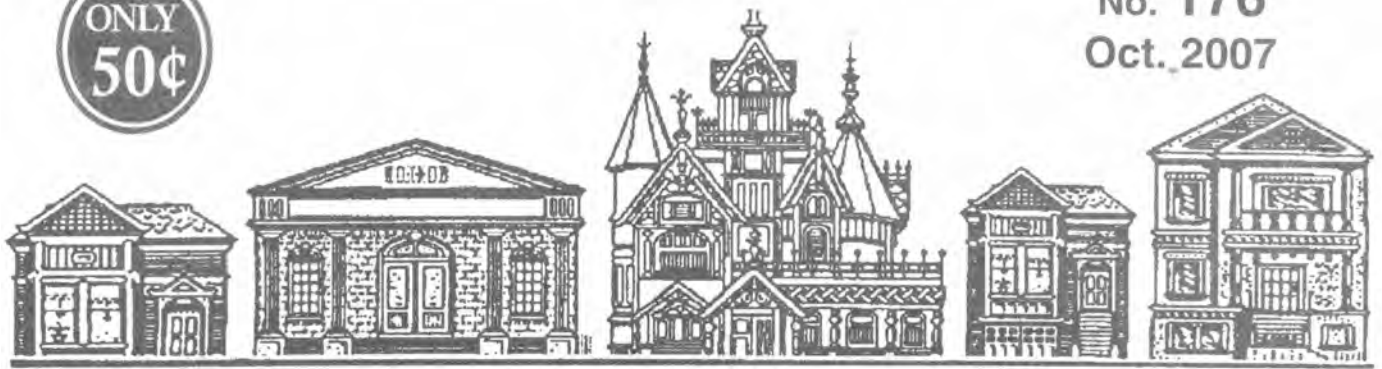


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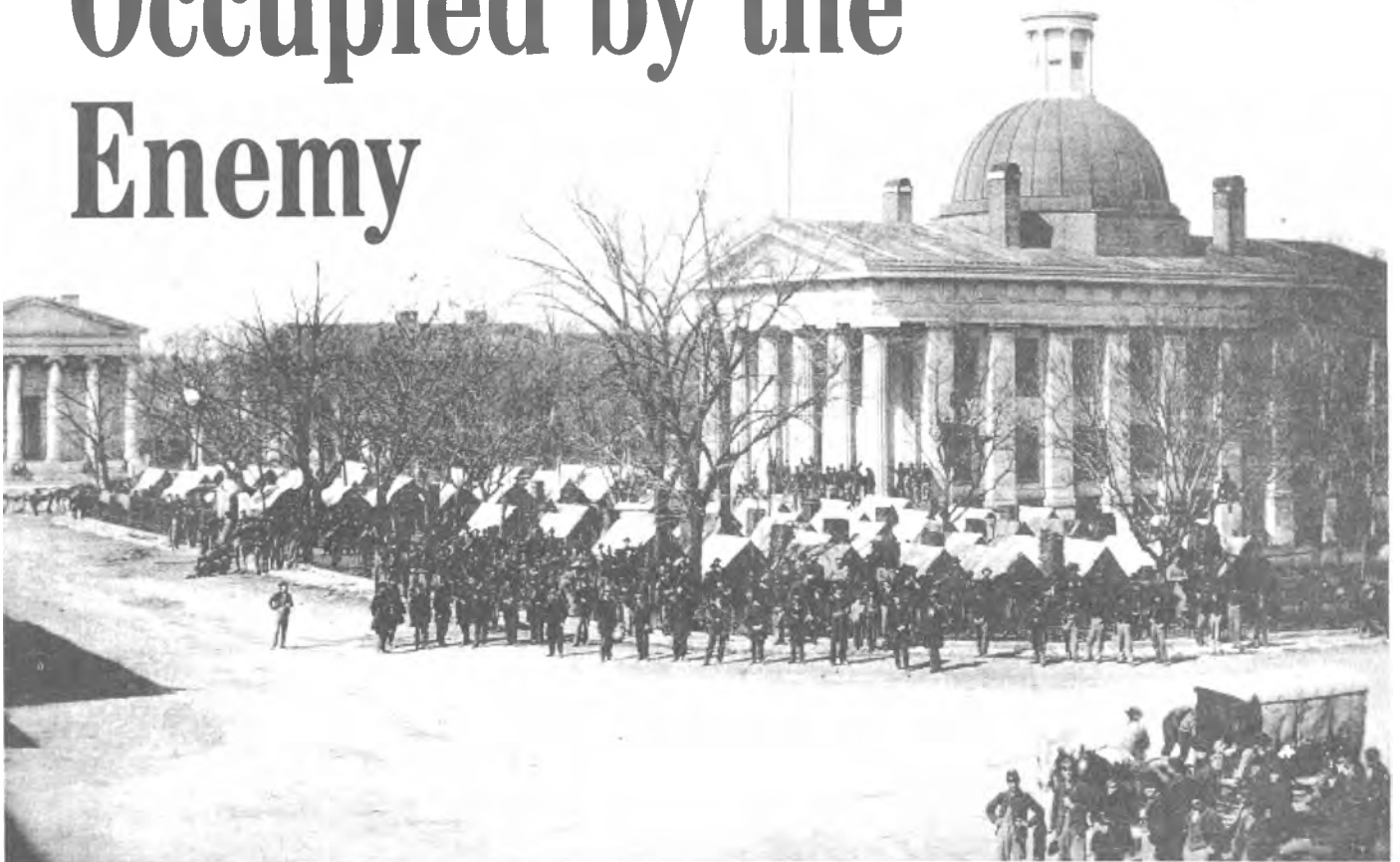
No. 176
Oct. 2007



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

Huntsville, Alabama, Occupied by the Enemy



Also in this issue: **German POWs at Redstone**

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Occupied by the Enemy

From the War-Time Diary of Jane Chadick

Step back in time, almost a hundred and fifty years ago, and experience Huntsville under the rule of the hated yankee army. For the writer, Jane Chadick, it was a constant struggle to obtain food and basic supplies as she worried about her husband, W.D., who was serving in the Confederate Army.

Oct. 4, 1864 - Still raining. Sent George and Davis to the depot for some provisions, which Billy had purchased from a soldier--one month's rations, that is, four pounds of sugar, two and a half pounds of coffee, 22 pounds of bacon and a half box of crackers. Heard there were two letters for me at the post office. Sent for them, and when 10 cents was demanded before delivery, Georgia, not having the money, returned without them. What new system of extortion is this from these upstarts in office? Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were arrested and carried before the provost today on a charge of feeding Rebels during the feint of Saturday last. Have not heard the result. Am

suffering with a dreadful nervous headache.

Oct. 5 - Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were required to take the oath and give a \$1,000 bond, besides the humiliation of being escorted to town by an enemy guard.

Oct. 6 - How beautiful the sunshine after four days of incessant rain! Sent George and Dave to the depot after provisions. In addition to the things above mentioned, they brought me some dried beef, cheese, a bottle of vinegar and a half a box of hard crackers.

Oct. 8 - Xenia Pruitt (a servant) came to town this morning, bringing me a present of a ham and side of meat from Mr. Thompson in her neighborhood. She also brought one bushel of sweet potatoes and some corn, which is quite acceptable in these times of scarcity and dearth of provisions, and for which I feel truly grateful. Mrs. Harris just came in for me to go to the market with her to make some arrangement for beef. She tells me that bacon is 40 cents per pound and very scarce.

Oct. 16 - The enemy look rather blue. Two regiments have received orders to leave since morning. Hark! A band of music playing "The Mocking Bird." They are at this moment marching by on their way to the depot. Joy go with them, so that



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they never return! Everybody has been gloomy at the thought of their taking up Winter quarters here, and we can only pray and hope that such a calamity may be altered by their being compelled to evacuate.

Oct. 17 - Yesterday, the enemy sent out 10 wagons on a foraging expedition, and they were all captured! Gen. Grainger's family all leave tonight for Nashville, which looks rather significant. Miss Kate Lane is to be married tonight to Col. Towns, one of Gen. Logan's staff. Gen. Grainger's family and many others leaving tonight. Was a great disappointment to the family, as they expected quite a crowd.

Oct. 21 - Here comes Xenia, with a present of 750 pounds of flour from Mr. Thompson. A bag of turnips and sweet potatoes from Mrs. Pruitt and a small basket of onions and apples from Mrs. Otey. I shall not forget my Meridianville friends. And here comes Nancy Watkins, colored, riding in on horseback at the alley gate with a note from Sue and with a basket of nuts for the children. I am truly glad to get this, as the boys were again refused a pass for that purpose this morning. We have a fine, fat yearling - our dependence for beef this Fall, and owing to the presence of the enemy, we have to keep it in the back yard. Hark!

Two shots are fired near us. What's that? Shortly after, Ed comes in and reports that someone has left the gate open, and the calf is out and gone! Everyone starts in pursuit. Returned after dark with no success. Gave it up as lost and gobbled up, no doubt, by the soldiers.

Oct. 22 - Ed and Georgie went out at daylight to look for the calf with no success. While at breakfast, someone drove it home, but it had a minnie ball through one side of its head - probably the shot we heard.

Oct. 24 - A soldier came in my back yard this morning and took deliberate aim at my house dog, and fired right in the midst of a group - Margaret and her children - the ball plowing the ground within a yard of one of the latter. The ball missed the head of the dog, going between his legs. I sprang to the door, calling out "What are you shooting my dog for?" He replied, "God d--n you, why don't you come out and keep him off me?" "It's nothing but a damned Secesh no how," he said and got away in a hurry, two other cowards standing sentinel at the gate. Such outrages from yankee

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Groucho Marx

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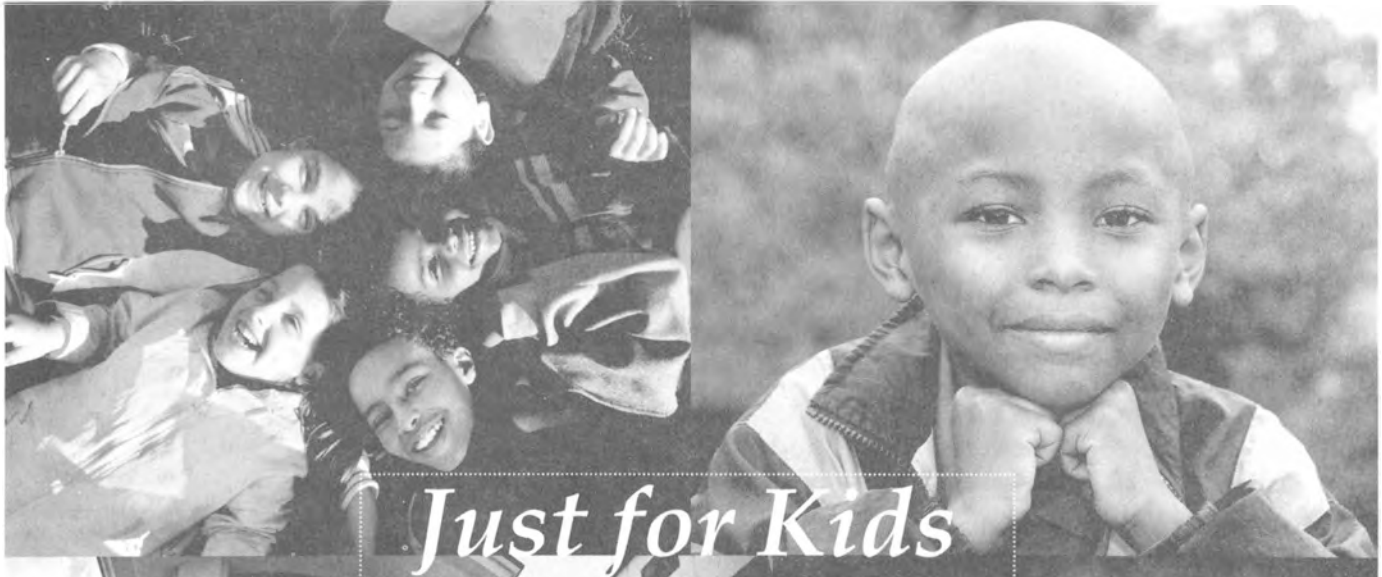
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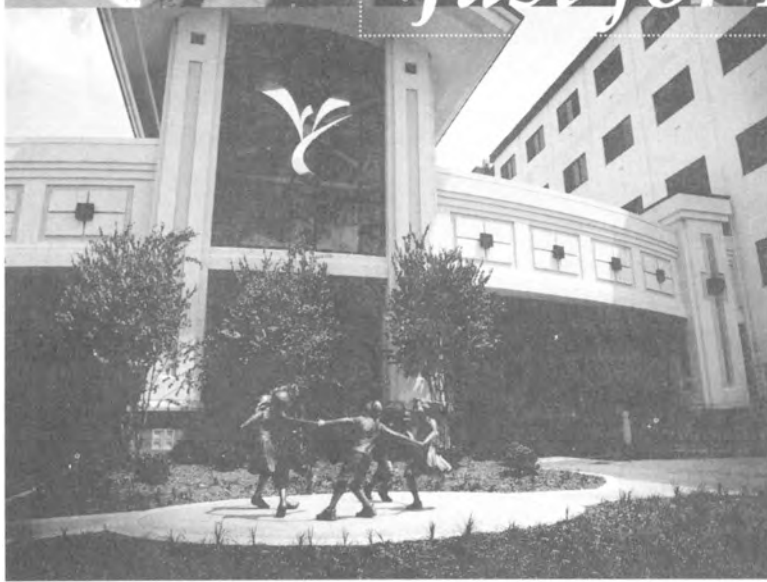
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soldiers are hard to submit to. Went to Col. Lynn (at Mrs. Rice's), commander of the post, to report these negroes. Was politely and kindly heard.

