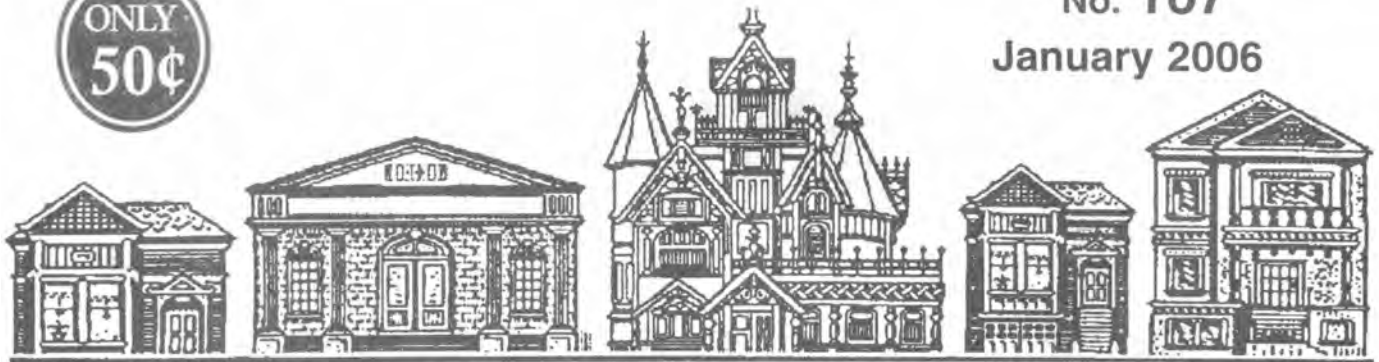


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No. 167
January 2006



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



The Story of Peter Daniels

As the sun began its slow climb over the horizon, the officers sent for him. Standing before them, likely with his fife in hand, Daniels was once again offered a choice. Join the enemy or refuse and die.

And like other men, whose likenesses are carved in stone all across our nation, Peter Daniels resolved to die as an American.

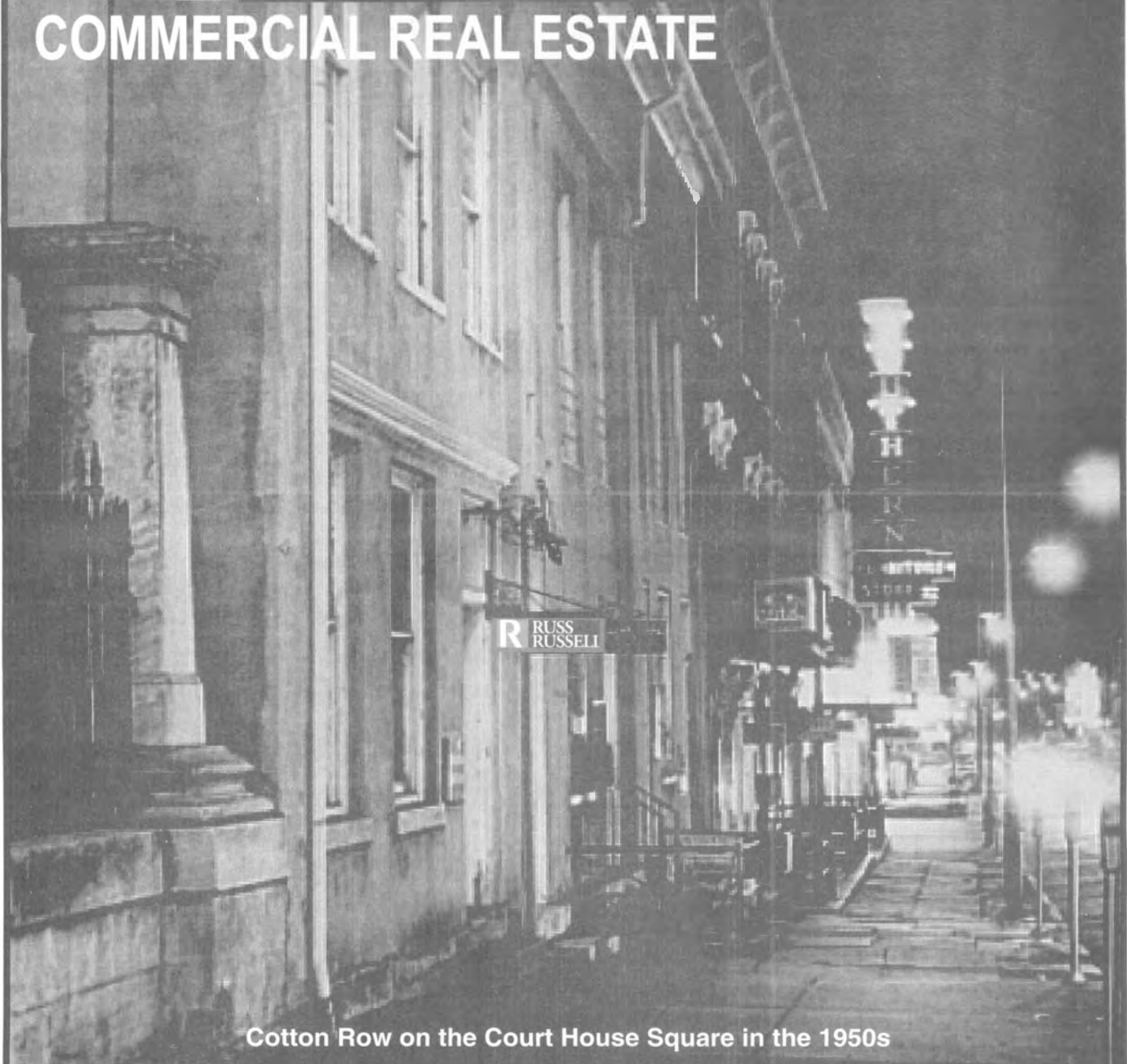
Also in this issue: **A Deadly Storm**

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The Story of Peter Daniels

For Peter Daniels it was just another day. He was an ex-slave who had purchased his freedom. Daniels had built up a good business in a little shop off the courthouse square where he worked as a barber. Although quiet-spoken, he was well respected by both the black and white communities.

He was probably cutting hair, or maybe sweeping up his shop when he first noticed the excitement outside. Quickly finishing his chores, he made his way to the square to see what was happening.

A large crowd had gathered. Word had just been received of the massacre at the Alamo in a far-off place called Texas. A pall seemed to settle over the crowd as the news began to sink in. All the defenders had been slaughtered. Even Davy Crockett, who had visited Huntsville so many times in the past, was dead.

As is true with all major

events of this nature, once the horrible news was realized, the citizens began to get angry. Immediately, talk began to circulate of forming a company to go to Texas and avenge the fallen dead.

One young man in the crowd, with a loud whoop, yelled, "All for Texas!"

The cheer was taken up by the other young men in the crowd and within minutes it seemed as if the whole population of Huntsville was about to march on Santa Anna. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed.

Several old-timers, who had seen service in the War of 1812 and in the Indian wars with Andrew Jackson, convinced a local businessman by the name of Peyton White to organize a military company. White had experience in the military and he was also fairly prosperous, a major qualification for anyone who wanted to raise a company. In those days, the officers were expected to contribute to the expense of supplies, clothing, weapons, and various other things.

Peter Daniels, like everyone else that day, must have felt a surge of pride as the young men flocked to enlist. But what could he do? He was black and lived in a society that condemned men to perpetual servitude for the color of their skin.



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

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

Advertising - 534-0502

Sales & Mrktg. - Cathey Carney

Gen. Manager - Ron Eyestone

Copy Boy - Tom Carney

Features - Stefanie Troup

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Slowly he made his way back to his shop. It was probably best to just put it out of his mind. Besides, there were a lot of other things to think about. It seemed as if everything in the world was happening right here in Huntsville. His mind raced as he thought about the events occurring in his home town:

"They are erecting a bank building on the square; people say the marble came all the way from Nashville. James Bierny is running for president on the abolition ticket; he used to live right here in Huntsville, and they got government troops over in Guntersville. People say they're gathering up all the Indians over there and sending them out west ... and besides, I've got my fife."

Daniels was known far and wide for his ability to play the fife, a flute-like instrument. Probably self-taught, he was an attraction whenever a crowd gathered in Huntsville. On muster days or when the local militia would practice marching in the town's dusty streets, Peter was often seen at their head urging them on with his fife. People

claimed he had a God-given talent with the fife, and though many people tried, no one could ever produce the stirring martial music the way Daniels could.

Over the next few weeks, the town was a flurry of activity as men prepared to embark for Texas. Women and children were kept busy making the Lindsay hunting shirts the men preferred to wear. William Wilson spent his time drilling the new recruits, while Peyton White huddled with the shopkeepers every day, trying to raise the necessary supplies.

Daniels, like everyone else, must have been caught up in the patriotic fever that had engulfed the populace.

Today, it is impossible to know how Peter Daniels became part of the company. Possibly some of the troops saw him sitting outside his barber shop, playing the fife, and approached him. Or maybe he spent so much time playing the fife for the troops as they drilled that people just automatically accepted him.

We do know for a fact that he did not enlist as a regular soldier, as blacks were not allowed to carry guns or enlist in service. The most they could hope for was a job as a servant, or a teamster, or maybe, as in Daniels' case, a job that no one else could do.

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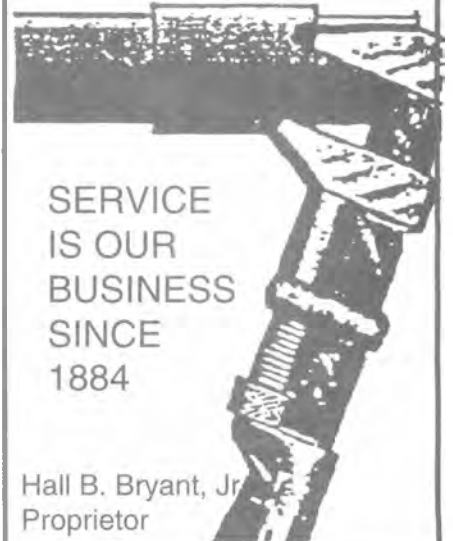
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Thank you Huntsville Hospital,
Christi and Will League
Huntsville, Alabama

"Because of your experienced staff

Betty's life was saved."



Steadman, Dr. Gilbert and Karen

Regardless of how or why, when Captain Peyton White and his small band of volunteers marched out of Huntsville early one morning in the spring of 1836, Peter Daniels was at the head of the company, blowing mightily on his fife.

From Huntsville, the troops marched to Ditto Landing where they boarded a boat that carried them to Muscle Shoals. There they were transported around the dangerous shoals by a horse drawn railway that had just been completed, saving the soldiers from a long, hot march.

After boarding another boat at the foot of the shoals, life for the volunteers must have settled down to an every day routine of boredom. It was a long trip and as the flatboats slowly drifted down the Tennessee to where it met with the Ohio River and then over to the Mississippi, there wasn't much for the troops to do.

The men would occupy their time by cleaning their rifles, sharpening their Bowie knives, and of course, telling tall tales. Most likely, Daniels was not afforded the privilege of having much spare time. Even though he was the fife player, he was still black, and blacks were the people who did the chores.

Occasionally, they might meet with another flatboat carrying more volunteers to Texas. When this happened, it was a time of rejoicing and bragging, with each boatload trying to outdo

the other with their boasts and achievements.

And finally, as always, after the men had exhausted every excuse for a conversation, someone would call for Daniels and his fife. It's easy to imagine now, over a hundred and fifty years later, how it must have sounded as the boats floated slowly in the current down the river with both banks covered by lush foliage. Men silently lying about the deck, lost in thoughts of home, or maybe, the approaching battles, while listening to Daniel's soulful music.

By the time the group reached New Orleans, word of Peter Daniels' musical ability had preceded him. Fife players were rare and every self-respecting military company was expected to have one. One musician, Justin Jeffries of Mobile, was actually kidnapped by members of another unit. When the members of his company realized what happened, they armed themselves and went after the kidnappers with a vengeance, resulting in a near-riot.

Daniels was recognized as one of the best and he was besieged by generous offers from many companies.

But Peter Daniels was not for sale to the highest bidder,

"Louis Pasteur's theory of germs is ridiculous fiction."

Professor at Toulouse, 1872



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and accordingly, when the small band of Madison County volunteers marched out of New Orleans, Peter Daniels, with his wife, was again at their head.

