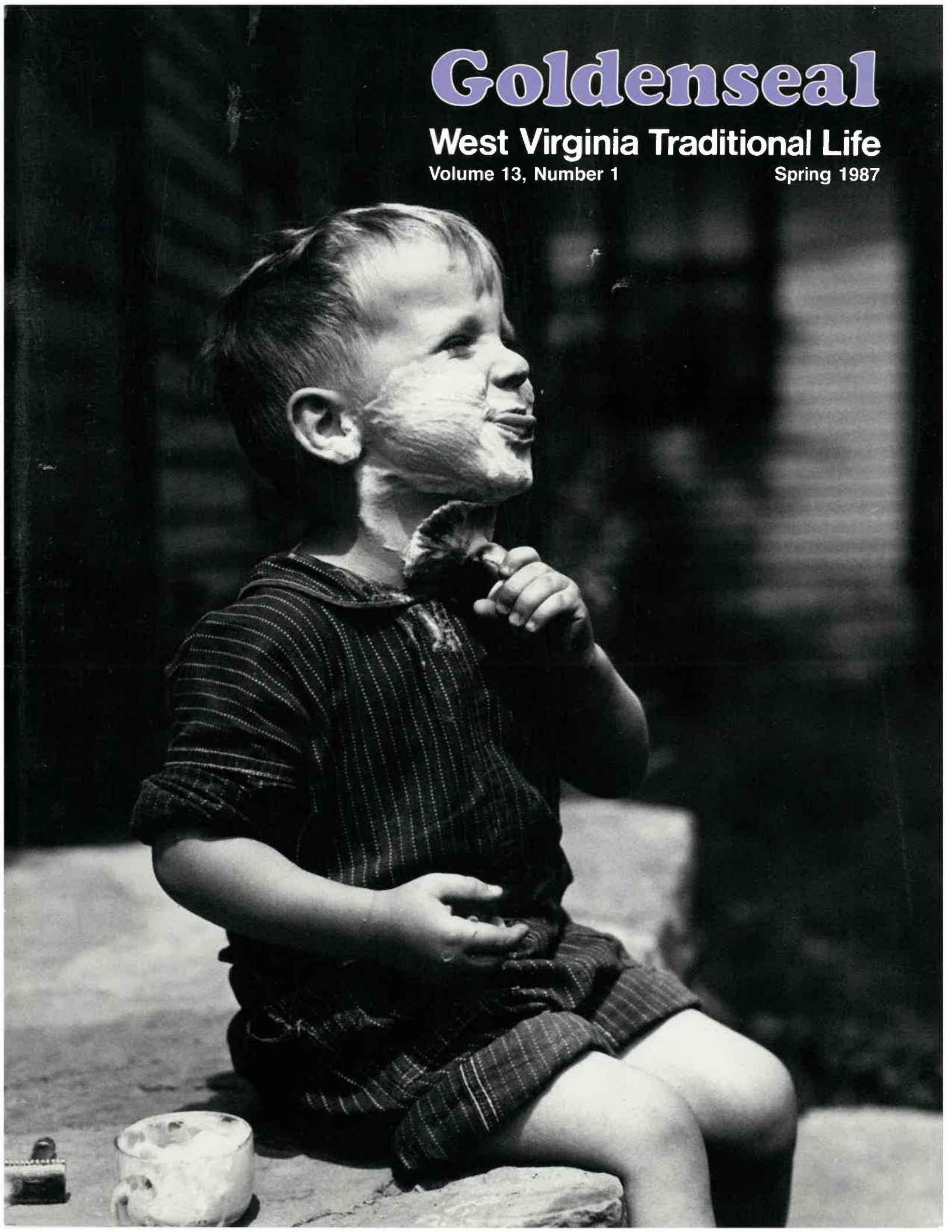

Goldenseal

West Virginia Traditional Life

Volume 13, Number 1 Spring 1987

Folklife • Fairs • Festivals

GOLDENSEAL's "Folklife Fairs Festivals" calendar is prepared three to six months in advance of publication. The information was accurate as far as we could determine at the time the magazine went to press. However, it is advisable to check with the organization or event to make certain that dates or locations have not been changed. The phone numbers given are all within the West Virginia (304) area code.

April 11 — Richwood (846-6790)
Feast of the Ramson
April 12 — Clay (587-2951)
Clay County Ramp Dinner
April 17-19 — Wheeling (242-3000)
Good Egg Treasure Hunt (Oglebay Park)
April 23 — Huntington (696-5990)
Dogwood Arts & Crafts Festival
April 25 — Helvetia (924-5063)
Helvetia Ramp Dinner
April 25-26 — Braxton County (364-2340)
Braxton County Arts & Crafts Show
April 25-26 — Cass (1-800-CALL WVA)
Spring Weekend (Cass Scenic Railroad)
April 27-29 — Pipestem (348-3370)
Pipestem Spring Senior Citizen Fling
April 30-May 2 — Mingo (339-6462)
Allegheny Mountain Wool Fair
May 1-3 — Mullens (294-4211)
Dogwood Festival
May 3 — Dunbar (766-0223)
Spring Festival
May 6-10 — Fairmont (366-4256)
Three Rivers Coal Festival
May 7 — Wellsburg (737-3666)
Heritage Days Craft & Quilt Show
May 7-10 — Davis (348-3370)
26th Wild Flower Pilgrimage (Blackwater Falls)
May 9 — Dunbar (766-0223)
Senior Citizens Spring Picnic
May 9 — Moundsville (845-9810)
Arts & Crafts Fair (Grand Vue Park)
May 9-10 — Huntington (529-2701)
10th Annual Benefit Antiques Show & Sale
May 9-10 — Fairmont (363-3030)
Traditional Music Weekend (Pricketts Fort)
May 9-10 — Point Pleasant (675-5737)
Antique Steam & Gas Engine Show
May 13-15 — Huntington (529-2701)
Heritage Festival (Huntington Galleries)
May 16 — South Charleston (744-0051)
Freedom Festival
May 16-24 — Webster Springs (847-5112)
Webster County Woodchopping Festival
May 17 — Shepherdstown (876-2551)
Mayfestival (Bavarian Inn & Lodge)
May 22-24 — Charleston (348-0220)
Vandalia Gathering (State Capitol Grounds)
May 22-24 — White Sulphur Springs (536-1721)
West Virginia Dandelion Festival
May 23-25 — Nitro (755-0701)
Spring Festival
May 27-31 — Buckhannon (472-5674)
West Virginia Strawberry Festival
May 29-31 — Bluefield (327-7184)
Rocky Top Mountain Festival
June 4 — Princeton (425-9392)
Princeton Town Fair
June 4-6 — Grantsville (354-7016)
Calhoun County Wood Festival
June 7 — Charleston (744-4323)
Rhododendron Arts & Crafts Festival (State Capitol)
June 12-14 — Star City (292-5081)
Mountaineer Country Glass Festival
June 12-14 — Lewisburg (645-2080)
Lewisburg Antique Show & Sale
June 12-14 — Charles Town (725-2055)
16th Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
June 18-21 — Glenville (462-7361)
West Virginia State Folk Festival
June 18-21 — St. Marys (684-7111)
West Virginia Bass Festival
June 13-14 — Fairmont (363-8538)
West Virginia Birthday Celebration
June 20-21 — Point Pleasant (765-5737)
Pioneer Days & Wheat Harvest
June 26-27 — Cottageville (372-4377)
Jackson County Gospel Sing
June 26-28 — Summersville (872-3145)
Bluegrass-Country Music Festival
June 27-28 — Wheeling (242-3000)
Farm Festival (Oglebay Zoo)
June 27 — Hillsboro (364-2340)
Pearl Buck Birthday Celebration
June 30-July 5 — New Martinsville (455-5060)
New Martinsville Regatta
July 1-5 — Ripley (232-5424)
Mountain State Art & Craft Fair (Cedar Lakes)
July 2-5 — Weirton (748-7212)
Weirton International Food & Arts Festival
July 4 — Vienna (422-8451)
Vienna Freedom Festival
July 4 — Ripley (768-3498)
11th Highland Games & Dancing Competition
July 10-12 — Marlinton (799-4973)
Pioneer Days
July 12-August 14 — Elkins (636-1903)
Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop (D & E College)
July 17-19 — Renick (497-2563)
Spring Creek Benefit (Outdoor Amphitheatre)
July 17-26 — Huntington (329-8737)
Summerfest (Harris Riverfront Park)
July 17-26 — Huntington (606) 329-8737
Tri-State Fair & Regatta
July 18 — Morgantown (296-5196)
Antique & Special Interest Car Show
July 18 — Purgitsville (289-3492)
Sing-A-Long Wine Tasting
July 19-25 — Moorefield (538-2725)
West Virginia Poultry Convention
July 19-25 — Mineral Wells (489-2829)
4-H & Wood County Fair
July 24-26 — Wheeling (233-1090)
Upper Ohio Valley Italian Festival
July 24-26 — Mt. Nebo (872-3630)
Mt. Nebo Gospel Sing
July 27-August 1 — Cottageville (372-2011)
Jackson County Junior Fair (Cottageville Fairgrounds)
July 31-August 2 — Clifftop (438-6429)
Appalachian Open Bluegrass Championship (Camp Washington-Carver)
August 1 — Purgitsville (289-3493)
Taste of the East
August 1-2 — Vienna (485-4464)
West Virginia Glass Festival
August 3-8 — Richwood (846-6790)
Cherry River Festival

(continued on inside back cover)

Published by the
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

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through its
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GOLDENSEAL is published four times a year, in the spring, summer, fall, and winter. The magazine is distributed without charge, although a $12.50 yearly contribution is suggested. Manuscripts, photographs, and letters are welcome. All correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, GOLDENSEAL, Department of Culture and History, The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305. Phone (304) 348-0220.

Goldenseal

Volume 13, Number 1 Spring 1987

COVER: Jack Swisher lathers up on the back stoop of Grandmother Ellen Hyer Swisher's house in Sutton, about 1930. "A Particular Time," featuring photographs by Jack's Uncle Tom Swisher, begins on page 9 with a portrait of two unidentified friends of Mrs. Swisher.

PHOTOS: Velma Eyler Dougherty, Michael Keller, Fred Miller, Jeff Seager, Chris Spencer, Thomas Hyer Swisher.

Above: Some music is made for the crowd and some for the appreciation of a friend. This fiddler was one of Vandalia's many jam musicians. Photo by Jeff Seager.

Below: It takes concentration, as any contest musician will tell you. Here Eric Canady tries for the youth fiddle prize while John Preston backs him up. Photo by Michael Keller.

Fiddler Joe Dobbs anchors this group by the west entrance to the State Capitol. Photo by Michael Keller.

Vandalia Gathering

The 11th Vandalia Gathering will provide the perfect opportunity to shake off the winter wool and celebrate, with plenty of oldtime music, dancing, food and West Virginia crafts. Vandalia will be held in and around the Cultural Center this Memorial Day Weekend. Friday evening, May 22, will officially open the folklife festival, with a concert in the theater. The "Picking A-Plenty" concert will feature some of the state's finest banjo players.

Saturday takes off at 11:00 a.m. with the opening of the food and craft demonstration booths and registration for the fiddle contest, open to all state residents. Dancing — from polka to clogging, with crowd participation encouraged — will take place throughout the day. There will be jam sessions under the trees and old-

Above: West Virginia craftsmanship is an important part of the festival. Here Benny Arms of Glen Dale works on a white oak basket. Photo by Michael Keller.

Below: Break time calls for a shady spot and a good place to sit. These gentlemen are among the citizens who bring the best of West Virginia to the Capitol grounds. Photo by Michael Keller.

time music performances. This year's Vandalia will host a new Saturday event, the lap dulcimer contest, the first of its kind in West Virginia. The day will close with an awards ceremony and another theater concert.

Sunday picks up with more music, dancing, food, crafts and storytelling. Banjo contest registration begins at 11:00 a.m., with the picking starting at noon. The West Virginia State Liars' Contest, a popular festival event, begins at 2:00 p.m. on the storytelling stage. State residents will compete for the title of West Virginia's Biggest Liar, with 1986 winner Paul Lepp back to defend his crown. Cash prizes and ribbons will be awarded to first, second and third place winners. At 5:00 p.m. the winning liars and banjo pickers will be announced, as a final awards concert winds up the weekend.

Traditional crafts will be demonstrated throughout Vandalia and the annual Quilt Show officially opened, with the state's most talented quilters honored for their work. The quilts will remain on display at the Cultural Center until Labor Day. There will be lots of good food available — traditional favorites, including corn on the cob and rib sandwiches, along with such ethnic treats as Greek baklava.

Vandalia Gathering is free to the public, and everyone is invited.

Letters from Readers

GOLDENSEAL welcomes letters of general interest from readers. Our address is Department of Culture and History, The Cultural Center, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Published letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

Vandalia, Ohio
October 9, 1986
Editor:
I am enclosing payment of $25 for the subscriptions of myself and my aunt. We have been subscribers for several years and find the magazine interesting and informative. The stories are so much like the experiences of my family who lived in the Thomas and Davis area for many years and migrated to Dayton, Ohio, in 1916.

You might be interested to know that your magazine is gaining a lot of attention in a class sponsored by the Sinclair College in Dayton and held here in our Vandalia Senior Citizens Center. The course, "Appalachia," has created so much interest in our community that we have 60 people enrolled, the largest class of any we have had. Our instructor, Professor Ed Davis, is a native of Princeton, West Virginia, and is able to relate to our group so well.

I am looking forward to many more issues.
Sincerely,
Cecelia R. Yankus

Spring Hill, Florida
October 15, 1986
Editor:
I want to congratulate you on the outstanding job you are doing in publishing this magazine. For far too many years West Virginia was a forgotten state. Many people in distant states thought we were from Western Virginia. During 18 years of my career I traveled over many parts of America in my work, and when I was introduced many times people would say "How close do you live to Richmond?" Or "Virginia is a very historic state." I quickly straightened them out.

For many years I was a national officer in the Fraternal Order of Eagles, and when I first started attending their national conventions in cities across America, they had our few delegates seated on the rear of the balcony of the convention hall. Within three years after I started attending, we had our delegates sitting on the third row from the speakers platform on the first floor, and we had delegates from 35 cities of West Virginia. In Seattle, I gave the orchestra leader at our annual banquet $10 to have his orchestra play one of our West Virginia songs before several thousand delegates. They started playing "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia." Ten delegates at my table stood up and booed them. The orchestra leader rushed back to our table and asked what was wrong. I told him he had the wrong state. Our 10 mountaineers then remained standing and sang "The West Virginia Hills" — and it brought down the house. That was long ago — in 1948 — but I will never forget our pride in our state.
Sincerely,
H. H. Chinn

Little Rock, Arkansas
January 9, 1987
Editor:
I have been receiving GOLDENSEAL for over a year now and I am continually impressed by the quality of your publication. The information contained within its pages is an invaluable resource to the citizens of West Virginia interested in preserving and learning more about the state's cultural heritage. I can't help but wish that our state produced a work which could rival your publication. Keep up the excellent work!
Sincerely,
Stephen P. Poyser, Ph.D.
Folk Arts Coordinator
Arkansas Arts Council

Bay City, Michigan
December 31, 1986
Editor:
I have just reviewed the winter issue of GOLDENSEAL and, as usual, there are several articles that command my interest, especially the one on glass making. As an electronics person, I particularly remember in a past issue the article about the young man that set up an audio distribution system throughout a small town to bring the marvel of radio to many, via his one home receiver. We have been to your wonderful state many times and have developed great respect for your charming people and the historic gems you have preserved.

As natives of Michigan, we came to know the charms of West Virginia in a somewhat roundabout way. Our daughter was doing great in honors college majoring in art, so it came as quite a surprise to us that she wanted to drop out of college and join VISTA, but these were the days of Vietnam and we understood and gave our approval. She was assigned to the Cabin Creek Quilting Project near Charleston. There she fell in love with both the people and the state and has, for all practical purposes, changed her allegiance to West Virginia. After several changes of career and the completion of her education at WVU, she found herself in a graphics art business and one of her first customers was a well known and respected state publication where she applied her skills and training assembling the pages of the magazine. As you may have guessed by now, the daughter is Colleen and the publication is GOLDENSEAL.

We are very proud of her and of you. Keep up the fine work and God's blessings to you and your staff.
Sincerely,
Ron and Aileen Anderson

Although young for the title, designer Colleen Anderson is GOLDENSEAL's official oldtimer, having more seniority than the editor or anyone else. She has worked on the magazine in one capacity or another since Volume 1, Number 1, back in 1975. — Ed.

Autumn Amos

Atlanta, Georgia
January 12, 1987
Editor:
While I was home (Fairmont) for Christmas my mother had a stack of

the wonderful magazine, GOLDENSEAL. Unfortunately, she did not have all copies but I came back with all she had. I have certainly enjoyed reading all of the articles in these magazines, as they are timeless. I have especially enjoyed the articles on glass blowing, Ruby Morris, the oldtime music, the bicentennial of Morgantown, Clarksburg and Parkersburg.

There is one magazine my mother did not have that I would like to get if possible. That is the issue with the article on Autumn Amos. She taught my mother in the 1930's. I also wonder if she could be related to a Sue Amos who taught me in second or third grade at the Watson School just outside Fairmont?

Also enclosed please find my check for my subscription. I look forward to learning more about my home state. As they say, "You can take the girl out of the hills but you can't take the hills out of the girl!"
Sincerely,
Mary Kay Travis

P.S. I know you don't want this brought up again but I enjoyed the letters and short articles on the ferry diddles and hoop snakes.

Beekeeping

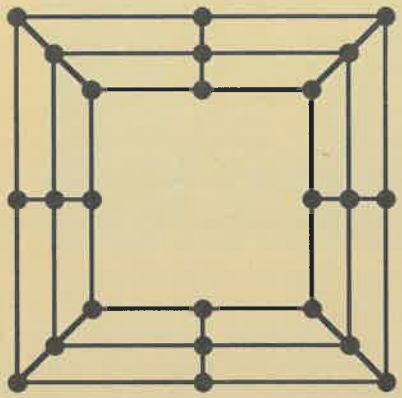
Salisbury, Maryland
January 6, 1987
Editor:
I just finished reading the two articles on bees in the Winter 1986 issue. They brought back a bee story that happened when I lived on Caldwell Run, in Harrison County, with my father. He usually had four or five hives of bees. They were located about a hundred yards above the house in the pasture field.

One day a calf some six weeks old knocked over one of the hives. My father worked at the time for an uncle in a garage a quarter of a mile away. In no time at all that calf was covered with bees. Mother warned me to stay in the house and she went after Dad. He came up to the fence, climbed over, got that calf on its feet and half carried, half pushed that calf to the barn. There he picked the bees off one at a time and mashed them with his foot. Now remember, while this was taking place he had no protective clothing on at any time. That night, after dark, he piled straw around all the hives and set them afire.

"That could have been my boy instead of a calf," he said, as he lit the match.

Later in life, I remembered the story of the bees and the calf and I asked him why he did not get stung. He told me he had been a friend of the bees and they knew it. He was not afraid of them and they knew that, too. Thinking back through the years, I never remember my dad with a veiled hat or a smoker, two pieces of equipment that Granddad always used. He himself was scared to death of his bees.
Sincerely,
Vernon O. Giffin

Another Game



Summerland Key, Florida
December 30, 1986
Editor:
Are any other GOLDENSEAL readers familiar with the board game called Mill Morris? When I was young (ca. World War I) we knew Fox and Geese (GOLDENSEAL Winter '86, page 23), but preferred Mill Morris, a game from my mother's childhood. Mother (1876-1976), one of six children, grew up on a farm a mile from nearest neighbors and learned to manufacture her own entertainments. For pieces we preferred miniature checkers, backgammon or haloma pieces but of course buttons or grains or corn may be used.

Mill Morris is a board game laid out as shown and played by two players. Each player has 12 pieces and attempts to get three of his pieces in a row wherever he can and to prevent his opponent from doing likewise. Game pieces occupy intersections of lines and play follows the lines. Play is started by the first player placing one of his pieces on any intersection. The second player then places one of his pieces on an intersection of his choice; play continues by turn until all 24 pieces have been placed. When either player gets three of his pieces in a row he may remove and retire from play any one of his opponent's pieces. When all pieces are placed, play continues by each player in turn moving any one of his pieces along any line to the next intersection, which must be vacant. When a move results in a three-in-a-row, one of the opponent's pieces is removed. The winner is the player who removes all of his opponent's pieces. When a player's pieces are arranged so that he can move one piece back and forth, making three-in-a-row at each move, he is said to have established the *mill* referred to in the name of the game.

The first player in Mill Morris has a big, but not completely preponderant, advantage among players of average ability. Loser goes first, next game.

I assume the game is of English origin but have no facts; it may well go back to the 17th Century coffeehouse days.
Best Regards,
Bassett Ferguson

We expect Bassett Ferguson will have left Florida for his home in Harpers Ferry by the time this GOLDENSEAL is published. We will forward any reader response to him there. — Ed.

Ed Buck

Lenior, North Carolina
Editor:
Ed Buck! Where are you?

In the first issue of GOLDENSEAL (Summer '85) I ever saw, the first article I read, "Trappers Rendezvous," mentioned Ed Buck of Richwood, my high school love. He doesn't look quite like he did back in the "olden days," but how could I ever forget anyone so very special?
Sincerely,
Jeanne L. Marler

Aunt Ruth

Emlenton, Pennsylvania
January 20, 1987
Editor:
We have just read the complimentary copy of GOLDENSEAL from our son Greg Todd with his story of "Aunt Ruth."

It is a most delightful magazine and, being 73, I was able to relate to several of the articles written in it. Except for my third grade in school at Triadelphia, my education through sixth grade was spent in a one-room school, Old No. 9 at the headwaters of Battle Run and Liberty District in Ohio County, the McGraws Run School. It was there we played a winter game, "Fox and Geese," in the snow.

My father, Lindsey Whipkey, carried mail from Triadelphia to Dallas, West Virginia, several years by horse and buggy during the winter.

While we lived on McGraws Run, our property joined the farm owned by an Italian, Thomas Tunis, who had a moonshine still dug under his corn field, with pipes down over the hill to his yard behind his house. I have a "Gone With the Wind" handpainted lamp purchased at the Lamplighter in Wellsburg in 1970's — so those articles were of much interest to me, as well. I enclose my contribution of $12.50 for your coming issues.
Sincerely,
Mrs. James (Hazel) Todd

Rochester, Pennsylvania
January 14, 1987
Editor:
Although I was born and raised in Pennsylvania, my parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were all West Virginians. When I went to work in West Virginia I married a Mountaineer, so I have innumerable relatives and friends in West Virginia.

Our two girls were born there. Both married native West Virginians and one graduated from Marshall University in 1979. It was from her that I received the Winter 1986 issue of GOLDENSEAL, with the remonstrance "don't let anything happen to this." She now lives in Kansas.

I knew "Aunt Ruth" and her family when we lived in Cameron, Marshall County. She came to spend summers with her mother. Mrs. Todd was a solemn woman in her 80's, devoted to her family and church. Cameron was a football town and we were told everyone attended their games. We doubted this until we saw Mrs. Todd, whom we had never known to go anywhere except to church, accompanying her daughter and son-in-law to the game.

We never visited Mrs. Todd without receiving eggs, a chicken, or garden produce. Being a flower lover I always admired the dahlias along the fence in front of her house, so I usually got a bouquet, too. She manifested hospitality and had apparently instilled it in her family.

Ruth and I corresponded for a while in the '60's but lost contact after we moved to Ohio. It was a joy to read about her, as well as other areas of West Virginia which hold fond memories of happy days.
Sincerely,
Eleanor W. Bolton

Pickle Street

Boynton Beach, Florida
January 5, 1987
Editor:
I was born at Pickle Street, West Virginia, in 1922, and after reading the article on Mrs. Stella Gordon, I was inspired to write the story of how Pickle Street gots its name, as related to me by my mother. My mother, Mrs. Ocie Gay (Smith) Radcliffe, was born at Pickle Street in 1899. Her story:

In the early days Pickle Street was known as Midway, as it was a point close to midway between Weston and Glenville. There was a one-room school and a general store 50 to 75 yards apart. One day two girls went to the store at lunch time, and one of the girls bought a jar of pickles and placed them in her lunch kit. On the return trip to school they got into a fight and the girl swung her lunch kit at the other one. The pickles fell to the road, hit a rock and broke.

Residents in the area started to call it Pickle Street as a joke. Midway was soon forgotten, but Pickle Street stuck. This is how the story was told to me.

My father, Mr. O. W. (Dick) Radcliffe was born and raised in Gilmer County. He attended Glenville State Normal School and taught school in the area for 19 years, including the one-room school at Pickle Street. He moved the family to Clarksburg in 1934.

I do enjoy the magazine as I can relate to articles and places you write about. I thought you might be interested in my story.
Sincerely,
Clovis J. (Buck) Radcliffe

Current Programs • Events • Publications

GOLDENSEAL announcements are published as a service, as space permits. They are not paid advertisements and items are screened according to the likely interests of our readers. We welcome events announcements and review copies of books and records, but cannot guarantee publication.

Hardy County History

The year 1986 was Hardy County's bicentennial, and a new book was published to mark the occasion. *The History of Hardy County, 1786-1986* was researched and written by Dr. Richard MacMaster, former history professor at James Madison University in Virginia, and published by the Hardy County Bicentennial Commission.

The story begins in 1786, when the Virginia Legislature created Hardy County in what would become the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. The county was named for Samuel Hardy, a Virginian who served in the Continental Congress. Moorefield was established as the county seat, and a small log building was constructed to serve as the county courthouse. The book describes the development of the county throughout the years, and ends with a review of the November 1985 flood's effect upon the area. Also included is information on Hardy County Heritage Weekend, an event held in Moorefield each fall. The book contains names, places and events which may be useful to area genealogists.

The History of Hardy County, 1786-1986 is a 338-page hardback with index. It may be ordered from the Hardy County Public Library, 102 North Main Street, Moorefield, WV 26386 for $35 plus $1.50 postage.

More West Virginia Women

In 1983, the West Virginia Women's Commission published its *Missing Chapters I: West Virginia Women in History*. The book recognized West Virginia women who had made significant contributions in the history of our state. As a result of the book's success, the Women's Commission now announces the recent publication of *Missing Chapters II: West Virginia Women in History*.

Missing Chapters II gives us more good material. The book documents the lives of 15 West Virginia woman who, through their efforts in music, education, politics, theatre, and more, have made themselves important figures in our state. Consider Aunt Jenny Wilson, widow of a Logan County coal miner, who has helped keep the traditional music of West Virginia alive through her banjo playing. Or Anna Reeves Jarvis, whose hard work and determination paved the way for the first Mother's Day celebration, held at St. Andrews Methodist Church in Grafton. And Kanawha County native Ann Kathryn Flagg, a teacher who found success as an actress and an award-winning playwright.

Missing Chapters II is a 200-page paperback. Each of the 15 chapters has a different author, with its own bibliography and endnotes. To order, send $6.95 (postage and handling included) to the West Virginia Women's Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 5069, Charleston, WV 25311. *Missing Chapters I* may be ordered for $4.95, from the same address.

Mountain State Hiking

Outdoors lovers will be happy to learn of a new guidebook on the hiking trails of West Virginia, published by the Appalachian Mountain Club of Boston. *Hiking the Mountain State: The Trails of West Virginia* is written by Allen de Hart, a writer, hiker and trail designer. There is an enthusiastic foreword by Maurice Brooks, renowned naturalist and Professor Emeritus at West Virginia University.

Hiking the Mountain State is a sturdy, pocket-sized handbook which includes over 500 state trails. For each, there is information on the length and difficulty, access, maintenance, and directions. There is also information on nearby camping facilities, hunting and fishing, flora and fauna of the region, residents and local history. The book is illustrated with photographs and 38 National Forest Trail maps show trails in the Monongahela, George Washington and Jefferson national forests. There is an appendix listing hiking organizations and clubs, as well as trail equipment suppliers.

Writer de Hart breaks his subject into national forest and national park trails, state and local public trails, and private trails. His book's only obvious defect is the lack of a key to locate all these trails on one master map. Nevertheless, *Hiking in the Mountain State*, characterized by outdoors writer Skip Johnson as the "walkingman's equivalent of the World Almanac," is sure to find its way into a lot of West Virginia knapsacks this summer.

Hiking the Mountain State, a 401-page paperback with index, sells for $12.95. Write to the Appalachian Mountain Club, Five Joy Street, Boston MA 02108; phone (617) 523-0636.

Ramblers Concert Change

In the Winter 1986 issue, GOLDENSEAL published an announcement on the Elkins Country Dance Society's series of folk concerts in 1986-87. Since then, the date for the last concert scheduled in the series has been changed.

The Red Clay Ramblers, with West Virginia native Tommy Thompson playing banjo, will perform on May 30, rather than April 25. The oldtime string band concert will be held at 8:00 p.m. in the Harper McNelly auditorium of Davis & Elkins College in Elkins. Childcare will be available.

For further information, write to the Elkins Country Dance Society, P. O. Box 2436, Elkins, WV 26241. The Society welcomes new members for an annual dues payment of $5. Members are given discounts at dances and concerts, and receive "Three Forks of Cheat," the Society's newsletter.

Arthurdale Restoration

During the Great Depression of the 1930's, Eleanor Roosevelt visited the coalfields of northern West Virginia. Shocked by the poverty-stricken conditions, the First Lady quickly shared her impressions with her husband. The result was the selection of the Preston County community of Arthurdale as a homestead farm project of the Bureau of Subsistence Homesteads. Its purpose was to resettle unemployed workers and their families into a planned community, where they were given a house and a little land to farm.

The town of Arthurdale, planned and built from scratch, was developed as the first community of the social reorganization effort. Arthurdale was closely supervised by Mrs. Roosevelt, who returned often to monitor its progress. Today, Arthurdale survives as a strong, rural community.

Arthurdale Heritage, Inc., is an organization devoted to restoring and preserving the buildings in Arthurdale square. Glenna Williams, an original homesteader and organization president, says one goal is "a living museum which will keep on telling the Arthurdale story." The organization offers a quarterly newsletter, published in spring, summer, fall and winter, which reports on their fundraising functions and restoration progress.

Arthurdale Heritage welcomes money and time donations, and will send its newsletter to interested friends and supporters. For further information, contact Glenna Williams, President, Arthurdale Heritage Inc., P. O. Box 850, Arthurdale, WV 26530.

Skip Johnson Collection

Most *Charleston Gazette* readers are familiar with writer Skip Johnson, whose column "Woods and Waters" has appeared in the newspaper for over 30 years. A lifelong Braxton Countian, Johnson has considered himself the newspaper's "Braxton Connection" for all those years, and has taken that for the title of his first book. In fact, *The Braxton Connection*, a collection of Johnson's favorite columns, ranges far beyond Braxton and even West Virginia for its material.

The Braxton Connection reflects Johnson's wit, writing talent and love for the outdoors. The stories are about hunting, fishing, camping, rafting and wildlife — deer, rattlesnakes, raccoons, bears, boars and turkeys, to name a few species. In "Don't Malign Rattlesnakes," written in 1973, Johnson begins: "I've come to the conclusion that the expression 'mean as a rattlesnake' is unfair to the snake. In fact, the one I met on a high mountain ridge in Boone County was very amiable." In the 1985 story, "Wildlife I-79 Style," he discusses the wildlife he and fellow carpool members have seen on the rural interstate. "A turtle crossing a four-lane highway," he writes, "deserves everyone's prayers." The book contains 53 short features in all.

The Braxton Connection is a 114-page paperback illustrated by drawings by Bill Pitzer and black and white photographs. It is available in area bookstores and at the *Gazette* office, or can be ordered through the mail. Send $7 (postage and handling included) to Johnson Book, *The Charleston Gazette*, P.O. Box 2993, Charleston, WV 25301. Checks and money orders should be payable to *The Charleston Gazette.*

Indian Mounds

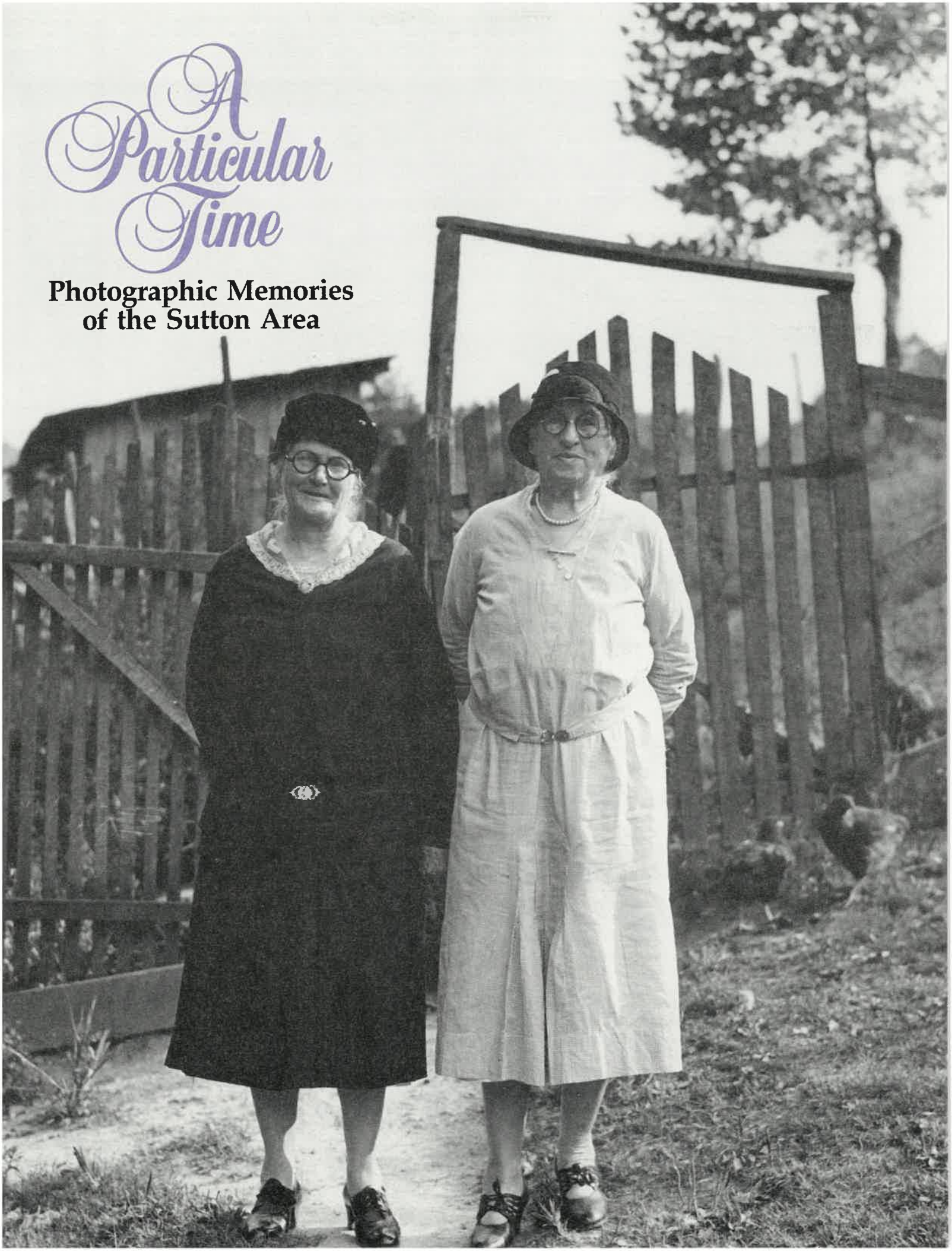
Between 3,000 and 1,500 years ago, the Adena and Hopewell Indians made their homes in the middle Ohio Valley. Although these early people left no written records, we can learn about their cultures by studying their burial mounds which are scattered throughout this area.

