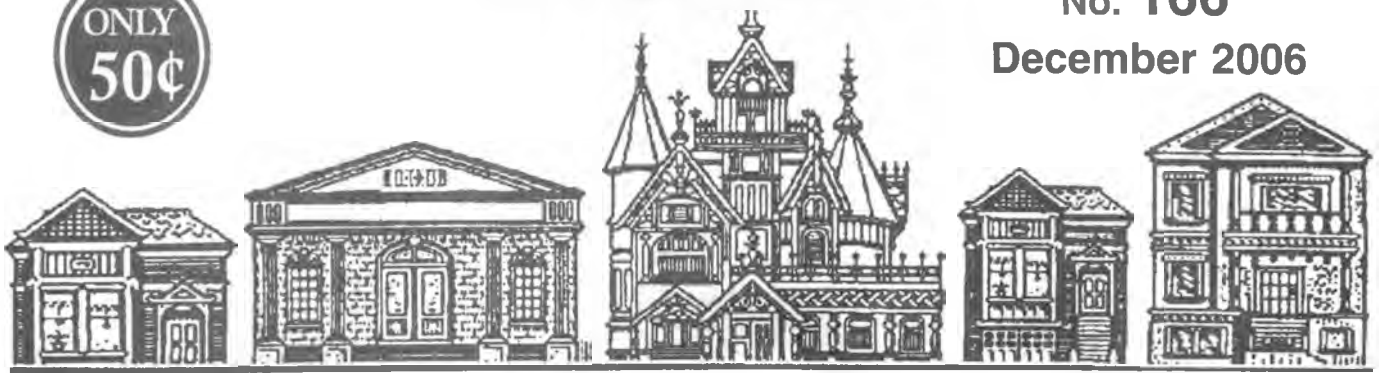


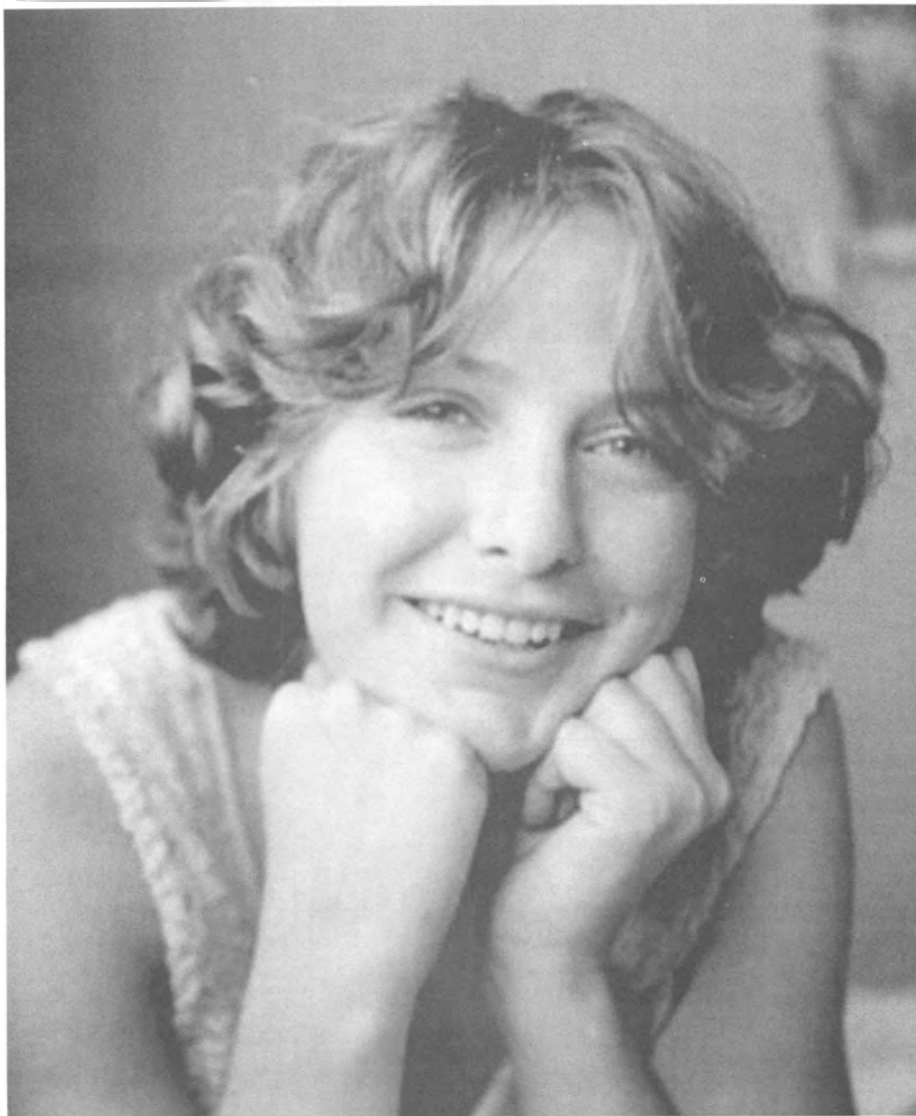
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December 2006



Old Huntsville

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TOO YOUNG TO DIE

“I know I’m going to die,” said Laurie, “but the thought of leaving my husband and children is so painful. I’ll never again be able to tell Will how much I love him and I’ll never be able to share another Christmas with my children.”

Also in this issue: **Your Christmas Memories**

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TOO YOUNG TO DIE

My Darling Will,

There are so many things I want to say but I don't know where to begin. I remember when we first met and you were wearing that funny cap and laughing at some joke. I fell in love with you that day.....

Most people who knew Will Harrison and Laurie Sisco described them as the perfect couple. He was a tall handsome man with a shock of unruly hair that always seemed in need of combing. Laurie was a slender beautiful blonde, full of energy, always with a big smile and a twinkle in her big blue eyes; the kind of person that people loved to be around.

They had met while both were attending college in Boston on scholarships. A friend had introduced them and it was love at first sight.

".... I remember the first time we kissed. I had read a magazine that afternoon with

an article on "The Perfect Kiss." You didn't know it but I was determined you were going to kiss me that night. When you did I was so worried about whether I was doing it right....."

In 1959, Will graduated and landed a job with an aerospace company in Huntsville. Although Laurie still had another year left to get her degree there was no question about what she wanted; a family. With a few close friends in attendance they were married on a Friday afternoon at City Hall. Early the next morning, with their car loaded down and a rocking chair tied on top, Mr. and Mrs. Harrison began their trip to Huntsville, Alabama.

".... It was so beautiful when we came across the mountain and saw Huntsville for the first time. The leaves were changing colors and the city looked like a small jewel set in the middle of a glorious easel painted with swaths of red, yellow and brown...."

The Harrison's first home was a rooming house on Holmes Avenue. Housing was at a premium in Huntsville and as Will recalled years later, "We were lucky to find that." Never the less, they were blissfully happy with their new lives.



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Although neither had ever lived in the South before, the young couple thrived in their new surroundings. They were young, in love, and made every day a new adventure. Their two small rooms seemed to be a magnet for new friends who would stop by with a bottle of wine or a pot of chili. The Harrison's welcomed the gracious southern hospitality and in no time felt as if Huntsville was indeed "home".

Several months later they found, and rented, a small home on Beirne Avenue. The only furniture they had was a rocking chair and a few wooden boxes.

"They didn't care," remembered a friend. "They were so much in love that the little house seemed like a mansion. We used to go over there and sit on the floor while playing charades or rummy. Laurie was always so enthusiastic and bubbly you would forget you were sitting on the floor."

"A few weeks after they moved in a bunch of us got together and had a "home party" for

them. The idea was that everyone was to bring something for the house, or an extra piece of furniture they no longer needed. Will and Laurie ended up with nine end tables, three lamps and a bed."

"... I cried when I saw what they had done for us. It was hard to believe that we had been blessed with such dear friends..."

Life was good for the young couple. Will enjoyed his job and Laurie went to work part time at W.T. Grant, a department store downtown. After work Laurie would rush home to prepare dinner for her husband. When people teased her about it she would laugh, saying "It's my job. He cuts grass, carries out the garbage and I cook."

Two years into the marriage, the Harrison's welcomed a new baby boy into the world. A year after that, the family was complete with the arrival of a baby girl. It seemed as if things couldn't be more perfect.

".... Sometimes when I look at Kenny and Margie my heart could burst. It is so hard to believe that you and I brought something so beautiful into this world..."

In a perfect family, there is a perfect mother. Laurie was indeed that. She organized

"Average weight of Americans drops to 250 pounds."

Newspaper headline in 2029

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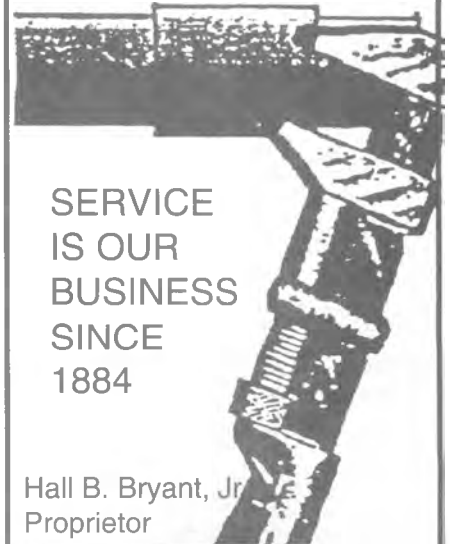
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Christi and Will League
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Christi and Betty

"Because of your experienced staff

Betty's life was saved."



Steadman, Dr. Gilbert and Karen

various parties for all the small kids in the neighborhood, allowed them to play with the water hose in the back yard on hot days and took not only her kids, but other neighborhood kids trick-or-treating on Halloween.

Laurie's favorite holiday was Christmas, though. She would begin right after Thanksgiving decorating the house with lights and greenery, turning it into a magical place for the children. Although the house was small she always insisted on getting the largest Christmas tree possible. Will would pretend to grumble about having to move the couch out of the living room to make space for the tree. Often she would bake cookies, and after turning the radio to a station playing Christmas music, she would curl up on the couch and read Christmas stories to the children. Like all children, they were intrigued by Santa Claus; and like all good mothers, she would tell them all about Santa's magic and the spirit of Christmas.

Christmas Eve was a special time in the Harrison household. After sending the children to bed, Laurie would sit up late

wrapping presents. Will would sit in amazement watching his wife and thinking how blessed he truly was. The next morning Margie and Kenny would jump out of bed and rush to see what Santa had brought them, and every year...it was exactly what they had asked for.

"... They were always so excited. They really believed in Santa Claus."

It was the perfect life for the perfect family but all of that would soon come crashing down. Like a kaleidoscope, life is constantly changing and for Will and Laurie, it did in a big way. A way they could never have prepared themselves for.

Laurie had always been the picture of health; vivacious and full of energy, so when she began to have periods of exhaustion she didn't think much about it. With three and four years olds she kept busy all the time. After all, being tired was part of being a mother.

As summer approached and then slowly dragged on, Laurie was becoming more and more tired and even listless at times. She often would have to force herself to do even the smallest task and then it would drain the energy right from her body. The initial few pounds she lost didn't worry Laurie, after all she had had two children and like most women was glad to lose a few pounds. However, that combined with the sallow look on her face,

"I've had a good round of golf when i didn't fall out of the golf cart."

Buddy Hackett



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caused concern for Will. Laurie brushed it off, and assured her husband that she was fine.

One night after dinner, Will was startled to hear the sound of plates crashing to the floor in the kitchen. Rushing to see what was wrong, he found Laurie gripping the edge of the counter top, trying to keep from falling. After helping her to bed, Will called the doctor and made an appointment for the next morning.

Although the examination only took a few minutes, it seemed like hours to Laurie and Will. When the doctor came back into the room, the look of concern on his face said more than his actual words.

"I want Laurie to go to Nashville for some tests. Some of her lymph nodes have an abnormal enlargement."

The Harrison's besieged the doctor with questions but he wouldn't say much. "Let's just wait until we have the test results before we get too excited."

Two weeks later Laurie found herself checked into the hospital in Nashville. Every time one test was finished, the doctors

would order another test or another X-ray. Laurie and Will tried to ask questions but there were no answers. "The results will be sent to your doctor." Hurry up and wait. That's all they could do.

Two days after returning home, Laurie's doctor called. "Laurie, I want you to come to my office in the morning and I want you to bring Will with you."

That night was the longest night in their brief marriage. As they lay in bed holding each other as if they couldn't let go, both tried to be positive on the outside for the other's sake. They knew, deep inside, the news was bad. If not, the doctor would have said so on the telephone.

"... I was so scared and then you took me into your arms and told me you loved me..."

One look at the doctor's face answered many of their questions. "I've been a doctor for almost thirty years and this is one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. The tests came back positive for cancer."

