

the GROUNDHOG

Volume 4 Number 11 February 1987

A Publication of the Mentone Area Preservation Association

Emma J. Smith (1864-1937)

Ode to a Nightingale

by Mickey Strickland

Emma Smith died before many of the residents of Mentone were even born. She was the wife of a simple farmer and began married life in a rude cabin on a rented farm. But her influence is felt to this day; her teachings were so far ahead of her time that many are universally relevant even now, and the depth and scope of her intellect encompassed so broad a field of interest that her life exemplified the grace, the strength and the ingenuity of the early pioneers.

Emma Jane May was born in 1854, some say in Rome, Georgia, some say in Gaylesville, Alabama, but at a young age she moved to Lookout Mountain. Her father, Pleasant Grove Mays, was a traveling dentist when he met and married the "Widow Van." The widow had young children, then she and Pleasant added to the places around the family table, one of which belonged to Emma Jane. Mr. Mays were part Cherokee and for all of Miss Emma's life she was proud of her Indian heritage. Jenny Dowiat told of her Grandmother coming to spend the night: "She always came about dark and would sit in front of the fire telling Indian stories. How we children loved to hear them!" She recalled, "and she loved to mix all sorts of colors saying it was because of her being an Indian."

Miss Emma and her husband, John William, whom she called Will, spent the first years of their married life sharecropping on rented land. They married in 1881, and Miss Emma's fierce pride manifested itself

See Miss Emma, Pg. 7



Miss Emma - Third from Left



Miss Emma - Fourth from Left

MAPA'S Major accomplishments in five years:

We of MAPA are proud of the accomplishments of the last five years and are glad to have made a contribution to the Mentone area. In the future, as in the past, we will endeavor to preserve the natural beauty of the mountain while providing those things which meet the criteria of enhancement. Thank you, Mentone, for five wonderful years!

By holding three seasonal festivals each year MAPA has raised some money which has been used for local improvements such as:

1. \$100.00 to the Welcome Center to get Mentone listed on the micro-vision machines in Alabama.
2. \$600.00 to the city to help repair the Brow Park Shelter.
3. \$200.00 for the Valley Head Athletic Field.
4. \$200.00 for the Rhododendron Garden Club for more plantings around town.
5. \$200.00 for the Moon Lake School Library.
6. These festivals are also used by various Churches and schools to raise money through the sales of foods, ect.

MAPA has been instrumental or responsible for the following:

1. Formed a Historical Committee for the purpose of obtaining a grant from the state to help rebuild the historic rock wall on hwy. 117. We expect the project to be completed in spring of 1987. The project is now underway.
2. Put up a bulletin board at the post office for the use of everyone.
3. The caution light on hwy. 117.
4. The yellow center line on hwy. 89, DeSoto Parkway.
5. The "MENTONE" signs at exits on I59.
6. Published Zora Strayhorn's book: MENTONE, ALABAMA, A HISTORY.
7. Helped in printing a high quality brochure on Mentone and surrounding area.
8. Monthly publication of THE GROUNDHOG newspaper.
9. Helped get a public telephone in Mentone.

Bill Riedesel, MAPA Secretary

Prestigious Award

Milton and Grace Howard have reason to be very proud of their son-in-law, Richard Whitaker of Kansas City, Mo., nominated for the coveted OUTSTANDING YOUNG MAN OF 1986 award.

This award highlights the achievements of young men 21-36, by their contributions to community and professionals; are shaping the future of our nation. These are the young men who give quietly so that all our lives may be improved.

The Annual Awards Volume states that the men are judged on the basis of service to others, professional excellence, civic and professional recognition and community activities.

New Career - Travel

Jean Seal, recent resident of Mentone, has moved to Fort Payne. She was an asset to our community, and we will miss her. "I will always think of Mentone as my home and at least I can visit because I'm so close." Joan told the Groundhog.

Jean is a travel agent at Madison Travel Agency and wants to plan a trip for you. "With the air fares so low now, I just might go, too!!" she said.

March MAPA Meeting

March 3, 1987

Tuesday

The Parlor

St. Joseph's On-the-Mountain Church 7:00 p.m.

In Memorium

Luther Edgar Kirby 1916-1987

Luther was a life long resident of Mentone. He was the son of Louis and Maggie Kirby. In 1938 he married Carrie Ruth Brown and they became the parents of Elaine (Keith) who now lives in Fort Payne and Ed who resides in Mentone. Luther was employed by Camp Alpine and lived in a home overlooking Little River. His grandchildren are Connie Keith Newsome, Alan Keith, Angela Kirby Lawton, Eric, Andrea and Allison Kirby and great-grandson, Matthew Newsome. He was much loved and admired by all who knew him, and he is sorely missed. He was a good and honest man, and an asset to our community.

