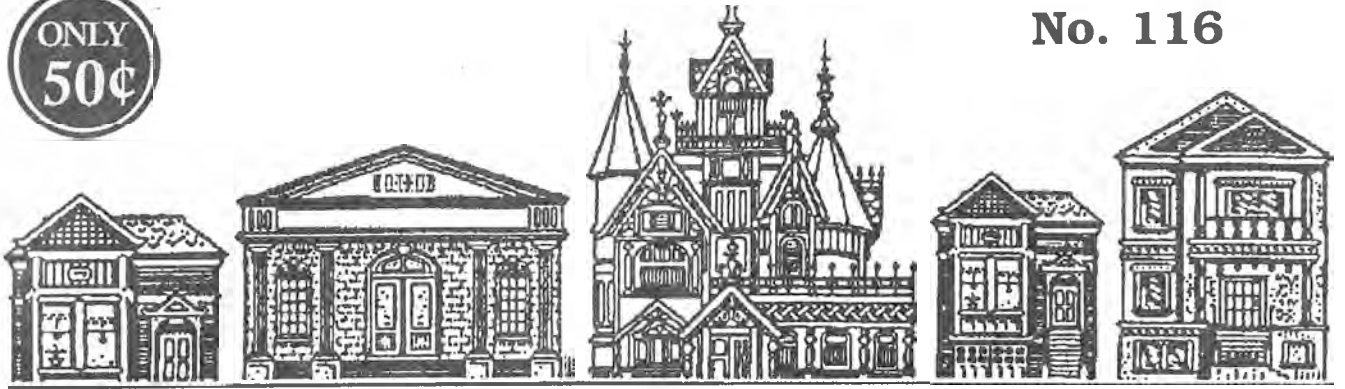


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A Family Tragedy

His new home was Cell 12 on Death Row, a 7 X 8 foot cell with a hole for a toilet. A guard's desk was located directly in front, allowing him to be watched 24 hours a day.

Orby Hethcoat, a Huntsville native, never dreamed he would end his days in a place like this.

Now there was nothing left except waiting - waiting for visitors - waiting for mail, but mostly just waiting to die.

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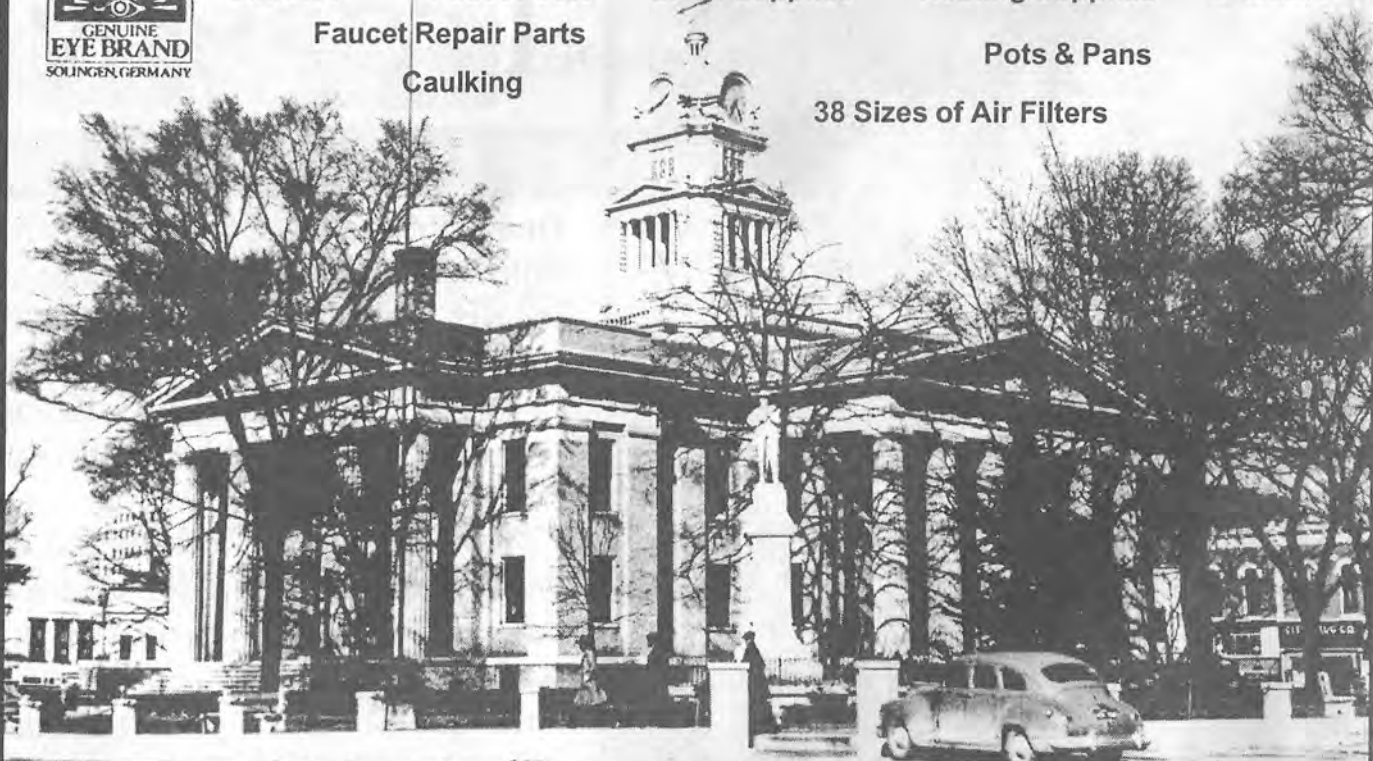
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Old Timer's Sale

A Family Tragedy

by Amber Chattee Saunders

Many older people say the spring of 1937 was the most beautiful they could remember. The mild temperatures, the crystal blue skies and the vivid hues of the early flowers all seemed to be harbingers of good fortune for the citizens of Huntsville. Even the dark storm clouds that formed daily over the Tennessee River, before moving north toward the city limits, appeared to disintegrate before reaching populated areas.

For James Hethcoat it was an especially good time. The Depression, which he had struggled against for years, was finally starting to recede and business in his photography shop on 9th Avenue was flourishing. His wife and five children were all in good health, his grandchildren visited him almost daily and Orby, his eldest son, had finally returned home.

Hethcoat smiled as he thought about his son. Orby was a free spirit who never seemed able to settle down and stay in one place. The family always teased him, saying he never saw a road without wanting to follow it. "But,"

Hethcoat thought to himself, "the boy always came home and that was the most important thing."

His thoughts were interrupted when Sheriff Frank Hereford entered the shop. Hethcoat and Hereford had been friends for years and his first thought was maybe the Sheriff had some photography work for him. He had done occasional work for the Sheriff photographing crime scenes and evidence.

The look on the Sheriff's face, however, showed the visit was much more serious.

"James," the sheriff said, "I'm sorry but I have to pick up your son Orby."

Hethcoat looked at the sheriff for a long moment before replying. He knew his son and was sure it was nothing serious. Whatever it was, they would take care of it.

"What did he do?"

"James, I have a warrant for Orby for first degree murder. They say he killed a woman up in New Jersey."

Orby Hethcoat grew up in West Huntsville, the oldest son of a deeply religious family whose values were centered around church and family. While still in his mid-teens he quit school and went to work at Merrimac Mills. At about the same time someone gave him an old beat-up guitar which soon became his prized possession.



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Orby was a natural musician and although he couldn't read music, he could play almost anything after hearing it for the first time. Within a few years he left the mill behind and started playing in local honky-tonks. With his easy-going manner and wavy black hair he became a popular feature in the clubs around town.

Almost everyone who knew Orby Hethcoat liked him. One person later described him as being an "independent soul. You couldn't help but like the boy. He was always laughing and cutting up. Just don't wait supper on him - he might show up and he might not."

Orby's biggest weakness, however, revolved around the ladies. While still a teenager he married a woman several years older than him. When that didn't work out, he soon met and married Pearl Lochart, who was also older than him. This marriage too was doomed to failure. Pearl wanted her new husband to settle down and provide a home, something that Orby, still a youth, was unable to do.

With two failed marriages behind him, Orby was heartbroken. There was nothing left in Huntsville for him and like thousands of other young men with broken hearts, he decided to follow the open roads to see where they would lead.


Orby spent the next few years

wandering from town to town picking up odd jobs and living from day to day. He played in bars in Texas and Louisiana, washed dishes in Arkansas and likely followed the harvests in the mid-west.

Occasionally, without any notice, Orby would return home for a few days where he would regale the family with tales of his travels. His nieces and nephews would gather around him, enthralled, as he told of visiting strange places and meeting famous people. Just as their attention would begin to lag, he would reach into his bag and pull out another exotic souvenir which would lead to another equally entertaining story. His visits never lasted long; almost as suddenly as he appeared, he would be gone in search of another dream in yet another far away town.

In 1936 his travels carried him to Trenton, New Jersey where he played with the Tommy Dorsey Band for a short while. When that job ended, he got a job as a musician in another club in Trenton. It was there that he met Emily Coats, the only daughter of the wealthy and influential Coats family who had made fortunes in the textile business.

Emily was strikingly beautiful, with a slender figure and long blonde hair and like so many other wealthy debutantes, she was tempted by the wild and of-




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ten promiscuous atmosphere of nightclubs.

Within weeks of meeting, the couple began living together in a small upstairs apartment over a watch shop. For Orby, the relationship seemed to be everything he had been searching for. Unfortunately, Emily seemed more into good times than lasting romance, especially when Orby had to work until the early hours of the morning, leaving her at home alone.

One night, several months after they had moved in together, Orby took off early from work. When he arrived home, Emily was gone. Just as he started to look for a note, he heard laughter coming from the stairwell leading to the apartment. Curious, he went to see where it was coming from. Emily and a man, both obviously intoxicated, were wrapped in an embrace and showering kisses on each other.

Harsh words were exchanged. The stranger lost his footing and fell backwards onto Emily who stumbled and fell down the stairs. One look at her crumpled body was enough to confirm that she was dead from a broken neck. The stranger disappeared, leaving Orby alone with Emily's lifeless body.