The war in Texas was entering a terrible period. Santa Anna, faced with ever-increasing swarms of American volunteers, hoisted the black flag. As with the Alamo, Goliad, and countless other places, there would be no surrender. If the volunteers failed in battle, they would be massacred to the last man.

It is hard to imagine what must have been going through Daniels' mind as he marched across the barren plains of Texas with the volunteers. Everyday brought fresh reports of atrocities committed by the Mexican troops, and yet the volunteers kept marching bravely on.

The war consisted mostly of small skirmishes; small bands of men constantly harassing their opponents. Hit and run, hide for a while and then hit again. With few men and fewer supplies, this was the only military tactic the Americans could employ.

It was during one of these skirmishes somewhere on the plains of Texas, the exact location has been forgotten for over a century, that Daniels was taken prisoner.

The Mexicans immediately recognized Daniels as the wonderful fife player they had heard so much about. The Mexican army was renowned for its military bands, so any prisoner with musical ability instantly became a topic of discussion at headquarters.

Santa Anna believed men fought better when inspired by music. Months earlier, at the Alamo, four regimental bands played constantly throughout the final battle, and even during the massacre that followed.

Daniels was taken before the Mexican officers, who after confirming his identity, offered him a position in their regimental band.

"No," replied Daniels. "I can not be a traitor."

The Mexican soldiers explained to him that the only other alternative was death before the firing squad.

Still, Peter Daniels refused. The soldiers must have been

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impressed by Daniels' courage, for instead of ordering his immediate execution, they placed him under guard for the night. Likely, they were hoping that after having time to reflect on the matter, Daniels would change his mind.

A thousand thoughts must have played on his mind during that long, dark night. Thoughts of home and family and friends. Thoughts of the injustices that he had known. Thoughts of Huntsville that now seemed so far away.

And yet, he never wavered. His loyalty was not for sale ... not even for his life.

As the sun began its slow climb over the bleak desert floor, the Mexican officers sent for him. Standing before them, likely with his life in hand, Daniels was once again offered the choice. Join the Mexicans, or refuse and die.

And like other men, whose likenesses are carved in stone all across our nation, Peter Daniels resolved to die as an American.

There was no music and there was no tombstone. His body was consigned to a simple unmarked grave somewhere on the barren and lonely plains.

Peyton White and the rest of the volunteers returned to Huntsville at the end of the conflict. For a time, whenever men would gather, they would talk about Daniels and his heroic decision to die as an American.

But then, as the years passed

by, people began to forget and within the span of a hundred years he had become just a footnote in an old, dusty book locked away in the archives of the public library.

Today, visitors in Huntsville are shown the fine antebellum homes of yesteryear and they learn of the hardy pioneers who built them.

They are told tales of the trial of Frank James and numerous other accounts of Huntsville's legendary figures, but not a word is ever mentioned about Peter Daniels.

A humble hero who loved his country, whose name got lost in the pages of history.



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News from 1873

- We are informed that five or six prisoners broke jail and escaped on Thursday night. They were at large at last accounts.

- Bill Thompson, colored, arrested on Wednesday by Captain Forman, on the charge of stealing a cow from Mr. River and offering the same for sale at market in Decatur, was taken to jail on Monday last for safe keeping.

- Telegrams received at Huntsville Saturday, from Houston, Texas, state that Joseph Aquero, charged with the murder of Jack Snow in that city last May, has been acquitted.

- A heavy wind and rain storm occurred on Thursday night in this county. The roof of the gin-house of Mr. Ogletree was blown off, and the blacksmith shop at Nance's was leveled.

- A little girl, between thirteen

and fourteen years of age, the daughter of Mr. Zach Elliot, of Madison County, brought to this place on Friday last a bale of cotton weighing nearly five hundred pounds, which she made by her own labor, plowing the ground, planting the seed, working it during maturity, picking it, and sold it herself, realizing from its sale nearly one hundred dollars.

- Miss Alice Johnson, a very pretty young girl, having recently started a barber shop in our city, has caused quite a stir. It seems that all the wives in town seemed moved by the same common impulse to present their husbands with some little love token.

By a remarkable coincidence they all selected razors and brushes and mugs.



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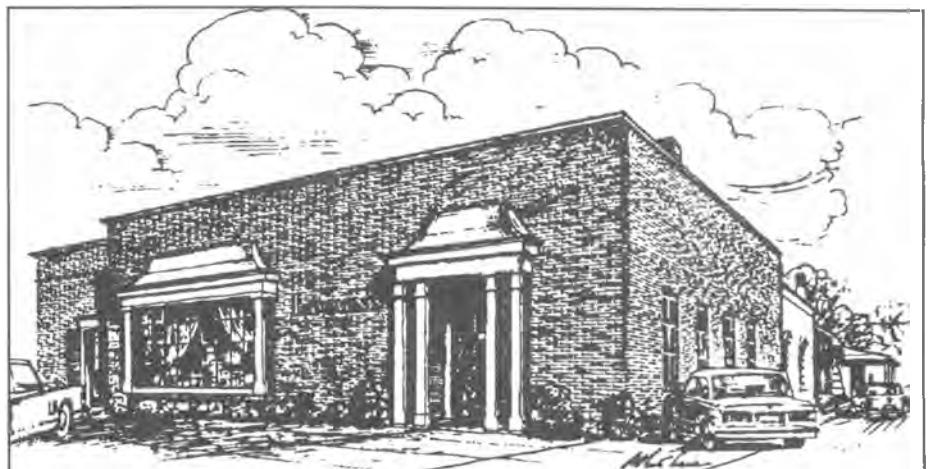
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Letters to a Soldier

Editor's note:

The following letters were discovered in the Nashville, Tn. archives. R. D. Jamison was serving in the Confederate Army when his wife was forced to flee their large plantation in Giles County, Tn. in front of the advancing Union Army. Camilla Jamison spent the rest of the war living in Huntsville and returned to Tennessee when the surrender was signed

My Dear Husband,

If I thought there had been any chance of you coming to Giles (County, Tn.) to see me, I would not have left on any condition whatsoever. But when I left you last, I left with the expectation of not seeing you again in a long, long time, and never once thought that you could

come to see me.

What sort of Negroes of ours are gone? Send me Lon's and her Ma's letters, if you will part with them. I will return them if you desire. I think I have written you several letters you did not receive. Did you get one mailed at Pulaski? My dear, excuse this short letter. I am now

very busy making soldier's clothes and I believe 'tis the first time in my life that I ever was doing good for anybody save Self.

Affectionately your own true wife, Camilla.

Huntsville, April 20th, 1863
My dear darling husband,
Good morning, Sir. How do ye

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do this morning? Glad to see you. All's well, I thank you.

Yours of 16th was read last night past at nine o'clock, giving the usual degree of pleasure and satisfaction. Although I hasten to write immediately, I will promise you nothing interesting for I am unusually dull this morning.

Ella got here Saturday night-safe and sound. No, she didn't stay long for all the children have the whooping cough. I will move down to her house today, and we will have a rich old time. But I believe I will be afraid of buggers. Bass is not like himself at all; he is as ugly as he can be, and doesn't like me any better than he did last winter. But I'll make him like me yet if he doesn't watch. Nellie is the same old Nell. She makes me think more of home than anything I've seen since I left home, and I am getting anxious to get home. I had Jinnie (her mule) brought around to see how she was looking, having been told by everyone who knew anything about the boy that she would be well attended to, but instead, she is the poorest object I ever saw. Henry will get me some corn and I will try and fatten her myself, and then if I think best I'll sell her. I would have made more by letting her stay at the stall at \$9.00 per month than letting her be worked to death for nothing.

It grieved me very much at first, but now I have gotten over it, for those who have, must lose,

and our lot has been to lose all the time, but I hope there is a better day coming.

How is Mrs. Smith? If Sam Crocker was very energetic and had good will enough, he might succeed in getting Jack out for Mr. Leatherman. I heard there were three hundred negroes burned to death in Murfreesboro short time since. Such freedom they would have received in a few days or years at most, if they had stayed at home, and perhaps in a more honorable way than by burning. If that is the treatment they received, they will not go off with them (Union Troops) when they leave.

March 24, 1863

I was anxious to send a letter from Mr. L. but Mr. T. insisted it would go sooner from Huntsville. When we arrived here the door was closed and could not mail. He then said he would mail at Stevenson and you would receive sooner than any

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other way. I guess with the whirl of excitement it went on to Mobile. We all wrote from here. We left Mr. L. Friday and got here Monday, and the others started Monday on the five o'clock train. Fannie was quite sick when they started and the rest were all well. I guess you were quite puzzled by not getting my first letter. The reason I came here, the people in Giles were all blue as indigo about the time I left. Thought the Yankees would be there in three days. We all concluded if I wanted to go on farther, that was as good an opportunity as I would have.

They all came in private conveyances to Huntsville. I thought when I got here I could get Willie C. to go on with me, but my buggy broke down at Elkton. Mr. T. then bought a buggy and left mine to be mended, sold his when he got here. But when I got here Willie had gone to Tennessee, which I regard as all for the best, as I found Henry here, expecting his family to move here. I never have seen anyone who takes the war as hard as Henry and Allen Crockett. It makes me laugh to hear them lamenting. By the time they have tried it twelve months they will be better reconciled.

My dear, I will be so glad if we all get back to Murfreesboro again. I want to see you so much. I hope there never will another Yank come here. Oh shux! I wish and hope so many things I can't tell what I do want. My dear, I never have such a thought as your being led astray by the temptations with which you are hourly surrounded, though I know 'tis not impossible. I have such perfect confidence



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in your faith. You will never leap the bounds of discretion. I feel so thankful, too, when I think of your many virtues and have so little to fear as regards your being led astray. I think I have been specially favored in the choice of a husband.

Henry comes to see me every day; he is in the cavalry and stationed here. I would like to see his wife and Ross but if the Yankees leave I can't wait long to see them. When I start back I will call by to see you. I will have to take Jennie back to make a crop with. I am so afraid the Yanks are not really leaving, but just fixing a trap for Bragg. Tis rumor here that Mr. Bragg's wife is dead. If you all would apply for furlough now you might perhaps obtain it.

I wish you could see Ella Bell. She is the sweetest thing in the state. She says I must kiss my sweetheart for her. I am very fortunate to find pretty children to love and love me. Poor little Fannie! I fear she will not long survive her trip to Mobile. Mr. Fletcher thinks it terrible we have no children, took privilege to say more to me on that subject than anybody else ever did.

Henry is in Roddy's cavalry. His company is here catching conscript's. He thinks he will get the Chaplaincy of the regiment. He went up to Tullahoma last week with prisoners and would have gone to see you but didn't have time. They have sent from 8 to 10 hundred conscripts and deserters to Bragg.

I am very sorry indeed that Alex fell into Yankee hands at last, he did dread it so much and then 'twas for me that he risked so much. I suppose all the Negroes are leaving in Ruthersford. I wish we had sent ours South and sold them where I never could hear of them again, for if they go off altogether we will lose them at best, won't we?

I have taken a walk two hours and 1/2 long, went through the principal part of town, saw some beautiful yards and houses, and went to the Graveyard (Maple Hill). There we saw many friends of the departed, bringing fresh flowers to put upon the graves of loved ones, seemingly to drive away the dark gloom that hovers on the graves of dear loved ones. Saw the grave of Col. Mitchell. No loved hand was near to supply his

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with fresh flowers of loveliness, and thus 'tis with hundreds who have died away from home and friends and no one to drop a pitying tear. Our enemies, too, lie there side by side in large numbers, they too have friends at home. Would to God the remainder would return home and let us alone.

I will remain here a week or two longer and then, if we think best, I will go back to Giles. I can't move tho' until I get the buggy and that is standing in the street where I left it, never been touched. The workman says he is in government service and will fix it as soon as he can. Tell Jim Alexander I think there are plenty of Gals here who would like to marry "Nobody but a soldier." Just come and make selection. I am going to work in the morning on government work if I can get it, and make eight dollars

per week. My dear, can't you come down here to see me? 'Tis not much farther than where I was before, and I assure you I would appreciate such a visit very much. Mr. Leatherman sent me word to send my horse and buggy back to his house. But the horse is doing very well now.

God bless you, my dear darling, and keep you from all harm is the constant prayer of a devoted wife.

