Goldenseal

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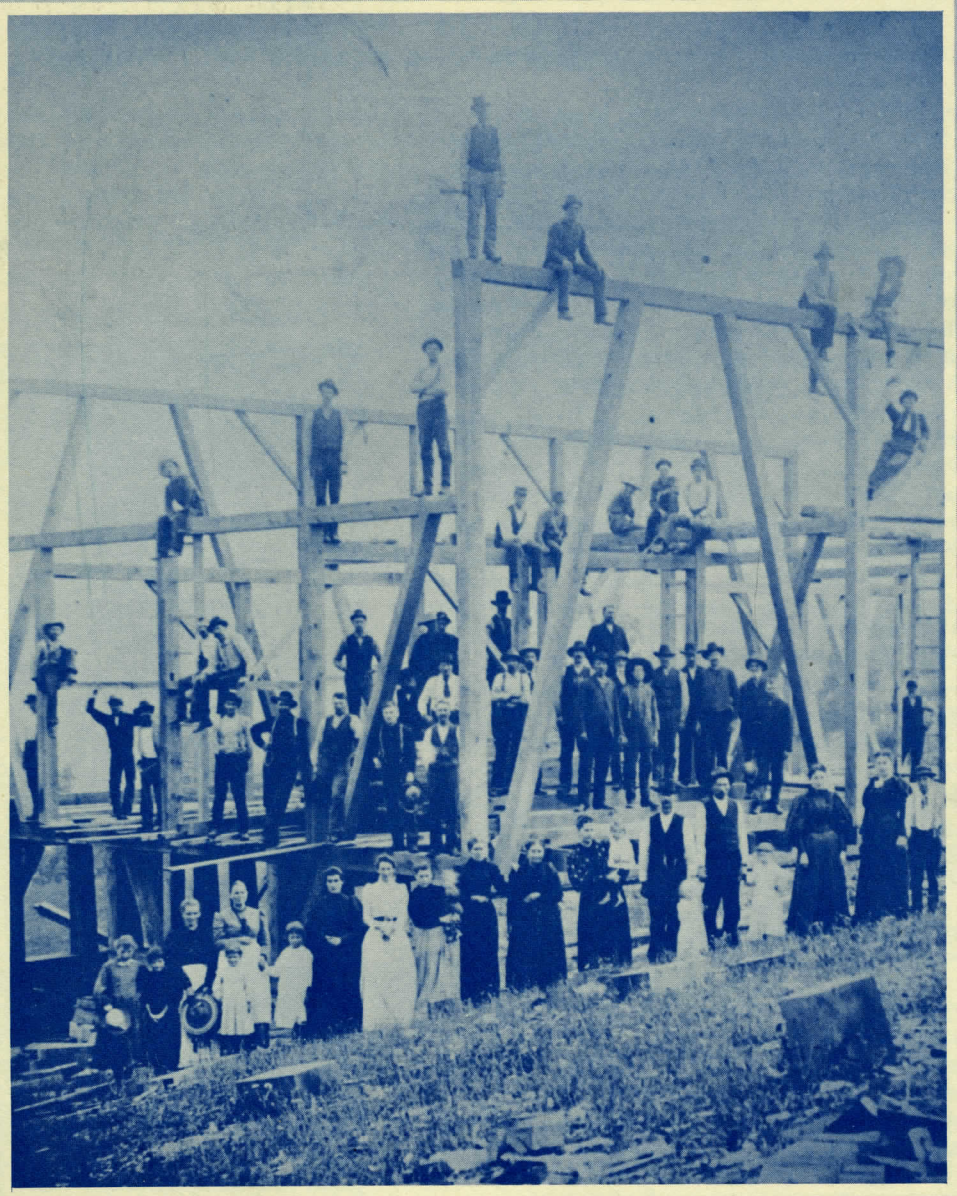

Mrs. Howard and the Railroad Hotel of the Past • When They Made Window Glass by Hand in South Charleston • Beverly, the Oldest Tygart Valley Town • Ab Cole, Country Entertainer

Goldenseal

A Forum for Those Who Document West Virginia's Traditional Life

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A Look at Ourselves

• As we wind up work on this third issue of GOLDENSEAL, it becomes clear that within the State there must be a great many potential, if often reluctant, creators of articles for these pages. Among our readers outside West Virginia, as well, are unquestionably a good number of them. At the outset when our format and philosophy were being established, we tended to feel the tape recorder was nearly a required tool and that people who submitted articles preferably would have solid academic backgrounds. We still are glad we have

continued on page 6

COVER Detail of photograph on page 17. Mineral County barn raising in 1895. Photograph by F.C. Rollman.

Current: PROGRAMS • FESTIVALS • PUBLICATIONS

FALL WORKSHOPS AT CEDAR LAKES CRAFTS CENTER

Strong emphasis on how to make traditional handcrafts continues at the fall workshop of the year-round Crafts Center at Cedar Lakes near Ripley. Weekend and week-long workshops have been in progress since October 10 in several craft media. On November 8 Charlotte Henson will work with students who are interested in learning the fundamentals of weaving seating for chairs and stools. Both traditional and original designs will be explored. Spinning and Wool Know-how and Christmas Banners are the workshops the weekend of November 14; Mary Helen Cutlip will share her years of experience processing and spinning wool, while Barbara Blumberg will instruct in making colorful Christmas banners with embroidery and applique techniques. For those who have been eager to learn to weave on a floor loom, the Center is offering a weaving workshop from November 3 through 7. Hazel Wright will provide expert guidance in the beginning techniques of weaving.

Mary Helen Cutlip, workshop instructor from St. Marys, shown at her regular spot at the Mountain State Art and Craft Fair at Cedar Lakes. Photograph by Gerald S. Ratliff.

In October, weekend and several-day workshops were offered in chair seat caning, hand carving wooden Christmas ornaments, silk screening as it applies to making greeting cards, intermediate weaving, decorative painting, and rug braiding. The moderate rates for food and lodging at Cedar Lakes will, of course, prevail during these workshops. For further information and registration blanks for all workshops, contact Tim Pyles at the Crafts Center, Cedar Lakes, Ripley, W. Va. 25271 or phone 304-348-7882 in Charleston or 304-372-6263 in Ripley.

FORT NEW SALEM'S YEAR-END EVENTS

Fort New Salem, the reconstructed settlement period log village at Salem College, is open to the public through late December. Hours for the living museum are from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is by $1.00 donation for adults and 25¢ for children. In each of the 15 buildings, including a store where handmade products are sold, visitors will find students both learning and demonstrating several traditional home industries and crafts.

A series of special 1975 events at the Fort are described below. For further information phone 304-782-5245.

Nov. 1-2	Late Harvest Holiday; special show of 200 quilts, antique and modern

Nov. 7-8	Benefit Craft Show and Sale at Middletown Mall in Fairmont for the special purpose of financing landscaping at the Fort
Nov. 22-23	Thanksgiving Holidays; special exhibits and demonstrations of traditional foods and their preparation with samples available to visitors
Dec. 6-14	Christmas celebration; workshops for all in dried flower arranging
Dec. 13-14	Re-creation of many Christmas customs including the wassail and madrigal and carol singing

BLACK DIAMONDS, NEW QUARTERLY PUBLICATION DUE

Ed Cabbell, Director of the John Henry Memorial Foundation, Inc., has announced he will add the job of editor of a quarterly magazine to his duties. Called *Black Diamonds*, the "Digest of Black Appalachian Viewpoints" will treat "material and issues both historical and contemporary," according to Cabbell. He expects the first issue to be out early in January and is searching for articles, photographs, art, poetry, and short fiction related to black Appalachians. The deadline for material is November 15. Contributors may contact Mr. Cabbell at the Foundation, P.O. Box 135, Princeton, W. Va. 24740. He will also gladly send subscription information to those who request it.

APPALACHIAN STUDIES CURRICULUM BEGINS AT GLENVILLE STATE COLLEGE

Glenville State College this fall became the first college in the State and possibly the first in the area to offer a teaching field in Appalachian Studies. The program was approved on a three-year experimental basis, and if there is enough interest the Appalachian Studies program will become a minor teaching field at G.S.C.

An attempt has been made to combine Appalachian crafts, its music, and all of its culture so that those taking the course become acquainted with all aspects of Appalachian traditional life. Students are instructed in such skills as weaving, pottery, candle making, chair bottom weaving, and spinning. They attend lectures concerning the historical background of the Appalachian people. They read the best that has been written for, by, and about the Appalachian people. And, they are fully schooled in the area of Appalachian music by Dr. Patrick Gainer.

The intent of the course is to give people the necessary skills to transmit the culture. Teaching is non-traditional, and a large portion of class time is spent in "doing" rather than listening and watching. For example, participants not only learn folk songs but they also receive instructions in folk guitar so that they might better transmit the songs. In the craft classes, resource people from the immediate area are brought into the classroom so that students can observe the skill from a primary source. Square dancing is done to live music and mountain calls rather than to a record player. A physical education teacher is training on the job as caller. In short, the Appalachian Studies curriculum puts the students into direct contact with mountain people and their culture.

In order to complete the teaching specialization in Appalachian

Studies, the student must complete an 18-hour sequence of courses. The course outline is as follows:

English 350	Appalachian Literature
Art 211	Heritage Crafts I
Art 212	Heritage Crafts II
Social Science 315	West Virginia and Appalachian Region
Music 300	Folk Music of the Appalachians
Music 156	Folk Guitar
P.E. 228	Appalachian Square Dancing

Students are also encouraged to take a special one-week Appalachian course offered each year in cooperation with the West Virginia State Folk Festival. The one-week course is, in a sense, a condensation of the entire program, but there are many, many craftsmen and musicians in Glenville that week and who are normally unavailable. Also the Festival is an invaluable experience for anyone who teaches Appalachian Studies.

The location of Glenville State College is in itself a plus for the program. The campus is located in the rural serenity of central West Virginia. It is an area where a great deal of the ways of the early Appalachians are still very much alive. Many people still raise nearly everything they eat, farm with horses, maintain some of the unique features of the language, worship in the Appalachian tradition, and still find joy in the simple life. Students find themselves surrounded by what they are learning.

Those who complete the program will be certified to teach Appalachian Studies in grades 4-8 or 7-12 in the West Virginia public schools. The program should also be very helpful to those who conduct summer camps or coordinate any sort of youth programs. Most importantly, the Appalachian Studies program will be a delightful experience whether or not a person ever plans to use it for professional reasons.

FEDERAL GRANTS IN FOLK MUSIC AND ART

In one of its newer grant categories, Jazz, Folk, and Ethnic Music, the National Endowment for the Arts on October 1 stopped accepting applications for projects to take place between June 1, 1976, and January 31, 1977. Their next deadline for receiving applications will be June 15, 1976, for projects taking place between February 1, 1977, and January 31, 1978. Individuals and organizations with either performing or research interests may apply for these grants meant to "create a broad artistic climate in the United States in which its indigenous musical arts will thrive with distinction through artistic, educational, and archival programs." The address is Music Program, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C. 20506.

The Endowment has a separate Folk Arts Program which receives applications for folk arts other than music. There are also special interdisciplinary projects involving music as one of the disciplines. Moreover, guidelines for the Expansion Arts and Public Media Programs may be of special interest to jazz/folk/ethnic applicants. In writing the address above, applicants should specify which program(s) interests her or him.

STATE FOLKLORE SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

The second 1975 issue (Vol. 18, No. 2) of *The West Virginia Folklore*

Journal, normally issued biannually, reached members late in September. The society's annual meeting, announced in its pages, took place October 10 at Fairmont during the Monongahela Arts and Crafts Fair. Dr. Patrick Gainer, president of the society and editor of its journal, annouced that in 1975 there will be a single special issue of the journal to commemorate the American Bicentennial. It is expected to be published in the spring. The West Virginia Folklore Society's address is Box 446, Fairmont, W. Va. 26554.

COLONIAL COSTUMES AVAILABLE AND ALSO CLASSES IN MAKING THEM

Both to make a contribution to the celebration of the Bicentennial and to enhance the incomes of women in several southern counties, Folk Designs, Inc., a cooperative craft production organization, is offering a unique program of Bicentennial Sewing Classes. The free six-week classes began October 1 and offer detailed instructions in making certain men's and women's colonial costumes. The final courses will be offered as late as November 1 in one or two of the counties involved, Mercer, Raleigh, Summers, and Wyoming.

Rachel Cox of Allen Junction models a Fancy Women's Dress, one of the costumes for sale by Folk Designs, Inc. Photograph by Roger Maynard.

Two other aims of the program, according to Mary Ellen Griffith, the coordinator, are to recruit producing members for the coop and find out the role women played in the founding of the country. Griffith said as a result of their research Folk Design's members "have discovered many exciting things about the lives and work of their foremothers...(and) that women helped the revolutionary cause in many ways, and quite a few women took up arms...Molly Pitcher, Emily Geiger, Nancy Hart, and Deborah Sampson." To inquire about the free classes phone 384-7705 or 384-5707 in Athens or 294-5588 or 294-4171 in Mullins.

Those interested in costumes for the Bicentennial functions may write for a free catalogue which contains complete information about a Working Woman's Dress, two Fancy Women's Dresses, the Man's Suit (waistcoat, breeches, and shirt), Aprons, and Mob Caps. The address is Folk Designs, Inc., Box 111, Athens, W. Va. 24712.

1879 NORTHERN PANHANDLE HISTORY REISSUED

History of the Pan-Handle of West Virginia, a book which first appeared in 1879, will be reissued in early November. Published by the Citizens of New Manchester Bicentennial Commission, the $20 book is a 480-page, 10" X 14" history of Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, and Marshall Counties written by J.H. Newton, G.G. Nichols, and A.G. Sprangle. To order write the organization at P.O. Box 12, New Manchester, W. Va. 16056.

THE WILD TURKEY STRING BAND IS NEW LP

A new record has just been released by a West Virginia old-time music band that considers itself "a synthesis of the northern and southern traditions." The name of the band is also the name of

its first record--*The Wild Turkey String Band*. On the Kanawha label (#323), it is available by sending $5 to The Wild Turkey String Band, 1316 Fairfield, Morgantown, W. Va. 26505. The names of the offerings, some with vocals, are "Over the Waterfall," "Frosty Morn," "Liberty," "Texas Quickstep," "Sweet Ellen," "Fisher's Hornpipe," "Boatsman," "Angeline," "Baby-O," "Fiddler's Reel," "Boatin' Up Sandy," "Margaret's Waltz," and "June Apple."

From the record's liner notes we learn about the makeup of the players. "With four married couples--almost five--and various kids, pets, and friends joining us for rehearsals, concerts, and recording sessions, we are more like a family picnic than a session for professional musicians. The old folklore books tell us of the time when Appalachian music was a family pastime. On those cold winter nights when people were lucky enough not to have TV to entertain them, they'd entertain themselves playing music. We were happy to preserve the family tradition in music. We don't have to play music; we enjoy it. Sometimes we even practice seriously before a concert, but not enough to hurt our playing."

The players and their instruments on the record are:

Rob Bailey	Dulcimer
Nowell Creadick	Fiddle and Clawhammer Banjo
Bill Healy	Washtub Bass
George Healy	Piano
Chris Holmes	Spoons
Lynn Holmes	Washboard
Dick Kimmel	Mandolin and Clawhammer Banjo
Nancy Kimmel	Guitar
John Lozier	Fiddle
Kitty Lozier	Clawhammer Banjo
Carolyn Reyer	Dulcimer, Autoharp, and Vocal
Howie Richman	Fiddle
Reed Sanderson	Jug
Marchetia Seese	Dulcimer
Harold Wilson	Fiddle
Alvin Wooten	Fiddle

In order to inquire to the band about playing dates in the area phone Dick Kimmel at 304-296-8195.