In retrospect it is easy to say or imagine what Orby should have done next. Call for help, call the police or call an ambulance. In

reality, he did none of these. Instead, after hastily gathering his few belongings, Orby fled the scene, not stopping until he was back in Huntsville surrounded by the protective shield of his family.

Three weeks later the F.B.I. issued a warrant for his arrest and he was picked up.

That afternoon, Mr. Hethcoat visited his son in the Huntsville jail where Orby told of the circumstances leading to Emily's death. "It was an accident," he pled. "I never tried to hurt anyone."

When visiting hours were over Mr. Hethcoat started to leave. Sheriff Hereford stopped him in the hallway and led him into an office. "James, I'm sorry about this. Is there anything I can do for you or the family?"

"Sheriff, it was an accident. I don't see how they can do this to him for something that was an accident."

Sheriff Hereford looked pained. "James, there's more to it than that. They found her body buried in the basement. That wasn't an accident."

That evening all the Hethcoat sisters, brothers, nieces and nephews gathered together hoping somehow to make sense of the terrible tragedy that had befallen one of their own. The whole range of

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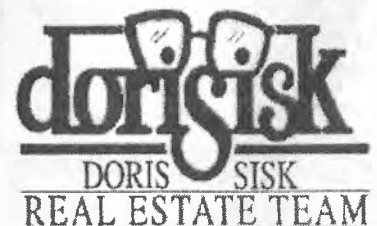


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emotions filled the small room with everyone handling their grief in their own way.

Some wanted to know why or how, others were worried about what neighbors and friends would think. A nephew asked what they were supposed to say when people said their Uncle was a murderer.

Mrs. Hethcoat, who had remained silent until this point, spoke up sharply. "You will tell people that he is your Uncle and that you love him. And that, but for the grace of God, it could happen to anyone."

Orby was returned to Trenton, New Jersey to await trial. The family had tried to hire an attorney in Huntsville to represent him but he had refused, saying that when all the facts were investigated, he would be found innocent. He also knew what an attorney would cost and knew his family didn't have the money. Unknown to Orby, the family hired James Boscarell, a well know attorney in Trenton to represent him.

Orby later wrote "...I turned my attention to Boscarell. He was not appointed by the court and I did not send for him. The first thing I knew, he just walked in and grabbed the case..."

The trial was almost a foregone conclusion. While most people understood how an accident could happen, there was no explanation for Emily's body being buried in the basement. Orby, despite his attorney's advice, simply refused to talk about it, or explain it.

After a short trial Orby was sentenced to be put to death at the New Jersey State Prison.

"...I worked every trick I could to get a life sentence, but I didn't have a chance. The fact a man makes a mistake is no reason to burn him...."

Orby's new home was cell 12 on Death Row, a seven by eight foot cell that predated the Civil War. A guard's desk sat directly in front of the cell allowing a guard to watch him 24 hours a day. Breakfast, mostly oatmeal, was at 6:30, a sandwich for lunch at 11:30 and supper at 5:00. The rest of the day was spent waiting - waiting for visitors, waiting for mail, but mostly just waiting to die.

A guard described it aptly when he said, "A person on death row doesn't have any friends. If he ever did, they forget about him when he walks through those gates. People just don't want that burden."

Orby's mother and father wrote constantly, beseeching him

to let them visit but he always refused. He begged them to forget about him, saying it would be easier for all of them.

Despite Orby's pleadings the family refused to give up. There was still hope for an appeal but justice was not cheap. Every mail delivery brought bills from lawyers for more money. The family, never well off, tried to meet every request hoping against hope that it might save their kin.

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West Huntsville. Money was borrowed from banks, then friends but it was never enough. There was always another brief to be filed or someone else to be hired.

By January 1938 all appeals were exhausted and a date was set. The night before the execution the warden visited Orby to explain the procedure that would be followed and to see if there were any last requests.

Orby seemed calm about his fate. He ordered a bowl of turnip greens and corn bread for his last meal. Just as the warden turned to leave Orby asked if he could have a guitar. The warden started to protest, but seeing the look of on Orby's face, nodded to the guard that it would be all right.

Prison is a noisy place. That's the first thing people notice when they visit. Doors slamming, men cursing, the sound of men being marched to and fro. The noise is constant and insidious, 24 hours a day. Guards remembered the night before the scheduled execution as being strangely different.

As Orby began playing the guitar and singing the songs he had grown up with, the prison grew still as guards and prisoners alike strained to hear the rich baritone voice coming from the cell on death row. At first he did the songs

he had played in bars and honky-tonks and the old fashioned blues he remembered from working as a laborer in the fields. As the night crept on into the early hours of the morning his music took a different flavor as he began recalling the religious songs he had sung so many times in church with his family. Prisoners and guards alike listened to *The Old Rugged Cross* and cried when he sang *Amazing Grace*.

Sometime during the night he asked for a pencil and paper.

"Dear parents There is about fourteen hours left for me. I have given up all hope that anything can be done for me in relation to my case. ... Reverend Paxton will give you a last message from me."

In Huntsville. Orby's family had given up hope. There were no more letters to write and no more phone calls to make. The only thing left was the waiting.

The case had been well publicized here and as the final day grew to a close curious thrill seekers began driving by the parent's house hoping to catch a glimpse of the murderer's family. Other people gathered across the street. Well-intended neighbors and friends stopped by with food and offered their sympathy. The

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1. Huntsville Heritage Cookbook (pub. 1967), over 100,000 in print. Junior League of Huntsville, \$15.95.

2. Huntsville Entertains (pub. 1983), recipes, food history, historic houses, flowers. Historic Huntsville Foundation, \$18.95.

3. Twickenham Tables (pub. 1988). Twickenham Historic Preservation District Association, \$12.95.

4. First Presbyterian Cookbook (pub. 1981). The women of the church, \$14.95.

5. Treasured Alabama Recipes (pub. 1967), by Kathryn Tucker Windham. Signed copies, \$12.95.

6. Old Huntsville Book of Recipes and Timeless Tips - Vol. II, (pub. 2000) By Catherine Carney, \$15.95.

7. Sweet Home Alabama - Food For Family and Friends (pub. 1995). Junior League of Huntsville, \$21.95.

8. Cotton Country Cooking (pub. 1972), over 130,000 in print. Decatur Junior Service League, \$17.95.

9. Some Like It With Herbs (pub. 1990). Huntsville Herb Society, \$14.95.

10. Herb Fare (pub. 1999). Huntsville Herb Society, \$14.95.

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preacher called to offer his prayers and support.

In Trenton, a prison barber shaved the top of Orby's head. The warden stopped by to tell him the Governor had refused to sign a last minute reprieve.

Dear Mother and Dad ... I have just five hours left now, but don't think of how I am going. I am not afraid of that. I want you to forgive me for breaking your hearts ... we will meet in another world at some future time ... There is not much for me to tell you right now ... Give my love to everyone and say that I went out like a man, unafraid. And now, this is the last letter. I love you more than I have ever known.
Orby

As the final hours crept by Orby's brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews gathered at his parent's house. A soft, chilling, rain had driven the thrill seekers away but it also added to the gloom of the evening. Feeble attempts at conversation drifted off into silence. The only sound was the Lord's Prayer which Mrs. Hethcoat kept repeating over and over.

Mr. Hethcoat sat in a chair, away in a corner by himself, not saying a word but with silent tears running down his face.

Everyone kept looking at a large wall clock as it slowly ticked off the minutes and seconds. Finally the hands reached 8 o'clock and began chiming the hours. As the realization of what was happening hundreds of miles away, began to seep in they looked at one another trying to understand how and why. But there were no answers.

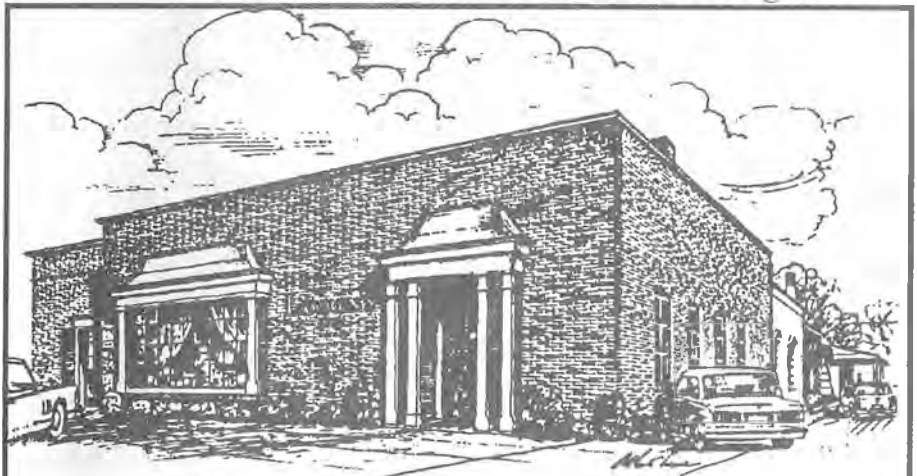
Mr. Hethcoat rose from his chair and turned off the overhead light, leaving only a small lamp to illuminate the sorrow. "It's over," he said, tears flowing down his cheeks. "May God rest his soul." As he left the room Mrs. Hethcoat gathered her remaining children

together and led them in a final prayer for her first born.

Three days later the family received a final note from Reverend Paxton.

"My dear brother and sister ... I stayed with him until the end ... He did all he could to make peace with God, he repented of his sins, confessed all, and went bravely to meet death ... The warden said he would hold the remains until Tuesday... Yours in God, W.J. Paxton"

It is not known if Orby Hethcoat ever explained why Emily's body was buried in the basement.



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Walking Charlie

by Kathleen Broyles

If you are a native Huntsvillian, chances are you remember Walking Charlie. He lived downtown. Charlie walked everywhere, down the middle of the road, near the white lines. He had a stick that he would wave in the air when children followed him when school was out. The children would pull and tug at his old black coat, laughing and screaming Charlie, Charlie. Some throwing rocks, as if the blind couldn't see. He felt those rocks.

Every day before sunset, Charlie walked down to the liquor store by the railroad tracks on Meridian Street. He went inside and would guzzle down the water provided by the men behind the counter, free of charge. He tapped his stick on the floor until he reached the door, then held the hands of the children who whispered now at the railroad tracks after looking both ways. He crossed the tracks home to his

mother.

