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Old Huntsville

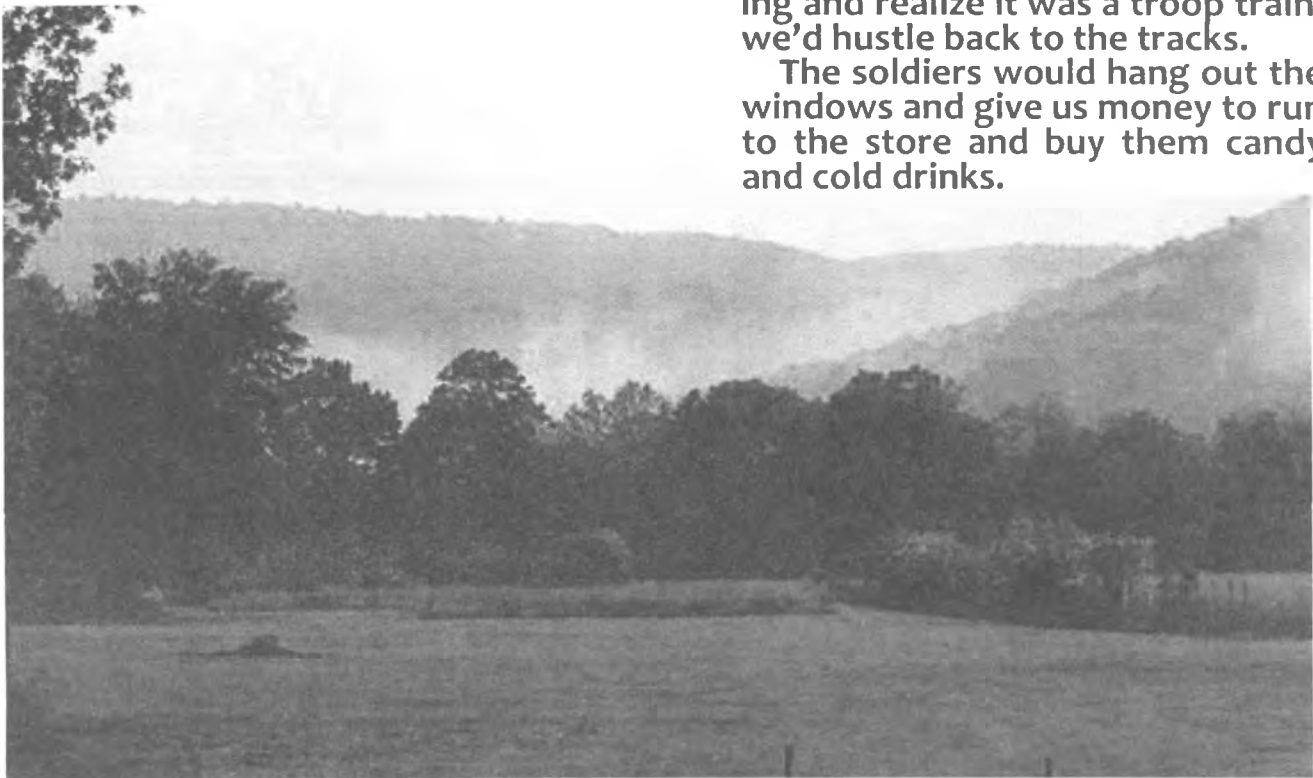
HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

Remembering Paint Rock, Alabama

During the summer when we were not in school, we kids would hang around town or the Paint Rock River, which was right below the depot.

When we would hear a train coming and realize it was a troop train, we'd hustle back to the tracks.

The soldiers would hang out the windows and give us money to run to the store and buy them candy and cold drinks.



Also in this issue:

The Rich History of East Clinton School

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Domie Lewter

Mac Lewter

Remembering Paint Rock, Alabama

by B. J. "Red" Flanagan

The Paint Rock of the 30s and 40s that I grew up in was basically a "wide place in the road." Paint Rock was a thriving little community until, in 1932, a tornado blew the town to kingdom come.

The town was situated on the 2-lane U.S. Highway 72 and, at one time, actually had a caution light that slowed the traffic passing through "downtown" Paint Rock.

I was born in 1930 during the Great Depression and was at a very impressionable age during World War II. Also, I remember well the post-war period.

With the opening of the Huntsville Arsenal during the war, folks in North Alabama earned income that lifted them out of the depression into an emerging economy that made life a lot more tolerable.

In the little town of Paint Rock, I witnessed soldiers who returned from the war and, because of the G.I. Bill,

went to college and found jobs that put a few extra dollars in their pockets. With this money they could buy and build a house, buy a car and on occasion go on a vacation.

As I think back, I feel like I grew up in the best of times, mainly because of where I grew up. The Paint Rock that I knew as a boy had most everything for kids, especially kids like us. Without any "store-bought" toys, we used our imaginations and created our own fun activities. We were familiar with every secret place, cove and "nook and cranny" from the top of Keel Mountain to the bottom of Paint Rock River. We made our own wagons out of scrap lumber from the O'Neal Chair Factory that we used to coast down the red clay hillside next to the mountain graveyard.

Like any small community, there was always a gathering place. That place in Paint Rock was the Rousseau Store. The pot-bellied stove was located in the back of the store and this was where the locals mastered the art of loafing. The stove sat on a 4-foot elevated platform that was filled with large coal cinders. These cinders helped prevent fires and took care of those "uncouth" folks who spit to-

"School days can be the happiest days of your life, if your kids are old enough to go."

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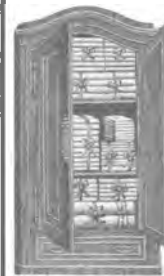
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bacco juice towards the stove. The large plate glass window in the front of the store that looked out onto Highway 72 was also a gathering place for people who came to the Post Office for their mail and just to stop in for a quick chat.

Even before I started in the first grade, the Paint Rock School was an old building. The ceilings were high, the wooden floors were oiled and the bell in the steeple was rung by the Principal at the beginning of school, recess, lunch and finally at the end of the school day.

In cold weather, every room was heated with a pot-bellied stove. The one cloak-room, a long narrow room next to one wall, was open at both ends. It was separated from the main classroom, having hooks for our coats and shelves for our lunch pails. Our drinking water came from two faucets three feet high from the ground. Since there was no indoor plumbing we also had outhouses

instead of bathrooms. The girls' outhouse was on one side of the campus and the boys' on the other. Of course, the boys' outhouse had holes at eye level so smokers could watch out for the Principal. The school had eight grades and the teachers taught two grades in each room. Each room had "cooperative learning" regardless of the grade, we all helped each other.

Our janitor, Uncle Felix, used "Tom Sawyer" and "Whitewashing the Fence" as a method to get the boys to bring in the coal and keep the stove full for the day. Of course, he used the same method for getting the girls to sweep the floors. At our age, we gladly volunteered and considered it a privilege to take on this heavy responsibility.

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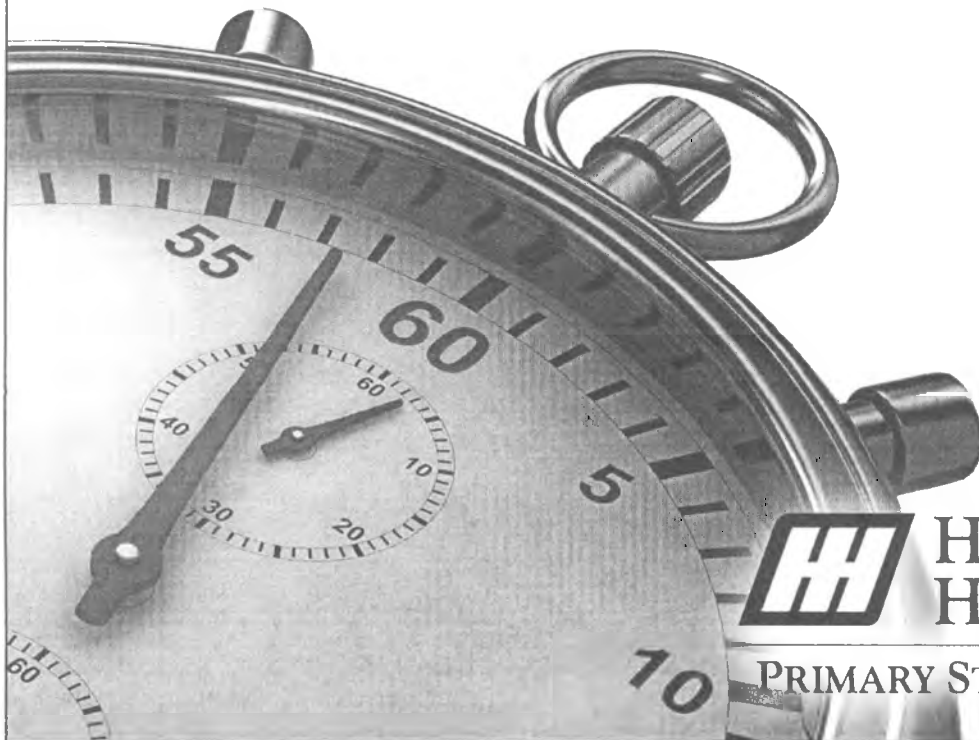
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Paint Rock was the only stop along the Southern Railroad between Memphis and Chattanooga that had both a water tank and a coal chute. Since all trains had to stop to fill up with water and coal, many events of my boyhood revolved around those trains.

I'll never forget one Sunday morning during World War II when a troop train stopped by for water and coal. The soldiers got off the train and gathered in a field between the coal chute and the Baptist church. As a rule the soldiers were not permitted to get off the trains. But this Sunday morning, someone in authority had decided to have religious services in that field. Those services were not only Protestant, but Catholic and Jewish, too. Since none of us kids had ever heard a Catholic or Jewish service, we left our Sunday School class at the Baptist church and walked across the road to the field and listened with wide-eyed quiet fascination. This was the outside world.

During the summer when we were not in school, we kids would hang around town or the Paint Rock River, which was right below the depot. When we would hear a train coming and realize it was a troop train, we'd hustle back to the tracks. The soldiers would hang out the windows and give us money to run to the store and buy them candy and cold drinks. We were proud of the nickel or dime they would give us, but our main purpose was to

get that candy and cold drink back to the soldiers before the train pulled out. After all, they were on their way to fight the War.

The Huntsville Times, the newspaper that I delivered in Paint Rock, came in from Huntsville on Train #36. Since the train was late at times, I would stand and wait to hear, "36 in block, Paint Rock." To this day, when I drive down U.S. Highway 72 and see that the light along the track is red, I can picture Mr. Roberts with his headphones on calling to the other stations, "36 in block, Paint Rock."

Later when I was in high school and became more interested in my appearance, I became aware of the shower at the coal chute. Since we didn't have indoor plumbing, our bathing consisted of either going to the river in the summertime with a bar of soap, or

bathing in a washtub in front of the fireplace in the winter. There was hot water in the shower at the coal chute, and since "Hot" Chandler was the head operator there, I asked him if I could take showers there and pay him.

When I think back on it, I'm sure the only reason he charged me a quarter a month

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was to make me feel better about it. After a hot shower in the cold winter, I would proudly walk home knowing that I would not have to take a bath in that washtub.

Since we all grew up in the Bible Belt, attending church, studying our Bibles and having a strong Christian heritage were deeply embedded in all of us. Mama saw that all four attended Sunday School and church every Sunday. Before Sunday School even started, I already had a full morning of delivering papers, getting dressed for church and heading for the basketball court in the pasture by the church.

For us boys the Sunday morning ritual was to gather at the court and play ball until we heard the church bell ring. Then we'd dash to the back seat by the window in hopes of a little breeze. I'm sure our thoughts were about the game rather than what the preacher had to say.

Of course we listened carefully for the rattle of change in Mr. O'Neal's pocket when he prayed and we always watched Mr. Thrower in case he fell forward as he rocked back and forth while praying the benediction. We knew after his prayer we were headed to the river.