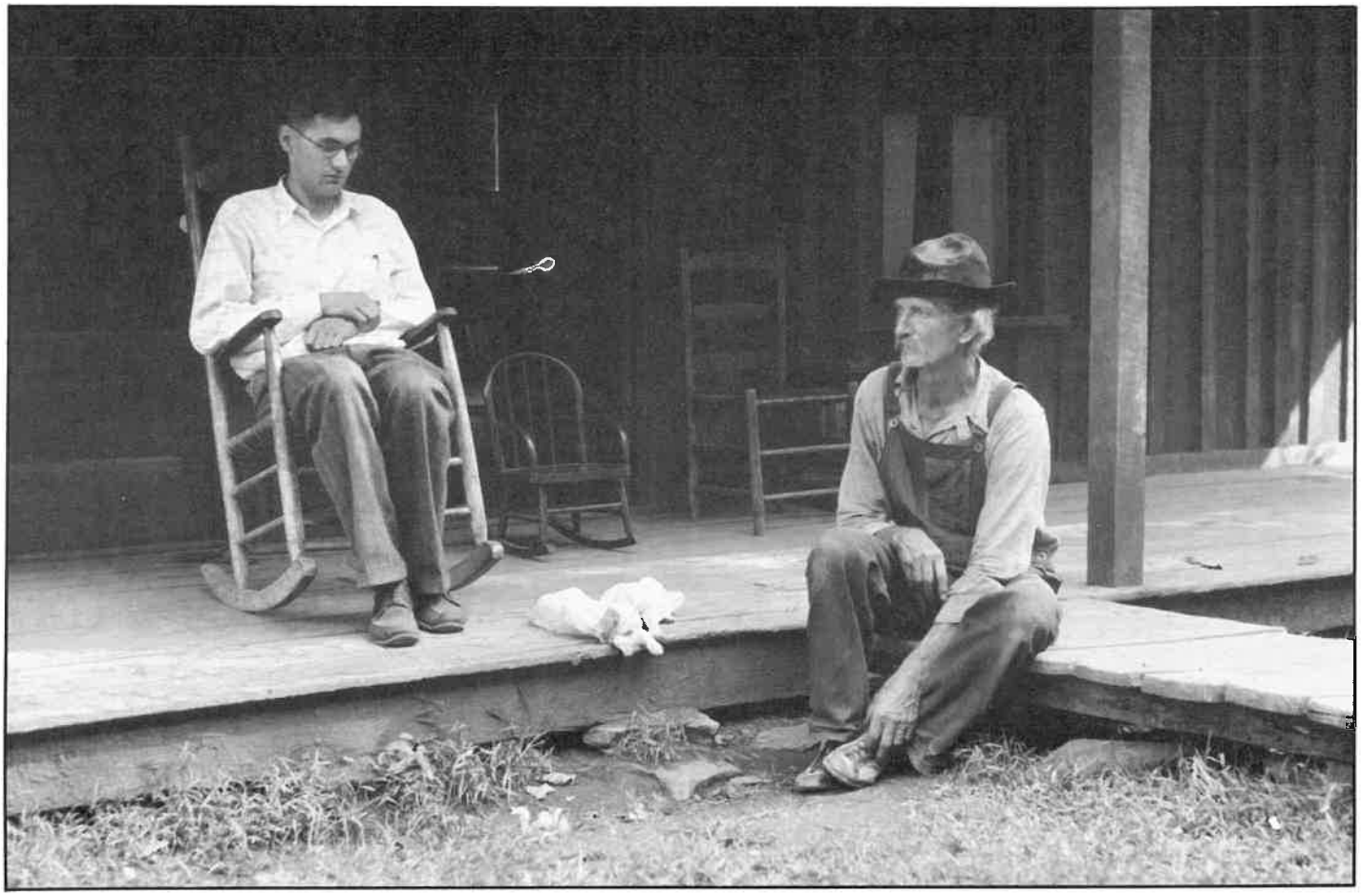
Indian Mounds of the Middle Ohio Valley: A Guide to Adena and Ohio Hopewell Sites is a new book written by Susan Woodward and Jerry McDonald. It gives the history and geography of the Adena and Hopewell Indians, and is a guide to the mounds they built in Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky and Indiana. For each site there are directions, information on public use, available educational facilities and a map. The book covers well-known mound sites in West Virginia, such as the large Adena burial mound in South Charleston and the famous Grave Creek Mound in Moundsville; it also lists other, less-known mounds.

Indian Mounds of the Middle Ohio Valley is a 125-page paperback with index. The book is illustrated with black and white photographs, maps and drawings. There is a section which provides additional information on museum exhibits, publications and available topographic maps of mound sites. The book is available by mail for $9.95 plus $1 shipping (add six percent of $9.95 for delivery to Ohio addresses). Write to the McDonald and Woodward Publishing Company, P.O. Box 4098, Newark, OH 43055.

A Particular Time

Photographic Memories of the Sutton Area





Tom Swisher (left) relaxes with Shelt Carpenter, in an apparent self-portait. Carpenter, a legendary Elk River figure, was Swisher's friend as well as frequent photographic subject.

The Engineer as Artist

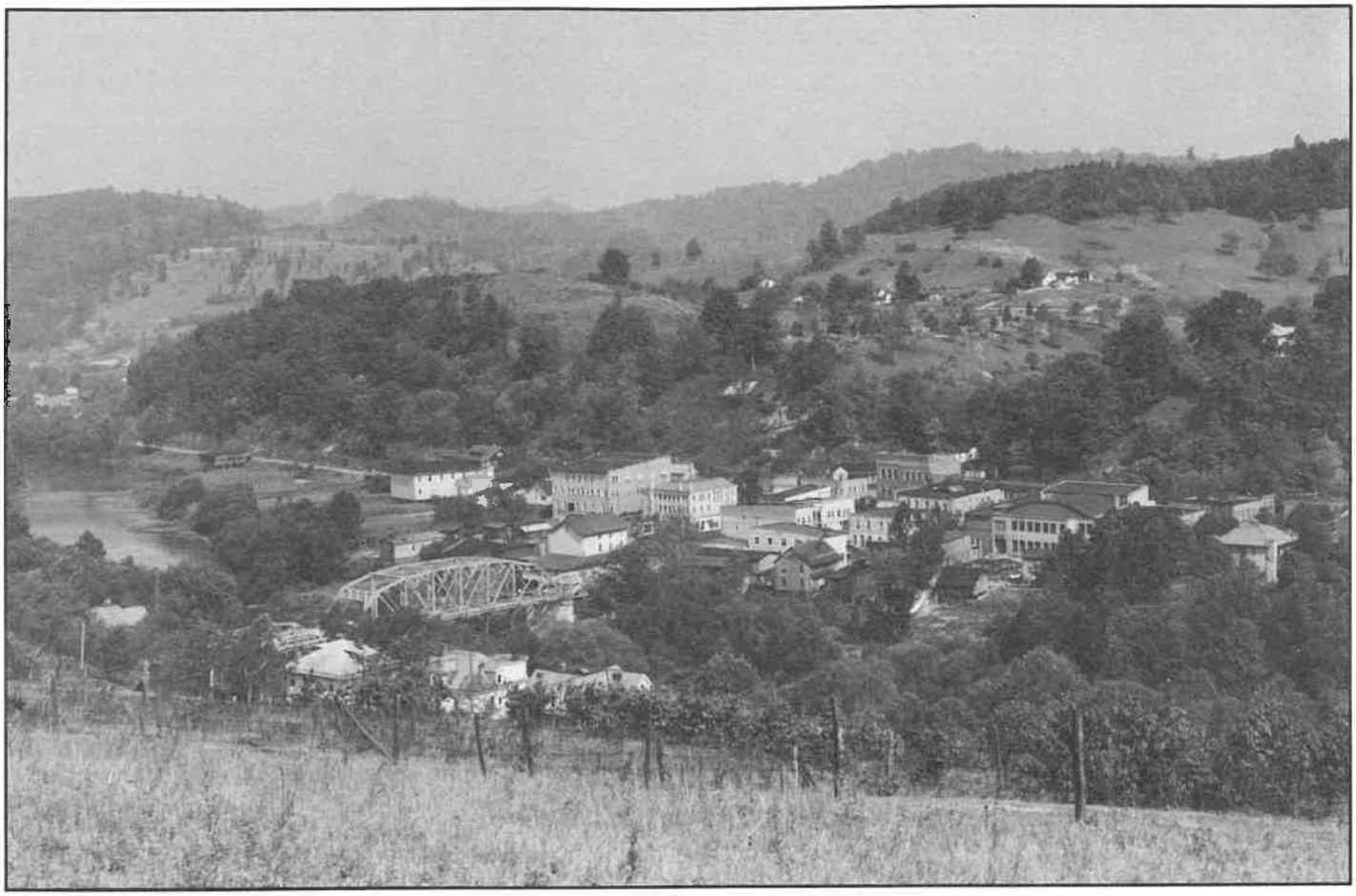
Thomas Swisher's Sutton Photographs

By Charles F. Swisher

Several months ago, my cousin and family historiographer, Bob Swisher, called to say that GOLDENSEAL had published a photograph of Shelt Carpenter that he thought was probably taken by my father, Thomas Hyer Swisher, many years ago. When he described the photo, I knew immediately that it was not only taken by my father, but that it won him a special award for excellence and has been well-known in our family for years.

There were a number of other photographs that I remembered seeing, and I was sure that the original negative of the Shelt Carpenter photograph was also around the house somewhere. But where? A search in all the obvious places revealed nothing, and after a week of hunting I gave up all hope of finding them. Then, lo and behold, the entire cache was finally discovered along with the original negative of Shelt Carpenter!

These photographs were taken by my father using a large-format Voigtlander camera and single-sheet Kodak black and white film. My best guess is that this series of West Virginia photographs was made in 1930. Although Father was quite a perfectionist in every way, he somehow neglected to keep an accurate record of the dates and subjects of his photographs. Fortunately, all the negatives and contact prints were carefully filed and safely stored for 56 years. It has been difficult for me to positively identify some places and people, but many are obvious. Apart from Father's collection of West Virginia photographs, there remains a large series from New York, especially the Lake George area. Summer and winter outings there were common during his years in Schenectady, where his photographic hobby later flourished.



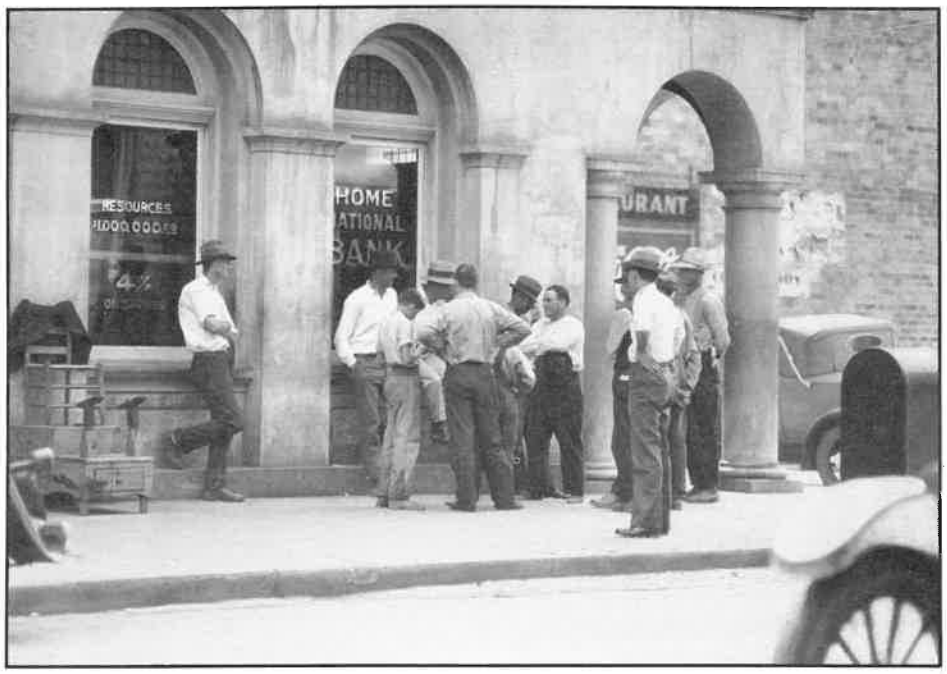
Above: Tom Swisher's Sutton, about 1930. This view is from across the river, in the general area of Swisher's boyhood home.

Below: The Swisher home. Photographer's son Charles Swisher recalls "curious nooks and crannies, kerosene lamps, antique furniture and the musty smell of unused rooms."

Thomas Swisher, engineer, scientist, inventor, photographer and golfer, was born in 1899 at his grandparents' house in Jane Lew, Lewis County. His parents were Hugh and Ella Hyer Swisher. Young Tom was raised in Sutton and graduated from Sutton High School in 1916. He attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, later transferring to the Mechanical Engineering Department of West Virginia University in Morgantown. He graduated from WVU in 1923 with the highest grade average ever made in mechanical engineering. While at the university he was president of the Engineering Society and a charter member of the Alpha Chapter of Tau Beta Pi, the honorary engineering society.

In his book, *The Swisher Family of Harrison and Lewis Counties, West Virginia,* Bob Swisher tells the following story: "Until 1923 there was no electricity within over 50 miles of Sutton, Tom Swisher's hometown. Illumination for Sutton's houses and streets had been by natural gas. A short time after Tom's graduation from West Virginia University, his father organized a group to build an electric plant in Sutton. Tom designed that first plant, together with all the transmission lines and street lights, and supervised their building. The generator was placed in the ice plant, where steam boilers were already available."

My father joined the General Electric Company in 1923, where he worked in the Research Laboratories at the company headquarters in Schenectady. My mother, Frances Hannan Swisher from Watervliet, New York, worked in the GE Re-



Above: Downtown was of special interest to Swisher. This building, constructed in 1894 and still standing, was a bank in 1930 and for many years afterwards. This corner has traditionally been a popular gathering spot.

Below: The other side of the Home National Bank corner looks toward the Elk River bridge, new at the time this photograph was made. The automobile carries a 1930 tag.

search Laboratories at the time, as secretary to Drs. Whitney, Coolidge, and Langmuir, three notable and distinguished General Electric scientists. She was, among other things, in charge of new employee records, and she was the one to put Tom Swisher on the payroll. Love bloomed in the laboratories. They were married in 1928, and I was born in 1934. We moved from Schenectady to Glen Ellyn, Illinois, in 1939. The family lived in Elmhurst, Illinois, from 1941 to 1964, and my parents' golden years were spent in Mountain View, California.

A best guess is that my father's photography hobby spanned the decade from 1928 to 1938. He always approached things with a high level

It is always interesting to look at old photographs of people and places we've known. The pictures seem to offer some kind of permanence, as if time had stood still in all the decades since the photographer captured that moment. With people, when you look at them now all that lost time piles up in a hurry as aging faces reflect the years that have passed. This is somewhat less true with the more permanent things of nature, such as photos of the swimming hole or your favorite tree. They don't change as quickly and we don't notice the change as much. Pictures of buildings fall into a middle ground between people and natural features. A building, if it still exists, is usually recognizable. If you walk down the street, you can look at it again, touch it, and remember the sight, feel, and sometimes even the smell of earlier times.

In historic preservation, the profession that attempts to preserve the built environment of our ancestors, building photographs play an incredibly important role. Each serves as a document to validate the appearance of a site at a particular time. Of course, we must not forget those very important words, "a particular time." A photograph shows only one instant, one split second of the millions of seconds in a building's life. We can only use the picture to substantiate one part of a building's life story.

Take for instance the Thomas Swisher photo of the Home National Bank shown here. This is the Elk Hotel building. It was built in 1894 by J. C. Hyer, one of Braxton County's "progressive industrialists," to quote an 1898 issue of the *Braxton Democrat*. It operated as a stage stop and hotel for many years and is still a hotel. In 1910 the bank moved in, when its officers bought and remodeled the building. They stayed until 1965, when Sutton's new bank building was constructed around the corner.

The future location of today's

Evidence of Times Past

A Preservationist Looks at the Sutton Photographs

bank can be seen in the photo looking down Bridge Street, behind the first telephone pole on the right. That's the picture with the car and five men and a barefoot boy lounging around it. The Elk Hotel changed its name to the Midway when the bus depot was located here, presumably because Sutton is halfway between Charleston and Clarksburg. The scene is very similar today, with people loafing around the building's recessed corner entrance, though the establishment inside now serves up mugs of beer instead of savings certificates. This is the street corner made notorious in William Least Heat Moon's chapter on West Virginia's rural towns in *Blue Highways*, a best-selling book of a few years ago.

To get back to that photo of Bridge Street, in the background you can see the street's namesake, the camel-back bridge across the Elk River. This through-truss bridge was constructed in 1930. It replaced one of the more historic bridges in the state, a suspension bridge built around 1851, modeled after and built by the same company that erected the famous Wheeling Suspension Bridge in 1849. The story of the demise of the earlier Sutton bridge tells of the circus coming to town one summer when the heavy elephants had to cross the river at a ford. What a time the trainers had in getting them out of the water! As the story goes, the circus people put lye on the suspension cables in retaliation for that aggravating experience, necessitating the removal of the bridge for safety reasons. Some of Sutton's residents still recall the day they cut the cables and the big bridge fell into the Elk with a stately splash.

In a 1911 *West Virginia Review*, the Bank of Sutton building, built around 1900, is pictured. The bank was evidence of the growing population and industry of Braxton County. That 1911 photograph is not very different than the 1930 Bank of Sutton picture shown here, and in fact one taken even today would not differ much. The bank no longer exists but the building does. The old vault is still in place on the first floor, now serving as a storage room for a florist shop. The adjacent storefront with the striped awning, the windows marked "C. E. Singleton & Co." and "Ladies Style Shop" in this photograph, is still there, though currently waiting for a new occupant. The rooms behind the second floor windows, since altered, are now apartments instead of professional offices, as is the case with many of our towns' older buildings.

The old Sutton High School, shown in its heyday in the Swisher photograph, was built in 1911. It replaced another brick building. It was built in the high style of Victorian architecture, making plain its respected status as a structure of higher education. The school still stands today, thanks to the concerted efforts of some of its alumni and the county historic society, and is honored by a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It has undergone many changes in use, from a high school, to a junior high, to an elementary school, to its current function as adjunct building. It houses the Braxton County vocational rehabilitation program, as well as some special education and community function offices, and once again classes. It is not much different in appearance today, though in need of some attention due to aging.

The Sanitary Grocery was located in the Curtin-Newlon Block. This building was built in 1896 and housed the Sutton Drug Store. There were offices on the second floor. The structure now houses a surveying firm, a doctor's office and other offices. The men in the picture haven't been identified yet, but you can surely recognize the goods the store carried, like the Heinz Rice Flakes and the Lucky Strike cigarettes — the latter recommended by "20,679 physicians," according to the sign. You can easily recognize this building today.

Houses are the historic structures that sometimes undergo the most changes. All of those pictured here are identifiable among Sutton's older residences, though some have seen extensive remodeling and alterations. Colonel Curtin's home, the one with the bird dogs on the porch and the picturesque vines, still stands, though the siding and shingles now are covered with aluminum. The Colonel himself only lived there a short time. His Pardee and Curtin Lumber Company sawmill and river boom at Sutton did not last long past an 1898 article which prophesied that while the local poplar timber was thinning out, "enough exists to insure a supply for the Pardee and Curtin Lumber Company's plant during the next ten years."

Like Colonel Curtin, residents and business enterprises have come and gone and the uses of buildings have changed according to the changing needs of the times. The buildings themselves have proven to be surprisingly permanent, however, and there is nothing like crisp historical photographs to remind us of that fact. Thomas Swisher has left us a fine legacy in his Sutton photography, of practical use to the historic preservationist and a pleasure to us all.

— Mike Gioulis

of perfection in mind, and his photography was no different. Not only did he take pictures with great care, but he also had an elaborate darkroom setup with much apparatus, where he would painstakingly develop and enlarge prints to his satisfaction. His original negatives have remained in remarkably excellent condition for a half century, and represent the high quality possible in these earlier years of semi-professional photography. The photographs in the collection reproduced here were taken on early Kodak nitrate film which can be unstable, and in any event is highly flammable and potentially dangerous.

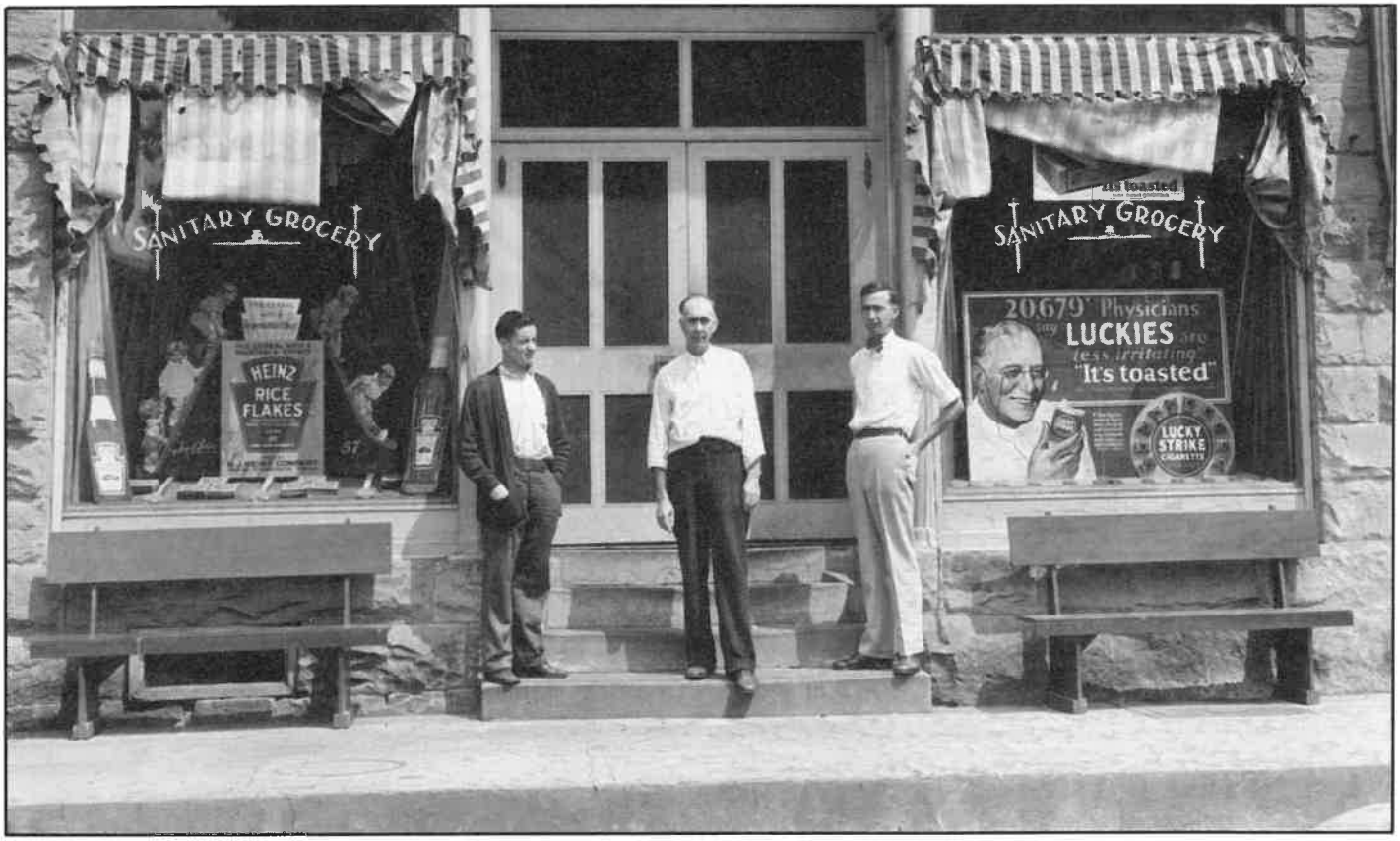
My own memories of West Virginia begin around 1938-1940, when I was four to six years old. My parents visited Grandmother Ella Swisher in Sutton nearly every summer. We either drove or took a bus from Illinois, sometimes coming via Schenectady, and stayed at Grandmother's house on the edge of Sutton just above the Elk River. It was a wonderful old two-story farmhouse with a barn, cows, chickens, valley with stream, and lots of room to roam and explore. Summers there were idyllic for me. There was even a great spreading chestnut tree in the front yard! I often filled my hours wandering through the old house with its curious nooks and crannies, kerosene lamps, antique furniture and the musty smell of unused rooms. There was a large swinging settee on the second floor porch, overlooking the front yard with its big chestnut tree, a favorite spot on warm summer days and evenings.

Grandmother Swisher lived with her maiden sister, Mary Elizabeth Hyer. Everyone knew her as Aunt Mamie. She was always a joy to be with and she helped make our summer visits very happy times. In the earlier years of my visits, I also clearly remember my great-grandmother, "Mother Hyer," who was in her 80's at the time. There were many family occasions in Sutton with four generations present in good health and good spirits.

My father always enjoyed showing me around Sutton and the surrounding area. I believe I had some of my first fishing lessons on the Elk River, and will always remember a fairly

Above: The Bank of Sutton was Home National Bank's competition. The handsome building, constructed about 1900, is no longer a bank but remains in use today.

Below: Sutton High School was the town's main educational institution in 1930. Tom Swisher's 1916 class would have been one of the earliest to graduate from the 1911 building. The structure is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Above: These unidentified gentlemen were presumably associated with the Sanitary Grocery, located in the Curtin-Newlon Block. The 1896 building now houses commercial offices.

Below: The post office was a prime loafing spot in any town and Sutton was no exception.

Photographer Michael Keller, who carefully printed the Sutton photos from the original negatives, asked us to publish this one as an example of bygone techniques in his profession. This contact print of Tom Swisher's favorite photograph is printed at the actual size of the negative. Single-sheet film of this size required much less enlarging than today's common 35mm format, producing exceptional clarity of detail. The film was Eastman Kodak nitrate, as the border indicates, which has since been supplanted by more stable and less flammable filmstocks.

This house, once home to Colonel Curtin, had other occupants by the time Tom Swisher made the rounds with his camera. It is one of many Sutton residences he photographed.

dangerous whirlpool that Father knew about up the river a bit. Although the house wasn't right on the river, it was a fairly short walk downhill and across the road to a great swimming hole. I found my way there just about every day. Father also enjoyed taking me to downtown Sutton near the old bank where many oldtimers gathered during the day. They always fascinated and amused him. Aunt Mamie worked in the bank, so we had occasion to visit this part of town quite often.

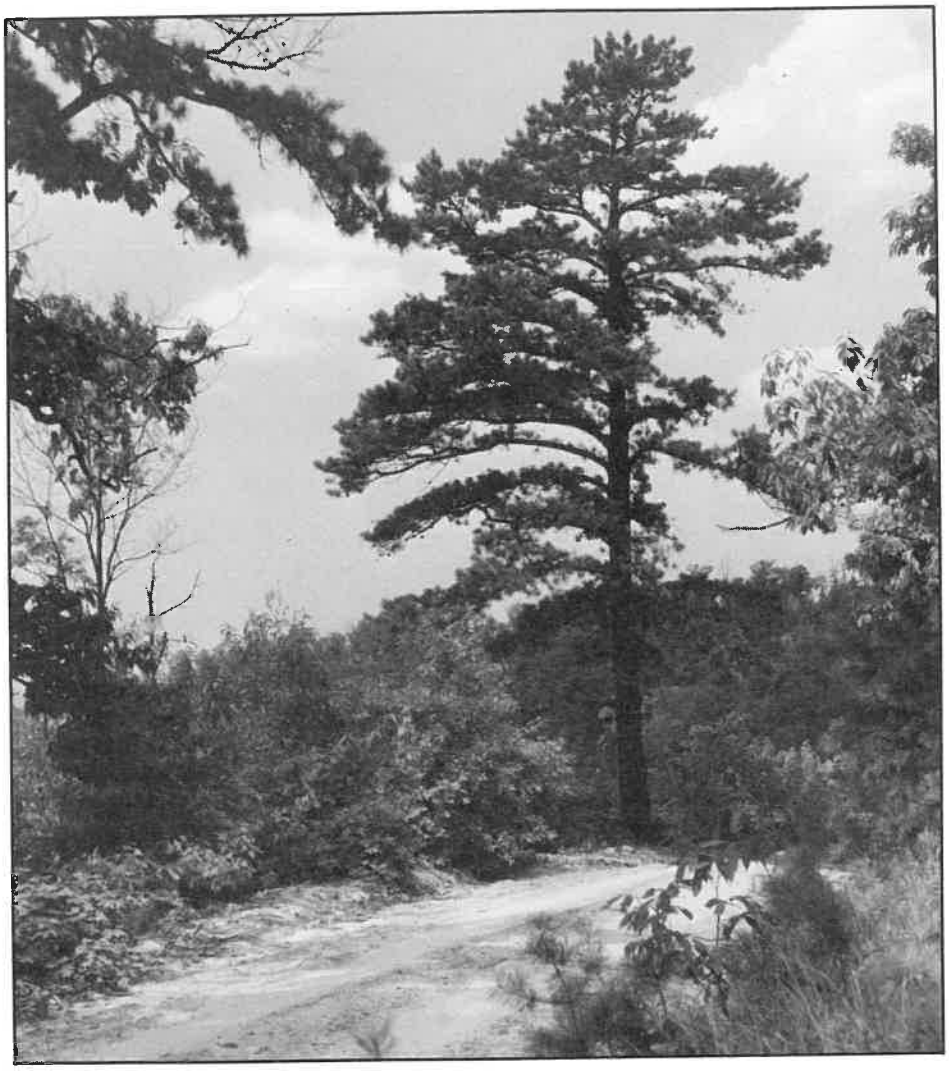
Of all the joys on those many happy summer days, I can most easily recall the food preparation and wonderful home cooking. Grandma Swisher always kept a few cows, chickens and pigs. Milking the cows was naturally a daily chore, and here I learned how to milk and then separate the cream, finally making butter. The milk separator was located just off the large kitchen, and I always enjoyed cranking up this hand-powered centrifuge. Its many parts had to be assembled and then dismantled for cleaning. Ice cream making was also a regular ritual, done on the back porch with rock salt, ice, and all those good fresh country ingredients. I became very adept at cranking the ice cream maker, as one might imagine.

My father never tired of telling Shelt Carpenter stories over the years, for his interest in the man was not just photographic. He and Shelt got together on numerous occasions, certainly to hunt and probably to fish. I can remember that my father had two rifles at one point and loved to hunt deer, particularly in the Adirondack and Catskill mountains of New York with colleagues from the General Electric Company. There was one story about Shelt Carpenter that Father repeated many times to his friends over the years.

It seems that Shelt and Father were used to hunting together with a .22 rifle. Once, Father had a new and much more powerful rifle with him. I can't remember the specifics, but knowing Father, it probably was a rifle with a lot more 'oomph' he had bought to add to his collection. Father was a playful person and loved practical jokes. He suggested that Shelt try his new rifle, which Shelt was naturally curious to do. No men-

Above: Swisher had an interest in the Braxton County countryside, as well. Perhaps this unidentified mountain farmstead was photographed during one of the local hunting trips son Charles Swisher writes of.

Right: This landscape was photographed during one of Swisher's rural jaunts.



tion of the significantly greater power was made to Shelt as the gun was handed over to him. Shelt pointed it, cradling it lightly as one could do with a .22. When he fired, Shelt was thrown completely backward after the powerful explosion. After regaining his wits, not to mention his posture, he exclaimed to Father, "Why, that's the biggest gun in this whole united world!"

My father used Shelt Carpenter as a photographic subject on various occasions, the best-known picture being the one of Shelt in the boat on the Elk River. Father made many prints of this photograph himself, even adding a hand-drawn ink border to frame the picture. The photograph is a classic study in composition, and reveals some of the artist in my father's strict engineering personality.

