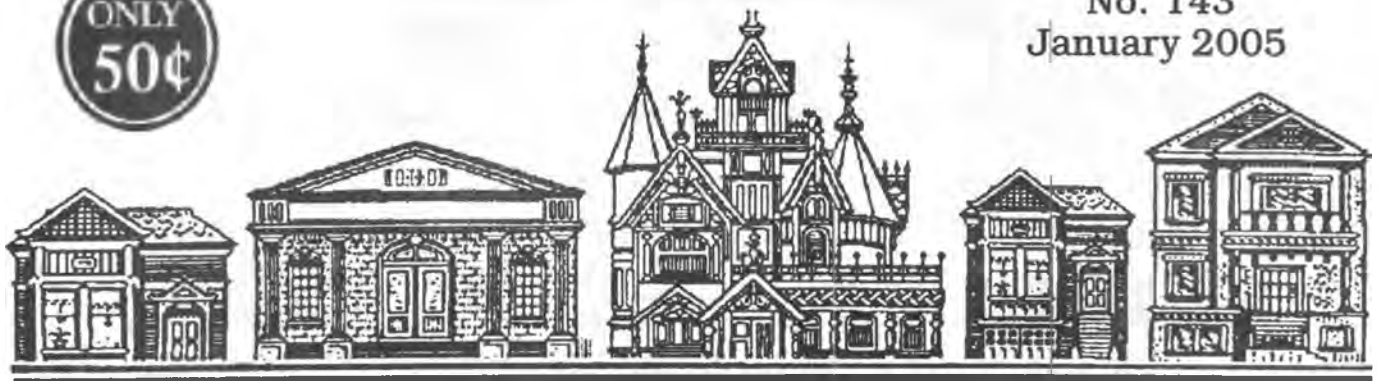


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No. 143
January 2005



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



The Legend of Mollie Teal

Mollie's bordello is said to have resembled a boarding house, with many rooms opening from a central hallway. She wasn't the only madam in town, but with as many as fifteen to twenty girls housed there, hers was the largest operation and reputedly the most popular. Mollie's establishment included a still in the back yard and the sale of her home brew may have further contributed to her financial success.

Also in this issue: "Old Huntsville Hang Outs"

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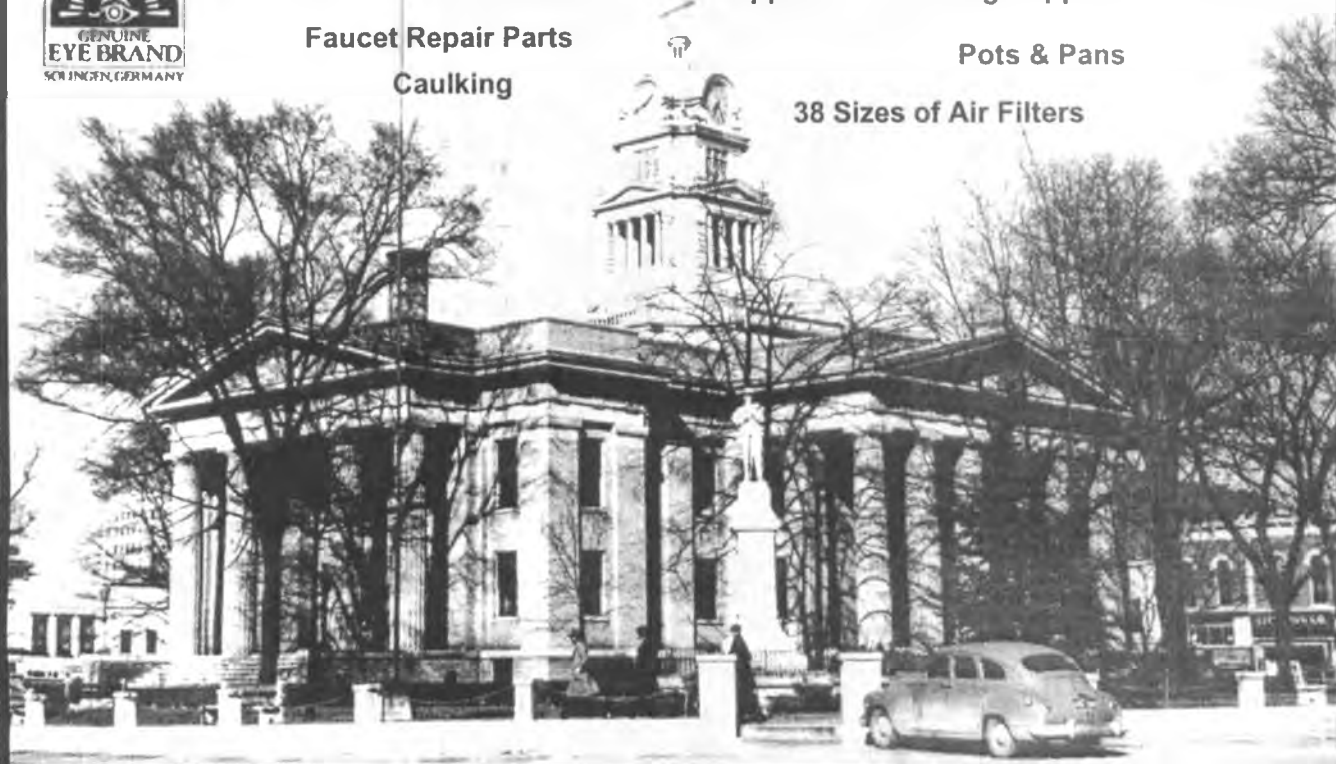
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Old Timer's Sale

The Legend of Mollie Teal

by Kay Cornelius

From its beginnings as a frontier town in the early 1800s, Huntsville, Alabama has always attracted many different kinds of people from a wide variety of places. Most, if not all, no doubt arrived in town with hopes and expectations that in Huntsville they would be free to make or add to their fortunes. While some failed and left in disappointment, many others stayed, succeeded and settled down to become civic minded citizens.

Over the years many of Huntsville's most successful entrepreneurs have generously contributed to the betterment of the growing city. One of the most unusual of these donors and certainly the most colorful, was a woman named Mollie Teal, who in the latter part of the nineteenth century made her mark as the operator of the largest and most successful bordello in town. Before her death the sporting house that she had run for a number of years was willed as a gift to Huntsville. The building then became the Huntsville City Infir-

mary, predecessor of the present Huntsville Hospital.

Very little is known about Mollie Teal's early life. According to her tombstone in Maple Hill Cemetery, she was born on August 20, 1852 and died in 1899. Her mother, Mary A. Smith, also buried in Maple Hill, died in 1872 at the age of 43. These facts suggest that either Mary Smith had followed her daughter to Huntsville or that Mollie Teal had joined her mother there at some earlier time. Mollie may have come to Huntsville from Memphis, where newspaper accounts there mentioned that one "M. Teal" had been arrested for prostitution. Whether she ever worked for anyone else in Huntsville isn't known, but in June of 1893 Mollie paid \$300 for a large Victorian style house at the present-day corner of St. Clair and Gallatin Streets, where she set up her business. Less than a year later she was able to mortgage the house for \$1,900, a note which she later repaid in full.

Mollie's bordello is said to have resembled a boarding house, with many rooms opening from a central hallway. She wasn't the only madam in town, but with as many as fifteen to twenty girls housed there, hers was the largest operation and reputedly the most popular. Mollie's establishment included a still in the backyard and the sale of her home brew may have further contributed to her financial success. Pic-



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

E-Mail - oldhuntsville@knology.net
Internet Home Page
www.oldhuntsville.com

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tures exist of the house, but none of Mollie.

Older people in the community who remembered seeing her reported that Mollie Teal made a most attractive appearance and dressed in the latest fashion when she went out. No doubt she wore the wasp waisted, heavy bosomed styles of the time— leghorn-sleeved dresses with bustles and perhaps trains, sometimes with a feather or fur boa around her neck. Her costume would be completed by a large felt or straw hat, usually decorated with flowers or feathers and probably tilted at an angle. Mollie Teal habitually took an afternoon ride about town in her elegant black Victoria carriage daintily holding a parasol to her shoulder.

Sometimes Mollie paraded her finely attired girls through the Huntsville streets as a form of advertisement for her establishment. The fact that they wore obvious makeup would have made their profession clear enough, but Mollie's presence also confirmed where they could be found. One of Mollie's most famous outings occurred when she filled her Victoria carriage with some of her most attractive girls and made an unauthorized appearance in the town's Fourth of July parade. Needless to say the entourage created a sensation which was generally welcomed by the men of Huntsville, but perhaps

understandably, not by their women.

Like the residents of the town's other sporting houses, Mollie's girls had regular medical checkups under a pragmatic system that privately regulated prostitution while publicly censoring it. Several times a year the local police or sheriff would dutifully raid the bordellos. These shows of official outrage served to appease the segments of the community who spoke out against the operation of the bordellos, but they had other benefits as well. The raids also netted fines, fees and other legal charges for the city coffers. In addition, the authorities were able to make sure that any girl who might need a health check would receive it before being released from jail.

One of the most often told stories about these sporadic raids concerns a time that Huntsville's volunteer fire department was called to fight a blaze in one of the local bawdy houses. The firemen quickly put out the fire before much damage had been done, but they made no haste to leave the scene, "lest the flames should erupt again." While the firemen were still on the premises the police descended on the house in one of their routine raids and arrested them all. The volunteers then resigned their fire fighting posts in protest, leaving the city without fire protection for a while.

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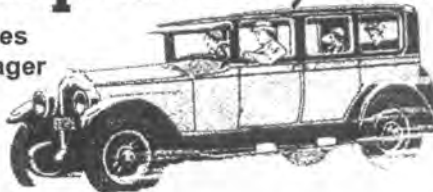
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Apparently houses like Mollie's never lacked for either customers or residents, but among the girls there was a steady turnover. According to the late Miss Bessie Russell, a number of Mollie Teal's and the other madams' girls managed to leave their chosen profession and marry into Huntsville families. Such instances horrified the "good people" of the town. They might grudgingly tolerate the presence of Mollie's business as a necessary evil, but they expected its practitioners to keep away from the rest of the townspeople.

Others of the girls probably grew restless and moved on, perhaps in search of whatever elusive dreams had brought them here in the first place. However, Mollie Teal herself stayed on in Huntsville and continued to prosper over the years, acquiring real and personal property, jewelry and cash. In 1898 at the age of 47, perhaps having some premonition that she wouldn't live much longer, Mollie made out her Last Will and Testament.