NEW RECORD BY STATE STRING BAND

Around the first of this year a West Virginia string band, The Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys, came out with a new recording. It is called *Talk of the Country* (Lark 2141) and features Harley Carpenter, guitar; Richard Hefner, banjo and bass; Dwight Diller, banjo and bass; and Wayne Erbsen, fiddle and mandolin. Even though every song on the albumn except one is an original composition by members of the band, mainly fiddler Erbsen, their playing style is said to be solidly traditional. To order the LP send $5.00 to the Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys, Mill Point, W. Va. 24959.

STATE CRAFT ACTIVITIES DETAILED IN NEW BOOK

In late September a 199-page hardcover book, *The Craftsman in America*, was published by the Special Publications Division of the National Geographic Society. Containing roughly 300 expectably high quality color photographs, the book surveys the past and present of American handcrafts. Activities at Fort New Salem

at Salem College are covered in some detail in a chapter called "In the Mountains." Another part of the book treats Fenton Art Glass Company in Williamstown. The Society's books are never available in retail bookstores. There are two means of ordering *The Craftsman in America*. If payment is sent with orders the full cost is $4.25. If orders are accompanied by a request for later billing a postage and handling charge of $.70 will be added bringing the total to $4.95. That charge is also added when phone orders are billed. They are placed by calling 301-948-8970 or 8971. The address for the National Geographic Society is simply Washington, D.C. 20036.

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continued from inside front cover

tape recorders to use and scholars interested in the outlet GOLDENSEAL provides, yet we are steadily discovering other ways and means, we feel, of validly documenting our traditions.

• The technique of using old photographs, most likely along with some kind of text, is one we hope to put to more frequent future use. What better way is there to see the past, excepting, of course, in moving pictures? We do ask that those who would allow old photographs to be used write or phone us about them before sending them. We would like to have irreplaceable old photographs copied under the owner's eye if at all possible. When such artifacts reach us attached to earnest pleas for their safe return, we quake in our boots until their owners have them again.

• We believe another rich source of material for GOLDENSEAL could come from the pens of our senior citizens. Older people, who necessarily have the most to tell about traditions and past events, are possibly the most logical people of all to write reminiscences and historical accounts. We will heartily welcome such material, inquiries about it, and suggestions from readers of all ages about how we may obtain it.

• An especially bothersome deficiency continues to hover over our search for material, and that is the shortage of articles dealing with women. We may not turn down all articles which deal superficially or sketchily with women, but we have tried up to now and will continue to hold them to a minimum. Also we challenge readers to help us come up with articles that explore women's roles and customs in some detail, and also in areas of life at least sometimes not related to home and hearth. The rate of both men's *and* women's submitting articles to us on men and men's activities is astonishingly higher than ones we receive on women. At the risk of seeming to set overly high standards for these pages, we believe it is worth mentioning that the latest issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* (Vol. 88, No. 347) is devoted entirely to and called "Women and Folklore." Based on papers read at the American Folklore Society's annual meeting in 1973, the special issue is edited by a woman, as the regular male editor steps aside. We hope more articles about and by women are forthcoming; yet if they are not, we wonder if we will feel obligated in the future to follow *J.A.F.*'s model.

• We still want to be able to establish a letters section. As grateful as we are for them, we have chosen not to print congratulatory and complimentary letters. Hopefully this brief self-examination of ours will stimulate readers to write us suggestions, criticisms, and comments. We will not print unsigned letters, but we will withhold a writer's name if she or he requests it. -Editor

The old Blackman-Bosworth store (1827), now the Randolph County Museum.

Beverly, West Virginia

Tiny Tygart Valley Town Boasts Roots Well Over 200 Years Old

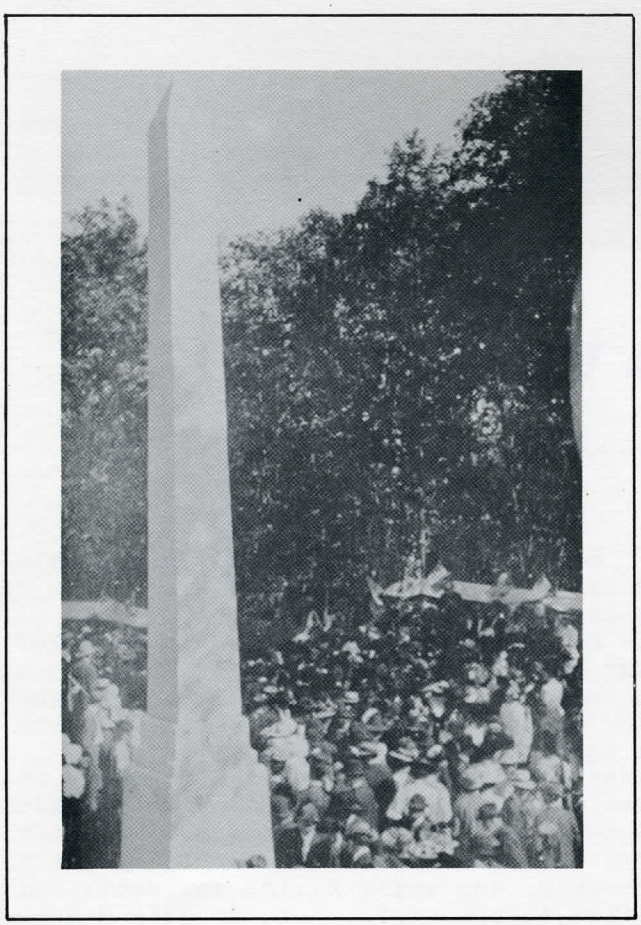
By Rose Ann Meyer

Photographs by Tom Hodges, Jr.

One of West Virginia's oldest settlements, Beverly, traces its history as far back as 1753. There are a number of early buildings still standing in this former Randolph County seat, including a museum built in 1827 mainly by slave labor; the county jail, completed in 1813; and a later jail built in 1841. A three-year conflict ensued when the county seat was moved in 1900 from Beverly to Elkins. Gun-toting Beverly residents were determined that court records would remain in Beverly, and angry Elkins residents, six miles to the north, were equally deter-

Beverly residents around 1898 prepared to prevent removal of county court records from Beverly to Elkins. Photographer unknown.

The dedication of Mt. Iser monument in 1908. Confederate dead from the Rich Mountain battle were interred in this privately owned cemetery on Ward Hill overlooking the town. Photograph by Charles Bell.



mined that the records would be moved. At one point a special train was procured to carry Elkins residents to a gun-to-gun confrontation at Beverly. However, cooler heads prevailed, a riot was averted, and the eventual change-over was accomplished peacefully. William Blizzard recounted that would-be battle in a Sunday issue of the Charleston *Gazette-Mail* in July, 1959.

Early History

In 1753 the first white inhabitants, the families of Robert Files (probably Foyles originally) and David Tygart arrived in the valley which now bears, along with the river, the latter family's name. The rich, fertile soil and dramatic beauty of the area must have convinced these pioneers that they had, indeed, stumbled upon an earthly Paradise.

One fatal miscalculation was to spoil their dreams and insure tragedy for the settlers. The land they chose to settle was located in the path of the old Seneca Indian Trail. The Files family was eventually massacred. One son was able to escape, and he warned the Tygart family in time for them to escape a similar fate.

The second wave of settlers arrived in 1768 and by 1772 the small but growing community contained successfully established homes. The town was originally called Edmundton, possibly in honor of Edmund Randolph, for whom Randolph County was named. It was renamed Beverly in the 1790 act of the Virginia legislature

Old Courthouse used from 1808 to 1894 and again from 1896 to 1900. The county records were returned here when a new courthouse, in use from 1894 to 1896, burned.

which established it.

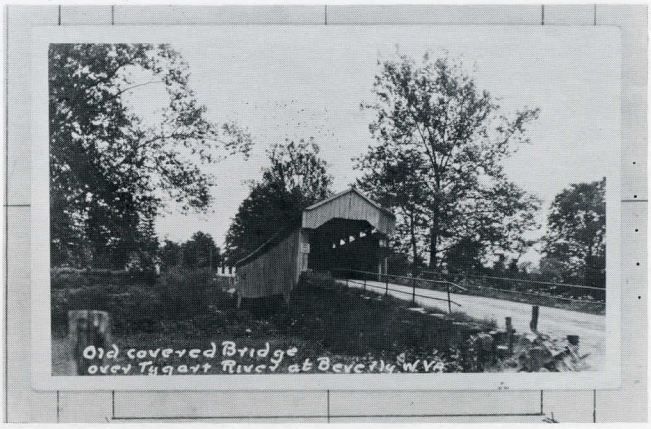
Town Landmarks

The Andrew Collett home, open to the public only during Beverly Community Week, is the oldest structure in Beverly. At various times in its history the house, a log dwelling when it was built in 1772, has been used as a fort, a tavern, and a Civil War hospital. Other buildings built prior to 1850 include the Goff home, circa 1835; the Crawford home (1850); and the early home of the old *Enterprise*, now the Randolph *Enterprise-Review* (early 1800s). Several other buildings date before 1875, including the Suiter home, built by at least 1854, the Beverly Presbyterian Church (1869), and the 1861 Blackman house.

A sign at the entrance to the Beverly cemetery proclaims this to be the oldest burial ground west of the Alleghenies. Indeed, early burials can be traced as far back as 1768. Soldiers from wars as early as the Revolutionary War lie buried in this peaceful park, approximately two acres in size.

Lemuel Chenoweth built his home overlooking the Tygart River in 1847. Chenoweth achieved some fame as a builder of covered bridges in the area. His best-known work, the covered bridge at Philippi, is still in use. After commissioners reportedly laughed at his proposed model as being too frail, Chenoweth is said to have placed the model between two chairs, stood on it, and then informed them that his bridges would be there to carry their children and many generations after. He was correct. Another Chenoweth bridge, which crosses Buffalo Creek at Barrackville (Marion County), is also being used today. Unfortunately, the bridge that he built over the Tygart River near his home was demolished as unsafe several years ago. In losing the bridge, the area lost an important his-

(left) Lemuel Chenoweth home built in 1847 overlooking the Tygart River and next to his covered bridge (below) which has been demolished. The house is on the old Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike.



torical structure.

The Civil War

By the time the Civil War erupted, Beverly had become the county seat and a bustling center of trade. Several important roads pass through the valley at this point including the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike, completed in 1847. It also became a center of military operations following the battle of Rich Mountain, which was fought about five miles away on July 11, 1861. Federal forces led by Gen. Willaim S. Rosencrans, under the command of Gen. George B. McClellan, were able to surprise and rout Lt. Col. John Pegram's Confederate forces, who were entrenched on the western slope of the mountain. A young man David Hart, who lived on top of the mountain, volunteered to lead Union forces up a secret path in order to avoid the main road and certain detection. The ploy was successful.

According to Jack Zinn in his *The Battle of Rich Mountain*, the number of casualties in the battle are reported as 12 killed and 49 wounded (Union) and 40-45 killed and 25 wounded (Confederate). Col. Pegram escaped after the battle but, believing himself surrounded by the enemy, surrendered himself, 30 officers, and 525 men the next day at Beverly. Informality reigned in the early days of the war; the officers were "put on their parole with the liberties of the town," according to Zinn.

McClellan's stock rose several points in the eyes of his commanding officer as a result of the campaign. Gen. Winfield Scott, army commander of all Union forces, sent McClellan a telegram on July 13, in which he heaped high praise on the Major General and emphatically stated, "We do not doubt that you will in due time sweep the rebels from Western Virginia, but we do not mean to precipitate you, as you are fast enough." Curtis Blackerby in-

(above) The jail built in 1813 and used until 1841. It is now the home of Mrs. Trudy McClellan. (opposite) Jail used from 1841 to 1920. Jailer's family lived downstairs. It is now owned by Mrs. S. S. Brownfield.

cludes those words of high praise in his *Great Civil War Stories*.

Although never rated as a major battle of the war by any means, the confrontation was significant for several reasons. The Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike passed over Rich Mountain at the battle's site, and whichever side controlled this important road held a decided military advantage. Also, the Confederates needed a base in the area from which to recruit Southern sympathizers. Only two years later in 1863, of course, western Virginia broke away and formed our present state. The Confederate defeat at Rich Mountain was a major blow, since Southern support was almost totally suppressed by Union occupation of the area which extended for most of the war's duration.

Still subject to periodic Confederate raids, the Beverly area served as a battleground several more times during the war. Blackerby's book contains the following telegram which was sent January 15, 1865: "General Early reports that (Confederate general) Rosser, at the head

of 300 men, surprised and captured the garrison at Beverly, Randolph County, on the 11th instant, killing and wounding a considerable number and taking 580 prisoners. His loss light."

A furious Gen. Crook fired back this telegram: "Upon hearing of the surprise and capture of Beverly, I sent two trusty staff officers to examine into and report upon the affair. Their report has been forwarded. I herewith forward the report of Col. Wilkinson, and recommend that Lieut. Col. R. Yourt, Eighth Ohio Cavalry, and Lieut. Col. L. Furney, Thirty-fourth Ohio Volunteers, be dismissed the service for disgraceful neglect of their commands, and for permitting themselves to be surprised and the greater portion of their commands captured, in order that worthy officers may fill their places, which they have proved themselves incompetent to hold."

Rosser professed himself disappointed with the "small" amount of men captured, but no disappointment was apparent over the capture of 100 horses, 10,000 rations, 600 arms, and various pieces of equipment. His hungry men gorged themselves on the food and whiskey found in abundance there.

According to Blackerby, Rosser attributed the brilliant success of his missions to the high caliber of his men: "The Confederate cavalry was composed almost entirely of young men, who were perfectly at home in the saddle and accustomed to the independent life of gentlemen. They were chivalrous and brave, proud and handsome; such as might have inspired the sweet songs of the romantic constellation of the Pleiades." He continued, "He is mounted on a thoroughbred charge, and his bright, beaming, boyish face is full of hope and his manly heart is as bold as Julius Caesar's." Union cavalrymen didn't measure up to Rosser's standards; the reason the South lost the war, contended Rosser, was that these marvelous young men were asked to fight with little equipment, and that what they had probably belonged earlier to their grandfathers.

The Confederate dead from the Rich

Beverly Cemetery, the oldest burial ground west of the Alleghenies. The two small white crosses in the foreground mark the oldest graves (1768).

Mountain battlefield were interred in a cemetery which overlooks the town, called the Mt. Iser Cemetery. It is on private property and is said to be the only privately owned Confederate burial ground in the United States. A large monument in commemoration was erected there in 1908 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

With the help of a small booklet visitors may stroll leisurely through the village on a self-guided tour. Called "Beverly, Official Guidebook," it was first produced in 1974 by Beverly Community Action and was revised this year by the Randolph County Historical Society. There are articles about 27 landmarks in the booklet, and these numbers are placed conspicuously at each landmark during Beverly Community Week late every July.

