

The Quill



T H E C H E A T H A M C O U N T Y A R C H I V E S N E W S L E T T E R

NEPTUNE AGRICULTURAL UNION

THIRD EDITION

- Welcome to the Third Edition of the Cheatham County Archives Newsletter, The Quill.
- Newsletters will be published quarterly.
- If you wish to subscribe to receive our newsletter via email, please send request to:

archives@cheathamcountyttn.gov

When one hears the word “union,” we do not associate it with Neptune, Tennessee in Cheatham County. The 1920 county court records provided brief evidence of an agricultural union in Neptune

The northwest, rural community which was said to first be named “Doodletown” is still today a mostly agricultural area. An order form was found in the records with the letterhead from the F. E. & C. U of A. The initials stand for Farmers Educational Cooperative Union of America. The Neptune chapter was the local No. 2022.

The F. E. & C. U of A was formed in 1902 by ten family farmers in Point, Texas. The union advocated increased cooperative rights for farmers, the direct election of senators, and voting rights for women. Their efforts led to the enactment of the 1916 Federal Farm Loan Act and the establishment of twelve Federal land banks and farm loan associations.

The F. E. & C. U of A today is just the NFU. The NFU stands for National Farm Union. They have over 200,000 members. The union represents family farmers, fishers, and ranchers

in 33 states. They provide educational support and legal support for farmers of today and the future.

The blank form is the only present information the archives have concerning the union in Cheatham County. If you have any information concerning the union and its members, please contact us.



~Walter Pitt, Archivist

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Neptune Agricultural Union	1
The Tom Swift Series	2
Retail in Cheap Hill	3
Automobile Dealerships in the Big City (of Ashland City)	4
Caring for Scrapbooks	5
The Stringfellow Bridge	6

ORDER BLANK

The F. E. & C. U. of A.

Neptune Local No. 2022

Neptune, Tennessee,---Cheatham County.

--	--	--	--

Local Agent _____

O. K. _____ County Agent.

THE TOM SWIFT SERIES

We look at three books from the library's antique book collection in this edition of "The Quill." All three books come from the Tom Swift science fiction series.

The Tom Swift book series emphasizes technology, science, and adventure. The three books we feature are from the original series which ran from 1910–1941. They are meant for juvenile readers. However, anyone can enjoy these books and the many inventions proposed by Tom Swift. The series continues today as the first book in the sixth series was released in 2019.

Tom Swift was born in the mind of Edward Stratemeyer. He conceived the series in 1910. He had used the name Tom Swift in earlier books beginning in 1903. These books are not related to the series. Mr. Stratemeyer and Howard Garis, who penned the **Uncle Wiggly Longears** series, wrote most of the first series. Harriet Stratemeyer Adams wrote the last three volumes in the first series. She was the daughter of Edward, and a prolific children's author.

The pseudonym Victor Appleton, was used by the Stratemeyer syndicate authors for the Swift books. The syndicate also produced several series including the Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew. The many advances in technology in the late 1800's and early 1900's provided ample material for the books. They also inspired many to enter the field of science and inventions.

Tom Swift Caves of Ice (1911), finds Tom and friends on a trip to the Arctic in search for the legendary Valley of Gold. They travel to the Arctic in Tom's custom made airship. There are no major inventions mentioned in the story but he did create a special lifting gas for his airship to help overcome the Arctic elements.

Tom Swift and His Photo Telephone (1914), details Tom's plan to develop a telephone which can transmit pictures. Tom's father does not believe it can be achieved. However, Tom has read where a photograph has been transmitted over telegraph lines. He sees there is little difference between telephone and telegraph lines. He sees there is little difference between telephone and telegraph lines. During this time, con artist Shallock Peters tries to undermine Tom's work and take his inventions.

Tom Swift and His Sky Train (1931) is the final Tom Swift book in our collection. Tom tries to build a powerful airplane pulling a string of gliders. His efforts are met with crashes and financial problems.

