

## Chapter Two

I have very little recollections as to the mechanics of exactly how and who moved our family possessions from York Mountain to Foley, Ala., in June of 1944. I do know that many farmers of the community and former students came with their trucks to move us. They made a caravan of the daylong trip. This was war times with gasoline and tires being rationed. My father and mother were in a great jubilant give-away mood when it came to that ordeal of moving. I think they were overjoyed at the realization that we were all moving to Foley, to begin afresh. They literally gave away almost everything, including the kitchen sink. They gave away all of the farming tools and equipment, including the old mule I loved so much. They kept the milk cow and she was brought to Foley in a separate truck. A small pasture and shed had been built for her. We drank an inordinate amount of milk, perhaps accounting for the fact that during all those adventuresome and tree climbing years at York Mt, we had no broken bones except Jane fell or was shaken from the apple tree and broke her arm. I learned recently that Sonny was said to have had a broken leg. I do not recollect such an advent, and if so, it was a well-concealed event. After delivering their truckloads of our furniture, and cow, they went to the Gulf for a swim and to take bags of the beach sand back with them.



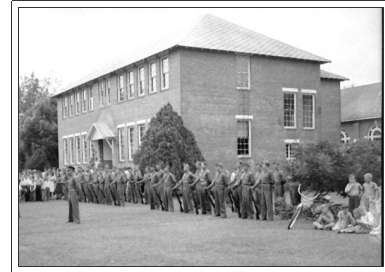
The four older ones of us were put onto the Hummingbird train and sent to Stockton shortly before the final move. It was safe for children to travel alone in those days. The conductor always seemed to know us personally and was like an uncle caring for us. I had hated to wear that string with a tag around my neck that had Bay Minette written on it in previous years when we did not have adult escorts. We were just children. A huge basket of food including fried

chicken, sandwiches, fruit and a jelly biscuit with butter was always a part of our carry on luggage. We always ate well on those train trips, both directions, going to Stockton and coming back home. The only instructions I ever remember that were given to us was; "stay out of the smoking compartment." I did go in there one time and it stunk of cigars and cigarettes. I never again wanted to go back into that stuffy, smoke filled room called the coach-smoking compartment. We did not go to the dining coach as it was cost prohibitive to go there for milk or colas. On one trip, the kindly conductor invited us children to bring our food basket into the dining coach and enjoy our meal. He provided us with glasses of milk, without charge. That trip from Birmingham to Bay Minette in the summer of 1944 was the last time I ever rode the beautiful Hummingbird with the family. I rode on it again when I enlisted in the Air Force in June of 1948 and went to San Antonio for basic training, via the train and in Dec 1949 when I went from Birmingham to Randolph AFB, San Antonio for pilot training. I enjoyed every ride on it.

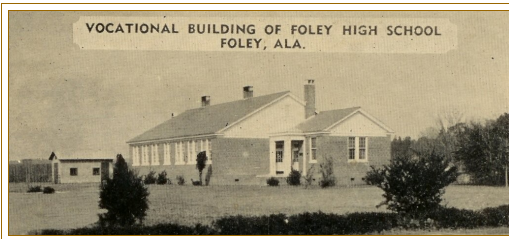


John, Jane and Donald came down with our parents in the car, which was then a big black Buick Roadmaster with four air holes in each side of the engine hood. They probably looked like Gypsy Oakies with all the luggage and things they brought, especially when we put the washing machine on the back porch exposed to a side street and a milk cow in the back yard. We have always been grateful to the many friends of York Mt. who donated of themselves and their trucks to move us, particularly as they used their precious ration cards for gas.

When we arrived in Foley we were somewhat like country bumpkins, gaping in awe at everything. The idea that we would live in the big house on the school campus was simply overwhelmingly fascinating. A large boys room was in the process of being built. The vocational agriculture building was so much more modern than the one at Corner with a modern wood shop and equipment, and a metal smith shop. Mother was extremely pleased with her assignment to teach in a spacious third grade classroom. She began immediately to haul in things for decorating and making the room appropriate for teaching third graders. She bought a large aquarium, which we carried up for her, and then filled it with what she said was stuff appropriate for an aquarium. She taught there for thirty-seven years. The school building itself was so different than that at Corner. All of us were excited about being in Foley. My first trip ever to a drug store soda fountain was to Crosby Drugs, and I was now certain as to where I wanted to work, for pleasure and to earn money for clothes and school needs, and share with my siblings. The transaction was fascinating.



*Mother's classroom*



I was fifteen years old and had never worked for anyone except working on our little farm at York Mt. and operating the school concession stand. Foley had two drug stores, each with a soda fountain, which fascinated me. I enjoyed watching the “Soda Jerks” make sodas, banana splits, fizzes and other concoctions behind their spotlessly clean soda fountains. I mustered up courage enough to ask “Doc” Crosby to give me a job working at his soda fountain. I was shocked that he gave me a job. He told me that I could eat all of the ice cream I wanted; just don’t eat it in front of the customers. After that first day, I wanted no more ice cream. He was a very wise man in many ways. It was a thrill to have that job. I would get there early and be the last to leave with Doc. I carefully ironed my starched shirts and pants before going to work each day. On the days that I worked all day, I would make and eat a grilled cheese sandwich. I still consider that to be my favorite sandwich. I saved my earned money to buy clothes and school supplies. There was a happy and kind couple from Romania, Mr. and Mrs. Tau that owned and operated a little “Foley School Store” directly across the street from the entrance to the school. They sold school supplies and snacks. At the morning recess, I always enjoyed having fifteen cents to buy a soft drink cola and a package of peanut butter cheese crackers. I also

bought the snacks for Sonny and Barbara, as they were not yet working. Mrs. Tau kept a record and I paid her every Friday. They loved young people and all students liked them.



*Bell Ringer*

Gone now were the bib front Liberty overalls with suspenders, which were the only clothes I had ever worn. Our parents bought all of us new clothes and shoes to begin our new lives in Foley. I was so proud to have long pants with a belt. Dr. E.M. Causey was the pastor of The First Baptist Church of Foley. He had married Emma Mae McCawley whose mother was Emma Mae Steadham, daughter of John Victor Steadham, a relative to us. Their children, Carol and Marion were friends of Mary and John. Dr. Causey and my father had a good friendship. He was a huge man, standing more than 6' 4" tall. He was a very good preacher, visited a lot among his church families and was a friend to all. For the summer of 1945, he invited me to attend his weeklong engagement at "Camp Glory" at Pirates Cove, Perdido Bay. I was embarrassed to tell him that I did not have the fifteen dollars attendance fee. He told me that he had already taken care of that and I was to be the official bell ringer for the camp. I asked Doc Crosby about me being gone for a week and he urged me to go. All of my brothers and sisters went except Sonny, as he went to Auburn to establish himself. Dr. Causey came back to Foley from his called ministry of preaching in Klamath Falls, Oregon, to perform the funeral memorial services of our father at his death in 1949. He was indeed a friend. Our father had fully prepared every detail of his funeral services. He even selected a casket that had a glass covering so no one would touch his body. He selected the music, the pianist, and every other detail that could be planned in advance. He conferred with the Troyers about his service.

Even though there was a small Presbyterian church in Foley, my father elected to attend the Baptist church with mother and the rest of the family. It was a joyous occasion when all nine of us joined that church one Sunday. I remember so well, that many people openly wept and gave prayers for our family that day. We were now full-fledged citizens of the little town of Foley and were very proud to be accepted among the people.

The Norton family of our aunts claimed that it was impossible for them to sing or carry a tune. I fully inherited that inability to carry a tune. I sang somewhat like whomever I was standing or sitting next to, alto, tenor, bass or whatever. Sunday nights after the BYPU meetings, the youth of the church would all sit in the choir behind the pulpit. We were always scheduled to stand and sing one hymn, as a choir. I usually just moved my mouth like I was singing. I am sure those who were singing, appreciated that I did so. After Sunday Night Services, we would all go up to the home of Pop and Mom Troyer. They lived above their undertaker parlor business. We were served some sort of refreshment and sat around singing both hymns and pop songs. She was the pianist for the Baptist Church and was a true friend of the youth of the church. She or Kitty

Barchard would play the piano for us while we sang or just listened to them play. My inability to sing a tune was always a joke. This was a time and opportunity for the boys and girls to sit close to each other and be thrilled to do so in youthful budding friendships. I think the Troyer couple enjoyed hosting these Sunday night 'sing along' events for teenagers in their home. We knew we enjoyed being with them and we fully appreciated their gracious generosity to provide this opportunity for us teens to socialize. Mom Troyer organized all of the Youth of the Church to act in a play about being a missionary to India. Everyone in the BTU had a part in it, including Barbara, Mary, John and Jane. We did it there at the church first and again at the Loxley Baptist church. I don't think they had children, and they showered us with their unconditional concern, care and love.

There was a Western Union Telegraph office in the lobby of the Foley Hotel. The young lady that ran the office, Janice, from Brookhaven, Mississippi, needed a messenger boy to deliver telegrams, especially to the shippers at the potato sheds in their season. I talked to Doc about me being their messenger boy as well as continuing to work at the drug store. He thought it was a good idea as I could earn extra money. I would run when I was delivering the telegrams to residents in town and to the potato sheds. One afternoon one of those telegrams from the War Department that read "I regret to inform you you're your son.....," came into the telegraph office. I was to deliver it to the Mother. I could never forget her name. Mrs. Porter. The War Department gave a large Gold Star decal to display from a window, for those families who had lost a family member in the WW II conflict. She was a widowed Mother who prominently displayed one of these Gold Stars on the glass part of her front door. Foley citizens had compassion for her in her grief at the loss of her son, and now I was about to add to her great grief.



The Telegraph operator, Janice, told me that she had tried to reach Dr. Causey and other preachers but was unable to do so and knew of no adult to go with me. I would have to deliver that telegram by myself, now. I did so. Mrs. Porter accepted the telegram and without opening it, she burst into tears, going back into her home. It was a very awkward and strange situation for me. I didn't know what to do so I just sat there silently in her front porch swing for what seemed to be a long time. I don't know why I stayed; maybe I just wanted to help her cry. She came out on the porch and sat beside me silently, holding my hand. I shall never forget those moments when she stood, and I did too. She grabbed me and hugged me really tight for a long time sobbing uncontrollably. She turned and went back into her home. She never spoke a word to me all of the time I was at her home. I understood. I took her a bundle of gladiolas later and put them at her front door, no note. I loved her and never knew her.

Doc Crosby suggested that I should buy a bicycle and I would not have to run so much and be gone so long delivering the telegrams. I did not know how to ride a bicycle. He found a slightly used bicycle for me in Mobile and brought it to me. I paid him the ten dollars he said he paid for it. I always thought he had paid much more than that for this very fancy used bicycle that had spring shock absorbers up front, a luggage rack over the

back fender and a wire basket on the front. It had a battery compartment for the front and taillights. I thought it was about the nicest bicycle in town. I really enjoyed delivering those telegrams and then hurrying back to work in the drug store. Mr. A.A. Corte always gave me a quarter when I would deliver telegrams to him at his office at his potato-shipping shed. Mr. Snooks would do the same when I delivered telegrams to him at the Magnolia Inn. They usually asked me to wait a minute as they prepared a response that I took back to the Telegraph Office. There were many grading and shipping sheds beside the railroad tracks. Potatoes and Gladiolas were major industries in Foley's economy.

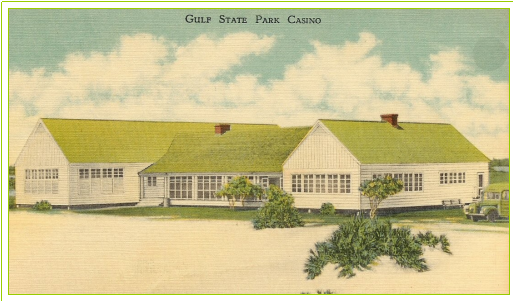
I truly enjoyed those first summer months of 1944 in Foley. I met many of my new tenth grade classmates to be and liked everyone I met. Ramona Thieme, who worked as an assistant to Nurse Mrs. Philomenia Holmes in the Holmes Hospital, which was directly over the Drug store, was one of the first persons I met. She came down to the soda fountain almost every day and would get a ten-cent ice cream soda fizz. She was very pretty, vivacious and I was to be one of her classmates when school started. I would put so much ice cream in her glass, there was barely room to add the flavoring and fizz water. So many of the to-be tenth graders began to come to the drug store soda fountain for refreshments, that Doc once commented that there were so many of us, we could just hold classes there in his drug store. He loved to talk with and tease the young people.

The social life of young people on York Mt. had been non-existent, as we never had such opportunities to be together in a relaxed social environment. The social life for young people in Foley was rather casual and well hosted by parents who held dance parties in their homes for us. I very well remember the first dance party I ever attended. The widowed mother and older sisters of Helen Seefurth invited me, and many others of our to-be tenth grade class to their home on the western outskirts of the town on the Magnolia Springs highway. I had ironed my very starched shirt and pants, shined my shoes and felt honored to be invited to a social gathering of young people my age and many that I knew.

