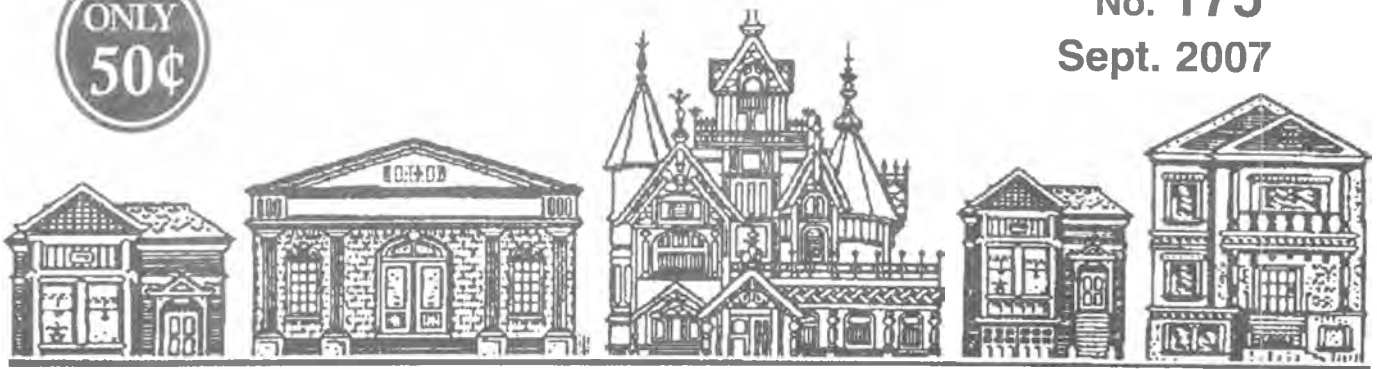


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# Old Huntsville

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## Mayor Joe Davis

One story is told about the time Davis asked a city employee for certain information. When weeks went by without it being supplied, Davis called the person on the carpet. The employee got angry and loudly told the mayor that he worked for a certain department head and did not have to take orders from anyone else.

The next morning the employee arrived at work to find two men moving his desk into the hallway. One of the men paused and said, "Mr. Davis said to tell you that you might work for someone else, but this is still his building!"

Also in this issue: **Last Date at the White Castle**

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*Domie Lewter*  
*Mac Lewter*

# Mayor Joe Davis

Huntsville has seen its fair share of mayors in the last two hundred years; some good, some bad, some famous and some infamous. Each one of them, in their own way, contributed to Huntsville's rich history.

Ask around town, however, and the name you will hear most often is that of Joe Davis, a man who spent his life believing Huntsville could be more than just cotton fields and rockets. He served as Huntsville's mayor for twenty years and forever changed its future.

The Davis family is one of the oldest in Madison county. According to tradition, when John Hunt arrived at the Big Spring in 1804 he found a cabin under construction by Samuel Davis. Unfortunately, Davis had paused in his work to go back to Georgia for his family. When he returned Hunt had already taken possession of the cabin and moved in. Ironically, if Hunt had moved on to a different location, there is a good possibility we would be living in *Davisville* today.

Rather than pursuing his

claim to the cabin, Davis moved his family to the area of New Market where, over the next hundred years, they became typical, hard-working families of the rural south.

By the time Joe William Davis was born in 1918, the Davis family had spread across Madison County with cousins, in-laws, and probably a few outlaws, too numerous to count. Joe grew up chopping and picking cotton and carrying water from the well. When the picking was finished his father would often "loan" him to kin who needed extra help with their daily work.

Although Davis had a life-long love for the country, he never missed the farm chores. When asked about his favorite memories of living on a farm, he laughed and said, "leaving."

After graduating from New Market High School he entered East Tennessee State College. "Every one was into sports," he later recalled, "so I decided to try out for the boxing team. In my first fight I got knocked out by the first punch. After that I decided to just spend my time studying." He graduated with a B.S. in Political Science and a Masters in Education Administration.

For his graduation present, Davis received a draft notice.



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After training, he was sent to the Pacific where he participated in the battles for the Philippines and Okinawa. He served as a NCO on a LCT (Landing Craft Tank), transporting soldiers from the ships to the beach heads.

Mike Rodgers, who also served on an LCT, described it as "knowing you are going to die every minute. We would load the LCTs with soldiers from the ships and by the time we got a few hundred yards off shore every gun on the beach was firing at us. The soldiers were hunkered down behind the metal plates but we had to guide it in."

Davis, like most veterans, never talked much about his military service.

After being discharged in 1946, Davis returned to Huntsville and got a job teaching with the Huntsville school system. Over the next decade he taught at Huntsville High, Huntsville Junior High and 5th Ave. Elementary.

Congress had passed the G.I Bill which allowed veterans to attend college at the government's expense. Unfortunately, for many ex-soldiers college was an impossible dream. They had been drafted out of the cotton fields, with many having dropped out of school after the third or fourth grade. Now they

were returning home with a burning desire to better themselves, but there was no program to teach a grown man the basic skills of how to read and write.

Davis began tutoring many of these veterans in the evenings. As word spread, more and veterans began attending the impromptu classes until it reached the point where there were too many for Davis to teach. He solved the problem by having some of his junior high students stay after school. It was common, according to one source, to see twelve-year-old children teaching grown men how to write their names.

Years later Davis was presenting some sort of an award to an elderly gentleman when the man leaned over and asked, "Mr. Davis, do you remember when I first met you?"

When Joe looked puzzled the old man went on to say, "You taught me how to read and write!"

Like many other young veterans, Davis was unsure about what he wanted to do with his life. In 1955 he quit the school system and took a job with US Industrial Corp. and was eventually transferred to their office in Tuscola, Illinois. The money was good, but he missed Huntsville. Within a few years he quit and moved back home where he tried his hand at selling real

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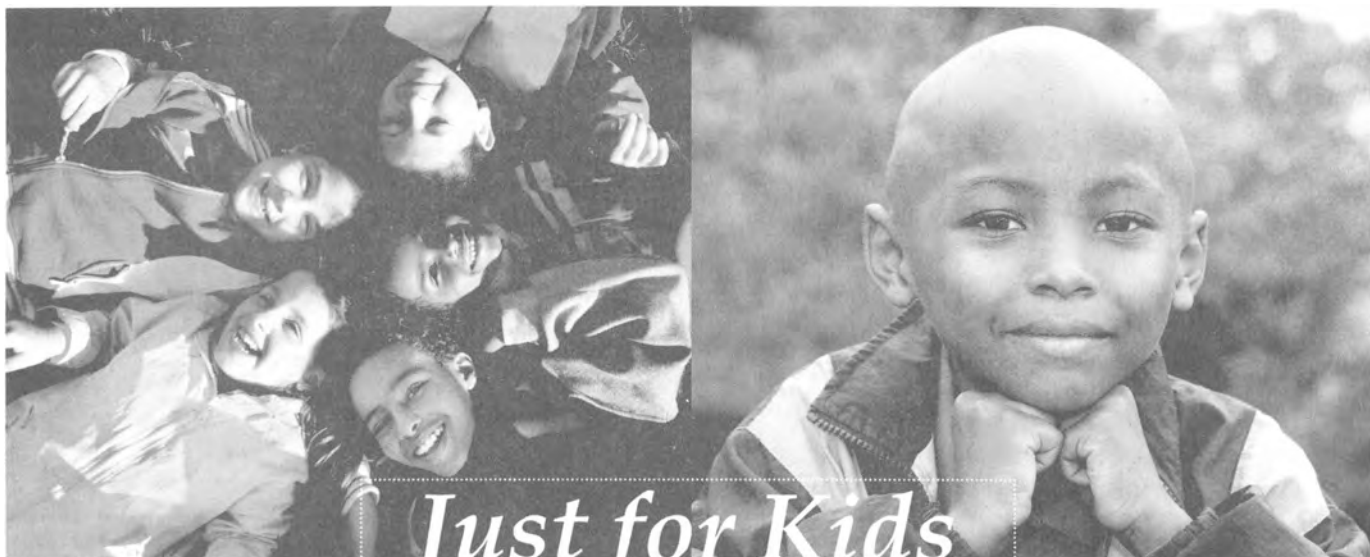
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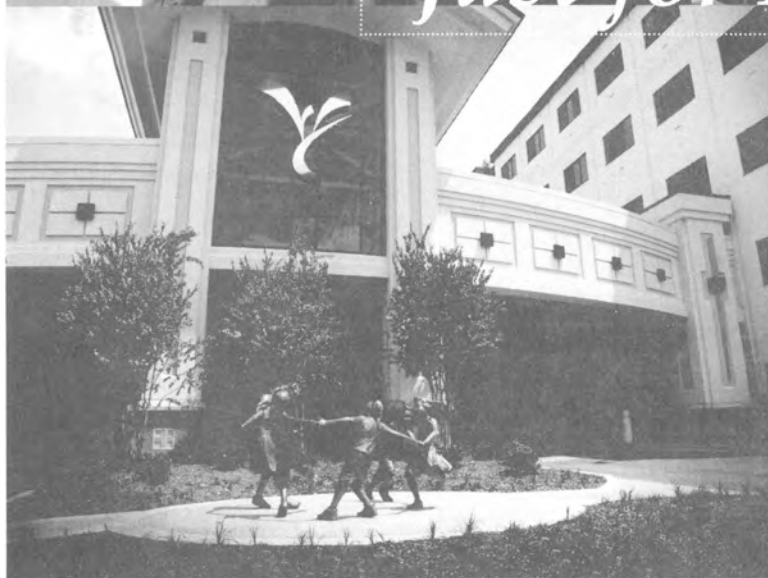
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estate, automobiles and even had a brief partnership in a dry cleaning business.

His break came in 1964 when Glenn Hearn was elected Mayor of Huntsville. Hearn was a retired F.B.I. agent who had originally been transferred to Huntsville to take over the "Von Braun file." To many people, though, he was still an outsider. Hearn realized he had to have an Administrative Assistant who knew the in's and out's of local politics and community relations. Everyone he asked for advice gave the same name - Joe Davis.

Davis quickly proved to be a capable administrator, winning the respect of everyone he dealt with. He had a folksy manner that endeared him to the public, but could be hard as nails when conducting city business. Although most people never knew it, Davis and Hearn had problems from the very beginning.

Davis, having grown up here when Huntsville's main base of employment was cotton mills, had seen how easily the city's economy could be affected by a drop in the cotton prices. Now, he argued, Huntsville was in the same situation with the rocket program. One out of every twelve people in Huntsville worked for NASA or the Marshall Space Flight Center and Congress had already hinted that money for research and development would be cut back as the Apollo Program neared completion. Huntsville's

biggest priority, he said, should be recruiting more diversified industry that was not dependent upon the space program.

Hearn disagreed, pointing out that Huntsville's economy was the strongest in history. He, along with many business leaders, believed the rocket program would continue indefinitely.

Davis' worst fears were confirmed in 1966 when almost two thousand people were laid off as development for the Apollo Program ended. The following years brought even more job losses and there was hardly a street in Huntsville that did not boast at least several "Home For Sale" signs as people prepared to move away.

In 1968, Joe Davis was persuaded to run for the office of Mayor. "It wasn't even a fair fight," recalled Charles Murphy. "Davis was kin to half the people in Huntsville and he had taught the rest of them in school. Glenn Hearn didn't have a chance of winning."

Davis' main priority continued to be attracting new businesses. Civic leaders, for the most part, agreed in principle but did not want the city to incur any cost in attracting the businesses. When the chairman of the Planning Commission,

**Money can't buy happiness,  
but it's sure alot more  
comfortable to cry in a  
Mercedes than in an Escort.**



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Loretta Spencer, proposed a deal for the city to buy land for the expansion of Cummings Research Park, it was roundly condemned by many people who loudly argued "the city can not afford it."

Davis' sharp reply was "The city can't afford NOT to do it!" Dollar for dollar, the land deal proved to be one of the best bargains the city ever made.

One of the biggest problems Davis faced was what many people called "The good ol' boy system." Although Huntsville was rapidly growing into a major city, in many ways it still resembled a small town. Every one, it seemed, had an uncle, cousin or friend who worked for the city and whom they could call for a favor. If a nephew needed a job, a phone call was all it took, whether he was qualified or not.

As late as 1972 there were still members of the Huntsville police force who had not even finished elementary school. In another case a job was arranged with the city school system for a man who had served time in prison, and was on probation, for manslaughter.

Davis was determined to put an end to the practice. Often-times, when he heard of a department that was in the process of hiring new personnel, he would stop by and casually ask to look at the applications. After throwing half of them on the floor he would place the rest on the desk and ask, "Which one are you going to hire?"

Most people took the hint, although there were a few people who resented the mayor's interference.

One story is told about the time Davis asked a city employee for certain information. When weeks went by without it being supplied, Davis called the person on the carpet. The employee got angry and loudly proceeded to tell the mayor that he worked for a particular department head and did not have to take orders from anyone else.

