

March 28, 1991

Ms Delia Gilliland  
Archivist and Genealogist  
Old Courthouse Square  
Decatur, GA 30030

Dear Ms Gilliland,

I apologize for the delay in sending you the information on Lt. James F. Pitman in connection with the letter you have mounted in your museum. I am enclosing a typed copy of the letter. I have also sent a copy to J. F. Pitman's children.

I am also enclosing some information on his pedigree and some information on Edward Moses and Jessie Pitman Sutton who lived at 209 North Candler Street.

As you will see from the enclosed material James Fling Pitman, writer of the letter, was the son of James Henry Pitman of LaGrange, GA. and Anna Sleeper Fling of New Hampshire. Anna died in 1892 and James Henry in 1910. I am not sure of this, but from what I can gather, after Anna Pitman's death James Fling was sent from one aunt to another. My grandmother and grandfather took him permanently and reared him with their two sons, who felt like brothers to him. The grandchildren always spoke of him as "Uncle Jim."

My grandmother was Jessie Boyd Pitman, sister to James Henry Pitman. My grandfather was Edward Moses Sutton. Jessie was from LaGrange and Edward from Danburg, Ga.

According to the write-up from the 1964 DeKalb New Era, Jessie and Edward Sutton came to Decatur in 1905 and built their home on North Candler Street. But I'm not sure this date is correct. I have always heard my Dad talk about living in Covington and Conyers, but have no proof as yet. However, I don't think they built their home in 1905. Edward Sutton died August 29, 1910. An item in THE DEKALB NEWS, June 1, 1911 is as follows: "Mrs. E. M. Sutton is erecting an attractive residence on North Candler Street." From the same source August 10, 1911: "Mrs. E. M. Sutton and family have moved into their handsome residence on North Candler Street" It would appear that Jessie built the home after the death of her husband.

Edward Moses Sutton and his wife Jessie Boyd Pitman Sutton are buried between plot #47 and #48 in Oakland Cemetery, Atlanta, Ga.

Edward and Jessie Sutton had two sons:

Edward Boyd Sutton (b. 2/9/1894, LaGrange, Ga. -

d. 10/21/1963 Decatur, GA. He worked for Ansley and Elkin Drug Stores and then went into real estate partnership with Faye H. Roberts in 1923. In later years he worked as a real estate appraiser for Home Owners Loan Corporation and New York Life.

\* John Pitman Sutton (b. Aug. 24, 1895, LaGrange, Ga. d. April 18, 1985, Decatur, Ga. He was a contractor and builder both in Decatur, Atlanta and Charlotte, NC.

Now to personal matters. I have checked the death records in our Courthouse and find no record of the death of Carl Etheridge. Our county began keeping records of deaths in 1913. At a recent meeting of our Genealogy Society I gave the name to a resident of Clayton, Rabun Co., Ga. Since we are just 14 miles from the NC/GA line, he might be found in that area. This person said she would check. Also we are just 16 miles from the Jackson County line. When I can I'll try to check that area.

I enjoyed my visit to Decatur so very much and appreciated all you did to help me. My daughter and I also enjoyed your museum. The next time you come to the mountains I hope you will stop and see us at our Macon County Historical Museum, 6 West Main Street, Franklin, NC. If I'm not in just have the person staffing the building call me. I live just about three blocks from the museum.

Sincerely,

*Jessie Sutton*

Jessie Pitman (Sutton) Sutton

(I was a Sutton and married a Sutton.)

\* John Pitman Sutton died in Burlington, Alamance Co., N.C. He is buried in the Decatur Cemetery.

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# Eldest LaGrange alumna nears the century mark

By MARY LOU DAVIS

Many years have gone by since Mrs. Jessie Pitman Sutton was a student at LaGrange College, but she keeps her intellect working and her mind sharp by memorizing poetry at night while others are asleep.

On Tuesday Mrs. Sutton celebrated her 96th birthday and was entertained at a family luncheon by her son and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Pitman Sutton, at their home on North Candler Street in Decatur. Among the invited guests were 13 nieces, four of whom are over 90 years old and four over 80 years old. The other five nieces are mere children, being between 60 and 70!

Mrs. Sutton was born in LaGrange in 1868, the daughter of Dr. Elisha Dortch Pitman and Emily Peary Pitman. Her father was a "saddle-bag doctor" in LaGrange and surrounding Troup county, where he enjoyed a rather wide practice before the War Between the States.

He sent his daughter Jessie to LaGrange College, where she was graduated in 1886, 55 years after that institution was founded. Mrs. Sutton is the oldest living alumna of LaGrange College, and the oldest living member of the Decatur First Methodist Church.

