

In Search of Things Worth Remembering



Clingstone
winter

In Search of Things Worth Remembering

This winter '77 issue of Clingstone brings to an end the work of the '76-'77 Clingstone staff. Putting together a publication like Clingstone requires the dedication and cooperation of many people: dedication to preserving our local heritage and cooperation in searching for the stories of our people. We, the Clingstone staff, believe that the goal of this project has been an extremely important one, and we are grateful to those who had the vision to initiate this project and the willingness to support it.

Our appreciation goes to Dr. Newton Smith, Bill Wood, and the members of the Piedmont Heritage Fund who provided the means to make Clingstone a reality; to Dr. Harvey Blanchard, Nancy Wood, Ann Duncan, Sara Frances Wallace, Jan Worthington, and the faculty members of Greer High School who were personally involved in the publication of Clingstone; and to the citizens of the Greer Area who helped us in our search for things worth remembering by contributing their ideas and memories of a way of life which we hold so dear.

In this winter issue, we look at the agrarian roots of our region, at the time when "Cotton was King" and men and mules worked the land for a living. We also look at medicine shows, where people came to be entertained as well as cured of "whatever ailed 'em"; and at the local barbershop, which was once a haven of male fellowship. Also in this issue, James A. Stokes has allowed us to print his own narrative of personal memories that he has written for his grandchildren, and Luther Greene has contributed an original poem, "Then and Now."

We hope that you, the reader, will enjoy this issue, and that you will yourself always search for those things worth remembering and help them to live on with future generations.

Clingstone Staff

Board of Editors

Lisa Belue
J. D. Burke
Martine Clare
Kendra Elrod
Michael Gooding
Greg Jones
Susan Hill
Jimmy James
Jeff Loftis
Rachel Pruitt
John Rollins
Tammy Waddell
Perry Williams
Chris Young

Advisor

Kathy Johnston

Faculty Advisors

Robert Chastain
Marvin Collins
Clarence Daniels
Ann Duncan
Earline McKown
Jim Pearson
Sara Wallace

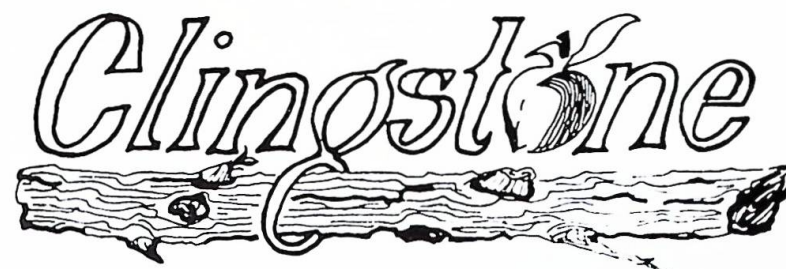
Consultant

Dr. Newton Smith

The cover is a photograph by Perry Williams

The members of the staff are students of Greer High School, but we invite any interested individual in the Piedmont to collaborate with us in producing Clingstone. Please send any comments, ideas for stories, or recipies to:

CLINGSTONE
P. O. BOX 1776
GREER, S. C. 29651

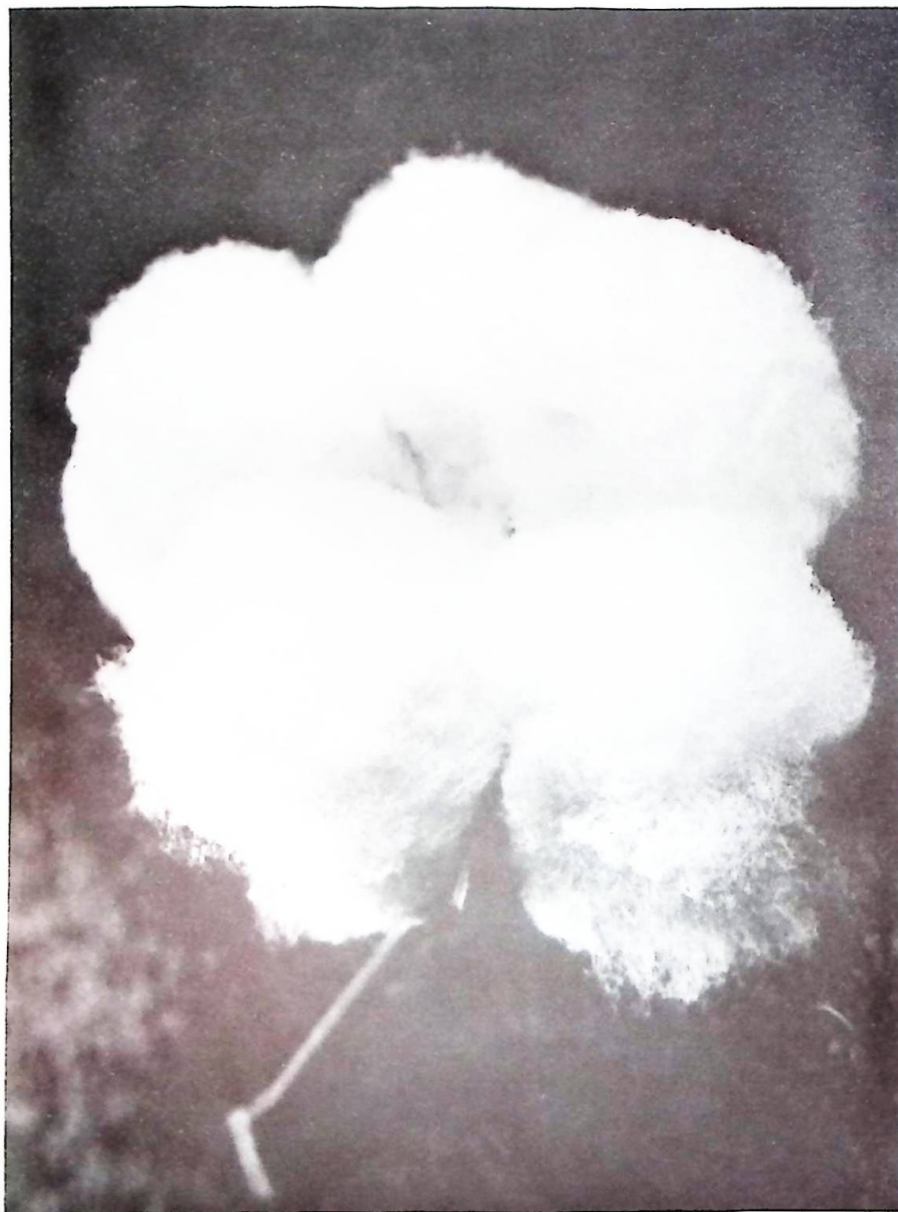


In Search of Things Worth Remembering	1
Clingstone Staff	2
Cotton: The White Gold of the South	4
Palmer McCrary	5
Gary Brockman	10
Frank Barton	14
Luther Greene	16
Then and Now	18
Of Mules and Men	20
Dr. N. J. Ayers	22
Sam Frey	26
Cornelius Bruce	27
Bill Lister	34
Elzie Powell	37
The Medicine Show Era	39
W. D. Owens	40
Homer Plumbley	42
Basketball Comes to Greer in 1919	44
John Kendrick	45
The Life Story of James A. Stokes	50
Who's Next?	55
Maynard Greene	56
Jason Dill	58
Preach Vaughn	61
Dortcha Smith	62
Letter from the President of the Piedmont	
Heritage Fund	63
Donors	64

CLINGSTONE is published in Greer, S.C. 29651. Prices are \$4.65 for a one-year subscription (three issues) or \$1.60 for one issue. No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any form, with the exception of brief excerpts for review purposes without the express consent of CLINGSTONE. Published by the Piedmont Heritage Fund with the assistance of the S.C. Arts Commission.

Copyright © 1977 by the Piedmont Heritage Fund.

Cotton: The White Gold of the South.



Photograph courtesy of Joe F. Jackson

Interviewed by: Paula Rector, Vicki Hiott, Jim Helminski, Kathy Johnston

Edited by: Vicki Hiott, Kathy Johnston, Susan Hill, Paula Rector

Photographs by: Perry Williams, Jim Helminski, Kathy Johnston

Many years ago, it took many hours of manpower to run a cotton farm, whereas now, with all the mechanical aids modern cotton farmers have, the workload has been greatly reduced. We decided to go back and talk to people who still remember when cotton was king and how cotton used to be farmed and milled, hoping it will remind you of the pride southerners used to have in their work.

We conducted interviews with Palmer McCrary, Gary Brochman, Luther Greene, and Frank Barton. We got plenty of information on "King Cotton" that should interest you.

The Clingstone staff has interviewed Mr. Palmer McCrary, who is now 106, before. We went to see him again when we decided to do a story on cotton-growing because Mr. McCrary has been growing cotton since he was a young boy working in the cotton fields with his father. Mr. McCrary explains how cotton was grown in those days, and we thank him for his time and patience in answering our many questions.

Mr. McCrary: I've been a farmer all my days. I was raised on a farm. That's all I've ever done. After I got to be a man and a housekeeper of my own, why then, I was a good farmer. Everybody said I was.

They used to say to me when I lived there at the Bailey's in Greer, they wanted to know how was it I made so much cotton. I just had a little funny joke I'd tell 'em. I said, "Well, I can make cotton walkin' cross the field."



Palmer McCrary

Paula: How did you get started in cotton?

Mr. McCrary: My father was a farmer, and he raised cotton. That's where I got it from. I was raised on a farm. But when I got to be a man and housekeeping and farming out for myself, I was a better farmer than my daddy. Well, I don't know as I was a better

farmer than my daddy because 'long in my father's time, people didn't use as much **fertilizer** as they did when I was farming. I could take ten acres and make more cotton on it than my daddy could make on twenty. Paula: How did you plant cotton? Did you have some certain tools that you used?

Mr. McCrary: Oh yes, we had a cotton planter. We would plant cotton with a cotton planter. When I was a boy, we had two cotton planters. We had one they call the cotton bloom, and we had one they call the Ted planter. The cotton bloom, it had two feet on it, and it was rigid. It had a plow; you could open out your furrow and run it in, and the two plows behind these covered the seeds as you'd go. The Ted planter we had, it had two feet back there, but they were kinda springy and had a bolt on them feet. They would cover up the furrow when you'd drag it flat.

Then we moved on from there to what they call the Cole planter. The Cole planter had the buzzard foot, had a drag foot behind it there. It'd go along and plant the cotton, and that buzzard foot behind it would cover the seed and make it right flat. We liked that better.

Paula: How do you work the cotton?

Mr. McCrary: Just put it in the ground and it comes up. When it comes up, you got to work it; plow it and then thin it. The first thing to do would be to thin it because it comes up right thick, you know, in great rows. It's too thick to stand that way. You cut it about a whole inch wide; some people cut it two whole inches wide. But on and on, when I got to be a farmer, we got a planter that would drop about four or five seeds in the hills. I just let it stay like that--wouldn't thin it, just hoe it and plow it. I was makin' cotton then. All them stacks would have bolls on them, and they'd lay apart. And you'd go there and pick cotton...it'd be just like a snowbag--all white cotton. Oh, it was pretty.