I rode my bicycle to Helen's home. I realized when I got there, that I had never taken a dance step in my life. I was humiliated and refused to even try to dance with anyone. I was a true wallflower; I was rude, not acting very sociably in her home. Helen took me into the kitchen and taught me the one-two, one-two steps over and over as the wind up Victor Victrola 78 rpm record machine played the many songs and music. I was beginning to catch onto some very non-rhythmic mechanical steps and motions. Ramona came into the kitchen and relieved Helen, who was trying so hard to relax me. I soon saw that she was rhythmic and not mechanical in her motions. I began to like that. She stayed with me, dancing in the kitchen for the rest of the party time that evening.

Sometimes Richard Eastburn or someone else would get permission from their parents to borrow the farm truck or family car and take all of us that could cram into or onto the vehicle and we would go to the Gulf Shores State Park pavilion we called "The Casino". It was a huge wooden building with a hardwood dance flooring, a jukebox loaded with Big Band music as well as popular songs, called Pop Music and a soda drinks and munchies concession. Music and songs such as "In The Mood, Coconut Grove, Irene, Blue Moon." and dozens of other hit songs provided an assortment for the fast dancers

and for those of us who knew only the slow two step dances. We would dance, dance and dance until Mr. McLeod, the manager, would close the doors and we would go home. The dance called Jitterbug was the rage as well as the dance called Boogie Woogie. Now



those were dances that demanded much animation and partner coordination and were entertaining for me to watch those who dared to try to do it.

Valton Long, a cheerleader, and the popular Ramona Thieme were always recognized as the best dancers. We often cleared the floor for them to have the whole dance floor to themselves, as we watched in admiration of their nimble contortions and rhythmic movements. The girls would line up to dance with Valton, as well as the boys would line up to dance with Ramona. They seemed to dance to every tune played and never tired. Girls would dance with girls if the shy boys were too timid to ask the girls for a dance.

In all of those years, I never recall that anyone of us ever smoked or drank alcoholic beverages. We did not consider ourselves as dating on these dance outings, as we went as a group and that is the way we came home. The boys always had the utmost respect for the girls and would never attempt to be boorish or force unwanted attention upon them or cause embarrassment in any manner. The girls all had a sweet disposition of youthful innocence, we so admired in them. The parents entrusted their daughters to the care of the boys, to be gentlemanlike and the girls to be ladylike. Their trust was not misplaced.

Three couples of the group of our classmates were considered to be “steadies”, but none participated in public displays of affection, (PDA) as it was called. I think that the three ‘steadies’ couples of our class married after their graduation, Earl and Mildred, Tall George Miller and petite little Phyllis Manning, and another couple. I know they all celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. By the senior year, most everyone had a close friend.

The “huggie, kissie” activities among us must have been very personal and private, because we never talked of such, nor did we display affectionate behavior in public. We did not consider ourselves as prudes or sneakies in our times alone. We genuinely enjoyed our wholesome teen-years activities and just being all together for social, school, church and athletic activities. The activities we enjoyed together were wholesome.

Sexual activity and pregnancy among our classmates was unthinkable. Through the years, our two days of class reunion attendances and interactions have reflected the lasting friendships that were developed during our teen years. Those teen years have been called carefree, developing, impressionable, learning, preparation and many other descriptions, which may have had a semblance of truth in each description. To me, in my reflections now, I would say those were memorable years filled with excitement and adventure that only a teenager could experience. Our parents and the adults of Foley tolerated us as well as guided us onto the highways of a life of honor, dignity and productive citizenship.

Friends like Floyd Holk, Richard Eastburn, Earl Boone, Helen Seeforth, Billy DeLoach sweet little Annie Smith, and so many other classmates and dear friends I met that summer working in the drug store have all died. Our graduating class of 69 students celebrated our sixtieth graduation year with a two-day reunion in May of 2007 with 23 of the surviving 39 classmates in attendance. It was announced that this 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary would regrettably be the last planned reunion for our classmates. None of our former teachers are now living. These were World War II years and some of our senior class members had been in combat in Europe and the Pacific and were returning to finish their schooling. We looked up to these brave young heroes and enjoyed them telling some of their experiences and travels when we could urge them into those conversations.

When school began that fall of 1944, Sonny was the football team center. He was very good and those running backs like Sammy Kirkland really depended on him and the two guards to clear a hole in the center of that line for them. They did it too. Foley had a very successful football season that fall. I was his substitute and got to play only when the score was very much in our favor or when Sonny would have an asthma attack from all of the dust and dried grass of the playing field. Asthma severely limited his breathing. The fans would groan when I was sent in because it meant that Sonny was out. I did not have the experience or muscle weight he had for that important position. He later was forced from Auburn Football due to asthma. Neither of us had any eleven man football team experience. Our only experience in football was that of playing six-man football at Corner. All of our games were played on Thursday or Friday afternoons, as there were no lighted football fields in Baldwin County. That year Sonny played, 1944, was the first year Foley had ever beaten Robertsdale. Sonny and his friend Slammin' Sammy Kirkland were hailed as the heroes of that successful football season for defeating Robertsdale.

At the start of the 1944 football season, I talked with Doc Crosby about me practicing with the team after school. He thought it was a good idea to do that and after practice to come to the drug store and work until closing at eight O'clock, and all day Saturday. In the summertime, Saturdays were always nice to work in the drug store soda fountain. Young people would stop for an ice cream cone or fountain soda enroute to Gulf Shores. The girls usually were giddy, flirty and cute as I prepared their orders of refreshments.

Shortly after school started in the fall of 1944, Sonny took a dare to leap through the small ticket window at the walled entrance fence to the football field. He calculated the opening of the ticket window, the distance he needed to get speed to horizontally dive through this very narrow opening and not scrape the edges, tumbling as he hit the ground on the other side. He was a new senior there. Word quickly spread as almost all of the High School students gathered at lunchtime to watch this event. He did it. Folks still talk about it 64 years later. He became an instant hero and a legend that lives on today.

I reveled in the friendships of new friends that were to be my tenth grade classmates when school was to begin. Classmates really welcomed all of my brothers and sisters into their classes. My classmates overwhelmed me by electing me as the president of the class. It was the largest class of tenth graders that had ever enrolled. About the only thing I ever did, as president of the class, was to institute an area of the school campus for our

## CLASS OFFICERS ARE ELECTED ✓

(Continued from page 1)

President, Mary Alice Benton; vice-president, Teddy Osborne; secretary, Betty Stockes; treasurer, Mary Bryant; student council representative, Edwina Brooks.

Jr. III—Mrs. Britton.

President, John Bryant; vice-president, Jimmy Shafer; secretary, Lorraine Galloway; treasurer, Evelyn Runyan; student council representative, June Nall.

class to be responsible for keeping neatly free of litter. It was a novel plan and became contagious with other classes. My father led his Ag Boys to do the campus shrubbery. Foley now had a well landscaped campus.

I liked Doc Crosby as a friend and as a boss. He was very good to me in every respect. I continued to work there for a year. I told him that I wanted to work with my friend Earl Boone, that summer of 1945. He told me to come back when I had enough painting in the heat and I would have a job. Earls father, Mr. Roy Boone, was a very talented sign painter. He had gotten Earl and me lucrative paying house painting jobs for the summer. We painted

the only three houses on the Gulf Shores beaches. Gov. Bibb Graves' home was one of them. We lived in his home for the six weeks or so that it took us to casually paint the houses, because we really enjoyed ourselves being on the beach and swimming in the gulf, especially at night when the phosphorus would glisten on the breaking wave crests. We fixed our own meals. There was no refrigeration so we used canned condensed milk to put on corn flakes. I have not liked it since that summer. We also painted a Purina Feed store in Fairhope. Now that job was a real experience, painting the entire building with two coats of white and then painting those precisely measured two foot squares in a bright red, without a single run. It took us more than a week, even as we worked long hours every day to finish the job. We didn't enjoy camping-out in Fairhope.

When our summer painting jobs had been finished, I was out of a job because Doc Crosby had employed others. I asked "Doc" Bob Stacey for a job in his Rexall Drug Store. He gave me a job. Working for Doc Stacey in his soda fountain and doing general clerk and counter sales was also a most pleasant experience. In fact, I enjoyed every place I ever worked in Foley and elsewhere. I admired him very much. He had just been released from the Army as a druggist at Ft. Dix, where he met and married a lovely and energetic nurse. He and his charming bride came back to operate his drug store in Foley.

He taught me how he prepared some of his own tonics and elixirs with his Stacey's Rexall pharmacy labels. Hadacol and Lady Pinkham's Tonic were some of the favorite base medicines he enjoyed mixing equal parts with medical alcohol, 180 proof, and pouring into smaller bottles. He applied his label to these ten ounce bottles with instructions to take two tablespoons before bedtime. He made a preparation for some middle aged persons using three drops of Tincture of Cantharides. He sold a lot of this "Youthful Energy", as he called it, preparation. He said all of this was legal as his reconstituted pharmaceutical formula, as long as it was listed in the Pharmacopoeia. Doc was very strict to comply with all laws. He taught me his cost code that was marked on each item before placing it on the shelves. The store may still be using that code after all these years, but it was a word of ten letters, each representing a number. Very simple.

There was an old "Uncle John" who was a Spanish American War veteran. He had become addicted to paregoric. He claimed to me that paregoric had been given to the soldiers aboard the transport ship in the Cuban harbor in 1899, to control their bowel



eliminations. Castor oil would then be given to purge their digestive tracts after a week of constipation and then restart administering the paregoric cycle. He and a host of others became addictive to it. The Federal Government must have accepted responsibility for Uncle John's authorized weekly allotment of eight ounces of paregoric. They paid for this and associated medial bills. He signed a federal registry log for each weekly visit to the drug store for paregoric. I had great compassion for the ailing, frail and aged Uncle John who wore a full gray beard. He looked like the man on the Smith Brothers cough drops boxes. I begged him each week to tell me one of his varied and interesting experiences in that war. I would give him a drink with a triple shot of Coca Cola syrup. He would sit at the counter and talk to me until his strong cola drink was consumed. I learned a lot from his homespun philosophy with wit and wisdom. I was very naive and perhaps gullible, but I have always enjoyed listening to elderly people tell of their life experiences.

Some of those who cut the long stems and gathered the gladiolas, glads as they were called, came to him displaying a rash they developed in their harvesting. They had been to Dr. Holmes and he sent them to Doc Stacey. I told Doc about the very similar rash I would develop on my hands and arms when I peeled tomatoes for canning back at York Mt. He sent me over to the Glads shipping shed to bring back a few of the long stemmed glads of various varieties. He squeezed these stems and collected the juice. He used Helen Long, the soda-fountain girl, and me to apply this juice to the underside of our left forearms. We both almost instantly broke into a red rash with itching. He applied a mixture of baking soda with Vaseline well combined into a paste, to the underside of our right forearms before he applied the glads juice to that forearm. Nothing happened. He made great gobs of that creamy white preparation and sold it to the gladiola farmers for their harvesters to use. I helped with the mortar and pestle to grind out a quart at a time and pack it into white glass ointment jars with the Stacey Drug label. It was fun.

Doc hired a U.S. Navy apprentice pharmacist, Ralph, from the local Barin Field, to help in the drug store. He was a help to relieve Doc some evenings to go home early and leave the store to our care as prescriptions were seldom filled after Dr. Holmes closed his hospital office. We worked together in harmony to clean and secure the store each night. One afternoon Doc asked Ralph and me to empty the weight machine and roll the coins. The machine would indicate ones weight and issue a ticket with a fortune on it when a coin was inserted into the slot. The slot would accept coins larger than a penny. At closing time, he and I unlocked the bottom of the machine and emptied the coins onto the floor. It had more than a cigar box of coins in it, pennies, nickels and dimes. We laughed that anyone would put more than a penny into the machine. We counted and rolled the pennies into fifty-cent stacks. The nickels and dimes were counted and amounted to something like four dollars of these coins. Ralph suggested that we divide these coins evenly and put a penny from our pockets into the penny stacks for each nickel or dime we took out. That sounded reasonable so we did that except I had no money to buy my coins.

The next day when I got to work after school, I told Doc what we had done as I was paying him for the coins I had taken, as I had no money the night before to pay a penny for each one the coins I had taken. He was silent for some time, just looking at me. I felt uncomfortable with his unusual, silent stare at me. He broke the silence, asking me if I

thought those coins were mine to take like that. It suddenly overwhelmed me as I realized what I had done. I had unwittingly stolen his money. I began to uncontrollable tremble. I was a sixteen-year-old boy, in full weeping remorse of what I had done. I had stolen money from my friend. I fled from the drug store and went home, telling my mother and father what I had done. After closing that night, Doc came to our home. He talked to the three of us and said that he had asked Ralph about the coins and he had denied that there were any coins other than pennies. Doc told us he had instantly fired him and that he needed for me to come to work the next afternoon. I cannot describe my emotions then.