The next morning the employee arrived at work to find two men moving his desk into the hallway. One of the men paused and said, "Mr. Davis said to tell you that you might work for someone else but this is still his building!"



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Whether the story is true or not is debatable, but everyone agreed that Joe Davis was not the type of person you simply ignored.

Personnel problems continued to plague Davis and the city of Huntsville for years. In 1971 the newly formed union of sanitation workers met with Davis and demanded a raise. The mayor patiently listened to the demands before explaining that there were no funds at the time. If they would work with him, he would try to put it in the next budget.

The union leaders rejected the offer and issued an ultimatum: Pay now or we will go on strike.

This placed Davis in a painful situation. He actually sympathized with the workers and agreed they were underpaid. But, as he explained later, if the city caved in to the union's demands it would place public services in jeopardy every time city employees wanted a raise.

On April 9, 1971 the sanitation workers walked off their jobs and declared a strike. Davis desperately wanted to work out a solution that was favorable to everyone but the union leaders refused to negotiate. Finally, Mayor Davis issued his own ultimatum: Return to work immediately or consider

yourself "resigned."

When there was no answer from the union, Davis ordered 105 striking workers fired.

The fired workers responded with a violent rage. Molotov cocktails and fire-bombs were hurled at the few garbage trucks still operating. Drivers were pulled from the trucks and beaten. More than three dozen strikers were arrested and arson damage exceeded \$500,000.

Davis refused to back down. Police squads, carrying riot guns and wearing gas masks, were called out to keep the peace. With the heavy police presence the strike fizzled out after several weeks. When the strikers finally

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*Jonathon Schmidt, age 7*

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decided to return to work they were rebuffed and told that since they had "resigned" they would have to re-apply for their jobs. Fifty employees were not rehired as the city had already hired replacements.

True to his word, Davis made sure there was money in the next budget for a raise for city employees.

In 1978 the scene was repeated when the police, firemen and utility employees called a strike. Davis called on the National Guard, State Troopers and county deputies to patrol the streets and announced "City employees who fail to return to work will be fired."

Three days later the strike was over.

Despite being the mayor of a growing city, Davis was still a country boy at heart. Sometimes he would sneak out of his office and call his good friend Cecil Ashburn. "Joe loved the country," remembered Ashburn. "We would drive around for hours exploring back roads and talking about

when we were kids. He had a thing for country stores; every time we saw one he would want to stop. Most people didn't know who he was and that was fine with Joe. He just liked to sit on a bench out front, talk to people and eat lunch. His favorite lunch was bologna, crackers and hot sauce."

Although Davis had a good sense of humor, he hated practical jokes. "There was a certain prominent business leader," said Frank Jeffries, "that was all the time trying to pull jokes on the mayor. Things like whoopi cushions, exploding cigarettes; really juvenile and embarrassing stuff. He would later try to justify it by saying "Come on, it's just a joke."

One day after a particularly embarrassing episode, Davis decided it was time to teach him a lesson. He called Gene Sweeton,

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the Chief of Police, and after explaining the situation, told him to send some officers out and arrest the man; take him to the station, make a mug shot and put him in a cell. After about an hour the officer was to tell the man, "The Mayor said to tell you it's just a joke."

"On what charges?" Sweeton asked.

"I don't know." Davis replied. "Just make up something like parking tickets."

A few hours later the chief called back and explained that he had done as the mayor requested and arrested the man for parking tickets. "But we have a problem. After we got him down here we found out he has a whole stack of parking tickets outstanding."

For the first time that day Davis broke into a wide grin. "Well hell, just make him pay them before you tell him it's a joke."

There were no more practical jokes.

Joe Davis was re-elected in

1972, 1976, 1980 and 1984. During his terms in office, Huntsville grew from being dependent on cotton mills and rockets to being one of the leading high tech research centers in the world. A small city that many people had written off with the end of the Apollo Program was now one of the most desirable places in the

country to live and work.

He created a modern police department and insisted that only the best applicants be hired. City employees now realized their jobs depended on performance rather than knowing someone. He guided the city in its recovery efforts from floods and tornados and was instru-



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mental in creating the historic districts.

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In recognition of his leadership, the City Council voted unanimously in 1985 to name the new sports stadium the "Joe Davis Stadium."

In 1988 he ran for office for the last time. "He didn't really want to run," recalls a friend. "He was in bad health and his heart just wasn't in it. The only reason he ran was because people kept pushing him."

After losing to Steve Hettinger, Joe Davis retired from the public eye. "I've served my time," he said, "and now it's time to rest."

Regardless of what he said, people who knew Davis well knew how much he missed the excitement of running the city. After he had been out of office for about a year an old friend, Johnny Johnston, called to see how he was doing.

"I'm not doing anything any more," Davis said with a touch of sadness in his voice. "When I was in office people called me every day wanting me to do something or go somewhere. Now the only time the phone rings, it's a wrong number."

Johnston paused for a brief second before saying, "Mayor, that's the reason I called. I'm going to come pick you up and we're going out to dinner."

"Joe had a great time that night," remembers Johnston. "People came up to talk with him, shake hands and tell stories. For a couple of hours he was once again the Mayor."

Joe William Davis died on November 14, 1992. At his funeral he was eulogized as the man who had done more for Huntsville than anyone in its history.

Few people would disagree.



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5. We should take exercise before and after the warm bath; the importance of this is every day evinced where bathing is practiced.
6. After leaving the water, the body should be briskly wiped with a coarse towel, and immediately covered with sufficient clothing to excite or preserve the healthy temperature.
7. We should never remain long in the water; from ten to fifteen minutes is sufficient.
8. Every second or third day is often enough to take the bath.
9. Never bathe the whole body at one time during the winter months.



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# Heard on the Streets in 1880

- A local woman asserted that for months she had been abused and threatened by her husband. Mrs. Ethel Olsen, formerly of England, and later of Huntsville, sent a pistol bullet at her husband in a crowded street near the courthouse here late Sunday, missed him and powder-burned a passerby. She declares she fired to protect her face from a dash of muriatic acid which she charges her husband was preparing to cast at her. She was arrested and charged with assault with intent of murder. She tells a story of her husband's alleged cruel treatment of her and their children.

- Last Saturday night some malicious scoundrel killed a horse belonging to Mr. H.W. Helm, the well known blacksmith. The horse, a very fine one, was in the pasture bordering the spring branch, and was killed by being struck just above the eye with a brickbat. We trust the perpetrator may be discovered and appropriately punished.

- Yesterday in the Big Cove a man named Stewart Wishart was shot and mortally wounded by a man named R.S. Buford, who was arrested. The trouble arose about a dispute in regard to crops. Wishart was cropping on Buford's

place. It is thought Buford was justifiable.

- We understand it is reported through the country that yellow fever is in Huntsville. This is untrue. There has not been a single case of yellow fever in Huntsville up to this time.

- Appeal to Mothers - Clothing partially worn or outgrown, sheets or bedding of any description, remnants of calico or domestic, such as always accumulate in families - any or all these articles are earnestly solicited for the Orphans of the plague-stricken city of Memphis, and will be thankfully received and immediately forwarded if sent to Mrs. S. R. Cruse, Adams Avenue.

- Miss Kate Erskine will open a School at the residence of Mrs. S. C. Erskine, on Franklin Street, on Monday, the 2nd of September. The patronage of the public

is respectfully solicited.


- Charles Rice, the one-eyed Negro from Mr. Frank McClung's place in Little Cove, was tried on a complaint before Justice Figg last Saturday, charged with an attempt to rape Linda Beasley, aged 10 years. Rice was arrested after an investigation of the facts committed. He came from Jackson County.

- Howard Washborne is in jail again. Enough said.

- Janie Carroll has thrown her husband Jacob out of their Oak Ave. home again due to his weakness for the bottle.

**"Some computers are almost human - when they make a mistake, they put the blame on another computer."**


*Ken Owens*



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# A Hero's Story

by Austin Miller

Mose Louis Miller, Jr. was the fourth son of Mose Louis Miller, Sr. and Anna McCay Miller. In his youth he was a handsome man, six feet two inches tall with jet black hair and dark brown eyes. His movie star good looks, unassuming personality and exceptional athletic ability made him very popular with the girls and even some of the young unmarried female teachers at Central School. He was a basketball star at Central and later played for pay on various adult independent teams in North Alabama. In 1939, at the age of twenty four, he joined the army. His reputation as a basketball

player preceded him to Ft. McClellan and instead of basic training they put him to playing basketball. He is probably one of the few enlisted soldiers in the history of the U.S. Army that didn't have to take basic training.

Later events would show that his lack of organized training in the fundamentals of soldiering was not a problem. He went ashore at daylight on D-day with the fourth Infantry Division and was in constant combat until the end of the war. He was decorated for valor during the battle of the bulge and metaphorically speaking, survived the war without a scratch.

I am proud to say that he was my uncle. We hunted and trot lined together and I spent time with him every chance I got. He talked freely and often about his war experiences and I was an eager listener. He told me about his many narrow and sometimes chance escapes from death, the cold weather during the battle of the bulge, the smell

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of death, walking on dead people at night and an unfathomable urge he had to get back to the front when he was behind the lines. Most interesting to me was when he talked about the things he learned that helped him survive in combat.

Once I asked how he stood the horrors of the war and he answered that he went into a different emotional gear and became totally unaffected by death even when it took close friends. Yet there was one subject that he never mentioned or discussed with me. I instinctively knew not to ask about people he had killed in combat. At the end of the war they offered him the rank of Master Sergeant to re-enlist, he refused the offer. He loved the army before he went to war and had planned to be a thirty year man. But when he returned home to Ryland in 1945 and set foot on the front porch the first thing he said to his mother was, "no more army for me!" Almost twelve months of constant combat in some of the greatest battles in history and the fact that nearly all of his army friends had been killed took its toll. In time, this was a decision that he came to regret. He was a soldier at heart and never truly fit back into civilian life.

In a perfect world he would have come home and had a prosperous life after such gallant service to his country. But as is often the case, life is sometimes not good for veterans, especially combat veterans. After the war, times were hard for Uncle Louis. He had to work long tedious hours at the Shoe Plant for low pay and be bossed without respect by much lesser men. It was a struggle to keep his family fed. There was not much energy or money left over to enjoy the American dream that

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he had fought so bravely for. Similar to most Madison County natives, the prosperity in Huntsville in the fifties and sixties passed him by.

It always bothered me a lot that after all he had been through, he had to eke out a hard living while people from all over the country and world, some his former enemies, came to his home town and got good paying government jobs with the army. But this never seemed to bother him. By his way of thinking, he had been regular army by choice and left the army by choice. He simply did his duty as a soldier and his county didn't owe him anything. In my book ,this alone made him a real American hero that we would all do well to try to emulate.

When he got in his fifties, Uncle Malcolm got him a job as a mailman in Huntsville. Things got better and he was able to buy a home. The last years of his life were good and he was able to enjoy for several years the fruits of American society that he had helped to win. It broke my heart when he died in 1983 at the age of 68. Charles McCay preached the funeral at Shiloh and talked about his war record and how much he loved Ryland.

He is buried in Ryland Cemetery close to Daddy, Uncle Robert and many relatives and life-long friends. His wife and two daughters live in Huntsville and were he alive, I believe he would be most pleased to know the great pride they and all the rest of the Miller family still take in his service to our country and what he was as a man. A few years ago

on Veterans Day, he was inducted into the Madison County Hall of heroes. There was a ceremony, and although I was not able to go, most of the rest of the family attended.

By any standard, he was truly one of America's great unsung war heroes to whom we all owe so much.



**"The auto industry accounts for one out of every 20 jobs in the U.S., and this does not include Morticians."**

**Jerry Tate, Decatur**

# Classifieds from 1932

- A 1929 Ford. Front fenders damaged and with numerous bullet holes in trunk lid and left front door. Was involved in an accident. Make offer. Contact B. Maples.

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# VOTE Glenn Watson



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# The General Who Wasn't

Huntsville was the birthplace of six generals of the War Between the States: Confederate Major Generals John Hunt Morgan and Jones M. Withers and Brigadier General LeRoy Pope Walker, and Union Brigadier Generals David and William Birney and Thomas T. Crittenden.

However, another "almost general" was also a native of Huntsville and Madison County. His name was Edward O'Neal and his parents were among the earliest settlers of North Alabama.

Edward Asbury O'Neal was born near Huntsville on September 20, 1818. His parents, Irish on his father's side and French Huguenot on his mother's, had moved to Madison County from South Carolina.

O'Neal received his education at the LaGrange Academy and then returned to Huntsville, marrying here on April 12, 1838. Two

years later, however, O'Neal moved to Florence and thereafter made that city his home.

When the Civil War began, O'Neal promptly volunteered to defend his native state. He left for Virginia by rail in June, 1861, as senior captain of a battalion of three companies. O'Neal's men became part of the 9th Alabama Infantry Regiment, and O'Neal was elected major. He rose in rank quickly, becoming lieutenant colonel in October, 1861 and taking over command as colonel in March, 1862.