Early one morning, Walking Charlie's mother died. He cried and cried. A man named Billy came by the house and said Charlie, it's time to go. Charlie was huddled in the corner, crying like a baby. The man named Billy picked him up by the arms of his old black coat and said it'll be OK, Charlie, and they left.

No one was there except the preacher, and an old lady. The sun was shining sharp into Walking Charlie's eyes. He picked up his stick and waved it at the sun, back and forth in the air, fast, while tears streamed down his face. He fell to his knees and couldn't stop crying, his face pressed to the ground. The preacher and the old lady let him

be.

As the preacher read his words, Walking Charlie still cried, waving his stick into the air as if he could really see the sun.

Walking Charlie's heart was broken.

One day Charlie guzzled down his water, as usual. He took the hands of children who said, don't go Charlie. Not now.

Charlie dropped their hands, moved to the middle of the tracks, and just stopped.

This time the whole town turned out. They came in hoards, and said he was an institution. A few women dabbed their eyes as the preacher read about salvation.

The man named Billy stood way back behind a tree. He pressed his face to an old tree at

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During the trial Jennie Robertson's indignation could not be repressed, and she denounced Brown as a perverted wretch. The jury agreed with her evidently, for they took but four minutes to find him guilty.

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Making Do During The War

by Lillian Dale
Originally published in 1899

Shall I tell you of some of the "makeshifts" to which we were driven during the war? Well, one of the hardest things to come by was sugar, and by the second year of the war it was impossible to buy even the commonest brown sugar in the South. My grandmother possessed a loaf of white sugar that she treasured very carefully, and only used on extra occasions, and when the war was over she still had a small piece of it.

The best substitute we had for sugar was molasses, or sorghum, made from Chinese sugar cane. It was used in coffee and all kinds of desserts, and when one got used to it, did not taste so badly. Preserves were made by cooking berries and fruits in sorghum molasses, and made them in large quantities.

Cake was also made with sorghum. In the South we do not think it is Christmas unless we have boiled custard for dinner.

One Christmas we had no sugar for even this favorite delicacy; so we decided to make it with sorghum. It was of a rich, golden color, and certainly the prettiest, if not the best, I ever saw.

Real coffee was almost as scarce as "hens' teeth," and many things were tried as substitutes. Grandma had a sack of coffee when the war began, and she di-

vided it into small quantities, and hid it in various places, so that if some of it was found and taken she would not lose it, so by this means we usually had our coffee, part Rio and part Rye, without the "O." Some of our neighbors used parched corn, okra, sweet potatoes, etc.

Another thing very hard to cure was salt. It was impossible to buy it for love or money. Then it was that those who owned old smoke-houses with dirt floors were considered very fortunate. The dirt floors were dug up for a depth of several feet, and the dirt put up in hoppers,

Water was then poured over it, and, as it soaked through, it was put in kettles and boiled down till it made a dark-looking salt that answered very well to preserve meat. The stock did not like it.

Many times was our house searched, on various pretenses, by the Yanks. Sometimes they were looking for Rebels supposed to be in hiding there; sometimes for arms, etc., but whatever reason they gave for doing so, everything that attracted their attention was stolen.

Such were war times in North Alabama.



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- ◆ Hostage Negotiator
- ◆ Domestic Violence Investigator
- ◆ Most recently, received promotion as Probation Officer with City of Huntsville Judicial System

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ◆ Nominated for Hope Place Victims Assistance Award
- ◆ Recipient of Jaycees Outstanding Young Huntsvillian Award
- ◆ 1989, 1990, 1993, 1998 Meritorious Award, Huntsville Police Department
- ◆ 1997 Certification of Appreciation, Birmingham Division of the FBI
- ◆ Founder of HPD Chaplain Program
- ◆ Active Member of College Park Church of God
- ◆ Member of Emmaus Christian Community

Please vote November 5th for Mac McCutcheon

Memories

by Malcolm Miller

I was walking through the tall grass when I stumbled over it. Just an old rotting, decaying tree stump. It was a huge thing, maybe three feet across, and as I stood there looking at the old stump my mind started to wander back to my boyhood days.

You see, this old stump was all that remained of the home place. Under the outstretched branches of this mighty oak tree stood the farmhouse that was my favorite of all the tenant houses we lived in when I was growing up. It wasn't particularly a good house, certainly not by the standards of today; but to me, an eight year-old, it seemed like a mansion.

But this house, like all the others I lived in back then, had a tin roof over it. And the sun beating down on it all day in the summer would drive the whole family out under the branches of the big tree where there seemed to always be a little breeze blowing. It was un-

der this very tree I sat for hours listening to grown folks tell of far-away places they had been.

I recall my uncle Curt telling of the time he spent in Texas, and how the real cowboys weren't like the ones we had seen at the picture show in town. I heard them talk with worried tones at the beginning of World War II. You see, for a couple with seven sons, two of whom were already in the army, my parents had much to be concerned about.

It was under the branches of this mighty oak that I first learned to play the guitar. One that my

brother Frank had ordered from Sears and Roebuck; and when folks, even today, ask me why I play the guitar upside-down left-handed I remind them that when are only one of seven sons in a family, you just don't go stringing up guitars to suit yourself.

That old tree stump, rotting away though it was, seemed to be there as a last reminder to me of another day and time, a time when folks seemed to really care more for one another. Neighbors were neighbors, friends were friendlier and pot wasn't something you smoked.

My, how times have changed since that old stump was a tall oak tree.



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Bud Cramer

Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

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



Isn't this wonderful fall weather! I love it! Hope you all had a great month. Of course, you know, I got a year older. Thanks to everyone who sent a card and so many beautiful flowers, candy and many other things. Huntsville is such a great place to live!

Long time friend of mine guessed **Billy Bell's** picture last month. **Nell Long** was the winner of a country ham breakfast and she sure did enjoy it. Billy is running for Circuit Judge and is such a nice fellow. After hearing his plans for family court, I don't see how people could not vote for him.

Everyone is talking about politics this month. We are lucky to live in a community that attracts so many fine people to run for public office.

We were saddened to hear of the death of **Mr. Bill Miller's** mother. **Mrs Leora Miller** was 100 years old and was loved by all. She will be missed.

It was so good to see the sons

of my dear friend **Peggy Huston**. **Bruce** lives in Seattle and **Rick** makes his home in Texarkana. They have been by to see me twice in the past month.

Terri Solomon McGhee came home from Texas to help celebrate her mother's birthday. We hear her mother, **Kathy Isabelle**, is moving in to a beautiful new home.

Congratulations to **Mr. & Mrs. Donald Ramey** who are celebrating thier 50th wedding anniversary. We all hope you have many more!

Has anyone noticed the new paint job on the **Early Works Museum**? It sure does stand out.

We had a group of old college friends really celebrating their reunion over large plates of country ham. **Geri Wilson, Ray Wilson, Bob Warner** and **Dollie Little** attended West Chester University, in Penn. Also with them were **Florence Warner** and **Pete Banhalger**. They had such a good time.

A big congratulations to **Mark Russell** on his win to the City Council. He'll be good. **Dick Hiatt** did a good job and we love him too.

My friends, **Mr. Clyde and Elmira Wilson**, brought their cousin **Ethel Stewart**, from San Diego, to breakfast. They had a great time and it was so good to seem them. Their daughter, **Sue**, also stopped by. I love you all.

A great big hello to **Mr. Frank Delaney** who had surgery. **Martha**, take good care of Frank cause we love you both.

Sometimes in the political world we have to choose the person we think would do the best job in the office. Sometimes they may not be one of your best friends but you have to choose anyway. I have met so many people this year whom I have grown to love. Some of them are

Photo of The Month

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

Hint: He's been doing a lot of handshaking all over Madison County.



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Billy Bell, Fran Hamilton, Blake Dorning, Mark Russell, Topper Birny and lots of others. They are all wonderful people.

How do you decide when there are such great people running? Just to name a few are **Don Seigleman, Bob Riley, Mary Jane Caylor, Billy Bell, Blake Dorning, Mac McCutcheon, Fran Hamilton, Mark Craig, Sandra Rhodes** and **Ray Swain**.

Also there are **Jeff Enfinger, Jeff Sessions, Lynda Hall** and **Kay Ivey**. I could go on talking forever about what fine people they are.

After almost a year talking about it I think most people have made up thier mind about who to vote for. The biggest thing is to **PLEASE VOTE!**

We want to say hello to our dear friend **Mr. Ray Pearman** who has been sick lately. A lot of people are praying for him.

Hi, **Mr. Cecil Ashburn**. How have you been doing? Haven't seen you in a while.

Well, **Bill Kling** can start eating breakfast again now that he's been re-elected. We heard he lost a few pounds while campaigning.

I was down to see **Loyd** at the Outback for my birthday. I think his food gets better everytime I go. He and **Marcy** are such great friends.

It was a shock to hear that our good friend **Larry Mullins** is retiring. That Liar's Table will never be the same.

Our prayers go out to **Mr. Alvin Blackwell**. We hear he has not been doing very well lately.

Cathey Carney brought her granddaughter, **Hannah**, in to see me. She is so sweet and sure loves biscuits and gravy!

Our Mayor is the most hard working lady I have ever known. Just think how fast the next two years will pass by before we have

another big election. It's a long time but I think **Loretta** and the District Attorney, **Tim Morgan**, will have no trouble in their races.

Our sympathy goes out to the family of **Mr. Julian Pope**. He was a lifelong resident of Madison County and a WWII veteran. He will be missed dearly.

Well, one of the big topics around the breakfast table is the situation in Iraq and whether we are going to war. I thank God I am not the person who has to decide but I pray for them constantly. Over the years I have seen so many fine young men go off to war. It's really sad.

A big thank you to the **Golden K Kiwanis Club**. I hear they gave away over three thousand American flags on Trade Day. Thank all of you guys for being such true patriots.

Well, that's about all this month. Just remember that I love all of you.

Mark Russell

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Family Celebrations

Spiced Autumn Tea

- 6 c. water
- 6 tea bags - regular
- 1 quart. water
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 15 whole cloves
- 2 c. sugar
- 1 3-oz. pkg. cherry gelatin
- 1 12-oz. can frozen orange juice - prepared
- 1 46-oz. can pineapple juice
- 1 8-oz. bottle lemon juice

Boil 6 cups of water and pour over your tea bags. Steep. Add the cinnamon sticks and cloves in 1 quart of water, simmer them for 20 minutes, then add all the remaining ingredients. Bring to boil and serve, or you may store in fridge for a long time in covered jars.

