

The author's parents, James Eulis Creasy and Nancy Hemington, grew up in two very different cultures, but they were both from hardworking, loving, and humble families, sharing a common religion, with teetotalers as matriarchs. The two families were brought together by the greatest cataclysm in history, World War II, and Jim & Nancy's love.

Jim & Nancy

Two Paths Merged by War

by Danny Creasy

Order the complete book from the publisher [Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com)

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/11092.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**

JIM & NANCY

Two Paths Merged by War

By
DANNY
CREASY



Copyright © 2015-2020 Danny Creasy

ISBN: 978-1-64718-671-5

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2020

Second Edition

Table of Contents

Preface.....	iv
Part 1 Much Need and Little Have	1
Part 2 Breathe, Relax, Aim, Sight, and Squeeze.....	45
Part 3 I Know, I Know	107
Epilogue.....	237
Appendix of Military and Civilian Terms	248

September 1931 – Florence, Alabama

Eulis Creasy fought the urge to have Sal pick up the pace as they crossed Cox Creek. He had hitched up the mare mule and departed, his home, a couple of miles north of the Cloverdale community, in the wee hours. They were still almost an hour from the Florence train station, and she still had to take them home that evening. He adjusted his position on the old wagon's hard wooden seat and rubbed his sore buttocks.

Sal was somewhat lacking as a plow mule, but she seemed to enjoy pulling a wagon, that is, as long as she was not pushed too hard. Maybe she enjoyed the changes in scenery or simply had wanderlust.

Eulis's mother had learned from a cousin the day before that because of the Depression's widespread hunger, the federal government was distributing food stores across the country. About twenty miles away the authorities would be handing out free flour, tomorrow, down near the Florence train station sometime in the afternoon.

Folks around Cloverdale and Cypress Inn had joked about the Depression at first. They were generally of the opinion that life in rural Alabama and Tennessee was just as hard before The Crash as after. But lately, cash was getting hard to come by. For goods they couldn't grow, raise, catch, or kill, such as, white flour, sugar, coffee, ammunition, and dry goods, there was, as old Preacher Cobb often said, "much need and little have." The idea of twenty, ten, or even five pounds of free flour was too much to ignore in spite of the damage to their pride. McKinley was "second pickin'" some late cotton with sons Herschel and Vernon, and Clora had to tend the small children, Alma, Leslie, and Arvel, so the couple decided to send fourteen-year-old Eulis to Florence for the flour.

McKinley and Clora had their eldest son get an early start. They knew there would be a crowd, and he best get there early to be near the head of the line. Not knowing how the flour would be distributed, they sent him with a few empty cloth sacks.

Some town kids stared at him as he passed through Needmore, just north of Florence. He didn't doubt what they thought of this skinny farm boy in his faded overalls and driving his mule and wagon. Never ashamed of his humble station, he sat up straight and waved at them and said, "Hello." Taken aback a little, they gave in and waved, too.

He had been down to the tracks in East Florence before, but never by himself. He veered Sal down Royal Avenue and eased her over to the right shoulder of

the road to let a dusty Model- A Ford clatter by. He saw three wagons pulled over up ahead and hoped it would be someone he knew.

“Hey, Eulis, what you doin’ down here all alone, son?” asked Jimmie Creasy.

“Hi, Uncle Jimmie. Hi, Aunt Fronie,” said Eulis and then continued, “Momma and Daddy sent me down here for some of this free flour everybody’s talking about.”

Jimmie and Fronie exchanged concerned glances, and Jimmie asked, “Kinley still second pickin’?”

“Yes, sir,” replied their nephew.

Eulis recognized the Cloverdale folks in the other two wagons and gave a “howdy” to Mr. Clemmons in one and to Mr. and Mrs. Balentine in the other.

Eulis had no timepiece, so he asked Uncle Jimmie the hour of the day.

His father’s brother must have recently checked, because he responded, “It’s nearly noon,” without even having to look at his cherished pocket watch. “We was restin’ here awhile before goin’ on down to the tracks.” He deliberately avoided saying anything about free flour.

In fact, they all pretended to be interested in the surrounding stores and houses to hide their embarrassment at getting something they had not earned by their labor.

Fronie cast a worried look at the boy and asked, “Eulis, have you had anything to eat since breakfast?”

“Yes, ma’am,” said Eulis, and further stated, “ Momma sent me with some cornbread and souse meat – I ate it back towards the Underwood community.”

She smiled at him, now relieved.

After a few more moments of silence, Jimmie turned on the wagon seat and suggested they should start heading down to East Florence. He offered for Eulis to follow them and the boy was glad to accept.

Because traffic, both cars and wagons, was getting thick near the National Guard Armory, the men decided it best to park the wagons in some shade and let Mrs. Creasy and Mrs. Balentine watch over the stock, while the men walked on down to the station to see what was what.

The number of folks down by the station shocked Eulis. Hundreds, if not a thousand people, of every age, were in waiting for the gift from Uncle Sam. He climbed halfway up a pole to view the scene.

