Gertha Couric
Eufaula, Ala
609 Randolph St
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Life Story of Gertha Couric.

As

Lunch Room Worker--Hotel Hostess.

It's a full time job. Six in the morning 'til nine at night.

When my husband died Sept. 12, 1918, I was at sea. I had never worked, didn't know what to do or where to turn. I had one child, a lovely little daughter just six years old. My husband had been ill thirteen months; the cash he had was most all gone for doctors, drugs and nurses. He was young to die, just thirty-five. He had a little insurance, not much. So the next year after his death I decided to take what insurance money I had and open a tea room. Everyone gasped with astonishment; saying I would not stick to it three months. They said it was too hard a job and I knew nothing about work and business and handling the public. I will say here I stuck nine years to the tea-room; never missed a day from work except when I had an acute attack of appendicitus and had to be operated on. Was out three weeks, two weeks at the hospital and one to recuperate.

I will say here I made a success of it, because I knew I must. It was a rendezvous for all social life in Eufaula. Very graciously the Rorary Club and Kiwanis Club had their weekly luncheons with me for nine years, and today I am still the Kiwanis Sweetheart.

Sunday nights were my big nights. I would have as many as ten or fifteen big dinner parties and every table would be taken from six until ten o'clock at night. I alwsys had an orchetra; would give them their dinner and they would play for me for two hours. After that I had an orthophonic and lovely records and would play that. Young people like soft music when they are dating and in love. Old people loathe it. I dont know why, unless most of them are deaf and it is confusing. One class that dont like music with their meals are the ones that want to talk and be heard by others.

Life Story of Gertha Couris.

As

Lunch Room Worker-----Hotel Hostess.

Then I had wedding dinner parties, luncheons of all kinds. Would have Ladies Night for the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, a hundred and seventy-five or more, and it never phased me. But not at first. At first if six would come in at a time, and if they were not served instantly, I would wring my hands and go all to pieces. I can hear my old cooks saying now: "Miss, calm yourself, if you dont you guin'er git sick". And Oh, my feet! how they did hurt. How did I do this, how did I make a success of a tea-room in a town of eight thousand? I will tell you, but first of all there is a lot in the town. Eufaula is an old aristocratic town, a lover of beauty and culture. Towns twice the size, new towns, like Dothan prefer a Greek restaurant.

To begin with, the building was the best location. The interior was most attractive. My first color scheme was white and gold with silk Japanese lights of old rose, pretty china and silver tea sets, old-fashioned mirrors on the wall and real flowers and ferns; never artificial ones. Of cours in the nine years I changed my color scheme several times. But why my unusual success? Answer: "Good food, quick service and courtesy. Why didn't I make much money? Everyone said I fed too much. I did not. Eufaula is not big enough for volume and it takes volume to make money. I had it at big affairs but not volume three times a day, three hundred and sixty-five days in a year. I had the best cooks in Eufaula and in spite of what the North thinks about the South and our cooking, their food cannot touch ours. Its not in the same class. With no opology to Miss Isabelle Post in her absurd article on Southern Cooking in the American Mercury, she just "aint been here" in the Deep South, that's all. Possibly she went in some of the homes of the poor whites and poor negroes. But most of the negroes live on the fat of the

land. Yhey take their food from the white "Mistis" kitchen. They "toat a pan". I have worked in some of the largest hotels in the South; Hotel Peabody, Memphis; Tutwiler and Thomas Jefferson, Birmingham; Graystone, Montgomery, and others and I know. Their food is not greasy as Miss Post says. Negroes are born cooks. Give me a negro cook in preference to a white foreign chef everytime. It depends upon the economic status of a home, or a lunch room or a hotel what foods are served. You can go to a hot-dog or barbecue stand or a swanky restaurant or hotel dining room and pay from .10¢ to five dollars a plate or more, according to wines.

There is a lot of routime work. At first I thought my heart would break. I wanted to stay at home where I had always bees with my little daughter. I was lucky in this way. I lived with my mother and she would get my little girl off to school and be at home to welcome her in the afternoons, Then at night, they would come down and have dinner with me.

I would go to work the year round at six o'clock in the morning. It was awful in the winter, but allright in the summer. That was one of th hardest things at first. I had never gotten up before eight or nine o'-clock before. But I got so I like it. You ask me, could I cook? Not a bit, but in the words of my Grandmother, "I knew the theory". I got every cook-book I could buy, every menu card from every hotel and restaurant, North and South, and studied them harder than I ever studied latin or trigonometry. I interviewed every cook of repute and got their best re-cipes. Oh, the comedy and the pathos of a "lunch room".

One day I was in the kitchen, writing my menu for the day and one of

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my cooks, Liza, said to me,"Miss(they all called me "Miss") is you ever cooked aire hold meal in your life?" I studied a minute, a little ashamed to say it. "No, Liza, I dont think I have". Then she said, with much enthusiasm, "yes, Mam, I knowed your Ma raised you right." A Southern negro thinks its beneath a "white ladies" dignity to cook. All my help were negroes. Three cooks, a dish-washer, four waitresses; two of the waitresses I had the entire time I had my tea-room. On extra occasions I had extra help. The lowest wage I paid was ten dollars a week and up. My servants loved me, and I loved them. I never had one to quit.

One thing quite unusual, I never had a lock and key on my pantry. I trusted them and they knew it, and I never had any stealing. The only thing they would take was liquor and they knew it was not mine. It was in the days of prohibition and things were very strict. Men had it on their hips. They would come in and ask the waitress for an empty glass. I never "saw" anything. That is one requisite in being a good hostess. Then I never "heard anything" and I never "told" anything. In all the nine years I never called a police or had any one arrested. That is a pretty good record. I would be asked "how do you di it?" First, I like people and if you like people, they will like you. I was my own boss.

In later years, when I was in the big hotels, the first thing that is taught,"the guest is always right". Nine times out of ten the guest is always wrong, and you have to swallow it, and it makes you lose your religion. But in my tea-room I didn't have to swallow anything. I didn't want to, but I was a "diplomat". How many times I would look up from my desk and see a boy and sometimes a girl about "passed out". I would go

them, pat them on the back, smile and say,"Listen, kiddo, I am afraid you have had a little too much, now that's O.K. with me, but I am afraid you might get sick; come with me in my kitchen and I'll give something to make you feel better." Nine times out of ten they would, then if they were too drunk to go back into the dining room, I would have their car brought to the back and if they didn't have a car, I would order a taxi.

