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Nostalgic Memories

Chloe Perry Mitchell

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Southern Folkways Journal Review Number 5

Nostalgic Memories

from

The (Claxton) Enterprise
and other stories

By

Chloe Perry Mitchell

Auspices

Bulloch County Historical Society

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Bulloch County Historical Society member Chloe Perry Mitchell is a prolific writer for the Claxton Enterprise. She writes on topics which we have classified here as Southern Folkways but there are historical nuggets among her articles.

We are pleased to include stories about her birthparents and her stepfather which reflect the social and economic climate of the times in which the stories are set.

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Kemp Mabry
Executive Vice President
Bulloch County
Historical Society

March 1993

Roots

Day follows day, and year follows year.
Every day's precious, and people are more dear.

We try to tell our loved ones
Of past happenings in our lives.
Some are interested in what we've done,
Others just pass it by.

Sometimes when it's too late,
Their interest starts to soar,
Our loved ones have met their fate,
They're not here to tell us more.

So while they're here to tell
Of facts we need to know,
Let's sit down and spend time well
Recording facts and family lore.

Medical Treatment was Different in Late 1800s

In the late 1800's, the country doctor was a constant traveler, but unless the situation was an emergency, most of the nursing was done by the family or nearby neighbors. They used all kinds of herbs and plants including salt and Bluestone Water to heal wounds and sickness. Sometimes the difference in a person's getting well or not depended on someone's determination to get you well. Such is the case of Omajean Daniel.

Omajean (known locally as Genie Daniel Smith) was one of nine children. She was lean of frame, with red

hair, and in her thirteenth year. Always full of life, she loved to play outside between chores. She and her sister Frances had always been particularly close, always looking out for one another.

This particular day, Genie walked along the edge of the picket fence, one that her father had built. She laughed and giggled, as girls her age were prone to do, and Frances watched, wanting to try it too, but was afraid that she would get a switching.

Frances cried, "Genie, you'd better get off that fence before Pa sees you, or you'll be sorry."

Genie laughed. "He's in the field. I'll be down before he gets back."

Just then, Frances watched as Genie slipped, fell sideways and punctured her right leg on the front.

Frances ran to her, helped her up, but it didn't seem much more than a good scratch. "Let's go in and wash it off. It should be all right. If you'd listened, you wouldn't have gotten hurt."

By the time her Pa came in, she was limping, pain making it throb. Her Pa watched her try to walk, then asked, "What happened to your leg?"

Genie hesitated, then answered, "I was playing outside and fell."

He slid back his chair, "Comer over here and let me look at it."

She thrust out her leg. Red was around the place

and pus was forming. Streaks looked to be starting. "I'd better hitch the buggy. You need to see the doctor."

After the trip to the doctor and putting on some salve he had given her, the leg got no better. It seemed to get worse and worse.

Finally came the day when the doctor wanted to cut it off, but Frances begged him not to. "She might die."

"She might die anyway," the doctor stated.

"Let me try. Please let me try." she begged. "We can't give up."

The doctor shrugged. "We'll try, but it might be too late."

Frances tore strips of cloth and made fresh bandages every day, but the leg worsened. One of the bones below her knee rotted away, but she kept pouring Bluestone Water and putting on more bandages. She wouldn't give up.

Finally, by the end of a year, there were signs that the leg was healing. She had saved her.

For the rest of Genie's life, she had to use a walking stick or a crutch. The two sisters were close all their lives and for the last 50 years lived together after their husbands died.

Determination and love do make a difference.

A Family Mystery is Solved

"What was your grandfather Daniel's full name?" I asked my grandmother, Cora Perry.

Seated in her recliner, she looked at me, puzzled, but attempted to answer my question. "George I. Daniel, but I don't know what the "I" stands for. Why do you want to know?" At the time she was ninety and had never given it any thought.

"I'm going to find out what happened to him," I answered enthusiastically.

She looked shocked. "You're what? Why he's been dead over 120 years. If my grandmother Angeline couldn't find out what happened to him, what makes you think you can?"

"I don't know," I returned, "but there should be a record somewhere." I wouldn't let her disbelief discourage me.

She sat there, straightened her rings as she thought this over, then looked back up. "It sounds crazy to me."

My great-great grandfather George I. Daniel had joined the Confederate forces, leaving his wife and three small children c1862.

Angeline watched him leave, with tears in her eyes and a heavy heart. She watched until he walked out of sight, then turned back to her work. There was wood to be chopped, clothes to scrub and put on the

line, bread to be made, and three children to look after.

Time passed ever so slowly at her home near Perkins, Georgia, out from Millen. Day after day she waited, hoped for a letter or some word of her husband, but none came. Her heart grew more heavy--more heavy. She took to her bed, finally died of a broken heart.

Three young children were left orphans--taken in by their grandfather and an aunt. The middle child became my great-grandmother, Ellafaire Virginia Daniel who married John Perry Long.

Throughout several years the children waited, hoping that after the war their father would return, but it was never to be.

Now 121 years later I was searching. Would I find the answer?

One Saturday while I was working in town, Carl Swain, a friend, happened to mention that he was searching out family history. He volunteered to search the records for my grandfather while searching for his family records in Virginia. I gave him what information I had.

A few weeks later the phone rang. It was Carl. He had found that George Isaac and Angeline lived in the 68th Brigham District of Jenkins County, that they lived in dwelling No. 963, that he was 32 at the time

of the 1860 Census. His wife Angeline was 22. His children were Rosaline 9, Ellafaire Virginia 5, James Pierce 2. He also found what happened to my grandfather.

In great excitement I called my grandmother, "Mama, I found what happened to Granddaddy Daniel. He died in the Battle of Gettysburg July 3, 1963." A 121-year old mystery had been solved.

A Trip to Savannah

As a young girl of twelve, I could hardly sleep for a week, thinking about our trip. Back in those days it took a week to go to Savannah and back. I went to bed early the night before we left, and it seemed like I had just gotten to bed when I felt Mother shaking me, telling me to get dressed and to help load the last few articles on the wagon. She had already lit the lamp and my clothes were laid on the trunk at the foot of the bed. I hurriedly made my bed and pulled on my clothes. Back in those days we wore long dresses, so I had to get Mother to button me up the back.

Mother had breakfast ready and waiting on the wood kitchen table. The heat from the wood stove felt good that early in the morning. She had a baker of hot biscuits, fried eggs, homemade sausage from the smoke house, and cold milk from where we kept it down

in the well. The aroma of the sizzling sausage and fried eggs made me more hungry than I thought I was. Hot grits to go with this soon had me all warm and half sleepy again.

I ran upstairs to pick up my bag and then back down again. Pa had Kate, Maude, Rena, and Ida tied near the front gate. I held up my skirt hem to keep the dew from wetting the bottom. I handed him my grip and ran back in to check, making sure I hadn't left anything. As I started back out the door, Mother handed me a large basket filled with food she had fixed for our lunch. We wouldn't be cooking today, only stopping long enough to rest the mules and eat.

Pa set the basket in the wagon behind the seat and started checking the ropes, the bolts and nuts to be sure that none had worked loose. He also looked at each wheel making sure that there was plenty of axle grease.

The four mules must have sensed our excitement, because they kept wiggling their ears and swishing their tails. Every once in a while they would stomp a foot, as if they were impatient to get on their way.

Pa helped me climb up on the wagon seat, hugged Mother, and climbed up. He picked up the reins, gently slapped the flanks of both mules, clicked his mouth for them to move on down the sandy lane flanked on both sides by a young stand of pecan trees he had

planted. It was just cracking day.

I shivered, so Pa reached behind him and pulled out a quilt and wrapped around me. As we rolled along on the dirt road, I huddled, almost submerged in the old quilt. Silently we sat, swaying instinctively to the pitch and roll of the wagon.

Pa held the reins loosely, in one hand, allowing the mules to move along easily. His eyes were fixed sleepily on the road ahead; his shoulders bowed slightly, tired from spring farm work. The clink of the breast chains in accompaniment to the clack-clack of the mules' shoes when we hit the clay road, along with the rumble and creak of the heavily loaded wagon came vaguely to me as I leaned on Pa's shoulder in the deserted stillness of the early morning. The mellow fragrance of his pipe, together with the mule-and-harness smell, drifted back over us too.

He pulled the quilts tighter around me and I drifted off into light sleep. No word broke the silence as we rocked on down the road to Savannah.

Along side of the wagon was our black and tan deer hound. With his mouth open in a satisfied grin, he ran placidly along, perfectly content to be with us.

I soon felt the sun warming my face and it wasn't long before I had folded the quilt and put it behind me. Then the gnats started. They buzzed and swarmed

and I swatted them until I was worn out, but the wagon kept rolling on.

Then we got on the other side of the Canoochee River and started up hill. Between the sand and the hill, the pulling up grade seemed interminable. Kate fell to her knees. I thought we couldn't go any further, but she regained her feet and the wagon strained on again. I got out to walk, thereby lightening our load a little.

We finally got to Pembroke and Pa stopped to let the mules cool, and to give them some water. There were a couple of oaks on the edge of town and we had pulled up under the shade to eat our basket lunch. Mother's fried chicken, corn bread and canned peaches didn't last long. We were starved.

Soon we had unhitched the wagon from the hitching post under the tree and the wagon lurched forward as Pa flicked the reins. We saw an occasional wagon, and called out, "Good morning", and later, "Good afternoon", as Pa tipped his hat, but mostly the road was rather deserted. We had hoped that there would be other wagons as we came closer to the flatwoods (Old Bamboo Road--now #204) as usually it was not too safe to go through this section without being in a wagon train. Robbers often came out of the woods on horseback and robbed unsuspecting travelers. While gazing down the long deserted road, my thoughts

insistently turned to depressing possibilities. The sun was getting higher in the sky and it wouldn't be long until its rays wouldn't penetrate the thick woods. Besides, we had several places to cross where streams ran across the road.

