

Mrs. J. G. Hagen, President

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VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

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Summer is the time to get writing done, and reading, too, but it hasn't been that way for me. So I am a few days late. But I'm glad, because today John Deming called and said the Lowndes County Historical Society could have his log cabin, most all things in it, the fence and outside buildings! Now isn't that great news? He'd like for us to move it soon and I haven't even had a chance to find out where to move it or how. But we must find a way and a place. Now we really need help, aid, and make some real decisions quite soon. I want to thank the Demings for this generous gift, a quaint little house from our county and a grand addition to our historical preservation effort.

Welcome new members: Mr. & Mrs. Lewis W. Williams of Birmingham, Charles E. Bryan of Atlanta and Francis Childress of Jacksonville. Mrs. Williams is the former Margaret Griffin of this city and I wrote of both the Williams' and the information they sent last month. Charles Bryan is the son of Margaret and Cecil Bryan, and Mr. Childress is of a remembered old family of Valdosta. He has given the Society a most generous donation.

The "Heritage" issue of the Valdosta Daily Times was really great and I'm sure all of you enjoyed it as much as I did. I still have a few copies of it if some out-of-town friends would like a copy. Our full page ad in this issue was made possible by: Citizens and Southern National Bank, First National Bank, First State Bank, Park Avenue Bank, First Federal Savings and Loan, Valdosta Federal Savings and Loan, Penney's, Valdosta Daily Times, Roses and Harvey Super Markets, all of Valdosta, and we thank them very much for this help.

I've checked on the Museum this summer, staying there one Sunday and we had three or four visitors. I saw Valentines, quaint and fancy, that were delivered to "Freddie" Ogletree once. There is a picture of the Roberts home on Wells street, the house that is older than Valdosta. It sits on five acres and is still a lovely place. I saw a locket and chain that was dated 1870 and said to have belonged to Mrs. Corinne Smith. A post card album was most interesting, of local scenes (about 1920 or before) as well as other places in the United States. At last, someone has given us a copy of the Lowndes County News, edited by Mr. June Norwood 1937-57. This one has E. E. Dekle's name on it. So thanks to the Dekles for it. It was the Friday April 13, 1945 issue and the headlines were "Roosevelt Dies", "Pres. Roosevelt Dies Suddenly at Warm Springs. President of twelve most momentous years, died Thursday April 12, 1945." It also told that Mrs. Aline Prewitte was to receive her son's awards the next day. Her son, 1st. Lt. Wm. Vivian Prewitte, had been a pilot of a B24. It told of Charlie Williams, who used to work for the Jack Cowarts, was in the service and gone to India. Someone told me of running into Charlie in India during the war and how glad they were to see each other. Valdostans always seem to find each other somewhere. There is much more in the paper of interest and we hope we can have more copies.

I had a most pleasant letter from Rena Mae Campbell informing me of some firsts in her life that involve Valdosta. I never really thought of this happening to anyone, but you'll enjoy the following. I always have to put a title to stories, so here it is.

WITHOUT A BREAK

by

Rena Mae Campbell

"I would like to tell you about a "first" which I believe you would be interested in hearing about.

"I was born in Valdosta, Georgia November 26, 1906.

"The College, then known as South Georgia State Normal College, opened its doors for the first time to students in January, 1913. In September, 1913, I enrolled in the first grade of the Training School which was a part of the college. I made the first and second grades that year. Continued through the Training School, then through the High School Division

of the College, receiving my High School Diploma from the College in 1923. I continued through the College, receiving my Normal Diploma (2 year) from the College in 1925. Continued at the College and received my AB Degree from the College (then Georgia State Woman's College) in 1927.

"A First for starting in the First Grade, the First Full Year of the College, continuing straight through and receiving my ABDEGREE FROM THE SAME SCHOOL (without a break).

"I received my Teacher's Life Certificate in North Carolina and Georgia, having taught in Gastonia High School, Gastonia, North Carolina for eleven years.

"In 1941, I passed Civil Service Examination, and went to work at Moody Field as Executive Secretary to Colonel Lloyd O. Yost, Maintenance and Engineering Officer at Moody Field (now called Moody Air Force Base). I continued with Civil service for seven years.

"On April 1, 1949, I went to work with METAL PRODUCTS (now a Division of ITT Thompson Industries, Inc.) as Executive Secretary to Mr. Lewis Kafoure, Executive Vice President, and have continued in this position for 23 years. (Here in Valdosta, Georgia).

"Valdosta is my home and it is a wonderful town in which to live. I appreciate the educational opportunities offered me by the College (now VSC). I appreciate the fine business in which I have been able to pursue my business career. Although I have not retired yet, I look forward to many pleasant years of retirement in Valdosta, the city I am proud to call MY HOME TOWN.

Rena Mae Campbell, 409 West Gordon Street, Valdosta, Georgia.

Thank you, Rena Mae, for your letter, and in sharing your "firsts" with the Historical Society. It is a most interesting part of the history of Valdosta State College.