He admitted that it was an outrage and said that they were sent out to press other negroes to work upon the fortifications, and were not allowed to go in private homes without a white officer with them. He promised to investigate the matter and prevent a similar recurrence of such conduct, and that as soon as the work upon the fortifications was finished they should be sent off from here, adding that he had but little use for them, and saying, "Upon my word, Madam, you treat them much better than we do."

Oct. 25 - Cannons have been heard here all the evening. All the available troops have been sent from here to Whitesburg with several guns from the fort to prevent the Rebels from crossing at that place. There is not a single picket out tonight, and if it were only daylight, we could, for the first time in a year, go where we pleased without a pass.

Oct. 26 - A good many troops passed to Decatur yesterday evening, raw levies, two-months men. A sutler from there reports today that 300 of them got suddenly sick, unable to cross the river when they got there, and 90 of those who did cross were killed.

Oct. 27 - Many soldiers,

wounded, were brought in last night from Decatur. There is heavy fighting going on still. Cannon are distinctly heard, but we can learn nothing of how the battle goes. Eighty Confederate prisoners were brought in this evening, taken in the trenches. They would not permit citizens to talk with them. There are not 100 Federal soldiers in Huntsville.

They have been moving their ammunition from the magazine today, and everything looks like they were preparing to leave. The price of goods has fallen considerably. Went this evening to see Mrs. Hereford, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Brickell and Mrs. Fackler. A surgeon waited upon the latter this morning to inform her that her house would probably be taken for the wounded.

Oct. 28 - Still fighting at Decatur. Went to the square this evening with Mrs. Stelle to look at the new goods. Mr. Herrick gave Mary a beautiful dress. Every store in town is filled with beautiful goods. Nearly all the female portion of Huntsville were abroad this evening shopping. The rush was caused by the new order which is to go into effect on Monday, that is, that no person can buy over \$1

"Exposure to German for two years, but many words are inappropriate for business."

Seen on local resume



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worth without a permit, for which they pay 25 cents, and if over \$10, they must take the oath.

Nov. 1 - Last evening, Mr. Herrick took tea with us. Owing to the scarcity of the times, had a very plain supper. A good cup of coffee, broiled ham and chipped beef, biscuits, batter cakes and light bread, canned fruit (peaches and cream) concluded that bill of fare. Eddie commenced clerking for Mr. H. a day or two ago. On Sunday evening, the Rebels came near town and burned the contra-band camp. Mr. Tate Lowry's house is being occupied by negroes.

Nov. 4 - Just sent Sue two letters, one from myself and the other from Miss Robinson in Dixie. Sue has not been home now since she left two months ago, even though only five miles distant, all because Col. Horner will not get her a pass unless she takes the oath.

Nov. 5 - Jennie and I were busy at work this morning finishing up a new black and white alpaca dress when we were surprised by the entrance of Sue. She seems overjoyed to get home again, is quit fat and rosy. She

brought the children a quantity of persimmons, hickory nuts and popcorn. Went this evening to see Miss Tanny Moore, who has just come from across the river, to learn if she had lately seen my dear W.D. She had not seen him, but had learned that he was on his way to Whitesburg.

Nov. 7 - Made me a pair of black cloth gaiters today and sent them to the country to be sold. My first attempt in the shoemaking line. Little Mary told me today that she had a new Sunday school teacher and, upon asking her name, she replied that she did not know, but it was the lady who went outdoors so much without her bonnet and got sunburned.

Nov. 8 - Sent this morning in search of Tom (a servant). Found him at his wife's house. He looked surprised and embarrassed to see me, and said that the reason he had not been

"Wife who puts husband in doghouse, soon find him in cathouse."

Old Chinese proverb



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round was because he had so much work to do elsewhere. He has evidently assumed his freedom. So farewell to our last servant. He consented to come up and go to mill, and Mrs. Parker kindly furnished me a horse. When he left, after bringing the meal, I requested him to return as usual. He replied he would when he had time. I gave him some fine chewing tobacco, which seemed amply to satisfy him for his trouble. Sue returned this evening. Today is the presidential election at the North.

Nov. 11 - The enemy hearing that some Confederate soldiers were at Mr. James Robinson's plantation, Col. Horner proceeded thither last evening, with a company of soldiers and the notorious Finch Britt as a guide. Surrounding the house, they demanded a surrender, telling them it was useless to resist as they had 50 men. The reply was, "If you want us, come and take us." Finch Britt was stationed at a window, where he was immediately shot. Thus have the enemy lost a most valuable scout and the citizens of the countryside a most dangerous foe. Col. Horner narrowly escaped. He had one of his shoulder straps shot off. The Confeds, number not known,

made their escape, but Mr. Nugent, an innocent man occupying the house with his family, was unfortunately killed. The next day, Col. Horner sent up a squad of men to lay the house in ashes, an inglorious revenge, we should say, for a Methodist preacher, for such is said to have been his vocation before the war.

Nov. 12 - I rose late with a nervous headache. Mrs. Mayhew and Miss Hattie Figures brought their sewing and spent the morning with me. The college buildings are ordered to be vacated for a hospital. Thus are five or six families and several young ladies from a distance from their homes turned out of doors upon a few hours' no-

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tice. Mrs. Wilson is sending most of the furniture out among her friends. A fine piano has just been brought here, as well as six poster chairs, a large hair-cloth arm-chair, two fancy Gothic chairs and some pictures. Also the portraits of Bishop Andrews and Dr. Irwin. Went shopping this evening with Clara and bought a hoop skirt.

Nov. 20 - There was fighting yesterday at New Market between Russell's cavalry and the Yankees. The railroad was also torn up so that the trains did not get in.

Nov. 23 - There is another excitement this evening, but how much foundation there is for it, we know not. It is thought that the enemy are evacuating here. They say that Hood's whole army is at Decatur, and Forrest in front of them.

Nov. 24 - The panic in-

creases. The enemy are actually taking their departure. The whole town is in commotion. The trade stores - many of them are closed - are packing their goods as rapidly as possible. Others are selling out as fast as they can at cost, and such another rush of men and women to furnish themselves with goods was truly never seen.

Jennie and I went on the square with the crowd, and I purchased calico and socks and other things in proportion. Went this evening to see Mrs. Davis and passed Corinna (a servant) having a wagon loaded for the depot. She goes to Nashville tonight.

The officer who has her in charge went to a Yankee lady at Mrs. Davis' today, and begged her to take Corinna under her charge, telling her that she was a very

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smart servant, and that her master was a tyrant and a colonel in the Confederate army, and had once taken her off South. Mrs. Davis advised the lady to have nothing to do with her, that her master had always been a kind one and, although he had once taken her across the river, he had brought her back when she wanted to come.

I went back and spoke to Corinna, and asked her where and why she was going. She said that it was to Nashville to avoid the Rebels. She was at first inclined to be important and impolite, but when I talked kindly to her, she changed her tone and said that, if things had not gone so far, she would not have gone. I told her that I did not ask her to stay, but if she was ever in want or needed a home, she could come back, and that she should be kindly treated. She commenced crying and the Yankees hurried her off.

A large proportion of Africa is collected at the depot tonight, awaiting transportation. The work

of evacuation is going on rapidly. Fires are burning in different quarters of the town where there have been camps, which makes quite an illumination. Many fear that they will set fire to the town before leaving.

Went with Eddie after supper to Mr. Donnegan to ask him to loan me some money to make a few

purchases in the morning. My request was kindly and readily granted. He is every inch a gentleman, and Mrs. Donnegan is equally a lady.

Nov. 25 - Had the misfortune to be very sick and unable to see anybody, consequently missed the opportunity of making many cheap bargains at the stores, as

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they are still selling out. Spent the day in great suffering from a violent sick headache, increased, doubtless, by the excitement.

Nov. 26 - Rose immediately after breakfast, notwithstanding my great weakness from yesterday's illness, and went on the square. Purchased shoes, calico, soda, pickles, oysters, knives and forks, plates, tumblers, and a hat and pants for W.D. They were burning the papers belonging to the provost marshal's office in the courthouse yard, and there was a great stir among the enemy generally.

It is said that Rebel cavalry are hovering in the neighborhood, and that seven negro soldiers were killed today near the house of Charley Strong. The enemy all expect to get away by morning. The soldiers threaten to burn the town, and there is a strong guard out to prevent it. Green Academy (the site of present day East Clinton school) is burning at this moment.

Many families in town are left without a single servant, all gone to the Yankees. The country all around the depot is perfectly black with them. Just one year ago today, the Federals occupied Huntsville from Brownsboro,

where they had their camp.

Nov. 27 - Everything remained quiet during the night. The enemy have not all left, but are getting away as fast as they can. The railroad has been cut during the night, and they are marching out, followed by a long line of contraband with their plunder. Stragglers are going around town, taking all the horses they can find out of the stables.

Citizens, disloyal to the South, are also leaving in great haste on mules or anything that they can find to ride. Billy has been down to the depot to see if he can secure some provisions at the hotel, as the proprietor has to run. Eddie has just come in and says that some negroes just fired Donnegan's block, one of the finest buildings in town, but the citizens with the aid of the soldiers, succeeded in putting it out.

Two regiments are still in town, helping the refugees to leave. The railroad being torn up is a mistake. There was a colli-

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sion, but cannot learn any particulars. The supplies have arrived - half a barrel of pickled pork, dried beef, mackerel, half a barrel of rice, white beans, sweet potatoes, 25 pounds of brown sugar, 20 pounds of coffee, four cans of soda, box of cigars. Dressed the children and started them for Sunday school, but they returned, there being none - too much excitement. It does not seem like the Sabbath.

9 o'clock. The last Yankee has gone and we are again free. They did not get off till dark, as the cavalry had to go with the train to guard it. Many apprehensions were felt by the citizens lest they should be detained overnight. Many of the common soldiers made threats of burning the town. They burned Governor Chapman's house today.

Nov. 28 - Russell's cavalry (Confederate) entered the town this morning. The Yankees sent back a train guarded by negro soldiers, from 75 to 100, to bring back the remaining contraband at the depot. A Confederate officer fired at them, and the shot was returned. He fired again several times, and called to his men to charge to the right and to the left, not having a single man at his command. The soldiers took to their heels toward the woods. The abandoned train and locomotive were sent to Decatur. Many females went upon the square to talk to our soldiers, but, for ourselves, we stayed at home.

Dec. 20 - W.D. has been in a constant run all day, trying to make arrangements for us to live this Winter. Has sold his gray horse this morning for \$150 in gold to



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Nick Davis, in order to obtain the right kind of currency. I have scarcely got to speak with him today. It is so long since we have had the pleasure of being together that I can hardly endure for him to get out of my sight.

O, horrors! We had just risen from a late dinner and he had started over to see Mrs. Bradford on some business when he came running back and, putting his head in at the door, said, "Jane, the Yankees are coming!" Telling me to take care of his saddle, he hurried away on foot. Such consternation, terror and confirmed fear and confusion! It was supposed that they were already coming into town. Our attention was now turned to getting Eddie off and hiding the things they left behind. In a few minutes, a servant came for W.D.'s saddle and blanket, but not a rag of clothes did either take with them.

Dec. 21 - Just at daylight, the Yankees burst in upon the waking inhabitants. O, their appearance was more like imps from the bad world than like human beings. They broke open stores, rifled private houses and cut up generally. At Mr. Jolley's, who has always been a good Union man, they took everything that they could lay their hands upon. Children's clothes, jewelry, hoop skirts, going into the rooms where

the young ladies were not yet out of bed. Billy went up town, and they took his hat off his head and ordered Mr. Donnegan to take off his boots, which he positively refused to do, and they had to pass on.

When the Confederates were here, scarcely a pair of boots were to be found in the town for the benefit of our officers and soldiers, but it is a mortifying fact that, when the Federals broke open the stores, plenty of them were found, and two actually came here on their horses with several pairs, which they tried to sell at \$5 per pair.

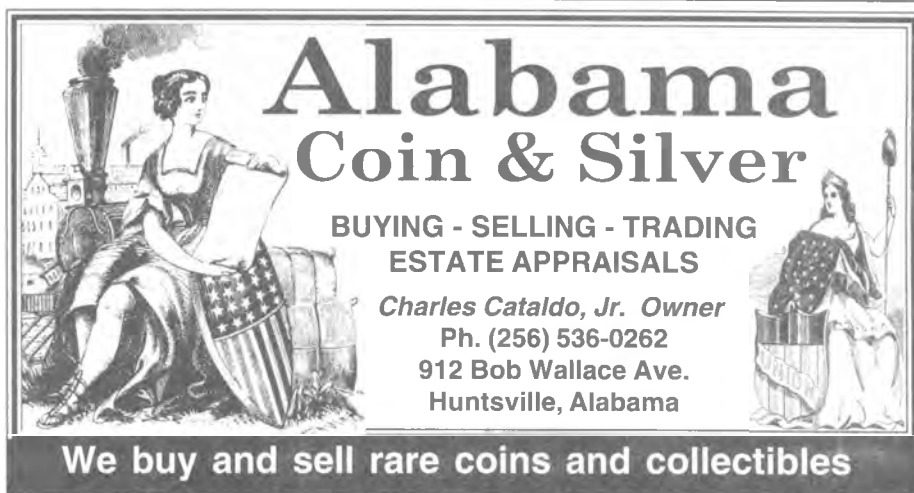
About 11 o'clock, three came here upon pretense of searching the house for arms. They would not take my word for it that there were not any here. I then asked to see their order for such a proceeding. They had

none to show, and explained that they had no commissioned officers with them. This, however, had no effect upon them as they were determined to go through the house.

I was entirely alone and could not leave them even to go to the kitchen and send for a guard. I persisted in declining the search until one of them pushed by me, saying, "We must obey orders." I told them that I was no Union woman, but professed to be a lady, and trusted that I had gentlemen to deal with. The sergeant then assured me that nothing should be touched unless they found arms. They then went into my

"I'm not old - I'm chronologically gifted."

