

SIX WEEKS VISIT IN THE EAST

July and Aug. 1950 by Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Atkins Bromide, Okla.

After three weeks visit in Washington, Arlington, Alexandria, Richmond, Williamsburg, and Mount Vernon, Va. Georgetown and Annapolis, Md., we turned south to visit our kin and friends in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina, where we were born and raised.

We stopped at Bristol, Tenn. and from there we went to Elizabethton, Erwin, Unicoi, Jonesboro and Knoxville. At Elizabethton we visited my sister, Mrs. Swin Howell, and their large family, also Mr. and Mrs. Nave, the Folsoms and many others. We attended the old Presbyterian Church that has been there for 175 years. Mrs. Atkins' Grandfather was an elder in this church 80 years ago. From here we moved on to Erwin to visit Mr. and Mrs. Luther Hurd and Mrs. W. F. Atkins, widow of the late W. F. Atkins, Register of Deeds of Yancey County 1900 to 1904.

Here we saw we would not have time to visit all the places together and

we separated. Mrs. Atkins moved on to Johnson City, Jonesboro, her old home, and Knoxville to visit her folks. I moved on to my old home in Yancey County. I was born and raised on Big Creek, the post office is Sioux. Here, I stopped with my cousin, Dannie Atkins, and visited the old home place that still stands and is 75 years old. I attended the old Church that my father, the Rev. David W. Atkins, was pastor of for 40 years. I visited my father's tomb on the top of a hill that overlooks the valley of Cane River and the mouth of Big Creek.

It seemed to me that the mountains had grown higher since I left fifty years ago, but they told me they had not, the timber had grown more on top of the mountain. The place had changed so much that I would not have known it. The good roads brought better living conditions to this section, with the TVA so near, and with the electric power and lights, and with this better housing conditions, and better farming. Tobacco seems to be the money crop and is raised with less labor than our grandfathers raised it. However it is like the cotton in Oklahoma, they are given allotments, so many

acres or fraction thereof. It seems that Yancey County has been able, since I left there, to interest capital in coming in and building factories which give employment to the large number that were unemployed.

From the old home I went to Burnsville, the county seat, where I attended the Stanley McCormick School more than fifty years ago. During my school days there, my brother, the late W. F. Atkins, was Register of Deeds and I worked in his office to pay a part of my expenses. Here, I met many fine boys and girls that attended the same school and some now live here: My good friend of many years, Carroll Gillespie, and also my good friend Zenus Robertson, Frances McPeeters, and Mrs. Mattie Gardner Sorrells and many others I am sure are here. While looking over Burnsville for a few hours I remember that some of my mother's folks live here and I called to see cousin Millard Honeycutt, 94, and his fine daughters, who were classmates of mine at Stanley McCormick I met many other good friends while here, and among them was John Lyon, 90. I was glad to see him, for he is a fine fellow. I missed many other faces as I looked around the place, such names as Cornelius Robertson, M. M. Robertson, T. F. Rolland, Stove Rolland, J. Biss Ray, L. E. Briggs, Joe Evans, Fred Wilson, Jule Abernathy, Zeb Anglin and George Anglin, Will R. Peterson, Dr. Ray, Prof. Hubbard and many others. Some are still living, I am sure, and the others have gone on to their reward.

Burnsville had changed from a village to the appearance of a city. No more muddy streets nor drinking out of a well. There were electric lights, office buildings, better schools, and trunk highways leading in four directions.

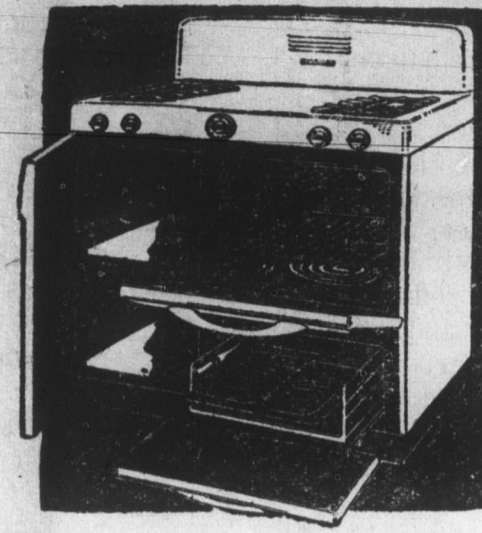
It was court week in town and I saw many faces from the country around the court house, but none I remembered. But in closing this part, I wish to say that I met a cousin of mine, Bill Atkins, whom I had never seen before.

From here I went to Pensacola to see my brother, Robert Atkins, and many cousins there. Pensacola had put on a change and good roads and better farms and houses.

I had planned to visit Asheville, Montreat and Swannanoa, and also, I had planned to return to Burnsville and spend a few days with my good friends; but when I reached my old home on Big Creek, a message was waiting for me from my wife at Bristol that Tommy, our son, had been called to report for duty and wanted to see us before he left. We caught a train that night. That brought our visit to the old North Stat to a close, and is now only a pleasant memory. . . .

