

The
Huntsville
HISTORICAL
Review

Vol 3 April 1973 No 2

*Published Quarterly by the
Huntsville Historical Society*

THE HUNTSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1951

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Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 3

April, 1973

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Editor
Elbert L. Watson

PUBLISHED BY
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DIARY OF CHAPLAIN ELIJAH E. EDWARDS

Part II

Continued from last issue

This afternoon I buried the dead of the 7th regiment, side by side in a single wide grave in the field where they fell. There were seven Minnesotians and an unknown soldier found dead on the same field.*

The lady owner of the Bradford mansion came accompanied by two rather beautiful young ladies, presumably her daughters. She looked with surprise at the holes made in her fine mansion by shot and shell, and congratulated herself that she was not at home during the battle. She looked ruefully at the ruin wrought but in the main took her losses philosophically.

She donated what delicacies might remain in the house to the use of the wounded. Her daughters were less discreet and forbearing in their manner and

*Names of the killed in battle, buried on the field near the Bradford mansion, Co. B: Corporal Napoleon C. Chamberlain, Co. C: George W. Simons, Co. E: Milton Burons, Co. G: Sebastian Baulig, Co. H: Fred H. Fessenden, Co. K: Archibald Savidge, David Coolidge. Besides the above there are six mortally wounded and possibly 20 who are disqualified for further service.

made some rather insulting remarks. Our burly English first musician resented [this] in language rather forceful than elegant. There was indeed some cause for the young ladies' complaints. But for the wholesale plundering and looting that occurred on the first day of the battle the present occupants were not to blame. I witnessed the looting and knew it to have been done by unprincipled and irresponsible parties. Some of the things stolen were the mother's picture, an alabaster statue of Christ and the virgin mother, and an album of family pictures. A piously inclined pilferer stole the old family Bible. One of the robbers crammed a curiously enameled clock case into his satchel. The mansion is badly damaged by the cannonading but is still livable. Mrs. Bradford expressed to the surgeons very decided views as to damages, but it will be difficult to decide as to which army is responsible, the building occupying a position between the lines, and being in fact damaged most by Hood's artillery practices.

The Bradfords are very decided rebels in sentiment, and the husband is, I understand, a fugitive in Texas and had risen to the rank of General in the Southern service.

A curious diary was found in the house, purporting to be that of a Mr. Cantrell, and its last date was Dec. 6th, '64, the time probably when the mansion had to be vacated. It is presumed that this diary with other goods belonging to the Bradfords was brought to the mansion for safe keeping. The diary was forwarded to headquarters for examination but contained no information worthy of note. The first date of the diary is 1835, and the writer was then a young man, affianced to an unnamed cousin of his, whom he spoke of as May. That part of the diary ends abruptly, but the presumption is that May and the Mrs. Cantrell mentioned in the entry of July 6th are one and the

same. The entry reads: "Mrs. C. was delivered of a child this morning. Removed her for safe keeping to Mrs. Bradford's."

The most audacious utterances in the modern part of the diary were the following melanges of the patriotic and common place. "The spirit of the South is unconquerable. Worked all day in the onion beds." "The future looks dark and portentous: Had to whip Willie and Buddie." "The Yanks have stolen all my sweet potatoes." The last entry is significant: "In order to save my property, I have taken the oath of allegiance."

I hunted up the 23rd Corps this morning and found my brother Wes in robust health but dirty as two days' fighting and wollering in the mud could make him.

I returned over our battle line and noted the traces of the carnage in the rebel trenches. The trees on the summit of the high hill on our right were almost stripped of bark and branches by our missiles.

The trenches were filled with dead that seemed already a portion of the earth in which they were partially imbedded. Half way down or a third of the way down, I came upon a heap of our dead laid out for burial. There were 20 of them, the fallen dead of the 10th Minnesota of McMillan's Brigade, (1st) which took part in the famous charge up this hill on the salient part of Hood's lines.

In one of the group I recognized the face of an old St. Paul acquaintance, Geo. L. Lumsden, a man with a singular and not unromantic history.

Bradford's Mansion, Dec. 18

Capt. [John P.] Houston of the 5th Minn. whom I found badly wounded on the field at the close of the 1st day's battle sent for me to call and see him at the shortest notice. I started immediately and soon reached

him in the City Hospital. His wound had been a serious one involving, as the hospital surgeons thought the necessity of amputation of his arm (his right) close to the shoulder. The ball of the humerus being shattered by a minnie bullet, it was contended that only an amputation could save his life. Captain Houston refused to submit to an amputation believing that with skillful treatment his arm could be saved. He wished me to go at once and interview his friend, Dr. Vincent P. Kennedy, former surgeon of the 5th and now Brigade surgeon, and ask him to call at once. His object is to secure a transfer to the department in the care of Dr. Kennedy, believing that his old friend was able by his skill to save both his arm and his life.

The surgeons have been severely criticised for their too great readiness to perform an amputation, when with proper care the limb could be saved, and the only answer is that they have neither the time nor appliances for the proper care, and that the surest way to save life is to amputate. Surgeon Kennedy immediately responded to the call of his friend, but as to the success of the operation, if performed, I have not heard.

FIELD HOSPITAL, BRADFORD MANSION
Dec. 19th, 1864

The number in hospital is being very materially reduced each day by discharges, and transfers to the city hospitals, and yet there is quite an army of surgeons, chaplains, assistants and hangers on left. Our first camp in the suburbs of the city beyond the Charlotte Pike has been entirely broken up. Nothing remains of the tent under the mistletoe but the debris of a chimney in the campsite style of architecture, but shapeless in its ruins. We are beginning to grow weary of hospital life and to envy the part of the army now on its hurried chase after Hood. There are rumors that the Confederate force is utterly broken up and ruined,

that they are not retreating in a body as beaten armies do sometimes retreat, but have scattered and melted away till there is scarcely a corporal guard left anywhere. There is no longer a Hood's army and never will be again.

