

June 6, 1990

Class Of 1940 Had Their 50th Reunion

Has it really been that long? Of course, it has, but to those who attended and who remembered, it just really doesn't seem that the graduating class of 1940 at Westminster High School was celebrating their 50th graduation reunion last Saturday.

Frank Barrett and Bob Grogan were members of that class. Also Louie King, James Grubbs, Rosemary Watkins, Wilton Adams, and Harry Jones just to name a few. That was the last pre-WWII class to graduate, for after December 7, 1941, the world began changing drastically.

According to one report, 10 members of that class have passed away. Most have retired and several live in the general area. It must have been a memorable occasion, and if there is a photo of the group now, it would be interesting to a lot of "old timers" to see it published with the correct identification in *The News*.

Furman Simpson Has Remarkable Memory

You may see a fellow standing on the sidewalk of Walhalla highway fairly often. In case you haven't been around these parts long enough, chances are the man is Furman Simpson, now retired. He usually catches a ride to Walhalla where he visits the main library of Oconee County.

Furman has been living in Westminster several years, having retired from a job in Greenville. He was the only son of Dr. and Mrs. F.T. Simpson. There were two girls—Ida Jane and Patricia. Doctor Simpson was a respected family doctor in Westminster for many years. He had an office space in the Cheswell Building above what is now a jewelry store located downstairs and was formerly Brockman's.

We've had the pleasure of picking Furman up as he sought a ride to Walhalla, and it is amazing the recall he has of dates and events that happened many years past.

Furman has a mental record of many birthdays of friends and acquaintances and can today recall them instantly. His ability to

remember people and associated events that happened more than 60 years ago, is astounding to some of us who find it difficult to simply keep up with our own children's birthdays.

Furman's father doctored folks throughout a wide area during the early part of this century. Often, he would drive a buggy and horse to call on patients far out in the country and would sometimes be gone several days before returning home. This was especially true when there were big flu epidemics and such. Flu was once a dreaded killer, long before antibiotics and sulfur drugs were being used.

Later, Furman recalled his father had a T-model Ford car. Those who have had experience with the T-model cars know how temperamental one can be. They only ran when they wanted to at times, and it was nearly always a big "if" when trying to crank one. It was reported that Doctor Simpson had a T-model that occasionally took those "won't run fits." Of course, this usually happened when transportation was needed immediately. In his effort to hand crank the old T-model, Doctor Simpson would sometimes lose patience and in his frustration begin throwing rocks at the vehicle. Whether or not this helped the situation or not is a good question. No doubt, it helped the good doctor express his sincere feelings when his model-T just wouldn't crank.

Since nearly all the early model cars were hand-cranked, it was a real challenge to get one going that may be "out of tune" just a little bit. Too, it kept several doctors busy just setting broken arms that resulted when the engine would suddenly roll backward as the cranker was "spinning" the motor.

There was a real art to cranking a vehicle during the 1920's and even into the 1930's.

Those who know Furman Simpson can appreciate his ability to recollect so many things so vividly and in detail in many instances. That is one reason perhaps, why he continues to keep in touch with the services of the main Oconee County Library in Walhalla.

June 13, 1990

Mr. J.H. (Jack) Hudson Was A Colorful Character

The late Mr. J.H. (Jack) Hudson was known far and wide in this part of South Carolina. He had for years operated a trolley car in Greenville before moving to Westminster where he became a rural mail carrier. It was from this job he eventually retired, but he left some lasting impressions with me.

For example, when I was in the fourth grade in school, I often rode with Mr. Hudson and his sons, Bill (W.G.), and/or Lloyd (nickname Sassafras) on whatever venture was on the schedule. We were neighbors for many years, and I came to know the family very well. They were great neighbors and most interesting people. As I recall, when I was in the fourth grade, Mr. Hudson had some business in Anderson one day. He invited me to go along for the ride. It was a great treat for me at that time. It wasn't often that a young kid got to go out of town during the 1930's. During the visit to the city of Anderson, we stopped to window shop a bit around the town square which was the center of the business district at that time.

In a pawn shop window we were looking at the wares which included many and varied items such as musical instruments, cameras, knives, guns, etc. in this particular one there was a beautiful little portable Remington typewriter. Mr. Hudson was probably watching me looking through the window at the machine with great interest.

He finally came up to me and said, "Would you like to look at that machine?"

Of course, I was interested, so we went in and had the owner to get the typewriter out of the window. Immediately, I fell in love with the idea of typing on the little portable. "Mr. Jack" asked the owner how much the machine cost and was told \$24.50. At that point in time, that represented quite a chunk of money, but Mr. Hudson didn't bat an eye. He simply told the man, "We'll take it." With that he pulled out the money and paid the owner.

From that moment on, I was terribly impressed with Mr. J.H. (Jack) Hudson. His sons and only daughter were a bit older than me

and were taking some typing lessons. They in turn, taught me the touch system which has been rather helpful down through the years—to this day. It was really a couple of years before I really mastered the system enough to gain a bit of speed, but that was the beginning of what later became a lifelong love of the printed word.

My father found out from Mr. Hudson how much the machine had cost and just about had a real bonafide “fit” because he had spent that much money on a neighbor’s boy—but deep down, I think he appreciated the idea and later repaid Mr. Hudson for the investment he had made.

My father—C.R. Hunt—was also a mail carrier, though one of the “walking” kind. Mr. Hudson drove A-models and T-models on his rural mail route and was a real stickler for having a machine that would be ready-to-run each morning as he headed for the post office about 6 a.m.

The things I experienced while visiting and traveling with the Hudson family were often very exciting. For example, one day we had gone to Atlanta to visit a relative of the family and were simply riding around the city a bit in the Five Points area of downtown. We were riding in a 1940 Ford car and were stopped at a traffic light on a slight inclined street. At that time the trolley cars were a major mode of transportation in Atlanta, and one pulled up really close to where we were waiting for the light to change. Mr. Hudson, having been an operator back in Greenville in his earlier years was engrossed in seeing the trolley instead of the the traffic light and as it changed, the trolley operator began to slowly pull away. Mr. Hudson observed this and it also gave him the false sensation of our vehicle rolling backward. He began hollering loud and clear, “What is the matter with this thing...the brakes have given away...we’re rolling backward...,” etc. And he suddenly began stomping the brake pedal. I believe it was his son, Bill, who was seated in the front right that finally convinced him that we weren’t actually rolling backward. But for a few brief seconds, I really wasn’t sure what had happened. Later, I realized the problem.

Mr. Hudson will be long remembered for many interesting things he said and did as he passed this way. In my opinion, he was

a really great man who took a little time to care about things boys are interested in seeing and doing.

June 20, 1990

Mr. J.H. (Jack) Hudson Was A Practical Man

“Mr. Jack” Hudson was a practical man. Last week, I recalled some of the interesting trips I made with him as a young boy. He retired from a rural mail route from the Westminster Post Office several years before he passed away and we were privileged to be his neighbor when I was growing up on East Main Street in Westminster.

Mr. Hudson was a learned man in many areas. I recall very clearly how he would spend many hours simply reading a big set of encyclopedias that he maintained in his home library. He had a lot of information about a lot of things. And he seemed to enjoy life in general.

Of course, Mr. Hudson, like all of us, had a few vices that sometimes threw him “off track” a bit, but usually he found his way back to the center-line without too much trouble.

There was a time many years ago when a new preacher had come to town. It may have been the Reverend Willie Cromer when he first came to the Westminster Baptist Church, or perhaps someone else, but an interesting thing happened at one of the meetings.

Mr. Hudson occasionally attended the church services at the Baptist Church. Whether or not he was a member, who knows, but he did go to church fairly often with his wife, “Mrs. Lillie,” and it may have been at her insistence that he attended.

However, on occasion, “Mr. Jack” would tilt a bottle of wine a bit when it really didn’t have anything to do with communion services. It may have been on one of these occasions when he had been dipping into the jug a bit that he was also led to attend church services.

It just so happened that the new preacher in the pulpit had delivered a rather inspirational evening service and for some reason called upon “Mr. Jack” to lead the closing prayer.

Mr. Hudson certainly was not above praying in public, but was not something he generally practiced, however he simply rose to the occasion. He hit the floor in the rear seating section of the church and began. Now, he was not short-winded, he could hold on to a subject for quite a spell—and even more especially, if had been “primed” a bit with a shot or two of wine.

As I recall, the way it happened, Mr. Hudson prayed and prayed and then he prayed some more. He was really getting into this thing. He continued his communication with the Lord in this closing prayer until the prayer was nearly as long as the sermon the preacher had just rendered. He was, of course, sincere in his effort, and gave it everything he could muster at the moment. But finally in his quest for divine guidance and help from a Higher Power, Mr. Hudson had confused the Lord a bit. Being the practical man that he was, he simply stopped right in the middle of the lengthy closing prayer and remarked, “Ah, Lord, I’m really all mixed up...I think I’ll just start over again!”

The congregation seemed to understand, and finally, the Lord led him to a point where he could conveniently end this, perhaps, most memorable closing prayer ever rendered at the Westminster Baptist Church.

Mr. Hudson was, indeed, a good man and he certainly meant no harm or inconvenience to anyone, for that was not his nature. However, he just got involved in this matter simply because he was there and perhaps by chance.

To this day, I know of several people who learned from his experiences...and just as he pointed out, when you are all mixed up, it really doesn't take much more than courage to confess it and start all over again...that is if the job is worth doing in the first place.

As a rural mail carrier, Mr. Hudson also experienced some unusual things. For example, he often stopped at Barker’s Country Store in the Coneross Community. The store was operated by Lizzie and Clint Barker, and they truly had a colorful country store. Mrs. Lizzie kept her change in a lard bucket, so it was reported, and one day when Mr. Hudson had stopped to sell her a roll of stamps, she simply set the bucket on the running board of Mr. Hudson’s A-

Model car that he used to deliver the mail.

In the process of buying stamps and talking to “Mr. Jack” she simply forgot to pick up the bucket. It was reported that a two-pound bucket of change was scattered up and down the road for several miles since he drove off not aware that Lizzie had left the company’s assets sitting on the running board. There may still be some of this change scattered out that way from that stopping point on Mr. Hudson’s rural mail route.

June 27, 1990

“Foggy” Dickson Knew How To Keep Cool

“Foggy” Dickson was almost a legend in his own time. He lived a most interesting life...though it seemed to have ended prematurely, but he was a man who dealt with matters on a daily basis. He loved to eat and it was obvious. Just prior to his passing away, he probably weighed in excess of about 400 pounds. He was an excellent cook and served many good meals to customers who visited his restaurant/grocery store combination when he was located on East Main Street.

When he moved down “on the branch” to the “Rinky-Dink” club building, he didn’t serve many meals to the public, but continued to cook and eat rather well for himself.

During the hot summer months, “Foggy” was very careful to have a good shower facility available for his own private use. Jack Dillard, a friend and plumber when necessary, installed a nice pipe system from a spring located just up the hill from his establishment and there was a continuous flow of water via gravity from the spring to his building. It supplied all his needs, including a marble-based shower stall.

