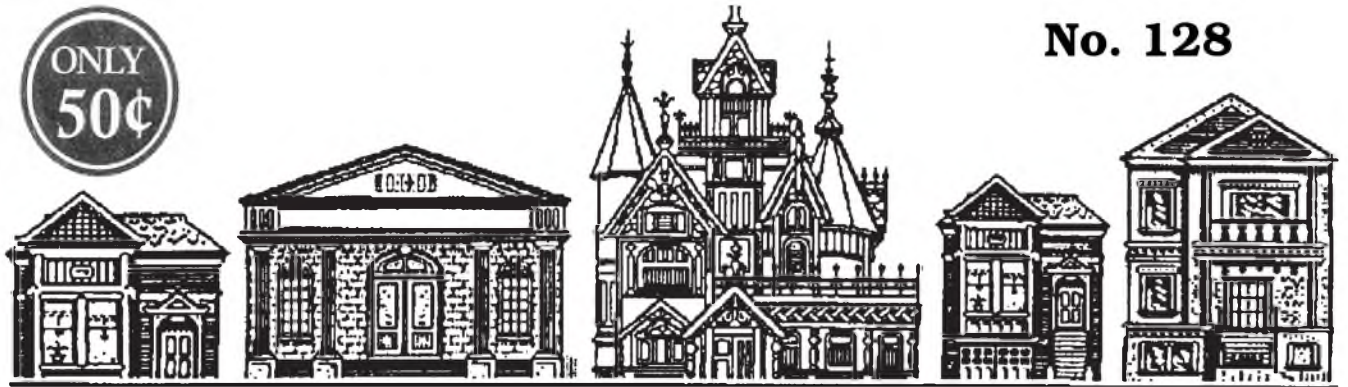


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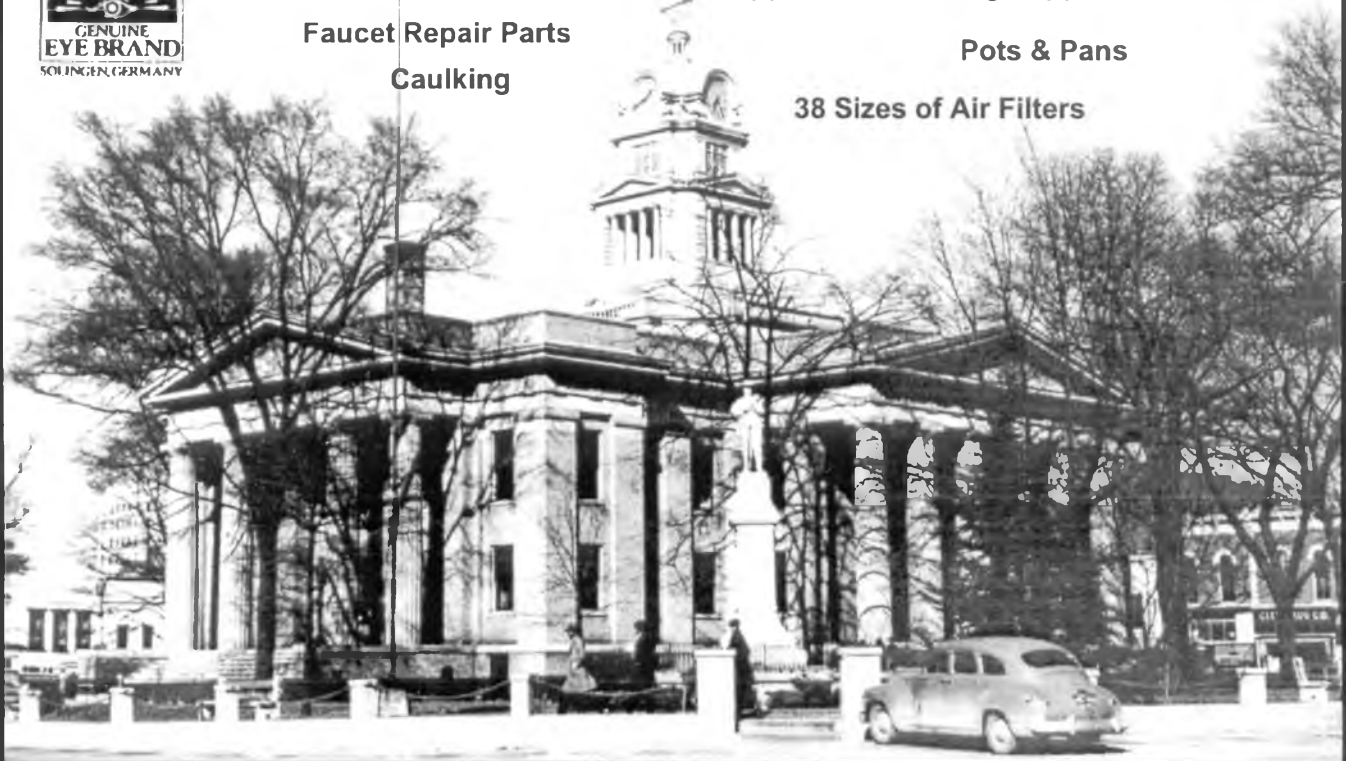


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Poor Orphan Trash

by **Mildred Holmes**

My very first memory was so terrifying and so senseless that I had never been able to figure it out. It was completely without understanding.

My father took my oldest sister Ruth, my little brother Harley and me for a long walk, deep into the woods. I was, at the most, three years old.

My sister Ruth carried Harley, and Daddy carried me on his shoulders. He later put me down to let me walk. It was spring, as I remember the pleasant aroma of the trees. It seemed every step I took was like stepping onto a feather pillow, for the ground was soft and springy following a ferocious morning storm.

What started out to be an adventure soon turned into a nightmare. We had journeyed all the way to a river or large creek. I don't know which. All I remember is that our daddy told us to go down a steep bank. We were frightened and refused, so he picked up Ruth, Harley still in

her arms. He carried her and Harley half way down the bank and deposited the two of them there. I was so afraid that I tried to hide, but he found me and carried me down. Slipping and sliding as he descended the steep embankment, he dropped me next to Ruth, then struggled back up the bank, disappearing from our sight. Where he went I don't know.

When we didn't return home, Mother began searching for us. Hours later, when it was pitch dark, she found and rescued us.

I don't know what daddy told her, but he disappeared soon afterwards.

My mother was beautiful! Long, black, naturally curly hair and sky blue eyes crowned her small, slim body. Her perfectly sculptured face was one that a great artist would love to have painted. She was a smart, industrious woman whose only goal was to care for and protect her children.

The only form of birth control in those days was to nurse one's babies until they grew teeth. That practice, it was believed, limited pregnancies to one every two years. My mother had nine children. David, Ruth, and Talmadge were fathered by her first husband, a drunk and wife beater. My mother divorced him and married my father, who was nearly twice her age. Unfortunately, Mother went from bad



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716 East Clinton Ave.
Huntsville, Ala. 35801
(256) 534-0502 Fax 489-3712

Email - oldhuntsville@knology.net
Internet Home Page
www.Oldhuntsville.com

Senior Editor - Thomas Frazier
Gen. Manager - Ron Eystone
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to worse. In the old days, one would say, "Out of the frying pan, into the fire."

Our half brother Talmadge was rumored to have been murdered by my father. Of course, daddy paid no penalty for his crime. In those days, the male head of the household could treat his family anyway he chose. It was considered to be a family matter.

I grew up in a cotton field. We worked from sun-up to sun-down and what money we made went into the company bank which was tightly rolled up in Mother's handkerchief. I remember Mother spending fifty whole cents to have our corn ground into cornmeal. A few more cents bought soda, salt and a huge sack of flour that was packaged in a cotton print sack. That's how she got the cloth to make our clothes.

Our lives improved considerably for a while, after our father came home in early summer. Mother never mentioned where he had been, but I overheard one of our aunts say he had been in prison.

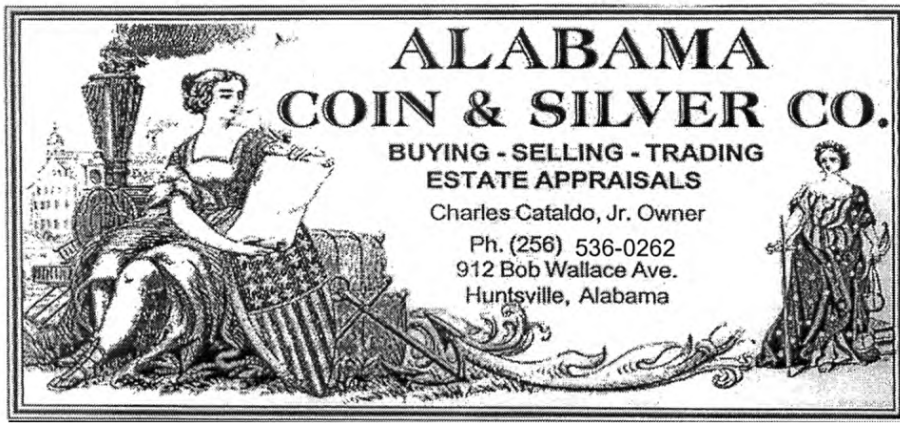
Daddy took a job in the sawmill and moved us to a better house. It was a weathered, shotgun house with a good tin roof that didn't leak. Best of all, there was a well from which we could draw water. In the past, we had to catch rainwater in big, number ten galvanized washtubs. This was what we used for bathing and laundering clothes. Our

drinking water was brought in buckets from the stream below our house. Now, we drew water directly from the well for bathing and for rinsing our clothes, after boiling them in our big black wash pot. More importantly, we no longer had to wait for rain in order to get a bath or to wash our clothes.

Mother never mentioned the word rich, but I'm certain that rich is the way I felt. We even had kerosene for our lamp, which meant we didn't have to go to bed at the moment of darkness.

Our daddy stood 6'4", weighing approximately 275 pounds, most of which was hard, bulging muscles. I would have thought he was handsome, had I loved him. I don't know if he was thought of as "the meanest man in the county", but I do know he was known as the strongest. Men who wished to challenge his reputation soon learned that all they had to do was give daddy a few drinks of home brew and the big man lost his strength, just as Samson did in the story we learned in Sunday school.

So, it became a regular tribulation. Daddy came home every payday, mean, drunk, and with no money for mother's handkerchief. After getting him drunk, the men sometimes beat him. Without exception, they rolled him for his money. Always a willing participant, he later cried, vomited, beat us or raped Mother, with us watching. Some-



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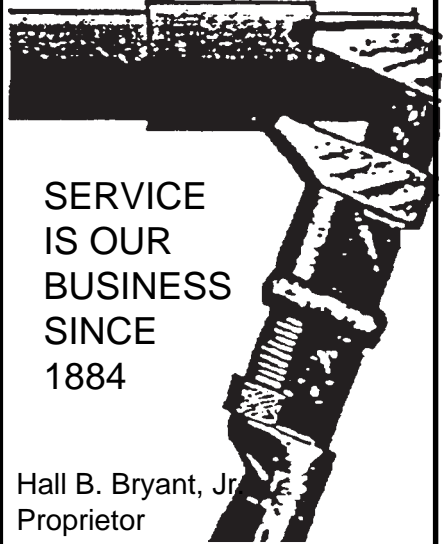


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times he just wanted to sit and listen to us sing.

Ruth had stepped on one of mother's sewing needles a year or so prior to this time. It was lodged there permanently, which gave her considerable pain. Our daddy, when he was drunk, knew how to make that needle jump right out, on it's own accord. All we children had to do was to sing to the top of our lungs, while Ruth, sitting on the floor, had to hold the bottom of her right foot level and horizontal to the rafters. The bottom of the foot had to be level to keep the three marbles from rolling off. This ritual was not an innocent game, played by a mellowed drunk. It was morbid punishment for us children, the forced participants. The object of the game was for him to hit one of us every time the marbles rolled off, or if we quit singing. The game sometimes lasted for hours. We knew the game had

mercifully ended when he passed out in this chair.

