

Alabama  
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Hughes  
111 Hunter Street  
Cowikee Mill Village  
Eufaula, Alabama.

Too short - AL-10

### THE HUGHES FAMILY

By Gertha Couric.

Their neighbors say they are the most beloved couple of Cowikee settlement, describing James C. ("Doc") Hughes as one of nature's noblemen, and his wife, Drucie Porter, as an angel of mercy.

One man said: "Doc Hughes has the kindest heart of any man I know. He is always ready to help a fellow who is down; and Miss Dru, well...she's an angel, that's all."

"Doc" Hughes, although his gray hair indicates approaching old age, wears a quizzical expression that stamps him as a man who still likes to know and take a part in what is going on.

He was neatly dressed in a light suit of summer material, spotless white shirt, and polka dot wash tie when he came to the door to extend the greeting that immediately recalled the words of Dr. Colley, President of the Baptist Orphans' Home at Troy:

"I'd rather stay at the Hughes' home than any place I know. It extends true hospitality."

With a flourish, "Doc" had me seated; and after preliminary pleasantries, launched into his story, which, when summed up, is chiefly a narrative of the virtues of his wife.

"Sho, I'll tell you all I can," 'Doc' said.

"Me and Dru started working side by side in the little mill nearly fifty years ago. Then four years later, we went to the big mill.

"Mr. John Foy was president of the little mill, and Captain Tullis was president of the big mill.

"We had a right tough time in them days. We was young, but

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Dru couldn't work steady. She had three youngsters, two boys and one girl, that came right close together and she had to stop work.

"Lord bless your soul, she wouldn't leave them babies for nothin'. But when they got old enough to go to school, she started back to work.

"Her Pa, old man Porter - you remember him; he was the last Confederate veteran to die in Eufaula last year - he gave us this land to build our house on."

The front door of the house opens into a hallway, with two rooms on each side. In the rear is the kitchen and bathroom.

The "sitting room" is inviting with its modern living room furniture including a radio and a lovely old marble top mahogany table. An antique clock adorns the mantel's center, directly over the fireplace.

Lace curtains and the rug-covered floor enhance the home-like appearance of the room.

The bedrooms are furnished nicely, but plainly. In Mrs. Hughes' bedroom are pictures of her loved ones. Hand-made bedspreads and quilts are evidence of Mrs. Hughes handiwork.

Directly across the hall from the "sitting room" is the "company room." This is where all the visiting preachers stay.

The kitchen has an electric refrigerator and a wood stove.

"We had an electric stove, but didn't like it," Mr. Hughes said.

"As I was sayin'", Mrs. Hughes continued, "Dru started back to work, and her Ma helped us a lot by tending the youngsters after school.

"No'm, Dru don't work at the mill now. I won't let her. I got enough to take care of her.. But she works all right. I never seen such a smart woman. She never stops.



"She's the best cook anywhere. Her cakes, preserves, and pickles always take first prize at the fairs. She is president of the W.M.U., has a Sunday School class, and is a member of some more clubs. Many a night, she sits through nursing the sick. When a body get sick, they call Dru and then call the doctor."

Mr. Hughes paused briefly to smile, and say:

"They say its her sweet smile that makes them well."

"I tell you," Mr. Hughes continued emphatically, "she's the smartest woman in this town. Her cooking, washing, milking - even though I milk at night - and sewing all the time for four grandchildren...I just don't see how she does it!"

"Me and Ma had some education, not much, but we can read and write," Mr. Hughes said. "We sent our three children to school and 'most through high school. They're all married now."

"My oldest boy lives up north; my other boy lives here, owns his home, and works in the mill. My only daughter works in the mill. Her husband, Rube Benton, died this summer of typhoid fever, and if grief could have killed, she would have died too. She took it that hard."

"I gave her the lot next door to here, and they built that little house. They were so happy."

"You see that little girl with the long golden curls playin' over there, That's their baby; the apple of her granddaddy's eye. She's in the fourth grade now."

The child was playing in Mr. Hughes hedge-enclosed yard. Rose bushes, ferns, palms and oleanders are growing profusely. There are several fine pecan trees and a vegetable garden that appeared to be a year-around affair.

"We all get a lot of pleasure out of the community house," Mr.

Hughes said in answer to a query about recreation.

"We can sit on the porch and hear the band in the summer time. I like to read, and when my wife ain't home in the afternoon and I don't have to work the garden, I go over to the Men's Club, where I usually take a shower and then sit around and read or gab with my friends.

"We take the Eufaula Tribune and we got a car; there's the radio too. I try to make things comfortable for Dru.

"We are all Baptists. I am a deacon, and my son is Secretary of the Church. We get a lot of pleasure out of the church too,

"Mr. Donald Comer is responsible for all the good things around here. Nobody knows what he has done for us.

"When I first started to work in the mill, we just run six or eight looms. Couldn't but a few run them. Now we have sixty-four and eighty looms.

"In the old days, we had to thread them with our mouths. We'd get a mouthful of lint and have to spit it on the floors. That's what caused so much T.B.

"Now they are threaded automatically, and clean shiny spittons sit everywhere on the floor. You don't see T.B. no more. Why, you have to be examined; and be well and strong, before you can work here.

"I'm a 'loom fixer.' It pays eighteen dollars a week," Mr. Hughes said. "But that ain't all I do. I have to go to the pasture for the cow. Mr. Comer has a pasture for our cows, and its a great help for them to get plenty of green stuff, so if you'll just wait until Dru comes in, I'll run on after the cow."

But I didn't wait.

I want to go back to see Mr. Hughes; sometime when I can go in the morning and spend the day.

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