

ALABAMA HERITAGE





Front Cover: In 1953 fashion designer Ann Lowe, a native of Clayton, Alabama, designed and made Jackie Kennedy's wedding gown. See story page 6. (Courtesy John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library)

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THE INTREPID ANNIE WHEELER



In her early years, as in her later ones, Annie Wheeler cut a wide swath through life. Energetic and compassionate, she spent her life helping others, and although she never sought the limelight, it fell on her nonetheless.

*By NANDA HOPENWASSER
and SIGNE WEGENER*



Two of Annie's dresses on display at Wheeler Plantation. (Photograph by Robin McDonald) Inset: Annie Wheeler (1868-1955), known as the "Angel of Santiago" by veterans of the Spanish-American War and "Miss Sunshine" by the doughboys of World War I, was internationally recognized for her efforts as a nurse-volunteer for America's soldiers. She is pictured here in mourning attire, probably following the accidental drowning of her brother Tom in 1898. (Courtesy Birmingham Public Library)

ON FEBRUARY 15, 1898, an event occurred that changed Annie's life forever: the USS Maine exploded and sank in Havana Harbor, killing more than 250 men and precipitating a war with Spain two months later.

PEOPLE LIVING IN THE VICINITY OF WHEELER, Lawrence County, Alabama, in the 1930s and 1940s could often see a diminutive, white-haired lady driving a pack of unruly children in her car. As the local postmaster recollected, "You can always tell Miss Annie's car. She picks up every kid she passes. If you see a lot of bare feet, with dirty soles, sticking out of the automobile, you know that Miss Annie is coming." People tended to stay out of her way. "She drives her car with the same abandon that she once rode her mare 'Memory,'" an article in the Southern Railway System magazine noted in 1948, "so neighbors prudently give her the whole road."

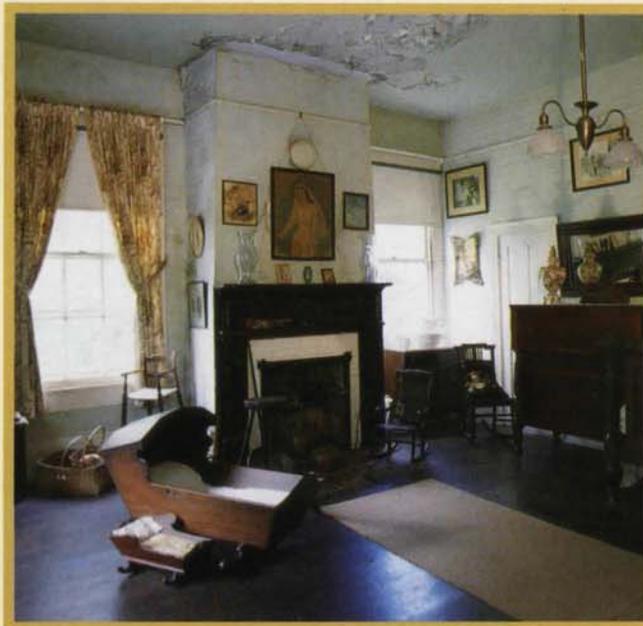
In her early years, as in her later ones, Annie Wheeler cut a wide swath through life. Energetic and compassionate, she spent her life helping others, and although she never sought the national limelight, it fell on her nonetheless. Soldiers in the Spanish-American War dubbed her the "Angel of Santiago," the doughboys of World War I called her "Miss Sunshine," and in 1912, when the vice-president of the White Star Line sought a compassionate soul to greet the *Titanic's* survivors as they disembarked in New York, it was to Annie Wheeler that he turned. Back home in Alabama, where she spent most of her life, "Miss Annie," as she was universally known, tirelessly continued her humanitarian work, becoming a local legend in the process.