Ron Melton, Arab



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Lou Holtz, Arkansas coach

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room and made right for the wardrobe. I told them to stand back and examine as I removed the things. Some bottles of wine immediately attracted their attention. After draining the only one that had anything in it, some cans of oysters and peaches next elicited their attention. I begged them not to take them and, by giving them a can of peaches, drove them away from the wardrobe.

They next searched where I had put my silver and W.D.'s clothes, but, by keeping them back, adroitly managed to keep them from discovering either. Then they wished to examine my large trunk, saying that it "looked like it would hold the government."

I opened it, but the sergeant prevented them from touching anything. While they were searching in Sue and Jennie's room, one of the scamps went back to my wardrobe and, helping himself to

all my oysters and cans of fruit, made off with them, and the other two followed under pretense of reporting this man, but, doubtless, to assist him in enjoying the spoils, thus relinquishing the search for firearms, which was only an excuse for ransacking the house and stealing whatever they could lay their hands on.

These are truly terrible times. Alas! Alas! There is the railroad whistle. They have actually come back with all their infantry and cannon to occupy us. Our hearts sink within us.



"Dear God: Maybe Cain and Abel would not have killed each other if they had their own rooms. That's what my Mom did for me and my brother."

Kid's note to God

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Long time Huntsville native and regular writer for *Old Huntsville*, Johnny Johnston will be glad to speak before your group about Huntsville, **the way it used to be**. There is no charge.

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Old Huntsville Trivia

1810 - First Courts of Law established in Huntsville.

1813 - Andrew Jackson and Davy Crockett camped at the intersection of Lincoln and Holmes on the way to fight the battle of Horse Shoe Bend.

1850 - Population of Madison County has grown to 26,427.

1862 - Huntsville occupied by Yankee troops.

1865 - Remaining Confederate Troops surrender at Cold Springs atop Monte Sano. This marks the end of the Civil War for Huntsville.

1868 - A judge from Athens is shot when 1500 members of the Ku Klux Klan break up a meeting of former slaves and radical Republicans.

1883 - Frank James, the brother of Jesse James, is acquitted of robbing a federal payroll (no, the James brothers did not commit any robberies in Huntsville).

1892 - First long distance phone call made from Huntsville. The telephone directory had 32 names listed.

1893 - A circus elephant dies while performing here. Its remains were hitched to a double team of mules and dragged to an empty lot in the 500 block of East Clinton Avenue where it was buried.

1904 - Allen Hutchens dies in the first automobile accident to take place in Huntsville.

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Why is it Named That?

by Dex Nilson

Paul Bolden Military Museum

This building just off Airport Road houses the Veterans Memorial Museum, operated by the nonprofit Alabama Center of Military History. There are displays and memorabilia dating back to the Revolutionary War, but the emphasis is on World War I and subsequent conflicts. There are special displays pertaining to North Alabama residents who served in the military. The building is named for one of the county's two World War II Congressional Medal of Honor winners, Staff (later Master) Sergeant Paul L. Bolden. The other is 1st Lt., (later Col.), Cecil H. Bolton.

In Belgium in 1944, Bolden's company was in an assault on a German house used as a strong point, but was pinned down by small arms fire. Bolden and a comrade charged through the fire, and Bolden threw in grenades, then entered the house, surprising 35 Nazi SS troops. With his submachine gun, Bolden killed 20 of them before he was hit - in the shoulder, chest, and stomach. He left the house only to find his comrade killed. He waited outside for the Nazis to surrender. When none came out, he re-entered and shot the remaining 15, thus insuring the success of his company's mission. Bolden's citation reads, "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of life and beyond the call of duty." He was also a recipient of a Silver Star, four Bronze Stars, two Purple Hearts, and Belgian Croix de Guerre with Palm. He was one of the most decorated soldiers

of the war.

Bolden was born at Hobbs Island and grew up on his father's farm near Madison. He enlisted at Huntsville in November 1942 and served until July 1945. After the war, Bolden worked at Redstone Arsenal and lived on a farm near Ardmore, Tennessee. He and his wife Violet raised four sons and three daughters. Bolden died in 1979.

The book "Why is it named that?", containing stories behind the names of 250 places in Huntsville and Madison County may be purchased at Shaver's Books, located in the Railroad Station Antique Mall

Old Time Superstitions

- You should always carry an acorn in your pocket, to bring you luck and ensure a long life.

- Ivy growing on your home will protect you from witchcraft and evil.

- If your nose itches, you will soon be kissed by a fool.

- It is bad luck to close a pocket knife unless you are the one who opened it.

- If your lover gives you the gift of a knife, it means the relationship will soon end.

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A Living Legend

by Malcom Miller

On September 15 a group of old musicians gathered at the Madison Manor nursing home to honor Monte Sano Crowder on his ninety third birthday. The group included many well known musicians including R.D.McBride, Willard Whitaker, Don Uptain, Rudy Strickland, Bill Jackson and many more including this writer.

Monte Sano Crowder was born on September 16, 1914, on Monte Sano Mountain; needless to say that's how he got his name. At an early age Monte and his brothers Leon and Arley P. started playing music. All were accomplished musicians but none of the others followed it to the extent that Monte did. I would venture to say that he played longer in one location and made more money doing it than any other musician of any type in Huntsville

history.

Any one who has lived in Huntsville and surrounding areas since the forties and fifties can remember the Snuff Dippers Ball, originally called the Tennessee Valley barn dance. For thirty some odd years the Ball was Monte Crowder's domain. It was held in the labor temple union hall on Jefferson Street above the Grand theatre and Panther lounge (where the Heritage Club parking lot is now, on Jefferson). There wasn't a whole lot to do for entertainment in

those days and after a hard weeks work in a cotton mill or a cotton patch folks just naturally needed to unwind, and unwind they did.

I will never forget the first time I slipped into the Ball at age sixteen. I had never seen the likes of it in my life. The place was packed to the brim with swinging, sweating humanity, there were cuspids all around and some of the dancers aim wasn't too good, but this made the dancers glide across the floor more smoothly. I still recall many of the original musicians in the band, there was

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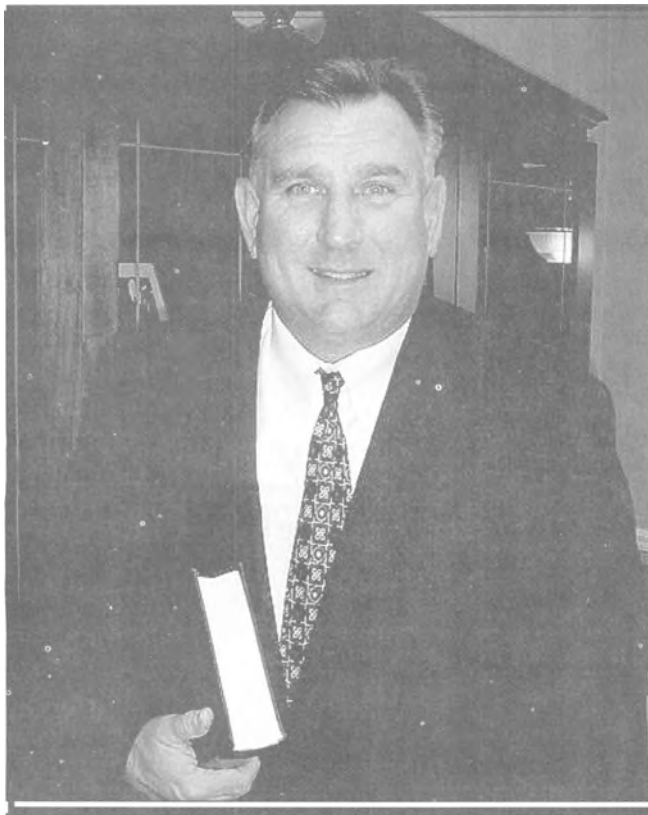
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Grady Gentle, Buster Holloway, Charlie Hanes, Gene Jennings, Joe Sharp, and of course Monte leading the band playing the fiddle as only he could. Monte not only played at the ball, he appeared at local theatres and schools through out the Tennessee valley. He also had a radio show at one time called Crowder's Corn Crib.

Most all of this happened before televisions, computers, cell phones, microwave ovens and many of the things we think we can't do without today.

I am truly glad that I have been able to live in Huntsville and Madison County from the depression era till today. I have seen many things and known

many people but I dare say none were more interesting than Monte Sano Crowder and the Snuff Dippers Ball.

The Naked Truth

from 1911 newspaper

Seven people - three men and four women - were arrested and placed in jail here by Deputy Sheriffs Pierce and Robinson on charges of enjoying the charms of the Big Spring while unclothed in their natural attire.

A mad scramble ensued as several of the town's gentry rushed forward to volunteer their efforts in the arrest of the comely lasses. The parties are members of a naturalist society.

"Thank you for your consideration. Hope to hear from you shortly!"

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Heard On The Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Many of you recognized that handsome boy in the September Photo of the Month as **Malcolm Miller**. However only one can be the first correct caller, and that person was **William Mitchell** who worked with Malcolm at Genesco in 1948 and has known him for 59 years! William has been retired now for 17 years, loves fishing and just living life with sweet wife of 60 years, **Iva**.

Burritt on the Mountain is a very romantic spot, and many couples love to marry there. Such was the case with **Ashley Moorefield** (parents are **Alfred and Deborah Moorefield**) and **Justin Cassidy**, who exchanged vows in early September. Justin's parents are **James & Pamela Cassidy**. Justin's proud aunt is **Dale Cassidy**.

Jane Roberts, wife of **Roscoe Roberts**, worked tirelessly at the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library. A special program was held in September to honor her life, and to dedicate the new **Jane Grote Roberts Auditorium** of the library. She will always be remembered for her tremendous contributions to the library, and the love she always showed to her

family.

Trade Day was held this year again in early September, and many people enjoyed the arts, crafts, food and entertainment held round the square. It was great to see **Elizabeth Wright**, who currently lives in Alaska, who was visiting her sister **Linda Denton**, who lives here.

Happy Birthday **SAM KEITH!**

Don't miss the 2007 event at the Von Braun Civic Center North Hall on Nov. 10 to honor the new inductees for the **Military Heritage Commission Hall of Heroes**.

I had the opportunity to meet a really great endodontist recently. Many people know **Schuyler Hunter**, who has done thousands of root canals over the years. I have to say I was dreading it, but it turned out to be one of the most pleasant experiences I have had. His sweet wife **Martha** works in the office as well, and it was great meeting both of them.

That sweet smiling face you

see when you have bank business at Colonial Bank on Church street belongs to **Jennifer Dugan**. She just married **Ted Parmenter** and they had a wonderful honeymoon cruise in the Gulf of Mexico. Congratulations to both of you!

Babs Roper was a legend in Huntsville, an extraordinary business woman (Roper's Flowers) and her death recently saddened many in Huntsville. We send our deepest condolences to **Randy Roper** and her many friends and family.

The luxury condo's at 301 East Holmes are really worth seeing - beautiful. Recently they were featured as the 2007 Decorator Showhouses by the **Women's Guild of the Huntsville Museum of Art**. This preview goes through Oct 7.

We met an interesting couple recently who are very involved with the **Dallas/Lincoln Village District** and actually are residents of Dallas Village - **Court &**

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 boy has been standing behind a chair for over 40 years!



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Mandy Heller are very interested in preserving the homes in that area.

We were so sad when **Margaret Tucker**, of Hurricane Creek, died recently. She will be missed by her family and many friends. She was the best.

October marks the 100th anniversary of the **Latham/Farley Methodist Church** here in Huntsville. Oct. 14 with a celebration - Congratulations!

Happy 28th Anniversary to **Ron and Barb Eyestone** - that's alot of togetherness!

John Rader recently had aortic valve replacement and is doing well - he's got good care with sweet wife **Phyllis** and daughter **Renay Nunn**, and Renay's husband **David Nunn**. We love you John!

A special Hello to a really nice guy we met recently, **Deputy Joseph Rice**. We are very proud of you!

Recently while having dinner at Mason's downtown, we met a very handsome firefighter. **Stan Miller** works out of the Madison firestation for many years. We are really proud of him, and so is his wife, **Elise!**

Peter Joffrion, our City attorney, went into his garage one night and was bitten twice by a copperhead snake hiding on a shelf. We're very happy that he is doing fine, and want to warn our readers to be VERY careful when reaching for something in the dark, as snakes are very active this time of year.

Lisa White is having a birthday this month, October, so Happy Birthday to you Lisa!

Another October birthday is **Diane Owens**, who looks younger each year! I need to know how she does that! Probably genes - her sweet mom **Lola Stutts-Braxton** lives in the Shoals and is gorgeous too!

Happy Anniversary to my sweetie **Tom!** We married in 1989 in Edinburgh, Scotland and

it was SO romantic!

It was really good to meet **Sammie Dickson**, who works with Seriese Intern. & European Boutique. She is married to **David**, and her daughter **Penny Mayhall** is having a birthday in October. Penny's daughter, and Sammie's granddaughter **Carrie Mayhall**, turns 15 in October!

We have famous newcomers to our city, as well as many who were affected by BRAC. WELCOME all of you to HUNTSVILLE and please take the time to walk around the historic areas, they're just beautiful this time of year. You're going to love Huntsville and her people!

Welcome back to **Chuck & Annelie Owens**, and **Ken & Diane Owens** who just returned from a week to Washington, DC! It was made even more special because **Congressman Bud Cramer** welcomed them to the Capital, and **Peggy Fields** gave them an incredible tour that they'll never forget. Bud & Peggy are the best.

Annetta Martinson, a young 93, wants to send her love to grandson **Pat Martinson, Jr.** and his pretty wife **Kassey** on their first wedding anniversary. **Pat Martinson, Sr.** is the proud Dad!

The Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation recently presented awards to those who work to preserve our historic treasures. Two of the recipients were the



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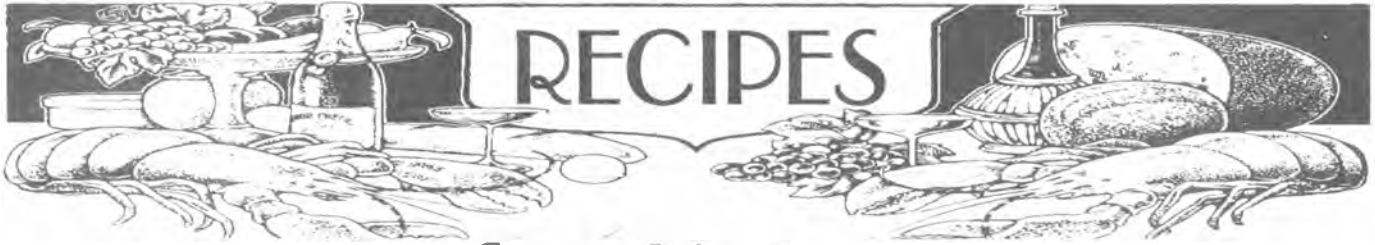
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Spicy Vegetarian

Jalapeno Cheese Nachos

2 T. vegetable oil
 3 8" flour tortillas, cut into 6 wedges
 1 1/2 c. grated Monterey Jack cheese with jalapeno peppers

With a pastry brush, lightly coat both sides of each tortilla wedge with oil. Place on cookie sheets and broil on both sides til lightly golden. (These can be stored for up to 3 days).

When ready to serve, arrange wedges on cookie sheet and lightly sprinkle the grated cheese and garlic powder. Broil just til melted. Serve with sliced Jalapeno peppers (bottled).

Tamari Almonds

3 T. tamari soy sauce
 1 1/2 T. vegetable oil
 1/2 t. cayenne pepper

3/4 t. salt
 4 c. whole, unblanched almonds

Combine the tamari, oil, cayenne and salt in a large bowl. Stir in the almonds and coat well, let sit for an hour, stirring often.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. With a slotted spoon, remove almonds from the bowl and spread in a baking sheet in single layer, discard remaining marinade. Bake for 20 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. When done, spoon almonds into another baking sheet and let them cool completely. Store in airtight container, or can be frozen.

1 t. salt
 1 c. almonds
 1 c. walnuts
 1 c. dry roasted cashews
 1 c. pecans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat, add spices and cook 30 seconds. Stir in nuts and toss to coat well. Cook 2 minutes, spread nuts in one layer on a baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and cool completely. Store in tin or jar for 2 weeks or freeze for several months.

Spicy Mixed Nuts

2 T. unsalted butter
 1 t. chili powder
 1 t. ground cumin
 1/2 t. paprika
 1/2 t. cayenne pepper

Crunchy Lentil Salad

1 c. lentils, rinsed
 5 c. water
 1 bay leaf
 1 celery rib, diced
 1 carrot, minced
 1/2 c. red onion, diced
 2 T. fresh parsley, minced

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- 1/4 c. olive oil
- 2 T. fresh lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 t. dried thyme
- 1/2 t. ground cumin
- 1/2 t. cayenne

Salt & black pepper to taste

In a medium saucepan combine lentils, water and bay leaf. Bring to boil and cook uncovered for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Pour into a colander and discard bay leaf. Drain lentils well, let them sit 5 minutes or so.

Place lentils in serving bowl and stir in the celery, carrot, onion and parsley. Mix together the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, thyme, cumin, cayenne, salt and pepper and pour this onto the lentil mixture. Toss carefully and serve at room temps.

Spicy Blue Cheese Vinaigrette

- 2 T. red wine vinegar
- 1 T. Dijon mustard
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Salt to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch sugar
- 6 T. olive oil
- 1/2 c. crumbled blue cheese

In a small bowl, thoroughly beat together the first 6 ingredi-

ents. Slowly beat in the olive oil, then stir in the blue cheese. Chill. Toss with salad just before serving. This will keep in the fridge for up to 4 days.

Cold Oriental Noodles with Peanut Sauce

1 lb. spaghetti, cooked al dente, drained & rinsed

4 T. roasted sesame oil

With your hands, place spaghetti in large bowl and mix with 2 tablespoons of the oil. Cover & chill up to 24 hours.

Sauce:

1/2 c. natural peanut butter

1/3 c. soy sauce

3 T. Chinese rice wine or Sherry

1 T. water

1 1/2 T. rice vinegar

1 T. vegetable oil

1 T. packed light brown sugar

3 garlic cloves, minced

2 t. fresh ginger, minced

1/2 t. crushed red pepper, or more to taste

Combine remaining 2 tablespoons sesame oil with all these ingredients and beat til mixed, set aside. Thinly slice 4 scallions & one cucumber, add to pasta at serving. Pour sauce over all and serve. Delicious and spicy!



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Treasure Under the Courthouse Square?

by Pat Carpenter

We've all heard the story of the daring Huntsville bank robbery by none other than the infamous Jesse James. How he robbed the bank atop the cliff at the Big Spring in downtown Huntsville, then, in order to successfully make his getaway, how he spurred his horse over the cliff and into the great spring itself! Truly, a story worthy of the legend of Jesse James. The only problem with this tale is that it never happened. Now, it's true that Jesse's brother Frank was tried and acquitted in Huntsville in 1884 for an earlier Muscle Shoals robbery, but from all historical accounts, Jesse never set foot in the lovely Tennessee Valley town of Huntsville, Alabama.

Well, there's another tale (tall?) of robbery and daring that too was set in Huntsville. Yet there's been no mystical legend built up around it and hardly anyone remembers or knows anything about it.

It was the spring of 1966, April

to be exact. Huntsville was no longer a sleepy Southern town, but it was still a fairly small city of, say 50,000 people. The Space Industry in Huntsville was a little more than three years away from its greatest glory; when Neil Armstrong and company would

blast to the moon aboard Huntsville's own version of home cooking, the most powerful rocket ever made, the Saturn V. It was also a time when the old Madison County Courthouse was being torn down to be replaced by a new modern facility that the architects



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said would be the envy of every other city in the land. In addition, a new Mall had just been constructed in an old pasture at University Drive and Memorial Parkway. For many years this pasture had been a favorite place for kids to go rabbit hunting. Now, it would be a favorite place to go "hang out."

This modern mall would be a boon to Huntsville and North Alabama for years to come. Its two anchor stores, Loveman's and J.C. Penney's, brought patrons in by the thousands daily. Business was good for the retailers and the citizens were so happy to have this wonderful place to come and shop.

It was also, apparently, a place someone else was very happy to have around: A professional safe cracker!

In the late night hours of Sunday, April 10, 1966 burglars chopped a hole in the roof of Penney's. Dropping 20 feet to the floor of the room housing the heating and cooling equipment, the burglars then broke through a wooden door leading to the accounting department. The intruders then went to the main floor of the store and availed themselves of a J.C. Penney brand electric drill, sledgehammer and other fine Penney tools which they used to open a large vault.

The desperados must have cased the joint well because they next entered a small second-floor employee dining room and chopped a hole through a wall, directly into the room containing the vault. Using their own cutting torch, the burglars burned a foot square hole in the bottom right corner of the vault door. The thieves took their cutting torch with them but

left the other tools behind. Huntsville Police dusted for fingerprints Monday morning, but it looked like the bandits wore gloves and left no trace of their identity.

A second, smaller safe was left intact inside the larger vault. Police said it contained only a few hundred dollars of office money.

In estimating the loss, a store official said the vault contained about \$20,000 in cash and \$20,000 in checks and credit purchases. The scoundrels took only the cash in the main vault and left

the checks and credit purchases scattered about the office and hallway.

Pointing out that the burglars were highly professional, detectives said that upon entering the store, they went immediately to the door through which they eventually escaped and cut off a heavy padlock in order to insure an emergency exit if they were discovered.

Huntsville police worked diligently on the case for many months but no new evidence or

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leads were ever discovered. The daring burglary was destined to go down in history as unsolved and the perpetrators anonymous masters of their craft -- textbook professionalism at its insidious best....

It was a little over four years later and a curious tale began to make the rounds in North Alabama.

It was June, 1970 and an Athens, Alabama man was in Westminster, Maryland. He asked the local police where he could find a room to bed down. They sent him to the local Rescue Mission where he stayed for two days. While there he met an ex-convict who had done time in the Maryland State Penitentiary.

This ex-convict, upon hearing the man was from North Alabama, told him that he had met another convict in the Maryland State Pen who was, "one of the best safe men in Alabama." This "safe man" told the ex-con that he had burglarized "either a Penney's or Loveman's store" several years earlier in Huntsville.

After he had cracked the safe, the man took his share, which he said was \$12,000 and hid it in the construction site of the Madison County Courthouse.

When he went back to get his money a couple of days later, concrete had been poured over the place where it was hidden and he was never able to recover it.

The safe man supposedly had two accomplices.

The Maryland ex-con did not know the date of the burglary but Huntsville Police records show that Penney's in The Mall was broken into the weekend of Easter, April 10, 1966, after the store had closed at 10:15 p.m.

Huntsville Police Department detectives, informed of this curious tale, were, of course, unable to confirm the whereabouts of the money, but did note that the story fit with the known facts of the case.

Pictures of the various stages of the construction in the corridors of the courthouse show that at the time of the break-in the cement columns around the ground floor of the building were being poured.

Is this story true? No one can be sure, but it does seem highly possible. We'll probably never find out, at least that is until the time comes when a new courthouse is needed.

Then, who knows, maybe the successful

bidder for new construction will discover an extra \$12,000 treasure hidden in the bowels of the courthouse square.



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Oil Discovered in West Huntsville

from 1923 newspaper

The news that the deep oil well in West Huntsville will again be probed was received as an assured fact at the office of the newspaper today. The committee in charge of the work, who have for the past two weeks been active in securing one hundred names, reported this morning that the subscription list has been over-filled and that a meeting is called for next Thursday.

Selection of officers is next. The sound of the oil man's drill will soon be heard again in West Huntsville and this time we all hope it will bring home a gusher. If it does, there will be a new crop of rich people in Huntsville.

Already the local hotels are crowded with speculators from northern states who are actively pursuing land leases. Some properties, which were selling for thirty dollars an acre a year ago, are now rumored to be on the block for more than a hundred.

If the wells play out, Huntsville may soon have a sky line decorated with oil derricks instead of cotton mill chimneys.

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Huntsville Heros

He was a Confederate hero. Born in Huntsville, Alabama, Henry Bolden served in many theaters of the war and saw action in the battle of Nashville. When the Union troops began to overrun his position in bloody hand-to-hand fighting, Bolden, who did not have a gun, picked up a stick and began swinging it furiously.

When the battle was over, five dead Yankee soldiers lay sprawled about his feet. Later when asked how he did it, his only reply was, "I knocked them in the head."

Henry Bolden was a black man.

Although few people realize it, there were a number of black Confederate veterans in Madison County. These men, all of whom were valued and respected citizens, earned a unique place in Huntsville history.

Essex Lewis, one of the best known and highly respected of these veterans, went to war with his master, Colonel Nick Lewis, and saw action in Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia.

After the war he returned to Huntsville, where he worked as a farmer and as a janitor at the post office. Lewis was "a loyal member" of the Egbert Jones Camp of Confederate veterans here in Huntsville. In 1910 he was chosen to represent the Huntsville camp at a Confederate reunion in Richmond, Virginia. When Lewis died at the age of 106, his funeral was attended by an honor guard consisting of ex-Confederate soldiers.

Another Huntsville black who saw service in the Civil War was Matt Gray. "Uncle Matt," as he was known, always wore an old gray uniform with the bronze "medal of the Confederacy" pinned to his lapel. He also was a member of the Confederate veterans organization here in Huntsville and had the distinction of a "special" chair being reserved for him at the monthly meetings. According to newspaper accounts of the day,

the only meetings he ever missed were when he was sick.

At his death, the Huntsville newspaper ended his obituary with, "Now Uncle Matt has gone himself to aid with the Rebel Yell."

Shooting Affray in Cocaine Alley

from 1920 newspaper

Shuberta Conley, a woman living in what is known as Cocaine Alley, back of the railroad on Meridian Street, got into an altercation with another woman of the same neighborhood and resorted to gun practice on the other woman, who was quite badly injured. Shuberta is now in jail awaiting the outcome with solidarity and her hearing will come about soon.

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Court News from 1883

This Court adjourned last Friday after disposing of many cases. Amongst them are the following: Carrying concealed pistol: Wm. E. Hill, fined \$50, with costs. Sentenced to hard labor for county 8 months, 15 days.

In the following cases, defendants entered plea of guilty, were fined \$50 with costs, which were paid or secured: Shed Williams, Lee Robinson, Sam Lumpkin, Darby Beadle.

Gaming: Joe Poteet, verdict of guilty, appeal to the Supreme Court, John Gardner, verdict of guilty, fine \$50 with costs, sentenced to hard labor 8 mos., 20 days.

Assault with stick: Allen Gardner plea of guilty, \$20 and costs secured.

Assault and Battery: Robert Brandon, plea of guilty, \$20 and costs secured.

Petit Larceny: Wm. Smith, guilty, fined \$20 with costs, sentenced 8 mos., 10 days. Moses Clay, plea of guilty, \$20 and costs paid.

There were six cases of various sorts against James Reid, white. There was a mistrial in one case, an acquittal in one and the others were dismissed or nolle pros'd.



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Only Half Guilty, Your Honor

from 1902 newspaper

A fellow named Donks was tried recently for entering a boarding house and stealing the owner's wallet containing \$84. The testimony showed that he had once been employed there, and knew exactly where the owner kept his wallet; that on the specified night he raised a window, reached in and took the wallet off the dresser and then ran off.

