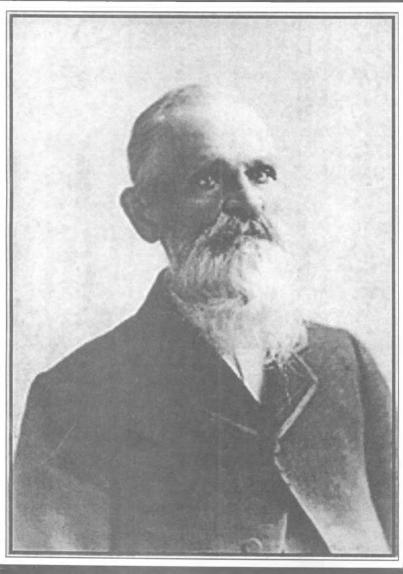


Old Auntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



All For Nothing

"My name's Troy Livingston and I want to give myself up," the old man said. "I killed a man in a fight."

The stranger seemed to be in control of his mental facilities and was clearly not a mental case.

"How old are you?" Sheriff Dave Headrick asked. He could not imagine a man that old being in a fight.

"Ninety."

"When did this fight occur?"

"In 1904. I was seventeen years old at the time."

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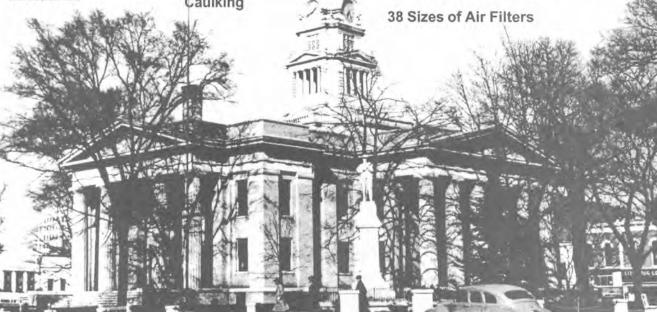
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Old Timer's Sale



All For Nothing

Few people paid any attention to the old man as he entered the courthouse in the late fall of 1976. There was nothing really unusual about the stranger; he was just an old man of indeterminable age. His body was bent from a lifetime of toil and he paused every few feet to lean on his walking stick while catching his breath. His hair was white, curling about the collar, and seemed to highlight his face which had been burnt a reddish brown from a lifetime of working outdoors.

After asking directions, the old man made his way to the Sheriff's office where he asked to speak to the Sheriff.

Sheriff Dave Headrick was having problems of his own and told his secretary to "Take a message. I don't have time to talk to anyone."

The secretary, being more diplomatic, relayed the message to the old man, saying "the sheriff is tied up right now. Would you like to leave a message?"

The stranger appeared to be resigned, saying "I'll wait."

Several hours passed, with people coming and going and the old man still sitting in the corner

patiently waiting. Finally Headrick, probably realizing the stranger was not going to go away, motioned for the secretary to show the man into his office.

Impatient, and barely looking up from his paperwork, Headrick asked the old man what he could do for him.

"My name's Troy Livingston and I want to give myself up," the man replied in a voice so soft that Headrick had to lean forward to hear the words.

"For what?"

"Murder. I'm just too old and tired to run anymore."

The Sheriff's head jerked up as he heard the words. After pausing for a moment to digest what he had just heard, he looked at the man carefully. The stranger seemed to be in control of his mental facilities and was clearly not a mental case.

"What happened?" the sheriff asked.

"I killed a man in a fight," the man answered, repeating the fact that he wanted to give himself up.

"How old are you?" The sheriff could not imagine a man that old being in a fight.

"Ninety."

"When did this fight occur?"

"In 1904. I was seventeen years old at the time."

Sheriff Headrick stared at the old man, speechless. As a long time law enforcement officer he



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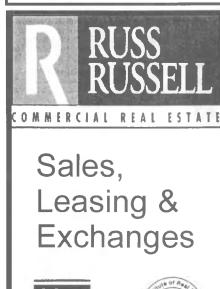
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had heard almost every kind of confession but this was the strangest he had ever encountered. Normally, at this point, he would have turned the case over to a detective but the whole affair was so bizarre he decided to continue the questioning.

"Tell me about it," the sheriff ordered while leaning back in his chair.

Relieved at finally being able to tell his story, the words seemed to burst from the old man as he traveled back to a time when he was young again.

His name was Troy Livingston and he had been born near Scottsboro, Alabama where his mother and father worked as sharecroppers. After a few years of disastrous crops, the family decided to move to Huntsville where they heard the cotton mills were hiring.

With all their belongings packed in the back of a wagon, pulled by a mule, the family showed up at the gates of Dallas Mills, where they were quickly hired. Troy, although only fourteen years old, was given the job of sweeper with the salary of thirty five cents a day.

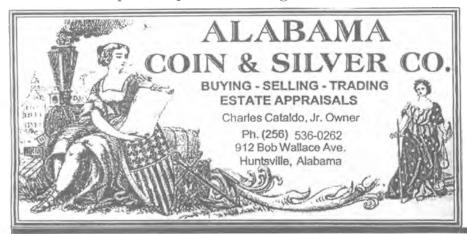
After receiving their "hiring papers" they were directed to another office where they were assigned housing. Although there were never enough homes to accommodate all the workers, the mills made it a point to provide

housing in cases where the whole family worked for the mill, thereby ensuring the maximum amount of labor at the cheapest price.

Along with the housing came a strict set of rules. No livestock or chickens could be kept and no gardens could be planted. If any member of the family quit, the whole family could be forced to move. All the coal for heating and cooking had to be purchased from the mill and the workers were "strongly encouraged" to buy their groceries and other supplies at a mill owned store.

Despite the rules, the Livingston family began their new lives as mill workers. Their work days were 12 ½ hours long, beginning at 5:45 in the morning and ending at 6:15 in the evening, for which an able bodied worker could earn fourteen dollars a month.

The family's original plan had been to work at the mill for several years, save their money, and return to Jackson County where they intended to buy a small farm. Unfortunately, there never seemed to be any money left to save. Every month came more bills. Regardless, the family kept trying. The father worked in the evenings sawing fire wood he would peddle door to door on the weekends. The mother took in ironing and made hand sewn quilts for sale to neighbors.







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Troy Livingston was probably the most enterprising of the family. He was a quiet, somewhat shy young lad whose diminutive size made him appear to be no more than eleven or twelve. His job enabled him to travel to all parts of the mill and he noticed that when people ran out of tobacco or snuff they had to wait until the end of the shift before they could purchase more.

After thinking about this for some time, he visited a local store where he talked the owner into selling him some cans of snuff and tobacco on credit. He then stuffed the pockets of his overalls with the supplies which he would sell throughout the day as he visited the different parts of the mill. He was careful to only charge a few pennies more than what he had paid. His new business was probably against the mill policy but as long as Troy was discreet, no one said anything. Before long he became a regular feature of the mill and although he probably didn't make more than a few dollars a week, it was a welcome addition to the family's finances.

The only dark spot in Troy's employment came from a foreman named Bullet Gaines who was a notorious tyrant and took a particular delight in tormenting the younger employees. Anyone incurring Gaine's wrath could be assured of a swift kick, or at the

least, a hard slap on the side of the head. After a few bruising encounters with the tyrant, Troy learned to simply stay out of his way.

The winter of 1902 was hard on the mill workers. A deadly form of the flu, some people called it the Spanish flu, had spread throughout the mill villages. Almost every household had someone sick, and in many cases it was the whole family. Troy's father, like most of the other employees, continued to drag himself to work every day despite being deathly ill.

"Pa went home one day after work and laid down," Troy recalled many years later. "The next morning Mama went to wake him up and he was dead. The mill gave us that day off to bury him but we had to be back at work the next day."

With the loss of the major wage earner the family's already precarious financial situation went from bad to worse. The small amount of money they had managed to save went for funeral expenses. Making matters even worse was the fact that the mill was experiencing one of its periodic slowdowns and in turn had reduced the employees hours to a minimum.

Several weeks after her husband's death, Troy's mother was called to the housing office where she was notified that once the mill started full production again, she would have to move. The houses were reserved for whole families, the bigger the better.

Mrs. Livingston was faced with a dilemma. She was too old to get another job and had no other place to go to. She knew she could not depend on Troy's help forever; he was already talking about moving to Birmingham someday and getting a "high paying" job in the iron mills.

In the end she made the same decision that so many women had been forced to make throughout the ages. She "took up house-keeping" with a neighbor who had lost his wife and was faced with the same situation.

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Troy remembered Mr. Sanders as a good man who never raised his voice and who always treated his mother with respect. The only problem with the new family was Sander's son, Dennis, who was jealous of Troy and resented the fact that his father was living with another woman.

"That boy was rotten to the core," remembered Troy, "but we tolerated him just to keep the peace."

With his home situation deteriorating rapidly, Troy began making plans to move to Birmingham. He was still giving his mother his whole paycheck but was saving the money he made from selling tobacco and snuff at the mill. Troy had always been discreet but now, in a hurry to save more money, became more open with his peddling. Before long he came to the attention of some of the foremen.

One afternoon as the employees were filing out the door at the end of another work day, Bullet Gaines accosted Troy, ordering the youngster to empty his pockets. Troy refused.

