

TODD'S LEGEND
OF
PLANTERSVILLE, DALLAS COUNTY, ALABAMA

Written at the request of the pupils of the 4th. grade in Plantersville Public School, this the first day of January, 1936, and dedicated to the 4th. grade.

Chapter 1

Since history in its incipency is folklore, this Legend is largely folklore, to be substantiated or disputed in coming generations.

Just as some now claim that William Shakespeare, born on the banks of the Avon at Stratford, never did the writing; but that it was Lord Bacon who gave to the world the greatest work of English Literature.

So some may rise up in future generations who will endeavor to disprove this legend of Plantersville on the banks of Big Mulberry Creek.

Yet it is doubtful that there will ever be the furor and disputes over this legend that have disturbed the literary world by wise acres, over the writings of William and calling for facts and proof.

It is a fact, however, that Plantersville, Dallas County, Alabama is located on the banks of Big Mulberry Creek - the name of this Mulberry Creek being considered an Indian name.

But this looks suspicious since the present spelling of Mulberry ends in a "y", which does not seem very Indian and has probably been tempered with by the white man's pen. And it formerly ended with "ee" like Ocamulgee, the sister creek to the west of Plantersville.

However, we will just pass this point up for future discussions to settle some hundred years hence.

Anyway, Big Mulberry Creek with its rippling waters, shining sands, and glittering pebbles, and its broad valley clothed in its verdure of Beech, Poplar, Gum, Pine, Hickory and Oaks, was to the Indians a definitely known hunting ground supreme, as can be seen by many arrow points both large and small still turned up by the white man's plow.

Chapter 2

Here the Indians camped and hunted and fished; and when "Mulberree" was spoken in the Indian tongue, they knew where to go.

The spot where Plantersville now stands seems to have been at the crossing of the Choctaw trail, leading from the rivers to the south to the mountains of North Alabama.

Yet the white man's names of locations seem to have despoiled all Indian Names, for the white settlers of English, Irish and Scotch descent came in and gave the name "Corinth" to where Plantersville now stands.

And these same intruders bestowed on the existing villages the names of

Kingston, Milton, Dublin, Perryville, Summerfield and Pine Tuckey; thus oblitterating the Indian names of Autauga, Mulberree and Ocamilgee for the creeks.

This is about all the folklore of the Indians, who some hundred years ago, as a small remnant of brave tribes, passed up and down the white man's road from Cahaba, once the capitol of the state, to Huntsville, the oldest town, (once called Twinkenham) passed through Plantersville and sold chestnuts, beads, baskets and moccasins to our grandmothers, as I have heard them tell.

But today, the only reminder of the Indians is the arrow points, broken pottery in tilled fields, and a few scattered mounds of rock on the hills to the East and West of the valley that mark the last resting place of some warrior or chief.

My individual knowledge of the Indian was when as a small boy, I bought a blow gun (made out of a cane about six feet long) and arrows made out of pine splinters with cotton wad on the back end.

These Indians came up from South Alabama and could hit a nickel with the a row of the blow gun. But this feat was beyond me, though I thought a lot of my blow gun and did a lot of blowing.

Chapter 3

And now as we reach the white-man period of this legend, we must be very technical (this being a technical age) and say just where Plantersville is really situated.

So here it is in Section 1, Township 19, north of Range 11, East St. Stephens Meridian, Cahaba District Public Land Survey U. S. A. as recorded in General Land Office, Washington, D. C., and where the Kingston and Perryville road crossed the Cahaba and Huntsville road, now known as State Highway to Clanton, and most notably the spot where my grandfather, Thomas Stanford Driskell, and his young wife, Emily McGee, built their log cabin as a young married couple.

The name was changed from Corinth to Plantersville because as the country was settled, there were well-to-do aristocratic planters, (we now call big farmers) living in the surrounding neighborhood, who gathered here for their social confabs, horse swapping, horse racing, Saturday brawls, stunts and fights; and named it Plantersville.

We of the present generation take out this week-end excess energy in baseball, football, basketball and speeding automobiles into telephone poles, ditches and opposing cars at street corners.

Anyway, here stood Plantersville when along came the Alabama Blue Mountain and Tennessee River Railroad which ran from Selma to Blue Mountain where the city of Anniston now stands.

On this railroad I took my first ride on train as a baby when the family went to Maryland to visit relatives.

We rode on train to Blue Mountain, then took stage coach up into Tennessee to another railroad and across Chesapeake Bay by steam boat to the eastern shore of Maryland to the town of Salisbury.

The railroad was finally built on to Dalton, Georgia and became the Selma,

Rome and Dalton Railroad.

I say a short time ago, in the railroad office at Plantersville, an old tin holder with the name Selma, Rome and Dalton RR on it; and I suppose it is still there, though the depot has been built over several times and office changes made during the years.

The letters on the box cars were S. R. & D. R. R. and as we had then, as now, some guy to make a wise crack, who said it meant Slow, Rough and Dangerous Railroad.

The name of the railroad was afterwards changed to East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia, and our wise cracker said the E. T. V & G stood for Eat Turkey, Venison and Goat.

After a while the name was changed to Southern Railway, as it now is.

However, Palntersville, Alabama is still twenty miles from Selma (once called Johnson's Landing and then called Moore's Bluff) and in Dallas County although it has been at different times in Perry County, Bibb County, Baker County, and Chilton County; and seem to remain as healthy a place as ever, regardless of what county it is in. And it has always been noted for its schools and numerous children, even to many sets of twins and two sets of triplets, the Parnell and Weaver triplets.

The county line of Dallas runs just north of the Baptist Church, but when it was in Bibb County, the county line was six miles farther south so as to put Plantersville in Bibb County. This is where the line was before it was put in Dallas County or Perry County.

Dallas County as you know, has a lot of swamps and rivers and creeks in it and used to have a great deal of malaria.

So when they were talking about changing the county line so as to put Plantersville in Dallas County, one old woman objected. She said she had always heard that Dallas County was such a sickly county she did not want her home in that county.

Some may not understand about Baker County but it ~~is~~ was what is now Chilton County. They just changed the name from Baker to Chilton County.

Chapter 4

When I was asked to write this legend, it was suggested that I tell something about Indians and first white settlers.

Well, if I am supposed to have been acquainted with the Indians, I surely am expected to have been here when the first white settlers came in. This certainly would make me eligible for the old age pension. But while I am the oldest native born citizen of the immediate locality and the oldest child of the oldest child of the oldest child of our family, I take it that it was meant for me to tell what folklore has told me.

As to the first family names that appear authentically, we will have to refer the land patents issued for entry of the public land in Section 1, Township 19 North, Range 11 East and we find the following list:

E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 1, T. 19 N, R. 11 E was entered October 16, 1838, by John Mansell and Patented October 10, 1840.

W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 1, T. 19N, R. 11E was entered by Robert Morris, December 19, 1834. Patented October 15, 1835.

SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 1, T. 19N, R. 11E was entered by John Tillery November 26, 1832. Patented August 12, 1834.

E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 1, T. 19N, R. 11E was entered by Ferrel Gorman September 5, 1832. Patented August 5, 1834.

W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 1, T. 19N, R. 11E was entered by James Cardin September 7, 1832. Patented August 5, 1834.

E $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 1, T. 19N, R. 11E was entered by Richard Chandler September 18, 1832. Patented August 5, 1834.

W $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 1, T. 19N, R. 11E was entered by Richard Parker September 18, 1832. Patented August 5, 1834.

The above information furnished me the 24th. day of January 1936 in a letter from the General Land Office at Washington, D. C. by a Mrs. A. Funk, Assistant Commissioner.

And now to proceed with our part of the legend, we find that the 4th. Grade Public School is in the building on the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 1, which was land originally owned by Richard Chandler who gave to the branch on the north side of the school lot the ne name of Chandler branch, and it was this mill and mill pond that furnished the swimming hole in this branch for us boys, years ago, though all the mill had disappeared except part of the old foundation logs and piling, when I was a small boy. At that time the branch was a deep stream, but now it is all filled up with sand that has come by erosion from fields up stream.

