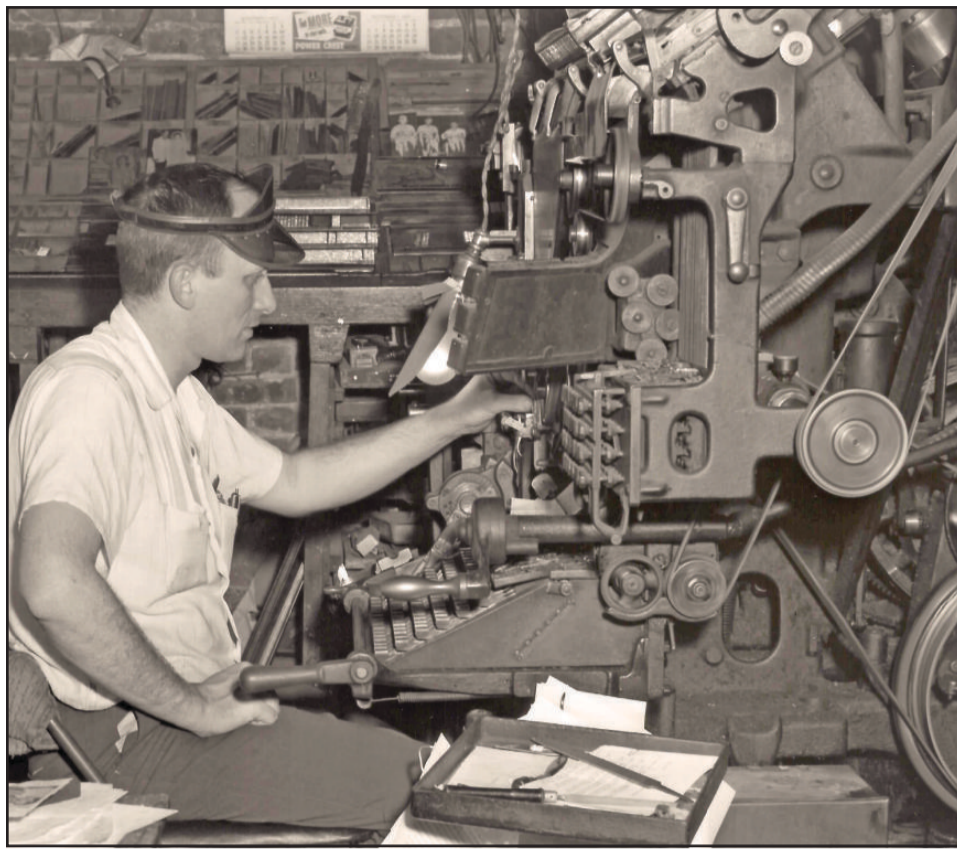
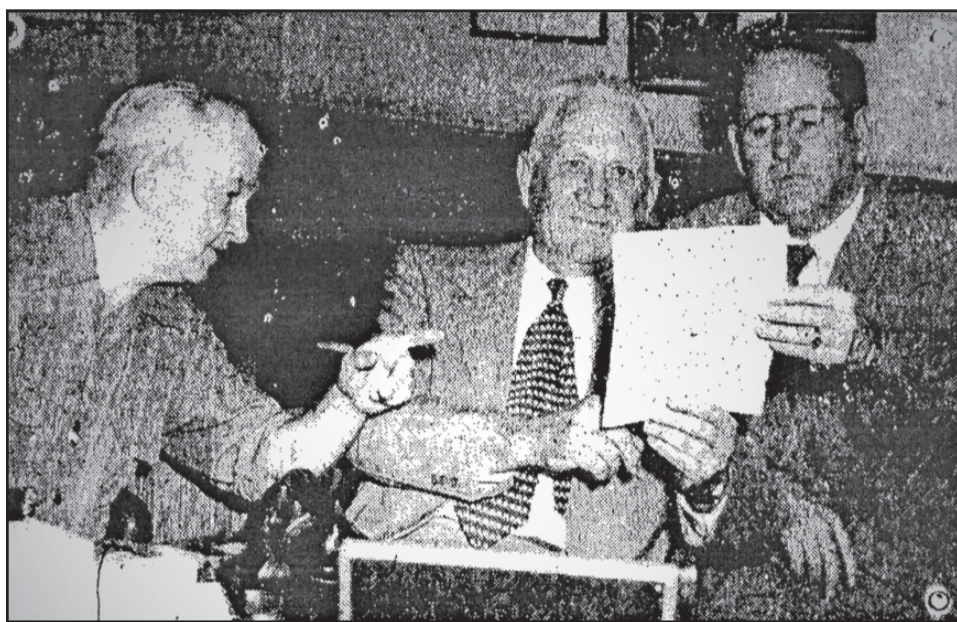


# My friend, the master storyteller



Managing Editor John S. McCracken setting type on Model 14 Linotype, photo by Bob Edmonds, October 1, 1957.