Although Mollie Teal had relatives, perhaps some who were even then living in Huntsville, she left nothing to them in her will. The immediate beneficiary of Mollie's property was a woman named Mollie Greenleaf, who could have been her personal friend, housekeeper or loyal servant. After the usual request that her "Just debts and funeral expenses" should be paid, the second clause of Mollie Teal's will

stated that she wished to give Mollie Greenleaf during her lifetime "my house and lot, said lot occupied by me now as a residence... together with all household and kitchen furniture." Another clause specified that at the death of Mollie Greenleaf, "it is my will that the city of Huntsville accept said house and lot for the use and benefit of the white public schools or for a city hospital, as the city authorities may elect and the household and kitchen furniture be sold for cash and the proceeds be used towards buying a library for use of said public schools." Then Mollie requested that "all my other personal property be sold for cash by my executors and the proceeds to be donated to the white public schools."

No one will ever know for certain why Mollie Teal chose to leave anything to the town in which she had lived for so many years. One story quotes Mollie as saying on her deathbed, "I've done much to ruin the young men of Huntsville. Now I want to help." However, it is debatable whether Mollie ever felt any such pangs of conscience or remorse about her contribution to the city's morals. Mollie Teal died only a year after her will had been written and apparently Mollie Greenleaf passed on to her reward only a year or two afterward. At any rate, before any of Mollie Teal's property could be disposed of under the terms of her will, it was challenged in court by "John W. Smith, et al" claiming

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to be Mollie Teal's "heirs at law and next of kin."

In a tangled web of legal suits, the Smiths claimed in Chancery Court that Mollie Teal's bequest to the "City of Huntsville" was void because it should have been addressed to, "The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Huntsville." When the plaintiffs (the Smiths) won their case, the defendants (the city of Huntsville) appealed and the decision was reversed by the Alabama Supreme Court in a ruling made February 28, 1903. However, the Smiths made one more attempt to gain some benefit from Mollie's estate by filing an Application for Rehearing. They argued that since the money in the bank was not specifically mentioned, it should not go to the city of Huntsville.

In an opinion dated July 9, 1903, the Alabama Supreme Court ruled that the heirs were entitled to the money Mollie Teal had on hand at the time of her death, which was deposited in two banks in Huntsville. Presumably the proceeds from the sale of her other personal property would, however, still be given to the city as Mollie Teal had designated in

her will. On August 5, 1903, the *Huntsville Daily Mercury* quoted City Attorney Murphy as reporting that the contest of the will of the late Mollie Teal had been settled and the city was to get Mollie Teal's house and property.

The gentlemen who ran the city of Huntsville now had Mollie Teal's house and lot, but they found themselves at a loss to know what to do with it. Mollie's primary request, that the property be used as a school and that the proceeds from her personal goods be used to supply a library for the same, could not be honored. The citizens of Huntsville might have been able to tolerate Mollie Teal's presence and profession in her lifetime, but even to think of having their children going to school in or checking out books from a building that had been a bordello too far exceeded the bounds of propriety to be considered. Mollie's will had specified that the city was to get the house for use "of the white public schools, or a city hospital." As such, it could not legally be sold.

Into this dilemma stepped some doctors' wives and other civic minded women who had long

advocated the establishment of a place of treatment for the sick in the city of Huntsville. Since such a use as that not only met the legal terms of Mollie Teal's will, but also filled a genuine need, the city

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fathers decided that the property she had willed to Huntsville should be utilized as a hospital. The large house with the shady past was then extensively remodeled and opened for use in 1904 as the "Huntsville City Infirmary." In addition to being Huntsville's first hospital, it also housed a school of nursing. Both remained in operation until 1926, when Huntsville Hospital opened.

Throughout the years, the Huntsville City Infirmary's occupants were quite aware of its former history. A woman who trained at the school of nursing in the building recalled that the front screen door would sometimes slam and hook itself shut, at which time it would jokingly be said that "Miss Mollie" had locked the door and was "checking on the customers." After Huntsville Hospital opened, the infirmary building was sold and soon fell upon hard times. Becoming ever more dilapidated, the building in turn saw use as a cheap boarding house, a "shot house," and it is said, eventually reverted to its original purpose although not in a manner that Miss Mollie would have tolerated or approved of in her day, before it eventually burned.

Although Mollie Teal has been gone many years, tales about her still persist and she has never

been completely forgotten. Even to this day, her grave, located near the Confederate soldiers' section of Maple Hill Cemetery, is periodically decorated with fresh flowers. Who brings them no one knows. Perhaps it is someone who thinks that Mollie Teal should be thanked in some small way for adding a splash of color to Huntsville during her lifetime and then giving part of the city's wealth back after her death.

News From The Year 1903

-James Murphree will leave for Cincinnati next week to purchase the fixtures for the new Henderson National Bank. The fixtures will be mahogany and marble base and mosaic tiles.

-Mr. John Sutherland, about 50 years of age, died yesterday from hydrophobia. He was bitten about six weeks ago and was sent to Atlanta. He died in awful agony, six men being required to hold him.

-Children will not be allowed in the pool rooms in Huntsville. Mayor Smith has given instructions to the police about the enforcement of the city laws concerning minors.

Shaver's Top 10 Books of Local & Regional Interest

1. *Scenic North Alabama - A travel guide to Canyons, Caverns, Bridges (natural & covered) and Waterfalls*, by Robert Schuffert \$27.95

2. *Recipes from Butter-milk Alley* by Jacque Gray \$14.95

3. *Currency & Tokens of Huntsville and Madison County*, by Charles Cataldo, Jr. \$29.50

4. *The Russel Erskine Hotel: A History*, by Historic Huntsville Foundation \$6.00

5. *Tales from the Front Porch; A Collection of True Stories of People, Places and Events in Northern Alabama and Southern Tennessee*, by Frank Westmoreland, Jr. \$12.95

6. *Alabama Simply Beautiful*, 123 stunning color photos by Charles Seifried \$29.95

7. *While our Hearts were Young: Memories of Huntsville* by Tommy Towery 7.95

8. *Civil War Tales of the Tennessee Valley*, by William Lindsey McDonald \$17.95

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In an effort to rectify the problem, Mr. Johnson acquired a large barrel which he placed in the front lobby of his establishment. The front of the barrel was fitted with a hinged door allowing customers to enter, where they could remove

their clothes and wait for them to be cleaned. It also gave the customers a chance to converse with other people who had business in the shop.

The price was 50 cents a suit, whether you used the barrel or not.

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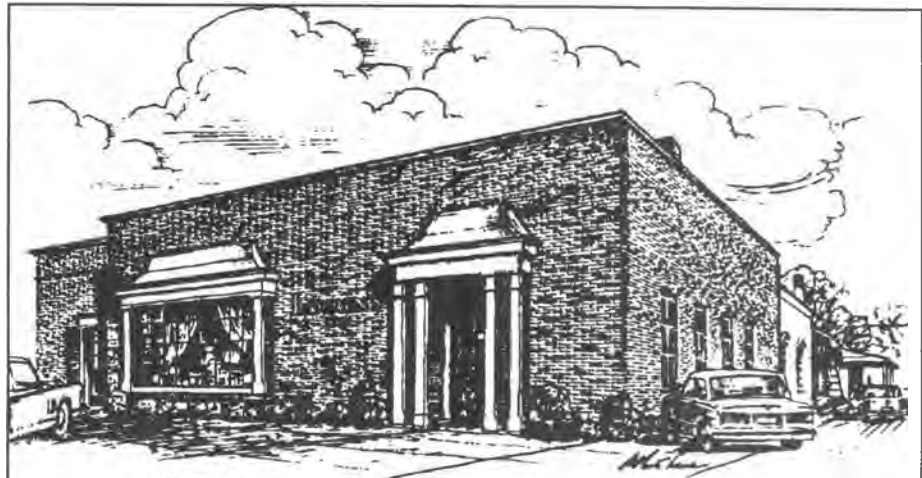
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Old Huntsville Hang Outs

by Johnny Johnston

Back during our teen-age days, 50 to 60 years ago, there were so many places to go just to see the crowd and hang out for a little while. Mostly when we were going out with a friend and our folks said "Where you going", you would answer "Riding around", that seemed to satisfy most parents at the time. Maybe it was trust; maybe they just knew that their kid wouldn't get in trouble. Because of all the bad things kids can get into now, I would be much more cautious. Here are some of the great places we could go and rarely experience any hint of danger except for the dangers of getting there in your car.

Slightly before I got my drivers license the older kids would go to the **Tic-Tock Inn**. That was a grocery store, cafe, and roller rink located on O'Shaughnessy Ave. I remember going there once with my older brother and it must have been before I learned to skate. The skating rink was a floor made of wood, wooden plank sides and a tent covering the entire floor. Boys met Girls

and Girls met Boys, they took it from there!

A favorite place that comes to mind is "Dillard's". Mr. and Mrs. Dillard Adcock worked at the Lincoln Mill where they had a habit of taking their lunch (or dinner) to work. Many of the people they worked with asked them to do the same for them on a regular basis. That is how the Adcock family started to feed people. They had some children my age so it was natural for me to have a "Pickle Burger" at Dillard's. The Restaurant was The **Kildare Café** at 105 Oakwood. That was the official name, however, most of us

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called it Dillard's. It sat back off the road about 100 feet in a group of trees with a fantastic welcome for those of us who called it a second or third home. For lunch we sometimes went in to eat at Dillard's. If we were driving, had a date or just had a car to sit in we went to **Bill's Drive Inn**. Bill Adcock was Dillard's brother. There were many Adcocks in Lincoln, most of them in some kind of public business.

Bill's was a larger building with a very big parking lot: usually filled with cars belonging to teenagers. Not many from Huntsville High, they were probably at Five Points. Bill's seemed to cater to Butler and other rural students from areas such as Big Cove, Gurley etc. We were never hassled by the owners, workers, or the police so long as we behaved ourselves and didn't cause any trouble. Many a heart was earned and many a heart was broken sitting in a car at Bill's.

I personally saved Bill's from

disaster one night, it never hit the papers or made the news, truthfully no one knew it. Oh! I might have told a friend or two but in the 50's you didn't say "dirty" things in public. After a long movie and drinking several Double Colas I was extremely anxious to visit the men's room. At Bill's the Men's room was on the outside of the building with the entrance facing the parking lot. Needless to say I was in dire need for relief and I don't mean later: the quicker the better. Just as I approached the door it quickly opened and a fellow about my age ran out and into the parking lot. I went into the Men's room and found that someone had piled paper in the corner of the room and set fire to it. The fire was blazing about two feet into the air and the walls already scorched. I had two choices, (1) embarrass myself, calling the fire department or (2) use "whatever" resource was available and put it out. I did just that, I put the fire out with the most available resource! Gruesome, ugly, smelly, I could say a lot of critical things about my actions that night, but Bill's was there to stay, it did not burn down!

