hazel Green district, last week. On Tuesday night, a Mr. Talent shot William Weaver in the head, the ball passing through the only good eye Weaver had, leaving him totally blind. They were in a quarrel at Key's Mill, and it is said that there was a good deal of whiskey around. Talent was arraigned before Justice Fowler and after an investigation was discharged. Weaver was alive, when last heard from and may recover.

The second affair was between two brothers by the name of Holloway, in the same district four miles from Hazel Green, last Friday, in which Gabe Holloway was cut in the abdomen by his own brother. There was a game of cards going on and Gabe Holloway was trying to induce his brother, who was engaged in the game, to quit playing and go to work, whereupon his brother grew angry, according to our information, and cut him. He is in very critical condition.

Fireside Glogg

A Christmas Treat

Peel from $\frac{1}{2}$ large orange, cut in spiral strip
 1 t. whole cloves
 $\frac{3}{4}$ c. raisins
 $\frac{1}{3}$ c. whole blanched almonds
 12 small sugar cubes
 2 cinnamon sticks, halved
 $\frac{1}{2}$ t. ground cardamom
 1 bottle dry red wine
 $\frac{3}{4}$ c. vodka

Stud the orange peel with the cloves, set aside. In a small bowl, combine the raisins, almonds, sugar cubes, cinnamon sticks, and cardamom. Toss gently to coat the raisins with the cardamom. Add the orange peel. In a 3-quart enamel or stainless steel saucepan, combine the raisin mixture with the wine. Bring to

simmering over low heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the vodka, simmer 2 minutes. Ladle into heat proof punch cups or mugs, including some of the raisins and almonds in each serving. Serve with spoons.

To give glogg mix as a gift, place the studded orange peel in the oven for 45 minutes at 250 degrees. Cool, add it to the raisin-spice mixture. Seal it in a plastic bag, tie with ribbon. Include instructions for making glogg, and give with a bottle of good red wine.



Getting old - when you go bra-less & it pulls all the wrinkles out of your face.

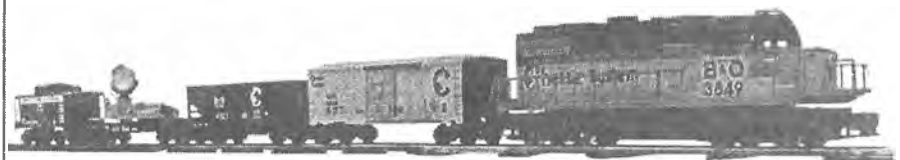
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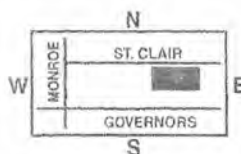
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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

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



Lynn Brown. We'll miss you so much. Our sympathy goes to his loved ones. Also, my deepest sympathy to my friend at Winn Dixie, **Sandra**, who lost her daughter in a car wreck. Love you Sandra.

Christine Van Enkenvoort brought her family, **Henry** and **Marlene Van Enkenvoort** from Green Bay, Wisconsin to breakfast and, boy did they have fun here.

We had a great time when **Cecil Isabell** celebrated his birthday here. Of course, his wife **Kathy** was here along with **Beverly Solomon**. The birthday cake quickly disappeared. I heard that **Kathy** had flown to Texas for a few day's rest. Her daughter, **Terri Solomon McGhee** and her family drove her back home safely for the Thanksgiving holidays.

Wasn't the **WAAY Christmas Parade** great! Everybody loves a parade and Santa Claus makes it even better. We were glad to see **Bill Kling** in the Christmas spirit

Hello friends! Hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I sure did. **Wayne** and **Doris** had me over to their home and, of course, we had turkey and the trimmings. Wayne and Doris have a three-year-old grandson named **Jamie**. He is so cute and was the spotlight of the party.

The Picture of the Month was **Mrs. Kathy Isabell** from **Quality Photo**. **Ruby Hyatt** guessed who it was. She has not come by for her breakfast yet but I'm sure she will.

There was a great birthday party for **Mrs. Ruth Weems** on her big 80. The celebration was given by her family at the **Café Paris**. I felt so honored to be invited among that great group of people. It was most wonderful. Love you all.

Two more friends of mine had birthdays this month. A big Happy Birthday to **Mary Buchanan** and **Mary Medley**.

A long time friend of mine, **Bruce Hutson** from Seattle,

Washington brought his mother, **Peggy Hutson**, and **Bob McNeil** to breakfast. They sure had a wonderful time and had been to Kentucky to a family reunion.

Lynwood Smith and his wife, **Missy** celebrated their 14th anniversary this month. Happy anniversary to you both and many more.

SY Technology had a going away breakfast for **Vicky Smith**. Several of her coworkers came for the event: **Tana Patrick**, **Denise Hallisey**, **Tim Adams**, **Laura Sundberg**, **Greg Smith**, **Julie Thomason**, **Bill Nichols**, **George Smith**, **Tina Salyers**, **Debbie Ogle**, **Donna Rigby**, and **Sander Weand**. They really had a good time. Did they eat the ham? Ho! Ho!

Jimmy and **Carolyn Flynn** of Arab brought **Joe**, **Rhea** and son **Nick Richards** of Scant City to breakfast for the first time. What fun!

My heart was very sad along with other friends on the death of

Photo of The Month

The first person to correctly identify the picture of this young girl, shown below, wins a free breakfast at Eunice's Country Kitchen.

Hint: This is a very smart business woman in our Five Points district.



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and riding on a float.

On Friday night, November 30 about thirty family members and friends gathered at **Mr. Primes Restaurant** in Mooresville to celebrate my daughter **Doris** and son-in-law **Wayne's** birthday. Great fun! And the food was great. We sure plan to go back.

I wish **Sheriff Joe Whisante** would tell us if he plans to run again for office. We sure want to know.

George and Peggy Sisson of Florence came over and ate breakfast with me. They were here celebrating their 50th Anniversary. They were as happy as can be.

Cathy Carney, the publisher of *Old Huntsville* was the guest speaker at the **Golden K Kiwanis** Christmas party. We heard she did a great job!

Mr. and Mrs. **Will Halsey** are expecting a full house for Christmas with all their children and grandchildren coming. Miriam said she'll be the Chief Cook and Head Dishwasher. Ho! Ho!

Ramona's little granddaughter, little **Catherine** (two years old) has cancer. We would love all of you to pray for her and the family. We love them.

We heard of a very prestigious award that was given to one of Huntsville's own recently - **Joyce Russell**, one of the managing partners for **New York Life** here in Huntsville, received the 2001 Life Underwriter of the Year award for the Huntsville Association. Congratulations to Joyce from all of us!

Have you all noticed how many people are putting up beautiful lights and decorations this year? It seems that every year gets prettier and prettier. Especially in the downtown area.

