

## MAULDIN

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Back in the 1920's when I first became a Mauldin resident, our little community was known to those traveling from Greenville to Columbia as "the place where the pavement ends." It was not until Highway 276 (Laurens Road), from Mauldin on toward Columbia was paved some years later that we first heard, "If you blink you'll miss Mauldin." Since those early days when we children ran outside to see an automobile pass, I have spent a half century watching our little country community turn into a city with rush hour traffic snarls. Most of those years I lived in a "house by the side of the road," right on Highway 276 that today is Mauldin's Main Street. Now our town is known, not as the place where the pavement ends, but as the place where the traffic stops, particularly on a Clemson football Saturday.

Whenever one talks about Mauldin, there is a problem of putting boundaries around the area under discussion. Mauldin is certainly not just that stretch of highway between the city limit signs, today filled with fast-food restaurants and used car lots, although this obviously tells the story of great change. Nor is Mauldin defined by address. In fact, families living outside the city limits with a Greenville address and a Simpsonville phone number are definitely "from Mauldin." For me, Mauldin has always been, not just a village, a town, or a city, but an expanding community of people drawn together by common interests and goals; therefore, I identify Mauldin as the area served by its schools and its churches.

Contrary to the belief of some eight year olds in the local elementary school, I did not play with little Cherokees when I was a child, although I did find a few arrowheads. For information about Mauldin's earliest days I must depend on histories and maps, on stories passed down through the years and on the memories of my older friends. It appears that until after the Revolutionary War, today's busy highway through Mauldin was little more than an Indian trail used by early white

traders. A map of the Province of South Carolina indicates that in 1773 the site of the present day town was on or very near the Indian boundary line separating the Cherokee lands from those open to settlement. The map shows no settlers along Gilder Creek, the branch of the Enoree River which flows through Mauldin.

It now seems certain that there were pre-revolutionary settlers in the Mauldin area. Greenville County historians agree that Nathaniel Austin came from Virginia as an emissary to the Indians and then returned with his family in 1761 to build a log home on Gilder Creek while this was still Indian territory. He was preceded by Gilbert Gilder who obtained land warrants in 1749 and gave the creek its name. It is not clear how long the Gilder family lived in the area, but the Austins remained. While the father and all ten sons were away fighting for the patriot cause, seventeen year old Mary, the only daughter, was killed by an Indian arrow. Family tradition says that she stuffed her wound with leaves to staunch the blood, and died alone in the forest not far from her home. Later two of her brothers found the Indian responsible and avenged her death. Her grave, and those of her father and mother, are on the family property, in what became known as the Bethel Church community between Mauldin and Simpsonville. If you go that way today you will see the homes of the Holly Tree subdivision with golf courses and condominiums, but you can also see an 1840 Austin plantation home, "Gilder," on the corner of Bethel Road and Highway 14. When Greenville County was divided into townships, the area which included Mauldin became part of Austin Township, named for this pioneer family. Like the Austins, there were other sturdy God-fearing settlers who risked great dangers as they carved homesteads out of the wilderness.

After the Revolution, the Cherokees, who had sided with the British, were driven out and their lands confiscated. The Loyalists also lost their holdings. Grants of land were then made by the state to soldiers in recognition of their service. Several present day Mauldin families can trace property holdings back to royal grants or to Revolutionary War service grants. A land office opened in Pendleton in 1784 and it was a busy place as

settlers poured into Greenville County from Virginia, Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Family histories now being assembled for a proposed history of Mauldin show that many families of this area came during this period. Among them were the McDaniels, Griffiths, Yeargins, and Hydes.

One of the early settlers in the immediate Mauldin area was Benjamin Griffith who came from North Carolina in 1784. His widowed daughter, Mrs. Kezziah Griffith McDaniel, bought or inherited property from the Griffiths and established a home where the Whatley house now stands, on the corner of West Butler and Main Street. At one time the Griffith-McDaniel holdings reached from Laurel Creek to Reedy River Road, now West Butler Avenue. Mrs. McDaniel's son, James, five years old when they moved to South Carolina, married Mary "Polly" Austin, the granddaughter of Nathaniel Austin. James McDaniel was a Quartermaster General in the War of 1812 and was sheriff of Greenville County. This is the McDaniel for whom McDaniel Avenue in Greenville is named. He is buried in the old rock-walled Griffith-McDaniel-Ashmore cemetery on McDaniel Lane in the Knollwood subdivision in the city of Mauldin. The worn granite slabs carry such names as Gen. I. James McDaniel (1780-1856), Polly McDaniel (1783-1883), and Stephen Griffith (1811-1898). Simple stones mark graves prior to the 1780's.

