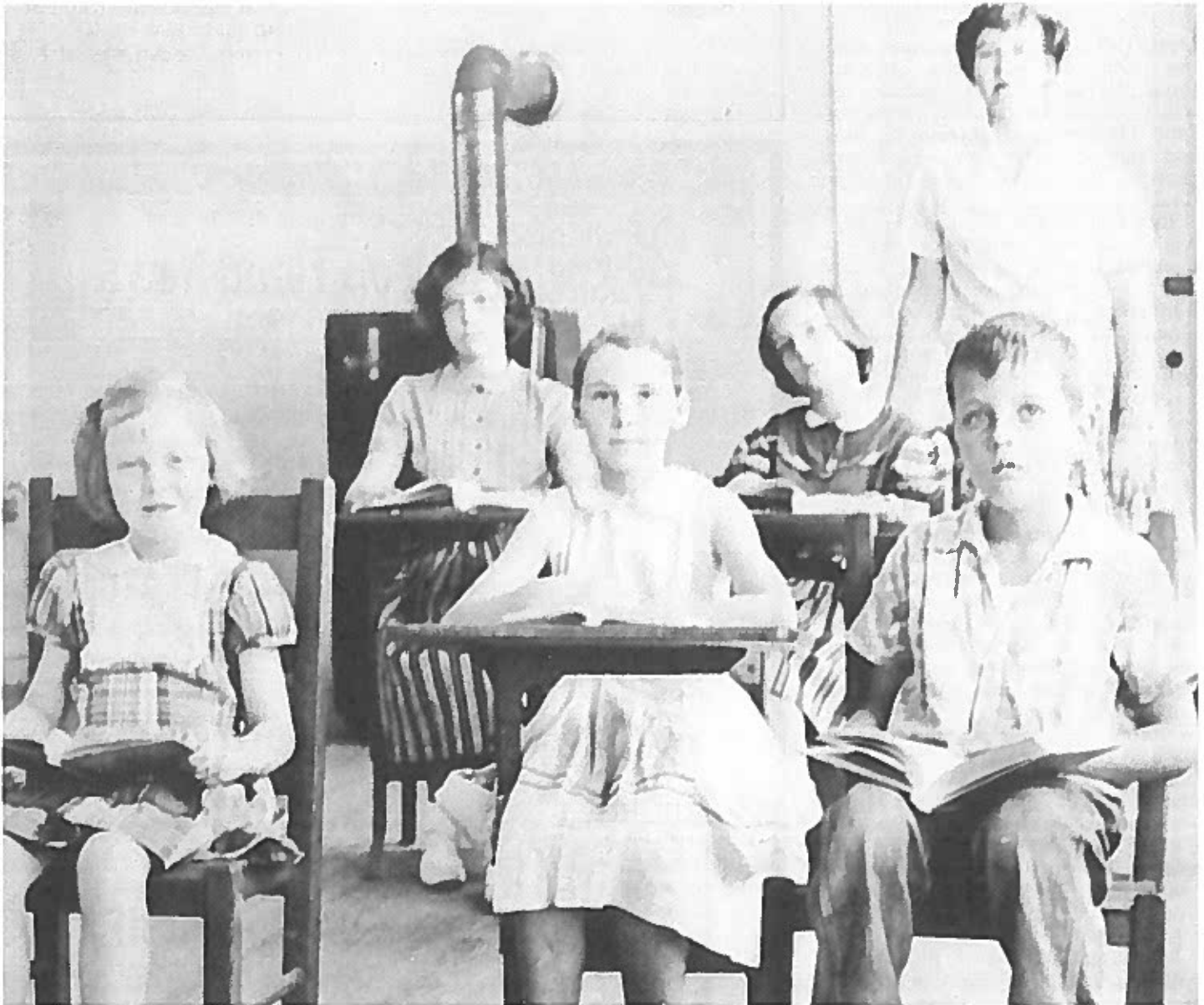


Profile

FREDERICK HACK, A PART OF THE HISTORY.

By Bill Fields

ISLANDER 2(77)



Frederick (lower right) along with the other students attended school in a one-room building.

When Frederick Hack came to Hilton Head in June of 1950, he was not quite three years old, and the way of life that was his as a child has slowly disappeared from the Island.

His father had come to purchase Island property from the owners, Alfred K. Loomis and Landon Thorne, two New Yorkers who kept two thirds of the Island for bird hunting. Fred Hack Sr. was in the lumber business and built mills with Gen. Fraser and Charles Stebbins, though they moved

quickly towards active development of the island.