However, there were times when the weather was extremely hot and “Foggy” would sit outside the metal building among the cedar and pine trees in the yard. During those scorching, hot sultry summer days when there was no other way to keep cool, “Foggy” would sometimes strip off his overalls and get him a rocker and

move it to the center of the cool, sparkling water of a branch that ran right through the front yard. In the rocker he would cool off completely, sometimes in the nude, and be very comfortable with his seat in the rocker...in the comforting cool water.

On occasion, if the weather was extreme—say, in the 100 degree range—he would take his cooling position in the rocker in the branch and simply have his friend and aide, “Nita-Belle,” to pour a bucket of cool water from the branch over his head.

It may not have been exactly like modern air-conditioning, but it served the same purpose on a hot day and was a lot less expensive. The sight of seeing “Foggy” stripped down nude, sitting in the middle of the branch with “Nita-Belle” pouring buckets of water over his head and down his back was witnessed by several friends and customers who visited the “Rinky-Dink” club during hot summer months.

While “Foggy” was an excellent cook himself, food was perhaps his final “undoing.” It was a sudden heart attack that moved him across that great divide. He truly loved good food and had an excellent collection of recipes for making hot dog chili, roast beef and roast pork sandwiches and chicken salad.

I have personally delivered to him 12 hot dogs made up “all the way” by M.L. McGuffin when he operated Pete’s Restaurant, and watched him eat all of them in one short meal. At the same time, he would “chase the dogs” with two or three big orange drinks...the big Nehi kind that was 12 or 16 ounces per bottle.

He loved to eat and could “hide” just about as much good food at one meal as any human I’ve ever seen. But at the same time, he never did like to pass up a good meal from his home. His mother, nearly every day, prepared his noon meal along with others she served at home, and sent it to him in a rather unique tray. Actually, the tray was one of the kind used to defrost a big refrigerator. His mother was also an excellent cook and would pile the tray full of good fresh meats and vegetables along with a nice pone of corn-bread.

“Foggy” was really an interesting character whom I was privileged to know and appreciate. He lived his life the way he felt it

should be and really didn't let a lot of protocol and custom interfere with any of his plans. Few are ever able to do just that.

July 4, 1990

Electric Fence Supplied The Power For Experiment

It was a most interesting letter I received recently from W.G. (Bill) Hudson, son of the late Mr. J.H.(Jack)Hudson. Bill is now a retired professor from Clemson University. He also has two other sons who have graduated from Clemson and one who is a radio personality in Greenville. Hayden Hudson is part of a radio team that has won national acclaim...I believe with the humorous "take-offs" on notable personalities, politicians, etc. He teams up with another radio man—Mr. Love, I believe, is the name, and they are heard on a local Greenville station, WMYI-FM.

Bill was married to the former Marjorie Coe. They had four sons—Gary, who was drowned in a tragic accident and Douglas, Hayden and Bob. Marjorie is also deceased. Old timers in the area will remember that Marjorie's father ran the old Oconee Store—a grocery in the building that was formerly occupied by Barrett's Hardware on Main Street. The late Jimmy Maxwell was a long-time employee of Mr. Coe at the old Oconee Store. The Coes also had another daughter, Mary, who is also now deceased.

In the letter from Bill, I was really surprised to learn that his aunt, Mrs. Dorothy Reeves, continues to live in Atlanta. Bill's brother, Lloyd, better known by his nickname "Sassafras," now lives in Saint Louis, MO and his sister, Veda, is a resident of Montgomery, AL.

The Hudson family was indeed, interesting and well-known and liked by a great number of people in the area who really got to know them.

As I pointed out in a previous article, the late Mr. J.H. (Jack) Hudson had a profound influence on my life—and more especially since he first provided me with a small portable typewriter when I

was a youngster in grade school in Westminster.

But he did a lot of interesting things—for example, Mr. Hudson had the first electric fence I ever remember seeing. He used it to fence in a pasture area. Most people in the 1930's kept a cow or two around for a fresh supply of milk. Mr. Hudson was no exception, and he had solved the problem of fencing by buying and installing an electric fence.

This fence was fed by a 110 volt system that took that power and transformed it into about 12 or 16 volts of DC current. The mechanical part of the fence allowed the power to build up and then “throb” with alternating “bumps” of DC current being fed through the single insulated wire that kept old “Bossy” the cow more or less contained in the pasture.

This was a most unusual system. Few people in this part of the country had such during the 1930's. Bill and Lloyd quickly learned that you could grab this fence and then grab another person's hand and the jolt of electricity, which was frightening but not deadly, would be transmitted to the last person in the hand-holding line. The discovery of this system caused a lot of fun and ‘shocking’ excitement by the neighboring gang of young kids.

The Claude Gibson family lived nearby the Hudsons, and they had some children slightly younger than me and the Hudson boys. Mr. Gibson was a noted brick mason, and he layed the brick on the old Westminster High gym building back during the WPA construction days of the 1930's when Roosevelt—FDR, that is—brought some help to the county through government programs.

The Gibsons had several children, but two of them were boys that I remember rather well. One was named Everett and the other, Alvin. We sometimes played in the pasture near Mr. Hudson's home and in the pecan grove that was owned by the late Frank Childress.

It was in the spring of the year and the clover was in full bloom. I knew about the electric fence, but the Gibson boys had not yet discovered it. It was when the kids were just beginning to go barefoot and it was Everett, I believe, who came to my attention as we played in the tall green grass. I had wired a tin can to the new elec-

tric fence and hid the wire alongside the post. The tin can was partially hidden in the tall grass and clover. I approached Everett and told him that I would reward him with a prize if he would urinate the “wired” can full. Of course, he was unsuspecting and took up the generous offer I made...and then, all of a sudden, he screamed and rolled like a bowling ball down through the pasture. He finally recovered and ran screaming to his house. His mother thought someone had hit him in the head with a baseball bat. However, it wasn't that at all. It was simply a rather “shocking” prank that I may have to explain on Judgement Day...and it all came about through an experience with Mr. Jack Hudson's electric fence.

May a Higher Power forgive me for that one...for I really didn't think Everett would take me up on my offer.

July 11, 1990

It Was Summertime And The Livin' Was Easy...

It's strange the way a few warm summer nights can bring back old memories...about friends and circumstances.

It was back in the 1940's...just after all the GI's got home and were getting settled into some kind of routine. Many of them had been members of the so-called “52-20” club. That, in effect, was another government program that mostly gave GI's who were not yet gainfully employed a living subsidy of \$20 per week for 52 weeks. Many signed up for the program and simply rested a while. It was deserved, I might add, by all who took part in the WWII activities.

By some stroke of chance, the late Harry Strickland, Lloyd Hudson, the now deceased Clarence Butts and I happened upon each other down the street.

Mr. Butts was an accomplished musician. Though blind from his youth by accident, he had studied music at several distinguished institutions and could play just about any kind of instrument. He organized the first Westminster High School band, and at one point

in our younger days, both Harry Strickland and I had been in his band or music classes. Whether Lloyd Hudson participated or not, I do not recall.

But on this warm summer night we finally wound up at Mr. Butts' home on the Toccoa Highway. Mrs. Butts, who was his able assistant and teacher in Westminster, had gone off to summer school at Peabody College in Nashville, TN. So it was, we were invited up to Clarence's house where he was really entertaining us with some sure enough down to earth piano playing.

I think we also carried along a few "brews" for refreshments, and actually we weren't doing anything except singing along with Clarence at the piano and maybe Harry Strickland coming on a bit with a set of trap drums. Just four good friends having a little fun on a warm summer night. By about 1 or 2 a.m., the "brew" gave out and someone suggested we take a little trip up to the Brasstown community and visit the renowned Silas Butts who also happened to be a relative of Clarence.

As I recall, we drove down the little dirt road to the home where Silas and his wife operated an orphanage for a number of youngsters who may not have had a home otherwise. The moon was shining brightly and you could see the sparkling waters of Brasstown Creeks just across the road from Silas' home. Some of our group kept knocking on the porch until finally you could see children sticking their heads out from behind doors and out side windows. Finally, the "old man from the mountains," Silas, came to the door. He saw all of us and particularly noted that Clarence had brought along an accordion.

Silas announced to about 15 youngsters who by now had gathered on the porch, "Your uncle Clarence has come to play for us!" And he even said it with a degree of enthusiasm at 2 a.m. on a summer morning.

With that, Clarence broke out the accordion, began playing and we joined in "singing along" with songs that we knew. Everyone was having fun...at least for about 45 minutes or so...when it dawned on Silas what daylight would bring. So he announced,

“Now, we’re going to have to go back to bed, young’uns, cause we’ve got work to do in the fields at daylight!”

Everyone understood and Clarence wound up the concert and began putting the accordion away. Someone very carefully negotiated a deal with Silas while all the youngsters were gone in the house and back to bed. It finally came about that we were provided with a small jar of “white lightnin’.” And with that carefully in hand, someone suggested we go across the road to Brasstown Creek and dip up some fresh water to “chase the lightnin’” with. Harry Strickland picked Clarence up and set him across the barbed wire fence and led him down to the creek. With Harry standing by, Clarence gently tipped the jar and went down with his hands to scoop up some fresh mountain water to help kill the aftertaste of the “mountain dew.” Just then, Harry casually remarked, “Clarence, I hate to tell you this but there’s a cow standing in the creek just above us.”

This shook him up rather quickly as he imagined what the cow may have been doing in the water and with that he gave a mighty “up-chug.” And all the good dew was for naught. Harry was really a great guy and loved to have fun with his fellow man...especially Clarence. And while they are now both safely departed for that big mountain stream in the sky...I can truthfully say this was one of the more memorable visits I ever made to the home of the legendary Silas Butts.

He treated all of us with great care and respect, and regardless of the early morning hour of our visit. We were welcomed!

July 18, 1990

Trucking Ice Was Once A Booming Business

The modern conveniences we enjoy today are often taken for granted. But a sure way to be reminded of just how good most of us have had it, is simply to experience a short delay in our electrical supply.

Summer thunderstorms with plenty of lightning can virtually put

all home and commerce operations out of business with one quick stroke. It is only when we don't have all these conveniences at our fingertips that we are reminded of how it is to be without them.

Back in the 1920's and 30's ice was a big business, for very few folks in this part of the country had refrigerators.

As a matter of fact, until Mr. D.W. Stribling used his considerable energy and contacts to help establish the REA, there wouldn't have been much point in shipping refrigerators to Oconee County, for only a few folks had electricity to operate them.

This reminds me of the time when ice was rather big business in this part of the country. Westminster Ice & Fuel Company was first operated out of a small building where the present NAPA Auto Parts store now stands. If memory serves correctly, the ice was actually manufactured in Seneca by a company owned and operated by a Mr. Moore.

