

## East Falls Past – Falls Folks

*The Fallser*, July 2012, by Wendy Moody

Below, Floridian **June Drumheller Miller** shares her recollections of her girlhood on Ainslie Street in the 1930s. In this abridged excerpt from *A Girl from East Falls*, June remembers some Falls folks:



### **The Milkman**

When we needed milk, my mother put the empty bottles on the doorstep with a note rolled up in one of the bottles with her order. Sometimes the horse went ahead to the next house before the milkman did; he seemed to know the way. The milk came in quart-sized bottles with cardboard stoppers. Since this was before homogenization the cream rose to the top. Mother poured some of this off to use in coffee or as a dessert topping. On cold mornings when the milk froze, the cream extended above the top of the bottle with the cardboard circle perched jauntily on top.

### **The Iceman**

A pan was put under the icebox to catch the water as the ice melted. It was emptied every day. The iceman came twice a week, more often in summer, and he looked for a card in the window to see how much ice you wanted. He used his large pick to break the block into the size asked for. On hot days when he left the truck to deliver the ice, we climbed up and got small pieces of ice to chew on. Sometimes he'd chip off more so that we all had a good-sized chunk.

### **The Huckster**

On Fridays, Pop Hess and his son Harry came around with a truckload of fruit, vegetables and fish, which they got down to the wharf at 4 a.m. Most Fridays they had fresh flounder and Mother bought it for our dinner.

### **The Lamplighter**

At dusk the lamplighter came around and lit the gas streetlights. He carried a tank and a long pole that emitted a flame at one end. The hissing sound of the gas advertised his presence as he walked from lamp to lamp. I was fascinated, watching the lights go on one by one as the sun disappeared.

### **The Butter and Egg Man**

Mr. Cleaver came to the house, called out "Cleaver's!" and delivered our butter and eggs. Years later I met a professor in Florida, Frank Cleaver, and mentioned our delivery man in Philadelphia. "That was my father" he smiled.

### **The Scissors Sharpener**

Twice a year flyers circulated to announce the scissor sharpener would be coming. Mother would be sure to be home that day. She had one pair she used exclusively for sewing and others to cut paper. It was important to keep them in the best condition.

### **The Coal Man**

The coal man placed one end of his chute into the cellar window and the other into his truck. The coal sounded like thunder as it cascaded down the metal chute. In winter Daddy sprinkled the ashes on the front steps so we wouldn't slip.

### **And...**

- There was a **Ragman**, an **Organ Grinder**, and, in summer, a man who came around giving pony rides for 5 cents.