A great burden of guilt was lifted from me. Silent praises for his forgiveness flooded over me as I hugged him there in our living room. We never talked about it again. I had indelibly learned three of my life's greatest lessons. Firstly, never tell a lie. Secondly, never take someone's property or belongings without permission. Thirdly, never covet another persons' belongings because it only leads to evil temptations. Accept only that which the Lord has made available to me as an honorable possession. I have always remembered him and the lessons learned that day. I think I always will remember too. Ralph came by the drug store several weeks later to leave some rolls of film to be developed and printed. Stacey's was the only film drop in Foley. The Hamilton family would collect the film daily and develop and print pictures in their home darkroom and studio on the Magnolia Springs highway. They were very good in portrait photography, working with large group pictures and in the darkroom. I don't know when Ralph picked them up, as I never saw him again. Nelson Hamilton was a flamboyant frustrated actor, mimicking movie personalities at a noted nightclub in Pensacola. Clark Gable was his favorite. This is a sampling of the scenes about Foley that he captured.

**Foley scenes 1946 - 1949**



*Crosby Drug Store*



*Holmes Hospital upstairs*



*Soesby's Bakery*



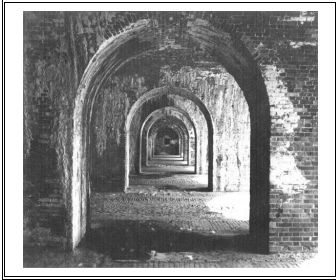
*Foley Hotel*



*Stacey Drugs*



*Magnolia Hotel*



*Fort Morgan Arches*



*Potato Sheds*



*Log Hauler*



*The Armory*



*US 98 & AL 59 in Foley*



*Foley Theater*



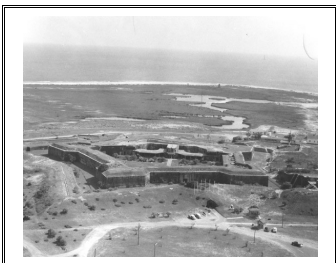
*Peteet Realty*



*To Gulf Shores*



*Ice House and Freezer*



*Fort Morgan Aerial*



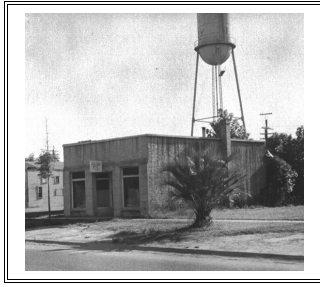
*Foley Post Office*



*Onlooker*



*Dumas Apothecary*



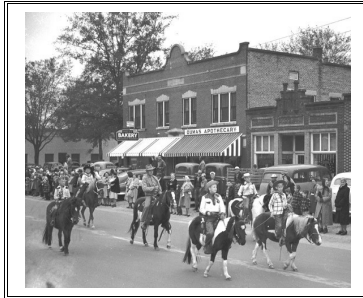
*Tower & Coffee Shop*



*Foley's only Fire Truck*



*Baptist Church*



*Parade*



*Captain Kidd*



I bought a little English made Austin from my friend Billy DeLoach for \$100. It reminded me of the little cars that clowns used in their circus acts. Believe it or not, about five of us could get into or onto that thing, it had no top, and we'd all chug off to the beach. One time we went down there after a hurricane to ride the rough surf. The engine flooded, as water was across the paved highway. I ran the battery down trying to restart the engine. Earl Boone suggested we pick it up and turn it around to let

the strong winds blow us up the highway. We did and they held up their beach towels like a sail. It worked, as we got the engine going again. One night some of us went all the

way to Elberta and stole three watermelons. We came back to Foley, broke them open and ate them under a street lamp. We were giddy and feeling very silly. We took those watermelon rinds and placed them in a neat pile under our only traffic light, on the main street. We were carefree about this mischief we had done, as I took everybody home.

That jocular mood changed instantly when I got home. Foley's only policeman, Constable Cobb, was parked in front of our house. He turned his police spotlight on me and turned on his siren momentarily, just enough to wake up the neighborhood. I was immediately shaken into a very sober sanity with much fright. He strode over to me as he adjusted that big belt that held his big pistol and big billy club. He was a huge man and seemed even bigger that night. He told me in a loud gravelly voice that there was a little mess under the traffic light that I needed to clean up. I was terrified as I hopped in that little car and went down there to remove those rinds. He gave me a little whiskbroom to clean up even the seeds on the highway and stood there over me to insure I did so.

He parked his car in the middle of the street with his headlights and spotlight on me, and stood over me while I cleaned it up. His red light was flashing. The police did not use the blue lights in those days. I was humiliated, but I deserved it. Constable Cobb was a kind man and tolerated many of the antics and pranks we did. Doc Crosby told me I could give him a small ice cream cone when he came in, and I did. We all liked and respected him, but we were also terrified of him when he would put on that scowling policeman's face to get after us which was not very often, twice for me which was twice too many.

One night we were screeching about the streets with boys hanging all over and out of that little car singing loudly and disturbingly. It was a very dangerous thing. A bad accident could have happened. He chased us in his big Pontiac patrol car. I turned off the lights and raced down sidewalks and alleys evading him. We were having great sport until he trapped us. We had to stop. This was the second and only times he ever stopped me or had cause to do so. I think he took great pleasure in doing so both times. He seemed to saunter in the manner in which he would slowly get out of his big Pontiac with a big gold decal "Foley Police" on each front door and slowly come up to me with his spotlight shining in my face. He paused at least once to adjust his police belt, pistol, and billy club. The little car had no top. He stood at the driver's side, silently glaring down at each of us. He broke the silence with his very gruffy voice to say, "Boys, look at me when I talk to you." He talked to us about what it was like to spend the night in his jail. Richard was always the stalwart, defender and arbitrator, but that night, all of us were meek as mice and crept our way back home. I told my father about it the next day. He displayed no emotion, he just limped away. I know my escapades hurt him, and he simply wept inside.

I was constantly having flat tires from Sand Spurs that we called Goat Heads, puncturing the inner tubes. I think I sometimes had patches on top of patches. They charged me ten cents per hot patch at Mr. Max Griffin's Blue Top, Pure Oil station, if I took the tube to them. I think Constable Cobb and some others were glad when the little thing expired the summer of 1947. We had a lot of fun with that little car until it backfired and quit running. I think the timing gears were broken or at least out of sequence. It was sold to a

used car dealer in Robertsdale for \$100. He painted it a bright red and put it high atop a steel pole at his car lot. That was the money I was to go to Auburn with.

The Halloween night of 1945, Mary was with a group of girls dressed in costumes doing their trick or treat fun at the new houses in East Foley and the Navy Housing area. Some boys had pulled a farm disc turning implement from the New Holland Farm equipment agency grounds out onto the sidewalk which was unlit and the night was dark. This was a cruel and intentionally harmful prank. They added to their sadistic cruelty by having a goat leap from the concealment of the bushes and chase the girls toward the sharp round discs of the implement across their path on the sidewalk. Mary was terrified and led the group fleeing from the goat in pursuit and looking back. She made contact with the sharp disc, which severed the shin muscle and ligaments of her leg. Leo Steadham, realizing the gravity of the situation, picked her up and raced the two or three blocks to Dr. Sibley Holmes Hospital with blood streaming from her leg. The hospital was over the Crosby Drug store with a long flight of stairs leading from the sidewalk to the hospital entry. He would not let anyone else carry her up, even though he was exhausted. Mary moaned in severe pain but never cried. It was said that Dr. Holmes worked for more than six hours to do the best he could to repair the severe damage to her leg. He probed to find the ligaments and reconnect them so she could have movement of her foot, and she does have. He did an absolutely marvelous miracle in his surgical skills in that little upstairs hospital with very limited instruments and equipment for such surgery. Dr Holmes never charged our family for his surgery with Mary. We never probed to identify the culprits, but they identified themselves with grief and remorse. I was told that the parents of the boys paid Dr. Holmes for his services, and told my father the bill was justly paid in full.

Recalling this tragedy many years later at a family reunion, Mary laughingly told of the tragedy, in her version of the incident. She had vivid recollections of the entire scenario. That which concerned her most, was her embarrassment after the surgery. Mother was permitted to see her after the six hours of surgery and Mary told her to please quickly go home and bring her some underpants because she had a tear in the ones she was wearing.

The Halloween night of 1946, as we were seniors and this was to be our last Halloween together, our little friendship group of twelve or so, decided to go out on the Magnolia Springs highway to a Satsuma orchard and raid the grove. We all got into and onto Richard Eastburn's farm truck and went to the orchard. We climbed the fence and began to pick the fruit. It was too dark to tell if the fruit peeling was orange ripe or still green and unripened. The girls who had skirts, held them up enough to make a pouch for us to put the fruit into. We had been in there perhaps three minutes picking the stolen fruit and snickering when .....BAM. It sounded like a shotgun. Everyone made a race for the fence. I think Helen and Ramona, and maybe Mildred Fell were the only ones to get back and through that fence with Satsumas still in their skirts. We went back to the school front entrance, sat down to peel and eat the fruit. Some of them were too green to eat but the ripe ones were delicious. Someone remarked that watermelons and satsumas were best when they were stolen. We ate all that we had, or all the fruit the girls brought out.

We made a neat little pile of the peelings and left them on the school entry porch. I don't know why we did that mischief because we knew who would have to clean up after us. Poor Mr. Wilson, the school custodian who lived in a very small little house on campus and had only one lung. He told me the next day that he was awake and saw us doing our little deed the night before. He loved that class of 1947 and tolerated our antics. He never told on us. I brought him a pint of ice cream the next day. None of us were cruel or mean, although we sometimes did mischievous and thoughtless little things like this.

Magnolia Springs is a quaint little river village about five miles west of Foley. The Thieme family moved to this interesting little river community in 1945. The family had a beautiful riverside home with a fishing rowboat and a planked lounging dock that protruded into the river. Magnolia Springs was the only area in America that had a river mail route, delivering mail to boxes on the docks along the river. I would ride my bicycle to Magnolia Springs on some Sunday afternoons to visit Ramona who liked adventure.

One afternoon Richard Eastburn, his friend Martha Richardson, Ramona and I were in their rowboat having fun. Richard had brought his shotgun along for some unknown reason. Acting in a most uncommon manner for him, perhaps showing off for Martha, he



shot a Pelican that was quietly and gracefully soaring along a few feet above the water. A Cajun neighbor named Ducie, was standing on his riverside, walkway dock and had observed the shooting. He spoke in a very loud shout for us to retrieve the Pelican and bring it to him. We were very frightened, as we all knew it was against the law to harm or shoot a pelican. We did as he commanded. He severely lectured us and let us go. That ended that boating party. We were embarrassed and remorseful at what happened.

The four of us were intrigued with an uninhabited house in the neighborhood in a very overgrown lot on the Magnolia River. It seemed to be abandoned. Probably the only one who knew of this eerie house in the grown up wilderness, was the tax collector. We dared to ease up to the house one Sunday afternoon and peek through the windows. It was filled with antiques covered with blankets, sheets and cloth strips. We knew better than to do so, but we jimmed open a window and all entered. There was an old, old car in the enclosed garage that I thought maybe it was a 1925 Stutz Bearcat. Martha found a wind-up machine that could play tunes from a large metal disc that had little slots in it. The tunes sounded dinky-dinky metallic like a spring. We danced to those tunes for a while until someone found a room that had what looked like a short-wave radio. There had been ugly rumors that some of the good residents of the nearby town of Elberta, which had been settled by German immigrants, were still loyal to Germany and sent messages as spies. That little nosy discovery put an end to our little afternoon exploration party.



We put everything back in order, covering things as we had found them. We silently left the house, promising to ourselves that we would not tell our parents of what we had

found, for fear that we were going to be in much troubles with our parents, the owners of the house, and the FBI. We never heard anything about our short wave radio discovery, nor did we ever learn of the owners of the house. I don't think we ever talked of it again.

On one of our exploring trips we paddled up the Magnolia River as far as we could and hiked a short distance, but we never found what could be called a spring. We did find a sand bank of beautiful sand all stratified into colors and hues of purple, pink, white, yellow and shades of these. Ramona scouted about and found some ketchup bottles and other bottles that were clean and we made stratified colors of the sands. Ramona was very artistic in her colored sand creations. She packed it real tight so the sand would not loose the layer effect she had created. It made a neat little remembrance of our explorations to the remote, almost inaccessible once headwaters aquifer springs of the Magnolia River.

One Friday night, Martha had gotten permission to use their family car to take some of us to the State Park Pavilion Casino to dance. About a mile south of Foley, a heavily loaded logging truck pulled onto the highway in front of her and into her lane to make a right turn to become northbound oncoming traffic. The truck had only one light and that was a spotlight that blinded Martha. She skidded with the brakes but the truck was too far into her lane and a terrible accident happened, as Martha's family car was demolished. Our only injury was that Helen was in the right front seat and her head slammed into the windshield and broke it out. That ended our dance party intentions as we went to the hospital with Helen. She had suffered a concussion and thankfully recovered very well.

After Sonny graduated, I became center for the football team. We never liked playing with or at Robertsdale. They had many WW II returning veterans. They were older and more muscular than we were. They were angry with us that first year, 1945, that I was varsity center. They were determined to beat us on the scoreboard as well as physically. With Sonny and the guards providing blocking and Sam Kirkland as halfback runner. Foley had soundly defeated them the year before. The Robertsdale football field was a cow-pasture with holes and was filled with cow pasture pies, some of which were fresh from the cows. Their players didn't seem to mind. We did. They would pick it up with a handful of grass and fling it into our faces when the ball was snapped. They were nasty players, literally. Their opponent teams with their fans, knew about Robertsdale players.