But you had to work it. Had to keep hoeing it and plowing it to keep the grass out. You can't make cotton in the grass. You got to keep it clean. When I moved up to Traveler's Rest, ole man Freddie Moody was called about the best farmer that was around there. He used to come up through my field, and we'd

be pickin' cotton, and he'd say, "You ain't got enough grass in your whole field to hide a rabbit." Well Lawd, you can't make cotton in the grass.

And you can't make cotton without puttin' fertilizer to it. If you're scared of your fertilizer and don't put much to it, you ain't gonna make much cotton. We put that fertilizer down in the row. We used to put fertilizer in with a hand distributor, but then we got a horse distributor. We could lay off the rows and put the fertilizer in as we'd go. And we'd use soda for a top dressing. We'd scatter that soda on top of the ground just after we thinned it and plowed a second time. It makes your cotton grow. Oh, you ought to seen my cotton field when I was a farmer. You couldn't hardly walk through my cotton field without knockin' the bolls off it. Cotton way up around your waist. I used to make cotton.

I lived up above Traveler's Rest. I moved up there in '37, and the first crop I made up there, ole man League said I made more cotton up there than had ever been made on the place. After that, we just got to makin' more cotton and more cotton every year.

My youngest daughter picked 470 pounds of cotton and loaded the bales of cotton out of the field before dinnertime and quit before sundown. She could have picked 500 pounds of cotton if we hadn't stopped an hour for dinner and an hour for loadin' the cotton. I could pick 500 pounds of cotton or more.

I never did have too much land in cotton, but I made more cotton to the land I tended than any man there was around me. Wasn't a man around where I lived that made as much cotton to the acre. I'd make from two to two and a half bales of cotton to the acre.

John Armstrong was about the best farmer around where I lived. He was counted about the best farmer there was in Spartanburg county. He just knew who to work the cotton, and he wasn't afraid to put the fertilizer down.

Paula: Did you ever have any bad storms that hurt your crop?

Mr. McCrary: Yea, we had storms. Sometimes there would come a hailstorm. I remember one time after the

fourth of July, a hailstorm came. Where I lived, we didn't have so much of it, but up there around Fork Church, it just cut some of the cotton down to the ground. A whole lot of people from around Fork Church moved off from the country and moved to Greer. A little cotton came out, but it never made nothin'. Some of them made a sack or two of yellow cotton. If a hailstorm comes way in July like that, you're just ruined. You ain't gonna make nothin'.

"I was counted the best farmer of 'em all."

Farming's kinda risky. You don't get rich on a farm much. You can make a livin' on a farm. You can plant and raise all you eat, except your sugar and coffee. You can raise your own meat. You can have your own milk cow. You can have your own chickens. That's the advantage you've got on a farm. On public work you can make money and have money all the time. You won't have money all the time on a farm. Ain't but one time of the year you'll pick up any money on a farm, and that's the fall of the year when you're gathering up.

When I was stayin' down by W. R. Bailey's, I come up by the house one day from the fields, and ole man Bailey was settin' out on the well. He said to me, "Pal, you ought to be proud of yourself."

I said, "How come?"

He said, "Government men was down through here today. They said you was a number one farmer."

I said, "That so?"

He said, "Yea. Harve Miller down here, said he's in the second class, him and Hoover Strange. Had another man on the place across the river, said he's in the second class. And they had another fellow on the other side of the river. He was in the no count class. Wasn't no farmer at all."

He said that I ought to be proud of myself. I was counted the best farmer of 'em all. Well, much obliged.

We talked with Mr. Gary Brockman about cotton and cotton gins. He has been a cotton ginner for 60 years and lives near Reidville. He still runs his gin, and he enjoys it. He was very anxious to talk with us, and we found him a pleasure to talk with.

Mr. Brockman: Cotton was King in this country for years and years. It's still right up there. In low country--Texas, Oklahoma--they can still make money raising cotton 'cause it's flat land. They don't have to contend what we do in this country; they can irrigate. They can make the water begin when they want, and they can make it quit when they want. The trouble with cotton, in this country, is you might get to running a drought and you can't irrigate it and it'll tie you up. And then maybe you got too much water. You couldn't stop it, and that would get you. You had all that to contend with.

But cotton made this country what this country amounts to today. Mr. Cotton was the King; he's the daddy of all of it. He put it where it's at.

I remember when they used spinning wheels in the homes. They had two things about as wide as my hand and had needles on it. They'd comb it out right smooth, and they'd spin it into a thread, and they'd use that to make clothes.

I've heard old people tell before they went to bed at night, they picked their shoe full of cotton seed. You know how cotton has seed in it, and how it's took out now is altogether a different system because they didn't have no gin back then.

You picked cotton by hand, then, you know, and you put it in a sack till you got your hands so sore. Then, when you got your sack full, you poured it out in a basket or on a sheet and tied it up. Then at a certain time, they'd come and weigh it, and take it up. The cotton was opened by hand, too.

About 15 years ago, things began to change. One man could pick 2 and 3 hundred pounds--a good worker. We used to have 50 at a time picking cotton. We'd haul these people from near around town.

When these cotton pickers (machines) came, that stopped. That cotton picker standing up there behind the gin, I remember one day it picked 17 bales of cotton--one man.

The basket on the cotton picker would hold about a bale of cotton. When you got it full, you took it to the wagon and dumped it in. When you got the wagon full, it was pulled to the gin and parked.



Gary Brockman

The ginner then took over. He'd pull the wagon on under the gin house—that took a strong back and a weak mind. Everything is automatic at the gin; the manual labor is sort of took out of it.

After it's ginned, it goes through a lint cleaner because when it comes from a cotton picker, it's got quite a bit of trash in it, and a lot of specks and things.

The first cotton gin that was ever created was by Eli Whitney. The first little gin was turned by hand with the same principle they use today--saws and rib. It was a slow process.

"It almost takes a
millionaire to buy
a cotton gin now."

The first cotton gin I remember my daddy telling about was his cotton gin on the river, pulled by water power. When you didn't want the seed to take home, they run 'em in the river. It was wonderful fertilizer, but they didn't know it then. If they didn't need it for cow feed or to plant, they ran the seed down in the river. But they soon found that wasn't the right thing.

I've been working at a cotton gin for 60 years. We ginned this last year and we will gin some more this year.

It almost takes a millionaire to buy a cotton gin now. This gin was put up to start with in 1950. You ginned for \$2.50 a bale. Now you gin for \$25.00 a bale.

Vickie B.: Are there many cotton farmers left?

Mr. Brockman: No, there aren't too many cotton farmers. I don't know of but 2 people, last year, that had cotton, and 3 people, this year that's gonna have some cotton. There's just not much cotton up in this country no more.

Vickie H.: Are there fewer people, but more land?

Mr. Brockman: People used to have 10, 15, 20 acres, and that was a pretty big farmer, we thought. Now if you don't have 300 or 400 acres, there ain't no use to start.

Now one man can work as high as a thousand acres. That's the difference in the way they're making a living now. One man can produce more, now, than a hundred could when I first remember. Now they plow night and day. Day don't cut no ice and night don't cut no ice. They do anything they want right on through. It's so much quicker, now, you know.

These big machines, the expense of it is so terrific, you've got to have a lot to spend. These big tractors cost \$30,000, and a cotton picker cost \$30,000 to \$40,000. You can see what you can run into in just a little bit.

Cotton is going out. There ain't no doubt in my mind--in a few years from now, you won't see a stalk of cotton in this country. They're raising beans, corn, and grain, now.

Cotton is a thing of the past in this country. It's fast going out. In fact, it's pert near gone.



We also visited with Mr. Frank Barton. He is a resident of Greer Mill Village and is now retired. He told us of a few of his experiences.

Mr. Barton: My first work in the mill was that of a sweeper in the spinning room. In my spare time I tried to learn to doff. One day I was asked to doff a set of frames, since the regular doffer was out sick. I got so disgusted that I walked out of the mill because I couldn't keep the job up, but went back later. Doffing was not for me, so I was transferred to the weave room.

All single employees were laid off during the depression to give each family some work, so I thinned peaches for 10¢ per hour during this time.

Mr. Barton also explained the process through which cotton goes in order to become a piece of finished cloth. Mr. Barton calls this:

"From the Cotton Field Through a Textile Mill."

When the cotton is removed from the cotton bowl in the field, it is carried to the Cotton Gin and the seeds are removed, and the cotton is baled. The owner then sells his cotton to the broker, who in turn sells to the cotton mills.

Once the cotton is at the mill, it is opened and the conditioning process begins (opening room). It is broken up and transferred to the pickers in the card room. From the pickers, it goes to the carding machine and comes out cat gut like shaped 3/4 inch diameter.

The next process is called the drawing process, then drafting and thence to the intermediate frames, and thence to the slubbers and on to the speeders. All of the above processing is to condition the cotton, but note no twisting has commenced. The product is then called roving, both warp-filling.



Luther Greene

It is then sent to the spinning room and a doubling-twisting process commences. (Making stronger). Warp yarn and filling yarn is the net result.

The filling yarn is ready for the loom, but the warp yarn goes to the spoolers and thence to the warper creel and is transferred to a slasher beam. Thence to the slasher room and is sized and thoroughly dried (this makes stronger and helps insure a cleaner yarn), and comes off on a loom beam. Then it goes to the drawing-in room. Each end is drawn through a dropwire, then a heddle eye, and a reed. It is now ready for the loom in the weave room.

The design or pattern comes into the finishing process. Some designs require only a patter chain. (Single-shuttle weave). Other patterns require not

only a pattern chain, but a box chain also. (Which is called fancy goods). Several shuttles are used depending upon the design required. The weaving process is a matter of platting or braiding the warp and filling yarns together into a product.

This is a very brief legend of what takes place from the cotton fields through a textile mill. If you are considering a career in the textile field, have someone take you through a mill and let them explain fully each step in the proper sequence.

For about 35 years, Mr. Luther Greene worked in the local mills. He describes changes in the mills and the mysterious wildcat strike of 1934.

Mr. Greene: On Oct. 16, 1922, I went to work at Apalache on the payroll. I worked until about 1930. I started to work in the Greer Mill in the office, May 17, 1932. Then I went back to Apalache in 1945, and I retired July 1, 1963.

In those days while I was working at Apalache, the mill used coupon books to trade with, and they had \$5 books, \$2 books and \$1 books. In 1933, they closed the banks, and we had no money. We had to pay in script and the merchants accepted the script for merchandise.

Vickie: What kind of improvements took place from the time you started till now?

Mr. Greene: It changed considerably. When I went down there they would spit on the floor; it was filthy. When I left down there it was just as clean as it could be. They stopped all that. They cleaned up all around and had everything shiny and waxed. They kept it that way. In the cotton mill where they opened the cotton it was so dusty you couldn't hardly get your breath, but now they have improved that.

