

Excerpts from Bob Edmonds' books

Augusta Chronicle and Constitutional, June 30, 1880, Augusta & Knoxville Railroad

"The first iron on this road was laid today, and it will be pushed forward to completion as rapidly as possible. The road will be an important factor in our prosperity, tapping, as it will, one of the most productive sections of South Carolina. At one time it seemed as if there was small chance for its success, but the perseverance of those who inaugurated it, and especially the indomitable courage and energy of Mr. W. T. Wheelless, its President, overcame all obstacles, and before many months the whistle of the locomotive will be heard on the other side of the river. Mr. Wheelless' mantle has fallen upon worthy shoulders. Mr. Eugene F. Verdery, the present President, is making every effort to secure the completion of this enterprise at as early a date as possible. His visit to Chattanooga secured a capital bargain in the matter of iron for the company and he will push forward the road as rapidly as circumstances will permit. Fully 25,000 bales of cotton will be brought to the city, and this means much. Our citizens certainly owe a great deal to those who kept the enterprise on foot until it was firmly established. We are satisfied that there is no road terminating in Augusta that will pay better or be of more practical advantage to the entire community. Its bonds which will soon be issued should bring a high price as no investment on the market can be surer. We venture to predict that the road will not only pay its running expenses and the interest on its bonds, but hand some dividend to its stockholders. It will be the cheapest road ever built in this section and all its appointments will be first class in every respect."

Edgefield Advertiser, October 21, 1880, Woodlawn, S. C.

"Beginning at the river, Capt. Cahill, the Superintendent, has finished up to the cross roads above Mr. A. Sharpton's, a distance of over eight miles. There is a gap of half a mile where it crosses Mrs. E. Meriwether's fields, which was left on account of some legal formalities. There seems to have been some slight misunderstanding between the road and penitentiary authorities, but they have been amicably settled.

"The company sent off twenty-six hands a few weeks ago on account of ill health. Since then the health of the camp has been very good, not a death occurring

in over two weeks.

"Most of the heavy work is done, and, from where they are now at work to the end of the road, about fifteen or twenty miles is all light grade and easy work.

"General Bradley, the energetic and tireless President of the company, speaks of hiring free labor, and recommending at the Greenwood end and working down until 'both ends meet.'

"The Georgians are hard at work on the bridge, and the road is an assured certainty. They have finished an abutment on the Georgia side of Little River and one on the Savannah side of Dearmond's or Walton's Island. They have about forty hands at work under the general supervision of Engineer A. J. Twigg. It is to be an iron bridge, on the King pattern, and judging from the masonry it will be very substantial. The bridge will be about five or six hundred yards long, counting the trestle on the island, which will be 256 yards long. The contractors - the Messrs. Denning of Augusta - promise to have the bridge finished by the first of April 1880. They got their rock from a splendid quarry in Colonel Sneed's fields about a mile from where the bridge begins. 'Tis said to be the finest quarry in the South."

Abbeville Press and Banner - The Greenwood and Augusta Railroad, December 8, 1880.

"We are pleased to learn that the work on the road is progressing and most satisfactorily to the most sanguine friends of the road. The Directors have secured thirty additional convicts, and have now a total of about fifty-five hands actively at work. The bridge across the canal has been finished; the road bed is ready for the iron to the river, where the stone piers are ready for the bridge. We are informed that those having the matter in charge think the iron will be put down to the river by the middle of January next. The iron bridge is now in Augusta and will be put in position as soon as the road is ready to transport to the place. The iron has already been laid for a short distance, and an engine and a train of cars are now in use. This begins to look like business.

We are truly glad at the success of the projectors of the enterprise and congratulate them as public benefactors."

(From *Building Railroads: The Greenwood to Augusta Railroad and The Savannah Valley Railroad*)

Kitty's Korner

By Kitty Craig - Jackson

I've known too many people who have made themselves miserable because they believed that they should be accomplishing the big things in life that are recognized by many, many people if their lives are to mean anything. They berate themselves for not measuring up, for not "succeeding," even when they've accomplished many things that other people would be proud of.

