

The July Meeting

Tuesday, August 25, 2015, 3:00 p. m.
McMillan Museum
Jefferson Davis Community College Campus

The Program

Debra Sims, granddaughter of Bernice Sims, and Larry Manning, former art instructor at Jefferson Davis Community College, will present a program on both Bernice Sims, Brewton's nationally known "folk" artist, as well other artists who are often called "outsiders."

A gallery display selected from the collections of Larry and Debra will be exhibited in the meeting room of the Museum.

Bernice Sims

Visual historian, memory painter, folk artist, all describe Bernice Sims. Although she did not begin her career as an artist until she was 52, she achieved national recognition and her work is now displayed in homes, galleries and museums.



Bernice

She has said of her art, "I paint the things that are real to me—that either happened to me or are in my memory from the old days. In my paintings are the important things to me. I want to save these memories for my family and for others"

([http://www.](http://www.marciaweberartobjects.com/sims.html)

[marciaweberartobjects.com/sims.html](http://www.marciaweberartobjects.com/sims.html)). €

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"Big Daddy's House at Hickory Hill"

Volume 42, Number 8

August 2015

The September Meeting
Tuesday, September 22, 2015,
3:00 p.m.
David Robb of Huntsville will present a program about Governor Bibb's 1818 'Mother Map' of Alabama and how it was used to make Alabama's first seal (and later becomes the basis for our present seal) — based on his recent article: "An Invisible Map Revealed" in *Alabama Heritage*, issue 114, November 2014.

"Big Daddy's House at Hickory Hill," shown at the left, is by Bernice Sims. Bernice grew up in the Hickory Hill Community near Georgianna.

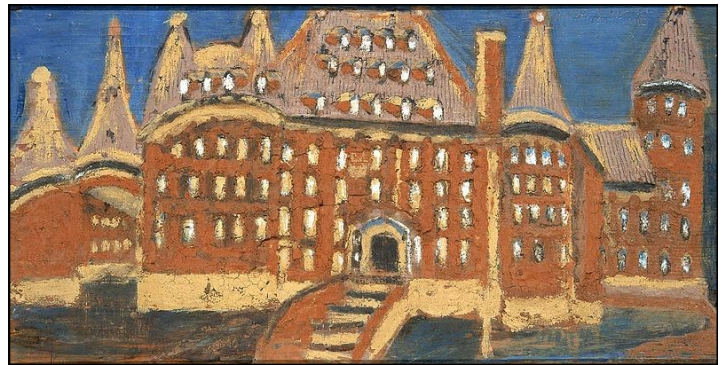
Outsider Art



Above, “L & N Depot Brewton” by Bernice Sims, Acrylic on Canvas.

Upper Right, “Flower Tree” by Mose Tolliver, Acrylic on Plywood.

Bottom Right, “Fantastic Building” by Jimmy Lee Sudduth, Mud (soil and sugar), Paint, Pencil, on Wood.



The picture above of the L & N Station by Bernice Sims was included in the announcement of an exhibit of “Outsider” Art at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, Auburn University. The exhibit, “Outsiders on the Inside,” presented in 2011, also featured the work of two other Alabama Outsider Artists, Jimmy Lee Sudduth and Mose Tolliver.

The museum curator, Dennis Harper, said of this art: “Outsider, visionary, self-taught

and vernacular are just a few of the most common labels placed upon the artists and their varied work. . . . These self-directed artists share important characteristics with their mainstream or academically trained contemporaries. Each creates work that is inventive, thought provoking and highly personal” (<http://www.artfixdaily.com/artwire/release/8139-exhibition-gives-insight-into-folk-art>). €

News and Announcements



**Alabama Historical Association
Call for Papers
69th Annual Meeting
Montgomery, Alabama
April 14-16, 2016**

The Alabama Historical Association invites paper

proposals to be given at its 69th annual meeting.

Proposals must include a one-page abstract of a 20-minute presentation on an Alabama history topic and a curriculum vitae or résumé that includes the author's email address, postal address, telephone number, and academic or organizational affiliation (if any).

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News and Announcements

(Continued from page 2)

Proposals should also indicate if the presenter will require any technical equipment (projectors, sound equipment, etc.)

