

BETTY SLOWE'S BLOG: Oct. 30, 2017 | 100 years ago this week

Posted Oct 30, 2017 at 8:45 AM

A funeral was held for Col. Joel Theodore Robbins, a patient at Bryce Hospital, in the Assembly Hall. His remains were buried in the hospital cemetery. Robbins was committed to the hospital in 1877, at the age of 28, and was a resident for over 40 years. Robbins was by profession a bookkeeper and farmer of good education; his mental collapse was attributed to the failure of the cotton crop in 1876. He was very useful around the hospital and would be greatly missed as he was a favorite among all the visitors whom he always greeted in a happy and most gracious manner. His last words to those around his bedside were to look after the trustees who were to meet there this week and the University Glee Club and see that there were enough provisions in the storeroom.

A list of drafted black men was published in The News with a notice that if they failed to appear, they would be subject to a fine and imprisonment for desertion.

The University of Alabama football team faced the Sewanee Tigers in Rickwood Park this week. Most of the students would leave for the Magic City on a special L&N train. Alabama would stage a big parade through the streets of Birmingham.

Harold Halstead, a resident of Tuscaloosa for many months and who enlisted in the Aviation Corps, was killed in action and buried in Toulon. Being a member of the naval aeronautic detachments who were the first American forces to go to France, he was one of the first Americans to land in France for service against the enemy. The aeronautic detachments were transported on naval vessels and landed in France during the first week of June, three weeks before the first army transport, under naval convoy, arrived in European waters. Halstead was killed on July 31.

Under a headline "Food Will Win War" was a plea for all to increase and conserve the food supply so that the world scarcity may not lead to famine.



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Under another headline, "Eat for Your Country," citizens were encouraged to eat in a manner that conserved meat, wheat, fats and sugar to go across the sea to the Army and the Allies. Eating chicken or duck, fish, eggs, green vegetables and potatoes was encouraged. Eating in this way was serving the country as truly as he who carries a gun, it was said. A program was held at the high school to impress upon the students the importance of conservation of food.

A Tuscaloosa man, who knew Bill Brandon in his boyhood days, sent him a lot of whistles, which made a shrill noise when swung around at the end of a long string. On the whistles were the words: "Clear the track. I am whistling for Bill Brandon for governor. He will get there on schedule time, just like the old dummy." The last

words referred to the time when Bill Brandon was a street car driver in Tuscaloosa and afterward engineer and conductor on the old dummy that followed the mule cars.

There were prospects that the coal famine in Tuscaloosa would soon be relieved. The Big Sandy Coal Co. had opened its mine at Cedar Cove and promised to deliver coal at the rate of 200 tons daily.



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