

War led to rationing and recycling

*Springs' weekly rent:
50 cents a room and
10 cents a garden acre*

During World War II there were all kinds of shortages. Ration books were printed for such things as canned goods (it was the cans, not the food, in short supply), shoes, gasoline, etc.

Rubber, which largely came from Indonesia, was cut off, so new tires were nearly impossible to find. "Recaps" were the only replacement tires available. Recappers of tires, it was found, were throwing away about a million yards a year of a type of linen cloth known as "Holland cloth," which was used in recapping.

In August 1943 it was announced that Holland cloth was being collected and used for surgical dressings. The American Red Cross made bandage rolls and bedside bags out of what had once been thrown away.

Shortages had to be handled in different ways. For example, there was a farm labor shortage. To get cotton picked, rural school districts either delayed the opening of school by several weeks or ended the school day at 1 p.m. to have more daylight for cotton picking.

NEARBY HISTORY

Louise
Pettus



In 1937, Elliott White Springs, president and owner of the Springs Cotton Mills, built around 140 houses for employees of the Lancaster Cotton Mill. Springs located them between Lancaster and Great Falls. Springs hoped that the workers would buy the houses, but the rent of 50 cents a room a week, including water and electricity for "lights," was so cheap that many just rented. If the family had radios and an electric refrigerator, an additional 50 cents was added to the bill.

The houses were on plots from one to three acres that Springs hoped would be used for gardens. He was willing to furnish seed to those who would plant. And, if the family wanted more space he would rent at a rate of 10 cents an acre per week. Some planted cotton on as much as a dozen acres rented from Captain Springs at that low rate.

Springs once wrote that he was worried that too many fathers put their wives and children to work in the mill while they lay around and drank up the wages of the family. Springs believed that

working families with the space to grow vegetables and keep chickens and rabbits would be much healthier.

Early smallpox inoculation

It is said that the first public hospital in upper South Carolina was in western York county. A Presbyterian minister, Dr. Joseph Alexander, built his log cabin hospital, or infirmary, near Bullock's Creek Church in 1775.

Smallpox was raging in the area, and Alexander knew a way of inoculating patients so that they suffered only light cases of the dreaded pox. A method called variolation was used.

The person wishing to be made immune to smallpox was inoculated with material taken from fresh smallpox sores. It was dangerous. Some cases were lethal, and while undergoing the light case, a patient could spread smallpox to others. Thus, the isolation in the log cabin.

Variolation, as practiced by Alexander, had been known in England since 1713. Twenty-one years after Alexander built his infirmary, Edward Jenner (1749-1823) announced that inoculation using the matter in cowpox pustules would safely make people immune to smallpox.

'Kickingest mule'

Back in 1934, a Filbert farmer,

W. Lee Pursley, bought a mule that, to his surprise, soon became the "kickingest mule in York County." Maud would kick at anything or "no thing," apparently for the sheer joy of kicking. She wrecked plows, a guano distributor, cotton planters and anything else in her way.

Word got around and soon people that Pursley had never seen or heard of would show up. They only wanted to watch Maud kick.

Pursley managed to lay his crops by and came up with an idea as to what to do with Maud. He asked the chain gang authorities if they thought they could manage her. Pursley told them there would be no charges.

They agreed that 6-year-old Maud be sent to the chain gang for six months. She did her time and was returned to Pursley. Unfortunately, we don't know whether or not Maud was reformed.

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