Baby Pizza Snacks

- 1 lb. hot pork sausage
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 loaf Party Rye bread
- 1 lb. Velveeta Cheese

1 1/2t. dried oregano

1 t. garlic powder

Brown your sausage and beef in a skillet with a bit of oil. Drain the fat and stir in the Velveeta cheese til it's thoroughly melted and mixed in with the beef mixture. Add the oregano and garlic and mix. Spoon the mixture on top of the rye bread slices, bake in pre-heated oven(350degrees) for 10-15 minutes. Serve hot.

Garlic Cheese Ball

- 2 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 16 oz. sharp cheese, grated
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 t. red pepper
- 1/3 c. chopped green olives
- 1/2 c. nuts, finely chopped
- 1 4-oz jar pimento, chopped
- 1 t. Worcestershire sauce
- Paprika

All the cream cheese to soften at room temps, then blend with sharp cheese, mix with the other ingredients. Form into 2 balls and sprinkle with Paprika. Wrap in

waxed paper and chill in fridge to set flavors. Serve with good crackers. These can be made ahead of time and frozen.

Football Feast

- 1 1/2 lb. ground beef - cooked, drained and crumbled
- 1 onion, chopped

1/4 c. green pepper

- 1 can cream of mushroom soup

1 28-oz. can tomato puree

2 T. Heinz 57

2 T. Catsup

1 t. Dale's or Worcestershire Salt and pepper to taste

1 8-oz. pkg. elbow macaroni

1 c. cheddar cheese, shredded

Saute your ground beef in a large skillet, add the pepper and onion. Add next 6 ingredients and simmer for 15 minutes. Cook the macaroni for 8 minutes, rinse in cold water to stop the cooking and set aside. Add to the sauce and place macaroni mixture in a 9 x 13 -inch pan or 2 8x8 pans (1 for now, 1 can be frozen). Top with the cheese, sprinkle with just a bit of cayenne pepper and garlic powder, bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Chicken Parmesan

- 6 boneless chicken breasts
- 1/2 stick butter, melted
- 1 pkg. Ritz crackers
- 1/2 c. Parmesan Cheese

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Melt your butter and dip the chicken. Combine the crackers and cheese, roll the chicken in that mixture and bake at 350 degrees for an hour.

Spicy White Corn Casserole

10 strips bacon, fried crisp and crumbled

2 12-oz. cans shoepeg corn, drained

1 onion, chopped

1/2 t. garlic powder

1/2 t. cayenne pepper

1 8-oz. carton sour cream

Saute chopped onion in the bacon grease. Combine most of the bacon, corn, sour cream and onions. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes and bubbly. Top with remaining bacon and serve hot.

Candied Carrots

1 lb. carrots, steamed and peeled

1 c. peach preserves

1/4 c. melted butter

Slice your carrots, layer in shallow pan. Add the preserves and butter over top of the carrots, bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes.

Orange Sugar Melts

1 c. butter, softened

1 c. confectioners sugar

1 1/4 c. all-purpose flour

3/4 c. cornstarch

3 T. orange juice

Cream the butter and 1/2 cup of the sugar til light and fluffy. Beat in the flour with cornstarch til well mixed. Wrap and refrigerate dough for 2 hours minimum. Roll dough into 1-inch balls and bake on greased cookie sheet for 8-10 minutes at 325 degrees. Cool in the pan, then cool completely. Mix remaining ingredients (remaining sugar and orange juice) and apply glaze to cookies.

Pistachio Salad

1 3-oz. pistachio pudding mix

1 20-oz. can pineapple, crushed, drained with juice reserved

1/2 c. toasted chopped pecans

1 large carton Free Cool Whip

Use the juice of the pineapple to mix with the pudding, beat well. Add nuts. Blend in the Cool Whip - it's ready! Decorate with green or red cherries.

Quick Key Lime Pie

2/3 c. key lime juice

1 egg

1 small box vanilla pudding

1 can Eagle Brand milk

Mix ingredients and pour into graham cracker crust - chill for a couple of hours or overnight.



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The Early History Of Huntsville, Alabama Part One

The following account of Huntsville's early days is taken from "Early History of Huntsville, Alabama," written by E.C. Betts in 1909.

Great numbers of prospective purchasers poured into the settlement during the year 1809, eager to bid on the lands offered for sale by the Government. Many of these potential settlers were wealthy and owned large bodies of slaves.

Twickenham was reached by two principal lines of travel, both leading North for about ten miles to where they merged into what is now the New Market road, which proceeded thence northward to Nashville. To the north of New Market this route was tapped by a road leading eastward through Tennessee and crossing the Tennessee river about the northwest corner of the state of Georgia, proceeding thence into Georgia. It is along this latter route that the greater number of these potential settlers came in 1809. They followed the New Market road till Flint river, in this county, was reached, here they

divided. Some of them coming to the settlement by the Deposit road to what is now Brownsboro, and thence into Twickenham others came along the road leading north from the settlement to Flint river.

As many of the men, whose names are so indelibly stamped upon the pages of our State's, and in some instances our nation's history, became purchasers at these sales, afterwards settling in the county. It will not be amiss to here record some of those names.

Large tracts of land along the road leading north from Twickenham to Flint river were bid in by William Moore, Nathan Strong, James Roper, Matthew Weaver, and John R. B. Eldridge. Closer into the settlement, but along that part of this same road, which is now known as Meridian Pike, purchases of land were made by R. Thompson, Thomas Bibb, J. Manning, B. S. Pope, J. Lowery, J. W. Watkins, J. Connally, P. Cox, J. W. Walker, Hugh McVay, and C. Cabaniss. Around Twickenham, and in different directions, large tracts of land were bought by Dr. David Moore, Archie McDonnell, and J. & S. Acklen, while out to-



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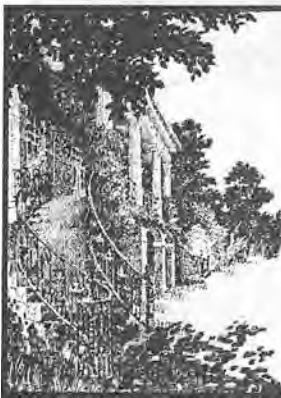
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ward what is now known as Russell's Hill, just west of the settlement, purchases were made by E. Dilworth, E. Ward, and J. Allison.

In due season, houses were built - in most instances of logs - upon these tracts. Great droves of slaves belonging to these settlers having been brought in, clearing of land commenced soon thereafter. Now, the business of transforming this frontier settlement into a permanent community and the famed metropolis of the Alabama Territory it was soon to be, was begun in earnest, and progressed with a gratifying and unprecedented rapidity.

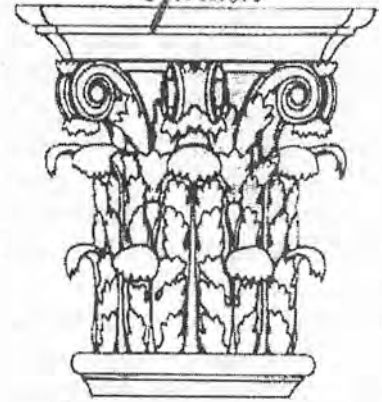
An examination of history's pages reveals that not only did Twickenham and Madison county contribute their share toward the political and economic development of the Mississippi Territory, but that the illustrious names, of those statesmen, are intimate to our history. For among those who purchased lands and settled in Twickenham during the years 1809 and 1810 were: Thomas Bibb, the first president of the Alabama Senate, who succeeded to the office of governor of the State upon the death of his brother, William Bibb, its first governor; Gabriel Moore, and Clement Comer Clay, both of whom became governors of the State, and the latter of whom served Ala-

bama as United States senator, shedding lustre upon her people, and by his marked abilities creating for Alabama, the new State, an enviable place in the counsels of the nation. Leroy Pope is affectionately referred to in the chronicle of the times as the "Father of Huntsville," he was called upon to serve his people in many and varied capacities, acting, as we have seen, as chief justice of the first court of the county. J. W Walker was the first lawyer admitted to practice in the courts of this county serving as attorney-general at the first session of the court, and later became one of the first United States senators from Alabama. At the beginning of his term Alabama was represented in the nation's Congress by two senators and one representative.

As we have observed, on the 22nd day of December, 1809 the Territorial Legislature created a

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commission to lay out the town, and when so laid out it was to be "called and known by the name of Twickenham." At this time the settlement had between two hundred and three hundred inhabitants. Just why the name of Twickenham was chosen is not a matter of conjecture. The moving spirit and the dominant influence of nearly all positive action in the life of the settlement was Leroy Pope, a wealthy man, public spirited and liberal. He was a great admirer of the poet Alexander Pope, though no relation, so far as the author has been able to ascertain. The poet's English home was named Twickenham. Through the influence of Leroy Pope this was the name given the settlement upon its establishment.

Pursuant to the legislative enactment the commission early in 1810, The town was laid out, including in its limits, about sixty acres. The town site, including the "Big Spring," had been previously purchased, in 1808, by Martin Beaty from the "Tennessee Land Company," for the sum of \$1.00 per acre. One thousand acres was included in the purchase, to which he afterwards released his claim, upon effecting a settlement with the United States Government.

Before the town site was laid out, at the Government land sales in 1809, Leroy Pope purchased

the quarter section of land upon which was located the spring, at the, then, exorbitant price of \$23.00 per acre. That the bidding for this piece of land was sharp is attested by the fact that it brought four times as much as any of the adjoining lands. Pope bought this land with a view to locating the county site upon it, which was accordingly done, later.

The streets of the town were laid out with reference to the spring bluff. It is probable that this work was done by J. W. Leake, a local surveyor, who it seems did all such work till 1816, when Hunter Peel, an Englishman, came to Huntsville. Twickenham was bounded on the north by what is now Holmes street; on the east by Lincoln street; on the south by Williams street, and on the west by Galatin and Henry streets, or Oak avenue.