A flurry of questions fol-

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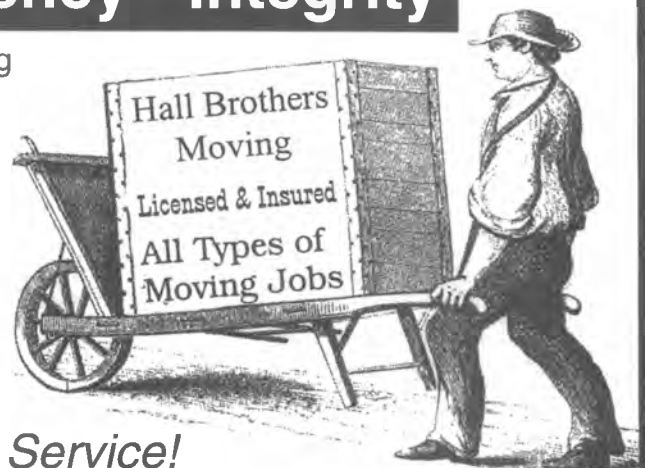
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lowed; operations, treatments, specialized care, clinics???

The doctor slowly shook his head. "It's too late. It has spread too far."

Laurie and Will sat there unbelieving, not knowing what to ask or say.

"Two months, four months, maybe six months, it's hard to say," the doctor continued. "I will do everything in my power to help you but there's not much I can do except keep you comfortable."

Will had been sitting silently but now he suddenly jumped to his feet. "I don't believe it! We're going to see another doctor!"

The doctor had anticipated this. Motioning toward a thick file sitting on his desk he said, "I took the liberty to make copies of all the tests and examinations. I have also included a list of some of the best cancer doctors in this part of the country in case you want to get another opinion. Call me anytime, day or night," he said while scribbling his home phone number on a piece of paper.

The next several months were a time of disbelief for the young couple as they made more and

more copies of the tests and X-rays and sent them to doctors in far-away cities. The only glimmer of hope they had was when a doctor in Atlanta called and wanted to schedule an appointment with them. After several days of more tests he confirmed what they already knew but refused to accept.

Laurie continued to grow weaker and lose weight. By now the weight loss was no longer a few vanity pounds, it was obvious that she was slowly drifting away. Will tried to do every thing humanly possible but there was really nothing he could do. Sometimes he would grow so frustrated he would go out to the garage and pound the walls with



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"If it's your mother, you can kiss her anytime. But if it's a new person, you have to ask permission."

Roger, age 6, on kissing

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3. *Huntsville Sketchbook: full color paintings of the Huntsville area* by the Botanical Gardens \$39.95

4. *The Civil War Journal of Mary Jane Chadick; Huntsville during the Civil War*, by Nancy Rohr \$16.95

5. *Through the Garden Gate: The Gardens of Historic Huntsville* by Donna Castellano \$30.00

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his fists as sobs wracked his body. "Why?" he would scream silently, "Why Laurie?" The guilt of knowing it was her instead of him was more than he could bear.

Not wanting her to see the effects it was having on him, Will would dry his tears, go back into the house to try and comfort her however he could. The feelings of helplessness grew more and more as each day passed.

Laurie went through all of the emotions: shock, depression, and disbelief. Disbelief, however, turned to anger. "It's not fair," she would scream while knocking things off the table next to her bed. "I'm too young to die."

As her condition continued to worsen, neighbors began taking care of the children. Will hired a private nurse to stay with her while he worked. Friends stopped by almost every day bringing cooked meals and offering to help. It suddenly felt strange that the same southern hospitality that she had once welcomed was now a depressing daily ritual.

One frequent visitor was Reverend J. Otis King, a flamboyant and colorful local minister who was known for staging events such as preaching from the roof of a local honky-tonk.

King was also well known for his compassion. Anyone in the hospital, or sick at home, could expect a visit from the minister whether they attended his church or not.

At first Laurie refused to see the minister, telling the nurse to send him away. King would leave but he would always be back in a few days. Finally Laurie agreed to see him, with the admonition, "Don't try to convert me!"

The visits had no set pattern. Sometimes they would talk about the children, the weather,

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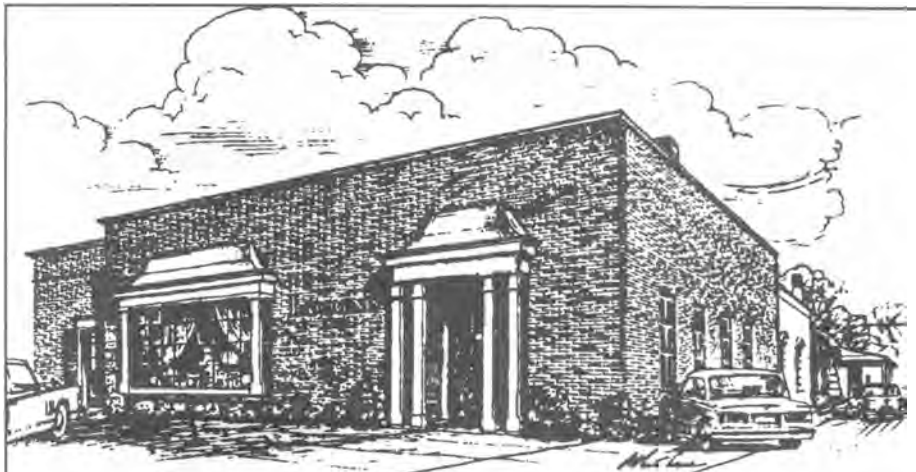
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world events. Other times King would sit silently with neither he nor Laurie saying a word. Over the course of several weeks Laurie became comfortable with the minister and began confiding her fears to him.

"I know I am going to die," said Laurie, "but the thought of leaving my husband and children is so painful. I'll never again be able to tell Will how much I love him and I'll never be able to share another Christmas with my children."

Reverend King had grown genuinely fond of the young woman and as he listened to her talk he was moved almost to tears. "Maybe you can," he said while holding her hand. "If you really want to, I believe you can."

On a dreary December day, Laurie Sisco Harrison died. It was only a week before Christmas. The day of the funeral was cold and raining, almost as if the heavens too were weeping in sorrow.

Although Will knew Laurie was going to die, nothing prepared him for going home and facing the stark reality that his wife was gone forever. He would never see her smile again; he would never hold her hand or be able to tell her how much he loved her.

Neighbors volunteered to keep the children for a week or so while Will struggled with his grief. In the days before Christmas, he became almost a recluse, not bothering to shave or change clothes. The once tidy home became littered with bags of trash and dirty dishes. When



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his little Margie asked if Santa Claus was going to come that year, Will half heartedly pulled some bills from his wallet and asked a neighbor if she would be kind enough to buy them something.

Christmas Eve found Will sitting home alone in a darkened house. He knew he had to go get the children but dreaded the thought of a Christmas without his wife. His heart wasn't in it. The phone rang. It was Reverend King.

"Will, I need you to clean yourself up and meet me at the church office." Will told the reverend he wasn't up to visiting, but King insisted he needed to see him tonight. It couldn't wait.

It was something in the tone of the minister's voice that made Will, for the first time in a week, get up and clean himself up. Hurriedly he shaved and changed clothes. When he got to the church he was met by one of the church members who was waiting for him. Without saying a word he led Will to the minister's office. The room was shrouded in shadows with the only light being a small

lamp on the desk.

It was obvious Reverend King had been sitting there, alone and deep in thought as he waited. Motioning Will to sit down, King asked how he was doing. Will made no reply. There was nothing he could say.

The minister sat silently for a few moments, watching the young man struggle with his grief. Finally he opened a desk drawer and pulled out an envelope, which he handed to Will. Without saying anything else he stood up and left the room, leaving the door slightly ajar.

Will instantly recognized the handwriting. It was Laurie's.

With trembling hands he opened the envelope and began to read the letter inside.

".....When you read this letter I will no longer be of this world.... There are so many things I want to tell you but find impossible to put on paper..... I know our children will have a

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Will sat in the darkened office reading the pages over and over again. After about thirty minutes, Reverend King entered the room. "Are you all right?" he asked. Will nodded his head

"I have to go get ready for services tonight but sit here as long as you want." Somewhere in the church the choir was rehearsing. The soft words of Silent Night seemed to fill the room.

Will sat there for almost an hour listening to the music and remembering the wonderful woman who was his wife and the mother of their children. For the first time in months he was at peace with himself.

When he pulled into the driveway of his home he noticed lights on inside and wondered if he had left them on. As he opened the front door the first thing he noticed was a huge Christmas tree, gaily decorated with twinkling lights, tinsel and ornaments. Under the tree were mounds of Christmas presents with colorful bows and ribbons.

Trying to absorb the shock of what was



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before him, Will stood motionless. The house was spotless, the dishes had all been washed and the garbage had been carried out. It was almost as if Laurie had never left. Suddenly the door swung open and the children came running in from the neighbors house.

While struggling to remove their scarves and jackets, the children started to toss their caps onto the couch; a bad habit their mother had always tried to break them from. This time however, the couch had been moved. As their little eyes scanned the room, they too were stopped in their tracks by the sight of what appeared to be the magic of Christmas.

The children, frozen in the moment, stared at the biggest tree they could have ever imagined. Under the tree were presents galore. The special care that was taken in the decoration of the tree and the wrapping of each and every gift left the children with no doubt as to where they came from.

Feeling a tug on his coat pocket, Will looked down to see his daughter's little face staring up at him. He had never realized that his little Margie had the exact same hair color as her mother. Or that they shared the same little pug nose and deep blue eyes.

"Yes, Margie?" He could barely see her through the tears welling up in his eyes.

"See Daddy, there really is a Santa Claus!"

As the same calming sense of peace overtook him once more, Will smiled at the tree and then his children before replying. "Of course there's a Santa Claus, Margie. Of course there is."

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A Real Job

by Judy C. Smith

It's Christmas Eve 1985 and mother, M.D., Scott, Brent, Creighton, Allison, Warren, Martin and I are going out to our annual Christmas Eve dinner (I only cook on Christmas Day and it takes two weeks to prepare). This year Dee is in California because he's in the Army and also having to have his gall bladder taken out on Christmas Eve. Mother and Brent will fly out to visit him a few days after Christmas, but we can't go with the family out

of school and a new baby likely to be here.

After dinner, we are all at our house, mother asks me if I will get her a glass of water, and here I am four days past my delivery due date, have gained forty pounds and I'm doing good just to walk around and still obliging everyone on their wants. It's 9:45 p.m. and Oh My God, my water breaks, which means the baby is on the way. I say, "Guess What, M.D.?" as he is preparing toys and being Santa since we just got all the kids to bed, "We need to go to the hospital." "Can't you wait?" he replies, "I have got to get the Santa stuff put out before the kids wake early in the morning." I asked him which was more important, delivering toys or delivering a baby. He got the point. Being nearly done, he was able to hurriedly finish in fifteen minutes and we were at the hospital shortly after 10:00 p.m., with my mother home to keep the kids through the night as well as Scott who is now 21 years old and we can depend on him to get the rest of the Christmas work done and even handle the next morning when the kids wake up if necessary.

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You might not think the eighth child would take nine hours to arrive, but Owen is not known for being on time. He was 8 pounds and 13 ounces and 22 inches long, and came screaming into this world at 8:10 a.m. and was a Christmas Day Angel. The nurses gave him a red elf hat to wear for Christmas. Happy Birthday, Owen.

Each year we will put up his Merry Birthday Tree, and I tell him only angels are born on Christmas Day, but he says he'll never get to have a birthday party on my birthday, like everyone else does, so we pick his 1/2 birthday for June 25th and that will be it. It worked for a while, having swimming birthday parties while he was little.

In the past I did some artwork for Sears, taught dancing, both in Huntsville and Tuscaloosa, organized the kindergarten at the First Baptist Church on Monte Sano mountain, owned and ran a vending machine business, taught swimming for twenty three years, ran a day care in my home with six additional children each day for thirteen years, and cooked supper every night for eleven people, including the house keeper, Ida Mae, who couldn't cook.

Well, time passed. I've had a child at home for forty-two years. Owen is twenty and going off to the University of Alabama. My, how time flies when you're having fun. It's time to "put a table cloth on the stove," cover it up and no more big dinners at night with silver candle sticks, cloth napkins and a milk pitcher (no carton on my table). Now it will be Hardees, McDonalds, and Steak-Out and paper products all the way. Just throw them in the garbage when finished or maybe a flash back and wash a few plastic forks and cups to use, just in case.

The other night I had company over for dinner, the works, on the patio. I used place mats, cloth napkins, silver, china, flower centerpiece of coordinated flowers, home cooked meal and it was really good. I thought maybe I could still pull off a decent get-together again, when Warren walked in from Birmingham Southern, where he is now a true Southern Gentleman. He says,

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"Mom, the place looks great, just like Martha Stewart would do. Have you been in jail?" So much for patio parties, I'll try something else.

I did buy and run an embroidery business, which is great fun. M.D. says I'll monogram anything that will sit still long enough, including my cars.

Now Owen is twenty and left to attend the University of Alabama where M.D. and I went to school. He turns to me and says, "Momma, why didn't you ever learn to do something and get a real job?"

So now, if my friends can't find me, I've gone in search for A REAL JOB. You inspire me, Owen.



"Anybody who doesn't know what soap tastes like never washed a cat."