My wife said that I will always have a purpose in my

life as I continue my fascination with the daily arrival of the mail and newspaper. I inherited this trait from my Mom, whose highlight of each day seemed to be her walk to town to pickup her mail. She would stop and chat with Roy Whitaker and other folks in the Post Office. Then she'd go into Rousseau's store to see Katherine Rousseau. I can still see her sitting in her rocking chair on the porch reading the Huntsville Times.

Mama and Lila Mae Whitaker taught for over 40 years at the Paint Rock school. It was said that the "powers that be" on the Jackson County School Board waited until Mama and Lila Mae retired before they decided to close the school. Mama was a guiding light in the lives of many folks in both Paint Rock and Paint Rock Valley.

The biggest social event of the year was the black folks' July 4th BBQ and baseball game. My Dad would let me stay all night with the men while they would BBQ the meat. I would get my friend, Roebuck Hunt, to stay with

You may not know when you're well-off, but the Internal Revenue Service does.

me and we would manage to "find" 2 or 3 chickens and some ears of corn and barbecue our food right alongside the men. Since the river ran through the pasture, Roebuck and I would cool off in the river every two or three hours

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during those hot July nights. This was definitely a highlight of each summer for me.

Since baseball was one of my loves, I would attend the Sunday afternoon games. I will never forget how Charlie Lovelace patiently worked with me and taught me how to throw a curve ball that helped me get a college scholarship. After the games, about 6:00 pm most every Sunday night, I would slip in the back pew of the black church near Roy Whitaker's and listen to their wonderful gospel music.

Since my family didn't own a car, my transportation was "hitch-hiking." This was how I discovered Huntsville. On some Saturdays, whenever I had a dollar, I would hitch-hike to Huntsville and could see three movies, eat popcorn and get a hamburger and a cola at Little Gem's Pool Room on the square.

After a full fun day and with a nickel change in my pocket, the big decision was whether to buy another cola and walk the mile to Highway 72 or to use my nickel to catch the bus to Rison School by Highway 72.

During my high school days Mr. W. O. Woolley was our principal. Because three of our coaches had been drafted into the Armed Forces, Mr. Woolley was forced to coach Varsity football and basketball. During these days, we were looking for both sports heroes and war heroes, and, even though we didn't know it, we had one right in our school. Mr. Woolley, with all of his responsibilities, never had a losing season during this time.

The old gym we played in was a WPA gym with 4 potbellied stoves for heat. Because the dressing room and showers were always cold, the procedure was to undress, shower, brush off excess water, towel down with the threadbare towel and dress as fast as possible. All this time I'd be thinking about walking the half mile in the cold winter weather in time to catch a ride home with the Huntsville Arsenal traffic. Those were the days, my friend.

Growing up in Paint Rock was a glorious absence of sophistication, but was a great sense of place.

Red Flanagan now lives in Stuart, Florida but cherishes his early life in Paint Rock, Alabama which is just a few miles from Huntsville. Between the mountains and the river, this town is surely one of the prettiest in the North Alabama area.



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A Prominent Doctor Injured in Runaway

When a prominent doctor was thrown from his buggy in a runaway the other day, the garbled reports of the accident that floated back to the city gave his identity as that of another equally eminent physician. This mistake brought about an amusing little episode.

The Sheriff heard the news and at once set about getting information of the accident to the wife of the doctor who was wrongly supposed to be hurt. The tender-hearted Sheriff, not caring to be the bearer of such sad news, determined to delegate the task to a lady who is a close friend of the doctor's wife.

He rang her by telephone. A woman's soft voice at the other end of the line answered him.

"Mrs. A," said the Sheriff hurriedly, without stopping to ask whom he was addressing, "I have just learned that Dr. B., while driving in the park with a young lady, was thrown from his buggy and seriously injured. I wish you would please step over to his home and break the news to his wife."

But as it happened, the lady who listened to that alarming message was the doctor's wife in person, and a very high-spirited woman, it may be said, in the bargain.

"What's that you say?" she shouted into the transmitter. "My husband seriously hurt while driving with another woman? All right, then. I'll finish him up when he comes home."

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The Rich History of East Clinton School



by *Andy Myers*

History is not static; it never stays still long enough to be accurately observed or recorded with any sort of integrity. Constantly shifting and changing, reinterpreted through eyes of bias and told through opinionated voices, swerving agendas and dec-

larations, history is at best a shadowy impression of truth. Through reading first-hand accounts, we can decipher a certain perspective of an event in the hopes to gain an evaluation. However, we quickly find our modern value system involuntarily plac-

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ing itself between us and our goal; and too hastily our own opinion on the event has been calcified.

Through photographs and other printed images we can attempt to place ourselves inside the beating hearts of these events, our eyes studying a face's expression and stirring up our own emotions about the experience.

Scenes of wheelbarrows filled with the dry hollow skulls of young soldiers who perished fighting at the Battle of Cold Harbor during our Civil War surely conjure up the sobering waste of life that wartime brings. Also a group photograph of young students of an early twentieth century classroom brings to mind the innocence of simpler days and the knowledge we now hold of all the changes their lives would experience in the coming century.

But still these are our emotions diluted through movies, media; watered down through politics, public opinion, as well as our own personal experiences. And once again in haste our minds settle into a gratified conviction. Education should strive to eradicate this haste and avert at all costs the slandering veil of ignorance. To never be too convinced of our perspective and hold too tightly to what we perceive as fact.

This was an incontrovertible truth to that generation who, towards the end of the 20th century, founded our current city school system,

their hearts filled with obvious passion and hope for the generations of school children ahead. They believed in a standard of progressive intellectualism that placed the unfolding goal of truth for the attainment of compassion above all else.

If any locality could manifest that spirit of progressive intellectualism through education it would surely be that block of East Clinton Street bounded by Calhoun and White Streets that for two hundred years has been the location of numerous school structures, and whose history, as a medium of learning, predates even that of our state's foundation.

Created by a charter on November 25, 1812, the Greene Academy would be built on this site, becoming only the second state-funded charter school in the entire Mississippi Territory. Major General John Brahan, a high-ranking officer in Andrew Jackson's Army and a major landholder in the newly opened Madison

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County, donated the land for the school from his vast holdings. The stately brick structure stood on the northwest corner of the lot in an area that at the time was considered the edge of town, having been only recently mapped out.

Though several smaller schools existed in the area, the Greene Academy represents the first publicly funded charter school. The school functioned for the next fifty years, endowing numerous generations of Huntsville and Madison County leaders with educations that would serve them well throughout their careers and would bestow them with the fortitude required for direction. The Greene Academy produced a foundation for excellence in education, striving, as Professor A.B. Meek, an educator at the Greene Academy is quoted in saying, "For the promotion of the intellectual, moral, and social welfare of the people."

It would only be the outbreak of the Civil War and the subsequent occupation of Huntsville by Federal troops that would halt this institution. Knowing that a civilization's future depended on the education of its citizens and the crippling effect its absence would have on the future of Huntsville, General Ornsby Mitchel, leader of the occupying forces that had captured Huntsville, ordered that all buildings of education be burned. Not spared from

this heinous act would be the Greene Academy, reduced to a smoldering pile of ashen timbers and blackened bricks.

Despite the senseless razing of the city's school buildings and the presence of Federal troops, Huntsville for the most part would be spared during the Civil War, unlike the fates of neighboring Florence in Lauderdale County and Bellefonte, then the bustling seat of Jackson County, who were nearly burned to oblivion by the occupying forces.

What would follow would be years of "Reconstruction", a period of American history wrought with dissension in an attempt to untangle the socio-political chaos that America had created.

By the end of the 1870's Huntsville would draw the eyes of Northern industrialist investors looking to capitalize on the high unemployment rate and booming population of the city. Within the next two decades, Huntsville would become the preeminent location for textile production in the South, with the foundation of Lowe, Merrimack, Lincoln, Dallas and several other mills in the area.

With the development of Huntsville came an influx of children and the city's small number of private education

institutions could not hold the vast amount of growth.

This led to the 1882 formation of the city of Huntsville's first Board of Education. The initial order of business would be to erect a new public school to meet the needs of

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Huntsville's children. Selected for the site would be the former grounds of the Greene Academy on East Clinton Street with the construction of a two-story wooden structure that housed classrooms for 150 students.

Professor D. B. Young would be among the first principals of the school with his staff of teachers including: Mary Dill, Mollie Pleasants, Nora Davis and Florence Hardie. The building was heated by large cast iron wood stoves in the winter sessions. During the spring the tall windows would be opened to allow for the cooling winds of the season to ventilate the classrooms.

For twenty years this building would serve its function. By the turn of the twentieth century it was decided that the structure had weathered the damage of years of use poorly and would be demolished to make way for a new building. In 1902 a new schoolhouse would be designed and built on the same location.

Contracted to build the structure would be A.M. Booth, owner of Booth's Lumberyard. Rising two stories and sturdily built of brick, the building featured an impressive garret on the front entrance that caused one to glance skyward as he walked up the stone stairway into the structure. Inside the building, the heart of pine floors would be meticulously hand waxed with the rich smell of the finish permeating the cavernous hallways. The school would be separated by floors with the elementary housed downstairs and the high school grades upstairs.

Following the resignation

of Principal Acuff in 1899, Professor W. J. Humphrey would occupy the position of Principal and would guide the transition into the new school building, serving both as Principal and Assistant Principal for many years to follow. Among the faculty chosen would be Florence Hardie, Annie Merts, Fannie Taliaferro, and Mary Dill.

Editor's Note:
East Clinton, an Art Deco style school, is located in the middle of Huntsville's Old Town Historic District and is again facing an uncertain future...

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Old Huntsville Trivia

1808 - Madison County is formed. There are 2,555 people living in the county at this time.

1817 - The first church in Huntsville is built. No records exist as to what denomination it was.

1817 - Physicians gather at Talbotts Inn on the east side of the square in Huntsville to discuss a terrible outbreak of smallpox. Among measures discussed was a proposal to place armed guards on roads leading into town to prohibit strangers from bringing the disease to Huntsville.

1821 - The first mail robbery in Madison County occurs when the carrier to Bennett's store is robbed. Among the items stolen were the carrier's shoes.

1861 - Vigilante committees are formed to help protect Huntsville in wartime.

1864 - Six newspapers are being printed in Huntsville at the same time.

1876 - New rates are posted for city supplied water. The rates are \$1 for a family of less than 3, and \$8 for a family of 3 to 8.

1919 - The last County Fair is held downtown on the Courthouse Square. The same year the Tennessee Valley Fair Asso. purchases land of their own on Church Street.

1937 - The first state liquor store opens on Jefferson Street in the Hutchens Building. Two-year old Red Brook straight bourbon whiskey sells for \$1.30 a quart.

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Memories of a Structure Long Gone

When I first saw the "mystery" picture in a year-old issue of "Old Huntsville" magazine, I immediately recognized the last remaining section of the old concrete and stone wall that once surrounded the Five Points property of J. Emory Pierce. Mr. Pierce built the Times Building located at the corner of Greene Street and Holmes Avenue in downtown Huntsville.

I will remember the house and other buildings that once stood at this site. The house and surrounding buildings were built on a large triangular piece of land at Five Points. The property faced Holmes Avenue (formerly East Holmes Street) and was bound on the east by Andrew Jackson Way (formerly Fifth Street) and on the west by Dement Street (formerly Second Avenue).

This triangular piece of land remains today and is now occupied by businesses. It helps form one of the most traveled intersections in Huntsville.

The shape and location of this land made it a very unusual place to build a house and, the house was even more unusual. It was a large square, three-story house built in tiers and to a child looked like a fairy-tale castle. It was often referred to as the "wedding cake house". There were other buildings on the grounds. There were also formal gardens with benches and flowers, stands and containers.