To order the guidebook send $.75 to:

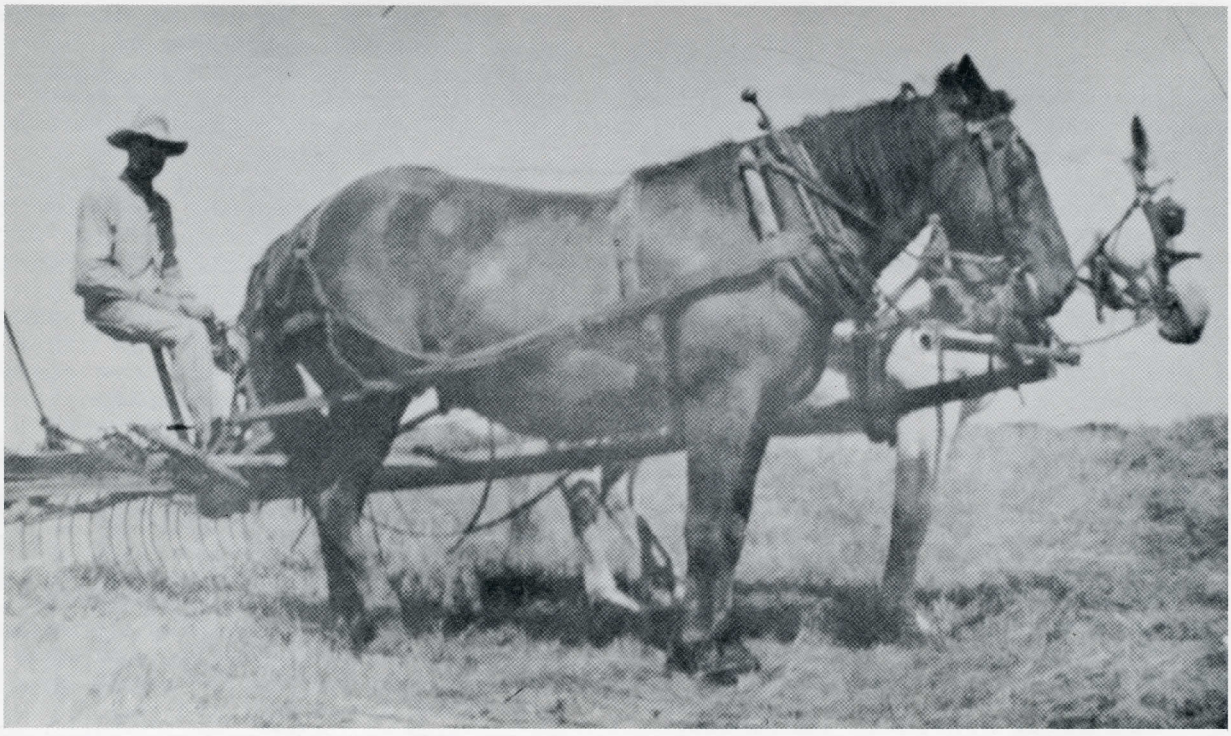
Randolph County Historical Society
c/o Donald Rice, President
Box 1164
Elkins, W. Va. 26241

The Barn Raising

By Mona Ridder

Total self-sufficiency, to most of us today, is an intangible, an incomprehensible way of life to which we cannot relate. To our grandfathers it did not mean separation from one another as human beings, an aloneness, but the opposite, a sharing and human interdependence. Cultural heritage, tradition, folklore have seen a revival in recent years, serving not merely as entertainment but as a reminder that the time and labor of a human being was not always bought and sold in dollars and cents. Now, perhaps more than any other time, is when we should remember where our values had their roots

George Stullenbarger in 1948 on a hay rake hitched to his horses Maud and Toots. Photograph by Georgette Evans.



and in what circumstances. A barn or cabin raising was dependent not on money or materials but on a man's neighbors' willingness to share their time and labor to get the job done. In return he gave his time and effort toward his neighbors' projects. An otherwise hard job became a social occasion and cause for celebration.

The following narrative is the story of a barn building as told by George Stullenbarger to his nephew Eldred Hanlin, and retold by Mr. Hanlin, my uncle, to me. Mr. Stullenbarger was born in 1881 and spent his entire life, until his death in 1967, on the Stullenbarger-Hanlin farm. At the present time the farm is estimated at approximately 600 acres. The barn stands pretty much as it did years ago, and is located against a knoll on the mountain near Elk Garden (Mineral County), W. Va., overlooking the north branch of the Potomac River. The farm is still owned and operated by Stullenbarger descendants. The children of the story spent all their lives on the farm with the exception of Lillie, the youngest, who married Blaine Kalbaugh and spent her life on the adjacent farm. As of her death on May 11, 1974, all are buried within two miles of their birthplace.

I feel that the use of Mr. Stullenbarger's words as my uncle remembers them lends a feeling of presence in the telling and preserves a good deal of the authenticity. -M.R.

Sometime during the Civil War my father and mother, Jacob and Hester (Harvey) Stullenbarger, bought this place from the Pollock family. It was then a tract of 143 acres with only three acres cleared and a one-room log cabin.

My brother Solomon, sister Laura, and I slept in the loft, while our parents and youngest sister Lillie slept downstairs. I remember often climbing the ladder and crawling to where I slept. In the summertime, on a clear night, I could lie there and count the stars through the cracks in the shingle roof. Often in the winter I would wake up in the morning covered with snow. Because of the condition of the cabin, Lillie was sick with pneumonia every winter. So after the winter of 1892 Dad promised us a house.

When the West Virginia Central and Pittsburgh Railroad was being built, Dad cut and hewed out crossties and made enough money to build a frame house and a barn. The house was built in 1893 by a a German immigrant, who patterned it after a house he had seen in the old country. The price of the labor and lumber, which was sawed and hauled here from Deer Park, Maryland, was $900.

Arrival of the Barn Builder

Dad had the barn built two years later, in 1895, by a Mr. Beachy from Pennsylvania. Beachy was about 50 years old and had built barns all his life. This was to be the biggest barn he had ever built and, in fact, the biggest in the county at that time. He came here in the summer of 1894 and we commenced cutting timber. The meadow on the hill above the barn was where the chestnut trees grew that were cut for the beams and sheathing. We also cut a few oaks from there. Mr. Beachy let the logs lay there on the ground all winter and the following spring we would skid them to where they were to be sawed.

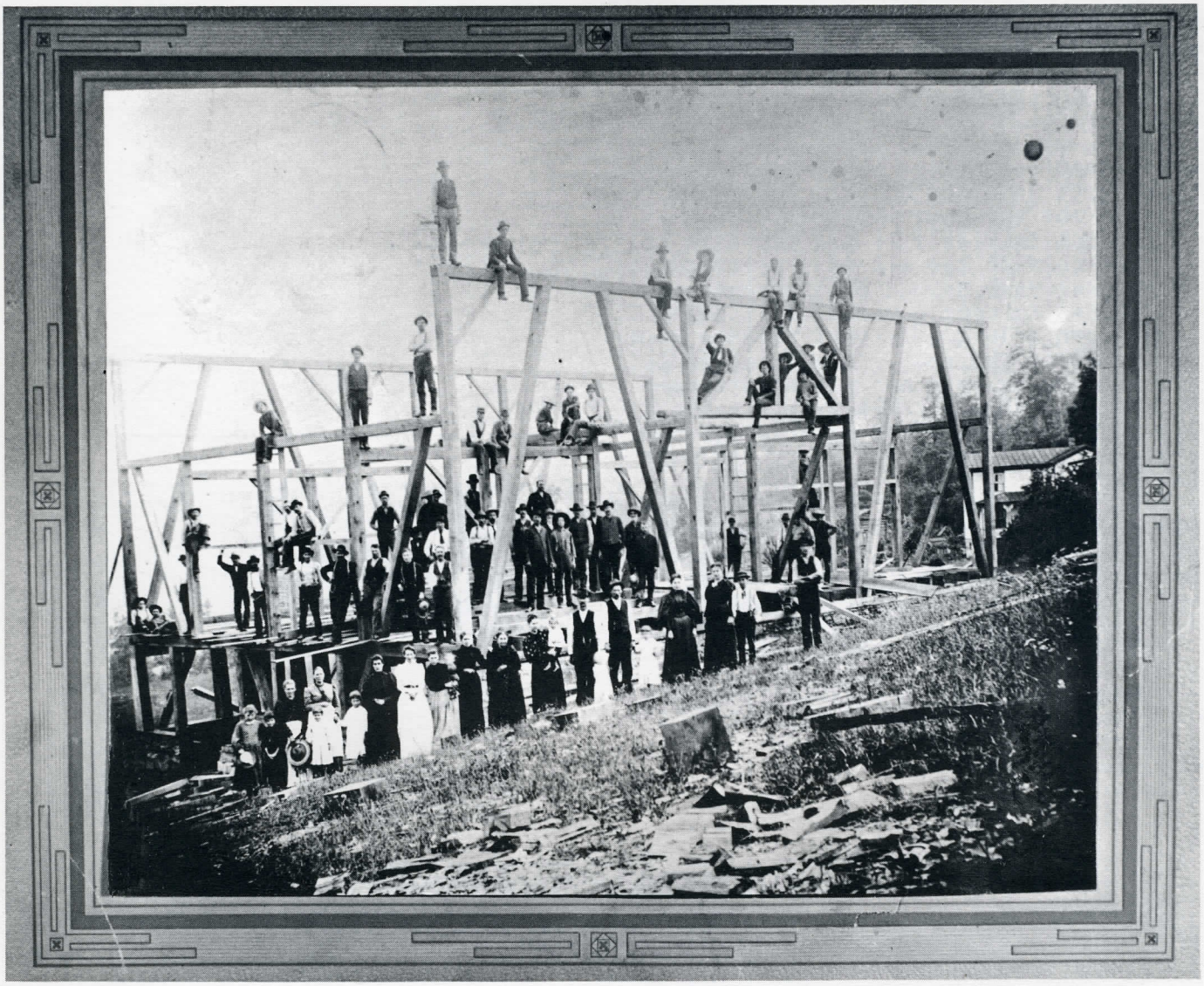
After we got the trees down we started to work on the foundation. We dug it out with horses and a scoop down to the Dirty Nine* pavement. Mr. Farabee, who was to lay the stones, said that would make a smooth, solid base. After the weather broke in the spring, Mr. Farabee started building the foundation. It was my job to mix and carry the mortar, which was lime and sand.

About the same time we started the foundation the sawmill was being set up for the logs that had been cut away back in the summer. Dad got Andy Rawlings to saw the lumber. He set up his sawmill below where the red house is, because the spring water there was pure enough to run the steam engine, which was fired with slabs and sawdust. It was about 300 yards from the barn site.

Four beams which were to run through the center were 42 feet long--too long to be cut on Andy's mill. So they were sawed on a mill in Deer Park, the largest mill in the area at that time. The pine beams were then hauled here by horse and wagon. Beachy, who had been with us since the cutting of the trees, was now ready for what he felt was the most important job of all. He himself set the head block on Andy's mill to cut some of the larger beams on an angle. As each of the pieces was cut, he marked them where and how they were to be joined.

* The Dirty Nine seam of coal was so called because there were nine feet of alternating layers of coal and rock. The top coal layer was 12 inches of clean coal and the bottom layer was 19 inches thick and of very good quality. Between the two good layers of coal were alternate layers of coal and rock one to six inches thick.

Photograph by F.C. Rollman.



By the first of June the foundation was ready and the timbers were all cut and marked. Dad kept saying it would never be done in time to put in hay, and Mr. Beachy had to constantly assure him that it would.

"If One Piece is Off, It's All Off"

The night before the raising Beachy paced back and forth worrying whether everything was going to fit. Dad said to forget it and go to bed, but Beachy couldn't calm down and, furthermore, made me sit up all night with him, repeating, "If one piece is off, it's all off." He would punch me every little bit to keep me awake.

Finally the day came and so did the people--the Harveys and Wilsons from Short Run, Md.; the Kitzmillers, Rafters, Pools, and Pughs from Kitzmiller, Md.; and the Junkins, Dixons, and Shillingburgs from around Elk Garden. Of course F.C. Rollman was here with his camera. There were about a hundred people here that day. Some came to work and some came to watch, but everyone came to eat. Mom and some of the women had baked about a hundred pies the day before, and there was corn bread, ham, beans, and fried potatoes.

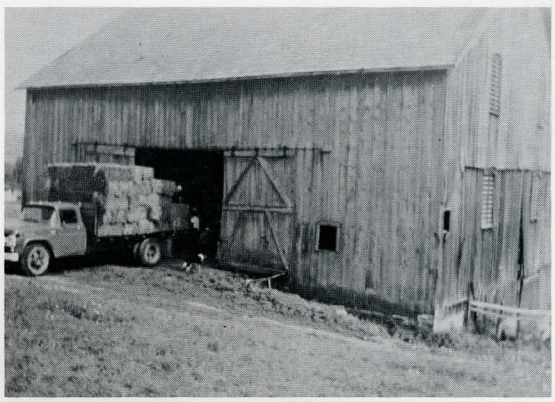
Well, the frame started going up--every piece fit perfect! They were put up one at a time with gigged poles and fastened in place with the pins and wedges that had been made ready beforehand. One side was about to be fastened to another when it started to fall back. Everyone but one fellow ran. He grabbed a pole and caught the wall. The pole

bent nearly double before everyone gathered their wits and helped him force it back in place.

That day the four main walls of the frame were up. The next day the rest of the frame was finished and the rafters were raised on pulleys and fastened together with no ridge board. The slate shingles for the roof weighed 16 tons and it took four or five men two days to put them on with the aid of a scaffold. Sam Hoopengarner helped on the roof and when he had to come down he slid, head first, down a long pole that reached from the ground to the roof. The metal ridge roll was put on by a man who didn't use a ladder. I remember watching him run a pole out the star-shaped hole at the top of the barn and crawl out on it and onto the roof.

Most of the side-boards were 20 feet long. The diameter of some of the beams was 18 by 20 inches. The rafters were two-by-tens. By July 1 the barn was ready for hay, and it held a hundred tons of loose hay. The cost for Dad to build it was $375 and the dimensions were 42 by 62 feet.

Beachy left right away after the barn was finished to go back to Pennsylvania to start another one. It was on that barn, we later learned, that he fell to his death.



The barn around 1957. Photograph by Minnie Gano Hanlin.

