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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

The Life and Death of the Huntsville Mills



Dallas Mill Fire - July 24, 1991

Also in this issue: **The Story of “Shorty” Cawthon**

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The Life and Death of the Huntsville Mills

by *Hartwell Lutz*

Although textile mills existed in Madison County as early as the 1830s, the industry didn't take off until Dallas Mill opened in 1891. By 1900 the mill had almost 2000 employees. Merrimack, Lincoln and Lowe Mills opened in 1900, each with large work forces, although Dallas remained the largest. A person looking at Huntsville City Directories for the 1920s and '30s would easily conclude that most people who worked in Huntsville worked in cotton mills, and that may have been correct.

All the four large mills had "villages" nearby where most of their employees lived for a reasonable monthly rental charge. Some have speculated that the mills did this in order to have a "captive work force," although two hundred years later it is hard to assess that claim. It is also possible that villages were just a way to recruit workers, or provide what we would today call a "benefit." Who knows?

The people in the mill villages had a lot in common. Practi-

cally all of them were white, and I think it would be safe to say that none of the non-whites who worked in the mills lived in a village. When I asked my friend Rand Lehman, who is a third generation Merrimack man, how he would describe the people who worked in Huntsville's mills he said, 'They were willing to work and they knew how to work.'

One thing that made most cotton mill work forces different from each other was that they employed large numbers of women and children. As was the case with farm families, a large family was seen as a source of income, not a financial burden. Plus, many cotton mill jobs did not require a lot of physical strength and women were at least as likely as men to have the necessary skill to do most of the jobs. In fact, children may have been more suitable than adults for some jobs, in particular a job called "doffing", that involved crawling around on machinery. If you see barefoot boys in pictures of mill workers, they were probably doffers.

It is clear from census reports and other data that most people who lived in Huntsville's mill villages in 1900 and 1910 came there from North Alabama and Southern Tennessee. The Civil War and the period of approximately ten years thereafter, known as "Reconstruction," left many of the people of those areas destitute. Given the ups and downs of farm produce prices and crops, things didn't get a lot better for small farmers for a

"Success consists of going from failure to failure without losing your enthusiasm."

Winston Churchill



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long time, if they ever did. So the coming of cotton mills was seen as a Godsend by many Southern people. The mills provided them a way to earn a living for themselves and their families. Cotton mill wages, while never great, did make it possible for a couple with a few children and cheap housing close by to make do.

In 1899 and 1900 a street-car line was constructed from the Dallas-Lincoln Village area, through downtown Huntsville, West Huntsville and some of the smaller mills, and to the Merrimack Village. The cars ran every fifteen minutes from six a.m. until midnight every day and the fare was five cents. This made it easy for people living, say, in Merrimack to the southwest of Huntsville, to visit their kin in the Dallas Village to the northeast, and to trade with merchants all over Huntsville.

There are a lot of good stories about life in the Huntsville villages. One of my favorites is about a guy we'll call "Charlie," who, along with another young man, worked at Merrimack on a "honey wagon." Honey wagons, usually pulled by mules, went around once a week or so

and collected the deposits of the outhouses behind the village houses. One day Charlie's jacket dropped into the contents of the honey wagon and he started fishing around with a stick to get it out. His co-worker said, "Charlie, what are you doing? You know you ain't gonna wear that jacket no more," to which Charlie replied, "Yeah, but my lunch is in the pocket."

Mr. Gene Faulkenberry, who lived most of his life in and around what was the Dallas Village, told me a story about his family and the coming of the Arsenal. Gene's father, who worked at Dallas Mill, applied for a job at the Arsenal and was turned down because the Army had agreed with the Chamber of Commerce not to hire mill workers. So he appealed to the Post Commander, who told him they couldn't hire him because they already had a relative of his in a similar job and that wasn't allowed. "OK, Colonel," Gene's father said, "I understand. That's good! I've got two boys in the Army, one in Europe and one in the Pacific. Which one are you going to send home?"

There is a book by the late

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Madison County Commissioner Tillman Hill, himself a Lincoln High School graduate, filled with great stories about life in Lincoln Village. The title is "Mr. Anderson's Monument" and if is well worth reading, if you can find the book. Somebody gave me mine at an annual reunion of the Rison-Dallas Association. At least, I think they gave it to me.

During the summers when I was in school at the University of Alabama, I worked at Thiokol on Redstone Arsenal. There were two black gentlemen, brothers Shelby and Theo Timmons, who worked there on the line where I did. Before that, they had worked in one of the mills, probably Merrimack, for years. They were both big, strong, stout guys. I was told that when they worked in the mill they could each carry a 500 pound bale of cotton by backing up to it and leaning over so as to balance it on their backs. Having seen them at Thiokol, I believe it. This was in the early 1950s and most everything was still segregated. One day I was up in the attic of a building pulling wire when my foot slipped, and I fell through the ceiling of the black men's rest room. Shelby, Theo and some of the co-workers scattered when I fell almost into their laps.

Dallas, Merrimack and Lincoln mills each built and maintained their own schools in their villages. The schools were part of the Madison County system, which paid the teachers' salaries. The Dallas school was named Rison, in honor of one of the mill's officials. The Merrimack school was named Joe Bradley in honor a long-time mill manager, and Lincoln school simply took the name of the mill. There was a

fourth school in West Huntsville that served the children of Lowe Mill and two other smaller mills, but none of them seem to have had the sense of community that Merrimack, Dallas and Lincoln did.

Each of those schools were blessed with some outstanding leaders, one of whom was Cecil Fain who was one of the first Principals of Joe Bradley School before he moved to Rison School, where he was Principal for thirty-two years. During his time at Rison, he was instrumental in organizing and coaching school football, basketball and baseball teams. Mr. Fain was a neighbor of my family when I was in high school. He was respected as an educator, coach, outstanding tennis player and a gentleman by the many people throughout the State of Alabama who knew him. He died in 1992.

When Cecil Fain moved from Joe Bradley School to Rison in 1922, E.F. Dubose, who had been Mr. Fain's assistant,

took his place, and he remained as Joe Bradley's Principal until the school was closed in 1962. One of his students had this to say about him: "Can you imagine how our lives would have turned out if there had been no E.F. Dubose? He taught us ethics and morality. He taught us good manners and how to live our lives." He was known as a strict disciplinarian in an era when kids were paddled at school if those in authority thought they needed it. As the story goes, the pants of a boy that Mr. Dubose was paddling caught fire when Mr. Dubose accidentally hit matches in his back pocket.

In addition to his knowledge and skill as an educator, he was a widely recognized horticulturist. He is reported to have said that "Plants and children have a lot in common - both requiring care, nurturing and counseling to grow." He died in 2002 at the age of 102.

Another outstanding gentleman who impacted the lives of

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many young people living in the mill villages was William P. Fanning, who started his working life at Lowe Mill when his family came to Huntsville to work there when he was seventeen years old. He worked at Lowe Mill for two years, but with encouragement and help from people who recognized his potential, he was able to become educated to be a teacher. His first teaching assignments were in rural schools of Madison County, but he later served as a principal and teacher at local mill schools.

But he is possibly best remembered for his involvement with the Dallas and West Huntsville YMCAs. Mr. Fanning was instrumental in organizing and securing funds to build the West Huntsville Y. He, along with Hub Myhand, Obie Johnson, Hosee Watson and Andy Boyd, were the early leaders who organized sports in Huntsville mill villages, mostly through YMCAs and the schools.

Mr. Fanning was a Bible scholar and an unconditionally dedicated Christian. When I was in high school my parents came home from a funeral where Mr. Fanning had given a prayer, and I remember my mother saying in

almost exactly these words, "Mr. Fanning prayed at the funeral. He is a man who knows God."

As everyone knows, however, it was and still is, the women teachers who, next to parents, have the most impact on young peoples' lives. Anne Clopton, who taught Latin, Art and Math at Joe Bradley School, is one whose name I have heard often. Reading through web site postings of a Rison-Dallas alumni group, I am convinced that first grade teacher, Miss Esslinger, was everybody's all-time favorite. Miss Esslinger must not have had a first name, but I remember some of mine didn't either. If a vote had been taken on Lincoln School teachers Miss Marguerite Chapman would probably be one of the top vote getters. She was another teacher who taught more than just what was in the school books. Every Sunday, for many years, she taught a class of young children some very important lessons.

The schools, the YMCAs, sports and the churches were the centers of activity and identity in the mill villages.

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ville-Madison County community. In 1919, the one hundredth anniversary of Alabama's statehood, the Chamber published a 28 page advertising piece praising the Huntsville-Madison County area as a place to live and do business, with major emphasis on textile mills. Total mill employment was said to be 3,320 (which seems like a low number to me) and the total weekly payroll was said to be \$27,877. Assuming both those numbers to be correct, that would make the average weekly textile wage here in 1919 \$8.40, which is more than I have seen for that period of time. It would, no doubt, be safe to say that the average work week of an adult mill worker at that time would have been closer to eighty hours a week than forty.

Twenty-one years later, on July 15, 1940 the Huntsville Times ran an article about some ongoing labor unrest in the local mills, saving that "No one opposes" raising mill wages to 37.5 cents an hour, when the national average was then 50.7 cents.

On July 3, 1941 the coming of Huntsville Arsenal and Redstone Arsenal were announced. It was a new era in the Tennessee Valley. Praise God and John Sparkman!

Sports were always big in the mill villages and schools, and

there were some great girls' softball and basketball teams and players. Cecil Fain coached girls basketball teams at Rison that won over thirty championships at various levels. Many of those games were played outdoors, even in cold weather, until the 1930s because there were very few indoor courts until the WPA built several in the county. The mills generally supported team sports played by their employees, with baseball probably being the most popular.

During summer months professional wrestling matches were held at Lincoln Park and were always lots of fun. "Grudge matches" were a real drawing card.

My cousin William Black and I crawled under the fence one night and got caught by a man working there. He took us to a trailer that was a kind of office and made a phone call to the police, or at least he convinced us that he had. We jumped out the door of the trailer, hit the ground running, and out the gate. A little later we came back and crawled under the fence again. We were more careful this time.

Lowe Mill survived several ownership changes and at least one bankruptcy, but was finally closed as a cotton mill in 1937. It was the first to go and became a warehouse and, later, a shoe

factory. Dallas Mill reduced its work force several times and finally closed in 1949. Like Lowe Mill, it became a warehouse and in 1991 it was destroyed by fire, although its water tower still stands as a monument to all the men, women and children who

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worked there.

Lincoln Mill closed in 1955 in the middle of a serious labor dispute and two of its main buildings have burned. Merrimack lasted the longest, although it was bought out by M. Lowenstein & Company of New York in 1945, and later operated as Huntsville Manufacturing Company until 1989.


In 1992 the Merrimack Mill structure was demolished. Even the smoke stack was destroyed, which still seems like a shame. The mill houses and Merrimack Hall remain. The late Jim Marek worked tirelessly to convince people to purchase the fixer-upper mill homes and make a beautiful neighborhood. Alan and Debra Jenkins purchased and completely renovated the old Merrimack Hall in 2007 and now it operates as nationally known Merrimack Hall Performing Arts Center that teaches dance & performance education to special needs kids. There is also a 300 seat state-of-the art

theater there.

And Lowe Mill got a new shot at life when Huntsville investor and philanthropist Jim Hudson bought the property and turned it into a nationally known, thriving arts center. A portion of one of the buildings has been leased to IronSclad Solutions, where a distillery is in full and legal operation. In addition Lowe Mill has 150 working artists who share a huge diversity of art styles and have studios where visitors are always welcome to watch them work.

If it weren't for the generosity and foresightedness of those who value history and take action to save them, all of these structures would have been destroyed.

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* For a headache, take a long whiff of pure peppermint oil, sit back and relax, drink peppermint tea hot and strong.

* To get a good night's sleep, rub your feet with vinegar water and think no evil of your neighbor. Give love and love will be returned.

* If you feel depressed, make a mixture in your blender of half a glass of watercress and half a glass of spinach. Throw in a few carrots, bottoms up!

* Bananas are said to be good at helping with depression - they contain the chemicals serotonin and norepinephrine, which help with mental depression.

* For a scalded throat, two teaspoonfuls of olive oil will soothe and coat.