Proposals must be submitted by October 1, 2015. Electronic submissions are preferred.



202nd Anniversary of Fort Mims The Annual Reenactment of the Battle of Fort Mims August 29-30, 2015.

Daily Re-enactments on site:

Burnt Corn -11:00 am

Fort Mims -2:00 pm

DAR Memorial Service -Saturday 9:00 am

“Old Time” Church Service - Sunday 10:00 am

The weekend includes: Living History, Displays & 1800's Crafts including arrowheads, wool spinning, blacksmithing, quilting, period music, basketry, pottery, watercolors, skinning, flintknapping, Creek Indian games & cultural presentation, period weapons & clothing.

Fort Mims is located on Hwy. 59, then west 3 miles on Co. Rd. 80

West Florida Genealogical Society September Meeting Saturday, Sept. 5, 2015 West Florida Genealogy Library

**Topic: Which Way Did the Census Taker Walk
Or Ride His Horse?**

Speaker: Bert Outlaw, WFGS President

Bert Outlaw, WFGS President, will give a Power Point presentation on using census, tax records, plat maps, and deeds to help locate ancestors that didn't own land.

Members and guests are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be available at 9:45. Meeting begins at 10:00.

For More Information, Contact: Charlotte Schipman, [850-477-7166](tel:850-477-7166)



Planning Underway for Tours of McMillan Museum

This message from Museum Coordinator Don (George Washington) Sales,

“We are about to start tours at our museum. We need help from our members to make these tours fun and extra interesting. Contact me if anyone can dress and act the part of a local or national historical figure. It's a lot of fun.”

As seen in the photo clip from the July ECHS meeting, Don has experience with playing the role of George Washington.

Website with Historic Pictures of Baldwin County and Atmore

The website www.imagesbyjohnlewis.com has historic pictures of mainly Baldwin County but also of Atmore. If you click on the word “more” at the bottom right of the screen, you can view the Atmore pictures.

Please note, these are copyrighted and illegal to copy but John Lewis, owner of the website, has a shop in Bay Minette near North Baldwin Hospital and would sell a copy to anyone interested.

Thanks to Barbara McCoy for sharing this information.



Reenactment of Battle of Burnt Corn Creek Jennings Park Brewton July 25, 2015

You Tube presentation of this year's reenactment at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umqyD5Pui4I>. €

Bull Slough Bridge on Cover of Nashville Band's First Album

Gaston Bozeman, a member of the band Riverbend Reunion, which produced the album, has family connections in both Conecuh and Escambia Counties.

His grandmother is Evelyn Duke, from Brewton. His father, Robert Bozeman, owns the Evergreen Courant and his mother, Karen Duke Shaver, lives near the bridge.

Built in 1924, the Bull Slough bridge across the Sepulga River near Brooklyn is one of Alabama's few remaining steel truss-bridges.

Desirable as an alternative to wood and stone for bridge construction in the 19th century, the steel truss-bridges began to be replaced when reinforced concrete was developed in the 1940's.

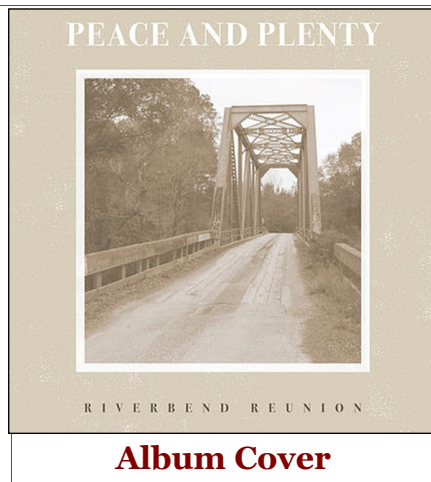
Truss bridges are so named for the triangular design in the steel superstructure in which the triangles take the weight and stress of the bridge.

The Bull Slough Bridge is a Pony Truss design. The simplicity of the Pony Truss design triangles is shown in the illustration above and on the superstructure of the Bull Slough Bridge shown at the right.