This article is an adapted version of one which appeared in the Journal of the Alleghenies *(Vol. X, 1974). The journal is published annually by the Council of the Alleghenies and often contains articles about West Virginia. Annual dues for membership in the Council are $ 7.50; members receive the journal and become sponsors of several worthy restoration and educational projects. The address is Dr. Alta E. Schrock, Exec. Sec., The Council of the Alleghenies, Grantsville, Maryland 21536.*

One of the Last American Railroad Hotels

An Interview with Mrs. Annetta Howard, the Recently Retired Owner of the Howard Hotel in Rowlesburg

By Tom Screven

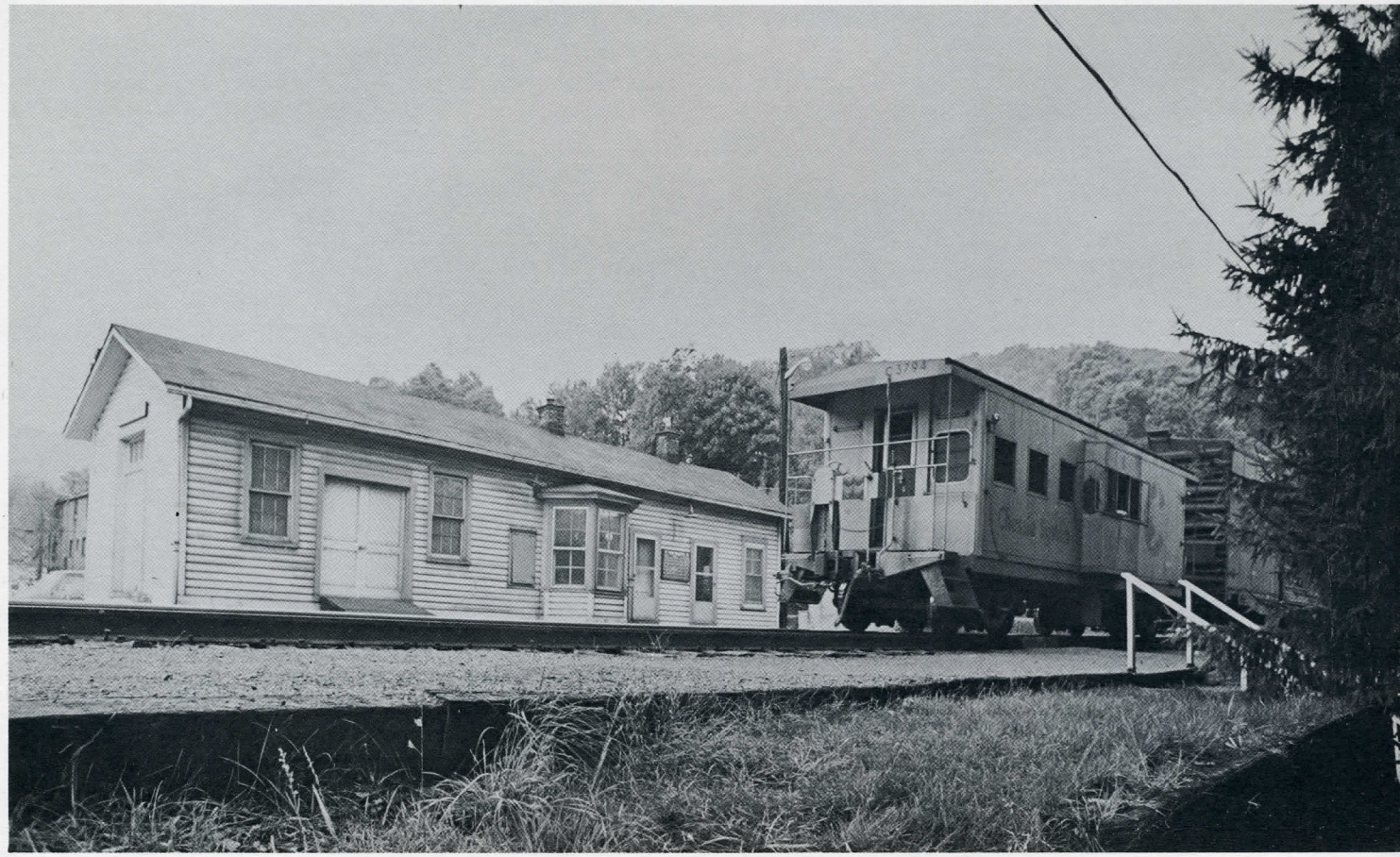
Photographs on pages 19-34 by Michael Meador

This article is based almost entirely on a tape recorded interview with Mrs. Howard made in Rowlesburg on August 22, 1975. -T.S.

The 85-year-old keeper of Rowlesburg's Howard Hotel and dining room is an unusual West Virginian. She neither was born here nor is she apt to die here, yet she has given nearly 60 busy, productive years, so to speak, to the State. A short time before World War I began she moved to Rowlesburg in Preston County as the wife of a young horse and buggy doctor. Now, toward the end of her career, Louise Annetta Nowell Howard plans to return to her native Maryland where she will live in an ideal way, she feels, "under the same roof but not in the same house" with younger relatives.

From Girlhood to Womanhood

Born in Shady Side, Maryland, on September 1, 1890, Annetta Nowell grew up and went to "a country school" in that small resort community. On the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, the town is 19 miles south of Annapolis. The Nowell's year-round home and a summer hotel, called Rural Retreat, was "a nice place to spend two or three weeks, you know. We had guests from Baltimore and Washington most-



ly." The dining room served three meals a day to as many as 150 guests.

Across the street the family had a grocery store and 4th class post office. Except for meals and "a lovely dance for the guests every Saturday night," where she and her sister Ethel learned to dance, she spent most of her time at the store. She definitely sees those years as perfect training for the work of her later, much longer career.

Annetta Howard. ...we had wonderful parents, and they taught us to be kind to people and to meet people pleasantly.... We dealt with people and had to be courteous, and *wanted* to be, because we had got that from our parents. They were... grand to people.

After high school she trained as a "kindergartner," or pre-school teacher, at the Affordby Normal School in "Baltimore City." Following that training, however, her father asked that one of the daughters go to Annapolis to take the examination for postmistress. Annetta decided to go, passed the test, and stayed in that position until she was married.

Mrs. Howard, in remembering there were no major wars between the Civil War and World War I, was reminded of some interesting mail that came regularly to the Shady Side post office in those years.

AH I recall in our post office there were about two checks that came, uh, for veterans, I mean the Civil War...and they were...pensions.... And do you know what they amounted to? About $28 (a month).

She learned the amount because the recipients usually cashed them in the grocery store section of the establishment.

Around the time she was 20 Dr. Foster Cannon Howard, a young doctor from coastal Virginia, set up practice in Shady Side.

Mr. Nowell introduced his daughter to him, and about four years later, on June 24, 1915, they were married. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Howard's father, a Methodist minister.

The Howards Move to Rowlesburg

Today the population of Rowlesburg is about 900. It was slightly larger, around 1,100, in 1915, the year Dr. and Mrs. Howard settled there. The Rev. Howard was responsible for the choice. He had preached at the dedication of a new Methodist church there and during his stay learned from parishioners that residents would warmly welcome a new doctor. On Rev. Howard's return to Shady Side he relayed the news to the couple, and they de-

cided to move to Rowlesburg.

AH We came to Oakland, Maryland, first, where his father was stationed as a minister, and stayed there a couple of weeks till our furniture came through by train, and, uh, our horse Bill. *That's* interesting to *me*. He brought his horse and buggy out.

Tom Screven. How's that, by the train?

AH Oh, yes, uh, huh, it was shipped through by train. I remember it cost just $100 to have him shipped here.... And my husband liked Bill--liked that horse so well that he wanted him shipped out, and (the) buggy was all painted and greased and everything....

And so when the horse was brought out, why, uh, he wouldn't go uphill, because we'd lived in level country...and my husband had to give him away to a farmer.

The young general practitioner made many tiring trips back into the mountains after he arranged to use mountain-bred ponies from a livery stable in town. His standard fee to rural patients was "about a dollar a mile" in those years before the automobile. His calls might have taken him as far away as 20 miles, Mrs. Howard remembers. The doctor's office was on Main Street in the Knights of Pythias Building, and the couple took an upstairs apartment a short distance away in "a little apartment house," the Rightmeyer Building.

Dr. Howard decided a year or so later that they should move to Wheeling where they lived with his parents. Mrs. Howard remembers being there on April 6, 1917, when, during the night while she was "lying in bed," she heard of this country's entering World War I. "It was going through the streets.... It broke my heart and everybody else's heart to have to go to war...." Dr. Howard joined the army and went to France, while Mrs. Howard returned to her old home in Shady Side with their only child, a son Hamilton.

Hotel Changes Hands

Around the beginning of 1919, with the war over, the Howards returned to Rowlesburg where again the doctor had an office in one location and they lived in an apartment elsewhere. Mrs. Howard recalls they were never really satisfied with their upstairs apartment; "...it just didn't suit my life or his either," not having a lawn or "porches all around" as in the past. Twice during their early years in the town the Howards had "boarded at" the Commercial Hotel just across the railroad tracks from the train station.

A "For Sale" sign outside the hotel

caught Mrs. Howard's eye one day in 1925.

AH ...(I) went home and I said to my husband, "Let's buy the hotel. Th--it's up for sale." "Oh," he said, "we don't want a hotel." That's the way he said.

And so, uh, in just a little while the owner Mr. Smouse came over to the office to see the doctor...and my husband said to him, "Smouse, I see the--Neets (his name for Mrs. Howard) said the hotel's up for sale."

And, uh, he said, "Yes, why don't you and Mrs. Howard buy it? We'll give you an option on it."

And, uh, the doctor came running across the hall to me and said, "Neets, what do you say if we *do* buy the hotel?" "Oh," I said, "we don't want the hotel." Just what he said to me. I remember it well...."

Dr. and Mrs. Howard did buy the Commercial Hotel, which she believes was about 50 years old at the time. The Smouses had inherited it only a few years earlier from Mrs. Smouse's mother, a Mrs. Hooten, who in turn had inherited it from her sister, a Mrs. Hayes.

In November of 1925 the Howards took possession of their new hotel. Rev. Howard was then retired from the ministry and living in Rowlesburg, so he and his wife moved into the hotel with the younger Howards. Some months later, but not after 1927, she is certain, the hotel got its new name, New Howard Hotel.

AH ...and we named it the (New) Howard because our name was Howard, and we used to go to Baltimore and stay at the New Howard there when doctor would take a patient to, to the Franklin Square Hospital...and so often I'd go along....

And, uh, I shall never forget this: I was standing at the front door one day and some, uh, students were over here playing games from the Kingwood High School, and they were going by, and they looked up and they saw "New Howard Hotel," and they said one to the other, "I don't think it's very *new*." And don't you know right then I took the "New" off the stationery and everything. Wasn't that something?

With the hotel the new owners acquired only one guest, Mr. Frank Grainey, the railroad station master. He asked if he could stay on. Mrs. Howard at first feared she would have to arise too early to make sure he could "go out of the door at six o'clock" every morning; but their one employee, a woman whom they "bought" with the hotel, as the woman put it, offered to take charge of waking Mr. Grainey.

Seemingly by accident they "gradually kept people...overnight." Guests in the late 1920s and early 1930s were mainly railroad officials, traveling salesmen, and an occasional party of tourists.

AH Oh, my! The day was when we had--we called Monday and Tuesday nights "traveling men's night." And we had the house full. But *no* more. No, no more. Because they don't stay out. You know, they--the good roads and good cars--to come into a town like Rowlesburg--maybe they'll have one customer here. No, and they can see them and go. They don't have to....We used to have more stores here, you know.

A Dedicated Life

For nearly her first 25 years in Rowlesburg Mrs. Howard devoted a great deal of time to supervising special programs at the Christ Methodist Church. She directed adult and children's seasonal pageants and other young people's activities until the mid-1940s. But always before then and especially afterward the hotel and its ever more popular dining room commanded most of her attention. She remembers that quite a few years ago she came close to not being able to make the railroad trip to Baltimore for a favorite niece's wedding due to the pressures of keeping the full hotel operating smoothly.

In the 1930s even the excitement of nearby visits by the President and his wife extended to the tracks just outside the hotel. Arthurdale, about 15 miles away, is a town which was established in 1935 by the Farm Security Administration as a Federal Homestead project mainly to relocate unemployed miners and their families. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt and, more frequently, Mrs. Roosevelt made visits to that site their trains, Mrs. Howard remembers, would sometimes back up all the way to Rowlesburg.

For at least two important reasons the Howard Hotel dining room has remained a popular, highly dependable, unmistakably old-fashioned place to eat--even after the disappearance of passenger trains and transient guests. First, Mrs. Howard oversees every step of the preparation of every meal.

AH The, uh, girls do the peeling and things like that, but I do the cooking and seasoning of the food. Of course I think that's, uh, very important, seasoning food.

TS Has the menu changed very much

Annetta Howard, 1975.

Looking north over Rowlesburg, September 17, 1975. Arrow on right points to Howard Hotel.

over the, say, since the '30s--?

AH The menus that I used?

TS What you served?

AH Not very much. No. Because I find that there are lot of vegetables people don't like, and the main vegetables are, are, uh, beans, you know, some kind of bean, and, uh, tomatoes; they like tomatoes and, oh, I can't serve spaghetti very much. If I have a group of men in the hotel, they don't want spaghetti for a meat dish. They--and I serve the Lions Club, and they don't want spaghetti. I have a time thinking of something different for the Lions Club.

Another of Mrs. Howard's secrets of success is her policy barring alcoholic beverages.

AH I was a woman running a place, and I didn't want people to bring drink into my dining room. And I've had them to ask me, and I've always said, "Don't ask me." And my niece down home says she loves to hear Aunt Annetta say, "Don't ask me." Because I felt that if I started that, I'd have a rough house. And I haven't had a rough house. I just don't have it.

Nowadays as she tells of an annual practical joke she played on her railroad men before their trips there faded with the steam engines, Mrs. Howard's sense of service to and warm affection for them stands out. The late '40s and some of the '50s are roughly the years.

TS You told...a story (to a friend)... I wish you would tell me...about the railroad men and the pancakes, the practical joke?

AH Oh, uh, that was on April Fool's Day.... Oh, goodness, I don't know how long ago it's been now, but, uh, several years when we had a lot of B&O men.... I would use a circle of muslin, you know, and dip it in the batter and put it on the grill. And I'd put one in every stack.... I'd do it every year, you know.

TS This is something you did every year?

AH Oh, yes--they, they wouldn't think about April Fool's Day, you know. And of course sometimes th--there would be different men.

TS Yeah.

AH They wouldn't all be the same.

But, of course, we had a train master who had, might have been here...and we could never fool him because, I think he would think of the first of April. But, uh, most of them would be fooled because they just weren't aware of it, you know. You know, uh, April the first doesn't--is not like Easter or Christmas. You know, people are not thinking very much about it.

TS Right.

AH And, uh, they, they got a kick out of it. And I did it--I did those things because it made a little pleasure for them, and they talked about it for days and days, you know. And then when, uh, evening came, I would put a circle in the biscuits. Hot biscuits, you know, that I would make.

TS On the same evening, on the evening of April first?

AH Of the same--of the same day. And, uh, and, you see, some I didn't have, uh, for breakfast and they would--it would catch *them* then. And also the ones that had known about the circle in the buckwheat cakes, they, uh, they just wouldn't be thinking about it, and, uh, would bite into a biscuit--and I wouldn't put it in every biscuit, you know. Some.... They really had a, got a kick out of it. And I, you know why I did those things? Well, in that day I was, uh, I was very healthy and I, you know, I had--felt that I had time to do the things. And, then, I had plenty of help in the mornings with breakfast, and so we could get busy and do it. And now, I always felt this way: Men who had to board away from home, they were missing a lot in life, you know what I mean? And most men love to be at home. And these little things help to make it more pleasant, that's all.

TS Sure. Sure.

AH (Laughs) And I enjoyed doing it, too. Hm. And then they would talk about it for days and days. We have one table in the dining room that is large--it will seat ten, 'course not comfortably, but it *will* seat ten. And we called that "the B&O men's table," you know.

TS Oh, yeah.

AH And that's where they would be seated. And, uh, sometimes for breakfast they'd eat around the long table in the kitchen....

TS Well, that's just a great story.

AH Now, I had one man who did not eat hotcakes. And he was the first in the kitchen. So I put a piece of muslin in the skillet and put his egg on it.

TS (Laughs)

AH And he took his eggs up, you know,

Rowlesburg,
A Day in September 1975

Joseph Nassif opened a grocery and dry goods store very near the Commercial (Howard) Hotel in 1921 with his Lebanese-born father. In 1933, feeling the effects of the Depression, they changed to beer and lunch counter fare.

A T-bone steak dinner served on one of the few remaining old compartment plates at the hotel.

sunnyside up, as some people say. And, uh, and then, uh--he was the first in the kitchen, and he would sit at this end of the big table--now I might be ready to sit down a moment, you know, as I fried the eggs and put everything before him. And he started to cut into the eggs and he looked up at me and said, "*Oh*, Mrs. Howard!" It was cute, to watch him, you know. (Both laugh.)

TS That's priceless.