These flat woods were spooky in late afternoon with strange shadows crossing the road. Spot wasn't much comfort. He would run out in the woods to chase a deer or rabbit, and then satisfied would come running with his tongue out to catch up with us. I wanted us to hurry on and get through this place, besides the mosquitoes were biting. I thought if I talked to Pa that I wouldn't be so scared, but Pa was so tired that the periods of silence grew longer.

The sun started down before we realized it was time. The world went suddenly all dusky and fearsome. I was glad I wasn't by myself. We spotted a place in the road that looked to be rather boggy so Pa handed me the reins and motioned me to pull the wagon a little more to the right to a harder place in the road. The mules strained and Pa had to push. Mud rolled on the wheels, but we made it through. Then Pa had to get some of the mud off his boots before he got up on the wagon. He was one who liked everything nice and clean.

We rolled on in the snake-like road into the blacker depths of the pine woods. There was a ways to

go before we stopped at the house on the curve with a cemetery in front of it. Pa whipped up the jaded mules.

The way grew unfamiliar as dark settled over the road, and the wagon seemed only to creep. "Pa, let's stop here", I said, "Before we go any deeper in these old black woods."

"We're pretty near there now", he answered. "It won't be long before you'll see some lamp lights." He was tired--so tired with responsibility--and the mules were tired, and I was tired. Was it maybe three or four miles yet to our stop? The thought was to reach it.

The lamplight shined through the windows, welcoming us to a place to sleep and to food and comfort. I climbed wearily down. Pa took our bags and set them on the ground. I waited while he hitched the mules. The front door of the rooming house opened as we walked to the front door. The barking dogs had brought someone out to see what was going on. Pa said, "We need a room for the night." The man invited us in and showed us to a clean, well-kept room, though all I cared about was to bathe, get supper, and sleep.

While I cleaned up, Pa left to take care of the mules. The lady had several other guests that were on their way to Savannah, so we'd have company on our ride tomorrow. The food was good, but simple. We had

hot grits and ham gravy, (red-eye gravy, we call it), fried cured ham, biscuits, butter, and scrambled eggs. All the grown-ups had coffee, but just plain milk was fine with me. The lady had the best blackberry jelly. It made my mouth water when I put a dab on my hot biscuit.

It wasn't long before I asked to be excused and left for bed. My eyelids just wouldn't stay open. Even though it was a strange bed, when I lay on that feather mattress, I knew nothing until Pa gently shook me and called my name the next morning. He had already had the mules hitched, but we would eat breakfast before we left.

This day we stopped at noon and made a fire to cook some cured meat and heat up the biscuits Mother had sent. We sopped the biscuits in sarrup and Pa let me drink coffee this time. He boiled it in an old pot we kept in the wagon just for that purpose.

Pa sat on the ground leaning against the big hickory tree as he ate. He finished and pulled his pipe out of his pocket. After packing it with tobacco, he lit it and stuck it into his mouth, occasionally taking a puff as he rested with his eyes closed. It wasn't long before he rose and threw sand on the fire to put it out and we were on our way.

Late in the afternoon, he pointed to a smoky haze in the east, grinned delightedly; "There she

is,--Savannah! We'll be there before sundown."

He marveled at the plodding steps of the mules; they had become more jaunty. Their step quickened. Occasionally, they broke into a trot. At last the city! The first outlying buildings were in sight.

The laughing drivers yelled good-bye, for each would go his own way now. The wagons clattered down the packed hardened streets, while the men sat jauntily on the wagon seats, their hats turned back, the tiredness forgotten. The mules were almost at a gallop.

Darkness came quickly down upon the night camp in the wagon yard. Vague forms could be seen in the light of the campfires. In the distance I could hear laughter and a banjo playing. My stomach pinched as Pa cooked our supper. The aroma of boiling coffee and sizzling bacon wafted our way. Soon the warm food and coffee would lift up our sagging bodies even though our spirits were already high. Tomorrow was the longed-for day of sightseeing, long-promised special meals and buying of long waited-for items.

After supper, with wood smoke rising in the cool air, the strumming of guitars and banjos could be heard from the groups along with singing and teasing. Everyone was full and contented after the long haul.

Next morning, after the goods had been unloaded, Pa took me to get some piece goods for Mother and some

marbles for the boys. Then we went to get a fish dinner that he had promised me. I had been looking forward to it for a whole year. It was like Christmas to get a treat like this.

We took the wagon back to the warehouse and loaded it with fertilizer. Did any children every have such a trip--such a time! Chattering and whistling, I skipped with other children and ran across the yard to feed some mules in the lot.

Just before we pulled out, Pa checked over Mother's list. While he did this, Spot sniffed about looking for a stray bone. Satisfied that we had gotten everything, we pulled out for the long ride home, with Spot trailing along beside us.

A Gift of Caring

My mother showed me the copy of my great-grandfather's diary, also a letter written to him by an officer in his regiment. Both were faded from age, the diary having been written from 1862-1865 and the letter in 1910; but when we read them it was like listening to voices, faint and faraway, echoing down the corridors of time.

The letter and diary were about not only great historical events, but about the caring of these two men for the men who served under them, and about their memories and the reality of now. The diary had blood

stains and the letter speaks of one man's admiration for another. I could feel their sincere warmth on the brittle paper.

The letter from Ben S. Williams to Isaac C. Daniel reads,

"My dear old Comrade, Your letter, dated the 25th Inst. received. It affords me great pleasure to receive a hearing from one who was once a member of the 47th Ga. Regiment. Dear to my heart is the name and memory of our old Command and often do I traverse in my memory, our marches, our camps, and our battles. I can muster in my imagination, today, each company of the Regiment and see them as plainly as I once viewed them on the field in their regular formation. Old Co. G. with Capt. Tippins, Lieutenants Kennedy and Parker, the sergeants, corporals, the whole rank and file rise up out of the eternal past and are before me in vivid remembrance at the present moment."

"There are only a few of us left on this side of the deep dark River. The greater number by far, have passed over and are awaiting us in the Bivouac of the Dead where we will all soon sleep until the sound of the last reville awakes us for the great roll call beyond. It would afford me great and sincere pleasure to join you in your county reunion on Saturday next and I would certainly do so and bring with me the tattered old flag we loved and love, so well; in my

possession ever since the surrender; but I am just recovering from sickness, am weak and unable to take the trip. I thank you for the invitation. Oh, I would like to meet you all and be with you once more. Remember me kindly, affectionately, to every member of the old 47th who may be present. May you have a pleasant time--a day of pleasure and true joy."

"I hope to be well enough to go to the Bulloch County reunion in acceptance of the invitation extended by Waters. Can't our men from Tatnall Old Co. G. be there, too?"

"Write me as soon as your reunion is over. I am anxious to hear from you, all. With best wishes, love and kindest regards, Very truly, Ben S. Williams."

Where did they get the fortitude to go through the hardships of life? The answer lay in these long-saved mementos. They got it from one another. They told each other how much they cared. There it was, the faith, the encouragement, written to last, so that those receiving the letters could read over and over what was said when they needed reassurance.

Where has letter writing gone? Most of us use the excuse that we don't have time. We pick up the phone and say a few words. It's so much quicker. But, isn't it wonderful when we go to the mailbox and there's a letter from a faraway family member, a card with a note from a neighbor, or a newsy letter from a

longtime friend.

That's a gift of caring.

Isaac Chadburn Daniel - 1840-1919 - Evans

Isaac Chadburn Daniel was born in Tattnall, now Evans County, on April 5, 1840, about 2½ miles north of Bellville, Georgia on a farm owned by his father, James Pierce Daniel, who was born March 10, 1802 in Bulloch County, Georgia. Isaac's mother was Elizabeth Glisson (the daughter of Joseph and Martha Glisson from Burke County, Georgia).

Isaac's grandparents were Elias Daniel (Revolutionary Soldier) and Elizabeth Pierce. Elias was born in 1762 in Tyrell County, North Carolina and Elizabeth, his wife was born in 1772 in Burke County, Georgia. Elias was a Revolutionary Soldier.

Isaac's great-grandparents were Ensign Aaron Daniel, Sr. (R. S.) and Elizabeth Whitfield. This Aaron Daniel was born in 1739 in Tyrell County, N.C. and his wife, Elizabeth Whitfield was born in the Pee Dee Section of South Carolina.

Before marriage, Isaac lived two and a half miles East of Reidsville, just off of the 280 Hwy. near the turn to the Tattnall County Methodist Campground. The original house was still standing in 1980 and about 125 years old, when it burned. The house and farm were owned by Grady Rogers, a descendent of James

Pierce Daniel.

Isaac Daniel, along with his two brothers, volunteered at Reidsville, Tattnall County, Georgia on March 4, 1862 to go to fight in the Civil War. He was a Pvt. in Tattnall County Invincibles, 11th Battalion; transferred to Co. G. 47th Ga. Infantry as 1st Corp. May 12, 1862; appointed as 1st Sgt. Dec. 8, 1862. The Roll for Feb. 18, 1863, last on file shows him present. Pension Records show he surrendered at Greensboro, N.C. April 26, 1865. See P. 67--Vol. 5--Roster of Confederate Soldiers of Ga.--compiled by Lillian Henderson, Director of Confederate Pension and Record Department printed 1960 at Hapeville, Georgia. They reassembled and later surrendered, not as G-47th, but as H-1st.

They were given \$1.14 each to come nearly 400 miles home. He and his brother William W. Daniel came home after nearly three years and he then married Nancy Brewton on June 6, 1867. The other brother, James Wiley Daniel came home earlier and died of disease.

