

# Old Jim



By Dan Caldwell

## (Volume Two, Chapter Eighteen)

The long days of summer had drifted slowly by....long lazy days that found little for the old farmer and his faithful old mule to do. Over the past weeks the two old friends had visited the fields up on the north mountain, as well as the gardens all around, just to make sure that everything was doing what it should. And it was. Soon the two would begin the harvesting of the squash, the beans, and, soon after that, the corn and fodder. Summer was mostly gone now and already there was the hint of autumn in the air. The wind was filled now with the smells of drying, dying herbs. The ragweed was turning brown with age and all along the river the peppermints were in full bloom and sending their pungent pollens into the air. As the old man and his mule started to cross the river a bluejay darted past them, screaming that something was surely amiss. The old mule started, then, realizing that it was only a bird, continued along on his sure-footed way.

“Easy now ol’ fellow.” the old farmer spoke softly and kindly, “I sure don’t look forward to being dumped into the river.” He patted the old mule lightly on the neck. The old mule grunted with pleasure at his touch.

“Grandpa” said a young man as the old farmer rode past the cabin.

“Robert. What are you doing here today?”

“We’ve been picking huckleberries up on Snake Ridge.” said Robert.

“We?” asked the old man

“Yes. I took little David William with me. Sophia went with Lacy Stidham and cousins Ruth and Naomi. We’ve picked nearly twenty buckets full of berries. Grandma says she can surely use them.”

“Well bless your hearts” said the old farmer, “Yes, she’s right. We surely can use them. I shore was dreading having to go and pick them by myself too. Where is Elizabeth?” he finished with a question.

Robert Hawkins, the son of John, pointed.

There, on the hill behind the cabin, in silhouette against the sun stood two figures. In front of them lay two graves marked by crosses of stone that lay flat on the ground.

“Jay?” the old man asked but waited not for the answer. “Git up Jim” he said to the silver old mule, “Let’s get you to the barn.”

As the old gray farmer started for the barn he saw, on the hill, one silhouette which took the hand of the other as they began winding their way down the hill towards the cabin. Behind them lay the graves of Highbones and Ginger, the two faithful hounds which had died protecting the old farmer from the fires of the past spring. The old farmer groaned in remembrance.

“Come on Jim” he said “Get up”

At the barn the old farmer took from its place between the logs a curry and began thoughtfully currying the old mule. With each stroke the memories flooded his mind. It had been a sad day when he had awakened from his unconsciousness to find both hounds lying dead. Highbones at his side and Ginger lying at the bottom of the cliffs. Now, with eyes and ears and a voice like Highbones, another hound lived in his place. The very offspring of Highbones and Ginger. The old farmer smiled a bit at this, though it was a smile still filled with sadness. Soon he must give the hound a name. A good name!

“Grandpa.”

Young Elizabeth startled the old farmer from his thoughts.

“Elizabeth.” he said, “Where’s Jay? I saw the two of you up by the hill.”

“He’s gone. He said he would be back tomorrow to help with the corn?” she queried

“He is a working man.” the old farmer stated. “Tomorrow we will be shelling corn for grinding into meal and for making hominy. Your grandmother insists on making a new batch before the fall harvest. Jay insists on coming to help.”

“He wants to marry.” she blurted.

“Does that surprise you?” asked the old man. “Did you not suspect that he loves you? I know it. Surely you must know he cares for you.”

“But I, I don’t know what I...”

“Do you care for him? asked the old farmer

Elizabeth cast a quick glance at her grandfather.

“You wouldn’t tell him if I said...?”

“Don’t you think he needs to know?” he countered

The old mule snickered, a soft gentle sound.

“Let’s talk about this later.” she said. “Grandma needs me to help with supper I think.”

Then, as young Elizabeth turned to leave she added, “I didn’t tell him no grandpa”

The old man smiled and continued currying the old silver mule.

## Inspirational Thoughts Into God’s Word

By Lynetta Hunter

Knowledge is defined as an awareness of truthful facts, learned from study or experience. It’s been said that experience is the best teacher, but education is also important in a relationship with God.