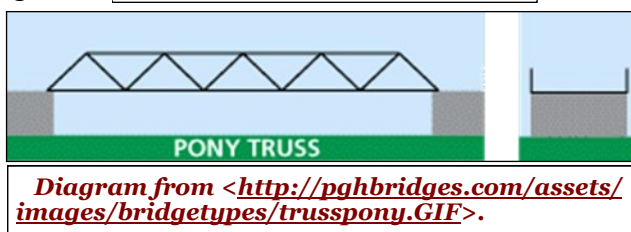
The steel truss bridges of Alabama were listed on the Places in Peril in Alabama in 2007 by the Alabama Historical Commission. The May 2008 Echoes discussed another of Alabama's steel truss bridges, the O'Neal Bridge over the Tennessee River near Florence. Built in 1939, the four-lane bridge was still in use at the time.

Many of the steel truss bridges have been replaced as they have deteriorated because they are not wide enough and have not been maintained.

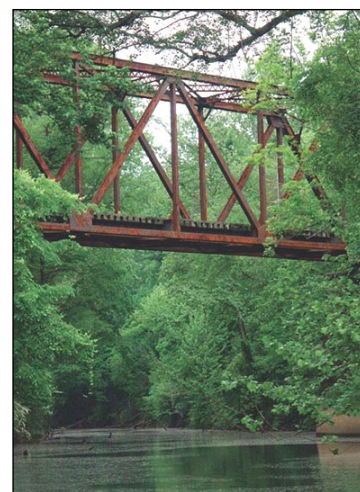
The only way to insure their survival is to keep them in. Some are being used only for pedestrian traffic and others as fishing piers. Many have been replaced by concrete bridges.



From Alabama Heritage, "While these new bridges offer improved safety and utility, they rarely possess the picturesque character and visual qualities exhibited by the historic iron and steel truss bridges they replace" (<http://www.alabamaheritage.com/places-in-peril/historic-iron-and-steel-truss-bridges-statewide-places-in-peril-2007>). €



Bull Slough Bridge
From <<http://www.ruralswalabama.org/attraction/bull-slough-bridge-1924/>>.



The Holt bridge that Alabama Heritage called "the last of its kind in eastern Tuscaloosa County."



The O'Neal Bridge Near Florence
<<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/57561701457499214/>>.

Mystery Pictures

The following article by [Stephanie Nelson](#) is reprinted from the *Brewton Standard*.

Valerie Long, owner of Longevity Antiques is shown with two of three pictures she has in her shop which spark speculation and interest by all who see them.

Valerie believes they could be charcoal renderings of historic photos.

One was given to Valerie by a family friend who asked her to keep it safe, one was found in Pollard and one was found in an old barn.

Valerie Long will never know, but the pieces continue to spark conversations – and the imaginations – of all who see them.

Long, owner of Longevity Antiques, said the each of the three pieces came to rest inside the Douglas Avenue shop in their own unique way.

The pieces appear to be either charcoal renderings or historic photos.

“It’s so hard to tell because they are so old,” Long said. “I don’t want to do anything to damage them, so we just speculate.”

One, she said, belonged to a family friend who asked her to house the piece for safekeeping. The other two, though, are part of a different story.

“There was a lady from the Bogia Community who read an article on my shop in the paper where I said I collected old black and white photos,” Long said. “She contacted me because she thought that I would be interested in a piece she had.

“Well, after her call, I thought I was going to get a couple of little photos, but when I walked in the door, I was blown away,” she said.

From inside a weather-beaten frame, the proud face stared back at her, she said.



“It was not a little photo; it was a piece of history with a background we’ll probably never know,” she said. “The lady told me she found it in the Pollard Community back in the 1960s. She said she was in the woods looking for old bottles when she came up on a dilapi-

dated structure that looked like it used to be a house. One wall was still standing, and it was hanging there.”

Long said when the woman’s husband passed away, she decided to bring the piece to the shop. “I’ve had tons of offers, but it’s just something that is so historic, I decided to hold on to it,” she said.

The other pieces, which feature a man and a woman in late 1800s -period style clothing, were found in an old barn. All of the works were reframed or reworked in their frames by local photographer Clay Lisenby, Long said.

“Those came from a dealer who traded me merchandise for them,” she said of the works. “He said he found them in a barn outside of Brewton and had no idea who owned them or where they came from.

“They’re just really great conversation pieces,” she said. “I’ve had historians and the lot to come and talk about them. They’re just interesting.” (<http://www.brewtonstandard.com/2015/08/05/its-a-mystery/>).