"Tiny successes" mean much more to me. These are the kinds of successes that build on themselves and each other, the kind that add up in the end to a successful life: Helping a friend to do something important, getting a plant to grow, making a loved one feel good about himself or herself, making someone smile, setting goals and reaching them, losing those ten pounds and setting a goal for ten more instead of starting with a goal for twenty. All of these things are small successes with which we

can decorate each day of our lives.

I do like to see Olympic athletes win gold medals, and I do like to see authors sell millions of copies, and I do like to see what we call the "bigger" successes. But think about it for a moment: Most of what we consider to be huge successes in our society have to do with entertainment (singers, writers, actors) or sports than anything else. And given the nature of those fields, there are relatively few people who can be great successes in them, and most of us aren't even in those fields to begin with.

In our own fields, in our own lives, we have plenty of opportunities for success. We must acknowledge and appreciate the smaller successes so that we can build on them and grow as people and allow ourselves to reach new levels of success. Otherwise, we're kind of squandering our opportunities to see ourselves as successful people and our chances to be happy with what we do and how we do it.



- Tom Poland photo

Across the Savannah

Insignificant treasures

By Tom Poland
A Southern Writer
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The things we collect. When I am gone, my daughters will think their dad was a bit touched. Just why did he hang onto a rusty bolt? And what's with the rock? The arrowheads they'll get. Well, each object you see here holds memories.

The white disk is a circa 1771 Mason jar lid. Before metal caps came along, folks sealed their jars with a snow-white disk of glass. Not that special you say. Well, I found this Boyd Genuine Mason jar cap in ankle-high water in Petersburg, Ga., the drowned ghost town that almost became the capital of Georgia.

That smooth, gray-and-white rock left of the cap? I picked it up from the swift waters of the Chattooga River, a place special to me in many ways. If I hold that rock up to my ear, I can hear the Chattooga raging. Well, I pretend I do. Just behind that rock is a green marble, Coca-Cola green. I heard that Coca-Cola bottles were made from such marbles, but I've yet to confirm that. What makes more sense is that they made early Coca-Cola bottles with a marble inside them. Carbonation pressure forced the marble up against a rubber seal, thus keeping the drink from going flat in what was known as a Codd bottle.

Up front right of the marble sits a three-ring Minié ball from the Battle of Richmond. A fellow I worked with gave me the bent projectile. Did it strike a Confederate's bone? We'll never know, but the Confederates prevailed that day in Richmond, Ky., routing Union forces.

Just behind the Minié ball is a rusty bolt but no ordinary bolt. It fell from my seat one Saturday in

Sanford Stadium, home to the Georgia Bulldogs. Yes, I can say I own a piece of that stadium with its famous hedges, and by the way, my seat is as solid as ever. To the far right of the bolt is a Morrow Mountain point I found on family land. To its left is a Dalton point I found as a boy. When I hold these points, I connect with people long gone. Between the points is a magical antique marble I found in sand along the drip line of an old building. When light strikes the marble, its surface turns silver, and an iridescent ray of cobalt blue light shoots out its opposite side.

A man gave me the cube-like rocks to the left of the Dalton point saying Indians used them as money. That's not true according to scholars, but I keep them nonetheless.

That small blue bottle? It's an antique bottle that held Vicks Vapo-Rub. What makes it special is I found it in the sands of a large creek, having washed downstream from some home long gone.

I have as well an old bolt from the now-gone steel truss bridge that used to shoot Highway 47 over Clarks Hill Lake back home. I'd love to have a dollar for each time I crossed that vanquished bridge. That's as close to a fortune as I come, though, for my collection is one of insignificant treasures. I have become the curator of my personal museum where mementos of special places and special times keep things in perspective, for the truth is we're all just passing through.

I suspect some of you collect things that would make little sense to others. Well, I get it. Keep them in a special place and attach a note to each. Your heirs will thank you, and they'll realize you weren't touched in the head after all.