Acclaimed Rockwork

Local resident Jesse Crow is well-known for his expertise in the field of stone masonry, and some of his meticulous work can be found gracing the pages of the January issue of SOUTHERN LIVING magazine.

A log cabin in Rome, GA, belonging to Harold and Kathy Stegall, is pictured on the cover and was featured on the inside as well. Jesse did all the rockwork on the cabin.

Jesse has been in the stone masonry business since he was fifteen, over 40 years, but "started helping my Dad as soon as I was big enough to hold a hoe to mix mud!"

Jesse's father, Lee Crow, was the mason for many structures in the area, such as the stone wall that runs beside Hwy. 117 down the mountain.

I have always enjoyed that kind of work," Jesse told THE GROUNDHOG, "and I just like to know people are satisfied with the job I do."

Congratulations, Jesse, on the recognition for your fine work!

Welcome!



A big Mentone hello to Hazel and Jim Campbell, the new owners of Helena's Restaurant. They are originally from Atlanta, but have been living in Cloudland in a home they built there. Stop by the cafe and make them feel at home.

A mountain welcome to Sybil Wright and son Robbie who have moved here from Maitland, Florida. Sybil is an R. N. who has taught special classes concerning learning disabilities. Robbie is in the seventh grade at Valley Head.

There's a new family in the Hoyle McCurdy house and we want to make them feel at home in the community. Tony and Judy White and sons Brook, Dijon and Joshua moved to Mentone in July, then purchased Floyd's Florist (Ft. Payne) in August.

The White's three boys are cared for by a nanny, Tess Daniels. Tess has traveled extensively, Europe, California, Montana, and Iceland—and served in the Navy. Lets make her feel right at home here in Mentone!



A Tip of the Hat To...

...MAPA, for being instrumental in getting the rock wall repaired.

...Jack Jones for allowing THE GROUNDHOG to share his office.

...Ben Smith, Jenny Dowlat, Darlene Keith, Mary Strickland, Susan Hooks, Dennis Smith, Johnny Hulkan, Clara Cash, Grace Pullen and to others who contributed unselfishly of their time and resources in the development of the cover story for February.

...Charles and Jean McGehee for their constructive support and advice in the development of this issue.

...Darlene and Lou Keith for being there and making the transition go so smoothly.

...To the old staff who stayed with THE GROUNDHOG. And to the new ones who came on board.

...To Tommy and Connie Hawkins, owners of the ADVERTISER, for giving tirelessly of their time and resources to help prepare this issue of THE GROUNDHOG.

Our Town with Linda Brown

Hello, I'm going to be writing a monthly community column and I need your help. This column will help everyone to know what is happening in Mentone. Therefore, if your organization is having a special event please let me know. For now I am going to report church news also, so if your church is having an event that you want the community to be aware of, call me. You will find my telephone number at the end of this article.

The lovely river-front home of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jones was the setting for the January meeting of the Valley Head Woman's Club. Mr. David Brouwer of Edward D. Jones Investors of Fort Payne was the speaker. He explained the many ways in which money can be invested and urged everyone to check all possibilities before investing. Co-hosting with Mrs. Jones were Mrs. Russell Brown, Mrs. Maynard Donahue and Mrs. Alvie Hammond. The meeting was concluded early because of the threat of inclement weather.

Rev. and Mrs. Allen Houston from Zambia, West Africa, were recent guests of the Mentone Wesleyan Church. The missionaries showed slides of the area and spoke to the congregation of their work in Africa. The local unit of Wesleyan Women International was responsible for the first Sunday night service in February. They presented Rev. Drew Wolcott who did a dramatization of blind Barnabaeas.

The Moonlake PTA is now selling ads to finance the printing of the 1986-87 Yearbook. If you want to help with this project you can call Vonda Lee (634-4524). You may want to print your name, the name of an organization or just "a friend of Moonlake School." The cost per ad is \$12.00.

The United Methodist Church is starting something new. Since they have worship service at 10 A.M. from December to June, they have decided to have Sunday School at 11 A.M. during these months. Everyone is invited to attend all services. The United Methodist Women held their January meeting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kirby. Mrs. Ovie Bialock presented a program, "Hear Us When We Pray."

Mrs. Kirk served cake and coffee around her dining room table. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship on a cold, raw wintry day.

At a recent meeting, the DeSoto Rescue Squad decided to stain the remainder of the American Legion Hall. The Legion has stained the front part and certainly improved the looks of the building. Let's all start thinking of ways to spruce up Mentone this Spring. The squad also wants to thank the band ALABAMA for the donation from the proceeds of June Jam. This gift will be used to do some much needed work on the vehicles.

A group of Mentone women meet at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church parlor every Thursday from 9:30 to 11:30 for an interdenominational Bible study. This is a discussion type study and they are now studying the book of Hebrews. All women are invited to come and meet with them at any time.