Camilla P. Jamison

Huntsville, April 5th, 1863
My dear darling husband,

'Tis Sabbath evening, and feeling so lonely, I thought I would write to my dear love. I do realize so fully this evening how much I love you. 'Tis so hard to live apart from all I hold dear on this earth. Petitions are to be made this evening for peace. All the churches will be opened and a general prayer meeting. Were I at home among friends I would delight to be one of the number, but among strangers I prefer to enter my closet alone, where I go every evening (not only Sunday) and make known the desires of my heart.

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My dear, I would prize so highly this evening a real old fashion talk with you, such as we often had during our short stay together. I get very impatient when old memories crowd the mind. I wonder if we ever will be as happy again. It seems to me I would give the whole world, except enough for us to live in, were it mine to give.

Here comes Ella, and she says she is anxious for paper and pen to write you.

April 6th:

There is a perfect Negro mama here that everybody is trying to buy at the most outrageous prices. They pass all reason. Mr. Crockett has sold all but two. When you get into old Kentucky capture a few and send them South. Henry has not got back yet but look for him in a few days. When I first commenced sewing, I thought making two shirts was a good day's work, but now I can make five and make them well. Mrs. C. is telling me heaps of bad things to tell you, but I am afraid it would make you blush.

This war has continued about long enough. I am getting tired of it. If Jeff and Abe don't stop it, they will get another fuss on hand.

Your Wife, Camilla



Spicy Black-Eyed Peas

1 med. pkg. dry black-eyed peas
 1 onion, chopped
 4 slices thick ham, chopped
 1/2 c. Dale's steak sauce
 1 t. garlic powder
 1 t. onion powder
 1 t. hot & spicy seasoned salt
 Tabasco Jalapeno sauce

Soak peas for a couple of hours, then cook just til done. Make sure you have at least an inch of water over the top of the beans when fully cooked.

Add all ingredients except for the Tabasco. Stir well. When serving, sprinkle with the green Tabasco sauce.

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Trees Native to the Holy Land found Growing on Monte Sano

from 1912 newspaper

Local lumbermen have samples of the famous Chittim timber which has been discovered by government experts in Madison County, in the vicinity of Huntsville, and much discussion about the same is being indulged by the lumber people. The timber found is not very extensive, the forest of the same being but sparsely built up. The timber is supposed to be growing only at Jerusalem.

It will be remembered that interior work of the great temple at Jerusalem, told of in the Bible, was built of Chittim wood. It was not believed that there was any of

this timber anywhere. Government experts in looking over the Alabama forests investigated trees which natives were calling Chittim wood and they have pronounced it the real article. The timber, of course, will be preserved and an effort made to bring about a growth. The samples of the wood on hand here are prized highly.

Here Chittim wood has been known to exist on Monte Sano since Huntsville was laid out in town lots nearly a century ago. Chittim wood was first hauled to town and sold as fire wood. For the past twenty-five years local mechanics have been working it into walking canes, gavels, police clubs, and many different kinds of furniture.

The Smithsonian Institute sent representatives here during the early nineties to investigate the wood and extent of growth, and now have a block on exhibition in the Institution at Washington.

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Dr. James A Farr - John Barnes - Julian Greer
Robert Thompson - Wilbur Thornton
Brooks Fulmer - Earl Feese - George Ortlip
Luther Adams - Paul Davis - Hubert Tatum
William Certain - Edward Bradshaw - Arthur Way
Harold Greenwell - Harold Sprinkle - A.C. Henley - Terry Ford
Lucian Bell - William Mills
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Andy Karabinos - Hartwell Lutz - John Martin - Hank Miller - Archie Murchie
Robert Overall - Chuck Owens - Wilbur Patterson - Pasqual Rico - Roscoe Roberts
Donald Royston - Bill Russell - Bill Sevey - Reggie Skinner - Joe Sloan - Walt Terry - John Vaughn
Ray Weinberg - Jim White - James Winning - Jim Yeager - Sam Zeman

Memories of Lincoln Village

by Tony Thompson

In 1930, life in the Village was a lot different than today. Life was a lot simpler, but cash money was often short. Many families raised chickens in their backyard for food, eggs, and as a cash crop. My dad, Erskine Thompson, was about 13 years old at the time. My grandmother had him enlarging the chicken coop when he ran out of fence staples. My grandmother instructed Dad to take one of the hens downtown to the Tennessee Hide and Poultry Company and sell it, and then go next door to Lewter's Hardware Store and purchase the fence staples he needed to complete the job. Dad caught one of their

chickens, tied its legs together, and with two of his friends, Roy and J.T. Duncan, began walking toward downtown Huntsville.

Unknown to the boys, there had been a chicken thief at work the night before in the Village. Someone had stolen a "Rhode Island Red" hen. This was exactly what the boys had with them.

About halfway to town, near the railroad tracks known as "Miller's Crossing," Dad and his friends stopped to watch a marble game being played.

The local mailman, aware of the previous night's crime, spotted the rag-tag boys with the chicken and called the police. As they were watching the marble game, a touring car with curtains pulled up beside them. Two police officers jumped out and said, "We want you boys." Dad explained that they were not playing marbles but were on their way to town to sell the chicken. The officers said they were not interested in the marble players - they wanted the boys with the chicken.

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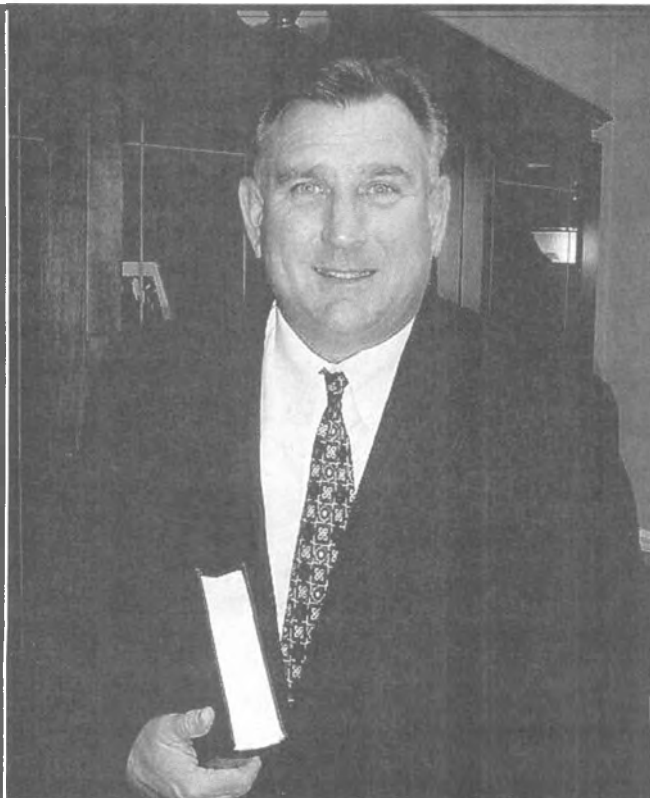
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All three boys were taken to the City Hall on Madison Street. There they were searched and taken to a cell.

As they were being escorted to their cell, they passed a desk with a pistol on it. Roy told the officer, "If you think we stole the chicken just take us out and shoot us." The officer told them that they would not be shot, but they would go to reform school if found guilty.

An officer was sent to Lincoln Village to fetch my grandmother. She went to the City Hall and cleared the whole matter. The officer then took the chicken next door to the City Cafe and sold it for \$1.25. Dad took the money and went to Lewter's and bought the fence staples to complete his job.

In the end, all came out well except Dad's rear end. He was punished for not going directly downtown and completing his chore. All three boys were kidded a lot at school for being chicken thieves.

This was the only time my dad was ever arrested, and he became the infamous "Chicken Thief of Lincoln Village."

Man bit by Snake

John B. Carruthers was bit by a snake Tuesday last while gathering corn. After experiencing painful swelling of the extremities he was made well again when his wife applied a poultice made of Kerosine and chimney soot. Within three days he was well enough to complete harvesting the corn.

The snake also survived and is again lurking in the cornfield awaiting its next victim.

From 1899 Newspaper

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Heard On The Street

by Cathey Carney



Angelika Turner of Gurley was the first caller with the correct guess for last month's Photo of the Month. The little girl was **Joyce Russell**, in the Compliance Department at New York Life. Angelika works as Production Operator at Benchmark Electronics in Huntsville. Congratulations!

We have several big birthdays in January. **Chuck Owens**, who is my Dad and resides at Redstone Village with my Mom **Annelie Owens**, turns 90 this month. **Mrs. Mary Dudley** has a birthday as well, and her good friend **Peggy Hutson** sends her love and best wishes.

Happy 49th wedding anniversary to that romantic couple **William & Barbara Norton!** He tells me it's just as sweet now as it was nearly 50 years ago! Their granddaughter **Megan Renee** will be 21 in February, and her daughter **Makenna** will be 2 in February. William has a February birthday too, so it's a big month for them!

I met a really nice lady at Madison Imaging center recently. **Kathy Belanger** has worked there for some time and is really fun to talk with. Her husband is **Paul Belanger** and they live in Athens. They had a full house for Christ-

mas when daughter **Marie** and her fiance **Dave Zeuski** came in for a visit, as well as son **Blake**, wife **Kim** and kids **Burke** (10 months) and daughter **Indigo** (3 1/2).

HUGE NEWS! We hear that our good friend **Glenn Watson** has announced that he will run for County Commissioner Place 2 against **Faye Dyer**. This might be a race that everyone will want to watch.

We speak for many people when we say how proud we are of our mayor **Loretta Spencer**. She has a difficult job and it requires tenacity & toughness - it's highly unusual to find someone who has the heart, sincerity and compassion to go along with that.

We were so sorry to hear that **Benny Little** had died, at the young age of 65. We loved to listen to his stories of Huntsville history. He loved his family first & foremost, and we send our sympathy to his wife **Nancy**, and all of his friends and family.

We know that **M.D. Smith IV** looks like a kid, but he turned 60 recently! His sweet wife **Judy** coordinated a fun party for him at the Elks Club on Franklin street.

We recently met **Steve & Judy Thornton** having dinner with friends. What a sweet couple they are! Their son **Derrick** is managing the new 301 East on Holmes.

We've known attorney **Cliff Hill** for years, so we were thrilled to hear that he has added **Sharon Dowiat** to his firm as Associate. We think they will make a great team!

Buford Sanderson led a good life and had a great sense of humor, and we were saddened to hear that he had died recently at age 79. **Shelby Scott** is his sister, and **John Troup** is a nephew who thought the world of Buford.

The **Airport Reunion** is scheduled this year for January 18, 2007. It will be held at Greenbriar Restaurant at 6pm, at

Photo of The Month

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

Call (256) 534-0502

Hint: This little girl spent 25 years talking on the radio down town.



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the corner of Greenbriar Rd. and Old Highway 20. It is open to all the folks who worked or had activities at the Huntsville Madison County Airport prior to August 1970, when the new airport was opened. Call **Johnny Johnston** at 656-9575 for more info.

Ann Price loved reading about Huntsville's legends and history, but after her stroke a year ago she wasn't able to do much reading anymore. She died at age 80, leaving children, grandkids and great grandkids as well as neices and nephews. **Gayle Nichols** was a special niece to Ann and will miss her so much. We send our sympathy to her family.

It was great running into **Lynda Hall** recently having dinner with **Andree Reeves**. Lynda is our Tax Collector. We still miss her Dad, legislator **Albert Hall**, and miss his visits to our office. Andree's sweet mama is **Mavis Reeves**, who lives in Chapel Hill, NC. Andree loves her so much and will be going up for a visit really soon. We send our love to Mavis.

What a party at the Elks Club recently! **Louie and Jane Tippett**, along with **Rene Fortin, Lloyd Garrison** and **Marie Hewett** recently hosted their annual, and always anticipated, Christmas party on Franklin Street at the Elks and the band, "**Michael Dean & Memphis**" was unbelievable.

Some of the folks we saw there were **Mr. Bill Miller, Sr., Cecil Ashburn, Clyde Yarbrough, Danny Banks, Ron & Barb Eyestone** and that devastatingly charming **Richard Castello!** Lots of folks were having a great time.

Wesley Sylvester had a birthday on Christmas day - his brother **Michael Sylvester** of MS Masonry says to say Happy Birthday!! Also, Michael's sweet niece **Jessica Stender** turned 13 in December!