During these years, which I best remember as summer days at the family homestead in West Virginia, Father was making his mark at General Electric and later at Hotpoint in Chicago, then a division of GE. Originally at General Electric he had

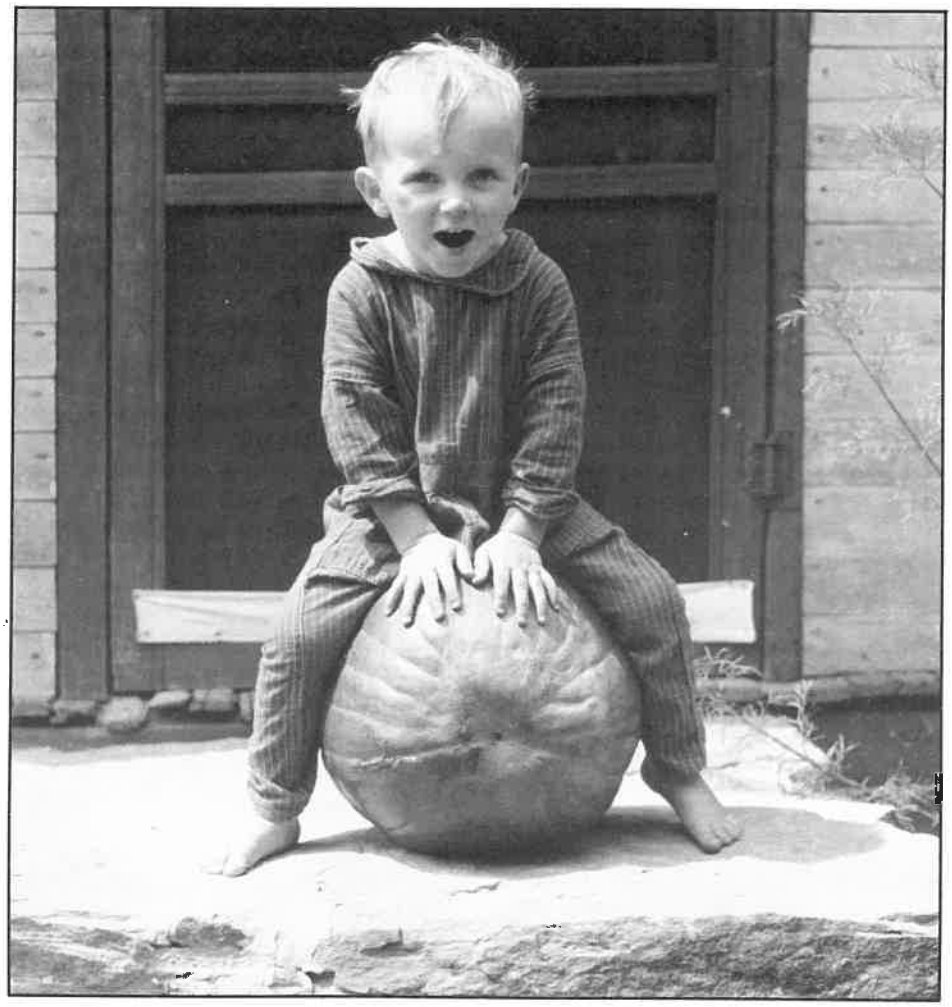
Above: This version of the scene that first attracted our interest to photographer Tom Swisher shows that Shelt Carpenter had company in the boat. The unidentified young woman features in many other Swisher photographs as well.

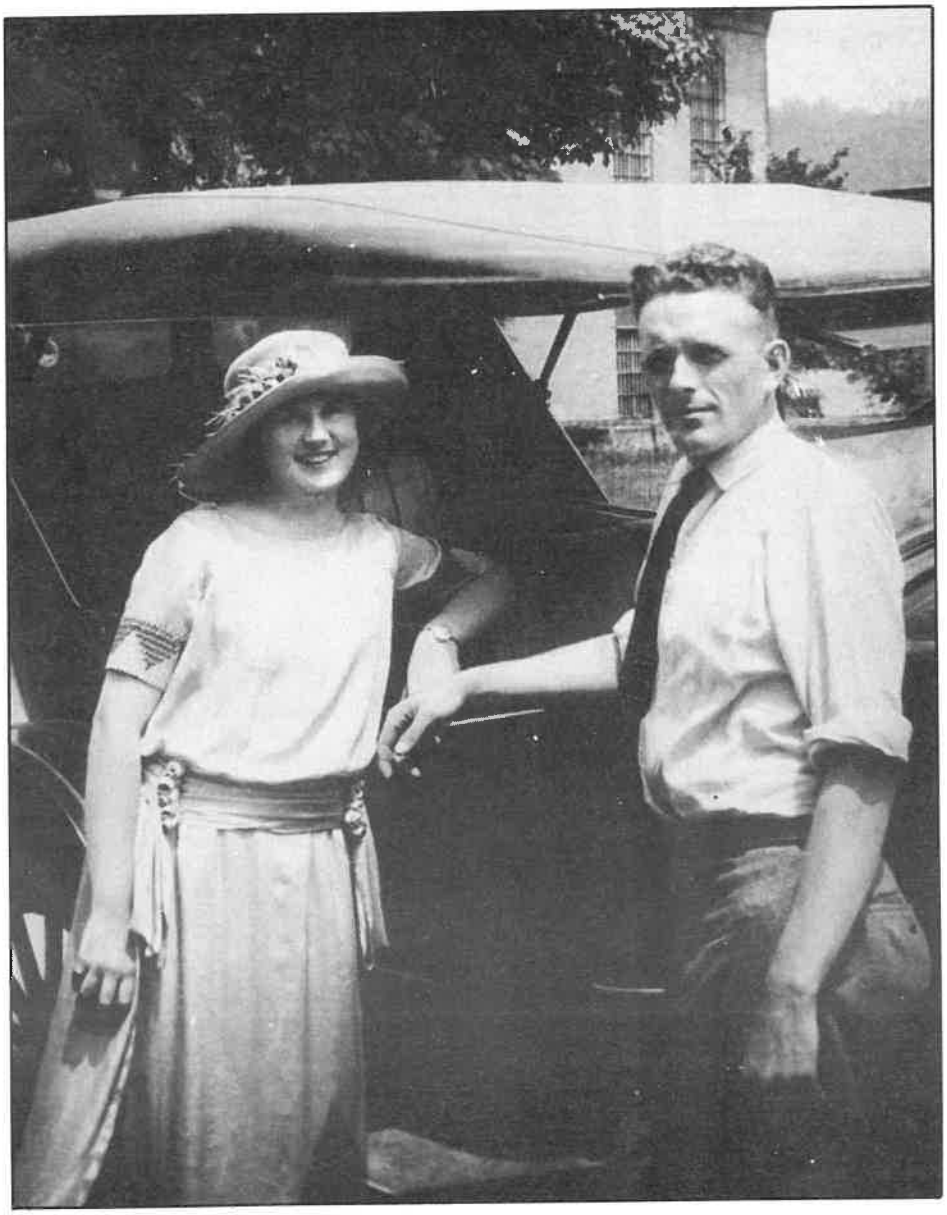
Below: Cover boy Jack Swisher was a favorite photographic subject for his Uncle Tom. Here he has finished his shave and set out on a pumpkin ride.

worked very actively on the development of mercury boilers for large power plants. A bout with mercury poisoning led to his patenting of a mercury vapor detector. At Hotpoint he later patented numerous improvements still used in electric ranges, dishwashers, garbage disposers and home laundry equipment. During the Second World War, he developed and patented a unique machine gun trainer for the Army, designed an electric torpedo for the Navy, and worked on other classified government projects for the war effort. He received the Navy's "E" Award for his work.

Father retired in 1964 after working 41 years for the General Electric Company, and he and his wife moved west to enjoy their retirement years in the California sun. There golfing, the hobby that replaced photography and hunting, could be pursued in peace and pleasure. He passed away in 1977, just one month before his 78th birthday.

I am honored that these early photographic works of Thomas Hyer Swisher have been published, and hope they bring enjoyment to the readers of GOLDENSEAL. Father would have been proud to have this recognition in print.





Madge Lester and Claude Matthews were a courting couple in 1923. Mrs. Matthews jokingly points out that the photographer used the Wayne County Jail as a backdrop. Photographer unknown.

Silver Bell
Wayne County Farm Life
By Madge L. Matthews

When the War Between the States broke out, my grandfather, James Patterson Preston Lester, known by his friends as Preston, and his eldest son, Ben, enlisted. Preston drove a supply wagon and Ben served in the infantry.

Near the end of the war, Preston sold his farm in Virginia, receiving payment in Confederate money. He came to Wayne County, West Virginia, where some of his children were living. He found a farm he wanted to buy but had to return to Floyd County to make final arrangements to move. By the time he returned, his Southern money was worthless. He could not pay for land but he rented a place and stayed anyway. His youngest son, my father Rufus Lester, was born March 2, 1868, in a house which stood just below the present site of Greenbrier Baptist Church, about six miles from the town of Wayne.

When my father was seven years old, his parents moved to Cuba, Missouri, 95 miles from St. Louis. While living in Missouri, my grandfather was granted a teacher's certificate by appearing before a justice of the peace and making an affidavit that he was qualified to teach the common branches.

The Lesters returned to West Virginia in 1882. From Cincinnati they traveled by boat to Hubbardstown on the Big Sandy River. There they were met by Isaac Lester, my father's brother, who was then living on a farm at the head of Wolf Creek. They lived in a log house across a hill from Isaac's home for several years. Among the possessions they carried to Missouri and back were a long-handled, iron fireplace shovel and a small "deed trunk" covered with deer skin, which I recently donated to the Ramsdell House in Ceredo.

My father Rufus went to school when he could. In those days the term was only three months. He studied at home and attended a term at Oak View Academy, a private school taught by Professor Taylor Bascom McClure at Wayne. Father began his own teaching career in the Bloss School in August 1888. Of the 39 enrolled, 13 bore the name Bloss. The ages ranged from five to 18. There were no kindergartens or high schools in the area, and everyone went to the one-room school. The term ended December 14.

Attendance was poor at the Bloss School and not everyone attended the full term. Vinnie Bloss did not enroll until the second month. She was 18 and, being the oldest girl in the family, had to help her mother. Perhaps after learning the new male teacher was only 20 and single, she decided to go to school after all.

In those days a recitation bench in the front of the room was a standard piece of equipment. Here each class sat in turn, while the teacher heard the lesson. A student felt it quite an honor to be the first one up front, to

Mrs. Matthews has made a library out of the room she was born in in 1902. She spends time here surrounded by mementos of her husband and her aviator son and his family. Photo by Michael Keller.

give his book to the teacher to use during the recitation. Vinnie Bloss often gave her book to the teacher. He would have a note written for her and put that in the book before he returned it. After finding an opportunity to read it without letting other students know, she would put her answer in the book for next time. Thus, a schoolhouse romance began.

Rufus Lester and Vinnie Bloss were married November 30, 1889, at the home of her parents, Valentine and Priscilla McClure Bloss of Dickson. The bride and groom, accompanied by her sister Zenobia and his nephew Paris P. Lester, rode horseback from Dickson to the head of Wolf Creek. There they made their home with Rufus's parents until they bought a farm of their own.

Zenobia and Paris themselves married later, thus Vinnie became her sister's aunt by marriage. Her youngest sister, Julia, became the wife of Levi Ellis, another nephew of her husband, making Vinnie again an aunt of one of her sisters.

The farm purchased by Rufus and Vinnie is located on Orchard Branch, a small stream flowing into Trace Fork, itself a tributary of Twelvepole Creek. They lived in an old log house on the farm until they had time to build for themselves. My brother Harry was born in 1891 and my sister Nina in 1896. I followed in 1902.

Meanwhile, the farmhouse had gone up. Timber from the farm was cut and hauled on a wagon drawn by a team of oxen to a mill in Louisa, Kentucky, a distance of approximately seven miles. Some was tongue-and-grooved in preparation for use as ceiling. Bob Foster, who lived on Trace, cut stone and built a solid foundation and three chimneys. Ben Lester, brother of Rufus, built the two-story, weather-boarded, L-shaped house in 1892. He worked 100 days and charged $130 for his labor.

This is the house I live in today. When it was remodeled in 1964, the carpenters were amazed that it was in such good condition. The explanation is simple: It was constructed from the best material available — yellow poplar and a metal roof — and it was carefully built. Through the years it was painted regularly and any needed repairs were made immediately.

Rural electrification was unknown, but my father wanted the conveniences that were possible and made his house comfortable by the standards of the times. There were two fireplaces with coal grates and one which burned wood. In the kitchen was a huge Home Comfort range with a water tank and warming closet. Water was drawn from a well near the kitchen door and later a hand pump and sink were installed inside. Oil lamps were used until about 1912, when acetylene lights (a carbide system) became available.

My mother had a washing machine, which was no more than a wooden tub mounted on a frame. In the bottom were crossed wooden pieces two or three inches high. A round cover with similar crosspieces fastened to the tub with a clamp. Water was heated in an iron kettle and poured over the clothes. Lye soap made by my mother was added, the lid clamped down and the tub turned back and forth by a wooden handle. This rubbed the clothes between the wooden crosspieces. A hand-cranked wringer with two rubber cylinders squeezed out the water. The washtub was drained by removing a stopper near the bottom. As

Above: Madge Lester at age four. The family had taken her to a studio across the Big Sandy River in Louisa, Kentucky, for this important occasion. Photographer unknown, about 1906.

Right: It won't compare to today's automatics, but Vinnie Lester's washing machine was a definite improvement over the washboard. It was strictly a handpowered model. Photographer and date unknown.

crude as it was, this machine was a big improvement over the zinc tub and washboard.

My father built a washhouse with a small flat-top stove, on which the iron wash kettle could be placed by removing the stove lids. A wood fire under the kettle heated the water quickly. If the weather was bad, the clothes were dried on lines stretched across the room. In summer, the washing machine could be taken outside under a tree and water heated over a fire built on the ground nearby. Good, soft water was taken from the rain barrel under the drain spout at the end of the porch. The clothes were dried in the sunshine whenever possible.

Ironing was done in the washhouse to avoid heating up the kitchen in warm weather. In winter, the irons were heated on the cook stove. Mother had three irons — small, medium and large — with removable wooden handles. My grandmother's irons had had metal handles, which had to be wrapped with pads because they were too hot to hold.

About 1910, a group of people built a telephone line from the mouth of Wolf Creek to Louisa. The phones were operated by batteries. Each patron had a number such as one long and two shorts, which was called by turning a crank on the telephone box. When a call was made, every phone on the line rang. Eavesdropping was common. I remember listening when the telegraph operator called to tell my Uncle Paris Lester that his son, Clyde, had been killed in France in 1918.

My childhood was very happy. I had a collection of dolls, two baby buggies and a little red wagon. My father built a small table, a dish cabinet and a doll bed for my playhouse. My favorite doll was Dorothy, a rag doll with hair and a painted face. She was large enough to wear my baby clothes which Mother had kept. Another favorite was a porcelain doll. I made many clothes for her, even a trousseau complete with bridal veil.

There were always books and magazines in our house. Before I learned to read, my mother read to me. One of my first books was *Mother Goose Stories*. Soon, I had memorized all the rhymes and jingles. Later, *Old Greek Stories* became a favorite of mine. When I studied mythology in literature classes, I found I was quite familiar with the gods and goddesses. I became an avid reader.

Above: The Lester surrey had no fringe on top, but it provided a comfortable ride to church and back. Father Rufus drives here, with Madge and her mother in back. Photographer unknown, about 1910.

Below: Madge Matthews has turned down offers to buy Silver Bell Farm, even with free lifelong tenancy thrown into the deal. "It wouldn't feel right to live on a place someone else owns;" she says. Photo by Michael Keller.

There were no radio or television programs to interfere.

On Sunday we went to church in the surrey. It had no "fringe on top," but springs and upholstered seats made it more comfortable than the farm wagon. Sometimes I would take my dolls, go to the shed, climb into the surrey and take imaginary trips.

At Sunday School the first class for youngsters was the Card Class. Each child was given a card with a colored picture and a memory verse on the front and the lesson story on the reverse side. I have a hundred or more of these cards which I have kept through the years.

When I was six years old, I started to school. The building had one room with two windows on each side, a door at one end and a blackboard — a section of the interior wall painted black — at the other. In the center of the room was a pot-bellied Burnside stove. On each side were desks with seats wide enough for two students each. Those at the rear were higher than those in front. The younger children sat up there. Two long, homemade recitation benches with no backs separated the teacher's table and chair from the desks of his pupils.

On each side of the door at the rear were benches on which the students placed their lunch pails and coats. On the end of one bench was a water bucket with a dipper with which each student filled his individual cup. The water was carried from the well of a nearby family. Two students would be excused to bring the water.

Lunches were brought from home. Usually there were biscuits and jelly or perhaps some kind of meat, corn on the cob, baked sweet potatoes, and maybe molasses cookies. Milk was brought in a glass bottle, for thermos bottles were unknown.

There was no playground equipment. The boys made bats from boards whittled down to a handle, and balls from tightly-wound twine. The older students played "Round Town" ball. Two captains chose their teams. Every boy and girl played, regardless of numbers. One team batted while the other chose a pitcher and catcher. All other members were fielders. There were three bases. The batter could run the first time he hit the ball, or he could take three strikes trying for a better hit. Outs were made if he struck at the ball, missed and the catcher caught it; if he hit the ball and the pitcher or a fielder got

the ball and threw it in front of him before he reached a base; or if a fielder caught a hit before it touched the ground.

If the batter struck the ball and rounded all the bases and reached home plate, he scored three tallies. If he stopped on a base, he could run only when the next batter hit the ball. When he finally reached home, he scored one tally. Someone who was out could be "brought in" with three tallies. This made it possible for one team to remain at bat for a whole day if they played at each recess and during noon hour.

While the older students played ball, the younger ones played singing games such as London Bridge or Farmer in the Dell.

The school term was six months, starting in August and ending in January. Many students were kept at home to pick beans or cut corn, since their parents grew large crops of beans to dry or pickle for winter and much corn to be ground into meal or stock feed. Some of the older girls stayed home one day each week to help wash clothes. Fortunately, I had a perfect attendance record for eight years.

Before I finished elementary school a number of two-room schools were built in Wayne County. Trace and Lower Greenbrier schools were combined and a building with two classrooms, two cloakrooms, a hall and a porch was erected about halfway between the locations of the old one-room schools. Each teacher now had four grades. Only the basic subjects were taught. Our new school had no music or art classes, and there was still no playground equipment. Today, the children are transported by bus to the elementary, middle and high schools of Fort Gay and Wayne. They have music, art, physical education, a band room, gymnasium, a cafeteria and various other advantages that were undreamed of when I was in school.

When I finished the eighth grade there was no high school near my home so I continued to attend the two-room school until I was 17. I took the Uniform Examination, received a first-class teacher's certificate and began my teaching career.

Country schools closed in January, so that year I enrolled at Marshall College for the second semester. Marshall was still offering some high school classes and I was able to get a schedule arranged. The next year, I went to New River State School at Montgomery, now West Virginia Tech. By receiving credit on my teacher's certificate and with my credits from Marshall and special examinations, I was granted a high school diploma.

As limited as these educational opportunities seem today, things had been worse a generation before. My father had served as county superintendent of schools in 1897-98 for an annual salary of $300. Traveling on horseback, he visited each school in Wayne County. Before the state adopted Uniform Examinations, the superintendent chose two "examiners" to work with him in preparing and administering examinations in the county. He also arranged for the Teachers Institute, a week of training held annually. Father taught 41 years in the public schools and also taught several "subscription schools," in which each student paid his own tuition. The purpose of these schools was to train those who wished to take the examination for a teacher's certificate.

In addition to this school work, Rufus Lester farmed. He bought an adjoining farm and put a tenant to work full time. During rush periods, such as the wheat harvest, Father hired men by the day, paying the going price of 50 to 75 cents. My mother cooked for the workhands. If they were working on the hill far from the house, she and I carried the noon dinner to them so they would not have to walk down the hill and back to work again. If they were working near the house, they came to the dining room to eat.

Mother was always busy. She milked several cows, carried the milk to the hand-powered cream separator, put the cream in a five-gallon can and shipped it by train to Cincinnati. The checks she received averaged $5. She made kettles of apple butter and kept it in stone jars. Their tin lids were sealed by pouring hot wax around the edges.

Most of our food was produced on the farm. Butter and eggs were carried to the country store and exchanged for such things as coffee, sugar, salt, baking powder and soda. The only time we had bananas and oranges was at Christmas. I can recall how happy I was to find a banana, orange, peppermint stick candy and perhaps a stick of Long Tom chewing gum in my stocking on Christmas morning.

During the winter months, my mother pieced quilts which she then quilted by hand. When I was six, she cut squares for me and I pieced a nine-patch quilt. Mother tacked rags and wove her own carpets on a huge wooden loom. Also, she carded wool, spun yarn and knitted socks and gloves.

My father and George Workman, who lived at Echo, bought a manure spreader in partnership and planned their work so both could use it. Farm machinery such as plows, mowing machine and rake were drawn by horses or mules. Later, we had a tractor but kept the mule-drawn machinery for use on hills.

We had horses for riding. My mother rode a sidesaddle. When I was small, I rode behind her on a sheep skin blanket. Once when we were riding a mare with a young colt following, the colt came up and took my bare foot in its mouth. That greatly frightened me.

Later, I had my own cowboy saddle. I used that when I taught school at Patrick and Greenbrier. Coming home from Patrick one day, my horse stumbled, fell and rolled over. The horn and the back of my saddle were scratched but luckily I was thrown free. When I was going to Greenbrier one morning, I found the creek was quite high following a downpour. I felt I couldn't be late for school, so I pulled my feet up and started across. The horse had to swim but I got to school on time.

In 1917, my father bought a Model-T Ford. Automobiles were such a novelty that if the neighborhood children heard one coming they would yell for their brothers and sisters and line up along the road to watch it pass.

Father's Ford had a brass radiator, oil lamps, a tool box on the running board and a crank out front. The wheels had wooden spokes. The windshield was two straight pieces of glass, one of which could be turned down to give more air. The car's top

The Box Elder Tree

There is not much left to the box elder, as last winter's bare limbs make starkly plain, but the old tree holds powerful meaning to Madge Matthews. Photo by Michael Keller.

A Mrs. Pelfrey, who lived on this farm before my father bought it in 1890, once rode horseback to visit relatives in Kentucky. On her return home, she broke a limb from a box elder tree somewhere along the way to use as a horse switch. When she reached home she stuck the switch into the ground in her garden where it took root and grew.

My father removed the tree from the garden and transplanted it below the log house which he, my mother and his parents occupied for a time, west of where my home now stands. When excavating for the foundation of the house he built in 1892, the workmen dumped wheelbarrow loads of dirt around the tree until six or eight feet of the trunk was buried. It did not seem to injure the tree, for it put forth roots near the surface and continued to grow.

When strangers came they often remarked how beautiful the box elder was. It protected the house from the evening sun, its branches spreading 55 feet by 1910. My mother sometimes mentioned that part of her garden got no morning sun, but she agreed that the big tree was much more valuable than the vegetables that might have profited by more sunlight.

The lawn swing, which my father bought when I was a little girl, was placed in the shade of the box elder. Here I often did my homework on warm evenings. Years later, during our courting days Claude and I sometimes sat in the swing under the tree. When our son was a little boy he had a swing made from wire rope with an old tire for a seat, which hung from one of big limbs of the tree. Still later, our grandson played under the box elder.

Time passed. Leaves and dead twigs lodged between the branches in the forks of the tree. Rain and snow kept them damp and decay followed.

About 1975, Claude was returning to the garden after finishing his lunch one day. Suddenly, he called in an urgent voice for me to come into the back yard. He was looking at the box elder. I, too, looked. I heard a rending sound, and saw that the tree was slowly tearing apart. We watched silently as the open space widened. Finally, there was a resounding crash and the east half of the tree struck the ground just in front of the house.

I cried, for I felt as if I had just watched the passing of a member of the family. Its fall left an open place against the sky and an empty place in my life.

Fortunately, none of the limbs had struck the house. We worked almost a whole day sawing the branches into lengths that we could move, hauling the debris away, and raking the grass.

Later, we had someone cut off the limbs on the other side, since they extended over a fence and we feared they would fall and destroy the fence. Perhaps most people would have cut the trunk of the tree also, but it is still standing. It serves no particular purpose for it affords no shade, but to me it has a sentimental value.

The box elder is part of my heritage. It stood in its present location long before I was born, and five generations of the family have enjoyed the beauty and the shade of this big tree. Now it has neither beauty nor shade to give, but it is like a person who has grown old and whose productive years have passed. As a family still loves a member who can no longer make a monetary contribution, so can one love an object which represents the link between the past and the present.

Since my husband's death August 28, 1984, I interpret the box elder in still another way. The half that fell represents Claude's life. The part that remains, which can never again be complete, portrays mine.

— Madge L. Matthews

The inside has been modernized, but from this angle the Silver Bell farmhouse looks like the historic structure it is. The house was built in 1892, from timber cut on the farm. Photo by Michael Keller.

folded down. When the top was up curtains could be snapped on to keep out rain, if one had time. They weren't needed to keep out cold, for the dirt roads were so bad in winter that the auto remained in the garage from November until April.

In 1925, Claude L. Matthews and I were married. I continued to go to school and received my A.B. degree in 1930. In 1932, we moved to Huntington. Our son, Larry, was born in 1934. The following year I returned to teaching. I taught four years at Ceredo-Kenova High, then transferred to Vinson where I taught 21 years, during which time I had earned an M.A. degree. I took my retirement in West Virginia but taught two years in Ohio, making a total of 39 years.

In 1964, my husband retired from the insurance business, I took my retirement and we moved back to the farm I had inherited from my father. We remodeled the house and named the place Silver Bell Farm.

On our lawn we have a large schoolhouse bell painted with silvery paint. We also have a silver bell tree. Maurice Brooks had published an article, which a friend showed to me, telling about the silver bell trees which grow wild in North Carolina. I knew Professor Brooks, who was a director at Jackson's Mill when I was a 4-H member. I wrote to him and he sent me the name of a nursery from which I ordered the tree. It blooms in early spring. The blooms are bell-shaped, in clusters of five to seven pinkish-white or silver flowers.

We spent our retirement at Silver Bell and in travels inspired by our son Larry. He has had travel in his blood since he built model airplanes as a small boy. He won a contest when he was 12 and was taken on a flight as a prize. He became a member of the Civil Air Patrol. When he was a junior in college he dropped out to enlist in the Air Force. I feared he would not complete college but he came back and earned a Masters degree. Still, he wanted to fly.

Larry went to work as a Pan American Airlines pilot and urged us to spend some time traveling. Our first flight was to Puerto Rico. The next year, we went to the South Pacific. The beauty of the islands and the strange customs of the natives, together with their friendliness, made this the best vacation we ever had.

Afterwards, we traveled to Europe, the Holy Land, Great Britain, and Central and South America, as well as Canada and Mexico. In 1979, we made our longest trip. Our son, his wife and two children flew with us from New York to Rio De Janerio, and then across the Atlantic to Johannesburg, the largest city in South Africa. From there we flew to Capetown where we rented a van and drove along the shore of the Indian Ocean to the Kruger National Park.

I have seen many beautiful places but my roots are firmly planted in the Silver Bell Farm in Wayne County.

The Willard Hotel and the B&O Station (at right) were the heart of Grafton. This is the Main Street view, with trackside entrances out of sight behind the buildings. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy West Virginia and Regional History Collection.

Once More Through the Tunnels

Remembering Grafton and the Railroad

By Mary Ellen Mahaffey

John Dougherty was John to everybody but my mother. Johnny was her pet name for the father of her 15 children. Dad, a first-generation American, born in Ohio of parents just two years removed from County Down, Ireland, was quiet and hard working. He was determined to forge ahead in his job with the railroad industry.

About 1916, in his early married life, he was building seniority on the Hocking Valley Railroad, a small line that served the brick yards of southeastern Ohio. He seemed securely settled, but agreed to move when his father-in-law suggested he come to Grafton and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. West Virginia was having good times, Grandfather said. For the next 46 years, until his death, Grafton was Dad's home.

Grafton was river, railroads and hillsides. Seventeen tracks, the Tygart River and a six-tiered slope hemmed in the business street. The few cross roads served merely as paths to get to the next level up or down.

A smaller version of the Willard Hotel, carrying the same name as its famous Washington, D.C., counterpart, and an outsized railroad station with marble floor and pillars dominated the scene. These symbols of grandeur were themselves adjuncts to the railroad. The hotel served travelers going anywhere toward St. Louis, or coming back eastward. Two blocks from the station was an opera house, the cultural dream of an enterprising family of the time. Entertainers passing through on the railroad performed here. Famous bands did one-night stands. I saw "Uncle Tom's

Cabin" and "Barney Google" performed live on that very stage. The red velvet curtains and the side boxes for special guests made it easy to pretend we were in Fords Theatre in Washington.

Grafton was a midway point of importance on the B&O. The stop here was long. The town was a bustling center for remaking trains. Engines were shifted, coal and water replenished and crews changed. The division east of town included the famous 17-mile grade requiring an additional locomotive to make the ascent. The 100-mile division to the west was noted for its many, many tunnels and the trestle at Parkersburg which took us across the Ohio River into Ohio. One tunnel lasted for a scary minute and a half. The railroad was the focal point of Graftonians' lives, and kids of railroaders felt sorry for other kids. We had passes!

A wildcat whistle near the roundhouse signaled a train wreck. Oh, yes, Dad worked the wreck train during the final years of his railroading. I remember one terrible accident near Toll Gate, about halfway between Grafton and Parkersburg. It kept Dad away from home many hours. We worried. The same horrible whistle signaled a fire in the town. Short blasts followed immediately to indicate the exact location of the blaze. We would never have escaped a fire at our house because we all ran to mother each time the whistle blew, clinging to her skirt in a huddle that made it impossible for her to move. We relaxed only when she assured us it was not our fire ward. Two bad fires of my youth were the one at the glass plant and the one at the lumber yard.

The day the steam locomotive fell into the pit of the turntable, the big platform used to turn train engines, was a Grafton day to remember. It was a Sunday, about 1920. The whistle screamed over and over. Word spread quickly. Families hurried to the wooden bridge that crossed a portion of the railroad tracks near the roundhouse. We scrambled for places to peek through the railings to watch the wreck train doing its job. The engine's nose was in the mud and gravel. During the raising of the disabled locomotive, activity came to a halt while a long train passed by. The engine passed under the bridge where we perched, puffing big billows of black smoke through the floor boards. Night fell. We did not get to see the crane lift that mighty engine.

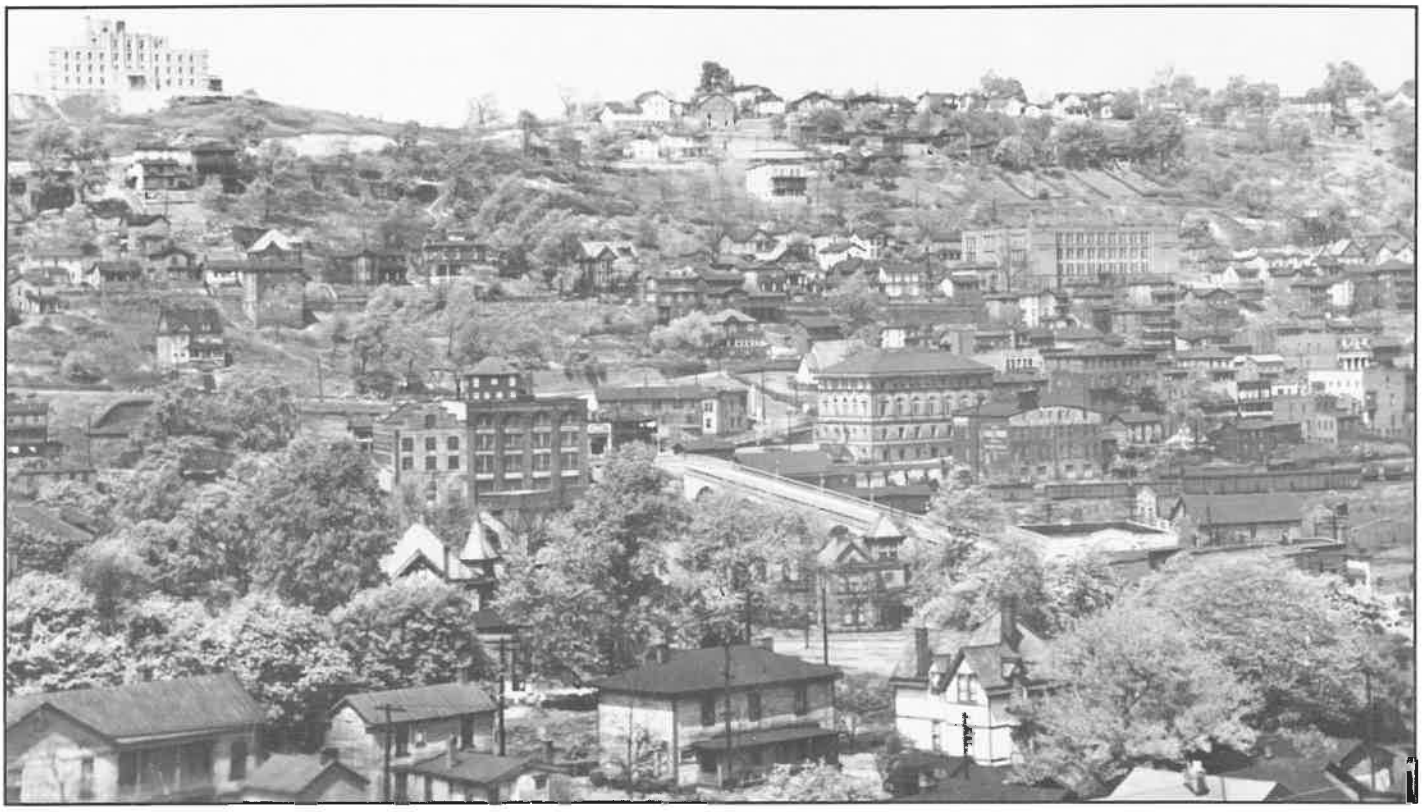
Periodically, Dad had to study for job promotions. It was difficult for a family man, because as he studied the little ones crawled over his lap. Mother did everything in her power to control her active brood and somehow Dad got up through the ranks to the position of car foreman.

"Callers" worked the streets of Grafton at the time. These men were veteran railroaders who knew the importance of getting a crew assembled on time. Some of them had been injured on their former jobs in the shops or yards. Now their work was to go to the home of each member of a train crew to summon him to his turn "out." Later, the callers disappeared from the streets, replaced by the telephone.