In a rage at being disobeyed, Gaines began slapping the boy.

"I reckoned I was just plain scared," recalled Troy many years later. He just kept hitting me so I picked up a piece of pipe off the ground and started hitting back. I hit him real good one time and he just fell down."

Immediately a crowd began to gather around the still form of the foreman who was on the ground with a thin stream of bloody foam dripping from his mouth.

Terrified, Troy ran home where minutes later he was joined by his mother and Mr. Sanders. Sanders, at first didn't think it was a big thing. "Just go to the office in the morning and explain what happened."

While Sanders was talking,

his son Dennis walked in the door, highly agitated. After listening for a few minutes, Dennis announced he had just heard that the foreman was dead from a crushed skull and a warrant was being issued for Troy's arrest.

Without saying a word, Troy and his mother began getting his clothes together while Mr. Sanders went to a neighbor's house to borrow some money.

"When I left," remembered Troy, "I had two shirts, one pair of pants and twenty-two dollars. Mr. Sanders had borrowed ten of it from a neighbor."

Although Livingston was fleeing for his life, in many ways it must have seemed like a Huckleberry Finn adventure to the young lad who had never been away from home. Leaving here he made his way to Tuscaloosa, walking most of the way, where he worked in a lumber camp for a while as a clerk. "I didn't really know nothing about clerking but the other clerk ran off with another man's wife and I was the only other person there that knew how to write and figure."

After working for a few months, and saving his money, Troy next went to Mobile where he bought passage to Panama. Thousands of people had been employed building the Canal and



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although most of the work was finished, there were still dozens of work camps scattered across the narrow country.

Troy purchased a mule and began working as a peddler, visiting the most remote camps in the jungle. "I had an old bugle," remembered Troy, "and when I got within a couple of miles from the camps I would start blowing. When I got there everyone would be waiting."

Troy was well on his way to becoming a successful businessman but could never forget the fact he was a fugitive from justice. Unable to visit his mother, he wrote letters in care of his stepbrother who was the only one at home who could read or write. With each letter he would send money for his mother.

A year or two went by with no answer but Troy kept writing and sending money. Finally he received a letter from Dennis, his stepbrother. Mr. Sanders had died, he wrote, and Troy's mother was in a bad way. Dennis was trying to take care of her but there wasn't much work in Huntsville. He also wrote that the law had been by the house several times trying to learn where Troy had gone and they had a warrant for his arrest. Dennis, appearing concerned that Troy's

letters might be intercepted, sent another address for Troy to write to.

Troy, deeply worried about his mother, responded by sending more money. Several months later he received another letter telling about how the mill was forcing them to move and they were trying to buy a house but didn't have the money.

Troy took all the money he had saved since leaving home and sent it to Dennis.

As the years passed a routine developed. Troy worked, saved every penny he could, and sent it back to Huntsville every time a crisis arose. Try as he might, he could never get ahead. His mother had to have an operation that cost thousands of more dollars. The house she had purchased needed a new roof, she needed glasses or there were more doctor bills. He felt comforted, though, that someone was back home caring for her.

Cut off from all contact with his mother, except through Dennis, Troy remained the dutiful son. His business was prospering to the point where he had bought a small store and had several peddlers working for him.

More years passed and Troy began to grow older. The letters he received from Dennis became

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- **4**. Lily Flagg The story of Huntsville's prize-winning Jersey cow, by Doris Benefield Gilbreath, \$10.00.
- **5.** Historic Mooresville: A Guide to the First Town Incorporated by the Alabama Territorial Legislature, \$25.00.
- **6.** We Are Not Afraid by Huntsville native Homer Hickam, author of The Rocket Boys, \$12.95.
- **7.** Gifts of Grace: Alabama Churches in Watercolor by Bob Moody, \$40.00.
- **8.** Glimpses into Antebellum homes of Historic Huntsville Alabama \$14.95.
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even more sporadic; sometimes he would receive two or three letters a month and then it might be several years before another one came. With each letter, however, came another request for money.

In the 1950's Troy received a letter telling of his mother's death and asking for money for funeral expenses. He sent the money along with instructions for a large marble tombstone. With his mother's death the letters stopped.

As the years crawled by, and his hair began to turn white, he began to think more and more about returning to Huntsville. Although he had acclimated himself to his adopted country, spoke the language well, and even looked like a native, he never really considered it his home.

Sometime in the 1960's he resumed writing his step-brother, Dennis, explaining his desire to return.

Dennis wrote back that it would be dangerous, the murder was still talked about and Troy would no doubt be sentenced to life in prison. After a series of letters Dennis proposed another approach.

He knew a politician, he wrote, who was close to the governor. He had talked to this person and for twenty or twenty five thousand dollars might be able to get him a pardon.

Troy sent the money, grateful that he might finally be able to return home. Unfortunately, more letters came, with more requests for money. Other politicians had to be bought and attorney's fees had to be paid.

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Suddenly the letters stopped. Troy kept writing for years, but this time his letters were returned.

The years had finally caught up with Troy and he was now an old man. Any thoughts of ever returning to Alabama seemed to have vanished. In 1976 he was struck ill and spent several months in the hospital on the brink of death. As he lay in the bed recuperating he thought about his life and the mistakes he had made.

He would run no more, he decided. He was going home.

As Troy finished his story, Sheriff Headrick leaned back in his chair, pondering what to do next. He couldn't arrest the man until he could prove a murder had been committed and, since so



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Suddenly Headrick made up his mind. Reaching for the phone he called Dianne Thompson, a lady well known around town for helping people. Many people called her "Aunt Bee" after the popular "Mayberry" series on television.

Briefly explaining the situation, Headrick asked her if she would be willing to look after the old man for a day or two while he did some checking. After being assured he was not dangerous, she readily agreed.

That evening, after the old man had gone to bed, Dianne started making phone calls hoping to find a relative of Troy's. After spending hours on the phone she called the sheriff. It was well past midnight but the sheriff answered on the first ring.

"Dave," she said, "There's something wrong here. His story doesn't match what I've been able to find out."

There was a brief pause as if the sheriff was trying to decide exactly what to say. "I know. Bring him to the office in the morning."

The next morning, after telling

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the old man to sit down first, Headrick told him what he had found out.

There never was any murder. Gaines had recuperated from the fight with nothing more than a scar on his forehead to show for the fight. He moved to a small community in Tennessee where he had died in the 1940s.

A look of shock and relief both tore at Troy. "What about my mother?" he asked.

"She died in 1904, the year after you left here," Headrick replied. "Your step-brother died about ten years ago."

Troy sat motionless, too stunned to move or talk. Finally, in a low voice that sounded almost like a plea, he said, "It was all for nothing, wasn't it." "It was all for nothing." Headrick repeated the words.

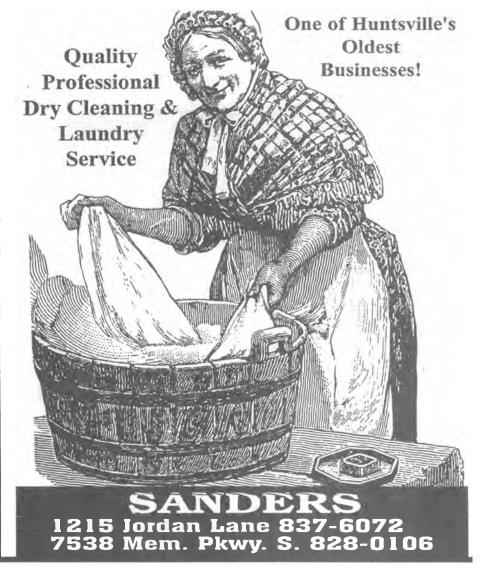
The silence in the room was almost unbearable. Finally Dianne Thompson asked if there was anything they could do.

"I would like to see where my mother is buried."

A few minutes later they were at the office of Maple Hill Cemetery. A search of the records showed no one with his mother's name. "Most likely," an employee explained, "she's probably buried in what is known as Potter's Field. They didn't keep very good records of a lot of those burials."

"I want to see it."

When the police car pulled to a stop in the section known as Potters Field the old man gazed out the window as if he was search-



ing for something. Finally he turned away, saying, "Not even a tombstone."

As they started to leave the cemetery the old man made one more request. "I want to see where my step-brother is buried.

Headrick thought about it for a minute. The other cemetery was out in the county and he had other appointments that morning. "The hell with it," he decided, "Someone owes the old man something."

A half hour later they pulled to a stop in front of the cemetery. After parking the car they got out and began searching. Minutes later they found the grave several hundred feet from the road.

Headrick and Dianne Thompson watched the old man as he walked around the gravesite, reaching out every few moments to touch the imposing polished marble tombstone. After a few moments he asked if they would wait for him in the car. He wanted to be alone with his step-brother for a few minutes, he explained.

Headrick and Thompson had almost reached the car when they turned around to see what he was doing.

The old man was zipping his pants up. For the first time there was a smile on his face as he gazed at a large wet stain spreading slowly across the grave.

Later when Headrick told the story, he remembered the man being almost happy as they drove back to town. "He kept pointing out roads and buildings and saying how he remembered them and telling stories about growing up here. When we got to town we stopped at the Big Spring so he could see it again. He knelt down and, using his hands, took a big drink."