It was great to see **Leanna**

Keith when she came to Huntsville to visit her Dad **Sam Keith**, and mom **Janet Watson & stepdad Buck Watson**. Leanna lives in New York but is working on a book about Huntsville and the Calhoun family back in the 1800's.

A very special Birthday Wish to our dear friend **Randy Villines!**

Newman Ward is 90! He lived in Huntsville years ago and now lives in California with his son and family. They welcomed a 4th generation recently with **Lennox Kornelis**. We love you, Newman.

We were so sorry to learn of the death of **Jack Farrington**. He was a good friend and will be missed by everyone who knew him.

Our favorite copy boy, **Tom Carney** recently had a major landmark - a 60th birthday! Of course that makes his wife even younger, as she's still only in her fifties!

Mark & Cordy Fortson's youngest daughter **Rachel** just graduated from UAH with a BS in Civil Engineering. They are very proud parents!!

Well, 2006 is gone but we all need to pause for a moment and think about the blessings we had in the past year.

Life is good!

"I had to get rid of my husband - the cat was allergic."

Jenny Johnston

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Fast & Spicy

2 lb. smoked sausage
1 bottle prepared BBQ sauce

1 green pepper, chopped

Boil the sausage til hot, punch hole in skin. When still warm cut the sausage into 1-inch pieces. Place in frying pan with 2 tablespoons butter.

Fry for 2 minutes. Add green pepper and cook for two more minutes. Remove to glass bowl, pour BBQ sauce over pieces.

Serve with toothpicks - you won't have leftovers!

Bacon Dip

1 c. plain yogurt
1/4 c. plus 4 t. mayonnaise
1 T. minced onion flakes
1 T. crumbled, crispy bacon

Put all in a small bowl and mix well. Chill to blend flavors.

Savory Sesame Dressing

1 T. toasted sesame seeds
1 1/2 T. toasted Oriental sesame oil

1 t. soy sauce
Salt to taste
freshly ground black pepper
1/2 c. peanut oil
2 1/2 T. red wine vinegar
1 garlic clove, pressed

Pour seeds into a small bowl. Combine all remaining ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and pour in the seeds.

Shake vigorously and put into your fridge to chill.

Good on all lettuce/greens salads as well as chicken, pork, etc.

Hot Buttered Cabbage

1/4 c. butter
1 t. caraway seeds, crushed
1 t. salt
1 t. pepper
2 T. water

6 c. coarsely shredded cabbage

Steam cabbage over boiling water, 6-8 minutes. Heat butter, seeds, salt, pepper & water in pan, add cabbage and stir well.

Broccoli Supreme

1 large bunch broccoli
1 c. grated Cheddar cheese
2 cans cream of mushroom soup

1/2 c. evaporated milk
1/2 c. water

1 can onion rings
Chop ends off the broccoli,

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cut remaining into bite-size pieces. Mix with the cheese, soup and milk and place in a greased casserole. Top with onion rings and bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes.

Corn Chowder

Saute 1/2 cup butter and 2 tablespoons onion, chopped. Add 1 cup boiling water and 2 cups potatoes (chopped) and 2 cans cream style corn. Cook for about 10 minutes til potatoes are tender.

Just before serving, add 2 cups milk, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon black pepper. Cook on medium heat, stirring occasionally.

Spicy Chicken

- 2 1/2 lb. chicken breasts, skinless
- 8 oz. Dijon mustard
- 4 oz. lemon juice
- 16 oz. dry white wine
- 1 t. tarragon
- 1 t. chervil
- 1 t. cayenne pepper
- 1 t. thyme
- 2 t. oregano
- 4 t. basil

Mix all ingredients, except for chicken. Marinate the chicken

in the mixture for several hours, then bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Baste occasionally.

Beer Bread

- 3 c. plain flour
- 2 t. salt
- 12 oz. beer
- 3 3/4 t. baking powder
- 1 t. garlic powder

Grease a 9"x 5"x 3" loaf pan. Combine flour, baking powder and beer in a large bowl. Stir together til well mixed. Spread batter in prepared pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or til browned and a wooden pick comes out clean. Turn out onto a rack and cool before slicing.

Sweet Chew Cakes

- 1 box brown sugar
- 1 stick butter
- 1 t. vanilla
- 3 eggs
- 2 c. self-rising flour
- 1 1/2 c. pecans, chopped

Melt the sugar and butter together. Add eggs, vanilla and flour. Mix well and add the nuts. Batter will be very stiff. Pour into a greased oblong 9 x 12" pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 20 to 30 minutes. Cut into squares when ready to serve.

Apples & Brandy

Make a crumb mixture:

- 1 1/3 c. flour
- 1 c. oats, uncooked
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 3/4 c. butter
- 1 c. chopped pecans

Combine first 3 ingredients & cut in butter til mixture resembles course crumbs. Stir in the nuts.

Reserve a cup of the crumbs, press remaining mix into the bottom of a 13 x 9" baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

For filling:

- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1 7-oz. jar marshmallow creme
- 2 T. brandy
- 3 c. apple slices, sliced thin

Combine first 3 ingredients using medium speed on mixer til well blended. Stir in apples and spoon over the crust, sprinkle with reserved crumb mix. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes.

Cut into bars & serve warm with whipped cream sprinkled with cinnamon.

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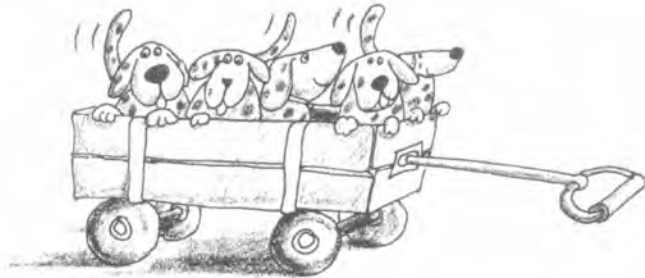
by Austin Miller

In the late 1940's, the Ryland community looked a lot different than it does today. The landscape consisted of scattered farm houses, cotton fields, pastures, fence rows and thickets. Most people didn't have electricity and lit their homes with coal oil lamps. Mama, like everybody else, washed our clothes in a wash pot and hung them outside on a line to dry. The only paved road was Highway 72; Ryland Pike and Dug Hill were made of brown gravel dredged out of a Flint River gravel pit. In dry weather, you could see a car coming a mile away because it stirred up a big cloud of dust. This was not much of a problem because there weren't many cars. Mules and two horse wagons were still plentiful. It was a cotton farming community and with the exception of a few tractors, farming methods and life hadn't changed much in fifty years.

During that time all the trains on the Southern line between Chattanooga and Memphis were pulled by steam engines. Our house was about a quarter of a mile from the railroad and we had a clear view of

the tracks from our front yard. Even before I started to school, I can remember stopping whatever I was doing as soon as I heard a train whistle and running to watch it pass. The spectacle of the big locomotives was a sight I never got tired of watching. The

cacophony of noise, the big rolling iron wheels and the cloud of smoke was very exciting to a young boy who had not yet heard of television or been more than ten miles from where he was born. But the best part to me was hearing the whistle when the engineer



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blew at the crossings.

Before the long freights coming from the east came into sight, you could hear periodic short bursts on the whistle and the engine struggling to make it up the long grade between Brownsboro and what is now Moontown road. The boiler-pushed engine cycles became progressively slow and labored as the weight of the box cars and grade slowed the locomotive to a crawl. After a while the engine cycle would slowly get faster and faster. This meant that the train had finally made it over the grade and was picking up speed. By the time it came in sight it was moving fast and sped through Ryland wide open with thick black smoke boiling out of the stack and trailing in whatever direction the wind was blowing.

The Brownsboro grade allowed a phenomenon in Ryland during the thirties and forties that occurred around railroad tracks all over the United States. It enabled countless starving hobos to get off the west bound trains. People living alongside the tracks had a steady stream of hungry men coming to their doors begging for food. Although the residents didn't have much more than the hobos, they were not turned away and usually left with at least a piece of cornbread or a cold biscuit. They often let the men sleep in the barn or on the front porch. The next day they would hide out near the track until another train heading west slowed down on the grade. In all the years of the depression there was never a story or report about trouble caused by the horde of hobos that stopped in Ryland. Mostly,

they were good men looking for work to feed starving families back home.

The only thing I have heard that compares to a steam train whistle's mournful sound at night is TAPS. I think most people who remember the whistle and hear it now would say it stirs something in their soul. It is the sound of the past, the echo of a simpler more innocent time. The voice of a piece of our country that is gone forever.

It was in 1948 or 1949 when

I saw the first diesel. I was spellbound at first by the novelty but soon realized that something had changed. It wasn't long until all the steam engines were gone. The diesels could get over the Brownsboro grade without slowing down and the hobos couldn't get off at Ryland. Without knowing it at the time, I saw an era end in America.

Several years ago, a steam powered excursion train occasionally came through Ryland. If I was there and heard the whistle,

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I stopped what I was doing and came running to see it pass just as excited as I was as a young boy. I haven't seen one in more than ten years but if one ever comes through again, I hope I am there to see it. What I would really like is to be there with my grandchildren so they could see what I saw as a child. Late at night, from my house in Huntsville, I can hear the diesels passing through the city. Sometimes when I first hear one blow for a crossing, I think for an instant that it sounds like a steam engine. Of course it never is, but I keep listening anyway.

1860 Law and Order in Huntsville

Sunday was the day of rest in Huntsville of 1860. To insure this, an ordinance was inserted in the code to notify residents that "no person shall in this city do or exercise any worldly labor on that day under a penalty of \$5 for each offense."

No sports, public exercises, exhibition or game was allowed on Sunday. Violators were subject to a \$5 fine. A similar penalty was required of any person who loaded or unloaded a wagon, or drove horses, cattle, sheep or swine through the streets, except in case of necessity, on that day.

"Bawdy houses or houses of ill fame" were banned. The ordinance further read that "All public prostitutes, or such persons as lead a notoriously lewd and lascivious course of life, and all person not being lawfully married, who shall cohabit, or live together as man and wife, shall pay a fine of not less than \$25."

A tax of \$1 per head was levied for each hog more than six months old and for each litter of pigs found at large in the city limits.

Whoever galloped or ran a horse or any other animal used for the saddle or gear within the city

limits, except in case of emergency judged by the mayor, had to forfeit one \$1 for each offence.

A tax of .50 cents per head was levied annually on dogs.

Freed slaves had to be registered by the city clerk every January 1. If any one of them was caught with a gun, pistol, knife or with ammunition on his person, he was fined \$25.

It was unlawful for the master of a slave to permit the slave to work as a public porter, or by the job, in the city without first obtaining a license. The fee was \$5 per year, and entitled the slave to a lettered and numbered badge, which he was required to wear.

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1907 Police Court

The fines, forfeitures and sentences in the police court this morning broke all previous records in Huntsville. The raid made by the police last night on the disorderly house of Ret Wales produced four hundred dollar fines or 296 day terms at hard labor.

Mary White, Ret Wales and Jenny Humphrey were fined \$100 each with the option of working out the fines at the rate of .50 cents the day.

Charlie Mason, a young man who was caught in the house was fined \$100.

Mary Davison, an inmate of the house, was given 24 hours in which to get out of the city and unless she is gone by that time she must pay a fine of \$100 or begin a term of 209 days labor. Four young men who were caught in the same raid were discharged.

Dave Pointer was fined \$5 for using profane language in the presence of females.

Lacy Clemens was fined \$5 for leaving a team unhitched.

R. Dervis, drunk and disorderly, was fined \$20.

F. L. Oates, drunk, was fined \$10 and John Sutherfield for drunk and disorderly and for carrying a pistol was given a term of 60 days.

L. Larkin, Lake Walker, H.H. Harris, Dave Jordan and Will Allison were fined \$10 each for drunkenness.

B. Matterson was fined \$15 for pig stealing

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The Last Slave

The following interview of Tom Moore was conducted by Kenneth Marsh in 1948. Shortly afterwards Tom Moore died at the age of 105. At that time he was the last surviving person in Madison County to have been born into slavery.

"If my body had to suffer all the misery that my eyes have seen I would have been dead a long time ago. I don't remember too good the things that happened yesterday, but the old things, the things that happened when I was young, I remember good."

"I was born on April 28, 1843. Mr. Ben (Benjamin Tyson Moore, his master) wrote the date down in an old fam-

ily bible. My mama, she was bought in Mobile when she was a little girl and brought to Mr. Ben's place. Mama said they paid \$700 for her. I never knew my daddy, don't even know what happened to him."