The oldest Mauldin home that I can remember was the log house built by Devereaux Yeargin very early in the 1800's and torn down about 1950. It stood at the corner of East Butler and Bethel Drive, shaded by a huge old oak. The John B. Vaughan family was living in this home during my childhood, and I visited them, saw the steep ladder steps to the sleeping loft, and marveled that large families had lived in the small structure. The Devereaux Yeargins had twelve children and from these are descended several present day Mauldin families. An old Yeargin family burying ground is near the intersection of Bethel Drive and Golden Strip Drive on property now owned by Mrs. J. A. (Mildred) Fowler, whose beautiful azalea garden was a lovely modern Mauldin landmark until her death. A smaller Yeargin cemetery is near the corner of Miller and Corn Roads. Other old family burying grounds are the Sheffield, Adams, Cox, and

Spillers cemeteries off Ashmore Bridge Road, the Stokes-Hamby cemetery in the Holly Springs subdivision, and the Hyde and Forrester cemeteries a short distance from West Butler. The stones at many of these are no longer readable and we are indebted to Mrs. B. T. (Mildred) Whitmire who recorded these in 1957 and preserved them in her book *The Presence of the Past*.

Another large landowner of early Mauldin was Jacob H. Hyde (1808-1884) who bought part of the Yeargin property including the present Mauldin town site. I remember an old Hyde home on East Butler that was not torn down until the 1960's. Jacob's son, John B. Hyde (1830-1907) served eight years in The Department of Internal Revenue in Washington, but returned to the Mauldin area to make his home. He donated the land for the first church and school; his daughter, Addie Hyde Cox, gave land for the railway and depot. Addie Hyde married Riley E. Cox (1852-1937), son of William Jasper Cox, who died in an army hospital in Atlanta (December 1863) during the Civil War. At the news of his father's death young Riley traveled with his mother and a Negro servant in a wagon to Atlanta to the military cemetery. They removed his body and brought it back home to be reinterred with relatives in Standing Springs Church Cemetery.

Solomon L. Robertson (1814-1911), another early Mauldin settler, owned and operated a grist mill west of Mauldin and lived in a large home on the east side of Main Street. The home was later owned by Will S. Baldwin and then by Jesse A. Fowler. An 1882 map shows many property owners in the Mauldin area in addition to those previously mentioned. Among the names shown there are: Adams, Baldwin, Blakely, Bramlett, Burdett, Cobb, Cox, Forrester, Fowler, Garrett, Glenn, Griffin, Griffith, Owens, Sheffield, Smith, Taylor, Thomason, Vaughan, and Verdin. A 1904 map adds such names as Alexander, Hamby, Hill, King, Montgomery, Spillers, Whatley, and White. Descendants of many of these early citizens live in Mauldin today.

Most of the early settlers came down through the Blue Ridge passes following the paths widened by the drovers who herded

hogs, turkeys, and cattle from the mountains down the state to markets in Hamburg and Charleston. A few of Mauldin's oldest residents can remember as children seeing the dust those drovers raised as they passed down Laurens Road with their squawking turkeys and squealing pigs. By 1830 a stagecoach road had been opened from Laurens to Greenville and it passed through Mauldin. Until that time the settlement had been rather isolated. The early homes, simple log or frame structures, were built near springs at some distance from each other. Travel was difficult and the streams were often impassable. When a neighbor said, "We'll be over to see you, the good Lord willing and the creeks don't rise," he was serious. The story is told of a mother who was stranded on one side of a creek while her sick child died across the turbulent stream. Families seldom traveled far from home and the young people usually married into nearby families. When we came to Mauldin (with a father from Tennessee and a mother from Georgia) I often wondered why everyone, except our family, was called "Cudd'n" and why we weren't "Cousin" to everyone around as our friends were.

A part of the large Griffith-McDaniel tract was bought by Willis Butler in 1853 when the McDaniels moved to Greenville. The Butlers then lived in the McDaniel home at the crossroads. When a name was needed for the growing settlement, "Butler's Crossroads" was a natural choice since the center of the community was near this intersection of the Laurens and Reedy River Roads. This is now the intersection of Butler Avenue and Main Street, where the traffic really is a rush-hour problem. A granddaughter came to live with the Butlers in 1886 after the death of her parents. This granddaughter, Mrs. R. D. Jones, wife of the founder of Jones Mortuary, could recall life as it was in Butler's Crossroads. Mrs. Jones died in 1980 at the age of 105. Her daughters, Misses Annabel and Juliet Jones, are repositories of her stories.

