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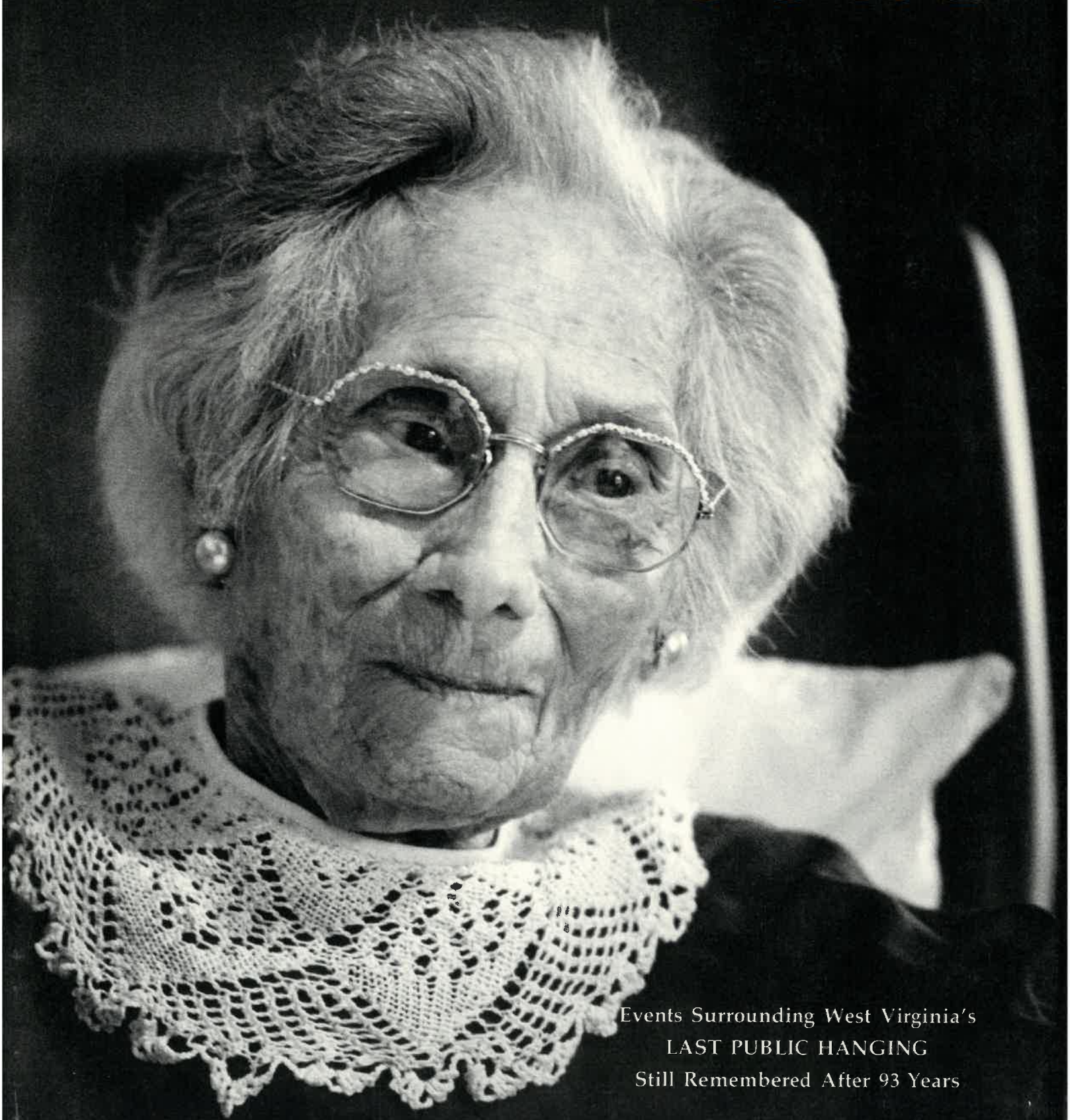
Goldenseal



Events Surrounding West Virginia's
LAST PUBLIC HANGING
Still Remembered After 93 Years

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. Information for events at West Virginia State Parks and major festivals is also available by calling 1-800-CALL WVA.

April 7 — Richwood (846-6790)
Feast of the Ramson
April 7-8 — Mullens (294-4000)
7th Annual Clogging Workshop (Twin Falls)
April 7-8 — Gassaway (364-2340)
Braxton County Arts & Crafts Show
April 8 — Clay (587-4226)
Clay County Annual Ramp Dinner
April 13-15 — Wheeling (242-3000)
Good Egg Treasure Hunt (Oglebay Zoo)
April 20-21 — Charleston (357-4821)
Governor's Cup Crew Race & Jazz Festival
April 23-29 — Elkins (636-1903)
Augusta Spring Dulcimer Week (D&E College)
April 28-29 — New Manchester (564-3651)
Wyandot Arts & Crafts Festival
May 3-6 — Huntington (696-5947)
20th Annual Dogwood Festival
May 10-13 — Davis (348-3370)
Wildflower Pilgrimage (Blackwater Falls)
May 12 — Mingo (339-6462)
Allegheny Mountain Wool Fair
May 12-13 — Point Pleasant (675-5737)
Antique Steam & Gas Engine Show (Farm Museum)
May 12-13 — Fairmont (363-3030)
Traditional Music Weekend (Pricketts Fort)
May 12-13 — Salem (782-5245)
The Fair at New Salem (Fort New Salem)
May 18-20 — Cass (456-4300)
Cass Scenic Railroad Railfan Weekend
May 18-20 — Lewisburg (645-1276)
Arts and Crafts Fair
May 19-27 — Webster Springs (847-7666)
Webster County Woodchopping Festival
May 24-27 — Fairmont (363-2625)
Three Rivers Coal Festival
May 25-27 — Charleston (348-0162)
Vandalia Gathering (Capitol Grounds)
May 25-28 — White Sulphur Springs (536-1310)
West Virginia Dandelion Festival
May 27 — Pipestem (466-1800)
Pipestem's 20th Birthday (State Park)
May 27 — Chapmanville (752-7259)
3rd Guyandotte Outdoor Gospel Sing
May 30-June 3 — Buckhannon (472-2191)
West Virginia Strawberry Festival
June 1-3 — Romney (822-4326)
Confederate Memorial Holiday
June 1-3 — Philippi (457-3700)
Blue & Gray Reunion
June 3 — Purgitsville (289-3493)
Vineyard Blessing
June 3 — Charleston (744-4323)
Rhododendron Art & Craft Festival
June 7-10 — St. Marys (684-7067)
West Virginia Bass Festival
June 8-10 — Charles Town (725-2055)
Spring Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
June 8-10 — Ronceverte (645-2639)
Ronceverte River Festival
June 14-16 — Glenville (462-7361)
West Virginia State Folk Festival
June 15-17 — Morgantown (599-3407)
Mountaineer Country Glass Festival
June 15-17 — Fairmont (363-8538)
West Virginia Birthday Celebration
June 16 — Terra Alta (789-2411)
West Virginia Day
June 16-17 — Point Pleasant (675-5737)
Pioneer Days & Wheat Harvest (Farm Museum)
June 20 — Wheeling (233-1333)
West Virginia Day
June 22-24 — Summersville (872-3145)
Bluegrass-Country Music Festival
June 22-24 — Gauley Bridge (632-1908)
Civil War Days
June 23 — Hillsboro (653-4430)
Pearl S. Buck Birthday Celebration
June 28-July 1 — Weirton (748-7212)
International Food & Arts Festival
June 30-July 8 — Marlinton (799-4315)
Pioneer Days
July 4-8 — Ripley (372-7000)
Mountain State Art & Craft Fair (Cedar Lakes)
July 7-8 — Cairo (643-2931)
Gospel Song Fest (North Bend)
July 8-August 10 — Elkins (636-1903)
Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops
July 14-15 — Wheeling (242-7700)
Calico Art & Craft Festival (Stifel Center)
July 20-28 — Mineral Wells (489-2829)
Interstate Fair & Exposition
July 23-28 — Moorefield (538-2725)
West Virginia Poultry Convention & Festival
July 25-29 — Wayne (523-2726)
Wayne County Fair
July 27-29 — Wheeling (233-1090)
Upper Ohio Valley Italian Festival
July 27-29 — Mt. Nebo (753-6208)
State Gospel Sing
July 28-August 5 — Cowen (226-3296)
Cowen Historical Railroad Festival
July 30-August 4 — Cottageville (372-3441)
Jackson County Junior Fair
July 30-August 4 — Moundsville (845-8659)
Marshall County Fair
July 30-August 4 — Grafton (265-4431)
Taylor County Fair
August 1-12 — Hinton (466-5332)
State Water Festival
August 2-5 — Harrisville (643-2719)
Hughes River Holidays
August 3-5 — Buckhannon (842-3960)
State Square & Round Dance Convention
August 3-5 — Clifftop (438-6429)
Appalachian Music Festival (Camp Washington-Carver)
August 4 — Pipestem (466-0626)
Mountain Music Festival (Folklife Center)
August 5-12 — Richwood (846-6790)
Cherry River Festival
August 6-11 — Matewan (426-8740)
Magnolia Fair
August 6-12 — Middlebourne (652-2528)
Tyler County Fair
August 7-11 — Petersburg (538-2278)
Tri-County Cooperative Fair

(continued on inside back cover)

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Gaston Caperton
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Goldenseal

Volume 16, Number 1 Spring 1990

COVER: At 101, Mary Chancey is the oldest lady ever to grace our cover. She recalls events surrounding West Virginia's last public hanging beginning on page 10. Photo by Michael Keller.

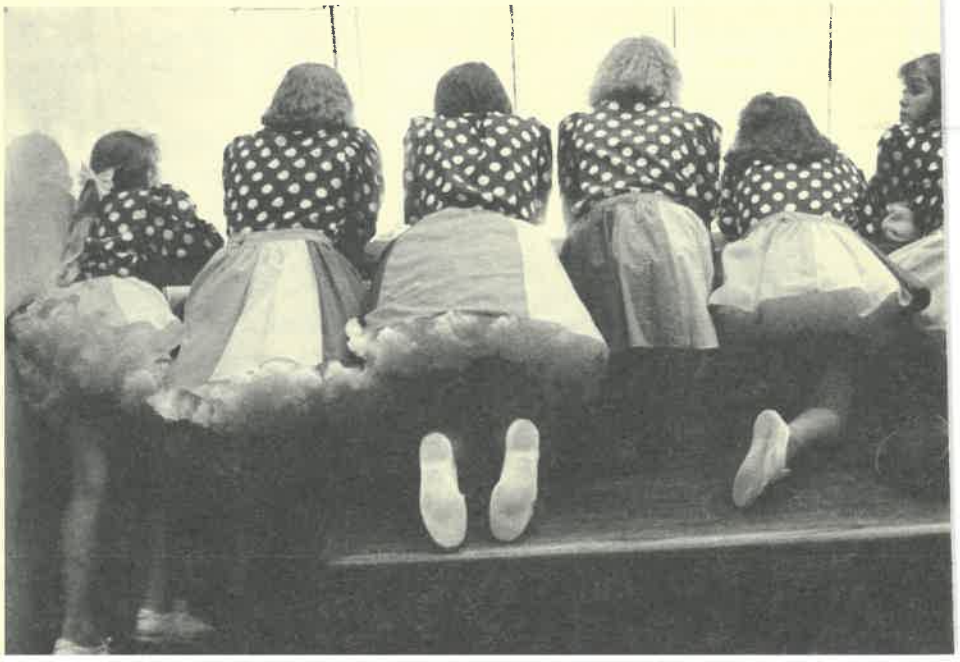
PHOTOS: P. Corbit Brown, Greg Clark, Cole Studio, Michael Keller, Lewis Photo, Ron Rittenhouse, Hali Taylor, Welch Studio

Vandalia 1990

Memorial Day Weekend is the traditional homecoming time for mountain people, when we get together to remember where we came from and what that means in a changing world. It was in that spirit that Vandalia Gathering began back in 1977, and it is in that spirit that Vandalia enters a new decade this spring.

The 14th Vandalia gets underway at the Cultural Center on Friday evening, May 25. The festival will continue the next two days, winding down about supper time on Sunday, May 27.

Vandalia is one of West Virginia's most authentic folklife festivals. Planners have scheduled the best of Mountain State traditional culture at performance, demonstration and sales areas in the Cultural Center and on the adjacent State Capitol grounds. Music and crafts are featured, as well as storytelling, dance, and fine ethnic and regional food.



Above: You can't help dancing at Vandalia Gathering, according to Henry Neylos, 87. The festival includes traditional and ethnic dance demonstrations, and plenty of chances to participate. Photo by Greg Clark.

Above Right: Carl Rutherford made a welcome return visit after 11 years away from Vandalia. The McDowell Countian brought an outstanding version of "Barbara Allen" to the concert stage.

Bottom Right: Performers and audience change places easily at Vandalia. This dance troupe on the Cultural Center balcony checks out the action below. Both photos by Michael Keller.

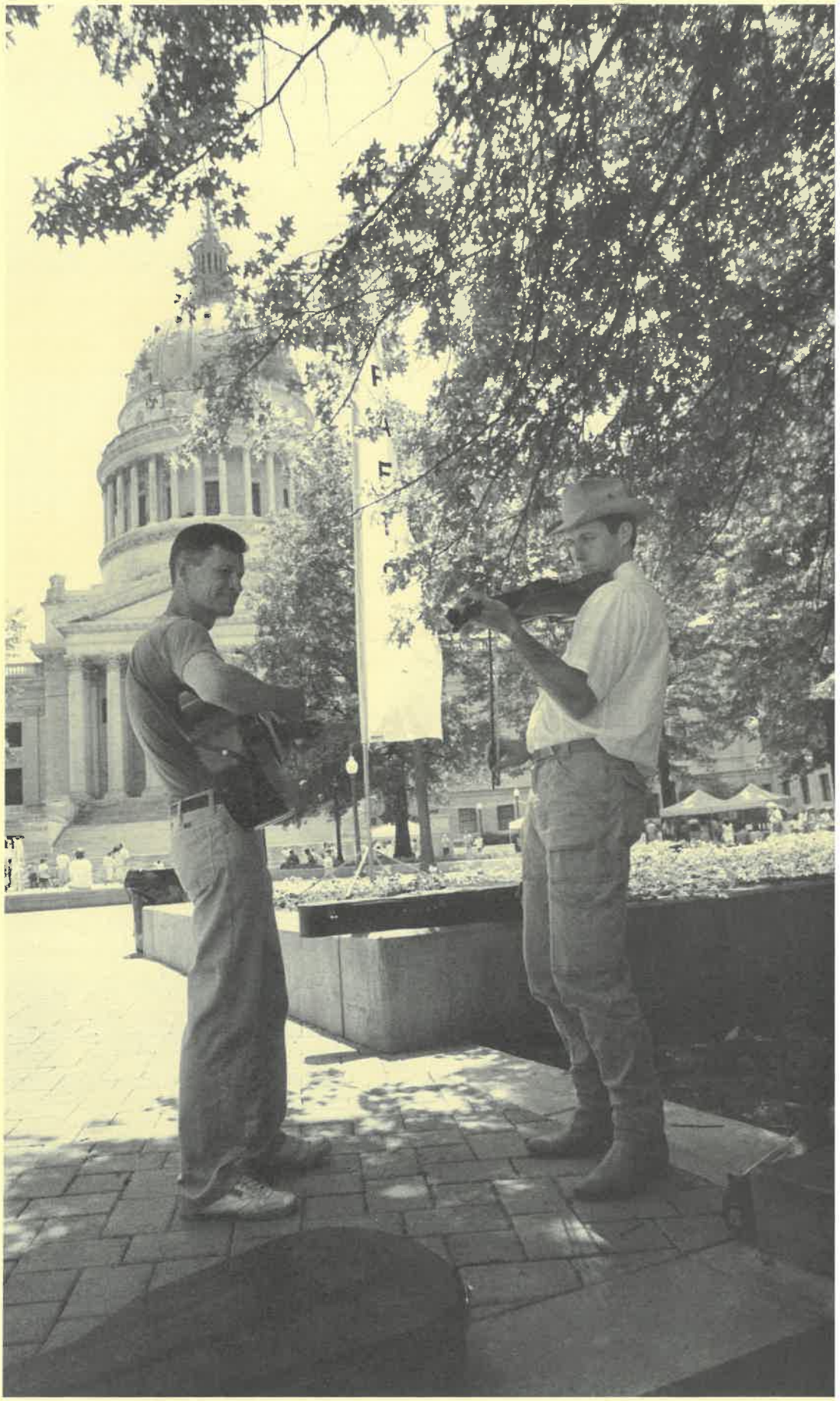
Below: Vandalia smiles are worth a trip to Charleston. Bob Kessinger's cap celebrates a great American overalls manufacturer.

Right: Vandalia had room to grow in 1989, spreading across the new landscaping around the Capitol. Fiddler Cal Reed and friend Ed Beckner found a shady spot. Both photos by Michael Keller.

Winning tall tales from the 1989 Vandalia Liar's Contest begin on page 67.

As usual, the big Cultural Center quilt show will begin Vandalia weekend and run through summer and early fall. Dozens of the best West Virginia quilts are chosen by a statewide contest for this annual show. Other highlights of Vandalia include the popular fiddle and banjo contests, liar's contest, open-stage clogging, and crafts demonstrations and sales. Jammers will vie for favorite spots and make music until well after dark.

Vandalia Gathering is sponsored by the Division of Culture and History of the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts. There is no charge for admission. You may call (304)348-0162 for further information.



Letters from Readers

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

Fiddletown, California
November 21, 1989
Editor:
While I was visiting a cousin in Oregon last month, she loaned me an armful of GOLDENSEAL magazines that go back through the Fall 1981 issue. When I finish them, she will donate them to a museum.

In the meantime I am getting quite an education on West Virginia. I have learned more from them than I've learned in the previous 72 years. Though my roots are there I was never able to get much information from Dad, who was a native. One of my older brothers researched the family for a number of years and turned up a lot of interesting information, but didn't enlighten to the extent that these magazines have.

I was interested in the recent article [Fall 1989] about Truman McCauley carrying the mail and working in the post office for so many years. It reminded me of my family's involvement with a much earlier post office. I thought it might be of interest to a few of your readers.

In the 1890's, my grandfather, Benjamin F. Woosley, took over as postmaster at a small post office a few miles south of Pineville, Wyoming County. I don't recall what Dad said the place was called previously, but while Grandpa had it it was officially Woosley, West Virginia. I have an atlas that still lists it that way. However, it is known today as Wolf Pen.

In 1896, my dad, James B. Woosley, was sworn in as assistant postmaster. He was only 12 years of age, but had a fourth grade education and was a good reader and a good penman. It could well be that he was the youngest ever sworn to that post.

Because some of his older half-brothers had no education and were unable to read, Dad would fix up the mail in such a way that they, riding horseback or muleback, could deliver it out along the route without making mistakes.

Itchy feet headed part of this family west in a few years, my dad among them, so I was born in the state of Washington. Consequently, I have never been in West Virginia, but I still hope to make it before I run clear out of time.
Sincerely,
George R. Woosley

We've written to Mr. Woosley to assure him that Woosley, West Virginia, still exists, although there is no post office there now. You will find it on the DOH Wyoming County highway map on State Route 16, between Wolf Pen and the McDowell line. —ed.

Missing Home

Pacoima, California
January 2, 1990
Editor:
I am writing to let you know that I really enjoy reading my GOLDENSEAL.

I was born and raised in Berwind, McDowell County, and enjoy all the articles written about the southern portion of West Virginia as well as the other ones.

We here in California hosted the 17th annual Excelsior [McDowell County] High School reunion last summer in Anaheim. We have not forgotten where we came from and miss the beautiful West Virginia mountains in the cities and states to which we moved. If the coal industry had lasted, I was willing to live and die there and have visited West Virginia many times since I left 35 years ago with my children.
Sincerely,
Geneva Burnett

Titusville, Florida
January 5, 1990
Editor:
Being born in St. Albans in 1919 gives me quite an interest in the magazine. The first I knew of it, my cousin sent it to me from her Alum Creek home.

One of the things I treasure are some bricks which were from an old house that was torn down in Jacksonville to make room for my son-in-law's restaurant expansion. These bricks were stamped "Charleston Brick Company, Charleston, West Virginia." The old brick company stood on the left side of Patrick Street at the railroad. An ice house was on the opposite corner. As a small boy, we used to play in the ruins of the brick kilns. These bricks I have are now built into my fireplace front, showing the lettering.
Respectfully,
D. K. Holley

Remembering WMMN

Elkins, West Virginia
January 10, 1990
Editor:
The article on Fairmont radio station WMMN in the winter issue of GOLDENSEAL brings back memories of my years there as a control and transmitter engineer from 1939 to 1947 and as chief engineer from 1942 to 1947, when I left the station to become co-founder of WPDX Clarksburg. One thing I noticed in the article was that a reference was made that WMMN was 5,000 watts power in 1938. Actually, we did not get the third tower energized until the spring of 1943 when equipment was installed and the month-long tuning of the three-tower directional antenna was accomplished.

I remember Grandpa Jones coming into the control room many times chatting with me while I was on duty.

Also Cowboy Loye, who spent more than an hour talking to me before he went to Cleveland for an operation that he did not survive. Murrell Poor used to come in of a morning and work the announce booth while he counted the money receipts of the personal appearances the evening before. Yes, there was a large crowd at his funeral, which was held at the funeral home across the street from the Armory where we held the "Sagebrush Roundup" program. We energized the sound system there and took care of many people who were then able to hear the service.

Other entertainers not mentioned in the article during the '40's were the Franklin Brothers, Ray Meyers, the Buskirk Family and Crazy Elmer. Most of the entertainers depended on personal appearances and the products that they sold at their personal appearances. Most of the live programming at the studios was on a sustaining basis and the talent and announcers were advertising products on a "per inquiry" basis. A great deal of mail was generated by this type of operation up until about 1952.

At WPDX we started off with Cherokee Sue and Little John Graham, the Mayse Brothers, Buddy Starcher, Cindy Coy and others, but we also saw the demise of this type of operation about 1952 and went to other types of programming. Cherokee Sue later became a disc jockey at the station. Cindy Coy became our music director.

Much can be said about that period of the broadcast industry. I enjoyed every bit of it and am glad I was a part of it.

We look forward to receiving every issue. It is a fine magazine.
Sincerely Yours,
Robert D. Hough

Ohio River Railroading

Grafton, West Virginia
November 27, 1989
Editor:
Reading "Slow Train: From Huntington to Parkersburg by Steam" by Bob Withers [Summer 1989] was very interesting and brought back a few memories.

When I was assistant train master for the B&O Railroad in Parkersburg, I was well acquainted with the entire crew mentioned in the article. This

was the crew that operated No. 82. They were all good railroad men and knew all the shortcuts to save work.

When I came to Parkersburg in 1945, the steam engines operating between Parkersburg and Kenova were 1300's and were replaced by the 4500's a few years later. I rode the first 4500 from Parkersburg to Kenova on train 92-93. The McArthur engines were equipped with stokers that ran the coal into the firebox and did away with the hand shovel. The firemen were glad to see this change. It took a stout heart and a lot of muscle to fire the old 1300's from Kenova to Parkersburg.

Another thing I recall was the long trains "sawing by" when there were too many cars on each train and the passing sidings were too short for a train of more than 50 cars. We ran 70 to 80 cars on each train and the train dispatcher would instruct both 92 and 93 to "saw by." Believe me, it was a sight to behold.

One more incident I recall was getting over the bridge at Point Pleasant. The bridge was old and it was feared the weight of two engines on the head end would be too heavy (we always ran two engines on these trains). To overcome the weight problem, the crew would put one engine in the middle of the train until they crossed the bridge. Many times the engine was left in the middle of the train until after the "saw by" was completed before it was put back on the head end.

Both the old "Rub Snuff & Grin" (RS&G) and the Ripley Branch are long gone.
Sincerely Yours,
E. C. Kincaid

Cultural Center railroad expert Quincy Adams advises us that to "saw by" means to pull all that fits of the first train onto the siding, cut it in two at that point, then let the second train pass, pushing the first train's extra cars ahead. Train one then exits the siding, moving down far enough for train two to back up and then push the extra cars onto the siding. Train two then proceeds on its way while train one reconnects itself. —ed.

Too Wild

Alexandria, Virginia
January 5, 1990
Editor:
I started reading Maureen Crockett's article, "Wild Foods at North Bend: Some Were Eaten and Some Escaped" [Winter 1989], with great interest. I am a West Virginian who was born in Grant County and grew up in Mineral County on a farm. We used a lot of natural foods and still do, fruits, berries, wild plants, game and mushrooms.

My husband's military career has kept us out of the state but that has not lessened the pride we have of being West Virginians. I strongly resent it when anyone says or does things that reflect badly on the state. I think that earthworm cake and grub canapes do just that, it's disgusting. There are too many good and delicious natural wild foods to use without being so ridiculous. I don't [approve of] articles indicating this kind of eating behavior.

I feel very strongly about this and just had to air my view. I also wanted to congratulate you on the fine magazine you put out. I have not missed an issue — keep up the good work.
Sincerely,
Alberta J. Taylor

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.

Elkins Celebrates 100

Elkins is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year as well as the centennial of one of the town's most famous structures — the Halliehurst mansion, formerly the home of U.S. Senator Stephen B. Elkins. Halliehurst was named for Elkins's wife Hallie, the oldest daughter of Senator Henry Gassaway Davis, the "Davis" part of Davis and Elkins College. The college is issuing a commemorative 12-month 1990 calendar to mark the double centennial.

The calendar is a two-color publication with a short history of the founding of Elkins, focusing on Halliehurst and the Elkins family. Illustrations came from the archives of Davis and Elkins College and West Virginia University's West Virginia and Regional History Collection.

Each month of the calendar has different facts about Elkins history, ranging from the first airmail delivery date to church dedications. Research and production took about a year. Dr. Thomas R. Ross, Donald L. Rice and Douglass Hill assisted with the project. Partial funding was provided by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The calendar is available in limited quantities. To order contact the Davis and Elkins College Bookstore, Elkins, WV 26241. The cost of $5.95 includes postage and handling.

Two Rebel Sisters

William D. Wintz of Nitro recently compiled a new book titled *Civil War Memories of Two Rebel Sisters*. Pictorial Histories Publishing Company produced the large-format, softcover publication for Wintz.

The book tells of the wartime experiences of two sisters, Mollie and Victoria Hansford. Both witnessed the Civil War firsthand, but from different locations. Mollie married and moved from Coalsmouth (now St. Albans) to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia in 1853, and Victoria remained in the Kanawha Valley to care for the family. They left personal written accounts of how their lives were affected by the fighting between the Union and Confederate armies.

Civil War Memories is 84 pages in length, with photographs, drawings, original letters, statistics and census figures, and is fully indexed. Wintz added notes to broaden the meaning of the sisters' words for the modern reader, but the text is basically the original thoughts and words of Mollie and Virginia Hansford.

Wintz also coedited *The History of Putnam County* and recently authored *Nitro: The World War I Boom Town*, among other published work. *Civil War Memories of Two Rebel Sisters* is available by mail order or at The Shop in the Cultural Center. The cost is $9.95. For mail orders write William D. Wintz, 2128 Harrison Avenue, St. Albans, WV 25177. Add $1.50 for postage and handling; West Virginia residents add 6% sales tax.

Lilly on the Bluestone

The Summers County village of Lilly is one of West Virginia's "lost" communities, demolished in the 1940's to make way for Bluestone Lake. The ancestral home of the huge Lilly clan is by no means forgotten, however. The place was never actually flooded and there have been several attempts to interpret the site for the visiting public.

Lawyer William Sanders of Princeton, a leader in the Lilly interpretation effort, recently published *Lilly on the Bluestone* as a contribution to the cause. The new book is a history of Lilly and the surrounding area, and especially of the Lillys, Meadors and related families who live there. Mr. Sanders, proclaiming at the outset that he is "kin to none of them," begins his account at the time of early settlement and carries it through to the recent past. This is the story of a richly complex traditional society, extensively affected by modern highway, water, and other development projects.

Lilly on the Bluestone was printed by McClain Printing Company of Parsons. The 58-page softbound book has many photographs, maps, and genealogical charts. It may be purchased for $7.50, postpaid, from William Sanders, at the offices of Sanders, Austin and Swope, 320 Courthouse Road, Princeton, WV 24740; (304)425-5522. West Virginians should add 45 cents sales tax. Proceeds go to the Bluestone Highland and Shawnee Parkway associations.

GOLDENSEAL Honored

The 1990 Spring issue begins the 16th year of publication for GOLDENSEAL. The years have brought great growth, as well as changes and improvements, and some honors along the way. This past fall GOLDENSEAL received the West Virginia Library Association's 1989 Literary Merit Award. Since 1954, the award has been given in recognition of work of an outstanding literary quality by a West Virginian or about West Virginia.

The Association's awards and resolutions committee makes the selection for the Literary Merit Award from nominations by the organization's membership. Yvonne Farley, editor of *West Virginia Libraries* and a member of the selection committee, said, "GOLDENSEAL has been of consistent high quality. The staff does a remarkable job of preserving the history and culture of the state of West Virginia. As librarians, we see the value of this preservation and are proud of Ken Sullivan and GOLDENSEAL for the consistent high quality they achieve."

GOLDENSEAL editor Ken Sullivan accepted the award at the Association's annual conference at Canaan Valley in October. Past recipients of the Library Association's Literary Award include Denise Giardina, Mary Lee Settle, Chuck Yeager and Ken Hechler.

The Mountain Homestead

The Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia is developing a historical park depicting early life in West Virginia. The Beckley facility, located adjacent to the Exhibition Coal Mine, presents West Virginia's cultural history by recreating a mountain settlement dating from the 1840-1880 era. There are also demonstrations of early American crafts and domestic chores.

The Mountain Homestead's log house, which opened in June last year, is a four-room traditional structure. A stone fireplace in the house is used to illustrate the technique of open-hearth cooking. Museum staff members do the work and there are samples for visitors.

A one-room schoolhouse originally located on Bennett Mountain in Raleigh County is being renovated for a look at early education. Other buildings projected for the Mountain Homestead include a blacksmith shop, tool shed, woodwright and weaver's shops and a still. Costumed interpreters at each location will provide a real-life look at pre-industrial life.

The Mountain Homestead is seeking contributions for the project and donation of items for display. For information contact the Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia, P.O. Box 1815, New River Park, Beckley, WV 25801; (304)252-3730. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the winter season. After May 1st, the museum is open from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Appalachian Studies Conference

The 13th annual Appalachian Studies Conference is scheduled for March 23-25 at Unicoi State Park near Helen, Georgia. The conference is sponsored by the Appalachian Studies Association, a major regional studies organization. The scholarly conference is the largest regional meeting of its kind with several hundred participants each year.

The 1990 conference theme is "Southern Appalachia and the South: A Region Within a Region." The program will explore Appalachia past and present — its history, literature, culture, social and economic development, current problems and progress, and how all of these have been shaped by changing times within the South as a whole. The keynote speaker will be Georgian Eliot Wigginton, editor of the "Foxfire" books.

The conference location is rotated each year among the Appalachian

Book Review

The Last Forest

An important West Virginia book, first published in 1940, is back in print after half a century. *The Last Forest: Tales of the Allegheny Woods* is the work of Pocahontas Countian G. D. McNeill. It was written during the 1930's when he was principal of Edray District (Marlinton) High School.

The title of the book tells the story. The first and last chapters bracket a period of industrial change which saw the destruction of the "last forest," a surviving wilderness of virgin timber along the Cranberry and Williams rivers. For generations the forest was a refuge for the men of the neighboring Greenbrier Valley, and the first trip there a special rite of passage for local boys. McNeill's book begins with the narrator's first trip into the forest paradise of the 1890's and takes the reader through to the 1920's, when logging and railroading have depleted the land.

The change was not abrupt and life went on as usual in the meantime. The intervening stories entertain the reader with tales of the Swago Creek community where G. D. McNeill was born in 1877 — tales of farming, fishing, folklore, supernatural happenings and mountain people.

In *The Milkweed Ladies*, the recent memoir by McNeill's daughter, state poet laureate Louise McNeill, G. D. emerges as a good candidate to tell the story of the cutting of the backcountry. G. D. knew the forest as a boy and lived to see it destroyed, spending enough time away to gain perspective on the events at home. He first left at age 16, his daughter says, bumming through the West as "The Boy Orator of the Allegheny." He ran away once more, this time as a grown man with troubles, sailing around the world with Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet before returning home for good.

G. D. McNeill came back to save the farm his ancestors had settled before the Revolutionary War. After serving as the Marlinton principal for 18 years, he spent the last 14 years of his teaching career at Davis and Elkins College. McNeill retired to his Swago farm in 1954, and ten years later he died.

The backcountry was well on its way to reforesting by McNeill's last years. Today a good chunk of it is protected as the Cranberry Wilderness Area, and the entire region is prime tourist country. Visitors will have trouble imagining the devastation pictured by McNeill at the close of his book, when the aging narrator and his boyhood chums seek to return to the scenes of their youth:

"Where, in other days, the boys had seen blue waves of spruce and hemlock, stretching away mile upon mile, the men now beheld desolation — bare hills, ribbed with shale, from which fire and erosion had swept every vestige of soil; long mountain ranges without a tree, save here and there a gnarled trunk with its few yellowed leaves; a monotonous panorama of destruction, as far as the eye could run."

