

Mrs. J. G. Hagen, President

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Thanks for gifts or loans to the following interested people: L. A. Swilley for Vol. 2, Oct. 1961 Georgia Genealogy Magazine, to Caroline Thomas for GSWC catalogues of the 1940s where I found a complete list of "The Measley Thirteen", to Cecilia Lawson for a picture of her father, J. A. Lawson, dated Jan. 1, 1908, Confederate Veterans of Hahira, Georgia, titled "Turning Back the Clock", to Frances Klein Staten Carson of Atlanta for information about the Whittington family (more to come) and a picture of B. F. Whittington, one of our early mayors. Mrs. Carson also sent another interesting picture: Valdosta Carnival Queen's Float--1890, sponsored by Lowndes Shaw, with Merchant Queen, Miss Bessie Jenkins, also Miss Lilla Whittington (Mrs. J. W. Pinkston), Miss Fanny Talley, a Miss Dasher and others unknown, on what seems to be the corner of Patterson and Valley Streets in front of the Methodist Church when the entrance was in the corner of the building. Thanks to Bette Corn Salter for three 1941 Campus Canopys, a program of recital class of Mrs. Eloise Wilcox, copy of 1941 Dosta Outlook (Bette's graduation class) and more than that, her interest and help on the article about her father, A. D. Corn.

Susie McKey Thomas has been helping me collect information. One story leads to another and there doesn't seem to be any end to interesting tales about our people and their families. We will be more than able to correct errors in historical facts formerly recorded. Many of these things will be revealed soon.

In the Folks Huxford Genealogy Magazines we need: Vols. 1-3-4-5-6-8-9-11-12-13-14-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-27-28-29-30. That's it! Can anyone help us?

Some more firsts: William Converse Thomas (Bud, Susie's son) was the first boy to bat in the Little League Baseball Park behind cemetery (Susie has a picture). He was eight years old, played for four years, a second baseman, sponsored by Pepsi-Cola and his manager was Ed Spriggs. Another first: the VSC "Serenaders" were first organized by Miss Marie Motter, a voice teacher at the college, then called GSWC. There were three Valdosta girls in the first group of "Serenaders". They were Ruth Taylor, Corinne Smith and Susie McKey. The Valdosta High School class of 1938 was the first to graduate in caps and gowns. The class of '37 was last to wear white dresses and white coats. VHS class of 1942 was first in quite a number of years to have an annual.

Hambone Larsen says the city began to take up the street car tracks in 1929. So about that time or a little before is when they probably stopped running the cars. They began about 1900.

Stories we'd like to write: about the street car line; about "Aunt Ibbie, faithful servant of G. R. McRee family", buried on the McRee lot in Sunset Hill. Also the story about "James Rourke, died November 22, 1902, 44 years old", buried in Sunset Hill. He was the circus animal trainer of Gypsy, the elephant who rampaged through this city's streets, killed her trainer and was hunted down at Cherry Creek. The newspaper account, I believe, calls him, John O'Rourke. Remember I reported that several years after 1902 someone had a charm made from a piece of Gypsy's tusk? Much of the activity of the elephant was behind the Valdes Hotel and Mr. Ferrell remembers it well.

Clyde McKey White is getting up the McKey history for the Society, for our book as well as to give at a later program. This will include, of course, John H. Holliday, better known as, "Doc", whose mother was Alice Jane McKey Holliday, Aunt of Clyde and of Julian McKey. Clyde will have first hand information from her father, Thomas Sylvester McKey, who knew his nephew, "Doc", as well, if not better, than anyone here in Lowndes County. We are all looking forward to Clyde's talk. Did you know that Clyde's father, Jake's father and Terrell Fender's grandfather were involved in the building of the Lowndes County Court House?

Susie Thomas and her hephew, Earle McKey III have presented the society with a handsomely framed copy of the will of William Harrison McKey, grandfather and great grandfather, respectively. This most authentic copy was written September 10, 1861 in Virginia while he was in the Confederate Army, and after disposition of his money, property and instructions for his burial, he names his brother, Thomas Sylvester McKey, and Henry B. Holliday, "my brother-in-law-" as co-executors of the will. Thanks to Susie and Butch for this important addition. And it's all ready to be hung on the wall. We thank them for a copy of a letter Mr. McKey wrote and for copies of many legal documents, all gifts from Susie.

Jane's article follows. And thank you, Jane, for it. It is most interesting, but far too short, for we could have read on and on. Here's hoping you will present us with a longer one very soon.

THE LADIES SOLDIERS AID SOCIETY, 1864

by

Jane T. Shelton

We know how the women of Valdosta and Lowndes County have helped the soldiers of World War I and World War II. During these conflicts, relief societies and the Red Cross chapter responded both by preparing personal and medical supplies to send abroad and by taking care of servicemen at home. But did you know that there was a Wayside Home in Valdosta during the Civil War?

