

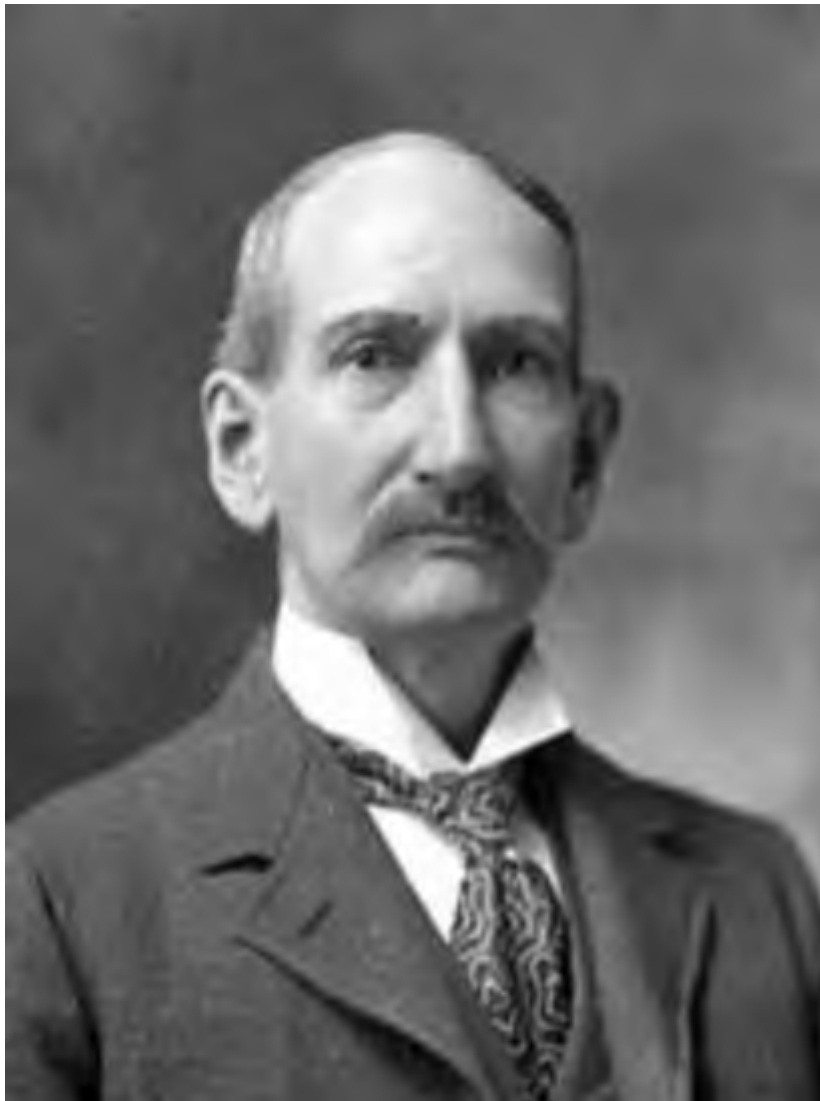


No. 206
April 2010



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



The Case Against Frank James

No trial in Huntsville's history has generated as many stories, and myths, as the trial of Frank James. Even though he was found innocent, historians still write that he was guilty of the robbery of the Muscle Shoals paymaster.

Was he really guilty or was he just a product of the press's zealous efforts to generate headlines?

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Also in this issue: The State of the Indian Nation

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The Case Against Frank James

As the south bound train from Nashville slowly pulled to a stop in front of the Huntsville Depot, an armed sentry carefully surveyed the dark and empty platform. After reassuring himself that it was safe, he motioned to the waiting train car. In a few minutes a middle aged man, in handcuffs, emerged from the train, followed by a heavily armed Federal marshal. Quickly the men boarded a waiting carriage for the short ride to the corner of Clinton and Green, the site of the Madison County jail.

Inside the jail there was a brief heated discussion between one of the Federal marshals and John W. Cooper, the sheriff. The marshal wanted to book the prisoner under an alias but Cooper refused, saying it was against regulations. Another complication arose when it was realized there were no empty cells. The problem was quickly solved by re-

moving two prisoners from an upstairs corner cell and locking them up in a downstairs storage room. Finally, a few minutes after midnight, on February 20, 1884, the booking procedure was finished and the prisoner was allowed to enter his cell where he immediately laid down on the cot, turned his back to the curious guards and went to sleep.

It was not until the next day that the citizens of Huntsville realized that one of the most infamous outlaws in history, Frank James, was locked up in their county jail.

Excitement in Huntsville had been building every since a small column appeared in a February 12 edition of a Huntsville newspaper. The article related how Frank James had been found innocent of a train robbery in Missouri and was scheduled to be brought back to Huntsville to stand trial for a robbery of a United States paymaster at Muscle Shoals on March 11, 1881.

Originally, James had been scheduled to arrive on an afternoon train but as anticipation began building in Huntsville, the authorities began to have second thoughts. James, an ex-Confederate soldier, was much admired throughout



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the Tennessee Valley and had many friends in the region. He had been to Huntsville several times in the past but always declined to give details of his visits.

In the end, the authorities solved the problem by having James disembark at the Nashville train station and catching a later one, a freight train, on to Huntsville.

Almost immediately, after news of Frank James being in Huntsville began to spread, a crowd started gathering in front of the jail. The building, surrounded by an eight foot wooden fence, had been extensively remodeled since the fall of the previous year when a crowd of enraged citizens stormed the jail and lynched Wes Brown, who had been accused of a brutal murder of a Huntsville policeman. Now the jail boasted of heavy, double-thick doors and shutters that could be closed and locked from the inside. Despite these precautions, however, the sheriff still thought it advisable to post an armed guard at the front door to screen visitors and deter sympathizers.

The first official visitor to see Frank James was LeRoy Pope

Walker, one of the area's most respected attorneys and the ex-Confederate Secretary of War. He had been referred to James by General Joseph Wheeler, another highly respected attorney and an ex-Confederate general. Wheeler had been contacted by James's supporters by telegram almost immediately once it became known that he would be standing trial in Huntsville but had to decline due to other commitments.

After a short consultation, Walker and James, accompanied by guards and followed by a large crowd, walked the few blocks to the corner of Eustis and Green, the site of the Calhoun house which was being used as a federal courthouse. At the courthouse there was a few minutes delay while the authorities tried to control the crowd who were scrambling for admittance. Finally, once a semblance of order was established, Judge Bruce read the charges against Frank James and asked how he pled.

LeRoy Walker, speaking for his client, rose quickly and answered "not guilty." Trial was set for April 17.

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Huntsville's tourism, they could not have done better than the trial of Frank James. Within days almost every hotel room in Huntsville was booked and restaurants and saloons reported a booming business. Newspapers from as far away as New York and Chicago sent reporters to cover the trial and gather local information. Ironically, even at this early date, northern newspapers were already predicting that Frank James would be found innocent, solely because, "the Tennessee Valley is a hotbed of secessionists who would never convict one of their own."

Secessionist or not, LeRoy Walker knew he would have a hard time defending his client. Not only did the government appear to have a strong case, Frank James had already been tried and convicted in the press. For years, whenever an editor wanted to boost readership, he simply printed another lurid story attributing another crime to the accused outlaw. Needless to say, most of the general public believed the stories.

Walker's first move was to enlist a first-class legal team consisting of his nephew, Richard W. Walker, a former member of the Alabama Supreme Court and James W. Newman, a resident of Winchester, Tennessee.

The prosecuting attorney, L.W. Day, quickly realized that with a trial of this magnitude he was going to need help. He sent word to Montgomery requesting another attorney to help in the preparation. The state Attorney General, William H. Smith, a former Republican Alabama governor with aspirations to be appointed to the Supreme Court, promptly held a press conference to announce that he was personally going to be prosecuting the case.

While his attorneys prepared for trial, James settled into life behind bars. He had been locked up continuously since October 1882 when he surrendered to authorities in Missouri. He already had the convict's habit of sleeping 12 hours a night and spent most of his time either reading or playing checkers with a guard. Though at first he declined to give interviews, after talking with his attorney he began talking with select reporters, probably in an effort to gain favorable publicity. He refused however, to pose for photographs, again on the advice of counsel.

Almost two weeks before the trial was to begin, Huntsville was taken by surprise when Mrs. Frank James and their six year old son, Robert, checked into the McGee Hotel.

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With them was Mrs. Zee James, the widow of Jesse James.

Mrs. Jesse James had already attended a trial in Huntsville once before when the year earlier she had given evidence against Dick Liddil, one of the men accused in the Muscle Shoals payroll robbery. She had resisted giving any testimony that might implicate her husband or brother-in-law in the robbery but insisted she had heard Liddil brag about it. No one could understand why she was in Huntsville again, though.

The trial of Frank James versus the United States Government began promptly at 9:00 in the morning of April 17. The courtroom, originally designed as a dining room, was packed with reporters with few seats left for spectators. Frank James was seated at a long wooden table with his wife, son and three attorneys while a few feet away sat the prosecuting attorneys. In front of them, to the left of the judge's desk, sat the jury; six ex-Confederate soldiers, three ex-union soldiers

and four who had seen no military service. Earlier the judge had replaced one juror when it was discovered there was an outstanding warrant for his arrest.

Missing in the courtroom was Mrs. Zee James, the widow of Jesse James.

After preliminary business, the trial opened with District Attorney Day making opening statements. With a low voice and self-assured manner that belied his youthful age, Day paced back and forth before the jury as he told how Frank James, Jesse James, Bill Ryan and Dick Liddil had conspired to rob the paymaster at Muscle Shoals. The outlaws had been living under assumed names a few miles outside of Nashville where, after reading of the large construction project at Muscle Shoals, it was decided that Frank, Jesse, and Ryan would travel there to rob the paymaster while Liddil remained in Nashville to look out for the outlaws' families. The prosecutor then told how he was going to produce wit-

nesses who would place James at the robbery.