The Westminster branch was, in the beginning, a part of the bigger operation in Seneca. Herman W. "Foggy" Dickson operated the Westminster branch and later his brother, "Dub" Dickson, took over the business and added coal and a fuel oil service. The company continues to prosper on East Main Street at its present location with Billy Dickson the operator along with a service station (gas) department.

On hot summer days such as some we have recently experienced, the ice trucks were busy hauling this precious commodity to people all over the town and county. Big blocks were frozen into 400 pound units, and I remember well how skilled "Dub" Dickson was in cutting ice with a pick. He knew exactly where to make the chips in order to have perfect smaller cuts. There was an art to this ice handling business, and a lot of people really depended strongly on daily delivery to keep their food from spoiling in the summer heat.

There were several drivers that worked at the ice house. One I recall in particular was Harold Price, now deceased. Harold drove a tan Ford pick-up truck and delivered to a wide range of customers.

Also, the late Frank Cashin was one of the earlier ice route drivers. This was during the late 1930's and early 1940's. The homes

that received regular delivery would buy a book of ice tickets—at a bit of a saving—and instead of having to tell the ice man how much was needed each day, the customer simply had a pre-printed sign that indicated the amount desired and hung it on the front porch so the driver could see how much to bring in with the handy ice hooks. He also picked up tickets or money for the service.

Frank Cashin once told of an experience had when refrigerators first came into being common in Westminster. He said one of his good customers was a fine lady with a husband and family. They lived in the area and worked faithfully at Oconee Mill. They were among the first to purchase one of these “new fangled” refrigerators that would keep food cold for you and, in addition, would manufacture ice in a handy freezing compartment. It may have been one of those old—but eternally good—refrigerator units that had the compressor built on top. Anyway, the family had just received their refrigerator and was getting on with the program of operating it.

Frank, if I remember correctly, said the conversation went kinda like this when he pulled up in front of the home with his usual ice delivery truck.

“Need any ice today...Mrs....?” he yelled.

“God, no, Cashin!” came the reply. “We have one of the new ‘frigerators, and that is the ice-makin’est thang you’ve ever seen. Why, Frank, that thang kept me an’ Jim up all night long takin’ ice out of it. We filled up every pot and pan in the house and we’ve given ice to all the neighbors around here.”

Apparently, it was believed that as soon as the ice was frozen it should be removed...or maybe it was the novelty of this new invention that kept them busy all night long taking ice out.

Anyway, that was the beginning of a new era that only those past age 55 or so will readily recall.

Most consumers now not only want the refrigerator to make ice, but “spit it out” on demand and do a complete defrosting without any further bother.

Who knows what the next 50 years will bring us...but it all couldn’t happen without electricity. This single achievement—the beginning of the REA—which is now celebrating its 50th anniver-

sary—probably did more to help better the lives of more people than any other one development that I can recall.

We salute all of those past and present who helped to make it happen.

July 25, 1990

King's Cash Grocery Was Typical In 1930's

It was long before the supermarket age hit this part of the country during the late 1930's and early 1940's. Most small towns, and even the larger ones, had a number of fancy grocery stores. Westminster had several that flourished. Among them were Reeder's, Honea's, Watkin's, England's, Lumpkin's, Freeman's, Oconee Store, Miller's and King's Cash grocery which was rather typical of all of them.

King's Grocery was located then in a building that is now part of Jerry Smith's Moon's Drug Store. It was the building previously occupied by The Globe, a department store operated by the late Mr. and Mrs. Vigodsky for many years. Before The Globe was there, the late Mr. King and his wife operated King's Cash Grocery.

There was little self-service back then. The store hired clerks who filled the orders as they came in by phone or were ordered at the counter in person. Each store had a number of clerks but mostly was staffed by owners and some regular employees that were assisted by part-time clerks during the weekends when about 75 percent of the business was conducted.

Most of these stores had delivery service, too. There was usually a truck that carried orders to the homes and sometimes picked up new ones as the delivery was made. For small orders, most stores had a bicycle delivery service. This was usually a part-time job for some youngster who furnished his own bike and basket for delivery purposes.

Delivering groceries by bicycle for King's Cash Grocery was one of my earliest jobs. I worked on Friday afternoon until the store

closed at about 8 or 9 p.m. and all day on Saturday until the store emptied at about midnight or sometimes over into Sunday. The vegetable bins had to be cleaned out and the building broom-swept clean before any clerks could go home. However, I should point out that I considered it a real privilege to have a job back then, for many kids did not have any way of earning a bit of change. This job paid \$1.25 for Friday afternoon and Saturday. With that pay, I managed to buy a bicycle—on credit—from Holcomb's Hardware for \$25. I paid for it with \$1 per week payments and had 25 cents left which allowed me to go to one movie and purchase a box of popcorn. It was among my first experiences with credit purchasing. And it seemed forever before I finally made the last payment.

Some of the clerks that worked at King's Cash Grocery were Howard Adams who later owned his own supermarket after he returned from the service. Howard also managed Watkins Grocery for several years prior to going into business for himself. Too, there was Donald Singleton, now deceased. Donald later went into medicine and I think was an instructor at Emory Medical School when he passed away suddenly from a heart attack. There was Bill Driver who was exceptionally bright in academics and was fleet on feet in the store. He earned the nickname of "Speedy Bill." He later became an electronics engineer for AT&T from which he has been retired for several years. Then there was Frank Brown, a very capable young man who later went into banking and retired in the Anderson area. Frank is now deceased. Also, there was Allen Wood, a black man who drove the red Chevrolet delivery truck, and who was a really helpful friend in times of crisis. Allen, now deceased, later worked for Southern Railroad from which he retired.

I was given a small bag to deliver to the home of Mr. and Mrs. T.C. Peden. It was just a few items and included in the order was a half-dozen eggs. The egg orders were filled from the egg crate. There were no such things as styrofoam packaging for such things. You simply, very carefully, picked the eggs from the carton, placed them in a brown paper kraft bag and gently delivered them to the customer.

On this occasion I had the eggs in my bicycle basket and was proceeding to the Peden home as I crossed the railroad tracks in front of the now Westminster News building and Westminster Medical Clinic building, I hit the rails too hard. The eggs bounced from my basket and most of them broke on the spot.

This presented a real crisis. If I went back to the store for more eggs, the manager might have very well fired me for being careless. But on the other hand, I had to get the eggs to complete the Peden grocery order. In this frustrated frame of mind, I simply went to the back door of the store and the first person I saw was Allen Wood.

Allen noticed that something had gone wrong and he wanted to know what happened. I told him the truth about the accident and he remarked, "Aw, boy, don't let that bother you too much...just wait right here for a few minutes."

In less than five minutes, Allen came back with another half-dozen eggs. I most graciously thanked him and proceeded to the Peden home with the order. I doubt that Allen ever told Mr. Henry King exactly what happened, but at that point in time, I was greatly relieved to get "off the hook." That job was very important to me at the moment, and I learned a few lessons there that one could never acquire in the academic halls of any school.

Grocery stores back then had a great deal of personality in the ownership and those who filled the orders and did the many chores that had to be done. It was a great era in many ways...and yet, at the time, most of us thought we had it kinda tough. It really wasn't.

August 1, 1990

Big, Friendly Collie Dog Got His Nose Into Chicken House Escapade

The story was told of a farmer, perhaps in the Oakway section of Oconee, that had quite an experience with his chicken house.

It was many years ago when nearly every home—especially farm homes—had a chicken house and lot. They were raised for fryers and layers. This was a valuable part of the food chain. Fried

chicken was almost a standard for Sunday dinner. Thus, it was important to protect chickens from all kinds of invaders—from weasels, to ‘possums, foxes, and sometimes people who had “sticky” fingers for picking up chickens—under the cover of darkness—as editor Gus Gosett used to report in the *Tugaloo Tribune*.

A farmer, whose name I can’t readily recall, kept missing chickens from the roost. They seemed to disappear during the night more than any other time. The habit was getting to the farmer as well as the chickens on the roost. He decided he would try to discover the culprit and take appropriate action.

He had one of those old, double-barrel shotguns that had two big hammers that sat up like rabbit ears above the barrels. He kept the gun loaded and ready for action.

Late one cold winter night he heard a disturbance in the chicken house. He picked up the old, trusty shotgun. Grabbed a flashlight and proceeded to the chicken house. It was cold and the farmer wore only his long-john underwear—the union suits, some called them—the kind that had a convenient flap door that buttoned in back.

He approached the chicken house very carefully. In a kind of half-crouched position, holding the flashlight alongside the barrel, he began to survey the situation.

Now, one corner of his button-up flap on the rear of his long-john underwear was not buttoned. This left a portion of his rear-end exposed to the elements. This was not a particular problem at the moment, for the farmer was conscientiously looking for whatever was picking up his chickens.

With both barrels loaded, the big hammers, both cocked back, was ready to fire at whatever.

Unobserved, according to the report, the big, friendly, family collie dog got into the act. He very quietly came up behind the man and was not noticed.

Just then, however, the farmer was in an extreme, crouched position with his rear-end exposed on one corner to the cool winter night air.

For some reason, the big collie walked up behind him and touched a friendly, cold nose to the man's buttocks.

The shock was too much for the fellow already "on edge." Something was getting to his chickens and he was determined to put an end to it.

Just as the big collie touched him, it frightened him and he let go with both barrels of the big, long shotgun.

Someone said chicken feathers fell for several minutes after the explosion. When daylight came there were eleven dead chickens on the ground.

Man's best friend had "reached out and touched someone" at a really critical moment. So the story was told to me.

August 8, 1990

Thanks for the Memories...

WHS Class of 1944

As Sloan Kay, now deceased black brick mason, might have describe it "a most magnificent, grand and glorious occasion." I refer to the 46th year reunion of the Westminster High School graduating class of 1944.

In a way, 1944 was the best of times and worst of times. The country was caught in the throes of world war. The future didn't look too bright at that moment.

As fate would have it, things began to gradually change in favor of allied forces, and the students who graduated from high school in 1944, for the most part, were spared some of the more devastating casualties...resulting from the war, though many served.

As this group met in reunion last Saturday night—with about half the original class of members in attendance—the meeting was all anyone could hope for in a class reunion.

The superintendent of Westminster High at that time was T.E. (Tom) Mabry. This distinguished man is going strong to this day and he will only be 87 years young on this December 4, 1990. Mr. Mabry has a full schedule during the summer months attending

class reunions, and he has a remarkable memory and good health. To most of us he looks just like he did the first time we remember him. The same goes for Mr. and Mrs. D.W. Stribling, who were also at the reunion and of course, Mrs. Sara (Kenneth) Johns who continues to be active and was at this meeting...of a class that she might have once described as "the best."

Class President Nathan Nuckols, Student Body President Richard Lay and class Valedictorian Winnie Belle Lee (Fendley) all handled their responsibilities with great ease and professionalism.

High school teacher and principal at that time was Mr. R.H. (Bob) Gettys, who later returned and served several years as Superintendent. So did Mr. David Stribling, who was agriculture teacher when the class of 1944 graduated. It was refreshing to see them all once again.