The town being now platted, the commissioners bought thirty acres, the south half of which was purchased from Leroy Pope at \$25.00 per acre. This thirty acres obtained by the commissioners, was that immediately adjacent to the spring bluff, comprising what is now a portion of Court square, and the property abutting thereon. Mr. Pope donated to the town for public purposes, what is now the jail lot and half of the court house square. This thirty acres was divided into half-acre lots which, when sold, brought from \$200.00 to \$500.00 each.

The first lot, in Twickenham, was sold on July 4th, 1810, which seems to mark the beginning of an era of phenomenal growth, not alone for the town and county, but for the entire State as well. Soon, thereafter, John Hickman was awarded the contract for the construction of the first court house, which was

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completed in 1816, and stood upon the site of the present one. AT the same time with the erection of the temple of justice, a jail was built; and completed after delay commensurate with that attending the completion of the court house, and was situated on the northeast corner of the square. From the number of years consumed in completing the court house, one might infer that this noble work of erecting Madison's first shrine to the Goddess of Justice, was probably finished by the "heirs, executors or administrators" of John Hickman, the original contractor. At any rate, these public buildings in their incomplete state, became the subject of legislation again, on December 12, 1816, when an act was passed providing that: "The justices of said county court be and they are hereby appointed a commission to contract for and superintend the completion of the public buildings of said county," with power to purchase a lot for the jail and to proceed to the completion of the pillory."

In the basement of the court house was located the first "Mar-

ket House;" later, it was removed to what is now the Holding block, on the east side of the square,

Not unlike other towns, Twickenham had its local dissensions and internal strife, and the name of the town was the bone of contention. Legend claims that the settlement was divided in twain, and that "there existed two powerful factions," denominated respectively: The "Royal Party" and the "Castor-oil Party;" being so named on account of the leadership espousing each. The former was led by Leroy Pope and contended for the name of Twickenham, while the latter was led by John Hunt, who operated a castor-oil shop, and contended for the name of Huntsville.

What the real reason for the change was must remain the subject of conjecture. However, history does inform us, that, though the town was legally named Twickenham, the spring, and even the settlement itself to some extent, was still called and known as "Hunts Spring."

This circumstance, taken in connection with the fact that there were many who believed deference should be shown the memory of Hunt; and again, the even more potent circumstance that Twickenham was an English name, which made it no doubt very unpopular just at this time, when the relations between this Government and Great Britain were unfriendly and strained to

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the breaking point by the oft-repeated insults, and bullying of our commerce by Britain's naval policy, which led to the War of 1812, amply explain the desire for the change of name.

Answering the demand of her people, the Territorial Legislature by act of November 25, 1811, changed the name of the town, by providing, that: "From and after the passage of this act, the county town of Madison county-now called Twickenham shall be called and known by the name of Huntsville. The same Legislature by an act of December 9, 1811, incorporated Huntsville, and gave to it, its first municipal charter and government.

The provisions of this charter were amplified and extended by an act, of the Territorial Legislature, of November 29th 1815, making the provisions of an act amending the charter of the town of St. Stephens applicable to Huntsville. Later another charter was granted by an act of December 16th, 1819, appointing three additional commissioners for Huntsville, and naming John Read, Henry Stokes and Jesse Searcy, as such commissioners. This charter and form of government remained in force without change till the meeting of the State legislature at its session of 1843-44, where a new charter was granted dividing the city into four wards and providing a mayor and eight aldermen to be chosen by the qualified electors also extend-

ing the limits of the town to one-half mile in each direction from the court house. This charter remained unchanged and in force till the Civil War.

Thus was the beginnings of Huntsville, Alabama.

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Take one pound of beeswax, and a fourth of a pound of soft turpentine from the tree, melt them together, strain them, take your wick of the desired length and stretch it as you would in making a plough line. Then take the mixture in a thick waiter, and hold the wick down in it as you apply it from end to end. This can be done three times and your candle is ready. The above proportion of the ingredients is sufficient for a wick forty yards long.



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Coca Cola Makes Its Case In Court

from 1911 newspaper

Chattanooga TN. March 22 - the hearing of testimony for the defense in the government case against "twenty barrels and forty kegs of Coca-Cola" in which the drink is declared to contain Caffeine, a dangerous drug, and was made under unsanitary conditions in violation of pure food laws, began this morning.

Judge John S. Candler, whose law firm organized the Coca Cola Co., testified the drink contained a substance known as "merchandise no". Asked what this was made of he said it had alcohol, cocoa nuts and kola leaves. Howard Candler, Vice President of the company testified how the syrup is mixed and denied the factory was unclean or that trash is allowed to fall into it.

Fornication Suspects Locked In Jail

Being Held For Murder

from 1911 newspaper

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

Chautauqua

History Festival & Tour

At the turn of the twentieth century orators, performers and educators traveled a national Chautauqua circuit across more than 12,000 sites bringing lectures, performance, concerts, classes, and exhibitions to small towns and cities across America. Up through the 1930s, Chautauqua events were held at Huntsville's own East Clinton School grounds. Over the last few decades the East Clinton PTA has commemorated the Chautauqua movement by holding its own history festival and tour of Historic District homes to raise both money and awareness for Huntsville's oldest educational establishment.

Chautauqua is scheduled for Saturday, October 19, 2002, 10 am - 4 pm on the grounds and building

of East Clinton Street School. Entertainment includes Civil War Reenactments, NASA historian and display, Early Works exhibit, Community Ballet, Community Chorus, Mountain Dulcimers, Sweet Adelines, and much more.

Chautauqua will also conduct an historic home tour of 5 houses from all three Historic Districts from 11 am to 3 pm. The school will also be on tour with our Historic Photo Gallery. In addition children's activities and refreshments will occur on the school grounds. These include a cakewalk, tug of war, tricycle race, horseshoes, 3-legged race and much more family fun.

All proceeds go to benefit East Clinton Street School. All are invited to attend this historical event.



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Green Academy

Huntsville's Historic School

by Charles Rice

Huntsville in its early years was an unusual city - unusual in that it was largely settled by wealthy planters from Georgia and Virginia, who brought their developed culture along with them. And while Huntsville did have its brief frontier period, it developed into a sophisticated settlement much faster than its sister cities of the Tennessee Valley.

A prime example of this can be seen in the once famed Green Academy, a private boys school that formerly stood on Clinton Street just east of Calhoun. This prep school was actually chartered by the Territory of Mississippi as long ago as 1812, just a half dozen years or so after pioneer settler John Hunt built his log cabin at the Big Spring.

Huntsville's Green Academy

did not actually open its doors to students until 1821, after Alabama had already become a State. However, the school quickly came to prominence as a center of learning in North Alabama. Virtually everyone who rose to prominence in those early years of Alabama's history had ties to the Green Academy. The education these men received was obviously more than adequate. Huntsville's Jones M. Withers, for example, would leave the Green Academy to accept an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point. Jones Withers later rose to the rank of major general in the Confederate Army. Former student John Withers Clay, son of Governor Clement C. Clay and brother of Senator Clement C. Clay, Jr., even managed to enter the University of Virginia at a very early age. He graduated from the university in 1837 when he was

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just 17. Clay went on to receive his M. A. there, the first nonresident of Virginia ever to do so. Many of Alabama's prominent 19th century political figures began their education at the little school on Huntsville's east side.

By 1859, the Green Academy consisted of a large one story brick classroom building. The city map of that year also shows several smaller outbuildings. Some of these probably were dormitories for the students. The principals of the school during the years immediately prior to the War Between the States were Charles O. Shepherd and A. Erskine Russel, both members of prominent local families. The school's curriculum was designed principally for college preparation, though it was also meant to provide all the knowledge an educated young gentleman of the time might be expected to know.

A rare photograph was found about 20 years ago in the 1850s Dill House, located just north of the school. The photo shows a group of boys in antebellum clothing posing with their teacher before a one-story brick building. The bearded teacher clearly resembles Principal Charles O. Shepherd, and the faded photograph might well be the only picture of the Green Academy.

The Huntsville City Directory of 1859 describes the Green Academy thus: "It is situated on a beautiful eminence on the edge of the city. It is cool, shady and retired. It holds the same relation to the male portion of North Alabama that the Seminary does to the female portion."

In 1861, however, the tranquil life of old Huntsville suddenly came to an end. Alabama had seceded from the Federal Union and joined the Confederate States

of America. Neither Huntsville nor the United States would ever be the same. When the fighting began at Fort Sumter in April 1861, the Green Academy realistically added military training to its studies. Even though the students were only boys in their early teens, it became clear that many of them might one day be called upon to defend their State from invasion.

One year after Fort Sumter, the Union Army marched into Huntsville - the first Alabama city to be occupied. All of the city's schools were immediately shut down. General Ormsby Mitchel's invaders made themselves masters of the land, and the 2nd Ohio Infantry took up residence in the Green Academy. The regiment's officers, naturally, appropriated the buildings to their own use. The enlisted men had to be content with pitching their tents on the grounds.

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Many of the school's beautiful shade trees soon fell to the axe, sacrificed for the 2nd Ohio's campfires.

The men in blue also helped themselves to everything in the neighborhood that was not nailed down. Dill family tradition tells that the Ohio soldiers made short work of the family's chickens, even though one thief was caught by his officers and made to carry a heavy log across his shoulders the whole day. The Dills finally removed temptation from the enemy's midst by bringing the chickens indoors, keeping them in an upstairs bedroom.

Even though the first Union occupation lasted only four months, the famed Green Academy would never reopen its doors. Charles Shepherd had already left the school to join the Confederate Army in the fall of 1861. Shepherd would finish the war as a captain in the 12th Alabama Cavalry. Many of the students would also eventually fight for the South, despite their young age. Some, like 16-year old James M. Mason, later a Methodist minister, would enlist in Captain Frank Gurley's cavalry company.

Not even the school's buildings would survive the war. In late 1864, General John B. Hood led the Confederate Army of Tennessee on its tragic march to disaster at the Battles of Franklin and Nashville. As Hood's Army approached Huntsville on the

South side of the Tennessee River, the Union Army garrison was forced to abandon its year long occupation of the city. On November 26, 1864, Union soldiers angry at having to give up their comfortable quarters set fire to the Green Academy. The school burned to the ground. By the war's end, the trustees were bankrupt and the school was never rebuilt.

In 1882 the City of Huntsville erected a new public school on the site of the old Green Academy. This was the original East Clinton School. Now in its third building,

East Clinton School continues to educate Huntsville's children today. Fittingly, this plot of land has never been used for anything but a school ground.