One thing that has been greatly improved is the spooling. They used to spool and tie it together by hand. But now they have an automatic spooler and all

Frank
Barton



you have to do is put the bobbins on.

Vickie: Were you working in the mill during the depression?

Mr. Greene: Yes, I certainly was. The average wage for labor was \$9.90, \$7.70 for a lot of them.

Mr. Greene: The Wildcat strike happened unexpectedly. No one had any idea of what was happening. A bunch of people in old trucks come on Wednesday to shut down all the mills in this area. They went from Greer to Apalache and pulled all the switches in the mills and shut them down completely.

It was rumored that the strike was for higher wages. However, a lot of people involved in the group didn't even work in the mills, and nobody knew where they came from or why. During the strike, the National Guard was called in to help. The strikers declared that absolutely no cotton was to be loaded or hauled. So the National Guard helped out by surrounding the mills.

But as mysteriously as it began, on the following Monday, it ended. The same group of people came in and turned on the switches and the mills started running again.

Then and Now

by Luther Greene

We have had a bountiful season this year,
and the harvest season is drawing near.
The peaches are picked and already sold,
and the apples will be ripe before turning cold.

But there is lots of sounds, we used to hear,
as we sat out at night this time of the year.
Like the lovely sound of a Whip-O-Will,
as He called to his mate on a distant hill.

We have dearly paid for cars and planes,
Today you can hardly hear, the sound of rain.
If it isn't a car, that goes speeding by
It will be a plane, not flying very high.

You wake up at night, and jump out of bed
Then you will discover, its a plane overhead.
You are never free, from the scent of gas
as a long line of cars continue to pass.

There is lots of things that had to go,
Like staying up late to hear a rooster crow.
The rooster has decided, there's no use to crow
For you can't hear his sound for a radio.

There is no such thing as a Katydid
He has smelled so much gas, he has flipped his lid.
And the frogs have decided, there's no use to croak
He has a sore throat, and he's now taking dope.

It has been a long time since I've heard an owl
He don't give a hoot since the air is so foul.
But there is one thing, you can always still hear
A bunch of dogs' barks, every night of the year.



Along
At
Dogs
The

Along about dusk they all begin to prowl
At the slightest sound they will begin to howl.
Dogs seem to be living in a life of ease,
They all wear collars to keep off the fleas.

And
The
The
The

And now all day long, they lay up and sleep,
They all have plenty of canned dog food to eat.
The horses all ride, in trailers so fine,
Their hair is so slick, you can see it shine.

It
With
Who
A

It hasn't been long, since he pulled the load,
With a heavy old wagon, in a muddy old road.
Who knows how soon, it may come to pass,
A horse may eat the cake, and the Man the grass.

Of Mules and Men



Photographs by: Perry Williams

When we first started our story on mules, the people we talked to asked, "Why mules?" Today, mules are almost obsolete. However, at one time people saw mules everyday. We wanted to remind people of the alliance between farmer and mule that helped to build and support the south. We also hoped to find some of the humorous tales that have originated around these long-eared animals.

In trying to find out about mules and mule traders in the Greer area, we contacted Dr. N. J. Ayers. Dr. Ayers, who is now retired, came to Greer to open his veterinary practice. Dr. Ayers told us about his experiences with mules as a boy on a Georgia farm and as a veterinarian.

We heard an amusing story about a mule from Mr. Sam Frey, a local merchant who grew up on a farm. He remembered this story because of its unusual outcome.

Another person we interviewed was Mr. Cornelius A. Bruce. Mr. Bruce told us of his life as a livestock auctioneer and how he got started in the mule trading business. Mr. Bruce is probably known by many people in Greer because of his contributions to the livestock industry of our area.

Mr. Bill Lister told us about working with mules, breaking them, and trading them at Jockey Day. Mr. Lister now works with the Dobson brothers in the peach and beef business. Mr. Lister and his father ran a livery stable in Greer when mules were still being used.

After speaking with Bill Lister, we wanted to learn more about Jockey Day. Mr. E. G. Powell of Greer, who still has a horse barn in use, gave us the information we were looking for. The Jockey Lot was a part of Greer that was important to the farmers of the time.

After reading these interviews, hopefully readers will remember the time when a mule, a plow and a hard working farmer were an everyday sight.



Dr. N.J. Ayers: Caring for people by treating their animals

Dr. Ayers: I was born in 1894 in Hart County, Georgia which is about three miles from Hadens Fort on the Tugaloo River. During the time after the depression, everything had to be started over. On our farm during this time we had 10 - 15 mules.

I feel like I am indebted to the mule because I received my namesake from a mule trader, Mr. S. A. Newland from Indian Springs, Tennessee. Tennessee was noted for the mule market, and they took droves of mules and traded all the way down to Georgia. In the country they traded as they went along because they didn't have any railroads at this time.

Here is a joke about a mule I learned some time ago. One of the first words a mule learns is "whoa." One time some fellow was trying to tell a bigger lie than another fella. He told this man he had been riding his mule in the mountains. The mountain trails were very narrow, and he and the mule fell off of a cliff that was about 90 feet down. When the mule got about 10 feet from the ground, the man hollered "whoa." and the mule stopped and he got off.

Martine: Did you ever go to any sales or auctions with your father?

Dr. Ayers: Sales back in those days were held at what was called a livery stable. They kept horses for buggies and other forms of road transportation.

Martine: Did they have jockey days back then?

Dr. Ayers: Yes, my father was kind of a mule trader himself. He would swap mules for just about anything. If we needed some fertilizer or something, he'd take a mule and trade for it. He was a good farmer. He made everything at home and never went in debt.

When I was a little boy I had a mule named Rubin. I had an oxen before Rubin that I drove to a cart. One day, a trader with cattle came through and traded for my oxen. Of course, it broke my heart. He let me have a mule (Rubin) that wouldn't work double. At this time my grandmother lived about a mile from our house, so I had to look after her and see that she had enough kindling and groceries. I rode Rubin down there.

Rubin was the second mule I had. Mary was my first. She was given to me by my namesake. She was a very gentle mule which I started riding when I was five or six years old. Soon as they took the dress off of me and put me in a pair of overalls, they put me on a mule, and I learned how to ride. Frank was my third mule. Old Frank did just about anything I wanted to do.

One day I had on one of my father's Texas spurs; I'd decided I'd use it to ride with. It didn't fit my shoe, so I rode Frank all day with it in my hand. Well, I was tired of doing that, so I thought I'd get a string and tie it to my shoe. My legs were too short to keep my heels off of Frank's sides. I got on him and couldn't keep the spur off of him. He sallied out at what felt like 75 miles an hour through the yard, and my mother was hollering to hold on. He finally ran and jumped into his stable.

Yes, the mule really was my main companion. During my high school years, they were my mode of transportation. When they used to hold the fair in Hartwell, it was about a mile from town. My father let me have a pair of mules and a surrey, a city buggy. At that

time there were no cars going back and forth from the fairgrounds. The show people were being put up in town, and I would use my mules to transport them from the hotel to the fairgrounds. I made about 50 or 60 dollars that summer. That was big money back then. Later on, when I attended college in Indianapolis, I still had a few instances where mules were involved. One was when I was in my first year. All of us freshmen were always being kidded by the seniors. Well, we decided we would get back at them. There was a blind mule that was being worked on. Well, one day, we all got that mule. We thought that now we would get back at them. We all took that mule upstairs and put him in their dorm and got away. Well, one boy fell and broke his leg trying to run away. When they finally caught me, they made me ride that blind mule back downstairs.

Later on, after I received my education, I ended up coming to Greer and taking up my veterinary practice. The knowledge I received was hopefully brought to good use.

A mule is derived from crossing the jackass and the mare. The mule is a descendant. The history of the horse family is usually divided into three parts. Now, the first part was 150 years previous to World War I. You must think of the horse as being the source of power at this time. You had very few railroads. Any transportation was from the horse. All the streetcars were pulled with horses. The horse family became tremendous; it built up until 1918. There were about 27 million horses up to that time. It was a big business buying, selling, and raising horses and mules. Veterinary medicine was based on the horse.

The machine age came along and this was the second part of equine history. This occurred between World War I and World War II. In this time, the horse dwindled down to about four million. You might say the horse was out. The automobile, the tractor, and all machines took over the horse power.

When mules were used, it was mainly for plowing. In plowing, the first job is to turn up terraces. Now that is the hardest job. The exhaustion of the horse or mule paved the way for other troubles such as in

the digestive tract. Mules had the long hair and couldn't throw off heat. You could soon knock one off. The young black workers would get them and overwork them. The best thing to do in this kind of a situation is to clip the animal, get that old coat off, and then you would change things considerably.

"I told this man he was going to lose his mule."

A mule can be very stubborn sometimes. You've heard the expression, "He's as stubborn as a mule." I think all that stubbornness originated from the male parent, the jackass. They get all the good traits from the mare. But a mule is of a different nature than a horse. He's stubborn, and you have to let him know who's boss. If he knew you were afraid of him, he'd probably kick you or something.

Another difference between a mule and a horse is that in running away a mule is going to take care of himself. He won't run into a tree and kill himself. However, when a horse runs away and gets scared, he has no control. He'll run into anything when he panics.

In the spring I had more patients to attend. In the spring a mule likes to get out and waller in the new grass. He'll just get down and roll in it. Sometimes you may end up with a torsion of the bowel, and in this case, you would lose your patient.

Once I had a man call me who lived up toward Gowansville, an old fellow. He had a mule that had been sick all day. He finally called me about sundown, and the mule was standing up swishing his tail. I made an examination. It was along in the fall of the year, and it was pretty cool. After the examination, I told this man that he was going to lose his mule. The man just laughed and said, "Oh, no. He's a lot better." What had taken place was gangrene had set in. He had no feeling or pulse. I knew I didn't have a case to work with.

In order to give the patient time to die, I suggested to this man that he go into the house and wait awhile. I came back later, and the mule had fallen over dead. I'll never forget what this man told me. He said, "When you call a doctor they kill your animal, but I can't say this about you because you didn't give my mule anything."

If I had given him even so much as some water, I would have gotten credit for killing him. In some cases, when you run up close to death, you have to decide pretty well what you're doing. There was no guess work. You had to make your diagnosis, know the condition, and deal with it.

Between my cattle and horse practice, I had all I could do. You might say six to eight mules in all directions. I sometimes ended up in Landrum after 10:00 at night. It was hard work, but I loved it. When I saved a good cow, a four or five gallon cow for a family with four or five children, I was doing something for humanity as well as treating an animal.

Sam Frey: a sure fire way to make a mule plow

My cousin went to Atlanta to buy a new mule. When he came home my uncle asked him why he had bought such a large mule. The mule was the size of one of those Clydesdale brewery horses. He had very large hoofs. The mule had been used to pulling ice wagons. Because of this, he wasn't used to being plowed or to hard work.

