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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

A Father's Revenge

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She was also careful not to mention anything about him to her father, whom she knew would not approve.



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A Father's Revenge

by Tom Carney

His name was Robert E. Lee Gilliam but most people simply called him "Gilliam, or "old man Gilliam." He was aged beyond his years, a product of a hard scrabble life and trying to eke out a living on a few acres of sunbaked red clay that never seemed to produce enough to keep body and soul together.

Being a truck farmer was not the life Gilliam had chosen originally. He had worked most of his life at a sawmill near Gurley until an accident left his right leg crippled. Unable to find other work, he worked as a sharecropper for a time before the landlord told him he was letting another man, an able-bodied man, take over the farm.

The next several years saw Gilliam moving from farm to farm, each one poorer than the one he had left previously. Finally he ended up, in 1943, on a small tract of land near Winchester Road. The land was a

virtual rock pile, overgrown with no water supply, and with a dilapidated old house that probably should have fallen down years ago.

Regardless, Gilliam, with his wife and three children, made the best out of a bad situation. Soon they had several acres cleared and were growing tomatoes, squash and other vegetables. These he peddled from door-to-door in an ancient pick-up truck he had patched together from parts salvaged from junkyards and trash heaps. On weekends, while he worked his route, his wife and children would spend the day at the Farmers Market selling the produce to Huntsville housewives who flocked to the stalls in search of bargains on fresh vegetables.

Gilliam's family was his pride and joy. His wife, a quiet-spoken woman with jet black hair that belied her Indian heritage was a perfect helpmate, spending long days toiling in the fields beside him and then going home to cook dinner with never a complaint. The youngest two children, both boys, were still too young to be of much help, but his daughter Lucy, who at fourteen was already turning into a striking young lady, helped her mother sell produce at the market. Many people, captivated by the young girl's exotic beauty and quiet charm, became regular

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The summer of 1946 was an especially hot and dry one. Almost three months had passed with no measurable rainfall and small gardens that had always produced a bountiful harvest began drying up. Gilliam had always hauled water from a nearby spring for cooking and washing but his work load was increased dramatically when he was forced to begin hauling water for the parched fields.

Every day, often three or four times a day, he would drive his truck to the nearby spring where he filled large containers with water. Returning to his garden he would use a gourd to pour a certain amount around each thirsty and parched plant. The work was backbreaking, and with the sun seemingly getting hotter every day, it soon became apparent that something else had to be done.

Calling his family together one afternoon, Gilliam announced a change in the fam-

ily's routine. He was going to dig a well. His wife would drive the truck on the route each weekend and Lucy would work at the market by herself. The two boys would remain at home with him, helping haul dirt from the proposed well. Gilliam figured a week, maybe two, would be enough to complete the job.

Though at first the job went well, with the dry, red clay yielding easily to the pick and shovel, a few feet down he began to encounter rock. Even the most casual observer surely realized it was going to take much longer than planned. Gilliam, however, was not a man to give up easily. Every Saturday morning he would help load the truck with produce and then return to what many people had already dubbed his "rock hole."

"Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was "Shut Up."

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For Lucy, however, these were exciting times. Her mother would drop her off early at the market where she would spend the day selling produce and talking to the other people who worked there. Every day seemed like another adventure to the impressionable fourteen year old girl. Probably even more exciting were the young men who visited the market to flirt with her. Without the stern looks of her mother to warn them off, there was a constant stream of young Galahads vying for her attention.

One of the men who noticed her was William Roberts. No one disputed the fact that Roberts was a good looking man, well dressed and with a line of blarney that could sway even the most doubtful person. It was the other things about him, though, that made people whisper. Some people claimed he had been married before, although no one was sure what had happened. He was also rumored to be involved in gambling and was a well-known supplier of bootleg whiskey to the G.I.'s at Huntsville Arsenal. Many people said he had a violent temper and was involved in many fights, some of which he resolved with the gun he always carried.

Perhaps the thing he was best known for, however, was the "Clip Joint." Some time earlier he had acquired a semi-truck with a 32 foot trailer. On paydays at the Arsenal he would park the trailer close to the gates, and with the help of accomplices, would lure

soldiers and employees into the trailer where he had a bar and crooked dice tables set up. The trailer had originally been owned by C & J trucking but local wags, after noticing the faded lettering, quickly dubbed it the "Clip Joint."

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not approve.

When Roberts appeared at the market one day and proposed that Lucy go for a ride with him she hesitated, explaining that she could not afford to miss any potential customers.

"How much do you make a day?" asked Roberts.

"Three or four dollars, if I'm lucky," replied Lucy.

Roberts quickly ended the conversation by laying a five dollar bill on the counter.

A pattern soon evolved. Lucy would work at the produce stand every Saturday until lunch time when Roberts would pick her up. Lucy always insisted that she be back at the market before 6:00 pm when her mother arrived to take her home.

Gilliam, preoccupied with digging the well and trying to support his family, had no idea




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of the courtship until one afternoon, about the time school let out, when Roberts and Lucy drove up.

Gilliam paused, laying the shovel aside, as he watched the couple walk toward him. He knew something was going on, Lucy was dressed in different clothes than the ones she wore to school that morning.

"Pa, we got married today."

Gilliam, stunned by this unexpected turn of events, stood silently as Lucy explained how Roberts had met her at school that morning and they had driven across the state line where they found a Justice of the Peace who had agreed to marry them.

By this time the rest of the family had gathered around Lucy, wanting to hear every detail. Roberts, not caring much for the emotions of the moment, wandered over to the well Gilliam had been working on.

Gilliam, sensing the need to say something to Roberts but not knowing what to say, walked over to the well with

him. Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, he asked, "You going to take care of her?" It was as much of a statement as it was a question.

"Get serious, old man," Roberts replied in an almost sarcastic manner. Then almost as an afterthought added, "You still working on this rock hole? The rains are going to come soon and you won't need it."

Gilliam, surprised at the sarcasm from his daughter's new husband, was at a loss for words. After a few moments of awkward hesitation he replied, "May as well finish it, might come in handy some day."

That evening, after the couple had left, Gilliam sat on the porch smoking his pipe, thinking about the day's events. If he had his druthers, none of it would have ever happened. "But still, Lucy is almost a grown woman. Her mother was only 15 when I married her and it worked out well. Maybe that boy will take care of her and everything will be all right."

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of his mind, was the realization that poor people just naturally married young. With no education, no money and no hope for a future, the only thing a girl had to look forward to was getting married.

The first sign of trouble came several weeks later, on a Sunday afternoon, when Gilliam and his wife stopped by to visit Lucy at her new home. Although Roberts was supposedly making good money from his various illegal enterprises, little if any of it went home with him. Most of it went to gambling and drinking. The house where they resided, in Dallas Village, was actually a bootleg joint owned by someone else but the person owed Roberts money and had agreed to let the couple live in the front part rent free while he continued bootlegging in the back.

Lucy was thrilled to see her parents, even in such shabby surroundings. "This is just temporary," she explained apologetically. "We're going to get us a big house just as soon as he gets on his feet."

Even though it was almost three in the afternoon Roberts was still in bed. "He: had some

business to take care of last night and didn't get in until late."

Wakened by the sound of voices, Roberts staggered groggily into the room where he dropped heavily into a chair. From his looks it was apparent that he was still suffering the effects from the previous night's "business."

Ignoring Gilliam, Roberts abruptly ordered Lucy to get him something to eat. When she didn't respond immediately, Roberts grabbed her arm and shoved her roughly toward the kitchen with the admonition to "make sure it's fit to eat!"

Noticing Gilliam sitting in the corner of the room, Roberts explained sarcastically, "We've still got some kinks to work out but she'll learn."

With Lucy no longer helping her family, Gilliam returned to driving his produce route every Saturday while his wife worked at the market. Still, he continued digging the well, even if only for an hour or two a week. He had struck solid rock and progress was measured in inches as he laboriously chiseled away at it with a hammer and crowbar.

The family, knowing Roberts didn't care for their company, stopped visiting Lucy at her house. Instead, several times a month, she would walk the 5 or 6 miles to her parents' home where she would spend

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the day. When it came time to return home, Gilliam would drive her, letting her out about a block down the street. "My husband doesn't want me to take any favors from anyone and if he sees me taking a ride from someone he might get upset."

Despite the many warning signs, Gilliam held his peace. Possibly he was hoping that time would work matters out. Most likely however, he was a product of his time, a culture where no one interfered in another person's marriage and where divorce was unspeakable. Never in the history of the Gilliam family had a couple even separated, much less divorced. Making matters even worse was the fact that most people considered a divorced woman little better than a "lady of the night."

Lucy's visits became less fre-

quent, but when she did visit there would often be signs of bruises on her arms and neck. "Just an accident," she would explain. "I bumped into something." One hot sweltering day she showed up wearing a long sleeved flannel shirt. When her mother insisted, Lucy rolled the sleeves up revealing dark ugly bruises. There were even more bruises on her back and legs.

"It was my fault," explained Lucy while wiping tears from her eyes. "I made him upset and I shouldn't have."

Her mother called Gilliam into the room and explained what happened. After examining the bruises himself, he stood silent for a long time looking at his wife and daughter, trying in his mind to verbalize the words he had been putting off for so long.

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he said quietly. "We'll go to the courthouse and get papers."

The words stunned Lucy and her mother. They both realized how hard it was for Gilliam to accept a divorce in the family.

The decision was made by Lucy. "Things will get better, I just know they will and he's expecting me to have dinner on the table, so I have to go."

Early that evening Gilliam worked in the well. Long after the sun had gone down he continued pounding the hard rock with a vengeance he had never known before. He was no longer crushing simple rocks, he was crushing his helplessness and despair with a cold rage for which he knew there was no outlet.

The next morning Gilliam drove into Huntsville to talk to Sheriff Blakemore. His second cousin's oldest daughter was married to the sheriff and though Gilliam didn't consider him a close friend, they had what he called a "passable" relationship.

After listening to Gilliam's account of the bruises, the sheriff had but one question. "Will she swear out a warrant?"

"I don't think so," replied Gilliam.

"There ain't nothing I can do then. It's all up to her."

Nevertheless, that afternoon the sheriff stopped by to talk with Roberts. Though he had no legal basis for the visit, he was undoubtedly hoping a bluff, or a threat, might accom-

plish the same thing.

Roberts merely listened to the sheriff with thinly disguised contempt and then ordered him off the property. "You ain't got no right meddling in peoples' marriages," he shouted. "This is a family matter!"

Several days later Gilliam and his family had just sat down at the supper table and were about to say the blessing when a neighbor stopped by to say he had seen Lucy at the hospital. He had been visiting a relative, he explained, and just as he was leaving, he saw Lucy being treated by a doctor. "I think she's got a broken arm because I saw them putting a cast on it."