— The editors

The Last Forest, *a 158-page softbound book, is a publication of the Pocahontas Communications Cooperative Corporation. The book is available at Trans Allegheny bookstores in Charleston and Parkersburg or from West Virginia Mountain Radio, a non-commercial station operated by the PCCC. Write WVMR, Dunmore, WV 24934. The cost is $9.95, plus $1.50 shipping. West Virginia residents add 6% sales tax.* The Milkweed Ladies *may be ordered for $16.95 ($8.95 paperback) from the University of Pittsburgh Press, 127 N. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Add $1.50 postage and handling per copy.*

states, with last year's meeting at West Virginia University in Morgantown. Research papers, panel discussions, and films are presented, and there's entertainment as well. Friday evening a bluegrass barbecue is planned and on Saturday flat-picker Norman Blake and his band will perform.

For more information contact the Center for Appalachian Studies, Appalachian State University, University Hall, Boone, NC 28608; (704)262-4089. For reservations at Unicoi State Park, call (404)878-2201.

Blue and Gray Reunion

Barbour Countians are hard at work planning the second annual Blue and Gray Reunion and the dedication of Philippi's historic and newly restored covered bridge, which was heavily damaged by fire in February 1989.

The big weekend is scheduled for June 1 through 3. The Blue and Gray Reunion commemorates the first land battle of the Civil War, which took place in Philippi on June 3, 1861. A parade, arts and crafts, and craft demonstrations are planned, but the big event is the battle reenactment on Sunday, June 3. Saturday promises a black powder shoot and an open field skirmish.

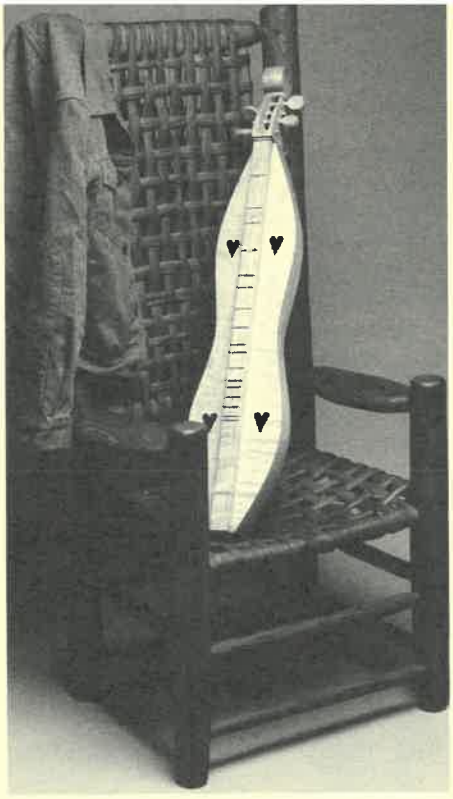
Sunday is also the day for the dedication of the Philippi Covered Bridge. The bridge was built in 1852 by pioneer bridge engineer Lemuel Chenoweth. It is made of yellow poplar and until it was damaged by fire carried the heavy traffic of U.S. 250 across the Tygart Valley River. The rebuilding of the bridge will be celebrated in a ceremony at noon on June 3.

For more information on Philippi's reunion, reenactments and bridge dedication write to Blue and Gray Reunion Reenactment, P.O. Box 460, Philippi, WV 26416 or call (304) 457-3700.

Spring Dulcimer Week

The Augusta Heritage Center in Elkins is conducting its third annual Spring Dulcimer Week April 23 to 29 on the campus of Davis and Elkins College.

The event includes instruction in hammered dulcimer and mountain (or lap) dulcimer, informal jam sessions, student showcases, and visits by master musicians. The week ends



Lap dulcimer by French Collison, chestnut chair by William David Butler; courtesy Cultural Center Shop. Photo by Michael Keller.

with a three-day Spring Dulcimer Festival that begins Friday night, April 27, with a public concert and square dance by the West Virginia string band Critton Hollow. On Saturday a series of mini-workshops and an evening all-dulcimer concert is planned at D&E's historic Halliehurst mansion. The festival concludes on Sunday with more jam sessions and an informal tune swap.

Several intensive classes form the heart of Dulcimer Week. Angel Chiango will teach the basics of the hammered dulcimer and Madeline MacNeil an advanced beginner workshop. Dulcimer builder and player Sam Rizzetta is instructing the intermediate level hammered dulcimer class and New England's Lorraine Lee will teach intermediate mountain dulcimer.

Presentations by local dulcimer maker Walter Miller and others are also scheduled. For information on lodging, tuition and classes contact the Augusta Heritage Center, Davis and Elkins College, Elkins, WV 26241; (304)636-1903.

WVU Students Study Ravenswood

Each year photo design students at West Virginia University visit a different town in the state "to explore the historical aspects of the community," according to Vic Haines, photographer and adjunct professor of art. In the spring of 1989, the students did part of their class project in a Jackson County community.

Ravenswood was selected because of its river location and the visual appeal of the town's architecture. The students spent two days photographing the area and produced an exhibit, a 48-page photo book, and a five-minute video. The Ravenswood Public Library displayed the student work last winter, as an exhibit titled "Making Contact." Copies of the book are available from Catharine Thieme, Development Director, WVU College of Creative Arts, Creative Arts Center, Morgantown, WV 26506. There is a $4 charge.

Ravenswood plans to use the students' work in promoting the city. The class was assisted by WVU faculty members Clifford A. Harvey and Eve Faulkes, professors of art; photographer Ed Petrosky; and Bill Crislip, television supervisor.

A Gift Subscription Tip

A GOLDENSEAL reader recently purchased a gift subscription for two Fayette County schools. We thought the idea was a good one and wanted to pass it along to other readers.

A gift subscription can provide learning along with enjoyment. If your family and friends like GOLDENSEAL, you may want to think about giving a gift subscription to your place of worship or a favorite school, a retirement home, library, or even a jail or prison. GOLDENSEAL is enjoyed by many types of people.

You may make such a gift by filling out the coupon on page 72 in GOLDENSEAL and sending it to us along with $12.50 for each subscription. We will send a personalized card announcing your gift and put any message you like on the gift card. We can send the gift subscription in a special person's memory if you desire. Send your order to GOLDENSEAL, The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305.

Last Public Hanging

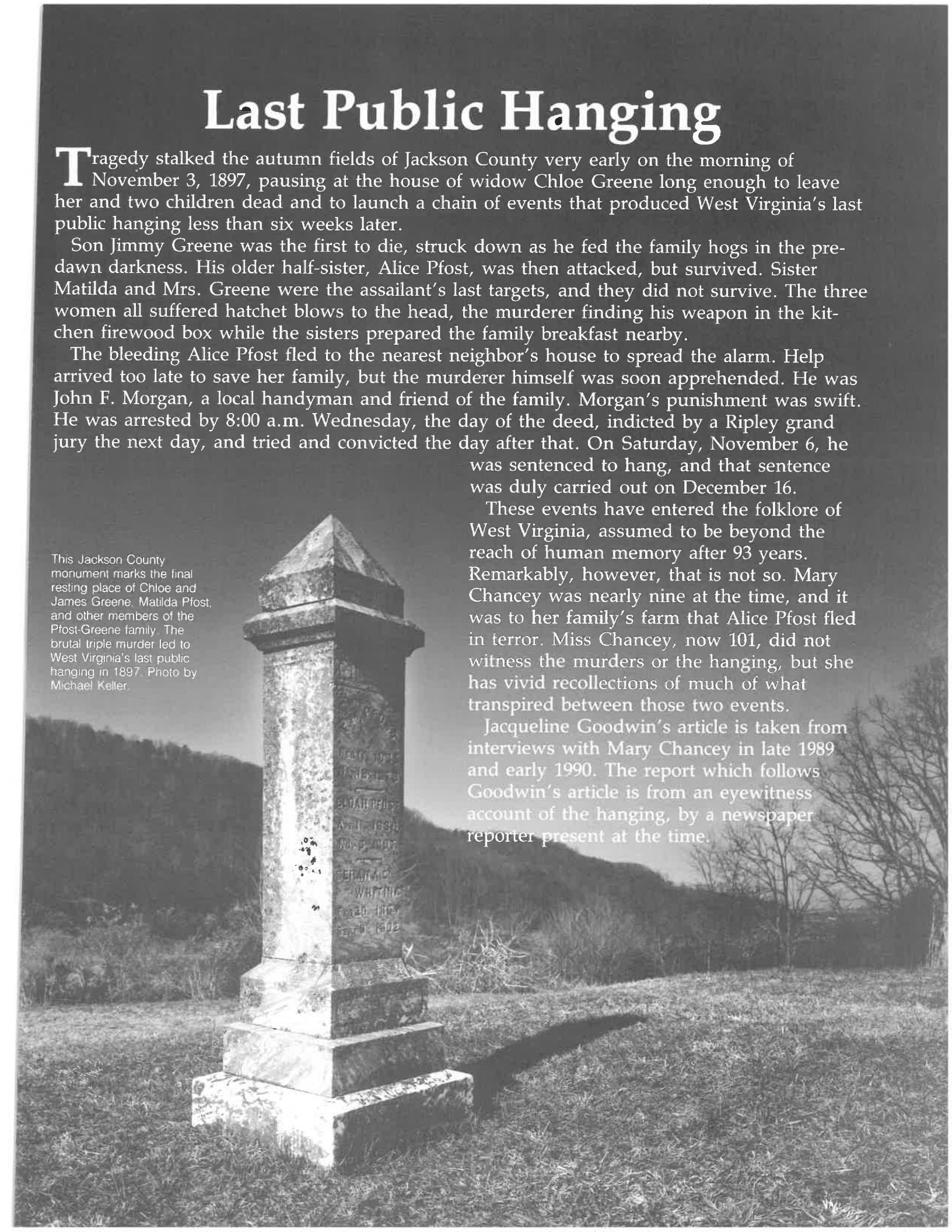
Tragedy stalked the autumn fields of Jackson County very early on the morning of November 3, 1897, pausing at the house of widow Chloe Greene long enough to leave her and two children dead and to launch a chain of events that produced West Virginia's last public hanging less than six weeks later.

Son Jimmy Greene was the first to die, struck down as he fed the family hogs in the predawn darkness. His older half-sister, Alice Pfost, was then attacked, but survived. Sister Matilda and Mrs. Greene were the assailant's last targets, and they did not survive. The three women all suffered hatchet blows to the head, the murderer finding his weapon in the kitchen firewood box while the sisters prepared the family breakfast nearby.

The bleeding Alice Pfost fled to the nearest neighbor's house to spread the alarm. Help arrived too late to save her family, but the murderer himself was soon apprehended. He was John F. Morgan, a local handyman and friend of the family. Morgan's punishment was swift. He was arrested by 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, the day of the deed, indicted by a Ripley grand jury the next day, and tried and convicted the day after that. On Saturday, November 6, he was sentenced to hang, and that sentence was duly carried out on December 16.

These events have entered the folklore of West Virginia, assumed to be beyond the reach of human memory after 93 years. Remarkably, however, that is not so. Mary Chancey was nearly nine at the time, and it was to her family's farm that Alice Pfost fled in terror. Miss Chancey, now 101, did not witness the murders or the hanging, but she has vivid recollections of much of what transpired between those two events.

Jacqueline Goodwin's article is taken from interviews with Mary Chancey in late 1989 and early 1990. The report which follows Goodwin's article is from an eyewitness account of the hanging, by a newspaper reporter present at the time.



This Jackson County monument marks the final resting place of Chloe and James Greene. Matilda Pfost, and other members of the Pfost-Greene family. The brutal triple murder led to West Virginia's last public hanging in 1897. Photo by Michael Keller.

At age 101, Mary Chancey can recall the tragedy of 1897. "The people Morgan murdered lived the next house up," she says. "I remember the day well."

"I Remember Well"

Events Surrounding the Last Public Hanging in West Virginia

By Jacqueline G. Goodwin

Photographs by Michael Keller

For over 101 years, Mary Chancey has made Jackson County her home. Born June 9, 1888, in a log cabin on the same spot where her two-story white farmhouse now stands, Mary parcels out a memory while relaxing in an easy chair, a crocheted afghan on her lap. In a soft, steady voice she recalls with much sadness the events that led up to West Virginia's last public hanging — that of John F. Morgan at Ripley on December 16, 1897 — for the murder of three members of the Pfost-Greene family. It should be noted that very shortly after this sensational event, the West Virginia state legislature passed a bill prohibiting public executions. Ours was among the first of the states to do so.

Mary's sharp memory backs up what historians have written over the years. All agree that so widespread was the interest around the murders that thousands of men, women and children, many of whom had journeyed over frozen terrain from as far away as Meigs County, Ohio, turned out for the event.

The *New York Sun* even sent a special reporter to cover the spectacle,

and his colorful, full-page report left out no details. According to the reporter's story, the crowd began arriving two days early, and kept coming until "every road and path leading into the town of Ripley was clogged with men and women on horse back, families in wagons, buggies and every conceivable type of conveyance."

Mary begins. "The people Morgan murdered lived the next house up. I was eight and a half years old at the time and remember the day well."

In all accounts, Morgan is described as a fellow who frequently did farm work for Chloe Greene, a widow with three children still at home. Mary agrees. "Morgan had come to the Grass Lick area of the county to make his home. He had no real family of his own and he stayed with the Pfost-Greene family for seven or eight years, farming for them all the while. My family knew him quite well. Eventually he married and moved up the road a little bit, one house above the church. But he still worked for the family on and off."

When asked if she remembers Morgan, Mary replies, "Oh, yes. John Morgan rocked me to sleep many a time. He was a good friend of our family."

According to Mary, the Greenes did not want for anything and appeared to have everything on hand that would make farm life desirable. "They were prominent and popular members of the community," Mary adds. Historians note that Chloe and first husband Francis Marion Pfost were among the early settlers of the locality. Daughters Alice and Matilda were the children of this first marriage.

Mary continues. "The old lady married again to a man named Greene and they had young Jimmy. Jimmy is the one Morgan killed first.

"Early that morning, Jimmy had gone out to the pen where they kept hogs to feed them. Morgan had spent the night with the family and when he awoke, he followed Jimmy out to the pen. When Jimmy wasn't looking, he took a mattock that he had buried in the corncrib and chopped Jimmy's brains out.

"Then he went to the house. The two daughters — Matilda and Alice — were cooking breakfast. Morgan entered the house and stood near the cookstove where the girls had left a hatchet in the wood box. They said to him, 'Where's Jimmy?' And he said, 'I think he went to look for some traps he had set.' The girls replied, 'No, he's not got any traps out. He brought them all in yesterday morning.'

"Morgan walked out on the porch and whistled a little bit and looked up in the yard. He said, 'Jimmy's coming. I hear him whistle.' And they knew it wasn't Jimmy. It was Morgan whistling.

"He returned to the kitchen. Morgan reached down in the wood box and got the hatchet and went over to where Alice was mixing bread for breakfast. He reached across the table and chopped that hatchet blade in her head. She ran through the living room

John F. Morgan was the murderer and the last man hanged publicly in West Virginia. "John Morgan rocked me to sleep many a time," Mary says. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy State Archives.

to where her mother was and then Morgan took after her — but she got out of the house. Alice told my father that the last thing she could remember was Matilda hollering for her to come back and help.

"Now Matilda ran to her mother and managed to get them both into a bedroom and locked the door. But Morgan just took that hatchet and knocked the panel off the door and got the door opened and ran into where they were and chopped them all up with his hatchet.

"In the meantime, Alice ran into the chicken house. There was a stack of boards there and she said she hid there. Some time back Alice and Matilda had said to my father that they were afraid of Morgan. But my father said, 'John wouldn't hurt anybody. And if he did, you just come here.' As she hid she thought about what my father had said. So she headed this way."

Mary Chancey knows of these bloody deeds second-hand, the only witness being Alice Pfost herself. She recalls what happened after Alice's arrival at the Chancey farm from her own memory.

"There was a big rail fence around this place and we had a big barn," she reports. "My brother was out there and he heard somebody. He stepped outside of the barn and here Alice was, trying to get over that big fence. My brother ran and helped her over the fence and then got her over that stream. My sister and I then heard them a-talking and went and opened the door to go out.

'My father went out and then Mother went out. Alice was hysterical. Poppy said, 'Alice, do quiet down and tell us what has happened. You know nobody's been killed.'

"She said, 'Why, John, looky here what he's done to me.' Big clots of blood was rolling down from the top of her head. She became hysterical again. Father started to run to the house and my mother then said, 'Goodness man, would you go up there when you don't know who is up there and what is going on?'

"Poppy then said, 'Billy, saddle the pony and go find Charlie and Ed Southhall.' The Southhalls lived on the lower end of our place. Now my father was so impatient that he wouldn't stand in one place. When he heard the men a-coming he said, 'Come on, boys, and come quick.'

"I remember my father saying that after he was captured, Morgan had made the comment that he was still searching for Alice when he heard the men coming. That's when he pitched the hatchet into the garden and set out.

"Now it still wasn't good light when the men got to the house. My father said, 'Boys, watch for the fire out of this Winchester and when you see it, fall to the ground.'

"They got to the stone walk in front of the house and stumbled over Mrs.

John and Emily Chancey, Mary's parents. John led the first party to rush to the scene, arriving very soon after the crime. Photographer and date unknown.

Greene on the walk. My brother-in-law was a pretty nervy man, and he said after he come to that little lady on the walk that he wasn't afraid anymore. He just walked up to the door and shoved the door open. There was just a little bit of a fire in the fireplace for light. They picked her up and carried her in. She was still warm. They took the bed and laid it on the floor and put Mrs. Greene on it. Then they did the same for Matilda.

"My brother knew they had some whiskey in the bottle in the press [closet] and got some out and gave some to Matilda and put some in her jaws thinking she could swallow. But she never could. Poppy said she would open her eyes and kind of smile a little — like she recognized him. But she never did speak. Poppy tried so hard to bring her to, so she could tell what she knew. But she never could.

"They couldn't find Jimmy. But when they got good light they searched around and went out there to the pen and found him. They couldn't touch him until the coroner came out and took charge of everything.

"They called the doctor in from Fairplain. Alice was still at our house and the doctor came to look her over. So did the coroner. All these people were in and out of our house all day. It was like a beehive. It was no time before three or four hundred people came by here to look at the murder site."

They arrested John Morgan within hours and Sheriff J. O. Shinn brought him into Ripley. According to Mary, justice was jammed into high gear for this sensational case. Morgan was indicted the next day, tried and convicted the following day, and sentenced the day after that. The court ordered that he be hanged on December 16, just a little over a month from the date of his crime.

During his time of incarceration, Morgan himself added to the public interest surrounding the case by making no less than seven "true and only confessions," each different from the others but only the last denying his guilt.

Morgan's defense was insanity, according to the *Sun* reporter. "He alleged that he had been driven to the deed by an irresistible impulse, and his wife and other people told of his queer actions for years past. His defense did not avail him. It is well that it did not, because the people of Ripley were up in arms, and if he had not been convicted he would have been lynched without any question, because the mob gathered in the court room were in no mood for trifling and they were all neighbors and friends of the Greene family, especially the girls, who were good-looking young women and popular with all who knew them."

Mary Chancey recalls that many people felt that money was the motive for the crime, since Mrs. Greene had sold a horse for $100 on 60 days time and Morgan knew when the note was due.

"My father said that on the day that Morgan was arrested, George Pfost walked up to him and said, 'John, did you kill my mother?' And Morgan replied, 'Yes, I did.' So incensed was Pfost that he intended to shoot Morgan, but was stopped by a local banker who said, 'Now George, you be careful what you do. There's already been too much done.' You see, they knew Pfost had a gun in his pocket."

Two weeks before the hanging date, Morgan fixed up a dummy in his cell and calmly walked out of jail and disappeared. He was at large two days before he was finally captured near Walton in Roane County. Still more excitement was aroused by Morgan's repeated oaths that he would never hang, at least not on the scheduled date.

But Sheriff Shinn vowed with equal vehemence that John Morgan would hang and hang on schedule. To back up his statements, he issued a widespread and general invitation to all to come witness the event, helping to account for the record-breaking crowd. The *Sun* reporter said that the sheriff planned the hanging before noon, to make sure no last-minute reprieve came through on the 12:40 train from Charleston.

"After Morgan's escape, the community was tore up and scared a-plenty," Mary remembers. "A bunch of us would stay at each other's home at night for I don't know how long. My uncle's family would come here and stay all night and my oldest brother would have to go and stay with someone else's family. This is how we did it for weeks before we got our nerves settled down."

Mary remembers the day of the funeral. "I remember the three caskets all in a row on the big front porch of the Greene house. They had one funeral for all of them. They buried them up there on the hill just above the turn of the road. There's a big monument marking the spot.

"Eventually a family named Anderson moved into the house. They stayed there and took care of the stock, but they were too afraid to live in the main part of the house. So they lived in the great big kitchen."

Mary says her father would not let her attend the hanging. "Poppy said it was no place for children, and even he didn't really want to go. But he and my brothers, and my brother-in-law went. My father said it was too cruel for him to watch, that when they dropped Morgan he turned his head. He said it was hard to watch the life

Mary's Father Speaks:
The Trial Testimony of John Chancey

Neighbor John Chancey, alerted by the wounded Alice Pfost, led the first party to arrive at the murder scene. He was a key witness at the trial of John F. Morgan two days later. The following testimony is taken from the record of the trial, as reprinted in The Slaughter of the Pfost-Greene Family of Jackson County, W. Va., *O. J. Morrison's 1898 book.*

John Chancey, third witness for the State, being duly sworn, says:

1st Q. — How far do you live from the home where the deceased lived during her lifetime?

1st A. — Well, it is about 400 yards.

2d Q. — State if you were present at the place of this occurrence on the morning thereof, if so, about what time?

2d A. — Yes, sir. I was there, it was between — it must have been 5 o'clock in the morning.

3d Q. — Did you see the deceased, Mrs. Chloe Greene, on that occasion; if so, where and under what circumstances?

3d A. — When I got there in front of the house Mrs. Chloe Greene was laying on her back with her head out off the porch and her feet up against the porch, struggling in her blood.

4th Q. — Who was present there, if any person, at the time you got there?

4th A. — Nobody but the two boys that went with me.

5th Q. — If you saw a mattock there at that time — look at this mattock — and see if you saw it? (Witness is here handed over the mattock by the Prosecuting Attorney to identify).

5th A. — Yes, sir. I saw that mattock setting around the corner of the palings of the house.

6th Q. — If you saw this hatchet there on that occasion, state where it was? (Witness is handed hatchet to identify).

6th A. — I saw that hatchet over in the garden back of the house.

7th Q. — In the garden did you say?

7th A. — Yes, sir.

8th Q. — What was the condition of the hatchet at that time?

8th A. — It was in the condition that it is now, only a little more bloody, and hair on it.

9th Q. — What kind of hair was on it?

9th A. — It looked like woman's hair.

10th Q. — Were the hairs black or otherwise?

10th A. — They were dark looking.

11th Q. — How came you to go there?

11th A. — Alice Pfost came after me to my house.

12th Q. — And you went in response to her invitation?

12th A. — Yes, sir.

13th Q. — In what county did you find Mrs. Greene when you went there and found her in that condition?

13th A. — Jackson County.

14th Q. — Were you present at the time of her death?

14th A. — Yes, sir.

15th Q. — State if she was conscious at any time after you found her up to the time of her death?

15th A. — She was not conscious of anything.

The Chanceys were a sprawling farm family. Here John and Emily sit surrounded by their family, with their boarders standing to their right. Mary stands behind John in this picture made more than a decade after the nearby crime. Photographer unknown, about 1910.

crushed out of someone who he had known for so long.

"But my brother-in-law said he watched it all. He said it was half of what he deserved for what he'd done."

Mary recounts that many years after the hanging, John Morgan's grandchildren came for a visit. "Yes, Morgan's grandchildren came to see me one afternoon. They said that after the tragedy, Morgan's wife changed her name and her son's name back to her maiden name. They also said that mother and son moved out of the community to start anew. My family had lost track of Morgan's son, so it was a real nice surprise when his grandchildren came back. They were awful nice boys."

Speaking of her younger years, Mary says that the biggest change she has seen is the decrease in the number of people who live on the creek. "This creek used to be a-swarmin' with people. There were nine in our family, then there was the Pfost family, and Luke Rollins had a family. Mary Rollins had a family, and Uncle Henry had a family. There was Uncle Charlie Winters's family and Charlie Reynolds's family, not to mention the Fishers and the Southhalls. Everyone back then had big families."

The Chancey family store, a familiar landmark in the Plum Orchard community, was built by Mary's father, John. According to Mary, he put down roots in the area after serving a four-year stint in the Civil War as a Union soldier. He married Emily Winter, who was born in Harrison County near Clarksburg, and they raised nine children — three boys and six girls. Mary was the sixth child.

"My father called himself a Yankee," Mary says. "He told so many stories about that war that I kind of got tired of hearing them. So I stopped listening. As a result, I don't remember them. But I do remember the neighborhood boys gathering around him and my father telling them war stories."

Smiling, Mary says, "There used to be our store, a post office, a grist mill, a school and a blacksmith shop all right here. I was four years old when I started school. Adam Casto was my first teacher. I just graduated from the grades. There was no high school back then."

When asked if she was ever punished for misbehaving at school Mary states, "I never was punished. I was too much of a coward to misbehave."

Mary is only too happy to talk about her family and the store. "Poppy built this building in 1914, but before that he kept store in another building across the road," she says, indicating a spot on the opposite side of the road. "After the new one was built, someone converted the old one into a blacksmith's shop. My father used to order all of the blacksmith's supplies.

"My father was the best hand at finding jobs for people you ever heard of. He could keep us busy. For awhile my father and my older sister ran the store. But it just fell into my hands to run the store. My sisters kept getting married off and eventually it just became my job."

Mary says that running a store used to be a lot different than it is today.

"Poppy used to have to keep everything from wood stoves to cured meats. We sold everything, and candy galore. The wholesale houses said we bought more candy than any other store that size. We'd get a lot of different kinds and they'd fix it up in wooden boxes or buckets. We'd get a bucket of every kind you could name. All sizes, all kinds — bon bons, sugar and gum balls.

"Our stock came in to the train depot at Ripley, and my father or brothers would take a wagon with a four-horse team to town to pick it up. It was an all-day trip into Ripley and back, and during wet weather, the mud would be so bad it was all the horses could do to get back with a load."

Mary says before the days of paved roads and the birth of the automobile, Chancey's Store served a five-mile area that included not only Plum Orchard, but also Stone Lick, Statts Mill, Fairplain and Kenna. "Trading was very heavy and we always allowed credit," she states. "We never lost a big account; oh, we lost a few little ones, but none to amount to much. The Depression was the worst. Times were awfully hard then."

Key sites associated with the tragedy have changed over the past nine decades. The Chancey house (above), though on the same spot and still in the family, is not the original house to which Alice Pfost fled. The Pfost-Greene homestead, where the crime was committed, is gone altogether. The house supposedly stood near the barn in the photo below.

After operating the store for 57 years, Mary, 92 years old at the time, closed the family business in 1980. She said it wasn't her age that made her decide to retire, nor lack of business. "I quit going up to the store because of the vandalism that was occurring. Vandals got to butchering it up so bad I couldn't keep it up.

"But one thing for sure. I worked that store for almost 60 years and sure had a lot of good friends. Never had an argument with nobody," Mary explains proudly.

The next time I see Mary, it is winter. Mary is now confined to a nursing home in Ravenswood. I visit on a day that a cold rain falls from a low gray sky. She greets me with a smile that suggests mischief. Her sparkling blue eyes, behind rimmed eyeglasses, watch photographer Mike Keller and me with anticipation. A cloud of white hair frames her face. Mike doesn't have to make her smile.

Mary looks forward to spring. Once warmer weather arrives she plans to return again to the farm that has been her home for so many years. For the time being she has had to relinquish the responsibilities she has known, but she maintains a stamina and optimistic outlook that are an inspiration to all that know her.

"Looking back I have no regrets," Mary says. "I know I'll eventually go home."

Above: Mary Chancey never married, preferring to make her own way in the world. She ran this store, founded by her father, until age 92.

Below: Serene today, Mary looks back on a time of great trouble in Jackson County. "The community was tore up and scared a-plenty," she says, adding that it was "weeks before we got our nerves settled down."

"I tell you, my boy, when you see that place you'll say it's made for a hanging. It was intended for a hanging from the first..."

"Boys, He'll Hang"
An Eyewitness Report

The public hanging of John F. Morgan at Ripley was a sensational event, attracting thousands of spectators from Jackson County and surrounding parts of West Virginia and Ohio. Interest evidently spread well beyond that local area, however, for the New York Sun *had a reporter on hand to cover the execution and events leading up to it. Writing in the colorful newspaper language of the day the reporter describes a bizarre carnival scene, as gamblers and fakirs — street vendors of questionable character — worked the huge crowd while the condemned man prayed and sang hymns in his misery.*

We excerpt the following from a much longer account by the Sun *reporter, as reprinted in the* Jackson Herald *on March 9, 1951.*

Let the reader imagine a town built around a public square covering perhaps five acres. In the middle of this square is a brick building two stories high, 75 feet deep and 50 feet wide. Fill the square with people on foot, with men, women and children in every imaginable kind of country vehicle, and with men and women on horseback, some of the women with babies in their arms, put here and there in the crowd a black or white fakir, with a stand in front of him, loaded down with imitation silverware, gold watch chains, diamonds and every conceivable kind of spurious jewelry — imagine them all yelling at once, or singing or shouting. ...Just lay out this scene in your mind and you have a picture of the town of Ripley as viewed from the Court House steps at daylight Thursday. The man who was to provide the day's pleasure for this crowd was shivering in his cell, praying and singing alternately.

Eight o'clock came — then nine. The crowd was greater. A wild rumor got around that the Governor had decided to respite Morgan. Then there was real excitement. Men gathered together in groups. They looked ugly and they talked ugly. The women joined them, and they were ugly, too. The Sheriff was on hand, the Sheriff's jury was on hand, and all his deputies were around, and, while they did not display any guns, they were prepared for anything. The Sheriff was appealed to. He said:

"Boys, he'll hang. Now, don't you fear, when Owen Shinn gives his word, he'll hang...."

It was a scene as strange as any ever witnessed. The attention of the crowd was divided between the jail and the fakirs. When the voices of those on the inside were in the ascendant, the crowd would sway toward the jail and listen. When the voices of those on the outside were in the ascendant, the crowd would sway back to them. Such was the scene until 11 o'clock. At that hour there was a commotion around the door of the jail and the Sheriff, bare-headed and surrounded by half a dozen of his deputies, stood upon the top most step and addressed the crowd thus:

"Ladies and gentlemen, this hanging is about to come off. We'll start from this jail in a very few minutes and if you want to get a good place to see you better go right out there now. Don't wait, cause those that get there first will get the best places, and I'll tell you now there's about two thousand out there. You better hurry if you want to see."

He went back into the jail with his deputies, and the greater part of the crowd swung down the street and out toward the gallows. Five hundred or more stayed right where they were, however, and the cries of the man who was to furnish the show and the singing of the fakirs were again intermingled.

Up on the second floor of the jail the Sheriff was practicing on one of his deputies with a rope. He had never hanged a man before, and he wanted to be perfectly familiar with the business, so that he could acquit himself with credit. He had a rope that had already taken four lives. He had the straps that had bound four other murderers when their lives had been taken....Again and again he put his noose over the deputy's head and tightened it and loosened it, and tightened it and loosened it, until he was such an expert that he could do the job quicker than it takes to tell it.

Leave the jail now, with the Sheriff still practicing, Morgan still singing hymns plaintively while the preachers prayed, and the fakirs still bawling their songs and go out to the gallows and look over the crowd there. The ten-acre lot was at the Junction of the Ripley and Charleston turnpikes. As stated before the gallows was on an Indian mound. Around it had been built, ten feet distant from it, a heavy barbed-wire fence. Within this fence the jurors and newspaper reporters were to be admitted. The crowd must be kept without. At 11 o'clock there were not fewer than 4,000 persons gathered around the fence, pushing, shouting, and raising Cain generally. On the outskirts of the town there was the same sort of fakirs as about the jail in town, and in addition to them were some three-shell men and some monte men. Here and there you could hear a voice appealing: "Come you seven, come seven, come eleven," as some crapplayer yelled to hold his crowd.

The trees in the neighborhood were filled with men and boys. Some of them had been there all night, they told the *Sun* reporter. The crowd stretched down the mound from the barbed-wire fence into a gulley and up again on all sides. It was made up probably of two-thirds men and one-third women. There were hundreds who sat in their saddles, women as well as men, and some of these women carried their babies. Hundreds sat in big

farm wagons. There were families of eight or nine children in one wagon, children who ranged in age from six months to 16 or 17 years. Along the fence on the far side of the field there were by actual count, 250 saddle horses tied. Along the fence on the other side there were 320 rigs of various descriptions, and scattered all over the field and surrounding country and on the hills on either side overlooking the scene there were horses hobbled or horses and riders. Any spot in the neighborhood was a good spot to see the hanging, for as Sheriff Shinn assured the *Sun* reporter:

"I tell you, my boy, when you see that place you'll just say it's made for a hanging. It was intended for a hanging from the first...."

A few moments later three wagons drove up to the side door of the jail. The first was a top surrey. It stopped in front of the jail door. Behind it came an open box wagon without any seats, but with a black coffin in the middle of it. This was for the Sheriff's jury. The other man who had been hanged in Jackson County had been compelled to sit on his coffin on his way to the gallows, but the Sheriff said that he thought this was an unusual hardship, and he thought it was better to put him in an easy spring wagon. The third wagon, like the second, was an open box wagon without seats. When these wagons drove up the fakirs for the first time lost their grip on the crowd. The 350 or 500 people rushed over and surrounded the wagons closely. Those on horseback, of course, had the advantage. They drove through the others until the horses' noses were in the wagons themselves.