* If you hear ringing in your ears and there's no one there and you're not in love, onion juice might work. Two drops of onion juice in the ears, 3 times a week should stop it.

* If you're menopausal, eat a cucumber a day. This has been said to really work.

* Have you ever had that bloated, gassy feeling? Make it go away by mixing a teaspoonful of anisette liqueur to a cup of warm water, stir and sip.

* Do you have large pores on your face? A friend uses Miracle Whip salad dressing to remove dead skin cells and to tighten her pores. She puts it

on her face and leaves it there for 20 minutes, then washes it off with warm water. Then a cold water rinse and she says no other mayo works like this one!

* For dry, lifeless hair after shampooing, rinse with a mixture of 1 cup apple cider vinegar and 2 cups water. Your hair will come alive and shine. This works especially good for lifeless permed hair.

* To avoid being constipated, drink a glass of room temp water with juice of 1/2 lemon every morning when you get up. You'll be amazed!

* If you can't brush after every meal, kiss someone. It starts the saliva flowing and helps prevent tooth decay!

* If you're overweight with high blood pressure, cut down eating meat and eliminate salt.



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From 1927 Newspaper

Mr. Frank Coe, inventor of the Coe's tractor wheel, is at present using a hollow log on the side of Monte Sano mountain as living quarters pending completion of the first of a series of cabins for which he has plans.

The log is located several hundred feet from the new Monte Sano road which will be formally opened tomorrow on the old stage coach road which runs off the east side of the mountain.

Although the log was originally hollow, Mr. Coe has improved upon it until it is more comfortable than a Pullman berth. With the use of fire he has enlarged his quarters, improvised a small screen door and a wooden door over the two and a half foot entrance. Near the entrance he has two small holes on each side which enables him to look out in both directions.

By closing the screen door he is protected from insects while at the same time a lantern hung at the entrance furnishes sufficient light for reading or writing which he has a great deal of.

A.E. Sampson, an architect, is Mr. Coe's only companion. He is cooperating with Mr. Coe in an architectural way and expects to open an office in Huntsville soon.

The first of a series of cabins which will be known as "Coe's Roost," is under construction a short distance from the log. When completed Mr. Coe says "the latch string will always be open to right thinking people."

As Mr. Coe traveled east 36 years ago, he has decided to face all the cabins in that direction.

Plans are also underway for two other cabins on opposite sides of the ravine, and a short distance from Coe's Roost to which Earnest Thompson Seaton and Albert Payson Terbune, (noted writers and who are friends of Mr. Coe), will be invited to occupy.


Mr. Coe is noted as the inventor of the tractor wheel bearing his name. More than a year ago he left his home in

New York for Miami, Florida. His wife and two children were called from this earth a short time before. After engaging in the building game in Miami for one year he arrived in Huntsville, on April 10.

Mr. Coe states he will spend the remainder of his days on this spot on Monte Sano.

Editor's note: Very shortly after this story appeared in the newspaper, the weather turned cold and Mr. Coe, with no explanation, disappeared from Huntsville forever.

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My Lincoln Village Memories

by James L. Wilburn

I was born and raised in Lincoln Village, 150 Rison Street to be exact. Across the street from us were the Morrisons; Ernest, Dessie, Freddy and Ronny. There were several others, Ernest Jr. "Cowboy", Evelyn, etc; however, Freddy and Ronny are key to this item.

I was born in 1940, Fred in 1941, my brother Gary "Buddy" in 1942, Ronny in 1943 and my youngest brother Jimmy in 1944, a leap year baby. The four of us were very close during those early years. We were always together, getting into minor trouble here and there and playing cowboys and Indians or war games. Fred was always Roy Rogers! Roy was his hero. Mine varied - Gene Autry, Lash LaRue, Tim Holt, or whomever. Don't recall the favorites of Gary, Ronny or Jim. I'll have to ask Gary and Fred. They may know.

Yes, we played together daily and fought each other weekly. No matter how close you are, as kids, there are gonna be fights. We would punch each other around, bloody a nose here and there, go home crying and team up the next day to fight Indians or Nazis. That's what boys do!

For us all, Lincoln Village was a special place then and remains so in our memories. Mrs. Morrison's buttered biscuits with a little sugar remains a favorite sweet-tooth memory. Her kitchen was like many others there in the village— open to a horde of famished kids in from the Indian wars or World War II. All that fighting makes you hungry and thirsty. Having been tomahawked, bayo-

neted, shot and hanged a multitude of times, I can readily attest to that. I can also vividly remember Freddy holing up in his house with a stack of peanut butter sandwiches, an RC cola and a stack of comic books to kill a few hours. Gary and I might join him in sharing all of the aforementioned.

Ah, but there was change in the wind as we grew older. The Morrisons moved away from Rison Street. Yes, they were moving on up. They pulled up stakes and moved all the way over to "New Village", to Abington Avenue. Lord, they must have been almost a mile away. Ah, yes, they were still in sight of the water tower in Lincoln. It has been said that if you moved so far away that you could no longer see the water tower, you were toooooo far away. Today the water tower and most of Lincoln Village no longer exists except in our memories.

As Fred's family moved to New Village, my family and I also moved. Since I never lived in one place more than two years, it was not new to me. We lived in Sparkman Homes, at Butler Terrace; on O'Shaughnessy, Redstone Park and as far away as Attalla, interspersed with returns to 150 Rison Street.

No matter where we lived, the Morrison boys and Wilburn boys stayed close. We would double up on our bicycles and visit each other constantly. Our wanderings to Pin Hook Creek, up to Monte Sano or to wherever our travels and games took us continued. These wanderings and Saturday visits to the Grand, the Lyric, Elks, and Center theaters were part of our existence.

Even as we branched out from Lincoln school to West Clinton, East Clinton, Huntsville Jr. High and other branch-

es of Huntsville's education system, we remained close. Always in touch.

Later, we began working. I worked at the Savage Super Market on Holmes, Fred began his cooking career at Gibson's BBQ and Gary at a Service Station. Gainfully employed teens, a little money and looking for the girls.

At this point we began to drift apart. In February, 1957 I quit school and joined the Army. Military training as a Cryptanalyst and off to Germany. I lost touch with Fred and Ronny. Came back briefly to Huntsville to meet my wife, married, then off around the world on my Army career. Over the years I checked on the whereabouts of Fred and Ron Morrison. At one point

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2 lb. Special

2 lbs. pork or turkey*
or whole chicken,
3 pt. side items,
16 buns, sauce

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3 lb. Special

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or whole chicken,
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*add \$1⁰⁰ per pound for turkey

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Don't Forget The Homemade Hushpuppies

I learned that Fred had married and relocated to St. Louis in pursuit of his Chef career. I was moving along the course of my life; Gary had married in New Mexico while in the Army and returned to Huntsville for a career with the Police Department. Jim had married a few times himself while working as a Semi Driver. I had heard little of Fred and Ron at this point and kept galloping around the world doing my bit with the Army. While doing this, I still never forgot the Morrisons and continued to wonder what had happened to old Fred.

After a long and enjoyable career with the Army, I retired and moved to Pulaski, TN for a few short years and then went back to the Intelligence business working for the National Security Agency in Atlanta, GA. I spent twelve years doing that and once again retired in February 2000. My wife and I followed our grandkids to Belleville, IL. We settled down there doing little or nothing but growing older and traveling a bit.

I continued to wonder about old Freddy Morrison. I checked for Morrison's all around St. Louis. He was not in O'Fallon, not in Chesterfield, not in Souldard, not anywhere that I checked. So, I gave up looking.

In late June of 2012, Gary called me from Huntsville. "I went to the Lincoln reunion last night. Guess who I ran into?" he asked. I had no idea. "Freddy Morrison! And guess what? He lives only five minutes from you in a place called Swansee!"

That was close. Swansee and

"When I die, I sure hope my wife doesn't sell my stuff for what I told her I gave for it."

Keith Samson, Athens

Belleville are connected. I got Fred's phone number and gave him a call. We chatted briefly and agreed to meet at a nearby fast food place for breakfast on the Fourth of July.

The Fourth rolled around and bright and early I walked into the McDonalds. I was a bit early and was there when Fred walked in and began looking around. I would have recognized Fred anywhere. It was old Freddy Morrison - just somewhat older!! He had not changed that much.

We grabbed our breakfast and began trying to catch up some fifty-four, fifty-five years. I was surprised to learn that Fred was the last one of his family remaining. Like me, he had lost a younger brother, Ronny, much too early. I had lost Jimmy when he was forty-two. But, I still had a brother and sister remaining. I did learn that Fred has a daughter and a young grandson here in this area. We managed to catch up on family events somewhat and I gave

him an old photo of him, Ronny, Gary and Jimmy from the 1955/56 era.

Later in July we invited Fred over for dinner, it was Mexican night at our house (Mexican seems to be Freds favorite) and we had our oldest daughter, Renee, and her family over so Fred got to meet Donald, Joshua, Stephen and Renee.

We had a nice meal, exchanged some old family stories and generally got to know one another again. Before parting I asked what Fred's mother's name was as I didn't remember anything but "Mrs.

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Morrison". Fred said it was "Dessie" as in "Dessie and Bessie". My mother was Bessie.

He also mentioned that his Mom had come to Huntsville from Smithville, TN where my mother was from. What a coincidence. I then asked what her maiden name had been. He said that she was a Cantrell. I chuckled and made an off the cuff remark that in that case, we were probably related.

Since I have been an avid genealogist for some years and had researched both my Maternal and Paternal lines, I began checking on Dessie Cantrell. It took me only a few minutes to learn that Fred and I were third cousins three times removed. Our relationship is through my Maternal Grandfather William Irvin Young and back to 1779 and Abraham and Sarah Durham Cantrell from North Carolina. I guess it really is a small world.

Both his mother's family and my mother's family had left the farms of DeKalb County, Tennessee, and relocated to Huntsville, Alabama in search

of work in the cotton mills and our lives came together in Lincoln Village. Then some fifty five years later we both find ourselves in Illinois and still have strong connections to a cotton mill village that no longer exists except in our hearts and memories.

Fred and I get together periodically and enjoy visits and exchange of memories.

In the meantime, I have located two other neighbors from Lincoln Village - Bertha and Barbara Cavender who lived next door. I found them too late to connect again with their brother Billy as he had died in February, 2014.

I plan to spend some time with Barbara and Bertha and hopefully continue this narrative in another article.

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Sheila Black, Gurley

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City News in 1911

Serious Street Car Accident Today

About 9 o'clock this morning Street Car No. 5, eastbound with Dick Hatcher as motorman, collided with a two-horse wagon belonging to Hon. D. I. White and injured the two men drivers. Jack Parham, slightly and Jim Fields, was seriously injured. The accident occurred at the corner of Holmes and Green Streets. The wagon and team were going south at a rapid rate and the car was advancing east in back-up fashion, the two colliding before the men in charge of either could see the approach of the other in time to avoid the accident. Both wheels on one side of the wagon were broken off. The Parham man escaped with a bruised head and shoulder. Fields was more seriously hurt, his right hip being dislocated and fractured.

Oil Men to Visit Local Fields for Work

E. R. B. Martin and J. K. Mahan, millionaire natural oil operators from Pittsburg, Pa. and who have options on more than 20,000 acres of oil lands in Madison county, left this afternoon for their homes after spending a few days here in the interest of their probably local operations. The tip was secured by a prominent businessman and friend of the gentlemen present, that within a very short time they expect to simultaneously start the drilling of five to ten wells near Huntsville. The gentlemen paid a visit to the Hazle Green and West Huntsville wells of the New York-Alabama Oil Co. and were much pleased with the prospects.

Come to the "Picto"

Huntsville's popular playhouse offers the amusement-loving people this week a series of choice entertainments that will please. Spend your evenings with us in enjoyment.

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- Dr. Lockwood of Huntsville passed through here to Fayetteville last week. Upon his return he did some veterinary work for Mr. Fred Baeder and also removed a large piece of cob from the mouth of one of Mr. Hense Lowe's horses that had been unable to eat for five days because of it, causing said horse and the owner to feel much better.

- Mr. John Mosely of Hazle Green has been adding more land to his already several acres, having purchased the Allison homestead, west of his farm on the pike, and now has a stretch of land one mile long from the pike west on the north side of Charity Lane. The Allison farm will be a much better piece of property after Mr. Mosely has owned it for a few years.