Daddy didn't like my sister Winnah very much. I think it was because Winnah had a male twin. At birth, the boy died and Winnah lived. I heard Mother say that Daddy burned Winnah's birth certificate in the fireplace as he vowed, "She ain't no daughter of mine." Daddy usually ignored Winnah. On the other hand, Daddy loved me; he gave me lots of attention. When Daddy was sober, I was his sweet baby girl. When he was drinking, I was the object of his rage. Often times, in the middle of the night, I awoke to another beating. Because he loved me so much, I was the one Daddy chose to grab by the hair of the head, and beat unmercifully, as my feet dangled in mid-air.

Once, mother asked him about his money. He threatened to shoot us, or slit all our throats, while we were sleeping. These were not idle threats; we knew daddy was capable of anything when he was drinking. We children were terrified; so was our mother, but the fear did not block her reasoning. Every Friday afternoon, she put the shotgun and every knife in the house in a pillowcase. She then took the pillowcase to the cotton field near our house, hiding it among the bushes.

One day, we saw a man staggering down the narrow dirt road that led to our house. We were at some distance, but it appeared to be Daddy! It couldn't be! This

was only Thursday! He had no money to buy whiskey until payday, which was Friday.

The approaching figure was much closer to the house than we were, so we dropped our

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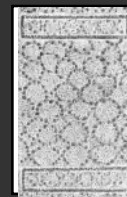
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hoes, jumped cotton rows and raced toward the house with one thought in mind: "Hide the gun and the knives!" We were too late.

Daddy was in the house, just a few steps ahead of us. He approached us with a butcher knife in his hand and proceeded to cut off Mother's dress from the shoulders.

Mother yelled at us, "Go outside, children!" as her dress fell to the floor.

We didn't budge. We watched in horror this enraged behavior.

"Think you're smarter than me, do you?" he said, sounding amused, as he put the knife to our mother's throat. "Well, let me show you how smart I am!" he said, as he forced her backward toward the bed.

With a clenched fist, Daddy punched mother in the stomach and threw her on the bed. He then pulled that big penis out of his overalls and put it inside Mother. He raped her and beat her in front of his own children's eyes.

The following Monday morning, Daddy was sober again. He went to work, never mentioning anything that had happened. It was just as though nothing had happened. We knew differently. So, that's the way it was. Life was a constant battle, a challenge to survive one day at a time. Many people today ask why we put up with it. The simple truth is that

we knew no better.

It was on a Saturday afternoon when I found myself alone with daddy. No one else was in the house. Realizing the situation, I quietly started for the door. Perhaps I should have run, as my tippee toe manner did not escape his attention. Daddy grabbed me and deposited me on the kitchen table.

"Hush, hush, baby girl," he whispered, as he put my legs between his to stop my kicking. He cupped my head with his huge hands as he added, "I won't hurt you; just be still."

I tried to fight but there was no chance of escape. I knew it and so did he. Just as I was about to give up hope, I heard a door slam. Mother yanked me from the table and held me close to her. From fear, anger, I don't know which; I could feel my mother's whole body shaking. Her small voice had a strength to it I had never heard before when she ordered Daddy out of the house.

Not long afterwards Mother got sick. She was unable to work in the fields any longer and the only income we had was what we children could earn. In desperation Mother applied for welfare.

The day the welfare people came to inspect us, mother seemed anxious and worried that they might not approve us. She actually had Winnah to climb up to the rafters, above our kitchen, to hide the pitifully small amount of coffee she had saved, and used

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so sparingly. I could not understand why the inspectors might turn us down because of a fourth of a pound of coffee, when there was no food in the house.

When we learned Mother had cancer, we moved in with my grandparents. We soon learned that all they wanted was the labor we kids could provide. Their first words to us were, "There won't be any lolly gagging around here. If you think we're going to do all the work, you've got another thought coming!"

I saw my Mother cringe as the light drained from her eyes. She knew, as did I, that we were in trouble.

There was nothing to do now but try to endure our situation, so we tried to work extra hard to make sure none of us were any trouble to our grandparents. From then on Winnah and I took care of Mother and the little ones, worked the fields, and did most of the house chores.

No matter how hard we labored, however, the treatment was the same. It was as though they looked for excuses to slap us, whip us, and verbally abuse us. It was not unusual for one or more of us to have wide blue marks on our legs and behinds. These marks were made by our grandfather's leather strap. To them, we were our crazy, sick

mother's children, not their grandchildren.

It was decided, I'm sure by Mama (my grandmother), that Mother should be taken to Birmingham to see Oral Roberts. He was a young evangelist, who already had a reputation for healing the sick. In a borrowed, rattletrap old car Aunt Lorez and Mama took Mother to see Mr. Roberts. In a world of pain, Mother lay on the back seat as they traveled over dusty, bumpy, dirt roads most of the way. Once there, they had to wait for hours to see this miraculous healer. Finally, Mother was carried in to Mr. Roberts, who laid hands on her and prayed for her recovery.

Then he looked at her, and patting her hand, said, "If your faith is strong enough, you will be healed."

On the way home, Mama threw Mother's morphine pills out the car window saying, "You won't need these anymore! If you're truly righteous, you're cured".

By the time Mother was brought home that evening, she was in screaming pain. Mama said it was her own fault because she was not righteous, and her faith not strong enough.

Oral Roberts did not know my mother. He could have taken lessons from her when it came

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to faith.

Mother's pain kept getting worse and with no medicine it was becoming unbearable.

My sister Winnah intercepted the mailman the next day and got our welfare check. After hitching a ride to town she somehow talked a druggist into selling her some morphine. Mother's pain was better, but Winnah got a beating from Grandmother.

Soon afterwards we returned home and discovered that our grandparents had given away our youngest brother and sister. Mother had not given permission but there was nothing that she, nor we, could do.

Mother kept getting worse all the time. One evening while I was sitting with her she asked me to help her die. I was 11 years old at the time.

I didn't go to sleep that night. All night long I prayed for mother to die, without my assistance.

When she died the next morning, without my help, I was so grateful.

Things continued to get worse after Mother died. As young as we were, we were expected to work in the fields ev-

ery day while dodging the blows of our grandparents whenever they got angry.

Looking back at it, people in the neighborhood must have realized our situation, for one day we were summoned from the fields early. There was a strange man waiting for us at the house.

He introduced himself as Mr. Cox and explained to us children that our grandparents were mistreating us. Before he could do anything, however, he had to confirm it with us.

We stood stiff with fear, so he asked us again and seemed to be staring right at me, into my heart. Something about his manner seemed to tell me that he was a kind gentle man who really worried about us

Clutching the hole in my dress with two hands, I walked directly to him and blurted, "As

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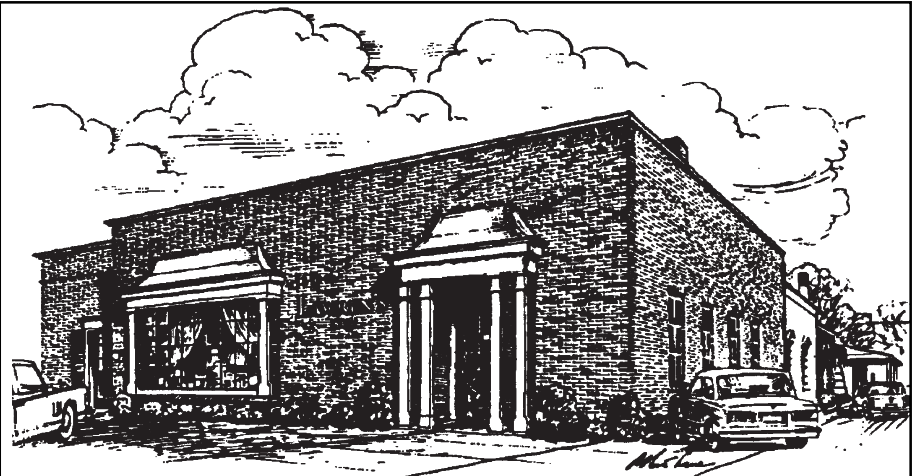
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soon as you leave, they will beat me for this, but I'm going to tell you anyway!" So I told him.

The words rushed from my underdeveloped eleven-year-old body like floodwater. There had been no one to tell before. No one asked, because no one cared. I told him how we were treated like slaves instead of grandchildren, how they beat us with firewood, and that we were hungry most of the time. Moreover, I told him they had sold our two-year-old brother and our four-year-old sister just a month before. Then they brought home infant twin boys to love and dote on with all their hearts. How could they love them but not their own grandchildren?

I told Mr. Cox that I did not understand any of this, but the one thing that I knew for sure, was that we needed to get away from there. I told him that my sister Winnah had overheard our grandmother talking about making extra money by inviting men callers to pay visits to Winnah and me. We, at our age, should not have understood what this meant, but we knew all too well. We felt that our grandmother would do anything for money.

Mr. Cox rose to his feet and

started towards the door. Never acknowledging my grandparents, he nodded at my three siblings then looked back at me, "Be patient," he said, "I'll be back for you."

When he left my grandmother called me into the house. Grandfather was waiting with his leather strap. I automatically assumed the expected position by leaning over the chair standing directly in front of him.

A few days later we were called from the fields early again. This time a lady from the welfare department, Miss Betty Coons, was waiting on the front porch. In a soft, confident voice she told us that the Welfare Department had decided that we should be placed in an orphanage called The Alabama Baptist

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Children's Home. When I learned that Mr. Cox was in charge of it, I could not have been happier.

Minutes later we got in the car with her and left. My grandparents stayed in the house, not even waving good bye.

Miss Coons drove us to a doctor who poked and examined, gave us several shots each and put some kind of patch on our arms. He said something about checking us for tuberculosis, malnutrition and some words I had never heard before. After seeing the doctor, I have a vague remembrance of Miss Coons taking us to see a man who was sitting at this real high desk. I believe he must have been a judge who made decisions for children who were not of legal age.

After a long drive, we finally arrived at the Children's Home where Mr. Cox was waiting for us. After being checked in at the administration building I was separated from my brothers and sister and led to a cottage which was to be my new home.

One of the matrons, Miss Evelyn, showed me around. First, she took me to the bathroom; there were four showers and three toilets. I had never seen in-door plumbing before, so she obligingly showed me how they worked. In what was to be my room were twelve beds more like the size of cots. Six were lined up on one side of the room

and six on the other side. Between each bed was a small metal table with one drawer. I started to sit down but was quickly corrected, "Beds are not to sit on; they are for sleeping."

There was a central storage room where everyone's clothes were kept together. When you outgrew your clothes they were given to someone else. The home resembled a large campus with acres of green grass between the various buildings that housed the cottages, laundry building, infirmary and offices. Boys and girls were separated on different sides of the campus.

After the brief tour I was given the rules. "From now on, you will not do anything without first asking permission. Here (at the Children's Home), we have a schedule. Meals are eaten at an exact time, three times a day. You will bathe every night, at an exact time. You will do chores at an exact time, get up and go to bed, at an exact time. You will also play at an exact time. If you are playing and need to go to the bathroom, you must first ask permission to come inside. Oh, and one other thing; I expect you to answer "Yes, Ma'am, No Ma'am. Do you understand?"

This was to be my home for the next seven years.

All of the children had chores. All boys over twelve years

of age worked the gardens, growing anything we could eat. The boys also milked the cows and delivered a five-gallon can of milk to the back door of each cottage every morning. The boys of the orphanage also kept that large campus mowed; that's why it always looked so nice.

Girls who were twelve and older had their duties as well. We kept the administration building clean. We also cut and bundled coupons and worked in the laundry. For awhile, I and several other girls, scissor-cut, counted



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and bundled coupons. These coupons were sent from all over the state of Alabama. Some people actually trimmed them; others just tore them out and stuck them in the mail. It didn't matter; they were worth money. Some coupons were worth one mill; others were worth three or five mills. Occasionally, we found one worth a penny, or five whole cents. The Children's Home turned in these coupons for cash. Eventually, we had enough to build a small infirmary where those of us who were sick could go to recover. To keep contagious things like mumps, flu and measles from spreading, visitors were not usually allowed.