Mr. Thieme was the Head Lineman with the Riviera Utilities Co. He installed the field lighting, 1945, with big lights and reflectors atop eight very high utility poles along the sidelines. I marveled at his method of adjusting that field lighting. He had a lineman climb the pole to the bars of lighting and make each light fixture adjust to exactly where he directed him to do so. Mr. Thieme used field glasses that afternoon to look at the filament of the bulb and thus adjust the light fixture to shine to the spot where he was standing. It was a very clever way to set the lighting pattern for the field. Foley School paid for the lighting, which cost only \$1,800, due to the frugality of Mr. Thieme and the donation of his professional time and the volunteers of the Riviera Utilities Company.

On the designated night, a crowd of Foley dignitaries and our county commissioner, gathered for a dedication ceremony of the first football field to be lighted in Baldwin



County. Mr. Thieme was so confident of his workmanship that he had never night tested the lighting before that night the switch was thrown to celebrate. It worked. His work was so exacting, with no shadows on the playing field, it never has needed to be readjusted.

We played Robertsdale early in the 1944 season as a home game there. Foley led the scoring 15 to 14 until seconds before the game ended, we fumbled and they recovered and scored with the game ending in a 20 – 15 loss for us. It was a hard game with much physical contact. We played Robertsdale again that year at Foley and soundly defeated them. To launch the 1945 season, we were scheduled to host Robertsdale as the first game to be played under our new lights. They came to Foley confident of a victory. It was considered to be a grudge game, and it was. They used every dirty trick their coaches had taught them and some they had made up, I believe. They would grunt and swear at us on the line, doing a little dance every time they tackled our runners. We hated them.

Our grass was green and they couldn't pull it up and throw it in our faces as they did on their cow pasture field. They spit chewing tobacco at us and on us. Our new Coach Meredith spoke to the umps but they seemed to have little or no control over them. It looked like their coaches delighted in their profane and barbaric behavior, which was never sportsmanlike in any manner. Our fans yelling and screaming at them urged us to play harder. There was a lot of holding and shoving in the line that the refs never called. George Gebhart was my substitute as center. Coach had put him in for a few plays. He came off the field after the first play and said, "Coach, they pushed my face in the grass." Coach Meredith told him to get back in there and play tough. After the next play, George ran out again, "Coach, they did it again". Leonard Harrison likes to tell that story.

Coach Meredith called a time-out in the fourth quarter and called all players to the sidelines. He told us if a fight starts, keep your helmet on and run for our sidelines as fast as we could. A real sure enough Donny-brook fight broke out late in the fourth quarter, only minutes before the end of the game. We were ahead 6 to 0. We had some pretty big fellows like Jack Moore, tackle, Navy veteran David Calloway, fullback, Carl Breckner, tackle, Charles Harper and others. We were getting the best of them until my father and Mr. Thieme, who were standing together by the master switch, turned off the field lighting. That ended the fight and the game. The referees conferred and declared the game as completed, directing that everyone should leave immediately. Robertsdale players were escorted to their bus by constable Cobb. At every class reunion, Jack Moore delights in telling the same old story of my helmet and me in that fight. He tells that I had gripped my helmet with a finger in the ear hole and was slugging it out against them shouting, "come and get it." We put some well-deserved knots on their heads and thoroughly bruised their pride that night. That rivalry didn't exist with basketball games.

The worst defeat we ever suffered was when we went to Atmore to play. They had mostly returning war veterans who were older and stronger than we were. They literally beat us black and blue, also winning by a score of 20 to 0. Coach Meredith, perhaps trying to get the most from each player, told us at halftime, if we didn't score we could walk home. We were physically hurting and took exception to his remark. Word of this reached the Foley fans that had accompanied us there. They took us home after a quick shower and

change. My father packed a load of us into his old Buick. Coach Meredith excused us from Monday practice and called for a meeting with parents, players, students and the public to meet him in the auditorium that afternoon after school. He apologized adequately and we continued our season. We got a measure of sweet revenge that week by defeating McCullough, a neighbor of Atmore, by a score of 27 – 2, at Foley. .

I enjoyed playing the games with guards Pete Blackwell and Johnny Holman. They were small but oh so scrappy. They would tell me, “I’ll hit him low, you hit him high”. Using that fast tactic, the three of us sent many defending guards to the sidelines and cleared holes for runners. They had no defense for our guards crawling on the ground holding their feet, while I would hit them in the chest, down they would come, almost every time.



*1946 Football Team  
Charles is Center*

Leonard Harrison had access to the family car to go to the Friday and Saturday night dances. He dated one of the very pretty identical twin sisters, Edith or Elsie Prine of Marlow. Leonard could date one of the twins only if the other went along with a date also. Leonard was always asking various ones of us to make it a foursome double date so he could take his favorite one of the twins to a dance somewhere. They were very, very identical. Boys were reluctant to date with them because of their antics, switching partners during the evening and embarrassing the tag-along date. They would go to the washroom and return to exchange partners. Many boys were embarrassed about this little antic. They did that with me the evening we went to the State Park Casino. I noticed immediately that they wore different colognes and was able to know their differences. I wanted to let her know that she wasn’t fooling me, but I didn’t know how to do it without blurting it as other dates had done, if they suspected, and had gotten themselves embarrassed. I didn’t know what to do now so I asked her if Leonard was a good smoocher. They immediately switched partners, giggling and wanting to know how I had detected their differences. This was our only date and it was a pleasant experience with their clever, vivacious antics. They were very popular, with their antics and pranks at school as well. I think they knew and used all of them. They were very animated.

Katherine (Kitty) Barchard was a lovely and musically talented neighbor who was a grade behind me. She and Mary Elizabeth McGowan were very close friends, and I liked both of them. One day I was at “The Onlooker” office watching the linotype machine and

massive newspaper printing press at work. The Onlooker was Foley's weekly newspaper, owned and operated by Kitty's mother. I made complimentary remarks of admiration about Kitty. Mrs. Barchard suggested that I should call Kitty for a date to go to a major banquet function; it may have been the football banquet. I did and Kitty and I had a very nice evening together. I had gotten her a corsage of an orchid blossom. She waited until we had walked from her home to the school function, which was only a short distance, before she put it on her evening gown. Kitty and her husband Nolan Calloway visited Panama City several years ago, asking Mary and me to have lunch with them. It was a thoroughly delightful meal as we enjoyed reminiscing of our Foley school days. Kitty told Mary that I was the first "date" she ever had and that I was kind to her as she was nervous about being alone with a boy for the first time. Kitty later earned a PHD in Psychology. She designed and wrote the educational program for UAB Birmingham, to establish their PHD graduate program for the School of Nursing. This became her very successful career to manage the program she designed and implemented. This was quite an achievement as she was so thoroughly capable of instituting the UAB, PHD program.

I was lying on a bench in the football dressing room one afternoon before school was out and before the team came in to dress for practice. I was a senior. I heard a familiar voice from the adjoining bathroom area, talking and laughing about what had transpired between him and Elaine on their date. It was vulgar. I was incensed as I walked into that part of the bathroom and hit him as hard as I could in his face. I stood there waiting for a retaliation. When he got up, his friends had vanished. He just walked out holding his jaw.

I never told Barbara about it and I don't think she ever dated him again. That was the only time I can remember that I ever hit anybody in my school days, except that I pulled Geraldine Harris's hair when I was in the third grade at Corner, before going to Stockton. Barbara was an acknowledged flirt, as she was voted the class flirt in her senior year. We often confided with each other about our personal lives and activities and I knew she was never immoral. That was the only time I ever heard a disparaging remark about my sisters or family. My father, mother, and family were greatly admired by the residents of Foley.



Mr. Carlisle Childress was a grocery man who lived two houses down from us. He was a good neighbor. He was also Captain Childress, commander of the local company of The Alabama State Guard. Sonny joined "The Guard" shortly after we went to Foley. He got two uniforms with shoes. The kaki pants and shoes became his school clothes. He looked very good in his uniform with the big shoulder patch of Alabama. I wanted this too but I had to wait until January of 1945 when I turned sixteen, to enlist. I was very proud of my uniform, web belt, brass buckle, cap with "ALA" and infantry piping, shoes and the feeling that I was in the company of soldiers. The pants had buttons for the 'fly.' I could be classified as a uniform groupie.



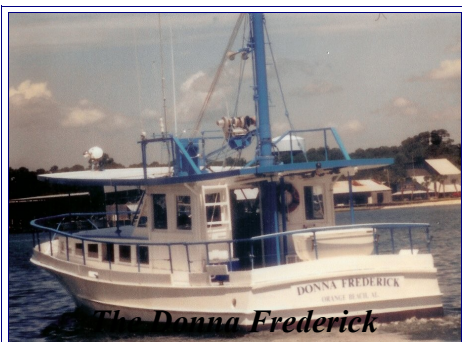
The Guard was made up primarily of people too old or too young to serve in any active military duty capacity, and persons who were deferred from the draft and wanted to be of service in some manner. The mission of our little company of sixty guardsmen was to be prepared to keep order in the event of a civil uprising in Mobile. We were also charged with protecting properties in the event of a significant hurricane disaster. We did a lot of marching and cleaning of old guns. We hosted many Saturday fish fries, spaghetti suppers and dances, which were well-attended social functions at the armory.

We met at the Foley Armory on Thursday nights, once a month. We were paid for each attendance, including patrol duties at social functions at the armory, by a check from "The State Of Alabama". I would be so proud of that very official looking check that I sometimes felt like keeping it rather than cashing it. Sonny and I were appointed to be demonstration instructors in the martial arts of self-defense. We really had fun with that. The State Guard dignitaries had a big banquet in the Admiral Semmes Hotel in Mobile. Sonny and I were invited to put on a demonstration of self-defense tactics. We really practiced and rehearsed about two weeks for the event. I remember that The Mobile Press Register cited our names in the report, hailing us as having done a good job of entertaining them that night in the marshal-arts of self defense. We had a good time too.

The Guard hosted a monthly dance at the Armory. It was always well attended. The State Guardsmen patrolled to keep order and security. Mr. "Slim" Stabler was well known to be a really mean drunk when he periodically got drunk. His little son was Kenny, who later became a nationally noted quarterback for Alabama. One Saturday night, Slim isolated himself in the men's toilet, called a latrine, and was threatening everyone who came in, with a knife. Capt. Childress came to Sonny and me asking us to go in there to subdue and disarm him. Sonny told me to guard the door and he would go in alone. I was frightened for him but I did as he told me. A crowd quickly gathered at the door to the latrine. In a few minutes, which seemed a long time, Sonny and Slim Stabler walked out of the latrine together, laughing. Sonny had in his hand Slim's big hunting knife encased in a leather scabbard. He gave the knife to the shocked, and speechless Capt. Childress.

As we walked outside, Sonny said something to the effect that we did a good job working together again to do that job. I only stood at the door as he had told me. That's the way Sonny was. He told me that he had been threatened by the raised knife and loud drunken threats when he first walked in. He said he walked right up to Slim and simply asked him to put the knife into the scabbard and give it to him. Slim did and that ended it. Mr. Stabler was taken home. In his farewell talk, as the State Guard was being deactivated and the National Guard was being activated, Capt. Childress praised Sonny and me for courage and duty, but it was Sonny who had the courage and displayed it. I had only stood at the doorway. I enjoyed being in the State Guard and all of its activities.

During the summer of 1945, the State Guard had a last big party before being deactivated and replaced by the National Guard who were returning WW II veterans. It was to be a paid three-day Guard drill on Dauphin Island. There were no bridges to Dauphin Island. Mr. Frederick made



three trips on his boat, The Donna Frederick, and got all the men and supplies from Ft. Morgan to Ft. Gains. Ft. Morgan was opposite to Ft. Gaines, both built to guard the very narrow inlet from the Gulf of Mexico to Mobile Bay. We set up camp in the historic old Ft. Gains. There were no houses on the island, just a lot of ranging wild cattle. Capt Childress authorized the shooting of one of the fat young animals he called a yearling. He had a butcher shop and meat market in his Foley grocery store. Sonny helped him as they hung the beef from a beam in the fort, skinned and butchered it. We took the hide and undesirable parts and threw it all into the Mobile Pass waterway. Lt. LaFlam brought a huge iron spit complete with prongs and clamps, legs and cradle that he had built in his Foley machine shop. A modest hole was dug in the sand and a fire was built in it. We gathered a big pile of driftwood, building a huge bonfire that first night. A detail was appointed to keep the fire going all night, building a big deep bed of cherry red coals. Early in the morning, some of the men threaded and clamped the carcass of that animal to the long spit rod. They set the spit rod, with animal, into the vertical iron rods' cradles and slowly turned it over the hot coals.

