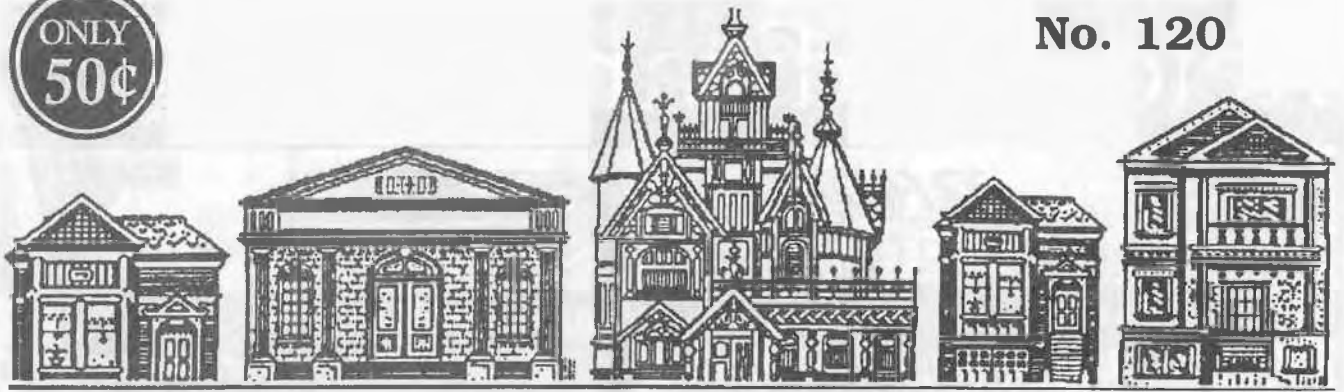


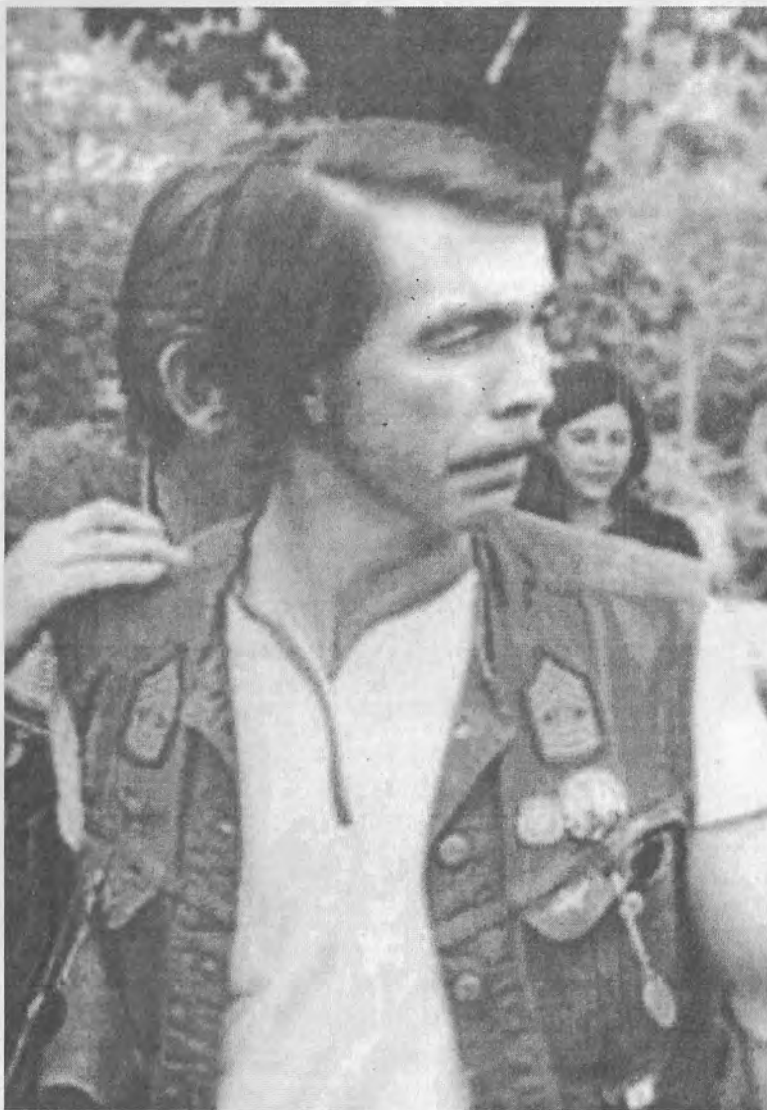
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## Dea Thomas

He rode his motorcycle fast and hard and partied the same way. He had a cocky attitude, a beautiful wife and was a brilliant attorney.

In 1964, he was elected as the Madison County District Attorney. Many people were appalled to see a “motorcycle hoodlum” in charge of the D.A.’s office. Almost immediately lines were drawn between his supporters and people who wanted him out of office.

The controversial District Attorney, Dea Thomas, was about to become even more controversial.

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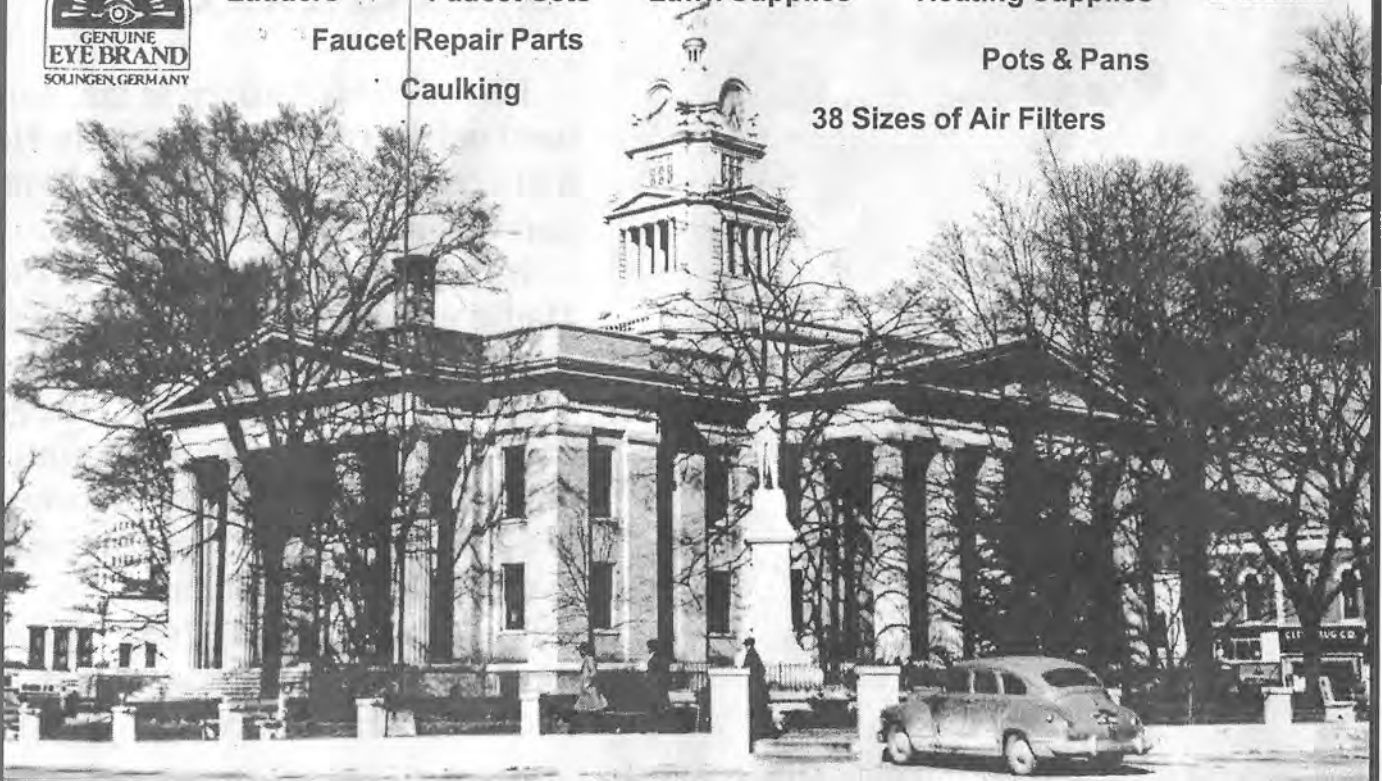
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# Dea Thomas

In the late fall of 1966, Madison County Sheriff Jerry Crabtree summoned representatives of the media to the county jail for an impromptu press conference. After waiting for the reporters to get settled, Crabtree strode rapidly to the front of the room.

Without any preamble, and reading from notes in his hand, Crabtree announced that a week earlier he had been asked to attend a meeting at the county jail with Dea Thomas, the District Attorney. At that meeting Crabtree had witnessed Lloyd Cummings, a local bail bondsman, signing a statement confirming that he had paid bribes to an Assistant D.A. to get charges against his clients dropped. Also attending the meeting were Chief Deputy Bulldog Daniels and two other bail bondsmen.

Crabtree said he had waited before revealing the meeting because he had been told by Dea Thomas that the case was going to be presented to the Grand Jury. When nothing happened, he had decided to make the facts public rather than wait and have the

Sheriff's Department involved in a possible scandal.

The news hit Huntsville like a bombshell. Before it was over, the scandal would reach all the way to Montgomery, reputations would be destroyed, elected officials would be indicted and the controversial District Attorney, Dea Thomas, would become even more controversial.

David "Dea" Lawson Thomas was born in 1937 in the small farming community of Monrovia, the son of Dea Theodore Thomas and Mary Lee Wall. The family farm had a store, gristmill, and sawmill, along with the cotton fields that provided much of the income. Thomas grew up working on the farm and always had fond memories of it.

While still in junior high school, Thomas became fascinated by motorcycles. When he approached his father about buying one, the elder Thomas tried to discourage him. Rather than saying "No" outright, his father compromised, saying he would let Dea have an acre of land for his own use. If he would cultivate the acre, plant the seeds, harvest the crop and sell it, and if he kept his grades up, he could use the profits to purchase a motorcycle.

If the elder Thomas had thought that would put an end to it, his son had other ideas. Working before school, after school and



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every weekend, the youngster plowed, pulled weeds and hauled water. That fall, after the crop was sold, Dea Thomas became the proud owner of a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

For better or worse, from that day on, motorcycles would always be a large part of the legend of Dea Thomas.

After high school Thomas attended the University of Alabama where he received his B.A. degree. During this time he was contacted by a political organization and became involved in a secretive military operation in the Caribbean. Much of this operation is still shrouded in a cloak of mystery.

When the operation ended, Thomas attended law school and passed his bar exam. Returning to Huntsville, he went to work with Tom Younger, a prominent local attorney.

The 1960s were a time of wild exuberance for Huntsville. The city was growing by leaps and bounds and there seemed to be no limit to its prosperity. It was a time of happy hours every night and parties every week. It was a time to enjoy life, and no one enjoyed life more than Dea Thomas.

It was also the era of motorcycle gang movies, when anyone who rode a motorcycle or wore a leather jacket was considered the reincarnate of the Hell's Angels.

"Dea Thomas didn't care," re-

membered a friend. "He was full of confidence, had a beautiful wife, was a brilliant attorney and didn't give a damn what people thought!"

Thomas quickly became one of the most well-known and colorful attorneys in Huntsville. Almost everyone had stories about seeing him race through town at breakneck speeds on a loud motorcycle, and then changing jackets as he rushed into the courtroom. There were also stories of Thomas carousing at local nightclubs and speeding down the Parkway while standing upright on his motorcycle with a bottle of liquor in one hand.

"Regardless of what people thought," says Fred Simpson, "he was one of the best prepared attorneys I have ever seen. I've seen him enter a courtroom with nothing but a yellow memo pad and give a presentation from memory that would leave the other attorneys in awe."

Despite his detractors, he was elected to the office of District Attorney in 1964. Many people were appalled to see a "motorcycle hoodlum" in charge of the D.A.'s office. Almost immediately lines were drawn between his supporters and people who wanted him out of office.