"It was similar to Daufuskie," Frederick said. "A past-by kind of society." There were 1200 to 1300 black inhabitants, mostly small-plot farmers and fishermen, and a few whites - the Hudsons, the Toomers and those who lived at Honey Horn Plantation. Honey Horn was the only place on the Island with electricity, powered by a diesel generator. There were chickens, beef and milk cows, dogs and

horses. For the most part, transportation was on marsh tackies or by boat. A single paved road stretched from the Jenkins Island boat landing to the lighthouse in Palmetto Dunes. Early communication was by short-wave radio. They had a wood-burning stove and an ice box.

"It was a pretty isolated life" and Frederick remembers the way people helped each other in those days. "If you shot birds on somebody's property, you'd go back and plow their land

shed. The wind, however, definitely was becoming of significance. For all but Hubert, that is. With birdies on Numbers 1 and 2, Green now was minus 9 for the Tournament and loose as a goose. His swing is not a thing of beauty. Twisting somewhat as one might do in beating a dusty carpet, Green appears to crouch too low, emphasize arms and wrists too much, and swing much too violently. As is so often the case with unorthodox athletes, however, who just happen also to be great, Hubert gets the job done. And this week very well done. Another thing. While Green is slender, as writers emphasize regularly, he is *not* frail. The strength is there in the hips and thighs, where the long-hitters generate the power, much the continuing mystery to 15 handicappers.

By the end of the 1976 Tour, Hale Irwin's record of consistency was unmatched. He had, on several occasions down through the year, established himself as a player who could step along with anyone. When you set about to mold the perfect professional golfer, you emerge with Irwin. Some speculate that Irwin permits the loss of too much "composure" when he misses a shot, with resultant diminution of effectiveness. I disagree. In Hale's case, his obvious displeasure with himself when he is less than perfect serves to make him play better. While totally unconcerned at openly manifesting his displeasure for all to see, his dissatisfaction with his occasional bad play, his anger, if you will, is always under control and seems to charge him up — with positive results. To underscore my point, the same thing happens to and within Weiskopf but with negative results. Back to Irwin. Except for his play on Saturday, he would have won his third Heritage, in my judgment. His scores for the other three days were 69-67-67. Even par on Saturday would have put him in a playoff with Hubert and a one-under 70, obviously, would have won it all. *However*, he put up 77 on this Saturday.

The casual observer of tournament golf asks how such a thing can happen. Hale Irwin shoots 67 on Friday and ten strokes higher the next day, on the same course and under basically comparable conditions. To begin, the margin of a winner on the Tour today is dramatically and agonizingly thin. There are six dozen players, on and off the regular circuit, who can beat anyone's brains out when hot. Typically, a player who for four days eludes the law of averages and consistently rolls in the putts up to twelve feet will win. That is, he will win when playing on a course that is fairly open and mildly forgiving of a missed shot. Harbour Town is not such a course. □

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in the spring," he said.

There was a black Angus bull from Honey Horn that was allowed to run free most of the year; a "kind of free service" to anyone on the island with a cow. When the bull was needed at the plantation, Frederick would tag along for the search. "We had to entice him back here that time of year," he said, and it was not an easy task. If a dog was lost on a deer hunt, "they'd get the boys out of school" to scour the underbrush.

Fred Hack Sr. was the Island "doctor" for years and day or night, those in need of medical aid came to Honey Horn.

"I remember when a man came to see my father who'd spilled hot tar all over the top of his head and his back. He'd been coating his roof with oyster shells and tar (it reflects the sun to keep the house cooler) and he was on a ladder, handing up a bucket of hot tar to his friend when it spilled. My father kept demerol here then and gave him a shot, smeared butter all over his burns and got him on a boat to Savannah," Frederick said.

Fred Sr. also acted as a veterinarian and would "get up in the middle of the night to see if he could help somebody's sick horse or cow."

