

COBB COUNTY ORAL HISTORY SERIES

NO. 34

INTERVIEW WITH MARTHA LEMON AND MARK LEMON

CONDUCTED BY KATHRYN A. (KITTY) KELLEY

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Cobb County Oral History Series, No. 34  
Interview with Martha Lemon and Mark Lemon  
Conducted by Kathryn A. (Kitty) Kelley  
Saturday, November 13, 1993  
Location: 4375 Willis Street, Acworth, Georgia

KK = Kitty Kelley    ML = Mark Lemon    MAL = Martha Lemon

[Ed. note: Kennesaw State College Professor Dr. John Gentile learned that the Lemon home is of historical interest when he was reading a brochure of a walking tour of historical residences in Acworth. He mentioned the house to Kitty Kelley, who contacted Mrs. Lemon. She and her husband own the house currently and arranged for this interview. This interview was conducted with Mark Lemon and his mother, Martha Lemon].

KK: First of all, I think I'd like to start back in terms of how the house was built and who built the house and why and some of whatever you want to tell me about the origin of the home.

ML: Okay. The house was built by James Lyle Lemon in 1856. My understanding is it was built or he had it built for himself and his wife; he had recently just married Eliza Jane Davenport. James Lemon, the father of James Lyle and Smith, was involved in DeKalb County politics and served in the War of 1812. In 1843 he moved near Marietta, then moved in 1845 to Acworth and died there in 1849. He is buried in the Mars Hill Cemetery. He purchased the land in Acworth where the current residence now sets, and willed the estate to his widow, Mary Brown Telford Lemon in 1849. The property included 180 acres and the homeplace at the current 4375 Willis Street address.

KK: Was James Lyle Lemon from Acworth?

ML: He was born in DeKalb County in 1835 and moved to Cobb County in...I think when he was about eight or nine years old. When he was twenty-one -- 1856 was when this house was built -- so he had probably just married when he was twenty-one years old and had built this house.

KK: And what was his occupation at that time?

ML: He was in business. I believe he had a general mercantile business; he was in business -- he had several areas of interest. He and his brother Smith...

MAL: He had a bank.

ML: Well, he had a brother by the name of Smith Lemon who I think in the 1850's -- Smith was a little older than he was -- Smith opened up the first bank in this town, that was the Smith Lemon Banking Company.

KK: In Acworth?

ML: In Acworth. Right up the street there.

MAL: His building is still there named the Lemon Building.

ML: He was in business with his brother in several different activities: mercantile dry goods, banking, they had a variety of things going on at this time.

KK: That's young to open a bank and a mercantile business; were they from a prosperous family?

ML: I don't think that you could say that they were wealthy. They were certainly industrious. I know that their father was heavily involved in county politics down in DeKalb County. I think they built the first frame house in DeKalb County. He was the county treasurer for several years; so I don't think they were very wealthy; but they weren't paupers either. I would say they were upper-middle class would be the best way to put them. I know that they were dynamic people. They were really interested in, probably very interested in becoming wealthy. They came up here and saw the opportunity to open up. . .

KK: The brothers?

ML: Well, they came up with the thought of the whole thing, and growing up in this area they probably saw the opportunity to open up several businesses and did so. They did everything from, like I said, mercantile dry goods, general merchandise, banking. There was a tannery that they got involved in right across the road here. I think there was a cotton mill that they were working at. They were mining for gold in the area, and that ties in later when they had \$5,000 in gold hidden on the property here during the Civil War. When they came back and re-inhabited this area they were able to dig up the money and start fresh after the war; they still had money.

KK: And that was from their own gold mining but did that take place in Acworth, the gold mining?

ML: Yes. They mined down on Proctor's Creek which ran from oh, about half-a-mile back that way. So there were old mines in this area.

KK: Now that was before the Civil War took place that the house was built.

ML: Right. Five years.

KK: Then tell me about your great-great-grandfather's being in the Civil War and being in the military.

ML: Well, being one of the slightly more prominent citizens in the area -- he was one of the group of prominent citizens in this area, just being well-known, everybody probably knew who he was -- when the War started a company of infantry was raised which was very common for that period. In fact, I believe, if I'm not mistaken, the company of infantry was raised before the War actually started and existed before the War started because of the threat of war, the impending threat of war. They raised this company beforehand and James was elected Second Lieutenant in the company, the company being approximately one hundred men.

KK: And those would have all been people from this area?

ML: Right. They were all local guys from this town. Many of the names you can still see on mailboxes around here. They trained locally in this area for a few weeks and then went down to Kennesaw, which back then was called Big Shanty, to Camp McDonald, which was a military training camp that was set up right off the railroad tracks down in Kennesaw. That was staffed by cadets from the Georgia Military Institute -- GMI -- and these cadets helped train these recruits in the arts of marching and firing and so forth. James and his company, in August of 1861, were shipped north on trains to Richmond and from that point on they were actively involved in the War.

KK: Fighting for the Confederacy?

ML: Right.

KK: Did his wife stay here in the house?

ML: Yes, I believe she did because I have a letter that he wrote to her when he was a prisoner -- personally I think -- I don't think, I know -- the most interesting part of this whole story -- the house and everything -- is his experiences during the War because he just went through an unbelievably dramatic set of circumstances and experiences. He was wounded badly and captured and so forth. He fought in every major battle that the Army of Northern Virginia fought in under Robert E. Lee. His unit was thickly involved in the worst of the fighting

and in almost every battle they took part in played some key role in turning the table or turning the tide of events for that particular battle. They were a very, very good regiment and fought really hard. They were really a high quality fighting unit. They were in very important parts of the battles; for instance, they were behind the stonewall in Fredericksburg which is so famous to Civil War historians. They were in the wheat field and peach orchard at Gettysburg. They broke through the Union lines at Gaines Mill at the end of the day when Confederate troops had been charging that line all day long and not being able to break the lines; the 18th Georgia went in with Hood's Texans, and they broke through the line and turned the tide of the battle. They won the day. Then that's not even to get into his prisoner experiences when he was prisoner so he saw a lot and experienced a lot.

KK: You said before he went to war he buried the \$5,000 in gold in the yard?

ML: What I've heard is that Smith did that and then they...

KK: His brother?

ML: His brother. I'm pretty sure about that; that's what I've always heard. Then when they came back they probably used that money jointly to get started again.

KK: How many years was he in the War before he came home for good?

ML: He was in for the duration of the entire War.

KK: But part of that time he spent in captivity.

ML: Right.

KK: Did he come home from being in captivity or was he...?

ML: Yes.

MAL: Tell her about being one of the six hundred. She may not know that.