Everyday they would take him to the fields and begin to plow. After three or four rows, the mule would lie down and refuse to get up. We called the veterinarian to have him checked. The vet said he was a perfectly sound mule. The only thing wrong was that he was lazy.

One day he was refusing to plow, lying in the field, when a man came by the house. He asked if the

mule was sick. After we explained the problem, he said he had a solution. He asked my cousin to go and get some newspapers. My cousin returned and the man started stuffing the newspapers underneath the mule. Then he lit them. After a minute or so, you could smell the hair burning. It got too hot for the mule, and he jumped up. We started plowing him, and he plowed just fine after that.

You see, from then on the only thing you couldn't do around him was rattle paper. While plowing, the black boys would sometimes stop and roll themselves a cigarette. If they were using this particular mule, they had to use caution. If the wind was blowing and the rolling paper rattled, that mule would go wild and start running, draggin' the plow behind him.

Cornelius Bruce: Mule-trader and auctioneer

Mr. Bruce: My father was a mule trader. Back then it was horse trading and mule trading. I followed my father as much as I could, much as he'd let me. I was actually born into it. They said that the first word that I said was "horse."

Back in 1917 when I was born, there were more mules in use than horses. All of the work was done by mule power. Mules were pretty high in those days. I remember they sold for anywhere from \$150 to \$400. During the depression, selling mules was just as hard as anything else.

My father, before he married, worked for a fellow, Mr. Broderick Mabry, in Campobello, S. C., and they ran a livery stable. I remember that old barn; it stood until 1940 or '41. Mr. Mabry would go to Tennessee, Missouri, and Kentucky to get mules. They'd ship them back, and they'd bring them to this barn.

There were few tractors; they were a rarity. People would go trade mules just like you would go to a car place and trade cars. A mule, just like a per-

son, would give out, and they'd have to trade it when it got to where it wouldn't or couldn't work any longer. A lot of people would trade because they wanted to see who had the best mules and things like that.

My father married in 1916 and he bought a farm in Holly Springs. I was born there. Mr. Mabry died, and they closed the barn. Daddy would keep a few mules on hand, ten or fifteen to trade with and then, of course, he worked on our land. We moved to Greer when I was in the first grade in 1923. We lived down there on Apalache Road. My daddy was still in the mule business, although we only had a small piece of land. We still had our farm at Holly Springs.

Before my daddy died, in 1946, we built a livery stable in front of the old Dobson Lumber Company. We had about 15 or 20 mules out there. There are no barns around there anymore. The last barn that was down there was below the ice plant.

I ran what used to be the Stevens Livestock. That was our home place for years. In 1967 it was called Piedmont Horse and Pony Company. I built that barn in 1957 and that was the first horse auction. It was a pony auction back then and I ran it. In 1968 I had to have both of my eyes operated on, and I had to sell the barn. I had lots of sales there in the 11 years I owned it. We'd start selling at 7:00 on Friday nights and sometimes at 7:00 the next morning we'd still be selling.

The main task in working with mules is breaking them. What I mean by breaking a mule is making it learn to work. We'd bring them in and tie them up with a grass rope where they wouldn't hurt themselves. We gradually worked with them and would finally get their bridle and saddle on. We'd have a gentle mule or horse and tie it to the unbroken mule. Then we'd turn them loose. Most of them broke out good, but we did get a hold of some stubborn ones.

I'll never forget one mule we had, didn't take the harness and bridle off of him for a month. He'd fight you with his feet; he was dangerous. We'd take the bridle off long enough for him to eat, but we'd put it right back on when he was finished eating. We



Mr. Cornelius Bruce

finally broke him.

Back then the farmers would have three or four boys or hired hands. Some farmers had two mules, some four, and some had as many as twenty mules, according to how much land or money a person had. We'd sell a lot of mules on credit too. They'd be financed through the bank, just like cars are now.

Mules were used for things other than plowing. A lot of people would use them with buggies for their transportation. Then a lot of mules would be used for grading out.

Martine: Did you ever attend Jockey Day?

Mr. Bruce: Yes, all the time. They did a lot of trading there. It was kind of a gypsy thing. You had to watch what you were doing; some of the traders would try and pull things on you. I got cheated several times. Back then there wasn't anything they

could do to doctor them up, but give them laudanum. It's more or less an old-fashioned medicine, but now it has been perfected. I can now quieten one down with a tranquilizer. I never knew the secret of it, but some people could work them and keep them quiet.

"... I asked him if it was
a plow-kicker."

I was in Forest City one day, and spotted a mule down there and thought it looked like another mule of ours. I went down there to this fellow that had him, and I asked him about it. He told the most pitiful story you ever heard. He told me how he didn't want to sell it, and his wife had had an operation. He had to raise money, and I just fell for it, hook, line and sinker. I could see the mule was sound because I had already learned to check that. I was 90 percent sure that its eyes were alright, so I asked him if it was a plow-kicker. Well, that kind of startled him, so he went out there and hitched the mule up to an old wagon with an old trace chain. It walked off as pretty as you've ever seen. Then he took the trace chain and wrapped it around the old mules back legs. He walked off and the mule never moved. Well, he convinced me right then, so I bought the mule, and brought it home.

My daddy was sick when I got home, so I told him about the mule, and he said, "Yes, you got a good buy." I think I gave \$150 for this mule, and I said we can match it with this other mule and trade it to Mr. Ben Gramling. He was a big farmer back in those days. He liked mules, and if you wanted one, all you had to do was call him. My daddy and I went to see Mr. Ben about selling the mules. He said if the mules were like we said, then we could bring them to him, and he would take a couple. I told him I wanted to trade two or three of them, and he said that would be fine. We took them up there and my dad asked Mr. Ben if he wanted to see how they worked. Mr. Ben said, "No, I'll just take your word for it." Dad said, "No, let's see how they work." I told Dad no,

that there wasn't any use in it because I knew they all worked well. At any rate, we hooked them up. The one I had bought took about four steps and stopped. It looked around, and I've never seen one kick as hard in my life. This mule kicked itself the worst of any I'd ever seen. The man I bought it from had had it loaded with something. It was a kicker sure 'nough.

Well, of course we didn't sell it to Mr. Ben, but later on we did trade one with him. I really did get taken on that one, but it wasn't the only one that I've gotten taken on in my life. I still don't know to this day what he had loaded it with. I took that mule back to a trade day and played innocent. I sold it to somebody else after I'd gotten my money out of it.

"... this mule just went crazy."

One of the funniest things that I can remember happening with a mule was when I was a boy, my daddy sent me to trade this mule to this lady in the country up above Holly Springs. I rode another mule and pulled this one behind me. I took it up there, and I had to work it for this lady, demonstrate it for her. She was a widow lady and had two or three sons, but they didn't live with her. They had this mule that they wanted to trade, and they came down to trade with me. They said that they would trade if my mule matched theirs and if it worked good. We thought it was exactly what they wanted, a young mule, but very gentle. And I never will forget that we took it up there, and one of the boys hooked it up with a two horse wagon. It did pretty good. One of the boys said, "Let's put it to a sled and see how it does." I'll never forget this colored lady out there washing clothes, and she had all these clothes hanging out on the line. I don't know what happened to this mule; it just went crazy. It just exploded when this boy hit it with a rope, and I've never seen one move so

fast. This mule went straight for this colored woman, and she screamed bloody murder. The mule just took clothes and all with him. He ran for five miles, I guess, and went into some woods. It took the sled the boy hooked up with it. The sled was bouncing and making a lot of noise. The mule was scared to death. That was the funniest thing I ever saw in my life, and it liked to have scared me to death.

Another time we took a mule to a man over in Inman. I don't know what happened to this mule. The man took the mule out and turned it loose in the pasture. He paid me for it, and that mule just fell over. I thought he was just playing, but he was dead as a door nail. He died just like that.

As a rule, a mule isn't as stubborn as a horse, and they're a lot more surefooted. Before I quit the mule business, I was shipping mules to a fellow out in California, and he was using them on trail rides. I asked him why he used them instead of horses. He said the main reason was on account of their stamina, endurance, and surefootedness. A mule doesn't get as excited as a horse, and they will not run into objects like a horse. Of course, I do have some stubborn ones and mean ones. However, I don't think they are as stubborn as people.

"I always said I would build me
an auction barn."

I wanted to learn how to be an auctioneer because an auction had always fascinated me. I got to going with my daddy to various auctions. We would buy a mule and tie it to a tree or post with a rope. I thought Bob Ferguson was the best auctioneer there was. My daddy would come to get me and always know exactly where I was. I always said that I would build me an auction barn.

One night my wife Frances and I were talking, and I told her that I was going to build a barn. She told me to go back to sleep, and I told her no, I had decided to build one. The next morning I called a

NOTICE

CATTLE ARE SOLD BY TYPE IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARRIVE:

1. HORSES, PONIES, MULES, GOATS
2. BABY CALVES
3. MILCH COWS, SPRINGERS, COWS
WITH CALVES
4. VEAL CALVES
5. BABY BEEF
6. BULLS
7. HOGS
8. STEERS
9. HEIFERS
10. BEEF COWS

BRING YOUR CATTLE EARLY AND SELL THEM EARLY- - AVOID THE
11:30 A. M. TO 2:00 P. M. RUSH!

P. L. Bruce Co.

contractor and told him what I wanted built. I traded with him, and he started right to work on it. Well, our auction was all ponies back then, maybe 5 or 6 horses at the end. We held our auction on Saturday. All of a sudden it just switched; the ponies went to nothing, but the horses took over. That is how I started in the auction business.

Then, I got to experimenting with the smaller mules. I had the bright idea to breed a Shetland mare to a small jackass and make a Shetland mule. I got in that business and started raising mules. Once in Bristol, Tennessee, I was buying mules. My daughter Faye was about two or three, and this little black pony mare came running up. I gave \$100 for it, and everybody with me asked me if I was crazy giving \$100 for that pony. I just said I wanted her for Faye. I brought her home and low and behold, she was in foal. She had a white mule. Well, I decided that was what I wanted, and so I kept that mule. It was a miniature mule. She was 36 inches tall and solid white. I kept her for five years and then I sold her

to a man in Winston Salem. He sold her to Disneyland, and they put her in the hitches of the reins of Cinderella. I bought me a little jack and started raising them. I had as many as 50 or 60 at one time. I've shipped to California and most everywhere else. Those little rascals were mean. That is the way that I got into the real mule business.