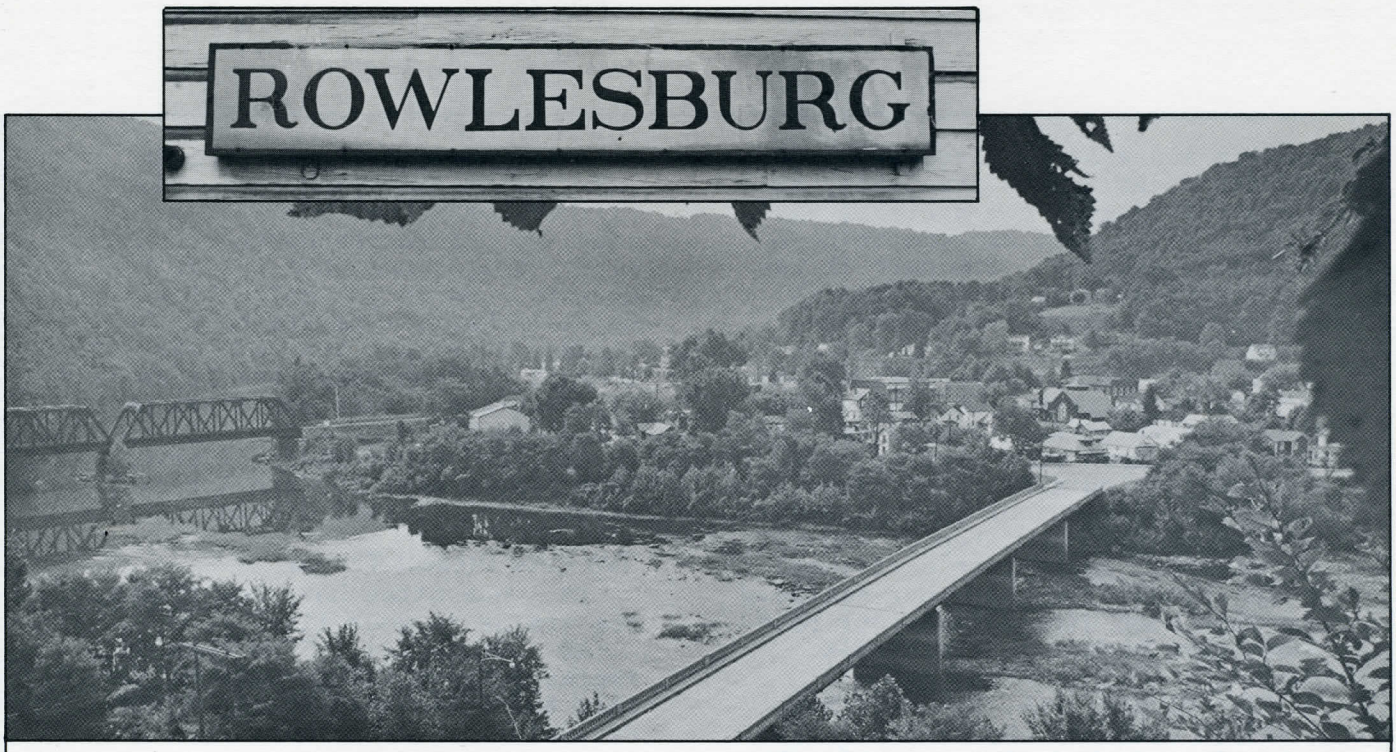
AH So, those little things and, and *all* those things made *my* life more pleasant, don't you know?

The Present

In the early summer this year Mr. Morgan Copeman, a prosperous businessman and entrepreneur from Kingwood, purchased the Howard Hotel from its reluctant but realistic owner. If there had been any difficulty in the transaction it apparently has been in Mr. Copeman's not wanting the former owner to leave; as part of their deal he asked that Mrs. Howard stay on as long as she pleased. There have been several tentative dates set for her returning to Shady Side, yet it seems likely she will no longer be preparing meals for the public as *Goldenseal* readers absorb these words. Mr. Copeman's workmen have already begun to add modern bathrooms, and Mrs. Howard says she plans in early October to pack certain belongings for the move.

Mrs. Howard remembers hearing of a skirmish during the Civil War that took place near Rowlesburg--"a little affair during the War," as she has called it. Very possibly one of the most important events to take place in the town since then happened on July 29, 1975. On that day the people of Rowlesburg paid elaborate homage to their revered innkeeper. Mrs. Howard's family surprised her by coming from Maryland for the tribute at her Methodist church. Nearly 400 townspeople are thought to have been there--or at least one-third of the population! Among the generous gifts she received was "a beautiful afghan."

AH The whole affair was beautiful. And my people, my sister and my nieces and my nephew, just thought that the Rowlesburg people were *something*. They did. They were so nice, nice to them, nice to me.



Rowlesburg from across the Cheat River. (Inset) Sign on station.

Trains, the Automobile, Planes

Understandably, many of Mrs. Howard's most interesting recollections, ones that offer us valuable insights into the past, are those related to modes of transportation. The railroad, mainly, of course, but also the automobile and the airplane seem persistently to creep into her memory. Such incidents as these that follow were exerpted from the same August 22 interview which provided the accompanying article. -T.S.

Early Memories of Automobiles, Steam Locomotives

TS When did he (Dr. Howard) first get an automobile? Do you remember that?

AH Well, let's see if I can recall, because when we first came to Rowlesburg a Mr. Pickering owned a car and he was the only one who did. And, uh, they were my good friends and lived across the street from me, and they, they really were interested in us and wanted Dr. Howard to stay here. And so they would ask me to go with them on Sunday afternoons for a drive and drive over to the Maryland line. And in Maryland they had commenced to get good roads because they were getting automobiles then. And I remember...Mr. Pickering would sing the minute we hit the Maryland line, sing our song, you know, "Maryland, My Maryland." And, and, uh, he did that because I was in the car....

That was the first--about the automobiles--our streets weren't paved when we came in February. We got here in February and our streets weren't paved. And it was a muddy

looking and a *black* place. Oh, we had the steam locomotives then, and you can't imagine how *dirty* it was!

TS Well, that was one thing I wanted to ask you. I'm sure it was a lot dirtier with them. What do you remember about the steam engines?

AH Oh, well, they, the, uh, engineers loved them. Oh, they were, they were reluctant to give up, and they got almost sick over it, but now they wouldn't want to change because they can put on Sunday clothes if they want to and step on and not get soiled. Isn't that different?

TS Yeah, I'm sure your railroad men were much dirtier and your bathrooms were harder to clean back then.

AH Oh yes, yes, but, you see, I didn't have the engineers or firemen. I never had them. I had, uh, the officials.

TS Well, tell me, does, uh, did steam engines make much more noise than, uh--?

AH Steam engines?

TS Did they make much--?

AH I don't know whether they did or not. They--I can't remember if they did, because maybe I've gotten used to all of it, you know, and I don't think about noise.

Airplanes, Then and Now

A visit to a reference book after the interview reminded us that Charles A. Lindbergh made his highly important non-stop, solo flight from New York to Paris in 1927. That was the year Mrs. Howard sometimes gives as the official date they began operating the hotel. She remembered that air crossing of the Atlantic Ocean after she talked of the World War I era and her husband's returning from France by boat.

AH Well, uh, in our day we didn't have planes, and it was when I lived in the hotel that, uh, our dear friend went across, you remember. What's his name?...Lindbergh.

AH But people do not ride trains, and I can't see the sense of having them. I really *can't*. I--we had a station agent over here, a lady, she was always fussing because people didn't ride trains, and I said, "Now look here, Boots (Burkhalter)"--she had a nickname, we called her Boots. And I said, "Now, about when you go to Arizona, how do you go?" "I fly." So she doesn't ride trains either.

TS It's just not very fast or doesn't get you there nearly as fast as the plane. Have you flown on planes much?

AH No, never have. I never have, never want to, and I know I never will. I feel afraid.

The Ever Present Trains

TS How often have you ridden the trains in your life?

AH Oh, *often*. I've been on trains long--a lot because my husband and I traveled by the train. We went--took long trips....

TS How many trains come by a day?

AH Why, I don't know that. Not as many as they once did, you know. Railroad isn't running full as it did.... I don't pay much attention to the freight train, *naturally*, because they are not passenger trains--I really don't know how many go by.

TS Well, what--do you remember when electric diesel engines came in?

AH The diesel? Wh--'49. Forty-nine, uh, huh. I remember that well. I had this house packed with people, the, uh, the officials.

TS Oh, was a celebration, or what?

AH Well, no, no. You know, seeing that everything went right.

TS Oh, yeah.

AH That they *worked* all right and all. And I had, I have two rooms on the third floor, and nine of the officials were using those rooms. And I said to them, "My, I'm so sorry about you being crowded." Now they didn't all sleep at the same time, you know, they had hours, because they had to be out and see that everything was working right. And, uh, and when I said that, well, one of the men spoke up, said, "Mrs. Howard, don't you worry about that. You get it while it's going!"

Mrs. Howard: Reflections on a Grand West Virginian

By John P. Killoran

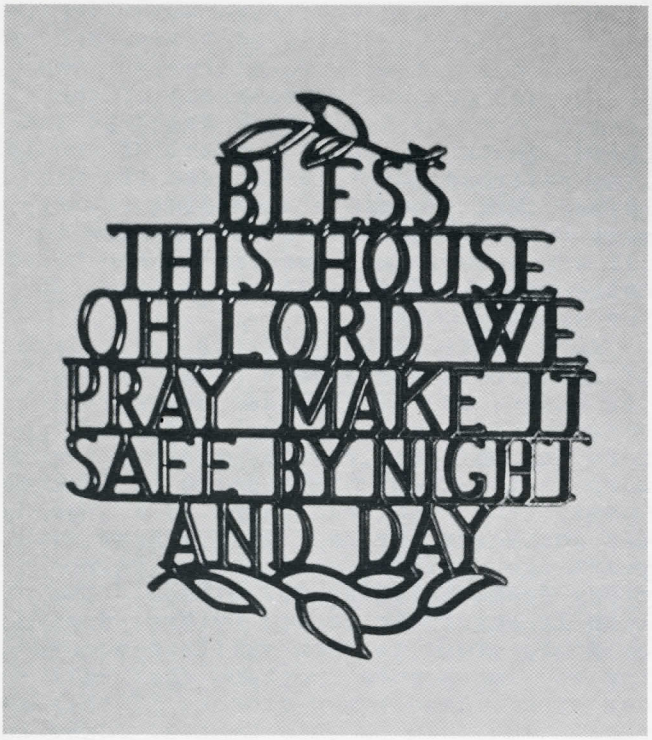
Annetta Howard is a rare West Virginian, although she is careful when she refers to herself as a Mountaineer. The petite and proper proprietress of the Howard Hotel in Rowlesburg has kept the charm, quaintness, and comfort of an old-time railroad hotel alive into the mid-1970s. Mrs. Howard's impending retirement to Maryland is a crushing blow to all who have loved, cherished, and become better people for having known her and her establishment.

As a railroad buff, I had long heard of Rowlesburg's railroad hotel or boarding house, one of the last anywhere in America. Tucked away beside the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's mainline tracks deep in the Cheat River gorge of Preston County, the hotel had taken on a legendary character for me. Then, about five years ago, I first went to the three-story frame building for dinner. The food is carefully cooked by Mrs. Howard on a big stove in iron skillets according to time-honored recipes that call for her expert dashes and pinches of this and that. The food of this best of cooks is truly a regional highlight. Her baked cabbage casserole is her own special zenith of culinary art, but all dishes far surpass the average home-cooked meal--let alone a comparison with the average restaurant.

It was true. Here was a place that kept the railroader between assignments, fed him in a manner needed by the hardest of workers, provided a home-away-from-home, and was a true friend in the person of the venerable inn's owner.

The upstairs sleeping rooms are akin to the rest of the experience. Mrs. Howard continually apologizes to her guests, saying she is sorry for the bathrooms being "down the hall," or for older furniture, or the squeaking and sagging floors in the hall at some places in the structure. The reverse, of course, is the truth. I know that if an auction sale were to be held--God forbid--a King's ransom would be paid for the nearly mint condition early 20th century furniture. How many times have you gone to a hotel lately to find china wash basins and pitchers in each room, with water and towel neatly placed on the mahogany vanity--in a spotless bedroom that might indeed have a genuine feather-tick bed?

For the better part of this century Mrs. Howard has kept hotel and board for the railroaders, and there were hundreds of them in Rowlesburg during her earlier years. She simply saw a need for the service, and she provided it. With charming and quaint assistants like Virginia



McCabe who waited tables, helped in the kitchen, and did other chores for the past quarter century, things have run like clockwork.

Rowlesburg lies at the bottom of two railroad grades, in a deep ravine. To the east is Terra Alta a dozen miles away, and a westbound hill takes trains over the famed Tray Run Viaduct, where B&O's finest passenger trains once made a ten-minute scenic stop--so spectacular was the view of the Cheat River canyon--and then through Tunnelton, where a long bore carries the rail line through the summit of the mountains on a westbound route to Grafton, Clarksburg, Parkersburg, and the West.

In the days of mighty steam locomotives as many as six locomotives would be assigned to a single train, with 15 to 20 crewmen manning the Iron Horses and feeding coal to the ravenous fires, as the throttles were opened to their fullest to make the 400-ton beasts crawl uphill at five miles an hour.

At Rowlesburg, a branch--now abandoned--wound its way toward Morgantown on what once was the independent Morgantown and Kingwood Railroad. To keep the helper engines and the branch-line locomotives in repair the B&O employed over 125 men at the shops in town. A friend, who visited as early as before World War II, remembers the pall of coal smoke hanging over the town in a thick cloud, and

A third floor room.

the noise of locomotives working at maximum effort was a 24-hour din.

It all ended in the mid-1950s. First came a set of five diesel helper engines, all hooked together and using only a two-man crew instead of the ten or 12 for a comparable steam lash-up. With the diesels came more diesels and finally the end of the shops with the dozens of boilermakers, riveters, machinists, welders, and the like. Then the road trains got the new shiny "motors" and employment at Rowlesburg took a tailspin, from 125 to ten in only three or four years!

There's still plenty of business for the Howard Hotel, for the other hotels and rooming houses passed into oblivion, leaving Mrs. Howard with the best and only hostelry in town. In fact, at the peak of rail activity in the canyon, Mrs. Howard's was where the "brass-hats" stayed, leaving the engine crews and other workingmen to other lodging.

Recognizing the unique and wonderful nature of Mrs. Howard and her hotel, I and some others suggested in 1970 that a State-sponsored tour of travel writers and editors from many out-of-state papers and magazines go to her dining room for dinner. I went to Mrs. Howard, got her to agree haltingly to host the group, and made the plans. She, of course, was convinced from the first that the places we should show out-of-state writers were the Greenbrier Hotel and Pipestem Resort, not her "humble little place." When told that the Greenbrier *was* a stop on the tour, she was indeed anxious.

The big day arrived. Word, of course, had leaked out all over the little community, and more than a normal complement of bystanders were rubbernecking on street corners when the big gold tour bus wheeled into the side lot of the hotel near the kitchen door (There's no front entrance except from the B&O mainline.), and the writers entered for dinner.

Exquisite steaks, the time-honored baked cabbage, and apple pie were the memorable ingredients of an experience that was easily the highlight of a week's tour of our State by the big-city writers. Hundreds, even thousands, of inches of type were set afterwards, and Mrs. Howard was a sort of celebrity about town.

After dinner, the diminutive lady was persuaded to come into the dining room and to answer questions and tell some more about the hotel. After some questions, she haltingly--a word that describes her proper modesty about her inn--volunteered that she hoped they had enjoyed their meal. She went on to note that her friends had great trust in an old lady to bring such an important group there for dinner.