The defense took only a few minutes in opening arguments cautioning the jurors to keep an open mind until they

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had heard all their evidence. Most of the spectators were in agreement that it looked bad for Frank James.

The first witness for the prosecution was Thomas Peden, who owned a saloon near Muscle Shoals. Taking his time, Day elicited the information that on the day of the robbery, three men had stopped at his saloon. He minutely described the men as well as the horses they rode. Asked if the accused, Frank James, was one of the men, Peden replied, "I think so."

Cross examination for the defense was short but brutal. Leroy Walker approached the witness, and after staring at him for what seemed like an eternity, asked what "I think so" means. Without waiting for Peden to reply Walker motioned for James to stand up.

With feigned anger in his voice he asked, "Can you positively identify this man beyond a shadow of a doubt as the man you saw that day?"

Peden, after swallowing hard for a few seconds said, "I think it is him but I can't say for sure."

"I didn't think so," mocked Walker as he threw a sheaf of papers back on the table.

Andrew Smith, the government employee who was robbed was called next. He described how he was met by three men, who, with drawn pistols, compelled him to throw up his hands. The men then took from his person \$5,200.00, forcing him to travel

with them for several miles until releasing him. He then went on to tell how he had received a telegram from the Nashville City Marshal several days later asking him to travel to Nashville. They had arrested a man for shooting up a saloon who fit the description of one of the robbers, Bill Ryan. Upon searching him they found two six shooters, a sack of gold coins and a fistful of 20 and 50 dollar bills.

After Smith identified Ryan as one of the men who had robbed him, the suspect began asking about a possible deal if he could implicate Frank and Jesse James.

Although Smith insisted that he thought Frank James was one of the robbers, when cross examined by Walker he



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said he "just could not be absolutely sure."

The government next called J.N. Wilcome who testified to meeting three strangers on the Shoals road the same day as the robbery, one of whom he believed to be Frank James.

For once, when LeRoy Walker approached the witness, he seemed unsure of himself, almost hesitant in his questioning. After leading the witness through his testimony again, he asked him to describe the men again.

"Take your time," Walker said, "just describe everything you can remember."

The witness seemed to almost relish the spotlight as he described the men's clothing, hats, saddles and horses in minute detail. After a few moments it was apparent to everyone that Walker was about to spring a trap.

"Do you realize," the attorney asked the expansive witness, "That none of your descriptions match what the other witnesses have testified to? Maybe you want to think about it more." Walker turned abruptly and returned to his seat leaving the witness still muttering, "... but I still think it is him."

Hugh Riley was called as a witness for the prosecution next. In a short testimony he told how he owned a saloon near Muscle Shoals and how on the day of the robbery three men had stopped at his establishment. After describing the men, he caused the audience to chuckle when he said he noticed them because he thought they were "revenue men."

"Yes," he said, "I believe the man sitting there (pointing to James) is the man I saw that day."

Cross examination was by Robert Walker who was unable to shake Riley's testimony except to note that the horse he described as being ridden by James did not fit the description everyone else had given.

At this point a break was called by the judge. Although the trial had already taken almost three hours, few people, except for the judge and attorneys, left their seats for fear they would lose them. There were still crowds of people outside clamoring to be let in.

Just as the bailiff started to call the court to order, excited whispering swept across the room as all eyes were directed toward a small demure woman, clad in black mourning clothes, entering the courtroom. Escorted by LeRoy Walker, she was led to the defense table where she took a seat next to the accused. It was Zee James, the

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widow of Jesse James.

As soon as the court came to order, the prosecution, represented by ex-Governor Smith, called Dick Liddil to the stand.

Immediately, the defense objected on the grounds that he had been convicted of grand larceny in Missouri, and that his infamous crimes made him an incompetent witness. The government countered by offering a pardon granted to Liddil by the governor of Missouri.

Judge Bruce overruled the objection and let the examination continue.


Asking his questions carefully, Smith had Liddil describe when and how he had first met the James brothers in Missouri and later followed them to Tennessee where Frank was living under the alias of B. J. Woodson. Liddil went on to tell how Frank and Jesse James, along with Bill Ryan, planned the robbery in his presence and of how he remained in Nashville to

take care of the families. After the robbery he heard of Ryan getting arrested and warned the James brothers. They immediately left Nashville, with the families following several days later, and headed to a hideout in Kentucky.

The careful and concise testimony of Liddil, combined with his knowledge of the inner workings of the James gang appeared devastating for the defense, leaving them no choice but to pull out all stops to discredit him.

LeRoy Walker began the cross examination, barely bothering to hide the disdain he felt for the witness.

"Isn't it true that the only reason you are not in jail is because you agreed to testify against a man you once called



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a friend?"

"Objection!"

"Sustained."

Taking another approach, Walker began going over every detail of Liddil's testimony. Liddil refused to budge from his original story. Try as he might, Walker could not shake him. Finally, in a voice dripping with sarcasm, he pointed to the widow of Jesse James and literally shouted to Liddil, "Isn't it true that you conspired with Bob Ford to kill that woman's husband in cold blooded murder!"

Governor Smith jumped to his feet, angrily objecting to Walker's line of questioning.

Suddenly, half rising from her seat, Mrs. Jesse James looked Liddil straight in the eye and mouthed the word, "Murderer!"

The judge sustained the objection, but the damage was already done.

The courtroom was stunned. It was not common knowledge that Liddil had conspired with Ford, and regardless of what Jesse James was, or had done, most people found his murder a distasteful and cowardly act. In all likelihood, Walker wanted to get this information to the jury but

knowing the court would not allow it, he set up the situation knowing how exactly how Jesse's widow would react.

A half hour recess was called. Everyone in the room stood as the widow of Jesse James, leaning slightly on the arm of LeRoy Walker, made her exit.

Now it was time for the defense to present their case. Although they had already managed to win a certain amount of sympathy for their client, the evidence seemed overwhelming to most observers.

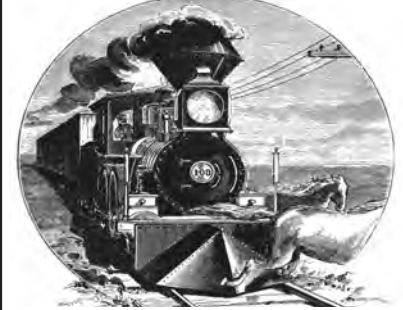
S.H. Fields, a city detective in Nashville, took the stand, and after being sworn in, identified Frank James as the man whom he had known as Woodson. Fields went on to tell about James being employed by the Indiana Lumber Company as a teamster and said he had gotten to know him well. He distinctly remembered seeing James on three different occasions in Nashville on the

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day of the payroll robbery in Muscle Shoals. When pressed for details, Fields described seeing James in the office of a local magistrate, once at the blacksmith shop of Jonas Taylor and once in front of Fisher's restaurant.

Next, Jonas Taylor, a blacksmith in Nashville, was called. He testified that he had known James for several years in Nashville. On the day of the robbery James had brought his horse to the shop to be shod. There was no doubt in his mind that the defendant was the man he saw that day. He then produced ledgers to show that James had paid him for the work on the following day.

The prosecution immediately tried to discredit the ledgers by attempting to show that they had been altered. The defense rebutted this by calling an attorney from Nashville who had discovered the ledgers. After a careful examination he testified that they were in the same condition as when he had originally found them.

Mr. Brown, a justice of the peace in Nashville, took the stand to swear that he believed the defendant was the same man he had seen in Nashville on the day in question. When pressed for details, he told how James had accompanied another man to a hearing in his

court and produced the records of the case to substantiate his memory.

By now the prosecution's case was beginning to look frayed around the edges. Governor Smith, probably seeing the handwriting on the wall, left the courtroom and began telling the waiting reporters that he had been there "mainly as a spectator."

Meanwhile, the defense attorneys kept pressing their case that James could not have participated in the robbery for the simple fact that he was in Nashville at the time. Walker began calling a parade of witnesses in a rapid manner, keeping each of them on the stand for only a few minutes.

W. H. Spann testified that he had seen James in Nashville and offered a receipt as proof of his memory. Jack Smith, a detective, recalled seeing James and talking to him on the day

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in question. He said he remembered the day well because he was on his way to serve a warrant. Martin Brewer swore to seeing James that day as well as the following day.

Satisfied that he had made a shambles of the prosecution's case, LeRoy Walker concluded his case.

Assistant Attorney Day attempted to salvage part of the government's case by calling two more witnesses who had seen the outlaws the day of the robbery.

Both witnesses, however, refused to identify Frank James as one of the men they had seen. Day made no attempt to hide his anger at the witnesses testimony.

At this point the trial was literally over except for the summations. Day made a gallant effort to salvage the case in his closing argument but the tone of his voice showed that he knew it was already over. LeRoy Walker, sensing victory, displayed the same oratorical skills that had once made him such a popular figure in the Confederate government. At one point he actually leaned over to the jurors and confided, in a loud stage whisper, "I am proud to be representing Frank James because he was a Confederate soldier."

Evidently he believed the case was so strong he could ignore the Union veterans sitting on the jury.

After both sides had finished, Judge Bruce instructed the jurors and at 6:00 in the afternoon they began deliberations. They returned within minutes to announce their verdict: Not Guilty!

Cheering broke out when the verdict was announced and James rushed to shake LeRoy

Walker's hand. A witness said later that Mrs. James looked as if she was about to cry.

The jubilation was short lived though when a stranger made his way through the crowd and presented James with a warrant from Missouri for his arrest. Handcuffs were placed on his wrists and he was once again led back to the cell from which he had hoped to be freed.

Early the next morning Frank James, accompanied by armed marshals, boarded a northbound train for Missouri, never to return to Huntsville.

Although Frank James was found innocent, legends and myths about his time in Huntsville continued to thrive. Within a few years the trial itself was largely forgotten but locals would swear that Frank and his brother, Jesse, had robbed the bank here and jumped off the Big Spring bluff while making their escape.

Another persistent story, actually printed in the newspapers at the time, had Frank James buying drinks for the jurors after the trial.