Federal Aid Sought for Shoals Improvement

Within the next few days the Tennessee Valley of North Alabama will send a delegation to Wash-

ington, DC, 500 strong, for the purpose of urging the Congress of the United States to take speedy and definite action in the development of the immense water power of the Muscle Shoals some thirty miles below the Decatur. Mayor Henry A. Skegg of Decatur has just appointed 25 delegates to go from Decatur.

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Georgia Man in Daring Rescue

Recently, Don Hill was driving home from work through the North Georgia mountains above the small former gold rush town of Dahlonega, Georgia. On a grassy island in the middle of a hectic and dangerous intersection he saw a German Shepherd pacing back and forth. Obviously frightened to death, the dog was emaciated and holding up an injured hind leg.

"My heart was pounding in my chest," Don said. "I was so scared it was going to run out into the very heavy traffic before I could do anything and I was going to see it die right there in front of me."

He didn't think twice about what he was going to do.

Don crossed two four-lane highways on foot to reach the dog and then slowly, over the course of 20 minutes, he calmly coaxed the dog while crouched down on the ground. Finally the dog summoned the courage to sniff Don. Just at the moment when Don was about to slip a leash around his neck, someone sounded their horn and the dog flew into traffic.

Without hesitation, Don dove across the lanes full of cars and grabbed the dog and carried it back to safety on the shoulder. A state trooper who witnessed the incident said, "Mr. Hill, that was either the dumbest or the bravest thing I have ever seen."

Don credits his guardian angel for leading him to the dog that day and for keeping them both safe during that dangerous rescue.

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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



As many of you identified, **Charlie Lyle** (of Charlie Lyle Band fame) was that pensive little boy whose picture we ran in last month's magazine. **Evelyn Ward Parker** was the first caller to identify Charlie, and she said she went to Huntsville High with him and he has not changed a bit! She says his face looks just the same. Congratulations to you Evelyn because you get a free subscription for a year!

Old Town lost a great neighbor recently. **Lyle Taylor** had been living there with wife **Ruth** for many many years and loved photography, helping people with projects and he read everything he could get his hands on. Lyle passed away at age 91 on Sep. 2nd and he will be so missed. There will be a story about Lyle in an upcoming Old Huntsville because he was just an interesting, sweet man. We send our deepest sympathy to his wife **Ruth** and their son **Lowell**.

Judy Smith had a birthday very recently and all her family celebrated with her. One gift she received was quite unusual, a purse with real green moss covering it! Happy Birthday to a lady who is very much loved by

alot of people.

Elda Katherine Citrano passed away Sep. 1st at the age of 83. Among her many accomplishments, Mrs. Citrano was the head librarian at the MOS Library on Redstone Arsenal. Elda leaves husband **Dr. Sam J. Citrano, Sr.**; daughters **Lisa Citrano, Karen Watson, Amy Mayben (Jim)** and **Donna Counts**; sons **Louis Citrano** and **Dr. Sam J. Citrano, Jr.** Her family cared deeply for this strong lady and will miss her always.

I like the inside of my car to smell sweet but it seems those air fresheners you buy never last long. So on a whim I bought one of those small bags of cinnamon infused pine cones you find everywhere around the holidays. Just threw it in the back seat. It's in a net covered bag so the great cinnamon smell just is all over my truck! I got mine at a store called Ollie's off University Drive in Madison but you can probably find them in other places too. It lasts a long time.

October seems to have lots of good events - one that you don't want to miss is the annu-

al **Cemetery Stroll** on Oct. 18th from 2-4:30 pm at Maple Hill Cemetery. There is no charge but any donations go towards keeping the cemetery beautiful. There will be over 70 characters standing over their graves to tell you all about their adventures! Be sure and wear comfortable shoes, water is always provided.

And if you like history and are interested in the houses in Five Points, **Jan Williams** will be conducting a walking tour of that area on Oct. 3rd. Should last an hour and a half and meet at the northwest corner of Maple Hill Cemetery on Wells Avenue.

LeeAnn Lancaster has owned and operated LeeAnn's Bar & Grill for the past nine years. She was telling me recently that there is alot of leftover food and she just can't see it get thrown in a landfill. So she gathers up bags of leftover bread & food each night after they close, divides it up among her staff and they take it home to feed birds, chipmunks, squirrels etc. She and her husband **Ryan** love animals and like to do this especially in the winter.

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Photo of The Month

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ville Police Department was recognized during the 2015 International Crime Stoppers Conference in Atlanta. HPD received the award for the Best Television Crime of the Week segment, that is produced by WAFF 48 TV with **Mark Thornhill**. It's always on the 10pm news and I don't miss it. Mark is doing an amazing job. It takes a team effort and their collaboration has made Huntsville a safer city. **The Crime Stoppers Program** has been recognized with awards four out of the last six years!

Mary Ann Sibley of Big Cove was 82 when she passed away on Aug. 25th. She worked at places many people will remember - Woolworths, Burketts School Supply, GTE/Automatic Electric, The Book Shop. She leaves brothers **William Sibley**, **James "Buddy" (Linda) Sibley**, **Bob Sibley** and sisters **Sherry Sibley Troglen** and **Charlotte Sibley (Bruce) Fulton**, sister-in-law **Beth Sibley** and many others who will always love her.

Jean Pitsinger was one of the most interesting ladies I ever talked with. She had so many good stories of Huntsville, and was a descendant of one of the first settlers in Madison County - **Isaac Criner**. Jean was 100 years old when she passed away Sep. 4th. She leaves children **Cora White**, **Sara Dervage** and **Benny Pitsinger (Victoria)** along with beautiful grandchildren and great grandchildren whom she

loved with all her heart. **Cory Hallmark** officiated at her funeral at the First United Methodist Church. She will be so missed.

Happy Birthday to that feisty **Diane Owens**. Her birthday is Oct. 25 and surely she'll be partying with hubby **Ken Owens** and sweet Shih-tsu **Angel!** Speaking of Diane who is my sis-in-law, she tried making her standard meatloaf the other day but used salsa in the meat mixture instead of ketchup and topped the loaf with strips of bacon - she said it turned out great! I will be trying that too.

Will Halsey was a Huntsville legend. As a community leader and member of one of Huntsville's oldest families, Mr. Halsey was instrumental in bringing business and capital to Huntsville in its early years. He was the owner and manager of the Halsey Grocery Company. He was just shy of 95 years of age when he passed away. Mr. Halsey leaves daughters **Laura Lanier Halsey**, **Elisabeth Halsey Golub (Noam)**, **Cecilia Halsey**, and grandson **William Eilerman**.

Mary Jones has worked for years at Old Heidelberg restaurant off University Drive, waiting on folks who come in there to eat. Well we were there the other night for dinner and Mary told us that she and her friend had

found a HUGE woolly worm at her home. Now it is said the bigger these guys are in the fall, the harder the winter will be. We don't know the scientific name for the one they found but let's see if they're right this year!

Have a great October.

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Entertaining

Pickled Shrimp

- 1-1/2 c. vegetable oil
- 3/4 c. rice wine vinegar
- 1-1/2 t. salt
- 2 lbs. shrimp
- 1 large onion, cut in rings
- 2-1/2 T. celery seed
- 1-1/2 T. capers & juice
- 8 drops Tabasco sauce

Boil shrimp with 3-1/2 teaspoons salt and 1 package of Crab Boil or Creole seasoning. Clean shrimp and alternate layers of shrimp with onion rings in bowl. Cover with sauce and refrigerate for 48 hours. Serve with toothpicks.

Black Olive Spread

- 1 sm. can pitted ripe olives, drained
- 1/4 c. chopped red bell pepper
- 3 T. olive oil

- 1 T. lemon juice
- 1-1/2 t. dried oregano leaves
- 1/2 t. minced garlic
- 1/2 c. crumbled Feta cheese

Put all ingredients except cheese into food processor with steel blade and process til smooth. Stir in cheese. Refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Serve with crackers or toasted French bread slices.

Ginger Martinis

Use 1-1/2 ounces plain vodka and 1-1/2 ounces ginger liqueur. Shake well with cracked ice. Put a small piece of crystallized ginger in bottom of glass before serving.

Southern Mint Julep

Chill or freeze glasses or Julep cups. Chop fresh mint

coarsely in an equal part of Simple Syrup.

To make syrup - boil equal amounts of sugar and water til the sugar is dissolved. Refrigerate several hours. Fill glasses half full with crushed ice. Add 1 tablespoon of sugar mixture and one or two jiggers of bourbon.

Stir and fill glass with crushed ice. Garnish with a large sprig of mint.

Cinnamon Biscuits

- 2 c. flour
- 4 t. baking powder
- 1/2 t. salt
- 4 T. shortening
- 3/4 c. milk
- 2 T. brown sugar
- 1/2 t. cinnamon
- Soft butter

Sift flour, salt and baking powder. Cut in the shortening. Stir in milk and mix as if for pie

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crust. Knead lightly and roll into flat oblong piece. (1" thick)

Butter the dough lightly with your hands, coat with brown sugar and cinnamon and roll like a jelly roll. Slice into 1 inch pieces. Bake on a lightly greased pan for 12 to 15 minutes at 400 degrees.

Cheesy Grits

- 6 c. boiling water
- 2 t. salt
- 1-1/2 c. uncooked grits
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 3/4 c. melted butter
- 2 c. grated Cheddar cheese
- Dash of Tabasco
- 1 T. seasoned salt

Combine water and salt, bring to boil, stir in grits and cook til done. You must stir grits regularly. Combine remaining ingredients. Add a small amount of hot grits to egg mixture, stirring well. Stir egg mixture into grits.

Spoon into a well greased 3 quart casserole.

Bake at 250 degrees for one hour. This can be prepared the night before, refrigerated and baked for 20-30 minutes the next day.

You can use grated jalapeno jack cheese instead of the Tabasco and Cheddar for a different taste.

Huntsville Chess Pie

- 8-inch unbaked pie crust
- 1/2 c. butter at room temperature
- 1 c. sugar
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1-1/2 t. white cornmeal
- 2 T. heavy cream
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract
- Dash salt

Bake pie shell in very hot oven (450°) until baked but not browned. Cream butter, sugar and egg yolks together. Add cornmeal mixed with the cream and vanilla. Fold in egg whites beaten with salt until stiff. Pour into the baked shell and bake at (400°) for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to 350° and bake 10 to 12 minutes longer or until filling is just set. Serve just barely warm.

Note: This recipe is attributed to a Huntsville, Alabama restaurant which is said to have operated there in the early 1900's. It is purported that people came from all over the state just to eat this pie. The recipe was kept secret but finally leaked out and was published some 50 to 60 years ago in a national magazine. The secret to the recipe was the addition of some white cornmeal.

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The Story of William "Shorty" Cawthon

by Reba Cawthon Hill



My dad, William "Shorty" Cawthon, was born 105 years ago. Daddy was a little person. He had a rare type of dwarfism. His father was a little person too, his mom was average size. He had another younger sister who died of polio. My grandfather worked as a telegraph operator in McMinnville, TN. That was a good job back then so they were doing well.

One morning while they were eating breakfast, a shot rang out. My grandmother told the kids to keep eating while she went to see what had happened. There on the hearth lay my grandfather. He had committed suicide. Daddy said he was on the hearth so that he wouldn't stain my grandmother's rug. The dwarfism he had caused bone and joint deterioration and pain that began in childhood. His pain had gotten so bad he felt like he was a burden to his family. He was in his early 40s. My dad was 14.

It wasn't long till the family moved into Ovoca Widow and Children's home in Tullahoma, TN. I

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don't know why they were not taken in by other family members but they weren't. Maybe they didn't want to take in a mother with three children, with two of them being handicapped. My dad would have been separated from his mother and sisters at Ovoca.

Boys were in one building and women and girls were in another. All adults living there had jobs. Daddy talked about swimming in the large lake. There was a school on the grounds for the children living at Ovoca. My father only finished 7th grade. My younger aunt died there when she was 6 due to the polio. I was in my 40s before I knew anything about Daddy living at an orphans' home. It broke my heart to think of him living there, away from other family members and friends, and separated from his mother and siblings.