Thanks to photographer Clay Lisenby, you can see the three pictures. Anyone who has information about the pictures can contact ECHS at, **email address:** <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#inbox>, **phone:** 251-809-1528, **mailing address:** P.O. Box 276 Brewton, AL 36427.



First of the Three Mystery Pictures

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Mystery Pictures

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Two and Three of the Mystery Pictures



Snapshots of the ECHS July 2015 Meeting



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The ECHS *Journal* Section

Hidden Cemetery Treasures

By Darryl Searcy

The following is about two cemeteries recently visited that are located in deep woods that were known to only a few people but not known to the public at large because the occupants of the cemetery plots were ancestors long removed. While landlords of the surrounding properties knew about the cemetery plots, there was no reason to advertise their being. However, if someone asked about the plots the property owners were more than happy to allow passage through vegetable gardens or tilled fields for the purpose of creating a memorial to the deceased individuals.

A promise was made and kept that no individual marker or blade of grass would be

disturbed unless it was necessary in order to properly read the headstone information and to photograph the cemetery plot, as well as the grave markers. In both cases permission was granted and the cemeteries are now recorded for posterity and general information for all to use in ancestral research.

Such is the case with the following; The Smith Plantation Cemetery near Wallace in Escambia County and the Lee Family Cemetery at a location once known as Shotgun Hill just inside Conecuh County near Range (also known as Deer Range) on Hwy-41. €

The Smith Plantation Cemetery

The old cemetery is well maintained by a local landowner named Michael Hall. Mr. Hall said that while it was known in olden times as the Smith Plantation Cemetery he could not say how or why this spot was chosen as a burial place, aside from the fact the entire area was at one time a large farm.

Whether or not other gravesites exist among the tall pines he cannot say. For reasons known to him personally he prefers to call it Hall Cemetery. As the tall grasses and underbrush were cleared away he discovered that one headstone bore the same name of his



Smith Plantation Cemetery Showing Chain Length Fence Installed by Logging Crew.

great-grandfather. At the time his ancestor was laid to rest in the cemetery the surrounding acreage was indeed farmland.

To reach the area from I-65, exit the Interstate at #77 and turn onto Hwy-41 south (toward Brewton). At approximately 2 miles southward is Hall Road. Turn right onto Hall Road and continue for another $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, at

which point Hall Road veers to the right and Timberline Road cuts in. Now, continue straight ahead on Timberline Road. If driving from Brewton on Hwy-41 watch for mile marker 21 and at approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile be-

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yond is Hall Road on the left.

Stay on Timberline to the first farmhouse on the left. Turn onto a graveled roadway to the Mike Hall home. At the home place please meet Mr. Hall and ask permission to cross his property. A few yards up a rise is a large vegetable garden and a tractor shed. At the shed turn right onto a narrow woodland trail and continue on the path another ½ mile. Take caution driving here as the trail is narrow and underbrush is thrashing against all sides of the vehicle. The trail will split; the left continuing on toward Little Escambia Creek. Keep the right-hand trail for about 200 feet and the small cemetery is at the end of the trail, com-

pletely surrounded by tall timber and dense underbrush.

Mr. Hall stated that a number of years back a timber crew found the burial sites and installed a chain-link fence around them to avoid damage by its logging crews. After the fence was installed Mr. Hall cleaned the area and discovered that Francis Hall was his long-lost relative. The underbrush has been removed and a turn-around area has been cleared. At the margins of the cemetery an ancient gopher tortoise has seen fit to dig a burrow and make the clearing its home as well.

David Smith - 1816 - 3/31/1891

Mary E Smith - 1837 - 2/3/1909

Francis M Hall - 10/3/1841 - 1/7/1927 e

The Lee Family Cemetery

The Lee Family Cemetery is, as mentioned earlier, at a location that in olden times was known as Shotgun Hill.