There were two boxcars parked with their side doors open, and Eulis could see twenty- pound bags stacked in them from end to end. There was a makeshift platform next to the boxcars. Some nervous-looking men in white shirts were con-

versing and pacing about this platform. Eulis climbed down and, now separated from his party, began to ease forward in the mass of increasingly anxious folks.

He listened to the chatter in the crowd. A man said that one of the men on the platform had announced that the flour would be handed out in about an hour. Those around him groaned and grumbled.

Minutes passed slowly as the temperature rose and the September sun bore down. Eulis cringed at the coarse language uttered by the rougher members in attendance, and angry shouts began to be heard about a half hour later. The physical press of the crowd began to change his nervousness to fear.

The young man could only catch an occasional glimpse of what was going on at the ramp. He was glad when a tall man next to him stated that the flour sacks were being handed out. He heard one of the men on the platform shout, "One bag per person folks, one bag per person!" Take it easy now!"

About an hour had passed when the pressure from those behind him increased, and the tall man turned and shouted back, "Ease up back there, dammit!"

Instead of easing, the pressure only increased. Those around him began to worry about the flour holding out.

Some sheriff's deputies tried to keep a path open for the lucky recipients to exit with their flour, but the path was narrowing and shifting like a tornado's funnel. Things broke loose when a little ragged man leapt up on the platform, ran to one of the boxcars, and jumped in. Before those in charge could react, he bolted from the doorway with his prize. He tried to skirt the crowd, but a couple of angry men tackled him and another grabbed the flour.

The tightly packed mass of bodies surged forward, and Eulis was pressed to the point of not being able to breathe. Next, some men began to fall and tumble. Eulis wound up in a pile of twisting and rolling bodies. He kicked and crawled free of the sweaty mob. A brief path opened, and he sprinted through to the street.

Eulis took one forlorn glance back at the boxcars to witness fists and clubs flying, and he knew there would be no flour for his family on this day. He made his way back up the road through angry, crying, and bruised men and women. Here and there was a burst and scattered sack of flour. His Uncle Jimmie and the others must have given up earlier and abandoned this madness. Only the hobbled Sal and his daddy's wagon were under the shade tree. He hugged the mule in the sheer absence of any human comfort.

The mule seemed none the worse from the surrounding violence. Eulis got her and the wagon turned and headed north. The convoy of vehicles and wagons

he traveled with began to thin when he got on the tree-lined Cloverdale Road.

The reality of the violence and failed mission hit him as he passed under the oaks that spread over him like a canopy. He sobbed a few seconds but never stopped the mule. “Let’s just get home, Sal,” he quietly said.

The sun began to set as they passed through Petersville. A gentleman let Eulis water Sal at his trough in Underwood. Word of the flour riot had reached the man earlier, and he asked Eulis about it, but Eulis could speak little of the nightmare. The man’s wife brought Eulis a couple of peaches that he devoured just after departing their gracious company. He wiped the sweet juice from his face with his sleeve. At that moment, he was sure they were the best things he had ever tasted.

Eulis began to nod after crossing Cypress Creek. With Sal’s confident stride taking him home, he didn’t hesitate to tie off the reins and move to the bed of the wagon. He stretched out on the empty flour sacks and looked up at the stars. He thanked God for getting him out of that mob alive. Eulis dropped into sleep as they rolled past the African Methodist Episcopal Church at Pisgah.

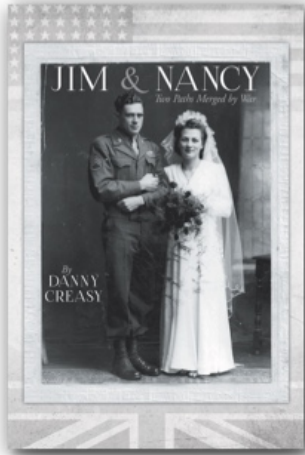
Early Sunday morning, McKinley awoke to the sound of a mule’s whinny-haw. He eased to the door and peered out to find Sal and his wagon standing in front of the house. Clora joined him, and they went out to find Eulis fast asleep on the wagon bed.

“Are you okay, son?” asked McKinley.

The boy awoke, startled and disoriented. He gathered his senses and finally uttered, “Daddy, there was a big fight at the station, and I couldn’t get any flour.”

His father said, “Well, get on to bed and tell us about it tomorrow. I’ll put up Sal.”

Eulis changed to his old tattered nightshirt and crawled into the bed he shared with three brothers. Sleep was returning quickly, but just as he began to fade, he decided that cornbread would taste just fine for a while.



The author's parents, James Eulis Creasy and Nancy Hemington, grew up in two very different cultures, but they were both from hardworking, loving, and humble families, sharing a common religion, with teetotalers as matriarchs. The two families were brought together by the greatest cataclysm in history, World War II, and Jim & Nancy's love.

Jim & Nancy

Two Paths Merged by War

by Danny Creasy

Order the complete book from the publisher [Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com)

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/11092.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**