Jim Buller, the principal witness, testified that he saw the window being raised, saw the man reach in, and heard him running away.

"I rushed after him at once," continued the witness, "but when I caught him I didn't find the wallet. But it was found afterward where he had thrown it."

"How far did he enter the house when he took the wallet?" Asked the counsel.

"Well, he was stoopin' over, halfway in, I should say," said the witness.

"May it please your Honor," interposed the counsel. "The indictment isn't sustained, and I shall demand an acquittal of the court. The indictment charges that he actually entered the dwelling. How, your Honor, can a man enter a dwelling when one half of his body is in and the other half out?"

The jury brought in a verdict of "guilty as to half of the body and not guilty as to the other half."

The judge sentenced the guilty part to two years impris-

onment, leaving it to the prisoner's option as to which part of him will serve the sentence.

Lily Flagg Sold

from 1893 newspaper

Huntsville's Jersey Queen, Lily Flagg, who was given the cup last year for her butter record of 1,047 pounds in one year, has been sold for \$1,250.00 to Mr. Hood of Sasperilla fame. We are informed that when in the zenith of her butter fame, an offer was made of \$3000.00 for the pride of all Madison county Jerseys, but was refused.

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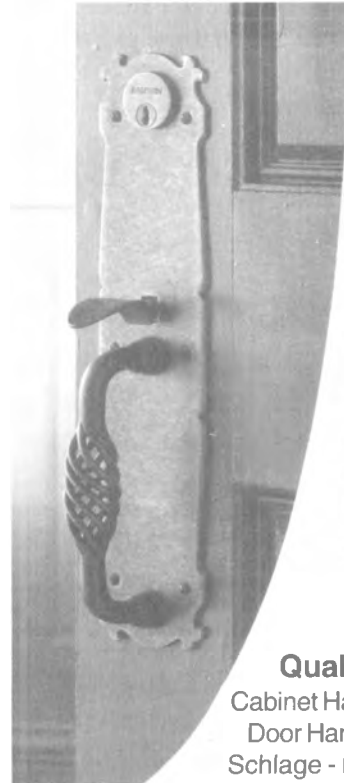
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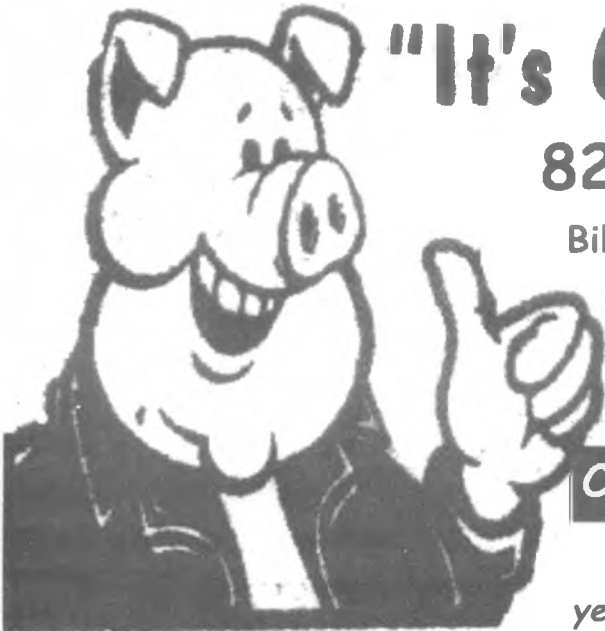
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Rocking Reuben

From the book "Life in the Skillet"
by Harold Fanning

Being the pastor of a country church is a rewarding experience but it can also have its more, well, stressful moments. Such was the case when our pastor received a telephone call from a family in our community inquiring if he would preside over a graveside funeral service. One of their relatives had met an untimely demise as he was run over by a city bus while crossing an Atlanta street.

Even though this family had deep roots in the community, most of them had little to do with anything of a spiritual nature. Not being associated with those church people was a source of pride for the entire family and a convenient way of dealing with a guilty conscience. According to them, attending church with hypocrites was just something that they had no desire to do.

They did, though, make exceptions for church attendance whenever special occasions such as weddings, Easter, Christmas or an occasional dinner on the grounds or a fifth Sunday sangin' arrived. Funerals were also excluded from their church attendance rule and I found it amusing that the father would always proudly proclaim, "I wouldn't be caught dead in a church with those self-righteous hypocrites!"

That was a fine philosophy until one of his boys decided to run for mayor and needed votes. All of a sudden church attendance seemed really

important!

Nonetheless on this occasion the family earnestly wanted their deceased cousin to be with his dearly departed kinsmen who were already buried there or would eventually have this as their final resting place.

The problem with this situation was that



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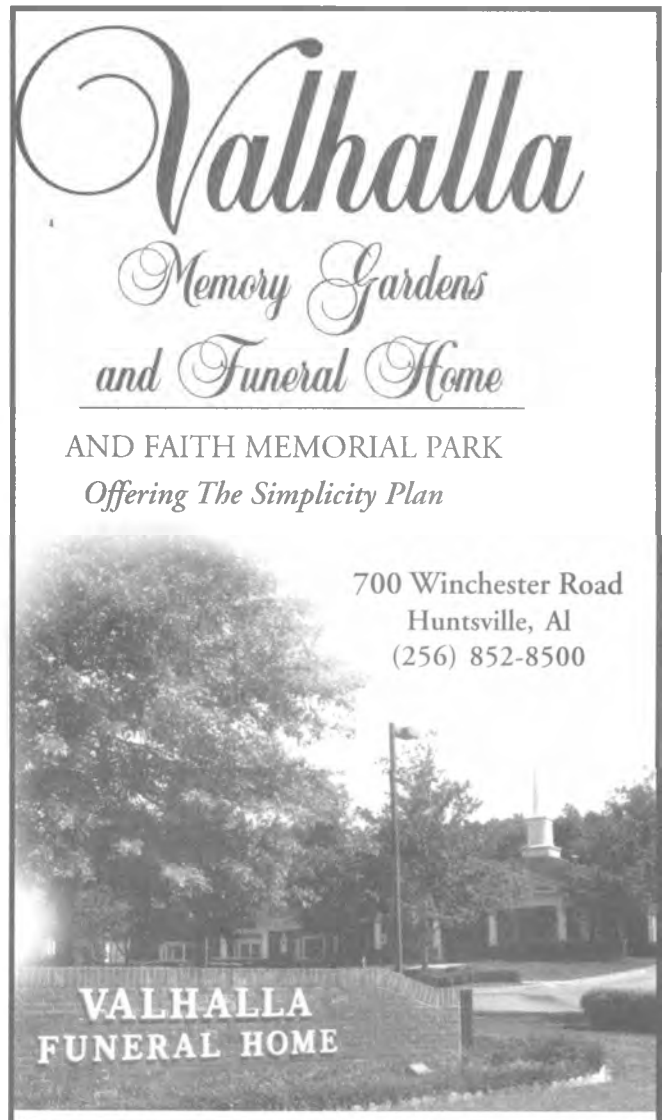
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the departed man's wife had finalized her own funeral plans and had already cremated the body. Needless to say when the family discovered what the widow had done it created a great deal of frustration, fussing, and feuding, especially when they uncovered the fact that the deceased man and his current wife were in the process of getting a divorce just prior to his unfortunate demise.

So after a brief court hearing over who was the legal guardian of the deceased man's ashes, a compromise was finally worked out. Eventually the judge ruled on their complaint and naturally the widow prevailed. But they reached a compromise on the deceased man's ashes.

The widow did agree that she would turn the ashes over to the family for internment in whatever manner they felt fitting.

In other words, she got the money and they got her honey, which was a possession that she was more than happy to surrender.

Looking back, I suppose the family felt some justification because rumor was that the ex was planning on renting an airplane and spreading his ashes either across the Appalachian Mountains (of which the deceased had never seen) or over the Atlantic Ocean (over which he had never

been). Somebody said that she got the idea while watching a movie and she was so moved by that compassionate scene that she vowed when Ruben died she would do exactly the same.

Anyway the day finally arrived for the long-awaited funeral and our pastor was instructed to be at the cemetery around 11:00 a.m. to say a few comforting words over Ruben's ashes.

I never asked him, but I suppose that pastor must have looked through his Bible for hours attempting to find a fitting Scripture that fit this occasion. What do you say about a guy who left his family, ran off to Atlanta, married a woman of questionable character, and got run over by a city bus?

In any case the pastor arrived at the cemetery in plenty of time to offer his condolences to the grieving family. He was told that the ashes were being transported from Atlanta by car driven by one of the cousins and should arrive any moment.

As they waited, the family visited around the various family gravestones and reminisced about days past. Some of the children found a nearby stream and were busy playing in the water while their mothers were constantly badgering them about not getting their new clothes wet



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Minutes ran to hours and still no ashes. Some non-family members became weary of the wait and began leaving the cemetery. Finally one of the uncles walked over to our pastor and said, "Preacher, we don't know what has happened but we understand if you have to leave." The pastor responded with graciousness but politely declined and reassured the family that he would wait for the ashes with them.

It was about this time that a police cruiser came driving up the long winding road to the gravesite. When the officer got out of his automobile he walked over to one family member and whispered something softly to him. The family member looked immediately in the direction of the pastor and said, "Preacher, I need for you to please come with me. There has been an ac-

cident!" The pastor and some family members immediately got in the cruiser with the police officer and headed back down the cemetery road.

Weeks later the pastor privately shared with my dad what had happened. The cousin that was transporting the ashes was almost to the cemetery when they had to stop at a four-way intersection. While stopped, a huge farm truck loaded with soybeans accidentally hit the rear of their car, thus dislodging the container of old Ruben's ashes.

Unfortunately for the family, the urn's lid came off with Ruben strewn all over the trunk of that new car as a result. When the pastor arrived at the accident scene he discovered the cousin in the process of sucking up poor old cousin Ruben with a little Dirt Devil vacuum cleaner, attempting feverishly to get as much of him back in that urn as possible.

Now let us pause here for a moment while I ask you a personal question. Have you ever experienced one of those occasions when you started laughing and even if your life depended on

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it you couldn't stop? That is exactly what happened to our pastor. He became so hysterical at the sight of that cousin sucking up Ruben's ashes that it became necessary for him to lean against the automobile for physical support. This in turn infuriated the family who immediately demanded that the pastor leave the premises.

It didn't take long for word to get back to the community what had happened and of course the entire story had taken on a brand new twist by the time it had made its rounds.

The next Sunday the deacons met to decide what needed to be done about their laughing pastor. Apparently the offended family had complained to some of the deacons and because of kinships, friendships, etc., everyone knew there was no way the pastor could be an effective man of God in their community again. They searched in vain through the Scriptures attempting to come up with some biblical rea-

son to dismiss him. I don't think that laughing at a funeral was dealt with in the Ten Commandments and Jesus never made reference to it in the New Testament either.

When it was all said and done it didn't make much difference because the pastor was let go from his position and wasn't allowed to minister to his congregation from that point on.

While sharing this event with my dad, the pastor said that now whenever he either attends or preaches a funeral he is reminded that in a cemetery in North Alabama, there are ashes of a man named Ruben buried deep inside a Dirt Devil vacuum cleaner bag.

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Woodville, Ala. July 13th 1862

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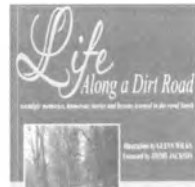
It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity of informing you that I am well and hearty and hope this letter will find you the same. I received your letter of the 5th July today which came very quick and it gave me much pleasure to learn that you were all so well and hearty and that you got along so well.

We started on the 9th from Decatur and came here to Woodville the 13th, a distance of about 45 miles and tomorrow we are going to start for Winchester. We are encamped in a pleasant grove. I can stand the hot weather much better than I thought I could but laying in the shade is not like mowing in the hot sun.

Last Sunday I and another man found a bee tree and we cut it in the evening but most of the honey ran out, but we all got as much as we wanted to eat, and we all got stung. I was stung on both lips.

I wish you had my money so that I would not have to take care of it. I would not spend it if you had it. You made mention of three women

making cheese which would go first rate with our hard crackers on the march. We are ordered to march at 4 o'clock tomorrow with 3 days cooked



HAROLD D. FANNING

Life Along A Dirt Road & *Life In The Skillet* by *Harold Fanning*

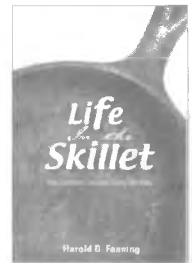
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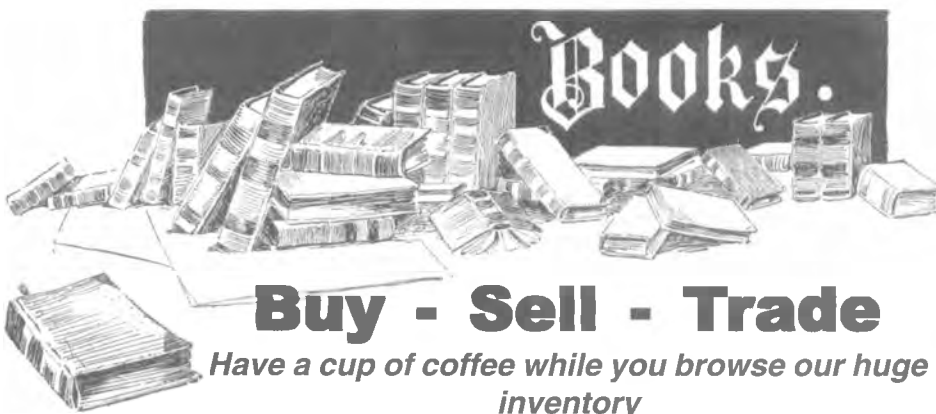
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rations in our haversacks.

I am glad to hear that Salome's family keep well. Tell Salome I want her to raise a hog for when I get home and come to see her I want some ham and eggs.