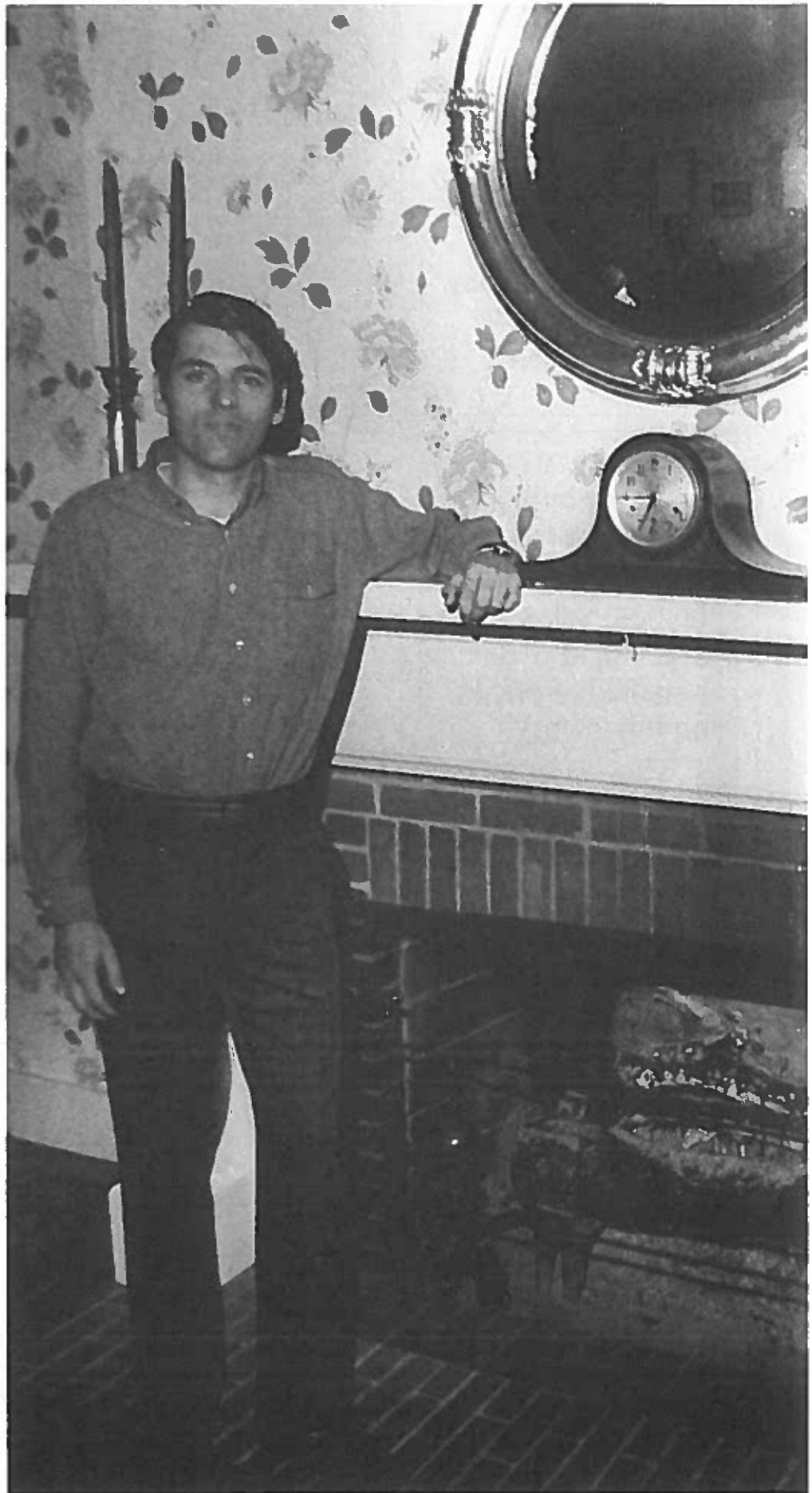
Frederick said, "We were involved with a lot of animals." As children they raised dogs, horses, coons, a motherless fawn, a turtle, sick calves and a nest of squirrels which were blown out of a tree.

Woods cattle roamed the Island; a fence was built across its southern end and eventually some 160 were bought and corralled. Frederick said, "There was no fence law enforced here and most of these had the run of the Island."

Wild cattle were not the only animals to be corralled and sold. Frederick went with Pat Hodges, the Island's magistrate for 22 years, to catch wild hogs in wooden traps.

"The hogs would root for corn in the back of the trap and spring the door shut. You could drop a noose over their heads, tie them and take them to a collecting pen. Some days you might not catch any and some days you could get 10 or 12," he said.

The once-plentiful wild cattle and boar are disappearing from the Island, as are the many duckponds. Deer, coons, gators and birds still abound and seem to have adapted to the gradual influx of people, though Frederick remembers well the night hunters — driving deep into the woods they would trap deer in their headlights, an easy target. "Those night hunters were detested," he said. "My father and others would go out at night to wait for hours for them and were able to catch a few."



Frederick Hack stands in front of the fireplace in the newest wing of his family's home, built in the 20's. The central portion of the house was built in 1850. (Photo by Bill Fields)

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The isolation of the plantation demanded a certain independence of life-style and a self reliance, and it was a segregated era. An episcopal preacher who came to Bluffton was brought by boat to a chapel on Honey Horn to deliver services. There were a few colored schools on the Island but the county provided a teacher, Eileen McGinny, for Frederick, his brother Byron, his sister Avary and a few others. "We were pretty much on our own," said Frederick and in a one-room schoolhouse across the road from Honey Horn, five or six students from grades one to five took their lessons. In 1956, when the Byrnes Bridge was built, some of the students went to Bluffton; Frederick began to commute daily to Savannah. At night he would take readings from the weather substation the family operated out of their home for 20 years. The trip to Savannah has always been a regular family routine; in past years they kept a car on both sides. "We had a boat house in the back yard then and the ferry operated for a couple of years before the bridge was built."