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Woman Marries Woman



Says She Did Not Know

from 1878 newspaper

Marancy Hughes, of this town, was married in September last to a person who was known as Samuel M. Pollard. Her relatives opposed the match, but she eloped and was married without their knowledge. A short time after their marriage, Pollard confessed to her that he was really a woman; that she had had trouble with her relatives in the East; had lost her property and assumed the disguise of a man for the reason that avenues for making money would be open to her in the character which would be closed to her as a woman.

Pollard has never given her any particular reason for doing her this great wrong, but is believed to have been actuated by foolish pride in appearing in the character of a married man. The victim was ashamed to acknowledge that she had been so imposed upon and shrunk from admitting the truth.

Pollard, without actually

threatening her life, repeatedly intimated that it would be bad for Marancy if she exposed her, and she kept silence until a fortnight ago, when her aunt got a perception of the fact and questioned her closely, and she related to her the whole story.

The victim says that the

woman's real name is Sarah M. Pollard, and that her trunk is filled with feminine apparel. A complaint was file yesterday by J.C. Howerton, accusing Pollard of perjury in swearing when he took out the marriage license



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The Thomas Townsend Story

A few years after the Civil War Thomas Townsend, by any definition, was a successful man. He owned a palatial home on Adams Street, had a large plantation near Hazel Green, was a successful attorney and had been elected as a Huntsville city alderman.

None of this would have been unusual except for the fact that Townsend was an ex-slave in an era when racism controlled every facet of the communities social, business and political life.

And he was also related to many of the most prominent white families in Huntsville.

Townsend's father, Samuel Townsend, was one of the wealthiest, and largest planters in North Alabama. He owned a total of eight plantations, seven of which were in Madison County and the 8th in Jackson County. The main plantation, where he lived, consisted of over 1,700 acres near Hazel Green and was worked by hundreds of slaves.

Townsend was a hard, and shrewd, businessman who was known to spend hours poring over ledgers trying to squeeze and extra dollar's profit out of a cotton crop. He reportedly did not drink, smoke or indulge in any other of the numerous vices common to the wealthy elite of that era.

The only weakness he had was Hannah, a tall, dusty and slender slave who worked as his housekeeper and shared his bed at night.

Hannah was reputed to be the daughter of a James Bierney, a

Huntsville attorney whose illicit affair was discovered when his wife's serving girl became pregnant. The wife, after questioning the servant, discovered her husband was the father.

Fearing a scandal, the wife ordered her husband to send the slave to New Orleans to be sold. Instead, Bierney sold his pregnant mistress to Samuel Townsend where he continued to visit her.

Bierney later moved to Cincinnati where he ran for President under the Abolitionist party.

After Hannah was born she lived in the "big house" with her mother who became Townsend's housekeeper.

Townsend evidently was intrigued by the young girl. He insured that she was taught proper manners, dressed right and was even taught to read and write.

At a young age; some accounts have her being only 13 years old, Townsend took her as his mistress.

Hannah took a keen interest in everything that transpired on the plantation. Townsend was often gone weeks at a time on business and he began delegating much of supervision of the plantation to his mistress.

Strangely, given the climate of the times, Townsend made no particular effort to hide his relationship. Even when she began to bear him children, nine in all, they all lived in the "big house" as a "normal" family.

When Thomas, the eldest son, was born Townsend doted on him the same way any loving father would. Thomas often accompanied his father on trips into Huntsville where he was undoubtedly

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the subject of much speculation and gossip.

Many people were infuriated that Townsend had hired a tutor to educate his son. This was a violation of Alabama law forbidding slaves from having an education.

Huntsville was a small town and although almost every one realized who Thomas' grandfather and father were, in the eyes of the law he was still a slave.

When Samuel Townsend died in 1855 his will stated that his entire estate was to be liquidated with the proceeds going to his children and mistress. He also made provisions for Hannah and the children to be taken North and freed. Under a law passed in 1834 slaves who were freed by their master could not remain in the state of Alabama.

Thomas and his siblings were sent to Wilberforce, Ohio where they were enrolled in a private boarding school.

The will created a furor in Madison County. While most people were inclined to look the other way at people's private affairs, the idea of leaving an estate valued in the hundreds of thousands of dollars to "a negro wench and her picaninnies" was appalling to many of Townsend's former friends.

Repeated efforts were made to have the will declared invalid but they all failed. Townsend had anticipated the efforts and, before his death, had hired some of the best attorneys in the state to draw up an iron-clad will.

Finally, a much simpler strategy was decided on to deprive the family of their inheritance.

The administrators of the estate simply took their time in liquidating it. Part of the land was sold to friends on credit. Other parts were leased, with the rent going back to the estate where the administrators and attorneys

lined their pockets.

Between 1855 and 1860 the family had received less than \$7000 out of an estate that was valued at almost \$250,00.

Meanwhile, Thomas, the eldest son, had completed his education in Ohio and was devoting almost all of his time in trying to claim his inheritance.

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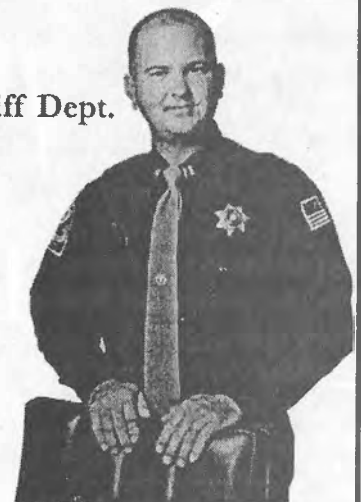
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The Civil War brought a temporary end to the settlement, when it was declared illegal to transfer money, or property, to anyone at war with the Confederacy.

In 1866 Thomas finally gained control of the estate but was immediately confronted with new problems. Much of the property had been sold on credit but, in a country ravaged by the Civil War, there was little money for anyone to pay bills with. Thomas decided to return to Huntsville to try and put the families affairs in order.

Although Thomas probably thought his visit would be short, he almost immediately became involved in community affairs. He became a teacher for one of the first Black schools organized in Huntsville and was instrumental in starting several programs designed to aid the ex-slaves in their new found freedom.

In 1868 the estate was finally

settled. Thomas received less than \$4000.00 after the money was divided and attorneys fees paid.

Undaunted, Thomas rented the Wade plantation, part of the original Townsend estate, and began farming. Many of the Blacks working on the farm were undoubtedly the same people he grew up with as slaves.

As the plantation began once again to prosper, Thomas became even more active in community affairs.

Respected by both the black and white communities, Thomas Townsend became a bridge across the racial barriers. When the government began issuing pensions for the black soldiers Thomas became a claims attorney and working with several white attorneys, helped secure pensions for many of the black veterans.

In 1880 Thomas Townsend

was elected as a city alderman, the first black to ever hold the position. He carried both the black and white sections of Huntsville.

As hard as it may be to believe, he was appointed to a committee overseeing the public schools even though blacks were forbidden to attend. He later served on the advisory board for the fire department and worked as a writer for the *Huntsville Gazette*.

When he died in 1916 he was eulogized by all the Huntsville newspapers.

As a tribute to a man who was born into slavery and became one of Huntsville's most respected citizens, the city voted unanimously to name a street after him. Townsend Street is located between Madison and Franklin Streets near Huntsville Hospital.

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A Family Ghost



by Jerry Wilbanks

Many southern families have a resident ghost handed down over generations much as old photographs, jewelry and other heirlooms are passed along to younger members of the clan. Sometimes, these spectral boarders are restricted to one dwelling house; others are not. My family's ghost is well known through personal experience to just about every member. His name is Eli and he has been haunting select Wilbanks households at least as far back as my great-grandfather, whom many say actually acquired him firsthand!

Now, some ghosts and transient spirits are ill-tempered, quick to anger and sensitive to slight and insult. These sulky specimens, as has been extensively documented, are apt to engage in scare tactics which border on downright mischievous behavior and which can result in property damage and even injury to family members and visitors. As you might guess, it is these malcontents who give our relationship with the spectral world and the business of "haunting" a bad name. Be assured, a self-respecting family ghost would avoid such conduct (for the most part) and the questionable motives behind it.

Now it has become my very distinct honor and privilege to entertain Eli in my home. Formerly, he resided with my father, who got him from his father, who was pre-

sented the ghostly presence by his father. In time, I will pass Eli on to my son to act as a kind of family retainer in his home until another generation is brought along and made acquainted with the many excellent virtues of the ever-thoughtful apparition.

How did the tradition of Eli get started in the first place, you may ask. Well, here is the story as I heard it from my grandfather, Millard Wilbanks: his father, my great-grandfather Houston, had come from Morgan County to farm in this region and had secured a dwelling house and some acreage of good bottom land, not far from Huntsville. Houston and his wife Pearl had several children already, true to the rural southern tradition, but few of them were old enough to actually help out with the heavy work of putting in and harvesting a cotton crop. When Houston needed help with the more difficult farming tasks, he had no choice but to recruit a hired hand. This he would do by going into Huntsville and scouting around for someone willing to help out on a temporary basis. This plan of action yielded only limited



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success. Sometimes the hired hand turned out to be unreliable, lazy, larcenous or worse. It was a big chance that sometimes had to be taken.

On one trip to town, Houston was having no luck whatsoever. Late in the day he gave up and decided to return home. He was in the one-horse wagon and his way took him past a set of railroad tracks where he spotted what appeared to be a dead body lying on the tracks. Dead or dead drunk, he guessed.

The latter proved to be the case and Houston, who was by all accounts a deeply religious man, felt that he could not leave the man in this dangerous position on the tracks and exposed to the weather and all else of potential threat to health and well-being. My great-grandfather drove this stranger home in his wagon and the family nursed him back to health over a period of weeks. He had pneumonia and was very weak. During this time of recuperation, the stranger, who gave his name as Eli, swore off the liquor and embraced Christianity with a zeal and fervor that only an eleventh hour convert could muster.

In his gratitude, he adopted the family as his own and worked like a draught horse from sunrise to sunset, slowing up only for meals and prayer. Houston, himself a lay minister, was quite proud of his faithful convert and showed him off around the neighborhood.

