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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



Return from the Dead

As reality began to sink in, Elizabeth seemed to age before their eyes. One of the men spoke up to say he would build the coffin. Another asked if there was anything else they could do.

Elizabeth hesitantly called for a pencil and paper and after writing her husband's name, year of birth and year of death, asked if one of the men would see about getting a marker. She didn't want to bury her husband until he could have a proper burial with a headstone.

Also in this issue: The Memoirs of Frank Gurley

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Doris Lewter
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Return from the Dead

David Howard was a peaceful man. In a time when the Tennessee Valley was torn apart with the ravages of the Civil War he stood apart as a man who did not believe in violence or the taking of lives, regardless of the reasons. This made him unpopular with many of his neighbors as the tides of war swept back and forth across his small homestead near the Marshall County line.

No one is really sure where Howard came from. Most accounts have him moving to Madison County in the late 1840s from South Carolina.

One account says his parents were devout Quakers, which would explain his lifelong aversion to violence.

David Howard settled on a small homestead in the foothills near the Madison/Marshall county line where he quickly became a respected and compassionate member of the community. Rarely did a neighbor suffer a misfortune without Howard stopping by to offer his condolences and help. The area was secluded, well off the traveled path, with only an occasional preacher stopping by to minister

to the religious needs of the small community. Although nondenominational in his religious beliefs, he soon became the community's spiritual leader, often presiding at funerals and weddings and offering words of comfort to the bereaved.

His wife, Elizabeth, was the epitome of gentleness. She was an extremely attractive woman with long dark hair and manners that hinted of a cultured background. Her single goal in life was to ensure the welfare of her family.

As the winds of war swept across North Alabama, the small community was torn asunder with almost everyone taking sides. Brothers fought brothers and sons turned against fathers. In the midst of this turmoil Howard continued working on his farm, hoping against hope that the war would pass him by.

For the first couple of years the only contact the family had with the war was an occasional stray Confederate soldier who would appear at the door asking for something to eat, or maybe a place to spend the night. Howard remained adamant in his refusal to take sides but continued to offer help to everyone who stopped at his farm. A crippled leg kept Howard out of



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

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

Advertising - 534-0502

Sales & Mrktg. - Cathey Carney

Gen. Manager - Ron Eyestone

Copy Boy - Tom Carney

Features - Stefanie Troup

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the war but he was undoubtedly worried that if the conflict continued it would some day involve his sons, who were 10 and 13 years old.

As the war dragged on and Federal troops occupied the Tennessee Valley, the conflict spread to every remote homestead. The Union troops disrupted the Rebel supply lines and the Confederates were forced to confiscate provisions from local farmers.

The Union troops in turn began a policy of burning any farm suspected of aiding the Confederates. Adding to the hardship was the fact that many soldiers, blue and gray, used the conflict to plunder the belongings of the helpless families.

Soldiers from both sides visited the Howard farm searching for deserters, enemy patrols and plunder. The chickens were the first to disappear, followed by the meat hanging in the smokehouse. The horse and wagon went next, along with the shotgun and family silverware. Within a few months the family had lost almost all of their possessions.

Howard had managed to keep a mule and several cows by hiding them in the foothills. With soldiers constantly going back and forth across the farm, Howard was often forced to tend the stock and plow his fields at

night time in order for the mule not to be seen and stolen.

In the spring of 1864 a small detachment of Confederate soldiers stopped at the farm. After the customary search, the soldiers had begun to prepare their lunch when a sentry gave the alarm - Union soldiers approaching! Quickly the Confederates mounted their horses and fled to the nearby foothills.

The Federal forces chased the Confederates a short distance, firing their guns at the fleeing enemy, before finally giving up and returning to the Howard homestead. After lining the Howard family up in front of their home, the officer in charge ordered the grounds searched. When the search revealed no hidden guns or hiding Confederate soldiers, the officer began to question Howard.

Howard, in his quiet manner, tried to explain that he was neutral, taking no side in the conflict. All he wanted, he explained, was to be let alone to tend his farm and raise his family.

Suddenly the officer's attention was diverted when a sentry raised an alarm. On a nearby hill, out of gun shot range, was a small group of Confederates, sitting on their horses, watching the proceedings at the farm.

The Union officer, apparently

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frustrated at his inability to capture the Confederates, began to question Howard again. This time the questioning took a harsher tone, accusing him of being a Rebel sympathizer for allowing the soldiers to camp in his yard. When Howard tried to explain that he had no choice, the armies did what they wanted, the officer angrily walked away. Motioning to the squad of soldiers standing nearby, he gave the orders, "Burn it!"

Within minutes the home was a blazing inferno. Years of hard work were being wiped out in a few short minutes. Howard and his wife rushed to try to stop the soldiers, begging them to spare what little was left. When Howard grabbed a soldier's arm he was brutally punched with the butt of a gun, leaving a long bloody gash on the side of his head.

Moments later the soldiers mounted their horses and rode away, leaving a lifetime of hopes and dreams lying in the smoldering ruins.

With no other choice available, the Howard family began to rebuild their lives. Pots and pans were salvaged from the smoldering ashes and several old horse blankets provided bedding. Fortunately the barn had been spared and it became the family's new home. As cruel as fate had been, the family still held hope that the war would pass them by.

Weeks later a small detach-

ment of Confederates arrived at the farm. After watering their horses and resting, the soldiers inquired about a trail they had heard about. The trail was little more than a path cutting across the mountain toward New Hope but it would save hours of riding. Howard tried to give the men directions, even drawing them a map, but the directions were still vague and confusing.

Finally one of the soldiers suggested that Howard let one of his sons accompany them to show the way. Howard protested vehemently, saying he did not want his family involved in the war. An argument ensued with the soldiers accusing the family of being Northern sympathizers. The more Howard tried to protest, the angrier the soldiers became.

The confrontation ended abruptly when several soldiers grabbed a torch and began setting fire to what was left of the homestead. At the same time they accosted the oldest son, demanding to know how old he was. Howard pleaded with the soldiers, explaining that his son was only 13 years old and too young to know anything about the war.

Finally, the soldiers left, with the admonition that the Howards had better choose sides. "If you aren't with us," they warned, "then you are against us!"

Once again the family set about trying to rebuild. The fires had only partially burned the smokehouse and it became their

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new home. Fortunately, Howard had taken the precaution of hiding some of their belongings in the woods during the daylight hours and now they were the only possessions the family owned.

Like so many other families caught up in the war, the Howards realized they could no longer ignore the conflict. If they remained on their farm, the best they could expect was more visits by marauding soldiers from both sides. The worst, however, was the knowledge that if the war lasted much longer one, or possibly both, sons would be forced to serve in the military. In the end, Howard realized the family had no choice but to flee, hopefully to a place where the war would pass them by.

After much discussion within the family it was decided that Texas was their best hope. Elizabeth, however, had seen too many families dispossessed by the war and wandering aimlessly with their few possessions in the back of a wagon. She insisted this was not going to be her family's fate; if they had to leave, she wanted a home to go to. Reluc-

tantly Howard agreed to make the journey by himself, find a homestead and then return for the family. So, in the late fall of 1864, David Howard mounted his mule and began the long trek to Texas. He estimated the trip there and back would take three, maybe four, months.

Howard had left the family as well-provided for as possible under the circumstances. There was no reason for anyone to venture off the homestead and if an emergency arose there were neighbors only four or five miles distant. There was an abundance of vegetables in the root cellar and several bags of flour and corn meal carefully hidden in the woods. The oldest son was a fairly good shot and could provide occasional squirrels and rabbits for the table, although Howard cautioned his sons to keep

the loaded guns well hidden.

The next few months passed uneventfully. Several times soldiers stopped to water their horses and rest but

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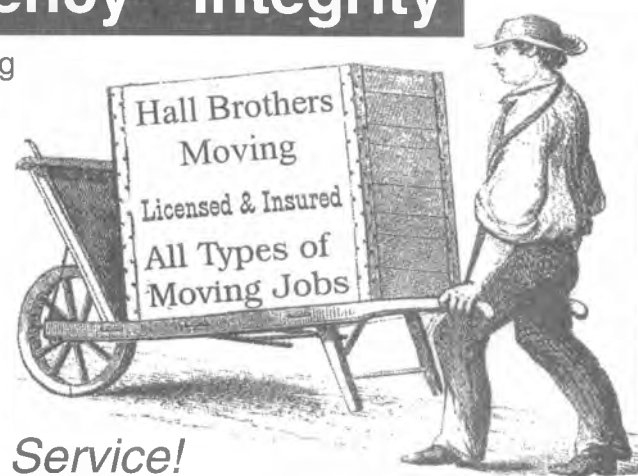
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always left without unduly disturbing the family. It was almost as if a peaceful calm had settled on the little cove. Elizabeth even began having doubts as to whether moving to Texas was the right decision.

Late one afternoon the calm was shattered when a small group of neighbors rode into the yard. The remains of a body had been found near the river. The body was unrecognizable, it had been lying there for months and wild animals had scattered the bones.

"Is this your husband's?" they asked while handing her an old weather-beaten felt hat. They already knew the answer. David Howard had worn the hat for years, in fact he had worn it for so long that no one could remember him without it.

As reality began to sink in, Elizabeth seemed to age before their eyes. Her shoulders sagged, wrinkles showed around her eyes and her gleaming black hair now hung dry and listless. One of the men spoke up to say he would build the coffin. Another asked if there was anything else they could do.

Elizabeth hesitantly called for a pencil and paper and after writing her husband's name, year of birth and year of death, asked if one of the men would see about getting a marker. She didn't want to bury her husband, she explained, until he could have a proper burial with a headstone.

A few days later Elizabeth, her sons, and a few neighbors gath-

ered to bury David Howard. There was no preacher so the few words said were kept short. The grave was filled and a sprig of flowers rested next to the headstone, the only marker to a man who just wanted to be left in peace.

Several neighbors were worried about Elizabeth's state of mind and offered to share their homes with the family but she refused the offers. She had her two sons, she said, and they would be all right.

Supper that evening, in the partially burned smokehouse, was a dismal affair. Elizabeth sat in a dark corner of the room rejecting all attempts by her sons to get her to eat. Regardless of how



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hard the young lads begged, their mother seemed to be sinking deeper into her own terrifying subconscious world of despair.

That evening, shortly before dark, the boys left to tend the stock. Almost at the same time a straggler, no one is sure from which army, appeared at the burned-out homestead. After the customary drink of water the soldier asked where Elizabeth's "men folks" were. Receiving no reply, the stranger became bolder, demanding to know if any money was hidden on the farm. Still, Elizabeth remained mute, staring at the stranger with empty eyes.

Elizabeth's silence infuriated the straggler. Grabbing her arm, he tried to push her toward the door. When she didn't respond, he began slapping her about the face until finally she fell to the ground in a crumpled heap. Disgusted, the stranger began prowling through the family's few possessions, searching for money or possibly something to drink.

Perhaps the sight of the stranger ransacking her home triggered something in Elizabeth's mind. Perhaps she was past caring. For whatever reason, Elizabeth seemed to draw on an inner strength, fueled by a raging fury, as she grabbed a metal fireplace poker and began beating the stranger. Her hopes, her desires, the loss of her home and her husband was driven home every time she raised the metal rod to hit him again. Consumed by an indescribable rage, she kept hitting, hitting, hitting...

Minutes later her sons returned to a scene of horror. The walls and floor were splattered with blood and gore and their mother was crouched in the floor next to the lifeless body of a stranger whom she kept hitting, and hitting with a fireplace poker.

The next morning several

neighbors appeared at the home to check on Elizabeth. The door was standing open, revealing the bloody terror of the night before. Immediately a search was begun and a few minutes later the terrified family was found hiding in some nearby bushes. The sight of the trembling woman was enough to make the strongest man recoil.

Elizabeth's gleaming black hair had turned white overnight! Her face was wrinkled and appeared to be that of an old woman. She had aged 30 or 40 years in the span of a few hours.

Without a word being spoken, the neighbors gathered the family together and placed them in the wagon. Until something else could be decided, the neighbors reasoned, Elizabeth and her sons would stay with them.

Elizabeth didn't protest. She

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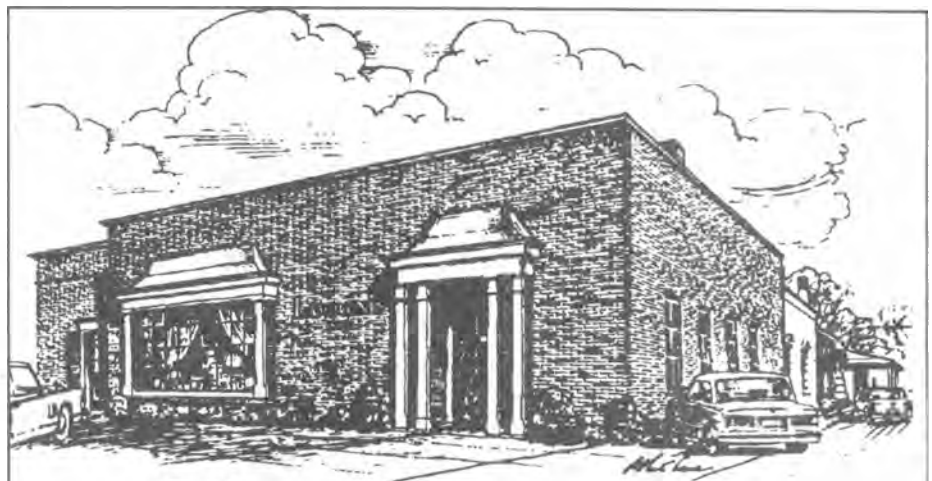
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didn't say anything. Her mind, as well as her spirit, was completely broken, leaving her in a dark world of horror from which she would never recover.