You wrote about sending me clothes which I do not want you to do for I can draw all the clothes that I want. But my old hat is about gone up. I wrote to you in my last letter that if you could send me one by Ed Niver, I would like it very well, but I suppose Ed started before you got that letter. If you should send me one get one hat size No. 71/8. I am out of postage stamps and cannot get any here so you might send me some if you could get them.

We are right in the mountains and there are no stores about here. Last week there were three men of the 10th Wisconsin shot who were guarding a rail road bridge. They burned two houses for the secesh for firing into a train of cars. There are bands of marauders, guerrilla parties that commit depredations all along the rail road.

I hardly know as to what to write any more, but when we came in this camp several of our boys went out and brought in a good sized hog so we had fresh meat for a while, instead of salt pork, and some of the boys killed geese and ducks, chickens and potatoes and anything they could get hold of.

This is a regular secesh nest, and I think we will clean them out yet but it is a good place for them to secrete themselves in these mountains. The cars run here on Sunday as well as week days in transport army stores.

Tell Lillie that I am coming home sometime and then I will get some of that bread and other good things.

Your husband, George Kryder

Court News from 1911

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

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Tips from Liz

* When you visit a new restaurant, check out the bathrooms first. That'll let you know how clean their kitchen probably is.

* If you are on a salt-restricted diet, try sprinkling a bit of lemon juice over your veges, etc. for a really good flavor.

* With the popularity of the computer, people are sitting for much longer periods of time. Not good for you! Be sure and move around every 30 minutes or so, your body doesn't want to sit for that long without moving.

* This is a really old one. To catch mice, place sweetmeat in your mouth upon going to bed. Keep mouth wide open, with eyes shut. When you feel the whiskers of the mouse, BITE! (And let us know how it turns out).

* An apple works better on heartburn than any expensive medication. Just eat one at the first feeling of heartburn.

* Bad cough? Take some laxatives - you'll be afraid to cough.

* A Bible placed under your pillow at night will keep you from getting nightmares.

* To cure a headache, cut off a lock of your hair and place it under a rock.

* A little moonshine swished around in the mouth will help cure a bad toothache.

* Put your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a noise outside your home or someone is trying to get in your house, just press the panic button for your car. Turn it off when safe.

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FROM THE HEART




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

The Honor

by Glenn Brooks

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

As a police detective and assigned to the evening shift, I had just parked my car on Jefferson Street when a patrol unit passed by. In the back seat, apparently under arrest, was a familiar face. I radioed the patrol unit and asked if I could speak with them about their prisoner before they locked him up.

We met behind the police station and after a brief discussion the arresting officer agreed to allow me to take charge of their arrestee and take him home since he was only guilty of intoxication. It was a long drive to his home out in the county and a longer drive back. I had been away from my duties too long.

On Monday I was summoned to my supervisor's office to explain why I had "interfered" with the officer's arrest. It seemed that one of the officers had made a complaint.

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

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

Staff Sergeant Paul L. Bolden met the enemy a few days before Christmas in Belgium in 1944. Thirty-five German soldiers did not live to regret it. Practically alone, armed with grenades and an automatic weapon, Paul assaulted a farm

house that contained the German soldiers. Paul was wounded three times in that action.

A hero is motivated into action by fear, courage or madness or a combination of all three.

What sent Paul into that fortification, I now know. I know he was a hero.

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

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



Old Huntsville Trivia

1866 - Madison County is recovering from the Civil War. More than 5,000 rations a day are distributed at the railroad station in an effort to combat starvation.

1894 - Robert Donnell High School in Gurley goes co-ed to the strong protest of local dowagers. An editorial of the day states that "co-ed schools are sure to lead to wickedness among the youth".

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AUCTION #1 - SATURDAY OCTOBER 13, 2007 FROM 1 P.M. TIL 4 P.M.

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Charles McCartney, The Goat Man

by Charles DeWitt

For well over 50 years, he was a familiar sight, traveling back and forth through Huntsville, on his way to nowhere; a happy-go-lucky vagabond who enthralled natives and tourists alike with his rustic ways and nomadic life style. His name was Charles "Chess" McCartney, but to people of our town, he was known simply as the Goat Man.

Dressed in his familiar overalls, boots and scruffy cap, the bewhiskered old man would pull into town, unhitch his goats, set up camp and begin talking a mile a minute, telling tales of his travels and his life. And all the time he would be holding a few old postcards, with his picture on them, trying to talk you into buying one.

Depending on the mood he was in, you may have heard tales claiming that he was the son of a famous Confederate General, (or Yankee) or you may have heard that he was a self-made millionaire, and had given up the life of luxury in order to roam the beautiful highways of Alabama with his goat wagon.

But whatever the story; you were sure to be entertained -- at a distance of about 50 feet to escape the smell of the goats.

Charles McCartney was born in Iowa, to a family that, believe it or not, raised goats. Hav-

ing spent his childhood on the family farm, wanderlust struck him, and after hitching his inheritance to an old cart, he headed south.

The few pennies he earned

he got by selling postcards of himself and picking up bottles on the side of the road. Fortunately, goats would eat anything. He claimed to be no stranger to poverty, as he had been raised

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Jamie Sanders, age 8

"dirt poor." If you can believe a story that he told to a storekeeper in Hazel Green, his family was so poor "they could not afford to buy clothes for me, but when I got to be 14 they bought me an old hat and let me stand in the window."

He met his first wife during the Depression, but when she gave him a choice between her and the goats, out she went. Married three more times, he claims not to remember their names. "They weren't around long enough for me to worry about trying to get their names straight." He had a son by his first marriage that was raised by his ex-in-laws.

In later years, when the son became a old man himself, he also became a vagabond with a goat wagon.

Looking back at his traveling days, McCartney described himself as a "self employed business man." Some of the businesses he was involved in were peddling medicine (snake oil?), repairing pots and pans, sharpening knives and axes.

Unfortunately his business as a medicine man ended on a sour note when the goats took a liking to his wares.

The goats also suffered some terrible hangovers.

In his heyday, McCartney also often remarked that he and the legendary Appleaseed would have made a good pair, "He a doin' the planting and me a'doin' the talkin'."

McCartney estimated that he and his team of goats trekked over 200,000 miles and in all that time claimed that he had never slept in a bed or a house. Always camping out, the Goat Man insisted that he had eaten more pork and beans than any other living person - mostly out of a can - and had burned over 75,000 tires to keep warm on cold nights.

Charles McCartney spent his last years in a converted school bus along Highway 80 near Jefferson, Georgia. His food and supplies came from a local welfare office and a church in town

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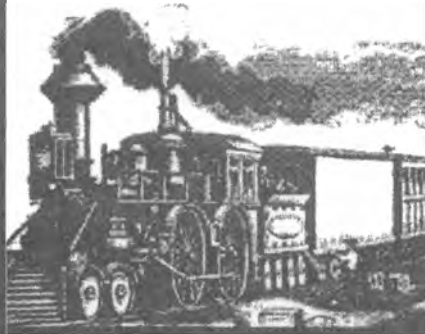
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that occasionally sent him a sack of groceries. He got his water from a nearby well, and cooked over a campfire in front of the bus.

Few people are left in Huntsville who remember the bewhiskered old man. The only memories left are a few grubby postcards.

When he died some years ago, newspapers throughout the South immortalized him as the "Goat Man of Dixie," and compared him to another itinerant wanderer, Johnny Appleseed.

The cheerful vagabond enjoyed the comparison.



Heard on the Streets in the Year 1911

- New 4-room cottage corner 6th st. and Pratt Avenue for rent cheap - apply to J. E. Pierce

- Nick Jones is looking for a good, cheap cow - he will trade or buy - call him in care of the Times.

- William Moore is being held here for charges of forgery and bigamy. He tried to commit suicide in his cell by eating the heads of a large number of matches. Women companions had returned apparently from a hotel on a mission to his mother to get help. The jailer discovered his plight and administered medicine. Before eating the matches he wrote a letter to his mother, companion and chief detectives.

- 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 court-

house 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 to murder.

- Mayor R. Earle Smith stated today that no whiskey shall be sold in Huntsville while

he is mayor. He stated that a few bottles may occasionally change hands but that there will be no general or even restricted sale, and that the law shall be enforced as it appears on the statute books.

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Last Will and Testament

I, John Thomason, knowing that my remaining days are few, take pen in hand to render my last will and testament.

I ask that Horace Cauthron, my good friend of thirty-two years, be the executor of my wishes. He is to be paid the normal fees as is customary for such situations,

To my wife, Mary, who has remained steadfast at my side for sixty-three years, I leave a lifetime of memories and love along with my sorrow at the many times I have caused her anguish.

It is my hope that the good days will heavily outweigh the bad days.

In addition, I leave her our home and farm, with all its furnishings, implements and livestock that she might live her remaining days in a comfortable manner in which she deserves.

In addition, I leave her all my stocks and bonds currently on deposit with the Chattanooga Trust Bank, in addition to any other monies due my estate, that she may continue to derive income from such.

For my oldest son, John, I leave the amount of ten thousand dollars to be paid up on the tenth anniversary of my death, or on the occasion of his mother's death, on the condition he visits her every week and continues to maintain the relationship of a loving son.

If he fails to do so, the money shall be given to a church of the executor's choosing.

For my son, Perry, who has caused his mother and I so much grief for so many years, I leave the amount of three thousand dollars which is in a metal box, buried on the farm in a lo-

cation known only to me and my executor. If he fails to find the money within the period of one year the money shall be given to a church of the executor's choosing.

In addition, a sum of seven thousand dollars shall be paid to

him only after the completion of ten years full-time employment, in a manner consistent with the morals of the community.

John Thomason
July 4, 1923

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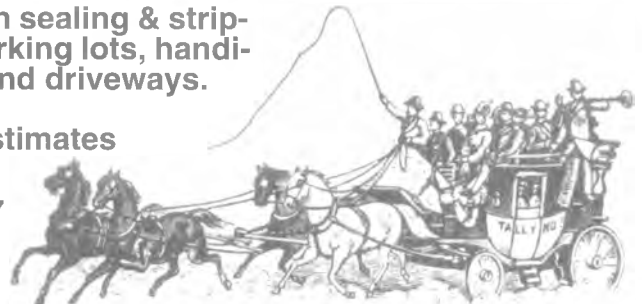
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News From the Year 1939

News From Huntsville and Around The World

Britain Declares War Hitler's Peace Offer Rejected

Blood indelibly stained European soil this month as Great Britain and France declared war on Germany following the Nazis' lightning invasion of Poland.

Immediately after German troops blistered across the Polish border, the French and British governments issued an ultimatum to the Third Reich: "Suspend all aggressive action against Poland (and) withdraw forces from Polish territory" or the United Kingdom and France, "in fulfillment of our obligations, will come to Poland's assistance."

After two days of German penetration deeper toward Warsaw, on September 3rd British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain made his fateful, and to many, inevitable declaration that the two Western powers would fight Adolf Hitler's troops. "We shall be fighting against brute force," the British leader added.

The obligations Chamberlain referred to are mutual defense treaties that Poland, France and England had signed.

Great Britain quickly announced a blockade of Germany after entering the war. Germany retaliated destructively when one of its submarines attacked and sank the British passenger liner, the Athenia, on its route from Liverpool to Montreal. One hundred and twelve people perished in the assault.

While France and Britain declared war, scores of other nations expressed adamant wishes to stay out of the fighting.

The United States denounced the German aggression, but stated it would not become engaged. President Roosevelt said, "This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well."

"England and France rejected the Fuhrer's hand of peace," the German government said tonight. "The government also denied reports that Hitler would make another peace offer to the French."

Hitler made his offer in a speech to the Reichstag earlier this month, after his military victory in Poland. French Premier Daladier was the first to reject Hitler's overture. Daladier said no "real justice and lasting peace" would be possible until Hitler was defeated.

President Roosevelt also turned down an indirect appeal from Hitler to mediate an end to the war.

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FDR Changes Date for Thanksgiving

President Roosevelt shattered another precedent today when he announced the move of Thanksgiving Day from Nov. 30 to Nov. 23 this year. He explained that many had urged the shift to create a holiday less close to Christmas. While retailers welcome the change, it gives football schedulers a headache. Their big day of games is now a mere Thursday in November. From Plymouth, where the first day of thanksgiving was held in 1621, comes "hearty disapproval." Since Abraham Lincoln named the last Thursday of November as the day in 1864, subsequent presidents have followed suit. Until now, that is.

"Pact of Steel" Signed

One of the most grandiose alliances in modern history was consummated by Italy and Germany today, creating "an invincible block of 300 million people." The Axis powers

signed a ten-year "Pact of Steel" which binds them economically, politically and militarily with the declared objective of reorganizing Europe, promoting the two powerful nations and creating a "just peace" in the world.

At the ceremonious signing, top German and Italian officials, including Chancellor Hitler, agreed that Germany would rule on land and Italy on sea in times of war, which to many Europeans seems to be lurking on the horizon. Britain, alarmed by the event, called an extra session of Parliament to discuss the pact's ramifications.

Barbara Stanwyck Marries Robert Taylor

Barbara Stanwyck, 31, and Robert Taylor, 27, were married shortly after midnight at the home of San Diego friends.

By obtaining the license under their true names of Ruby Stevens Fay and Arlington Spangler Brugh, they kept their plans secret. The wedding trip is delayed until he finishes making a movie with Hedy Lamarr. It is reported that their agents were against the marriage.