Recently Mrs. J. M. (Sarah Whatley) Griffin recalled her mother's stories of her childhood days during the Reconstruction period. "They lived hard back then," she said. "You know how farmers would 'hill' sweet potatoes. They would 'hill' turnips and Irish potatoes, too, to try to make them last. They would wrap pumpkins, cover the collards with 'tow'

sacks. They ate what they had — lots of dried beans. And they were so glad when the first greens came up in the spring — poke sallet. They raised sheep and carried the wool to Batesville to get it spun into thread and woven to make winter garments. They didn't have any dyes they could buy except 'turkey red'. They used coperas for blue and made brown from walnut hulls. My mother used to tell about loading up all the family — all the children — in the wagon to go to church. The men were always going off and leaving the women and children at home. They raised cotton. Children had to pick their shoe full of seed every night. They knit their socks, made all their clothes." Although this story is second hand I did know and talk many times with Mrs. Griffin's mother. She was Mrs. R. A. (Susie Forrester) Whatley (1870-1954), my neighbor across the street, and she had time to talk of the old days while she taught me to knit. The '911 R. A. Whatley home, a two story square brick structure stands on the corner previously owned by James McDaniel and Willis Butler and is a Mauldin landmark today.

The earliest businesses in the Mauldin area were grist mills and saw mills on the swift flowing streams. Old Mill Road, Adams Mill Road, and Parkins Mill Road are reminders of these nineteenth century enterprises. The first industry in the area was the Reedy River Factory, later Conestee Woolen Mill. This dam and factory building were designed and built by John Adams, millwright, for Vardry McBee in the 1830's. Adams also designed and built the Methodist Chapel at Conestee, patterning it after the churches in his native Scotland. This church is one of the few octagonal churches remaining in the United States and is on the National Register. Descendants of Adams and of the Griffiths, who were the brick masons for the church and mill, still live in the Mauldin area. William A. (Will) Adams represented Greenville County in the state legislature from 1938 to 1940. Other descendants have been active in community life.

The industrial growth of the upstate was halted by the Civil War. I believe that every Mauldin family whose ancestors were living in the community during the 1860's can trace back to a relative who fought for the Confederacy. Although no battles were fought in this region and it was not on Sherman's march,

the women and children, too, were forced to endure great hardships. Family stories tell of raids by Union soldiers and of the scarcity of the necessities of life. It was a time of struggle to "keep body and soul together" as they "scratched out a living."

When the defeated soldiers came home, they put away their uniforms and took up the plow handles again to begin the work of reconstruction. One of their tasks was to build a church and a school in the neighborhood. Families had gathered together for worship in their homes or under brush arbors. Some traveled by wagon to services at Reedy River Presbyterian Church (founded in 1778) or to Bethel Methodist Church (founded about 1801 on property donated by John Bramlett). Others went to McBee's Chapel (built in 1830 on land given by Vardry McBee) or to Standing Springs Baptist Church (founded 1818 on land donated by James Cox). But these were some distance away from the growing settlement. A deed shows that in 1869, J. B. Hyde transferred land to the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the purpose of building a church and a school. Because the property included a grove of poplar trees shading a fine spring, the name "Poplar Springs" was given to the new church and to the school that used the same pole building. A few years later a separate school house was built, and by 1900 a two story frame building was needed for the growing "Poplar School."

Until 1923 church and school shared name, property, and trustees. The church was served by circuit riders who drove their buggies from church to church as they served several small congregations. Preaching in 1884 was on first Sunday afternoon and fifth Sunday morning at Poplar from April to October. The 25 charter members grew slowly into a congregation that numbered between fifty and sixty when I first attended services at Poplar Springs Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1927. The building I knew then was a one room white frame structure with a vestibule in front and shutters at the windows. It was built in 1904 at a cost of \$1500 and was used until 1940. The altar rail from this building is in the chapel of the Mauldin United Methodist Church today.

The name of the church changed in 1959 after the spring was covered over and few of the trees remained. Poplar School became Mauldin School in 1924 and land was divided between church and school.

There were other early schools in the Mauldin area. I have been told that at one time there was a Republican and a Democrat school across the road from each other. Other schools included Bethel School near Bethel Church, Rosebud School out Miller Road, Adams School on Ashmore Bridge Road, Old Stoney Creek School just off Log Shoals Road, Oak Grove School off Woodruff Road, and Flat Rock School in the Forrester Woods area.