Speaking of my servants stealing liquor. A funny thing happened once in the hey-day of prohibition. A man, a friend of mine, came in to the tea-room about five minutes before train time and hurriedly asked me, "Wont you do me a favor? A friend of mine has just given me this, a quart of Canadian Club, cost $10,(it did in those days,) and I dont want to take it with me to Montgomery, may I leave it here in your tea-room until I get back. Will be back Saturday;(that was Thursday). I told him he could go back and hide it on the top of the refrigerator, that I had no place to lock it, or he could just put it behind the piano, which he did. Friday night was Kiwanis night and we work the entire afternoon. Several times I went back into the kitchen and everytime there was a lull, and all looked guilty. Still I never thought about the whiskey, and then I would hear the peals of laughter. After-while Mary came slipping up to me and in a whisper said,"Miss, them niggers done drunk up all Mr. Harmon's liquor but for God's sake dont tell them I told you." Sure enough, I went tolook for it and there was the empty bottle, and everyone swore they hadn't touched it. What could I do?. Harmon never left any more liquor there. Liquor was the only thing they would steal.

Routine starts breakfast. Breakfast is no trouble; the same menus the

year round except extrs fruits in the summer; cantaloupe, berries,etc. While breakfast was being served I would make out my menu for lunch and dinner. Then after breakfast was served I would go to market. I bought a lot wholesale;flour, sugar, coffee, lard, butter, bacon, hams, oranges, applesp,in fact everything except my fesh vegetables and meats and fowls. I was given a cut. I paid cash, dxcept packing house, I paid them once a week. My hours were from six in the morning til nine at night. When I got home I would be too tired to even speak sometimes. And if I played bridge, I never knew what trumps were. But after ahile I didn't even get tired. I was very happy.

There is a lot of waste in all eating places. It can't be helped. You can save cream in individual cream pitchers, and butter to cook with, but what was left on the plates went to the servants. Emma, my head cook, had "four head of chillun" and they were welcome to the scraps.

I entertained my friends and my child's friends. Once a year I gave a party to the old ladies of the town,"The Girls", ages from seventy-five to ninety. They were thrilled. There is not one living today. Twin old maids, the McTyer sisters, played duetts on the piano. My place cards were hand-printed nosegays with the inscription,"When You and I Were Young Maggie".

The American Legion, on Memorial Day, each year entertained the old Confederate Veterans of Barbour County. They are no more. Their songs were "Dixie", "Tenting On The Old Camp Ground". And how they would give the Rebel Yell:

"He is a Southern gentelman,
He's all the world inplies,
He proved it in his daily life,

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As

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He showed it in his eyes.
But every little now and then,
He yearned for just a day,
To join his ever-thinning ranks,
And wear the coat of Gray.
But once a year he liked to march
With those he use to know,
And hear again the Rebel Yell,
And live the long ago."

They were invited at one o'clock, but at eleven o'clock they would begin to come; each wearing their suits of Gray.

The depression came. I had an offer on my tea-room and had to sign a paper not to open another one, or eating place in Eufaula for five years. I sold it and have always regretted it.

My thoughts then turned to Birmingham. I will never forget that feeling in the pit of my stomach, the lonliness, the misery. I had never gone "job hunting" before. It was in January and the very look of Birmingham made me feel ill. Governor Wm. D. Jelks and Mr. Donold Comer were most kind to me and it was through their influence that I landed a job. The Thomas Jefferson Hotel had been taken over by the Baker Hotel Corporation of Texas and R. Beut Orndorff was Manager. The hotel had not opened, but they were hoping to finish it and open in six months. Mr. Orndorff gave me the job of Manager of the Coffee Shop, if I would go to some large coffee

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shop in some large hotel and get exprience. I immediately went to the Hotel Peabody in Memphis. Mr. Schutt was fine. Said I could work there for the experience, but of course no pay. I worked there for several months in the Grill. They served on an average of a thousand a day and had seventy waitresses, three head waitresses, and Coffee Shop manager; a twenty-four hour coffee shop. Oh, what a difference in the morning.A small town tea-room with charming people, maybe a hundred or a nundred and fifty a day to a thousand or more daily. I was put on as one of the head waitresses the first two months. I would work from eight until three, then come back from six until eight. I chose my hours. The last month I was there I worked mostly in the office of the Coffee Shop Manager, a Mr. Gegor. For a week I ran it alone. Mr. Gegor going out of town. The most important thing for a coffee shop manager or hostess or head waitress to learn,first, never lose your temper and how it is tried! Men that come in for breakfaat with hang-overs; snobbish women, with no consideration. I found this out; men are lots nicer to deal with than women in a business way. Of course you find some lovely women and some rotten men.

When I first took my first hotel job, I had never really heard any one curse in my life. Of course I dont mean a little slang now and then. But I had not been there three months before I became the "champion".

The next thing to learn is to watch your guest like a hawk, to see that their food is allright. Don't talk to them unless they ask you a question. They don't come in to be entertained; they come to eat. And don't allow your waitress to talk. Of course be courteous at alltimes. I have had to

change a man's eggs three times at a meal. It is a loss. But in the long run it is not, for he goes out satisfied and will boost you instead of knocking you. And it's a good advertisement.

I wanti to work at the Thomas Jefferson in July. It was opened in September. I had to get my waitresses, hire line boys and get the coffee shop ready. It was a job. To "open" anything is a job. I tried to get my waitresses pretty. Men like pretty girls. But you want efficiency too. I was only there a few months. There was a general shake-up.They say always in Baker Hotels.

I went from there to the Tutwiler Hotel and there I stayed for several years. And it was there I learned my job as Hotel Hostess. But I was listed as Coffee Shop Manager.

I worked for Coleman Hudson, Manager of the Tutwiler hotel for twelve years. Let me say right here, I have never met a more perfect and honorable gentlemen. Everyone loved him and there wasn't a man or woman working for him that woul not have almost lain down their life for him. He was truly a friend to man and he got one of the dirtiest deals at the last that has ever been handed to man.

There is more superficial snobbery and more jealousy in the hotel world than anywhere else in the world. I didn't know what it was all about at first. But I pretty soon found out. A big hotel is like Port Said, a meeting place of the nations. In the kitchens alone, would be Germans, French, Swedes, Italians, Greeks and Americans. To go into the main kitchen when a meal is being served, there is no one, not even an actor or an actress as temperemental as a chef. The air would be blue with "choise bits of words" mingled

din of rattling dishes. You could not go to a better show.

When I first went to the Tutwiler to work, the steward was an old man; a very nice oldman, a German, Mr. Fishel. Everyone loved him. He was splendid to me and showed me every courtesy and helped me wonderfully in my work. He died; then Carling Dinkler sent Mr. Crosy, a Frenchman. He was a gentleman and fine in every way.