Historians never realized that reporters, in an attempt to make deadlines, had written the story before the trial was over.



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Editor of the Huntsville Times Arrested

From 1918 Newspaper

J. E. Pierce, editor of the Huntsville Daily Times, and one of the most strenuous reform politicians in North Alabama and candidate for the State senate last summer, was arrested here last night on a federal warrant sworn out by federal officials charging him with obtaining money under false pretenses by representing himself to be a government official. Pierce made bond in the sum of \$500.

Mr. Pierce waived a preliminary hearing before U.S. Commissioner Watts and he was bound over to the federal grand jury. The charges upon which Mr. Pierce was arrested by the federal authorities were first brought informally before a meeting of the Campaign Committee of the Fourth Liberty Loan Drive during the

last week of that campaign. The district and county chairmen, with a full attendance of various subcommittees composed of the best citizenship of the county, after hearing the charges presented against Mr. Pierce, recommended the matter be referred to the Madison County War Defense Council and the Council of Defense for Investigation.

At a called joint meeting of these two federal bodies, witnesses appeared and under oath gave their testimonies concerning these wholesale frauds practiced upon fifty or sixty odd Negro citizens of the county.

By unanimous motion of these federal boards the chairman was instructed to lay the matter before the United States District Attorney of this district for further investigation and action. At this point all local activities ended and all subsequent developments proceeded from the government.

Many prominent and well respected Negroes appeared before the War Council and claimed that Pierce enforced collection of \$30 from each of them on the grounds that it was compulsory and levied by the Federal government. This was during the last ten days of the Fourth Liberty Loan campaign



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and all the witnesses declared that they were given to understand that this constituted a part of the government's bond drive.

Some stated that he declared these sums were assessed to be expended in patriotic advertising, some stated they were led to believe they were making first payments on Liberty Bonds and all declared they would not have contributed unless they had believed it was obligatory.

A few were given receipts for display advertising in return for their money, but in most cases no receipt was given.

Witnesses stated that Pierce's operations had created great consternation and resentment among the Negroes of the county.

Witnesses who appeared and were placed under oath testified that the collection of money in Pierce's advertising campaign was practically by

force.

One person testified that Pierce told him the government was requiring this contribution, and that Pierce and the Huntsville Daily Times were merely acting as agents for the government.

Another witness declared that Pierce stated to him that he had to make the contribution, that he saw Mr. Pierce's brother, the United States deputy collector, in Mr. Pierce's car a short distance off, and that Pierce gave him to understand that these demands were being backed by this official. The witness further stated that he paid the money because he believed he had no other choice.

Another witness stated that Mr. Pierce said to him, "Do you know that gentleman in the car?" Pointing to his brother, the deputy collector. "I want \$30 from you for the Fourth Liberty Bond Drive." The witness then stated that after paying the money he was given a

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receipt which he read as Pierce was leaving the place; that as soon as he saw on the face of the receipt that it was for patriotic advertising, he ran after Pierce in an effort to catch him so as to get his money back but could not outrun the car.

Another witness testified that Mr. Pierce stated to him that he wanted him to take out Liberty Bonds, where upon witness replied he had no money. Pierce replied that he would lend it to him if he would sign a note for it; that if he didn't do so, he (Pierce), would put him in jail.

Two other witnesses stated that Pierce declared these were first payments on Liberty

Bonds which were assessed against the witnesses and that they were compelled to pay the assessments to him.

Some twenty-odd Negro farmers, out of the great number alleged to have been defrauded by Pierce, gave sworn testimony substantially along the same lines.

Huntsville Quarantined

from 1879 newspaper

A lewd woman from Memphis reached Huntsville last night, went to a bawdy house in Pin Hook, took sick, and the case is pronounced yellow fever. Our city officials have fenced in the bawdy house and forbids all communication. The public is urged to take careful note of the situation.

Saturday night, the Mayor and Aldermen met and passed a resolution by advice of the Board of Health of Huntsville, that a quarantine be established against all persons, freight and baggage, of every description, from Memphis; that R.R. trains from Memphis be stopped at a station one mile east and one mile west of Huntsville, and that the health officer shall board and rigidly inspect every train, and allow no person from Memphis or any other infected town to get off here; that no train shall run less than six miles an hour though Huntsville or stop within the city limits; that one health officer and one policeman be appointed to enforce this quarantine; and that any violator of these regulations shall be fined and punished to the full extent of the law.

From Saturday to Tuesday, one or two hundred, perhaps, of persons from Memphis came to Huntsville. On Tuesday, a number were required to pass on, and some of them, we understand, returned on the western bound train and stopped here. Absolute nonintercourse is, probably, impossible by any municipal regulations, but should now be enforced as far as possible.



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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



One of the prettiest little girls we've ever run was featured last month - it was **Joy McKee** who works for the City of Huntsville as manager of the Green Team. Only the first correct caller wins - and that was **Wally Keel** of New Hope, who wins a free year's subscription to "Old Huntsville" magazine. Wally is a Traffic Engineer for the city and is the guy who drives the sign trucks that replace/repair signs all over Huntsville, along with the rest of the great crew. In fact, Wally will have 19 years employment with the city in April!

We talked with a really interesting guy recently - **Bobby Green** has lived in New Market all his life and just loves the history of this area. He sure has seen many changes in the area.

Another sweet lady who called us recently is **Gladys Gray** of Huntsville. She remembers a lot of the stories and people of days long ago and loves reading about them.

Kathy Ingram's mom,

Janey Pauline Mullins, who is 81 years old, sure has a good remedy for a bad cough and I am definitely going to try it. You'll see it in an upcoming **Tips from Liz**.

There was a really rocking birthday party recently held at a home on Walker Avenue, to celebrate the Double Nickel birthday (55) of **Tom Simpson**. Fabulous food, drinks and especially the people who attended - what a great night! We met many people there including **Ellen Jordan**, owner of By Design Landscaping. Ellen works at C. T. Garvin and since she is selling spring bulbs to customers now at Garvin's, she wears Dutch wooden shoes! It attracts lots of attention and you have got to see those!

We also talked with **Lynn**

Fronti, who lives near Providence with her husband and is delightful to talk with. **Dan McKittrick** was the organized host for the party and he did a fantastic job in getting everything together. Also there we saw **Teresa and Kirk Carlisle** - Teresa owns the 5 Points Hallmark shop and husband Kirk owns Carlisle Galleries in 5 Points.

Also there we talked with **Julie Boissel & Lisa Norton**, as well as **Edward & Frances Dalrymple, & Lucy & Roy Brown**.

The **Kiwanis Club of Huntsville** held their 33rd Annual Pancake Day in March, and there was a huge crowd there. Those pancakes & syrup & sausage were SO good! Not on my diet AT ALL but who cares? I'm already looking forward to it next year! While there we talked with **Mr. & Mrs. Sam Zeman**, in addition to **Kiwanian Cecil Stokes**, who is the sweetest guy ever.

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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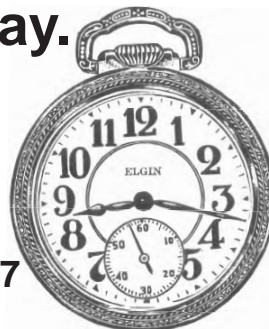
Hint: This little boy is The Man!



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Many people in this area know the name **Nina Beal**, and to say Nina loves animals is quite an understatement. She has personally rescued thousands of dogs, cats and other pets, and is the founder of **The Ark**, which is a no-kill animal shelter. The Ark turned 20 years old recently, and is the result of a lot of sweat, love, and support from the community and local animal lovers. Nina credits her success to her husband **Doug**, but she has worked with animal welfare groups for over 40 years. We are so proud of you, Nina!

Butch Cryder was only 64 when he passed away at his home. Butch had many friends in Huntsville and had one daughter - **Melissa Ann Cryder**. We send our deepest sympathy to the friends and family and know he will be very much missed.

We were very saddened to learn that **Jenny Ashburn** had died at the very young age of 63. She loved to cook and travel, and was an amazing artist. We send our deepest condolences to her dad **Cecil Ashburn**, daughter **Margaret Farber** and son **Jeremy Farber**, as well as the many friends and family who will always remember her beautiful and gentle spirit.

Edna and Artis Sydney are certainly hard workers. You know them as the proud owners of one of Huntsville's most unique grocery and produce stores, called **Garden Cove**, on Pratt Avenue. They began their business 26 years ago and are still going strong. The Sydneys need our support, if you haven't been there before it's worth a trip just to check out the produce and vitamin/natural foods section.

Many of our readers

were moved by the story on Polio submitted by **J. Creighton Smith**. **Don Duffey** is a member of the Greater Huntsville Rotary Club, and is a lead donor in his club for the eradication of Polio as part of the Paul Harris foundation. We are very proud of Mrs. Smith, and Don Duffey as well.

While driving through the intersection of Whitesburg Drive and Airport road on a cold, windy and rainy Saturday morning, I noticed people on both sides of the street waving signs - on one side were **relatives of soldiers**, on the other side were **PEACE** signs. I have admiration for citizens who will go out in bad weather to express their opinions. I'm proud to know that we have the freedom to do that. Happy birthday to **Liz Ford** - they sure come around faster these days! Also celebrating is **Brandon Owens**, son of proud parents **Ken and Diane Owens** of Huntsville.

April 5 - mark your calendar for the annual cookout at **Jackson Way Styling Salon!**

We're finally seeing some warm days - try to get out and walk around downtown - you'll really enjoy it!

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Holy Spirit Favorites

These recipes are from "Cooking with the Choir", Holy Spirit Catholic Church's very popular cookbook.

Hot Crab Dip

3/4 c. butter
 3/4 c. chopped green onions
 8 oz. cream cheese
 1 lb. shredded crab meat

Saute onions in butter. While onions are still crunchy, add cream cheese til it melts, then add crab meat. Prepare 1/2 hour before using. Serve with crackers.

This is especially good on our few remaining cold nights!

Be sure to add a washcloth between skin and pack, to prevent skin from freezing.