To visit the small cemetery please be courteous and ask permission of Mrs. Doris Graves to enter. Mrs. Graves is eager to lead visitors to the cemetery, but she has seen no reason to advertise its existence. It is her belief that many years ago the area was visited by the Conecuh Genealogical Society, but to her knowledge the cemetery was never registered with the Alabama Historical Commission or the Conecuh County Historical Society (now Canebrake Society)

The Lee Family Cemetery is easily accessed by

leaving I-65 at the Brewton-Repton Exit #77. Turn north onto Hwy-41 and drive 1,900 feet to the Doris Graves place (a large two-story log cabin type structure). Turn onto the gravel drive, keeping to the left at the edge of a woods. At about 25 - 30 yards will be a clearing; turn left here into the clearing and go another 35 - 40 yards and the few headstones will be visible.

It is told that many years ago the Lee family owned a sizeable farm here. On a particular day a young boy appeared at the door of the Lee home asking

for food and shelter in exchange for his labor, as he had recently lost his family and had nowhere to turn.

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The Lee Family Cemetery.

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The Lee's, being childless and in advanced years, took him in and he worked hard to earn his keep. As the Lee couple grew in age and passed away, the youngster buried them, along with other Lee relatives, in a family plot that is known today as Lee Family Cemetery. Each burial was given a headstone to its memory. In time the boy also died, but there was no one left to honor his memory. Only one grave in the plot has no headstone - this grave is said to be the young man who lived out his days with a family that adopted and cared for him as their own.

Maggie Edwards (wife of Wiley Edwards) -
1/13/1835 - 7/30/1896

Wiley Edwards (husband of Maggie Edwards) - 1846
- 1903

Nancy E Lee - (wife of Richard Lee) 4/26/1845 -
9/12/1929

Richard P Lee (husband of Nancy Lee) - 11/6/1850 -
4/24/1918

W. B. Morris - 12/1/1819 - 1/16/1904
Unknown grave

Although he would have been in advanced years at the time of the War Between the States, historical records reflect that an application for a CSA military marker was requested and applied for in memory of W. B. Morris, but no marker was found in the surrounding woods. However, let me fast forward to the Magnolia Cemetery (Stanley Crossroads) where a CSA footstone was erected for the same person (W. B. Morris; same dates of birth and death) at the grave of Rosanna Carnly Morris. The burial records indicate that Rosanna and William were married for 58 years and had two sons, John Thomas and Leander. The marker does not reflect a death date for Rosanna. €

Recollections of My Boyhood in Brewton (1880-1896)

By Robert Colley Granberry

This is a continuation of the "Recollections" by Robert Granberry begun in last month's, July 2015, Echoes.

The Medal and Anvil

As I remember my years in the Brewton Institute, I recall that Miss Adams came to town to teach the piano. She gave private lessons, but was attached to the Institute. My father and mother decided to enroll me for lessons. I did not want to take those lessons; I was much more interested in playing baseball. But I became one of twenty-seven children out of the community who registered for piano; I was the only boy, -and that certainly did go against my grain.

At the beginning of the year, Miss Adams said that she would present a gold medal to the pupil who made the most progress by the close of the school year. As she talked about that medal, I never had

wanted any one thing so much in all my life. During the year, she encouraged me from time to time. The first piece of music I learned to play was "Little Fairy Waltz." I would practice at home from time to time, not because I wanted to play, but because I wanted that gold medal at the close of school.

At last the evening came when all the town assembled in the auditorium on the second story of the school building. At the close of the exercises, Mr. Gillis stood up to make the awards. He talked at length about the different medals to be given. I thought he would never get to the one in music.

I sat out in the audience, and was sure everyone in the hall could hear the beating of my heart. And then he came to the awarding of the music medal. He held it up that we all might see. My eyes burned with desire as I looked upon it. It shone in its loveliness. It

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looked as big as a saucer, —but it really was not that large.

And then he said that Miss Adams had real difficulty in deciding which one of her pupils should receive the medal. My throat was dry; my lips were parched; my cheeks were pale—I did want that medal. At last he came out with the atomic statement—“The medal goes to Pearl Henderson.” My! My! I really wished that the rocks and the mountains might fall on me, that a hole in that floor would open up and let me disappear. It was life’s bitterest moment. It was the saddest hour of my boyhood. I did want it so much, and I did not get it.

Mr. Gillis did say, however, that Miss Adams had requested him to state that Robert Granberry was a very close second in the race, that she had real difficulty in making the decision, and that Robert should have honorable mention.