Then, in a quiet voice, she concluded, "I was awake most of last night thinking about my tasks today, and I prayed to Almighty God for help in presenting this beautiful State in the way it should be."

Many people have their memories enshrined in halls of fame or on monuments. Mrs. Howard's monument is indeed the richer life that those who can call her friend have gleaned from knowing this gracious lady who once told a group of guests, "I'm sorry I cannot call myself a West Virginian, for I am a native of the eastern shore of Maryland." On further query, she admitted, "I've only been here 53 years."

The measure of honor returned by those she befriended and enriched is often seen in the railroader who comes back to see the hotel where he stayed as a young apprentice. He brings his grandchildren so they may have a slight glimpse and experience of a way of life that time has passed by.

When, in 1972, the shiny new AMTRAK "Turbo-Train" made an experimental run across the B&O, it was scheduled to pass Rowlesburg at maximum speed, stopping only at major cities as it carried the national press and officials on a tour. At the little hotel beside the tracks, the newest and most important passenger train in America ground to a halt. The group alighted, invited Mrs. Howard on board to see the train's interior, and told her she was not forgotten by those who once called Rowlesburg, on the B&O's "West End," their temporary home. Her host was David A. Watts, Jr., who recently was named as Vice-president and General Manager of AMTRAK and once headed all passenger operations on the B&O.

The Howard Hotel will continue albeit under new ownership. But the major human ingredient will not be present. Annetta Howard, after half a century of service to her community and state, will take a well-earned retirement back to Maryland where her relatives remain.

My life is richer for having known her. My heart is sorrowful for the fact that my children will not know her and will not experience the wonders of a genteel railroad hotel. That will be all gone.

Photograph by Nancy Abrams, the Preston County *News*.

Recipes

How Mrs. Howard Makes Her Specialties

In mid-June Kimberly Dunham, a free-lance writer and poet from Morgantown, made an overnight visit to the Howard Hotel, and during the stay she collected these recipes.

Baked Steak

Round steak
Salt

Pound the steak with McCormick tenderizer. Trim it and fry it in a skillet with its own fat. Put the steak in a roaster and sprinkle with salt. Put the skillet drippings, with a little water, in the roaster. Cover the steak loosely with a piece of foil and bake at 350° until tender, at least an hour.

Mrs. Howard's Original Salad Dressing

3/4 quart Mazola oil
1/2 cup vinegar
Paprika
Salt
Tbsp. Miracle Whip
Sugar

Mix the oil and vinegar together in a quart jar. Add paprika, for color, and salt. Stir vigorously and shake together in the jar. Add a tablespoon of Miracle Whip, to give it body, and a pinch of sugar, just before sprinkling the dressing on salad.

Baked Cabbage

Shredded cabbage
Longhorn cheese
Velveeta cheese
Kellogg's Corn Flake crumbs

Boil the shredded cabbage in salted water until tender. Grate the cheeses together. Put a layer of cabbage on the bottom of a Pyrex baking dish. Then add a layer of the grated cheeses. Add another layer of cabbage and one more of cheese. Sprinkle Kellogg's Corn Flake crumbs on top, and bake at 350° until brown on top.

Stewed Tomatoes

Hunt's whole tomatoes
Butter
Black pepper
Onion, chopped
Sugar
One or two slices of bread

Mash the tomatoes with a potato masher. Add a chunk of butter, sprinkle with pepper, and cook over medium heat. Add just a bit of water now and then so the tomatoes won't thicken. Add some onion and cook for about an hour. Sweeten to taste by sprinkling with sugar. Before serving add one or two slices of shredded bread.

George Delforge and the Banner Window Glass Company of South Charleston

By Fred Barkey

Anyone even passingly familiar with southern West Virginia knows South Charleston as the Chemical City. Yet there are a few individuals who can recall that the real industrial base of South Charleston was glass. Those who know this heritage best are some skilled workers and their families who came to the Mountain State around the turn of the century. Their trade, which is all but lost, was devoted to handcrafting windows whose slightly wavy texture can be seen in older homes in the Kanawha Valley.

One of these hardy glass craftsmen is Mr. George Delforge who now lives in his retirement home in St. Albans. Delforge's father was one of a group of mostly Belgian and French workers who moved to South Charleston to establish the Banner Window Glass Company. This firm, first chartered in Sheridan, Indiana, was relocated to an eight-acre area on Eastern Avenue near D Street or at the present F.M.C. Corporation plant entrance on MacCorkle Avenue across from the mound. This site had been donated to the Banner by the Kanawha Land Company which hoped to benefit by the rising price of home plots in the plant area. George Delforge elaborates in the Banner's move and his father's connection with the company.

Fred Barkey. Why did the Banner move to West Virginia?

George Delforge. It had to move because of the gas. The plant had moved from Sheridan to Shirley, Indiana, but the gas played out there. They thought they would never run out of gas there. The gas companies only charged 25 cents per outlet no matter how much you used. Some farmers lit up the roads to their homes with gas jets. Well, the gas ran out but there was plenty in West Virginia. We moved first from Shirley to Salem, W. Va., before we moved to South Charleston.

FB How did your father become a part of Banner Glass?

GD He came to this country from Belgium in around 1880. He hoped to get a better job. At that time, they worked 12 hours a day in Belgium for six or seven days a week. He landed in Baltimore and couldn't find much work so he split oysters for a while. He went back to Belgium and got married and came back to Baltimore in 1890. He worked around and eventually went to Indiana and put in $600 for a share in the Banner which was incorpoated in Sheridan in 1900. There were quite a few cooperatives

George Delforge, 1975. Photograph by Steve Ladish.

started right about then but so many of them went bankrupt.

The cooperative movement was an old tradition in the working class. It persisted, in part, from the workers' desire to keep the means of production in the hands of those who did the labor. Cooperatives multiplied rapidly in window glass at the turn of the century when the two largest trusts, the Independent and American Window Glass Companies, failed to agree on how to divide up the market. About 30% of the glass factories started in West Virginia at that time were cooperatives. Some of the more notable plants of this type were located in Clarksburg, Salem, Mannington, and Morgantown.

FB How was the old Banner organized? Did they hire a manager or what?

GD Well, they had a board of directors which were workers. It was all Belgiums like the Waterloos, Le Febers, Dandois, Hershels, Dumonts, Brigodes, all skilled and pretty well educated for that day. Like Jules Waterloo's father was president of the company at one time, but he was also a blower in the plant. There was also a board of directors that would meet regularly and if they had something to come up that required a decision then they would call all the stockholders together.

FB How many of the workers were stockholders?

GD All the skilled workmen, about 18 blowers, three or four flatteners, six or eight cutters. Later on I'd say that went up to between 20 or 30 blowers and the rest proportionately. They kept up with the stockholders. When they moved to West Virginia, they got in touch with my father to see if he wanted to keep up his stock. He did and paid 200 more dollars to help move the plant to South Charleston.

The Banner glass plant was a pot factory in that the glass was melted in individual clay pots in a furnace by a master teaser. A superior furnace had been developed, but window glass workers clung to the older pot type. In this and other techniques of production, glass production had changed little for hundreds of years. Mr. Delforge was a blower and describes the various aspects of the craft.

FB Could you give me an idea how each craft played their part in making a window?

GD Yes, you had a blowpipe about six feet long. A man called a gatherer heated the end of the pipe and took it to the tank (furnace) where he'd get a small amount of glass. He'd let that cool, get another layer, let that cool, and then he'd work that glass on a block (mould) to round off the glass. Then a snapper (a nonunion semi-skilled worker) would take it to the blower who would blow what was called "the ball." Then the snapper would take that to a blow-furnace and hook the pipe on a crane so the blower could move the glass back and forth in the heat until a cylinder was formed. The snapper would blow a hole in the end of the cylinder away from the pipe. The blower would swing the cylinder several times in a swing-hole to get the desired length. Then the snapper would place the cylinder on a wooden horse or rack. He'd use a piece of steel to snap the cylinder off the pipe. He'd use a small

Belgian workers at the Banner Window Glass Company around 1908. Frank (originally Francois) Delforge, George's father, is near the middle sitting on the corner of the railing and wearing a light shirt. The elder Delforge died in 1957 when he was 98. Photographer unknown.

wire or small ring of glass to remove the curved cap that was still on the top of the cylinder. Then he'd run a hot cracking iron down the length of the cylinder and touch it with his wet finger, and the moisture would run down that crack in the cylinder and split it open.

The glass went to the flattener and his "boy" who would put it on one of four revolving stones inside the flattening oven. The flattener would use a wooden rod to press down the glass. Another worker (semi-skilled) would lift the glass to a lehr or conveyor that took the glass through the oven till it was ready for the cutters.

The Banner employed about 100 men. Possibly a little more than one third were in the skilled trades of blowing, gathering, flattening, and cutting. Most of the rest were semi- and unskilled laborers of one type or another. The work force labored in a plant consisting of five large buildings made of steel and concrete. The blowing building was 70 by 125 feet. The cutting room or building was 40 by 65 feet. There was a box factory of 40 by 65 feet and a warehouse of 40 by 150 feet.

FB In what ways would you say that making window glass was different from making the decorative glassware that is still made in small plants in West Virginia?

GD There were lots of differences. I'd say that the old-time window workers would think of art glass as sorta child's play. You take the pipe and ball of glass the window blower worked. It might weigh 40 or 50 pounds. I doubt if the flints (decorative) pipe and glass would weigh half that. Then the glass was basically different. You had to be a lot more careful with the window glass. We used to fool around down at the plant making little lilies and things. I gave

one to a lady I knew and she told me, "I just moved that flower a little bit and it went into a thousand pieces." You see, the window glass was so much more fragile.

Conditions in South Charleston were very primitive in the first decade or so of the 20th century. Streets were little more than mud paths. The railroad and the river provided the only access. The self-reliant glass workers made the best of it, and their ethnic solidarity helped them do it, as Mr. Delforge explains.

FB I understand the Belgians had their own social club. What was it like?

GD It was down there on the river bank on plant property. They'd play a lot of cards about all the time when it was open. They served beer and we had dances at the club. We organized a Belgian band down there. We had about 24 or 25 members. We went around and we played at different things but mostly for our own dances. I forget what they charged, 25 or 50 cents just to go to the dance. They didn't have a bowling alley but they had some pins--oh, I guess they were about four inches across. They'd take five pins and put them in a row and I don't know what the distance was now, but about 15 or 20 feet. They'd throw at those things like you would at a bowling alley, and some were very good at it.

The Club would have a festival every summer. It was just like a county fair with produce, preserves, with prizes for the best things, only it was only for the Belgiums. They'd also raise pigeons and race them with quite a lot of lively betting. They'd take the birds down to Point Pleasant and release them. Sometimes the birds would beat the boys back, the transportation then was so poor.

We also had our own benefit society. It was called *Secours Mutuels*. We put a dollar a month in it, and every six months we paid an extra dollar. If you were sick

Around 1912 when he was 17 George Delforge, at the far right, had been working at Banner about two years and was a gatherer. The tank or furnace opening is behind him and to his left. Photographer unknown.

Members of the South Charleston Band around 1911 were all of Belgian extraction except for one. Frank Delforge, a baritone horn player, is in the first row, second from left. Photographer unknown.

or hurt you could draw from it.

FB It looks like there was much of old country in those traditions.

GD Yes, they would often go back to the old country, especially during the summer months or fire out. You see, the plants shut down in the summer because it was so hot. It was real cheap to travel over there. You could go on a ship from New York for 15 or 20 dollars.

FB The sense of community among the glass workers is interesting. Did this help produce a strong union?

GD Yes, a very strong union. It (the union) was pretty much a family business and pretty hard to get in. You had to apprentice for three years. Then you had to acquire what they call the journeyman papers. You could only teach your son or the son of another member of your trade. Each skilled worker could only have one apprentice every three years. You had to pay $75 dues after your apprenticeship. The first union was the L.A. 300, but later it was the Amalgamated Window Glass Workers.

L.A. 300 refers to a local assembly or union of the Knights of Labor. Up until 1880 each of the four window glass crafts had separate organizations in District Eight of the Knights. In that year the trades were consolidated and retained the charter of the Gatherers' Local Assembly 300. These unions were probably more important than trusts and tariffs in regulating window glass production. Like much of American industry at the turn of the century, window glass manufacturing had a constant tendency toward overcapacity. As Mr. Delforge mentions, both the L.A. 300 and Amalgamated helped control production by rationing the labor supply through limited apprenticeship. The unions also restricted output per man by weekly quotas for types of glass per factory. There were stiff penalties for violations. The unions were capable of such power because the glass workers were part of labor's aristocracy. Their days of such power, however, were numbered, as machines were replacing those very skills which gave them strength. The blowers were first affected as automatic and semi-automatic machines began to perform the task.

FB I guess the coming of the machines hit the glass workers pretty hard.

GD I was 26 and the hand plants were still operating but they were dividing up the work (left to them by machines). We started working only six and eight weeks at a time. I went down to Louisiana but I wasn't trained for it (the job), so I came back and I called on the Huntington plant but it was shut down. Then I did get a job in Bristol about three or four miles from Salem. Then I came back here and got a job working for Libby Owens and

At one of the annual Belgian carnivals (ca. 1914) held in an apple orchard next to one of the company buildings in South Charleston. Arrow points to Delforge. Photographer unknown.

I was there the rest of the time. But I'd have to do just anything they had.

FB Couldn't the men see the writing on the wall?

GD They couldn't believe that machines would blow glass. Flatteners wouldn't believe that the machine would ever take their place. Even the cutter's job was taken but they were able to hold on as operators and inspectors.

One last desperate attempt was made by the union to keep the handcraft trade alive. They purchased the Camp Glass Company in Huntington and ran it till about 1927, making it the last hand window glass plant in the United States. If they were lucky the old glass workers got a job in a machine plant; if not, they had to find another livelihood. Their plight was captured well in some lines of a poem by Oscar Wood, a former craftsman.

At one time in the Mountain State
And many years ago
Pete Felix could blow window glass
As very few could blow

Pete Felix in those early days
Had manners and was neat
Was known for his fine living ways
And called glass blower Pete.

His friends and fellow mechanics
Were workers highly paid.
And training their apprenctices
They kept the tricks of trade

But Pete could see machine and age
Creeping with stealthy pace
Yet vowed that lacking eyes or brains
Machines couldn't win the race

Till changes came at a rapid rate
Altho he said, "It can't be done."
Machinery had him out of date
A dozen sheets to his one.

And yet the window glass industry remained in West Virginia and so did a large number of the hand glass workers. Names like Callard, Michaux, Monen, La Chappel, Quinet, and a host of others dot the Kanawha Valley. There are many Appalachias, and these Belgian and French workers are a continuing part of that complex.

SOURCES

Taped material developed by the author for the West Virginia Commission on Aging.

Robert Lookabill, "The Hand Window Glass Workers in West Virginia," M.A. Thesis, Marshall University, 1971.

Pearce Davis, *The Development of American Glass*, (New York, 1949).

Ab Cole: Portrait of a Country Entertainer

By Louis and Jeannie Horacek

Photographs by
Carl Fleischhauer

Ab Cole, 1945. Photographer unknown.

Two of West Virginia's best-known musicians are Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper, from Valley Head and Harman respectively. Their old-time country sounds are nationally known from their appearances for many years on the WWVA Wheeling Jamboree and now on the Grand Ole Opry. Until the mid-1950s an integral part of their performances was provided by fellow West Virginian Albert "Ab" Cole, their bassist, baritone singer, and comedian. Some may also remember Ab as one of the Cole brothers who played on radio in Fairmont and Charleston in the late '30s and early '40s.

