

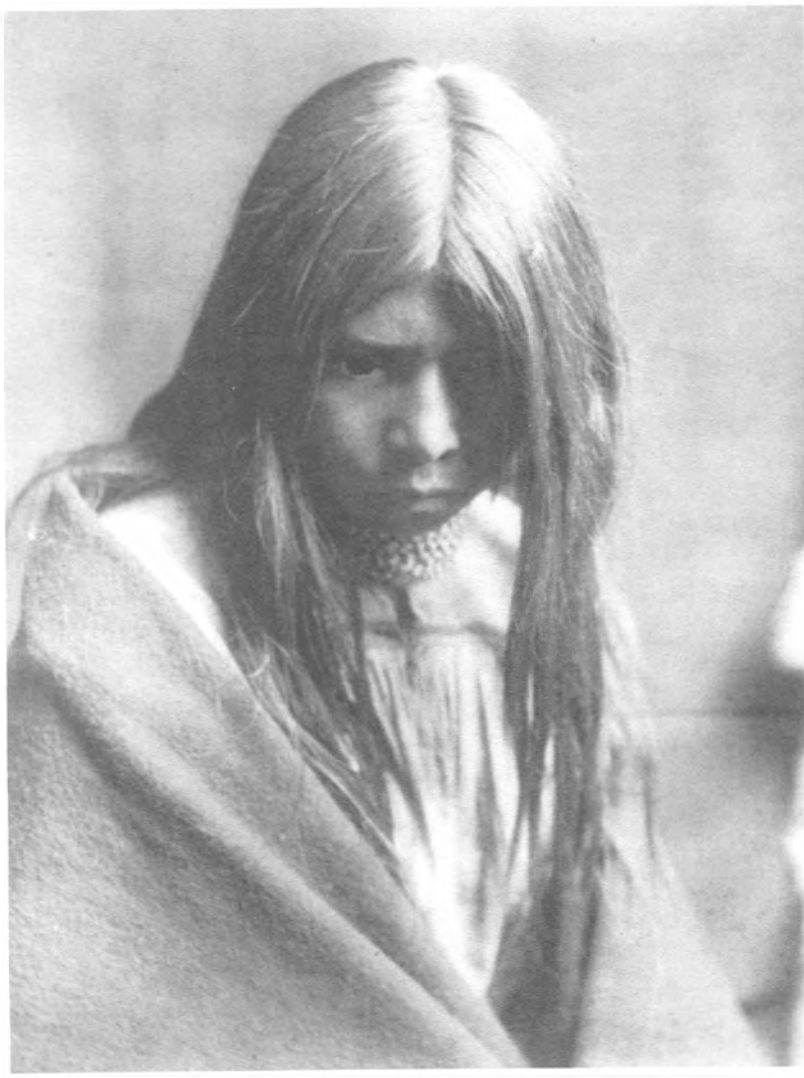


No. 210
August 2010



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



Let My Children Go

She was born a Cherokee and then sold into slavery where she had two children, one by her white master and the other by an Indian.

Now the court had to decide if her children were slaves or free born, entitled to the same rights as any other person.

Maby Davis was about to discover that although there were laws for both Blacks and Whites, there were none for the Indians.

Also in this issue: "Greg Patterson - A Sports Legend"

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Domie Lewter
Mae Lewter

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Let My Children Go

The house was silent as James Fisher crouched on the floor, laboriously tracing the words on a note. If all went well he would be leaving Huntsville early in the morning with a pass in hand from his mistress, Mrs. Lane, stating that James, her slave, had permission to travel.

James flinched inwardly as he thought of the word "slave." Although he had been held in bondage for all of his life, he never thought of himself as a slave. He was a full-blooded Cherokee, determined to do what the courts had failed to do - set himself free.

Indian slaves were part of our country's horrible past that most historians have chosen to ignore. Almost from the very beginning of settlement in this country, Indians were seized and sold into slavery. In North Carolina the practice was so widespread that some historians have estimated that fully half of the Cherokee population were captured and sold.

In the years preceding the Revolutionary War, the Indian slave trade was one of the

colonies' most profitable commercial enterprises. Vast caravans of captured Indians were marched to Savannah and Charleston where they were sold and shipped to the West Indies, New York and New England. Years later, when most of the Northern states did away with slavery, many of these Indians were "sold south" to the very places where they had been captured.

Ironically, many of these Indian slaves were sold to firms engaged in the importation of Black slaves from Africa, where they would actually be used to help capture the Africans. In return, the Black slaves were often used to help capture the Indians in this country. It was a vicious cycle driven by high profits and the need for an inexhaustible supply of cheap labor.

Although the Indians provided cheap labor, they were never considered adequate for the hard work required on the Southern plantations. They were highly susceptible to the white man's diseases and did not have the physique required for hard physical labor. As a re-

"I thought the handle on my recliner qualified as an exercise device!"

Jeremy Slaton, Arab



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sult, the Indians were used primarily as domestic help while the Africans toiled in the fields.

By the beginning of the 1800s the practice of seizing and selling Indians into slavery had largely stopped, mostly due to financial reasons. An Indian would bring a price of about \$400.00 on the auction block while a strapping African in good health would often sell for \$2000.00.

Another major cause for the decline of Indian slavery was the fact that the courts never would decide exactly who could be sold as a slave. While there were strict laws governing the practice of African slavery, the issue of Indians fell somewhere in a gray area. Many states had laws stating that anyone held in servitude, as well as their children, was automatically a slave. Virginia had a law stating it was illegal to sell Indians unless they were slaves but declined to state what made someone a slave.

Most often the whole issue came down to what the supposed owner claimed, as once an Indian was deemed a slave, he had no recourse in the courts.

In the early 1800s a young full-blooded Indian girl by the name of Maby Davis was living with a family near Knoxville,

Tennessee. According to what she later related, her parents had experienced hardships and were no longer able to take care of her when a white family living nearby volunteered to raise her. She was treated as a loving member of the family, doing the same chores and enjoying the same liberties as the rest of the family.

After living with the family for several years, tragedy struck when the parents died. A short while later the couple's son took Maby to Nashville, where she was sold as a slave. Although Maby protested violently, it was to no avail. Although technically she could have pursued her case in court, in reality it was impossible.

To press her case she would have to get a white person to sign a bond, then find a lawyer and pay his fee. All of these things were impossible, and illegal, without the permission of the slave's owner.

Maby's new master, Eli Young, owned a boarding house in Nashville where she was used as a servant. Young owned several other slaves, one of whom was Thomas Fisher, also a full-blooded Cherokee Indian. In 1816, Maby bore a son by Fisher, much to the owner's delight who now owned another slave. The father was

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huntsvillehospital.org/womenchildren



Women & Children

 **HUNTSVILLE HOSPITAL**

evidently less than thrilled as he fled from bondage the same year. The following year, according to court papers, Maby bore a daughter by her master.

At about this time, Maby's owner agreed to let her take in laundry. Although he kept most of the money, she was able to hoard the few nickels and dimes that she received as tips. Her life was probably as content as possible for a slave. She had her two children, her master was not overly cruel and she was slowly but surely saving money.

Her life was shattered, however, when her owner announced his intentions of selling the family at a slave sale. He had suffered severe business losses and Maby and her children were practically his only remaining assets.

The daughter was sold to a plantation near Nashville and Judge George W. Lane of Huntsville purchased James, the son. Maby's owner, probably out of remorse, agreed to let her buy her freedom. Using the small amount of money she had been able to save as a down payment, Maby agreed to pay a certain amount each month with the loan secured by a mortgage on herself. If she missed a payment, she would be repossessed.

Maby worked frantically over the next six years trying to earn every penny she could. Seven days a week she washed and ironed clothes, often into

the wee hours of the morning with only a flickering lantern to keep her company.

Finally the day came when she was able to make the last payment on her freedom. Instead of rejoicing, however, she began to work even harder, putting in even longer hours and doing without necessities in order to save every penny.

In 1832 Maby hired an attorney by the name of Thomas Crump. Patiently she explained how she had been sold into slavery, had a son by another Cherokee and a daughter by her master. She told how the children were torn from her and sold at auction. All she wanted now, she explained, was to have her children back.

Crump filed suit in court alleging that since Maby was born free she could not have been a slave. Therefore her offspring were entitled to their liberty, too. Papers were sent to Judge Lane in Huntsville who replied that he had purchased the son, James, in good faith and had no knowledge of the boy's Indian heritage. He asked that the suit be dismissed.

When the case came up in court, it was immediately thrown out with the explanation that even if she had been born free, and there was no

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evidence that she was, the fact that she knowingly paid for her freedom acknowledged the fact that she recognized, and accepted, her status as a slave.

The attorney explained that for Maby to prove her children were free she would have to prove first that she was enslaved wrongfully. Once again Maby went back to work, again hoarding every penny to pay the attorney's fees.

Slowly her attorney began to collect statements from people who had known Maby when she was a child. The evidence supporting her claims appeared overwhelming but the attorney urged caution. Rather than file suit for both children, it was decided to sue for the release of the son first and use that judgment as a basis for acquiring the daughter's freedom.

Again, Judge Lane was served papers and again he replied, disclaiming all knowledge, and asking for the suit to be dismissed. A short while later the court ruled that although Maby was born free, the fact that she had a child by a slave, even though he was an Indian,

made the child a slave too.

Although the law stated that a child born to a White woman, or a Black woman, followed the status of its mother, it was vague about the status of an Indian woman bearing children by a slave. The court used the argument that since Maby was neither Black nor White, the laws did not apply to her case. In addition, the court argued a law that dated from pre-Revolutionary War times stating that any Indian held as a slave shall always be a slave, as shall their offspring.

Maby was devastated by the news, even though her attorney said he was sure they would win on appeal. In the meantime they would file suit for the daughter's freedom. The court's ruling, and the fact that the girl was fathered by a white man, seemed to ensure a favorable verdict.

Meanwhile, she went back to the wash board, working harder than ever to earn money for the legal fees. However tired she became, she took comfort in the fact that her daughter would soon be with her.

In Huntsville, Judge Lane

"The best cure for insomnia is to get plenty of sleep."