Sammy Johnson

Want Ads from 1907

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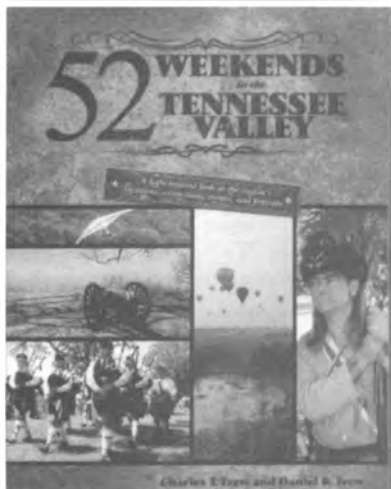
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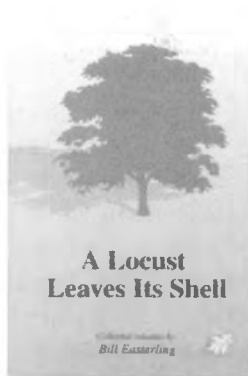
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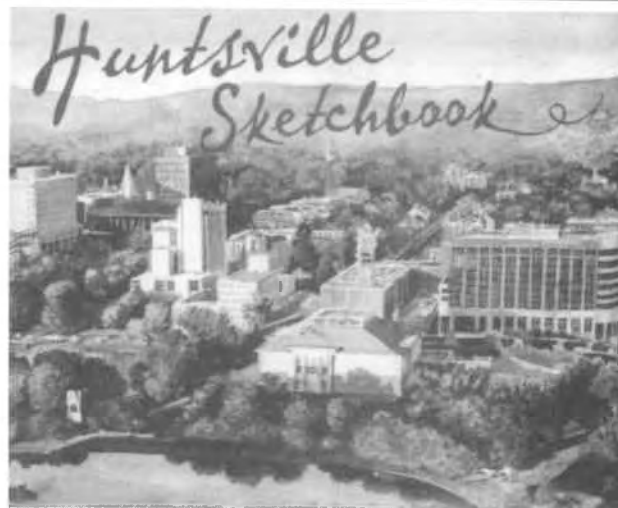
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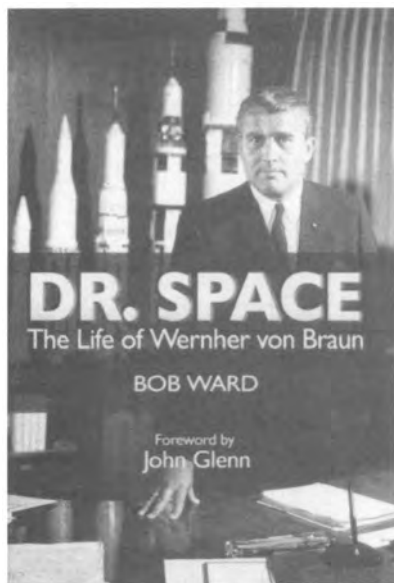
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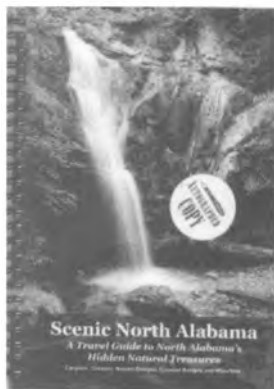
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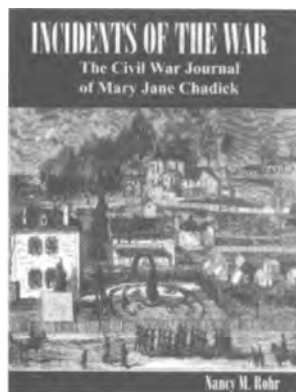
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Remembering Christmas

by Malcolm Miller

I know that everyone remembers the day and time when they found out that Santa was really a fictional character and not as real as he had always seemed when we were small.

In my wife's case, her father had been called to the war; it was World War II at that time, so she (age 6), her Mother and her sister (age 8) had to move to a small house in town.

They had been living in the country. When they moved in she and her sister found some beautiful little orange glass dishes under the porch of the house where they moved. They were afraid to show their Mother, as she would not let them keep things that did not belong to them.

Then, guess what? The dishes ended up on Christmas morning being under the tree from Santa. Instead of a great

Christmas, it was a Christmas of broken hearts. Her Mother had found the dishes and because times were hard used them for items from Santa not knowing the girls had found them first.

As for me, I am the youngest of seven boys. All of my brothers were quite a bit older. Every Christmas Eve all seven boys would put their caps on the hearth and every Christmas morning the caps would be filled with candy, oranges, and raisins for the older boys and candy,

oranges, raisins and a small toy for the younger boys. It was a very exciting time when we would all wake up and see our caps filled to the brim with goodies. This was the only time of year we would have candy, raisins and oranges as we were sharecroppers and the winters were rather slim when it came to extras.

My brothers were enjoying the benefits of Santa way into their teenage years. When I was seven, just a few days before Christmas, my Father and I were walking to

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the local store and Dad said, "Son, there will not be a Santa this year, when we go to the store you can pick out some firecrackers for Christmas." I developed a big knot in my stomach. This was so hard for me to believe.

I felt this was very unfair as all of my older brothers had been able to enjoy having Santa treats way into their older years and after this talk with my Father we never put our hats on the hearth again.

There are several phases of Christmas. It was exciting for me and my brothers when we were receiving Santa presents in our caps. Then when I married and had three children of my own it was exciting during their younger years to see what Santa would put in their stockings.

Their excitement on Christmas morning was so wonderful to see. It reminded me of my younger years and how happy we were on Christmas morning.

Now I have grandchildren and great grandchildren and it is wonderful to see them at Christmas and see how excited they are seeing their gifts.

Died In a Dentist Chair

Mrs. C.E. Jordan died very suddenly while in the care of her dentist. Death was attributed to heart failure. Eleven teeth had been extracted by Dr. W.S. Meyers. Mrs. W.C. Miller of Huntsville, a sister of Mrs. Jordan who was with her at the time, and Mrs. John Glenn, her mother, became hysterical when they learned the news, and were compelled to be placed under the care of their physicians.

from 1900 newspaper

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Heard On The Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Our winner for the November Photo of the Month was **Judy Johnson**, of Huntsville. The photo was an adorable shot of **Doug Martinson, Sr.** an attorney here whose family has been in law for generations. Judy's uncle was **Glenn Sherrill**, the man who started the Krystal restaurants. When her grandfather **Sam N. Sherrill** heard about the concept of small fast-food burgers, his Nu-Way restaurant on the square in Huntsville became the first Krystal here!

What a surprise when 6 screeching witches came by the office just before Halloween. The ladies were only dressed as witches - **Barbara Saunders, Karen Dekko, Jan Bush, Jill Fletcher and Ann Miller** looked like the real thing and really shook up the neighborhood!

Lee Ann's Place, a new restaurant off Church street, has opened and is really packing in the crowds. The other night we talked with **Dea Thomas Jr., Ann Frazier Hill, Marie Hewitt, Louie & Jane Tippett and Jean Pewitt. John Henegar** was there with a posse of friends. Also there were **Danny Banks, Glenn Watson, David Milly, Tom Ryan and Clyde Yarbrough**. The leg-

endary **Tony Mason** was performing that night and he did a great job - so many people remember Tony from the old days and love that he is playing again. It seems the older he gets, the better he sounds AND looks!

Bill Leatherwood, owner of Old Dad's BBQ in Hazel Green, recently had to undergo bypass surgery at Huntsville Hospital. He is doing great and taking good care of him is his sweet wife **Rosemary**.

Congratulations to our friend **Rusty Dinwiddie**, of Park Supply Co., for his recent championship. He is a member of the Huntsville Senior Men's 8.5 Combo Tennis team who recently traveled to Gulf Shores, Al. to play for the state win. They played 4 matches and won every one of them! I couldn't even believe that Rusty was a senior, but you only have to be 50, which he is! Next the team travels to Baton Rouge to compete against 9 states for the Sectionals. Good luck Rusty!

Recently while out and about we met up with **Mitch Howie** and his beautiful wife **Debra**. Mitch is an attorney in town. They had just returned from a trip overseas and were having dinner with Mitch's sister **Tricia Kessler**. Tricia looked alot like Joan Baez, and was gorgeous! She has a flat in London and is here for a visit.

Happy birthday to our buddy **Rocco Petrella**, whom many people know here in Huntsville!

We were saddened to hear of the death of **Dea Thomas, Sr.** Dea is definitely a part of Huntsville's rich history and was a brilliant lawyer. We send our sympathy to Dea's family and many friends.

It was geat meeting **Scott Hamilton** recently. Scott works at Channel 19, WHNT as IT/Broadcast Engineer and loves the history of our old Huntsville landmarks. What a nice guy!

It was a shock to hear that **Albert Hall**. State Legislator since 1978, died at the young age of

Photo of The Month

The first person to correctly identify the youngster below wins a 1-year complimentary subscription to "Old Huntsville" magazine.

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Hint: This little girl has never lived in New York but is very familiar with it here in Huntsville.



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70, and leaves so many friends and family who will miss him dearly.

We're so proud of our dear friends **Alan** and **Debra Jenkins** for their gift to the city of Merrimack Hall, on Triana Blvd.. Alan and Debra will be renovating the historic building and turning it into a performing arts center, ready in April. You'll be hearing much more about this.

We send deepest condolences to **Sam Zeman** and the family of **Nora Zeman**. Nora was a beautiful lady who loved her family.

Michael Sylvester and his wife **Lindsay** are the proud parents of a baby boy - **Michael Chance Sylvester**, who was born Oct. 2. The new father is a brickmason in Huntsville. Lindsay's mom is **Kim Cappeart**, whose husband **Steve Cappeart** sells real estate for Averbuch. Congratulations to you all!

We recently had an enjoyable evening at Carrabba's Grill in Parkway Place mall, with **Darryl & Linda Goldman**. The lady who took care of us was **Stephanie Anderson**, and did a great job!

Liz & Joe Waggett are proud grandparents for the 2nd time! Their son **Chris** and his wife **Stephanie** are parents of **Colin Wilson Waggett**, the first for them. We hear he is just beautiful!

Connie Smith's beautiful Mom Stella Campbell recently died at the age of 91. She was a grand, elegant lady and will be missed.

We all mourned the loss of **Jim Carney**, a man who was familiar to so many in Huntsville. His friend **Richard Gulyas** remembers Jim as someone who enjoyed every minute of his life. Jim was a good friend and dear brother. He will be missed

Dear friend **Cheryl Tribble** is recuperating from surgery in Woodstock, GA. - she comes to Huntsville for a visit annually and just loves it here. We're thinking

about you, my friend!

John Bzdell's daughter, **Heather Bzdell**, recently celebrated a birthday and John doesn't want to give any clues about his age, but she turned 27!

Carolyn Tidmore, formerly of Arab and now living in Huntsville, was that sweet lady you would see working at Sanders Cleaners on Jordan lane. She always had a smile for everyone. Carolyn died very unexepctly at the age of 54. We send our condolences to her family and many friends.

Vivian Kruse recently suffered a bad fall and is slowly recuperating but has a really great attitude! We love you, Vivian!

Dick Maroon's sweet mom died recently, at age 91. **Mary Maroon's** four grandsons were her pallbearers. **Dick** and his wife **Karen** are Twickenham residents downtown. Our condolences to Mary's family.

Dorotha Washington and her sister **Marie Adkins** have a message for everyone - to go to your doctor and make sure you are checked for any type of cancer. Dorotha is going through experimental treatment for advanced lung cancer, and truly believes in the power of prayer. We're thinking of you, Dorotha.

That's all for but always remember how lucky we are to live

in Huntsville, Alabama.

We wish you and yours a warm and wonderful Christmas!



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Sweet Christmas Gifts

Honey Balls

- 1 c. butter
- 1/4 c. honey
- 2 c. flour
- 1/2 t. salt
- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 1 c. pecans, chopped
- Powdered sugar

Cream butter & honey til fluffy. Add flour, which has been sifted with the salt, slowly. Add vanilla and nuts. Form into balls, place on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 300 degrees til light brown, about 30 minutes. Do not overcook. While still warm, roll in powdered sugar and let cool. Roll in sugar again.

Mama's Fig Preserve Cake

- 2 1/2 c. sugar
- 3/4 c. butter

- 4 eggs
- 3 c. flour
- 1 t. soda
- 1 c. buttermilk
- 1 t. each cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon & vanilla
- 2 c. fig preserves
- 2 c. pecans, chopped
- pinch salt

Cream sugar and butter, add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Sift dry ingredients and add to creamed mixture with buttermilk. Add vanilla, nuts, and preserves, Pour into a greased Bundt pan and bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour, 20 minutes or until done.

Rum and Sour Cream Fruit Sauce

- 1 pt. sour cream
- 1 1/2 c. dark brown sugar
- 2 T. rum
- 1 t. cinnamon

1/2 t. nutmeg
Mix all together and serve over strawberries, blueberries or green grapes. Store in fridge.

Cowboy Cookies

- 1 c. butter
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1 1/2 c. dark brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 c. flour
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 t. baking soda
- 1 1/2 t. vanilla
- 2 c. rolled oats
- 2 3 1/2-oz. cans coconut
- 1 12-oz. pkg. semi-sweet chocolate chips

Cream butter & sugars. Add eggs, flour, salt and soda. Add vanilla, oats, coconut and chocolate chips. Drop by teaspoonful onto greased cookie sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

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- 3 egg whites
- 1/2 t. cream of tartar
- 1 c. granulated sugar
- 2 T. unsweetened cocoa
- 1 c. pecans
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract

Beat egg whites in a small bowl with mixer til foamy. Add cream of tartar and beat til soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar. Fold in cocoa 1 tablespoon at a time. Fold in the nuts and vanilla. Use a level teaspoon to drop the meringue mixture onto non-stick cookie sheet. Place in a 350 degree oven and immediately turn it off. Forget about it until the next day or at least 8 hours later.