After a time, I was rotated to laundry duty. Underwear and dresses were done by each individual girl's cottage but the central laundry washed and ironed all the shirts, pants and sheets. Teams of two girls each folded the sheets to perfection.

The most awaited, expectant time of the whole year was vaca-

tion time. It was the time around which the entire orphan's year evolved! For two whole weeks, the forty-acre campus of the orphanage was silent of children's laughter, tears or chores. A lucky few went to visit relatives. The large majority took potluck, being sent all around the state to whomever requested a boy or girl of a particular age.

That first year I watched as Billy's name was pinned to his left shoulder. He had been promised to a family in Mobile, Alabama - a long bus trip for a little boy all alone. The family who requested him asked for a sweet, seven-year-old boy. Their request did not include a twelve year old girl. I was sent to a family in Vinemont who had requested two pre-teen girls.

Each boy and girl at the home had his or her own clothing people, as they were called. In order to help the orphanage, different churches from around the state volunteered to clothe an assigned child until the child graduated or left the Home. There was no changing. Once your name was assigned, it became a permanent situation unless the clothing people resigned. Consequently, some of the children were better-dressed than others.

My clothing people were from a small, rural, poor church that could not have had more than fifty members. The clothing they sent me was used and often

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times, too mature for a young girl. I would like to have had pretty new dresses, but somehow, it didn't matter. I was grateful that these people cared enough to share with me what they could.

Somehow the years passed. The Children's Home truly became my home and thoughts of being an orphan rarely if ever entered my mind. For me, and most of the other children, it was a blessed relief from what we had known before.

After graduating high school I received a scholarship at Samford University. I worked 25 to 30 hours a week in a beauty salon and spent the rest of my time studying and attending classes. Some friends talked me into entering a local beauty contest and, much to my surprise, I won. I entered other contests and was eventually selected as the Alabama Maid of Cotton, which was a high honor at the time.

Part of my duty as the Alabama Maid of Cotton was to

travel to different states, giving speeches on behalf of the Cotton Council. I really enjoyed this, especially the flying. Cotton really was my favorite fabric, and I was more than happy to say so. As I became a more experienced speaker, I humorously told of planting, thinning, chopping and picking cotton.

In grand style, my sponsors sent me to Memphis, Tennessee for the National Maid of Cotton competition. They really expected that I would win, especially since the National Press Association had picked me as most photogenic. It made me nervous that my sponsors expected so much of me. All I could do was my very best. That was all.

The week long competition got underway. There was such a bevy of beautiful girls, I felt honored just to be among them. I knew that I had one chance out of fifty-two and that was okay.

During the week, it

was made clear that the winner would travel the globe, promoting cotton. I would love to do this. I could handle it! But so could every girl there, especially Miss North Carolina. Had I been one of the judges, I would have picked her.

On Friday, I received a good luck telegram from the orphanage. The names of over two hundred children were plainly spelled out. It was probably the longest telegram in history. A sense of pride and duty overwhelmed me. I knew that, if I should win, it would be like they were winners too. Now, I wanted to win more than ever. The telegram was still in my hand when I was called in for a special session with the judges.

The head judge was very formal as he began to speak. "You might not know this, Miss Nelson, but the National Maid of

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I rose from my seat, fighting back anger and tears as I handed him my telegram. "I have a family. Here are all two hundred of their names."

Somehow, I managed to leave the room without completely breaking down. For the first time in my life, I felt like an orphan.

That was over forty years ago. Since then I have married the most wonderful man in the world, owned a successful business and, most importantly, realized how lucky I have been.

Only five of Mother's nine children survive. The author and two of her brothers, Billy and Sam, are college graduates. All five have attended a college or university. All have become stable adults with no predisposition to passing on to their children, or anyone else, the abuse they suffered as children. Winnah and her husband, a Baptist minister, have devoted their lives to caring for underprivileged and abused children. Each of our homes has been a refuge for distressed children in need

on many occasions.

If the scars of the past have left any bitterness in any of us, it certainly is not apparent. The author's home is filled with wall-to-wall people at holidays - three generations of happy, well-adjusted grandparents, parents and grandchildren.

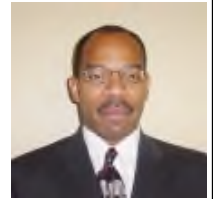
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The book, "Poor Orphan Trash," by Mildred Holmes, can be purchased at Shaver's Book store. It is a strong, inspirational book that should be read by everyone.

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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice



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

Summer is just about over, and it sure has been a great one. There are lots of activities going on. The tax bill failed but our city and county both seem to be doing well. So that should say something about our leadership.

I sure hope all is well for you and your families. For my birthday I went to the Smoky Mountains with my son **Donald** and **Wanda**, and my daughter **Doris** and her husband **Wayne**. It was a great trip and we had a great time. I looked around but I never did see a bear! We had lots of good food and laughs, it was good to get away for a while.

The Picture of the Month was a double picture - our dear friends **Richard** and **Ralph Gipson**. **Tom Gwynn** was the one who called and guessed correctly. So he'll be coming by soon for his hot, delicious country ham breakfast!

Congratulations to **Larry** and **Sue Landman** on their 40th. anniversary! It was a great party. Two wonderful kids - love you, **Margaret** and **Jonathan**!

Fran Hamilton is working so hard in the Tax Assessor's office. Slow down, Fran - no one every said you could do it all in one day!

I wanted to say a special hello to **Mr. and Mrs. Ray Pearman** - and tell you that I'm so happy that Mr. Pearman is doing well.

After being so sick, **Mr. Bill Penney** and his **Geraldine** are doing much better. They met **James** and **Nell** and **Peggy Long** here for breakfast and are looking great. Love you all.

Mr. Ellis and **Mrs. Brenda Bedwell** were all smiles when they came to tell us Mr. Ellis had great news from his cancer doctor. We sure are happy to hear that - they are two wonderful friends to us and we think the world of them.

Old time friend **Floyd Roy Duncan** left us recently in death. Our sympathy and love go out to his family.

The dear lady whom we get our jelly from - **Mrs. Catherine Wilson** - has a lovely niece who is a freshman at Oakwood Col-

lege. We met **Mushianah Sales**, a very sweet girl from Durham, N.C., and we need to show her all the great areas of Huntsville!

I hope you have a great day today, **Mrs. Jean Reid**. I know you haven't been feeling well lately. Just know that I think about you all the time and love you very much. Also, a big hello to **Martha Wells** who hasn't been well either.

We're counting the days til **Cheryl Tribble** and her dear Mom **Barbara Fortner** come back to Huntsville for a visit. Barbara is from California, and fell in love with our Southern ways when she visited a year ago. Cheryl is from Atlanta, and works for Hewlett-Packard Co.

Our sweet six-year old, **Wade Rodgers**, who is in school now, just had his first Karate class and loved it. He said it was lots of fun.

I guess **Carlton Smith** and his lovely bride are on their honeymoon. Our next couple who is getting married is **Jeffery Smith** and **Amy** - they're in the middle of planning right now.

Photo of The Month

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

Hint: He's seen around City Hall a lot.



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June and Ernie Young - I sure hope your trip to Birmingham hospital was a success for June's eye surgery. I love you.

Ralph & Gwen Alred just returned from Colorado and said they had an outstanding time!

The Minister at the First Christian Church - **Paul Koch** - brought his parents to breakfast from Kansas City. They had fun and said KC needed an "**Aunt Eunice's**" in that city as well!

Dewey Taylor - hurry and get well. His son brought him by on the way home from the hospital. I sure do wish you well, and enjoyed meeting you.

Our sympathy goes to the family of **John McNeill** who died recently. He was a fine man who had touched the lives of so many and he will be missed by his friends and family. He would always tell us when he left the restaurant how much he loved us, and it came from his heart.

The other day a lady stopped in from Hampton Cove and she had just driven to Huntsville over the mountain on **Cecil Ashburn Drive**. She said it's one of the most beautiful and scenic roads anywhere in Alabama! It's the Four Mile Post extension that goes from Bailey Cove to Hwy. 431. She travels all the time, so she knows! When the leaves start changing here pretty soon it will even be more beautiful! Try it out if you haven't driven on it yet.

Our buddy and ex-Huntsville District Attorney, **Dea Thomas**, wants everyone to know that it was not him who was arrested recently for possession of drugs. As **Dea** says, "This ain't me!"

Don't forget that the **Senior Center** on Drake desperately needs volunteer help in their gift shop. If you can help out, please call them. The shop has some great crafts and gift items, that many seniors have made with their own hands! Good place to look for Christmas gifts.

We are so happy that **Tricia and Steve Connelley** are back in Huntsville after living in Fresno, CA. for a year. Steve was there playing pro baseball where he was a Triple A player for the **San Francisco Giants**. Prior to that he played pro-ball with the **Oakland Athletics**, and was all-American in Oklahoma, years ago. He and Tricia (**Hall and Susan Bryant's** daughter) live in Old Town and are the proud parents of a beautiful little girl, **Virginia**. We know that Hall and Susan are so proud to get their kids back!

We hear that **Glenn Watson** had a big fundraiser at the Furniture Factory the other night. According to what we've heard - the place was packed. Way to go, Glen!

Mark Russell - City Councilman - sure has been in the news lately about the no-smoking ordinance. We hear, however, that there may be a compromise in the works that will make everyone happy. More to come later.

That's all for this month - just remember that I love all of you!

Aunt Eunice

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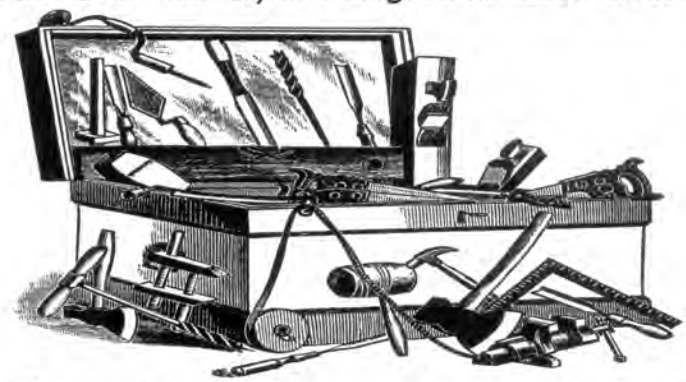
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Slice ham 1/4 inch thick. Heat up your cast iron skillet, add about a tablespoon of grease, and fry ham on both sides until brown and thoroughly cooked. Remove ham to a warm platter. Add about 1/2 cup of strong coffee to pan drippings and stir until gravy sizzles. Pour over ham and biscuits and wait for the applause!

Southern Greens

5 lbs. mixture of fresh mustard and turnip greens
2 lbs. ham hocks
2 qrts. water
1 t. crushed red pepper
Salt and pepper to taste
Vinegar

Cover ham hocks with 2 quarts water and boil for one hour. Remove the stems from the greens and wash in cold water til clean. Add greens, red pepper, salt and pepper to pot. Boil for 45 minutes and greens are tender. Serve with pepper sauce on the side.

Mountain Green Beans

3 lbs. snap green beans
1 ham hock
small strip ham fat
4 c. water - to barely cover
beans
1/2 t. crushed dried red pepper
1 t. salt
1/2 t. dried cloves
1 1/2 T. brown sugar
1 small onion, chopped
Place all ingredients except for the beans in a large pot and bring to a boil, uncovered. Lower heat and cook for 15 to 20 min-

utes. Add the beans and bring back to boil, then lower heat and simmer for 3 hours with lid half on, until the liquid is nearly evaporated. Remove the ham hock, break up the ham into small pieces and serve.

Herbed Hot Rice

10 bacon slices
3 T. bacon drippings
1 small onion, chopped
1 c. celery, chopped
1 c. canned, sliced mushrooms
2 1/2 c. rice, cooked
2 T. soy sauce
1 egg, beaten

Saute onion and celery in the bacon drippings. Add mushrooms, rice and soy sauce. Just before serving, re-heat and stir in the beaten egg til it's cooked. For those who love heat, add some cayenne pepper, then top with the crumbled bacon.