By 1904 there were enough Baptists to build a Baptist Church in the community. After a successful revival, led by Rev. Lewis Fowler at a brush arbor near Old Stoney Creek School, the Misses Mary ("Polly") and Lucinda ("Cindy") Owens gave property surrounding their family cemetery for a church and cemetery. Owens Lane commemorates this gift. The Baptist congregation I joined in 1931 was still using the original one room white frame building, although it had been moved to face a different direction. This building was not torn down until the early 60's, some years after a new brick sanctuary was in place. So many Furman student pastors served Mauldin Baptist Church in the early days that someone remarked that Furman should pay the church for providing a training ground for its students. Many strong preachers of the state gained their first experience in Mauldin. Since the Baptist church and the Methodist church had preaching on alternate Sundays, families often attended both churches, young people joined together for church socials, and protracted meetings in both churches were well attended. Black residents attended nearby Reedy River Baptist Church and Laurel Creek Methodist Church.

The year 1886 was an important one in Mauldin history. The Greenville and Laurens Railroad completed its tracks from Laurens to Greenville with the first train

run on September 8, 1886. This third railroad into Greenville was the first to go through Mauldin. The G and L became a part of the C and WC (Charleston and Western Carolina) which later became a part of the Atlantic Coast Line. Now it is a part of the Seaboard Coastal Railway Company. A depot was built in Mauldin in 1889 as a combination passenger and freight station. Riley E. Cox was the first depot agent as well as the first postmaster. The mail was delivered by train until into the 1940's.

Recently Curtis Baldwin recalled how he watched the train go by as he worked in the fields as a young boy and dreamed of working for the railroad. He remembered every detail of his first train trip in 1909, an exciting overnight excursion to Savannah with his father. In 1920 he began a lifetime of work on the railroad during which he spent more than 20 years as section foreman on the line through Mauldin. He recalled that several passenger trains stopped each day in Mauldin and many bales of cotton were shipped out from the station on mixed trains. Farmers and merchants came by to pick up supplies and the depot was a favorite place for the men of the community to gather. The station master was also a telegrapher and sometimes a buyer for the cotton mills. The station was retired in 1956 and torn down. Now a sharp curve in Jenkins Street before it crosses the railroad to become Miller Road is the only indication that once a busy railway station functioned there. Depot agents that I remember are Mr. Morgan, Mr. C. E. Graves, and Mr. Herbert Smith.

The year 1886 was also noted for a literally earth shaking event. Throughout this area a roar like a freight train was heard, the earth shook, windows rattled, bricks fell from chimneys, and in the ensuing confusion many thought that Judgement Day had come. A revival was in progress at Poplar Springs Church, I have been told by ones who were there as children, and the preacher was expressing his disappointment in the response, when the lanterns began to swing, the floor began to shake and

the minister joined the congregation in making a speedy exit. "After that I understand they had a very successful revival" (according to J. F. Whatley) — all because of the Charleston Earthquake of '86.

Mauldin received its name because of the coming of the railroad. It seems that W. L. Mauldin, of Greenville, lieutenant governor under Governors Hugh Thompson and John Peter Richardson II, was influential in getting the railroad to come through Butler's Crossroads. In his honor the state legislature in 1890 gave the name Mauldin to the little community within one-half mile radius of the depot. I found no record to show town officials were elected at that time. The town charter dated February 14, 1910 shows that ten freehold electors had filed a petition for incorporation. This charter granted commissions to Andrew Lee Holland, Anthony White and Henry Samuel Morgan to register electors, appoint managers and to hold an election for town officials. The appointed managers were A. L. Holland, W. S. Baldwin, and B. A. Thomason. In the election held February 14, 1910, A. L. Holland was elected Intendant and W. S. Baldwin, J. T. Bramlett, B. A. Thomason and Dr. Anthony White were elected Wardens. At that time the town limits were given as one mile radius from the town well (now the corner of Main Street and Jenkins Street).

Mrs. Sara (Whatley) Griffin recorded additional facts in her brief history written in 1961: W. J. Alexander was the first policeman. Dr. Anthony White was the first practicing physician, but Dr. Dalmar Blakely, another early doctor, was practicing at the time of incorporation. There were only three business establishments at that time. Holland's Grocery was in a corner brick building near the town well, Chiles' Grocery and Post Office was in a frame building nearer the depot, and the J. S. Hill General Store was in a two story brick building on Laurens Road. This building, erected in 1904 is now one of Mauldin's oldest surviving buildings. Its solid brick walls are 18 inches thick and the massive wooden doors were opened with huge flat folding keys. After having its front sliced off in highway widening, it is in excellent condition today and is used as a photography studio and gallery, after having been a general store.

Just last year I asked Miss Hattie Forrester, one of our oldest residents, about life during her childhood and she told me of walking along the railroad tracks from her home, in what is now the Forrester Woods Subdivision, to Poplar School along about 1909 or 1910. She started out with her cousin, but hurried on ahead of him to "giggle and gossip with the girls" while he stopped by his rabbit gums in the woods along the way. On the day Miss Hattie remembered, her cousin caught a rabbit, carried it to Chiles' store and traded it for two nickel tablets and five penny pencils. They both reached school equipped for work before the school bell rang, and some Mauldin family had rabbit for supper that night.

