

October, 1986

THINGS I REMEMBER ABOUT OUR FAMILY

I was born in 1923, so, I will not be able to remember very much, but I will try. I think we were fortunate to have lived in such a pretty village. It was once noted as the prettiest Mill Village in the South. It also had a twin village in New Holland, Georgia. I went through there once and the houses were identical to the ones in Pacolet Mills. The man who landscaped this village was brought here from Belgium. That's what my Daddy called him "Old Belgium". There was a greenhouse built on Stone Street (across from the parsonage) which he used for plants etc. At that time, the trees, hedges, flowers and walkways were beautiful and were maintained by the Company. "Old Belgium" must have lived in the house which now belongs to Lois Greene. By the way, the office of the greenhouse is still standing on my property, it was moved there when the greenhouse was sold.

I do not know how old Uncle Fred was when he went to Texas. I do know he must have liked it and he found a pretty girl named Ginny, married her and she kept him there. I remember their visits back here because Mama always kept ham especially for them. Uncle Fred worked hard, prospered and made quite a name for himself in a little town called Paris, Texas.

Aunt Rose was a very strong and smart woman. I can barely remember Uncle Joe, but he always sat in a big rocking chair and always wanted me to do the "Charleston" for him. Aunt Rose was widowed very young, with a big family. She had to work hard and long hours just to keep her loved ones alive. "Work will not kill you" because she lived to be 76 yrs. old. They lived near the railroad tracks (you know where the dummy (train) ran) on Walker Street. Clyde told me that every time he shot out street lights that Uncle Mush would come by and tell on him. (Now he knew Daddy had to climb them poles and put in those lights.) Aunt Rose also kept our Grandpa Kirby until his death. God bless her!

I cannot say Aunt Lottie, I will have to say Aunt Laud. (Don't that sound better) Aunt Laud was also a strong, smart woman. (Wonder why some of this didn't rub off on us?) I remember she and her family lived in the house with Grandma and Grandpa Kirby a long time. She also was widowed young with five children to rear. I especially remember Earl and his Snowball Machine. This machine was not motorized - he pushed it - it did not have crushed ice - he used a hand ice-shaver and sold the snowballs for 5 cents or 10 cents. The kids all over

Pacolet Mills loved him. (I don't know about the Parents.)

We shortened Aunt Allie to Aunt Arl. (that's the only way I know to spell it) Now she had a big family and had to be strong and smart but she also had a strong husband, named Heber, who was a God-send to her. I know. They migrated to Union County and lived in the village of Monarch. I remember visiting Christine in the summertime. They had some good-looking boys down there. I always remember when they would bring me home on Sunday afternoon (back then it seemed to be 100 miles). Aunt Arl and Uncle Heb. always remarked about Union County having better roads than Spartanburg County. They said they could tell when we crossed the line. I was setting in the back seat thinking to myself, "Yeah, but you don't have Pacolet Mills in Union County."

Uncle Arch and family lived on Stone St. quite a while, then they moved away. Uncle Arch was always a big kidder and Aunt Maybelle an immaculate housekeeper. Their daughter Kathleen made news in Pacolet by joining the Navy during World War II. There she met Chuck, married him and really left us all and moved to Indiana.

Uncle Robert (Eastman) and Aunt Nora Belle resided on Stone St. and reared their family there. (Wonder why they didn't name that street Kirby Ave.?) This couple really loved square dancing and Uncle Eastman was the only man I ever square danced with who did intricate steps and didn't wear your arm off going up and down. He was really smooth. I understand he also called square dances. Before Aunt Nora Belle's mother, Granny Burgess, came to live with them, my sister, Vera, took care of the children, so Aunt Nora Belle could work. One morning when Vera was going to work, it was real cold, the dog ice covered those red banks. She left the house with Daddy. Now he could come off that red hill faster than an A-model ford could run and Vera, trotting, trying to keep up. Daddy had made a short cut by laying two telephone poles (called a foot-log) across the creek. On this cold morning these poles had ice all over them. Daddy made it but Vera slid off in the creek. She had to walk back home with her clothes frozen and crying all the way. (Bless her heart!) I just had to add that!