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Old Style Beets

- 3 c. cooked sliced beets
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1 T. cornstarch
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/2 c. mild vinegar

Cook and stir last 4 ingredients, when clear add beets and place in pan, covered, over hot water for thirty minutes. Before serving heat beets again and add 2 tablespoons of butter.

Alabama Cracklin' Bread

- 1/2 c. pork cracklin's
- 2 c. buttermilk
- 3 c. cornmeal
- 1 1/4 t. soda
- 1 t. salt
- 1/2 c. water, enough to make a soft batter

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Combine ingredients and mix thoroughly, turn into a greased baking pan. Bake at 400 for 20-30 minutes.

Sweet Cherry Bread

- 1 c. sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 1/2 c. plain flour
- 1 1/2 t. baking powder
- 1/4 t. salt
- 3/4 c. nut meats, chopped
- 1 6-oz. glass red maraschino cherries, quartered
- Juice from the cherries

Beat sugar and eggs together. Sift flour with the baking powder and salt. Add nuts

and cherries. Alternately add flour and cherry juice (mix green and red cherries for Christmas bread). Bake 1 hour at 350 degrees in a 1 pound loaf pan.

Georgia Pecan Squares

- 1 1/2 sticks real butter
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. flour
- 1 t. cinnamon
- 1 egg, separated
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1 c. pecans, finely chopped

Use your electric mixer to cream the butter til light. Add dry ingredients sifted together. Add egg yolk and vanilla, mix well. Spread in a 18" x 13" Pyrex dish. Brush with egg white, sprinkle liberally with pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes, and color is a light brown. Cut into small squares, cool on a wire rack.

Country Fried Apples

- Apples
- 1 heaping T. butter
- 1/2 c. sorghum molasses
- 1/2 c. water

Quarter the apples but do not peel. Place all ingredients in pan and cook slowly with lid on until apples are tender.

New Hope Peanut Brittle

- 3 c. sugar
- 1 c. peanuts
- 1 t. vinegar

Melt sugar in a pan with vinegar, being careful not to let it burn. When melted, add peanuts, stirring as little as possible. Pour on a buttered platter, break up when cold.



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The West Huntsville Witch House

by **Jerry Wilbanks**

Was she really a witch? Most everyone in my immediate family would have said yes. She was strange, old and frightening, especially to me and my sisters, all of us under the age of ten. For a year back in the early fifties, she was our neighbor in a duplex that my Father had rented in West Huntsville on Sixth Street. In the southern vernacular, we lived in adjoining rooms; or as my Mother would have put it, "joining rooms." It was the only time before the age of fourteen that I lived anywhere besides Huntsville Park. This period occupies a dark fearful part of my childhood memory, a strange interlude steeped in superstition and dread.

There was a fireplace inside and a well outside. The driveway and most of the lot was dirt. A few drooping trees and scrub bushes completed the landscaping. A dilapidated picket fence wrapped the whole property in a scene of ruin and disrepair. We could walk a couple of blocks to a general store, a couple of blocks to a drugstore and the

Center Theater, and a block or so more to the YMCA. That was just about the extent of our movement around the West Huntsville neighborhood.

The old woman, Miz McAbee as we called her, always presented the appearance of a witch or wild woman. She had long, ratty dark hair, piercing black eyes and always wore an oversized robe or gown that made her look like a Halloween witch. There was a door between our two apartments that was always kept locked. From her side. At any time of the day or evening, she would silently open it and stand framed in the doorway to the great fear and apprehension of us kids. How long she might have been standing there, no one could say! She would address my Mother and the two would talk briefly. My Mom was always greatly relieved when the old lady faded back into her half of the house and locked the door securely.

Needless to say, we all had

nightmares about the old woman creeping into our rooms late at night and getting up to who knew what kind of dark, secret, witchy activities! We all felt like we'd had a curse put on us and we were bravely waiting for the terrifying outcome; would it be snakes, spiders, accidents, or visitation by other-worldly beings? Perhaps disease and long weeks of suffering and then horrible, agonizing death! Our imaginations covered all the bases. We tried to prepare ourselves for any curse, hex, plague or otherwise unchristian and un-American eventuality.

These few things we knew for sure: (ONE) The old lady's black cat Rufus was pulled drowned from the well in a bucket on Mon-

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day morning. Miz McAbee seemed unconcerned. By the following morning, Rufus, or his exact double, was to be seen strutting around the property, big as life and twice as ugly. His "drowning" had not slowed him down in any way that we could determine.

(TWO) Items seemed to travel in our half of the house. Things that disappeared from the kitchen would turn up in the bedrooms, in the bathroom, and vice versa. Some things would mysteriously appear in the fireplace, burned almost beyond recognition. Nothing seemed to stay put for long.

(THREE) There were sounds at night. Creepy, moaning, clumping sounds; crying, groaning, altogether disconcerting sounds. Sounds that could never be tracked down or fully understood. Sometimes it was mumbling voices and low grieving, for all the world like a funeral or wake; sometimes sharp cries and pleading intonations. Getting a full night's sleep became more and more difficult.

(FOUR) There were the mysterious appearances and disappearances of old Granny McAbee herself. As already described, she would materialize at the doorway between our apartments, no one having seen or heard her arrival. The old woman's lips were always moving: reciting the Lord's Prayer backward, we guessed, or calling down curses on our innocent heads.

(FIVE) And then there was the Big John and Sparky episode. Big John and Sparky was a radio show which aired on Saturday morning and I never missed it. Big John was an adult and Sparky was his kid sidekick. It was regular children's programming with jokes and stories and special features. One part of the show that I was especially fascinated with was the "magic spyglass." Big John claimed that he could look through this glass and actually SEE the listeners. He would supposedly inspect the kids in his listening audience for clean faces and fingernails, combed hair and brushed teeth.

Occasionally he would say something like, "Well, Tony (or Mary,) it looks like you didn't comb your hair this morning!" I always felt supremely confident, because I was always prepared for the closest inspection. Imagine my surprise and consternation one Saturday morning when Big John peered into his magic spyglass



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and said, "Well, it looks like Butch didn't wash behind his ears this morning!" Why would he lie like that? And how did he find out my family nickname? I was devastated and never listened to the program again. It was the worst humiliation I had ever suffered up to that point in my five year old life!

However, the spookiest aspect of this whole affair was yet to come. That afternoon while I was sitting out on the old wooden porch alone, the old woman came out of her front door. She stooped and leaned close to my ear. "Well, Butchie," she crowed softly "I guess you'll keep your ears clean from now on!" I was petrified with fear, unable to move or speak. This is what convinced me that the cackling old hag was truly a witch. She might well have picked up my nickname innocently enough, but there is no way she could have known about Big John and his magic glass. The old crone didn't even own a radio!

(SIX) As hard as this may be to believe, there were rumors on good authority that she threw live ammunition into her fireplace in a kind of twisted game of Russian Roulette. We sometimes heard cracks and pops like rifle shots and obscene cackling and chortling coming from the old lady's side of the house. When this would happen late in the evening, we threw ourselves to the floor in our bedrooms until all the rounds had cooked off.

We could only guess at when the game might be over.

One more incident occurred while we lived in that witch house which has haunted my memory for fifty years. My Mother's good friend lived a few blocks away. She was not really related to our family but everyone called her Aunt Lydia, in the Southern tradition. She was old and in poor health. When she became so ill that the doctors gave her no chance to live, friends and family began "sitting up" with her through the night. This death watch had gone on for the better part of a week when my Mother's turn came to sit by Aunt Lydia through the night. She brought me along and I was instructed to keep very still and quiet. Around ten or eleven P.M., when it became apparent that my Mom's presence would be required through the night, she decided to take me home and return alone.

It was a cloudy and moonless evening, altogether dark and foreboding. It was late winter and

a cold wind cut through our thin coats as we turned the corner and started up the walkway toward the witch house. A large bush stood at the corner of the lot and as we walked past it a shimmering, filmy sheet of some



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transparent substance began to rise up from behind it. My Mom and I were both stunned into immobility as the gauzy thing spread out in front of us. In a moment it was blown away by the wind.

"It's a sign!" My Mom whispered, "it's a sign that Aunt Lydia is gone!"

She grabbed me up in her arms and ran back to Aunt Lydia's house. Sure enough, the saintly old woman had expired in the few minutes that we had been gone. Later that night when we were back in our house, the old witch next door could be heard chuckling and chattering to herself.

Shortly after this incident, our family moved back into the Merrimack mill village and tried to put all the creepiness behind us. We heard that within a month of our moving out, the Sixth Street duplex caught fire in the night and burned to the ground. They say that rocks fell from the

sky on that unhappy house, that wild dogs circled the property, that smoke and fog erupted from the well, and dust devils kicked up clouds of dirt which made visibility almost impossible. The neighbors and firemen were helpless to attempt any kind of rescue. There were shrieks and screams coming from the house and the old witch was presumed dead. However, not one trace of remains was ever recovered from the scene.

I felt that a place of evil had been purged and that it was fortunate for my family that we had gotten out of there when we did. Was she really a witch? I'll let the readers decide that for themselves. As for my family, we just don't talk about it that much anymore.

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A Letter From Huntsville

The following letter, by an unknown writer, appeared in the Nashville Union newspaper on March 12, 1864

A few notes from this department of the army may be interesting to your numerous readers.

This town of Huntsville is truly the gem of the Southern Confederacy. It is a most charming and delightful place. It is beautifully situated in the centre of a rich and enterprising population. Notwithstanding the horrors of war, it is still imposing and attractive. The mansions of the wealthy nabobs vie in picturesque splendor, with the lordly residences of European aristocrats. There are four churches, all distinguished by the peculiar architecture of their church edifices. All of them are neat and commodious, though, as a matter of taste, Methodist as I am. I confess a special liking for the Gothic grandeur of the Episcopal Temple. The Methodists have a magnificent Female College, in fact it is the finest structure of the kind I have ever seen. Mr. Plummer is the President, and is said to be a gentleman of fine

culture. Mrs. Prof. Wilson presides over the culinary department, and is a lady of great personal beauty and accomplishments.

Jerry Clemens resides here. He is a brilliant lawyer, and voluminous author. The fearless and patriotic Nick Davis stays here. This also was the home of the noble Lane, who kept the grand old flag floating from his house in the darkest days of rebellion. He was the noblest Roman of them all. Peace to his gal-

lant soul.

Standing upon one of these hills, and looking around upon this beautiful and glorious country, the thought of this most wicked rebellion, came over us with a heart depressing dullness. We scarcely need to go to India or Ceylon to find the spot pertinently described by Heber where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile.

I am forcibly reminded of the saying of Cromwell, while viewing the beautiful valley of the

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Nore from the cupola of St. Canice "That this indeed is a land worth fighting for." What weather! More lovely days never dawned on the sunny South than those of the last few weeks. Yesterday the sun rose beautifully and brilliantly, the surrounding hills dazzling as his first beams played upon them. But what a fickle climate. One day bright, another dark; one as wet as a swamp creek, another as dry as powder! One day the air is still as death, not a leaf stirring; another cloudy and wet! If angels laugh, they may smile at our sudden transition from storm to sunshine.

Today it is very unpleasant, as it rained all night, and continues to rain. Did not a poet write something beginning with the words, "How beautiful is the rain?" If that hardy genius was doing picket duty in a pelting storm, walking his post two hours out of every six, and in vain trying the other four to get some rest under the shelter of cloth through which the water came in a fine drizzle, he would expurgate that piece from the next edition of his works. There are some indescribable elements connected with the Southern climate, which make it sometimes peculiarly attractive to Northern-

ers, and yet the greater number prefer not to stay here any length of time.