This reunion was only the second the class has experienced. One was held about 10 years after graduation. Another is planned for 1994, according to Nathan Nuckols. The committee that served with Nathan in planning the meeting that was held at the Steak House in Walhalla, included Dorothy Rogers (Waters), Richard Lay, Jack Hunt, and Winnie Fendley. A little bit of help from each of them and their husbands and/or wives made this thing happen. Too, Roy Strickland, a now retired school administrator himself, was right in there taking messages over the phone, etc., along with his wife, June Nuckols Strickland, helping to get the job done. Roy also very capably gave the program invocation. Don't let anyone kid you, folks, ole' Roy is just like all of us...he certainly believes in staying in touch with a Higher Power. Otherwise, how could he win all that cash in these fishing tournaments?

Prior to the reunion a fellow told me, "I know who you will see at your class reunion."

Naturally, I wanted to know who, and he simply answered, "A lot of old people."

In fact, Aldine Carter of Atlanta must be using "stove polish" or something in his hair (he still has plenty of it, too) for he would pass for a man much younger than his some 63 years...that we know. Too, his wife, Elizabeth, has held herself together really well. In

fact, she and Aldine were married before they graduated from high school. Only they didn't tell anyone about that back then, for it was strictly against the rules to be married and going to high school in 1944. You would have been expelled. Therefore, they very carefully kept this matter quiet until after graduation night. Smart young'uns, they were!

A special member of that class who was forced to drop out of school and help take care of an invalid parent was Raford Lee. Raford and his wife seemed to get a thrill out of seeing and talking with classmates at this historic meeting.

Now deceased members of the class of '44 include Morris Alexander, Bobbie Bond, Billy Brock, Bobby Browning, Mae Evelyn Duncan, Carl Garner and Julian Grubbs. Deceased faculty include Mr. M.B. Self, Mr. G.K. Sumerel, Mrs. S.F. Reeder and Mr. C.E. Butts.

Other class members were Helen Brock, Ethel Burton, Lenore Butler, Paul Crenshaw, Miriam Cumulander, Lillie Mae Davis, Sara England, Ethel Elrod, Othella Freeman, Elmina Franklin, Mary Gregory, Louisa Hall, Margie Haney, Edna Hilley, Jack Hunt, Ruth Knox, Richard Lay, Willie Belle Lee, Annie Belle Lyles, Mary Jean Martin, Frances Mason, Virginia Mason, Frances McClain, Stella McGuire, Nathan Nuckols, Mary Adeline Oliver, Elizabeth Owens, Paul Powell, Estelle Ramey, Dorothy Rogers, Lois Sander, Dorothy Spearman, Arthur Smith, Jr., Dorothy Smith, Sara Sims, Roy Strickland, Christine Turner, Bill Watkins and Doris Williams.

August 15, 1990

Camp Toccoa Was Training Paratroopers

As the build-up for WWII began seriously in the 1940's, a basic training camp was established near Toccoa, GA. It was, in fact, located just at the base of Currahee Mountain. Soldiers from all over the US came there and received basic training for some of the first paratroopers to be dropped in North Africa as Americans did battle with the German Rommel and his troops in the desert.

There was little or no recreational facilities available for these soldiers who were lucky enough to get weekend passes. Many of them came visiting to towns nearby Toccoa...including Westminster, Walhalla and Seneca in Oconee County. There was no motel or hotel facilities except in a very limited way in Oconee County, and yet there was a deep sense of patriotic pride and respect for those soldiers who were away from their homes and friends.

The communities here believed strongly in the cause for which we were engaged in war. Citizens offered space in their homes for soldiers who had a few liberty hours on the weekends. Many came and stayed in extra bedrooms that citizens of the area provided. It was one small way the folks could offer a needed service at a critical time. Gasoline was already rationed as was sugar, and some items of clothing, etc. Thus, all were doing some part in making a contribution to the war effort.

At that time during the early 1940's, there was a big square dance held every Friday and Saturday night in the Cheswell building on Main Street. Country string musicians held forth in the upstairs part of the building. Down below was Mitchell's Drug Store and Talmadge Seigler's Restaurant.

The soldiers from Camp Toccoa loved to visit Westminster and especially attend the square dances in the upstairs part of the Cheswell building.

Once the basic training of these troops was completed, they were sent to Fort Benning, GA, where they were required to make at least five jumps prior to receiving their "wings" and permanent assignment.

The drops were usually made from C-47's, and occasionally, there would be some local landing made in this area. One especially is recalled that was held in Seneca. The C-47's were brought in from Fort Benning to the field that R.G. LeTourneau had constructed with his heavy equipment and was the nearest airport to Oconee County at that time.

On Sunday afternoons, if any were lucky enough to have a vehicle and a bit of gas, they would travel over to the field and watch the planes

land and take off. This was especially interesting to youngsters who saw, many for the first time, a real military aircraft up close.

The training at Camp Toccoa was not easy. There were often long hikes. Sometimes a group of soldiers would be hiking from Clemson back to Toccoa along Highway 123 with full field packs. Usually, there were two ambulances following the hikers and picked up those who fell by the wayside. It was not like a "Sunday School picnic." The training was tough, but necessary for what was to follow. Some of these men did not survive the invasion of North Africa. Some were wounded and later returned to visit this area and homes where they once spent a lonely weekend away from home as their training progressed.

All the problems arising once again in the Middle East tend to bring these thoughts and how history may possibly be repeating itself.

August 22, 1990

Clemson "Haircuts" Came With Freshman Territory

Clemson has not always been a university. It may have had all the qualities of a university, but for many years it was known as Clemson College. It was about the mid 1940's, when GI's were coming back to enroll that Clemson took on a more civilian status.

No more military uniforms were required. Finally, women were admitted and not long after, integration took place. It doesn't seem that long ago, but that has been nearly 50 years back.

All freshmen who enrolled in Clemson College were given "haircuts." If you could call them that, but it was more of a "head peeling" and a way upperclassmen could make some easy money at the moment. The "upperclassmen" had the privilege of cutting the incoming freshmen's hair, and charging anywhere from 50 cents to \$1 when the going rate at a regular barbershop was hardly more than 25 cents anywhere.

This brings to mind two distinguished Clemson Alumni—one in the person of Bruce D. Hunt, now a retired engineer living in the Chattanooga, TN area, and the other James (Red) Shirley, a retired U.S. Navy Captain who was last reported living in Florida.

Bruce Hunt is a brother and oldest son of the late Alma and C. Ralph Hunt. He began his academic training early by attending the first and second grades in nearby elementary schools where his mother was a country school teacher. She taught in the one, two and three teacher schools that comprised some 43 separated districts in Oconee County in the 1930's. There were no babysitters at the time, so Bruce went to school with his mother for two years and by the time he was ready to be enrolled in the regular first grade at Westminster, he was able to pass third grade work. Therefore, he completed his high school training—only eleven grades at that time—in rather short order and was very young when he entered Clemson College as a freshman in 1936—about 16 years old to be exact.

But the point here is this. Bruce had completed his freshman year at Clemson one year previous to James (Red) Shirley's enrollment. He was, therefore, an "upperclassman" and entitled to the barbering privileges afforded sophomores and above.

"Red" Shirley had beautiful, red wavy red hair that came with his freckles. He didn't particularly want some unknown "barber" messing up his hair with a real scalping and perhaps "gapping" haircut.

Bruce Hunt was a neighbor and friend, so he came to him and pleaded for a more humane haircut. Bruce was glad to oblige and "Red" may have been his first customer. They didn't wait until they got to the Clemson Campus for the usual treatment, but rather "Red" convinced Bruce—and paid him \$1, too, I think—to have him cut his hair behind the house on East Main Street where Clarence Satterfield now lives.

All went really well with Bruce using an old pair of clippers that my dad owned. That is, everything went well, until "Red" officially arrived on the Clemson campus. "Upperclassmen" spotted him immediately and recognized his rather careful and "limited" hair-

cut. Nothing would appease them except for a “new” haircut...done in the Clemson tradition.

It was the tradition then, and there were no exceptions to the Clemson rule. You came as a freshman, had your hair cut off clean, wore a gray military uniform, and you served as a “rat” for at least one or more upperclassmen, for an entire year. Sounds kinda tough, doesn’t it? But it worked, and Clemson turned out some really fine men, and at one point had more commissioned officers in service than any other college.

August 29, 1990

We’ll Be Talking Real Money

The question of whether or not to have a referendum to see if the tax payers of Oconee County are ready to go “on the line” to guarantee a new twenty million dollar hospital via bonds is heavy on the minds of many.

It appears the new hospital issue is a bit far fetched in view of the fact the present hospital continues to have vacant rooms. There is a multitude of tax payers in Oconee County that couldn’t afford to stop by the emergency room much less check into the facility.

We keep hearing these horror stories of bills that are all but beyond one’s imagination. Even if they can be justified by some “hocus-pocus” padding or juggling, this does not make it better for the one who is trying to survive and pay the bill.

While we are sure that Oconee Hospital is not alone in the heavy billing department, we cannot help but question why we are being asked to continue to pour funds into a facility that can only serve those who have adequate insurance or an open checking account with unlimited funds. The average “po folks” ain’t got a chance with the cost of medical facilities these days.

The county council in a 3 to 2 decision has indicated they will ask the voters in a referendum if they want to pay for a new facility. Yet, the hospital board (the governing body) is not open to the idea of having their directors elected by public voters. It is, instead,

governed by those who are willing to join the association and pay a fee for the privilege of voting in their election. It just don't make good sense for this same board and facility to come to taxpayers and want them to guarantee a bond issue—while at the same time they don't want these same tax payers having any vote as to who is on the hospital board of directors.

It has been reported that this voter participation would “politicize” the board, according to the hospital administration. How about that folks? Just exactly what is keeping it from being “politicized” under the present system? The question of having some input into where your money goes and who is influencing the spending of it is very important to the voters of Oconee County.

It really doesn't matter what the hospital administration thinks of their system and those who “call the shots”...if they are wanting tax payer money, then tax payers ought to have the right to influence those who will oversee and administer the spending of these funds through the hospital board of directors. That should not be a closed circuit.

To argue whether or not a new \$20 million facility is needed isn't really a good question until the powers that be decided on who they want to pay the bills and get everything “laid out” on the cutting table.

Maybe you ought to just ask your personal physician where he or she would like to be hospitalized in case he or she became suddenly ill. Who would your doctor go to for medical and hospital help for his own health? You may get some interesting answers. And as the late Alben Barkley once remarked, as he served as U.S. Senator and Vice President, “A few billion here and a few billion there...the first thing you know you're talking real money.” Twenty million here and twenty million there, the first thing you know we'll really have a nice tax bill...and maybe an “empty” hospital!

September 5, 1990

“Easy Does It”

You, who are not in the know, may have wondered why some cars have bumper stickers that read in red and black letters, “Easy Does It.”

That is a sort of slogan for AA members. AA is among one of the few organizations that has effectively dealt with alcohol abuse and other addictive problems. Alcoholics Anonymous is not restrictive in its membership. Some of the great, near-great and not-so-great people have found the program useful in controlling out-of-control drinking.