"I used to do this when I was a kid," he grinned.

"We drove around for a while looking at the old buildings," Headrick remembered, "and then he asked us to drop him off at the bus station. I asked where he was going."

"Birmingham," the old man replied. "I started to go there a long time ago but something came up."

"I hope he made it," said Dave Headrick years later as he sat staring at an empty glass in front of him. "I really hope he made it."

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Lacey's Springs Woman Starves To Death While Sleeping

from 1904 Huntsville paper

Mrs. Sallie Rutherford, of Lacey's Spring, was stricken with what was labeled "inflammation." She fell into a coma and her jaws were so tightly locked that no food, liquid, or solid could be administered to her.

Known as "The Sleeping Woman," her case attracted national attention and physicians from all over visited her. After 57 days without food or water, Mrs. Rutherford awoke and quietly asked for something to eat. Alas, she was unable to digest any food that she ate, and after lingering a few more days she died of starvation.

Local Boy Gets Third Leg

from 1918 newspaper

Private John Kellogg, of Madison County, received a telegram last week informing him that he had been wounded, degree undetermined, while serving with the Army in France last month.

When he contacted the authorities to tell them he was home on leave and was perfectly well, he was ordered to report to the military hospital in Augusta, Georgia to be fitted for an artificial leg.

If the authorities have their way, Mr. Kellogg will be the only man in Alabama with three legs.

1902 Huntsville Want Ads

Lost - On the square a stick pin with nugget of gold on one end. Finder will please return to this office or the Democrat office, and receive reward.

Lost - Buffalo lap robe, last Saturday. On Walker or Holmes streets. Finder return to the City Baker and receive reward.

For Rent - The corner store, McGee Hotel Block. This is one of the best stands in the city for any business. See Jones & Rison.

After January 1 t 1902 - I will begin to close out my entire stock of old whiskies and brandies for cash only. Persons wishing to purchase a gallon or more of these flne goods should avail themselves of this opportunity. I have some goods that have been in stock over 5 years. Will positively allow credit to no one in the future. W E. Everett, Propr. Huntsville Hotel Bar.



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News From New Market

(Editor's Note: In the late 1800s, New Market was a bustling town second only to Huntsville in size in Madison County. Mrs. S.H. Hambrick, whose family had connections with early New Market, in 1968 found a bundle of 17 issues of the New Market Enterprise from 1888 and 1889 in the attic of her home near Manchester, Tenn. Following is the tenth of a series of articles based on the contents of those eight-page weekly tabloid newspapers.)

by Waylon Smithey

Volume I., No. 15, September 29, 1888



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The editor ran these items on Page 1:

"The advent of Jack Frost will be hailed with delight all over the South. He is a sure and fatal foe to the yellow fever curse. Ordinarily in the cotton region late frosts are desired, especially after such disastrous rains as fell at a critical moment in the cotton belt, but this year his coming is early looked for."

"A letter lately received at this office is full of offensive personalities to another party. We will not publish such articles, and parties who write them had as well not send them to this office. The *Enterprise* is not that kind of a paper."

"A few persons had the pleasure of seeing a rainbow last Saturday night, produced by the reflection of the moon. This is something rarely seen."

Correspondent Joe Grover wrote this item from Wells' Precinct: "The health throughout our section was never better. Chills and fevers are almost unknown to a large part of our people."

A column of notes on Page 8 contained these items:

"Every person who enters New Market with a grip is viewed with

a suspicious eye, but we haven't established the shot-gun policy."

Workmen are here to build a cotton platform at the depot, but its location is not convenient."

"We return thanks to Miss Eva McCoy for a basket of very fine apples left at our sanctum Wednesday."

John O. Bridges ran the following ad under the heading "Strayed": "From the undersigned, at Holly Tree, a cream-colored cow, with one smooth crop on each ear and underbit in right ear, Also, a black yearling heifer, unmarked, about 1-1/2 years old. Any information about them directed to me at Holly Tree, Ala., will be thankfully received."

Following is the next installment of the History of New Market column:

"For several years before the war, probably about the year 1850, there were no saloons or places where whisky, etc., were sold. An act of the Legislature was passed prohibiting the sale of such within three miles of the village. This was done in order to enable the inhabitants to live in quietness and peace. Night was made hideous, and the days - particularly Saturdays - were scenes of blood spilling, fights, gun and



pistol shots, frightening the very souls of our adversaries. The hands of the surgeon were bloody all day in dressing wounds, etc. Many serious results happened and several deaths. One person, during an exciting election, drove down the neck of a decanter containing whisky upon the counter of a saloon, and nearly cut off his hand near the wrist with the glass.

"Such were our early days. Now we have peace and quietness, except at some times some souls, coming from the still-house, gets overfull and becomes hilarious. This law is still in force.

"John P. Pool was the principal gin builder, together with his father and brothers, Samuel P. Pool and Colwell P. Pool. John was of a mechanical turn of mind, very ingenious, and one of our best citizens. So were his father and brothers.

"George Allen with William Decherd were merchants here. Allen was elected Town Marshal. Being of determined mind and having no fear, he attempted to arrest some wrong-doers, but was shot with buckshot, fortunately without serious results.

"New Market Lodge No. 52 A.F. & A.M. was organized in 1819, and chartered in December, 1840. This Lodge was formerly Washington Lodge No. 23, chartered by the State of Tennessee when Andrew Jackson was G.M.: but on the formation of the State of Alabama, the G.L. of Alabama was constituted at Cahaba on the 11 of June, 1821, and Washington Lodge No. 23, which was located at Hazel Green, Madison County, Ala., surrendered her charter to the G.L. of Tennessee and removed to New Market, but nothing was done in the Lodge until some time in 1839, when New Market Lodge went regularly to work and increased her membership, and is in operation to date.

"George Vaughn was a successful merchant and was much thought of. He was rather of an imaginative mind, and used to brag of his achievements. One day he was before his store narrating some of his exploits before

a crowd of men, one of whom saw advancing an old man by the name of Pitman Pitts, who was a very humorous man, and observed to Vaughn and made a bet that he would give him a new name. Vaughn agreed, and while continuing his narrative old man



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Shavers Bookstore (205) 536-1604 2362 Whitesburg Drive Pitts came up and leaning on his staff silently listened, and during Vaughn's relation of an extraordinary event, Pitts cried out, "Go it, Gulliver!" Neither of the parties having met one another.

"Mr. Pitts called one physician "Big Physic," being a large man, and the other, a very small man, "Little Physic." He called Sledge "Big Hammer," and Dr. Hale "Frozen Water." In fact he had a new name for everyone."

For Rent - Farm near Gurley with new barns and fresh water. 16 acres under potatoes - Boyd & Wellman

For Sale - The Petty property on East Randolph Street. This is a good bargain for somebody and it is going to be sold on easy payments. - Boyd & Wellman.

For Sale - The Bone homestead. The beautiful two acre lot, lying west of White Street. between Randolph and Eustis streets, location high, healthy and ideal, is now in my hands for sale.

W. F. Esslinger, Attorney.

For Sale - The Thomas home on Meridian Pike. A fine home with two wells and out buildings. Contact H. Thomas

News From Huntsville In 1891

- For Sale - One Rockdale filly 4 years old, one filly 2 years old, one mare mule, hay, corn, fodder and all farming tools. All property at my farm 3 miles north of Huntsville. J. D. Whitcomb.

- The roof is now placed upon the great Dallas Mills. Thus it is that this immense structure is rapidly nearing completion. The wing now nearly completed is three hundred and fifty feet long, one hundred and fifteen feet wide. five stories high. It will require eighteen hundred operatives to run this mill.

- News is that the Pullman Car. Company wrote Monte Sano Manager Harvey S. Denison on the subject of securing the adoption and use of the name of our loved mountain on one of their palace cars.

Yesterday Mr. Denison received a letter from one of the officials stating that they have named one of their cars "Monte Sano" and thanked him for the suggestion.

- Wanted - a lady companion will give her a comfortable home. Apply to Mrs. E. M. Musick, Goldsmith cottage No. 1, West Holmes Street.

- For Rent - The Stines Place about one mile from town containing 7 acres of land. Call on W.B. Robinson at this office.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a cash advance. - Ron Eyestone



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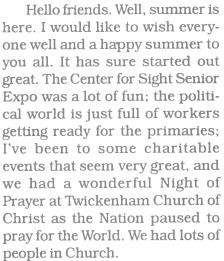


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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

With pearls of wisdom contributed by the Liar's Table



Our Picture of the Month was my beautiful friend **Cindy Lowery** from the restaurant 302 on Winchester Road. **Bobby Varnon** was the lucky guesser. So, he'll be coming for his country ham, I'm sure.

Our sympathies goes to **Mike Newbourne** on the death of his father. To charles King on the death of his mother. To **Loyd** and **Lehn Brooks**, and their families, on the death of their mother, and to **Susan Moque** on the death of her daddy. We love you all and our

prayers go to eah of you with much love.

Mother's Day was just great! I closed and went to church with **Doris** and **Wayne**. We, along with **Donna** and **Todd** had dinner at Outback. It was very good. **Loyd Tomlinson** always takes so much care of his dinner patrons. I love you, Loyd. I talked to my son and his family and was with **Linda** on Saturday. I also got to talk to some of my grandchildren, so it was a great day for me.