The land on which Dallas County High School stands was originally owned by James Cardin as it is on the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 1, which he entered, and his home was right about the west part of present school grounds. And I remember that two large chestnut trees stood at the old house place when I was a small boy.

You will find an old well right near the house Mr. Beam lives in. This, I suppose, was Mr. James Cardin's well for his water supply. I have heard my mother speak of the family of Cardins who lived here some eighty years ago. And in my mind is a picture of a little girl with a red dress. This is so faint that I can not recall why there was a little girl with a red dress in the legend my mother used to tell when I was very young but the picture is there from something she must have described.

I remember when I was four years old, that late one evening my father and my uncle Tom Driskell and I went up in the field just west of the High School building and there were wild turkeys eating peas in the pea field, and as they flew up, Uncle Tom killed an old turkey hen and then went to the trees on the north side of the field where Herbert Morrow's land now is and killed one of the turkeys. Those were the first wild turkeys I had ever seen.

But to refer to the dates of entry, it seems Ferrel Gorman, on the 5th. of September, 1832, was really the first person who had any lawful claim to where Plantersville now is, for he took possession of E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 1 and it is on this land the Baptist Church now stands and is where Wiley Letcher and Walter Herrod live and have the chicken ranch, and also grow fine vetch and corn. They are on the north part of this E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ which extends down to Oak Street that was the Ferryville road. And the Driskell home and all the stores and the depot and also the Christian Church are on this land that Ferrel Gorman entered. And as he was the first one, he really was a "Gorman". But he was only two days ahead of James Cardin who took that right west of him where the High School and Presbyterian Church are located as well as the nice homes along 5th. Avenue.

I do not know that there is any connection of those who bear the Cardin name but we do have the Cardin Cafe in Plantersville at the present time.

It would seem that Richard Chandler and Richard Parker who located on adjoining eighty acres must have been either related or good friends, as they both entered their lands on the 18th. day of September 1832 and had patents issued each of them on August 5, 1834. So I take it they went along together in getting their homesteads. They had to go to Cahaba to the land office.

It was on the Richard Parker's lands that I built my home where Mr. Biscoe now lives.

This spot where I built seems once to have been the home of old man Enoch Little. *Enoch Little 1780-1850*

For when I was quite small, here was an old well partly filled in and only made a big deep sink which sunk about ten feet deep that had a thick clump of sassafras bushes over it.

This was a deep, cool place where we children would play in summer. Like children of today, we did not see the danger that the bottom might fall in and down we'd go into the old well. This did not happen though it now makes me feel a little creepy when I think of the risk we took.

The reason I know old man Enoch Little lived here was from what two old men said about sixty years ago. My mother was out in the garden and heard these old men talking to each other as they rode along the road. And when they got opposite the old well, one said to the other, "Do you remember when old Enoch Little lived right over thar?" So that answered a question that had been in my mother's mind since she was a child.

So it is possible old man Little lived there and had his home on the land before it was entered by Richard Parker.

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I am told that Richard Parker married old man Little's daughter. And it might have been public land while Richard "was come a-courting" and when he married he homesteaded the land for himself and his bride. In those days it had been customary for anyone to just pick him out a nice place and settle down and build him a home and not even go to the trouble to take out entry papers or homestead proof. He would hold it under what was called "Squatter Sovereignty".

Little's daughter was named Frankie, his son John was born 1811. John's son was shown in 1850. Richard Little.
That is from the fact that he got on the land first and possessed himself of it, the United States Government would allow his claim ahead on anyone else.

And so it seems old Mr. Little did not object to his son-in-law's taking over the land. "All in the family", I suppose.

The Parkers and Chandlers who first settled here have passed away. There is an old grave yard at the foot of the hill just west of the public school where the clump of oak trees stood when I was a boy.

It was in one of these trees I killed my third squirrel with my single barrell, muzzle loaded shot gun, the first gun I had. A boy remembers the things proudly accomplished when he first gets big enough to hunt by himself. My old cur dog was named "Watch", as my father had given to him for a yard dog (a watch dog) but I converted him into a hunting dog and great times we had. And I remember the first "possum" he treed.

I have had many dogs since old "Watch" and the things I could tell about how good they were at hunting and how they surpassed all other dogs from the first one, a little puppy named "Nick" that would run the trail of a rabbit when he was so small I had to tote him around in my pocket to where I was going to drive up the cows in the evening. And there were also my pointer dogs-- and a pack of Maryland Fox Hounds, which of course have always beat the other fellow's dogs.

But I will stop now on this subject of dogs as I am not trying to compete with "Major Hoopls" and do not wish to be classed with him.

You know, dog owners have the same weakness as fishermen and golf players who keep their own score sheet or weigh their own big ones that did not "get away."

As to this old grave yard that had the graves in it but no head stones or marks to show who was buried here, it must be the resting place of some of the very earliest settlers.

But today, all signs of graves are gone.

My mother told me the first burial she ever attended was at this spot when she was a child.

This all shows how soon one is forgotten when he has passed away, and others come and take his place. Time just smooths over our life and works and leaves but little to be remembered by, just as these old graves today are all smoothed over. No sign to show and no one remembers.

The land where John Mansell and Robert Morris entered are now where the sand and gravel plant operates, and where the Methodist Church stands.

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Cupressus B. river + along banks of S. river Johnson in 1922, Henry C. B. river

The land that John Tillery entered lies down east of the railroad from the public school, and I do not think there is a single ouse on this 160 acres today, unless it is a house just back of Mr. Jim Fridays home. This land once owned by James H. McGee, one of Davis McGee's sons.

I have detailed these lands owners merely as a matter of history and not that they laid the foundation for any of the present condition of Plantersville.

In a few years after these dates, my great-grandfather, Davis McGee, moved into the neighborhood and settled where Arch Sample now lives. And Davis McGee and his five sons and four daughters with their husbands soon possessed themselves of all the land where Plantersville now stands and all the way from the south side of Sec. 1 at Tom Sherrer and Albert Barnes on up above Riderville and some places at Stanton and near Maplesville.

The Stage Coach stopped at Davis McGee's home where he, at that time, kept the Inn as it was called, where travelers stopped and were lodged and fed. } *Alvis' house*

And here was headquarters for the horse drivers who came from Tennessee to sell their horses and swap and trade.

Davis McGee was some horse trader, himself. In fact, that was the joy of his life. "Horseshopping", as it was called, and would never let an opportunity pass to trade horses even if he had to trade with his own sons. And when he habitually chiseled them in the trade, he would tell his son, "Boy, I am just cutting your eye teeth out."

It is a saying that "All is fair in love and war", and I must say that the old fellows of that day considered the same to hold good in a horse trade.

I remember how my father who was no "judge of horse flesh" and took a man's word for it, was swindled out of a fine young saddle horse for an old mule whose legs all swelled up and could not get out of the stable after we got her home.

Not only did horse drivers come through and stop at the Inn kept by Davis McGee but there were hog drovers who came through driving big herds of hogs that they would sell to the Southern Planters. Even when I was a small boy, I have seen hog drovers come through Plantersville with the drove of hogs poking along down the road. It looked to me like a mighty slow way of traveling. But in those days as the saying was, "They had more time than money.", and as Dowdel, who was Will Ward's foreman was told when he said it would take a long time for hogs to get fat in Ward's pasture; Ward said, "What's a hogs time worth?" This too has changed. A pig now is supposed to weight 200 pounds at twelve months.

But this mode of travel would not suit the present generation. They can't even let a horse trot down to market. They put him in a truck and whis away and are back before dinner. As I say, times change.

And even after I got large enough to go to "parties" they used to play a game and sing a song in it,

"Hog drovers, Hog Drovers, we are
Come courting your daughters
so young and so fair."

But today "The music goes round and round", they say. Yes, Times Change.

When Davis McGee settled here it was the days when home and the plantation took care of all the necessities and luxuries of living. He had his farm, his grist mill, gin house, blacksmith shop, carpenters, his loom house where they spun the thread on spinning wheels from the cotton in his fields and the wool from the sheep in his pasture, and wove it into cloth on the loom and dyed it with copperas and maple bark and indigo bed; and then made the cloth into clothes. All right at home.