Field Hospital, Dec. 20th, 1864

We are impatiently waiting an order to transfer the patients to the city, close up the hospital and to proceed over the country, following in the footsteps of the conquerors of the fugacious Hood till we overtake them. It does not appear reasonable that the 16th Corps should return to Nashville where there is no longer need of a militant body bearing the peculiar stamp of the force known and respected as "Smith's Guerrillas." That we may be ordered back to Memphis is spoken of as a probability. It is, however, a remote one. There is no need of us there. It was the mission of A. J. Smith to threaten Tennessee and Mississippi, to engage the attention of Forrest and prevent his going eastward to join forces with [Joseph E.] Johnson. Forrest thought his high mission was to intercept Smith and prevent him from joining forces with Sherman. Now that these emergencies no longer exist, what motive for Smith to waylay Forrest, or Forrest to interfere with Smith? It is the thought that for the time, both Forrest and Smith are played out. No, we shall not go to Memphis.

Field Hospital, Dec. 21, 1864 - Last Day

The last discharges and transfers have been made, and the Bradford mansion ceases this morning to be a hospital. It is again a private dwelling, though as yet not in possession of its owners. Mrs. B. asked the surgeon in charge to be good enough to have the floors cleaned of bloodstains, and all rubbish removed, and the building put in good order, fumigated and

swept. Some of her stolen household goods, that had been found hidden about the premises we had restored; but not all. Her mother's picture and the family Bible had been given back. It served a hard and cruel thing that she should have been plundered of things precious to her and worthless to any one else, but such are the caprices of warfare in an enemy's land. Upon the whole she seemed a kindly woman and she cheerfully surrendered for the use of the wounded all the provisions and dainties in the house and it was left unto her desolate.

Dec. 22, 1864

Yesterday the mud in Nashville was unfathomable or at least of uncertain and dangerous depth. Today the mercury is below [the] freezing point and a thin stratum of ice and frozen mud has formed on the surface of the slough. A little colder and we shall have a bridge to bear us over the worst places. The appearance of Nashville is not inviting. The eye rests upon heaps of rubbish, with dead animals promiscuously scattered about.

Nashville, Dec. 23, 1864

Still detained in Nashville by red tape, and the necessity of getting an outfit to provision us till we overtake our regiment.

Nashville, Dec. 24, 1864

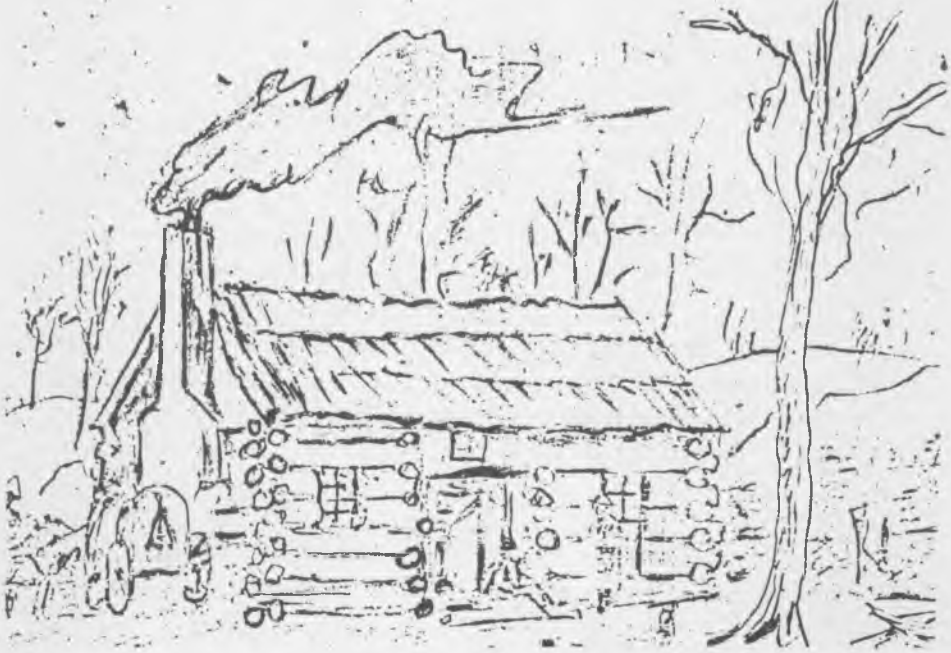
This is positively our last day in Nashville, as the red tape has been at last untied and we start tomorrow on our winding way in search of the 7th Minn. Vol. Inf.

Franklin, Tennessee, Dec. 25, 1864

From the date above this day should be Christmas, but there is no sign of it here in this war wasted land.



Our Cavalry Expedition of Surgeons and Chaplains across the country from Nashville to the vicinity of Elk Ridge



Log cabin where group stopped for lunch

No bells ring. No joyous gatherings of young and old in honor of the day. The country is desolate, and from the appearance of the houses and fields, looks as if it might never [again] have [happiness] .

We set out early this morning, our cavalcade consisting of Surgeons [Albert A.] Ames, Murdock and [William H.] Leonard, Adjutant [Edward H.] Couse (a wounded Lieutenant) and Chaplain [Aaron H.] Kerr, and myself, (Chaplain Humphrey was to have accompanied us, but is delayed and will join us later on,) and two enlisted men with an ambulance wagon to carry our forage, rations, and luggage. These men had officiated as nurses and cooks in the hospital, and still officiated for us in the latter capacity, and looked after the horses. We rode out of the city on the Franklin Pike, and crossed over miles of our late battleground. The marks of the battle were still fresh apparently as on the day of the fight. The trees were seared and splintered with shot and shell, the soil upturned and the hill and fields trodden down. There were new made graves, conspicuous for their [shallow] width in every direction, the dead having been buried where they fell. The road to Franklin was strewn with the debris of wagons, and the bodies of dead animals-horses and mules. Here and there are what remained of the fences, even torn fragments of clothing both of blue and gray.

At noon we took possession of an empty deserted cabin, made of logs, in the common fashion of the country, the main building containing two good sized rooms with an open hall between, and an attic above as shown in the accompanying sketch. A kitchen or ell in the rear of the cabin and connected with it by a hall completed the structure. There was evidence that the army, or a very small part of it, had camped here the day after the battle, and the walls were covered with pencilled (sic) inscriptions with names, certifying to the fact.