Nancy Brewton was the daughter of Samuel Brewton and Mary Ann (Polly) Smith; the granddaughter of John Burton and Isabell _____. Isabell later married an Askew.

After marriage, Isaac and Nancy lived on a farm, about a mile south of Hagan, Georgia, just off Perkins

Mill Road, earlier called Bull Creek Road. He farmed the land for a living and raised cows. He had a blacksmith shop in the yard and worked on his own tools and made some furniture. They had split rails for fences.

Isaac first had a log house, then later about 1875, built a large house. The log house was then used to store canned fruit. They lived in the large house the rest of their lives. Nancy died February 23, 1910. Isaac still lived in the house until his death on March 27, 1919.

Nancy washed her clothes in a hollow log, which had a partition in the middle so as to put the dirty clothes in one end, and clean ones in the other. Holes were bored to turn out the water. A well sweep was used to pull up water from the well. Travel was done by horse and buggy or mule and wagon.

This land was handed down in the same family until 1970 when it was sold. The land was an original land grant to Nathan Brewton, then inherited by Samuel Brewton, and then Nancy Brewton Daniel. The original land grant papers are still in the possession of Mona Lee Daniel Allen, a granddaughter.

In those days, the families were large, averaging from eight to thirteen children. Many children were necessary to help clear and tend the land, as they did not have any tractors and modern machinery, as they do

today. They had nine children.

In 1988, the site of the original house is owned by John and Peggy Perkins. Troy Moore owned the farm for a while, but tore down the original house, and built a new one in 1974.

This information was furnished from Mona Lee Allen's own records, from tombstones at Brewton Cemetery, from Isaac Daniel's family Bible, and from marriage records at Reidsville, Georgia.

Story Teller Recalls the March of Sherman

Many years ago the old man waited his turn at the cash register to pay for another pocket knife, his weekly ritual. He was short and dark, middle-sized with a hunch to his shoulders and with knotty hands from hard work and arthritis. His dark eyes sagged with years, but always had a light to them, as if he took life as it came.

I asked, "George, how are you?"

"Fine, Ma'am, just fine," he answered.

The old man was George Fagin.

"George," I said, "You must be getting up in age."

"Yessum. I was a small boy when Sherman came through Claxton. Word had passed to us that he was coming. When I heard the pounding of all those horses' hooves and saw the dust billowing behind, my

heart felt like it would come out of my chest. By the time they thundered by, my mama had had us carry our mattresses into the woods, our mule was tied in the middle of the deepest thicket, and the hogs had already been penned there too. We squatted in the bushes and Mama dared us to make a sound. She knew the men would take our food and maybe kill us too for hiding it. My feet hurt so bad that tears ran down my face. In hurrying to get away, I had stepped in a pile of hot ashes and both feet were scorched. That was a long time ago, but it was the scare of my life."

He stopped speaking as if he had just realized where he was. He tipped his hat, "Have a good day, Ma'am," and left, taking his newly purchased pocket knife with him.

Dr. Ben Traded Plow for Medicine

It was the year 1910, the time Ben Daniel had worked for so diligently. He lay in bed with the flu, coughing, shivering from high fever, feeling devastated. His mother, Nancy, had put a pneumonia jacket on him hoping to clear his chest before pneumonia set in. Fumes from the concoction filled his nose. She had melted tallow and mixed turpentine, Vicks Salve, and musterole and put all this on layers of flannel and laid it on his chest.

He thought back to the day he had made the

decision to become a doctor. He had walked the long furrows, hour after hour, breaking ground for spring planting. It was one of those hot days when sweat ran down your face and down your back while gnats swarmed around your eyes and mosquitoes bit. The ole mule had swished her tail to swat the insects, but he had to let loose one handle to swat. When he did, it was hard to keep the row straight. The longer he had worked, the madder he had become. In frustration he had made his decision. "I've plowed the last day I ever intend to plow. "I'm going to become a doctor."

He thought back to the few dollars he had saved from selling vegetables and eggs. His mother had kept it for him. The day he was to get on the train at Hagan, Nancy had handed him this money and his daddy, Isaac had handed him \$50.00. That's all he had to go to school on. He had boarded the train and had headed for the Georgia Normal College and Business Institute in Abbeville where he graduated from high school in 1904. Next was medical school in Atlanta at the Atlanta School of Medicine. He remembered what a country boy he had been, trying to compete with city boys who had had Latin. As far as he had been concerned, Latin might as well have been Greek. Never had he imagined anything could be so hard. He had thought daily of quitting, but thoughts of how he had bragged about becoming a doctor and not plowing any

more plagued him. He would have been the laughing stock of Claxton and Hagan if he had given up and come home.

Now the time had come for his last test in Atlanta--the one for his license and here he was in bed.

Nancy came in the room. "Ben, you're not going. You're too sick. It won't do for you to flit around with that flu. It'll turn into pneumonia."

"I'm going," he answered. "I can't quit now."

Nancy sent Isaac after Dr. Ellarbee in Daisy, hoping he could convince him of the danger. Dr. Ellarbee's opinion--"Ben, if you go you're likely to die. Your body can't take any more."

"I'm going," Ben answered adamantly.

Seeing that he was determined, Nancy sent for Ben's brother Saxton to go with him. She butchered a chicken and made chicken soup for him to take on the train. Then she helped Ben dress while Sack hitched the mule to the buggy. It took Sack and Isaac to get Ben to the buggy and onto the train at Hagan.

Once Sack got Ben in his seat, Nancy handed him the quart of chicken soup with the warning to "make him sip it all along to keep him from drying out with that fever." She and Isaac watched them leave with heavy hearts, wondering if they would ever see their son again.

Ben took the exam and passed, making third in his class. His determination had pulled him through.

December 20, 1910, he married Minnie Jones Daniel from Emanuel County and doctored until his death at 45 in 1932 of nephritis.

"Did you eat something that didn't agree with you?" a person is often asked when he has a bad dream. My mother wondered the same thing when she awoke in a cold sweat from a scary one.

In the dream she saw herself going through her brother's things--sorting--selling--taking a load to the dump. She was the executor to her brother, Dr. Ben Daniel's estate. Some large amount of odds and ends were stored in the attic of one of the downtown buildings. She had dreaded for some time sorting through these things. In the dream she saw herself pulling through old furniture, books, out-of-use doctor's equipment, old boards that could be used for patching.

She saw herself walking towards an old cabinet. one that had been in Ben's office, stepping across all the dusty piles of goods and unlatching its door. She pulled it open and screamed. Inside hung a skeleton, its jaws gaping in a smile. She screamed loudly and awoke, her heart thumping wildly. It was hours before

she could sleep again. Every time she closed her eyes she saw that skeleton. Because of the dream, it was some time before she got around to cleaning out this attic. Somehow she felt too wary to tackle the job.

On a Thursday, when the stores below were closed, she obtained some help and had the truck back close to the entrance. Dust and spider webs were gradually pushed aside and the truck was loaded with the first load. While the trashy material was taken to the dump, she continued to sort--putting articles in different piles for different ways of disposal.

Gradually working her way, she realized that directly ahead of her, about dead center of the long room was a cabinet, one exactly like the one in her dream. Warily she headed to it, still unsure about opening it, then thought, "I'm being silly. It was only a dream," but dread still held her in its grip. With cold, clammy fingers, she gradually eased the door open and gasped in shock--followed by a blood-curdling scream. That same skeleton hung there with his jaws gaping. The explanation was that it was used in her brother's doctor's office to explain to patients exactly where a break was and how it would have to be repaired. It was later sold to a local lawyer for courtroom use, but Mona never goes in that building without that episode flashing in her mind.

Delight in Simple Things

"Teach us delight in simple things," wrote Rudyard Kipling years ago. Today, in our fast-paced world, we might add, "And help us simplify our lives to make room for them."

One afternoon while buying groceries and at the same time trying to decide what to have for supper, I decided to have grits, sausage, and maybe scrambled eggs. It was a cold afternoon and something warm seemed right. Being out of grits, I picked up a bag of the quick cooking kind. It was so easy to pay a few cents, carry it home and cook it.

When I was a child and we ran out of grits or corn meal, we children would be told to grab a large bucket and head to the corn crib. The corn lay piled almost to the ceiling and held back by a few boards nailed across the lower part of the doorway. We would grab the unhusked corn from over the top of the opening, peel back the dry shucks and break off the ear. This continued until we had a large mound of golden ears.

Next came shelling it off the cob with the "heel" of our hand, even using a cob to help clean the grains from the ear. By the time a croaker sack was full of the grains, hands were calloused and sore, and our clothes and faces were covered with the shuck dust.

The corn was then taken to the mill. Water from

a stream, trapped behind a dam, was sent through a raceway to the mill. There it fell in a boxed wooden trough onto a horizontal wheel under the building.

The actual grinding didn't take long, but some farmers extended the waiting period by swapping some of their tall tales and bits of news. When it was finished, the grits and meal were stored in lard cans. The aroma of the warm grits and meal lingered all the way home.

In these hurried times, it's time-saving and easy to buy a bag, but I wonder, does it taste as good?

Hard Work Makes Good Start in Life

The night air was somnolent and still, with not enough breeze to ripple the large shade trees around the unpainted wood house. Stars twinkled in the dark sky. In the woods surrounding the large house, frogs sang for rain, while cicadas strummed and crickets chirruped. The Georgia woods seemed unwilling to let go of the day's heat.

The house sat in a man-made clearing not far from the yard brush-broom clean. The house was home to the Blalock family, while its front porch, running the width of the house was the family gathering place on spring and summer nights after supper. Bright

blooming pot plants lined the edges, giving color to the unpainted porch. Inside, a kerosene lamp burned, attracting moths. The soft wings whirred as they beat against the screen.