In the summer of 1966, according to testimony later given in court, Thomas began hearing rumors about bail bondsmen pay-

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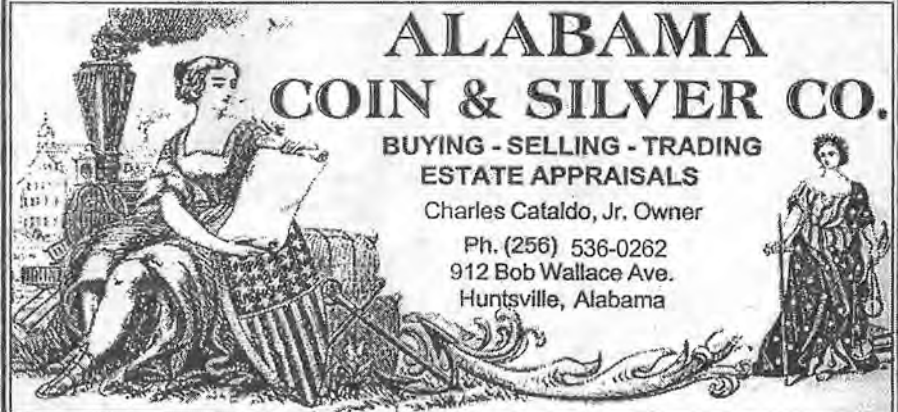
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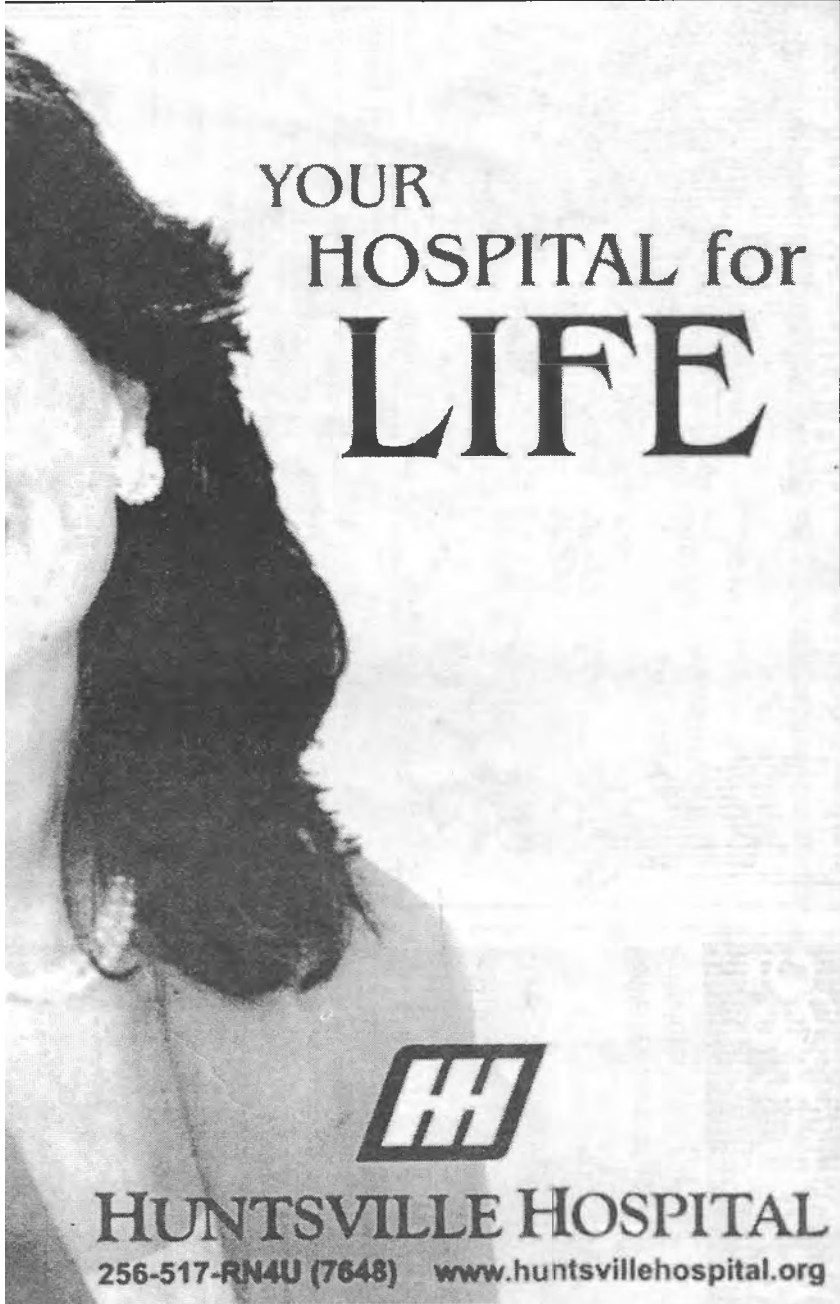
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ing bribes to get cases dismissed. At first he dismissed the allegations, but later received information from Larry Noblett, a local attorney, that caused him to suspect that Lloyd Cummings, of B&C Bonding Company, was in fact bribing someone in the District Attorney's office.

Along with Sheriff Crabtree, Bulldog Daniels and Clarence Berry, Cummings' partner in the bail bond company, as witnesses, Thomas confronted Cummings with the bribery allegations in a hastily called meeting at the county jail. Cummings, although protesting that some of the bribe amounts were not correct, signed a statement saying he had paid bribes to an Assistant D.A.

The meeting broke up with Sheriff Crabtree believing the statement would be presented to the Grand Jury in the next day or

so.

The following week Crabtree held a press conference at which he released the details of the statement signed by Cummings. When the media learned that Thomas had had the information for a week without presenting it to the Grand Jury, it created a furor.

Some people said that Thomas had not presented the case because he was still investigating it. Others claimed he simply did not believe that the Assistant D.A., a close friend, could have been involved.

Almost immediately a special investigation was called for and Bill Baxley, a 26 year-old District Attorney from Dothan, Alabama was placed in charge. Special investigators from the State Attorney General's office visited Huntsville to take statements and go over the evidence.

During this time Thomas appeared to be totally unconcerned. Tales of his exploits with motorcycles and partying seemed to grow even more outrageous as they were whispered from one person to another.

"It seemed as if Dea was thumbing his nose at the system," recalled one longtime courthouse observer, "and it made a lot of people mad. People were used to a D.A. who kissed babies and attended tea parties. Dea wasn't about to attend a tea party unless,

perhaps, someone put a little Jack Daniels in the tea cup."

After months of investigation the Grand Jury made its report. The results were different than

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anyone had ever imagined.

Lloyd Cummings, the bail bondsman who claimed to have made pay-offs to an Assistant D.A., had changed his story. Now, he was claiming to have paid the bribes directly to Dea Thomas.

Dea Thomas was indicted on 24 different counts, ranging from bribery, embezzlement and defamation of character. The Grand Jury also ordered that impeachment proceedings be held and that Thomas be removed from office if found guilty. In effect, this meant Thomas could be tried twice for the same charges - once as a criminal case and next for impeachment.

Baxley, like many other zealous prosecutors, had chosen to use the "shotgun" approach - "charge them with everything you can think of and hope some of them stick." Some of the charges seemed almost ridiculous. He was charged with carrying a gun without a permit although he had a Deputy Sheriff's card authorizing him to carry a gun. He was charged with not destroying confiscated weapons although he was following standard practice. No weapons had been destroyed by a District Attorney in almost a quarter century.

Still, Dea Thomas, the flamboyant and colorful District Attorney, was suspended from office pending outcome of the cases.

Many people claimed the indictments were a cover-up for Cummings who had helped lead the local political campaign for the attorney general. As proof, they pointed to the persistent rumors alleging that Cummings had made a deal with the prosecution in exchange for his staying out of jail.

The prosecution vehemently denied that any deal had been made with Cummings.

Thomas was able to get 13 of

the 24 counts dismissed at a preliminary hearing. The other charges were to be tried separately, but as an indication of what was to come, Baxley refused to say which cases would be prosecuted first. Thomas' lawyers replied that it would be "humanly impossible to defend Thomas without knowing the order in which they were to be presented."

The prosecution was literally expecting Thomas to appear in court each day without knowing what he was going to be tried for that day!

On June 24, 1968 the trial began. Much of the first day was taken up by legal sparring between the opposing attorneys. At the end of the day, to no one's surprise, the defense asked that the trial be postponed for two months to allow them more time to prepare. The prosecution quickly agreed.

Two days later, in a move that shocked many observers, the State Attorney General filed pa-

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pers to begin impeachment proceedings against Thomas. This meant that Thomas had to stand trial for the same offenses he was charged with in the criminal cases, and win or lose, he could still be tried again for the same offenses.

The move infuriated Thomas and his lawyers. Thomas charged that a deal had been made with Baxley to withhold impeachment proceedings until after the criminal trial. Some lawyers said this was a smart move by Baxley as the burden of proof for impeachment was assumed not to be as high as a criminal case. Also, judges would render the verdict rather than a jury, who might be swayed by the personable young D.A.

A short while later the criminal cases were postponed indefinitely pending outcome of the impeachment hearing.

Complicating the case even farther were facts revealed about a secret deal the state had made. In testimony taken in the Judge's chambers, Baxley was asked if the state had offered Cummings any inducement to testify.

Baxley replied no.

Further questioning, however, brought out the point that the state had told Cummings' attorney that

they would not send him to prison if he agreed to cooperate. Baxley argued the deal was between the state and Cummings' attorney and that Cumming had no knowledge of it.

Apparently, no one saw any reason to tell the state's star witness, Cummings, that he was being given a get-out-of-jail-free card for cooperating.

On Oct. 21 the impeachment hearings began before the Alabama Supreme Court. The state opened its case with testimony attempting to show that Thomas had embezzled money from a "bad check" fund in the D.A.'s office. This fund was set up to collect restitution from bad checks and to reimburse the victims.

The defense countered the allegations with proof that the victims had indeed been paid.

Next on the stand was Lloyd Cummings who testified that he had paid Thomas between \$2,000 and \$3,000 not to prosecute specific cases. A parade of witnesses followed whom all offered testimony indicating that they had indeed paid money to Cummings to have him use his influence to get their cases dropped. No one, however, was able to connect Thomas with the money.

Ed Greene, an assistant dis-

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district attorney, offered testimony that it was he who had dismissed a case Thomas had been accused of fixing.

When defense witnesses were called, Baxley attempted to attack Thomas' character through a series of questions.

Baxley asked one witness if he had ever heard that Thomas was the leader of a motorcycle rat pack. This was followed by questions inferring that Thomas ran around with 15 and 16 year old girls on his motorcycle. He asked the same witness if he had heard about a \$5,000 IOU signed by Thomas that was found in the personal effects of Marvin Rucker after Rucker's arrest on gambling charges.

Another witness caused a loud burst of laughter in the courtroom when he testified the only thing he ever heard bad about Thomas was what he read in the newspapers.

After a long grueling week of testimony and mountains of evidence, both sides rested their case. Most people assumed the judges would take at least several days to render a verdict.

Within hours, however, the verdict was in. By a vote of 4-3 Dea Thomas had been acquitted. Several months later, after intense legal wrangling on both sides, the state dropped the criminal charges. Thomas once again assumed the duties of District Attorney. The case had left him more than \$20,000 in debt from legal fees.

Huntsville was bitterly divided on the verdict. Many claimed he had been vindicated while others insisted he still needed to be removed from office because of his life-style.

"Dea had made a lot of enemies during the trial but unfortunately", said one observer, "his worst enemy was himself."

Less than three months later, Thomas was involved in a celebra-

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tion at the courthouse for several young men who had just passed the bar. Liquor was consumed, the party became boisterous and at some point someone suggested getting some fresh air. Almost immediately someone opened a window and the party moved to the 3rd floor ledge of the courthouse. A liquor bottle was dropped and someone called the police to complain.

That same evening, at about midnight, deputies arrested Thomas at his Blossomwood home on a "disturbing the peace" charge. Thomas said later he thought the whole thing was a joke. He could not imagine someone going to such great lengths to get someone arrested for disturbing the peace.

Within days a full-scale investigation was underway and Dea Thomas was once again suspended from office pending the outcome. More than 25 witnesses were called to give testimony about the party. Daily editorials began appearing in the morning newspapers calling for Thomas to be removed from office.

On April 30, 1969 the Grand Jury presented its report. It rec-

ommended that Dea Thomas be removed from office "because of intemperance..." and cited 16 times when he was alleged to have been drunk and disorderly. The charges, some of which dated back over two years, included being drunk at the State National Bank, Russel Erskine Hotel, Cotton Club, Hickory House, the Pub Club, Madison County Coliseum, the Jaycees Fair and the Huntsville Emergency Room. Charges of operating a motorcycle while intoxicated were also thrown in for good measure.

"They had people running all over town asking bar patrons if they had ever seen Dea with a drink," said an associate. "It had gotten to a point where everyone who had ever had a drink with him was afraid they'd be called



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before the Grand Jury.”