You may not know about indigo. It was once an export of importance from the Southern States. Many of you children have never seen indigo most likely.

Well, last summer I came upon an old abandoned home site out six miles east of Plantersville in the woods of second growth timber, and the indigo bed where they had it in the garden was still there and blooming blue.

Davis McGee's corn cribs were full of corn, his smoke house full of meat and lard, and flour at his mill made from the wheat in his wheat fields.

In those days all the farmers raised their wheat and I remember still seeing stand in the yards of old homes the "wheat bins". These wheat bins were a large tight box up on legs with the top or roof made so it would turn up to the high side on hinges to the north side so the whole top would stand up on edge when lifted and let the sun shine in to keep the weevils out of the wheat. And also to keep the wheat fresh. Nothing was ever stored in the wheat bin except wheat exclusively.

Little did the farmers of those days care for foreign trade, except as a market for their bales of cotton which was a surplus crop, and there was no world competition in the cotton trades. All came from the southern states and just that much clear money. The necessities were home raised and home grown by the slaves. These farmers knew nothing of depression and would not have understood its meaning even if you had spelled it to them.

Fields full of growing crops, slaves to work them, horses, hogs, cotton and timber of the forest without stint. Houseboys and house girls of slaves at beck and call.

Even the children of the slave owners had their own slaves, for it was that custom that when a son or daughter was ten years old, the father would give the son a negro boy about his own age as his own, and to his daughter a little negro girl about her age for her property, just as now they give her a pony or dog, to accompany and serve them.

In the "World Book of History" it says the wealth of the South consisted in cotton. This does not seem true. The wealth of the South consisted in negro slaves and cotton was only a by-product that was sold.

A man's wealth was reckoned by the number of slaves he owned. And those who owned no slaves were called "poor white trash."

To illustrate the value of a slave, I will tell of the Southern planter who went to New York to visit a rich friend, who was displaying his comforts and riches.

The Southern planter told him to come down South and would show him the thousand dollar candle sticks he ate supper by. When the New Yorker came, they went out to supper in the house that stood in the yard (for in those days they always cooked in one end of the house and ate in the other end of the house that stood in the yard separate from the dwelling. And when

the New Yorker entered this dining room, which was a room with dirt floor, he began to look for the thousand dollar candle sticks and then he saw two little negro chaps near each end of the table holding a pine torch for lights to eat by. These were the thousand dollar candle sticks.

That was the real wealth of the South and when the Civil War freed the slave it was a ruined land of physically helpless cultured people.

And had it not have been that the negro ex-slave of that day still looked to his former master for protection, guidance and support, the South could not have survived even with all its natural resources.

But out of the ash of ruin, has sprung the South of today with new wealth and happiness. And its wealth now is its climate, its minerals, agriculture, its timber, cattle, water power and many other natural resources. But not in Slaves.

With Davis McGee, here to Plantersville, came his son-in-law, Thomas S. Driskell who had married the oldest daughter, Emily. And here Thomas S. Driskell, as a young planter, lived in his two room log cabin just back of the present Driskell home which he afterwards built and is now occupied by Dr. Martin.

He opened a store where the brick store now stands in Plantersville and in his store he laid the foundation of a successful business man. It was in after years he built the present Driskell home that today challenges on grandeur and beauty any "Ante-Bellum" home in the land. This home he built as a rich man, in which to enjoy his declining years with the fruits of his early life's labors. Yet this home was barely finished when the Civil War swept away his slaves, his money, his fortune, burned his store and left only this building and acres of land uncultivated and unfenced. Just ashes of ruin. This building was spared only because the Yankee officers in "Widons Raid" had selected it for headquarters and personal comfort and extinguished the fire that had started its destruction rather than move out and thus saved the house.

I have heard him tell of his happy young-man days and how he would enjoy sitting by the big open fire in his two room log cabin with his young wife and smoke his clay pipe up with cane stem and there lay the pipe up in the crack between the logs until next time. But to really understand those days and conditions, you will have to close your eyes on the present day picture and stop up your ears from the present whiz and hum of cars and trucks and yells.

There were no railroad at that time and Selma was only a landing place on the Alabama River, known as "Johnson's Landing" or Moore's Bluff.

My grandfather said he would get on his horse once a year and ride horseback through the country all the way to Charleston, South Carolina, to purchase the supply of goods for his store and then ride all the way back. The goods were shipped by boat around through the gulf to Mobile and up the Alabama River to where Selma now is, and then hauled by wagon to Plantersville. The way children wear out their clothes nowadays, it took longer to have them shipped in than they now last. However, when the stock of goods did arrive, it was a complete stock for a full year for men and women, hats, shoes, suits and silks and laces, and supplied the country for miles around.

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But when we speak of Plantersville and the first settlers, we can not confine ourselves to Sec. 1, T. 19, R. 11 but must speak of those from miles around, for a neighborhood in those days did not stop at two blocks away but extended even further than you could hear a dinner horn blow. And in those days people could hear further or at least they responded to a call far quicker than now. Anything that happened for miles around was the concern of the community to be sympathized with or righted by individual responsibility. Today a man can die next door and you don't know about it. And evil deeds are left to constable and police and no concern of the individuals of the community. Personal responsibility of the American citizen and voter seems fast ebbing in our land. Just a little selfish. So within what was calling distance of those, we find prominent a list of names that must be classed with Plantersville. For several miles around was called a neighborhood in those early days of prosperous planters who gave it the name of Plantersville.

It was customary in those days for each land owner to possess many acres of land in his holdings and felt cramped and crowded unless his back fence was a mile or two from his back door step.

However, I will mention only a few of the early names prominent in proximity to Plantersville. These are: McGee, Driskell, Pearson, Peeples, Vincent, Morrow, Walker, Oden, O'Neal, Harville, Harris, Smith, Gandy, Godwin, Fulford, Campbell, Milling, Martin, Mitchell, Gay, Moore, Davis, Terry, Todd, Friday, Welch and Barnes.

These seem to be among earliest settlers and not only most productive of wealth and also of progeny.

Though there are other names which may come under the list, I am not attempting to list all and leave it to research to delve further into family trees.

One thing that should be especially stressed in this list of early settlers is the fact that the names all indicate pure English, Scotch, and Irish descent and one hundred per cent Americans.

We do not find a single name ending in: -lini, -dolf, -izza, -wooski, -boski, -noif, -berg, and not a Von or Polocka among them all. So we claim the purest of blood proportionately for any locality in the United States. This is what has made our people land owners and home loving citizens, who stand for schools, churches and patriotism.

Chapter 5 - Professions

As to the professional men of Plantersville, we will say - The Doctors as they were called the (now called Physicians) about covered the list of professions. With the exception of Justice of the Peace and a County Surveyor if such can be termed profession.

Dr. Phillips was the first Physician as far as I know and his office still stands in the grove near the railroad where his old home stood before it burned some years ago. This office building is the oldest building built except a cabin north of the Pearson branch and the Driskell home in which I was born July 28, 1866. After Dr. Phillips, there came Dr. Harville who lived at the old Harville home four miles down the valley but had his office in my grandfather Driskell's store that stood where the brick store now stands. Dr. Harville would ride up horse back every morning and hitch his old "bald face" sorrel horse to the Walnut tree that now stands at the railroad depot,

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And here when a small boy I would see the old horse stand all morning switching his tail and gnawing on the walnut tree. Go look at this tree and you will see old Bald nearly gnawed it into. This tree is the last of a row of walnut trees planted by my grandmother Driskell along a fence row that ran north beside the present State Highway and enclosed in a small field where the Methodist Church grounds now are, and before the railroad was built. After Dr. Harville died there seemed to be no physician around near and while Plantersville was a healthy locality those who needed medicine reverted to the old primitive method of being their own doctor. And looked to the home medicine shelf on which was a big bottle of quinine, some blue mass (now called calomel), a bottle of castor oil and a bottle of whiskey full of cherry bark, and a bottle of spirits of turpentine. And these with mullein tea, jimson weed and hoar hound syrup served the purpose.