Gilliam said nothing but the look of rage on his face made



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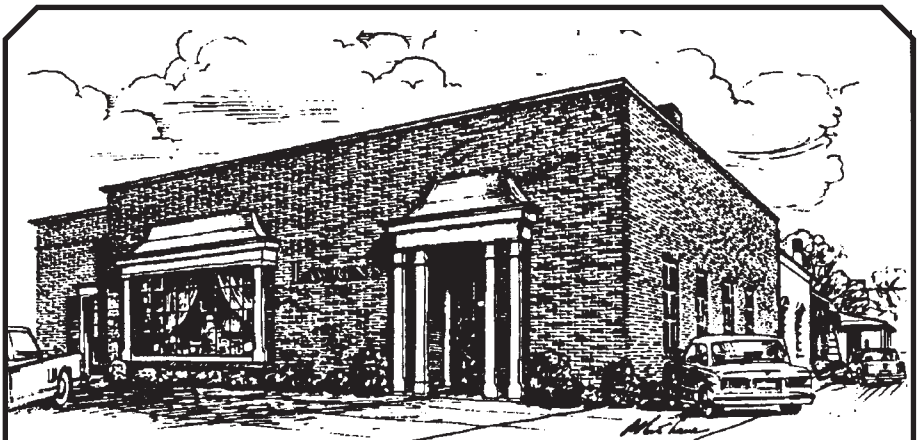
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Mark Twain

his intent clear. He had just reached for his coat and was about to walk out when his wife ordered him to sit back down first. "We are going to say the blessing first and then you can go do whatever it is you have to do."

Gilliam rushed to the hospital where the nurses told him that Lucy had been taken away by her husband. Next he drove to their house but even from a distance it was evident that it was vacant. The only other place he could think of was the "Clip Joint." He had never been there but had heard the rumors of the crooked dice games Roberts ran from the trailer.

Upon arriving, Gilliam knew he was at the right place by the loud music and profanity piercing the night air. Entering the trailer he immediately saw Lucy sitting in a corner. Her arm was in a cast, and her hair hung limply across her face. On her right cheek was a bruise that was just starting to turn a dark purple. "Come on," Gilliam said. "We're going home."

Roberts had been on his knees in the back of the trailer shooting dice when he noticed the old man. Springing to his feet he ordered, "Leave her be. This is a private thing between her and me!"

Gilliam paused for a brief second, eyeing all the men in the trailer before letting his gaze rest on Roberts. "Boy, I ought to kill you right now but I'm not going to. I'm going to take my daughter home and you can go on about whatever you do. Just don't never let me see you again."

Something about the unarmed old crippled man; something more than the barely controlled wrath in his voice, caused the men in the trailer to freeze in their footsteps as they

watched him escort his daughter out.

If Gilliam had hoped that would be the end of it, he was sadly mistaken. In the morning's early hours, before the sun came up, the family was awakened by the sound of an automobile and loud cursing. Gilliam quickly grabbed his overalls and started for the front door when he was startled by the sound of breaking glass followed almost instantly by a wall of flames.


In spite of all the noise and

confusion of the inferno, the whole family swore they heard Roberts laughing as the car drove away.

Although no one was hurt in the fire, the house was destroyed and all of their meager possessions lost. After salvaging what little they could from the ruins, Gilliam drove to the Huntsville bus depot where he put his family on a bus to Chicago where his wife's sister lived.

Word of the fire and of Gilliam sending his family to Chi-

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chicago had spread throughout the community. Several neighbors, though taking great pains not to get involved, stopped by the ruins of the house to see the carnage from the night before. The first thing they noticed was Gilliam with a pick and shovel still working in the well.

Trying to make conversation, one of the neighbors remarked, "That well will come in handy next summer won't it?"

Without pausing in his labor, Gilliam replied in a barely audible mumble, "Ain't going to need it. Going to Chicago."

Many townspeople were even more puzzled by the fact that Gilliam had not showed up at the sheriff's office to swear out a warrant for the arson. Until he made a complaint there was nothing the authorities could do.

That same night an unidentified person threw several sticks of dynamite under the "Clip Joint." The trailer was totally destroyed and its occupants, cut and bruised, barely escaped. People assumed that Gilliam was responsible, probably as a last measure of revenge before joining his family in Chicago.

"If he was responsible," people theorized, "that boy had it coming." Almost everyone had heard of Roberts' abuse of his child bride and of the arson he undoubtedly had committed. For many people there was even a certain amount of wishful reminiscing about the "old days when the Klan took care of that kind."

Gilliam had not left town, though. The next morning he was back at the well working at a feverish pace. Neighbors, curious at his strange behavior but still not wanting to get involved, stopped by several times during the day trying to

draw the old man into a conversation. Gilliam, after politely acknowledging their presence, continued digging, refusing all attempts at conversation.

Late that afternoon neighbors saw him sitting on top of the huge pile of dirt next to the well. Something about the way he sat silently staring into the hole made it apparent that the well was finally finished.

That evening, about 9 o'clock, Roberts was sitting at the bar in the White Castle, a notorious speakeasy located near the intersection of Meridian Street and Winchester Road. With all of his cronies gathered around, he was basking in his new notoriety as he told of running the Gilliam family out of Madison County.

Most of the patrons, however, tried to ignore Roberts. The incidents of the past few days had disgusted them. Probably what bothered them the most, though no one would say it out loud, was the fact that they had let it happen without doing anything.

Suddenly the whole place got quiet as people focused on a solitary figure standing in the doorway, holding a shotgun leveled at Roberts. Some people said it was 'ol man Gilliam, but other people, probably wiser, said there was no resemblance.

Without saying a word, letting the motions of his gun give the orders, the figure directed Roberts outside. A backward glance insured that no one would follow.

Some people claimed to have heard a gunshot moments later but others, after careful thought, insisted it was just a car backfiring.

By the next morning almost everyone in Huntsville had heard of the evening's strange events. Gilliam's neighbors, now embarrassed because they

hadn't helped, drove by the burned out homestead. The place looked much the same as it had the day before with personal belongings scattered across the yard and partially burnt timbers swaying in the wind. There was no sign of Gilliam, though.

The only sign that someone had been there since the day before was the well. It had been completely filled up.

Roberts was never seen again. Some people in Huntsville, perhaps a lot wiser than most, said he probably left town suddenly due to "unexpected business."

More than likely they felt, as Sheriff Blakemore was later overheard saying, "It was just a family matter."

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A Genealogical Nightmare

from 1874 Newspaper



One of the most sensational cases ever to appear before our court system is due to go to trial next week in Judge Ramsay's court.

Mr. Allan Dement, a 72 year old resident of this city is charged with the crime of marrying his granddaughter. According to reports, Mr. Dement returned from the war to find his home burned and family scattered to the four winds. Finally after much difficulty he was able to locate his granddaughter, who was at the time living in Jackson all alone, but for her four children. She too had become separated from her family.

The couple soon set up house together and began living a life as man and wife along with her children who were his great grandchildren but were now his stepchildren, making them their mother's uncles by marriage. After the granddaughter/wife sensed signs of approaching motherhood, a quick visit before a justice of the peace was arranged. When the child was born it became the mother's son/great uncle, the father's son/great grandson and the half brother and great great uncle of the other children.

Soon, however, her eldest son (the great grandson of its stepfather and the great nephew of his half brother) began

a correspondence with his aunt who was also Dement's granddaughter. The aunt/granddaughter, upon hearing the news immediately notified her great uncle who was also Dement's brother, so he paid a personal visit to his great nephew who was his brother's stepson.

The great nephew/stepson and brother/great uncle then notified the judge (no kin) who issued a writ for the arrest of the grandfather/husband and granddaughter/wife. The child has been placed in care of its half brother who is also his nephew and his mother's uncle by marriage.

The trial is sure to attract a lot of near-by relatives.

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A Lady of Distinction



from 1866 newspaper

Clarissa Douglass, a lady of dubious distinction, was up before Justice Figg yesterday on a charge of stealing clothes from Huntsville's merchants.

Miss Douglass' downfall was her penchant for fine clothing which she said, "is necessary for any lady in my

changed position," hence she began a monologue describing why each article of the purloined clothing was essential to maintain her position in our fair city's society.

She found her purse would not withstand so heavy a load, but the clothes must be had. Recalling the raids of the late war, she decided to undertake one of her own, and if successful, would be clothed as well as the best of them.

Her raid ended on a sour note when she attempted to leave the store with three dresses in an egg basket, and two hats perched daintily upon her head. She was brought up before the august presence of Justice Figg, who after hearing evidence of the state, bound Clarissa over in a bond of \$100.00.

No one appearing to endorse for her, Clarissa went down to the corner of Clinton and Green Streets to wait until the court is held.

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Growing up in West Huntsville

by Stephen Stolz

I was raised in the West Huntsville area of Eighth and Ninth Avenue. I later lived on North Rose in West Lawn. College took me to Decatur and Florence, while the Army took me to Georgia, Texas and Germany. Although exposed to other places, I always came back to "Old Huntsville".

In 1948, my father moved my mother and older brother Jimmy to Canton, Ohio. Dad was a house painter and moved there with his brother Howard looking for work. I was born there in 1949. In 1951, we moved back to Huntsville.

Times were hard in the 1950s for us even though I am not sure we children knew it. In 1951 my sister Kathy was born. In elementary school, we attended West Huntsville Elementary on Ninth Avenue. We would walk home to our house on Eighth Avenue just west of Twelfth Street.

Walking home while in the first grade, I was hit by a 1950 bullet nose Studebaker. It knocked me into my friend Luther Kirkland. I remember waking up in the hospital, seeing Luther's father carrying him in. Luther had small pebbles stuck in his crew cut head.

At times, we would move in with my grandmother, Edith Nickelson. She had a coal-burning stove which she used for heat. She lived next to Kendricks Grocery at Ninth Avenue and Twelfth Street. The three of us children would pull our little red wagon to find coal when there wasn't money to buy it. One day I was told to take the wagon to Dorning's Grocery and purchase a 50 pound bag of coal. I really didn't want to go because I would have to pass "Booger Town".

There was a bully there that was looking for me. As I walked past "Booger Town" I hurried into the store thinking I had made

it safely. I opened the door to the store and there he was. He said, "Come outside, we're going to fight." What could I do? After the scuffle he didn't bother me anymore. It ended with me chasing him to his house.

Our friend Travis Fields would come to our house with a Double Cola and be eating a bag of potato chips everyday. We thought he was rich to be able to have this daily. His father drove a delivery truck for Sterchi's Furniture. Back in the 1950s Huntsville had public transportation buses which many people used to get around town. At the bus stop on Ninth Avenue in front of my grandmother's house, the bus ran over Travis's foot. He was just a little sore.

We would go to the movies at the Center Theater. Movies were fifteen cents and popcorn was ten cents. We would pick up drink bottles and collect one cent per

bottle. When bottles went up to two cents, it was like getting a big raise. The scary part about going to the movies was walking back at night. We would walk past the cotton warehouses and think of all the stories of "Headless Hazel"! If we survived the cotton warehouses, next up was "Booger Town".

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When I was ten and my brother Jimmy was twelve years old, we talked our uncle Tim Nickelson into driving us to the pump house in Decatur. Our plan was to fish and camp out, and then the two of us would ride our single bicycle back to Huntsville the next morning. About eight o'clock in the evening, thunder and lightning rolled in. My brother said he wasn't going to get rained on all night and took off walking. I wasn't going to stay there by myself so off we went. The wind was blowing hard. It was blowing so hard we could not ride the bicycle at all during the whole trip.