In the Savannah paper, March 6, 1864, there was a news item from Valdosta. The editor inserted a notice that the Ladies of Valdosta had "established a Wayside Home, . . . for sick and wounded, and other Confederate soldiers, a number of whom have already been recipients of their bounty, care and handling." The news story, also, listed the names of the officers of the Ladies Soldiers Aid Society. They were Mrs. Eliza Bessent, President; Mrs. T. B. Griffin, Secretary; and Mrs. F. Bryan, Treasurer. Mrs. Bessent was the wife of the lawyer, Major Abram J. Bessent, and they had refugeed from Charleston earlier in the War. Mrs. Griffin was the wife of farmer and merchant Thomas B. Griffin (he had a store on the north-west corner of Patterson and Hill), and they had a son in the Confederate Army. Mrs. Bryan remains unidentified, although there were several Bryan families in the county. Two members of the Lowndes County volunteers, Sergeant J. A. A. Bryan and Private J. H. Bryan, died at Camp Bartow, Virginia, in 1861.

Surely the Confederate soldiers appreciated the Wayside Home. Certainly, one Valdostan was grateful for the consideration shown him by Southern folk. When on his way back to Virginia, in 1865, twenty-year-old Captain William F. Pendleton wrote in his diary: "O how it comforts the soldier's heart to meet with kind treatment. And how it encourages him to be more determined than ever in discharge of his duty. It increases his energy, makes him bear his sufferings, and hardships with a better spirit. Would that all our people could be alive to the wants and necessities of the soldiers; it would have a better effect than the most sanguine can imagine."

Another Lowndes County soldier had suggestions for comforting the men at the front: From Marietta, Georgia, in June, 1864, Sergeant John W. Hagan wrote to his wife, Amanda, at Cat Creek: "send me some Butter and a bottle of syrup & some Buiscket . . . also send us some apples if you can get any . . . ship it to Marietta in care of the Thomas County releaf Society I think old Lowndes and Berrien is not very patriotic or they would despach some man from that sectsion with something for the soldiers who are fighting for them daley." John Hagan was writing before the battle for Atlanta.

Soon many Georgians were fighting for themselves daily, and they must look to the welfare of the people at home.

Another story we'd like to write: Amateur Hour at the Palace Theater. For you young ones this theater is part of Bob Ferguson's Tile & Terrazzo Company on South Patterson and where quite a few of us spent our time: first run movies, as well as cowboy shows on Saturday morning. I have a short-short story about Amateur Hour 1934, concerning Mills B. Lane. Can anyone tell me more?

Tom Shelton's program at our next meeting will be The Salzberger Migration to Georgia. We are looking forward to this. Meeting night is April 27th at 8:00 PM. We have a grand time at our meetings, hearing the program, talking about it, the gifts to the museum and items mentioned in the Newsletter. Come join us, old members as well as new. And remember, you can hear past programs on tape, such as Joe Stevens' History of the Denmark family, last month's program.

Thanks to Susie for all the help and footwork, now and yet to come, particularly for her story about her contest win and trip to Hollywood in June 1937. Some day soon you readers will, I hope, get to read my article about it. Susie is doing the history of S. L. Mason School and Central Grammar School. Hadley McDuffie will help with information and pictures. We need someone to tackle the other schools, which will not only include the ones still in operation, but the old Adair Street School, old Junior High and Valdosta Institute (a picture at the Museum loaned by Mrs. Ralph Bradford).

For the Fun Festival why not have posterboard size maps of Franklinville, Lowndesville and/or Troupville, with information about each one, the move to Valdosta, the dates, etc.? Use Mr. Swilley's snapshots of Franklinville marker, Troupville marker and others. We need to have something like this people can stop and look at when they visit during Festival days.

Our first Miss Valdosta (as far as we can tell) was possibly Dinah Roberts who reigned as our queen in 1916. She is Mrs. Redden Parramore, mother of three, grandmother of seven, and still a beautiful lady. I think we should have a picture of this Miss Valdosta 1916 and a story to go with it. We want pictures of all Miss Valdosta's, and the college May Queen's too. Who should I see in someone's picture album but May Queen 19??, Virginia Hutchinson, now Mrs. Bill Culpepper, another beautiful lady. Another good-looking one, Minnie Roberts (Mrs. George Williams) was a May Queen at GSWC. Who else? Bring us some pictures.

Valdosta State College went coed in the fall of 1950. My date in the last newsletter of 1958 was incorrect and only one person corrected me. Thanks, Jackie.

M. J. Paine was telling me what his uncle Hansell told him. They used to watch the wagons from The A. S. Pendleton company deliver groceries from house to house on Savannah Avenue. This was the retail store, before incorporation, I'm sure. One day Uncle Hansell was behind a tree with an umbrella waiting, and when the horse came by with wagon loaded, he jumped out and opened up the umbrella quickly, scaring the horse who jumped off at a trot, strewing groceries for two blocks.

I stopped off to see Mr. and Mrs. Louis Shelton recently. Mr. Louis' family also lived on Savannah Avenue a block from the Holliday house. He remembers many things that he told us. One was that after Major Holliday died and Mrs. Rachael (the second wife) Holliday was alone, he and his brother often spent the night with her. She was the aunt of his grandmother. He remembers her as a young, fine looking woman. She later remarried and moved away.

Come tell us your stories, all your shortest recollections even. Some day they will all fit together. We have learned some interesting and remarkable things already.

See you at the meeting, Thursday, the 27th.

Albert Pendleton