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Here I will mention another home remedy. If you had a rising or stone bruise on your heel, they would bind a piece of fat meat to it to draw it they said. And draw it did. It felt like it was drawing your teeth out through your leg. I experienced this when I was about eight years old. I suffered with a stone bruise and Lon Cater, my playmate neighbor boy, was a very manish boy and made sport of my complaining with a stone bruise and said it did not amount to anything. However, after mine got well in a few weeks, I heard awful whooping and crying by some one coming up the road. And I went out to see what the matter was. It was Lon Cater riding a big old horse he called "Selus" and on his way home with a stone bruise on his heel. I said to Lon "you told me a stone bruise did not hurt" and he said "yes, but the one you had was nothing like the one I have". Here I will incidently say, if any of you school children happen to have a stone bruise on your heel, you will feel that it hurts even worse than Lon Cater's.

Dr. Moseley practiced medicine awhile and then Dr. Sherrill from down at Vine Hill and then Dr. Mixon came in and located and rode his fox trotting horse with saddle bags of medicine across his saddle. In those days all doctors rode "back and and were accompanied by their saddle bags full of bottles of medicine that looked to us children like a veritable drug store, as they dish out of the bottles calomel, quinine and ipecac on a long pointed pocket knife, mix it, work it up, cut it into little cubes and put each little cube in a separate paper nicely folded up and then say, "Give him one of these every two hours in cold coffee, and in the morning give him two tablespoons full of castor oil and he will be all right."

It seemed that in those days people just loved medicine like it was something good to eat. Further to illustrate home medicine, I remember having heard my old Aunt Mary DuBose tell of her husband who had got back ~~in~~ from town with the usual supply of medicine and had opened the bottle of quinine and was taking some of it out. And she said, "Are you sick, Mr. DuBose?" He said, "No, but we have been out of quinine a right smart while and I have just got a fresh bottle and thought I would like to taste it."

We also had Dr. Moore and Dr. Palmer practice medicine a while. I recall seeing a negro come out of Dr. Palmer's office making an awful face and his mouth all drawn up. After a while Dr. Palmer came out and asked me where the negro was. But he had gone. Dr. Palmer said he had just given the negro 24 grains of quinine and wanted to see what effect it had on him.

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But Dr. Mixon seems to have been the last of the horse back saddle bag type of doctors and was followed by Dr. Jefferies; who wore a high silk hat and drove two horses to a buggy and wrote prescriptions that you had to take all the way back to a drug store to have filled after he had diagnosed the case congestion, pulled on his kid gloves, tipped his hat and driven away. So types change in Doctors as well as in other people. And this brings us to our present physicians. Dr. Martin, Dr. Wallace and Dr. Pickering who shake it up in bottles, apply ointment, porous plasters, adhesive tape, paint it red and ride in automobiles. And with due respect we love them all for each in his way gets results and the bill is just about the same.

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My father, Dr. Todd, was the first dentist though at that time usually spoken of as a Tooth Doctor. And in that time of practice they did not administer anesthetics but just yanked the tooth out, for they said one hurt was all there would be to it. And if the patient fainted he would hold them over until their head was low and when they revived he would give them a glass of water and tell them to rinse out their mouth and spit. And that was all there was to pulling a tooth. Toothache is one of man's greatest comforts. It feels so good when it quits hurting.

As to surveyors I mentioned as professional men Old Mr. Sample, the County Surveyor who made the first land survey I ever heard of when I was a small boy. An old Irishman by the name of Fitzgibbon who was section foreman on the railroad bought from my father five acres of land where Oscar Barnes's home and other houses and the Christian Cemetery are now located. Old man Fitz as he was called, had the county surveyor, Mr. Sample, to run the land off and establish the corners to the five acres of land. When the survey was made, old man Fitz had some negro men to bring a large rock and put down in the ground at each corner of the land. The rock was large enough to be in the ground and stick up a foot or more high. I remember the usual crowd of by-standers on such occasions made sport of the old Irishman and rock corner posts. But old man Fitz said "Shure and be faith you may lauf if ye like but I'm doing this like it is done in Auld COUNTRY from whince I came (meaning Ireland).

And today you can see standing at the south west corner of the cemetery lot the very stone old man Fitz put there sixty years ago and it stands a monument to Irish determination and persistence. Had more of the original settlers of our land done likewise as regards to the corners of their land, there would today be less contention over the "Land Marks of our Fathers." At the same time of this survey, I was quite a small boy and had no idea I would be a surveyor but was interested and noticed Mr. Sample was very deaf, as I am. Maybe deafness is put upon surveyors so they cannot hear the land owners fuss over the lines and make remarks about the surveyor when the line is run.

While we are thinking of the Irish, it is well to mention that the railroad was graded and built largely by Irishmen with picks, shovel and wheelbarrow. I have heard the old folks tell about them and their ways. There is a spring up the railroad still known as the Irish Spring where they camped while grading the road.

One bunch of Irishmen camped in a house that stood where Oscar Barnes' home now is on the five acre Fitzgibbon lot.

One instance of their customs that has been told to me is when they held an Irish Wake as was their custom. One of the Irishmen had died and on that night they all drank whiskey, sang and danced around the dead man to wake them up.

Dave Fitzgibbon, the son of the section foreman, was my first boy chum and playmate when I was about seven years old and for several years, and was my nearest neighbor.

One thing I envied in him most was that he was musically inclined and could play a Jews-harp and a harmonica (we called it a French harp in those days). I myself could never get music out of anything, could not even sing, and when I would hear him and then try he would say "Boy, you couldn't turn a tune with a stick". There is one other instance of Fitz and his music I will have to mention. Dave had a sister that was right pretty and George Powell, a railroad section hand foreman, fell in love with her but old man Fitz would not hear to their marrying and locked his daughter up in the closet and threatened to kill Powell. Powell had the old man and David arrested and taken up to the depot to be tried and put under a peace bond and everybody was waiting for Powell to come and testify against them. So while they waited David was playing on his French Harp, "Yankee Doodle", "Dixie", "Listen to the Mocking Bird" and other tunes. The favorite tune of old man Fitz was "Haste to the We'ding" so he says "David, play "Haste to the Wedding" Well right then Powell had gone to the house and broken open a window and he and the girl had jumped on the train and were on their way to Selma and got married. While David was really playing the we'ding march for them. I suppose I best tell how it turned out. Just like all run-away marriages when over. Everybody kissed and made up.

As to the Justices of the Peace, I will say we have had quite a number through the years but the first one I can remember was an old "Squire" Crosland who lived on the hill West of the High School and near where Coy Morrow has his pecan orchard and by the way, Squire Crosland was the grandfather of the late Dave Crosland of Montgomery who was one of Montgomery's leading citizens and especially prominent in Masonic Fraternities. As I remember old Squire Crosland, he smoked a short straight cane stem clay pipe that stuck straight out and was rather pompous in his dignity and assertions. At that time I did not know much about the happenings in the Justice Court except that Squire Crosland fined my Uncle Will Driskell, who was a good sized boy, \$2.50 for shooting toward the section houses when he was shooting bull bats out in the old field where Will Rush's house now stands. The section foreman swore out the warrant and had him arrested and my grandfather had to pay the fine though Will swore he was shooting straight up.

Since then we have had and still have other Justices of the Peace. Whether they give justice or peace either. But we do not feel that a lengthy list is essential for they are longer honored by the title of Squire from the public in general.