O'Neal earned a reputation for bravery and skill, being wounded twice in battle. He commanded a brigade at Chancellorsville, and was recommended by Robert E. Lee for promotion to Brigadier General. However, something must have happened at Gettysburg to change Lee's mind. O'Neal again commanded a brigade in that ferocious struggle, and while there are no complaints on record about O'Neal's conduct, Lee withdrew his recommendation. The Confederate Congress had already issued O'Neal's com-

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mission, but complied with Lee's wishes and did not deliver it. O'Neal's promotion was then cancelled.

Edward O'Neal commanded his regiment through the end of the war. He was often referred to as General O'Neal, and many people apparently believed he was one. However, the courageous officer was never officially more than a colonel. Always a popular figure, O'Neal was elected Governor of Alabama twice, in 1882 and in 1884. He died at Florence on November 7, 1890, and is buried in his adopted city.

However, Edward O'Neal does hold a unique distinction as being the only governor of Alabama whose son was also elected governor. Florence native Emmett O'Neal was elected in 1910, and became the first Alabama governor to occupy the executive mansion in Montgomery. His father would have been proud.

## City News from 1921

- Madam Altreso, Fortune Teller & Palmist, knows all. She will straighten family affairs, untangle love affairs & give advice along business lines. See her at 222 West Clinton Street, Corner Oak Avenue.

- Taken up - two black sows, three pigs, three spotted heifers. Owner may gain possession by paying for ad and feed. Chase Nursery Company

- Lost - a black velvet pocketbook containing Eastern Star Pin, bank book and other papers, also some money. Finder return to Mrs. H. Walker, at I. Wind & Co.

- Found - beautiful jeweled necklace in red satin pouch, found at Opera building. Owner must call paper and identify. Reward would be appreciated.

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# Heard On The Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to our August winner of the Photo of the Month. **Martha Sanderson** was the first correct caller and she identified that sweet boy as **John Shaver**. Martha is a stay-at-home Mom of three, ages 14, 16 and 23!

It was interesting recently to meet up with a visiting group of Corps of Engineers who were here for a meeting. They were touring Old Town & Twickenham and were very interested in several of the older homes on Clinton Ave.

Congratulations to **Cliff Hill**, who is celebrating his 10th year of practicing law. You're the best, Cliff!

Happy September birthday to **Annelie Owens**, the best Mom a girl could ever have!

I want to correct authorship of a story that we ran in issue 173. "The Story of Alfred L. Clark" was incorrectly shown as being written by **Emma McKenzie**. It was in fact written by her aunt **Nettie Mefford**, who is 78 years old and lives in Indiana. The story was about Nettie's father, of whom she is very proud.

**Ginny Langbehn**, who works with Hospice Family Care, is sure proud of her par-

ents! **John & Elaine Langbehn** will celebrate their 35th anniversary. Congratulations, you two!

**Lorene Fish** has lots of grandkids. Her son, **Rick Carlton**, lived in Huntsville for years and had many friends here. Lorene turns 90 in a few months and just loves Huntsville, even tho she lives in Missouri. She has 4 grandkids, 11 great grandkids and 2 great-great grandkids!

**Jesse McClain** is that sweet guy we see each month, who works hard for our printer ColorXpress in Madison. He is so proud of granddaughter **Velancia Long** who is 14, and **Katrina McClain**, 10. All three have October birthdays!

**Bill & Vivian Kruse** are proud grandparents of a hefty little boy named **Nicholas William Phillips**. **Jason** and **Anita Phillips** are the happy parents!

**Kathy Hignite**, owner of Tropical Cafe on University Drive, is sure thrilled about her

handsome football player son **Brett Byford**. Brett will be the Starting Center for University of Nebraska this year and it will be shown on TV when they play USC. Brett is there with a full scholarship - Congratulations to you!

A big hello to **Elsie Bolt** from Collinsville - she has been reading about Huntsville history for many years and just loves it!

We were so sorry to hear of the death of **Sarah Purdy**, age 91, mom of our mayor Loretta Spencer. She will be sorely missed.

We were happy to meet **Danny Alm** recently, of Henry & Alm Co. CPA's. Danny was telling us about grandkids **Ellie Bass**, who just turned 2, and little **Cole Hughes**, who will soon be 8 months old.

**Kathy Heckman** is sure excited about another addition to her sweet family. **Lee Killian Heckman** was born recently to **Eric** and **Jonie Heckman** in Garmish, Germany, where

## Photo of The Month

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

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Hint: This young Navy lad in the middle is a musician, writer and great family man.



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Kathy's son Eric currently lives. I hope you get a visit there soon!

The Golden K Kiwanis recently hosted a very interesting speaker at one of their Thursday morning meetings. **Bill Russell** introduced the speaker **Aladin Beshir**, who spoke about Muslim beliefs and practices, and who took many questions from the audience.

I am so proud of our **police men & women** and of our **firefighters**. I think most of the time we take those folks for granted but they put their lives on the line every day and don't get many thanks for it.

Happy Birthday to **Jean McIntosh!** I hope you were really pampered by hubby **Ron!**

**Jane** and **Louie Tippett** recently took an interesting and COOL trip to Alaska - we can't wait to hear the details! Speaking of Jane, she is owner of the historic Lowry House and is now arranging tours of the home for 3rd, 4th and 5th graders, probably in the next couple of months.

**Joe Sloan** turned 90! He recently celebrated with friends and family at the Grisham Pavilion at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens. Happy Birthday, Joe!

Many of you may remember the Platters, and **Virgil Gibson**, who was the lead singer. Well, Virgil recently stopped in at Lee Ann's off Church street and had a blast there. Now he is talking about maybe joining **Rudy Mockabee** on some Tuesday nights to jam with him. Now THAT will be some kind of great music!

Speaking of Lee Ann's, we tried some of the new barbeque sauce for shrimp that chef **Eddie Osborne** created - it is really good!

Happy 2nd birthday to sweet **Tyler Holman**. He is grandson of **Liz Ford**, and son of mom **Laquanda Ford**.

**Ed Harris** lives in San Diego but LOVES Huntsville, as he was raised here. His Aunt **Lois Stephens**, of Cullman, soon to be 84 years old, recently called us and she said was raised in Lincoln Village and misses all her friends. In fact if they want to get in touch with her she'd love it. I don't want to give out her phone # but if you call me at our office I will be happy to give it to you.

**Malcolm Miller** really had a rocking birthday party, arranged by sweet wife **Lois**, out in Monrovia. Hundreds of family and friends got together with BBQ, guitars and lots of jamming to show how much they love him. Malcolm turned 80 and is one of the most interesting guys you'll ever meet.

**Steve** and **Kim Cappaert** recently traveled to a lodge in Vickburg, Miss. to help his parents celebrate an important anniversary. **Carl & Janet Cappaert** have been happily married for 60 years, and they celebrated there with **Steve, Kim** and his sisters & their husbands for a very memorable event. Some of the family attending were **Carolyn & Jim Martin, Chris & Salley Heros, Amy Franco** and **Jack & Beth Wridley**.

We see where **Glenn Watson** has a large billboard on Parkway & Governors, at the loca-



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tion of his campaign headquarters for his run as **County Commissioner**. Glenn is sure one busy guy and we see him everywhere. He just had a birthday, so Happy Birthday Glenn!!

Well, have a great September and try your best to stay cool.



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## Cooooool Foods

### Shrimp Dip

- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1/2 c. celery, minced
- 1/2 c. onion, minced
- 1/2 c. mayonnaise
- 1 c. cooked shrimp, chopped
- 3 T. lemon juice

Mix all ingredients & chill at least 3 hours or overnight. Serve with good crackers.

### Black Bean Salsa

- 2 cans black beans, drained
- 2 c. Pace Picante sauce
- 6 chopped green onions
- 2 t. chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 roasted red pepper, chopped
- 1 t. ground cumin
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 2 ripe chopped avocados

Mix all except avocados and let sit overnight. Stir in avocados 1 hour before serving and

serve with restaurant-style Tostitos.

### Coffee Punch

- 2 oz. instant espresso
- 4 c. boiling water
- 4 c. sugar or to taste
- 1/2 gallon milk
- 1/2 gallon good vanilla or chocolate ice cream

Boil water and add the espresso and sugar, simmer til sugar is dissolved. For punch, mix 1 1/2 cups of syrup, milk and ice cream in a punch bowl. For single serving, mix 1 1/2 tablespoons syrup, 1 cup milk and 2 scoops of ice cream in a glass.

### Cosmopolitan

- 1 c. cranberry juice, chilled
- 6 T. good Vodka, chilled
- 1/4 c. Grand Marnier
- 4 t. fresh lemon juice

Chill two martini glasses. Mix ingredients in a large measuring cup. Pour into an ice-filled shaker and shake well to mix, about 5 seconds. Strain into chilled glasses. This is good mixed ahead and chilled. Shake in a cocktail shaker just before you serve it.

### Easy Macaroons

- 2 2/3 c. Baker's Angel Flake Coconut
- 2/3 c. sweetened condensed milk
- 1 t. vanilla
- 1/2 c. ground toasted almonds

Combine coconut, milk, vanilla and almonds and mix well. Drop the batter from a teaspoon, 1 inch apart onto a well-greased baking sheet.

Bake at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes and lightly browned. Remove at once from sheets, when cool store in an airtight container. These may be refrigerated.

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## Beef Relish

2 c. canned beets, drained & chopped fine  
 1/2 c. sugar  
 1/4 c. vinegar  
 1 small jar horseradish  
 2 T. lemon juice

Combine all ingredients and place in a covered container, let stand overnight. Will keep in fridge for week, and is really good on ham, polish kielbasa or any smoked sausage.

## Asparagus with Lemon

2 lbs. fresh asparagus  
 4 T. onion, chopped  
 1/2 c. lemon juice  
 1/4 c. water  
 1/2 c. dry white wine  
 1 t. garlic salt  
 1 t. dried oregano  
 2 T. olive oil  
 Salt to taste

Salad greens, lemon slices and red pepper strips

Clean asparagus & cut off woody ends, steam til crisp-tender. Combine all marinade ingredients, pour over asparagus. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours or overnight. Drain & arrange on salad greens; garnish with lemon & pepper strips.

## Bok Choy Salad

1/2 c. butter  
 2 t. sugar  
 small jar sesame seeds  
 small pkg. slivered almonds  
 2 heads bok choy  
 5 green onions  
 2 pk. Ramen noodles, crushed

### Dressing:

3/4 c. vegetable oil  
 1/4 c. rice wine vinegar  
 1/2 c. sugar  
 2 T. soy sauce

Saute butter, sugar, sesame seeds, and almonds til light brown. Coarsely cut bok choy and green onions and chill. When ready to serve, add Ramen noodles (discard packet of seasoning) and dressing.

## Mexican Pasta Toss

8 oz. shell pasta, cooked al dente & drained  
 1 1/2 c. favorite salsa  
 1 16 oz. can black beans, rinsed & drained  
 1 10 oz. pkg frozen corn kernels, thawed  
 1/2 c. green onions, chopped  
 1/2 c. sliced black olives

Combine all ingredients in large bowl, serve at room temps.

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# Kidnapping in Gurley

by William Sibley

On Aug. 20, 1883, a stranger calling himself Ogletree rode a horse into the town of Gurleysville (Gurley), Alabama, located in extreme eastern Madison County. The stranger arrived after darkness had fallen, and the horse he was riding was thought to have been stolen earlier from John Smithey of Bell Factory. John Ogletree went to several houses in the town, telling the citizens that he needed a boy to help him catch his yoke of oxen that had run away at a nearby spring.

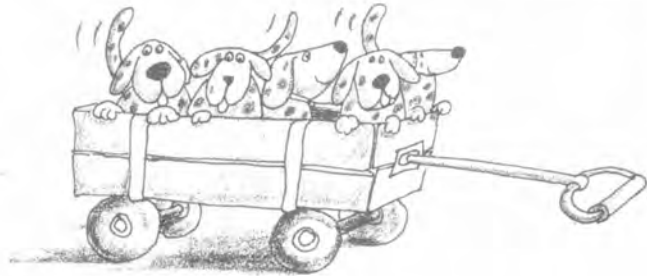
Getting no help from the townspeople in Gurley, the man "went on into the mountain." (This was probably Keel Mountain.) One newspaper wrote, "It is supposed that he stopped by accident at the home of James White." Mr. White was in Gurleysville at the time, and "his wife was visiting a neighbor and left her three small children to take care of the place." During

the absence of the parents, this wandering man calling himself Ogletree tried to get the oldest boy to go to the spring with him.

The boy, Allen White, who was said to be seven years old at the time, refused to go with the stranger. Later newspaper

reports said the boy was nine years old.

After the boy refused to accompany the stranger, Ogletree showed him some money, and in that way "induced" the boy to go. For some unexplained reasons, Ogletree had the boy to



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change clothes before the two left together.