We soon had a roaring fire in one of the spacious fire places and our camp dinner was a royal one. Toward evening we reached the village of Franklin, the scene of a fierce battle on the 30th of November. The village showed sad evidence of the sanguinary struggle. The houses were shuttered and the trees splintered and parted by cannon balls and minie balls. A bridge on our battle line, plainly shown by a low embankment hastily thrown up, was stripped of bark by the storm of minie balls fired by Hood's soldiers as they made 8 or 9 useless charges across the field, leaving it heaped with their dead, most of them buried in the field where they fell. It is said that in their charges they left 993 dead on the field. We noted here the usual debris of battlefields, broken arms, fragments of clothing and dead horses, which had not yet been accorded an honorable burial. It was growing dark when we passed the fatal field. The ground was level and mostly clear of trees. Such as remained stood up spectral against the evening sky, the crimson of which was fast fading into the s o m b e r tints of night like tattered sentinels guarding the bloody ground.

We halted before a comfortable though plain dwelling, which we were told, was the residence of Gov. Isham Harris, and asked for leave to camp on the ground and to occupy some of the vacant rooms for a night. The reply was a curt refusal on the part of the proprietor. We decided that a military necessity would justify us in taking forcible possession of an empty building in front that (sic) seemed to have been used as an office or shop of some kind, and without further ceremony we took possession and made ourselves comfortable. The room had a fine large fireplace and we helped ourselves liberally to fuel from the woodpile near.

When the proprietor found out that we had taken forcible possession, he assumed an entirely different

air, called on us and became quite communicative and cordial even, and gave us many particulars of the battle and in the end declined to receive any compensation for the use of his office, remarking, as an excuse for his first abrupt refusal, that a severely wounded Major General of Hood's army was in his house (Major Gen. [William Andrew] Quarles). He had found out besides that we were not a band of guerrillas, but only a harmless group of surgeons and chaplains, and said that he was glad to entertain as well as he could. His guest, however, was still in a critical condition both arms having been shattered. Our surgeons were invited to call upon him. The Harris house had been used as a hospital and was still redolent with odors of the battle. We spent a rather pleasant evening here, and I obtained and carried away from the battlefield as a relic a cedar wood canteen with the name of Frank Cheatham carved upon it. It was too dark for me to make any sketches.

The Warfield Residence, Dec. 26

During the night, Surgeon Murdock and Chaplain Kerr were taken sick and we were delayed in starting on this account this morning. A straggling soldier, besides, came with the rumor that a band of guerrillas, had appeared in the neighborhood and that there were fully a hundred of these men in buckram, and that they had attacked a railroad train. He had not seen them but had heard rapid firing. We held the usual council of war, and having decided that the fellow was lying, and our invalids declaring themselves well enough to travel we set out on our perilous way, deeming it likely that we would be as safe one place as at another. Without doubt there were small bands of stragglers from Hood's scattered army prowling around but these were in no condition to attack us and were doubtless more afraid of us than we of them.

At any rate trespassing farther (sic) on the hospitality of our now hospitable entertainer was out of the question, and we set out under cover of a dense fog. We conjectured that we were passing through a rich country and occasionally noticed a fine residence looming up somewhat grandly in the fog. There were traces of the passage of a devastating army in the wreckage of trees and fences, and wrecked wagons protruding from mud holes which made the passage of our own supply wagon [difficult]. We saw also an occasional discarded gun, and at regular intervals the inevitable dead mule.

We fell in with a "reliable contraband" who confirmed the story of the "one hundred villains in buckram," now lying in wait somewhere or another. But another reliable colored man said that he "didn't know nuffin about it" and continued, "I speck dar are no rebs around here." At 11 a. m. we passed through the village of Spring Hill, where we found a hospital full of sick and wounded soldiers, many of whom were of our own army, sent back from the front or left here in passing. There were quite as many of Hood's army here and the "Blue and the Gray" seemed not only on speaking, but on very friendly terms. We received from our men the latest advice from the front, and that the prevalent opinion was that the 16th Army Corps, was destined to a march overland to the Gulf of Mexico, possibly to New Orleans or Mobile.

We stopped for our noonday lunch at a somewhat pretentious but deserted house in the suburbs of the village of Poplar Grove, our traveling force having been somewhat augmented at Spring Hill by a miscellaneous force of men of other regiments, amongst whom was Chaplain Humphrey of the 12th Iowa. It is a moot point whether we overtook them at Spring Hill or they caught up with us. We built roaring fires in the deserted mansion and sat down (we do not always have seating facilities) to a dinner of bread, fresh

beef, onions, dried apples, hard tack, and coffee. A sketch of our dining hall will be found facing page 32.

Three little boys came to the house and proceeded to impart such information as they possessed. Though white children they spoke with a broad negro accent. Pointing to a shattered tree the spokesboy of the party said, "The rebels threw dat shell, and hit dat yar tree." The scene about the house was uninteresting. There were no fences, the trees were leafless and ragged and the mud was deep.

Toward evening we reached Columbia, and crossed [the] Duck River on a pontoon bridge. This is (at the present) a deep and rapid stream with high banks, and we had some difficulty in crossing. Columbia is an old town and with a rather dilapidated appearance. There were many ornamental trees shading the streets. The most conspicuous being the holly and mimosa.

As it was getting near evening we began to look out for a camping place. All the dwellings in the town seemed to be inhabited, and we proceeded some distance into the country hoping to find a deserted mansion like the one in which we had dined, but finding none drew up in front of a palatial brick home, the windows of which were already lighted, and applied for shelter. The tenant proved to be the wife of a Confederate Major Warfield, supposed to be somewhere in Hood's scattered army. She received us most graciously not only giving permission for us to remain, but cordially inviting us, assuring us that our presence would be a protection from the stragglers and robbers that were prowling in bands over the country. We accepted her hospitality as cheerfully as it was offered, posted a guard on the outside and took our station within where, for the first time in our campaigning, we were treated to the complete luxuries of civilized entertainment. However, as owing to the hard conditions of the war, the larder of our



Residence of Major Warfield, C. S. A.

Headquarters of General Hood, C. S. A., November, 1864

Headquarters of General A. J. Smith, December 24, 1864

Headquarters of our squad, December 26 & 27, 1864

hostess was incomplete, we contributed liberally of our own, and spent a delightful evening in conversation.