After what seemed like hours later we stopped at the country store in Mooresville for hot chocolate. Thinking we were almost to Huntsville we asked how much farther did we have to go? The owner said, "A long way." Later down the road we saw a sign that said "Huntsville - 17 Miles".

The next morning we made it to our house at five o'clock. Not bad for pushing a bicycle and carrying fishing poles and a back pack into a 30 mile per hour wind!

Our lazy, hot summers were filled with sandlot baseball. We played anywhere we could find an open field. We would cut the grass and find anything we could for the bases. If you hit a fly ball to the high grass it was a home run. Players that I remember were my brother, Jimmy Stolz, Travis Fields, David Weaver, Billy Mullins, Dale and Duane Cantrell, David and Dewayne Vest, Bubba Stoltz and anyone else we could round up. I played organized ball and the two coaches that were most influential were Melvin Brooks and Ray Walker. Both were tremendous role models for young boys needing direction.

When not playing baseball or football, we fished. We would walk to any local fishing holes we could find. Some of the places were Brahan Springs (Merimac), ponds that were behind the cotton warehouses and Bob Wallace and our favorite Cobb's Hill. Cobb's Hill was on Old Madison Pike near what is now Madison Pike Elementary School. We would fish the running water under the bridge.

I later attended Butler High School where Stone Middle School is now located. I remember cruising up and down the Parkway. We would circle Shoney's Drive-In, and then go south to Jerry's Drive-In. We would circle Jerry's and back to Shoney's looking for girls. I don't remember ever finding any.

My first car was a 1955 Ford. My brother had a 1956 Crown Victoria with overdrive. On a trip to my Uncle James Nickelson's house in Ha-

zel Green, I remember going about 135 mph with my brother driving and his Crown Vic had tires that were completely worn out.

When I think about some of the dangerous things we did, it makes me realize why so many young people die young.

Growing up in West Huntsville in the 1950s to mid 1960s was tough by most anyone's standards. However, there were lessons learned that I will never forget. These memories will stay with me forever.

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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Congratulations to the Photo of the Month winner for August - **Jane Patterson** of Meridianville! Many know Jane and she and **Joe Patterson** have been married for 47 years now. Joe was Sheriff of Madison County for alot of years. She took care of Joe and their boys **Brent** and **Jason** for many years. Jane and Joe are the proud grandparents of 3 grand daughters. The baby picture was me! I ran out of famous people, but alot of callers ID'd me.

Happy Birthday to my good friend **Barb Eyestone** who has a Sep. 17 birthday. Time for a Party!

Also I hear that **Darryl Goldman** has a Sep. 15 Birthday. Hard to believe cause that man Never looks any older! It's that good care by sweet wife **Linda**.

If you want to have your lettuce, greens, peppers etc. really last a long time in the refrigerator, just put it in an empty cereal box liner. Well I tried it and it really works! I've had a head of lettuce in one bag now for 2 weeks and it is as fresh as when I first bought it. **LeRoy Friendly (Larry Fowler)** said it's the chemicals in the liner. Not sure about that but something sure makes it work.

Lots of events happening in September like the **Trade Day**

around the Square (Saturday Sep 12 from 8-5) and the **Super Slide down Church Street** with food trucks & entertainment.

Concerts on the Dock at Lowe Mill is starting again every Friday in September from 6-9pm and they are SO good - it's outdoor, entertaining and free. You can bring your own beverages, blankets, pets and kids. So much fun and places to eat as well.

Jan Williams wanted to remind us that there will be a Walking Tour of 5 Points Historic District on Oct. 3 at 10am. You should meet at the NW corner of Maple Hill cemetery on Wells Ave. The event is put on by the Convention and Visitor's Bureau and Jan will be the tour guide for this day. There are so many different stories to hear and the architectural styles of the homes are different and interesting. Lasts about an hour and a half, wear some comfy shoes.

Just remembering that life is soon to get exciting around the **Rountree** home - **Jim** is an avid Alabama football fan and **Carolyn** feels just as strongly about Auburn! They would be a great couple to have at your Auburn-

Alabama game party!

We were so sorry to hear that 18 year old **Hunter Huskey** had passed away in mid July. He was a recent graduate of Grisson High School, was a licensed EMT and loved his family. He is survived by parents **Darrell** and **Michelle Huskey**; sister, **Hannah Huskey**; grandmother **Carol Stewart** and Uncle, **Mike Stewart**. We send our deepest condolences to his family and friends.

I recently tried some Shrimp & Grits that **Walter Thames** makes and sells at Greene Street Farmers Market. It was SO good. His company is "What's for Supper" and it makes it so easy cause you just warm it up - no cooking!

That mechanical genius **Sam Keith** will be having a birthday Sep. 28. He can do nearly anything! Happy Birthday to Sam.

I wanted to send a special hello to our friend **Jo Green** of Athens who loves reading about the history of this area.

Col. Martin Burke, Jr. was a long-time resident at Redstone Village and a friend to many of the people who worked/lived there. Col. Burke passed away Aug. 19 at the age of 95 and so many will miss his friendliness

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 boy headed up an orchestra in town and likes to write stories about the past!



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and how he would join in the sing-alongs RV had with his beautiful voice. He leaves wife **Edress** (married nearly 68 years); children **Marty Burke (Ann)**; **Cheryl Van Aken (Steve)** and his beloved grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Phyllis Lawrence called us to let us know that her sweet husband, **Billy Lawrence**, had a 71st birthday on Aug. 26. They live in Murfreesboro, TN and Phyllis says she is so blessed to have Billy in her life, he's her whole world.

The annual reunion of the **Rison/Dallas Assoc.** was held recently at Jackson Way Baptist Church and was so much fun. Everyone who attended brought a dish and the spread was unbelievable. There are fewer and fewer of those who worked in the mills years ago, and it was sad to me when the President read the names of the members who had passed away during the year. There were close to 40 who had died, including **Floyd Hardin** who owned Jackson Way Styling Salon.

That's why I keep asking for memories, and stories from your family members. If you don't get it in writing, and your relative passes away, those memories are gone. We need to get them written and published in Old Huntsville so that they will be around forever!

Happy Birthday to that handsome **Clayton Yarbrough** of Athens. He will be 86 on Sep. 2 and his daughter **Ann Smith** loves

him SO MUCH and wants him to have a great birthday.

So many people are sick of being robbed and are buying security cameras. Years ago they were pretty expensive but now the prices have gone down and with the wireless versions out there, they're easy to install and gets you clear images of any-way who tries to break in. There have been several instances in Huntsville where the homeowner was able to turn pictures over to the police and arrests were made. The police are doing a great job in Huntsville but they need our help too. More eyes out there can prevent thefts.

It's a little bit in the future but be sure and mark your calendar for the Oct. 18th **Maple Hill Cemetery Stroll** from 2-4:30 pm. It's free and there are always hundreds of people visiting. Donations are accepted and all monies are used in the care & maintenance of the cemetery. There will be over 70 characters who are buried there to inform you about themselves and the part they played in Huntsville's history. There have been many stories about them in Old Huntsville as well (**Mollie Teal, Lily Flagg the cow, etc.**) Very family friendly and a popular event.

A very special Happy Birthday to my Mom, **Dr. Annelie Owens**, who will be 95 years young on 9/11. She went to medical school at the

University of Berlin where she lived, during the war years, and remembered taking her medical books to the shelters when bombs would be falling over her city. An amazing, strong woman and I LOVE you Mom.

Have a Great September!

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Mood Foods

Foods can definitely affect your moods. Skip the refined sugar, and try some of these healthy menu suggestions.

Cottage Cheese Fruit Salad

- 3 tart, red apples
- 1 small pear
- 1 c. cottage cheese
- 2 T. chopped dates
- 2 T. chopped walnuts
- Lemon juice

Core & chop one of the of the apples and the pear, combine them with the cottage cheese, dates and nuts. Cut remaining apples into eight wedges each, sprinkle with lemon juice. Arrange four apple wedges in a

circle on each serving plate, and place a portion of the cottage cheese mixture in the center. Garnish with mint sprigs.

Greek Vegetable Salad

- 1 c. sliced green beans
- 4 c. shredded cabbage
- 1/3 c. crumbled feta cheese
- 3 T. olive oil
- 1 T. vinegar
- 1/2 t. dried thyme

Steam the green beans til crisp-tender, shock in ice water and drain. Combine the cabbage and feta in a serving bowl.

For the dressing, mix the oil, vinegar and thyme in a small bowl.

Add green beans to the cabbage mixture, toss with the dressing and serve.

Chili Bean Dip

- 1 large ripe tomato, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 fresh hot pepper, halved
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 T. tamari sauce
- 4 t. chili powder
- 2 t. ground cumin
- 2 c. cooked kidney beans

Place all ingredients, except for the beans, in a blender and process on medium til smooth. Add 1 cup of the beans and process til blended. Add remaining beans and repeat. Serve dip with natural corn chips or corn tacos.

Garlic Bean Salad

- 2 c. cooked navy, garbanzo, kidney or pinto beans
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped

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- 3 scallions, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves
- 3 T. minced fresh parsley
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 1 t. dijon-style mustard

Combine beans, celery and scallion in a serving bowl. Put the garlic through a garlic press (or use the prepared minced garlic, 1 teaspoon) and add it to the serving bowl along with the parsley.

In a small jar combine oil, lemon juice and mustard. Shake and pour over the salad. Toss to combine and chill before serving.

For extra spicy, sprinkle a bit of ground cayenne pepper.

Avocados Eldorado

- 2 large ripe avocados
- 1 lime, squeezed
- 1/2 cantaloupe or melon of your choice
- 3/4 c. seedless green grapes
- Honey

Cut the avocados in half lengthwise and remove pit. Sprinkle cut halves with some lime juice to prevent discoloring. Using a melon bailer, cut out a dozen small balls from the melon half.

Place a mixture of melon balls and grapes in the avocado halves. Sprinkle with lime juice and drizzle with a little honey.

Whipped Dessert Topping

- 1 c. ricotta cheese
- 1 T. honey
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract

Place ricotta in a blender with the honey and vanilla, process on low speed til the mixture is smooth and has the consistency of heavy whipped cream. Chill. If too thick, add a few teaspoons of milk.

Pineapple Ambrosia

- 1/2 ripe pineapple
- 1/4 c. chopped walnuts
- 1/4 c. sour cream

Peel, core and cube the pineapple half, drain. In a serving dish, toss with the chopped walnuts and sour cream. Add a dash of cardamom, if desired, and serve immediately.

Peanut Butter Nightcap

- 1 T. peanut butter, smooth
- 1-1/2 t. honey
- 1 c. milk
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract

Place peanut butter and honey in small saucepan with a few spoonfuls of the milk. Stir over low heat til smooth. Add remaining milk and vanilla, stir over low to medium heat til just hot. Strain and serve immediately. Different and surprisingly comforting before bedtime!