I wanted to be as accurate as possible about locations and to review my aged memory, so I consulted a mid 50's Huntsville City Directory. Looking under Restaurants I found four! Only four I thought to myself! Then my senior moment left and I remem-

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bered that places to eat 50 years ago were most likely called Café's. Sure enough, there they were: all the hangouts were listed under Café.

Boot's restaurant in 1956-1957, was a fun place to hang out in your car. Grady Reeves had a broadcasting booth built on top of the roof, on the South East Side, where he had a DJ show during the evening. He placed a bucket on a rope and lowered it to the ground. We would leave our cars, place a note for a request in the bucket which he pulled up on occasion then played the music. After returning to Huntsville in 1984, I was hired by a group of people to speak at their annual Christmas Dinner. A short week before the occasion I received a call that the meeting had been moved from the Hilton Hotel to Boot's Restaurant. I thought about it and wondered if there was a room large enough at Boot's but I showed up anyway. When I found the lady who had hired me, she told me the story. A disagreement had occurred some weeks before between the participants of the group, they had separated and the ones left were now eating at Boot's. I stood at the side of one of the large booths, (it held six people), gave my presentation on "How It Used to Was", picked up my check and left. I felt a little silly but that isn't the first time I entertained in a public restaurant.

Downtown Huntsville on the East Side Square stood **James Steak House**. There weren't many places downtown you could buy a bottle of beer and no one served hard liquor. Laws were a

little more restricted back then. At James you could have a beer or two and a meal. My Father loved a beer back in those days but did not bring it home. Dad had barely lived through Typhoid Fever in his twenties; the sickness left him with a chemical imbalance. His body was not at all tolerant of any alcohol. After one beer he became very forgetful. On more than one Saturday he drove downtown, had his beer and walked home. He either forgot the car or forgot where he left it. My older brother would take some of us and drive around downtown until we found the car. Dad had a total revolution with any kind of alcohol, accepted religion in a big way and never again had another drink.

Many blue-collar workers considered James Steak House their hang out downtown. James Steak House was located at 11 1/2



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Eastside Square while **Wimpy's Grill** was next door at 11 Eastside Square. Wimpy's did not serve beer: it was a family place.

My Grandfather, Jim Buck, and many other farmers who lived in Lacey's Spring usually came downtown on Saturday morning and stayed all day. They hung around the Courthouse or **T. T. Terry's** on Southside Square, and visited with each other, did their business and went home about dark. Jim Buck would never buy lunch but he did favor the **Big Spring Café**. He would take a Baked Sweet Potato with him, walk into the Big Spring Café and ask for a glass of water. That was his lunch and he spent no money. In those days, early century until mid 1950's, businesses in Huntsville stayed open most of the day on Saturday but closed Wednesday afternoon. My brother Lloyd was Head Cashier at the **State National Bank**. When they moved from Jefferson Street, The Tennessee Bank Building, (now Condos), to the new building across from the Russell Erskine Hotel, he was given a wheelbarrow and a pistol. He moved the money between locations alone. If you know Lloyd you know he would never fire the gun. He really couldn't with both hands full of wheelbarrow handles, the wheelbarrow full of money and no one watching his back!

With the passing of our favorite Aunt and the closing of **Eunice's Restaurant** many of the local leaders and those of us who watch the local leaders, had to find a new place to eat breakfast. That process is working itself out with **Gibson's** on South Parkway and **Mullins** on Andrew Jackson seem to be getting more than their share of business. Mine included!

Aunt Eunice was a family friend for many years. All our family visited her at the **Butler Grill** on West Clinton. She was a close pal to my sister who passed away some 29 years ago of can-

cer. I went by Eunice's in 1994 to have breakfast and she was in a quandary. Fuses had blown in her kitchen and she couldn't cook coffee. I came home, picked up a really nice heavy extension cord, went back and ran the cord from an outlet in her kitchen into the coffeepot. Together we made the coffee and as customers came in I poured my share. Years later, shortly before Eunice became ill, I went in and asked her if I could have my extension cord back. She said "I'm still using it." I had given her warnings to be sure and get an electrician in to repair her power. Those warnings fell by the wayside. When the Restaurant was closed she was still cooking coffee with my extension cord. I never got it back!

Mullins Drive In hasn't been a drive in for many

years. It was located at 819 5TH Ave. for years where it started in business about 85 years ago. Andrew Jackson was renamed from 5th Ave. Now Mullins attracts people from all walks of life. My 55th. High School class meets there every Monday morning. A

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Sometimes Nothing Else Will Do!

friend sent me a lot of pictures made during one of these gatherings. I told him it looked like the Mullins Home for the Aged! Larry Mullins, Butler graduate himself, the owner, can't stay away either. He retired sometime back but realized how much he missed the customers who come in on a regular basis. Mullins absolutely is the meeting place for all us old folks who grew up around here and really care about seeing each other. The wonderful humor of the Mullins helps as well. Years ago I was sitting with Larry and others around the Liars table when a gentleman came in with a Huntsville Hospital patient's bracelet on his wrist. Larry asked him if he was feeling better. He told Larry he was but upon release his Doctor asked him where he was going for lunch. When he told him Mullins the Doctor said well I guess you'll be back in here this afternoon. Larry got a bigger kick out of it than anyone did. I especially enjoy the pictures of old Huntsville establishment, which Larry has gathered and hung so well. The chili dogs aren't bad either!

Gibsons is the first business I remember to open on the Parkway. They were located a few

hundred yards further south from their present location. We were working on an old Crop Duster Piper aircraft at the Huntsville Municipal Airport late one evening when Mr. McAlister sent his wife over to Gibsons Café to get us a Bar-B-Q sandwich. He had known the family while living in Decatur. That was my first meal from Gibson's. They also have many old friends coming in for breakfast. At least they eat, but it seems to me they really come to visit and are made up of

businessmen, politicians and plain folk who like folks. They will dearly miss my great friend Ray Pearman who had breakfast at Gibsons almost every morning. We buried Ray this week. He was a lifelong friend and the most steady and true Christian I ever knew.

Downtown businessmen, politicians and the well known gathered at the Post Office Café on 122 North Jefferson or the City Café on 211 Washington. Popular also was the Central Café at

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103 East Clinton. Many changes have happened in the eating out business. Fifty years ago it was very rare for most people to eat out. Now most people eat out two to three days per week. You were welcomed to come into a Café anywhere and sit for awhile drinking a 15-cent cup of coffee.

I cannot forget the **Pullman Café** located across from the Train Tracks and the Railroad Depot on Church Street. Railroad workers spent the night upstairs during their overnight turn in Huntsville. Downstairs a fairly good meal was served along with "female company", and lots of beer. Mr. Dick Church who built and operated the **TipTop Café** on Maple St. bought the Café after the war and cleaned it up to a great extent. One of the former customers could not accept this reform when he was refused service. He went outside and came back with a pistol and shot Mr. Church five times. He passed away later that night. Mr. Church was a good man!

Bon Air Motel and Restaurant was a favorite Sunday Lunch place for my Parents and many others. I was involved with the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in the late 1980's and rubbing elbows with many of Alabama' Singers and Actors. George Lindsay (Goober) came up to me early one morning and asked me if the Bon Air food was still as good as ever. I had to inform him that it was torn away for the Interstate. He testified that most of his meals were taken there when he was teacher/coach at Hazel Green School and lived in Huntsville.

Progress being what it is most of the places to hang out and Eat have become a part of history. I believe that Mullins is the oldest Restaurant still in business. It may be a tie

with **The Big Spring Café**.

This article would not be complete with the mention of **Zesto**. I am told and believe the Corn Dog was invented at **Zesto**. It has been on Pratt and Russell forever. Ray Pearman tells the story of Dating Louise at Zesto's in the late 40's. I went there as a child with my older brothers and sister and took my children and grandchildren there in later years. I just wish I knew how they made the Zestoburger. That was like a Hamburger on a stick only it had Sausage mixed in it was great.



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Heard On The Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to the winner of the Photo of the Month - **Johnny Logan** called in with the first correct guess - it was none other than **Nancy Van Valkenburgh** of **Van Valkenburgh & Wilkinson Realty Company**.

We heard from our Atlanta friend **Don Kurtzahn** the other day. He worked for Hewlett-Packard for 36 years before he retired several years ago. Don's son **Michael** works for Kroger management in Delonaga, GA. and his daughter **Anne** is an HP District Manager in Atlanta.

Joan Hatfield is thrilled to welcome her very first beautiful grandchild, born 12/7. The sweet girl is **Emily Faith Holcomb**, who arrived with a head full of hair. Her proud parents are Joan's son **Lee Tallant** and mom **Pamela Holcomb**. Congratulations!

Jamie and Dehaan Gates, of **Gates Auto**, are sure proud of their son **James** who came home from Cheyenne, WY with his wife **Ashley** for Christmas to visit with Mom and Dad. James serves in the Air Force at F.E. Warren AFB as a nuclear specialist.

Margaret and J.B. Tucker of

Hurricane Creek had a house full of guests over the holidays. There was barbeque and chicken stew and some of the best desserts - the Divinity was awesome thanks to cousin **Sandy!**

It was good to hear from **Billy Layne** recently - we understand he is quite an expert at baking the Chess pie he recently found the recipe for in a back issue of "Old Huntsville." He's a regular at **Jackson Way Barber Shop** where he visits with his good buddy **Floyd Hardin**.

Stan Lee, of the Corps of Engineers, recently celebrated his 9-year wedding anniversary with his sweetheart **Debbie** - congratulations to you both!

Betty Davis called to tell us that her aunt **Mrs. Jean Pitsinger** turned 90 just before Christmas. Mrs. Pitsinger's daughter, **Cora Jean White** hosted the family party.

Our good friend **Joe Loughheed** is out and about these days - it's always good to see him.

Bobby and Donna DeNeefe were out recently with their good friends **Buddy and Barbara**

Chapman. We saw them at Papou's on the square downtown and it was sure good to catch up with them again! **Donna** is playing golf when it's warm enough and is getting pretty good at it!

While at 801 Franklin recently with **Joyce Russell**, we saw **Bill and Ann Lane** and talked to them awhile - what a good-looking couple they are!

It was so fun talking with **Marie McAloon** who works at Ruth's Nutrition on So. Pkwy. She is a newcomer to Huntsville and loves reading about all our rich history. Her daughter **Sarah Day** is a cosmetologist, married to **Michael Day**.

Mike Moran is one of 11 children from Australia, and his son **Kevin**, a proud graduate of Auburn U., has worked over there for over a year. Mike's other son **Patrick** was in the Marines and currently lives in Gainesville, Fl.