Camp near Pulaski, Dec. 27th

Facing page 41 is a hasty sketch of the Warfield Mansion. It has been well preserved from the fate that has been measured out to so many Southern homes, probably from the fact that from its commodiousness it has been generally selected as a headquarters for both armies. Thus, Hood in his advance on Nashville, and retreat, as well, made it his headquarters, and on the 24th Gen. A. J. Smith pillowed his weary head in the best bedroom. Lastly came our squad of surgeons and chaplains. The building was thus protected from pillagers and from the torch. It has been used also in a small way as a hospital. We found here a badly wounded Confederate soldier. He was quite friendly and communicative, and criticized his late commander Hood most unsparingly, pronouncing him a butcher for driving his men into the shambles at Franklin, where they were slaughtered like so many dumb animals. He believed for himself that the time for fighting was over. It certainly was for him, he musingly remarked, since he had but one leg left and could neither fight nor run away. He was a Lieutenant. There was a sick and badly disabled Confederate soldier in one of the outer buildings, that had been used as negro quarters, (sic) whose feet were badly frozen. He told me that many of Hood's soldiers were absolutely barefooted, and that, too, at a time when the temperature, a very unusual thing in the South, marked as low as 10 above O. (I do not recall any such frosty weather as that, but can testify that while we were at Nashville it was frequently several degrees below freezing.)

We left the Warfield home quite early this morning

with friendly adieus to the lady hostess and kind words to the wounded soldiers.

We passed today through a hilly region. The road, as before, was strewn with broken vehicles and other evidence of a rout. There were also barricades and rifle pits constructed, it was said, by Forrest to impede the progress of our cavalry.

We passed a skirmish or battlefield, where a few Confederates had made or attempted to make a stand. This was near Elk Ridge. The road wound up through a valley bordered with rather steep hills on each side. Several dead horses lay on the field of conflict, the trees were scarred by shot and a hospital flag fluttered from a cabin near by. We dined on this field and near the farm house of Mr. Waldrup. This house was built of frame. It would have been called in the North, a balloon frame. An ell was attached, the boards on which were battered or put on perpendicularly. Back of this was a log smokehouse. There were no trees or shrubs in the dooryard, the only ornaments of which were a grindstone and a large table probably used for drying apples. To compensate for these outward evidences of poverty the Waldrups were thoroughly loyal, and that too in a country where it means something to support the flag of the Union. The poorer people in the mountains have never owned slaves. Hence, recognizing slavery as one cause of their poverty, they had little sympathy with a war waged to perpetuate that system.

We learned from this family that Hood advancing on Nashville had 108 guns and that he carried back with him in his retreat 26. Some of these he was obliged to leave by the wayside. A few of them had been buried, and the ground heaped up above them in the fashion of a grave, and head-boards. Part of these have been exhumed, and four fished up from the depths of [the] Duck River.

In the afternoon we overtook our Division, and separated, each reporting to his own regimental headquarters and I thence to my mess tent, and there met the members of the mess, Major [William H.] Burt, [Theodore G.] Carter and Lieutenant [Henry F.] Folsom, after an absence of 12 days but crowded with events that seemed momentous enough to fill the record of as many weeks. We overtook the command in the afternoon before going into camp, which we entered late. It was, however, well chosen, and our regiment had a choice location on the slope of a hill. It had a single advantage over an encampment on level ground in point of drainage. The night was very dark and foggy.

Dec. 28th. 1864

For some unexplained cause the Division was not moved forward today, and we have consequently a leisure day to be given up to rest and social concerns on the great events of the past two weeks. We discussed also sensational rumors of the next movement, of which we know absolutely nothing. We discussed the strategy of the late battles, and explained wherein our gallant commanders blundered. Especially animated is the discussion as to whether the echelon charge of the 2nd day, afternoon at 4 o'clock, was ordered by Gens. [George] Thomas or [A. J.] Smith, or the Division commander on the right, or whether it was spontaneous and without authority. Some are discussing the claim of the 12th Iowa made in a letter written by their chaplain, for honors due chiefly to the 7th and to be distributed all along the line. Various newspaper accounts of the battle are severely criticised, especially those in the Cincinnati papers. The correspondents for these papers are severely denounced for glorifying Gen. John Schofield at the expense of other commanders, and claiming honors for the 23rd Corps

due to the 16th. We have the report of Gen. Thomas giving the 16th Corps the credit of carrying the salient point of Hood's line of defense. Gen. Thomas's report, while thus generally accepted, is criticised for giving too much credit to McMillan's Brigade (the 1st) when we of the 3rd think the second as worthy of an honorable mention and ourselves as not a whit behind. I have written descriptions of the Battle for the St. Paul papers, but these are not under discussion, as yet.

This has been truly a lazy day. It is night now and we are still sitting round our camp fires observing "how fields were won," and discussing the next general order not yet issued. The night is clear, cold, and starry. The hillsides are bright with a thousand camp fires. The wind rises and the fires flame sending showers of sparks to the tree tops, and in a tempest through the camp. A gigantic hollow beech tree has been fired. A spire of flame leaps out from its very summit and floats like a glorious banner on the black night. The trunk of the tree is dark, but its bark is thin, and the heart of fire throbs nearer and nearer the surface. At length the flames burst forth and the mammoth tree glorified for a few moments by its destroyer, was like a furnace from foot to crown. It is a grand sight - a mountain torch signalling victory, or it is a true pillar of fire in the wilderness.

The camp is vocal with shouts no one knows wherefore. Something has happened. Anon a peal like the heaviest clap of thunder. Surely we have heard that sound before. It is the report of a bursting shell. There is a momentary panic. A few men start amazed to their feet, thinking that Hood and his minions have opened fire on the camp. As we wait to hear a repetition of the fearful sound, a messenger rides by shouting, "Peace is declared!" It was a premature announcement but turned the camp into a bedlam. The more pity it is a stupendous joke, probably suggested

by the bursting of some of Hood's shells, left by him along the wayside. These shells had been placed in a deep ravine and a fire made round and they thus exploded without harm.

Camp Content, Dec. 29th, 1864

Today we marched 12 miles through a beautiful country, though somewhat desolated by war. The homes of the people are neither well built nor tasteful. They are generally wooden, cabin or frame buildings, innocent of paint. The people are poor and loyal. The men are dressed in coarse butternut colored jeans, and the women in a kind of homemade cotton cloth, coarse of texture and white. I am sorry to say that some of our bummers, I will not call them soldiers, robbed these poor people of the little that the tatterdemalions of Hood had left them. Women and men came inside our lines and made complaint, and asked protection for their property even when there was nothing to protect. The General issued an order against pillaging, which was about as effective as St. Anthony's sermon to the fishers, after which "the eels went on with their sinning - the pikes with their striking."