In its Sept. 6, 1883, edition, a Huntsville, Alabama newspaper, THE INDEPENDENT, reported, "Parties have hunted for them faithfully and are still hunting for them." By the time that newspaper story appeared, the stranger and the boy had been missing for seventeen days.

As the story of the kidnapping progressed, accounts of the man and the "stolen boy" appeared in several newspapers, describing the physical features of the pair and the clothing they were wearing.

On Sept. 5, 1883, the day before the first story of the kidnapping appeared in a newspaper, Mr. A. M. Sublett appeared before Gurleystown Justice of the Peace, Mr. J. B. Joplin, apparently on another matter, but while he was in the justice's office, Mr. Sublett said to Mr. Joplin, "I will pay one-hundred dollars for the boy and the kidnapper." Later, reward money reached \$500.00 in Alabama and \$50.00 in Georgia.

Stories of the kidnapping reached out for many miles and THE INDEPENDENT printed, "We are in receipt of a letter from a reliable citizen of Gurleystown, saying that the excitement of the kidnapping continues without abatement."

Citizens had reported seeing Ogletree and White as they made their way across "Sand Mountain and Will's Valley". A correspondent reported, "Ogletree knows his business and stays hidden during the day and travels by night and is seldom

seen by anyone except when he is compelled to get something to eat."

It was reported that Ogletree zigzags as he travels, using fields and untraveled woodlands in an effort to elude his pursuers. He usually steals small articles along the way, including a nickel clock which he carried for three to four miles before trading it for "enough rations to last several days."

Citizens in rural areas, villages, and small towns reported seeing Ogletree and the boy, who

Ogletree claimed was his son. To keep the boy quiet and to keep the citizens from believing the boy if he should cry out for help, Ogletree said that the boy had fits and if they talked to him, it would excite him.

Two prominent men from Gurleystown who joined the search party were Mr. John Connelly (Connally) and Mr. Frank Bennett. Descendants of both families still live in the Gurley area. Those two men reported that Ogletree was winding in several directions but was

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steadily moving toward Atlanta.

Captain Frank B. Gurley, a very popular veteran of the Civil War, "sent a horse through to meet him (Ogletree)." The horse was apparently sent by train and "himself" (Gurley) left Tuesday for Rome, Georgia." There is no doubt that the family and friends of the White family were encouraged that the kidnapper would be caught because of the confidence the people of Gurleysville had in Captain Gurley. His father was John Gurley and his grandfather was Jeremiah Gurley, the man for whom the town of Gurleysville was named.

Other newspapers including THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION and THE MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER and newspapers "at other parts" printed stories of the kidnapping. THE MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER called Ogletree a "well-known Georgia kidnapper."

Captain Gurley, who sometimes signed his letters FBG, on Sept. 15, 1883, wrote a letter to W. P. McClung, stating that he had mailed a letter the day before (Sept. 14), telling Mr. McClung that he was awaiting the arrival of Horbin (Harbin?). The letter was written from Possum Snout, apparently near Rome, Georgia. The captain stated that two men, who were identified as Cushing and Pickens, had arrived in Possum Snout on Sept. 14", and it was learned that Ogletree and the

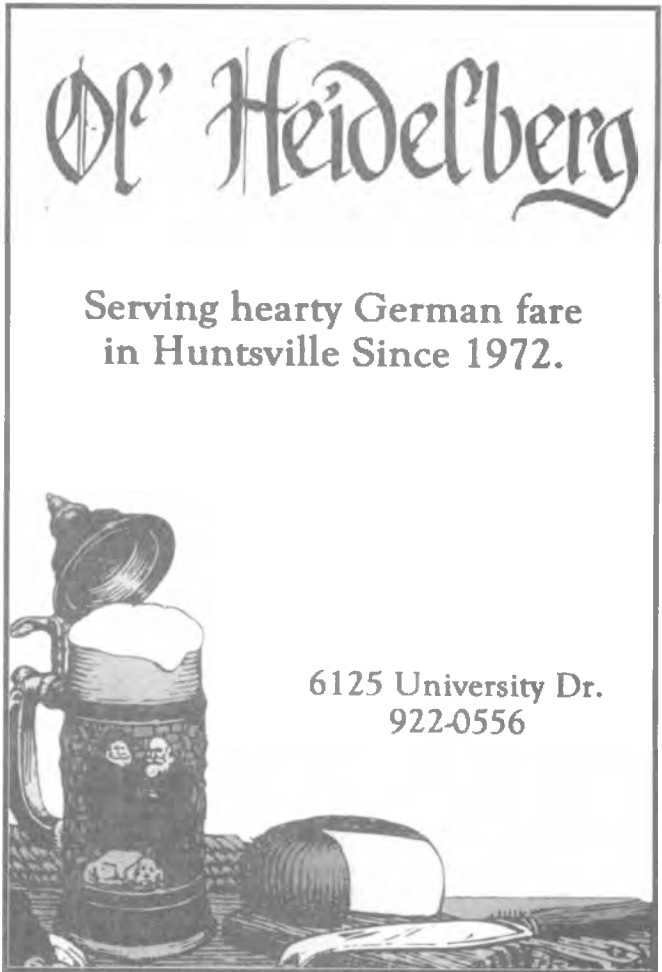
boy were seen "not more than twelve miles from Possum Snout." Also, "one young man that has been watching Ogletree's house says old reliable men in Ogletree's neighborhood told that he had stolen three children before this. Two of those children were "so bad off that they required medical attention."

Captain Gurley learned that Ogletree was a twenty-three year old married man, whose wife and father worked in a factory in Dallas, near Atlanta, where the family lived. Also, the captain learned that a big Baptist Association meeting was being held near Possum Snout and its crowds were covering fifty miles. Captain Gurley had a minister to announce from the pulpit, the story of the kidnapping.

There was a reward of \$50.00 from Atlanta for the capture of Ogletree for stealing an eleven year-old newsboy (whose

name was printed in the newspaper). After having the boy for a week and "leaving him raw," Ogletree tied the boy in the woods while he (Ogletree) went to get food. The boy escaped and Ogletree was arrested, but while he was awaiting trial, Ogletree escaped.

Sept. 19, 1883 - Gurleysville, Alabama A writer identified as JBJ wrote to the editor of THE INDEPENDENT, "to inform you that Ogletree the kid-



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napper is still at large, but is pursued by fifty or more determined men." James White, the kidnapped boy's father, was among those posse members. Bloodhounds had been put on the man's track. Allen White had been missing for thirty days.

Captain Gurley had learned that Ogletree had "got frightened and went twenty miles back into Alabama and is at this time near the line." (Apparently this was a reference to the Alabama-Georgia state line).

The man identified as Harbin returned to Gurleystown at a date near Sept. 20, 1883, and reported that Captain Gurley was in Carroll County, Georgia, confident that "he would speedily bring the chase to a successful end."

THE MERCURY, a Huntsville newspaper, reported in its Sept. 19, 1883 edition a story that was written in THE ATLANTA

CONSTITUTION. The story was written from the town of Tallapoosa, Georgia, and said that the White family lived in Gurley's Tank (another contemporary name for Gurley), Alabama. Although Gurley is in Madison County, near Jackson County, the newspaper reported that the Whites lived in Jackson County. The report called Ogletree "a fiend in human form" and that he had three more kidnappings, not counting that of Allen White. Some of the kidnappings occurred in Paulding County, Georgia.

THE HUNTSVILLE WEEKLY DEMOCRAT reported in its Sept. 26, 1883 edition, that "the boy was last seen alive

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in the kidnapper's company at Oak Levee, Alabama, a small place fifteen miles from Tallapoosa, Georgia." The boy had been brutally beaten and his blood-stained clothes attracted so much attention that villagers demanded an explanation from Ogletree. He told the people that Allen White was his son and that he had been beaten by a Negro woman in Etowah County, Alabama and that the woman had left him for dead after beating him with a wagon spoke. "The villagers seemed satisfied with the story and Ogletree passed on."

It was reported that Ogletree was seen alone on Sept. 25, 1883, riding at "breakneck speed" through Tallapoosa with blood stains on his clothes and "there is little doubt that by being hard pressed by his pursuers, he murdered the boy after leaving Oak Levee and hid his body in the woods." It had been thirty-six days since the boy was kidnapped.

Predictions were made that Ogletree would be hanged or that he would be cruelly tortured to death when caught.

In the last newspaper accounts that this writer could find, a large posse was in pursuit of the kidnapper and was going toward Buchanan, Georgia, but no story could be found in the newspapers to tell whether or not the thief was captured.

In talking to a friend whose family has a connection to today's descendants of the White family, this writer learned that those descendants are aware of

a kidnapping in their family, but the time frame that they have of the kidnapping does not fit the time frame of the stories printed in this story.

According to today's family of Whites, they thought that their ancestor was kidnapped during the Civil War. A posse caught up with the kidnapper, who was in the company of another grown companion and they had three young male children with them. (One newspaper wrote earlier: "He always steals boys."). According to the White family source, the posse shot both men and buried them at the site of the shooting. Allen White and the other boys miraculously escaped Ogletree after he had eluded posses in eastern Alabama and western Georgia, covering several counties. Allen White was brought back to Gurley and reunited with his family.

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*from 1897 newspaper*

The Scottsboro Citizen says that "Snatch'em" is the name of a business place between Larkin and Princeton. Brother, we can do you better'n that.

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Constable James Overton reported the latest piece of thieving this morning. He had left his trou-

sers near the window of his room at his home in Patton Grove last night and when he got up this morning they were not to be found anywhere. The pockets of the garment contained a gold watch, \$11.25 in money and several valuable notes.

It is believed that the thief reached in the window and made off with the booty. The work of the thieves shows that they are accomplished in the thief profession.



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# Man Lives in Hollow Log on Monte Sano

*from 1927 newspaper*

Mr. Frank Coe, inventor of the Coe's tractor wheel, is at present using a hollow log on the side of Monte Sano mountain as his living quarters pending completion of the first of a series of cabins for which he has plans.

The log is located several hundred feet from the new Monte Sano road which will be formally opened tomorrow on the old stage coach road which runs off the east side of the mountain.

Although the log was originally hollow, Mr. Coe has improved upon it until it is more comfortable than a Pullman berth. With the use of fire he has enlarged his quarters, improvised a small screen door and a wooden door over the two and a half foot entrance. Near the entrance he has two small holes on each side which enables him to look out in both directions.

By closing the screen door he is protected from insects while at the same time a lantern hung at the entrance furnishes sufficient light for reading or writing which he has a great deal of.

A.E. Sampson, an architect, is Mr. Coe's only companion. He is cooperating with Mr. Coe in an architectural way and expects to open an office in Huntsville soon.

The first of a series of cabins which will be known as "Coe's Roost," is under construction a short distance from the log. When completed Mr. Coe says "the latch string will always be open to right thinking

people."

As Mr. Coe traveled east 36 years ago, he has decided to face all the cabins in that direction.

Mr. Coe is noted as the inventor of the tractor wheel bearing his name. More than a year ago he left his home in New York for Miami, Florida. His wife and two children were called from this earth a short time before. After engaging in the building game in Miami for one year he arrived in Huntsville.

Mr. Coe states he will spend the remainder of his days on this spot on Monte Sano.

**Ed. note:** Shortly after this story appeared in the newspaper, the weather turned cold and Mr. Coe, with no explanation, disappeared from Huntsville forever.

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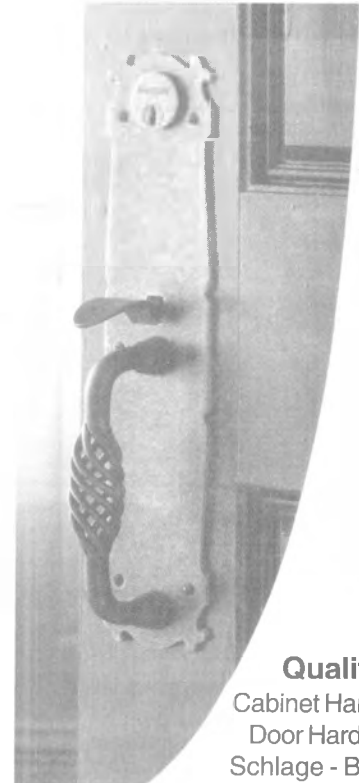
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# Fortunes of War

Pittsburgh, Pa. Dec. 14, 1901

Dear Sir:

A clipping was recently handed me, stating that the President had appointed you to a judgeship for the Northern and Middle District of the State of Alabama, and giving a sketch of personal history, stating that you had served in the Confederate army under General Gordon, and carried a flag of truce to Sheridan's lines at Appomattox.

