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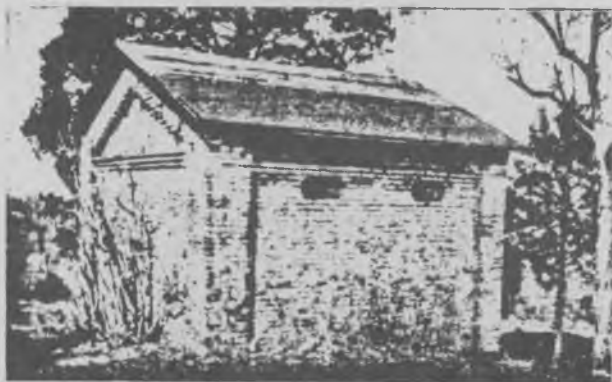
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The Huntsville Powder House



[The following unsigned essay is from *The Montesanon* 1925, yearbook of Huntsville College/Wills-Taylor School, p. 90.]

Strange it is to hear the different stories and opinions of the Huntsville Powder House. As the Chinese proverb is -- When the water has receded, the stones will appear. Let us then dismiss from our minds the idea that this powder house was operated for the use of the soldiers. It was not. It was built and used by the merchants of Huntsville. It was sometimes referred to as the Merchant's Powder House.

Sometime about the year 1850, the merchants of Huntsville and the near surroundings got together and raised funds to erect a powder house to store their powder, dynamite, and shells, there not being enough room in the local stores. They too were considering the safety of the town, when they thus considered. In case of a fire, the damage would be threefold.

The powder house was built a little way down the Big Spring Branch, then called the canal. It was situated on the north side of the branch, about two-thirds the distance from Gallatin street [sic] to the point where the branch joined the dry creek. There was a walkway on the south side of the branch,

leading down to a wide flat "foot-log," which lead [sic] across the branch to the powder house, which was about thirty feet from the branch. It's [sic] front faced south. The structure was a small brick house about ten feet square. It had a steel door and a concrete floor. It was the container of the powder of Huntsville.

Some years later, it was abandoned, another was built on the little spur of the mountain above the cemetery. It was situated on a little rise, where the first ascent to the mountain is reached, on the Monte Sano Drive. A change to this location, the people thought, would be more safe, and would be a little more convenient. This house was a little larger than the other one, for Huntsville was growing; there were more stores that handled powder. This structure was built of brick; it had a concrete floor, steel door, and a well supported roof. The inside measurements of this house was [sic] about fifteen feet long, twelve feet wide, and fourteen feet high. There were no windows. Although very crude, it is one of Huntsville's relics.

W. H. P.