My dad left the orphans' home and joined the carnival. He was a clown. Makes me smile to think of that. He told me about the clown makeup he wore. One of their acts was when they all piled out of a car and Daddy was last. He told mom he never wanted to eat beans again because he had eaten too much of them on the road with the carnival. He came back and got his mother and sister from Ovoca and moved to Huntsville. He was still a teen so I guess he didn't travel long with the carnival. All three of them worked in the cotton mill on Triana Blvd.

My dad knew someone who was selling all his watch repair tools and equipment. Daddy bought it all and taught himself to repair watches.

In the 40s he went to work on the Arsenal. He worked for NASA until he retired in the late 60s. He was a minute instrument repairer and an engineer tech. Recently, we met two gentlemen who worked with my dad and one told us he made thermocouples and all other sorts of delicate, tedious instrumentation devices for their organization. The other said that early on, Daddy had the job of climbing into the rockets and working on the panels inside them. Being a little person, he could get into those small areas when others couldn't.

By the mid-late 40s he had opened his own watch shop downtown. Shorty's Watch Shop was on Clinton Avenue and then on Holmes Avenue. He worked there weekdays after getting off work at NASA and all day on Saturdays. After retiring from NASA he worked full time at the watch shop for several more years. His friend, crippled from polio, worked there and ran the shop when Daddy wasn't there. Ollie opened his own shop in Ardmore, AL when Daddy closed Shorty's and retired in the 70s.

I have wonderful memories of being a little girl and helping Daddy at the shop. A customer would come in and I would

say "May I help you?" They would either give their watch to Daddy and explain what was wrong or, my favorite part, they would give me the little ticket stub with a number on it to pick up their watch. I would look through the drawer of repaired watches and match the

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numbers. Each watch had a tag that listed the customer's name, watch brand, repairs done and the price. I would tell them how much it was and even got to make change and give it back to them. This was thrilling for me!

Daddy gave me a little table and stool to use and some old watches. He gave me my own set of watchmaker's tools and showed me how to take the old watches apart and how to put oil inside them.

Mom would bring us to town for a day of shopping and errands. There was so much to do downtown then... Clothing shops, Grants, Woolworths, ice cream counters, Krystal and Sno-white burgers on the Square, movie theaters and Daddy's shop. My legs hurt from walking so Mom would carry me most of the time. Some days I would stay at Daddy's shop and "work" while Mom and my two older sisters shopped.

Daddy's shop was on the Christmas parade route. He would park in front of his shop when he went to work early in the morning. Mom would bring us when it was near time for the parade to start and set us on Daddy's Buick Wildcat to watch the parade.

Everywhere we went, people knew Daddy. I was always so proud to be there with him. I can remember his hands - thick, pudgy, little hands that I would hold and he made me feel so proud and safe and happy.

I didn't understand why people would stare at him and point and laugh. The people that knew him didn't do that so why were these others doing that? I

stuck my tongue out at them sometimes.

I asked Daddy why they did that. He told me not to worry about it, it was ok, he was used to it. I didn't like it! I would hold his hand tighter. I didn't know then that I was a little person too. I'm a grandmother now and I still haven't got used to it. How do you get used to people staring at you and treating you like you are a sideshow freak?

My legs hurt all the time and my mom carried me almost everywhere we went. I can still remember her carrying me when I was 11 years old and

I was hurting. She must have had arms of steel. She never complained about it either. When I first started walking, around age 2, my parents said I would stop walking and hold my hands up for mom to take me anytime someone would come near. My legs were severely bowed and people would stare and make comments.

They would sometimes have pony rides at the M&J shopping center parking lot. Mom shopped at M&J and my sisters and I always hoped to visit Dipper Dan's for an ice cream cone when we were there. One day the pony ride people were giving away a Shetland pony. We had to fill out entry forms at the

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Andy Rooney

drug store. I'm sure my parents were shocked when I won. They delivered that pony and we had no place to put it. She slept in the garage that night.

I remember sitting out in the garage with Daddy watching the pony that night. I was sitting behind Daddy and I got his comb and was playing barber shop and giving him all kinds of funny hairstyles. The funniest one was when I parted his hair in the middle and combed it straight down on both sides. He looked like Shemp from the Three Stooges. The pony, Butterball, found a new home with our neighbors a few doors down.

We moved to town when I was going into second grade. I grew up in the house my dad had bought for his mom and him not long after they moved to Huntsville.

I loved to watch my dad shave. I would put the toilet seat down and sit there and watch him. He took a washcloth and would wet it with steaming hot water. Then he held that hot washcloth on his whiskers. I would watch the steam rise and wonder how he could keep it on his face when it was so hot. That was to soften the whiskers. Then he got his shaving mug. It had a round soap bar for shaving in the bottom of the mug. He took a shaving brush and added a bit of water to it and swirled it round and round in the mug. It made a thick creamy lather that he would brush on his face. The razor was a double sided blade razor.

He would slowly and care-

fully shave all that shaving cream off along with the whiskers. He would hold his mouth a certain way when he shaved the different areas of his face. I was totally fascinated.

I wanted to know what it felt like so he shaved a little square on my arm, just above my wrist. It became standard procedure for him to shave that spot on my arm whenever I watched him shave.

While I sat there I would ask questions. Most of the things I've written about here were the results of those shaving conversations. I can remember, specifically, sitting there while we talked and he shaved. I can remember the way his face felt after a shave. Very smooth. Not prickly like it was when he would rub his stiff whiskers on my cheek to aggravate me.

I just remembered one story about Daddy's whiskers. I say whiskers but they were not grown out like a beard. He just had a couple of days' growth when he shaved. One day I was "working" at the shop with

him. I was always around his workbench, prowling in the drawers, looking at the different tools, counting the change in the money drawer, and watching him work.

I was playing with a pair of tweezers. I looked at Daddy and he had the prickly whiskers sticking out, maybe a couple millimeters long. All of his whiskers were black.... But one... and it was grey. Hmm. I took the tweezers I was playing with and got hold of that one little grey one and jerked it out. Daddy jumped and almost flipped off his chair!

I never thought it would hurt him. He yelled and I jumped down and ran to my own little work table. I was trying not to laugh because Daddy was hurt

"Teach your daughter how to shoot, because a restraining order is nothing but a piece of paper."

Jerry Frost, Athens

"Old Huntsville" magazine has a new website!

Are you looking for family members to add information to your Family Tree?

If you are interested in tracing your family tree and have family members in Maple Hill Cemetery, you've got to check out the Maple Hill link in the "Old Huntsville" website. There is also a link that will take you to grave sites U.S. wide - complete with pictures of the headstone and a map of the cemeteries.



www.oldhuntsvillemag.com

and mad but I just couldn't control it all so there were some giggles and me holding my hand over my mouth to try to hold it in. After a few minutes he was OK but he made it quite clear that I was NOT to do that again.

When I was about 12 years old Daddy had a kidney stone that would not pass. He ended up having surgery to remove it and found it was so large it was almost as big as the kidney. He got a bad infection and almost died. He was in the hospital for weeks. I was scared to go to visit because the infection made him talk out of his head. Sometimes he didn't recognize Mom or where he was and that was scary also.

When he got well and came home he sold all of his watch shop equipment except his chair and I still have that.

My parents divorced and we stayed with Daddy. He never left the house anymore. He couldn't drive. He couldn't even get off the porch. He walked with crutches. He hurt all the time. I didn't realize the extent of his pain till I grew up and started having the same pain that goes along with our type of dwarfism.

I remember bumping his arm once and he cried out and told me it hurt. I mockingly laughed and said that couldn't have hurt because I barely touched him. Years later the exact same thing happened with my daughters. They barely touched my arm and the pain was awful. Instantly, I thought of Daddy. I felt so bad thinking about what I had said to him. I didn't believe him. I'm so sorry that I did that.

I watched old movies with Daddy. During the summer I would sit up late at night watching the only all night channel we had which was old movies. Daddy would wake up and come to tell me to go to bed. He would start watching the movie and end up watching for 2-3 hours. We watched Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, the Dead End Kids, Pat O'Brien, Humphrey Bogart, and Daddy taught me to love James Cagney movies. I still love to watch them. He also watched Ronald Reagan movies. He once told me, "I'll tell you who would make a great President - Ronald Reagan." I think he was right about that too.

When I was 14 and my sister was 16, Daddy got very sick and my sister and I didn't know what to do. We were just kids. I honestly couldn't remember Daddy ever going to the doctor. I only remembered about the time he was in the hospital. He would be OK most of the time but then we heard him talking in his bedroom. We thought he was on the phone but when we went in there he would be laying there talking to

himself. It was like he was talking to someone who wasn't there. It scared us.

We would sleep in the same bed and cry because we were scared.

One morning, a couple of weeks later, I woke up to hear my sister crying on the phone to a neighbor because Daddy was so sick. She came to take him to the hospital. As they were helping him get down the porch steps he looked at me and said, "If I go in the hospital, I won't come home."

He was right. He died at 4:10, early the next morning. I wrote this on his birthday this year. I miss him every day. I love you Daddy!



My family - I'm the little girl in front.



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THE OLD GEEZER



An old geezer, who had been a retired farmer for a long time, became very bored and decided to open a medical clinic. He put a sign up outside that said:

Dr. Geezer's clinic.

"Get your treatment for \$500, if not cured you get back \$1,000."

Dr Young, who was positive that this old geezer didn't know beans about medicine, thought this would be a great opportunity to get \$1,000, so he decided to pay a visit to Dr. Geezer's clinic.

Dr. Young: -- "Dr. Geezer, I have lost all of my sense of taste. Can you please help me?"

Dr. Geezer: - "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in Dr. Young's mouth."

Dr. Young: - "Gakk!! - This is Gasoline!"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You've got your taste back. That will be \$500."

Dr. Young gets annoyed and goes back after a couple of days figuring to recover his money.

Dr. Young: "I have lost my memory, I cannot remember anything."

Dr. Geezer: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in the patient's mouth."

Dr. Young: "Oh no you don't! That is Gasoline!"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You've got your memory back. That will be \$500."

Dr. Young (now having spent \$1000) leaves angrily and comes back after several more days.

Dr. Young: "My eyesight

has become weak, I can hardly see!"

Dr. Geezer: 'Well, I don't have any medicine for that so here's your \$1000 back.'

Dr. Young: "But this is only \$500..."

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You got your vision back! That will be \$500."

Moral of story: just because you're "Young" doesn't mean that you can outsmart an old "Geezer".



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Incident at LaGrange

by Steve Johnson

There just ain't nothing to do, thought Luke Jackson. The days were long and hot. School had been let out a month now. Luke, a lean, just-starting-to-fill-out young man yearned for some adventure in his life. Why I bet Tom Sawyer never got this bored, he thought. Luke pondered himself in the middle of some great adventures. But even though he, like Tom Sawyer, lived in a small rural town, that adventure seemed as distant as the moon or his kinfolk in Louisiana.

You just can't get any more country than Leighton, Alabama. It is the proverbial one-horse town. One red light, one small cafe, and the post office, all on Main Street. The year was 1966, and besides baseball, there just weren't many things for a kid to do. Except to maybe explore. Leighton was surrounded by woods with ponds and streams and seemingly endless cotton fields full of arrowheads.

Luke liked the outdoors. He liked fishing in the nearby Tennessee River, catching catfish, stripes, crappie and the other local delicacies. He loved fishing by the nearby Wilson and Wheeler Dams. However, the woods and the open fields where he hunted game and arrowheads were his favorite places. After all, the gallant Southern Army had marched through these very woods of his birthplace. Luke just knew that some of those men in gray were blood kin.

Luke got on his bike, and since he wanted adventure, decided to ride to LaGrange Mountain. LaGrange was about six miles from Leighton, down County Line Road and a short stretch of Highway 157. It was a long ride, but not too much for an active, restless kid. Luke attached a couple of baseball cards to the bike spokes with a clothes pin and hit the road.

LaGrange Mountain was the site of the old LaGrange College, the first

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The kids text me "PLZ" which is shorter than "please". I text back "NO" which is shorter than "YES."

R. Nathan, Grandpa

college in the state of Alabama. It was started by rich southern planters who wanted a quiet place for their sons to learn away from the temptations of a big city. It was small and private. The main building was three stories high. It was said you could see the Tennessee River some twenty miles away on a clear day from the third floor balcony. There were two smaller buildings on the grounds.