Chapter 6 - Amusements & Incidents

As to the amusements and entertainments for the young people in my young days, will say there were no movies to go to and whatever entertainments we had must be manufactured by ourselves. There were "parties" now called socials and at these parties, refreshments and sometimes dances. But at most of them, they were not allowed to dance even the "Square Dance" or "Virginia Reel" or "Twistification" and "Shock to my Lou, my Darling". The present Waltz and other round dances would have shocked and upset the community until who ever had taken part would be virtually ostracized. But as I say, Times Change)

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The young people for an excuse to be together more than any other reason would get up plays or charades (we now call it ~~theatricals~~ theatricals). Attending the rehearsals and putting on the play would throw the young people together and as the saying was "break the ice", for young people in those days were very timid and could not get up courage to have a "regular" date as nowadays. A date would have been so formal it would have scared the boy away. Boys just barely could sum up courage to ask the girl to let him walk home with her after the party. The proceeds in money derived from these plays went to the benefit of school, church or building the parsonage. But the real object was an excuse to see your girl. Some of these performances were well attended by the public. There is one particularly outstanding in my mind, when everybody who had not had the measles, caught the measles from packing the house full of folks with the doors and windows shut tight, for it was on a cold night the performance was given. I was the hero in the cast of characters and Lula Lassister was the heroine. That night just before the play began Lula said she could not take part and would not go through with the play. They asked her what was the matter with her. She said she had a pain in the neck". Well you see in this play I was supposed to kiss her and I was wondering if that was causing the "pain in the neck." But it so turned out that she had been exposed to measles somewhere though there was not a case in the community. She at last went through with the play though at this time she had a high fever. And in about two weeks the whole country from fifteen miles around broke out with the measles.

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School girls were not allowed to have dates with boys or be seen walking with them. When they went to church or prayer meeting, the boys were on one side of the church and the girls on the other and all you could do was to sit and look at your girl every now and then. It was called "casting Sheep's eyes at her." But even there was some circumvention. For the girl would be slow about keeping up with Ma or Pa or the teacher when walking home and the boy would come up in the dark and they would stroll along together. Once the boy and girl thought "the coast was clear" and she took his arm and they started along, when suddenly the old man came up and said "Daughter, leave that boy and go home like you have been going." Of course he meant for her to on with the old folks for he did not know she had regularly been going with the boy. So if she went as she had been going, it would have been with the boys after all. Speaking about girls being on one side of the church and the boys on the other side, reminds me of the fact that in the early days there were two doors to the front of all church buildings. The women all went in through the left hand door and the men through the right hand door. And there was a plank partition down the center of the middle row of benches to keep the women and men separate in church. This partition was in the Union Church (where now stands the Methodist Church) when I was a boy. But time changed and they finally tore out the partition.

The right hand side of the Church was called the "Amen Corner" and here sat the old and substantial members of the church and community. All wore full beards of whiskers on their faces. For in those days all men of forty years old wore a full beard. There was no such thing as the Hitler type of mustache. Even all boys in those days wore a mustache all across their lip as soon as they could sprout a down on their lip. I do not recall a clean shaven face on any old man except one preacher, Old Mr. Felts Andrews, who was clean shaven and wore long white hair combed straight back from his forehead that came down on his neck to his coat collar. He prided himself in the fact that he looked like George Washington and he really did resemble George Washington's pictures. By the way, Mr. Andrews, they said had been married

five times yet without any divorce. He had lost every wife. In those days a divorce case would wo ld have stirred up the community just about like a declaration of war. And a "grass widow" as they would call her was something to be gazed at. Some of the old men, however, would shave out a hole in their mustache in the middle right under their noses and show a bare spot on the upper lip. The boys said it was for a kiss hole, but it seemed to be used mostly to squirt tobacco juice through.

The good sisters sat in the left hand corner with their veils on in the winter and a turkey wing fan in the summer, very quietly, for in those days a woman's speech was not heard in church. The men alone being allowed "to speak out in meeting." This right hand corner of the church was called the "Amen Corner" for here the good brethren would sit and when the preacher warmed up and said something very appealing these amen brethren would say Amen, Amen. A preacher could tell in just how much favor he stood with his congregation by the number of Amen responded he received during his sermon. And as the Amens in the course of his pastorate began to weaken and grow few he began to look around for another group of churches to serve. Some one was talking one day about the "Amen Corner" and the little boy wanted to know if the left hand corner was the "Awomen Corner." There was no organ or musical instrument in the church in those days. Some one good brother was always delegated or usurped, to raise the hymn, and then some good ~~brother would take the organ and play it~~ sister would follow in with her sweet alto as another good brother would bear down heavy with his bass and all the congregation join in. And with all the pipe organs and classic music of today there will never be any more soul stirring repentant melody than they made from "How Firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord" and "Bear Me Away on your Snowy Wings to my Immortal Home" as it swelled and rolled and reverberated in that Sacred Place.

Chapter 7 - Modes, Fashions & Notions

I am not so young but that I can remember the days of hoop skirts, dolly varden hats, reddinggote polinaise bustles and balmorals.

In the days of the hoop skirts a woman looked like a cone nearly four feet wide at the floor (for the dress touching the floor) and tapered up to her waist line which was just a little below the arms and then drew in tight for an inordinately small waist. From then up she was muffled up until you could see only from the throat up to her brow where there was a lot of hair all over her head even if it was false hair. So in those days when the hoop skirt was so wide it filled up th entire width of the door as she entered the room and just the end of her toe stuck out sometimes beyond the edge of her dress, you then knew she really did have feet. From this you will know all a fellow saw of his sweetheart was the tips of her toes a beautiful throat, lips, eyes and forehead. In those days, a fellow did not go so often to see his sweetheart. Nowadays, they see them oftener and more of them.

The ladies did ride horse back a good deal in those days, but it was on a side saddle so that they sat side ways with one leg hooked through the horns of the saddle, for a ladies saddle had two horns to it and only one stirrup on the left side in which the dainty toe was placed. They wore a long riding skirt that hung down about half way to the ground when on the horse. This riding skirt had a band around the bottom in which was a row all the way around of buck shot or some heavy slugs of lead lest the wind blow the skirt up and show her legs. There now, I have gone and done it. In those days it was not supposable a woman had legs and it was the height of impropriety to say legs. If she were to be thrown from the horse and broke a leg, you should say "she injured her limb." But the men loved them in those days just the same.

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And with all the woman's apparent timidity and blushing, she said "Yes" at the proper time if the man had the courage to propose and marriage was just as much in vogue. But in those days it was the law of custom that the man do the proposing.

I do not wish you to think for once that the style of dress for the girls of the sixties meets my idea for dress for the girl of this or any other generation. I am indeed glad our girls can step out unhampered by encumbering clothes and really enjoy the freedom of limb and body in the clean athletics of today with physique vibrant, strong and naturally developed and are no longer "doll babies."

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Yes, girls have come into their own that they may step right up by the side of the boys and keep pace and now boys, what a responsibility rests upon you that you be clean mentally and physically. For the girl of today is vying with you in every act. Your language, your manners, your dissipations, your sports and business appeal to her. Then boys, how clean you must be. You have no right to any indulgence your future wife cannot take part in. The most conspicuous act of the girl today is her smoking to which many hold up their hands in horror. Well if the man smokes, why not the woman? But the young college girls of today does make a mighty mess of it. She hardly flops in her seat in the train or public place before she feels it incumbent upon her to just fog everybody out with her cloud of smoke. But maybe incoming years she will learn to be more decent about it. I remember seeing our old grandmothers sit by the fire place with their cap of lace on their heads and quietly smoke a clay pipe with a long straight cane stem. And there was ~~nothing~~ really a grace to the faint curl of smoke that floated away. Nothing loud, nothing rowdy, nothing boisterous. But we must caution as regards the pace the girl of today is taking in no longer making a home but seeking a career and eliminating that high calling "the making of a homo" and is out for fame and the dollar. The woman of today can "bring in the bacon". In other ~~many~~ times she did too much of the drudgery. That in itself was bad. But her ability now to take the man's place is putting her where man may just let her "bring in the bacon." She is fast relieving man of any responsibility. And bad it will be when he entirely acquiesces. Let us not lose our homes. Woman alone can make home. What a land we could have if all the boys and girls would live towards that picture of Annie Lee and Willie Gray in the little poem the children used to recite when I was teaching school, where it said:

Annie Lee was swinging her basket to and fro going up the hill and Willie Gray said "May I carry your basket if you will?" And she answered with a laugh "No, but you may carry half." And then in later years, "She swings her basket to and fro" "But this is different from the one of yore. This is long and deep and wide, And has rockers on the side."