Visit my website at
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Birthdays/Wedding Anniversaries

January 8 - Frances Corley, Mike Stribling, Martha Mueller, Lateidrya Mims, Thomasa Rodgers, John Allen Campbell, Candace Lester, Henry and Nina Young, Tracy Jester.

January 9 - Anissa Ann Parker, Zim Cannon, Alicia Mims, Janet and Scott Wilkins, Barb Barritt, Bob Rennie, Wanda Rogers, Nicholas Bowick.

January 10 - Daniel Lewis Dukes, Susan W. Buck, Michael Cochrane, Lou Lee, Jan Panka, Sue Lundy, Jerry and Barb Berton, Barnaryous Drennon, Sherrick Williams II.

January 11 - Paul E. Brown, Cheree Dorn, Dick Parks, Josh Houston, Miles Martin, Joseph Boyce,

Miles Sibert, Kevin Sanders, Aubrey Guiney, Gayle Sheffield.

January 12 - Chris Bundrick, Jean Moore, Clem Smith, Mari-Clare DoByns, Shameaka Ervin, Lt. Will Crady, Nathan Timok, Shirley Stiers.

January 13 - Cheryl D. Pennington, Dusty Newby, Martha Perrin, Na'Toya Leverette, Kathryn Perrin, William D. Willis, Darren Keith Upshur, Mr. and Mrs. Ricky Creswell, Nick Rocheleau, Sheri Leslie.

January 14 - Johnny A. Key, Rosemary Pettus, Preston Lewis, Marcia Brown, Bradley Eberts, Lakisha V. Morgan, Gary Jones, Nadia Wells, T'Sayveon Creswell.

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On tyranny

The U.S. Constitution has successfully guided our nation's democratic way of governance for 232 years, making it the longest lasting democracy ever. This is a remarkable achievement considering that democracies are fragile instruments that often fail. They're fragile because they allow for freedom of religion, speech and press — freedoms not permitted in totalitarian nations. With such freedoms, the populace has a powerful voice in their nation's governance. Without them, tyrants thrive.

For centuries, a so-called "Tyrant's Handbook" has been used by demagogues to overthrow democracies. Some of the conditions needed are a divided nation, a populist figure, bold promises, governmental chaos and a sleepy, indifferent populace. Recent examples of countries where democracies failed include Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Germany, Hungary and Spain. All of those nations failed to halt the damage inflicted by a demagogue to their cultural values, their governments and their institutions until it was too late.

Donald Trump is such a demagogue. He used that formula to get elected. Then, he showed us what can happen when a country's citizenry fails to stand up against a bully with takeover intentions. In just four years, he and his enablers undermined our cultural values, divided us and severely damaged many of our most vital institutions, most notably the executive branch, the U.S. Senate, the Department of Justice, the Federal Elections Commission, the U.S. Immigration Services and the U.S. Department of Defense.

This demonstrates why it is our obligation to constantly defend our institutions. They are the backbone of our democracy. The opportunity for takeover is greatest when the populace becomes complacent, assuming that the three branches of governance — legislative, judicial and executive — will automatically

prevent power grabs by would-be kings. That is exactly what the people in the above listed countries believed. They paid a deathly price for being wrong.

Hitler's takeover of Germany didn't start with gas chambers and assassinations by firing squads. It started with politicians dividing the people by using a "us vs. them" strategy. It started with swastikas, intolerance, hate speech and easy answers for big problems. Hitler, thusly — using corruption, deceit, lies, conspiracies, treachery, terror, coups, and unauthorized force — convinced the heads of the German government to join his newly formed Nazi party. With that accomplished, the Nazi party inspired the vulnerable citizens of a downtrodden nation to elect the so-called "Führer" (leader) as their chancellor. Less than six months later, he had full control of Germany. Remarkably, the dumb-founded German citizenry continued to support their obviously crazed leader, even after he announced his intention to obliterate Jews from his so-called "superior white race."