After a supper of peas, rice, fried chicken, tea, and biscuit, the family settled on the porch for a while, until bedtime. In the shadows of the porch, out of reach of the light, Alvin leaned back against the porch wall and stretched out his bone-weary body on the porch floor, while his parents sat in their cane-backed rockers, gentle creaks emitting from their slow movements. Alvin's uncle and aunt, Marvin and Clyde Sapp, enjoyed this companionable silence also. They had walked the eight miles after work to spend the night and talk business.

Marvin was a few years older than Alvin, not long married: trying to make his living farming. His dark hair and firm body showed signs of his young years. His eyes were dark, but full of life. His experience hadn't come so much from schooling, but from hard work.

He was a product of the farm, a self-made man as he liked to think of himself. His days were spent trying to make a go of the farm, working long hours in the fields and fishing whenever he could.

His faded overalls hung loosely, hardly touching his body. His plaid shirt has seen many washings, but

there was still lots of "wear" left in it, which was evident as it lay neatly across his narrow shoulders. Clothes in these years of "The Great Depression" weren't indicative of a man's status in the community. In this farm community, it was the quality of the man that was judged, not his possessions, and his name commanded a hard-earned respect. A man's word was his bond.

His lean legs stretched out in front of him, his bare feet crossed over each other as he propped against the post near the edge of the porch, his weather-beaten straw hat nearby.

A ravel of smoke curled from the self-rolled cigarette he held between the second and third fingers of his calloused hand. He reached up to take a draw from it. As it flared, the glow cast a light on his angular features, especially the curve of his cheekbones.

In contrast, Alvin was a lad of fifteen, sunburned, blond-haired, already five feet, seven inches tall. In winter, he had to put on shoes and get to school like everyone else, but summer days hardly ever saw him with shoes on, except of course when field sands burned with heat, and today had been a day of no respite from the fierce Georgia sun. He had hoed tobacco all day.

They talked crops, weather, livestock, and family

matters until finally Marvin turned to Alvin, "Alvin, I've got 18 rows of tobacco that needs suckering tomorrow. If you'll help me, I'll give you a rooster and hen in payment." He waited for Alvin's reply.

Alvin studied a minute, "I reckon I will. What time did you want to leave in the morning?"

"About sun-up. We'll leave while it's cool and be home in time to get most of the suckering done."

They all sat a while longer, finally getting up one-by-one to get some sleep before the long day began.

The next morning, after a big farm breakfast, the three left for Marvin's house. Once in the field, Marvin, Clyde, and Alvin pulled out the sticky suckers from the fast growing plants, their fingers and clothes growing black from the work. Hour after hour they worked, stopping every once in a while to get a swallow of water from the jar under the shade and to wipe sweat off their faces. It was a full-time job to blow the gnats away.

Finally, the field work was finished, supper eaten and the work day over. Alvin prepared to sleep in the bed he usually slept in when he stayed with his aunt and uncle, not taking long to drift off to sleep after the hard day, while windows stayed open to let in whatever breeze there was that might flow through.

During the night he became instantly awake, fully

There Was Nothing to Love

There was nothing to love

For us life was farming: hard work and little money.

It took backbone, tenaciousness, plain work clothes, protecting what we had.

There was nothing to love.

And yet. . .

We felt no fear as we slept in an unlocked, drafty old house.

Or no tension as we drifted off to the sound of rain pattering on a tin roof or

Snuggled under homemade quilts in the winter while cold winds whistled around the corners and seeped through the cracks.

We felt no lack when our breakfast table was laden with scrambled farm-fresh eggs, ice cold milk with cream on top, churned butter, smoked sausage, blackberry jelly and a baker of piping hot biscuits,

Or as our friends came to cane grindings to drink the juice and to taste our supply of syrup being put up for next year,

And we felt no lack when we fished in our pond for bass, bream, or catfish with willow poles and with earthworms dug from the ditch,

Or when we sang on Sunday afternoons with several families harmonizing around the old upright, enjoying the fellowship.

There seemed nothing to love, and yet. . .

As I look back, what else was there but love.

aware of some awful squawking in the hen house. At the same time, he heard Marvin moving around. The two grabbed their clothes, lit a lantern, and made a dash to the chicken yard, gun in hand, but it was too late. Both the rooster and hen were dead, killed by some animal. They went back to bed, knowing that new arrangements would have to be made for payment.

The next morning, over breakfast, Marvin said, "Alvin, I've been thinking. As soon as the sow has pigs, I'll give you one in place of the rooster and hen."

Alvin nodded.

The day arrived that three piglets were born. Alvin's granddaddy made a deal with Marvin for the sow and pigs, but in the deal, he was to let Alvin's pig go with the mother and eat in his field until it was grown. Over a period of time, it became grown, and later had several pigs of its own.

That's how Alvin got his start in life.

Temperatures Evoke Memories of 'Cane Grinding'

The temperature is around freezing with icicles hanging everywhere and some meltdown beginning to drip from the roof. Inside, the heat flows and we are snug

and warm. I think how good it would be to have a baker of homemade biscuits and some real cane syrup to go with it.

Cane grinding around here is mostly a job of the past, but fondly remembered by many.

On the day of the grinding, the men used to go to the cane field to cut the cane. The "middling" children's job was to drive the two-horse wagon for the loads and haul them back to the mill.

A single mule was hitched to the "sweep", which was a long pole attached to the top of the mill, and marched in a circle which gradually deepened during the long day. As the mule powered the mill, the cane was inserted between the rollers and raw juice was pressed out to run into a barrel or bucket for carrying to the boiler.

People would arrive from miles around for a taste of the fresh juice and mothers cautioned their young ones not to drink too much before bedtime. But pressing out the juice was only the beginning. Once it was poured into the many-galloned boiler, it was simmered for hours.

Often the weather was so cold that cotton sheets were nailed along the sides of the boiler shelter to hold in some of the heat from the wood-fired furnace. It was long, tedious work skimming the skum that rose to the surface and throwing it into the skum bucket.

Even the sides of the boiler had to be wiped.

Throughout the year, old bottles were saved and washed for just this occasion. When the syrup had finished, the bottles were filled and corked, while the family waited eagerly to sample the first making.

Some of the old-timers tell me that they liked to get hold of a biscuit about the size of a saucer and bore a hole in it with the finger, then fill it with syrup and homemade butter. "Now that's good eatin'."

Their Prayers Were Answered

In the small town of Hagan, just about fifteen minutes east of Reidsville, there is a white clapboard building built in 1893. . . The Hagan Baptist church. Through the years it has had its ups and down membership, but finally, some weeks ago the handful of remaining members knew that there weren't enough of them left to support its expenses.

B. A. Hammock and Lela Mae Marks were two that worked diligently to keep the doors open, often telling others of their concerns. B. A. said, "It hurts me to see our church going down. I've prayed to God to help us keep His house open."

Then one Sunday when the doors opened for Sunday School, with heavy heart they wondered: "Will this be our last Sunday in the church that has been our home

for so long?" To their surprise, there were cars, trucks, and vans pulling up in the parking places. Men, women and children filed through the doors. B. A. and Lela Mae stared in amazement. They had had an influx of approximately forty new members.

The new members and the regular membership called a pastor. They had a cleaning day and cleaned the old church from top to bottom, made new curtains for the Sunday School rooms and are now working on a new sign for the church. One member was called and asked to purchase a speaker system and it would be paid for.

When B. A. told about this, he wiped his face, now colored with emotion and shook his head. He says, "The Lord answered our prayers."

This church has taken on new life and one can see it in the smiles of the members when they refer to it.

Fears, Joys and Challenges of Old Age

Old. I cringe when I think of being old. I want to live to an old age, but I don't want to be old. My concept of old is a fumbling, deteriorating person who rocks life away, always talks about the past, about how old he is, about being lonely, about not being able to do anything. My idea of how people over sixty-five think has radically changed since

interviewing twenty people to see how they really feel about their lives.

I thought retired people would dwell quite regularly on whether life would force them to go into the nursing home, or whether they would be able to live alone if they were to lose their mate, but I found that fears seemed to be centered on the rising costs of doctor bills, keeping up insurance premiums, attaining help when needed, burdening others, losing their minds, or having their possessions taken to the city dump when they passed on.

One seventy-one-year-old great-grandmother, with hurt in her voice said, "The executors of my aunts' estate backed up to the door with a pick-up truck and loaded up all my aunts' papers, small articles, kitchen utensils, quilts, trunks, and musical instruments and hauled them to the dump. I'm labeling my possessions with names so that that won't happen to my things. I shudder to think of anyone's possessions being treated that way."

One homemaker, career woman, as she ran her hands through her hair, with a worried look stated, "I would like to see my children get their lives straightened out and settled before something happens to me. I'm beginning to wonder if they ever will. Mothers never stop worrying about their children, no matter how old they get."

With a glowing face, one tenant farmer, who is now a millionaire, spoke of his childhood. With a crack in his voice, he said, "I long to see my family members. They're all gone now, but I get so lonesome to talk to them. My mother used to stand on the back porch to look over the corn field and the pond below it. The land was so sorry that ten bushels per acre was a good yield. We didn't have much, but we were happy. Mother told the other children that they would always have to look after me, since I wasn't much of a student. My goals in life have been honesty, truthfulness, and dedication to whatever I attempt. I believe that whatever we do we should do well. Each should be a champion." He stresses, "I have one ambition in life, that is to encourage others to do the best they can with what they have. I believe that if we don't share, we don't prosper."

Asked about his retirement, he said, "I love it. It is the greatest part of my life. I've gotten to come back home, to see the beauty surrounding me, to help create beauty. I enjoy every day of my life, and every morning I give thanks that the Lord has given me another day."

One seventy-seven-year-old still-ambitious farmer feels that as he gets older, younger people seem to shun him, as well as others his age. He said, "All ages should listen to each other. Each could learn

and profit from the insights." He states, "At any age we need a challenge to keep going, and especially as our health begins to deteriorate."

