

W. A. Ballard

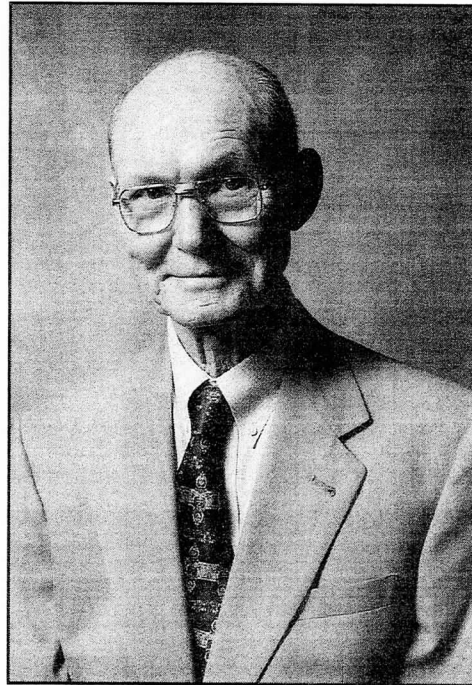
by Amy Ward

My name is W. A. Ballard and I am 75 years old but my nickname is Bud. I have lived in Woosley all of my life. I am next to the youngest in my family of seven brothers and sisters. I am still living on my father's property and my other brother who is still living lives in Inman. I went to grammar and junior high school in Woosley and high school in Fayetteville. I loved all my teachers. When I was growing up there were schools located in Woosley, Brooks, Tyrone and Fayetteville and then we all went to high school in Fayetteville. We rode a bus going into Fayetteville to get to the high school.

The worst trouble I ever got into during school, there was so much of it, and the worst part was trying to figure out how to get out of it. I had my fair share of spankings, and then when you got home you would get another one. But I was mischievous. My brothers and sisters and I never really got into much trouble because most of them were older than me. I had one little sister and there was 14 years differences between me and my next sibling. My father was married twice and had five kids with his first wife and he was a widow for about nine years before he had me.

When I was in grammar school they had a rule that you could not ride the bus if you lived one mile away from the school. On my way to school the bus would pass me and then pass me again on my way home. I didn't like arithmetic or geometry while I was in school. We had prom if you got up the nerve to ask a girl to go with you. Then you used to have to consolidate vehicles. We went on a class trip to North Carolina and we spent the night. But there weren't too much stuff other than the prom.

Growing up I was a sports fan, but we didn't have a team. I played on the basketball team for one year then World War II started and then we stopped playing. Working was about the only other activity I did after school. There were a lot of socials that were around church. And also the school would put on plays for the students to do. When I was in high



school our principal came up with the idea of having a barbecue once a year and that would bring all the people in the community to the school. He bought a pig, and then the pig was fed scraps from the school and then in September, or sometime we would all get together and

barbecue the pig. And the ones of us who were bigger would have to go get the wood to cook the food, so that was a good activity I guess. When our principal first came to our school he told us that there was not a person there who could out run or out jump him and I proved him wrong. His name was George Rogerson. This happened when all the schools came together for a thing called a Field's Day, and there were track events. I did the relay races and I ran against all of them. There were four of them running the one hundred and I was running all four hundred and still beat them. When I came up to Fayetteville to run, my mother made me wear my best suit so when we got here everyone else was wearing shorts and tennis shoes. When it was time to compete I just took off my jacket and competed in that. And of course they competed in math problems too so it wasn't all sports. I don't know where I finished in math, the first time I remember doing it, when you would add up the number it wouldn't come up to be in the hundreds, so when I was done it didn't add up to the hundreds for me to carry so.

There were rivalries here between Fayette County and Jonesboro and the other counties around participated in sports. So it is still the same. Back then we only had one paved road in Fayetteville and that was from the Courthouse west to Jonesboro.

I went into the army for two years after high school and I was stationed in Texas, then to San Francisco

then on to the Philippine Island then to Korea. Then when I came back I began farming. I worked for the Agricultural Stabilization Committee here in Fayette County and that was when they had allotted crops, and they used an arial photograph to take pictures of property here in Fayette County. They went out to take the photograph and they would then match the acreage to the arial photograph. That is what they used to determine what acreage you planted of crops you could grow. Most of the allotted crops were cotton, peanuts, and wheat. You have certain allotments of the crops that you could grow. The number of his allotment also was based on the number of crops that the farmer planted in the years before. I had the opportunity during that period of time to visit almost all of the farms in Fayette County. Back in that 50's that is pretty much all we had here.

During my growing up time there were railroads in Fayette County. In the east part of Fayette County Southern Railroad ran and it was derailed in 1938-39. The train would leave around 8:30 in the morning and would come back around 5:00. People would ride to Atlanta to do the shopping and come back in the afternoon. There once was a man who was in the habit of going to Atlanta and riding the train up there and back in the afternoon. One time he drove his car and then he got on the train and rode back home and didn't realize that he had left his car until he got back home. When the train came into town everybody came to see the train. That is the way the mail came and the train depot was across from where Jordan Salvage and Sales is and the post office was over there off of main street just across the street from the Courthouse. The train stopped in Woosley but not in Inman. Inman was not called Inman as far as the railroad was concerned. It was called Ackrin, and because there was an Inman in North Atlanta the freight would get mixed up. Now if you go down Hilo Road you will see a neighborhood called Ackrin

Station, that's where the name came from. During this time Inman and Woosley were about the same size. Most of the communities had small towns. Of course back then when there was a large town like that people did a lot of shopping in Griffin and the people in the northern part of the county went to Fairburn and those in the lower part went to Newnan and the people who lived in Brooks went to Senoia.

I didn't come to Fayetteville very much until I was in high school. About the only time that I had been to Fayetteville before was when I came with my father to bring cotton to the mill, and from Woosley up here it was about eight miles and that was about three fourths of a day. Of course you had to wait your turn to bail the cotton. In order to get from where I live to Griffin you would go down Mud Bridge Road to the river and sometime in the 30's the spring rain came and neither county had money to put back in a new bridge and they decided to leave it.

I got my first car in 1946 and it was a 41 Ford. I paid \$900, and I bought it from my future father-in-law, that was before I married. I met my wife in Fayetteville, her father was in the military and when he retired they moved back down to Fayetteville in the 40's and we went to school together, so there wasn't a special event when I met her because I knew her a while before that. I got married when I was 21 here in Fayetteville in 1947 and we had a small wedding. There isn't much of a secret to being married for that long it is just a give and take situation.

When I was growing up my father had a lot of influence over me. My father was a strong willed person and had a lot of confidence in me and I guess that he gave me a lot of values with the things that I should do and shouldn't do. Out on my property we moved the house that I grew up in, and built the one that is there now. We also have a shed to store stuff in that is by the road.