Our thoughts go out to **Gus Peavy** of Hurricane Creek. He has been having health problems and we sure hope he gets better. I don't think there has been a child on Hurricane Creek in the last fifty years that has not grown up loving that man. He's everyone's favorite uncle.

We had lots of weddings this month. My niece, **Ashley Gray** and **Pat Kennamer** had a beautiful wedding at Farley Church of Christ. My friend **Bill Fowler** and **Melanie Ann Johnson** married

April 27th. Our weather pal **Dan Smithy** was also married this month.

Congratulations to long-time friends **Lem** and **Jo Tipton**. They're married 50 years on April 14th. I hope you have come to know them for they are wonderful people. I let in their ministry as they are passing through this life. They've touched more lives than most anyone I know. They have sure been an inspiration to me. Hope you both have many more good years together.

I wish you could all see my little great granddaughter. She is so beautiful. She's about 15 months old now, and her mother had a birthday on Sunday. So I would like to say Happy Birthday to **Beth**. My granddaughter **Donna** had a birthday on the 16th. Happy Birthday. Love you all.

I want to talk about politics,

Photo of The Month

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

Hint: One of the finest farmers in Madison County.







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Sandra Steele, President

but how do we start? With so many wonderful people in the races. We'll start with Billy Bell. He is one of Huntsville's finest. I'm sure his opponents are good, but I haven't met them. Mark Craig is a super young man. The tax assessor office runners are Fran Hamilton, Adam Ragland, and Jim Duncan. How can you pick one of these? Fine folks.

We have some of Huntsville's finest running for sheriff. You take Blake Dorning. He sure has made an impression on his boss so that should tell us something the way the sheriff is working for him. Then look at Mickey. Eddie and David. All young men that our community is so proud of. They are all Republicans. Then we go to the Democratic side: Ed Nixon and Mac McCutcheon are sure at the top of the list when we talk about leaders for our community. So how can I go to the polls and vote for all of them. They are all dear friends of mine. I love you all.

Now, you take **Linda Hall**. She is running for tax collector. She is a hard working young lady who I think we're all proud of.

There are four fine ladies that were high school friends who get together once a year for about a week's vacation. This year Margie Stephens of Flint, Michigan, Ruth Backman and Barbara Blockwood of Huntsville ended their vacation eating breakfast with me. They really had a good time. We missed you Betty Jo Cunningham (maybe next time).

Remember the 6th annual **Long Family Reunion**. It will be held June 21-22 here in Huntsville. **Peggy** hopes for a big turn out this year as it will move to Georgia or South Carolina for the next two years.

My sister **Naomi** from Bradenton, florida has been here

this week. We really enjoy it when she gets to come for a few days.

Billy Bell is going to be so good at pouring coffee before the election if he don't win I'm going to hire him as my official coffee pourer.

I'd can't forget **Jeff Enfinger**, or **Patrick Jones**. I also will never forget my 22 years of friendship with our Governor, **Don Siegleman**.

I'm so thankful for the friendships I made with the **Bob Riley** family. I think **Bab** and **Patsy** are two of Alabama's finest. Then you take **Steve Windom**, I love him,

I can't get away without talking about our own **Mary Jane Caylor**. She's running for State School Board. I'm betting on you, Mary Jane. I love you.

I want to say a great big hello to my dear friend **Mr. Cecil Ashburn**. I saw him the other day and it was so nice. I love you.

aund Eunice

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Alabama Treasures

Cantaloup Salad

2 c. diced fresh cantaloupe

1 c. sliced fresh strawberries

1 c. mandarin orange sections

1c. fresh pineapple chunks

French dressing

Toasted sliced almonds

Combine the fruits in a large bowl, toss lightly with French dressing to taste, sprinkle with sliced almonds and mix. Serve in small bowls on chilled lettuce leaves.

Ladylike Orange Treat

1 1/2 T. water

20 large marshmallows

1 c. orange juice

1 t. grated orange rind

1c. heavy cream, whipped

Melt marshmallows in water in top of double boiler, stirring every now and then to hasten the melting process. Pour in the orange juice and add rind. Stir til smooth. Cool til mixture begins

to thicken, then fold in the whipped cream. Freeze, without stirring, in freezer tray.

Deep South Coconut Cake

10 egg whites

4 c. flour

2 c. sugar

1 c. shortening

1 t. salt

1 1/8 c. milk

½ t. orange extract

5 t. baking powder

1 t. vanilla extract

Cream shortening and sugar. Sift flour, salt and baking powder together and add t creamed mixture alternately with milk. Beat egg whites til stiff and fold into batter. Add flavorings. Line, grease and flour cake pans. Pour in batter and bake at 350 degrees til done.

County Fair Coconut Filling

6 egg whites

1 ½ c. water

4 c. sugar

1 t. flavoring

4 T. white corn syrup

Cook sugar, corn syrup and water til it forms a hard ball when tested in cold water. Let cool about 7 minutes before pouring slowly over stiffly beaten egg whites. Beat til mixture holds shape. Grate 2 coconuts, mix part of the icing with the coconut, save out enough to sprinkle generously over top of the cake. Spread on cake.

Cousin Lou's Eggs and Green Onions

12 tender green onions

1 T. butter

6 eggs

1/4 c. cream

1/2 t. salt

Pepper

Chop onions fine (use green tops, too) and saute in butter. Add cream, salt and pepper to eggs and beat. Combine with onions in skillet and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, til eggs are done. Serve immediately.

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Mammy's Sugar Pie

½ c. butter

1 c. sugar

1 whole egg

3 T. ice water

1 t. lemon flavoring

l unbaked pie shell

Cream butter and sugar together well, add egg and beat til light. Stir in water and flavoring. Pour into unbaked pie crust and bake at 350 degrees til filling has a delicate brown crust.

Buttermilk Fudge

2 c. sugar

3/4 c. buttermilk

½ c. white corn syrup

Combine ingredients and boil together til a sample forms a soft ball when dropped into cold water. Cool slightly, beat and pour onto buttered dish or slab.

Cullman County Fried Corn

8 ears freshly picked corn

 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. milk

3/4 t. salt

1/4 t. pepper

4 T. butter

Cut corn from cob and add milk, pepper and salt. Melt butter in skillet and add corn mixture. Cook, turning and stirring with a spatula, til tender. Some cooks add two well-beaten eggs to mixture just before they take it up for serving.

Fresh Peach Ice Cream

2 eggs, well beaten

1 c. sugar

1 c. light corn syrup

2 c. milk

2 c. light cream

1/4 c. lemon juice

2 c. mashed, very ripe peaches, sweetened

Add sugar to beaten eggs, adding gradually while beating. Stir in corn syrup, milk, cream and lemon juice and mix well. Place in freezer and freeze til mixture is partially frozen. Add the peaches and continue freezing til firm.

Hobbs Island Glazed

sweet potatoes

6 medium sweet potatoes

1 c. boiling water

1 t. salt

3 T. butter

3/4 c. orange marmalade

Peel potatoes and cut them in half. Place potato halves in heavy skillet and add boiling water and salt. Cover and simmer for about 20 minutes or potatoes are tender. Pour off liquid except for 1/4 cup. Ut dabs of butter on potatoes and spoon marmalade over them. Cook, uncovered, over low

heat, basting frequently, until potatoes are glazed.

Buttery Butterbeans

Shell butterbeans and cook them in water just to cover well. Many good cooks add a half dozen or so pods of okra to the beans while they are cooking. When the beans are tender, add a tablespoon of butter for each cup of butterbeans and add salt and pepper to taste.

These recipes are taken from a wonderful cookbook called "Treasured Alabama Recipes," by Kathryn Tucker Windham. They are old and tasty and unusual. You can find this cookbook at Shaver's Bookstore, on Whitesburg and Bob Wallace in Huntsville.



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A Discussion Of Slavery In Huntsville

Written in 1909 by E.C. Betts

We are not interested to know the mere fact that slavery as an institution was nurtured upon our soil; but, we are concerned with the inquiry as to the status of the same as such.

As we have previously observed, the slave population of the town and county grew with marked rapidity. This is explained by the fact that great numbers of slaves were brought into the county and sold in the open market, especially during the early part of this period. Many of these slaves were intelligent and had acquired limited manual and domestic training; many more were merely plantation hands. The former class longed to return to the haunts of their childhood. and mingle again among their companions "back on the old plantation." Those of the latter class, many of whom very probably were neither born nor reared in slavery but were sold into servitude, chafed under the restrains of regular labor among companions, who in some instances could neither understand, nor be understood by them. By this time,

the menace of the Indians to the fugitive slaves, was largely a thing of the past; they having withdrawn from this part of the country, except in rare instances.

No source of information is more reliable and enlightening than records contemporaneous with the matter under consideration. None such is more comprehensive than a newspaper file of the times. It is to this latter source that the author has turned in an effort to grasp the spirit of the times and its attitude toward slavery as an institution. Throughout the first fifteen years of this period, the papers carried many advertisements for "runaway slaves," similar to the few here quoted:

\$100.00 REWARD.

"Ran away from the subscriber, Oct. 1, 1819, an African negro man, named "Jack;" 33 years old, speaks bad English, but may be understood."