Talk of the brutal attack circulated throughout the community. Before long, everyone knew of the terrible tragedies that had struck the family. No one was prepared for what happened next.

Several weeks later a farmer and his wife, who lived near the Howard farm, were interrupted at their evening meal by a loud pounding on the door. Cautiously the farmer opened the door and stared at their visitor as if seeing a ghost. Finally the wife asked her husband who it was.

"It's David Howard," replied the shaken farmer.

In a jumble of words, with everyone talking at the same time, the story came out.

After Howard had left home early that morning to go to Texas, his mule had been spooked. In the ensuing confusion he had lost his hat, and although he searched, he never found it. He had no idea

who was buried in the cemetery under his headstone.

David Howard reclaimed his family and moved to a small farm near Abilene, Texas. Both of his sons grew up to become outstanding citizens of the community. Elizabeth lived until 1891, her mind trapped in the nightmares of a night long ago. David

Howard's grave is marked with a headstone he had brought from a grave in Alabama, with the date of death crudely chiseled out.

Another senseless tragedy of a cruel war.

A special thanks to Thelma Contraris, of Paris, Texas, for sharing her family history .

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- Half the women could write their own names and about two thirds of the men were literate.

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1945 - Waterman Airlines begins regular flights to and from Huntsville.

1946 - City council takes a chance on modernization and sells the city's last mules and wagons to C.A. Floyd for \$200.

1958 - Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson is hanged in effigy by Huntsvillians who blamed him for Russia being first to launch a spacecraft.

1959 - West Clinton property is sold for a new shopping area to be called "Heart of Huntsville."

1962 - President John F. Kennedy and VP Lyndon Johnson visit Huntsville & Redstone Arsenal.

1962 - the First Baptist church holds its first services in its new Governors Drive location.

1964 - Construction on Humana Hospital begins.

1966 - The Mall, largest enclosed mall in Alabama, opens on the corner of University Drive and No. Parkway.

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The Ball Glove

by Austin Miller

When I was a student at Central School, the warm weather varsity sport was fast pitch softball.

This is also what we played at recess, before and after school and during PE class.

I was always relegated to the outfield because I didn't have a glove. The rule, set by the kids who had gloves, was that you had to have a glove to play in the infield. I could catch about half the fly balls that came my way without a glove but this statistic did not impress the other kids.

We played with leftover balls from the school team. They were usually in good condition at first but we played with them until the cover came off and they started to unravel. Sometimes we got rubber-covered balls that we used until they were as soft as a sponge. Sammy Gossett was the best player in school; Nina Steger, Marie Osborne and Mary Jim Johnson could play almost as well as Sammy. All four could knock a home run about every time they got up to bat. This meant that the outfielders spent a lot of time chasing and retrieving balls that sailed off the school grounds into the woods. Sammy didn't play with us all the time because he was on the school team and sometimes had to practice with the varsity. I knew that all I needed to be a better player was to have a good glove. I always hoped that I would get one for Christmas or have enough cotton money left over to buy one but this never happened.

One summer after we finished laying-by,



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I can still remember the excitement I felt on the hot August afternoon when he left for work the first night. My brother Berns and I walked down to the road and waited with Daddy until his ride came. I saw visions of store-bought groceries, money to spend and maybe even a family car. Several days before, I had asked him if there was any chance that I might be able to get a ball glove after he had gotten a few paychecks. He said, "we will have to wait and see." Since he didn't say no, I took it to be yes, and told everybody that, "Daddy had a job and I would soon be getting a new ball glove."

The unlikely happened the first night. He was exposed to the gas and it made him sick. After he got home, he sat on the front porch the rest of the night struggling to get his breath. He didn't go back. Soon word got out and everybody knew that my talk of getting a ball glove was just talk. My reply was, "my Daddy is more important than any old ball glove."

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had paid him for the one night he worked. A few days later he went to town and returned with a Lewter Hardware sack. When I saw the sack, I immediately knew what it was. He had taken the eleven dollars and bought me a new ball glove. As soon as I opened the sack and saw the glove my great excitement turned to crushing disappointment. I had never seen a glove like it before. I knew that it wouldn't do as a softball glove and kids at school would laugh. It was flat shaped, as stiff as a board, didn't have a pocket and was about the color of our old Guernsey Milk Cow. The kind I wanted cost about six dollars; came in dark brown or burgundy colors and had a deep wide pocket. My disappointment had to be apparent. We never talked about it but I knew Daddy was stunned by my reaction and lack of appreciation.

We bought so little that it didn't occur to me that we could have taken it back and exchanged it for what I wanted with money left over. We had no clue that you could take something you had bought back if it was not satisfactory or had a defect. I never used the glove or played softball again. It lay around the house for years. There didn't seem to be a place where it belonged. It would appear in the yard, on the porch, in the house, in the smoke house or in the shed. It seemed to linger as a symbol of our material poverty as well as the poverty of my spirit. At some indistinguishable point, it finally disappeared forever without being missed.

Sometimes, the things that cause the most disappointment in our youth turn out to be the things that mean the most to us in later years. I would give a lot now to have that glove. If I had it, I would proudly display it as a symbol of my father's love for his oldest son.



Setting the Record Straight

In April 1861 the first Negroes were appointed commissioned officers by the Confederacy, in Louisiana. By war's end 93,000 blacks served the Confederate Army.

About 100,000 blacks fought in the Union Army and more than 65,000 were killed.

The only statue at Arlington Cemetery commemorating the Confederates who died in battle features a black soldier in a Confederate uniform.

"Be sure and pour the cream off the top of the milk when you open the new bottle."

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A Soldier's Letter

Huntsville, Alabama,
6 Aug 1864

Dear Brother-in-law & Sister

May these bare lines meet with you in good health. I am so far right hale and hearty. I want to let you know in short how it is here and what happens. We have so far been fortunate, having still lost no man through the enemy, although the bushwhackers are fairly thick in the vicinity.

Our regiment is near the city on a hill where (there) is a fortress with 8 cannons which can be used over the city and all around the whole region. The city is very beautiful but has gained much damage through the war already. We have no danger, only if we should be attacked at night, and if that happens the whole city will explode into the air and burn up, what the citizens know well enough and therefore are always afraid it should happen.

One sees few whites almost not as many as blacks which are very friendly giving up the hat to the soldiers. We perpetually have 50 to 80 blacks that must hew timber for new fortresses, or do other work. These were slaves in the country about (here) and must work whether they want or not, there is always a guard by them. I have good hours since I am the company's bugler, I need to do no watch, and no rifle to carry. Only to practice an hour each morning. However, the boys have it fairly hard, every other day on picket, and each day a unit goes out to scout after bushwhackers, but to now have found no oppo-

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John T. Henegar
President

sition. Last night the report came that a 400 man enemy cavalry was approaching, whereupon the pickets were immediately doubled, but did not let themselves be seen just yet, should they attempt it, so we are ready for them, in order to welcome (them) warmly.

The land here is excellent and very much cotton was planted, but the fences are all gone, therefore (they) must widen deep ditches around the fields as fences. For 2 weeks it has rained almost every night here, huge bad storms move through the valley. The old man who lives in the flat, his son who is in our company, you know him also, he is a handsome big boy, will probably die, since he has an extreme fever. Yesterday he was admitted into the hospital, and last night he jumped from the window 3 stories high since he is sometimes out of his head. I visited him this morning, he said he had not hurt himself, that can't be. We all regret his loss since he was an excellent corporal.

There is talk in circulation that we are coming to Indiana for the election, which I much doubt since we are necessary

here, still it could be possible. We are 310 miles from Indianapolis, it is very hot here, but yet we have good water, there is a spring here as large and even stronger as the long branch. I wanted to receive a few lines from you, how you are and what gives otherwise. I wait already next to 2 weeks for a letter from Susanna, and still have none, what is the reason, I do not know. Many greetings to Fredrich, Kaspar, Calander, Graf, Stollens, Brebner, and all acquaintance. The next time I will write more, since I am in a hurry. If we should come to Indianapolis, then I will also come home, the company can go as it wants. In anticipation of your answer, I remain your dear brother-in-law and brother.

My address is John Drexel,

Company CO 13th Ind. Cav vol 5
Huntsville, Alabama

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Spiro Agnew's election as Vice-President in 1968 came exactly ten years after his first political victory - his election as Vice-President of the local Kiwanis club.

"If it is true that we are here to help others, then what exactly are the others here for?"

Maxine

"You can't win. When you get too old for pimples, you go right into wrinkles."

Janie Sentell, Athens

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Growing Up in Lick Skillet

by Harold D. Fanning

Living in a small town like Lick Skillet had its advantages as well as disadvantages. One advantage was the sense of community where your neighbors looked out for each other's interests. If you happened to be out of town or away from home you could be assured that your property was being watched and protected by your neighbors. If both parents worked outside the home you would not have to worry about your kids coming home alone in the afternoons after school. Most kids would simply get off the bus at their neighbor's house and remain there until their parents came home from work.

The disadvantages were somewhat related to the advantages. Yes, you could go to your neighbor's house, but if you got into trouble while there the neighbor would discipline you just as severely as your parents. To make matters worse, once your parents came home from work the neighbor would tell them what you did which resulted in more punishment. It was hard for us kids living in the Skillet to get away with much because you had every adult in the entire community constantly watching your every move.

Another disadvantage of living in a small town is that everybody knows everyone else's business. It did not matter if you were an adult or a kid. If you did something you were not supposed to do it did not take long

for the news to saturate the entire community. In the Skillet we had basically three modes of communication: telephone, telegraph and tell-it-to-your neighbor. In my opinion, one of the dumbest inventions ever to befall humankind was the telephone company's old eight party lines. Rarely could you use the telephone because you shared one line with seven other households. And believe me, every word that came out of your mouth made it to the ears of people who had nothing better to do than listen in on your conversations. There is no counting how many fights and fusses resulted between neighbors over the use of the telephone. PTA meetings at LSU (Lick Skillet University) were disrupted because the root cause was a dispute between neighbors over telephone use. Friendships were broken, churches split, and fences erected - all because of the eight-party line telephone system.

In most cases, by the time the news of some sordid event got to the local mercantile, the truth was frequently lost somewhere in translation as it passed from one mouth to the other. Usually, in more cases than not, what you ended up with was more of an exaggerated parody of the real thing.

Such was the case of a woman in our community whose reputa-

tion was sorely soiled by her momentary lapse in judgment. To understand what happened to her you must first appreciate how things were back in the 1950s and 60s. There was not very much traffic back then, other than an occasional farm tractor that would slowly limp past your house. About the greatest excite-

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"You don't get to the top by sitting on your bottom."

Submitted by Hannah Troup, age 7

ment of the day was the local mail delivery. For some reason going to the mailbox always gave adults a thrill and something to look forward to. This is a really good indication that you need to get a life if the U.S. mail delivery is the most exciting event in your day.

It was a hot summer day when this lady finished taking her daily bath. She had just slipped into her bathrobe when she noticed through the window the mailman making his daily delivery. Right away she became excited and couldn't wait to retrieve the surprises that might be lurking in that mailbox.

Immediately she began devising a sneaky plan of attack on how she might get to that mail without putting on any clothes. She rationalized that she was home alone and it also appeared that no one else seemed to be around, so she could probably go out there without being seen.

There were several things wrong with her plan. One, the mailbox was a good 100 feet from the house to the road. Second, she still had on her bathrobe and

nothing else. Third, the front yard has a few holes and uneven spots where moles and underground varmints made their home. And fourth, it is amazing how all these factors play into a great story...

According to reliable Lick Skillet sources, this lady embarked on her mission of retrieving her mail without getting dressed. She first peeped through the front door, looked left, then right to make sure no traffic was anywhere in sight. Then she reasoned that even if someone did see her they could not possibly

know she didn't have anything on beneath her bathrobe. And third, on top of all these factors, she decided that if she ran fast enough she could pull this off (pun intended) and she would be back in a flash.

Plan in hand, she bolted out that door like a racehorse coming out of the starting gate during the Kentucky Derby, heading toward the mailbox. She made it just fine going; however, it was the return trip where she found herself in a bit of a dilemma.

Just about halfway on her re-

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turn trip, traveling at a high rate of speed across the yard, her right foot found one of those mole holes and set off a series of events that would forever change her life. She did a complete somersault which resulted in a face-first landing, culminating with a belly slide that would be the envy of any professional baseball player coming to home plate.

Finally, her body stopped its forward motion but unfortunately the same could not be said of her bathrobe. See, long after her body had ground to a halt her bathrobe kept traveling which resulted in her bare essentials being completely exposed to the entire world.

Immediately the lady sprang to her feet and quickly looked around to see if anyone had witnessed this fiasco. She did not see anyone and breathed a sigh of relief, figuring that she had gotten away with an otherwise embarrassing moment. And it

might have worked except for a few minor details.