Fun time was when Mother took us all for a summer stay with relatives in Ohio, 160 miles west. Getting ready was a ritual, generally requiring outfitting a babe in arms, a toddler and assorted older children. We made the annual trip until we numbered 10. Since our train departed at midnight, it meant that preparations began in early evening. After baths, we were lined up on the long horsehair sofa and threatened to within an inch of our lives if we quarreled or got dirty. Hats were an absolute must. I remember particularly the time when a younger sister found a loose thread and managed to unravel her entire bonnet before we ever left home, leaving only the organdy loops of ruching around her neck like a lei. "What has Margaret done to her hat?" came from Mother. "Why did-

Above: John Dougherty, about 1918, with the button-up shoes that caused so much trouble in the household. He had been in Grafton about two years by this time. Photographer unknown.

Below: The Dougherty children, ready for school. Our writer, Mary Ellen, stands at left rear. Kodak box camera photo by their mother, Velma Eyler Dougherty, 1925.



Our writer remembers the Grafton of her youth as a city of hillsides. This is the view west of the B&O Station, showing the Post Office (the large building at right center) with the high school to its upper right. Photographer and date unknown.

n't you call me? What shall I do now? No stores open." On and on she went at this disaster. We didn't say anything. Remember, we were threatened to within an inch of our lives. We took Mother literally.

Darkness had fallen; young ones were sleepy and cranky. Older ones were alert to distant train whistles, fearful — knowing full well, in fact — that we were being left behind. Such bedlam!

Finally the wiggling travelers were all assembled. With our cardboard suitcases, shopping bags and the faithful shoe box lunch, we were off to the depot. The kindly police officer on Main Street spotted our little parade. He caught up with us and relieved Mother of the infant or picked up the toddler, thus making it possible for the rest of us to step along a little faster. During these two-block walks from home to depot, a baby's bottle was sure to break.

Eleven at night was quitting time for Dad. We all arrived, the train, Dad and family, at about the same time. Mother's concern for her children had her convinced that sooner or later one of us would land under the wheels as we groped our way onto the coach. It made no difference to her that the train was standing still. The six or eight older ones elbowed one another to get a window seat, even at midnight. We were preparing in advance for the games to be played. The clanging of changing engines added racket to our settling down.

This commotion wakened passengers who had already retired for the night. They looked up from their rented pillows, then quickly feigned sleep, hoping not to have to share a seat, improvised bed, with some kid. They always did!

Dad had to work and couldn't accompany the travelers. He did help us into our coach. Last-minute instructions from Mother to Dad went something like this: "Take in the milk. Put out the ice card. Only 25 pounds. Don't forget the drip pan." Grunts from Dad, who had his own words of caution. "Do you have the pass? Guard it. Put it out of sight as soon as the conductor punches it." All this was in a loud whisper. Then he jumped off. One time he lingered too long and we all yelled "Dad, we're moving!" "Hell, we are," Dad said, followed by "Johnny don't jump," from Mother. By now, coach passengers were as agitated as the hissing boiler up front. The conductor pulled the emergency line, letting

The Doughertys were a Roman Catholic family, marking the happy and sad occasions of life at St. Augustine's Church. Photographer and date unknown.

The Grafton rail yard at an unknown patriotic occasion. The locomotive turntable is behind the speaker's platform, with the B&O Station and Willard Hotel in the far background. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy West Virginia Collection, WVU.

Trackside was the proper place to photograph John and Velma Dougherty. This picture was made later in their married life. Photographer and date unknown.

Dad off at the Fetterman crossing near Bailey Brown's monument. I don't know how he got the couple of miles back home, probably by street car.

Those platform sessions were a delight to us. The train workers, each with his blocks of grease lined up one arm and a long rod in the other hand, went about checking for hot boxes. That gave us a feeling of security. We had learned early that hot boxes were a no-no on trains. They indicated that something was wrong with the braking system. Brakes sticking could be the problem. If not corrected, a fire could result. Dad explained this and all the other action nearby, while Mother gathered us near. We took pride in Dad's know-how and were embarrassed at Mother's hovering, especially if some school chum were there with his mom going through the same thing. As the bright lights of the yards faded and the dimmer ones of houses on the hill twinkled, we left Grafton sleeping and headed full-steam for Clarksburg.

Once moving, we engaged in constant arguing as we counted each tunnel we passed and tried to be first to see the next one. This was possible due to the deep bends. A squeal from the child nearest the window announced the next coming event, be it the long tunnel under Pennsboro, the big town clock at West Union or the glass plant at Ellenboro. Once in a while, if we were lucky, we could see the fire in the furnaces there and the men making hand-blown stemware. A nearby hilltop house intrigued us. It belonged to the grandparents of a Grafton family. Now and then they would be riding their dad's pass to visit grandparents, much as we were.

Once past Lamberton, day having overtaken night way back up the line, we made bathroom trips, got ice-cold drinks in little paper cups and attacked the shoe box of food. It contained hard-boiled eggs, two or three bananas to be divided and sandwiches made of homemade bread, jams and jellies. A sigh of distress escaped Mother's lips if the child in charge of carrying the lunch had put it on the offset of the heater below the seat. The eggs would be warm; the bananas would be brown and squishy-squashy. But the sandwiches would be delicious, anything from early summer strawberries to late fall tomato preserves.

We made those sandwich fixings ourselves. Mother canned fruits and vegetables all summer long. She had an assembly line, with all hands helping. Dad baked the bread. Our eggs, butter and milk came from the huckster wagon drawn by two white horses. Hanging from a pole anchored to the bed of this wagon was a produce scale, swinging along. If the metal pan for weighing vegetables were not securely positioned in the chains, it would fall to the ground and roll — sometimes even to the railroad tracks. A piece of fruit was the reward for the child who retrieved the scale pan.

By the time we had finished lunch, we were at Parkersburg and the Ohio River trestle. This structure was probably one of the longest in the country at that time. A gradual incline led through the streets of the city, onto the trestle and across the river to Belpre, Ohio. Like Grafton, Parkersburg was a railroad division point and the train ritual was again performed here. A new engine, the taking on of water, hot box inspection, and greetings to and from exchanging crews added to our idea of Park-

Left: Grafton's railroad legacy did not dampen early enthusiasm for the automobile. B&O machinist Jim Mahaffey, our writer's grandfather-in-law, is at the right here. The tag says the year is 1922. Photographer unknown.

Right: Uncle Bob Eyler with one of his collector's items. He had moved to Wheeling by the time this newspaper photograph was made in 1957.

ersburg's being a big, big city. We grew anxious to be on our way as we talked of what might happen on the trestle. Nothing ever did! Shortly after crossing the river — we could never understand why it was called the Ohio when most of it was in West Virginia, the state line being the low-water mark on the Ohio side — we would change to the Hocking Valley for the rest of our journey.

Two or three children would stay with great aunts and uncles the entire summer, while the rest returned with Mother home to Dad. For those who returned home, spirits ran high during the summer in anticipation of our Sunday exoduses to Grafton Park. Once in a while even Dad, still in his church suit, white shirt and high-button shoes, went with us. (The memory of those shoes brings to mind times when the tranquillity of our home was disrupted. This happened whenever the shoe buttoner disappeared and had to be hunted amidst Dad's bellowing.) A special passenger train ran over the Belington spur to the popular day resort. The very fine sand was kind to our bare feet after a swim in the Tygart River. There was another amusement there, the ferryboat. The power to propel it back and forth was supplied by lots and lots of kids pulling on a big, very wet rope looped through the side rails of this flat, box-like contraption and tied to big trees on both banks. The beauty of the park was to take another form when the Tygart Dam was built in the early 1930's.

The year 1926 was an eventful one in our lives. We made our final move out of rented property into a permanent home. Mother and Dad, through a loan from the B&O, bought the Kimball property at 220 West Washington Street. The previous owner, Mr. Fury, was being transferred to Keyser, over in Mineral County. We were the third family to own this house and it remained in our hands into the 1970's, after Mother died. The month after we made our move, all of us children, one by one, came down with scarlet fever. We were quarantined six weeks or more. Dad was allowed to go to work but there were house restrictions, such as dressing and undressing in the basement, which had an outside entrance. He could talk to us in the sick room only from the hall, through the barricaded door. He had his paper money changed to silver. Mother boiled the silver and lowered it in a can on a string from our porch to our wonderful neighbors, the Shaws. They and the Behan family did errands for us if an emergency came up while Dad was at work. None of the three families had a telephone. Mother and Mrs. Shaw communicated by shouting or by ringing a hand bell. Our back doors were just a few feet apart.

Fortunately, the neighbor children did not contract the disease. Our two youngest babies, three years old and 14 months old, died. I remember our pastor, Father Hannon, coming to the porch to say a few words through the window at each of the funerals, only three weeks apart. There were no church funerals for victims of contagious diseases. That winter, Grafton mourned the death of several boys and girls who died of typhoid or scarlet fever. Typhoid vaccination was given in the schools that year for, I believe, the first time.

Several of us girls — there were seven sisters before a brother came

along — worked part-time during high school days at the local dime store. I remember my first sale at McCrory's. It was a berry set, the pink rose pattern, of what was later to be treasured as "Depression glass." The seven-piece set sold for 40 cents. It was the Saturday after Labor Day, 1929. I had a job, just weeks before the big crash on the Stock Market.

At age 16, working in the 5 & 10, I became more aware of automobiles. The store received a shipment of rear-view mirrors that sold out in a day or two at 20 cents each. Fancy gearshift knobs sold for 10 cents each. The coming of the motor car was an event I remember from age four or five.

Grafton had moved cautiously into the motor age. Automobiles were first seen as chancy innovations, for dapper young men in raccoon coats. The milkman, the iceman, and the undertaker were the last to take the blinders off their horses and turn them out to pasture. The first time the motorized hearse passed our house on the way to the cemetery, Mother remarked that it was much too fast for a funeral procession. She didn't take kindly to the change. She didn't take kindly to the ladies going to voting places to "drag their skirts in tobacco dirt" in 1920, either. But a few years later, and then forever after, Mother voted. Change was upon us, including women voting, telephones and motor cars.

Mother's brother, our Uncle Bob, was not afraid of change. He was an automobile enthusiast, living in Grafton at this time. While Dad and Mom were getting their older children started in school and looking for a house to buy, Uncle Bob traded his team for a horseless carriage. When he got his first truck, Grafton had only five blocks of brick street and a couple of blocks of cobblestone. Tires blew out regularly, according to him. But with his truck he could make quick deliveries, transporting freight from train to merchants on Main Street.

Uncle Bob's ambition prompted him to rent space, an old livery stable, and start a garage. I recall his telling us that his first touring car would make only 20 miles in an all-day trip. Young men in Grafton always had their eye on Bob Eyler's latest treasure. They hoped to purchase one of his "finds" after it was put into A-1 condition. Bob and his motoring friends would brag about making it up Thornton Hill east of Grafton. One young man told of making the hill in reverse.

Eventually Uncle Bob left Grafton, but he visited often. He kept us spellbound with his stories. Frequently he took us for a ride, all the while explaining about the sleeve-valve motor of the Willys-Knight or the speed of his Lexington Minute Man 6. He never failed to remind us that Barney Oldfield broke all racing records of the day with a Minute Man 6. According to Uncle Bob, one of the very early assembly-line cars was the Hains but probably the very first was the Oldsmobile.

By the time we older girls were no longer interested in Uncle Bob's cars, we had ridden in his Kissel, Moon, Jordan, Dixie Flier, Stutz Bearcat, Star, Durant, Chandler Grey and Cole Vero 8. The novelty was gone for us, but Bob went on to have his own antique car museum in Wheeling.

Time passed. As young adults we took excursion trains east. The platform activity for a train going east out of Grafton was different from that of our childhood trips west. A second engine was added to pull, or push as the case might be, up the 17-mile grade. Through Thornton, Newburg and Rowlesburg we went chugging along to Keyser and beyond. Great views of Cheat River come to mind, as does the little trestle at Harpers Ferry. We were out of West Virginia now and who cared what was between there and the big city. We were going to New York!

Main Street, Grafton, looking west from the B&O Station. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy West Virginia Collection, WVU.

West Virginia country music will reach a milestone this May, when Doc Williams celebrates his golden anniversary with the "Wheeling Jamboree" and radio station WWVA. There have been dark periods when Doc's appearances have been relatively few, but his heart has never been far from the big stage and the WWVA microphone. Like Roy Acuff and the "Grand Ole Opry," Doc and the "Jamboree" are linked together in the minds of longtime country fans — and, for the record, Doc has been at Wheeling nearly a year longer than Acuff has been at Nashville.

Doc Williams
A Half Century at the "Wheeling Jamboree"

By Ivan Tribe
Photographs by Michael Keller

Before "Doc Williams" existed there was Andrew John Smik, Jr. He was born of immigrant parents in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 26, 1914. Doc calls himself "the only hillbilly who ever came *out* of Cleveland," and he is surely one of the few country musicians of Slovak origins. Doc's father and mother had both been born in what is now Czechoslovakia, in those days part of the Hapsburg Empire. The elder Andrew Smik came to America at the age of 20 about 1906, and Doc's mother, Susie Parobeck, came at age 12. The couple eventually had five children. Younger brother Milo (known professionally as Cy Williams) would work with Doc as a fiddler and occasional duet partner for some 20 years.

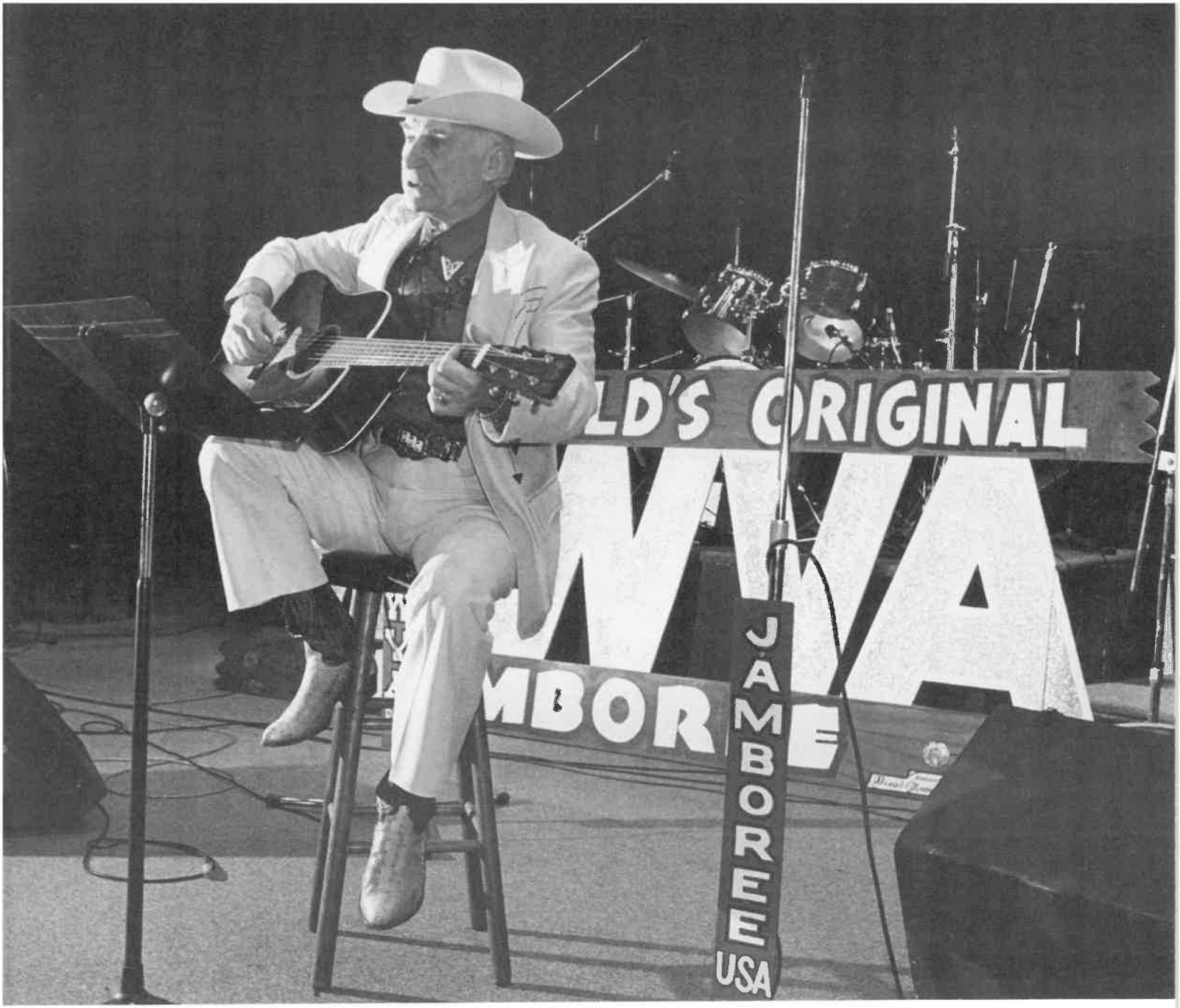
When Doc was two, his parents relocated to the small community of Tarrtown, in the coalfields near Kittanning in Armstrong County, Pennsylvania. Coal camps offer an unusual mixture of rural and urban and the Cleveland boy soon learned something of country living and Appalachian music. His dad played several musical instruments, preferring the traditional fiddle tunes of East Central Europe. Doc's playing eventually came to reflect a mixture of traditional American country music as it was commercially evolving in the late '20's, with just a touch of East European ethnic stylings. The latter mirrored his own background as well as the tastes of audiences in northern West Virginia, eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

Oddly enough, Doc's first musical instrument was the cornet. From there he went to the accordion, the harmonica and finally the guitar. The latter was favored by Jack and Jerry Foy, his earliest country radio influences, and by Jimmie Rodgers, whose recordings had considerable impact on Doc from about 1928. Cy learned to play fiddle from their father and the two brothers worked square dances around Kittanning.

Aside from this, Doc gained his first performing experience back in Cleveland, where he periodically went to live with his grandmother. He and neighbor Joe Stoetzer "teamed up to play beer gardens," Doc says today. Doc played guitar and harmonica, while Joe played a kazoo with an attached horn and also the mandolin. Both sang and together they called themselves the Mississippi Clowns. They auditioned for radio and went on a show called "The Barn Busters" at WJAY in Cleveland, hosted by Morey Amsterdam of later TV fame. The Clowns appeared on this program once a week for about six months. They then found themselves absorbed into a larger unit called the Kansas Clodhoppers, led by Doc McCaulley, a fiddler from Belington, West Virginia.

About 1935, Doc returned to Pennsylvania when his dad asked him to help support the family by working with him in the coal mines. It wasn't long, however, until he returned to radio, teaming up with his brother Cy on fiddle and an Ohio mandolin player named Leonard "Curley" Sims. With the addition of a bass fiddle, this band took the name Allegheny Ramblers and worked at radio station KQV in Pittsburgh. Doc describes their sound as almost "bluegrass at the time, but we didn't know it."

Pittsburgh was no center of hill-



Doc Williams and his favorite radio show go back a long way together. He will celebrate a 50-year association with WWVA's "Jamboree" this May.

billy culture, but the Steel City's varied population did support some early country musicians. Among them were Jack and Jerry Foy, and a band called the Tennessee Ramblers that had been put together by West Virginians Dick Hartman and Harry Blair. The Ramblers later included Cecil Campbell, the group's eventual leader, and West Virginian Harry McAuliffe, whom Hartman gave the sobriquet "Big Slim, the Lone Cowboy." When Doc Williams arrived on Pittsburgh radio, the Tennessee Ramblers had moved on to Rochester. Big Slim, however, remained to play a role not only in Doc's career, but also at WWVA.

Doc's Allegheny Ramblers soon became the band for girl singer Billie Walker, taking the new name Texas Longhorns. At the end of 1936, Walker took an opportunity to go to WWL in New Orleans. Doc, Cy, Curley and Big Slim chose to remain at KQV. By now, the four were known as the Cherokee Hillbillies and were also being carried on two other local stations. It was about this time that young Andy Smik became Doc Williams. He had already been called "Doc," as had his father before him, both being health food advocates, and people tended to confuse Smik with Smith. Billie Walker had suggested Williams, since it was a common last name not likely to be confused with Smith. An autographed picture from about 1936 bears the signature "Cowboy Doc."

In May 1937, Doc and his group changed places with performer Tex Harrison. Tex came to Pittsburgh and Doc went to WWVA in Wheeling. This was when Doc's band took the name Border Riders. The group now consisted of Doc, Cy, Curley and two new members. One newcomer, show business veteran Hamilton "Rawhide" Fincher, was a 26-year-old Alabama native who had worked at times with his brother Shorty Fincher and as part of the duo of Rawhide and Sue. The other was the not-

The Border Riders were the hot new band in Wheeling when this publicity photo was made in 1937. The gunman at left is unidentified, but beside him stand fiddler Cy Williams, Curley Sims and Doc Williams. Newcomers Sunflower and Rawhide hold down the front row. Photographer unknown.

quite-18 Mary Calvas, a Davis, West Virginia, native of Italian background known as Sunflower. She would marry Cy Williams and work for several years as the band's female vocalist.

The Border Riders achieved almost instant popularity at WWVA and in 1938 were acclaimed the station's most popular act. Each Saturday night they performed on the "World's Original Jamboree," as it was then called. Broadcast from the Wheeling Market Auditorium before a crowd of 1,200 or more people, the program had been a favorite since its inauguration before a live audience on January 7, 1933. The Border Riders also performed on a daily show from the WWVA studio in the Hawley Building. Each day they greeted their listeners with a theme song that Doc had recomposed from "Riding Down that Old Texas Trail:"

We are the happy Border Riders,
Who ride down that old border trail.
We are here to bring you cheer
And to sing you songs so dear
That will tell you of that old border trail.

Ridin' down that old border trail
Ridin' down that old border trail.
We'll try hard to make you smile
And to make it worth your while
If you'll tune us in for just a little while.

In addition to their radio broadcasts, Doc and the band began playing show dates almost nightly in nearby parts of Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Since all their programs were done live in the studio, they could never go farther than a hundred miles or so from the station and get back in time for the next broadcast. Most of their stage shows were sponsored by community organizations, fund-raising concerts in the schools, theaters, and public auditoriums of small to medium-sized towns.

In December 1937, Rawhide Fincher was injured at a fire in his apartment and missed several weeks of shows. Doc brought Big Slim McAuliffe to Wheeling to help out. Slim remained at WWVA and became one of the all-time "Jamboree" favorites. Soon after returning, Rawhide left to join his brother Shorty, who brought his Prairie Pals to WWVA. Doc, a firm believer in keeping a comedian in his show, hired James J. "Froggie" Cortez in his place. A native of Pennsylvania, the bass-playing Cortez sang old country comedy songs like "Courtin' in the Rain" and added a trained monkey named Jo-Jo to the usual bucolic humor of

Mountaineer Jamboree

GOLDENSEAL readers wishing to learn more about West Virginia country music during the heyday of Doc Williams may consult Ivan Tribe's *Mountaineer Jamboree: Country Music In West Virginia*. Since its publication in 1984, the book has become the standard work in its field.

Live radio was an important factor in the early history of commercial country music, and Tribe devotes much of his book to the subject. There is a full chapter on WWVA and the "Jamboree" in Wheeling, beginning with the station's first sign-on in 1926. Subsequent chapters discuss radio before and after the watershed year of 1942, a turning point when World War II was calling many musicians away and bringing unprecedented prosperity to others. A short following chapter details the impact of television, which initially provided opportunities before local performers were edged out by syndicated shows.

Mountaineer Jamboree goes on to discuss the bluegrass and folk music revival, and finally to place West Virginia's contributions within the overall history of American country music. The author is a college professor and his book is the product of exhaustive research, assembling facts and details into a work of careful scholarship.

Mountaineer Jamboree *is a 256-page hardback book, illustrated with photographs. It may be purchased for $23 in bookstores, or by ordering from the University Press of Kentucky, 102 Lafferty Hall, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506. Mail orders should include $1.50 for postage and handling.*

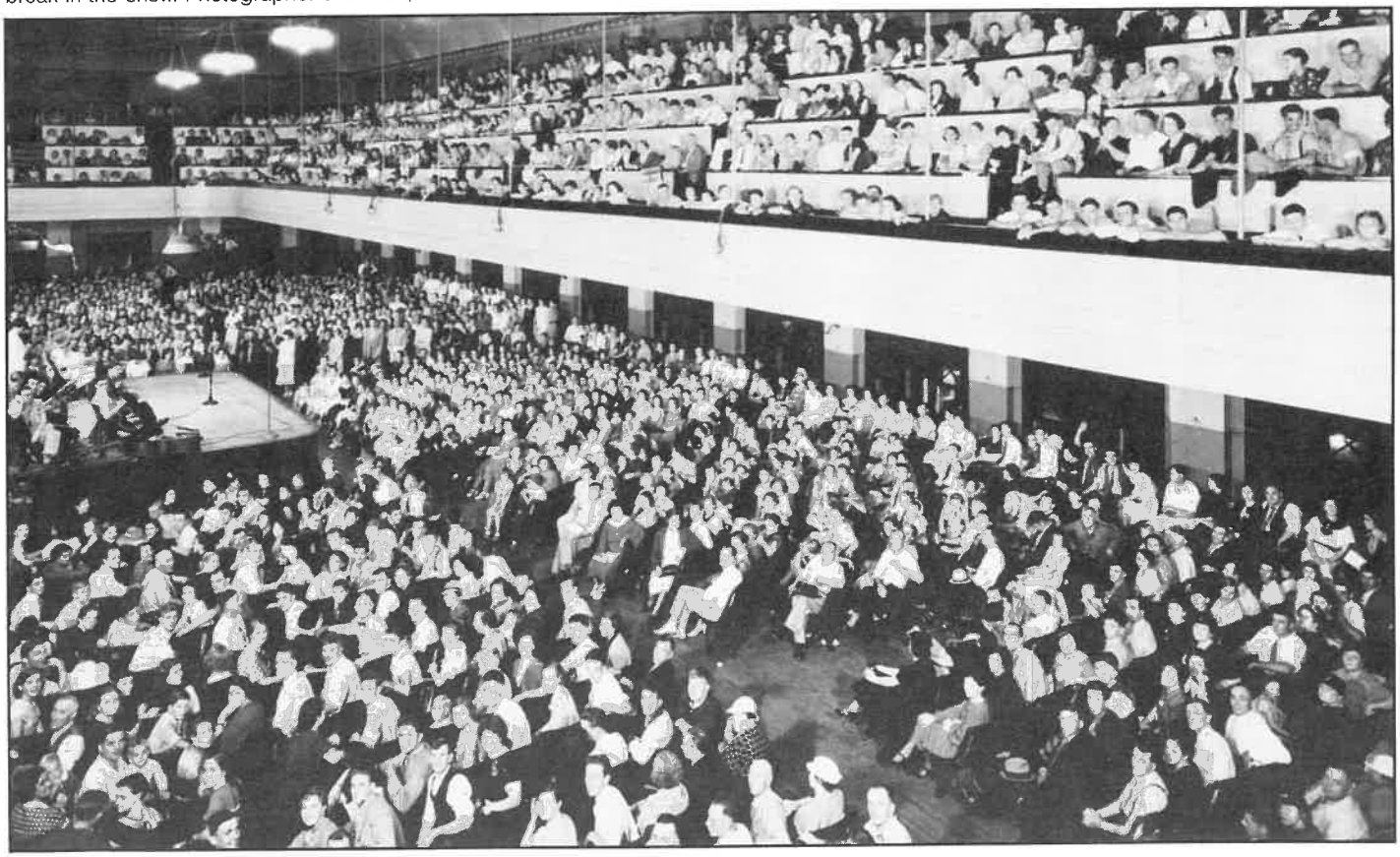
the country clown. The music of the Border Riders continued to be built around the fiddle and mandolin, and Doc's solid rhythm guitar and vocal leads, with other members singing on certain numbers. This band remained together until 1942, when the war brought changes.

During this period, the Border Riders usually took several weeks off in the summer. On one occasion, Doc and Froggie Cortez went to Texas and California. Snapshots from their adventure show a pair of fun-loving country boys enjoying themselves, somewhat awestruck by actually experiencing for the first time the West they sang about. The Texas border, ranches, horses, cowboys and the wide-open spaces made an impression later conveyed to fans via their souvenir booklets.

The "Jamboree" brought nighttime magic to the Capitol Music Hall and Main Street. This crowd awaits a special show, about 1960. Photographer unknown.

Doc courted and married the one true love of his life during those early years at WWVA. Jessie "Chickie" Crupe was a West Virginian, born in Bethany on February 13, 1919. Her father, Fred Crupe, was a renowned oldtime fiddler. He had been contacted to record for Columbia, but death intervened and the family moved to Washington County, Pennsylvania, where Chickie finished high school in 1938. She had once written a fan letter to Doc when he was still at KQV, erroneously addressed to Buck Williams. The two met at a dance in Washington County and following a pleasant courtship were married on October 9, 1939. The first of their three daughters, Barbara Diane ("Peeper") arrived on December 22, 1940. Madeline Dawn ("Poochie") came on April 11, 1943,

The Wheeling Market Auditorium was home to the "Jamboree" during many early years. The photographer had the crowd's attention during this break in the show. Photographer unknown, 1930's.



The historic Capitol Theatre is the undisputed mother church of country music in West Virginia. The "World's Original WWVA Jamboree" was born here on January 7, 1933, before a crowd of 3,266 people. The "Jamboree" has had other homes during its life, particularly the Wheeling Market Auditorium during the early years, but in late 1969 returned permanently to its original stage.

The Main Street theatre, known to country fans as the Capitol Music Hall, is a building of architectural importance as well. In documentation nominating the Wheeling historic district to the National Register of Historic Places, the building is characterized as an "exceptional late beaux-arts design vaudeville house and theatre" and further noted as a "pivotal structure" of downtown Wheeling. The theatre, designed by architect Charles W. Bates, was built about 1926.

The Capitol Theatre is also home to the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra.

and finally Karen Dolores ("Punkin") on June 10, 1944. The girls all performed on special occasions with the Border Riders from an early age, although only Karen ever made any real efforts at a career in music.

The year after Doc and Chickie's marriage, the Border Riders turned their summer vacation into a work break. With Doc's first child on the way and some of the band members also with increased family responsibilities, the musicians worked at WREC in Memphis. On the way home, Doc received an offer from WSM, home of the "Grand Ole Opry" in Nashville. He had sent Chickie back to Wheeling early and was driving his band and their families through Tennessee when he stopped to see Harry Stone, the most powerful behind-the-scenes figure at the Nashville program. After hearing the Border Riders, the WSM manager offered them a daily show and "Opry" spot. Doc, thinking more of his expectant wife in Wheeling and the other band members' squalling babies in the car, asked Stone for a rain check. He never followed up on this offer.

To place this missed opportunity in better perspective, recall that Nashville had not yet attained its "Music City USA" status. Doc Williams and the Border Riders might have become as famous as Roy Acuff, Bill Monroe, Pee Wee King or Ernest Tubb. On the other hand, they might have stayed awhile and then moved on, as did folks like Fiddlin' Arthur Smith, Asher Sizemore, Zeke Clement and the Milo Twins. Nashville's reputation would soon receive such boosts as the Republic film *Grand Ole Opry* and an NBC slot for the "Opry." But in 1940 Wheeling ranked only a little below Nashville in music prestige. In fact, WWVA officials passed up a chance for the "Jamboree" to go on the NBC Blue Network at about that time.

Back in Wheeling, the Border Riders continued as they had in the past. The "Jamboree," daily radio programs, and almost nightly live shows kept Doc, Cy, Sunflower, Curley and Froggie busy. The group first sold photos and a little souvenir scrapbook over the air, and about April 1940 they came out with a more elaborate *Doc Williams Border Riders Family Album*, including 39 pictures and 14 songs. They weren't making phonograph records, but neither had any other WWVA acts since the Hugh and Shug's Radio Pals session for Decca in July 1937. Among the WSM acts, only Acuff and Monroe were recording at the time. After Christmas of 1940, Chickie stayed home with little Peeper and Doc indulged his spare moments in a fascination with aviation. He learned to pilot planes and later even managed an airport for a time.

After Pearl Harbor, the world of country music went through many changes. Gasoline rationing curtailed personal appearances and also reduced the number of fans who could come to Wheeling to see the "World's Original Jamboree." Many musicians entered the armed forces or were

called into defense work. At the same time, people depended as much or even more upon radio for entertainment and the popularity of country music increased a great deal. Performances tended to be confined to the studios and from December 1942 until July 1946, the WWVA "Jamboree" was not broadcast before live stage audiences. The musicians who remained with the station, disproportionately women, got more opportunities to sing over the air than ever before.

The effects of the war came gradually for Doc. The service took Cortez and Sims and eventually only he and Cy were left. Chickie was singing with them often by this point. In 1943, Cy entered the military and Doc acquired other musicians. Marion Martin (Marion Keyoski), the blind accordionist, had his first association with the Border Riders during this period. So, too, did steel guitarist Tex King.

It was during the war that Doc began to put together the guitar instruction course which became one of his trademarks. With financial help from the WWVA management, he succeeded in getting his *Simplified By Ear System of Guitar Chords* printed in June 1943. The 42-page booklet proved an instant success as a mail-order item. By 1966 it had sold more than 125,000 copies. The course went through six printings by the end of 1944 and in those months when travel was limited it provided a major source of income.

By early 1945, Doc began producing transcribed radio programs for airplay in various sections of the country. He bought time on other stations, sent off the large disc recordings, and made some profit. In the latter part of 1944, Doc along with Chickie and Tex King left Wheeling and went to WFMD in Frederick, Maryland. This station had excellent facilities for cutting transcriptions and it was here that many of the early programs advertising the guitar course were made. Doc recalls that when not playing live from the studio, he, Chickie and Tex would be in the transcription room recording programs for broadcast elsewhere. Other entertainers at WFMD included Mac Wiseman and folk singer Ed McCurdy.

Above: The Border Riders saw personnel changes during World War II. The 1947 group included Cy and Chickie Williams, accordionist Marion Martin and Doc himself. Photographer unknown.

Below: Souvenir booklets were important money-makers during the heyday of live radio. Here are a Border Riders album and scrapbook and the Jamboree's 15th anniversary booklet.

Like most musicians, Doc's band spent much time on the road. This 1947 photo shows new comedian Hiram Hayseed, Marion Martin, Cy, Doc and Chickie at the WWVA broadcast tower. Photographer unknown.