It was founded by two men who very carefully reasoned out 12 steps that can be used to help those who seem beyond helping themselves. If followed, this program has worked for many people. For some, it did not work nor will anything else.

However, the point of this article is this: those things—those 12 steps that have helped many suffering alcoholics begin a recovery program—had also helped individual problems other than alcohol.

The fragile thread that holds us suspended each day between life and death sometimes breaks without obvious warning. We are caught up in sudden trauma and shock, without explanation for what happens.

We are quickly reminded that we are all weak, and without dedicated belief in a Higher Power, we are utterly helpless.

Who can say exactly what is right or wrong in a momentary decision that profoundly affects our mood and reason for being here as we try to keep a degree of sanity in our daily activities?

As a learned person tried to explain what sanity is and what it is not, he said it's kinda like this: Each morning when we awaken, sanity might be described as a straight line. He drew a straight line on a piece of paper. This could be a “norm.” The “norm” could be what is acceptable in the society in which you reside. All day long, each day, you are probably zig-zagging back and forth across the “norm” line. He drew little curved lines back and forth and upward on the straight line. “The key,” he said, “to keeping in touch with

reality is to try not to get so far away from the center (“norm”) line that you can’t see how to get back.” In other words...don’t go off on a tangent!

Regardless of the problem you may have this day at this moment, it may be helpful to remember: We are living this brief life one day at a time. The problem, whatever it may be, may best be handled if we can resolve to do what we can...just for this day only! Yesterday is history. While we reflect, we can learn, but we cannot change one thing that happened yesterday. Tomorrow, we may not see. For life is uncertain. We are barely here for a few days at best, thus we have no assurance of anything beyond today.

Usually, a complex matter can best be handled if broken into smaller component parts rather than considered the vastness of the whole. As one Chinese philosopher remarked, “A ten thousand mile journey begins with one small step.”

All of the things we consider “problems”—whether it is a tragedy, alcoholism, addiction or whatever it may be—can be thought of in terms of “I can handle this or anything else at least for this one day.” Each day, upon rising, remind yourself again.

We are living very briefly—one day at a time—and if we are worried about friends, it may be well to remember what the late Tom Morehead said: “Most of us can count all our real friends on one hand and probably have some fingers left.”

September 12, 1990

Printing With Lead Had Special Problems

It was not always easy to produce printing. It still isn’t, but now it’s a whole lot different for many shops. We’ve become accustomed to a computerized world of “systems.”

There’s a whole new vocabulary of “two-cylinder” and “three-cylinder” terms that didn’t exist just a few years past.

Once upon a time, in the early part of this century, most printing was accomplished with handset type. Men and women compositors put the single molded letters together with a thing called a “type

stick.” The lines, letters and words were spaced to a flush measure, then removed to a “galley.”

The “galley” was a storage place until the type was “proofed.” A corrected proof was made and then the type was placed into “forms.” The forms were likely to be steel or hardened metal frames that held the pages together so it could be transported to the “bed” of the press for printing.

Too, the type was held in place in the forms by “furniture” and was tightened into place with locks called “coins.”

Such systems still exist, and right here in Westminster! Felder Printing Company continues to use lead type—both handset and Linotype production to produce genuine, excellent printing. Perhaps no one in this part of the country understands quality letterpress printing production as well as Mr. W.C. Felder who continues to be active in his shop whenever he wishes to practice this fine art.

The Linotype machine was invented in the late 1800’s, but it was many years before they were in common use throughout the industry. The early cost of such machines kept many small shops from getting them, and now they’re almost extinct. It’s hard to believe.

When *The Westminster News* was first printed in 1953 and for several years thereafter, the lead type system was used for type composition.

To understand what this story is leading up to, you must remember the old handset type, locked into a chase or form, to be transported to the press, sometimes was not “justified”—that is, not fitted tight enough in place. Thus, on lifting the forms for transport to the press, it was not uncommon for some of the “loose” letters to fall out. Usually, the printer noticed any letters that failed to lock up and immediately replaced them as the forms were placed on the bed of the press.

The Westminster News in the early years of production in the 1950’s would occasionally promote a town-wide sale. There were more retail stores in town at that time and a wider variety. Nearly all would participate in these town-wide sales promotions, and the newspaper was able to sell a lot of extra advertising space.

Nathan Vigodsky, a fine gentleman, now deceased, operated The

Globe Department Store in a building that is now part of Jerry Smith's Moon's Drug Store.

Nathan bought advertising generously for those special town-wide sales. The *News* staff had to stay up late at night—sometimes all night long to produce the papers and get them mailed in time for the weekend business.

In one of Nathan's ads, he was featuring a number of clothing items, and included was one section for short-sleeved sport shirts—only \$2.98 at that time! However, when the lead forms were being lifted to the press, the handset word, S-H-I-R-T-S, was too loose. The letter "R" fell out and the tired and worn out printers didn't catch the mistake. But Nathan did early next morning. He was on the phone early. "Customers are coming in here," he exclaimed, "and pointing to the error!" It was only after he was assured the whole thing was a mistake and his business for that week was exceptionally good, did he take any comfort in our explanation.

Printing in lead can and has presented some really special problems—but so do computers!

September 19, 1990

Demolition Of Old Filtering Plant Stirs Memories

Maybe it had lost its usefulness. Maybe its time had come to be torn away to make room, perhaps, for something new. Maybe it had become a "sore spot" in the community for lack of maintenance. For whatever reason, the demolition of the town filtering plant on North Avenue and Walhalla Road, makes one feel kinda sad, especially if there is any pleasant associations with the structure in the past.

It was long before Westminster had any idea of providing a public swimming pool. The building was first constructed, according to the information engraved in the concrete, in 1925. It was much smaller in its humble beginning, but it served a good and useful purpose. It did, indeed, provide some of the best water in the world through its filtering system to some of the greatest people in the

world. As it grew, so did the concrete reservoir space—or concrete pools of filtered water—from Ramsay Creek, and later on from Chauga River.

This, of course, was illegal, but if you didn't get caught in the act, it was not a problem. Nor was it a serious crime if you compare it with some that are committed in the neighborhood today. You had to have someone watch for patrolling policemen. Some of those who had this official police duty included officers like the late John Rothell, Lee Haley Sr., Ira "Scrap Iron" Lee, "Smokey" Smith, Bill Bloodworth, Perry Sanders, and perhaps many others who have now long since passed on.

Some of the Sticklands, Shirleys, Hunts, Brocks, Haleys, and we are sure others found a way as youngsters to explore this facility. In the summer, when school was out, the weather hot and sultry, what better way to cool off than to take a dip in the filter plant pools? Of course, you paid the price if you got caught. Some did and some did not.

This is not to convey the idea that this filter system was used exclusively for public swimming by those who could scale the walls or otherwise gain entrance. But, it is a historical fact that some swimming did take place there.

The people who were charged with the operation of this plant did an excellent job of keeping the town in good water supply. The late Mr. Horace Cowan was, perhaps, the guiding force in his job as City Engineer. He was ably assisted by others who followed later such as Knox Kelley, who must have a million memories of things that happened in and around this old building. Also Shelor Harbin who once worked with the city in the electrical and water systems department. Also the late Homer Martin, and there were many others down through the 1920's, 30's, 40's, etc.

There is one thing we are sure the demolition team that is now tearing the structure away can attest to, and that is the fact that this facility was really built well with properly poured concrete, reinforced with steel. It isn't a simple chore to take apart.

Regardless of what happens to this property there are some really great memories of early youth that were spent there watching the filtering process and playing on the grounds—though this was not

constructed for the purpose of being a public park. It served well, many times, in place of one.

September 26, 1990

Football Games Stir Old Memories

Football, as we know it today, is hardly akin to an era not-so-long-ago. Westminster High School excelled in many ways, but in football, the fortunes were “mixed.” It seems there were long periods of “dry spells” between victories. Kinda like the West-Oak Warriors are experiencing at present, but it seems like it was even more pronounced in the 30’s, 40’s and 50’s. Westminster High School Yellow Jackets had a lot of good teams and then there were some that just barely showed up for the games and hoped the score would be something less than 50 to 0 for the winning opposition.

Distinctly, I recall one when the Yellow Jackets had a game scheduled with Hartwell, Georgia at night. The coaches were Wilson and Hendrix, I believe. I don’t recall their first names. They did the best they could with what they had. Many of the players were quite capable; others were on the team through sheer “guts” and effort with little ability and size to offer the opposition. On the other hand, Hartwell, Georgia had a seasoned team. If my recall is correct, one member of the Hartwell team was a brother of Frank Bagwell, a math and industrial arts instructor at Westminster at the time. The Hartwell team looked very much like a college team when they hit the lighted field. Westminster carried everyone who could “suit-up” and that included about eleven team members with about five or six substitutes. It is difficult to remember exactly who was on the team, but all the players for the Yellow Jackets were willing, but that’s about all you could say. They were simply out-manned, out-trained, and certainly mismatched to say the least.

There were some outstanding players on the team, such as Bob Grogan and O.E. “Junior” Smith, and one or two others with some size and ability, but nothing like a well-balanced team. The Westminster band, under the direction of the late C.E. Butts, made

the trip and it turned out to be a brisk fall night for the game.

Hartwell returned the opening kick-off for a touch-down and scored on practically every possession of the ball thereafter. The final score was 88 to 0, if memory is correct. Westminster played anyone and everyone who had the courage to get on the field. That, also included the two coaches and several non-high school fans who made the trip to see the game, but decided to pitch in and help the Yellow Jackets at half-time when the score was only 48 to 0.

The only thing good for Westminster was the adequate transportation getting us out of town. One unusual incident occurred before the game. It was during the "warm-up" period when the players exercised a bit, run through some of the simulated plays, and generally "bang each other" on the head or shoulders to get ready for the actual shock of combat on the field. During this period, Milford Hull, now a New York attorney, blocked, the now deceased, Roy Hair. Unfortunately, Roy was struck a freak blow and suffered a broken collar bone. This, however, may have been to his advantage at the moment, for it took some of those determined Yellow Jackets several weeks to recover from that episode.

This was one of those games you'd like to forget, but somehow can't. Looking back, it must have been sort of akin to the time Georgia Tech defeated Cumberland College 223-0.

October 3, 1990

What's New to Some...Is Old to Others

It is an embarrassing state of affairs to know that some of our politicians who have been trusted to serve in the General Assembly have been "selling" votes. The FBI sting operation brought this matter to us graphically with the modern technique of tape recording. The sting operation started out as an investigation of drugs, etc., as it was being used and distributed in our legislature. Suddenly, the picture became much bigger and more complex. One member, who was under investigation for his part in questionable dealings with members of the General Assembly, suddenly found it

necessary to “assist” the FBI in its effort to get to the root cause of “vote selling.”

The sting operation was set up to entice or otherwise give an opportunity to those members of the legislature who were willing to accept cash in return for voting for a gambling bill before the assembly.