Chocolate Pecans

- 1 c. brown sugar
- 2 squares semi-sweet chocolate, melted
- 1 c. flour
- 1/4 c. butter, melted
- 1 egg
- 1/2 lb. whole pecans

Mix all ingredients except nuts. For each turtle, place 4 pecans on greased cookie sheet, drop a teaspoon of dough on pecans. Bake for 10-12 minutes at 350 degrees.

Chocolate Candy Balls

- 1 stick margarine, softened
- 1 1/2 boxes powdered sugar
- 1 c. Eagle Brand milk
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract
- 1 8-oz. can coconut
- 1 lb. pecans, chopped
- 3 pkgs. chocolate chips
- 1/4 lb. parafin

Mix first 4 ingredients, then stir in the coconut and nuts. Roll into balls the size of large marbles and chill overnight in the fridge. Melt chocolate chips and parafin over hot water. Use a toothpick to dip each ball into the chocolate mixture and let dry on waxed paper.

Creamy Fudge

- 2 1-oz. squares chocolate
- 2 c. sugar
- 1 c. milk
- 2 T. butter
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- Chopped pecans to taste

Melt chocolate, stir in milk and mix well. Add sugar, bring to a boil and cook until soft ball forms, stirring occasionally. Remove from stove and set pan in ice water. Add butter and vanilla. When slightly cool, add nuts and beat til color turns dull. Pour onto greased plate. Cut when cool.

Here's a good tip - Use an empty, tall Pringles can to store your leftover sleeves of saltines or crackers.

*Peggy Stolz-Conti,
Hazel Green*



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The Ghost Deer

For years, tales and legends have persisted about Keel Mountain, some with a basis in fact, others with none. Stories about Indian chiefs, hermits, and outlaws all make an appearance when groups of friends gather around a roaring fireplace on a cold wintry evening, but perhaps no story is as strange as the one we present here.

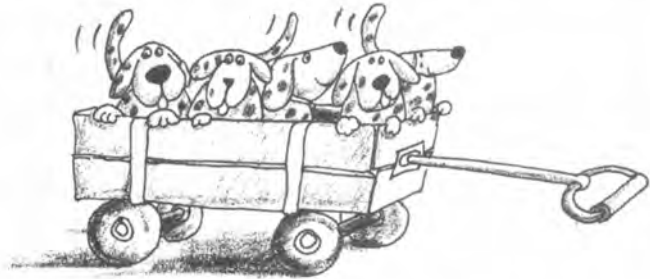
No one knows for certain where Eleanor came from; we don't even know her full name. According to legend, she made her first appearance around 1850. Farmers and travelers alike stopped to stare at the young woman trudging slowly up the road pulling a hand cart loaded with her few meager possessions. At every house she would stop and ask if, perhaps, they might have work for her, and possibly a place for her to sleep. People would later say that even though she always had a faint smile on her face, there seemed to be an aura of sadness hanging over her.

A short while later, those living in the community heard that she had taken up residence in an old abandoned hut at the foot of Keel Mountain. She made no

attempt at farming and rarely, if ever, had contact with other people. She never visited the local store. People had no idea how she managed to survive.

Immediately, rumors began to spread about the peculiar woman living in the broken-

down hovel at the foot of Keel Mountain. Woodcutters and hunters told stories about passing by her place and seeing deer, raccoons, and other wild animals following the woman around as she went about her chores. The animals seemed to



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have no fear whatsoever of this strange but gentle lady. She was seen feeding deer by hand. They all appeared to co-exist in a peaceful kind of harmony. It was rumored the animals protected her from harm, and would let her know when strangers drew near. Other people claimed that it was Eleanor who protected the animals.

The rumors might have eventually died down, had not two young men decided to go torch-hunting one night. There used to be a clearing on the top of Keel Mountain where deer would congregate and feed at night, and it was there the men decided to try their luck.

Quietly picking their way through the woods, they stopped at the edge of the field. Their hunch had been right; a whole herd of deer were feeding in the clearing, with one huge, solid-white buck standing guard. Suddenly, for no explainable reason, the buck's head jerked up and every muscle in his body went tense. The rest of the herd immediately took flight, while the white buck stood perfectly still.

In the last second before the white buck was about to flee, the young men raised their rifles and fired. Dropping their rifles and racing to the spot where they had last seen the deer, they came to an abrupt stop.

The buck had vanished; no tracks, no blood-trail, nothing. It had completely vanished. The only evidence of anything ever being there was a blood soaked shawl lying in the spot where the deer had disappeared.

The young men were at first puzzled, and then

frightened as the idea began to sink in that, perhaps, they had shot a person. But no, that was impossible. They both agreed they had seen the white deer fall.

Returning home, the men told their families what had happened. Quickly, the neighbors organized a search party, just in case there was a person lying on the mountain, wounded. As the search party fanned out across the mountain, it quickly became apparent that something was different.

There were no birds in the

trees, no deer running in front of the search parties, not even a fleeing rabbit. It was almost as if all the animals had deserted Keel Mountain.

After searching for most of the next day and finding nothing, the men finally gave up. Coming down from the mountain, they decided to stop at Eleanor's house and get a drink of water. It would also give them a chance to satisfy their curiosity about the strange woman about whom they had heard so many rumors.

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As they approached the house, they shouted out a hello. No answer. They shouted again.

Still no answer. The house looked like it was deserted. The door was hanging off of its hinges, and most of the roof had long since disappeared. The men were about to leave, when all of a sudden, a huge white buck walked out of the woods.

Several of the men raised their rifles and shot at the buck. The animal just stood there calmly, watching them. Other men began blasting at the buck, which stood motionless while the deadly barrage was taking place, until finally it slowly turned around and walked back into the woods.

Some of the men in the group were the best rifle shots in the county, yet it appeared as if they could not hit a deer standing only fifty feet away.

Others in the party who were standing off to one side later said that when the men began shooting at the deer, they could see bark flying off the trees directly behind. It was almost, and they said this very hesitantly, "like the bullets were passing right through the deer."

In the late fall of 1923, John Ingrams was returning home from a hard day at work. As he approached the foot of Keel Mountain, in the midst of a freak snowstorm, he was suddenly forced to slam on his brakes. Standing in the middle of the road, directly in front of

his car, was a woman.

After getting out of his car John approached the spot where he had seen the woman a few moments before. The woman had disappeared. No sign of her could be found anywhere. The only sign in the fresh snow was a set of enormous deer tracks.


Being curious about the strange tracks and the disappearance of the woman, John followed the tracks a short piece up the road to where a bridge crossed the stream. The bridge was gone, it had collapsed. Amazed and confused at the good fortune that had saved his life, Ingrams was about to return to his car when his attention was drawn to the other side of the stream. Standing there calmly, not moving a muscle, was the largest buck he had ever seen ... and it was pure white.

No one has ever been able to explain the strange facts surrounding the woman, and while almost everyone living near Keel Mountain has seen a white deer at some time or the other, no one has ever seen or heard of one being killed.

Maybe it was something that could not be harmed by mortal man.

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Old Huntsville Trivia

1815 - Dr. William H. Glasgow founds the town of Manchester about half mile above the three forks of Flint River. The town later becomes a ghost town as people move away. Today it's cotton fields.

1817 - The first church in Huntsville in built. No records exist as to what denomination it was.

1817 - Physicians gather at Talbots Inn on the East Side of the Square to discuss an outbreak of smallpox. Among measures talked about was the proposal to place armed guards on roads leading into town to prohibit strangers from bringing the disease to Huntsville.

1821 - The first mail robbery in Madison County occurs when a carrier was robbed. Among the items stolen were the man's shoes.

1861 -Vigilante committees are formed to help protect Huntsville in wartime.

1874 - Six newspapers are being printed in Huntsville at the same time.

1919 - The last County Fair is held downtown on the Courthouse Square. The same year, the Tennessee Valley Fair Association purchased land of their own on Church Street.

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A Letter

September 20, 1891

Mrs. Sally Sandlin

Dear Daughter:

I seat myself this beautiful Sabbath morning to answer your letter that I got from you some-time ago. I was glad to hear from you and to no that you was well and doing well. Sally, I have nothing to rite to you that would interest you, no more than we are all well, hoping that this will find you and Len both well. Well, Sally I have got your picture and Len's lying by me, thee look pleas-ing and it looks like they both want to say some-thing to me. What to rite. Well, I recon that you think that I mite rote to you sooner. I could have rote a letter a long time ago but I was just hoping you would rite. That is the only reason that I have for not riling sooner. Well, Sally if you will excuse me for not riling no sooner, I will try to rite you a letter once a month. Dear Daughter, if I could see you with your glossy black hair & rosy cheeks, loving smiles, tender words & kind heart with them lilly white hands clasp my one, that would been briter to me than the britest star that ever shone. Sally there ant many days that passes but what I think of you. Sally, I recon you would like to no something about how times is here. They are very hard times here. Money for horses & cattle & hogs cheap, corn & wheat is a very fair price. Sally, I recon you would like to no what sort of a crop we have got.. We made 60 bushels of wheat, a few oats & I have got about 2 acres of cotton. We have got a fine corn crop. We ant tending much of our land in corn. The land that we rented will make 10 barrels per acre. I have got a fine sweet potato patch, made rite smart of arch potatoes. No cabbis, no garden, no chickens, hardley heap of ducks. Sally we had squir-rel and chicken for breakfast this morning, two big possomes for dinner. I dont no what for supper yet. I must close for this time. Sally you & Len write to me

just as soon as you get this so no more. I remain your affectionate father over till death.

Letter written by Henry Rutledge to Sally & Len Sandlin. Submitted by Nell Rutledge

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A Yankee Confederate

Of all the Civil War veterans who called Huntsville home, Maj. S. F. Sweinhart must have been the most unusual.

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.

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 all wounds and as the Major grew into old age, he began taking his place on the old courthouse bench, reliving and re-fighting the battles of his youth. An old Yankee officer and 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 community affairs and became active in veterans affairs. Of course the only other veterans in Huntsville were ex-Confederates.

In 1927 Major S. F. 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 to dinner this week to attend a dinner given by the Daughters of the Confederacy to 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, Maj. 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

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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 Maj. 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 Confederate veterans stood guard during the funeral ceremony. His body is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery, next to the other veterans he had grown to love.

the other day, and when he awoke he owed the company \$13.70, at .10 a trip.

- A very wealthy farmer of Decatur has this Notice pasted up in his field: "If any man's or woman's cows or oxens gits in these here otes, his or her tail will be cut off as the case may be."

- A Huntsville minister was dismissed when it was discovered that he did not believe the warning against the wages of sin did not apply to him.

- A father near New Market is preparing to send his daughter to Nashville in search of a husband. All the eligible local beaus are cousins.

- A home near Gurley was destroyed when its owner used dynamite to get rid of rats.



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Newspaper Clippings from 1893

- A local leader of the Scottsboro Temperance Society was unable to attend the meeting last week. He had been arrested for public intoxication.

- The city of Guntersville has a ladies' society called the "Sisters of Silence." It has two members, and they are both deaf and dumb.

- A farmer near Hazle Green is advertising for a wife. The last four did not work out.

- A fight broke out at Maple Hill Cemetery when it was discovered that the deceased was wearing a new suit which the widow had stolen from her brother.

- The local editor of the Florence paper fell asleep while crossing the river in a ferry boat

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They Buried The Wrong Man

from a 1923 newspaper

Clarence Peters, of Gadsden, Ala., after being buried in the family lot of a Gadsden cemetery and grieved as dead by a sorrowing mother, is not dead at all but very much alive.

A strange story, but true. It was in 1917 that Peters, alias Jim Holloway, was caught in Morgan County as a member of a gang of thieves, operating in Decatur, and it was Peters who shielded his two comrades who were also captured, while five others of the "gang" escaped - and it was Peters who took a fifteen year sentence, refusing to squeal on his pals, and they went free.

Peters, still known only by the name of Holloway, began his prison sentence while still under the age of 20.

It was in 1918 that he escaped from the state prison and stayed at his mother's home in Gadsden three weeks before leaving for the West. His mother and brothers never knew that he was going under the name of Holloway.

It was only a short time after he escaped from prison that he was captured in a western state and returned to Alabama where prison bars were waiting for him, but relatives never learned of his fate.

During the latter part of the year 1919, a mes-

sage was received from a small town in Iowa by Mrs. Peters, Clarence's mother, informing her that a young man answering her son's description had been killed in a freight wreck and that letters taken from the pockets of the body bore the name "Clarence Peters, Gadsden, Alabama."

The body was sent to Mrs. Peters at Gadsden



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and grieved over by the mother and sons. The head and face were so badly mutilated that close identification was impossible. The size of the body and the color of the hair fitted the description of Clarence.

A small tombstone, purchased by the mourning mother and brothers, was erected at the head of the grave in Clayton Cemetery and Clarence, meanwhile, never knowing of the cruel joke played on him, served on in the penitentiary. He steadfastly refused to convey the news of his recapture to his mother and the incident was forgotten in Gadsden except to those dear ones.

