

Albert S. Pendleton Jr., President

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VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

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Our November meeting is the last day of this month at the Museum at 8:00. Then we will discuss the moving of our Log Cabin and other buildings and artifacts, generous gifts from the John Demings of Twin Lakes. We have a lot to put it on and after our voting, we will make it public. There are several more items of business to attend to, including Open House, Old Fashioned Christmas at the Museum December 10th, so please all be present. More than that, Tom Crouch is in charge of a most interesting program. Be there to hear Tom.

We want to thank Colonel Ren Christie for gifts of his uniforms of the Air Force. They are on display, as well as gifts from Lille Queen Fluit, who gave us old brass knucks, brass andirons, and three pair of gold rim glasses. We appreciate all these gifts.

I want to remind you of one of the gifts from another member, the maps we have in our meeting room. They are quite good, informative and useful and just the best I have seen. Schools should purchase sets of these maps made by Modern School Supply Company. I believe a representative in our area is Clarence Staten and I want to get word to him how pleased we are with our set. Use them, bring your school children and friends by to see them.

The name Powhatan Bolling Whittle in the history of this county and city has always fascinated me. His name appears on many papers in the court house and he is mentioned several times in the Lowndes County history book. I have his personal signature on a paper. I asked Susie Thomas to be on the lookout for his name in microfilm. We found a good bit about him, though it is never mentioned that he was married and we have been unable to find his date of death and place of burial. But we wanted to share with you the following:

(From History of Lowndes County, DAR) "Among the first lawyers in Troupeville were Charles S. Rockwell, T. O. Townsend, J. J. Underwood, Charles C. Morgan, James W. Patterson, and Powhatan B. Whittle." "...have been clerks Court of Ordinary, and Ordinaries of Lowndes County; ...Powhattan B. Whittle, November 18, 1856-59;..." "Representatives to General Assembly of Georgia from Lowndes County; 1880-1881--Adj. P. B. Whittle". "The Episcopal Church...Among other early members were Col. Powhatan B. Whittle,...in 1885 a few loyal members bought a lot on East Central Avenue from Mrs. Joshua Griffin, on which an attractive chapel was erected..."

There was also mentioned that he was a descendant of Pocahontas. And at the local city library there are several volumes of history of Prominent Virginia Families. I thumbed through, came immediately to Pocahontas and her marriage to Capt. John Rolfe. I was then able, through many pages and families, to trace to Powhatan B. Whittle. It begins with Chief Powhatan, whose daughter Pocahontas (Matoaca) married Capt. John Rolfe, their son Lt. Thomas Rolfe (b. 1651) married Jane Poythress, their daughter Jane Rolfe married in 1675, Colonel Robert Bolling, their son, Col. John Bolling, born 1676, died 4-20-1729, married Mary Kennon, their daughter Anne Bolling (who inherited the large statue, high courage and awe-inspiring bravery of her Indian progenda Pocahontas), married James Murray, their daughter Mary Murray married the second time (1750) Colonel William Davies, son of Rev. Samuel Davies, President of Princeton College 1759, their daughter Mary Ann Davies married (1804) Fortescue Whittle (fellow exile with the Irish Patriot, Emmet) and their son was Powhatan Bolling Whittle, Colonel, C. S. A. of Troupeville and Valdosta.

From the "Atlanta Journal" published in the Valdosta Times November 9, 1897:

A Gallant Veteran

"Col. Powhatan Bolling Whittle, of Valdosta, who is now visiting the city, is a gallant Confederate veteran who deserves more than a passing mention.

He was a colonel of the Thirty-eighth Virginia infantry during the war, and is the brother of the late Lewis V. Whittle, Macon's model citizen, and of the present Bishop Whittle of the Episcopal church in Virginia.

The colonel was seriously wounded, the first time, at Williamsburg, Va. Later, his arm was shot off at Malvern Hill, where he was left for dead on the field. When he was able

to stand camp life he returned to his regiment, and was shot in the shoulder of the remaining arm, while advancing with Pickett's men in the famous charge at Gettysburg. Resisting the entreaties of his comrades, he refused to leave the field, and when he saw his colors fall with his color sergeant, he picked them up and was again shot, this time so severely that he had to be left on the battleground.

The story of his heroism and adventures in the war would be equal in interest to the most thrilling romance.

Colonel Whittle, like all brave men, is modest and reticent about the personal achievements and incidents in which he bore so distinguished and valiant a part. He is a man of remarkable and striking appearance. He is 6 feet 4 inches in height and although his hair is as white as snow, he is still active and youthful in spirit and feeling.

The many friends of the colonel will be gratified to learn that he will remain in Atlanta a few days, and they will give him a cordial welcome."

HISTORY OF THE VALDOSTA DRUG COMPANY

by

Hyta Plowden Mederer

The Valdosta Drug Company was originally the J. M. Harvey Medicine Company, established in 1890 and incorporated as the Valdosta Drug Company in 1902.

Mr. James Stewart Plowden was one of the petitioners for charter in 1902, and later became owner. "Mr. Jim's" first job when he left his birth place in Dickey, Georgia was selling lightning rods. That he was a good salesman was evidenced by the abundance of lightning rods on all the houses in Southwest Georgia. He next went to work for John B. Daniels in Atlanta, one of the oldest wholesale drug houses in the South. Then he became associated with Mr. J. M. Harvey and later bought his interest. In 1906 he brought his nephews, David and Andrew Plowden into the business and Prince Noell. Mr. Noell was with the Company over fifty years.

In 1910 Mr. Jim married Miss Ossie Hyta Burruss of Carnesville, Georgia. They had three daughters, Hyta (Mrs. Leonard J. Mederer), Matilda (Mrs. Plowden Yow) and Russell (Mrs. E. K. Wilcox) all of Valdosta.