During my school days in the Institute, another “music experience” which I remember was when an orchestra was organized, and the “Anvil Chorus” was to be played at Commencement. I was elected to strike the anvil at a certain time. I was very much frightened at the thought of participation in the orchestra. I was so afraid I would strike the anvil at the wrong time —there were to be only three times when I was to strike it, —that was exactly what I did. I came in way ahead of the time with a terrific blast. I then was so confused and frightened that I kept on striking the anvil with such fury and force that the whole production was brought to a halt, and the conductor began over.

Well, that will do, I suppose, for my school days in Brewton. If I had only worked as hard at my books as I did in getting out of applying myself, I know that I would have learned considerably more than was the case.

Jobs

I cannot recall having any particular job which amounted to much before I left Brewton to go off to school. Of course, there are not many things small boys can do, and that is especially true in a small town.

I did have some little jobs from time to time, and

they gave me a feeling of great importance. The first time I recall ever earning anything by working was when I assisted for two days a farmer on the edge of town in gathering his crop of sweet potatoes. My pay for the work was a bushel of potatoes, and, when I carried the sack of potatoes home and delivered it to my father, I felt as if I were supporting the whole family.

Later on, for a few weeks during the summer, I was water boy at a planning mill, at a daily wage of fifty cents. And then on a few week-ends, I worked in Mr. Charles Powell’s grocery store.

As I recall my playmates, not any of them had spending money; there seemed to be no particular need for money. We did enjoy having a little money every now and then. I often had some money by being given permission by my father to sell the feed sacks from the barn —sacks in which oats and corn came. The merchants would pay five cents for two sacks, and that always helped quite a bit. To be honest about the matter, I sometimes sold sacks without by father’s permission.

Church Life

There were four denominations in Brewton when I was a boy, —Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Universalist, —and one Catholic family by the name of Arends. The Baptist pastors I remember were Dr. R. R. Crumpton, Rev. A. A. Scruggs, and Rev. L. M. Bradley. The names of Methodist pastors which come to mind were Rev. B. C. Glenn, who came to Brewton in about 1884; then I believe that Rev. A. C. Huntley was the Methodist pastor till about 1890.

Our home was one of the “headquarters” for the Baptist preachers. I remember when Rev. L. M. Bradley came to Brewton to consider accepting the pastorate, he stayed in our home, and greatly startled me by suddenly turning toward me and saying, “Robert, do you pray in public?”

The pastors in our community had real positions of leadership and influence. The remuneration given them was very small; from time to time, the congregations gave them “poudings,” —which means that they would get together and visit the preacher’s home and carry groceries, produce, and often clothing.

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Recollections of My Boyhood in Brewton (1880-1896)

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I joined the Brewton Baptist Church in 1892. Dr. Crumpton was pastor. He called at our home one afternoon and asked to see me. When I came into the living room, he talked to me quite at length, and told me what it meant to join a church. At the service that night, I united with the church. I recall that the congregation was singing "Happy Day That Fixed My Choice."

The baptismal services in those days were held in a creek about a mile from the church. Following the revival meeting in August, the one baptismal service of the year was held. It was always quite an occasion and practically everybody in town would be in attendance.

The Ladies Aid Society was an active organization in making money to help support the church by giving ice cream festivals and oyster suppers.

To the left of our house there was quite a large open space, and this was the usual place where the Baptist women would sell things to aid the church. My mother was active in the Ladies Aid Society.

I remember that when the Aid Society was having an ice cream supper one night, my father, being tired, retired rather early. During the evening, someone got in through the window of his room, stole his trousers, watch, and money, and departed. My father often joked mother in after years about someone in the Ladies Aid Society during the ice cream supper stealing his trousers.

After I was five or six years of age, I was always carried to church for the morning and night services. As soon as I would get to church at night, I would go directly to the pew against the wall in the right Amen corner, stretch out thereon, and go sound asleep. That was my practice for years.

One night after the service was over, the family forgot to awaken me, and I was not missed until they had reached home and were sitting around talking when someone said, "Where is Robert?" After finding the old Negro sexton to open the church, they found me sound asleep. I have often wondered what would have happened if I had awakened in that dark church!

The denominations got along very well together, unless one became too prosperous, —then the others

would quietly put on the soft pedal.