Up on the second floor of the jail the Sheriff was practicing on one of his deputies with a rope. . . Again and again he put his noose over the deputy's head and tightened it and loosened it, and tightened it and loosened it, until he was such an expert that he could do the job quicker then it takes to tell it.

In this great crowd the fakirs worked without hindrance from anybody. They still worked when the procession started from the jail. To take up again the story of the scenes in and about the jail: About twenty minutes after the Sheriff had made his first speech, he came downstairs again....After the Sheriff's last announcement to the crowd he went to the cell himself and said: "Morgan, you've got to be ready in twenty minutes."

"All right, sir," said Morgan. "I'll be ready. I want to let these people baptize me first."

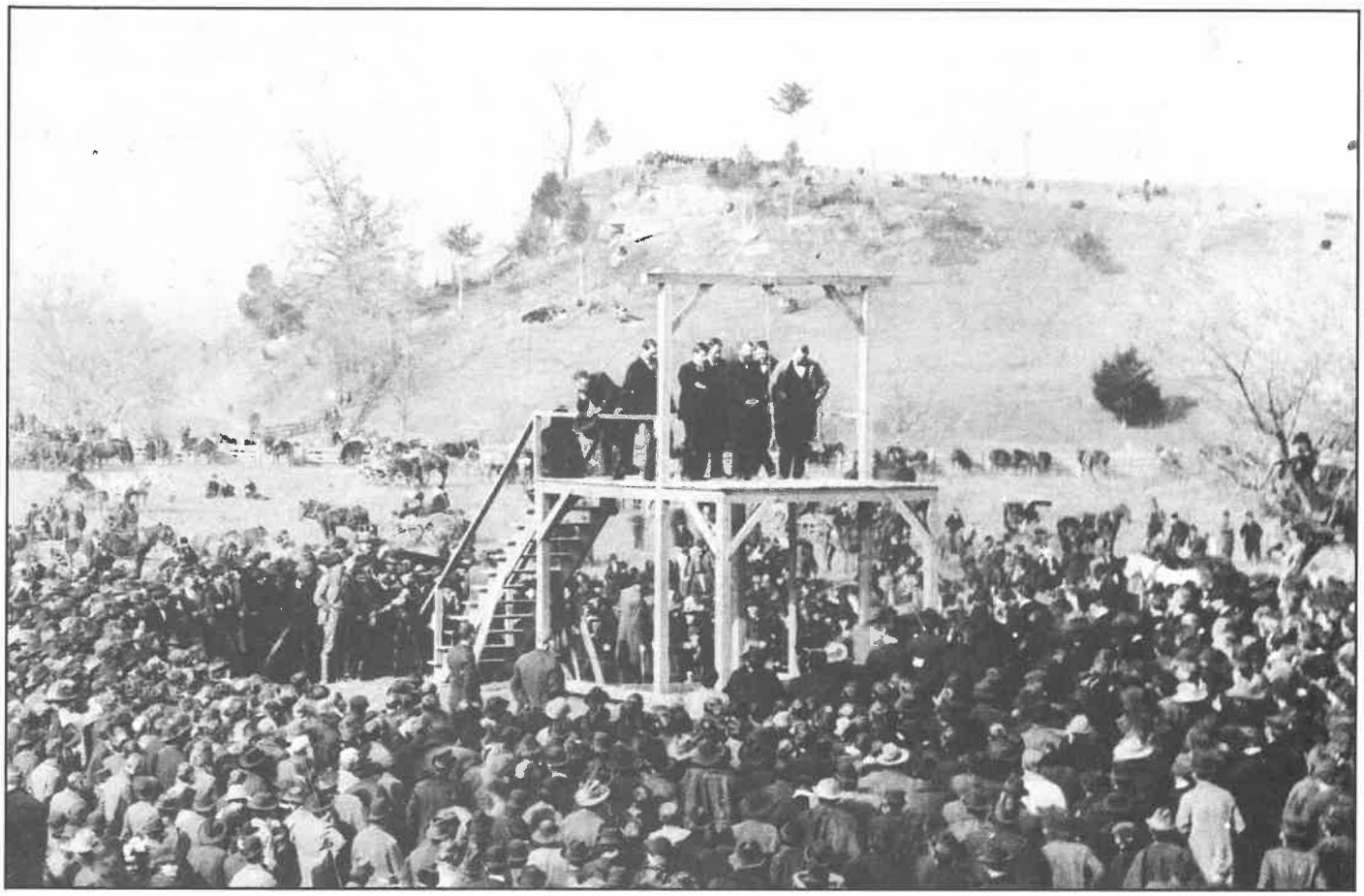
"Why certainly," said the Sheriff, "anything that you like," and he retired.

In twenty minutes the door of the jail opened and the Sheriff appeared. Next to him, with his hands handcuffed in front, was Morgan. He was a little fellow, perhaps five feet four, cleanly shaved, and dressed in black from head to foot. He wore a standing collar and a black necktie. His suit was new and, by the way, it was the first new suit he had ever had in his life. His shoes were new, too, and, in spite of his position, it was written on his face as plainly as anything ever was written on a man's face, that he was proud of himself. Behind the Sheriff and Morgan came the two clergymen. These four got into the first wagon. Then the Sheriff's jury and the *Sun* reporter clambered into the second wagon, and stood up. The propriety of sitting on the coffin was discussed, and it was decided that it was more respectful to stand, even if it was at the risk of the neck of every man in the wagon. In the third wagon were eighteen or twenty other persons who had received special permission from the Sheriff to keep inside the barbed wire fence. They also stood. There was a cry of "Make way! Make way! Make way!" and 150 or 175 horsemen rode out and made way for the Sheriff's wagon.

Once out of the court yard and into the street, the procession straightened out. It proceeded slowly because of the crowding and jamming. Ahead of the Sheriff's wagon and surrounding it closely there were men and women afoot, walking ankle deep in the mud. They kept their eyes on the prisoner. Riding outside of them along the edges of the road and behind them and beside the wagons containing the jury and the common and the invited guests were the horsemen and the horsewomen, riding recklessly, crushing against one another and in imminent danger every instant. Stretching out behind the procession were more horsemen and horsewomen and footmen and footwomen and boys and girls.

It was a hilly road to the gallows. It was a terrible ride, particularly for the men in the open box wagons who were standing. The whole crowd was shouting. Everybody was warning everybody else. Thus the procession moved. It had proceeded not more than a hundred feet when the clergymen beside Morgan began to pray aloud and he repeated over and over in a trembling voice, "Oh, Jesus, save me!"

Out into the country the procession spread, the confusion now great and now little, with occasional silence save for the rumbling of the wagons and the hopping up and down of the coffin as the mud holes were struck. Now and again singing was heard, now and again cursing as this horse or that horse slipped, or this rider was crushed against the sides of the wagons. The road to the gallows from the town



This photograph was taken shortly before the execution. We cannot identify John Morgan, although the newspaper account makes it clear he was among the first to mount the gallows. Photographer unknown, December 16, 1897; courtesy Jackson County Library.

winds around a bluff, and the gallows became visible about one-quarter of a mile away. As the Sheriff's wagon wheeled around Morgan sang:

Oh, think of the home over there
By the side of the river of life,
Where the saints all immortal and fair,
Are robed in their garments of white....

As the people in the procession caught sight of the gallows surrounded by 5,000 people there was a hubbub. Exclamations were heard of "Look at the crowd! It beats the county fair!" and "Say, maybe people don't come to a hanging."

The crowd around the gallows caught sight of the procession at about the same moment and shouts could be heard from their direction. The people could be seen to turn and crane their necks to get a better view. Morgan stopped singing. The preachers stopped praying. The Sheriff edged over close to Morgan and got a grip on his arm. He wasn't taking any chances.

Into the field rode the Sheriff's carriage. Behind rumbled the open box wagon, and the jury and the invited guests, and the coffin, and beside and all around them the crowd, now numbering perhaps 500, on foot and on horseback. The Sheriff's carriage drove right up to the edge of the crowd. A half-dozen deputy sheriffs, with revolvers strapped about their waists, shouted "Make way," but their voices were drowned by the exclamations of the thousands and by the shouts of the fakirs, who bawled away:

"Last and only true confession of John F. Morgan, the murderer. Here ye are." Or, "Fresh roasted peanuts, five cents a quart."

It was a difficult proceeding to force the Sheriff's carriage through the mob to the entrance at the barbed-wire fence. It was finally accomplished. The Sheriff stepped out. Morgan followed him, stepped in front of him, and calmly walked up the steps in full view of everybody. Behind him came the two ministers. Then came the Sheriff and his deputy, and after them a young woman. She was a stenographer. She walked up the gallows steps and seated herself at the top to watch the proceedings, and cast on her were the envious eyes of every woman in the crowd. She was the stenographer who took the testimony at Morgan's trial, and the Sheriff had promised her that she should be the only woman permitted on the gallows.

It was a perfect day. The sun was shining brightly. It was warm. There wasn't a person in the crowd who didn't have a first class viewpoint. As Morgan stepped beside the rope, the noose of which dangled on the floor of the gallows, there was a hubbub all over the crowd. Then there followed a moment of silence and then a hubbub again, led by the bawling fakirs. Some of them yelled: "Slaughter of the Greene Family, fully illustrated." Others: "Morgan's picture 10 cents. Your last chance. He'll never have another took." And others: "Here's a full set of his confessions for a half a dollar."

John F. Morgan's three victims lie at peace beneath this monument, on a Jackson County hill near the family farm. Photo by Michael Keller.

Mixed up with all this hubbub of voices, too, there were the whinnying of horses, the barking of dogs, and the baaing of a flock of sheep over in the next field. As Morgan stood by the rope he bowed to all sides, turning completely around.

It is only necessary to say, regarding Morgan's nerve, that at the end of fifteen minutes, he still had it with him. Once or twice during the prayer his knees were seen to shake, and each time it was commented on by the crowd. When the prayer was finally over the Sheriff stepped up to him and said: "John, do you want to make a speech? I will give you ten minutes if you want to do it."

There were one or two exclamations from below of "Speech, speech!"

Morgan shook his head at the Sheriff and said:

"I'd like to say a lot, but I can't."

"Hot roasted peanuts, five cents a bag," shouted a fakir.

Then a dozen or so in the crowd near the gallows hissed for silence as Morgan made his way to the edge, and, holding up his handcuffed hands, bowed and said:

"I—bid—farewell—I bid you all (choke) goodbye." Then he paused. Raising the handcuffed hands up and down, he said, a choke between each word: "This ought to be warning to all young men."

Another pause, during which he swallowed hard, and went on:

"God help and forbid any young man going and acting as I have done. Goodbye, goodbye."

Morgan went around the gallows shaking hands with everybody, including the young woman. Then he went back to the rope, and the Sheriff pointed out the exact spot he wanted him to stand on. While the Sheriff was adjusting the straps Morgan looked around and as he recognized people he bowed to them and they shouted:

"Goodbye, John, goodbye."

Of those who yelled goodbye, there was one who shouted: "Goodbye, John. That's from your sister Ida."

Of the detail of the hanging nothing need be said. As the moment for the springing of the lever came the crowd grew silent — all save the fakirs, who never ceased their yelling.

The man's neck was broken by the fall. There was silence for a moment after the fall, and then a babble of voices. There were shouts of: "I reckon you done well, Sheriff" and "The world is shet of him, Sheriff, and you done it, I reckon."

In The Family
A Hundred Years at the *Hampshire Review*

By Bill Moulden
Photographs by Hali Taylor

"The primary function of the *Hampshire Review* is to be educational, to explain to readers what things mean to them, what effect they might have on their lives." This is what his grandfather told John Cornwell Ailes about the purpose of the family-owned Hampshire County weekly newspaper.

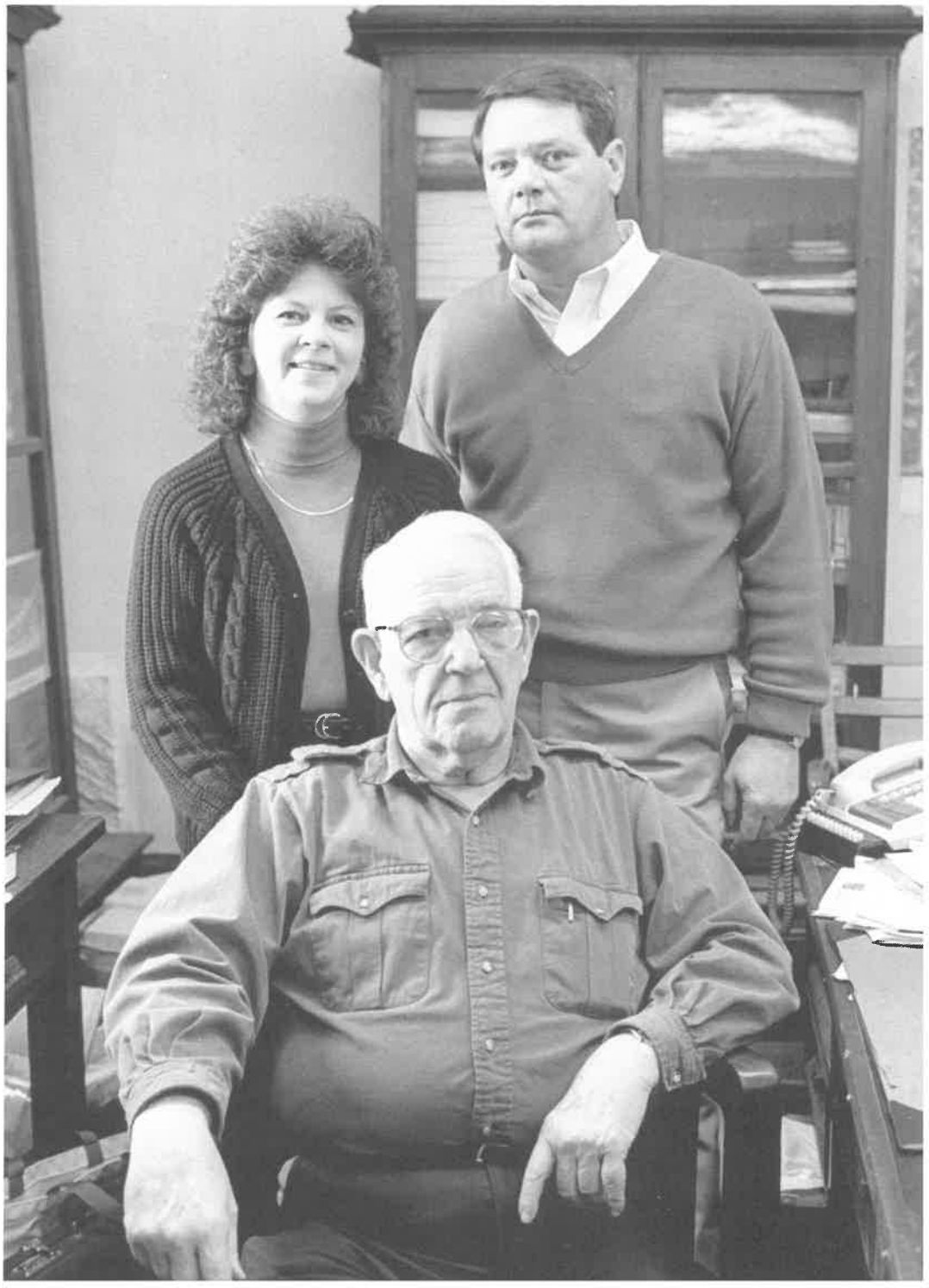
John Ailes is now 76 years old, a grandfather himself. His white hair is trimmed close, military style. His bearing is also military, attesting to the five years he spent on active duty with the U. S. Army during World War II. As a first lieutenant he led troops in fierce fighting in Italy, and he served many years in the army reserves after the war.

Though Mr. Ailes has been editor of the *Hampshire Review* since the mid-1950's, he wasn't groomed for the job from childhood. He wasn't even raised in Hampshire County. His mother married Eugene Ailes, a stockbroker, and John grew up in ritzy Westchester County, New York, reading the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. He says he was the only student at his Virginia boarding school with a subscription to the *Times*.

But there were many visits to West Virginia and John enjoyed a close relationship with his illustrious grandfather, former governor John Jacob Cornwell, and with the family newspaper. When he left active duty with the army at the end of the war, he decided to raise his family and practice law in Romney, Hampshire County's seat.

After that, it was only natural for John Ailes and his wife Ann to get involved in the newspaper. Mr. Ailes remembers being called over to help set up a new press, after which he was the only one in town who could adjust it properly or fix it if it broke

The *Hampshire Review* has been in the hands of Cornwell descendants for a full century. Here are John Cornwell Ailes, daughter Sallie See and son-in-law Charlie See.



Above: Main Street, Romney, was a muddy proposition in earlier times. The newspaper moved to new quarters in 1908, but the original *Review* building remains in commercial use today. Photographer and date unknown.

Right: The founding generation is represented in this photograph of John Jacob and Edna Brady Cornwell. The picture was made at the Greenbrier resort several years after Cornwell's service as governor. Photo by Cummins, 1933.

down. When there was a staff pinch, they would call him in to run the press to get the paper out.

It was also natural, when his father had died and his mother was failing, for the family to look to John to take over the paper, there never being any question then or now of the *Review* going out of the family's control.

John Ailes admits to being a conservative, "but not in the pejorative sense," he explains. "I'm in favor of progress, but I don't believe in fixing something if it ain't broke." And though he has been editor for close to 40 years, Mr. Ailes makes it clear that the *Hampshire Review* still walks in the shadow of John Jacob Cornwell. "The paper continues in his tradition. It's based on his personality," said Mr. Ailes in a recent interview. The story of the newspaper can't be told without some background on this remarkable West Virginian.

No one could deny that Cornwell was a prodigy. By age 16 he had completed his own secondary education and a teacher training course at Shepherd Normal School, and was teaching school in Romney. By age 18 he was the principal of his school. He then "read for the law," passed the West Virginia Bar, and went into practice with older brother William, already a Romney lawyer. In 1890 the two brothers purchased the *Hampshire Review* from C. F. Poland.

Mr. Poland had established the paper six and a half years earlier. In his farewell editorial on November 6, 1890, he assured his subscribers that the new owners would continue his "Jeffersonian principles" in publishing the paper. Further, he said, "The Cornwell Brothers are young, industrious, intelligent, honest 'to the manor born.'"

Actually, 235 acres of hilly land in Hampshire County, the farm the Cornwell boys were raised on, could hardly be called a "manor" in the old English sense. But Mr. Poland was telling his readers that the new owners of the paper were from a good family, and there has never been any question of that.

No doubt the departing editor would have been pleased to know that Cornwell descendants would nourish his paper a full hundred years. That makes the *Review* itself over 106 years old, and in fact, the paper traces its ancestry back a good ways farther than that. Under today's masthead it says, "and the *South Branch Intelligencer.*" Then there is the line, "The oldest newspaper in the oldest incorporated town of WV," followed by "Established 1829." This needs some explanation.

It was the *South Branch Intelligencer* that was started in 1829. The Cornwell brothers bought out this competition in 1897, adding its name and founding date to the masthead of the *Hampshire Review.*

Mr. Ailes admits that the Jefferson County city of Shepherdstown might

question the "oldest incorporated town," claim. He says that both towns were incorporated on the same day in 1762 by Lord Fairfax, and no one seems to know which charter Fairfax signed first.

Mr. Ailes makes no bones of the fact that the *South Branch Intelligencer* was probably bought for political reasons. The Cornwells were Democrats in what was then an almost entirely Republican state and county, and at least one of the brothers had political plans. Two years after purchasing this opposition paper John Jacob Cornwell was elected to the West Virginia Senate, where he served until 1906. Explaining that his grandfather became minority leader, Mr. Ailes laughingly confesses that there were "only three Democrats in the Senate for him to lead."

But Cornwell's service in the legislature was not inconsequential. It was in this first elected office that he began building a statewide reputation. He ran for governor in 1904 and was defeated. However, he won that post in 1916, the only Democrat elected governor of West Virginia between 1896 and 1932.

Cornwell guided West Virginia through World War I and the coal wars that followed. Though the governor had to call the troops out during outset, while assuring readers that his paper would not "be the receptacle and vehicle of printed rubbish miscalled news, nor of the disgusting scandals and other vile trash that too often defiles the columns of newspapers." In the nation outside Hampshire in those last years of the 19th century, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst were building giant newspaper chains by trying to outdo each other with sensational "yellow journalism." Mr. Poland wasn't going to let his paper go that way, nor did the Cornwells when they took over.

John Jacob Cornwell served one term as governor and then became chief counsel and a director of the B&O Railroad. He always maintained an office in Romney and a close involvement in the newspaper.

John Morgan's fine history, *West Virginia Governors,* from which much background for this article comes, quotes Cornwell on the subject of his newspaper. "I was not only editor, but manager, reporter, printer's devil and whatnot," said Cornwell, echoing many a country editor. But John Ailes notes that his grandfather was not involved in the routine operation of the paper once his legal and political career gained momentum. Still, whether practicing law in Romney, holding high office in Charleston, or working for the B&O, John Jacob Cornwell remained publisher of the *Hampshire Review* and wrote most of its editorials until his death in 1953.

Mr. Ailes says that his grandfather's mind remained alert until the end. The Democratic National Convention was on the radio in the hospital in Cumberland, Maryland, and each day the doctors and nurses would gather in John Cornwell's room to hear his interpretation of events at the convention. "Just 30 minutes before his death he discussed an editorial for the paper with me," Mr. Ailes says.

In his later years, when Cornwell's eyesight was failing, as many as four handwritten editorials a week continued to pour into the newspaper of-

There have been hard-working women behind the *Hampshire Review* since early days. These are Pattie Grapes (left) and business manager Nora Kimble.

fice. Only one employee could decipher them. This was Kate Davis, who worked for the paper from the 1890's through the 1950's, becoming as entrenched there as the former governor. John Ailes remembers her well.

"The first three women ever hired to do other than domestic work in Hampshire County worked for our paper," Mr. Ailes explains. Two of these were the Davis sisters, "Miss Kate" and "Miss Mary." They were part of a cadre of long-time employees who did the day-to-day work at the newspaper office, working so smoothly, Mr. Ailes says, that it seemed like "the paper got itself out."

Kate Davis, like the staff today, did a little of everything. She set type when it was done by hand and learned to operate the Linotype machine when that innovation entered the scene. By the 1950's she was listed as manager. The public-spirited Davis sisters bequeathed their home to the county to be used as a historical museum. The log building has been completely restored and stands in stark contrast to the modern public library building next door to it near the center of Romney.

Another woman who played a significant role in the entwined histories of John Jacob Cornwell and the *Hampshire Review* was Margaret Inskeep Keller. A Romney native, Keller graduated from a business college in Winchester, Virginia, and became Mr. Cornwell's personal secretary. She continued in this role all through his career, a job that naturally involved her heavily in the newspaper.

Getting the Paper Out

Wednesday about noon, when the week's issue of the *Hampshire Review* has been stuffed with ad supplements, bundled and sent out to the stores and newsstands and post office, there is hardly time for a coffee break in the back room at the newspaper office. Managing Editor Charlie See, who does most of the news writing, is already on the street looking for future features.

After an informal critique of the new issue on Thursday morning, See's team gets to work on next week. Advertisements take up the biggest chunk of each issue. Orders flow in continually, encouraged by the *Review's* first ad salesperson, hired last fall. "We don't have any competition for county news," See points out, "but we have plenty of competition for advertising space from the daily papers that come in from Keyser and Martinsburg, as well as from the Maryland cities of Cumberland and Hagerstown.

"In case you didn't know it, it is advertising that keeps a paper alive," explains See. "We shoot for 50 percent of the space of each issue for ads. We might get as high as 60 percent or as low as 40 percent on any given issue, but we need that 50 percent average."

The ads from the larger organizations come in "camera ready," with no further preparation needed, but most others are created right there in the back room. The staff uses a computer program that gives a wide variety of design styles, print and sizes. Each ad has a distinctive and professional look.

When the advertising staff is satisfied, they push a button and the ad comes out of a high-quality laser printer attached to the desktop computer. It is printed on paper that is ready for "pasting up," when the time comes for that.

In the meantime, news copy comes in through the mail or from people dropping it off at the front desk. Copy readers check these items first, select the ones that will be used in the paper, do any editing and rewriting that may be necessary, and pass them along.

This material includes publicity and press releases from a wide variety of state and local organizations, as well as articles about club meetings and organization events, and engagement, wedding, birth and death notices. Upcoming civic events are slated for a last-page block called "Area Update," a popular innovation by Charlie See.

It is a fact that just about anyone can get news or announcements in the paper by simply writing it up and sending it in. This is a vital role of a county weekly.

Coming in also is the school news. "We put a heavy emphasis on school news," See explains. There are two pages of school news and two pages of school sports in almost every issue. This copy is provided free by the county schools, which appreciate the chance to present their news. Larry See, Charlie's teacher brother, writes the sports news. This weekly "Trojan Tidbits" column covers the Hampshire High Trojans and other activities in the school system.

The *Review* also has four local "stringers" — volunteer reporters who send in news from various communities in the county. Fort Ashby has its own page.

Also coming in are the weekly editorials from John C. Ailes, editor, and a column on national affairs sent in from Washington by Stephen Ailes, John's brother. Steve Ailes was secretary of the army under President Johnson and now practices law in the nation's capital. Phil Gallery, a county resident, also does a weekly column for the editorial page. "I wouldn't call Mr. Gallery a liberal," says Charlie See, "but his commentary moves a bit away from the conservative editorials of Mr. Ailes."

All of this material, along with Charlie See's feature stories, goes through the computer and out the laser printer as the action picks up. Three o'clock Monday afternoon is the deadline for submission of material.

Now all is set for the most hectic day of the week, Tuesday. Everyone gathers for the paste up, but there are no paste pots to be seen. The headlines, the type columns, the ads, are now run through another machine that

In 1953 she took over the running of the *Review*. The January 14, 1953, issue lists "Cornwell and Keller," as the publishers and Margaret Inskeep Keller as editor. That issue also included a pro-Eisenhower editorial over the initials "M.I.K." Mary Pugh, acknowledged authority on Hampshire County history and now custodian of the Davis House museum, remembers that Margaret Keller always signed her editorials that way, with her initials.

These employees brought a woman's perspective to the *Review*, and the ladies of the family pitched in as well. Mr. Ailes reports that his grandmother and mother both helped with the paper. His wife, Ann Y. Ailes, is currently associate editor. Daughter Sallie is married to Charlie See, the managing editor. The Sees are principal stockholders in Cornwell-Ailes, Inc., the family publishing business.

Throughout their century together, the family and the newspaper have taken a guiding hand in Hampshire history. Founder C. F. Poland committed the *Review* to an active role at the outset, while assuring readers that his paper would not "be the receptacle and vehicle of printed rubbish miscalled news, nor of the disgusting scandals and other vile trash that too often defiles the columns of newspapers." In the nation outside Hampshire in those last years of the 19th century, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst were building giant newspaper chains by trying to outdo each other with sensational "yellow journalism." Mr. Poland wasn't going to let his

puts a coat of wax on the back side of the paper. These pieces can then be "pasted" onto the page forms. The tacky wax permits them to be moved around as the meticulous process of making up the paper goes on.

Photographs take special treatment. The *Review* has a camera room, containing a huge stationary camera purchased several years ago with other new equipment. All pictures to appear in the paper are reshot on this camera, and then either a positive print is waxed in place on the paste-up or a negative is later incorporated into the larger page negative.

The front and back pages and the editorial page contain no advertisements. The classified section, usually two pages, is all ads. One full page each week, sponsored by about 30 local firms, is devoted to church news. Legal announcements and real estate ads crowd the last few pages, save the very last.

Other features, articles and copy are laid out and the issue, usually about 24 pages, comes together. There's a basket of short articles waiting to be used, if needed, to fill in blank spaces. The paper has to have an even number of pages. Charlie says that some county weeklies are not above leaving a page blank when the paste-up doesn't come out even. "You'll never see that in my paper," he asserts.

"A lot of things can happen on Tuesday," Charlie reports. "Once we left out four ads and had to pull it all apart and put it back together." Sometimes expected copy doesn't come in and anybody may be sat down in front of a keyboard and told to create, quick. No staff person is too proud to take on lowly tasks nor too shy to do an editing or writing job, whatever is

As managing editor, Charlie See is the man in charge of getting the paper out. Each week's *Review* appears Wednesday morning — and the next one begins that afternoon.

needed. "This is what makes the job fun and why I love it," explains Charlie convincingly.

Even when a complete paste-up of the paper is done, the work is far from over. Back they go to the huge camera to photograph each page. Then another machine makes a full set of page-size negatives. Now Tuesday is over.

About six o'clock on Wednesday morning a worker heads over to Keyser with the big page negatives. There in a modern printing plant a technological miracle takes place and takes place very quickly. By 9:30 the staffer is heading back to Romney with nearly 6,000 copies of the *Hampshire Review*, all printed and folded and ready for sale.

Extra staff are waiting to insert the ads and bundle up the papers and get them out on the street. The cycle is complete when Charlie See heads off to look for next week's news.

— Bill Moulden

The old and the new coexist at the newspaper office. Most type is set electronically by desktop computer nowadays, but hand type is available when needed. In these photos Kim Moore works the computer with Nancy Gardner at the old-fashioned type case below.

paper go that way, nor did the Cornwells when they took over.

There were other changes afoot in the larger world. America rapidly urbanized and industrialized, but Hampshire County stayed pretty much out of the mainstream. Cornwell's B&O swept along the northern border, by the shores of the Potomac River, but the railroad brought little change to the governor's county. Farms, orchards, small towns and light industry predominated in Hampshire, as in many parts of West Virginia.

One quote from Governor Cornwell indicates that he regretted the lack of development, although he seemed resigned to accepting the situation. "It is lamentable that so large a percentage of our coal, oil, gas and timber has gone out of the state to build up manufacturing plants and cities in other states instead of being consumed here," Cornwell said, "but we cannot by law compel nonresidents to come here, invest their money, build factories and manufacturing plants."

Today, Governor Cornwell's state and county continue to wrestle with the complex problem of development. Romney attracted a shoe factory in the 1960's but it closed, putting 400 residents out of work, in the spring of 1989. This left the public schools and the state school for the deaf and blind as the largest local employers.

When I drove to Romney in late fall 1989 to start interviews for this article, I came in from the south on Route 127. The color was yet holding in some of the maples and all of the oaks, deep red and bright yellow. The hills and fields were still green, kept trim by grazing sheep and cattle. Stalks still stood in some cornfields, brown and brittle in the bright morning sun.

Old log and stone farmhouses still stand in the fields of Hampshire, as well, many of them unoccupied and slowly decaying. The one-story "rambler" appears to be the house of choice today. There are trailers, too, most on well-kept lots. Obviously more people live in the county than are needed to maintain its farms. Here lies the clue to major change that is finally reaching Hampshire and neighboring counties in West Virginia and Virginia. Housing developments are moving into the fields and up the mountainsides.

You can see the future stirring in Capon Bridge, the only other incorporated town in Hampshire County. It lies just west of the Virginia-West Virginia border on Route 50, about halfway between Romney and Winchester. Here you see many "new people," retirees or city dwellers with weekend cabins and commuters who drive to jobs in Winchester or even into the megalopolis spreading outward from Baltimore and Washington. Capon Bridge also is the home of the nearest thing to a competitor the *Hampshire Review* now has. It is a monthly tabloid called the *West Virginia Advocate,* a fiesty little paper with a decidedly more liberal slant.

Can the *Review* and the folks behind it keep up with the competition and with changing times in the Eastern Panhandle? Charlie See thinks so. He left a 12-year career as an English and journalism teacher to take over the paper about three years ago. The paper then "looked just like the *Wall Street Journal*" he says, referring to the staid format. "We've jazzed it up," See says. There are more features and better pictures and an overall new look. One doubts, however, that the *Hampshire Review* will ever become like *USA Today,* the flashy national newspaper now available each day in Romney.

Like most weekly papers, the *Review* actively promotes local development. "The closing of the shoe factory shocked the county," Charlie See explains. "There are strong moves to get new industry in here now." Charlie has no objection to the influx of new residents but he knows that retirees bring only service jobs, not good-paying industrial employment.

"And yes, we can grow with the county," says Charlie See of the *Hampshire Review.* "We can become a biweekly and a daily if and when the growth determines the need."

One hundred years ago the weekly paper was the only news most Hampshire people received. Those earliest issues, now on microfilm at the county library, had only national and state news on the front page and the editorials dealt with state and national issues. Now information needs are different. Hampshire Countians get their national news from other sources, and the news reported by the *Review* consists almost exclusively of local and state events.

This is important. There needs to be a newspaper where a kid can see his or her name and picture in print for the first time, with the 4-H Club or school group or sports team. That's when you get the first inkling that you are expected to be more than just a member of the family, when you start to think of yourself as having potential to be something in the eyes of the world.

Every family needs someone keeping a scrapbook of these clippings from the paper — of graduations, engagements, weddings, births and, yes, even deaths. A county weekly plays an essential role in maintaining what the sociologists call a sense of community.

Editor John Ailes has six grandchildren, three of them sons of Sallie and Charlie See. There is no reason to doubt that Hampshire County will have its newspaper for another century. You would expect some of these descendants of John Jacob Cornwell to become teachers and lawyers. Maybe another senator or governor will arise among them. But when the time comes, will one of them be ready, willing and able to take over the *Hampshire Review?* You can count on it.