The matter of indictments is not yet over, for there are more to come, according to reports. So far several previously elected and respected government officials have been charged. Some have already had the good sense to resign their office in view of what has transpired in the way of evidence of wrong doing in handling a public trust.

While this may be a shock to some citizens and a matter of outrage for all who value any semblance of honesty in government, it is not the first time such things have occurred. It probably won't be the last. The main difference now is that it has all come to light. It is very difficult to deny what is visually seen on evidence tape. The people have been betrayed and often “fooled” into believing that these office holders were honest and above reproach. It just ain't necessarily so, and it never has been.

We try to elect people who have the courage to act in good faith and honestly represent us, but the truth is we are often mistaken. The matter of payment for government officials has always been brought up as a way of trying to keep folks in government honest. Truly, this must have some merit, but when you consider the huge amounts of money that are spent—even on local campaigns—there must be some reason beyond the salary that elected jobs offer. Too often it is greed. The desire for power is great among aspiring politicians. Many know that power can be translated into money...that's the bottom line and “name of the game.”

There are no quick-fix solutions to this problem. Who can you trust among those who are willing to serve the public and truly not have ulterior motives behind the facade of election campaigns? Your guess is as good as mine. But we all had better keep watching as well as praying.

As the late John Butler, dry cleaner and philosopher observed, “What's New to Some...is Old to Others!” He probably didn't know how prophetic he really was in that observation.

October 10, 1990

Civil War Series Was Worth Watching

One Chinese reportedly said, "One picture is Worth A thousand Words."

That may be questioned. It could depend on the picture and more importantly, the context in which it is presented. But why argue the point? We presently have both in modern news media. A lot of the "stuff" we are bombarded with each day is hardly worthy of anything except a way to fill a void between commercial presentations.

It was refreshing, however, to see a series a couple of weeks past, that gave a fairly good documentation of the Civil War. The programs were presented in five parts and was broadcast by Public Television. In South Carolina, that is the Educational Network, which depends upon private and corporate donations for its sustenance.

The first shot, of this most devastating war this country has ever participated in, was fired at Fort Sumter in South Carolina. The cost of human life alone was staggering 620,000 men and often boys. It was, and continues to be, a struggle that shaped our nation at a time when it was doubtful that a United States could stand together.

In reality, there were no winners. While the Northern forces greatly outnumbered Southern in manpower and industrial strength, the South certainly had troops of more determined spirit and an almost religious dedication to the Confederacy, regardless.

Slavery was only one of the matters in question. Abraham Lincoln at first tried to circumvent the slavery question by saying that his first interest was in saving the union. Later, he did a rather sudden turnaround with the Emancipation Proclamation. This, of course, was one of the main issues, for many southern plantations were operated with slave labor. At that point in time, this gave many southerners a really great economic advantage over their neighbors to the north.

The war, which lasted from 1861 to 1865, touched virtually every household in the United States and the Confederacy. Few, if any, were spared loss of life and/ or many otherwise conveniences that would have been normal.

The still photographs in the series were unique graphic illustrations of the human suffering and struggle on the battlefields that covered states from the East coast to just-formed territories to the midwest and west. Many citizens today did not realize how widely this was covered with the camera until this series was presented. A photographer from New York -- a Mr. Brady, had studios which did an amazing job of making pictures when picture-making was not exactly a simple procedure.

While the South won many more battles than the North, the Yankees finally did prevail when they turned the tide at Gettysburg, and later at Richmond and Vicksburg, and most importantly, in Atlanta.

I can recall to this day my great grandmother Johnson on my father's side of the family. She lived to be nearly 100 years old and made her home in the vicinity of Winder, Georgia. She was only a young girl some 13 or 14 years old when General Sherman not only defeated Atlanta's troops but proceeded to burn everything in his path as he marched to the sea and then on in to South Carolina where he spent the rest of his venom.

My great grandmother was so impressed by this battle, living nearby and in the path of Sherman's famous march to the sea, that she wrote a vivid account of his troops passing through her community and stealing foodstuffs and / or farm animals. She explained how some animals were saved as they were taken from the barns and hidden in distant woods. Her account of this event was impressive and was reprinted in *The Winder News* in 1975 when that paper published a centennial edition.

In the vicinity of Mullins Ford boat ramp and picnic area on Lake Hartwell, a home once stood where the great-grandparents of the Tom Morehead family lived. The late Thomas Morehead once showed me at the Old Chimney which was standing at that time, where there had been a false hearth in front of the fireplace. The hearth stone could be removed and beneath it, the family hid their food - ham, meat, etc., from Yankee soldiers that came through the area.

Sherman was certainly right when he explained, "War is Hell," as he did everything he could to make it so as he torched and sought

to make the enemy feel its devastating sting.

This television series should be a requirement of every student in every high school in the United States. It would bring just a fraction of our internal heritage to light. The struggles that were felt at that time are, in many ways, with us today -- but of course in more subtle tones.

While the North did win the military victory, there can't be much rejoicing on either side. There simply isn't a way to be justly delighted.

October 17, 1990

They Care For The Land... The Land Cares For Them

Nothing is more enlightening than a bit of travel to other places. Things you read about, hear of or see on television have more meaning when you experience them first hand.

For the past several years I have had the privilege to visit an area in Pennsylvania better known as "Amish Country." It covers a vast section in and around Lancaster, PA.

These trips were made possible by Doctor and Mrs. E. L. Shuler. Dr. Shuler is now a retired senior partner of the Westminster Medical Clinic where he and Dr. Henry R. Kuemmerer served the medical needs of this area together for several years.

Doctor Shuler continues to live part-time in Cheohee Valley on a quietly serene lake near one of his sons, in the upper reaches of Oconee County. Part of the year, the Shulers also live in Columbia near their daughter, Rhett and her husband, Bill Barker, and grandsons.

Back to Pennsylvania. It is here that Dr. Shuler's sister lives in a little city near Hershey, PA -- a place that's internationally famous for chocolate, and other things. Mrs. Joyce Pattishale, his sister who so graciously allowed us to visit in the home and area, is originally from South Carolina, as are the Shulers, in the Charleston area. She now teaches in the Hershey, PA Middle School and brings a background from the South and travel all over the world to her classroom each day.

The "Amish Country" that is a part of this area brings first hand experience of people who believed very strongly in their religious heritage. William Penn, the man for whom the state was named, granted, as governor, that these people settling here, and seeking religious freedom from persecution, be allowed to live in peace. This, they have done and continue to do. They are by disposition and practice, kind and gentle folk but with hard-nosed determination to care for the good land that has cared very well for them.

The farms of this section are almost immaculate. The barns, the land and streams are given great consideration and are the sole life for many. Some continue to use buggies for transportation and real horse-power to till the soil. They are skilled in areas of construction and know how to build things that will last -- not only today, but down through the turbulence of hundreds of years.

Conservation to them is not something they've heard about on radio or TV, but a real life situation that is logical and right. While most of this country, and indeed, the world, is oriented to money as a source of supplying whatever goods and services we desire, these people more realistically use their talents to farm and build with their hands the real material necessities of life. All the while, they continue to have an abiding faith in a Higher Power to help them keep on keeping on. It is amazing and most refreshing to see what really can be done when human endeavor is put to the test.

Just think for a moment -- would any of us really be unusually upset or concerned about the oil situation in the Middle East if only we practiced a fraction of the way of life that the Amish have done for many generations?

If we don't learn to care for this great land, there is no guarantee that it will stand abuse forever. "Amish Country" people offer some things that it would be well for each of us to understand and appreciate...conservation and self-reliance.

October 24, 1990

Ashton Hester Will Be Remembered

If you are 'above average,' during your lifetime, you will meet a few people, probably less than ten, that you won't easily forget.

One that may be recalled by several in this and the Walhalla area is Ashton Hester. He left, last week, by his own choice, to return to his home in Florida, Inverness to be exact, so he could be near his mother, who is aging a bit.

Ashton came to this area originally as a sports writer for the Seneca Journal. Later, and maybe more importantly, he became the main guiding force as editor of the Keowee Courier -- a weekly newspaper that has been in existence since 1859. Except for about three years when everyone in this part of the country took time out to fight or assist with the Civil War in the 1960's, the Courier has been published ever since. It has a long and distinguished list of editors, publishers, printers and writers. Ashton Hester is remembered as one of those who took the time, patience and talent to influence for good a great number of readers as well as youngsters.

Ashton had "school-teaching" experience prior to his 17 years in Oconee County as a writer/ editor. He used his talent freely in addition to his regular work as he spent countless hours coaching little league teams in the area.

Often Ashton spent most of the day on Wednesdays, after the Courier was printed, helping young people who had taken it upon themselves to sell papers up and down the streets of Walhalla. These kids were not 'average' youngsters. They came from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Many of them were from broken homes or from single parent homes where the struggle for survival is a daily encounter. Ashton, very patiently, for many years, would do his very best to try to help each of them with personal problems as well as try to keep them straight and honest with their monetary endeavors. He used every bit of talent he could muster to encourage them to work, honestly and try to do "the right thing" in all situations.

He would sometimes have to referee small "fights" that would break out among youngsters when one would "invade" another's

street corner territory where the Courier was sold weekly. This was no small task when you consider about 25 or 30 screaming youngsters eager to hit the street first with the “new” edition of the Courier each Wednesday.

Aside from these activities, Ashton is a great photographer. He loves people and he gets excited in simply doing the things all newspaper people must do...report the news. Ashton, could, for example, attend a big meeting with hundreds present, several trying to talk at once, come back with his long-hand written notes, take his film to the dark-room, develop and print pictures as well as render an accurate story about the event. His accuracy was uncanny. He did his job well, and he did it because he felt it was really worth doing for the people.

While Ashton has his own personal “whims” about our system of things, he was most dramatic in allowing other points of view expression. Ashton admitted that he loves the Walhalla area and really had no desire to board that big “bird” for Florida last week, but felt a duty to do so.

During his tenure in Oconee, Ashton wrote a book that has yet to be published. He may return someday and complete that mission. He is truly one of the “great” newspaper people who left his mark in the hearts and minds of those who truly knew him.

October 31, 1990

The Skyline Is Changing

Maybe you didn't notice the “Westminster Skyline” very much - until it began changing.

The old two-story “Carter” building that fronted on Main Street and with a rear entrance on Windsor Street has been knocked down to the ground. With the exception of the wall that was and is common to Mr. Felder's print shop. Thank goodness, that is still intact.

For whatever reason, this building has been removed, and the view is different as you approach the town from the east on highway 123.

Many of an older generation will recall when this building was

occupied by a furniture store and later it housed Watkins Grocery. For many years Mr. Martin Watkins used this building for his home-based grocery business and he kept his three sons very much occupied within its walls. M.D. (Jack) Watkins, now retired post-master, worked here as did Bill Watkins who continues to operate Watkins Grocery a bit further down the street now.