We passed through Pulaski, a dilapidated old town, war worn as well as time worn, and of some interest to us as the scene of a spirited fight between some of the forces of Hood and our advance corps. This proves that Hood's army did not entirely melt away after the rout at Nashville, but had kept up a partial semblance of military order, though fearfully weakened. The ground was still strewn with the wreckage of the battle, and the usual percentage of dead horses and broken wagons. An attempt had been made to burn the bridge, which had almost succeeded. We delayed here a short time and I made a hurried run through the old cemetery. The tombstones were moss grown and lichen covered,

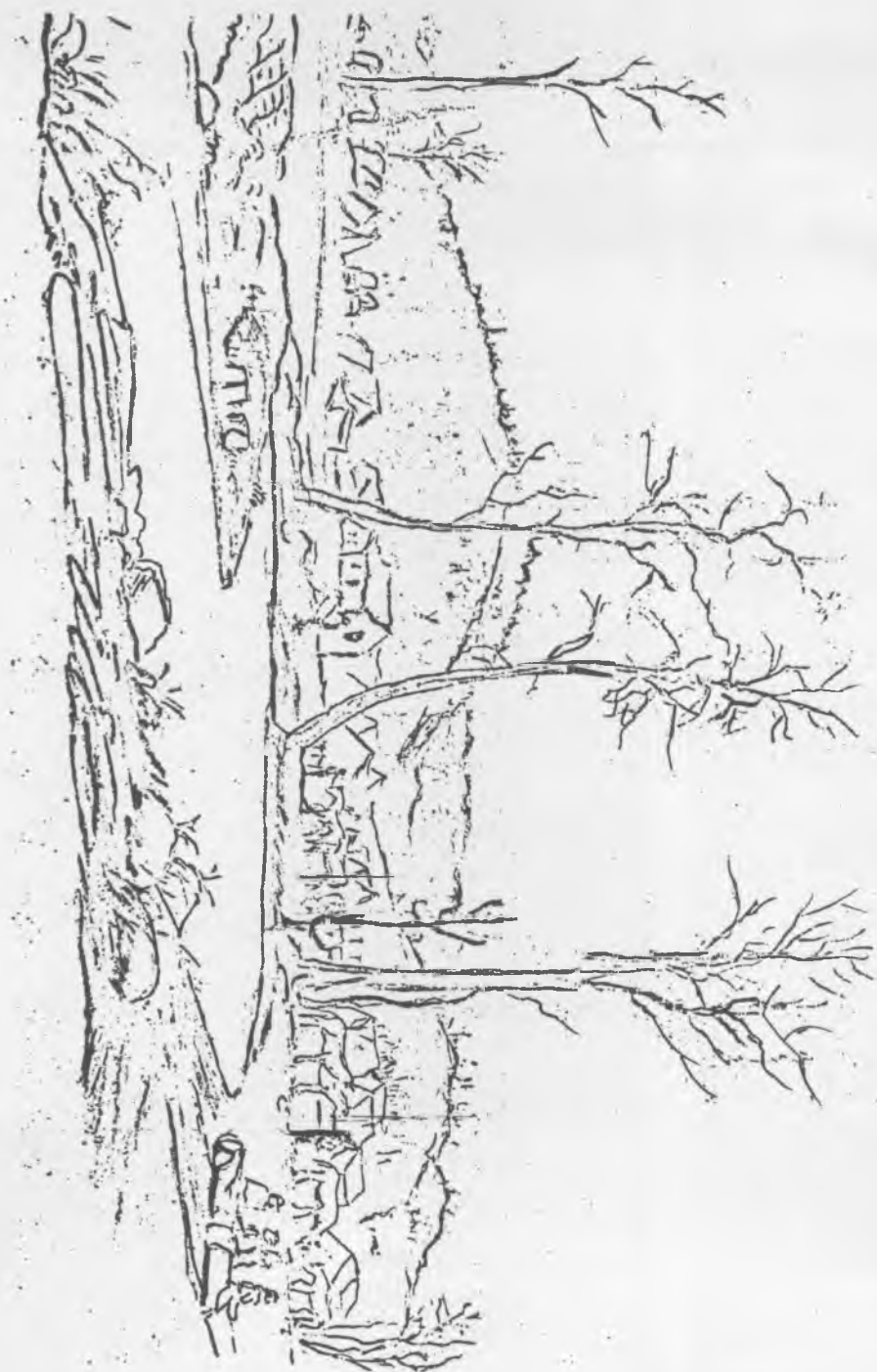
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and I found [one] bearing the date of 1817. There were some uncommonly quaint inscriptions which I had not time to copy.

Leaving Pulaski we crossed a deep unfordable stream on a covered bridge, the same which the retreating rebels had tried to burn. After crossing, we left the traveled pike to the left and followed a common country road. We camped at night in a beautiful valley. Its principal features were a winding stream, clear, and rippling over a shaly bed and shaded by clumps of willows and along which a few white trunked sycamores stood as sentry. The hillsides slope gently, and there is a dry velvety sward on which to pitch our tents. Our tent floor is yielding to the touch and odorous with pennyroyal. A prince could not wish a couch more magnificent.

Dec. 30, 1864

We left our pleasant camp this morning with much regret, and marched about 12 miles over a picturesque country, marred as all parts of the State are with the desolating touches of Civil War. We passed many deserted homesteads and as usual everywhere lovely monumental chimneys representing cottage or homes, once the centers of happy households now scattered. One town, Lawrenceburg, the county seat of Lawrence County, we found in picturesque ruin. All the brick buildings surrounding the old fashioned courthouse had been burned, only the bricks and crumbling walls remaining. Strangely enough the court house had been spared. In front of this building was a tall and slender shaft of pristine, on the apex of a pyramidal base, or pediment, This monument commemorated the heroes of the Mexican War, their names being inscribed upon its sides. The inscription characterized them as "Heroes who gave their lives to extend the boundaries of our empire to the Pacific Ocean."



The monument is about 60 feet high and in a good state of preservation. There were some frame houses that the flames had spared, probably because they were too dilapidated and worthless to be counted worthy of the torch.