Annie Early Wheeler was born July 31, 1868, to former Confederate general Joseph Wheeler, well known for his daring cavalry exploits during the Civil War, and his wife, Daniella Jones Sherrod, at Courtland, Alabama. The second of seven children, Annie spent a happy childhood at the family's eighteen-thousand-acre plantation at Wheeler, where she became known locally for her riding skills. Letters to her from her parents and sister reveal a close-knit family, with her father—an Alabama congressman in Washington begin-

ning in 1880—often offering gentle admonitions and advice to his tomboy daughter, prodding her toward more feminine pursuits. Her handwriting, it seems, was not ladylike enough. She would "be ashamed" later in life, he wrote in 1883, if she found she could not "write a pretty letter." The subject came up again later that same year. "Now is the time for improvement," he wrote. ". . . There are few things which are more important for a young lady [than] to write a pretty and accurate letter." The hastily written missives of Annie's

later life suggest that her penmanship never met the general's standards, but, even in her youth, it was evident that she was her father's daughter: the tiny brown-haired girl was as fearless a rider as "Fightin' Joe" Wheeler had ever been. According to the *Montgomery Advertiser*, 1893:

Among the fair equestriennes of the South, Miss Annie Wheeler, daughter of "Fightin' Joe" certainly has few peers. In her



Annie's childhood bedroom. Enscorced in the loving bosom of her family, she led the privileged life of a well-to-do young lady. (Photograph by Robin McDonald)

dainty blue habit, military cap, silver-topped crop and pretty riding boots, on her brown mare "Memory," she is a familiar sight to all for many miles around her father's plantation at Wheeler. She is a most intrepid rider, being absolutely without fear, frequently performing feats of horsemanship which make a strong man hold his breath.

Annie seemed to enjoy all aspects of the outdoors:

"I remember the ecstasy of the first warm days," she later wrote, "when Mother would let her little tribe leave off shoes and stockings, to hobble over the . . . rough places to the creek where it was bliss to wade with the cool water rippling around our ankles." Ensnared in the loving bosom of her family, Annie led the fairly conventional life of an upper-class young woman in the South. She attended one of the better schools for young ladies and enjoyed an active social life. When her mother died in 1896, the grieving family became even closer. Then, on February 15, 1898, an event occurred that changed Annie's life forever: the USS *Maine* exploded and sank in Havana Harbor, killing more than 250 men and precipitating a war with Spain two months later. Annie and her sisters had been staying with their father in the Arlington Hotel in Washington when the tragedy occurred. Congressman Wheeler, now sixty-one, rushed over to the White House and volunteered his services to President McKinley in case war erupted with Spain. McKinley accepted Wheeler's offer and soon appointed him a major general of volunteers in the U.S. Army. With one brother, Thomas, already stationed on a naval ship off the coast of Cuba, Annie watched her father and



Annie Wheeler in the Red Cross nurse's uniform she wore during the Spanish-American War, 1898. Soldiers dubbed her the "Angel of Santiago." (Courtesy Birmingham Public Library)

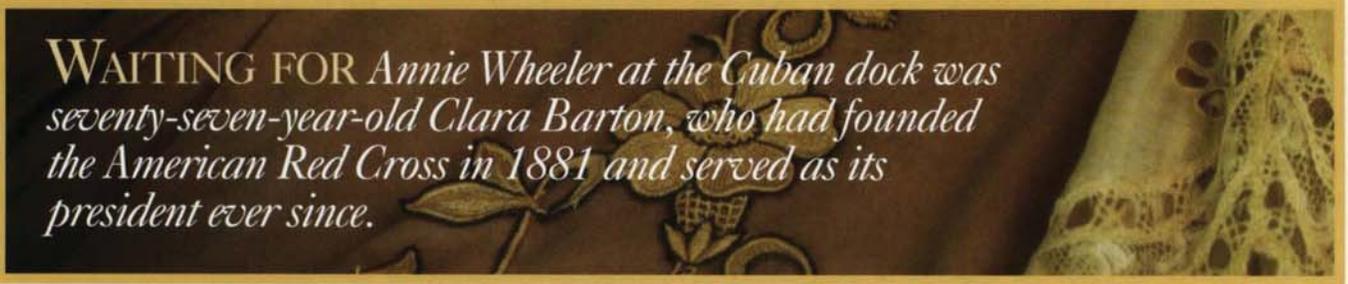
brother Joe, Jr., depart for Tampa, Florida, with trepidation mixed with envy. She wrote:

Came a day when the thought of spending the summer at some Hotel, dressing & going to parties & listening to music every night at dinner & reading the newspapers while Father & my brother were confronting untold dangers & suffering, was simply unbearable to me. A flood of realization swept over me of how Much it would mean to see my adored Father & hear his voice & touch his hand & have one more assurance of his precious love before he sailed for Cuba. I simply had to go to Tampa.