ML: Okay. When Longstreet was sent to Tennessee on temporary assignment to help in the eastern theater of operations, the 18th Georgia being under Longstreet went with him; and they took part in the attack on Knoxville, Tennessee in November of 1863. It was November 29, 1863. They conducted a pre-dawn assault on earthen fortifications on the outskirts of the city of Knoxville held by the Union

troops. It was one of the first times in the history of warfare where wire entanglements were used. Not meaning barbed wire but like trip wire. It was telegraph wire strung between tree trunks, and that worked in the darkness. The assaulting troops ran through that stuff and got all tripped up and plus it was freezing cold and it was muddy, it was dark; they had to chop their way through a whole line of fallen trees that had been lined up; so it was difficult just in getting to this fortification. Once they got there, they poured down in to the ditch that had been -- like a moat without water -- that had been built around the fort and then poured down into this thing. The surface that they had to climb up to get over and into the fort was covered with ice and mud; and they had not brought scaling ladders; so they had to try to scramble and dig and claw their way up to the top of this fort. Meanwhile, cannon shells were being rolled down into them and exploding amongst the troops, killing dozens at a time. It was just a mess. According to James in his diary he and a group of about twelve other men -- well, I'm sure isolated incidents like this happened all around the fort -- but he and a group of men were able to slowly gain just below the crest of the parapet; and he said he had to use a sword, plunging a sword into the mud and pulling himself up with it to get up on the outer part of the parapet. Right on sort of a signal they rushed over and were met; they ran right into a volley of musket fire that killed the colonel of the regiment and killed almost everyone. He wrote that he moved forward firing his pistol, and then the next thing he knows he was unconscious. What had happened according to the military medical records that I got from the National Archives was that he was shot with a fifty-eight calibre mini-ball that pierced his pharynx; and the ball passed just under his jaw, pierced his neck, and came out the other side. Of course, he was instantly unconscious, I mean the shock. He was dragged down into the fort and captured and then sent to a medical field hospital. Then he was subsequently sent north through Ohio and across over to Delaware where he was imprisoned in Fort Delaware prison which was a masonry fort. Located on Pea Patch Island in the middle of the Delaware River. Not long after that he was among six hundred hand picked Confederate officer prisoners that were sent south under the orders of Secretary of War [Edwin M.] Stanton as retribution for a perceived mistreatment of northern troops in Andersonville, I believe.

The idea was to take six hundred Confederate prisoners and mistreat them as badly as they could be mistreated just as basically a revenge measure. These six hundred

men were put in chains and manacles and put down in the hold of a steamship, a steamer, sent south to Charleston, disembarked on Morris Island, which is just right around the Charleston Harbor there. At that particular time Fort Sumter was still in Confederate hands, and they were firing, there were artillery duels going on all day long between Fort Sumter and the Union troops and batteries surrounding Fort Sumter. Well, they took these six hundred Confederate officers and put them in a pine stockade on three acres right outside of the Union fort, so that any shells falling short from the Confederate cannon at Fort Sumter would fall right in and kill their own men. So it was sort of an ironic little revenge technique. It backfired on them though because all the records that I've been able to read. . . there were some Confederates wounded, but no Confederates were killed that way even though several of the Negro guards from the 54th Massachusetts, who were detailed to guard these guys, were killed. Apparently on the catwalks that surrounded the stockade some of the guards were killed from shrapnel, but none of the Confederates were.

KK: How long was it until it was released?

ML: He was eventually sent back to -- well he went to Fort Pulaski, was imprisoned in Fort Pulaski and then sent back to Fort Delaware... Well, he could have been released right away at the end of the War. He could have immediately taken the oath of allegiance and walked out of there in April of 1865, but as he explains in his diary it was a real emotional decision for a lot of these guys to make. They had gone through so much, and they felt so strongly about what they were fighting for that it was a dilemma. Some did; some signed the paper, took the oath, and left and went home. But he and a group that he was with held out for another three months. Finally he said [quoting from the diary]: "I have done the unspeakable but I am now paroled & today set out for home. My duty to my country is done. Mine to my family remains."

KK: Now tell me what had happened to the home in the meantime while he was gone.

ML: Well, all I know for a fact is that the house was utilized -- I suppose it was lived in by his wife and daughters...

MAL: He came back here several times.

ML: He came back on furloughs. . .

MAL: He came back on furloughs; so he did visit here once; so his family had to be here.

ML: That's right. They continued to live here, and he came and visited frequently or as frequently as he could. Then I guess that when news that the Yankees were coming down with Sherman and getting fairly close -- it didn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that armies had to travel close to railroads, because that's where they got their food and supplies and so forth; and this town sits right on a railroad. They knew they were going to be coming right down the railroad of the occupied town.

KK: How close is this house to the railroad tracks?

MAL: One block.

ML: I don't know feet or yards but it's 150 yards, maybe.

MAL: Yes, because I know it's just a block down to Main Street; and then there's the railroad tracks right there.

ML: So, in any event, I have heard that -- I know for a fact that Smith Lemon and his family went to Cuthbert which is south Georgia. It's down below Columbus. I know that's where Smith and his family went. I'm not sure but that maybe Eliza, his wife, went also; but I don't know that. So she may have been here when the Yankees got here and occupied the place; but when they did get here -- I think it was in June, late May, early June of 1864, the army moved into this town and the surrounding communities as well. It was a huge army spread all over.

KK: Was it thousands or hundreds?

ML: Oh, it was thousands. Several army corps were involved under Thomas and McPherson and Schofield. Along with a few other houses in this area, this house was utilized as Sherman's army headquarters and provost marshal's office.

MAL: And as a hospital.

ML: Well, that was later. The townspeople and the Yankees had occupied this town; it was under martial law. The only people who could walk up and down the streets were soldiers. Any civilians that wanted to go into town for any reason had to have a pass issued and personally signed by the provost marshal, and all the old-timers around this area all say independently of each other that this was the place where their grandfather or their great-uncle had to come to get a pass.

KK: This address?

ML: Yes. They had to come to this house where the provost marshal would sign a pass, and they could walk on up the hill into town.

KK: Was this the nicest house in town at the time? I wondered why he picked it; I mean it's obviously very convenient just being one block from Main Street.

MAL: It was probably one of the nicest and one of the largest.

ML: But, you know, I hesitate to say that, because ninety percent of this town was burned in November when Sherman -- later on down in the timeline when Sherman had already gone down and occupied Atlanta and fought the battle of Atlanta and all that and when he was packing up and moving toward Savannah, when they moved out of Atlanta, they burned not only Atlanta -- people think they just burned Atlanta -- but they burned all the towns anywhere near where his army was located. In November, they burned Acworth.

KK: November of 1864?

ML: That's when they packed up and left.

KK: Now is that when the fire took place in this house?

ML: No, that was recent.

KK: But this house was not affected by that fire?

ML: No. As was the custom before the March to the Sea began, it was customary as a civilized gesture to spare any house that the army had utilized for headquarters or for hospitals. That changed during the March to the Sea, because that's when Sherman became fairly vindictive and, indiscriminately, would burn homes; but prior to that when they were in this area they would spare homes that they had used for any purpose. The Methodist church that's now gone that used to be up on Main Street was used as a hospital. This house was also used as a hospital after the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain.

KK: For Confederate soldiers?

ML: No, for Union soldiers. They would haul them off the battlefield in wagons to the closest community, which would have been Big Shanty; they utilized several structures around there. Then they loaded them onto troop trains and headed the six miles up the line,

disembarked here and used this house and the Methodist church as a hospital.

KK: So obviously the wife was not here at that time. Is that true? Well, you don't know.

ML: I don't know. I wish I could say.

KK: Do you know what was stolen, if anything was stolen from the house or what the condition of the house was when all that was over with? Is there any record of that?

ML: No. I can infer, but I don't know. I just infer and assume that they probably -- I shouldn't say that. Actually it all depended on the officer in charge. It depended on the commanding officer in that area. They would often turn a blind eye to that, to looting and pilfering. On the other hand, if he were conscientious and had a little bit of civilized nature they would halt the looting and pilfering whenever they saw it and issue strict orders to prevent it. They would many times guard a home, post armed guards in the house to keep it from being damaged.

KK: Whose name is engraved under the cellar?