The Drug Company was on West Hill Avenue in the building later occupied by Stump Brothers and now by the Futch Appliance Company. At the top of the west side of this building still appears in large letters VALDOSTA DRUG COMPANY -- faithful testimony to "The paint we used to have". This sign has been there since before 1910 - sixty-two years at least - because in 1911 the new building was built on East Savannah Avenue across from the Atlantic Coast Line Depot. Railroad property was high. The fifty by ninety foot lot was bought from Mrs. Eula Converse for \$3300.00 and the building was erected for \$10,000.00. In later years Armour and Company built an adjoining building. This was later bought by McElvey-Futch. In 1958 the Valdosta Drug Company bought this building to extend their warehouse; and by building a bridge over the alley, they expanded and occupy the story over Barnes' Drug Store and the second story of the old Victoria Hotel. Hopefully they will soon build new offices and warehouse at the intersection of West Hill Avenue and West Central Avenue.

The modern drug salesman makes many miles and many calls in many towns each week, traveling by car on paved roads. In contrast, the drug salesmen of yesterday, or drummers, as they were called, traveled by train. Mr. Jim took the Atlantic Coast Line to Thomasville, Cairo and Donalsonville. Then he hired a horse and buggy and drove to Arlington, Damascus and Blakely. From Blakely he took the Central of Georgia to Albany. Or, in the opposite direction, he would take the Georgia and Florida to Fitzgerald, make his calls, then take a horse and buggy to Ocilla. The Georgia and Florida had a spur-line to Nashville and Moultrie - and he would take the Moultrie and Western back to Valdosta.

In those days, payments were often made in county warrants, mules or bales of cotton. The retail druggist had to wait until the farmers' crops came in - and the wholesale druggist had to wait and wait. Credit and Faith were the basis of finance.

Mr. Plowden died in 1924 at the age of fifty three and the business continued under the supervision of his wife. During this time the Drug Company weathered the depression and several changes of managers. Mrs. Plowden died in 1937. Her youngest daughter, Russell, succeeded in supervision for a year and then "Miss Hyta" managed the business during the war years until in 1945 when she married Leonard J. Mederer who at that time was manager of Mc Kesson Robbins Drug Company in Newark, N. J. Under his ownership the business has kept in stride with the research and development in medicine.

In contrast to the original charter of 1902 which called for "...all kinds of drugs and medicines, school books, cigars, snuff, paints, oils, varnishes, window glass, doors, blinds, crockery, garden seeds and any and all things usually manufactured or sold by a wholesale or retail drug establishment..." the modern drug house deals mostly in pharmaceuticals. Pharmaceuticals have replaced patent medicines. The "miracle drugs" of today may be considered expensive, but they are cheap beside weeks of illness in bed or in the hospital. Years ago pneumonia was either fatal or meant two months in bed. Today's miracle drugs cure pneumonia in one week. The strides made in drugs today are like magic to the doctor or pharmacist or wholesale druggist of yesteryear.

Thank goodness for the Drug Company and Hyta and Len, and all the Plowdens. This is such a wonderful story, one of progress and success and of great historical value. Thank you again, Hyta, one of the busiest ladies I know, most gifted and most generous.

Now, my usual plea for the rest of you to write something for the Newsletter. The story of your family business, your home, your family...better still listen to this. Susie Thomas is writing her memories of "The Hill", West Hill Avenue, when she was a child. She has gone up and down the street and told of families, businesses and happenings. I've read most of it (because she hasn't finished) and you have a real treat in store. You could do the same of your own old neighborhood. Even if you lived next door to Susie, you'd have a different slant, even a different generation. Butch McKey plans one, a generation younger than Susie, same neighborhood and I'd like for Sarah Dunaway Deloach to write one, a generation older than Susie, same neighborhood. I'm planning one of the neighborhood around 1504 Slater Street which will include our special haven and playing grounds and my favorite of all places, Brookwood Park. I spoke with Uncle Frank Rose the other day about something about the Rose family, possibly about the house, which I have found in microfilm to have burned three times and still is very much there. I remember the 1940 fire. Friends of Coot waded through it.

From the Valdosta Times, July 23, 1898: "Mr. J. W. Pinkston, of Americus, has rented the store next to W. D. Dunaway's Drug store and will open a large dry goods store there in a few days. The store is being painted and put in good shape for occupancy now."

"Valdosta Times", March 5, 1898: "Work has begun on the new residence of Mr. W. D. Dunaway. The structure will set back in the yard farther than the old one and will be two stories high. It will be one of the handsomest homes in the western part of the city."

"Valdosta Times", (another first, from clipping of scrapbook of Miss Annabelle Myddelton, don't know what year), "Valdosta Girl Presented at English Court, Eulalie Converse Harris, Miss Eulalie Converse Harris, 19 year old daughter of Mr. & Mrs. R. A. Harris, well known Valdostan will be presented tonight to King George and Queen Mary in London. It was the fourth royal court and Miss Harris was presented with several other American women. She is the first Valdosta girl to be presented at court. Mrs. Harris is with her daughter in London. The presentation of Miss Harris is of much interest to a wide circle of friends in Valdosta. Miss Harris will wear a deep green satin gown veiled with chiffon and with a band of satin around the hips. The train is of satin and chiffon made with a continuation cowl neck. She is to carry an ostrich fan."

We, of course, know "Miss Harris" as, Honey, Mrs. John Pickett of Cedartown, Georgia. Perhaps she has a picture of this occasion or a memento of her trip for our Museum.

See you at the meeting Thursday night for the program with Tom Crouch. And Frances Dekle, Program Chairman, will tell us about future plans.

Albert Pendleton