Sunday School was held in the church's one assembly room. The classes were scattered over the small auditorium. My interest in Sunday School was largely on account of two things: first, the Sunday School had a tree [event] every Christmas Eve, and gave each child in the school a present, —a tin horn, a jack-in-the-box, and a package of fire crackers. The Christmas Tree was an event with the "free" presents.

The other Sunday School plan that appealed mightily to me, and helped to hold me in line during the year, was the annual picnic for the school, with lemonade, —free lemonade, and it was usually pink, in a barrel, —a barrel full. We could drink all we wanted of that lemonade, and drink it all day at the annual Sunday School Picnic.

Play and Recreation

Our play and recreation life was all very simple. It did not take much to satisfy us and to make us happy. All of the children dressed just about alike. Little boys wore two garments, —short pants buttoned to a waist with open collar. That was all there was to it!

The dress of girls was conventional, simple, orthodox, —long sleeves, high collars, and skirts well below the knees.

Little boys played a great deal with bottles which were called horses. Some of us had large stables and would be very proud of different colored bottles, especially when we would hitch a double team to a cigar-box wagon.

We rolled hoops a great deal. Playing tag was very popular, especially during recess at school. The swimming hole in Burnt Corn Creek was always popular. Fishing was often engaged in, but I believe that my first love was baseball.

The first bicycle ever brought to Brewton was a prize won by my brother George for writing a short story in a contest arranged by the Youth Companion. This bicycle was the high-wheel type, with a little wheel trailing behind. It created quite a deal of excitement among the young people in Brewton. That front wheel must have been four to four-and-a-half feet high, and it was very difficult to ride. Later on, I remember the first "safety bicycle," that is, the bicycle with two wheels about the same size, which

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came to Brewton.

Parties were big events among the children. While in Brewton in October, 1946, I looked over the files of the town paper, and in the local column of the paper dated June 16, 1896, I read the following: "Robert C. Granberry entertained at home on Tuesday evening a good crowd of boys and girls. A pleasant evening was spent." I wish I could recall all the boys and girls present, and the games we played, but I do remember that we had a big time playing "Going to Jerusalem," and that the big occasion of the party was the candy-making and the candy-pulling.

Pets

There were certain pets I had when I was a boy, each of which can be vividly seen at present. I really loved an old horse which the family owned when I was about six or seven years of age. A little dog, "Skeeter" could not be cured of the mange; my father tried, but he got worse and worse. When I was about eleven years of age, it was decided that the merciful thing to do was to end "Skeeter's" existence, and I said if it had to be done then I would do it. I was to take him way out from town and shoot him.

With a heavy heart, I left home, carrying a small single barrel gun. My dog kept very close at my heels, and I kept walking a considerable distance from town, but could never make up my mind to end his life. "Skeeter" seemed to understand; I thought that his eyes had never been so constantly upon me and so appealing. After three or four attempts, I turned and walked back home, "Skeeter" still following. I do not know how he was disposed of later on.

One of my outstanding pleasures was in the ownership of a goat, wagon, and harness. To hitch up that goat was joy unsurpassed. We found one day that the goat had disappeared. I roamed the village and walked through the neighboring woods. Everybody was looking for the goat. After four or five days, he was discovered at the bottom of a well which was next to our barn.

Christmas

There is one Christmas season which stands out with considerable prominence in my early life. I think

it was about 1888. At that time I really believed in Santa Clause. As I remember, all of the boys and girls did. There were two things I wanted very much indeed, and I wrote a letter to Santa Clause requesting them. When I actually received these desired objects from Santa Clause, I am sure I was more thrilled than I was the first time I boarded a ship for Europe in later years.

My mind was obsessed with the desire to have red-top boots and a magic lantern. I can see those boots now. About the upper fourth of the boots was turned back and was of a rich red leather. Little boys did not wear shoes often. But those boots, —I wanted to wear them even on hot days.

And the magic lantern which came from Santa Claus was all that a boy could desire. The little slides were in colors. There were some posters to announce when the show would be given; and there were tickets printed, stating that the admission price was five pins.

We all liked to have pins since we could cross them on each other on the railroad track, and we would have a pair of scissors after the train passed. We would trade one pair of scissors for four pins, thus doubling one's capital, and after the next train had passed, we would have two scissors.