We took turns all day, turning that spit handle. Only the cook was allowed to put more wood on the fire or put water on a flaming log. That night by suppertime, we were all tired and hungry and some of the men had been drinking beer. I was concerned that a fight might begin, but everybody was happy. The cook was a man of about sixty from Montrose, near Fairhope. We all affectionately called him Sergeant Pappy. He was always mumbling to himself. He cooked a wonderful meal served with the most tender and delicious roast beef I had ever eaten. He made a delicious pepper sauce to go with the roast beef. We ate roast beef in many ways the next two days. That was a new experience for me to learn about a spit in cooking meats. My most memorable



*Fort Gaines Interior*

event of that three-day outing happened on our second day there. We called this day maneuvers. The men took those old World War One Springfield rifles, the ones like Sergeant York used, and went down on the beach without ammunition. They played war games, slithering along among the sea oats and scrub, hunting the designated evading enemy which was the other team. That wasn't my idea of a fun thing. Capt. Childress knew that and he also knew that I had an aversion to guns. He designated me as his messenger runner for the day so I did not have to participate in these 'fun' games. About noon he told me to go, "tell Lt. LaFlam to bring....." With that, I was off and running.



*S/Sgt. Charles Bryant*

He whistled me back, asking just what was it I was going to tell Lt. LaFlam. I was dumbstruck. Oh how he yelled at me and thoroughly had my attention. He had piercing black eyes and an olive complexion. His eye contact was all business. I was a scared and humiliated. Sixteen year old. He then very calmly told me to sit down on a bench and he began to talk as Mr. Childress, telling me to never start out to do something unless I knew where I was going and what I was to do when I got there.

He said this was called a plan. He told me that every successful adventure had a plan. People who didn't plan their lives were drifters. Drifters were the dregs of humanity he said to me. He told me the story that Christopher Columbus was one who had no plan. He set sail not knowing where he was going; when he landed he didn't know where he was, or how he had gotten there or how to get back from wherever it was that he started.. We laughed. Then, as Capt. Childress again, he told me to go and "tell Lt. LaFlam to bring the troops to camp for the noon meal, stack the rifles and leave them for afternoon live ammunition target practice into the dunes". I rehearsed my message as I ran along to find him and delivered it. I knew what I was to say this time.

He was the friendly, affable and smiling Mr. Childress when we bought our groceries at his store. He would always ask me about whatever sports we were engaged in at the school or how were things going for me. Always friendly, never speaking of the State Guard. When he put on that State Guard Uniform, he was Capt. Childress. I had absolutely no reason to be terrified of him as Capt. Childress, but I was and he knew it.

He provided me two invaluable living lessons that have always remained with me and became a part of my being, particularly as a career Military Officer. I gained a new and lasting perspective of authority; my fear of authority had been instantly changed into a respect for authority. I learned that morning that authority is to be wisely, prudently and equally administered in whatever manner is appropriate to influence another to do a task. My other lesson learned was to plan, plan ahead, anticipate and be prepared, even for the unsuspected. I now liked him as Capt Childress or Mr. Childress at the meat market.

I enjoyed fun times with classmates. Billy DeLoach had a neat sailboat that he and I went sailing in many times. I liked sailing very much. They lived on Perdido Bay. He knew of a grouping of rocks where oysters were plentiful. He said old sailing ships that used them as ballast, piled the rocks there. His widowed mother was always so pleasant. She would fix us a jar of cocktail sauce, lemon halves, a bottle of hot sauce and a box of crackers when we planned to sail to the ballast rock area for oysters. We would sail up to the massive piles of rock, secure and anchor and break out the goodie box Mrs. DeLoach had prepared for us We would shuck and eat our fill of oysters, year round, and never get sick. I had never eaten oysters before. I really cultivated a taste for them with Billy.

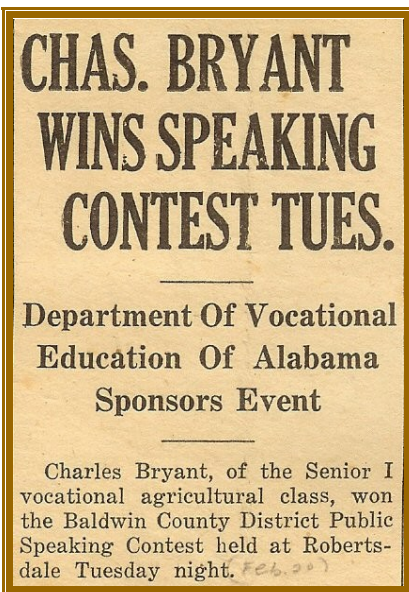
Charles Harper, a handsome muscular red head, lived on Bon Secour bay and it was always fun to visit with him. He had a crude sailboat he had made from a flat bottom rowboat and a 2X4" mast with sewn bed sheet sails. We had fun just trying to keep the thing from turning over, which it never did. An Indian mound was in his yard. I got my first love for archeology, or crude digging for artifacts as we literally dug that eight or ten foot mound apart. We found buckets full of broken pottery called potshards and a few copper things in that massive pile of black dirt and discarded huge oyster shells. After two years of fun digging in that pile, we were told that we were illegal in doing so. Our good friendship and respect was lasting but I seldom visited with him after that warning.

My introduction to shrimp was when my father led the FFA boys in a shrimp boil party at the old abandoned school at Mifflin. I think it was Jim Tom Anderson and Leonard

Harrison who procured the two fifty-pound cases of headed shrimp. I think maybe Mr. Nelson, who established Bob Secour Fisheries, donated the shrimp. The FFA boys worked two days to clean up the school building, cut the weeds and shrubs. We cleared a large circle free of grass and vegetation to make a huge bonfire. We gathered a large pile of limbs and logs and piled them into the cleared circle. Everyone was very conscious of safety as two of the wooden steps were replaced with new boards. They put corn meal on the floor to make it slick for dancing. After ears of corn, carrots and potatoes had been cooked in a huge cast iron wash pot, the cases of shrimp was dumped in and cooked.

They stirred the boiling shrimp often and said they were checking to see if they were all pink to red, which meant that they were ready to eat when they were all red. All of the Home Economics classes of girls were invited as well as other girls. I was teased at trying to mimic them in deheading and peeling the shrimp. I found the shrimp to be delicious and ate probably more than my share with half an ear of corn on the cob, small potatoes, carrots, baked beans and Cole slaw. After the fun of eating and the bonfire, we went into the building and danced to a wind-up record players tunes and songs. Several cases of bottles of Coca Colas were iced down in tubs. Oh so cold. Helen had taught me the motions of the two step dance and Ramona had taught me to put rhythm to that basic two step dance earlier that summer. They were my dance partners for that evening of my introduction to boiled shrimp, which I have enjoyed as a favorite food ever since.

The FFA conducted a national oratorical speaking contest with scholarships awarded at the National level. I won the Baldwin County and the Southwest Alabama district contests in 1945 and 1946. I placed second each year in the South West Alabama District. I felt that I had won a great honor in even competing. My 1946 five-minute, memorized and thoroughly rehearsed speech was "Conservation". It was an emotional speech and I was proud of it. The Rev. Wilson, the Episcopal minister, was my tutor, teaching me voice control and gesturing at the proper segments of the speech. I was proud that he agreed to tutor me. I liked visiting in his study with so many wonderful



books. I enjoyed his speaking ability so much that I sometimes attended his church services in Foley. Ramona and I sometimes attended a few of his afternoon services in the beautiful little chapel on the corner in Magnolia Springs. He was an enchanting speaker. He had a huge collection of model airplanes in his study at home. He had been President Roosevelt's personal minister at Warm Springs, Georgia and was called to Washington DC to participate in his funeral.

The American Legion sponsored a national oratorical contest for seniors. Ramona and others entered the contest with very well prepared speeches. Mrs. Robinson made open challenges and derogatory dares for me to enter the contest against her, assuring my classmates that I would not compete against her for fear of being humiliated in my defeat. She accused me of

being smug; winning the FFA speaking contests the years earlier. She declared before the

class that she would give me an “A” in Government if I dared to enter the contest against six girls. That did it. I entered the contest, using my old speech from the year before. I placed second behind Ramona and was not humiliated, because I felt she had been the better speaker in the delivery of her speech. When the six weeks report cards came out, I was given an “F”. I immediately went into the office of Mr. McGowan and Mr. Strong, the assistant principal, showing them my report card and telling them the story of her promise. Mr. Mac took me into his office and closed the door. He told me that his daughter Mary Elizabeth, who was in that class, had told him of the promise.

He told me that he would take care of the matter if I would not make a scene about the grade. He emphasized that part about making a scene, as he knew I was very angry. I did not make a scene but I did let it be known what she had done. I did not like her after this. She was short and very much overweight. That year, she taught a full day and had a baby that night. He changed the grade at the end of the school term and I received an “A”. I had made only “A and B” in that class and other classes up to that time. I feel then and now that we had wonderfully talented teachers at all levels and subjects in the Foley School System. They were teachers!

The Senior Class Play was a tradition. Mrs. Britton and Miss Mercer chose a play “Mama’s Baby Boy” for us. We had tryouts and assignments. It was a lot of fun for all. I played the role of Mama’s Baby Boy, dressed as Little Lord Flaunteroy. Ramona, with powder in her hair, played the role of Mother. Admission charge was 40 and 20 cents. Our class motto was, “Today we Follow, Tomorrow we Lead”. We had a good class. The Foley School began early in August and terminated in May. This was done to provide an opportunity for students to participate in the harvesting and processing of the two major crops; potatoes and gladiolas. These were shipped from Foley via iced refrigerated freight cars to northern destinations. Some of the boys worked the fields, while the potato sheds hired almost every available person they could, to sort by grade, bag and place into the refrigerated boxcars, which were shipped every day of the season. The glads were sorted, bundled and shipped via refrigerated trucks. Long lines of these trucks were always at the sheds, being loaded. It was big business for a few weeks. The place reeked of rotting potatoes.

I worked at one of Mr. A. A. Corte’s potato sheds during the harvest season of 1945. German and Italian Prisoners of War were working there also. They were a happy group of men, wearing their uniforms and strange caps to work the sheds each day. They would laugh with us even though they didn’t understand a word of English. It was fun to talk to the men who spoke English and had been our enemies before being captured in the campaigns in North Africa. They were glad to just be out of the war. They were not allowed to have any money in their possession. If anyone bought them a five-cent Coca Cola, they made an instant friend. They would beam at the gift of a Coca Cola.

**FOLEY HIGH SENIORS  
TO PRESENT COMEDY**

FOLEY—(Special) — The senior III class of Foley High School will present a three-act comedy, “Mama’s Baby Boy,” at the auditorium. Friday at 8 p.m. Players are Raomina Thieme, Charles Bryant, Roger Schad, Mary Elizabeth McGowan, Carolyn Schad, Paul Carr, Magdalena Herter, Emily Phaff, Evangeline Thomas, Glenn Holk and Annie Smith.

This play is an annual event to raise money for the senior class to leave a gift for the school.



Many of the Elberta girls who spoke fluent German worked at the sheds. I think they worked there because it gave them an opportunity to flirt with the young POWs using the ten-minute break every hour as a chat time. Some of the Elberta girls as well as others were given German Medals and military paraphernalia for their conversational friendships. There was a POW camp south of Foley with a separation of the Germans from the Italians. The noon meal was brought to them at the sheds in a truck and served on metal trays. It was said that with the very relaxed security at the camp, none of the POWs ever attempted to escape, but that one American guard went AWOL. The POWs were a hard working lot and worked much harder than we did. They were stronger also. They would put those 100-pound bags of potatoes on their shoulders and walk them into the refrigerated boxcars all day long and not seem to be tired at the end of the day. All of the men seemed to always have a big smile on their face and nodded at every passing.

The Bird Eye foods company had set up a “quick freeze” processing operation at the Foley icehouse in 1947. They were processing strawberries, which was a significant farm product of Elberta. They also had big refrigerated trailer trucks hauling strawberries coming in from as far as Arkansas and Tennessee. It was a twelve hours each day job to cull and grade the strawberries, fill the sugared berries into boxes and quick-freeze them. About twenty-five persons worked two processing lines for the operation. My job was to wheel the racks of the boxed strawberries into the large quick-freeze chamber, which held about ten of these racks, each containing probably 300 boxes of berries. A huge fan kept the air circulating in the well-insulated chamber. As I took one rack in for freezing, I would take one frozen rack out to go to the freezer storage room. It took 20 minutes to freeze a rack of strawberries. The big heavy door to the chamber was very hard to open and close one day. I told the supervisor about it. He oiled the hinges and the latching mechanism. I wheeled a rack of berries into the freezing chamber and closed the door as always, to place the rack and select the frozen rack to be taken out to frozen storage. When I tried to open the door, it would not open. I pushed on the big push rod as hard as I could. I took a rack of berries and rammed it, but it would not open. I wore long legged and sleeved underwear, a sweatshirt and a parka, but I was beginning to get chilled in the forty below zero temperature. I rammed a rack of berries into the huge fan that created a tornado like freezing wind. It did not stop. For some reason I did not do my usual procedure, to turn the fan off before I opened the door. I was really freezing by now and beginning to be concerned, big time concerns. There was a large sensing meter mounted high on the wall. I climbed onto a rack of berries, opened my parka and pressed my chest over the sensor. I remember shaking uncontrollably from cold before I went to sleep.