Within days, she revised her plans again: she would accompany her father to Cuba, where she would serve as a nurse. That she had no training in the field of nursing was a concern but not a deterrent. In an 1898 letter to a friend, she admitted being insecure about her nursing skills, claiming she had never had "an aptitude for nursing," although she had "always been *so* sorry for those who were in need, sickness or any other affliction."

It is unlikely that any of the other women who volunteered to serve in Cuba were better trained than Annie Wheeler, which is to say, they were not trained formally at all.

In the late 1890s, professional nursing was still in its infancy, and most "nursing" was done at home by women, who were regarded as "born nurses." Although Florence Nightingale had opened a school for nurses in London, on July 9, 1860—a date generally regarded as the birth of modern nursing—and hospital-based nursing schools had opened in the United States in the 1870s, standardized training programs, examinations,



WAITING FOR Annie Wheeler at the Cuban dock was seventy-seven-year-old Clara Barton, who had founded the American Red Cross in 1881 and served as its president ever since.

and registration for nurses would not come about until well into the twentieth century.

Trained or untrained, Annie Wheeler's family did not want her to go. Neither did her father's friends. Sec. Russell A. Alger of the War Department advised against her even going to Florida, and her father's old friend Gen. John M. Schofield "was *most* emphatic in his hard opposition." Annie later reported that Schofield, in her father's absence, commanded her not to go. When a man went to war, he said, "the *only* right & proper & dignified thing for the women of his family to do was stand on the door step & bid him fare well & be standing there to welcome him, *if* he comes back."

But nothing could stop Annie Wheeler, even fear of her father's disapproval, and she left for Tampa immediately. When she finally found him in a Tampa hotel, she later wrote, she was overcome by "feelings of intense relief" to see her father's "happy welcoming smile. That he was glad to see me & did not think I had done wrong in coming was an inexpressible joy to me."

An acquaintance who saw father and daughter in Tampa commented on their relationship:

I haven't seen anything in years that was so pretty as the great friendship between General Wheeler and his daughter, Annie. They are more like comrades than father and daughter and neither seems quite happy with the other out of sight. Miss Wheeler accompanied him whenever possible and was often seen riding with him about Tampa and the camp. She was ready to go at a moment's notice and several times I saw her riding along contentedly, wearing a muslin frock and riding sideways in a man's saddle. She wanted to go to the front as a nurse in order to be near her father. I think he would have been perfectly happy if she could have ridden with him into the fight.

Despite the closeness of the two, Annie declined to tell her father about her decision to go to war, and a week or so after he left for Cuba, she followed him on a ship containing several nursing volunteers. Prevented initially from disembarking because of yellow fever "in Santiago

and in all the Camps of American soldiers," Annie managed to wrangle passage ashore for herself and the other volunteers after a delay of several days. Waiting for them at the dock was seventy-seven-year-old Clara Barton, who had founded the American Red Cross in 1881 and served as its president ever since. "A stranger would never have recognized a world renowned character in the simple but little old woman in queer, old timey attire," Annie wrote. To her "utter consternation," Barton advised the volunteers to return to the U.S. There was no work for them in Cuba, she said: the place lacked an "organized Hospital," there was nowhere to stay, and the sick and wounded were "scattered in different camps" miles away.

For Annie Wheeler, "the solid earth upon which [she] was standing seemed to give way beneath [her] feet." She had not come so far to give up, and she persuaded Barton to allow her to stay and even to put her up in Barton's own quarters. The next morning she "was up long before light, undertaking in a perfectly strange foreign country to find horses and guides" to go to General Wheeler's headquarters eight miles in the country.