This situation came to a sudden end early in 1945 when Andrew J. Smik, Jr., found himself drafted into the U. S. Navy. Doc had registered for Selective Service back at Memphis in the summer of 1940. Despite one bad eye, he now memorized the eye charts and got into Navy flight school. The weakness soon became apparent and on April 12, 1945, Doc received his discharge. President Franklin Roosevelt died the same day and the final Allied victory was less than five months away.

When the war was over, Doc returned to Wheeling. Still much under the influence of the romance of aviation, he operated an airport at nearby Martin's Ferry, Ohio, with a friend and also organized a contracting firm, the Cook and Smik Company. An article in the July-August 1945 *National Hillbilly News* reported that "Doc isn't doing any broadcasting in person," but had transcriptions on a station in North Carolina and one in Ohio. Soon he added two more North Carolina stations. Doc recalls one Sunday afternoon at the airport, when an old fan pleaded with him to get back into live music on a regular basis. By then he had already resumed solo appearances on the Saturday night "Jamboree." A little later, he got his band back together for three-a-week daytime shows at WWVA as well.

Late in 1945, Doc Williams and his reassembled Border Riders gave a show in Newcomerstown, Ohio. That happened to be the residence of *Mountain Broadcast and Prairie Recorder* columnist Mary Jean Shurtz, who reported that Doc "really packed them in." Her review of the concert provides a glimpse of the Border Riders in their prime:

> What an act! Flannels Miller. . .is just about the cutest thing. . . . Flannels plays the fiddle, banjo, bass, guitar and almost any musical instrument in the old time band. . . . Then there's Doc's wife, sweet little Chickie. She's called the Girl with the Lullaby Voice. . . . Chickie plays bass, and is one swell radio personality. The next Border Rider is Curley Sims. . . . Curley is doing quite a bit of comedy. . .along with the rest of his entertaining features.
>
> Now we come to that fellow every WWVA listener has admired. . .for years — Doc Williams!. . .Congratulations, Doc, for working at it until you have the Border Riders where they belong — at the top of the world in old time musical entertainment.

Flannels Miller fiddled for the Border Riders until Cy Williams returned from the service. Froggie Cortez and Sunflower had gone off to New Castle, Pennsylvania, to work with Curley Miller's Ploughboys, since Cy and Sunflower's marriage had become a casualty of the war. Cy was back with the Border Riders by 1946, and a later article by Mary Jean Shurtz praised his fiddling on "Orange Blossom Special" and his singing on the recent Spade Cooley hit, "Shame On You." Cy continued to work with Doc until October 1956, when he left show business for a job with the U. S. Post Office.

Doc hired William Henry Godwin, an oldtime vaudeville performer, to replace Froggie as comedian. A native of Georgia by way of Texas, Godwin had recorded for Columbia in 1929 as Shorty Godwin. By the time he came to West Virginia in 1938 with Mack Jeffers and his Fiddlin' Farmers, Godwin had developed his comic character, "Hiram Hayseed." Specializing in novelty fiddling, dancing, comedy and singing, he remained a Border Rider from 1946 until his death in 1959. When Curley Sims left in 1947, Marion Martin renewed what became perhaps the longest association of any musician with Doc, outside his own family. If the Sims

mandolin had been the outstanding feature of the Border Riders sound in the earlier years, Marion's accordion would provide the main characteristic for the next quarter-century. The three Williams daughters often performed, too.

Doc made his first record in 1947. The WWVA management had not encouraged phonograph recording by their artists earlier, and Doc had not concerned himself much with this aspect of entertainment. But the increasing importance of records for radio airplay made the post-war situation different. Chickie had come into her own following Sunflower's exodus, and Doc decided to feature her on record as well. Both did their initial recording in Cleveland in December. Chickie's first release was "Beyond the Sunset," a single, with "Silver Bell" on the flip side. "Beyond the Sunset," including a recitation of the Rosey Rosewell poem, "Should You Go First," was the hit of the session. The sentimental performance spread the lovely 28-year-old brunette's fame far and wide.

Other numbers from that first session also had some impact. Doc's original "Willy Roy," a ballad about a little boy with a terminal illness, went on to become a bluegrass standard, although Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper's 1949 recording would have more influence than Doc's own. "Silver Bell," an old song about an Indian maid by Percy Weinruch, became one of Doc's best-known numbers, while "Merry Maiden Polka" showcased the sound that made Doc Williams and Marion Martin popular with ethnic audiences.

This 1947 recording session was a promising beginning for Doc's new enterprise, the Wheeling Record Company. Between them, Doc and Chickie would wax more than 200 masters for the label, which was releasing discs as late as 1985. Wheeling Records has never had any million sellers or adequate distribution, but it still has records in print and much of its catalog remains available on cassette. In the meantime, the Williamses passed up a chance to record for Mercury.

Through 1947, 1948 and 1949, Doc operated a summer country music park at Musselman's Grove near Altoona. Parks of this nature, with weekend afternoon family entertainment, had become quite popular through the tri-state area, especially in Pennsylvania. Jake Taylor's Radio Ranch near Grafton was West Virginia's best-known park. Doc and his group played often with big-name talent from Hollywood, such as singing cowboys Tex Ritter and Jimmy Wakeley. Doc promoted Chicago "National Barn Dance" stars like Lulubelle and Scotty, and such "Opry" heroes as Roy Acuff, Bill Monroe and Ernest Tubb. "Jamboree" performers like Big Slim and Hank Snow also appeared at Musselman's Grove.

The Doc Williams Golden Anniversary will be celebrated May 17, at 2:00 p.m., at the Capitol Music Hall. Call (304) 232-1170 for ticket information.

By 1950, Doc, Chickie and the Border Riders were doing far better than most country acts. Few performers enjoyed much security at the time. One contemporary recalls that when he came to WWVA in late 1950, folks said that Doc Williams was the only entertainer at the station prosperous enough to pay cash for a suit of clothes. Doc hardly felt rich, however. In 1950, he finally let the WWVA management excuse him from broadcasts long enough to do more road shows. He says that he had only "$87 in the bank" when he left for an extended tour in the East and Canada. On this and later trips he drew good crowds in eastern Pennsylvania, upstate New York, rural New England, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. Doc's several tours of Newfoundland proved especially rewarding. WWVA had been a powerful 50,000-watt station since October 1942, and its artists found that they had an eager audience waiting in eastern Canada. Daily live shows began to be phased out during the '50's, but WWVA entertainers now could play personal appearances in a much larger hinterland.

Doc left WWVA a second time in the fall of 1956, buying a 37½ percent interest in radio station WMOD in Moundsville. One-time "Jamboree" artist Jake Taylor was the other principal owner. Brother Cy had remarried and quit music. His replacement, Buddy Spicher, later left to go with Johnnie and Jack and Kitty Wells in Nashville. Doc decided to

The "Jamboree" occupied Wheeling's Virginia Theatre for about 15 years following the war. This is a 1950 show. Photographer unknown.

get off the road for a while. He did 55 minutes of deejay work daily and spent most of his remaining time in the business end of things. He didn't play at the "Jamboree," because WMOD gave WWVA a lot of competition for the daytime audience. He didn't play many live shows either, but did do a three-month television stint at WTRF in Wheeling.

By 1958, Doc had sold his interest in WMOD and returned to his true calling. His love for music, for the "Jamboree" and for performing proved stronger than the attraction of radio as a business. During this WMOD interlude, Doc did his first Nashville record session on October 8, 1956, with Chet Atkins among the accompanying musicians. The results were not especially satisfying and he did not return to Nashville to record until 1963.

For another 20 years, Doc Williams and the Border Riders remained on the road much of the time, entertaining at school auditoriums, parks, clubs, fairs, and other such locales. Doc branched out into live television, hosting a very successful show for two years at WJAC in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and earlier at WFBG Altoona. The Williams girls grew up and went to college. Peeper and Poochie both obtained degrees, but Punkin came back to pursue a musical career as Karen McKenzie. Paul Cohen, who had produced Patsy Cline's hit recordings, chose Karen as a replacement after Cline's tragic death in 1963. Cohen produced Karen's session for ABC Paramount Records, but then his own death intervened and the releases never went anywhere. Nonetheless, she remains a fine contemporary country singer.

After Hiram Hayseed died, Smokey Pleacher worked for more than a decade as Border Rider comedian, until his own death in 1971. Pleacher and Marion Martin recorded a pair of albums for Wheeling Records. During the 1960's, he and Martin became as well known as Cy Williams and Shorty Godwin had been earlier. Other sidemen came and went during those later years, with Dean McNett, Curt Dillie, Gary Boggs, Fred Johnson, Jack Jackson and Bill Barton among the more memorable. Sometimes older WWVA figures like Toby Stroud, Roy Scott

and the armless musician, Ray Myers, worked tours with Doc.

By 1966, Doc was playing the Saturday night show now known as "Jamboree USA" only about once a month. Much of the rest of the time, the Doc Williams Show remained on the road. Crowds mostly were large and the Border Riders continued to please their fans. But with the increasing conformity in musical styles associated with the bland "Nashville Sound," Doc and Chickie found themselves the survivors of a vanishing breed. Still, Doc recalls the middle and late '60's as among the most lucrative times of his career.

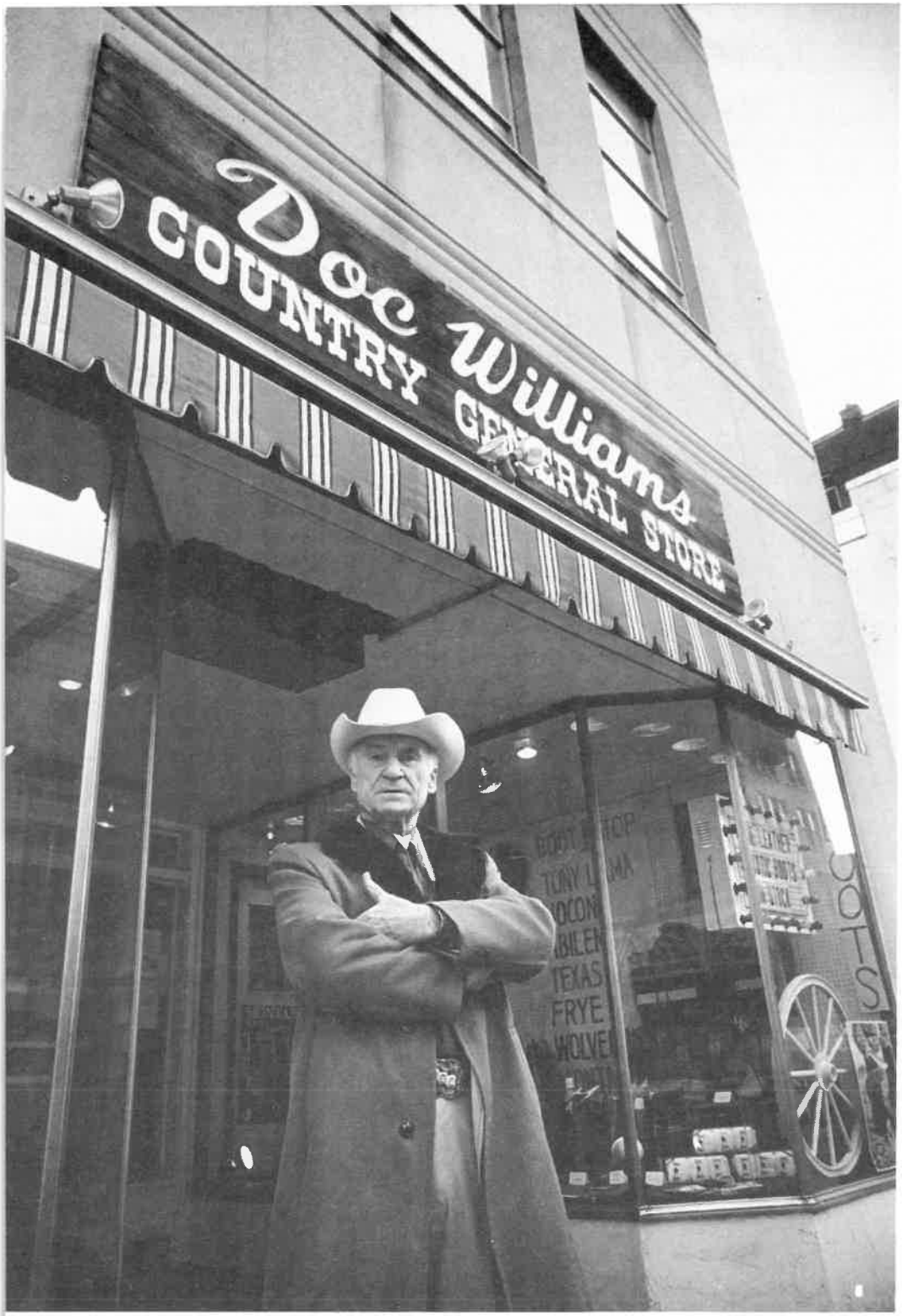
The 1970's proved to be a time of transition. At the beginning Doc and Chickie continued as before, but then their careers began to wind down. They eased away from constant touring and began playing just now and then. By the end of the decade, their "Jamboree" appearances were down to one or two per year, and sometimes then for oldtimer reunions or other special occasions. Although Doc and Chickie had connections with the "Jamboree" as solid as Roy Acuff or Minnie Pearl had with the "Opry," the Wheeling management never seemed to appreciate them in the same way, often choosing to favor some special guest from Nashville. "Jamboree" management has not had the continuity of that at WSM, and perhaps that was a reason. Doc, for his part, became increasingly a spokesman for regional distinctiveness and the endangered notion of country music as clean family entertainment. He became a critic of today's complex and expensive recording arrangements, which, together with emphasis on the top-40 formats by country radio stations, forced many musicians far younger than himself into near obscurity.

Doc also opened his Country Store across the street from WWVA's Capitol Music Hall. Stocked with a goodly selection of Wheeling and music souvenirs, western clothes, and traditional country recordings and publications, the store has become a gathering spot for the music's traditionalists and long-term "Jamboree" fans. Daughter Peeper manages the store and Doc and Chickie often can be seen helping serve the customers who crowd in on Saturdays.

Top Left: The show business trappings were put away for this 1953 family portrait. Daughter Barbara stands at rear, while Karen sits with Doc and Madeline with Chickie. Photographer unknown, courtesy of Stanford Hankinson.

Left: "Jamboree" performers, backed by the powerful 50,000 watts of WWVA, have always been popular in Canada. This 1962 photo was made in a Toronto tavern. Photographer unknown.

Above: The Duke stands guard while Doc confers with Marge Brasill in his Wheeling store. Marge and husband Arthur, from Massachusetts, say they have been Williams fans since 1953.



Doc Williams takes a stand at his store on Main Street near the Capitol Music Hall. He believes in the traditional sound, appreciation for the past and in country music as clean family entertainment.

Doc has not fully retired. He and Chickie still play several show dates yearly. From 1979 until 1984, he organized a yearly reunion concert which featured his own family, former Border Riders, and West Virginia show business veterans like Lee Moore, Blaine Smith, Curley Miller, Bonnie Baldwin and Roy Scott. Beginning in 1974, Doc, Chickie and the band taped several programs for the public TV station in Morgantown. One, featuring an in-depth interview by folklorist Carl Fleischhauer, later was aired on 200 Public Broadcasting System stations nationally. In 1982 a crew from the British Broadcasting Corporation came to call, filming Doc for an overseas special on West Virginia music. In August 1985, he and Chickie appeared on the "Jamboree" with Grandpa Jones and the Sunshine Boys. In February 1986, the couple headed a group of "Jamboree" veterans in a show that included such old favorites as Shirley Barker and Lloyd Carter, and younger performers like Jimmy Stephens and Junior Norman. In 1983, Doc was probably the major symbol of continuity when "Jamboree USA" celebrated its 50th anniversary as a live radio barn dance.

Although Chickie is content in semi-retirement, Doc has recently announced that he will book appearances with Jay Kirk, a veteran comedian with whom he has worked over the years. Plans are under way for a big special at the Capitol Music Hall on May 19, 1987. Honored as a Distinguished West Virginian and as West Virginia's Country Music Ambassador by Arch Moore during his first term as governor, and as a 1984 inductee of the Wheeling Hall of Fame (along with opera singer Eleanor Steber), Doc has more than made his mark on the state's musical history. He stands with Craigsville's Buddy Starcher and those West Virginia symbols of tradition on the "Grand Ole Opry," Wilma Lee Cooper and Little Jimmy Dickens, in professional careers that go back to the early days of country radio. They were not only country when it wasn't cool, but before today's stars were born. ✱

Author's Note: Most of the biographical information is from an interview conducted with Andrew Smik, Jr. (Doc Williams) in Wheeling, on September 9, 1986. This has been supplemented by an article by his daughter Barbara that appeared in the JEMF Quarterly *(1974) and various materials in early country music fan magazines like* Mountain Broadcast and Prairie Recorder *and* National Hillbilly News. *In addition, all known Doc Williams songbooks, and all recordings by Doc and Chickie Williams, have been examined. Over the past seven years, I have had numerous conversations with Doc, Chickie and Peeper, and many of their friends and associates. Both the research and the experiences have been incorporated into this article. For information concerning available records and tapes, write Doc Williams, Box 902, Wheeling, West Virginia 26003.*

Honest smiles and handcrafted baskets are the trademarks of Adam and Lula Adkins. They have enjoyed a life of hard work and country abundance, they say.

Adam and Lula Adkins

A Life on Big Ugly

By Bob Schwarz
Photographs by Chris Spencer

Through the valley winds a creek, and the creek being named Big Ugly, folks call the whole area Big Ugly. Actually, it's a beautiful place. This is the remote innards of southern Lincoln County. It is an area outside people go around, not through.

A traveler heading south along Route 10 could go from Huntington to Logan every day, pass daily one Big Ugly sign at Ranger and another beyond Ferrellsburg, yet maybe go a lifetime without stopping by. One Big Ugly post office remains, at Leet, and it is part of DeHaven's, the one store. DeHaven's closes for the day at 1:30 p.m. On a dreary day last November, the store part of the operation was winding down for what owners Bruce and Mildred DeHaven said would be the last time. Along the creek and up the branches and forks, mostly older people are left. Many of the young people have moved away to cities and towns, to jobs. Big Ugly is a community grown quiet. It was not always so.

Adam and Lula Adkins have been married 59 years, and have lived up Big Ugly the last 57. They witnessed the days when the creek bustled with activity. Early in the century, crews of men worked in the hollows, cutting down trees, taking out logs, and sawing them into lumber. Adam lives now just a few hundred yards up a hollow, off a Big Ugly tributary. His is the last house. At the end of his garden is a barn, and beyond the barn, woods.

Once rails ran up the narrow hollow, where woods are today. "There was a dinky used to run up and down here — a small train," recalls Adam. "Lula's daddy used to run it. He hauled logs out of here." A sawmill sat at the mouth of the hollow then, on some big rocks. Beside the sawmill was a pond, where logs were washed before sawing. There were rows of houses as well, in a logging camp called Stringtown. When he was 12, says Adam, two of his aunts lived in Stringtown.

Stringtown sprang up around 1905, according to Lula. The logging work brought her father into Big Ugly, where Lula was born in 1911. She was still a girl when the logging ended, the mill pulled out, and the houses of Stringtown were taken down and moved. She has remained

on the creek. Adam is from outside, from Pea Ridge, over towards Spurlocksville. Outside is not so far away. To get to Pea Ridge by a walk through the woods, Lula says, would take but an hour.

"I was born and raised in Pea Ridge country," says Adam Adkins. "I ain't been over on this side very long."

"He's been here 57 years," chimes in his wife, "since two years after we were married. We been right around here all that time — 'fraid to go too far, 'fraid we couldn't get back."

The couple began with little those first two years on Pea Ridge, but they were young and worked hard. That first year the farm had a good orchard and they dried apples day and night. They preserved 60 gallons of beans, 60 gallons of corn and 60 gallons of sauerkraut. "There was just two of us," Lula remembers, "and we couldn't eat all that. We gave people that stuff all winter. We gave people sacks of dried apples."

In 1930, Adam and Lula came to Durg Frye Hollow, an offshoot of the main valley of Big Ugly Creek. At the end of the hollow, where they live today, sat a big two-story house when Lula was a little girl. But when they arrived, the house was gone and the property empty. "We were just two little kids," recalls Adam, "and we just took it all from the stump."

Adam built a 22-by-18 log house that first year. The rest of the house was later built around that, and only some thick doorways between rooms now hint of their home's log origins. Half a dozen other buildings, including two barns, came later. "I ain't no carpenter yet," says Adam, "but I built all the buildings here."

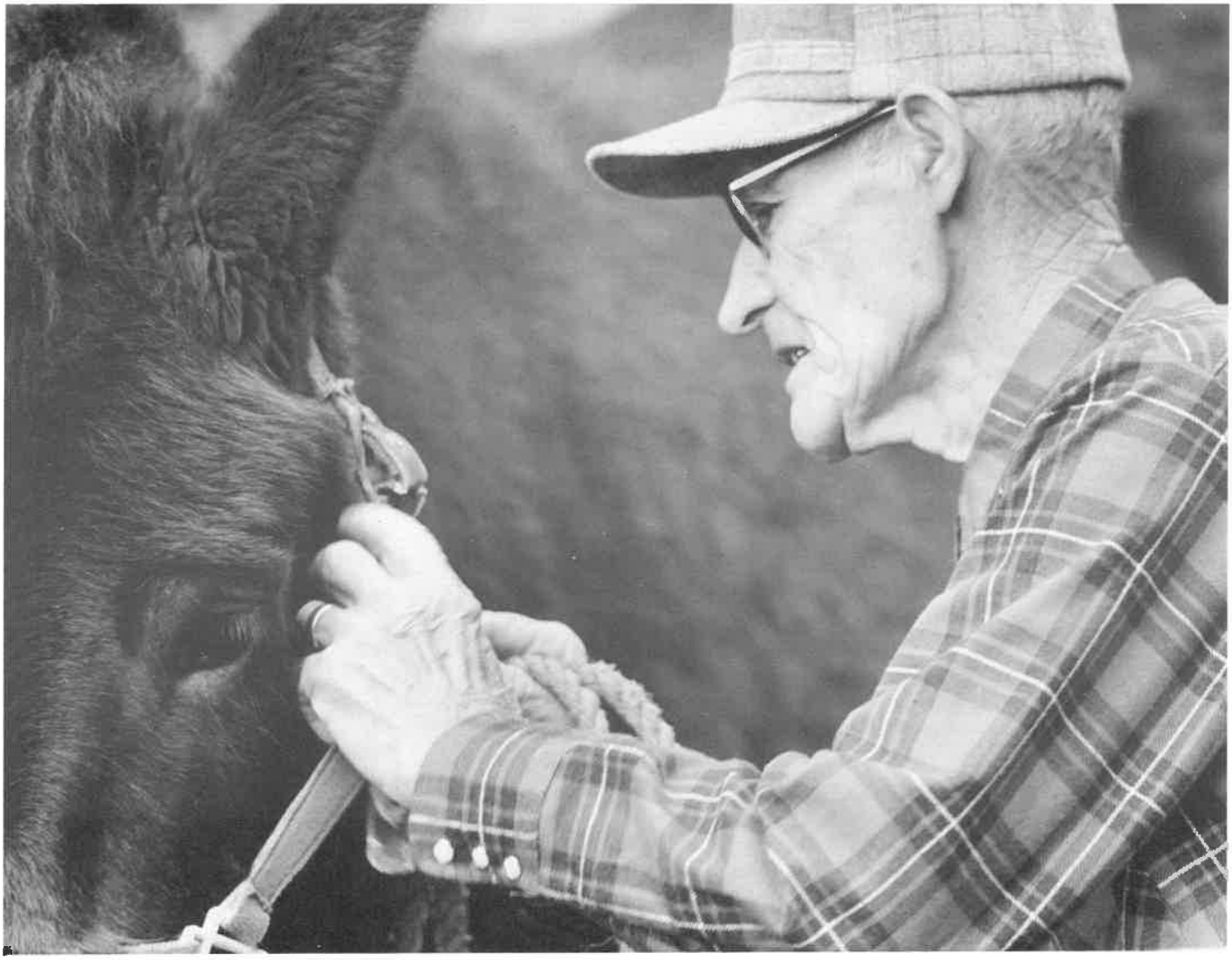
Lula gave birth to eight children, all at home. The next-to-youngest, Hazel, went to Guyan Valley High where she and a friend boarded together. Hazel graduated, moved to Huntington, went to work, and got married. The youngest daughter, Keseleen, took the school bus daily over Green Shoals Mountain to Harts High, and she too graduated. Both girls, Adkinses themselves, married Adkins boys. This was not unusual in Lincoln County, where Adkins to this day is the overwhelmingly dominant name from one end of the county to the other.

In their early years together, in the 1930's and '40's, Adam and Lula were farmers. They raised their yearly crop of tobacco and they worked at whatever else would bring in a dollar, selling berries or railroad ties, as the market accepted, or selling a day's labor when a paying job was offered.

One year, the hills were blue with huckleberries — wild blueberries. With a party of eight or 10 people, they went into the hills with seven-gallon lard cans. Filled cans were emptied into coffee sacks, and the sacks thrown across mules. They took the berries four miles to Gill, where the stationmaster was paying a dollar a gallon. "Used to be a rail depot at Gill," recalls Adam of the community at the mouth of the creek, where Big Ugly empties into the Guyandotte River. "Ain't nothing down there now."

Cutting and splitting railroad ties was a harder way of earning cash. "Starvation poles," Adam calls them, and they too had to be taken to Gill. "I had to chop them out," Adam remembers, "using just a double-bit axe. I could make 15 in a day, and start on a 16th." A railroad tie had to

Earlier times in Lincoln County. Adam is the biggest in this group of Adkins brothers and sisters. Photographer and date unknown.



Adam once took two mules to the field, cooling one while he worked the other. His farming today is of a lighter nature.

be seven inches thick, nine inches across, and 8½ feet long. "Within an inch," Adam says. "It could be an inch short or an inch long."

Adam would deliver by wagon or ox-cart, and the inspector would examine the ties and grade them. The best ties he marked five spots on, the next best four, and so on all the way down to one. A man's pay was good when his ties graded out at four and five stars.

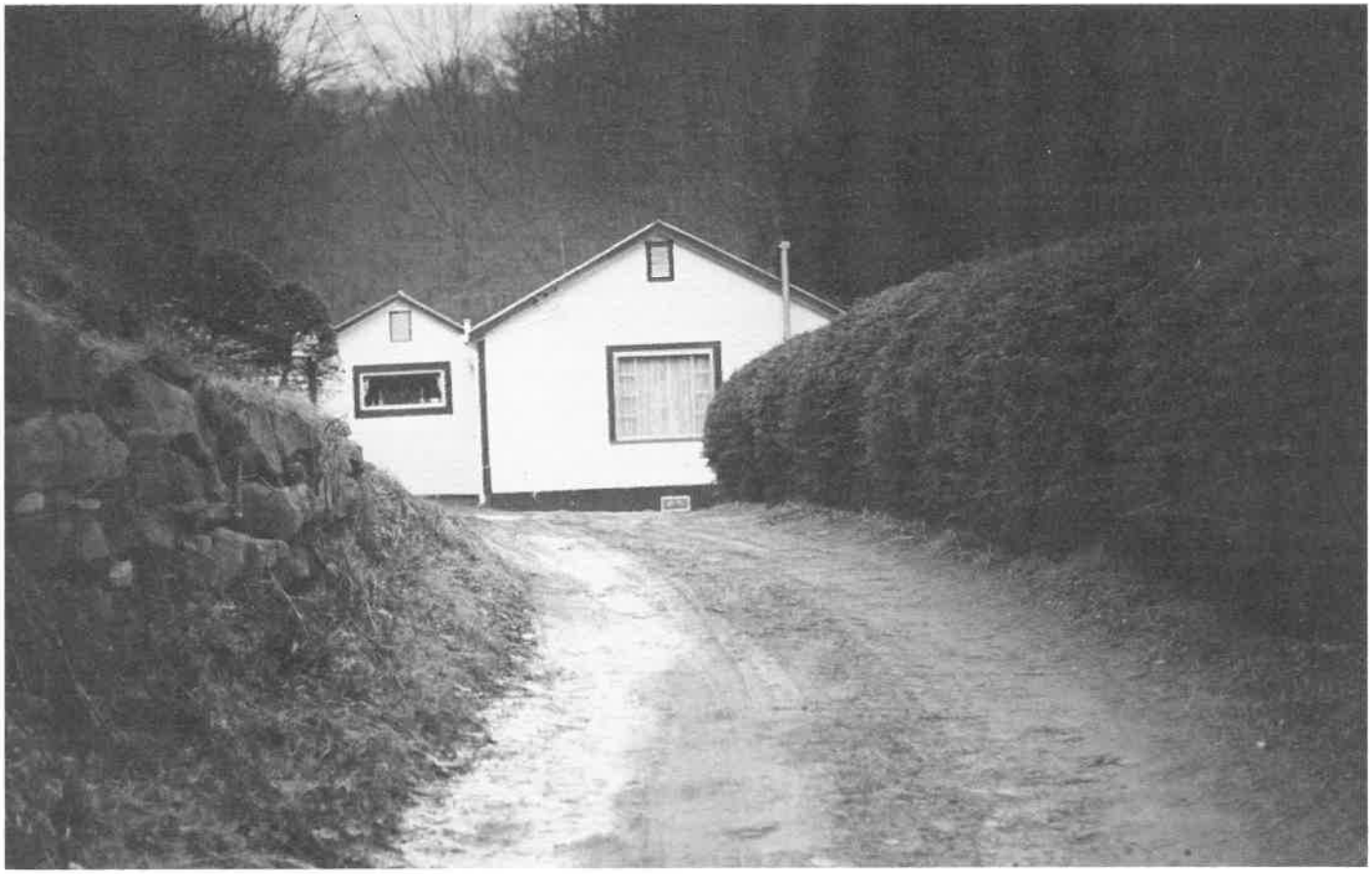
Once a natural gas line was going through, and Adam applied for a job. "I went down there and asked who's the boss. I walked over to him and he looked me up and down, and he said, 'Get yourself a pick and a shovel and go up on the mountain and hit the ditch.' " A 12-foot section would be marked out, and a man assigned to dig it. "When you was dug out," says Adam, "you went to the front and started again." The pipe was 12 inches wide, the old thick cast iron, and each length went over 20 feet and required 12 men to carry. "When we needed to bend pipe, we heated it, and put it in a fork of a tree, and the men bent it," Adam remembers. "We put log heat on it, from a heap of logs."

Not all the pipeline workers were from on the creek. Often crews of immigrants would be brought in from Pennsylvania, introducing strange new ways. They stuck by themselves, and spoke their native tongue. "Folks called them honkies," recalls Adam. He gives his own explanation of that term. "Get them stirred up, and they were like a bunch of geese. That's what they sounded like to me."

Once one of the foreigners brought his arm out just as Adam had his shovel raised. It was an accident, but Adam's shovel cut the man's hand badly. "I said 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry.' They were just chattering away. I didn't know what they were saying."

Mostly those were years, says Lula, when they dug and hoed their living out of the ground. Cash work only supplemented the real business of farming. They farmed corn and tobacco and all manner of garden stuff. They milked cows, raised hogs, and cured their meat with hickory wood.

In 1949, the lure of a steady paycheck drew Adam to the outside. For the next 14 years, seven months, he worked in Logan County, at Peach Creek, where he was one of 300 miners. It was a 25-mile trip and he made the drive daily, five days a week, sometimes six. Shortly after he started at Peach Creek, he bought his first red and white Jeep. The Jeep was his daily ticket over Green Shoals Mountain. Only three times did Adam not get home of an evening, and then, he says, it was high water that stopped him. "I like my Jeep," he says. "It don't matter how much ice and snow, it can go, all four wheels spinning." One red and white Jeep succeeded another. The fourth, a 1970 model, Adam still uses when he goes out. The fifth he keeps mostly in the garage. He is saving it.



The Adkins place is as far up Durg Frye Hollow as you can go. The family has been there nearly 60 years.

"The 1970 runs just like a new one," he smilingly observes.

The mine at Peach Creek helped him support his family, but it took a heavy toll. Adam lost a son at Peach Creek, and had another son crippled. Adam's brother lost a son, and a man they rode with lost a son. These were four separate accidents.

During the 14 years in the mines, Adam continued to farm. He raised a tobacco crop every year but one, and missed the one because he had no plants. His work at Peach Creek came to an end when the mine shut down

Weaving White Oak

Adam is 84 now, and Lula 75. They are in their autumn years, and no longer work as hard as they once did. Yet they have not grown lazy, either. They started making oak baskets about 20 years ago, and are winding down at it now. According to Adam, they made just three last year. He wanted to make more but when he went to renew his wood supply winter before last, he cut an oak and found the sap had already come up, just as if it were summertime. And sappy wood can't be worked, he says.

Adam is proud of the family baskets, of how sturdily they are made. "You can see all kinds of baskets," he says, then points to his own. "But show me ones like that."

The baskets in stores, Adam continues, are mostly willow and poplar. His own baskets, by contrast, are white oak. "White oak is the toughest wood there is," he says. "A lot of people will holler that hickory is tougher, but hickory will break. White oak won't break. White oak you can tie in a knot." Some of the Adkins baskets are small and delicate. Some are large, and in them the oak splits are thick. "This one," he says, holding up a big one dyed blue, "is almost made out of plank. It's worth 15 from the store."

The first one he ever made, says Adam, holding it up, took him two days to make. The weave is uneven, since when he split the oak some slats turned out thicker than others. But if it is rough in the crafting, adds Lula, it is stout enough to carry rocks. "Money wouldn't buy that one," she says.

His stepmother, Adam recalls, made oak baskets by the hundreds. Some she sold and some she gave away. "She went blind, and she made them even after she was blind," he says. His stepmother had the know-how, he recalls, know-how he and Lula acquired from her. "It's all in knowing anything," he says. "If you know it and you got the nerve, you can do it."

Lula usually does the actual basket weaving, but it is Adam who prepares the wood slats and sets them on her table. First he finds a good white oak tree — a basket oak about four or five inches in diameter — and cuts it down with a

in 1964. Adam was 62. He had worked inside Big Ugly, and then outside. Now he collected Social Security and labored within Big Ugly again. Until the last few years, Adam still tended many of the nearby creek bottoms. He would take his wagon and two mules. "He'd have one tied in the shade," says Lula. "When one got hot and tired, he'd get himself a cool one."