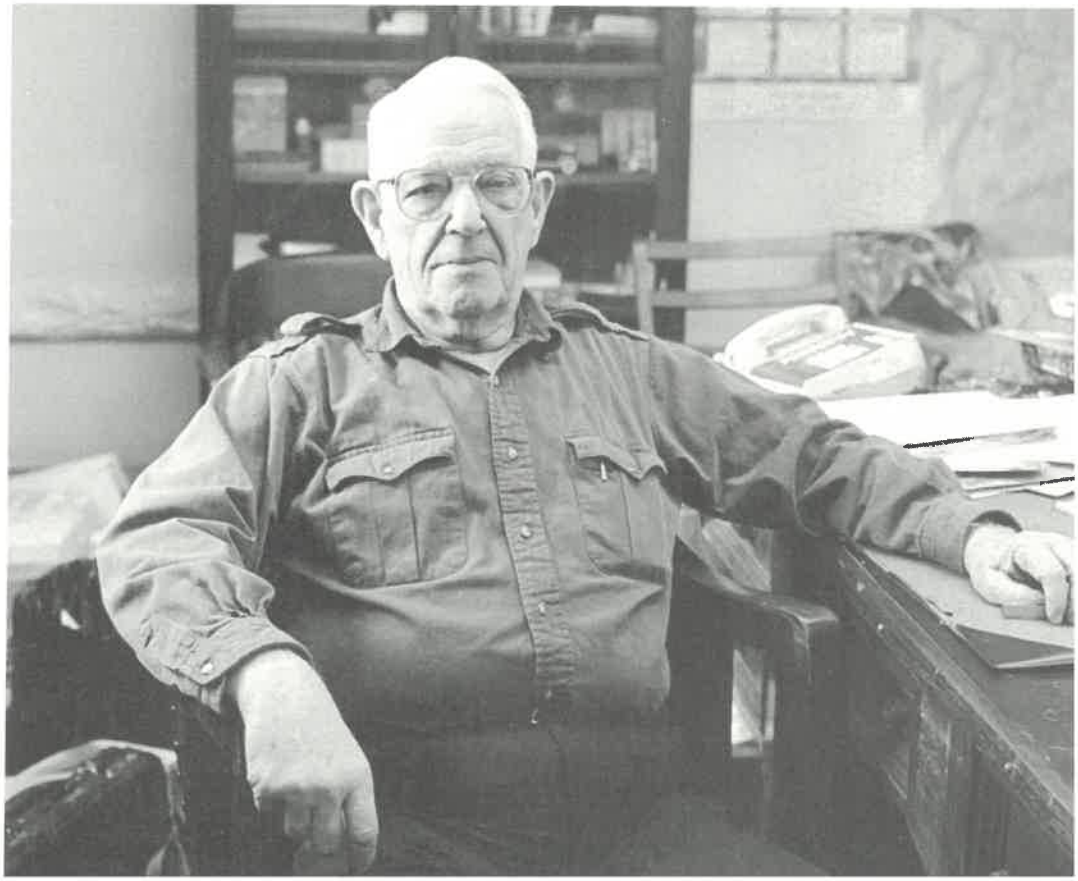
West Virginia Governors

In the adjoining story, the reader learns about Governor John J. Cornwell's involvement in the *Hampshire Review.* If you want to know more about him and other West Virginia governors, there is an excellent source available on the subject.

West Virginia Governors by John G. Morgan was published in 1980 by Charleston Newspapers. The 558-page, hardbound book begins with West Virginia's first governor, Arthur I. Boreman, and continues in its treatment of the state's leaders up through Governor John D. Rockefeller. Morgan, a former political reporter for the *Charleston Gazette,* includes historical illustrations and a bibliography in his collective biography of 29 governors.

West Virginia Governors may be purchased from Charleston Newspapers, 1001 Virginia Street East, Charleston, WV 25301. The cost is $10 by mail and $8 if you buy the book at the newspaper offices.

The *Hampshire Review* continues in the tradition of Governor John Jacob Cornwell, according to his grandson, editor John C. Ailes. That's unlikely to change.



Wilcoe
The People of a Coal Town

By Irving Alexander

When I was 17 and fresh out of Baltimore, I spent two years in Wilcoe, part of the Gary industrial complex in coal-rich McDowell County, and there mined a rich treasure of experience.

I had graduated from high school in 1928 as an honor student and been offered a scholarship to a college far from home. I refused, knowing that my parents, who could do little more than put food on the table, could not provide the supplementary funds required for my education.

It was then that my Uncle Dave Scott, my mother's brother-in-law, gave me a job in his general store in Wilcoe. Dave owned the store along with another uncle, my mother's brother, Max Roston. He had brought Uncle Max, a young immigrant, to Welch from Baltimore, trained him to sell and then made him his manager and partner in the Wilcoe store. Uncle Dave was the sole owner of another store in the town of Welch, just a few miles away.

Swept across the front of the Wilcoe store was a huge banner bearing the name D. Scott & Company, and directly below a line reading "The Store Upon the Hill." It was called that because it was located on a knoll about 300 feet from the road that linked the big town of Gary through Wilcoe and on to Welch.

My job, my very first, paid $125 a month, plus room and board in Uncle Max's apartment over the store. Not bad for a 17-year-old back in 1928. I had never sold a stitch before coming to Wilcoe. Uncle Max initiated me into the art of selling to miners, many of whom could scarcely speak English, and to the hill people who cut timber,

Dave Scott hit McDowell County as a young Lithuanian immigrant, but he soon caught onto the distinctly American ways of life in the coal towns. He became a successful merchant and served also as a volunteer deputy, among other capacities. Photographer and date unknown.

hunted wild ginseng, and made and sold moonshine whiskey of questionable quality.

Uncle Max was tall, lean, gray-haired, friendly — a man I dearly loved. He was fluent in several languages, which he had picked up the hard way in his dealings with immigrant miners. Max's wife, Viola, slightly plump and pretty, was a sweet woman. She and Max lavished love on daughters Irma, five years old, and Helene, three. I shared in the family conviviality, but I did miss my big, busy hometown, my brother and sisters, and my own wonderful mother.

Wilcoe, a coal mining town of about 1,200, was for me like a bygone world. The language of the native people was larded with archaic words and colloquialisms — words like "poke" for a paper bag and "roas'n'ears" for corn on the cob. The mining families lived in low-rent units, most of which were owned by the coal company.

The Store Upon the Hill sold everything but food, and was open 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily, and closed only on Sundays. Uncle Max, a pleasant woman named Elizabeth Totten, and I were the only salespeople, except when Aunt Viola came down from the apartment to help during busy periods.

Every Sunday I took the bus to Welch to visit with Uncle Dave, Aunt Libby, and cousins Isadore, Earl, Gerald, and Miriam. Uncle Dave was wealthy. The family lived in a handsomely furnished home on a low hill overlooking Elkhorn Creek. Dave would frequently trade in his Packard automobile for the latest model; he did not drive but employed a full-time handy man and chauffeur named Scipio Pittard. There was also a full-time house girl named Katie Palancer.

Apart from raucous horseplay with my cousins, the highlight of my weekly visits to Welch was Aunt Libby's Sunday dinners. She was a marvelous cook. Among her culinary delights was a vegetable soup the likes of which I had never eaten. I dubbed it "football soup" because in my mind it was the kind of stuff that made for strong athletes. Another of her delicacies was fragrant cucumbers pickled with dill and garlic that made a snapping *crunch* with every bite. She bought the cucumbers from Polish families, many of whom raised vegetables in their small backyards.

Our author, Irving Alexander, at the time of his high school graduation. He spent the next two years in Wilcoe. Photo by Cole Studio, 1928.

Those Sunday visits were my only relief from long hours in the store. Customers and the Roston family were what filled my time. I was a shy boy, never seeking friends among the young people in Wilcoe, but I got to know some of the characters of the town. Among them were some of the most remarkable people I have ever met.

One was J. B. Smith. "Mr. Smith, you *must* have a first name, what is it?"

"No, Alex," he responded. "My father wrote only my initials on my birth records, and that's what I've always been called." Anyhow, J. B., about 50, was short and skinny. Except for a slightly protruding stomach, everything about him was narrow — his nose, his neck, his arms and legs.

J. B. lived in the only really elegant house in town, a two-story brick dwelling just a few hundred feet from our store. In the two years I lived in Wilcoe, J. B. never invited me or the Rostons into his home. Nor did his wife, a patrician-looking woman, but friendly. She would drop into the store on occasion, make a purchase, exchange a few pleasantries, and that was it. The Smiths had a son at Columbia University, and their daughter, a talented pianist, was attending a music college in Cincinnati.

In this small town, J. B. found multiple ways to make a living. In a tiny one-man office only a few yards from our store, he was a telegrapher for Western Union. J. B. also represented the Norfolk & Western Railroad on freight shipments. He did a thriving business in mail-order suits and shirts as well. He also traded company scrip. Although scrip was spendable only at the company store, you didn't have to be a miner to spend it. J. B. was able to buy large quantities at 85 cents on the dollar from miners needing cash, and would then turn around and sell it at 90 cents. He always had takers.

Furthermore, he would buy crateloads of live chickens from nearby farms and drive them into Welch, where a single dealer would buy all of them, producing another tidy profit. J. B. Smith even profited on religion. Each Sunday he would deliver a sermon at the local church for a fee.

Here was a man of many resources. He never wanted for coal for the potbellied stove in his office, or for the furnace in his home. Coal trains, generally about 100 cars long, powered by a huge Mallet engine up front — 32 wheels, I enjoyed counting them — with a second Mallet to the rear, would pass through Wilcoe, coming from Gary. I was awed, even intimidated, by those grunting titans, their hot bellies belching geysers of steam through snorting smokestacks.

J. B. took a more practical view of the matter. Those powerful Mallets required many miles to develop momentum, and they lumbered past our store and his office at a snail's pace. He would shinny up the ladder of one of the cars with a small shovel and two coal buckets. When both buckets were full, he would toss them over the side. Then he would clamber back down and repeat the operation — winding up with four bucketfuls before the train had gone any distance.

I once asked J. B. if he did the right thing taking coal from those freight cars. "Young man," was his reply, "you have things to learn. I'm not the only one taking coal. It doesn't amount to much, and even the company knows about it. They don't really care. Now you ask Tom Shepard, the N&W engineer, and he'll confirm what I told you."

This is the interior of the Store Upon the Hill. Max Roston stands at the counter (in glasses) with wife Viola (in stripes) and young daughters. Clerk Elizabeth Totten stands at Max's right. Photographer and date unknown.

Well, I never troubled to ask Mr. Shepard because I knew J. B. always spoke the truth.

Another unique person was Burns Baldwin, who had a busy lumbering operation up in the hills. He employed about 20 men who lived in a cluster of huts with their families, Baldwin's house just about dead center. Burns ran a big bill at the store. Several times a month he would shop for his men and himself, always settling up with Uncle Max on the last day of the month. We could depend on that, for ethics and sincerity were the hallmarks of this lean, handsome man.

Burns, through his family and his workers, was by far our largest customer. With intelligence written in every line of his face, he still could not write a word of English. He would mark the bills for his purchases with an "X," and either Uncle Max or I would sign his name for him. But he was honest, earnest, hard-working, and successful. We gave him the same respect as we would have a college president.

Then there were Frank Ruzzi and his wife Sylvia, both probably in their 60's. They had two sons and a daughter, none married. Frank and the elder son worked in the mines. The younger son was in the office at the company store, and the daughter worked there as a salesperson.

The Ruzzis accumulated their savings over the years so that they could return to Italy to spend the rest of their lives in leisure where the cost of living was so much lower. One day, feeling that they had made their fortune, the family drove into our store to stock up on clothing to take back to the old country. Since it was not unusual for families to return to their native lands, our store was always prepared. We carried large wooden trunks, bound in steel straps, for the trip.

Anyhow, in came the Ruzzis, all five of them, to load up. They could have found a greater selection at the company store, but we had the lower prices, and our customers knew that if they made a large purchase they could haggle with Uncle Max. The Ruzzi bill, as I remember, including five large trunks, came to about $655, which bought a lot in those days. The bargaining session must have lasted for over an hour, and the family emerged victorious; they paid exactly $600, a figure which still left Uncle Max a reasonable profit. Actually, both sides had a wonderful time, for bargaining was part of the fun.

As a parting gift, Uncle Max bought a five-pound container of cookies, made in Italy, for them to munch on the voyage home. He blushed crimson when Mrs. Ruzzi suddenly planted a farewell kiss on his mouth!

What about Joe Greenberg? Now, there was a real character. Joe came from Latvia, and spoke a sing-song, soft-toned broken English. He was short, slender, and stoop-shouldered. He had a high forehead with a single large tuft of gray hair that stood in a crown-like clump at the top of his skull. Joe didn't have the sweetest breath, so folks had a way of standing at a respectful distance when speaking to him.

Greenberg operated a small store to the left of our knoll on a skinny street

Wilcoe was a rugged place at the time of this 1913 photo. Mr. Alexander says it was more settled and refined when he arrived there in 1928. Photographer unknown, courtesy State Archives.

that extended for only a few blocks. This street had no name, and was simply referred to as "the Bottom." Greenberg sold miners supplies, canned foods, and miscellaneous items, and had a good following.

He had as his only assistant a man named Labe Margolis, whose age I figured at about 35. Labe had extremely red features; Uncle Max thought it was high blood pressure. Labe always wore the same brown sweater, dirty and sweated-out from washtub neglect. But he spoke excellent college English and read good books. What he was doing in Wilcoe, cutting off any future that his education might have afforded him in a larger town, is anyone's guess. I was fascinated by Labe's scholarly fund of knowledge, including a mastery of history and geography. He painted word pictures of famous people from the past, and would take me on verbal guided tours through various places in the world.

Greenberg never closed until 11:00 p.m., not because any customers came in that late, but because his store was host to about eight cronies who sat around a potbellied stove for evening chitchat presided over by Joe. I dropped in occasionally. I remember Joe's huge metal container of salted-in-the-shell peanuts, with the word "Brynees" printed on its white-enameled surface. The men would dip into the can, dropping their shells on the floor, which Labe had to clean up.

Another thing I remember was the two enormous Great Danes that Joe put in his front window at night, to keep away intruders. It was intended as a display window, but it never displayed anything but those two fearsome dogs.

Across from Joe Greenberg's store was the combined office and courtroom of Squire Whittle. The squire was black, portly and short, with a razor-sharp mind, excellent vocabulary, and distinguished features. His dark beard was peppered with gray, as was his heavy shock of hair. He was so roly-poly that he couldn't find his fit in town, so he went to J. B. Smith for his suits and shirts. When he talked, the squire breathed hard, as if the fat around his throat threatened to strangle him.

I learned for the first time what a squire was, or at least who Squire Whittle was. He was the local law, and lawbreakers in the Wilcoe area were tried in his own court and only by himself — no juries. In every case involving local people, except for moonshining, murder, or grand theft, a winning plaintiff was usually awarded a sum of money predicated upon the defendant's financial condition. Whittle, a warm, kindhearted man, was not out to ruin a family with an over-burdensome penalty. Of course, major cases went to Welch, or to the federal courts where moonshining was involved. At that time, in 1927, the Volstead Act was still in effect.

And how could I forget Shoemake! The nickname was a foreshortening of "shoemaker," which trade Shoemake had practiced in his younger years in Wilcoe. Thinking he could earn a better living, he had converted his shoe shop into a tobacco and candy store. His place was directly adjacent to our store, and he lived in a little four-room

apartment in the rear. Shoemake's real name was either Donato Bellini or Bellini Donato. Nobody ever knew, and perhaps he didn't know either. When pinned down he'd reply, in his shattered Italian-English, "Take your pick!"

When I first arrived in Wilcoe, a daughter and son-in-law were running the business, while Shoemake, age 72, was in Italy seeking a young wife. A few months following my arrival, home he came with a 32-year-old bride, who couldn't speak a word of English.

But while Shoemake was in Italy, mischief was afoot. His daughter and her husband had been systematically looting both his inventory and his business checking account. The curses he heaped upon them still ring in my ears. Fortunately, the bulk of his

The U.S. Coal & Coke company built to last, and much of residential Wilcoe remains intact. The old photo above is from a 1913 glass negative, while the new picture was made this January. Old photo courtesy Mike Hornick Collection, Eastern Regional Coal Archives; new photo by Michael Keller.

money was in his savings account, and only he had access to that.

Although Shoemake spoke a fairly understandable English, he had only limited writing ability. So in this crisis he asked me to write letters to his suppliers of merchandise, explaining his problem and asking them to wait for their money. Since Shoemake's credit had always been gilt-edged, his wholesalers gave him time. In less than a year, he had paid off his entire debt.

Despite my youth, Shoemake and practically all the adults treated me as an equal. He appreciated the little favors I did for him. On occasion he would invite me into his apartment to share lunch with him and his pretty new wife, Carlotta. Every time I ate there, lunch consisted of a huge bowl of canned pineapple or peaches or apricots. We ladled generous portions into deep dinner plates and broke off chunks from slender loaves of crisp Italian bread the likes of which I have rarely enjoyed since.

And now to Uncle Dave, Uncle Max's partner in Wilcoe and sole proprietor of the D. Scott & Company dry goods store in the town of Welch, population 5,000. Dave knew what hard times were, having run away from his home in Lithuania as a 15-year-old, taking a job on a freighter from the German coast to Baltimore, from where he hitchhiked to Washington. His first work was cleaning theaters, often sleeping in them. He alternated that with delivering messages for Western Union.

Later, still very young, he migrated to North Carolina, where he worked on a farm for $48 a *year*, plus room and board. But Dave didn't remain on the farm for long. He moved to High Point, where he worked as a clerk in a retail store. He obtained his citizenship papers in Greensboro, North Carolina.

From High Point, Dave Scott moved to Wilcoe, where he worked for a horse trader named Jake Shore, looking after the horses and sleeping in the stables. By scrupulously putting together his dollars and with some help from friends, Dave was able to open a small dry-goods store in the Bottom. He did well, but an unfortunate fire destroyed the entire building. Barely started out in life, Dave Scott was ruined.

Dave Scott set wife Libby's name in stone, leaving it as his main surviving mark in southern West Virginia. The Libby Building remains a prominent feature of downtown Welch. Photo by Michael Keller.

A close friend, Bill Hatfield (later sheriff of McDowell County), came to the rescue. Hatfield mortgaged his home and loaned Dave the money to build a new store, which became the Store Upon the Hill. The loan was paid back, of course, and their friendship continued through the years.

At this point, Dave was able to persuade my lovely Aunt Libby, then living in Baltimore, to marry him. In 1914, flush with success, he opened another store, this one in Welch. He had the good fortune to locate his business directly in front of the Welch train station, where the N&W Railroad deposited passengers coming to the big town for shopping and moviegoing.

Uncle Dave was his own prime salesman, and he and his two assistants did a great deal of business. He never forgot a face or a name. If he hadn't seen a customer for a long time, he would immediately grab his hand, and say something like this: "Hello, Brasher. I see your wife is as beautiful as ever. Hello, Emma." Dave Scott knew how to smile, how to tell a joke.

One day, while Dave was having his big Anniversary Sale, Uncle Max sent me to the Welch store to help out. I saw something there which I've never fogotten. A man in ragged clothes, wearing beaten-up miner's boots, his wife barefoot and dirty in a torn dress, and three tattered kids walked into the store. Dave remembered them from better times. He greeted them warmly and got around to asking what was wrong.

The man told him that his mine was down to two days a week. They needed clothes. They had no money but they also owed nothing. "I always paid you quick when I had it, and work should pick up soon," the miner reminded the merchant.

Uncle Dave searched through his stock, and clothed the five of them, head-to-foot, as carefully as if they were his own family. "I'm putting it on the books," said Dave. "When things get better I know I will hear from you."

That was why people loved Dave Scott, how he came by such a great reputation, and why he did so well in business. Visible evidence of his success was the apartment building he put up in the heart of Welch, named the Libby Building after his wife.

I was taken with the many wonderful folks I met in the coalfields — those earnest, honest, religious mountain and mining people who lived with truth and fair play. Although few in and around Wilcoe then enjoyed much education, I met many who displayed intelligence, wisdom, and aptitude.

Locked into my recollections are the

Jewish Merchants in the Coalfields

Uncle Max Roston and Uncle Dave Scott were among the Jewish merchants of southern West Virginia, representatives of a class that was once an important part of life in the coalfields and in small towns across the country. Such merchants are much less prominent today, and to explain the decline we must first go back to what brought these people to America.

They came by the thousands, hopeful immigrants from countries like Russia, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, or — like my own relatives — from Lithuania. They were refugees from poverty, hunger, and persecution. Those able to gather the money and the will to leave their native lands believed that once in the new country, with its grand mansions and rumored golden streets, they could make their fortunes and enjoy the good life that came with it.

They migrated, in the main, to large Eastern cities like New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston. They came in greatest numbers in the years just before and after the turn of the century. Unable to speak the language and having little education or experience to draw upon, many were exploited in sweatshops, earning as little as 15 cents per hour and working 12-hour days and seven-day weeks. Many became quickly disillusioned.

My father, a Baltimore sewing machine operator, brought home stories of fellow workers who left to seek better opportunities. Some became peddlers or street vendors. It was from such humble beginnings that Jews became a significant factor on the American retail scene. Some, remaining in the big cities, zoomed in the course of a generation from the peddler stage to command of enormous retail complexes — stores such as Gimbel's, Lazarus, and others.

Henry Rodgin was among the successful Jewish merchants in southern West Virginia. Here he poses inside his Bluefield jewelry store. Photographer and date unknown.

Others moved into small towns and the countryside. Carrying their merchandise in backpacks, they sold household items from door to door. They performed a real service to people in secluded places, who otherwise would have had to travel to distant stores for their pots, pans, soaps, and medications. These friendly, accommodating men carried as much as 120 pounds on their shoulders.

A pack peddler, if selling an average of $12 a day, might net a profit of $5. By working a six-day week, he could earn $30 — big money in those days. With sufficient funds, a backpacker could buy a pushcart which took the burden off his back and placed it on wheels, enabling him with greater ease to transport much larger quantities of merchandise.

The next stage was a horse and wagon. Now he could do a much greater volume of business, perhaps eventually profiting enough to open a retail dry goods store in one of the small towns on his route. This is what happened in the coalfields of West Virginia. Coal was booming at just the time these immigrants were settling themselves in America, and it is not surprising that many of them found their way into the mountains. Town after town came to have general merchandise stores owned by Jewish merchants.

Determined to get a better grasp of the language and anxious to make customers into friends, these enterprising men extended credit,

gave charity in the age-old Jewish tradition, and eventually became pillars of their communities. Customers at first taken aback by the strange accents of these intruders overcame anti-Semitic prejudices as they came to know their ambitious new neighbors.

In the Pocahontas Coalfield the town of Welch was a major retail hub. It acted as a magnet for such men as Dave Scott, who had gotten his start in much smaller Wilcoe. By the 1920's Welch had a small but cohesive Jewish community, organized around Temple Emanuel. Uncle Dave was among the synagogue's founding members.

While merchants as astute as my uncles prospered in the coalfields, many failed to put down permanent roots. There were many reasons. Jews, since the time of the ancient Hebrews, have revered learning. So it was not surprising that these merchants sent their children away for an education — and to meet other young people of their own religion. Many of the children, having once tasted college and big city life, had no desire to return to their hometowns and no interest in perpetuating their fathers' businesses.

Even the parents, having gone to these small towns for economic reasons, were often anxious to resume their lives in the big city, among the relatives and friends and places of worship they left behind. This became an invincible urge for some, drawing Uncle Max, for example, back to Baltimore. Local businessmen, Jew and Gentile, also suffered from competition as chain stores came to towns like Welch.

Their children gone and themselves often having few close friends in towns of little or no Jewish population, it was not surprising that immigrant merchants of my uncles' generation finally returned to old relationships and to the solace of their religion — greater gold than any wealth they may have accumulated.

— Irving Alexander

Scott was a long way from rough-and-ready horseback days when this portrait was made. As a mature businessman he preferred Packards, according to nephew Irving. Photo by Welch Studio, date unknown.

powerful images of the men who dropped into our store on their way home after a hard day in the mines, often with their lamps still attached to their foreheads. Their clothes were layered with soot, and their faces and hands bore the smudges of their labor. Even their eyelashes were rimmed with a heavy encrustation of sooty black, much like the dark eye shadow worn by women.

I wondered that men could bear to work in those perilous depths with pick and shovel — the back-bending, excruciating struggle to produce a tenuous existence in stygian caverns which threatened to engulf them without warning. Some were no older than I, and I would feel guilty at my good fortune working in daylight while they labored in darkness below.

It has now been 60 years since I left Wilcoe, but I carry with me, indelibly, a mixture of memories. Sounds echo out of the past, like the sighing of winds through those hollows, the Old English speech of the mountain people (strange words still pop my ears), the chug-chugging of those titan Mallets grinding their bituminous burdens past our store, and the ring-a-ling of the ancient cash register.

Most of all, I conjure up the ghosts of Dave Scott and Max Roston and J. B. Smith and Burns Baldwin — and of Shoemake and Joe Greenberg and Labe Margolis and Squire Whittle — special people lost in the mist of time, but still parading before me in my dreams.

Right: Gem-studded puffballs. Drawing by Chris Bone.

Below: Spring is the time for morels. Sometimes called "dry-land fish" or "Molly Moochers," morels are the most popular wild mushroom gathered in West Virginia.

From Nature's Bounty
Mushroom Hunting in Mercer County

By Charlotte H. Deskins

Photographs by Michael Keller

Dana and Paul Allen can't stop hunting mushrooms. At almost any season of the year, you can find these two dressed in comfortable hiking clothes, bag and guidebook in hand, combing the countryside in search of these delectable delicacies.

The Allens have a long and varied history in southern West Virginia. Paul is transplanted to the mountains. He was born in Charleston, South Carolina, but has spent most of his life in the Mountain State. Dana was born in Mercer County and attended Concord College. For a time the couple lived in upstate New York, but after ten years of Yankee life they decided to come home.

"We missed these hills," Dana explains. "People are just friendlier here in West Virginia, more caring."

Both Allens work, putting in long hours with little spare time. When they do get a free afternoon, they like to spend it foraging for mushrooms.

The art of mushroom gathering first caught Dana's attention in 1977 when she attended a meeting of a local mycological association. At first she gathered just for fun, but soon discovered it could be an inexpensive yet creative way to eat well. Wild mushrooms are not only nutritious and flavorful, they can make almost any dish look elegant.

Folks in these parts have been gathering mushrooms for many years and a lot of old wives' tales have grown up around the activity. Some concern how to tell a safe mushroom from a poisonous one. One belief involves being able to pull back the skin from a mushroom's cap. Supposedly this means it is safe to eat. Another myth is that if you cook a silver spoon in with your mushrooms and it turns black, they are poisonous.

Paul and Dana caution against relying on all such methods. The only way to be truly safe is to know a particular variety beyond the shadow of doubt. Anyone interested in mushroom gathering for food should purchase a reputable guidebook and always use it. They suggest using a guide that has actual photographs of the mushrooms as well as line drawings. Make sure your guide has detailed key listings. Two guidebooks they rely heavily upon are *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms* and *Simon and Schuster's Guide to Mushrooms*.

You should take the guidebook with you on every excursion, the Allens say. Never depend upon memory alone for proper identification. A beginner should also take along an experienced mushroom hunter the first few times out. Many species look

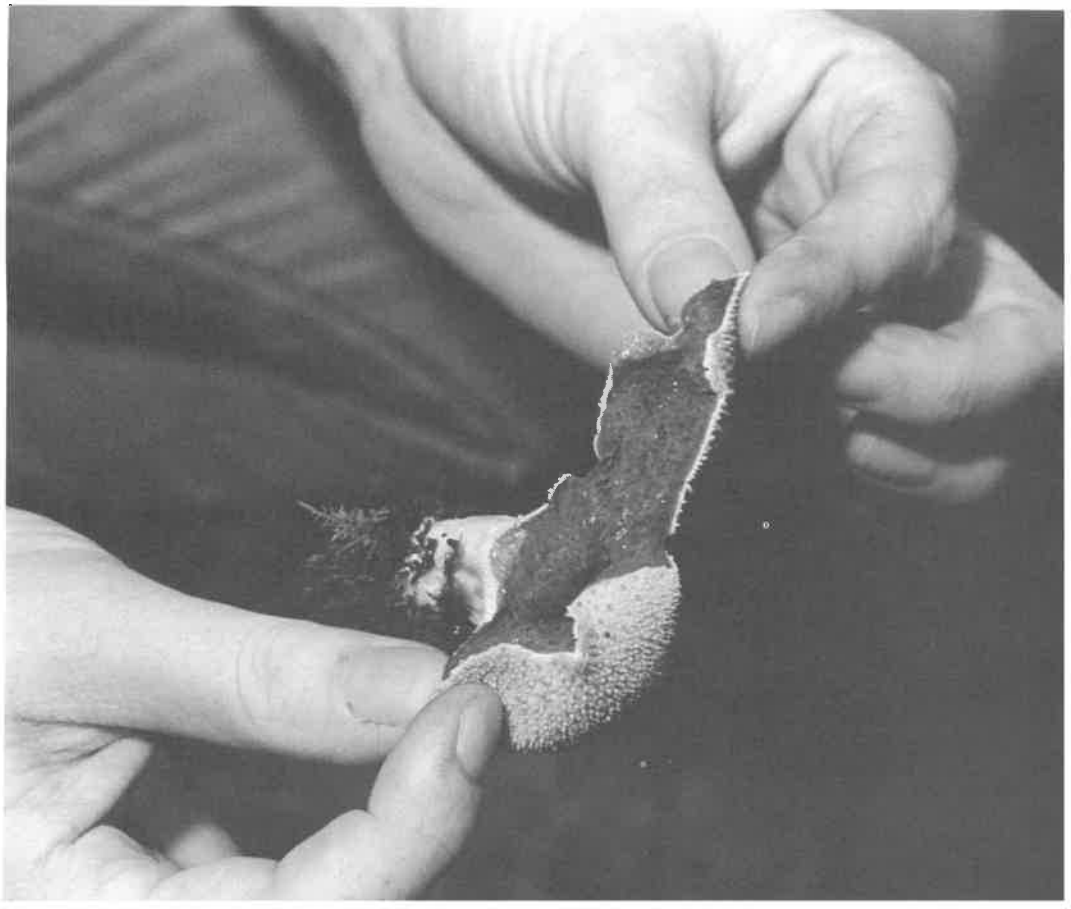
Above: Dana Allen says this is "the most common posture for mycologists." This photo shows her and husband Paul on a recent outing.
Below: A mushroom may be edible at some stages and not others. This puffball is past its prime.

almost identical and only a practiced eye can tell them apart.

Take several brown paper — not plastic — bags so that you can keep each species separate. Before eating any mushrooms always double check it in your guidebook. A single mistake can be costly to your health, even fatal.

Fortunately, about seven out of every ten varieties of mushroom are non-poisonous. For the beginning mushroomer the "Foolproof Four" — morels, sulfur shelfs, puffballs and shaggy manes — are safe to eat and easy to recognize.

Poisonous mushrooms vary greatly in their level of toxicity. They can cause everything from a nasty upset stomach to convulsions and death. Many are easy to recognize because they are so pretty. There is an old saying among mushroom hunters that the uglier a mushroom the better it tastes, the more beautiful it is the more deadly. This is certainly true of the



destroying angel (*Amanita virosa*). This one gets its name from its pure white cap, gills and stalk. Its poison has no known antidote.

One mushroom, though highly toxic, does have a practical use if handled properly. The red-capped fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*) can cause dizziness, nausea and convulsions. However, pioneer women discovered that it makes an excellent fly killer when chopped and placed in a bowl. Just don't let anyone eat it!

The real bane of the mushroom hunter, however, is simply called the little brown mushroom. The "LBM" comes in at least a hundred different varieties in southern West Virginia, according to the Allens. They are dangerous because they are difficult to identify as to poison content and are better off left alone.

Many people mistakenly refer to the mushroom as a fruit or vegetable. It is actually a fungi, a flowerless plant made up of identical cells. Fungi have been around for many millions of years, occupying a critical niche in our ecology. A couple of varieties have been estimated as being over two billion years old. Altogether there are about 75,000 different types of fungi, many of which are mushrooms.

Mushrooms play an important part in the natural balance of the woodlands because they feed off of dead green plants, rotting logs and dampness. By helping to reprocess this material they produce a food eaten not only by humans, but also by raccoons, deer, squirrels, chipmunks and bears.

Mushrooms are more complex than they appear. The part that we eat is called the "fruiting body." It holds the spores which allow the mushroom to reproduce.

The hidden part of the mushroom is made up of thousands of threadlike filaments called "hyphae." They make up the root-like system that allows a mushroom colony to spread. Such a system may settle into the earth and go for years without fruiting. Only when conditions are exactly right — plenty of decaying plants and moisture — will they put in an appearance above ground.

At first the fruiting bodies resemble small, swollen knots. Although they look fragile, they are really quite strong. A developing mushroom may push aside rocks that get in its way. Some have been known to push their way up through a layer of concrete.

These tiny mushroom "buttons" will grow a cap and stem. When they are about three inches tall they are ready for harvest. Some varieties mature slowly. Others button, mature and dry up in the span of a single day and must be gathered quickly. Most mushrooms can live for about a week in very damp conditions.

Beneath the umbrella-like cap are the "gills," tiny slits that hold the spores. Instead of gills some mushrooms have pores. Mushrooms reproduce in a big way. A single meadow mushroom can produce up to 16 billion spores.