We recently talked with **Carlton McLain** at ABC Store #77. **Amanda Lovelace** works there as well and they both wanted to be sure and tell our

Photo of The Month

The first person to correctly identify the youngster shown below wins a year's subscription to "Old Huntsville" magazine.

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Hint: This little boy wasn't born in Huntsville but he helped put the city on the map.



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readers to please not forget the troops over in Iraq and say an extra prayer for their safety.

Barbara Burke, of Hazel Green, recently wrote us. She wrote about the unexpected happiness you get from meeting friend whom you haven't seen in years, or when something good happens on a real bad day. Barbara's mother and dad **Louise and Joseph Tucker** moved here in the early sixties.

Vic Grimes, of the **Golden K Kiwanis**, recently had a pace-maker operation and he's doing well!

Well, the mayor's race is barely over and we are already hearing of people lining up to run next time. Talk on the street is that **Glenn Watson** is the front runner but he says he doesn't know if he wants the job.

Dave Hargrove recently spoke at a Golden K meeting and discussed progress in internet, phone and satellite. His wife is none other than **Liz Hurley**.

Thornton Garvin was very surprised recently to find a yard full of tombstones, buzzards and black signs in front of **C.T. Garvin's** on Holmes Ave. The occasion was his 72nd birthday and was a real shocker for him. Celebration Yard signs did a good job. Thornton began working with his dad in 1955, the business having been started in 1934.

Curtis Ramey now lives in Fort Worth, Tx. but many of you may remember him as he was a judge in Huntsville for many years. He loves Huntsville and its history and says he really misses living here and how lucky we all

are to still be here! He sends a special hello to his old friend **Cecil Ashburn**.

Greetings to our buddy **Alan Jenkins** and his sweet wife **Debra** - stay warm this season!

Pauli's Chophouse was the place for the 11th Annual Christmas party hosted by **Pleasures and Sherri Williams**. The party was enjoyed by all and the food as usual was excellent!

Ray Pearman's recent death was very sad news for so many people who loved him. He was a vital part of Huntsville's history and we send out sympathy to his many friends and family.

A big hello to **Walter Tripp and his wife Joyce - Linda Hamlin's** sweet Dad and stepmom who love Huntsville and her people. Walter's sisters **Estelle, Geraldine and Loretta** try to get together with him as often as possible. Walter's other sister **Dewey Sanders** worked at Sunbeam bread factory for years and is now retired. Dewey's son **Donald** recently was hit by a car on Governors Drive and is now in a nursing home here. Hello to **Betty Hamlin**, who lives in Clearwater,

Fl. and was married to **Keith Hamlin** for many years.

Well, that's all for now. Stay warm and we'll see you next month!

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Black Cherry Salad

- 1 lrg. box black cherry Jello
- 1 can drk. sweet pitted cherries
- 1 sml. can crushed pineapple
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 1 1/2 c. boiling water
- Coca Cola

Mix the Jello with 1 1/2 cups boiling water. Drain the cherries and pineapple, saving liquid. Add enough Coke to make 1 1/2 cups liquid. Slice cherries in half before mixing. Add pecans and pour into large dish. Refrigerate.

Ann Smith

German Potato Salad

Boil 8 or 10 small potatoes with jackets on - don't overcook. Set in fridge to chill. Peel and cut

thin in dollar sizes. Slice onion on top of potatoes and add salt and pepper to taste. Cut 4 slices of bacon in small cubes and let brown til crisp in a skillet. To this add:

- 1 c. water
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 3 T. vinegar
- 3-4 T. flour, made to a thin paste to add to boiling sauce

Pour this over the potatoes. Gently stir so potatoes won't break too much. Season to suit tastes, more vinegar or sugar may be added.

Linda Gibbs

Sour Cream Chicken

- 6 chicken breasts, boneless & skinless
- 2 cans mushroom soup
- 1/2 pint sour cream
- 3/4 c. herb dressing
- 1 stick butter, melted
- Poppy seeds

Cook the breasts and chop

into bite-size pieces. Spread chicken in a greased, 13x9" glass pan. Combine the soup, sour cream, herb dressing and butter, pour over the chicken. Sprinkle lightly with the poppy seeds and bake at 325 degrees for an hour. Serve over rice. *Debbie Andrews*

Lemon-Shrimp Casserole

- 2-3 lb. cooked and cleaned shrimp (medium)
 - 3-4 c. cooked rice
 - 1 c. sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
 - 1 can Cream of Mushroom soup
 - 1/2 c. chopped green pepper
 - 1/2 c. chopped green onion
 - 1/2 c. chopped celery
 - 5 T. butter
 - 4-5 lemons, thinly sliced
- Mix shrimp, rice, cheese and soup together. Saute green pepper, celery and green onion in butter, add to the shrimp mixture. Put

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in a 15x9" greased casserole dish and completely cover the top with the lemons. Cover and bake for 30 minutes at 375.

Clark Straw

Mom's Yeast Biscuits

- 1 pkg. dry yeast
- 3/4 c. warm water
- 2 c. flour
- 2 T. oil
- 1/2 t. salt
- 3 T. sugar

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Mix dry ingredients, add oil. Knead and roll out, cut into biscuit shape. Let set 20 minutes and bake at 425 degrees for 12 minutes.

Lucy Goforth

Peanut Butter Pie

- 1/2 c. crunchy peanut butter
- 3 oz. cream cheese
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1 9-oz. Cool Whip
- 1 graham cracker pie crust

Let cream cheese soften at room temperature, then cream well with peanut butter and sugar. Add the Cool Whip and beat til smooth. Pour in crust, top with crushed peanuts.

Sandy Whitfield

Reno's Nugget Pecan Pie

- 1 c. Karo syrup (light or dark)

- 3/4 c. sugar
- 4 oz. melted butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 t. vanilla
- 3/4 c. pecan pieces
- 3/4 c. pecan halves

Mix the sugar and Karo, add melted butter, then mix in the eggs and vanilla. Let stand for an hour. Place pecan pieces in bottom on unbaked 9" pie shell. Pour in the filling and cover with pecan halves. Bake 45-50 minutes at 325 degrees.

Sandy Whitfield

No-Bake Cookies

- 2/3 c. peanut butter
- 1/2 c. milk
- 1/2 c. butter
- 2 c. sugar
- 3 c. rolled oats
- 3 t. cocoa
- 1 t. vanilla

Over medium heat bring the milk, butter and sugar to boiling. Boil for one minute and remove from heat. Mix with remaining ingredients. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper to harden. *Bob and Mary Poore*

Sugared Nuts

- 1 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. water
- 1 t. cinnamon
- 1 t. salt

Mix in large pan and heat to 235 degrees on a candy thermometer. Do Not Stir! Add:

- 1 1/2 t. vanilla
- 1 c. walnuts
- 1 c. pecans
- 1/2 c. almonds

Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes, stirring a couple of times.

Sandy Whitfield



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To Capt. J.B. Fry,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

Sir: After a forced march of incredible difficulty, leaving Fayetteville yesterday at 12 M., my advanced guard, consisting of Turchin's brigade, Kennett's cavalry, and Simonson's battery, entered Huntsville this morning at 6 o'clock. (John B. Turchin's Eighth Brigade of Illinois, Indiana and Ohio troops, John Kennett's Fourth Ohio Cavalry, and Peter Simonson's Fifth Indiana Battery.)

The city was taken completely by surprise, no one having considered the march practicable in the time. (A Union correspondent with Mitchel wrote: "His movement was almost as sudden and luminous as the meteors which he so often followed through the skies.") We have captured about 200 prisoners, 15 locomotives, a large amount of passenger, box, and platform cars, the telegraphic apparatus and offices, and two Southern mails.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O.M. Mitchel, Brig, General

To Gen. D.C. Buell

The work so happily commenced on yesterday has been completed today upon a train of cars captured from the enemy at Huntsville. A heavy force of the Ninth Brigade (Ohio and Wisconsin troops), under command of (Joshua W.) Sill, was ordered to drive the enemy from Stevenson in the east, while an equal force from the Eighth Brigade, upon captured cars, was directed to seize Decatur upon the west. Both expeditions proved eminently successful. I accompanied the most difficult one to Stevenson in person, from which place 2,000 of the enemy fled as usual at our approach without firing a gun, leaving behind five locomotives and a large amount of rolling stock.

To prevent the enemy from penetrating toward Nashville, I or-

dered the destruction of a small bridge between Stevenson and Bridgeport, which we can replace, if necessary, in a single day. The expedition from the Eighth Brigade, under the immediate command of Colonel Turchin, proved

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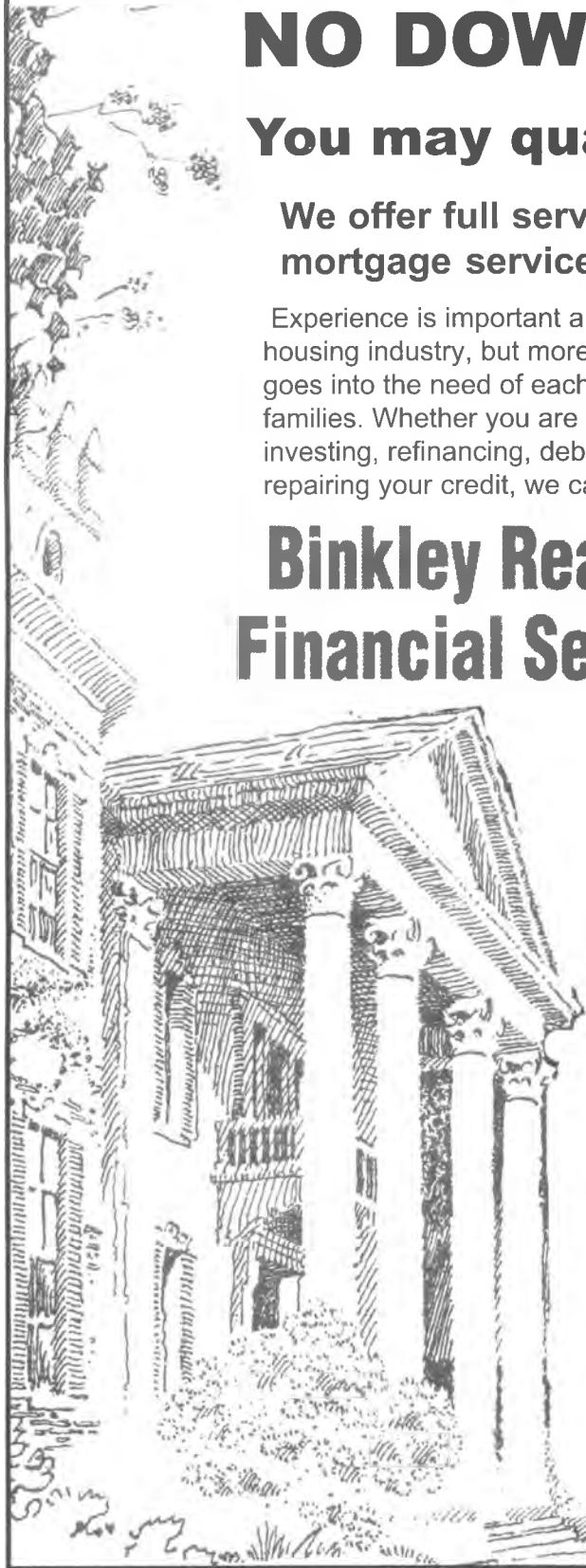
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eminently successful. To arrest his advance the enemy fired a bridge on the farther side of the Tennessee River, but our troops reached it in time to extinguish the flames. A small force of the enemy fled from the town, leaving their tents standing and their camp equipage behind them.