A mile beyond Lawrenceburg we forded a beautiful stream known as Shoal Creek. The waters were clear and sparkling, the shores on one side were sloping and covered with a stunted growth of trees or shrubs, and on the other ran precipitous rocky bluffs, an escarpment so smooth and regular that it might have been taken for an artificial wall. It was 40 or 50 feet in height, and crowned with a slope gently rounded and crowned with pines and thatched with laurel. On this stream I counted 5 cotton mills which had apparently been closed for some time, but were still in running order. At least one was. A mischievous soldier opened a flood gate above the wheel and soon the machinery within was in full motion but creaking, rattling, and banging most discordantly.

Near one of these mills was a landscape (see opposite page) that struck me as worth sketching. The foreground had a few gnarled sycamores and across the stream hung a wire suspension bridge, (for foot passengers only). Beyond are the hills and the forest. The stream is here about 40 feet wide. I crossed at this point, and having noticed a vivid evergreen shrub growing in abundance on the hillside, I asked a native, a girl of 14 with a great wreath of frowzy hair, what this shrub might be, and the maiden fair made answer: "Why, that's ro-la rank pizen. It kills all the critters that eats it. That's the pizen ivory." I thanked the gentle girl for her information and rode on somewhat sceptical as to her botanical definition.

Still farther on on the same stream was a village of cabins clustered round a mill, these cabins still occupied, at least by the women, the men being absent - perhaps in hiding. These women with their

children were poorly clad, and seemed quite ignorant and spoke the patois of the poorer class of whites, with a strong touch of the African dialect.

They seemed to know nothing about the war and its causes. They addressed us as "you'uns" and called themselves "we'uns." "We'uns," said they to us, "have never done no harm to you'uns. What are you'uns comin' down hyar fer?" The negroes were far better posted as to the war and its causes than they. I am sorry to say our bummers did not spare their simplicity. I am ashamed to narrative, (sic) but I write what I saw myself. The starting of the mills was a small bit of deviltry compared with plundering these poor people of their scanty stores of milk, butter, and potatoes and sometimes of their bedding and almost good for nothing household utensils. The women had no conception of the disproportionate force of themselves and their plunderers and frequently fought for their rights with tooth and nail, and bludgeon which the bummers considered a rare joke. I noticed one soldier who had audaciously stolen a long handled drinking gourd pursued with a shovel with which she banged him over the head, while she shouted "I'll be rumsmudgeoned if you shall have that ar gourd." I am glad to put on record that in this contest it was not the woman who was "rumsmudgeoned." The children of the village, a numerous white haired progeny, did not seem to be disturbed at the scenes of violence and the plundering of the cabins. Perhaps they did not understand it. It was a depth of human baseness they had never before encountered and, therefore, they could not comprehend it 'enough to be troubled by it. They ran into our lines as we were marching through with the innocent assurance and trusting faith of childhood and importuned men and officers for buttons. I made a sketch of this village as the wagon train passed through, or labored rather to make its way through mud

and mire, [and] the soldiers, or rather the disorderly ones known and despised as gobblers and bummers. In the foreground some of these bummers are trying to drive away a cow. The owner of the animal is waging a battle with the robbers single handed to save the stay of the household from capture. The cow herself seems to violently protest against following the flag, and turns hither and thither to find a way of escape, and she is wise.

I have said before that there is a positive order against this plundering, but officers find it impossible to exercise control over men not under their command. Our Minnesota men as a rule are not given to this kind of lawlessness. Some have attempted it only to be promptly arrested and punished. A sergeant of the 7th who had taken a blanket was arrested, reprimanded and stripped of his chevrons by Col. [William R.] Marshall and was so reduced to the ranks.

We advanced a few miles farther before going into camp but without startling incident. We have a poor camping place tonight. The ground is marshy and there are no good dry roads.

Dec. 31st, 1864

We had a bad night of it. There were portents of storm in the heavens, men and officers grumbled and talked in their sleep and to crown it all the night was made hideous by the incessant braying of Co. D's mules. The weather is more disagreeable today and the mud deeper than heretofore. To crown it all we don't know where we are going, somewhere in a westerly direction across country, over the worst roads possible. Hence, this pessimistic vein. The men grown weary of marching through mud and slush, have drafted into the service every horse, mule, and ass in the country. On them they heap their knapsacks and blankets, and hang their muskets and in many cases

ride themselves thereon, and too often with a sublime disregard of the strength and ability of the steed. I have seen as many as three stalwart men mounted on one sorry, rawboned horse. Noticed also an amusing scene that awakened some hilarity along the line. A bumper had drafted into the service a donkey that wouldn't go. In vain, all kicks and blows with whip big as a club, in vain the kicks and blows off friends on foot, the donkey stood his ground like a hero. In which case the sympathy of the orderly and well disposed men who obeyed the regulations of the service, marching on foot and carrying their own guns and knapsacks, was aroused and they gave loud and vociferous cheers for the donkey.

Our camp tonight is in a cornfield and newly cleared patch of land in the corner of which stands a miserable cabin. The winds are bleak, the snow is drifting in our faces. Our fires do not burn readily. We are bidding adieu to the old year under the most inconspicuous circumstances. The old year could not well avoid dying on such a night as this.

ANDREW JACKSON'S ACTIVITIES IN THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

By Henry Marks

Almost every one of us has learned about one of the most illustrious patriots in our history, the man who was born in Wax-haw, South Carolina, and who became the seventh president of the United States. He is a perfect example of how one can overcome obstacles of poverty, sickness, and death in the United States to rise to a position of economic consequence and even to attain the office of the presidency.¹

Most Americans do not know, however, that Andrew Jackson was a prominent figure in the early history of the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama, almost as soon as he became prominent in his adopted state of Tennessee.