One, she did not realize until she got to her front porch that her neighbor was plowing his cotton field directly across from her house. Second, it just happened that he was at the point behind her mailbox where he got a full view. Third, the farmer served on the school board and was also known as the 'mouth of the south' around the Skillet.



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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to **James Edwards, Jr.** of Huntsville for being the first correct caller to guess last month's Photo of the Month. The handsome boy was **Tommy Battle**, who actually looks now just like he did back then! James works for Kohler Plumbing in Madison and says his "boss" at home is wife **Marcia**.

It was really fun to meet **Charlene & Tommy Rutledge** of Fayetteville, who stopped by the office recently. Charlene has a pretty famous brother - it's **Floyd Hardin, Mayor of Dallas Village!**

Happy 40th Anniversary to **Barb and Chuck Saunders**, who celebrated in June. Barb said they're still honeymooning!

Where else but Huntsville will traffic come to a complete halt to allow a line of ducks to cross a very busy downtown street! (Church St.)

Louise Avery had a birthday in June - Happy Birthday to you!

We were very much saddened to learn that **Mildred White**, of Owens Cross Roads, had died. Mildred was the Mom of **Donna Hays**, owner of the Furniture Factory. She was 95 years old, and much loved by her daughter and

family. Mildred was a bank teller at a bank on South Parkway for years. We send our deepest sympathy to Donna and her family, who miss her very much.

Rachel Scott and **Chris Reep** will be married July 12, in Clearwater Beach, FL. Rachel is the daughter of proud mom **Sherri Williams**, of Pleasures stores. Congratulations to Rachel and Chris!

Bill Kruse's brother, **Fred Kruse**, passed away recently. We send our condolences to **Bill** and his wife **Vivian Kruse**, as well as their family and many friends.

It's never too late for **Sonja Schrader** to take on another project, and the new Sweet Tea Cafe is the latest. It's a meat&3 located across from Grissom High School, with **Dorothy Tibbs** overseeing the cooking of the savory Southern comfort foods.

Bennett Nurseries and the **Botanical Gardens** hosted a garden tour in June, with perfect weather and lots of attendees. One

of our favorite gardens was that of **Ray Morris**, on Randolph, whose hidden backyard garden was just incredible.

Congratulations to **John Bzdell**, of Marathon Printing, who is now a granddad! (John's Polish, and he said the Polish word for Granddad is "Dziakek"). His daughter **Heather Luthy** and husband **Ben Luthy** are doing fine, and their new baby girl, **Annali Ionna Luthy**, is beautiful.

We're very proud of **Royal Funeral Home**. They have been in business in Huntsville for 90 years! They are the oldest black-owned business in North Alabama, and just celebrated with a community-wide series of events.

C. B. "Bill" Miller just celebrated his 86th birthday - Happy Birthday to you! Also, **Cecil Ashburn** had a birthday in early June, with a party at **Marie Hewett's** home.

We had several wedding anniversaries during the month. **Chuck and Annelie Owens** celebrated their 61st on June 8, and

Photo of The Month

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

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Hint: This little Hurricane Creek boy wants to be in politics.



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Ken and Diane Owens went to Bridge Street to celebrate their 38th on June 13! Congratulations to you!

Mary Unita Hile was born in 1924, and she grew up in Lincoln Village. Her mother, **Pearl** and all four of her brothers lived and worked in the cotton mill at Lincoln. One of her brothers was **Macon Weaver**, a well-known lawyer. Mary was very active with the Lincolnettes, a group dedicated to helping the children who attend Lincoln elementary school. Mary died at age 84 and is remembered by her daughter **Jimi Vernie**, her other daughters and family, and many friends.

Happy July Birthday to that handsome **Ken Owens**, of Cinram. We love you Ken!

Joe Sloan, Sr.'s beloved wife **Billie Jo Locker Sloan** died in June. We send our deepest sympathy to Joe, son **Joe, Jr.** and daughter **Belinda Ivy**, along with their many friends and family who will miss her gentle personality and love for her family.

A special Happy Birthday to **Elizabeth H. Jackson** of Plano, Tx. who turns 90 in July. Elizabeth used to live in Huntsville years ago in the Old Town area and really misses it here.

We met a really interesting man recently, **Edd Cantrell** of Huntsville knew **Bushy Bolton** (won the Medal of Honor) very well and knows alot of fascinating stories about Huntsville.

Jesse Hopkins, that energetic Golden K Kiwanian, just had a birthday in June - Happy Birthday to you Jesse!

James Allen Martin, of Grant, died at age 79. He was the sweet Dad of **Sharon Martin Whitaker** of New Hope, and his wife **Erma Nell**. His family misses him and he'll be in their hearts forever.

Henry Samuel Avery is a very strong name for a little baby boy, born in May to parents

Kelley and Daniel Avery. Louise Avery is the very proud grandma and I'll bet she has pictures!

Tressye Maples, who lives in Owens Cross Roads, is 99 years old and reads without glasses! She certainly has some good genes! Tressye loves to read and her good friend **Doris Spivey** visits her and catches up on the latest news.

Congratulations to **Michelle and Steve Trentham** on the birth of their new baby girl, **Andrea Michelle**. She is happy and healthy and beautiful.

We spoke with **Ellie Sanford** recently. Many remember her and her late husband **George Sanford** who died at the young age of 61.

The **McAllister** family of Hazel Green wants to send a special birthday greeting to twins **Jane Lyle** and **June Broad** of Huntsville!

On July 5 **Will Stutts** portrays **Mark Twain** at 8:15 in Norton Auditorium, on the University of North Alabama campus in Florence. We have heard that Will looks so much like Twain that people ask for the author's autograph!

Ria and Ed Pulles are from the Netherlands originally, but now make their home at Redstone Village. At their 60th anniversary in June, they celebrated with friends and family at Cherokee Ridge, Holy Spirit church and Redstone

Village. Lots of parties for a really sweet couple!

Mr. & Mrs. Doug Raney recently visited Huntsville (they used to live here) and among other things saw Burritt Museum, Holy Spirit church, Grace Lutheran Church, Parkway Place Mall and Doug's 3rd grade teacher. They'll be back in January for Grace Lutheran's reunion.

Stay cool and have a great 4th of July!

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Yogurt-Orange Dip for Fruit

- 1 1/3 c. plain low-fat yogurt
- 1/4 c. orange marmalade
- 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 6 c. assorted fresh fruit

Combine first 3 ingredients, cover and chill.

Serve with your fresh fruit such as bananas, apple slices, peaches, pear slices, canteloupes and watermelon.

Bagel Chips

- 4 plain bagels
- Ground garlic powder
- Parmesan cheese, grated

Cut the bagels in half lengthwise, then cut each half into 4 quarters. Slice each

quarter into 3 slices.

Place the slices on a baking sheet that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Spray the slices lightly and sprinkle on the garlic powder and cheese. Bake for 25 minutes at 300 degrees, until crisp. Remove to a rack to cool.

Parmesan-Pimiento Dip

- 1 c. mayonnaise
- 1 c. Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 c. ripe olives, chopped
- 4 oz. jar of pimientos, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced
Combine all in a baking dish. Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve with bagel chips.

Cabbage, Apple and Walnut Salad

- 1/2 c. chopped walnuts
- 1 c. tart apples, chopped
- 1 c. shredded cabbage

- 1/4 t. salt
- Mayonnaise
- Whole cabbage leaves
- Paprika

Toss the nuts, apples and cabbage together. Add salt and enough mayonnaise to coat the ingredients, no more.

Serve on whole cabbage leaves and garnish with a walnut half, additional mayonnaise and sprinkle with paprika.

Oriental Slaw

- 3/4 c. mayonnaise
- 2 T. soy sauce
- 1 t. sugar
- 1 t. salt

Mix all this and grate up a small head of cabbage. Add the mayonnaise mix to the cabbage and stir well. Add:

- 1/2 c. chopped green onion, with greens
- 1 can sliced water chesnuts, drained
- 1 can bamboo shoots,

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2 T. chopped pimiento

Mix this into the cabbage and refrigerate overnight.

Cheddar Baked Potatoes

4 medium potatoes

1 can cream of mushroom soup

1 t. paprika

1 t. onion powder

1 t. garlic powder

1/2 t. black pepper

1 c. Cheddar cheese, shredded

Cut potatoes into 1/4 inch slices. In a small bowl, combine the soup, onion powder, garlic powder, paprika and pepper.

Arrange the potato slices in a greased 2-qt. baking dish in overlapping rows.

Sprinkle with cheese, spoon the soup mixture over the cheese. Cover with foil and bake at 400 degrees for about 45 minutes.

Uncover and bake for 10 additional minutes and the potatoes are tender.

Lemon-Spiked Broccoli

1 lb. fresh broccoli

1/2 c. chopped green onion

1 T. plus 1 t. fresh lemon juice

1/4 c. butter

1/4 c. chopped celery

1/4 t. grated lemon rind

Cut tough ends off the broccoli, wash well and steam for about 7 minutes.

Melt the butter in a small saucepan, add onions and celery.

Cook til tender and stir in the lemon juice. Place broccoli in a butter-greased serving dish.

Pour the butter-onion mixture over the broccoli and sprinkle with the remaining lemon juice.

Sweet Potato Fingers

6 medium sweet potatoes, cooked and peeled

1/4 c. plain flour

1/4 c. vegetable oil

1/2 c. firmly packed brown sugar

1 t. salt

1/2 t. nutmeg

Cut potatoes in 1/2" slices and coat each with flour. Heat oil in skillet and fry the potatoes 4-5 minutes and they're golden brown.

Combine the sugar, salt and nutmeg. Sprinkle evenly over the sweet potatoes.

Toss lightly til sugar mixture melts and serve immediately.



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Bits of Huntsville History

1908 - Madison County becomes the first county in the state to use gas-powered buggies and motorcycles to deliver mail.

1910 - The spring, located downtown, finally gets a name. Mrs. Grace Walker appeared before the city governing body with a request that the spring be named the Big Spring Park. The motion barely passed.

1921 - Huntsville's first supermarket, Piggly Wiggly, opens with J.S. Comer as the manager.

1930 - A mad dog runs amuck in Bryant's Alley, biting fifteen people, all of whom had to take the dreaded rabies treatment.

1933 - The first state unemployment office opens in the Madison County Courthouse. Unemployed people were lined up for three blocks on the day of the opening.

1946 - Lawrence Brock, a Huntsville radio dealer, acquires the first television set in Madison County. The television is a seven inch "Sentinel".

"Never tell the Platoon Sergeant you have nothing to do."

Unknown Marine Recruit

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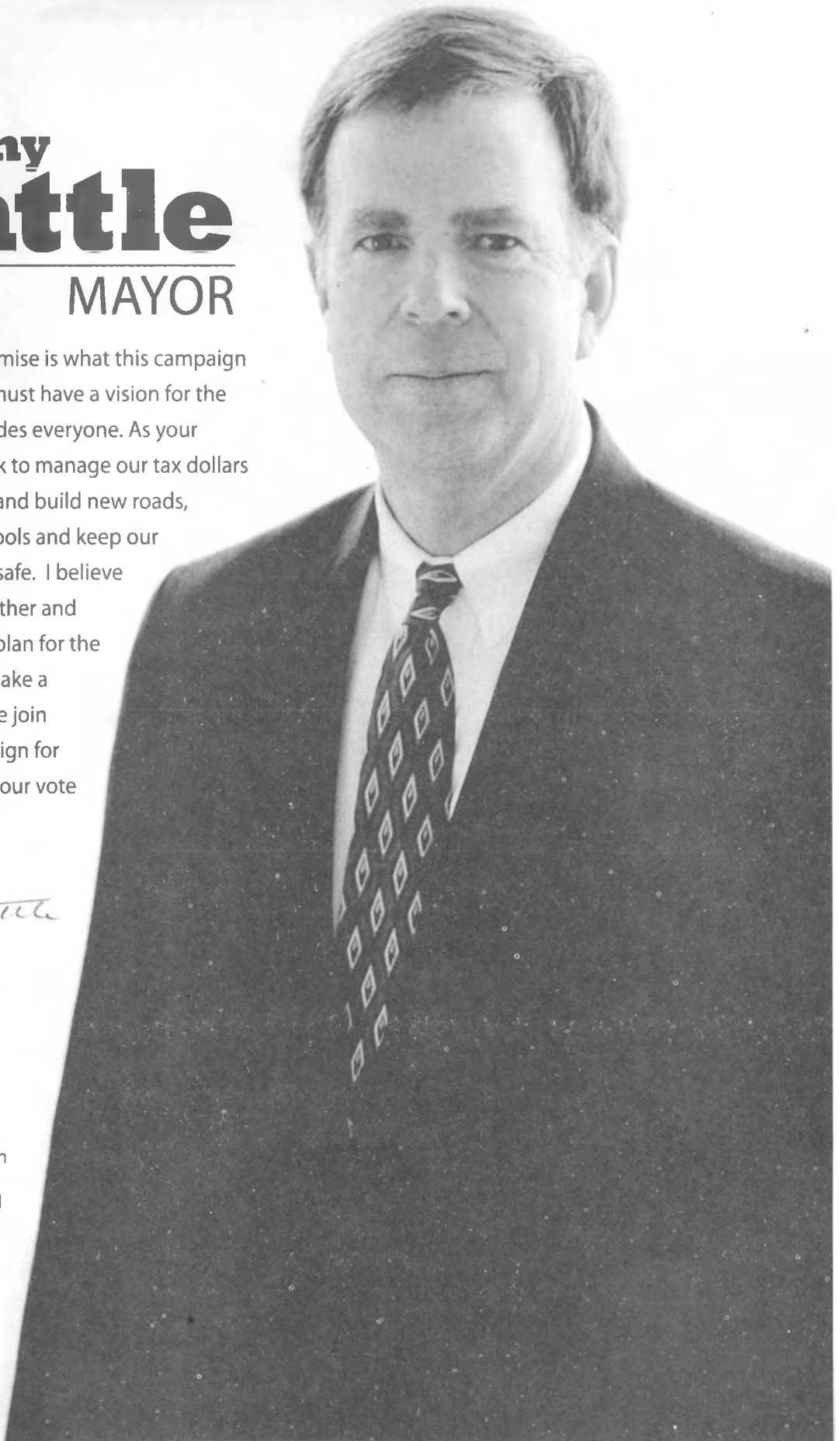
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Rocket Science

by Jerry M. Wilbanks

Baby boomers all, the kids in my neighborhood of Huntsville Park (or Merrimack Village as it had been known to the previous generation) grew up as the space program developed at the Marshall Spaceflight Center. Also going on at that time was the building and testing of new weapons systems at Redstone Arsenal. As a result of these highly publicized programs, we were kids absolutely obsessed with rocketry! After all, one of the gates to Redstone Arsenal Military Reservation was, literally, just up the street. That street would have been Park Boulevard or Triana. I lived on this street, almost directly across from Huntsville Manufacturing Company.