One of the gentlemen who worked in this building for several years was the late Mr. Perry Garner. Those who remember Mr. Garner will also recall that he always wore a "handle-bar" mustache and had a quick sense of humor. Molgro England always contended that Mr. Perry Garner was once elected sheriff of Oconee County but simply go "out-counted" at the ballot box. Just who was the opposition and how the vote counting happened is not clear, but no doubt Molgro recalls the circumstances. Anyway, the thing that stuck out in the minds of many at that time was a slogan that Mr. Garner used in his campaign. Evidently, he was serving a term as Coroner of Oconee County, or had somewhere along the way. An astute politician, he made all the "stump" meetings over the county and had considerable support in his bid to be Sheriff. He would call out at these rather vocal meetings where the candidates spoke, "Hold what you've got...and...give me two more!" He was, of course, talking about votes. And it is reported that he came within eight votes of being elected Sheriff. This reaffirms the importance of those who conduct elections and are responsible for accurately counting the votes.

The old "Carter" building surely must have been an interesting gathering point for many conversations about politics, farming, cattle raising and trading and the important topics of the day at the early part of this century. The late Mr. M.D. Watkins, Sr., was a well-known cattleman and "cow trader" during the 1930's and 1940's. He and the late Mr. Evans Brock were great friends and had a common interest in the cattle business. Mr. Brock ran the "Blue Bird" service station just down the street where the Harper's store building now stands.

Business was rather brisk at these old store buildings when they were in their prime use, but time has caused population and trading

shifts that caused many of them to deteriorate and eventually disappear. But the memories are still there.

November 7, 1990

Coach Howard and His New Book

Anyone who is 50 years old or more from South Carolina, or even the South, has probably heard of Coach Howard. He is a living legend of football coaching at Clemson.

He took over as Head Coach in the 1930's when Jess Neeley defeated Rice University in the Cotton Bowl in Texas with the Clemson Tigers by a score of 6-3. Rice, a private University, had plenty of money, so they just hired the Clemson Coach after that game.

I haven't yet seen or read a copy of Coach Howard's new book, but I plan to read it, and see how accurate some of the anecdotes are related. Coach Howard has been a speaker in great demand all over the United States for many years. A few health problems slowed him a bit in recent times, but he is a "fighter" from the old school.

Coach Howard, himself an All-American football player for the University of Alabama, always kept in touch with his constituents. He coached football at Clemson when there were "big games" and not so much "big money" derived from them...for the schools or coaches.

In fact, there was a time when college coaches had some teaching chores in addition to coaching jobs. Bruce D. Hunt, a Clemson graduate in the class of 1940 recalls having at least one class taught by Coach Howard. I'm not sure what the subject matter was, but the thing that Bruce recalled of the class, "Coach Howard always had a classroom with open windows nearby. This was not by accident, but more by intent, for chewing tobacco was not regarded as it is today...Coach Howard needed a nearby open window to accommodate his chewing habit.

Frank Howard has friends from various strata of humanity he has touched. His outgoing attitude, and his quick wit has been one of his most effective weapons during his coaching years as well as later.

As a younger man, he always rose early in the morning at Clemson. About 4:30 or 5 was not an unusual time to see Coach Howard out running or exercising. He was in as good or better physical condition than his players. The late Marshall Cleveland of Westminster, drove a bread delivery truck at that time, so he arose early in the morning. Often, he delivered to facilities at Clemson at an early hour. The two often met, and Coach Howard would assist Marshall in his job of loading and unloading bread trays from the truck. They became lifelong friends, and in later years when Marshall established a successful wholesale business, and Coach Howard and Clemson moved into "big time" football, they continued to communicate.

It became tradition for Marshall each year to send Coach Howard one of those big, nice "ten gallon" Stetson hats that he wore. Too, Marshall was an avid Clemson football fan and supporter when sometimes the going was rough. He was not a "fair-weather" friend.

A number of people from this area have known Coach Howard personally for years and have heard first hand many of his interesting stories.

C.L. (SLED) Smith has been a member of the distinguished "coffee club" that met each morning for years at the Holiday Inn dining hall where Coach Howard and friends have gathered.

It is good and fitting that he has found time to publish his book, for there will never be another era in Clemson history to equal the times of Frank Howard when he led the Tigers.

November 14, 1990

Gambling Instinct Is Alive And Well

Is it right or wrong -- gambling, that is!

Well, who knows; it may depend on whether you are winning or losing.

It is the element of chance that keeps interest high in many things. It is the possibility -- however slim -- that you might risk a little and win a lot. But the people who operate gambling operations

professionally leave little to chance.

They know it is a big and serious business all over the world -- and in states that legally allow it and also in those that don't.

Betting a small wager on a sporting event, a golf match, or just flipping a coin to see who pays for the soft drinks at a vending machine, the principal is the same. You run the risk of winning or losing.

Publications as well as many church organizations take advantage of this inborn instinct to promote interest and raise funds for many worthwhile projects. Or sometimes just to make money for the company or operator.

It is beyond me to pass moral judgement as to what type of gambling is right and what kind is wrong. The law, in general says, where there is consideration (money or material risk) in a given promotion with the possibility of risk, then technically this can be construed as gambling from a legal point of view.

Personally, I have no quibble with most of the games of chance that are legally allowed, and even some of those that are not legally allowed in all states.

One has the option of participation or not and that is a moral decision that each must answer for himself. It will not be a matter of legal decision or moral judgement left to the church or state in the day of judgement hereafter.

The matter of a state operated lottery keeps creeping into public opinion...more recently in South Carolina as indictments are being handed down to try lawmakers in our capital for allegedly selling votes in a FBI "sting" operation to pass a law allowing para-mutual betting.

While the FBI seems to have some irrefutable evidence on video tape that as many as 15 lawmakers were willing to "sell" their votes, this is not something especially "new" to our system as well as other states. It has happened before and may well happen again.

Taking money for votes is against federal law, whether for good or evil reasons. The so-called "public trust" is violated by those who cannot "legally" take money for reasons other than voting the conscience of their constituents.

Regardless of the outcome of these trials, these lawmakers did the state an extreme injustice by participating in such a scheme to promote new gambling laws. The experience coming to light will assuredly deter the chances of any reasonable legislation in this matter in the immediate future. All the while, many dollars will continue to flow out of state to those that accommodate the public desire to engage in games of chance.

What and how you believe in this matter is your personal business; as for me, I think I'll just take a few days off for a vacation visit to Las Vegas, and really "clean those guys out"... teach 'em a lesson, and bring a bundle back home to invest in the stock market...where it is legal... and little left to chance!

November 21, 1990

Some Fishing Trips You Don't Forget

The late J.E. (Judge) Cobb, local Magistrate, was a great and respected citizen. He had many talents, in addition to his job of dealing out justice as a local magistrate. He loved to fish, and he sometimes worked at this avocation with great diligence...as did a number of his friends.

One special trip, perhaps 25 years ago, a group was assembled about this time of year to make a pilgrimage to Florida to "take on" the Stein Hatchee River at a point where it empties into the Gulf of Mexico. The brown sea trout run down there about this time of year...as do the 'spots.' If you know how and what you are doing, you can really load a boat with them when they come from the Gulf up the mouth of the river.

Max Glymph, Dean Breazeale, M.L. McGuffin, Judge Cobb and I made arrangements to go. Other than me, the above had been to this favorite spot at least once or twice a year on previous trips. They knew the special fishing camp where you could get a bunk bed for \$2 per night and there was the necessities of fishing, but nothing else.

The camp was operated by a little lady -- a Mrs. Taylor, I believe, who weighed every bit of 85 pounds, but she was quick, efficient

and in charge of the place. The cabins were just that. No frills, just bunk beds, and with three on one side and two on the other of an open shack.

We pulled M.L. McGuffin's boat down there behind our vehicle. It was a nice outfit, nearly new and ready to go. As we entered the camping area and was assigned a camp building, I noticed that all of the others, with the exception of Judge Cobb and me, very quickly got out and almost ran into the cabin and the three -- Max, Dean and M. L. -- each claimed one of the three bunks away from the two that were left for me and the Judge.

I thought these fellows were reacting kinda strange when they very quickly, and with great determination, claimed these bunks, but I dismissed the thought without saying anything.

However, it didn't take forever for me to discover what was taking place. When we completed fishin' for the day and prepared to hit the bunks for sleep, I discovered that Judge Cobb, in the one next to me, was carrying on a lively conversation.

I thought to myself; this is a bit unusual, but the Judge kept on sort of mumbling and every now and then he would "rail out" something like this, "Shut up, sit down, be quiet, I'm in charge of this court, and you'll do what I say!"

It didn't take long for me to figure out that the Judge talked in his sleep, and it was not all in a whisper. He would sometimes carry on a rather lengthy monologue with emphatic mood changes. This was OK for a while, but pretty soon, when you really wanted to doze off to sleep, the Judge would almost 'jar' you from the bunk with a dissertation.

Max, Dean and M.L., on the other side of the cabin, knew this before they got there and therefore put some distance between the Judge and me as they claimed the bunks opposite. I was a victim of circumstances, but it was all great fun, and I treasure the moments of that trip, and the lively conversation -- even as the Judge "held court" in his sleep for about four nights.

By the way, we caught plenty of fish...and I think I was the "top man" in this department. However, no doubt, someone would be sure to dispute that claim!

November 28, 1990

A strong bond...50 years and holding!

Not many things -- or relationships -- last for 50 years.

There are exceptions, and it is refreshing, as well as reassuring to human endeavor, to know that some can endure.

Joe and Evelyn Rogers celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the Westminster Depot last Sunday with a host of friends and relatives joining in the occasion.

Both these good citizens have seen some good times and some, maybe not-so-great, but they have the qualities of "lasting values" to keep on "keeping on," regardless.

Some things you just don't forget. Joe recalled he had exactly two dollars in his pocket when he and Evelyn had the knot tied by the late Rev. "Jack" Stansell. Joe said he gave Preacher Stansell one of the dollars for his services and proceeded to take his new bride on a honeymoon trip to what is now the Oconee State Park. The late Harley Thrift was park Superintendent at that time, Joe had served with him in a CC Camp somewhere along the way.

Anyway, they were able to rent one of the cabins across the lake for the other dollar.

The cost of marrying has gone up since that experience, but whatever ingredients these two fine people have were based on values far greater than material or monetary.

For years Joe worked as the Supply Room Manager at Beacon's Oconee Mill. He came into contact with a wide spectrum of the human race here and at his previous work with the Oconee Office Supply in Seneca where he was employed as the Sales Manager.

Joe not only did a good job with the Supply Room work, but he seemed to thoroughly enjoy working and dealing with people. He has a great sense of humor and this has, no doubt, been a valuable asset down through the years.

He recalls many interesting people whom he met both on and off the job. A number of the "old timers" are no longer with us...Such as Walter Duckworth, J.L. Holland and "Roddey" King...but Joe knew them well and a host of others.

Since his retirement, he and Evelyn live near Rae Cain and his wife. Rae probably knows as much about Westminster and its recent history as any. He played baseball at the Oconee Mill Park when there were folks in the gallery such as Rob Simpson and King Dillard. He also served a number of years as a Deputy Sheriff of Oconee and retired after serving the citizens of Westminster as Police Chief.