His advice to others is "Get your sights on your life's goals as soon as possible and keep at it. Get your education. To do anything well, you have to have the goal in mind and the education. I went to night school to learn math and to learn how to write business letters."

With effervescence in his voice, he said, "Oh, there are many things I'd yet like to do. I hope to write a book and to do extended traveling, along with the other plans I have."

An almost blind retired clerk smiled and said, "I want to hold a weekly Bible class in my home." Listening to tapes, TV, or getting someone to read to her is her only way of studying, but that doesn't stop her. "I want to live every day for my Lord," she stated.

A retired teacher, who was also a visiting teacher, said, "If I had been a visiting teacher before teaching in the classroom, I could have understood family conditions more easily and would have been able to get material across to all the children more effectively. If I had the authority, I would require all teachers to do some visiting so that they could do a better job. I hope that I'll always

be able to read so that I can have more understanding of others' viewpoints."

"How has your outlook changed through the years?"

"I've mellowed. I don't let little things bother me much any more. I feel that life is too short to get upset about irritations that I can't do anything about."

There were some regrets. One grandmother who still has a job, was left a widow at thirty-two. She states, "I regret not attending college after being widowed. I could have had a much higher paying job if I had gotten my education. I also regret staying in an unsatisfactory second marriage for twenty-three years, while hoping that he would change. It was twenty-three years of purgatory, a hell on earth."

One long-time retired eighty-seven year old, when asked if he had any regrets hung his head in embarrassment and said. "Yes, I regret having relations outside of marriage, but that's a long time in the past now."

When asked how they would live if their life could be lived over, most stated, "I'd live about the same way I've lived this one."

In all our lives, there are fears, joys, and challenges, no matter what age. These people say that they are sometimes forgetful, but they have a keen interest in learning, in understanding others, in

solving their problems, in spiritual knowledge and wisdom. They want to make the most of their lives for as long as they live.

There's a saying made famous by Robert Schuller that "Tough Times Don't Last, but Tough People Do." Though tough times change from one challenge to another with time, Cora and Thaddeus Hagan remember fondly their days of attending school at "The Level", a one-room unpainted school located close to "The Level Church" about four miles south of Hagan on Perry Road.

They dressed early by lamp light, packed a syrup bucket with biscuit and a piece of fat-back, maybe a piece of sweetbread or some syrup, and set out on the dirt road for school. Cora lived further south out in the flatwoods than Thaddeus, but both had to walk on narrow roads flanked on each side by tall pines and underbrush.

In dry times, dust rose with each step and sand often filled their shoes. If rain came and was too hard they couldn't go. Teachers never knew if they would have as few as twenty or as many as fifty children.

Cora and Thaddeus recalled different teachers

they had had, some of whom had boarded with Thaddeus's parents, Mary and Cleve Hagan. They named Gladys Clark, Serena Kennedy, Ruby King, and Irene Spanns.

Pupils sat on homemade benches lined against each long wall behind homemade desks. In the center of the room was a potbellied stove. Cora said, "We nearly froze in the winter, but we always made it through 'til time to go home."

"We had enough books to learn from and some sort of rough paper to write on, sometimes Blue Horse Composition books to write in."

School stopped after seventh grade. Not many made it that far, what with work and having to walk so far. Most pupils attended a couple of days a week between field work--only averaged attending about three months of the year."

They recalled some students--Thaddeus and Ruby Hagan, Purly and Jack Brown, Theodore and Tiny Boy Brown, Robert Williams, Willie Williams, Clifford Kennedy's children, and Remer Kennedy's children.

Though the old school has long fallen into decay, Cora and Thaddeus feel going to school there enabled them to cope with the tough times of adulthood.

A Look Back to the Good Old Days

As we woke this morning to an eerie silence, we realized that the electricity was off. Knowing that the regular routine would have to be gone through anyway, we groped around the house for a flashlight. Then after finding several candles, we placed one in each room so that everyone could see to dress. Next in line was breakfast. My family always likes cooked breakfast, so I proceeded to get out an iron skillet to put on the wood heater. We soon had sizzling fried eggs, toasted cheese sandwiches and perked coffee.

As the fire glimmered through the open heater doors in peaceful quietness, it reminded me of those long ago days of my childhood when we had no electricity out in the county. Every morning Mother and Dad had to get up early in the cold to build fires in the fireplace and in the wood stove for us to warm by and to have a meal. Times were as hard then as now, but there was a feeling of security within our family that many don't have.

Before starting breakfast they would have to go out on the back porch to the well to draw water to use in cooking breakfast, which consisted of home-smoked sausage or cured ham, grits, stewed tomatoes, scrambled farm-fresh eggs, fresh cold milk with the cream still on it, a large baker of biscuits with homemade butter and cane syrup to "sop" the biscuit in.

I remember Mother going out once a week, even if it was freezing cold, to do our family wash in wash tubs--having to draw all those buckets of water for washing and rinsing. There were always some clothes that had to be boiled in the washpot over an open fire to be able to get all the farm stains out. Always there was a large pot of home cooked starch to starch the white shirts, blouses, and dresses. As she hung the clothes on the line her fingers would start to freeze to the clothes. Then came the long job of heating smoothing irons on the stove and sprinkling the clothes to get them ready to iron. Several irons would heat on the wood stove while another was being used.

Every night in the summer, after our chores were done and supper over, we'd sit on the front porch in the large black rockers surrounded by Mother's myriad pot plants and look at the twinkling stars, pick out the big dipper and other groups of stars, and talk over the day. To most people this wouldn't seem much, but it's something I'll always treasure.

In those days most of the farm work was done by mule and plow, the corn gathered by hand and thrown into a two-horse wagon. Once, when some of us were sick, Mother had to let some of us ride around on the wagon beside the farm help so that she could look after the child that was so sick. Then when we caught

whatever it was, the well one got to ride.

Sunday afternoons we would have several families come by to spend the afternoon. We'd gather around the piano and sing through the Baptist Hymnal and other books. There was always the most beautiful harmony.

In some ways, gardening hasn't changed so much in that it is still quite a lot of hard work and we still enjoy the beauty that comes from the beautiful blooms, vegetables, and fruit; but we still have to hoe, rake, prune, dig, and water. Mother used to go to the woods to cut what we called "brush brooms", bring them home, and tie them together to sweep the sandy ground clean of sycamore leaves from the huge sycamore in front of our home. Now we spend hours cutting grass and trying to keep the straw, leaves, and limbs up.

My children came home after school one day several years ago asking me, "Mother, what was it like in the olden days?" You can imagine the shocked surprised expression on my face at that question. Why, I wasn't that old!

Those were good old days and yet these are too. There was hard work then and now, but maybe not so much pressure then, but aren't the conveniences to work in the yard and house just great?

Lack of Understanding Means Loss

It was January, cold outside, but warm and comfortable inside. I stood in my parents' bedroom and talked with my Dad while he finished dressing. He picked up his change and keys, and put them into his pockets, then picked up his billfold, and checked the renewal date on his driver's license. He studied it for a long moment. "I'll never get to renew that again," he said.

"Oh, Daddy, don't talk that way," I answered. I felt almost like I had been struck. He couldn't go. Not yet. I needed him to help me make wise choices in my marriage. It was too soon--way too soon. Surely he wasn't leaving us yet. I had always pictured my parents as not leaving us until very old age. His heart was damaged from a heart attack six years earlier, but surely he wasn't that ill. He was only 50 years old.

He said no more, but slid his license back into his billfold and then into his pocket. He walked over to the dresser and ran the comb through his hair and straightened his tie. His expression seemed a little sad, but he acted as if the incident had never happened. He put his hand on my shoulder as we left the room and wisely changed the conversation to something else.

Some time later when my boys and I were on the way home, we talked about our day, but my Dad's statement of "I won't get to renew my license," kept running through my mind. It took a few days of trying hard to rid myself of depressing thoughts before the feeling left me.

Soon signs of spring began popping out everywhere. It was Daddy's favorite season. He could get his planting done, and get an occasional chance at fishing for bream in his pond. He seemed happy and made no more mention of not being around.

About the middle of March, Mother called and said, "Your Daddy called your Grandmother Perry and your Uncle Charles and asked them to come to dinner Sunday. And he also asked your Aunt Genie and Aunt Frances, and your Grandmother Minnie to dinner the next Sunday." She paused as if giving this some thought, then continued, "You all come, too. We'll have plenty."

This time came and went. Then the first of April I went to the local ceramic shop to work on a few pieces for gifts. I was working on a piece when the siren sounded. "It's Daddy, I thought. Hardly had the thought run through my mind when my husband came for me. I learned that my Dad had dropped dead at the local stock market. As President of the Claxton Bank, he had gone there to present the trophy to the top

winners of the 4-H Club.

Sometime before the funeral Mother said, "I knew it was coming when he swapped some papers with your Uncle Charles. Always before, their word was sufficient. And never has he wanted to have family dinners two weeks in a row."

Even in my anguish, it finally got through to me that he was trying to warn us in January that he would be around only a short time longer, and we weren't ready to listen.

Now I looked at the casket and thought of how much I missed him and what a hole there would be in my life. There was a million questions I had wanted to ask him--about his childhood, the whole stories to parts that I had heard, how he felt about so many things, about his desires for us. The list was endless. Now it was too late.

Only recently, when I had some medical problems that gave me a scare, did I realize how lonely death might be. How had Daddy felt knowing that his time was so short and that his life had hardly begun? Had he wanted to talk about his feelings--and had I stopped him by my outburst? Maybe there was some business advice he thought we should have or maybe he wanted to let us know how much he loved us.

There is the old saying that one never understands another unless one has walked in the

other's shoes, and now I understand that saying. My lack of understanding caused me not only to lose precious moments, but left my Dad with no emotional support from me when he needed it most. I hope I've learned my lesson.