I'm not seeing many of the local politicians yet. **Loretta, Glenn** and **Joe** are regulars, but the State

people are just beginning to get started early trying to get the votes.

We were so glad to hear that the **Big Spring Specialty Care Center** had a big Thanksgiving celebration with over 150 family members attending. Among the volunteers who made it possible were **Buddy** and **Sandra Esslinger, Diane Jolly, Dianne McGilvry, Joseph Vance, Dot Collins** and **Valinda Thomas**.

My dear friend **Loyd Tomlinson** of **Outback Restaurant** has about the best food and service in Huntsville. I love you and **Marci**, Loyd, and I'll see you soon.

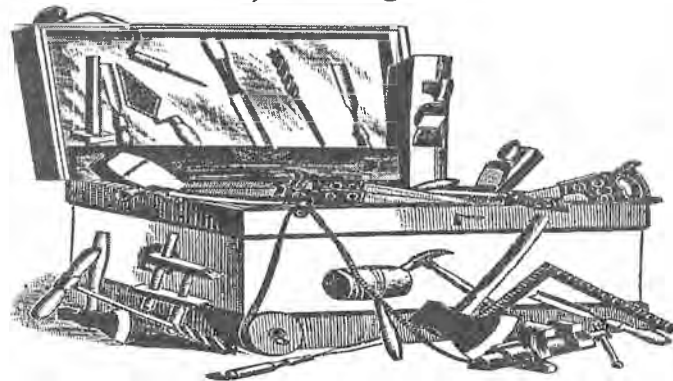
Well, another year is just about gone, and it's been a good one. I feel truly blessed to have so many friends and live in such a wonderful place like Huntsville. If I could have but one wish, it would be that everyone else could be as happy as I have been.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Remember to come see me and always remember that I love you all.

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Unusual Holiday Favorites

Christmas Almond Brittle

- 1/4 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. honey
- 1/2 c. (1 stick) plus 2 T. butter
- 1 lb. almonds, chopped

In a heavy skillet, heat the sugar over low heat til it has melted and is slightly browned, make sure it doesn't burn. Add the honey and butter; simmer for 20 minutes. Stir in the nuts and cook for 10 minutes. Line a platter or pan with wax paper and drop tablespoonfuls of the brittle onto the paper. Let it harden, break into pieces and serve.

Pfeffernusse

- 4 C. plain flour
- 1 t. baking powder
- 1 t. ground cloves
- 1/2 t. ground allspice
- 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 3/4 c. honey
- 1 c. dark corn syrup
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 2 T. butter

- 1 T. shortening

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Coat 2 large baking sheets lightly with butter. Combine the flour, baking powder, and spices in a bowl, set aside. In a large heavy saucepan, bring the honey, corn syrup and sugar to a boil over moderate heat, stirring til the sugar dissolves. Reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered for 5 minutes.

Remove the pan from the heat, add butter and shortening, stir til melted. Beat in the flour mixture a cup at a time. When you have a smooth batter, drop it by teaspoonfuls onto the baking sheets, leaving an inch or so between the cookies.

Bake for about 15 minutes, and the cookies are firm to the touch and light brown. Let cool, remove from sheets and rebutter the baking sheets. Continue til all the batter is used. These can be stored for 6-8 weeks in a tightly sealed jar.

Cajun Pralines

- 2 C. granulated sugar
- 1 c. packed brown sugar
- 1 c. milk
- 1 stick butter
- 2 T. corn syrup
- 4 c. pecans halves

In a large heavy saucepan, combine the sugars, milk, butter and corn syrup - bring to a boil. Cook, stirring constantly, til the mixture reaches 225 degrees on a candy thermometer. Add the pecans and continue cooking, stirring constantly til the mixture reached 236 degrees or soft ball stage. Remove from heat and beat vigorously til the mixture just begins to thicken. Working quickly, drop by tablespoonfuls onto greased wax paper. Let stand til firm, and store in an airtight container.

Brandy Butter

- 4 T. unsalted butter, softened
- 1/2 c. fine sugar
- 3 T. brandy
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract

Cream the butter til light and fluffy. Beat in the sugar, a little at a time and keep beating til the mixture is very white and frothy. Beat in the brandy and vanilla, refrigerate at least 4 hours and the mixture is firm.

Chocolate and Bourbon Balls

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8 1-oz. squares semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped

60 vanilla wafers, ground in a blender or crushed with a rolling pin

1 c. pecans, finely chopped

1 2/3 c. sugar

1/2 c. bourbon

1/4 c. light corn syrup

In a heavy saucepan, slowly melt the chocolate - prevent scorching. When melted, set aside. In a large bowl, pour in the next 3 ingredients, stir well. Add the melted chocolate, bourbon and corn syrup. Stir until the ingredients are well-combined. Shape into balls about an inch in diameter.

Fit a double round of paper towels inside the lid of your storage container and moisten with a bit of the bourbon. Cover and seal tightly for 3-4 days prior to serving.

Toasted Pecan Divinity

2 c. sugar

1/2 c. water

1/3 c. light corn syrup

2 egg whites

1/2 t. vanilla or almond extract

1 1/2 c. coarsely chopped and toasted pecans

In a heavy saucepan, combine the sugar, water and corn syrup - bring to boil and cook til the sugar dissolves. Cook briskly, unstirred and undisturbed, for

10-15 minutes, until the temperature reached 255 degrees on a candy thermometer, or a drop of the mixture in cold water forms a firm almost brittle ball.

In a large bowl, beat the egg whites til they form stiff peaks. As soon as the syrup reaches the correct temperature, remove the pan from the heat and pour the syrup into the egg whites, beating with electric mixer all the while. Pour the syrup in a very thin stream. No need to scrape the syrup saucepan. Add vanilla and continue to beat the mixture for another 10 minutes or so, loses its gloss and is firm enough to hold its shape in a spoon. Stir in the pecans at once.

Immediately drop the divinity by tablespoons onto wax paper, letting each spoonful mound slightly in the center. Let stand undisturbed til firm.

Hot Cranberry Tea

3 c. cranberries

3 1/2 qrts. water

12 whole cloves

4 cinnamon sticks

juice of 2 lemons

juice of 2 oranges

2 c. sugar

In a stainless steel or enamel kettle, combine the cranberries, water, cloves and cinnamon, bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer 12 minutes. Strain

through several thicknesses of cheesecloth, squeezing gently. Return to the kettle. Add the lemon and orange juices and sugar. Stir until sugar dissolves, and serve hot.

Almond Creme Liqueur

1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk

1 c. heavy cream

4 eggs

1 t. instant coffee powder

2 t. almond extract

2 t. vanilla extract

Pour all ingredients into a blender, process til blended. Store in a tightly sealed container in the fridge, this will last up to 5 weeks. Serve chilled, and stir prior to serving.