We became aware of Ab Cole when he joined Wilma Lee and Stoney for a few numbers during a show in Fairmont in 1974. He added some beautiful harmony and joked and reminisced with the audience to prove that the ability to entertain had not left this "retired" musician. When we later visited him and his wife Jean at their home in Mannington we found him equally genial and articulate offstage.

Ab was born in 1921 in Hope Hill, W. Va., and raised in nearby Mannington. He was exposed to traditional music early in life, as his father was an old-time fiddle player and his mother a "fabulous, fabulous singer" with a great love for the old hymns. His two brothers, Carl and Glen, were also musicians and it was with them that he entered the music business.

When he was about 17, Ab bought a bass fiddle and Glen taught him the basics on it one evening. The next day there was a talent contest in Fairmont.

Ab Cole. One of the announcers, a man by the name of, I believe it was Kay Balf was his name that was at WMMN in Fairmont, he had this show and we got on the thing and won it, and of course that gave us the opportunity to work with Kay on some shows and we played some local theaters like Philippi and Elkins and Grafton and so on.

And we did get the thing (the bass) and plunk on it one night and started the next day with it.

The show also got them started playing on station WMMN in Fairmont, on the Old Sagebrush Round-up, an early morning musical program. Ab played bass and sometimes some banjo, sang the tenor part, and was responsible for the comedy. Glen played fiddle and guitar and sang baritone. Carl was the lead singer and also played guitar. They called themselves the Cole Brothers and performed in what was called the "Western" style.

AC As far as I know, we were about the only group in this area, in this state that did this, what we used to call the smooth Western style. It was strictly a trio that did the smooth Western stuff like the Sons of the Pioneers, and, as far as I know, we were the only ones in the area.

We asked how they came to perform that way.

AC It was a thing that we liked. We liked the Sons of the Pioneers, we liked their material and that was just the kind of thing we went into. We didn't go into what we called the bluegrass or the deep country then. We played the smooth type country. In fact, we did, leaned a little bit really into the semi-pop field, did a lot of stuff of that type too.

Like many other groups who worked on radio, they made transcriptions, recordings of entire programs which were made in advance to be played when the group was on the road, or produced to be sent off to other stations.

AC When the Cole Brothers were together, we had...then they cut these great big...I think they were--

Louis Horacek. Transcriptions?

AC Yeah. Transcriptions, you know. You remember the old Sons of the Pioneers? All these people did them. They cut ours. We had scads of them, you know. We used to sit and listen to the Sons of the Pioneers and Riders of the Purple Sage (on transcriptions). Oh, there were so many, you know. And we'd listen to those things and we'd get ideas, we'd get numbers from them. We'd memorize, you know, from their words and we got a lot of songs that way.

And they cut a bunch of ours and through the process of moving the station from one building to another, or maybe cleaning out the back closet, they destroyed those.

After a time in Fairmont they were hired by singer Floyd Howser and moved to Charleston where they worked on the Old Farm Hour on WCHS and played personal appearances in the area. Ab remembers working these with Red Sovine and T. Texas Tyler who were just beginning their careers in Charleston; he also played with such greats as Gene Autry and Roy Rogers.

After World War II the Cole Brothers found themselves back in Fairmont playing on WMMN. It was there that Ab met Stoney and Wilma Lee Cooper, who had been working in the Midwest with Wilma Lee's family band, the Leary Family.

AC He was working with another band then. He didn't even go by the name Stoney then. He went by his right name, which is Dale, "Fiddlin' Dale," and he was working there with the Leary Family.

And so we ended up at WMMN all about

The Cole Brothers about 1936. Carl, Ab, Glen. Photographer unknown.

the same time, I think.... That's where we met and we worked together, you know, on the Sagebrush Round-up. Of course we worked in and out of the road and everything. I come out of it for a while, then went back, and he offered me a job. KLCN in Blytheville, Arkansas, was our first jump from there.

In Fairmont the band had been called the Blueschasers, but in Arkansas, with some personnel changes, they also changed their name to the Clinch Mountain Clan, the name Wilma Lee and Stoney still use. The band consisted of Stoney and Wilma Lee, Ab playing bass, Johnny Johnson on guitar, and on banjo Bill Carver.

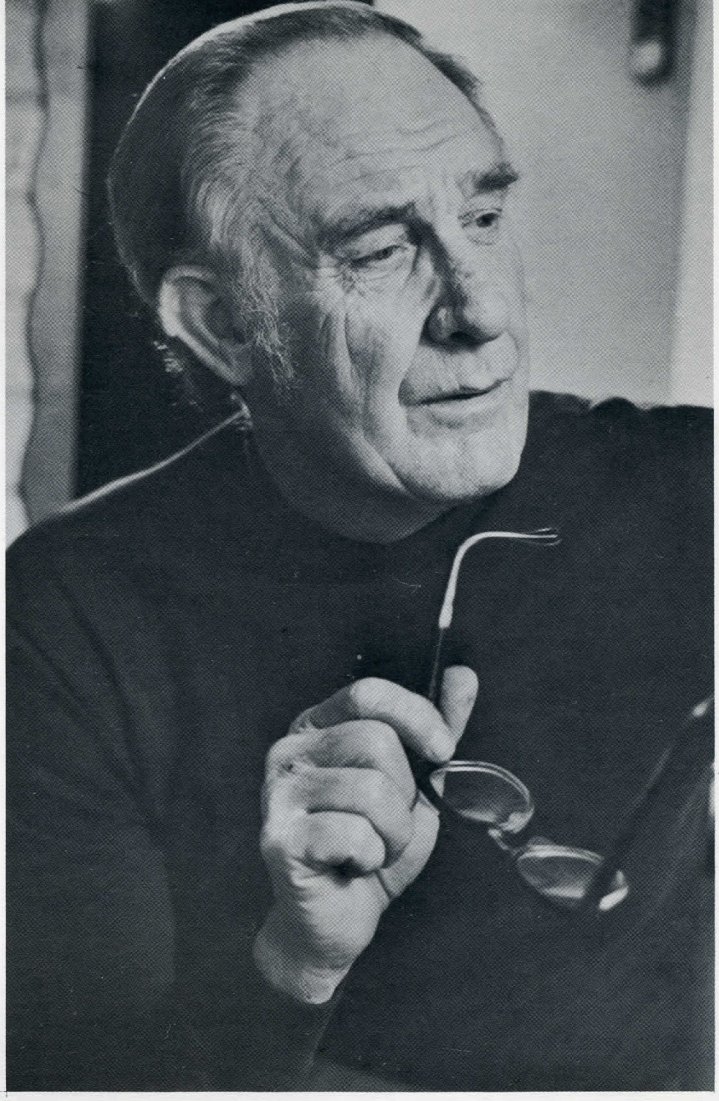
When he was with the Cole Brothers and in those early days with Wilma Lee and Stoney, the groups were based at a radio station where they did daily radio programs. These shows didn't pay any money but were considered worthwhile for the publicity. They were a blend of music, comedy, and salesmanship.

AC Then they used to have what they called a P.I. account. They were various accounts from products all over the world, such as Carter's Little Liver Pills and things of this nature. You sold little chicks, you know. "Send in box tops off--" such and such a thing, you know. Georgie Porgie Cereal and so on. (P.I. stood for "per inquiry" and meant the station got paid on the basis of the number of orders the company received as a result of the advertisement.)

Personal appearances were generally within the area served by the radio station, a radius of 60 or 70 miles and at the most 100 miles. They played shows seven days a week, at high schools, Grange Halls, and theaters. Theater chains were particularly good, since the owners might send the band on a round of the whole chain.

They always worked for a percentage of the gate, the preferred arrangement being a 70%-30% split, with the theater or whatever getting the 30%. Ab recalls that with Wilma Lee and Stoney they split the money equally rather than operating on a salary basis. But since admissions might be as low as 15 cents, or in later days, half a dollar, they too often ended up with hardly enough for dinner.

Fortunately this situation didn't last forever. In the late '40s they were hired to work on the WWVA Jamboree in Wheeling, and the regular Saturday night program brought them fans all over the East and a recording contract with Columbia. Working out of Wheeling and later for a time at the Old Dominion Barn Dance in Richmond, Va., they toured the Eastern United States and Canada along with many of the other greats of country and bluegrass music.

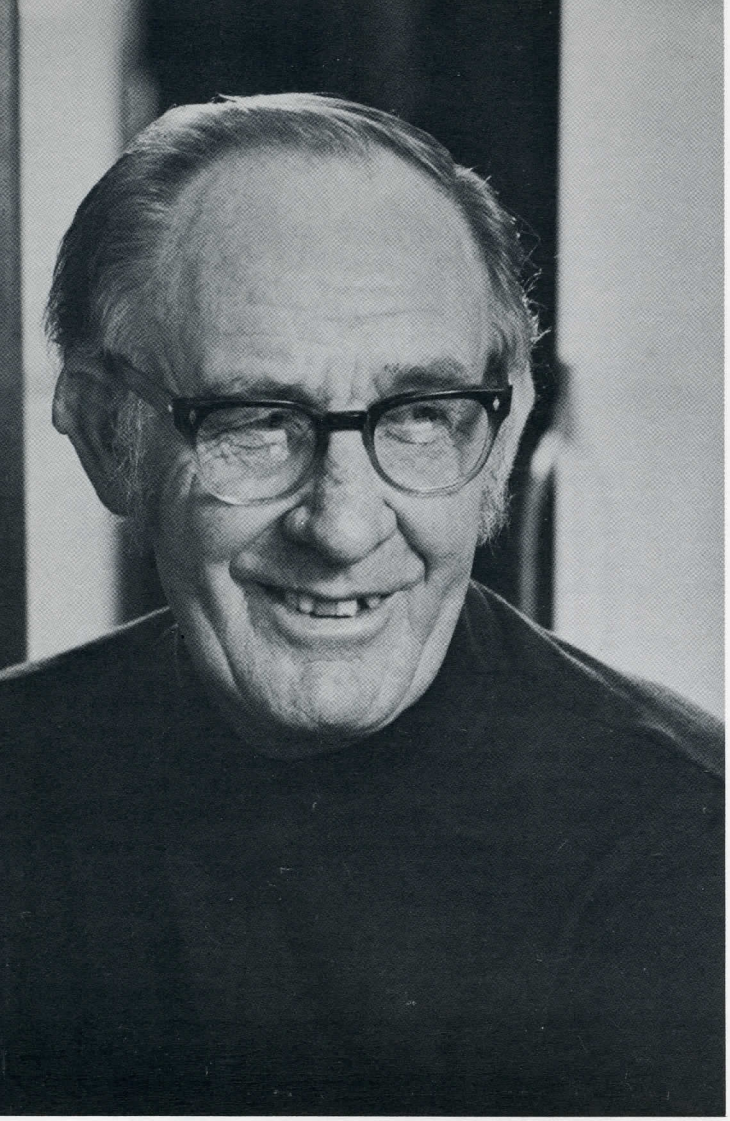


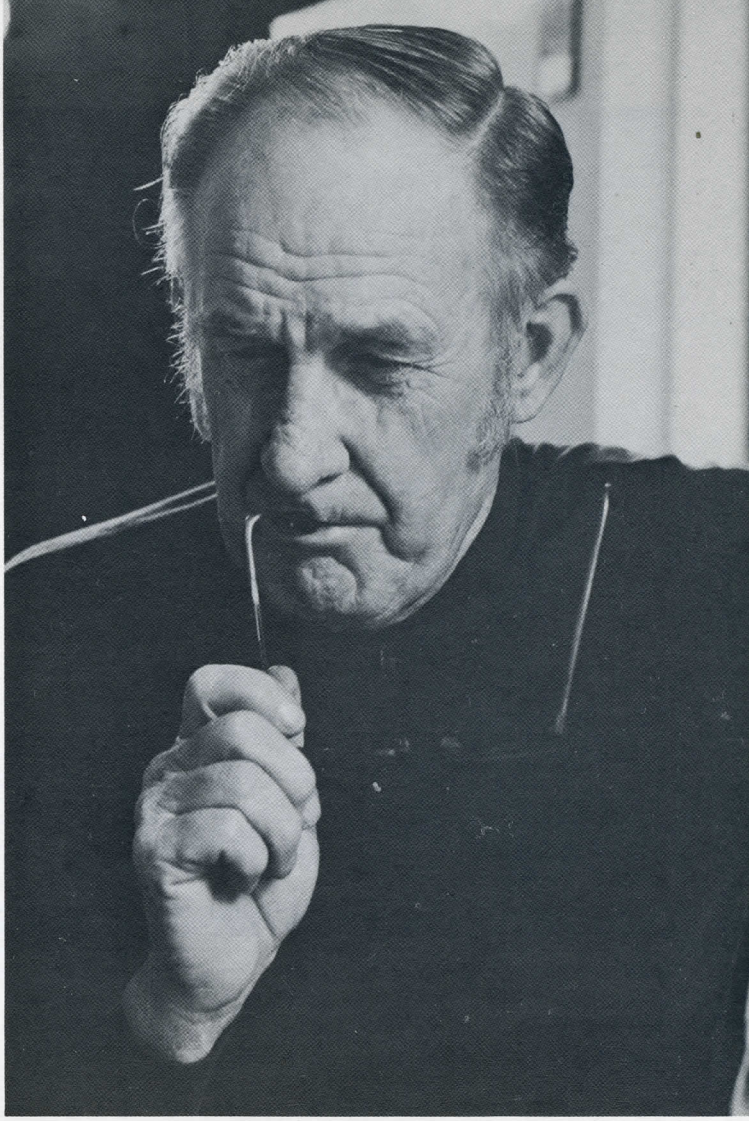
Ab played bass and sang baritone for Stoney and Wilma Lee, and recalls the latter was a problem initially. "I kind of had to fit in because Stoney and Wilma Lee sang the two parts they used. He sang lead and she sang a harmony. Then I had to sneak in and find something that went in there." He feels, however, that his main role was comedian.

AC I've done comedy, well, in fact, I did comedy--oh, 99 and 99/100% of the time that I was in show business, I was basically classified as a comedian.

I did some slapstick, but most of it was, well, we did a lot of vaudeville type stuff. We had just about what most bands had in the way of country comedy. Just like the old Speck Rhodes routines. That was the type of stuff we did.

I used a hat with the brim turned up in front with a big safety pin in it. I had a necktie that was about six inches wide at the bottom and it hung almost to





my knees. And that's a lot of necktie because I'm not too short, you know. And then I had the baggy pants, you know, that was really too short for me by about six or eight inches which made 'em come up on my leg a little ways, you know. In other words it didn't fit. There was nothing that fit and the shirt was usually a loud plaid-type thing, you know, something that looked gaudy. That's about what it consisted of.

Jeannie Horacek. Did you sing any funny numbers?

AC Very few. I used to do one or two, but not really too much. Most of mine was just in pulling bits and gags, and we did quite a bit of acting, you know, little routines that required a lot of moving around.

And I used to do a lot of comedy with Big Slim when he used to be at Wheeling, with the whips. He used to do the whip act. He'd wrap whips around me and of course you got to scream like you're being killed and actually you aren't hurt at all.

In the Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper show, as in most acts of the day, comedy was very important. Ab and Stoney had dozens of bits and routines worked out, from gags to fill-in between songs to entire skits.

AC We'd go out and do these vaudeville acts, these long skits that would last--I've done skits that would last 15 or 20 minutes. You do the whole thing. And it was comedy from the time you started until you got out the end. There was all kinds of routines we did.... Just stop the music and lay the instruments back out of the road and he'd start talking and we'd work our way into this thing just automatically.