Once again he was faced with a trial, and if found guilty, would be removed from office, and if he survived that and lost the impeachment case, he would still be removed.

As if that were not enough, the Madison County Bar Association began an investigation that, if he lost, would result in his disbarment which would mean automatic removal from office.

“No one really wanted to see Dea prosecuted,” remembered one attorney. “The whole thing was about two misdemeanor charges where he could have been fined maybe a hundred dollars. But he just was not what some people wanted as a D.A. and he refused to change.”

For the first time Thomas began to have doubts about being District Attorney. His children had become teenagers by this time and his wife had filed for divorce.

One observer recalled, “Dea just got tired of playing the game. He realized there was no way he could win.”

On a spring Saturday morning, while Thomas and his son were loading a motorcycle to go to a race in Athens, a Western Union telegram arrived from Governor Albert Brewer accepting his resignation.

Needless to say, all charges were dropped after Thomas resigned.

Dea Thomas continues to practice law today. He is widely recognized, and respected, as one of the best legal minds in the state of Alabama. Although he still owns a motorcycle, he drives a red Corvette most of the time now. The speedometer reads 200 miles an hour.



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6. Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa, and Tennessee were each more heavily populated than California. With a mere 1.4 million residents, California was only the 21st most populous state in the Union.
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8. The average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents an hour.
9. The average U.S. worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year.
10. A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2,000 per year, a dentist \$2,500 per year, a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year and a

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11. More than 95 percent of all births in the U.S. took place at home.
12. Ninety percent of all U.S. physicians had no college education. Instead, they attended medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and by the government as "substandard."
13. Sugar cost four cents a pound. Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen. Coffee cost fifteen cents a pound.
14. Most women only washed their hair once a month and they used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.
15. Canada passed a law prohibiting poor people from entering the country for any reason.
16. The five leading causes of death in the US were: A. Pneumonia and influenza B. Tuberculosis C. Diarrhea D. Heart disease E. Stroke



17. The American flag had 45 stars. Arizona, Okla-

homa, New Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska hadn't been admitted to the Union yet.

## HELP

**Harrison Brothers Hardware** is in desperate need of updating and repair, to keep it from closing down. This hardware and gift shop downtown is one of Alabama's oldest continually-running business since 1897. **Bud Cramer** was good enough to get the building designated to receive government help through the "Save America's Treasures." There will be matching funds made available to the store only if we can raise \$175,000 locally. Any donation is tax-deductible. The Historic Huntsville Foundation needs our help - we don't want to lose it!

## HOMEOWNERS

LOAN AMOUNT	MONTHLY PYMT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase</li> <li>• Refinancing</li> <li>• Debt Consolidation</li> <li> </li> <li>• Construction</li> </ul>
\$100,000.00	\$435.20	
\$200,000.00	\$870.41	
\$300,000.00	\$1305.61	

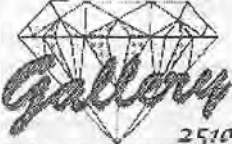
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# Robert Johnson & Fred Stevens Charged with Murder

## Farmer Killed While Getting Water From Well

1902 Huntsville newspaper

News of the killing of John Byrd, a farmer, by Robert Johnson and Fred Stevens, reached the city from the Monrovia precinct Monday morning. The two men came to the city after the killing and surrendered to Sheriff Rodgers, who had no warrant for them at the time. The sheriff told them to appear for preliminary trial before Judge Stewart in the early afternoon, which they did.

It seems that Byrd has for sometime past been getting water from a well on Johnson's place and last Saturday afternoon when Byrd's boy went for the water, Johnson told him that he could get no more supply as the well was getting low and it was liable at any time to go dry. The boy returned home and told his father what Johnson had said. Byrd then got a bucket and a double-barrel shotgun and said that he would go and get the water anyhow as he must have it. He was accompanied by his wife, son, father and two or three others.

Johnson and his brother-in-

law, Stevens, saw the party coming and armed themselves. When Byrd came within hailing distance they told him he must not come to the well. Byrd came on anyway and leveled his gun at the two men who were standing in the door of Johnson's home. Johnson opened fire with a pistol, none of the bullets taking effect. Stevens then fired the shot gun and Byrd fell immediately dead, his chest riddled with shot. Some of the shot struck Mrs. Byrd in the arm and badly wounded her. Byrd was shot twice.

Warrants for arrest of Johnson and Stevens were sworn out by the dead man's father and a preliminary trial was held before Squire David Phillips, who held the men for further investigation.

Their regular preliminary hearing was held by Probate Judge Steward Monday afternoon and Judge

Steward bound the defendants over to await the action of the grand jury. Their bonds were fixed at \$1,000 and were made easily.

All of the parties to the tragedy are well known in the Monrovia neighborhood. They have many relatives in that locality and were all known as peaceable citizens.

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## Elevator Scalps Mill Worker

*from 1901 newspaper*

Walter Bradford, a weaver employed in the Merrimack Mills, was probably fatally injured yesterday afternoon by allowing the elevator to descend on his head. The young man was looking down the elevator shaft and did not see the car descend from above. The floor of the car caught his head on the side and his scalp was almost torn off. The accident was a horrible one and Bradford is not expected to live.

## Deputy Assaulted In Gambling House

*from 1879 newspaper*

Clarence Jamar, formerly a deputy sheriff, was assaulted in a gambling house on Jefferson Street last night and beaten by four men in the employ of the house.

The incident started over a rigged faro game which the house has had in operation for some time.

The gambling house which has been in operation day and night has now been closed.

## Coffee Liqueur

4 cups sugar  
6 cups very strong coffee  
1/2 vanilla bean  
1 fifth moonshine  
1 tablespoon Hershey's chocolate sauce

Mix sugar into the coffee, bring to rolling boil, turn off heat and let cool.

Chop vanilla bean very small, keep little seeds. Place pieces in bottom of large glass jar and pour in moonshine.

Add cooled sugar/coffee mixture and chocolate, stir and cover container, let mixture rest for a month. Strain twice through cheesecloth. This will keep for several months in the pantry.



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# Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

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



For those of you who remember **LeeAnn Lancaster** from the old Fogcutter and Bennigan days (1980) when she worked as waitress and bartender - you will be happy to know she's now the Manager at Furniture Factory. That girl has people that follow her around from one establishment to the other because they like her so much!

Congratulations to our friend **Lee Sentell** whom **Governor Riley** recently appointed to the State Tourism Convention and Visitor's Bureau in Montgomery. We'll sure miss you around here, but that sounds like a challenging and exciting job!

We want to say a big hello to a long-time resident of Huntsville - **Stephen Bzdell, Sr.** He hurt his back a while ago and is recuperating at his son **Joe's** home. Huntsville resident **John Bzdell** is Joe's identical twin and they

Well, here I am with snow on the ground and ice on the sidewalks, trying to write up this month's column for you. Boy is it COLD! I called the Comcast Weather Channel and it showed 3 degrees this morning! I hope you all are well and healthy, and are staying off that ice. A lot has happened this past month.

The Picture of the Month was local politician **Roger Jones**, and very hard to guess. I must have had hundreds of calls, with guesses ranging from **Don Siegelman**, to **Ed Starnes**, to **J. R. Brooks**. Finally a nice young man called - **Larry Fowler** - with the correct guess. Larry, come in and claim your country ham breakfast!

One of my dearest friends I've ever had in my life, **June Young**, lost her mother this month. It was such a sad good-bye. **Mrs. Barker** was a sweet, genuine lady who loved her family so much. Our sympathy goes to June and Ernie and Connie and the chil-

dren. We love you all very much.

Do you remember **Pam Mitchell**, who worked in the D.A.'s office and whom we lost to cancer? Pam's sister and brother-in-law, **Saundra** and **Scott Harper**, stopped by to see me and wanted to pass along their hello's to all of their friends in this area.

**Sonny Osborne** had a big birthday recently. He hadn't been feeling well lately, but his sister, **Mrs. Emma Adair**, brought him here for breakfast and nothing was wrong with his appetite - he had a big country ham breakfast! It was so good to see him.

**Mr. Ray Pearman** had surgery recently in Nashville at St. Thomas Hospital. We sure hope you are doing OK. Our friend **Pat Colson's** Dad has been in the hospital for about a month - Pat we love you and pray for you and **Mr. Smith** every day. Hello to **Sue Landman** who had surgery recently. I know you'll be OK because **Larry** is taking good care of you. We love you both.

## Photo of The Month

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

Hint: Well known around the courthouse.



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Sandra Steele, President

are so proud of their Dad. When you get to feeling better, Mr. Bzdell - I want to see you in here for a good country breakfast!

Congratulations to **Kay Ivey**. I received an invitation to her oath of office as State Treasurer, as well as a beautiful inaugural pin with her name and year on it. Thanks Kay and I wish you best of luck! Also congratulations to my friend **Lucy Baxley**. Love you lots! Also, we wish **Wayland Cooley** a nice retirement - **Fran** moved into the Tax Assessor's office early and we know she's a very smart lady who will do a great job.

I had the pleasure of attending **Blake Dorning's** oath of office and also **Billy Bell's** investiture. They were both so memorable and many people attended both. Blake's ceremony took place at the courthouse with **Judge Little** doing the honors. Blake is one of the finest young men I've ever had the pleasure to meet. Our **ex-Sheriff Patterson** and **Joe Whisenant** sure said some great things about Blake and what a hard worker he is. Billy's ceremony was at the First United Methodist Church worship center and what a crowd there was, along with three ministers! I know Billy will do a good job, and he wants so much good for Huntsville! Judge Little did the honors at Billy's ceremony as well - he and the head of the Bar Association both spoke. Good luck Billy with your plans for the Family Court.

A week ago Billy brought a crowd here to eat and they had a great time. In the party were his mother - **Mrs. Dot Summerlin**, his uncle and aunt **Bill** and **Elvia Young** from Jasper, Ga. Also his friends

**Jimmy and Charlene Wood**, wife **Monica** and daughter **Amanda**. They ate tons and had a fun time.

As you all know our new Governor is **Bob Riley**. I think he will be great for Alabama. I watched the inauguration and really enjoyed what he had to say and how sincere he was - he truly loves our state and wants the best for it. We will all pray for you and your staff so that you can accomplish your goals of uniting Alabama and working together. I must mention **Mrs. Patty** - you looked absolutely beautiful in that blue suit! We know you have a hard time ahead of you and will all be pulling for you.

**Judge Little** and his **Maggie** have a new grand baby - another beautiful girl. **Caroline**, the oldest granddaughter, came with her grandparents to breakfast and she sure is adorable too!

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

*Aunt Summerlin*

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## Snacks For Your Sweetie

### Bacon and Water Chestnut Wraps

1 can whole water chestnuts,  
cut in half

1 lb. bacon  
1/2 c. sugar  
1 c. ketchup

Cut bacon slices into thirds, wrap each piece of bacon around each half of water chestnut. Secure with toothpicks. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes. Drain the fat.

Mix sugar and ketchup in baking dish, heat slowly til sugar dissolves. Add the drained wraps to the ketchup mixture, serve immediately.

### Tortilla Appetizers

1 6-oz. can pitted ripe olives,  
drained and chopped

1 4-oz. can chopped green  
chilies, drained

1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese,  
softened

1 c. sour cream

1/2 c. chopped onion

5 10-inch flour tortillas  
Snipped fresh parsley  
Chopped cilantro  
Salsa

Combine all ingredients except tortillas, parsley, cilantro and salsa. Blend well. Divide evenly among tortillas and spread to edges. Roll up, wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate several hours or overnight. When ready to serve, cut rolls into 1/2 inch slices. Arrange the slices, cut side down, on serving platter. Sprinkle with snipped parsley and cilantro. Serve with salsa.

### Maryland Crab Cakes

1 lb. regular crabmeat

1/2 c. bread crumbs

1 egg, beaten

5 t. mayonnaise

1 T. parsley, chopped fine

2 t. Worcestershire sauce

1 t. prepared mustard

1 t. salt

1/4 t. white pepper

Mix all ingredients, form into small (3" diameter) flat cakes.

Deep fry at 350 degrees for 2 or 3 minutes or broil til golden brown. This will make 6 cakes.

### Good Salsa Recipe

2 cans Ro-Tel tomatoes with  
diced green chilies

2 cans diced tomatoes

1 jar chopped jalapenos

Fresh cilantro, chopped

Garlic salt (or crush a garlic  
clove and add salt)

Add and mix tomatoes in food processor. Add lots of cilantro. Add garlic salt, chop up jalapenos and add them to suit your hot register. Optional - can add a squirt of lemon or lime juice, or a medium sweet onion, chopped.