The Moonlake Baptist Church is now in the process of conducting a Master Life Discipleship program. The participants make a deep commitment to the program. They read and study the Bible at home as well as in class. The course enables them to grow spiritually and to improve their relationship with God. The program lasts from six to nine months. So that it doesn't seem that all they do is work, the church is sponsoring a Valentine Day Banquet in the form of a covered-dish meal. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Mentionians find various ways to break the winter doldrums. There are at least two bridge clubs which meet weekly in the homes of the members. Another group passes the time and enjoys the fellowship shared around a quilting frame. Winter in Mentone can be a most rewarding time and I urge everyone to use the days constructively.

I would like to try something in this column. Let's have a SWAP SHOP. If you can't find a certain recipe, a pattern or even an out-of-date color of yarn, or maybe you need some seeds or other items, let me know and I will put your request in print. I'm sure that someone will have just what you need and then you may have an item that they have been searching for. I want to know if someone has some catnip that I could get a start from. My cats have always killed mine before I could get it started. I have fewer cats now so maybe this time it would stand a chance.

Call me or send me your news items and let's make this our column.

Linda Brown, Rt. 1, Box 272, Mentone, AL 35984 205/634-4755

Don't miss Frieda Darnell of the Historic Foundation of Huntsville at the March MAPA Meeting!

From the Editor...

There is no way I can fill the shoes of the two previous editors of THE GROUNDHOG, so I will just try to do the best I can to uphold the fine tradition of excellence of those who have preceded me. I hope to provide a common point of reference for everyone who lives here, passes through, has moved away or who is just interested in this community. Let's make it a great year in Mentone—one in which all of us who share the same goal of having a place for families that welcomes all friends and can work together in harmony and love, never forgetting to keep a sense of humor through it all. M.S.

Mountain Watch

by Charles White McGehee

Sometime last year a discussion arose on zoning at the town council. Some folks thought the best way to control any future growth in Mentone was through zoning—specific districts for business, others for residences. Someone suggested that if anyone was concerned about what might happen to adjoining property, to just buy it.

The idea seemed impractical to me because I thought most people didn't have that kind of money. Yet I found myself recently doing just what was suggested. Here is how it came about.

When Jean and I bought the Morgadanes property, it included the log cabin and four lots just across from Brow Park, almost an acre. There was an additional lot, jutting out to the north, between us and the Mayer property. It is now owned by artist Rick Long. Over the years the Morgadanes sisters had paid taxes on the lot, but a deed was nowhere to be found.

"Just let it sit," our attorney advised. "No one can get a clear title to it." So we let it sit for some five years. But we began to worry what if someone started raising hogs there, or put up a cheap trailer? So Jean went down to the Court House in Fort Payne and found that a gentleman in Chattanooga had exercised the legal right to attain ownership by paying taxes for three years.

We got in touch with him and made an offer, more than we could afford. He put us off. Our worry increased. The lot was just across the fence from Jean's treasured garden, and the walk which leads through our carefully manicured property. Then we decided to contact our neighbors, Rick and Debba Long, and agreed to divide the cost and property.

So it came about. There are now two unique deeds for two priceless lots—each a narrow 25 by 125—one for the McGehees, one for the Longs. When spring comes, Rick and I will do our own rough surveying and I will put a wire fence about ours. Rick's vegetable garden is on theirs.

Isn't the ownership of land wonderful? There's kind of joyful greed about it. Someone recently asked what books had influenced me most while growing up. Along with Lin Yutang's THE IMPORTANCE OF LIVING and Richard Halliburton's THE ROYAL ROAD TO ROMANCE, I cited ADVENTURES IN CONTENTMENT. It was written by a journalist named David Grayson who bought a small farm for his retirement and wrote poetically about it.

One day as he walked in serenity about his pastures and woodlots, he said to himself, "I can actually spit on my own land."

Before Jean and I were reduced to a fixed income, we bought several adjoining lots. Now we own about three acres, four delightful lots just off the Lookout Mountain Brow, thence across Central Street (Alias Willie Nelson Drive or North Lookout Mountain Parkway), and up the slope, above our untouched woodlot, a small stream through its center.

Imagine this! Its all within the boundaries of one of the finest small towns in America, with the advantages of civilization, and yet there is a sense of wilderness and privacy. The nearest neighbor—a block away. Greed or not, ownership of land is wonderful.

A main reason early colonial settlers left Europe for America was the ready availability of largely untouched land. Taxation of land was a top priority, and still is. Although such other taxes as income, sales and luxury produce more revenue, increase in land taxes brings squawks.

Nations are established on the basis of the geographics of land. We fight wars over it, fence it in, pass it along to our children, usually sell it for the highest possible price. My father inherited forty acres in Southwest Mississippi. Because of the depression he was unable to pay the taxes. It went to a purchaser for modest tax coverage. Oil was discovered, successful wells were drilled.