On Jan. 18, 1893, she was married to Edward M. Sutton of Washington, Ga. They moved to Decatur in 1905 and built their home on North Candler. Their two sons, the

late Edward Boyd Sutton and Pitman Sutton grew up in Decatur. Mrs. Sutton now makes her home with her son Pitman in the family home on North Candler. Besides rearing her own two boys, Mrs. Sutton adopted and reared her nephew, James Pitman, who was before his death one of Decatur's best-loved doctors.

Mrs. Sutton has five grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren, all of whom have received crocheted afghans done by grandmother. She reads and crochets without glasses, and keeps herself entertained by keeping up with the news as it happens.

Mrs. Sutton's home is across the street from that of Belle Miller, who owns and operates a Decatur bakery. Each Aug. 18 the talented Mrs. Miller sends her long-time neighbor a birthday cake, ablaze with 16 candles!

What has kept this lady young and cheerful despite her 96 years? Her family who adore her, her friends who run in to see her, her Bible, newspapers, and the poetry she memorizes at night, some of which is quoted here:

"Fret not because the promise of the bud  
The fruit doth not fulfill  
Was not the promise which it brought

To us, a blessing still?"  
Mrs. Sutton has believed in promises all her life — and found blessings.



## Decatur's senior citizen celebrates

Mrs. Jessie Sutton (seated, center) neared the revered century mark Tuesday when she celebrated her 96th birthday at her home on North Candler Street in Decatur. Celebrating the occasion with her were nieces and great nieces, all graduates of La-

Grange College, who are (seated left and right) Mrs. Kate Brown, Mrs. Eta Dodd, (standing from left) Mrs. Richard Willis, Mrs. Carrie Davis, Mrs. Curtis Glass, Mrs. Jennie Lee, Miss Stella Bradfield.

1964  
Dekalb New Era  
Decatur, Ga

B. No. 1000  
Sutton

# Humor, talent and love create a life of sharing

By MARI BEHREND  
Family Living Writer

His lively sense of humor and natural talent for teaching in a Christian perspective have kept 87-year old Pitman Sutton of Graham active and young in both heart and mind.

At the age of 19, Sutton was asked to teach a Sunday Bible class to a group of seven-and-eight-year-olds in his hometown of Decatur, Ga. He enjoyed it so much that when asked some years later if he would teach Sunday Bible classes at his church he accepted the challenge and has been teaching ever since.

So, when Sutton and his wife moved to Graham 11 years ago, to be close to their only son, Dr. Edward Sutton of Burlington, it was only natural for him to resume his teaching.

Since 1971 Sutton has taught Sunday Bible classes at the Graham Presbyterian Church, where he is not only the oldest teacher, but the oldest parishioner as well.

"I don't call myself a Bible teacher," says Sutton. "I just take each lesson and see what meaning it is trying to convey and then research and read until I find the general drift of the Bible passage, and teach what I've learned.

"A real Bible teacher is some-

one who doesn't have to do a lot of reading and research. They know the Bible by heart and don't have to research like I do."

In his classes, Sutton tries to "teach the scripture to enable people to bring the Bible into their everyday lives," says his wife of 62 years.

Because Sutton does a good deal of research and reading to prepare for his classes, he claims that he "gets more out of the class than anyone else."

However, according to his wife, the parishioners, both young and old, really love her husband and his work.

"When Pitman had major surgery back in the fall, he got nearly 200 cards in two months," she says.

"There are also a couple of children at the church who call him grandpa because they don't have one," Mrs. Sutton smiled.

Sutton's age is definitely not a factor of his life that slows him down. And, a good sense of humor is important to him, creating little toleration in his mind for what he terms, "Gloomy Guses".

"You know the type that just sit around and never laugh when they get old. There must be something wrong with that type of person," says Sutton.

"One of the best things about growing old is you can look back

and evaluate what was good and bad. The only trouble is you can't change the past, only the future," says Sutton.

Besides teaching on Sundays, Sutton is also a lifetime member of the Presbyterian Church elders. Under the title, he helps uphold high doctrinal standards and answers questions and problems pertaining to the spiritual aspects of his religion.

According to Sutton there's nothing he would really change in his life except maybe one thing. "If I could do it all over again, I would want to be exactly like my son. He's such a good person all around," says Sutton.

Since his operation in the fall of 1982 Sutton hasn't been able to teach his classes, but he will resume his duties the first week in March.

Although a good deal of Sutton's life has been spent doing work for the church, he is a professional, commercial engineer by occupation.

He graduated from Georgia Tech in 1915 and went to work for a company which helped build Camp Butner, N.C., a former military facility, which is now a mental health and rehabilitation center.

He also served in the anti-aircraft division of the U.S. Army in World War I.