### Savory Rice Dish

Melt 1 stick butter in a skillet and 1 cup of rice. Simmer 7 minutes. Stir once or twice. Pour rice in casserole dish, add a package of onion soup and a can of Beef consomme. Bake covered at 350 degrees for an hour and 15 minutes. This is especially good with ham.

### Red Beans and Sausage

1 lb. red beans, dried

1 large onion, diced

1 clove garlic, diced

1 T. parsley flakes

Celery

1 lb. smoked or hot sausage

3 T. butter

## The Book Legger



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2 T. Cajun spice

Rinse your beans, pick over them and discard stones. Fill a large pot with beans and water. Let boil for an hour, adding water as needed. Add seasonings and spices. Let beans cook til soft. Add meats and butter, cook on low heat til creamy. Serve over white rice.

### Broccoli Casserole

1 c. mayonnaise

½ c. chopped onion

1 can Cream of Mushroom soup (undiluted)

1 c. shredded Cheddar cheese

2 pkg. frozen chopped broccoli

Saltine crackers

Cook the broccoli according to package directions. Mix mayonnaise, onions, soup and cheese. After broccoli is cooked, drain any remaining water. Alternate the following layers into a baking dish - ½ of the broccoli, followed by ½ of the mayonnaise mixture. Repeat once more. Crumble saltines on top of the casserole and add a sprinkling of cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes and the top of the casserole is brown.

### Chicken & Cheese

4 boneless chicken breasts

4 slices Provolone cheese

1 tomato, chopped

1 bunch green onions, chopped

3 t. Worcestershire sauce

1 T. soy sauce

½ g. garlic

Combine the last 3 ingredients as a marinade. Put the chicken breasts in, let marinate for 2 hours. Grill or saute the chicken til done. Melt the cheese over tops of breasts. Garnish with chopped tomato and green onions. Good with a side of sour cream.

### Apricot Coconut Balls

1 ½ c. dried apricots, ground

2 c. coconut

2/3 c. Eagle Brand Sweetened Condensed Milk

Combine ingredients and shape into balls. Roll in powdered sugar, if desired. Let balls stand til firm. Makes 32 balls.

### Sweet Potato Custard

2 c. cooked sweet potatoes, mixed with electric mixer

1 c. sugar

1 c. milk

3 eggs

6 T. melted butter

½ t. lemon flavor or ginger

½ t. allspice

½ t. cinnamon

Mix all ingredients well. Pour into 2 (9-inch) unbaked pie shells and bake at 350 degrees til done, about an hour.



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# It Didn't Work, Your Honor

Huntsville attorney Dea Thomas was in court trying to convince the judge that his client deserved probation.

The judge, Danny Banks, listened to the arguments and then looked at the paper work on the prisoner. Much to his dismay, the man had a long rap sheet and had spent much time in jail. Judge Banks was amazed that Thomas would have the audacity to ask for lenient treatment for someone who was such an obvious risk.

"Mr. Thomas," the judge asked, "How can you justify asking for this man to be placed on probation?"

"Your Honor," Thomas replied

with a straight face, "Every other time my client has appeared in court before this he has been sent to jail and so far that has not seemed to work...."

## New Merchandise For Low Prices

We have just received and are now opening in our brick house (next door below our old stand at present occupied by Messrs. Moore and Jones) an assortment of goods which we are determined to sell very low, for fall pay - we will barter for all kind of homespun, beeswax and tallow. James White's iron works are now in complete operation & by the first rise of the Holstein and Tennessee rivers, we shall receive a large quantity of iron and castings and will always keep a constant supply on hand.

White and Read, Huntsville, July 14, 1817.



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# A Romance on Monte Sano

from 1897 newspaper

Among the visitors at the famed Monte Sano Hotel above the town of Huntsville was James S. Porter, a young man whose wealthy parents lived in Birmingham. Porter had been roughing it on the mountain since the latter part of May. One of the first objects to catch his eye was a mountain lass, who lived two miles or more from the hotel.

The young people became acquainted casually, but the girl's fair cheeks and ankles were too much for Porter, and he visited the home of his sweetheart time and again.

Unfortunately for him, Porter's knowledge in games led the girl's mother, an old lady whose Bible and spectacles were her Sunday companions year in and year out, to suspect that he was a gambler. The girl refused to believe anything was bad of Porter, and in the face of her mother's opposition, she continued to receive her lover's attentions.

Last week she agreed to quit her home and to go with Porter to accompany him to Boston as his wife. They left the girl's house together, on foot, and took a wagon a quarter of a mile down the road. When a few minutes after they had started, the bride's father missed his daughter, he set out in hot haste and in anger to stop the runaways.

He came upon them at a point where the road was steep and rocky, and when they whipped up their horses, he gave his animal such a furious cut that he was thrown from his wagon down the mountain-side.

The mad horse ran past the lovers, and they knew that their pursuer had been injured. They went back, found him, took him home and restored him to consciousness.

Subsequently, the young man won the confidence of the mountaineer couple and they gave their consent to the marriage

**Long ago, cursing and beating a stick into the ground was called witch craft. Today, it's called golf.**

Glenn Brooks

## Famous Birthdays

Feb. 1 - Clark Gable  
Feb. 2 - Farrah Fawcett  
Feb. 3 - James Michener  
Feb. 4 - Charles Lindbergh  
Feb. 7 - Garth Brooks  
Feb. 10 - Lon Chaney  
Feb. 12 - Arsenio Hall  
Feb. 15 - Jane Seymour  
Feb. 19 - Smokey Robinson  
Feb. 22 - George Washington  
Feb. 24 - Steven Jobs  
Feb. 27 - Elizabeth Taylor

## Welcome Back! Mollie Teal's 'in the Alley'

Legend has it that one of Huntsville's most famous and colorful Madams - Miss Mollie Teal - once requested as a stipulation to the City of Huntsville, that if they decided to make a hospital of her house, which she was to donate to the city, a sign would be hung over the front door reading 'WELCOME BACK'. And while no one knows for sure if this sign was ever displayed as requested, such a sign is proudly displayed in the beautiful downtown district where the all new Mollie Teal's is located.

**Mollie Teal's 'in the Alley'** is now open and has instantaneously become recognized as Huntsville 'best kept secret' not to mention its regular clientele promoting its unique metropolitan 'Alley' appearance and distinguished cozy interior as the quintessential pub.

While **Mollie Teal's 'in the Alley'** has long been known as a traditional 'Meet & Greet' venue, that much has not changed. However, with upgrades come new props and Mollie Teal's certainly has that covered. Included in the new venue are such things as a 24 foot ceiling, antique hand rail surrounding the second story balcony, the city's largest Import Draft selection, the city's largest showcase of publicly displayed 'OLD HUNTSVILLE' photographs, nightly promotions such as 'BOSS Bartending' and best of all... a flair for unique entertainment such as 'Mollie's Ivory Cats' Dueling Piano show - **Two Guys, Two Pianos, TWO THE EXTREME!** Show Times: Every Thursday and Friday at 9pm.

**Mollie Teal's 'in the Alley'** is located in the alleyway directly behind the Jazz Factory. Just look for the 2-story 'RED' building (simply a coincidence) at the end of the deep green awning and you will have found the best kept secret in the city! For more information, please contact us at 256-512-5858.



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Dueling Piano Show  
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# Early History Of Huntsville

## "Canal Building"

by Brig. Gen. E. C. Betts and published in 1909

The enterprise of the inhabitants of the town and county was not wholly consumed with this business of establishing highways; for the citizens of Huntsville were concerned about providing the community with navigation at its very door, thereby fixing its enduring commercial supremacy. The newspapers of that day display the monumental effort to "bring the mountain to Mohammed," to bring the Tennessee river commerce to her gates. Confidence in the success of the lock and dam project of the Indian Creek Navigation Company was not confined to a few but was shared by all alike. Many were the wealthy and prominent men who showed "their faith by their works," giving liberally of their time and means. Chiefest among these was Dr. Thomas Fearn, some of whose worthy descendants yet live in Madison county. To his indefatigable energies was mainly due the realization of this dream. In latter years it was known as "Fearn Canal."

The plan was to render navigable by a series of locks and dams, the Big Spring branch or creek to its confluence with

Price's Fork of Indian creek, and the latter stream, from that point to where it flows into the Tennessee river at Triana. The first positive action toward the attainment of this end was taken when, on December 21, 1820, "Indian Creek Navigation Company" was chartered by act of the Legislature to open books for subscription to stock in the corporation. Section seven of this act further provided: "That said corporation should have power and authority to open and improve the navigation of Indian creek, in Madison county, from the spring at Huntsville to the town of Triana, at the mouth of said creek, by removing the obstructions therein, opening canal or canals, or such other mode or way as they may deem expedient." To this end powers of eminent domain were conferred upon the company. The charges to be made were regulated by section 11, which declared "that whenever said creek should be rendered navigable for boats drawing ten inches of water, and so long as said creek shall be left thus navigable, it shall be lawful for said corporation to demand and receive toll on all boats navigating

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the same between said towns of Huntsville and Triana, at the following rates: Two dollars for every ton of freight which said boat carries, provided that toll shall not be collected on boats running between Prout's Mill and Triana."

The company had no "authorized capital;" the only limitation upon its right to issue stock was that it should be "in shares of fifty dollars each." The right to increase the capital stock, existing at any time, appears to have remained with the directors, five in number; of whom one was to be president of the Company. However, the act did provide "that as soon as the sum of \$10,000.00 shall have been subscribed, notice thereof shall be given by the commissioners," named heretofore; after which the subscribers were to proceed to the details of organization.

The matter of financing the enterprise appears to have resolved itself into the mere detail of offering the investing public an opportunity of subscribing for

stock, as a meeting was held on Wednesday, the 16th day of April, 1821, at which directors of the company were elected.

Work of construction was commenced without delay, and pressed with all due haste. Promising indeed, must have seemed the future, and general was the satisfaction when it became known that the "work of the Indian Creek Navigation Company is progressing rapidly and the canal will be ready for use next season."

The company reckoned without its host, for during the next year public announcement was made that "Dr. Thomas Fearn, President, is receiving bids for the unfinished half." The work of completing the canal extended over a period of time to the limits of which the public concern and enthusiasm could not endure.

During the next few years the doubtful success of the plan, even ultimately, is reflected in the general lack of interest in the progress of the work. From all accounts it seems to have been deserted by all its friends, except Thomas and George Fearn, who remained steadfast in their fidelity to the original purpose until their efforts were crowned with a laudable success.

Five years later, in 1827, though not perfected, freight was being transported through the canal, as appears from the following advertisement in the (Huntsville)

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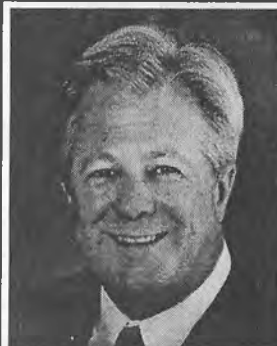


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Southern Advocate, of January 27 1827:

"The Indian Creek Navigation Company is prepared to ship cotton to the Tennessee river. It is not completely finished, but will admit the passage of boats."

It is not unlikely that further development of the project would have been suspended at this point, but for the fact that a strong public sentiment favored the plan now being urged, to render the Tennessee navigable for large steamers, and all signs of the times seemed to insure success for the undertaking. At all events, work on the canal, which had by now come to be known as "Fearn's Canal," was continued by slow stages unto its complete and final perfection in 1831.

On the 5th of April, 1831, intense excitement prevailed throughout the community. This epoch-marking event, greeted by

assembled hosts, was embellished by the picturesque exhibition of two keel boats gliding up the canal and landing at the wharfs by the head of the Big Spring, where the cargo of supplies was discharged from one of them which had come from the river. These boats had a capacity of eighty to one hundred bales of cotton and fifty passengers. Loaded to "the guards," one of these pioneers proceeded on its return trip to the Tennessee, passing all locks, both coming and going, safely.

The feasibility of making navigable the Spring branch, having been demonstrated beyond conjecture, the public concern now interested itself in a plan to provide for the passage of large river steamers through the canal. Frequent and lengthy were the newspaper discussions of this form of waterway. Again, the Fearn's were

neither timid nor tardy in action, and the (Huntsville) Southern Advocate of July 7th, 1835, carries the following notice:

"On the 20th of July books will be opened by the Huntsville Canal; to render the stream navigable for large boats, at a cost of \$150,000.00 - Thos. and George Fearn."