Pineapple Angel Food Cake

1 pkg. Angel Food Cake mix
 1 20-oz. can crushed pineapple in juice

Mix together in large bowl and bake in two ungreased loaf pans for the time indicated on the box, usually 30-35 minutes.

Curry Chicken Salad

3 lbs. chicken, cooked and cubed
 1 c. mayonnaise
 1 T. chopped ginger
 1 c. chopped celery
 Salt and pepper
 1/2 c. sour cream
 2 c. cubed pineapple
 1/4 c. chutney
 1 T. curry powder
 1 t. garlic powder
 1 t. onion powder
 1/2 t. cayenne pepper
 1/4 c. green onions, chopped
 1/2 c. pecans, chopped

Mix all ingredients and chill for at least 3 hours. Serve with whole grain bread.

Hot Spiced Tea

1 c. lemon-flavored ice tea mix
 3 T. orange beverage crystals
 1 T. apple pie spice
 1 pkg. lemonade mix

Mix all ingredients. To serve, put 1-2 teaspoons in a cup and fill with hot water.

Grandma's Love Pack

3 c. water
 few drops food coloring
 1 c. rubbing alcohol
 Gallon zip lock freezer bag

Mix the water, food coloring and alcohol in a bowl, then pour into freezer bag. Remove air then freeze. This is good to apply to bumps, sprains, etc.

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Italian Pasta Salad

1 lb. pasta, cooked and drained
 1/2 c. black olives sliced
 1 tomato, seeded, peeled and diced
 1/2 c. parmesan cheese
 2 T. basil, crushed
 1/2 c. red wine vinegar
 1/2 c. olive oil
 salt, pepper, garlic to taste
 Combine all ingredients and chill for at least 3 hours before serving.

Taco Soup

1 lb. lean ground beef
 1 med. onion, chopped
 1 can whole corn, with liquid
 1 can beans with liquid
 1 can tomatoes
 1 pkg. taco seasoning
 Brown beef and onions and drain. Add other ingredients. Cook for 15 minutes, garnish with shredded cheese and sour cream. Serve with tortilla chips.

Peanut Butter Pie

2 graham cracker pie crusts, ready made

8 oz. cream cheese, softened
 2 c. powdered sugar
 1 c. peanut butter
 1 large cool whip
 Mix all ingredients together and pour half into each pie crust. Refrigerate until serving.

Lemon Tease

3 oz. lemon jello
 1 c. boiling water
 3 T. fresh lemon juice
 16 oz. whipping cream
 9 oz. cream cheese
 1 c. sugar
 1 t. vanilla
 2 pkg. Lady Fingers
 In first bowl, mix jello with boiling water til dissolved, add lemon juice. In second bowl, whip cream til stiff. In third bowl, mix cream cheese, sugar and vanilla. Mix in the jello mixture, then fold into the whipped cream.

Arrange Lady Fingers around the sides of a spring-form pan and on the bottom. Pour in the jello/cream cheese mixture and refrigerate for 5 to 6 hours before serving.

**"I almost had a psychic girl friend, but she left me before we met."
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Central School Basketball

by Austin Miller

Central School opened in August of 1917 to serve the people of Ryland, Maysville and Brownsboro. Mr. Ben Lawler donated the land and residents from the three communities raised the money for materials and provided the labor to construct the building. It was the first consolidated High School in Madison County.

My Father and all ten of my uncles as well as my mother attended Central School. When he was fourteen, Daddy tried out for basket ball and made the team. Due to his young age and lack of experience he started out sitting on the bench. Soon he was sent in as a substitute, scored twenty points and got most of the rebounds.

After that, he was a starter. All his younger brothers played and helped make Central a basket ball power for years. There was at least one Miller boy on every team from 1925 to 1943. In that period the school lost very few games and the Miller name was synonymous with Central Basketball. In those days entertainment choices were limited and the games drew large crowds.

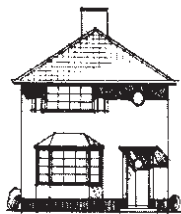
Spectators took their school teams seriously and there were always lively discussions and second guessing about plays, referee calls and coaching decisions.

The old Central High School was a tall two story, white frame building with fifteen big windows across the front on the top story and thirteen downstairs along with two arched entrances. There is a picture of the school at the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library. I am told that it was a one story building in the beginning and the second floor added later. The old school burned to the

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ground in the spring of 1931. The students were sent to Gurley but Daddy didn't like it and quit after the first day. It is interesting to note that when the school burned, he was in the ninth grade and twenty years old.

In those days most of the children only attended school about three months during the winter. They had to work in the cotton fields during the warm months. As a result it was hard to keep up and pass to the next grade. Many of the players and students were long past twenty one. It goes without saying that the eligibility rules for basket ball in the Madison County School System have changed since those days. The fire ended Central as a high school. Students grades ten through twelve went to Gurley.

A new brick junior high school with a modern gymnasium was opened in 1933. This one was built by the tax payers. The first attendees were there during the depths of the Great Depression and were as poor as any children that ever lived in the United States. When I started in 1947, we still had outdoor toilets. Indoor facilities came in 1955.

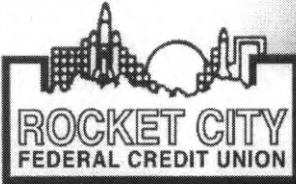
A lunch room was opened in 1947, (lunch cost .20 cents) before that students brought their own lunches. Many did without or had only a cold biscuit and a piece of fat back. The floor of the school was made of wood re-coated every so often with a dark liquid that looked like burnt motor oil. You couldn't sit on the floor because of the oil would leave a black greasy place on the seat of your pants. The building was heated by steam radiators fed by a coal heated boiler, there was no air conditioning. Sadly the school built in 1933 burned in the 1980's but the old lunch room survived and still stands.

I played at Central from 1955 to 1957 for Coach Ralph Champion. Our best year was the 1956-1957 school year. People said that team resembled the Central teams of old when my father and uncles played. We lost only three games that year, all three losses were to Owens Cross Roads; one of those was the last game of the county tournament.

The star ballplayer on the Owens Cross Roads team was Jerry Craig. Jerry went on to

play for New Hope High School and the University of Alabama. He is now a Madison County Commissioner. I love the movie Hoosiers because it takes me back to basket ball at Central in the fifties. Our uniforms (blue with white letters), our black high top converse tennis shoes, our agricultural heritage and the simplicity of the fifties embedded an aura in our memories that you can only know if you lived it.

I still remember the names of the other players. They were: Sammy Gossett, Henry Freeman, MacArthur Sanders, Ralph Pilot, Jimmy Gentry, Jimmy McGaha and Phillip Sharp. Sammy was



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the best player on our team and one of the best in the county. Sammy retired as a Huntsville police officer but sadly was killed a few years ago in a car wreck in Jackson County.

MacArthur is retired from Redstone Arsenal, lives in the Ryland area and is now an Elder at the Maysville Church of Christ. Ralph joined the Navy at seventeen and now lives at Maysville. Phillip became wealthy in the oil business and lives in Newnan, Georgia. Coach Champion retired from Central with about thirty years of service and the Central School Gymnasium now bears his name. I don't know what happened to the others.

Philip and I were the substitutes; neither of us got to play for a second in the 1957 county tournament and not much more than that during the entire year. Everybody said when it came to ball playing I took after my mothers side of the family. Not being a starter on that Central team so long ago is one of the biggest disappointments of my life.

It's not so much that I missed the enjoyment of playing or being a star, it's because I broke the Miller basketball tradition at Central.



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| Quesadias | Fried Squash |
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Growing Up in the Country

By Helen Medlin

Growing up in a household of mostly young adults, I learned a thing or two about how to act around the older folks. When we went to Hurricane Creek Church, there was always someone who would invite us to lunch after the service. I looked forward to that because there were children my age I could play with. Nowadays children eat first and then scatter to their own games, TV shows or the computer. In the old days children were the last to eat, and you had to play while you were hungry. We would just sit on the front porch swing and look at the tables full of vegetables and chicken, waiting til it was time for us to eat. The women cooked on wood stoves that still had hot coals from breakfast so it didn't take long for the chickens to cook and they smelled wonderful!

The kids always got to have a chicken leg and if there was more than one family that came to lunch, there were 2 chickens prepared. To get a chicken leg meant you hoped there was only one more child besides you. This was an expensive lunch for the farm folks because the chickens were more than just for eating, they were for laying

eggs as well.

My Granddad Charlie Tidwell would take a small box of ginger snaps with him to church for me, because I was the youngest, and he knew I loved them.

I had to learn how to act around grown ups. First thing I learned was to listen and only speak when someone asked me a question. There was one house I loved to visit, the St. Clair house. It was at Hurricane Creek Road, and

the St. Clair's had a granddaughter, Betty, whom I loved to play with. They also had a piano that I played there, even though I didn't know how to play too well I'd do it and they'd all laugh and clap when I was finished. They were the nicest people and they surely knew how to make children feel important.

My granddad bought Mr. Yarbrough's grocery store on Washington Street right next to the railroad tracks. My dad worked there as well as myself and 4 sisters. I

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remember working there during World War II, as the trains came by the store you could feel the rumble of them passing on the tracks. When the train stopped my granddad would give the soldiers a bottled drink or ice cream sandwich. He had a son in France at the time and every time the trains came by he remembered and hoped someone would be good to his son.

The county jail was just two doors from the store and we could hear all the prisoners yelling and singing.

The people that traded with granddad were the folks who lived around the store and workers from the railroad. They would come over on their lunch hour and spread out in

the chairs for hours to talk to granddad, and rest for a while. Sometimes a neighbor from Tidwell Lane would come by.

A couple of funny things happened while we were living on the farm. One Sunday we had all started to church and my sister Ruby had a new dress on. We were all really little. My mother, Clara, said she was in the yard waiting to get in the car when all of a sudden she heard a loud yell and cry. Because of a bad rain storm the night before the billy goat they kept in a fenced yard had gotten out and had knocked Ruby into the mud, new dress and all.