In fifth grade, I organized a group of fellow ten-year old enthusiasts from Joe Bradley School and formed a science club. We were all from the mill village and our club met in one or another of our homes each week.

We tried to schedule a field trip or activity after each meeting. Usually it was the launching of our latest home-made rocket in the open space behind the ball park next to the school. Sometimes, however, we would visit someone in the neighborhood who had a special interest or

knowledge in science. One club member's neighbor was a ham radio operator and he gave us a very good talk about short wave communications and ended the evening by letting each of us don the headphones and listen in, to our amazement, on the radio signal being emitted by the newly launched Russian satellite Sputnik. This first satellite to be lifted into orbit, as many will remember, was programmed by the Russians to send out a signal of greeting which could be picked up by

anyone with the simplest of shortwave receivers!

We had several good trips like this, with the focus on radio communications, astronomy and other science related topics. We even had adult supervision throughout most of this period in the form of our school teacher who gave us great support and encouragement. She stood by us loyally until the birth of her first child took all of her attention away from extracurricular activities. Left to our own

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devices, we were mainly interested in the big bang of rocket science and this is what ultimately led to our "time of troubles."

We cobbled together every kind and style of rocket or missile and the high point of our get-togethers, as I have stated before, was the launching of these questionable devices. Our usual scheme was to take a cardboard tube, seal one end with a cap or warhead, cover the whole deal with aluminum foil to give it that shiny rocket look and fill it with large, tightly packed kitchen match heads. The match heads were the only practical, easily obtainable propulsion system we could manage.

Alternative systems, such as CO2 cartridges and one or two other bright ideas, had been tried and rejected.

The match head experiments usually ended in disappointment as there was not sufficient thrust developed to propel the missile straight up into the air which was the whole point of the blooming exercise! We tried to correct this problem with traditional engineering approaches. We tried different kinds of match heads and ultimately discovered the most fiery and combustible. We built a ramp for launches, reasoning that our propulsion would be more efficiently focused in a semi-horizontal blast-off attempt. These measures met with only modest success.

A real advance was realized in improving the performance of the solid propellant when we began to add paraffin to the mix. Match heads suspended

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in paraffin, we found, produced a great deal of thrust, plus fiery, dripping, spectacular combustion as well. This was altogether gratifying to our lust for showy, alarming pyrotechnics.

However, the real coup de grace came with the culmination of all our engineering efforts: we somehow got our hands on a small supply of gunpowder. We immediately set about building the super rocket. We found a piece of copper tubing which we rigged out on one end with a bullet shaped nosecone. We had difficulty attaching this item. Using every tool and trick at our disposal ... tamping hammers, glue, hose clamp, etc. ... we at last declared it to be securely attached. Next, we filled the metal tube with the explosive black powder (kids, don't try this at home!) sealed the end with tissue and inserted a three inch green fuse pulled from a cherry bomb. We leaned our rocket against the ramp which sat on a log in my back yard, and without the slightest inkling of good judgement or common sense (that highly regarded southern virtue,) we put a lit match to that fuse and proceeded to duck and cover. There followed a mighty booming and earth-shaking shock wave, something on the order of heavy artillery going off outside your bedroom window.

The copper tube lay just where we had leaned it on the launching ramp but the nosecone was nowhere to be found! We had launched that nosecone like a bullet into parts unknown. It is my opinion that the nosecone/projectile has by this time entered Jupiter space and is being inexorably drawn into the gravity field of that massive gas giant. Based on the sound of the explosive blast and the mind-numbing concussion, for it to have travelled such a distance in no way stretches the imagination or challenges the credibility of those on hand to witness it!

When we had recovered sufficiently to know our own names and to know that our leaving the vicinity would probably be best all around, it became a general skedaddle on the part of the Huntsville Park Rocket Science Club. It was every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost! We ran, all of us ... Andy, Buster, Tony, the brothers Joe and Dan, myself... like boys who were truly late for an appoint-

ment, And we had no intention of ever coming back!

During our absence, someone in my neighborhood (I never knew exactly who) phoned the police department and reported a breach of the peace, When I came sneaking back home around dusk, I learned that my father had been interviewed by a policeman and was made aware of the back yard experiment which had generated so much consternation in the neighborhood. The less said about the subsequent confrontation between my father and myself, the better. Suffice it to say that I was properly rebuked and chastised.

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I don't know what would cause my neighbors to turn on me like that!

My story now moves ahead ten years. In 19671 joined the Army and, after basic training, I was sent to the Air Defense School at Fort Bliss, Texas to become a radar operator with the Nike Hercules Missile system, I completed the training cycle and became a for real, genuine, U.S. Army Missileman, school trained and fully qualified to acquire and track targets and to guide missiles on an intercept course with these dastardly intruders! The final phase of our training involved firing a Nike Hercules missile at a drone target. To say that my crew were very excited would be an understatement. When the big day came we travelled by bus to the test site just across the border in New Mexico. Other crews were firing ahead of us so we had to wait our turn.

The missiles were equipped with conventional high explosive warheads. If you were viewing the

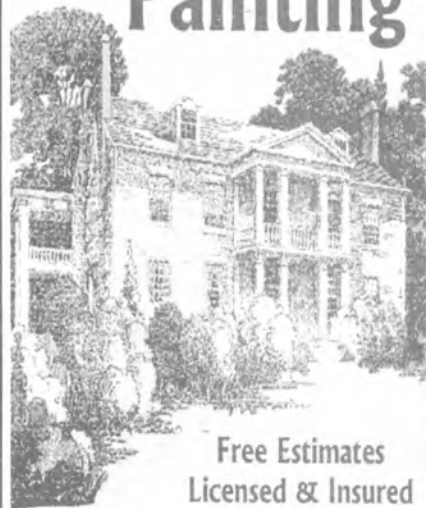
"event" outside you might see a small puff of smoke off in the distance when a target was destroyed. Those participating in a mission, however, were located in a radar van deep inside a fallout shelter. After engaging a target, our computerized equipment would indicate a hit or a miss.

My opportunity to fire a real missile had finally arrived. I was a pro now no more backyard fiascoes for me! When our time came we located our target and set our equipment to track it automatically while we put a missile up to pursue it. Our attack had developed flawlessly, The target was locked in our range gate, the missile left its launcher with the four rocket motor boosters producing 186,000 pounds of thrust and the missile's speed topping out at 2500 miles per hour. The computer indicated a hit and a cheer went up inside the van!

There was only one little hitch.

The HE warhead had failed to detonate.

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This meant that the missile had sailed past the target harmlessly and continued its flight, losing more and more momentum, until it smashed itself into a nearby range of mountains.

Still, the warhead did not explode. A disarm team was ordered to ascend the mountainous terrain, locate the missile and destroy the explosive warhead or otherwise render it harmless. They located the wreckage of the missile around 9:00 PM that night and dealt with it appropriately.


I've tried to come up with a moral for this story, but nothing occurs to me, off-hand. I was mighty disappointed to find that another big launch in my life had turned out to be a bust. I'm sure that other missile men would sympathize with me completely. After all, what's the big deal? Its only rocket science!

Heard on the Street in 1875

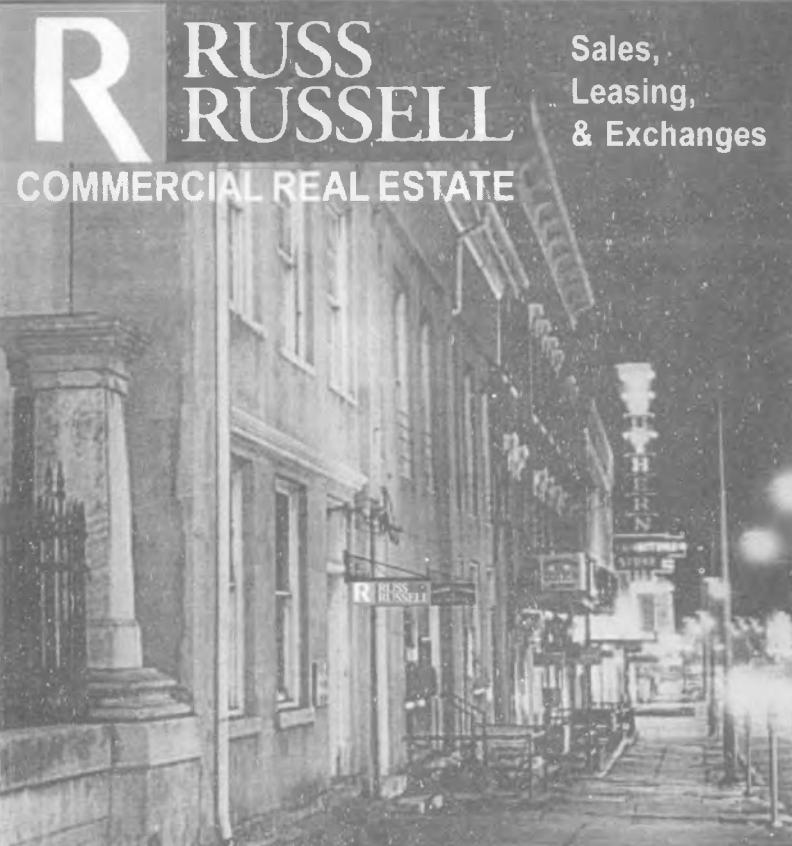
- Our friend Henry Ford, who has a most elegant little saloon on the North East Corner of the Square, invites all his friends of the old 4th Alabama, and everyone else, to call and test the quality of his cooling drinks. Henry was a good soldier, and therefore a good judge of liquor.

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

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



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Hard Times

by Helen Miller

The Depression touched everyone. For us, it meant cut out this and cut down on that, but we always had enough to eat thanks to Daddy's skill in hunting. My two piano lessons at Mrs. Nita Stokes were cut to one a week and finally cut out altogether. It didn't bother me too much. I dreaded those long practice hours. There were too many more important things I had to do—only God knows what they were.

The sheets on my bed were wearing out and Mama made more out of rough yellow domestic. I complained and she said, "Shut up and be thankful you still have a roof over your head; that's about all we have left." She made pillow cases out

of flour sacks.

Every day or two, transients would come by asking about yard work in exchange for food. There was always baked sweet potatoes, collard greens, and venison stew in the kitchen, so Mama fixed a plate and listened to their stories. Some were going south and some were going north looking for work. I recall going into the kitchen one day where she was washing dishes to see tears streaming down her face. She was shaking her head back and forth and sobbing, "I can't go on much longer, Lord."

I guess she had tied a knot and was trying to hang on.


We often made fudge candy that I sold for five cents a package for my school money, and we sang songs like Stephen Foster's "Hard Times Come Again No More." Robbing and stealing were almost never heard of and the

front door was seldom locked. Some folks' electricity was cut off because they couldn't pay their bill. Mama complained because ours was a bit over two dollars a month and she stopped using the electric iron. I recall she would often build a roaring fire in the kitchen stove on a hot summer day to heat up the old black flat iron if we had some pressing to do.

For entertainment we would go over to Uncle John's and listen to Amos and Andy. Daddy read *The Charleston News and Courier* and accepted every word as factual as if it had come straight from the New Testament. Franklin Roosevelt started campaigning and vowed to change things for us.

Thank goodness he was one president who lived up to his promises.