My object in addressing you is to ascertain if you remember on that occasion as you approached the Union skirmish line you stopped and asked a Union soldier, dressed in a zouave uniform, where the commanding General was. If you are the person that carried the flag of truce in at that point, I was the party who directed you. I was Sergeant-Major of the One Hundred and Fifty-Fifth Pennsylvania Volunteers, First Brigade, First Division. Our Regiment was on the skirmish line that morning, advancing into Appomattox, when I saw a supposed cavalryman advancing from the Confederate lines with a flag of truce; he stopped, addressed me an inquiry, and I directed him where to go. This is a matter of personal interest to me to straighten out history and it will also be source of pleasure to renew an acquaintance and claim you as a friend who was once a foe. Hoping to hear from you at an early date, I remain,

Very truly yours, William Shore

Huntsville, Ala., April 14, 1902.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of April 7th revives some very interesting memories and I reply at the earliest opportunity.

When the war ended at Appomattox, I was an officer on the staff of Major-General John



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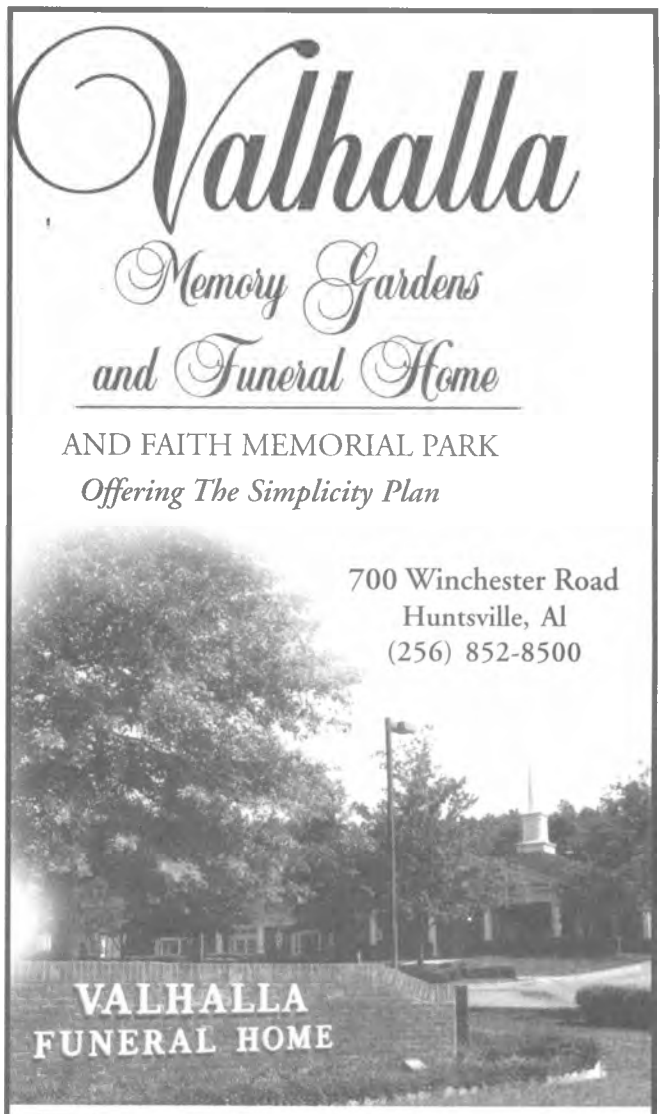


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B. Gordon, who then commanded the Second Corps of the army of Northern Virginia, and parts of Anderson's corps. General Gordon was selected to command the troops which attempted to cut out about day break on April 9th, and I was with him in that charge.

As you will remember, we drove the cavalry some distance; when, coming upon General Ord's forces, we retired, without attempting to break through, then being closely pushed by the infantry.

When General Gordon ascertained that General Ord's command was in front of him, he gave up all hope of cutting through, and as he had been directed in that event, by General Lee, with whom he was in communication by messenger and courier, sent in flags of truce at several points on the line in our front.

As the emergency was very pressing and your people were about to swoop down upon us, it was all important to stop hostilities at once, and General Gordon directed flags to be carried to several points along the line which was advancing on us.

I was then not quite twenty-one years old, and was mounted on a good-looking bay horse, and was in full dress, having put

on our best uniforms for fear they would be captured with the wagons. We all expected the worst and wished to be dressed as decently as possible. I rode in on the right of Appomattox Court House, coming from the direction of our lines. Some of your skirmishers opened fire on me at first, but they stopped as soon as they perceived my flag of truce, which was a large, white napkin in which some ladies had wrapped some snack for me the day before, the napkin being all that remained in my haversack.

I have always had a vague recollection that the officer I met was an artillery man, and it may be you were the man who told me where to go, and that I mistook the artillery man for a man in zouave uniform. I was so intent on getting the firing stopped that I did not pay very particular attention to what happened on the skirmish line. Thirty-seven years have elapsed since then, and my memory is not very distinct as to the details.

I think the first general officer I was carried to was General Chamberlain, of Maine, who was a Division Commander, and if I am not mistaken, he carried me to General Griffin. General Sheridan was near by. I think he or some of his staff rode out into a part of



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the field where I was and said something about having another flag of truce and that "we seemed anxious to stop" and so on.

From this point I was sent with a Union officer to some Confederates, who did not understand the situation, and were trying to move off and were occasionally firing.

After this I went back into the Confederate lines to where General Lee was sitting on the road about a mile from Appomattox Court House on some rails near an apple orchard, waiting to hear from General Grant.

It would give me great pleasure to meet you, should chance ever bring you to Alabama, and I will hunt you up if I ever come to Pittsburgh.

Yours very Truly,  
Thomas G. Jones

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# Will Pay a Fair Price

Under the heading "Strayed or Stolen," Mrs. S. Hundley, of Birmingham, Alabama advertises her husband, Andrew Jackson Hundley, in the Enterprise. She said he left her about two months ago, in company with one Manda Wyrick.

The deserted matron says, "I want A.J. arrested and handcuffed, if necessary, and brought back to me dead or alive, as he owes a good many debts that he must pay, and he owes me a support in my old age." He is a long, lean, lanky fellow, about six feet high, broad shoulders, thin beard, light hair and complexion, blue eyes, and about 45 years of age.

She offers to pay anybody a fair price who will return him to her, "dead or alive," and requests all papers in the United States to copy the advertisement one time - and forward their bills to her.

*from 1873 newspaper*

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# My Father's Life

by Lisa White and Chuck Swafford

A giver to his country, his community, and his family... our dad, Charles Norman Swafford was born March 17, 1921, the twelfth of thirteen children. He was born a sharecropper's son in the Maysville community. He told of the times he would drive fence posts with a sixteen pound sledgehammer from daylight to dark for 75 cents a day, plus lunch. The money he earned would be applied to the local grocery store in Maysville where his dad had established credit to help feed his family.

On October 23, 1942 Dad was inducted into the Army. Four days later he married Emma Jean Avery at the ripe old

age of 16. She was a pretty young girl who was born in Tunica, Mississippi. Together they had four children, Charles Norman Swafford, Jr. (Chuck), Dennis Swafford, Janice Holt, and Lisa White. Chuck was 17 and a senior in high school when Lisa was born. They would laugh about how many years they had at least one child in school.

In July of 1943, Dad left the States for Northern France and spent three years in the Army Air Corps as a Medic, flying over 150 missions into enemy territory. They would pick up wounded soldiers and try to keep them alive until they could get them to the hospital. Dad returned home in October 1945.

During those three years Dad received several medals including four Bronze Stars. These medals were never mentioned to anyone in the family. Chuck remembers seeing them only one time. He was about six years old, found an old trunk and started going through



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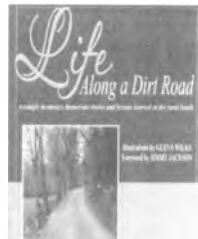
it. In this trunk was an Army uniform and several small items on ribbons. Our mother came into the room, saw what he was doing and told him to put everything back into the trunk. She said some day those things might be important to him.

Recently, we found a little suitcase of letters Dad wrote to our mother while he was in the Army. He must have written almost every day and the letters are filled with how much he missed her and how he couldn't wait to see her again.

Although Dad physically came home in 1945 from World War II, he continued to fight that war for the rest of his life... in the form of nightmares. Growing up, we would stay up late watching TV and our dad would start yelling out in his sleep -- usually he was fighting something or somebody. Although it might have made for an entertaining evening to us back then, now we know the war was the cause of those nightmares.

In 1945 Dad purchased a farm in the Brownsboro community and tried his hand at farming for about six years; but due to asthma, his health could not handle the dust. He lost weight and would have to tie a kerchief around his face just to go milk the cow. Our mom would say, "He's going to rob Bessie." He sold the

farm and in 1951 and purchased the grocery store in Maysville. This was the same store in which his father had established credit that Dad had worked



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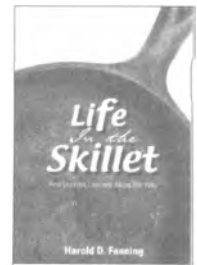
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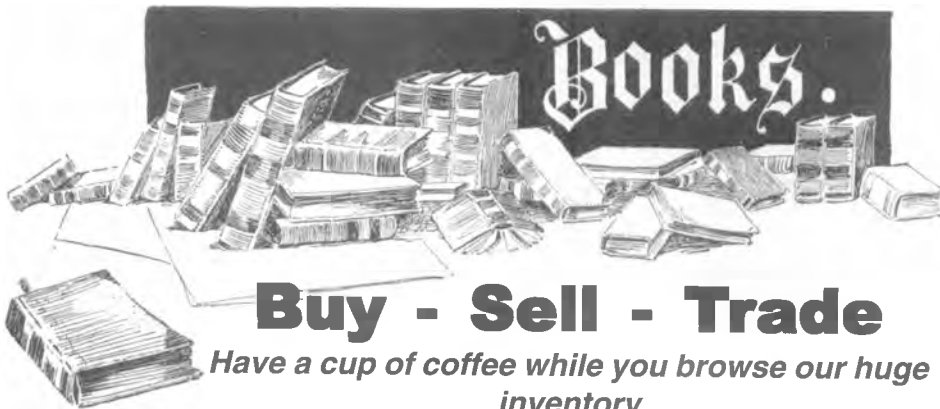
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to help pay off. The store also contained the Maysville Post Office, which the Postal Service closed in 1956. Dad was the last Postmaster of Maysville. Having a big heart, Dad allowed credit to families with children knowing he would most likely never be repaid. And in a lot of cases, he wasn't.

During the first few years he owned the store, with his medical training in the Army, the Madison County Health Department would allow Dad to give shots to some of the folks in the Maysville community who were not able to get to doctors in Huntsville. The nurses would come to the store on a weekly basis and leave Dad syringes, medicine and instructions on how much to give, how often to give, and who to give the shots to. His medical work would start after the store closed -- sometimes as late as midnight. He would drive to each house and if school was out for cotton picking, Chuck was allowed to go with him. They would walk up to the door and knock and lights would come on and you would hear them ask, "Is that you Mr. Swafford?" He would answer, "Yes," and they would be invited in. Dad would tell them to roll onto their side and then he would take a cotton ball with alcohol on it to clean the area and give them their shot. He would get a great big "Thank You" and they would drive to the next house. Sometimes he would have to give the kids a shot and he would always take them a little something from the store so they wouldn't mind the shot so much.

Where there's a store there are a lot of stories and this store was no exception. One story Dad told was that some of the men that hung out at the store had bet one guy that he couldn't eat a whole jar of peanut butter in a certain amount of time. Well, the guy took that bet and almost lost his life in the process. Dad had to reach down into the guy's throat and pull out a wad

of peanut butter that he was choking on. Another story (this one made the papers) Dad and Janice helped catch a bank robber one afternoon right there in the middle of downtown Maysville. There are more stories than Carter's has pills but we'll just stop right there.

After 13 years Dad sold the store. He then sold cars at Ray & Pearman and Lee Bentley for many years until his retirement.

He also ran for County Commissioner on two different occasions but was not successful in politics. For that, our mother was always glad.

On April 3, 1974 one of the many tornadoes that struck our area totally destroyed our parents' home. The medals our dad had earned in the war were gone. We ran across his discharge papers back in January when our

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mother died and for the first time we all learned what our dad had done for our country. We contacted the V.A., the medals were verified and the medals have now been replaced.

One of Norman's greatest loves was baseball. He played on teams in his earlier years and his oldest son followed in those footsteps growing up. Chuck can remember one particular game where he was up to bat and his dad just happened to be umpiring that game. It was three balls and two strikes and the pitcher delivered the ball which Chuck thought was low. His dad called strike three. That night Chuck was still upset with the call and told his dad so. Norman looked at him and let him know with two strikes you can't take a pitch that close. It may have been low but he didn't want the other team to think Chuck was getting a father/son call.