The bridge came in 1956 and in 1958 the first golf course appeared on the Island. Homes were built on North Forest Beach and elsewhere, but change came gradually; for Frederick, there was "a little more ease and a few more people." □



Frederick and Byron.



Frederick, left, and his school mates, Gracie Hodges, (Pat's daughter) teacher Eileen McGinny, Diane Taylor, Byron and Avary Hack.



Photo by Doris Bowers

ISLANDER 2/78

Profile

FRED HACK: FAREWELL TO A PIONEER

By Porter M. Thompson

On the evening of Tuesday, January 10th, 1978 Fred C. Hack died at the Hilton Head Hospital. He had been under treatment at the Hospital a number of times during the past few weeks, finally his heart failed and Fred Hack became a part of the history of this Island.

On January 12th, two days later the *ISLAND PACKET* published a front page story recounting the many accomplishments and achievements of this unusual man. The list is long. Fred Hack first saw this Island in 1922 at the age of eight, as he traveled on the steam boat Clivedon from Savannah to Beaufort. He remembered in conversation many times the sound of the steam whistle and the stops the boat made to off-load supplies onto waiting bateaus along the deserted marsh creeks.

In 1949, Fred, Gen. J. B. Fraser and C. C. Stebbens purchased the entire south end of the Island, primarily for the timber rights. Fred saw the potential for development and with the completion of the Byrnes bridge the land was suddenly much more valuable than the trees on it. This was followed

by more deals, more shuffling of land, the entrance of the visionary son of Gen. Fraser, Charles and the subsequent formation of the Sea Pines Plantation Company. Fred kept vast holdings in the central and northern parts of the Island and his company, the Hilton Head Company fostered Port Royal Plantation, Shipyard, and numerous commercial tracts. He saw the good years, "Time and the Island have been good to us", and the bad years, "I saw it coming — things were too loose, too fast, everybody got greedy."

Even though the land was more valuable than the trees on it, it never seemed that way to Fred. "This land is valuable," he said many times, "because of its natural elements. It could be ruined by indiscriminate cutting of trees to make room for buildings. As we develop — we must always consider preserving what we have to start with." It was this kind of thinking that set Fred apart from the traditional stereotype of the land-hungry developer.

He was a true pioneer. That term has always called to mind the visage of a

tall, indomitable man, courageous, willing to face the elements to establish a home for himself and his family. A self-reliant Whitmanesque American. Fred Hack met all of those criteria, more in his approach to life than from his physical appearance (which fit too.) He worked hard and fought hard to make Hilton Head a community, and to make it grow up strong and healthy and straight. He never for a moment deserted the community he helped revitalize. Through the Hilton Head Company and from his own personal resources he contributed to a list of causes including every area of community development. Money and/or land was freely provided for the airport, the fire tower, two fire stations, a highway department storage facility, Child and Youth Development Center, the First Presbyterian Church, the County Health Clinic, the Bargain Box, the Hilton Head Hospital, The Humane Association, the Library, the May River Academy, the Playhouse, the C. D. Heinrichs Fund, and many more.

In the same *PACKET* there was a notice on the following page about a new Island mother giving birth to a daughter in her home. It describes with rather considerable detail the "beautiful family experience", it was. There was a warm fire, a sunrise over the ocean, a bottle of wine to celebrate and the children all around to share the joy of the moment. It was unusual because the child was born at home. Somehow it seemed a fitting and fortunate item in the same paper that carried the notice of our loss of Fred Hack. It was a sort of symbol of the process Fred worked so hard to set in motion. Little Hayden Sears came into the world not long before Fred left — she will soon participate in the experience of Island living established by the pioneer spirit of Fred Hack.

Oh, he's not the only pioneer, but he is one of the very few men who saw a vision of what this Island could become and set out — pick and shovel — to see that the job got done.

It is a sad thing to lose a citizen like Fred Hack, but the sadness is mitigated by the legacy he has left us. The process of beginning is still in motion, and it is as vital and alive as the new child that entered the lives of the Sears family to the strains of a Chopin piano concerto. There is really no need to say goodbye to Fred Hack — he will always be a part of the Island, a part of the life here and the process of growth and change. There will never be a time henceforth that an Islander can look at the beauty around him and not think for a brief instant of the name of our own pioneer — Fred Hack. □