In 1922, Peters could no longer refrain from writing home and, under the name of Jim Holloway, he wrote his mother, inquiring of her son's whereabouts and feigning friendship with young Peters.

In the best way that a mother could she wrote thanking him for the interest he had manifested in her dead son, telling him of the calamity and encouraging him to turn his own life around so that he might have a bright future.

The tender words of the sorrowing mother touched Clarence so, and yet overwhelmed him with surprise over his believed death, that he immediately wrote

the whole truth to his mother, and Mrs. Peters was soon clasping her son to her bosom at Banner prison.

Since that time Peters has made his seventh attempt at escape, and was captured just before he made good in his efforts to gain freedom and to try again his fortunes in a free world.

He is in a sad plight at the prison, marked for bad conduct, and is scheduled for the long route of the sentence.

Peters is still a young man, hardly 25.

In the meantime there is a grave in Etowah, containing the mortal remains of some mother's son who has been wept for most bitterly by the Peters family even though his own loved one are doubtless looking and longing for his familiar voice and footfalls, which they will never hear again.

Old Huntsville Trivia

1876 - New rates are posted for city supplied water. The rates are \$8 for a family of less than 3, \$1 for a family of 3 to 5, and if you have a private bath, it cost an additional \$6.

1937 - The first State liquor store opens on Jefferson Street in the Hutchens Building. Premium whiskey sold for \$1.25 per fifth.

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Young Girl Scalped Alive!

from 1870 newspaper

While Emelia Grinnell, a young girl, was working last week in a shingle mill near here, under a shaft which was going at the rate of 200 revolutions per minute, her hair, which was very long, got caught in the knuckle joint, and in an instant was torn completely from her head. It took with it all the flesh and muscles, as well.

"From a line," says a local paper, "drawn around from each eyebrow, her skull was left white and bare, without a trace of blood or flesh." The strangest part of the accident is that she felt little or no pain, declaring that while it was being torn off all she experienced was a tick-

ling sensation of her head. She coolly walked out of the room and waited patiently for a buggy to take her home.

The scalp, with its beautiful long locks of brown hair, was curled and entwined around the shaft at the joint, and when the mill was stopped it was taken

down, but no one had the presence of mind to place it back on her head. It was nearly perfect, and the doctors have determined to tan it with the hair still on, so that when the girl recovers, it may be used as a wig. The case is one of the most remarkable on record.

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Christmas at the Farm

by H.T.

A few days ago, as Fall fell and a sharp wind with almost frozen rain blew into my face, I again thought about the Christmas of 1983.

Christmas was always the greatest day of the year in our family. Miles would be traveled and all efforts would be made to get back to the family farm. Purchased in the early 20th Century and located about an hour away from Huntsville, the farm made a wonderful home for 3 1/2 generations.

Adventure, Grandma's cooking and Love always abounded. Grandpa was a strong man of character, with many children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

With so many to see, he had two favorites, my older cousin and myself. No sacrifice was too much for us to be with him. I often remember him picking me

up at 6:00 pm to stay the night and driving me back to Huntsville the next morning to make school by 8:00 am.

I never knew if he picked us because we needed help or he thought we were special.

After he passed, my Grandmother still held the best Christmas Day we ever knew. There was something in the air that told you, somebody loves you!

Late December, 1983, just before Christmas, word came that Grandma had a bad stroke and things might be different.

Christmas day soon rolled

around. My miles traveled seemed to be the longest ever. Upon arrival, I saw my cousin parking his truck. Hardened by the Vietnam War, two wives and himself, he spoke very little.

We performed our token walk through the house to see if we could do anything and then went outside; still without a word spoken, we stood in the cold. The wind was sharp and icy rain blew upon us. Without a word, we shared a deep pain. We stood together, but we were deeply alone.

I don't know how long we

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stood together. He smoked 5, 6, 7 cigarettes as the ice built on his long sideburns. I said nothing and then counted trees. 1, 2, 3,..., 7.... 100, 200. It eased my mind and helped me not to speak.

Finally, I had to say something. "Sure is cold today", I said in a meek tone. "It's been colder" he replied. Soon after, we both had another token walk through the house and left, almost simultaneously.

By the Christmas of 1984, Grandma had made tremendous progress in getting well and everything was back to normal. That year everybody was present for Christmas and the farm. Our family enjoyed many more merry Christmas days.

Later, my older cousin and I bought the farm. We never spoke too much, but we could always communicate.

So when the wind is blowing and the sleet hits my face, I remember Christmas 1983.

Heard on the Streets in 1895

- Wanted-- Two hundred colored families to go to Texas and Louisiana to farm. You will be furnished provisions to live on all the year, and will be given credit until your first crop is made to pay for them and your railroad fare. You get wood, garden and a house to live in FREE. Call on Thos. H. Haywood. Decatur, Ala. Transportation will be paid.

- Money to loan on short notice, at 6 per cent interest. Apply to A. E. Echols, 113 Eustis Street.

While toying with a revolver last Monday night, the carriage driver of Mr. A. Campbell accidentally discharged it, the ball striking the cook, inflicting a dangerous and maybe a fatal wound.

At last report the woman was resting easy.



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The First Christmas

by Lois Miller

When my immediate family came to Huntsville over forty years ago to work at the arsenal, I was a very young Mother with two young children. I was away from my parents and other friends and relatives for the first time at Christmas and I was feeling rather sad about that.

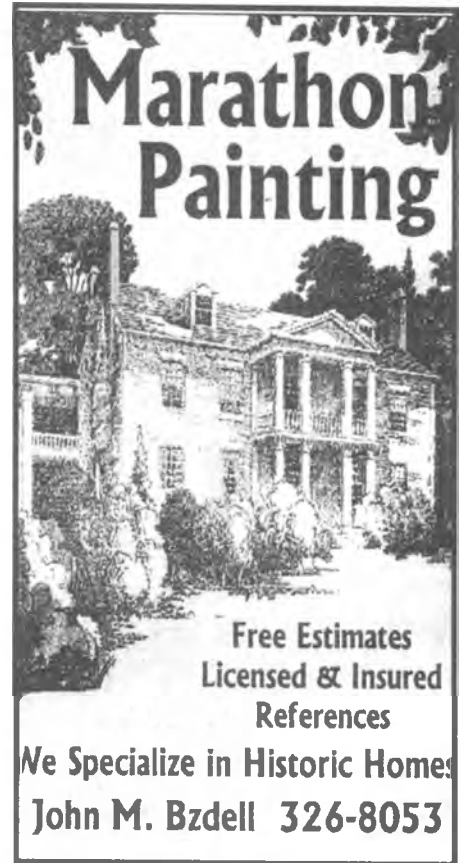
We were living in a trailer park on Triana Boulevard. I prepared the regular Christmas decorations, with tree, etc., however something was really missing, family and also friends from back home. We had not yet found many new friends here as we were both working and taking care of the household.

On Christmas Eve there was a knock on the door and there was Santa with gifts for the children. These were some people that worked with my husband trying to make a rather sad event a happy one. It worked. There is nothing like Southern hospitality, then, now, and forever.

I still have friends and relatives back home, however, I have now for many years called Huntsville my home and have many family members and friends here, however I will always remember our first Christmas in Huntsville and the happiness it brought.

"I'm not rushing into being in love. I'm finding second grade hard enough."

Rachel Wilson, 7



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Heard on the Streets in 1899

- Charles Hawk, a young painter of Huntsville, about 24 years old, while attempting to jump on a running freight train that was passing Dallas Mills Sunday afternoon, missed his footing and fell with his right leg under the wheels. It was so badly crushed that it had to be amputated three inches above the knee. The operation was performed by Drs. W. C. Wheeler and Felix Baldrige, and the patient today is doing as well as can be expected.

- On Thursday last. Mr. John Hertzler was riding in a buggy on Clinton Street in this city. His horse took fright near the Baptist Church, ran away, and ran the buggy against a tree on the opposite side of the street, throwing Mr. Hertzler out and breaking loose. The horse ran off. Mr. H. was knocked in-

sensible, was taken into Mr. Thos. Jamar's house, remained there for two days, and so far recovered as to be taken home. Mr. Hertzler is a good citizen and we rejoice to learn that he is recovering, without permanent injury, and should be fine in no time.

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- A son of Lira Elliot, of Lincoln Village, aged ten years, was ill for a year and although having a ravenous appetite, grew emaciated. His physician gave him some medicine that produced nausea and he was choked by the appearance of a snake which required all the doctor's force to draw from his mouth. It was striped and eighteen inches in length.

The lad recovered and is better.

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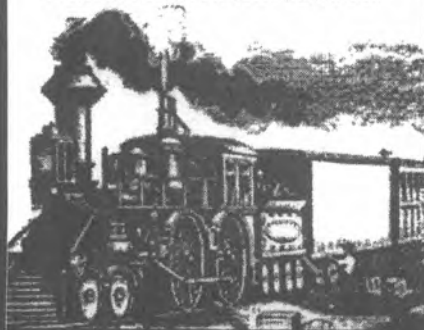
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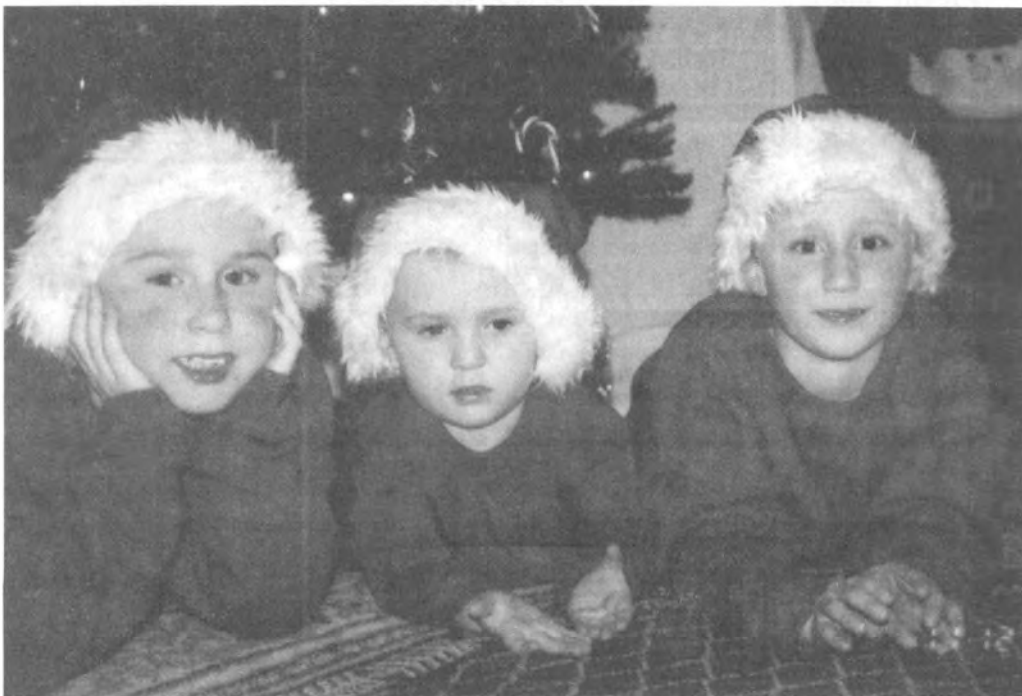
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A Christmas Gift

by Tommy Towery

Not all Christmas holidays in my past are good, and not all Christmas presents I received were something that I really wanted or was excited to get. Perhaps my worst Christmas holiday ever was 1972, when I was in the Air Force with a B-52 unit deployed to Guam. I was young and away from my family for Christmas for the first time. It was a trying time. For those old enough to remember, that was the time when the B-52 aircraft were involved in a major bombing campaign in North Vietnam. During that period, I had ten of my friends and squadron mates shot down or ejected from their aircrafts and seven of them were captured and became prisoners of war. In retrospect, I now know how lucky I was just to be away from home and not sitting in a prison camp or worst - dead.

While there is not a direct Huntsville connection with the bad Christmas holiday, there is certainly a Huntsville story in the tale of the worst Christmas present I ever received as a child.

Most of us kids got clothes and non-toy items for Christmas when we were growing up. We accepted them as a necessary part of the Christmas present concept, but knew that they were only added baggage to the real spirit of a child's Christmas - toys. It was always about toys.

For several years I have shared with the readers of Old Huntsville the stories of my favorite Christmas memories and

favorite toys I received when I was growing up on East Clinton Street. There were wonderful toys like race car sets, "Robert the Robot," and a new bicycle every few years. I remember the great time I had with the Marx "Captain Gallant of the French Foreign Legion" play set complete with fort, camels, palm trees, and plastic foreign legionnaires.

I thought it was expensive at \$7.99 from the Sears Toy Catalog in the Fifties. The same set is now selling on the internet for over \$700. I am lucky that I still have my Hubley "Atomic Disintegrator" cap gun because a gun like it now frequently sells on eBay for over \$75 and I would hate to have to pay to replace it.

Even though I remember many of those great feelings of tearing brightly colored papers off boxes to reveal the treasures inside, I cannot remember great Christmas presents of my past without remembering one that made me cry when I opened the box. I feel that I could easily go to counseling today to try to figure

out the emotions I felt that day and to decide why it still bothers me over 50 years later. I am sure that most people would have long ago pushed the memory to the back

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of their brain and never given it another thought.