"Mr. Ben, he was a cotton man. The first thing I remember is pulling bolls. After all the cotton was picked, we'd go thru the fields again and pull all the cotton bolls that had opened late. That winter, when it would get cold, we'd sit in front of a fire and pick the cotton out."

"I remember we had this boy on the place, his name was Buck, and he kept running off. The paddy-rollers caught him clear up next to Nashville one time. His mama did the cooking for the big house. When they caught this boy they brought him back and tied him to a big tree out next to the

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cabins. When Mr. Jim started whipping this boy they had to lock his mama in the smokehouse, she was carrying on so much.

Before then, sometimes if we went to the door of the kitchen, she would give us a bite of whatever she was cooking. After they whipped her boy and we saw the look in her eyes, we never asked for no food that she fixed for the white folks!"

When the war (Civil War) came along all the men got ready to go off and fight. Mr. Ben, he sent me and my uncle to take care of his kin. It was just like we were in the army. We took care of the horses, cooked for them and fixed their clothes and stuff. Course we didn't have to put up with all that marching back and forth and yelling.

After bout a year the war heated up real good and the Captain sent us back to Alabama. He had this big red horse that he had took from a Yankee soldier and we rode that horse all the way back to Alabama, Yankee saddle and all!"

We were working in the fields when we heard the war was over. Mr. Ben, he came out to where we were working and told us that he had orders to tell us all that we were free. He said that anyone that wanted to stay could but everyone else had to

be off the place by sundown. Most everyone, after Mr. Ben left, just threw down their hoes and started walking to town."

They had this place in town where all the colored folks had to go to, to get registered. We got there, me and Sally, my wife, and they asked us what my name was."

"Tom," I said.

"What's your last name."

"Don't have none," I said.

"Who was your master", they asked me.

"Mr. Ben Moore."

"So they wrote me down as Tom Moore and I been a Moore every since then!"

I took up with this Yankee soldier and started working for him. He was a good man and when he got out of the army he carried me home with him to Indiana. I lived up there for about two years working in a stable but I was miserable the whole time. You wouldn't think a man could miss cotton fields but I sure did. Finally I got Mr. Foster to write a letter asking (the Moore family) if I could come back home."

I didn't wait for no answer, I just started walking toward Alabama. When I got here Mr. Ben, he told me that we could stay in the old quarter but he couldn't feed us. We'd have to take care of ourselves.

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It was too late in the year for anything but turnip greens. We lived most that whole winter on turnips and rabbits. Didn't have no gun, the Ku Kluxers wouldn't let us have none, we trapped the rabbits in boxes.

Those were hard times and not just for the black folks. Everyday you could see men and women and children, black and white, walking down the road with no place to go to. The war just tore this country up good.

Trouble is, people ain't got nothing to be scared of no more. Everybody needs something to be scared of, even if it is his wife or God or whatever,

That's what keeps people in line.

REWARD

Ran away from the subscriber within seventeen miles north of Huntsville on the Meridian road on the 4th July, a negro girl named Sally, speaks English and the French language, twenty years of age, 5 feet 4 or 5 inches high, of a yellow complexion, full face and a pleasing countenance, had on when she went away a white cotton frock. She has all her clothes with her, and it is likely she may alter her dress in yellow calico.

She wears a handkerchief on her head and has a scar on one of her arms, some marks of the small pox.

The property formerly belonged to Mr. Lloyd, who brought her from Pensacola, to which he expects she will aim to get back again.

She was last seen in the company of Larkin Taylor and may try to pass her self off as belonging to him.

Whoever takes up and brings home the said negro or secures her so that I can get her again shall receive a \$10 reward.

from 1817 newspaper

Don't take your gun to town

from 1891 newspaper

Two men, John Battles and James Davis, are residing in the Huntsville jail after a failed burglary of Masters Store.

The men attempted to gain entrance by breaking a window. As Battles climbed through the opening a pistol fell from his pocket and discharged, wounding Davis in the leg.

Davis then pulled his own pistol and shot Battles, also in the leg.

The gun shots quickly attracted a crowd and the bandits were apprehended. They are currently sharing the same cell.



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A Deadly Storm

by Jacin Durham

On Wednesday, 15 November 1989, I had been working in a remote area of Redstone Arsenal. The building I was working in had no windows or any outside communications other than a telephone. Quitting time was 4:30 P.M. Normally; we would start clean-up at 4:00 P.M. and, afterwards, meet at the break room for a briefing of the next day's activities. When my co-worker and I went outside, we noticed the weather had a strange appearance that made us uneasy. The sky was beginning to darken in the west. When I drove up to the building, where everyone usually met, there was no one there. I really started to worry then. I decided to leave, pick my son up from school and get home.

I went north on Patton Road, and then east on Martin Road. Because the western sky grew darker and more threatening by the moment, I had turned the radio on in my truck. The announcer was issuing tornado watches, and there were updates between each song.

As I was approaching the overpass to exit Martin Road onto the Parkway, I heard a bulletin on the radio. A state trooper had spotted a funnel cloud passing over the Decatur Bridge. I remember thinking, "It's headed right for Huntsville." I then turned north onto Memorial Parkway. I remember the sensation of being in a vacuum. Traffic was moving far too slow and the western sky grew darker and more threaten-

ing.

I had moved to the inside lane hoping to go faster, but the red light caught me. I stopped about ten or twelve car lengths from the intersection at Airport Road. I looked to my left at the golf course on the west side of the road. In a matter of moments it had gone from daylight to dark; by now



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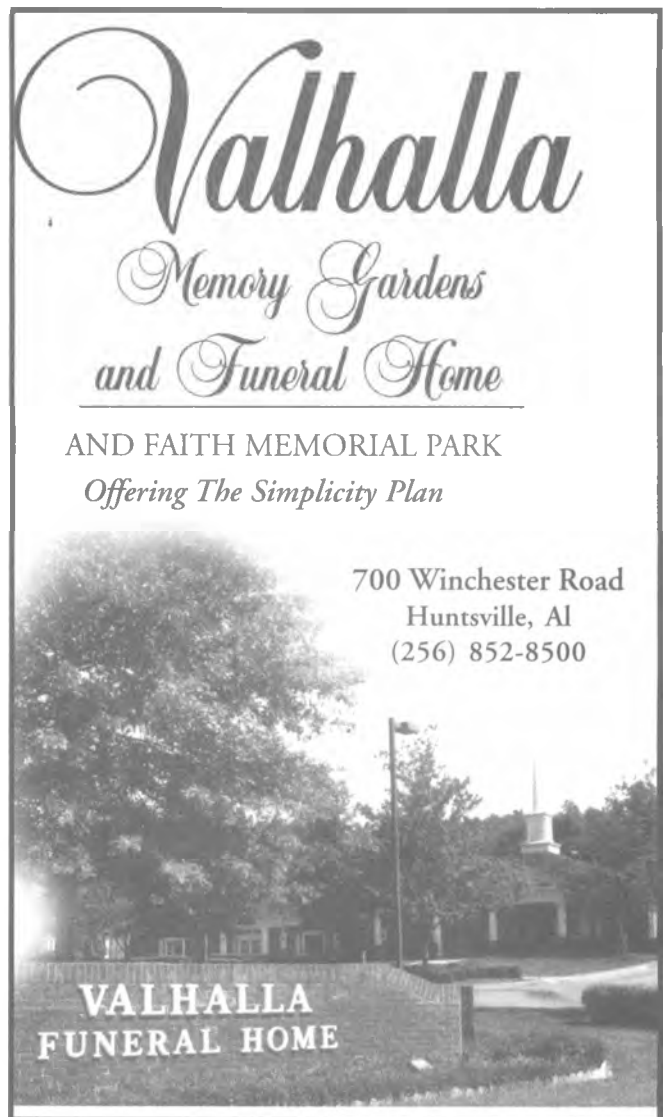
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the sky was pitch black. I turned my head back to the front and continued listening to the list of closings being bulletined on the radio, hoping the light would change soon. The D.J. had stopped playing music altogether.

I suddenly became aware of a loud noise coming from my left out of the west. It sounded like New York traffic at rush hour. After seeing only a few vehicles going in the opposite direction, I realized what I heard was a very strong wind blowing and howling. I suspected for the first time that a tornado was approaching.

I started remembering some of my tornado safety. My first instinct was to get out of my truck and head for low ground such as a ditch. Upon looking around, I realized there was no low ground. Besides, with all the vehicles that surrounded me, I thought I would be better off with the protection my own vehicle offered.

I stayed in my truck, double checked my seat belt, and prayed for the best. The western sky was a black wall that had no shape. Vision could not penetrate it. By the time I had rolled my window up, my truck started vibrating and levitated off the asphalt about three feet. My truck turned slowly to the east and then came to rest once again on solid ground. I was now certain it was a tornado.

The wind started picking up

again as evidenced by the electric lines in front of us slapping together sending out shards of deadly, miniature lightning bolts. I looked to my right where I saw a white station wagon inching closer to my truck. I thought, "Oh, Lord! Please don't let us slam together."

At that instant three things happened almost simultaneously. The front of my truck reared straight up, the hood folded over the cab blocking my frontal view, and the white station wagon hit my passenger side sealing the window shut. I thought I could hear people screaming. There was a sensation of something slamming into my truck time and time again. Then the truck seemed to have been thrown through the air hammering into the ground on the driver's side. Grass came in through the driver side window. My vehicle rolled several more times and came to rest upside down.

As I hung there by my seatbelt, I wondered if another burst of air was going to hit me. I waited, not yet aware of injuries. Then I realized I had a mouth full of something. At first I thought it was my teeth. Fortunately, I only had a mouthful of small gravel.

Even though I realized it must have been my own screams I heard, I couldn't help feeling

somewhat relieved and encouraged that my teeth were still intact.

I became increasingly concerned with the possibility of fuel leaking out of my vehicle, causing a fire. I knew I had to escape the



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truck and find help. I was disoriented, because I didn't know which way I had been blown or where I had landed. I released my seatbelt, and immediately felt excruciating pain in my shoulder and left side. I could only get my breath in short gasps. The only way to exit the truck was through the narrow opening where the driver side window had been. Somehow, I managed to turn my body and crawl out of the opening.

The next thing I knew, I was lying on the ground on my back with the rain hitting me in the face, gasping for breath. I was in such pain; I didn't know if I could stand up. I wondered if I would be found before I went into shock and passed out.

Concentrating, trying to block out some of the pain, I managed to turn over and stand up. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was facing Westbury Mall, which was on the east side of Memorial Parkway. Standing there in the cold rain, I was in even greater pain than before.

The first thing I saw was a building with hardly anything left

but the steel frame. In my confused state, I said to myself, "I wonder what they're building over there." I turned around, and, seeing the vehicles on the Parkway, I became aware of my location. I was right beneath the power lines I had seen arcing just a few moments before. I looked down at my feet and I was within inches of a downed power line. I realized if the wires were live; I would be dead by now. Fortunately, the power was off.

I walked on up to the road and stopped at the closest car. The lone driver was staring at the damages

ahead and apparently didn't notice me.

As I was reaching for the handle on his car door, I heard someone to my left ask if I was hurt. There was a car with several passengers parked on the side of the road and a man was standing in the open door. They made room in their car for me and proceeded to take me to the hospital. We traveled up the outside of the road past the other vehicles.

A man flagged us down. He asked us to get out and help some of the other victims. He said some were women and small children,

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but the person driving took me on to Huntsville Hospital. I felt guilty at the time, but I know now there was nothing I could have done to help anyone. I barely remember the ride to the hospital. I will remember this act of kindness the rest of my life.

During the tornado, my truck had flown through the air and came to rest over a tenth of a mile away. The rear driver side wheel was broken off at the axle, and the tailgate was missing. The truck was a total loss. I had a broken collarbone, five crushed ribs and internal bleeding in my left lung cavity, not to mention the cuts and bruises. The doctor also suspected I had a bruised heart. Glass and gravel came out of my scalp for weeks. I spent a total of thirteen days in the hospital, four of which were in ICU. It took over a year for me to get back in good health, and I was one of the lucky ones.