One way a mushroomer can better determine what variety of mushroom he is dealing with is by making a "spore print" of it. This is done by

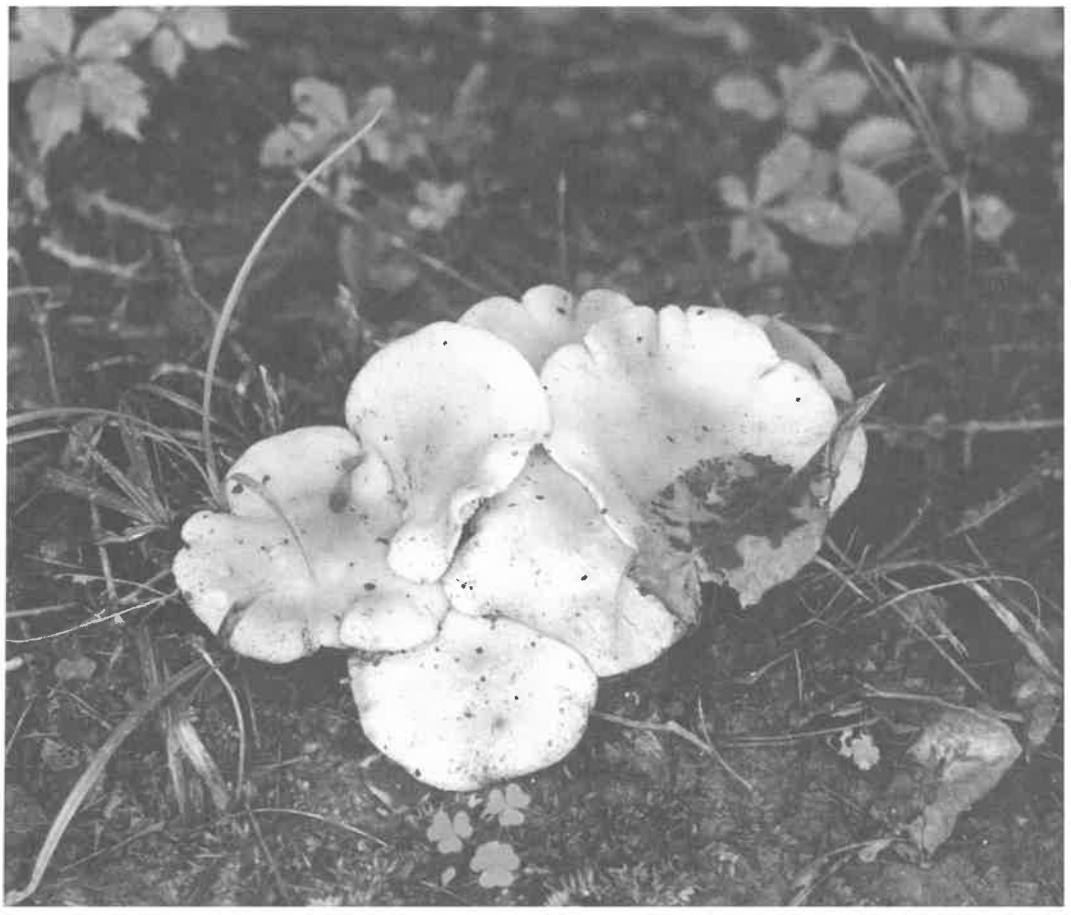
The bright orange sulfur shelf is one of the Allens' "foolproof four," and Dana's favorite for cooking. This fall fungus is also called the chicken mushroom.

Good guidebooks are a must even for the most experienced mushroom hunters, according to the Allens. Even then some species may be impossible to identify conclusively, such as the mushroom below, tentatively identified as a member of the clitocybe family. Never eat mushrooms you aren't absolutely certain about, caution the Mercer couple.

placing a freshly picked mushroom cap onto a piece of paper with the gills facing downward. The mushroom is covered with a glass and allowed to sit for a few hours. The spores will drop onto the paper, revealing its unique pattern and spore color.

Paul and Dana Allen describe southern West Virginia as a mushroom hunter's paradise. There are many varieties available almost year-round.

First come the morels (*Morchella esculenta*), undoubtedly the most commonly eaten wild mushroom in the Mountain State. In southern West Virginia we know them best as "dry-land fish," from the way they're breaded and fried, and folks elsewhere in the state call them Molly Moochers. According to the Allens, the best time to go dry-land fishing is in late spring when the oak leaves are about the size of a mouse's ear. Morels are found under fruit trees, in burned areas and among mayapple plants.



From Dana Allen's Kitchen

Every avid mushroom hunter has a collection of favorite recipes. Dana Allen is no exception. The following are some of her best:

Dana's Dream Soup

1 1/2 pounds whole chicken, cooked, drained and boned; reserve broth.
1/2 bunch broccoli
3 medium carrots
1 cup dried sulfur shelf mushroom powder
1/4 cup butter
1/2 cup heavy cream
3 cups broth from chicken
1 teaspoon honey
2 tablespoons cornstarch in enough water to thicken
Salt and pepper to taste

Lightly sauté vegetables in butter. Add broth and cook until tender. (If not enough broth was produced from the chicken, supplement with chicken bouillon.) Add chicken, mushroom powder, cream and honey. Bring to a boil, then add cornstarch mixture a bit at a time until desired thickness is reached.

Golden Dragon Chicken

1 pound chicken breasts cut into bite-size pieces
1 pound sulfur shelf mushroom cut into bite-size pieces
1 bunch scallions, chopped
1/2 cup blanched almonds
10 oz. snow peas in pod, fresh or frozen
1 cup chicken broth or bouillon
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons cornstarch in water for thickening

Sauté chicken, mushrooms and scallions together in butter. Add broth and soy sauce and simmer until chicken and mushrooms are tender and cooked through. The mushrooms will become slightly more orange-colored and translucent. Add blanched almonds and snow peas. Finally, add cornstarch a little at a time until desired thickness is reached. Serve over rice.

The sulfur shelf mushroom may be used in any dish with chicken or as a chicken substitute, according to Dana. Because of its unique flavor it has been nicknamed "the chicken mushroom." Trim the outer edges of this mushroom for use right away. The rest can be discarded or dried and powdered for use as a flavoring or thickening agent.

To cook puffballs, sliver them and fry with bacon until lightly browned. You can also add them to hush puppy batter and make "mush" puppies. Puffballs should always be cut in half to make sure they are white and firm inside before use. This is a good rule to follow for most mushrooms, to make certain they are not overripe and are not harboring insects or slugs. Such unwanted dinner guests can ruin an otherwise delightful feast.

They resemble a sponge growing out of the ground on a stalk and have a wrinkled look.

Some mushroomers consider morels the ugliest of mushrooms, but their taste more than makes up for it. "We deep-fry them after rolling them in flour," Dana tells me. "Or I sometimes stuff them with a mixture of chicken, rice, scallions and leeks. They also make an excellent addition to most gravies or sauces." She further advises to cut off the stems or slice them in half lengthwise to make certain that no bugs are hidden in the mushroom's many crevices.

And watch out for the false morel. These look almost like the real thing but have an unpleasant taste and are mildly toxic. To distinguish them from a genuine morel, look at the stem. A false morel is attached only at the tip. A true morel is more solidly attached to its stem and its cap is completely hollow. As always, check your guidebook for final confirmation.

Summer brings the large and lovely parasol mushroom (*Lepiota procera*). These are usually found on lawns and can grow to a foot tall with a ten-inch cap. Parasol mushrooms are delicious sautéd in butter.

Early autumn is the best time to find the meadow mushroom (*Agaricus campestris*). This mushroom is much like the canned mushroom we put on pizza. Its gills turn pink when it first opens, then a deep chocolate brown as it ages. It grows almost as large as the parasol mushroom.

These varieties have nothing on the giant puffball (*Calvatia gigantea*) when it comes to size. These are found in fallow fields near running water. It is not uncommon for a puffball to get as large as a basketball. Some have been found that are almost as big as a small sheep! Other, smaller varieties, such as the gem-studded puffball, are more common here in southern West Virginia.

Puffballs should be gathered at the peak of ripeness, while they are still firm and white. Once a puffball has turned dark and the spore mass has dried, touching it will release a dusty cloud. It is easy to see how this mushroom has gained the nickname of the "devil's snuffbox."

"In late September," Paul tells me, "after the first chilling rains we look for Dana's personal favorite — the sulfur shelf." This bright orange mushroom (*Polyporus sulphureus*) is found growing on dead hardwoods and usually grows in quantity. At

times the Allens have picked 30 pounds of it in one location. It is especially good in Oriental-style dishes.

Other varieties out at the same time include chanterelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*), and shaggy manes (*Coprinus comatus*) and other members of the inky cap family (*Coprinaceae*).

In late fall the Allens like to look for the oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus ostreatus*). These soft, gilled mushrooms have a cream or brown top and are cream-colored underneath. They taste faintly like oysters and are usually found growing out of the trunks of dead maple or poplar trees, two or three days after a cold, steady rain. This mushroom will bloom or "flush" later in the year, too. "Once we even found some in early December," Dana remembers. "They will pop up whenever there is a thaw in the cold weather, provided the winter has been a mild one." The Allens like their oyster mushrooms deep-fried or use them to add a touch of extra flavor to an oyster stew or chowder.

Mushroom hunters should not forage too close to busy roadways. The diesel and gasoline fumes produced by passing traffic can cause a buildup of lead and other noxious chemicals in plants growing in such areas. Mushrooms are especially sensitive to their environment. Even a normally edible mushroom can cause illness if taken from contaminated ground, so stick to secluded areas.

The Allens preserve their mushroom harvest by drying or freezing them. Most varieties respond well to drying either in a food dehydrator or in the sun on a clean, dry cloth. Do not dry mushrooms in the oven. They will usually cook instead. Shaggy manes and inky caps are best preserved by sautéing and then freezing them. Chanterelles tend to become tough when dried and should be frozen in this manner also. Sautéing first helps them retain body and flavor.

Aside from practical uses, mushrooms have a decidedly romantic nature. For centuries they have been associated with the "wee folk" — fairies, elves and brownies. Their delicate and cunning shapes suggest an umbrella or table top to us more imaginative souls.

I can still remember as a child out walking with my McDowell County grandfather, when we would come upon a circle or semi-circle of mushrooms. With an Irish twinkle in his eye he would say, "Well, now! The fairies must have had a party last night. And look — they have left their furniture behind."

After talking with the Allens, I now know that such "fairy rings" actually mark the outermost edges of the underground network of the hyphae that grow out from the fungi's center. The mushrooms button up from the margin, forming a perfect circle. Alas, another myth shattered! But it was worth it to learn so much about one of southern West Virginia's most plentiful and tasty wild food sources.

The gem-studded puffball is choice eating when gathered at the right time. Dana Allen says to sliver these mushrooms and fry until brown.

A Good Life and a Full Life

John Wesley Harris of Shepherdstown

By Malcolm W. Ater, Jr.

Photographs by P. Corbit Brown

If you happen to pass through Shepherdstown one day, you may see something that always brings a smile to the townspeople. It's the sight of an elderly black gentleman easing his vintage Buick around town, a large dog leaning over his shoulder from the back seat. The man with the graying hair is Dr. John Wesley Harris, and the dog is his constant companion, Snowball. What's remarkable about Dr. Harris is the fact that at age 90 he gets around almost as much as during the 45 years he taught in Shepherdstown's segregated black schools.

John Wesley, as most everybody calls him, enjoyed teaching because he enjoyed learning. "I always had a burning desire to learn as much as I could," he says. "You might say I had a very strong attitude towards achievement. I never looked on learning as a chore, but rather as a way of bettering myself." He pauses for a moment, then adds, "I always looked on education as something that everyone needs."

It was this that led John Wesley to his life's work, helping young black children reach out for knowledge. He began his teaching career in 1921 at Frederick, Maryland, then moved back to his native Jefferson County in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle in 1922. For three years he taught in Summit Point, becoming principal at Shepherdstown's Shady Side Elementary School in 1925. It was an aging two-room building, decrepit even by old-time standards. John Wesley taught grades five through eight while another teacher instructed the younger students. Together the two educators taught about 50 students each year.

"It was right difficult teaching back in those days," Dr. Harris admits wryly. "You had so many different ages in one room, working on at least five different levels. We didn't have much teaching help, either, so to keep the kids busy you really had to keep hopping yourself."

John Wesley Harris and his dog are well-known on the streets of Shepherdstown. Dr. Harris was born and raised there.

Making teaching still more difficult was the lack of even basic conveniences until the 1930's. "There wasn't any electricity, so the only light came from the windows," laughs John Wesley. "Which meant that if there were any special meetings at the school, everything was concluded by dusk.

"For years we used two old Burnside stoves to heat the building, one

in each room, until we finally got a furnace system. You know, I haven't thought of those Burnside stoves in years, but at this moment it's as if I can smell them burning right now," the old schoolmaster reminisced, his thoughts flowing back to an earlier time. "And let me tell you about our plumbing in those days," he continued heartily. "We had an outhouse in the back, but we had to go over to a neighbor's house to fetch our drinking water.

"Of course, we didn't have any bus transportation in those days, so all the children had to walk to school. Fortunately most of them lived in town, but we had some kids who lived out in Uvilla, a good distance from Shepherdstown, who had to walk ten or 11 miles each day. But they came to school regularly, too."

In 1949 East Side Elementary School was built on the edge of town. The new school was still segregated, but John Wesley calls it "far superior" to the old one. "I think the town really took care of us when the new school was built, because it was modern even by white standards," he says. "We had modern plumbing and a good furnace system, a hot food program, and playground equipment for the kids. We added two more teachers and even had a janitor."

John Wesley continued to teach and serve as principal at East Side Elementary until he retired in 1966. "I only missed two days of school in all that time," he proudly recalls of his 45 years of teaching. "I felt I had a job to do, and I went out and did it."

Perhaps his greatest contribution as a teacher was his ability to instill a lasting desire to learn in his students. "For most black children, their formal education ended after the eighth grade," he remembers. "But I tried to impress upon my kids how important it was for them to continue going to school. Many of them went on to Page Jackson High School in Charles Town or Ramer High School in Martinsburg."

And many of John Wesley's students went well beyond Page Jackson or Ramer High. Some went to Storer College in nearby Harpers Ferry, a prestigious black college until integration indirectly caused its closing in 1956 [see related story]. Other students continued their schooling at black colleges in Washington and Baltimore, still others at schools far away from their native Shepherdstown. Some followed in Dr. Harris's footsteps and became teachers and school principals themselves.

"Others became doctors, lawyers, dentists, scholars, and just plain good citizens," he says with satisfaction. "Most importantly, I'd like to think that all my students became energetic, hard-working church people," says the man who bears the name of the great Methodist prophet.

John Wesley Harris took both his high school diploma and teaching certificate from historic Storer College. Photographer unknown, about 1920. Courtesy Jefferson County Oral and Visual History Association.

One thing that brings joy to Dr. Harris is the fact that so many of his former students stop by to visit with him. "My students still remember me," he says with a small shake of his head, as if in wonder that any would remember a teacher from 50 years ago. "Why, just last week one of my eighth grade graduates, he's a doctor now, stopped by to say hello. It makes you feel good that they care enough to stop by and see you."

Perhaps one reason John Wesley has had such an impact as a teacher is his obvious love of the work. When asked what he would do differently if he had his long life to live over again, he answered without hesitation. "Nothing. I've had a good life, a full life, and I got tremendous satisfaction out of teaching. I couldn't imagine wanting to be anything except a teacher, and if I wasn't so dang old now I'd still be teaching."

John Wesley Harris was born and raised in Shepherdstown, having lived his entire life in the historic town overlooking the Potomac River, just across from Maryland. When he was six years old his family bought a small house just a block away from Shepherd College, the same house that John Wesley lives in today. "My father paid a thousand dollars for it back in 1905, which was considered a pretty handsome price back in those days," he says with a smile. "Some people thought my father was paying too high a price, but in the end I guess he knew what he was doing." The house and property are today worth many, many times what John Wesley's father paid.

"Now I can't swear this is true," states John Wesley, warming up to a little anecdote about his place, "but back in the 1700's George Washington originally wanted to make Shepherdstown the capital of the new government. Well, he and his brother Charles often spent a lot of time in this area, and historical lore has it that George Washington spent several nights here. Now wouldn't that be something if it was true?"

Although the nation's capital was eventually situated 65 miles downriver, the Washington brothers are still remembered for their contributions to the area. Both Shepherdstown and Charles Town — named for Charles, of course — and neighboring Harpers Ferry all have main streets named, quite appropriately, Washington Street.

All of John Wesley's early education was in Jefferson County. After attending the same Shady Side Elementary School where he later taught, he immediately went on to Storer College. At that time there wasn't any black high school in Jefferson County. Two years later, in 1921, he earned his teaching certification from Storer,

Above: Aussie Harris, John Wesley's mother. Dr. Harris's parents acquired the family home in 1905. Photographer unknown, 1920's. Courtesy Jefferson County Oral and Visual History Association.
Left: Dr. Harris is proud of his independence as he enters his 10th decade. He looks after his own affairs and stays active in the community.

leading to a career he would never turn his back on.

His days at the historic college were happy ones. "Even though I could have commuted between Shepherdstown and Harpers Ferry, I decided to board in one of the dormitories. There were always lots of activities to keep us busy after class, and living away from home gave us a chance to manage our own lives," he remembers. "We especially enjoyed playing other black colleges from Baltimore and Washington in sports such as football, baseball and basketball, and we always had a fair amount of success. I truly loved my days at Storer College."

Although most people's formal education ends when they receive their college degrees, John Wesley Harris was still like a young pup waiting to be weaned. "I couldn't seem to stay out of the classroom," he says with a smile. "There was just something in me that made me want to keep on learning."

And keep on learning is exactly what he did. Over the next many years he took classes from West Virginia State College, George Washington University, and LaSalle School of Law. Of course, he couldn't resist night classes at neighboring Shepherd College. Harris was later awarded an honorary doctorate degree from Ohio Christian College in Cincinnati.

John Wesley married the former Amelia Collins in 1921, enjoying her companionship for 55 years, until her death in 1976. Their son, Dean, a retired high school science teacher in Fairfax County, Virginia, now works as a conductor for a traveling music chorus. Daughter Lillian is retired from Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and now a church choir instructor. "I'm so proud of them," said John Wesley. "They worked hard to do something with their lives, and they've both done that."

Although John Wesley has lived alone for the last 13 years, he has plenty to keep himself occupied. A member of the Knights of Pythias, Elks, Shriners, and Masons, Dr. Harris has kept busy over the years. He's served as a grand lodge officer in the Pythians, been the grand exalted ruler of the Elks, and has been the state grand officer of the Masons. John Wesley is particularly proud of the fact that he's achieved the 33rd degree in Masonry, the highest degree accorded a Mason.

Today, even at 90 years of age, John Wesley stays active. He regularly attends the Asbury United Methodist Church in Shepherdstown, and over the years has served not only as its delegate to the annual Washington conference but also in virtually every one of its different offices and positions. "I love my church," he says. "One day when I get some time I'd like to do something where I can leave something behind me. I'd like to do some research on our church's American founder, Reverend Asbury, and look up the history of our church here in Shepherdstown. That would give me a great deal of pleasure."

Besides his work with the church and fraternal organizations, John Wesley has a solid record of working for his hometown. During the 1960's he was elected as a member of the town council, serving through the administrations of three different mayors. Then, at age 87, when most people can expect to spend a few quiet years in peaceful retirement, Shepherdstown called upon its native son for still more service. John Wesley was asked to serve as town magistrate, a position he gladly filled until his recent re-retirement from public life.

"I enjoyed the work, just as I've always enjoyed keeping busy," he says dutifully. "But I guess there's always the time for someone younger to take over," he adds, laughing.

John Wesley Harris has seen Shepherdstown change in many ways, casting off racial segregation to become a community proud to extend equality to all its citizens. His small and sleepy town has grown into a leading tourist spot and become a permanent home for throngs of newcomers from the Washington area.

When asked about the changes, Dr. Harris replied, "I've loved Shepherdstown all my life. Even when we had school segregation, the county always treated us fairly," he said without bitterness. "I can look around to neighboring states and realize, considering the times, that the black schools were well supported. And now, well, things are the way they should be, the way they should have been a long time ago, but at least they've been here longer in Jefferson County than they have been in other places."

John Wesley remains a familiar and well respected figure in Shepherdstown, himself changing little except for his gray hairs. He scoffs at the thought of senior citizen activities. "Oh, I've been asked to join some of them, and it's something I want to do, but I keep telling the folks that I'm still a junior citizen," he laughs. "Why, I never heard of such a thing, being called a senior citizen!"

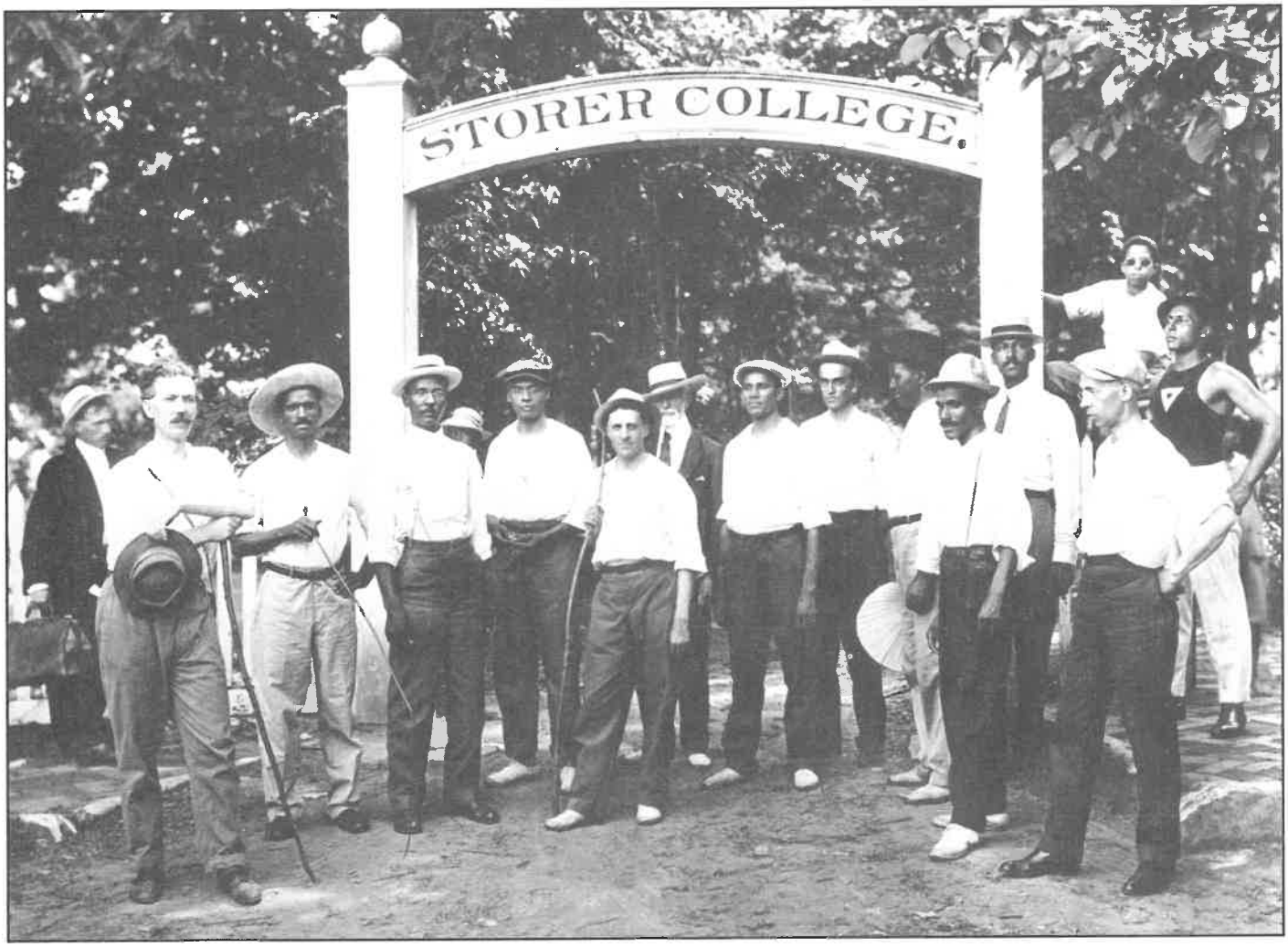
He still drives to the post office for his mail, goes about visiting his friends, and frequently drives his 1978 blue Buick Electra up Route 45 to Martinsburg for shopping. And always, regardless of where he goes, he has his steady and faithful companion with him. "Yes, Snowball and I have been together a long time," he concedes. "I surely do love him and wouldn't go anywhere without him."

I had to smile when I heard John Wesley say that, because that was one of the first things he talked about when I did a newspaper article on him a couple of years ago. He told me how he had put Snowball on his chain for a few minutes of exercise one cold evening before bringing him in for the night. When he checked on Snowball a short time later, the dog was gone. The hours seemed to press on forever. Finally, at 1:00 a.m., the old gentleman bundled himself up and climbed into his car.

I can picture John Wesley, then 88 years old, driving the dark streets of Shepherdstown, searching for his dog. For over an hour he looked. And when he did return home, he could sleep soundly because Snowball was with him.

A small thing? Perhaps. But for Dr. John Wesley Harris it was just another example of doing what he's done all his life, looking after others before he takes his own ease.

"Snowball and I have been together a long time," John Wesley Harris says. It's a safe bet that the affection is mutual.



Storer College was the gateway to learning for generations of black Americans. Professor Henry T. McDonald stands at left, hat in hand, and Dr. Madison Brisco at the right, with hand on hip. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

Storer College

A Bygone Harpers Ferry Institution

By Barbara Rasmussen

Storer College was a school for freed slaves established in the rubble of Harpers Ferry in the Reconstruction years after the Civil War. The institution was endowed by a Maine businessman and established by a New England religious denomination, the Freewill Baptists. Defunct since 1956, Storer espoused a mission of "sensible interracial living."

Nathan C. Brackett, a Freewill Baptist minister, provided the leadership to establish Storer College. Shortly after his ordination, Mr. Brackett joined the United States Christian Commission. He was assigned as a field agent in General Philip Sheridan's army. Brackett was sent to Harpers Ferry, where he was responsible for mailing soldiers' pay home to their families.

The Freewill Baptist story began in the late 18th century, when Benjamin Randall founded the denomination. Randall died in 1808, and over the next 30 years his followers refined their doctrines. Among other things, the Freewill Baptists concluded that slavery was evil. They denied membership to slave owners and adopted a vocal anti-slavery position. Their own salvation, they believed, was at risk unless they used all means possible to extinguish human servitude.

Unlike most other abolitionists, whose efforts ended once the slaves

were freed, the Freewill Baptists continued their support for blacks. With representatives such as Brackett already in the field, the long tradition of opposition to slavery transformed itself into massive efforts on behalf of freed blacks in the South. The denomination provided relief, missionaries, and teachers to the freedmen.

Following the war, Brackett was commissioned by his church, the American Missionary Association, and the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands to be superintendent of freedmen's education in the area loosely called the Shenandoah Valley. His territory encompassed everything between Martinsburg and Lexington, Virginia. Simple elementary schools were started in all the principal towns in the 150-mile long, 30-mile wide strip.

Within two years Brackett was working with church colleagues to establish a black college. He appropriated the ruins of the home of the superintendent of the former U.S. arsenal on Camp Hill in Harpers Ferry. Overlooking the majestic convergence of the Potomac and the Shenandoah rivers, the once grand Lockwood House stood a forlorn and empty ruin in 1865. Below, also still and empty, but intact, stood a red brick fire engine house — John Brown's fort.

It was six years to the month after Brown's momentous attack upon American Negro slavery that Nathan Brackett and four northern school teachers began to teach former slaves to read and write and cipher. Harpers Ferry was a shambles. Anne S. Dudley Bates, one of the first teachers, later recalled that there were war-riddled buildings everywhere, with neither a tree nor a fence left. Hundred of rude soldiers' graves marked the landscape.

The conditions which confronted Brackett's teachers were not cheering. Local hostility made it difficult to find often destitute and suffering, southern whites were loath to share with freedmen or northern missionaries. Inevitably, federal help was necessary in the Shenandoah Valley as well as the rest of the South, where vast groups of freed slaves had flocked to U.S. Army camps or fled to Union-held territory.

Storer's Anthony Hall, renamed Wirth Hall for a National Park Service official, is now a Park Service training center. Photo by P. Corbit Brown.

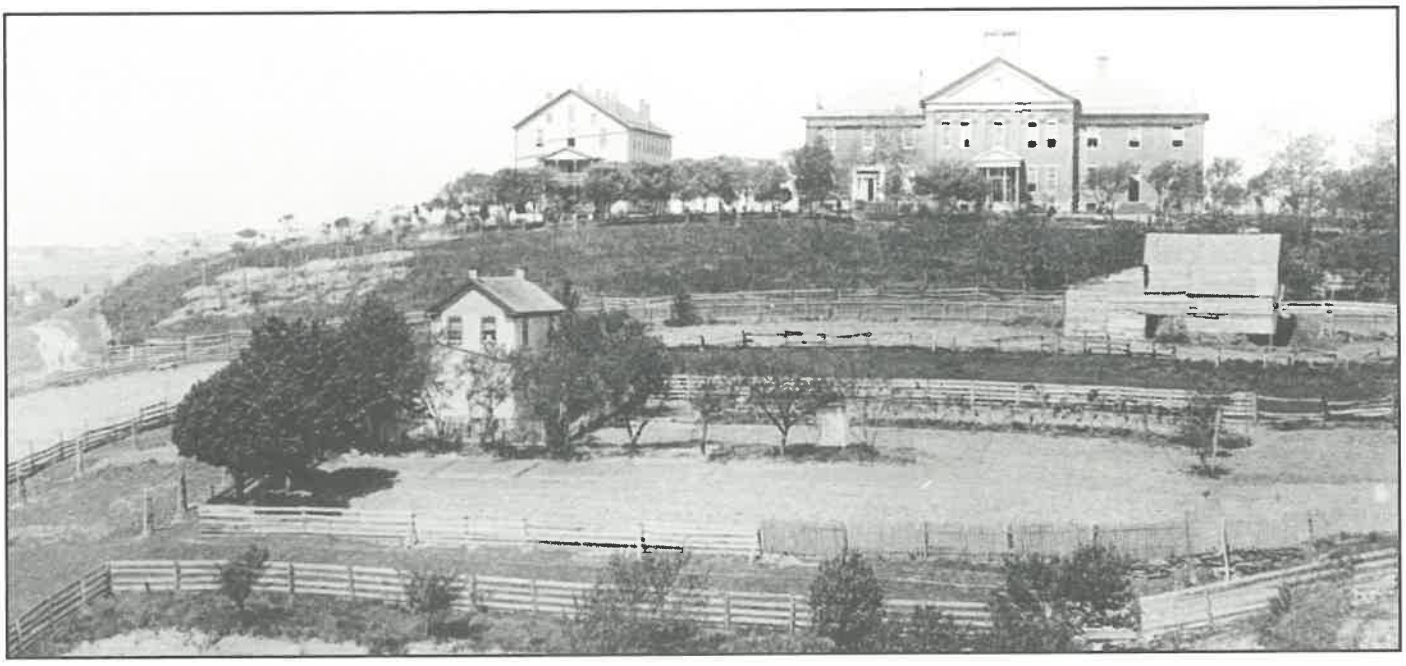
Miserable conditions aside, the Reverend Brackett kept to his work. He was soon joined by his bride, Louise Cook Brackett, who also taught. By 1867, the Baptists were teaching 2,500 freed slaves. Within months, the denominational leadership decided to back Brackett's dream of establishing a permanent school in Harpers Ferry. By a curious twist of events, the Freewillers soon found the money to turn it into a college which would occupy their efforts for the next 89 years.

Businessman John Storer of Sanford, Maine, was old and infirm in the post-war days, but he still held strong sentiments. Storer, who was a Congregationalist, wanted to endow a black college in the South. He believed the American Missionary Association would accept his proposal and open a college within a year. Freewill Baptist minister Oren B. Cheney begged for the opportunity to take the same proposal to the Freewill Baptist Home Mission Board first, and Storer agreed. The two men then drew up a complicated agreement with many strings attached, and Storer set aside $10,000 worth of municipal bonds until the Baptists raised a matching $10,000.

John Storer died before his college opened its doors, leaving Senator William Pitt Fessenden of Maine to hold his bequest until all aspects of the agreement were in order. By August 26, 1868, $30,000 had been raised. Other contributors donated 150 acres of land near Harpers Ferry, and the Baptists weathered an attempt by Storer's heirs to contest the will. These heirs, a son and a daughter, later came around. They acquiesced in their father's will and even honored his verbal wish to do more by giving an extra $1,000 from the estate to lay the foundation for a library.

By this time, Congress had approved legislation awarding the Baptists possession of four old houses on Camp Hill where arsenal officials had lived. General O. O. Howard of the Freedmen's Bureau provided funds to meet operating expenses and to construct a men's dormitory. A total federal contribution of $18,000 in funds plus the donation of the Camp Hill property, valued at $30,000 at the time, made the federal government prominent in the establishment of Storer College.