I finally collected quite a box of pins, for I gave many magic lantern shows, and always saw to it that my playmates bought a ticket with five pins.

The stores at Christmas did not decorate very much. They would have a few simple toys on a table in the center, but these places were very popular centers with the children.

Music

The first piano bought into Escambia County was a Chickering which my father ordered from the manufacturers in Boston. It was an old-fashioned square piano. He purchased it shortly after his marriage, —I think it was in 1872. My mother played the piano, and the instrument was secured for her use. When I was a boy, I often heard that people drove in from miles around to hear the piano.

My sister, Nannie Baer, studied music and played. My brother George, from earliest childhood, had played remarkably well by ear, and later on studied to

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Recollections of My Boyhood in Brewton (1880-1896)

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become a professional musician.

There was a great deal of music, thus, in my home when I was a child. One day just about dark my sister was in the living room playing when she suddenly felt the presence of someone. Turning toward the window which opened on the front porch, she saw a tall Negro man standing at the window, who smilingly said, "Please play on." Of course, my sister was very much frightened and screamed. The man jumped over the bannister of the porch, ran across the yard, and out the front gate.

When father came home and heard the story, he quieted my sister, who was very much agitated, by saying, "Why, the Negro meant no harm at all he was passing the house, was attracted by the music, and without realizing what he was doing, walked into the yard, on the porch and to the window. When you screamed, he realized the predicament he was in."

Events Recalled

As one reverts to the early years of one's life, it is interesting to note some of the events which made an indelible impression, —sometimes for no reason at all.

I recall the court week of Escambia County. Men from all sections, both white and colored, would be loitering around the court house all day. Mardi Gras in Mobile was a big occasion in the southern section of Alabama. I attended Mardi Gras in 1892. While in Mobile, my shoes hurt my feet; I sat down on the curb and pulled them off, tied them together, and hung them around m neck. Boat loads of bananas had come into the port of Mobile. I purchased an entire bunch for twenty-five cents, lugged it on the train with me, and have never cared especially for bananas since!

I remember the torch-light procession when Cleveland was elected president. The Fourth of July baseball game with Evergreen, twenty-five miles away, was a big event. When I was fourteen, I attended the Southeastern Fair in Atlanta. I drove in a buggy with my mother and her sister from Brewton to Andalusia, a distance of forty-two miles, when I was about nine years old.

Brewton is located between two creeks. Often the

entire community is flooded. I recall the occasions, especially, when the railroad and all of the business part of the town were under water. It was a great lark to be in a boat with other boys and row up and down the main street of the town. On the other occasion when high water came, I was afflicted with the mumps, and was overwhelmed with sadness and sorrow because I could not participate in the good times of the boys in the boats.

In July of 1885, there was the The Great Fire in Brewton. It was one of the outstanding calamities of the town, along with the yellow fever epidemic, and the submersions by high water.

In the Great Fire, practically all of the business section was burned. The town had no fire department or any fire equipment. There was no way to combat the onrushing flames other than by the use of the bucket brigade. The Great Fire is remembered by all of the older citizens. The merchants were not disheartened after the fire, even though they were very much downcast. From the ashes of the fire of 1888 arose better and larger buildings.

There were two very trying experiences which came to me as a boy. The first of these was in 1889 (I was nine years of age), when I was bitten by a rattle snake. While walking on a plank through our backyard toward a small peach orchard at the rear of the house, this deadly poisonous snake came from under the plank, unseen by me, and bit me on my bare foot. Fortunately, my mother was at the rear of the house and heard me scream; my father was out in the lot where the barn was located, and rushed to me. But for immediate attention, I am sure that I would not have lived. Within a couple of minutes after being bitten, my leg below the knee was tightly bound by a rope; many chickens were sliced and my foot plunged within the hot meat to suck out the poison, and I was literally drenched in whiskey. These things were done instantly. I recall lying on the bed for some days, looking at my foot which was swollen to the size of my head.

My brother Mack found the snake, and after he killed it, put it in a cigar box and burned it. I think that all of that was done to give me some feeling of satisfactory revenge upon the poisonous reptile. €

To be continued.

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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