Senator S.I. Hayakawa

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was closely following the case. Besides the boy, James, he owned another Cherokee slave, and an unfavorable ruling could cause him to lose a considerable investment in "fancy slaves." These slaves, with light complexion, long black hair and trained for housework were a rage among wealthy Southerners at the time.

After acquiring James and training him as a servant, Mrs. Lane decided she also wanted a "fancy serving girl". She soon learned of a Cherokee girl in nearby Athens and began to badger her husband to buy her. Judge Lane was reluctant, however, arguing that the person did not possess a clear title and it could be costly if the girl was ever set free.

Regardless, Lane finally consented to buying the girl, but only after getting the seller to post a bond stating that if she was ever freed Lane would be reimbursed for the purchase price.

James was aware of his mother's fight to gain his freedom although it was difficult to learn many details. Maby was forbidden to enter the state of Alabama as a freed slave, unless a bond was posted in her behalf. Most of what he knew was overheard in the Lane household or gossip passed on by other slaves in Huntsville. After teaching himself to read and write he wrote several letters to his mother, but when Lane learned of it he was punished severely, along with being threatened with being sent to Louisiana where Lane owned an interest in another plantation.

In 1836 Maby's suit for her daughter's freedom finally

went before a Nashville court. Her attorney argued passionately that as Maby was "free born" and the father of her child was also free born, and white, there was no justification for the daughter to be declared a slave.

The defense, however, had anticipated this line of argument. They offered rebuttal stating it was against the law for whites and Indians to have sexual relations and, strange as it may sound, since the alleged white father was never charged with a crime, therefore a crime could not have been committed. In support, an affidavit was offered to the court by Maby's ex-owner stating he had no idea who the father was.

Maby's attorney countered by arguing that the daughter's light complexion alone showed she was fathered by a white



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"I'm so ugly - I worked in a pet shop and people kept asking how big I'd get."

Rodney Dangerfield

man.

The court ordered the daughter, only thirteen years old at the time, to be brought before the bench where she was ordered to disrobe. So-called experts, slave traders, doctors and probably anyone else interested, examined the young girl, feeling her muscles, peering into her mouth, measuring her buttocks and even snipping samples of her hair to examine more closely.

In the end, the experts ruled that, although the girl was light complexioned, there was no overwhelming evidence that she had been fathered by a white man. Most likely, they concluded, her father was an anonymous slave which meant the daughter was a slave too and not entitled to the same privileges as a free born person.

The courts quoted a colonial Virginia law which stated that any Indian held as a slave shall be a slave forever, as shall as their offspring.

At about the same time, the courts heard Maby's appeal on her son's behalf. In short, the court ruled it was a moot issue as Tennessee could not impose its jurisdiction on a slave who resided, and was owned by someone living in another state. If Maby wanted to continue her fight she would have to do so in the Alabama district courts, most likely in the same district over which Judge Lane presided.

For the first time in her long struggle, Maby felt like giving up. Even though her attorney insisted they would win on appeal, Maby knew the process could take years and by then her children could be anywhere.

In Huntsville, it was several months later when James overheard the Judge and his wife discussing the outcome of the court case, that he learned of the final verdict. During all the many years that his mother had fought the case through courts,

James lived with the idea that one day he would be a free man. Now that day seemed so far in the future as to be impossible.

Discarding all thoughts of the courts ever setting him free, James began to make preparations to flee. Numerous times in the past his mistress had given him passes, allowing him to run errands to outlying plantations. By studying them carefully he had learned to imitate her handwriting.

One day, while Judge Lane was out of town, his wife entered James' room and caught him practicing writing. In a sudden flash of anger she snatched the pencil and paper from James' hand and ordered

"To collect fumes of sulphur, hold a deacon over a flame in a test tube."

Seen on 6th grade science exam

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another slave to go get her brother, Nicholas Davis. When he arrived, she asked that James be given a flogging and told of catching him practicing reading and writing.

Davis ordered James brought before him, and without any explanation, began beating him with the edge of a heavy board. James grabbed the board from Davis and began hitting him back. Terrified that a slave would have the audacity to strike a white man, Davis ran from the room. Mrs. Lane then sent a servant to fetch her father, Captain Davis. In a short while the servant returned saying that Captain Davis was busy but would be there the next morning.

James knew he was in serious trouble. The elder Davis had often expressed a desire to give the Indian boy a beating and was noted for his brutal thrashings. It was said that he had killed a slave named Reuben, and a girl named Rachel, by excessive beatings. He had lately struck, with a heavy

board, an old man who used to tend him when he was a baby.

As soon as James finished his chores that evening, he wrote a note and signed his mistress's name to it. Walking the few blocks to the stage office he asked if he might take a stage to Nashville the next morning. The clerk demanded his pass, whereas James showed it while explaining that his mistress was not used to writing passes for servants and she wanted him to look at it and see that it was done right. The clerk obediently wrote the proper instructions on the back

"Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered."

Seen in church bulletin



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of the pass.

Returning to his room James read the instructions and wrote himself a new pass. Hours later he was on the stage bound for Nashville.

If James was hoping for a family reunion, it was not meant to be.

Ironically, after Maby Davis had spent years in court to prove herself a free born Cherokee Indian, that very fact was used against her when she was ordered west on the Trail of Tears.

Nothing was ever heard of the daughter again. Probably she was sold to an owner in another state where she disappeared forever. James Fisher eventually made his way to Boston, Mass., where he told his story to a newspaper editor. It was published in 1848.

Judge Charles Lane later earned the dubious honor of being one of the most famous traitors in Madison County during the Civil War. After first supporting the Confederacy, Lane changed sides and became a staunch Union man. He died a disgraced and completely broken man.

"When you remove people's right to bear arms, you create slaves."

George Washington

News from 1909

- W. F. Canterbury, who claims to be here from Memphis, and who came here yesterday and registered at the men's boarding house on East Clinton Street, complained to the police that he had been robbed of \$200. He claimed that he went out early in the evening with a party of friends and alleges knockout drops were administered to him. When he awoke, he found himself in his room at the boarding house and his roll of money missing.

- Decatur - Upon the size of the wife a man beats depends the size of the fine he must pay in Judge Carlisle's court here in the city. Yesterday Luther Chambers was fined \$25 for beating his wife. Chambers said he could prove by his wife that it was only his first offense. A sweet-faced little woman walked out of the crowd to take the witness stand.

"Is that little woman your wife?" asked the court, before she had testified.

"Yes," responded Chambers.

"Your fine is raised to \$500," said the judge.

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Final Words for a Yankee Tyrant

Union General Orsmy MacKnight Mitchel led the Northern troops that captured Huntsville in April, 1862 and occupied the city for four months. It seems Mitchel didn't make many friends, since this is the way the Daily Huntsville Confederate announced his demise in its issue of November 12, 1862:

"A telegram from Richmond, three or four days since, announced intelligence, through Northern papers, of the death at Beaufort, S. C., on the 31st ult, of his detestable lowness, Maj. Gen. O. M. Mitchel.

No man ever had more winning ways to excite people's hatred than he. We have not space to do justice to his vices -- virtues he showed none, in his dealings with the people of North Alabama.

He was "an undevout astronomer," who cannot be otherwise than "mad" - a military cockscorn, without skill, theoretical or practical - proud, vain, vindictive, vile, barbarous, who made war on women and children, and was, of course, a coward, who skulked from the presence of armed men.

A single instance of his cow-

ardice, was his personal retreat on the railway train from Athens to this place, for reinforcements, while a portion of his army was engaged at Athens with an inferior Confederate force, and his failure to return thither with the reinforcements. No tears were shed here for his reported demise, but fears were generally expressed that it was not so.

A patriotic sufferer, in the noble county of Jackson, from Mitchel's insolence and barbarity, on hearing of his death, remarked that he had often said that a new hell would have to be established for the Yankees, and that he thought Mitchel or Turchin would be President, and he supposed the choice had fallen on Mitchel."

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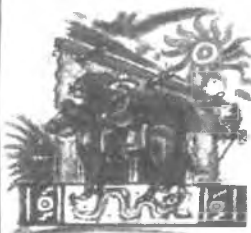


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Dixie

by 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 Cafe and around the corner to the ditch.

Bob Sisk also had a cafe (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

"The last resort we stayed at had towels so thick, I could barely close my suitcase."

Linda Drake

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 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!

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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 bum 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 - or Abingdon.

If you are cross-eyed and have dyslexia, can you read all right?

Soccitumi Cake

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 3/4 c. butter, melted
- 4 eggs - added one at a time, unbeaten
- 1 c. sour cream

Mix all together with big spoon, then beat for 5 minutes with electric beater. Pour into a round cake pan, or mold, or Bundt pan. Bake for an hour at 350 degrees - so good it doesn't even need icing! Good all alone, or with someone.

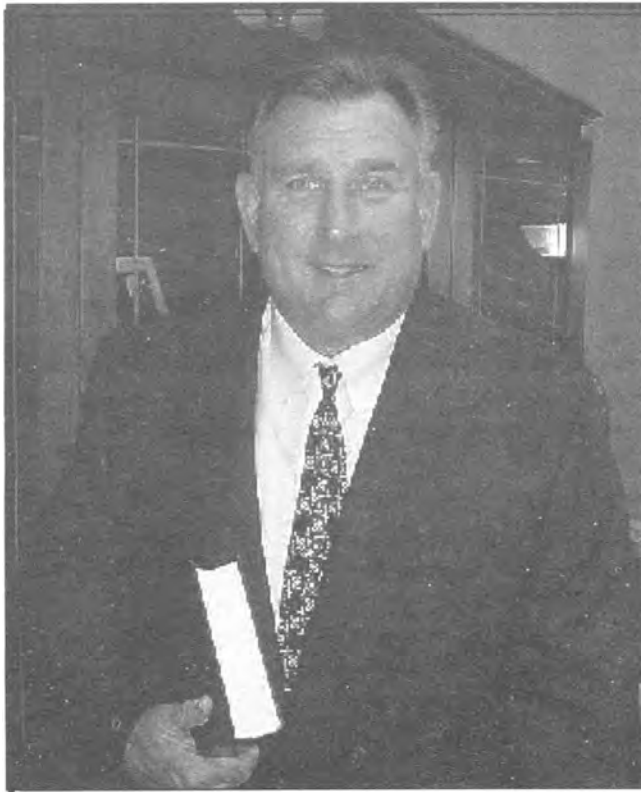


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Heard on the Street in 1911

- C. S. Griswell, a one-armed man of this city, this morning sent a load of bird shot into his left breast by pulling the trigger of a gun with his toe. Family troubles are said to have been the cause of his suicide.