Ed Perry's death was April 1, 1963.

Saturday Was Town Day in the Good Old Days

All week long we children looked forward to Saturday in town. Saturday was town day. On Saturday morning Mother heated water on the wood stove to pour in the tub and we each took turns bathing while more water heated for the next child.

After dinner, we hurried to dress in "town" clothes for an afternoon at the Tos Theater. Every Saturday was double feature day. All those under twelve were allowed in for a dime. They always questioned me about my birthday as I was extra tall for my age. I looked twelve, two years before I became that age.

Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Cisco Kid, The Masked Man and Tonto, Gene Autry, and Jimmy Wakely rode across the screen at regular intervals every week firing their six-shooter, trying to obtain justice in the West.

While the four of us sat glued to the screen, Mother shopped for groceries, not for just anything she wanted, but items that couldn't be produced on the farm, such as sugar and cocoa, or rice. There weren't any such items as fast-food products or pre-mixed goods. It all had to be mixed from "scratch" at home.

On the way home, Mother would pick us up from the "show" and take us next door to Tos Bakery where we purchased individual apple and mince pies. That was our treat for the week. We looked forward to this special meal. It kept Mother from having to fire up the wood stove, thereby giving her a break from cooking for six people.

After supper we gathered near the radio to listen to Grand Old Opry and it wasn't long until we children were lulled to sleep from all the crooning. Children today laugh at such simple enjoyment, but as my children say, "Those were my Saturdays in the old days."

Memories of the "Old Up-Right and Learning to Play

The old upright piano stood in the corner in the parlor. It was not a large room but was always kept "special" so that it would be ready for company. Over the mantle hung a long old painting painted by Nell

Goldspring.

Every morning before school, I had to enter this room and practice my piano lessons. Every time I hit a wrong note, Mother would say, "You missed a note. Go back a measure and get it right." Until I got older, I couldn't understand how she could be in another room and tell when I made a mistake.

Mother taught me until I got in third grade and started taking from Miss Edna Lee Brewton, who taught me throughout school. My last recital piece was 23 pages.

Sometimes I would go in to practice and the keys would be stuck from dampness. Mother would open up the bottom, set a kerosene lamp close and by the next day, the heat would have the piano playing as good as new.

When we moved into our brick home in 1950, this old piano went with us for a while, but one day a furniture truck backed up to the door and a beautiful baby-grand piano was unloaded. I loved the touch and sound of this new piano, but many memories went out the door with the old up-right.

Rules of Undine Squat

The lingering afternoons of late summer have a

special significance to some county dwellers. After the burning heat of the midday, with their struggles to finish the field work, the sun passes its peak and day begins to slip into shadows. It's knocking off time. There's time to talk over events, time to visit, time to remember.

Two pickups sit along the edge of the corn field. Nearby, two dusty farmers remove their caps to wipe off the sweat and then squat on their haunches under the shade of a pecan tree. One grabs a piece of grass to chew on while the discussion takes place. They look to be discussing a serious matter, or are they pondering over plans for their next fishing or hunting trips? Occasionally one will make a point by drawing out the picture in the dusty ground with a stick.

The unwritten rules are that there will always be brief chitchat about the weather and crops before the main talk begins.

Finally, when one has the information he needs, he doesn't abruptly stand up and leave. The rural code of neighborliness requires him to make small talk for a while.

Of course, these talks can take place outside any time the weather's comfortable. It's much more fun than sitting inside. What's been going on? It's known locally as "The Undine Squat."

The Mule Earned Respect When Cars Arrived

Seventy-four year old Isaac Daniel dressed and hurried through his chores at the barn. He cleaned his shoes and then made his way up the back steps to the stoop and dipped some water from the bucket into the wash pan to scrub his hands well with homemade lye soap before going into the kitchen for breakfast.

His dark-haired daughter, Frances, had breakfast ready. The aroma of fried fatback, and steaming coffee made his stomach pinch after the vigorous work of putting out feed for the mules and his milk cow.

He pulled his chair and sat down, watching Frances as she folded up a fresh cloth to pick up the hot iron skillet with fresh scrambled eggs, and then put a dollop on his plate. She spooned out a good sized helping of creamy grits, forked up a couple of pieces of the fatback, and then filled his coffee cup.

While she set the enameled coffee pot back on the wood stove to stay warm, his mind was on how thankful he was that she was such a loving, caring daughter--that she had stayed on to take care of him after Nancy, her mother, had died. It had been four lonely years without his Nancy, but in this rambling house it would have been even more lonely without Frances.

Then Frances sat down at her place and soon the two were talking over the day. Isaac spooned a little sugar into his coffee and poured some fresh cream from the pitcher. "Frances, you need anything from town? I thought as it's such a pretty day I might try out my new car."

Frances put down her fork, thought for a minute. "I don't think of anything. You go ahead, and I'll sweep the yards while you're gone."

Soon as breakfast was over, he brushed his white hair, checked to see that his white beard was neat, and went out through the white picket fence gate to his new 1914 Model T. Ford. He cranked it, got in, and headed down the rutted dirt road into Hagan, carefully making his way to Claxton. His aim was to park at the train depot. There was plenty of space around it in case he had any trouble.

He drove up near the depot. Then people milling around the depot noticed that he didn't stop, that he was riding around and around the depot.

Finally one twelve-year-old young man, Frank Smith, hopped up on the car. "Mr. Daniel, is anything wrong?"

Isaac answered, "I was going to run 'round and 'round until it ran out of gas. I couldn't remember how to stop it."

Frank smiled, but helped him stop the car. After

all, it wasn't like hollering 'whoa' to a mule, and it was one of those new contraptions.

Cotton Pickin' Days Were No Picnic

Around the curve on the dirt road, past Jack Strickland's pond, beside Benjamin Road, lay a cotton field, it's white boles ready for harvest. It was a welcome sight after almost two generations of children not being able to see any or very little cotton growing in Evans County. One day the field was a white mass, the next day it lay barren. In the course of a day, a mechanical picker had cleaned the field. This brought to mind my cotton picking days.

Just at the crack of dawn our parents gently shook us, telling us to get dressed. We rose, still bone tired from the field work of the day before, but we knew not to grumble. The work had to be done. In minutes we were dressed in jeans, long sleeved shirts, with a handkerchief tied around our necks, and had a sunhat in hand, ready for a hearty breakfast.

Shortly the flatbed truck would rumble up the driveway and we, along with all the other pickers, old and young would find a place, along with our cotton sacks and our quart Macon Jar of shallow well water, and the driver would make his way to the cotton field.

Dew still stood on the grass and the hills of cotton. To a young child, looking out over the field, the rows seemed to go on forever toward the distant haze of the woods. Soon nimble fingers clutched the white masses, both hands in the process, to fill the bag attached across his shoulder by a "strop" as the strap was often called.

As the morning wore on, gnats swarmed over our eyes, around our face, and around our ears, making our life miserable, while sweat glued our clothes to us and ran down our necks. Occasionally we'd stop, straighten up little by little, and put a dollop or two of citronilla around our eyes and dig in our bag or under a bush for the quart of water. We unscrewed the lid, took a swallow and then closed the lid, making sure it didn't leak, as that was all the water we had. By this time, the handkerchief around our neck was moist, helping to cool us by evaporation.

As soon as the sack was full as we could drag, we emptied onto a cotton sheet, gradually seeing our sheet fill as the day progressed.

Pickers kept a watchful eye on each other, one trying to outpick the other, but late afternoon always told the tale of the real winner. At weighing time, the last bag was dumped, the cotton sheets tied and put on a scale. Some workers came in with two hundred plus pounds, but two hundred was about my speed.

Finally the sheets were weighed and loaded, and the weary pickers settled on the truck to ride the dusty field road to the highway and then home.

After we children had had our baths and the whole family was around the supper table, we talked over the day, always thrilled when we could tell our parents that we had increased our poundage that day. Nobody had to tell us to get to bed shortly after that.

Farming is still hard work, but cotton picking, as well as other farm work has made great changes.

Mornings of the Past

He was middle-sized, with a slim slightly bowed body and a kindly face. His eyes were furrowed, his cheekbones sagging with the weight of his years--years of field work and yard work.

The three children, two boys and a girl, watched as the tired old man trudged down the clay road to his weathered house, his clothes dusty and sandspurred from working in the field. He murmured something and chuckles floated up from his throat. He threw back his head and let out a peal of laughter.

The girl brought her hand up to stifle her giggles. She knew that he was laughing at the joke he had pulled on them. Tiredness had never stopped him

from teasing. This time it would be their turn.

They watched the even tread of his feet until he approached his house and walked up into the brushbroom clean dirt yard surrounding the small house. He stopped at his steps, lighting a cigarette, his hand cupping the flame. A ravel of smoke curled and lost itself in the air. He seemed in no hurry. The workday was over and there was no one to come home to.

He walked up the two steps and across the porch to a water shelf on the side next to the woods, and patiently pumped a pan full of water. There was a quiet that wasn't really silent--a buzz of the flies, the distant chatter of a squirrel in the woods and the trilling calls of birds. He splashed water on his face and arms and dried them on the towel hanging on a nail.

In moments the heavy wood door squealed a protest as he opened it and pushed it back against the wall. The fall day hadn't yet let go of its heat.

Sounds came from the inside and then the wood window shutter moved back against the outside wall. The old man's hand reached for a splinter or two and a piece of wood. In moments a puff of smoke rose from the chimney. It was a good way to run mosquitoes out. From their hiding place in the nearby woods the children saw a flash of light as the low flame of a kerosene lamp flared.

Outside the house, shadows lengthened as sundown approached. What light there was seemed to be a pinkish gray. The first stars were beginning to twinkle in the blue-gray sky.