Adam is down to one mule now, and with it he tends two gardens. In the cold cellar behind the house, glass jars three deep crowd the shelves. Also in the cellar are baskets of potatoes and turnips. In the smokehouse where Lula cans are more baskets, filled with sweet potatoes. Putting up food begins in late spring, according to her. "You just have to start when it comes on," she says. "First thing is beets, then peas, then beans — it doesn't all ripen at the same time." Even on a mid-November day last fall, this work was not yet done. "Now's the time for making apple butter," Lula said, though in these modern times, with good fruit hard to grow at home, she buys the Golden Delicious apples.

Adam and Lula, after 59 years together, still have a beautiful outlook. They share what they have with others, whether it be the oak baskets they make, the canned goods from their cellar or a good meal at the kitchen table. They believe the good Lord has left them on this Earth so they may continue their sharing.

They raised eight children on the farm. The children are gone now, and it is just the two of them alone again. The food in the cellar and in two big freezers, Adam and Lula find, far exceeds what they can use themselves. But the children come back to visit, some from within the county and some from beyond. They take supplies home. Neighbors and other kin also get their share.

Times have changed since Adam and Lula first took up housekeeping 59 years ago, and Lula worries that people growing up today have forgotten the value of a garden, and of providing for their own winter's table. Young people, she complains, won't let her teach them how to make jam and kraut and quilts. "I don't know what's going to become of these young people," she frets. "There may come a time when the food stores may not have anything or people won't have any money."

"A lot of people today," adds Adam, "say if you're going to come to my house, give me a week's notice and I'll have something for you to eat. That's not the way it is at our house," he says. "We can go to the freezer and cellar and set a table."

At 84, Adam is not yet through with farm work, and he can still make good use of a hammer, square and nails. "I built a tin building inside that log corn crib last fall," he said. "I framed it up, and put the tin on. It sure stopped the rats from eating the corn up."

There is work left in Adam. Two years ago, at 82, he helped a son-in-law strip a tobacco crop, and helped harvest a cane crop and take it to Salt Rock. "Work won't hurt no one," Lula figures, "or we'd be dead long ago." But, she adds, "people won't hardly work for love nor money now."

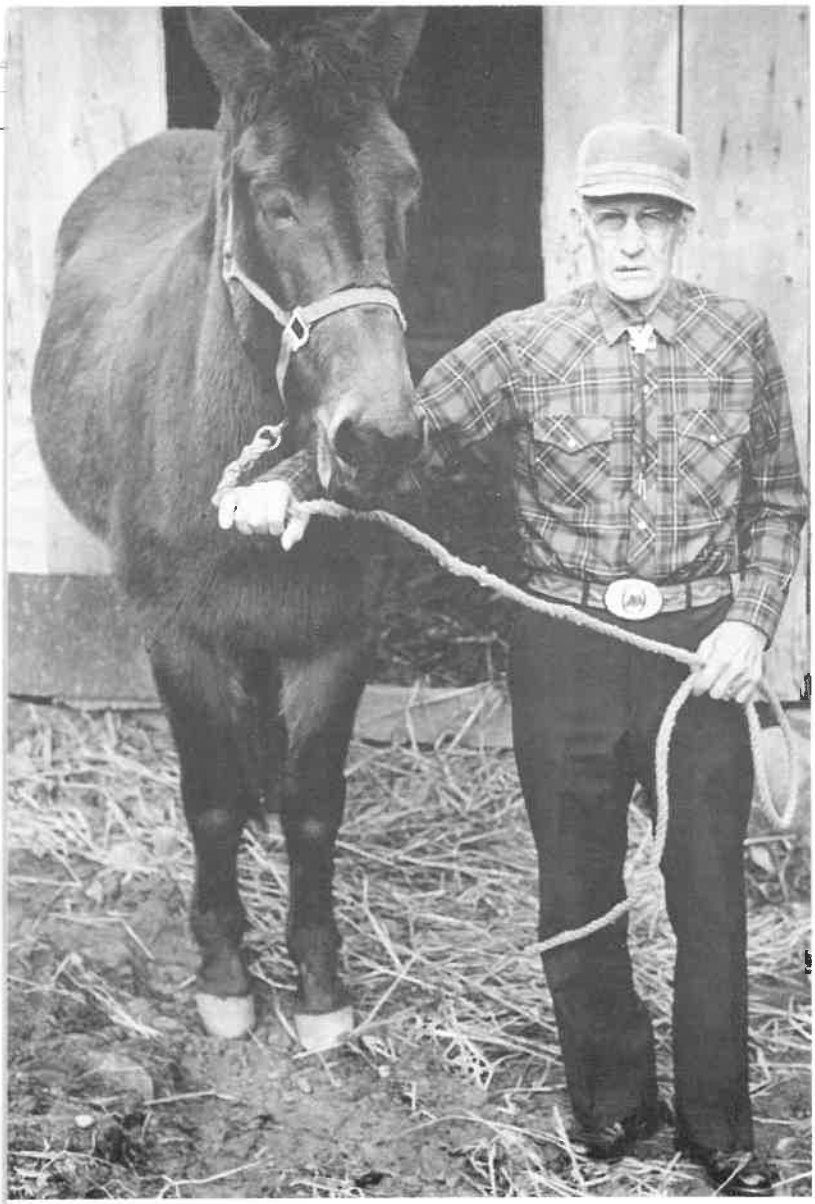
The hand-dug well still provides water to the Adkins family.

Adam and Lula were not blessed with a great deal of formal education. Lula completed third grade, and picked up the rest of her reading and writing on her own. Adam had a few years' schooling too, and learned to read and write. "But I went to hard work, and I let it get away from me. It'll do that, you know." Still, if he lost most of his capacity with letters,

chain saw. Next he divides the log into pieces five or six feet long. Then using a sledge, a metal wedge, and a kind of wooden wedge he calls a glut, he cuts away the four sides, leaving behind the rejected heart. Using a froe, he halves each side piece again, and then peels the bark. Finally, he puts a section in a vice, puts a pen knife to it, and separates out one slat after another. "You don't have to soak the slats if you weave them when they're fresh-cut," he says. "You only have to soak slats if you're keeping them.

"I'll tell you why people don't make oak baskets any more," Adam Adkins explains. "There's too much work in it. If you count your time from the start, and got $50 out of it, you wouldn't make no money. That's just hand power."

—Bob Schwarz



Left: Times have changed on Big Ugly. Adam is down to one mule and two Jeeps now, he says.

Above: Lula among the poinsettias of last winter. Hers is a philosophy of working and sharing, and guarding the old values.

he gained much else. He mastered things many educated people fail at, including wit, charm and humor.

Larry and Joyce Stratton live in the first house down the hollow below Adam and Lula. Joyce is their niece. She stops in often and listens to their tales by the hour. Larry is principal at Big Ugly Grade School, where Joyce teaches fourth and fifth grade. The couple have recently completed a handsome brick house. Yet Lula worries about them.

Joyce earns money, Lula says, and she comes up the hollow to help with the gardening and canning. But Joyce does not quilt, and she did not have a garden of her own this year while busy putting a house under roof. Joyce also does not run her own canning operation. What will she live off, Lula wonders, if things get bad? Who will carry on the oldtime skills, and pass them to the next generation?

At home, in 1987, Adam and Lula live in an odd combination of new and old. Their house has electricity and lights, a refrigerator and two freezers, but lacks a phone and television. Were Adam to get a television, said Lula, she would move to the lower end of the house to get away. A TV would get between her and her sewing and quilting. As it is, she says, she had more than enough quilt tops made last summer to carry her through the winter. Without television, Adam and Lula talk to each other of an evening. "He talks to me and I talk to him, and we never run out of things to talk about," Lula says. "If we had a TV, he'd want to watch one thing, and I'd want to watch another, and we'd go to fighting."

So they live together peacefully, as they have lived and worked together for their first 59 years. "He helped me churn, I helped him cut crossties," Lula says. "We worked together cutting tobacco and planting corn all day. I never did have no trouble out of him."

As they leave this 59th winter of their being together, Adam and Lula go on as they have been doing. When the snow flew and the wind blew, food aplenty was in their cellar and freezer. If the fancy strikes, they may make a few oak baskets this year. Adam vows he'll get himself an oak supply before the sap is up. Adam and Lula used to make those oak baskets for sale and for giving. Now what baskets they make are only for giving away to loved ones and neighbors. Their grandniece Alicia Ferrell and their grandnephew Jody Ferrell, for instance, a few years back received small baskets for hunting Easter eggs.

"We shared things with people," as Lula says. "We still share with people. That's why the Lord blessed us still to be here."

West Virginia's fire towers always took the high ground. This is Huff Knob, near Flat Top in Mercer County. Photographer and date unknown.

Fire Towers

"Pop" Wriston Built the Big Ones

Compiled by Robert Beanblossom

For more than 70 years, forest fire towers have played an important part in the control of ruinous wildfires in West Virginia. Now their role is fading. Aerial surveillance and modern communications have replaced fire towers as the forester's major detection tools. At one time more than 100 of these towers dotted the state's highest peaks; only 30 or so remain today.

But years ago, these towers were vital. Roads were poor and telephone service nonexistent in most rural areas. Fires could not be reported quickly and then hours and hours were spent in traveling to reach them. A detection system of fire towers was started, and it soon became apparent to all concerned what a difficult and arduous task building the towers would be. For the most part, steel and other construction materials had to be skidded up steep hills by mules and horses. Snow storms, rattlesnakes and loneliness were among the hazards to be faced. Once a tower was completed, telephone lines and observers' quarters had to be built and local manpower recruited to fight the fires that were bound to occur.

The development of this fire tower system in West Virginia was a direct result of the disastrous fires that swept the state following the cutting of virgin timber around the turn of the century. In the aftermath of cutting, fires raced unchecked in the heavy logging debris left behind. One report indicated that a fire which started one May was still going strong in July. The magnitude of destruction was staggering. In places, the very earth seemed to burn.

Stripped of the protective canopy of vegetation, mountain slopes were unable to absorb rainfall. As a consequence,

Forester Emory N. "Pop" Wriston was southern West Virginia's fire tower expert. His tower-climbing days were over by the time this photograph was made in 1956. Photographer unknown.

floods followed fires. Heavy spring rains resulted in a particularly devastating flood in the Monongahela River basin in March 1907. This flood, coupled with stirring conservation sentiment across the nation, moved Congress to act. The Weeks Act of 1911 provided federal funds for the first time to assist the states with fire protection. It also provided for the establishment of national forests in the East.

In 1909, the state Game, Fish and Forestry Commission had been created. The West Virginia Forest Fire Protective Association, a group of landowners, was also organized, and fire control work began in earnest.

Later, in 1917, a man by the name of Emory Nelson Wriston joined this small band in their eager crusade to stop fire. "Pop," as he later affectionately came to be called, became one of the most popular men to wear the forestry uniform.

Wriston loved the forests, and had no patience with those who wantonly destroyed them. He was born at Kincaid, Fayette County, in 1882 and later moved to Scarbro, where he lived until his death in 1966. Before joining the Game, Fish and Forestry Commission, he studied bookkeeping at Marshall College (now University) in Huntington for a time, then taught at a one-room school on Paint Creek or Cabin Creek in Kanawha County. For two weeks in his early years he had worked in a coal mine.

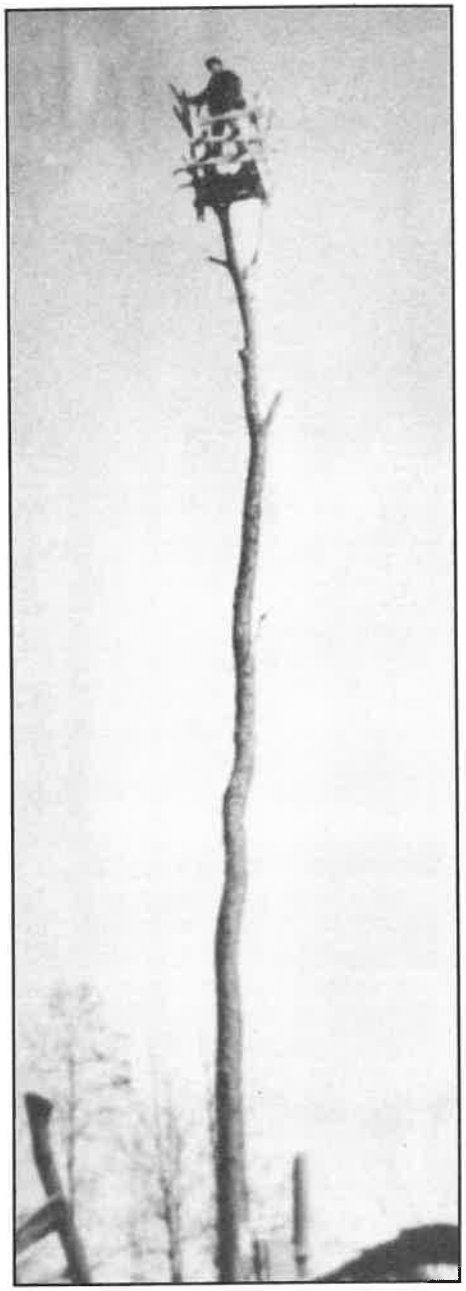
Not liking the pay or the confining work, Wriston quit teaching and took a dollar-a-day job on a sawmill. He apparently soon rebelled against the very idea of seeing timber chewed up by a noisy mill. He then sought employment with the fledgling state forestry organization.

Thus began a career that spanned the next 37 years. During this time, Wriston held a variety of positions: builder of fire towers, forest fire towerman, Civilian Conservation Corps foreman in eight camps, forest lecturer and fire fighter. In 1948, shortly before his retirement, "Pop" was asked to write his reminiscences about his early years with the forestry division and in particular the building of the state's first steel towers. What follows is his account, slightly edited for publication.

In 1916 the Southern West Virginia Forest Fire Protective Association was formed. The companies that made up the Association owned approximately 338,000 acres of land.* The association was formed to cooperate with the U. S. Forest Service and the state, under the authority of the Weeks Act of 1911 which made possible a cooperative forest fire control effort. The Weeks Act provided up to $10,000 per year in federal matching funds to state fire protection agencies. This money could then be used to match fire control expenditures paid out by local landowners. In those days, fire wardens were paid 35 cents per hour, labor 30 cents, and no provision was made for subsistence or transportation.

The first fire towers in the state were erected in 1916. They were a truncated, pyramid model, a two-story "Jenny Lynn" 10 feet square at the base, seven feet square on the top plate, with a hip roof. The first floor was a living quarters for the observer and the second floor served as an observation room. Ivy Knob tower in Raleigh County went up first. The

*The Rowland Land Company, Binford Land Company, Paint Creek Coal and Land Company, Pocahontas Land Corporation, and Solvay Collieries were among the first members of the association. - ed.



The Elk Knob tree tower took only a day's work and replaced a 30-mile foot patrol. George L. Jarrell, shown here, was one of those who helped Wriston build it in 1920. Photographer unknown.

lumber used in its construction was snaked up Martin's Fork by the "Marrying Rock," then through the divide to the knob by the contractor, S. V. Coon, who later became the first observer. (A turn key job for $75.) The Lick Knob fire tower went up this same year, with Winfrede Ferrell snaking the lumber up from the Raleigh County side of the mountain. John T. Hundley contracted the erection job. Luther Proffitt was the first observer. A metallic circuit telephone line connected the tower with Solvay Collieries' mine phone at the head house on Jake Ridge.

Ivy Knob's first telephone was a grounded circuit tree line erected on Guyandotte Mountain to Pond Knob, then along Cherry Pond Mountain to "Mountain Perry" Jarrell's residence, then down Spring Branch to Clifford Hunter's house at Munition. Later, it was extended to Pine Knob and then on to John L. Jarrell's residence on Dry Creek. The telephone service in the Ivy Knob unit, with the help of local citizens who contributed their labor and of the association which contributed the wire, eventually was extended to Spring Mountain fire tower in Boone County, to Burning Rock tower in Wyoming County and to Blair Mountain in Logan County. Over 125 miles of wire was used in the system. A six-circuit, knife switching station was operated by Mrs. Ernest Wells, who received $30 a month for her services during the fire season months.

Back in 1916, to support the only two towers south of the Kanawha River, patrol routes were also established. L. B. Massey of Green Castle patrolled the divide between Armstrong Creek and Paint Creek; Bob Burdette, also of Green Castle, patrolled the ridge separating Paint Creek and Cabin Creek; Cherry Pond Mountain was patrolled by John L. Jarrell of Dry Creek. Jarrell was the only patrolman who rode horseback over his patrol route. The Squealer Knob patrol was covered by George L. Jarrell and it had the best rating since George hired extra labor at his own expense to make it so. It was also the longest, at 30 miles. Each patrolman always carried a brush hook or axe and improved the trail as he went. Supervision of these patrolmen was handled by regional inspectors of the U. S. Forest Service and by the association's field manager.

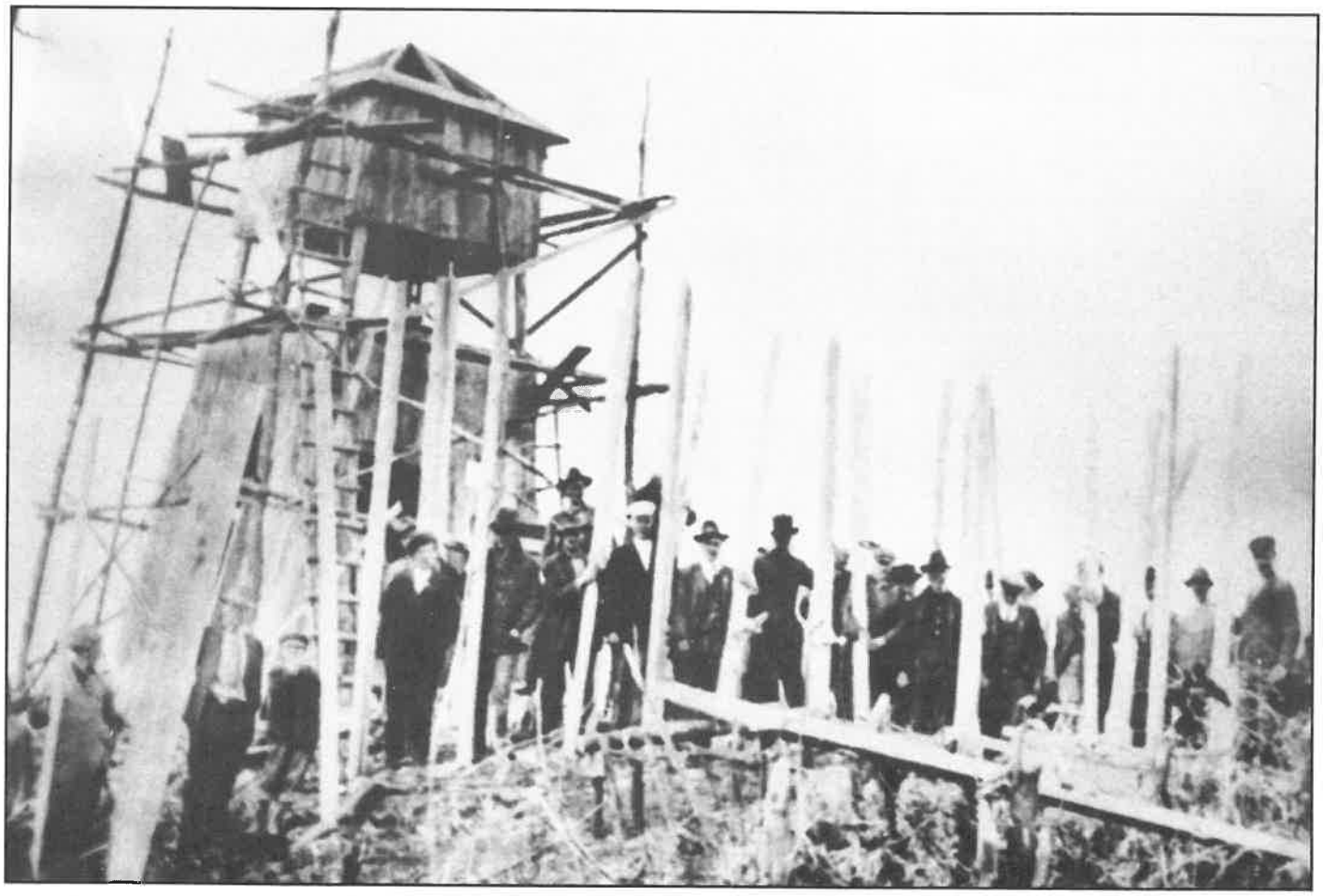
On November 4, 1917, I was employed by Walter R. Cook, Chief Deputy Warden, from Rockview, West Virginia, acting for J. A. Viquesney, Chief Warden for the West Virginia Game, Fish and Forestry Commission. My duties were to report and have suppressed all forest fires occurring within a 16-mile radius of Lick Knob fire tower. I received $3 per work day and was only paid for Sundays when it was necessary to be fighting fires. On November 6th, I was commissioned a warden so as to have authority in the exercise of my duties.

On my first day at Lick Knob, I left the tower early in the evening and met the late Austin Carey, regional inspector for the U. S. Forest Service, who was to coach me in my new assignment. He spent the next two days helping me. Together with F. H. Morton, superintendent of Solvay Collieries, we traveled the area of rugged hills that I was now responsible for.

My first real brainstorm was to dismantle Lick Knob fire tower and to rebuild it with contributions from several cooperators — $10 from J. W. Lambert of the New River Company, and another $10 from A. A. Gallagher of the Milburn By-Products Coal Company. This gave us money for new windows and roofing. Solvay Collieries had lumber sawed and stored to dry for us and the coal company at Krebbs supplied the ceiling for the inside of the tower. While waiting for the lumber to season, I covered the unit's 140,000 acres on foot, recruiting and organizing local fire wardens. This was the "good old days" when you either walked or rode a mule.

In March 1918, C. W. Bradon of Philippi succeeded J. A. Viquesney as Chief Warden, and appointed L. H. Rogers of Charleston as his special deputy and inspector. It was this same year that I dismantled the tower at Lick Knob, which was only two years old, and moved into temporary quarters, a wigwam built entirely of chestnut poles and weather-boarded with the composition roofing taken from the old tower. This was to house my equipment and be my living quarters for the next two years. But I was sure we could build a better tower.

Four fire seasons elapsed before the new tower at Lick was completed, and even then it could not have been completed had it not been for the local citizens coming to my rescue by helping carry material to the top of the mountain. One Sunday morning 54 people assembled and each one carried a plank up the mountain to the tower site. This was



Ingenuity was called for in rebuilding Fayette County's Lick Knob tower in 1920. Local residents, recruited by Wriston, each carried a plank to the remote site. Photographer unknown.

an especially strenuous task for the Kingston school teachers, who were not used to such hard work but joined the procession up the mountain anyway. There were some sore ankles in Kingston the next day but no one complained as they were all happy to assist with this worthy endeavor. For lunch that day we barbecued $26.80 worth of round steak over a bed of hot coals prepared in advance of the event.

In 1920, the late A. B. Brooks, then head of the Game, Fish and Forestry Commission, began to assign me to inspection and supervisory duties down Johnson Knob way and over in the Ivy Knob unit. The sportsman's rebellion over having to pay a dollar for a hunting and fishing license was dying and we began to accumulate some revenue for conservation work.

About that time a 59-foot locust pole tower was built at Johnson Knob. Eight locust trees were used in the Johnson Knob tower — four set square on the inside and the other four forming a larger square around them. A 10 X 10 observation room sat on top of the eight poles that one entered through a trap door in the floor. These tall locust trees were nearby and available at no cost except for their cutting. The Paint Creek Coal Company supplied us with plenty of mules and a good driver, Pat Alexander, to haul them to the tower site for us. They also supplied the lumber for the observation room.

Telephone service was by means of a connection to the Paint Creek Coal Company's line at Whittaker and then on to their PBX board at Gallagher, which gave the tower a connection with the commercial lines at East Bank. In 1928, J. J. Goulden, the new district forester, and I salvaged this tower and erected a 90-foot International Derrick steel tower on the same site. John Hammond and Pat W. Kirk assisted us.

Somewhere around 1920, with George L. Jarrell, the Squealer Knob patrolman, and Mr. Coffer, the superintendent of the C&O mines at Eunice, assisting me, we gave the state the Elk Knob tree tower in one day. Using drift bolts for the pole steps and axe-made lumber for the "crow's nest," this simple tower was an improvement over the 30-mile Squealer Knob patrol.

In another day's work, we strung a grounded circuit telephone line from a box at the base of the tree to Eunice. Our next improvement was to extend this line to connect it with the river circuit.

Later on, during the heyday of the Civilian Conservation Corps program, a 50-foot steel tower replaced this tree tower. Then because of a mine break* during the time D. B. Griffin was State Forester, this steel tower was moved south to a knob overlooking the main haul road above the Eunice mine; and in 1946 again moved to a new location on Bacon

*A shift in the earth due to the collapse of an underground mine. - ed.

Knob, a 500 foot higher elevation across the river. In the fall of '46, we built almost two miles of road to that tower, using nothing but hand tools.

Around 1922, Phillip M. Browning of New York was employed as the Chief Forest Warden and equipped with the state's first car, a T-model Ford roadster. Division headquarters was established at Buckhannon, only to be lost to the State Capitol in Charleston in 1927, the fourth location of the Division of Forestry headquarters.

It was also around this time the Commission acquired Watoga State Forest (now Watoga State Park), which was a fitting memorial to our late A.B. Brooks. I was assigned as the district ranger in charge of fire control work in the Kanawha District. The four counties that comprised the district were Kanawha, Fayette, Raleigh and Boone. Owen O. Nutter, with headquarters in Buckhannon, was in charge of fire control in Greenbrier County and all counties north of it west of the Alleghenies. That was when Arthur Wood and his helper east of the Alleghenies wondered who the other two rangers were west of the mountains in West Virginia. Mainly to protect lands owned by the Pocahontas Land Corporation, the Pocahontas District was established at Bluefield with J. W. Karr assigned as the district ranger.

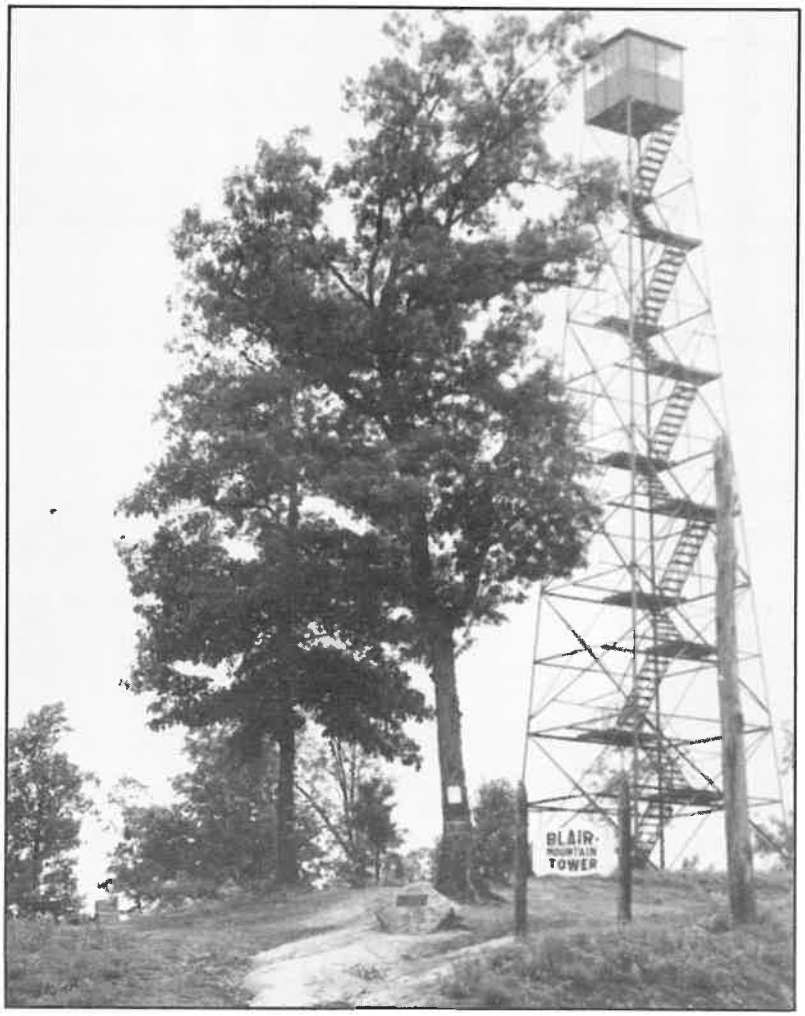
In 1922 the Game, Fish and Forestry Commission purchased six steel fire towers from the Blaw Knox Steel Company in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania — two 30-foot and four 45-foot towers. The first steel tower in the state was erected on Backbone Mountain in Tucker County during the winter of 1922-23. This job was assigned to me and I remember spending the Christmas holiday alone with my camera in a "Jenny Lynn" cabin sheltered between two massive sandstone rocks atop Backbone Mountain. The next steel tower to be built went up in March 1923 on Bald Knob in Pocahontas County. It was a 45-foot tower. From atop it, a person is higher in elevation than at Spruce Knob, the state's highest point. Owen Nutter helped me erect that one and neither of us will ever forget the terrible snow blizzard that trapped us on that mountain a month in order to get a week's worth of work done.

On both the Backbone and Bald Knob jobs, I checked both my tools and my blankets in on the train as baggage. Railroads and log trains were our only means of transportation. On the Backbone job, the train took me as far as the logging town of Hambleton on the Dry Fork River and from there I walked on to the tower site atop Backbone Mountain. At Bald Knob, my ticket called for Cass. From Cass, I caught a log train to the town of Spruce and then walked on to Bald Knob.

In addition to Nutter, we had a lumber camp cook by the name of Greathouse who helped us with the Bald Knob tower. We repaired the strung telephone line as we went in, so we had a telephone connection to the log camp at Spruce while we were snow bound. The spring which we were to use was under a 15-foot snow drift, so we melted snow to get water. The West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company officials were most cooperative and, a couple of times during the blizzard, sent a big Swede with a horse to haul in wood and drag a log up and back over the trail to open it up in the event we needed to use it. Someday, I hope to find the copy of the poem that Owen and I wrote on Bald Knob. It included Owen's comment, "the bed it had a center slant, while one of us sleeps, the other one can't." We put a red spruce pole lengthwise under the springs to remedy this impossible pose.

With the 1923 spring fire season

Wriston's real love was steel towers, and he put up the state's first at Backbone Mountain in Tucker County. He spent Christmas 1922 alone on this job, in a "cabin sheltered between two massive sandstone rocks." The 30-foot tower was manufactured by the Blaw Knox Steel Company.



Left: Supplies came to tower sites the hard way, as these unidentified workers demonstrate at Spring Mountain on the Boone-Logan line. The prefabricated observer's cabin in the background is of the sort denounced by Mr. Wriston as "not livable in winter or summer." Photographer and date unknown.

Above: The 63-foot Blair Mountain tower went up in 1926. The site was near a machine gun nest used during the Battle of Blair Mountain, five years before. Photographer and date unknown.

behind us and with the Gauley Mountain Coal Company at Ansted joining the association, we erected one of the 45-foot Blaw Knox towers on Gauley Mountain in Fayette County. Mr. George Spencer, who was hired to help build it, remained on to become the first observer. Before the fall fire season was upon us, we built another tower on Stop Knob near Powellton and J. H. Andrews of Elk Ridge was hired as the first observer there. Andrews was soon employed by the Game Division and it has been said of him that he had all of the game violators in his area so afraid that they would not even as much as oil their shotguns out of season. The Stop Knob tower was later smoked out by the Alloy plant and was moved to Peters Mountain in Monroe County in the fall of 1946.

It was also in 1923 that I first met Lloyd H. Ellison of Kayford, who was to become my right-hand man on all future tower erection and phone line construction jobs.

J. W. Karr, the Pocahontas District Forester down in Bluefield, had one of those 45-foot Blaw Knox towers to erect on Shawnee Mountain in McDowell County. So Lloyd and I got train tickets to Northfork, still checking our tools in as baggage, and, with J. W.'s help, soon had Shawnee tower bolted together. About the time we were at Shawnee Mountain, Owen Nutter and Brown Miller were erecting the sixth and last of the Blaw Knox towers on Michael Mountain in Pocahontas County. It was destined to be later dismantled when CCC boys from Camp Seneca built a more modern 50-foot McClintic Marshall tower on Thorny Mountain in the middle of Seneca State Forest.

In 1924, the Commission purchased a number of additional fire towers. The Kanawha District got two of these — one was assigned to Ivy Knob and the other one to Williams Hill. The Ivy Knob tower was delivered to Munition by rail and from there Perry Jarrell contracted for its delivery on to Ivy Knob. First, he moved it by sled two miles to his place at Jarrell Fields. From there, it

was a six-mile sled trip via Indian Gap and Pond Mountain to Ivy Knob. The half soles of his sled lasted only one trip. The first work at Ivy was the erection of a 10 X 12 observer's cabin to house the crew. Next, we built a sand pit and screen frame and put two of Perry's boys to sledging rock and screening sand for the concrete piers. It required seven yards of concrete to anchor a steel tower. We had to sled water from a spring on Crane Branch in a flour barrel. With the foundations in at both Ivy and Williams Hill, we were ready to assemble the two steel towers.

So with the observer's cabin ready to move in at Ivy Knob, Lloyd Ellison brought along his wife Ethel to cook for the crew while the steel for the tower was being assembled. The crew consisted of Lloyd, "Mountain Perry" Jarrell, and Sil Coon and myself. Ivy Knob went up one week and Williams Hill the next.

In 1925 the village of Hernshaw joined our force under the leadership of Pat Kirk, Lawn Prince and Jessie Hughie. With this extra help, fire protection in Kanawha County began to be county-wide instead of being confined mostly to the Cabin Creek area.