Luke used to love to see the old china set that had been donated to the Leighton Library of LaGrange College. Each plate had a different scene of the school.

LaGrange College was virtually deserted during the days before the Civil War. It had, however, been converted to a military school shortly before the war. There was also a small settlement on the mountain that pre-dated the school. It was totally self-sufficient and even had a small business that made crockery. It was a haven for the wealthy planters and their families to escape the scorching north Alabama summers. The old road from Leighton to Russellville ran across the mountain, also.

The fact that LaGrange College had been converted into a military school attracted the attention of Union General Granville Dodge. He was headquartered in Florence, Alabama, about twenty miles away. General Dodge was terrorizing the Shoals area. His men were stealing livestock and crops, and stealing people's china, gold, and other valuables. They burned houses and crops, too.

The local families, according to Luke's third grade teacher Mrs. Sue Smith, feared and hated the pillaging Yankees. Mrs. Smith liked and doted on Luke and lived right down the street. Luke loved to hear her stories of Leighton and LaGrange. She was a direct descendant of a Leighton family that had a cottage in LaGrange. She told Luke how the families had buried what valuables they could, and fled the village by overloaded wagons in a hurry when news of Dodge's plans to come to LaGrange reached them. Luke knew all of her stories by heart.

Luke wished he could have been around to fight the Yankees. Luke's vision of being a glorious soldier was a little too rosy. He really couldn't imag-

ine life without electricity, television, cars and all of the other comforts he took for granted. Young boys just don't let such matters concern them when they are daydreaming. Little did he know the taste of reality that awaited him on this sunny, carefree summer day. As he reached the foot of the mountain, he decided to raid old man Edgar Miser's apple orchard. His daddy had talked about doing it as a kid, and he was hungry.

He rode to Mr. Miser's orchard and the trees



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were full of ripe green apples. Luke picked a few of the apples and leaned up against one of the trees. As he ate them, he thought about the history of the area and Mrs. Sue Smith's stories. He was tired from the ride from Leighton and full of the green apples. He fell into a deep sleep and the dreams began.

Luke awoke to the sounds of chaos and turmoil. He was looking at the LaGrange College buildings from behind a stand of brush and trees. Wagons full of furniture and barrels, and families with sobbing mothers and kids were roaring down the muddy road in front of the school. The men at the helm were screaming at their teams of horses to run faster. People were running on foot down the mountain.

Then, coming furiously up the mountain on horseback were the dreaded men in blue. They lit torches and descended on the grand old college. Luke watched in dismay as they torched the school, and the smoke plumed and filled the air. Luke was torn about what to do. Should he run to the school and try to stop the pillage, or should he just run. Then, out of nowhere, appeared a Union officer on horseback.

He screamed at Luke. "What are you hiding from, little Johnny Reb? I ought to kill you now boy, so I don't have to do it later." Then he slapped Luke hard on his face with his rider's crop. Luke let out a yelp and started to run for it. The Yankee pulled out his sidearm and pulled the trigger. Luke screamed at the sound of the pistol at the top of his lungs. He was a goner for sure, he thought in his dream.

Luke awakened to old man Miser shaking and yelling at him. "What's wrong boy, you sick from eating my apples? Remember what the Good Book says, "Thou shalt not steal"! Luke looked around, and slowly gathered his wits about himself. He saw his bike, and jumped on it and hit the road running. He did not slow down as he crossed Highway 157 to McCormack Lane nor when he crossed the construction site for the new Highway 20 at County Line Road.

He made it back to Leighton in record time. He got to his house and slid into the gravel driveway like a champ. His heart was racing, and he had to pinch himself again and again to make sure he

was alive. He could still smell the smoke from the burning college and the gunpowder from the Union officer's gun. Luke took a big step toward being a man that day.

And he was never much one for lost causes again.


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A Lucky Cat

A man stopped the traffic to save a tiny kitten that was trying to cross a busy road. He ran across three lanes of traffic to get her. Meet Shahrazad the kitty!

This tiny gray kitten was trying to cross a four-lane busy road at rush hour. "I saw traffic stopping, then driving crazy to avoid something. Saw movement on ground. Was a tiny (TINY) kitten, scared out of its mind, trailing something bright pink..." Reddit user GubGeek wrote.

"Threw my car into park and got out, blocking traffic and ran over. Scooped it up and came back to car."

"Inspecting, it wasn't as I'd feared, her tail was stripped of fur, but other than that, she seemed okay. Called vet and told what had happened (shaking because I was so angry at the other humans who'd just kept driving past this tiny, helpless, terrified animal) and that I'd be there in 15 minutes," he wrote via Reddit.

"After inspection, nothing looks broken. Doc thinks that her tail was run over and her attempts to escape caused the fur to be pulled off. He thinks that she is about 5-6 weeks old."

He brought the little kitten home and gave her some kitten food, and set up fresh water, a litter box, and a nest of blankets and old shirts. "She's slept and eaten and used litter and even batted at my fingers when I was playing," he added. "She's eaten like a pig and even drunk some water, which makes me happy."

"And, then she curled up next to me on the blanket and shirts I laid down for her, and napped for about an hour and occasionally would purr and head-butt my hand as I petted her."

"She really is a beauty, and her personality as she settles in is really coming to the fore."

"Part of me thinks that we can be judged by how we treat animals in need (and that part is STILL angry at all those drivers who just honked their horns and drove around her... like she's going to know what a horn blare means?!) and part of me is just glad I was in the right place at the right time to help."

Update: the last two inches of her tail has turned black and is now brittle. She's going to lose at least that. Still no mobility in the rest of the tail, though; it just hangs limp.

One of our other cats had a tail injury, recently, so I've seen that the tail can be traumatized and not have any mobility of its own for a little while. I'm hoping that this is the case with her, too.

I've just called the vet, however, asking about possible infections from this recent turn, and am waiting on a callback.

However, she's eating and drinking well and she also has used the litter box a few times and there's not been any blood in either urine or feces, thankfully. And, when I put her on the bed she curls up next to me (I'm keeping her in the bathroom, since we have two full-grown cats already) on the blanket I laid down for her.

She's the sweetest cat, and very lucky.



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THE PICTURE SHOW

by Tommy Towery

We usually didn't call it a movie when I was growing up. We called it a "picture show" or "show" for short. Girls were asked for dates with the phrase "Do you want to go to the show with me?" Not only were they called differently, movie theaters themselves were different in the Sixties. Today, movies are shown for months at a time at the same place. During any one week in 1964, each theater would show three or four different movies. Usually the newly released movies started on Sunday and ran Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. A different movie would be shown on Wednesday, sometimes that being the only day it would play. On Thursday a different movie would start that would also run on Friday.

Saturdays were special. There were usually double feature movies at the Lyric Theater every Saturday. Before those started there was a special showing we commonly called a "Cartoon Carnival." It was about an hour of nothing but color cartoons and on days that there wasn't anything special going on, it cost ten cents to get in. For one period of time the admission price for the cartoons was an empty Golden Flake potato chip bag. I never knew why they wanted them. When I was a kid, whole Saturdays were spent in theaters.

During one period you were given a special ticket when you entered the theater. These were not the normal door-prize type tickets, but big ones about two inches square with a big number ranging from one to sixteen in the center. These tickets were used in the Crazy Races part of the Saturday morning activities. Sometime during the morning, a special short film was shown with Crazy Racers with each racer wearing a number.

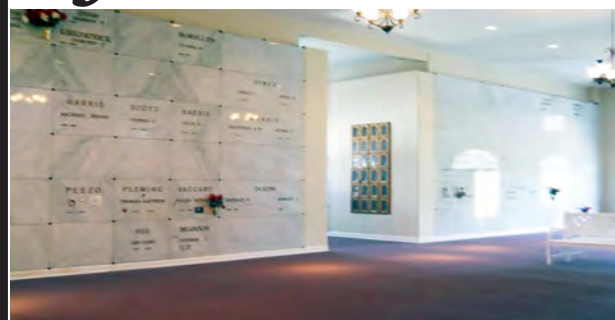
The races were in the mode of the Keystone Cops or Our Gang type films and at the end of the film, one racer crossed the finish line first and was declared the winner. If your ticket matched his number, you were a winner and went up on the theater stage and received a prize. Usually fifteen or twenty prizes of some type of game or toy were given to the lucky few. After getting up early on Saturday mornings for two years and eating myself sick on potato chips, my number finally came up and I won a clay construction set.

On some Saturdays the Lyric Theater held live talent shows with special prizes for the winners. Five or ten people got up on stage and put on their show and then the master of ceremonies would let the crowd pick the winner by yelling or applauding.

There was not a lot of talent displayed but someone was always a winner. I don't even remember the prize I won when Don got all his friends to clap for me after he goaded me into getting up on the stage and singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." I think I was about seven then.

The other feature of the Saturday morning theater visit was a "Serial" as we always called it. The rest of the world called them continued series. We would see one of the fifteen episodes of Commando Cody, The Rocket Man, Batman, or Dick Tracy. Each week we were left watching the hero go off the edge of the cliff and the compelling message "Don't miss next week's exciting

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episode of 'The Mask of Doom' in this theater," or something equally demanding. Of course we wouldn't think of missing it. More than once I went to the theater fifteen weeks in a row just to see what happened to my hero.

The Cartoon Carnival was the epitome of what children liked and adults hated about movies. There was plenty of screaming and yelling and running through the aisles and throwing of popcorn and candy wrappers. Perhaps it was held to give the kids a time to do those kinds of things without disturbing the adults. The kids loved it.

I think my record for the number of different movies seen in one day was seven, counting the Cartoon Carnival. That day started early in the morning holding a potato chip bag in the line with the screaming kids at the Lyric Theater. I followed that with a double feature at the same theater.

A quick lunch at Krystal and I was off to the double feature at the Grand Theater a couple of blocks away from the cafe. Once that let out, a ten cent bus ride took me to West Huntsville where I had supper at the Rebel Inn. After that, it was a short walk across the street to the Center Theater for the third double feature of the day. It was a world-class record that would stand for a long time.

On Saturday evenings, the movies would change again and a special show would be shown that night only. On rare occasions, special "Sneak Previews" were given in some of the theaters and no one knew what movie would be shown. There were great ones and terrible ones.

I remember one night "Gigi" was shown. It was such a sneak preview, that

a month passed before it was shown again at the theater. I never learned where the sneak preview features came from, but if nothing else was going on, they were always a good way to spend the evening.

In the early days of dating, before we were teenagers and the automobile entered our lives, movie dates were common. They gave the young people a place to sit in the somewhat-private dark with whoever they currently had a crush on.

You were as private as you could get, considering you were sitting in a room with a hundred or more people, all watching you instead of the movie. The

movie dates had one other thing going for them - they were cheap, since you usually met your date inside the theater instead of having to pay her way. Many a first date was to a movie and many a first kiss was made in the dark of the flickering lights. Kids started movie dates before they had any other way of dating, so it was up to the girl to get her own transportation to the movie and the boy did likewise. Usually you met each other inside the dark theater and whoever got there first saved a seat for the other.

It didn't matter what was playing on the screen, that was not the reason for being there anyway.

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SHORT & SWEET

MEMORIES FROM OUR READERS

From Doug Raney

I moved to Huntsville with my parents in 1965, upon moving here I saw two level apartments near where Governors Drive and Franklin Avenue intersect.

I remember them briefly being occupied and shortly after, abruptly abandoned. I had always wondered why and what the story was on it, they were still there when we left Huntsville in Aug. 1971.

Mrs. Jane Barr, who was my pre-school teacher at Monte Sano Methodist Nursery School, wrote a short article about living in the apartments, it actually helped me re-connect with her after many years.

I finally found out that they were abandoned after the area became zoned for medical buildings. Anyway, there have got to be many memories of living in the College Hill apartments and I hope that anyone with stories will share with Old Huntsville magazine.

From Rosemarie Webb

With Halloween coming soon, I thought I would share this haunted train story with you.

It was a beautiful fall afternoon, the leaves were rustling in the trees and the sweet smells of fall were in the air. My husband Terry and I were sitting outside on our porch in Toney. The school buses were running, bringing home the children who had been in school all day.