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Mill Village Christmas Party

by Jerry M. Wilbanks

In Huntsville Park during the 1950s, we always knew when the Christmas season was officially kicked off. The strains of all our favorite traditional Christmas carols began to be broadcast throughout the neighborhood by means of speakers located atop one of the tall brick buildings which made up the Huntsville Manufacturing Company's production facilities. This was a most effective sound system and the music could be heard and appreciated anywhere in the village.

The music, which began about a month before Christmas, was played on a regular schedule, beginning at about dusk on those wintry evenings and continuing for an hour or two. We all knew that the holiday season had begun in earnest when we first heard those familiar chimes. We looked forward to them each year and could not imagine a Christmas without them.

From time to time a class from Joe Bradley School would organize a carolling expedition. At

these times we would traverse the neighborhood, just after dark, handing around our gift of song (usually exhibiting more enthusiasm than musical talent) and collecting hot chocolate and Christmas treats along the way. No one to whom we sang ever complained and we were made welcome wherever we stopped to hold forth.

Loud, boisterous carolling notwithstanding, our voices were never able to overpower the Christmas carol chimes. Not that anyone would want to, mind you!

Each year, a week or so before Christmas, the Huntsville Manufacturing Company would hold a party for the young children of its employees. This party would usually commence on a Sunday afternoon and would be hosted by the supervisors from the mill. It was usually held in the gymnasium located above the stores in the strip mall across the street from Joe Bradley School. Of course in those days no one used the term "strip mall." However, it was a line of storefronts occupying one building. We just called it "the stores."

If either of your parents were employed by Huntsville Manufacturing Company and you were still young enough to be considered a child, you were automatically invited to join in the fun. Each qualifying child would be issued a ticket.

My sisters and I and some of

our friends would walk the two blocks to the stores and ascend the long, wide staircase to the second floor gymnasium. These stairs always seemed to be littered with cigarette butts and flattened out gobs of chewing gum. At the entrance to the gym, each child would be given a shopping bag, typically a white one with Merry Christmas lettered on it in green. Entering the gym and receiving your shopping bag came after a long wait in line.

Once inside, you might first encounter Santa himself, seated on a throne-like chair perched on a platform and surrounded by Christmas decorations and Elf assistants. Santa would take you on his knee, if you weren't too heavy, and ask that all important question: "Have you been a good boy?"

I really dreaded this question because I knew in my heart that I was a sinner and a wrongdoer, full of mischief and unforgiven; and

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you could JUST NOT LIE TO SANTA! I went to my Dad with this problem and in his Fatherly wisdom he supplied the answer.

"Tell Santa that you've been a 'pretty good boy,'" he said.

I did just that. It always worked! Santa would then go on to the next stock question: "What do you want for Christmas?"

It seems now like the things we desired in those long ago days were simpler and more wholesome than what kids lust after in these times. We didn't ask for violent, blood-soaked video games, true, but we did ask for make-believe guns and toys of mass (if imaginary) destruction. Kids' imaginations haven't changed in the least!

After the obligatory Santa interview, you were free to line up with the other kids for the high point of the afternoon, the collection of presents and treats. It went like this: after showing your ticket with your age group printed on it, you were directed to one of the roped-off lanes where supervisors and helpers stood ready to stuff your shopping bag with gifts, toys, treats, etc.. You just had to walk along, holding your bag open and your Christmas party hosts would do the rest.

Some of the loot included apples, oranges, candy canes, hard Christmas candy, a box of assorted chocolates and creams and a bag of unshelled mixed nuts. The boys might receive a yo-yo, a bag of marbles, a paddleball and an archery set with rubber-tipped arrows. The girls might get a small baby doll, jump rope, paper dolls and a game called bob jacks. Everyone would get puzzles, coloring books with crayons, pick-up-sticks, board games like Chinese checkers and Parcheesi, card games like Rook and Old Maids and always the

ever popular kaleidoscope. We were simply overwhelmed by our good fortune.

The main event of the season, of course, was Christmas at home. The celebration would include tons of food and gift exchange on Christmas Eve and a visit from Santa for the younger kids on Christmas morning. Visiting with friends and relatives, and more feasting would round out the holidays. Just as today, Christmas then was the high point of the year and "getting into the Christmas spirit" was the goal of everyone involved (and that included just about everyone you knew.) It always seemed that the whole village rang with the Christmas spirit and church attendance soared to underscore the spiritual aspect of the season.

I'm sure there were disadvantaged children in the village who received no other Christmas gifts than those so decently and lovingly handed out at the Huntsville Park Christmas Party. When these children were touched by the spirit of the Christmas season, it surrounded us all with the warmth and glow of feeling that we had fulfilled Jesus' most important commandment that we should "love one another." And at least for that moment in time, I believe we did.

A sign of getting old is when your sweetie says, "Let's go upstairs and make out," and you answer, "Pick one because I can't do both."

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Old Railroad Bed Road

by Bob Baudendistel

The Decatur, Chesapeake & New Orleans (DC&NO) Railway Company was founded on July 20, 1887. The plan was to construct a rail line from Decatur, Alabama running in a northeast direction passing through Fayetteville and then on the reach Gallatin. Approximately 17 miles of the proposed route would be built through the north and western sections of Madison County. Only 25% of the total project was ever completed, and turned out to be rather short lived.

Early promoters of the rail line worked to raise money through stock subscriptions. Dr. G.C. Sandusky was elected as director for the railroad. \$200,000

was then raised with money paid out by the City of Shelbyville, Tennessee and through other private subscriptions. An additional \$150,000 was later subscribed by Lincoln County, but with the condition that rail service would operate over the line within two years, or by September 10, 1889. Despite this condition, the construction and grade work for the new railroad did not start up until June 6, 1889. Work was done very quickly and eagerly to beat the deadline and the resulting roadbed fell into a state of disrepair soon thereafter. The lack of any initial service from the rail line was partly due to its poor condition and caused the company to default on subscription balances which it now owed interest. This resulted in a foreclosure followed by an order from the State of Tennessee to sell off the line. No bids were immediately declared, so a second attempt was made to auction the rail line in two segments, one in

Tennessee and the other in Alabama.

On January 2, 1893, the entire DC&NO Railroad was finally sold for the price of \$100,000. Mr. J. Edward Simons headed the group that bought the property and assets. The rail line was reincorporated under the new name of The Middle Tennessee & Alabama (MT&A) Railroad. To many, this name seemed more appropriate than the original. The construction of the rail line on the stretch between Fayetteville and Shelbyville was nearly completed during original work efforts, but several bridges and trestles over major creeks and rivers were deemed unsafe for rail movement. In 1897, construction efforts ceased along this section of the line, leaving only the part that ran southwest of Fayetteville and into Madison County, Alabama. This operation would stem from a Fayetteville rail yard along the existing Nashville, Chattanooga, and

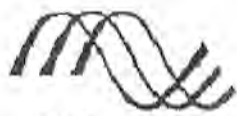
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St. Louis (NC&StL) Railroad branch line that came over from Elora and Decherd.