I wrote several articles for the newspaper issue, but they were too long and are also too long for our Newsletter, unless I publish one in two parts. But these are about our people and I should withhold them for our book, but long to let you know what they are about, for "to withhold is to perish..." (Gibran), if "you yourself deserve to be a giver..." So I may have copies of them in the museum for you to read. Some of them are: "The Keepers of the Crescent" (about Col. West and his granddaughter, Sis West May), "A Visit with Mrs. St. John" about our first mayor, R. T. Roberds, the Collins family, Mrs. St. John's parents and about her sister, Mrs. Eloise Wilcox, expression teacher here for many years)(Part of this appeared in the paper), "Grandma Thomas" (about Fanny Elder Thomas, resident of Troupeville, moved to Quitman with her family and stepfather, Mr. Hunter, and how she moved to Valdosta), "Susie Goes to Hollywood" (about Susie McKey Thomas and her contest win in 1938 and visit to Eddie Canter and Walt Disney), "The Man in Corn's Barber Shop" (about a comical, outspoken, warm personality we all remember). There are more in the making. Now follows a short one.

DREAMING OF A LITTLE SPANISH TOWN

by

Albert Pendleton

A song of today says, "...life is a turn of the page, a book without lines.." and goes on to say, "...wish I could be in your eyes, looking where you were.."

Being a historian by nature and a writer by heart, I thought of all historians who recorded our past, rumors and facts. And at the same time wishing we could remember and see this through the eyes of the people who lived it. (A much less romantic project than the idea of the song, but let's just say it's my age.)

It's impossible, literally, but we can read these histories and try to go back. Do you realize, as I do, that life is the same, it's the same old world, the same problems decade after decade, it's only different times and different people playing the parts?

One place good stories are to be found is a microfilm library of newspapers. You can spend hours reading about the past, piecing together bits of stories of long ago. But a word of warning from one who has made this mistake many times and lived to regret it. If you're looking for something in particular and see other articles you want to read later, be sure to record the date of the newspaper in order to look it up again.

This writer is still searching for an article, "Old Spanish Town Near Here", I saw it, I know, but the story illudes me!

I have much the same information from another article, but it is not the same one. Nevertheless, it is outstanding information. And if you'd like to start looking, digging, or what--be sure to include me!

It is said that in 1849 there was near Troupeville, the remains of an older town, whose origin is unknown. Some believed it could probably date to prehistoric times. Large live oak trees flourished in the same locality and the idea of their spontaneous growth was precluded by the straight and uniform rows in which they sat. But who could have placed them there is a mystery unsolved by time. It is quite possible, suggests Lucian Lamar Knight, that an old Spanish town was located there before the days of Oglethrope, as there were signs of old building foundations. And all this was long before Troupeville.

But who knows? In 1540 DeSoto came in far to the west, swinging over through Cordele and to Abbeville before going north. Yet, Spaniards could have settled here any time. There were several fine farms near Troupeville at the time of its existence, but most of the area looks as if it were never touched. The areas where I've been are very much full of growth--even jungle-like--and seem as though no one has ever walked through.

Little Spanish town, huh? Helmets...gold! If we only knew where to look!

I had to go to Oxford, Georgia, Oxford College to a writers conference to meet Ray Register of VSC. Ray was introduced along with his fine book of poetry, Discovery by Lamplight. He read several of his poems to the GWA group before returning to Valdosta. I met new friends Joy and Doug Robinson and found we had much in common. Doug used to live here, and one teacher he remembered quite well was, Mrs. Emerson Bell (Sue Pendleton), my first cousin. And Joy, whose mother was English and father was French and grew up in Paris, asked if I were related to an Edmund Pendleton, conductor and choral director and instructor in Paris. I, of course, claimed kin. I contend that all Pendletons are kin, and especially if they're named Edmund or Philip. Doug gave up an operatic career to get many degrees and is now Professor of Humanities at Oxford College. They're on a trip to Florida soon and promised to stop by. Doug writes poetry and read some of his poetry and also the prize winning poems in the Summer GWA Contest. My one article that I submitted, which did not win, was called, The Other Hollidays, and I disagreed with our judge when she says that no one but a first cousin of Doc's would be interested in his relatives. Susie Thomas has found out many interesting facts, some quite revealing, when we began trying to find out what happened to Michael Holliday, the Major's second wife. My judge said that if I had tackled something more universal like Wallis Simpson or Jack the Ripper, etc., that I might approach Stephen Birmingham at his own game (his book about the history of the Jews). That part was most encouraging and always sends you back to the typewriter, trying, hoping, working, sometimes nodding until your head hits the machine. Anyway, GWA meetings are always full of something different and I was glad of the couple of days off to go there. I have also purchased, along with a copy of Ray's book, a copy of The Future Makers by John M. Branan. There are the newest additions to my collection of Georgia authors.

Met a lady the other day who can tell me about her father (or grandfather) who helped lay the brick for the streets of Valdosta, and about some other facts of historical interest. I will be meeting with her soon and report on that to you. Please, some more of you write us something for our letter, your story, some little known facts. I'll be glad to help you. If you don't do it, who will?

A few items from the Valdosta Times 1891:

"Mr. C. B. Patterson was married on Wednesday night last, to Miss Fannie J. Peeples -- Rev. P. H. Murray officiating. They were quietly married at the residence of the bride's mother, on Troupe street, in the presence of a few relatives and friends. No cards. The bride is the youngest daughter of the late Judge R. A. Peeples."

"Fisherman have been getting some good strings out of the river recently."

"The doctors say it is distressingly healthy in Valdosta now."

"Marshall Jolly is on his rounds now collecting street tax. Take notice and be prepared to pay when he calls on you."

"The cow law in Valdosta went into effect on Thursday last. The effect was seen at once. No cows are to be found on our street."

Thank goodness.

Albert Pendleton