But the most unusual thing was that the house, buildings, benches, flower stands and containers were all built of concrete and stones like the remaining section of the wall featured in the Old Huntsville "mystery" picture. Also, this wall completely surrounded the property.

This section of wall is all that remains of Mr. Pierce's grand house and gardens that once was one of Huntsville's most unique show places and is an important part of Huntsville's history.

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A Heroic Mother Bird

From 1877
Newspaper



A local paper relates this interesting story. During one of the last summer's thunderstorms, lightning struck a barn near the town of Pensacola, Florida. A stork's nest, in which there were some young fledglings, was threatened by the flames.

The two parent birds contemplated the horrible situation from a distance with evident distress. At last the mother bird darted down upon the nest, and, seizing one of her young family with her beak, bore it off to a safe spot upon a meadow. The father followed her, and settled down to keep watch over his offspring.

When the mother returned to the scene of danger the fire had reached the nest, in which one bird still remained. But while she was flying around it, preparing for a descent, the young one fell through the charred nest into the burning barn. There was no moment for thought. Down darted the mother into the smoke and fire, and, coming up with the fledgling in her beak, flew off, apparently unhurt.

On the next day a wounded adult stork fell to the ground in the marketplace. She was unable to stand, and the policeman who found her carried her into the guardhouse, where it was discovered that both legs were sorely burned, and she was recognized as the heroic mother who had done the brave feat of rescue at the fire in the barn. A physician was sent for, and the policeman found her a temporary home.

Meanwhile, the spouse of the sick she-stork had discovered her whereabouts. He attended diligently to the two young ones, and paid daily visits to the mother, as if to inform himself how the patient was getting on, and to assure her that their children were doing well.

The school children of Pensacola readily charged themselves with the task of finding food for the patient, bringing her everyday far more than the necessary number of living frogs. The Mayor paid an official visit every day to the sick guest of the municipality, to see that the doctor's orders were duly carried out, and in less than a fortnight the bird was sufficiently hale to fly away to her mate and children.

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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to **Lisa Loveday** who was the first correct caller to identify the photo of the month for March. It was **Austin Miller** and he was the sweetest baby ever. Lisa said the Millers are relatives of the Lovedays. She enjoys taking care of a big garden and can't wait til after April 15. (You can't plant anything before that date - it's a rule).

Bob Peavy works on building homes for people in North Huntsville and gives much of his time to the volunteer work. He works through World Changers and the Baptist church. He didn't have to venture far recently to oversee a group of people ranging in age from 12 to their mid-40s who were taking part in the annual program. It's a great organization.

Sam Zeman is that handsome, personable member of the Golden K Kiwanis Club and no one will convince me that he turned 85 on Apr. 7! NO WAY! It was celebrated in true form with a birthday party at Brookdale Place put together by his sweet wife, **Liz**. Happy Birthday to you Sam!

It breaks my heart to tell you that **Audra Wilson** passed

away in mid-March, at the very young age of 45. Audra owned Salon Bella on Church/Pratt for 12 years and knew hundreds of people here. She was a loving Mom to sons **Chandler** and **Forrest**, and just cherished her daughter **Olivia**, 12. She had a heart of gold and would help anyone who needed her. We were not ready to lose her. We will always love you, my dear friend.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, May 9 for the **Commodores in concert** at the VBCC. All proceeds go to Huntsville Hospital's Cardiovascular program and should prove to be a rocking night!

It was great hearing from **Dorothy Durham** recently. She is a native Huntsvillian for 90 years and sure has seen a lot of change here. She just had a birthday in late February so Happy Birthday to you!

Rosemary Leatherwood's

daughter **Jamie Wood** will celebrate her 35th birthday April 14 - Rosemary wishes every Mom could have a wonderful, caring and sweet daughter like Jamie. Also she wants to wish her brother-in-law **Johnny Leatherwood** a happy Apr. 8 birthday, he will be 54.

The Kiwanis Club of Huntsville West hosts the annual Pancake Day each year, and this year they served so many people who really enjoyed the hot pancakes, sausage & juice. If you missed it this year, be sure and go next March! I enjoyed talking with **Joan Dawson & Doug Driskill**, proud members of the club.

March is a rough month for our friend **Joe Waggett**. His wife **Liz Waggett** passed away 3 years ago from pancreatic cancer on March 31, after just celebrating her birthday on March 21. Many remember Liz as that person who would always make you feel good just by being around her. We sure do miss her.

Helen Grace Hooker was the epitome of the Southern Lady. Helen was 94 when she passed away, and had proudly taught in the Huntsville school system

Photo of The Month

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

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Hint: This little girl loves hosting weddings in her beautifully renovated Southern mansion.



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for 37 years, retiring from south Huntsville's Blossomwood Elementary. Helen was a founder of Trinity United Methodist Church. She leaves daughter **Mary Adelaide (Perky) Taylor** (and husband **Jerry**) and son **Robert Hooker** of Nashville. We send our deepest condolences to all who knew Helen.

While taking care of some business at Wells Fargo Bank on South Parkway recently I met and worked with the nicest guy. **Jermaine Fletcher** was the Personal Banker Rep I spoke with and he was very professional and took care of what I needed!

George Wells sent us some information recently that had alot of "pork" attached to it. The Coffee Tree hosted the first annual Pig Day proclaimed by **Mayor Tommy Battle** to a standing room-only crowd, most in costume. Singer **Patsy Trigg** was there to sing "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" and "It's a Merry Christmas When Pigs Fly" (2012). **Jerry Mungle** sang his popular song "Diarrhea Blues." Money was raised for the Shepherd's Green Pig Sanctuary located in Cookeville, TN in order to provide rescue and lifetime care for abused, abandoned or homeless pigs.

Ruth Hursh is the beautiful mom of **Barb Eyestone** of Huntsville, and Ruth will celebrate her 87th birthday in late April. Ruth lives in Naples, FL and sure looks forward to her visits from Barb and husband **Ron**. Happy Birthday Ruth!

While going through a move recently with Murray Moving Co. we met **Neil Murray** of Marshall County, **Matt Smith** of New Hope and **Scotty Hill** of Somerville. Along with the help of Rick Murray we were moved in NO time. They were really fast, efficient and nothing broke! Very good experience and just nice guys.

Mary Jim Ailor is the owner of Loose Ends, and she helps those who are downsizing/moving, to go through belongings and sell or dispose of them. Her hardworking staff have so much energy and are very fast. There is much need for this type of business, especially in these economic times.

We have so many historic buildings in Huntsville that are unique and contribute so much to the rich history of our city. Several are empty now and face a bleak future unless the **Huntsville Historic Preservation Commission** fights for them. Recently the commission turned down a request to demolish the **East Clinton Elementary school** building and most of the residents were very happy with the decision.

The Greene Street Farmers Market is so popular downtown because people enjoy eating local fresh produce more than ever - now we hear that **Latham United Methodist Church** will be hosting another farmers market on Weatherly Road that will start in May in the parking lot of the church. There are lots

of vendors signed up to offer a great variety of food & products and they will be there each Tuesday for the warm season. Be sure and mark your calendar for the opening day, Tuesday May 7 from 3-7 pm.

With this tough economy, please get out and support Huntsville's small businesses. The big box stores will be fine, but our small family-owned businesses need your support now more than ever. Many are on the brink of going out of business, so please think of them when you make your shopping decisions.

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Sweet Spring Delicacies

Almond Macaroons

1-1/4 c. coarsely chopped almonds, lightly toasted
 3/4 c. sugar
 3 egg whites
 1/3 c. chopped maraschino cherries, well drained

Preheat your oven to 300 degrees. In a 2-quart pot mix your almonds, sugar and egg whites, cook over medium heat for about 6 minutes, stirring constantly. When a path remains when you drag a spoon through the mixture, remove it from the heat. Stir in the cherries and cool.

Cover a cooking sheet with parchment cooking paper, drop the mixture by rounded teaspoonfuls about one inch apart onto the paper. Bake about 20 minutes and the macaroons are light brown. Slide off the paper onto a wire rack, cooling completely.

Chess Pie

Pastry for a 9-inch pie
 4 eggs
 1-1/2 c. sugar
 1/2 c. butter, softened
 2 T. yellow cornmeal
 2 T. half-and-half
 2 T. lemon juice
 2 t. vanilla extract
 Dash salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Prepare your pastry or thaw it out. Beat eggs, sugar and butter for 3 minutes in a medium bowl on high speed. Beat in the remaining ingredients. Your mixture will look curdled but is supposed to.

Pour into pie plate, lined with the pastry. Bake for one hour or til set, cool for 15 minutes. Refrigerate til chilled. This is great served with your favorite liquor, such as Kalhua, Grand Manier or Amaretto.

Coconut Meringues

4 egg whites
 1-1/4 c. sugar
 2-1/2 c. coconut
 1/2 t. vanilla extract
 1/4 t. salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly grease a cookie sheet. Beat egg whites in a deep glass bowl until foamy. Beat in sugar and continue beating til stiff and glossy. Don't under-beat.

Fold in remaining ingredients, drop mixture by heaping teaspoonfuls about 2 inches apart onto cookie sheet. Bake for 20 minutes til light brown. Immediately remove from cookie sheet and cool. Store in a tightly covered container.

Strawberry Cream

1/2 c. powdered sugar
 1 qt. fresh strawberries, sliced
 1 c. whipping cream

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2 T. powdered sugar
4 T. orange-flavored liquor

Sprinkle 1/2 cup of the powdered sugar on the strawberries, and stir gently. Refrigerate 2-4 hours covered.

Beat the whipping cream and 2 tablespoons of the powdered sugar in a chilled medium bowl til stiff. Fold in the liquor. Fold this mixture into the strawberries and serve.

Apple Crisp

4 medium tart cooking apples, pared and sliced
1 c. dried apricots, chopped
3/4 c. regular flour
3/4 c. brown sugar, packed
1/3 c. chopped pecans
3 T. butter, softened

Whipping cream

Place the apples in an ungreased square pan, 8x8x2 inches. Top with the apricots. If the apricots are dry, cover them with boiling water and let stand for 3 minutes, drain and add.

Mix remaining ingredients, except for the whipping cream, and sprinkle the mixture over the apples and apricots.

Bake at 350 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream.

Gingersnap Parfaits

1-1/2 c. whipping cream
2 T. powdered sugar
1 c. gingersnap crumbs (use about 8 cookies)

Beat the whipping cream

and sugar in a chilled medium bowl til stiff.

Layer the crumbs and whipped cream in 4 parfait glasses, starting with the crumbs and ending with the whipped cream.

You'll make about 4 layers in each parfait glass. Refrigerate at least 5 hours, but no longer than 24 hours.

Sweet Dixie Cake

4 eggs
1/2 pint heavy cream
1-1/2 c. sugar
1-1/2 c. self-rising flour
1 t. almond extract (or vanilla if you prefer)

Powdered sugar

Break the eggs into a bowl and beat til light and foamy, at least five minutes.

Add the cream, beat another 5 minutes. Pour in the sugar, beat well. Blend in the flour and extract.

Pour in a greased tubular pan and bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes. If using two 8-inch cake pans, bake for 30 minutes. Dust with powdered sugar.

Gramma's Bread Pudding

1 loaf dried bread pieces
1 t. vanilla extract
3/4 c. sugar
2 eggs
1 c. warm milk

Mix all in a big pan, pour into a baking dish. Bake for 35 minutes at 350 degrees.



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School Lunches

by Malcolm Miller

A few weeks ago my twin grandsons, Crayton and Phillip Miller, spent the night with me and I am always thrilled when they come for a visit. They are seventeen year-old juniors at Buckhorn High School and they were telling me the best thing about getting back to school is the great hot breakfasts and hot lunches they enjoy in the school lunch room. They shared with me some of the menu items they particularly enjoy.