Dad came up to bat for the last time on Saturday, April 22. He survived many things in his 85 years, including World War II

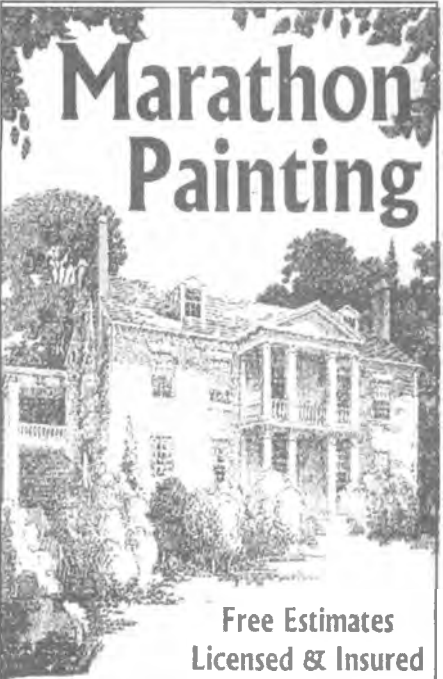
and the nightmares that followed, but he couldn't survive losing the love of his life. Our mother, his mate, had died just 89 days earlier on January 23, 2006. They had been married for 63 years. He couldn't make it without her. In baseball terms, he finally struck out.

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*George Carlin*

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

# The Town of Whitesburg

by Jack Harwell

About the time that the town of Huntsville was being laid out early in the last century, other settlements were springing up all over the county. These were generally located along well-travelled routes that brought the new migrants into northern Alabama from the large population centers to the east. A large number of these arrived from Virginia, entering Alabama by way of the old Winchester road.

By 1810 there was a long string of settlers' homes stretching from the Briar Fork of the Flint River, between Huntsville and New Market, southward almost to the river. The area near the river was not well populated, partly due to its proximity to the Indian lands.

One of the first of those who were willing to make their home on the river was John Ditto, who for a number of years operated the river landing at that location that bore his name. The Tennessee River was a popular route for merchants and travellers, and Ditto's business did well.

About the time that John Ditto was running his riverside trading post, James White came to Huntsville. Like many transplanted Easterners, White had money and was looking for business opportunities. In 1811 he went into business with Alexander Gilbreath, who was possibly the first merchant in

Huntsville. White and Gilbreath operated a store on Gates Street, a block south of the courthouse.

White later bought large plots of land at the site of Ditto's Landing on both sides of the river. The population of this area began to grow soon after the county boundary was extended to the Flint River (it was extended to the Paint Rock, its current alignment, in 1836). John Ditto's old trading post became a real town, and it was incorporated by the legislature two days before Christmas

1824. The town was named Whitesburg for the man who owned the land where it was located.

The borders of Whitesburg correspond roughly to the limits of the marina and park which are located there today. The town was located at the southern terminus of the highway to

**"There is no snooze button on a cat who really wants her breakfast."**

*Carla Ott, owned by a cat*

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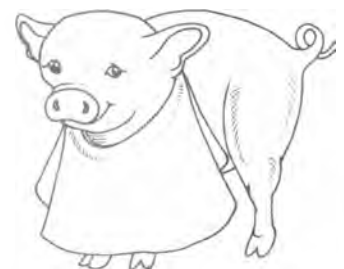
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**"I was hoping the old fellow would make it to the other side of the street when I struck him."**

*Seen on accident report*



Nashville, and that and its proximity to the river brought in a considerable amount of traffic.

In the days before trucks and trains, the rivers bore much of the nation's commerce, and many flatboats laden with Alabama cotton stopped at Whitesburg on their way to New Orleans. Often these boats would take on "shoals pilots" at Whitesburg, who would guide the craft through the treacherous Muscle Shoals down river. Once calmer water was reached, the regular pilot would take over and the shoals pilot would be put ashore, to return home on foot. This long walk from Muscle Shoals to Whitesburg (or, in some cases, Decatur) was not considered exceptionally tiresome at that time; many of the river pilots who accompanied their boats down the Mississippi would return home the same way, up the Natchez Trace. Richard Anderson, a longtime river pilot and resident of Huntsville, is said to have walked from Huntsville to Whitesburg every day - before breakfast.

Whitesburg, and other communities on the Tennessee, remained little changed for many years, even in wartime. Unlike some parts of Madison County, Whitesburg was relatively quiet during the Civil War. Occasionally Southern soldiers and sympathizers would smuggle arms and troops across the river to the Union-occupied north bank under cover of darkness. Federal troops confiscated all ferry craft when they could find them. Records show that a skirmish took place at Whitesburg on May 29, 1862, but provided no details.

For most of a century after the war, Whitesburg remained a quiet

little village, like many others throughout the South. The road to Huntsville was macadamized and turned into a turnpike. A railroad line was built to the river, but Whitesburg was bypassed.

Eventually the town's charter expired, and its post office was moved. But Whitesburg, the place, remained.

There were no schools in Whitesburg, and children might

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**"One nice thing about egotists:  
They don't talk about  
other people."**

*Jerry Simmons, Athens*



have to travel a mile or more to reach one of the one-room schoolhouses, some of which were privately operated.

One resident who grew up in the area in the 1890s recalled years later the first public school he attended, in a log cabin heated by a wood stove. "We children would go out in [the] woods, chop a tree, cut it up," wrote C. D. Hobbs in 1962. "That was our fuel." The seats, he wrote, were boxes, and the desks were "split logs with pegs in them."

With the opening of the Clay Bridge in 1931, the character of Whitesburg was permanently altered. No longer was it the end of the line. Now motorists could drive back and forth between Madison and Morgan counties. The road became a state highway extending to Birmingham.

But if Whitesburg was doomed, its name would live on. The bridge became known as "the Whitesburg bridge." When a second span was completed in the 1960s to carry south bound traffic, it became the Whitesburg bridge, too.

Today the Huntsville-Madison County Marina occupies the land

where the town once stood. A plaque at the picnic area marks the location of John Ditto's store and the town of Whitesburg.



## Fresh Ice for Huntsville

*from 1866 newspaper*

The value of ice to the city can only be estimated by the disastrous consequences of a deprivation of it for use in sickness or as a luxury. The winter was so mild that not a pound of ice could be gathered here.

To meet the wants of the city, Mr. Robert Coltart, having fitted up his Ice Depot, ordered from the North, is now receiving and packing away nearly 500,000 pounds of ice.

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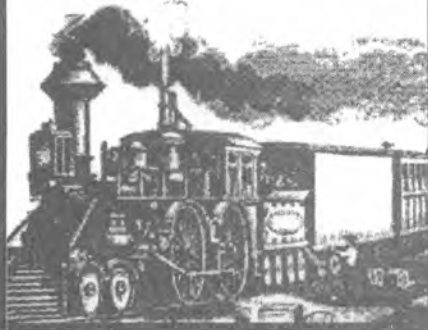
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# Unsolved Mysteries

One of the great mysteries of Madison County that has never been solved is the report of an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) here in Huntsville on January 12, 1910. This was the era when airplanes and balloons were almost unheard of in the Tennessee Valley.

The following account comes from the January 13, 1910 Huntsville Mercury Newspaper:

"An unknown airship passed almost directly over Huntsville at half past four o'clock yesterday afternoon coming from the southwest and continuing on its course on a straight line to the northeast. The craft appeared to be making a long journey and it passed on its course without making any signal or other demonstration and so swiftly did it move that it was out of sight over the crest of Chapman mountain before many people on the streets had an opportunity of seeing it. It is believed to have passed on out of Huntsville territory as nothing more was heard of the ship during the evening.

"....Before any one had time to obtain glasses, it had passed out of sight. The aircraft was not traveling with the breeze near the surface of the earth because the breeze on the surface was coming directly from the west. The speed appeared to be greater than any wind short of a hurricane would travel."

At first glance the preceding article appears to be of an airplane or a balloon except for the fact that a balloon could not travel against the wind, and no airplane of those days could travel as fast as a "hurricane."

Also, there were no airplanes in the Tennessee valley in 1910.

If the whole event had a logical explanation, why did the New York Tribune think it was newsworthy enough to run an article about it on the front page on the same day?

On the same day, January 13, 1910 the Chattanooga Times, with a front page headline, reported sightings of a "cigar shaped vessel" traveling at a high rate of

speed in a northeasterly direction.

The following day the strange airship appeared again in the skies over Chattanooga. The

**"When you put a hot dog in the microwave for 5 minutes, you don't want to be there when your Mom sees what's left."**  
*Jeremy Jacobs, age 8*



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Chattanooga newspaper speculated that it was the same one that had appeared over Huntsville the day before. The article went on to say, "Some are inclined to think the mysterious airship is the craft of a sky pirate who has sinister designs upon Chattanooga."

The next day, January 15, the "cigar shaped vessel" was spotted in the skies over Knoxville, Tennessee headed south. This was the last reported sighting.

If this "airship" were some type of an airplane or a dirigible, where did it come from and where did it go? It was in the area for three days but there were never any reports of it landing anywhere.

Did it stay air-borne the whole time? Many questions were asked but there were no answers. This remains one of the great "unsolved mysteries" of the Tennessee Valley.

**"For NASA, space is still a high priority."**

*John F. Kerry*

## The Infant

In 1831 a lawsuit was filed in the Alabama courts against a young man for non-payment of debts. The young man, twenty years old, was already married and had children but was unable to provide for his family or pay his debts.

In this case, after being repeatedly sued, he pled infancy. (too young or immature to take care of oneself.) The prosecuting attorney, Mr. James Dellet, after listening to the defense arguments, called the young man for cross examination.

Every eye of the jurors was on the tall, debt-ridden young man as he made his way to the stand and took a seat. Mr Dellet, taking his time, slowly walked across the courtroom

and stared at the defendant for what seemed like an eternity. Abruptly turning to face the jurors, he proclaimed, "Gentlemen, I make "proofest" of this infant."

The jury took one look at the size of the "infant" and ruled against him. A short while later,

after being ridiculed and called an "Infant" everywhere he went, the young man left Alabama and moved to Texas.

Years later, the "infant" William B. Travis would go down in history as one of the heroes of the Alamo.

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# News From the Year 1917

## News From Huntsville and Around The World

### U.S. Troops Land in France General Blackjack Pershing Leads Them

Major General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing's American troops arrived at a French seaport this morning. For security reasons, the precise location cannot yet be disclosed. The second contingent came ashore not far from a camp where Major General William L. Sibert and the first contingent are already established. Pershing himself arrived this evening.

The doughboys crossed the Atlantic swiftly. Despite mines and submarines in the waters, they did not lose a soul en route. A few of these men volunteered, and a few were drafted when conscription started in May. Others are army diehards, whose rugged tans suggest they served with Pershing when he routed Pancho Villa in Mexico. They are boys from small towns and farms. French villagers,

rushing to the shore, called them heroes.

Pershing, 56 years old, earned the title Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces (A. E. F.) through his success in Mexico and the Philippines, where he defeated the Moros in 1913. He plans to keep his soldiers together, independent of other Allied leaders. Eventually, he hopes to command divisions of 28,000 men each.

French, British and other Allies on the Western Front realize that the Americans are still green. Therefore, they will be spared the front lines, for now.

**"I've just learned about his illness - let's hope it's nothing trivial."**  
*Irvin S. Cobb*

### U.S. Needs \$156.30 to Outfit Doughboy

The War Department revealed tonight that the startling sum of \$156.30 is required to provide an infantryman with arms, clothes and eating utensils.

Each soldier will receive 107 pieces of fighting equipment (including 100 rifle cartridges), 50 articles of clothing and 11 cooking implements. His weapons are priced as follows: trench tool, 50 cents; bayonet scabbard, \$1.13; bayonet, \$2.15; steel helmet, \$3.00; cartridge belt, \$4.08; cartridges, \$5.00; gas mask, \$12; rifle, \$19.50. Included in the clothing costs are three wool blankets (\$18.75) and a bedsack (98 cents). The cost will soon force many countries to abolish the military.

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## Presence of Negro Troops causes Riot

The quartering of a Negro regiment in Houston led to a riot today that left 17 dead. And Texas now wants to try 34 Negroes in a state court rather than defer the matter to the military.

The state has also requested that the remaining Negro soldiers be ousted from its borders immediately. The troops were sent from Deming, New Mexico, to Houston three weeks ago. Their captain, who clearly has respect for his men, stated that they had all felt uneasy since their arrival.

This morning, a soldier who had been drinking witnessed a white policeman slapping a Negro woman. After the soldier objected to her treatment, the officer beat him and sent him to jail.

A corporal, hearing of the arrest, approached the policeman for information. He too was beaten. When more troop members heard of this, they grabbed their weapons, ran into town and opened fire on white residents. Among the dead was a 15-year-old girl.

A few Southern senators and representatives had opposed stationing of any Negro regiments in their states months prior to today's incident. Some Southerners explained that they have no objections to Southern Negroes stationed in their area, but they are wary of Negroes from other parts of the United States who do not recognize the code of conduct followed by local Negroes

## Mata Hari Executed at Dawn

Mata Hari, who, by a court martial two months ago was found guilty of espionage, was shot at dawn this morning by the French.