I waited until last to write about my Daddy, Clarence. He was 25 when he married Mama and they went all the way to Whitney on their honeymoon, in a buggy, and it took them all day. Daddy was better known as "Mush", I had a brother nicknamed "Grits". (You know mush and grits (Ha)) Pacolet is known for nicknaming people. This still goes such as - Lead-

bottom, Chug, Smokey, Lead-man , Worry, etc. My mother was Mattie or Mat. She lived to be 72 years old, a wonderful mother, went through a lot but could still laugh. She always welcomed people to her home - loved them - laughed with them - and “preached” to them. Ha! Daddy bought our home and 5 acres of land for \$800.00. We moved there when I was about nine yrs. old. The floors had cracks so wide that the wind would blow the rugs up off the floors. So we had to move back to the village to keep from freezing to death until Daddy could (re-model) the house. After another baby, another mortgage and plenty of hard work we returned to the country. We drew our water from a well- had a modern 2 hole outhouse, a mule, cows, hogs, wagon and a big barn. Daddy called it a farm, so we farmed. I’ll never forget all those sweet-tater slips we set out. I know it was an acre. (Try covering an acre on your knees.) Daddy usually kept 3 cows and I did the wrong thing, I learned to milk! Frank and Harold and David milked the other 2 cows, but my stall was in the middle. We always wound up in a milk fight. (You know taking that thing the milk comes out of and squirting it at each other.) Don’t you know we smelled good when we went to school, dried milk in our hair and that other stuff you couldn’t help but step in on our feet. But, oh, what fun! By the way, I got to quit milking when Shelby got big enough to milk. My Mother was not only a church-goer, she was a Christian. Sometimes she would let us play rook, but, Daddy would cheat, we would start fussing and the cards would go in the heater. After we were grown, if we were home to spend the night, she would make us sit down and listen as she read the Bible, then get down on our knees for prayers. I am so thankful for such a mother, but we always had fun. When we would get on our knees, Grits would grab two cushions, one for his knees and one for his head. He would say, “Now, Ma, don’t pray all night.” When she finished praying, Grits would be snoring. (not really)

I don’t think any of us could have made it without the three F’s, Fun, Family and Friends. When there was trouble, everyone was troubled, when sorrow, everyone was sad but they all clung together and enjoyed the funny things in life.

I am truly thankful that I was brought up the way I was. It seemed families were closer then, but time and changes go on. Families can’t live in the same places because their jobs move them away from each other. This is sad because we truly need one another. So children, grandchildren and great grandchildren please remember each other, visit and stay as close as possible. None of our parents were well educated but they were physically smart, strong, willing

and wanted to do the best they could for their loved ones. How fortunate we are to have had ancestors that were that strong.

My Daddy could not read or write, but oh how I loved him and was so proud of him. He could figure and you better not try to cheat him in money. I never knew him to be out of a job other than the Depression. He went to work, in the mill, at 7 yrs. old, retired at 65 yrs. and lived to be 84. During the Depression - we farmed. Oh! how we farmed - I hated it! I never wanted to marry a farmer or live in the country. So I married a man from Burlington, NC, who fell in love with Pacolet and the Red Hill. Now I live in Can Hollow at the bottom of the Red Hill and happy to be here. It has been a good life. I thank God for my Mother and Daddy, my family and my heritage. (even my purple nose) Hasn't he been good to us all!

I love you, my people, and don't hesitate to tell others you love them.

God Bless You!

Dot Kirby Kimrey

Oct. 5th 1986

Typist Note:

Dorothy Mae Kirby Kimrey, the wife of James E. Kimrey, died on 6/16/94 at the age of 71.

James (Jim) Kimrey had died on 12/6/1958 at the age of 41.

(From notices on the Internet)