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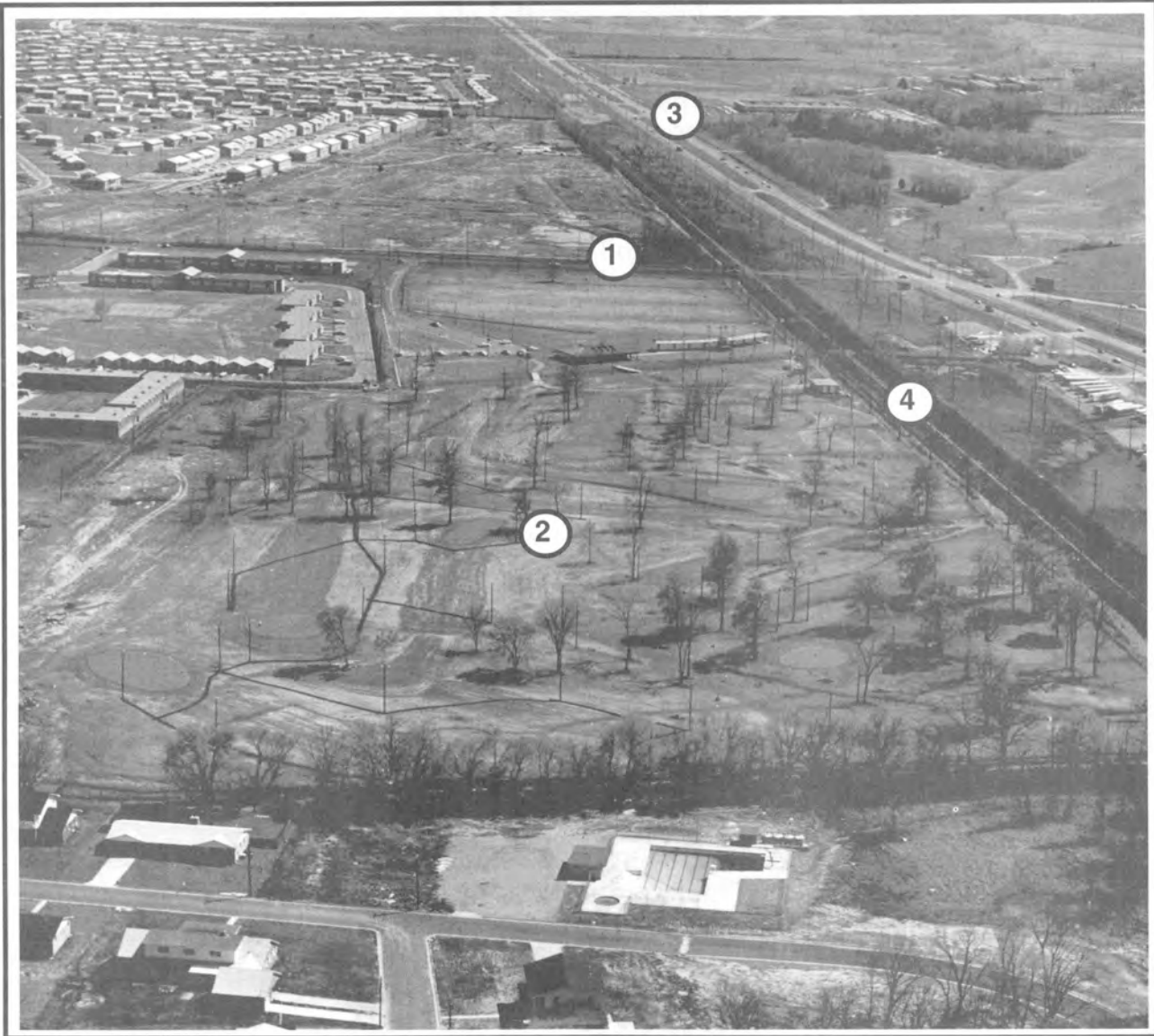


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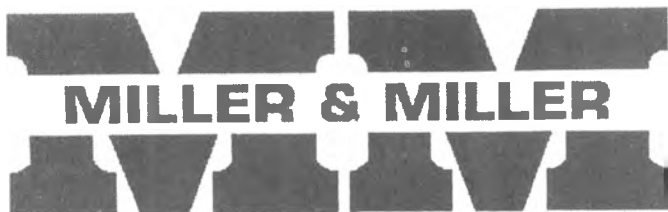
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Anthony F. Stahelski - Silver Star, Bronze Star Heroism (WWII) Bronze Star W/V

Retired U.S. Army Colonel Anthony F. Stahelski served in three wars: World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He received the Bronze Star Medal for heroism for his actions against enemy forces on March 18, 1945 while serving in Germany. For Gallantry in Action on July 14, 1950 near Samgye-Ri Korea, he was awarded the Silver Star Medal for safely evacuating his surrounded men and thereby saved the lives of 156 officers and men. On October 31, 1950, he lead his men against a superior enemy force near Kwakson, Korea causing the enemy to suffer heavy loses. For this action, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor. He received the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in action on December 24, 1964 while serving in the Republic of Vietnam.

Eric C. Deets - Silver Star

Retired U. S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Eric C. Deets was awarded the Silver Star Medal for Gallantry in Action and the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in action on October 5, 1968 while serving in Vietnam. On that date, he led the defense of his position against a numerically superior enemy force.

Thomas S. Allman - Distinguished Flying Cross

Thomas S. Allman retired from the U.S. Air Force at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. While serving as co-pilot of a B-52 aircraft he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism for his actions on December 28, 1972 in a bombard-

ment of enemy forces near Hanoi, North Vietnam.

Paul E. Freeman - Bronze Star W/V

Paul E. Freeman retired from the United States Army at the rank of Major. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor during his tour of duty in Vietnam. In November 1966, he distinguished himself against a Battalion size force of North Vietnamese Regu-

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lars who were attacking his forward support base. With disregard for his own safety, he exposed himself to intense enemy fire on numerous occasions in order to organize the defense of his position.

**Billie F. Gaines
Bronze Star W/V**

Billie F. Gaines is a retired U.S. Army Sergeant First Class. On June 24, 1970, Sergeant Gaines was serving in Vietnam as a crewmember of the 191st. Aviation Company. On that date, his distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action against enemy forces at Rach Soi, Republic of Vietnam. For his actions, Sergeant Gaines was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor.

**Michael P. Kehoe
Bronze Star W/V**

Retired U.S. Army Colonel Michael P. Kehoe distinguished himself on May 13, 1968 when his Troop came under heavy enemy fire during an operation in Vietnam. Despite being severely wounded, and due to his courageous actions, his men rallied to conduct a frontal assault that completely overwhelmed the enemy. For his heroic actions, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor and a Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in action.

**Vision Sends
Local Man to Jail**

from 1903 newspaper

Hearing of the case of Jas. B. Mitchell, who is alleged to be insane, was resumed before Judge S. Morgan Stewart yesterday. He is alleged to have burned a neighbor's home as a result of a vision. Several witnesses were examined, all of whom testified as to Mitchell's strange behavior. It is apparent that Mitchell does not wish to be adjudged insane despite wanting to summon the Mayor of Huntsville, the President of the United States and the Queen of England as witnesses.

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German POW's at Redstone

The area along Dodd Road on Redstone Arsenal looks almost serene today. Off in the distance the remnants of a long ago dirt road meanders aimlessly through the tall grass and overgrown brush while a rabbit sits in the middle of a small clearing, basking in the warmth of the early morning sun. Occasionally you spot a stray piece of broken concrete or a piece of wire that, in your imagination, might have been part of the barbed wire enclosure.

Regardless of how hard you search though, there is nothing to tell you that the area was once a prison camp for one of Adolf Hitler's most elite fighting groups.

The 6th Regiment of the 2nd Fallschirmjager (Paratrooper) Division, under Major Freiherr von der Heydte, was considered by many military experts to be the premiere airborne force of the German Army in World War II. Often jumping into the midst of raging battles from an alti-

tude of less than four hundred feet, the regiment was constantly in battle as the German High Command shifted it from one front to another in an attempt to stave off the inevitable defeat.

Part of the regiment, under the temporary command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Skorzeny, was used to rescue the Italian Fascist premier, Benito Mussolini from atop Gran Sasso, a 2,130 meter peak in Italy, where he was being held captive by Italian forces after they had negotiated a surrender with the Allies. Afterwards the regiment was transferred to the Russian front where the unit suffered 60% casualties in the bitter hand-to-hand fighting before being ordered back to Germany to rest and regroup.

Many German citizens thought joining the group was the same as committing suicide but others, drawn by its elite spirit and bold exploits, eagerly signed their names to

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the enlistment papers. Typical of the young men who joined the regiment was Karl Spitzenfeil, a native of Oberfranken.

Spitzenfeil, born in 1922, grew up in a country where the youth were immersed in the Nazi dogma. At the age of 11 he joined the Hitler Youth and in 1940 became a member of the Labor Front. That same year he officially became a member of the N.S.D.A.P. (Nazi Party). Perhaps drawn by party ideology as much as glamour, Spitzenfeil joined the Fallschirmjagers in 1941.

In 1944 the regiment was transferred to Normandy, France to be held as reserves for the expected Allied invasion. Ironically, though designated as reserves, the 6th Regiment was the only German fighting force fully prepared when the invasion occurred on June 6.

The regiment was in the middle of live-fire field exercises with troops deployed and artillery dug in when suddenly Allied paratroopers began dropping into the middle of the training grounds. One of the first allied soldiers to hit the ground was Reverend George Woods, who later became a priest at the Church of the Nativity in Huntsville.

The same troops who were firing at Father Woods would soon know Huntsville well.

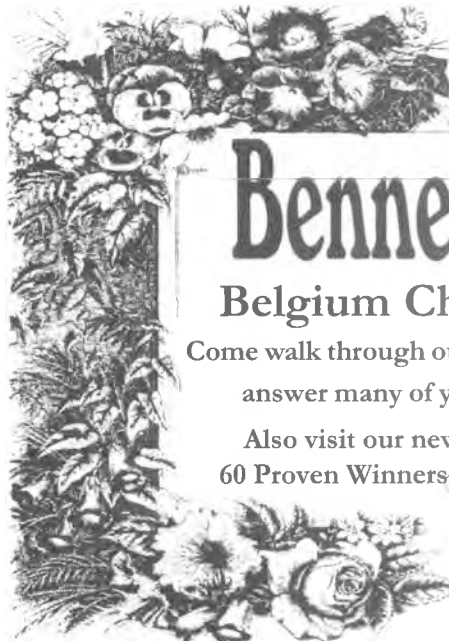
Using a combination of armor and overwhelming air superiority, the allies rolled over the makeshift German defenses. Within days the 6th Regiment was reduced to small pockets of men fighting desperately to survive against overwhelming odds. A German private, George Remer, later recalled the battle.

"We couldn't move. Every time we tried, airplanes spotted us and artillery would fire at our positions. We were fighting tanks and airplanes with rifles. The worst thing was the thirst and

the smells – we had run out of water days before but to move was almost certain death – we had to stay in our holes with dead cows and bodies lying just feet from us."

Although the Germans had been taught that surrender was the ultimate disgrace, reality soon won out and the Allies began taking vast numbers of prisoners. Among the captives were the 272 soldiers of the Fallschirmjager. After being relieved of their weapons and helmets the prisoners were marched to the beach where they were loaded into the empty hull of a cargo ship destined for Glasgow, Scotland.

In Scotland, the prisoners were transferred to a temporary



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POW camp that held almost 135,000 captives. No preparations had been made for the large number of prisoners and as a result the camp was hastily thrown together with an unruly and disorganized mob held behind the barbed wire.

The noncoms of the 6th Regiment POW's immediately set about restoring order among their troops. While other units deteriorated into leaderless masses, the 6th Regiment set themselves apart by the rigid military discipline they submitted to willingly, a trait that would follow them throughout their captivity. According to the *Glasgow News*, the regiment, when ordered to board a Liberty ship destined for the United States, infuriated its guards when it formed ranks and marched, goose-stepping, to the embarkation point while singing German military anthems.

After disembarking in New York the POW's were shipped by train to Camp Forrest, near Tullahoma, Tennessee. Private Heinz Pabel described the train ride.

"We laughed and jeered at the flimsy construction of the wooden houses. All the cities we passed through seemed built haphazardly with no plan in mind. How could a country like

this defeat the Reich? But as the miles grew longer we began to realize the vastness of the country and our bravado turned into hopelessness."

Camp Forrest had originally been authorized in 1942 as an internment camp for Japanese civilians. As the war in Europe grew in intensity, however, it was decided to convert the camp to a German POW camp with the capacity to hold 3,000 prisoners. By June of 1944, the camp held almost 22,000 prisoners. Much of the overcrowding was alleviated by the establishment of sub-camps throughout Tennessee and Georgia where they were employed in non-war essential jobs.

Upon arrival at Camp Forrest, all POW groups went through an informal classification. Class 1 was considered suitable for employment with minimum control; class 2 was employment with guards and class 3 prisoners were to be segregated from the others and not allowed employment away from camp. Normally the last classification was reserved for the elite, such as paratroopers and submariners who might have an influence over ordinary troops.

The submariners were transferred to Anniston, Alabama and the remnants of the 6th Regiment, apparently the only paratroopers at Camp Forrest, were ordered

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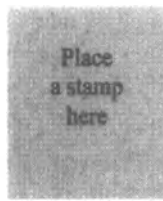


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to the newly established Camp Huntsville.

Chambers Construction Company of Athens had been awarded a contract on July 24, 1944 to construct the basic camp which consisted of three wooden buildings and a barbed wire enclosure with guard towers at each corner. A sick bay was located in one end of the mess hall, although seriously ill patients were sent to the University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa where McFarland Hall had been converted for use as a POW hospital. The enclosure was approximately 600' by 400', fronting on Dodd Road. A motor transport pool was located across the road.

Two weeks later 250 of the 6th Regiment POW's arrived and were immediately separated into groups of six. Each group was then assigned a tent with a small wood burning stove and given a "kit" bag in which to store personal belongings.

Almost from the beginning the POW's seemed determined not to appear defeated. "They were haughty," said one former guard. "You could give them an order and they would look at you like you were nothing. I've seen them stand at attention in the hot sun for hours without flexing a muscle, waiting for one of their people to give them an order. But an American couldn't even get them to pick up a cigarette butt."