Now, it came about that Houston was expecting a visit from his favorite brother, Bill. Bill was on foot and was walking from Morgan County. He was expected at any time, but no one could guess exactly when. One evening there came a very severe thunderstorm and the rain beat down in solid sheets for hours. Houston got it

into his head that Bill was about to arrive for his visit but was being held up by an unfordable, rain-swollen creek. His feeling was so strong that he asked Eli to get a length of rope and accompany him down to the creek where the two of them might assist Bill in the difficult crossing.

Autumn had arrived and there was a distinct chill in the air. When the two arrived at the ford, they found conditions much as they had expected, and incredibly, Bill was waiting on the opposite bank. To make a long story short, in trying to assist Bill to cross the creek, Eli wound up in the water. Their mission was accomplished but poor Eli became desperately ill and once again contracted pneumonia. This time the unfortunate Eli expired within a few days. He was given a decent Christian burial and grieved over just like the beloved family member he had become,

It seems that Eli never really left the home of Houston and his loving family. The haunting began immediately and was very alarming and disconcerting to family members. However, after a while the family grew accustomed to Eli's moaning, rattling presence in the late hours of the night and his demonstrations be-

came very commonplace and unremarkable.

Eli stayed with Houston's family until the oldest son, Millard, had struck out on his own and established a home and family. Houston solemnly presented the ghost to Millard, who kept him in his home until my father came into possession of him sometime



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in the early 1950's, The shade of Eli resided with us for about ten years in the mill village duplex on Triana (formerly Park) Boulevard, across the street and one block down from Huntsville Manufacturing Company. I won't be any more specific than that, because as far as I know, that house is still occupied (though not by Eli!)

Growing up in a house with a family ghost was sometimes alarming, sometimes amusing, always interesting. Overnight visitors would laugh off the story and then nervously settle in to wait for morning. Sometimes there would be mysterious sounds and happenings; sometimes there would not be. Eli always expressed his displeasure with a guest by rattling and clomping up and down the stairway and by slamming doors through the night. He would sometimes even hide a visitor's clothes and shoes.

Household objects would vanish only to reappear in unusual and inappropriate places. Moaning and howling noises were not unusual. When things got too out of hand, my Dad would speak sharply to Eli and things would settle down immediately. My Dad could put up with a little general haunting as well as the next man but there was a limit to the amount of mischief he would tolerate.

In time, all of our neighbors became acquainted with the situation and the acting out of the phantom Eli became predictable and mundane. When we moved away to Warren Park, Eli came with us and in the fullness of time, he was passed on to me, even though I now live far away from the city of Huntsville.

Eli is with us even as I write, faithful and true as ever an old family ghost or old family friend could be. Someone once suggested that I have Eli exercised. This is, of course, most certainly out of the question! Eli will reside here with his "family" until my son has made his own home and is ready to take on the responsibility. As you might have guessed, he can hardly wait.

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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 fifteenth in a series of articles based on the contents of those eight-page weekly tabloid newspapers.)

by Waylon Smithey
Volume 1. No. 35, February
16, 1889

Editor W.R. Murrell used most of Page I to editorially oppose a turnpike bill being pushed toward approval in the state legislature.

"We are in favor of good turnpike roads," he wrote. "While this is so, we wish to say a few words about the recent turnpike bill formulated at Huntsville, authorizing Madison County, through her commissioners, to issue bonds to the amount of \$100,000 for the purpose of building 130 miles of macadamized roads and for the purchase of the pikes owned by the Madison Turnpike Company.

"There are about nineteen miles of pike roads in the county owned by the said company, which would cost, at \$1,600 per mile, \$30,400. This would leave \$69,600 of the \$100,000, and estimating the cost of the new roads at \$2000.00 per mile, the proposed eight lines radiating from the city of Huntsville - as proposed in the bill - would only be built four

and four-fifths miles in each direction from the city."

Murrell goes on the state:

"Monkeying Huntsville proposes to make a cat's-paw of Madison County to pull her turnpike chestnuts out of the fire.

" - if the turnpike bill is so universally popular, why did not the framers of the bill allow it to come before the people and let them give it a unanimous sanction?"

In the present turnpike bill - which should be entitled, "A bill to extend the streets of Huntsville five miles" - Huntsville is nineteen-twentieths beneficiary, while she pays about half the taxes.

"In the turnpike matter, Huntsville says to the county, 'Heads I win - tails you lose, or, as the Indian said to Sambo, "you take the squirrel and I'll take the turkey, or I'll keep the turkey and you can have the squirrel."

These other items appeared on page 1:

"While Dr. D.H. McLain, of

Maysville, was boarding the train Monday morning at Deposit, he accidentally slipped and broke one of his ribs."

"There is something wrong about our Huntsville mail. We received a letter a few days ago from a gentleman of this place, written and mailed by him in Huntsville, which did not reach us for two days after he had returned to New Market, and last Saturday we got the *Daily Mercury* dated Tuesday, Feb. 5. What is the matter?"

A full report on a local wedding, headlined "Orange blossoms" appeared on Page 8:

"The marriage of Mr. G.H. Terry and Miss Alice Terry took place at the residence of the bride's parents, near New Market, on the 13 inst., (Wednesday), the Rev. R. T. Blackwell officiating, in which he made it very impressive as well as solemn. The bride, who is well known as the charming Miss Alice, and much loved for her sweetness of disposition, was attired in dark green suiting, which added much to her blonde type of beauty. It is said 'Happiness is a beautifier.' It certainly was on this occasion.

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"A word or two for the bridegroom and I am done: He is a young man of this locality, of excellent business qualifications and endowed with the spirit of energy, possessing many friends among his large circle of acquaintances. He looked quite happy and proud of her who has cast her lot with him, let it be for better or for worse."

Also on Page 9: "Charley Stone, the youngest son of Mrs. W.C. Stone, shot himself through the thigh one day last week by the accidental discharge of a pistol cartridge while picking at it with a knife. The family were all absent and when his mother returned she found him weak and much exhausted from loss of blood. We learn that he is recovering from his wound and will be about in a short while. Moral: boys, do not handle either pistols or cartridges and you will be safe against the possibility of death from them."

"It was reported that three inches of snow fell in the mountains a few miles from New Market on Monday morning."

Southern Superstitions

It's bad luck to sweep out trash or carry out ashes after sunset. If you desire to become a good seamstress, allow a lizard to run across your hand.

A young woman seeking a husband should stick seven needles into a lighted candle while praying to the Virgin Mary, until the wick is consumed. By doing this she can obtain the love of the man of her dreams, while rendering him impotent with other women.

Never invite thirteen guests to dinner, or one of them will suffer very bad luck

Should a man and woman pour tea together, they will have a baby within the year.

Check your cup of coffee in the morning. If the bubbles on the surface float in your direction, you will soon come into some money you didn't expect.

If you're getting out of a chair and it tips over, you will NOT be getting married during the coming year.



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Caramel Corn

A recipe from the 1890s

- 2 quarts popped corn
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt



Put butter in saucepan, when melted add sugar, salt and 1/2 cup water. Bring to boiling point and let boil 16 minutes. Pour over corn, and stir until every kernel is well coated with the mixture.

Tales From Lincoln Village



This story is true and accurate. My father is Odell Woodrow Wilson. He's 87 years old and his brother, now deceased, was Robert Wilson.

Back in Lincoln Village around 1951 an event occurred that was quite funny. My Daddy kept noticing that his back porch light was out and he thought it just blew out from so much moisture in the air, or maybe an electrical short. It was strange though because the bulb was broken, rather than just blackened.

He went to Harrison Bros. Hardware store for 137 weeks and replaced those bulbs, once a week. He used his credit ticket, where Harrison Hardware would just bill him. It got to be kind of expensive, so Daddy decided to find out what was really happening.

Daddy sat up late one night watching out his back door, making sure he was hidden from view. It was a dark and very still night with no moon. In a short while a shadow appeared moving towards the back porch. Daddy was shocked to see his brother Robert appear, take his BB gun and shoot out the light.

Early the next morning, Daddy went back to the hardware store, told them the story and asked them what he should do. They suggested putting the next light bulb on Robert's account.

Six weeks went by, with the light bulb being changed out every week. When Robert went to Harrison Bros. Hardware to pay his bill, he was shocked to see that his bill included 7 new light bulbs.

Mysteriously, the light bulbs were never shot out again, and nothing was ever said about it among the brothers.



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Flannel Cakes

Two pounds of flour, six eggs well beaten, one wine-glass of yeast, a little salt, wet with milk into a thick batter and set it to rise. Bake them in small pans.



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News From The Year 1923

News From Huntsville and Around The World

PRESIDENT HARDING DIES SUDDENLY Calvin Coolidge is President

Washington - News of the President's death shocked the seat of this country's government, which had expected a complete recovery.

The end came suddenly as Mrs. Harding was reading to him from among the evening's newspapers and after what associates have described as his best day ever since the beginning of the illness exactly one week ago.

Reports that Mrs. Harding had collapsed were denied. She has been extremely courageous and by her example has aided those around her who are grieving the loss of our President. Fu-

neral arrangements are pending, finalized at press time.

Calvin Coolidge received the word of the Presidents death and his own elevation to the presidency at ten minutes before one this morning when a telegram was delivered to him with the news. His father, who is a notary public, administered the oath of office in a solemn ceremony attended by only a few persons.

Shortly afterwards, Coolidge issued a statement asking that all persons who served under Harding's administration to continue in office.

Fire Destroys Home On Madison Street

Saved By Faithful Canine

Huntsville - Residents of a home on Madison Street were roused from their slumber by the barking of a dog as smoke and fiery flames devoured the residence.

Steven Packard, the resident, says the family would have perished had it not been for the actions of the family pet who awakened them.

Most of the Packard's household belongings were destroyed but the home is insured and work is expected to begin soon on rebuilding.

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MEXICO ISSUES PROTEST AS APACHES RAID BORDER

Arizona Indians Crossing Border To Rob And Pillage Mexicans - Homes Burned - Four Dead

Mexico City - Government officials today issued a strongly worded protest to Washington complaining of repeated armed excursions across the international border by members of the Apache Indian Tribe.

Since the raiding began early last year officials have documented over thirty instances of armed excursions onto Mexican territory by the renegade Indians who are making their base near the Superstition Mountains.

