

## A Step Back in Time By Bobbie Sue Shelton-Lonas

The following article about our hometown, Eagleville, was located in an old "Home Journal" publication, a subsidiary of an early county newspaper. The author is unknown.

### ONE OF THE THRIVING TOWNS OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY.

As the crow flies, Eagleville lies 18 miles northwest of Murfreesboro. In this instance, the crow is J. W. Elmore, who for twenty-six years has driven the stagecoach between Murfreesboro and Eagleville. Every man, woman and child between these two points, knows Mr. Elmore. He was quite a young man when he began his service on this line. Now, even after twenty-six years, although somewhat stiff and somewhat bald and somewhat grizzled, he is still young in spirit and is as cheery and merry and withal as accommodating as in the morning of his journey. (See additional family information on Mr. James William Elmore, at the end of this article.)\*

Eagleville does not enjoy the modern luxury of a railroad. Several times, the iron horse has threatened to invade this territory, but something has always intervened to prevent. It would almost be a pity should such an enterprise were eventuate. To be sure things in that event would take on a little more haste and a little more hustle, but then too the old-fashion courtesy and comfortable hospitality and genuine social contact of neighborhood life would largely disappear and a bald commercialism would take their place.

You may just write it down, that a railroad is not essential to human happiness. Neither do brick and mortar make a paradise. The real happiness comes from within and not without, and we are masters of our own destiny. There is a picturesque charm in an inland village that cannot be found in the larger centers. Where else can you find such kind hearts, such loyal natures, such wholesome examples of Christian plenty; such downy beds; such puffy biscuits; such delicious honey; such candid peaches. As we write the memory of Mrs. Dryden's cookery, it comes over our mind and we would wish we were again in Eagleville.

The first settlement in the neighborhood of Eagleville was made in 1790. Among the pioneer settlement were William and Thomas Jordan, Henry Ridley, James

Shepherd, Robert Donaldson, James Neal, Daniel and Ab Scales, John Guy, Robert Wilson, James Gillespie, Joe Carson, and George and Albert White. By reason of its geographical location, the place has always been an important trading center.

It is the crossing of the Murfreesboro, Nashville and Shelbyville pikes, only a few hours drive from each place, and is the center of a fine area of rich farming country. It is one corner of Rutherford County, about equal distance from the county lines of Williamson, Bedford and Marshall Counties. Through it, flows a varied overland travel, and its citizens are busy, prosperous and happy.

Today, Eagleville has a population of about four hundred souls. It is one of the cleanest communities, morally and physically, that may be found anywhere. Life is lived on a high plane. The church and school life, vitally affect the town and community. From them, radiate educational and spiritual influences that show forth in the practical everyday life of the people. In all the essentials that go to make good citizenship, Eagleville is in the front ranks. There is no dissipation, no blasphemy, no horseplay, no wasting of life's forces. The people are earnest and conscientious, have a firm grip on life, and live it with unvarying fidelity to high ideals.

The Town has four dry goods, two groceries, two hardware, one furniture, two undertaking and one vehicle establishment. There are also one livery stable, one saw and planning mill, one flouring mill, one tobacco factory, one grain and feed store and several iron and wood-working establishments.

The Bank of Eagleville furnishes the people with a repository for their circulating medium. It has a paid-up capital of \$10,000. According to its last statement, its deposits aggregated nearly \$50,000, and its surplus amounted to \$3,654.36. Its officers are J. C. Williams President; U. J. Owen Vice President; A. B. Robertson Cashier; and D. H. Hughes second Vice President. This bank is in a flourishing condition and the stock cannot be bought for \_\_\_\_\_unreadable).

The town has three churches, as follows; Missionary Baptist- Rev. N. B. Williams, Pastor; Primitive Baptist - Rev. J. K. Womack Pastor; Christian Church - No resident Pastor at present. Besides these,

there is a colored church of the Missionary Baptist at which Rev. Allen Brown is Pastor.

At present, Eagleville has but one hotel operated by Mrs. E. R. Dryden. This lady runs an excellent hostelry. The food is tempting and appetizing and the beds are fit for the nuptial couch of Venus and Agonist. And if you don't believe it, go try it for yourself.

Three doctors look after the health of the community. Drs. S. S. Duggan, E. L. Williams and J. R. Moon. They are a fine looking trio of professional men and play an important part in the physical and moral economy of the community.

The biggest and most important single industry viewed in dollar and cents is the Eagleville Tobacco Works, manufacturers of twist and smoking tobacco. Mr. U. R. Owen is sole proprietor of the tobacco works. It is well worth knowing this gentleman. He is a self-made man, modest and unassuming, but public spirited and progressive. Mr. Owen is a native of Williamson County. He was quite a youth when the Civil War broke out and the days of reconstruction found him in the formative period of his life, wrestling with the adverse forces of nature, for a bare subsistence. He had been deprived of early school facilities and was illy equipped for the battle of life. However, nature had given him indomitable perseverance and he slowly made headway. In 1890 he established a small tobacco factory at Allisona, Williamson County and in 1902 moved to Eagleville and invested \$700, all he had in the world, in his present business.

It is remarkable to note what this one man has accomplished since 1902. He built a large three-story factory, a handsome residence, barns, and out buildings and has bought a valuable farm in the edge of Eagleville. As he, himself, said, the struggle was hard and keen for many years, but the turning point was reached in 1902 and now things are coming his way. *Dame Fortune is a fickle jade, but he who woos her with a bold and masterful hand, will bring her fawning at his feet.*

This year the volume of business done by Mr. Owen will exceed \$20,000. In 1902, it was only \$3,000. This rapid increase in the business is due to the superior quality of the goods marketed, by this factory and

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this in turn is due to the careful personal supervision given every detail of the business by Mr. Owen. Of course tobacco is a luxury and many people think it a useless and pernicious habit, yet there are others and they are greatly in the majority, whose personal habits include the use of tobacco in some form or other and this class is interested in knowing where they can secure the purest and best wares.