Jean, steadily becoming a recognized William Faulkner scholar, says that the famous Mississippi writer thinks Southern land is cursed—because the people took it from the Indians and maintained it by slavery. Indians to this day consider land sacred, something that is only lent to us for our care, that we should worship it, not consider it chattel.

Do we own the land or does it own us? Is it possible for us to consider it a precious loan, given to us for awhile, to pass along to others in a higher state of preservation or development? There are some

The Groundhog

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MENTONE, ALABAMA: A HISTORY

by Zora Shay Strayhorn

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organizations such as the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society which insist on the maintenance of areas left to the miracle of infolding nature.

Here in Mentone, a village of half-a-thousand, there is a premium on the economics of land. Without straining, I can think of six persons who deal in real estate—plus even more who operate here from Fort Payne. We are blessed by a huge and carefully maintained wilderness preserve just south of DeSoto Park. We are careful, sometimes doggedly stubborn, about our decisions concerning anything that applies to land.

As for me, I delight in our three acres. It is a perfect rectangle, pointing from west to east, with the northward abutment of a thin strip 25 feet wide, 125 long. Half of it is left absolutely to nature—to the two families of pileated woodpeckers, squirrels, rabbits, chipmunks, cardinals, reptiles and other creatures who make it their home.

Our three acres fill me with both ecstasy and greed. Its ownership can be proven by deeds recorded in musty volumes (perhaps computers) in the Fort Payne Court House. It was most likely owned by the Cherokees before they were driven west on the "Trail of Tears"; then the Mentone Springs Hotel Corporation; then the Morgadanes sisters; now it's mine!

To MENTONE AREA PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, BOX 50 in support of the objectives of MAPA, desiring to join with others in preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area, I enclose \$5 for voting membership for one through June 1987.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

M.A.P.A. Meeting for February— A Birthday Celebration

On February 3, the Mentone Area Preservation Association held its monthly meeting in the parlor of St. Joseph's on the Mountain Episcopal Church.

Donna Buckley, Acting Director, reported on a special meeting of the executive board that was held to change the publishing responsibilities of THE GROUNDHOG paper from Luther Keith to Mickey Strickland.

Bernise Crow reported that Homer Crow has received word that the rock wall rebuilding will begin soon. (Since the meeting, work has begun) There was some discussion concerning the upcoming Rhodendron Festival, and everyone agreed that there was no way to choose between Maggie Cordell's two lovely handmade quilts, so they will BOTH be used to raise funds. Chances will be sold soon, so be ready to get your share! Shurlee Froeler is the person to see concerning the Festival.

The time is at hand to print more Mentone brochures, and the good news is that Linda Brown is going to ask the Crafts Festival Committee to approve half the cost. It is hoped local merchants and camps will contribute also. MAPA will also help with this project.

The guest speaker for the evening was Ben Hill of Sequoyah Caverns. He told of the operation of the attraction and said they are now open on weekends during the winter months. The original name of the natural formation was Ellis Cave. There have been nine weddings performed in the cave. The Arts and Crafts Show held last Fall was their first one and drew about 8500 people. The next one will be the second week of September.

After the meeting, everyone enjoyed a big birthday cake baked especially for the occasion of our fifth anniversary. —condensed from the minutes of Bill Riedesel, secretary



Mapa Birthday Celebration

Standing left to right: Grace Howard, Ed Disney, Mable Kirk, Shirlee Froehler, Ray Froehler, Bill Riedesel, Sammy Cash, Olive Jones, Dorothy Crow, Milton Howard, Harrell Jenkins.

Bottom Row: Jack Jones, Maggie Cordell, Donna Buckley, Bernise Crow, Jean McGehee, Zora Strayhorn.

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Town Council Meeting

The Mentone Town Council meeting was held on February 3, 1987 in the Town Hall. Mayor Rob Hammonds said a discussion concerning Mentone's water supply will be held in April concerning application for a community development block grant from the state. At the time of the meeting, the water telemeter was not working and was still under manual control. There was a discussion concerning getting the streets patched up when the weather improves. There was agreement that the county should be contacted in the spring about necessary road work.

Concern was expressed over the increase in vandalism, especially to signs in the area. Contacting the sheriff's dept. for back-up support for Mentone Policeman Colquitt Jones was suggested.

The Council has been unable to make contact with Boyce Dooley concerning possible Cable TV for Mentone. It was agreed that efforts to reach him would continue.

A motion was carried to reappoint the present Fire Board Members for another term.

It was stated that the liability insurance policy had paid, as well as the bill for the feasibility study proposed water system.

Robert French - Thinker, Teacher, Walking through the fire

For iron to become steel it must first be exposed to intense heat. It's strength and purity are a direct result of a process of metamorphosis brought about through a change in the very heart of the metal itself. Such has been the career of Bob French. He has had to walk through the fire, and from that experience has come an attitude that is reflective of an inner peace — hard won but soul-felt.