The Commission purchased two additional 60-foot, Type LS-40 Aermotors. It was decided that one of these would be assigned to Bee Mountain in Kanawha County and the other to Spring Mountain on the Boone-Logan County line near the extreme head of Buffalo Creek. About that time, Ritter Lumber Company was operating band mills at Barrett and at Rock Lick. I went down to meet their forest engineer, H. W. Shawhan, because we needed help in laying out a road to Spring Mountain. I also got acquainted with the late J. W. Bradley of Madison, who was the representative for the Mellon holdings on Pond Fork. He in turn introduced me to men like "Big Frank" Perry, Berlin Price and his brother Hobert — strong mountain men who could take punishment and like it. Hobert Price could throw a half-mile coil of iron 'phone wire around his neck and pay it off single-handed faster than the lineman could handle it. C. H. Workman also joined our force then and there.

Steel for the Bee Mountain fire tower was delivered to the knob late in the fall of 1925 and we poured the concrete piers in a blinding snow storm with a huge bonfire built between the forms to prevent the concrete from freezing while it was being mixed and placed. When we finished, a foot of snow covered the ground, and we buried the freshly poured piers in snow to keep the concrete from freezing. With our "Hernshaw crew" doing the labor, Bee Mountain went up early in 1926. Jesse Hughey became the first observer — a most efficient one, at that. He was also as good a camp cook as he was an observer.

The Spring Mountain fire tower went up in the summer of 1926. Big Frank Perry, who had earlier joined our crew, became the first observer. Spring Mountain is the site where a wind and rain storm blew our lean-to away in the middle of the night, leaving us exposed to the elements. It is also where Frank went to bed one night when we were all sleeping on the ground. Frank could not get in a comfortable position so he got a mattock and started to grub out an "ivy stool;" when he finished, we all could get some rest. I well remember the outside position that I had on the ground, facing the rattlesnakes that might decide to visit our camp.

It was then on to Blair Mountain, also in Logan County. Just a few years before this, the notorious mine war, the so-called "Battle of Blair Mountain," took place. I was told by local residents of the area who visited our camp that a machine gun post had occupied the site we had selected for the tower. The Game, Fish and Forestry Commission was purchasing still-higher towers. This time it was a 73-foot Aermotor, built like the others with metal cabs and wood sash.

Thirty-two thousand acres were brought under protection when the Boone County Coal Corporation joined the association. With the help of Col. Willey, their manager at Sharples, and Bruce Mullens, their agent at Sovereign, fire protection began in earnest in Logan County. Here, Walter Smith from up at the mouth of White Oak and Uncle Joe Mullens from up in Adkins Fork joined our force. Uncle Joe reported to work with his rattlesnake-killing bulldog that later killed four snakes in our camp site. That dog had been bitten so much that he was immune to their poison.

Along with these new steel towers, we also built 16 X 16 steel cabins for the observers' living quarters at Bee, Spring Mountain and Blair Mountain towers. I have stayed in these portable steel cabins when it was so hot that you had to cook the noon meal outside. In the winter the warm upper air would form a dew that would freeze into a shield of ice on the walls. Long since have these cabins been salvaged, as they were not livable in winter or summer.

The Bee Mountain telephone line was easy. We set one mile of poles which the Libby Owens Gas Company provided; C&P installed the wire. Spring Mountain was rougher going, with service to the tower requiring a total of 23 miles of wire extending from the mouth of Lacy Fork down Pond Fork to Rothwell School, to the tower then along the county line to the head of Denison Branch for a telephone for Elbert Bailey, one of our local fire wardens. Then it went down Denison Branch and Spruce Laurel Fork to the mouth of Jerrys Fork where Earl Ferrell, another local warden, lived.

The Blair Mountain line ran out to the head of Beech Fork, then six miles down to Sharples to connect up with the Boone County Coal Corporation's switchboard.

Also during the year 1926, the Commission purchased a Model-T touring car for the Kanawha District which was soon nicknamed the "Green Frog." A trip in it from Madison to Levy Harvey's place at the foot of Lacy Fork on the head of Pond Fork resulted in the car getting washed. There was at the time no highway bridge at Madison, and Col. Willey pretty well summed it up when he said that "the roads were in the creek during the summer and the creek was in the roads during the winter."

Cooperation in fire control matters was not lacking. W. M. Ritter Lumber Company gave $160 worth of lumber for the Spring Mountain and Blair Mountain towers. Westmoreland Coal Company donated the telephone wire. Boone County Coal Corporation, Kingston-Pocahontas Coal

The ground breaking for Plum Orchard Lake near his Fayette County home brought "Pop" Wriston (right) out of retirement in 1960. Here he stands with former Lick Knob tower observer Isaac Ellison (left) and Conservation Commission Director Warden Lane. Photographer unknown.

Company, and the Pond Fork Timber Landowners Association bought the telephone poles. Rangers were assigned three days' work before the beginning of fire seasons to post 720 posters and distribute 1,000 copies of the *Forest Primer*, supplied without cost by the American Tree Association, to the public schools.

In 1927 the fire control unit in Buckhannon was moved to Charleston and, if I remember right, O. O. Nutter's district headquarters was transferred from there to White Sulphur Springs. Mt. Desert fire tower in Kanawha County was also erected that year.

I was supplied with a 14 X 16 wall tent and I bought a Gold Medal cot to go along with it. The tent was first used on the Mt. Desert job. A bale of hay or straw spread on the ground in the back of the tent was the bed for the crew, who supplied their own blankets. A tent fly outside was our dining room, and we began having our meals on a table. The crew consisted of Jessie Hughey, who was the cook, Pat Kirk, Lawn Price, Sil Coon, Preacher Polly and his son from down at Sovereign.

The Commission paid the grocery bill which usually ran around a hundred dollars a month for the seven of us. I always had my dutch oven with me and Jessie Hughey could bake a raisin cake in that oven fit for a king. Four of that crew were fairly good singers and the folks from out at Putney would come out to the camp during the evenings with a song book and we would all sing. With Mt. Desert tower and cabin complete, we started the telephone line to Mammoth for a connection to the East Bank exchange. When the line was erected to the foot of the mountain, we moved off to the creek and set up camp there until the line was done to Mammoth and ready for the coming fall fire season.

In September, we loaded our tools and equipment on the Model-T Ford truck and unloaded at the mouth of Coal Fork in the Williams Hill unit in Boone County and built a grounded circuit telephone system on poles from Van to Williams Hill tower and then down to Coal Fork. At the mouth of Coal Fork, we installed a telephone in a box we nailed to a sycamore tree and called it a "ranger station." This gave us 10 miles of telephone line with a ranger on both ends and one in the middle at Williams Hill.

The first frost that fall was on the 20th of September and well do I remember it because that was the night I threw that cot of mine as far as I could throw it because I was freezing to death. I had not learned yet to put paper under the mattress pad. Instead, I took my blankets and shared with the crew the hay bed on the ground in the back of the tent and found out that they had been having a better bed than I all along. Lawn Price took that cot home as it made an alright bed in the summer.

Continuing with the 1927 construction, we installed 11 miles of wire in the Ivy Knob unit, 10 miles in the Johnson Knob unit, extending the metallic circuit from Whittaker to Gallagher. The switchboard at Gallagher had connections onto the East Bank exchange. With the help of the Pocahontas District Ranger, Ivy Knob was connected to the Edwight to Glen Rogers circuit. This 33-mile circuit had a connection to our own switching station at Edwight, which was maintained in Charley Jarrell's store. From it, we also had line connections to Elk Knob, Burning Rock, Spring Mountain and Blair Mountain towers — a total of 125 miles of wire.

Sil Coon, who had helped erect Mt. Desert fire tower, was sent to the Pocahontas District to erect Lambert Knob fire tower and observer's cabin, which was an exact duplicate of the Mt. Desert installation. From there, he went on to Burning Rock to erect a special three-legged Aermotor designed to fit the rock it was built on. Both of these towers are located in Wyoming County.

During the fall fire season of 1927, hunters were responsible for 58.2%

of the total acreage burned and 72% of the suppression costs required to extinguish the blazes. That was when I recommended a $2 license instead of a dollar, because the honest hunter didn't mind to pay it and the careless hunter ought to be made to pay it. It later went to the $2 fee.

Also in 1927, Chief Browning had written the scenario for a motion picture entitled "The Careless Smoker" and supplied me with a 35mm DeVry motion picture camera and 1,300 feet of film. This project was a sideline as well as a hobby with me, and in connection with my regular duties, required one year to complete.

In 1928, J. J. Goulden, who was a graduate forester from the state of Pennsylvania, succeeded me as the district ranger of the Kanawha District. The district office, furnished gratis by the Kingston-Pocahontas Coal Company, was moved to Montgomery. Shortly after he hired on, Goulden, John Hammond, Pat Kirk, Wint Lilly and I erected a 60-foot Aermotor tower on Round Knob in Raleigh County. That was the last tower I helped erect until 1934.

The "Green Frog" was traded in at Capitol Motor Sales for a Model-A, three-quarter ton Ford panel body truck. I was boarding at the Ruffner Hotel in Charleston and with my carpenter tools over in the garage of Capitol Motor Sales, I installed a Kohler power plant, a folding bed, tool box, a refrigerator on the running board, and still had room left in the truck to carry a portable tent, two cots, two folding chairs, a two-burner gas cook stove and a gasoline heating stove. This was to become my home for the next four years. Next a trip to Washington with Chief Browning was in order, to choose visual education materials. We chose lantern slides and motion pictures suitable to the forestry education project that I was about to undertake. This conservation education project eventually covered 38 counties and I estimated that I had given over 1,569 talks to over 134,000 individuals during the course of this project.

There was a lull in the Division of Forestry during the Depression, the terrible 1930 drought and the 1932 floods. Setbacks were the order until March 4, 1933, when conservation in this nation was to be advanced a generation in a decade because of the New Deal programs that were to come along in the Roosevelt Administration.

The Blair Mountain tower stands as firmly today as in 1926, a monument to Wriston and the other fire tower pioneers. This picture was made during the snows of last January. Photo by Michael Keller.

In 1938, Chief Browning resigned and was succeeded by H. S. Newins, who was not to be with us long enough, and he in turn was succeeded by J. W. K. Holliday when Vernon Johnson was chairman of the Conservation Commission. One event that I recall was the fact that one year the fire control section was appeased with an extra $10,000 appropriation and Mr. Newins and I worked through the night spending it for fire fighting tools, telephone line materials, telephones which cost $50 — a princely sum then — and other equipment.

From June 19, 1933, until May 20, 1942, I also worked with the Civilian Conservation Corps. In 1934, I was sent to help erect the Rich Knob fire tower in Randolph County using labor from the CCC camp at Mill Creek. The next fire tower I helped erect after that was the 80-foot Model MC-39 Aermotor on Huff Knob near Flat Top in Mercer County — the highest point south of the Kanawha and New River drainage, at 3,566 feet above sea level.

Clubs and organizations were an important part of early Marshall social life. Here members of the Erosophian Literary Society pose in front of College Hall (now Old Main) in 1903. Photographer unknown; all historical photos courtesy of Marshall University.

From Academy to University:

Marshall Turns 150

By Deborah B. Smith

In 1837, students attending classes in a log building on a peaceful grassy knoll beside the Ohio River couldn't have imagined what the future had in store for their little academy. The city of Huntington, which surrounds what is now Marshall University, would not be established for another 35 years. In fact, Marshall Academy was a mature 26-year-old institution by the time West Virginia became a state. Today, the 60-acre campus is our second largest university. Alumni, students, faculty members and friends celebrate Marshall's 150th anniversary this year.

As a small academy, Marshall first occupied a single building on little more than one acre of land. John Laidley, its founder, named the school in honor of his friend, Chief Justice John Marshall of the U.S. Supreme Court. The academy gradually expanded to become a teachers training school in 1867 and then a four-year college in 1920. In 1961 it was designated a university by the West Virginia legislature.

Ceremonies, speakers and special events will commemorate the sesquicentennial and give alumni an opportunity to reminisce about their days at Marshall. With enrollment now

more than 12,000, it is hard to imagine that at one time everyone on campus knew everyone else and that teaching, eating, sleeping, socializing and exercising once took place in just one or two buildings. Plenty of former students remember those days, however, and some seem to regret the loss of that close-knit community. Last summer, four alumni from the era when the university was a small college shared some of their experiences as Marshall students.

For these alumni and many others, memories focus on Old Main and the Shawkey Student Union. The oldest building on campus, Old Main now houses administrative offices. Before 1916, however, it served as a dormitory, cafeteria, classroom building, administrative center, recreation hall and more. "Everything we needed was in that building," Lyell Douthat, a 1926 graduate, recalls. "We had some classes in Northcott, but everything else was in Old Main. We called it College Hall then."

Parts of Old Main were built in 1870 and additions were constructed in 1896, 1898, 1899 and 1907. Old Main was the only building on campus until Northcott Hall opened in 1916.

Douthat remembers that when he was a student, women's activities were much more restricted than men's. Most of the men lived off campus in boardinghouses, but women were required to live in the dorm. "If a girl wanted to leave campus overnight or for a weekend, the house mother would have to verify that it was a safe place before she was given permission," Douthat said. "We could do just about whatever we wanted, but we weren't allowed in their dorms. The girls lived in rooms in College Hall. The closest I ever got to those dorms were the parlors. There was a north and a south parlor where the girls were allowed to entertain visitors, but only at certain times and with a chaperone present. They had strict times to be in at night and could only go out certain nights of the week."

Douthat was part of the sixth class to receive four-year degrees from Marshall College. Looking back through his yearbooks, he recognizes the faces of many friends who graduated that year. There were 86 in the class. Only four students had received four-year degrees in 1921, the first year such degrees were conferred.

The state Board of Education designated Marshall College a degree-granting institution in 1920. Before then, Marshall was a college in name only. From 1837 to 1867 the school was called Marshall Academy and was strictly a secondary school. In 1867, the state legislature established a state teachers training school at Marshall and renamed the institution Marshall College. As a state normal school, Marshall now offered teacher training courses and a two-year normal diploma. By 1915, the school was offering college credits equivalent to those earned during the freshman and sophomore years at a four-year college. Lyell Douthat said many students from that era attended Marshall for two years and then went on to West Virginia University to complete their degrees.

When Douthat came to Marshall in 1922, there were still watering troughs outside Old Main on 16th Street. "Many deliveries were still made by horses and wagons," he recalled. "I remember seeing them pull right up to the building to deliver goods from town. That didn't last long."

Although few college students owned cars in the 1920's, Douthat was one of the lucky ones. He had a big Ford which was often used to transport the baseball and debate teams to games and competitions throughout the state. Douthat played baseball for four years, and his best memories of college are of the team and his teammates.

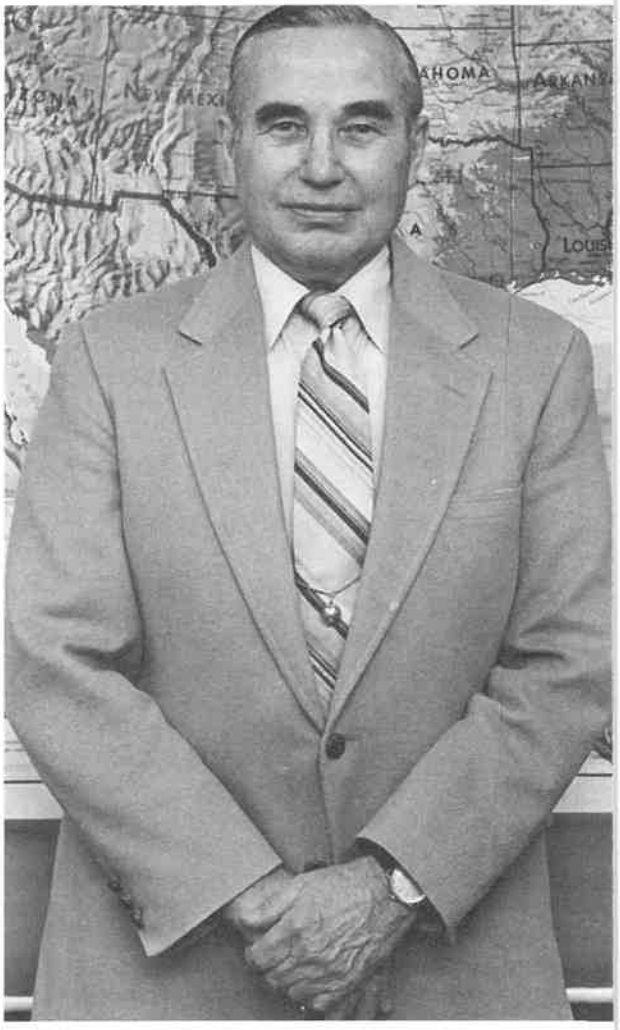
"We were a small team, but we were good," he said. "We played in Cincinnati, Morgantown and lots of other places. We always traveled to games in private autos in those days. Two or three people had cars, and everyone just piled in and off we'd go."

Douthat was pitcher and captain for the Marshall team for two years. He must have been good, because he was invited to play professionally for St. Louis when he graduated. He didn't go to the big league, but treasures the memory of being asked. Athletes didn't have scholarships in the 1920's but Douthat recalls that many Huntington residents followed the Marshall teams closely.

"People in town sometimes offered us money when we won. But I absolutely refused to take a single penny for playing baseball, and I don't think any of the other players did either. We played ball because we wanted to," Douthat said.

Marshall students in the 1920's found most of their entertainment on campus. Clubs catering to almost every interest were active, providing both educational and social activities. Douthat, for example, was involved in the Harlequin club which put on four or five plays a year, the debate team which competed with teams from other colleges and universities, the baseball team, the honorary educational fraternity and the student council. Other students were just as

Retired geography professor Sam Clagg is a good source of Marshall memories. Clagg graduated from Marshall in 1943 and was a faculty member there for 39 years. Photo by Chris Spencer.



During World War II, the USO planned social activities for servicemen on campus. Tuesday night dances were popular, with the women attending subject to USO approval of their character. Photographer unknown.

involved in campus activities, he recalled.

"We had to make our own entertainment. We didn't have television and couldn't travel far off campus to find things to do," Douthat said. "Everyone on campus knew everyone else in those days and we were a close-knit group. We had some good times with musical programs, parties and all kinds of activities."

Douthat was president of student council his senior year. He said an unexpected benefit of the office was dancing with Miss America at the spring formal. "We thought it would be fun to have someone famous come to our formal, so we wrote some letters and got Miss America to come," he explained. "We made all the arrangements for her transportation and lodging. Since I was president of student council, I got to dance with her first."

During Lyell Douthat's college days, Marshall students had no special building for socializing as they have today. They gathered, instead, at a drugstore on 16th Street or in a classroom in Old Main. After graduating, Douthat helped Marshall President Morris Shawkey raise money to build the student union which was to be the campus social center for four decades. Douthat edited the *Alumni News* in 1929 and used its pages to solicit funds for the building. Shawkey's idea of a center on campus where students and faculty could meet informally was a novelty and drew considerable attention to Marshall College. Completed in 1933 and called the Shawkey Student Union, the building was selected in 1948 as a model for small colleges by the National Association of Student Unions.

From the time it opened until it was replaced in 1971, the Shawkey Student Union was the center of campus activity. Alumni remember it as the most important place to meet other students and professors. Douthat, who taught at Marshall for 41 years after graduating, said most faculty members went there for coffee sometime during the day. "We knew almost all the students and often sat and talked with them," he said.

Like other buildings on campus, the student union was threatened in 1937 by flood waters from the Ohio River. Water rose high on the streets of Huntington and students could be seen rowing across 16th Street, according to Dr. Charles Moffat's Marshall history, *An Institution Comes of Age*. Classes were suspended for several days and water reached the rafters of the Shawkey Student Union. Two new dormitories, Hodges and Laidley, suffered $200,000 worth of damage. Losses to individual properties in Huntington were great and students staged a fund-raising program to aid flood victims.

The importance of the Shawkey Student Union in the lives of Marshall students was emphasized by 1943 graduate Ethelene Holley. She studied English and commerce from 1939 to 1943 and then worked at several different jobs on campus until she retired in 1986. Holley said the student union was *the* place to be.

"We used to go over there and jitterbug all the time," she recalled. "There was a big ballroom at one end and dining tables at the other. Either the jukebox or the piano was always going, and we used to go in and just dance away. We also spent a lot of time playing bridge. We gathered in the eating areas and played for hours. Sometimes we even skipped classes just to finish a game. You could go over to the student union any time of the day and there was always someone there that you knew."

The student union also was the hot spot for snacks and meals. "Milkshakes and hotdogs were really popular," Holley said. "For 25 cents you could get a sandwich and a milkshake."

Dorm residents ate their evening meal in the dining room in College Hall, now the Admissions Office. Holley recalled that the dining room was beautiful. "The tables had real tablecloths, and students had to dress up for dinner. You couldn't wear sports clothes into the dining room. It was like that all the way through the '50's."

Fashion was important to Marshall women of the early 1940's. Holley said the style when she was a student was to wear Shetland skirts with three pleats in the front and three in the back. With these, women wore cardigans buttoned up the back rather than the front. "We were very fashion conscious," she said. "We liked to wear silk hose, but because of the war they were hard to get. We had cotton and rayon hose but they were uncomfortable and took about 48 hours to dry after washing. So mostly we wore bobby socks with saddle oxfords."

Ethelene Holley's 1939 freshman class was the largest ever, with more than 900 students. By the time she graduated in 1943, however, fewer than 200 of them remained in school. Students had left to fight in World War II or to take employment in support of the war effort. Jobs were plentiful, Holley said, and many students left school to work. Those who stayed on campus also helped. "They set aside a room in College Hall on the third floor for rolling bandages. Anytime anyone had free time; they went up and rolled bandages. I spent many hours there," she recalled.

Most of the students left on campus during World War II were women. After the war men started coming back, many of them on the GI Bill of Rights, which provided financial assistance for education. Sam Clagg, another 1943 graduate and now a retired faculty member, remembers the GIs as the most serious students Marshall ever saw.

"They were all playing catch-up because they were older than most students and knew the value of an education," Clagg said. "They changed student life quite a bit. The vets really tried hard in classes and made most of the good grades. But outside of athletics, most were not interested in campus life."

Quonset huts were built next to the library to house married veterans and their families. Many cadets who had been stationed at Marshall earlier

Phil Cline, a 1955 graduate of Marshall College, remembers that in the '50's few students owned cars. Transportation wasn't a problem he says, because students made their own entertainment on campus. Photo by Chris Spencer.

Before television became widespread in the 1950's, radio programs were a popular form of entertainment on campus. Here students relax in Hodges Hall. Photographer unknown.

In 1961, the college newspaper published the good news that the legislature had given Marshall College university status. *Parthenon* editor Susan Atkinson and President Stewart Smith display the "Marshall U" headline. Photographer unknown.

now returned to attend college in Huntington. The Air Corps had begun training cadets on the Marshall campus in 1941. This was a common use of colleges and universities, because there were too many men to be accommodated in regular military establishments all at once.

Sam Clagg returned to complete his master's degree in 1947. Then he spent 39 years at Marshall as a coach, geography professor, chairman of the Department of Geography and acting president. He retired from the faculty in 1985 but continued to serve as chairman of the sesquicentennial committee. When Clagg started at Marshall in 1939, the Great Depression was ending and the war in Europe was just beginning. Going to college represented a big family sacrifice for many students. There was little extra money to go around and students felt great pressure to do as well as possible, to behave and to reflect well on the family.

"We studied hard," Clagg said. "I remember spending a heck of a lot of time in the library. We used to get in groups and study there and sometimes socialize. That is, until Miss Oliver, the librarian, heard us and came to quiet us down. Then we'd go over to the student union for a break. We had a path beaten from the library to the union."

Clagg attended Marshall on a football scholarship and was co-captain of the team in 1942. Things had changed since Lyell Douthat's days as a ballplayer. Marshall athletes now stayed in Everett Hall or in downtown hotels. Their scholarships paid for room and board but often local restaurants also gave them free meals. Restaurant and hotel owners took pride in saying certain athletes lived or ate in their establishments.

Marshall Memories

To commemorate Marshall University's sesquicentennial anniversary, Dr. Ralph Turner has produced *Marshall Memories: A Pictorial History of Marshall University 1837-1987*. Turner himself earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Marshall, and is professor of journalism there now. The book was published in cooperation with the Marshall Office of University Relations.

The heavily illustrated *Marshall Memories* is a comprehensive history of the school, beginning with the establishment of Marshall Academy in 1837 to serve the nearby farming community of Guyandotte, and ending with its present status in the 1980's as the second largest university in the state. Particular attention is given to the school's architectural history. There is a list of early school leaders and presidents, and an historical almanac of Marshall, compiled by university archivist Cora P. Teel.

Marshall Memories is a 176-page paperback with more than 300 black and white and color photographs and illustrations. It is available in area bookstores for $10, or can be ordered through the mail by sending $12 (tax and postage included) to Marshall Bookstore, Marshall University, Huntington, WV 25701. All proceeds go to the university to help support sesquicentennial activities.

The late 1960's and early '70's were years of student unrest on college campuses throughout the country, and Marshall University was no exception. Here students stage a sit-in at Gullickson Hall. Photographer unknown.

Bus companies gave free tokens to athletes, Clagg said.

College athletes staying in hotels like that may not have been a good sign for the city of Huntington, Clagg reflects. "It was probably an indication that the hotel era was vanishing. Otherwise they wouldn't have had those empty rooms. There were many grand hotels in downtown Huntington in those days — the Pritchard, Fifth Avenue Hotel, the Frederick. They're all gone now."

Few cars were seen on the campus in the 1940's. Students walked or took the bus if they went downtown. Clagg said he knew only one student who had a car. "That's the most apparent difference from the 1940's," he said. "Today, parking is a major problem, even though all the houses on Third Avenue were demolished for a parking lot. No one had to worry about parking when I was a student because no one had anything to park."

Even in the 1950's cars were not common on campus. Phil Cline remembers only two of his fraternity brothers having cars. Cline graduated from Marshall College with a bachelor's degree in 1955 and from Marshall University with a master's degree in 1962. Both diplomas hang on his office wall but no one has ever questioned him about the difference between the college and university. "I guess everyone around here knows about Marshall," he said.

Cline said not having cars never bothered students. Public transportation was much better in those days and students never went far off cam-

Tragedy struck in 1970, when an airplane carrying the Marshall football team and others home from an East Carolina game crashed near the Tri-State Airport. All 75 aboard were killed. Hearses lined up along Huntington's Fifth Avenue for the funeral procession.

Marco the buffalo, mascot of Marshall's Thundering Herd, has seen many incarnations over the years. Here cheerleaders touch up his horns in 1959, as he stands guard over the Shawkey Student Union trophy area. Photographer unknown.

pus. "We did a lot of double dating," he said. "We walked downtown to the movies or to the Artists Series at the Keith Albee. Mostly we made our own entertainment on campus."

Fraternities and sororities were very popular in the 1950's, and a large percentage of students belonged to one or the other. Cline was a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon. He managed his fraternity house in return for free room and board. The hallmark of SPE men was wearing a coat and tie to classes and campus events.

"We had a lot of pride in looking nice on campus," Cline said. "Wearing a coat and tie was the mark of our fraternity. Fraternities and sororities were *the* big social organizations then, and students identified themselves by which organization they belonged to. They all sponsored dances and those were the best entertainment we had. Each group would send out bids for its dances. Only so many would be sent out, and you had to have one to go. Guys would almost fight over those bids so they could take their girlfriends, or they'd try to get a date with a girl in the sorority having the dance."

There were also dances every Wednesday night in the Shawkey Student Union. The union was just as important in the 1950's as it had been in the '30's and '40's. Students still played bridge there. Cline said he wasn't much of a bridge fan at first. "Then in one of my political science classes the professor said smart people play bridge because it exercises the mind," he said. "I started to play a little after that."

Cline had come to Huntington from Kopperston, a small coal town in Wyoming County. He was the first member of his family to attend college. Two of his high school teachers had urged him to go to Marshall and arranged a tuition scholarship for him. He worked throughout his years in school to help pay expenses. He worked for a while at Fletcher's Mining Equipment Company, where he works today. One benefit of that job was that he was allowed to borrow the company car to go on dates.

"Once I borrowed the car to go to a dance at Camden Park," he recalls. "I drove there with my date and a buddy and his date. Sometime in the evening they decided to go out in the car for a while. He drove off somewhere and put a dent in the front of the car. I felt pretty bad telling my boss the next day, but he seemed to think it was funny."

These alumni and more than 70,000 others have watched Marshall grow year after year, both in student enrollment and in physical size. The small campus with two main buildings which Lyell Douthat knew in the 1920's expanded greatly after Marshall became a four-year college. Morrow Library opened in 1931 and several dormitory and classroom buildings soon followed. The Science Building was completed in 1950 and recently almost doubled in size with a new annex. But most of the growth at Marshall came after it was declared a university in 1961, with more than five major buildings added to the main campus in the past 26 years and a medical school established in 1977. Growth continues with the planned addition of a modern fine arts facility and a 30,000-seat football stadium.

Today's graduates will have much different memories of their days in Huntington than these four, who attended Marshall when it was a small, quiet college.

Book Review:

The Hawk's Nest Incident

The big Hawk's Nest dam and tunnel project looked like a godsend to Fayette County in early 1930, bringing thousands of jobs to an area sliding deeper into the Great Depression. Men flocked to the construction site from throughout the county and from far beyond its borders, including many blacks from the South. They found work, but for many it was the last job they'd have. Hundreds lay dead before it was over, victims of silica dust and inhuman working conditions.

The goal was power generation and ultimately the refining of specialized metal alloys. The dam and tunnel were designed to divert New River through Gauley Mountain, delivering its energy directly to a Gauley Bridge hydroelectric station built expressly for the purpose. The three-mile tunnel brought the rushing water to the turbines with greater force than the river would have developed following its natural course. The electricity was transmitted by cable to the metallurgical plant at Boncar (now Alloy), several miles below Gauley Bridge.

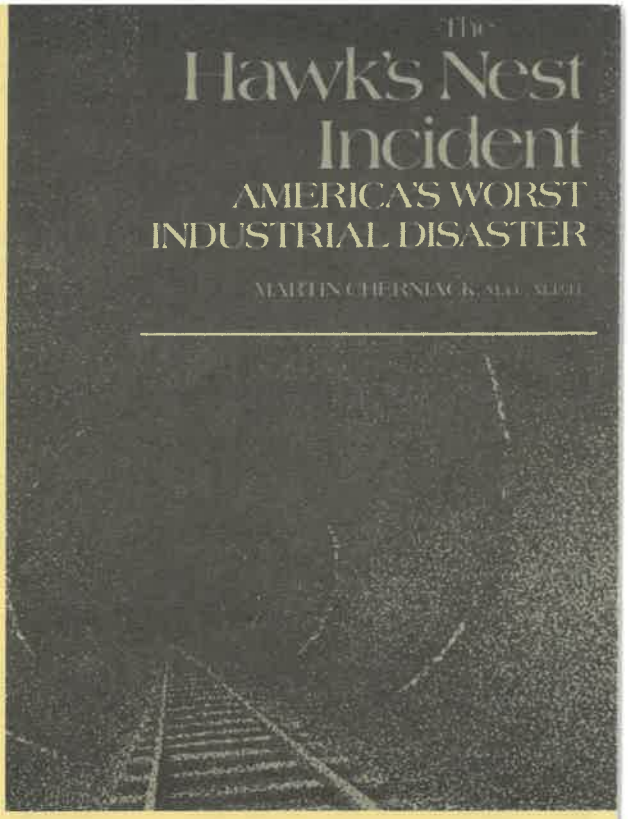
Union Carbide was the Hawk's Nest owner, with the Rinehart and Dennis Company of Virginia doing the construction work. Both companies were charged in massive litigation arising from the tragedy, with Rinehart and Dennis effectively shut down within a few years. Congress investigated and more than 500 lawsuits piled up in the courthouse at Fayetteville. The storm of charges and countercharges brought meager results, as far as compensation to victims was concerned. Confusion, and some say deliberate suppression of facts, effectively clouded public understanding at the time and left the story mostly unknown to the history books. The upshot is that what U. S. Senator Rush Holt called "the most barbaric example of industrial construction that has ever happened in this world" is almost forgotten today.

Physician Martin Cherniack intends to set that straight with his book, *The Hawk's Nest Incident: America's Worst Industrial Disaster.* The new volume, just published by Yale University Press, is the only full book devoted to the subject, apart from Hubert Skidmore's 1941 novel *Hawk's Nest.* It is the most thorough scientific investigation of the case, and the first serious national exposure since Alicia Tyler's influential 1975 *Washington Monthly* article and John Alexander William's treatment in his Bicentennial history of West Virginia.

Cherniack's medical training gives him advantages over the historians and journalists who have previously tackled Hawk's Nest. His approach is essentially that of a statistician rather than a physician, however. The evidence is lacking to support a serious medical investigation of the sort that might have been done at the time. The Hawk's Nest victims are mostly gone — the worst-hit survived only a few months — and remaining records are far from complete. Given that, Cherniack turns to what he calls "shoe leather epidemiology," building what amounts to a complex medical mystery case.

The statistical reasoning is complicated in its details, but simple in its overall concept. Basically, Cherniack uses the abnormally high Fayette County death rates of the period to project probable mortality among workers who spent two months or more laboring in the tunnel.