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Madison on Saturday Nights

by John W. Hughes, Athens

Saturday nights in downtown Madison in the late 1940s and early 1950s were usually calm and uneventful. The stores stayed open until around 9:00 p.m. The streets were crowded with shoppers. Not that they were buying all that much - money was scarce. They had come to town to socialize. There was no television or movies in Madison, so walking up and down the street talking to friends was the evening entertainment. An old farm couple from just outside Madison would come into town and park in front of the Farmers and Merchants Bank and just watch the parade of humanity. Around 8:30 p.m. they would buy two fountain cokes from my father's drug store. When they finished those, it was time to go home.

About every other month there was some sidewalk entertainment. A medicine man named Jake set up his table in front of the drug store. He had several herbal medicines of his own concoction. Two of his best sellers were a liniment that he guaranteed would cure the aches and pains brought on by working in the cotton fields. The other was an elixir that he claimed would rival today's Cialis and Viagra.

My father said Jake's father was a black man and his mother was a Cherokee Indian. Jake would gather a crowd with several magic tricks that included card reading and steel rings joined together. No one could ever separate the rings, but Jake would cover the rings with a scarf, tap it with a wand and the rings would be separated when the scarf was lifted.

His routine seldom varied. Near the end of his magic act a voice would come from the large cardboard suitcase Jake had on the table. When the suitcase was opened a ventriloquist dummy would scold Jake for keeping him locked up. Jake would take him out and they would begin a dialogue that was risqué for the time. Some of the jokes would be considered racist if it had not been a black dummy and a black ventriloquist performing the act. When the act ended a line would form to purchase Jake's medicines.

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However, not all Saturday nights were calm and quiet. At times things could get as rowdy as Dodge City when the cattle herds came in. One particular night a gunshot was heard and someone screamed "She done been shot!"

The shooting took place at the west end of the street. The crowd began to exit in a hurry toward the east end. My father's drug store was in the middle. He was Mayor of Madison at the time. There was only one policeman / night watchman on duty and he came to the side entrance of the drug store and told my father that he needed help.

Normally, my father's 12 gauge shotgun would have been in the prescription room, but on this occasion it was behind the front door of our home on Church Street. So, my father and the policeman jumped in his pickup truck to go get the gun. When they went out the front door of the drug store the crowd had cleared out and the gunman was walking down the sidewalk declaring that he would kill any SOB that stood in his way.

After getting the shotgun from home, they drove back downtown. The streets were deserted. The gunman had gone. An advantage to living in a small town is that everybody knew where everybody else lived. They drove to the gunman's house. When my dad stepped out of his truck the shooting started from the direction of the wood pile. My dad fired back with his 12 gauge shotgun expending all 5 shells. When the gunfire exchange stopped the man screamed "You have done killed me!"

It turned out that he was not killed as he claimed; only peppered from head to toe with birdshot. It also turned out that the girl who had been "killed" had not been harmed. Only frightened. If the man had not been so drunk he might have been a better shot.

About two years later I was driving toward Madison and passed a man walking in the direction I was headed. I offered him a ride and when we were underway he asked me if I was Mr. Walter Hughes' boy. I told him that I was and we drove on to downtown Madison. I let him out and went on home to dinner.

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Jay Leno

When my father came home to dinner he said "Guess who came in the store this morning? Old "XX" who got into the gunfight with us that Saturday night. He's been in Kilby for a couple of years and stopped by to apologize for all the trouble he caused."

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GRANDMA'S REMEDIES



- For nervousness - throughout the day, sip apple, pineapple, prune, grape and cherry juice. Drink them at room temperature, not chilled.

- When you wake up in a sad state of mind and don't know why, wear bright colors to help cheer you up. The rose colors - pinks and scarlets - are good. Also effective is the orange family for a good picker-upper.

- If you feel especially moody, drink peppermint tea. Drink it warm and strong.

- According to European folklore, celery helps you forget your troubles from a broken heart and soothes your nerves at the same time.

- For a painful case of shingles, try a paste of Epsom salts and water. Place the paste directly on the af-

ected area. Repeat as often as necessary.

- The fastest way to do away with a blister is to have snail crawl over it.

- If you are still young enough to have pimples on your face, try eating brown rice. It contains amino acids that are good for skin conditions. For blackheads, before going to bed rub lemon juice over the area. Wait til morning to wash off the juice with cool water. Repeat several evenings in a row and you'll see results.

- If you are prone to

nightmares, eat a small evening meal 2 hours before retiring. When you go to bed, sleep on your right side with your right hand under your head. Then tell yourself that you will have a happy dream.

- To improve your memory, drink half a glass of carrot juice together with a half glass of milk, daily. Or try 4 whole cloves added to a cup of sage tea. Drink a cup everyday.

- For a fever, bind sliced onions or peeled garlic to the soles of your feet. It may give you garlic breath. Or eat grapes throughout the day.

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"He's the kind of man a woman would need to marry in order to get rid of."

Mae West

This Auction Business

by Bob Baker, 1992



My back hurts, my feet hurt and my eyes are tired. Sorry to complain so, but I just returned from a marathon six-hour auction and I left before it was over! I didn't need to stay - all the items I had been interested in sold and I no longer have the fascination I once had for such events. After twenty years of attending them, I have found the limit of my enjoyment and can leave. No guilt, no real interest in what the remaining items will bring. I get what I want and go home.

But sometimes I get what I don't want and that's why I'm sitting here at my word processor writing this. Perhaps it will save you aggravation and protect your investment if you are buying with that in mind. I don't think there's anything worse than bringing home that wonderful bargain or that expensive-looking piece that is cracked, a put-together or a little unsound in construction. (As you're unloading it three legs suddenly plunge to the ground).

All of the

above has happened to me. A few years ago I bought a great looking drop leaf dining room table I got it for a steal. I couldn't believe no one was bidding! Were they blind? Ignorant of its potential value? Asleep?

The mystery of my bargain unfolded when I noticed, well, that it looked a little funny. It sat in the shop and seemed to glare at me. It gave off some strange sort of energy as a friend of mine might say. So, taking the bull by the horns, I did the simple thing I should have done at the auction. I looked underneath, where the legs are attached to the top. Something I had failed to do at the auction. In fact, I had not examined the piece at all before the sale, it came up and I just bought it. Well, those legs had never seen what was attached to them. It was two tables put together.

OK, you might say, no big deal. Just put a price on it and get rid of it. Let someone else worry about it or not realize that they are getting. That would be fine except it's not the way I want to run my business. A customer should know what

they are getting and I don't like to sell tainted merchandise.

I immediately called the auction where I bought the table, told them what the problem was and they told me to return the item for a full refund. Very nice of them. That's why I've done business with them all these years. I'm just glad they couldn't see my red face over the whole mess. I should know better after all these years. I should know to always look closely at what I am going to buy. But I'm only human, impulsive and sometimes too eager.

So, look things over before you buy them. Auctions are busy places, they can't know everything. They may fail to say there's damage on a piece because they may not know it's damaged. There's nothing wrong in buying an item, going and then looking it over and if it's not what they said it was, tell them and let them put the item back up for sale. Don't think you will win any popularity prizes if you do this, but if it's their failure to call damaged items, it may just make them be more careful in the future. Like I try to be.

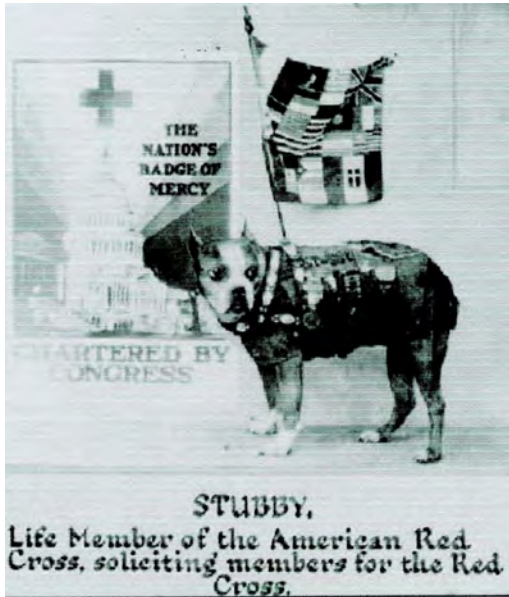
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STUBBY, WAR DOG HERO



Submitted by Austin Miller

In honor of Veterans, I thought this little bit of history would be interesting to share.

America's first war dog was a stray Pit Bull/Terrier mix, named Stubby. He became Sgt. Stubby, was the most decorated war dog of World War I and the only dog to be promoted to Sergeant through combat.

One day he appeared at Yale Field in New Haven, Connecticut; while a group of soldiers were training, stopping to make friends with soldiers as they drilled. One soldier, Corporal Robert Conroy, developed a fondness for the dog. He named him Stubby because of his short legs. When it became time for the outfit to ship out, Conroy hid Stubby on board the troop ship. In order to keep the dog, the private taught him to salute his commanding officers, warming their hearts to him.

Stubby served with the 102nd Infantry, 26th (Yankee) Division

in the trenches in France for 18 months and participated in 4 offensives and 18 battles. The loud noise of the bombs and gunfire did not bother him. He was never content to stay in the trenches but went out and found wounded soldiers.

Stubby entered combat on February 5, 1918 at Chemin Des Dames, north of Soissons, and was under constant fire, day and night for over a month. In April 1918, during a raid to take Schieprey, Stubby was wounded in the foreleg by the retreating Germans throwing hand grenades. He was sent to the rear for convalescence, and as he had done on the front was able to improve morale. When he recovered from



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his wounds, Stubby returned to the trenches.

After being gassed and nearly dying himself, Stubby learned to warn his unit of poison gas attacks, continued to locate wounded soldiers in no man's land. Since he could hear the whine of incoming artillery shells before humans could, he became very adept at letting his unit know when to duck for cover.

He was solely responsible for capturing a German spy in the Argonne. The spy made the mistake of speaking German to him when they were alone. Stubby knew he was no ally and attacked him, biting and holding on to him by the seat of his pants until his comrades could secure him.

Following the retaking of Chateau-Thierry by the U.S., the thankful women of the town made Stubby a chamois coat on which were pinned his many medals. There is also a legend that while in Paris with Corporal Conroy, Stubby saved a young girl from being hit by a car. At the end of the war, Conroy smuggled Stubby home.

After returning home, Stubby became a celebrity. He marched in, and normally led, many parades across the country. He met Presidents Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge and Warren G. Harding. Starting in 1921, he attended Georgetown University Law Center with Conroy, and became the Georgetown Hoyas' team mascot. He would be given the football at halftime and would nudge the ball around the field to the amusement of the fans.

Stubby was made a life member of the American Legion, the Red Cross and the YMCA. In 1921, the Humane Education Society awarded

him a special gold medal for service to his country. It was presented by General John Pershing.

In 1926, Stubby died in Conroy's arms. His remains are featured in "The Price of Freedom: Americans at War" exhibit at the Smithsonian. Stubby was honored with a brick in the Walk of Honor at the United States World War I monument, Liberty Memorial, in Kansas City at a ceremony held on Armistice Day, November 11, 2006.



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My Brother Jimmy

by Charlie Lyle

I'll never forget my brother Jimmy who was a pilot in the Air Force. He buzzed our house with a B-26. His training base was Courtland, Alabama. A crash almost occurred when he and his co-pilot became so absorbed in things. They came very close to slamming into Green Mountain on their turnaround.