Her equestrian skills now came in handy, for she found herself riding "a man's saddle sitting side wise . . . over hot sand and scrubby bush . . . through soapy mud and down deep *ravines* where the horse's four feet would slide down long distances like toboggans and then plunge and mire and plunge again through muddy streams. . . ." She arrived at several "small tents on the hillside" to find her brother sick with a fever and not expected to live. Her distraught father welcomed her with open arms. Immediately she began securing supplies for the sick and nursing her brother. Every evening she returned to Santiago, as there was no place for her to sleep at the camp, making the return trip the next morning, "bringing such comforts as I saw was necessary on my lap or the pouch of the saddle, going down those steep ravines and floundering around in the water and mud, holding the reins over a high pile of pajamas, towels, sheets, pillow cases, soap, basin, mosquito net, etc."

One day she passed near the Rough Riders camp and Col. Teddy Roosevelt rushed out to meet her. Thrusting a paper in her hands, he said, "Miss Wheeler, I make you my envoy extraordinary and Minister plenipotentiary to your father—be sure he signs this!" Reportedly, Annie said, "I will take it to him with pleasure, Colonel, but I cannot tell anything about whether he will sign it or not."

Five days later, with her brother Joe, Jr., out of danger, Annie reported to Clara Barton for duty and was put to work sorting clothing for injured troops. The job consisted of unpacking crates, making a list of the contents, and repacking it with a list outside so Barton would know what supplies were available. It was simple work, Annie explained, but hard due to the "intolerably hot sun . . . I felt many times a day that I would *surely* die—that I could *not* stand the heat & fatigue—but I had come to do what I was told & would stick it out to the last ditch."

Soon, she was put in charge of her own makeshift hospital. Barton, in her typical brusque manner, gave Annie the assignment in front of the other volunteers: "I put Miss Wheeler in charge, not that she can do any better than the rest of you, perhaps, but we must have some one at the head, so I place her in command." Annie found the conditions appalling: "We went down & found about sixty very sick soldiers lying on the floor in the uniforms they had worn for a month in sun and mud. There [were] absolutely *no* Hospital supplies whatever." Commandeering wagons from the "Captain of Headquarters" and pajamas, mosquito netting, and other supplies from Barton, Annie soon had the pa-

tients "bathed and into the nice pajamas and between fresh cool sheets."

In this primitive situation, the volunteers did the best they could. "We only had such help as could be procured locally and *no* trained nurse during the time I was there," Annie later wrote. Sometimes their ministrations helped the soldiers survive; but often they did not, and Annie noted how "heart breaking" it was "when any

Lad gave up the fight and died in a strange land."

In August 1898, the Spanish-American War ended, but the suffering of the soldiers who had fought in it did not. Assigned to the hospital ship *Olivette*, Annie accompanied the sick on their trip to Camp Wikoff, Montauk Point, Long Island, New York, where provisions were being made for their recuperation. That trip, she wrote, was "a fearful experience—*so* many desperately sick and dying and so few to care for them. Sometimes three times in one day I would stand by the Rail & read the burial service over some poor boy who had been so *eager* to reach home."

The situation was no better at Camp Wikoff, where a shortage of nurses and supplies wreaked havoc. In the first three weeks she was there, twenty thousand soldiers

arrived, overwhelming the poorly prepared camp. Annie herself occupied a hot, crowded tent with seven other nurses. She wrote to a friend: "Although I am too tired to eat or sleep, I am happy in my work here, and only wish I had the strength to do ten times as much. I am truly thankful that the dear Lord has spared Father and my brothers thus far when so many poor women had but one and lost that one."



Wearing an elaborate gown and long train, Annie Wheeler was presented, along with her sister Carrie, to the Court of St. James, London, in 1900, not long after her service in the Spanish-American War. Queen Victoria was ill that day, nevertheless Crown Princess Alexandra was there to greet the two sisters. (Courtesy Birmingham Public Library)

IN MAY 1900 Annie and her sister Carrie sailed abroad to the Paris Exposition, attended a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace, and were presented at the Court of St. James in London.