Efforts to rebuild the MT&A railroad from Fayetteville into Madison County were fairly successful. Under the direction of Mr. James Rodes, the Cumberland Construction Company out of Fayetteville succeeded in getting the rail line in operable condition. The first bale of cotton was shipped successfully over the railroad on September 17, 1896. Soon after, regularly scheduled mixed trains were running out of Fayetteville approximately 27.4 miles south to reach Madison Crossroads (Toney), Alabama. Despite the renowned success, the MT&A fared no better financially than the DC&NO. The MT&A defaulted on the interest of two bonds, and soon after, the rail line was sold once again.

On May 5, 1897, Mr. Joseph Dickson of St. Louis, Missouri purchased the 27.4 mile rail line and assets for a price of \$150,000. On October 13, 1897, Dickson sold the rail line to the NC&StL for a sizable profit. Following this purchase, NC&StL had to temporarily suspend the rail operations from Fayetteville to Madison Cross Roads in order to make the needed repairs. The original goal of connecting with the Memphis and Charleston Railroad at the Decatur Junction never materialized. This may have been partly due to the fact that the Louisville and Nashville

(L&N) Railroad was now the majority stock holder of the NC&StL. Since the L&N Railroad already had a mainline rail connection to Decatur from Nashville, the need for another north-south rail corridor was quickly dismissed.

NC&StL did extend the former MT&A another 10 miles south of Madison Cross Roads to reach the community of Capshaw. This terminal point marked the end of the line and was only about 15 miles short of reaching Decatur. For quite some time, the passenger service along the line was operated only as far south as the community of Harvest. Later, passenger service was continued along the remaining 6 miles to Capshaw. Freight deliveries included cotton, timber, corn, hay, livestock, and nursery stock. Passenger service was often scheduled to help serve many of the nearby schools, primarily those around Fayetteville.

Due to the use of lighter weight rail, light ballast, and several weak bridges, only the smallest locomotives could be used along the

rail line. This limited the total tonnage of freight that could be safely handled. Upon departure from the station and yard in Fayetteville, the rail line had nu-

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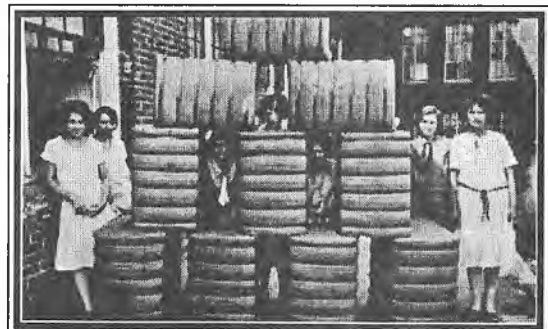
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merous curves as it generally followed the path of the Elk River before crossing over using a through-truss bridge. From here, the line followed a tributary of the river to reach the community of Cold Water. Just south of here, the train would encounter a 2% grade for a distance of approximately 3 miles before reaching a summit at the community of Taft. Upon entering Madison County, Alabama shortly thereafter, the rail line was fairly level and straight with very few curves along the remainder of the way to Capshaw.

Stations and flag stops along the railroad from Fayetteville to Capshaw included: Harmes, Tillman, De Ford, Sumner, Hobbs, Cold Water, Blanche, Taft, Akers, Elkwood, Bobo, Ready, Madison Cross Roads (Toney), Harvest (Jeff), Coalton, Clark, and finally Capshaw. Some of the busier and more populated communities along the railroad featured a typical NC&StL depot with an agent's office, freight rooms, and passenger waiting areas. Many of the stops however were only marked by the use of carbodies (stationary rail cars) that acted as a temporary make-shift depot.

The 1920s brought about a sharp decline in the number of passengers and total freight ton-

nage. The timber industry had quickly exhausted its resources, leaving only smaller loads of cotton, hay, livestock, and other agricultural commodities to be shipped. The advent of paved roads allowed over-the-road transport to gain an even larger share of the transportation market. As a result, on July 21, 1928, NC&StL applied with the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to discontinue rail service along the former MT&A railroad including all 37 miles from Fayetteville to Capshaw. By March 8, 1929, the ICC granted permission. It was then on April 20, 1929 that the last train to use the rail line rolled into Fayetteville bringing with it all of the rolling stock and other equipment that was used along the line.

The short-lived history of the MT&A Railroad is an example of a railroad branch line operation that simply had no place to go. With little business and industry along the line, any long-term success would have only been possible with more track-miles, better connections with the other rail lines, and more commerce. On April 20, 1929, the NC&StL Railroad Company sold the property and roadbed running through Madison County to the County Highway Department with a quit-

claim deed.

Today, the roadbed is marked as a two-lane roadway that continues to serve as a vital link in the modern day-to-day transportation network, and carries the seemingly appropriate name "Old Railroad Bed Road."

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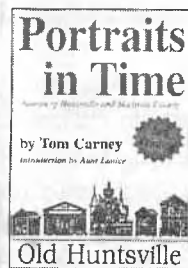
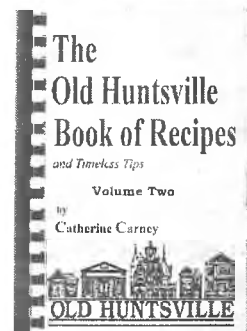
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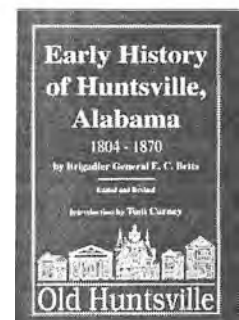


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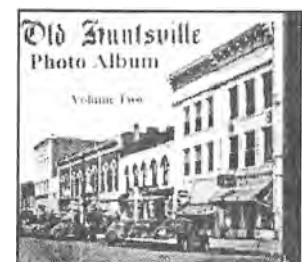
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Sold Into Slavery

Heart Rendering Account
Details Cruelty Of
Huntsville, Alabama Judge

Reprinted from an 1843 manuscript

I have lately been introduced to a very intelligent and interesting young man, whose mother was a full-blooded Cherokee. He showed me a very interesting letter from her, and several from his sisters; one of which brought tidings of his mother's death, and enclosed a lock of her hair, fine, black, and glossy, and beautifully braided. He kept it very carefully, in several envelopes of paper. His name is James Fisher. He has suffered shameful treatment from the people in Alabama, and was

thereby induced to seek warmer hearts in a colder climate. He told me his story, with liberty to publish it when I was sure that he was safe in another land. Here it is, as he told it to me.

I was born in Nashville, Tenn. October, 1817. My mother's name was Maly Davis. Though an unmixed Cherokee Indian, she was kept in slavery all her life. My father's name was Thomas Fisher. He fled from bondage when I was a small child. They pursued, but never caught him. My mother was a very industrious woman. By washing and ironing, she earned money enough to buy herself for \$800.