As the sensor began to indicate a warming on the outside thermometer gauge, an alarm was triggered indicating the rising temperature. I was told later that a welding torch was quickly brought to the door and the latching mechanism was heated with success, as the door was finally opened. I had passed out from the cold and probably from the realization that I was going to die. I remember waking up outstretched on a canvass with all of my clothes off except underwear. Several people were rubbing me all over and even pounding on me. It hurt, and I was cold. I was taken home. I went back to work the next day. Shortly after I began to work there, I was permitted to take several of the damaged cartons of strawberries home each evening. At home, we all enjoyed strawberries on our

cornflakes for breakfast and strawberries as dessert in the evenings. Barbara and Mary made a delicious strawberry cake almost every day. They have always been good cooks.

When the strawberry harvesting season was over, our happy foreman Mr. James asked me if I would drive the truck with the 32 tons of processing equipment to the Bird Eye headquarters in Ontario, Oregon. He wanted to hurry home and not have to drive the truck and equipment. I jumped at this exciting opportunity to travel, drive that big truck and make some good money to go to Auburn in August. I packed and repacked for a week. My father and I carefully mapped out the route on roadmaps Mr. Boller had gotten for me. He was the local Texaco distributor. Mr. Mac let me go to the school library and read-up on places along the route we panned. I was so excited with expectations of adventure. Mother made suggestions for me to stay in a “tourist cabin” every night.

She told me to eat three meals a day and not to drive too far each day. Yes Maam When the truck was loaded, the company representative, Mr. James, got into the truck with me and directed me to drive us around the block. I did so. He gave me \$500 in cash in a snap leather wallet, saying I could have whatever was left after expenses and that I was to collect \$200 when I got to Ontario. He got out, shook my hand, said drive carefully; he’d see me in Ontario and goodbye. That was my check-ride in a truck I had never driven. He was trusting of this eighteen year old. He did not even ask me to sign a receipt. He just handed the money to me. I drove the rig home, got my suitcase and left. My father had given me his old college days Gladstone pebble leather black suitcase with straps. It was a wonderful two weeks of driving into this spectacular new world I was discovering each day. Gasoline was 19 cents a gallon in most places nationwide. Tourist Cabins were about three dollars. I saw natural wonders of which I couldn’t imagine. Texas was great even in those lonely expanses of little else than scrubs and rolling tumbleweeds.

It was well after dark when I was passing through the area of Mt. Capulin, New Mexico, an extinct volcano cone. The lady that owned and operated the café where I ate, told me of the volcano. I asked her for directions to drive up to the cone. She strongly advised against driving that big truck up there. My adventuresome curiosity was determined. When I got to the top by way of the narrow precarious one lane volcanic ash drive, I understood why she was so adamant in her discouragement. I got out of the truck and sadly determined there was no room to turn the truck around to get back down. I would have to back it most of the way down to where I had seen a space wide enough to perhaps turn it around. While I was looking around, I felt the darkness and loneliness of the area. I heard a woman screaming in distress. It was so close I went down the trail into the crater to attempt to rescue her. The sound seemed to move back into the brush. The woman’s screams were so real and yet so eerie because it was here and then there. I became frightened, ran back and began backing that truck down the curving mountainside. When I finally got back to the café I woke her up and told her of the experience. She roared in laughter, “son you were lucky, that was a killer mountain lion we have been hunting for more than a month.” She and her husband invited me to stay the night with them. I did.



Colorado was breathtaking. I got myself into a backing out problem by taking that big truck to see the Royal Gorge. The Million Dollar Highway was spectacular every mile I drove along on it. I even stopped once to try my hand at panning gold and another time to go down into a gold mine. I was playing the tourist bit for all I could; excited at everything I saw or did along that route to Oregon. In Idaho, I marveled at the springs that poured from the sheer rock walls of the Snake River. I tried fishing for sturgeon that was supposed to be so abundant in the river, but not even a nibble for me.

I had not eaten well on the trip and was constipated, sore, achy and my stomach hurt when I finally arrived. Mr. James, my happy foreman from Foley was there to greet me, insisting that I stay at his home before returning to Foley by via the Greyhound bus. His wife “doctored” me and fixed the best meals ever. She served Salmon one night. I had never eaten that fish before, and I liked it very much. She served vegetables that I had never seen. I ate and enjoyed everything she so graciously prepared and served. After two days, I told them I was ready to leave and thanked them for their hospitality. I had about \$300 left over from the expense money he had given me. I told him that was enough for my pay for driving on this wonderful trip. He already had \$200 in an envelope and insisted I take it to get started in college. Their son John James Jr. had been their only child. He was of my age. He was killed in an automobile accident two years earlier by a drunken driver. They wept as they told me their story. I felt awkward in doing so, but I asked them to kneel with me and I prayed that they would accept God’s promise of their son being in heaven and they would one day join him. We all cried. The long trip home was uneventful. I met a lot of very interesting characters on that four day bus ride home.

Doc’s Dumas, Stacey and Crosby and Professor McGowan all wrote letters to the Alabama Pharmaceutical Assn. in Birmingham, petitioning for me to receive the annual award of a \$1,000 scholarship. I was awarded that scholarship to begin in the fall of 1947, at API, Auburn, Alabama. The scholarship did not pay for food or rooming. The scholarship paid for the \$45 quarterly tuition, textbooks, fees, and supplies. I have always been very grateful to these men for what they did for me. It was so very easy to write a letter to each of them, thanking them for their confidence in me to succeed at Auburn.



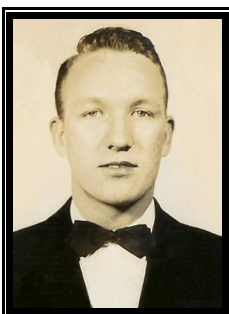
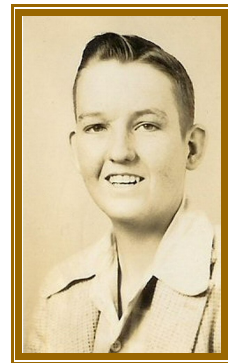
I tried to resign from Foley’s National Guard Company “G”, 200<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, known as the Dixie Division with the striking shoulder patch of a white background with a red circle around red back-to-back DDs. Capt. Oscar B. Rich, the Foley Commander would have none of that. He had orders typed for me to be assigned for duty with the company at the armory at Opelika, near Auburn. I had a great pride in being identified with the Alabama National Guard and the Guardsmen who were all well decorated individually as well as a unit Presidential citation. I was not an enthusiastic participating soldier in the National Guard as I had been a sergeant in the Alabama State Guard. I actually did not do anything that merited a promotion from the lowest grade of private, so I stayed a private

for the more than two years. I did not have to sew on stripes and I could wear the shirt to classes. When I joined the Air Force the next year, I was honorably discharged.

I was happy to give my father and mother the \$100 from the sale of the little Austin Car. I still had more than \$300 to begin at Auburn. Sonny had been at Auburn two years before I started. He got me a job with him, working for Miss Ibbey Jones the college dietitian, waiting on tables in the girls dining hall at the Quadrangle. We waited tables for the family style student dining, for our meals. She was very strict and intolerant with any deviation of her rules, which were numerous. We privately, among the table waiters, called her “cracker”. That was a term used to identify Southern Cattle Men who cracked the whip over the backs of their cattle to drive them. About two months of waiting tables, a girl complained that my thumb was too far over the edge of a platter of pork chops. Miss Ibbey fired me, without question, as she did everyone who had a complaint against them. She hired me back the next day, assigning me to the women’s Alumni Hall saying these were more mature women who didn’t complain so much about food or the service.

Sonny was a self-trained barber with Mr. Robb who had a barbershop on College Street, directly across the street from the campus. He could cut three heads of hair in an hour between classes, which netted him 60% of \$2 each haircut. He is the only person I have ever known who went to Auburn absolutely penniless, paid his own way into everything, got three degrees and graduated with a tidy account. He was very frugal. He got me a job working in the evenings operating the soda fountain and snack bar at the student union with a Mrs. Jolly. She was a very pleasant lady. He got me another job feeding the laboratory mice and cleaning their cages at 5:00 every morning. That lasted about a month. I was paid the standard college student labor rate of nineteen cents per hour. It took me about an hour to do the mice thing but they paid me for two hours. I got the same rate in the student union but I got to eat. Even though I waited tables and could eat all I wanted, I was always hungry. Sonny helped me immensely to adjust to my Auburn life.

John worked at Greer’s Grocery in Foley, as their stocking person. He saved the cans of groceries that were missing labels and labeled cans that were bent or damaged. We took these cans of food to Auburn to eat when we were not waiting tables for our meals. Our little shack was full of boxes of these cans of groceries. We agreed that whatever was opened, if it was edible food, we would eat it or throw it away, but we were not to open another can for that meal because we did not like the first can. We seldom threw away a can of food. We ate canned collards, beans, chili and other such food for breakfast many times. We learned to identify certain canned foods by the numbers and letters stamped onto the can and we could be somewhat selective, sometimes.



Sonny was a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho (AGR) fraternity, which was mostly for students of agriculture. Some called it “Alfred Grab A Hoe”. He roomed there. He wanted us to be together so he rented a shack for us from a Mrs. Johnston. It was truly a shack. A hovel was about 10’ x 12’ with a roof that leaked and vertical planked walls of rough-cut boards. We could see through the cracks in the

walls. We made a flour paste and pasted newspapers on the walls to keep out the wind and rain. It took several layers of these pasted papers to seal out the wind and rain. On calm nights we could hear the cockroaches munching on the flour pasted papers. We had US Army steel bunk beds, two tables with chairs and a study lamp. We found a chest of drawers for clothes storage and hung a galvanized water pipe from the ceiling to hang our clothes.

The shack had two windows and no curtains. The door had a hasp for a padlock. It was only a block from the campus. The rent was only eight dollars a month for the both of us, and that was too much. It really was a shack. It definitely would be condemned today. We had to go to the main house to take showers, use the bathroom or wash clothes. I bought a bathrobe to make the trek. Sonny could afford the laundry. I washed, starched and ironed my own clothes. She had about ten of these little shacks in her backyard. I was ashamed for anybody to know where and how we lived. We never had any visitors anyway, so it didn't matter. Ramona came over once on a greyhound bus on a Saturday to see the football game. I was humiliated to show her how and where we lived. I never had a date that entire year I was at Auburn. I think there is a grocery store there now.

Mrs. Johnston had a grandson, Johnny, about four years old. The boys that lived there at Mrs. Johnston's were mostly WW II veterans and some were rather salty with a spicy language. They had taught little Johnny to curse. I mean curse big time, using curse words I had never heard. They laughed at him thinking it was cute and urged him on, teaching him to curse in English, German, French and Spanish. Mrs. Johnston did not attempt to stop them. Sonny and I avoided most of the rough veterans and that little guy.

John Newton of Newton, Alabama, lived alone in the shack next to us. We became friends. I teased him that he wrote "Amazing Grace". His father was a physician in Newton, Alabama. John was a much decorated army veteran who had survived the "D Day" invasion. I reveled in his stories, when he told me some of his experiences. He was in the National Guard and was also assigned to duty in Opelika. John had a Cushman Eagle scooter. He always invited me to hang on and we went to the drills together. I felt like a boy scout, among these veteran soldiers. One night I was unable to go with him because I was to be tutored in algebra 1, which I was failing. John went on to the drill meeting. He was assigned to a detail of three men to go down into the basement of the Armory and clean some new rifles just received. I have never understood the rest of this.

Army weapons are packed in a grease-like preservative substance called cosmaline. It is an excellent rust inhibitor and metal preservative but it is very difficult to remove. The cleaning detail was given a tub of gasoline to clean the weapons. The investigation revealed that one of the men had left the basement to go get rags. The hot water heater ignited and the explosion demolished the entire front half of the Armory building. John and his partner were the only fatalities. They were burned and disfigured beyond recognition. I am certain that I would have been with John if I had attended. Frank Miller lived in the shack next to John. He too was a veteran and had a most beautiful 1939 LaSalle coupe. He took me to Opelika the next day to bring the Cushman Eagle back to

John's shack. Sonny and I packed his possessions in boxes for the family to come pick them up. It was a very sad occasion for me. I wasn't real close, but he was my friend.

I was failing algebra my first quarter at Auburn. I had never been exposed to it in high school, nor had I had studies in geometry. The Algebra instructor was a tall young blonde graduate teaching assistant. She invited John Adcock to come to the Student Union for a personal tutorial session in algebra. I worked at the Student Union, which was in the basement of the old wooden Music Hall building, next to Samford Hall. A huge rusted iron turning lathe was in that place. The tradition was that if a virtuous co-ed walked past that lathe, it would turn one revolution. John asked me to come along and sit with him for the tutoring session, as he knew I was also failing. Now John Adcock had been a good friend of Sonny as they started in football together their freshman year. Asthma attacks forced Sonny to give it up. John was a huge man and was now a star tackle for the varsity team. John's poor hands and face were always swollen with cuts and bruises on Mondays after a Saturday game. Looking at him on Mondays, I was glad I was not going to be able to play that kind of football. The algebra teacher was quite obvious in her flirtations with John, but he was oblivious. John and I met with her. After about twenty minutes it was obvious the instruction was for John, not me. I realized I was not learning algebra. I felt like she was more interested in anatomy than algebra. I excused myself, muttering regrets that I had wasted a night that I could have made a few dollars by attending the Guard drill. This algebra tutorial session had kept me from going to the Opelika Armory with John Newton that fateful night. I flunked algebra and lost a friend.