Thus in a single day we have taken and now hold a hundred miles of the great railway line of the rebel Confederacy. We have nothing more to do in this region, having fully accomplished all that was ordered. We have saved the great bridge across the Tennessee (at Decatur), and are ready to strike the enemy, if so directed, upon his right flank and rear at Corinth.

I have this day written you fully, embracing three topics of great importance - the absolute necessity of protecting slaves who furnish us valuable information, the fact that I am left without command of my line of communications, and the importance of holding Alabama north of the Tennessee. I have promised protection to the slaves who have given me valuable assistance and information. My river front is 120 miles long, and if the Government

disapprove what I have done, I must receive heavy re-enforcements or abandon my position. With the aid of the negroes in watching the river I feel myself sufficiently strong to defy the enemy.

O.M. Mitchel, Major-General,

To Major-General Mitchel,

Your telegrams of the 3rd and 4th have been received. No general in the field has deserved better of his country than yourself, and the Department rejoices to award credit to one who merits it so well. The Department is advised of nothing that you have done but what is approved. The assistance of slaves is an element of military strength which, under proper regulations, you are fully justified in employing for your security and the success of your operations. It has been freely employed by the enemy, and to abstain from its judicious use when it can be employed with military advantage would be a failure to employ means to suppress the rebellion and restore the authority of the Government. Protection to those who furnish information or other assistance is a high duty.

Edwin M.

Stanton,
Secretary of War.

To Hon. E.M. Stanton,
Secretary of War:

The occupation of Huntsville and this railway line by my troops seems to have produced among rebels the bitterest feeling. Armed citizens fire into the trains, cut the telegraph wires, attack the guards of bridges, cut off and destroy my couriers, while guerrilla bands of cavalry attack whenever there is the slightest chance of success. I have arrested some prominent citizens along the line of the rail-

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way and in this city. I hold some prisoners (citizens) against whom the negroes will prove charges of unauthorized war. Am I to convict on the testimony of the blacks? Have I your authority to send notorious rebels to a Northern prison? May I offer the protection of the Government to the negroes who give valuable information? Is it not possible to give me re-enforcements to cross the Osage at Grates' Ferry and march against Rome? That entire region is now comparatively unprotected and very much alarmed.

O.M. Mitchel, Major-General,

To Hon. E.M. Stanton,
Secretary of War:

No answer has been received to my request for authority to send two or three notorious rebels to a Northern prison. Judge (George W.) Lane and Senator (Jeremiah) Clemens believe it necessary. Would it avail anything for General Clemens to appear in Washington as the representative of the citizens of northern Alabama, his object being to learn unofficially in what way the exist-

ing controversy might be ended? He will come if you approve it. Since the driving out of the regular troops, guerrilla warfare has been commenced, and advocated by the very men I wish to send to a Northern prison. The failure to occupy Tuscumbia, I fear, is to become a frightful source of trouble. (John Hunt) Morgan is said to have crossed below Florence, and it is now said other cavalry, and even (Sterling) Price's infantry, are now crossing. I have not heard from General Buell or General Halleck in two weeks. No re-enforcements have reached me. If guerrilla warfare is to be waged, I must have a large force of cavalry. Am I to expect soon any addition to my command?

O.M. Mitchel,

To Hon. E.M. Stanton,

My line of posts extend more than 400 miles. My own personal attention cannot be given to all the troops under my command.

The most terrible outrages - robberies, rapes, arsons, and plundering - are being committed by lawless brigands and vaga-

bonds connected with the army, and I desire authority to punish all those found guilty of perpetrating these crimes with death by hanging.

Wherever I am present in person all is quiet and orderly, but in some instances, in regiments remote from headquarters, I hear



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the most deplorable accounts of excesses committed by soldiers.

I beg authority to control these plunderers by visiting upon their crimes the punishment of death.

O.M. Mitchel, Major-General.

To General George S. Hunter and others, Committee, Athens:

Gentlemen: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your report, dated Athens, May 3, 1862, presenting the affidavits of 45 individuals, who claim to have suffered by the depredations committed by the officers and men of the Eighth Brigade, now under the command of Col. J.B. Turchin.

You report the aggregate losses of these 45 individuals to amount to the very large sum of \$54,689.80.

I greatly fear, gentlemen, you are laboring under a very serious misapprehension. I sincerely hope that no remarks of mine could have led you to imagine that the Government of the United States would pay individuals for robberies suffered at the hands of individuals, acting not only without orders, but contrary to the most positive and repeated orders.

A tobacco chewer on Sand Mountain has agreed that if smokers won't blow smoke in his face, he won't spit at them.

Whenever provisions or forage have been taken, and the accounts, properly made out, are certified by the proper officer, these accounts will be paid promptly by the quartermaster. All other articles have been taken without a shadow of authority, and those who are guilty are but robbers and plunderers, and must be treated as such.

I cannot arraign before a court, civil or military, a brigade, and I most deeply regret that a portion at least of your time had not been occupied in searching for the testimony which would have fixed the charge of pillage and plunder upon some individual officer or soldier under my command. To this, the most important matter connected with this unfortunate affair, you do not appear thus far to have given the slightest attention.

Trusting that a finished report from you may furnish the evidence which may convict before a court-martial those guilty of robbery and pillage.

O.M. Mitchel,

To Hon. E.M. Stanton:

Sec. of War:

Sir: In my note of July 18 1

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made a distinct denial of the charges made against me before the Military Committee of having failed to do my duty in repressing pillaging and plundering by the troops under my command.

I now desire to lay before you positive evidence of having done my duty in this particular in the most earnest and energetic manner.

First. I send you copies of the orders issued by me against all irregularities of every kind.

Second. The record will show that, notwithstanding the fact that my troops were perpetually in motion and almost daily engaged in repelling the attacks of the enemy, I managed to keep a division court-martial in session during the whole time that I had command in middle Tennessee and northern Alabama; and that offenders, wherever they could be found, were brought before the court, tried, convicted, sentenced, and punished.

Third. In the special cases of the excesses committed by the soldiers of the Eighth Brigade on the recapture of Athens, I visited the town, addressed the citizens,

induced them to organize a committee to hear indirectly, one particle of personal pecuniary advantage from any of the transactions in cotton.

I trust that my former character is a sufficient guarantee to yourself and my countrymen that I am perfectly incapable of doing anything to the injury of the Government and to my private advantage.

I now declare that since I have been in the service of the United States my head has never rested at night upon my pillow with one solitary particle of the day's duty unperformed.

I am guiltless of anything which should in the smallest degree diminish that confidence, and here I rest my case.

O.M. Mitchel,
Major-General, US. Army

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The Old Armory

by Collins (CE) Wynn

My Dad (Gene Wynn) was a Huntsville Police Officer and as such he often worked security type jobs after his normal duty hours. In the mid-1950s one of his extra jobs was at the "rasling" matches held at the National Guard Armory on Dallas Street. Does the name Gorgeous George ring a bell? This was true southern showmanship in its most basic form. Oddly enough the thing I remember most is the thick blue cloud of cigarette smoke that hung over the entire auditorium - everyone in the room was smoking something in amongst all the hollering and screaming - it was a real circus and a true cash cow. Believe me, they had police protection present for good reason. As a side note and piece of meaningless trivia, some years later I worked as the Ring Announcer for a couple of 'rasling' events there at the Dallas Street Armory and had a minor business relationship with the promoters - Gulas/Welch Enterprises of Nashville,

The armory was built by the WPA (Works Progress Administration?) in the mid and late 1930s and it was the original home of the Headquarters of the 1169th Engineer Group. Although there

were National Guard units in Huntsville from about 1909 onward, I don't know where they met before the Dallas Street Armory was constructed.

In 1959 or so the 1169th moved to a "new" facility on the west side of South Parkway a mile or so north of Airport Road. The armory was named Fort Raymond T. Jones after a former commander who also happened to be a part of the Jones engineering family of Huntsville and Jones Valley. They remained there until,

maybe, 1990 when they moved to another "new" facility farther south still on the west side of the Parkway near Green Mountain Road (?).

After the 1169th moved out in 1959, the Dallas Street Armory was occupied by two units, the 279th Signal Battalion and Company A, 20th Special Forces Group. Late one night in 1968 a fire broke out in the rear portion of the building where some electrical maintenance work had been going on and totally destroyed it.

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Because it was small and had little equipment, the Special Forces unit was allowed to remain in the front, undamaged portion of the building and everyone else was scattered to temporary facilities within a 50 mile radius of Huntsville.

Over the next few years a new armory was designed and constructed on south Lehman Ferry Road on the west side of the main runway of the by then inactive Huntsville Madison County Airport. Eventually the scattered units were drawn back into Huntsville and along with the Special Forces unit, relocated to the "new" armory. The Special Forces unit (now Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group - a decorated veteran unit of the war on terrorism after spending a year and a half in Afghanistan and, I suspect, with plans for other adventures in the near future as well) was later moved into the armory on south Parkway vacated by the 1169th Engineer Group as described above.

After all these moves and relocation's settled down, the City of Huntsville gained title to the then Dallas Street Armory and rehabilitated the facility to serve as a recreational center. I understand it is still in use today - which proves that not everything has to be new to have value. Maintenance dollars and labor hours expended on old buildings are often well spent.