And now what of our present camp? It is one of the finest, in all respects, which we have ever occupied. The water is excellent and abundant. Two regiments of the brigade are encamped on the slope of a large field, almost clear of timber, and beautiful for situation. In full view is the charming city of Huntsville, back of it is a vast range of hills, their peaked summits glowing in the sun, with the colored brilliancy of a chain of gems. The sanitary condition of the troops is all that we can desire. Thanks to the vigorous efforts of the surgical department for this state of things. Messrs. Buell and Bowenger are indefatigable in their efforts to secure the health of the men. How long we shall occupy this almost Eden we don't know; a day - a week - per-

haps a month. Army movements are uncertain. The birth of the Father of his Country was celebrated by appropriate ceremonies in the beautiful rooms of the Huntsville Hotel. Though the design of the celebration was unknown a few days before, still the occasion was full of interest and enthusiasm. Peals of bells ushered in the morning, salvos of cannon resounded at noon. And the bands discoursed patriotic airs. The day was delightfully mild and bright. It seemed as if Providence had ordained that the anniversary of this memorable event, should have no drawbacks on account of the weather.

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The contrabands are collecting here by the hundreds. Much has been said as to their future. Our land cannot do without them. We have almost a boundless continent of surpassing beauty and fertility to be converted into a garden. It will require myriads of hands to make this wilderness blossom as the rose. The forests are overshadowed with myriad acres because there are no hands to fell the trees. The luxuriant prairie lies idle because there is none to put in the plow. Here thousands of streams rush uselessly down their foaming beds, because no hands.

The Sanitary and Christian commissions have branch offices here, and are doing a noble work for the soldiers of the Union. The useful and inestimable services of these societies for the sick, wounded and dying volunteer, demand the gratitude and blessing of all. The Sanitary organization is not quite two years old, and in this brief period of time it has accomplished a great work in promoting the general health of our vast army. The originators

of this God-like scheme of benevolence are well-known philanthropists. Though authorized by the Government, it is not a Government institution. Since its formation, it has disbursed four hundred thousand dollars in money, and distributed seven million dollars' worth of hospital stores. Dr. Teed is superintendent of the Western department. These remarks also apply to the Christian Commission.

I hear a noise in camp, followed by a shout. The Paymaster has arrived. The countenances of the veterans are radiant with joy. I wish I could describe the sensations produced by the presence of the aforesaid gentleman. The first company paid, and green backs flying like leaves.

Our regiment (the 80th Ohio), received almost fifty thousand dollars; much of it has been sent home. May every dollar create joy and gladness in the distant homes of our brave, battle-scarred volunteers. These noble fellows had fulfilled their first term of enlistment, and had entered the service for another

term. They have been through many terrible battles, passing through incredible hardships; and yet these undaunted heroes again pledge their honor never to lay down their armor until the last armed foe expires. It was a grand and imposing sight.

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they left Ohio nine hundred strong; now they number three hundred weather heroes. Their two battle flags once flaunting to their fresh embellishments, are now rent by hostile bullets. Many brave hands have grasped them, and followed them into the scenes of warfare and of death. But where the hundreds whose places are now vacant? The majority of them fill soldiers' sepulchres.

Have they died in vain? No, by Heaven! The blood of men fighting for Freedom is never shed in vain. From the ground it cries aloud; the earth will never cover it, and the Avenger knoweth his day and his hour. Indeed those lines of Byron's are profoundly true and noble, "For Freedom's battle once begun, Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son, Though often lost, is ever won."

Gallant defenders of their country's glory; they are buried in no ignoble graves, for their resting place shall be a spot at which valor shall gain fresh life and freedom trim her torch. Yes, illustrious patriots, ye died not in vain. The truest and best na-

tures in the Republic will mourn for you; copious tears will be shed for you; the gallant, the chivalrous, the brave, the beautiful will sorrow for you; keep with their tears the green sod verdant above your heads; the heart of the nation will throb heavily at the portals of your tombs, and the young will see visions of beauty, of hope, of honor, of the bright future ascending out of your sepulchre. It is a glorious consolation that those who sleep where they fell, whose graves are unknown, trampled over, ploughed up, blown and scattered by all the winds of heaven, have better and truer tombstones than those who live and die in inglorious ease.

Nazi's Coming To Huntsville

Huntsville, 1944 - Chambers Construction Co. has been awarded a \$24,000 contract to build a facility for German POW's at the Huntsville Arsenal.

Most of the prisoners are from Rommel's Afrika Corps and are expected to be employed in agricultural work. Civilian workers at the Arsenal are cautioned against having anything to do with the prisoners.

In other Arsenal news, it is reported that large quantities of chemical munitions, captured from the Nazis, are to be stowed at specially built facilities.

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Monrovia

by **Jack Harwell**

A short distance off the highway from Huntsville to Athens, the town of Monrovia once stood. The location is still known as Monrovia, although there is no longer a town there. It was a thriving little community which fell victim to changing times, as Huntsville grew larger and nearer.

Possibly the first outsider to see the area known as Monrovia was Thomas Freeman, the surveyor who, in 1809, established the range and township lines still in use today for specifying locations in the county. Freeman had opportunity to see a great deal of what is today Madison County, and made special notes of locations which he considered prime real estate. When lands went on sale in north Alabama, Freeman took possession of parcels of land scattered all around the county, including the Monrovia area.

The land where the town of Monrovia would eventually arise was bought by William Petus in 1811. Around mid-century the Petus family sold the land to a family from Monrovia, Indiana. The Hoosiers decided to remember their former hometown by giving its name to the farm they now owned.

In the latter half of the Nineteenth Century the village became a real town, complete with a blacksmith shop a general store, a cotton gin, and a post office. During this time the land was owned by the family of Rufus Thompson, who had bought it in 1871.

The Thompsons kept control of the land until 1912, when Rufus's son Oscar, then in declining health, sold the town to Author Wall. The Walls and their descendants would own the

land thereafter. Author Wall, and later his brother Lawson, made a number of improvements to the town. To the existing mill they added a mill pond and an over-shot water wheel, which provided power for both a grist mill and a saw mill.

Lawson Wall's fine home had Monrovia's first indoor plumbing, and was wired for electricity long before such a luxury was common in rural areas. In 1935, Lawson Wall retired and sold Monrovia to his daughter. In the years that followed changes would take place that would mean the end of the town. A fine new gymnasium was built at Monrovia School by the WPA, the beginning of a county wide school renovation program that would last for a decade. But after World War II, the accelerated pace of life began to bypass Monrovia. The store, mill, and shops, which had prospered even during the Depression, were closed by 1950. By 1960, fires had destroyed nearly all the structures that had housed Monrovia's businesses. Even the post office was closed.

But Monrovia's name lived on in its school. For three decades Monrovia's students enjoyed some of the finest facilities that existed for a county school. Then, on a Monday night in March, 1968, the gymnasium burned to the ground. Some members of the football team, who had been holding a spring drill nearby, managed to dash in and rescue some of their possession before the fire grew uncontrollable. Everything else was gone. The next day the brick walls were brought down as a precaution.

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Nearly five years later, during the 1972-73 holiday break, the old school was torn down. The event saddened many residents who had themselves attended the school, but a fine new building replaced it, so that Monrovia still has one of the best school buildings in the county.

The school remains one of three local institutions to keep the memory of Monrovia alive. The Monrovia Homemakers' Club, founded in the blacksmith shop in 1911, has been a part of many community projects, such as building mailboxes; and of course, the Monrovia Road, one end of which is in front of north Alabama's largest shopping mall. There, you can buy videos, computers, and the latest clothing fashions, just five miles from the site of the old grist mill and blacksmith shop.



Local News From 1867

- Wm. Chad Lowry, a freedman, and charged with shooting a mule belonging to Nash Malone, was up before Squire Figg yesterday, and bound over in the sum of \$200, to appear at the County Court to be held in July.

- It looks considerably like old times to see the Bell Factory goods at the old Bell Factory Store, on Commercial Row, and to see the smiling face of Mr. Charles Cabaniss behind the counter. Wm. Elgin is also at his old place with the books. The same old loungers may be seen there daily and an hour spent with them carries us back to the good old times of yore.

- Owing to feeling unwell, Dr. F. Seymour will be unable to visit Paint Rock until June 4th and Huntsville, June 6th at which time he hopes to see his patients.

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News From The Year 1946

News From Huntsville and Around The World

Fire Destroys Struve Building in Downtown Huntsville

A roaring blaze, last night, gutted the inside of the historic Struve Building located, on the corner of Randolph and Washington. Firemen struggled in vain to contain the roaring fire as it devoured all three floors and the businesses located within. Initial reports say that the estimated damage will be well in excess of \$100,000.

Businesses located in the building include the Henderson National Bank, Business Equipment Company, Mrs. Joe E. Co-

per Insurance, Attorneys Jere Murphy and John Thomas, Murphree Insurance, J.L. Fisher Real Estate, Williamson Insurance, W.O.W. Camp 67, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Elks Lodge and two shoe stores.

No Peace in Middle East as Jerusalem Bombing Kills 100 People

A powerful blast destroyed one wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. The hotel was being used as headquarters for the British government who are currently occupying the city.

The Zionist guerilla group Irgun, led by Menachem Begin, has claimed responsibility for the blast which claimed more than one hundred lives and injured several hundred others. President Truman has sent a special envoy to the region in an attempt to work out a peace plan.

Hirohito Proclaims Divinity To Be Myth

Japan - In a break with tradition going back thousands of years Emperor Hirohito has issued a proclamation declaring his divinity a myth. Since ancient times Japanese people have believed their emperors were descended from the legendary Sun Goddess.

Local Man Gives Television Demonstration

Huntsville - Lawrence Brock, a radio dealer and repairman, last night displayed to his friends and customers a new marvel known as a Television. Almost five foot high and three feet across, the box featured a glass viewing screen seven inches wide. It took much effort on Brock's part as he adjusted the various knobs and controls but finally a moving picture of two people apparently singing, although fuzzy and distorted, appeared on the screen.

He has been trying to interest investors but most people believe it to be a fad that will quickly pass.

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Nazi Leaders Hung At Nuremburg

Nuremburg, Germany - Nine leading figures of Nazi Germany's brutal aggression, after having been found guilty of war crimes, were hung today one by one as witnesses from the Allied powers watched in silence.

Most of the condemned men expressed no remorse for their actions as the nooses were tightened around their necks. Julius Streiker, an early member of the Nazi party, clicked his heel and shouted "Heil Hitler" seconds before the trap door opened.

Herman Goering escaped the hangman's noose by swallowing cyanide only minutes before his scheduled hanging. His body was placed with the others before being taken to Dachau where they were reportedly cremated.

According to one report from a member of the Allied Tribunal the ashes will be dumped into a river to prevent any type of Nazi shrine being erected at their burial site.

There are at present over 14,000 Germans in Allied custody awaiting trials, of which 2,300 are likely to be hung

Madison County Votes Wet

By a two-to-one vote, citizens of Madison County voted to approve the sale of liquor within the county.

Local religious leaders expressed shock and dismay at the election's outcome. Church groups had worked diligently for months to oppose the vote, forecasting large increases in the public welfare rolls if people were allowed to spend their earnings on liquor.

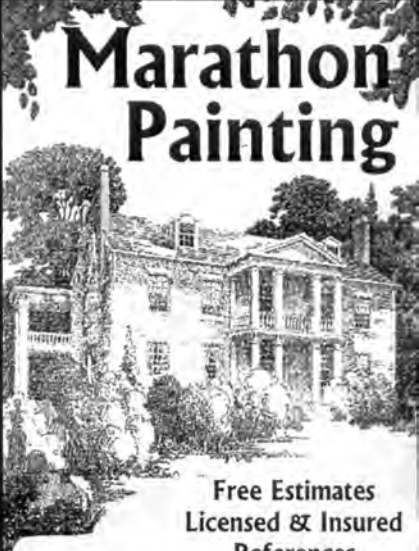
The liquor store is expected to be located on Gallatin Street with M.H. Patton as manager.