Mrs. Griffin reported only three automobiles in town in 1910: Mr. J. S. Hill and Mr. John Chiles each had Overlands, and Mr. Morgan had a Franklin. By the time my family came to Mauldin in 1927, the Laurens Road had been paved as far as the Butler Crossroad where J. M. Griffin had a garage and filling station. A cement bridge had been built over Laurel Creek in 1911 to replace a wooden covered bridge, and the cars were a little more numerous. We still drove onto the rocks at Laurel Creek to wash the car, but the covered bridge was gone. Several families still came to church in buggies, and mules still pulled farm wagons, the only transportation for some. There were no streets, just dirt roads, dusty in dry weather and slick with mud when it rained. Main roads were identified as the road to Conestee or Bethel, to Oak Grove or Rocky Creek, while other routes that had begun as wagon roads to isolated farms, we identified as the road to the Smiths' or the Forresters' or some other home place. We walked to school, to the store, to church, and to visit our friends. On Sunday afternoon we might walk down to see the overhead bridge under construction. The horse could plod along as slowly as he liked when we went on hayrides. There was no parking problem and the only traffic congestion was at the gin, where in the fall, we often saw a line of wagons piled high with cotton patiently waiting their turn, while the farmers enjoyed a leisurely morning, visiting with their neighbors.

There was no electricity in Mauldin until the Whatley family

installed a Lolley plant in 1916 to generate their own electricity, and it was not until 1929 that, through the efforts of J. M. Griffin, a power line right of way was secured and Duke Power agreed to provide service after twenty-six families (including ours) bought electric stoves or refrigerators.

My older friends tell me that Mauldin's most prosperous business years were from 1910 until the end of World War I in 1918. During those years cotton brought good prices and the cotton gin and depot were very busy places as textile mills bought many bales of cotton and the Conestee Woolen Mill shipped bales of cloth from the depot here. Some of these older residents remember the 1920's and 1930's as the hard sad days of the Great Depression. Businesses closed, mortgages were foreclosed on farms, people moved away and Mauldin became the sleepy little town I loved as I grew up. Of course, we children did not feel strongly the anxieties of those days as my parents and the other adults did. If we wore cardboard to cover holes in our shoes, so did many others. We were not accustomed to spending money and were glad to pick cotton for thirty-five cents a hundred pounds, for many children spent long days in the fields to help make the family farm provide a bare subsistence. One man, in talking about those days, remarked, "If blackberries had come in a week later we would have starved to death."

I well remember my first look at the little town of Mauldin. My father, Professor A. B. Clarke, had been invited to come over to make the Mauldin School an accredited high school. We drove all the way from Oconee County one Sunday in the Spring of 1927. We saw the three or four stores, the tree shaded homes along Main Street, the two neat frame churches, and the well-kept farm houses with gardens and fruit trees. We were impressed with the two story brick school located in an eight acre campus. The campus was shaded with stately oaks, poplars, gums, pines, maples, sourwoods and hickories. I know there were 455 trees because later my brother and I were part of the group given the task of counting and recording the trees after a crash course in tree identification. We even had to distinguish between a red oak, a post oak, and a black jack. But that Sunday we just enjoyed the trees as we picnicked in the

wooden bandstand on the campus, and walked around the white frame classroom building that was to become our home when it was later remodeled into a "teacherage." It is now a community building in Springfield Park.

The two story brick Mauldin School had been built in 1924 on property across the road from the old Poplar School. Mr. R. C. Meares was the last principal of Poplar and Mr. J. F. Whatley was the first principal of Mauldin School. Both later became Greenville County Superintendents of Education with Mr. Whatley serving for twenty-eight years in that capacity. Miss Neal, the 1926-27 principal was well liked and the school was growing when she left. The trustees had asked my father to teach agriculture and mathematics and superintend the high school, the elementary school, and to oversee the operation of the five feeder schools including the black elementary school at Laurel Creek. My mother, with five young children, was to teach in the primary grades.

In 1927 there were still few businesses. Mr. W. Eugene Gresham ran the gin as well as the general store in the old Chiles building. There were a hundred-twenty small metal post office boxes in a corner of his store. The store keeper became postmaster by leaving his counter, unlocking the corner cubbyhole to hand out the general delivery mail and sell three cent stamps and penny post cards. I remember a sign in that store which read "In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash." Mr. J. M. Whitt had a busy blacksmith shop across from the depot and his family lived nearby. Mr. Holland's brick building on the corner was empty but Mr. C. C. White had a small wooden grocery store across the street from it. The mayor, Dr. W. E. Murray, ran the store and lived in back of it. This store was replaced with the brick building Truman Massey ran for so many years. The Alexander brothers, Coke and Will, had a small garage, and Mr. H. C. Shaver had a small meat market across from it. Mr. Hill carried general merchandise in his store and community square dances were held on the upper floor.