As we watched each bus pass and the happy little children run to their homes, we heard a loud train sound. We looked at each other puzzled because there were no trains in the area, or so we thought. My husband and I just thought maybe it was a semi truck on the 231-431 highway near by.

We gave it no other thought and went about enjoying the beautiful afternoon. A couple of weeks went by and we heard someone talking about the

Haunted Ghost Train of Old Railroad Bed Road.

Being new to the area and being lovers of trains and anything spooky, we decided to see where this train was. We found no sign of a train or train tracks in the area around us and no one in the area seemed to know anything about the Ghost Train.

So, my husband and I went to the Huntsville Public Library to see if there was any information on the Old Railroad Bed Train.

As it turns out there was a train on the Railroad Bed Road years before, but the train was no longer there.

As stories have it, the train was hijacked many years ago by two passengers on a late fall afternoon. These men had just robbed a bank and fled on the train as their get away. During the course of the highjacking the train derailed and ended up in a creek, killing all aboard from either drowning or from the wreck itself.

Many years have come and gone since this accident, but on a fall night you can hear the train whistle and some have even reported seeing lights moving through the trees near where the wreck happened.

I do not know if you believe in ghosts or not, I will leave that up to your imagination, but many have seen the lights and heard the train horn blowing, in the Fall of the year when strange things seem to happen!

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop at any time.

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From Tommy Towery

I had forgotten all about the go-cart track on Traylor Island in Huntsville, AL until I saw that aerial photo, when it was posted on the Old Huntsville website, and then many memories came back to me.

The incident I remember the most was that Bob Walker and I and maybe a few others were out riding on the track one night. Out of nowhere the sky opened up and we were hit with a major rainstorm.

The track was covered with rubber from all those soft tires squealing around the turns, and when the water hit the track it became as slick as ice.

The cars took on minds of their own and started spinning around like throwing pennies on a frozen pond. I know I made two complete 360 spins before I left the track and hit a bale of hay that was used as a safety barrier on one of the turns.

We were wet, dizzy and laughing our heads off when we left the track that night. Wow, what a ride.

It was one that I thought I'd never forget, but I had forgotten until I saw the photo of the track again.

From Phillip Johnson

"The Spring" was what we Village boys called it when we referred to Brahan Spring. I recall that the mill company owned and maintained the spring. A single cinder-covered lane at the end of Ivy Avenue led up to the spring. Automobile traffic was discouraged by a cattle guard and locked field gate. An entrance was built for the villagers who wanted to pasture their cows and a barbed wire fence enclosed the pasture that surrounded the spring.

Some weeks during the summer months the mill would open the gates for fishing and picnicking. We would slide under an eroded washout at various locations around the fence. We caught brim, bluegill and shellcracker if we were lucky - we all loved to fish back then.

There was lots of algae covering the top of the water, which posed an obstacle for us boys. Wayne Quick concocted a technique by using a long cane pole, twine and a hook. We would tie the twine to the pole, then a hook to the other end of the twine, then finally apply a fat red worm to the hook. We would loft the pole into the air, slinging the line out and over

the algae. We caught so many dark, fat brim this way, I lost count. We also had some good times frog gigging around the edges of the spring.

We found so many Indian artifacts in that area near the mud flat - I figured there must have been some Indian homes there at one time.

Some of the older guys who were residents of the village fished at the spring quite often, Abe Daniel and Pete Hammond were two that come to mind. Abe was a member of a very large family, whose father died when he was just a teenager. He had to quit school and go to work to help support his family.

He was a loom fixer in the mill, and told me how he would get up every morning for work and take cold biscuits and streak of lean for lunch. A shelf was designated as the location for storing lunches. Abe made use of the same sack for several days, causing the sack to become quite greasy. One day while on his lunch break he noticed a clean brown sack. He thought he would take this one and leave his greasy one but when he looked inside the sack all he found was a hammer and two hickory nuts.

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The Pride of Camp Ground High School

by William Sibley

The Rev. Green Also Collier is thought to have been Big Cove's first teacher. He taught school from 1833 to 1853, and it is thought that he held classes in his home. Records show that he charged his students (whom he called scholars) six cents per day for tuition.

It is almost certain that Big Cove's first school was Mt. Pleasant School, which was located on Camp Ground Road. Mt. Pleasant School, thought to have been established in 1854, was among the first public schools in Alabama.

The school was on the second floor of the Mt. Pleasant (Big Cove) Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The only access to the second floor school was by way of outside stairs. One day in about 1875, pupils arrived for school and discovered that the stairs had been sawed off. When the teacher arrived, he sent two pupils to get my great-grandfather, John Wesley Miller, who was a school trustee at the time. Mr. Miller immediately had a good idea who the culprit was, and went to the man's home to confront him about the issue. While talking to the suspected culprit, Mr. Miller discovered that his suspicions were correct. Mr. Miller told the man that he (the culprit) and Mr. Miller would reconstruct the steps or the sheriff's office would be contacted. Mr. Miller asked, "Why did you do such a thing?" The man replied, "Because that school ain't nothing but a 'thang' of the devil." The stairs were

reconstructed immediately.

Although Big Cove's early schools were small, they had some strong students and some strong teachers. During the 1800s, outstanding teachers were Bose Williamson, Rev. L.B. Morgan and two sons of the Rev. Daniel Keith Hunter. In the early 1900s, some outstanding teachers were Tennie (Allen) Sibley and Sallye (Johnson) Sibley. Those two teachers married my father's two brothers. Other good teachers were Mr. McClure (first name not known); Aunt Tennie's brother, Prof. W.S. Allen; Bertie Spivey; Susie Mae (Roundtree) Drake; Hosmer Esslinger; A.S. Hodges and daughter; Miss Reynolds and Miss Elizabeth Monroe.

The late Leon Moore, Sr. told me that Miss Roundtree boarded with the Tate Drake family and that she drove a blind mare to school each day. The mare knew the way perfectly and

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- 1 12-oz. bag cranberries, coarsely chopped
- 1 t. grated orange rind
- 2 c. vodka

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Combine this mixture with the vodka and cover tightly in a large glass container. Store this in a cool, dark place for 4 weeks.

Shake the container every 3 days, then drain through a fine sieve to extract the liquid. Strain again, through muslin or cheesecloth, til liquid is clear.

Cover tightly again and store for another couple of weeks before serving.



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did not need to be guided. Miss Roundtree married John Drake, nephew of Tate Drake.

My father Romie Sibley and my Aunt Stella Sibley would entertain my siblings and me by telling us pleasant stories about the "good old days" at school, but one sad thing they told us about was the form of discipline used by one "unnamed" principal. That principal kept a large bunch of hickory switches on the stage of the auditorium, and he would whip pupils mercilessly for misbehavior while the entire student body witnessed those beatings. Aunt Stella reported that the older girls would look away, not wanting to witness these brutal switchings.

The Anyan family lived near Camp Ground School and had been citizens of Big Cove for several generations. George Anyan was the father of Captain Bendall Anyan, and Captain Bendall was the father of Washington "Wash" Anyan, who was a bachelor and the undisputed community drunk. Although Wash was a drunkard, Big Cove citizens insisted that he was one of the kindest men they ever knew.

Teachers and students at Camp Ground School always got their drinking water from Anyans' Spring. Aunt Stella reported that, for some unknown reason, female students were always sent to get the water. Miss Elizabeth Monroe was one of Camp Ground's most popular teachers.

On Aug. 13, 1913, Miss Monroe sent four girls to Anyans' Spring for water. Something terrified those four girls and they came running back to the school, telling Miss Monroe about a monster that had scared them.

Miss Monroe wrote a poem titled "Monster" and dedicated it to "my four brave little girls."
*"Four little girls for some water did go.
 Four little girls got scared you know.
 One came running back to the door.
 The other three were behind so that was four.
 Four little girls were almost to the spring
 When lo and behold they saw a monstrous thing.
 It came from the ground up through the leaves.
 Increased its size till it was as large as the trees.
 So this is a lesson, dear little girls and boys.
 When out in the woods, don't make a loud noise.
 Don't talk about wild men or any scary tale,
 For if you don't, your mission likewise might fail."*

Those brave little girls were Alma Howard (Taylor) Drake, Carrie Bell (Lyle) Hardin, Annie Lee (Miller) Roach Milliard, and Ora Mae (Nunn) Buford.

This clever poem was furnished to me by the late Howard Wilson Drake, son of Alma Drake.

Among the other girls who were sent for water were Stella Sibley, Virgie Taylor, Lucille Taylor, Frances Drake, Eleanor Drake, Ethel Drake, Allene Lyle, Estell Holder and others. Aunt Stella reported that she and other girls would pull up turnips in the Anyans' garden.


One day, a lady called out, "You can have all the white turnips you want, but don't get the 'rubber bellies.'" By rubber bellies she meant rutabagas.

Many Big Cove students attended Camp Ground School as long as they could, including my father, who attended school twelve years, but never graduated because the school was not a high school.


In 1920 and 1921, Camp Ground was a high school. The entire 1920 class consisted of James Allen Taylor, President; Stella Sibley, Vice President; Naomi Lucille Taylor, Secretary; and Grace Virgie Taylor, Treasurer. All four graduates were college bound.

James Allen Taylor became a student at Maryville College in Tennessee and played football and basketball there. All three of the girls went to Florence State Normal School, arriving there by train, which was a new experience. Allen Taylor became a new car dealer. All three of the girls became teachers.

Aunt Stella said they did not know that so many students would be at their college, but they quickly adjusted to the situation and made friends easily. Dormitory life was fun. Aunt Stella reported that she and Virgie and Lucille always stuck together and were loyal to each other. There was a telephone at the end of a hall in the girls' dormitory, and the dormitory matron had told the girls to answer the phone if they were near it when it rang. Big Cove had no phones at the time and Aunt Stella said



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that when the phone would ring, she, Lucille and Virgie would run to the other end of the hall.

Aunt Stella reported only one unpleasant incident to me that occurred while she was in college. All three of the girls had planned to become teachers and were required to have a conference with the director of teaching, who was very proud of himself and got enjoyment out of belittling students he interviewed. Other students had warned the girls about the man. Aunt Stella was determined not to be embarrassed by any of his comments.

At the beginning of the interview, the director of teaching sarcastically said, "Well, Miss Sibley, I see that you're from Brownsboro, Alabama. Is that where two roads cross?"

Aunt Stella replied, "No, more than two roads cross in Brownsboro. I understand that you are from the mountains of Kentucky. Do you have any roads in those mountains?"

The interview proceeded without interruption. All three of the girls became successful teachers.

The only graduate in 1921 was Annie Lee Miller. She told me that she was given a complete graduation program, so she was salutatorian, valedictorian and giftorian. She probably played the graduation march on the piano because she was a gifted pianist. Leonard Taylor, brother of Lucille and Virgie, 1920 graduates, told me that he attended Annie Lee's graduation.

Annie Lee was standing bravely on the stage and giving an excellent speech when the audience noticed that she had her eyes fixed on a certain spot in the auditorium. Naturally, the people looked in that direction and someone shouted, "Fire!"

The fire was extinguished and the ceremony was completed. When asked if she had seen the fire, Annie Lee responded, "Yes, but I was determined to give a good speech and didn't realize that we could have been in danger."

Annie Lee was educated at Florence State Normal School and Athens College and had a successful teaching career.

In 1920, Miss Elizabeth Monroe was the Principal and she gave the graduates their class rings. I'm quite sure that she was still the Principal in 1921. I heard that she was a teacher for fifty-one years. She has always been held in esteem by everyone in Big Cove.

After 1921, pupils from Big Cove began attending high school at Madison County High School in Gurley after completing the ninth grade at Camp Ground. The first two Camp Ground students to graduate from Madison County High School were Marvin Drake and Carrie Lyle. Other graduates of that era were Edna Miller, Nolan Drake, Burns Drake, Carrie Moore and Annie Lee Drake.

Currently, Big Cove pupils attend school at Gurley or at Huntsville City Schools.

Big Cove is a very proud community, and much of that pride comes from the fact that we had only five graduates of our high school and all five were college-trained and successful.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5th @ 5:00 P.M. = **Remainder of BOTH Barbara Hunkapiller Estates!* Other estate lots & consignments (including a load or two from up North) will also be sold. We're going to move a **LOT** of merchandise in these two sales, so don't you miss it!! Pictures, listings, and updates will be added to the web address below.