ML: I didn't know who it was at first. His name was -- I'd have to go -- I think it's Captain L. M. Dayton. At the time that didn't ring a bell with me. I discovered it one day when I was down there rooting around underneath the stairs kind of trying to reach my arm back in some out-of-the-way areas. I pulled out what a guy told me he thought they may have been linen bandages, but it's strips of linen. I don't know what they were used for. But at the same time I found that stuff, I was looking around and knocking the cobwebs out from underneath the stairs, and I noticed a carving underneath the stairs on a stringer, one of the stringers that goes up. So I got a flashlight and shone it on there; and the name says, "L. M. Dayton, Captain, June 8, 1864." Then I started digging through my reference books, and in that process I determined that Sherman himself was here in this town for -- I believe he came here on -- this is right off the top of my head -- I'm pretty sure he arrived personally in town here on the sixth of June, 1864 and stayed here the sixth, seventh and eighth and left the morning of the ninth. I think he went down to Big Shanty or one of the surrounding communities down here. He didn't stay very long. The army stayed here for months but he himself was only here for about three and a half days.

KK: When did James Lyle Lemon come back to this home?

ML: I don't have a specific day and month or year, well, I know it was '65. When he was paroled he made his way back down here. It would probably have been, let's see, probably August or September time frame. It would have probably taken him two or three months to walk back here. But the name down there turned out to be one of Sherman's staff officers. The general officer would always have a staff of eight to ten junior officers that basically tailed them wherever they went in case dispatches had to be sent to some other general. There would always be a little cluster of officers, and he was one of Sherman's staff officers.

MAL: That would tie in -- the date tied in with the time that he would have been here.

KK: So once he came back, what do you know about the house from that point on? From the time James Lyle returned?

ML: He lived in it, raised a huge family. I think he had ten -- I believe he had only two girls during the War and after the War he had the other eight children for a total of ten. They lived here, he was heavily involved in business, local businesses around here.

KK: Started, do you think, by that buried \$5,000?

ML: Right and plus his grit and determination. They guy was just a real -- Smith I have heard and read was more of a studious, introverted kind of, I don't want to say sickly, but...

MAL: Not as outgoing.

ML: In fact, it's been said because of his health he wasn't really up to the rigors of army life; so he was in a Georgia Home Guard Unit, but wasn't really actively involved in the War, whereas James was more of the dynamic, physical, get-up-and-go, hard charger and more gregarious and outgoing. It was an interesting contrast of the personalities.

KK: So did he live here with his family for the rest of his life?

ML: Right. He died in 1907.

MAL: We have pictures of him taken as he had gotten older with some of his family here.

ML: That's him in the middle [indicating a family photo on the wall].

MAL: Mark belongs to the Sons of the Confederacy, and it was through Mark's efforts that he was able to get this information about James Lyle and his being wounded and refusing to. . . what was it?

ML: He refused to take the oath of allegiance after he was wounded in return for good food and medical treatment and basically just told them to "go to hell" and he survived it. Anyway, the totality of his experiences qualified him.

MAL: For the medal of honor.

ML: This organization bestowed that medal on him, and they say it's just as difficult to get as the Congressional Medal of Honor. It's the equivalent.

KK: What happened to the home after he died in 1907?

ML: He willed the house to his daughter, May, who shortly thereafter sold the home to one of his other daughters, her sister Mariah. Mariah married a man named John C. Nichols. If I'm not mistaken that John Nichols was in James's unit during the war. He was a veteran that fought under James. John Nichols married his daughter Mariah, and the house passed into the Nichols' family at that point in time.

MAL: So that's how the Nichols became owners.

ML: I've often wondered since he had four sons why it wasn't willed to the eldest son.

KK: Then it probably would have stayed in the family. As I understand, the house passed to that family down through the years and then somehow or another -- were you always aware of this home, you and your husband?

MAL: Yes. We've always been aware of it. My husband came here as a small child when it was then in the Nichols' family and spent several nights as a child here. So when we would come to the cemetery here at Liberty Hill where his father and mother and brother are buried, we would come up to the cemetery and always come by this house. Mark learned at an early age, maybe in high school -- we would bring him by here and show him this house and we would tell him that this was the old family home -- and Mark just had a desire from then on. The more he learned and researched James Lyle and the more he learned about him the more he wanted to somehow and some way in some year be able to acquire it back and get it back into the Lemon family. It changed hands several times, and I

don't know the names of. . .

KK: ...of exactly who owned it, but what meaning did this house have to your husband? Did he feel like you did Mark? Did he feel compelled to own the home again or was that really you that had those feelings?

MAL: You going to pass that to me? I really think that in the back of his mind he would have loved to have owned it himself and get it back in the family, but I think he thought that maybe it was so far out of reach that perhaps the people that had bought it and had renovated it for ten years, that when they got finished they were no way going to sell it. But during these ten years that they were doing this Mark was constantly in touch with them even though he didn't live here or in Atlanta -- he lived the last few years in North Carolina -- but wherever he was he was in contact with them either by phone or letter or when he was in Atlanta visiting us he would come by to see them and always telling them if they ever wanted to sell it, please give us first choice. Although that was just something so far-fetched that we would ever be able to even be offered it. . .

KK: You mean you just didn't think it was possible.

MAL: We didn't think it was possible, but Mark had that burning desire I think to get it back as well as Frank did. He just kept at it, Mark did. He just wasn't going to give up. When he found out this house was auctioned off when the Corbin's bought it, he just. . .

ML: In '85.

MAL: In '85, he was just beside himself. He said had we known it was even for sale. . .

KK: Oh, you didn't find out till after it was auctioned off?

MAL: Right. This young couple had bought it; and Mark thought, "Well, they've bought this home and they're going to completely renovate it and there'll be no way."

ML: Fairly young, had a family, probably going to be entrenched here for thirty years or more.

KK: Was that devastating to you to find out?

MAL: It was. I remember him telling me then that he though it was completely out of reach.

ML: I'll be honest with you. I don't like saying this at

all, but I never felt right about any other family living in this house.

MAL: He resented the fact that somebody else was here.

ML: I know there's no rationale in saying this, but this is an emotional feeling. I didn't feel like anybody else had the right to live here. That's what kept me nipping at these people's heels, "Hey, I'm still here. You want to move yet?"

MAL: I don't know whether they just completed the renovation and this was a challenge to them and that's what they bought it for. . .

ML: It was a project.

MAL: ...it was a project and once they accomplished it then they were ready to move on; I don't know if that's the reason that they decided to sell or whether the fact that Mark just kept after them that they said they might as well give in to this fellow.

ML: Plus they had a guaranteed sell.

MAL: Right. They knew they didn't have to put it on the market. They knew they didn't have to pay the real estate fee. They knew they had a definite buyer. So in January when they called Mark and told him that they had decided to sell, then we got a call from Mark; and he was real excited: "This is very important, you've got to hear this."

KK: When was that, Mark?

MAL: January of this year, 1993.

ML: I got suspicious when I received an invitation to their December open house, because they had had these things for ten years, and I had never received an invitation before. They knew how to get in touch with me, but I never received one. Suddenly I get an invitation in December to come to one; and unfortunately I couldn't go; but a month later they personally called me. . .

MAL: You replied to it.

ML: ...and asked me if I was still interested. So I figured something was about to happen, and that's when I talked to them about doing this.

KK: Now you Mrs. Lemon, you and your husband, were living in

a different part of Georgia; you were both retired at the time. So what did this mean to you financially?