Most of the homes I remember from that period have been replaced with businesses — fast food places and used car lots. Golden Strip Shopping Center replaced Mr. C. C. White's big

brown house and a laundry occupies the site of Mr. Will Baldwin's two story white house. In the Knollwood section were the Montgomery and Blakely homes set back among large trees. Today we enter a shopping center where the J. S. Cooper house stood near the Baptist Church. Oak Tree Plaza occupies the site of the B. A. Thomason house and Messiah Lutheran Church has replaced the Hugh Baldwin home. The Miller Road Apartments stand where the George Rogers family lived in the old Forrester home. It is hard to believe that Chinese food is served where the old Ambrose Smith house and barn marked the intersection of Old Mill and Miller Roads. However, a few of the older homes remain. The Alexander house just off Main Street was built by A. Lee Holland around 1910. On Miller Road the H. C. Shaver house is now a craft shop, but the homes of W. A. Fowler, Walter Smith, Eugene King, and Raleigh Corn are still owned by family members, as is the Mack Burdett home on East Butler. The Smith and Corn houses were both built in the 1890's and the Burdett house was built about 1906.

Mauldin was a small farming community when I first knew it, and it continued to be almost completely agricultural until after World War II. Cotton was the chief crop and families had very little cash except in the fall when the crops were sold. Many families, black and white, were tenant farmers, dependent upon the landowner for supplies. The larger landowners kept storehouses of necessary staples, like flour, sugar, molasses, etc. They furnished seed, fertilizer and some food until the fall when the books were settled. Sometimes the tenant had barely enough left after paying out to buy shoes for the family before he went into debt again. Stores granted credit until fall, and churches made their collections for the minister then. The minister's meager salary was supplemented when the congregation gave him a "pounding," each member bringing a pound of coffee, or sugar or meal. Fresh vegetables from the gardens were often found on the preacher's porch. Our family, too, benefited from this generosity. My father often came back from "agriculturing," as we called his visits to farmers, with a watermelon or a dozen ears of fresh corn. Everyone had a garden and a cow.

As the farms were dependent upon family labor, large families were desirable because that meant a larger work force. The children were needed to work in the fields and therefore the school session was set by the cotton crop. There were six weeks to two months of school in July and August in buildings that were not air conditioned and then there was a "cotton picking" vacation in the fall followed by a longer session of school beginning in late October and ending early in May, in time for the children to help hoe the new crop.

The 1927-28 session at Mauldin School was for the full nine months and the Class of 1928 the first to receive state high school diplomas. That year courses in agriculture and home economics, foreign language, and advanced mathematics were added to the curriculum, and by the time I entered high school three years of Latin and two years of French were offered, along with four years of mathematics, four years of history and four years of composition, grammar and literature. In addition every student had thirty minutes of physical exercise each day and every student had his turn appearing on the stage in weekly programs of the literary societies with debating and music on every program. It must have been difficult for such a small faculty to offer so much; some classes were given every other year to have a class large enough to qualify for state funds.

Activities at Mauldin High School became the focus of community interest. In 1929 the first of the annual homecomings drew a crowd considered "huge" for a small community. Yellowed clippings in scrap books show that up to two thousand people thronged the school campus to enjoy pit-cooked barbecue and listen to such political figures as "Cotton Ed" Smith. In 1930 the first of the annual community fairs was sponsored by the Farmer's Club. There was competition for ribbons in farm produce, needlework and cooking, livestock, antiques, etc. There were ball games and harness racing on the ball field, a greasy pole climb, hog-calling and husband-calling contests, and plenty of fun for all. School events entertained the entire community with the audience cheering just as loudly for the debating

contests as for the basketball teams. The new gymnasium-auditorium was in use every day and most nights by school and community groups.

With the 1930 construction, rooms for the vocational classes had been added and the first indoor toilets had replaced the outdoor facilities. The school grounds were landscaped and beautified with five basketball courts, three tennis courts, two volleyball courts, playground equipment and class gardens. The spacious school grounds were the town's first public park and a favorite place for young people to gather. A Dramatics Club for former students produced plays in the school auditorium and the Tennis Club staged a tournament in the summer. The Grange met regularly in the school and church groups held suppers there.