After my mother had bought herself and sister Ellen, there was a suit brought in favor of some of the others, who had been taken with her; and they were proved to be Indians, and set at liberty. My mother consulted a lawyer, named Grundy, to know if her children could not likewise be proved free. He told her it would cost more money to carry on the suit, than it would to buy the whole of them. This discouraged her, and she gave it up. When I was in my fifteenth year, the widow Stump sold me to a man who kept a boarding-house in New Orleans, by the name of Shawl. He paid \$500 for me, and I lived with him, as a house-servant, for four years. He was a drinking man, and when he was in liquor, abused me.

Parts of the manuscript describing his first escape attempt are missing. The story takes up again after he has been captured and is waiting his fate in Nashville.

In the midst of this, my old master, Mr. Shawl, came to Nashville, with an execution to be served on me, as Mr. Gamble's property, to satisfy some old judgement or claim. But he lost his suit, because Judge Lane, of Huntsville, had a mortgage on me, and came to Nashville to secure me. There was quite a squabble among them, who should have me; and all this time, mother was trying with all her might to buy me. At last, I was very unwillingly obliged to go to Huntsville with Judge Lane, as house servant, coachman, etc. The judge promised to use me

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well, and let me visit my mother once a year.

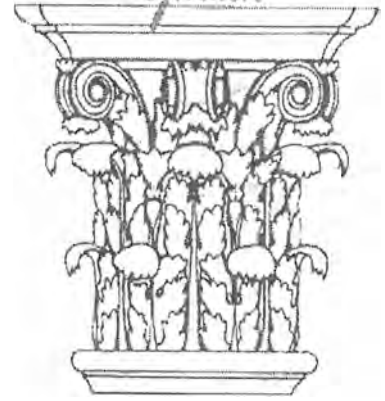
However, I had serious doubts whether my poor old mother would ever be able to comply with the rigid terms Judge Lane exacted. I therefore thought it wise to learn to write, in case opportunity should offer to write myself a pass. I copied every scrap of writing I could find, and thus learned to write a tolerable hand before I knew what the words were that I was copying. At last, I met with an old man, who, for the sake of money to buy whisky, agreed to teach me the writing alphabet, and set me copying. I spent a good deal of time trying to improve myself, secretly, of course. One day, my mistress happened to come into my room, when my materials were about, and she told her father (old Capt. Davis) that I was learning to write. He replied, that if I belonged to him,

he would cut my right hand off. After that, he sometimes talked to me an hour at a time, to convince me that I was better off than I should be if I was free. He said slaves were better off than their masters, much better off than the free colored people, and vastly better off than they would have been if still in the wilds of Africa; because there they fought, killed, and ate each other.

"But here," said he, "masters are bound by law to provide well for you, will be punished if they do not do it." He told me that the reason why they murdered and devoured one another in Africa, was because there were no white people there to make them behave themselves.

Judge Lane was circuit judge of several of the counties where he lived and was what would be called a kind master; but he did not let me know, that she had writ-

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ten several letters to him, trying to buy me.

Though forbidden by law from learning how to read and write, letters from and to slaves were common. Normally a slave would pay a white person to write the letter and the person receiving it would pay to have it read

I will give an extract from the last letter my dear mother ever wrote to me.

The reader can imagine that some pangs shot through my heart, on hearing it. "Dear Son, I am very sorry to learn from Judge Lane's letter, which I received yesterday that it is impossible for me to free you, under any circumstances whatever, unless I can comply with paying the full amount of money that he must have for you, and that all down. He also informs me that he could not do without you, and would not hire you out under any circumstances."

When I spoke to Judge Lane about it, he asked me if I was dissatisfied with living with him. I told him I would as soon live with him in the condition of a slave, as with anybody.

"If you had your freedom, you would not be so well off as you think," said he. "I have all the trouble of thinking for myself and all the rest of you."

I told him I greatly wished to relieve him from the task of thinking for me I should much prefer

to think for myself. He smiled, and said I was a fool.

Twelve days after this, my master had occasion to go to Mobile. When he started, he charged me to mind whatever Miss Lane told me.

My mistress was naturally irritable, and crabby and before master had been gone three days, she ordered her brother, Nicholas Davis, to give me a flogging. He came into the kitchen, and struck me on the arm with the edge of a heavy board. In a sudden flash of anger I snatched it out of his hand, pushed him against the wall and choked him a little. He ran and told his sister I had nearly killed him.

She sent a servant to tell old Captain Davis, her father, that he must come the next morning to give me a flogging. The old Captain had often expressed a wish for a chance to give me a good thrashing. He was noted by his severity to servants. It was said that he had killed a man named

Reuben, and a girl named Rachel by excessive beating. He had lately struck, with a heavy club, a poor old man, who used to tend him when he was a baby. He had a big whip and made a point to conquer or kill everyone he undertook to flog. I was not willing to fall into the hands of this old tyrant. He was sent for on Sunday morning and as soon as I got my kitchen work done that day, I set myself to writing passes, till I got one that suited me. It was a permission to go to Nashville and stay two weeks, signed with my mistress' name. In the evening I went to the stage office, and asked the landlord if I could take passage to Nashville the next morning. He demanded my pass. I showed it, telling him that mistress was not much used to writing for the servants, and she wished him to look at it, and see if it was correct, if not, he would please to send it back again, and she would alter it as he said; but that mistress wanted him to write her a few



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lines about it.

He wrote accordingly and I went back to my room, read the note, and burned it. I then went back to the tavern, and paid my passage to Nashville the next morning, I rose before anybody was astir, carried my trunk to the stage office, and hurried back to prepare breakfast for the family. I had just sent it in, when I heard the stage horn I ran up to the tavern, and toward the stage just starting to come to the house for me. I jumped in, and in four days was safely landed in Nashville.

Judge Lane still holds an Indian woman, with her six children, as slaves. She is of the Creek nation, and her name is Susan. He bought her from Mr. Tanner of Athens. When I first went to live with the judge, Mrs. Lane used to be often teasing him to buy Susan for her, but he replied that Mr. Tanner had not a good bill of sale; she was a full-blooded Creek Indian, and that if a suit at law should ever be brought, she would be set free. However, Mrs. Lane at last persuaded him to buy Susan, on condition that Mr. Tanner should refund the money if she was ever declared free. He paid \$2,500 for her and her six children. When

the Creek Indians were removed to Arkansas, by order of the government, they went past the house where we lived. Susan went out, with some of the other servants, to look at them. The moment they looked at her, they knew she be-

longed to their tribe. They stopped, and gathered round her, and made signals for her to go with them. She could not understand their language; but they pointed to her and her children, and then at their women and chil-

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dren, and then along the road they were traveling. They took one of her children and carried it some distance, and we had trouble to get it away from them. Susan would have gone with her tribe, but Judge Lane stood by all the time.