William Whitesides

\$150.00 REWARD.

Three negro fellows. Will probably return to Virginia, from whence they came.

AWAY

"Negro man named "Bob;" will probably make for the Cherokee or Choctaw Tribes.

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and others similar thereto, was accompanied by the rude cut of a negro, male or female, as the case was, in a fleeing posture; and in some instances by more elaborate cuts depicting the fugitive with a stick across the right shoulder, on the end of which was carried a small bundle tied up in a bandana handkerchief.

The most striking feature of these advertisements is the total absence of any description of the escape, whereby he or she might be recognized. None was needed and none was given. This for the very sufficient reason that, throughout the entire South, where slavery existed, a more or less competent and comprehensive patrol system was maintained. No slave was permitted off the premises of the master, and only in rare instances out of his slave quarters, without a special permit. Free negroes were scarce, and usually well known. Hence, we see the matter of capturing a fugitive slave resolved itself into the simple office on the part of the patrol to take up any negro seen upon the highway, day or night, unattended by some person in authority. Nor was it an easy matter for a runaway to travel across country; since, in doing so he almost invariably came in contact with some slave overseer, or owner, to whom he was unknown:

whereupon he was promptly arrested. To the escape, the difficulty in getting food was no inconsiderable obstacle. To obtain it he was almost necessarily compelled to approach some white man, or his habitation. There were few, if any, negro homes about the country. The tendency, if any there was, to assist an escape was discouraged and effectually checked by the laws of the land, which made it a crime to aid or abet a fugitive slave. These, and other statutes of a similar character, effected to make of every citizen, more or less, a member of this patrol force.

If, perchance, the slave arrested was a fugitive, he was returned to his master, who administered appropriate punishment. If not a fugitive but merely a prowler without permission, which was rarely granted, he was taken back to his quarters, where he received commensurate correction at the hands of the overseer or master. Recognition of the dangers of being caught abroad after dark, is made by the negroes themselves, in their folk songs, which contains more of melody than of sentiment: the chorus of which is: "Run. Run!, the Pattirol 'ill git you."

The summary manner in which the slave larcenist was dealt with, is portrayed in the fol-



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lowing terse news item appearing in the Alabama Republican, of September 22, 1820:

"Collins, convicted of negro stealing, has been sentenced to be executed on the first Friday in December."

In addition to the sale of negroes brought into the county, the local market was kept pretty active through the desultory selling of slaves, in small numbers, by the citizens; not as slave traders, however, but merely the buying and selling in ordinary business intercourse as of any other chattel.

The advertisements of slaves offered for sale go more into descriptive detail than do those offering rewards for fugitives; at least as to the good points of the subject; as appears from the following taken from the numerous instances found in the newspapers of that day:

A NEGRO FOR SALE

Will be sold on Monday, April 27th, next, for cash, at auction,

in Huntsville, a likely negro girl.

FOR SALE

Two likely negro boys, from twelve to fourteen years old. Also a woman, age about thirty-five, a trusty servant, good cook, washer and ironer. For terms apply to A. D. Veitch.

By the end of 1835, conditions seem to have changed. The papers of this period rarely carried advertisements of escapes. Striking in comparison, notices of sales were likewise infrequent.

During the year of 1830, the sentiment rapidly forming at the North for the abolition of the institution of slavery, was spreading, and had become a matter of interest and concern to our people. Societies were being formed throughout the East for the promotion of the cause. Chiefest among these was the "American Colonization Society," which had many branches and auxiliaries, such as the "LaGrange Colonization Society."

That the East was the breeding ground for these societies and such sentiments, laudable or otherwise, the author does not assume to judge, causes us little less surprise than does the knowledge that no such organizations became overt and no such senti-



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ments were enunciated publicly till slavery had ceased to exist as an institution upon its own soil.

The ostensible and avowed purpose of all these abolition societies was to liberate slaves, not at an economic loss to the South, but gradually and systematically. Slaves so freed were to be transported to Africa, and there colonized under a government of their own establishment. Toward these ends the South was not hostile.

Strange to say, as early as 1830, Huntsville papers began the publication of matter condemnatory of slavery. True enough, editorials to this effect were rare, vet not infrequently in the news columns were to be found lengthy items about the work of these societies. In the Southern Advocate of May 1, 1830, there appeared two ponderous articles, copied from the Washington Spectator; one of which applauded the proposed "good work" of the American Society, stating at length its proclaimed purposes; the, other similar in its tendencies, though not so general, exclaiming praises for LaGrange, Franklin county, Ala., where a chapter of the parent society had been formed. From this day forward, articles endorsing the work of the society and lauding the movement appeared from time to time, and not infrequently in the local papers.

At all events, this constant propagation of these panegyrics had its effect, locally; for some time in 1832 an auxiliary of American Colonization Society was organized at Huntsville; the meetings being held in the Presbyterian Church. Memberships in this society were held by some of Huntsville's most prominent men; a goodly number of her citizens were counted among its sympathizers and attended its meetings. The officers of this

branch were: M. S. Watkins, president; Thos. Fearn, W I. Adair, A. G. Vaughan, A. F Hopkins, vice-presidents; C. P Clifton, secretary; John Martin, treasurer; R. L. Fearn, D. M. Wharton, E. Picket, J. G. Birney and S. D. Morgan, managers.

Regular orthodox abolition' speeches were the order of the day when this society met. Its members were unstinted in their accusations against the institution of slavery, as one of "injustice and cruelty." The public expressions of E. R. Wallace and James G. Birney, were characterized by vindictive denunciation of the whole system.

A kindly spirit of indulgence, even sympathetic attention, was accorded the abolition movement and its supporters, in Huntsville, and generally throughout the whole South. Not until it became evident that the aims of these societies were ulterior to those proclaimed for them, did this attitude change. This difference in sentiment was brought about by a realization of the fact that the paramount object of these societies was not the colonization of the slave, but his liberation by force, by aiding him to escape or inciting him to rebellion. Probably, this altered condition of the public thought was aroused by the approach of the threatening storm at an earlier date in Huntsville than anywhere else in the South.

In addition to this, a more lo-

cal cause was to be found at Huntsville, in the person of James G. Birney, the arch "agitator" and uncompromising "dictator" of the whole wretched business. Birney later became the first candidate for the presidency of the United States on the abolition ticket.

The caldron having begun to boil, editorials in answer to abolition speeches made in Alabama and elsewhere, were not infrequently seen in the papers. At first, the almost universally outspoken sentiment in Huntsville and other North Alabama towns, as expressed by resolutions





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passed at mass meetings held for the purpose, was: "Pledging themselves for the support of the Union."

In 1833, locally, at least, this manifestation of public concern reached the height of its intensity; due in no small measure to the pernicious activities of Mr. Birney.

By this time, he had become an out-and-out advocate of the total and immediate abolition of slavery. Having already responded by accepting a commission from the American Colonization Society as its "General Agent for the States of Tennessee. Alabama. Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas Territory." He dallied, however, sufficiently long to reweld the shackles upon his numerous slaves, by selling them into continued servitude.

On May 21, 1833, he commenced the publication of a series of fifteen letters to the public, through the columns of the Southern Advocate, for the avowed purpose of "explaining the aims and intentions of the American Colo-

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http://huntsville.about.com

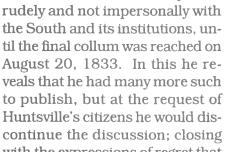
nization Society."

The "African Repository," the official journal of the society, records and makes mention of only seven of these letters. This same mistake is made by the narrator of "The Life and Times of James G. Birney." However, it has been the author's good fortune to unearth the remaining eight, from among the files of the (Huntsville) Southern Advocate of 1833. It is to these latter letters, that the future student of history must and will turn with an acute interest. in order that "The Life and Times of James G. Birney" may be understood and interpreted amid the proper lights and shadows.

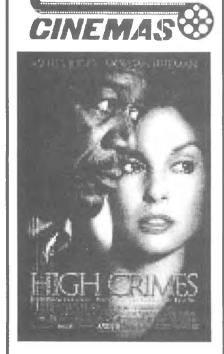
The known existence of these other letters is of more than ordinary concern to Huntsville; for thereby she is furnished unimpeachable evidence with which to combat the maligning statements made about her and her people in that colossal misrepresentation of fact, "The Life and Times of James G. Birnev."

To one who has searched the files of all of Huntsville's newspapers of those times, and found account of only one "drinking and shooting brawl," or chronicle of murderous or disorderly conduct it comes as a great surprise that the son of this man, in writing of his "Life and Times," should seek to create the belief that his father left Huntsville because moral conditions were so depraved, and shooting and drinking brawls so frequent that one's life was not safe there.

"Objection in the South that the colonization plan originated in the free states," "Sentiment of distinguished gentlemen at the North," "Objects of the abolitionists examined," were some of the subjects considered in the installments. Their author finally dealt with the expressions of regret that



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this course had become necessary.

Mr. Birney was one of Madison's representatives in the first State Legislature, which met here; and from time to time had been honored with positions of trust and confidence by her people, who had both respect and regard for him.