For pottery to be durable; for it to glow with an inner beauty, it must be put into the kiln. A piece of clay, no matter how skillful the potter, would not retain its shape without the integrity of the flame, nor would it ever be as deeply brilliant without the changes fire brings.

If one could combine the strength and tenacity of the steel with the beauty of the pottery, one would have the Bob French of today. His compassion for humanity and his desire for knowledge lead him on a spiritual quest that gives him profound insight into the feelings and attitudes of the common man.

"Being judgemental, having a fixed opinion, having strong likes or dislikes, having pride, or being critical, surrenders possible choices. By examining as many choices as possible we can see available to us, we reduce the range of possible error in selecting the "right" choice, the choice most beneficial to us and to others...this is the way of knowledge." Bob reflects in one of the volumes he has written on human spirituality.

Being an attorney is just the tip of the iceberg when considering the life of Bob French. There is a depth to the man that can only be measured through his introspective writings and teachings. For those who wish to embark on their own spiritual journey, Bob gives lectures on Tuesday nights at his office in Fort Payne. All seekers are welcome.

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call 634-4676 after five.



Local Artists

A group of students from Valley Head have created a work of art that is prominently displayed in the entrance hall there. Professional artist, Jimmy Frazier, supervised the project which is a painting of rolling farmlands done in brilliant, warm colors. David Looper, Karen Bain, Tammy Hawkins, Dwight Gray, Dean Gardner and Bill Clark, Jr., are the artists.

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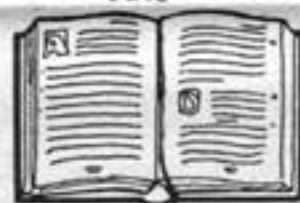
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Book of the Month



by Rachel Manning

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Crafts Corner

by Helen Turner

I have so many requests for my bread dough sculpture recipe, that I thought it would be good to use to introduce my craft column.

Recipe:

Mix in large bowl:
1½ cups hot water
1 cup salt

Let water get to room temperature, then add:
3 to 3½ cups all purpose flour, a little at a time until a stiff dough forms. It should have a clay-like texture.

Now, Knead! Knead! Knead! The more you work the dough, the smoother it will be.

O.K., we are ready to create. There is no need to buy expensive sculpturing tools, because you will find in your kitchen drawers and cabinets a multitude of tools that do very nicely. For instance, knives, cookie cutters, garlic press (to make grass and hair), a melon ball shaper, pizza cutter, spoons, toothpicks. Cookie cutter shapes are easy for anyone and make beautiful Christmas ornaments.

Roll the dough as thick or as thin as you would like. If you are a very creative person with some sculpting ability, the sky is the limit.

Experiment with different kinds of flour for a variety of colors and textures. You can also add food coloring to your dough. Brushing pieces before baking with beaten egg or cooking oil will cause dough to turn a nice brown color in chosen areas.

After rolling out the dough, cut in the desired shapes, place on a cookie sheet and bake. When done, allow to cool before finishing.

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees and as the dough becomes firm, increase the temperature to 300-325 degrees. If dough gets too hot at first, it will be puffy.

A general rule for baking time is approx. 30 minutes for each ¼ inch in thickness.

To finish your bread dough pieces, you have several methods to choose. Each type of paint produces its own interesting effect.

Try the different ones, or leave it natural. Personally, my two favorite are acrylics and water colors. Because of salt contents in the dough moisture is drawn to each piece and softens it, so you must completely seal it for protection. You can use shellac, varnish, lacquer or one of the many sprays and sealers available at any craft supply.

Acrylics give a nice rich color and water colors give an antique-like finish. If you use a water base, make sure the piece is completely dry before applying the sealer.

There is no way that I can cover all the different things you do with bread dough sculpture in this column or even touch on all the different recipes, but if you have any questions write me in care of THE GROUNDHOG and I will try to answer in future columns.

Well, here I am in my kitchen, admiring my creation, with flour all over me, and all over the floor, the cabinets and telephone as well! (Someone called during mixing time), and at last I have that white Scarlett O'Hara complexion I always wanted. Wish I had a fairy godmother with a magic wand to whoosh away this mess. Oh, well! I won't think about that today, I'll think about THAT tomorrow!

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 - Largest Commercial building in Valley Head over 5,000
• sq. ft. factory site \$10,000
 - Little River Tracts for sale in your own NATURAL
• SWIMMING POOL \$8,000
 - 3 acre tract on Little River near Cloudmont Ski and
• Golf Resort - also near Cloudmont Airpark. \$20,000
 - New Log Cabin on 5 acres overlooks beautiful Little
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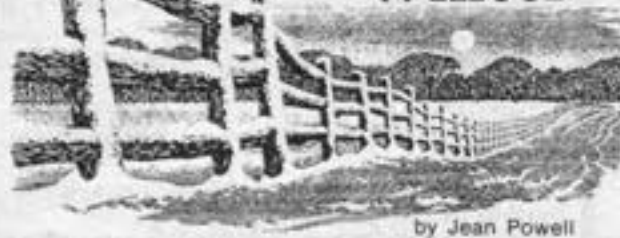
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by Jean Powell

Whose words these are I think I know,
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

—Robert Frost



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Nightingale Essays

Nightingale Letter

Nightingale, AL
March 11, 1914.

