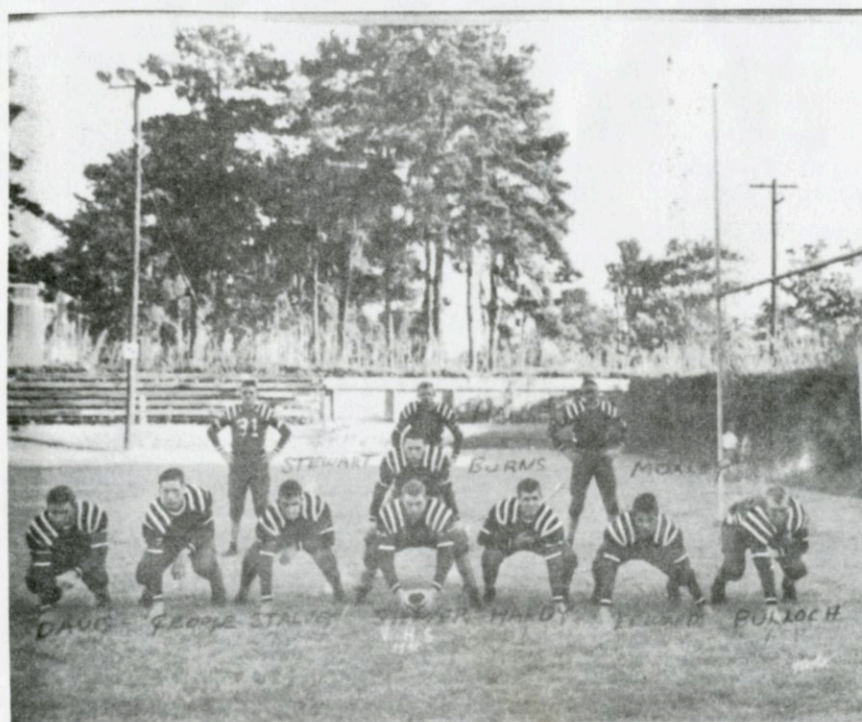


Mrs. George H. Hart, Jr., President

OCTOBER 1986

VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

VOL. XV NO. 12





The two pictures on page one are from the collection of snapshots that Bob McLaughlin of Costa Mesa, California reproduced for the Society. They are enlargements of snapshots of enlargements at the Sportsman's Center on West Hill Avenue in Valdosta. Enlargements of snapshots of enlargements always seem to come out fuzzy, but I am determined to use them. The first picture is of the 1933 football team of the Valdosta High School of Valdosta, Georgia. The scores that year, under Coach Bobby Hooks in his second year were: Valdosta 20 Douglas 3; Valdosta 34 Bainbridge 0; Valdosta 28 Cairo 0; Valdosta 32 Richmond Academy 14; Valdosta 21 Waycross 0; Valdosta 0 Thomasville 0; Valdosta 13 Tifton 0; Valdosta 6 Albany 26; Valdosta 28 Moultrie 0. In a couple of football articles these names were mentioned as playing: Strom, Thomas, Ratliff, Garbut, Tanner, Nijem, Murphy, Register, George, Gornito, Cleveland, Ulmer, Joiner, Parker, Young, Giddens, Pearlman, Conyers, Langdale, Johnson and Paine. In the last game of that season when we beat Moultrie, the Times said that Joiner came out as hero.

The second picture is dated 1941, the year after Bobby Hooks left Valdosta, but these were his men, some of which he wrote about in his memoir. I believe the second picture was taken in the west end of Cleveland Field, facing south -- note the wooden bleacher seats. That is how it all looked then. Davis, Stalvey, Stewart, Shiver, Hanley, George, Hardy, Moxley, Edwards, Bulloch and Burns are the football players in the second picture. One of these days, we will publish more pictures of football and baseball players in our Newsletter. Until then, here is the second installment of the memoirs of Coach Bobby Hooks, 1932-1940 for the Valdosta High School Wildcats of Valdosta, Georgia.

#### THUMBNAILED SKETCH OF OUTSTANDING FOOTBALL PLAYERS ON VALDOSTA'S TEAMS

FROM 1932 THROUGH 1940

(Part 2 and Conclusion)

BY COACH BOBBY HOOKS

(Written in the 1950's)

(1935, 1936, 1937) Billy "Dynamite" Goodloe willing to pay the price because he loved it, stocky, big and fast enough for an ideal guard which had to pull out and run interference. Played some for Ga. Tech and is now a member of their coaching staff.