A quick story about my brother, Jimmy. He flew his required minimum fifty missions over Austria and Southern Germany. If he had any bombs left over, his bombardier would drop them on the same location every time. Below, the same anti-aircraft operator would fire flack to bring the aircraft down. On one occasion he was successful and that forced Jimmy's plane to crash land in Albania. Lucky for them these were friendly forces. They made the necessary repairs and were able to return to their home base in Forgia, Italy.

During the war, German prisoners were held at Redstone Arsenal. My brother Jimmy made friends with a German fellow named George. George talked Jimmy and me into having a party at my house. The war had long been over at this point. We had beer and there were girls at the party. George had never met an American girl before. People were beginning to feel no pain. Jimmy and George begin discussing the war. Would you believe that George turned out to be the guy that was the anti-aircraft operator that was firing flack at Jimmy's plane in Austria?

You couldn't ask for a nicer guy. I don't know George's last name, but he has been an honorable citizen living in Huntsville for many years.

"Women like quiet men - they think they are listening."

Joe Fritz, quiet in Arab

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First Monday in May to be Trade Day in Huntsville

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Shooting in Cocaine Alley

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

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Memoirs of a Bishop



Recently discovered at the University of North Carolina are a set of manuscripts that tells an interesting story about a Huntsvillian's chance encounter with General Sherman.

Reverend Henry C. Lay was the first Rector of the Episcopal Church in Huntsville and during the war served as missionary bishop with the Army of Tennessee during the Georgia campaign. While with Hardee's corps on Sept. 16, 1864, Bishop Lay wrote the following to General Sherman:

"The undersigned respectfully suggests to Major General Sherman that he greatly desires to enter his lines, spend two or three days at Huntsville, and return."

"His object is to visit an old lady who has been as a mother to him and whose situation is such as to require an interview. He is well aware how unusual is a request and urges it with great deference. He can only say that the permission, if accorded, shall not be abused by a covert word or deed."

The reply sent by Gen. Sherman said:

"Bishop Lay may come to Atlanta where the necessary papers will be given him to visit the city of Huntsville and return. I will not exact of the Bishop any specific promise, but will presume on his character to observe the war secrecy."

When the Bishop was finally conducted to the commanding officer in Atlanta, his diary records:

"I found him most comfortably established in a fine house, near the city hall. The furniture seemed to be that of the owners. There was a parlor handsomely furnished opening into another used as an office.

General Sherman greeted me very cordially. He was in slippers and easy in manners. He has that military sort of courtesy which puts one at ease."

The bishop was invited to remain for dinner - pea soup in tin plates and some roast beef and vegetables, no drinkables - and after dinner on the piazza there was an interesting conversation "of an hour or two." "To be sure," he quotes the General as saying, "I have made war vindictively; war is war, and you can make nothing else of it; but Hood knows as well as anyone I am not brutal or inhuman."

After recording many interesting things in his diary, the bishop proceeds:

"He passed hence to speak of war in general. He observed that it was an artificial war brought about by the ambition of individual men; that it was impossible for two nations to exist side by side on this continent. The case was like the effervescence of a soda powder; agitation could be ended only by union. Of course, I dissented from those opinions and expressed the belief that the alienation between the nations was of slow growth; that the separation might by prudence

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have been deferred, but not prevented; there was a deep-seated alienation which would render it impossible for them to live together on terms of intimacy. All this be utterly denied. There was no real animosity, he said, and cited in proof of it the friendship which invariably characterizes the intercourse of pickets and others when they are permitted to converse ... It was of no force with me ... General Sherman insisted however that if the war were over, the past would be quickly forgotten and both parties would love and respect each other more than ever."

Here is a further unique view which the bishop quotes in the general's own words:

"But you made a great mistake in organizing a Confederacy. Had you clung to the Union and claimed to be legitimate exponents of the American ideas, the true representatives of the American Constitution, you would have had better success. As it was, you surrendered at once into our hands the most valuable of the common property - the memories and traditions, the flags and emblems, the songs and national airs. These are invaluable in sustaining the popular enthusiasm. This war ought to be arrested. It is intensifying the greatest fault and danger in our social system. It daily increases the influence of the masses, already too great for safety. The man of intelligence and education is depressed in value far below the man of mere physical strength. These common soldiers will feel their value and seek to control affairs hereafter to the prejudice of the intelligent classes."

As for his personal impression of Sherman, Bishop Lay writes:

"His hair is (not unpleasantly) red; his forehead very fine, his eye clear and restless. His face is somewhat dyspeptic in its expression. He would be accounted ordinarily a kindhearted man; but when aroused, severe and utterly unrelenting. His manner is very frank and outspoken." After a trying and eventful journey the bishop reached Huntsville, "and at last found my way to Mrs. Rice's, a Federal colonel occupying part of her house."

It may be recalled that it was in the home of Mrs. Rice that Lillie Bibb, afterward Mrs. William Greer, the 16-year-

old granddaughter of Gov. Thomas Bibb, was held a prisoner for three months by this Union colonel for burning a bridge across Limestone creek. The bishop's stay in Huntsville was prolonged more than a month because of the broken lines and inability to use General Sherman's pass to make his way back to Atlanta via Chattanooga, but after reposing in a freight car loaded with oats for two days and two nights he finally made the last seventy miles.

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COTTON PICKING AND OTHER PAST AND PRESENT FARM WORK

by Malcolm W. Miller

As I drive through the countryside these days and see all the modern farm equipment and new devices to make farming more profitable and much easier, I can't help thinking how different farm life is today from what it was when I was young. I keep thinking of all the things the youngsters of this day and age are missing, both good and bad that the children of my early years thought of as a way of life, a way of life that is gone now forever.

Most every farmer today owns at least one or more cotton picking machines, that means the youngsters today will never know what it is like to drag a pick sack through a cotton field all day long, to have their shoulders ache and be rubbed raw from dragging the heavy pick sack, looking up at the sky and praying for rain so you would be able to quit for the day and go to the house. Children today will not likely feel the sting of the caterpillar that often was hidden among the cotton leaves. They do not know what it was like to have their fingers bleed and hurt from the cotton burrs that would stick in them.

As I was picking cotton in the fields I was the youngest and the slowest. My brother Robert's wife, Boots, was young and small, but she could pick much more cotton than I could. She would keep me company talking to me and telling me stories as we picked, however she never lost sight of the job at hand. I wondered when she married Robert if she knew what the farm life held for her, work in the fields as well as work in the home. So many women had life rather hard during my formative years, the farmer's wives of today hopefully have life much easier because of the vastness of the farmer's equipment, special equipment for cotton picking, for hay baling, for hauling, etc.

I would see the U.S. Mailman delivering the mail to the homes nearby while I was picking cotton and I would dream that some day I would become that man and that I could drive a mail car in lieu of picking the cotton. When I pass cotton fields today I say my thanks as I did become a mailman. Although as a mailman I would pass many cotton fields full of pick-

ers and my back would hurt just looking at them. Today those are not my thoughts as I see the giant cotton picking machines working in the fields. What a change, and a definite change for the better.

There were a few good times for children in those cotton fields such as the surprise of coming upon a water melon growing wild among the cotton stalks and lying back on your pick sack among the tall cotton to enjoy its juicy sweetness. The children of today cannot know about the cotton boll battles we had with the other nearby children and then feel the sting of being thrashed with a cotton stalk full of green bolls when your parents caught you

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participating in this wasteful behavior.

The farm children of today surely will never have the problems involved in chopping cotton either, the way one's neck would be stiff and hurt from holding your head to one side all day long looking at the cotton you were chopping. We also experienced soreness and burning of blisters that would rise up and then burst and get raw and sore before your hands were toughened, then corns were formed in them. Today the farmer possibly worries more about the payments on the equipment and the quality of the cotton than he worries about the blisters and corns.

Farm children of today surely won't have to shuck hay with a pitch fork in the field and then load the hay on a two horse wagon with a hay frame on it, only to have the whole pile of hay slide off and the procedure have to be repeated. The other children would slide off too on the way to the barn and then when you finally got the load to the barn everyone had the job of restacking the hay under the hot tin roof in the old barn loft.

Because children today do not do this they do not get the experience of jumping into the cool creek water afterward and getting rid of all the stinging particles of hay from your aching body. Farm children of today will have to find some other way of learning how to tie a neck tie; you see back in those days the boys learned to tie ham strings while harnessing up the mules and they soon found out that a neck tie could be tied the same way. How many farm boys today could harness up a mule?

How many of the children today ever curried a mule, getting the mud and cockleburrs off of him? The boys in my family shucked enough corn to feed four mules two or three times a day. They delighted in the sounds of the mules crushing on the corn as they walked through the hall of the barn in the evening, knowing that they too soon would have a meal at the large kitchen table.

How many farm youngsters today can identify a double shovel, a bull tongue, a gee whiz, an anvil or a hickory mall? Yes, life on the farm has changed drastically over the years hasn't it? It has changed mostly for the good I imagine

because life on the farm was much rougher in those days than it is today, however when I recollect those old days - it surely brings back many fond memories along with the bad memories. You could call it memories of the good old days when times were bad.

When I grew up it was a time when hard work was a way of life and simple pleasures slipped into our life when we least expected them. We enjoyed these simple pleasures because it is all we knew.

Perhaps today's farmers, because of their equipment, have more time for the simple pleasures they and their family enjoy.

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SHORT & SWEET MEMORIES FROM OUR READERS

M.D. Smith IV, Huntsville

I remember some teacher, perhaps Miss Jones, making us write sentences during recess or after school if we misbehaved in class. I wrote many times, "I will not talk in class". You had to do it and if you had time when finished, then you could go to recess, or leave for home. Well, once I spent a part of the night writing these sentences in advance, then talked during class the next day.

Sure enough, I was "sentenced" to write the sentences 50 times. After about two minutes, I turned my prepared work in to her and watched her amazement. Of course, she knew what I had done. I smiled and left the room. I got great pleasure out of that victory, since she didn't keep me in. So, during the next night or two, I prepared many more pages, 25 sentences to a page. Victory was sweet and that "homework" was fun.

It was not long before I was caught talking in class again. She wanted 100 sentences. No problem, I had now about 8 pages pre-written with 25 per page, so I was looking for 4 pages full when she announced to me I was to write a NEW sentence, which she wrote on the blackboard.

OH Lord give me patience and give it to me NOW!

Juanita Adcock, Huntsville

I'm a Sand Mountain girl who moved to Huntsville in 1965. One of my favorite grocery stores was Star Market in Five Points. Chick Russell was the owner and manager and he whistled all the time. Every-time I went into the store Chick was whistling. I remember Jeannie Roden worked there, her dad, Don and her uncle George Roden was there too. Jody Turner was the sacker and such a sweet man. Chick's son Wade was just a young guy and he was there all the time too.

When old timers go in to Star Market now, and listen really hard, they say they can still hear Chick Russell whistling.