Editor Times:—

Accept an apology for not getting in a letter in your last issue. We simply had an unusual rush of work. Don't guess your readers missed us much, anyway, however. We hope to do better in the future. It seems to be a characteristic of the human family to always hope for the future, and it is well we should.

We all like to sing "In the sweet bye and bye," and I sometimes think we fail to properly appreciate the blessings of the present by the great anticipation of the future.

Well, who says we haven't had weather to suit everybody? I don't remember of having seen the weather so fickle at this season of the year. Last Friday just before noon we heard thunder, and the clouds gathered and it turned very dark and we thought we were going to have a spring storm, but it turned out to be a regular snow storm, but cleared up and was soon gone. Sunday morning when we looked out there was a thin mantle covering the ground, and through the day, at times, the fleecy flakes kept falling, but soon disappeared. We remember big snows we had 20 odd years ago, and what great discomfort was caused to both man and beast, and how we would wade through the deep snow, to feed and water the stock and hunt up our hogs on the range, and feed till the snow disappeared, and at that time most all of us old mountaineers depended on buying the major part of our feed, consequently often the snow caught us unprepared. In looking over some old papers a few days ago, I found some lines I scribbled at just such a poverty-stricken time, and here they are:

I take my pen this sunny morn,
To tell you something true,
That we are out of cotton seed
And out of softness, too.

Our barrel, not quite full of meal,
Our meat and flour all gone,
You may know how sad I feel;
When they left me all alone.

Our fattening hogs are dead and gone,
Cholera killed them, every one,
We'll have to buy our meat—I guess,
Or do without it more or less.

In the present day of fast living and reckless spending of time and money, we think it good to go back (in memory) to the old times, when money was scarce, and hard to get, and what we call necessities now were luxuries then. When children looked forward to Christmas, and knew Santa was coming with reindeers and sleigh, and were overjoyed at the emptying of the stocking, now children are so surfeited and feasted the whole year, that Santa fails to bring the joy of olden times. Santa's outfit in ye olden times would look exceedingly plain to the present-day children, but to us grown children Santa was allright and his yearly visit is greatly appreciated. Well the times do change. What next?

Respectfully,
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The Story of Reddog Part 1

by Gregory Purvis

At dusk the orange sun had set beneath the mountain and the world was growing once again dark. The people were afraid, it was the time of the Moon and the time of shadows. The women and children shuddered in their deerskin blankets, and the men sat around the fire and smoked their pipes.

Reddog was among them. He stood out from the other young men who had recently passed the rites of manhood. He was tall and slim, with lengthy cords of muscle running down his sunbronzed arms and legs. His features were sharp and handsome, and his eyes were a gentle shade of brown. What separated him from his peers was his hair; it was bright red, the hue of blood, cut long and braided in the back and short on the top. None within their tribe had any other color hair than black or gray, and this trait marked Reddog as special and important. His father was the Medicine Man, as he would have been also. But his hair, his undisputed strength in combat, and his wisdom, had allowed him to become a warrior. They considered that the color of his hair represented victory and strength, as it was the color of the sun, and so he would lead their tribe into victory—victory over the Bear Tribe, their greatest enemy, who had stolen their cattle and taken their lands.

It was the war against the Bear Tribe which the council of men talked over in hushed voices that particular night in November, with winter's kiss of death not far ahead. Reddog's mind, however, was filled with more gentle things—his new wife, Rising Fawn, and the child she would soon bear him. He thought that, even though he was a warrior, the smell of the peace pipe's bitter incense was better than the smell of blood and death. With winter coming, there would be death aplenty without a war.

Reddog's gaze lingered for a moment longer over his own mound-like house, then to the great Long House, and beyond to the Chunkey yard, where he often played games and wrestled against his peers. Then a voice spoke up harshly:

"Reddog? What is your say? Do we attack the foul Bear people now, as their strength is dying with summer sun, or do we wait until spring has thawed the ice from our spears?" The voice came from his father, sitting opposite him.

"You must decide. The great Healer has said that you must tell us what to do."

Reddog did not like for these decisions to be left up to him.

"We know what the risks are," Reddog began, "If we wait until spring then the Bear tribe will have time to group its brother clans from the north together against us."

The Healer, who was the eldest man in the tribe and the Medicine Man who had taught Reddog's father his craft spoke: "North means trouble. Those who come from the north mean death. We cannot wait."