Everything moved along beautifully The next year he was sent to the Ansley in Atlanta, and horrors of horrors, a Greek, a "Mr. R."(I wont call his name) was sent in his place. You give an illiterate foreigner ~~anything~~ authority and it goes to his head. He resented me from the first day because I had been there a long time and had friends. So the trouble began. Every monday there was a meeting of the personnel of the hotel in the manager's office. The first Monday he said that he found that "Mrs. Couric, the Coffee Shop Manager, was 'too soft' with the girls." He talked so fast and in such broken English that I couldn't follow him. Then Mr. Hudson said, "Mrs Couric, what have you to say for yourself?" I said,"Mr. Hudson, I am sorry, but I couldn't understand a word Mr. R. said". That infuriated Mr. R, but the funny expressions on the others faces. I treated my waitresses like they were human beings and not animals. Everone of them loved me and I loved them. With very few exceptions, they were little country girls alone in the big city. They had very little education as a rule. Several had "bell boys" as husbands at different times. Some had three or four husbands, some none; some "kept women". I had nothing to do as to their morals. If they were efficient and courteous on the job, I had nothing to do with what they did off the job. They had a queer standard of morals; but who could blame

them? Poor, lonely little country girls. No home, no mother; fighting, working, slaving for the necessities of life. A certain class of man, particularly a "Kike Jew", if you know what that is, trys to make a date with the waitress even before he orders his meal. Most always they are successful. They are lonely and crave happiness and companionship. The pay is low, they depend on their tips and if they make a date the tip is big. A wsitresse's pay is usually about four-fifty a week, their meals, and their uniforms laundried. So you see they have to depend on their tips for a living. I wish all the world knew about tipping a waitress and a bell boy. How terribly they nedd it.

Mr. R. went over my head and fired three of my waitresses.One(Jimmy) had been there seven years and had quite a large folllowing. Mr. Hudson let me take her back. Of course that infuriated Mr. R. One girl he fired because he caught her eating a piece of "fillet mignon". Said she stole it. I investigated and found it was a piece left on a plate. I had to write an order for everyone that was served and it tallied with everyone that was sold. I could write on and on of his diabolical atrocities but I wont. Needless to say, he was feared and despised by all who knew him. My waitresses called him by one endearing neme,"S.O.B."

I will tell John Temple Graves(columnist of the Birmingham Age-Herald) parlor joke. One day he was having lunch in the coffee shop of the Tutwiler, and he called me to him and said,"Mrs. Couric, who is the man over there? He seems to be talking very rough to one of your waitresses". I turned and saw Mr. R.(the steward) shaking his fist in the face of little Daisy, one

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Lunch Room Worker-----Hotel Hostess.

of the sweetest little waitresses I had. I said, "Oh, Mr. Graves, he's terrible". Mr. Graves, said, "What is he"?(Meaning a Greek or a Dago.) I said,"He's a son of a bitch". Did he laugh? The next day he asked me if I had seen the Age-Herald. Said he had written me up. He had very graciously written me up before. I went up to the lobby to get a paper and this is what I read:"Mrs. Gertha Couric of Eufaula, Alabama, but now nobly of Birmingham is an authority on ancestry. She even knows of the "animal kingdom"-----I wonder?."

When I left the Tutwiler I left because of Mr. R., the steward. I went to Dothan and ran the "Sweet Shop" for Fred Barrow. He was nice and quite a gentleman. But I was offered the position of operating the dining room of the Bluff City Inn for Gorman Houston at Eufaula. Who would blame me for going home?

I fell and broke my ankle and for three months it was in a cast. I had to give up my job as Hotel Hostess. I hope my hotel life is jot ended.

Owing to circumstances I am now with the Federal Writer's Project, Miss Myrtle Miles, my State Director; the most efficient, the most brilliant and the lovliest person I know.

May I say this in closing? When I took charge of the dining room for Gorman Houston there were three regular boarders. When I left there, eighty. I got back my Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs and the first month I took it over, I had nineteen banquets. I hope I am not blowing my own horn too much. Am just stating facts. Max Friedman of New York said,"Mrs. Couric could make you eat straw and ~~like it~~. I'll say this, working for the public twenty-years, you should "know how".

Life Story of Gertha Couric.

As

Lunch Room Worker----Hotel Hostess.

I have told my life story of "hostess", but there are lot of pther phases of hotel life that I have not told.

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After giving it consideration, I have decided to add a note about my tea-room. Was afraid some one would think I was boasting, so that is why I omitted it.

For the nine years that I operated my tea-room, it was my privilege and pleasure to give at least one or more meals away a day. It cost me nothing; the food was there. The joy of feeding hungry people and heart hungry people also, gave me more pleasure and happiness than anything I have ever done. I did it in different ways. Of course I never turned away anyone asking for food. But that was not often. It was before the depression.

First every Monday, Mrs. Lizzie Brown, one of my protegees, came for her dinner. She was very poor and it was heart-breaking to see how she would eat. She would not leave a crumb of the four courses. Miss Betty Johnson, a very poor sewing-woman, I gave her a dinner every day for several years. She would bring her basket to the kitchen, have it filled and carry it home. She moved away.

The Knitting Mill was just a block back of my place. I told the Supt. I wanted to give lunch every day to the most deserving person in his Mill. He suggested a lovely little woman with several children. She came in every day for almost a year. One day she came to me and said that she had gotten two raises and that someone else needed it more than she did.

During December I gave little Ten Cent Store girls, one a day, their

lunch. It was so cold and they were so tired.

I deserve no credit for this. It was such a joy and God just put it into my mind.

Alabama

Gertha Couric
Barbour County

FARM OWNER.

Mr. Leon Dubois, who lives 10 miles South of Eufaula, was born in Belgium, and is one of the leading farmers and cattle raisers in Barbour County. Here is his story:

"I came South nearly fifty years ago. Barely grown was I then. I can say, therefore, I almost entered my childhood in the United States of America. I came here with the hope that I might be one of the citizens of this great country. It long since became my country, and if I do not resent being called a Belgium, it hurts me profoundly to be called an alien or a foreigner. Born in Belgium I was, yes, but I am still an American.

"But what has this to do with the raising of livestock? Simply this. In Belgium a farm without livestock is not a farm. So it is that insofar as I am concerned, from early childhood, farming has always been associated with the raising of livestock. I have farmed fifty years, and never without livestock.

"I have always predicted and I firmly believe that a day will come when the far South will awake to the many possibilities offered farmers though the raising of cattle. Long grazing periods; good pastures along rivers and creeks; thousands upon thousands of acres of flat lands, which can be made grazing lands; cheap by-products of oil mills in the cotton belt(cotton seed meal, cotton-seed hulls, etc.) cheap lands; a favorable and mild climate, are only a few of the many advantages we have in Barbour County, and the neighboring counties. The raising of stock is here to stay and is a constantly increasing industry. Another sign of stable markets for cattle is the growing number of large packing houses erected everywhere.

"This is not a dissertation on the raising of cattle. I mean only to emphasize the real possibilities offered by a generous climate. It is not meant as advice to abandon all else and turn to cattle raising only. Rather, it is meant to suggest a way to partially substitute another interest for cotton, the wild promotion of which has created immense and troublesome surpluses."

Mr. Dubois advises against cattle-raising and farming unless one hasa natural love for it.

"You will never make a real success of it unless you like it," he says emphatically.