(Ex. 33, 34) Moses was leading the rebellious, idolatrous people through the dry, barren dessert, when he realized that if they were going to make it then he needed more strength and awareness of God. He asked God if He would reveal His glory in a way like never before. As Moses traveled up Mount Sinai with the second set of stone tablets, the anticipation of God’s promise to let Moses see part of Him was overwhelming. Moses walked away from their common path, to walk into a special place located near to God. God told Moses to separate himself from everyone else, and enter into a solitary meeting that would disclose the glory and nature of Him.

The mercy, grace, longsuffering, goodness, and faithfulness of God, Moses saw that day, humbled him to a place of worship, where God personally unveiled Himself to Moses. It wasn’t the beginning of the Law, but a fresh start to sincerely abide by it. The Law was their foundation for a favorable relationship with God, with no hidden agenda. For God spilled every aspect of His character and individual revelations concerning matters of life.

God sent Jesus to be the fulfillment, or completion, of the Law, creating the way for humanity to obey it, through His power and influence. Knowledge of God is now received by the instruction and edification of the Holy Spirit, the educational source that is an open book to those who seek Him.

# Granny’s Porch

## Military Family Members

Hello everyone! It’s Granny again. I’m just sitting here in my favorite rocking chair and having my coffee. I’m just thinking about all of you and how much I appreciate you, my family and friends.

I was thinking about the soldier from Jackson County that they had identified his remains after all these years and was going to have a burial service to honor PFC Berton McQueen. This made me think and remember all the service men and women. I stopped and said a prayer for the safety and guidance for our troops. We should be thankful for all of them and keep them in our daily prayers.

I also started remembering all of my immediate family that was in the service many years ago. Now, let me think...there was my dad, Elige Caldwell that was in World War I, my cousin, Carlo Caldwell was also in World War I. In WWII, I had three uncles: Edwards, Elverett, and Arnold Caldwell. I also had a brother, Hardy Caldwell, in the service serving over in Germany in 1959.

During the Vietnam War, I had a nephew, Lonzo Williams. My boy, Lester, was also in the Vietnam War but they sent him to South Korea to serve. My daughter, Darlene, was in the Army serving in the US but she was in when there was no war. My son, Foister Jr., was sent to Saudi Arabia.

My husband, Foister, was in WWII and I had three cousins in WWII: Larkin and Leige Simpson and E. L. Caldwell. I also had three grandchildren in service: Amanda, Sheila and Keith. We also had a lot of neighbors in WWII.

When our boys came home after WWII, there were lots of weddings, including mine.

It seemed like I had waited so long for Foister to get home from the war and finally he was home, and we were planning on getting married.

As I am sitting here looking at the beautiful fall-colored leaves in my yard, it seems like time has flown by and with this Covid-19 pandemic, it has restricted us to being able to visit and spend time with our friends and family. I remember so many Thanksgivings and Christmas’s years passed when my mother would make a wonderful dinner. Then, we had a chicken and fresh hog meat...and that was a big thing! These days, we can just go to the store and make a turkey with all the trimmings for both Christmas and Thanksgiving.

I am so thankful that I have been blessed through the years with the family that cares about each other and loves to get together and cook their special dish for the holidays and sit down at the table together and share a wonderful meal.

For today, I will put my pen away and finish my coffee and get to working on my quilt. I have made so many beautiful quilts here lately. I am so proud of them. I have a wonderful lady that quilts them for me. They always look so pretty. I am proud to give them as gifts to my family.

So, for now, please keep our country in prayer and stay safe and healthy. I will see you next week on Granny’s Porch and share another memory from my life’s library.

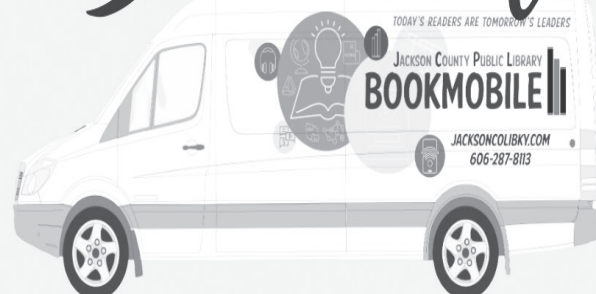
Love, Granny.



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Emily Combs

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