Things have definitely changed since I was in school. We never had a lunch room the whole time I was in school and I usually didn't have anything to take to school for lunch except when we were lucky enough to have flour. Then I would take biscuits and whatever meat we had, on them. I started out with ham then later on ended up with sow belly in my biscuits. Then when we ran out of flour sometimes I would take corn bread sliced open with sorghum molasses poured in it.

The worst part of it was there were always two or three what I called rich kids in the class and they would always make fun of my biscuits or whatever I brought for lunch, so I finally stopped taking anything to eat to school. I used to hear those rich kids talking about pimento cheese sandwiches and I promised myself that when I got older, I would buy all the pimento cheese I could find and see how it tasted. To this day, when I eat pimento cheese sandwiches, I think back on those days when I was eating sow belly and watching those kids eat those delicious-looking sandwiches.

I had a buddy who was in about the same fix I was and on occasion he would bring biscuits with fried potatoes in them. His name was Malcolm "Craw Dad" Warren and he didn't care what anyone thought about what he brought for lunch. Some days he would give me one of those fried potato biscuits and they tasted mighty fine. When you

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are really that hungry, potato biscuits are a feast indeed. I can't help but wonder if my grandsons would eat fried potato biscuits for lunch.

Since I refused to carry the lunch to school that my Mama fixed she did the next best thing. Every day when I came home from school there would be a big black pot full of pinto beans setting in the middle of the table along with a pone of cold corn bread and of course a big onion when available. My six brothers and I would all be so very hungry and this meal was a great relief as well as being a wonderful stomach filler for seven hungry boys.

Even after I was going to high school at Hazel Green and playing basketball I still didn't take a lunch to school, however on occasion I had enough money to go up to Atlas Carriger's store and buy myself a pint of milk and that would keep me going til I got home.

I can still recall the time when I was in the tenth grade. I went with the team to play in the district basketball tournament and I thought I had enough money to eat on, but the last day in Cullman I ordered lunch and lacked a dollar having enough to pay for it.

Vernon Scott was the team manager and he and I roomed together with some of Big Jim Folsom's relatives. Vernon was eating with me that day and he loaned me a dollar and got me out of an embarrassing situation.

I will never forget what Vernon did for me that day and believe you me since that day in Cullman I have always made sure that I had the money to pay before ordering food.

We all talk about the "good ole days"; however I believe my grandchildren have it quite a bit better now than many of us had it in the "good ole days."







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MONTE SANO MEMORIES

by Jane Barr

It was August, 1950. We were married in El Paso, Texas and right after the reception left for Huntsville, Alabama. The population was about 16,000.

My husband was part of the Von Braun group moving here to work on the rockets.

Since most of the men and their families had been moving all year, the availability of housing was almost nonexistent. There were converted garages, with dirt floors covered with old carpets; converted "upstairs" into semi-apartments with shared bath, if the advertisement didn't say "bath" you knew it was a "path" to the outhouse! "You can have this bedroom but you have to stoke the furnace (with coal) every morning."

One "upstairs apartment with shared bath" had one room, "this corner is for a hot-plate and when Sonny is home on leave from the Army you have to get out of the bedroom 'cause it's Sonny's." I guess we were to pitch a tent in the backyard when Sonny was home on leave.

Anyway our first choice was a cabin in Monte Sano State Park. YEA!!!! We could stay there until October when they closed since the cabins were not insulated for year-round use.

That's when we fell in love with Monte Sano. We had a cabin on the bluff, we'd eat on the screened porch, my husband would take our car to the Arsenal and I'd wander around the woods.

We could not find a house on

Monte Sano to rent so we moved into a house downtown. Every weekend we'd be back on the mountain with a picnic lunch, going down a dirt road and stopping at a stream.

Two years later we bought a lot on Monte Sano. We went to the Post Office to get a rural box number. When we told the postmaster where we were going to build he laughed. "Only folks with summer homes live on the mountain. The weather and roads are really bad."

When we insisted he finally said "OK" then he looked for a number. "There will never be more than one hundred (100) houses up there, if that." Well, they already had over 77 because 77 was taken and so was 77-1/2. "I can give you 77-1/4", so that was our rural box number. The houses had no numbers or mail boxes. The mail boxes were lined up on Monte Sano Boulevard!

Our first house was 900 sq. ft. pre-fabricated. We had a con-

crete slab poured over the plumbing pipes, then a truck pulled up and unloaded the house. The windows and doors were in place, like a doll-house.

It was up in a day! Complete with white Youngstown metal kitchen cabinets and all appliances. The bath-

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room was small, but it was inside! One day a man drove up with a pick-up truck loaded with picnic tables and benches made of tree branches. I bought a table and two benches. We were living "high on the hog."

My next door neighbor, Mrs. Lloyd Kranert, and I would walk from my house about a mile away to a special place. There, along the stream, we'd pick blueberries.

Two years later, stopping by Sam Thompson's house (he took care of the sale of lots for the Mountain Heights Development Company), he said "There's a new area just opened. Come on, I'll show you." So we followed Mr. Thompson down a dirt road, stopping near a stream. "Here, this has just opened."

What we assumed was Monte Sano State Park property turned out to be adjacent to the park but owned by the Mountain Heights Development Company. We got out of our car, looked around and said "We'll take this one."

It was the same spot we had been stopping by for picnics since we came to Huntsville and the spot Mrs. Kranert and I would go to pick blueberries. The stream our three kids got to play in and catch polliwogs in glass jars. The stream that still runs past our house, Casa del Monte.

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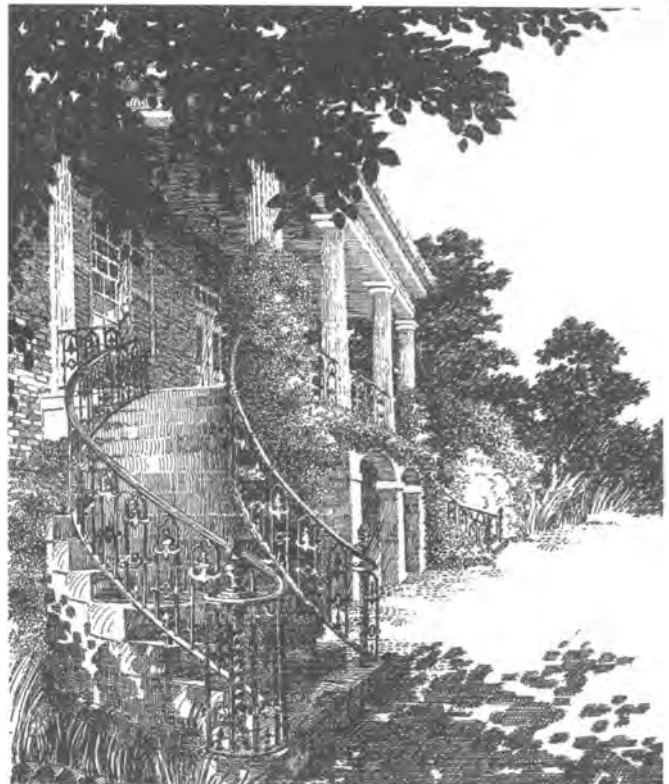
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Redstone Arsenal's Historic Goddard House

by Skip Vaughn
Editor, Redstone Rocket

An antebellum structure on Redstone Road stands as a reminder of past generations.

The Goddard House, built in 1835, was moved to its current location from the southeast part of the installation in December 1955. The 12-mile trip took two days. The only unplanned incident occurred less than a block from its new site, when utility lines had to be disconnected to let the house pass. It happened that the power disruption blacked out a Christmas cartoon show for Post children, a situation quickly corrected by the Fire Department with a portable power generator.

In May 1956, the VIP guest house was officially named Goddard House in honor of Dr. Robert H. Goddard, who is generally recognized as the "Father of American Rocketry." Dr. Goddard (Oct. 5, 1882 to Aug. 10, 1945), was an American professor, physicist and inventor, and is credited with creating and building the world's first liquid-fueled rocket.

Ready for occupancy in February 1956, the guest house was in use immediately. First to sign the guest book was Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson, followed by Secretary of the Army Wilber Brucker, Secretary of the Navy Dan Thomas and



Lt. Gen. James Gavin, Chief of Army Research and Development.

It has gone through extensive renovations through the years, and is no longer used as a guest house. The Goddard House, with 5,875 square feet, has become ad-

ministrative space, according to Roger Hare, physical space manager in the master planning division of the Garrison's Directorate of Public Works.

"We wanted to find a valid tenant," Hare said. Now vacant, the facility's most recent use was for source selection boards by the Army Contracting Command-Redstone. Its next tenant has already been identified.

"We're in the process of assigning that facility to the (Garrison's) Environmental Office," Hare said. "We have a program that's called Interim



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Measures Work for 17 suspected chemical warfare materiel sites, and it's the cleanup of those sites. And the project's going to go until February 2037. And it's a \$527 million project."

The Goddard House will serve as administrative space for that environmental project, which is scheduled to bring in workers in June.

The two-story house has a colorful history. It is thought that the house was built by James Manning, who owned 2,200 acres of land in Madison County, part of which is now Redstone Arsenal. No one is sure whether Manning, described as a merchant and wealthy planter, ever lived in the house but he owned the land at the estimated date of construction.

In the Oct. 25, 1989, issue of the Redstone Rocket, an article written by Pam Rogers included recollections by Nellie McAnally of Huntsville, who had lived in the house for several years during the 1920s, when it was known as the Chaney house. Back then it was located near what is now Gate 9. Her father was the overseer of the Chaney farm, part of which was rented out to tenants who grew cotton and corn and bought their supplies from a commissary located at the rear of the house.

According to the article, McAnally visited the house with the Rocket reporter and she described how the facility used to look. She also expressed her belief that the house was haunted.

"One morning my mother and my sister-in-law were in the kitchen. My sister-in-law was churning and my mother was washing dishes. My sister-in-law said, 'Look Mrs. Russell, there's a dog.' It was standing right there, in the doorway of the kitchen, and it was soaking wet, even though the sun was shining outside. It had the body of a dog and the face of an old man. Leona (the sister-in-law) threw a stick of stove wood at it, but missed. It turned around and my mother followed it, and it just disappeared," McAnally said in the article.

Family members and visitors were awakened on several occasions by the sound of the huge folding doors between the living and dining rooms being slammed back, only to find them in their normal positions. When it stormed, the family could hear a baby crying outside

the family room window. McAnally said she got so used to a ghostly hand turning the doorknob to her upstairs sitting room that she finally quit getting up to see who was there. She knew there would be no one, at least no one she could see, at the door.

Editor's note: Dr. Kaylene Hughes of the AMCOM History Office provided information for this article. Skip Vaughn can be reached at skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com



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- It's bad luck to sweep out trash or carry out ashes after sunset.
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- When you get up out of a chair, make sure you don't leave the chair rocking, or you will get very sick within the year.
- If you spill a jar of face powder, a bad quarrel with a friend will ensue.
- If you desire to become a good seamstress, allow a lizard to run across your hand.
- A young woman seeking a husband should stick seven needles into a lighted candle while praying to the Virgin Mary, until the wick is consumed. By doing this she can obtain the love of the man of her dreams, while rendering him impotent with other women.
- Never invite thirteen guests to dinner, or one of them will suffer very bad luck.
- If a hen is set in the light of the moon, the eggs will hatch roosters who will refuse to leave the henhouse.
- Should a man and woman pour tea together, they will have a baby within the year.
- Always plant peppers when you're good and mad at your wife, and give your gourd seeds a good cussing or they will never come up.
- If you have a wart and can't get

rid of it, go to the home of a lady friend and steal her dish towel. Rub the towel on the wart and place it under your friend's front porch or step. Don't let her know you did it, walk away and don't look back. The wart will soon disappear.

- If a family has black cats, the daughters will all be old maids. Also, a girl who rides a mule will never marry.
- To prevent nightmares from recurring, before bedtime soak both your feet in very warm water. Take half a lemon and thoroughly rub your feet

with it, don't rinse but pat dry and hit the sack.