But tragedy would also touch the Wheeler family in Montauk: the beloved younger brother, Tom, died while attempting to rescue a friend from drowning. Annie, in her recollection, makes no mention of the emotional toll the death of the youngest child had on the family, but she and her father and older brother accompanied the body home for burial in the family cemetery at Wheeler.

ANNIE WHEELER'S DEDICATION TO THE WELFARE OF American soldiers did not go unnoticed. In late 1898, Major and Brigade Surgeon D. F. Lane, under whom she had worked in a Santiago hospital for six weeks, wrote Charles F. Joy, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives:

It gives me great pleasure to write you in reference to Miss Wheeler and the admirable and able work she performed at Santiago. She certainly deserves some recognition of her distinguished services as a nurse to the soldiers during the late war. . . . Her unselfish devotion and cheerful spirits brightened the hearts and lightened the sufferings of many. Although not an immune, to my knowledge, she showed no fear or hesitation in taking charge of such cases of yellow fever. . . . Too much cannot be said in praise of the work she unselfishly performed at Santiago.

Others, including former soldiers she had tended, also wrote Congress praising Annie Wheeler's services to all soldiers, "black and white." Representative Joy even introduced a bill in Congress to present Miss Wheeler with a





Opposite page: Annie's writing desk. General Wheeler often admonished young Annie for what he considered unladylike handwriting. Above: Much of Wheeler Plantation remains as the Wheelers left it, complete with furnishings, medals, and personal clothing. (Photographs by Robin McDonald)

medal for her distinguished services during the war as a nurse, but no medal ever materialized—a situation that probably pleased Annie, who never sought public praise.

Whether she liked it or not, however, by now Annie Wheeler was a national celebrity, referred to by the press as the “Angel of Santiago.” After completing a special course in the surgical wards of St. Luke’s Hospital in New York, she accompanied her father, President and Mrs. McKinley, members of the U.S. cabinet, and a military entourage on a tour of army installations in the South. Afterwards, she looked for other opportunities to serve and found such a mission in 1899, when her father volunteered to go to the Philippines to help quell an insurrection.

“Where father goes,” she told a friend, “I go too,” a phrase that became quite famous in its day. More experienced now in dealing with military bureaucracy, she obtained a permit from the War Department before she left. As she had in Cuba, she separated from her father and

attended to her own hospital work, this time at a converted convent surrounded by a twelve-foot-high brick wall topped with broken glass. She lived in a small hut about a mile away from the hospital and commuted to work via a pony cart. Work here was far more routine than it had been in Cuba, and when her father’s six-month tour of duty was up, the two of them set sail for home.

NOW IN HER THIRTIES AND CONFIDENT THAT SHE could withstand whatever obstacles life threw her way, Annie Wheeler resumed the life of a daughter of the Wheeler household. There were suitors along the way, but she never married, dedicating herself to caring for her aging father, managing the plantation, and, when opportunity presented itself, to travel. In May 1900 she and her sister Carrie sailed abroad to the Paris Exposition, attended a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace, and were presented at the Court of St. James in London. Queen Victoria was ill that day, but Crown Princess Alexandra was there to greet them. It was an exciting moment for the Wheeler girls, who were fascinated by the white-gloved gentlemen-in-waiting who assisted their every need and by the “little crooks” the gentlemen wielded to help maneuver the ladies’ long trains.

AFTER NEWS OF THE Titanic's fate became public, Phillip Franklin, vice-president of the White Star Line, asked Annie Wheeler to meet survivors aboard the Carpathia when the ship docked in New York.

FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF HER FATHER IN 1906, THE grief-stricken Annie used travel as a palliative for her pain. In 1908 she sailed to Japan, which she described as "the loveliest Country I had ever seen except my own Southern part of the United States," and in early 1909 returned home to settle once again into the life of a plantation mistress.

Two events would shatter the calm of her life in the next decade. The first was the sinking of the *Titanic* in April 1912. When news of the tragedy struck, Phillip Franklin, vice-president of the White Star Line, asked Annie to meet survivors aboard the *Carpathia* when the ship docked at the pier in New York. Although more than a decade had passed since her service in the Spanish-American War, she was still so widely known for her compassion that she was considered a natural for missions such as this.