As soon as the Fort Mims massacre became known in Tennessee during the late summer and fall of 1813, Jackson became the chief architect of retaliation against the "red sticks" faction of the Creek Nation, led by William Weatherford. Over 100 men, women, and children had been butchered, and all of Alabama, including even Mobile, was regarded as at the point of being exterminated. At the time of the initial Tennessee reaction Jackson was recovering from almost fatal wounds suffered in a melee with Jesse and Thomas Hart Benton in Nashville on September 4, 1813.² When Governor Willie Blount of Tennessee was given the

authority on September 25 to call 3,500 volunteers from the field, in addition to the 1,500 men already enrolled in the service of the United States, Jackson was still extremely worn and debilitated. Nevertheless, on the twenty-fifth he organized his forces into the field. On the next day he sent his friend and partner, Colonel John Coffee, to Huntsville to restore confidence to the frontier, to enlist volunteers into military service and to obtain supplies.³ Coffee wrote to Jackson twice on October 4, stating that "I am jerking Beef and the contractors are doing all they can to procure bread, which is very difficult to do. . ."⁴ Soon Coffee's forces had increased to nearly 1,300 men. The colonel continued to visit Huntsville in November and December and wrote many letters to Jackson reporting his activities. Meanwhile, Jackson left his advance base at Fayetteville, Tennessee, 32 miles from Huntsville, and marched non-stop in Huntsville on October 11, 1813. Thus, Huntsville was Jackson's first stop in Alabama, then of course part of the Mississippi Territory. The present marker commemorating this movement was erected at the corner of Holmes Avenue and Lincoln Street in Huntsville by the Acme Club of Huntsville in 1951.

Next, Jackson moved to Ditto's Landing on the Tennessee River, ten miles or so from Huntsville, where he joined with Coffee, then moved about 24 miles along the river near the southernmost course of the river and erected Fort Deposit, designed to be his major base of supplies. The depot was finished on October 24, and Jackson stated in a letter written on that date that the depot "is well situated to receive supplies from Holston, and from Madison county, and I am determined to push forward if I live upon acrons."⁵ Some sources state that Fort Deposit was located south of the river, although most contemporary maps and authorities place the depot north of the Tennessee.

A map of Alabama, published by T. G. Bradford in 1838 and a second map, also published in 1838, place Fort Deposit north of the river. Yet a map published in 1836 places the depot south of the river, as does S. Augustus Mitchell's map of 1846 and the Thomas Cowperthwait map of 1850. John Apencer Bassett places Fort Deposit at the southernmost point of the Tennessee in Alabama, at the mouth of Thompson's Creek.⁶ C. G. Summersell states that the depot was constructed on the river.⁷ However, another source states that Jackson located the depot near Warrenton, after crossing Brindley Mountain to Brown's Valley.⁸ Nevertheless, Jackson must have crossed the Tennessee at Gunter's landing or Gunter's Ferry (now Gunter'sville), for John Gunter settled at what was called the "big bend" of the river about 1784 or 1785, where he had discovered a salt deposit, and one of his sons, Edward, was to establish a ferry across the Tennessee at this location in 1818.⁹

Jackson then moved across Racoon Mountain, to which he referred as "the american alps,"¹⁰ reached the Coosa River and erected his major supply base, Fort Strother, on this river, about 50 miles from Fort Deposit.

Therefore, Huntsville and the surrounding area were of large importance to Jackson in the Creek War, which culminated in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, and the aid this area gave to the campaign should not be ignored. In addition, an Indian boy of three captured at one of the engagements was taken as a ward by Jackson and sent back to Huntsville.¹¹ Jackson's wife Rachel and their child met Jackson in Huntsville on his triumphant return from the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.¹² The Indian boy, Lincoyer, died of tuberculosis in 1827, after being raised by Jackson at the Hermitage. He was buried there as a member of the family.¹³

This was but the first of Jackson's many involvements with the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama. Many of those who served against the Creeks saw the opportunity for the economic growth of the Tennessee Valley area. Men such as Coffee and Jackson purchased extensive holdings in what was to become part of Alabama. Coffee and others created the Cypress Land Company, which was able to purchase a sizable tract of land below the Muscle Shoals of the Tennessee River.¹⁴ The company, of which Jackson owned eight shares, then valued at \$430.00,¹⁵ created Florence. Marquis James, in Andrew Jackson The Border Captain, states that Jackson "acquired a lot or two." However, he held more town property than this, for as late as 1840 Jackson sold three lots for \$240.00, to pay debts of Andrew Jackson, Junior, which "saved him from the sheriff's grasp."¹⁶ More important, Jackson was allowed to buy considerable acreage, at the minimum government price of \$2.00 an acre. It is stated that by prior arrangement, no one placed a bid against him for this property.

Part of Jackson's holdings fronted on the Tennessee River at Melton's Bluff. This part of his property, situated at the head of Elk River Shoals on the south bank of the Tennessee, was purchased from John Melton. Anne Royall, in her Letters From Alabama 1817-1822, states in a letter dated January 14, 1818, that Melton "attached himself to the Cherokee Indians, married a squaw, and settled at this place many years ago; that with the assistance of the Indians, he used to rob the boats which passed down the river, and murder the crews. By those means he became immensely rich, owned a great number of slaves, most of whom he robbed from those boats," She further stated that Melton "used to keep a house of entertainment at Melton's Bluff, after his piracies ceased; and kept an excellent house." Other sources note that Melton's Bluff was

surveyed into 658 lots by John Coffee, became the seat of justice in Lawrence County, but declined in importance after 1820 when the county seat was moved to Moulton.¹⁸ In any event Jackson evidently did not profit from his investment here. In 1822 he sold part of this property for cost plus \$1,000 for improvements, and was paid one-third the price of the transaction on the buyer taking possession and the remainder two years later "in good money."¹⁹ James G. Birney of Madison County, later the candidate of the Liberty Party for the presidency in the elections of 1840 and 1844 and a leading opponent of slavery, looked at the property but was not able to purchase it due to a lack of funds.²⁰ Jackson continued to operate and maintain ownership of the gin located on or near this property. The remaining property at Melton's Bluff was sold in 1827, after the cotton crop had been picked and processed.