(1932, 1933) R. D. Ratliff Halfback -- one of the best slashing type backs -- good for 4 or 5 yards through small slits in the line. He and Strom (his running mate) complimented each other -- Ratliff the short steady gainer, Strom the long ball hitter.

(1934, 1935) Will Spain Kelly Fullback -- very fast and consistent. Was a star on a fine ball club who gave you 110% in effort and hustle on the practice field and in games.

(1932, 1933) Buck Thomas - H B - was the best so-called 2nd string halfback. He had a fine pair of hands, could pass, run and punt. In looking through some old notes I find where I had said, "Buck is one of the most likely to make a success of coaching." He's fulfilled this prophecy and deserves a lot of credit for Dosta's success in football through the years. He played behind Strom at R. H., Ratliff at L. H., Young and Giddens at Full. Absorbed coaching like a blotter.

(1933, 1934) Henry Dukes Guard - Dependable - he was not of the rugged type, not flashy, was more of the brain type, but quite consistent. A coach's kind of ballplayer.

(1932, 1933) Max Young Fullback -- a hard running, vicious tackling football player. An excellent blocker - a hard nose type player - one you had rather have on your team than against you. Rough & Ready was his motto.

(1932) J. V. Martin & J. G. Joiner played ends on one of the most amazing teams, my first, and one of the best. Two fine ends, one was of the reckless type, the other of the cautious type. They have been fast friends through the years - both got the job done and "How!"

(1936, 1937) Zeke Campbell End - A great competitor and fine pass receiver. He caught a pass and ran to the five yard line against Moultrie on one Thanksgiving Day when they were unscored on and undefeated. Two plays later Blanton went over - score Dosta 6, Moultrie 0. It was played in a sea of mud.



(1938) Lonnie Gornto, a very fine signal caller, blocker and leader - very heady and a wonderful memory - could remember play situations and carried out instructions to the letter. Sam, James, Jack and Lonnie Gornto, all brothers, played fine ball at Dosta High for all it was worth.

(1937, 1938, 1939, 1940) Joe Davis Left half - the greatest passer I ever coached - he had ice water in his veins and could hit his mark. He was tall enough, but lean and didn't weigh over 150 lbs., but was indestructible. He had great hands and could throw to all distances. He was a great ball carrier to boot. He would have to be remembered as one of the greatest halfbacks. He lost his life in the service of his country.

(1936, 1937, 1938) H. M. "Butch" Passmore, Co-Capt. 1938, the greatest center and all-round lineman I ever coached. He had a nose for defense and was a vicious tackler. He was the most sought after lineman in the annals of football history at Dosta. He and Brooker Blanton had a private plane to fly to Valdosta and pick them up and fly them to L. S. U. They were not only courted by L. S. U., for a scholarship, but Gen. Bob Neyland of Tennessee came to Valdosta to try and sign them up and later they went as guests to the Volunteer Campus - Duke, Alabama, Georgia and many other great football schools sought these two fine football players. They both ended up at Georgia. Butch Passmore also died in the service of his country. The most vicious tackler I ever saw or coached.

(1937, 1938, 1939, 1940) Jim Powell Quarterback - although he's listed on the squad and team for four years - his career started years before this as a mascot for the Wildcats. Jim Powell loved football with a passion and goes down along with the all-time greats. His greatest forte was blocking and was the greatest blocker or leader of interference. He was a champion and he played on a Championship Team. He was just as fine a boy as he was a football player. He went to Mercer University on a football scholarship. Purple Heart as a Marine - World War II.

(1939, 1940) Lou Blanton - Tackle - The tallest and one of the biggest tackles of all times. He would have to be listed with the long list of great tackles at Dosta. He was a team man and kept the spirit up at all times - big, strong, dependable - a specialist at kicking off. He played for Mercer and Georgia. A great competitor who believed winning was not only a good thing - it was the only thing!

(1937, 1938, 1939, 1940) Glenn Ratliff - Right halfback who followed in his brother's footsteps (R. D. Ratliff played on my first team at Dosta). Glenn Ratliff was the quickest and best pass receiver of any back I ever coached. Because of him and these qualities, along with Joe Davis, the passer, we used a flanker that had much to do with carrying Dosta to another State Championship. A dangerous back in open field. Loved to block and run.