By silent agreement they were ready for their prank. There was a rustling of undergrowth and the rattling of tree limbs. An owl hooted, its eerie cry not sounding far away.

The older boy licked his lips nervously. He pulled the rosin coated string of the whang-doodle. A spine-tingling sound emitted from the tin can. All movement ceased in the little house. They pulled the string again, the moaning sounding even louder. Moments later a kerosene lamp light flickered from the window, and the old man cried, "Who's that?" In the shadow of the light he turned his head towards the area of the sound, seemingly pricking up his ears to listen more closely.

He moved to the front door which stood open. He looked around. Something rustled in the brush near the edge of the trees. "Children, is that you?"

They pulled the string again, sliding their fingers to make an even louder wail. In moments the front door was slammed and bolted, the window closed and locked.

The children held their laughter until they had slipped out of hearing. Then they laughed so hard

their sides hurt.

About this time their mother called them to come in from play. They turned to see the soft glow of the lamp shining from their living room window. It was time to go, but they figured their friend would guess that they'd paid him back for all the teasing he had done.

Sand-hill Brings Back Memories

I stood at the window, looking out while drying my hands on the dish towel after finishing up the last of the cake-making utensils for Mother.

It was almost Christmas and the beautiful green field gleamed in contrast with the stark browns of winter. The cover crop was like a breath of spring, its slight hill in the center a lush green-covered mound, but I thought of the other times the sandy brown hill was bare.

The sound of the oven door opening and the aroma of freshly baked layers caught my attention. My two brothers and sister came to a stop around the kitchen table after a chase through the house. An angry expression crossed my Mother's face when she looked at us. "I told you not to run through the house when I have a cake in the oven. Just look at it. It's

fallen!" Knowing we had done it again, we slunk out of the room.

While the layers cooled, Mother set about making the icing and cutting an orange peel into long ovals to decorate the top. In minutes she was swirling the smooth frosting between the layers and over them. The finishing touch was the Brown-eyed Susan of orange-peel sections with a chocolate chip for the center.

Still there was no way to disguise that hump. It looked just like the hump of the sand hill. More times than not, we'd forget and run through the house, causing the same results. Somehow we renamed the cake "Sand-hill Cake" instead of its original name "Brown-eyed Susan," and that stuck. We always thought it tasted better the times it fell.

I was reminded of the cake when just this week I rode by that same field, once again, and saw the green covering on that sandy hill.

MONA AND ED MOVE TO THE FARM

As Mona and Ed Perry drove through head-high weeds to the front door of the old white clapboard house, they wondered if they had lost their minds to think they could live here. It looked forlorn, almost on its last legs, but with the eyes of young marrieds, their next thought was, "We'll have our own place, with no landlady to bother us. It seemed like heaven," Mona said. They had driven through sand and ruts on the old Glennville Road south of Hagan for the last half-mile and now their work stood before them.

Saplings and weeds blocked their way to the steps, and Mona wondered what else they might find when they made it that far. While Ed cleared the way to the steps with an axe, weed sling, and bush hook, Mona waded through thick weeds to find an old Brown Turkey Fig Tree, a couple of Pineapple Pear trees, a broken-down scuppernong vine, and several pecan trees.

By this time, Ed had cut his way to the steps. They were crumbled. He patched them enough to get inside where he found bedbugs crawling on the walls, and cracks "big enough to throw a cat through," according to Mona. One side of the house sagged from the underpinning being gone. Cobwebs hung from corner to corner and in broken-paned windows. Rags and old papers littered the floor. There was a well with no frame over it. The back porch had rotted. There was

a huge hole in one room where a fireplace should have been. Mona wondered by this time what had persuaded them to leave a good paying job to come to the farm. Would they ever make it?

Ed tied a long rope onto the handle of a bucket and dropped the bucket into the well. Mona poured this bucket of water into another bucket and started scrubbing walls and floors. With homemade lye soap and a broom, she made headway with the spider webs and dirt. Walls were washed with kerosene to make sure the bugs were gone. Out went the old rags, newspapers, the dust and dirt. It was no problem getting rid of the water. It ran through cracks and knotholes. Mona took can lids and nailed them over the knot holes and put some under baseboards around the rooms. One afternoon she eased up, her back hurting from the hard work and surveyed her accomplishments. Maybe the old house was salvageable.

Ed worked on a frame for the well, put in new windows where some had rotted, put in new panes in broken ones. He had the house jacked up and put in a large stump to hold up the dropped corner. Day after day sweat dampened his clothes and long forgotten dust clung to his skin, even in the gradually cooling temperatures. There was still more work to be done before they could move in.

The well had to be cleaned out and that was a

dangerous job. Sometimes those who cleaned out wells died from cramps or gases. Harley Brown was hired for the job. Ed put a chain on the pulley, hooked it to the bucket, and Harley wedged his feet in the bucket. Ed clung tightly to the chain and eked it out little by little. Mona watched, almost holding her breath in anticipation of danger.

Harley sent up frogs, old bricks, and all sorts of trash. That's when Mona felt something wasn't right. Harley had laughed and joked, but now his voice changed. "I got to come up," he said, "I got the cramps."

Ed pulled him up, let him get over it. He agreed to go back down. When the job was over Clorox poured into the well purified the water.

Gradually the rooms were painted and linoleum laid in the kitchen and in one bedroom. Still there was more to do.

Ed built an outhouse. For a while there was only a narrow path through the weeds to their facility. There was a half-moon in the door and inside were two openings and the Sears and Roebuck catalogue in case the tissue ran out.

Then came the big day in November of 1936. They brought their furniture in a borrowed pickup. They had bought a thousand dollars worth of furniture from the I.C. Helme Furniture Company in Savannah. They

had a bedstead made of iron which Mona had painted maroon, a sheet of cotton to make into a mattress, a second-hand dresser needing a coat of paint, a repossessed pie safe still to be screened, a freshly painted wooden table with green chairs, a wood stove, and an ice box only large enough to hold a dime's worth of ice. What they had wasn't much, but it was theirs and this was home.

They moved Mona's upright piano from town, and Ed's mother gave them a victrola with some records. "New River Train" was one of the records.

Mona and Ed gradually adjusted to doing without electricity. Every day, kerosene lamps were cleaned with newspapers and refilled with kerosene. In the early morning, the lamp cast barely enough light to dress by, and at night enough to read if one put his reading material real close to the light.

Morning held a nip in the air. Dampness hung on the trees and on the grass. Pecans lay on the ground and leaves turned to russet, gold, and in-between shades. Chloe was wrapped in a quilt and kept near the fire as drafts of air flowed through the uninsulated house. No manner of tightening seemed to stop the drafts.

Mona and Ed were happy, but work always waited for them. There was no end to it except the night

time when there was not enough light to do more. Ed worked on the crops and winter garden and Mona worked on the house and took care of Chloe.

Daylight had hardly dusted the night when Mona and Ed slid from beneath warm quilts to light the lamps and build a fire. It was hard to leave their warm bed for the brisk air.

Mona slipped into thick bedroom shoes and a green flannel housecoat and made her way to the kitchen. Chloe was back to sleep. While Ed went out to milk the cow and feed the pigs and mules, Mona put a few corncobs, splinters, and some firewood into the woodstove to get it going. Gradually warmth spread across the frigid kitchen.

She rinsed her hands in the washpan, took the dipper and filled the kettle and set the kettle on the stove. That way water could heat for the dishes while she cooked.

She put on a pot of grits, simmered the sausage, and made a baker of biscuits. She scrambled eggs, and perked a pot of coffee. The smell of freshly perked coffee brought pangs of hunger. With homemade jelly and butter, they were set for their workday.

There were Rhode Island Reds and White leghorns to feed. Mona threw kitchen scraps into the pen and went to the crib for corn. More minutes were spent shelling the corn with the heel of her hand. The

chickens squawked at each other over the corn and scratched around in the leaves, trying to find every grain.

All during the day there were cackles when another egg was laid. Mona occasionally had to run her hand beneath a hen to get the eggs. She'd bite down on her lip and grab for the eggs in a hurry, especially if the hen was trying to set on her eggs. That type of hen wanted her eggs left alone and would peck at you and draw blood. Every egg had to be broken separately so as not to get a bad one in with the good ones. When she did get a bad one she had to make a fast trip to the back door and air out the house.

Between chores, there was Chloe to see about. She played on a pallet and slept in her crib. As soon as Mona had her to sleep, she had to cut wood for the kitchen, gather and clean vegetables, butcher a fryer, make a cake, or wash clothes.

In a few short weeks, the weather worsened and ice crusted on soaking diapers in the No. 1 washtub out on the wash bench in the back yard. Mona looked out the window with dread of the coming job. Cold winds whistled and cried through the cracks and tree limbs swayed, but the washing had to be done. Rosa Brewton, a black woman from a neighboring farm would help.

Mona poured hot water into the pan of dishes and let them soak while large pots of water heated on the stove for clothes washing. If she hurried, she could finish the dishes before time to wash clothes.

Freshly washed greens sat to the back of the stove with a big chunk of fatback simmering for dinner. In another pot beside it was a beef roast in the gravy. She would check on these occasionally while she and Rosa worked on the washing.

With thick stockings on, a heavy black sweater from college, and a lavender plaid wool scarf, she let herself out onto the open porch. Chill wind bit at her face. She shivered, but the clothes wouldn't wash themselves.

While Mona drew bucket after bucket of water and carried them to waiting washtubs, Rosa broke the ice in the washtub where the diapers soaked and rang out each diaper before dropping it into hot sudzy water, the water that had been heating on the wood stove.