With all the inconvenience of those enormous hoop skirts there occurred an occasion during the Civil War when it served a purpose. You know during the Civil War just about every man and boy from sixteen years old was called to serve in the Army. And in those days, just as in having to go to our last War, some would do all they could to keep from going. During the time of being called to the World War, one fellow ate soap to make him so thin they would not take him. And during the Civil War we had shirkers then. So one fellow was hiding out. But the conscript officers suddenly came to his house which was a one room house and he was in the room. When they came in and searched the entire house they could not find him. His wife was sitting there before the fire knitting and they supposed she was sitting on a stool but not so. She had made her husband sit down on the floor and she just sat down on his head. The big hoop skirt covered him entirely up and he was left safe at home when the officers left. As I was saying there are all ways of shirking duty when patriotism calls for danger or war.

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About forty years ago I was out surveying in Ocamulgee Creek Swamp, right along by a steep hill side covered over with thick ivy bushes and one of the men with me said, "Right up there in that hole is where Bill and Tom lay out hid during the Civil War to keep from going to the Army." They said it was none of their war and they did not intend to do anything about it. These men stayed in their hiding place and their folks at home would take something for them to eat down to the swamp at a big hollow log and then beat on the hollow log with a lightwood knot as a signal for Bill and Tom to come get their food and slip back and hide. They were called Moss Backs for they stayed out in the woods so long people said moss had grown to their backs like on a tree. These were two typical men who would not fight under any consideration they said. Yet before the War was over, the Yankees came right into their neighborhood and no sooner was the enemy at their door than Bill and Tom loaded up their old guns with a hand full of powder and a hand full of slugs and bullets and went to the bridge on the creek and stood guard ready to kill any "Yankee that came in there." Right here I am going to say it will be thus with any of us. When war gets at our door any of us will fight, regardless of all the sissy talk of pacifists and disarmament.

Look at Ethiopia and China today. When a fellow is too big for you, you just got to get a piece cut off of him. As a nation we should fully understand there is but one safe rule. "Speak soft but carry a big Stick."

And above all things, respect the rights of those but at all times be in a position that others must respect your rights.

Chapter 8 - Schools

As I have already said Plantersville is noted for its schools.

Though it is in the North East Corner of Dallas County it boasts the Dallas County High School that enrolled last year 93 students and a graduating class of 25. It also boasts the Plantersville Public School that enrolled last year 109 pupils.

This stand for education is an inheritance of antebellum well-to-do planters handed down to their children, grand children and great grand children, for nothing was too good in the minds of our forebears for their posterity (places like families are largely the product of their background) and while they may have had to deprive themselves just as parents today are skimping and depriving, yet their children must be educated.

In the early days there were little public money for schools, and the private purse had to supply the school of Plantersville. There were in those days no special appropriations made for schools. What public money there was came from the 16th. Section Fund. This came from the U. S. Government, having set aside the 16th. Section of each Township of land for the use of schools in that Township and Range. There was also Poll Tax money that went to the school but poll tax was just about as hard to collect in those days as it is now.

People today will forfeit the franchise of voting and being a qualified full fledged citizen rather than pay poll tax that goes to the schools. I once failed to pay my poll tax and could not vote that election. I never before knew how little a fellow could feel until I saw others voting and I could take no part in it. I just was not an American Citizen that day, I felt like. Have you noticed how many today howl about what the Government does and right then, they cannot vote because they have not paid their poll taxes and have no right to open their mouth.

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Prof. Jennings and his wife were among the first teachers I ever heard mentioned. There may possibly have been other teachers earlier but these two cultured people lived at my grandfather T. S. Driskell's home and taught in a small school house, provided by my grandfather, that stood where the north west corner of the Methodist Cemetery. This same school house 16 x 18 feet where my mother before me went to school was still standing when I entered it at eight years old for my first day in school. This same school house was also the first school building in which I myself taught school and was also the last school house in which a one room school was taught by me before the two story school building was built on the East side of the Southern Railroad opposite the present Public School Building and in which two story building Plantersville College was founded and chartered under John L. Dodson LL.D.

The Plantersville College was afterwards merged into the Dallas County High School. After Dr. Dodson, his wife and Miss Essie Gladden of Oxford, Ala. had taught successfully until Dr. Dodson's health failed and he had to give up teaching. Dr. Dodson was one of the prominent educators of Alabama and had to his credit pupils who have been Judges and Superintendents of Education and Governor of the State of Alabama and Legislators. Dr. Dodson told me 54 ministers of the Gospel had been taught by him free of charge. One of Dr. Dodson's former pupils afterwards became chief counselor of Queen Victoria's of England though born and reared in the mountains of North Alabama as an orphan boy. And one (Dr. Abercrombie) became president of the University of Alabama. Today Dallas County High School stands on the hill to the west a monument to our fathers who fought for our education. It is not amiss to mention the fact that some of our text books now show the picture of this High School, which was among the first established by the state, as a building representative of the High School System of the state. And indeed it is a beautiful building handsomely located with its 9 acres of grounds and streets around it.

But to revert to the list of teachers in order who have taught in Plantersville.

After Prof. Jennings came Dr. Franklin DuBose who was the father of Dr. Goodwin DuBose of Selma and Maplesville (a most prominent physician). Though at that time Dr. Franklin DuBose was not a doctor but was reading medicine and teaching school at the same time. And these were the days when there was a good deal of whipping in the school room (they called it thrashing then).

Anyway when recess and dinner time came the boys had a good time playing ball. It was before the days of baseball and was called Town Ball, and was played with home base and three bases on a diamond laid off like a baseball diamond. I feel sure it was from town ball that baseball originated. But the rules were simple. It was not necessary to catch the ball and put the runner out but just throw the ball between him and the base he was running for and he was out. They called ~~it~~ it crossing him out. The ball they used was a home made ball made by wrapping wool yarn thread around a small rock or some hard core. The yarn thread was procured by unraveling an old pair of Pa's socks and there was no cover on the ball. The boy at the bat used a piece of plank made into a paddle to bat with and when you were at the bat you were said to be in the holes. And every boy in school wanted his play time whether he learned his lesson or not.

Homer McGee was a great big boy but poor student and would miss his lesson and have to stay in as they called it about all the play time as punishment. One day Dr. DuBose said, "Homer, I hate to keep you in today. Had you rather take 10 lashes from this hickory switch or stay in?" Homer said, "Give me 10 lashes." Then Dr. DuBose said "Stretch out on that long bench and count

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The minute he called 10, Homer jumped up and said "come on boys, I'm in the holes, let's play ball."

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After Dr. DuBose came D. C. B. Conley who was quite a noted teacher but could not finance the large schools he would open with several assistant teachers. I remember that he looked like Abe Lincoln's picture though I was only 5 yrs. old at the time. Conley had had quite a school at "Stone Wall" as it was named. Stone Wall was about 12 miles west of Plantersville and was an assembly of log cabins in which the student lived and log school rooms. Conley came to Plantersville about the year 1871 and rented the Driskell home together with several cabins back of his home and built the houses in which Dr. Pickering now has his office and the house in which Carroll has his barbershop. At that time also the Masons moved the Masonic lodge from Dublin to Plantersville and built a large two story building just north of the Methodist Church; and this provided lodge room up stairs for the Masons and school class rooms downstairs. This building, the Methodist Church building, the small school house I mentioned and some of the rooms in the Driskell home furnished class rooms for Conley's large school of some 200 pupils. He even had Military Department and I used to watch the boys drill on the campus in front of the church. At that time most any man in the community could put them through drill for it was just after the Civil War and what men were still alive were fresh returned from the Confederate Army in the Civil War. But I possibly should not have said Civil War as it seems they are now trying to change the name to "War between the States" and it is no longer considered cultured to say "Rebels" and "Yankees." However, as I have said Conley could not finance his school. His chief quality was to get in debt to everybody and to borrow anything anybody would lend him. He was a most persuasive talker. They once had him up in church to turn him out but he managed to get the floor and by the time he got through talking they were ready for a "love feast". Anyhow his discipline in his school was a failure. So this school lasted only two years and he moved away. But the destruction he and the 200 boys wrought on Plantersville is memorable. There was not a fence left. They burnt it up for fire wood and there was not a pig or chicken anywhere to be seen. Those boys shot them and ate them just like they were wild game. My grandfather was glad to get Conley out and get possession of his home again even without collecting what Conley owed him. Sam Cater was one of Conley's assistant teachers and continued to teach a small school after Conley left. It was to Sam Cater I went the first day of my schooling. This first one day was not only my first day but my last day with him for a while though I was eight years old. He was high tempered and had dyspepsia and cross as a sore headed bear. And that one day of his yelling virtually scared me cold. So I took all my books and toted them home not to return. In those days the motto was "No licking, no learning" and school consisted principally in thrashing the pupil instead of explaining the problem. No school was considered complete with fixtures unless there was a five foot hickory switch standing in the corner of the school room close to the teacher's desk. They might get out of pencils or crayon for the blackboard but not out of switches. One teacher in Conley's school had a reputation for doing a good deal of thrashing. His name was Halliburton and it became a by-word handed down through the following school that if you were in danger of being whipped they would say you better watch out "you'll catch halliburton." After a while of staying away from Mr. Cater's school, I was persuaded to try it again as he was a great social friend of my father and a Sunday School worker. In fact, he organized the first Sunday School in Plantersville as far as I know. And at that time the preachers who preached in Plantersville opposed Sunday School work and denounced it from the pulpit. But to return