(1939, 1940) Max Stalvey - Guard - he was built the least like a guard, but he had the heart, so his then small size was no handicap. He was tough and agile on offense and defense - weighed only 145 lbs. soaking wet, yet never got hurt. Count him in where it was thickest, yet he was quick. Demure off the field.

(1938, 1939, 1940) Clarence Paine - guard - he was one of the easiest players to coach - Wonderful spirit and hustle, the brother of M. J. Paine, who played earlier. Dosta developed fine guards for they had to pull out and run interference for the fast halfbacks and fullbacks. Picked for speed and endurance.

(1938, 1939, 1940) Knuck McCrary - Fullback and signal caller. He ranks along with Guy Reid Parker in calling the right plays at the right time - he was daring and imaginative, he was the fastest and best fullback to the outside I ever had. He went to Mercer University and Georgia on football scholarship - he was one of the outstanding coaches turned out at Dosta. He's now coaching at Moultrie High School.

(Editor's note, Knuck McCrary died in 1965)

(1939, 1940) Jim Shiver - Center - one of the all-time outstanding centers, he was great defensive linebacker - and great snapper of the ball on offense. He played halfback in college and was a coach. His last coaching assignment was at Dawson, Georgia.

(1938, 1939, 1940) Steve Condurelis - Tackle - rough and ready and he liked it where it was thick - He was mobile and had great stamina - He played on an undefeated and untied team and a State Champion. Never was hurt himself, but clobbered ball carriers.



(1940) Red Bullock - end - a red-headed ballplayer who had great relaxation and good hands. He developed into a fine pass receiver. He has been coaching for a great number of years in high school circles. A fine blocker of tackles on offense.

(1939, 1940) Tom Stewart - quarterback, left halfback and right halfback - the best 2nd string QB I ever coached - he played behind Jim Powell, which is enough said - He was called upon in many crucial situations and came through like the champion he was. He started coaching at Quitman, Georgia, then at Bremen, then at Dublin High School. To prove he was a terrific blocker, he has a cauliflower ear. He was good enough to move Jim Powell to half for much of the time.

(1939, 1940) E. B. Hanley - fullback - there is no question but that he was the greatest converted fullback to ever wear the gold and black. In preseason camp practice in 1940, we needed a bruising fullback to keep our opposing linemen honest and to make our wide stuff go with our light fast backs - After trying out many linemen we decided upon Hanley - it meant a great sacrifice for him for he was a good tackle, but, with much overtime work, he developed into one of the best fullbacks up the middle. With him we developed two teams that carried us to the State Championship. Our plan was to use our big team along with Hanley to soften 'em up and then to put Knuck McCrary in to go wide from fullback. The plan panned out. He ran with reckless abandon. He could ramble.

(1935, 1936, 1937, 1938) Brooker Blanton - Co-Capt. 1938 - Halfback or Fullback, it didn't matter, the greatest all-round back I ever coached or ever saw play in high school and prep school circles. He had more natural ability than any athlete I ever saw. Once when it hurt his knee to kick right-footed, he boomed punts 50 & 60 yards down field left-footed with no concern. When asked why he had never told me he could kick left-footed, he replied, "I had never tried it before." I had him caddying for me on the golf course when up on the tee he asked to try his hand and drove the ball 300 yards, straight down the fairway the first time he ever had a club in his hand.

Brooker could outrun and outside step opponents, but when he had to, he could explode through and over them. He could quickkick as well as punt for he used the rocker step to punt and never had a punt blocked. He got 'em off so fast. He was truly a triple threat, being able to pass, kick and run equally well. He never liked practice and yet after a game when he did everything but swallow the ball, and everyone was enjoying the taste of victory, he sat dejectedly alone thinking he had not played well. He needed encouragement and was extremely sensitive to criticism. Found him on a sandlot kicking booming punts down a cow pasture.

It was strange that the best all-round lineman, H. M. Passamore, and the best all-round back, Brooker Blanton, played on the same team -- Mr. Offense and Mr. Defense on the same team was a coach's dream come true. They were the scourge of all South Georgia teams during their careers. With all the attention, praise and glory it never went to their heads.