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Bite wounds are common: In the U.S., half of us will be bitten by an animal or human at least once. Most of those bites will come from household pets.

Domestic pets cause most animal bites. Dogs are more likely to bite than cats. There are about 5 million dog bites a year in the U.S. Cats are the second most common biters, but their bites pose a higher risk of infection because they can cause deep punctures and lacerations. Cat bites are more likely to cause infection because they can't be thoroughly cleaned. A dog bite, on the other hand, typically causes a crushing-type wound because of their rounded teeth and strong jaws. Human bites - from children and adults - usually cause bruising and a shallow tear.

Bites that break the skin may cause a variety of bacterial or viral deep-tissue infections — including rabies, in rare instances. Infections arise from tiny organisms in the mouth of the biter and on the victim's skin.

It's important to care for a bite wound or injury quickly. Although you may be able to treat a superficial bite at home, you should call your doctor for advice. Deeper bites, lacerations of the skin and cat bites often require medical care. Bites on the hand are also of particular concern because there is a higher risk of infection.

Here's what to do when you, your child, or another person is bitten.

If there is minor bleeding, the skin is barely broken and there is no risk of rabies:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after treating the wound.
- Wash the area with mild soap

and running water to reduce the risk of infection. Pat dry.

- Apply antibiotic ointment and cover with a clean bandage or sterile dressing.
- To reduce swelling, apply an ice pack wrapped in a towel or a cold compress (cloth soaked in cold water) to the bruise for 5-10 minutes.
- Call your doctor to see if you need to have the bite examined. Always seek medical attention when a child has been bitten in the head.

First Aid for Deeper Animal or Human Bites

If a bite wound is bleeding and the skin is torn or deeply punctured:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after treating the wound.
- Inspect the wound and irrigate with water to remove any dirt or loose debris.
- Use a clean cloth, towel or sterile bandage to apply direct pressure to the injury until the bleeding stops. Elevate the area while you apply pressure.
- Do see a doctor right away. If you can't stop the bleeding after 10 minutes of pressure, call 911.

Doctors recommend getting a tetanus shot every 10 years. If your last one was more than five years ago and your wound is deep or dirty, your doctor may recommend a booster. Get the booster as soon as possible after the injury.

Bites from non-immunized domestic animals and wild animals carry the risk of rabies. Rabies is more common in bats, raccoons, skunks and foxes than in cats and dogs. Rabbits, squirrels and other rodents rarely carry rabies.

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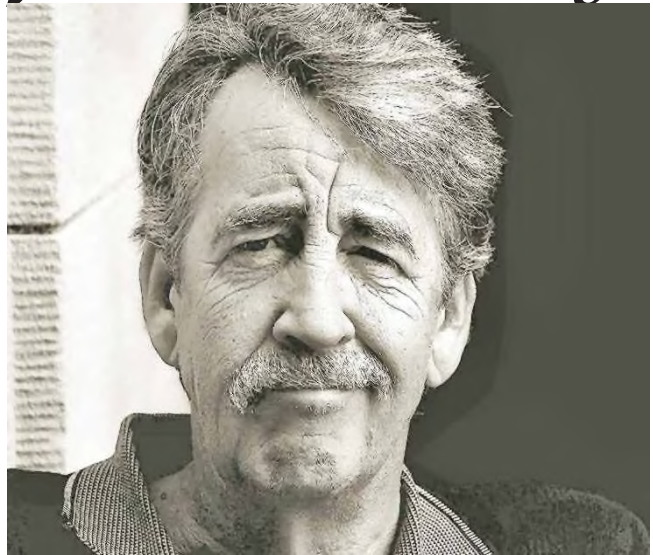
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From the Desk of Tom Carney

PETER DANIELS, A HUNTSVILLE HERO

by Tom Carney



For Peter Daniels, it was just another day. An ex-slave who had purchased his freedom, Daniels had built up a good business in a little shop off the Courthouse Square where he worked as a barber. Although quiet-spoken, he was well respected by both the black and white communities of Huntsville.

He was probably cutting hair, or maybe sweeping up his shop when he first noticed the excitement outside. Quickly finishing his chores, he made his way to the Square to see what was happening.

A large crowd had gathered. Word had just been received of the massacre at the Alamo in a far-off place called Texas. A pall seemed to settle over the crowd as the news began to sink in. All the defenders had been slaughtered. Even Davy Crockett, who had visited Huntsville so many times in the past, was dead.

As is true with all major events of this nature, once the horrible news was realized, the citizens began to get angry. Immediately, talk began to circulate of forming a company to go to Texas and avenge the fallen dead.

One young man in the crowd, with a loud whoop, yelled, "All for Texas!"

The cheer was taken up by the other young men in the crowd and within minutes it seemed as if the whole population of Huntsville was about to march on Santa Anna. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed.

Several old-timers, who had seen service in the War of 1812 and in the Indian wars with Andy Jackson, convinced a local businessman by the name of Peyton White to organize a military company. White had experience in the military and he was also fairly prosperous, a major qualification for anyone who wanted to raise a company.

In those days, the officers were expected to contribute to the expense of supplies, clothing, weapons and various other things.

Peter Daniels, like everyone else that day, must have felt a surge of pride as the young men flocked to enlist. But what could he do? He was black and lived in a society that condemned men to perpetual servitude for the color of their skin.

Slowly he made his way back to his shop. It was probably best to just put it out of his mind. Besides, there were a lot of other things to think about. It seemed as if everything in the world was happening right here in Huntsville. His thoughts raced:

"They are erecting a bank building on the Square; people say the marble came all the way from Nashville. James Bierny is running for President on the abolition ticket; he used

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to live right here in Huntsville, and they got government troops over in Guntersville. People say they're gathering up all the Indians over there and sending them out west... and besides, I've got my fife."

Daniels was known far and wide for his ability to play the fife, a flute-like instrument. Probably self-taught, he was an attraction whenever a crowd gathered in Huntsville. On muster days or when the local militia would practice marching in the town's dusty streets, Peter was often seen at their head urging them on with his fife. People claimed that he had a God-given talent with the fife, and though many people tried, no one could ever produce the stirring martial music the way Daniels could.

Over the next few weeks, the town was a flurry of activity as men prepared to embark for Texas. Women and children both were kept busy making the Lindsay hunting shirts that the men preferred to wear. William Wilson was kept busy drilling the new recruits, while Peyton White was huddled with the shopkeepers every day, trying to raise the necessary supplies. Daniels, like everyone else, must have been caught up in the patriotic fever that had engulfed the populace.

Today, it is impossible to know how Peter Daniels became part of the company. Possibly some of the troops saw him sitting outside his barber shop, playing the fife, and approached him. Or maybe he spent so much time playing the fife for

the troops as they drilled that people just automatically accepted him.

We do know for a fact that he did not enlist as a regular soldier, as blacks were not allowed to carry guns or enlist in service. The most they could hope for was a job as a servant, or a teamster, or maybe, as in Daniels' case, a job that no one else could do.

Regardless of how or why, when Captain Peyton White and his small band of volunteers marched out of Huntsville early one morning in the spring of 1836, Peter Daniels was at the head of the company, blowing mightily on his fife.

From Huntsville, the troops marched to Ditto Landing where they boarded a boat that carried them to Muscle Shoals. There they were transported around the dangerous shoals by a horse drawn railway that had just been completed, saving the soldiers from a long, hot march.

After boarding another boat at the foot of the shoals, life for the volunteers must have settled down to an everyday routine of

boredom. It was a long trip and as the flatboats slowly drifted down the Tennessee River to where it met with the Ohio River and then over to the Mississippi, there wasn't much for the troops to do. The men would occupy their time by cleaning their rifles, sharpening their Bowie knives, and of course, telling tall tales. Most likely, Daniels was not afforded the privilege of having much spare time. Even though he was the fife player, he was still black, and blacks were the people who did the chores.

Occasionally, they might meet with another flatboat carrying more volunteers to Texas. When this happened, it was a time of rejoicing and bragging, with each boatload trying to outdo the other with their boasts and achievements.

And finally, as always, after the men had exhausted every excuse for a conversation, someone would call for Daniels and his fife. It's easy to imagine now, over a hundred and fifty years later, how it must have sounded as the boats floated slowly in the

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Sam Keith, Huntsville

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current down the river with both banks covered by lush foliage. Men silently lying about the deck, lost in thoughts of home, or maybe the approaching battles, while listening to the soulful music of Daniels' fife.

By the time the group reached New Orleans, word of Peter Daniels' musical ability had preceded him. Fife players were rare and every self-respecting military company was expected to have one. One musician, Justin Jeffries of Mobile, was actually kidnapped by members of another unit. When the members of his company realized what happened, they armed themselves and went after the kidnappers with a vengeance, resulting in a near-riot.

Daniels was recognized as one of the best and he was besieged by generous offers from many companies. But Peter Daniels was not for sale to the highest bidder, and accordingly, when the small band of Madison County volunteers marched out of New Orleans, Peter Daniels, with his fife, was again at their head.

The war in Texas was entering a terrible period. Santa Anna, faced with ever-increasing swarms of American volunteers, hoisted the black flag. As with the Alamo, Goliad, and countless other places, there would be no surrender. If the volunteers failed in battle, they would be massacred to the last man.

It is hard to imagine what must have been going through Daniels' mind as he marched across the barren plains of Texas with the volunteers. Everyday brought fresh reports of atrocities committed by the Mexican troops, and yet they kept marching bravely on.

The war consisted mostly of small skirmishes; small bands of men constantly harassing their opponents. Hit and run; hide for a while and then hit again. With few men, and fewer supplies, this was the only military tactic the Americans could employ.

It was during one of these skirmishes somewhere on the plains of Texas, the exact location has been forgotten for over

a century, that Daniels was taken prisoner.

The Mexicans immediately recognized Daniels as the wonderful fife player they had heard so much about. The Mexican Army was renowned for its military bands, so any prisoner with musical ability instantly became a topic of discussion at headquarters.

Santa Anna believed men fought better when inspired by music. Months earlier, at the Alamo, four regimental bands played constantly throughout the final battle and even during the massacre that followed.

Daniels was taken before the Mexican officers, who after confirming his identity, offered him a position in their regimental band.

"No," replied Daniels. "I can't do that."

The Mexican soldiers explained to him that the only other alternative was death before the firing squad. Still, Peter Daniels refused.

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The soldiers must have been impressed by Daniels' courage, for instead of ordering his immediate execution, they placed him under guard for the night. Likely, they were hoping that after having time to reflect on the matter, Daniels would change his mind.

A thousand thoughts must have played on him during that long, dark night. Thoughts of home and family and friends. Thoughts of the injustices that he had known. Thoughts of Huntsville that now seemed so far away.

And yet, he never wavered. His loyalty was not for sale ... not even for his life.

As the sun began its slow climb over the bleak desert floor, the Mexican officers sent for him. Standing before them, likely with his fife in hand, Daniels was once again offered the choice. Join the Mexican band, or refuse and die.

And like other men, whose likenesses are carved in stone all across our nation, had also chosen, Peter Daniels resolved to die as an American.

Peyton White and the rest of the volunteers returned to Huntsville at the end of the conflict. Daniels was the only casualty of the company.

For awhile, whenever men would gather, they would talk about Daniels and his heroic choice. But then, as the years passed by, people began to forget and within the span of a hundred years he had become just a footnote in an old, dusty book locked away in the archives of the public library.

Today, visitors in Huntsville are shown the fine antebellum homes of yesterday and they learn of the hardy pioneers who built them. They are told tales of the trial of Frank James and numerous other accounts of Huntsville's legendary figures, but not a word is ever mentioned about Peter Daniels....

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"If you think it's hard to meet people, just try picking up the wrong golf ball."

Jack Lemmon



A Day Out Fishing

When two fishermen, Jason Frost and Brandon Key, were out fishing Saturday morning on the Warrior River in Alabama, they saw not one but two kittens jump off the river bank and swim towards their boat.

"We were sitting there, fishing, facing the water, and then behind us we hear a splash," Frost told Buzzfeed News.

"I thought it was a fish jumping out of the water. I turned around and saw something swimming in the water - and then we heard it meow."

"This is by far the craziest thing I've ever seen," he added. "Nobody I've spoken to has ever seen anything like this. Nobody even knew cats could swim."