The second shattering event was the U.S. entry into World War I in 1917. Determined to go to war alongside her brother Joe, the surviving male member of the family, Annie volunteered for service in France. However, because regulations prohibited a woman from serving abroad if a family member was already overseas, she was sent to Gun Hill Road Hospital No. 1 in New York, as a "comforter and cheer builder." Such danger-free work was not what Miss Wheeler had in mind. "They told me if I went overseas I would die," she wrote a friend. "I replied, 'I'll sure die if I don't go.'"

When the regulation was changed several months later, she sailed for Europe immediately on a voyage

fraught with danger (the ship was chased by a submarine) and eventually wound up at a base hospital near the front in France. "I simply loved the work and just fit in," she wrote her friends at Gun Hill. She admitted, however, that much of it, particularly writing the parents of soldiers who had died in battle, was painful: "I wrote to the mother of each dear lad who fought a good fight and finished his course and kept the faith and had gained the

crown God had prepared for them that loved him." The work was emotionally draining, but she steeled herself for each task:

In order to accomplish anything worth-while in war work, one needs all the strength, courage, fortitude, inspiration, endurance, and every other attribute that can be imagined. And above all one must learn to so control the emotions that they can go with a smile into a ward where the wounds and sufferings are unimaginable and unspeakable.



*The dining room in the Wheeler home. After her service in World War I, Annie returned to her beloved plantation, a place, according to the locals, she knew "as Caesar knew his army."
(Photograph by Robin McDonald)*

Much of the work was tedious and menial. She wrote a friend: "I work in the wards from early morning till nine at night with a tray slung from my neck like street venders of jewelry and shoe strings, only my tray is filled with cigarettes, gum, oranges, etc." The doughboys called her "Miss Sunshine," and on her last Sunday of service in the hospital, the chaplain noted from the pulpit that "no man has passed through that hospital since . . . [her arrival] who was not a braver, stronger, purer man because of her ministrations." The source of her strength, she later wrote, was her faith in God and "the inspiration and glory of [her] pride" in America's soldiers.

Following World War I, Annie returned home to the Wheeler Plantation—a place, locals said, she knew “as Caesar knew his army.” By now she was universally referred to as “Miss Annie” and was well on her way to becoming an institution in the Tennessee Valley. Indeed, although Southern Railway trains had no scheduled stops at tiny Wheeler Station, when Miss Annie called ahead, Southern’s trains always stopped to pick her up.

Through overseers she superintended her vast estate, taking care of her tenants “spiritually, physically and mentally,” it was said, maintaining and expanding the schools for tenant children that her father had originally established. Although she contributed to hundreds of charitable causes, helping children seemed to be her special province. “No one knows,” the *Moulton Advertiser* reported in 1955, “just how many [polio victims] there are in Lawrence County who have been helped to walk again by the generosity of Miss Annie.” She paid for operations, special shoes and braces, and took children to Birmingham and Memphis for treatment. In addition, she built two churches on the Wheeler

Plantation for her tenants, one of them, “the church of no denomination,” welcoming both blacks and whites.

With the advent of World War II, Miss Annie again volunteered to go abroad but was turned down because of her age—seventy-three—and spent the war years organizing relief efforts in the valley. In her later years, she took a serious interest in gardening, lining the highway east and west of the plantation with iris and daffodils. She also planted profusely along the road to her home, making it, locals said, “one of the most vividly colored stretches of woodland in the area.” Preserving the natural beauty of her surroundings be-

came a prime concern as well, and when the highway department decided to widen Highway 20 and cut down several old trees, she jumped on the train to Washington to have the decision revoked. The new road was built, but on either side of the trees. “The Two-Way Drive” was known across Alabama, and the trees, called “Miss Annie’s Trees” by locals, still stand beside the highway today.