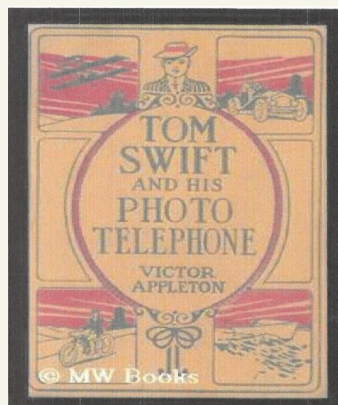
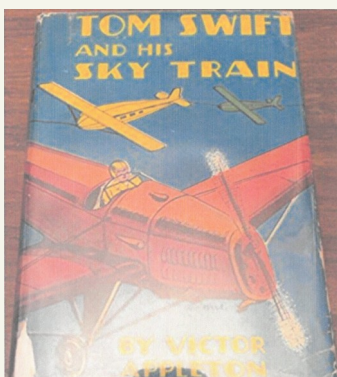
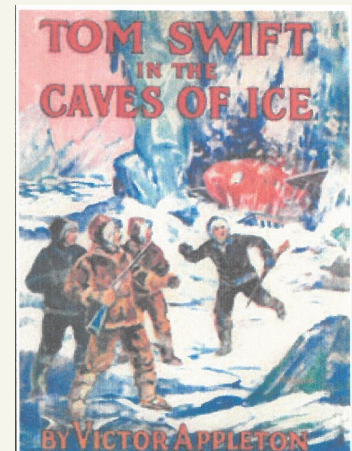
It is reported that famous science fiction writers Robert A. Heinlein and Isaac Asimov were inspired by the Tom Swift series. Many of today's technology company founders also have found inspiration in the Tom Swift series.

Many of the Tom Swift books seem quaint

by today's standard. However, they served as an inspiration to children when they were written. The books not only provided entertainment, but inspired young people to have an interest in science.

Tom Swift's photo telephone then seemed like a dream which might never happen. But, the next time you take a photo with your current phone and send it to someone, remember Tom Swift. The dreams of today are often the realities of the future.

~Walter Pitt, Archivist



RETAIL IN CHEAP HILL

The Cheap Hill community has a long history of retail businesses. It is said that the community's name originated from travelers on the river who needed goods that the goods were "cheaper on the hill."

The earliest merchants were Mitchell Turner, George Mallory, and Littleton John Pardue. The archives have several letterheads from the Cheap Hill community. The Doubleday Brothers were in business from the 1890's until the early 1900's. They sold their business to Charles Clifton. We do not have records pertaining to the Clifton store.

Junious Flowers provided Mr. Clifton with competition. He also opened a cannery in the rear of his retail establishment. The flowers grew a large crop of tomatoes. These tomatoes were brought to the cannery's huge boiler, cooked, and put into cans. These cans were sold in the Flowers' store. Mr. Flowers' store was removed when the new Highway 12 was constructed.

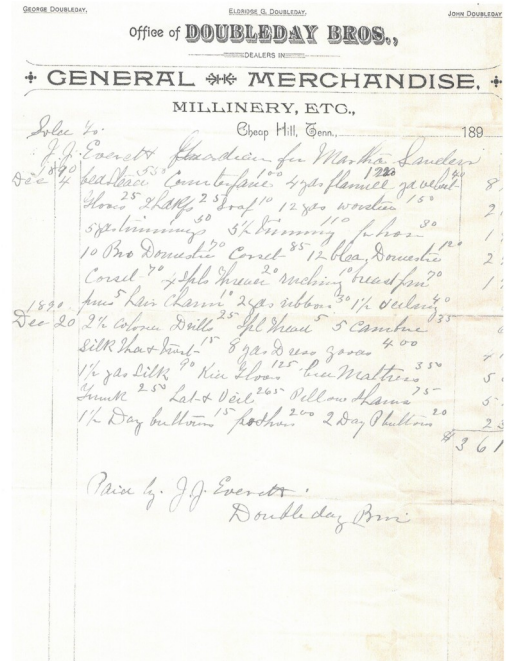
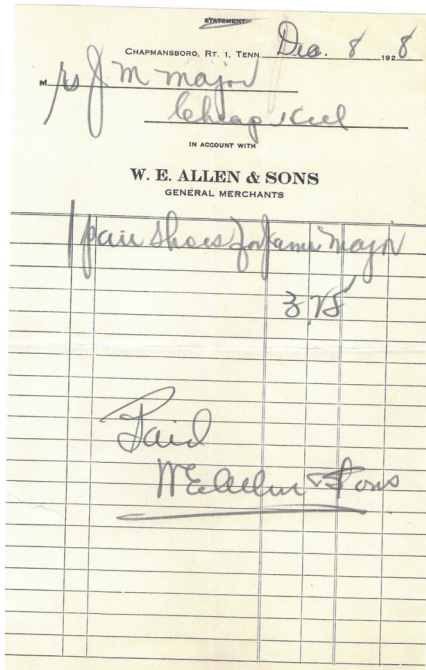
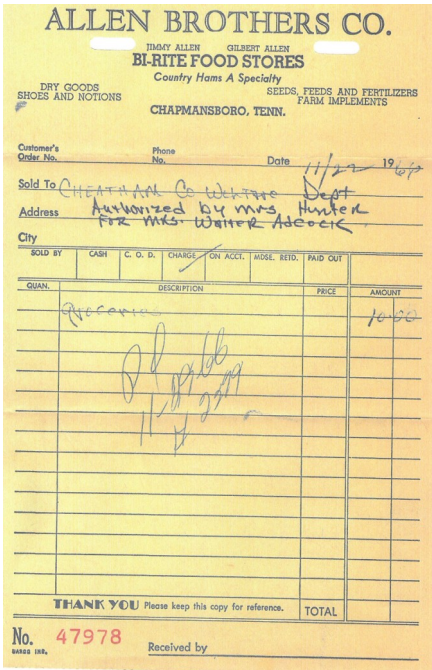
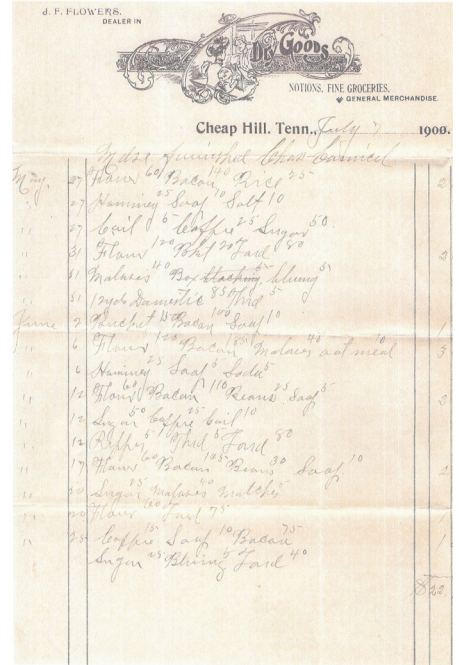
Perhaps the most prolific and well known retailers in Cheap Hill were the Allen family.