Mr. and Mrs. Dubois have no children. Their home is a model country home beautifully equipped. He has one of the largest stock farms in Barbour county.

He also has one of the largest truck farms, producing cotton, peanuts and pecans. Interested in civic affairs, he is a Rotarian, and past president of the Eufaula Club and also a member of the commercial Club. Mrs. Dubois is a prominent club woman. They entertain lavishly and often.

"I do not pretend that we can compete, as yet, with the great beef cattle areas of the Middle West and the far West," Mr. Dubois continued; but we could supply the whole South with good Southern-raised beef, a thing that has never been done. The most popular way of raising stock consists of breeding cattle with the view to supplying the market with young, fat calves or veals. This means, explicitly, animals with all their milk fat weighing not over 250 pounds. These animals will be from four to six months old. If pastures are normally good and the dams are fairly good milkers, animals classing No. 1 will be produced, and such animals will bring about eight cents. Judging from past years they are always

in demand. My advice is to take to market only no. 1's; keeping all others on pasture with their mothers.

"There is no money to be made out of light no. 2 and still lighter no. 3 (100 to 150 pounds) at seven cents and five cents a pound. Good no. 1's will bring from $15 to $17. Number 2 & 3 run from $10 even to as low as $6 and $5. These should be left in pasture to grow to be two years old. The crossing of good native cows with one of the beef breeds (White Face, Aberdeen, Angus or Shorthorn) will give the best results. I spke of 250 pound limit for veals. This is important. Animals weighing more will be classed as baby beeves, a class less valuable than veals.

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10/20/38

L.H.

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10/20/38

L.H.

Alabama
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Hughes
111 Hunter Street
Cowikee Mill Village
Eufaula, Alabama.

THE HUGHES FAMILY

By Gertha Couric.

Their neighbors say they are the most beloved couple of Cowikee settlement, describing James C. ("Doc") Hughes as one of nature's noblemen, and his wife, Drucie Porter, as an angel of mercy.

One man said: "Doc Hughes has the kindest heart of any man I know. He is always ready to help a fellow who is down; and Miss Dru, well...she's an angel, that's all."

"Doc" Hughes, although his gray hair indicates approaching old age, wears a quizzical expression that stamps him as a man who still likes to know and take a part in what is going on.

He was neatly dressed in a light suit of summer material, spotless white shirt, and polka dot wash tie when he came to the door to extend the greeting that immediately recalled the words of Dr. Colley, President of the Baptist Orphans' Home at Troy:

"I'd rather stay at the Hughes' home than any place I know. It extends true hospitality."

With a flourish, "Doc" had me seated; and after preliminary pleasantries, launched into his story, which, when summed up, is chiefly a narrative of the virtues of his wife.

"She, I'll tell you all I can," 'Doc' said.

"Me and Dru started working side by side in the little mill nearly fifty years ago. Then four years later, we went to the big mill.

"Mr. John Foy was president of the little mill, and Captain Tullis was president of the big mill.

"We had a right tough time in them days. We was young, but

Dru couldn't work steady. She had three youngsters, two boys and one girl, that came right close together and she had to stop work.

"Lord bless your soul, she wouldn't leave them babies for nothin'. But when they got old enough to go to school, she started back to work.

"Her Pa, old man Porter - you remember him; he was the last Confederate veteran to die in Eufaula last year - he gave us this land to build our house on."

The front door of the house opens into a hallway, with two rooms on each side. In the rear is the kitchen and bathroom.

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"She's the best cook anywhere. Her cakes, preserves, and pickles always take first prize at the fairs. She is president of the W.M.U., has a Sunday School class, and is a member of some more clubs. Many a night, she sits through nursing the sick. When a body get sicks, they call Dru and then call the doctor."

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"We all get a lot of pleasure out of the community house," Mr.

Hughes said in answer to a query about recreation.

"We can sit on the porch and hear the band in the summer time. I like to read, and when my wife ain't home in the afternoon and I don't have to work the garden, I go over to the Men's Club, where I usually take a shower and then sit around and read or gab with my friends.

"We take the Eufaula Tribune and we got a car; there's the radio too. I try to make things comfortable for Dru.

"We are all Baptists. I am a deacon, and my son is Secretary of the Church. We get a lot of pleasure out of the church too,

"Mr. Donald Comer is responsible for all the good things around here. Nobody knows what he has done for us.

"When I first started to work in the mill, we just run six or eight looms. Couldn't but a few run them. Now we have sixty-four and eighty looms.

"In the old days, we had to thread them with our mouths. We'd get a mouthful of lint and have to spit it on the floors. That's what caused so much T.B.

"Now they are threaded automatically, and clean shiny spittons sit everywhere on the floor. You don't see T.B. no more. Why, you have to be examined; and be well and strong, before you can work here.

"I'm a 'loom fixer.' It pays eighteen dollars a week," Mr. Hughes said. "But that ain't all I do. I have to go to the pasture for the cow. Mr. Comer has a pasture for our cows, and its a great help for them to get plenty of green stuff, so if you'll just wait until Dru comes in, I'll run on after the cow."

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Washington Copy 10/20/38 L.H.

Alabama
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Hughes
111 Hunter Street
Cowikee Mill Village
Eufaula, Alabama.

THE HUGHES FAMILY

By Gertha Couric.

Their neighbors say they are the most beloved couple of Cowikee settlement, describing James C. ("Doc") Hughes as one of nature's noblemen, and his wife, Drucie Porter, as an angel of mercy.

One man said: "Doc Hughes has the kindest heart of any man I know. He is always ready to help a fellow who is down; and Miss Dru, well...she's an angel, that's all."

"Doc" Hughes, although his gray hair indicates approaching old age, wears a quizzical expression that stamps him as a man who still likes to know and take a part in what is going on.

He was neatly dressed in a light suit of summer material, spotless white shirt, and polka dot wash tie when he came to the door to extend the greeting that immediately recalled the words of Dr. Colley, President of the Baptist Orphans' Home at Troy:

"I'd rather stay at the Hughes' home than any place I know. It extends true hospitality."

With a flourish, "Doc" had me seated; and after preliminary pleasantries, launched into his story, which, when summed up, is chiefly a narrative of the virtues of his wife.

"Sho, I'll tell you all I can," 'Doc' said.

"Me and Dru started working side by side in the little mill nearly fifty years ago. Then four years later, we went to the big mill.

"Mr. John Foy was president of the little mill, and Captain Tullis was president of the big mill.

"We had a right tough time in them days. We was young, but

Dru couldn't work steady. She had three youngsters, two boys and one girl, that came right close together and she had to stop work.

"Lord bless your soul, she wouldn't leave them babies for nothin'. But when they got old enough to go to school, she started back to work.

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Washington Copy 10/20/38 L.H.