Some man once said, "If you are a ditch digger, be a good one; be the best ditch digger going. In other words, what ever you do, do with all your might; do it as if it were the only thing on earth to be done.

This is the way Mr. Owen makes tobacco. He clearly supervises every detail, and can make a full hand in any department. He does not sacrifice quality for quantity, but his goods are at all times kept up to a high standard of excellence. And so he is pushing ahead, holding by merit what is gained and steadily widening his field of operations. Today his wares go into Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Oklahoma, Arizona, Kansas, Illinois and Texas. His smoking tobaccos are very popular in Murfreesboro.

The "Select Popular" leads all the others in extent of sales although Mr. Owens special pride is a comparatively new brand call "Brazila". This brand is becoming very popular for export. It is the result of twenty years of experiment on the part of Mr. Owen and he assures the lover of the fragrant weed that in this smoking tobacco he will find the maximum of quality with the minimum of price.

\_\_\_Q" and "Standish" twist are the leading brands of chewing tobacco. No better twists are made than these brands and the painstaking care with which they are made is a guarantee of their high standard of excellence.

The best should always come last; and we can do no better in closing this article than by telling the reader something about the Eagleville School. This is a training school for boys and girls. It is not strictly speaking a commercial asset of Eagleville; yet it is by far the biggest and best thing in the town and in this whole section of country.

Thought is the most potential force in the universe and this is a thought factory. Here



Mr. James William Elmore, Hack Driver

He is yet a young man on the shady side of forty, and is earnest ambitious, aggressive and optimistic. It is his life work and into it he is putting his best thought and energy. He, too, believes, as does Mr. Owen, that the best and only way to successfully do a thing do it well. One manufactures tobacco and the other, though both put into their work, a high order of efficiency, and there in, lies their success.

The faculty of the Eagleville School for the year 1905-06 consists of John W. Williams, Principal, Mathematics, English and Commercial Law; J. W. Journey, Assistant Principal, Latin and the Sciences; Miss Regina C. Cowdick, Primary Department; Mrs. John W. Williams, Department of Music. The Board of Trustees is; Wm. A. Bailey President; J. C. Williams Secretary; U. J. Owen, R. T. Russell, J. H. Hay, D. M. Hughes and Rev. J. E. Sullivan; Board of Directors D. H. Hughes Chairman; S. M. Williams, Clerk and A. J. Simms.

The school is non-denominational, although it's every department is permeated with the Spirit of Christian culture. The building is a commodious frame with seven rooms, divided into primary and intermediate rooms, recitation room, music room, library room and cloak and hat room. The rooms are well lighted and comfortably heated. The library is probably the best of the kind in the country, comprising about 500 volumes. In enlarging its capacity and, the Board of Trustees has expended more than \$500 on this school, in the past two years.

The day and night we spent in Eagleville lingers. This fair village nestling at the foothills of old Williamson was pleasant to behold. At her feet spread out the broad and fertile acres that pour tribute into her lap. The air was full of springtime redolent with the perfume of orchard and garden and earth and sky. Nature wore her loviest garb and her handmaidens, sang their sweetest song.



The Stagecoach-Hack that traveled to and from Murfreesboro to Eagleville in the early 1900's.

It was an arcadia, a nocturne of melody and peace and contentment and through it all ran the quiet hum of human activity tuned to nature's sweetest chords.

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The "Eagleville Tobacco Factory" mentioned in the above article, will be the topic of Back In Time, May edition of the Eagleville Times.

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\*Mr. James William Elmore, the Eagleville to Murfreesboro hack driver, (b. 1852 d. 1932), was the son of David Atha and Elizabeth Ellen White Elmore. David Atha Elmore was a stonemason, a producer and engraver of tombstones and other stoneware. He and his wife died within hours of each other in 1900. They had a double funeral at the Eagleville Baptist Church and are buried in a double grave in the Elmore Cemetery near Rover.

Mr. James W. Elmore married Catherine Knott and lived on Bunker Hill Road, later living on highway 99 near the Eagleville

School. He first drove a hack transporting passengers to and from Shelbyville but later drove the Eagleville - Murfreesboro route. It's reported that he sounded his bugle upon approaching stops to summon the people. Children of James W. and Catherine Elmore; Anna Virginia "Mollie" Elmore, who married Richard Greenberry Hay; Addie Hill Elmore; Emma Elmore who married Jones Floyd; Pearl Elmore married 1<sup>st</sup> James Christopher and later Thomas L. Pope and Willie Elmore who married John Black.

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Thanks to Betty Rowland for bringing this "Home Journal" article to my attention. I really appreciate copies of any old news articles, pictures or any information, about the old days of Eagleville and surrounding communities. If you have any to share, please call me, 615-274-6282.

boys and girls are molded and developed for the future citizenship, true it is that the schools of our country, public and private determine the status of our country and this is in a large measure true, spiritually, as well as intellectually and ethically. Eagleville has always recognized the importance of good schools and during a long and varied history, has never lost sight of the fact, that the best equipment for the battle of life is good, sound mental training, developing in unison, head, soul and body; and it is safe to say that at no time in her history has she come as near realizing her ideal as at the present time. The present principal of the Eagleville School is John W. Williams. Mr. Williams is a familiar figure in the educational circles of Rutherford County and the state at large.