

# HISTORY & FOLKLORE

Informally Speaking –

## A Halloween Story

by Homer Smith (1995)



**From Dayton Times-Herald, April 26, 1962 – FIVE GENERATIONS**  
Mrs. Tkla Bartkowiak, seated, passed away March 25, 1962, at the age of 93. With her in this picture are four generations of her descendants. (L-R): Mrs. Jeannie Ressler, Crosby; Mrs. W.R. Svoboda, Dayton; Mrs. John Falk, Dayton, and Rusty and Gary Ressler, Crosby. This picture was made in the Conroe home of Mrs. Bartkowiak’s daughter, Mrs. E.L. Colby.



**From Dayton-Liberty Voice, June 11, 1980 –**  
Jabo and Pearl Coker stand before the trophies awarded to the winners of last weekend’s Second Annual Trinity River Canoe Regatta. Winning a first place trophy in the open race were John and Edwin Bauer (sponsored by Moss Hill Baptist Church), second place went to Russell Rives and Charles Whitehead (sponsored by Jabo’s Lounge), and third place to Robert Warner and Mark Halfin. The team that came in first, Jerry Nunnery and Paul Kaegler of Lake Jackson were disqualified. The women’s race on Saturday was won by Billie Gowdy and Barbara Copeland (sponsored by Rain Out, Hang Out Tavern), second place, Suzy Monts and Shirley Herron (sponsored by G.I.D.), and third place to Dollie Williams and Jenny Burgess.

Three years ago, a certain couple I know, bought a beautiful, one-hundred-year-old house out in the country. It was just what they were looking for. Thirty or so acres with a few barns and run-down fences accompanied the deal. Really quite nice and with some hard work it has become a showplace.

All the century old shrubs and bushes ring the house in a wreath of blossoms. The big oak trees provide shade around the yard. There is still a three-legged stone table by the huge walnut tree left there by an ancient owner, which has produced many a cracked walnut over the years.

When you drive up to the door, you automatically slow down from the fast paced world to rest in one of the comfortable chairs on the newly constructed patio. This being the scene then, you just naturally expect the next part of this story to follow.

One day the owner of this lovely dwelling place was home alone and decided to cut the grass on the front lawn. He happened to look up at the upstairs window and saw a woman standing there. She had long, dark hair, fair complexion and was wearing a white dress of some kind. Not being aware of any company, he dropped everything and ran inside and up the stairs to see who she was and how she had gotten into the deserted house.

After looking all varound and seeing no one there, he happened to notice that the window where she was standing was open. Now, this is a window that is never unlocked, and in fact, is quite difficult to open. It is in the bathroom just off the two bedrooms and is over the staircase.

He thought about this for a while and decided maybe it was just a reflection of some kind. Still, this did not explain the window being opened. It was even hard to close. Had he, in fact, seen a ghost?

Several days later a couple came to visit from out of town. They spent the night in one of the upstairs bedrooms. The next morning at breakfast, Mary, the guest, stated that she really appreciated having her covers pulled up around her and being tucked into bed, but that was not necessary for the hostess to do this. Her husband was asleep next to her and neither saw nor felt anything.

Now the lady of the house said she knew nothing about this and certainly did not go upstairs at all, much less to tuck someone in. Another visit from the apparition?

Still another couple related later that they were asleep up there in this same room and had heard someone come in and gently close the bedroom door. The next morning the same bathroom window was open again.

Since these happenings, others who visited overnight have felt a presence in the upstairs rooms.

Now this ghost, named Mary, by this time because of certain facts I’ll relate to you later, seems to be a very maternal and caring ghost. She is not hostile or scary and in no way has offered to harm or offend anyone. Her eerie being has been sensed by others who have visited this house but she has never actually been seen by anyone but this present owner.

The next part of this story must now be told. The lady, from whom the house was bought, was actually the first and third wife of a late and previous owner of this domicile. The second wife has neither been seen nor heard from, since before the first wife became the third wife. Her children haven’t even heard from her. Her disappearance has caused many strange rumors to abound in the neighborhood.

Some say she may have been “done in” in the upstairs of this house and buried somewhere on the grounds.

Her name was also Mary and she came from the same city as the first out of town guests. The residents now think Mary, the ghost, felt a closeness to Mary, the guest, because they shared the same name. Mary, the guest, even has the same last name as Mary the ghost’s maiden name.

All this is just too much. I don’t believe in supernatural spirits. I’m relating this incident to you because I have slept in this bedroom on many occasions and I have neither seen, nor felt, Mary’s ghost in this room. Maybe the next time I go there, though, she will come in and tuck me in.

Have a nice Halloween! Boo!!



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**From Illustrated Press of Liberty County, Thursday, March 8, 1962–**  
Scene in Hull about 30 years ago shows the feed store of the late R.P. Hill, with his home in the background. The store is now the Hull Post Office.