

chow or hot pepper sauce, my Aunt Iris's barbecue and caramel cakes. These can't be beat by anyone, anywhere, anytime.

The best days of my childhood were when I became filthy dirty and covered in sticky, salty sweat playing in the sweltering Georgia summer heat. I was like Tom Sawyer swinging on ropes, roaming through the farmland, chasing chickens with chicken feed, discovering what seemed to be a deserted smokehouse hidden in the woods, finding tiny kittens in a dark barn, and walking barefoot on a hot dirt road. And not knowing till bedtime that I'd been completely bitten by mosquitoes from my noggin' to my toes.

Eventually my parents returned and retired in the South. I graduated from Wesleyan College in Macon. Alas, foolish little 'ol me left my beloved Southern homeland after graduation because of some Yankee boy. You gotta watch out for those fast talkers.

Well, I finally had enough sense to come out of the Yankee rain – and snow. So my family and I loaded up the van and headed for the Isles, the Golden Isles, that is, to return to the land of my ancestors.

When we landed on these Golden Isles, it was no surprise to me that my family and I were Yankees. But we have good Southern genes and it didn't take my younguns a New Orleans minute before they were "Yes, mam'ing" and "Yes, sirring" like good little Southern children. Bless their little hearts. In fact, they now are so adapted to the lowcountry that they don't even put sugar on their grits. One day, just like their Mama, they too will be of the South. ■



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