The giver of the present was my paternal grandmother. She was a wonderful woman who was a 55-year old widow at the time. In the Christmas seasons before 1954 and in the Christmas times that would follow that year, she was always the source of some of my best presents. That was because I could always take a Sears or Montgomery Wards catalog to her and show her what I wanted for a present. I gave her many choices and I am sure that in the Christmas of 1954 I did the same. I had no doubt that at least one of the toys I circled would be wrapped under the tree for me.

She worked as a clerk at Dobson's Department Store down on the square at that time and did not make a lot of money, but she seemed to save what she made. That year was the first Christmas since my parents were divorced and it was going to be a tough period anyway, but I was never expecting it to be as bad as it turned out in my eyes.

Now I want you to know that I loved my grandmother and she loved me. She was not around very much since the divorce and perhaps that might have been a part of the problem. It had been many years since her only son - my dad - had married his sweetheart and moved away from his childhood home. I want to think that she was just "out of touch" with what young boys liked but cannot prove that. I know of no sound reason why she would have otherwise picked such an inappropriate present for an eight-year-old boy.

She was not there on Christmas morning when we opened most of the presents under the tree that year. In my memory it was late Christmas afternoon before she came over to our house to open presents

with us. I do not know what I got her that year, probably some cheap toilet water or "Evening in Paris" if we could afford such luxury. I do remember her reaching under the tree and pulling out a box and handing it to me with a big smile on her face.

I hastily ripped off the paper of the box that was too heavy to have clothes in it. It had to be a toy instead. The box was about the size of a shoe box and I broke the tape holding it together and pulled open the flaps. There was tissue paper inside so I did not see at first what my gift actually was. I am lucky that we did not have video cameras back then, for I would hate to have to view the look that

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must have come upon my face when the present was actually revealed to me.

There, inside the brightly colored paper covered box, was a doll. A doll!

I was an eight-year-old boy and she gave me a doll for Christmas. To make it worse, it was a baby doll in a cute little pink outfit. Even worse than that, it was a "colored" (as we called it back in the days before political correctness) baby doll in a cute little pink outfit.

A doll! I can almost still feel the tears that filled my eyes when I looked down and saw that I had received a doll from my grandmother as a present. It was the most awful feeling that I can ever remember about a gift from anyone. I don't remember when I actually started crying, but I would like to think that I waited until she could not see me. I do

remember that many times in relating the story my mother told people that I whined "I'm a boy and she got me a doll." I don't know if I remember that from the event or just the retelling of the event, but that was certainly how I felt.

I would like to tell people that the doll turned out to be a collector's item and it

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now sells on the internet for thousands of dollars. I can't say that. I didn't keep the doll. I don't know what happened to it, but it was never played with and just disappeared from my life quicker than it came into it.

I had hoped that when I sat down to write this story that I would be enlightened and come up with a profound enlightenment about appreciating the reason behind the gift and not worrying about the present itself. I can't. To this day I still do not understand what possessed my grandmother to buy me a doll.

There is no forgiving moral except to know that for whatever reason she picked it out, she thought I would like it and she was excited to give it to me. There is no way to make white seem black, even after 50 years.

You can call me a spoiled little unappreciative brat if you must. It was the worst Christmas present I ever got as a child, and yet it came from one of the most generous and loving persons in my life at that time.

"His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity."

Seen on employee review

A Clothing Raid

from 1866 newspaper

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

Miss Douglass' downfall was her penchant for fine clothing which she said, "Is necessary for a lady in my changed position."

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

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

She was brought up before the august presence of Justice Figg, who after hearing evidence of the state, bound Clarissa over in a bond of \$100.

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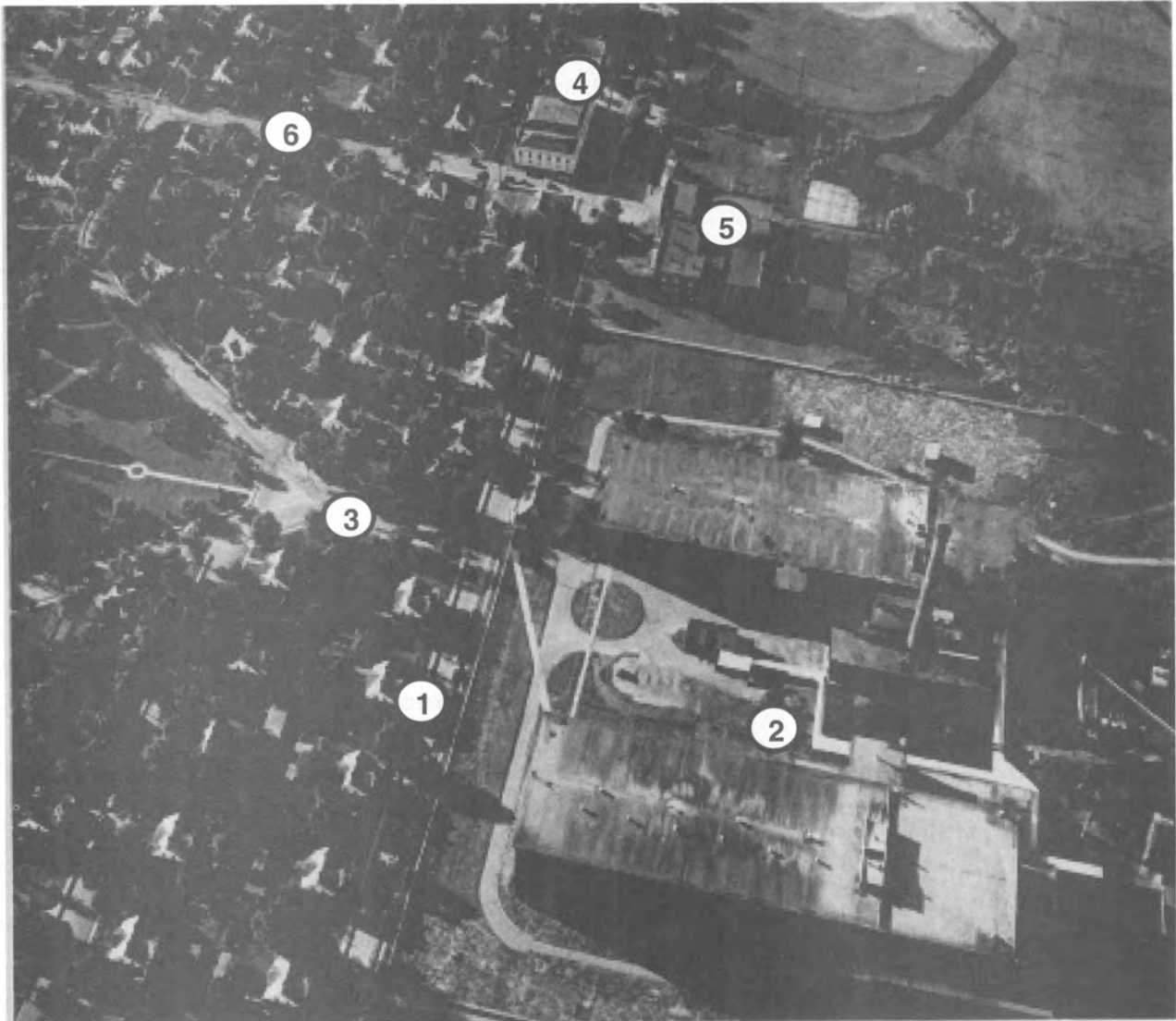
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Major John S. Dickson

by Alonzo S. Elliot
(written in 1914)

John Steele Dickson, citizen, closed his hardware store in Huntsville, and obeying the first call to arms, enlisted as a Lieutenant with the historic Madison Rifles, under the command of the gallant Captain John G. Coltart. He left Huntsville, and home, bearing the distinction of being among the first troops to leave Madison County for the front.

The enlistment of one year soon expiring, Lieut. Dickson returned to Huntsville with a Captain's commission to raise a company of volunteers to serve three years - or for the duration.

This was his second enlistment. It was the 22nd of March, 1862, and that portion of the Courthouse Square along the

sidewalk and fronting Bank Row presented a scene that stirred the hearts of men, women and children gathered from all parts of the county. Varied were the emotions of each one, according to age and temperament at the time.

As a wee small boy, the writer of this saw Capt. Dickson in plain citizen's dress, with a small walking cane in hand, walk back and forth along the street from the National Bank corner to the old Huntsville Hotel, calling for volunteers.

"Volunteers for the war," he cried. "Volunteers for the War!"

And thus the company was made up, men stepping forward and falling into line, marching behind one another until the company was made up.

On the 5th of April, 1862, this company left Huntsville, and so close were the Federal army of invasion upon the scene that six days afterwards Gen. Mitchel's command occupied Huntsville, and blue coats took the place of the gray in our midst for the next five long

months.

I now return to the subject of our communication. The Southern historians have followed the marches, the privations and the battles of the 35th Alabama through the war from Corinth, Vicksburg, Jackson, Champion Hills, Franklin to North Carolina and Joe Johnston's surrender. Let us keep fresh the memory of the gallant and self sacrificing Dickson, that noble martyr to the Southern cause, for as a Major, to which position he had won his way, he fell while bravely leading his men in the desperate battle of Franklin, Tenn. on Nov. 30, 1864.

Like another of Huntsville's noble, the immortal Col. Egbert Jones, he sleeps peacefully with many of his comrades in beautiful Maple Hill Cemetery.

May the present generations continue to honor the distinguished dead and to emulate their virtues as soldiers of war and citizens in peace.



FROM THE HEART



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News From The Year 1937

News From Huntsville and Around The World

Hindenberg Crashes

The dirigible Hindenburg was destroyed by fire tonight in a disaster that killed at least 33 of its 97 passengers and crew. The giant airship was consumed in minutes as it came in for a landing at the Naval Air Station at Lakehurst, New Jersey. The cause of the fire is unknown, but it is believed to have started when either static electricity or sparks from the engines ignited hydrogen gas that was being released preparatory to landing. Until tonight's disaster, the Hindenburg had a perfect safety record in the ten round-trips it made across the Atlantic with 1,002 passengers.

The Hindenburg was 12 hours late on its last flight because of headwinds encountered over the Atlantic. It had cruised slowly down the East coast so it would arrive at dusk, the best time for a landing. The airship

dropped its two landing lines at 7:20 p.m. and was settling toward earth when its hydrogen caught fire. At 7:23, witnesses heard a boom and saw a flash from the ship's rear gondola. The flames enveloped the airship in moments, and the Hindenburg collapsed in clouds of smoke. Heroic efforts by Navy personnel and crew members saved many lives.

Justice Black Admits Belonging to KKK

While having admitted that he was once a member Ku Klux Klan, Hugo L. Black took his seat on the United States Supreme Court today. The court heard motions to deny his seat but no action was taken.

Jean Harlow Dead

"The Platinum Blonde," Jean Harlow, has died in a Hollywood hospital. The 26-year-old actress succumbed to uremic poisoning after a year of poor health.

Harlow was born Harlean Carpenter in Kansas City, Mo. When she was only 16 she eloped with a businessman and moved with him to Hollywood. Restless, she sought bit parts in films. Harlow separated from her husband and finagled her way into an early talkie, the aerial war saga "Hell's Angels" (1930). She developed a tough-girl image, as in "The Public Enemy" and "Redheaded Woman."

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Amelia Earhart Vanishes

At sunset tonight, the search for Amelia Earhart will be called off. The famed flier went down in the Pacific about 100 miles from Howland Island two weeks ago. She vanished without a trace.

Miss Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, were attempting to circle the globe. They started May 21 at Oakland, Calif., heading east. The trip was more than halfway completed when they landed at Lae, New Guinea, on June 28. They rested and prayed for good weather. July 2nd dawned with perfect visibility. After the hop to Howland, it would have been straight to Honolulu, San Francisco and home.

That evening, two radio amateurs in Los Angeles picked up a faint signal on the wave frequency assigned to the plane. "Low on fuel," it said. Other details were garbled.

Four of Scottsboro Boys free; five held

Four of the "Scottsboro Boys" were set free today after years in prison awaiting new trials. Three of them had earlier been sentenced to death, and the fourth sent to prison, after sensational trials in Scottsboro, Alabama. Their convictions were reversed by the Supreme Court and new trials were ordered.

The Negro youths were among the nine accused of raping two white women on a Southern freight train on March 25, 1931.

Joe Louis Beats Braddock


Joe Louis battered James J. Braddock for seven rounds before finishing him off in the eighth to become the new world heavyweight boxing champion.

With a head jarring right to the jaw, the "Brown Bomber" from Detroit ended Braddock's two-year reign and emerged as the first Negro heavyweight champion in 22 years. There were those who said Louis had been denied a title chance until now because of his color.

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The Christmas of 1954

by Austin Miller

Nineteen fifty-four was a lean year for our family. It was one of the hottest and driest summers on record. When it did rain it was at the wrong time or too late for the cotton crop. With two mules and a two-horse wagon, we were farming and trying to make a living on twenty acres of cotton. About twelve acres was our own and we rented another eight from Mr. Will Thomas. Mr. Will's property bordered what is now Norfolk Southern Railroad and Dug Hill Road.