But this prophet Birney, for he was "not without honor save in his own country;" this Joshua, who, thought to "teach the planets in what orbs to run, reform old time, and regulate the sun," by his letters, conduct and public utterances, produced a revulsion of sentiment among his former friends and adherents. Now, they no longer gave heed to him.

Birney, having become generally obnoxious, hied himself to more congenial climes-by invitation. "Wisely he sought some other shore, where those who knew him less might praise him more." Accordingly, in the early part of 1834 Mr. Birney took his departure for the North, where he became a leader of thought and action concerning the abolition of slavery.

While a resident of Huntsville, Mr. Birney occupied the brick house, now the home of Hon. Ben. P Hunt, situated on the north side of East Holmes street, opposite its intersection with North Lincoln street.

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Lt. Col. Milus E. Johnston

The name "Bushwhacker' Johnston carried terror to the enemy during the Civil War in north Alabama, but after the war, he was a fearless preacher for thirty-one years.

Reverend Milus E. "Bush-whacker" Johnston was born in Wilson County near Lebanon, Tennessee, on the 26th of July, 1823. When he was seventeen years old, he was "born again" and was licensed in 1845, at the age of 22, by the Methodist Church to preach. He was first assigned to the Smith's Fort circuit, where the wife of his youth died and was buried near the village of Alexandria.

While assigned to the Larkinsville circuit, Milus Johnston married Mrs. Mary E. (Hammer) Findley, of Madison County, Alabama.

Milus did not leave Tennessee until it became unsafe for people

to assemble and worship in their churches. When Federal soldiers invaded Tennessee. Reverend Johnston was assigned to the Fayetteville circuit and was attending to his own business, that being the business of preaching the gospel. Without any cause on his part, he was arrested by union troops and told to quit preaching. He was later set free and started preaching again, slipping through the hills to his appointments. Again, he was arrested and his horse confiscated. Reverend Johnston then walked the hills and valleys to preach to his congregations. Unable to preach in peace, Reverend Johnston took his wife and moved southward to Madison County, Alabarna, to the home of his wife's father.

On arriving home and finding there was no chance to preach the gospel and having no desire to enlist in the army, Reverend Johnston went to work farming. His only goal was to take care of his family to the best of his ability.

On came the Federal army laying waste to everything in their path. They burned out the Reverend's family three times, taking everything they had including the boots off his feet. He

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then crossed the Tennessee River at the mouth of the Paint Rock River with the assistance of some of Col. Roddy's (4th Alabama Cavalry) men.

Upon reaching the south bank of the Tennessee River, he looked northward and said, "Boys, I have come to the conclusion that God never yet made a man to be slobbered on always by dogs; hence, I'm going to give those fellows a turn-the best turn I can get into the hopper." He immediately went to the Confederate authorities and was given a commission and sent back inside the Federal lines to raise troops. Reverend Johnston helped organize a company of partisan rangers.

He acquired the name "Bushwhacker" Johnston after being appointed a captain of Company E of Mead's Confederate Cavalry. These units were also known as Mead's Regiment of Partisan Rangers. He was promoted to Lt. Colonel on March 27, 1865, and given command of the 25th Alabama Cavalry, which he commanded until its surrender to Union forces on May 11, 1865, at Trough Spring on Monte Sano Mountain and was parolled at Huntsville, Alabama.

Dr. L. Hensley Grubbs of the Decatur News in 1899 had the following to say about the old Ranger chief: "Milus Johnston was a brave man, a splendid Commander, a victorious fighter and only took up the sword after he was driven out of the pulpit. He knew nothing of the science of war and could not give a single command according to the books, but when he said 'Catch 'em boys,' his Rangers would do it or die in the attempt."

After the war Reverend (Bushwhacker) Johnston lived at New Hope, Alabama, until his second wife's death. His second wife bore him five children while they lived at New Hope.

In the 1890's Reverend Johnston was assigned to the Warrenton, Alabama Mission circuit. He retired in November, 1896, at the age of 73.

On January 4, 1899, Reverend Johnston married Mrs. Jane Jullian, the widow of John Jullian. He was 76 and she was 69 at the time of their marriage. It should also be noted that Mrs. Jullian had been a widow for only seven months when she wed Milus. Reverend Johnston lived on his wife's farm, where he wrote his memoirs, until her death.

After his wife's death, Milus E. Johnston moved to Watertown, Tennessee to live with one of his sons. He died in 1915 at the age of 92 and is buried in Hearn Hill Cemetery near Watertown.



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Escape FromThe Yankees

By early 1865 the bloody War Between the States had been going on for four long years, and even many staunch Confederates were losing hope. The final straw had been General John Bell Hood's disastrous Tennessee campaign, during which that inept offtcer had virtually destroyed his once great army at the battles of Franklin, Spring Hill, and Nashville. Among those ready to call it quits was Captain Joel Cunningham, the commander of Company B of Col. Lemuel Mead's Partisan Cavalry Battal-

Cunningham had gone to war in May 1862 as a corporal in Captain Frank B. Gurley's Company C, 4th Alabama Cavalry. On March 1, 1863, he was promoted to first sergeant. In January 1864, Cunningham left Gurley to form a company for Mead's Battalion. For one whole year, Cunningham's men harassed the occupying Union Army along the Alabama-Tennessee border. By February 1865, however, even he had had

enough. Cunningham secretly negotiated a surrender with Lt. Col. William J. Clift of the 5th Tennessee Union Cavalry. "I gave the surrender the appearance of a capture and wish it so understood for the present," Clift reportedfrom Fayetteville on February 7, 1865. "Capt. Cunningham will surrender to me from twenty to twenty five of his men for whose good conduct he is willing to vouch."

Unfortunately, Union General Robert H. Milroy was not in on the plan and issued orders for Cunningham and his brother to be shot! The embarrassed Colonel Clift avoided the problem by arranging for his prisoners to "escape."

Captain Cunningham's brother, Peter, describes the exciting times that followed in a letter printed in the Fayetteville Observer in April 1914.

Dear Friend: Today my mind runs back to February 17th, 1865, forty-nine years ago, when Capt. Joel Cunningham and I, his brother, were being held prisoners of war in the city of Fayetteville, Tenn. We had been prisoners fifteen days and on the 17th day of February, 1865, General Milroy, U.S.A., whose headquarters were at Tullahoma sent Col. Stauffer to Fayetteville with a message to Col. C. ordering him to turn us over to Col. Stauffer to be executed.

Col. Stauffer, when he first reached Fayetteville, surrounded the Provost Marshall's office with his men. He left his men in front of the Provost Office while he and the Provost Marshall crossed over to Col. C.'s headquarters in a room of Dr. William Bonner's residence. I was at the northeast corner of the square when the squadron came into town. I had been in bed sick and had not eaten a bite in the last twenty-four hours and had not seen my brother. I was feeling bad but the worst was seemingly an awful dread on my



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mind.

Finally I left the bed and started to look for my brother, when I reached the northeast corner of the square I learned that Col. C. had ridden up the pike. While I was standing on the corner immediately south of Thomas Goodrich's store house, we saw the Yankees (I think they were mounted infantry) making the curve on the street coming around in front of the old Presbyterian Church. I remarked to the citizens that I was talking with, "I have seen a great many Yankees but there goes the hardest looking gang that I ever saw."

When they were even with the courthouse they filed left and went to the Provost Marshal's office where they formed a half circle line in front of the office. The Provost Marshal went with the Colonel across to Col. C.'s office to deliver General Milroy's orders to Col. C.

In the meantime I walked across the square to look for my brother and as I approached the southwest corner of the square I noticed him and White Buchanan sitting with their backs against Dr. Bonner's yard fence engaged in conservation. Just then I noticed Col. Stauffer and the Provost



805 Regal Dr., #7 Huntsville, Ala. 35801 Marshal coming through Dr. Bonner's yard gate from Col. C.'s office. and I noticed the Provost look at my brother, then say something to the Colonel and the Colonel turned and set his eyes on brother and gave him a long, wicked, vicious look until he had walked some distance.

The Marshal glanced to me but the Colonel kept his eyes on brother until they had passed without seeing me. I spoke to White Buchanan and my brother and passed on to meet Parson Gill and another friend who had just then driven up and stopped on the street in front of Col. C.'s office.

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I walked up and was standing with one foot on one of the front wheels when Col. C.'s office guard walked up to me and said in a low voice for me and brother to come into his office and stay there. The guard passed on to brother and notified him. Brother glanced at him and we both walked into Col. C.'s office. The Colonel was walking the floor seemingly in much trouble, and without delav made known to us General Milroy's orders, and he said for us to get out of town without delay and report to General Johnson at Pulaski, and referred us to his adjutant for further instructions.

The adjutant was also excited and informed us of General Milroy's orders and told us to make our escape if we could and report to General Johnson at Pulaski, who would protect us.

I remarked that I was sick and had not eaten since yesterday morning and I was not able to make the trip to Pulaski. The adjutant replied, "get away from here. Avoid the pickets If you can." Then he turned to brother and said, Captain, you have the pass that I gave you yesterday to pass you and your brother outside the pickets? Yes, replied brother, "a pass for me and one other man. "That will do. Your brother is the other man: avoid the pickets if possible as they may have heard the news. But if you meet them show them your pass without excitement and pass on."