Known in Europe as an extremely attractive woman with a complicated romantic history, she was born as Margaretha Gertruida Zelle in Holland, though she at times claimed to stem from India. She was accused of having joined the German secret service in 1907 and of having betrayed important military secrets confided to her by the many high Allied officers who were on intimate terms with her.

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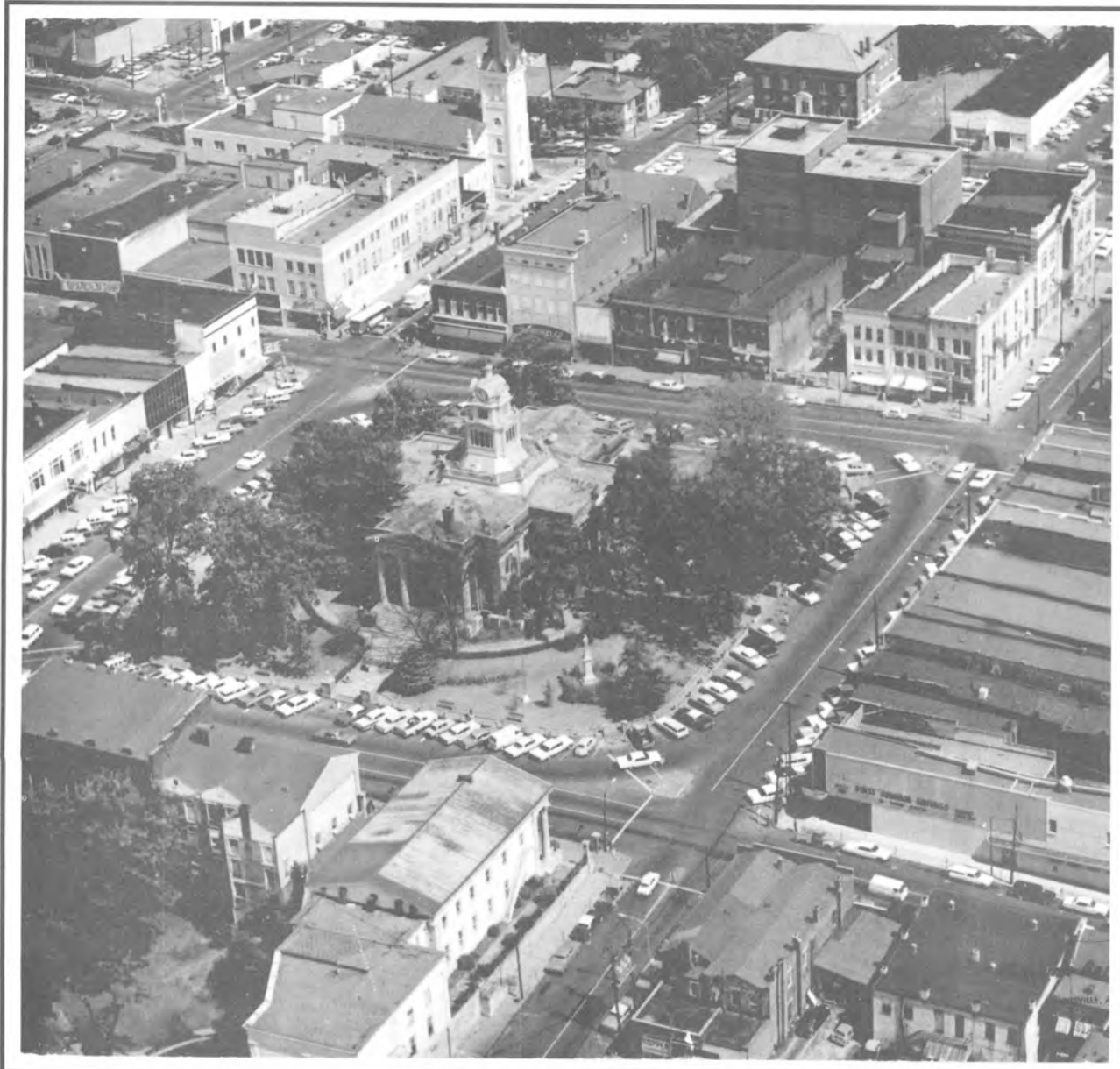
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# The Television Picture

by Harold Fanning

Growing up in Hazel Green, Alabama during the 1960's was, for the most part, a simple life. Most kids of that era spent their days outdoors playing hide-and-seek, cowboys and Indians, or riding their bikes. There wasn't much television watched in those days, but when we did, about the only television set within a twenty-five mile radius of our house belonged to my grandparents, Percy and Gladys Sharp.

Percy purchased that old black and white Philco at the Montgomery Ward department store in Huntsville and any attempt to watch it was more like looking at hazy figures though a winter snowstorm. After awhile the straining, squinting and attempting to distinguish who from what just wasn't worth the effort and we'd eventually give up and go outside to do something else. I reckon the concept of "reception" for television manufacturers back then was pretty much left to the innovative discretion of the purchaser.

For example, everyone who had televisions in the late 1950's and 60's had a forty-foot antenna rising above their roofline. Usually any attempt to adjust the picture clarity required someone standing outside next to the antenna pole with everybody inside yelling through an open window their contrasting instructions on which way to turn the thing.

Sometimes this effort worked, but, more often than not, it didn't. At one point someone heard that if you wrapped the pole in aluminum foil this would somehow increase reception. Word spread fast

on that novel idea and in no time at all there were antenna poles throughout the community wrapped tightly with aluminum foil secured with baling twine or duct tape.

Sometimes the best reception was gained when someone simply laid their hand on the antenna pole itself. For my family we always hated that - especially if my grandfather Percy happened to be watching professional wrestling hosted by Grady Reeves on WHNT Channel 19. That meant the entire family would have to take turns standing next to the pole holding onto it so Percy could see the screen more clearly. He would get so wrapped up in watching the Masked Marauder, Nut House Fargo, Dusty

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Rhodes and ToJo Yamamoto that he would literally fight, flop and flip the chair he happened to be sitting in. He would yell, scream, and occasionally use 'not-so-nice' adjectives if his favorite wrestler happened to be losing the round. To be honest, my dad used to say that the best entertainment was watching my grandfather Percy watch wrestling.

On one occasion Percy got the notion that birds sitting or roosting on the antenna interfered with reception. I think he got the idea from one of those infamous discussions held at the local barber-shop. Al Davis' barbershop stood behind Mr. Tom Harbin's store in Walnut Grove and was usually the gathering place of all the men in the community.

There was always a card game, checkers, or some activity going on whether you needed a haircut or not. It was also the place where all the world's problems were solved - including bad television reception. Of course, once Percy Sharp was convinced of the "bird theory" no amount of persuasion to the contrary would change his mind. No sir, Percy Sharp had a mind like a steel trap and once it

was slammed shut, the matter was a settled issue. Any attempt to convince him otherwise was like arguing with a stop sign.

From then on the only possible recourse was for one of us to shoo the birds away by pounding on the antenna with a stick.

Well, those simpler times are long past now. Today we don't have to wrap our television antennas with aluminum foil or bang on the pole with sticks. No, today we just call the local

**Golf can be defined as an endless series of tragedies, with an occasional miracle, followed by a cold bottle of beer.**

cable company and they come out and make the necessary adjustments for us! Excuse me, but did I say at the beginning of this article that times back in the 1950's and 60's were a lot simpler? Hummm.



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# Last Date at the White Castle

At the sound of the car horn blowing, young and vivacious Flossie Putman, who had been a beauty contest winner at the age of 16, jumped to her feet. Glancing in the full length mirror standing in the hall, she checked her makeup and shapely figure one last time. Her mother, sitting in a chair and watching, was agitated that her daughter was going out again. It seemed to her that Flossie was always on her way to another date.

Flossie kissed her mother on the cheek lightly, and pausing only long enough to tell her not to wait up, dashed for the door.

Mrs. Putman watched as her daughter departed. Her whole life was wrapped up in Flossie, an only child and her sole support. Mother and daughter lived in a modest house on O'Shaughnessy Avenue in the village of Dallas, a cotton mill section at the edge of Huntsville.

As darkness closed over the hills and valleys that night of April 30, 1937, angry clouds were gathering on the western horizon to swoop down on Huntsville and the surrounding countryside in one of the worst storms ever experienced in the community. Within an hour after the daughter's departure from home, lightning flashed and thunder cracked with a fearsome fury. This was followed by a gale of hurricane proportions and then rain came down in torrents. As the storm increased in violence, Mrs. Mae Putman, alone in her house, felt worried

about her daughter for the first time in her life.

Flossie, however, was safe from the elements of the night. She was comfortably seated in a darkened corner of the White Castle, a popular road inn four miles north of Huntsville. Opposite her sat a companion and on the table between them were two glasses filled with whiskey.

The popular tavern was almost empty of patrons on this stormy night. Besides Flossie and her date, there were only a few others present. No one paid any attention to the young couple until they began arguing in loud voices. The man seemed to be doing most of the talking, his voice thickened by the whiskey he had already consumed. As suddenly as the argument had begun, it ended, with the couple leaving the bar holding hands.

For the next hour the remaining patrons of the tavern continued to drink and talk as the storm raged outside. Two of the customers were preparing to leave when suddenly the door flew open and Flossie Putman, her face and clothes splattered with blood, stumbled through the entrance.

The patrons anxiously gathered around the young girl offering to take her to the doctor, only to be met by a curt refusal.



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"Leave me alone," Flossie cried angrily. "Please go away."

Just then the door opened and the girl's escort walked in. He, too, was splattered with blood and appeared to have been drinking heavily. Grabbing Flossie by her arm, the man angrily ordered her to leave with him. Neither spoke a word as they left.

Through a window those in the tavern saw the couple climb into a pickup and drive away.

The following morning, when Mrs. Putman realized her daughter had not returned home, she became scared. She began calling her daughter's friends only to be told that they had not seen her. One of them did tell her, however, that the man Flossie had been seeing was named Jim.

Mrs. Putman next notified H.C. Blakemore, Huntsville's chief of police. Anxiously she told the Chief of her daughter dating someone by the name of Jim, and of her concern.

Recalling the fact that Flossie had joked about getting married, Blakemore said there was nothing he could do in case of an elopement, but he would do what he could.

Blakemore began searching for the man who had been with Flossie's the night she had disappeared. Finally after much hard work, he was able to narrow the list of possible suspects down to five whose first names were Jim. Four of the suspects were able to give alibis for the night Flossie disappeared. The fifth, James McAnally, lived only a short distance from Blakemore's home. McAnally was married and was known as a devoted husband and the father of eight children.

With attributes such as these, Blakemore was at first hesitant about even considering McAnally as a suspect. Despite

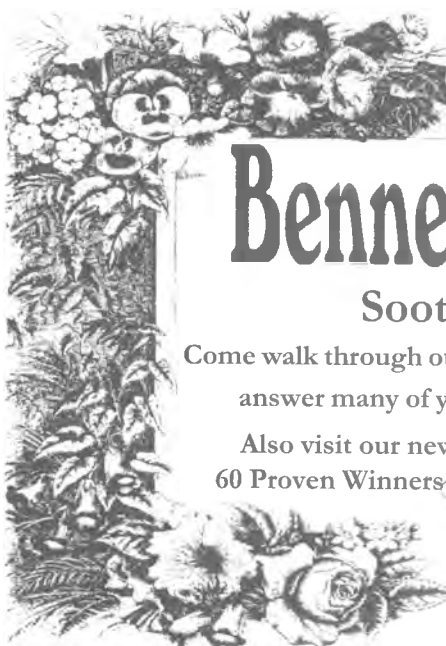
his personal feelings, the Chief nevertheless decided to question McAnally.

During the course of the next several weeks, Blakemore visited McAnally's residence several times, only to be told each time by McAnally's wife that he was not home. Finally Blakemore demanded an explanation as to why McAnally was never home.

Obviously worried, the woman said Jim had disappeared. "I know I should have reported it sooner but I kept thinking that he would come back."

The woman said she had not seen her husband in almost a month.

Upon questioning the



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woman, Blakemore was able to establish that McAnally had disappeared the same night as Flossie Putman. Now the investigator was faced with two mysterious disappearances instead of one. As rumors begin to spread across Huntsville, the general feeling was that McAnally had abandoned his wife and children and had run off with the attractive Flossie Putman.

The whole case had stalemated when Mrs. McAnally appeared at headquarters one day, three months later, to tell the Chief that she had heard from her husband. He was working in Texas, had a good job and was about to send for her and the children.

"Did he say why he left so suddenly without telling anyone?" Blakemore asked.

"He just said that he had an unexpected job offer and he wanted to make sure it worked out before telling anyone." The look on her face showed that even she knew it was a flimsy excuse.

Then, as the woman was leaving the office, Blakemore said he would like to talk to her husband about the disappearance of Flossie Putman.

Indignantly, the woman replied that Blakemore was mis-

taken in his assumption that her husband had anything to do with the Putman girl. "My husband has never been unfaithful to me."

"Mrs. McAnally, I'd like permission to search your place before you leave for Texas."