In addition to his own holdings the General also directed the affairs of the Huntsville plantation of Andrew Jackson Hutchins. When he was six years old his father, John Hutchins, had died and Jackson had promised to care for the boy, making this vow at the deathbed of the father. The father had once been the junior partner of Jackson and Hutchins in earlier days. Jackson frequently called the boy "my little ward" in letters he wrote to Coffee.²¹ The relationship between Jackson and his "Little Ward" is well covered elsewhere; any interested in this relationship, see the article by John H. DeWitt, "Andrew Jackson and his Ward Andrew Jackson Hutchings," Tennessee Historical Magazine, Series II, Vol. 1, No. 2. In 1821 the cotton crop of the Jackson and Hutchins plantations were ginned by January 1, and the General decided to sell the cotton in New Orleans, necessitating a wait until the winter rains filled the Tennessee River so that the cotton could be floated over the rapids of the

river at Muscle Shoals. The transaction was handled by Major George W. Martin, one of Jackson's aides in the Creek and Louisiana campaigns, who served on the staff of Coffee.²² Jackson raised Hutchins as a member of his own household and placed overseers in charge of the plantation, although many times he personally was to visit the plantation to direct its activities. In April, 1833, Hutchins attained his majority and Jackson relinquished operation of the plantation to him. Afterwards, Hutchins was to suffer tragedy after tragedy -- death of a child and his wife, Mary Coffee, daughter of John Coffee, poor economic conditions and finally, death from tuberculosis after an unsuccessful trip to Cuba to stem the affliction.

In 1819 Jackson built the Hermitage, his permanent home for the rest of his life. In 1834 a fire destroyed the home, in effect, the blaze ruining much of the interior and sparing only the dining room wing. However, the walls and foundations were used in the new building, as well as salvaged material from the old. Once again Jackson called on Huntsville and Madison County for help. During the inflationary period of 1835 carpenters and masons were very scarce and the General's contractors looked beyond Tennessee for help. The General wrote at this time that "Hands cannot be got. I have written to Cincinnati, Louisville, Huntsville and Lexington."²³ But there is no record of how much help he actually received from the Tennessee Valley region.

By the 1830's Jackson was well aware of another facet of life in the Tennessee Valley and in Huntsville. A famed sportsman, he long had enjoyed the hospitality of the Green Bottom Inn,²⁴ erected in 1815 on what is today part of the campus of Alabama A & M University, in Huntsville. The inn was constructed by John Connelly, like Jackson a lover of race horses. Connelly owned "Gray Gander," then the champion thoroughbred

stallion in the South. Several times Jackson raced at the race track constructed by Connelly on the grounds of the inn. In particular, the General was in Huntsville on December 13, 1819, attending the meeting of the state legislature. He had been invited and was given all the "privileges of the floor." Staying at the inn for a few days, he brought along some of his horses and also some of his fighting roosters.²⁵ His horses did well. Of course, politics could never be left out of Jackson's life, and T. P. Abernethy, in his The Formative Period in Alabama, 1815-1828, succinctly sums up the political aspect of the General's visit to Huntsville. The first session of the General Assembly passed a resolution, which read as follows:

And be it further resolved that this General Assembly do highly disapprove of the late attempt made by some members of the Congress of the United States at the last session to censure the military course of this inestimable officer from motives (as we believe) other than patriotic.

It was carried by a majority of twenty-seven to twenty-one. Those that did not support Jackson through this resolution in effect signed their political death warrants in Alabama. Alabamian's approved of Jackson's recent invasion of Spanish Florida and the capture of Pensacola, actions that were not supported on the national level. Jackson's presence also influenced the naming of Jackson County for him, the county created on December 13, 1819. Hastily created, the county's boundaries were so vaguely set that the lines have been changed six times since.²⁶

James Jackson, builder of the famed "Forks of Cypress" some five miles from Florence, was also a lover of horses and a friend and business associate of The General. James Jackson constructed a regulation racetrack in the flat meadow in front of the mansion and on May 28, 1821, wrote a letter to the

General from his home which stated that he raced and won at Huntsville. Some of his comments are important in showing the significance of Huntsville as a sporting place and the large amounts of wagering that evidently were not too unusual. To quote from various parts of this letter: "I won the race at Huntsville, the Grey had great superiority of heels, he took the track and kept it . . . to please others I permitted a much worse rider and heavyor (sic) Boy to ride. Camp Campbell lost upwards of \$4,000 and offreed (sic) to bet me \$6,000 in Land Certificates, but I had too many Children for such dashing."¹

Thus, the General was no stranger to the Tennessee Valley. There were close ties between Tennesseans and North Alabama: economic, social, sporting, and Andrew Jackson naturally availed himself of the opportunities afforded by the area. In retrospect, this also shows the historical importance of the Tennessee Valley during the lifetime of the General, who died in 1845, to be buried in the garden of the Hermitage, by the side of his beloved Rachel, who had preceded him to the grave seventeen years before.

¹For a good introduction to the life of The General see "Andrew Jackson," Dictionary of American Biography, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961, v. 5, pp. 526-534. For a sympathetic portrayal of the youth of Jackson see James Parton, Life of Andrew Jackson, New York; Mason Brothers 1860, 3 vols.

²Marquis James, The Life of Andrew Jackson, Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1937, pp. 152-153.

³John Spencer Bassett, ed. Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1969, v. 1, p. 326.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., p. 336

⁶Ibid.

⁷Charles G. Summersell, Alabama History for Schools, Northport: Colonial Press, Inc., 1961, p. 140.

⁸Katherine Duncan and Larry Joe Smith, The History of Marshall County Alabama, Albertville, Privately Printed, 1969, v. 1, pp. 22-23.

⁹Thomas McAdory Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, Chicago: T. S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921, v. 1, pp. 677-678.

¹⁰Bassett, op. cit., p. 336.

¹¹Ibid. pp. 400-401.

¹²James, op. cit., pp. 174.

¹³Ibid., pp. 469.

¹⁴James, op. cit., pp. 377.

¹⁵Bassett, op. cit., v. 2, p. 412.

¹⁶Ibid., v. 6, p. 60.

¹⁷James, op. cit., p. 278.

¹⁸Letters From Alabama 1817. Note 56, by Anne Newport Royall, Biographical Introduction and Notes by Lucille Griffith, Univeristy: University of Alabama Press, 1971, p. 274.

¹⁹Bassett, op. cit. . v. 3, pp. 166 & 60.

²⁰Ibid., p. 61.

²¹Ibid. . p. 181.

²²Ibid. . p. 183.

²³James, op. cit., p. 690.

²⁴James F. Sulzby, Jr., Historic Alabama Hotels and Resorts, University: University of Alabama Press, 1960, pp. 145-147.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶J. Leonard Raulston and James W. Livingood. Sequatchee A Story of the Southern Cumberlands, Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press, 1974, p. 90, as quoted from John Robert Kenamer, History of Jackson County Alabama. Winchester, Tennessee, Southern Printing, 1935, pp. 17-19.

