

(Editor's note: This is the final installment of an article written by George Frank Andrews of Spartanburg, who spent the first sixteen years of his life in Fairfield County.)

This nostalgia would not be complete without some mention of the ferry across the Broad River at Dawkins. This was the only route from Fairfield to Newberry Counties at that time. The ferry was a flat bottom barge type of boat, large enough to accommodate two wagons and mules. It was powered by the use of cables and a winch with a crank which was turned by hand. My uncle, Will DeHhns, was a cotton farmer and he also ran the ferry. I am thinking of times he would let us kids go with him as he carried passengers and vehicles across the river. That was a real thrill. For a kid who had not traveled very far from home, when we landed on the other side of the river it was like tales we had heard of landing in a foreign land.

This crossing of the Broad River was not only a crossing from Fairfield to Newberry County, it was also the only crossing for thirty-five miles up or down the river. Some years later a bridge was built across Broad River at Strother, about five miles from Dawkins. At the same time the ferry was discontinued. Fond memories linger on with those of us who enjoyed the "then" ways of life.

I have mentioned the town of Dawkins several times but not told much about it. Dawkins is a station on the Southern Railroad and in the early years of this century the center of activity at Dawkins was the railroad and railroad depot. It was a very large depot consisting of a warehouse, passenger waiting rooms, telegraph and ticket office, all of which was attended by a depot agent. Mr. Alley Ladd owned and operated a large general merchandise store; he sold everything from a spool of thread to a carload of guano. He also owned and operated a public cotten gin and bought and sold cotton and cottonseed. No doubt about it, Mr. Alley Ladd was a big man at Dawkins. No one lived at Dawkins so the population was zero. However, if you could have seen the people visiting on Saturday afternoon you would think that there was somewhat of a population. Some of these people were buying and trading; for some it was only a social gathering where they exchanged news mostly about the progress of the crops at that time. Some of the people were there to watch the train go by. We kids were always happy when Papa said, "Let's go to Dawkins this Saturday afternoon." We would watch the trains go by and listen to the gossip while Papa was buying supplies. I would say that on an average there would be about a hundred people in Dawkins on a Saturday afternoon. We kids always looked forward to these trips.

After helping in a small way in building our new home, my twin brother and I kid-like thought we knew all there was to know about building and since there were

some odds and ends of lumber left and we felt the outhouse was in a bad state of deterioration, we decided to build a new one. This small building was called by most people the "privy". My grandfather called his the "state house". I never did learn exactly why he called it by this name, but I have always had a suspicion that it was because the State newspaper found its last useful service inside this building. But when I think of all the out of date catalogues that found this to be their final destination, I wonder why it was not called after one of these.

We did not have any problems in constructing this building until time to cut the crescent ventilator hole and other holes. We did not have any problems in constructing this building until time to cut the crescent ventilator hole and other holes. We did not have the proper tools to cut crescent and oval holes so all we could do was to cut square ones. I will have to say that the square holes in place of oval holes were not very comfortable. We built what was called a two-holer. However, I never could see the use of two holes when the building is only used by one person at a time. I have wondered through the years to the present time if we are happier with the modern bathroom facilities than we were with the old two-holer.

I do not remember much about my grandparents but I would like to say something about them. Grandmother Andrews died in 1901 when I was one year old. Grandmother Blair and Grandfather Andrews both died in 1904 when I was four years old. Grandfather Blair died in 1910 when I was 10 years old. I can remember some things about Grandfather Blair. After my grandmother died, he continued to live with his two stepdaughters Elizabeth and Maggie Aiken in the Blair home. He had been a big cotton farmer, but in the later years he had cut down to a two-horse farm on account of age and failing health. I remember visiting him and he would tell me of his experiences in the Civil War. He was a flag bearer and was wounded twice, once in the breast and once in the foot. Both of my grandfathers were elders in Salem Presbyterian Church and both of them and my grandmothers were buried in the churchyard.

Although I have been writing of things as they were

in my childhood and early teenage days in Fairfield County, I want to say that my mother and father were the two most important people in my life while in Fairfield and since. They played a major role in every aspect of my life from the day I was born. My mother died in Columbia in 1927, when I was twenty-seven years old and it seemed I needed her more than ever. I have always tried to live up to her high standard of integrity and morality. Her passing left me with a sad and helpless feeling. My father died in 1943 in Columbia when I was forty-three years old. Although I had enjoyed his guidance for forty-three years, his passing left me with an empty and sad feeling. The love and affection of my parents have always been a guiding light in my life. My parents were buried in Elmwood Cemetery in Columbia.

As I mentioned before, my father moved his family to near Columbia in the fall of 1916 and we all operated a truck farm. My twin brother and I began working in the Southern Railroad Shop in Columbia in 1918. My brother continued working there until his death in 1968. He was shop foreman the last thirty years. I worked in Columbia shops and other points outside until 1939 when I was transferred to Spartanburg. I was shop foreman for 35 years until I retired in 1971, four years a foreman in Columbia Shops and thirty-one years in the Spartanburg Shop.

My brothers Robert and William (Mack) have been in the automobile business in Columbia since finishing school. My only sister Margaret, (Mrs. Reggie Lever) lives near Blythewood where her husband has been a farmer and also worked for Richland County until he retired about a year ago. My youngest brother, Blair started working with Southern Bell Telephone after he finished school and he has been with them since, except for about five years when he served in the army during World War Two. Clyde Blair was born after we left Fairfield.

Mother died in 1927. Father died in 1943. Charles died in 1968. Robert is living in Columbia. Mack is living in Columbia. Clyde is living in Columbia. Margaret is living near Blythewood.

I am living in Spartanburg, 645 South Converse Street, 29301.