MAL: Well, my husband had this stroke about ten years ago when we were living in the mountains at the time; and we then had to move to Grayson, which is right there at Snellville, to be closer to the doctors and the hospital and so forth. We thought then that that would be the last move we would make. That was it; no more moving. We had no idea of moving, because we didn't think that -- this house was not an option to us then; it was just something we would like to have; and we were sorry somebody else was living there; but there's nothing we can do about it. As it worked out, when Mark called and told us they were going to put it up for sale and offered it to us first -- then that meant that we had to somehow sell the house, and hopefully what we could get out of it would be enough to acquire this house. So my husband not being able to help me with this financial arrangement -- he tried to help me in telling me what we needed to do and between him and Mark helping in sort of spurring us on, I realized I had to get a certain amount out of the house. I realized through liquidating some bonds that we had -- municipal bonds -- and some savings that we had, if we could get a certain amount out of the house and get this other money together with the two things happening we might be able to buy. At our age, we didn't want to start off having a monthly mortgage payment, because we hadn't had one for years and years, because we'd bought each house after we acquired our first house on Clairmont Road; then we were able to sell that house and build another one with that money; and when we sold that house we paid cash for the one in Grayson; so at this point and time of our lives we didn't want to have to start off with a huge mortgage payment; so we were trying to get the money together to pay for this house, you know, cash down, and not have this big mortgage. That was quite a feat in itself trying to get that worked out, because we had financed a house on Clairmont Road where we had lived and we were trying to get those people to refinance that house so we could get our money out of that house which took three months to do that. I had gotten all the other money together; I was waiting on this in order to close. Actually at the closing I didn't have this money in my hand; it was in the process and we were able to go ahead and close within -- I think it was what? -- thirty days that they were going to allow us to get the balance, which amounted to. . .

KK: So it took everything you had.

MAL: It took everything we had to do it. You'd have to know

my husband to know that he would have to have wanted this house very, very much to have given up the -- because he is the one who has saved all his life and believed in saving. He was trying to instill that in Mark and always saving, and if it hadn't been for that we wouldn't have had the money to have done it. But to give that up, his life savings, to give that up, and put it into the old home place, it speaks for itself in saying how much he really wanted it.

ML: He never would have done it if he. . .

MAL: He would never have done it for anything else, any other reason.

KK: How has your husband reacted to living here?

MAL: He's really enjoying it. It was quite a change to say the least, because we had settled in there; and he had gotten a routine together where he would get up in the morning and go down to the drugstore where a lot of other retired men would meet, you know; so he had that little camaraderie there with them which he needed after being just cut off from not being able to do anything. He was always very active in building everything. He was able to take care of the car and do anything on the car, the house, whatever; and then suddenly not to be able to do any of this; and it helped him to go and be with other men; and that association was good for him. They understood his situation about his speech, having difficulty in speaking; so they would draw him out; so it was a good thing for him to have that fellowship there with those men. That worried me a lot, because I thought, "This is what he needs, and if we move up here. . ." But I knew too that he knew a lot of people who had lived here. Maybe their descendants were still here. It just worked out that we have since gotten him started in another group down at one of the little cafes on Main Street that we were just down there one morning for coffee, and two elderly gentlemen just started talking to us, and come to find out they knew Frank's father. So. . . it just started that way; and now he's getting more into the community and getting the feel of this place; and the peaceful existence is just. . . we were right there off of Hwy. 78 and the traffic was just. . .

ML: Typical modern subdivision. Houses right up next to each other.

MAL: We were all of three streets off of there. We weren't right in the middle of it; but we had to get on there to go anywhere; and it had gotten to be such a chore that we

just didn't go most of the time to avoid that. But being here in this community is more laid back; it's more peaceful. You have people all around you, and they're good neighbors. They'd do anything for you, but they don't bother you. They'll stop by here in the front yard; and they'll speak to you and bring you stuff, baked goods when we moved in and that sort of thing; but we have the convenience too in Marietta and Kennesaw of the stores if we need to go there; but. . .

KK: Was it worth it? Everything you went through?

MAL: Oh, yes.

KK: You love it?

MAL: I really do, and I think if you had asked him if he would do it again I think he would say yes too, because you wonder -- it was such a big change. I told Mark, I said, "I lay in bed sometimes and wonder and worry about doing this; is this the thing we should do? We get up there in that big house. Will we like it? Will things work out for us? Will we be sorry then that we spent our life savings and everything?"

KK: Well, and you were also worried about your husband's health.

MAL: Right. And I didn't know what the change would do to him in that respect.

ML: I tell you, I always knew -- I told you this the other day -- I knew you were worried about that, but I always knew, knowing the history of this family and this town; I never had any doubts but that when you all came up here, just the name recognition alone would get people to be friendly to you; and that's exactly what's happened. People have been real friendly and genuinely friendly. They've stopped by and they've been welcomed with open arms around this place.

KK: What has it meant to you? Is it as good as it -- I mean is it a dream come true and just as good as you thought it would be? Because you seem to have a very serious attitude about it. Obviously I'm very impressed with your knowledge of your great-great-grandfather's life and his experiences and so forth; and you have many artifacts here in the home of pictures and the family tree and Civil War diary and so forth; and obviously you take all this very seriously.

ML: Yes.

MAL: He takes it so seriously that he's given up his job there in North Carolina to move here. He tried to get transferred through the government, and they're just not transferring -- mainly because of his father's health and. . .

KK: Now you did tell me that your will was such that the house would go to Mark.

MAL: Absolutely. Free and clear. First thing we did when we moved here -- we have a daughter; but she's just not interested in the house; she's just not interested in things like that. Anything old is a clunker. It's not modern.

KK: Many people feel that way.

MAL: And Mark is entirely opposite.

KK: Mark, when did your interest in your great-great-grandfather and all of the history in the house, when did that begin? When you were small?

ML: I thought about that; and the only thing that I can picture in my mind as the first memory of him or of him being talked about is when we would go up to Powder Springs to visit my grandfather, Elvin Lemon; and we would usually go up on a weekend on Sunday and have Sunday dinner. I clearly remember sitting around the dinner table either eating or just as dinner was being finished; and my dad and my grandfather would be talking about him, about James Lemon and his experiences; and that was the first time that I had ever heard that he was wounded. Now the story had been changed slightly from word of mouth over the years to the point that they said that his wound was -- instead of being shot through the neck he was shot through one ear and it came out the other ear. I was probably eight years old when I heard that, and I thought that was just the neatest thing I'd ever heard of in my life. I'd hear about how he was a soldier and was captured and wounded, and I guess that just really put the hook in me when I heard that stuff. I wanted to know more about it.

KK: You were very proud of your heritage then.

ML: Oh, yes.

MAL: He's always been.

ML: I'll tell you something else; I don't know how much of this is pertinent to what you want to know, but it has a

big influence on me. When I grew up in the '60's and '70's there was a lot of -- what's the word? -- a lot of re-writing of history and a lot of shame being brought down on the South from media and from Hollywood producers. I guess this mainly manifested itself in miniseries or t.v. shows or books or articles or whatever; and I started realizing that the popular, cultural atmosphere at the time was such that it was a shameful thing to be from the South.

KK: Because of slavery you mean?

ML: Yes, because of slavery, because we lost the War, because it's always the tendency of somebody that beats somebody else in a war to gloat, I guess; but at the very least the victors get to write the history books; so their side of the story is always the one that prevails. Their side of the story is the one that gets published basically and gets the official sanction of the government. I began to get really sick and tired of being made to feel shameful and embarrassed for being a southerner and being from the South. I got teased in school; I went to high school with kids -- in Atlanta -- but the kids were from all over the country. It's a highly urban environment, kids from all over: Massachusetts, New England, the Midwest; and here I was in my backyard basically, so to speak, being made fun of because I was from the South. When I joined the Navy people always used to ask me when I'd had my last plate of grits and stuff like that. You know, I didn't want to hear it anymore. Over my lifetime, I've just been inundated with this guilt trip; and I think it's not just me, it's a lot of southerners who feel this way. They may not express it, but a lot of us feel this way. The more I read about that man and about what he did. . . .