My uncle Joe Tidwell aggravated us no end. We girls would work really hard on cutting out

“paper dolls” from Sear’s catalogs, and position them around a small play house. He would sneak up from behind and blow as hard as he could, just when

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we had them just right.

When we lived in the Grizzard house, there was a tenant house behind us that the folks in it helped out on the farm. There was one lady named "Aunt Lou". We were all out in the field chopping cotton one day and Aunt Lou had been talking with the Lord. All of a sudden she started to shout and threw her hoe straight up in the to the air. When it came down it barely missed hitting us little girls. We never did hear what the Lord told her.

My mother died December of 1999, and I really miss her. The reason I have written about my family is to encourage others to write down all you can about your growing up days and to the young folks I say, time has away of passing by very quickly so absorb all you can from your experiences.

Want Ads from the Year 1907

Lost - On the square a stick pin with nugget of gold on one end. Finder will please return to this office or the Democrat office, and receive reward.

Lost - Buffalo lap robe," last Saturday, on Walker or Holmes streets. Finder return to the City Baker and receive reward.

For Rent - The Corner Store, McGee Hotel Block. This is one of the best stands in the city for any business. See Jones & Rison.

After January 1, 1902 - I will begin to close out my entire stock of old whiskies and brandies for cash only. Persons wishing to purchase a gallon or more of these fine goods should avail themselves of this opportunity. I have some goods that have been in stock over 5 years. Will positively allow credit to no one in the future. W. E. Everett, Propr. Huntsville Hotel Bar.

See J. M. Askin store on the east side of the public square, at Grayson Mercantile Co.'s old stand for your dry goods and groceries. At this store you can get goods ten per cent cheaper than at any store in Huntsville. All stock

complete and everything is fresh. We also stock many of the latest fashions direct from New York.

For Sale - The Petty property on East Randolph Street. This is a good bargain for somebody and it is going to be sold on easy payments. - Boyd & Wellman.

For Sale - The Bone homestead. The beautiful two acre lot, lying west of White Street, between Randolph and Eustis streets, location high, healthy and ideal, is now in my hands for sale. W. F. Esslinger, Attorney.



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Segregation Laws and the Mailman

by James E. Taylor

From 1926 until 1-565 took our property in 1990, my parents' home was on Mitchell Drive which was a couple of blocks from Pulaski Pike and West Holmes Street, both of which were predominantly black neighborhoods. Around 1931 when I was 10 years old, I became fascinated with the black postman (Clarence Powers) who delivered our mail primarily because of his gentle manners and his mode of transportation. He delivered the mail by driving a horse and carriage. The carriage was enclosed much as in the manner of the small enclosed trucks of that day.

After the war, I returned to work at the Russel Erskine Hotel and in 1947 was made manager.

Around 1948 or 49, the local postmaster contacted me and advised that Clarence's fellow workers at the post office wanted to give him a retirement party but didn't know how to get around the state segregation laws. (Remember - in 1948 there was only one post office in Huntsville and not very many postmen). Our blue room would seat 50 persons which was about the number in attendance. In the center of a dividing wall, there was a door to an adjoining room. We removed the door and placed a separate single table for Clarence in the door to give him the appearance of being the guest of honor, which he was. Thus, we legally beat the segregation laws.

I recall it as being a beautiful retirement party. As I recalled this event in later years, I only regretted that I failed to tell Clarence that I was that young teenager that he delivered mail to in the thirties.

Real Estate Bargains from 1906

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One of Huntsville's unique attractions in the late 1940s was, believe it or not, a dry cleaning establishment.

Owned by a Mr. Johnson, the Grand Shine Dry Cleaners offered on the spot dry cleaning and pressing for the individual with a busy schedule.

Unfortunately, many of his clients were farmers who only owned one suit, and it was the one they wore to town to do their shopping. Many of these farmers wanted to have their suit cleaned while in town, but, not having another change of clothes, were forced to hide in the restroom while the employees hastily dry cleaned the suit.

In an effort to rectify the

problem, Mr. Johnson acquired a large barrel which he placed in the front lobby of his establishment. The front of the barrel was fitted with a hinged door allowing customers to enter, where they could remove their clothes and wait for them to be cleaned.

It also gave the customers a chance to converse with other people and old friends who had

business in the shop.

The price was 50 cents a suit, or 65 cents if you used the barrel.

"My husband said to choose between him and the cat. I miss him every once in a while."

Jesse Conners

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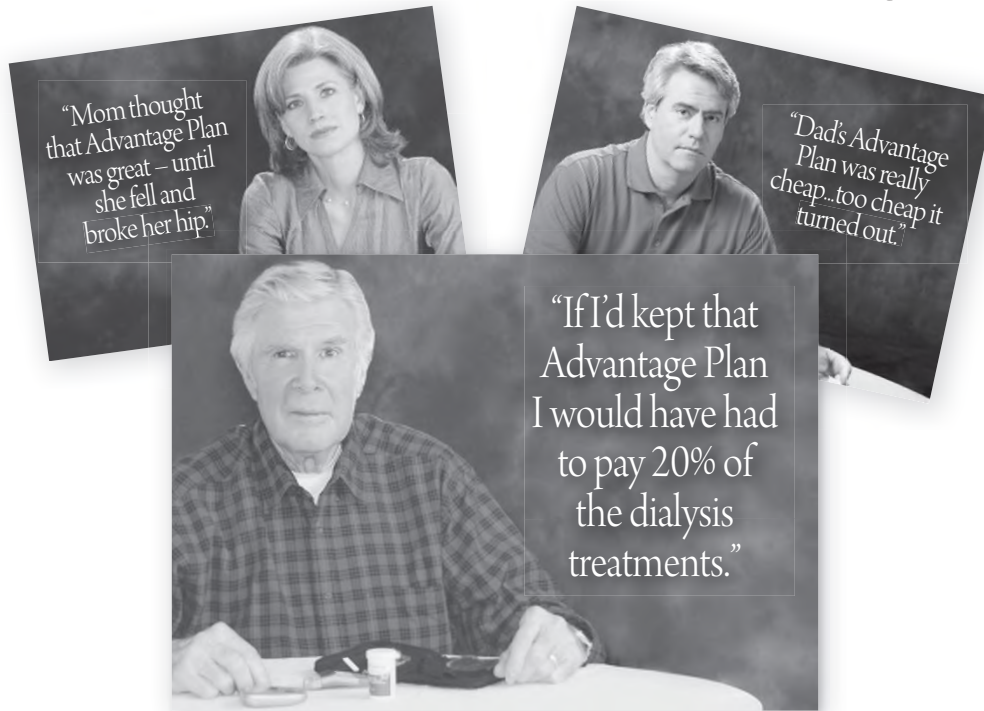
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Dixie

Johnny Johnston

I can't remember where Dixie came from, how we got her or why we called her Dixie. I also can't remember how Dad managed five children, several old cars, a trailer, a barn, outside toilet, garden and cow lot on such a small piece of property.

I drive by that old empty lot on Maple St. now, look at its size and try to place our life support of the 40's. The lot can't be more than 75 feet by 150 feet and we had so much there!

Dixie, by the way, was our Jersey cow. She gave enough milk for the family of seven with plenty to spare. I sometimes remember mucking out the stall, taking hay in for her to eat but mainly have a strong connection to leading Dixie down the street where Johnson Grass, tall Bermuda or maybe fescue grew in ditches around the neighborhood.

That is where she grazed for hours on end, it wasn't possible to leave her tied to a fence or post. Leaving her could tempt someone to take her to their house and our family needed the milk. We couldn't always afford to get feed but the grass seemed available and free.

A favorite place was down the back alley past the Tip Top Café and around the corner to the ditch.


Bob Sisk also had a café (next door) on the corner of Abingdon and Maple with a concrete sidewalk alongside. There was usually grass there for Dixie to eat.

On one occasion I also found a broken bottle in the ditch which sliced my foot nearly to the bone. That was one of the few times I saw a doctor in those days.

Habits we had then were drinking raw milk, hardly anyone does that now. We also raided the barn for Dad's lumber to build toy things of wood. Airplanes were a favorite thing with long wings of pine stretched across a two by four. Many hours were spent straddled across that two by four flying across the world

with vivid imagination.

Another favorite thing to do was get the "saw horses" and place saddles on them. If we practiced real hard we could jump on them like Roy Rogers did, fire our rifle while riding at a gallop making sure those wild Indians didn't corner you and scalp the hair off your head. Neighbors would come over or friends from the village to help in the Indian wars we fought on a regular basis. There was usually a toy gun strapped to my side and you would find me practicing the fast draw



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and shooting bad guys of the West! On one occasion my holster came loose from the belt which caused me great expressed grief. I was hard to live with until Dad came home from work and repaired it with brass brads. Dads were good for that!

It wasn't until I came back home in 1983 that I learned the true spelling of our neighboring street. We always thought it was Abington. Low and behold the City of Huntsville installed street signs and spelled it Abingdon. I thought that was a mistake but after checking I learned the spelling was correct and from an early Cotton Mill investor from "up north". I have since found other publications which spell it as we did in the old days.

Another big surprise about my old neighborhood came just last year. I had gone to United Fire to see my friend Louie Tippet. Barbara, my wife, remained in the car. When I returned she made a statement about the logo painted on the side of United Trucks. It was of a burning building. I made some slight remark then took another look.

The burning building was the house on Maple Street where I grew up. Louie had bought the old house, used firemen to burn it and captured the event on film. I was amazed at the picture and stood looking at it until Barbara interrupted my trance to say it was time to go!

Now I go to buy milk in the yellow container, nice and pasteurized, sanitized and purified. I think of Dixie and the many hours I spent with her grazing on the side of Maple Street, Virginia Boulevard or maybe even Abington.