to Mr. Cater and my going again to his school. We got along all right even until I got to the 4th. multiplication table that was always hard for me and still seems awkward to me. I missed multiplication lesson and Mr. Cater said "Boy, if you don't know your table tomorrow I am going to take one of your buttered biscuits away from you at dinner." So that night I said "Mamma, please put me in an extra buttered biscuit in my dinner bucket in the morning." At that time there were no comforts to a school room. There were only a desk or two and some long benches without backs to them on which the little fellows had to sit, and so high your feet could not reach the floor. Some of the benches were what they called pucheons. That was a half a log that had been split and the flat side was up up with pegs stuck in it for legs. And when it was cold weather you suffered, for while there was a big fire place in one end of the school room, the cracks in the floor where cold air could come in were so wide open that if you dropped your pencil it would fall through and you would have to crawl under the school to get it. And half the time the wood for the fire place was scarce or even out and we had to go pick up thrash for the fire. When it was very cold the teacher would place a long bench before the fire and allow you to go sit on it and warm. The bench was very long but the middle of the bench was right in front of the fire and the rest of the pupils string along on the bench out each way toward the end of the bench and in the cold. If the boy in the middle had to go to the class or leave his seat on this bench those on each side would close up the gap and when he came back he would have to go out to one end of the bench and hide his time to get back in front of the fire when others got out. They called it "shove up" and sometimes the fire was so hot and those on each side were squeezing in so tight, about like sardines in a box, that a boy could not stay long in the middle of the bench. One cold day one little fellow was too hot but did not want to go to the end of the bench and began complaining. The teacher said, "What is the matter, Willie?" And he said, "They are scrouding me."

The list of books for a beginner was a Blue Back Speller and a thumb paper. The thumb paper was for you to put between your thumb and the page in the book to keep from wearing out the lower corner of the book as you sat on that high bench and held the book in front of your face. You were supposed to be constantly studying in the book and dare not let the teacher catch you looking off the book. You could take any pupils book and look at it and tell just how far he had gotten in the book by the number of pages that were worn out by his thumb at the lower corner of his book. Those were the days of slate and slate pencils. Such a thing as pencil and pad as they now have was unknown. My slate and slate pencil worked every problem in my schooling even in college through survey and calculus. The pencils and pads for children nowadays cost more than my entire tuition through school and college. Is it possible that more goes on the pad than into the pupil's head? After Mr. Cater taught a while and as the expression was "Just about run it in the ground" education and schools were a low ebb and I was then about 10 years old and had gone to school in all about five months. So my father thought it was about time something should be done about it. And along came a young preacher by the name of Hencil from up in Virginia who was selling books (colporteur they called it). Father hired him and boarded him to go down to the small school house I have mentioned and teach school if any children would come. At that time children were indeed scarce around Plantersville but by going up the road two miles and down the road four miles to the Harville place for the Harville boys Seab and Chat, they scraped up ten pupils and I and my sister Kate got to go to school five months. Mr. Hencil was a pretty good teacher and was friendly with the boys and took part in play on the play grounds. The boys were all small except one by the name of Tom Dickerson who came in and boarded in the neighborhood and was far enough advanced to study algebra. It was with great

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admiration that we boys would see him go around to the blackboard and see him write b equals x . Mr. Hencil introduced "Shinny" as our chief game on the school grounds. (This "shinny" bore no relation to present liquid so generally spoken of now) The game when played on ice is called Hockey. But we called it shinny for in driving the ball along on the ground toward your goal if you were on the off side the other fellow would holler "Shinny" on your own side" and crack you on the shin with the crooked stick used for driving the ball. One good feature of the game was that all could take part in it for the small boys could run about as fast as the bigger ones and were just as expert in driving the ball toward their goal lines.

After Mr. Hencil closed his school, our next teacher was Miss Marie Ethridge. Mr. Hiram Lassister had moved from down near Cahaba and bought the lands where Grady Herrod now lives. Miss Marie was a daughter of one of his friends and as there was no school in Plantersville Mr. Lassister had her to come up and open a small school in a log cabin at the foot of the hill beyond Mr. Charlie Levine's home. I went to school to her for two months. Miss Marie was a sweet little woman but she had the misfortune to have small pox and her face was deeply pitted. After Miss Marie Ethridge, Miss Pat Huggins from up near Ashby came and taught a few of us children about three months. I remember she had an encyclopedia for reference and it was the first one I had ever heard of. Miss Lottie Burns then taught in the same small school house. It was during her school they vaccinated me and the rest of the children for small pox. It was while going to school to Miss Lottie we children waded across Mulberry Creek to get huckleberries and Viola McGee, a big girl, dropped her shoe and it floated off down the creek and sunk so she had to borrow one of my grandmothers shoes to get home. After Miss Lottie, came Miss Sallie Gandy and taught two short schools. It was under her I really learned what it meant to study and to her I owe the fact that my school work on through college met with fair success. She put me through Coleburns Mental Arithmetic without slate or pencil. After Miss Sally then Miss Susie Roberts of Mobile came and taught a few months Miss Susie was a nice refined young lady but could not do much with us uncouth boys who were getting up some size and I will acknowledge we lead her a miserable time. She wore beautiful shoes but as is sometimes with young ladies they were just too tight and the corns on her toes were just too tender. If one of us barefoot boys happened (I say happened) to stub the side on her foot with our big toe, she would almost faint. But with all that, still I did some good work in her school that put me along. I learned to do my own studying. Miss Janie Pouncey from Carlowville, Ala. then came and taught two schools in Plantersville. She was a pretty little brunette and wore a curl of hair and a refined young lady. Some one was talking about a passage in the Bible but could not turn to it. She said wait a minute till she got her Bible and she could find it. People used to read their Bibles more than now anyway. Speaking of the Bible reminds me of what old Senator Pettus of Selma, who was a 49'er said about the Bible. A 49'er was one who had gone West in 1849 in the gold rush to California. Sen. Pettus was a young lawyer in Cahaba at that time but he picked up and rode horse back to California. He rode with the Bible in one end of his saddle bags and a copy of Shakespeare in the other and said no finer library has since been brought in.

Prof. Waugh, a young man but poor teacher, took charge of the school after Miss Janie had taught two short schools.