T. H. Atkins.

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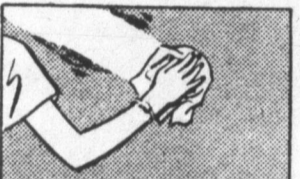
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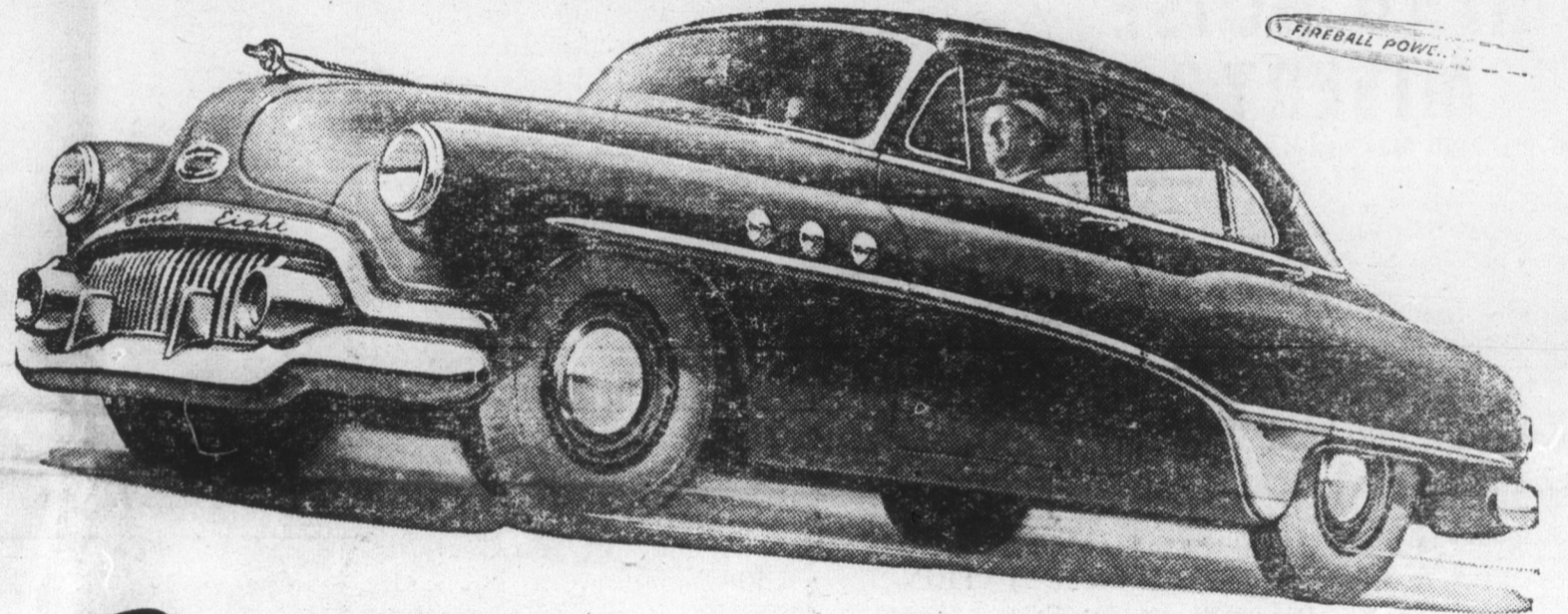


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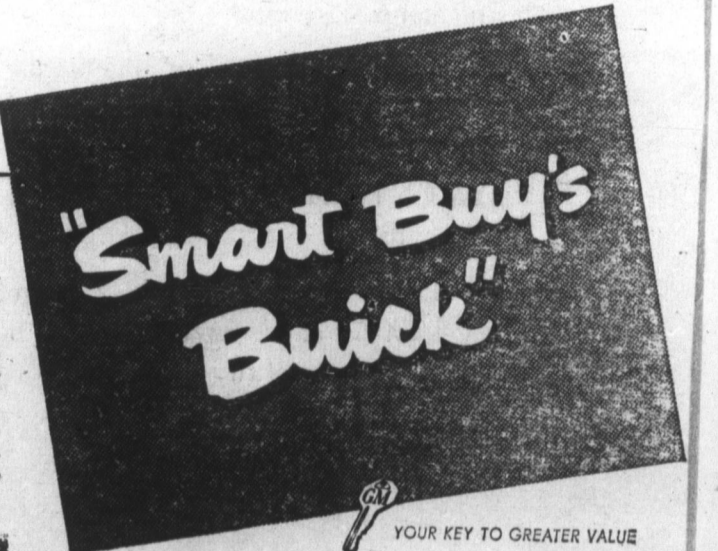
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