The camp quickly took on the appearances of a regular German army camp. Reveille at 6:00 in the morning, formation and roll call at 6:30 and breakfast at 7. The prisoners worked from 7:30 until 4:30 when they would fall in for another roll call. After dinner there was usually another formation, this time called by the Germans, to take care of camp business, mail call and other items relating to the welfare of the prisoners. In one instance, when a POW was accused of stealing from a tent mate, he was tried by his own comrades before the entire camp. After being found guilty, he was ordered to walk sentry duty four weekends in a row (inside the barbed wire).

After helping to complete the construction of the camp, the POW's were assigned to work in a rock quarry where they broke rocks with a 12 pound hammer for eight hours at a stretch. More important than

the gravel used in road building was the cooperation gained by such labor. While most POW's initially resisted being assigned to work details, a month's hard labor at breaking rocks caused all but the most fanatical to volunteer. After the first several months, the stone quarry seems to have been used primarily as a punishment detail.

About half of the prisoners were assigned regular jobs such as kitchen detail, barbers, sanitation and grass cutting. The other half were "temporary workers." They would stand in formation every morning while civilian "foremen" would tell the guards how many prisoners they

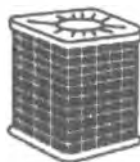
needed that day for certain jobs. The guards would then inform the German noncoms, who would order the appropriate number of people to "fall out" and board the trucks. Most of these POW's were used in road construction and spraying for mosquitos in the malaria infested marsh lands of

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the Arsenal. Each prisoner was paid 80 cents a day, in canteen script.

Although the POW's were elite soldiers, they were still virile young men who would go to great extremes to be around the fairer sex. Often when sent to the area on a garbage detail the men would loiter as long as possible hoping for glances of the female workers. In several instances POW's actually posed as janitors until they were discovered and sent on their way.

The POW's favorite job assignment was the garbage detail. Not only did they get to travel all over the base but it gave them the opportunity to "organize" items such as reading materials, radios and odd pieces of clothing.

In a typical case of government bureaucracy, the prisoners were not allowed to purchase any type of reading material but could receive it if someone sent it to them. Many of the POW's took advantage of this by writing relatives who lived in the states. An aunt of Karl Spitzenfeil, who lived in New York, sent a large box of books along with packets of flower seeds which were planted along the camp walk ways.

"All the prisoners were treated correctly," Spitzenfeil later said, although probably with a certain amount of exaggeration. A former guard laughs at the story of POW's getting two cases of beer each for their birthdays. "The truth was they would trade us cartons of cigarettes they had gotten from the canteen and we would trade them in town for beer. For every three cases we would give them two and we would keep one."

In all POW camps there was a constant struggle for the "souls" of the POW's. Prisoners who would renounce Nazism and agree to cooperate with the au-

thorities were deemed "progressives" and offered better working conditions as an incentive, as well as being sent to re-education camps. In most camps becoming a "progressive" was viewed as being a traitor and was severely dealt with, often with a beating in the middle of the night. An ex-POW from another camp, now living in Huntsville, later told how the "fanatics" terrorized the prisoners, sometimes administering beatings for offenses as simple as talking to a guard. As far as is known, no one in the 6th Regi-

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ment ever applied for "re-education."

Oddly, few people in Madison County even knew there was a German POW camp in their midst. All news of the camp was censored and even the guards were under strict orders not to talk about it. In one case two POW's actually walked off from a work detail and hitchhiked into Huntsville where they went to an evening matinee movie and then went next door to a restaurant and enjoyed a large meal. When it came time to pay the bill they calmly told the restaurateur to call the base so they could turn themselves in. Even though they were clad in prisoners uniforms with large white letters painted on the legs and sleeves, no one had thought it was unusual!

From the original contingent of 250 prisoners the camp had grown to hold over 1,200 by March of 1945. Small groups of prisoners were continuously being transferred in and out but the total number appears to have remained at between 1,100 and 1,300 until the camp was closed down.

As the days turned into months the prisoners began to realize the hopelessness of their situation. In Europe, if a prisoner could escape, he at least had a chance to make it back to his own lines. In America, a prisoner had no chance whatsoever. Even more bitter was the realization that with an Allied victory they would be able to return home, but as a nation defeated. Most of the men were torn between wanting to go home and wanting the war to continue.

Though there were no escapes from Camp Huntsville, in nearby Camp Forrest there were four escapes and seven suicides as the war entered its final days.

Henry Gibbons, a former guard, described the end of the war. "We received orders to double

the guards around the fence but they didn't tell us why. The base sent over a detachment of M.P.'s and we posted them next to the gate. In a little while an American officer drove up and entered the camp where he stayed for a few minutes and then left. Shortly af-

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

terwards the POW's lined up in formation and one of their officers gave a speech. I couldn't understand him but they told me later what he said.

"The Fuhrer is dead. He has fallen in the defense of the Fatherland. You are reminded that you have taken an oath as a German soldier and shall be expected to act accordingly.

"For the first time," Gibbons continued, "those boys really looked whipped. You could just see all the hot air going out of them."

If the Pow's had been expecting a quick return home, they were to be disappointed. Almost immediately new regulations went into effect. Whereas before officers and noncoms, under the Geneva Convention, could not be forced to work, after the surrender all POW's were required to work regardless of rank.

The recalcitrants who refused were placed on a special diet, called the "Camp Forrest dinner," consisting of milk and herring. Huge quantities of herring had been shipped to the States by Great Britain in partial payment for war loans but when the United States troops refused to eat it, a large amount ended up in

Camp Forrest from where it was shipped to other camps.

A few days of this diet usually persuaded even the die-hards that work in the rock quarry was an acceptable alternative.

An event that was to have even more far-reaching effects occurred on June 5, 1945 when all the POW's were assembled and ordered to fill out new forms. This form, unlike others they had already filled out, asked for information on political organizations they had been a part of.

Karl Spitzenpfeil, as many others did, while not realizing the

implications, acknowledged being a member of the N.S.D.A.P. (Nazi party).

Preparations to close Camp Huntsville began in September of

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1945. For the first time the men of the 6th Regiment were separated with many being sent to the Midwest to help with the harvest and a few to a camp outside of Chicago.

The last group of POW's left Huntsville at the end of October after helping to demolish the camp. Lumber from the buildings were stacked in neat piles, later to be used for other construction on the Arsenal. The tents were returned to Army warehouses and even the gravel walkways in the camp were completely erased.

The United States government marked all the records concerning the camp as "Classified," thereby effectively erasing it from history. Almost a half century later personnel files of the POW's were shipped to Germany where they remain sealed.

For Karl Spitzenpfel, the war was far from being over. After leaving Huntsville he was sent to Nebraska where he helped to harvest potatoes.

At this time they were slowly beginning to return POW's to Germany with the "politically correct" being sent first. Others who had acknowledged being members of the Nazi party suffered a different fate.

In January of 1946 Spitzenpfel was sent to San Francisco where he boarded a ship bound for England with most of the other POW's from Camp Huntsville. There, they were joined by another 900 members of the 6th Fallschirmjager Regiment who had been held in other POW camps.

They were held in England for another two years after the war helping to repair war damage, "doing penance" for having once been Germany's elite.

In 1982 Karl Spitzenpfel returned to Huntsville for a visit. After touring Redstone Arsenal and seeing the site where he once broke rocks, he asked to be taken to the site of the camp.

There was nothing left of the camp to stir his memory. All traces had long ago disappeared. Spitzenpfel stood for a long moment staring at the site before finally turning away.

"It's good," he said. "It's good it is gone."

Karl Spitzenpfel died in 1996 in Michelau, Germany.

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Memories of Farley

by Helen & Jack Hagler

Soon after we moved to Weatherly Road in 1957, Mrs. Claude Buchanan and Mr. Doug Ray came to welcome us to the neighborhood They invited us to visit Farley Methodist Church. At the time we were members of Holmes Street Methodist and were very happy there. So, we declined their gracious invitation.

Helen was invited to join the Farley Homemaker's Club. She did and became acquainted with several ladies of the community including some who were members of Farley Methodist.

One day in 1960 as we were driving down Weatherly Road, we saw a sign near the railroad proclaiming "Future Home of Farley Methodist Church". We decided then and there to join Farley and transferred our memberships in October of 1960.

The good folks at Farley welcomed us and immediately put us to work. One of our earliest assignments was the sale of \$75,000 worth of Church Bonds to build the first increment of a new building on Weatherly Road (close to South Parkway). The congregation was divided into sales teams and I was made captain of a team.

Most of the bonds sold quickly, but as the days dragged on, we still had \$5,000 worth of unsold bonds. I asked around (again) at work at Thiokol. A co-worker said that a Dr. Evans, another coworker, had some money he wanted to invest.

I contacted him and was invited to his home on Monte Sano that evening to discuss the offering.

I drove to the address given to find a very small mobile home. Surely this must be the wrong address, I thought. I knocked on the door and was greeted by a very gracious Dr. Evans who invited me in. I thought: "Oh well, I may as well go ahead with my pitch since I'm here." After describing the available bonds, I asked if he was interested in any of them.

"I'll take them all!" was his reply. He gave me a check for \$5,000. I was so excited, I didn't remember driving back down the mountain to Mrs. Buck's home to register the bond sale. (I think I might have "flown").

We have fond memories of the many families who were members of Farley at the time we joined and who were instrumental in making the move to our present site on Weatherly Road. To name some of them: The Claude Buchanan family - who were pillars of the Church and were principal forces behind the move; the families of Montgomery, Ed Day, Miss Lillie Latham and her sister, Mrs. Mattie Lee McNaul, the Byrams; Bernice Harper, Ray McComb, Clem, Womack, Bennett and Nicholson. And of course, our Pastor, J. Paul Rowe, who was our last minister at Farley and our first at Latham.



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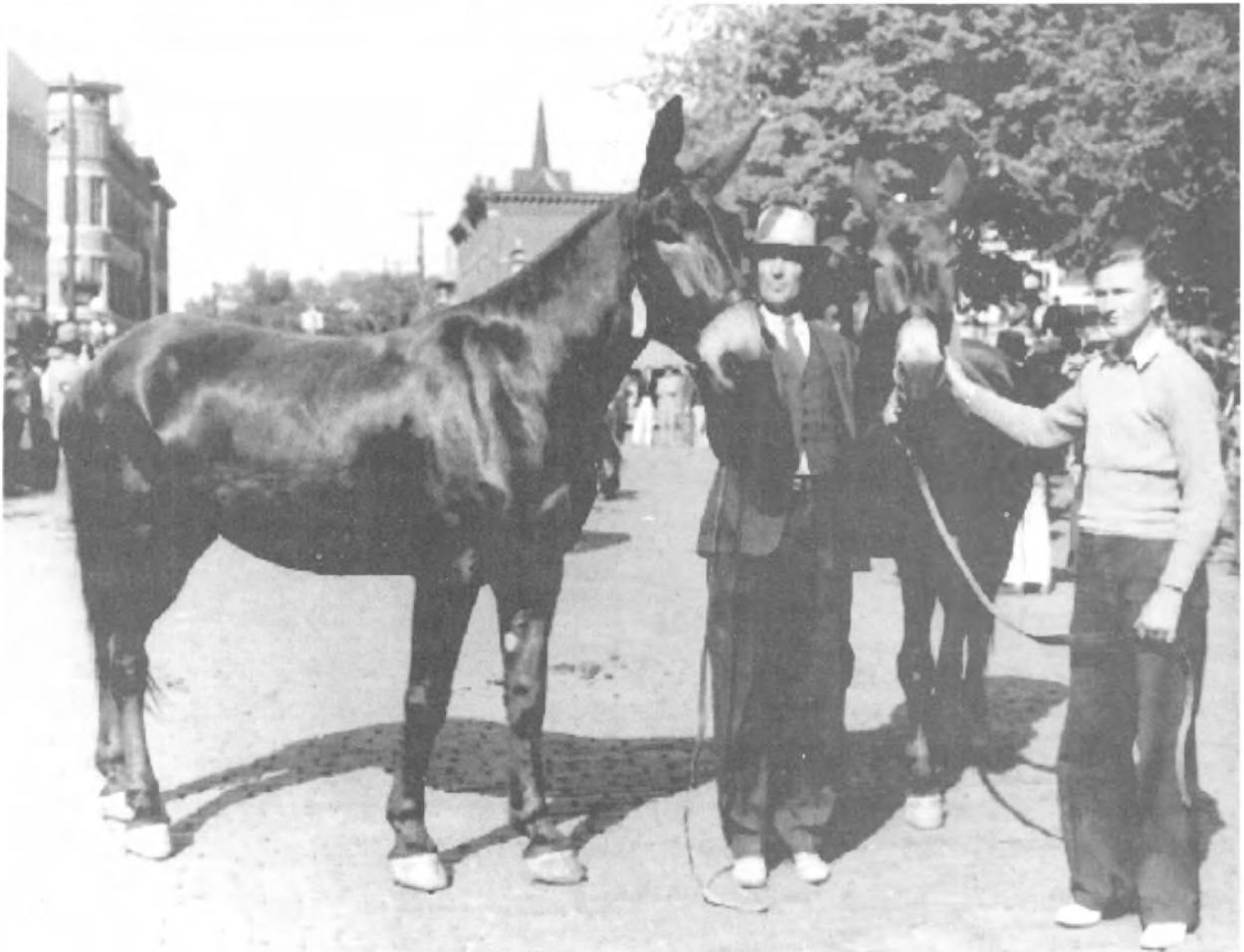
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When life was simple...



Even though Huntsville was entering the space age in 1955, mules were still a common sight downtown. That same year Wernher von Braun took the oath to become an American citizen, Memorial Parkway was opened to traffic and Huntsville boasted nine public schools with an enrollment of 4,300 students.

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