One of the routines was called "The Kissing Bit." Ab would tell Stoney, "I was late getting on stage today because I was out front kissing all the women that came in." Stoney would reply, "That's impossible. No one would want to kiss something that looked like you."

"They couldn't resist me. They were all just begging to be kissed. But I can prove it: Anyone who I didn't kiss before the show raise your hand and I'll come down and kiss you now."

And generally there would be one, an older woman, most likely, that would raise

Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper and the Clinch Mountain Clan. Front row, Stoney, Wilma Lee, Bill Carver. Back row, Cole, Chuck Henderson. Photography studio name on picture.

her hand, and Ab would jump off the stage and kiss her. He'd run back toward the stage, hesitate, and go back and kiss her again or sit down next to her and kind of snuggle up to her.

Of course there was one time when it didn't work out. A woman raised her hand and when Ab came running toward her she hauled off and slugged and nearly broke his jaw.

In a typical show, which would last an hour and a half to two hours, they would devote a portion to one of their longer skits, and of course there would be shorter things scattered throughout the program. As well as making for a more entertaining show, this improved the musical quality of the program, in Ab's opinion. The band could play only their very best material and still provide an evening's fun for the audience.

In the mid-'50s after nearly 20 years on the road, working full-time as an entertainer, Ab retired. He related the familiar story that the pressures of constant travel were interfering with his family life.

Since then he has worked construction and now works at the Mannington Home Center. For several years he also was a disc jockey on WMMN, his work there gaining him the title "DJ of the Year" awarded by WSM in Nashville. He attributes this to the fact that he avoided a tight playlist and just played what people wanted to hear and what he thought deserved some exposure.

Through the '60s he was also active in the Fairmont Country Music Association and was responsible for bringing many country and western shows to town. Ab still visits and keeps up acquaintances in the country music business and regularly attends the Jamboree Homecoming, a special show each spring on WWVA to honor the veterans of that program.

AC You see, I was basically a comedian. Of course I was a musician and a singer, but my main job was to do comedy, and if I do any guest appearances anymore, it's in that capacity.... Most of the time I just go and appear and let the people know that I'm there and say "hi" and show my appreciation, and I get out of the road and sit back and enjoy the show with the rest of the people.

Cole possibly at Wheeling around 1950. Photographer unknown.

This article was expanded for GOLDENSEAL *by the authors from one called "Ab Cole-Comedian" which appeared in the May 1975 issue of* Bluegrass Unlimited. *"Dedicated to the furtherance of bluegrass music," that monthly often contains articles on West Virginia musicians and carries detailed listings of performances by particular groups and of festivals. The yearly subscription rate is $6.00, and their address is Box 111, Broad Run, Virginia 22014.*

The Folk Festival at Glenville

Annual Late June Mecca for Old-time Music and Mountain Culture Fans

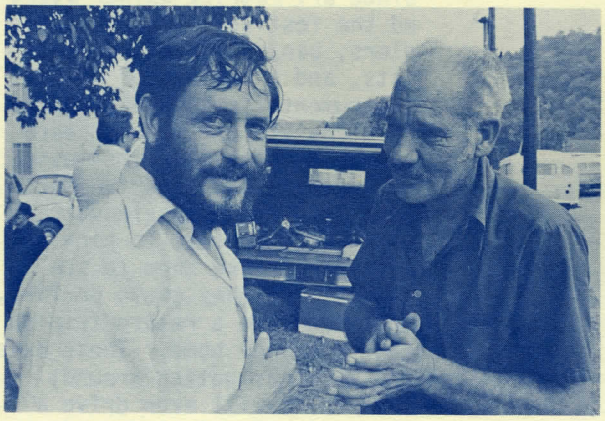
Text and Photographs by Dick Kimmel

Melvin Wine, over-50 fiddle champion, plays to banjo accompaniment under the box elder tree.

Last June, as in years past, the West Virginia State Folk Festival in Glenville became a meeting place for old-time string band musicians. Ever since Dr. Patrick Gainer started the festival in 1950, fiddlers, banjo pickers, guitarists, and a variety of other instrumentalists have gathered in Glenville one weekend each summer to play old-time music. Dr. Gainer used to drive far back into the mountainous regions of the state to pick up musicians, take them to the festival so they could perform, and then make a return trip to take everyone home. These days the word has gotten around; some folks will even drive a thousand miles just to enjoy a few days of music in the heart of West Virginia.

This had been a year when many other festivals encountered problems because the musicians and people who came to enjoy the music were outnumbered by others who were more interested in having a big party than a music festival. This was not the case at Glenville because of the fine job done by the director, Fern Rollyson, and her co-workers. A non-profit committee of volunteers handles all the advance planning of the festival. They emphasize that the festival is a non-commercial venture. Its purpose is to promote tradi-

(below) Two well-known West Virginia fiddlers, Franklin George on the left, Glen Smith on the right. (right) Banjo maker Paul King at his Tunnelton studio in June, 1975.



tional folklore, arts and crafts, music, dancing, and other aspects of Appalachian culture. No "big-name" entertainment is hired to draw crowds to the festival. Nevertheless, some of the state's professional groups like the Morris Brothers and Glen Smith and the Mountain State Pickers do show up and entertain an informal crowd in the parking lot. The crowds that have shown up at Glenville come to enjoy themselves by participating in and learning about Appalachian culture at events like a shape note singing school and impromtu fiddle workshops.

Thursday, June 19, 1975, was the first day of the 26th annual West Virginia State Folk Festival. My wife Nancy and I packed the car with my banjo and mandolin, her guitar, some food, and some extra clothes and left Morgantown about 10:00 a.m. We wanted to get to Glenville before noon, so we allowed some extra time to the usual hour and a half drive. I remembered that just a few years ago the trip took at least three hours of winding down U.S. 19 to Weston and then across U.S. 119 to Glenville. Now it's just a quick zip down I-79 to Burnsville and a short distance on little State Route 5. Back in the '50s some folks probably took most of the trip over dirt roads. I thought that I ought to take back roads all the way just to get in the mood for the old-time music, but I'm not that much of a masochist. I appreciate a good road like I appreciate a fine banjo, but I still have respect for a junk banjo and a dirt road too, I guess. We'd just have to let the ten or 15 miles on State Route 5 get us in the mood.

Sam Rizzetta plays his own design hammered dulcimer with an informal old-time band.

When we arrived in Glenville we headed for the small park behind the bank because in past years this is where the musicians have gathered. There is a grassy square there about the size of someone's large front lawn. The area is perfect for playing music because it's off the main street, there's a large box elder tree for shade, and it adjoins a couple of parking lots for more picking space when it gets crowded. There were already a couple of groups of musicians under the tree playing some quiet fiddle tunes. Other people were investigating the large tarp-van where the wares of Liberty Banjo Company from Connecticut were displayed. A few people complained that Liberty's set-up took up "valuable picking space."

After taking a few pictures, which is usually the first thing I do at a festival, I got out my banjo. I reserved the remainder of the afternoon for picking, talking, and relaxing with musician friends. That worked fine until a hard rain hit early in the evening, scattering a square dance demonstration, musicians, and onlookers in all directions. Nancy and I rushed down the main street to a small cafe to get some dinner.

This was uneventful until the storm downed some electric lines, cutting off all electricity to the town. And then we enjoyed a hamburger dinner by candlelight while talking with Lee Triplett, a fine older fiddler I remembered from other festivals. He remembered when all the musicians were picked up at home and delivered to the festival and remarked that he even had to get his own hotel room these days.

Woody Simmons of Mill Creek plays guitar accompaniment for a fellow contestant. Woody entered both the fiddle and banjo contests as well as backing up other contestants.

The sky was still storm-dark when we finished dinner. I was worried that the first night's music would be rained out but heard a banjo from the direction of the box elder tree. Pickers were already gathering in Liberty's tent. No matter what other people had said earlier, I was glad they were there providing a roof; here a small session of fiddle tunes went on well past the time when the rain stopped and the lights went on.

Friday is traditionally the day when the population of Glenville increases manyfold. The Folk Festival Belles in their bonnets and long, colorful dresses arrive as well as a hoard of musicians coming for the banjo and fiddle contests. Both these contests are divided into two categories: one for contestants under 50 years old, and another for contestants over 50. It's a good chance to hear very serious younger musicians get an opportunity to try out their best numbers on the auditorium stage at Glenville State College and then enjoy the old masters of the art. We spent much of Friday morning and early afternoon playing and listening to music under the tree. I did manage to spend a couple of hours visiting with the craftsmen who had displays. I remembered the banjo maker, Paul King, of Tunnelton, W. Va., from the crafts fair during Mountaineer Week in Morgantown. As usual, I was more then impressed with his excellent five-string frailing and his fine bluegrass banjos which reflect the handmade care lacking in today's factory-made, brand-name instruments.

Back at the tree, small crowds of people with tape re-

(left) Phoebe Parsons, 1975 over-50 banjo champion, playing in the contest. (below) Stu Cohen, a 1975 judge at Glenville and an authority on old-time banjo, frails a tune in the parking lot.

corders gathered around the older fiddlers preparing for the contest. Melvin Wine of Copin, W. Va., who must have played for a couple of hours, was surrounded by an audience of faces and microphones. I'm sure no one there was surprised the next day when he was awarded the coveted first prize in the over-50 category of the fiddlers' contest. As usual his fiddling was superb.

By mid-afternoon Friday the competition began in the theater up the hill. Fiddlers and banjo pickers from the two age groups played on Friday or Saturday afternoon. Some players exhibited polished hornpipes and reels note for note; some took a moment to clown with the audience. The judges sat behind a curtain offstage, unaware that a roar of laughter from the audience was caused by Lee Triplett's famous little dance of counting time with his hips. Some of the tunes became a song when a contestant sang a verse. Jenes Cottrell did his "Arkansas Traveler" routine in between frailing verses on his homemade banjo whose rim is made from a 1956 Buick's torque converter in an automatic transmission. Phoebe Parsons, later to win first prize banjo picker, threw into her tune a bit of a technique she calls "fanning." The hardest part of a contest like this is the judging. Many contestants do a superb job. The difference in the style of the fiddlers or banjo pickers makes it nearly impossible to decide who played better, but somehow decisions are made. On Saturday evening some excellent musicians received well-deserved recognition. Most of the musicians then returned down the hill for another night of parking lot pick-

Lee Triplett, a well-known West Virginia fiddler, plays "Old Joe Clark" under the box elder tree.

ing, while others put on an informal show on the contest stage.

Traditionally the music at Glenville has been the old-time string band music played in this country during the '20s and '30s. Fiddlers draw tunes from many thousands of fiddle tunes. Each tune is played with subtle variations in melody and rhythm. The banjo is the clawhammer style. Within this style the banjo is able to closely match the fiddler's melody while keeping a strong rhythm going. Occasionally a mandolin, penny whistle, hammered dulcimer, or concertina will play the tune in unison with the fiddle. A guitar and maybe a string bass plays the accompaniment. In old-time music, unlike its close cousin bluegrass, no one takes solos or breaks. Everyone with a melody instrument plays together until a mutual ending or fatigue brings the band to a halt. The sound of the whole string band is stressed in preference to individual instruments.

Saturday night the picking goes very late, well into Sunday morning. People who have played almost continuously for two days pick in small groups with a couple of fiddles, a banjo, and a guitar. The crowd gradually gets smaller as the pickers give in to sleep. Dawn on Sunday morning shows a different Glenville with folks quietly repacking cars and leaving town, except for the people who stop off at Job's Temple for the annual shape note singing celebration. By Sunday evening Glenville is back to normal for another year.

In This Issue

FRED BARKEY was born and raised in Pittsburgh. He received both his bachelor's and master's degrees from Marshall University and his Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh, where he specialized in labor history. He has taught in Kanawha County public schools and now is chairman of the history department at Morris Harvey College. His writings have been published in several labor journals. Dr. Barkey helped establish the West Virginia Labor History Association and the Kanawha Valley Historic and Preservation Society. He serves as consultant for the Education Foundation and the Oral History Collection of the West Virginia Commission on Aging.

CARL FLEISCHHAUER works as a reporter and photographer for public television station WWVU-TV in Morgantown. A native of Columbus, Ohio, he graduated from Kenyon College and received his M.F.A. from Ohio University. In five years in West Virginia his "extra-curricular" work has included the Library of Congress documentary record album *The Hammons Family*, produced in conjunction with Dwight Diller and Alan Jabbour.

TOM HODGES, JR. was born in Braxton County 30 years ago. Educated in West Virginia schools, he has chosen to make his career in the Mountain State. His photographic training began with high school science projects and continued with the college newspaper and, finally, professional assignments for studio and commercial firms. The photographer also gained his journalistic experience in West Virginia; he spent nearly four years on the staff of the Charleston *Daily Mail* and is now photographer with the Beckley *Post-Herald*. He was elected in 1973 to membership in the American Society of Magazine Photographers. Hodges' credits include *Time*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and the Washington *Post*, and in 1973 he illustrated *The Mountain Artisans Quilting Book* by Alfred Allen Lewis.

JEANNIE HORACEK was raised in Jane Lew and received her A.B. and B.S. degrees from West Virginia University. She taught several years in Fairmont and now lives in Illinois. She was a vocalist with the Appalachian Women's String Band for several years.
LOUIS HORACEK, a native of Kansas, lived in Morgantown from 1960 to 1972 and in Fairmont from 1972 to 1975. He received his bachelor's degree in sociology from West Virginia University and is currently studying library science at the University of Illinois. He is very interested in the history of commercial country music.

JOHN P. KILLORAN is a railroad buff who has been active in practically every major rail project in West Virginia "railfanning" for the past 20 years or so. He was part of the small citizens committee that saved the Cass Scenic Railroad, organized publicity that made Clay County's Buffalo Creek and Gauley Railroad nationally known in the late 1950s when it was the last remaining railroad loyal to steam locomotives, founded the State's only rail museum in Huntington, was the first president of the only railfan club in the State, and is a director of the National Railway Historical Society. Last November he was elected president of the Tourist Railway Association. Since 1964 he has been employed by West Virginia's State Park System and is now assigned to the Charleston offices as an Assistant Chief. He has a major responsibility in the supervision and expansion of the Cass Scenic Railroad. Killoran was born in Lewisburg and is a graduate of Marshall University. He and his wife Nancy are avid rail and West Virginia historians.

MICHAEL MEADOR, a native of Oceana, began studying photography in 1964 and has a B.A. degree in journalism from Marshall University. He has worked for two Huntington printing companies and as photographer for the Charleston *Daily Mail* and the Kingsport (Tennessee) *Times-News*. He has been a free-lance photographer and has exhibited in several art and photography shows in West Virginia. He moved to Charleston in 1973 and became a photographer and publications designer for the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, his present employer.

ROSE ANN MEYER was born at Mabie and now lives in Beverly with her four children. During a 14-year stay in Ohio she attended the Stark Regional Campus of Kent State University. Earlier this year she received her B.S. degree from Davis and Elkins College and has completed teaching certification requirements in language arts. Meyer has written several articles on the history of Randolph County, particularly the Beverly area. One, planned for the September 1975 issue of *Mountain Life and Work*, deals with the neglect of the Rich Mountain Battlefield, a particularly strong concern of hers.

MONA RIDDER, though born in Florida and raised mostly in Georgia and Tennessee, is able to trace her family back to 1622 when her ancestors arrived at College Lands, Virginia, from England. Many of the present residents of Keyser and Elk Garden are her aunts, uncles, and cousins. She and her husband Dixon share an avid interest in family history and genealogy. The Ridders and their two children live in their ancestral community, Elk Garden.

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