Hartwell Lutz, Huntsville

Merrimack Village houses had "privies" behind them. From time to time, the company sent something called a "honey wagon" around to collect the contents of the privies (outhouses). One day two guys were working on the wagon when one of them took his jacket off and accidentally dropped it into the wagon that was full of all its contents. When he started to fish it out the other guy said, "Man you know you're not going to wear that jacket again!" The first guy replied, "Yeah, but my lunch is in the pocket and it's lunchtime!"

"You know you've gotten older when there's more food than beer in your refrigerator."

Larry Nelson, Athens

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It was something like, "Talking in class is not permitted." WOW! All that work for nothing and I had to write a NEW sentence a LOT of times. I complained that "it wasn't fair to change the sentence." She replied something like, "I never said you always had to write the same sentence and it's good for your English to practice different ones."

Well, that pretty much cured me. I never again wrote sentences in advance and she never again assigned the exact same sentence for me to write when I had to do others. I didn't talk nearly as much in class anymore. Dog-gone, teachers always win in the end it seems.

Hugh Michaels, Hazel Green

A student at Hazel Green High School was involved in a bizarre accident last year. She was traveling to school one morning and was following a hearse. The hearse stopped at a stop sign but the student didn't, plowing into the back of the vehicle.

The hearse was carrying a dead body to Hazel Green Funeral Home, which nearly came flying out of the back end of the vehicle. It was so badly damaged that another hearse had to be called to retrieve the body and take it to the funeral home.

It happened to be April Fool's Day and some people who were passing by after the accident thought that it was a stunt being pulled on someone - it wasn't.

When the girl's father was notified and told about the accident, he thought his daughter had killed someone. It all turned out OK, but the frightened girl will remember this incident for the rest of her life, and SO WILL HER DAD.

Jim Webb, Huntsville

The lot where I built my current house was an empty lot made so by a tornado that blew the house away. A drawing was required for the city to approve the new use of the property. The surveyor's drawing showed a grave on one side

of the lot which caused some distress. The reason for this was that doing the survey and making the plan the previous gravel drive was turned into a grave. A mistake was a short word caused by the omission of an L on what made a grave out of a GRAVEL driveway. There are no graves under a driveway in Huntsville, I don't think. This occurrence was a good example of being precise in the use of language.

Back to my childhood. Chuck Bobo lived a short distance from where I lived with a creek between us. On my side of the creek was an ancient, small grave with a few burials. Several of us hid out in this growth and at the right time, made what we believed to be - haint - noises. There was a field with adults working and numerous kids there with the old folks. Previous talk about the graveyard set the stage for our trick.

It really worked. Kids running in all directions and several adults. Not sure if the adults were scared or just chasing their kids, maybe both.

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Habits of Cats

by Ted Roberts

Sometimes when an author/writer looks at a blank piece of paper, he sees a blank piece of paper. He gropes for a subject and all he gets is a blank. I usually holler to the wife. "Hey Shirley, anything newsworthy happen to us lately?"

"Oh, your oldest son, Harry, got married, but he's done that before."

Nothing. But lately in the absence of wars in the Congo, new children born in the family, the house burning down, or car wrecks - there is one category of events that always serves up material - our two cats. They are so predictable, so unpredictable.

Take their nighttime habits - and this one could win a prize at the planetary cat show: We're all laying in the bed watching TV. We're in our pajamas, they are nekkid, as we say down here. They like crime shows with a lot of action; explosions, fires, gunfire.

Well, when 9:30 rolls around the male sedately, almost priggishly, heads for the door and with a sniff over his shoulder leaves the room. Bear in mind he carries no watch strapped to his leg as he leaves the room. Why? Maybe because once or twice earlier I ran him out at 9:30 and he remembered.

They have another crazy habit even more mysterious. They love to drink water out of the flower bowls. Bowls of clean water on the kitchen floor and these connoisseurs are lapping water full of fiber, worms, and microscopic algae out of the flower bowls.

Outside, they also favor mud puddles wherein stray bipeds have relieved themselves. Maybe there are more vitamins in it - maybe we oughta try it. Maybe it's the long hidden remedy to cancer. Ever hear of a cat getting cancer? Or maybe the cure is a diet of mice.

Related to diet is the strange habit of these two

free renters. They'll only eat cat food. Hold up a bowl of pate foie gras to their lips and they'll look at you like you're crazy and turn aside. Nothing other than cat food tempts them - not even ice cream.

And do they know how to conserve energy. One minute they're sleeping - the next they are streaking across the yard chasing an aggressive grasshopper. They gave up on birds as soon as they caught on to that flying trick.

But maybe their most endearing habit is to jump in any enclosure - like a box. Nothing makes a cat happier than to sit in a box, survey the world, and mistakenly think they're safe from any hungry predators. They're wrong, of course, but it's like you locking yourself in your room, hiring a Doberman and hiding under the bed. It makes you feel good.

Well, regardless of my cat's foibles, they're lovable, furry balls of delight. And did I tell you they're brother and sister? They're lovable, yet full of the wild.

"Don't worry about the storms that hit you - just learn to dance in the rain."

Juanita Adcock

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Local News in 1923



*** Killed by his own Trap Gun.**

"Accidental Death" was the verdict today in the killing of A. C. Sikes, a merchant in Decatur. Sikes was shot by a trap gun set by himself in his store when he apparently blundered against the trap when he re-entered the store in the dark.

The shotgun had been trained on the only opening anyone could enter the store. A small wire was stretched across the opening and tied to the trigger of the gun. When Sikes went in, he walked against the wire and was killed instantly. Sikes had suffered several robberies recently.

*** New Hope Barn Burned, Struck by Lightning.**

During the heavy electrical storm of Wednesday night a barn belonging to James Cryce, New Hope, was struck by lightning and destroyed together with all the contents, consisting of foodstuffs and farm machinery. The damage will reach approximately \$2,500 with no insurance.

*** Gold Fish Stolen, Arab, Ala.**

Accustomed to every type of theft, city detectives are quietly studying clues leading to possible identification of the person who Wednesday night took the pet gold fish of Mrs. M. Marion from the front porch of her home at 1004 South Tenth Street.

*** A Severe Shock.**

While standing over her stove Thursday afternoon a bolt of lightning entered the home of Mrs. Alex Bryan, severely shocking her. She will recover. The lightning is supposed to have entered the kitchen over an electric wire.

*** New Market Man Under Arrest.**

Sheriff Lane yesterday brought in from the vicinity of New Market a man docketed

under the name of J. M. Richards, charged with illicit distilling. Richards was placed in the county jail for a later hearing.


*** Pigeons Sent Here for Trial Flights.**

Harry London of this city is having shipped to him from Atlanta by Mr. Wm. Crawford of that city several Homing pigeons for a race to be held in Los Angeles, Ca shortly. Mr. London upon receipt of the birds will immediately turn them loose and then time them as they leave. The time is sent to Mr. Crawford who, by timing their arrival in Atlanta, is able to make his selections for the Los Angeles show.


It is said that Mr. Crawford has between two and three hundred of these Homing pigeons from which he will make his selections for speed and endurance. The distance from Huntsville to Atlanta is about 300 miles and the birds usually make the trip in three hours.

*** Merrimack Sewage System.**

A new sewage system is being put in at Merrimack by the Merrimack Manufacturing Company at a cost of \$50,000. It is much needed and a welcome addition for the workers there.



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WHAT I LEARNED GROWING UP IN THE SOUTH

by Kelsey Jordan

Lesson #1: DO NOT play with ANY snakes you see in the cotton fields or wetlands. Especially, if your mama tell you not to, because then you've gotta go to the doctor and then you're gonna get a whooping.

Lesson #2: When the street lights come on you better get in the house for dinner. Especially, if you mama already told you once, because if you're not in the house when the lights come on you're gonna get your dessert taken away and get a whooping.

Lesson #3: When a storm is coming you better get in the house! If you don't then mama's gonna worry and when she finds you, you're gonna get a whooping for not taking cover fast enough.

Lesson #4: ALWAYS use your manners, if you don't and your mama finds out you're getting a whooping.

Lesson #5: It's the South, your mama will ALWAYS find out!

Lesson #6: If your mama tells you to wait for your dad know this: You're either in BIG trouble or your mama forgot what you did.



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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th @ 2:00 P.M. = **TONY FROM OHIO** will be hauling 2 loads for his **ANNUAL FALL SALE!!** Plus, we'll have other local consignments & estate items including a **LARGE** variety of Antiques, Furniture, Collectibles, Glassware, Advertising, Old Tools.... We'll also be selling other estate & consignment lots. Pictures, listings, and updates will be added to the web address below.

***For pictures, listings, details, and directions, log onto www.auctionzip.com ~ Auctioneer I.D. #5484. Call us for questions, inquiries, and seating at 256-837-1559!!**

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Tweetie's Pet Trivia

Playing with Dogs

*"Not Me!"
Tweetie*



Dogs love to play - and some of the behaviors that drive you crazy as a pet owner are forms of dog play. When your dog steals an item of clothing and plays "keep away" with the dirty sock, it's a game to your pup. When you chase your pet all around the yard, trying to catch the dog, in your pet's mind, the game is "tag" or "catch me if you can." Trying to get the dog to let go of the couch pillow can easily become a game of "tug", as far as your pet is concerned. While these "puppy games" can be frustrating, they can also be turned into positive training opportunities.

Playing with your dog also helps to use up the excess energy and reduces the boredom that causes adolescent dogs to get into trouble. One of the best things you can do to build a great relationship with your canine companion is to play games with him or her. The challenge is to change the rules of the game so that both people and pups win!

* The dog holding the dirty sock can play the "trade" game, where the person offers a tasty treat to the pup in exchange for the dirty sock. This game can be taught using the dog's toys, teaching "give" and "take" as well, and it is an important game for all dogs to master who live in households with small children.

* The chase game can be turned around when teaching your pup to come when called. Call your puppy, and then run away from him! Reward your pet when he catches you with a "good dog" and an ear rub, and a tasty treat, then run away again - this game can go on as long as you and your pet have the energy to play.

* Hide and seek isn't just for children. Most dogs are pretty good at playing this game, too. You can play with people hiding from the pup and then calling for the pup to find them. This also strengthens the "come" cue.

* Another variant is to hide one of the dog's toys in a room, then rewarding him when he finds the toy.

* Catch - Throw a small ball to the dog so that he can easily catch it in his mouth. Make sure the ball is small enough to fit in his mouth, but not so small that he can accidentally swallow it. Once your dog understands the game, make the tosses more difficult. Play this with a Frisbee, especially if you have a large play space.

* Soccer - Kick the ball away from your dog and get him to chase after it. Once he gets to it, let him play with it for a bit. then kick or step it away from him again.

Soccer is best played with a larger ball that is not easy to puncture or deflate. Rubber balls are quite durable and can work well for soccer. Pick a larger sized ball, so that it is difficult for your dog to keep the ball in his mouth and chew on it. Some dogs prefer chasing after squeaky balls.

* Fetch is a wonderful dog obedience game. However, it can be difficult to teach to a dog. Go in small, slow steps. Start by giving him a toy. Once he holds it in his mouth, move a few steps away and call him. Give him a lot of encouragement for taking steps toward you and praise him well for coming. When he gets to you give him the "Drop" command, and give him many treats for giving you the toy.