That year, due to the drought, we made only six bales of cotton. This did not bring near enough money to pay what we owed the bank, not to mention what we needed to live on for the next year. The cotton was so knotty and opened so slowly that it took Daddy, my brother Berns and me all fall to get it picked.

To his great credit, Berns, who was only eight, worked like a grown person without complaining. Even though he was five years younger, he could pick more cotton and beat me at the scales every time. This brought me much grief from Daddy and considerable gloating from Berns.

Around Thanksgiving, the last shriveled lock was gathered and we were done picking. That's when

Mama announced, "There wasn't going to be much "Christmas this year." Considering the crop failure, Mama's conclusions about a bleak Christmas were obvious but hearing her say it destroyed all doubts and brought the stark reality of it home. Christmas was my favorite time of the year and I usually looked forward to it for weeks in advance. The late fall and early winter of

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1954 was different. I just wanted Christmas to come and go.

In the last part of 1954 and most of 1955 we qualified for commodities. This was surplus food given to needy families by the government. Each eligible family came to a designated location and received a monthly ration of cheese, beans, rice and canned meat. Some said the meat was horse meat but that was not the case.

We enjoyed and needed the food, but having to get welfare hurt our pride and was a bitter pill to swallow. What made it so bad was the distribution of commodities was at Central School. The kids and teachers saw who received commodities and they all knew I was poor. My feelings may not have been true or justified but I felt everybody was looking down on my family and I took it as a personal insult.

When Christmas came, it was not as bad as I expected. Using money Mama had saved from selling butter and eggs; she went to the store on Christmas Eve and bought loaf bread, sandwich spread, apples, oranges and a little candy. Seeing the food brightened all our spirits considerably.

On Christmas day Mama killed a big, fat rooster and made chicken sandwiches for lunch. We loved the food and ate until we were stuffed. Even now, I consider it one of the most delicious and memorable meals. But the best part came when we finished eating.

Daddy announced that he was selling the mules and buying a tractor. To me, getting rid of those cantankerous, old mules was reason enough to celebrate.

The news of the tractor was a great Christmas gift. Daddy told us he had rented more land and received a loan from the FHA. He said the loan would cover our

debt at the bank and would give us enough to live on until we raised a new crop. The Christmas of 1954 that once seemed so bleak had taken a most pleasant turn. Things started getting better right away and when the 1955 crop came in, we no longer needed commodities.



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News From the Year 1875

- Lost - somewhere between the Baptist Church and the Public Square, a double barreled shotgun, loaded with shot. The finder will be rewarded by leaving it at the newspaper office.

- For Rent - the large and commodious store room with ware room attached, and the enclosure included, situated at the foot of Jefferson Street and adjoining the Railroad, now occupied by Joe T. McGehee & Co., will be rented for one year for \$175.00. Contact Mrs. Geo. Neal at her residence on Franklin Street.

- Our friend Henry Ford, who has a most elegant little saloon on the North East Corner of the Square, invites all his friends of the old 4th Alabama, and everyone else, to call and test the quality of his cooling drinks. Henry was a good soldier, and therefore a good judge of liquor.

- The public is invited to try Volta's Electro Belts and Bands, available at all drug stores. All nervous disorders, chronic diseases of the chest, head, liver, stomach, kidneys and blood, aches and pains, nervous and general debility are quickly

cured by wearing the electric belt.

- Dr. Henry A. Binford, one of Huntsville's highly esteemed citizens, was stricken down with paralysis a few nights ago and now lies in critical condition, with no hope of recovery. It seems on the day of his affliction he had been unusually active and had exercised more than usual. He had visited a patient at ten o'clock that night and was quite lively.

"Patient is tearful and cries constantly. She also appears to be depressed.

Seen on patient chart

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The Death of General Daniel McCook

Paper by Mrs. Annie B. Robertson at Huntsville, Ala., 1902

The death of Gen. Daniel McCook, the Ohio brigadier who lost his life near Huntsville during the early part of the War between the States, was the subject of a historical paper read at the last meeting of the Virginia Clay Clopton Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy by Mrs. Annie B. Robertson. The paper contains data of historical interest given by Capt. Frank B. Gurley, of the Confederate army, who was the central figure of the tragedy and was condemned to death by the United States army court-martial for firing the shot. Captain Gurley is still living at Gurley, Alabama.

Asked by our hostess to contribute an article, I give one of local interest which, I believe, has never been made public from the Southern standpoint. Therefore I have gotten these facts from the one person yet living who can give them, and I

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think it only just to the 4th Alabama Cavalry, and Company C especially, that the truth should be told by their side and preserved by the Virginia Clay Clopton Chapter, U. D. C.

Frank B. Gurley, having been commissioned captain of cavalry by the order of the Confederate Congress, raised a company in Madison and adjoining counties of one hundred and fifteen men. In the spring of 1862 he was sent to watch the enemy in North Alabama and Middle Tennessee, taking with him about thirty men, with orders to report to Gen. Kirby Smith then at Chattanooga. Thinking he had not men enough for the work, he returned to the command and asked the commandant to let Capt. J. M. Hambrick with thirty men go back with him into the enemy's lines, which request was granted.

I asked Captain Gurley for

dates of the skirmish in which General McCook (U. S. A.) was killed, and I give his answer in his own words: "I can't give dates - I had no way of knowing dates - I did not know when Sunday came. We lived on what we could get and slept where the enemy would let us."

It was in the spring of 1862, soon after the return of the companies to North Alabama. Captain Hambrick in command by right of seniority. I quote again from Captain Gurley: "I learned by slipping around among the few people who would take the risk of being my friends that a drove of beef cattle had been taken from the citizens of Limestone and Madison Counties by the Federal troops and would pass along the Limestone and Winchester road." Captain Hambrick, with sixty-six men all told, thought that, as the road on which cattle would pass



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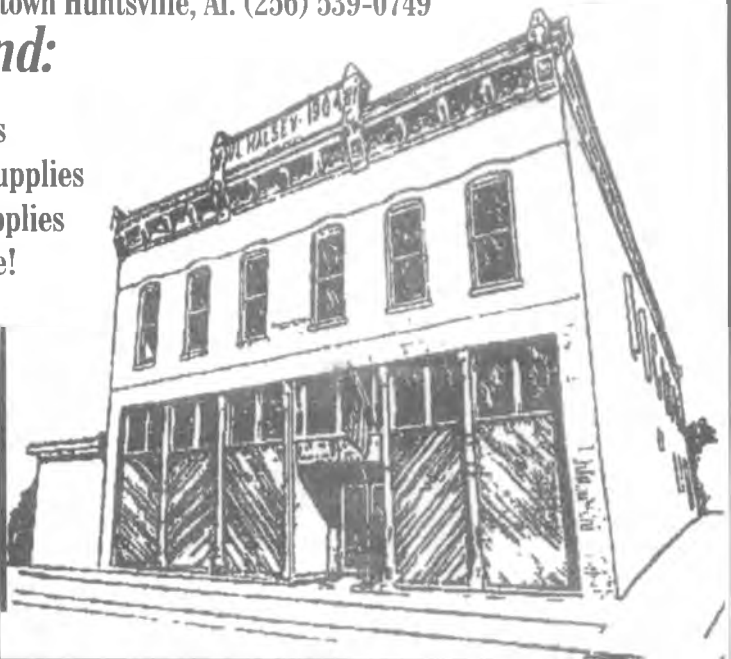
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was through a barren woods, they might scatter the cattle and pick up quite a number of them.

Going north, they reached the Limestone road when Captain Hambrick halted the command and Captain Gurley was ordered to move west to see if the cattle had yet passed. They soon came in sight of some Federal soldiers in the distance, the captain and men would retire, the enemy following. When they would stop, the bluecoats would do the same, thus tailing them until they were in firing distance, then the shooting began. Soon the Federals gave back, they shooting back and the Confederates at them. The dust soon became so thick that they could see only the hindmost men. This continued for about one-fourth of a mile, when a school wagon going "full speed" came in sight. Soon the wagon ran under some overhanging limbs, tearing off the top. The wagon was driven by a negro. Two white men were on the back seat. One was in full uniform, and the other in his shirt sleeves. Captain Gurley and his brother were in advance.

K. B. Gill, James Mason and James Campbell were following closely. When within about fifty yards, Captain Gurley fired three shots at the officer in uniform. The wagon was halted, and on reaching it they found that the man with his coat off had been wounded, one ball passing through his body. Now as the shooting had been at the man in uniform, the killing of General McCook was an accident.

When the rest of the command came up, Captain Gurley turned the wounded man, who proved to be General McCook, his staff officer, Capt. Hunter Brooke, and the wagon over to Captain Hambrick and he and his men continued in pursuit of the enemy. In about a half mile they ran into a divided column of Federal infantry, which did not fire at them, although they passed the head of the column.

Seeing the situation, Captain Gurley ordered

a retreat, reporting to the commanding officer. There was no further fighting. Captain Gurley says: "Why we were not pursued we never knew, and thought strange the Federal cavalry should abandon their commanding officer."

Captain Hambrick had ordered the wounded general to be taken to the nearest private house. Dr. J. C. Steger thinks it was Mr. Crutcher's. He was attended by his own surgeon and staff officer, and the family did all they could to give relief. Soon afterwards smoke was seen in several directions, and it was

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February 5	6:30	Delaine Mountain	Tort Law
	7:40	Robert Presto	Divorce Law
February 12	6:30	Ron Sykatus	Bankruptcy and Consumer Rights
	7:40	Phillip Price	DUI Law
February 19	6:30	Charles Boyd of Gadsden	Worker's Compensation Law
	7:40	Tommy Siniard	Nursing Home Law
February 26	6:30	Connie Glass/Carol Wallace	Elder Law
	7:40	Ed Gentle	Class Action
March 5	6:30	Robert Prince	Automobile Insurance Law
	7:40	Mike Wisner	Wills, Estates, and Tax Law
March 12	6:30	Archie Lamb	Sports Law
	7:40	George Moore	Justice in America
March 19	6:30	Robert Patterson	Criminal Law
	7:40	Mayor Loretta Spencer	City Hall
March 26	6:30	Kerri Riley	Employment Law
	7:40	Steve Heninger	Medical Malpractice
April 2	6:30	Richard Chesnut	Real Estate Law
	7:40	John Brinkley	Questions & Answers
	8:40	J. Allen Brinkley	Graduation

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learned that the Federals were burning the houses of citizens along the road.

Capt. Hunter Brooke, U. S. A., who was a prisoner, suggested to Captain Hambrick that he should be permitted, under guard, to go and use his influence to stop the wanton destruction. He was sent with Lieutenant Gibson as guard, and did succeed at the time.

Dr. Steger says: "But after General McCook's death, which was in twenty-four hours, the entire premises of those who had sheltered him were burned, and a sick man, seventy-five years old, with the ladies and children of his family, was made homeless."

Capt. Hunter Brooke was held for about two weeks, and then exchanged for a Confederate officer of equal rank. A few days after this incident Captain Gurley and troop, passing through Huntsville, were received as heroes. Cheers, tears, and flowers were showered on them; even Captain Gurley's horse was wreathed with flowers, the whole community joining in the laudations.

The troop remained two or three weeks in North Alabama, and then joined the other three companies somewhere in Middle Tennessee, and were organized with a battalion by Captain Russell, under General Forrest into the 4th Alabama Cavalry, and remained under Generals Wheeler or Forrest until surrendered by the latter at Gainesville, Ala., May, 1865.

What Captain Gurley suffered after his capture sometime later - aye, even after peace, as it was called - would take another paper to relate. After our own President and Senator C. C. Clay, I suppose no Confederate soldier suffered more than our own gallant Captain Gurley.

I myself know how he refused money, even gold, as scarce as it was at that time, for the corn and hogs on his place, saving it for those who had followed him into the war and the widows and children of those who had been killed in his company.

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City Council Meeting in 1906

The city council held an interesting meeting last night and passed several ordinances that are of interest to the general public.

- Mayor Smith stated that on the advice of John Wesley, a paving expert, the entire cost of the paving will be passed on to the property owners. The paving ordinance was changed effective immediately.

- An ordinance was also passed providing for the grading of the extension of Locust Street, laying the street with concrete gutters, stone curbs and granitoid sidewalks.

- Permission was granted the owners of the little frame building on Washington Street occupied by the Davis tin shop for roofing the building with tin.

- The members of the Fire Department will be allowed vacation for the summer.

- The Hospital Association stated that an annex is being erected to the city hospital and permission was asked for the right to remove this new structure when the lease of the association runs out. This was granted.

- By a vote of the council, water meters will be placed on the pipe furnishing water to the livery stables.

- Permission was granted for the city police to be issued two uniforms per year.



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Frank James in Huntsville Jail

from 1884 newspaper

The latest accession to the list of our local sojourners is the last of what is known to the history as the James Band--no less a personage than Frank James himself. He was brought here last Thursday, from Missouri by two United States Deputy Marshals and turned over to Marshal Hinds.

He looked travel worn and when seen several days later in his cell at the jail, there was a marked difference for the better in his appearance. He is rather pale, but by no means a cadaver standing in stockings ready to jump off into the great elsewhere in a jiffy. His extreme pallor is suggestive of a want of sunshine. Since October of 1882, he has not enjoyed the bounding, buoyant life of a dashing freebooter, but has sickened over with the damp of prison walls. His life has undergone a change.