The band is reported to be led by John Kennesaw, a half breed, who earlier last year led a group of Indians off the reservation.

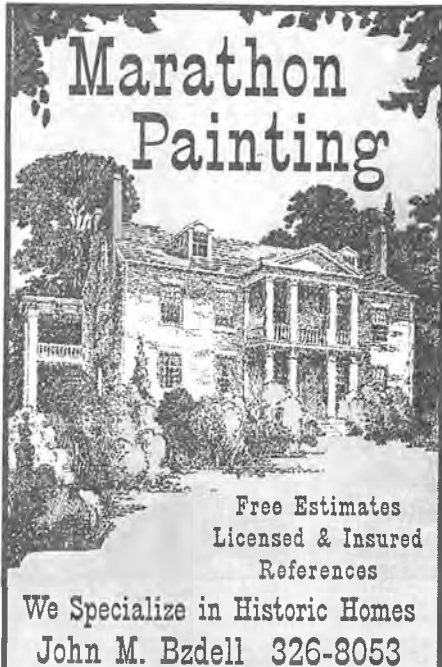
Many of the renegades had fought with Pancho Villa in earlier years and are suspected of being well armed.

The Indians are preying on isolated ranches, where they rob the households and drive off substantial numbers of cattle which they sell in Arizona and Texas. In

almost every instance the Indians have burned the homes after removing any valuables they could carry with them. Two weeks ago, near Tejas, a family of four was brutally murdered after a futile attempt to protect their home from the savages.

Yesterday it was announced in Washington that Captain Lee Thomas, of the U.S. Army, will be commanding a group of three aeroplanes which will be used in tracking the renegades and bringing them to justice.

Mexican authorities have threatened to follow the Indians into Arizona if the U.S. Government does not take action.



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Household Tips, Remedies and other useful Notes

- If you burn coal, see that the stove is thoroughly cleaned out in the morning before a fresh fire is started, for in no other way can you secure a clear, bright fire during the day. Be sure that the ashes are sifted and slightly dampen the cinders before using them, for this promotes combustion.

- Since American enterprise has succeeded in supplying reliable timekeepers at so low a figure, every kitchen should reckon a clock among its outfit. Having learned from cookery books, verified by personal experiment, the average length of time required for cooking the usual meats, poultry, vegetables, etc., make a list of these and hang it up in some convenient place in your kitchen.

- If you burn lamps keep them scrupulously clean. Wicks, soaked in strong vinegar and dried before being used, will not smoke. Two or three times a year, the part of the lamp containing the wick should be boiled in water in which washing soda has been dissolved; this will improve the quality of the light and obliterate the danger of explosion.

- Never reprimand servants in the presence of others. Avoid irresolution, undue fault finding, familiarity, or display of ill temper, and endeavor to show all possible consideration for their com-

fort.

- A clean cap and long white apron should always be kept hanging in the kitchen closet, ready for the servant to put on to serve the meals or to open the door. It is better for the mistress to own these articles, since if given to the servants they depart with them, and, in our American households, alas, a change of domestics is too apt to be a frequent occurrence.

- Heavy woolen sweaters may be dried most successfully in the following way: lay a clean sheet of paper kept just for this purpose over a window screen. On this place the washed sweater in exactly its original form, carefully placing the fullness in the front, with a flat back. Balance the screen on two chairs and dry the sweater over a floor register or in a warm room in the winter time, or in a shady place out of doors if

it is summer.

- When drying celery, parsley or sage for winter seasonings, leave all the leaves on and cut the stalks short enough so that they will fit in preserve jars. Place them in the uncovered jars with the leaves down and dry them in the oven. Then adjust the rub-

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bers and covers and store them away.

- Keep a mixture of sweet oil and lime water on hand at all times. Apply immediately to burns. The best lime water is made from one pound of lime soaked in a quart of water.



Wife Whips Husband

Birmingham - When all else had failed to stop Elish and John Garvy from fighting, Judge R.T. Young ordered the married couple to remain in a room by themselves until their differences were settled. Thirty minutes later

Elish Garvey emerged. Her husband was lying on the floor knocked out.

Judge Young dismissed the case with the admonition to either separate or buy boxing gloves.

from 1934 newspaper

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- **BRAUN, WERNHER VON (1912-1977).** The German-born engineer who developed the V-2 rocket for the Nazis during World War II came to the United States in 1945 and immediately resumed work in missile research. As the director of the Space Flight Center at Huntsville from 1950 to 1970, he helped develop launch vehicles for the first U.S. satellites and became an active consultant-researcher for numerous space programs. His home from about 1950 to 1957 was 907 McClung St., and his home until 1970, built in 1957, stands at 1516 Big Cove Road. Both remain privately owned.

- **BLACK, HUGO LAFAYETTE (1886-1971)**- U.S. Supreme Court justice for 34 years, the Alabama native

grew up in Ashland, his home from 1889 to 1907. The privately owned house on Second Avenue South was recently described by a local official as "very old and falling down." A plan to restore the residence has not yet advanced beyond good intentions.

- **COLE, NAT KING (1919-1965).** Born Nathaniel Adams Coles, this Baptist minister's son who became one of the world's most popular singers was born in Montgomery, his home until age 4. His privately owned birthplace stands at 1524 St. John St.

- **FITZGERALD, F. SCOTT (1896-1940).** Montgomery was Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald's 1900 birthplace. Her parental home is long gone from South Street, but the large house where she and her novelist husband resided in 1931 remains privately owned at 919 Felder Ave.

- **GERONIMO (1829-1909).** The Apache leader and guerrilla chieftain who fiercely resisted white settlement in his Arizona homeland was taken prisoner in 1887 and moved, along with his family and tribal members, completely out of Arizona territory. From 1888 to 1894 he lived in semi-confinement at Mount Vernon Barracks, a 2,000 acre military reservation established in the 1830s. The marked site of Fort Stoddert, where he occupied a small house, lies about two miles east of Mount Vernon on County Road 96 off U.S. Highway 43.

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Aged Groom Finds Young Love



from 1891 newspaper

The marriage of John Ring, aged 70, of Jackson County and Miss Mary Donnan, aged 20, of Decatur, is somewhat romantic. An old friend of the aged groom says that Ring was at one time in love with Miss Donnan's mother, but on account of his then comparative poverty was forced to see her wooed and won by her present husband.

He remained true in his feeling, however, and when his present bride was a little girl became much attached to her. In appearance so much like her mother, the old gentleman found in her childish affection a solace for the loss of her mother's love. As the girl grew to womanhood the old gentleman became a wealthy man, and when he sought the hand of Miss Donnan a short time ago found the mother a ready

helper in the match.

The groom has just purchased a fine farm near Birmingham and will enjoy his last days in the sunlight of the smiles of his young bride.

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Doing Battle With The Devil

Claude Berry was a preacher man. An old fashioned, hell-fle, brimstone, "you're going to Hell" preacher.

Claude worked as an automobile mechanic during the week, but Sundays were set aside to do battle with the devil. His battleground was an old dilapidated frame building, with its paint peeling, and with an old faded picture of Jesus hanging behind the pulpit, held in place by two rusty thumb tacks.

The religion he preached was as old as the red clay foothills surrounding the church. Accept the Savior, go to church every Sunday, and reap your rewards in the afterlife. Unfortunately, his preaching alone was not enough to attract members to his dwindling flock.

Every week he counted fewer heads in the congregation. Especially disappointing were the young neighborhood lads, who

refused to attend services.

The preacher pondered this problem for a long time, and then one day while sitting in front of the wood burning stove, whittling on a piece of cedar, he suddenly announced to his wife:

"We're going to build a brush arbor, and we'll have an old fashioned revival meeting."

A brush arbor was a tradition unique to the southern Appalachian foothills. An open air structure, with pine boughs providing the roof, it allowed the breezes to take the edge off the summer heat.

Willing hands were soon dragged to help build the arbor and word was spread throughout the community of the upcoming revival.

The day of the revival dawned with the promise of another sweltering day. Mr. Berry had barely started his preaching when several of the neighborhood boys wandered in. As they were about to leave, having satisfied their curiosity, their attention was drawn to three young ladies sitting on the back row.

The ladies, all strangers to the young blades, were young and very attractive.

Needless to say, instead of

leaving, the young men quickly took a seat, hoping to catch one of the lasses' eyes.

The next day, the same scene was repeated, only this time the ladies were sitting in the middle row, and so were the young men.

By the end of the revival the lasses were sitting on the front row, surrounded by a bevy of young men.

Preacher Berry, now in his element, and with a captive audience, fought the devil with an oratorical style that sent chill bumps running up the spines of the young men. So impressive was his sermon that many of the boys, who had never before been inside a church, made commitments to a religious life.

The revival was a great success and as Preacher Berry later said, "I only had to pay those girls two dollars each."



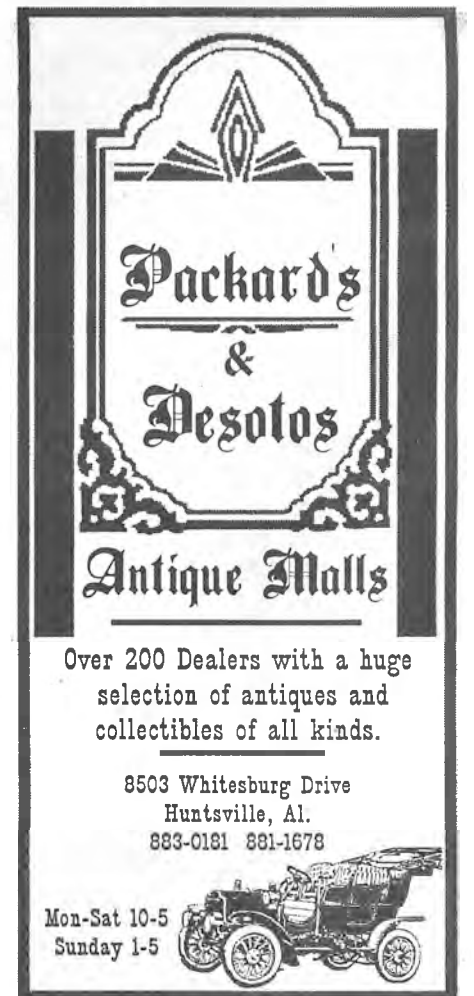
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