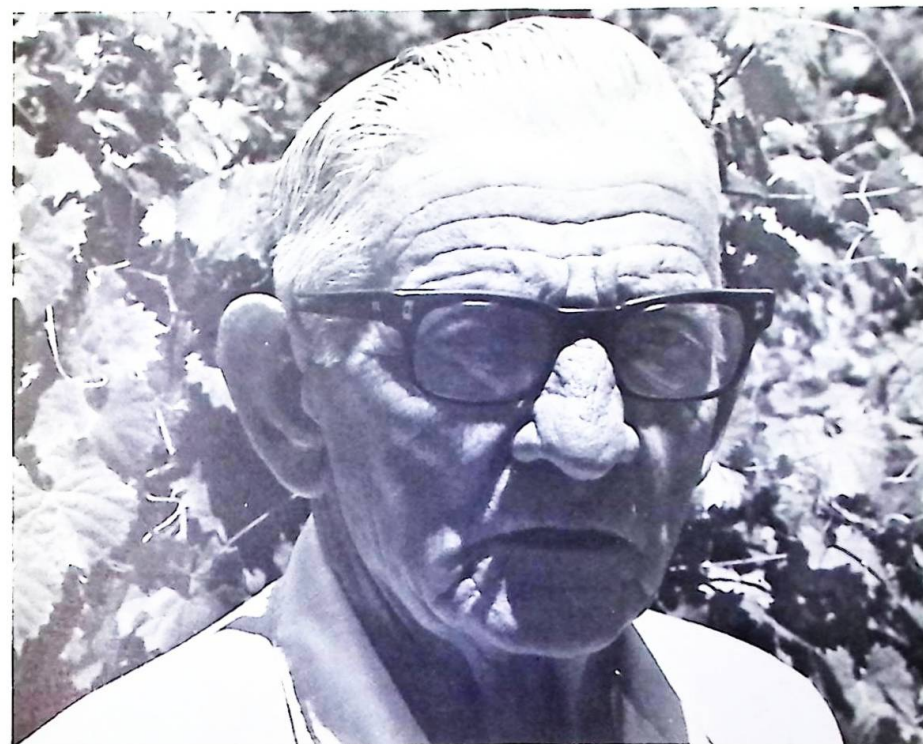
There are several mules around here today. There's a good many in the lower part of the state. I wouldn't know where to go out here and buy a mule. They've just played out. I'd hate to see the auction business go out like the mule business. If I could I'd go out and build and start having another auction. I really enjoy the auctioning business. I guess you could say the auctioning and trading of mules is a lot like the car business of today. You can never really be sure.

Bill Lister: There's no telling how many mules he's broken.

My Dad was in the mule business for 75 or 80 years--all of his life. I took it up after him. When I first started in the mule business, we used to ship mules from the western states into Greer and trade them to the farmers. The majority of people would use a mule to plow before they would use a horse. It was just nature to do this.

Most mules are willing to go. Of course, occasionally you would get one that would give you some trouble. I don't think they're really stubborn. They act according to how you treat them. I think mules are smart, just like cattle.

A mule was really important in a man's daily life. Back in the olden days we used them to farm all the time until all these tractors came out. When these tractors came out, the mule business gradually became smaller and smaller. We used to ride mules too. Mules were worth more back then than today. They were priced higher. Horses were cheaper than mules. That



Mr. Bill Lister

is, work horses were. An American Saddle bred horse or anything like that would bring more than a mule.

The mule trading took place in Greer down below the ice plant at the livestock barn. It was the same place where Jockey Day took place, around the mule barns. Our mules always were there. We owned the barns.

We would usually ship anywhere from one to four carloads of mules into Greer. There would be about 25 to the carload. They came from the western states, as far away as Billings, Montana, also from Texas, Nebraska, Tennessee, and Iowa. You could buy the best mules from Tennessee because the people bought the mules as colts and raised them to work. We shipped a lot of mares in here and traded them. The farmers would breed them and raise mules.

The farmers all brought these mules to Jockey Day to sell and ran them through the auction. Then they

would sell them for the highest dollars. The price varied, but you could buy them for anywhere from 100 dollars on up to 300 and 400 dollars per head. You also could buy them in pairs. We used our mules for farming.

The hardest mules we ever had to break was a horse-mule. It took us about a week to even get a set of gear on him. After we got the set of gear on him, he wore it for six weeks after the harness had been taken off of him. He would kick you.

But most mules, if you treat them like you should, they won't give you any problems. The majority of the mules when we shipped them in here, if you walked through the pen and paid no attention to them, you would be fine; but if you knocked them out of the way, they would probably kick at you.

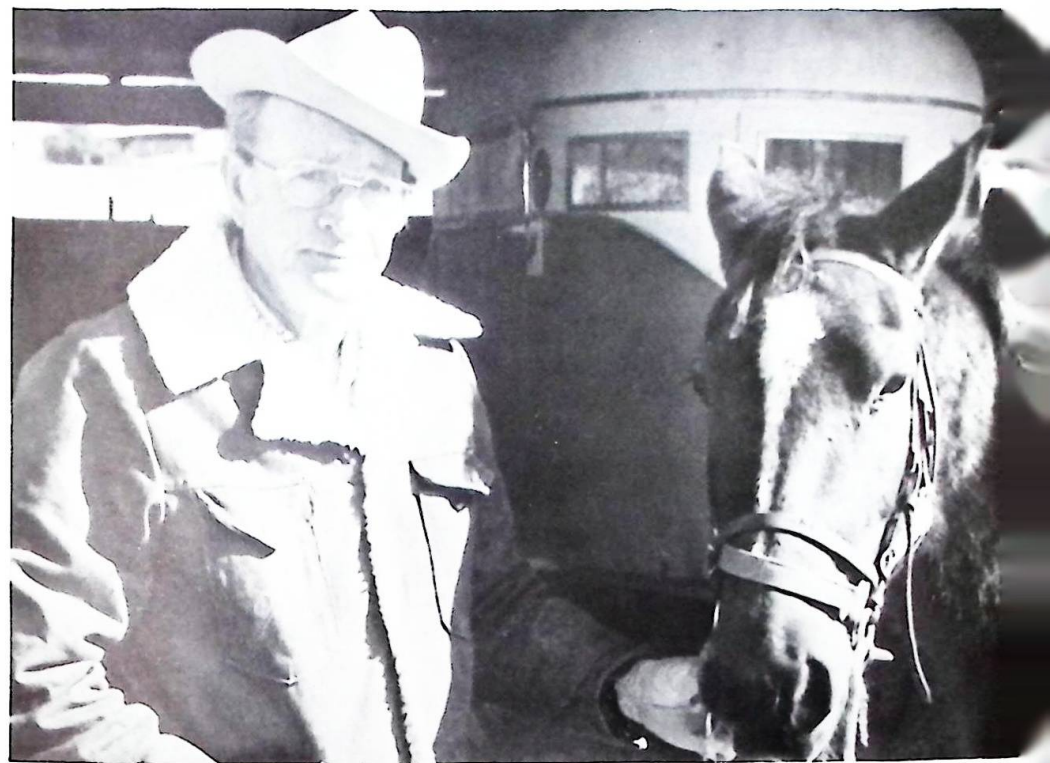
I would get two unbroken mules and use them to haul dirt from the barn in town to home. They would run all the way. Then I would get another pair and do the same thing.

I left the barn one morning with a pair of mules hitched to the wagon with a cotton frame on it. I left at nine o'clock in the morning. I drove 12 miles up into the country and loaded a wagon of corn. Then I ate dinner with my Grandma Lister, and I was back in the barn at two o'clock that afternoon. They ran every step of the way up there and back. Then Papa traded that pair of mules off that afternoon.

When you break a mule, you would put a harness on first. Then you would hook them up to a wagon and put them to work. They learned pretty fast. You would teach a mule to "gee" and "haw" after he was broken. When he worked and got off the row, you would say "gee" for right and "haw" for left so he would get in line again.

There isn't any telling how many mules I've broken. Working mules of years past would be worthless here now, but they break a lot of them in Tennessee. There are extremely few mules in this area now.

Elzie Powell: He remembers Jockey Day from his boyhood



Mr. Elzie Powell

In the wintertime, Jockey Day was held about one time a month. It would be the first Monday of the month in Greer, the second week in Inman, and so forth. It was held in Greer down at the livery stables. This was one of the first meeting places for farmers in Greer.

The times I went to Jockey Day the most I ever traded was those little pocket knives. Jockey Day was dying by the time I was old enough to really have anything to trade.

Usually, the jockey lot opened up and people began to arrive at about eight or nine o'clock, and they would stay all day. They'd usually have people there

till dark. When the farmers came to town to do their shopping, they would go to the livery stables to do a little trading too.

There was always a nice crowd, but it really depended on the weather. If it was a rainy day to where farmers couldn't work, then you'd have more of a turn out.

Practically all ages came to Jockey Day. Mostly at that time you had to be a married man to own a horse, so most of the people there would be from 20 to 80 or so.

The most common thing traded there was mules. Horses would be second. Most of the horses traded there were work animals. There were very few buggy horses traded on Jockey Day.

Horses, mules, dogs, buggies, wagons, knives, guns anything that people wanted to trade was brought to the sale. They contacted each other, and they went there free of charge. The stables furnished the place for them in order to sell their own mules. This was the stable's way of advertising.

If you had a dog, and I a "plug" mule, and we swapped with no money involved, that was called a fair trade. Or if you had a mule, and, for some reason, it didn't suit you, and I had a mule that didn't suit me, and we swapped, that was considered an even trade.

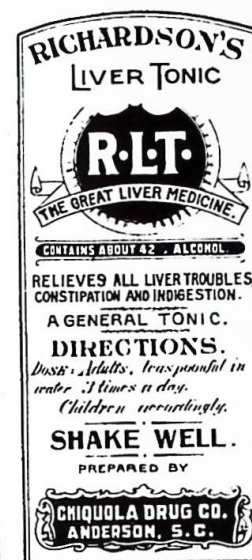
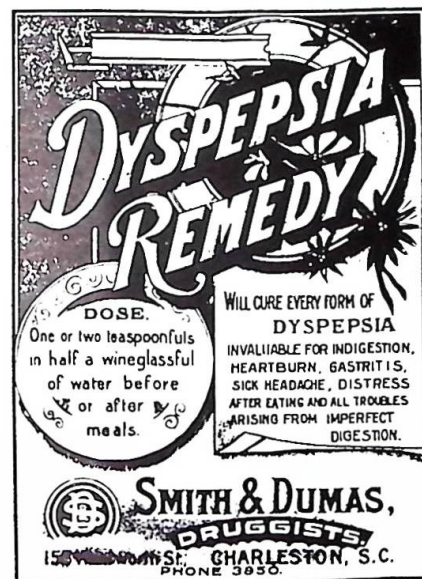
Most people were happy with the trading even though there were no guarantees. Just like a sale today: you buy it; it's yours. Occasionally, somebody would get loaded and feel that they had been given a wrong deal. Then there would be a fight.

There was always someone who would be there every week. A man who made a living at Jockey Day would come riding one mule and pulling four or five behind him. He would be considered a regular jockey. This was usually his only income.