Belle Ricks (Negro)
Midwife and Farmer
Near Eufaula, Alabama

Gertha Couric
Barbour County,

BELLE RICKS, MID-WIFE AND FARMER

Three miles north of Eufaula on the Eufaula-Columbus Highway, Barbour County, is Belle Ricks, licensed mid-wife and farmer.

The door bell rang, and there was Belle with a basket of turnip "greens" that she was selling at five cents a bunch. I said, "Belle, you are smart, peddling vegetables a cold day like this."

"Yas'um, when I ain't kotching babies, honey, I's peddling or working at home. I has to work mighty hard these days. All of our children married and gone, excusin' one." At my invitation she came in by the fire, and when requested to tell me about her farm and her work, I added that I would have her picture taken for "Uncle Sam" and give her one.

She said, "Sho', honey, I'll tell you anything you want to know. I ain't never had my picture took since I was a littler gal and I sho will be proud; but how come you gwiner give "Uncle Sam" Jones one of my pictures?" I told her I meant "Uncle Sam", the Government.

"Well" she said, "I will start at the fust. My Ma and my Pa wuz slaves. My Ma's name was Rena Sly Shorter. She was born on de old Shorter place and belonged to Marse Eli Shorter. My Pa was Jake Sly Holt and belonged to Doctor Holt and he wuz born in Russell County on one of old Colonel Long's plantations. Doctor Holt married Mistis Laura, one of Colonel Long's daughters. After freedom my Ma and Pa married and lived in Russell, where I wuz born. Between this time and next August I think I will be 'bout fifty-eight years old." She is actually over sixty; her oldest child is forty-five; but very few Negroes know their ages. "I married George Ricks"; she went on. "We been living together nigh unto fifty years. He's gitting on too; he says he is

past seventy, and I speck he is. I wuz the mother of nine children. I birthed nine and I got seven now.

"My old man, George, been living on our farm since he were eight years old. Hit fust belonged to George's Pa; now hit's his'n. We got eighty acres and we raises everything we eats on hit. 'Course us has to buy kerosene and matches. You know the Government just lets us make so much cotton, but the Government sho' is good; done give us two little checks. Don't know what we would er done without hit.

"We got two mules, two cows, lots of pigs en chickens. I does right smart peddling. We always has a garden en I makes more peddling than at the Cub (Curb) Market.

"Now, when I is on a case my boy peddles. I got eight babies out now and ain't got a penny on nare one. Hits outlandish the way folks won't pay. I begs 'em to give me a chicken or a pig, or even just a little corn or anything that I kin sell, but no bless God, they won't give me nothin' half the time. As soon as I cuts that navel string and gits the after-birth they's through. I done kotched dat chile and dat's all. I passes 'em on the streets and they turns the' heads the other way. Hits scandalous the way folks does. Ten dollars is what we is s'posed to git; sometimes I gits a dollar, but not often. Sometimes they gives me fifty cents fore I kotch de chile, nothing after.

"The New-fallah (Eufaula) doctors tells me not ter go ter nobody least they pays me fust, but I ain't got the heart to. I jest can't turn folks down when they's in trouble, and that's trouble, honey. A 'oman in labor and nobody to kotch dat baby! I is sho' had a lot of bad cases. I kotch most all the nigger babies in Barbour north of New-fallah, and a heap of 'em in town too. I kotch a baby last

week and hit were marked. Hit's Ma looked at a man with two slits in his mouth and dat baby's mouth got two slits on hit. I kotched a baby, another gal baby, last month and hit wuz marked.

"That's one thing I hates, is ter kotch a marked baby. This 'oman I started to tell you 'bout, went out to the pig pen en a sow wuz kotching pigs, en made an awful noise. Hits been two months and right now dat baby cries jist lak dat sow. Another gal, stays out there in front of me, name Tollers. Her brother brung a sea frog ther! She wuz expecting her baby pretty soon. Dat sea frog wuz in a sack. She didn't know hit and picked hit up. Lordy, how dat gal did holler. Hit scared her plumb nigh ter death. I kotched dat baby; hit never could open hit's mouth and hit's foots wuz web-feeted. Hit wuz awful. Didn't live but two days. Gid wuz good to take hit.

"I gits a lot of herbs out there in the country where I lives and uses 'em fer a 'oman when she settin' in. They ain't got no money ter buy medicine. I biles em down and makes teas. A root, called fever grass, dat's good fer fever. Another root, called 'possum leaf, dat checks a flow. Another root, horse-mint, dat's good fer colds. I never does sweep under a bed fer a 'oman laying in. Hit's bad luck. And when yer takes up de ashes, sprinkle 'em in front of de door. The best thing fer a 'oman laying in is a rabbit foot, fer luck. But be sho' en git the left hind foot. Tie hit on a string an' hang 'round de neck. Hit makes the pains lighter. I goes to the Medical Board every month and gives in how many chillun I kotch every month. They sho' has a heap of chillen in this part of the country. I hears they don't have so many up North. Hit sho' is true, the hotter the country the more chillun yer has.

"The best thing New-fallah (Eufaula) is ever done is that Syphilis Clinic fer niggers. They has the clinic once a week. Ef a nigger

has the disease they gives 'em the shots free. I is a mid-wife and I knows all the idiot chillun, blind chillun, eczema chillen, deaf chillun an' a lot of other kine of ailments too comes 'cause their Ma's has hit. They didn't use ter know how to cure hit, but they does now, ef you ain't too fur gone. Hit's awful how many niggers has it, but I don't believe hit is as catching as folks says hit is; 'cause ef hit wuz, everybody would have hit. I sho' ain't careless though when I is around hit. Ef I is with a 'oman that has hit, I washes my hands with carbolic acid. Then I has them mercury (bichloride of mercury) tablets; little green ones, and I puts 'em in water and uses hit too. I'll tell you another thing. Ef I has a sore or a cut on my hands I gwin'er let another mid-wife kotch that chile, not me. The niggers has dat disease awful and I sho' is proud they is trying to stomp hit out. Taint such an awful percent though. I hears Doctor Salter say hit about 25 percent. Two New-Fallah doctors takes care of the clinic at ~~er~~ a time for three months, then two more and keeps on that way, with the hope (help) of the County nurse and the County doctors. They takes the blood (Wasserman test) on Tuesday at the Courthouse in the Christ Child Clinic Room, then ef they has hit, they gives 'em the shot on Thursday. Hit makes a lot of 'em pretty sick. Hit's all free, the Government and State furnishes the medicine.

"I kin tell how many chillun a 'oman gwiner have when her fust chile comes. She is gwiner have as many chillun as theys knots in de cord.