As the manager of the Dallas Street Armory in 1967 and 1968 I unknowingly watched a scam as it was perpetrated on many of my friends in the Huntsville area - I suspect some of you reading this may have been victims as well. One day this guy blew into town who presented himself as a rock and roll show promoter who wanted to

rent the armory. Hey, fine with me, just sign the contract and cough up the cash and you can have whatever kind of show you want. I mean, it was just business, you pay you play. So the guy paid up (in advance - which is always a good policy) and started advertising and selling tickets to the big show. His lead act was supposedly one of the hottest bands of the day whose name I cannot now quite pull out of



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the fog - not the Beach Boys or the Monkees but something close, perhaps the Turtles. Ticket sales were dynamite and the cash was rolling in. The day of the show the facility was set up and the stage was erected and ready to go by 2 pm. In hindsight, the fact that nothing else happened (no roadies, no equipment, no light guy, no sound guy, etc) should have tipped us off to what was happening but, besides being young, stupid, and gullible, we weren't paying close enough attention. Around 7pm, after filling the building up with probably 2,000 16 to 20 year old party animals and collecting all the cash he could carry, the guy tells me he is going to the airport to pick up the band and leaves abruptly through the front door, predictably, never to be seen again. It turned out to be a bumper night - about an hour later after I made the announcement that we had all been taken, I had to call the police to get the building cleared. For me it was a hard lesson well learned - I viewed everything from then on with a healthy dose of skepticism and still do.

I was glad to see the Armory building still in use. I had a chance to visit with a long time personal friend of mine, Dallas Fanning the other day at a civic event in Anniston. Since Dallas is a senior City of Huntsville official I inquired about the status of the old armory. He mentioned to me that the City was installing a new facade over the original sandstone block to make the building more appealing but other than that it is still sound and the City intends to use it for years into the future.

"Sampson was a strong man who let himself be led astray by a jezebel like Delilah."

Answer from 8 year old Bible school student

Local Cavalry Will be Mustered On Monday. Ordered to Camp for Full Training. *from 1904 newspaper*

More than seventy-five men who have signed all necessary papers are about to become members of the First Alabama Cavalry. The boys will begin to draw their salaries beginning next Monday night, September 18th, at which time they will be "mustered

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in by Major R.E. Steiner and Captain Roberts.

The men will all assemble in the event house and await the organization by these officers. Then they will drill once a week until ordered to go to the training camp to complete their training as to the duties of a soldier.

Secretary Aiken of the of the local Chamber of Commerce will be on hand to render all the assistance he can and will at the regular meeting of that body tonight do what he can to have an understanding with the businessmen of this city who will no doubt agree to give the boys their jobs back when they come back from the training camp.

Hurrah for Huntsville! The new cavalry troop now has more than the minimum amount of men and more are signing everyday. One businessman said yesterday he was glad Huntsville had succeeded in obtaining a military organization. It is a protection to the town of all sorts of riots and disorders. Cavalry has never yet been called out to protect a negro against a mob, and that is one reason we are glad Huntsville has a cavalry company, but nobody expects to see anything of the sort here.

Henry Ford, the automobile manufacturer, is suing the Chicago Tribune for saying he would refuse to give his men their jobs back when they returned from the border of Texas and this is the attitude of every broadminded man. Everybody thinks the boys of the country should be prepared to fight when the war times roll around and no businessman wants to be a traitor to his country.

America first is the way they look at it and they all give the boys their old positions. Many corporations are paying their men their regular salaries and the men are also drawing pay from the government.

The Huntsville troop will assemble in the event house at 7:30 Monday, September 18. Everybody will be there.

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News From The Year 1913

News From Huntsville and Around The World

Ford Pays \$5 A Day Will also Share \$10 Million in Profits

Jan 5. Henry Ford astounded the business world today by announcing that he will give his employees a minimum wage of \$5 a day and will share with them \$10 million in last year's profits.

The automobile magnate also disclosed that the Ford Motor Company will begin operating around the clock, with three shifts of eight hours each instead of the present two nine-hour shifts. This will provide employment for several thousand more workers.

Still another part of the new plan provides that no person be fired except for proven unfaithfulness or inefficiency. Anyone doing poor work in one department will be given the chance to make good in another part of the plant.

About ten percent of the workers, most of them women and boys, will not receive any profit-sharing. However, all employees will receive a wage of at least \$5 a day, even the boys who sweep the floors.

The dramatic moves will affect about 26,000 employes, of whom about 15,000 are now at work in the Detroit factories, while others are in Ford branches throughout the world. The company's financial statement for 1914 showed assets of more than \$35 million and a surplus of more than \$28 million.

In announcing the new plan today, a Ford Motor Company representative said: "It is our belief that social justice begins at home. We want those who have helped us to produce this great institution and are helping to maintain it to share our prosperity."

It takes only a few words mumbled in Church and you're married. It takes only a few words mumbled in your sleep and you're divorced.
Jerry McAnnally, Elkton

Wilson Opens Panama Canal

Oct 10. The waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans joined today, as President Wilson pushed a button in Washington that ignited eight tons of dynamite, opening the last segment of the Panama Canal. Small vessels can travel through the canal already, and the path for larger ships from ocean to ocean is expected to be open within weeks. Work on the canal began a decade ago. Success was made possible by Dr. William Gorgas' conquest of malaria and yellow fever.

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INCOME TAX To Be Law

May 8. A bill to impose a graduated income tax and reduce tariffs passed the House of Representatives today by a wide margin. Congressional observers believe that the strong vote in the House will serve as a mandate for the Senate to enact the bill into law.

The way was cleared for imposing an income tax when a constitutional amendment was ratified earlier this year, after an earlier law for an income tax was held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

The new legislation would levy up to six per cent tax on those making above \$500,000 a year. President Wilson had called for tariff reforms in his first address to Congress.

Such legislation, he said, is essential to stimulating foreign trade as well as in curtailing special privileges for domestic industries. There is expected to be much opposition to the new tax. Opponents are already preparing lawsuits to declare the income tax unconstitutional.

Grand Central Station Opens In New York

Feb 2. The New York Grand Central Terminal opened yesterday to the admiration and sometimes confusion of 150,000 visitors.

The throng, hailing mainly from the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan, constantly asked attendants where and when trains departed or arrived. One attendant claimed he received 310 such queries in a little over 24 hours. Several travelers were curious about the architecture of the station, the system of electricity and the nature of the marble used in the building's construction. Countless heads tilted backward to examine the ceiling, which features the stars in the night sky.

The new terminal is expected to handle over 9,000 travelers each day with a minimum of wasted time. Connections will be to all major cities on the Eastern seaboard.

Grand Central Station is already becoming a top attraction for the city of New York.



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River Mystery In Scottsboro Has Everyone Puzzled

from 1927 newspaper

Great excitement and perplexity has been caused in Jackson county by the mysterious disappearance of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Garland, who were last seen Monday afternoon when they boarded a motor cruiser to go up the Tennessee river a short distance to buy fish. The 24-foot cabin cruiser has been discovered four miles below Scottsboro, abandoned, and at some distance from the shore. No trace of the missing couple except a woman's pocketbook and gloves found in the cabin, have been discovered.

Some people have conjectured that either Mr. or Mrs. Garland fell into the river and that the other lost their life in a vain attempt at rescue.

Empty whiskey bottles found on the boat has added to the mystery as the young couple were well known for thier opposition to alcoholic beverages.

The young couple, married last April, were last seen by a house guest, Miss Ruby Manning, who decided to wait on the dock while they made the short trip to purchase fish.

The swollen condition of the Tennessee makes dragging for the bodies impossible, but a lookout is being kept below Scottsboro.

The condition of the boat is very perplexing to officers investigating the strange disappearance, since the ignition to the motor of the cruiser was turned on, and the tanks contained fuel. The boat was found hidden in a thicket of trees in a backwater. Numerous footsteps were observed at the scene.

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The Gypsies

by Helen Miller

Apparently the glorious days of the carefree vagabond gypsies are over. I haven't heard or seen any physical evidence of them now is over 50 years. Back in the 1920's they came in covered wagons to Huntsville, pitched tents on the outskirts and camped for weeks at the time. Their unique lifestyle attracted me to no end and with wild imagination and excitement I viewed in awe those strange people whose life was so different from mine.

I was warned by my elders to stay away from where they were because they were lazy, had no fixed dwelling and were without means of an honest livelihood.

They would come riding into town in horsedrawn wagons, then split up into small groups going in

every direction in and out of shops pretending to look for something special but never buying anything. I would stop and listen with great curiosity as they loudly chatted to each other using strange words and phrases that I was unable to understand. I supposed gypsies had a language all their own. Some proprietors would miss items from their counters and complain to the law, but their slight of hand technique was so skillfully mastered it was impossible to catch them in the act of stealing. Every day we heard another story about their sticky fingers or how someone foolishly lost their money having their fortune told by "Madame Evelyn". In exasperation some of the church women of the town talked about going out where they were camped and try to evangelize them, but the city fathers advised against it.

Usually after a few weeks the gypsies became restless and moved on, much to the relief of everyone. Stretching my memory a bit it seems like I can recall an

old classic English nursery rhyme that reminds me of those unique but happy people and a phase of American life that is gone forever.

"Hark! Hark! The dogs do bark. The beggars are coming to town. Some in rags, some in tags, and some in velvet gowns!"

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I'd Be My Best Friend

by **Ellie Yarbrough,**
95 years old

If I could do it all over again, knowing what I do now, I'd change a few things. I'd treat myself better, I'd be my best friend. I wouldn't be so hard on myself for not quite getting where I wanted to. I'd be kinder to me.

It's funny how you can be gentle to other people, trying so hard to not hurt anyone's feelings. If you say something that hurts someone, you feel badly about it for a long time. But I was always so critical of myself, when I should have been more understanding.

I'd ease up a lot, if I could start all over. I wouldn't take things so seriously - life can really be fun when you see humor in everyday events. There can even be humor in something that seems tragic at the time.

And finally, I'd sure quit worrying so much. I used to worry about everything. What people thought, what would happen in the future. It's so much better to use your "now" by being happy, and if something happens that causes you to worry, worry then. Why waste your todays in worrying what MAY happen, and often doesn't?

I'd kick off my shoes if I could do it again, dance more dances, hug more strangers, and be good to myself. I'd be my own best friend.

Old News

from 1891 Huntsville paper

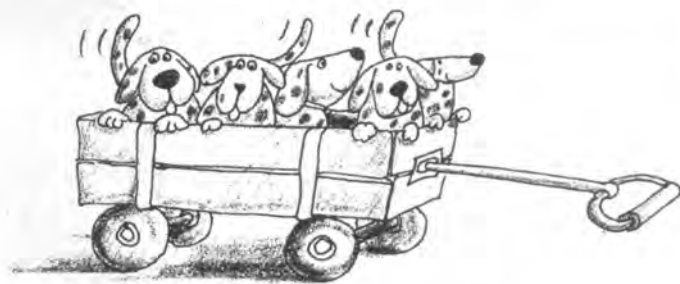
The board of Mayor and aldermen met in session last night. Nothing of special importance was transacted by them. The City Marshall was instructed to notify Mr. H. Wind to have the hides at the store on the corner of Clinton and Washington streets removed at once and not have any stored there during the summer. This order also applies to all dealers in the same line whose houses are offensive.

