

The writer of the following letter needs no introduction to you boys. He grew up here in the village with you - None other than Ted Caldwell. Tod is now Sales Manager for Lily Mills Company and lives in Shelby. He has a very attractive wife and two fine youngsters, Nancy and Bob. His letter will evoke pleasant memories for many of you and if it rolls away the years, causing you to laugh with him and at him, Tod will be happy.

Dear Fellows:

Jim Osborne asked me the other day if I would write a letter to you boys for this issue of the HOOVER RAIL, telling something about my boyhood days in Lawndale. I realize that it is pretty bad to write an article and talk a lot about yourself, but I know more jokes and near things on myself than anyone else, so I have decided to tell you several things that happened to me while I was growing up in Lawndale. One other boy who could ask about as many questions as I could was Ralph Eaker-- John Eaker will vouch for this statement.

I understand this is the first anniversary of THE HOOVER RAIL, and to Jim Osborne, and the others there on the staff, who have worked so hard to bring this paper to you boys, I would like to offer my congratulations. I am only about 10 miles from Lawndale, and get up there every week-end, but I still enjoy every page of THE HOOVER RAIL, and can imagine what you boys away from home think of this paper.

The first real trouble that I remember ever getting into in Lawndale was when I was about 14 years old, or probably a little younger, and I was in the Company store one evening about 6 o'clock during a rainstorm. When I started home to supper, I noticed an umbrella setting at the store, and I asked Charlie Wease if I could use it. He told me I could, so I ups with the umbrella, went on home, and had supper, returning about 6:30 to find Uncle Johnny Lattimore out in front of the store, cussing like a drunken sailor, because I had taken his umbrella. I don't think there is any need of telling you what all Uncle Johnny said to me, but I was mighty glad to get him back on my side again.

That was just about as scared as I have ever been, except one night a few years later, when I decided I would like to become a night watchman. Hal Schenck told me one evening to go ahead and relieve Jesse Eaker, who would fire the boiler that night. I got along alright the first night, making all the rounds, and so far as I know, punched all the keys. However, by the next night, Belve Canipe had found out that I was watching, and he hid up in the spinning room, and just as I started to punch the last key in the upper end of the spinning room, Belve made a weird sound, and pounded on the floor with a heavy bundle of cotton warp. Well, I have heard about people getting so scared their hair would stand up, but this time my hair did stand straight up! Belve tells to this day that I yelled out, "Look out there, Belve, you're fixing to get shop", and then started running for dear life. I remember that I did not finish watching that night, as this was the 2 o'clock round, but I went back and told Jesse Eaker that he could fire and night watch, too, if he wanted to, but that I was going home -- and I did go home.

Maybe the best known story that is told on me around Lawndale is the year that I tried to turn farmer, and produce a bumper crop of peanuts. I had two nice rows across our garden, from the back of our kitchen out to "Doodle" Laughlin's hogpen, and, if I do say it, they were nice vines. I had bragged to "Buck" Southards, and others, that I wouldn't buy any of their rotten peanuts this year, as I was going to have peanuts for sale. Along about the middle of August, while the peanuts were blooming, I became very impatient to harvest my crop, and one afternoon I was up in the barber shop getting my hair cut. I told "Buck" Southards and Walt Lee about my crop. It had been dry for 3 or 4 weeks, and we were needing rain. I remember that Walt Lee said that if it rained on the peanuts that they would certainly be rotten, and if they were in full bloom, that it was time for me to harvest them. "Buck" also agreed that if I failed to pull them up in the next few days, they would all be rotten. I ran home and told Mama what these two great farmers, Mr. Southards and Mr. Lee had told me, and she begged me not to pull them up. But I started out, and pulled up every vine completely across the garden. All I was getting was 2 or 3 little soft shell peanuts, and when you mashed them, the water would ooze out. Mama kept begging

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