- Have bags under your eyes? Try mother nature - slice up a raw potato and place a slice on top of each bag for 10 minutes; supposedly the chemical composition of a potato draws out water.

- To help lower your blood pressure, get some Crayola Magic Scent crayons. They're meant to calm you down - get a good coloring book that you love and settle in for a night of coloring.

- Don't plant onions and potatoes close to each other - the onions

will put out their eyes.

- If you thank a friend for a gift of seeds, they will never grow right.

- If you have a raging impulse to get some dessert, get out your nail polish and paint your fingernails. It takes awhile to dry and by that time your urge may have passed.

- Check your cup of coffee in the morning. If the bubbles on the surface float in your direction, you will soon come into some money you didn't expect.

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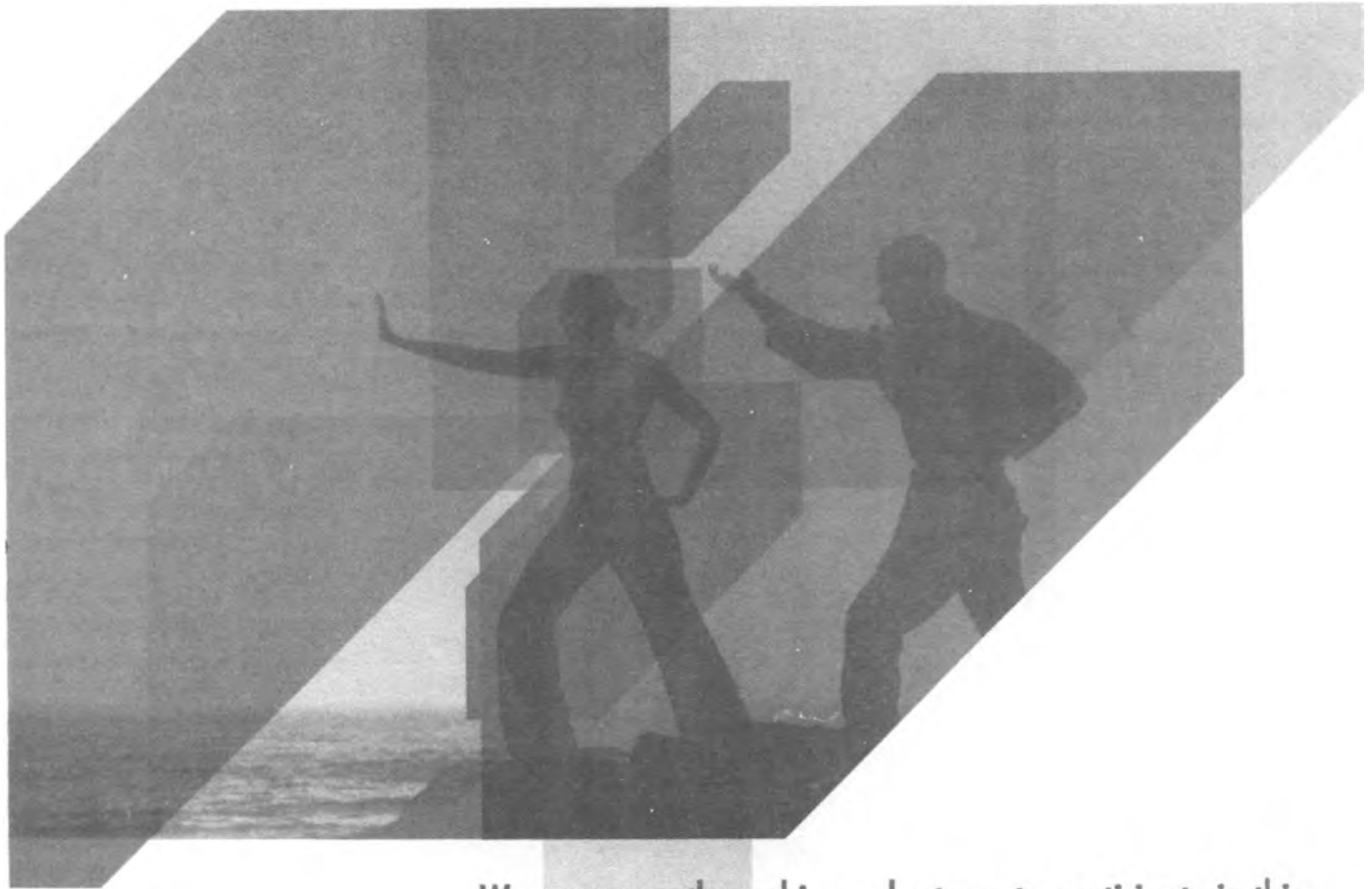
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SHOCKING NEWS FROM 1916

RINGLING BROS. CIRCUS GOES UP IN FLAMES

Huntsville: What started as a day of merriment for people attending the Ringling Brothers Circus here quickly turned into tragedy as flames swept the compound.

Over 600 people were on the circus grounds when a fire, apparently caused by a carelessly discarded cigarette, and fueled by high winds, swept through the grounds.

The main damage was concentrated near the stock pens where immense quantities of fodder had been stowed for the livestock.

The stock handlers, who had been prepared for such an emergency, immediately began blind-folding the horses and leading them to safety.

Though there is no report of human casualties, 37 horses burned to death in the conflagration. Scores more were severely injured.

Several of Huntsville's doctors were pressed into service in an attempt to save the injured animals but in many cases it was too late. Shots rang out through the day as more of the animals were put out of their misery.

A spokesman from Ringling Brothers Circus stated the show will continue its run here in Huntsville with no interruption of scheduled shows. Agents for the circus are already in negotiations with local livestock dealers to replace the horses. The fiery blaze, and the smoke, was seen all across the county.

Citizens in New Hope, upon seeing the smoke, immediately raised a contingent of volunteers and dispatched them to Huntsville.

NEW DISEASE DISCOVERED IN MAYSVILLE

Dr. I.W. Howard has confirmed that a new and dreadful disease has been identified in Maysville.

Nettie Preston, the two year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Will Preston, was diagnosed yesterday as having polio.

Though two other cases have been reported in other parts of the state this is the first confirmed case in North Alabama.

JUDGE LAWLER MURDERED

Huntsville: The body of W.T. Lawler, Madison County Probate Judge, was discovered by ferryman Percy Brooks yesterday near the Hambric Slough bridge on Aldridge Creek.

The body had been weighed down with heavy pieces of metal that unidentified sources have claimed came from the County Jail. First reports say that Lawler died from wounds inflicted to the head with a blunt object.

Lawler was last seen yesterday at a Chatauqua on the school grounds of the East Clinton School. Sources claim that after receiving a telephone call, Lawler left the Chatauqua to meet with unspecified people. He was not seen alive again.

The murder is whispered to have political connections with rumors of whiskey rings, corrupt payoffs and vote buying all being tossed about as the possible motive.

Percy Brooks has reportedly implicated C.M. Nails, Circuit Court Clerk, and David Overton, an ex-Huntsville Police Chief. Sheriff Phillips has also been mentioned as a suspect.

Overton had lost the election for Probate Judge to Lawler after a bitterly contested race in which both parties were accused of being part of a corrupt political machine.

The Governor is reported to be sending three companies of National Guard to Huntsville to guard against any parties seeking retribution. An investigator from Montgomery is also expected to arrive tomorrow.

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THOMAS JEFFERSON & ABRAHAM LINCOLN: BROTHERS IN THE FAITH

by Hartwell Lutz

People the world over recognize the greatness of Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, America's third and sixteenth presidents, respectively. But, from several perspectives, it is easily seen that there were significant differences between them, physical appearance being one of them. Jefferson is frequently described as being "handsome," whereas Lincoln is said to have been "ugly." One of his army generals described him as the "gorilla." His tall, gangly, awkward body, often covered by poorly fitting clothes, and his rough facial features made him a favorite subject of cartoonists.

Thomas Jefferson's appearance, on the other hand, has been described as being "rather majestic." A former Jefferson slave said of him, "Mr. Jefferson was a tall straight-bodied man as ever you see, right square shouldered. Nary a man in this town walked so straight as my Old Master. Neat a built man as ever was seen in Vaginny, a straight-up man, long face, high nose."

The ancestries of the two men could not have been more differ-

ent. Whereas Jefferson was born into a wealthy, slave-owning planter family in Virginia, Lincoln's ancestors were poor dirt farmers, who moved from Kentucky, then to Indiana and, finally, to Illinois. Jefferson wrote that his first recollection was of being carried on a pillow by a slave riding on a horse. Lincoln's family did well to own a horse.

Upon the death of his father, when Thomas Jefferson was fourteen, he inherited a large plantation and a goodly number of slaves. Needless to say, Lincoln never owned a slave, and he owned very little real estate. Ironically, Jefferson died virtually bankrupt, while Lincoln's wife, Mary, was left in reasonable circumstances, although she never acknowledged it.

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As a young boy, Jefferson was tutored by highly educated men. At the age of 16 he enrolled at the College of William and Mary, one of America's top institutions of higher learning at that time, and graduated two years later with honors. It would be fair to say that Thomas Jefferson had as fine an education as America had to offer in the middle of the 18th Century.

In contrast, Abraham Lincoln's formal education consisted of, at most, two years in a one-room school house. He was essentially self-educated, first as a land surveyor and later as a lawyer. His access to literature in his early life was probably limited to the King James Bible and the so-called "classics," such as the works of Shakespeare, Plato and Aristotle. He studied them closely and committed long passages of the Bible and classical literature to memory.

Jefferson loved the ladies, and they seem to have returned his admiration. Lincoln, however, was much more at ease with a group of men than with women. Although it has been asserted that he was gay, this is possibly the result of the fact that, as a circuit riding lawyer in rural Illinois, he, like most of his contemporaries, had to share a room and a bed with another lawyer as they traveled the circuit. Close associates of Lincoln referred to Mary Lincoln as "The Hell Cat." Unlike Jefferson's, his was not a happy marriage.

Thomas Jefferson's only marriage was to Mary Wales

Skelton, a beautiful young widow, who was herself from a prominent Virginia slave-owning family. But, in keeping with his promise to his wife before her death at age 33, he never remarried, which is not to say that he did not sire children subsequent to her death.

In short, Jefferson was a man of the world, cultured and refined, and Lincoln was a backwoods country lawyer. There were, of course, some similarities between these two great men. They were both undoubtedly geniuses. The Declaration of Independence, by Jefferson, and the Gettysburg Address, by Lincoln, will stand forever as two of history's finest examples of political writing, using the term "political" in its best sense.

And then there's "Religion."

On the surface, this presents another sharp contrast. Thomas Jefferson was almost certainly baptized as a baby and was a life-long member of the Church of England (now the Episcopal Church). But Lincoln was never baptized and never joined a church, although as a child he did attend services with his parents at a country Primitive Baptist church.

In his 1843 campaign for Congress, Lincoln was attacked by his opponent, himself a fiery Methodist circuit-riding evangelist, for being an

"I was such an ugly baby, my mother never breast fed me. She told me that she only liked me as a friend."

Rodney Dangerfield

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"infidel." (Lincoln is reported to have said that, "Had there been no priests, there would be no infidels.") This charge became such an issue in the campaign that Lincoln felt compelled to issue a handbill addressing it. In that paper, he admitted that he was not a member of any church, but denied any hostility to religion in general or Christianity in particular. Early in the campaign, he had to confront written and oral statements that he had made over a period of several years. For example: "The Bible is not my book nor Christianity my profession;" and, "The only person who is a worse liar than a faith healer is his patient."

However, it is clear that President Lincoln, over time and trial, came to a firm belief in a just and powerful, but not well defined, god.

Near the end of his life, Lincoln told a close friend that whenever "any church will inscribe over its altar, as it sole qualification for membership, the Savior's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church would I gladly join." He had studied the subject of religion closely, and he knew there was no church that fit that description.