This nuisance has continued far too long and it is hoped this will spell an end to it.

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Celebrating the New Year with a Bang

By Walter S. Terry

For New Year's Eve 1941-42, someone I knew well, home from college for the holidays, concocted a most ambitious plan: The largest cannon on the Madison County Courthouse lawn - a World War I camouflaged, five-inch-bore, long-barrelled gun - would be fired once again at the stroke of midnight - an early precursor of World War II, as it turned out.

The plotter of this plan set forth a week ahead of New Year's Eve to prepare a "round" for the cannon. This involved the task of nearly filling a Double Cola bottle (12 ounce) with powder from umpteen zillion broken-open Zebra firecrackers. Once the bottle was close to full, a length of dynamite fuse, predetermined to burn for thirty seconds, was inserted into the powder and excelsior was packed into the neck of the bottle around the fuse. The bottle was then wrapped with string and black electrician's tape until it had grown to twice its original size. This was to create compression and an explosive burst at ignition.

Shortly before midnight on December 31, the bombmaker and a friend, a fellow

conspirator, both in handed-down tuxedos, left a New Year's dance at the Russell Erskine Hotel and hastened to the Courthouse Square. There they waited in the shadow of a store across the street from the cannon. The event occur as the courthouse clock was striking twelve. A wind was blowing and the friend got to worrying about being able to light the

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fuse after the charge had been placed in the cannon's breech (the breech block was missing.)

"Why don't we light it over here in the shelter of this building and carry it to the cannon?" the friend asked.

The bombmaker, more respectful of his creation's awesome potential, said in effect, "Man, I may be dumb, but I ain't crazy!"

So they followed the original plan and were successful in lighting the fuse a few seconds before twelve. Then they raced away down the lawn at the northeast corner of the Square. Before taking to the air to clear a heavy iron-link chain strung between concrete posts, the bombmaker had not heard his companion's warning cry. In mid-air, the toes of both shoes were snared by a wire put there to keep people off the grass he had been running on. The leap became a headlong dive as the bombmaker cleared the chain and tumbled you-know-what over appetite across the rough street pavement. There was injury, but, because of the artful tumbling act, confined to some missing hide on the face and hands - nothing life-threatening. But that's another story.

The retreating duo reached the shadows of the Henderson National Bank building and waited.

Not in vain - after the clock had struck six or seven times, there came a brilliant flash, as of vivid lightning, followed by a tremendous blast, with a glorious ring of smoke ejected from the cannon's muzzle. Within seconds came the sound of a hail storm as pieces of Double Cola bottle rained down on the roofs of surrounding buildings. Cars stopped,

with occupants agape.

Mission accomplished.

Miraculously, the bombmaker's tuxedo was none the worse for its owner's sensationally acrobatic (as later related by the accomplice) exit from the Courthouse lawn, and the bombmaker survived to relate the event to his

grandchildren (if not to the local authorities).

Description of a 40-year class reunion - "Same old faces, many new teeth."



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Old Huntsville Trivia

1816 - Huntsville's first school of dance opens. It was located above Talbot's Inn and run by John B. Grantland.

1816 - 10,000 bales of cotton ginned in Madison County

1823 - The first turnpike road in the County is authorized by Legislature. It ran from Huntsville to Ditto Landing and is now known as Whitesburg Drive.

1863 - New Hope is burned to the ground by Yankee soldiers. The only buildings left standing were the Masonic Hall and the saloon

1881 - Village of Meridianville enacts laws prohibiting sale of liquor within three and a half miles

of town limits

1887 - Mr. S. Lyons, a local tailor, advertises men's suits for twenty dollars. An extra pair of pants was another six dollars

1892 - R. G. Fields is performing at the Huntsville Opera house. The admission was \$.25 for the balcony and it was divided into three sections. One was for blacks, another was for poor whites and the third section was reserved for "harlots".

1914 - Graduating class at Huntsville High has 14 members. Class Day exercises were held at the Elk Theater.

Prosperity is that wonderful time when we can always get enough credit to live beyond our means.

TIMOTHY JAY FOOTE



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Woman Loses Furniture and Two Children

Children abducted and brought to
Huntsville - Mother spends night in
Police Station

Atlanta - Dec. 13, 1891-A right pitiful story is that of the misfortunes of Mrs. Elizabeth Haynes. Saturday night she slept at the police station, because she had no other place to stay.

Mrs. Haynes is a widow, and up to Saturday morning she had three children. Now she has but one.

She and her oldest boy earned a livelihood for the family by working at Esas and May's big factory. She says they were discharged from there two days ago because she resented the cruelty of a foreman. She decided to go to Rome, Ga., with the family of George Armstrong. Armstrong was an employee of the factory, and he represented that they could get work in the factory of Rome.

Saturday morning all her earthly belongings were loaded upon a dray with the household goods of Armstrong. Armstrong, his wife and, Mrs. Haynes' two young children went with the dray. Mrs. Haynes and her eldest boy stopped along the way to the depot to bid some neighbors goodbye. When she arrived at the depot she could find neither Armstrong, his wife, nor her two children. She looked everywhere and finally applied to the officer to direct her what to do. He told her to go to the different depots and make inquiries. She did as advised, and finally she found at the Georgia Pacific Railroad that Armstrong had shipped her goods, together with his, to Huntsville, Alabama. She was in despair, and at a loss to know what to do. She found later that Armstrong and his wife had left for Huntsville with her two children. She called at police headquarters to get help in her distress. The officers could do nothing for her. She said she didn't have the money to follow her children to Huntsville where Armstrong had taken them. She was given a room at the police station to remain throughout the night. She spent the night in the room provided for her, hoping that through some means she might yet reach her children.

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The Indian Creek Canal

To bring the Tennessee River to downtown Huntsville was the dream of Dr. Thomas Fearn, and his dream was to become a reality through the construction of a canal linking Huntsville with Triana.

On December 21, 1820, the Indian Creek Navigation Company was chartered and Dr. Fearn, LeRoy Pope, Henry Cook, Sam Hazard, and Stephen Ewing were designated as commissioners and were empowered to issue stock in the company at \$50 per share.

Under the charter, the corporation was given the rights to open, and improve for navigation, Indian Creek from the spring at Huntsville to the Tennessee River at the town of Triana, and to open the waterways for use as a canal. The corporation was also given the right of eminent domain for the purpose of acquiring the necessary lands and waterways. The company was empowered to collect tolls for the passage of all boats through the canal from Huntsville to Triana at the rate of two dollars for every ton of cargo the boat may carry.

A notice appeared in the *Alabama Republican* on 30th March, 1821, stating the "Indian Creek Navigation Company Stock is available for sale at the Planters and Merchants Bank in Huntsville."

At the end of August, it was announced that the canal was progressing rapidly and the canal would begin shipping next season. But, in April of 1822, Dr. Fearn was receiving bids to complete the unfinished one-half of the canal.

Over the next few years, there was a lack of interest in the canal by the public and the feeling was that the canal would never be completed. Dr. Fearn and his



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Tip Of The Month: Eat dark chocolate every day!

brother, George, still had faith in the project, but it appears they were the only ones who believed the canal would become a reality

An advertisement in the *Southern Advocate*, 27th January, 1827, announced, "The Indian Creek Navigation Company is prepared to ship cotton from Huntsville to the Tennessee River. The canal is not completed, but presently will admit the passage of boats".

Work on Fearn's Canal, as it was now known, progressed slowly with alternating phases of "work" and "no work".

Finally, on April 5, 1831, two boats came up the canal to the wharf at the head of Big Spring Creek where they unloaded a cargo of merchandise. They loaded up with a cargo of cotton and passengers and successfully returned to the Tennessee River. Each boat was capable of carrying 100 bales of cotton and fifty passengers.

Unfortunately for the investors, the advent of the railroad spelled the end of the canal's future. The last time the canal was used was during the Civil War, when the federals shipped the stones that had been quarried for the uncompleted Catholic church to Ditto Landing.



Cracklin Cornbread

2 cups stone ground yellow corn meal mix, 1 1/2 cups milk or buttermilk, 1 egg beaten, 1/2 cup oil, 1 cup cracklins, 1/2 teaspoon onion powder, 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder, salt if desired.

Mix all together in bowl til smooth. Pour 1/4 cup oil in skillet & heat, pour in batter. Bake at 450 for about 25 minutes.

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My Rag Time Baby

Teaching school was just about the worst job he could imagine. Confined in a class room for eight hours a day, it seemed to spell the end to his musical aspirations

But for Willie Handy, it was a job. At least it put food on the table.

Born in 1873, as the son of a Methodist preacher, Willie decided at a young age he wanted to be a musician. But his family, all stalwart hell-fire and brimstone, God-fearing people, thought a musician was nothing but a blatant sinner in disguise.

In an effort to pacify his father, who wanted him to become a minister, Willie agreed to finish school and take the examination to become a schoolteacher. After graduation, however, he found the job opportunities in Birmingham to be much more profitable. He soon landed a job at one of the iron mills working as a laborer, making more money than he could ever expect to make as a teacher.

Willie had not lost his desire to be a musician, though. He quickly became friends with most of the black musicians in Birmingham and it was not long before he had formed his own group and

was playing around town at night while still working in the mills during the day.

One of the first gigs he had in Birmingham, according to legend, was playing in a notorious dive. The owner, after listening to the audition, asked what the group's name was.

"Don't have one." Willie replied.

"Well, what's your name?"

"Willie."

"Sounds like a damn Uncle Tom name to me. What's your whole name?"

"William Christopher."

"Hell, that's even worse! We'll just call you by your initials."

W.C. Handy soon tired of Birmingham, though, and moved to Huntsville where he got a job teaching at Alabama A&M as a music instructor. Among his many duties as an instructor, Handy was also responsible for organizing recitals for his students.

Unfortunately, the headmaster at A&M believed that classical music was the only music that should be performed. He even insisted on personally approving the pro-

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For his first recital Handy chose a piece, written by an obscure song-writer, he said, entitled, "La' Overture Toussaint." With a name like that, it was no trouble getting the headmaster to approve it. Handy diligently rehearsed the students, who were by this time enraptured with the new musical composition.

The day of the concert arrived and it was an instant success. Even the staid headmaster was seen sitting in the front row tapping his foot to the music.