A general murmur of agreement went around the fire. Long tendrils of gray smoke were clouding Reddog's mind.

"We must not attack now, either. Let me go to the great place, the Silver Falls. I will speak with the Wise Men. Perhaps there is a better way to defeat our enemies than by war. In the winter we will need our men to protect our women from the cold of the ice-devil Shakak. We must hunt and warm our hearths."

Again, the wizened old Healer spoke up: "And if we wait we also die. Perhaps the young one should go to the Silver Falls. Perhaps that is our only choice."

In the morning, when the shadows had fled, the breakfast had been eaten, and the last of the warriors rubbed sleep from their eyes, Reddog was ready to leave. He sat on his shaggy black horse, nearly naked and painted with red dye. About him he cluttered his father's medicine bag, his bow and arrows, and his hunting knife. His mother and sisters cried, and his father gripped his hand firmly. Reddog was going to the Silver Falls, which white men called DeSoto Falls. If he survived the trip, he could save the life of his tribe. If he failed—all would perish in the great winter which lay ahead.

Part II, will concern Reddog's travels south to the white-man's trading town called Gadsden and his arrival at DeSoto Falls.

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by Randy Still

Steak Know-How

Traditionally, steak is cooked quickly by dry heat—broiling, grilling, pan-frying, or pan-broiling. When meat is cooked by dry heat, it is not tenderized during cooking; therefore, it is important to buy a tender cut of meat to begin with or to tenderize meat in a marinade before it is cooked by dry heat. There are two major factors that determine whether or not a retail cut of meat is likely to be tender: the grade of meat and the wholesale or primal cut.

What Meat Grades Mean

The grading of meat is a service provided to meat packers by the Federal Government. Meat packers must pay to have their meat graded and their participation is voluntary. It is reasonable to assume that if a meat packer does not think he has a top grade of meat, he will not pay to have the government confirm this.

Grading is based on a uniform method of identifying those characteristics of meat that affect flavor and tenderness, thus the value of the meat. The top grade is U.S.D.A. Prime, which is what the Prime Rib that we serve at Cragsmere Manna is graded. U.S.D.A. Prime is sold mostly to fine restaurants and butcher shops and is almost never available in supermarkets. The next grade is U.S.D.A. Choice which is readily available in most supermarkets. The grade below Choice is U.S.D.A. Good and is rarely identified on meat packages because it is not a very good grade. When there is no identification or grade on a package of meat, in all likelihood it means the grade is U.S.D.A. Good or the meat has not been graded. Ungraded meat is generally known as a "house brand" and usually is equivalent to Good grade.

If you are going to cook meat by dry heat, you should not buy any grade below U.S.D.A. Choice because it probably will not be tender. One added word of caution: When a package of meat is labeled with the grade, the grade is always preceded by the letters U.S.D.A. When the words "choice" or "prime" appear on a package without the letters U.S.D.A., these words are simply meaningless adjectives the butcher is using to persuade you to buy the meat. They do not indicate grade.

What Cuts Of Meat To Buy

Retail cuts of meat are identified by names such as steak, chops, cutlet or roast. In most parts of the country, the cut must be further identified by the wholesale cut or section a cut comes from. It is identification of the wholesale cut that provides a clue to the potential tenderness of a steak. The most tender and most expensive steaks come from the loin. These include top loin, porterhouse and sirloin steaks. Steaks from the round, including top round, eye round, bottom round and tip steaks, are not as tender as loin steaks and often have to be marinated before they can be cooked by dry heat. Steaks from the chuck, such as arm, shoulder and blade steaks, are not suitable for cooking by dry heat. If there is no indication of the wholesale cut on a package of meat, ask the butcher. Don't buy a cut of meat simply labeled "steak."

Bernaise Sauce

1/2 cup butter
3 egg yolks
1 Tablespoon cold water
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
Dash hot pepper sauce
salt to taste

Saute 4 Tarragon leaves in 1/4 cup white vinegar, strain and add to sauce after it is cooked. Cut butter into small pieces. Place egg yolks and water in top of double broiler. Place over, not in, simmering water. Beat until slightly thickened. Add butter and melt slowly until sauce is thickened. Beat in lemon juice and tarragon vinegar.

Princess Filet

2-3 oz. or 1-16 oz. Filet of Tenderloin.
Saute to desired doneness. Cover with crabmeat and ladle Bernaise Sauce over crabmeat and steak. Serve with broccoli or asparagus.

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Miss Emma, Con't from Pg. 1

in her writings during that time. Always the journalist and chronicler of the era, she had many of her works published in newspapers. Her series, "Three Years Experience on Rented Land," printed in *The Times Journal* in Fort Payne, AL received some acclaim and was often alluded to in reference to her later works. It begins: "In the early part of 1881, my husband and I started out to begin our fortune by renting land. It being our first year of married life, we were inexperienced in the ups and downs of life, especially a renter's life..." We can get a hint of her feelings about the way she perceived prevailing attitudes about renters: "...there was no yard fence, so we were not troubled with opening and shutting gates. What was the use, we were only renters and were not expected to care for our surroundings."