I have often heard her tell how she came to be a slave. A blacksmith by the name of Taylor went

among the Creek Nation to work at his trade. Susan's mother, a poor woman, gave her to the blacksmith's wife to raise, when she was a little girl; and she became much attached to the family, that when they left the tribe, she went with them. She says that Mrs. Taylor always told her she would be free when she was a woman but before that time arrived, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor died and their son sold Susan and she has been a slave every since.

Heard On The Streets In 1912

- Mayor R. Earle Smith stated today that no whiskey shall be sold in Huntsville while he is mayor. He stated that a few bottles may occasionally change hands but that there will be no general or even restricted sale, and that the law shall be enforced as it appears on the statute books.

- The prettiest gasoline table lamp in the world is sold here by Harrison Bros., 214 Washington St. You can carry it from room to room with you, it is absolutely safe.

- West Holmes street concrete bridge is nearing completion. Its opening to public travel has already relieved the West Clinton St. congestion. Deputy Sheriff Pierce late yesterday arrested Ike Lee of Dallas Village on a charge of an assault with a knife.

- The Jabber-Jabber Club meets on Tuesday evening with Miss Lula Lockerd on Meridian Street.

- Mr. Theo. Hereford, deputy sheriff, had a very exciting race last night after a man who stole a cow in Madison some time ago. He had the good luck to capture his man about 4 o'clock in the morning after running him all night.

- 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. If our city fathers would take action against the gambling that is running rampant here, we feel sure that many of these young men would seek respectable employment.



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	7:40 Congressman Bud Cramer	U.S. Congress
February 18	6:30 Ed Gentle	TBA
	7:40 David Cromwell Johnson	Jury Selection
February 25	6:30 Doug Jones	1963 Birmingham Bombing
	7:40 Hare, Wynn, Newell & Newton	Trial Tactics
March 4	6:30 Robert Prince	TBA
	7:40 Connie Glass & Carol Wallace	Elder Law
March 11	6:30 Bill Burgess	Divorce Law
	7:40 Charles Brinkley	Insurance Law
March 18	6:30 Jennifer Brinkley	Employment Law
	7:40 Jere Beasley	Tort Law Update
March 25	6:30 Jim Yance	Medical Malpractice
	7:40 Charles Boyd	Workman's Compensation
April 1	6:30 Phil Price	DUI Law
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Life At The Tollgate House

by Betty Williams Gordon

I am sitting in the sunroom of my brother's house on Tollgate Road, looking out the window and watching the chipmunk running around storing his food for the winter months ahead. If you look close you will see the squirrels and birds coming out of the woods to the feeders. Late in the evening the old gray fox appears, looking to see if it's OK to come out of the woods. I know now why Mama loved this place.

This house belonged to Mama and Papa Williams (Tom & Josie) and it stood behind the old tollgate house.

We were sharecroppers living in the country, Papa decided to move us to the city of Huntsville. He rented a small house on 8th Avenue on the west side; Mama did not like the west side. The

houses were so close together there was no privacy at all.

While living on the west side I met and fell in love with a neighborhood boy. Mama did not approve of our relationship; she said I was too young to be serious with him. The more she disapproved the more I loved him. He knew Mama didn't approve of our relationship. He would walk down the street at night whistling our favorite tune (Tipping End). I would climb out my bedroom window and meet him. My sister Stacie always was going to tell Mama, but she never did.

Papa and my brothers bought the old tollgate house and three acres of land in 1929 from the Penny Family. Mama was so happy she could not wait to get moved. The old house was built close to the road and a window was used to collect the toll to cross the mountain. Tollgate Road was the only road going over the mountain at that time. It was a gravel road that washed out any time we had bad weather. The old Tollgate House had only three rooms; a rock fireplace was built in the center. The room at the front

of the house, with the large window, was where the gate keeper worked, leaning out the window to collect tolls from the travelers. My sister Stacie and I shared it for our bedroom.

The cars coming up the gravel road at night looked just like they were coming in the window. The old house was spooky; it would creek and snap at night and sometimes the wind would blow so strong it was like a hurricane.

My brother Carl (Spud) slept in the kitchen by the table. It was so cold the dipper would be frozen in the water buckets in the morning. My older brother B.W. (Dub) built in the small porch and he slept out there. He would get up in the morning and come by the fireplace trying to get warm. He claimed he was so cold that his ears were frozen and he could not move them.

There was no bathroom in the old house. We had the outdoor toilet in the woods behind the house. At night when we had to go, we would hear foxes and raccoons. We would run back to the house scared to death. We often heard tales that there was money or some sort of treasure buried on the property.

In the fall we use to go hunting in the woods down the old gravel road. The foliage from the trees was beautiful that time of the year. In the wintertime the rain would sometimes freeze on the trees and the icicles would sparkle like chandeliers.

My brother B.W. (Dub) decided to go to trade school and become a barber. He went to live in Gadsden while he was in school. I moved into his room on the porch. At night I would dream of an old ghost sitting on the side of my bed, laughing and moaning. I would wake up scared to death, calling for my brother, Carl.



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The ghost would visit my room often; I always thought he wanted the buried money.

My westside boyfriend finally married someone else and my heart was broken. Mama said I would get over him, and after much crying, I did.

Later when I got married and had Jeff, my first son, we brought him home to the old tollgate house. He is now forty-nine years old and he still loves to go home to the old tollgate place.

We tore the old house down in 1952 and a lot of good memories disappeared. The lumber was used to build another house where we moved. Papa died March 22, 1961; he was ninety-one. Mama stayed in the new house until she died in 1975.

My sister Stacie got married and moved away. My brother, B.W., worked in the local barber-shop where he is known to everyone as Dub. He lives across from the old tollgate place. My other brother, Carl, went into country music, the thing he loved best. Everyone in Huntsville knows him

as Spud, the music man.

The Williams family is a very close family. We still get together once a year in October for a family reunion.

As I sit here looking out the window, the old walnut tree still loads the yard with walnuts. The hickory nut tree still stands; it still attracts lots of squirrels. If I didn't know better, I would think the old groundhog is still there, it looks like him but I guess it is one of his ancestors.

Our family loves the old place and the memories it brings. There is no place like home.

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Ad from 1911 newspaper

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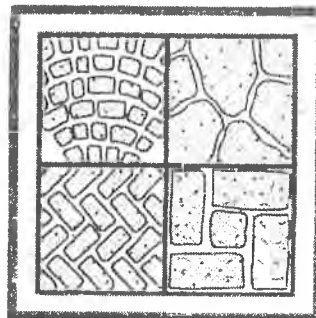
Off Limits

from 1872 newspaper

An unruly incident took place this week past at the Spring Saloon when soldiers of the 7th Indiana Regiment began casting disparaging remarks about the late war. The patrons promptly left the establishment, went home, donned their old gray uniforms whereas they returned and made short work of the northern visitors. The bar has been placed off limits.