William E. Allen purchased the Clifton Store in 1924. He, along with his sons, John and Gilbert, owned and operated the business. The store was known as W. E. Allen and Sons. W. E. Allen sold his shares to his son Julian in 1927. the name of the store became Allen Brothers. They handled a large, diverse range of merchandise. The brothers also had a rolling store outfitted with their products. Allen's purchased much of their products from the local farmers.

John Allen sold his interest in the store to his nephew Jimmy Allen in 1958. the Allen's continued to operate the business until the 1970's when it was sold.

The last building to hold the grocery store still stands. It serves today as the fellowship hall of the Cheap Hill Church of Christ.

~Walter Pitt, Archivist



AUTOMOBILE DEALERSHIPS IN THE BIG CITY (OF ASHLAND CITY)

Cheatham County was once the home to several new automobile dealerships. The “big three” auto makers all had dealerships in Ashland City at one time. We had Balthrop-Clifton Motors which sold Chrysler vehicles, Hagewood Ford, and a Chevrolet dealership which had several owners. Today, these businesses have joined the J. P. Patton Overland and Willys-Knight Automobiles as part of Cheatham County’s history.

Overland and Willys-Knight Automobiles are not a household name. There have been many failed automobile companies since the car was invented. There are many long forgotten companies. Willys brand cars are on the list of failed companies.

The Willys brand began in 1913. John North Willys purchased the Edwards Motor Car Company located on Long Island, New York. He proceeded to move the company to Elyria, Ohio, 23 miles south of Cleveland. The plant had previously been used to build Garford Automobiles.

The company moved most of its

production to Toledo in 1915. The engine production remained in Elyria. Willys-Knight distinguishing characteristic was the use of the sleeve-valve, four to six cylinder models. As the years progressed, the sleeve-valve engine was replaced by more efficient engines.

Willys-Knight ceased production in 1933. The company instead focused on production of the inexpensive Willys 77 vehicle in its final year. Mr. Willys was determined to save his company from receivership, but it was not to be. He died of a massive heart attack in 1935.

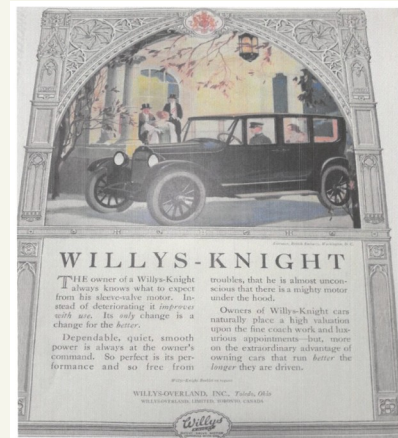
The company outlived its founder. Soon after Mr. Willys’ death, several investors rescued the brand. The investors hired talent from other car companies. Willys-Overland again began producing and selling automobiles. The sales were enough to keep the company running. World War II would prove to be the best times for the company. The Jeep began production. There were 650,000 Jeeps produced during the war. Willys-Overland produced 362,000

Jeeps for the services.