All morning long, the washpot boiled. Occasionally Rosa "juged" the clothes with a tobacco stick, careful not to catch the hem of her dress on fire or splatter lye water on her legs. Work clothes were boiled to loosen stains that were hard to rub out. They scrubbed on the washboard, then rinsed in a fresh tub of water. A freshly cooked pot of Argo starch waited for pants, shirts, dresses, and

pillowcases.

At eleven o'clock Mona left Rosa to get on with the washing while she finished preparing dinner. Ed would be in from the field and he wanted dinner exactly at Twelve. This day she prepared rice and tomatoes, and cornbread to go along with the greens, roast, and freshly brewed tea.

By the time dinner was over, some of the clothes had dried and Rosa would start ironing. Rosa went to the clothes line, gathered diapers to fold, threw the stiffly starched pieces over her arm and came in loaded down. With a large syrup bottle full of water and a sprinkler top on it, she sprinkled all the starched pieces and rolled them up so that the water could soften them. She put these into a pillow case while her smoothing iron heated on the stove. Her ironing board was a wide board with one end tapered, covered with an old sheet which had been folded several times and tacked onto the board. She laid this board across a couple of chairs and by the time the diapers were folded, the smoothing irons were hot.

She dampened a cloth and wiped a pair of pants. At the touch of the hot iron, steam rose. When finished, every piece looked fresh from the laundry. Not a wrinkle was to be found.

Every morning fresh milk waited to be strained and bottled. Ed had milked the cow, but Mona could

hardly bear to look at the milk from the cow that was milked for Chloe. Chloe had colic and the doctor told Ed to buy a "Piney Woods Cow", one with milk so poor it almost looked blue. He wanted no fat in it. This thin milk helped. For cream, butter, family drinking, cooking, ice cream, etc., they had a Jersey called Dink.

By the latter part of July 1939, there were three children—Chloe, Malcolm, and Ben. Four years later, Patricia was born. Shortly after Ben's birth, electricity came to the country. Each room held one bulb in its tall ceiling with a string running down to the bed post or hanging down within arm's reach. Ed put a pump next to the well and pumped water from the well for the house.

Mona and the children spent many hours gathering food to can. Ed raised hogs, cows, and fryers to butcher. From this meat Mona made sausage, Brunswick Stew, liver pudding, hog-head cheese. Ed cured hams, bacon, smoked the sausage. The smokehouse stood directly behind their home and all Mona had to do was go to the smokehouse for meat once all the hard work of preparing it was done. The smell of cured meat hit your nostrils when you opened the door of the smokehouse and Ed salivated thinking how good that ham would be for breakfast.

During the fall, there was cane to grind, hogs to

butcher, greens to gather, pecans to pick up and shell, corn to shuck by hand, shell, and take to the mill for grinding into meal or grits. When nighttime came, there was no dawdling about getting into bed. There weren't enough hours in the night to remove the tiredness.

Mona gathered eggs, picked mustard greens, cut cabbage, and swapped them for flour, sugar, coffee, cocoa, and salmon and rice. They grew everything else they ate. They grew cabbage, onions, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, corn, pears, peaches, figs, peanuts, butterbeans, peas, string beans, radishes, lettuce, beets, okra, carrots, sweet potatoes, white potatoes, and canned everything that could be canned. She made catsup, fig preserves, pear preserves, canned whole pears, made pickles, and jelly. Ed made syrup in the syrup boiler.

The pie safe always had candied sweet potatoes with raisins, pear tarts, blackberry cobbler, pecan pie, divinity candy, or some other goodie to nibble on.

Sunday mornings, Ed liked to make pancakes. The children hurried to the table, hardly able to wait for pancakes, syrup and fresh cream to stir in the syrup. Then he would help Mona with dinner so that all the family could get to church and yet not be so late eating when they returned. Some Sunday's for dinner

he would make catfish stew with catfish from the farm pond. This was made by an old family recipe.

To get away from chores and relax a while, Ed liked to paddle the boat to the back of the pond and fish. He would cast out his line next to an old stump, making hardly a sound while letting the boat drift along. He never failed to bring home a mess of bream or bass. Sometimes he would put out a trap and catch suckers which he cooked crisp for Chloe. "Why is it you always seem to catch fish and we can't?" Malcolm would ask. Ed's stock answer was, "Because you don't set your mouth right." He liked to cook his specialties, but only when he took the notion.

All through their growing up years, Chloe, Malcolm, and Ben liked to slip out of bed early, just about daybreak and go to the pond. The road wasn't paved, but there was a bridge over the stream. They could slip beneath the bridge onto a piece of cement that had fallen from an earlier washout and sit on this to fish. They'd cast black line tied to a willow pole and baited with worms or crickets and listen to cars rumble over the bridge, feeling special that they were beneath the bridge and those crossing had no idea they were there. Sometimes a red-eye would nibble and nibble, eating their bait, but never get caught, and other times they'd catch a good mess by the time Mona called them for breakfast. It wasn't long before

Patricia was tagging along with them, wanting a line too.

When corks got lost or broken and there were no more, the children found a root that would float and cut it into cork-sized pieces and slit it to go onto their line. Occasionally someone stole their poles, and they'd look for another willow to cut. Sometimes Ed would find an empty gunshell. They had taken the shot and made sinkers.

One of those times fishing, Ben stood on the cement of the spillway, beside the deepest part of the pond. Chloe gasped in horror when she saw his hand going down for the third time before she could reach him. He couldn't swim. She ran across the road and edged out on the spillway to grab his hand. His hand was the only part visible. It was her responsibility to look after the two boys and Patricia, but sometimes the responsibility for them grew heavy.

Another morning early, when the day was just breaking, the four children sat cross-legged on the cold cement beneath the bridge. Black fishing line hung from their short poles and disappeared in the dark pond water, the only sound, a stream of water flowing and misting over the spillway. Malcolm's cork bobbed and sank. When Chloe turned back, Patricia, then about three, was sinking in the stream. She had tried to grab a reed floating in the water and

over-balanced. Chloe reached for her and pulled her out. Her little cotton sundress dripped with water and her shoes squished. That ended the morning's fishing.

All the children were given more and more responsibility in the field. There was tobacco to pick, cotton to hoe and pick, peanuts to rack in the early years, and fodder to pull. Then there was hay to bail, corn to pick, cane to cut, sweet potatoes to gather and bank. When Sunday came, the whole family sighed with relief. Even then, there was a cow to milk, mules, hogs, and cows to be fed, eggs to gather and chickens waiting for feed.

Gradually their way of life changed, from mules to tractors. The chickens went, more appliances were purchased to help with the washing, cooking, and a refrigerator instead of the icebox. Then a freezer, a phone, and a car for Mona.

In 1950 Ed built a brick house next door to the wood house. The boys had their own room upstairs with twin beds and their own bath. In the old house everyone had to share the same bathroom.

Chloe and Patricia shared a room and bath, but Chloe had only three and a half years before she left for college. Gradually, one after another left for college and married, leaving Patricia, Mona and Ed.

Ed was elected Senator for the First District for

the years 1961-62 and Representative for 1963-64.

Patricia graduated, then entered college in the fall of 1962 and Ed died during her college year in 1963. He had had heart trouble for six years. He had a massive attack and died at a stock sale in Hagan. He was only 50. Mona still lives in their home.

Tinker Gets a Job

Ten year old William Henry Allen, known to all his friends as Tinker, ran in from school, threw down his books onto his bed, then hurried into short pants. His two sisters still had not made it home. His shoes and socks plopped to the floor. With a quick flick of the comb through his dark hair, he scampered to the kitchen to the pie safe. He'd get something to eat and hurry to his job. Now that school was out until next fall when the crops were in, he could make some money and maybe stay out of trouble, so his daddy said.

Through the kitchen window, he saw his mother picking beans. Her flour sack apron keeping her dress clean, hugged her dress while she scrounged around the bushes for those runners that hide beneath the leaves.

He pulled open the safe door and took out the candied potatoes, the fried pork chops, and a piece of cornbread. That would hold him until supper. He went over to the ice box, chipped off a hunk of ice for his tea, then sat back down to make short work of the food. His sweet tooth made him dig into the sweet potatoes first. Full now, he put his dish in the sink, the food back in the safe, and called through the window to his mother, "Ma, I'm a going to work now. See you at supper."

"Don't you be late, now, you hear," she called

back. "You know how your Pa is."

With legs slightly longer than some boys his age, he hurried to Main Street, about a block away. Newly leaved trees hung over the path he walked. Ahead he saw wagons loaded with wool in line to be weighed and sold. He recognized one of the men with his driver. "How you doin', Mr. Jones? See you got quite a load today." Some of the men had told him that Mr. Jones sheared a thousand sheep at a shearing.

Allen Jones, from near Twin City, smiled and looked back at the young boy. "Better get on the job, Tinker. Haven't got all day. Got to get back home, and I got a good piece to go."

Tinker made his way into the warehouse where men worked, some carrying loads of wool, others stacking what had already been bought and bailed. The owner, Rafe Simmons, motioned for Tinker. "Hop in this sack, son, and start packing this wool." He held the bag for Tinker and Tinker dropped out of sight. Up and down his legs went, packing wool while more came down the sack. The sack stood higher than he, but he could hear sounds of laughter, an occasional curse, trace chains jangling, hear the rumble of wagons, a gee and haw, and feel the soft stuff that came out of the wool.

As the afternoon wore on, his pace slowed. After what seemed forever, someone called, "Quittin' time."

By the time his head cleared the top of this last bag, a stack of 300# bags of wool lay there. He eased his tired body out and Mr. Simmons paid him a nickel for his afternoon's work.

Around the corner, he bought three cent's worth of hard stick candy, jammed it in one pocket and his change in the other. Heading home for supper, his face held a tired smile and thoughts of the clothes he'd purchase by the end of summer. If any of his friends had plans, they'd have to wait another day. A hot supper, bath, and bed were his last thoughts as he walked the block home.

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