- Lost - one gold watch fob with name of Johnny Jemison on back. Finder please return to this office and receive reward.

- Mr. J. M. Oldfield and his daughter Miss Ora were thrown from their buggy while enroute to the mill neighborhood yesterday afternoon. Mr. Oldfield was injured about the shoulders, while his daughter escaped being hurt. The animal was frightened at something in the road and ran up the side of the embankment.

- The Old Huntsville Hotel walls will be torn down. The walls left standing as the result of the burning of the Huntsville Hotel recently will be torn down, and men were seen today putting up scaffolds to do the work.

- For Rent - a new 4 room cottage at the corner of Pratt Avenue and 6th street for rent cheap - apply to J. E. Pierce

- During the early hours of last night, while the rain and windstorm was at its worst, the north chimney of the residence of Mrs. C. C. Dement on West Holmes street was blown down. The occupants of the house and nearby neighbors were greatly frightened at the noise, but no one was hurt.

- What was said to be one of the old time ice houses, which were usually built under ground, caved in last night at the residence of Mr. Newt White on Adams Avenue. The cave in was on Locust street and to a depth of about ten feet.

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The First Bathtub in America

Among history's "firsts" is the unusual fact that Huntsville had the first bathtub. This splendid invention was the brainchild of Thomas Martin of Fairfax, Virginia.

He had learned, in 1808, of a new land opening up south of Tennessee. A territory that was said to be abundant with game and fertile land upon which crops of all varieties could flourish.

Martin, his wife, Sarah, and her parents left Virginia and soon settled near the big spring in the North Alabama territory that John Hunt had founded in 1804.

Huntsville, as it would soon be named, was a thriving community of 2,500 people.

Martin built a grand home for his family on the northwest side of Monte Sano and engaged in dairy farming. It was reported that he earned the considerable sum of \$2,000 a year in this business. An enterprising young man, he decided to pipe water to his property.

Huntsville had become the first city in the United States to start a water works system and Martin copied the technique of hollowing out red cedar logs to carry the water.

Running the pipe from the Cold Spring to his milk house, he carved a limestone tub, placing it in the milk house, probably because it was against the law to bathe in the house. This was most likely due to the fact that open fires had to be used to heat the water for the bath.

The tub was five feet long, 19 inches wide and 12 inches deep, with a hole carved in one end for drainage. It remained on Monte Sano for close to 50 years, then it was moved to a daughter's house on Holmes Avenue where it lay neglected until it was uncovered during excavation for the downtown post office.

For many years it sat unnoticed in front of the Post Office Cafe, where it finally became lost forever, leaving only the footnote that it was, as reported by a New York newspaper in 1916, "the first bathtub with running water in the United States!"

A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.

"When your mother is really mad and asks you 'Do I look stupid?' it's best not to answer her."

Matt, age 8



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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*

Eddie Wilson was the astute reader who was the first to call with the correct guess to last month's Photo of the month. It was an adorable picture of a young **Buck Watson**, who among other things owns and restored the old YMCA building downtown. Eddie worked at Automatic Electric for 20+ years and in his spare time was a very good guitar picker. He told us he put a set of tires on **Hank Williams, Jr.'s** bus when he was here in town for a concert, then started playing with his band!

We were so very sorry to hear that **Jackie Reed's** beloved sister **Barbara Ann Hall** had passed away at 76, after fighting lung cancer. She had lived in Huntsville for 40 years and worked at the Army Missile Command. Jackie says that her sister was her inspiration.

It is hard to believe, but **Malcolm Miller** will celebrate his 83rd birthday Aug. 10. He says he's older than dirt, but we sure think the world of him. Happy Birthday, Malcolm!

Another very special day was the recent 15th anniversary



of **Old Dad's BBQ** restaurant in Hazel Green! These days to be in business that long is certainly a success, especially for a restaurant. We are so proud of **Rosemary** and **Bill Leatherwood**, Ole Dad's owners.

A very important reunion is taking place on Aug. 7 at Jackson Way Baptist Church. **The Rison/Dallas Association** program will start at 10am with a covered dish luncheon and honored guests will be all Veterans. Visit web site rison-dallas.com for more info.

The **Lincoln Mill reunion** just took place recently. One guest who has attended every year was **Ben Harris** who is 97! **Johnny Johnston** was there with many others. When someone asked Ben if he wanted to tour the mill he said no thanks, that he had gone to work there in 1929 and that was enough!

We are so proud of

Rebekah Keith McKinney. She was recently elected President of the Alabama Association for Justice at its annual meeting in Sandestin. Proud Dad is **Sam Keith** and also parents **Janet** and **Buck Watson**.

Margie and **Darryl Burks** of Huntsville just recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with sons **Brad Burks** and **Brent Burks** of Huntsville; **Mitchell Burks** of Chicago and **Bruce Burks** of Florida. Congratulations to the lovebirds!

Clinical Research Associates has some of the best people working for them. We recently met **Erin McCulley**, who is a study coordinator who's as proficient as she is gorgeous! Working there also are **Peggy Rochine**, who is Director of Research and **Sonya Mertz**, a research Assistant who is a Huntsville native. We first met these hard-working ladies on a holiday, when everyone else was on vacation - they were in the office hard at work!

Another Research Assistant we met there is **Tina Ware**,

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 girl is into BBQ and fund raising.



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who happens to be the granddaughter of one of our favorite writers, **Ruby Crabbe**. Ruby passed away several years ago, but many of our long-time readers will remember the poignant and funny stories Ruby wrote about her early days. We sure do miss her and Tina is very proud of her grandmother.

Christy Webb, owner of Sexy Shoes in the City next to Thai Garden, tells us that she is relocating to Holmes & White Street. She will be announcing changes in a forthcoming issue but she will be open by appointment and continues to receive stocks of high-end consignment clothing and shoes.

Happy birthday to that handsome **John Troup**, of WHNT-19 TV, who will celebrate a birthday Aug. 15. Also, **Hannah Troup**, daughter of **John and Steph Troup**, turns a big 10 on Aug. 25 - Happy birthday to Hannah who will celebrate with friends at the Embassy Suite Hotel!

Congratulations to our dear friend **Joyce Russell**, of New York Life, who was recently promoted to Assistant Vice President of Agency Standards for the South Central Zone. In addition to this win, she had a big birthday in July and celebrated with friends at Mason's.

Many Huntsville people know **Harold Jackson** as that energetic, handsome member of the Lion's Club who coordinates **Trade Day Around the Square** each year, among many other projects. He belongs to the Von Braun Lion's club and is currently President, he also served as past District Governor of the Alabama Lions Club. Well, Harold, who looks like he's about 60, turned 80 years old on July 28! I was shocked when I heard that because he looks so young! It must be all that Lions activity that keeps him going strong!

Jodi Sisk's step dad is someone familiar to many

Huntsvillians. He is **Buddy Holman**, now living in Monrovia, Al. He was a radio announcer for WBHP back in the '50s and was a race car driver in the 60's, holding the Huntsville Speedway track speed record for many years in the 60's. We know Jodi is SO PROUD of him! Jodi & husband **Glenn** own Harnessing the Past.

Robert Staggs brought us an old Huntsville newspaper clipping that he thinks was printed in 1946. Here it is:

"Mrs. **George Staggs, Jr.**, entertained recently with a birthday party for her son, **Robert George**, on his second anniversary at their home at 202 Humes Avenue. Following an afternoon of games and entertainment, refreshments were served. Guests were **Richard Wilburn, Tyrone Samples, Francho Samples, Donald Smith, Billy Smith, Harold Smith, Georgia Lynn Luna, Steve McGinnis, Geraldine St. John, Jeff St. John, Jr., Ben David Atkinson and Shirley Anne Smith.**" Thanks to Robert for the information!

Curtis Parcus, who with his wife **Becky** own and operate the Dallas Mill Deli, wanted to let their good customers know that they are now open for lunch ONLY and will no longer be open for breakfast. If you

haven't been there yet, the food is really good and you'll never meet a nicer guy than Curtis. Their little baby girl **Avery Jennings Parcus** is 8 months old and is just a doll!

Lots of robberies lately. Always watch out for your neighbors, especially if you see some strange activity happening around their homes. Call the police & let them handle it. Be very observant, but stay safe.

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Easy Baked Chicken

- 2 lbs. chicken pieces
- 3/4 c. melted butter
- 3 c. crushed cornflakes or crumbs
- 1/2 t. seasoning salt
- 1/2 t. dried tarragon
- Salt & pepper to taste

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Sprinkle the salt, pepper, seasoning salt & tarragon all over the chicken, then dip in butter, then in the crumbs. Arrange skin side up on baking pan and bake for 30 minutes. Baste them with the rest of the butter and back in oven at 250 degrees for another hour.

Easy Cheese Sauce

- 1 lb. sharp Cheddar, diced
- 1 1/2 c. evaporated milk
- 1 t. salt
- 2 t. dry mustard

Melt cheese in top of double broiler over hot water, add everything else, stir til blended. Pour into a jar, covered, and into the fridge. When you need some of it just add a bit of milk to thin and reheat.

Banana Jam

- 6 very ripe bananas
- juice of 6 lemons

Add a cup of sugar to every cup of the banana-juice mixture and set on low heat. Cook for about an hour, watching carefully. If it turns pink, that's OK. Refrigerate before eating on toast or ice cream.