History was always my favorite school study. I felt very confident of making a good grade in my first quarter freshman World History, now called Western Civilization I. Professor Johnston was difficult to understand due to his pronounced nasal twang, lisp and monotone high-pitched voice. He would read a segment of the textbook and then do a commentary on what he had read. I made a 96 on my first "pop-quiz" and felt good about that. While working at the Student Union one night, someone told me that if I wanted to make a guaranteed "A" in his class, he would tutor me in his home. They said he was a bachelor and would take only one male student at a time to be tutored. Sonny cautioned me saying that he had a strange sort of reputation but he did not know why.

On the appointed evening of my tutoring session, I got off from work, cleaned up and went to his house with text and notepad. He fixed glasses of iced tea and we chatted a few minutes. He began to ask me personal questions and I felt uncomfortable. Within fifteen minutes after arriving in his dimly lit living room, I found out what Sonny did not know about him. He sat beside me on the sofa, putting his hand on my leg as he explained how I could make an A in his class and with other courses also.

I was mortified, scared, mad and felt dirty, all at the same time as I quickly excused myself and left. I made a "C" in his class and never enrolled in World History II, which he taught. I had just had my first encounter at being accosted or approached by a homosexual man. I was very naïve and had never heard of such. That uncomfortable feeling has come over me at times in encounters with men who seemed overly friendly.

The student body at Auburn had an established tradition that was called “panty raid”. After the Homecoming bonfire pep rally on Friday night, the boys would run wildly to The Quadrangle screaming “War Eagle”. The girls were well aware and prepared for this tradition. They would place two pieces of their underpants on their bed. Closets and clothes storage area were off-limits. The boys were to take only one under pant, put it on their heads and leave the dormitory to join the milling crowd in the quadrangle screaming War Eagle and Go Tigers. Almost as if on schedule, the campus police would arrive with sirens wailing, signaling that the party was over. The boys left with their ‘treasures’.

Sonny had insisted that I go on this panty raid party. I did not want to go because it meant three hours of pay loss. Oh Yes, freshmen had to wear their orange and blue beanie caps and I didn’t like that thing either. I went. We witnessed one of the boys turn a soda-acid fire extinguisher upside down and spray a girls fur coat. That was the first time I had ever seen one of those extinguishers in operation. The beautiful fur shriveled and became a gnarled mess. Sonny and I were identified to police investigators as having witnessed the destructive mischief. We told the truth and identified the boy, a senior, who destroyed the fur coat. He admitted it. I was concerned that he would retaliate and harm us. The rumor was that he paid her a lot of money and that settled it. I believe that was the last panty raid ever held on the Auburn campus. Pep rallies at Auburn were rowdy and wild as the crowds were stirred into a wild and raucous frenzy shouting slogans and singing at the top of their lungs. A big bonfire was held only for the Homecoming rally. Professors and graduate students attended, players were not permitted to attend. Almost everybody had a hoarse and sore throat on Mondays after a pep rally on Friday night and a football game on Saturday afternoon. Students were free and general admission was two dollars.

During the thirties and forties, Auburn seldom if ever had a winning season. The slogan was, “Wait Until Next Year.” The players on the freshman team that I played with were a very aggressive team. Many of these players went on to be varsity players for Auburn to win the National Championship. I played offense center and defense line backer. I only played in one game and that was against Georgia at Columbus, Georgia. It was no surprise that we lost, after only three weeks of practice. No freshman could play on the varsity team nor could any player who practiced with the varsity, play on the freshman team. We sometimes wondered if Georgia knew of this NCAA rule. Sonny and I got to meet the indefatigable, noted All American, Charlie Trippi after the game. Charlie Trippi of Georgia, Harry Gilmer of Alabama and Travis Tidwell of Auburn were outstanding National All Americans that year of the 1947 season. I never met Harry Gilmer. Sonny was able to eat meals in the Athletic Dormitory, Sewell Hall, one night a week. This provided him opportunities to maintain friendships with those he started with on the Freshman Squad of 1945. Sonny was captain of the wrestling team under Coach Umbach.

I think the freshman team must have been organized solely as opposition for the varsity to tear the flesh from our bones on Wednesday practices. The varsity walked through plays on Mondays and Tuesdays and were restless for action as they played a regulation game against the freshman team on Wednesdays. It was a no-holds-barred scrimmage, just play by the rules. It often got vicious with fierce competition and action. Auburn’s star player was an outstanding running back, Travis Tidwell, from Birmingham. The first team

varsity was called 'The Orange' and the second team varsity was called 'The Blue'. They had a very light scrimmage of plays on Thursdays with exercises on Fridays.

I had been playing about five weeks as a freshman line backer. It was a Wednesday scrimmage, which we dreaded and yet looked forward to roughing it with the high and mighty varsity. Travis Tidwell was the ball carrier and was running full speed, headed straight for the cleared hole in the line before me. He had tremendous strength in his legs, with his thighs bigger than my waist. He pumped his legs as he ran and woe unto anyone who tried to tackle him frontally. I saw him coming, full steam with his legs pumping. He carried the ball held tight against his chest. He was an awesome ball carrier. I crouched and braced myself. Just before contact, I lurched at him with arms wide open. When I woke up, they told me that I had been the only freshman that had ever tackled him frontally. I was in what I thought to be mortal pain. My head was buzzing and I had a bad taste in my mouth. I was taken to the Dispensary, which was really a hospital. The College Dispensary was Auburn's only hospital. Many babies had been born there. I was fluoroscoped and it was determined that I had a dislocated right shoulder and arm socket. Now, when he maneuvered my arm and shoulder, and reset the shoulder and arm socket, I did see stars.... I think I even saw the universe. Travis came by to see me after practice and I wished him a victory in Saturday's game against Mississippi State. I well remember how refreshed he looked, as though he hadn't been in a rough scrimmage game at all.

I wore an arm sling, and reported to the dispensary each day for therapy exercises for about a month. I was excused from ROTC, Physical Education and carrying a rifle with the National Guard marching. I also lost the privilege of eating those good Tuesday evening meals with the football players at Sewell Hall. They could eat all they wanted and also had the privilege of going into the kitchen and raiding the refrigerator where leftovers were stored. They had such tasty good foods in there, plus a huge fruit basket always available for the athletes. I suppose they wanted the athletes to get fat so the coaches could run the players and exercise it all off every practice day. Run, Run, Run

Somewhere and sometime during that first quarter of studies and work at Auburn, I realized that I was overwhelmed with alien studies such as Chemistry, Algebra and Geometry. I knew nothing of these subjects and never caught-up. Coach Meredith was the high school Algebra and Geometry teacher. The classes were the last period of the day for my junior and senior years. He gave me a permanent pass to be excused from the class to go home and wash football jerseys, every day. I had no exposure at all to Geometry or Algebra, which severely hurt. He always gave me a "B" for those courses.

I enjoyed practicing with the freshman football team, but otherwise, I felt that I had gone to Auburn to work like slave labor. Work was all I seemed to be doing, feeding and cleaning up after those cursed mice, waiting tables for inconsiderate, snobbish girls for my food, and working in the student union for so little money, nineteen cents per hour, doing my laundry by scrubbing and everything seemed a task of labor. I was slow to recognize my newfound position and I began to resent all that I was doing. It was a challenge each day to accept or integrate into this totally different lifestyle of pressures to



succeed academically, socially and productively into this Auburn College society. I was now increasingly frustrated with life. I felt alone for the first time in my life.

I had accepted with enthusiasm the dramatic changes of lifestyle three years earlier, from York Mt. to Foley. It had seemed to be a giant step from primitive to a new world for me. I found instant, new and lasting friendships in Foley that had uplifted me and I had a feeling of comfort and security. Here at Auburn, it was only Sonny and me. You see, he was moved from his comfortable school and social environment at York Mt. to Foley for his senior year. He adjusted and handled that very well, but it was not home to him. It was here at Auburn that he came alone, penniless and made his home. He lived with friends at his fraternity house, worked, played sports, studied, went to church, voted, had a campus full of friends and paid his way on everything. This had now become his home, not Foley. Foley had been my home because my family and friends provided for me that inner sense of peace, comfort and security that I could call Foley my refuge. Foley was only the name of the place where this sense of home was developed and nurtured. I had not yet matured to develop a sense of direction and purpose for my life.

That feeling of comfort and security I had known among family and friends of my school days, came into serious questioning when I went back at Thanksgiving and Christmas time. My classmate friends were all gone, they were in colleges, nurses training, in the army, married or simply working elsewhere. My family was there, busy with their lives. Barbara was working as a waitress at the Wee Bite Café, Mary was working as a sales clerk in the Dry Goods store, and John was working at Greer's Grocery. Jane was baby-sitting a lot and Donald worked at home and had a paper route. They were in their routine of a happy home, a life that I had known only months ago, but now it was all gone. I loved my family dearly, but I knew now that this was no longer my refuge, my home. Sonny and I went on a fishing trip to Oyster Bay and had a good catch. He remarked several times while we were fishing that he must get back "home", meaning Auburn. It took me a long time to realize that he had made his transition from the security of family to that of being himself in his environment, which he had created for his comfort. He had not changed; he was just confident and happy.



I felt a lonely sense of despair even though I may have been in a crowded room of friends or acquaintances. I wanted to say to someone, I need a hug and to be hugged. I was drifting without a purpose or direction as Capt. Childress had told me of drifting about two years earlier. I had hit the bottom, all enthusiasm was gone, I was unhappy and did not know exactly why, I was secure but I felt adrift and that I belonged nowhere that I knew of. I didn't even know how to express my feelings to anyone, and wondered if anyone cared anyway. I felt that I had not tried to make and keep friends at Foley, nor at Auburn. Maybe I had been so selfish and concerned only with my own pleasures and interests and that was why I was so desperately lonely without a single friend. I only

knew I had obligations and responsibilities to work and study, work and study. There seemed to be no purpose in this routine of existence. At times I didn't even know myself.

Those two holidays had been lonely for me. The carefree days of my high school teen years with family and friends seemed to have been eons ago and could never be recaptured. I expressed these feelings of loneliness and perhaps a little mixture of despair with my father. I liked those chats we had sometimes when we would be seated and he would say, "Well now Charles, let's see....." He would then launch into an "open" monologue of the subject or problem I had brought to him. He sometimes talked with: homespun quips, quotes, or a personal or novel type story. At other times, he would reach into his vast collection of personal philosophies of his values and ethics. He never handed me a blueprint, but he often drew a mental sketch outline for me. I concluded by deduction, that it was neither a geographical place nor a house that makes a home or refuge. I had not yet found or made my home or refuge. Confidence, I had none. I often hummed or whistled my favorite Hymn, which gave me comfort. Knowing the story behind the words gave me solace, "It Is Well With My Soul." by Horatio Spafford.

My first quarter was truly a soul-searching awakening for me and I handled it poorly as well as performing poorly academically. I had gone back to Foley for the Thanksgiving Holidays and felt that it was a hollow visit. Then it was that same haunting feeling of loneliness when I returned at Christmas time, except I was glad to be with the whole family. I had gotten home late and was hungry. In the refrigerator was a can of corned beef hash, which I inhaled most of it. It was so good and tasty, even while it was cold. The next morning at breakfast, John wanted to know what had happened to his opened can of dog food. Mmmmm John has kept me humbled even to this day, gleefully telling that story at every annual weekend of family reunion. My response is as usual, to smile.

For the spring quarter of academics I scheduled myself a very light fifteen-hour load, which included such things as music appreciation. I found very quickly this was not to be a 'crip' course. It was held in a room over Toomer's Corner Drug Store. The little lady who taught the course had been a Kettle Drummer for the San Francisco Philharmonic Orchestra. We went over and over and over the New World Symphony as she went through weird contortions at the sound of her kettledrums. There was a text, which we were tested on; the class time was all music from her orchestra. I scheduled other courses, like pharmacy and pharmacy lab, which I knew I could raise my average grade (GPA).

About mid-point during the spring quarter, 1948, I wrote home a despondent letter telling my parents that I was failing and saw no hope for college continuation. I had hit the bottom of the well. My father, whom we all had always called Daddy, wrote back a story about a frog in a well. His story was that a frog was hopping along without a care or thought of what it was doing or going, and hopped into a well. It saw no hope of survival as it looked at the insurmountable walls and it would soon tire of kicking and drown in the well of water. A milk maiden lowered a pail of milk into the well to cool the milk. The frog hopped into the pail of milk and kept kicking. With its' kicking and churning the milk, a butterball was formed. The frog hopped upon the butterball and rested. When the milkmaid raised the pail to the surface, the frog hopped off the butterball and went its

merry way, much more attentive and wiser. His last sentence of that letter was to “keep kicking until God’s providence provides a plan of rescue.” Oh, what needed wisdom.

The letter encouraged me to keep kicking and not to drop out before the end of the quarter. I did keep kicking, knowing that I was on academic probation and had little or no hopes of avoiding academic suspension. I have so often remembered his frog story as it has guided me in difficult times and occasions. I learned perseverance, patience and optimism through his letter of encouragement. I cherished that letter and the advise.