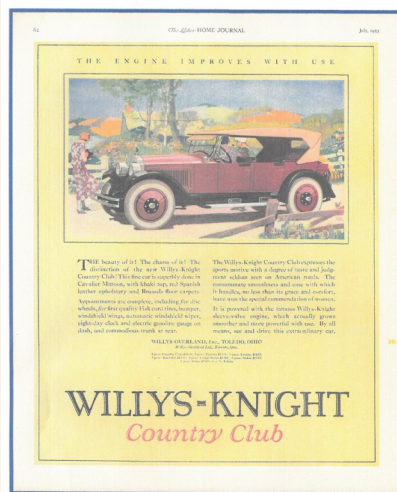
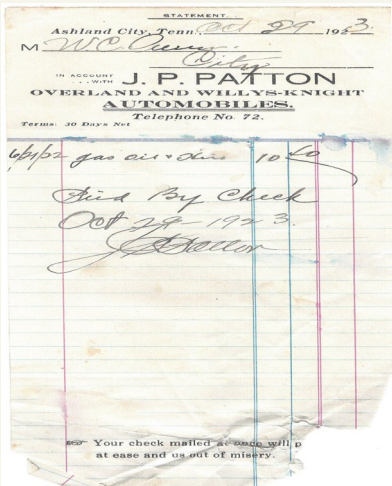
After the war, Willys-Overland continued to produce Jeeps and introduced a civilian version, the CJ. The company also produced the Aero. The Aero was “the nearest thing to flying on the highway” according to the company. However, sales were not enough to keep the company going. It soon was sold. The company was purchased first by the Kaiser Motor Company and later American Motors and Daimler Chrysler. The Willys name disappeared in 1963 when it became Kaiser Jeep.

Today, Willys-Knight and Overland are not known by the everyday automobile owner. J. P. Patton’s dealership has been mostly forgotten, but the Jeep is still around with its rich history.

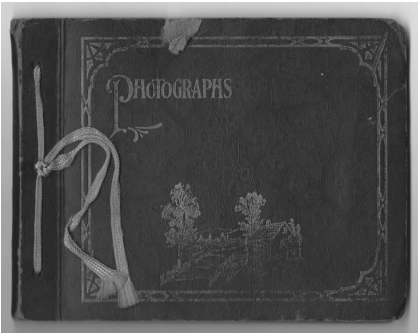
~ Walter Pitt, Archivist



1923 Overland Car



CARING FOR SCRAPBOOKS



Pictured above and below are two examples of an old photo album and an old scrapbook. Pressing flowers between books to be placed and preserved in scrapbooks was a common practice long ago.



Our preservation topic last issue was the care and preservation of photographs. This month we visit preserving scrapbooks.

Many people still have the scrapbooks they made when they were younger. These scrapbooks may contain photos, cards, or mementos from places where the person visited.

As one grows older, we often think these books hold nothing more than sentimental value. However, there can be some interesting and important things in these books. They can often tell the story of a time in a person's life.

In order to correctly preserve these scrapbooks, there are several things a person must do to properly preserve the book. First, the book should be boxed and stored flat on shelves. Scrapbooks can often be bulky or hold loose items. Storing the book this way prevents items which become loose over time from falling out and perhaps being lost. Boxing prevents dust from invading the pages and also prevents the items from being damaged.

Items which do fall from their pages can be stored in polyester sleeves and the sleeve placed on the page whence it came. Adhesives should not be used to reattach the item or items. Adhesives can cause damage to the article as time passes. If notes have to be made on the significance of the item, a number

2 pencil should be employed. Ink should never be used on any item.

In the last edition of "The Quill," we discussed the care of photographs. There are things to always remember concerning the care of photographs. If photographs are mounted in a scrapbook, do not try to remove them. If they are removed, they can often be damaged. Loose photographs can be stored in the sleeves. Please also use cloth gloves if possible when handling photographs and never expose original photos to light for extended periods.