KK: James Lyle?

ML: Right. There's no way I'm ever going to be ashamed of him or what he fought for. For example, in his will he left a sizable amount of money -- I don't think it specified, it's basically an interest gained on stocks that he has and so forth, it's not a specific numerical value -- but he left a sizable amount of money to the poor blacks in this community when he died. Somehow that doesn't fit into the neat little peg-in-a-hole stereotype that a lot of people want to make out of southerners or Confederate soldiers; that they were all raving racists out with a whip cracking on the slaves. That's not true; it's not the way it was, at least not with this man. He was kind-hearted, and he was a good man. That's just sort of an undercurrent that runs through my feeling

about this house; and everything is that I'm proud. I'm proud of being a Southerner. I'm proud of being his great-great-grandson, and living in his house is just a celebration of that.

MAL: He also helped organize the First Presbyterian Church here. He left at the time, I think, \$10,000 to that church; and to this day they're still drawing interest on it.

ML: One hundred twenty-three years ago.

MAL: Right. Mr. Abbott, one of the men that we met down here, he was in charge of that at one time there at the church; and he was telling me that they still draw interest from the money that he left to that church; so it gives you a good feeling that he's still doing good even though he's been gone a long time.

KK: Well, it sounds like in many ways, Mark, that you've reclaimed your pride, your sense of identity, your sense of worth as a person and as a man and as a Southerner through the history of your great-great-grandfather that as you can document what his life was really like; and now you're reclaiming the home place; and that's giving you a whole sense of purpose. It gives your life meaning; it seems like it does.

MAL: It's more important to him than anything right now. His family and this home here; it's more important to him than the time he spent with the Navy that was bridged over to the government job that he has now that he's willing to give up to come down here.

KK: So you're going to give up your job and move down here?

ML: I resigned effective December 20.

KK: And that's just because this house is here and you want to be nearby.

ML: No, that's only secondary. The primary reason is my dad's health is very bad; and my mom's right knee has no cartilage left in it; so it's painful for her to move around a whole lot; and it's just a matter of I'm needed around here. It doesn't bother me that -- I don't mind it a bit. In fact, I want to be here to help out. I can't in good consciousness lay in my bed five hundred miles away from here day after day knowing that there's things that I need to be doing around here to help out.

KK: You have been coming. Did you tell me you had been

coming almost every other week since you acquired the house?

MAL: Right. And it's hard to drive an eight hour trip and try to keep up a home and job in another place and then try to come here and work so hard on the weekend and go back. It's just too much for him. I hate for him to give up this time that he has that would go toward his retirement; I hate to see him do that; but I don't think I could change his mind if I tried; so I don't try.

KK: He set his priorities. I think when he sets his mind to something he's going to do it.

MAL: He's like his father in that respect.

KK: Mark, you told me when we were walking around the house that you were spending some time up in the rafters trying to outline the initial layout of the house. Is that ongoing or have you pretty much figured everything out about that?

ML: I'm still learning things about this place; and as a matter of fact I just last night made another discovery that slightly changed my original ideas; but I'm about ninety percent sure of the original layout of the place, the way it looked, the way it was styled, the way the roof looked and so forth. Not only that, but also the progression of alterations and changes that were made over the next 137 years; there have been a lot of them, some minor and some major. I've been able to, by getting up into the attic, down in the cellar and underneath the foundation quite a bit -- I've taken notes and done drawings -- I've been able to date various parts of the house and then fit the pieces together to form a rational...

MAL: What he's working on in connection with that is these drawings that he's been able to determine how the house originally looked, which is entirely different from the way it is now. What it looked like originally, and through the years by a series of drawings that in 1870 it looked like this and then on down until the present date.

ML: For instance, when he came back from the War they started back in business and got money flowing in again and raised a larger family, they added what you saw as the laundry room and then a room right across from it that would have been the exact same size. I've been able to pretty much speculate that because he had more kids and it was consistent with the way houses were built and designed back then to have a large main dining room and

then to have an area for the kids to eat in, and that would have corresponded perfectly with the children's dining room/pantry. And then maybe the one across the hall right over in here being -- my dad thinks it might have been a borning room -- which also fits in with being close to the kitchen. They wanted it to be warm and close to a source of water. That's just. . .

KK: You mean where the children were born?

ML: That's just. . .

KK: Well, with twelve children you might need a room for that.

MAL: I imagined it was used too quite often.

KK: Well, I was especially interested and you showed me what you called and thought was a fire escape upstairs that goes down three stories from the second to the first to the basement. Is that a straight shoot down or are there stairs? Would you just jump in there and fall the three stories?

ML: I didn't mean to give that impression. There are big heavy square spikes still in the studs of the interior walls right underneath what would have been the trap door in that closet. . .

KK: In the master bedroom?

ML: ...in the master bedroom going straight down the steps which is where the ladder would have been spiked on there, onto the studs. So you would have climbed a narrow ladder. Then you would set foot down on the floor -- and I'll show you later -- inside on the first floor; and then you'd have to lift up another panel and go into the cellar.

KK: So it could have been for hiding or it could have been for fire.

ML: It was definitely not an accidental feature, because, well, it's just obvious by looking at the details of the construction that it was planned that way.

KK: Well, if you pulled up the trap door in the closet, you'd be able to escape a fire as you stayed on the stairs. Tell me for a minute about the fire that did take place in the house. When was that?

ML: Well, that ended the occupation of the house by the

Nichols family basically. That was in 1975. An elderly lady by the name of Grace Nichols and her daughter Sarah, who I think was a school teacher at Acworth High, died in a fire here in this house in 1975.

KK: Both of them died?

ML: Right. They were apparently overcome by smoke and heat and were unable to get out of the house. It occurred right outside this doorway.

MAL: In the hall. They were staying in the hall. They had their chairs and sofa in the hall, and the other rooms were apparently closed off.

KK: Was it to conserve heat?

MAL: Probably.

KK: Do you know how the fire started?

ML: I think it was a cigarette.

MAL: I understand it was a cigarette, and I think the daughter was staying at home that day. She normally would have been at work; but she was staying home that day, because she was sick for some reason. She had taken medication; so it could have been that she was not aware of the fire until it got out of control. Maybe the mother had fallen asleep. We don't really know all the details, but we do have articles that different people have given us of pictures of the fire and what took place.

KK: Has that ever given you a strange feeling of sleeping in a home where two people died? Probably a lot of people died here during the War.

MAL: I'm sure they did with the Yankee soldiers being here. I'm sure there were a lot of deaths that went on.

KK: But there doesn't seem to be -- I don't know maybe you don't believe in such things -- but any negative spirits.

ML: I joke about it.

MAL: We joke about it; and I tell Mark, you know, we stay down here and we watch t.v. until about eleven or twelve; and we turn everything off; and then we head upstairs; and usually Frank has already gone to bed before I come up; and sometimes I get sort of a weird feeling walking through the halls thinking this is where two people died. Then I start up the steps; and I think I hear little

squeaking or something; but it's probably, you know, how the house shifts sometimes; and you hear something like that. But it really doesn't bother me.

KK: It sounds like though there's a little something "tweeksy" as you come through here. I can understand that.

MAL: Other people have said, "Oh, I don't think I could live. . . ." But you know, people live in houses that probably other people have died in that they don't know about. Why let something like that bother you?