Even though Jefferson, as mentioned above, was a member of a Christian church, he said of himself, "I am a sect by myself," and he described the book of Revelation as the "ravings of a maniac, no more worthy or capable of explanation than the incoherence of our own nightly dreams."

Mr. Jefferson went through the Four Gospels, (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), dis-

carded the miracles and supernatural events, and literally cut and pasted those of Jesus's sayings that he, Thomas Jefferson, accepted into what became known as "The Jefferson Bible." Elsewhere, he stated his belief that Paul and other New Testament writers were corrupters of the teachings of Jesus, and that he, Thomas Jefferson, understood those teachings better than the gospel writers did. Both men, throughout their political careers, had to defend themselves against charges of being "atheists," which they hotly denied.

Clearly, neither of these men were atheists. Both of them, almost surely, believed in the God of what is today referred to as the "Judeo-Christian tradition." They could probably best be described as "Deists," which is to say they believed in a Creator who set everything in motion and then, more or less, got out of the way and let his creation function according to the laws of nature, which the Creator had established.

Brothers in the faith, such as it was.



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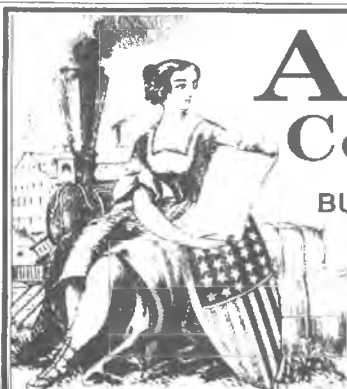
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The Picture

by Austin Miller

In the latter part of 1941, when I was about nine months old, Mama and Daddy got my great Aunt Lucy McCay Currier to drive us to town to make my first baby picture. It was black and white, as most photographs were in those days. In the picture, I am barefoot, sitting up with my arms to my side and wearing a white one-piece dress with a belt that fastened in the front with a button. I don't know how many photos were made, but a number were given to my grandparents, uncles, aunts and friends of the family. One was an eight-by-ten that has survived to this day.

Mama and Daddy gave one of the wallet size pictures to my Uncle James Curtis Miller, Sr. (Gib). They may have given it to him when he came home to Ryland for Christmas from the Army in 1941 or they may have mailed it to him at Fort Benning. In any event, he had it before he and Aunt Bertha married in the summer of 1942. More than fifty years later she remembered him showing it to her when they were dating.

One time when I was visiting, Uncle Gib mentioned that he had one of my baby pictures with him in combat. This intrigued me but I didn't pursue it further at the time. Later, I asked about it and told him I would like to see it. Both he and Aunt Bertha said they didn't know where it was. A few months after that, I asked Aunt Bertha again and she said she would look for it. I was afraid she wouldn't be able to find it because Uncle Gib had shown me his old war time wallet and some of the things it contained, but there was no baby picture.

I was intrigued because if that picture could talk, what a story it could tell. The saga began in army training camps in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Louisiana and finally a voyage on a troop ship across the Atlantic. The English spring and winter of 1944 is on record as one of wettest

and coldest in history. The living conditions and tent cities scattered all over England have been shown many times in countless war movies and documentaries about World War II. Uncle Gib was in one of those camps.

The 4th Division, however, was not sitting around in tents all the time. They were training for the invasion of France. This included mock landings on the English side of the channel. These were child's play compared to what was to come but it was still a cold, wet and dangerous exercise, with many

killed. Uncle Gib and my picture survived England and the practice landings. This was not a journey that improved as it progressed. Conversely, conditions got worse with each step in the progression.

Life on the transports ferrying troops across the channel to France is also well documented. Packed in like sardines, they suffered through gale speed winds



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STYLE ELEGANCE FUNCTION

and high seas for days. The rolling swells made most of them deathly ill, a condition exacerbated by a strong stench of vomit and diesel fuel. Based on historical accounts of the crossing, many veterans said they were so sick and miserable that they would not have lifted a finger to save the ship from sinking; others said whatever horrors awaited them on the beach would be better than life on the transports.

Uncle Gib didn't talk much about the war but I know that he was on one of those transports. I also know that he was in the first wave that hit Utah Beach on June 6, 1944. At daylight, he exited the transport by jumping into cold breast deep water. He told me that everything on him was thoroughly soaked with seawater including my baby picture.

Some drowned immediately but many more were killed by hostile fire. They were like sitting ducks. By the time he waded ashore the waves hitting the beach were tinged red with blood. They were being pounded with heavy artillery and raked with rifle and machine gun fire. Some veterans gave accounts of bullets falling around them like rain.

To my surprise he watched the movie "Saving Private Ryan". I asked him how the movie compared to his experience. He said the real thing was much worse and all the actors were way too old. Somehow, Uncle Gib made it across the wide expanse of sand and went inland without a scratch. After clearing the beach, he went from Normandy to Cherbourg and back again. This foray was in the infamous hedgerows where some of the fiercest fighting of the war occurred.

After that, he patrolled up and down the beach and back inland. On July 20th, in the vicinity of St. Lo, shrapnel from a German 88 gravely wounded him. After being hit, he was taken to an aid station; from there he was moved to a tent that served as a field hospital. Finally, he was evacuated to a hospital in England. After England, he was sent to a hospital in New York, from there to Atlanta and finally, after about a year, to a convalescent center at Daytona Beach, Florida. My baby picture, worse for the wear but still intact, made the entire trip.

In the spring of 2004, he asked me if I would cut up a tree with my chain saw that had fallen in his garden. I jumped at the chance, because it is not often that he gives me an opportunity to help him. As soon as I could, I went to the

house on Wellman Avenue and cut up the tree as promised. When I finished, Aunt Bertha gave me a red envelope with my name on it. Inside were high school graduation pictures of my cousins as well as some old family snapshots. Also, in the envelope was my baby picture. The picture is cracked and has some torn places around the edges but considering what it has been through, it is in remarkable condition. It now resides in a gallery of baby pictures on a wall in my house.

Knowing the history of where the picture has been makes it a cherished possession but the real prize to me is not altogether where it has been, but with whom it went.

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A STORY OF TRUE LOVE

by Leo Larkin

His name was Howard William Mason and he lived on Coldwater Road in Hazel Green. Howard was born May 11, 1917, before the youngest of six sisters. They were a farm family and it was not unusual for them to each pick 400 pounds of cotton a day. Eventually, Coldwater Road was renamed Elkwood Section Road. Although the farm was in Alabama, all those living on the first road that ran east and west (south of the state line), received their mail from either the Taft, Ardmore or Flintville Post Offices in Tennessee. The Mason family mail came from Taft but they had Alabama driver licenses with a Tennessee address.

About 1980, when the 911 requirements were passed, they received a new address. Most of the county roads were named for the oldest family living on the road (even if they were bootleggers). Signs were placed on every road to identify them.

Howard was a quiet, shy man. Bashful! Shortly after I married into the family, I met him on the square in Fayetteville. I stopped and spoke to him and his face turned blood red.

Howard courted Dorothy Marie Towry for quite a long time and she dearly loved him. Dorothy, a vibrant lady, born March 21, 1922, was from Howell Hill, Tennessee. Howard's father had passed away and he felt a great responsibility to maintain the farm and support his mother. In those days, well, women just didn't propose marriage. Finally, after giving up on him she started dating another fellow. Eventually, the new beau asked her to marry him and she said yes, although Howard still held her heart.

Dorothy asked her best friend Sue to stand up with her. Sue tried her best to persuade her to not do this, for she knew Dorothy still loved Howard. The ceremony took place, and there was a gathering at Dorothy's mother's home. They were all sitting on the front porch when Howard showed up. He stood around for a bit and then said to Dorothy, "Well, I guess you know you've ruined my life!" Impetuously, Dorothy, said, "Oh no, I haven't!" She pulled the wedding ring off and gave it back to her groom of only a few hours. She had the marriage annulled and married Howard on Feb-

ruary 13, 1945, in Alabama. They lived on Coldwater Road in the home place with his mother and farmed the land. When Howard's mother died, they gave the home place to his oldest sister, Leoma, and lived in another home close by. Later they moved to the new ground on Mason Road a short distance away. Their two children, Andrea and Wade, were born there.

As with most small farmers, Howard held two jobs. He was employed by Martin Stove Company in Huntsville. After they closed, he worked at Amana Refrigeration in Fayetteville, Tennessee. Dorothy worked for Serbin, a dress manufacturer in Fayetteville.

They bought a farm in Park City, Tennessee, and moved there in 1957. Howard worked his 'company' job and continued farming, his first love. He even made his own molasses. Their two children eventually gave them four grandchildren. Howard continued to be shy and quiet, and Dorothy remained her spirited self. It is reported by family that he would be in the recliner with the newspaper over his head while she'd be talking to him. They lived happily until Dorothy's death during the 1985 Christmas holidays. Howard was so lonely he would get his sister, Virginia, to go with him to the local square dance. He continued to farm the new ground on Mason Road, until he died at the age of 78.



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The Spare Bed

When I go to the country to visit my relatives, the spare room rises up before my imagination, and I shiver when I remember how cold and grave-like the sheets are. I put off the visit as long as possible, solely on account of that spare bed. I do not like to tell them that I had rather sleep on a picket fence than to enter that spare room and creep into that bed, and so they never have any suspicion of my sufferings.

The spare bed is always as near a mile and a half from the rest of the beds as it can be located. It is either upstairs at the head of the hall, or off in the parlor. The parlor curtains have not been raised for weeks, everything is as prim as an old maid's bonnet, and the bed is as square and true as if it had been made up by a carpenter's rule.

No matter whether it be winter or summer the bed is like ice, and it sinks down in a way to make one shiver. The sheets are slippery clean, the pillow slips rustle like

shrouds and one dare not stretch his leg down, for fear of kicking against a tombstone.

One sinks down until he is lost in the hollow, and foot by foot the prime bed posts vanish from sight. He is worn out and sleepy, but he knows that the rest of the family are so far away that no one could hear him if he should shout for an hour, and this makes him nervous. He wonders if anyone ever died in that room, and straightway he sees ghostly faces, hears strange noises and presently feels a chill galloping up and down his spine.

Did any person ever pass a comfortable night in a spare room? No matter how many quilts and spreads covered him, he could not get to sleep, and if he did accidentally drop off into a doze it was to waken with a start, under the impression that a spirit was pulling his nose. It will be days and weeks before he recovers from that impression, and yet he must suffer in silence, because the spare bed was assigned him in token of esteem and affection.

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Tweetie's Pet Tips

The Family Dog

* Using metal water dishes outside in winter may be a risk, because your pet's tongue could stick to the frozen metal. In the summer, metal bowls can get very hot and burn your dog.

* If you have a puppy that urinates on your carpet: After soaking up most of the mess with a paper towel, sprinkle a generous amount of bicarbonate of soda (baking soda) over the area and leave it to absorb both the traces of urine and the odor.

* If your dog runs away from you and you finally catch up to it, no matter how angry you are at the dog, do not yell or smack it or he will never come to you when called for fear of being punished.

* Do not leave your dog unattended on a choke chain. The chain could get caught and strangle the dog.

* Do not leave your dog in the car unattended on hot days. Even with the windows open, temperatures in cars WILL reach deadly levels. It only takes five minutes! If you see a dog locked in a very hot car do something to try and help it before it's too late.

* Do not make your dog walk on extremely hot or cold asphalt, cement, etc. The pads of their paws are not made out of steel. If it is too hot for you to walk barefoot, then chances are that it is too hot for your dog also.

* To keep your dog busy, buy toys with little holes in them (such as a Kong), put both big and small pieces of kibble in the toy and give it to your dog. This will keep him busy for quite a while, presuming he has a few small ones that he gets out quickly. You can also wedge dog biscuits in the holes with a smear of peanut butter.



* When your dog is teething, instead of having him chew on couches, walls, etc., buy a few (cheap) washcloths. Soak the washcloth with water and put it in the freezer. When fully frozen, give it to the dog to chew. It will thaw out so have another one ready in the freezer. (Be careful when doing this with very small dogs, as they may get a chill. I have heard of small dogs getting too cold too quickly when chewing on ice.)