What the success of this venture was, the author is unable to state, due to a total lack of information, which diligent effort did not render available. However, the tradition, that this effort was not a success is no doubt well founded. For it would seem evident that so pretentious a canal as contemplated would have left enduring signs of its accomplishment. None exist, even in the memory of the "oldest inhabitant."

Though "Fearn's Canal" is the only one which rendered service

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and achieved prominence, another such scheme to render Flint river navigable was undertaken, and a charter obtained from the Legislature. On December 20, 1820, one day before the Indian Creek Navigation Company was formed, it was provided by enactment that a body corporate, under the name and style of 'The Flint River Navigation Company,' for the improvement of navigation of Flint river, in Madison county, from Captain Scott's Mills (now Brownsboro), to the Tennessee river.

A chronicle of the times vouches for the statement that this company received liberal appropriations from the General Government, to aid its works; but ill fate attended the first efforts put forth so that the plan never matured.

Large trees grew in profusion on the banks of this stream. It was thought advisable to remove all growth and timber from near the water's edge; thereby preventing any possible hindrance to navigation, resulting from the falling of these trees into the water. So, accordingly, the company set about clearing the banks; felling those trees into the stream, with the fallacious hope that the force of the spring freshets would wash them out of the channel into the Tennessee. It was fortune's bitter irony, however, that these spring freshets which were considered by the company to be inadequate to the task of clearing the stream of

fallen trees after navigation had begun, were commensurately inadequate to this same task, before navigation was begun. So it was that the first work done was that of destruction rather than construction. History records the projected accomplishment of the Flint River Navigation Company's efforts with the ugly, yet appropriate, term "failure," spelled with a capital "F"

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- For rent - The Alberta Taylor residence on McClung Street. The house is handsomely furnished and possession can be given at once. Rent is reasonable - Mrs. E. E. Ezell

- West Holmes street concrete bridge is nearing completion. Its opening to public travel has already relieved the West Clinton St. congestion.

- Deputy Sheriff N. L. Pierce late yesterday arrested Ike Lee of Dallas Village on a charge of an assault with a knife.

- Mrs. E. Y. Miller, of West Clinton St. was notified yesterday of the death of her cousin, J. W. Gills at Dyersburg, Tennessee to which place she goes tonight and will come into possession of \$5K in cash left to her by her cousin in his will.

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

Street.

- It is a great pity that the Hotel Monte Sano will not be a reality this summer. Our people should come together and help complete the car line to Monte Sano, that being one of the necessary adjuncts to Huntsville's future success.

- R. Lee Penney, aged 46 years, died yesterday at 1:50 o'clock at his home on Madison Street after a short illness with a complication of disease. He was buried this afternoon, the funeral having been conducted from the residence at 2 o'clock by Rev. H. E. Rice and interment was in Maple Hill.

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# Valentine's Day

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It was believed in earlier days that if a young woman saw a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor. If she saw a sparrow, she would marry a poor man and be very happy. If she saw a goldfinch, she would marry a millionaire.

Another belief of ancient times was that on St. Valentine's Day and Eve, a young girl would even-

tually marry the first eligible male she met on this day. If a girl was curious and brave enough, she could conjure up the appearance of her future spouse by going to a graveyard on St. Valentine's Eve at midnight. She would then have to sing a certain chant and run around the church twelve times.

Valentine's Day and Mother's Day are the biggest holidays for giving flowers.

One of the earliest Valentine's Day gifts were candles.

The most common gifts are chocolates in heart-shaped boxes

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# Home Tips

by Liz

If you don't have a deep-fat frying thermometer, just drop a kernel of popcorn into the oil - when it pops, the oil is ready for frying.

Line your vegetable drawers in the refrigerator with paper towels - they will absorb moisture and cause the veges to last longer.

Coffee grinds rubbed between your hands will get rid of that garlic smell.

For quick frosting, after you have baked a batch of muffins, drop a couple of chocolate mints (like Andes) on top - they will melt in a moment.

Make a big batch of granola and freeze it in large Ziploc bags - take small bags with you to work or on trips to munch on and keep you from eating more fattening snacks.

To keep your cookies moist in the cookie jar, place a slice of apple on a piece of waxed paper inside the jar.

Spray on oil to your batters and very little with stick to them.

Soup too salty? Drop a raw potato into the pot, let cook and remove just before serving.

Count out loud to keep up with the number of cups you have added to a recipe.

If you often use chopped onion, keep it chopped in a Ziploc bag in the vegetable drawer of your fridge.

To make that great white cheese you find in Mexican restaurants, just get a block of white American Cheddar, add a bit of milk and garlic powder, a small can of chopped green chiles and a jalapeno pepper chopped for heat.

Sprinkling salt will keep snails away.

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CRISP MESCLUN LETTUCE, THINLY CUT GRILLED CHICKEN, CORN & BLACK BEAN SALSA, SPICY RED TORTILLA STRIPS, JICAMA, AND JULIENNE RED PEPPERS TOSSED IN BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE. 7.95

### CHICKEN PORTABELLO

AN 8 OZ MARINATED CHICKEN BREAST TOPPED WITH SAUTEED PORTABELLO MUSHROOMS AND A RICH BROWN DEMI-GLAZE. SERVED OVER A HEAPING BED OF CHIVE SMASHED POTATOES. 10.95

### SANTA FE CHICKEN

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### SHRIMP PIGNOLI PASTA

LARGE TENDER SHRIMP AND PENNE PASTA SAUTEED WITH PINE NUTS, ARTICHOKE HEARTS, FETA CHEESE, SWEET BASIL, SCALLIONS, GARLIC AND OLIVE OIL. FINISHED WITH DICED TOMATOES AND PARMESAN CHEESE. 14.25

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# Memories

by Newman Ward

When I was about 11 years old, I had an experience that turned out so badly that I will never forget it. I had watched Daddy crank and drive the model T Ford, and it seemed so simple, and easy enough, that I was sure that I could do it. I was home alone and the car was in the yard. I thought that if I cranked it, and drove down to the mill to show Daddy, that I would get praised, and a pat on the back. Boy, was I wrong. My pat on the back was a bit lower, and harder, and became several pats. This was the only spanking that I remember ever getting.

I remember being sick in bed with the croup, when I was 5 or 6. Daddy had to go to Birmingham on business, and when he came back he brought me a small electric train, the first one I had ever seen. I hopped out of bed, and like a miracle was cured of any croup, or sickness. What a happy day.

Back then a doctor's office visit cost \$2.00, and a house call was 3 or 4 dollars. I never went

to a dentist before I was in high school. In Merrimack, the mill company supplied what they called The Nurses Home, and Dr. Anderson, the dentist, Dr. Grote, the physician, and the two nurses who were there around the clock, would treat you for free, or almost nothing for employees and families, and the school teachers and pupils.

The mill also gave the use of three church buildings. The Company had horticulturists, Mr. Byrne, and his son, Harold, who beautified the village. Mr. Byrne also had contests at school, and would give out a subject every week, and the ones writing the best papers would win a half dollar, a fabulous sum. I always tried, and won some.

One evening, three or four of us kids (with idle minds) thought that if we greased the street car track with lard, as it came up a little rise of a couple of feet, that it would be fun to watch the car start up and then slide down. The car came around the bend, started up, and skidded down.

The motorman, Red Bradford, or Peter Sharp, or Mr. Rogers, evidently used to this, got out and with a little shovel scooped some dirt onto the rails and went merrily on. It wasn't as

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funny as we thought it would be, and after that we only put pennies on the track to flatten them.

One fast and easy way to ride toward town, or to Merrimack, was to hop on the end of a White Transfer Co. wagon. The big draft horses were always going at a trot, and most of the time the drivers wouldn't bother you. The wagons hauled bales of cotton from the warehouse to the mills.

Miss Mary Virginia McCormick was the biggest supporter of the West Huntsville Y.M.C.A. Sometimes she would be driven out to look over the 'Y' in her electric car. This was the only electric car that I have ever seen, and this was over 75 years ago. And sometimes Miss Selma Mitchell, of the ladies department of the 'Y,' would teach about 15 of us kids to march, and do a may-pole exercise, and we would go to Kildare, Miss McCormick's winter home, and perform for her.

The name, Kildare, was taken from her ancestral home in County Kildare, in Ireland.

When I worked at the 'Y' we used to go to the stables, or barn, at Kildare, and show movies every Monday night to the maintenance people. The stable was like the Mars Milky Way Farm, in Pulaski, Tennessee, and as clean as a pin. Mr. Baxter, who was in charge of the grounds and building upkeep, let me look inside the house once. To me it looked scary, with sheets over the furniture. I will never forget the massive, beautiful stairway.

Kildare was at the N.W. corner of Meridianville Pike and Oakwood. It must have been more than 15, or 20 acres, and probably worth well over a million dollars.

When Miss McCormick died, the property was auctioned off. My uncle, George Lehman, bought it for \$3,000, and I think that later it became apartments.

C.D. Lane published a small paper, the "Communi-

nity Builder," and it seemed to me that Charlie was usually negative on everything. Emory Pierce published the Huntsville Times, and lived in the "Glass Palace," out near 5 points. The exterior of his home was mostly glass, and very attractive.

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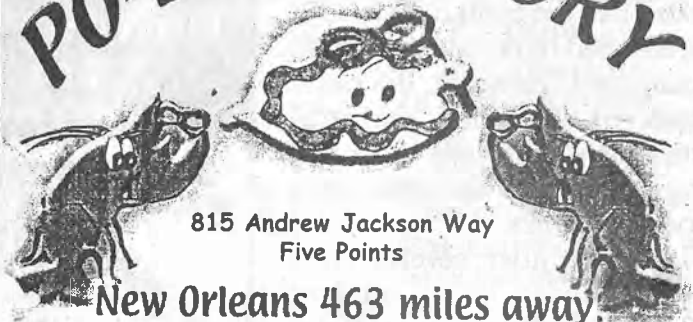
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# The Confederate Soldiers Reunion

by Bill Wilson

Although I have lived in Huntsville since 1959, in the summer of '37 or '38 my father took me to a Confederate Soldiers Reunion at Edgewood Park in my home town of Memphis. I still remember that day as one of the great holiday spectacles of my childhood. Smack in the middle of the park was a gaily festooned revival-type tent serving cold beer to adults and hosting a number of one-arm bandit slot machines, both I believe illegal at the time. Nevertheless, two of Boss Crump's uniformed policemen stood on either side of the main entrance to insure maintenance of law and order.

Just outside the tent several huge barbecue pits had been dug and covered with massive iron grills on which slabs of pork were roasting. These slabs were slowly and diligently turned with long pitchforks wielded by sweating shirtless attendants whose only job was to make sure the barbecue was evenly cooked on all sides before delivering it to the chopping tables. I remember staring down at the fiercely glowing coals lining those pits thinking how much they looked like the front door to Hell as described by certain preachers I had heard. However, the heavenly scent of roasting barbecue wafting over the milling crowd soon dispelled all thoughts of underworld terrors.

Nearby under several large oaks, a dozen or so ancient grizzled Confederate soldiers, some in full regalia and side-arms, were seated in a grouping of straight-back chairs decked with Confederate and regimental

flags. Some still had their old muzzle loaders propped up against the trees.

Urging me in their direction, my father, who was a veteran of WWI said, "I want you to go up and shake hands with some of those men. They fought for you and you need to remember that." Since I had never known anybody who had killed anybody before, I was indeed eager to talk to them. I shook hands with the first veteran I came to and I remember to this day how cold and bony his

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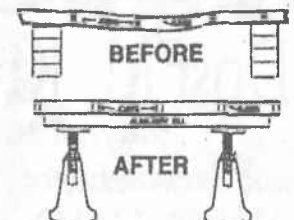


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hand felt. I told him my name and asked him outright, "Sir, did you kill anybody in the War?" He said something like, "More'n one for sure. Just outside of Corinth we popped off a whole passel of lost Yankees from Ohio before we had to scat." Another veteran whom I met in the group had a bugle which he declined to blow at my urging saying, "Young man, you gotta have teeth to blow a bugle and you gotta have teeth to eat barbecue and I hate to tell you this, but I can't do either one anymore."

People were milling in all directions, bringing beer, lemonade, and barbecue sandwiches to the soldiers and shaking hands and slapping them on the back. All kinds of exciting stories were floating in the air about Shiloh

and Bloody Pond, Chickamauga and The Battle Above the Clouds. Every hour or so a small brass band seated behind the veterans would break out into a stirring rendition of Dixie followed by Under the Double Eagle and other Sousa marches. Everytime Dixie was played everyone who could stand up stood up. The one sure thing about this reunion was that everybody there was really proud and respectful of the old soldiers and you could tell they were equally happy to be there too. It was a great summer outing of fluttering banners, barbecue, lemonade, and ice cream, one that I shall never forget.