Once he is comfortable with this exercise, try throwing the fetch toy a very short distance away. If your dog just ignores the toy, try using a more interesting squeaky toy, or coax him toward the toy with treats and lots of praise.

If your dog comes back with the toy, then there is a big celebration. However, more often than not, he will run to it and then come back without the toy. He may even take the toy and go play with it somewhere else, or tease you with it.

Have patience and treat with a high priority item every time your dog goes in the right direction. If he comes back without the toy, you can try and give a no-mark (e.g. Uh-oh) as soon as he drops the toy. Then use the "Take it" command and offer him the toy again. Once he has the toy in his mouth, walk a few steps back, call to him enthusiastically, and make sure to give lots of praise when he moves toward you.

Always listen to your dog and don't force him to play a game he doesn't really enjoy.

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

A KEEL MOUNTAIN MYSTERY

by Tom Carney

For years, tales and legends have persisted about Keel Mountain, some with a basis in fact, others with none. Stories about Indian chiefs, hermits, and outlaws all make an appearance when groups of friends gather around a roaring fireplace on a cold wintry evening, but perhaps no story is as strange as the one we present here:

No one knows for certain where Eleanor came from; we don't even know her full name. According to legend, she made her first appearance around 1850. Farmers and travelers alike stopped to stare at the young woman trudging slowly up the road pulling a hand cart loaded with her few meager possessions. At every house she would stop and ask if, perhaps, they might have work for her, and possibly a place for her to sleep. People would later say that even though she always had a faint smile on her face, there seemed to be an aura of sadness hanging over her.

A short while later, those living in the community heard that she had taken up residence in an old abandoned hut at the foot of Keel Mountain. She made no attempt at farming and rarely, if ever, had contact with other people. She never visited the local store. People had no idea how she managed to survive.

Immediately, rumors began to spread about the peculiar woman living in the broken-down hovel at the foot of Keel Mountain. Woodcutters and hunters told stories about passing by her place and seeing deer, raccoons, and other wild animals following the woman around as she went about her chores. The animals seemed to have no fear whatsoever of

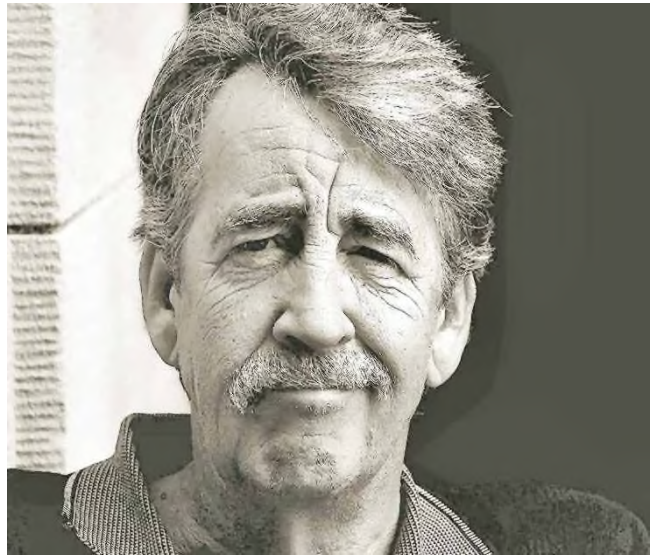
this strange but gentle lady. She was seen feeding deer by hand. The closer you got to her place, the louder the birds got. When at her place, they all appeared to coexist in a peaceful kind of harmony.

It was rumored that the animals protected her from harm, and would let her know when strangers drew near. Other people claimed that it was Eleanor who protected the animals.

The rumors might have eventually died down, had not two young men decided to go torch-hunting one night. There used to be a clearing on the top of Keel Mountain where deer would congregate and feed at night and it was there the men decided to try their luck.

Quietly picking their way through the woods, they stopped at the edge of the field. Their hunch had been right; a whole herd of deer were feeding in the clearing, with one huge, solid-white buck standing guard. Suddenly, for no explainable reason, the buck's head jerked up and every muscle in his body went tense. The rest of the herd immediately took flight, while the white buck stood perfectly still.

In the last second before the white buck was about to flee, the young men raised their rifles and fired. Dropping their rifles and racing to the spot where they had last seen the deer, they came to an abrupt stop. The buck had vanished; no tracks,



no blood-trail, nothing. It had completely vanished. The only evidence of anything ever being there was a blood soaked shawl lying in the spot where the deer had disappeared.

The young men were at first puzzled, and then frightened as the idea began to sink in that, perhaps, they had shot a person. But no, that was impossible. They both agreed they had seen the white deer fall.

Returning home, the men told their families what had happened. Quickly, the neighbors organized a search party just in case there was a person lying on the mountain, wounded.

As the search party fanned out across the mountain, it quickly became apparent that something was different. There were no birds in the trees, no deer running in front of the search parties, not even a fleeing rabbit. It was almost as if all the animals had deserted Keel Mountain.

After searching for most of the next day and finding nothing, the men finally gave up. Coming down from the mountain, they decided to stop at Eleanor's house and get a drink of water. It would also give them a chance to satisfy their curiosity

about the strange woman about whom they had heard so many rumors.

As they approached the house, they shouted out a hello. No answer. They shouted again. Still no answer. The house looked like it was deserted. The door was hanging off of its hinges and most of the roof had long since disappeared. The men were about to leave, when all of a sudden, a huge white buck walked out of the woods.

It was later said that the deer just stood there, looking at the hunters.

Several of the men raised their rifles and shot at the buck. The animal just stood there calmly, watching them. Other men began blasting at the buck, which stood motionless while the deadly barrage was taking place, until finally it slowly turned around and walked back into the woods.

Some of the men in the

group were the best rifle shots in the county, yet they could not hit a deer standing only fifty feet away. Others in the party who were standing off to one side later said that when the men began shooting at the deer, they could see bark flying off the trees directly behind. It was almost, and they said this very hesitantly, "like the bullets were passing right through the deer."

In the late fall of 1923, John Ingram was returning home from a hard day at work. As he approached the foot of Keel Mountain, in the midst of a freak snowstorm, he was suddenly forced to slam on his brakes. Standing in the middle of the road, directly in front of his car, was a woman. Leaving his car, John approached the spot where he had seen the woman a few moments before. The woman had disappeared. No sign of her could be found anywhere. The only sign in the fresh snow was

a set of enormous deer tracks. Being curious about the strange tracks and the disappearance of the woman, John followed the tracks a short piece up the road to where a bridge crossed the stream. The bridge was gone, it had collapsed.

Amazed and confused at the good fortune that had saved his life, John was about to return to his car when his attention was drawn to the other side of the stream. Standing there calmly, not moving a muscle, was the largest buck he had ever seen ... and it was pure white.

No one has ever been able to explain the strange facts surrounding the woman, and while almost everyone living near Keel Mountain has seen a white deer at some time or the other, no one has ever seen or heard of one being killed.

Maybe it was something that could not have been harmed by mortal man.



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HUNTSVILLE'S LADIES OF THE NIGHT

by Judy Wills



The theme of the wicked lady with the heart of gold runs through our literature from the Biblical Rahab, the Harlot, an ancestor of Jesus, to that friend of Rhett Butler's, Belle Watley, in *Gone With The Wind*.

Huntsville has its own version, but it was fact, not fiction.

Huntsville Hospital owes its existence to the generosity of the town's most colorful madam, Mollie Teal. She bequeathed her house, the most popular bordello in town, first to a friend, and then upon the friend's death to the City of Huntsville. It became the City Infirmery and operated until 1926 as a hospital. It was one of the most modern hospitals in North Alabama, even having its own School of Nursing. It remained in operation until Huntsville Hospital opened.

Mollie became quite well off financially as a result of her "business." She bought the house at the corner of St. Clair and Gallatin for a mere \$300 and a few years later was able to mortgage it for \$1,900, a debt she soon repaid. It was an extravagant, well run house where a shot of whiskey could be had for 25 cents and the favors of an attentive lass would cost you \$5 for the night.

Part of the public's confidence in Mollie's probably was the fact that her girls had regular health inspections.

Miss Bessie Russell, for whom the branch library is named, was the widow of the physician who was charged with health inspections at Mollie's place.

Mrs. Russell remembered her mother talking about Mollie, saying "she was the most attractive person you ever saw." She always carried a parasol and when she took her afternoon ride in her long black carriage with the two black horses, she was considered, by most people, to be an extremely glamorous lady.


Mollie was an astute business woman who knew the value of publicity. One year, during the 4th of July parade, she dressed her ladies in their finest garb and joined the parade, to the delight of many onlookers. She was not on the official parade schedule, but as an observer later commented, "She did add interest."

Mollie's ghost was said by many to have haunted the hospital for

years after her death. There was a screen door that had a habit of slamming and hooking itself shut. The long time employees joked that it was Mollie checking on the customers.

Another legend concerns her grave in Maple Hill Cemetery. Every since her death, almost a century ago, fresh flowers have been periodically placed on her grave. No one knows who has been doing this.

While Mollie Teal is the most colorful and the best known of Huntsville's "Fancy Ladies," she was certainly not the only one. Minnie Maples' establishment, though smaller than Mollie's, was equally well known around



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the turn of the century. She and her employees advertised their wares by dressing up and promenading on the city's sidewalks. Heavily made up, wearing big flowery hats and exquisite clothing, they attracted much attention on their daily excursions.

May Wells, June Martin, Jewel Earl, and "Gashouse Carrie" were other prominent Huntsville madams, but in the 1920s and 30s the best known was Hazel Battle. Her house was located near the present day site of the Von Braun Civic Center parking lot, North Hall, and though illegal, had the reputation of being a well regulated house. The only disturbances were an occasional police raid when some of the girls would be jailed long enough to get their health checkups.

Many of Huntsville's outstanding citizens were regular patrons of the houses, as evidenced by an incident that happened in the late 1800s. One of the bordellos caught fire and the fire department quickly showed up and extinguished the blaze, which proved to be minor. Needless to say, the girls were so impressed by the brave, courageous firemen that they invited them to stay for a while and "relax."

And needless to say, when word spread among the volunteer fire department of the madam's offer, other firemen, even from out in the county, began showing up, "to make sure the fire is out."

Unfortunately, the Huntsville Police Department chose this exact time to stage one of their raids. The firemen were promptly arrested and thrown in the calaboose. Furious, the volunteer firemen resigned, leaving Huntsville without

fire protection until the matter was straightened out.

Some of the prostitutes married well. Miss Bessie Russell remembered that her husband was astonished at the number of young men who married women right out of the houses.

Though "polite society" never mentions the fact, there are still several elderly matriarchs in Huntsville today who got their start in a much more colorful place than the Huntsville Country Club.

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"Don't throw away that unflattering picture of yourself - you'll love it in 5 years."

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NEWS EVENTS IN HUNTSVILLE - 1907

Two Men arrested at Southern Depot

Will Pylant was charged with drunk and disorderly conduct, and Jim Bowman, charged with trespassing. Both men were arrested at the Southern Passenger Depot last night by the watchman, Will Short. Bowman is a hackman and he was arrested after the officer had warned him to stay in line at the depot. Both men have been lodged in jail.