"Yes, I'll tell you 'bout farming," she interrupted herself. Our days on the farm is full. Right now this cold weather is hog-killin' time. Now that sho' is work. We gits up long 'fore sun-up. We got a clock' a Big Ben, but hit don't run unless hits on hit's face. We has to set hit by the sun. Ef hit turns warm on us, my old man takes his hog meat

to the cold storage, 'til hit's cured, here in New-Fallah. That's a big help and saving. We use ter lose a lot er meat ef hit turned warm before hit wuz cured. Here is the way we do our hog killing. We builds a pen with a wooden floor on hit and puts the hogs in hit that we is gwineter ill; an' keeps them hogs in there three weeks and feeds 'em on corn and water to fatten 'em. Hogs is the dirtiest animal there is. Then we makes a big fire out in the yard and puts a big black pot on to boil. The hog is knocked in the head with an axe; then hung up on poles to bleed. The neck is cut with a carving knife fer the blood to come through. Then the hog is put into the pot of boiling water and the hair is scraped off when hot. Then you takes him and hangs him up to cool. Then the cuttin' up starts. First yer gits the chitterlings; chitterlings are the guts you know (very much relished by connoisseurs of hog meat). I likes to clean chitterlings 'cause I likes to smell 'em. Next, the sausage making, and we sho' makes 'em good. Folks in this town all wants to buy mine. We hangs up a hundred pounds in the smoke house to dry. I likes them better than the freshmade ones. We makes good souse; that's made out of the head and ears. You boil hit, then grind hit up, season hit with salt, pepper and vinegar, then mould hit. I makes grand hog gelatin. You boils the pig feets, and the water that they are boiled in yo' takes hit, skin the grease off, add your sugar and scuppernong wine. When hit is cold, hit's congealed just like gelatin you buy down town. We got a big scuppernong arbor and makes our own wine. Makes a lot of blackberry wine too. We use every inch of the hog. Don't lose none of hit. Has enough meat in our smoke house, hams, bacon, side meats to last us from one year till the next.

"Country folks kin sho' live cheap. I cans my vegetables in the summer; tomatoes, snap beans, soup-mixtures and things. 'Course we

has collard greens growing and turnips all through the winter. Collard greens ain't good no way 'til the frost falls on 'em. Then we banks our 'taters, Irish and sweet, with dirt in 'tater hills.

"We makes a right smart of syrup, cane and sorghum, and uses hit fer long sweetenin'. We just buys sugar at Christmas time, when I makes a cake, and then in the Summer when I makes jellies and preserves. No, we don't buy no coffee; don't drink hit. We drinks sweet milk and hot water tea.

"We ain't got nothing to complain at 'bout the farm. Ef I does say hit myself, we gits along tol'able well. Got all the meat, meal, lard, butter, milk, vegetables, chickens and eggs, wood, and lye (pot-ash) soap. God is been good to us. God helps them that helps themselves and there sho' is a lot of lazy niggers.

"Give a nigger a place to sleep and meat and bread for one day and a harp or banjo to shake his foot by and he is happy. No matter if he is po', he is a lot happier than po' white folks. Sorghum molasses ain't so good as cane but hit's a quick crop and easier to make.

"You want to know why niggers is so healthy? Yes'm, I'll tell yer. They eats so much collards, greens, peas, and 'taters and don't have so much fresh air a-coming in their rooms when they's 'sleep, like white folks does. I chinks my windows in the winter time and we ain't never had the flues. (Collard greens, potatoes and peas are highly nutritious with iron.) The way we keeps our 'taters from rottening is, we puts a hole in the top of our 'tater hills and kivers hit over with straw and lets 'em air.

"The way we makes our lye soap, we keeps all our oak ashes. Then we skins the grease off the water in the pots where we biles our hog meat. Then we mixes the oak ashes and the grease together and biles hit in a big pot and that makes pot-ash soap. Hit's lots better soap

than that folks buys.

"Then in my mid-wife work, I makes my goose-grease. I got a flock of geese. Uses goose-grease on a woman's breast to keep the milk veins soft. And keep her from having a rising breast. I don't like to use no puppy. They's so rough. I makes my mutton suet, and my blackberry cordial and I takes my own "scotched linen". That's fer the baby's navel. I puts all them things and my catnip tea in my little satchel just like I wuz a doctor. I sho' wish them niggers would pay me fer ketching chillun.

"The white gentlemens in New-fallah says me and my old man is thrifty farmers. We ought to be; we been at hit long enough. I is proud of our farm and home. I got a pretty flower garden, too. Raises a lot of sunflowers for my chicken feed. I is proud of the folks my Ma and Pa belonged to in slavery time. They was quality. My Ma and Pa didn't have no use fer po' white trash, like Carpet-bags and Scalla-wags. No, honey, they sho' didn't.

1/19/1939

S.J.

Geetha Connie.
Eufaula, Ala.
March 15, 1939.

Project # 4454 Federal Writers Project WPA Page # 1.

Women Executive. Telephone Co.

Mrs. Minnie Richards, Manager, Southern Bell Tel. &. Tel. Co. Eufaula, Ala.

April 19th. 1939 will be twenty nine years Mrs. Richards has been working at the Telephone Exchange. She and another woman at Troy, Ala. are the only two lady managers is the State.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Richards, Manager of the Telephone Co. of Eufaula, Ala. the telephone service of this city has improved splendidly and is today one of the most efficient of any city in the South.

Mrs. Richards has been connected with the Telephone Co. since 1910; first as an operator. She became Chief Operator in 1915, Collection Clerk in 1921 and in 1926 Manager, in which office she has since capably served since.

Mrs.Richards was born and reared in Eufaula and graduated from the Eufaula High School.

I asked Mrs. Richards if she would tell me something of her life with the Telephone Co. She very graciously said that she would.

"My people had had reverses, so I went to school in the day and worked at night as Relief Operator at the age of thirteen years to learn the work. I was so ambitious to work, and also to go to school. I finished high school at the age of seventeen. That was when I got my first day job and it was one of the happiest days of my life. I have been Manager of the Telephone Company thirteen years. Pardon me for saying this, but it is truly a man's job. The Manager has all of the direct contact with the public and no matter how hard we try, all patrons cannot be pleased. But I do believe this, that we have ths a whole the nicest bunch of subscribers of any town in the State of Alabama.

"During the time I was Collection Clerk, there was a Manager here. They

transferred the Manager; made me Manager and since that time I have been in charge of the Telephone Company here, serving as Manager and Collection Clerk together for thirteen years. I handle all of the Eufaula and Clayton, Ala. accounts. I issue all service orders and handle all of the correspondence from the Commercial Office.

"I have always loved my work and I expect that is why I have made a success. Of course it was hard at first. But I never got discouraged. I was determined to learn and I wish everyone knew just some of the things an operator has to put up with. I sometimes think the public has rather distorted ideas of the Telephone Operator. It makes me furious when I go to a movie and see an operator pictured as a scatterbrained, gum-chewing type. For it is so untrue. We, like every organization try to employ girls with average intelligence and looks. Of course regardless of how we try we do slip up sometimes and if we find that we have made a bad bargain, that girl is let out as soon as possible. My Telephone girls have been above the average in many, many ways. They have been heroines on many occasions such as the ternado and the Commercial Bank fire. They stayed at their post of duty, never thinking of leaving until forced to.