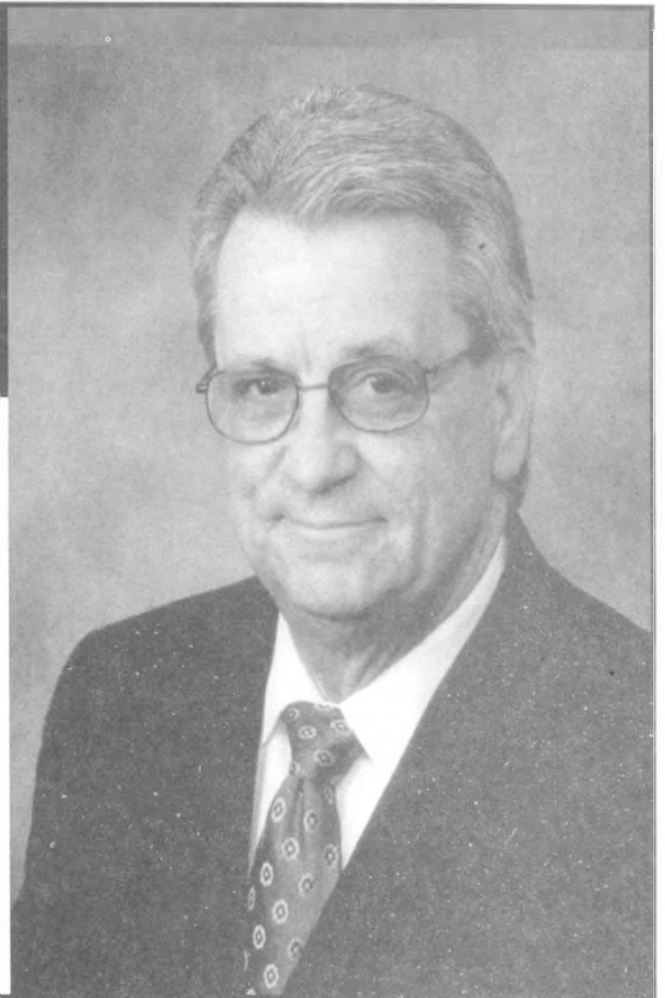
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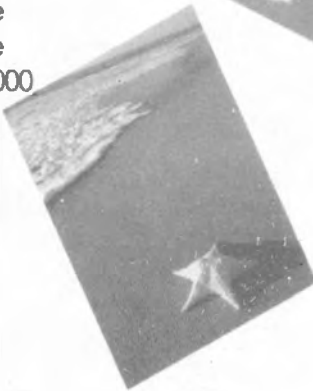
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The Confederate Statue

by Ken Owens

The idea of a memorial originated with the United Daughters of the Confederacy shortly after the turn of the century. They felt that the spirit of Southern fighting men during the Civil War should be preserved for the future, and what better way than a statue?

They sponsored many socials, rummage sales, teas and parties in the Huntsville area to raise money for the project. Finally, they accumulated \$2500 and began to put the plan together.

Today, \$2500 doesn't sound like a lot, but in 1905, it was enough to buy an exquisite piece of Vermont granite and hire a sculptor to perform the work.

Huntsville had a pretty decent sculpting artist in 1905 by the name of Oscar Hummel, to whom the UDC wanted to give the job. However, since he was a local artist, some felt he wouldn't be able to do as good a job as other sculptors somewhere else. As a sort of test, he was assigned to sculpt an Indian

head. If the Indian head was satisfactory, he would get the job. It was, and he did.

Hummel set up shop on the site that is today a parking lot next to the Church of the Visitation in downtown Huntsville. As soon as the granite arrived, Hummel began his work. His model was Jim Mott Robinson, of Hazel Green.

In those days, a blacksmith shop was at the corner of Washington Street close to Hummel's shop. People would watch the progress of the statue while they waited their turn to have their buggies and surreys repaired by the blacksmith. Most were amazed and pleased with the progress as Hummel tirelessly continued.

At last, the statue was complete, and dedication plans were being finalized.

November 21, 1905 was a wonderfully festive day. Wagons, carts, horses and people jammed the courthouse square for the dedication. Dignitaries were on hand with windy speeches and well-wishes, including the Mayor of Huntsville, the county commissioner, and the Governor of Alabama. Thirteen pretty young ladies (one for each state of the former Confederacy) laid a large wreath at the pedestal base of the statue while Monroe's band played heart-stirring music. There wasn't a dry

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eye on the square that day.

The years passed... and the old soldier silently stood his ceaseless vigil as sentry, facing south in honor of those who fought for the Confederacy.

In 1966, plans were underway to tear down the old courthouse and replace it with a modern new one. Obviously, the statue had to be moved out of the way before the work started. A crane was called in to perform the task, which went well and without incident. The crane merely lifted the statue from the courthouse lawn, swung it across the street, and carefully set it down on the front lawn of the First National Bank.

This was to be the soldier's temporary home until the new courthouse was completed.

Before the completion of the courthouse, demolition of Cotton Row began in order to make way for the construction of the new State National Bank Building.

The fateful day was June 29, 1966. During the destruction of Cotton Row, one of the walls fell right on the warrior and knocked him down, breaking off his head, both hands, and his feet.

Since the UDC actually owned the statue, the Huntsville chapter president, Mrs. R.G. Moore, was notified. She came to the scene via a police car that picked her up at home and was

both horrified and sickened by the sight of the old soldier, in pieces, before her. She absently tried to pick up the head for safekeeping before she realized it was too heavy.

Then began the long process of replacement, including insurance claims and legal actions.

At first, it appeared that molds could be made of the damaged parts for replacement, since the body of the statue was undamaged. However, that wasn't possible, and it was determined that a new sculpture had to be made... so the insurance appraisal was done that way.

The legal process took an unbelievable two-year period, but

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eventually, the courts found in favor of the UDC in March, 1968. The re-sculpting process could at last begin.

The work was awarded to the Georgia Marble Works, one of only five granite sculptors in the U.S. The granite used was Georgia granite... good, but not as visually appealing as Vermont granite.

The original undamaged pedestal was used, but the difference in the granites necessitated some re-sanding for a color match.

The new warrior's hands and face are exactly as the old one's were; the body is pretty close to the original except for some minor differences in the folds and creases of the uniform.

The original statue was surrounded by an iron picket fence, which has been officially (are you ready for this?) "misplaced."

In case you're wondering what happened to the original statue, last word was that it is in the good care of Mrs. George C. Crome in Memphis, Tennessee.

The next time you have business at the courthouse, you might pause a moment to reflect on the stone warrior who, like countless thousands on both sides during the Civil War, moved up to replace a fallen comrade.

The term "mulligan" in golf is really a contraction of the phrase "maul it again."

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Guntersville - August 3, 1894

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Alabama's First Airplane

by Gab Wicks

It was the first flight in Alabama, and possibly the world's first monoplane, but, because of two North Carolina bicycle repairmen, it was beaten by a margin of only a few years.

That is not, however, all of the story. That flight would affect the early history of aviation, and influence the formation of one of the largest aviation companies in the world.

William Lafayette Quick was born near Shiloh, Tennessee in 1859 and later moved his family to a small community outside present day New Market which became known as "Quick's Mill." He set up a grist mill, blacksmith's forge, saw mill, and machine shop in the late 1800s and began to dream of flying.

Quick first began talking of what he called "aerial navigation" before the turn of the century. Although he had never heard of anyone trying to fly before, he came up with the idea of building a "flying machine."

Quick had no formal education, but he had all the resources he would possibly need. He could build a wooden body in his saw mill, derive a method of propulsion with his machine shop, and make all the necessary rigging and gear in his

forge. His primary resource, though, was the models he found in the woods that surrounded his home.

Quick's granddaughter, Lorraine Wicks, recalls: "My grandfather would go into the woods back of the Quick home and watch the buzzards sail around and around, dip down and up with



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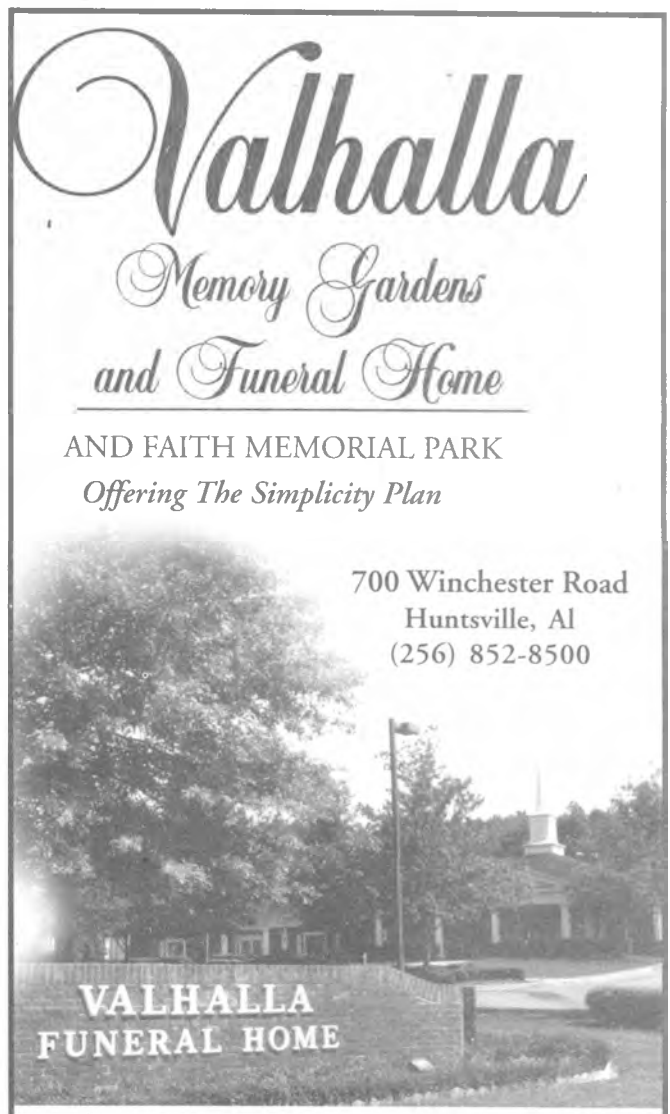
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ease and never flap their wings."

Quick designed his craft after the buzzards, bats, insects, and other flying creatures that surrounded him. He chose his power plant, cut and laminated the lumber for the frame, took three bicycle tires for landing gear, and set about on an eight-year design and construction plan, with assembly well underway in 1908. After assembly, the final step was the selection of a propeller. This consisted of several high speed engine tests to find the right combination. When the choice was made Quick asked his son William Massey to fly the plane because he was the smallest of the ten children.

The flight lasted for only a few seconds. William achieved an altitude of a few feet, and then ran out of pasture. He tried to turn the plane, but succeeded in clipping the ground with a wing. The wing was damaged, the propeller broken, and the landing gear torn off. Quick took the plane back to his shop where it stayed for almost 60 years.

This, however, was just the beginning of the Quick family's career with aviation. In the years to follow, eight of the Quick children became pilots. Some were barnstormers, others were pioneers of the crop dusting indus-

try, and others fell victim to the numerous dangers of primitive aviation.

W. L. Quick influenced many friends and relatives to fly, including his brother-in-law, Terah Maroney. Maroney moved West about the time that Will Quick was finishing his monoplane, and enrolled in the flying school of Glen Curtis, later founder of the air craft company that bears his name.

Maroney purchased a flying machine, and became a barn stormer.

Later, he became the first man to fly in the state of Montana. On July 4, 1914, Maroney gave a flying exhibition in Seattle, Washington. Many of his audience were impressed enough to ask for a ride - including a certain lumber company owner named Bill Boeing. When Boeing stepped from the plane he vowed to spend the rest of his life as an aviator. The rest is history.

Meanwhile, Will Quick, innovator that he was, modified his original monoplane design, and patented an "improved flying machine" in 1913 that had such modern features as folding wings, retractable landing gear, and a three-prop propulsion system. However, it never left his blueprints; he died in



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Dale Cassidy, Madison

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1927, leaving his historical flight simply a local legend.

However, in 1970, the Experimental Aircraft Club discovered the old monoplane as it hung in the rafters of Will Quick's old shop. After obtaining the consent of the family, the plane was restored to its original condition using almost all original parts. It is now on public display at the Huntsville Space and Rocket Museum.

Will Quick has received some recognition for the history he created. The Smithsonian Institute has his original model and patent, and the Alabama Aviation Hall of Fame in Birmingham has a plaque commemorating his induction - right beneath the Wright Brothers. Even with this notoriety, the Will Quick story remains one of the most impressive and well kept secrets of Huntsville's colorful past.

"I'm so old, all my friends in heaven are thinking I didn't make it."

Zack Barrett, Arab

Old Time Justice

The parties who went in search of the horse stolen from Mr. Luke Matthews, a long time and respected resident of Huntsville, succeeded in finding the horse and the four culprits responsible for its removal.

After brief negotiations the horse and the culprits were returned to Huntsville under guard. Mr. Matthews once again has possession of his animal and one of the thieves is now lodged in our jail.

The other three are reported to still be recovering from an unfortunate accident.

from an 1869 Huntsville newspaper

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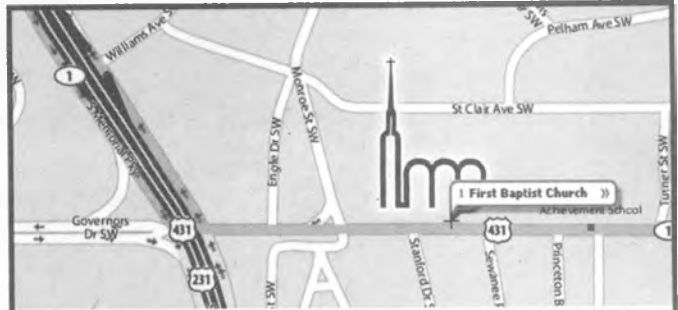
Shooting Marbles

by Malcolm Miller

When I was in grammar school many years ago, one of the favorite games for boys was marbles. We called it "shooting marbles." In order to shoot the marble you placed it on top of your thumb and thumped it over your index finger.