Cheese Sticks

- Pastry dough
- Parmesan cheese

Make your usual pastry dough or use ready-mix. Roll

it out as far as it will go. Sprinkle lots of the cheese all over it, fold over once and roll out again. Repeat this 3 times using more Parmesan each time. Cut in strips, sprinkle with paprika and bake at 400 degrees for about 10 minutes.

Olive Eggs

Hard boil some eggs, devil the yolks with mayonnaise, mustard, vinegar, salt, pepper and chopped up pimento-stuffed olives. Delish!

Firecrackers

- 1/2 c. butter
- 1/4 lb. sharp grated Cheddar cheese
- 1 c. flour
- Several drops Tabasco
- 3/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. cayenne pepper

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1 1/4 c. Rice Krispies

Cream butter with the cheese, add seasonings, then the flour and cereal. Shape into marble-size pieces on a lightly greased baking pan. Flatten with fork and bake at 350 degrees for about 12 minutes. These are crisp, short and hot.

Smoky Cheese Spread

3 8-oz. pkgs. sharp processed cheese

1 lb. bacon, fried crisp, crumbled & drained

1 bunch green onions, minced

Mix it all up & put it in a pretty oven-proof bowl, then bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve hot or cold with multi-grain crackers.

Brown Sugar Apple Pie

Grease a pie plate, then peel & slice 6 apples. Put a layer of slices in the pie plate, sprinkle with sugar, cinnamon & dots of butter. Stay with it til the apple slices are all in. To top it, blend:

1/2 c. brown sugar

1/2 c. butter

1 c. flour

Take little dabs of this and try to flatten it over the apples as best as you can, then bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes and

apples are soft. This is great reheated too!

Pots of Chocolate

1 c. semi-sweet chocolate bits

1 c. scalded light cream, heated til just below boiling

2 egg yolks

3 T. good brandy or rum

Pour all into a blender and blend on high til racket stops. Pour into small demitasse cups and chill for about 3 hours.

Melon Wine Compote

Cantaloupe balls

Honeydew balls

Watermelon balls

Powdered sugar

Sweet Sauterne or Muscatel

Place balls in a large bowl, sprinkle a little powdered sugar on them and half cover with the wine. Chill for at least 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

Peanut Butter Treats

In a bowl, mix 2 egg whites with 1 1/2 cups peanut butter and 1 cup of white sugar.

Drop by teaspoonful onto a greased baking sheet, press gently with tines of a fork and bake for 8-10 minutes at 350 degrees. Simple & good!

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Frank Gurley

In his own words

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

Everything being new and without camp equipage, the men was divided out at night and sent to the citizens houses to be fed. For two or three of the first days, I went to the hotel. One evening while on drill I noticed a beautiful young girl apparently about fourteen years old watching me and I noticed myself as often watching her. It was the evening of the 3rd day I was sent to the house of a gentleman to stay, and at supper I met with the girl I had been trying to find out about and found it to be the daughter of my host. Her being young and me bashful, we did but little talking but a good deal of looking, but those looks was lasting. I met her every day from that time until I left for the army.

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

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

I was ordered to take a boat for Fort Donelson and came near being drowned in going down the river. I reached Fort Donelson and in a few days was joined by the remainder of the Regt. After be-

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

The next day we learned that there was a Female spy between the Cumbalin (Cumberland) & Tenn River below the Fort and she had gotten frightened and was hid. I with two other men was sent to hunt her. We had a long tedious hunt and the nearest we could come to the spy was a part of her underclothes with some important papers secreted in them. After getting these clothes we went back to report and saw the spy in the Fort talking to the commanders. I had a sufficient description to identify her and when she left the fort there was an officer went with her. I never heard of her afterwards.

We then left to go to Hopkinsville, Ky. Road all night. Reached Hopkinsville to breakfast which we got at the hotel. There one of my friends J.H. Jones, was taken sick and came near dying and was then discharged.

We remained in camp 4 days and went on a scout. It commenced raining the day we left camp and rained or snowed every day for 10 days. We found no yanks but plenty pretty girls and lots of good grub.

Just before we reached Marion, Col. Forrest Maj. Stange and Dr. Vanwic (Van Wyck) went to a house to arrest a strong Union scout, and the scout told them if they came to the house he would kill one of them. They unheeded him, surrounded the (house) and ordered him to come out. He opened the back door and the Dr. was near the door, and he shot and killed him instantly.

The scout jumped the fence and made his escape. The Dr.('s) remains were carried to the town of Marion, and there I saw the first dead soldier.

The next day we went to

Greenville. Camped that night and at ten the scouts came in and reported Yanky infantry in 5 miles of us marching on us. We moved two miles and slept in line of Battle. The next day the report proved to be all of a fudge. We traveled all the next day in the snow 4 inches deep. Struck camp at dark (and) made beds on the snow. I waked up in the night and my bedfellow, T B. King, was sleeping on his back and the snow had covered his face so I could not see his eyes or nose, and him fast asleep.

We arrived at Deeyville on Cumberland River and stayed a few days and started back to Hop-

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kinsville, Ky. We got out of anything to eat and the night before we reached Hopkinsville myself and J.H. Morrow slipped off to a house to get something to eat, and I think we got the best meal victuals I ever et.

The next few pages deal with various skirmishes and his return to Nashville.

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

We supplied ourselves with a bottle of brandy and started home. When we reached the (Flint) river it was very full. The back water was out 1 mile from the



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river. In going through this back water Morrow got in a deep place and stopped and said if I did not bring him some brandy he would not come out. We reached Maysville wet and drunk.

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

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

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

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

I had a boy named Aaron waiting on me and he said I must take a walk with him to

which I consented. Then he told me some things about that house. Aaron said he had seen our hostess wiping the children's nose on the dish cloth and putting hot water in the churn to wash the dirty children and he thought it time for us to leave, which we did.

The valley was too thick with blue for safety and I had to leave. I attempted to get across the Tenn R. but it was closely watched, so I turned

my course to Tenn. I went through the mountains to Winchester, where there was some Rebs there. I got into a drunken fight at Winchester that caused the Yanks to leave. I then joined Capt Trimbles squad and went to Shelbyville Pike, but did nothing.

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

On my way home I concluded to raise a company of men. I suc-

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

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

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

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

After resting a few days we started back having collected a few recruits. When we reached the South side of the river, which we did just at dark, I learned the country was covered with Yanks guarding the R.R. We soon discovered a large lot of men and got the advantage of them, killed and crippled many a Yank. We then paid our respects to the R.R., but with what result I cant tell. I let some of my men go home and one of them got captured. I had great fear he would be killed and I kept all the prisoners I caught as a hostage. Genl. O.M. Mitchel then in

command at Huntsville refused to exchange. I got a young lady to come to town to see what she could learn and when she came back she said the Genls daugh-

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ters was going to start North on a certain day and I determined to capture them if possible and get my man released. I struck the road between Fayetteville and Shelbyville and had the pleasure of seeing the young Ladies pass, but they was so strongly guarded that I could not affect anything. We had a fight with the rear guard and captured 4 men.

I came back home and captured 1 capt & 2 Lts while they were asleep at New Market. I carried them out to the mountain and a citizen brought us breakfast of broiled ham, fried-chicken, fresh butter, honey, hot biscuit, coffee and milk. One of the officers said he did not think when he went to bed the night before that he would be at a picknick at breakfast.

I returned to the river at Sublets Ferry and there I learned that a Negro named Cato belonging to C.L. Tipton had murdered Mrs. Elisabeth Warren and five children. She was the sister of my old bedfellow TB. King and also a cousin of mine. The citizens had managed to arrest him and had him in

jail in Beliefonte and the Yanks refused to let them do anything with him. When I learned the facts I determined to have him if possible.

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

Afterwards they stopped at a farm to spend the night.

I think he was the poorest man I ever heard of. He stopped complaining of his poverty for a moment and asked me who I

was. I told him it was Gurley, and I called up a man who was acquainted with the old fellow. We soon convinced him we were all right.

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

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

My camp was near the farm of Dr. Jordan and he had 96 bales of cotton that the Yanks wanted very badly, but (I) could not spare men enough to send out to drive them away from it, and while I was absent with my men, they came out and got the cotton. When I reached home and learned the acts I thought of trying to burn the cotton on the road to Shelbyville. I went to McDavid's mill and there I found all the cotton that I was looking for and four wagons loaded with sutlers goods. With one bold dash we got possession of all the wagons, burned the 96 bales of cotton, and carried [all] of the sutlers wagons to my camp, having only six men and as much as I could do. After a long hard drive of 10 hours we reached our camp and examined our spoils, which was rich and racy. I invited all the neighbors in and I mounted a wagon and made myself a good auctioneer for three days.

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

As I was coming upon them, I made out the driver and two other men sitting in the wagon - one an officer in full uniform and the other person in his shirt sleeves. I shouted to them to halt and surrender. As they did not halt I fired at them as did several others of my command. Selecting the Union officer in uniform as an important personage I fired at him three times. The carriage ran under a peach tree that knocked the top off, and not

until then did the Negro driver stop his horses. The officer in uniform stated "this man is shot." I asked the driver why he had not stopped. The wounded man said that he could not stop them. I did not know who the wounded man was nor did I ask for I passed immediately to the front leaving them with some of my men.

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

I got to an old house and there my broth-

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er came to me; and the next morning the Yanks commenced shooting at us before we new they were in six miles of us. My brother got between me and the Yanks and surrendered, and I got away but was captured by another squad immediately. There was 13 shots shot at me not over 60 ft and the balls passed through my clothes but never drew blood. I wrote this note to my Father: "Father, we are both prisoners unhurt and bound for Brownsboro."

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

We reached Nashville in safety and were lodged in the penitentiary. I had tried minutely from the time I was captured

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

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

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

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the sentence.

After the trial was over I had the liberty of the yard, but the yard was a horrible place, quite small and 800 prisoners in it and flies so thick you would get two in your mouth every time you opened it. After trying to escape I was made to sleep in the cell at night, and going in with all the balls and chains it went like thunder storms. One evening as we went into the wings one of the Yanky prisoners borrowed a razor and cut his own throat from ear to ear. This was the most horrible sight I ever saw. Not many days after one Capt. Fraly (C.S.A.) was hung and many of my friends thought it was me. Soon after this I with many others was locked up. I remained in solitary confinement 8 months this time without intermission. While in this condition I laid many plans for escape, but I was so closely guarded I could not get out.