Winds from the killer tornado on November 15, 1989, were es-

timated at over 250 miles per hour. It cut a swath a half mile wide at its widest point. There were 17 people killed instantly. Four more died in the days and weeks that followed. More than 400 people were injured and at least 1,000 were left homeless. Property damage was estimated at \$100 million. A hospital and doctor's complex were damaged. The storm destroyed 259 homes, caused major damage to 130 homes and minor damage to another 148 homes. 80 businesses, 3 churches, 2 schools, and 10 public buildings were either damaged or destroyed. There was over \$2 million in damages to public utilities.

I would like to point out that, even though my decision to stay in my vehicle contradicted with the tornado safety tip I remembered, I believe it was the right decision for me. I truly believe my seat belt saved my life. Tornado safety tips are valid guidelines, but they may



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not apply in all situations. I learned sometime later that a neighbor of mine had been in that same tornado. It was suspected that the tornado pulled him from his vehicle, or he got out of his vehicle and tried to find shelter. They found him dead, leaning against a tree. I think of him from time to time, and I think of that instant when I grabbed my door handle and almost got out of my truck. And, yet, some people who stayed in their cars also died.

Tornadoes are deadly killers, and seemingly very selective in their destruction and choice of victims.



Busted water main shuts down newspapers

from 1907 newspaper

A water main leak was found in front of the Schiffinan Building on the southeast corner of the square early Saturday morning and a force of men set to work to dig down and make the necessary repair.

When the hard crust of the macadamized street was removed the escaping water burst forth and flooded the street.

The daily newspapers of the city are the chief sufferers because they had to depend on water power to run the presses. The Evening Banner was caught half through with its editions and city subscribers were furnished with the paper in an unusual form.

The Evening Tribune, which had gotten into trouble at its own plant and was depending on the Mercury plant for publication, was unable to get out at all.

Superintendent Murphy Improving Streets

from 1906 newspaper

The city street force and Superintendent Murphy are making improvements in various portions of the city. California Street is being graded and put in good condition. Granitoid pavements are being placed on Locust Street in accordance with the promise made the realty firm that developed the property further out this street.

Foot bridges are being put down wherever needed. Good use is being made of the street force and the convicts who are sentenced to hard labor are required to do the good work.

Mr. Murphy said today that he was looking for the arrival of the material for paving the square any time, and when it does arrive here then his job will begin.

Tall Stories Told about Huntsville Alabama

Some true and some of uncertain reliability . . .



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A Letter from Maysville

Maysville, Ala. Dec. 16, 1864
Dear Sir,

Your letter from Dr. Clopton is at hand. We are delighted to hear from you as we so seldom get any knowledge of you. The condition of things around us is somewhat changed, but we are in daily dread of a raid. The Yankees are at Paint Rock. Twenty odd were captured by General Meade yesterday and passed through last night. Roddy and others are after the balance of them and we will hear from them today or tomorrow.

Well, we are all used up as to fencing, etc., as I wrote you, and years will pass before the destruction will be repaired. Many vacant houses were torn down to make tools, etc. Mr. Stewart's store, Bill Hall's old exchange, Masonic hall, all torn to pieces. Some parts remain, but

ruined. Mr. Jones' store and Wortham's gutted. Your office remains as it was with the exception of the things - medicines, table, etc., all of which is gone except for a few bottles. I got most of your papers, among which is Mr. O'Neal's note for property - which I got from a Yankee doctor, for they occupied it as an office. It was then turned into a saddle makers shop, then into a pesthouse (for smallpox).

Since that time it has not been disturbed - only the removing of the two front sash which are lost, as also all the Jack O'Neal residence, where not a trace is left to tell where it stood except one load of joist, which I paid a man \$5 to haul home and is now in the smokehouse. All the fencing about the place, except for the orchard and garden are gone, and they are simply patched up.

Nearly all the citizens are gone, negroes and whites, and the present conscript act will leave not more than eight or ten men in the place, such as Mr. Burns, Pitts, Wortham, etc.

There is scarcely a single negro here that was here when you left. Some few of the Daniel

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plantation negroes are here in great confusion since the retreat of the army and should any of your darkies come here they will find a change of population and a ruined town.

I will give you an idea of that retreat caused by a flank movement of General Hood. The soldiers amounted to about 8,000 and baggage wagons beyond number. Refugees and contraband, astonishing in number slowly moved with the cavalcade.

It began to pass here at 8 a.m. and continued until 4 p.m. So hasty was the move among the contraband that they emptied their featherbeds and cotton on the road until, even now, the track of the caravan could be followed by feathers and cotton.

The day they passed led to many astonishing sights but the distressing feature is that women gave birth to children during the flight and quite unnaturally left them to perish. One case occurred near this place. A yankee soldier picked up the infant, wrapped it up and tried to give it away as he passed along.

Several cases of the kind are reported to have taken place on the banks of the Paint Rock. At Stevenson, 'tis said that they are dying by multitudes since the cold weather set in. Other children were left behind, running about looking for their mothers, who had left them to their fate.

At or near Paint Rock many of them (refugees) were cut off by our calvary and for several days others were passing in small numbers, deploring their lot, returning to their former homes.

As to our own condition, we have lived in constant dread surrounded and subjugated by our foes. We have lost by the yankees

many things, but we have not been used like others who were plundered of all they had; in flour, meal and meat, bed clothes, etc., but even now, though we have a respite, we dread a raid.

A few almost worthless horses, a little stock and a few pigs are still left. Our house was once ransacked from top to basement by a set of the worst men I have ever seen, but were dispersed by two surgeons who providently stepped in while they were depredating, and so we lost but little.

I got twenty men to guard the town that night, had two at my house. But for them we would have been ruined, burned out, as was threatened.

As to supplies, we have always had bread and meat and even some of the luxuries. Thomas has sent us coffee and sugar, cheese, bacon and salt. These have kept us together with what I could do with my own scanty money. My cow, or rather yours, died last winter. This put us on short rations. As to milk and

butter, we have done without until a few weeks ago. Mrs. Howard, who went to live at the college in Huntsville, loaned her cow to us. She has now returned

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and will take her home again. Mrs. Kelley loaned me her cow and calf but the yankees took the calf before we got them in our possession and we left the cow, not bringing her home.

We raised nothing but what we got from the orchard and garden, which was plundered of all its fruit before they were ripe. It would amuse you and distress you to see how they stole from the orchard, and how obsequious we all were, fearing to say a word.

We are now hiding our scanty food, fearing we shall lose what little we have left, for so much depends on the success of the companies now doing battle at Paint Rock. Cannon was heard booming yesterday, but to what result we don't know.

Our home affairs go on very quietly. Mattie is not quite so taciturn as formerly, has become domesticated, can wash a little, iron, cook, milk, make fires, feed chickens, bring in wood and nurse the baby as though she was used to it. Her health monthly is inexpressibly better than formerly, although she fell into her old condition and was alarmingly sick until she heard of a certain herb whose vulgar or classical name I do not know.

I eat two meals a day and sleep about six hours in twenty-four, rather restless, and lay awake many hours these long nights. I chop all my own wood and work hard during the working season, have not preached for many months except for a funeral sermon for Mrs. Debois six or eight months ago.

I keep no horse, so I go nowhere from home; indeed I am afraid to go anywhere - robbers are spread over the country and yankees hitherto on every road.

(Signed) Dr. Madden



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The Backwards House

As hard as it may be to believe, one of the most beautiful and substantial houses in the Twickenham district was built as a mistake!

By 1842, William McDowell had become a successful cotton broker and was looking for a site to build a home on that might befit his newly found status. After much searching he finally settled on a site facing Adams Street. The area was still largely rural, but McDowell felt sure that it would become an affluent neighborhood someday, thereby justifying the high cost of the land.

During the next several months McDowell spent every free moment working on plans for his new home. Every detail was planned meticulously, even down to the type of wood to be used and how many nails it would take.

Just as time for construction was to begin, McDowell was forced to go to England on business. Realizing it would be months, and possibly a year or so before he could return, McDowell went over every detail of the house with his newly hired contractor. Finally, after satisfying himself that the contractor knew what he wanted, McDowell left for England.

In the following months, Huntsvillians watched curiously as the house began to take shape. The materials were superb, the workmanship was excellent, but still... there was something that was just not right.

When the long awaited return of McDowell arrived, he

immediately went to the site to view the home he had been dreaming of for so long.

One can just imagine McDowell standing in the streets and gazing at the home. It was exactly as he had planned it, down to the smallest detail.

Except for one minor detail.

It had been built backwards!

Possibly McDowell had forgotten to inform the contractor of which way the house was to

face, or maybe as some locals later surmised, the contractor simply could not read.

Regardless of why, the home still stands today as the only known house in America to be built backwards.

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The Witchcraft Trial

The courtrooms in early Alabama history normally dealt with horse thieves, murderers and bushwhackers, but in the late fall of 1822 our courts of law were forced to deal with something totally different. The courts had to render a decision about a woman accused of witchcraft.

History has forgotten the old woman's name. All we know about her is that she lived on the banks of the Flint River. A friendless old crone who had strange ways and was rather aloof, the woman was the talk of the local area. At first, she was spoken of only in whispers, then more boldly until she was publicly accused of being a witch. It culminated in a warrant for her arrest signed by one of the landed gentry of the community.

The day of the trial was fixed. Excitement ran high and people came from far and near to witness the unusual event. The trial proceeded on time and a great number of witnesses were called to testify, but nothing positive resulted from any of their testimony.

Then a young woman was called to the stand. Her testimony went as follows: One day she was washing down at the creek, and became extremely tired. She sat down at the foot of a beech tree to rest. Soon,

the old accused woman came down the tree in the form of a squirrel, with its tail curled over its back, snarled at her and put a spell on her. The sickly girl testified that she had been ill ever since and couldn't sleep due to pain in her stomach that started the day she saw the old woman in the form of the squirrel.

The presiding judge, who seemed to have been in deep study, now, seemed quite relieved upon hearing the young lady's testimony. He straightened in his chair and announced that the young woman's testimony was proof positive of the old woman's guilt. His opinion was that he should immediately send her to jail and began writ-

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ing the order to put her behind bars.

Shock and dumb amazement settled on the faces of every sensible person in the room except that of a young Irishman named John Gallagher. Gallagher seemed calm and self-possessed. He rose and modestly asked permission of the court to make a single remark, whereupon he was told by the judge that he could make as many remarks as he wished.

"Then, Sir," began Gallagher, "allow me to remind you that it would be useless to send this woman to jail, for if she really is a witch she could escape through the keyhole; and if she should be innocent, it would be a great pity for her to be sent to prison."

The old judge was now more perplexed than ever for he was in a dilemma as to what to do with the old woman and asked young Gallagher his opinion. At this, the sensible young man suggested that the case rest where it was until the Grand Jury met at which time it could

be laid before them.

That course of action was accepted, but for one reason or another the case was never taken before the Grand Jury and was never brought up again. It is assumed that the poor old lady lived out her days in peace, left alone, by the banks of the Flint River. And so ended the only witch trial that was ever held in Alabama's colorful history.



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We are looking for Old newspapers from West Huntsville and Merrimack Mills. "Merrimacker" was name of one of the newspapers.

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Fighting For Affection

From 1890 Huntsville newspaper

Mary Herben and Mable Brown, daughters of prominent residents of Pleasantville, fought a prizefight in a 16 foot ring pitched in an old barn on the outskirts of town at three o'clock Sunday morning.

The cause of the fight was rivalry for the attentions of a young man named George Woodward. Thirty-eight rounds were fought, in which both girls were severely punished, but neither had the advantage, and the contest was declared a draw.

The combatants were stripped to the waist, and every part of their bodies exposed to view bore the traces of punishment. The referee, seconds and spectators were all females and friends of the principals.

Woodward has since declared that he will have nothing to do with either of the girls.

FROM THE HEART



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A S S I S T E D L I V I N G

News From The Year 1882

News From Huntsville and Around The World

Jesse James Killed

After more than 15 years of robbing banks and hijacking railroad trains, Jesse James has been killed - by his cousin, a member of the James gang. Townspeople say that James's kinsman, Bob Ford, had never liked Jesse, and that when a \$10,000 reward was placed on the outlaw's head, Ford decided to go after it.

He supposedly asked James if he could join the band of outlaws for a robbery. This morning, the 19 year-old Ford, armed with a pistol, came up behind James's back as the outlaw was standing on a chair in his home dusting off a picture.