End Of An Era

The Huntsville City Council voted last night to sell the last of its mules and wagons to C.A. Floyd for \$200. Mules and wagons have been used by the city for well over a hundred years for everything from garbage pickup to road repair.

Rising feed prices have made it impossible for livestock to compete with gasoline powered trucks and tractors.

It is not known what the county barn, located on Church Street will be used for.



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History of Madison County

"The Early Settlers"

Written by Judge Taylor in the year 1890

When our forefathers came to this country it was covered everywhere with a magnificent forest. The trees were the largest of their species. The poplar or lime trees were exceptionally numerous and large and were found on the best soil. To remove these primeval forests or deaden them was a task of no little magnitude. To cut down or remove the trees from the land was impossible, so they were girdled, that is a circle cutting through the sap was girdled around their trunks. The best time to perform this task was in August or September as when girdled at this period their vitality was effectually destroyed.

The first year it was not expected they would produce a good crop as the trees stood so thick that they took a great deal of the tillable land and the roots made cultivation impossible.

When spring came, the undergrowth shot up in the rich soil and the sprouts were removed with the old fashioned grubbing hoe. Plowing among the roots was a very unpleasant and slow business. As a general rule, for the first two or three years the farms had to be gone over acre by acre, by which time the sprouts and roots near the surface were gotten rid of and the plowing was less difficult.

But about the second year the small branches of the girdled trees began to fall, covering the ground during the winter with their litter which had to be gathered and burned in the spring before plowing commenced. Then the less durable timber began to decay and was prostrated by the winter gales and had to be cut up, piled and burned before plowing could be

done.

On a large plantation where there was an adequate force of stout men and stouter oxen the work was done by the hands on the plantation, but in a region of small farms a cooperative system was introduced and what was termed log rolling was the order of the day. In the first place the owner of the field cut notches on the logs at intervals of about ten feet and started a fire on each notch and when the fire had well caught he laid a large dry limb across the notch which caught and burned until it fell in half on each side of the log.

Morning and evening the fires were mended by taking the burned and divided fragments, placing them in the increasing gap made by the fire and as the logs gnawed deeper, filling it up with combustible material until it cut the logs into, which was sometimes done as smoothly as if cut with a saw.

In favorable weather it took about a week to burn off the logs and just before logrolling day the farmer went over the ground with his axe and cut off the logs the fire had missed. As a rule, each farmer had one or two log rollings a spring but he expected the help of all his neighbors and had to help them in return so he

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expected to spend two or three weeks in this business.

Normally a force of forty or fifty stalwart men would gather at a neighbors farm to pile the logs into a large heap which would later be burned. The portions the owner could handle were not touched, as the object was to pile up the logs he could not lift. Except for an hour at noon they usually worked until sundown or till the logs were all rolled and the host expected them to remain after supper even when there was no frolic or dance to detain them.

In a space of two or three weeks the logs in the fields for miles around would be piled in vast heaps and set on fire and at night the whole neighborhood would be illuminated. Sometimes the wind would rise and sparks from the log heaps would catch and set the dead forest on fire and the farmers would have to fight to save their fences. A cry, "the fence is on fire!," would come from some watchful sentinel and the men would hasten to the point of danger and scatter the fence rail out of the reach of the flames. So it would be kept up until the fire died from lack of fuel.

Outside of the labor of preparing, piling and burning of the logs there was a vast amount building and fencing to be done and the men of that day were among the best oxmen in the world. The early settler, when he had selected and entered his homestead, had his tract of 80 or 100 acres of heavy forest with

not a tree missing. He was a stranger in the country with no shelter for his family except his rude tent or covered wagon, one or two beds and a few cooking utensils. He generally had his gun and dogs, an axe or two, some iron wedges and he owned or could borrow a crosscut saw.

The first work was to fell a huge oak, saw and split it and rive it into boards. They then cut forks of sufficient length, fixed them at proper distances upright, laid poles thereon and covered them with boards. This afforded protection from the rains and they and their families frequently spent weeks with no other shel-

ter. After a cabin was built these rude shelters were sometimes used for a kitchen until the owners could find time to build more comfortable tenements.

The first question in building a house was the help a man could depend upon in his work.

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If alone with no help but his wife, his logs were merely poles cut near or on the building site and were of size that he could handle. The lodge poles were notched, the pen put up and the boards laid on the roof. If he had punchcons ready, the floor was laid, if not, he made a temporary one out of boards. The door, and sometimes a window, was cut out after the pen was up, a shutter was made of boards and swung on wooden hinges .

Boards were smoothed and nailed inside for ceiling, a loft was laid overhead for storage of odds and ends. The cracks were closely chinked and then daubed on the outside with clay.

Sawing plank was a laborious business, yet in the course of time the sawmen managed to turn out a considerable amount of lumber from their old saw pits. The old fashioned whip saw is now more of a relic than an ordinary working tool but the first settlers, remote from saw mills and with poor roads, resorted to hand sawing to get flooring and planks for other uses. A pit five or six feet was dug in order to make it easier to

roll up the logs. The saw stocks, as they were termed, were put on a frame and a man on top and one in the pit, with a measured regular stroke sawed through the long summer days getting out two or three hundred feet of lumber daily.

Some men followed the busi-

ness as a trade and could make from one to two dollars a day at the work. A large amount of lumber used in building up Huntsville was sawed in this way and many an old settler who lived to own land and negroes got his start by pulling the whip saw.

As the houses grew more pre-



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tentious and the logs heavier, house raising assemblies grew in size and the knack of carrying up a corner became one of fine art. It required the judgement necessary to alter the notches for a good fit and at the same time keep the walls plumb so that when the walls were up there would be uniformity in the cracks between a wall. Some of these old poplar houses are still standing but generally they have been weather boarded and disguised and disfigured by side rooms and galleries until they are hardly recognizable. Some of these old time buildings are between Gurleystown and Grayson's spring where some four or five such buildings were erected about fifty years ago and are still standing.

The art of chimney building also attained a considerable degree of perfection, the body of logs and the stem of square sticks riven out of heart oak and the whole well covered with a coat of good clay, made a good chimney. They would not last a great while unless protected from the rain which shed away the clay covering and admitted the air on all sides, thus destroying the draft. The standard chimney for the hewed log house was the rock chimneys, which were well constructed and lasted for generations, but the first settlers had no hewed logs or rock chimneys. These were the work of a later generation.

Local News From 1907

- Helen Evans, a young white woman who keeps a quiet place in the city, was placed under arrest yesterday afternoon by policeman Pamplin on a charge of operating a blind tiger. Several

bottles of beer were found in the cooler and the woman protested that she kept them there for her own individual use. She made bond in the sum of fifty dollars and appeared in the police court for trial this morning. Dr. Lacy Mastin, city physician, testified that he had prescribed for the woman and directed her to drink beer. The case was dismissed.

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Weird News

- Near Barcelona, Spain, Time magazine reported that in 1941 a farmer hitched a ride on a truck carrying an empty coffin. Since it was raining, the man climbed inside the coffin. Later, two more men thumbed a ride. After a while, the farmer raised the coffin lid and exclaimed, "I see it's stopped raining." The other passengers jumped off the moving truck. One was killed and the other badly injured.

- In Washington, D.C., a man driving to work was delighted to discover a totally naked young woman standing under a street light. She explained that she had just broken up with her boyfriend. When she refused to give back his engagement ring, the ex-

boyfriend took her clothes.

- In Missouri, a passing good Samaritan pulled an injured man from a wrecked car - and carefully laid him down in a bed of poison ivy!

Mules Stolen in New Hope

from 1901 newspaper

John W. Buford, a planter from the New Hope neighborhood, reported to the police late yesterday afternoon that two of his tenants, Jackson Jones and Henry Brooks, stole from his place two fine mules and when last heard of were coming in the direction of the city. When last seen they were both under the influence of whiskey.

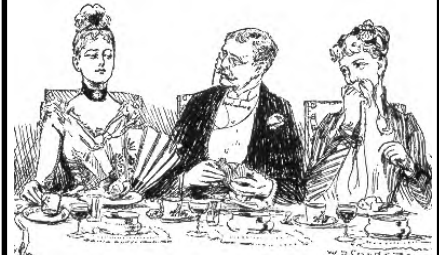
Police are under the impression they have skipped to some other state with the animals.

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Great Grandchild Of Revolutionary War Soldier Still Living In Madison County in 1950

William Sibley, the author of this article, is a great-great-great-grandson of American Revolutionary War Soldier, Robert Wright, Sr.

A 1950 front page story in The Huntsville Times showed 87-year old Mills J. Potts getting into an automobile and indicated that Mr. Potts was possibly the only third generation survivor of an American Revolutionary War soldier. Mr. Potts' grandfather was Robert Wright, Sr.

Part of the article read: "City Record Claimed By Revolution Soldier's Grandson" and "Mills J. Potts Is Believed To Be Only 3rd Generation Now Alive Throughout The United States Of Colonials Who Fought To Forge Nation's Heritage."

The information about Mr. Potts and his grandfather, Robert Wright, Sr. came from local long-time attorney and historian, Walter Esslinger, who was compiling information for a book about prominent Madison County families.

Mr. Potts' grandfather, Robert Wright, Sr. was born in 1762 in Amherst County, Virginia and died in 1847 in Madison County, Alabama. Mr. Wright was married to (1) Keziah Bibb and (2)

Peggy Calvert. Robert and Keziah were the parents of 11 children. Robert and Peggy were the parents of 3 children. Mr. Potts descended from the second marriage.

Quoting from Alabama Records, Vol. 35, the 1950 newspaper article tells of the death of Mr. Wright in 1847 and says that he emigrated to Madison County in 1815, a date that is in disagreement with Mr. Esslinger's records. Mr. Esslinger pointed out that Robert Wright was living in Huntsville in 1809 when a census was taken here. This writer also found the census record plus 2 more records that indicate that Mr. Wright was living in Madison County before 1815. Robert Wright and Peggy Calvert were married in 1811 in Madison County, Alabama of the Mississippi Territory and the newspaper, The Southern Advocate of Huntsville, Alabama in its April 2, 1847 edition has the story of Robert Wright's obituary and has 1808 as the date he emigrated to Madison County. Marriage, Death, And Legal Notices From Early Alabama Newspapers, 1819-1893, printed the story from the Southern Advocate on page 489, which reads: "Departed this life - Robert

Wright, Sr. A Patriot of the Revolution aged 85 years 17 days, a native of Amherst County, Virginia. Was at the Seige of York and assisted in the capture of Cornwallis. Emigrated to Madi-

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son County in 1808..." Mr. Esslinger, quoting from Alabama Records, Vol. 35, points out that Mr. Wright assisted in the capture of Cornwallis on Oct. 19, 1781.

In the 1950 article, Mr. Esslinger points out that 174 years had passed since the beginning of the American Revolutionary War and that it seemed unbelievable that a third generation descendent of that war was alive in 1950. In 2003, 227 years have passed since the war began in 1776 and a fourth generation, Mrs. Edna Berryhill, is living only a few miles from the place where her great-grandfather settled in the early 1800s. Robert Wright settled first in Little

Cove and after a few years, he moved to Berkley. Both communities are on the eastern edge of Big Cove.

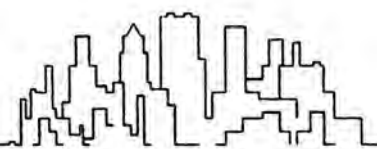
Mr. Esslinger attributed Mr. Potts' long life and his distinction of being a third generation Revolutionary War descendent living in 1950 to two reasons: being the child of long-lived parents and

grandparents and descending from very large families. Mr. Wright was the father of 14 children and Mr. Potts was the second youngest of 12 children.