There were two main games we played. One was where we drew a large circle in the dirt and each player put an equal amount of marbles in the center of the circle then we drew a straight line off to the side, walked off so many paces and pitched a marble at the line. The boy coming closest to the line got to shoot first and the next closest next till every one got a shot. Naturally getting the first shot was a big advantage because a real good marble shooter could clean out all the marble. If you knocked at least one marble out each time you could keep on shooting until you missed.

One important asset in shooting marbles was to have a good taw, that's what we called the marble used for shooting. If possible you wanted to use a large marble that was very hard called a stoner. You got to keep all the marbles that you knocked out of the ring but you would give them back to the owners after the game; that is unless you were playing for keeps. The "for keeps" practice was frowned on by the teachers and most



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parents, however rules are made to be broken and some of the bigger boys would win so many marbles that they would have their pockets bulging with large tobacco sacks full of marbles won off of the lesser skilled shooters.

One other marble game that we played back then was called "Roley Holey." In this game three holes were dug in a straight line about two feet apart. The shooter had to shoot his marble into each hole without missing then hit his opponents marble on the far end. The loser in this game was very unfortunate as he was required to put his knuckles on the ground and let the winner shoot at them. This of course could be the cause of a lot of bruised knuckles.

I suppose one reason the marble games died out over the years was there was really no good place to play the game. Back then we primarily used the out-

door basket ball courts and if we played at home we would simply scrape off all the grass on a spot in the yard. The main reason the sport died out I suppose is that there got to be more and more things for kids to do with their time. With TV, video games, computers and iPods kids have today. I am sure they wouldn't be interested in shooting marbles. Therefore, the game of marbles now

only exists in the memories of those days long ago by those of us who wore the knees out of a many a pair of overalls shooting that favorite stoner and cleaning out the ring.

"At my age, flowers really scare me."

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Klan Ceremony at Big Spring

from 1923 newspaper

From near and far Friday night a thousand or more people of Huntsville and adjacent territory drove through rolling roads of mud and fields of more mud to the football field of the Big Spring branch where the Huntsville Ku Klux Klan held their much talked of "Public Naturalization" as conducted by the Invisible Empire. The services were impressive as groups of white-robed men, held in relief by a "burning cross" composed of electric light bulbs, gathered about their respective stations with each man holding a flash light or torch high above their heads, the "naturalization" appearing to be what is called initiation into the mysteries of the order.

Placing the candidates in the center, leaders of the Klan

administered the oath which qualified them as members of the order, the public held back at considerable distance, watching with bated breath for some mysterious happening which never came.

The flag of the United States played a big part in the ceremony, with one large flag and two smaller ones. After the "naturalization" had been completed the Klan closed its public meeting with singing "Nearer My God to Thee" and "My Country 'Tis of Thee", sung by old and new members.

Within five minutes after the closing, not a single white-robed

man was to be found in the large number of people gathered to participate and witness the ceremony. Whither they went or when, nobody appeared to know.

Two representatives of the News who were present to view the exercises and to report thereon were admitted within the lines, but not near enough to recognize the members.

One reason for unhappy marriages is that men can't fool their wives like they could their mothers.

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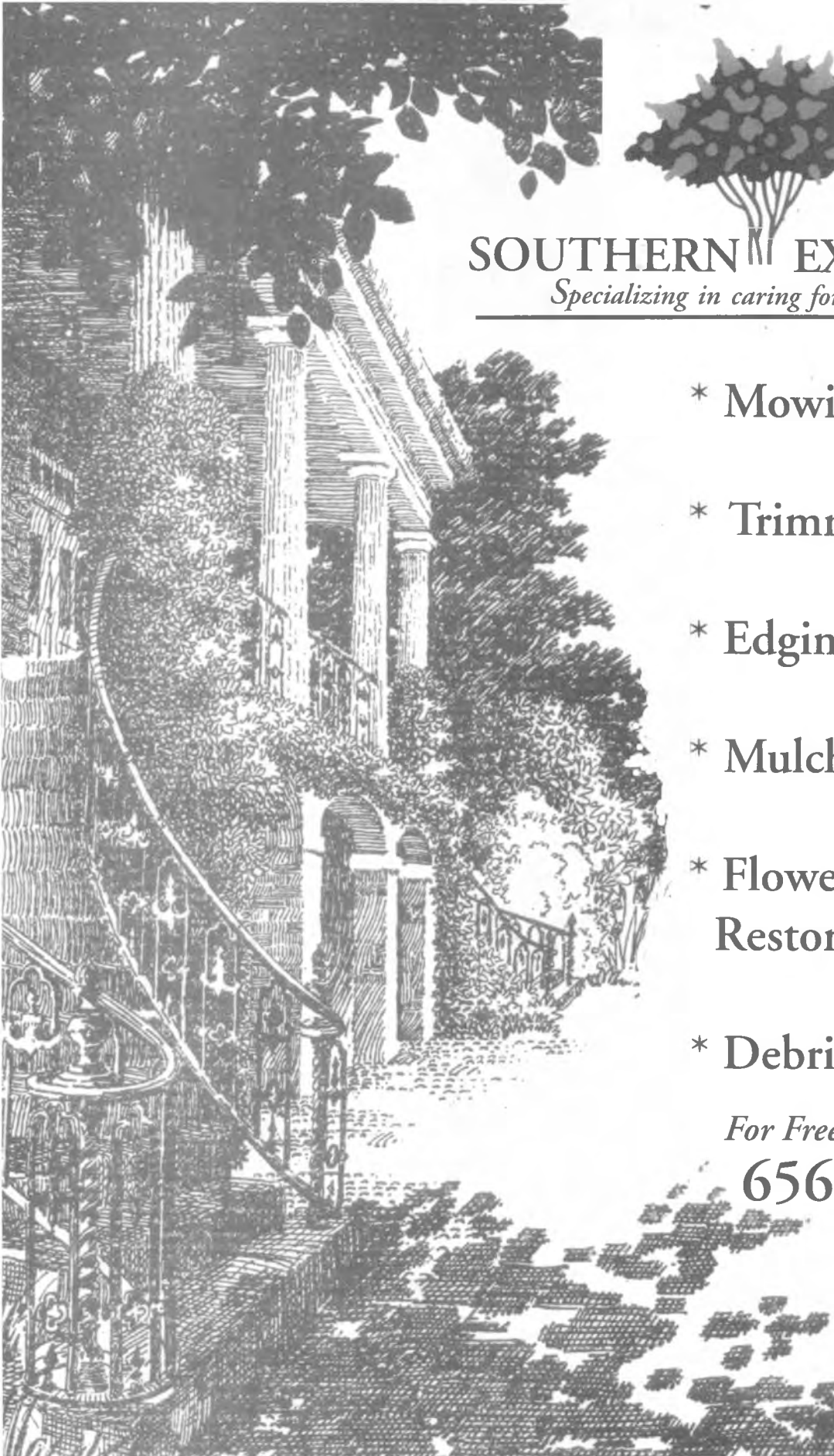
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Dilworth Lumber

A Part of Huntsville's History

by Penn Dilworth

It's not quite shrouded in the mists of time, but no one has been able to determine the actual date the Dilworth family entered into the lumber business in Huntsville. Somewhere between 1885 and 1890, J. D. Dilworth was a building contractor using his own lumber yard as a source of supply. That business, called J. D. Dilworth and Son, was no great success, but several families were able to sustain through troubled financial times at the end of Reconstruction.

An 1898 invoice from J. D. Dilworth and Son to D. D. Shelby priced 2x4x12's at \$1.20 - for 10! Two-by-fours sixteen feet long were 15 cents each and a "small coal shed" cost \$14.95 for the lumber! Today, sales tax for this purchase would be more than that total bill.

The "son" of the business, W. P. Dilworth, must have felt hampered under the close proprietor-

ship of his father, and purchased the Huntsville Lumber Company (renamed Huntsville Manufacturing and Land Company). This business was located at Church Street and the Southern Rail Crossing, the present site of Dilworth Lumber Company. Upon the death of J. D. Dilworth the two businesses were combined.

Soon after the purchase of the Church Street business, the coal trading division was discontinued. A 1916 newspaper article noted that "...too many kinds of broth spoil the cook so he (W. P. Dilworth) decided to devote his entire time and attention to the manufacturing for and supplying of the retail trade in everything that goes into the building of homes."

This news report went on to detail, "the number of horse teams (increasing from one in 1907 to three in 1916), proximity to the rail line that enabled them to handle carload lots of lumber and supplies with ease and dispatch," and further noting that a supply of new asphalt shingles was available since the "... recent city ordinance provides against the use of

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wooden shingles in the city of Huntsville. Mr. Dilworth states that while the dealer makes money selling the composition roofing, both the city and the builder are better off for having passed that ordinance."

1916 was the year a new lumber planing mill was installed. The business carried a stock of "... rough and dressed lumber in a full and complete line, sash, doors, mill work lime, cement, paints, oils, brick, builders' hardware, shingles and composition roofing." 75 years later, only brick and oils had been discontinued.

This was also the year that L. A. Sublett built a house in Brownsboro. His 2x4x16's were up to 18 cents each. The bill for this two story house was \$890.15 for lumber, brick windows (at \$1.85 each), doors \$2.25 each, door locks for fifty cents and all other materials. Dilworth, Sr. wrote at the bottom of the bill, "...Will guarantee you all to be satisfactory in every way."

The Huntsville Daily Times reported in 1925 that the firm had adopted the name of Dilworth Lumber Company in 1923. News traveled slow at that time.

The change reflected the new partnership of W. P. Dilworth, Sr., his son William Dilworth and daughter, Miss Virginia Dilworth. The Church Street location held eight warehouses in 1925. (It later had nine.)

The delivery of materials still used the three horse teams, but now had begun deliveries by truck. The newspaper claimed "a considerable volume of trade east on the railroad line towards Chattanooga and north towards Nashville, but

the larger part of its volume comes from Huntsville and Madison County."

Economic problems were prevalent everywhere in the thirties. W. P. Dilworth would often speak of the high volume of barter in those days. It was also common to extend credit on the basis of personality, as it was sure that an honest man would pay his debts as soon as possible. After

the funeral of W. P. Dilworth Jr., Mr. Theodore Wilson related that money had been loaned for his home when "...the banks wouldn't talk to a Black man. All we had was our word, and that's how our house was built. Times were hard and people pulled together."

Prosperity began to return with the military buildup of World War II. Supplies were diverted to military uses, but with the expan-

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sion of Huntsville Arsenal the business grew. Founding of the Army's missile program headquarters at Redstone Arsenal and the influx of new residents turned Huntsville into a "boom town."

James F. Smith began a thirty-year career as salesman in 1948, and W. P. Dilworth, III returned home from military service in 1955 to work in the family firm.

Beginning in 1951 taxes were added to your bill at the end of each month. Mrs. C. E. (Mollie) Hutchens' statement of that same year showed that a 2x4x16 foot pine was selling for a little over a dollar each. Windows were up to \$9 each!

New building materials suppliers opened to sell to the suburbs springing up in between cotton fields. Wilson Lumber and Huntsville Roofing opened their doors with the boom. In the 1960s, the boom continued. Dilworth Lumber built a new warehouse and office and the old house which had served for so long was torn down. "Tubber" Thiemonge became a valuable member of the firm and remained until the 1980s.

W. P. Dilworth, Sr. died in 1964. He had been a very active citizen in many organizations in Huntsville. Dilworth Lumber remained, under the ownership of W. P. Dilworth, Jr. and his sister, Mrs. Virginia D. Henry.

This era saw some of the "old" names in lumber disappear. Van Valkenburgh, Gunn, Geron, Bartee - all left in the sixties and seventies. New chain lumber yards opened up in Huntsville and brought the mass merchandise concept with them. Slowly,

Dilworth changed from commodity lines to products of higher quality. They now concentrated on the very best lines of lumber, pine and a large selection of hardwoods.

Decorator hardware and paint brands were added. This opened whole new areas of sales and customers. Penn Dilworth entered the business in 1977.

When Walter Dilworth moved back to Huntsville in 1987 to join the firm, his presence expanded the industrial and contractor sales. During the following year W. P. Dilworth, Jr. passed away. He was very proud of his good health and worked a full day on the day he died. He was fascinated by the interstate I65 construction, and had always hoped that he would live to see its completion.

In 1998, after over a hundred years in business, Dilworth Lumber Co. closed its doors.

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Shaver's

Top 10 Books of Local & Regional Interest

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2. *The Civil War Journal of Mary Jane Chadick; Huntsville during the Civil War*, by Nancy Rohr \$16.95
3. *When Spirits Walk: Ghosts of Hazel Green, Dallas Mill & more* by Jacque Gray Reeves \$15.95
4. *Why is it Named That? 250 Place Names in Huntsville/Madison County* (new edition with a few corrections) by Dex Nilsson \$13.95
5. *Killingsworth Cove on Hurricane Creek* by Joe Floyd Broyles \$12.95
6. *True Tales of Old Madison County* by Virgil (Pat) Jones \$7.95
7. *Lily Flagg: Huntsville's Famous Cow* by Doris Gilbreath \$13.95
8. *Scenic North Alabama: A Guide to North Alabama's Hidden Natural Treasures (Canyons, Caverns, Natural Covered Bridges & Waterfalls)* by Robert Schuffert \$27.95
9. *Tales of Huntsville Caves* by The Huntsville Grotto \$12.95
10. *13 Alabama Ghosts and Jeffrey* by Kathryn Windham \$15.95

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City Council News from 1906

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

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

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

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

- The members of the Fire Department will be allowed va-

cation for the summer.