As he pulled the tiny ginger cat to safety, his friend Key heard another splash and saw a second kitten making his way to their boat.

"There were no houses for miles," he said. "Somebody

probably dropped them off there in the middle of the night. They were so desperate they swam all the way out to us and almost jumped in the boat."

They dried off the kitties and gave them some water to drink, then the two fishermen spent some time hanging out with their new feline friends.

"They played with us all day," Frost said. "They were loving on us and people went by and thought we were these crazy people who took their cats fishing."

By the time they got to shore, a family with two little girls saw the kittens and fell in love. They offered to adopt them.

"Everybody always has a crazy fishing story, and that's all it is, is a story," he said. "If I wouldn't have had this on video, everybody would have thought I was crazy."



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Many Wasted Years

by Jerry Lee Keel

Someone once made the observation that often we can't see the forest for all the trees. Life has many twists and turns that block our vision at times. Often some begin to feel like they are inferior to others because they don't possess the material things others have. It's so easy to succumb to the negative thoughts that pervade our minds when we subscribe to these thoughts.

Many times I, along with so many others, begin to suffer from the "poor old me's". The more these thoughts hang around in our minds the more real they become. We fail to realize our full potential because we give up on life and all the promises that are ours just for the taking.

When I was young I was satisfied with the status quo. Instead of developing the God-given talents I was given, I just accepted the false idea that I was destined to live a life of mediocrity. I chose to believe I was not as good as others who had a higher social standing.

As the years went by I made so many bad choices. I tried to find happiness in places where no happiness could ever possibly be found. Night clubs were my choice of "fun" places to go. The alcohol could dull the pain and loneliness I felt inside. But when the alcohol's effects began to fade the hurt, pain, loneliness and despair showed up again. Each time my self-esteem sank a little lower.

I was like the clown who cried when no one was around. The self-loathing I felt was a little worse year after year. As time passed I had a family. A wife, four wonderful children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren - all these were given to me by the Father in Heaven. But instead of being thankful I just took it in stride as one of those things that just happened.

But then the nightclub scene was replaced by a love for Jesus Christ. I began to realize that we all are placed here on this earth for a specific purpose. Some of the luckier ones find that purpose while so many just continue down the road to destruction. Satan places so many temptations in our paths. It's hard to resist these seemingly wonderful things the evil one places there to turn us aside from the one true living God of the universe.

Our pastor explained the differences between the Big 'G' God and the little 'g' god. The Big 'G' God created us and the universe in which we live. We were all created in His image. As such we are all special. God does

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not make any junk. Some are blessed with good health, comfortable places to live and work, many creature comforts, wonderful families and friends.

The little 'g' god created by Satan has many tempting things he places along the way. The little 'g' god seeks only to destroy our faith in the Big 'G' God in Heaven. All the beautiful things we are given are targets for Satan. As he tries to win us over to the dark side we are faced with so many choices.

Ultimately we make mistakes. Each time we choose Satan over God we bring tears to God's eyes while Satan celebrates yet another conquest. Thank God these victories are only temporary. God always has His arms open to us. When we make the choice to turn to the Big 'G' God of Heaven all the angels rejoice. God is happy, the angels are happy and lo and behold, we find the happiness we have been looking for.

All the above is my feeble attempt to help all realize that true happiness is not found in material things. Wealth can be deceiving. God has promised to meet all our NEEDS. He also gives us many of our WANTS if we just accept Him and His plan of salvation.

The peace that passes all understanding is not found in material things of the world. Rather, it is found in the love God has for us if we will just reach out and take His hand.

It took me 75 years to find the promise He had for me all the time. Instead of accepting Him I chose to become bitter and resentful toward others who had more worldly goods. I sure did miss a lot of true joy in all those years.

A recent conversation with one of my high school classmates helped me to realize that looks can be deceiving. Lucy pointed out to me that often much sadness, loneliness and heartbreak are hidden behind the doors of the big houses just as they are in the smaller houses. It took a long time but I finally realized that God made us all equal. Some have more money, better looks, better health, etc. but in the long run we are all equal in His eyes.

For many years I chose to not be a part of anything that pertained to my high school class or classmates. I realize now that my stubbornness and stupid pride only hurt me. I missed so many opportunities to be a part of that group of wonderful people. Now in the twilight years of my life I

have another chance and I don't intend to miss this one.

Some of my classmates are no longer with us. I don't know how many have departed or who they might be. I do know that any chance I might have had to see them is lost. All I can do is try to see as many of the ones remaining as possible. We sometimes put off things that should be done when we have the opportunity. It's up to us to reach out to others and share both the good things and the things that are not so good that happen as we journey through our lives. By doing this we can all realize the full potential that God has placed in each one of us. I don't mean to preach to anyone but I cannot help but share the joy I have found since I have started trying to do what I feel God wants me to do.

With heartfelt conviction I say to all my former classmates, Huntsville High School, Class of 1955, "I love each one of you and regret all the years I have wasted feeling bitter and resentful. I am truly sorry."

Maybe we will have other opportunities to meet and visit before we make our final trip in the back of a black limousine. I certainly hope so.

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A farmer had some puppies he needed to sell. He painted a sign advertising the 4 pups and set about nailing it to a post on the edge of his yard. As he was driving the last nail into the post, he felt a tug on his overalls. He looked down into the eyes of a little boy.

"Mister," he said, "I want to buy one of your puppies."

"Well," said the farmer, as he rubbed the sweat off the back of his neck, "These puppies come from fine parents and cost a good deal of money."

The boy dropped his head for a moment. Then reaching deep into his pocket, he pulled out a handful of change and held it up to the farmer. "I've got thirty-nine cents. Is that enough to take a look?"

"Sure," said the farmer. And with that he whistled. "Here, Dolly!" he called.

Out from the doghouse and down the ramp ran Dolly followed by four little balls of fur.

The little boy pressed his face against the chain link fence. His eyes danced with delight. As the dogs made their way to the fence, the little boy noticed something else stirring inside the doghouse.

Slowly another little ball appeared, this one noticeably smaller. Down the ramp it slid. Then in a somewhat awkward manner, the little pup began hobbling toward the others, doing its best to catch up...

"I want that one," the little boy said, pointing to the runt. The farmer knelt down at the boy's side and said, "Son, you don't want that puppy. He will never be able to run and play with you like these other dogs would."

With that, the little boy stepped back from the fence, reached down, and began rolling up one leg of his trousers. In doing so, he revealed a steel brace running down both sides of his leg attaching itself to a specially made shoe.

Looking back up at the farmer, he said, "You see sir, I don't run too well myself, and he will need someone who understands."

With tears in his eyes, the farmer reached down and picked up the little pup. Holding it carefully, he handed it to the little boy. "How much?" asked the little boy.

"No charge," answered the farmer, "There's no charge for love."

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Another First for Huntsville

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The tub was five feet long, 19

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

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



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and hunger. I liked the kitty doctor but did not like the shots! Ouch!

I am a gray tabby with lots of white, and was born May 2015. My favorite things to do are play with toys, eat, sleep, purr and play with all the other kittens in my big room. I wish for a loving family that will keep me safe indoors and love me always. Please visit the Ark and ask to see the sweet little girl named Luna. That's me.

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* There was lots of sickness, we used to take 666 which was so bitter, it only took one spoonful to cure you. We also used castor oil, Black Drought or kerosene and sugar.

* We would always use our ground coffee 3 times.

* Mama stretched out our butter by softening it, then beating it with a can of evaporated milk.

* Road meat was Depression food. Fowl or wild game killed by cars was quickly retrieved and dressed out for the next meal.

* A favorite kid's game would be to curl up in an old tire and have someone push you down a hill!

* Leftover gift wrap and ribbons were always carefully removed, ironed and saved.

* My Dad would patch the tops and sides of our shoes with tire patches. We used hardened tallow to polish our shoes.

* Mom always watched the first 3 days of spring to see what the next three months would bring.

* Everyone had a cabbage patch. Cabbage was used in sauerkraut, as well as a hot vegetable.

* We used to try to beat the squirrels to all the wild nuts like hickory and hazelnuts.

* The weed, Queen Anne's Lace, was dipped in flour and fried. It kept the family from going to bed hungry many times.

* Bread was torn into pieces and added to fried potatoes, to make "Stretch Potatoes."

* Farmers planted only the potato eyes for the garden, then ate the rest of the potato.

* We used cardboard in our shoes and washed our hair in Fels Naptha. We brushed our teeth with salt and soda.

* My Mama wrapped my school sandwiches in the Cornflake box liner. I used it day after day.

* To unshrink woolen sweaters Mama would boil them in a solution of 1 part white vinegar to 2 parts water, then stretch to original size and dry.

* Baths were on Saturday and the cleanest one bathed first, then the rest of the fam-

ily used the same water in the old wash tub, the dirtiest person last.

* Everything was patched and darned, and orange crates were used for everything from furniture to storage containers.

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"My husband and I divorced over religious reasons. He thought he was God and I didn't."

Reba Franklin, Woodville

A PAST RECESSION

by Malcolm W. Miller



friends were closer to one another and more helpful to everyone in the community.

Also everyone felt the need for God and practiced the teachings of the Bible during those times. The majority of our social life was at the church

This country of ours seems headed into a pretty bad recession, or possibly even a depression, such as the one that was happening when I was a small boy. A good friend and I were discussing this very subject just the other evening over steaks in a nice restaurant and realizing the irony of the situation. We were sitting there talking about how bad times are getting while eating expensive steaks and it caused me to make this statement. I said, "You know, it is not the high cost of living - it is the cost of living high that is causing our problems."

and many times we, our families and our friends would attend revivals of all the neighborhood churches.

We are, for the most part, a spoiled nation of people accustomed to a life of plenty and still not satisfied because we have a desire for more. We are always trying to keep up with or even surpass our friends and neighbors. You know the old desire to keep up with the Jones.

Regardless of the fellowship between friends, family and neighbors there was much suffering and anguish that people went through. This burden must have been so very great on my own parents who were trying to feed and clothe seven sons, send them to school and provide the bare necessities for them. I have seen my mother cry-

I am certainly not an economist or a great philosopher; however I have been around a long time and still recollect the Great Depression of the late twenties and thirties. If this type of thing should happen in the future it would be far worse than it was at that time because generations coming up now would in no way be prepared. We also were not prepared when I was a boy; however, our family like most families of those days had to be self-sufficient.

Most families had extended families and between everyone they had vegetables from the garden that were canned for winter; milk, and meat, generally dried or canned. Most of the men would hunt wild game in the winter and we would feast on venison, rabbit, etc. In the spring, summer and fall we would have fresh fish from the lake or nearby river. I have also known some men to ice fish in the winter.

I write a lot about the old days and the fond memories I have of those times and they did seem good at the time. But I would never want to go back to them although families, neighbors and



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ing for days with the toothache because there was no money for the dentist. This would never happen to people today.

I hated taking my lunch to school because I dreamed of the day I could have lunch like some of the other children in lieu of a dried biscuit. When we arrived home from school Mother would have a big pot of cold beans and cold biscuits on the table and my brothers and I would devour them in a matter of minutes. We enjoyed that feast as much as any because when you are hungry all things taste good. Today children that do not have lunch money are given lunch, no one has to go hungry.

I remember when my three month old niece died because there was no money for a doctor and the road into our place was so bad because of rains that a car or buggy could not get there anyway. That is one of the worst memories of my life as Mother called me in and told me if I wanted to tell her goodbye that is was time and after that she was gone. I had been truly in love with her as I had had seven brothers and this was to be the first girl in our family. This would never happen now.

I recall my father boiling coffee grounds over and over making coffee until they were almost white; the coffee was sweetened with molasses that had gone to sugar because there was no money to purchase sugar from the store. Only the bare necessities were purchased from the store. Many times my Father and the older boys would rob a bee tree that would be full of honey that we used for sweetener. We would not only use that in coffee, Mother would use that in baking too.

We all know this just couldn't happen again in our modern day society. The country is too heavily populated for everyone to hunt and fish and rob bee trees for their food.

We can only hope that wages and prices do not continue to inflate like a giant balloon. That inflation and unemployment does not continue to get worse because no one in today's time would want to go back to those days, I know I don't.

It is a typical case of the good old days when times were bad.

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