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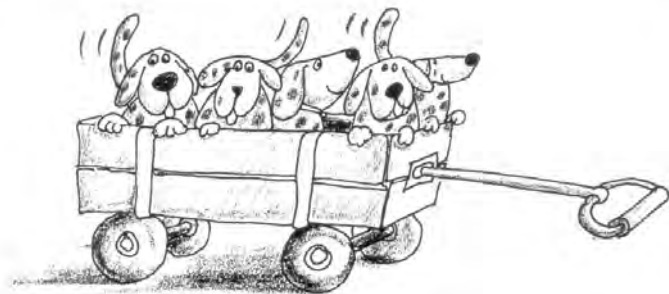
Carrie Snow

Police News from 1911

- Harvey Gibson was arrested last night by the police on a charge of appearing in public with a woman of bad character. He was fined in Mayor Smith's court this morning.

- Willie Burkley, a boy from Tullahoma, Tenn. claims he came to the city with J. Gibson and was deserted by him. He had no money and no place to go and applied to the police for aid. His people in Tullahoma were notified and they asked the police to keep the boy until they could send for him.

- A vagrant claiming to be Abraham Lincoln was arrested Tuesday night at the depot. He will be emancipated in 30 days along with a ten dollar fine.



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The Great Davsini

One of the most popular forms of entertainment in Huntsville's early history were the traveling troupes of magicians, spiritualists and hypnotists who traveled from town to town performing one night stands.

Edward Young, or the "Great Galvani - Master of the Hypnotic Trance" as he was more popularly known, was a frequent visitor to Huntsville in 1911, performing at the Elks Theater.

His show consisted of selecting volunteers from the audience and after placing them in a trance, having them perform various tricks. The highlight of the show always came when Galvani placed a small bowl filled with water on the floor and told the subject he was drowning.

The resulting antics always brought down the house. Unfortunately, the Great Galvani was also a master of the whiskey bottle, consuming prodigious amounts of the fiery liquor at every opportune moment.

Often times the show would have to be delayed while a search

party scoured the neighborhood bars for him.

Despite Galvani's shortcomings, he attracted a large group of admirers. One of them was Carlisle Davis, an employee at a nearby carriage shop.

To Davis, Galvani represented everything he had always dreamed of being. The allure of traveling, being idolized by admiring fans, and performing on stage was more of an attraction than anything Huntsville could offer to a young lad.

The biggest attraction for Davis, however, was the awesome power Galvani seemed to

hold over his subjects while they were hypnotized. Davis began spending every spare moment with Galvani. Before long he had committed the whole act to memory.

The Great Galvani was scheduled to appear at a local park as part of the 4th of July celebrations.

According to a Huntsville newspaper of the day, over two thousand people thronged the park to see the Mystic.

Unfortunately the great man had mysteriously succumbed to a quart of Kentucky Bourbon and could not be aroused. The committee in charge of staging the event were frantic. There seemed to be no alternative except to call the show off. Suddenly their gloom was interrupted by Carlisle Davis. "I can do the shawl" he proclaimed. "I've been watching him and I know exactly what he does."

The offer was met by a stunned silence and disbelief. Finally one



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of the men who had been standing in the back of the room stepped forward. "The boy's right," he said. "I been seeing those two together every day for the past week." Any other qualms the committee had were probably dispelled by the angry rumblings of two thousand people clamoring for the show to begin.

"Get your stuff," he was told, "you're on in five minutes."

And it came to pass that Carlyle Davis, a local small town boy with dreams of stardom, was magically transferred into the "Great Davisini."

Davis was superb. He had copied Galvani's patter exactly. After a brief "lecture" he chose Ivan Benson from the audience to be his subject.

Again, everything went perfect. Davis had Benson crow like a rooster, bark like a dog and even forget his own name.

The audience, though skeptical at first, began to warm up to the budding star. Many of the crowd seemed to believe Davis had found a new career and would soon be headed toward

riches and fame.

The grand climax of the show finally came. Davis carefully placed a small teacup of water in the middle of the stage. Now, turning to the subject, he announced in a loud voice that the teacup was the Atlantic Ocean and he was out in the middle of it about to drown.

Benson, the subject, immediately threw himself on top of the teacup and began thrashing about, as if he was swimming. The effect was everything one could have hoped for. The whole audience were on their feet laughing outrageously.

After about five minutes of swimming, the audience became silent, waiting for Davis to waken Benson. The committee was waiting too. Finally one of the members approached Davis on the stage and told him it was time to stop. It was evident Davis was in trouble. He was sweating profusely and his eyes kept darting about as if searching for, a hole to crawl into.

"I said that's enough!" This time the committee member's voice left no doubt that he was to be obeyed.

"I can't!" replied Davis in a trembling voice. Galvani always whispered those instructions and I never got a chance to hear them!"

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Realization dawned on the audience at about the same time. First there were a couple of cat calls, and then a few hurled insults, followed closely by a barrage of rocks and bottles aimed at the Great Davisini.

With the angry crowd in close pursuit, Davis took refuge under the floor of a nearby house. Fortunately for all concerned, Dr. Westmoreland, a noted Huntsville doctor, had observed what happened. After dragging Davis from his hiding place, the doctor marched him back to the park where he coaxed Davis on how to waken Benson - who was still swimming.

The next week Huntsville's city fathers passed an ordinance barring hypnosis from being used for entertainment.

Alabamian Serves in Three Wars

Dr. William West Grant (1846-1934), a native of Russell County, Alabama, set a record that will be hard to beat. As a teenager, Grant joined Clanton's Battery in 1863 and spent 16 months as a Confederate artillery man.

Later moving to Davenport, Iowa, he became a distinguished physician, studying in London, Vienna, and Berlin. Grant was a doctor in the Colorado National Guard during the Spanish-American War of 1898, and became Surgeon General of Colorado the following year.

Unbelievably, he returned to uniform for the third time in September 1917- 52 years after Lee's surrender! The 71 year old ex-Confederate spent all of World War I on active duty.

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A Petition

Bridgeport, Alabama,
February 2, 1865

Sir, I have the honor to enclose here within, petitions of James H. Hembree and C.W. Melton, my son-in-laws, praying to his Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, that they be permitted to take the oath of allegiance and return to their homes and families.

Mr. Melton's wife is dead and his daughters, six and three years of age, are dependent upon me for their support.

My husband died in 1854, and I am now in destitute circumstances, having a family of my own to support and care for, and not one male member of my own, or daughter's family to render me assistance.

In the present conditions of the country, it is impossible for females alone to gain a livelihood.

My daughters cultivated a small field of corn the past season, with their own hands, which would have been sufficient to subsist us through the winter, had we been permitted to gather it, but it was all taken by the soldiers, and we are left destitute. Mr. James Hembree's wife is in very poor health, and has no means of support for family and two children, aged eight and four years.

I respectfully submit the enclosed petition to your kind considerations and action in be half of the widowed, and their children.

I am Sir
Your Humble Servant Lucy Johnson

Mrs. Lucy Johnson was the cousin of Andrew Johnson, Military Governor of Tennessee, who later became President of the United States after Lincoln's assassination. There is no record that Johnson ever responded to his cousin's plea.

City Wins Lawsuit

Judge T. Betts of the law and equity court heard several suits brought by the city of Huntsville against property owners who have contested the assessments against them for the cost of paving streets in front of their property. The judgments of the court in favor of the city against the property owners are as follows:

Harry M. Rhett. \$250, Miss Mattie P Barnard \$250, Mrs. Maria Jones and A. L. Rison \$200. Mrs. Kate Caldwell \$250, Leo Marscheutz and Mrs. Maria Jones \$300, John R. Connor \$300, J. N. Mazza \$140, Mrs. Annie Powell \$175.

from 1910 Huntsville paper



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Burnam's Pool

by **Walt Terry**

Back in the olden days of the 'twenties and 'thirties, Burnam's pool, located about where the Big Spring Lagoon is now, was about the only place in town to swim. Of course, there was Pinhook Creek, Fagins Creek and the like, for those who couldn't afford Burnam's twenty-five cents admission.

The pool was unique by today's standards. Its sides were wooden boards, its bottom was sand and mud. The men's bath house was wood frame with wood-slatted floors, as I remember. Available for the womenfolk were little wooden structures that looked like connected out-houses.

In the center of the pool, at the deep end, was what looked like, to our youthful imagination, a super-tall utility pole. Way up on it, almost out of sight in an imagined stratosphere, was a postage-stamp size platform you could dive from if you were crazy enough.

A local "prize fighter," named Dummy Robinson used to do it. I thought for years that diving off that insane pole was how he had earned his name. At least, I thought that until I learned he

was as deaf as the pole he dove from. Maybe there was a connection anyhow, in that he couldn't hear the warnings (from people like me) who would not have plunged off that stupid perch for any fame or fortune imaginable.

Mr. and Mrs. Burnam were fine folks, he a lock and gunsmith, as I recall, and she the commander-in-chief of the pool. Her authority was indisputable and unchallenged. Once I heard of a small boy telling her that a lady floating around in an inner tube had one of her "things" hanging out. Turned out she was a local prostitute advertising her wares. Mrs. Burnam was quick to inform the "lady" that her pool was a respectable place and she would have to hang out somewhere else.

The Burnam's had two children, Emily and Jimmy. Jimmy was my age, Emily two or three years older and infinitely wiser about many things, like where babies came from and even how they got there.

The two often fought, as siblings will. Emily, older, stronger and a tomboy, was sometimes overly aggressive. In one of their battles, Emily called her brother a "son of a dog." I was standing nearby and very carelessly said, "Hey, Emily, you called your own

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mother a dog."

Later in my life I did some boxing, but I never came anywhere near as close to being knocked unconscious as I did that day.

"You stay out of this!" she yelled, and I still can't for the life of me remember whether it was before or after she hit me. No matter. I stayed out of it, not only for that time but for all time to come. I might have been stupid, but I was not suicidal.

Emily forgave me. But she did me no favor when she invited me to go to the Lyric Theatre for the first Huntsville showing of "Frankenstein."

Soon after we had settled into seats in the front row, an evil looking man in a black suit came on the screen. In menacing tones he said something like, "If anyone in the audience has a weak heart or a cringing fear of unspeakable monsters, he or she should leave now!"

Well shucks! I wasn't that interested in seeing the movie anyway. I got up to leave.

Only to be collared by Emily, who told me in no uncertain terms to sit my "you know what" back down in that seat.

Well, on that day my fear of the monstrous surrendered to my respect for Emily's left hook.

I sat back down.

I'll never forget that headon, if tremulous, confrontation with Frankenstein's monster - only one of many confrontations, some equally frightening, that I've since had to face up to.

And I'll never forget Emily, who played an important role in getting me started.

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from 1911 local newspaper

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A Letter

Mr. Robert Shirer, Meridian Road, Huntsville, Alabama - August, 1871

Dear Papa,

I do not think I will be able to come home for Christmas. It is such a long way and not much money. I think about you and the family all the time. I wish you could be here to see the sights I have seen. California is truly a grand place. I have got a job at a sawmill now. I am throwing slabs. When I get some money ahead I am going to send you some picture cards of places I have seen.

I went to San Francisco with the men I work with. The city must be as big as Huntsville and Decatur both. It is something to see the ocean. You can throw a fish up in the air and the birds will fight over it until one gets it and flies off with it. Some of the birds are as big as a turkey. Some of the men I work with are going to go off gold hunting. They want me to go but I said no. I don't think there is any gold left here. We did not find as much to pay for our beans this year past. There are men all over the hills and all the good places are gone. The way to get rich here is to open a cooking place. The food is bad and most of us would rather be hungry than eat it.

I had to sell the horse. I had run out of money and no one to turn to. But don't worry, I will send money to pay you for it. I hope my letter gets to you by Christmas and tell everyone that I send my regards. I will surely be home Christmas next year. Your Dutiful Son, Lee

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An Innocent Incest

There is now in the State Penitentiary an aged couple who are serving out a term for the crime of incest, they being brother and sister.

The story is this: At the age of twelve years, the male left his father's house to seek his fortune and no more return. He, in time, came West, grew to manhood and married, raised a family of children, and in time his wife died.

His sister grew to womanhood and was married, and with her husband came West, and then to Iowa. Her husband died, and in time she received an offer of marriage from a man who was a widower. She accepted the offer and they were married. Her husband was wealthy, and after a time one of his sons wished to have the father give him some property, but the father refused to accede to his demands.