Money remained a constant worry, and Storer College also had to overcome racism from within the local community and beyond. The state legislature objected to the idea of chartering a school which took students regardless of race or sex, but Senator Joseph T. Hoke of Martinsburg, who had introduced the charter bill, managed to get a crippling amendment tabled. Hoke, a graduate of the Freewill Baptists' Hillsdale Col-

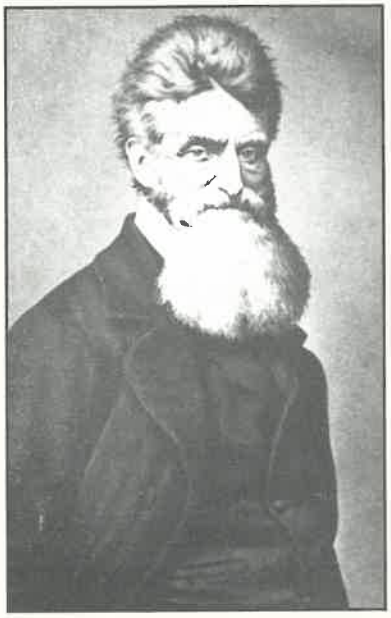


Storer College in the spring of 1909. Anthony Hall stands at right center, with Lincoln Hall to the left. The college farm, in the foreground, provided support for the struggling school. Photographer unknown, courtesy Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

lege in Michigan, was a member of Storer's board of directors.

Life was trying for the teachers in the early days. One young woman wrote home saying she was often hooted at or stoned on the streets. Military escorts were provided in the immediate post-war period. When opponents failed to block the state charter, a drive was begun to rescind it the following year. Hoke again managed to outmaneuver the legislature, but continuing local opposition prompted the federal government to send an agent to investigate requests that government property donated to the college be reclaimed. Those efforts were unsuccessful, but hostility was so heightened that both students and teachers carried arms.

The Ku Klux Klan directed its wrath at Storer, too, but ultimately opponents grew weary and abandoned the campaign. By 1891, war wounds



John Brown. Courtesy Boyd B. Stutler Collection, State Archives.

October 16

Perhaps
You will remember
John Brown.

John Brown
Who took his gun,
Took twenty-one companions
White and black,
Went to shoot your way to freedom
Where two rivers meet
And the hills of the
North
And the hills of the
South
Look slow at one another —
And died
For your sake.

Now that you are
Many years free,
And the echo of the Civil War
Has passed away,
And Brown himself
Has long been tried at law,
Hanged by the neck,
And buried in the ground —
Since Harpers Ferry
Is alive with ghosts today,
Immortal raiders
Come again to town —

Perhaps
You will recall
John Brown.

— Langston Hughes

(Reprinted from *Selected Poems of Langston Hughes,* by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)

were healing and the Freewill Baptists were pleased to report that community sentiment now reflected pride in the college. Even so, the legislature that year defeated a bill proposing an annual $3,000 appropriation for the college.

At first, Storer offered normal, industrial, and preparatory courses rather than a college degree. Costs were low. In 1869, tuition was $3 per term or $20 for five years. By then 1,200 students had attended, although far fewer graduated. Of these early students, 300 became teachers and 30 joined the ministry. By 1910, Storer College had produced 400 graduates. Accreditation as a four-year school came in 1940. By the late 1940's more than 7,000 students had attended Storer, but World War II radically reduced the student population.

To augment sparse endowments and low income, the institution undertook many fund-raising efforts over the years. In the summer months, the college rented rooms to city dwellers seeking healthy air. Trustees sold lots from the farm the original benefactors had donated, and the rest of the farm was cultivated. In 1872, when the need for a girls' dormitory had become critical, a student choral group toured New York to raise construction funds.

Support came from such prominent former anti-slavery leaders as the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* fame. Frederick Douglass served as a trustee in 1891, and by 1910 the faculty was fully integrated with men and women of both races.

A religious atmosphere permeated student life at Storer, although ultimately no denomination claimed it. The Freewill Baptists merged with the larger denomination of Northern Baptists in 1911, and the school's denominational affiliation weakened. By the 1930's, all strict affiliation was gone.

In 1954, the West Virginia Legislature used compliance with the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown* v. *Board of Education* desegregation decision as an excuse to stop its modest annual appropriation to Storer. The state's reasoning was that the doors of all other West Virginia colleges were now open to black students.

Without supplementary state funds, Storer could not remain open, and the

This Storer College choral group was photographed during academic year 1940-41. Teacher Pearl Tatten stands in the center, near the back. Photographer unknown, courtesy Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

institution was essentially abandoned in 1955. A merger with the Baptist-run, but all-white, Alderson-Broaddus College was considered but not tried. After several unsuccessful attempts to reopen, Storer's trustees sold the institution back to the federal government in 1960. Shepherd College received portions of the Storer library. College buildings are now part of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

The significance of Harpers Ferry as the location for a college for freed slaves was not lost on black Americans, who fought for Storer's survival. On February 22, 1931, poet Langston Hughes autographed and sent to Storer a poem memorializing Harpers Ferry and John Brown's raid. "October 16" ultimately was published in a slightly different version five times, but the famous poet's work was sent to Storer College first.

While the Freewill Baptists generally cooperated with the American Missionary Association in the Civil War era, church leaders had outmaneuvered the Association in urging John Storer to give his money directly to their denomination. This unusual departure in financial matters brought results very quickly, but in the end resulted in too narrow a base for fund raising. Bypassing the AMA may account for Storer College's early successes as well as its ultimate demise.

Nowadays, student voices no longer enliven historic Camp Hill. But Harpers Ferry is "alive with ghosts," as the Langston Hughes poem notes, and it may be assumed that the spirits of pioneering preachers and teachers have joined those of the soldiers and raiders who passed that way before. Together they keep watch over this beautiful spot, "Where two rivers meet/And the hills of the/North/And the hills of the/South/Look slow at one another."

Bluefield Baseball
The Tradition of a Century

By Stuart McGehee

Bluefield outfielder "Spitoon" Potts winced at the crack of the bat and backpedalled quickly, squinting up to find the baseball against a bright blue southern West Virginia sky. Locating the soaring drive, he turned and raced for the wall, seeing that the long blast would beat him there. The ball bounced once, and then rolled into a nearby tin can, sticking tightly.

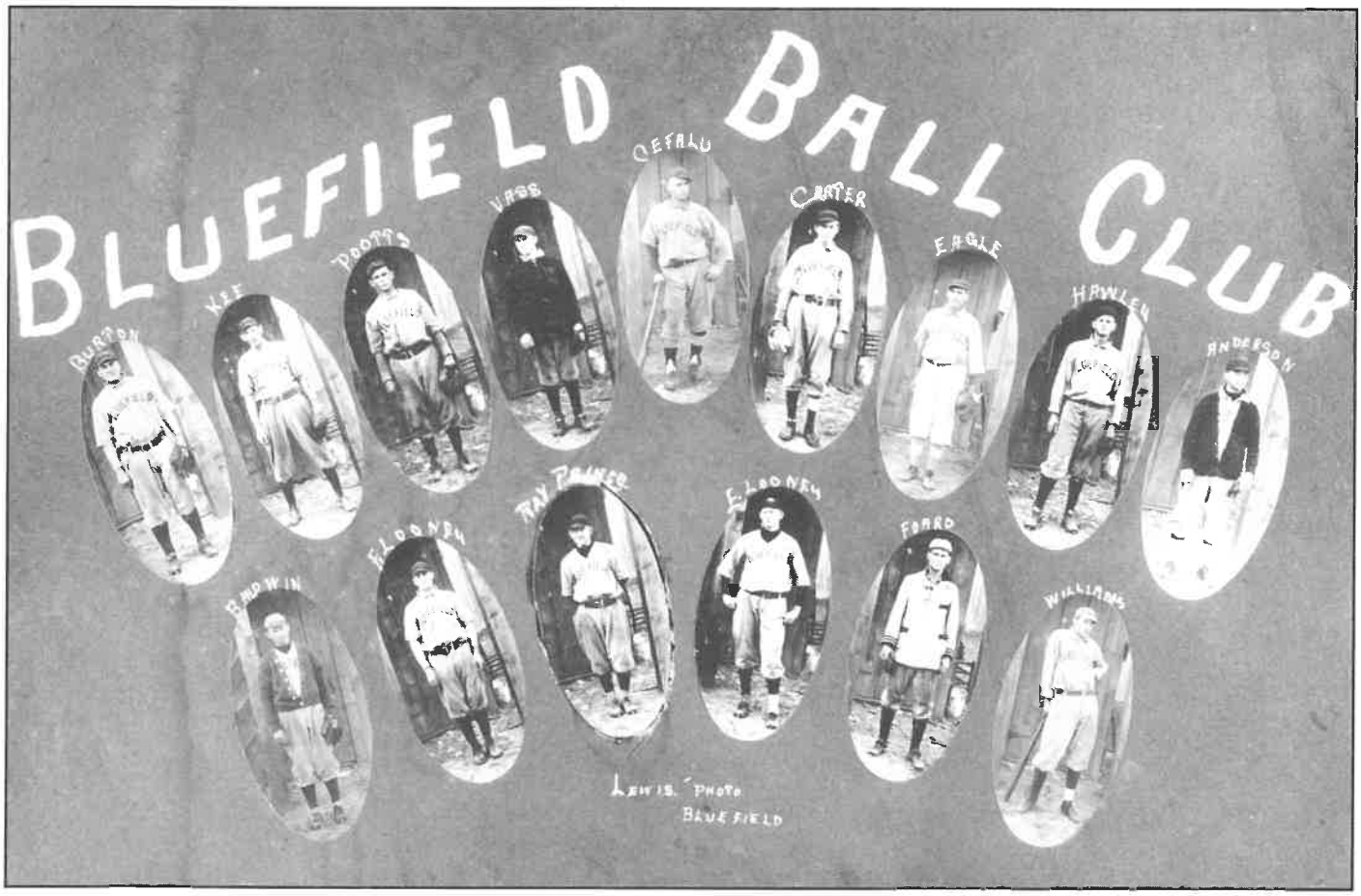
Potts gloved the can, ball and all, and whirled toward the diamond. Spying the runner rounding third and heading for the plate, he had no time to extract the ball and hurled the can with all his might. The mighty peg bounced once and landed squarely in the catcher's mitt a split-second before the surprised base runner slid home in a cloud of red clay dust. "You're out!" screamed the equally amazed umpire, punching the air for emphasis.

The year was 1912 or thereabouts. Potts's famous throw, while not typical of baseball in Bluefield, nevertheless characterizes the long and colorful local heritage of the game, which was played here even before the 1889 incorporation of the town. Last year's city centennial celebration brought a lot of the old memories back to life.

Baseball was largely unknown in pre-industrial Appalachia, but when Pennsylvania coal and railroad men descended upon the West Virginia hills a century or so ago, they brought their passion for the national pastime with them. Imparting it to the innumerable coal and lumber towns they founded among the rugged mountains, these entrepreneurs created a unique athletic tradition in the isolated hills and hollows.

Bluefield's baseball history thus began not among the hardy Scotch-Irish pioneers who first settled the pristine valley at the headwaters of the

Late winter is the worst time for lovers of the game, but Bluefield general manager George Fanning has seen enough off-seasons to take it philosophically. Bowen Field has been a second home to him since 1948. Photo by Michael Keller.



The 1912 Bluefield club was a tough-looking crew. "Spitoon" Potts suffered the indignity of having his name misspelled on the team picture, but left an enduring local legend. Photo by Lewis Photo, Bluefield; courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

East and Bluestone rivers, but with the 1882 arrival of the Norfolk & Western Railroad. The N&W's Philadelphia management encouraged company teams, and savage competition developed between various railroad shops. Firemen played after-work games with locomotive refitters, and baggage handlers contested brakemen. Spectators lined the steep rocky hillsides along the massive Bluefield rail yard while tons of coal rolled through town on its way to Norfolk and the sea. The N&W paid good players extra, and rewarded employees with free passes to Cincinnati for major league games.

The favored railroad field was the "Tower Grounds" in the West End near the Norfolk & Western freight station, but another popular diamond was just behind the landmark locomotive roundhouse on the North Side. Other early parks were located off Bland Street and up "Union Hollow" where a fairground lay. The first regulation-size field was laid out on Adams Street — College Avenue today — between East River and Augusta streets.

These early sandlot teams played a fiercely competitive brand of baseball. The game was an equalizer, drawing in high and low. Future N&W president A. C. Needles played shortstop, while Mayor R. M. Baldwin caught — without the benefit of modern protective gear. Early Bluefielders created their own entertainment, and fan support was intense. Workers squeezed a few innings into noontime lunch breaks, and some firms let out their entire work force for afternoon contests.

As population soared throughout the southern West Virginia smokeless coalfields in the early 20th century, independent coal operators sponsored company teams to instill solidarity and community spirit among miners and their families. Almost every coal town reserved some rare and precious flat ground for a diamond, and coalfield baseball became a way of life. At times slag heaps served as outfield walls and

High school teams developed talent for local professional and semi-pro leagues and contributed to city sports enthusiasm. This is Beaver High School's first baseball team, photographed in April 1908. Photographer unknown, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

tipples as impromptu grandstands.

Coal operators bet heavily on their teams, sometimes slipping in outside "ringers" from major league teams after the bets had been placed. Miners who could get their curve ball consistently over the plate were seldom called upon to perform hazardous underground duty. Entire towns rode the main line down to the next camp for wild-and-wooly Sunday afternoon picnic doubleheaders. Legendary for competitive fire and rowdy fan violence, baseball in the coalfields is a story all its own.

The creation of a strong sports culture in the surrounding coalfields led to cries for Bluefield's professional entry into the game. As the financial and service capital of the vast Pocahontas Coalfield as well as the headquarters of the Pocahontas Division of the railroad, Bluefield's preeminence in the recreational world of the booming region evolved naturally. The city's first professional team suited up in 1906, sponsored by prominent local businessman W. L. Otey. Otey's team captured local hearts by stomping coal operator Edward Cooper's renowned Bramwell nine, despite a near-riot caused by a beaning incident.

The overwhelming demand for steel to feed the American war effort in the First World War sent coal tonnage soaring, and solidified Bluefield's position of regional leadership. By then there were three semi-pro squads in town, including the Bland Street Stars. Brewer P. J. Kelly spirited in all or most of the Purdue varsity team to play locally for a spell, again besting Bramwell's coalfield champions. Serving as a sort of minor league for the paid players was the amateur City League, which included clubs from the railroad, the utility companies, the *Daily Telegraph*, and many churches. Beaver High School boasted some fine scholastic teams as well.

Baseball fever swept the city in the early '20's. The *Telegraph* replayed the World Series for a huge throng of fans on a giant display diamond on its Bland Street windows, manually posting the plays as they came in over the news wire. Early radio broadcasts garnered vast listening audiences.

But Bluefield's fame as a baseball mecca in the mountains really dates from 1924, when the professional Blue-Grays were formed by Fred Fox and Fred Hawley. Manager Dick Neberger recruited terrific talent for the team, including several players destined for the majors. Entering into official Coalfield League competition with tough teams like operator Laurence Tierney's Powhatan nine and Colonel Edward O'Toole's famed Gary powerhouse clubs, the Blue-Grays began a continuous local professional baseball tradition which now spans half a century. The Coalfield evolved into the Blue Ridge and later the Class "D" Mountain State League, while the Blue-Grays remained the darling of the community and a terror for hapless opponents. The post-war Appalachian League circuit was founded in 1946 and, with occasional reshuffling, has persisted until today.

The Blue-Grays, perennial pennant challengers, needed suitable accommodations, and the Roaring '20's witnessed the construction of two fine small-town facilities: Cain Field in the East End and a sprawling park in the Bluefield-Graham Fairgrounds along the state line in South Bluefield. Foundations for both fields are still visible today.

The phenomenal popularity of the Blue-Grays eventually prompted the construction of a first-rate stadium in City Park alongside the fairgrounds, and spectacular Bowen Field was dedicated on May 14, 1939. Despite the ill omen of Mayor Carl Creasy's errant opening day toss, the home

Bluefield History

Bluefield's first pictorial history, the *Centennial History of Bluefield, West Virginia, 1889-1989,* is now in print. The new book is by Dr. Stuart McGehee, Bluefield College professor, archivist at the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, and occasional GOLDENSEAL freelancer.

The 128-page hardbound book has more than 300 photographs. The archives collected all photo and historical data for the publication. The *Centennial History of Bluefield* spans the century since Bluefield's founding as a major regional railroad center. Many of the photos and documents have never been published before, according to McGehee.

To order the book, contact the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Craft Memorial Library, 600 Commerce Street, Bluefield, WV 24701. The cost is $20, plus $3.50 for shipping and handling.

The legendary Blue-Grays brought up a generation of ball players starting in 1924. These score cards are from the '30's and '40's. Courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

team rallied to sink the Welch Miners, 4-1. Nestled in a tight hollow in City Park — oddly, a West Virginia municipal park located partly in Virginia — Bowen Field is a lovely facility. Just over the concrete outfield wall is a wooded hillside, a perfect hitter's backdrop, and gorgeous sunsets regularly grace the right-field panorama. Pitchers lose long balls into the Bluestone River.

Major league teams made Bluefield a favorite stop on barnstorming railroad exhibition tours, and promotional stunts brought fans in droves. It was not uncommon for management to give away automobiles and suits; fiery car crashes in the outfield delighted spectators; "Donkey Ball," "Fat and Lean" games, and mixed-sex games packed the stands night after night.

Nor did the concession booth drive away sports fans. Bowen Field boasts unquestionably the best hot dogs in the country, minor or major league. Hall of Famer Bob Feller himself pronounced the all-meat frankfurters tops. The choice chili and sweet onions prompted superstar Dwight "Doc" Gooden to call Bowen's dogs "the best hot dog I've ever had at any ballpark" when he toiled briefly for the Appy League Kingsport Mets.

As a farm club for the Boston Braves and Red Sox, Washington Senators, Brooklyn Dodgers and Baltimore Orioles, Bluefield's franchise has survived five parent organizations, annual spring floods on the neighboring Bluestone, perennial lightning strikes, and a devastating 1973 fire. It became one of the most successful minor league organizations anywhere, drawing a full 100,000 spectators one glorious season, reportedly the most ever for a minor league club.

Since 1958, when Baltimore took over the team, over 60 former Bluefield Orioles have played major league baseball, and four former "Baby Bird" managers have managed in the big leagues: Joe Altobelli, whose Bluefield team won the 1967 Appalachian League title; Billy Hunter, who garnered consecutive pennants in 1962 and 1963; Jim Frey, who guided a young team to losing records in 1964 and '65; and current Cleveland skipper John Hart, who managed Bluefield's last title in 1982.

Bluefield's 32-year partnership with Baltimore is the longest such affiliation on record. The roster of Oriole greats who began their careers in Bowen Field is a gallery of talent almost too extensive to list: Albert "Sparky" Lyle and Cy Young Award winner Dean Chance ascended the hallowed mound in 1964; John "Boog" Powell deposited hanging curve balls into the Bluestone. Don Baylor hit .346 and

They played the game by the rules in Bluefield, according to the adjoining article by Stuart McGehee, but we've got reason to believe that that wasn't always the case in the coalfields of southern West Virginia. The following recollections by former pitcher Fred Cadle suggest certain irregularities in a record cliff-hanger topping off the 1923 season in Mingo County. Mr. Cadle's remarks are excerpted from an article in the January-March 1978 GOLDENSEAL. — ed.

Baseball, Naugatuck-Style

Fred Cadle. Now that the new baseball season has just started, my memory takes me back to a ball game that I participated in in 1923. The game was between Salt Fork and Naugatuck. Both of these little towns are located in the coal mining district of southern West Virginia.

By 1923 I had developed into somewhat of a fair-to-middling baseball pitcher. And I was pitching for Naugatuck. It's in the coal mining league that they have down there, and it was the playoff game. The date was late October 1923, as I remember.

This game was *the* game. Let's put it that way, it was *the* game. It was the most terrific game that I ever participated in, or anyone else for that matter. It went into the books of disorganized baseball as one of the screwiest ball games that had ever been played anywhere. As a matter of fact, it's the only ball game that I ever heard of where the pitcher had to play third base, too. And that was my job.

The third baseman had let an easy ground ball roll between his legs in the 15th inning of that game, and one of the fans in the stands shot him with a rifle. That's the way they did down there when you made a real bad error with men on base, you either got shot or beat up. That was the way they had of developing ball players.

Well, to get on with the game, it went to the 16th inning, the 17th inning, the 18th. It was in the 19th inning that I discovered that I was pitching a no-hit, no-run ball game. Nineteen innings of no hits, no runs — but we'd had that one error where the third baseman got shot. Of course, all this did was advance the runner, and I struck out the next two men, so it didn't make any difference.

Well, anyway, we were going into the 20th inning, the 21st inning, the 23rd inning, the 24th, 25th. I struck out 63 batters by the 39th inning.

When Naugatuck was at bat in the 39th inning, the first two men up struck out. The opposing pitcher was pretty rough. That guy, it would take him at least five minutes just to wind up and get ready to throw the ball. And when he threw the ball you didn't know whether it would be coming down the third base line or whether it would be coming down the first base line. He had the most terrific curve I've ever seen in my life. It'd curve at least 12 feet.

I thought probably they'd put somebody else in for a pinch hitter for me, because I was completely done in. I didn't have nothing left. My arm was dead. As a matter of fact, my right arm had grown out — I'd thrown it out — until it was four inches longer than my left arm.

Of course, the manager, he could see the effect that this long game had had on me, and I told him I didn't want to go up there and hit at this pitcher because I was afraid of him. But he said, "You go up there and hit, don't worry about a damn thing." Says, "You just go up there and hit."

So he had three balls on me and two strikes, and he throwed a fast ball at me. I closed both eyes and swung, and I hit the ball fully, right in the middle. The ball took out over the ballpark and over the N&W railroad tracks and across Tug River. The center fielder went after it. He went back and back, back, back. No one knew how far he went back to get that ball.

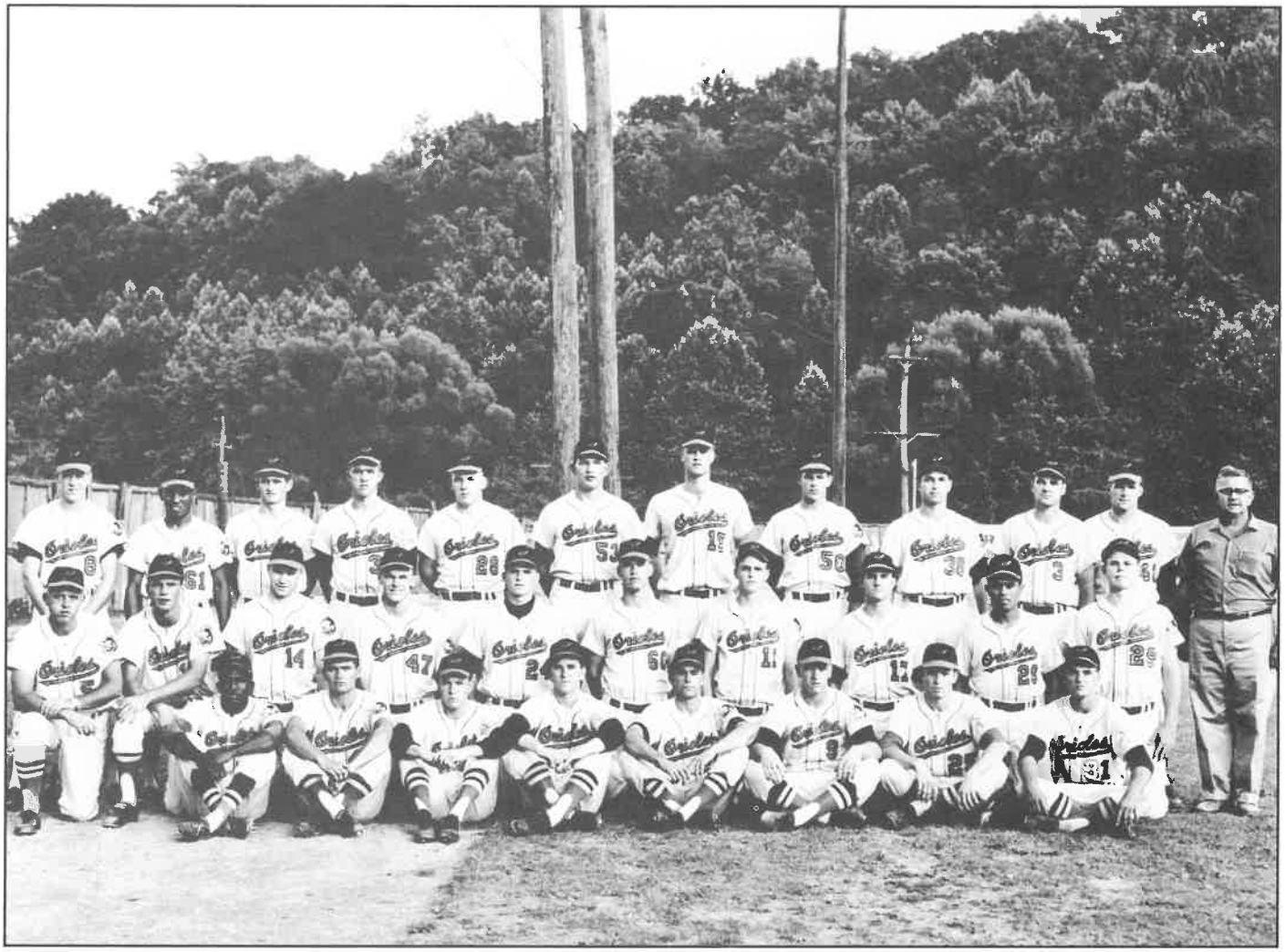
Everybody was sitting there waiting, and it got cold. They built fires under the grandstand to keep warm waiting for the center fielder to come back with the ball. They didn't know whether he caught the ball and dropped it or whether he caught the ball and held it. They just didn't know, so they naturally didn't know how this ball game ended. Whether it was a tie game, or whether he caught the ball or dropped it, in which case Naugatuck, my team, would have won the championship. Finally the sheriff had to come down there and drive the people out of the ballpark. Said, "You guys go home. Everybody's got to go home because it's too cold out here, and you're not dressed for this kind of weather."

All they did was talk until the next spring. They talked about that ball game. What happened to the center fielder? They didn't know where he went. As it turned out, we had an awful hard winter down there with a lot of snow. It was awfully cold.

Finally, April came and the snows melted. And there were two hunters going out along the side of the mountain and they came upon a phenomenon. That's what it was, that's the only word you could use to describe it. There stood the center fielder standing straight up in a solid cake of ice. And down at his feet was the ball that he had gone after, indicating that he had caught the ball and dropped it. Naugatuck was declared the winner of that little world championship.

That's really and truly the most outstanding baseball game that was ever played. I had faced 117 batters, I struck out 63. I had one error. That was when the third baseman got shot for letting the easy ground ball go between his legs. And my right arm grew out five-and-a-half inches longer than my left arm.

In other words, what I had done that day was ruin one of the finest baseball careers anyone could ever have hoped to have.



The Orioles have been Bluefield's team for more than 30 years. George Fanning (right) poses here with the championship 1963 Baby Birds, managed by Billy Hunter. Photographer unknown, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

stole 26 bases in 1967, and both Bobby Grich and Mark Belanger patrolled the base paths the same year.

Most of the top Baltimore stars played at least part of their minor league careers in Bluefield. Eddie Murray was the 1973 Appalachian League Most Valuable Player. Both Billy and Cal Ripkin, Jr., played in Bluefield, Cal hitting a paltry .264 despite the friendly confines of the small park. Doug DeCinces hit .293 and made some still-discussed "picks." Larry Sheets hit a league-leading 48 RBI's in 1978. Mike Boddiker was 2-1 with a sparkling 0.43 ERA the same year, while Storm Davis went a meager 4-4 in 1979. And Jim Traber not only stroked the long ball at Bowen several years ago, but even belted out the "Star Spangled Banner" before the game.

Moreover, despite a stated goal of "player development," the Bluefield teams have won more than their share of league titles — ten in all, beginning in 1949. They added conference crowns in 1950, 1954, 1957 (Al Fantuzzi hit .377), 1962 (Billy Hunter managed the champions who survived a no-hitter thrown at them by Harlan ace Denny McLain), 1963, 1967 (skippered by Joe Altobelli with .346-hitting Don Baylor pacing the attack), 1970, 1971, and 1982. Despite cellar finishes the last two seasons, Bluefield's laurels are intact. In fact, for a two-year stretch in the mid-1980's, the Bluefield Orioles were the only professional sports franchise in West Virginia.

Providing continuity through all that great baseball has been veteran general manager George Fanning. Since 1948, Fanning, the heart and soul of the organization, has personally supervised the daily care of the field, the stadium, and the front office.

"I started out running the vendors, and about two months later, I took over field preparation," Fanning told *Daily Telegraph* reporter Don Cuppett recently. "I had one helper on the field. No power tools. Everything was done by hand. We even drug the field by hand," he laughed wistfully. Fanning's dedication and professional attitude have enabled Bluefield to maintain a high-quality organization for decades.

Fanning benefits from remarkable community support. Volunteers like Patsy Malimasura and Fred Horne always seem to be there when work needs to be done. Bluefield team loyalty is legendary. When the stands burned down 15 years ago, Baby Bird fans brought in lawn chairs and blankets and never missed a pitch. Bluefield Chamber of Commerce president R. W. "Buzz" Wilkinson has recently restated the community's commitment to the franchise, recog-

Play Ball!

You will find more minor league baseball in West Virginia in 1990 than for many years past. Four cities, all in the south, will field teams this season.

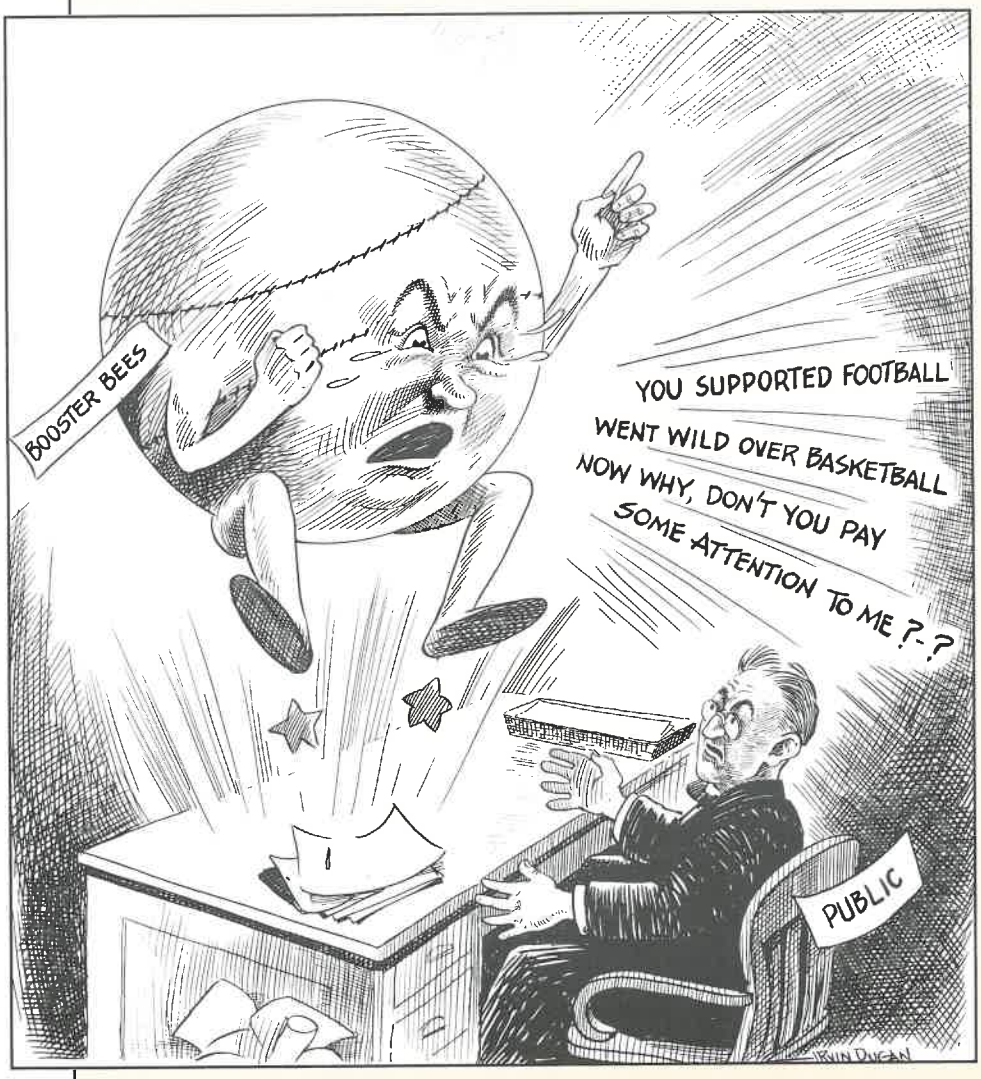
The Charleston Wheelers, a Class "A" team of the Cincinnati Reds, are the state's flagship team. This year the Wheelers' first home game is April 10 at Watt Powell Park against the Myrtle Beach Blue Jays. The Charleston Wheelers belong to the South Atlantic League. They play through the end of August and have a total of 144 games on their schedule, 72 at home and 72 away. The team averages two weeks of play a month at home. For a schedule or more information contact the Charleston Wheelers, Watt Powell Park, 3403 MacCorkle Avenue, Charleston, WV 25304, (304)925-8222.

West Virginia's three other teams all belong to the Appalachian League, promising some fine cross-state rivalry. They play the short season, beginning in mid-June.