"When I was Chief Operator, I had a very unique experience. We were attending a conference in Atlanta. It was more like a traing school. The Atlanta Operators went on a strike at one of the large exchanges there. To show you how loyal we were to the Company, every one of us went to work for them. I had never seen a big city switchboard, and was I scared? All of us stayed at the Wyncoff Hotel with all of our expenses paid, and be-

sides our salary a ten dollar bill was give us each week extra for the four weeks that we stayed there. It was a wonderful experience and I had more money than I had ever had before.

"I was Chief Operator when Eufaula had the terrible tornado in 1917. Every telephone was out of order, and every line down. The Telephone men played a splendid part in that emergency. They furnished flash lights. The kind we use is a very special light. There were no lights in Eufaula, the light plant havinhg been partly demolished.

"Many sad, humorous and exciting things happen to the Telephone operator and an old employee who was once Chief Operator here and has worked in many large offices of three states and has done Private Branch Work for many business houses was talking to me the other day and said that she had to come back to Eufaula to know that her most interesting Telephone service was spent here. I want to relate a few of her experiences;

At one time the Telephone Company had to dispense with giving out the time"to the subscribers, as it made so much work for the operators that they could not perform their duties efficiently for other calls that were more important.

Early one morning a dear old lady, whom all the operators loved called the night operator and said: "M---, what time do you get off?" "I leave at seven o'clock Mrs. F---" "Well, please tell me how long it will be before you get off." Of course she was given the time without having ever directly asking for it.

A good many years ago the Operators did not have the thorough training

training as they do today. A student would just be given a head-set, put to the switchboard and learn by observation.

One little frightened girl answered a signal and very meekly said, "Number please?" The subscriber said, "23". Then the operator, finding out that 23 was busy said, "I am sorry, sir, 23 is busy but I can give you 24." Of course all of the experienced girls had a big laugh at her ignorance. But this same little frightened, ignorant girl became an Instructor in one of the largest Telephone Exchanges in the South.

One busy day an operator answered a signal and the subscriber, a negro, gave his order. The operator established the connection and in a few seconds received a re-call on the connection. The negro said, "Cuse me, Miss, I made a wrong mistake, I want number 112."

The Chief Operators try very hard to teach their girls to be courteous and accommodating at all times. We once had a subsciber, a very sweet old lady, who was almot blind. Of course it is against the rules to give the numbers to the subscriber when he or she ask for them by name. This is not done in a spirit to be un-accommoding, but it is impossible for the operators to know all of the numbers, so a directory is printed for that purpose and if the number of a new telephone is not in the directory is can be gotten from the Information Operator. Of course there are exceptions to the rules;in case of fire, doctors, or police, the operator is to give the number without question. Well, this good lady would strive so hard to look up her numbers for she did not want to bother the operator. When her case was brought to the attention of the Chief Operator by one of the operators, she immediately gave all the girls orders to give

her the number without question, even if they had to secure it from the Information Operator themselves.

Late one night a drunk man, a local citizen put in a long distance call for his girl in a nearby town. After talking to him a few minutes, and finding out that he was drinking, she left the telephone, leaving the receiver off the hook. He immediately re-called the operator, thinking that she had disconntected him from his party. She tried to explain that he was still connected with his number but that the party had left the line. He immediatly went into a tantrum and used some of the vilest language that has ever been used over the telephons. To make it a little more emphatic, he took an axe and chopped the telephone off the wall. (it was one of the old-style box -shaped one). Of course the operator reported this to the Chief Operator the next day. She in turn reported it to the Commercial Manager. He went down to see the man. He was most opologetic to the Manager and the operator that handled his call. But he had committed two offenses; used obscene language over the telephone and destroyed the Telephone Company's property. He was never allowed to have another telephone as long as he lived in Eufaula.

During this Chief Operator's time with the Telephone Company, Eufaula experienced one of the worst fires in its history. A large hardware store, with professional men's offices in the two stories above it caught fire. It was out of control when the fire department was summoned, so they concentrated on saving the nearby buildings. We were just a few doors from this raging inferno.When the fire started into the store-room where they

had the dynamite and shells stored, the local citizens warned the girls to leave the building, not knowing just what turn the fire would take when it got into the explosives, and knowing too that the Telephone Exchange had only one exit and it was on the third floor. But they did not leave. Stayed there and called the Chief Operator, Plant Foreman and Mnnager to come down and be on hand to save any important records that needed to be gotten out if the building caught fire. This is just one of many instances where the operators showed their bravery.

There have been many, many outstanding subscribers in Eufaula. As a whole we have always had more nice that bad patrons. And it is hard to try to sift them down and try to find just a few who stand out a little more than the rest. But I would like to pay tribute to two subscribers who will always be loved and remembered by the Telephone Operator and all other employees of the Telephone Company.

One was a representative of a well known cotton firm of Alabama who had an agency in Eufaula. At that time there was a tremendous cotton business in this section and this man did a big business with the Telephone Company, sometimes giving a sequence of forty and more calls.

Regardless of how many calla he had or how anxious he wanted to talk on them, he never was impatient or cross to the Telephone Operators. He always accepted their reports without question and never called back and asked about a call. He said that he knew the operators were just as anxious to complete his calls as he was to talk on them. Every afternoon at a certain hour, he would treat the girls to any kind of a drink they wanted from the drug store. And on Christmas, each girl was given a lovely Christmas present.

Another beloved subscriber, whom all the operators loved and miss very much is a dear doctor who recently died. He said that the operators always knew where to find him, at any time of the day or night. They seemed to just know without very much effort. If this was true, it was because they were interested in him and his great work, and counted him as their best friend. On several occasions he was called to see some of the operators who were sick. If they were out-of-town girls and boarding, he would carry them to his Infirmary and never discuss the question of money.

He will always live in the hearts of all of the Telephone Operators and all members of the Telephone Company."

In 1919 Mrs. Richards married Ralph Richards, Chief of the Eufaula Fire Department. She is a home-maker and living up over the Fire Dept. was a terrible hardshop on her, but never once a word of complaint.But when he resigned and opened a shop of his own(radio, electrical refrigerators,etc) she was very happy.

She has a lovely little home on Randolph Street and spends much time in her flower garden when she gets off from work at the office.

She has no servant and does all of her work. She is an excellent cook and can work wonders with a needle.

She adopted her sister's little boy, Ashton Johnson; his father died when he was just eleven days old. His mother had two other children, and

lost all she had in a bank failure. So Mrs. Richards took the baby when he was a small boy and she feels like he is her very own.