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Welcome Back!

Almost Famous

It was an old dilapidated nightclub in one of the worse neighborhoods of Huntsville. The air was thick with cigarette smoke and fumes of stale beer. There were only a few people sitting around the tables, bored to death, while on the small stage was an old gray haired black man, trying to coax one more song out of his memory, as his knurled fingers gently stroked the strings of a guitar.

The old man had been almost famous at one time. Years earlier he had been known as "Lonely John," a name he had acquired because of his soulful renditions of the Blues. But with the new popularity of the radio, time had passed him by.

Now he was just another broken down old man, playing in clubs for whatever tips people might decide to give him.

No one really noticed the stranger when he slipped in the door and pulled up a chair at a table in the back shadows of the room: He sat there for almost an hour, listening to the old man and drinking, never saying a word.

Finally, when the old man was done playing, the stranger invited

him to set at his table and have a drink. They talked in voices so low that no one else in the room could hear them. Not that anyone cared, of course. The old man had long ago become the butt of all the jokes told in the bar.

When it was time for the old man to begin playing again, the stranger joined him on stage. With the old man taking the lead, the stranger hesitantly began to follow.

Slowly and awkwardly at first they began singing the songs of the cotton fields and of the poor people. Their songs told of empty whisky bottles, and of heartbreak, and lost loves. An old broken down black man and a young white man, together on the make-shift stage, staring into one another's eyes as they blended their voices in perfect harmony while singing the songs that most people had forgotten.

When they finished the last song the stranger said it time for him to leave. They stood there silently for a moment, and then the stranger reached out with his arms, and embraced the old man.

After watching him leave, the old man paused, wiping a tear out of his eye, and then slowly picked up a piece of paper the stranger had given him. Carefully he smoothed the paper and with a piece of old scotch tape, taped it to the wall behind the stage.

Once more, he stood back and looked at the stranger's picture on

the poster and read the words, "Hank Williams - Appearing on Stage."

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The Youngest Confederate Soldier

On April 23, 1898, according to an article that appeared in the Huntsville Mercury newspaper, William Eugene Clutts filed a request for pension at the Madison County Court House. Written boldly on the front of the application was "Youngest Soldier in War From Alabama."

According to the records, Clutts was born July 16, 1848 and enlisted in the Confederate Army at the age of twelve years and six months.

On November 15, 1861 William Clutts and his father, James, made the short trip to Huntsville where they both enlisted in Company K of the 49th Alabama Infantry. Just why his father allowed him to enlist at such a young age is unknown. Possibly there was no one left at home to take care of him so his father simply decided it was a way to keep the family together. In early 1862 the unit was organized in Nashville and first came under fire at Shiloh on April 6-7 where the units suffered heavy casualties. They went on to Vicksburg in 1862 where Clutts' father died on July 1, 1862. Whether he died of wounds or sickness is not known. After helping bury his father young Clutts stayed with the regiment when it moved to Baton Rouge in August and Port Hudson in the winter of 1862-63.

In January of 1863 officers of the regiment apparently became aware of Clutts' age as he was dis-

charged for being underage. Two weeks later the unit was captured near Port Hudson, Louisiana.

Clutts returned to Huntsville where he stayed until the winter of 1864 when he once again joined the Confederate service, this time with the 5th Alabama Cavalry. Possibly, because of the dire straits the Confederacy was in, no one questioned his age.

After the war Clutts returned to Madison County where he became a farmer. On his pension application, in 1898, he listed his worldly goods as one mule, one cow and two hogs. The authorities, probably noting Clutts' age at enlistment, rejected the pension.

On October 22, 1914 another pension application was filed and a witness, L.F. Pike, swore that Clutts had been captured with the regiment at Port Hudson, Louisiana and that Clutts was discharged for being underage. He also offered evidence that Clutts, after returning home, joined the 5th Alabama Cavalry in November, 1864 and later surrendered with the Regiment at Danville, Alabama. Another veteran, A.T. Williams, filed a similar sworn statement backing Clutts' claim.

After lengthy delays, the pension was granted. When Clutts died in 1923 his widow filed for a

widow's pension which was also granted.

Can William Clutts be the youngest Confederate Veteran? Another claimant, Warren F. Dent, swore he was a courier during the war, serving under his brother. While he may have delivered messages, his date of birth, March 23, 1855, makes it highly unlikely that he ever bore arms. Another contender, Charles Carter Hay, based his claim on the fact that he drilled while an 11 year old Cadet at Glennville Military Academy.

If the records are correct, William Eugene Clutts, of Madison County, was in fact the youngest Confederate soldier.

Who Is This?



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The Florida Short Route

In 1919, the automobile age was still in its infancy and most roads were literally dirt paths but already tourists were making the long drive to Florida. For many Northerners the most direct route was thru Huntsville. Despite the fact that the roads were horrible, there were no road signs and few gas stations, the city fathers decided to promote the route in an effort to draw tourist dollars to the city.

Thousands of maps and brochures were printed and distributed, advertising the route thru Huntsville as the "Florida Short Route." The brochures; along with providing directions, were full of traveling tips such as "Do not attempt this road during wet weather - wait for at least three hours of full sunshine," and "a person skilled in automobile repair may be found at blacksmith shop at mile 73.8. If he is not there, inquire at the general store next door or the nearby church as he is frequently at both."

Below are directions from Huntsville to Gadsden. Although the distance was only 84 miles, motorists were advised to allow 3 1/2 hours for the trip - in fair weather.

Huntsville - Court House on left, First National Bank Building on right, Jog straight ahead South on macadam pike.

Mile 5.8 - Lily Flagg - Cross RR track; straight thru four corners; straight thru at 9.7.

Mile 11 - Whitesburg - The Tennessee River, bear left around store house. (Caution) Do not cross river at Ferry located just around curve to right. Turn right over iron and wood bridge following road straight ahead with poles. Cross wood and iron bridge at 12.4 then bear right over winding road. Cross RR then pass church at 13.9.

Mile 14.6 - Hobbs Island - Station on right; straight thru, following gravel road and poles.

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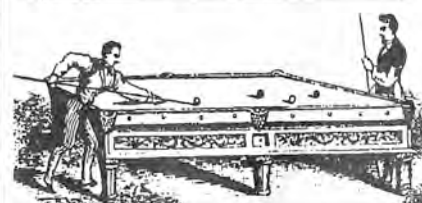
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Pass church on right at 16. Pass school house on right at 16.6. Cross wood and iron bridge at 18.1. Sharp turn to right at 19.1, straight ahead; keep to right at 20.7, keep to right at 21. Church on right at 21.4. Straight ahead and turn right at 24.4.