The venerable Bluefield Orioles open their season with an away game on June 21. The farm club for the Baltimore Orioles will play their home opener on June 23 at Bowen Field against Pulaski, Virginia. Their schedule runs through August 31, with 36 games at home and 36 away. The "Baby Birds" have had a 32-year partnership with the Baltimore Orioles, the longest such affiliation on record. For schedule information call the Bluefield Chamber of Commerce at (304)327-7184 or Bowen Field after May 1 at (703)326-1326.

The town of Princeton will continue its newly revived baseball tradition when the Princeton Patriots travel to Huntington on June 21. The co-op team's first home game at Hunnicut Field is June 25 against Pulaski, Virginia. For more information contact the Princeton Chamber of Commerce at (304)487-1502.

The Huntington Cubs are a new team, and will play at the newly refurbished St. Cloud Commons. The rookie team is a farm club of the Chicago Cubs, with roughly 25 team players, pitchers, and staff. The Cubs' season begins with the Princeton game and also runs through the end of August. For more information call (304)429-1700 in Huntington or contact the Charleston Wheelers office at the address listed above.



Minor league baseball will demand attention in Huntington again this summer, though the team will be called the Cubs rather than the historic Booster Bees. Irvin Dugan's cartoon appeared in the June 12, 1938, Huntington *Herald-Advertiser*. Courtesy Special Collections, James E. Morrow Library, Marshall University.

George Fanning will see more West Virginia competition at Bowen Field this year, with the addition of Huntington and Princeton to the Appalachian League. Photo by Michael Keller.

nizing it as an important economic development tool for the region.

As Bluefield basks in the continuing glow of last year's centennial, city baseball is undergoing a renaissance of sorts. New renovations to Bowen Field have updated the facility, and new interest has been sparked by the appearance of a Princeton team, up the road at the Mercer County seat. A fierce local rivalry has developed, with 14 cross-county contests drawing capacity crowds to Bowen and to Hunnicut Field in Princeton. High school clubs on both sides of the state line call Bowen Field home, and the season-closing Coppinger Tournament draws the best teams from the region together for superb day-long marathon competition. Both Bluefield College and Bluefield State play home games in Bowen, and their fierce twi-night doubleheader matchups have produced some memorable moments.

There is nothing like a cool, breezy evening in lovely Bowen Field in Bluefield, "Nature's Air-Conditioned City." The ball no longer gets stuck in tin cans, but the sunsets are the finest in the land, the home run still splashes in the Bluestone, and the hot dogs are, well, the best. See you there.

Bluefield and Baltimore have shared this sassy bird for a long time. He'll be back again this summer. Photo by Michael Keller.

Our author returns to the former Boys School at Pruntytown, where she taught nearly 30 years ago. Larry Clark, an employee at the facility, shows her around.

My Boys

Teaching at Pruntytown

By Zera Radabaugh Lough

Photographs by Michael Keller

In 1960 I found myself alone on the farm on Flag Run in Taylor County where I had lived with my late husband, George Radabaugh. Our two sons were married and gone. I had had tuberculosis a few years before. We had reduced our work load then, and for two or three years lived a quiet and less active life. But George himself had not been well for some time. In 1959 he had several strokes, and he died of a major one in November of that year.

After the funeral, when all the relatives and friends were gone, I learned about loneliness. It was something which I had never known before. At first I thought I had to stay on the farm. During the 41 years we had lived there, we rarely were away overnight. The cows had to be milked, the chickens fed, and the livestock cared for.

But I knew I had to find work. I was not rich and I was not old enough to retire. Finding work meant leaving the farm. Before my sons left after the funeral, we decided that I would move into a small house belonging to my brother, Raymond Bartlett, and located next door to him in nearby

Simpson. I made the move early in 1960. My youngest son, Roy, moved to the family farm with his wife and four children.

I made plans to have my teacher's certificate renewed. I went to my old high school and to Alderson-Broaddus College and collected my grades and sent them to Charleston. I was given a certificate for substitute teaching.

I went to Washington in August 1960 to visit for a few weeks with my eldest son, Earl, and his family. When I returned home my brother, Paul Bartlett, who was then Taylor County superintendent of schools, asked me to report to the West Virginia Industrial School for Boys at Pruntytown the following Monday morning. The principal there had asked Paul to help find a substitute teacher for the sixth grade. I went to Pruntytown as requested and was told that the regular teacher had broken her right arm and I might be needed for several weeks.

The Industrial School for Boys was a reform school. "Bad boys" came to Pruntytown from all over West Virginia, from the institution's founding in 1891 until its closing in 1983. These were boys in serious trouble, sent there for a final attempt to make them into productive citizens. My job would not be easy, and I wondered if I was up to it. I had never had experience with delinquent boys but I really wanted to try.

In a few days I found myself in the sixth grade schoolroom. About 8:00 a.m. the boys began to file in — some tall, some short, some white, some black, about 18 of them. I asked them to call me Mrs. Radabaugh. I told them I was to be their teacher for a while, and I wanted us to be a family. I was there to help them, and I wanted them to help me. I also told them I expected them to be good boys. If they had any bad habits, they should leave them out in the hall. We talked quite a bit. Some talked freely and some were reserved. I tried to make it plain to them that they were my boys, and I expected them to respect me as their teacher. Those talks had to be repeated from time to time.

It took a few days to get acquainted and to get a regular schedule prepared. We used our first 30 minutes each morning for devotionals. I found that the boys loved to sing and loved for me to read to them. I usually read a Bible story, and we said the Lord's Prayer and sang some songs. I prepared song sheets on which I included several of the songs the boys liked most, especially those with a lilt: "Down by the Riverside," "Lord, Build Me a Cabin," "Supper Time," "Precious Memories," and many others.

Sometimes when the boys were a little grumpy we would sing longer. I thought the principal might think I was taking too much time in singing, but he said, "Let them sing. You'll probably never know just how much good singing does for these boys."

About the first of November, I was called into the office and told that the regular teacher was not coming back and the job was mine if I wanted it. I told them I would love to stay but I did not know if I could drive back and forth all winter. I had not been driving very long. As a result, I was provided with an apartment and all meals. This made it possible for me to keep my job.

The first winter I was there I came back home to Simpson almost every weekend, a distance of about eight miles. Later, I was given a larger apartment with cooking privileges. When the weather was too severe, I was able to stay at the school.

Our curriculum included a lot of written work in the classroom, and

The Administration Building has always been the focal point of the Pruntytown campus. The postcard view shows that the building originally had a large central tower and a rounded portico. Postcard courtesy State Archives, about 1925.

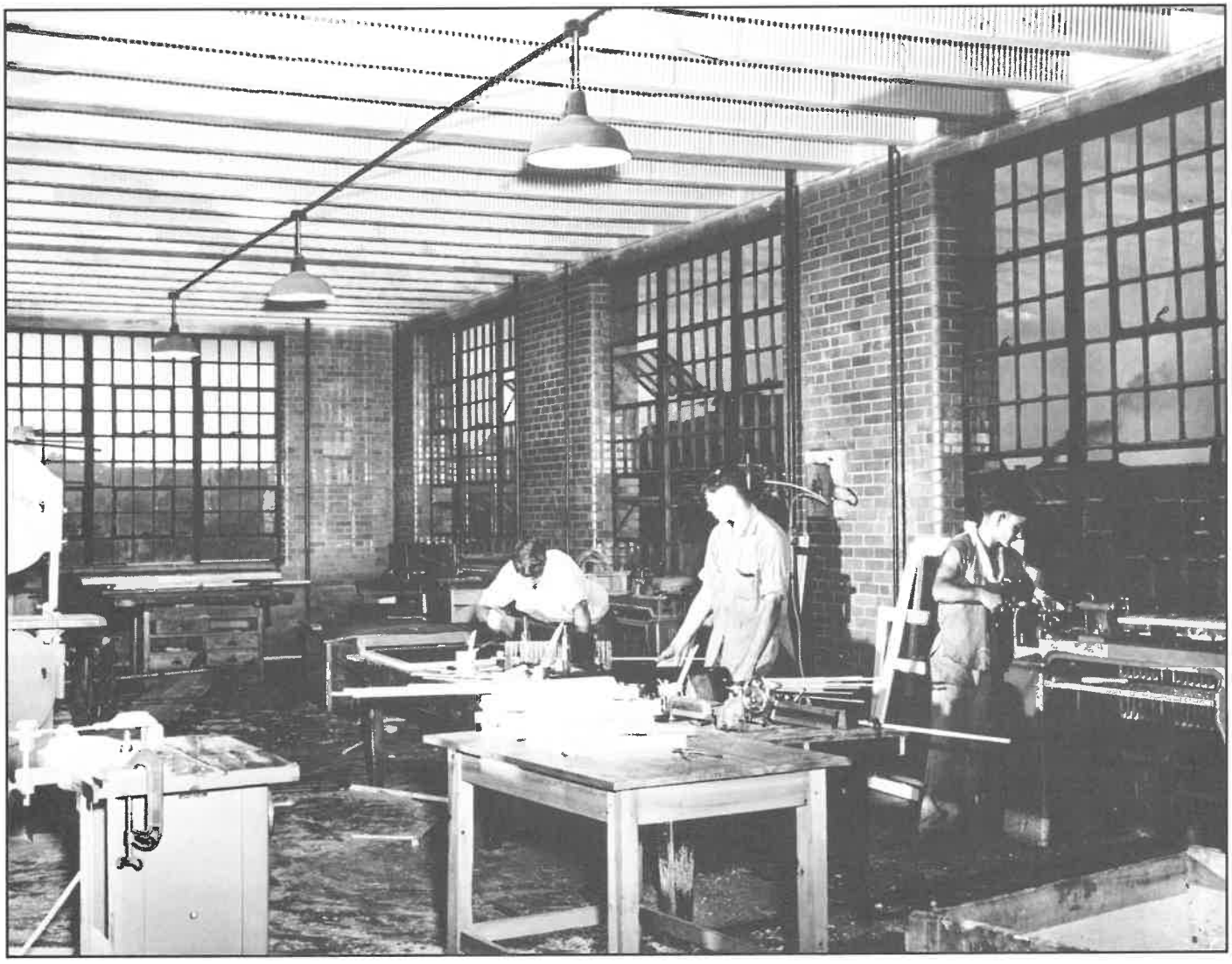
numerous written tests. Each boy who made an average grade of 90 or above for the week had his name written on the blackboard on Friday morning. That was an incentive for them to work really hard. For me, it meant grading papers to near midnight each day.

We continued to sing. On one occasion the chaplain, Oren Reneau, asked me if I had a visiting singing group in my classroom. He said that when he was walking down the hall he had heard beautiful singing. He said, "I just stood out there and listened." I assured him it was my boys, some of whom had beautiful voices. He then said, "Write down the names of some of your best singers. I want them in choir." There was a chapel service each Sunday morning at a small church on the grounds. The choir got bigger and better.

Shortly thereafter, one of our lady teachers wrote a couple of plays. One was the story of the life of Jesus. The story used a lot of characters — shepherds, wise men, and several of the disciples. Another teacher and I helped Chaplain Reneau choose the actors. There was a lot of memory work and practice required, including the music which went with it. It took from three to five weeks to get it ready to produce. It was put on for all the boys in the institution and then again for the public. Following the Christmas play, we had an Easter play.

The principal required each teacher to put on an assembly program in the auditorium for all the school. The sixth grade's turn came on Valentine Day.

Above: Former chaplain Oren Reneau was a fair but firm influence in the boys' lives, according to Zera Lough. Photo by Ron Rittenhouse.
Below: Pruntytown boys received industrial training, as well as regular classroom courses and another chance at life. Photo courtesy State Archives, date unknown.



"What Killed Coonie?"
A Schoolboy Composition

Like students everywhere, the boys at Pruntytown were given writing assignments from time to time. The results could be pretty unpredictable, according to teacher Zera Lough, who sent us a favorite example. "On one occasion I had asked the sixth grade boys to write an amusing story," she says. "This is what one boy wrote."

I grew up on a large farm in West Virginia and we had no close neighbors, no church or stores close to us. We always had lots to eat, because we raised lots of vegetables, and Dad had big, big cornfields. We needed lots of corn to feed horses, cows, pigs and chickens. I was the oldest of five children and I had to hoe corn from the time it was two inches high until it was laid by about the 4th of July.

Soon thereafter, my father said to me, "Son, you have worked hard and I'm going to let you go visit your grandparents on the other side of the mountain for the 4th of July."

So my mother fixed a tub of warm water and got a cake of homemade soap. She said to me, "Now get yourself a good bath and be sure and wash behind your ears." She hunted me some clean clothes and got out my shoes and stockings. She said, "You will have to wear your shoes as you will have some briar patches to go through." We went barefoot at home since we only had about one pair of shoes a year.

Before I left, my Dad gave me two nickels and ten pennies. He said, "You can get you ten little firecrackers with your pennies, but get you one big one with one nickel. With the other nickel, get your granddad a newspaper at the store on top of the hill."

It was a long walk. I had to walk a mile or more before I came to the blackberry patch and maybe another half mile up a big hill where there was a store and a post office. I went to the store and got my firecrackers and to the post office and got the newspaper and mail for my grandparents. It was late in the evening when I got to their home.

After we had supper, Granddad took his paper and sat down to read it. My grandma had made up a batch of cookies which she wanted to bake after supper. She made a hot stove, red-hot on top, and went to work on the cookies.

They had a big lazy dog named Coonie lying out in the yard. He seemed to be asleep. I knew that he must sleep with one eye open for if any food was thrown out the kitchen door, his mouth would fly open and he would swallow it before it hit the ground. I got an idea. Grandma had the cookies rolled out on the kitchen table, and as fast as one turn was baked she had another ready to put in the oven. She said, "Now, honey, you eat all you want," which I did.

She called to Grandpa, "Pa, you'd better come and get the night water. It's going to get dark soon." She said to me, "Whenever he gets his nose in a newspaper you just can't move him."

When I got a good chance, I got my five-cent firecracker out and when Grandma wasn't looking, wrapped it up in cookie dough, leaving the fuse end sticking out. I lit it on the red-hot stove and threw it out in the yard. Coonie didn't let it hit the ground and swallowed it whole. Of course, I was in the room with Grandma at once.

After a while, Grandma said, "Come on, son, we'll go get the night water. He'll not move until he's read his newspaper from 'kiver to kiver.'"

We had to go around the hill a ways to the spring. When we got about halfway there we saw Coonie lying on the ground. Grandma ran to him, dropped the buckets, and ran as hard as she could back to the house, yelling, "Oh, Pa, come quick. Something's wrong with Coonie!"

Grandpa dropped his paper and came running. He turned Coonie over and looked him over and finally said, "Well, Ma, he's dead. You know, we've had him about 15 years and I think dog days set in today. I suppose his time had come. Anyway, he's done for now!"

It was a long, long time before I told them what killed Coonie.

— Name Withheld

Mrs. Lough was joined by her brother, Paul Bartlett, on her recent tour of Pruntytown. Mr. Bartlett worked at Pruntytown, and as Taylor County superintendent of schools.

I purchased a gallon of candy kisses. We had about one hour of poems and then performed skits. At the close of the program each boy sang a song. As they finished each threw a handful of chocolate candy all over the auditorium. Maybe you think that didn't cause a scramble!

A year or two after I went to work at the Industrial School Camille Robinson, a teacher from Fairmont, came in. She often came home with me on weekends. We became the best of friends, and today we are still almost like sisters. Whenever we had any amusing things happen which deserved a good laugh we usually shared it with each other. Camille organized a group of boys called her "Singing Sevens." We would go to the cottage and practice them. They performed at several functions, such as assembly groups and sometimes church affairs.

At times while I was at Pruntytown the girls from the Industrial School for Girls at Salem were brought over for a party and dance. I remember one brother and sister who would sit together and talk for the entire evening while the rest were dancing. There were always refreshments for all. Always present at the dances were law officers and "commanders," the Pruntytown employees who lived with the boys and had charge of them most of the time. As far as I know, there were never any runaways from the dances.

I had one experience that taught me that I needed to be alert at all times when the boys were in my care. A new boy was brought in who asked to go to the restroom, just across the hall. I gave him permission but did not send a trusty with him. In a few minutes one of the commanders who was working out on the grounds brought him to my door and said, "Here is one of your boys who was trying to run away." I realized then that I needed eyes in the back of my head. That was the only time such an incident arose.

On one occasion a boy came to my room acting as though he felt it was the end of the world. A couple of trusty boys brought him in but he would not stay in his seat. He kept walking and cursing. He swore he was not going to stay at Pruntytown. I got permission to send him to Chaplin Reneau. When he came back to my room he was calm and well-behaved. I asked the chaplain what he had done. He said the boy was so full of tension he was sick. "I just let him rave. He walked, cursed all law officers, cried, and just completely wore himself out."

I went to work on the boy myself. I made him see why he was there and that it was no one's fault but his own. There was no one who could pay the price but himself. He was a very intelligent boy, but in all probability had been allowed to do as he pleased. He settled down and became a good student. I realized that Chaplain Reneau was a wonderful person. He could be as hard as nails, but on the other hand, he was most compassionate. He had had a lot of experience and seemed to know just how to handle each case.

A ten-year-old boy had a fit of anger one night, throwing the new pair of glasses the state had bought for him and breaking them all to pieces. When he came into my classroom I noticed that he had been crying. After our devotional period, while we were getting ready for our written spelling lesson, I heard a commotion. I looked back and he was beating up on another boy. I smacked the back of his neck with my ruler, and set him in his seat, put his head down in his desk and put the lid down. He bawled out loud. I told him when he quit bawling he could take his head out.

We went ahead with our class and he just sat there and sobbed. After we were through, he asked if I would let

one of the boys give out the spelling words to him. I said, "Yes, if you would like." He made 100 percent on his paper. He asked if I would allow him to stay in the room and miss his gym class. I knew he wanted to talk to me, so I let him stay.

After the boys had gone to gym class, he came up to my desk, crying, and said, "Mrs. Radabaugh, I'm sorry I've been so mean, but no one likes me or comes to see me or brings me things like they do for the other boys. They all make fun of me."

He told me his mother and father were in a tuberculosis institution in another state. He, too, had been there but was cured. He had been visiting in West Virginia when he got into trouble. He said, "I don't have any friends."

I asked him to sit down beside me. I said, "You're one of my boys and I like you, but I don't like for you to fight. Maybe it's your fault when the boys laugh at you. You know you have a bad habit of sucking your thumbs. Now let's make a pact. Can you keep a secret, tell no one?" He agreed. "If you will keep your thumbs out of your mouth for one whole month, I'll get you something. I'll be watching you."

I watched him closely, and a time or two he got one thumb in his mouth and I had to start counting all over again. But he finally made it and I got him a nice pair of gloves. By the end of the school term, the boy had completely quit the habit, at least in school. I don't know about at night. But it seemed he grew up, and he quit his fighting and made good grades. He loved to see his name on the blackboard on Fridays.

An older boy, who was very bright but extremely nervous, got his work done before anyone else and then wanted to get into mischief. It was hard for him to stay in his seat. I finally sent him to the office and found that the boy had witnessed his drunken father shoot and kill his mother and wound his sister. He and his sister had been put in an institution but he kept running away, finally ending up in Pruntytown. They said he was having nightmares and would wake up screaming, "I see blood!" He could not relax and be quiet.

I really should have promoted him upstairs to the seventh grade, but he begged me not to. I believe he was afraid. I had heard that the wife of one of the commanders taught him to make cushions in his cottage. I asked him if he would like to learn to crochet. He was thrilled. I bought crochet thread, put him in the front seat where I could watch him all the time, and gave him a crochet needle. He kept busy after his school work was done and made crocheted rugs for every lady who worked there that winter. Keeping him busy took care of his problem.

Most of the boys, if not all of them, had regular hours of vocational training, such as auto mechanics, cabinet making, machine shop, and inside and outside house painting. I bought some items made by the boys as part of their shop work, among them a bookcase, typewriter stand, TV stand, coffee table, and some whatnot shelves. The training was to help them find gainful employment when old enough, and I think many of them benefited from the opportunity. Of course, there were exceptions. As one boy put it, "Well, my grandpa was in the pen and Pa is now in the pen, so I guess I'll be there someday."

The Industrial School was closed for economic reasons in the early 1980's. The few boys there at that time were transferred to the Girls School at Salem. I am now living with Earl and his wife, Polly, in Georgia. I am past 90 years of age and in reasonably good health. As I look back in my retirement, I believe that time spent at Pruntytown helped many boys to lead successful and productive lives when they returned to the outside world. I know I tried to do my best for the ones in my care, urging them to behave themselves while there and to save their money and make something of themselves when they got out.

The experience was a rewarding one for me, even after I left. I recall one incident a few years later. I was in a food store when a tall, nice-looking young man came up and laid his hand on my shoulder.

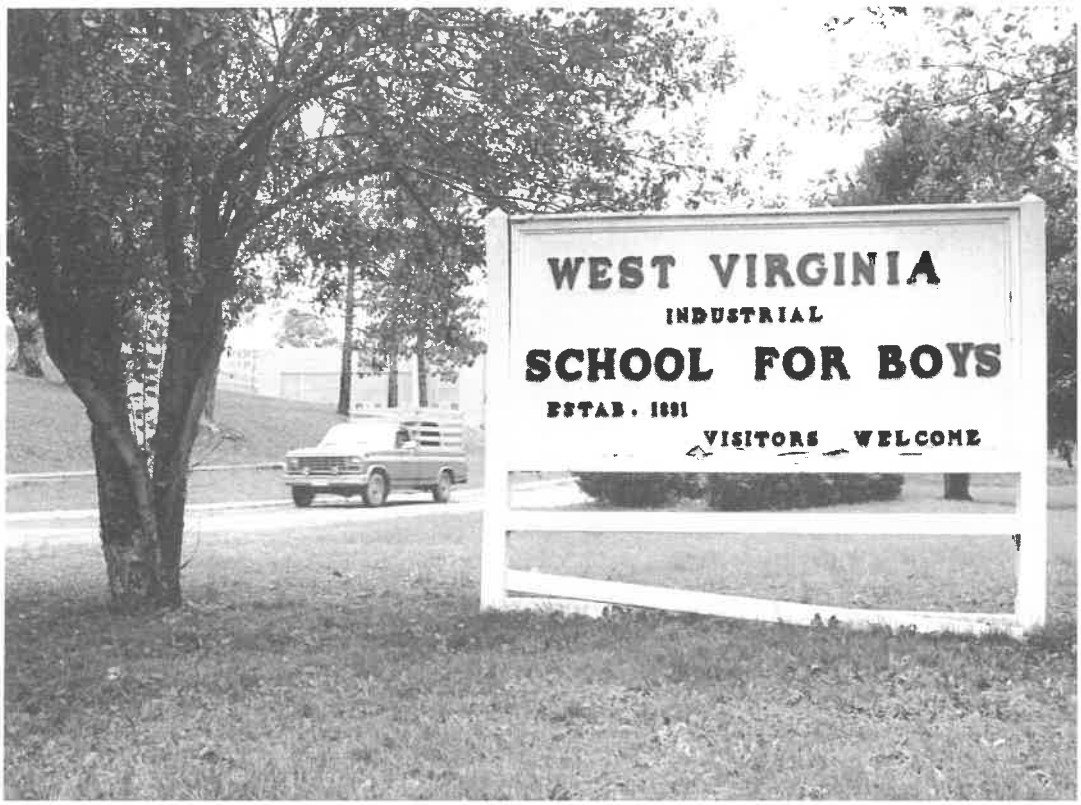
"Hi, Mrs. Radabaugh," he said. "You don't remember me?" I said, "I'm sorry, I'm afraid I don't."

He said, "When I went to school to you at Pruntytown you told us boys that when we got married, we must never buy anything we could not pay for. I want you to know that I am married and live in Clarksburg. I drive a Pepsi truck and I don't owe anybody one red cent. I remember what you told us."

That really made me feel good. Someone listened.

For Further Reading: See "Pruntytown: 'A Good Place To Do Time?'" by Bill Moulden, in GOLDENSEAL, Fall 1983, pp. 42-52, and "The Reverend Reneau," same issue, pp. 50-51.

The sign remains, but the Pruntytown School for Boys closed in 1983. The place is now a minimum security adult facility.



A Satisfied Man

By Eric G. Waggoner

I went to see James Hall, my great-grandfather, back in the early winter. The snow had come to Georges Creek, covering the mountain and the small houses set into its face, and I realized that this was how I best remembered him. When we were small we would visit just after Thanksgiving, when the snow had only begun to fall, and he would sit beside his window in a faded flannel shirt and talk to us about whatever he was thinking.

We, the youngest, knew him as "Papaw Candy;" when we came through the door he would give us chewing gum or jawbreakers, or whatever he had bought that week in town. I remember Pap taking my small hand into his big one and squeezing, gently, just to let me know who was boss. Back then I knew little of the life he had lived, or the things he had seen. I know now, however, and I look into his hooded eyes with deeper respect, proud to be one of his kin.

James E. Hall was born in 1899, in the northern part of the state. His family, like most, was poor. Little Jimmy was brash and often hardheaded, and his folks did their best to keep an eye on him when they left the house. But when he was six, on a busy market day in town, he slipped away and climbed into the back of another family's wagon. The owners of the wagon came back, loaded their supplies, and drove away. Halfway home, the oldest boy found Pap beneath some blankets in the back. Pap asked him to be quiet, and the older boy didn't say anything. The family lived a few miles back up the hollow, and when they got home they didn't turn back around and go looking for Pap's real family. They let him stay. His strong will often set Pap at odds with his new father, and he ran away from that home numerous times.

Around the summer of 1915 jobs were scarce. Both Pap and the natural sons in the family had to leave home at various times to look for work. Frustrated because there was no steady work to be had and anxious to be on his own, Pap bought a gun and a couple of shirts. He stuffed the gun in his pants and walked out of his second home for the last time in the dead of night, heading for the nearest train yard. Settling himself down in an empty boxcar, he waited for the train to take him away.

Jim Hall was 16 and on his own, and the company he kept while he hoboed was rough. The stories he told me when I was little were populated with bandits and rogues, and he rarely told the same one twice.

"Once me and a couple of buddies of mine were riding the trains through Matoaka and we had to jump off the car because the engineer was coming back through and checking. Well, we jumped off and ran into town to find some place to hide before he found us. We ran past a couple of barns but they was all locked up, so we kept running and we found a funeral home.

"We came in the back way, the three of us, and there were two big viewing rooms. One of them had people in it, and it was all lit up, so we couldn't go in there. The other room was dark, and there wasn't nothing in it but a big empty coffin up on the table. We went on in and tried to squeeze in under the table, but that didn't work because not all three of us could squeeze in under there. We were making a lot of noise, and we heard somebody coming down the hallway to see what it was that was going on.

"So we decided to put the biggest one of us inside the coffin, because he'd been drinking the most out of us three, and probably the best thing for him to do was to lie down. We lifted him up into the coffin and told him to shut up and lie still, and I turned the light on just as this big old fella in a jacket walked in. He looked at the two of us standing with our hats down in front of us, in front of that coffin, and he said, 'I didn't know there was somebody else in here today.'

"I said, 'Yessir, it's just a private little thing, we'll be outta here in a few minutes.'"

Once during Prohibition, Pap was in Buckhannon at an illegal bar. The owner of the place became convinced that Pap and his friend were alcohol enforcement agents and started to give Pap trouble about it. Pap and his friend decided to leave, but the owner and his bouncer wouldn't let them off that easily.

"They had me in the owner's car outside," Pap told me, "and that bouncer had a gun on me. He said, 'You move and I'll put a bullet through you.' I told him, 'Then son, you don't have to worry about me moving.' Finally they let us leave if we promised not to come back again, and we got out of that one all right.

"Never did get my beer, though," he finished, and smiled just a little.

Pap worked as a painter, carpenter, driver, husband, planter, father, and delivery boy, and he has performed countless other jobs on his way through life. He has outlived two wives and his descendants are scattered as far east as Washington and as far west as Phoenix. He is my oldest living relative, and a man I can look to when I consider my own problems. He's seen more of life than most people imagine, and come through it wiser and stronger.

Pap now lives at the mouth of Georges Creek, up the Kanawha River from Charleston, near his three daughters. When the snow comes down and the houses along the creek are covered, I can look at his trailer and the firewood stacked behind it and think about what I can learn from this man even today. He told me once, "I don't care what anybody thinks, I know what I've done with my life and I'm satisfied with it."

Last year he turned 90. His eyesight is dim, and I had to tell him who I was when I went to see him. He squinted up at me as we shook hands. "Boy, you got big," he said. Then he poked me hard in the ribs and I jumped back a little. "You still ain't *too* big, though," he said, and sat down again on the couch.

He looked out the window toward the mountains, and for a minute I was that little kid again, with my feet propped up in front of the gas furnace, listening to him tell stories about train yards and cops and traveling buddies. We talked for a while, and when we were finished Papaw Candy handed me a pack of gum.

He's right. I ain't too big yet.

"Cheap, Quick and Drafty"
The Jenny Lind House

Last fall's GOLDENSEAL asked readers for their opinion of what constituted a "Jenny Lind" house. The term is in common but imprecise use in much of West Virginia, and we hoped to arrive at a clear definition.

Well, the jury has spoken. We received many letters on the subject, some several pages long and including detailed sketches. The verdict is not exactly unanimous, but there is general agreement on the essential points of quality (cheap but durable), framing ("minimal," as one reader diplomatically put it), foundation (open piers), and the characteristic vertical board siding.

The foundation went in first, with the piers "split out of the most convenient rock ledges," according to Donald E. Norman of Gilmer County. Undoubtedly loose field stones were also used, as well as manufactured block or brick, and wooden posts. These piers were spaced around the perimeter of the building, with others lined up inside if the structure was large enough to require a central girder.

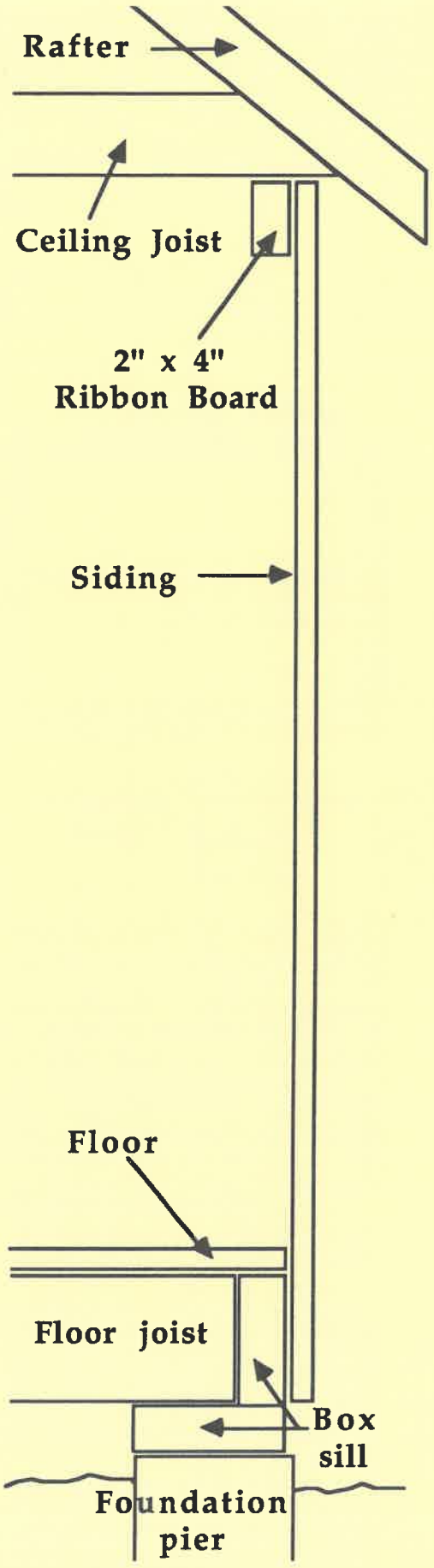
From there on, building the Jenny Lind was a simple proposition, according to E. S. Goodson of Fayette County: "Make a frame like you were going to make a box, put a floor in it, then nail rough boards to the frame in a perpendicular position." Other readers fleshed in the details, starting with the floor framing. Early models called for hewed "sleepers" along the four sides, says Garrett L. Bragg of Nicholas County, although later versions employed box sills as described by Mr. Norman and others. From there parallel joists went on in the conventional manner, and the flooring was laid.

Then for the walls, the most distinguishing feature of the Jenny Lind house. There were no studs, so upright corner planks were nailed to the sills with a two-by-four "ribbon" nailed flat to the top of these planks and running corner-to-corner all the way around. The rest of the plank siding could then be nailed to the sills at the bottom and to the ribbon two-by-four at the top.

With no internal framing, the wall planks supported the roof or even the next floor in the case of a two-story Jenny Lind. These planks were structural elements, in other words, and builders had to take that into consideration. Hardwoods were preferred, according to Mr. Norman, who says that "tie lumber," left over from the production of railroad ties, was always used in his area. Other letter writers described various wall reinforcement strategies. Tom E. Housby of Alderson called for an additional horizontal two-by-four halfway up the wall. David L. Myers, a Boone County native now living in Richmond, describes a similar crosspiece of one-inch lumber.

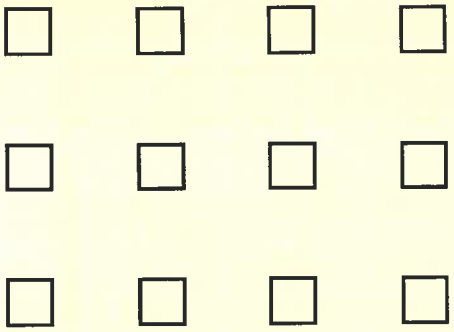
Mr. Bragg says the entire wall was made of two thicknesses of lumber. A double-thick wall of one-inch lumber would have offered substantial support and may have been necessary for two-story unframed houses. Professor Barbara Howe of West Virginia University recently offered a verbal description of what may be essentially similar two-story structures now under investigation in Preston County.