Edgewood Park is long since gone as are the massive cannon and huge mortars that once lined Confederate Park on the bluffs

overlooking the river. As children on Sunday outings we used to climb inside the mortars and hide. During WWII in a misguided fit of patriotism, all these armaments were donated to the scrap drive by the City Fathers.

Maybe that's why they also changed the name of the big municipal tennis courts near my former home there from "Beauregard Park" to the "John Rogers Tennis Center". Who the hell is John Rogers anyway? Memphis was then and is still a great mercantile center, for what ever that counts for in history, which is not all that much.

It was many years later before I became conscious of the opprobrium that now attaches to the Confederate cause. Reconstruction in the South was tortuous and difficult and took generations — in some places right up till WWII. Some folks tell me that I am still not fully reconstructed either, but I am working on it.

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# News From The Year 1933

## News From Huntsville and Around The World

### The Only Thing To Fear Is Fear Itself

**March 4.** Under dark clouds that mirrored the despair of the country, Franklin D. Roosevelt was sworn in as President of the United States today, assuring the troubled nation that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

In his inaugural address, the new president denounced the nation's financial leaders, saying that these "money changers" should be driven from the temple and never again be allowed to misuse other people's money. His biggest applause of the day came when he said that if necessary, he was prepared to ask Congress for power "as great as the power that would be given to me if we were

in fact invaded by a foreign foe."

As he spoke, 13 million Americans were jobless, one out of every four heads of households. In the final years of the administration of President Herbert Hoover, scores of banks failed, factories closed and farmers were evicted from their lands. In many cities, entire families are now living in tarpaper shacks and scavenging for food in city dumps.

Sensing the despair of the people, President Roosevelt said: "This nation asks for action, and action now. Our greatest primary task is to put people to work."

Scarcely hours after his inaugural speech, President Roosevelt

acted, meeting with key advisers and legislative leaders to work out plans for banking relief and for putting the millions of jobless Americans back to work. He also announced that he was calling Congress into emergency session, in the middle of next week.

### King Kong

*Fast Becoming Blockbuster!*

"King Kong" opened recently and has already gathered acclaim for the special-effects technology used in producing this monumental work. Even better is Fay Wray, the prolific young actress whose terrified scream is quickly becoming the most celebrated vocal performance of the year.

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# BANKS to Reopen

**March 12.** Many of the nation's banks will reopen tomorrow after a seven-day bank holiday ordered by President Roosevelt to shore up the nation's economy. All banks were closed on March 6, two days after the new president took office, to allow time for passage of emergency legislation by Congress.

The bank holiday was to have lasted just four days. But even after Congress, now in special session, had speedily passed the emergency bank bill sought by the president, the holiday had to be extended until the Treasury Department could make new regulations. Now that that has been done, major banks found by federal and state authorities to be sound will reopen.

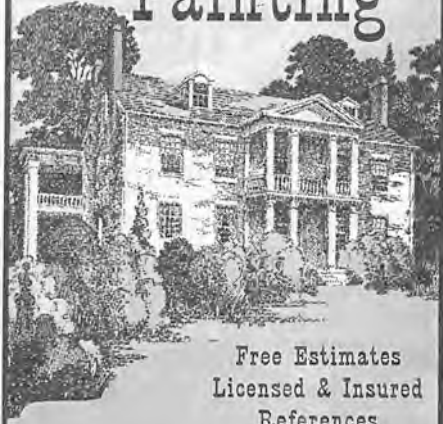
# Much Damage in California Earthquake

**March 10.** A violent earthquake spread death, injury and destruction over a path 200 miles long and 30 miles wide in Southern California, beginning at 5:55 p.m. yesterday, and 16 aftershocks threw people into panic over the next seven hours. Some 123 were listed as dead and more than 4,150 as injured in still incomplete reports.

# Germany Opens Concentration Camps

**March 20.** Nazi authorities in Germany have arrested so many political opponents that the jails are bursting. This month alone, 15,000 people were arrested in Prussia. There was nowhere to send them until Heinrich Himmler, the Nazi Police Commissioner in Munich, came up with a solution. It is called a concentration camp. The first one has been built at an old powder factory near the town of Dachau, ten miles outside of Munich. Three more camps are ready to open near Berlin.

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# Gurley, Alabama

## The Railroad Town

by Jack Harwell

In the last century the railroads held the position that the interstate highways have today. They were the principal means of intercity travel, much faster and certainly more comfortable than the covered wagon. As is the case with the interstates, a city's access to the rail lines could determine whether it would prosper or become an isolated backwater. In many cases, towns would appear where there were none before the rails were laid. Such was the case with Gurley, Alabama.

The land where Gurley is located was bought from the Cherokees in 1817, and white settlers moved in soon thereafter, even though there was no town there at the time. The area was taken into Madison County in 1824.

John Gurley came to Madison County from his native South Carolina. He had fought with Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812; his father had served under General Nathaniel Greene in the Revolution. In 1830 Gurley bought a quarter-section (160 acres) on the county line, through which Hereford Road runs today. He bought

another quarter-section in 1834 two miles away on Hurricane Creek, where he built one of the first mills in the lower Hurricane Valley.

The isolation that John Gurley enjoyed between Keel Mountain and what would later be known as Gurley Mountain was disturbed somewhat in 1851 when the Memphis and Charleston Railroad began pushing its tracks through the valley. The railroad purchased the right of way from Gurley, he being the owner of the land along the best rail route. Before long Gurley and his

neighbors were treated to the sight of passenger trains passing by their doors on their runs back and forth between Huntsville and Chattanooga.

The old steam trains had to stop frequently to replenish their supply of water. Hilly terrain, such as exists east of Huntsville, caused the engines to use water at an accelerated rate. So the Memphis and Charleston built a "filling station" - a water tank on the land it had bought from John Gurley. Water for the tank was piped from a spring on Keel Mountain, over a mile away. Exercising commendable practicality, the railroad called it "Gurley's Tank."

The presence of a railroad stop attracted business to the area. A town grew up around the tank, and Gurley's Tank became Gurleyville. The old railroad men used the

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term "tank town" to describe a place that was so small that it was little more than a water tank for the trains. The term, considered pejorative by some, would have applied to Gurleyville in the mid-19th Century. But the town had not yet been eclipsed by its neighbor to the west, and more and more businessmen discovered that Gurleyville was a good place to live and work.

John Gurley and his wife, Matilda, had four children, three sons, Franklin, Thomas and John, and one daughter, Jane.

Franklin and Thomas both enlisted in the Confederate cause, Frank joining a cavalry company at New Market. His unit later became part of the Third Tennessee Cavalry, under the command of Nathan Bedford Forrest. It was while serving with this unit that Frank Gurley was involved in an incident which nearly destroyed

both his life and his reputation.

On August 5, 1862 Gurley, now a captain, led two companies against a Union patrol that had been reported north of New Market. The Federals were under the command of General Robert McCook of Ohio, who was riding in a wagon rather than on horse-

back due to a bad case of dysentery. The Confederates shouted an order to halt, and began firing when the order was ignored; the Union troops would later claim that they heard no such order. Gurley fired four shots from his service revolver at the wagon which contained the fleeing

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McCook. The first three bullets missed; the fourth struck the Ohioan in the side, inflicting a mortal wound. McCook was taken for treatment to a nearby farmhouse, where he was later visited by Gurley, but died the next day. Gurley put the incident behind him.

To Northerners, particularly those in Ohio, the story was different. The story spread, or was spread, that Gurley had shot McCook from ambush, rather than in a combat situation. The McCooks were a popular and well-known family in Ohio, and demands were made for Frank Gurley to be tried as a war criminal.

On October 21, 1863, Gurley and his men were surrounded and captured at Brownsboro, Georgia. Frank's brother Thomas was taken prisoner at the same time. With the "murderer" now in

Union hands, the Army moved quickly. After a brief trial, Gurley was sentenced to hang, but the death sentence was suspended by the officer in charge, General Frank Thomas. Not long after, in a bizarre display of bureaucratic incompetence on the Union's part, Gurley was freed as part of prisoner exchange.

Frank Gurley survived the war and returned home to the town named for his father. But the U.S. Government was not through with him yet. Perhaps feeling that it had been cheated of the pleasure of hanging the rebel officer, the army sent troops to arrest Gurley at his home in November 1865. They had no trouble locating him; he had been elected sheriff of Madison County the previous month.

Again Captain Gurley, C.S.A., was tried and convicted for the death of Robert McCook. His ex-

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ecution was set for December 2, just nine days after his arrest. But again, Gurley would escape the noose through the intervention of a Union general, Ulysses S. Grant. President Andrew Johnson suspended the sentence of death on Grant's recommendation. The following April, the War Department dropped all charges against Gurley. One year after Appomattox, Frank Gurley's war was finally over.

Although the terms of his pardon forbade him serving as sheriff, Gurley spent the rest of his life in civic affairs. He died at his sister Jane's home in 1920, and was buried in Gurley next to his brother Thomas, who had died in 1901.

Frank Gurley had lived to see his town's most prosperous days. In 1909 Gurley's population had reached 1,200. There was a newspaper - the Gurley Herald. A school which was built by the Presbyterian church in 1893 later became Madison County High School, the name by which it is still known and a branch of the Tennessee Valley Bank was established at Gurley in 1892.

There were other businesses, too. Gurley had four saloons, which did brisk business with residents of nearby Jackson County, which was then dry. One of Gurley's hometown heroes in the early part of this century was

a William Graves "Lena" Styles. Styles was born in Gurley in 1899 and died there in 1956. As a young man he had played for Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics from 1919 to 1921 as catcher. In his five-season major league career he played in 77 games and batted a respectable .250. In his final year, with the Reds in 1931, he recorded 21 hits.

Like many small towns, Gurley eventually fell victim to changing times. The road to Huntsville was paved, and the railroad became less and less important to the town. Over the years, fire destroyed many of the businesses, most of which were never rebuilt. The bank closed in 1934. The town's relationship with Huntsville changed as more and more people began to commute there to work, particularly after World War II. Then, in 1968, local telephone service to Huntsville became available. The Gurley exchange had been part of Southern Bell since 1905. Now people could call Huntsville numbers as easily as their neighbors'.

Eventually even the highway shifted away from the old center of town, as U.S. 72 was widened and straightened for travellers to and from Chattanooga and the large cities of the East. It is likely that Gurley's future growth will be determined by land developers selling lots for houses.

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# The Roomers Of Clinton Ave.

by Tommy Towery

My family moved into the large two-story duplex at 505 East Clinton Street in 1953 when I was seven. We rented it from a landlord that I knew only as Mr. Nickelson, to whom we paid \$65 a month rent. It had a great tree in the front yard and was a large white house with a big front porch and a driveway that ran the length of the property that we shared with the house at 503 East Clinton. The sidewalk in front was a pattern made of carefully laid red brick.

We moved into the house just in time for me to start the second grade at East Clinton Elementary School that was just a short walk up the hill. The house was really a duplex and we moved into the west side. We had a large room on the ground floor in the front of the house facing the street that was probably built as a parlor or some other type of room but which we used as a bedroom. There was another room that was the living room and a third room behind it that might have been designed as a dining room but which was also used as a bedroom. Finally there was a kitchen on the back of the house on the ground floor and a screened in back porch attached to it.

It was obvious that the house had been built before indoor plumbing, because it was easy to see that two bathrooms, one on the ground floor and one on the second floor, had been added onto the house. There was an enclosed stairwell that was accessed through the living room that led to the second floor containing two very large bedrooms and a bath.

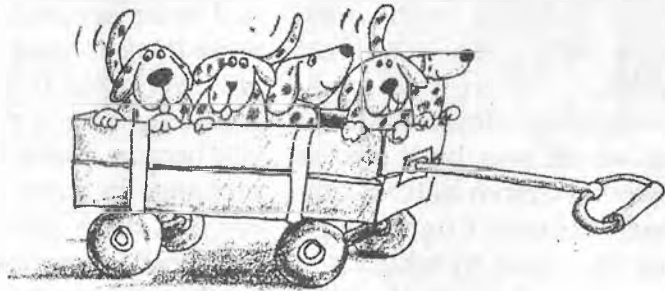
When we moved into the large house, it was heated with coal, with fireplaces in each main room except for the kitchen. In the back of the house was a coal shed and an open one-car garage located on the back of the property.