Just as was the case in Germany, many people in America made the mistake of assuming Trump was incapable of undermining our cultural norms and institutions. They were wrong. As a result, millions of Americans have been maliciously attacked and injured by Trump during his reign of terror. His administration was the most corrupt, the vilest and the most destructive to democracy in our nation's history.

Our duty now is to hold accountable those people in government who endorsed this president's atrocious behavior and allowed it to continue. We must also acknowledge our grave mistake of believing this tyrant's false promises. Finally, we must pledge to be better caretakers of our precious democracy for the future.

-Luman Slade

Messenger Mail

A country turned upside-down

- The Brink Of Destruction - With all of the fraud perpetrated in the presidential election, after the long and purposeful planning to pull this off, in the dead of night, one could say that the plan was wildly successful. Even the backstops to derail any attempt to fix it were impeccably planned out. But what do you think the outcome will be after the people who have gone to this extent to fraudulently steal the election take charge, and power?

- Bob's Rule Number 5, bet on it!

- China - Who is going to stand up to China? There are some serious questions about our new president being compromised, which may or may not be sorted out. Agenda driven will not get it done, and the power in China is leading the cheers to see Trump out of the picture.

We are at war with China, economically and militarily. They have infiltrated our government, sleeping with our elected officials (right, Mr. Swalwell) and working at all levels of state and federal government. Biden in their pocket? We shall see, as the "deep state" gets the handcuffs taken off. The next step, the government owns your company. Wait a minute, doesn't China ... Oh, never mind.

- Truth, justice, and the American way - dead!

- Clean elections - R.I.P!

- "Musical groups" - The two new ones are Joe Biden And The Inclusionists and Kamala Harris and the Inclusionists.

- Racism - Let's face it, the politicalization of racism, and dividing people into voting blocs, fits the definition. But, one could look at it this way: "Racism is not a skin tone issue; it's a heart issue." It's way past the time to let people be people, but rest assured, politicians will keep poking at the horns nest.

- S.W.A.T. - Social Workers And Therapists - the replacements for the police in the defund the police movement, brought to you by the liberal/socialist/Marxist/democrats. When someone is breaking into your house, who are you going to call? Take care of the problem yourself and see who's in trouble.

- Hope and change - We are left (maybe too far left), with the hope that the change will be good for the people and the country. Take the cor-

onavirus out of the equation, and a very strong case could be made that the country was doing pretty well in spite of the malcontents always trying to tear it, and the President, down.

- New normal, re-imagine, and New World Order - These will become well-known words to you. With Trump out of the way, the World can now be managed by an elite force of high-powered socialists and Marxists. Before they get done restructuring the world, this will make us imagine what the world was like when it was normal. Watch who pays for it.

- The Biden cabinet - Based solely on diversity, not knowledge or background or ability, just the first this or the first that. Now, the infighting over not enough of this, or that, based entirely on a numbers game. Lots of focus on current racial issues, defined systematic racial issues, gender issues, wealth disparity, quotas, inclusion and new entitlements. Have they no clue that income growth and jobs, which all of this will harm, is the real answer?

- The Stimulus Bill - Held up for months so that Trump couldn't take the credit, and now they come up with this garbage. Typical that politicians do what politicians do, mess it up. Let's see, \$600 for every American and \$2 Billion for Asia and Africa. So big, 5,593 pages, that it had to be transported on a cart. Let's look at a few things, like \$10 million to monitor elections in Zimbabwe. What about our elections? Some \$37 million to help with Filipino truant youth, \$20 million to rebuild the runway at Nantucket Airport (who uses that airport?), \$3.5 million for mailings getting mothers to monitor their daughters at indoor tanning salons, \$10 million for gender studies, another \$25 million to the Kennedy Center and \$1.4 billion in checks mailed to dead people (and they know this because...) (votes). People, and businesses are getting hammered, and this is what they call stimulus. Manure!

- The economy - The Wall Street Journal reports that "the outlook for the economy has darkened this month." Couldn't have anything to do with the massive election fraud, or of Joe Biden and his inclusionists, taking over, would it?

-Robert Patrick

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