At this time Greenville High School under Dr. Mann received high recognition for its academic program, and the Parker District Schools under Dr. 'Pete' Hollis were receiving well deserved recognition for vocational education and community improvement. The Mauldin school, though much smaller, gained strength in all these areas — academic, vocational, and community development. It received nationwide recognition as an outstanding rural school. It was many years before I realized that not all of the rural schools in Greenville County had facilities, curriculum and community impact equal to those we enjoyed.

The brick building that housed the school of those days burned in April, 1935, and T. M. Verdin, Jr., in his first year as superintendent, had the task of finding space to continue classes while WPA labor built the brick building presently used by the elementary school. In 1937 the new building was ready. Soon it was overflowing and a frame vocational building was constructed mainly with volunteer labor.

During World War II a brick cannery building was in full time operation. Thousands of cans of fruit and

vegetables helped to supplement the store-bought cans which required red and green tokens. Homemade cookies and candy were sealed there for shipment to sons and brothers and boyfriends overseas. In the vocational building, young men registered for the draft and families signed up for gas coupons and food tokens and stamps for sugar and shoes. By that time I was teaching and I found registering and rationing added to the three R's as a part of our teaching duties. In the churches, service flags showed how many were away at war. Donaldson Air Force Base brought many new people to Mauldin and some who lived here briefly then, came back to make permanent homes. After the war Mauldin really began to grow.

In 1951 the Mauldin-Simpsonville-Fountain Inn Water District was formed and in 1953 the main pipe lines were laid from Greenville to Fountain Inn. It was at this time that the section became known as the "Golden Strip." After the coming of the water line, B. E. Greer sold part of his farm land beyond the overhead bridge to the Ironrite Company, the first industry in Mauldin. Officials of the company were welcomed at a community reception at the school. Her Majesty, Texize, and C. F. Sauer moved their plants to the town, employing several hundred local people.

During this time a Mauldin Community Council with representatives of the churches, the school and the community at large was functioning. This was a carry over of the work done by the Greenville County Council for Community Development, sponsored by Furman University. Through this group a summer recreation program was initiated. Mr. Jim Conyers, the school coach, was the director and guiding spirit but he was backed by community donations until the program could become self-sustaining. This was the forerunner of the fine Recreation Department we have today.

Mr. J. M. Griffin proposed to the Community council in

1952 to give office space rent-free if the council could secure a good doctor for the Mauldin area which had been without a local doctor for some time. Dr. Milford was here for a short time and Dr. Tarbod served the area in the early war years, but for a time residents had to go to Simpsonville or to Greenville for medical help. A committee interviewed Dr. Walter Wells, then interning in Greenville. Soon Dr. Wells and his wife, Dr. Evangeline Wells began practice in Mauldin. They have remained in town, building their own medical center some years later on the site of Mr. Whitt's blacksmith shop.

The Golden Strip Garden Club under the leadership of Mrs. James Clyde and Mrs. J. M. Griffin (Sara Whatley) undertook the project of naming the streets and erecting markers. This was done in 1953, a number of the streets being named for early property owners. Then steps were begun to incorporate the town. An unofficial census showed 914 people within a mile radius. It was discovered that although the town charter had been inactive since 1932, the town was still incorporated.

The first political rally in the town's history was held Jan. 19, 1957, and an election in February named C. W. Barbrey mayor with B. F. Adams, J. L. Bouchillon, C. A. Leopard and B. M. Snow councilmen. E. L. Griffin was the first town clerk under the reactivated charter. A special referendum held in March 1957 resulted in 115 citizens voting to remain incorporated and 106 voting against incorporation. A survey of the correct boundaries of Mauldin was made and an official census showed 1,069 residents. During this year the Mauldin Post Office, J. T. Massey, Postmaster, was made First Class. (The Sunshine Cleaners now occupies the building.)

The town's first fire truck, a used one, was purchased in 1959, volunteer firemen were recruited and trained and Joe Morris was appointed fire chief. The truck was kept in the shop of the school vocational building. Another event of the year was the opening of the Golden Strip Shopping Center and the purchase of two lots on Butler Avenue for the construction of a Town Hall and Fire Station. This was built in 1961 with J. H. Blakely, Jr., R. M. Hart and S. M. Forrester on the building committee.

The building cost \$22,597.02.

There were two important developments in 1961: Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church was organized and a small dwelling formerly used as the town hall was renovated to become the town library, furnished and stocked by the Greenville County Library. Up to that time library service to the Mauldin people was through Bookmobile stops. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Magill became interested in library expansion, and in 1962 their Her Majesty Foundation gave the town a new brick library building in memory of Langdon Cheves. I was the first town librarian, followed by Mrs. Joanne Summey and Mrs. Jean Morris.