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

Myself and 18 others was sent off for exchange. We lay over two days at Louisville, from thence to Indianapolis, Ind., then to Cresline and to Pittsburg, Penn. where we lay over one day, and when we started off we came near being mobbed by a large crowd of the angriest Duchmen I ever saw. We had 30 guards protected us. We went from thence to Point Lookout, where we remained 16 days and was sent for exchange.

We had to walk 4 miles after getting off of the U.S. boat until we got on the C.S. boat. My feet blistered and the blood ran out through my sock. I remained in Richmond 3 days and left for

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Montgomery, Ala. The R.R. was cut and we had to walk or get private conveyance 120 miles. It was a hard trip for me in my condition, but some of the men being stout went ahead and the people inquired and found I was behind. They sent carriages for me and would send me from place to place and I only walked 9 miles out of 120.

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

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

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

Editors note: The reader should be aware that the preceding are excerpts.

News from 1890


- Wanted: An elderly woman with no children and good disposition to take charge of house about 4 miles north of town. Contact the editors for more information.

- New Restaurant: Charles Brickie has opened a restaurant and lunch counter on Washington Street where he will be pleased to serve his friends and the public. He states that no food more than three days old will be served.

Madison County Needs a Jail

from 1911 newspaper

The time has come when Madison county needs a jail in order to keep the jail birds in. Huntsville has rather a nice-looking building that passes for a jailer's home but for his permanent guests it's no good, notwithstanding it cost the county more than \$30,000. With all the precaution exercised by the sheriff and his deputies, jail bird escapes have become too frequent. All of which is due to a poorly constructed jail. We are informed that a local Federal grand jury recently reported the local jail is very unsafe. And in connection with the suggestion for a new jail, we might add that the county jail should be moved out of town, get it off down the spring branch or in some other part of the county outside of the center of our business and residence districts. As we see it, this is the thing to do, or when the court house is remodeled, put the jail on the top story.



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Stump Brings Memories

By Malcolm Miller

I was walking through the tall grass one day when I stumbled over it. It was just an old rotting, decaying tree stump. It was a huge thing, maybe three feet across and as I stood there looking at the old stump my mind started to wander back to my boyhood days, and the mighty oak tree that once stood tall from this very stump.

You see, this old stump was all that remained of the place where I spent about seven of the happiest years of my life. Under the out-stretched branches of this mighty oak tree stood the farm house that was my favorite of all the tenant houses we lived in when I was growing up. It wasn't particularly a good house, certainly not by the standards of today; but to me, an eight year old at the time, it seemed like a mansion. I still recall the shiny white door knobs on the doors. To me this was really something, because all the houses we had lived in up until that time had either wood buttons or latches to keep them closed.

This house, like all the others I had lived in back then, had a tin roof. The sun beating down on the tin roof all day in the summer would drive the whole family out under the branches of the big oak tree where there seemed to always be a little breeze blowing. It was under this very tree that I sat for hours listening to the grown folks tell of far away places they had been and important things that had happened in their lives.

I recall my Uncle Curt telling of the time he spent in Texas, and how the real cowboys weren't like the ones we had seen at the pic-

ture show in town. I heard them talk with worried tones at the beginning of World War II. You see, for a couple with seven sons, two of which were already in the army, my parents had much to be concerned about.

It was under the branches of this mighty oak that I first learned to play the guitar. It was a guitar that my brother Frank had ordered from Sears and Roebuck.

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When folks, even today, ask me why I play the guitar upside down left handed I remind them that when you are the only left handed one of seven sons in a family, you just don't go stringing up guitars to suit your self.

The old tree stump, rotting away though it was, seemed to be there as a last reminder to me of another day and time. It was a time when folks seemed to really care more for one another. Neighbors were neighborly, friends were friendlier, and pot wasn't something you wanted to smoke. No sir, it was most likely something that sat under the foot of the bed to save a trip to the out house on those cold winter nights.

How times have changed since my family, my family's friends and I sat under that tall oak tree and told stories, played guitar and harmonica, and sang. All that is left of the old stump is the wonderful memories it inspires.

"Old age isn't bad when you consider the alternatives."

Maurice Chevalier

Feeding the Kids

The Great Depression was devastating for Huntsville and Madison County. Times were hard and jobs were scarce. Many people, with no other way to support their families, began manufacturing illicit whiskey.

Sheriff Frank Riddick had received several tips about a moonshiner by the name of Tyler Moore making whiskey out on Hurricane Creek. When he went to check it out, sure enough, there was Moore fixing to run off another batch.

Mr. Riddick knew that Moore had a large family and would be in dire financial straits without the money from that whiskey, but he had no choice but to make the arrest.

Tyler appeared in court and was sentenced to six months. Sheriff Riddick, feeling sorry for Moore's children, began stopping by their home every week or so to carry them groceries and to loan them money.

Six months went by and Tyler was released. Unfortunately, he went back to his old livelihood and was promptly arrested and sentenced again, this time for another six months.

Again, Sheriff Riddick provided food and clothing for the children while their father was in jail.

Another six months go by and Moore is released. Less than a month later, the sheriff received another tip and found Tyler back at his still working on another batch.

The following week, Moore appeared in court and was again found guilty. The judge was about to announce the sentence when Sheriff Riddick spoke up and said, "Your Honor, could you make it thirty days this time? I don't think I can afford all those kids for another six months."

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The Man With No Name

John W. Hanner, a staff writer for the Brooklyn Gazette, while visiting Alabama in 1847, wrote a story about a slave in Huntsville who belonged to a Mr. McLemore. The slave had been born on the place where he lived, but had never traveled more than a half-mile away from home.

Apparently, the slave was born retarded, but had become a favorite of his master. Although able to perform simple chores, the man was unable to care for himself. He slept in the main house, where someone could watch over him.

Mr. Hanner described the slave as a very large, but calm, person who was never known to tell a lie. His voice was low

and his enunciation slurred. He never became angry or excited about any of the ordinary things of life. Like all other slaves at that time, he was unable to read or write.

What made the slave so unusual was the fact that he was a mathematical genius. The man did not know one figure or letter from another, but was able to add, subtract, multiply, and work complicated mathematical problems in his mind faster than most people could on paper.

Word of his unusual ability spread and before long he became a local curiosity. The Rev. John C. Burruss and Thomas Brandon, prominent men in the early days of Madison County, heard of the strange slave and

decided to see for themselves. Some of the questions used in testing the slave were as follows:

"How much is 99 times 99?"

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Answer: "9,801."

"How much is 74 times 86-1/2?"

Answer: "6,401."

"How many 9's are there in 2000?"

Answer: "222 with 2 over."

"How much is 321 times 789?"

Five-second pause. "253,269."

"How much is 7 times 9,223?"

Two-second pause. "64,561."

"How much is 3,333 times 5,555?"

This was the only question that seemed to stump the slave. He pulled at his clothing, wrung his hands, sucked his thumb and then ran out of the house into the yard where he began skipping and leaping into the air.

Satisfied that they had finally been able to best the slave genius, Burruss and Brandon were about to leave when the slave ran back into the room.

"18,514,815," he shouted to the bewildered questioners.

A week later he was able to recall to the men what the last problem, asked him on that day, had been.

He never had an explanation as to how he arrived at the answers, stating only, "I studies it up!"

When word of the slave's uncanny mathematical gift began to spread, his master was besieged by requests from people wanting more information. One group of learned professors, from Nashville, spent three days with him in an effort to prove trickery. All attempts failed as the slave answered each ques-

tion correctly.

Finally, in a last effort to discredit him, one of the professors asked how many stars were in the universe. The slave jumped up, ran out of the room and never returned. Almost an hour later the professor found him hiding behind a woodshed.

"You don't know the answer!" exclaimed the jubilant professor.

"Yes sir, I knows the answer ... there jest ain't no word for a number that big."

No one knows what ever happened to the slave who was a mathematical genius. Years later, people could not even remember his name and he became just another footnote in old Huntsville's history.

Writers

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Traveling to Huntsville in 1931

By James T. Syler

When I was just 7, we made my first trip to Huntsville. I had never been to what was called the "big" town. Someone had asked Mr. Tabor to come to our house and take us to "town." Getting to ride in a car was a thrill for me.

About 9am that day he came for us and we were off. Along with us, he took many vegetables, eggs, chickens and milk to sell at the courthouse square in Huntsville. In fact, I was the one who held a gallon of milk the entire trip to town. Everything was wonderful until the car started up the mountain. When the trees in the valley were so far below the road, I really hugged that jug of milk for dear life. I could just see that car, and us, going down into that valley, end over end. Finally the top of the mountain came into view. At that point Mr. Tabor flipped a button (the car didn't have a key). This turned the motor off and put the car in neutral gear, and we coasted all the way to

Huntsville Hospital. I didn't realize the danger of a trip down the mountain with squealing brakes, that could fail at any time.

With the motor running again, we arrived at the Court House. There were so many wagons parked all around the square, and a few cars. Grandpa said they were model "T"s and

model "A" s. There were tall buildings everywhere. One could buy anything he wanted, and there were crowds of men and women choosing through the large selection on each wagon. A few of the men were yelling to the buyers, telling what they had to sell. One car had some large tubs containing fish. There were some huge

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fish - bigger than the any I had ever caught in the bog. It was rumored that the fish salesman would take out the entrails and put a quart of "White Lightning" inside each fish. This turned out to be true, but I don't think they sold any of these fish to the policemen. Everything was astounding to me. I looked at the tall buildings around the square and asked how on earth could people get to the tops of them. I was told that they had elevators, but I had no idea what an elevator was. It was explained that people used an elevator to get to the top, that it was a big box that had a man sitting on a stool, who would ask the floor number you wanted to get to, then carry the passengers to the desired floor.

I saw that the streets were paved with bricks and then noticed a man standing on the street corner holding what looked to be a rope. I asked what that man was doing, and was told that he was making the thing in the middle of the

street turn red or green. The cars would cross the street for a while, while the walkers would run for their lives, trying to cross the streets and avoid the cars.