Senator L. L. Hester and B. F. Smith of Mt. Carmel visited Anderson Mayor W. C. Johnston.



World War II Combat Infantryman Badge

By Bob Edmonds

John S. McCracken was a master storyteller. He was a serious, deliberate writer as managing editor for the *McCormick Messenger* for many years. Often, he worked on a lead story all weekend and spent time visiting the scene of the story, he examined details carefully, being sure not to miss anything. Story writers just don't come any better. Newspaper writing ran in his blood.

Johnny McCracken came home from World War II with a Purple Heart, wearing a Combat Infantryman Badge, and a desire to get back to printing the *McCormick Messenger* in small-time McCormick. One time only he described the combat experience to me in which he was wounded.

Johnny enrolled in a journalism course at the University of South Carolina. After a week his professor told him, "Boy, you can learn more at your newspaper than I could ever teach you here, go home." Johnny returned home.

Forever, the front page of the *Messenger* had consisted mostly of columns and columns of type. In late 1952, McCormick County Senator L. L. Hester and B. F. Smith visited Anderson Mayor W. C. Johnston. *The Anderson Independent* printed a story of the event. Johnny read the story, gave a call to his friend Hurlley Badders at the *Independent*, and asked for the favor of sending the metal cut to enable running the picture in the *Messenger*. He ran the picture and as the old saying goes "one picture is worth a thousand words." A major change was about to occur.

Johnny called on *Index-Journal* Editor Ed Chaffin. The *Index* used less expensive plastic cuts. Not only would his friend Ed gladly pass the used cuts but if the *Messenger* would shoot pictures of other events in McCormick needed for his newspaper and provide glossy prints for engraving, we would swap even. Bingo, we could use my darkroom and I had ferrotype plates and could make the glossy prints.

Johnny offered the same deal to the *Independent*. Hurlley liked it. That fall, Johnny sent me to shoot football team and individual photos at Lincolnton and Washington for the *Independent*. The December 25, 1952, *Messenger* issue was teeming with local Christmas photographs. Forthwith the *McCormick Messenger* was a newspaper enhanced with lots of pictures much to the pleasure of its readers. Now for the first time, local folks could view themselves in the local newspaper.

Over the adventurous years Johnny and I shot hundreds of news photos with our 4x5 Crown Graphic Press cameras. We were at Oak Hill at sunrise to photograph rare birds departing for foreign parts, we searched for an unidentified flying object (UFO) in the woods near Bordeaux on a Sunday night, we waited until midnight for Annie Sue Faulkner's flower to bloom, we shot car wrecks, civic meetings, Boy Scouts, football and basketball games, politicians smiling, defeated politicians crying, moonshine stills, fires, triplet baby calves, funny looking turnips, a three-legged chicken, etc., etc.

For many years Johnny and I shared a beautiful, flawless work relationship and a friendship as tight as brothers, with never a rude word to one another. Unbelievable but true.

Johnny McCracken was a peach of a man – a gentleman and a master storyteller. What a legacy he left.



Pvt. John S. McCracken



Purple Heart

## Birthdays/Wedding Anniversaries

Congratulations and best wishes to the following persons who celebrate birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

February 4 - Tammy E. Hill, Shawn Keith, Thaddeus Jermaine Creswell, Karen Glassburn, Wayne Kirkland, Faye L. Puckett, Kenny Bottoms, Faye Crawford, Marty Slone, Sylvia Mancuso, Carrie Miller, Ty Seigler, David Williams.

February 5 - Mr. and Mrs. John H. Colter, Henrietta Franklin, Ron Hancock, Jeff Young, Linda Wilkie, Sidney Coffee, Porsche Puckett, Rylen Holden Goff, Robert Lee Storey, T'Shaun M. Creswell, James Daniel Cartledge.