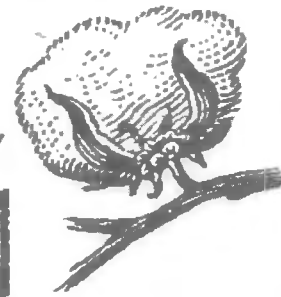
- The Hospital Association stated that an annex is being erected to the city hospital and permission, was asked for the right to remove this new structure when the lease of the association runs out. This was

granted.

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

- The street committee recommended widening Cruse Alley.

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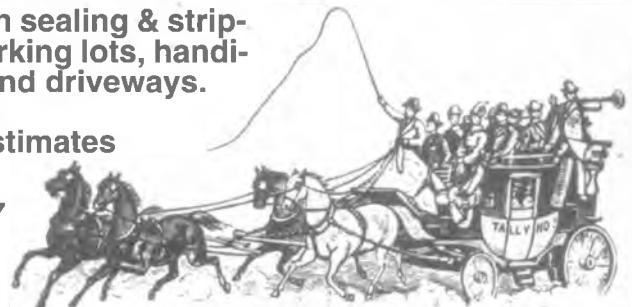
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Limited seating available for the dinner event.

Once upon a time, there was a young girl, a spider and two mice who lived in a tower in the middle of an enchanted forest...

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It runs from July 18th through July 26, 7PM, matinee's are at 2:30 on July 19, 20, 26. All seats are \$10.

- Giant Yard Sale -

8AM until Noon, July 12TH, we are having a Giant Yard Sale in front of the theatre building at 1214 Meridian Street, selling donated items to benefit the theatre and our Wheelchair Lift Fund. We will have hundreds of quality items as well as furniture and junk, clothing and all sorts of stuff.

News From the Year 1960

News From Huntsville and Around The World

Protests by Negroes Spread across the South

Lunch counter sit-in protests by Negroes seeking to be served have spread throughout much of the South, resulting in rioting in some major cities and numerous arrests.

The sit-ins began earlier this month in Greensboro, North Carolina, when Negro students from Agriculture and Technical College and Bennett College marched into a variety store and took seats at the lunch counter. White waitresses refused to serve them.

Within days, the passive resistance movement spread to Raleigh and Charlotte and finally to other cities such as Atlanta, Birmingham, Little Rock, Nashville and Montgomery. The protests have been held largely in variety stores, such as S.H. Kress and Co. and Woolworth's, which offer inex-

pensive lunchtime meals. Many lunch counters have been closed. No similar sit-ins have been staged at the more expensive restaurants.

Taking a seat at a lunch counter in Charlotte, Joseph Charles Jones, a Negro college graduate, said that he and others were seeking "Godgiven" rights. "All I want is to come in and place my order and be served and leave a tip if I feel like it," he said.

In Chattanooga, Tennessee, there were angry clashes between Negroes and whites in one variety store. Dishes, flower pots and other items were hurled at the Negroes as the store management sought to close the lunch counter. In Rock Hill, South Carolina, a Negro was knocked from a lunch counter stool, another struck by an egg.

Unknown Senator Throws Hat in Ring for President

Senator John F. Kennedy tossed his hat into the ring of presidential hopefuls early this month. At month's end, he had campaign offices opened throughout the U.S. Democrat Hubert Humphrey currently trails him in most polls.

While Kennedy failed to win the vice-presidential post at the last Democratic convention, the move at least got him national exposure. Poorly known outside Massachusetts, he must expand his base, especially in the West.

It is widely believed that being of the Catholic faith will spell doom for any candidate running for president.

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Birth Control Pill to go on Sale in U.S.

This year, the Food and Drug Administration gave its approval to an oral contraceptive to be marketed in the United States next spring. The pills will be sold under the brand names Enovid and Norlutin. Price for a month's supply of protection will be around \$10.

Planned Parenthood spearheaded testing in Puerto Rico in 1956. Initially, pills used progesterone to suppress the development of ova. Recently, other hormone combinations at lower dosages proved just as effective. The progesterone alternative is less expensive.

The Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology, based in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, has been monitoring the women in the Puerto Rican study for adverse effects. One in five report weight gain and/or nausea. There has been no sign of cancer; in fact, preliminary findings show a reduction in breast and uterine cancer. Fertility usually returns a month or two after discontinuation of the pills.

Ted Hits Last Homer

Ted Williams has left baseball with a bang. In his final turn at bat, the star of the Boston Red Sox poled a 420-foot home run against the Baltimore Orioles and said he was quitting the sport. Williams was supposed to end his career after a final three-game series against the Yankees but decided to leave with a flourish after his 521st career homer. He received a standing ovation. Williams' career home run total is exceeded only by Babe Ruth (714) and Jimmy Foxx (534).

House Committee Looks into Payola

Host of "American Bandstand" Dick Clark has been paying disk jockeys to play records he has invested in. That is the charge of a House panel investigating payola in the music field. Today, an editor of a major music magazine testified defending Clark, saying song-plugging was a tradition in the music business.

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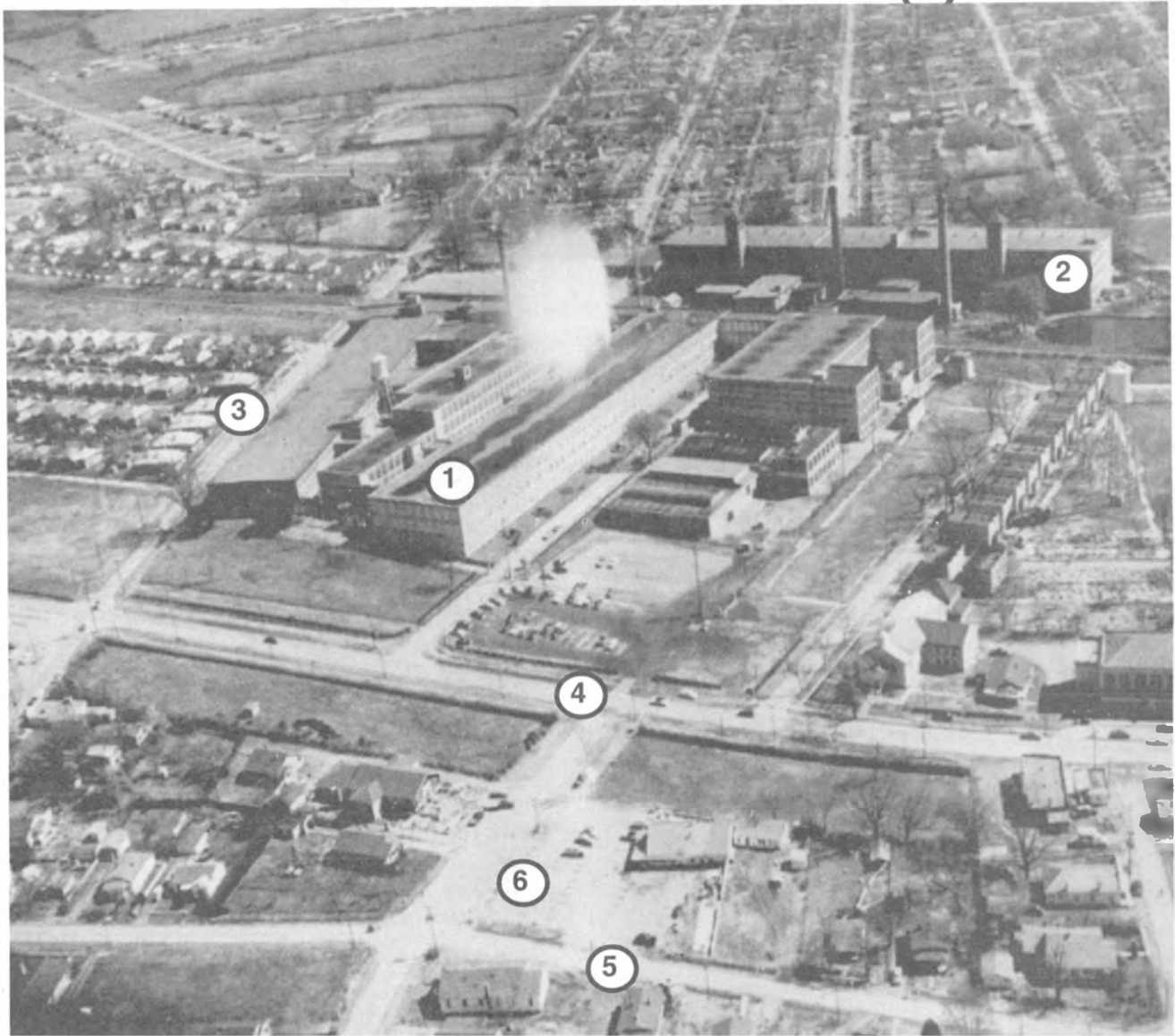
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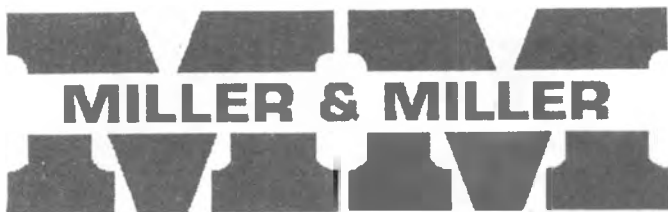
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The Memoirs of Frank Gurley

I enlisted in the C.S.A about 16 July 1861 at Maysville, Madison Co., Ala. in a company of cavalry afterwards called the Kelley Rangers, commanded by D.C. Kelley formerly of Lebanon, Tenn. Soon after I enlisted, the company moved to Huntsville and commenced drilling.

Everything being new and without camp equipage, the men was divided out at night and sent to the citizens houses to be fed. For two or three of the first days, I went to the hotel. One evening while on drill I noticed a beautiful young girl apparently about fourteen years old watching me and I noticed myself as often watching her. It was the evening of the 3rd day I was sent to the house of a gentleman to stay, and at supper I met with the girl I had been trying to find out about and found it to be the daughter of my host.

Her being young and me bashful, we did but little talking but a good deal of looking, but those looks was lasting. I met her every day from that time until I left for the army.

The Kelly Rangers boarded a train and we arrived at Memphis about the last of August and was mustered into Forrest's Regt. and commanded by Lt. Col. N. B. Forrest.

After being in Memphis for a short time the Capt. of my company, D. C. Kelley, and myself came back to North Alabama to get some recruits. We remained at home 10 days and went back to Memphis. When we arrived at Memphis we met the Regt getting onto the cars bound for Nashville, where we arrived without anything of note transpiring.

I was ordered to take a boat for Fort Donelson and came near being drowned in going down the river. I reached Fort Donelson

and in a few days was joined by the remainder of the Regt. After being at Donelson a few days my company under Lt. Hambrick was ordered to Ft. Henry. The third day after we reached the Fort we learned that our Capt. had been elected Maj. and the Lt. in command of the company was ordered to hold an election for brevet 2 Lt. The two 1st Lt.'s refused to accept their offices by promotion and was elected by acclamation. The brevet 2nd said he would not accept the 2 Lts. by promotion, and I was nominated against him. And then he said he would hold it by promotion and refused the election, and that caused a difficulty until this day.

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The next few pages deal with various skirmishes and his return to Nashville. We pick up his story again as he prepares to visit home.

We left Nashville and trudged our way to Murfreesboro and camped. I stretched my tent and stretched out to get a good nights sleep, which I greatly needed. About midnight I woke up and I was in a pond of water 4 inches deep. My bedfellow T.B. King was with me and the water on his side of the tent was so deep it ran over him without waking him. There we learned we was bound for Huntsville. When we reached Fayetteville, my Regt was disbanded to go home for 10 days. I reached home and remained with my friends 10 days and went to Birds Spring, where the Regt was to meet. When we got to camp the Col. sent word he would not be at the Regt in 4 days. Myself, King & Morrow got permission to go back home.

We supplied ourselves with a bottle of brandy and started home. When we reached the (Flint) river it was very full. The back water was out 1 mile from the river. In going through this back water Morrow got in a deep place and stopped and said if I did not bring him some brandy he would not come out. We reached Maysville wet and drunk.

I went to my bachelors home and was taken sick but managed to get back to the Regt and was sent to the house of Mrs. Walls.

It was reported that the Yanks was coming and my friends came and moved me out to my father, where I remained a few days and had to go to the mountain for safety. I was thrown in a wagon and hauled to the mountain and such a jolting I never had, but the jolting cured me.

I was carried to the Chalybeate Spring and when we reached it I drank a pint of water without stopping, then lay down and had a good sleep. When I awoke my brother had me a nice meal and I et a hearty dinner, then walked 30 yds without assistance - the first step I had walked for 30 days. Dr. Jordan came to see me the next day and said I need not take any more medicine.