W.C. Handy's career as an instructor did not last long. He was still determined to make his mark as a musician. After leaving Huntsville, he moved to Memphis where he wrote the all-time classic, "Memphis Blues," which he sold for \$100. Still a poor man, he next ended up in St. Louis, and after being forced to sleep in alleys and pool rooms, composed the song "Saint Louis Blues," a song that made him wealthy and famous and earned him the title of "Father of the Blues."

Ironically, he was to become best known for the piece he had composed while teaching at A&M - after he changed its name to "My Ragtime Baby."

Children who grew up in poverty had only two choices at mealtime - take it or leave it.

Leonard Adcock

Ironic Justice

from 1874 newspaper

Huntsville police arrested Claude Little the week past for circulating counterfeit money. His method was to walk into a business, ask change for a bogus twenty, and walk out with two legal ten spots. Mr. Little was found out when he tried to spend a counterfeit ten dollar bill he had received in change.

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From Beer To Bibles

One of the stories of old Huntsville that has almost been forgotten is the one about Faith Presbyterian and Cambron's nightclub.

As Huntsville began to grow in the late 1950s, so did the need for more church space. A recently formed congregation of the Presbyterian church had been meeting in members' homes and anywhere else they could find space to worship. As the membership grew, so did the need for a permanent meeting place.

The answer to their dilemma came one Sunday evening when Charley Motley, a member of the congregation, was driving down Whitesburg Drive. Noticing a nightclub by the name of Cambron's, Charley paused and took a long look at it. Due to the Sunday Blue Laws of that time, nightclubs were not permitted to open on Sunday. "What a waste," Charley thought. "All that space not being used on the one day of the week when we could really use it."

Due to the nature of their business, it's hard to shock most nightclub operators, but when Mr. and Mrs. Motley walked into the darkened club and asked permission to use it for a church gathering, Mr. Cambron was flabbergasted. "Ruby, come here," he said to his wife. "You gotta hear

this."

As Mr. Motley explained their needs, Mr. Cambron shook his head and decided, "Why not? If they're willing to help clean the place up on Sunday mornings, it will help me out, too."

Over the next several months, a routine was established by the

Faith Presbyterian Church that had to be unique in the annals of church history.

Church members would arrive early on Sunday morning and begin sweeping the floors. One person was assigned to empty ash trays, while others would clean tabletops and carry out trash.

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"Moses died before he ever reached Canada. Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the Battle of Geritol."

Child's answer in a Bible exam

One member was even assigned the task of unplugging the juke box and turning off the neon sign that proclaimed Budweiser as the "King of Beers."

The membership continued to grow with Cambron's being the only nightclub in Huntsville with Bibles and textbooks stored in the back room. One old-timer tells a story about a man who was in the habit of drinking too much on Saturday nights. After much persuasion, his neighbor finally talked him, into going to church. One Sunday morning, as he got out of the car in front of Cambron's, the man paused, as if in reflection and said, "I've heard that guilty people always return to the scene of the crime, but isn't this just a little ridiculous?"

When Mr. Cambron offered to sell the property, (for one million dollars with no money down.) the church quickly accepted the offer, becoming the only Presbyte-

rian church to ever purchase a nightclub.

The nightclub has long since been replaced by modern facilities and the church continues to flourish, only now without the neon Budweiser sign.

Holmes Ave. Woman Swallows Snake

From 1913 Huntsville paper

Miss Mamie Nolan, of Holmes Ave., has been in the habit of drinking water directly from the aqueduct by putting tier mouth to the tap. She will not do it anymore. While she was drinking, a water snake about ten inches long passed through the faucet, and went halfway down her throat. She could not yell, but she managed to attract attention by throwing herself down on the floor and kicking. The snake was pulled from her throat, and she fully recovered from her fright in an hour, but her throat is still sore.



"mom, please put the cocktail down and come out with your hands up!"



must you always be the center of attention? happy birthday."

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The Frugal Reader

* To prevent your kitchen and house from smelling like fried foods or fish, slice potatoes and place them in the oil. You can even eat them afterwards.

Also, try mixing water/vinegar on your stove and simmer while you're cooking!

* Instead of using Tums or Roloids for an upset, gassy stomach, put 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda into 8 oz. of warm water, stir well to dissolve and drink down fast. This is also a great hangover remedy.

* To remove burnt food on the bottom of your pots and pans, add a tablespoon of bleach to the pot full of hot water and let it sit for about 30 minutes. The burnt food comes right off - but don't use this on nonstick or copper cookware.

* Milk can be frozen, so when you see it on sale at the grocery store, stock up. If you often use milk for recipes, you can freeze it in small containers for quick thawing. The milk fat in whole milk will sometimes separate, but it does not affect the taste, nutrition or performance of the milk in recipes.

* Instead of buying Soft Scrub to clean your stovetop or other appliances without scratching, use a non-gel, white toothpaste from the dollar store.

* Ask your doctor for samples of any medications you are prescribed. The drug company reps supply doctors with lots of samples, so don't be embarrassed to ask for a week or more supply.

* For great deals on stylish, brand name children's clothing, check out Ebay. When your kids outgrow the clothes, you can resell them, which will pay for the

next size or next season's clothing.

* Unplug all of your unused electrical devices around the house when you're not using them. Even when a product is not in use, it is conducting a small charge. You'll save on your electrical bill.

* Try drying two loads of clothes at once. It will normally take the same amount of time to dry 2 as 1 load, and you're only using 1 dryer sheet!

* If you have a Swiffer wet mop, instead of buying the expensive, disposable refill pads for it, buy some cheap wood sweaters at a thrift store and cut them up into several pads. Glue some Velcro on the end of your mop so the pad will stick. These work great and can be tossed in the washing machine and used over and over.

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When Veterans Meet

Of all the Civil War veterans who called Huntsville home, Major S.F. Sweinhart must have been the most unusual. An ex-Yankee soldier who moved to Huntsville after the war, he earned the respect of his former enemies and was accorded an honor unique in Huntsville's history.

Major Sweinhart was a member of an Ohio volunteer regiment and had participated in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war. While stationed in Alabama, he was captivated by the warm climate and the natural beauty of the Tennessee Valley. At the time he wore a Yankee uniform, so it is doubtful that he was exposed to the legendary "Southern hospitality" our region has become famous for.

When the war was finally over and the soldiers had stacked arms for the last time, Major Sweinhart moved to Huntsville, determined to make it his home.

Feelings were running high at the end of the war, so it is not surprising that he was greeted with scowls and bitterness.

"Damn Yankee," the Huntsville natives would say as they passed him on the streets.

"Damn Rebels," the Major would mutter under his breath, while looking straight ahead.

But time has a way of healing

An Athens man complains that there are two reasons why his wife won't wear last year's dresses - she doesn't want to, and she can't.

all wounds and as the Major grew into old age, he began taking his place on the old courthouse bench, reliving and refighting the battles of his youth. An old Yankee officer and a group of old Confederate veterans, with nothing in common except the blood spilled on battlefields years before.

Slowly the town began to accept the old soldier and the scowls he used to encounter on the streets turned to smiles. Sweinhart became involved in the community and became active in veterans' affairs. Of course, the only other veterans in Huntsville were ex-Confederates.

In 1927, Major Sweinhart was awarded the highest accolade ever given to a Yankee by Confederate veterans. The story can best be told by a newspaper article of the day:

"He was invited this week to attend a dinner given by the Daughters of the Confederacy to

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members of the Egbert Jones Camp of Confederate Veterans at the home of Robert A. Moore acting adjutant for the Third Brigade, Alabama Division.

"He was welcomed with hand clasps and smiles. After dinner, the old veterans invited him to attend their business meeting. When discussions lagged a little, Major Sweinhart, who had remained in a corner deep in thought, rose and stood at attention.

"Men," he said, with a shake in his voice, "I've lived down here so long I feel like I belong here." His voice quivered again as he added, "And by golly, I want to belong to you."

"The Confederate veterans gave a hearty cheer, and one of them proposed Major Sweinhart for membership. The proposal was accepted immediately and the major was accepted as a member of the camp by unanimous vote.

"He now belongs to the Egbert Jones Camp of Confederate veterans and is believed to be the only Union soldier in the country who has experienced such a transformation."

When Major Sweinhart died, an honor guard consisting of ex-Confederate soldiers stood guard during the funeral ceremony. His body was buried in Maple Hill Cemetery next to the other veterans he had grown to love.

Old Fashioned Fritters

1/2 cup milk, 1 1/4 cups flour, 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder, 1 tablespoon sugar
 1 tablespoon melted butter, 1 egg

Mix as any batter, beating very hard. Put in baking powder after the beating is done, then mix well. Drop small pieces in deep fat and fry until done.

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Another First For Huntsville

Among history's "firsts" is the unusual fact that Huntsville had the first bathtub. This splendid invention was the brainchild of Thomas Martin of Fairfax, Virginia.

He had learned, in 1808, of a new land opening up south of Tennessee. A territory that was said to be abundant with game and fertile land upon which crops of all varieties could flourish.

Martin, his wife, Sarah, and her parents left Virginia and soon settled near the big spring in the North Alabama territory that John Hunt had founded in 1805. Huntsville, as it would soon be named, was a thriving community of 2,500 people.

Martin built a grand home for his family on the northwest side of Monte Sano and engaged in dairy farming. It was reported that he earned the considerable sum of \$2,000 a year in this business. An enterprising young man, he decided to pipe water to his property.

Huntsville had become the

first city in the United States to start a water works system and Martin copied the technique of hollowing out red cedar logs to carry the water.

Running the pipe from the Cold Spring to his milk house, he carved a limestone tub, placing it in the milk house, probably because it was against the law to bathe in the house. This was most likely due to the fact that open fires had to be used to heat the water for the bath.

The tub was five feet long, 19 inches wide and 12 inches deep,

with a hole carved in one end for drainage. It remained on Monte Sano for close to 50 years, then it was moved to a daughter's house on Holmes Avenue where it lay neglected until it was uncovered during excavation for the downtown post office.

For many years it sat unnoticed in front of the Post Office Cafe, where it finally became lost forever, leaving only the footnote that it was, as reported by a New York newspaper in 1916, "the first bathtub with running water in the United States!"

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As Huntsville moved into the 1950s, there was a sense of excitement in the air. The population had grown to an astounding 16,437 people and Huntsville's own John Sparkman had been chosen to run as Vice President with Adlai Stevenson. Downtown was still the place families shopped and went to the movies even though the city fathers had routed most of the streets one-way. UAH was located in the old Butler High School on Clinton Avenue and Huntsville had a total of 3,178 students. Bill Haley and his band "The Comets" released "Rock Around The Clock," a song that had many parents concerned because of it's wild rock and roll lyrics.

Those days are long gone, but the folks at Propst Drug store still believe in offering the same dedicated, personal service that makes our city a special place to live.

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