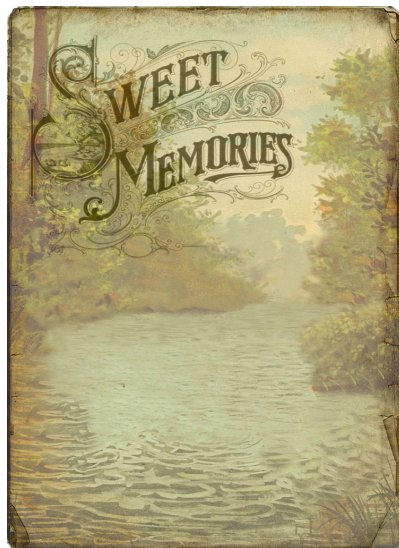
Finally, many items contain staples, metal paper clips or other metal fasteners on their documents. These items need to be removed if at all possible. Over time the fasteners can rust and leave a mark on the item. A good plastic paper clip may be used to keep the items together.

There are also many good websites on preservation which can provide more in depth help in preserving valuable items. If you have questions concerning preservation, please contact the archives.

~ Walter Pitt, Archivist

*"Preserve your memories,
keep them well. What you
forget you can never retell."*

~ Louisa May Alcott



*"Our most treasured
family heirloom are
our sweet family
memories. The past
is never dead, it is
not even past.*

~ William Faulkner



VISIT US ONLINE AT:
CCTNARCHIVES.OMEKA.NET

**THE CHEATHAM
COUNTY ARCHIVES
NEWSLETTER**

Cheatham County Archives
188 County Services Drive
Ashland City, TN 37015

Phone: 615-792-4828 [Library]
Fax: 615-792-2054
archives@cheathamcountyttn.gov

The Cheatham County Archives houses, maintains, & provides public access to County Government records and historical documents; and serves as the primary repository for these records.

It is the mission of the Cheatham County Archives to support and provide public access to County Government records in our custody and control.

We have a vision of promoting innovative approaches to historical preservation and research. We desire to expand the accessibility of historic resources to the community.

THE STRINGFELLOW BRIDGE

The term “ford a creek, stream, etc.”, was once a common term when people were travelling the rural areas of Cheatham County. Many roads did not have bridges and people had to ford the stream to continue their journey.

A ford is a shallow place in a stream where one could cross the water by wading. The ford also provided a safe place where only the wheels of the vehicle were supposed to get wet. However, if the area received a good rain, the fords often became impassable.

Cheatham County had many fords. Some fords were still in use in the later part of the twentieth century. I recall many times crossing Marrowbone Creek and Dry Fork Creek where bridges were not available.

A 1924 county map in the archives still includes the Three Island Ford on the Harpeth River near Johnson’s Bend. The county court records include petitions from citizens to have bridges constructed to replace fords.

One of the more prominent documentations of the desire for a bridge was the Stringfellow ford. The ford was southwest of Griffintown and near Mann’s Chapel on the 1924 map.

The discussion of a bridge over the Harpeth and into Dickson County began in 1904.

W. R. Oakley proposed to donate land for the bridge approach in Cheatham County. W. H. Stringfellow came forward to donate land from the Dickson side of the river. The citizens living near the ford also offered financial aid to have the bridge constructed. It was estimated that the total cost would be \$500. The court agreed to build the bridge provided the Dickson County Court also passed a similar measure.

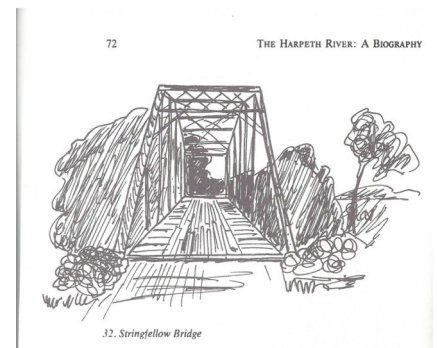
The Dickson County Court approved its portion of the bridge in 1909. A contract was agreed upon with the W. T. Young Company of Nashville to build the bridge. The bridge would be 225 feet long and 16 feet wide.

As the years passed, the bridge served the citizens well. However, it eventually became obsolete. It was replaced by a modern concrete bridge. The current bridge sits near where the old Stringfellow Bridge once spanned the Harpeth River.

The old bridge remained for years, rusting iron, over the river near Corlew Bend near

Pint Rock Bluff. The bridge served as a reminder of earlier days when travel was not as easy as it is today. Today the Stringfellow Bridge is just a memory of the distant past.

~ Walter Pitt, Archivist



To learn more about this subject or to submit a research request, please email the Archivist at:

archives@cheathamcountyttn.gov