Ford, firing from only a few feet away, shot James through the head and killed him instantly. The bullet is said to have entered James's skull at the base and to have gone out through his forehead.

The murder weapon, a silver

mounted, pearl-handled Colt .45 revolver, had been given to Ford by Frank James a few days before. According to residents, Ford told Mrs. James that his gun had fired by accident. Mrs. James is reported to have replied, "Yes, I guess it went off - on purpose." Ford then fled, and authorities say that his whereabouts are still not known.

Belle Starr Convicted of Horse Stealing

Belle Starr was recently tried and convicted on a charge of horse stealing. Taken before the famed "hanging judge," Her maiden name was Myra Belle Shirley. A resident of Dallas, she was once married to a bank robber and supposedly has been having torrid affairs with a variety of gangsters, including a former member of the Younger Brothers Gang.

Frank James Surrenders

With little drama and absolutely no fanfare, Frank James, the vicious outlaw and popular folk hero, walked in and surrendered to Governor Crittenden today. Upon entering the office of the Governor, James turned over his Remington .44 revolver and commented: "I want to hand you that which no living man except myself has touched since 1861, and I am your prisoner." So only a half year after the death of his brother Jesse, the James gang is defunct. It is expected that Frank James will be sent to Independence, where he will be tried on at least one count of first-degree murder.

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No Immigration for Chinese

With violence against Chinese nationals escalating across the country, Congress has passed the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibiting further Chinese immigration and naturalization for 10 years. The legislation is in conflict with the Burlingame Treaty of 1868, and when first presented to the President was vetoed. A small change in wording and a reduction of the moratorium from 20 to 10 years got the bill passed.

Dennis Kearney did much of the lobbying for the bill on the grounds that Chinese labor takes jobs away from Americans. Kearney, whose favorite slogan is, "The Chinese must go," is an Irish immigrant.

Cigar Sweat Shops Now Legal

The Supreme Court has struck down legislation that banned the making of cigars in tenements sweat shops. It was widely believed that enforcing the ban would have put an end to the five cent cigar.

Knights of Columbus Founded

The Roman Catholic Church announced today that it will permit the founding of the Knights of Columbus, an organization aimed at enhancing the lives of American Catholics. Founded by Father Michael McGivney, 30 years old, the group first met in a parish house on January 16 to discuss issues ranging from life insurance to education. McGivney is an 1877 graduate of St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore.

Sullivan Wins Fight

Paddy Ryan's reign as king of the bare-knuckle fighters was short-lived. The Boston strong boy, John L. Sullivan, put away Ryan, the first undisputed American champion, in nine rounds. In addition to the purse, the 25 year-old Sullivan won a side bet for \$5,000. The Bostonian may abandon the bareknuckle fights because fan interest seems to be waning.

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Covert Operations

O.T. Frazier, the night jailor at the Madison County Jail, cautiously eyed the three prisoners standing before his desk. They had been picked up earlier in the evening for disturbing the peace at a local nightspot. When arrested, the prisoners refused to give their names or any other information that might help Frazier identify them. For Huntsville, in 1960 where everybody knew everybody, this in itself was an oddity.

Frazier gave the order for the deputy, Ed Norton, to search them. A careful examination of their pockets revealed nothing about who they were or where they were from. Their billfolds were empty except for a small amount of currency. Reluctantly, Frazier picked up the phone and dialed the home phone number of L. D. Walls, the Sheriff of Madison County.

Walls, mildly annoyed at being disturbed so late at night, listened as Frazier told of the arrest of the three strangers. At the end of the summation, Walls said, "Book them under John

Doe's. Is there anything else?"

Frazier, choosing his words carefully, replied, "Sheriff, I think these are the men we were talking about yesterday "

Without waiting to hear anything else, Walls told Frazier to put them in the drunk tank, he'd be there in a few minutes. As Walls quickly got dressed he pondered the curious events of the last several weeks. For some time he had been hearing rumors of the strangers approaching people and offering them jobs for some type of military operation. A few days earlier while eating breakfast at a local greasy spoon, Leon Franks, an employee at Redstone Arsenal, approached him and told of being propositioned by the same men. One evening after work, he had walked to his car and found the strangers waiting for him. They appeared to know all about him and asked if he would be interested in working on a project vital to national security. At first Franks was intrigued but when the men refused to give any details, or even their names, he sensed something was wrong and cut the conversation short.

As Franks told the story, the

sheriff watched him carefully trying to gauge his credibility. Franks was a twenty-year veteran of the Armed forces, having seen action in both WWII and the Korean War. He was highly decorated and well-known for his expertise as a small arms specialist.

Walls pondered the possibilities of the prisoners' identities. Even though the Civil Rights movement was beginning to take hold in the South, so far Huntsville had been quiet. While it was possible they could be Ku Kluxers, he didn't think so; he had too many informers in the Klan. Another possibility were the Northern agitators who were making a nuisance of themselves throughout the South but that didn't sound right either; so far they had all been peaceful. "Whatever," Walls decided, "I will soon get to the bottom of this."

The prisoners were still standing in front of the desk when Walls entered the office. They had been joined by another stranger who appeared to be the spokesman for the group. Almost immediately the stranger, without identifying himself, ordered Walls to send his deputy out of the room so they could talk in private.

Infuriated that a stranger

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would have the audacity to order him around in his own jail, Walls motioned for Frazier to remain seated. Turning to the stranger, he then demanded to know "What in the hell is going on!"

Instead of answering, the stranger picked up the telephone and dialed a number. Mumbling a few words into the phone he handed it to the sheriff. The conversation was brief, lasting less than a minute with Walls saying nothing, just listening. After hanging the phone up he looked at the strangers for a long time as if he was having trouble deciding what to do. Finally he told the strangers they were free to go.

After the strangers had left, Frazier and Norton both asked what was going on. "I'm not sure," replied the sheriff. "Some kind of official government business." Almost as an afterthought he added, "But I'm going to find out!"

A short time later at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia a top-secret discussion was held. Though much of the minutes are still classified, one can be assured that much of it had to do with "those damn red neck officials in Alabama who are screwing up the Cuban operation."

When Castro first came to power it had been hoped he would steer Cuba toward democracy. Instead he openly embraced Russia and the Communist Party which put him on a collision course with the powers in Washington who were terrified of having a Communist country only ninety miles from Florida. At high level meetings between the CIA, the Pentagon and President Eisenhower, it was decided to overthrow Castro under the auspices of a Cuban revolution, supposedly engineered by right wing Cuban exiles.

At first it was decided that the


CIA would recruit retired military personnel who would then train small groups of Cuban exiles. After the initial training the recruits would come together at some predetermined point where the CIA would supply them with weapons and guidance for an invasion of Cuba.

Alabama was a prime re-

cruiting area for the CIA. Not only did the state have a large number of retired military personnel, but its citizens were known to be fiercely patriotic.


Unfortunately, things went wrong almost from the beginning. Instead of using CIA personnel to enlist people, the agency, in an attempt to main-

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tain "deniability," used contract agents, many of whom were unqualified and had little if any experience.

Many recruiting sessions consisted of telling the potential recruit, "we can't tell you what it is about, or what you will be doing, or who you will be working for or even where you are going but we need you and, no, the United States government is not involved!"

In one fiasco, agents rented two rooms at a hotel in Decatur, complete with a stash of firearms and military training manuals, to interview potential recruits and judge their experience. Local law enforcement officials, after hearing of the guns, decided a gang was about to pull an armed robbery and planned a raid. Only quick intervention by top government officials prevented what could have been a public relations nightmare.

Needless to say, under these conditions, the agency was not very successful at building their "private army." Even worse, the whole affair had become almost common knowledge. Law enforcement officials from Decatur, Anniston and Birmingham were all demanding answers.

In Huntsville, Sheriff L.D. Walls was also trying to find answers. He called the State Attorney General's office and they told him to call the United States Attorney General's office. They, in reply,

suggested he contact the State Department who in turn referred him back to the State Attorney General's office. Most people would have given up at that point but Walls was not a man to be pushed aside easily. Each reply only made him more determined to find out the truth.

The CIA knew it had a real problem on its hands. After much consultation it was decided to change direction and approach Governor Albert

Patterson about using the Alabama National Guard to train the Cubans and provide support. There was already a precedent for it - in the late 50's select members of the Alabama National Guard had been used for clandestine

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tine missions in South Vietnam, when officially there was no U.S. military presence in the country.

From all appearances this seemed to be the perfect solution. Gov. Patterson had served as a young Lieutenant on Eisenhower's staff during WWII and had acquired a reputation as a crime buster when he broke up the racketeers in Phoenix City. In addition, the Alabama Air National Guard was the only unit in the country still flying the B-26 bombers - the same type used by the Cuban Air Force. These bombers were important if the world was to believe it was a Cuban uprising.

In the late fall of 1960, Gov. Patterson met with Brig. General Doster who asked to "borrow the Alabama National Guard for an undisclosed purpose in the national interest." Patterson was well aware of the "Need to know policy" of the CIA and asked but one question.

After being assured of the President's knowledge and approval, Patterson gave his consent.

Almost overnight, once the Alabama National Guard became involved, the whole project took on a professional tone. Selected guardsmen were released from duty, given new identities and sent to a top-secret base in Florida. From there many of them were transported, with false passports, to a secret base in Nicaragua that would serve as the staging area for the invasion. Other members of the guard traveled to Washington where they worked with the CIA in the planning.

Wives were given a post office number in New York where they could write to their husbands. Guardsmen were instructed in cover stories to explain their being away from their jobs and families. "We weren't supposed to know anything about it," said one wife, "but of course we all did."

"In a way it was almost like being back

home," recalled one of the recruits. "Almost all of the men there were from Alabama. The others were mostly spooks (CIA) and we didn't have much to do with them. I think all of us felt uncomfortable with all the cloak and dagger stuff, but \$750.00 a month was a lot of money in 1960."

In the late fall of 1960, General Doster, who was acting as a liaison between the men in Nicaragua and the CIA, stopped by to pay a courtesy call to Gov. Patterson. As he started to leave he made the cryptic remark that "in a few months you will read all about

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what we are doing and the overthrow of Cuba."

Although Patterson had never been formally briefed, he had apparently heard rumors that gave him a good idea of the invasion plans. This placed Patterson in an awkward position. Though he was fanatically loyal to President Eisenhower, he was supporting J.F. Kennedy in the upcoming elections. He realized that if the invasion occurred before the election, the Republican nominee, Richard Nixon, would probably be swept into office as a result.

After much soul searching Patterson contacted Stephen Smith, Kennedy's brother-in-law, and told him he had to meet with Kennedy on important business. A short while later Patterson received a phone call and was told to fly to New York and check into the Barclay Hotel. Late that evening Kennedy showed up, and after being sworn to secrecy, was briefed by Patterson. By all accounts this was the first time Kennedy knew of the proposed invasion.

Before Kennedy left, Patterson gave him a bag with ten thousand dollars cash as contributions. "That was the way things were done then," said Patterson later.

Though most historians have given Kennedy's stellar performance in the debates as the reason for his victory over Nixon, few of them realized that Kennedy possessed knowledge that gave him a secret advantage. By the third debate Kennedy and Nixon were tied, with many observers giving Nixon a slight

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to yesterday, along came
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28	29	30	31			

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Suddenly, during the next debate, in response to an innocuous question, Kennedy dropped a bombshell by stating he supported armed intervention in Cuba. Nixon, in his capacity as vice-president, was well aware of the invasion plans, but because of the secrecy, was forced to act as if he opposed any armed intervention. To have done otherwise might have jeopardized the whole operation. Ironically, Nixon's position that night caused him to be labeled as being soft on Communism, a view that most Americans despised.

The information received from Patterson proved pivotal in swinging the presidential election to Kennedy.

While the country celebrated the election of a new president, Sheriff L.D. Walls was still trying to get an answer to his questions about the strangers. Phone calls were not returned and letters were seemingly ignored. Still, he persisted in his quest—after all, he was the sheriff of Madison County and if something was going on here he wanted to know about it.

In the early spring of 1961 Kennedy gave the green light for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

"We spent most of the night before carrying the Cubans to the waiting ships and getting the aircraft readied," remembered one man. "Some of the boys had made plans to sneak aboard the ships with the Cubans but when the spooks heard about it they posted guards around the piers and searched the ships."

All the Cubans were excited about going home. They had

been led to believe that when they landed on the beaches they would be supported with air strikes.