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\$20 for the return of a Maxwell buggy and sorrel mare. Last seen being driven by my mother-in-law. Keep her and return the horse and buggy for reward.

from 1901 newspaper

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The Visit of President McKinley

by Jack Harwell

It is one of the ironies of history that the monuments we erect to our leaders come to have less meaning than the people they are meant to honor. McKinley Avenue, in northeast Huntsville, is named for the man who served as the nation's 25th President, but the significance of this honor is lost to many people today. For William McKinley was one of the few Presidents to visit our city.

McKinley is one of the streets that originally made up East Huntsville, a large subdivision that was laid out near the Dallas and Lincoln Mills in 1892. It was originally called Melette Avenue, after Arthur C. Melette, who was governor of South Dakota in the 1890s.

South Dakota was the home state of Tray Pratt, one of the men responsible for bringing

the mills to town and reviving the local economy a century ago. Pratt was also one of the individuals who laid out East Huntsville.

Huntsville was a busy place at the turn of the century. New textile mills were running in East and West Huntsville, and the city was marching into the 1900s with enormous self-confidence. It was a reflection of the national mood of the time, for the United States was becoming a world power.

Having been preoccupied with foreign policy during his first term, McKinley wanted to turn his attention to the nation. In particular, he wanted to visit the great cities of the South, and reaffirm his message of national reconciliations. This was a favorite theme of his. Although the Civil War had been over for 36 years, reconstruction was still marred by regional differences.

McKinley missed few opportunities to remind audiences that America was the great united nation its founders had intended it to be. In 1899 he had tried this approach with a



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group of Confederate veterans in Atlanta. Though respectfully silent at first, the old Rebels applauded the President loudly when he said that "sectional lines no longer mar the map of the United States." A suggestion in the same address that the North should help maintain Confederate graves received a thundering ovation.

Thus, Mr. McKinley was eager to revisit what was once enemy territory, and remind people that the United States was truly united. His first major stop would be Memphis. To get there, he would follow the route of the Southern Railroad through northern Alabama. He was scheduled to reach Huntsville on April 30.

In the days before radio and

television brought major world events into our homes, the contact people had with history was limited to what they could see with their own eyes. The idea that the President of the United States was coming to Huntsville created an enormous amount of excitement.

The night before the President's scheduled arrival, volunteers began stringing 200 yards of bunting along the platform at the railroad depot on Church Street.

The Presidential train was scheduled to arrive at 9:10. By eight o'clock, crowds had begun to form at the depot. Newspapers reports stated that the crowd had grown to 10,000 by 9:00. (This, at a time when the city's population was 8,000.)

The crowd included a number of veterans from both sides of the Civil War. A local band provided music to set the mood.

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The tracks coming from Chattanooga, then as now, passed the sites of the Dallas and Lincoln Mills as they entered the city from the east. As the train approached the mills shortly after nine o'clock, the whistle at the Dallas mill began to blow. It was soon joined by every other factory whistle in town. No one in Huntsville had ever heard anything like it.

If the President had looked out the window of his private car, the "Olympia," he would have seen hundreds of mill workers assembled in the reservoir yard, waving and cheering.

At the depot, the sound of the whistles had brought the expectant crowd to an almost unbearable state of excitement. The people surged forward, straining to see up the tracks and catch a glimpse of the train as it came around the bend across Meridian Street. Policemen struggled to keep everyone out of the path of the locomotive, now only seconds away.

Finally, someone shouted, "There it is!" The noise of the crowd almost drowned out

the squealing of the brakes and the hiss of escaping steam as the train came slowly to a halt. After a moment, the great man that everyone there knew but never expected to actually see, appeared on the platform, and the cheering began afresh. Congressman William Richardson waited for the noise to die down, then introduced the President to the people.

The President spoke only briefly; he had only a short time to devote to this stop, and much of that would be taken up by formalities. Nonetheless, he was interrupted by applause over half a dozen times. He spoke of old foes and new friends, of America's love of peace, and the recent war "to relieve the oppressed people in Cuba."

After his speech, he introduced Mrs. McKinley to the crowd's obvious delight. There were a few remarks by local officials, and the President was presented with a walking cane made of Shittim wood from Monte Sano (where it still grows), and a glass decanter of Big Spring water, with which

he was invited to drink to the prosperity of the nation.

Finally, the President waved farewell and disappeared into the "Olympia". The train pulled out of the Huntsville depot at 9:30. The whole affair had lasted only twenty minutes, but thousands of people would

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remember for years the day that President McKinley came to Huntsville.

Ironically, this trip, for which McKinley had such great hope, had to be curtailed due to a minor illness not long after the Huntsville visit.

On September 6, 1901 President McKinley was shot twice by an anarchist while visiting the Pan American Expositions in Buffalo. Though seriously wounded, the President rallied a week later and appeared on the road to recovery.

Vice President Theodore Roosevelt returned from his vacation, and Congressional leaders called for a day of national thanksgiving for the President's deliverance. But on September 13, he took a turn for the worse, and died the next day. It had been just 106 days since he had addressed the cheering crowds at the Huntsville depot.

William McKinley was great-

ly lamented by his countrymen, and the people of Huntsville were no exceptions. On September 17, the day of his funeral, memorial services were held in three Huntsville churches. McKinley was a very popular President, even for his time, and when an Indiana minister called him a "political demagogue" at

a Sunday service, half the assembly walked out.

Later, Melette Avenue was renamed for the slain President.

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The State of the Indian Nation

Indian Agents were required by Law to submit a report once a year detailing the condition of the tribe under their care. John Allen, the author of this report, resided in Huntsville and was agent for the Chickasaws,

February 7th 1830
Sir:

In conformity with your request of the 29th January, to give the Dept. of War, the information of which I may be in possession, touching the condition of the Indians within the Chickasaw Agency. I will do it with pleasure; but regret my inability to do the Subject that Justice which its importance So Justly demands, and on which the Gen. Govt.. and the Indian Nations in General – are so

deeply enlisted.

Before I proceed in detail to answer the different Interrogatories, I presume that the situation of the Chickasaw will be better understood, were I to give a brief, but correct description of the Country that they have inhabited ever since they have been known to the whites as a Nation.

This may be decided entirely unnecessary by the officers of the War Dept., as well as many of the members of Congress from the circumstances of their being personally acquainted with the facts hereafter states but as this information is not intended for them, but for members of Congress who are seeking information on this important Subject, I respectfully Submit the following.

The Chickasaw Nation is bounded as follows (to wit) on the east by Tennessee river, on the North by the State of Tennessee until the line strikes the Mississippi, thence down Said River until it strikes the Choc-

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taw Line in the State of Mississippi for compliment, So as to include a Small portion of North Alabama.

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The buffalo and Bear are gone, and there are but few Deer, not sufficient to satisfy and Indian to depend upon for support, more particularly those that have family. Consequently the Chickasaws are compelled to subsist by a different means than that of the chase.

They (The Chickasaws) have a plenty of Horses of a superior quality as at least as well adapted to the use of Indians, they use them on their farms with much less food that is generally given those Animals that are raised and used by the whites, and when traveling through their country, they travel from thirty to fifty miles per day never feed them but let them subsist entirely on what grass or Cane they can procure for themselves when hobbled out at Night.

They have large herds of Cattle Swine Sheep and Goats, and poultry of every description that are in use generally in that section of the Country. The Country is well watered; and is well adapted to the Culture of Cotton, Corn, wheat oats peas potatoes Beans, etc.

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of sustenance.

Every family cultivates the earth more or less, as his thirst for gain, or his imaginary or real wants increases,

Much to the honor of the Chickasaws, for the last eight years, the practice of the men requiring the women to perform all the labours in the field is much changed, the men now (with a few exceptions) cultivate the earth themselves, while the female part of the family is engaged in the household affairs. They spin weave make their own clothing, Milk Cows make butter cheese, etc. They keep themselves decent and clean and in many instances particular attention is paid to fashions that are in use by the whites. It is their constant practice to appear in their best apparel at their public meetings, also when they visit the country villages in the white settlements.

Many of the Chickasaws profess Christianity. I attended Camp meeting in November last at the Missionaries. Divine worship was performed alternately by white and red men, in the English and Indian Languages; and for the first time I saw the Sacraments taken by the Indians. Everything was Conducted with the utmost good order, and decorum.

As a Nation the Men are brave, and honest, the women (the half breeds in particular) are beautiful and virtuous; and I am of the opinion that there has been greater advancement In Civilization in the last eight years than there was in twenty previous.

Education is confined generally to the half breeds and youths generally of the first promise. There are at this time several white men that have identified themselves with

the Indians by Marriage, and Several half breeds that have sufficient education to enable them to transact a considerable portion of the business of the Nation.

The Municipal laws of the Chickasaws consists in written Laws, or resolutions Commanding that which is right; and prohibiting that which they Conceive to be wrong.

As I have already mentioned the state of agriculture I have only now to say something on the Subject of the Mechanic arts, the knowledge of which are Generally confined to white men that have identified themselves with the Indians, particularly of the highest grade proposed among them (to wit) House Carpenter wheel right Mill rights Blacksmiths, etc. All

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the arts necessary for farming use, Stacking plows, helving axes, hoes, making Slides, Truck wheels, draw bars Gates, etc. is generally confined to the common Indians, and Slaves. As it has been the wish of the Gen. Govt., many years to promote the interest, and better the situation of the Chickasaw Nation, I am sorry to have It to say that the Indians and the Gen. Govt. have been greatly disappointed, from the unfortunate Circumstances of their having made two bad appointments of Agents in succession for the Chickasaws, who have ruled the Nation with Despotism for the last eight or ten years, they have not stopped at the meanest acts of depravity that the human mind is capable of conceiving. They have oppressed, they have Slandered, and they have Cheated both them and the Gen. Govt., thoroughly a weakening their faith towards Civilized man in general; and any other

Agent that may preside over their future destiny.

The Chickasaws being surrounded by the white inhabitants, I have found it a difficult matter to restrain the whites from violating the Intercourse Law, by driving their Stock over line upon the Indian Land, making settlements, trading with the Indians in a manner that is prohibited by Law as well as Stealing their Negroes, Horses, Cattle, etc. but I am proud to have it in my power to say that

those white persons who are so much trouble to the Indians are Generally men of the lowest grade and dregs of Society. Such men as are always unwilling to conform to the Laws that govern the Civilized World.

