



We kept after Grover Rollins of Raleigh, formerly of Lawndale, until he sent us the following article for publication in the Hoover Rail. We feel sure all you boys are going to enjoy it as much as we did. Thanks a lot, Grover - write us again soon.

Dear Hoover Rail Staff:

I promised several members of the staff some time ago to write an article for publication in your splendid magazine. I have been receiving your magazine for quite sometime and thoroughly enjoy each issue.

I decided that this article should consist mainly of my boyhood reminiscences in Lawndale, with a few sidelights on some of the original characters who lived there, but have since passed

on to their reward.

One grand old man who stands out vividly in my mind is the late Major H.F. Schenck, who at times exhibited a somewhat gruff exterior, but beneath this seeming gruffness, he had a heart of pure gold.

I remember an incident that happened in Lawndale a long time ago. One day the mill was closed down because of high water. Someone noticed that the water under the old covered bridge had a skim of oil on top of it. This news quickly spread and in a short time the village turned out en masse to see this, to them, strange phenomenon. Among the onlookers was the Major, who was more interested and excited than any of the others. All the spectators were discussing the probable cause of this oil on the water, and I remember the Major exclaiming excitedly to several men who were using grappling hooks, "By doggies, boys, we may have struck oil." This "By doggies," was one of his pet expressions. You can imagine his chagrin when, a few moments later, one of the men fished out a roll of old leather belting, which had been used in the mill and discarded. This old belting had become impregnated with oil which explained the mystery. Thus the Major's oil well turned out to be a "duster" or, perhaps I should say, a "water haul." It developed later that I.S. (Ike) Pearson and Sam (Sock) Blackburn, two of the village's mischievous boys, had thrown the belting into the river. As I recall they were among the onlookers and no doubt got a great kick out of all the excitement their prank had caused. But I shouldn't have wanted to be in their shoes when the Major learned they were the perpetrators of the hoax.

Perhaps the most original character who ever lived in Lawndale was the late J.L. Lattimore, or, as most people called him, "Uncle Johnnie." He was conductor on the narrow gauge railroad that runs from Lawndale to Shelby. This railroad did a thriving business, carrying passengers some twenty-five to forty years ago, when Piedmont High School was a private boarding school and drew students from all over North Carolina and some from other states as well.

The late R.Z. (Zollie) Riviere was the engineer on the railroad at the time the incident I am about to relate happened, and the late B.B. (Buren) Wilson was the fireman. One day just before the train pulled out from Lawndale for Shelby "Uncle Johnnie" noticed a woman passenger who exhibited unmistakable signs that she was about to be visited by the stork. This naturally excited "Uncle Johnnie" who realized that the coach would not be a very desirable delivery room. Hastily looking up the fireman, he explained the circumstances to him and said, "Buren, you tell Zollie I said, By G__, to run like hell! As I recall the train beat the stork to Shelby by a nose.

"Uncle Johnnie" was a great story-teller, and if he chanced to tell you a joke that "hit you home", he would repeat it, at least once, and sometimes twice. I recall

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