By this time I was starving and could smell a wonderful smell of something cooking. It was coming from the "greasy spoon" next door and smelled wonderful. I had heard the kids at school tell me how good the hamburgers tasted and how many they could eat, but I had never had one. The good smell nearly drove me crazy, but no amount of begging and pleading to my grandfather worked. He said he had a better idea for dinner. That we would go to "T. T. Terry" to have some cheese and crackers, a dime's worth. Sure enough, there was a large wooden barrel with cheese and crackers. To the back of the store we went, to sit

on large feed bags as chairs. It didn't taste good to me because what I wanted was a large, greasy, hot hamburger just around the corner. T. T. Terry's slogan was "Great is the Power of Cash," painted on a sign over

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the doors of the store.

After our crackers & cheese, I begged my grandpa to see the Big Spring. To my surprise he agreed, until he saw the number of steps he would have to take coming back up. He finally gave in and we started down. What a spring! I had never seen such boiling water, just bubbling up from the bottom. I asked what caused that and was told that a swift current was pushing the water from under the ground. Someone said the spring had no bottom, and that brought on a deep puzzle. If the spring had no bottom why did the water not run the other direction and run out some other place? And surprisingly, the water was very cold and not hot, which I imagined.

We went back up and I went up the courthouse stairs and onto another floor, where I noticed a drinking fountain. It was marked "White Only" and a little further down was another one marked "Colored." I couldn't understand that and asked about it. I was told that was the rule, I wondered who made that rule but no one paid attention to me.

My grandmother wanted to go to Kress's 5&10 cent store. I was thrilled, we could buy anything in the store for 5c and no more than a dime. I was shocked beyond speech when I found out that was not true, things cost a lot more. I asked why they tried to fool people with that sign on the glass window. I ended up with a pair of blue socks to wear to Sunday school. I was happy with that

as I wanted a souvenir to take from town.

By this time the place was so crowded with so many people.

It was time to go. We found our car and were on our way home. Going back down the mountain towards home Mr. Tabor switched off the car again and barely held it between the ditches while I said prayer after prayer, with my eyes shut tight.

At the end of the day, I was really happy to get home, and see Bingo, my dog, greet me at the yard gate. The day had been great but there was no place like home and I was very happy to be there.

I heard years later that Mr. Tabor had ended his life in that same car, when he was hit from behind by a car traveling at a high rate of speed.

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War, The Way It Really Was

Charles Wills, a Union Arm officer from Illinois, was delightfully honest in his letters home. He settled in Louisiana after the War Between the States and died there of fever in 1883 when he was only 42. Wills' sister later published his letters exactly as he had written them in a book called "Army Life of an Illinois Soldier." His comments from Alabama still make fascinating and informative reading.

Wills could be surprisingly sympathetic towards the Southern civilians and was frequently critical of his soldier comrades. While on the march in Mississippi, for example, he described the Union soldiers' conduct to his sister:

"Rebels though they are," he said, "'tis shocking and enough to make one's blood boil to see the manner in which some of the folks have treated them. Trunks have been knocked to pieces with muskets when the women stood by offering the keys, bureau drawers drawn out, the contents turned on the floor, and the drawers thrown through the window, bed clothing and ladies' clothing carried off and all manner of devilry imaginable perpetrated. Of course, the scoundrels who do this kind of work would be severely punished, if caught, but the latter is almost impossible. Most of the mischief is done by advance of the army, though, God knows, the infantry is bad enough. The d-n thieves even steal from the slaves (which is lower business than I ever thought possible for a white man to be guilty of), and many of them are learning to hate the Yankees as much as our "Southern brethren" do. This army is becoming awfully

depraved. How the civilized home folk will ever be able to live with them after the war is, I think, something of a question. If we don't degenerate into a nation of thieves, 'twill not be for lack of example set by a fair portion of our army."

Stationed at Tusculumbia shortly thereafter in August of 1862, Wills again expressed his dismay with what he saw, though he tried to persuade

himself that it was proper. "Orders have been given us to put every woman and child (imprison the men) across the line that speaks or acts secesh, and burn down their property, and to destroy all their crops, cut down the corn growing, and burn the cribs. That is something like war.

"Tis devilish hard for one like me to assist in such work, but I believe it is necessary to

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our course... I'd hate like the devil to burn the houses of some secesh I know here, but at the same time, I don't doubt the justice of the thing. One of them has lent us his cook, or rather his wife did; and they don't talk their secessionism to you unless you ask them to."

Later at Scottsboro in January, 1864, Wills' infantry regiment was temporarily mounted and became a part of Sherman's notorious army.

"I think that today," wrote Wills, "(Generals) Sherman, Logan or Ewing would not trust a detachment of this brigade on sore-backed mules if they had only three legs. This little squad of 500 men in the two months they have been mounted have committed more devilment than two divisions of regular cavalry could in five years. Everything you can think of from shooting Negroes, or marrying these simple country women, down to stealing babies' diapers. From taking \$2,700 in gold, to snatching a brass ring off the finger of the woman who handed a drink of water. From taking the last old mare the widow had to carry her grist to the mill, to robbing the bed of its cords for halters, and taking the clothes line and bedding to boot. I'll venture that before we were dismounted, not a well

rope, trace chain, or a piece of cord of any kind strong enough to hold a horse could be found in the districts through which we have foraged."

This is the Civil War as it actually was.

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Tips from Liz

* To see what plants/bushes/trees can take this extreme heat & dryness, just drive around town and check out areas that aren't normally watered regularly. Look to find plants that are doing well in spite of the heat, and plant them!

* For a headache, open a jar of strong mustard and inhale the fumes several times - this has been known to help ease the pain in some people.

* If your baby has an outbreak of pimples, just dab the acne with Mother's milk - this is a very old remedy.

* Here is Rodney Dangerfield's formula to stop hair loss - use Alum and Persimmon juice. It doesn't grow hair, it shrinks your head to fit what hair you've got left.

* Aloe Vera gel is being used for arthritis, apply the gel externally to the aching joint and you can also drink it - one tablespoonful in morning and one at night.

* Gout is extremely painful. To help relieve some of the pain, try staying away from meat for a while, other than chicken. Also eliminate sugar and white flour from your diet. Another popular tip is to drink cherry juice or eat fresh cherries daily.

* If you swallow one teaspoonful of olive oil before a night out, it will relieve the craving for alcohol.

* For skin cancer, apply a poultice of dried chaparral leaves.

* To kick the tobacco habit, for several days drink only unsweetened fruit and vegetable juices to cleanse the system.

* Ringing in the ears or tinnitus is often cured by castor oil. Try 3-4 drops in each affected

ear and plug the ear with a cotton ball for about 5 minutes.

* Vinegar is said to be very helpful in getting a bloody nose under control. Just pour some onto a cloth and wash the neck, nose and temples with it. Also, mix 2 teaspoonsful in half a glass of warm water and drink it.

* According to a gem therapist, wearing an amethyst can help to strengthen your memory. You just have to remember to wear the amethyst.

* If you're feeling tensed up, clothespins can work. Simply take a handful of them and clip one to each of your fingertips,

at the start of your nails of your left hand. Keep them on for 7 minutes. Remove them, then put them on the fingertips of your right hand for another 7 minutes. Pressure exerted on nerve endings is known to relax the entire nervous system.

* For a good nausea remedy peel a large onion and cut it in half. Place each half under each armpit. It stops vomiting and relieves nausea quickly.

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Greg Patterson

A Sports Legend

By John Pruett

From his second-floor office window overlooking a cluster of baseball and softball fields in Brahan Spring Park, Greg Patterson can clearly see his past, present and future.

"It's like my life has come full circle," said Patterson, the Director of Recreation Services for the city of Huntsville. "I grew up playing and loving sports here. I used to play at Brahan Spring, back when we were still just a small town. I played high school ball in Huntsville and later coached at three different schools here.

"Now I'm in charge of the recreation services for the fourth largest city in the state, helping oversee recreation programs ranging from little kids to senior adults. So for me, it's a full circle."

Patterson, who was born at the Huntsville Clinic in 1949, is the eldest of Carlos and Loretta Patterson's four children. A former honorable mention All-State quarterback at Lee High School and a graduate of the University of North Alabama in Florence, he later became the winningest head football coach in the history of Huntsville High School. Greg's sister Anna also attended UNA. His brother Brad, an Auburn graduate, is an architect in Gulf Shores. His sister Barbie, an Alabama graduate, works for the Huntsville Airport Authority.

Their father, the late Carlos Patterson, was a prominent home builder in Huntsville. Both he and his wife were

raised in the Dallas village, where both sets of their parents worked in the Dallas cotton mill, along with nearly everyone else in that tight-knit community during in the Depression era.

"I was very fortunate to have parents who loved sports," said Greg. "They took me to ball games from the time I could first walk, so I got a taste of it at an early age. And the taste never went away."

Throughout most of the 1950s when Patterson was in his formative years, Huntsville High and Butler High - then a new school - were the primary sports attractions in the city, which numbered only about 10,000 people at the time. Patterson regularly attended football and basketball games at both schools, although his parents favored Butler because their high school alma mater, Rison, had become part of the new S. R. Butler, located across town at the intersection of Clinton Avenue and Governors Drive.

Gradually, young Greg began leaning toward Huntsville

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High, primarily through the influence of Gordon Loftin, who owned a neighborhood grocery near the Patterson home, just off Andrew Jackson Way. Clem Gyska, a former University of Alabama player who later joined Paul "Bear" Bryant's staff at Alabama, was Huntsville High's head football coach at the time. Gyska "recruited" the young Patterson to be a ball boy on the HHS sidelines for Friday night games at Goldsmith-Schiffman Field. "I think Coach Gyska was amused that my parents, who were Butler fans, would allow me to run around on the Huntsville side of the field," Patterson said.