I have had a conversation with the principal Chiefs and head men of the Nation, at a

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Council that I called, on the 10th of November last;

After the business was settled for which they were convened, they conversed freely with me on the subject of the States of Mississippi, and Alabama extending their Laws over them, of which they were awfully afraid.

They all stated that they were much attached to their Country, they were the first that occupied it, and had always been faithful to Gen. Govt. of the United State and on them grounds they bot-tomed a strong hope that they would be specially favored by the present men in power.

They (the Principal Chiefs) also stated that if the Laws were extended over them, they had no belief that they would be placed upon an equal footing with the whites; and if they made so by Law, all the officers of the Law would be composed of white men, and as they were unskilled in Lawsuits; and the whites would be partial to each other.

They had no belief that they would be able to withstand the encroachments of the whites upon them, and if they did attempt it, that in a few years they would not have a vestige of property left. Consequently they would exchange their country for any they could get rather than as they conceived,

lose their native freedom.

Very respectfully,
Your Obet Sevt.

John L. Allen - Sub Agent for the Chickasaws



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News from the Year 1935

News From Huntsville and Around The World

U.S. Warns Soviets: Stay out of America

The State Department issued a "most emphatic protest" to the Soviet government to cease its interference in "the internal affairs of the United States." A note presented by Ambassador William C. Bullitt to the U.S.S.R. stated that the U.S. "anticipates the most serious consequences" if the infiltration of Communist groups into American organizations is not halted.

Earlier this month, the Communist International announced it intended to infiltrate American labor unions. This prompted leaders of the American Federation of Labor to plan strategies to fight Communist tactics of "boring from within." It is expected the A.F.L. will deal with Communist propagandists' attempts to influence union decisions, at its annual convention in October.

Such interference hinders "the maintenance of friendly relations" between the two nations, according to the text of

today's warning. The Soviets have yet to respond, but some say they will refuse to discuss the matter.

Social Security Enacted

President Roosevelt signed into law the Social Security Act today, fulfilling a 1932 campaign promise. In that year, the Democrats pledged, "We advocate unemployment and old-age insurance under state laws."

Now, America joins many other industrial nations in providing comprehensive care for its elderly, handicapped and unemployed.

Payroll taxes will fund the legislation which has taken over 14 months to enact; conservatives have fought the bill since FDR proposed it last June. One congressman believes the bill will "threaten the integrity of our institutions."

But the majority of congressmen feel it will relieve the burden of many Americans.

Reaction from the public is mixed because of the tax increases.

Rogers and Post Die in Alaska Air Crash

America was shocked to learn today that its most popular humorist, Will Rogers, and famed aviator Wiley Post both died in a plane crash. Rogers and Post were touring Alaska, just starting a ten-minute hop from an Eskimo village to Point Barrow, when their plane engine died. An Eskimo ran three hours to Barrow to bring the news.


Earlier in the day, fog had forced Rogers and Post to lay low in a town outside Anchorage before taking off.



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Huey Long Assassinated in Baton Rouge

Senator Huey Long died today after doctors conducted a third blood transfusion in a last-ditch effort to prolong his life.

The Louisiana dictator was gunned down Sunday night by Dr. Carl Weiss, a leader of an anti-Long faction and son-in-law of Judge B.H. Pavy, also an opponent of the senator.

Weiss shot Long in the stomach just outside the chambers of the Louisiana House of Representatives, where among the legislation being enacted was a gerrymandering of Judge Pavy's judicial district which would have virtually prevented his re-election. Weiss was then killed by the senator's bodyguards.

Many Louisiana residents are grief-stricken over the loss of their leader and recalled that a month ago Long predicted there would be an assassination attempt on his life. He seemed to accept that he would die by the gun. Senator Thomas of Utah, one of Long's political colleagues, on hearing of the attack, remarked, "Shooting always invites more shooting. It cannot bring better conditions. The American system of recall is to use ballots, not bullets."

Malcolm sets Record of 300 Miles an Hour

Sir Malcolm Campbell, the British land speed ace, set a world record today when his racing car Bluebird made two runs over a measured one-mile course on the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah at an average speed of 301 miles per hour. Campbell broke his own record of 276 miles per hour, set last March at Daytona Beach.

Born in 1885, Campbell has been a racing enthusiast since boyhood, and over the years he has set numerous speed records for motorcycles, airplanes, automobiles and motor-boats. He was knighted for these accomplishments in 1931. But today's feat is surely his greatest.

Lindy Helps Invent an Artificial Heart

The creation of a "chamber of artificial life" that can keep vital organs alive outside the body for prolonged periods was announced today by Charles A. Lindbergh and Alex Carrel, the Nobel Prize-winning scientist. Writing in the journal Science, they said they had used their device to maintain thyroid glands, ovaries, adrenal glands, hearts and other organs from animals.

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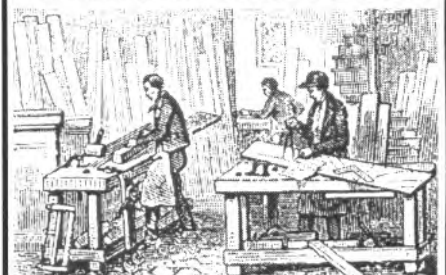
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A Law Man to the End

by Malcolm Miller

Some stories I feel inadequate to write and this is one of those stories for more reasons than one. First off it's about a man I knew well and had a great admiration for. Secondly he was a man that led a life full of family, friends and his occupation of law enforcement. Lastly there is no story that can fully encompass this fine man's life

Charles "Jerry" Crabtree was a man I had known for many years and I watched as he pursued his love for law enforcement with a diligence not often seen in an individual and as he climbed the ladder of success in his chosen vocation he never lost sight of still being a friend to all he came into contact with. Jerry's Dad and I were very close friends and he stood by me when I needed a friend and

I shall never forget him. Jerry's younger brother Ronnie who every one called Butch was best friends with my oldest son Tommy "T. A," and Jerry's son Chuck was my youngest son Doug's close friend. So you see the ties between Jerry Crabtree's family and mine were very strong and still are to this day.

Jerry Crabtree's life ended on an icy road in Winchester Tennessee on January twenty ninth this year while he was doing what he loved to do, working as a law enforcement officer. At seventy six years of age he was working as an investigator for the Franklin County Tennessee Sheriffs

Department.

Jerry was born on October twenty third, nineteen thirty three, and he grew up in Mer-



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George Burns

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rimack Village in Huntsville, He went to school at Joe Bradley School and finished high school with the first graduating class at Butler High School. After high school he enrolled in Florence State Teachers College, now known as University of North Alabama, as he had been given a football scholarship there.


In March nineteen fifty three he married the love of his life, pretty Miss Nina Green, to whom he had been married fifty six years at the time of his death. Their union brought into this world two fine children, the eldest a beautiful daughter, Cindy who is married to Mike Cunningham and their son Chuck (married to Amy) who followed in his Dad's footsteps and just recently retired from the City of Huntsville Police Department. He was also the proud grandfather of ten grandchildren and

eight great grandchildren.

Jerry had to cut his college time short when in July nineteen fifty three he was about to be drafted so he joined the Marines for two years. After he was discharged from the Marines he joined the Huntsville Police Department and from nineteen fifty seven to nineteen sixty four he held just about every job in the Department. He started

out as a patrolman, and then became an investigator, a chief training officer and a departmental inspector. He attended the F.B.I. Academy in Quantico, Virginia, in nineteen fifty seven.

Jerry was elected Sheriff of Madison County in nineteen sixty six where he proudly served through nineteen seventy five. While he was sheriff he worked to get the dust-off the

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old fee system where they were paid by the number of arrests they made and put the employees on the merit system. Under the old system when a new Sheriff was elected he usually fired all the employees of the former sheriff and hired his friends and supporters, some of whom had no formal law enforcement training.

While Jerry was Sheriff of Madison County, he served as president of the Alabama Sheriffs Association and was instrumental in starting the Alabama Sheriffs Boys Ranch. Jerry also served as law enforcement instructor for the state of Alabama through the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

In 1976 Jerry served as Director of security for the Peach Tree Plaza Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. From 1976 to 1981 he worked in private enterprise. From 1981 to 1998 he was employed at Arnold Air Force Base in Tullahoma, Tennessee

as a Security Guard and was soon promoted to investigator. From 1998 to 2007 he was Chief Deputy with Coffee County, Tennessee, Sheriffs Department in Manchester, Tennessee, in 2007 he served in the first group of judicial commissioners in Franklin County Tennessee, and then from 2009 till his untimely death he served as an investigator with the Franklin County Sheriffs Department.

There were two visitations for Jerry, the first one at the Moore-Cortner Funeral Home in Winchester, Tennessee. I

understand that the crowd was so large that visitation had to be extended several hours. At the visitation at Laughlin's in Huntsville there was also a huge crowd gathered to pay final respects to a man that touched so many lives in so many ways.

It seems that the older I get the more good friends I lose and I certainly lost one of the best on that icy highway sixty four in Winchester, Tennessee on January twenty ninth of this year.



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Paul Kent

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General Lee's Birthday Cake

For years we have heard references to a mythical dessert called the "Robert E. Lee Cake." This cake was, according to legend, prepared and served at a Richmond, Virginia, hotel to honor the leader of the Confederacy.

The chef had served in Lee's command as a foot soldier and after the war went to work at a Richmond hotel where he quickly achieved notoriety for the dishes prepared under his supervision. In 1870, after receiving word that Robert E. Lee was contemplating a visit to Richmond, and would stay at the hotel, the chef ordered everyone out of the kitchen, and began preparing a dessert befitting the stature of his former commander.