ML: Any time you have a house that's almost 140 years old, somebody is going to have died in the place.

KK: Well, it's only a recent phenomenon that we choose to die in hospitals. It used to be people did die in homes.

MAL: I'm sure there's been many more births in this home than there's ever been deaths.

ML: There have been a lot of happy things going on in this house. There were three golden wedding anniversaries in this house.

MAL: Right here in this room with the bay window.

ML: One was James and his wife.

KK: Golden is fifty years.

MAL: If we hang on long enough we'll have another one here.

KK: Is that right? When will that happen?

MAL: Well, we were married in '49; so we've got a ways to go yet.

KK: Only six years.

MAL: When you think of it six years is not very long. If we could have another -- that would really mean a lot. That would be great. Your dad's always saying, "Oh, I'll be gone by then." I say, "Yeah, you'll outlive us all." There's been a lot of nice memories here too; so we choose to look at that side rather than the other; but it doesn't bother us at all. It doesn't bother me.

KK: Your Civil War paintings are beautiful. Will you continue that as a special interest or do you paint other things? And I also understand from your mom that you're

going to try to get a Lemon museum going in Acworth.

MAL: He's not trying to get it.

KK: Clarify that for me. What is it that you told me?

MAL: What I told you is that they're trying to get a museum off the square in Marietta, you know, at the Kennesaw House. They're trying to acquire a floor there that will be used as a Civil War museum; and that is where James Lyle's medal of honor would be housed; and Mark, the painting that he's going over today to pick up -- it's up at a gallery near Northlake -- is the painting that he did where he was actually wounded.

ML: Where he's coming over the top of that fort with his men getting. . .

MAL: And so that would be the painting that Mark would donate to the museum.

KK: So that's really a culmination of your research and your diaries and so forth and then your own imagination in trying to put that into the picture.

ML: Well, it's very little imagination.

MAL: All of it's been research. Everything.

ML: Every place I've painted, I've gone there and using the official records, a combination of the official records, his diary and other sources, have actually physically gone to that spot and 360 degree photographed it; so I know what -- and I even get what the weather was like on that particular day; so that I can get as close to authentic on these paintings.

MAL: Even the belt buckles, the buttons, the rifles, everything that's in that painting has been researched; and he knows that was what they used and wore at that time.

ML: What I'm doing, the overall thing that I'm doing is using all this data from the diary, I'm using the diary as the core or the foundation of a regimental history for the 18th Georgia that's not been written yet. Being one of the most famous and one of the best regiments from Georgia, there's been no regimental history done on it; and that's what the paintings will serve as illustrations for the book, if it ever comes out. That's a long time from now, but they will serve as illustrating various events.

KK: And then this beautiful painting that you did of James Lyle -- did you say Mrs. Lemon that he gave that to you as a housewarming gift?

MAL: Actually it was at the closing; when we had the closing, yes, it was a housewarming gift. He did some beautiful script writing on the back that it was "Presented to Martha and Frank Lemon on the occasion of reacquiring the Lemon House."

ML: Years from now somebody who pulls that down and looks at it, they'll be able to tell who did it and why it was done.

MAL: I want to get a little brass plaque, so that you won't have to take it down to look at the back; and I want to put it on the front so everybody can see that.

KK: Is there anything that you wanted to add that we haven't gone over? Seems very thorough to me. How do you feel about it?

ML: I feel the same.

MAL: Me too. I think you've covered it pretty well. You can see why I wanted Mark to be here, because he's done the research and knows more of the facts than I do; and it just wouldn't have been an interview without him, because I couldn't have told you all this in no way.

ML: It was a real special moment last month when we had this open house here in October when -- what is it? -- dad's niece, Dorothy? -- and her husband, Johnny Stanford, brought over the Bible of George Lemon.

KK: This Bible was given to you by your father's niece last year on the occasion of an open house here?

ML: Last month.

KK: Last month? Tell me about that; how that ceremony went.

ML: Well, it was a pretty large affair; we had close to maybe eighty or one hundred people. Johnny and Dorothy Stanford, Dorothy being my dad's niece, came by; and while they were here Johnny pulled me over to one side and told me he had something he was going to give to my dad; but he wanted to wait a few minutes until the appropriate time.

MAL: He wanted all of us to be there.

ML: He basically just wanted me to -- he gave me a heads up that he was about to do it. So then when my dad came in there and everybody was sort of gathered in the parlor and he had my dad sit down and he had me open it for him, because it's hard for him to use both of his hands. I opened it and I knew immediately that it was something old by looking at it, and he said that it was George's -- George meaning George Lee Lemon, my dad's grandfather -- it was his Bible, something like that. It was a personal Bible belonging to his grandfather. It was something I don't think he had even ever seen before.

MAL: I don't think he knew it was in existence.

ML: It was pretty overwhelming emotionally. He stood up and sort of cried a little bit and hugged Dorothy and Johnny too; so it was really nice.

MAL: There were people all in the room and in the hallway; and it was so emotional; and he just couldn't contain it. He just broke down.

KK: Have you found that people in the family have been giving you artifacts now that you have the house?

MAL: Oh, yes. People calling and telling us -- well, in fact, Bill Lemon, one of the Lemons, had a book where there was an account of James Lyle in it.

ML: It was Confederate Military History, Vol. VI (Atlanta: Confederate Publishing Co., 1899), 788-89. [Appendix A.]

MAL: Right, and he had three volumes that he's bringing to us.

KK: So you've started sort of a museum right here haven't you?

MAL: It's a collection. Every week or so we'll have someone at the door. Just the other day I went to the door and there were these two young fellows -- in their forty's or so -- and they were standing there. I had no idea who they were; and he introduced himself as being one of the descendants of James Lyle and that he lived in Auburn, Alabama. His mother lived in Columbia, South Carolina; and he told me that he had been here as a small child. He was just up in the area and just thought on a little whim if he could find the house and if he saw the house he would know it right away. He wanted to come in -- he was with an ex-roommate of his from Auburn. They came in, and I showed them the whole house. They were just thrilled to death. His mother -- I had been given back this summer a card by one of the Nichols and told me to

get in touch with his mother in Columbia, that she had done extensive research on this house and could give me a lot of information. He told me -- I didn't connect the two until I ran across the card -- I saw that this was his mother that she was telling me to get in touch with. He was telling me while he was here that his mother had a Bible that belonged to James Lyle that had a metal cover on it that he carried in his breast pocket inside his uniform and that he thought that after seeing the house and what we have here and any other artifacts that we have and articles that he knew that that Bible belonged here. We're going to try to have another open house before Christmas, and I have received a letter from his mother since then. So he said he's going to do his best to get her to turn that Bible over to us. So we're going to have a collection of Bibles.

ML: We already have one from him. This is one of the Bibles that he carried, he signed it in pencil here: "Company A-18 Georgia"; then on the back somebody has written: "Given to me by Captain James Lemon," so that we know that this is one of his. Of course, kids have scribbled all over the inside of it.

KK: So he gave it to someone and then it somehow came back into the family. So this house, not just the people, not just you people, because you've all been alive and around, but it's actually you owning the house, the combination of you being in the home has inspired all of this gift giving and all these wonderful acquisitions.