The other side of the duplex, at 507 East Clinton, was a unit that was a mirror image of our floor plan and was occupied by the Beaguards, a family with whom we never became close neighbors. At the time we moved

in, my family consisted of my father and mother, my maternal grandmother, and a brother three years older than me. My father was a disabled vet and worked as a draftsman at the arsenal. Although we did not have enough money to buy a house, we could afford to rent the big one we had moved into.

Things changed in 1954 when my parents were divorced, a rare occurrence for those days, and my father moved out leaving my mother and grandmother with the burden of paying the monthly rent.

My grandmother worked as a cook at the Rebel Inn in West



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Huntsville for \$40 a week. She did not drive so she caught the bus in front of the house each day to go to work. My mother worked at the Huntsville Electric Center for a salary unknown to me.

Whatever the amount, I remember we had a hard time making the monthly rent payments. My mother and grandmother soon found that they needed a way to take in more money to take care of their family's needs. They seemed to be in the right place at the right time because the solution to their worries soon became apparent.

There have been many articles over the years detailing the rapid, almost boomtown population growth of Huntsville generated by the influx of personnel being sent to Redstone Arsenal to work on rockets and missiles. According to the Historical Atlas of Alabama Volume 1, Historical Locations by County, the population of Huntsville in 1940 was 13,050 people. The next ten years saw a growth of only 3,387 making the 1950 population 16,437. The following ten years, between 1950 and 1960 saw Huntsville's population grow to 72,365, a massive population growth of over 400%.

It is hard to imagine that type of growth today. That population figure represented the addition of 55,928 new people to a small Alabama city that had only contained a total of 16,437 people just ten years earlier.

Many of the new residents had been sent to Redstone Arsenal to work and to Huntsville to live, and were initially sent without their families. Their arrival probably resembled the unaccompanied American servicemen who were stationed in England to await the European invasion. Thousands of them were sent to the small Southern town on some type of

temporary employment for three to six months or were sent to try to find accommodations for their families that would follow at a later time.

There were not enough living facilities on the Redstone complex to accommodate all of these employees. At the time, Huntsville had the Russel Erskine, the Twickenham, and the Yarborough hotels downtown, and a few motor courts scattered near the small two lane main highways that led into Huntsville.

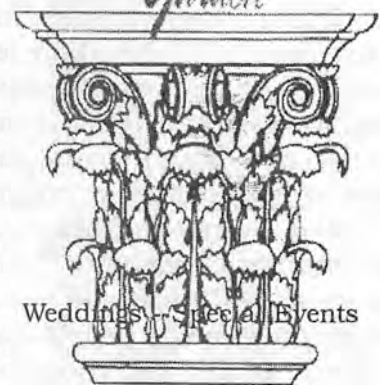
Those facilities could house a small percentage of the pilgrims, but in general the city was ill-prepared to accommodate the number of workers that were pouring into the area almost daily.

While it is unknown exactly where all the workers came from, to most of the Huntsville residents, if they came from anywhere north of Fayetteville, Tennessee, they were considered Yankees. During the Civil War, when the Federal troops occupied Huntsville, housing them was no problem. The Union commanders simply took over the houses they needed and moved their troops in. This second Yankee invasion was not so easy for them, and the citizens of Huntsville had more power to control the situation.

About the time all this was going on there were major

changes taking place to our house and the others on Clinton Street as well. The coal-burning fireplaces in the house were replaced with gas space heaters; the party line telephone was replaced with

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a single line and the operator who said "which number please" was replaced with a dial tone on the phone.

For some unknown reason the city fathers changed East Clinton Street from a street to an avenue called Clinton Avenue East. In the process, our house that had been 505 East Clinton Street became 510 Clinton Avenue East. I never understood why that happened.

The answer to housing the population growth was not seen as a problem, but as an opportunity for many Huntsvillians, including my family. With a little rearranging of our own possessions, we were able to move my brother and myself from our rooms upstairs into the rooms occupied by my mother and grandmother downstairs. This change made the upstairs available for the group of people that became referred to as "roomers" by the residents of East Clinton Street.

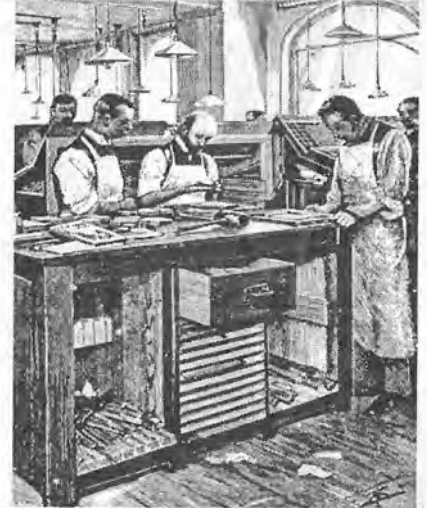
Many years earlier my grandmother, Ethel Sullivan Roden, had run a boarding house in West

Huntsville. From the stories I heard, I pictured her boarding house like the ones I saw in the western movies each week at the Lyric and Grand Theatres - rooms to sleep in, and a meal (board) cooked nightly for the guests. Since my grandmother now worked full time each night at the Rebel Inn, there was no way we could cook big meals so we could not offer "Room and Board" - we simply had rooms.

A small hand-written cardboard sign would be stuck in the front window advertising "Room For Rent." Similar signs went into the windows of the Drakes who lived next door at the newly designated house number of 508, as well as in the window of Mrs. Louise Crabtree and her mother Mrs. Butler down at 506. The Beaugards next door followed suit. I cannot be sure but I believe that the Drummonds several houses down also rented rooms, as well as several of the people

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who owned the houses across the street. In no time at all, Yankees from the north inhabited the homes of the street.

One major draw for the Clinton Street area was that it was only a short walk downtown where several cafes were located and where the roomers could eat their meals and go to movie shows to help them occupy their evenings. At first we had two beds in each of the upstairs rooms that allowed us to take in four roomers.

Our rate for the rooms was \$10 a week for each person. Later, one smooth-talking carpetbagger convinced my grandmother to let him have the whole front room as a private room for which he paid \$15 each week. It took away the necessity of cleaning one pair of sheets and washing one less set of towels each week, so I guess there was a mutual advantage for her as well.

The room in the front of the house was reconfigured to contain a double bed, but the occupant had to walk through the twin-bed room to get to the stairs or the bathroom. The bathroom contained a claw foot bathtub, a toilet and a freestanding sink. It also had a small gas heater that kept the room warm. It was never designed to accommodate three men trying to get ready to go to work at the same time each morn-

ing.

I don't remember my family ever having problems finding people interested in renting the rooms at first. More often than not, the departing roomer had already lined up his replacement before he moved out. Rooms on Clinton Street were at a premium. Many of the men stayed several months at a time, but when the time came to move out, a new prospective occupant would knock on the door and ask about the room. Many times others would knock and ask if we had any rooms available. When we told them no, they would inquire about any others rooms up or down the street that may be available. Usually the neighbors knew

who had vacancies and helped each other find roomers that needed the space.

We never knew or really cared what all the men did except that they worked at the arsenal. I did know that one time the Drakes next door had a roomer that worked with the army band. I knew that because he would leave his window up and play marching music and work with the tem-

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pos. I know that was in 1957, because the marching music he was working on was "The River Kwai March" and that was the year the movie came out. He supplied his own record player to play the 45 rpm record.

As far as that goes, any roomer that wanted something to listen to in their rooms had to supply their own. None of the renters had rooms with TVs or even radios. Sometimes some of our roomers would sit with us in the living room and watch the family's black and white TV, but more often they would stay up in their own rooms by themselves. Many times the roomers bought some adult entertainment magazines from the Grand Newsstand and read in the rooms. One of my buddies down the street would rush up to the rooms when one of those room-

ers who rented from his family moved out so that he could see if they left any girly magazines in the trash. He often got in trouble when his mom would later find them under his bed, but that did not keep him from collecting them.

Every so often one of our roomers would get tired of Southern food and would want to cook himself something special. Since they were not allowed to cook in the rooms, my mother or grandmother would usually allow them to cook in our kitchen, but that did not happen often. They could keep snacks there, and drink beers in their room, but not cook.

The closest grocery store for snacks was Kroger's, and there was also a little store that Mrs. Grimes ran in her house up the block. It was an interesting store because she would go to Kroger's

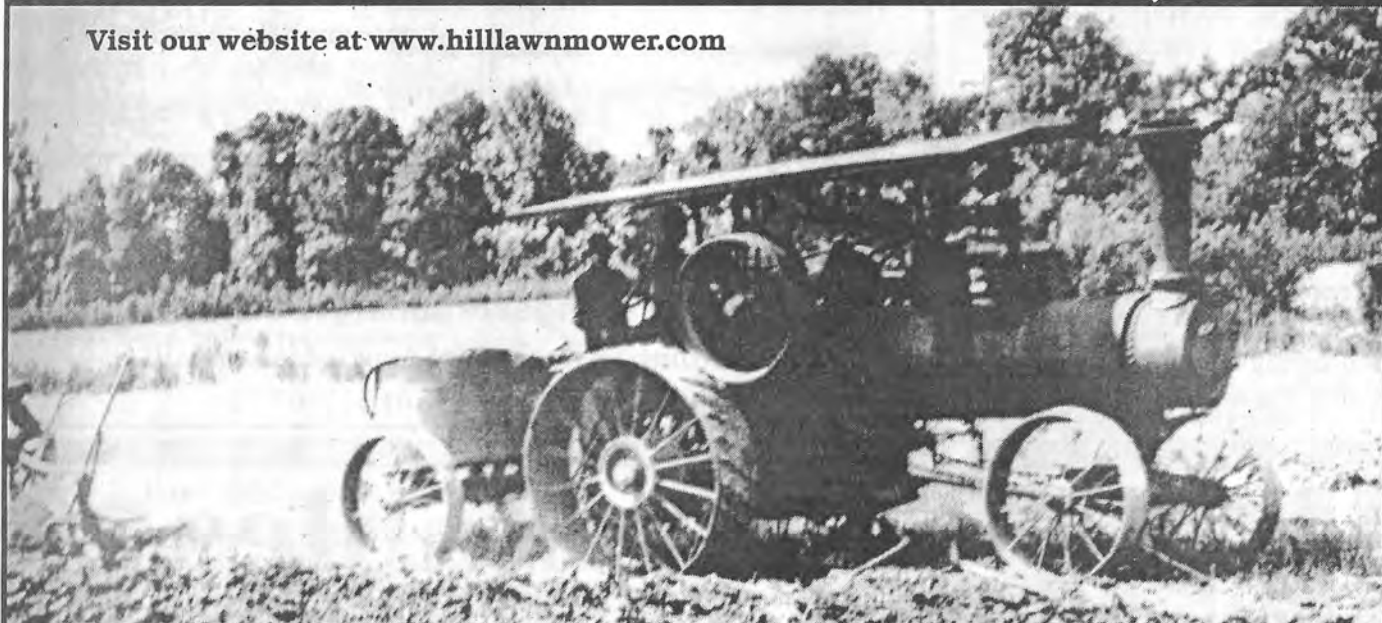
and buy groceries there and then take them back to her house and use a China marker to raise the price on each item by three to five cents and set them on her shelves to sell.

More often the roomers would eat out, usually walking downtown when the weather was nice. Sometimes they would go in groups, stopping at the various houses where they roomed collecting others that wanted to go eat together.

Of course we didn't lock the front door back then. We didn't have a curfew and our roomers came and went as they pleased. The long driveway easily accommodated their cars if they had one. Telephone calls were rare, since the cost of long distance was still very expensive and the calls were difficult to complete. I

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do not remember mail being delivered to the houses for the roomers. Perhaps they got their mail at a post office box or at work. In the years we had roomers, a dozen or more men must have lived with us. I knew them at the time, but soon forgot them as they were replaced with different faces and names.

Our first roomer was a Yankee from Colorado. The one roomer that stayed with us the longest was named Jim, and he did a lot with the family. He would take me swimming at Guntersville, and would walk with my grandmother and me to the

wrestling matches at the Armory each Wednesday night.

Jim's hobby was weight lifting and he had a makeshift gym in the room he rented. He and three of his friends finally all got together and rented a house in West Huntsville where they could cook as well, so he moved out. Although I still remember some of our roomers, I have not had contact with any them since they moved on. I believe that Jim was our last roomer.

Eventually the Huntsville housing market finally must have caught up with the demand and the need for people to find spare rooms in which to temporarily live diminished. By the time 1960 came around, we could no longer depend on the income from renting the rooms and we had to move away from the big white house on Clinton and find something more affordable. I believe that others houses in the neighborhood might have lasted a little longer in their efforts, but not much longer.

