

A Sad Mystery from the Past

Jackie Banks and his wife, Amanda, and their son and daughter, have lived in their house in [Pacolet Mills](#) for several years. The house is located on [Milliken Street](#), a quiet street in the [Pacolet Mills](#) village. Jackie's grandparents, Jennings and Mary Banks, had moved into the house in the late 1940s. Jackie's Dad, Craig, was born in this house in 1950. In all this time, no one in the family had any idea that the house contained a very sad mystery.

The house is one of several hundred that was built by the Pacolet Manufacturing Company for their employees. The [Company](#) started operations in 1883 and the last mill closed in 1983. Before the closing, the [houses](#) were sold to the employees by the [Mill Company](#) in the 1950s. Before that, the [houses](#) were rented to the employees, by the [Mill Company](#), based on the number of people in the family. Families frequently moved from one [company house](#) to another. Every [house](#) had a series of families occupying it over the years.

Jackie and Amanda had planned for some time to build an addition to the [house](#). They are doing the renovation themselves. The mystery finally came to light on Saturday, January 2, 2021. When they tore into the wall, they found a board with a date on it of April 6, 1912. This seems to be the date when the [house](#) was being built, nearly 109 years ago.

Shortly after that, they made another discovery but this one was much more shocking. When tearing out a wall they found a piece of cloth with something wrapped in it. They unwrapped it and it was the skeletal remains of a baby and was very small. They immediately contacted the police who quickly came, along with the Coroner. They said it was too small to have ever lived. Jackie said that he thinks that the only way it could have gotten where it was in the wall, was for someone to climb into the attic and drop it down into the wall between the studs. There is a small opening into the attic at the top of the bedroom closet.

Investigators from the Coroner's office said the remains had possibly been in the wall for decades. They also said a forensic anthropologist would examine the remains and try to determine the age of the baby and how long it had been dead. They said it might take several months to get the answers.

This tragic story was a traumatic event in some girl or woman's life. It probably haunted them the rest of their life. They probably lived in fear all their life that the secret in the walls of the [house](#) would be discovered.

There is another unsettling possibility about the story. The families that make up the population of [Pacolet Mills](#) have been pretty stable over the years. There were many new families that came to the town in the years following the beginning of the [Mills](#) operation in 1883. However, after about 1910, the influx of new families to the mill village greatly slowed. It is very possible, even probable, that the little baby that lay in the wall all these years still has surviving relatives in the [Pacolet](#) area.

Ever since the discovery of the little skeleton there has been a tremendous amount of publicity about it in the media. There were stories about it in the newspapers all over South Carolina including Spartanburg and Charleston. There were numerous statewide TV news stories about it as well as national news stories including CNN. Some few of them got the story correct. Others were so garbled you would not understand it unless you knew the actual story. The story told on one of the Charleston TV stations showed a falling down [house](#) that had nothing to do with the event along with a video of the area around [Victor Park or Pacolet Park as it later became known](#).

(Editor's Note – Jackie Banks is my nephew and is the son of my sister, Vicki Teaster Banks, and her husband Craig.)



The house before the addition was started.



Board found in the wall probably showing the date the house was built.

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