The son, one day, while looking over the family record of the stepmother, which had been laid aside and forgotten, discovered that there was a kinship between the families, and further investigation proved that his father and stepmother were very own brother and sister.

To avenge himself for his

father's refusal to give him the bulk of his property, he brought suit against them both for incest. They were tried and convicted and sent to the penitentiary for one year. They are both over sixty years of age, and as innocent of intent to commit crime as the new born babe.

The son has meanwhile taken possession of the property.
from 1873 newspaper

Mayor Fines Himself For Fighting

Huntsville Mayor R. E. Smith, who engaged in a fight with J. E. Pierce, editor of The Huntsville Times, sat on his own case in the police court this morning. The case of Pierce was called first, and the defendant was discharged although he entered a plea of guilty. The mayor next called his own case and entered a fine of \$10 against himself because of the fact that he was the aggressor in the affray.
from 1912 newspaper

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The Honor

by **Glen Brooks**

During the 1960's the northern section of downtown Huntsville was known as the "Z" strip. During this era there was a lot of activity there due to several beer joints, pool rooms and at least one dance hall; therefore a drunk or two was not rare.

As a police detective and assigned to the evening shift, I had just parked my car on Jefferson Street when a patrol unit passed by. In the back seat, apparently under arrest, was a familiar face.

I radioed the patrol unit and asked if I could speak with them about their prisoner before they locked him up.

We met behind the police station and after a brief discussion the arresting officer agreed to allow me to take charge of their arrestee and take him home since he was only guilty of intoxication.

It was a long drive to his home out in the county and a longer drive back. I had been away from my duties too long.

On Monday I was summoned to my supervisors office to explain why I had "interfered" with the officer's arrest.

It seemed that one of the officers had made a complaint.

"It was Paul Bolden," was my only explanation. None other was needed. My supervisor said he would take care of it.

I had first met Paul about ten years earlier while we worked together at Redstone Arsenal. I grew to care very much for this small, quiet man.

Staff Sergeant Paul L. Bolden met the enemy a few days before Christmas in Belgium in 1944.

Thirty-five German soldiers did not live to regret it. Practically alone, armed with grenades and an automatic weapon, Paul assaulted a farm house that contained the German soldiers. Paul was wounded three times in that action.

A hero is motivated into action by fear, courage or madness or a combination of all three. What sent Paul into that fortification, I now know. I know he was a hero.

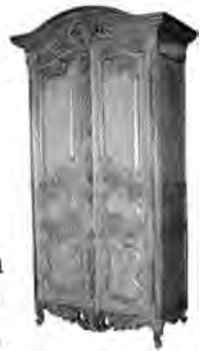
Paul has since died. Not much has been written or said about this poor North Alabama country boy. I've often wondered why.

He won the Medal of Honor. I won the honor of knowing him.

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I Remember When

by Don Wynn

The building that used to house Mullins' is still standing at the corner of Andrew Jackson Way and Stephens Avenue. Even though the building seems small when I drive by it today, Mullins' Drive-In seemed like a big place in the 60's. It had large plate glass "picture windows" that faced the streets. It was well lighted inside and there was always a lot of noise and activity.

I remember sitting at the counter when I was a boy about 12 or 13 years old. Mr. Mullins and the waitresses made me feel as though I were the King ordering my lunch.

The traffic light and the bus stop at the corner made it possible to sit in the corner booth and keep track of the comings and goings of everyone. In the afternoons and on weekends, kids would fill that booth for hours. The juke box on the front wall was kept busy playing the latest rock-n-roll songs.

All the kids wore a uniform of sorts. Boys wore white T-shirts, dark blue jeans with the cuffs turned up, white socks and penney loafers. In the winter, leather jackets were everywhere. Just about every hair cut involved long greasy hair that ended in a duck-tail in the back.

The girls wore turtle neck sweaters, poodle skirts, bobbie socks and saddle oxfords. When they danced to rock-n-roll music, their skirts would flare out when they did the spins.

Neighborhood boys could always pick up a little spending money by working as car hops for Mr. Mullins. People would park on Stephens, honk their car horns and wait for one of these boys to take their orders. They could eat in their cars with serving trays hung on the door glass or they could simply pick up their orders "to go."

The boys earned about 30 cents per hour plus tips. They weren't real formal about work hours though. Boys would usually drop by when they needed money and would ask Mr. Mullins if they could work for a while.


The restaurant has moved a

few blocks down Andrew Jackson but not much has really changed.

The dining area is bigger and there is a big parking lot. And if you look in the phone book, it's still listed as Mullins' Drive-In Restaurant!

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Tips From Liz

Household Advice, Beauty Tips
and Common Sense



Arthritis Tips

We have heard from so many folks recently who are really suffering with arthritis. So this month we want to give you some information that may help you.

* 500 mg. of Glucosamine sulfate taken 3 times a day - relieves the symptoms and helps repair damaged joints. Sufferers swear by this one.

* Foods - there are certain foods to avoid - called stressors - that trigger arthritis inflammation. Some of these are:

- Coffee
- Alcohol
- Meats
- Chocolate
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Sugar
- Processed foods

* Exercise is excellent - even just walking around Old Town, Twickenham or your own neighborhood - wear sturdy, comfortable shoes and breathe deeply.

* Lifting weights is very good - but check with your doctor so that you don't strain yourself.

* Vitamins - Vitamin C is one of the best arthritis fighters - take it every day.

* Other foods good to eat are fruits, whole grains, nuts, vegetables and seeds.

* Cauliflower is excellent, cooked and raw. Try whole grain breads instead of that bland white bread.

* Red, yellow and orange fruits neutralize harmful free radicals in the body, and can treat and prevent degenerative diseases like arthritis.

* Blueberries, cherries (not in a bottle!) raspberries and strawberries are very good.

* Aromatherapy - the powers of fragrant oils. This can effect changes in mood and health, and has proven powerful in easing arthritis pain. Put 5 drops of lavender oil in your warm tub water to ease your pain.

* Hot chili peppers and cayenne have been proven effective.

* Cinnamon is one of the oldest healing herbs for osteoarthritis.

* Chamomile tea - 2 to 4 teaspoons of the flowering heads in a cup of boiling water daily will relax you as well.

* Aloe vera boosts the immune system and is excellent in reducing inflammation.

* Many people swear that copper bracelets ease their arthritis misery.

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The Baby Race

When the new Huntsville Hospital opened in 1926, it was the start of one of the strangest races in Huntsville's history. The hospital, which now boasted of a modern maternity ward and an up-to-date delivery room, offered a silver loving cup to the first baby born in the new facility. Not to be outdone, several merchants in town also offered prizes.

Most babies at this time were born at home, most often with a mid-wife helping in the delivery. With the lack of sanitary conditions, and improper training, this often resulted in dire medical complications for both the mother and newborn baby. The staff of Huntsville Hospital realized the dangers and had begun an intensive campaign to educate the public on the benefits of a modern delivery room.

When the hospital opened its doors on June 8, 1926, there were three ladies in Huntsville who were expecting any day. The publicity surrounding the hospital had generated much interest among Huntsville's citizens, with many speculating on who would win the prize.

One of the ladies was Mrs. L.M. Miller, a naturalized citizen who had lived in Huntsville for years. Both she and her husband were Russian emigrants who had come through Ellis Island before settling in New York. A few years after coming to America the Millers came south for a visit. As their son would recall years later, "They were so impressed by the friendliness of the people in Huntsville, they never left!"

The Miller's quickly established themselves in Huntsville,

opening a business named L.M. Miller and Sons that is still in business today. Although Mrs. Miller was aware of the intense competition to have the first baby born in Huntsville Hospital, she evidently could have cared less.

On the night her labor began she was playing poker with a group of friends and, being on a winning streak, refused to leave. Despite her husband's frantic entreaties to go to the hospital, she kept insisting on, "just one more hand!"

Finally, probably more worried about her husband's condi-

tion than her own, she agreed to be taken to the hospital, where, a few hours later, she became the proud mother of the first baby born in Huntsville Hospital: The baby was named Israel Bernard (Buddy) Miller.

Like most trivial historical incidents, the birth of the first baby in Huntsville Hospital soon became lost in the midst of time. Years later the Public Relations Director for Huntsville Hospital, was browsing through some old documents when she ran across the story. Intrigued, but not expecting an answer, she reached



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for the phone book to see if Buddy Miller might still live in Huntsville.

Within minutes she was talking to Mr. Miller who confirmed that he was indeed the person in question. "Unfortunately," he explained, "the loving cup had been lost years before." After learning that Mr. Miller's birthday was coming up in a few days the director invited him and his wife to lunch at the hospital.

Sixty-five years after becoming the first baby born in Huntsville Hospital, Buddy Miller once again visited the hospital. This time he was greeted by a huge banner across the dining room proclaiming, "Happy Birthday, Buddy."

Surrounded by staff and well wishers, he was presented with a replica of the silver loving cup that had been given to his mother years earlier.

Misplaced Money

A strange case was brought to our attention yesterday about a salesman staying at a local hotel who has misplaced a valise containing \$9,000.

Being fearful of leaving that amount of cash in the room, he went to a nearby bar where he proceeded to get tipsy.

He claims not to remember what happened to the valise but recalls meeting many friendly persons.

from 1911 newspaper

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Tipsy Pudding

Put stale sponge cake or lady fingers into a dish and pour brandy or sherry over them. When soaked, stick full of blanched almonds.

Make a custard of 1 pint milk and 3 eggs, leaving out one white. Sweeten to taste; flavor with vanilla, boil. When thick, pour over cake. Beat the white of an egg to a stiff froth with sugar, then add custard.

Serve cold and enjoy!

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A Jealous Husband

From 1873 Huntsville newspaper

There is a man in this city who is so affectionately fond of his wife that he is jealous if a man looks within forty-five degrees of the direction in which she may happen to be. The other day a gentleman spoke to her, and the husband immediately threatened suicide. He wife was dispatched for a bottle of poison which she had put up at the druggist's consisting of a little water, colored with licorice and bottle, with a glaring poison label on the side. When he threatened to take some of it, and actually poured it into a wine glass she screamed for help and ran into another room, where she could watch him through the key hole, and saw him coolly open the window and throw it out.

She then rushed back, apparently frantic with grief and implored him not to do the rash deed. He merely pointed at the glass, and laying down on the floor began to kick out his legs like a jumping jack. She told him, she was determined to share his fate, and swallowed the rest of the licorice water, whereupon he became really frightened, called the neighbors, confessed that he only shammed, and said that if she only survived he never would trouble her again. Then she explained the ruse, and he was so mortified he tried to buy up the silence of his neighbors, but the story was too good to keep it quiet.

Raid On House of Ill Repute

from 1907 Huntsville newspaper

The raid made by the police last night on the disorderly house of Ret Wales produced four hundred dollar fines or 296 day terms at hard labor. Mary White, Ret Wales and Jenny Humphrey were fined \$100 each with the option of working out the fines at the rate of .50 cents the day. Charlie Mason, a young man who was caught in the house, was fined \$100. Mary Davison, an inmate of the house, was given 24 hours in which to get out of the city and unless she is gone by that time she must pay a fine of \$100 or begin a term of 209 days labor. Four young men who were caught in the same raid were discharged.

Jitney Drivers Dangerous

From 1919 Huntsville newspaper

The authorities should take some steps to stop the reckless driving of automobiles. No regard is paid to the crowd crossing the streets by the reckless drivers of the smoke belching machines.

At dusk this practice is indeed a most dangerous degree when numbers of jitneys and others who know better, run their cars without lights. The police, no doubt will cause somebody a great deal of trouble when some hapless soul is run down.

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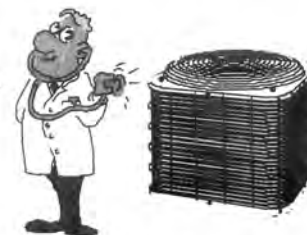
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