But care she did, and through each successive move from farm to farm, she kept a happy heart and hopeful mind. "We both went to work, trying to make all we could," she told of one move, and that seemed to be the way she confronted all areas of her life.

She was a small woman, but large in determination and honor. A sense of humor is also evident, as is shown in this incident: "And ever and anon, Mr. Logan (the landlord) would send up messages of inquiry as to the state of things in general. At last I became indignant when he sent a gentleman by with three interrogatives connected this time. His Lordship wanted to know what we were doing? What we had been doing? Also, what we expected to do? As his inquiries involved three tenses, the present, the past and future, I could but answer the same, so my answer to the whole was this: We are doing as we please. We have been doing as we please. And we furthermore expect to do as we please."

It was glorious indeed when Miss Emma, husband Will and their two little girls, Pluma and Katie, moved onto their own place. She recalled the day eighteen years later: "Like a caged bird given it's freedom, I felt like singing, and did sing with joy...we were not King and Queen royally speaking, but truthfully we were, and our log cabin was our castle."

The farm consisted of 160 acres East of Mentone near Bankhead, and the simple structure that was their home "had no chimney or windows and only one door sawed out and no shutter for it." They registered on their land and as it was a homestead, had to take up residence that day. "Poor but happy and contented with our two little children in our own cabin in the woods, we made a fire in the yard and cooked camp style for awhile."

Miss Emma lived in that place until her death in 1937. She loved the farm and relished the ownership of land. She was one of the first naturalists in the area, and her love of birds is often evident in her writings. She named her home Nightingale, after her favorite bird.

Like the Nightingale, she continued to sing, through good times and bad. She seemed to find release in the expressions of her heart and felt a need to share her feelings and experiences with others. When in 1907 her little son, Waldo Emerson, then just four years of age, burned to death when his nightshirt caught a spark from the fireplace, she mourned:

"Oh little bird as you make your nest,
Do you miss a face you saw last year?
Do you stop your work with a little rest?
Do you miss the answering chirrup here?
The little boy who gave you bread,
And watched you as you sang
He now is numbered among the dead
While you your music ring."

The Lookout

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This tragedy forever changed the writings of Miss Emma. It seemed this was a turning point in her perception of life. There could be sorrow along with the happiness, so wistful acceptance became an element in her work. "Time makes many changes," she wrote, "sunshine cannot last."

Miss Emma loved children and had nine of her own. "She often wrote with children crawling all over her, and did not seem to mind," Jenny Dowiat remembered.

She taught school on her back porch in the warm weather, but pressed hard for a schoolhouse where the children could be properly educated. "...but one thing we need and must have is a schoolhouse," she wrote in one of her columns. "I am ashamed to say we have none; but such is the case. Bankhead must have a school house, or this will be a field for missionaries in a few years!"

She loved the beauty of the mountain and the mountain people whom she defended with a staunch loyalty: "Some people entertain the idea that it (Lookout Mnt.) is settled up with rough, uneducated people, moonshiners, etc. but it is a mistake...we have...intellectual people, well-posted on all the leading topics of the time...as a rule (they) are sober, industrious, law-abiding citizens, always ready to respond to the cry of need, no difference who from." She went on to say, "As to independence...I have never seen as independent people anywhere as in the mountains. And right here let me say, just class me with them."

Emma Smith opened a small grocery store, then a post office in 1911, which bore the Nightingale name. The last official transaction recorded at the post office is dated 1933, and the document, along with many other treasures that record her life, are in the possession of her grandson, Ben Smith.

Her grocery store ledgers are fraught with the names of many local citizens of the time recorded in her creative, sprawling hand. The prices give an idea of the value of money in those days: coffee - 50¢, candy - 5¢, beans - 10¢, oats - 20¢, 5 1/2 yds of outing - 28¢, ribbon - 35¢. These ledgers are a chronicle of an earlier, simpler time and give insight into the lives of the mountain people.

Ben Smith recalled his grandmother and how she believed "an idle mind is the devil's playhouse." "She kept us hopping," he said. "We had to stay busy even if it was just carrying water from the spring and washing off the porch over and over."

Once, when Ben was to spend the night with his grandmother, he tarried too long with friends Grace and Harry Cash. He got to the Nightingale farm after the lamp was out and Miss Emma was asleep. "I knew better than to wake her, so I went to the hayloft to sleep. What a surprise when Grandma started forking hay and found me."

Miss Emma's little store and post office are well remembered by many who knew her, and we will continue this tribute to her life and times in next month's issue of

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