*Interviewed by: Kendra Elrod, Martine Clare,
Kathy Johnston
Edited by: Kendra Elrod, Martine Clare, Tammy
Waddell*

THE MEDICINE SHOW ERA

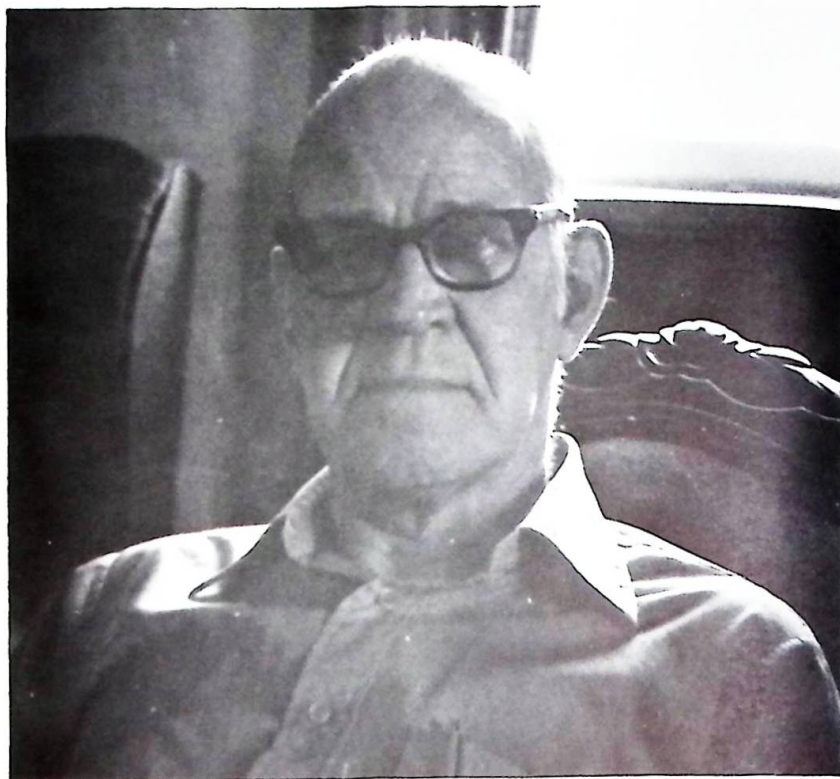
*Interviewed by: Lisa Belue, Greg Jones, Rachel
Pruitt, Chris Young
Edited by: Lisa Belue, Rachel Pruitt, Tammy
Waddell, John Rollins
Photographs by: Perry Williams*



Patent medicines were very popular in this country right after the Civil War and up until 1906 when Congress passed the Pure Food and Drug Act. This act put an end forever to some of the nation's more bizarre patent medicines.

It was during the early 1900's that the Greer area was host to the medicine shows with all their sure-fire concoctions that would cure everything from indigestion to whooping cough.

During our search for material on this story, we found out that W. D. Owens and Homer Plumbley remembered when the medicine shows still came around.



W. D. OWENS

"Men that ran medicine shows were just common people," according to Mr. W. D. Owens. Mr. Owens lived in Westminster, S. C., until he was 20 years old. During these 20 years, he went to many medicine shows.

When I was a boy, the medicine shows came up to Westminster all along. It was the same way back then in Greer, I imagine. They'd come and set up out on a street in the main part of town or on the side street. They'd build up a small platform and generally sing. Sometimes be one, sometimes be two. And then they'd pass out the medicine. They carried different kinds of medicine.

There was one there one time, and he was selling shaving soap. He made up a lather and he was talking

about how good it was and how long it would last. He wiped some up on a post or something there abouts the little ole platform. He said, "Now when you're going to church tomorrow, there'll still be some of that up there." He didn't say it'd be dried up and be no good. That stuff, see, you'd wipe it up on something, and it'd stick up there and dry 'til it rained or the wind blowed it down. But there was another one there one time, he had some kind of musical instrument. He said, "Now I'm gonna sing you a song entitled Daddy Cut Your Toenails, You're Ripping Up the Sheets." They'd sing or do whatever they're going to do and draw a crowd up there, and then they'd pass out the medicine.

One time there was a man there selling these knife sharpeners that you pull the knife through to sharpen it. He had a big ole long one. It was either a butcher knife or a long bread knife, and he was hitting it on something, might have been an old horse shoe, to dull it so he could show us how it would sharpen, and he broke the end of it. I think he said it would be long enough anyhow. He pulled it through there, and that put another edge on it.

There wasn't any certain time the medicine shows would come. They'd come in there and stay maybe two or three days and be out there every night. They usually put this platform on main street in town where the people were. They'd build it right up next to the curb, next to the sidewalk where there'd be enough room for people on the sidewalk and out in the street too. Sometimes there'd be a pretty big crowd.

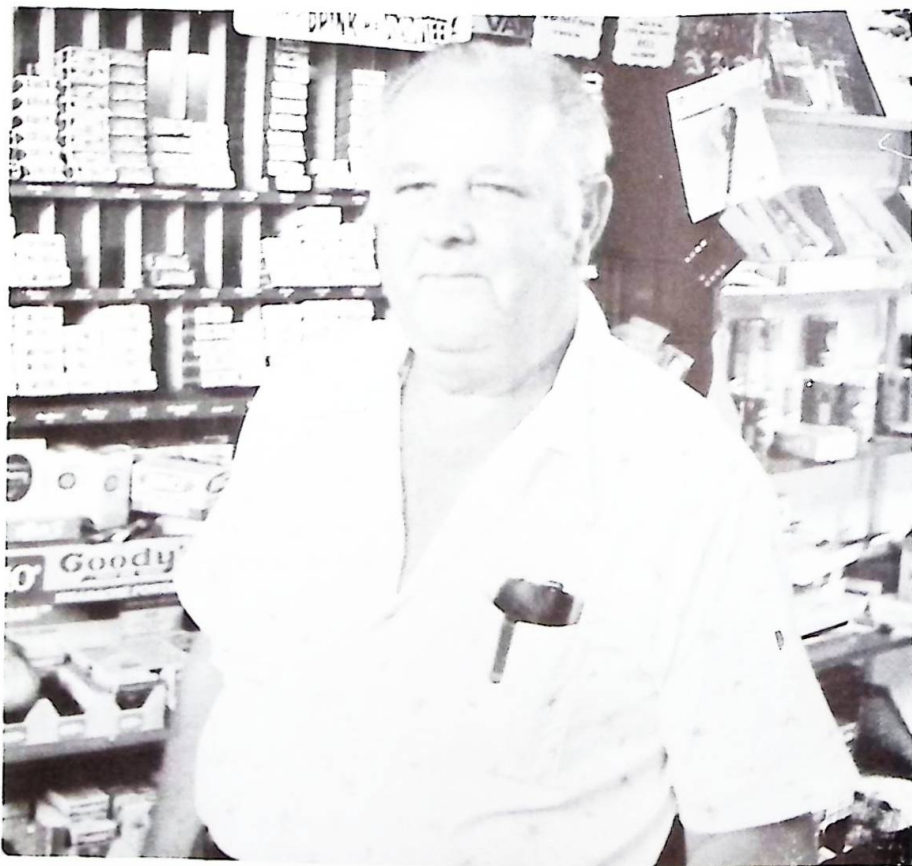
The men that ran the medicine shows were just common people. Of course, they were just traveling doing that just like any other salesmen. They had a little program they'd put on. Maybe they'd pick the guitar or banjo, or, if there were two of them, one would play the instrument and the other would blow a kazoo. They'd sing and go on. It was right interesting back in them days. See, that's been 60 years ago.

Way back in them days when carnivals and shows came to town, they'd furnish their own lights. They had these gas lights, I think you can buy them now.

It'd get real bright when it was lit up. I remember one time there was a carnival come up there, and they pulled out the merry-go-round with a steam engine. That was way back before electric lights and electricity got to be so plentiful.

This was just ordinary medicine. It probably wasn't sold in a drugstore. It was pretty reasonably priced. That was way back when nothing cost much. People'd go for it if it was for rheumatism, or what have you.

HOMER PLUMBLEY: He saw the ugliest man in Greer.



Once there was an "ugliest man in Greer" contest, and Earl Howard won it, according to Homer Plumbley. Mr. Plumbley lives in Greer and owns Plumbley's Grocery. He has some vivid memories of the medicine shows that regularly came to the town.

Medicine shows happened when I was just a little boy. They sold snake oil made out of herbs, roots, barks, berries, sold candy with a prize in it, and had all kinds of music contests, and jokes. I remember one time they had an ugliest man (in Greer) contest. Old man Earl Howard, he's done gone over the hill now, won it. Of course, he wasn't the ugliest man in Greer; he had more friends than anybody else at the medicine shows. Another night this old clown was gonna blow fire out of his mouth. When he blew it out, Maggie Lane, who was standing about ten feet from him, liked to have had all of her hair burnt off her head.

The shows and the clowns would bring out the crowds. The shows were like plays. There were two places they would set up. One was out here at the corner of 26th street at Victor and the old Woodruff Road. The other was out at Greer Mill where the barbershop and Drum Taylor's Grocery Store is.

Maybe the medicine shows would come every six to eight months. Sometimes they'd stay a week or sometimes two, depending on the weather. There were many different shows that come through. There were maybe six to eight in the country. They would open about seven o'clock and close about eleven o'clock.

I, personally, never bought any of the medicine. My folks bought a little snake oil and liniment. The liniments were to cure arthritis and rheumatism, just about anything. I really don't remember what the snake oil was for. I believe it was for cuts and bruises and stuff like that.

Some people said the medicine was good and some said it wasn't any count. When you buy medicine like that, you don't ever know. I see older people today that still want to get a hold of that snake oil.

Basketball Comes to Greer in 1919



Pictured above are the first stringers for Greer High's first basketball team. They are, left to right: George Nodine, Ruby McLaughlin Kendrick, team sponsor, John Kendrick, Dr. J. N. Holtzclaw, Howard Dominick, Sr., and Ray Norman.

*Interviewed by: J. D. Burke, Jimmy James
Edited by: J. D. Burke, Jimmy James
Photographs by: Perry Williams*

Back in 1919, there were no high school athletics in Greer. It was not until T. W. Duggin came to Greer and organized a basketball team that athletics in the schools got started. John Kendrick, the captain of this first basketball team, remembers that first team.

Professor Howard Dominick was Superintendent of Schools. He was a fellow that just didn't want athletics around here. He would not let us bring a football or basketball to school. He was afraid we would break out window lights with the ball. He just had a quirk about that thing.

But I. W. Duggan came here to teach agriculture. A bunch of us fellows in the school got to talking to him about a basketball team. He felt like we ought to have one. So we got together with him and made our plans. Then we went to the trustees over Mr. Dominick. We didn't consult him. At that time Mr. John D. Wood, Mr. E. C. Bailey, and Mr. M. L. Cunningham were trustees. They gave us a good hearing and agreed for us to have a basketball team. So we got together and organized it. This was the first sport we had at Greer High.