Time nor space will allow me the opportunity to mention any more players in that 1932-1940 football era. I wish I had the time to mention everyone who played on the squad, the varsity or the "Bogart Teams," for I am deeply indebted to all of them for the success Dosta enjoyed in building a football dynasty which still stands in that South Georgia community known as Valdosta, the Vale of Beauty.

Thanks to the managers such as Walter Williams, Vernon McRae, Red Sikes, Pete Giddens, Julian LeFiles, Buster Bassford, Lovic Greer and Hugh Blanton. They did a fine job and deserve much of the credit for this success.

Special praise and consideration must go to the coaches who so ably assisted me, such as Coaches House, Langston (now deceased), McGinty, Stone, Cathcart, Roberson, and Wright Bazemore. Coach Bernard Stone, who never scouted a game before coming to Valdosta, developed into the finest scout a team could have and was instrumental in many fine victories for the Wildcats.

I would be unappreciative unless I took this opportunity to salute such men as Mr. Nelse Holcombe, Mr. Jeff Davis, and Mr. Jack Oliver, all three deceased, but their fine deeds and help in so many ways will forever live in the hearts and memories of those who love the heritage and great traditions of Ole Dosta High School.



In speaking of traditions here are some of the firsts at Valdosta:

- #1. The first team in South Georgia to have spring football practice.
- #2. First with lights to play night ball.
- #3. First to have pre-season football camp.
- #4. First to travel by Greyhound bus.

1932 - 1940 Victories over arch rivals:

- 9 yrs. Moultrie 0, Valdosta 9 wins, Thanksgiving Day traditional game.
- 9 yrs. Waycross won 1, tied 1, Dosta 7 won, 1 tie.
- 9 yrs. Thomasville 2 wins, Dosta 7 wins, Armistice Day Game.
- 9 yrs. Tifton won 1, Dosta won 8.
- 9 yrs. Albany won 3, Dosta won 6.
- 4 losses - most losses suffered any one season.

Total games played as coach of Ga. Military College (1 yr.), Valdosta High School (9 yrs.), and Mercer University (1 yr.), 108 games, Victories 92, Losses 14, & Ties 2.

-----  
This concludes the Hooks story and we thank Mrs. Hooks for supplying this to the former players who gave it to us to use. Everyone will find it interesting and we are quite pleased to print it here.

We plan to mail a copy of these two Newsletters to many of these men and ask that they send comments so that we might follow up with another story, some things they remember, special times and games. Let us hear from you!

-----

#### MUSEUM NEWS

Don't forget the Blackburn Photographs Display to be held at our Museum on November 23, 1936, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. Share with us some of your treasured Blackburn photographs. Bring them to the Museum on Wednesday, November 19th, from 9:30, to 11:30 am and again on Thursday November 20th, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. The photographs may be individual portraits, family portraits, events, scenes -- anything photographed by Mr. Blackburn. Please bring any information concerning the photographs. Photographs shared should be picked up by the lender immediately after the showing ending at 5:00 pm, Sunday November 23rd, or the following day on Monday, November 24th, from 10:00 am until 12:00 noon.

We would appreciate your cooperation in helping make this a real tribute to the artistry of Mr. Blackburn. Refreshments and decorations for the event will be furnished by the 4-H Club of Lowndes County. Please join us for this interesting display and enjoyable occasion. The public is definitely invited -- bring someone with you.

Natalie Williams sends a big "thank-you" to these who stayed at the Museum on Sunday afternoons, keeping it open for the public. January, Mary Ann Blanton, Edith Roberts, and Catherine Redles. February, Dr. Joe Tomberlin. March, Mike Paine. April, Dr. Dale Peeples. May, Tom Shelton. June, Martha Horowitz. July, Jane Caudle and Jean Malone. August, Lillian McRee, Dorothy Denmark, Louise Ellis, Jewell Barnum, and Fainsy and Mac McClure. September Annabel Cowart, Emily McCall, Margaret Baker, Henrietta Walker, Carolyn Butler, and Julia Bess Scott. "Thanks to all -- your time given is really appreciated -- won't others volunteer?? Call 242-8962, Natalie Williams."

Now is the time to join or renew with LCHS. Use the form below.

LOWNDES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P. O. Box 434, Valdosta, Ga. 31601

1936-1987 YEAR

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

\$10.00 per person joining

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Number joining \_\_\_\_\_

GIVE A MEMBERSHIP  
AS A GIFT