Brother asked the adjutant, "Do you know where the pickets are on post? He said. No. but I believe there are none west. He then opened the door for us to pass out. We passed out down the hill, across the street, and going directly west went up

through a beautiful blue grass lawn where we meet a Yankee soldier driving some loose horses off the pasture. He was the only Yankee we saw.

We addressed him and leisurely passed on, pointing at and talking about some fine cows grazing on the blue grass, and occasionall turning our toward town. Continuing west we crossed over the hill south of the college and at the head of a ravine we stopped where we could see back over town and took a good look, but could see no sign of excitement or unusual movement in any way.

As we started down the ravine we increased our gait and were soon under cover of the hill so we could not be seen and we began to feel more safe. We struck the river at the head of a small island about one-fourth the distance across. Both up and down the river as far as we could see the water looked as though it was deep. But, deep or shallow, we must cross to the other side. I began to taking off my shoes. My brother asked if I meant to remove my clothes and I answered that I was too feeble to travel in wet clothes.

We found the water about the same depth all the way across. reaching to our hips. We, felt thankful that it was not any deeper. We climbed up the bluff to where the bush would partly hide us and rubbed our limbs dry and dressed and then climbed to the top of the bluff and crossed a field keeping to the southwest we reached a beautiful grassy woodland.

The tall grass killed by frost, made a fairly good bed; the sun was shining nice and warm and I was feeble and needed rest so we chose a nice place with a large log on the south side which hid us from passersby. The sun warmed



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Holmes Sockwell





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us from our cold bath in the river and a half hour's rest made us feel better able to travel. About half an hour before the sun set, we were passing a house and I had passed four meals without eating and our little jaunt that day had made me quite fatigued and hungry.

While I was resting brother asked the lady of the house if she could furnish us something to cat. She said nothing was cooked but if we could wait we could have supper. Brother gave fictitious names saying we lived in Jackson County, Ala., and that we belonged to General Hood's army and that I was sick and he, my brother, was detailed to wait on me and we were now trying to get home.

My physical appearance verified the sick part. While we were waiting, brother stated that in passing west of Favetteville that day we heard the Yankees had captured Captain Cunningham and his brother and were holding them prisoners at Fayetteville and General Milroy had sent a squad from Tullahoma to execute them. The lady said, "Yes, they are prisoners but I don't think they will be executed. My husband is acquainted with them and he is in town today. I am looking for him home now; he will know."

In a short time he came in and said it was a false report; that he had just came through town that afternoon and would have heard it if it had been true. He said he said he was acquainted with the Cunningham boys especially Peter whom he would know anywhere they met. Peter was our County Register before the war began. Yes, I (Peter) and the gentleman were intimately acquainted before the war, and I recognized him but he did not recognize either of us while we stayed and

talked an hour.

After supper we left him in ignorance as to our identity and then we followed the road east. After a little it became so dark that we could not follow the path so we went a few steps to one side and lay down in the underbrush and took a nap until the moon rose so we could see the path. Then we arose and traveled on until were within a half mile of Esquire Myrick's where brother's family was stopping.

We moved on cautiously to the house and awoke Mr. Myrick. He had not seen or heard of any Yankees being about. Day was now coming on so we retired to an out of the way place for the day. During the day one of Col. C.'s captains with his company passed within half a mile of Esquire Myrick's house and went on to John Smith's a mile further on. The captain requested Smith to go to Esq. Myrick's and tell Captain Cunningham's wife to tell the boys to lay low for a few days and all would be well.

The day following we took some large wagon covers that we had captured from the Yankees a short time back and went two miles from home to a dense woods where a cyclone had passed two years before and uprooted all the trees in its way; and saplings fifty feet tall on down to under brush and briers had grown up thick; and in this thicket we set our tent made of wagon covers. The large logs crossed

and piled all about us made a good wind break. We made our fire where a large tree had been blown out so the fire could only be seen a short distance. We kindled the fire in the day time on account of the smoke being seen. We made a good bed out of forest leaves and had blankets and quilts. Our tent did not leak and we did our cooking at night. There was a small stream of running water within a few feet of our tent.

We never fared better at any time of the war; well protected from the bad weather, a cozy bed to sleep on, fire wood convenient. good water at the door, enough to eat. But we deemed it advisable not to stay in one place long consequently we moved several times before the eighth day of May when we were finally paroled.

I will not weary your patience further.

Yours, Peter Cunninham

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Clarissa Douglass, a lady ofdubious distinction, was up before Squire Figg yesterday on a charge of stealing clothes from Huntsville's merchants.

Miss Douglass' downfall was her penchant for fine clothing which she said, "is necessary for a lady in my changed position," hence she began a monologue describing why each article of the purloined clothing was essential to maintain her position In our fair city's society.

She found her purse would not withstand so heavy an outlay, but the clothes must be had. Recalling the raids of the late war, she decided to undertake one of her own, and If success ful, would be clothed as well as the best of them.

Her raid ended on a sour note when she attempted to leave a store with three dresses in an egg basket, and two hats perched daintily upon her head.

She was brought up before the august presence of Justice Figg, who after hearing evidence of the state, bound Clarissa over in a bond of \$100.00. No one appearing to endorse for her, Clarissa went down to the corner of Clinton and Green streets (the jail) to board until the court Is held.

How awful to realize that what people say about us may be true.

- Kenneth Worthy

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Excerpts From The 1912 Grand Jury Report

To Honorable James H. Ballentine:

Judge of Law and Equity Court:

We the Grand Jury, having completed our labors, beg leave to submit this, our final report. We have endeavored to follow your charge faithfully and to do our duty fearlessly.

We have had before us 588 witnesses and have returned 241 true bills out of a docket of 758 cases. We were confronted with witnesses, especially those summoned in the alleged election fraud and illegal selling of whiskey, who had been so intimidated or pursuaded that they held to the lie in spite of postive information by reputable witnesses.

Indeed our information is that a large number of witnesses in these cases had been instructed

to lie and stick to the lie and thereby escape citation. Many witnesses whom we were informed had positive evidence upon which we could indict were actually persuaded to join the "bird gang" and flee the county.

Our probe into the illegal selling of liquors or "bootlegging" was as deep and far reaching as we could possibly make it. It is surprising beyond belief to know that "bootlegging" exists in every part of the county in a more or less degree, but it is rampant, especially in the city and outlying districts. (Merrimack alone is excepted.)

We are informed that even the night hacks and omnibus lines are quickly in touch to supply the demand of the belated traveler or citizen. We are informed that two restaurants, one located near the Southern Railway and the other near the N.C. & St.L. Railway, are nothing but dens of vice, openly and notoriously selling whiskey and beer at certain hours on week days and Sundays. We are informed that the so called restaurant near the Southern Railway was closed by an injunction out of the Law & Equity Court and divested of all its contents, but that it is now operating in full blast in spite of that injunction which we are informed had never been dissolved.

We can only ask: Is it a fact that the officers of the law are winking at crime? This Grand Jury asserts that a murder was lately committed near this restaurant located near the Southern Railway, one Joe Pyncheon, was foully murdered and his remains carried a safe distance and placed upon the Southern Railway track



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that a passing train might cover up the crime - Pyncheon had sold his cotton and had displayed fifty dollars in this so called restaurant and some time during the night was lured away and beaten into insensibility. He was heard to beg for his life, pleaded not to be killed and our Witnesses on whom we relied for indictment were so intimidated that they chose to lie out of the fact that they were practically eye witnesses to the cold blooded murder.

We are informed that this den at the Southern Railway sells from three to five barrels of whiskey a week, but we were powerless to indict the proprietor. We not only recommend as a Grand Jury but we ask the City Commissioners to forthwith revoke the licenses of these so called restaurants or soft drink stands and to put the ban upon these properties from ever being used for like purposes again. Located as they are, near railroads, they are bound to degenerate into just such dives as they are now because of the class of people who loaf about and frequent such places, especially at night. We have frankly admitted our inability to indict the proprietors, we therefore put it up to the City Conunissioners to destroy these notorious dives which we know they can and ought to do for the sake of decency, law and say nothing of their sworn duty. We informed that the Twickenham Club is also among the favored. That liquor is being handled and served contrary to law and gambling is allowed, but we are powerless to indict.

Now let us name another and a glowing state of fact. Those would be reformers who called loud and lustily for a special Grand Jury to investigate, the election frauds, saying they had enough evidence to indict the whole outfit, were allowed to come before us and given the opportunity they clamored for. It is sad to relate that their evidence was none at all, or was so pitfully weak that we had to give it nourishment before we couldvote upon it at all.

We had more scholarly liars in this investigation than during the whole time we were in session on other matters.

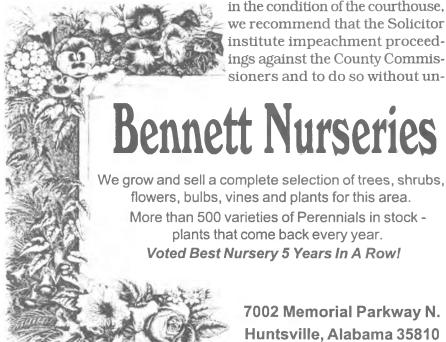
Other Grand Juries have recommended additions, changes and repairs of various kinds, we recommend nothin of the kind whatever but we are bold to declare that we condemn the whole Courthouse building as utterly unfit and unsafe for the preservation of nearly a century's collection of the most valuable records, which if destroyed could never be replaced and would perhaps cause the loss of a life time of work of many deserving citizens. The vaults and safes are respectively, simply jokes and

Such pretended protection is criminal.