A quarter-century later, ironically, Patterson would be a leading candidate for the vacant head football coaching positions at both Butler and Huntsville at a time when Butler was one of the largest schools in the state. Mary Jane Caylor, the city schools superintendent, picked Butler alumnus Leonard "Rabbit" Thomas as head coach of the Rebels. Patterson got the Huntsville job.

Patterson, then an assistant coach under his brother-in-law Paul Parvin at Crosstown Johnson High, was privately disappointed, knowing Butler had more and better athletes than Huntsville. But it turned out to be one of the most

fortuitous career moves of his life, although he had no way of knowing that until years later.

When he wasn't helping Gyska on Friday nights back in the mid- to late-'50s, Patterson was playing youth sports around town - football and basketball at the YMCA and baseball in the city's recreation program. "The town was so small at that time that each neighborhood had one team," Patterson said. "Today, each neighborhood has its own league."

The games were played at Brahan Springs, Mayfair Park and sometimes on Redstone Arsenal.

"In my area," said Patterson, "Dallas, Lincoln and Mayfair each had teams. What I remember most are two things - those flannel uniforms and the snowcones everybody got after the games."

Over the years, Patterson became acquainted with many of the leading sports personalities in both the Huntsville and Butler school zones. His closest Butler friends included Gordon Day, Brooks Gentle, Curly Houck, Don Mincher, Buddy Burkett, Kenny Daniel, Jerry Rice, Jerry Dugan, John Childress, John Moon, Nelson Montgomery, Shot Statum, David Thomas, Leroy Cunningham, Glen Nunley, Bill Childress and Burl Dunlap. Among his Huntsville High

pals were Sam Sullins, Benny Nelson, Steuart Evans, Bill Elders, Mickey Moore, Buster Frank, Phil Pickett, Hall Bryant, Linwood Smith, Mike Hopper, Walter Bishop, Bruce Hammer, Bart Loftin, Creed McDaris, Ty Samples, Crawford Howard and Larry Owens.

"I knew them or knew of them," Patterson said, "and whether they know it or not, they all had a big influence on my life in the late '50s and early '60s, and right on up until today. As an adult, I became connected with many of those men, either at church, serving on some committee together, or through coaching or just general friendship.

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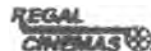
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"Kenny Daniel was my first Little League coach, and later he and I were inducted into the same class of the Huntsville-Madison County Athletic Hall of Fame. Benny Nelson at Huntsville and Donnie Mincher at Butler were my two biggest heroes when I was a kid. After Benny graduated from high school and signed with Alabama, Coach Gryska cut the number off his practice jersey and gave it to me as a present. My first year as the coach at Huntsville, Benny volunteered to coach the freshmen team, and I ended up coaching with Don Mincher's son, Mark, for 17 years."

Patterson fondly recalls his first encounter with another Alabama football player, All-America lineman Billy Neigh-

ors, a native of Northport and a longtime Huntsville businessman. It was in January 1962, shortly after the Crimson Tide had won its first national championship under Bear Bryant. Neighbors was in town to visit Susan Kinzer, a Huntsville girl who would become his future wife.

"Bart Loftin, who was Gordon's son, called and told my mother that Billy was in town and that he'd bring him over to our house to meet me," Patterson said. "Billy was a senior in college and I was just an impressionable sixth grader, so it was a big thrill for me to meet this guy who played for a national championship team and had just appeared on the Bob Hope television show. Naturally, I did a lot of bragging about it when I went back to school.

"She probably doesn't remember it, but Susan taught me swimming when I was a little kid. It's quite an irony that

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20-something years later, I was coaching one of their sons at Huntsville High."

The ironies and intertwined relationships are almost endless, it seems.

"Bill Elders, who went to Huntsville, married my mother's first cousin, Brenda Burkett," Patterson noted. "Her brother Buddy Burkett, who went to Butler, was also my cousin. I had another cousin, Danny Banks and an aunt, Barbara Chisholm, who went to Butler. Another cousin, Donna Lacey Carriger, was in the marching band at Huntsville High. These kinds of Huntsville-Butler connections went on and on."

By the time he reached high school, however, Patterson was neither a Rebel nor a Panther. A new high school, Lee, had opened its doors in the mid-'60s not far from the site of the old Rison School, and the Pattersons lived in the Chapman and Lee zone.

In 1966, his junior season, quarterback Greg Patterson led coach Keith Wilson's football Generals to a dazzling 9-1 season, settling a number of passing records, some of which still stand.

After his senior year, Patterson was chosen to play for the North team in the annual high school All-Star game in Tuscaloosa. The quarterback on the other team was a kid from Birmingham named Pat Sullivan, who would go on to win the Heisman Trophy at Auburn University four years later.

"It was a great time in my life," remembered Patterson. "It's strange how things work out sometimes. I played for Coach Wilson, helped him coach one fall (1972) before going off to basic training at Fort Knox, and later coached against him when he got back into coaching at Butler. Another full circle, I guess."

Patterson began his coaching career as an assistant at Cullman High School in 1974 and moved to Johnson High of Huntsville eight years later in the heyday of the Jaguars' football program. In 1984, he was named the head football coach at Huntsville High, which was in the throes of a tough rebuilding process. In Patterson's first two years, the Panthers won only three games. "At that time, my long-range goal was just to break even and try not to get fired," Patterson later said.

In the end, he did a lot better than break even. In 18 years at HHS, Patterson won 104

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of 191 games, compiling more victories than any other football coach in history at a school that produced such coaching legends as Milton Frank and Tom Owen. Patterson's teams won three city championships and four area championships, and he was named city Coach of the Year four times.

In 1998, the Crimson Panthers beat arch-rival Grissom 7-0 for Huntsville High's 400th football victory. It was also the game in which Patterson passed Milton Frank in the record book.

When Patterson retired at HHS in 2002, Huntsville mayor Loretta Spencer picked him to lead the influential Huntsville Sports Commission. Four years later, she named Patterson as the new Director of Recreation Services, which was formerly called COHPAR (City of Huntsville Parks and Recreation).

Patterson was reappointed

to the position when Tommy Battle was elected mayor in 2008.

As Director of Recreation Services, Patterson oversees about 180 full-time and part-time employees. His staff includes Steve Ivey (Manager), Ray Greene (Youth Services), Lou Hovatter (Community Services) and John Mayes (Neighborhood Services). The department is in charge of 13 recreation centers, three swimming pools, 60 passive (non-sports) parks, 10 neighborhood parks and 150 athletic fields, in addition to the Jaycee Building at the old airport site, the Merrimack Soccer Complex and the Metro Kiwanis Sportsplex.

"This job has been quite a learning experience," Patterson said. "It has taken a good while to adjust to the broad areas that are included in the recreation world. But I've had many good

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"Many afternoons, I look out the window and see the young kids practicing and I also see the college boys working on the fields as I once did. My mind drifts back to those days at Brahan Spring, Mayfair, Oak Park and Optimist Park. Maybe it's true. Sometimes you do end up where you started."

News from 1911

- The funeral of little 5 year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Bell, of the Huntsville Wholesale Nurseries, was held yesterday and internment made in Maple Hill Cemetery. Services were conducted by Rev. Carey Gamble of the Episcopal church. Death was the result of pneumonia and was the 2nd death in the Bell family in the past 3 months.

- At 7 o'clock this morning the house of Buck Ward, colored, was destroyed by fire on North Washington street just across from the Southern railway. Buck's wife and child were carried out in their nightclothes, barely escaping being burned to death. Loss estimated at about \$500.

- Notified by a burglar alarm that thieves had broken into the storerooms of the Scottsboro loan company, where gems and jewelry are stored, police ransacked the 2 floors at 6 this morning. The policeman John Keenan, who had been stationed on the 2nd floor of the building, idly tapped a sheeted statue with his mace. He hit the statue's funny bone and with a yell it came to life, cast aside its sheet and started running for the door. The supposed statue, which had been standing on a pedestal for 2 hours, was Fred Fitch. He is now held in the county lockup.

- J. S. Clay, a well known merchant, and Frank Randall, a clerk in a clothing store, engaged in a sensational duel with pistols at the front door of Clay's residence on Adams Street. Randall is being seen by his doctor and is fatally wounded - a pistol ball having passed through his head and tearing away a large portion of his right cheek. Clay received 2 wounds, one in the shoulder and the other striking him in the

mouth, shattering his teeth and almost cutting his tongue in two. Randall had gone to Clay's residence and demanded an explanation of an alleged insult to Miss Maude Ledford, fiancee of Randall. Clay was arrested and held in bail of \$2,000 awaiting the outcome of Randall's injuries.

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Back To Madison County High School

by Austin Miller

May 20th of this year was the fiftieth anniversary of my graduation from Madison County High School. There is a 1970's country and western song by Tex Ritter, titled, "oh how the years roll away," those of us that graduated in 1960 can identify with that old tune. In celebration, we had three events over the weekend of May 1st. All three were fun but the one I enjoyed most was the tour of the old high school building in down town Gurley; I heard others express the same sentiment.

The principal, Mrs. Becky Meador, kindly drove all the way from Harvest with the key to open the door. She graciously turned the school over to us to roam as we pleased. The first thing that struck me was the enduring architectural beauty of the 74 year old brick building. The majestic tall windows and high angle roof lines were something I never noticed or appreciated when I was a student. The structure has aged well and clearly stood the test of time and utility.

It now serves middle school children and I hope students will be walking those hal- lowed halls for many more years to come.