MAL: And just earlier this summer we had someone stop by -- we saw a young couple out here taking pictures; we see that quite often anyway; so we didn't think a whole lot about it -- but then Frank saw them and -- he invites everybody in -- and come to find out they were a relative of the Nichols; and they lived -- his father lived in Pine Bluff, Arkansas; and they were from Arkansas; and they wanted to take pictures -- and his father had a stroke back some time ago -- and wanted to take some pictures of the house, inside and out; and when he found out it had been acquired back into the Lemon family then he was just thrilled to death to be able to take pictures and go back and show his father. So almost every month or every few weeks or so someone will come to the door that has been a relative or knows of someone who has known this house in the past. And another thing that I've noticed that this house has been closed off to people in this community for the last ten years since it's been put back in order; and they, of course, were not interested in it historically; so it was not open to these people. People had lived here all their lives and never been in this

house; and we made it available to them when we had the open house to be able to come in and see this house, because it means a lot to the people in this community, because it's an historical house and it's part of the community; yet they had never been able to see it; so there were so many neighbors and friends that were able to come in when we had the open house and see it for the first time.

KK: I noticed looking through this Bible, first of all it looks well loved. But I'm also noticing many passages are highlighted with pencil checks and so forth. Some of this, I was reading this one: "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long suffering, charity and patience". I guess I just happened to see that in Timothy that is highlighted here with a star and I wonder if maybe that's what James Lyle, how he got through his suffering in the War by finding passages. I guess that's my fantasy.

MAL: I think it's well-based, because you can tell from his letters that he wrote to his wife how he loved his family and what a good man he was; and his faith in God is what got him through, because he mentioned that in some of his letters. That letter that we have up here on the wall is a letter that was found in a bunch of Nichols' papers in the basement when we bought the house; and the people were going to throw them out; and Mark said, "For goodness sakes, let me go through them first." First thing Mark picked up was a letter from James Lyle that he wrote to his wife when he was a prisoner, and that's it on the wall. [Appendix B.]

KK: So just by luck -- it sounds like more than luck. It sounds almost to me like this was all meant to happen. I don't know if you believe in those things.

MAL: I do. I absolutely do. I think that sometimes, you know, like I said, you don't know whether it's the thing to do when you're doing it; but once you're done, you get that good feeling that "this is where I should be, and this is the way it should be."

KK: And it has turned out to be true, hasn't it?

MAL: I believe in it, I really do. It's just that now that we're here everybody we see says, "We're glad it's back in the Lemon family and that you're here again in the house, and I have so-and-so I want to give you to put with your other things you have." So that's just the way it's evolved.

KK This is a diary entry after the interview:

The interview took place Saturday from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. on November 19, 1993 at the residence. Speaking on the interview were Martha Lemon, in her sixties and Mark Lemon, her thirty-eight year old son. Frank Lemon, the husband in his seventies, did not participate in the interview. When I first arrived at the home we took a tour of both floors. The house was in immaculate house-keeping condition furnished with what Mark and Martha said were recently purchased antiques, many of them from an antique dealer in Acworth named Beverly Gee. Martha said several times that they had relocated from a ranch house and few of their furnishings seemed appropriate to the newly acquired home. None of the original furnishings remain. Frank stepped into the interview during the last two or three minutes only. He has a right-side paralysis and language -- speech -- is difficult for him; but he just came in and sat with us for a minute and then helped escort me to the door. He seemed very friendly. On the way out Martha asked me where I was from, where I was raised. I told her New Hampshire. She laughed and looked a little uncomfortable and so did Mark. She laughed and said that during the interview, while they were talking about things, that she sat there thinking, "I bet this woman is a Yankee" and she felt like maybe they had offended me; and I told her that nothing that she had said, that nothing that they had said or done had offended me in the least. As we stepped out onto the porch they invited me to a Christmas open house and asked for my name and address so they could send me an invitation. All in all it was a lovely interview. They were as warm and personable as they could be. They really wanted to do a good job. Mark -- I was especially fascinated with him. He is a special agent for the Naval Investigative Service at a military base. I had several very brief conversations with him over the telephone. I expected him to be quite officious and domineering, and it was just the opposite. He was a very empathic and very sensitive person. He got very emotionally involved in the interview, and gave it everything he had. I was surprised. I had experienced some anticipation, some anxiety on approaching the interview, because I had spoken with Mrs. Lemon in the past. She's quite a talkative person; and I was afraid that she was going to take over and that he was going to be a dominant, military type; and both of those assumptions were totally false on my part. I enjoyed the interview. It was one of the best that I think that I've done.

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that amply testifies to the confidence of the community in his honor and integrity and his popularity as a citizen.

Captain James L. Lemon, of Acworth, a veteran of Hood's and Wofford's brigades, army of Northern Virginia, was born at Decatur, Ga., in 1835, grandson of Robert Lemon a soldier of the revolution, and son of James Lemon, a native of South Carolina, who came to Georgia in 1821 and built the first frame house on the site of the town of Decatur. He was a soldier of the war of 1812, and died near Acworth in 1849. Captain Lemon's maternal grandfather, William Telford, was also a soldier in the war for American independence. Captain Lemon enlisted for the Confederate service in June, 1861, in Company A, Capt. J. B. O'Neill, of General Wofford's old regiment, the Eighteenth Georgia infantry. They were mustered in at Big Shanty, and after two months' drilling went on to Virginia, and presently were put with three Texas regiments to form the brigade commanded by Gen. John B. Hood. In the peninsula campaign they were first in action at Eltham's Landing, and soon afterward at Seven Pines. In the Seven Days' battles he shared in the brilliant and famous charge of Hood's brigade up the heights of Cold Harbor, on June 27th, and the combats which followed until McClellan was driven back to the gunboats. When the army marched northward after this he was detailed in command of Camp Lee, near Richmond, for about three months, after which he rejoined his regiment, at the close of the Maryland campaign. In November his regiment was transferred to Thomas R. R. Cobb's brigade of McLaws' division, Longstreet's corps, and Captain Lemon, in command of his company, was on duty behind the famous stone wall on Marye's Hill, at Fredericksburg, on December 12 and 13, 1862, on the latter day taking part in the terrible repulse of the repeated assaults of the Federal army. Under the brigade command of General Wofford, he fought at Chancellorsville and Salem Church, the brigade performing most arduous duty, and participating in gallant charges upon the enemy's works, taking many prisoners, and driving the Federals from their front a distance of a mile and a half. At Gettysburg he was in the charge of McLaws' division, July 2, 1863, driving the enemy to Little Round Top, where he was under fire on the 3d also, close to the Federal line. On the retreat he was under fire at Hagerstown. Going to Georgia with Longstreet, he took part in the battle of Chick-

amauga, and the investment of Chattanooga, and marched into East Tennessee in November, participating in the assault upon Burnside's troops at Knoxville, where Captain Lemon was dangerously wounded, a ball passing through his head, entering near the right ear and emerging near the left. He was cared for in the Federal hospital, and in three weeks was able to walk. Though badly wounded, he was destined for yet more trying experiences and much suffering. As a prisoner of war he was sent to the penitentiary at Nashville, and thence to Camp Chase, Ohio. From that prison he was forwarded to Fort Delaware, and in August, 1864, was one of the six hundred Confederate officers who were sent by boat to Charleston harbor and encamped under fire of the contending artillery on Morris island. For forty-seven days they were kept in this dangerous position, guarded by negro troops, and then were transferred to Fort Pulaski, Ga., where they were after a while put on starvation rations in retaliation for the straitened diet at Andersonville. For forty-seven days they were fed on wormy corn meal and pickles. March 4, 1865, Captain Lemon and his fellow-prisoners were shipped to Fortress Monroe, and later they were held at Fort Delaware until paroled, June 19, 1865. On his return to Georgia Captain Lemon resumed the mercantile business at Acworth which he had abandoned to take up arms for the South. In this he was associated with his brother, Smith Lemon, of the First Georgia regiment, who had also been in the service throughout the war. Captain Lemon has been eminently successful in his career as a merchant; since 1889 has been president of the Lemon banking company at Acworth, and is also interested in farming and milling. He is worthy of remembrance as one of the best soldiers and one of the most prominent business men of North Georgia. He was married in 1856 to Eliza, daughter of Thomas Davenport, and has the following children: George L., bookkeeper for the milling firm of which his father is manager; Edward W., secretary and treasurer of the oil mills; James R., a merchant at Anniston, Ala., and Clayton S., in business at Charlotte, N. C.