W. Hugh Chastain was principal of Mauldin High School in 1957 when the schools at Mauldin, Simpsonville and Fountain Inn were combined to make Hillcrest High School. This was a result of the consolidation of all the schools in the county into The School District of Greenville County. The elementary school under V. M. Lomas continued to use the former high school building. W. P. Bennett was the first principal of Hillcrest High School and several of the Mauldin teachers transferred there. Hugh Chastain was elected mayor in 1964 but resigned when, at Mr. Bennett's death, he was made principal at Hillcrest. S. M. Forrester was elected mayor in 1964 and served until 1975. Virginia Forrester became town clerk in 1964 and she too served until 1975.

In 1966 the town began a sewer project costing \$2,234,083. This included 30 miles of lateral lines, six miles of truck lines and two waste treatment lagoons. In 1976 the town acquired an 18-acre site for the construction of a town park. This was the first major park land acquisition in Greenville County in more than 15 years.

The town continued to grow by leaps and bounds. An expanded fire department and new trucks added in 1962, 1965, 1967 and 1970 resulted in improved ratings. In 1969 fire protection was extended to outside areas on a contract basis. That same year a new post office building was constructed. At that time Mr. Miller was postmaster. He was succeeded by Mrs.

Louise Long, a local resident.

In 1970 the town of Mauldin officially became a "city." The 1970 census showed a population of 3,797, an increase of 159.7 percent since the census of 1960. This was the greatest growth of any city in the state of South Carolina and the third greatest in the nation.

And what has happened to Mauldin since 1970? The growth during these years has been exceptional and the changes have been so rapid that I can only mention a few. In August 1973 a new Mauldin High School on East Butler was opened with more than 1,000 students and with Miss Marilyn Koon as principal. The new school received very strong community support with active booster clubs for mathematics and debating as well as for athletics. The efforts of many volunteers were recognized in 1981 when the school received the first South Carolina Governor's Award for Community Participation in Education. The Vocational School on East Butler, opened in 1978, serves students from Mauldin, Mann, and Hillcrest High Schools. Some Mauldin High students also attend classes at the Fine Arts Center in Greenville. Younger students attend Mauldin, Bethel, Greenbrier, and Laurel Creek Elementary Schools and Hillcrest Middle School. With the rapid increase in population in the area all these schools are crowded.

The churches, too, have grown in number, in size and in community outreach. Among those serving Mauldin residents are: First Baptist (1200 members — new sanctuary under construction), Mauldin United Methodist (900 members — new sanctuary 1970), Rocky Creek Baptist (800 members — new sanctuary 1970), Grace Covenant Presbyterian, Church of God, Messiah Lutheran, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic, the Cathedral (interdenominational), New Hope Baptist, Glendale Baptist, Wesleyan Methodist, Calvary Baptist, Bethel Methodist, Reedy River Presbyterian, Reedy River Baptist, and Laurel Creek Methodist.

In 1975 Ray Hopkins succeeded S. M. Forrester as mayor and David Treme became the first city administrator. The present mayor is A. Wayne Crick and David Bates is city administrator. The 1980 census listed a population of 8,245 more than doubling the 1970 count. It also showed a population of 13,987 within a three mile radius. A population of 20,000 is predicted for 1990. In the city there are 2,144 owner occupied homes with an average value of \$54,900 and seven multi-family housing complexes with a total of 417 units. One of these, Miller Oaks, is for older adults.

Major employers within the city are Texize Chemicals, Her Majesty Industries, National Lock, Sewell Plastics, C. F. Sauer, Emery Industries and Armstrong World Industries. Bi-Lo Supermarket has its corporate headquarters in Mauldin. New businesses are opening almost every day and there are now four shopping centers: Golden Strip, Mauldin Square, Whatley Square, and Mauldin Plaza. Local financial institutions are First Federal Savings and Loan (on our old homesite), Carolina Federal, Bankers Trust, South Carolina National, and others.

Development of the Golden Strip Freeway should not only relieve traffic congestion in Mauldin but will present more opportunities for growth and demands for city services. Like their predecessors of the fifties and sixties, the present City Council is both conservative in its use of tax money and progressive in its outlook, as it plans to make this growth orderly and to have needed services provided. The operating budget for 1983-84 totals \$1.8 million and \$200,000 is allocated for capital outlay.

The volunteer fire department of 1959 now has 14 full time and 15 volunteer firemen who operate four pumper trucks and one multi-purpose truck. The police department (one night watchman in the 50's) now has 16 full time officers. The city operates 30 acres of public parks with a recreation building, senior center, tennis

courts, and playing fields for year round organized team sports.

This rapidly growing city is far from the little country village I once knew.

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