However the walls were built, the exterior vertical planking left plenty of



Jenny Lind construction required no stud framing at all, with the vertical siding planks nailed to the box sill at the bottom and to a ribbon board at the top. The wall planks directly supported the roof. Our illustrations are adapted from detailed sketches supplied by Donald E. Norman.

Foundation stones in place



tional design, involving ceiling joists and rafters and some weatherproof covering. Mr. Bragg says the early models used riven wooden shingles, with tar paper following in later years.

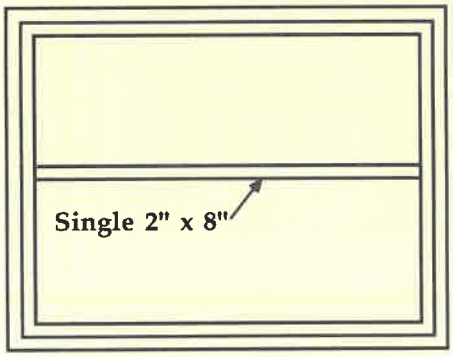
So have we answered the question as to what exactly a Jenny Lind house is? Not entirely, perhaps, but the consensus of our writers was that the term refers to construction methods rather than house style or floor plan. Dr. J. A. Smith, a former West Virginian now living in Florida, says, "It had nothing to do with size, arrangement or use of the building." Mr. Housby, who grew up in a Greenbrier Valley construction family, put it succinctly: "The style of the house was not important, but the construction was."

The key construction feature had to do with the building of the side walls, specifically the framing, or lack of it, and the exterior siding. Writers were unanimous only on the latter point, all calling for vertical board-and-batten siding as the prime Jenny Lind hallmark.

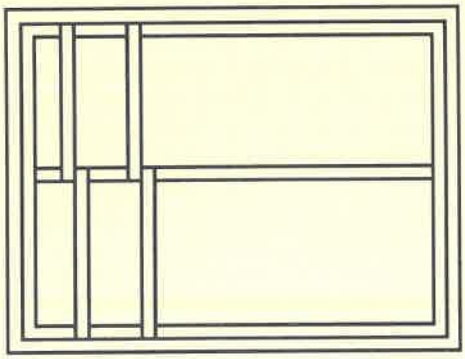
This allows for considerable divergence on other matters, and there was plenty of that among our respondents. Mr. Myers says Jenny Lind construction was used for hog pens and toolsheds as well as small houses — which his father, a Madison volunteer fireman, considered firetraps. Others described much larger dwellings, such as the two-story house that T. H. Light was born in on Kanawha County's Paint Creek. Jenny Lind seems to have been "a catchall term," as Steve Reynolds of Huntington aptly commented.

Most of the letter writers came from the southern counties, interestingly enough, and most were describing owner-built houses rather than coal company rental units. No one shed much light upon the name itself, although Mr. Bragg questioned whether it had anything to do with the opera singer Jenny Lind, noting correctly that it is more often pronounced "Jinny Linn." He says the terminology and pronunciation go back to the days of his father and grandparents, and thus at least back to the mid-19th century. Actually, that would put us squarely in the era of the "Swedish Nightingale's" triumphant 1850-52 American singing tour.

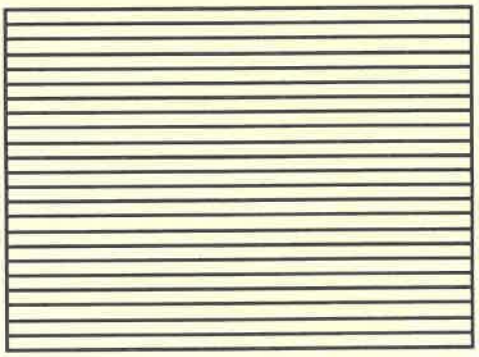
Adding the box sill...

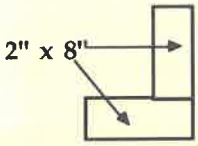


...the floor joists...



...and the floor





End view of box sill

cracks, which expanded as the green lumber cured. The cracks were covered by battens three or four inches wide, referred to as "weather stripping" by Mr. Goodson and simply as strips by most of our other writers. It is the board-and-batten pattern created by random width boards with narrow strips overlaying the joints that constitutes the most distinctive visual feature of the Jenny Lind house.

Radford Lykins of Summersville put the whole business in a few words. "A Jenny Lind house is put up without studs," he wrote. "You lay the foundation and floor it. Then put two boards up at each corner and run two-by-fours or two-by-sixes all the way around [the top] and nail boards to the sides. Some people double-box it and some just put four-inch strips over the cracks."

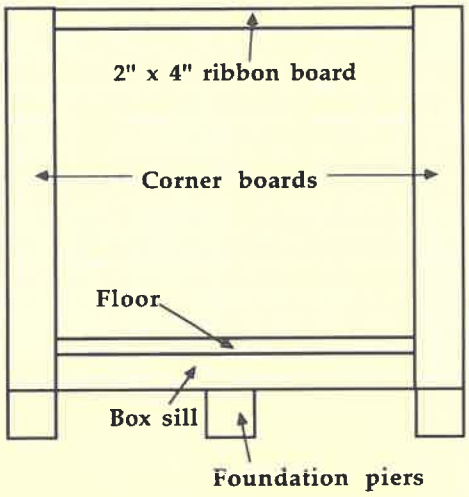
Our experts were vague about Jenny Lind architecture above the side walls. Presumably this means that the roof and roof framing were of conven-

The Jenny Lind was a quick way to get a roof over your head and reasonably cost efficient if it lasted the two or three decades predicted by our experts. But it was no palace. In that regard, Donald Norman spoke for most of our correspondents in concluding his five-page letter.

"And there you have the Gilmer County Jenny Lind," Mr. Norman wrote. "Cheap, quick to build, relatively temporary, and drafty."

— Ken Sullivan

Beginning a side wall



Kanawha Catfish and a Tale of Tails

The Winning Liars from Vandalia 1989

The liars flocked to Charleston again Memorial Day Weekend, rolling in from Matewan, Morgantown and points between. They gathered before a standing-room-only crowd in the Cultural Center theater for the State Liar's Contest, a regular part of the annual Vandalia Gathering.

The out-of-towners ran into stiff local competition in the person of Paul Lepp, powerhouse prevaricator from Kanawha County. Lepp, with a fish story as usual, won an unprecedented third title as West Virginia State Champion Liar. Tom Drummond of Huntington followed in second place, with last year's champ, Bee Murphy, claiming third. Phil Angel took the special youth prize.

Space considerations limit us to publishing only the top two stories. We present them in the order that judges Bonnie Collins, George Daugherty and Marc Harshman chose them. You can bet that the winners will be back this year for the eighth annual contest, beginning at 2:00 p.m. on May 27. If you would like to participate, you may preregister by calling Ken Sullivan at 348-0220.

Paul Lepp. Folks, it takes three things to get by in the world today. That's life, liberty, and the secret fishing hole. As you can plainly see, I am alive and kicking as I stand before you today. As for liberty, well, I'm just as free as my wife will let me be. And I've got a dandy secret fishing hole. Being secret and all, there's not a whole lot I can tell you about it, other than it's located on the banks of the scenic Kanawha River, somewhere in the general vicinity of the city of South Charleston.

It's quiet, it's peaceful, and it's secluded. It'd probably make a real good swimming hole, too, if you could just get the fish to move out of your way long enough to get in the water.

I was down there the other day, relaxing in a lawn chair. I had my feet up on a cooler. I had the monster stick — that's my nine-foot surfcasting rod — in my hand and I was making small talk with a bucket of night crawlers.

By and by, a big old towboat came plowing up the river behind five barges of coal. As she drew near, I saw she was an Exxon boat, the *City of Charleston*. If you've never seen that boat, she's a fine one — four decks and a big shiny wheelhouse. As she got up to me, I waved to her like I always do to a passing riverboat, and you can imagine my surprise when immediately her engines backed down and she slid to a stop right there.

Framed in the wheelhouse doorway stood the captain, white shirt, gold braids and all. He called down to me and his voice was real bashful-like. He requested permission to come ashore. I guess I'm a little old-fashioned, but I've always ranked riverboat captains right up there with God, train engineers and policemen. So I told him I'd be right honored if he'd come on down.

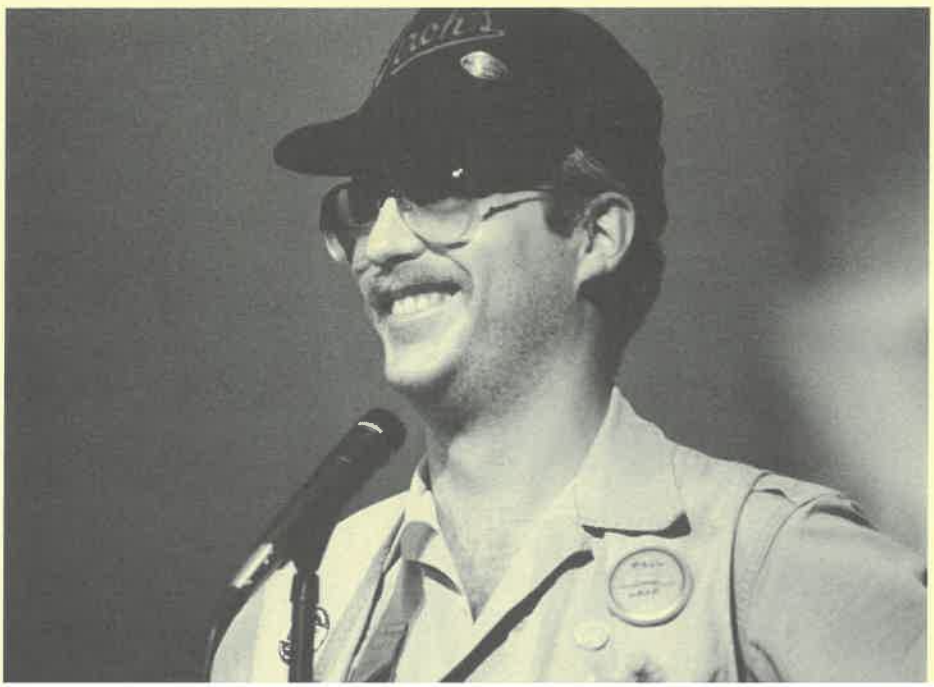
Well, he clumb over and stood before me, and folks, I'm here to tell you, he was a sorry sight. Looked like he didn't have a friend in the world. Looked like he was just about ready to cry.

He stuck his hand out to introduce himself and it was then that I realized why. You see, the man standing before me on the banks of the Kanawha River at my very own secret fishing hole was none other than the commander of the late, great *Exxon Valdez*, the ship that let loose enough oil to keep Alaska from squeaking until the 25th century.

He seemed so low that I offered him a beer and he took that beer and he drank it down in one swallow. And he said it tasted good. He said it was the first one he'd had since the wreck.

I hate to see a grown man thirsty, so I offered him another one. He took

Paul Lepp's toothy grin is a fright to fish and to truth lovers everywhere. He is a three-time state champion liar. Photo by Michael Keller.



that beer and about four more until by the time he had finished the fourth one, he was feeling a considerable lot better. He was feeling so good in fact that I felt brave enough to ask him the question that I was dying to ask.

And that was, "Just exactly what happened up there in Alaska?"

Well, he said it was like this. He said everything was going fine on the bridge of the *Valdez* that day. In fact, it was going so smooth that when a big school of salmon swam by, he figured there wouldn't be any harm in him turning the bridge over to his new third mate while he ran down to make a few casts.

That's exactly what he did. On the first cast, he hooked a fine salmon but as he was reeling it in, the fish was swallowed by a migrating killer whale.

Little did the captain know, but his new third mate up there on the bridge was none other than an ex-deep-sea fishing boat captain out of Tampa, Florida. When he saw the whale's head, he assumed that's what they were fishing for and he turned the whole ship to follow the game.

The rest is history. Before anything could be done, the boat was aground and ten million gallons of oil was afloat.

Well, Exxon stripped the captain of his ship and stuck him on this boat down here on the Kanawha River — assuming, I suppose, that he'd end up like everyone else in West Virginia and get laid off anyway.

Looking at it in that light, the whole story made a lot of sense, at least to me, because, folks, stuff like that happens to me all the time. I told the captain how I felt and he was so tickled that he offered to take me for a ride on his boat. Now, I've always wanted to fish the Kanawha's main channel from a big boat. So when the *City of Charleston* set sail, I was signed on as a bona fide charter fisherman, strapped into a makeshift fighting chair at the stern of that boat with my monster stick in hand, trolling for giant Kanawha River catfish.

I didn't expect to have any luck, fishing over those two big twin diesel engines and all, but I was wrong. We had just cleared the Patrick Street bridge when the fish hit, and he hit with such power and fury that the boat immediately began to lose steam.

The captain didn't know what was happening, so he hit full speed ahead. The boat began to buck and shake like a rodeo bronco. Everything that wasn't lashed down began to dance off the decks and out into the water, like spiders off a hot griddle.

The captain looked out the back of the wheelhouse door and saw what was going on. His eyes got about as big around as saucers. The door flung

Below: The young fellows get some advice from the older generation in this photo of past champ Bee Murphy (in tie) surrounded by Paul Lepp, Alan Klein, and Tom Drummond. Photo by Michael Keller.

Opposite Page: Karen Vuranch of Beckley was among the contestants. She is an experienced storyteller and director of the Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia. Photo by Greg Clark.

open, he hollered down, "Boy, cut that line!"

Folks, it was right then I realized, sad but true, the things that people had been saying about that captain were right — he did have a drinking problem. Because if he thought I was going to cut loose from a catfish that could out-tow a towboat, he must have been drunk!

I hollered back up to him, "I can't hear you!" He dashed back in the wheelhouse and came out with a big butcher knife. He began to make slashing motions through the air, and he said, "Son, I said, cut that line!"

"I can't hear you," I said.

He took that knife and held it to his throat. He said, "Boy, I said cut that line, or I'll come down there and cut your throat!"

I hollered up to him, "Captain, I can't hear you, but don't kill yourself. Somebody's got to steer this thing!"

The engines moaned and the turbines whined and the props below me were kicking up the Kanawha like a muddy Niagara Falls and just downstream, that fish came up — giant dorsal fin slicing through the surface of the Kanawha River like a freshwater "Jaws" and great fork tail thrashing and frothing that water and throwing the riverboat's weight right back upstream at us 'til you knew something was going to give.

Well, I've stood on this stage enough times before that I don't think there's a soul in the audience that thinks for a minute it was going to be me and the monster stick. And as it turned out, it wasn't going to be that great Kanawha River catfish, raised on PCB's and dioxins and other such vitamins and minerals, neither. The fish went down and he came up with a mighty lunge and broke clear free of the water and splashed back down with such force it sent a 40-foot wall of water heading upstream towards us. I just had time to reach down and cut myself free from the fighting chair when the water hit and sent the *City of Charleston* to the bottom of the Kanawha.

The captain, in time-honored tradition, went down with the ship. I immediately realized that he was a lot better off than I was, 'cause the boat only went down in 20 feet of water with two decks and the wheelhouse high and dry. I, on the other hand,

The Earl, AKA George Daugherty, stretches a point at Vandalia 1982. Photo by Michael Keller.

Earl of Elkview Tape

George Daugherty, the Liar's Contest judge otherwise known as the Earl of Elkview, has released a cassette tape of country humor. The new tape, titled "The Relax Radio Show," was issued by Braxton Records last fall.

Daugherty's tape takes the format of an old-time variety show, consisting mainly of original songs and commentary. The Carter years seem to have been especially fruitful for the song-writing Earl, producing such memorable numbers as "Jimmy Carter's Sister Saved My Soul" (about Larry Flynt's bout with religion) and "I'll Pump the Gas Jimmy, You Run the World." He is not bashful about taking on delicate matters, as in "Someone Rubbed Our Mayor the Wrong Way" (about the closing of a massage parlor) or the tender relations ("Warm from Another Man's Kiss"). Long-time fans will be pleased with such classics as "It Takes A Snuff-Dippin' Woman for a 'Baccer-Chewin' Man" and the big-hearted sentimentalism that makes the Earl special.

"The Relax Radio Show" may be ordered for $10 postpaid from George Daugherty, 7 Summers Street, Charleston, WV 25301. It may be purchased for the same price from The Shop in the Cultural Center in Charleston.

was in the Kanawha River with a catfish that had just sunk a towboat and was liable to be working up a powerful appetite.

I thought about that, and I decided any fish that was that game and that sporting, the only sportsmanlike thing for me to do was to let somebody else have a chance to catch him later. So, I reached down and cut the line and swum back to check on the captain.

Needless to say, by now he was a wreck. You see, when the boat went down, all five barges had turned turtle and dumped 10,000 tons of West "By God" Virginia coal to the bottom of the Kanawha River, creating the worst bituminous spill in the history of river navigation. For the second time in two months, the Coast Guard showed up and hauled him away.

I grabbed my empty cooler out of the wheelhouse and took the monster stick and headed on home. But I got to thinking about it, and I think this time the captain's going to come out all right. Because in this particular spill, not a single seal nor sea otter, nor sea lion, nor sea gull, nor salmon was killed. The harshest environmental impact I can see is a possibility of a few slow-witted and sluggish carp being squished to the bottom of the Kanawha River, which is no big deal. In fact, when you think about it, five barges of coal is probably the cleanest thing that's been dumped in the Kanawha River in 50 years!

Which brings up the point of the whole story and that is, I think Senator Jay Rockefeller needs to get on the phone to somebody up there in Alaska. Now obviously, those people use an awful lot of fuel trying to stay warm during their long, cold winters. Well, folks, coal makes a mighty fine heating fuel. And I'll bet you the monster stick you couldn't find a single soul up there that wouldn't rather have ten million tons of West Virginia coal on the bottom of their ocean than ten million gallons of Exxon's oil on the top.

Just the same, Jay, if you do strike a deal with them, you tell those folks we can send them all the coal they want, but if they don't mind we'll send it up on the railroad.

Tom Drummond. Well, I'm going to tell you all one tale, about two tails, and here's how they go together.

It all started back in the frontier days of West Virginia, back when Saturday was the time for going to town. And on this particular Saturday, sure enough, everyone was there. All the womenfolk, they were out trying dresses on, one size too small. And all the menfolk, they were down at the saloon a-sipping and a-tipping a few and bragging about their livestocks and bonds.

Suddenly, you could hear an argument a-brewing over at the corner poker table. And a man by the name of Lukey jumps up, points his finger across the table to a man named Larry, and says, "You can't have the fastest and meanest pig, 'cause I have the fastest and meanest pig." Larry said, "Oh no, you don't!" And Lukey said, "Oh yes, I do!"

And that's when Larry stood up, took a final swig of his sarsaparilla, smugly threw his mug on the rug and said, "Well, I'm a man that doesn't like loose ends a-hanging, except maybe once a day on the backside of my long johns.

"So, we need to settle this issue today in the middle of Main Street at high noon. You go get your pig and I'll go get my pig and to see just who has the fastest and meanest pig, we'll have a tug-of-boar."

Now, folks, a tug-of-boar is when you take two pigs, you face them in opposite directions, and you join them at the tail with a granny knot. And believe you me, it is a sight to behold your nose!

Well, Larry, he went and got his pig named Pinky. Pinky was a pedigree Hampshire pig with long, droopy ears and came from a pork chop heritage. Lukey, he went and got his pig named Stinky. Stinky was a black Yorkshire with erect ears and was linked to a sausage line.

Meanwhile back in town, all the townfolk were a-whooping and a-hollering. Half of them were betting on Pinky and the other three-fourths were betting on Stinky. So much money was being wagered there was a run on the local piggy bank. All the citizens of the county lined the street in time to hear the first of a dozen high-noon peals from the courthouse clock.

Then, from the south corner of town, weighing 422 pounds, and in the white hide came Pinky, followed by Larry. He had a towel around his neck and was carrying a bucket of water. From the north corner of town, weighing 427 pounds and in the black hide, came Stinky. Stinky was followed by Lukey who was bent over giving his pork chops a rubdown.

The drama was about to unfold. It was so quiet you could hear a pigpen drop, and there was more than just excitement in the air. The town judge comes out and he meets Lukey and Stinky and Larry and Pinky in the middle of dusty old Main Street. He sat Pinky a-facing south. He set Stinky a-facing north, into the wind. And then he summoned in the local preacher to tie the knot.

The judge opened up a felt-lined box that had a pair of bright, juicy Silver Queen corncobs in it. He said, "Men, choose your weapons. Go stand ten paces back from your irrespectable hog and on the count of three, you draw your cob and start yelling 'Wee, wee, wee' and try to bring that hog of yours all the way home to you."

Well, faster than a third-grade boy can pull a pigtail, the judge said, "One, two, three!" And Larry and Lukey, they drew their cobs and started yelling, "Wee, wee, wee." And Pinky and Stinky started huffing and pawing and oinking to beat all git-out. You could tell right quick that it was going to be a close contest.

And then it started raining cats and big, bad wolves and the entire town got muddier than a fresh cow pie in the middle of spring. I mean, it was a real sight for sore pigsties. And the half of the people that were rooting on Pinky started throwing mud on the three-fourths of the people that were rooting on Stinky. And the three-fourths of the people that were rooting on Stinky started throwing mud on the people that were rooting on Pinky.

Folks, there was a grunt-grunt here and a grunt-grunt there, here a grunt, there a grunt, everywhere a grunt-grunt. If you have ever heard of a place going hog wild, this was it! Because this was the first and biggest and the wildest of all hog wild that you have ever seen or heard.

And I hope you enjoyed this one tale about two tails. But don't forget: it started in a tie and it ended in a tie — and folks, that's no lie!

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In This Issue

IRVING ALEXANDER was born in Baltimore, where he graduated from high school in 1928. After two years in McDowell County, he returned to Baltimore to begin a career in advertising. He later started his own advertising agency in California, where he now lives in retirement. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

MALCOLM W. ATER, JR., was born in Virginia and graduated from Old Dominion University. He moved to the Eastern Panhandle in 1983 and now teaches students with learning disabilities at Harpers Ferry Junior High, attends graduate school, works as a sportscaster for WRNR in Martinsburg, and edits the *Good News Paper* in Shepherdstown. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Fall 1989.

P. CORBIT BROWN is a native of Fayette County. He works as a freelance photographer in the Eastern Panhandle and the Washington area. His photos have appeared in *Washingtonian* magazine, among other publications, and he recently exhibited his first solo show at the Washington Center for Photography. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the Winter 1989 issue.

GREG CLARK is photo preservation archivist for the Division of Culture and History, Department of Education and the Arts.

CHARLOTTE H. DESKINS, a McDowell County native, now lives in Virginia. Her nonfiction, short fiction and poetry have been published in various magazines, and she has received awards for her writing from West Virginia Writers and Mountain State Press. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Winter 1988.

MICHAEL KELLER is the chief of photographic services for the Division of Culture and History, Department of Education and the Arts.

JACQUELINE G. GOODWIN, born and raised in New Jersey, earned her undergraduate and master's degrees at West Virginia University. A former teacher, she is now director of communications for the West Virginia Education Association and a freelance writer. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Winter 1986.

ZERA RADABAUGH LOUGH was born on Flag Run, Taylor County, in 1899. She earned a teacher's certificate from Alderson-Broaddus College and taught grade school and later at the Industrial School for Boys at Pruntytown. She did church and volunteer work upon retiring and now lives with her family in Georgia. This is her second contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

STUART McGEHEE, who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, is a history professor and chairman of the Division of Social Sciences at Bluefield College. He is archivist of the Eastern Regional Coal Archives and first base coach for Bluefield College's Ramblin' Rams. He is a regular contributor to GOLDENSEAL .

BILL MOULDEN, born in Washington and raised in Maryland, graduated from the University of Maryland in 1951. He has had an extensive career in corrections, working with the federal, District of Columbia, and other correctional systems. He now lives in Morgan County, where he works as a consultant and a freelance writer. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Fall 1983.

BARBARA RASMUSSEN, a native of Lewisburg, is a graduate student at West Virginia University, working toward a Ph.D. in Appalachian history. Her article on Storer College was adapted from her master's thesis. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

HALI TAYLOR is a freelance photographer and artist living in Shepherdstown, where she also runs a chocolate business. She grew up in California, and studied photography at the University of California in San Diego. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Winter 1986.

ERIC G. WAGGONER is a Charleston native and a second-year student at West Virginia Wesleyan College. He is on the editorial staff of Wesleyan's student literary magazine. In 1987 he received the National Council of Teachers of English Award for Excellence in Writing. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

(continued from inside front cover)

August 8-11 Elizabeth (275-3101)
Wirt County Fair
August 8-11 Spanishburg (425-1429)
Bluestone Valley Fair
August 9-12 Danville (369-3925)
Boone County Fair
August 9-12 Ravenswood (273-2293)
Ohio River Festival
August 10-12 Elkins (636-1903)
Augusta Festival (D&E College)
August 10-12 Summersville (872-3145)
Gospel Sing
August 10-12 Logan (752-1324)
Logan County Arts & Crafts Fair
August 10-18 Lewisburg (645-1090)
State Fair of West Virginia
August 11 Daniels (252-3161)
Civilian Conservation Corps Reunion (Little Beaver)
August 13-19 New Martinsville (455-2058)
Town & Country Days
August 17-18 Welch (426-3113)
Last Blast of Summer
August 18 Richwood (846-6790)
Civilian Conservation Corps Reunion (Camp Woodbine)
August 21-25 West Union (873-2654)
Doddridge County Fair
August 22-September 1 Charles Town (728-7413)
Jefferson County Fair
August 24-25 Walker (489-2280)
West Virginia Bluegrass Festival
August 24-26 Grafton (265-3383)
Arts & Crafts Show (Tygart Lake)
August 24-26 Cairo (628-3705)
Cairo Days
August 24-26 Beckley (252-7329)
Appalachian Arts & Crafts Festival (Armory)
August 25-September 3 Charleston (348-6419)
20th Charleston Sternwheel Regatta
August 26-September 1 Philippi (457-3254)
Barbour County Fair
August 31-September 1 Pennsboro (659-2926)
Country Roads Festival
August 31-September 2 Jane Lew (842-4095)
Firemen's Heritage Craft Festival
August 31-September 2 Clarksburg (622-7314)
West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival
August 31-September 3 Weston (269-1863)
Stonewall Jackson Heritage Jubilee (Jackson's Mill)
September 1-2 Erbacon (226-5104)
Erbacon Days
September 1-3 Huntington (523-6998)
State Horseshoe Tournament
September 1-3 Mt. Nebo (753-6208)
Labor Day Gospel Sing
September 1-3 Parsons (478-2700)
The Hick Fair (Camp Kidd Park)
September 2-3 Wheeling (242-1929)
Oglebay Woodcarvers Show & Sale
September 3 Logan (752-7259)
12th Labor Day Outdoor Gospel Sing
September 4-8 Parsons (478-2949)
Tucker County Fair
September 7-9 Winfield (755-8421)
Putnam County Homecoming
September 8-9 Helvetia (924-5018)
Helvetia Community Fair
September 8-9 Huntington (529-2701)
Hilltop Festival (Huntington Museum of Art)
September 8-9 New Cumberland (564-3801)
Brickyard Bend Festival
September 9-15 Williamson (235-5560)
King Coal Festival
September 13-16 Sistersville (652-2939)
22nd West Virginia Oil & Gas Festival
September 13-16 Franklin (249-5422)
Treasure Mountain Festival
September 14-16 Cairo (428-9590)
Nature Wonder & Wild Foods Weekend (North Bend)
September 14-16 Wheeling (233-7000)
Fort Henry Festival
September 15 Lost Creek (745-3466)
Country Fall Festival
September 15-16 Parkersburg (295-5639)
28th Harvest Moon Arts & Crafts Festival
September 21-23 New Martinsville (455-2049)
River Heritage Days
September 22-23 Parkersburg (428-4080)
West Virginia Honey Festival
September 22-23 French Creek (924-6211)
National Hunting & Fishing Days
September 27-29 Arnoldsburg (655-8374)
West Virginia Molasses Festival
September 27-30 Kingwood (329-0021)
Preston County Buckwheat Festival
September 28-30 Charles Town (755-2055)
Fall Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
September 28-30 Morgantown (599-1104)
Mason-Dixon Festival
September 28-30 Gandeeville (342-8877)
Footmad Fall Festival (Camp Sheppard)
September 29-30 Moorefield (538-6560)
Hardy County Heritage Weekend
September 29-October 7 Elkins (636-1824)
Mountain State Forest Festival
October 5-6 Wellsburg (737-2787)
Wellsburg Apple Fest
October 5-7 Milton (743-3032)
West Virginia Pumpkin Festival
October 5-7 Clay (587-2934)
Golden Delicious Festival
October 5-7 Middlebourne (652-2528)
Middle Island Harvest Festival
October 6-7 Berkeley Springs (258-3738)
Apple Butter Festival
October 6-7 Fairmont (363-3030)
Apple Butter & Craft Weekend (Pricketts Fort)
October 6-7 Wheeling (242-3000)
Oglebayfest (Oglebay Park)
October 6-7 Burlington (289-3511)
Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival
October 6-7 Fairmont (366-6601)
Heritage Days
October 11-14 Spencer (927-1640)
West Virginia Black Walnut Festival
October 13 Cameron (686-3541)
Big Run Apple Festival
October 13-14 & 20-21 Hinton (466-4971)
Railroad Days
October 14 Mullens (294-4000)
Lumberjackin'-Bluegrassin' Jamboree (Twin Falls)
October 18-21 Martinsburg (263-2500)
11th Mountain State Apple Harvest Festival
October 20 Bluefield (425-2778)
Country Craft Guild Show
October 20 Fayetteville (465-5617)
Bridge Day (New River Gorge Bridge)
October 20-21 Oak Hill (465-5617)
New River Heritage Celebration
October 23 Union (772-3003)
Autumn Harvest Festival & Reunion

GOLDENSEAL requests its readers help in preparing this listing. If you would like your festival or event to appear in the 1991 "Folklife Fairs 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, 1991, 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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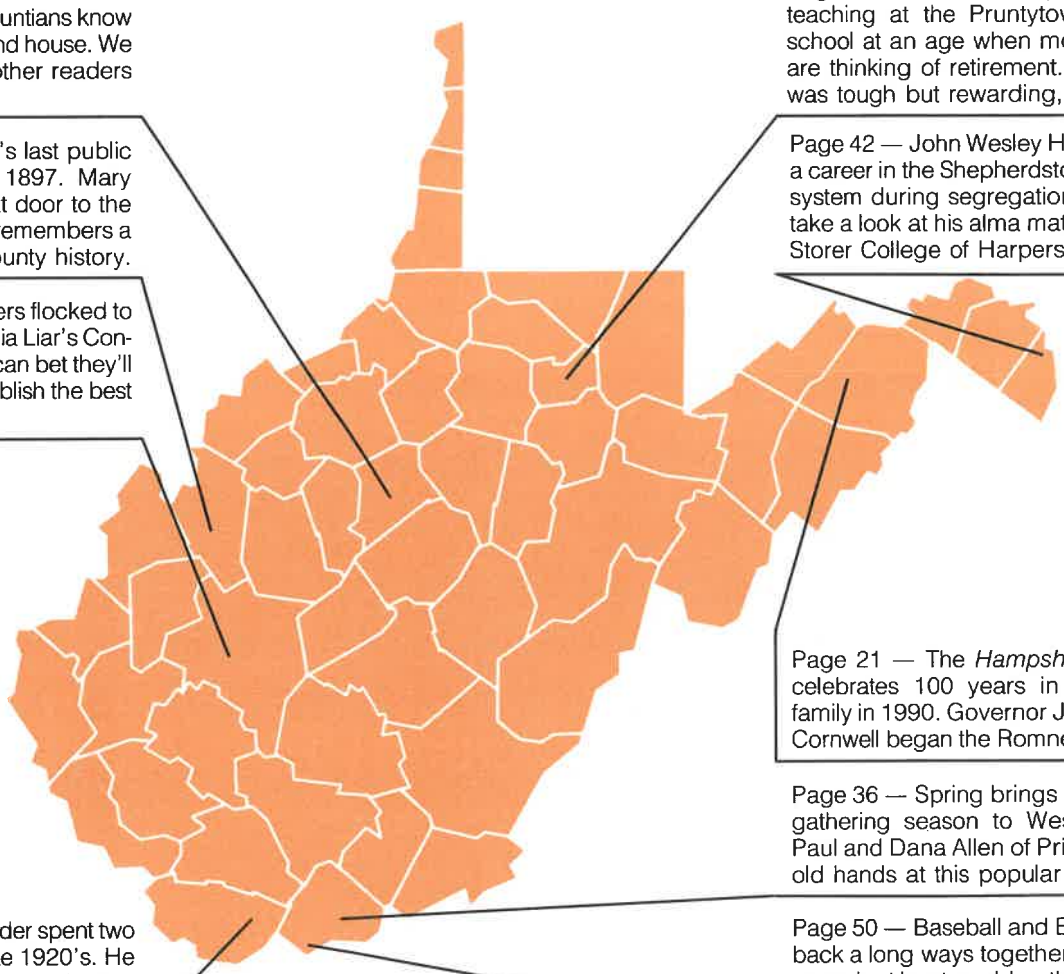

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