* For teething puppies, mix chicken or beef broth (look for low fat, low sodium brands) with 1/4 cup of water. Pour the mixture into ice cube trays to make broth ice cubes. They are tasty treats on hot days. (Be careful when doing this with very small dogs, as they may get a chill. I have heard of small dogs getting too cold too quickly when chewing on ice.)

* Do not leave your pet in an area with dangling phone cords, drape cords or other items that it

may strangle itself on. Be aware of electric cords that may be chewed by the pet.

* I have a dog that used to love to dig. When I'd fill the hole and re-seed, he'd just dig it up again. One day I was watching him wander around the yard, and I noticed he took extra care not to step in his droppings. So, the next time I filled up a hole, I buried a little dung at the bottom and left some dung on top. He avoided the freshly-seeded grass, and his droppings made excellent fertilizer. This won't work for all dogs...I also have another dog that loves to dig. This trick does not work on her, as she does not care where she steps.

Please note: the feces of dogs or any other meat-eating animal are NOT SAFE to use as fertilizer on plants that will be eaten by people, such as veggies, fruits or herbs. The feces can spread disease, even if it comes from a healthy dog.

* Is your dog digging? Try putting cayenne pepper in the holes—they don't like the sensation when they go back to dig again.

* Dog urination burns your lawn? Try giving them some tomato juice every day (either in a bowl or on their food) and it should solve the problem.

* After soaking up the majority of urine or picking up the poop on your rug, baby wipes do a great job and pick up all smells with no stains left behind.

"I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me."

Sam Keith, Huntsville

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

Frank Gurley, Fugitive in Gray

by Tom Carney



Something was up. You could feel it in the humid, late summer air. Union General Don Carlos Buell's Yankee soldiers could feel it. The Rebel horsemen under General Nathan Bedford Forrest could feel it. There was an ominous sense of impending tragedy afoot. Something was up.

The month was August. The year was 1862. That dreadful saga that was the American Civil War was a little over one year old. In the east, the Union army under General George McClellan had been stopped cold in its drive toward the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia. In the west, the Union army under General U.S. Grant had steamrolled its way through western Tennessee by taking Forts Henry and Donelson. It had lost some of its steam after being terribly bloodied at Shiloh, but had gone on to take Corinth and Iuka, Mississippi from the equally bloodied Confederates. Now Grant's army was stalled. It was spread out over western Tennessee and northern Mississippi in several garrisons thanks to Grant's cautious superior, General Halleck. That left the middle.

Yankee operations in Middle Tennessee were under the

command of General Don Carlos Buell, who like Grant, also reported to General Halleck. Buell had left his headquarters in Nashville and personally led part of his "Army of the Ohio" to help Grant out at Shiloh. After that battle, he ordered one of his army commanders, Ormsby Mitchel, to strike south from Middle Tennessee into North Alabama.

The target for Federal operations in North Alabama was originally the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. This line was one of the vital supply arteries for the South, connecting east and west with north and south within the Confederacy. It was also vital to an invading Yankee army if it was going to eat. So General Mitchel plunged southward.

In early April of 1862, Mitchel's army marched from Fayetteville, Tennessee and stormed into Huntsville, Ala-

bama. He captured the railway station, the roundhouse, locomotives, rolling stock, Confederate soldiers on leave, a fledgling foundry, and anything else in town he wanted. Once Huntsville was secure he sent elements west to take Decatur and east as far as Bridgeport.

Now the focus of operations shifted. Mitchel believed that given enough men he could take Chattanooga, Tennessee. Whoever controlled Chattanooga would control East Tennessee, but even more important, the door to Atlanta would be open. Buell thought it was a good idea. Buell's superior, Halleck thought it was a good idea. The War Department

"Charles Darwin was a naturalist who wrote the Organ of the Spices."

On 4th grade history exam

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thought it was a good idea as well and started clamoring for action.

Buell marched the rest of his army from Mississippi through Tusculumbia, Florence, and eventually headquartered in Huntsville, Alabama. Before it was over, Buell had assembled some 55,000 men and had more in Iuka, Mississippi if he needed them.

All he had to do was keep the rail lines open, the bridges repaired, stockpile supplies at Stevenson, Alabama, and it was on to Chattanooga. Then disaster struck.

Buell's captured prize, the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, was fast becoming a mill stone around his neck. To keep his army going, he needed some 300 tons of food and forage daily. Assuming he had the necessary engines and rolling stock, this would be a tall order for the railroad even in peacetime.

But this was war, and disaster for Don Carlos Buell had two names: John Hunt Morgan and Nathan Bedford Forrest.

The Rebel raider Morgan had been causing general havoc up in Kentucky, but now he dipped down into West Tennessee destroying tunnels, burning bridges, and tearing up track; effectively blocking Buell's supply line to Louisville, Kentucky. But, the lines to Nashville, Tennessee were still open.

Enter Forrest.

While Morgan might be causing general havoc, it would be Forrest who would play sheer hell with the Yankees in Middle Tennessee and North Alabama. Not content

with just destroying sections of the railroad, Forrest would capture garrisoned towns full of Yankees. He would supply his men with Yankee guns and cannon, and feed them Yankee food. What he couldn't use he would burn. He would attack repair parties, trains, and even the sawmills pressed into service by the Federals.

Now Buell was bogged down. His demoralized army was spread all over Middle Tennessee and North Alabama guarding the railroad. There would be no march on Chattanooga that year.

Forrest was no stranger to the area that Buell was trying to operate in. He was born in Chapel Hill, a small town in Middle Tennessee. He was also familiar with North Alabama. Earlier in the year, in February, he had spent a three week furlough in Huntsville, Alabama.

Several companies of his best men had been recruited from Huntsville and Madison County. Men like Captain D.C. Kelley, a Methodist preacher who could preach the gospel and fight Yankees with equal

fervor. There was also another lad that Forrest had his eye on, young Frank Gurley. Gurley hailed from the small town, not far from Huntsville that bore the name of his ancestors who had settled in the area. Forrest had mentioned Gurley in some of his earlier reports, commenting on his courage and intelligence in battle.

It had been a busy year for these men, but now some thing was up. You could feel it in the late summer heat.

The Confederate armies began to stir everywhere. Like hungry animals on the prowl, they moved out looking for Federals to feed on. In the east, Bobby Lee's Army of Northern Virginia would find and crush Pope's Union Army at the Second Battle of Bull Run, then head north into Maryland. In the west, Rebel Generals Van Dorn and Price would harass Grant and attempt to retake Corinth, Mississippi. That left the middle.

While Morgan and Forrest tied down Buell's Union Army in North Alabama and Middle Tennessee, Confederate Gen-

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"The most dangerous way to sleep is with your feet on your office desk."

Dan McKitrick, Huntsville

eral Braxton Bragg consolidated his Army of Tennessee and crept northward. Crossing the Tennessee River at Chattanooga, he embarked on what would be his invasion of Kentucky.

These momentous events would of course affect the lives of thousands of individuals, North and South. For the young Frank B. Gurley, Bragg's invasion of Kentucky would trigger a series of circumstances that would bring untold misery into his life.

As Bragg's Rebel Army cautiously crept northward through East Tennessee, Buell was inundated with alarming reports from his scouts. Fearful that Bragg might be moving on Nashville, Buell began moving his army out of North Alabama, consolidating it and keeping it between Nashville and the Confederate army. Buell was to move his headquarters from Huntsville to Decherd, Tennessee, where he could keep a closer watch on the unfolding events.

As the Union army moved north, one of Buell's brigade commanders, General Robert Latimer McCook, was also on the move. McCook was one of the 17 fighting McCooks from Ohio. His father, his uncle, nine other brothers, and numerous cousins were to serve the Union cause, either in the army or the navy. McCook didn't know it yet, but he had an unfortunate date with Destiny. In this case Destiny's name was Frank B. Gurley.

Gurley had been detailed by Forrest to recruit from

North Alabama additional men for what was eventually to become the 4th Alabama Cavalry. Operating under the collective noses of the enemy, Gurley had succeeded in raising a company of stalwarts. Meeting up with another company of fresh recruits near New Market, Alabama, Gurley and his men headed out to find Forrest. As fate would have it, he also found General McCook.

While following Buell's earlier advance along the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, General Robert McCook had taken ill and was confined to an ambulance. McCook, in his ambulance and with a small cavalry escort, was scouting in the New Market area on his way to Decherd. When his party stumbled into Gurley's party, all hell broke loose.

Upon seeing Yankee soldiers, Gurley ordered his men to charge. To the outnumbered Yankees it must

have been a fearsome sight as this rough crew of horsemen rode them down. Gurley's recruits hadn't had time to be properly outfitted and were dressed in a motley assortment of homespun civilian clothes and armed with shotguns, pistols, and whatever else they brought from home. In truth, they looked more like common outlaws than Confederate soldiers.

The Union horsemen broke and ran, being hotly pursued by the Rebels. As Gurley rode after the escort he passed the ambulance. Glancing over, he saw a figure in Yankee blue

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"The answer to this last question will determine whether you are drunk or not. Was Mickey Mouse a cat or a dog?"

Police to potential drunk after pulling him over

whipping the horses to a higher speed. Gurley fired at the figure as he passed it. Robert McCook fell, mortally wounded in the abdomen.

When Gurley returned from the chase, he discovered whom he had shot. The Confederates took the mortally wounded officer to a nearby farmhouse so that he might be more comfortable. Gurley spent some time talking to the man before he died the next day. Apparently, McCook believed Gurley and his men to be legitimate soldiers for he never said anything to the contrary before he died. Unfortunately for Gurley, the North didn't see it that way.

The word that got back to the Federal officials was that McCook's men were attacked by a band of ruthless guerrillas. Furthermore, Robert Latimer McCook had been cruelly murdered while he lay in the captured ambulance bed. Now a different kind of hell broke loose as outraged Union soldiers scoured the countryside looking for Gurley and his men. The farmhouse that had given General McCook comfort while he lay dying was burned to the ground. A Rebel lieutenant on furlough was found and shot. Old men and boys for miles around were arrested. The Yankees had blood in their eyes.

While it was true that Forrest had given Gurley a commission to raise troops, technically it was illegal since under Confederate law only Jeff Davis could grant that authority. In reality Gurley was acting as a Confederate soldier doing his duty as he saw it in a country at war.

Gurley was commissioned as Captain, Company C, 4th (Russell's) Alabama Cavalry later that year and went on to ride with and fight many more battles for General Forrest.

After the fighting at Chickamauga, illness and exhaus-

tion forced him to go home on leave. At this time Madison County was again under Federal occupation and on the Yankee books Gurley was still an outlaw-at-large.

In October of 1863, Gurley was arrested at his home. Jailed in Huntsville, then Nashville, he was found guilty of murder on January 11, 1864, and sentenced to hang by the neck until dead. When Confederate authorities got wind of this they threatened to hang Yankee prisoners in retaliation. This probably had a bearing on the fact that his execution date was continually postponed. In January of 1865, apparently by mistake, he was exchanged. After the close of the war, Gurley returned to his Madison County home to try to pick up the pieces and start a new life. But it was not yet to be.

A nationwide manhunt was launched late in 1865 to find the "murderer" of Robert McCook. Now, Frank Gurley found himself once again to be a fugitive from Yankee justice. Once

again he was arrested at his home and once again he was scheduled for a date with the hangman's noose. Strangely, two days later the proceedings were postponed by none other than Andrew Johnson. Living in jail, not knowing if each day was to be his last, Gurley was finally released in April of 1866.

His ordeal finally over, Gurley at last was able to get on with his life. Every year he would host reunions for his old regiment at his Madison County home. He became a respected farmer and pillar of the community, always ready to assist his friends and neighbors endure the ordeal of Union Reconstruction.