A glance reveals the fact that his chest is his weak physical point, but he is not yet on the perilous edge of the grave. He informed our scribe that his natural weight was not over 140 pounds. He has a dry, comfortable cell at the jail and thinks he is stronger than he has been

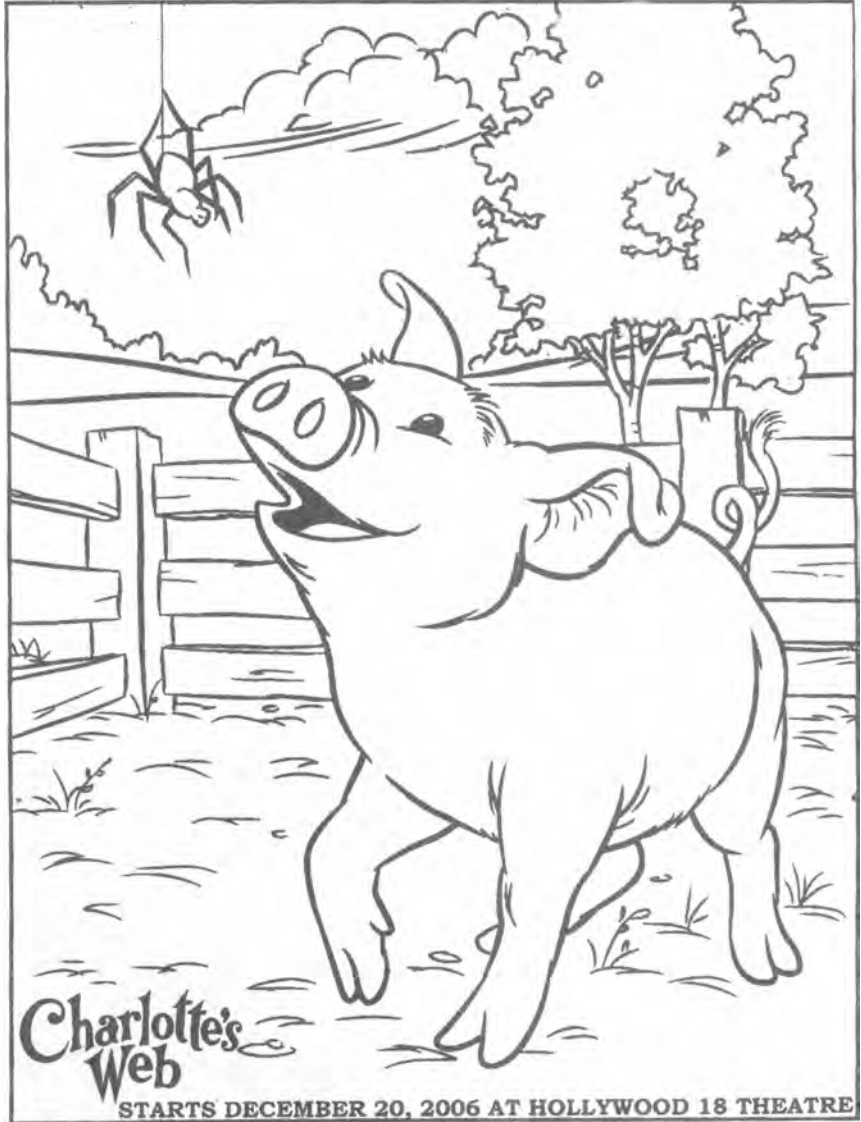
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for some months past.

He thinks he would like Huntsville, whose beauties of scenery and charming air were already familiar to him. He had been to Huntsville several times before, but had not tarried here for more than a day or two at a time. He had likewise traveled through on the Memphis and Charleston road several times and had admired the mountain views of Jackson county.

Concerning his case, of course, we did not expect him to say much. He said that he had employed Gen. L.P Walker as his local attorney and expected that Governor Charles P. Johnson, of Missouri, would be on hand to attend his trial. His habit was to get the very best counsel to be had, and then leave everything to them.

Yes, he always slept well; slept as easy as an infant, went to bed about nine o'clock every night and did not get up until half past ten next morning. He found that sleep had all the health giving powers so often ascribed to a thousand and one nostrums.

He would not try to make bond, he reckoned, as it was but a short time till the April term of the Federal court and his friends had already been exceedingly kind to him. He could make it easily if he chose to. He did not wish to tax his friends any more than he found actually necessary. He hoped the local press would at least, not go out of its way to pound him, and

prejudice his approaching trial. Every man is entitled to an unprejudiced trial. With quite a merry twinkle he said that he thought the entire press owed him a large bounty, for he had furnished them food for gossip and reflection for twenty years, and they had often taken the privilege of placing him a thousand miles distant from where he really was.

When the scribe bade him "Good morning," he extended a cordial invitation to the scribe to call again as he had always been a good friend to the "quill-drivers" and had never interfered with one of them. The scribe has a vague suspicion that there was another twinkle in his eyes this time, as he said he had never "troubled" any newspaper man.

We would not charge him wrongfully, but unless we are on a false trail, there was in this last mentioned, laughter of his optic which arose from a knowledge on his part of the impecuniosity of the journalists guild, as much to say: "Frank James knew where to find what he wanted."

Alas! What great mistakes even the greatest among us sometimes fall into.



"Supreme court rules that punishment of criminals violates their civil rights."

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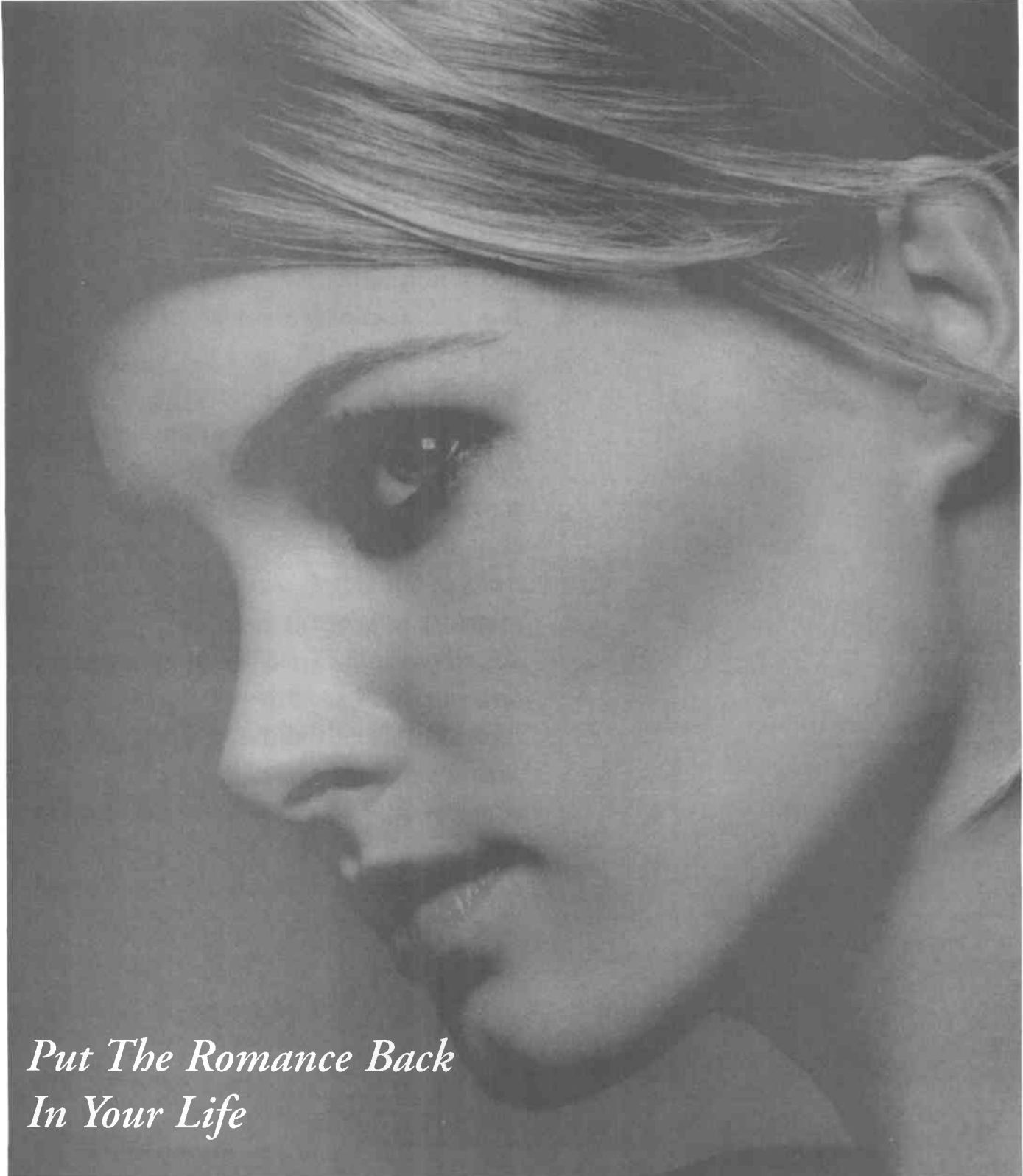
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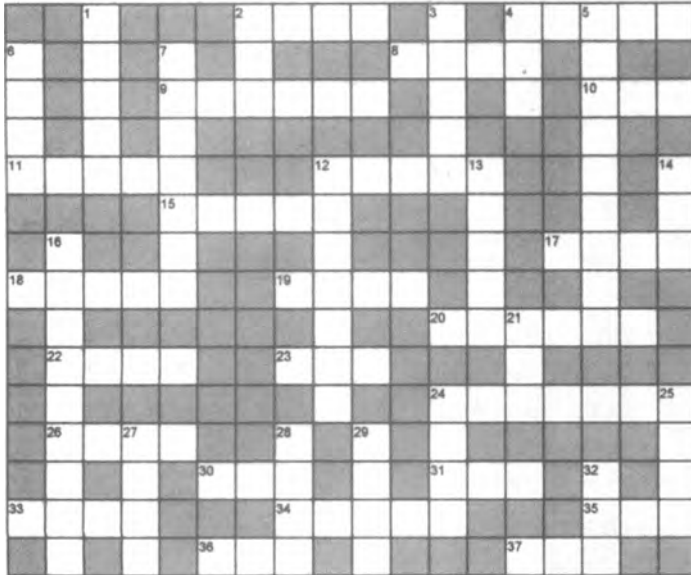
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Old Huntsville Crossword

created by Bob Spencer



answers on page 61

Across

2. John ____ Company started production of farm equipment, 1946
4. ____ School opened 2 Jan, 1922
8. Mary ____ Caylor, Huntsville School Superintendent, 1990
9. MARK _____, member Huntsville City Council, 2006
10. The Bon-____ Motel and Restaurant opened, 1951
11. Probate Judge Myrtle ____ named woman of the year, 1971
12. Construction began on the giant ____ on Monte Sano, 1961
15. Huntsville's ____ Corp., Developer of Library Automation Software
17. Sandra ____ , member Huntsville City Council, 2006
18. " HUNTSVILLE IS A _____", one of Huntsville's slogans
19. ____ Gillespy elected Chairman of the Madison County Commission, 1981
20. The National Children's Advocacy ____ moved into new facilities on Pratt, 2003
22. The "New ____ Times", owner of WHTN Channel 19
23. First Street ____ in service, 1901
24. Hardware Store in Huntsville since 1928
26. Construction began on the Toyota ____ Plant in Huntsville Industrial Park, 2001
30. The Spanish ____ outbreak killed 393 people in Huntsville, 1918
31. The new ____ High School opened, 1964
33. Law of 1889 prohibited women of ____ character from riding horses in downtown Huntsville
34. Huntsville resident, ____ Willis crowned " Mrs. America", 1999
35. President " ____ " Eisenhower Dedicated MSFC, 1960

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36. Construction on the Huntsville/Madison County ____ Port began, 1964
37. The first ____ from the Olde Town Brewing Co. was tapped in 2004

Down

1. " MURDER In THE HEART OF _____ ", a book co-authored by Huntsvillians Fred Simpson and Jaquelyn Gray
2. The Huntsville Shuttle ____ runs 11 different routes, 2006
3. CSA President Jefferson _____ Addressed a group in Huntsville, 1861
4. ____ Reynolds, Huntsville Police Chief, 2006
5. The _____ Theater opened at the USSRC, 1982
6. Olin ____ Established SCI, 1961
7. The Huntsville _____ Co. discontinued bus service after 40 years, 1977
12. The Huntsville _____ Club was established 1921
13. ____ and Handle Factory, opened 1892
14. ____ Mincher, local ball player, started with Washington Senators, 1960
16. Principal of Huntsville High School, 1868
21. 109 German Scientists and their families became U. S. Citizens on " ____ Citizens Day" in Huntsville, 1955
24. ____ Flag, cow who broke world record for butter production, 1892
25. The General ____ Co. First shipment , 1946
27. Madison County Probate Judge , Ashford ____ retired after 18 years on the bench
28. Freedman's school on Franklin Street, 1870
29. Five Points ____ Market opened in 1944
32. ____ Brothers Supermarket opened, 1952

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