We made our own backboards. We got the lumber and got us a couple of posts, dug the holes, and then we got Mr. Ed Baswell, who was running the blacksmith's shop here in Greer at that time, to make the hoops. He did a good job of it. We didn't have any nets at the bottom of it, but we had the hoops that we put the ball through. We chipped in the money ourselves to buy the basketball. We didn't have but one either. We got the team organized. My first wife, who was Ruby McLaughlin, was the sponsor of the team. And I was fortunate in the fact that the boys elected me captain of the team.

We didn't have any uniforms, so we got World War I army britches. They laced up to the knees. We cut them off at the knees and made our shorts.

We played outdoors in back of the old grammar

school. The whole time I was on the team we never did play indoors. We didn't know what that was. We'd mark us off our court with chalk dust so we could play. First time came a rain, it was gone. In fact, we had to do it every time we played.

One day we were playing, and we didn't have knee pads. I don't think they knew what knee pads were in those days. I fell down and took all the skin off one of my knees, but that didn't stop us from playing right one.

I played two years. The first year we played, we lost every game. The nearest we came to winning was once at halftime we were ahead of Inman. But they beat us in the second half. However, we got athletics started at Greer High.

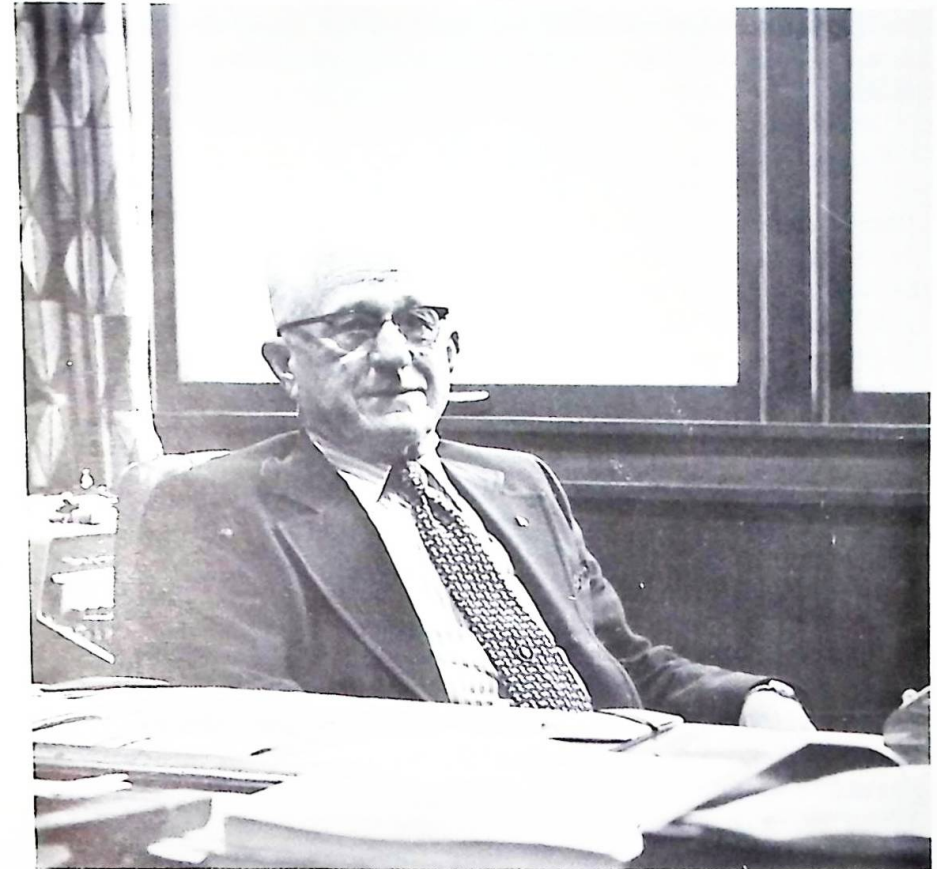
We thought we improved a little bit the second year. We still didn't play a big schedule--four or five games. Greer High went on and was state champions one year.

"They knocked the starch out of us"

I'd say our big rival was Inman. We wanted to whip them worse than anyone else. We were real close at half-time with Inman. We thought that we were going to town. We got real peppy. But those guys came back with blood in their eyes in the second half and they knocked the starch out of us. I forgot how bad they beat us, but it wasn't too bad. We were real proud of the fact that we came that close to winning a game.

As I remember, the scores were low. You would bounce that ball around on the ground and it might hit a rock and you wouldn't know where it was going.

We'd get to the different places ourselves. I. W. Duggan, our coach, had a Model T Ford, and he carried us along with somebody from the community. One time we all went in Duggan's car. We just all had to pile in there. Mr. Duggan was interested in athletics and



John Kendrick

got it started. We all loved him too! He was a great guy.

I believe Central would be the farthest away we played. It would take a good long while to get there. We had to go on those dirt roads. We usually played on Friday afternoon. I believe we did play a few games on Saturday because of the distance.

Some of the other students came to see us play. When we played at home, they would come down and support us. They didn't have any place to sit. They would stand up or sit on the ground and watch us. We would have them lined up all around the court. We

did play to a small crowd a time or two. But most of the time we played to a pretty large audience of our local student body. But when we went away, it was just us.

"We just took our licking in stride."

We had local referees. Somebody from the YMCA at Victor refereed those games for us. We thought they were fair. We didn't have any problems. I can't remember us having an unpleasant situation--anybody getting mad, wanting to fight, or anything like that. The fellows we played with were real good sports, and we just took our licking in stride. We were real proud of the fact that something good came out of it in the form of an athletic program. It took something like that to get it started.

The active players on the first team were George Nodine, John Kendrick, Dr. J. N. Holtzclaw, Ray Norman and Howard Dominick, Professor Dominick's son. After we got permission from the Board of Trustees, and his son was going to play, Professor Dominick warmed up about it.

Nelson Holtzclaw was the tallest man on the team. I would say he was about 6'6" or 6'8". Ray Norman was the shortest. He played forward. The best player probably was Ray Norman. Next to Ray would be George Nodine. George was a good player. I would classify me as one of the sorriest on the team. I don't know how I got to be captain of the thing. Ray really was a good player. Ray went on and played a lot of textile basketball after he finished high school.

There were five of us who were active, what we called the team. The substitutes were Harry Burgess, Arthur Howell, and Dr. Arnold. We had three substitutes. Eight people. There were several others that were interested but we were the folks that got it started in its first year. The next year they had a good turnout for the team. And later we produced

some real good basketball teams. But this was the first basketball team back in 1919. It was an uphill proposition to get it started.

We didn't have any cheerleaders. The only cheerleader we had was my gal. She and I were buddies then, and later we got married. She was Ruby McLaughlin, the team sponsor.

We didn't have practice everyday, only about two or three afternoons a week after school. At that time of life most of us boys had some work we had to do when we got home. I had to milk the cow for Dr. F. G. James. That was my job. I did it everyday, morning and evening. So when we got to practicing, we couldn't practice too late because I had to get home and milk that cow.

We didn't have a schedule. We would just talk it over and agree to play. We didn't know what a schedule was. Some teams we played were Inman, Woodruff, Central, and Easley. I guess the worse beating we got was from Easley. Easley was an athletic town. They came over here once, and we went over there too. They really beat us bad because they had had athletics a good while before we got into it. They really socked it to us. We didn't play Spartanburg or Greenville because they were in a class separate to us.

"This was the first basketball team back in 1919."

An Autobiographical Sketch

by James A. Stokes



Edited by: Jimmy James

The first school that I went to was when I was six years old. It was a one room building, and all ages from six years old to twenty-one went to that school with only one teacher. Sometimes there would be from 65 to 75 scholars.

This teacher went to school in a buggy and drove an old red mule, and when he wanted that mule to trot, he would throw cotton seed on his back, and he would take off in a trot.

When I started to school, Dad told me if I got a whipping he would give me one when I got home. So one day, a boy told a lie on me, and I got three licks, and when I got home, Dad gave me more than that. So I got two whippings on account of that boy lying.

I did not get to go to school but four months of each year. Sometimes we would have five months. We had to stay eight hours each day, and the teacher only got twenty-five dollars for five months salary. Sometimes we would have to stay home and work and did not get to go all the time. By the time I quit school, the teacher was being paid \$35.00 for five months. I don't know what grade I finished--did not have grades then. I guess I would have made the fourth grade.

The scholars would all take dinner, we called it dinner, not lunch. When the dinner hour came, they would all grab their baskets and buckets, and each family would sit down under a tree and eat. They would carry potatoes, greenbeans, cabbage, and milk

and most anything that people eat. They would eat a hearty meal. Then the boys would play ball until the bell would ring. The girls would play drop the handkerchief and skirt around the ocean and other little games.

Back when I was a boy, we did not know a lot like children do now. We did not get many daily newspapers or radio. We got a triweekly, and it was very small and not very much news was in it. Before we got RFD, we had to go to the P.O. to get the mail.

Grandpa Page carried the mail twice a week. He would ride a mule from home to Inman, S. C., pick up the mail, and bring it to the P.O. Sometimes Dad would go in his place.

**"I was afraid they would
shoot me."**

When we got the RFD, we had to go to the Jordan Road (1 mile) to get the mail. When the Spanish American War broke out, one day I went to get the mail. I was 13 years old, and when I got the paper it had all across the front page, "War Decreed on Cuba," and I was so bad scared I ran most of the way back home. I was afraid they would shoot me. That goes to show you how ignorant boys 13 years was back in the 1890's.

Back when I was a boy we did not get to go anywhere very much. I would get to go to Greenville once a year and to Greer once in the spring and once in the fall.

Transportation was slow. The roads were rough, and the only way we had to travel was in a wagon. It would take all day to go to Greer and back, and it took two days to go to Greenville. Sometimes when the roads were bad, it would take three days. They would drive to what they called the three-mile branch and camp for the night. Next morning they would drive on to town and do the trading, did not call it shopping, then drive to the camping ground (the branch) and camp for the night, and next day drive

on home. They would carry their food with them. They would make coffee in a black kettle and fry meat and eggs, and that was some good eating. Sometimes the weather would change during the night, and they would have to come home in sleet and snow. It would rain sometimes and freeze on the harness, and lines would get icy and your hands would almost freeze.

The way of travel was slow. The only way we had was in a wagon, ride a mule, or walk. The most we could make was four miles per hour. There were not any hard-surfaced treated roads. The streets in Greenville were not paved. They were muddy in the winter time. They had streetcars pulled by horses. Sometimes the mud would be knee deep in places. The streetcars ran on a track like a train, and the horses walked between the track. The first hard surface road out in the country was in the time of the first World War. The army paved a road from Greenville out to Paris Station. That was an army camp.

"Daddy operated a cotton gin."

In the 1890's, Daddy operated a cotton gin, and in the busy season some days he would be crowded with customers, and he would leave word of a morning if he got crowded he would need me to help at the gin. He said if I heard the whistle blow three long blows, for me to come and help work at the gin. I was eight years old, and he would have me feed the gin by carrying cotton in a basket and pouring it in the hopper. I was too small to reach the top of the hopper, so he made a step out of some planks for me to step up on.