Inside was as clean as a pin. There was not a hint of the musty smell that sometimes permeates old buildings. There were many changes since 1960 but I was pleasantly surprised to feel a strong sense of familiarity. We walked the halls and looked in the class- rooms. Some said they were impressed by how small everything seemed, oddly enough



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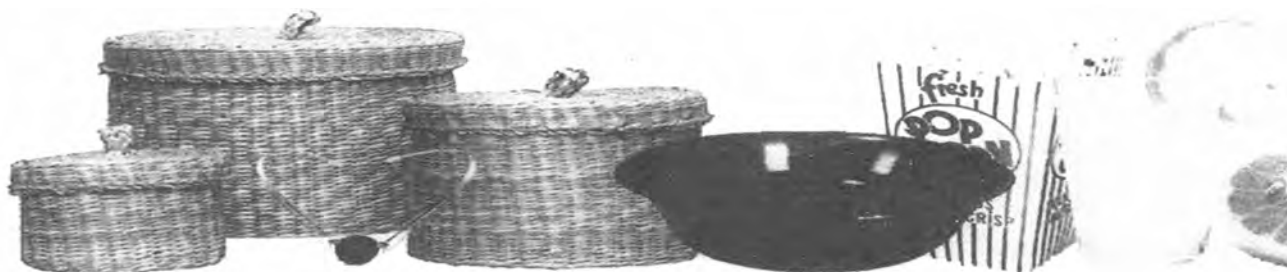
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I didn't have that impression. I enjoyed looking in the classrooms and in one room I could almost see Mr. James Sheppard standing up front making history come alive from his memory. I liked Mr. Sheppard because he gave me good grades and made me believe that I might be college material.

Another class room brought back the day that Bill Moring and I decided to leave class and have a fight. When we got up to leave the teacher asked where we were going and Bill said without stopping, "to see a man about a dog". We went out behind the bus shed, which is now gone, and had our fight. It was mostly a wrestling and shoving match. We weren't mad at each other or even having a dispute, we just decided to see who was the toughest. Neither of us won, so we finally quit and went back to class like nothing had happened.

The same room is where I got my first kiss. When we were in study hall in the tenth grade, Phillip Sharp paid Delois Webster Doherty a quarter to kiss me. He dared her and Delois was not one to dare, so she came up before I knew what was go-

ing on and smacked one on me. I have never let her live it down and we have a good laugh about it at every class reunion.

In the fifties, the library was in the front center of the building facing College St. It also served as a class room. This library/class room is where I had my first and only high school romance. I was sitting next to Marie Self Keel one day in English class when she dropped her pencil. She and I reached down to pick it up at the same time and our hands met, so we held hands for a few minutes. I was most exhilarated and still remember it after all these years. I don't think it stayed with Marie until the end of the week. But it

sure made an impression on me!

The most pleasant surprise was the auditorium. It instantly took me back in time. This is where we spent a lot of time either in chapel, study hall or just hanging out. I remember well my first time there. It's where on our first day, I met up with my good friend Ralph Pylant at recess. Ralph came with me from Central. Standing just inside the auditorium, he introduced me to a new boy named Slick Hill. Slick and I soon became good friends, a friendship that has lasted until this day. Ralph then said to me, "I don't like this @#*+## place and I ain't coming back!" He didn't come back. Not long after that he joined

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The old auditorium is beautiful; the floors that were dark and oily when we were students have been refinished to a light natural wood color. The vintage seats that were as dark as the floor have been refurbished to a clean natural color and the metals parts have been painted a tastefully coordinated green. My mind wandered back to all the boys and girls that sat in those seats for almost three quarters of a century. At least four, maybe five generations have spent some of their school day time in that old auditorium. I think it is possible that there are children sitting in some of the same seats that their great-great grandparents once sat in.

In that old auditorium, I sensed that fifty years and everything that it had brought for each one of us individually briefly disappeared. Several of us tried to see if we could jump up on the stage by backing up to the edge and springing ourselves up with our arms. The winner was Marie Keel; she sprang up like a jack in the box and was on her feet quicker than you could blink an eye.

After our exercise in frivolity, we left the auditorium and went outside; the first thing I noticed was that there was no trace of our old cement block lunch room. Somebody said it was torn down years ago.

But, the change that affected us most was the gym. There was no evidence of a basket ball court, all the inside had been converted into what appeared to be classrooms. Built in the thirties by the WPA, the only thing left of the original gray stone rock exterior was the front and back. We didn't tarry in the gym. Next was the Bryan C. Adcox Agriculture and Home Economics building. There was a strong sense of connection to this building.

On the inside, I could not see one thing that had changed from the way I remembered. Mr. Adcox was the agriculture teacher and ruled with an iron hand. His job was funded by the federal government and some said he made more than the principal. His wife Ida was my teacher in the third and fourth grade at Central. I remember her very fondly. All the county high schools had agriculture teachers; there was also one at New Market, Riverton (later Buckhorn), New Hope and Hazel Green. Mr. Adcox was a strict disciplinarian and wherever he was on the grounds there was order. If you behaved you had no trouble with Mr. Adcox but if you misbehaved in his presence or if he thought you were a "smart alec", woe unto you. Suddenly the tour was over and our interlude of giddiness turned back to reality. We were back to fifty years later.

I wish to express my thanks and I believe the thanks of the whole class of 1960 to Linda Nunn Solmon. Linda has been the catalyst that kept us in touch all these years; for that, we all owe her a debt of gratitude.

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Local News from 1913 Newspapers

- A vagrant who gave the name of Thomas Foster was arrested near the depot yesterday on the charge of public intoxication. He refused to give any more information after almost \$9000.00 was found on his person. His memory will no doubt be refreshed before he gets out of jail.

- Hearing of the case of Jas. B. Mitchell, who is alleged to be insane, was resumed before Judge S. Morgan Stewart yesterday. Hon. Erie Pettus, solicitor, filed a motion protesting against the hearing on a writ of lunacy because the crime charged against Mitchell is a felony. The motion was overruled and the hearing proceeded. Several witnesses were examined and the case went over until today. It is apparent that Mitchell does not wish to be adjudged insane despite wanting to summon the President of the United States as a witness.

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

She was arrested and charged with assault with intent of murder. She tells a story of her husband's alleged cruel treatment of her and their children.

- The Daily Times takes pleasure in announcing that another large shipment of handsome presents for paid-in-advance subscribers, both old and new. If you have not already done so send us your check for a years sub or you can pay it on delivery

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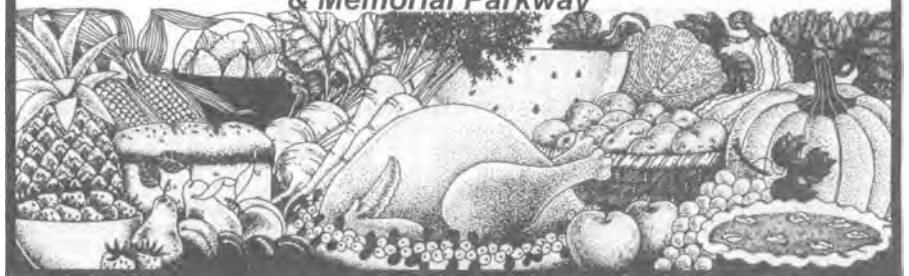
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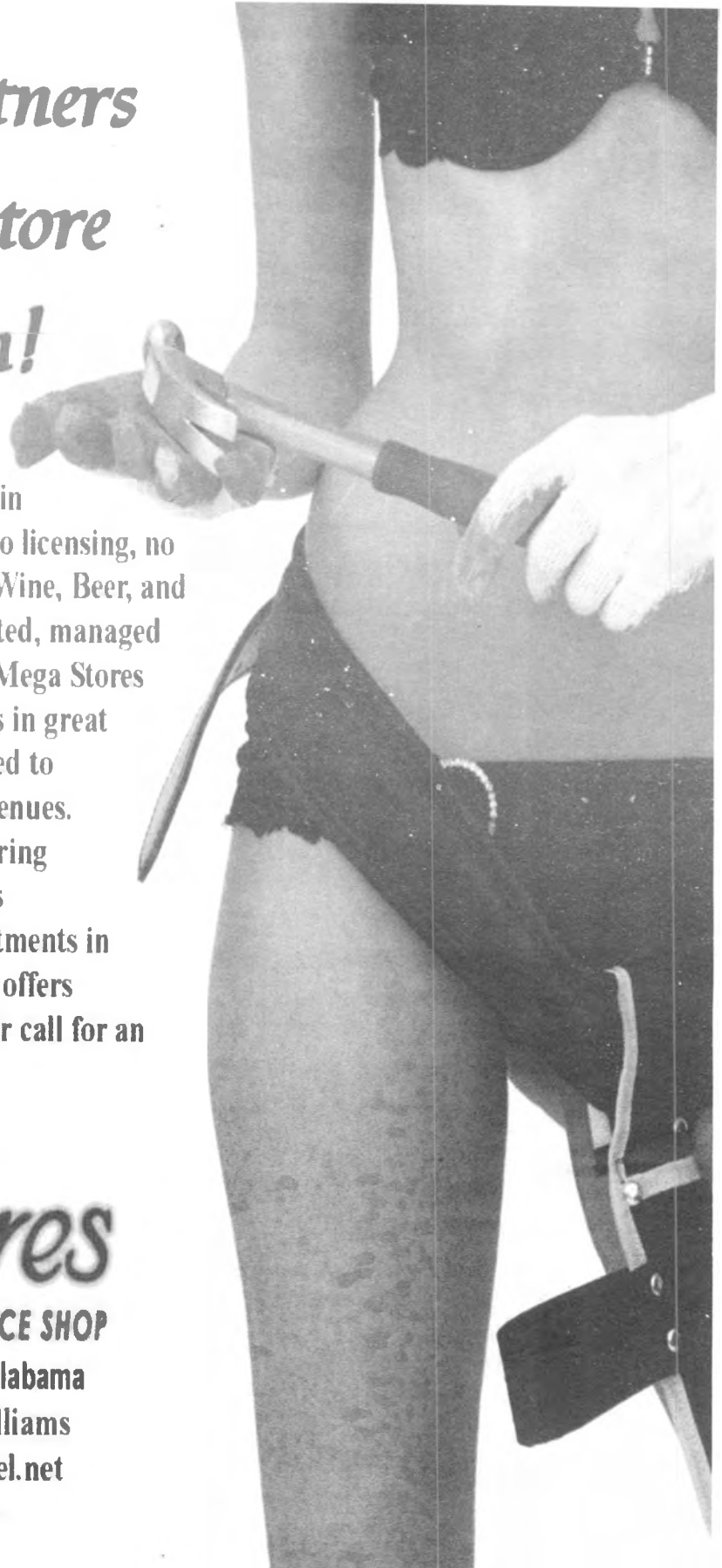


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