Two days later I had to leave the spring to give the Yanks a chance to camp there. I went down in the Buckhannon sinks and remained a few days with a man living there.

The valley was too thick with blue for safety and I had to leave. I attempted to get across the Tennessee River but it was closely watched, so I turned my course to Tennessee. I went through the mountains

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to Winchester, where there was some Rebs there. I got into a drunken fight at Winchester that caused the Yanks to leave. I then joined Capt. Trimble's squad and went to Shelbyville Pike, but did nothing.

After a short while Gurley returned to Madison County where he recruited a small band of men and began to wage his own war with the occupying Federal army.

"On my way home I concluded to raise a company of men. I succeeded in getting a commission and raised a lot of men. I went to the R. R. Bridge nearby (probably at Flint River) and found some of the guards out gathering mulberries. We exchanged a few shots and killed one Yank and wounded one and captured a man named Skinner. I sent him to Chattanooga, Tenn. and he was sent from there to Richmond, Va. This fight stirred up the Yanks and it was impossible to stay in Madison Co. and I left for Jackson.

I found I had to cross the river and I was not satisfied to go out without more fuss. I went to the R. R. and when the cars came along we (six in no.) shot into the cars and killed 12 men dead and wounded 12 others and six of the wounded died.

The Yanks paid me back in burning houses. I went still further up the R.R. and paid my respects to the cars again and rec'd six dead Yanks in return.

After we got on the South side of the river we learned there was a gunboat coming up. We fell in with some other Rebs and when the boat came up we secreted ourselves on the bank and the boat started to land at the very place we were lying, and we gave her a hot landing, killing seventeen men.

After resting a few days we started back having collected a

few recruits. When we reached the South side of the river, which we did just at dark, I learned the country was covered with Yanks guarding the R.R. We soon discovered a large lot of men and got the advantage of them, killed and crippled many a Yank. We then paid our respects to the R.R., but with what result I can't tell. I let some of my men go home and one of them got captured. I had great fear he would be killed and I kept all the prisoners I caught as hostages. Genl. O. M. Mitchel, then in command at Huntsville, refused to exchange. I got a young lady to come to town to see what she could learn and when she came back she said the Genl's daughters was going to start North on a certain day and I determined to capture them if possible and get my man released. I

struck the road between Fayetteville and Shelbyville and had the pleasure of seeing the young Ladies pass, but they was so strongly guarded that I could not affect anything. We had a fight with the rear guard and captured 4 men.

I came back home and captured 1 Capt. & 2 Lts while they



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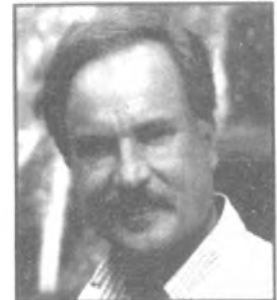
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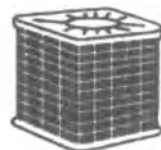


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were asleep at New Market. I carried them out to the mountain and a citizen brought us breakfast of broiled ham, fride chicken, fresh butter, honey, hot biscuit, coffee and milk. One of the officers said he did not think when he went to bed the night before that he would be at a picknick at breakfast.

I returned to the river at Sublets Ferry and there I learned that a Negro named Cato belonging to C.L. Tipton had murdered Mrs. Elisabeth Warren and five children. She was the sister of my old bedfellow T.B. King and also a cousin of mine. The citizens had managed to arrest him and had him in jail in Bellefonte and the Yanks refused to let them do anything with him. When I learned the facts I determined to have him if possible.

I moved my men as near the jail as was prudent to do, then dismounted 4 of the best and moved up near the jail where I left three of them. We could see the Federal troops passing the jail constant. I picked a chance and me and W.H. Bailes walked in to the jail yard and maid a demand of the jailor for the body of Cato, which he refused. I told him if he did not give him up I would go after the other men and tare the jail down, where upon he agreed to give him up. I put a rope around his neck and led him back to the command, put (him) up behind the O(derly) S(ergeant), carried him to a good limb, fastened the rope round a limb, and the last time I saw him he was dangling in the air.

Afterwards they stopped at a farm to spend the night.

I think he was the poorest man I ever heard of. He stopped complaining of his poverty for a moment and asked me who I was. I told him it was Gurley, and I called up a man who was acquainted with the old fellow. We soon convinced him we were

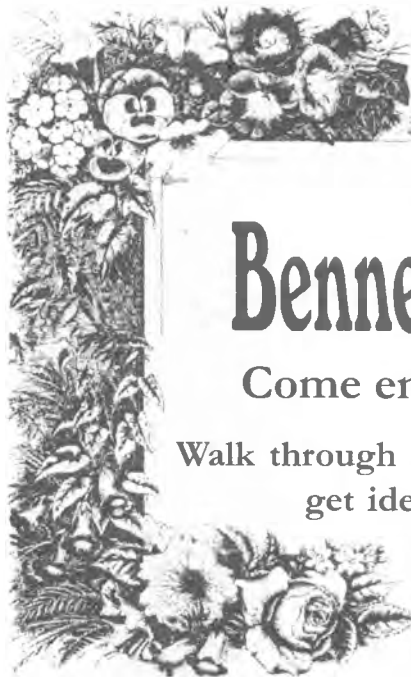
all right.

At daylight, we were aroused to a slug of corn whisky and the finest breakfast we had for many moons.

The Feds had got pretty well acquainted with my affairs and reaked their revenge on me. They abused my Father. They took his saddle horse and one of my horses and I sent a note to the commander stating if he did not send Father's horse back, I would kill six of his men, and he sent him back immediately.

My camp was near the farm of Dr. Jordan and he had 96 bales of cotton that the Yanks wanted very badly, but I could not spare men enough to send out to drive them away from it, and while I was absent with my men, they came out and got the cotton. When I reached home and learned the acts I thought of trying to burn the cotton on the road to Shelbyville.

I went to McDavid's mill and there I found all the cotton that I was looking for and four wagons loaded with sutlers goods. With one bold dash we got possession of all the wagons, burned the 96 bales of cotton, and carried [all] of the



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sutlers wagons to my camp, having only six men and as much as I could do. After a long hard drive of 10 hours we reached our camp and examined our spoils, which was rich and racy. I invited all the neighbors in and I mounted a wagon and made myself a good auctioneer for three days.

On August 5, 1862, Gurley learned of a large wagon train that would pass near New Market.

As I was coming upon them, I made out the driver and two other men sitting in the wagon - one an officer in full uniform and the other person in his shirt sleeves. I shouted to them to halt and surrender. As they did not halt I fired at them as did several others of my command. Selecting the Union officer in uniform as an important personage I fired at him three times. The carriage ran under a peach tree that knocked the top off, and not until then did the Negro driver stop his horses. The officer in uniform stated "this man is shot." I asked the driver why he had not stopped. The wounded man said that he could not stop them. I did not know who the wounded man was nor did I ask for I passed immediately to the front leaving them with some of my men.

Although Gurley did not know it at the time, the wounded officer was General McCook. His death caused a furor in the northern press who called it a murder and demanded that Gurley be hung. A year later, on Oct. 21, 1863, Gurley was captured.

I got to an old house and there my brother came to me; and the next morning the Yanks commenced shooting at us before we new they were in six miles of us. My brother got between me and the Yanks and surrendered, and I got away but was captured by another squad immediately.

There was 13 shots shot at me not over 60 ft and the balls passed through my clothes but never drew blood. I wrote this note to my Father: "Father, we are both prisoners unhurt and bound for Brownsboro."

There was a large lot of Yanks at Brownsboro and there was a great excitement when I went in. Some wanted to kill me, others to burn me. Some was for drowning me. I found my old bedfellow T.B. King in the guardhouse and many other friends.

We reached Nashville in safety and were lodged in the penitentiary. I had tried minutely from the time I was captured to make my escape, but was so weak I could not. I was then separated from my comrades and placed in a cell 4 ft wide and 7 ft long, where I remained 28 days without going out. This cell was in a wing occupied by 400 Federal soldiers put in there for misdemeanors, the most of them with ball and chain on. Some of them would whistle, some sing, some curse, some pray

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and rattle their chains. Such a sight is better imagined than described.

I was 30 days on trial and found to be guilty and sentenced to be hung by the neck until dead! dead! dead! There were a communications sent Genl Johnston, one from Genl Hardee, and one from Genl N.B. Forrest, but said did no good - at least they did not stop the sentence.

After the trial was over I had the liberty of the yard, but the yard was a horrible place, quite small and 800 prisoners in it and flies so thick you would get two in your mouth every time you opened it. After trying to escape I was made to sleep in the cell at night, and going in with all the balls and chains it went like thunder storms. One evening as we went into the wings one of the

Yanky prisoners borrowed a razor and cut his own throat from ear to ear. This was the most horrible sight I ever saw. Not many days after one Capt. Fraly (C.S.A.) was hung and many of my friends thought it was me. Soon after this I with many others was locked up. I remained in solitary confinement 8 months this time without intermission. While in this condition I

laid many plans for escape, but I was so closely guarded I could not get out.

Due to a clerical error Gurley's name was mistakenly placed on a list of prisoners to be exchanged.

Myself and 18 others was sent off for exchange. We lay over two days at Louisville, from thence to Indianapolis, Ind., then to

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Cresline and to Pittsburg, Penn. where we lay over one day, and when we started off we came near being mobbed by a large crowd of the angriest Duchmen I ever saw. We had 30 guards protected us. We went from thence to Point Lookout, where we remained 16 days and was sent for exchange.

We had to walk 4 miles after getting off of the U.S. boat until we got on the C.S. boat. My feet blistered and the blood ran out through my sock. I remained in Richmond 3 days and left for Montgomery, Ala. The R.R. was cut and we had to walk or get private conveyance 120 miles. It was a hard trip for me in my condition, but some of the men being stout went ahead and the people inquired and found I was behind. They sent carriages for me and would send me from place to place and I only walked 9 miles out of 120.

Gurley returned home and gave his parole without knowing he was still wanted for the murder of McCook.

The 23 Nov. 1865 I was arrested and confined in the county jail. Saturday night I was heavily ironed with shackles, waist band and handcuffs. I was sent to Nashville in this condition and walked all over town after night. Returned the next day to Huntsville and was there informed that I was to be hung on the following Friday.

Public outrage caused the authorities to order a stay on the execution. Gurley remained in jail until April, 1866 when he was set free by President Johnson.

"When you put a hot dog in the microwave for five minutes, you don't want to be there when your Mom sees the mess."

Jack, age 12

Preserving your family history

One evening last week while taking a walk around our neighborhood, my sister and I passed one house that had put out their garbage and I was saddened to see on top of a box of discarded belongings were several old photographs, some still in their frames.

I thought of the shoe box of old photos I found when I went through my mother's belongings when she passed away many years ago. There were many I could not identify. I brought them out during a family reunion and asked her brother and sister to help me identify the pictures and we had a wonderful afternoon reminiscing and I got to know some family history. By putting the photos in an album with the stories that were shared I have preserved a part of our family that can be passed on and not left in an unidentifiable trash heap.

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News from the Huntsville Confederate Newspaper October 13, 1863

- We have intelligence from Huntsville, Oct. 2nd that the enemy was expected there from New Market on the 1st, but the report of their coming was untrue. There were none nearer than Winchester, Tenn., and had not been for about three weeks. Many families are beginning to flee Huntsville for destinations south.

- The family of Geo. W. Lane, Lincoln's U.S. District Judge for the State of Alabama, had arrived some two or three weeks before, and were making preparations for a permanent residence, his wife having returned to Nashville or Louisville for groceries. It is said that they had an escort of 60 Federal cavalry on their trip to Huntsville. It was reported that Judge Lane got to Stevenson, en route for Huntsville, but was too drunk to proceed further.

- Wood and coal were scarce in Huntsville - wood bringing \$10 to \$18 per load (little, if any, over half a cord) in Confederate notes and \$8 in Federal greenbacks. The planters around are so nearly stripped of horses, mules, oxen and wagons that few of them can haul wood. Some offer to give it to citizens, if they will haul it, Others seem disposed to grasp all they can get of their fellow sufferers.

The coal mines, in the vicinity of Huntsville, were worked by a Northerner and an Irishman, when we left there. The enemy is reported to have taken over several mines and have placed prisoners to work in them.

"Why do psychics have to ask you your name?"

Linda Jackson, Scottsboro

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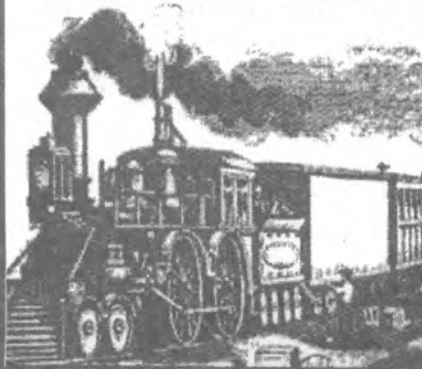
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When life was simple...



When the Sharp and Smith family posed for this photo in 1899, Huntsville was a thriving community. There were 2,561 students enrolled in city schools and the Merrimack Manufacturing Company announced plans to build a new mill in Huntsville that would employ 5,000 people. There were 500 homes under construction and over 250 licenses had been issued for bicycles. The new city hall was wired for electricity, possibly causing a disastrous fire that swept through the downtown business district

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

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