The landing was a fiasco.

The Alabama guardsmen in Nicaragua were supposed to only provide training and support but as the operation began to falter, it was evident to everyone that something else had to be done.

"We heard everything on our radios," recalled one guardsman. "They were being massacred on the beaches and kept calling, begging for air support." The Cuban pilots who were supposed to fly the B-26s refused to take off. It was a suicidal mission, they claimed.

Frantically, the guardsmen radioed Washington begging to be allowed to fly missions and

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**My mind not only wanders,
it sometimes leaves
completely.**

Sam Keith

provide support. Washington refused, giving orders that no airplanes were to be allowed to take off. Finally four members of the Alabama Air National Guard, unable to stand by helplessly while people were being slaughtered, ordered their planes made ready and took off for the short flight to Cuba. Three of the pilots were shot down and the fourth, pursued by Russian made Cuban fighters, barely managed to make it to Miami. The government issued a statement saying the pilots lost were all Cuban nationals.

Without the promised air support from the United States government, the Bay of Pigs invasion failed miserably. Now began the process of denial.

"We were still listening to the battle on our radios," recalled one Guardsman from Cullman, "when we got orders to leave. They didn't even give us time to pack. We left our clothes, equipment and everything else. We just stopped what we were doing at the time and boarded an airplane.

"All types of military hardware was left there - crates of army 45s, with no serial numbers, aircraft parked on the runway, radios - you name it - we just walked away from it."

After landing in Florida the guardsmen were searched for anything that might prove where they had been. The false identity papers and passports were confiscated.

"We were told to go home - this never happened. If anyone asked any questions we were to deny everything. I still remember the last thing they told me - the United States Government had nothing to do with this operation."

"The next morning I was back at my job in Cullman selling insurance. The whole thing seemed like a long nightmare, except I couldn't tell anybody about it."

The same day a spokesman for President Kennedy went on national television and declared "no American military personnel were involved in the ill fated invasion."

A week later Sheriff L.D. Walls finally received a reply to his questions about the mysterious strangers. "... the men in question were employees of the Wildlife Protection and Research Control Board but have since been terminated."

There was not, and never had been, a Wildlife Protection and Research Control Board

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Justice Served

The following is a true event that happened at the Madison County Courthouse. For obvious reasons we are not using names.

One evening a police officer responded to a domestic disturbance. Upon arrival the officer advised the husband to calm down or he would be arrested for a disorderly conduct,

The husband in return made

an obscene gesture at the police officer. The officer arrested the husband for harassment and took him in to jail.

During the court procedures the judge was questioning the husband:

Judge: "Did you shoot a bird at the officer?"

Husband: "Yes sir",

Judge: "Did you say anything when you did it?"

Husband: "No sir".

Judge: "You can go back to your seat"

He then asked the police officer to be sworn in.

The judge asked the police officer the same questions and the officer answered the same; the husband had said nothing when he made the gesture.

The judge raised his gavel and slammed it down; case dismissed.

The police officer, obviously upset, asked the judge why? The judge replied that had the hus-

band said something while making the gesture the case would not have been dismissed. But as it stood, he had done nothing wrong.

The officer, without batting an eye, turned to the judge and raised his hand in the same obscene gesture.

The entire courtroom busted into laughter.

The judge called a recess and went to the officer's supervisor to advise him he had a problem with one of his officers.


The judge proceeded to tell what had happened.

The supervisor asked, with a grin on his face, "Well, did he say anything while doing it?"

Justice served!

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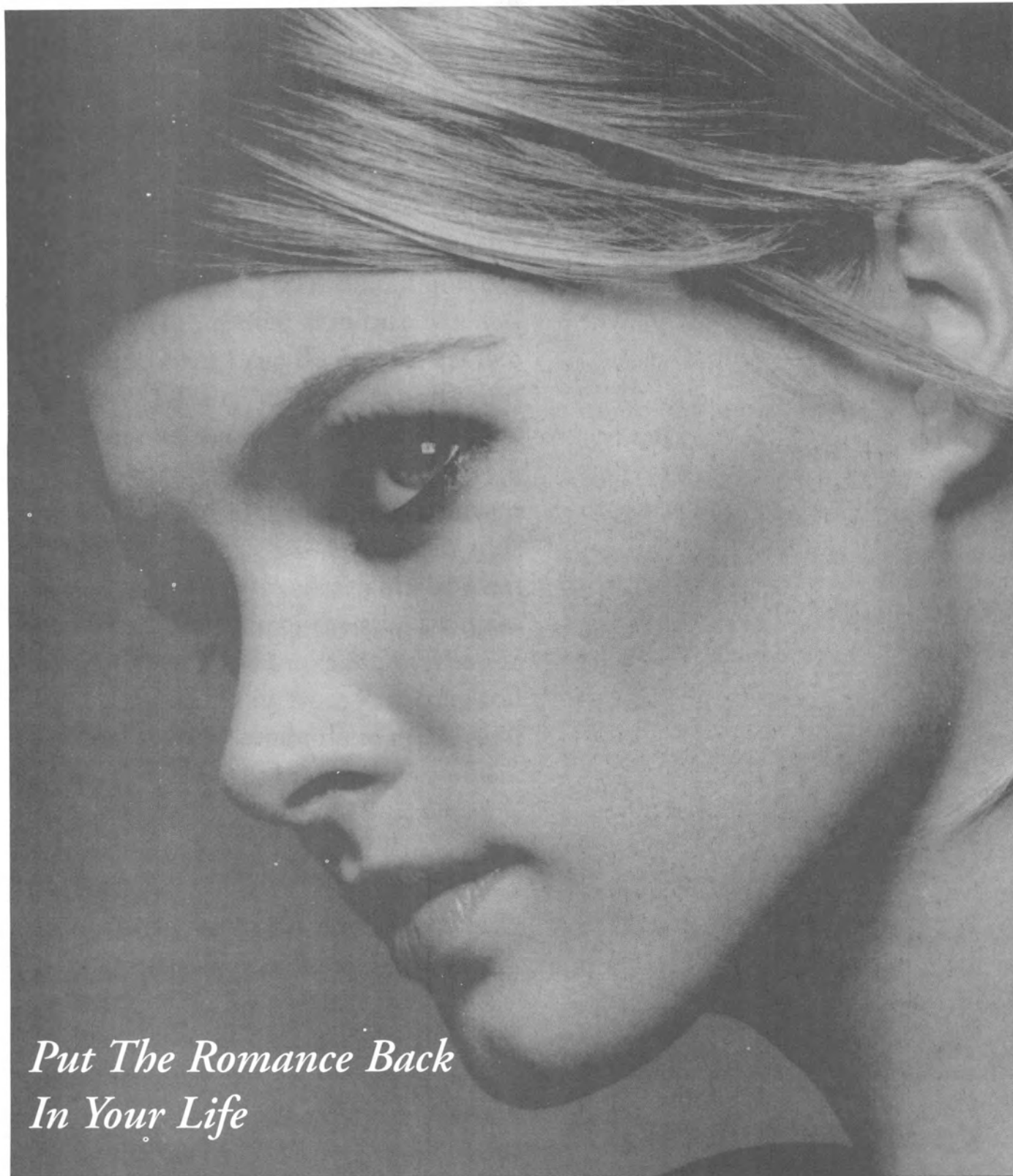



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- Two bridges across Flint river, one at Brownsboro and the other at Three Forks, were washed away Wednesday night due to the storm.

- Someone broke into the smokehouse of John Giles and stole all the meat he had, except just enough for one day's rations for his family. Not long ago some villain killed one of Mr. Giles' cows, skinned her, took the hide and, strange to say, left the meat.

- City Hotel Restaurant, offering wild game, fish and oysters - is now open to the public opposite the Opera House.

- Halsey's Carriage shop, corner of Green Street and Meridianville Pike, has an elegant display of Phaetons,

Rockaways, Spring Wagons and buggies. The departments include wood-work, ironwork, trimming, painting and varnishing.

- D. B. Young will open an English and Classical School for Boys at his residence on Franklin Street on Monday. Terms: \$4, \$5 and \$6 per month, payable monthly.

- For Sale - by the Probate Court of Madison County, the estate of John Gurley, deceased, will sell at public outcry, for cash, to the highest bidder.

- We hear of a couple living in Guntersville who have thirteen children, the oldest of whom is ten years old. Six pairs of twins are among the number, and all the thirteen are girls.

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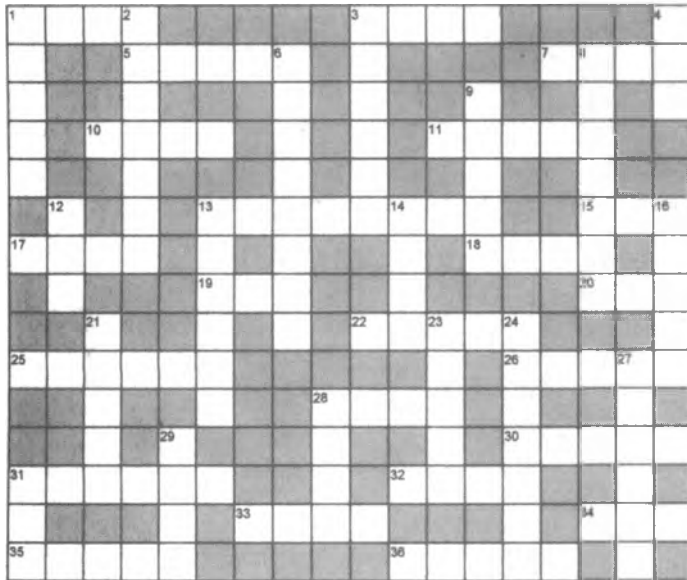


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Old Huntsville Crossword

created by Bob Spencer



Answers on page 57

Across

1. 1895 Ordinance passed preventing ___ from roaming downtown streets
3. First white man to settle at the Big Spring
5. The Von Braun _____ Center was dedicated, 1975
7. John _____ Company started production of farm equipment, 1946
10. _____ Distance Telephone Service, Est. 1896
11. _____ School opened 2 Jan, 1922
13. Dr. Taavo _____ was selected as Director of the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, 1989
15. "Speaking _____ News", Alternative newspaper available in Huntsville
17. _____ Space opened in 1995
18. A house, gift from Mollie _____, was forerunner of Huntsville Hospital, 1904
19. _____ Mincher, local ball player, started with Washington Senators, 1960
20. 109 German Scientists and their families became U. S. Citizens on "____ Citizens Day" in Huntsville, 1955
22. Metal detectors were installed at Courthouse _____, 2000
25. The Huntsville _____ played first Basketball game, 2001
26. Tenn. River Island where 2000 year old skeletons were found
28. The Goodyear-Dunlop _____ Plant closed after 34 years in Huntsville, 2003
30. Homer _____, President Huntsville City Council, 1960-1964
31. 20 thousand U.S. troops, returning from Cuba, _____ in Huntsville, 1898
32. Albert _____, Noted local artist
33. Lake _____ in cavern under downtown Huntsville, 1890



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34. The first _____ from the Olde Town Brewing Co. was tapped in 2004
35. Joseph _____, Huntsville Mayor, 1844-1849
36. The Land _____ of Huntsville is dedicated to preserving the Natural Heritage of the area

Down

1. Four Mile Post Road extension named _____ Ashburn Drive, 2002
2. Huntsville has 12 Middle _____, 2006
3. Monte Sano is Italian for "Mountain of _____"
4. _____ Reynolds, Huntsville Police Chief, 2006
6. Huntsville added _____ to the public water supply, 1914
8. _____ Mill became the HIC Building
9. Huntsville was the _____ Capitol of Alabama
12. _____ Building, Early Office building for Space Contractors
13. Former small town on Monte Sano
14. Construction began on the Toyota _____ Plant in Huntsville Industrial Park, 2001
16. Harry _____, Huntsville native, Star of Broadway, Movies & TV, late 30's thru 1980
21. The U. S. Army Missile Command (_____) was established on Redstone Arsenal, 1962
23. Carrie Nation lectured on temperance at the Huntsville _____ House, 1902
24. Richard _____, City Council member, district 1, 2006
27. The new S. R. _____ High School opened, 1952
28. Von Braun's _____ transferred from U.S. Army to NASA, 1960
29. _____ Hudson Department Store opened, 1941
31. A new _____ camp was assigned to build a park on Monte Sano, 1935

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