In her later years, Annie Wheeler tended to her large estate in the Tennessee Valley and contributed to hundreds of charitable causes. Helping children seemed to be her special province.
(Courtesy Birmingham Public Library)

IN 1955, WHILE VISITING relatives in Virginia, Annie Wheeler died from complications following a fall. She was eighty-six. She came home from Virginia, as she would have wished, on the Southern Railway, the train stopping at Wheeler Station. Her body lay in state in the front parlor of her home, surrounded by a sea of flowers that spilled out into the hall. Many came to pay their last respects. “There were fine stylish ladies who drove up in shiny big cars,” reported the *Joe Wheeler News*, “and some dressed in calico, who came in pick-up trucks. There were carefully tailored quiet men, and . . . men with leather tanned faces and calloused hands. There were people who came on foot, and in

through the back way, and asked if they could see Miss Annie.” She was buried in the family cemetery behind the house.

Prior to the funeral, a reporter asked several people in the area what they remembered most about Miss Annie. One young woman said she remembered that “Miss Annie never really approved of the phrase ‘pursuit of happiness.’ She always said that you were never made happy by seeking your own happiness, but you incidentally found your own happiness by seeking it for others.” Miss Annie, the reporter concluded, must have had a happy life. AH

CONTRIBUTORS, SOURCES, AND SUGGESTED READING

FIGHTIN' JOE WHEELER

By Mildred Witt Caudle

MILDRED CAUDLE, who received her Ph.D. in history from the University of Alabama, is Professor of History Emeritus at Athens State College, Athens, Alabama. Long interested in the Wheeler family and the state-owned Wheeler Plantation, Caudle has served as board member and president of the General Joe Wheeler Home Foundation and is currently chairing the Wheeler Plantation Tree Replacement Project. She is a former board member of the Alabama Preservation Alliance.

THE INTREPID ANNIE WHEELER

By Nanda Hopenwasser and Signe Wegener

SIGNE WEGENER, a native of Stavanger, Norway, received her M.A. and Ph.D. in nineteenth-century literature at the University of Alabama. She teaches English at the University of Georgia. Nanda Hopenwasser, a native of New York City, received her M.A. and Ph.D. in medieval literature at the University of Alabama. She is an instructor in English at the University of Alabama. Wegener and Hopenwasser have worked together on several projects, including a play, scholarly articles, and paper presentations.

The authors and editors would like to thank the following people for their assistance with this article: Melissa Beasley, curator of the Wheeler Plantation; Ella Coffee of Wheeler, Alabama, a close friend of Miss Annie's; Frances Robb, photoarchivist, Huntsville, Alabama; James Baggett and Don Vesey, archivists and research librarians at the Linn-Henley Research Library of the Birmingham Public Library; and the archive librarians at the Hoole Library and Gorgas Library, University of Alabama.

For more information on General Wheeler and his daughter Annie, see:

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ANN LOWE: COUTURIER TO THE RICH AND FAMOUS

By Ann S. Smith

ANN SUTTON SMITH, associate editor and publisher of the *Eufaula Tribune*, graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Alabama in 1959 with a bachelor's degree in history. She holds a master's degree from Vanderbilt University and, from 1961 to 1965, was an assistant professor of history at Huntingdon College in Montgomery.

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Articles on Ann Lowe have appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* (1954), *Ebony* (December 1966), *Flair Holiday* (1982), and *American Legacy* (Winter 1999).

LICENSE PLATES FROM ALABAMA

by Stephen Goldfarb

STEPHEN GOLDFARB is on the staff of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library, Atlanta, Georgia. He holds a Ph.D. in the history of science and technology from Case Western Reserve University.

The author and editors would like to thank Johnny L. Newman, assistant director of the Motor Vehicle Division, Alabama Department of Revenue, and Lee A. Hallman, Tuscaloosa County License Commissioner, for their assistance with this article.

License plates have received little attention in the otherwise voluminous literature on the history of the automobile. For more information on license plates and the early history of the automobile, see:

Jimmy Burton, "The History of Alabama License Plates Since 1912," privately published pamphlet, Birmingham, Alabama.

James J. Flink, chapter six in *America Adopts the Automobile, 1895-1910*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1970).

James K. Fox, *License Plates of the United States: A Pictorial History to the Present* (New York: Interstate Publishing Company, 1997).

Readers may also wish to visit the website of the American License Plate Collectors Association at <http://www.alpca.org>.

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