Rae also enjoyed flying an airplane when he was younger and there wasn't so much cost and government involved. Now, he settles for riding his bicycle twice a day, and maintains his health in a way that makes younger folks wonder how he does it.

Joe and Evelyn's 50th anniversary was not only a great day for them but for others who attended and recalled some experiences past.

Continued good wishes go to all concerned!

December 5, 1990

What Ever Happened To Bert Love?

Bert Love was a young, strong and healthy man who lived in Westminster during the 1930's.

He lived with his brothers, Kletner and Wade and his mother, Ella and his father, George, in a two-story home that once stood near the intersection of Walhalla Road and Doyle Street. He also had some sisters. There was one named Annie, and another perhaps, by the name of Bessie.

To youngsters who lived in the neighbor at that time, including me and others such as Julian Grubbs, Roy Strickland, Lee and Lloyd Haley, along with the Shirley boys, James, Frank and Raymond, Bert represented "courage" in its purest form. He was strong; he didn't like school very much; he did a lot of things the rest of us just "thought of doing."

Bert sometimes found himself at "odds" with the local police. He absolutely defied them on more than one occasion, when they were called upon to arrest him for some charge. Bert would have been a great contender as a "Golden Gloves" prize fighter during

his prime years. He would, with only slight provocation, “fight a proverbial circle saw and cuss it for not running fast enough.” He came up in an environment not unfamiliar to a lot of people during the ‘great depression’ when you had to scratch and fight for your very existence.

Bert was not a “mean person” per se. He simply didn’t fit into the system’s way of doing things. For example, he knew a little about bootleggers and how they operated. Back then, it was a big deal for law enforcement to raid the illegal stills and those who dealt the booze. Not that Bert had any real close association with the manufacturing process, but he did like to sample the stuff every now and then. And this sometimes left him at odds with the law. Especially when he had a bit too much and got into a fist fight with some of his buddies or just about anyone who crossed his path at a given moment.

The police department had a job to do back then -- just as now. But it was slightly different. It seems there were a lot of fights, but those involved didn’t necessarily try to kill each other with guns, knives, etc. Most were fist fights that left bruises and black eyes, but fatalities were few. But the law officers had to answer the call when it came. When Bert was involved, not many of them relished a hand-to-hand combative situation with him. He was quick, strong, cagey and determined and more often than not, he won.

Several police officers at that time who had to deal with Bert included officers Giles, Bloodworth and one who Bert particularly didn’t wish to face, Perry Sanders.

For some reason Bert didn’t like to face Perry when an arresting situation arose. Perry, for many years, was a respected local officer and later became a county rural policeman. Most of the time he could and did reason with Bert, but if necessary, he would take his need to submit to an arresting officer.

I have seen as many as several hundred citizens gathered along the banks of the hollow behind their home to witness an encounter with Bert and “the law.” Sometimes there would be a big fight, but most of the time when Perry Sanders arrived, it was all over. Bert would go along with Perry and they would proceed to work out

their differences in a more humane way.

Bert was not always a model citizen in his younger days, but there were not many kids in the neighborhood who didn't secretly admire his "guts."

December 12, 1990

Forestry Products Are With Us Daily

Contrary to the belief of a few who advance only controversial matters, due to the U.S. Forestry Department and technicians who exercise the wishes of the majority, we reap great benefits from our natural resources.

Multiple use of the land, its trees and waterways provide daily benefits to virtually every citizen. Many of these things go unnoticed, or simply accepted as we go about our lives.'

Clean water is one of the goals the forestry people strive for in their efforts of controlling erosion and environmental matters such as waster and chemical disposition. There was a time, in the not-too-distant-past, when heavy rains in Oconee County would see virtually every river basin and lake filled with mud washed in from surrounding territory. While this may happen in a limited way, now occasionally, it is nothing like it was 25 years ago.

Wildlife in this country has flourished in recent years. For example, it is not unusual to see wild turkey in this area in rather great abundance. This was not so 30 years ago.

I personally remember going with Game Wardens Frank Cashin and Ray Moore to stock wild turkey in a game reserve above Westminster in the Long Creek-Chauga River area. These two officers of the SC Wildlife and Resources Division had two dozen turkeys that were released in an area just above Holly Springs community known as the Spy Rock Trail.

For some reason, I had heard that a wild turkey needed room to run before it could lift off and fly. In other words, the story was that these turkeys needed a little "runway" distance to travel along the ground, much like an aircraft needs a runway to get airborne.

Where and how I got this information is not clear, but the day I

went with Frank and Ray to the Spy Rock Trail, newspaper camera in hand to photograph the event, a great truth was revealed to me.

A wild turkey can and may fly straight up much in the fashion of a helicopter. Some of these birds did just that. Too, some exhibited great sailing ability. I recall seeing one sail for what must have been over a mile right down the Chauga River valley. It was beautiful.

The point is, game birds, turkey and quail have flourished and continue to do so as well as an abundance of deer, and yes, even a few bear live in Oconee County. This kind of thing does not just happen. It is planned, pre-meditated and executed by people who study our forest resources and do those things that help promote a better quality of life from the multiple use of our land.

Clear-cutting timber land has always been one of the most controversial matters in recent months in this area due to the fact of its unsightly presentation. Nearly all agree that this practice as seen from public highways has caused more concern than a 1000 good land practice habits that have gone unnoticed...or, at least, little publicized. There is a great deal of evidence, that clear cutting has some redeeming value beyond its unsightly quality in much the same way that a farmer clears a corn field of old growth and bushes to allow for new trees, new growth for beauty and timely further use down the road. Actually, much less than one percent of our public lands are harvested in this procedure, but it's exposure to public opinion has sometimes been extreme, and sometimes unfair, to our system that can and does work well for the majority.

December 19, 1990

Christmas Lights And Interesting "Themes"

It is the time of year when the adults take over the fantasy world that is usually reserved to the minds of children. It's Christmas.

The lights go up all over the place in this area, and sometimes it appears to be an out-right contest as to who can "out-string" and "out-light" the neighborhood competition. It is all in great fun, and usually interesting to observers.

Dr. Henry Kuemmerer has traditionally taken a great deal of

interest and care in Christmas displays and lighting his home on Walhalla road. This home lends itself to unique decoration and Doctor K. prides himself on developing a Christmas "theme" in his efforts.

This year he has not spared traditional display. The big columns and wreaths are well-lighted as is the cross at the pinnacle of his multi-level home. It appears in good taste as does his Christmas tree at the front entrance, complete with Santa Claus nearby. Also his "self-manufactured" and installed iron fence has seasonal appointments that seem appropriate and in keeping with his "theme."

Just across the street is the home of Claude and Carrie Knorr. This home, too, has come alive with decorations as Claude has apparently learned some new "wrinkles" in lighting and gives Henry K. something pleasing to see from his home.

Too, just up the street is the well-lighted home of Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Lynch and just above them is another home with very colorful displays -- the owner-occupant whose name is not known.

Also, just around the corner, Denise and Rick McCormick have done an outstanding job with their decoration of their beautiful home that was once occupied by the Pedens.

Perhaps, the most-lighted home in the immediate area is that of the Bobby Boggs family -- just out the Walhalla Highway beyond Jim Smith's garage. No doubt, Bobby Boggs has gone "all-out" for giving some light and life to everything in and around his home. The power company ought to be real proud of him when he flips the switches at Christmas. He can keep the jaws of depression out of their way with the liberal lighting system he has exhibited. It can be seen for about a half-mile out as one approaches from Walhalla. Bobby should be awarded some kind of trophy for this special effort and investment of time and really unique Christmas spirit that his home stirs.

There are many others in the area that are equally beautiful and all somehow lend itself at this time of year toward bringing diverse interests into one central "theme."

It's Christmastime. It's a magical season. You can get away with some of your wildest decorating ideas all in the name of the season.

It's not only acceptable, it's expected. And it's fun.

A tip to Doctor Henry K. for next year -- check with your neighbor, Claude K. before decorating next year...he can lend you some expert advice and save you a lot of frustration.

January 2, 1991

Every Time History Repeats Itself... The Cost Goes Up!

Whoever said that had it right! Not that we can do much about it, but it is an accurate observation.

Here we are at the beginning of a new year with prospects looking "dim" to "dull," at best, for the beginning of this last decade of the century. That is, if you're expecting "peace and prosperity."

The immense build-up of American Armed Forces in the Middle East certainly has the attention of the world. If our leader, our President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, does what he says he is going to do, then we may, within less than one month, find ourselves at war in a place that is very foreign to most of us.

One cannot help asking oneself some soul-searching questions about this whole thing. Forget all that propaganda about this being a fight to stop "naked aggression." That is only a smoke screen. The public is not stupid. This bone of contention is about oil. It also translates into our economy... our very jobs, in some cases, and also a standard of living that we have insisted upon whether or not we had the money to pay the bills or not.

It's not that this isn't important to us. It is. But whether or not it is worth one ounce of American blood being spilled under the present circumstances is a question only you can answer for yourself. It keeps coming up in my efforts to sort out a few truths that if, for example, Canada sent troops into our state of Maine and occupied part of it, how many Saudi troops could we really bet on to come over here and help us take it back?

On the other hand, we do not like what this fellow Saddam Hussein has done to his neighbors. We don't know that much about

his neighbors, but apparently they were friendly enough to us in the big business of buying and furnishing oil as are the Saudis. However, according to our own Senator Hollings, their system of government is a lot different from ours and not very much different from the unfriendly neighbor that just took over their property. Hollings says, according to a media statement, that this country, Kuwait, is not worth the life of one American.

However, on the other side of the coin, one must consider the possibility, that if Saddam gets away with simply taking his neighbor's property, then who will be next?

It is not an easy question for us to answer. It's sort of a "damned if you do, and damned if you don't" arrangement. Our President is supposedly privy to much more information about this matter than we are. We hope he is, and we certainly endorse the statement a local lady expressed recently in a News story. The mother of Phillip Lear, said "I certainly hope President Bush knows what he is doing." She was referring to the Middle East situation. Who knows any better than Mrs. Lear what happens when the Commander-In-Chief issues an order. She and her family lost a valuable son in the invasion of Panama. The entire area continues to mourn this loss.

Whatever the decision on this matter, as history begins again to repeat itself, you can bet the cost will go up...lives will be lost, and blood that is priceless will be spilled. It's not likely we'll get much help from all those "friends and neighbors" at the U. N. when it comes to pitching in some money to help pay the bills. They are mostly "fair weather friends." You can bet on that for 1991.

January 9, 1991

"I've Fallen And I Can't Get Up..."

Television has a way of creating instant celebrities. Even with commercials. One of the most recent is the lady who stars in a commercial advertising a device to assist persons who have accidents and are unable to reach a phone. It's called "life-line" and no doubt, really has some value to older people or those forced to live isolated.

The interesting thing is the way the idea is presented. A little old