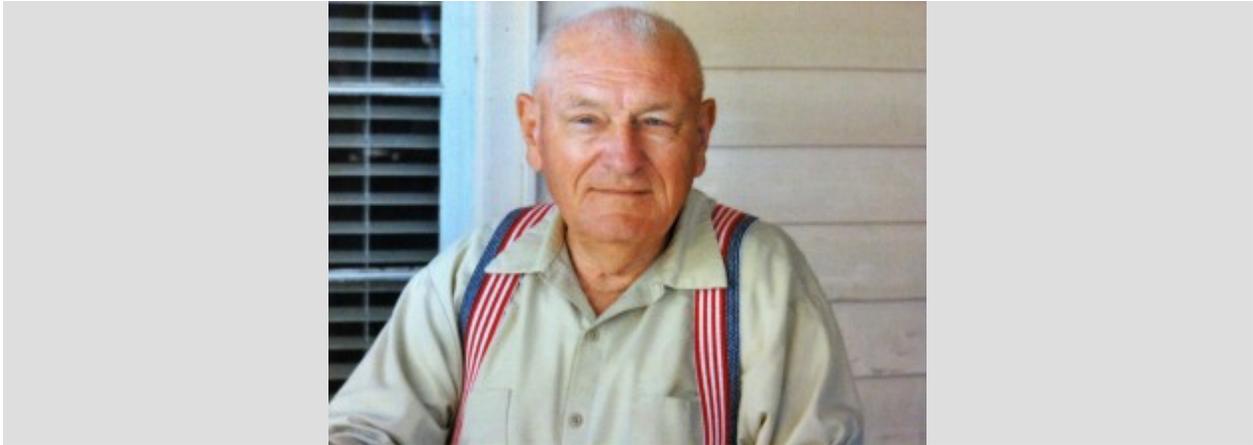


WHERE DID THIS RECLAIMED TIMBER COME FROM? ASK NOLAN!



Meet Nolan

This is Nolan. We met this summer while I was traveling in Alabama, sourcing reclaimed timbers for our sister company. It was 107 degrees in the town of Fayette where the demolition was under way of a former Union Underwear Inc. mill (makers of Fruit of the Loom). As I measured and photographed the timbers which had been carefully plucked from the wreckage, I was approached by an older gentleman in a white pick-up truck. I had seen him earlier driving around the site, chatting to the workers and keeping an eye on the activity, and had assumed that he was some sort of foreman or security employee. After a warm greeting he inquired as to what I was doing. We spoke and it turned out that he was not an employee of the demolition company, but rather a kindly man name Nolan who had retired from the mill in 1985 and had taken on the role of something akin to town historian. He lived nearby and liked to monitor the progress of the mill's demolition. This day he was there to gather some bricks to add to his collection of mill memorabilia.



Union Underwear Inc. demolition site.

Our customers are constantly asking about the **origin of the wood** that they buy. Often we can tell them that it came from a barn in a neighboring state or a factory in a nearby city. When we meet a fellow like Nolan it's like striking gold!

After showing this Yankee a southern trick for keeping cool (wearing a water soaked dish rag around your neck),



Here I am sporting some southern air conditioning (i.e. a wet dishrag around my neck).

Nolan headed home to have lunch with his wife and to see if he could dig up any pictures or documents related to the old mill. An hour later he returned with not only pictures and documents but also a bag of tomatoes, cucumbers and an ear of cooked and buttered corn wrapped in foil. I thanked him effusively for his generosity.

Upon my return to upstate NY, I received a manila envelope from Nolan filled with more documents which was followed by another delivery a month later. This one contained photographs (including one picturing some massive catfish that Nolan caught this summer) and a sweet "Mystery Money Changer".

I use it around the office to try and con folks out of a bill or two.

So what did I learn? The Union Underwear Inc. mill was built in 1921 as the Fayette Cotton Mill. The factory was built adjacent to the Brown Lumber Company. Logs were transported by rail to the lumber mill, sawn into hefty **timbers** (many as large as 9" x 15" x 26'), then used in the construction of the cotton mill next door. Nolan's father worked at the lumber mill at this time and was sadly the victim of a fatal accident.



old photo of the Fayette Cotton Mill

Nolan himself began work at the Cotton Mill in 1944 and except for the two years he spent in the service during the Korean war, worked there for 39 years. Since the mill closed in September 2003, the town of Fayette has certainly felt the loss of a major employer, but Nolan has made it a mission to keep the memories alive. Our correspondence continues, and we share what we learn with the clients who have given the wood from The Union Underwear Inc. mill a **second life**.



It should also be noted that the wood that we have reclaimed from this mill has been some of the nicest material we've seen in a long time. Just look at the dense grain in this beautiful Douglas Fir timber that we recently used for a job!

Thanks again Nolan.