Robert E. Lee's untimely death prevented him from ever sampling the dessert prepared in his honor. Because of the legend surrounding it, and its superb taste, the cake became a huge success, being prepared and served in restaurants all over the world. Strangely enough, as the years passed, the recipe became lost. For years people had passed the recipe down orally and no one had thought to write it down. The recipe presented

here was found in an Atlanta cookbook, dated 1884, and as far as we know, is the only one in existence. Certain parts of the recipe have been changed to allow for modern cooking convenience.

Cake

- 2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 8 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- Grated rind of 1 lemon and the juice
- dash of salt

Lemon Jelly filling

- 6 egg yolks
- 2 cups sugar
- Grated rind of 2 lemons
- Juice of 4 lemons
- 1/2 cup butter

Orange-Lemon Frosting

- 6 cups sifted confectioner's sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 3 or 4 tablespoons orange juice

Prepare & bake 2-layer cake in moderate oven. Cook filling, it goes between layers. Prepare frosting and frost entire cake.



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from 1910 newspaper

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Terms of Sale: \$5.00 in cash and then \$1.00 per month, or only \$12.00 per year. No interest will be charged for 5 years. I will keep the interest paid for 5 years.

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Eight \$5 gold pieces as first prizes.

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Eight Silver dollars as third prizes.

Special cars will leave the office at 2 o'clock and run to the corner of Fifth Street and Stevens Avenue and the crowd can be seen from this point.

Come out to the sale whether you wish to bid or not, and take a chance at the free money, and let's all have a good time! Ladies are especially invited to attend.

YMCA Nearing Completion

The rapid work on the YMCA building is being watched by hundreds daily. Many stop and wonder at the progress being made. The steel structural work is almost up for the third story. It is a new sight for many Huntsville people to see a building being built from the inside out.

from 1910 newspaper

Real Estate from 1908

7 room house on Randolph Street. Will make improvements if rented for a year to suite the tenant. \$25 per month.

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News from 1904

Injured in runaway

As the result of a runaway accident near the Wade Mattress Factory yesterday afternoon, Mrs. R. B. Searcy was badly injured and Mrs. Frank J. Thompson was painfully bruised.

The ladies were attended to by Dr. Brooks and last night both were resting quietly.

Joe Mason Arrested

He claims that he did not sell whiskey but only bought it for his friends. Joseph Mason, the well known egg and produce dealer, was tried before Commissioner Greenleaf yesterday on a charge of retailing whiskey.

The revenue men claim that Mason has been violating the revenue laws with impunity for several years and has kept a wide section of Paint Rock Valley supplied with whiskey.

Mason, on the other hand, claims that he was not selling whiskey but that he merely took orders for it and delivered it to his friends and customers whom he desired to

accommodate and furthermore, that he made no profit whatsoever by delivering the liquor.

The case is unique and will be an interesting one for the next grand jury to pass upon.



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The Bootlegger

by Jim Latham

De Mitt Kelly lived in the block of West Clinton where Planter's Union bank now stands. He wore a heavy, long wool coat the year round in which he carried pint bottles of whiskey that he sold all over town.

The First Methodist Church was starting a Men's club, and they invited all the prominent men in Huntsville. Since he was so well known, De Mitt decided he would attend the meeting. The men were asked to stand up and introduce themselves. They stood and told the crowd that they were doctor, attorney, business man, etc.

De Mitt stood up and said, "I, De Mitt Kelly, am a bootlegger. No need to deny it, as I have sold whiskey to most of you fine fellows who are here today."

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Downtown

by Jerry Wilbanks

The big yellow city bus would take you downtown for a dime (later a quarter) and bring you back home, practically to your doorstep. All this, and the schedule was amazingly accurate. The bus came all the way out to Huntsville Park, made a loop around the neighborhood and then headed back to town. It was extremely convenient for youngsters and for those adults without an automobile. It seemed like there was a bus waiting at our corner stop every half hour; and if you missed it, you could just run up the street one block and catch it at the end of its neighborhood loop. My sister Dorothy was an acknowledged master of this maneuver. When she had to ride the bus for any reason, I don't think she ever once made it to the first stop on time! (Only kidding, Dot).

My father worked a short stint as a bus driver back in the fifties. I don't remember too

much about that except that he wore a kind of gray uniform and a cap with a big shield on it that made him look for all the world like a policeman. Encouraging this mistaken belief, he enjoyed a special kind of respect around me and my young friends. By the time we had gotten old

enough to know better, he had gone on to another job.

Sometimes on Friday afternoon, I would ride the bus downtown with my Mom. There she would take care of banking business, shop the ten-cent and department stores and wind up the afternoon at the

"The other car collided with mine without giving warning of its intention."

Seen on local accident report

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A&P Grocery Store. When we had finished up with the grocery shopping, my dad would appear and we would load the grocery bags into the trunk of the family car and drive home.

My sisters worked at the Woolworths, Walgreens drug-store soda fountain and anywhere else they could find after school employment. After all, the bus service was always available for the back and forth commute. There were no malls to speak of in those days, but teenage girls loved to hang out and shop downtown. That's where the stores and the movies were!

Alone, I liked to ride the bus downtown to go to the movies. I remember that the Lyric and the Grand Theaters were directly opposite each other on the same street. The movie theaters were usually my destination on Saturday and Sunday afternoons (after window-shopping the hunting knives, guitars, cameras, Army surplus and luggage at the local pawnshop on the square.) Occasionally... almost always ...I would spend all my money at the theater's concession stand, and I would be forced to walk home.

This was quite an uneasy journey and usually in the dark! I would come straight down Clinton Street, past the sometimes dangerous red brick projects, turning at the Butler High School intersection and proceeding through the very scary district of West Huntsville, and thus into the familiar village of Huntsville Park. Each

time I made this harrowing trek, I promised myself it would be the last. And it always was ... until the next time.

Another destination on the bus route was the Big Spring Park. The area had been developed into ponds, bridges and neatly trimmed expanses of grassy landscape. The ponds and waterways were home to ducks, geese and giant goldfish. These little carp had been given plenty of room to grow and grow they did. Some of them were huge! We liked to

bring along bags of popcorn and bread scraps to feed fish and fowl alike.

Located near the Big Spring Park was the Huntsville municipal swimming pool. We came there on hot summer mornings and spent the day swimming and sunbathing, During the fifties, before the development of

"Time is what passes rapidly between the 'Easy Monthly Payments.'"

Julie Foster, Arab



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**"Just because you're
paranoid does not mean you
are NOT being followed."**

Ronald Craft

the polio vaccine; many parents became concerned that their kids might be at risk around public recreational areas, and for at least one summer attendance at the municipal swimming pool was noticeably down. Sometimes the facility looked downright deserted. Although there has never been any scientific evidence to support the idea, many people still believe that public swimming pools are high risk areas for infection by the polio virus! Around our neighborhood, parents just didn't feel good about communal swimming during the unfortunate polio epidemic of the fifties.

One of the big attractions of Big Spring Park was the Big Spring Cafe. In those days before the proliferation of fast food joints, the Big Spring Cafe was a destination in itself. The food was just great. Delicious chili dogs and slaw dogs made with

ketchup, hamburgers, cheeseburgers and chili; these are just a few of the items to be found on the menu.

Even today the Big Spring Cafe continues to serve all the old favorites, along with stew, hamburger steak, Double Cola and Coke in bottles and the ever popular "greasies". These are little burgers with mustard and onion. (Did you want fries with that greasy?)

Along with an army of other customers, my Dad especially liked the hamburgers. Upon request, both sides of the bun, top half and bottom, could be dipped in the grease that the burgers were cooked in. This was considered the apex of gourmet dining among burger enthusiasts of all ages. A note to the health conscious: don't try this at home. My Dad somehow made it to the age of eighty-seven, in spite of such reckless dining and utter disregard for

all the rules of a healthy diet.

Riding downtown on the bus was a big deal to us kids. It sort of expanded our universe and allowed us to browse around beyond the confines of our little village. Of course we were always happy to get back home to familiar surroundings. In those days, a trip downtown for shopping, business or recreation was an event to be enjoyed.

Even though the town itself began to grow and expand and businesses began their slow, inexorable crawl toward the outlying complexes and malls, the downtown was slow to give up its dominant status in the estimation of old time residents. Downtown was still the big story in most people's minds and endures in memory unchanged and undiminished.

Men are from earth. Women are from earth. Deal with it.



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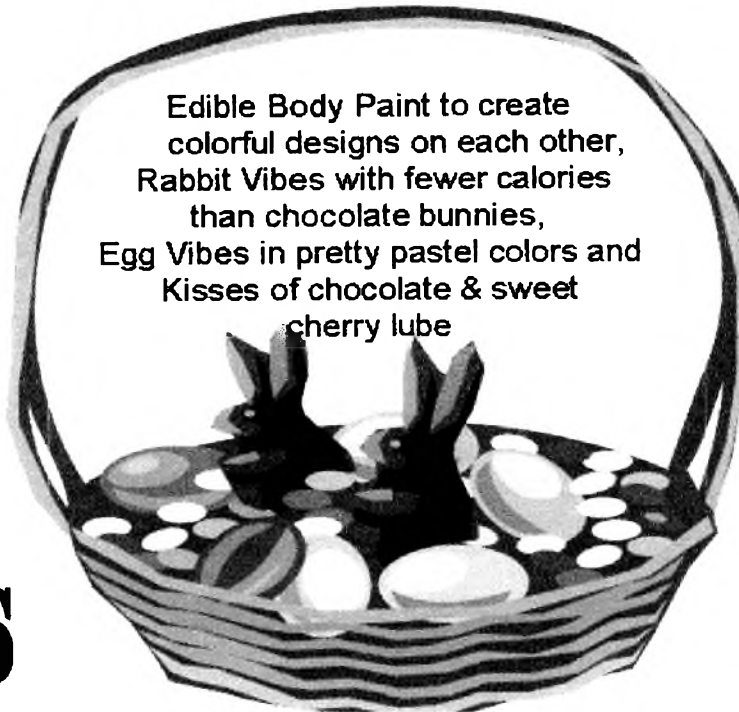
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