

“My feet was giving me ‘Halifax’

Submitted by Marty Everse

May 1896 was hot, the hottest known in many years. And what better way to beat the heat than a picnic along the cool waters of Mahan Creek. So the Baptist and Methodist Sunday schools of Montevallo joined the Brierfield Sabbath school scholars in a frolic near the mill there. It was a grand occasion. The *Montgomery Advertiser* reported, “the young people were out in great force and had plenty of everything good to eat, and the day was most pleasantly spent by all present.” Sixteen year old Christobel Mahan was there sporting a new pair of shoes recently purchased for her by her brother, joined by her Aunt Bulah and niece and nephew, Maggie and Jessie. Christobel was the daughter of Jesse and Anna Mahan and lived in the house that now sits abandoned opposite Mahan Creek Dental Office. She was smart as a whip but awkward as her diary entry of May 22, 1896 illustrates.

“Cunningham bought me a pair of shoes yesterday to wear at a picknick given by the Methodist Sunday school. Sister Bulah invited me to go with her to it. I took Maggie and Jessie and went over to the grounds early. Sister Bulah and the others were coming later. The place that they selected was over to the old grist mill. The Montevallo school came down to join them. When the children and I got there (with much pain in my lower extremities) there was quite a crowd collected, mostly Montevallo people. I wandered around aimlessly trying to keep up with Maggie who marched about as solemn as a death. I sat down on a bench a little while. When I go anywhere I never get anybody to talk to me because I look so stupid. Adelaide [Christobel's older sister] says I get sad about it sometimes but soon get over it. Lucy Rice was sitting near and I went to talk to her. The young preacher came up, told Lucy to “introduce him to this young lady.” He believed he hadn't met me before. I sat on a bench about an hour it seemed not saying anything to anyone and looking like a dunce when I saw a little girl near me in the same fix. “Come here child and lets sympathize,” I said quick and loud that everyone turned round to smile at me. Maggie and Lois came to me and I went to the spring with 'em. There was a crowd of Montevallo boys and girls there and the [Montevallo Methodist] preacher, Mr. Abernathy. He introduced me to every boy and girl in the whole crowd. Another gang of people came up. He asked them if they were hunting for water. They said, “Yes.” “Come here then and I'll water you.” I had dinner



Christobel Mahan in all her Victorian splendor a year or two after the Brierfield picnic.

after another hour of posing then Cunningham carried Lucy and I to get some soda water. We couldn't drink it, too much soda. Miss Mary Ann and Kate Kroell, whose mother and father are my godparents, came and spoke to me and asked me if I remembered them. I did tho I hadn't seen them only once since I was a little girl. We went up to Mrs. McCullom [nearby house]. I had a nice time but my feet was giving me “Halifax.” When we got back to the grounds I couldn't stand it any longer. I told them good bye. I told Sister Bulah good bye and started home the nearest way, pulled off my shoes, waded across the creek. Got home in a hurry. Adelaide went to see the baseball game in the evening but I didn't.”

The day-long event ended when the baseball game was called in the seventh inning, the score 18 to 12 in favor of the visiting team. The local *Montevallo News* correspondent failed to give particulars.

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