As far as the houses go, most of them are not only still standing but have been restored and are now a part of the Historic Twickenham and Old Town Districts. Their age and heritage are documented now with small signs in their front yards, signs that reflect their history. These grand houses are now the homes to

many new families that are probably unaware of the colorful history of the men who lived in them for short periods of time and were known as the roomers of Clinton Street.



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Stir in 3 cups regular rolled oats. Add 6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips, 12 oz. peanut butter chips and 1/2 cup chopped pecans.

Drop by teaspoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet, bake at 375 degrees for 9-11 minutes.

Your whole family will enjoy this treat!

## A Strange Case

A man living in England hid in a 21-foot-wide hole under his living room floor, covered only by a carpet and a sofa. He was wanted for an assault charge, so he hid under the floor from 1974 until 1982. While under the floor he lost 98 pounds and had grown a long, scraggly beard and nails.

He said, when he was discovered in 1982, that he was thinking of what his wife and four children were going through. "It was terrible lying there and listening to them talking and playing but unable to let them know I was there and doing OK."

He was finally discovered when one of his neighbors reported a vile stench coming from the lower vents of the house

Old age is when former classmates are so gray and wrinkled and bald, they don't recognize you.

## Thief Leads Deputy On Seven Mile Race

Mr. Theo. Hereford, deputy sheriff, had a very exciting race last night after a negro who stole a cow in Madison some time ago. He had the good luck to capture his man about 4 o'clock in the morning after running him all night. The chase began on Washington Street after Hereford attempted to question the man for suspicious loitering. A foot race ensued when the suspect took flight. The race led up Meridian to the Mill and then doubled back toward Fagan Spring, before setting a course to Braham Spring where he was finally captured. It is estimated the total length of the foot race must have exceeded seven miles. (From 1911 newspaper)

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# Them Dad-burned Long-handles

by Malcolm Miller

When I was a little ole yellow haired boy, fact is about as far back as I can remember Papa used to load the whole family in a two horse wagon along about the last of October or the first of November. We usually always had out a few bales of cotton by then, got the money for the seed on the spot right there at the gin. Then after the landlord got his share, which somehow or other didn't seem fair, we would head out for our yearly trip into town, just thinking about it made my insides pound.

We would get a barrel of flower, a stand of lard and some store bought canned goods if times weren't too hard. We would get two pairs of overalls, some shoes or boots and brother you better believe a pair of union suits. We would put them things on that very day and wear them come hell or high water till the first day of May. Now you can call them union suits, BVD's or red flannels,

but if there is anything I hate it is them dad-burned long handles.

They would start showing at the neck and I would button up my collar and it would choke me so bad I couldn't hardly swallow. The legs would stretch and I would pull them up to my knees and they would fall right back down just as pretty as you please. And buddy you ain't lived until you go out like I did one night to a cold country out-house without a sign of a light. My mind was a little fuzzy, I had been taking a nap. I guess that is why I forgot to unbutton that flap.

Now I wouldn't mind going back to the old days so bad, eatin' possum and taters or whatever we had. I think I could even learn to read again by candles, but buddy deliver me from ever again wearing them dad-burned long-handles.

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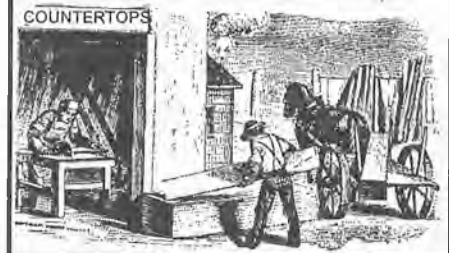
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# Sharecropping

In 1935, sixty-five per cent of the cotton farmers in Alabama were sharecroppers. These people became the forgotten history of our land.

Under the hot, broiling sun, scorching everything its rays came in contact with, a wizened old man, with skin burnt like aged leather, labored tirelessly between the cotton rows. In the next row, his wife, wearing an odd apparel that had long ago lost any resemblance of a dress, knelt on lacerated knees and desperately plucked at the ripened bolls.

Sun up to sun down; 200 pounds at 1/2 cent per pound. Pay the man at the store for the sack of flour you bought yesterday. That takes all the money, but you can buy again on credit tomorrow. Go home and rub liniment on your tired aching muscles and try to forget they will be sore again tomorrow.

There is no other choice. This is your only way to survive in the

bleak existence that nature has so cruelly bestowed upon you.

There was no hope of escaping the vicious cycle of tenant farming. Bound by debts to the land owner and untrained for other types of work, all they could expect was a pair of cheap shoes for the children to wear to school, or maybe a few store-bought groceries to supplement their standard diet of beans, fatback, and corn bread.

In another few weeks the rains would begin, and following that would come the cold, frigid blast of winter, spreading its gloom on the now-exhausted fields. Young boys and old men would pace the floor like caged animals, pausing every so often to stare out the windows of the broken-down hovels they called home, and curse the fate that made them slaves to unseen cotton moguls a thousand miles away.

Keep the fire going, ration what meager food there is, and wait for the frozen ground to thaw. Walk down to the store. Maybe they will let you

add some tobacco and a bag of flour to the long overdue bill. Stop and talk to Lem Wilbanks over on the next farm. His daughter is expect-



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ing any day and her husband is up north, in Chicago, trying to find a job. Talk and kill time and wait. Wait for the warm showers of spring to thaw the frozen earth and bind you to another year of servitude.

"Maybe next year," they would say, year after year. "Maybe next year will be better."

Spring jumps out suddenly across the barren land. The sopping red clay is now dry to the touch, waiting to embrace the seeds of a brand-new cotton crop. It will be a new beginning, the start of new dreams. Tonight you will sleep the slumber of a conquering warrior, for tomorrow you will prove your manhood.

You stand and look at the fields through the early morning twilight, daring and challenging the gods up above to anoint you; let you pay off your debts and maybe have enough left to buy your wife a new dress.

But as you pick up the hoe and begin trudging silently toward the dismal fields, a truth begins gnawing at you, deep inside. And no matter how hard you try to suppress the thought, it keeps coming back and coming back, until it envelopes you in its overwhelming reality. And then, with your body shaking in convulsions, you hold your head in your hands and cry like a new-born baby.

This year won't be any better and there won't be a new dress.

Cotton will still be King ... But

not for the people working in the fields.

Years later, when the man talked about not being able to buy his wife a new dress, his eyes began blinking, and in an effort to hide the tears, he pulled out an old, worn handkerchief and loudly pretended to blow his nose. After regaining his composure, he refused to talk anymore about sharecropping.

**Trouble in marriage often starts when a man gets so busy earning his salt that he forgets his sugar.**

## Green Corn Pudding

Take a half dozen ears of green sweet corn (good size) and with a sharp pointed knife, split each row of kernels, and scrape from the ear. Mix with this pulp two eggs, well beaten, two tablespoons sugar, one of butter, one salt-spoon of salt, half pint sweet cream, and one dozen crackers - grated or pounded very fine. Mix well together, and bake three hours in a pudding dish in a slow oven.



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# Playing Hookey

by Jim Harris

We moved to the Houk farm in Harrison Cove in January of 1946. As much as my brother and I disliked the Lincoln High School, Madison County High School at Gurley appealed to us even less. The second semester of the 45-46 schoolyear was not a happy one for us. The bus would not drive a mile off its regular route to pick up just two kids, so we had to walk the mile to catch the bus. Yes, we had shoes to wear, and it was uphill only one

way. Know what? We missed that bus several times during that semester. There were two bridges between our house and the bus stop. The second one was only a quarter of a mile from it. With one exception, we never decided to miss the bus until we reached the second bridge. It took us three quarters of a mile to convince ourselves we couldn't make it that last quarter mile before the bus got there. Of course, we couldn't see the bus from under that bridge.

Missing the bus

didn't always work out to our advantage. Part of the time the weather was too cold for us to hang out until that afternoon and then go home as if we had gone to school. We also needed an excuse from home, so we had to go back and say that we missed the bus. Big mistake. Dad always put us to work unless it was pouring rain or too cold for him. It rarely was.



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Although the sassafras tree is native only to the eastern half of the United States and some parts of Asia, its roots are sold throughout the world for use as tea and as flavoring for medicines and soft drinks.

Sassafras roots may be pulled from the ground at any time of the year. They're all good, but the smaller ones are best of all. As long as you use some reasonable restraint, there's no need to worry about ruining a patch of the little trees by gathering their roots. The more you harvest the more underground shoots the shrubs seem to send out.

Wash the foraged roots thor-

oughly and cut them into pieces a couple inches long. Then dump a handful of the sections, fresh or dried, into a pot and boil them in water until the liquid is a satisfying red. Sweeten to taste with sugar, honey, or maple syrup and drink hot or iced. The same roots can be used to make three or four batches of tea.

In backwoods country, sassafras has traditionally been reserved for use as a spring tonic that "thins the blood", but many people drink the brew in moderate quantities all year round.

## For Hog Stealing

In court yesterday M.D. Hammer was placed under a \$500 bond for, grand larceny. He was accused of stealing a hog last week from a colored man, named Felix Hawkins, and the evidence against him was strong enough to warrant binding him over to await trial. In his defence, Hammer stated the hog had followed him home from a saloon and he had no idea it belonged to someone else.

One must wonder what manner of people, or beast, Hammer is used to associating with in our city's saloons. (1900 paper)

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# Two Brothers and a Dream

Brothers Billy and Charlie had a dream.

They wanted to build a hospital where patients could receive specialized care and would also serve as a research and teaching center.

Such an idea in the late 1800s was considered absurd, to say the least.

For many patients of that era, checking into a hospital was equivalent to a death warrant. Unsanitary and crowded conditions, combined with medical practices, often bordering on quackery, was enough to convince most people to take their chances at home.

Also opposing the idea were many prominent members of the medical community who distrusted the "new-fangled" ideas of the two brothers.

Huntsville was without a true hospital at the time. When several

of the community's leaders heard of the idea, they immediately contacted the brothers who were living in Minnesota at the time.

Also in Huntsville's favor was the fact that the United States Surgeon General had recently declared the city as one of the healthiest places in the country. In April, 1896, Charlie was induced to visit Huntsville. He took an immediate liking to the city and after extensive negotiations, purchased a parcel of land.

The land was expensive: \$2,500 in cash and another \$3,000 in bank stock.

Unfortunately for Huntsville, civic leaders in the brothers' hometown also heard of the their idea. By offering attractive inducements of land and money the brothers were persuaded to build their hospital there.

The brothers kept their land in Huntsville for several years before finally selling it.

Several years would pass before our city finally got a hospital. It is interesting to note, however, that if the brothers' dreams had worked out here, the hospital, instead of being named Huntsville Hospital, would have been named the Mayo Clinic.

The brothers, Charles and William Mayo, never returned to Huntsville.

**I've learned that opportunities are never lost - someone will take the ones you miss.**

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# Bridegroom Arrested

**SPECIAL** - A sensation occurred at the union depot today. An old man caused the arrest of a rawboned swain and a country bride. She looked not more than sixteen years of age.

When the procession reached police headquarters, the prisoner turned to the old man who had caused his arrest and said:

"Say, look here, Jim Burns, I've done married the gal, and you can't do no good by kicking up a row."

"I don't believe you are married to Ginnie. You've got to prove that," the old man replied.

Someone was sent to the courthouse and it was ascertained that a marriage license had been issued to Ben Morris and Virginia Burns, and Pat Owens had performed the ceremony.

"Good God, is my gal the wife

of a horse thief?" the old man exclaimed when the news was told him. "But I'll make them suffer, Ginnie," he said, turning to the girl, "you and Ben stole \$45 when you left my house, and you've got to give it back to me."

"I love Ben," the young girl said, "and now we are married. I am happy. We didn't take but \$18, and you can have it back."

"Then, Mr. Policeman, take that fellow to jail for stealing my money," exclaimed the old man, who was white with rage. The policeman took hold of the young man, and after some trouble, with a pistol as a factor, the bridegroom was behind the bars. When he saw this, the old man's heart softened, and upon the payment of \$18 by the girl he agreed not to prosecute her husband. As Morris was traveling, and his pistol was not loaded, the other case was also withdrawn. The couple left for Anniston on the afternoon Georgia Pacific train.

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A hand saw cost \$2.50, a padlock 8 cents and a hammer could be purchased for 85 cents. A lawn mower sold for \$6.50 and a 100 lb. barrel of nails was \$2.25.

While our prices have gone up slightly we still provide the same quality service our fore-fathers insisted on. We are the same family, doing the same business in the same location. Stop by and visit with us.

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