Mile 24.6 - New Hope - Post

Office on left. Straight thru; bear left with poles at 24.8. Bear left at 25.4. Cross iron and wood bridge at 26.2. Keep straight ahead at 27.2. Old school house on right at 28.4. Church on left at 29. Keep straight ahead with travel at 29.4. Cross culvert and bear left at 30.

Mile 32.1 - Cottonville - Store

on left, straight thru; Fork; take left at 32.7. Church on left at 33. Cross two wood culverts at 34.4. Go over long winding hill at 36-2. Sharp turn to right at 37.6. School house on left at 38.7.

Mile 42.8 - Bear right down hill to Tennessee River Ferry; cross here to Guntersville; ferry

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To the right the Post Office. To the left the Chamber of Commerce. Below: Monte Sano, seen from Huntsville.

runs day and night. Necessary to call for ferry at night as it anchors during the night on the Guntersville side. Two large gasoline power ferries each handling five cars. Toll \$1.00. Go straight out from ferry. Four-corners; turn right.

Mile 44 - Guntersville - four-corners; Courthouse on left; straight thru. Brick church on left at 44.1. Pass watering trough in middle of road, at 45.5. Go thru covered bridge at 46.4. Go up winding road to Sand Mountain.

Mile 48.3 - Top of Mountain. Irregular four-corners; bear left thru covered bridge at 51.7. Go thru bridge again at 52.4. Pass Cemetery on left.

Mile 54.4 - Albertville - Four-corners; straight thru. Cross RR station on right at 51.7. Forks keep right at 56 2. Cross iron bridge at 58.8. Cross RR at 60.

Mile 62 - Boaz - Straight thru; Post Office on right. Pass church on right; thru covered bridge. Forks; take left. Cross RR. Church and school house on right at 65.8.

Mile 68 - Descend long winding road with wide sweeping curves. At bottom of mountain cross iron bridge and bear left and then right over another mountain at 76.2. Four-corners; straight thru at 78.3. Turn left, RR on right at 78.4.

Mile 78.7 - Attalla - Bank on left; Four-corners; straight thru with trolley, crossing RR. Keep straight up hill at 78.9. Cross concrete bridge at 79.6. Cross RR at 80.

Mile 81.3 - Alabama City - Post Office on right; cross RR and follow trolley. Cross concrete bridge. Forks; take left at 82.2. Bear right; pass Southern RR shop on left at 82.6. Cross RR. Four corners; meeting trolley; turn left.

Mile 84 - Gadsden - Court House on left.

The reason it's called "golf" is that all the other four-letter words were already taken.

New Building will be erected by the Struve Brothers

from 1913 newspaper

The Delp property at the corner of Washington and Clinton Streets, one of the most valuable building sites in the city, has been purchased from Delp-Ware heirs by the Struve Brothers and will be improved at once. The frame buildings standing on the lot will be sold and taken away and the brick store will be torn away. The deal that has just been closed has been under negotiations for several years and it has finally been carried through successfully and one of the handsomest business blocks in town will be erected there.

Mr. W. F. Struve informed a reporter that he has already rented the proposed building and it will be constructed according to the lessee's plans. It will be two stories high and the ground floor will be a store 50 by 100 feet.

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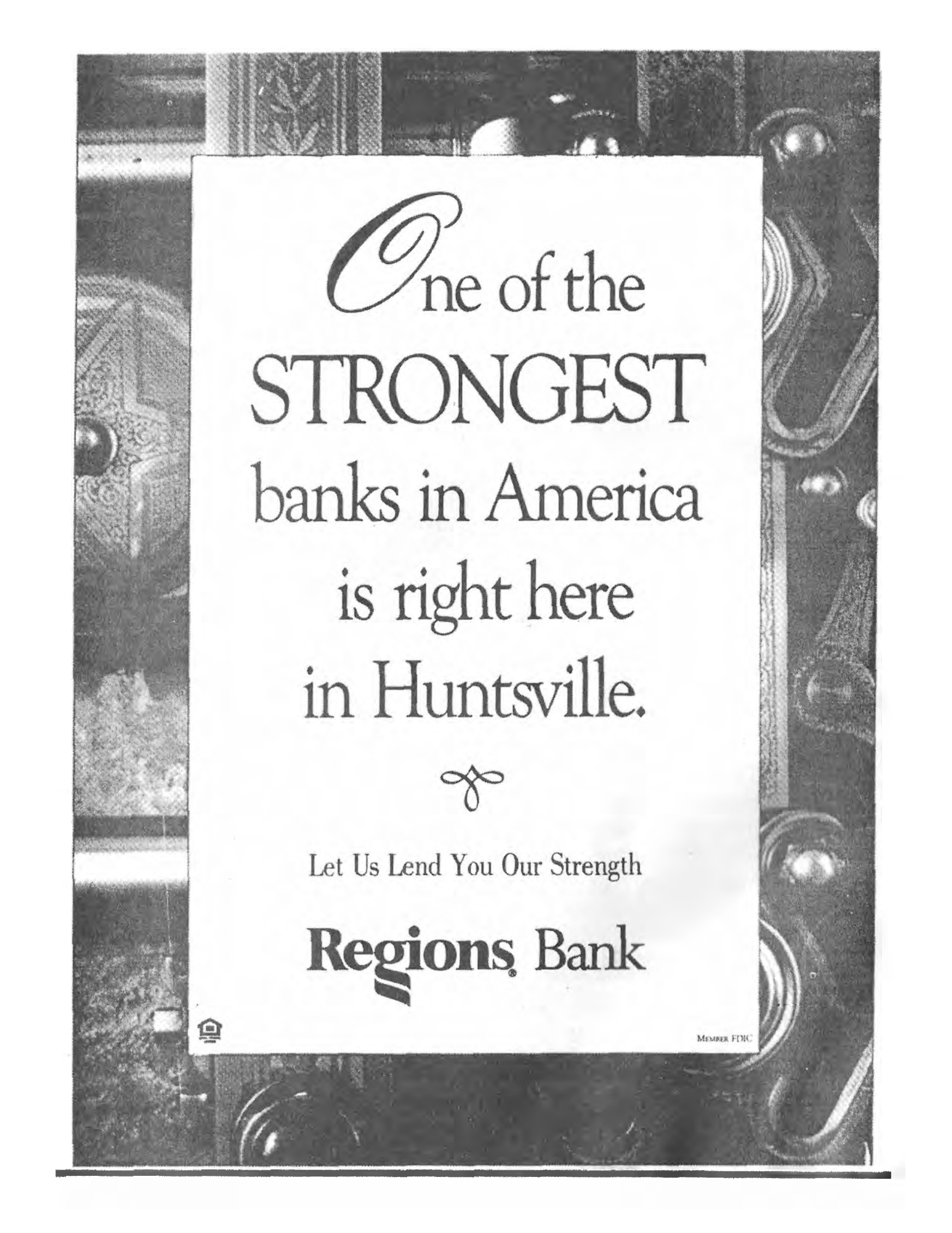
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