Pharmacy Lab. students were required to make pharmaceutical preparations designated by the instructor during the two hour lab class time. In addition, students were expected to make ten pharmaceutical preparations listed in the Pharmacopoeia before the end of the quarter. The instructions and formula was written for each preparation. It did not seem to be quite the intentions, but it was a common and acceptable practice that students would make overdoses and trade or swap their surplus for others’ preparations. This was done to fulfill the requirement for ten preparations. I had procrastinated and had not started this extra assignment until two weeks before the end of the quarter. Each preparation could take hours sometimes. I chose Tincture of Lemon, the simplest but most time consuming of the preparations, and got my swap partners lined up to fulfill the ten different preparations. The instructions were to place ground, bruised or mortared lemon peel chips into medicinal alcohol, 180 proof, marinate 48 hours and distill. I had stored the marinating solution and it was ready to proceed to the distillation process step. I began late, about midnight, working alone. This was not an unusual lab practice.

It had been a lot of fun heating, bending and cutting glass tubing to form connections from the flask of alcohol and lemon to the laboratory’s glass distillation coil and then on to the catch flask. This was a “still”. Running water provided the cooling for the coil or worm as it was called. It took me hours to make the still. I used stoppers, glass tubing, valves and thermometers inserted into the stoppers. I liked glass blowing and glass rods. I was rushing or perhaps inattentive and forgot to place an asbestos wire gauze under the heating flask of alcohol over the gas Bunsen burner. The Pharmacy laboratory was a surplus Army type wooden building with a long laboratory table down the middle with gas, water with a drain trough in the middle and student stations on either side. I was at the other end of the laboratory when the heating flask of one liter of 180 proof alcohol exploded. Flames were everywhere. It was too much for me to try to extinguish. This was about midnight and by the time the lone wailing fire truck responded, it was too late. The building was gone and I was standing there in tears. I went to our shack and told Sonny.

Sonny and I went to the scene about two O’clock and left as crowds had gathered. I did not sleep that night. At 7:30 I was at the office of the Dean of Pharmacy. I told him what I had done. He was shocked that students were swapping preparations, which made me feel even guiltier of a wrongdoing. He said that because I was honest about the fire and the swapping of preparations, I would not be held responsible for the damages. He told me that he was imposing a one-year academic suspension and gave me a letter to that effect. I asked for permission to complete the quarter, which he granted me. I made a B in

Pharmacy and F in Pharmacy Lab. The huge Student Union and University Cafeteria have been built on that site of the destroyed Pharmacy Lab. near Ross Hall Chemistry.

Shine, I think his last name was Hamm, was a strong supporter, booster of the Auburn Athletic programs. He operated the Sinclair gasoline station at the corners of Gay and North College. He also rented automobiles. He knew Sonny very well, I don't know why because he had no hair for him to cut. We went to him and told him we wanted a car to go to Birmingham for me to resign from my scholarship. He suggested a letter would do the job but I really wanted to personally tell the Executive Secretary of the Alabama Pharmaceutical Assn., as to why I must resign. She had granted me the scholarship and I felt that I must face her and explain. I was humiliated to admit my academic suspension. I told her that I would repay all the moneys I had used of the scholarship. She rather emphatically declined and wished me well, assuring me that the scholarship would be waiting for me if and when I returned. Shine had let us have a 1946 Ford coupe car for one day at ten dollars and we furnished the gas. Sonny drove very up and I drove back. We had never been on an automobile trip together. We lived on two Coca Colas that day.

I resigned from all of my jobs personally and thanked those who had hired me for the many jobs I had held that year at Auburn. I said my farewells and goodbyes the day before Sonny and I came back home to Foley. I got my last free haircut. For lunch we went to The Auburn Grill and ate our favorite sandwich, an open-faced roast beef and gravy on a slice of bread. That had become my favorite meal. We had both worked at the grill waiting tables and washing dishes. For dinner that night, we went to the Auburn Tea House where we had both worked as waiters. We splurged and ate a steak, potatoes and salad. That was my farewell to Auburn. I returned twenty years later to be a sophomore in the School of Education. Sammy Kirkland drove his car to our shack for me to load my meager belongings, uniforms and Sonny's small suitcase, and he drove us home to Foley.

My father, Daddy, and I spent a month together having many very serious and long talks about my future. He gave no tangible instructions or made any decisions or recommendations. He gave me several long discourses of philosophy and wisdom in living in a successful life. He told me that personal success was measured by ones own personal comfort or satisfaction in ones life. He said the world erroneously judges success by what one gains in life, which leaves one always striving for another rung on the ladder called success, but never achieving it until the comfort of peace is reached. It has taken me a lifetime to understand and discern those things he told me during that month we were together. The cancer in his right chest was manifesting symptoms of failing health with shortness of breath and energy loss. He was partially bedridden.

I told him that I wanted to get into the Merchant Marine, to travel and see the world and make a lot of money. I told him I never wanted to go to college again. He would smile without comment. Mother would always say, "Now don't stray too far from home".

I went to Mobile to the Waterman Steam Ship Lines to apply for a job on one of their ships. They told me that every person in their employ was a member of the Maritime Union. That was like a guillotine to my hopes and aspirations to be in the Merchant

Marine. I went to Pascagoula and on to New Orleans asking for a job with the Merchant Marines and I always got the same answers, to go join the Maritime Union first, then apply. My resentment to the notion of work being unionized grew ever stronger. At an early age I had learned to despise what labor unions did in the way of strikes during WW II and the violence they promoted in their strikes. I refused to join any labor union in order to get any job anywhere. I had no compromise on that subject.

On the way back home, I stopped back in Mobile and walked the shipping docks. I went aboard a Swedish merchant ship and talked with the captain. He looked the typical sea captain role, a full beard, white hair and soft blue eyes. He smoked a crooked pipe of good smelling tobacco. I instantly liked him and told him of myself and my aspirations to be a crewmember on a sailing vessel. He was slow to respond, but when he did, he told me that yes he could hire me as an able bodied seaman and I would be assigned as a deck hand, but, he said, “you wont survive to get out of Mobile Bay. The union boys will chop you up and throw you overboard.” He really scared me. That ended all Merchant Marine talk. The Marines had the best looking uniforms, the navy had bell-bottoms, which I did not like, the army was always marching and I did not care for that. I wanted to fly and become a fighter pilot. That settled it. I wanted to think about enlisting in the US Air Force. I was not really ready yet to make that commitment for a four year enlistment.

I went home and got a job with Mr. Frederick to go to Mississippi and work on his dredge boat. The pay was about three dollars per hour with twelve-hour shifts, or 36 dollars a day, seven days a week. I jumped at that offer. He drove a 1946 Ford coupe, which he loaded with two weeks of groceries for four men and we left the next day. He was a very funny man and smiled almost all of the time. He looked somewhat like Mickey Rooney. He was always such a pleasant man, smiling a smile that was contagious. Everyone smiled with him. I was really looking forward to working on his dredge boat by night and sleeping on his huge Donna Frederick boat by day. I would get to go fishing in the Pearl River where I would be working my night shift with a fine hard working Creole man named Andy.



*The Donna Frederick*

I had no experience but I quickly learned the orders from Andy. One of my jobs was to walk the tail pipe, which was a huge pipe floating on pontoons that directed the dredged silt to a place on the banks of the river. I would beat on the pipe with a baseball bat at places and keep the silt and dredged material flowing. I carried a strong flashlight to walk the pipeline, in order to see the snakes that would climb atop the pipe. I was never bitten but a snake did strike at me twice. Andy had four WW I leggings that strapped around the calf of each leg as a snake bite penetration prevention. I wore those things too. I really did enjoy the work on that dredge and pipeline **until** my two weeks was up.

Somewhere in there I wanted to go home but I couldn't until Mr. Frederick came for me. At the end of my two weeks, I was very pleased to see Mr. Frederick and that little black Ford Coupe drive up the trail to the Donna. He had a stranger with him. He was my

replacement, if I wanted to go home. He said he knew I would be ready as he laughed and laughed, saying he knew that two weeks would be all I wanted. He was right. We all helped unload the car of groceries. The stranger got his clothes and put them aboard the Donna. I got mine from the Donna and put them in his car. Mr. Frederick chatted with Andy and we left. Mr. Frederick chatted and laughed a good bit but I had little to say.

I told my father that I had had a lot of time over there on the Pearl River, swatting those mosquitoes, to meditate and consider the many options for my life. I told him I wanted to join the US Air Force and eventually become a pilot and fly fighter planes. He was silent for a long, long time and I thought I had made a decision that did not please him. He broke the silence by telling me to go and not try to be the best of anything, but to do the very best I could do in all things I attempted and be comfortable with whatever it was that I was doing. He even mentioned that perhaps I could find "Home" in the Air Force. We laughed because I did not understand his wisdom within those words he had just spoken.

I don't remember how much it was, perhaps \$350, I had made during that two weeks working for Mr. Frederick among those snakes and alligators on the Pearl River. I gave it all but five dollars to my father and mother. I told them to use it all, as I would have no need for money where I was going. He and Mother hugged me and said they loved me. I don't remember that either of them had ever told any of us they loved us, but we knew they did, as we had always felt their love. After breakfast, I left for Mobile to enlist in the United States Air Force as a private.

### A Family Record

Morton Hodgson Bryant	b. 6 Nov 1902	Stockton, Ala.	d. 24 Sep 1949	Foley, Ala
Married	15 Sep 1926	Home of bride	N. College St. Auburn Ala.	to
Nettie Jane Jeanette Norton	b. 1 Dec 1904	Birmingham, Ala	d. 9 Nov 1937	B'ham, Ala
Married	3 Sep 1938	Home of bride	Inverness, Ala	to
Eula Mae Cope	b. 25 Nov 1904	Inverness, Ala	d. 14 Dec 2006	Daphne, Ala

### Second Generation

Morton Hodgson Bryant, Jr. b.5 Jul 1927 Stockton, Ala. d. 23 Apr 2006 Bham, Ala  
 m. 8 Mar 1952, Mobile, Ala to Josephine Lee b. 22 Dec 1927, Semmes, Ala

Charles Eugene Bryant b. 2 Jan 1929 York Mt. Rural Walker Co., Ala  
 m. 14 Feb 1951, Montgomery, Ala to Mary Earle Eidson b. 26 July 1926 Enterprise, Ala.

Barbara Elaine Bryant b. 27 Sep 1930 York Mt. Rural Walker Co., Ala.  
 m. 4 May 1950, Montgomery, Ala. to Daniel Ray Hawk b. 28 Apr 1927 Titus, Ala

Mary Virginia Bryant b. 3 Nov 1931 York Mt. Rural Walker Co., Ala  
 m. 21 Jun 1951, Foley, Ala to Henry Carroll Teate b. 25 Sep 1928 Pensacola, Fla

John Patrick Bryant b. 28 Dec 1932 York Mt. Rural Walker Co., Ala  
 m. 13 Apr 1957 Moulton, Ala to Martha Sue Montgomery b. 4 Nov 1934 Moulton, Ala

Rowena Jane Bryant b. 14 Dec 1933 York Mt. Rural Walker Co., Ala  
 m. 23 Jul 1951 Foley, Ala to Joseph Bruce Childress b. 6 May 1934 Foley, Ala

Donald Norton Bryant b. 18 Oct 1935 York Mt. Rural Walker Co., Ala  
 m. 27 Dec 1958 Toronto, Canada to Donna Mae Lapp b. 17 Mar 1937 Toronto, Canada

### Third Generation

Morton Hodgson (Sonny) Bryant, Jr. and Josephine Lee Bryant  
 . Cynthia Marie Bryant 9 Feb 1953 Mobile, Ala

Charles (Charlie) Eugene Bryant and Mary Earle (Molly) Eidson Bryant  
 . Charles Eidson Bryant 14 Oct 1954 Dow AFB Bangor, Maine  
 Thomas Allen Bryant 10 Jun 1957 Connally AFB Waco, Texas  
 Camilla Jean Bryant 17 Aug 1959 Roswell, New Mexico

Daniel Ray Hawk and Barbara Elaine(Babs) Bryant Hawk  
 Daniel Ray Hawk Jr. 8 Feb 1951 Montgomery, Ala  
 Debra Elaine Hawk 25 Sep 1952 Montgomery, Ala

Richard Alan Hawk 11 Jul 1954 Montgomery, Ala

Henry Carroll Teate and Mary Virginia Bryant Teate

Sharon Marie Teate 2 Feb 1961 Birmingham, Ala

Elaine Janice Teate 16 Feb 1965 Birmingham, Ala

John Patrick Bryant and Martha Sue Montgomery Bryant

John Timothy (Tim) Bryant 28 Jan 1961 Opelika, Ala

David Jackson Bryant 1 Sep 1963 Chapel Hill, NC

Joseph Bruce Childress and Rowena Jane Bryant Childress

Linda Jane Childress 27 Jan 1952 Fairhope, Ala

Connie Childress Dec 1952 Mobile, Ala

Donald Bruce Childress 3 Jun 1954 Mobile, Ala

Lisa Ann Childress 4 Jun 1954 Mobile, Ala

Donald Norton Bryant and Donna Mae Lapp Bryant

Errin Don Bryant 14 Nov 1963 Pensacola, Fla

Mark Stephen Bryant 29 Feb 1968 Pensacola, Fla