The afore mentioned schools were quite small there being just from 5 to 12 pupils and my father just about paying the entire salary of the teacher

and also giving them board at home. But he said he expected to educate his children if he did nothing else. His father had given a profession to each of his sons. About this time which was 1881, Welsh Bros. built a saw mill where Riderville is and this brought in a number of children and the Welshes who had thus moved in, took interest in the school and employed J. J. Williams of Selma to open up a fairly good school of some 30 or 40 pupils which he and his daughter Jenny taught. Prof. Williams was a fine school teacher when sober, but whiskey was his ruin and ruined his school. After Prof. Williams had made a failure Mr. Saxson of Loachapoka taught two pretty good schools. Prof. Saxson took charge of the school and brought with him 3 daughters, the oldest quite young for a teacher and other two daughters came as students. While Prof. Saxson took charge of the school these three daughters took charge of the hearts of all the boys in the community who were big enough to set up and take notice. Miss Genie Saxson, the oldest daughter who taught music and sang "Wait til the clouds roll by Jonny" and "My Bonnie Blue Eyed Scotch Lassie Gene" was the most expert in heart crushing. Miss Genie's affair would last about three weeks with one boy. As they said she would take him up high and then let him drop and rope in a other boy. This not only caused a lot of heart aches and vows by some boys never again to love another woman but it also caused a lot of fist fights and bloody noses for boys who had once been chums and even between brothers. Still the school was a fair success for a while.

About this time was the beginning of advertising signs being put up along the roads, nailed to posts and trees. Before this it was small signs on store walls. Prominent was one sign with a small half moon on it and said "Harter Lung Balm" and I must hand it to it for it was good cough medicine. The new signs nailed up that I have reference to was a board with S. S. S. on it and asked by some what it meant the wise crackers said Saxsons Singing School.

Then Mr. Lum Duke of Chambers County, who is now Judge Lum Duke. After Mr. Lum, people persuaded me to teach. So I had a small school as numbers went but my grades were numerous. I had about 10 pupils all the way from some learning their ABC'S to some in algebra and Latin and one reading Greek. Miss Bessie Lassiter then taught a short time while after which the schools of Plantersville went entirely dead for a year or so. My sister Kate Todd then taught. Then I decided I would undertake to restore the schools in Plantersville and opened up with 15 pupils in the small school house and taught for about six months This was about 1894. Then the people in Plantersville decided they really wanted a school in Plantersville,

So Mr. Joe Fulford, Mr. John Martin, Geo. Walker, Bill Walker, Bailey Mills, Hiram Lassiter, Jim Lassiter, Dr. Todd and some others got together to build the school house that stood east of the Southern Railroad opposite the present Public School. And that summer I rode around and drummed up enough pupils until we had 70 and Miss John Wilkerson as assistant teacher and my sister Sally Todd, and school seemed to be flourishing once again. People began coming to Plantersville to live for benefit of school. At this time the the school had reached such proportions some thought it needed some other than home talent to run it so they elected Prof. Weysinger to take charge and he taught one year and the next teacher was a Mr. Jones who also ran the school into the ground again and in closing he addressed the audience that came to the closing exercises by saying "this ends the school and some of you are still owing tuition and I would like for you to come forward and pay me." As it happened after this Dr. John L. Dodson, who had been head of the Oxford College at Oxford, Ala., where I had graduated wrote me a letter to know if there was an opening to build up a good school. And I that same day had mailed him a letter asking him to come down and build up a school here. The letters passed each

other in the mail, though he and I had never before written each other or knew the other was thinking of a school in Plantersville.

Mr. John Pickering, Mr. John Walker, Wilber Morrow and some others had moved to Plantersville by this time and their efforts threw new strength in school. John Barnes at this time a merchant was an ardent supporter of schools, he himself having been a school teacher. Mr. Sanders the section foreman gave strong support, so with the others I have mentioned gave strong support and the real foundation for the present system of schools was laid in Plantersville. I have not mentioned the younger heads families among them were: Dow Walker, Jim Mitchell, Dick Mitchell, Wylie Letcher, Hi Lassister, Oscar Barnes, Morgan Campbell, Arch Sample, Dr. Martin, Ed Terry and your humble servant and others I do not intentionally leave out. All threw their strength to Dr. John L. Dodson in founding Plantersville College, which was a chartered college, and finally obtaining the Dallas County High School which absorbed the Plantersville College and following this move, we have also the Plantersville Public School of today with its beautiful building, spacious grounds, numerous pupils and excellent teachers.

An now before mentioning the list of more recent teachers, due credit for school work of past 20 years should be given Prof. J. A. Lee, who taught so long and well and is now County Superintendent of Education for Dallas County.

Much of my time for past 20 years has been away from Plantersville so I can only submit the list of teachers as they have been given to me from the roster and if this legend were complete to date younger pens than mine must write the addenda.

The following list of teachers from Dallas County High School:

1935-36

Principal, E. A. Thomas
Coach, W. H. Shepherd
English, Mrs. J. P. Friday
Home Economics, Miss Patty Kroell

1934-35

W. J. Ponder
D. K. Brasington
Miss Hilda Norman *Mrs Jack Friday*
Miss Elizabeth Dinkins
Mrs. R. L. Partin

1932-33

T. G. Vaughan
J. W. Farmer
Miss Hilda Norman
Miss Mina Belle Hamilton
Miss Elizabeth Dinkins

1931-32

T. G. Vaughan
J. W. Farmer
Mrs. William Morrison
Miss Mina Belle Hamilton

1930-31

T. G. Vaughan
J. W. Farmer
Mrs. William Morrison

C
O
P
Y

1929-30

T. G. Vaughan
J. W. Farmer
Mrs. William Morrison
Miss Mina Belle Hamilton

1928-29

T. G. Vaughan
J. W. Farmer
Miss Mabel Patton
Miss Mina Belle Hamilton

1927-28

T. G. Vaughan
R. A. Nunnally
Miss Clifford Baker
Miss Mina Belle Hamilton

1926-27

J. S. Christberg
R. A. Nunnally
Miss Ora Anderson
Miss Mina Belle Hamilton

1925-26

J. S. Christberg
R. A. Nunnally
Miss Glen Avis Rice *Mrs Jack Martin*

The others given are from memory:

J. L. Bates, Prin.
Mr. J. L. Moulder
Mr. J. L. Bates
Mr. Snuggs
Miss Selma Almon
Miss Louise Stephenson
Mr. Hurst
Miss Grace Shields
Mr. Centry
Miss Edna Leetherwood
Miss Agnes Tutwiler *English*
Mr. J. L. Moulder, Prin.
Miss Julia Fortis
Mr. Hood
Miss Bennett Stewart
Miss Maria Haseley
Mr. F. M. Monrow
Mr. W. C. Slappay
Miss Cecil Chilton
Miss Mary Grogan
Miss John Witherspoon
Mr. W. J. Bray, Prin.

There were 93 enrolled in High School in year 1935. There were 25 graduates.

The following is a list of teachers for Plantersville Public School:

Mr. J. A. Lee
Mrs. Witherspoon
Miss Sadie Pickering
Mrs. Alma Mallette Hay
Mrs. Annie S. Pierson
Miss Lucy Hanlin
Mr. Amos Sellers
Miss Peggy Glover
Miss Martha Young

Miss Florence Adair
Mrs. Stella Kahey Martin
Miss Leila Green
Miss Dees
Miss Snoddy
Miss Marguerite Fitts
Miss Eunice Ward
Miss Evelyn Moulder
Mr. J. G. Alexander

Miss Martha Munro
Miss Dickinson
Miss Gladys Moore
Miss Elsie Schurter
Miss Inez Cox
Mr. S. C. Reeves
Mrs. Elisa Young Terry
Mrs. Mahaffey

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The present faculty:

Mr. S. W. Hixon
Mrs. W. A. Fiday
Mrs. J. A. Lee
Miss Ruth Pickering
Miss M. E. Hardy

*This was my first
teachers*

25

We enrolled 109 last year.

As a closing word on school and education, it is not amiss to stress the fact that education is the power to think. Whatever else you may get in school is only "book learning" except nowadays you do get sports (athletics they call it, I believe) But if you come out of school without the power to think, your book learning is nought. And all there is to education is nought unless you can fit in and carry on in the great plan of life.

It is astounding how many educated (I mean book learned) are failures in life and on the other hand many of the best educated men I have known as far as making a success of life are failures. An honest family could not read or write. As the saying is "could not tell B from Bull's foot" but they had the essential qualities in them and if you do not have the essential qualities in you, it is a waste of money to give you "book learning". Many a good plow hand has been ruined by college.

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