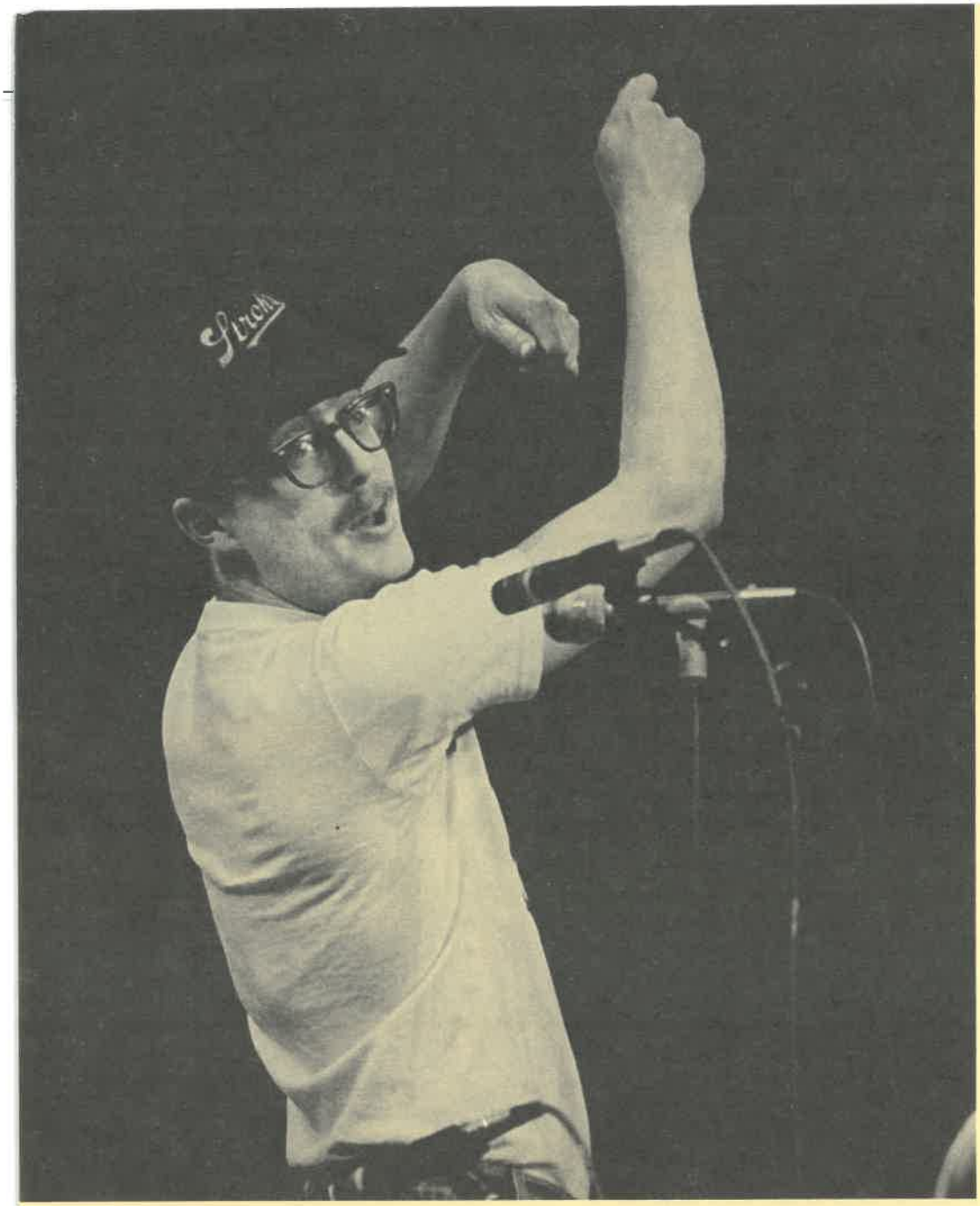
The results are jolting. Cherniack estimates that at least 764 men died from silicosis contracted while working in the dusty tunnel. This was nearly two-thirds of the two-month group, overwhelmingly black migrants. As startling as this number is, it is within the range of previous estimates, which have run from under 500 to as high as 1,500. The lower early estimates — Cherniack gives Union Carbide's own count as 109, and some others were lower still — have been largely discarded, with recent best guesses by historians in the 400-500 range. It seems likely that Cherniack's estimate, backed by its elaborate statistical hypothesis, will now be accepted as the best possible.



The value of *The Hawk's Nest Incident,* in short, is in providing a scientific underpinning for this little-understood disaster. Martin Cherniack is not a flashy writer and does not try to dramatize this dark chapter of our industrial history. Skidmore's novel, a thin fictionalization of events, provides a more riveting account for those who can bear to read of the human side of the dreadful tragedy. Cherniack's intention is to document the case, to get the cold, hard facts on the record insofar as that is possible at this late date.

—Ken Sullivan

The Hawk's Nest Incident *is a 194-page hardback, illustrated with charts and photographs. The book includes an index and notes and an extensive methodological appendix. It may be purchased for $19.95 in bookstores, or ordered by mail from Yale University Press, 92A Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520. GOLDENSEAL readers wishing to consult the record of the Hawk's Nest Congressional hearings or to read Hubert Skidmore's novel,* Hawk's Nest, *will find both reprinted in Jim Comstock's seven-volume* West Virginia Heritage *collection. The books are available in many libraries or may be bought by mail. The cost of the hardback set, which is sold only as a unit, is $42, plus $4 postage and handling. Send mail orders to the Hillbilly Bookstore, Richwood, WV 26261.*



Champion liar Paul Lepp reels in the big one at the 1986 Liars' Contest. His fish story took top honors.

Fishing and Flying and Other Tall Tales

The Champion Liars from Vandalia 1986

Photographs by Michael Keller

The liars turned out in force in Charleston again last year. They gathered in the shadows of the State Capitol for the West Virginia Liars Contest, a part of Vandalia Gathering each Memorial Day Weekend. The contest, held at the festival storytelling stage since 1983, is popular with both audience and participants.

There were old faces and new among the 1986 prevaricators. When the lying was over and the judging done, Jimmy Costa of Summers County emerged in second place and Huntington's Tom Drummond — the previous year's grand champ — in third. Eric Waggoner, a promising teenage storyteller, won the special youth prize, awarded some years at the discretion of the judges.

Paul Lepp of South Charleston, a newcomer to storytelling, carried off top honors with a wild tale of fishing and flying. Mr. Lepp has since taken his story to a national broadcast audience on "Mountain Stage," the weekly show syndicated by West Virginia Public Radio. He will reign as West Virginia's official Biggest Liar until Vandalia 1987 this May.

At that time, the coveted title will be up for grabs. If you would like to try for it, contact the editor of GOLDENSEAL for information and advance registration.

Paul Lepp. I'm going to tell you all a story that took place right here in Charleston a few summers back. Now, I never have told the true story before, but seeing as how the trial's over I reckon it's safe.

It all began up there at the Marmet locks on the Kanawha River, just right up from Charleston, a few summers back. I was night fishing. It was a fisherman's dream. There must have been a thousand fisherman up there, they all had their Coleman coolers and their Coleman lanterns lit up. In fact, they had that riverbank lit up all the way from the Marmet locks to the 35th Street Bridge.

I was fishing for monster catfish that night and I had my nine-foot monster rod out — that's a surf-casting rod. Had about six miles of brand new 50-pound test line on it. That thing was the castingest outfit I ever did own. You'd have to haul off and cast that thing and sit down and drink a beer and wait for it to land. If you weren't careful, at night, you'd hang up on the trees on the other side.

Well, fishing was a little bit slow that night, so I reeled in and I was putting a fresh hunk of rotten liver on my hook. As I was baiting up I could hear a droning noise coming from up above the lock and I couldn't quite figure out what it was. But it wasn't bothering me, so I just went ahead and hooked up and gave one of those famous five-minute casts. Hook, line and sinker went flying out through the air.

And then I saw the plane. It was a DC3, and it came up over the lock so low it was pushing a wake. I knew right off what had gone wrong. That pilot had seen all them lights down through there and mistook the river for a landing.

He figured out what he had done, too, and he hauled back up in the air. But it was too late. Well, it was okay for him because he got up just fine, but not before the end of my five miles of brand new casting line had wrapped a triple clench knot around his tail fin.

Well, folks, if you've never been hooked to the tail of a flying DC3 before, I'll tell you things start happening mighty fast. The next thing I knew, I was ripped up out of my shoes and looking at the 35th Street Bridge at eye level and coming in quick.

There wasn't nothing I could do but just reel up over that thing so I reeled up, shut my eyes and cleared that bridge. I looked back and I was so shook up and so happy I quit reeling. I sunk right back down to river level. Things were happening real quick. The next thing I knew, the South Side Bridge was zooming in at me like an instant replay. Well, I reeled back up over that thing and got clear of it, just barely slid over. I started to get a little bit worried by now.

About then the pilot got his bearings back, and about the time we came even with the old Sears Building down there he hung a sharp right for the airport. That whipped me around and I followed right up the Elk River. For you folks that ain't from around here, I'll tell you there's no less than *five* bridges on the first half-mile of that Elk River.

Well, I got reeled up over the Elk River Bridge and cleared it and my momentum carried me over the Virginia Street Bridge. I just barely tipped the Lee Street Bridge with my feet and that somersaulted me over the Washington Street Bridge. That's when my luck ran out. I knew I was going to hit that Spring Street Bridge and there wouldn't be anything I could do about it.

It was right about then my *mad* caught up with me. I guess it had been left back there on the riverbank somewheres. It caught me about 40 feet downriver from that Spring Street Bridge, and when it hit me it straightened me and I was flying through the air feet first like a board. I began to feel like Chuck Yeager. I started reeling again. I knew I wasn't going to clear it, but I bent my knees a little bit and hit the top beam of that bridge and just wrapped my legs right around there.

That's when the fisherman in me took over. I reeled up the slack out of my line and I set the hook on that plane. Well, he felt the sting of my number-two Eagle Claw hook and he took right up off the river and swerved up around the airport. He was streaming that line till I thought it would melt the reel, but I just kept the pressure on him. He began to circle up around Charleston. He was still stringing that line out and he almost hung me up on the Kanawha Valley Bank Building, but I got him turned just in the nick of time.

Then he came back around. He was coming right straight for me again and I had all that five miles of brand new 50-pound line coming down all over Charleston. I was reeling it up and he got over top of me, headed back toward the airport again. I knew I was winning now. I could feel him tiring. I was tiring, too. I was sweating so hard cars driving on Spring Street Bridge were turning on their windshield wipers because they believed it was raining out.

Anyway, I got him turned and he was coming down on that airport hill just so pretty and my arms were shaking. He went out of sight down there on the hill and just behind the trees. I thought I had him for sure when the line snapped.

Well, I've lost big ones before. I knew that nobody was going to believe this one, either. When that line snapped, it flung me down in the river and I just swum up to the bank, grabbed my rod and went on home.

That probably would've been the end of it, but it turned out a buddy of mine was working up there at the airport and he saw the whole thing. He said what happened was, I was bringing that plane down for a perfect three-point landing — which made me pretty proud, 'cause I had never landed an airplane before. I was bringing him down for a perfect three-point landing, and at the last minute that sneaky thing, he wiggled his tail and got me hung up on one of those Air National Guard C130's up there and that's what broke the line. When the line broke he shot forward just as I was falling back into the Elk River. He shot forward and went clear off the end of the runway and down into Coonskin Park.

Even that wasn't the end of it, 'cause I read the next day that that airplane was plumb full of that marijuana stuff from South America. I just hope my mom's not here. I don't care if she knows I'm hooked on fishing, but I don't want her to think I'm hooked on pot. Thank you.

Jimmy Costa. Well folks, I'm gonna tell you a tale. You can believe it or not believe it. But it happened, it did. It's a true story as far as I can document it.

You know, everybody's probably been involved through their life in Christmas pageants at their church. They kind of duplicate the birth of Jesus Christ and have Mary and Joseph and the three wise men and all. At the church down home they were going to do that, here about four or five years ago. The woman who told me the story, her brother Delbert was supposed to be on the planning committee.

So about a day before they were to have the pageant he comes up to her and he says, "I've got this idea." He says, "Elsie, you know how those kids bring that little china baby Jesus up the aisle and place it in the manger? Well, I don't believe we ought to do it that way this year." He says, "I think we ought to use a string."

He says, "I've tried this and it works just fine. I'll take a string and I'll string it back from the choir loft and put it right on down over the congregation." He said, "I'll take that

Jimmy Costa calms an anxious crowd as he spins his Christmas pageant yarn. Costa's Summers County stories are all true, he says.

little baby Jesus and put it on a little tether and just run it right down that string — they'll not see it, you know, until it gets right down there. We'll run it right into that little manger, kind of surprise everybody."

She was kind of uneasy, said, "Well, do you think it will work?" He said, "I've tried it, it'll work fine."

So I'll tell you how she told me, in the same words if I can do it. She said, "So, the next day, we got that thing started up, you know. We always had a bunch of sheep in there around that manger to make it look right real. We couldn't get no sheep that year, but my uncle had this old black bobtail dog. And we taken that old dog, you know, and wrapped him in a bunch of this old quilt batting. We took big button thread and run it around that quilt batting and had that old dog looking just like a Dorshire sheep. I'm a-tellin' you, it looked just like one. Had that little black bobtail a-hanging out, you know.

"Everything commenced right on time. Everybody's kinda wondering, they didn't see them kids a-bringing the baby Jesus down.

"Well, they got on with the program and we started hearing this awful mournful noise back in there about where the dog was. We kept hearing this 'roooooo, roooooo,' and we thought, 'Well, land's sakes, what in the world is a-going on back there?' And the next thing I knowed, it just looked like a big storm cloud had come in and it was snowing back there. Someway that thread had that old dog bound up and he was a-scratching and that cotton was a-flying off. We was setting there and we didn't know what to do. Next thing we knowed, we heard this thing just kind of plop and that dog started up again, 'Roooooo.' It was all hung up in that sewing thread, had that leg of his all curled back. Well, somebody finally got up and let the dog a-loose and led the dog out.

"And I thought to myself, 'Surely nothing else can happen this year to the Christmas pageant!'

"Well, wouldn't you know it. Mary Tabor got up there in the choir loft and stood up and she started to singing. That was when Delbert was supposed to lower that little Jesus down on that string, you know, only Mary didn't know that. So Mary was a-singing, 'Oh little town of Bethlehem. . . .' About that time Delbert let loose on the string and it was a-coming down. Mary was a-standing up, you know. She said later, 'I seen that thing out of the corner of my eye and I thought it was a bat had got loose out of the choir loft.' She let out a big whoop, and she hit it with her hymn book, and it broke a-loose.

"And buddy, I'm a-telling you if you don't think a chiny baby doll in swabling clothes can't move down a string, you ought to have been there, honey! Mary's mom heard her give out a yell. She turned around to see what happened to Mary and that baby Jesus hit poor old Sadie right smack in the top of the head, knocked her out cold as a creek rock.

She fell out in the middle of the aisle. The preacher was a-standing there seeing this thing coming at him and he didn't know what it was. It come on flying down through there.

"Well, they had cleaned out that podium where the preacher stands about to here, you know, where he kept them Bible books. Had that little manger setting in there, and the idea was that doll was to go on down in the manger. Honey, it didn't go *in* the manger — it went plumb through and took the manger with it, hit that poor preacher right below the belt line! He was a-jumping up and down, trying to turn around so nobody could see what was a-going on, you know.

"And I'll swan, Brother Suttles was up there right where he always is, in the front row, and he thought the preacher was waving his arms for altar call. Brother Suttles can't hear hisself do anything anymore. And Brother Suttles got up and was a-testifying during all this of what the Lord had done for him.

"Well, we tried to get over there to the preacher. He turned around and we just kindly hid Brother Suttles in a whole group of people and we all balled up there in the floor.

"And I'll tell you, if I have anything to do with them Christmas pageants anymore, they ain't a-going to be none of them flying baby Jesus's."

Tom Drummond. Folks, this is a brand-new tale. And it is the most incredible tale that you're ever going to hear, 'cause it was the most incredible tail that I ever saw.

It begins with two old boys by the name of Willie Will and Billie Bob who were the biggest moonshiners east, west, north or south of the Mason Dixon Line. Their corn squeezin's were so potent and high-powered folks around those parts called it "Thunder in a Jug." Now, don't let me mislead you into thinking this was good, 'cause there was three things wrong with making Thunder in a Jug: First, you see, it was illegal; second, it was against the law; and third, you weren't supposed to do such a thing.

Yeah, old Willie Will and Billie Bob, they were law-not-abiding citizens. They'd never been caught, you see, because the chief law enforcement officer around those parts was none other than old Sheriff Whichway. Now Sheriff Whichway, he couldn't track a train. He couldn't tell a handprint from a fingerprint from a footprint if they were labeled. And year after year after year after year, old Sheriff Whichway tried to catch Willie Will and Billie Bob, until one day he decided to call the FBI for some assistance. And sure enough, they obliged and sent him, believe

Tom Drummond of Huntington was 1985's Biggest Liar and the third-place winner last year. His story concerned moonshining, a bad sheriff and a good dog.

this, a dog named Beauregard. But, you could call him Bo for short, if'n you petted him.

Now, Bo was originally from West Virginia, and like most dogs around here, he was one-half mutt and the other half mixed breed. But unlike most dogs, Bo did not follow a scent with his nose. Instead, Bo followed a trail with his tail.

Yep, he'd just hike his tail up, flip it over his back, point it between his ears right at that trail — and, folks, believe me on this one, Beauregard *never* lost a trail. Why, he tracked things so well that one day he tracked down a bank robber going east and an escaped convict going west, and he caught 'em both at the same time.

Needless to say, Sheriff Whichway was *thrilled* with Bo's ability. But the problem was, you see, that Willie Will and Billie Bob kept their still in their pickup. So their still was a still but it didn't stand still, 'cause it went wherever they drove their pickup. Well, Beauregard, he figured he could track 'em anyway. And folks, this is where this tale gets real incredible, 'cause faster than a cork flies off a jug Bo was off and gone after Willie Will and Billie Bob and soon caught up with 'em at the county line. And they wouldn't have been suspicious but old Beauregard had a deputy badge on his tail pointed right at 'em.

Well, Willie Will and Billie Bob, they revved up their pickup and headed up what is now I-79 with Bo close behind. Meanwhile, Sheriff Whichway was back stuck in his car going backwards in all four directions. Willie Will and Billie Bob were still on the getaway, and Willie Will notices that they were running on empty. So he yelled to Billie Bob, who was a-sitting in the back holding the still still, to throw a few jugs of Thunder down the tank.

And they're off! Willie Will, Billie Bob, their pickup and the still, with Beauregard making a move on the inside at the scenic milepost around a hairpin curve. They passed a Smokie with his ears on and blew 'em both off. They were going so fast they passed each county before they got there and all the time Beauregard kept a-barking up a thunderstorm on the heels of Willie Will and Billie Bob with his tail pointed right between his bloodshot eyes.

By now, Beauregard had kicked it into four-paw drive and they all were going so fast they couldn't stay on the road, but that didn't matter 'cause wherever they went they made one. They went back and forth four times on Backbone Mountain, ran over poor old Dolly up on the Sods, down the North Branch of the South Fork of the Potomac River and up the east branch of an old oak tree.

Willie Will and Billie Bob, their pickup and the still, and Beauregard all fell out of that tree and when they hit the ground, with all that Thunder, the most explosive explosion you could ever imagine happened. Billie Bob blew east, Willie Will went west, the truck went north, the still stayed still, and Beauregard flew south for the winter. And old Sheriff Whichway, he finally got there and stood in the middle of it all, looking north and thinking he was facing south, and said, "Doggone, I've missed 'em again."

So, folks, now if you ever hear of *doggone*, you'll know the story behind it 'cause this was the first and biggest double-doggone, dog gone you've ever seen or heard. And to keep your tale straight, just remember, one dog gone was a good-bye. And the other doggone was a sad sigh. And folks, that ain't no lie. Thank you.

Eric Waggoner. Thank you for bordering on applause there.

Now, the story that I'm going to tell you involves my Uncle Charlie, myself and a dog called Jake. I got to tell you about Jake, first of all. Jake was a dog that stood about this tall. I'm not lying. The sucker could run 4,000 miles an hour, all right? You know when cats climb trees and a dog will run around the tree trying to keep them up there? Well, Jake would knock down the tree and walk across it, just to give you an idea.

I'd been staying with my Uncle Charlie who lives up north — he lives in the state but he lives up north — for about a week. This raccoon had been getting into his garbage cans outside, knocking them over, ripping the bags, just spreading the trash, causing general havoc. And we decided one night that we were going to actually go out and get him. We were going to get this stupid raccoon.

So we waited up one night. We were out there by the back door, turned all the lights off, and nobody could see anything. We had Jake sitting there with us, you know. Jake was all ready to go. We'd told him about it, we'd warmed him up, he'd done vocal exercises the day before so he was ready to bark.

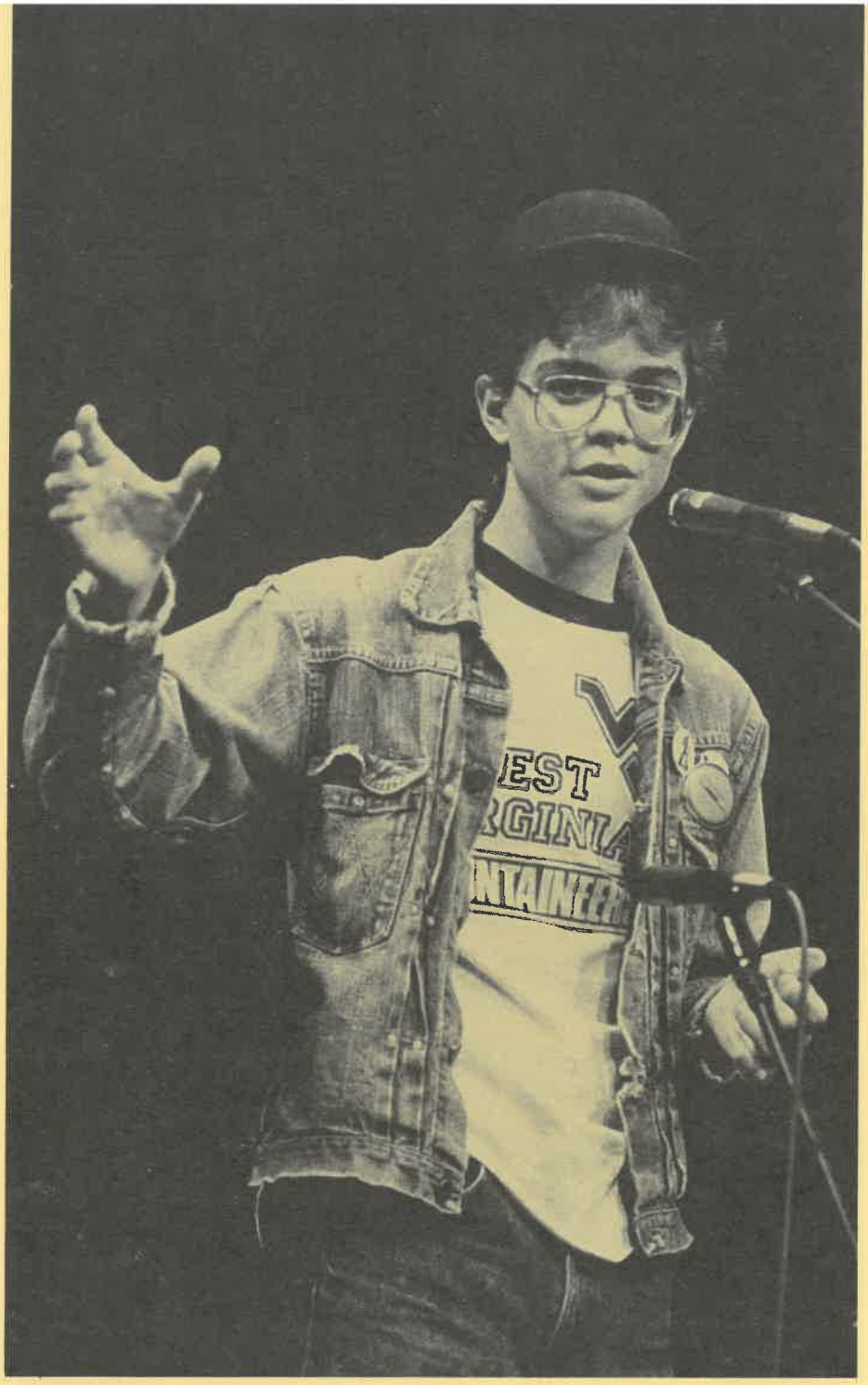
And then, coming across the clearing there out back by the house, making a beeline straight for the garbage can, we saw the raccoon. Raccoon was just a standard-sized raccoon and Jake really outnumbered, just by himself, this one little ignorant raccoon. The raccoon evidently had not heard about Jake so he trotted on across, you know, thinking he was going to get into the garbage can.

All right, Jake let out with a big howl, "Aroooooooo," and the raccoon looked straight up and saw Jake and took off back across the clearing. Jake just scared him to death.

Jake took off — you know how coon dogs bark: "Arhhhh, Arhhhh" — straight across the backyard. He would not let the raccoon get out of the clearing. By gosh, we were going to have this raccoon. All right, chasing him right around the clearing, just would not let him go, "Arhhhh." The raccoon was going at least 50 miles an hour. And Jake was only in first gear, mind you. "Arhhhh," all around the clearing. The raccoon's body looked like it was this long, the raccoon was running that fast. The raccoon was just straight, there was no bends in it all, it was running that fast. "Arhhhh!" He was doing this for a minute and a half, okay?

The raccoon, you could tell, was getting tired. The raccoon's toenails flew off his body. Hit Jake right in the forehead, but he shook it off. "Arhhhh," right back after that raccoon. Just chasing him all around the place. Jake shifted it into second gear. So he was up to like two million miles an hour. "Arhhhh" all around the clearing.

The raccoon's rings on its tail went right off his body. Hit Jake straight in the forehead. Jake was a smart dog, he turned his head to the side. If he hadn't, them rings would have come over his neck and choked him instantly. They bounced off his head. "Arhhhh," chasing him all around the place. It was terrible. We were on



Youth-prize winner Eric Waggoner is about ready for the big league. He told of an unfortunate raccoon saved by fair play and good sportsmanship.

the side, you know, we had cheerleaders there, doing jumps and flips and twists and everything. "Arhhhh," just chasing him all around the place.

Finally, Jake shifted it up into third gear, he was going to *get* this boy, he'd fooled around with him long enough. The raccoon's mask flew off his body, flew right off his face, everybody knew who he was. Raccoon figured he might as well quit and he just sat down there in the clearing. Jake came up on him, he looked at the raccoon and turned around and walked back to us.

Uncle Charlie seemed to know what was going on. I couldn't believe it. I said, "Charlie, we sat out here waiting for this raccoon for I don't know how long, and Jake's been chasing him around all over the place. Why did he give up?"

Uncle Charlie said, "Boy, that's just sportsmanship. It ain't fair to run a coon when he's naked." ♣

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In This Issue

ROBERT BEANBLOSSOM, a native of Gilbert in Mingo County, is superintendent of Watters Smith Memorial State Park in Harrison County. While in college, he worked as a forest fire tower observer. He has been with the West Virginia Division of Forestry since 1973. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

MIKE GIOULIS, a former historical architect with the Department of Culture and History, is an historic preservation consultant in Sutton, Braxton County. He is currently working on the nomination of the Sutton historical district to the National Register of Historic Places. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

MICHAEL KELLER is the chief of photographic services for the Department of Culture and History.

MARY ELLEN MAHAFFEY is a native of Ohio who lived in Grafton for 20 years. She graduated from Chillicothe Business College and was a business school director until her retirement in 1974. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

MADGE L. MATTHEWS was born in 1902 in Wayne County, and has lived there most of her life. She has both an A.B. and an M.A. degree, and taught school for 39 years before her retirement. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

BOB SCHWARZ is a New York State native who farmed in Wetzel County for over 11 years before moving to Lincoln County. He has taught high school and college and does freelance writing. He is now a reporter for the *Lincoln Journal*. He is an occasional contributor to GOLDENSEAL.

DEBORAH SMITH grew up in a small town in middle Tennessee. She has M.A. degrees in both forestry and journalism, the latter from Marshall University. She has recently moved to California, where she works as an editor for the California Trucking Association. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

CHRIS SPENCER says he has been interested in photography since high school. He was born in Huntington and attended Marshall University, where he earned his B.A. in advertising. He now makes his living as a freelance photographer. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

CHARLES SWISHER was born in Schenectady, New York. He earned an electrical engineering degree from the University of Illinois in 1956. He is currently president of his own company, which specializes in audio and visual systems design and operation. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

IVAN M. TRIBE attended Ohio University and earned his Ph.D. at the University of Toledo. He has published many articles on oldtime and early country music and authored the book, *Mountaineer Jamboree: Country Music in West Virginia*. Dr. Tribe teaches at Rio Grande College in Ohio and is an occasional contributor to GOLDENSEAL.

CORRECTIONS: In the Winter GOLDENSEAL, we mistakenly referred to the Peoples Bank of Charles Town as simply the Bank of Charles Town. Our apologies to the bank, and thanks to photographer Hali Taylor for setting us straight.

We also transposed Jeremiah Carpenter's 1785 marriage date as 1875 in the Richard Carpenter letter in the same issue. Sharp-eyed readers pointed out that Jeremiah would have been 121 years old at the time.

(continued from inside front cover)

August 4-8 Petersburg (538-2278)
Tri-County Fair
August 6-8 Spanishburg (425-1429)
Bluestone Valley Fair
August 6-9 Harrisville (643-2738)
Hughes River Holidays
August 7-8 Moundsville (845-2773)
"Show 'N Sell" 12th Annual Arts & Crafts Fair
August 7-9 Ravenswood (273-9612)
Ohio River Festival
August 10-16 New Martinsville (455-2418)
Town & Country Days
August 14-16 Elkins (636-1903)
Augusta Festival (D & E College)
August 14-16 Logan (752-1324)
Logan County Arts & Crafts Fair
August 14-16 Summersville (872-3145)
Gospel Sing
August 15-16 Fairmont (363-3030)
Local Crafts Weekend (Pricketts Fort)
August 21-22 Cairo (643-2931)
Square Dance Weekend (North Bend State Park)
August 21-29 Lewisburg (645-1090)
State Fair of West Virginia
August 22 Richwood (846-9787)
10th Civilian Conservation Corps Reunion (Camp Woodbine)
August 27 Cairo (643-2931)
Quilt Show (North Bend State Park)
August 28-30 Beckley (252-7328)
23rd Appalachian Arts & Crafts Festival (Armory)
August 28-29 Walker (489-2280)
West Virginia Bluegrass Festival
August 29-September 7 Charleston (348-6419)
17th Charleston Sternwheel Regatta
August 29-30 Cairo (628-3705)
Cairo Days
August 29-31 Weston (745-5376)
State Horseshoe Tournament (Jackson's Mill)
September 2-5 Glenville (462-7061)
Gilmer County Farm Show
September 4-5 Pennsboro (659-2926)
Country Roads Festival
September 4-6 Summersville (872-3145)
Bluegrass-Country Music Festival
September 4-6 Pipestem (425-9356)
15th Annual John Henry Folk Festival
September 4-6 Jane Lew (842-4095)
Jane Lew Fireman's Annual Heritage Festival
September 4-6 Clarksburg (624-8694)
West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival
September 4-7 Weston (269-1863)
Stonewall Jackson Heritage Jubilee (Jackson's Mill)
September 5-6 Huntington (529-2701)
Hilltop Festival
September 7-12 Summersville (872-3024)
Nicholas County Potato Festival
September 9-13 Gauley Bridge (632-2504)
Gauley Bridge Anniversary Festival
September 11-13 Grafton (265-3138)
Railroad Heritage Festival
September 11-13 Wheeling (233-2575)
Fort Henry Festival
September 12-13 Fairmont (363-3030)
Wool Crafts Weekend (Pricketts Fort)
September 12-13 Helvetia (924-5018)
Helvetia Community Fair
September 13-19 Williamson (235-5560)
King Coal Festival
September 17-20 Franklin (358-2809)
Treasure Mountain Festival
September 17-20 Sistersville (652-7881)
19th West Virginia Oil & Gas Festival
September 19 Lost Creek (745-5734)
Country Fall Festival
September 19-20 Alderson (445-7730)
Arts & Crafts Fall Festival
September 19-20 Parkersburg (428-3988)
Harvest Moon Festival
September 20 Shepherdstown (876-2551)
Octoberfest (Bavarian Inn & Lodge)
September 24-28 Kingwood (329-0021)
Preston County Buckwheat Festival
September 24-26 Arnoldsburg (655-7104)
West Virginia Molasses Festival
September 25-27 Charles Town (725-2055)
12th Fall Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
September 26 Union (772-3003)
Autumn Harvest Festival
September 26 Hillsboro (364-2340)
Pearl Buck Fall Festival
September 26 Poca (755-4677)
Poca Area Heritage Day
September 26-27 Moorefield (538-6560)
Hardy County Heritage Weekend
September 26-27 French Creek (924-6211)
National Hunting & Fishing Celebration
September 26-27 Parkersburg (428-1657)
West Virginia Honey Festival
September 27-October 4 Elkins (636-1824)
Mountain State Forest Festival
October 2-4 Middlebourne (652-2528)
Middle Island Harvest Festival
October 2-4 Clay (587-2934)
Golden Delicious Festival
October 2-4 Gandeeville (988-0702)
FOOTMAD'S Traditional Music and Dance Festival (Camp Sheppard)
October 3 Wheeling (242-3000)
Oglebayfest (Oglebay Park)
October 3 Dunbar (766-0223)
Dunbar Fall Festival
October 3-4 Burlington (289-3511)
Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival
October 3-4 Milton (743-3909)
Milton Garden Club Arts & Crafts Show
October 3-4 Fairmont (366-6601)
Heritage Days
October 3-4 Point Pleasant (675-5737)
Country Festival & Antique Steam & Gas Engine Show
October 8-11 Spencer (927-5657)
West Virginia Black Walnut Festival
October 9-10 Bluefield (425-1912)
7th Annual Country Craft Guild Show
October 10 Fayetteville (465-5617)
Bridge Day (New River Gorge Bridge)
October 10 Cameron (686-2238)
Big Run Apple Festival
October 10-11 Berkeley Springs (258-3738)
14th Apple Butter Festival
October 10-11 Fairmont (363-3030)
Apple Butter Weekend (Pricketts Fort)
October 16-18 Mullens (294-4000)
5th Lumberjackin'-Bluegrassin' Jamboree
October 16-18 Martinsburg (263-6414)
Mountain State Apple Harvest Festival

GOLDENSEAL requests its readers' help in preparing this listing. If you would like your festival or event to appear in the 1988 "Folklife Fairs and Festivals," please send us information on the name of the event, dates, location, and the contact person or organization, along with their mailing address and phone number, if possible. We must have this information in by January 15, 1988, in order to meet our printing deadline.

GOLDENSEAL regrets that, due to space limitations, Fourth of July celebrations are no longer included in the listing.

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