As I grew older he would have me do other work. Sometimes I would run the engine. When I ran the engine we would give a bale more per day than when a hired hand would run it. I would run the governor up and increase the speed, but I didn't let Daddy know it.

Sometimes I would take the team and haul cotton for people. One day I was lying on a load waiting for my time to come, and the boiler blew up. The mules turned the wagon over, and I just did jump out of the way. I almost got caught under that load of cotton.

When I was about seven years old, I would have to drop corn with my hands. I would carry it in a bucket and drop two grains in every other step that Daddy would take. He would lay off the rows and I would follow him.

He would have about three hands to drop compost. They would drop a hand full at each hill of corn that I would drop. Sometimes mothers would help drop the compost. Dad had a Negro helping, and the days that Mother would help he would go home for his dinner. When she didn't help, he would eat at our house. He thought Mother's hands were not clean enough to make bread and when I got a little older, I would drop guano by the hill of corn.

Willie, my brother, would be dropping corn when I was dropping guano. The plow would be following us covering the corn and guano.

We had to work the corn until it began to tassle. I have hoed corn when it would be silking. We would have to rake dirt up around the hill to keep it from blowing down. That's what they thought at that time. I was about grown before they learned better. When the corn got matured, we would have to pull fodder to feed the mules on. We would pull all day and take it up at night in the dark. We would carry it out to the end of the field so we could get to it with the wagon. Dad wouldn't drive in the corn. He did not want any of it broken down. Sometimes we would have to work until 11 o'clock at night if it looked like it might rain.

Then about October, we would gather the corn and throw it in a big pile and ask our neighbors to come in and help us shuck out the corn. The women and girls would cook a good supper for all. This was an annual thing with all the neighbors. We would go from one house to another as they would get their corn gathered. Some would put a gallon of whiskey at the back of the pile to get them to work hard to get to it.

Who's Next...?

Interviewed by: J. D. Burke, Jimmy James, Greg Jones, Chris Young

Edited by: J. D. Burke, Susan Hill, Jimmy James, John Rollins

Photographs by: Perry Williams

What town would be complete without a barber shop? Men's styling salons have sprung up in all the shopping centers that seem to be killing the downtowns today, but the established barber shops stubbornly refuse to leave.

For years a man chose a barber and stayed with him. His barber was his friend. Hair was shorter and visits to the barber shop more frequent. Strong friendships were formed. The barber provided a haircut and some friendly conversation in the days when only women made appointments to get their hair done. The wait was longer, but the jokes and gossip was an enjoyable way to pass the time.

Today hair spray has joined the hair tonic on the barber's shelf and in the smell in the air. The sound of the blow dryer has joined the sound of the electric clippers. Styles have changed just as the barber shops, but we hope the barber, the friend, will never become out of style.

Several Greer barbers talked with the Clingstone staff about the profession. Maynard Green, Jason Dill, Dortcha Smith, and Preach Vaughn have gained friendship and respect from the people of Greer.



Maynard Greene is our youngest contact, but he has already been cutting hair for twenty years.

I started working in barber shops shining shoes when I was twelve. I grew up in a barber shop. I got tired of shining shoes, so I decided to get on top of their head. I was fifteen when I started barbering. It was January 22 of 1958. I started off at the old Greer Mill Barber Shop under the direction of the man that inspired me to start cutting hair, Clarence Tucker. He is one of the best barbers I've ever known.

Later on, Grady Garrett came in and taught me speed, and Clarence taught me finished trim.

I learned how to shave by using a balloon. I'd put lather on it, and I shaved it with a straight razor. I could shave a balloon as many as 13 times before it would bust.

The most important person whose hair I've cut was aboard the U.S.S. Midway when I was offered a job by

Captain Gosa, who was the captain of the vessel, to go to the Pentagon and be his own personal barber, which I could have done. I could have probably worked my way up to be cutting the President's hair, but I turned it down and asked to stay where I was.

I've trained about 38 people altogether since I've been barbering.

Over the years, many things changed because now, you have to have a diploma from the state saying you can train someone or a teacher's permit. Also prices have changed a lot too. The 50 cent haircut has gone up to \$3.00. The styles have changed from the plain ole skint haircuts and flat tops plum on up to, well, today you get the styling part of it!

People care a lot more about themselves now than twenty years ago. You couldn't put a can of hair spray in a man's hand back then. It was Vitalis this, or Sure Lay that, or "just a little dab'll do you."

If you're going to sit back and cut hair, that's all you have to do, is cut hair and wait on somebody to come in. But if you're good enough, you don't have to sit back and wait on them; they'll call you. If you know what you're doing behind that chair and with that head of hair, they'll come to you.

I've changed locations three times in the last five years. Everytime I make a change it's for the best, and I'm fixing to start right now remodeling my shop.

The pay is a lot better now, and I like the new styles better. It's not the same old thing. I'm not the kind to do the same thing all of the time. In this business you have to do a little of everything.

"The styles have changed from the plain
ole skint haircuts and flat tops. . . ."



Jason Dill has had a varied career--carpenter, mill worker, ship yard worker, and farmer. But now he's back behind the barber chair where he first began his career.

I started into the barbering business when I was a boy 16 or 17. I learned myself. I never had any training.

I cut my father's hair first. I just picked up the scissors and comb and went to work. I didn't know whether he was pleased or not; he had to wear it.

When I was a boy my mother cut my hair. She cut it right smart too. She had to cut it with the scissors and comb because back then they didn't have thinning shears or electric clippers.

One day I told my mother that my daddy and I were going to Greer, and that if she let me borrow five dollars, that I would pay her back the next week. She asked how I was going to pay her back, and I told her by cutting hair. I said, "I'm going to buy me a pair

of scissors, clippers, and a comb."

I paid her back the next week, cutting hair at ten cents a head.

I ran my first barbershop beside John Owens' store in a little 12 by 12 building. I ran that one for five years and quit and went to Charleston. I stayed there 30 months and came home. Then I opened another barbershop at Taylor's store. I ran it for five years. Then I fixed this place up and I've been here ever since. Pretty soon it will be 30 years.

Haircuts . . . ten cents a head.

A lot of the barbershops in those days had showers, some had bath tubs, but most of the shops had showers.

Haircuts in that day, when I first opened, were only ten cents a head. I didn't shave then, only around the ears. I didn't shave until later. Shaving is a lot harder than cutting hair. It's more tedious.

I cut one fella around the ear once while cutting his hair down in John Owens' shop. I was shaving around his ears, and I was using a square-pointed razor that I wasn't used to. And he bled like a hog. I had a time trying to stop it bleeding. But he still came back to have his hair cut again.

Barbershops in that day stayed open from seven o'clock in the morning to twelve o'clock that night. Sometimes it was twelve-thirty or one o'clock until I was able to close.

Back then I was pretty well busy all the time, steady. I have had crowds here, and there wouldn't be any space for parking, and the people would have to park down the road.

Since I've been in this building, there's been times where I've cut hair from five-thirty one morning till one-thirty the next morning, only sitting down to two meals a day. Back then I cut hair every day, 18 to 20 hours a day.

Back then most of the people came in to have their hair cut on Fridays and Saturdays. They didn't come every day like they do now. People back then had something else to do besides get a haircut.

The most important people whose hair I have cut, I guess would be preachers. I've cut a lot of the preacher's hair around here until the last few years, but even they've changed their hairstyles now.

Marvin Pearson and I cut each other's hair. We've been swapping haircuts right at 50 years now.

We've always had good clean fun in my barbershop, and one thing's for sure, I don't know where you could find a better bunch of customers than I've had here. I got a good bunch of customers and I think a lot of them. And I think they do me the same way.

I enjoy cutting hair now as much as I ever did, I think cutting hair is what keeps me going. If I stayed sitting down somewhere I'd be so stiff that I couldn't move.

I've done several other things besides barbering. I've farmed, carpentered, worked in the mill, and worked in the shipyard in Charleston, but I've always come back to barbering.

I've always come back to barbering.



Preach Vaughn has been barbering for 50 years.

I first started barbering in 1927 when I was 17 years old. There wasn't any license required at that time; you just got your tools and went to work.

I learned how to barber up in the country cuttin' hair with a lamp light. The first thing I learned was to shave. I started by shaving a bottle, and then I would shave the lather off to get the knack of smoothing it out.

It usually took 15 to 20 minutes to a head of hair at the time when I started.

People used to get their hair cut off short, all the way up their neck. A lot of people would even have their hair clipped all over.

The most famous person whose hair I have ever cut was the president of Leget and Morris Tobacco Company, Mr. B. F. Few.

The prices have changed a great deal. When I started it was 25¢ for a haircut and 20¢ for a shave. Prices now run up to \$3.00 for a shave, but your over-head has more than tripled.

I have always enjoyed barbering and always will.

The Palace Barber Shop has been a fixture in Greer for a long, long time. Walk in and go down to the last chair and you'll find Preach Vaughn, one of those barbers Greer doesn't want to lose.



The Smiths have run a barber shop for two generations. Mr. Dortcha Smith Sr. started the business, and now his son has established himself in the same field Greer respected his father so much for.

I was a barber college drop-out. I learned at a barber shop in Greenville. I worked under a registered barber for three weeks. He got sick, and I had to run the barber shop for six weeks by myself.

I have been cutting hair for about 20 years. Back when I first got started, everybody would get crew cuts, G. I.'s or white sidewalls. That was standard procedure for young people, and that was the difference between five minutes on a head of hair and the 20 minutes that it takes now.

When I first started in Greenville in 1957, haircuts were only \$1.25. In Greer, they were cheaper, only 85¢.

When I first started in Greenville, I cut a couple of General's hair. General McCarty was one of the most important persons whose hair I have cut.

Most of the barber shops in Greer didn't have baths in them, but the ones in Greenville and Spartanburg did.

There wasn't much to hair cutting then because you cut it all off. You just cut it as long as it would last.

Donors

The CLINGSTONE staff greatly appreciates the donations of the following Piedmont Heritage Fund contributors:

Stevens Beechcraft, Inc.



BANK OF GREER

JAMES C. DUBOSE, O.D., P.A.

W. CARL SMITH, AGENCY

WILLIAM McB. WOOD

RONALD K. EDWARDS

THE TIRE EXCHANGE

CITY OF GREER

THE GREER WOMEN'S CLUB

MR. AND MRS. D. N. SMITH

SMITH PRINTING COMPANY

THE GREER CITIZEN

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF GREENVILLE COUNTY

MRS. O.G. WOOD

HOMELITE, DIVISION OF TEXTRON INC.

DAN D. DAVENPORT TRUST

CITIZENS & SOUTHERN NATIONAL BANK

HYMAN'S STUDIO

M.E. CLEMENT

BANKERS TRUST OF SOUTH CAROLINA



In Search of Things Worth Remembering