Heyward A. Lester, of Millen, a survivor of Gen. P. M. B. Young's gallant Georgia brigade, was born in Burke county, Ga., October 21, 1821, son of Noel Lester, a native of North Carolina, and his wife, Elizabeth Warner, of Burke county. When hostilities began he was a farmer in Burke

27th 1864

Ch Delaware Penn

Beloved Wife

I take pen in hand  
in hope they find you  
of life as much as you are  
I hear the Yankees are  
I pray that a merciful  
ness are safe & that He will  
the slightest harm. As for  
inform you I am captured &  
conceal at this place about  
on the prison train & am  
was grievously wounded  
long after my last furlough  
enemy but thanks to a  
improved. I my darling wife  
how much I miss you & the  
picks, but do not fret over  
return. Thoughts of you  
sustained me through this  
continue to pray that we  
& enjoying the blessings of life  
family & I am well & will  
you are able to do so, please  
this place as my uniform  
articles of all descriptions  
do so do not fret for I  
for you as well. I hope this  
as I have neither  
& have received no reply  
conviction & safety. I could

send you these few lines  
& enjoying all the blessings  
in these difficult times  
in God & causing much  
that you & the little  
to you & protect you all from  
I take this occasion  
presence of the Yankees I  
after a long & arduous trip  
smallly with the weather  
the perfect at Knoxville  
I then captured by the  
Providence I have  
I cannot begin to tell you  
for you & our happy  
for I am determined to  
the girls & faith in God  
induous captivity, & I will  
all the more again together  
Please tell Smith  
I am able to  
I need  
but if you are not able to  
some conditions are hard  
this place  
I that I miss of you  
I have  
I could then happily

(2)

handship. If you are able to receive these lines  
 please write to me at his place & tell me  
 of & where you are & how the Yankees are.  
 With dearest wife I will close this letter as the  
 ball is being called & I must go. Always remember  
 my love for you & family is eternal & I will return  
 one day soon. Tell Smith I will always do my duty  
 to the utmost of my ability, as our cause is just.

Your loving husband  
 James

June 27<sup>th</sup> 1864

David L. Damon Capt.  
 Co A 18<sup>th</sup> Regt Geo Vol  
 Williams Penn.

THE ACCOUNT PROVIDED BY CAPT. JAMES L. LEMON DESCRIBES P.O.W. EXPERIENCES. THE TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR AT THE END, "JOSEPH L. LEMON" IS UNDOUBTEDLY DUE TO A MISREADING OF HIS HAND-WRITTEN SIGNATURE WHICH WAS OFTEN WRITTEN "Jas. L. Lemon" SOME EDITOR MISINTERPRETED THE "JAS." FOR "JOS." THUS "JOSEPH L. LEMON"

Ai str

I came across the skeleton of a Union soldier in a thicket, who had probably been killed during the 'seven days' fight."

SIX HUNDRED CONFEDERATE OFFICERS.

HOW THEY WERE EXPOSED TO CONFEDERATE CANYON - A RETALIATORY MEASURE.

The following story comes from J. L. Lemon, of Acworth, Ga., who says he thinks the story has never been published:

"Doubtless you will offer your columns as a medium for recording interesting historical incidents connected with the war. My experience while a prisoner was thrilling and tragic in many respects, and varied as the winds.

"I was in Gen. Longstreet's command in his movement to take Knoxville, in November, 1863, and was severely wounded and taken prisoner. Some time later I was removed to the penitentiary at Nashville, then to Camp Chase, and from there to Fort Delaware, where two thousand five hundred or more Confederate officers were confined. On our way from Camp Chase to Fort Delaware we passed through Columbus, Ohio, where I had a view (?) of the Ohio penitentiary.

"In the summer of 1864, six hundred of the officers were taken from the pen at Fort Delaware and put aboard the steamer 'Crescent' and carried to Morris Island, victims of retaliation for some alleged wrong to the Federal prisoners at the hands of the Confederate authorities. On the way we planned an escape, the crew in charge of us being Confederate sympathizers. We were to land at Georgetown, overpower our guards and the guards of the town, and escape. The steamer, on nearing the shore, struck a bar and prevented its possibility.

"When we were awaiting to be taken upon the island we were without water, and suffered tortures from

the heat in our crowded condition. We were taken in charge on the island by a negro regiment, who were instructed to take all U. S. blankets, clothing, canteens, and all other trinkets marked U. S., which they did, leaving some of our men nearly bare. We were kept under range of the Confederate batteries on Sullivan and James' Islands and battery wagons for forty-two days. We obtained the water we drank while on the island by digging holes in the sand for the water to accumulate in; this, you perceive, was fine (?) water in August! Our negro guards treated us roughly for awhile. Issuing our scanty rations to us, they poured thehardtack and thin slices of meat into the tent on the sand. By and by, through persuasion, we gained their sympathy and they were kinder to us, stealing for us extra rations and paying us most extravagant prices for our horn, bone, and wood rings, and other trinkets fashioned in our leisure.

"We were removed to Fort Pulaski and Hilton Head. Some parties had escaped from Andersonville, and said they were fed on sour sorghum and corn bread; in retaliation we were given pickles and refuse corn meal, the result of which had almost completely broken down our six hundred, none of whom were scarcely able to drag themselves along.

"This awful affair has never been printed before, so far as I know. "I am very respectfully,

"JOSEPH L. LEMON."

#### GALLANT TENNESSEAN KILLED NEAR RICHMOND.

This little CONFEDERATE VETERAN has put many people to looking up old documents that will ever be sacred to them. Mrs. T. S. Colley, of Franklin, kindly sends a copy of an article from the *Richmond Enquirer*, of July 17, 1862. Its literal reproduction will be interesting to young readers, as it breathes the spirit of the time that it was written. In Col. Shackleford's honor the Bivouac at Fayetteville was named. Maj. F. G. Buchanan is its President, and W. H. Cashine the Secretary:

"Among the noble brave who fell in the recent battles near Richmond, perhaps no one deserves more honorable mention than Lieut. John C. Shackleford, of the First Tennessee Regiment, who fell on Friday, the 27th of June, while gallantly leading his regiment in the first charge at Gaines' Mills. Col. Shackleford was in the battle of Seven Pines, and also commanded his regiment in the fight at Ellison's Mills on Thursday before the battle in which he fell. In every action, though but twenty-six years of age, he showed himself to possess in an eminent degree the qualities of a good commander, to wit., coolness, self-possession, and bravery. So gallantly did he demean himself upon the field in the thickest of the fight that the soldiers would often exclaim: 'Surely Col. Shackleford's nerves are steel!' When shot he was waving his sword above his head and cheering his men on, but so thick and terrible was the leaden storm that our men were ordered to retreat. A soldier offered to take him off the field, but he said: 'No; it is no use; take care of yourself.' He was universally popular, and was the favorite of his own regiment. The First Tennessee will ever cherish his memory with the most grateful recollections. He was a most ardent and enthusiastic devotee to the southern cause, was among

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