February 6 - Bob and Cathy Osterman, Eric Brown, Kevin Coleman, Robert F. Settle, Cornelia Sibert, Stanley Singletary, Teviar Timpson, Laura Ashley Heyward, Em-

ily Sanders, Cliff Boese, Dana Heyward, Shannon Armstrong, Steve Long, Bob McIntosh, Tina Jones, MacAuthur Wells.

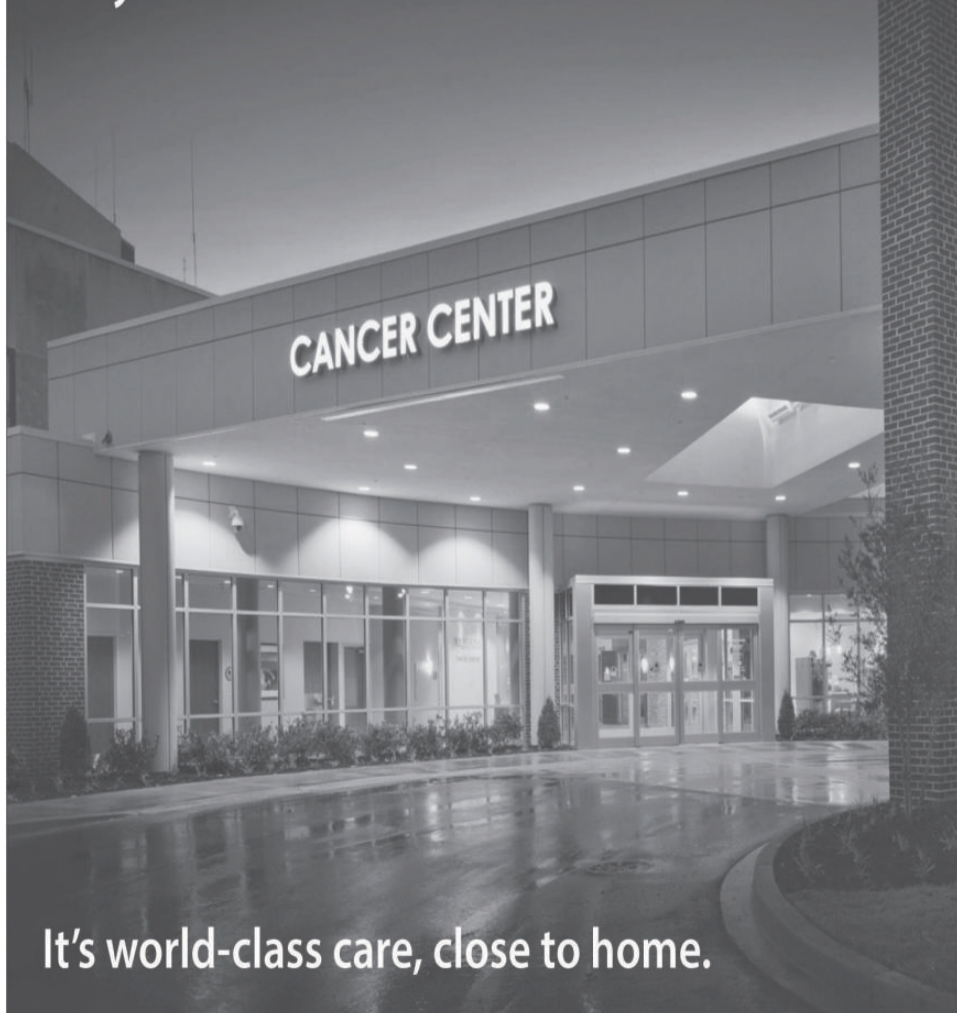
February 7 - Twan Garrett, Queen Wardlaw, Jerry Sears, Andrea Nalbandian, Lorene Morgan, Brianna Cowart.

February 8 - Michael King, Beverly Gertrude Leverette, Matt Jennings, Tracy Searles, Julie Winn, Bradley Thornton.

February 9 - Shelvie S. McKinney, Magdalene Lomax, Ricky Banks, Morgan Bussey Jr., Natoyan Jennings, Rachel Broome, Jordan W. Franklin, Titus Tinch, Randall Morton, Jim Klausman, Les Sulyi, Bill and Kay Wold, Bridget Fowler, Stephanie Lampkins, Peggy LaDuke.

February 10 - Doris Parsons, Barbara Morris, Libby Smith, Mary Frances Hall, Kitty Boese, Don Lewis, Jerry Berton, Samantha L. Crowell.

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## Valentine's Specials

for Orders Placed before Feb. 10

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**Rose Bud Vases \$10**

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