Frank Gurley was probably the only man in Madison County history to have his exploits recognized by two American presidents. President Jefferson Davis honored him for his faithful actions in the service of the Confederacy. Andrew Johnson, president of the United States, pardoned him for the very same actions.



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Keeping Clean

by Tillman Hill

In the early years it was not as easy to keep clean as it is now. You had to heat your water and put it in a number 3 wash tub to take a bath. The men and boys could go to the barber shop and take a bath. There, a bath cost a nickel and then they went up to a dime. But the women had to use the number 3 wash tub.

It was not uncommon for someone to have lice, bedbugs or the "seven-year itch". A health nurse would come to school and check everybody's head. If you had lice you went home and got rid of them.

We never had lice or bedbugs. I will never forget my mother each morning as she made up the beds, pulling the ticking down on the edges of the mattress and looking for bedbugs.

Today, I never go to a zoo and see a mother monkey pick up her little monkey and start looking in his fur for fleas, that I don't think about how my mother used to grab me every time I got close enough for her to grab me and

look my head over to make sure I did not have lice.

I said my family never had lice or bed bugs but we all had the seven-year itch. One time in particular I remember my mother had us to rub down in sulfur and grease.

A few years earlier, my uncle had gotten killed in an accident at Lowe Mill. He had 3 kids and one of the teenage girls had come to live with us. She could be hell on wheels sometimes.

Back to the seven-year itch. My mother had just gotten us all cured with sulfur and grease when my cousin threw a mad fit and went to stay with some friends of ours over on Lincoln Avenue. Unfortunately, they had the "itch" and my cousin brought it back to us.

The process you went through to get rid of it is well remembered. You had to wash all your clothes and the bed sheets. Then everybody took a hot bath and rubbed down in sulfur and grease.

This one particular time, it was in cold winter. One by one the water was heated and put in the number 3 wash tub. After one of us would take a bath, the tub was taken to the back yard and dumped. More water was heated and one more of us would take a bath and be rubbed down in sul-

fur and grease. My daddy was the last to take a bath.

As I said it was very cold so we took our baths in front of the wood cook stove in the kitchen. We had the most beautiful cook stove I have ever seen. It was white porcelain with a big warmer on top and a water reservoir on the end. It had a shiny chrome rail in the front of it. We cooked on it up to the 1950s.

When we moved from Barrell Street to Meridian Street we got an electric stove. I don't remember what happened to the wood cook stove but I would give anything to have it today. I can close my eyes and still see every detail about that stove.

Well, back to my daddy getting rid of the itch. My daddy was built just like I am. He had a big chest, big shoulders, good arms but a skinny butt. He was standing up in the tub drying off with a towel, bent over and bumped his butt on that beautiful chrome rail on the front of the stove. He started to holler and scream and everybody ran into the kitchen. There he stood, buck naked and very mad. Needless to say he gave my cousin hell for bringing the seven-year itch to our home.

Many years later, we had many a laugh over the incidents of that day.

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THE FAME OF AUNT EUNICE



by Billy Joe Cooley

It all started when a gas station overcharged me three cents for gasoline one Friday afternoon. I asked the station manager why the pump automatically clicked on three cents, even though I hadn't started pumping the gas yet.

"Don't worry," he said. "It's in the nozzle."

"There's no more in your nozzle than there is in anybody else's nozzle," I replied. He ignored me.

I was a reporter for the old Huntsville News, our morning paper, and had met, just a few days earlier, an inspector in the city's Weights and Measures Department, the outfit that oversees gas stations. His name was Pep Morgan. I went to my office and

phoned him, giving him the above information.

Mr. Pep Morgan met me at my office and we went together to the gas station in question. He took measuring equipment from his car and, while the gas station manager stared scornfully at me, the station got a thorough inspection. Several things were wrong at the station, so Mr. Morgan ordered the station closed "until you have all new hoses and nozzles installed on all eight of your pumps." That would take all weekend.

As we turned to leave, Mr. Morgan saw a dozen country hams hanging on a halltree. He observed that the station wasn't licensed to sell hams, so he confiscated them and we delivered them to a small restaurant on Andrew Jackson Way. He introduced me to his friend, Eunice Merrell, who

owned the establishment, The Country Kitchen.

We became friends and she told me that she had operated the place for years, opening at 4 in the morning and closing at 10 o'clock at night. I thought it was a shame that she had to work so hard, doing most of her own cooking. I called my old folksy radio pal Grady Reeves, who had in recent years become an early

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In 1908 most women washed their hair once a month, and used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

morning television celebrity on Channel 19. He was already acquainted with "Aunt Eunice," as he called her, and he agreed with me that such a nice lady needed more business.

Grady and I started giving her daily plugs in our respective mediums. When famous personalities or their agents would call the newspaper or television station seeking publicity interviews, we would ask them to meet us at Eunice's Restaurant, where we would conduct such interviews. Then we would give the interviews prominent display and make sure Eunice's Restaurant got plenty of exposure.

Before long a lot of people started coming to her restaurant in hopes of running into famous people.

Politicians, both local and national, frequented the place. I made sure they all got prominent mention in my regular columns. And I would mix regular customers' names in among the celebrities. Grady did the same.

One of the celebrities was U.S. Sen. Howell Heflin. He later said "She is such a sweet and popular lady, Billy Joe, why don't you write up a big story on her and I will read it into The Congressional Record."

I did and he did.

Another of her friends and regular customers was Tommy Battle, who owned Britling Buffet, a popular buffet at the corner of Governors Drive and the Parkway. He paid to have

several copies of the Congressional Record framed and hung around town, one was on her restaurant wall.

Soon she started her daily closings at 6 in the afternoon, then at two, and finally at noon. Her specialty became breakfast, as opposed to the full menu of the past, although she continued to offer a full service menu on request.

I was out of town and didn't get to attend her funeral services, but she was on my mind. I saw on the news coverage that Sen. Heflin attended, as did many other celebrities who had benefited by being around her.

Jane Pauly once did a national TV special on her place and it ran several times. I introduced the great writer Lewis Grizzard to her kitchen, as well as comic Jerry Glower, gospel legends Wally Fowler and Calvin Newton. TV's Willard Scott made a big to-do over her place on his national weather cast.

There were far too many celebrities to mention here - soap opera favorites, movie stars, politicians from across the nation. It was in Eunice's that our crowd met Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens (who was guest of heroic Admiral Jeremiah Denton, himself a U.S. Senator

from Alabama). There were many, many more.

For years I continued to receive phone calls from friends across the nation, including adventurer Kevin Streit of Las Vegas, a Grissom grad who grew up on Eunice's breakfasts. One of the first things they always asked - "How is Eunice doing?"

And I remember how Drs. Bryce and Dolly Davis brought their future astronaut daughter, Jan, there every day for her morning nourishment.

The list has to stop someplace, so this is it. So long, Eunice. We all loved you.

Editors Note: We miss you too, Billy Joe.

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Town News in 1923

Only victim Remaining is Mrs. Greaves

Mrs. C. T. Greaves, of Dallas, Tx., one of the most seriously injured in the wreck of the Southern passenger train near Scottsboro last week, is still at the Huntsville infirmary, where she was taken immediately following the accident. Mrs. Greaves is, however, reported to be doing well. She is the only one of the several brought here who have not returned to their homes.

They Saw the World

Two boys, Lonnie Jones, age 16 and Warren Sanders, age 14 will be held in Huntsville for the arrival of their parents this week. They said they lived near Scottsboro and were taken in charge by Chief Hackworth. Their parents had telephoned the chief to notify him that the boys had traveled to Huntsville, after telling them that they "wanted to see the world." They were without money and seemed quite ready to return home after seeing enough of the world and its hardness.

Machine Boy injured

While riding his bicycle on Walker Street Sunday, Howard Larkin, a small boy, was run into and knocked from his wheel by an automobile driven by Henry Thomas. Young Larkin was jolted but not seriously injured.

**"Only a fool argues with
a cook, skunk or mule."**

Johnny Johnston

Huntsville Invention

Messrs. James McGill and Lee Guy have perfected a new automobile light for which they intend to apply for a patent. The light will contain a revolving fan on one end and colored lights on the other, the lights being generated from a dry battery and being operated by the car. The gentlemen have tried out their light with complete success.

Street Cars Halted by Molasses Lake

Whether because of an accident or an attempted joke, street cars on 17th Street be-

tween Second and Third Avenues were unable to make their schedules for an hour or two yesterday because of a veritable lake of molasses on the right of way in that section.

The sticky substance had to be shoveled up and placed in carts and a liberal supply of sand placed on the tracks before traffic could be resumed. A reward of \$500 is being offered for the apprehension of the party who placed the molasses on the track. If caught and the act found to have been committed as a joke, the joker will be prosecuted.



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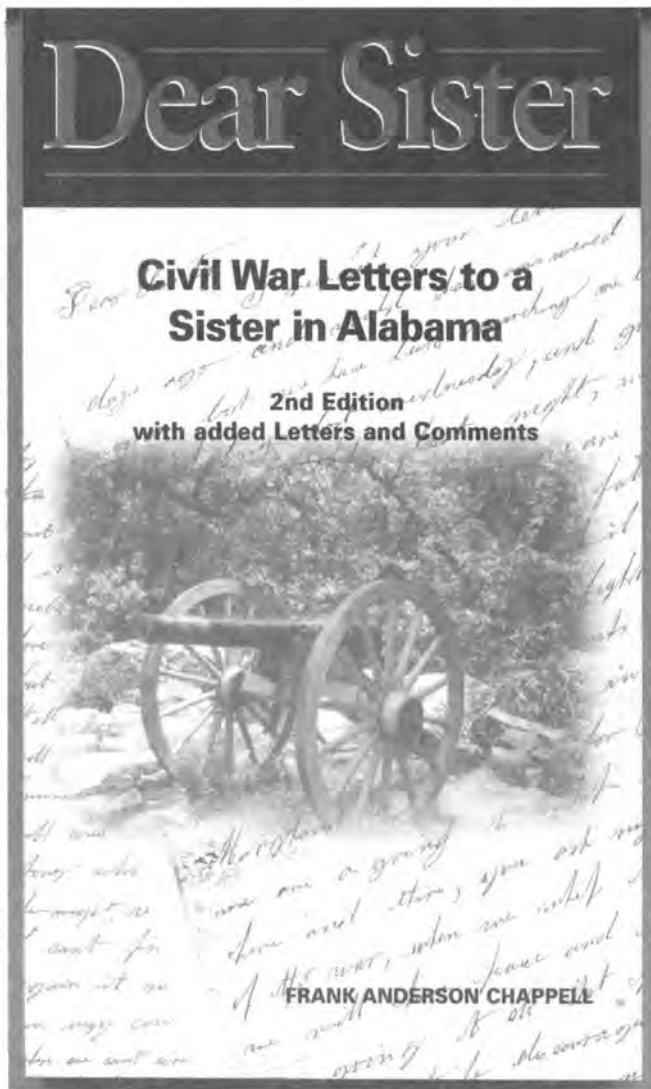
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2. *The Sword of Bushwhacker Johnston - back in stock!* edited by Charles Rice \$20
3. *Historic Huntsville: (2002 edition)* by Elise Hopkins Stephens \$18 (new price)
4. *Growing up in the Rocket City: A Baby Boomer's Guide* (over 200 Photos/illustrations) by Tommy Towery \$15
5. *1861 Civil War Map of Huntsville* (with historic points of interest) \$4.95
6. *Remembering Margaret Mitchell* by Huntsvillian Lucille Thompson Love \$18
7. *True Tales of Old Madison County - back in stock -* by Pat Jones \$7.95
8. *Huntsville Entertains - History & Recipes* by Historic Huntsville Foundation \$12
9. *Tornado Valley* by Shelly Miller \$14.95
10. *Dear Sister - Civil War Letters to a Sister in Alabama* by Frank Anderson Chappell \$14.95

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