I said, "Mrs. Richards you haven't told me about the cyclone?"(the tornado of March, 5, 1919). "Not a girl left her post, not a one lost her head. Suddenly,without any warning, there was a shattering of glass, a roar that sounded like a thousand freight trains over head, so deafning we could'nt even hear our own voices; and the peculiar yellow glow, it lasted three minutes; then a dead calm. Those three minutes were an eternity. Eufaula was shut out from the world. There were seven hundred telephones; all were dead,excepta few. All toll lines were down. But those girls never left their post and the heroic work they did is past describing. A line was put up quickly between Eufaula and Cuthbert and calls relayed to Eufaula, Over nine hundred long distance calls came in one day and over a thousand telegrams. Montgomery and Macon Telephone offices sent extra help. It was awful. There were no lights. We used Delco lights and lamps. They also used the Delco lights all Wednesday and Thursday nights, before they could get lights to dig out the bodies under the debris. Many of us worked thirty six hours without even resting. They would bring us food up to the office. Eufaula being such an old town there were hundreds of relatives all over the United States that read of the tornado, and of course they would telephone or telegraph.

Woman Executive. Telephone Manager.

Mrs. Minnie Richards.(continued)

Eufaulawas wrapped in gloom; not because of the property damage, (millions of dollars), not because the city had been bereft of that which had for many decades made it really the "City Beautiful#, the magnificent trees which can never be replaced in this generation(over five thousand), but death. Many of our leading citizens lost their lives, those who could not be conforted. Just after the dawn of the second day of distress and anguish, the watchers and workers found the last body, And all that time the telephone girls never stopping, trying to get through these frantic calls. These girls were heroins as much as the men digging for bodies. "

Geth a Comic.
Barbour County.

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George Harris. Jack of all trades.

Lives in a two room house near cemetery.

George Harris, negro carpenter, brick mason, gardner, painter. "I kin do any kind of work I can git ter do. I was birthed Dec. 25, 1861, right down there at Dr. Baker's home. He show was a fine doctor. The things he learnt me, I ain't never had to have air doctor and I done cured a lot of niggers too.(Knows everything)

"My Ma belonged to Dr. Baker and my Ma was named Charlotte and married Wate Harris. My Ma wuz the house gal and my Pa he drive for Dr. Baker. Us lived in a little red house right on the ally right behind Dr. Baker's. I member the furst cotton dat ever I seed in my life. Hit was cut here at the Rainey place north of Eufaula. Then Bates buyed hit. He married Dr. Lanes daughter, Pinky. I learnt to swim when I was just a little play boy in Pruitts pond. The train at that time was gittin' her water by the side of the railroad out of er water tank, gitting the wood from out of a rack by the side of the railroad. Lawdy, I learnt more little shavers to swim in dis here town. Mercer Johnston, Loyd Bray, Lexy Couric,Roy(your husband), he was a little hitty fellow then, Rob,and Cliff Foy. I disremember now jist all of dem. I was twenty two years of age when I married Annie Roam. Now, dat show was er grand and glorious omen, nebber did pass no lick on her, no mam, Missey. But I is shame ter say hit, I show wus er botheration ter her when it came ter drinking likker. I show likes er little drink. All my family does. She been dead now six year er gwine on seven, When I lost her my mind jist flow from me. Hit look lak hit nigh bout kilt me. Nebber et nary one's cooking but Annie's". That is true, no matter where George was working he would always go home to eat with Annie.

"I was twnety-two year old when me and Annie Roam married. She birthed

six chillun, Leksie, oldest, then Jerry, Albert, Mary, George and Charlie. All of dem living but one, that's Albert. Ef I do say hit myself, I ia still spry, can climb air tall tree in town(78 years old). I's a tree doctor too yer knows. I sweeps out de gutters on de tallest houses in town, dey gits stopped up with leaves,yer know".

I asked him what was the worse time he had ever seen. He said, "Missey, hit were de cyclone(March 3, 1919). I was moving furni-ture fer Miss Moore and hit cotched me in de street. I lay down flat and hit burnt me on de back, and de chairs I wus er-toting, flewed er-way somewheres, aint nebber seed em since."

George is the biggest liar unhung, but really wonderful for his age. He makes very good money. Works by the day and by the job. His picture does not do him justice. It is the facial expression that is so ludicrous. His hair is almost white.

Gertha Comic.
Barbour County

The Alsobrooks.

1. A detailed description of the house; number of rooms, heating facilities, furnishings, bedrooms, etc.

The house is painted a light brown with white trimmings.

Five rooms, two bedrooms, dining room, kitchen and bath room. Open fire places. Furnishings, oak, very plain, but very clean; an organ in one corner of bed-room, family pictures on wall, no electricity, kerosene lamps. In kitchen, wood stove. In back yard, wood house, wood already piled up and cut for Winter. Fall garden and chickens.

2. A description of Mr. and Mrs, Alsobrook.

Mr. Alsobrook, seventy-two years old, very gray, thin and stooped.

Mrs. Alsobrrok, sixty-three, tall and thin, black hair with streaks of gray.

3. Is Lizzie in the home? If so, how long has she been there.

Lizzie never in the house with the Alsobrooks, always lived with Mother.

4. The Alsobrooks economics and political views.

The Alsobrooks are very saving and are economists. Have some money in bank. He wants to sell his home and buy a farm, as he is getting old and is tired of working in mill. He loves to farm. He does not want to rent his home, because he said,"Nobody er-renting a house would keep my shrubs and flowers pretty. I cut my hedge every other day."

Their political views: Both Democrats, but "his old lady dont vote, ain't got no use fer women er-voting".

5. Did the Alsobrooks buy their home with a loan from the Mill? Is it paid for? If so, how long did it take?

The Alsobrooks bought their home through the Mill several years ago, and it is paid for. It took them eight years.

The Alsobrooks.(continued.)

6. A typical meal at the Alsobrook home.

Mr. and Mrs. Alsobrook both work from 6 until 2, so their breakfast is a quick affair, eaten before day. Fried white meat, eggs, hoe-cake and coffee. Mrs. Alsobrook cooks her vegetables when she gets off from work in the afternoon, so when they come home at twelve, she just has to heat over things, and make a little corn bread. They mostly have sweet or white potatoes, collard or turnip greens or snap beans or peas, or any vegetable in the garden. At night for supper, fried chicken or fried steak, batter-cakes or biscuit, and what cold vegetables that are left from dinner. Sunday "theys always have ice-cream or cake or pie". Mrs. Alsobrook does a lot of canning in the Summer in the afternoons at the Mill, and she said,"them can goods show hope her a lot through the Winter".

7; What is the salary of workers(Mr. and Mrs. Alsobrook, for instance) at the Mill?

Thirty cents an hour for 40 hours a week for frames(they both work on frames). The least they can make is $12.00 a week, the most $16.00 a week.

How do the living expenses compare with the Alsobrooks salaries?

Their salaries are good, but they are out sometimes on account of sickness. Mr. Alsobrook is getting quite feeble. Living expenses low; taxes and insurance first. Their garden and chickens help a lot.