Thief Gets Nice Prize

Mr. J.J. Crittenden, who resides at Adams Avenue, has reported to the police the loss of a pocket book containing \$9. He claims that the wallet was left on a table in the front room and while the family was at supper a thief entered the home and escaped with the loot.

Detective agency will Locate Here from Nashville

A Banner reporter was informed Monday that a detective agency will permanently locate in the city within the next few days. Messrs. Corbett and Ladd of Nashville, who have been in the city for the past month are very much pleased with the location for a good detective agency. Mr. Sawyer of West Huntsville will be a member of the firm and only first class men will be employed.

For Sale - Nice rubber-tired buggy, harness and driving mare, perfectly gentle. For information, address 512, in the city.

Lost - A lady's bracelet, lost on the public square, finder return for large reward at the First National Bank. The bracelet has sentimental value to the owner as it was a gift from a departed father.

Murder Last Night

Charles L. Stanley, a commercial traveler, was killed here last night by Wesley Christopher. Christopher assaulted a young woman in an alley, and when Stanley heard her screams he ran to her rescue and was shot in the heart. Christopher was arrested and is lodged in the city jail.

Crushed Rock on the Streets

Street Supt. Murphy has made a big improvement on the public square by building up the streets with crushed rock. It is understood that quite a number

of improvements will be made on the streets of the city during the summer. The rock crusher is kept busy from early morning until late in the afternoon crushing rock for the use of the busy Superintendent.

One-Legged Man makes Trouble at Depot

A one-legged young man attempted to take charge of the Southern depot today and was arrested by the police. He was drunk and anxious to get a fight out of anybody. He refused to give his name.

Kiwanis Club of Huntsville GOLDEN K

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The Vacation

by Noel D. Tallon

Kudos to the movie makers and actors of the "Vacation" movies. But I think a part of the success of those movies is that most of us have had one of those vacations. This is a story about just such a vacation. Maybe it will remind you of one you have had. Oh, the fond memories.

Let's start at the beginning. I moved here in 1964 along with the other space people. Although not from there we moved from North Dakota. I won't soon forget being introduced in Sunday school class by the instructor and some girl in the back saying, "Are youuu ahh Yankee?"

Man, I thought that war was over.

I was to attend Butler High School. To refresh your memory Butler was the one on Triana Avenue, no Governor's Drive, no Clinton. Well you get the picture.

Perhaps this will help. It was the school commanded by Dr. J. Homer Crim as Principal. He is

the one well known for throwing a newspaper on the floor in his office and having girls get down on their knees. If the dress didn't touch the floor, he let them have the rest of the day off.

Butler assigned homerooms based on the alphabet and my friend Ray Tising and I should have been in a room with the T's. But the influx of space workers and their families caught the school off guard and some of us in the latter part of the alphabet were sent to other rooms. Ray and I were sent to the one that included the K's.

As with most seating arrangements if you come in late you get to sit on the front row. Ray and I must not have had a lot of sense because we quickly got into trouble for talking. Now how smart is that right in front

of the teacher?

So the teacher moved me to the back of the room just behind Linda. My conversations with her surely were before or after class because I know I would

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have learned my lesson. But I found out that she lived just a few blocks from me and she and two of her friends needed a ride to school which they were willing to pay for. A few dollars a week went a long way to keep my '55 Chevy on the road.

I had a girlfriend at the time (who got to ride free by the way) so she rode in front and Linda and her friends got to sit in the back. Needless to say one of them could have ridden by the passenger door in the front seat because there was plenty of room there. And you thought the invention of bucket seats was a good idea.

Somehow I decided there was a better deal in the backseat. So the girlfriend got dumped, Linda moved to the front seat, quit paying and 45 years later, the rest is history.

After graduating in 1966, Linda and I were married in the fall. We bought a mobile home and I started college at the University of Alabama-Huntsville. She and I both worked my way through college. We didn't have much money, but were able to save some for a vacation the next summer.

She had only been to Florida once to visit family and I had never been. Money was tight so we went the cheapest way we could. I rented a pop-up camper and a gas stove for a week. We bought groceries, cokes, etc. for the trip. Filled up the water bottle that fed the sink with the pump faucet and put ice in the fridge.

When I picked up the camper with my VW they didn't have the right kind of hitch. They put one on the bumper which is not good for a VW. There was a little crease in my bumper and I remember them telling me that the hitch would straighten it out. They also pointed out that the camper could easily be pulled by hand. So even though it was bigger than the car, it would follow just fine. Little did they know.

We packed and pulled out on Highway 20 to Decatur. I565 was only a dream and I65 was not completed through Birmingham. When I got up to about 60, the trailer and car started fishtailing violently. It was so bad that you could hear the back wheels of the car squeal when they hit the ground. We were very lucky.

We slowed to about 45 mph and everything was fine. But that makes for a long trip to Panama City, especially going through downtown Birmingham in the

heat.

When we got to Vulcan Park, I told Linda that we probably should stop and see if anything happened in the trailer with all that fishtailing. I stopped, got out, and saw something dripping from the trailer. That is not a good sign. We opened the trailer and all the food, water, cokes, etc. had been thrown everywhere. Glass was in all the food, so it had to be thrown out and a major cleaning was in order.

We finished that and hit the road again. The rest of the trip down was fine, but I had noticed a small crack

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developing where the bend had been in the bumper. We stopped in Panama City, FL to get gas. After filling up, I got in the car, turned the ignition and nothing. I mean nothing.

That was in the days that gas stations actually had attendants and if you can believe this, three of them pushed started us with the trailer on.

We located the campground on the bay where I had made reservations. They told us we could use any of the parking spots that were empty. We made the major mistake of choosing the one closest to the water. I parked the trailer and found a little rise to park on so that I could roll down and get started. Have you ever tried to find a hill in Florida?

That night we couldn't get the tent to seal around the trailer and got eaten alive by mosquitoes.

The next morning we went to Sears to see what was wrong with the car. They told me it needed a new starter solenoid. I asked how much that was and he said, "\$20". I told him that I really didn't have an extra \$20. He said, "Do you have a screwdriver?" I told him that I did and he showed me how to cross the poles on the solenoid and start the car. The engine in a VW was in the back close to the ground. So for the rest of the trip, I had to get down on my knees and reach up under the car to start it.

That day was very cloudy. I remember telling Linda, "boy this is great, lots of clouds, no sun, so cool and nice." Being new to the beach, we made a long, long day of it.

As you might expect, we got burned to a crisp. So that night, miserably burned and more mosquitoes. Are we having fun yet?

The next morning I got up to make some coffee and Linda started screaming, "I can't see, I can't see!"

I told her to be a little quieter; some people might still be asleep. She was so burned that her cheeks were swollen up to her eyes. We stayed in most of that day.

The next day we did venture out some. We had put aside a

little cash to go to a movie and out to eat one time. So we chose that day. It was still daylight when we exited the theatre and I remember telling Linda that a street sweeping machine must have come by because the parking lot was wet and there wasn't a cloud in the sky then or when we went into the



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"Why do I have to press 1 for English when you're just going to transfer me to someone I can't understand anyway?"

Ron Eyestone, Madison

movie. We pulled out on the road and it was obvious that it had rained. As we parked by our camper, one of our neighbors came out and said, "I am really sorry." I asked, "Sorry about what?" He said, "Well when that squall came through here I didn't notice that your camper had all the flaps open until it was too late."

My electric razor was floating in the overnight bag. That night sunburn, mosquitoes, add wet bed sheets.

The next day, we decided we had had enough fun, so we headed home. Before leaving PC, I decided to go through a State Park. With as much rain as they get, the roots of the trees were above ground on the road. So we bumped along looking at the scenery. This was doing wonders for the crack that had developed in my bumper, which I was keeping a close eye on.

When we got to about 33rd Avenue North in Birmingham, we had to stop at a light. I told Linda that the trailer looked a little funny in the mirror. She said, "I have had enough, let's just get home." When I took off the trailer tongue hit the ground. Thankfully, we weren't traveling very fast and the chain held on. It was about 4 in the afternoon. The trailer had broken the bumper in half. We pushed the trailer into the parking lot of a closed gas station and went to a phone booth to find a welding shop. You do know what a phone booth is don't you?

A shop was nearby but when we got there, they were closing. The manager insisted that they couldn't do anything until the next day. I convinced him that we'd had a terrible trip and didn't have money for a motel so we would have to sleep in the

car. That wasn't very common in those days.

He was sympathetic, repaired the bumper for \$5, and sent us on our way. We made it home that evening.

The next day, I returned the

camper and stove. The people there said, "Did you have a good time? You came back early."

I said, "Don't even ask." Just call me Clark Griswald.



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we took off. This cat seemed unusually upset by this," said Hanst.

What they did not know was that the cat didn't just come alone. "It turns out, when she managed to sneak on board, she also managed to smuggle on three kittens. We thought she had given birth on the ship, but it was pointed out to us that they were too big to be

They found boxes and necessary things to make a temporary nest for the kittens. They were all so proud, holding their new furry buddies and letting them climb all over them. When it comes to bottle feeding the kittens, these sailors showed remarkable love and care to the tiny little creatures that were about the size of their palm.

They were gentle to the kittens and tended to their every whim.

"After the initial shock of being found, and feeding, the kittens were just as happy and playful as any other cute little bugger you'd find anywhere else. They were a great boost to crew morale, and I LOVED THEM," said Hanst.

After they docked, the kittens were transported to local veterinary services. "We managed to find homes for all three kittens. I talked a friend into adopting one of the kittens, the other two were taken in by a 'cat couple' who are regular rescuers."

The soldiers rescued the kittens and the kittens gave them the companionship and love they needed during these long voyages. They both needed one another and it was a blessing that they found each other.

only a few days old."

When they were sailing off, no one on board was aware of the kittens. The little ones were very confused, looking for their mom for almost four days until they were discovered in the machine shop. "We found one initially and the other two a couple hours afterwards," Hanst added.

Even though the crew had little experience bottle feeding a kitten, they all jumped into action, doing everything they could to help these little creatures. They did not have a bottle, so they improvised.

Rescue at Sea

It all began when Eric Hanst and his fellow sailors were Navy deployed overseas. When they were in port for a few days, they were greeted by an unexpected guest.

"A cat came aboard via mooring line. We lost track of her, and found her later that evening. We managed to get her back to the pier, and waved goodbye as

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“Cheech”

A little ginger kitten named Cheech used up a couple of his nine lives before he was saved by Amanda and brought to his foster home back in 2009. He was much smaller than his age, but the little guy was getting stronger every day.

Then one day, he was introduced to a teeny tiny five day old Chihuahua puppy named Casanova who was an orphan. From that point on, something remarkable happened between

the two.

Cheech took to the little puppy immediately as if they were meant to be together. He took him in his arms and groomed and cleaned him. The puppy responded to his every touch, snuggling up to his new friend like a pup to his mother.

When Cheech was tired, he would climb into the puppy's box and cuddle with Casanova, sharing his heating blanket. To Cheech, he was "his" puppy and best friend.

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