Upset by the thought of police prowling about her home, and certain that her husband was in no way connected with the disappearance of Flossie Putman, she refused. She could not understand the Chief's attitude nor his request as she stalked out of the office.

The state of Alabama had a peculiar outlook regarding the searching of private property, regardless of the nature or seriousness of the case involved. A legal search could be made only with the consent of the resident or with a warrant sworn out in his name whenever the consent was refused. When a search was made with proper warrant, should the officer fail to find what he was looking for, the resident had recourse against the officer and superiors in the courts of the state.

So Chief Blakemore refrained from searching the McAnally home and premises. He had no proof of his vague suspicions. Jim McAnally had turned up alive and there was the possibility that the girl whose name had been linked with his, might likewise be

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located. Until he had proof that the girl had not merely run away the police official had no intention of subjecting himself to a costly damage suit.

There were many conflicting and baffling possibilities in the events surrounding that stormy evening. Had the Putman girl dashed into the roadhouse that night because she was fleeing the man who tried to kill her? If so, why did the man follow her into the bar where other people were bound to see him. And why did she leave with him again?

Every promising trail the investigating Chief followed seemed to lead to Jim McAnally, and then dissipate into thin air. Especially intriguing was his mysterious departure from home at the time of the girl's disappearance.

Surely Jim McAnally was not the "number one boy friend" mentioned by Miss Putman or the one to whom she referred in jesting about an elopement. What attraction could there be to an insignificant married man of 41 years for the attractive and popular beauty with countless admirers? Yet, there seemed to have been innumerable clandestine meetings between the two.

After months of diligent work Chief Blakemore believed the girl might be dead, the victim of a jealous suitor. But his investigation along those lines was stalemated until some evidence of the body or the murderer could be located. To hunt for one involved dangerous financial risks and to look for the other was a colossal undertaking, with the name of Jim and a general description that might fit hundreds of men the only clue to his identity. Where to look for either was a mystery as dark as the stormy night into which the girl and her friend had disappeared.

Months and then years

passed. Finally the summer of 1939 rolled around with still no trace of the missing Flossie Putman. In the long span of time the city of Huntsville had practically forgotten the former beauty and many changes had occurred in the lives of the principal characters of this strange drama.

Chief Blakemore had resigned his position as head of Huntsville's law enforcement body and had been elected sheriff of Madison County. In his new capacity he had not forgotten the baffling Putman mystery, now more than two years old. The McAnally home was now occupied by the owner's father and mother who had moved in when McAnally's wife and eight children left for Texas.

Reports from Texas told of McAnally's success. He had acquired half ownership in a garage and had purchased a home for his family.

Blakemore never heard from

Jim McAnally, though he still wanted to question him in regard to the missing Flossie Putman. He also still wanted to search the house in which McAnally had resided while in Huntsville but his repeated requests had been met with stern refusals from the new occupants. There was strong re-

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sentment of any thought that anything could be wrong. And a search was still impossible with the meager information available.

On the morning of Aug. 13, 1939, Sheriff Blakemore received in his offices at the county courthouse a visitor with what appeared to be an important bit of information. This visitor was a neighbor of the McAnallys in West Huntsville.

"For the past few days," the man said, "my dog has been acting strangely around the McAnally house. He has been digging under the kitchen in the rear. I watched him again this morning through the fence. He digs a while, sniffs the hole he is making and then digs again. I am sure there is something buried under that house."

Sheriff Blakemore decided to act immediately, to risk his judgement against a possible lawsuit. After obtaining a search warrant and accompanied by two deputies armed with shovels and digging irons, he went to the home which had previously been McAnally's residence.

There he saw where the dog had been digging but the opening was too narrow to permit the entry of a human body. The sheriff and his deputies then entered the kitchen and their attention was immediately drawn to a section of the flooring which had a different appearance from the remainder of the boards. The elder McAnally explained this section had rotted and he had repaired it several days after his son went to Texas. Sheriff Blakemore ordered his men to remove the boards.

Directly beneath the floor was a mound of earth, large and oblong in shape, which had partly caved in. The aged occupant of the house, still unaware of the purpose of the unusual procedure but asking no questions, explained that his son had started to excavate for a cellar with the intention of installing a furnace but had abandoned the plan just before he went away. The sheriff ordered his men to start digging.

Four feet down in the earth, which was loose and easily removed, Deputy Smith struck something hard with his shovel. Reaching down, he brought to the surface a small shoe, almost disintegrated, which contained the bones of a human foot. The officers continued their digging with renewed vigor and soon uncovered the skeleton of a woman. The shoes and a few fragments of

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clothing remained among the bones. These were carefully removed to a mortuary, where an hour later Mrs. Mae Putman, torn with grief, identified the bits of cloth and leather as part of the dress and shoes worn by her daughter the night she disappeared.

Flossie Putman's strange disappearance was solved.

A long distance call to the sheriff's office in McKillney, Texas requested the immediate arrest of Jim McAnally. Within an hour a call came from the Texas city stating they had arrested James McAnally.

When McAnally was returned from Texas he was brought before Solicitor Jeff D. Smith and Sheriff Blakemore for questioning. The man had made no statement since his arrest and the officials expected a continued denial of the murder.

Sheriff Blakemore addressed McAnally. "Jim," he said, "it looks pretty bad for you and we want to hear your story about what happened that night."

Calmly, and without any outward sign of remorse, McAnally began to tell his story of what had transpired that night. He admitted to being out that night with Flossie Putman, whom he said he had known about a year. He told how they rode around for hours talking and drinking whiskey.

When the storm was at its peak, he said he parked the pickup truck off the New Market road. It was here, according to his story, that the girl fell out of

the truck and cut her face.

"The next thing I remember," he continued, "a man was shaking me to wake me up and get out of his way so he could drive into his home. After moving the car I tried to arouse Flossie and she didn't answer. Well, the woman

was dead.

"I didn't know what to do so I went home, took the body out of the truck, and carried it into the house, placing it in the closet in the downstairs room. I then fell asleep,

"I was wakened soon after day-

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light by my wife and children moving about in the house. I thought of the body, and knew I had to dispose of it. So I told my wife to take the children and go to the home of my parents.

"I had planned to dig a basement and had actually started it. So after the family left, I removed the floor in the kitchen and deepened the hole. Then I placed the body in it and covered it up, nailing down the floor tightly. When my wife and children returned at 11 o'clock they were none the wiser. I left the following morning and finally landed in Texas. You know the rest."

Though the story sounded feasible, it was a lie. Medical evidence had already shown that the girl died from a gunshot wound.

The trial began Nov. 1, 1939. McAnally offered a plea of not guilty because of insanity. Solicitor Smith recounted the mass of testimony against the accused man and demanded the death penalty for a brutal murder.

Three days later a jury deliberated four hours and returned a verdict of guilty and fixed punishment at life imprisonment. Notice of appeal was filed at once but this was withdrawn two weeks later and McAnally was taken to prison where he died in 1959.

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# Tips from Liz

\* If you drink ice tea with a straw, you won't get tea stains on your teeth.

\* This is a good time to observe what trees, perennials and flowers do well in the heat, for you to plant next year. This heat will be with us for a long time. A good example - Crepe Myrtles do fine with heat and little water, dogwoods don't.

\* When making spaghetti, you could use just half the meat/sausage you currently use and never miss the extra calories.

\* Many thieves will check cars in a parking lot for purses/valuables. DON'T leave your purse in your car unless it's hidden or in the trunk - otherwise you're just asking to be robbed.

\* If you use spices, you will save time by storing them on a 2-layer turntable in your cabinet - takes up less room and you just twirl it to quickly find the one you're looking for.

\* Cinammon is really good to use if you are diabetic - try putting it on yogurt or fruit - delicious!

\* Using a wet washrag when you are working out in the heat can really refresh you - rub it on your neck and/or pulse spots and it will beat the heat!

\* This one from our good friend Lola in Muscle Shoals - if you have frequent leg cramps at night while sleeping, try putting a bar of soap at your feet - it may stop them!

\* You've seen those draft dodgers that you can put in door cracks

- they work great for keeping heat out as well as cold in - the Senior Center still has a few left!

\* When you buy a container of cake frosting, whip it up with your mixer and it will double in size, giving you more and cutting back on sugar & calories!

\* Put a small safety pin to the seam of your slip and you won't have a clingy skirt or dress.

\* Weeds will NOT grow through wet newspapers. Wet the

layers of newspaper, put in area where you have weeds, add mulch on top - no Weeds!

\* To warm biscuits, bread or muffins that have been refrigerated, place them in a microwave with a cup of water. The water will prevent them from drying out, but the bread will be good and hot!

\* Use plain body lotion as a facial cleanser - just rub in a bit and use a warm washrag to clean it off.



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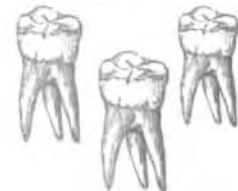
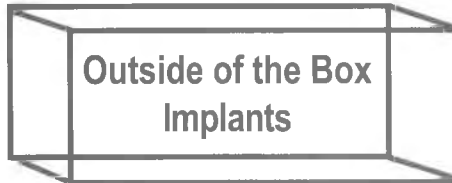
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# A Man of Honor

The Huntsville Cotton Mill was created by the efforts of D.L. Love, a businessman from Mississippi. Traveling throughout the Southeast, Love aroused interest in Huntsville, found subscribers for common stock, and persuaded the city to pass a ten year exemption on taxes.

As the cotton mill began to prosper, such was not the case for its organizing genius. Apparently Love fell in love with the young and beautiful Ada Johnson of Huntsville. But, following the demands of a busy travel schedule, Love found it difficult to devote his full attention to the courtship.

Miss Johnson, perhaps tiring of waiting, began to see other suitors.

The newspaper on September 21, 1881 announced the marriage of Ada Johnson to Mr. John F. Lanier of Madison County. The paper further commented: "The Huntsville public was greatly surprised that Miss Ada, whose hand had been sought by so many suitors, had at last succumbed to Mr. Lanier's offer of marriage."

None was more surprised than Mr. Love, who, when learning of the betrothal, lost his temper and sought to avenge his loss by besmirching her character.

So foul were his accusations that the young husband did what honorable young men of breeding were expected to do in such cases. He went to Greenville, Mississippi and killed Mr. Love.

Defended by Huntsville attorney Capt. Milton Humes, young Lanier was completely exonerated. The judge announced from the bench, "It is my opinion that he did just what I or any other man of honor would do, and I therefore discharge the prisoner, and bid him go hence without delay."

## Court News from 1923

Horace Bentley, \$25 fine and 30 days in the lockup for selling opium.

Cooper Foster was fined \$25 for allowing pigs to run loose on city property.

On the charge of bastardy Bill Jones was found innocent.

Jim Lemley, found guilty of wife beating and fined \$25.

Thomas Clark and Charley Tuminello were fined ten dollars each for gaming.

Maple Maddox and Odis Patterson were up on a charge of assault with a pistol and knife respectively and each drew a fine of \$25.

Bruce Killiam was discharged on a charge of unlawfully riding a street car.

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## *In recognition of our incoming officers for the year 2007 - 2008*

President - Gordon Dison, President elect - John Vaughn,  
2nd VP - Don Bishop, Treasurer - Kinley Eittreim  
Secretary - Hartwell Lutz

## *and in grateful appreciation of our outgoing officers for the year 2006 - 2007*

President - Ray Weinberg, Pres/Elect - Gordon Dison,  
2nd VP - Bill Sevey, Secretary - Hartwell Lutz, Treas - Kinley Eitreim,  
Past Pres - Hank Miller

### Directors:

Don Bishop - Pasqual Rico - Neil Cocker - Vic Grimes  
Don Royston - Steve Harris - Sam Zeman

### Our Motto - Young Children, Priority One - Our Goal - Helping Kids

Clyde Barclay - Donald Bishop - Bill Brown - Chuck Bobo - Martin Burke  
Winston DeShields - Gordon Dison - Kinley Eittreim - Ernest Francis - Neil Cocker - Vic Grimes  
Jack Grosser - Bill Grunwald - Ed Hardin - Steve Harris - Jesse Hopkins - Bill Ivy  
Andy Karabinos - Rand Lehman - Hartwell Lutz - John Martin - Hank Mattern  
Hank Miller - Archie Murchie - Robert Overall - Chuck Owens - Wilbur Patterson - Pasqual Rico  
Roscoe Roberts - Donald Royston - Bill Russell - Bill Sevey - Reggie Skinner - Joe Sloan  
Bob Smith - Walt Terry - John Vaughn - Ray Weinberg - Jim White  
Jim Yeager - Sam Zeman

# When life was simple...



Thousands of people flocked to the courthouse square in 1905 for the unveiling of the Confederate statue. Funeral dirges were played in memory of the fallen soldiers and a parade wound through downtown to the tunes of Dixie. That same year the first telephones came to Huntsville and the town of Gurley raised the license for operating a saloon to \$10,000.

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