There is not an officer in this building who would trust his

money or valuable papers with a bank that had only the protection that the courthouse offers. Now think of what the citizens of Madison County are trusting to hold their records immune from total destruction. The building further is in a very bad state of disintegration and will soon become, if not now, dangerous to human life. It is dirty, dingy and its sanitary condition and arrangement is in strict accord with every law against health, it is vile. The basement is piled up with every species of trash andjunk together with old records, an urgent invitation to a conflagation, we say that the present courthouse has served its purpose well, but is wom out and the time has long since passed that the present structure is wholly unfit for the present day needs and should speedily give way to a modem

The recommendations of the other Grand Juries have been treated with silent contempt and the recommendations of this Grand Jury is likely to share the same fate. If immediate steps are not taken looking to a betterment in the condition of the courthouse, we recommend that the Solicitor institute impeachment proceedings against the County Commissioners and to do so without un-



necessary delay; the time has arrived for action and indifference and dilatory should be no longer tolerated.

The new part of the County Jail is in fine condition as it must necessarily be for it has just been completed, the other part needs repairs and a general overhauling if it is to ever be used again. There is too much junk in the hallways. If this collection has any value it should be properly stored away. The old stone Jail is a horrible reminder of the dreadful dungeons of the Dark Ages, and should be removed from the sight of civilization. Its presence is an insult to Christianity, a disgrace to humanity. It serves no purpose whatsoever, except the harboring of vermin and trash: its condition is frightful. The State has condemned it. We therefore, recommend its immediate removal and call the special attention of the Solicitor to this recommendation.

The Jail is absolutely without protection from the outside. It stands openly upon the street it faces. The Sheriff complains that he is powerless to prevent, since the transferring of the prisoners to the new cells just completed, the handing in of tools or other prohibited articles even to the third tier of cells: and further that he cannot prevent clothin and other comforts from being exchanged for whiskey or other luxuries not named on the regular bill of fare. Only this week during the Sheriffs absence on business at the Courthouse, a lot of mill hands attempted to release one of their number by intimidating the turnkey. It is manifest that some outer guard should be put around the Jail.

We have endeavored to be true to our oaths, therefore we can only hope that future Grand Juries will be as earnest as we have been to further check the open and flagrant violations of law, especially "bootlegging" and election disgraces. At the enormity of both we are simply amazed, and our utter inability to render a better service we are simply stunned. Guided by the able admonitions of the Solicitor we have done our best whether good results will follow or not, and having reported the facts as we see and know them, beg to be discharged.

WALTER F. SMITH
Foreman of the Grand Jury

Wife Ran Away

from 1901 paper

On Tuesday of week past I returned home to find my wife had forsaken her marriage vows. She is thought to be in the company of a man by the name of Howard. If anyone has knowledge to her whereabouts please wish her godspeed that she may leave this place and never return.

- Franklin Cox



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The Ghost Train of Old Railroad Bed Road

By Amber Chattee Saunders

People around Toney, Ala. say that they know when the train is nearing. Its lights are the first things to appear. They can be seen for miles down the road like pin holes in black silk. A thick dark cloud pumps rapidly from its smoke-stack up into the sky, enveloping the stars in its ebony pocket. The familiar chorus of the night, courtesy of the frogs and crickets, silence their nightly symphony and the air is as still as death. Only then does the ghost train of Old Railroad Bed Road round the next bend.

The true story of what happened on that dark day over a century ago when the train was demolished has been lost with time, as most stories are. Supposedly in the 1880s, a train had left Nashville, Tennessee loaded with passengers bound for Mobile.

People around here who still tell the tale say that it was a hot muggy day in August, the kind of day where the humidity was enough to keep the ladies' skirts plastered to the backs of their legs. The train was more than full and the overcrowded spaces intensified the heat. None the less, the passengers were optimistic about their trip and greatly looking forward to the cool gulf breeze in Mobile.

Unfortunately, two wanted men had also boarded the train that afternoon. Part of their luggage supposedly consisted of a trunk brimming with stolen bank money and gold coins. They also brought with them an ill-formed plan to hijack the train and deliver the treasure to their own secret destination. However, the six foot tall 310 lb. train engineer could not be easily persuaded to abandon his position. The bandits threatened the angry engineer with a coal shovel from the engine room and tried to push him from the train.

A brawl erupted and the passenger soon became aware that their lives were in jeopardy. Screams, wails, and prayers filled the train cars like a toxic fume only to be abruptly halted by the grinding and screeching of torn metal. The train had mysteriously derailed, causing a collision so fatal it is still talked about today.

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Part of the train, along with fifteen unlucky passengers including the two thieves, plunged into a deep spring next to the tracks where they drowned. No one survived the devastation.

Locals say that the infamous train can still be seen and has been spotted as far out as Taft, Tennessee, although the majority of the sightings occur in the Toney and Bobo area. It has been the most active near Dan Crutcher Road, the sight of the derailing and the home of the old railway spring.

In 1956, a mother and her young daughter who lived in the Toney area off of Wall Triana Highway, had their first and only experience with what they believe was the phantom train. They were in the kitchen one night when the odd happenings began. The woman was standing over the stove cooking dinner when she heard the low distinct whistle of a nearby train. She shrugged it off and continued cooking, figuring it was the freight train that could be heard passing through Ardmore on occasion. Only a few seconds had past before the rumbling grew louder and closer. The twostory house began to shake on its foundation and the windows rattled violently. The woman snatched up her screaming child and fled down the houses's basement steps for shelter. If it were not for the unmistakable train noises: the chugging engine, guttural whistle, and screaming metal wheels, the woman may have sworn that the whole ordeal was an earthquake. Her husband still doesn't believe her story. But her once young daughter, now fifty-two, still jumps when ever she hears an approaching train.

On a clear night in 1948, a middle aged couple were coming home after a long night of visiting relatives. They were stopped

at the intersection of Old Railroad Bed Road and Ready Section Road. To their right they saw approaching lights that, at first glance, did not seem unusual. When the lights crossed the couple's path the blood drained from both their faces. There was no obvious source for the light, only a silently floating orb.

Despite his wife's pleas, the adventurous husband followed the orb down Old Railroad Bed Road. The light vanished at Dan Crutcher Road, by the railroad spring and also the site where an old train was demolished only a century before.

The old spring looks like a ditch overflowing with swamp water, but appearances can be deceiving. There are two things that have always been said about the well. The first thing is that it is haunted and the second is that it is bottomless. Not only is it supposed to be haunted by the passengers of the ghost train, but also by the spirit of a little lost boy who tumbled in and drowned in 1910. It has been said that it is his melancholy ghost that wails loudly into the night and hopelessly call

out for his mother.

As for the well being bottomless, that was supposedly put to rest in 1974. At that time a professional diver from the area decided he would end the rumors once and for all. He took all his expensive diving equipment to the

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well and prepared to submerge. He was surprised to discover stone steps leading part of the way down. The diving equipment stretched down to a total of fifty feet and the defeated diver still never reached the bottom. Toney lore says that the spring eventually collides with an underground river and that is the reason for its so-called endless depth.

The biggest mystery that remains is that no one ever found the gold that the bandits of the train were smuggling. That too has disappeared into modern day folk lore. Some swear that the gold is buried underneath the present day Old Railroad Bed Road. Others argue that the gold was lost in the well along with the thieves who stole it.

Although, there are those who say that the train wreck never occurred at all, there is only one way to find out. Ask the only people who would know the answers to these mysteries, the alleged eternal passengers on the ghost train of Old Railroad Bed Road.

A SAD ACCIDENT

from 1916 newspaper

The ginning season does not pass without its victim. The unfortunate victim this Fall is Lee Robinson. son of Neal Robinson. While feeding the gin at Coxe's Monday afternoon his hand was caught in the teeth, slicking and mangling it terribly. The young man suffered intensely. The doctors think after examination that amputation will not be necessary if proper attention is given. It seems that enough of these kind of accidents have happened to teach gin feeders to keep their coat or shirt sleeves and hands out of the reach of the gin teeth.

A Baffling Dilemma

from 1897 newspaper

Last week a widow lady, residing near Hazel Green, put her house up at a raffle and very soon disposed of the tickets - all feeling disposed to assist her.

The evening arrived, and the house was won by a gentleman who thought himself most fortunate in obtaining a homestead so cheaply.

The next day he asked for a title to the property. What was his surprise when he was coolly informed that it was unnecessary to give any written title to the house - that there it was, and to take it; and - the sooner the better, as she was anxious to build another on

the spot where it stood. The winner discovered that he had drawn a house, but no lot.

Upon applying to the authorities for relief he was turned away with the understanding the raffle was legal and he had no recourse.

The gentleman, deciding to make the best of a bad situation, moved into the house with it still standing on the lady's piece of land.

The lady then applied to the authorities for relief but was told that she too had no recourse; she had not specified the house had to be moved.

There has not been a final outcome to the baffling dilemma yet.

A surefire way to entertain most people is to merely listen.

- Gerald Covey

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